



Military Despatches

Vol 34 April 2020

Flip-flop

**Generals that
switch sides**

Surviving the Arctic convoys

93 year WWII veteran tells his story

Joseph Stalin

Revolutionary, politician, Generalissimus and dictator

Aarhus Air Raid

RAF Mosquitos destroy Gestapo headquarters

For the military enthusiast



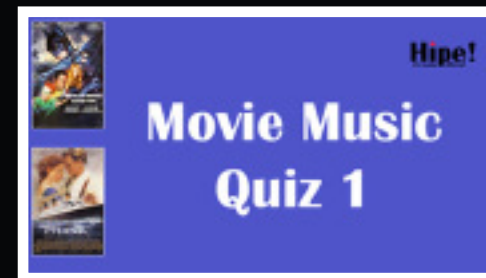
Click on any video below to view



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



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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This month we're looking at tanks that all saw action during World War II. We show you 15 tanks, you tell us what they are. And this one isn't as easy as you think.



Editor's Sitrep

“May you live in interesting times” is an English expression which purports to be a translation of a traditional Chinese curse.

And let's face it, we are currently living in very interesting, if not downright scary, times.

Covid-19 is causing panic, fear and havoc throughout the world. And personally, without trying to be a prophet of doom, I believe that this pandemic is a lot worse than we currently believe.

Many South Africans are still not taking this whole thing seriously enough and believe that it is not as bad as people are saying.

So please, all of you, stay at home if you can and, above all, stay safe. Most of us are in the age group that is high risk. So let's take this thing seriously.

And if things aren't bad enough, Moody's has just downgraded South Africa to junk status. As if the economy wasn't bad enough.

One bit of good news is that Eskom has promised that there will be no load shedding during the lockdown. Let's hope, for

once, they can actually make good on their promises.

I received quite a few e-mails from readers asking me if Military Despatches will still be published during the lockdown period.

The answer is yes. As long as I am able, I will publish Military Despatches. I will be remaining in isolation but will have to go out every Sunday. I do a radio show and radio has been deemed an essential service.

I do a show from 09h00 to 12h00 every Sunday and you can listen to it via the Internet. Check out the ad on page 23 of this issue and follow the link.

You can also WhatsApp me in the studio on 072 447 8044 and request a song, or you can just say hello and let me know you're listening.

Until next month, stay safe and stay healthy.

Until next time.

Matt

Hipe!

media

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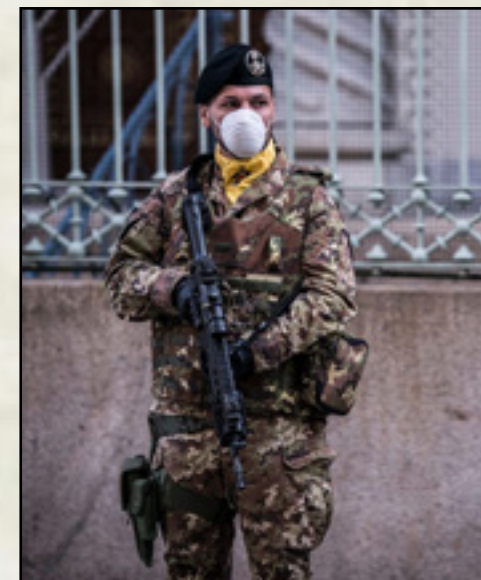
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Front Cover

An Italian soldier on patrol while enforcing the country's lockdown rule. In South Africa the SANDF is assisting the SAPS during our lockdown.



Ten generals that switched sides

Imagine you're a soldier heading into battle under the leadership of a general who, until very recently, had been in command of troops that were trying very hard to kill you. How much faith and trust would you have in a leader like that?

Throughout the history of warfare it has not been uncommon for soldiers to switch sides - either voluntarily or against their will.

Soldiers that had been captured by the enemy were sometimes given a choice - join us and fight for our side, or die.

Many soldiers have displayed their loyalty to their country or cause by holding their chins up high and declaring that they were ready to die for their country. For other self-preservation has taken preference over loyalty.

After all, many of these soldiers have been conscripts, fighting in a war against their will. Often for a country that regarded them as little more than slaves and cannon fodder. It is not difficult to see why they would choose to switch sides.

Yet one would not expect this type of behaviour from someone that has risen to the lofty heights of a general or admiral.

What would make a person of this stature turn against his country and against the troops that he once led?

While it is not common, there have been numerous incidents in history where generals have indeed turned against their own army and switched sides. In this article we look at ten such people.

10. Hermann

Hermann (circa 18 BC – 19 AD) was a German tribesman in Roman service.

By all accounts he was a pretty good soldier and rose through the ranks to command an auxiliary cohort.

Such was the respect given to him by his employers that they bestowed Roman citizenship and high social status upon him.

Hermann was posted to the Rhine, an area he was familiar with, where he served under Publius Quinctilius Varus, a Roman general married to a niece of the emperor Augustus.

Augustus ordered Varus to conquer and pacify Germania. Now as many conquerors have learnt throughout history, when you conquer someone its usually best to treat them humanely and try to win them over to your side. It was a lesson Varus ignored.

Varus' arrogant treatment of the Germans, however, caused them to revolt, and Hermann decided that his loyalty lay with his people rather than his paymasters.

In 9 AD, acting as guide for Varus and his army as they returned from campaigning to winter quarters, Hermann suggested a short-cut through a hilly and heavy forested region, and lured them into an ambush

in the Teutoburg Forest in which three legions were annihilated.

Not wanting to be taken prisoner, Varus committed suicide. Which was probably a wise decision on his part.

The disaster shocked Rome, and in its aftermath, Augustus went into mourning, let his beard grow out, and took to banging his head against the wall while wailing "Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions!"

Roman plans for expansion into Germania were halted and never resumed, and Germania eventually became a springboard and highway for the barbarians who demolished the empire.

The decision of Hermann to switch sides against the Romans had far-reaching historic impact, and made him a Roman villain and a German national hero. His gigantic statue and memorial, the Hermannsdenkmal, stands today near Detmold in Westphalia, close to the site of his betrayal.

9. Flavius Josephus

Yosef ben Matityahu (37 – 100 AD), who went on to Latinize his name into Titus Flavius Josephus, was a Jewish general and leader who commanded the Jewish forces in Galilee at the start of the First Jewish-Roman

War (66 – 73 AD), also known as the Great Jewish Revolt.

The revolt had erupted in 66 AD after the Roman authorities responded to tax protests by arresting prominent Jews and looting the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. That heavy-handedness transformed the protests into a full-blown rebellion, which forced the Romans to flee Judea. Armed bands seized forts across the country, while in Jerusalem, which the rebels captured, a national military government was organized.

In Galilee, Josephus, a 29 year old priest, was chosen to lead. With a combination of guile and force – such as his bluffing the town of Tiberias into surrender with an overwhelming display of force from a navy of 230 boats that, unbeknownst to the Tiberians carried no more than five men each – he managed to bring Galilee under his control.

As to be expected, Rome took a pretty dim view of the proceedings and they dispatched Vespasian, one of their top generals, to crush the revolt.

Vespasian marched his legions from Syria into Judea, with Galilee as his first stop. Josephus gathered an army, but its undisciplined ranks broke and ran at the first sight of the Roman legions, and fled to the hilltop town of Jotapata.

There, Vespasian surrounded Josephus and his men, and after a 47-day siege, successfully stormed the town.

Josephus and the rebel leaders fled to a secret hiding place down a well, but a prisoner told

the Romans, who shouted an offer down the well for Josephus to surrender, as Vespasian wanted him alive.

Josephus wanted to surrender, but the other leaders insisted that they all commit suicide instead. So Josephus suggested they do so in an orderly fashion, by drawing lots, with the loser of each round getting killed by the others.

As we've already seen, Josephus was no fool. He rigged the lots so that by the end of it there was only Josephus and one other survivor. He convinced the other survivor that they should surrender. They did, and while the other man was summarily executed, Josephus was taken in shackles to Vespasian.

Once again Josephus showed his guile by claiming that he was actually a prophet and that he had a vision in which he saw Vespasian becoming emperor of Rome.

Vespasian, who was already pondering a revolt, spared Josephus' life and kept him as a prisoner. In 69 AD, following Nero's ouster and suicide, three Roman generals had followed in quick succession as Roman emperors, and Vespasian decided that he should be the fourth. He led a successful revolt that put him on the throne, and recalling Josephus' prophecy, ordered him freed.

While Vespasian sailed off to Rome, Josephus joined Vespasian's son, Titus, in besieging Jerusalem and finishing off the revolt. After a horrific siege, the city fell in 70 AD, and Titus

ordered Jerusalem's complete destruction, while tens of thousands of prisoners were sold off as slaves or forced to fight to the death in games for Titus' amusement and to celebrate his victory.

Titus then took Josephus back with him to Rome, where he held a triumphal parade featuring captive rebel leaders chained to models of their towns on floats that paraded down Rome's street, and off to their execution sites. Josephus joined Vespasian's household, and spent the remainder of his life writing, leaving behind a valuable history of the Jewish Revolt.

8. Ashikaga Takauji

Feudal Japan was headed by the *Tennō* (heavenly sovereign), an emperor who was considered to be a deity. Yet the emperor was little more than a figurehead.

Japan was dominated by various samurai, also known as bushi, clans. They were warriors and each clan was led by a *daimyō* or lord.

These clans would compete against each other, with each *daimyō* plotting to become *shogun* or military dictator. It was the shoguns duty to protect the emperor. In reality however, it was the *shogun* that actually ruled Japan.

Ashikaga Takauji (1305 – 1358) was a samurai, general, and statesman whose life and career featured numerous twists and turns, during which Takauji switched sides multiple times.

At the end, he rose to become shogun, or military dictator, and founded the Ashikaga Shogunate at age 33, which dominated Japan for nearly two and a half centuries.

Takauji began his career in service to the powerful Hojo clan, which ran Japan's then-Kamakura Shogunate. In 1333, Takauji was tasked by the Hojos with ending a civil war against Japan's figurehead emperor, but he came to dislike the Hojos and switched sides, joining the emperor, instead.

With Takauji's help, the Hojos were defeated and compelled to commit suicide, ending the Kamakura Shogunate.

The emperor was restored to power and established the first imperial government that wielded both military and political power since the 10th century. For his troubles, however, Takauji was rewarded with an accusation of having murdered an imperial prince while campaigning.

He responded by switching sides once again, and turning on the emperor whom he had only recently restored to the throne. He defeated the emperor, reducing him once again to a figurehead, and assumed the military dictatorship of Japan, founding the Ashikaga Shogunate, which ruled the country from 1338 to 1573.

Contemporary Japanese intellectuals credited Takauji's success to three factors. First, calm courage in battle, during which he exhibited no fear of death. Second, mercy towards defeat-

ed foes and tolerance, which often meant that surrender was a viable option for his opponents. Third, an open handed generosity to subordinates, which earned and cemented their loyalty.

7. John Hawkwood

Sir John Hawkwood, known in Italy as Giovanni Acuto, meaning "John the Astute" (1320 – 1394) was an English soldier of fortune who plied his trade in Italy as a *condottiere*. As captain of a powerful mercenary band, Hawkwood played a significant role in 14th century Italy's wars and politics, and switched sides on numerous occasions between the peninsula's competing factions and states.

Hawkwood began his military career during the Hundred Years War in the armies of England's king Edward III, who knighted Hawkwood for exceptional service.

When that war was temporarily interrupted by a peace treaty in 1360, Hawkwood left for Italy at the head of a company of mercenaries, and joined the English unit known as the White Company.

In 1364, he was elected captain-general of the White Company, and he elevated its reputation, transforming it into an elite and highly sought after mercenary unit by adopting the English longbow and tactics successfully used in France, lightened his men's armor and equipment, which made them famous for the rapidity of their movements, and instilled strict

discipline.

During the 1370s, he served the Pope, but when the Holy Father cheated Hawkwood on payment, the mercenary bided his time, and when the Pope sent him to put down a rebellion in Citta di Castello, Hawkwood captured and kept the city in order to compel payment.

Strapped for cash, the Pope was forced to invest Hawkwood with the city, granting it to him in return for uncompensated services.

Between 1372 and 1378, Hawkwood repeatedly switched sides between serving the Pope and his rival, the duke of Milan, whose illegitimate daughter he married in 1377.

In 1378, after quarrelling with his new father in law, Hawkwood switched sides and signed a contract with Milan's rival, the city of Florence, and was appointed its captain-general.

He remained in Florence until he finally decided to sell his Italian properties and retire to England to spend his last years, but died in 1394 before he could do so.

6. Francesco I Sforza

Francesco Sforza (1401 – 1466) was an Italian *condottiero*, or soldier of fortune. During a lifetime filled with twists and turns, he became a mercenary general, turned on his employers and switched sides multiple times.

Finally, he made himself Duke of Milan, founding the Sforza Dynasty which ruled

that city and strongly influenced northern Italy and Italian politics for a century.

Sforza was the illegitimate son of a mercenary commander and accompanied his father on campaigns starting at age 17. He quickly developed a reputation for toughness and strength, and became famous for his ability to bend metal bars with his bare hands.

Following his father's drowning during battle, against a rival in 1424, Sforza took command. He proved himself a brilliant tactician and battlefield commander, went on to win the battle, and killed his father's rival in the process.

He then signed on to fight for

multiple Italian rulers, including the Pope, the Neapolitans, and duke Visconti of Milan. Sforza fought alternately for and against these groups during the next two decades.

During one of the intervals when he got along well with Milan's duke, he betrothed Visconti's illegitimate daughter and only child in 1433.

The following year, however, Sforza switched sides and left the duke of Milan's employ for that of his rival, Cosimo de Medici of Florence. In 1438, Sforza fought for Florence against his prospective father in law, and inflicted crushing defeats on Milan.

In 1441, he patched things up with Milan's duke, and finally married his daughter. But two years later, in 1443, he again switched sides and fought against his now-father-in-law.

When the duke of Milan died in 1447 without a male heir, the Milanese rebelled and proclaimed a republic, and hired Sforza as their military commander. A three-sided struggle then ensued between the Milanese republic, the rival city of Venice, and Sforza.

When the Milanese signed a peace treaty with Venice in 1449 against Sforza's

wishes, he turned on his employers and switched sides, this time backing himself. He besieged Milan, starving it into submission, and entered the city in 1450 as its new duke.

5. Albrecht Wallenstein

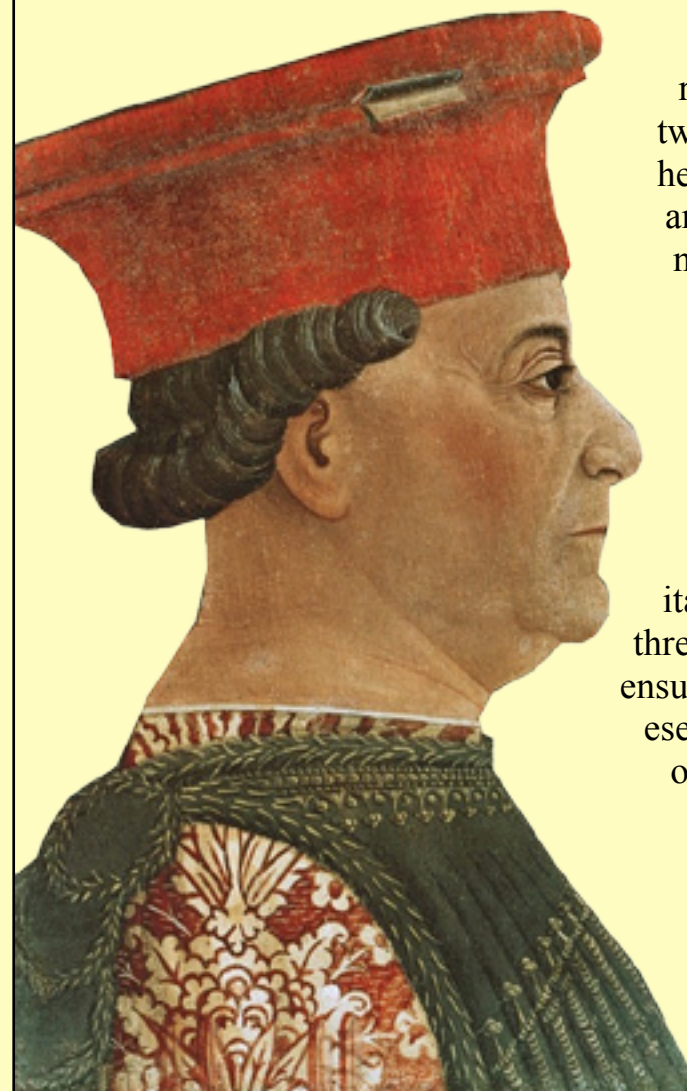
Albrecht Wenzel Eusebius von Wallenstein (1583 – 1634) was a Protestant Bohemian soldier who approached soldiering and war as financial transactions and business moves.

He rose to command the armies of the Holy Roman Empire during the Thirty Years War, fought for the Catholics before switching sides to the Protestants, then switched back to the Catholics once again.

Born a Lutheran, Wallenstein was orphaned at age 13 and raised by an uncle who saw to his education. In 1604, he fought for the Habsburgs and ingratiated himself with them and the influential Jesuits at their court by nominally converting to Catholicism.

His Jesuit confessor arranged for him to marry a fabulously wealthy elderly widow with huge estates, which wealth and lands Wallenstein inherited after her death in 1614, instantly vaulting him into the ranks of the powerful in the Habsburg realms.

He fought in numerous campaigns and battles, and earned a reputation for military brilliance. At the outbreak of the Thirty Years War, the Habsburgs feared that they would end up facing the Protestant-born Wallenstein.



Francesco Sforza

But calculating that serving the Catholics would prove more lucrative, Wallenstein offered his services and an army of 30,000 to 100,000 to the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II.

Wallenstein then proceeded to thoroughly destroy Protestant armies and the Protestant cause in his native Bohemia.

Particularly at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, so as to eradicate two centuries of a strong Protestant tradition, dating back to Jan Hus' uprising in the early 1400s. From a Protestant stronghold in Central Europe, Bohemia was transformed into a Catholic bastion, and it remains Catholic to this day.

Wallenstein then proceeded to wreck the Protestant cause in western and northern Germany,

but his successes and ambition, plus fears that he was preparing to switch sides, led Emperor Ferdinand to remove him from command in 1630.

The Protestants recovered, and particularly under Swedish king Gustavus Adolphus, won a series of stunning victories. Reasoning that a potentially treasonous general was better than incompetent ones, the Emperor recalled Wallenstein. Wallenstein stabilized the situation by defeating Gustavus Adolphus at the Battle of Alte Veste in 1632, and killed him at the Battle of Lutzen later that year.

However, Wallenstein grew increasingly resentful of his treatment by Ferdinand, and did little to hide his intent to switch sides and defect to the Protestant cause by joining the Swedes, as soon as he negotiated an agreeable deal.

Word got back to the Emperor of Wallenstein's planned defection, however, so he nipped the problem in the bud by having the problematic general assassinated in 1634. It seems that

Wallenstein switched sides just once too often.

4. Shi Lang

Shi Lang, Marquis Jinghai (1621 – 1696) was a Chinese admiral who served the Ming Dynasty, before switching sides and turning against his people. He defect-

ed to help the Manchu invaders in their successful conquest of China, helped with the overthrow of the Ming Dynasty, and its replacement with the Manchu Qing Dynasty which ruled China until the early 20th century.

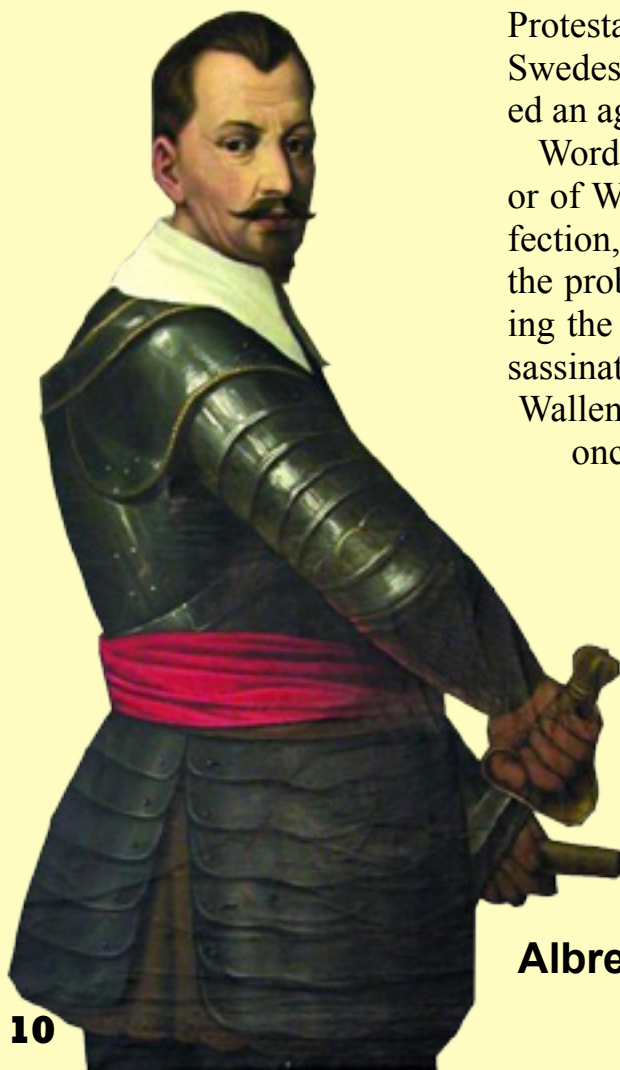
Shi Lang was born into a prominent family in Fujian, studied the military arts, and gained an expertise in naval warfare. He joined the Ming navy, which was led by the powerful Zheng family and quickly distinguished himself.

Lang rapidly rose to command a powerful contingent by his mid-20s. A falling out with a scion of the Zhengs led Shi Lang to defect to the rising Manchus in 1646. The Zhengs retaliated by slaughtering the family he left behind as traitors, killing Shi Lang's father, brother, and son.

The Manchus, who lacked a seafaring tradition and capable naval commanders, warmly welcomed Shi Lang for his naval talents and network of contacts throughout East Asia's port cities.

In 1656, he helped the Manchus conquer his native province of Fujian. Later, in 1663, he conducted a successful campaign against the Zheng family, in cooperation with a naval contingent from the Dutch East India Company.

In 1681, he led the Manchu invasion of the Ming Dynasty's last bastion in Taiwan which gave him great personal satisfaction. He once again defeated the Zheng family, crushing their



Albrecht Wallenstein

leading admiral in a sea battle off the Pescadores, and forcing the final surrender of his old enemies.

After conquering Taiwan for the Manchus, Shi Lang was given the hereditary rank of marquis, and granted the title of "General Who Maintains Peace on the Seas".

3. Benedict Arnold

Mention the name Benedict Arnold and most Americans tend to get a bit upset.

Benedict Arnold (1741 – 1801) is America's most notorious turncoat, whose name became an epithet, synonymous with treason. He had played a leading role early in the American War of Independence from Britain, and had probably been the rebelling patriots' most capable general and combat commander, before resentments over slights, coupled with financial distress, led him to switch sides.

Before his treason, Arnold had fought valiantly for the revolutionaries. Early in the conflict, he even played a leading role in capturing Fort Ticonderoga. He then led an expedition through difficult terrain in an attempt to capture Quebec, and although the expedition ultimately failed, it demonstrated great leadership skills on Arnold's part that he even managed to get his force to the outskirts of Quebec.

In 1776, a creative Arnold constructed a fleet from scratch at Lake Champlain, with which he defeated a superior British

fleet. While proclaimed a hero, he also aroused the resentment and jealousy of fellow officers, who began a whispering campaign to tarnish his name. In 1777, Congress created five new major generals, and Arnold was aghast upon discovering that his name was not on the list while some of his juniors were.

He was kept from resigning only by personal pleas from George Washington. A short time later, after defeating a British advance into Connecticut, Arnold was finally promoted to major general. However, his seniority was not restored, which he took as another slight.

He again sought to resign his commission but was prevailed upon to remain. He performed brilliantly in thwarting the British advance from Canada into upstate New York in 1777, and was instrumental in bringing about its defeat, culminating in the British surrender at Saratoga, where Arnold suffered a serious wound.

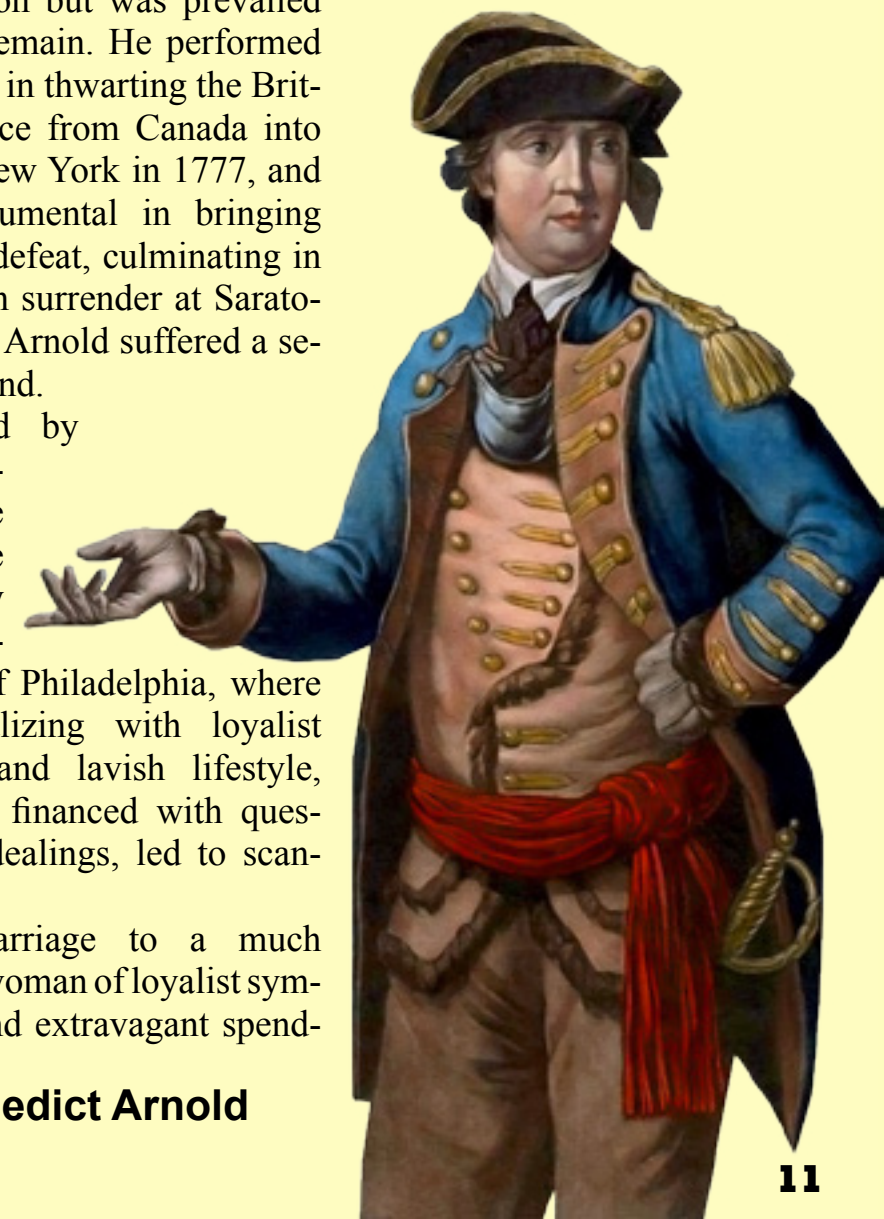
Crippled by his injuries, he was made military commander of Philadelphia, where his socializing with loyalist families and lavish lifestyle, which he financed with questionable dealings, led to scandal.

His marriage to a much younger woman of loyalist sympathies and extravagant spend-

ing habits soon pushed him into debt, and between stewing over slights and his increasing financial difficulties, Arnold secretly approached the British, offering to switch sides.

After his stint in charge of Philadelphia, Arnold was put in command of West Point, a fortified position on the Hudson river, upstream from British-occupied New York City. West Point barred the British from sailing upriver.

Arnold schemed to sell the British plans of the fortifications, and to help deliver them into their hands, for £20,000. However, his British contact, major John Andre, was cap-



Benedict Arnold

tured, along with documents incriminating Arnold, who barely escaped ahead of arrest.

Arnold was then made a brigadier general in the British army, and led Redcoats against his former comrades. His new masters never warmed to him however, and he was unable to secure a regular commission in the British Army after the war.

After the conflict's end, he engaged himself in a variety of enterprises, including privateering and land speculation in Canada, before finally settling in London, where he died in 1801.

2. Bernadotte

Jean-Baptiste Jules Bernadotte (1763 – 1844) was a French Revolutionary general who was granted high rank and honors by Napoleon Bonaparte. Bernadotte returned the favour by switching sides, and at the head of a Swedish army, helped defeat Napoleon at the Battle of Leipzig in 1813, the Napoleonic Wars' largest and bloodiest single engagement, whose loss effectively sealed Napoleon's fate.

The son of a prosecutor, Bernadotte enlisted in the French army at age 17. When the French Revolution erupted, he became an ardent supporter. Within two years, between 1792 and 1794, he experienced rapid promotions from sub-lieutenant to brigadier general in the Revolutionary armies.

Campaigning in the Low Countries, Germany, and Italy, he developed a reputation as

a disciplinarian who kept his troops under tight control, and in 1796 he played a key role in saving the French army in Germany from destruction following its defeat by the Austrians and ensured its safe retreat across the Rhine.

Bernadotte first came in contact with Napoleon in 1797, and the pair developed an early friendship, which eventually frayed and broke as a result of rivalries and misunderstandings. While relations between the two were still good, however, Napoleon recognized Bernadotte's talents, and in 1804 – following his declaration of empire and Bernadotte's declaration of loyalty to him – Napoleon appointed him a Marshall of France.

Following the successful 1805 Ulm Campaign and victory at the Battle of Austerlitz, Napoleon further rewarded Bernadotte by making him Prince of Ponto Corvo in Italy. Things began to sour between the two, however, during the Prussian campaign in 1806, when Napoleon severely criticized Bernadotte for failing to bring his corps to the fight at the hard-fought battles of Jena and Auerstadt, and barely refrained from court-martialing him for dereliction of duty.

The relationship was sunken at the 1809 Battle of Wagram, after which Napoleon relieved Bernadotte of command for his poor handling of his troops during the fight. Napoleon sent him back to Paris under the face-saving guise of "health

reasons".

Things soon looked up for Bernadotte, however, when the childless and ill king Charles XIII of Sweden, a French ally and client state, adopted him in 1810 and made him Crown Prince and heir to the throne. Bernadotte assumed the regency and governance of Sweden, and cast about for an accomplishment to solidify his authority and future dynasty.

The opportunity came when Napoleon was weakened following the destruction of his Grande Armée after his catastrophic invasion of Russia in 1812. In 1813, Bernadotte switched sides, signed a treaty with Britain, and declared war on France. He landed a Swedish army in northern Germany, and in alliance with the Austrians, Russians, and Prussians, got his payback against Napoleon by helping defeat him in the war's biggest and bloodiest battle, at Leipzig, in 1813.

After the war, he returned to Sweden, where he established the Bernadotte Dynasty, whose royal family reigns in Sweden to this day.

1. Andrey Vlasov

Andrey Andreyevich Vlasov (1900 – 1946) was one of Joseph Stalin's favorite Red Army generals, who turned on the Soviet dictator during WWII and switched sides after his capture by the Germans in 1942. Throwing in his lot with the Nazis, Vlasov turned coat and fought with the Germans against the Soviet Union at the



THE RED NAZI: General Andrey Vlasov not only switched sides, he also recruited hundreds of thousands of Soviet defectors to fight for the Nazis.

head of the so-called Russian Liberation Army.

Vlasov had been drafted into the Red Army in 1919 and fought in its ranks during the Russian Civil War, during which he distinguished himself. Rising steadily through the officer ranks, he earned a reputation for his ability to whip poor units into shape. In 1930, Vlasov gave his career a boost by joining the Communist Party, and in 1938, he was sent to China as a Soviet military advisor to its generalissimo, Chiang Kai-Shek.

When the Nazis invade the USSR in 1941, Vlasov was a mechanized corps commander in the Ukraine and was one of the few generals who managed to get his unit to safety, as he successfully fought his corps out of multiple encirclements. His skill and aggressiveness brought him to Stalin's attention, who summoned him in

November of 1941 and promoted him to command an army in Moscow's defences.

Vlasov and his army played a key role in keeping the Germans out of Moscow, and in January, 1942, he spearheaded the counter-offensive that pushed the Germans 100 miles from the Soviet capital. He earned decorations and acclaim in so doing, plus Stalin's admiration, who promoted him to deputy commander of the Volkhov Front, 300 miles northwest of Moscow.

Later, he was put in charge of the 2nd Shock Army after its commander fell ill, but it got cut off and encircled as it advanced towards Leningrad, and was destroyed in June 1942. Vlasov escaped temporarily but was captured 10 days later.

In captivity, he agreed to switch sides. Taken to Berlin, he and other Soviet traitors began drafting plans for a Russian

provisional government and for recruiting a Soviet turncoat army.

In 1943, he wrote an anticommunist leaflet, millions of copies of which were dropped on Soviet positions. Using Vlasov's name, the Nazis recruited hundreds of thousands of Soviet defectors, forming them in a so-called Russian Liberation Army, but although they were nominally under Vlasov's command, they were kept strictly under direct German control, with Vlasov exercising little or no authority.

His only combat against the Red Army took place while in charge of a turncoat division near the Oder river in February of 1945, during the war's closing stages, after which he was forced to retreat to German-controlled Czechoslovakia. There, in May of 1945, a few days before war's end, Vlasov's division turned coat once again, this time against the Germans and in support of a Czech uprising.

At war's end, he attempted to escape to the Western Allies' lines but was captured by Soviet forces, who discovered him hiding under blankets in a car. He was flown to Moscow and held in its dreaded Lubyanka prison, where he underwent torture for months. He was tried for treason in the summer of 1946 along with 11 of his leading subordinates. All were found guilty and sentenced to death, and on August 1st, 1945, Vlasov and his fellow turncoats were hanged.

Special Forces - Russia

Part fourteen of a series that takes a look at Special Forces units around the world. This month we look at Spetsnaz, the Russian Special Forces.

Spetsnaz is an umbrella term for special forces in Russian and is used in numerous post-Soviet states.

Historically, the term referred to special operations units controlled by the main military intelligence service GRU (Glavnoje Razvedyvatel'noje Upravlenije). It also describes task forces of other ministries (such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs OMON and Ministry

of Emergency Situations' special rescue unit) in post-Soviet countries. Russian special forces wear different berets depending on the branch of the armed forces they belong to. These include:

- Ground Forces and Airborne Forces (VDV) – Blue beret
- Navy and Marines – Black beret
- National Guard – Maroon

beret

As Spetsnaz is a Russian term, it is typically associated with the special units of Russia, but other post-Soviet states often refer to their special forces units by the term as well, since these nations also inherited

their special purpose units from the now-defunct Soviet security agencies.

Spetsnaz operates under the command and control of the Soviet General Staff's main Intelligence Directorate and has no western equivalent. Its main purpose is to carry out what the Russians term 'special

reconnaissance (Spetsialnaya Razvedka). This is defined as reconnaissance carried out to subvert the political, economic and military potential and morale of a probable or actual enemy.

This includes acquiring intelligence on major economic and military installations and either destroying them or putting them out of action; organising sabotage and acts of subversion; carrying out punitive operations against rebels; con-

ducting propaganda operations; and forming and training insurgent detachments.

History

The Imperial Russian Army had hunter-commando units, formed by a decree of Emperor Alexander III in 1886, which saw action in World War I prior to the Russian Revolution of 1917.



Also during World War I, General Aleksei Brusilov became one of the first senior commanders to utilize the tactics of fast-action shock troops for assaults following concentrated accurate artillery fire in what would be later be known as the Brusilov Offensive of 1916.

Such tactics, considered revolutionary at the time, would later inspire people like Prussian Captain Willy Rohr in the development of the Prussian Stormtroopers (founded in 1915).

The Russian military theorist Colonel Mikhail Svechnikov originally proposed the concept of using special tactics and strategies. Svechnikov (executed during the Great Purge in 1938), envisaged the development of unconventional warfare capabilities to overcome disadvantages faced by conventional forces in the field. In the 1930s the “grandfather of the spetsnaz”, Ilya Starinov, began the implementation of the idea.

During World War II, Red Army reconnaissance and sabotage detachments formed under the supervision of the Second Department of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces. These forces were subordinate to front commanders.

The infamous NKVD internal-security and espionage agency also had their own special purpose (osnaz) detachments, including many saboteur teams who were air dropped into enemy-occupied territories to work with (and often take over and lead) the Soviet Partisans.

In 1950 Georgy Zhukov ad-



HEADING OUT: A Spetsnaz team in Afghanistan pose for a quick photo before heading out on a mission.

vocated the creation of 46 military spetsnaz companies, each consisting of 120 servicemen.

This was the first use of “spetsnaz” to denote a separate military branch since World War II.

These companies were later expanded to battalions and then to brigades. However, some separate companies (orSpN) and detachments (ooSpN) existed with brigades until the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The special-purpose forces of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union included fourteen land brigades, two naval brigades and a number of separate detachments and companies, operating under the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) and collectively known as Spetsnaz GRU.

These units and formations existed in the highest possible secrecy, disguised as Soviet paratroopers (Army spetsnaz) or naval infantrymen (Naval spetsnaz) by their uniforms and insignia.

Twenty-four years after the birth of Spetsnaz, the Chairman

of the KGB General Yuri Andropov (in that office from 1967 to 1982) established the first counter-terrorist unit. From the late 1970s through to the 1980s, a number of special-purpose units were founded in the KGB (1954–1991) and in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) (1946–1954).

During the 1990s special detachments were established within the Federal Penitentiary Service (FSIN) and the Airborne Troops (VDV). Some civil agencies with non-police functions have formed special units also known as Spetsnaz, such as the Leader special centre in the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MChS).

In total, by December 1991, at the time of the collapse of the USSR, the GRU reconnaissance and sabotage formations had:

- 14 special purpose brigades
- 2 special purposes regiments
- 29 independent special purpose companies
- 5 naval reconnaissance point

In 2013 a Special Operations Forces Command was estab-



THE WATER IS FREEZING: Potential Spetsnaz recruits negotiate one of the many obstacle courses they will face.

lished for Special Operations Forces which had earlier been established from around 2009 following a study of Western special-operations forces units and commands.

The Command was not under the control of the GRU but reported directly to the General Staff – as did the GRU.

Operations

During World War II Russian ‘special forces’ units took part in numerous operations. But it was from the 1950s, during the Cold War, that spetsnaz units and operations came to the fore.

They operated in various African and Asian countries and most of their operations were shrouded in secrecy. Details of spetsnaz operations were highlighted during the Afghan War.

Soviet Spetsnaz forces took part in the Soviet–Afghan War of 1979–1989 in Afghanistan, usually fighting fast insertion/extraction type warfare with helicopters. Their most famous operation, Operation Storm-333

(27 December 1979), saw Soviet special forces storming the Tajbeg Palace in Afghanistan and killing Afghan President Hafizullah Amin and his 200 personal guards. The Soviets then installed Babrak Karmal as Amin’s successor.

The operation involved approximately 660 Soviet operators dressed in Afghan uniforms, including 50 KGB and GRU officers from the Alpha Group and Zenith Group. The Soviet forces occupied major governmental, military and media buildings in Kabul, including their primary target – the Tajbeg Palace.

In the first one and a half years of the war, spetsnaz units in the form of the 459th special forces company, were exclusively responsible for recon missions and intelligence gathering for the 40th Army.

Aside from reconnaissance, the 459th was also tasked with capturing prisoners, destroying the leaders and field commanders of the Mujahideen. By 1985, the GRU had expanded

its special forces footprint to two spetsnaz brigades in Afghanistan, comprising just under 5,000 troops.

After the collapse of the USSR, Spetsnaz forces of the Soviet Union’s newly formed republics took part in many local conflicts such as the Civil war in Tajikistan, Chechen Wars, Russo-Georgian War and the Crimea Crisis. Spetsnaz forces also have been called upon to resolve several high-profile hostage situations such as the Moscow theatre hostage crisis and the Beslan school hostage crisis.

Selection and training

Spetsnaz selection and training requirements are extremely demanding. Potential conscripts must be physically fit, intelligent and politically reliable before they will even be considered as Spetsnaz candidates.

Once approved for the induction phase, conscripts have to sign a loyalty oath, in which they acknowledge their awareness of the death penalty for anyone who betrays the Spetsnaz. After the induction phase, some of the brighter conscripts will be selected for NCO training. Those that pass the six-month course graduate as NCOs, while those that fail revert back to the rank of private soldier.

In addition to their basic military training, all conscripts receive specialised instruction in hand-to-hand combat, silent killing techniques, parachuting (including HALO techniques), infiltration techniques (including defeating alarm system and locks), sabotage, demolition,

foreign weapons, foreign vehicle operation, and foreign tactics, techniques and procedures.

During the training phase, conscripts face obstacle courses and long gruelling marches, many of which are conducted in full chemical warfare protective clothing, including gas masks. Most of the physical training is extremely harsh, and conscripts are denied rations so that they have to forage for food themselves.

However, there are also good opportunities for conscripts to travel to foreign countries as part of the Russian Olympic team, and enjoy good food and good living while carrying out adventure training, such as mountain climbing and skiing.

Once through specialised training, the conscripts face a series of battlefield exercises, which test their skills to the limit. These exercises take place in very realistic environments, such as mock Cruise missile bases, NATO airfields and communications facilities, and they involve the use of explosives and live rounds.

Spetsnaz missions

The main mission of the Spetsnaz forces are sabotage and reconnaissance, although they are known to have carried out insurgent training in Africa and Cuba. During the Cold War, their main purpose was described as 'diversionary reconnaissance' (diversiya rezvedka), which essentially meant carrying out sabotage operations against vital western installations.

Other mission envisage at the time included laying mines

on likely tank routes, killing NATO pilots in their accommodation blocks, making suitable insertion sites for paratroopers and transport helicopters, and assassinating senior NATO commanders.

Although these practices were never used against European nations, many Spetsnaz tactics, techniques and procedures were tested for real during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, where Spetsnaz units spear-headed the main invasion force and were highly successful.

Spetsnaz units are training to infiltrate enemy territory by many methods, both overt and covert, and can operate up to 1,000 kilometres behind enemy lines without support. Although their primary role is to locate targets for other forces (whether paratroopers, strategic bombers or armoured units), they can if necessary launch attacks themselves. Typical targets include mobile missile sites, Cruise missile bases, integrated air defence systems, radar sites, command and control facilities, airfields, ports and lines of communication.

The basic Spetsnaz unit comprises a team of eight to ten soldiers commanded by an officer. Within each team there is a specialist in communications, reconnaissance, sniping and explosives, and every member of the team has been cross trained to ensure that a mission can continue even if a specialist is lost or injured.

Modern Russian forces are structured in operational fronts that each contain a Spetsnaz brigade. Each brigade consists



Spetsnaz GRU

of three to five battalions, a signal support company, a support unit and a HQ company, which equates to a wartime strength of about 1,300 men capable of deploying 100 operational teams.

In addition to the brigade units, most Russian armies also have a Spetsnaz presence of several companies, which gives them a force of 115 men or 15 operational teams. Each company is organised in a similar manner to that of a brigade, and it contains three Spetsnaz platoons, a communications platoon and a support unit.

Apart from the Brigade and Army Spetsnaz, there are a number of other units operating directly under the command of the GRU and Naval Spetsnaz brigade, giving a peacetime strength of some 15,000 personnel.

As most Spetsnaz missions take place deep behind enemy lines, soldiers tend to be lightly armed and carry only a small selection of weaponry. A typical soldier will carry either an AK-74 or AN-94 assault rifle, a silenced 9mm pistol, ammunition, a knife and up to 10 grenades. In addition each team carries and SVD sniper

rifle, RPG-16 grenade launcher, under-rifle grenade launcher, SA-14 MANPADs, plastic explosives, anti-personnel mines and an R-350M burst transmission radio, which has a range of about 1,000 km.

Spetsnaz units can only be successful if they are in possession of good intelligence, and it is for this reason that they report directly to the GRU and, to some degree, the second directorate of the front staff, which is responsible for intelligence matters.

Within this group, there are separate departments to process agent intelligence, signal intelligence, and Spetsnaz intelligence – normally gathered via sleeper agents or operatives posing as truck drivers, for example, or athletes travelling overseas.

Much has changed amongst the Russian military since the end of the Cold War, including the manner in which Spetsnaz units operate in Europe. It should be borne in mind, however, that despite Russia's financial state its Spetsnaz units still receive generous funding and are now training and re-equipping to operate more like the British SAS and US Delta Force.

Spetsnaz training now includes tubular work, counter terrorism, urban warfare training (based on lessons learned in Chechnya) and mobility warfare.

Weapons used by Spetsnaz



AK-74u



AN-94



MP-443 Grach



Dragunov SVD



RPG-16



RGN hand grenade

Social Media - Soldier's Menace

These days nearly everyone has a smart phone, laptop or PC with access to the Internet and to social media. Yet using this technology can have dangers for those in the military.

Most of our readers, at some stage, served in the military. And a large number of them served in the old South African Defence Force (SADF).

Those that serve in the military, irrespective of which military force, all have one thing in common - they have a life outside of the military.

They have parents, brothers and sisters, relatives, and friends. Some have girlfriends, or boyfriends - the military is not exclusive to males. Others may have a wife or husband. Many have children of their own.

Something of vital importance to any soldier serving away from home is contact and communication with those back home. This contact and communication was just as important to those back home.

Back in the days of the SADF

there were two methods of making contact with those back home. One method was by making use of a pay phone, the other was through writing letters.

Using a pay phone had its advantages and its disadvantages. In South Africa pay phones were better known as public call boxes or public telephones.

To use the phone you had to deposit coins into a box. The amount of money you deposited determined how long you could talk on the phone. Public telephones were nicknamed 'tickey boxes'

Every major SADF base in South Africa had public telephones available. This was especially true of bases where basic training was carried out.

The advantage of this was that every troop at least had the opportunity to phone home and tell his parents that he was

doing fine, that he missed home, and that the food was

terrible.

He could also phone his girlfriend and tell her how much he loved her, how much he missed her, and implore her not to date other guys while he was away.

The disadvantages, however, far outweighed the advantages. First of all troops, especially those busy with basic training, could not just go and use the phone whenever it took their fancy.

Troops could only use the public phones during their "free time". Now anyone that ever did basic training will know that free time is nothing more than a myth. This time was usually used for washing and ironing clothes and getting ready for the next morning's inspection.

If you did manage to sneak a few moments to make a call there were other problems that had to be overcome.

Most bases would have only three or four public telephones available. During basic training there could be up to 1,000 troops undergoing training. You do the math.

First of all you needed to ensure that you had coins for the phone. Back then most public

Old public phone.



phones would take 20, 10 and five cent coins. Getting change was often more difficult than may be assumed.

Gary did basic training in 1976 and he recalls just how difficult it was.

"We had four 'tickey boxes' at our base. We could only use the public phones after seven at night and that is if you were prepared to wait in the queue. The first hassle would be getting change for the phone. Everyone used to go to the tuck shop and buy something small so that you could get change. Of course the old lady who ran the tuck shop would always moan and bitch that she had no change. If you were lucky enough to actually get change, then you would rush off for the phones. Normally there would be four long lines waiting to use them."

If and when you did get to use the phone your problems didn't end there. You have to take into account that there were always queues of troops waiting to use the phone. You couldn't spend

half an hour chatting up your girlfriend and telling her what you planned to do to her during your next weekend pass.

The general rule was that you had three minutes to talk. Then you hung up and let the next person in line have their turn.

When troops were deployed to the operational area, the Border, there were no public telephones. The only way to communicate back home was by writing a letter.

Troops would also write letters during basic training. The SADF encouraged troops to write home. In fact in most basic training bases it was compulsory.

You would write your letter, place it in an envelope, seal it, put a stamp on it, and post it.

On the Border, however, things worked a little differently.

You wrote your letter, placed it in an unsealed envelope, and handed it in. The letter would then have to be read by a censor, usually an officer appointed for the job.

The censor would then read the letter and, using a thick black marker, cross out any words or sentences that he felt were a threat to security.

This would include the names of places, troop movements, specific dates, equipment used and any enemy or friendly forces activity.

If, for example, a troop had been injured this could not be mentioned in a letter as it was regarded as being bad for morale.

It was not uncommon for a troop's parents to receive a letter that began "Dear Mom

and Dad..." and ended with the words "your loving son." The rest of the letter would be blacked out.

It was sometimes difficult to write a letter home because there was little that you could actually say and your social life was nothing to boast about.

It was even worse having to write a letter back to your girlfriend because you knew the censor would be reading it so you were always wary of writing something intimate or romantic. Although there were some troops with a twisted sense of humour that would write steamy letters just to get the censor all hot and sweaty. Often you were left with little to write about.

The mail was slow and letters would often get lost in the system. Sometimes you would send a letter from the Border and arrive home before the letter did.

Technology

Time has moved on from the days of writing letters and using public telephones. And as time has moved on, so has technology.

These days we live in a digital world where communication is instant and at our fingertips. The vast majority of the world's population makes use of the Internet on a daily basis.

Few people still take the time to write letters. Instead they make use of word processing programs such as Microsoft Word to produce documents. These are then sent via electronic mail, better known as e-mail.

Most people will also use cellular or mobile phones to make



phone calls. And cell phones are another piece of technology that has advanced rapidly.

The first cell phones arrived in South Africa in 1994, and there were only 400 of them to begin with. The original phones were bulky, had limited battery life, and all you could do was make a phone call on it. Yet at the time they were revolutionary.

These days most people own a smart phone. In fact 45.12% of the world's population have smart phones, and these phones can do a lot more than just make phone calls.

They can send text messages, access the Internet, take high quality photographs and video, record audio and far more. It's like having a computer in your pocket.

And if nearly half of the

world's population has a smart phone, it makes sense that most soldiers will also have their own smart phones as well.

Why write a letter home when you can send an e-mail that is received almost instantly by the recipient?

Forget about public phones, these days a troop can lie on his bed at night and talk to his girlfriend for hours.

And with software and apps such as Skype, Facebook, Twitter and so on, troops can upload photographs and videos, keep family and friends updated, and even have live video calls.

In fact, communication has never been easy for those in the military.

Yet while this does come with advantages there are disadvantages and even dangers that come into the equation.

Social media - social menace

More than 3.8 billion people use social media currently, and this includes members of the military.

Want to know where troops are deployed? Want to find out what weapons and equipment they are using? All you need to do is check out their online profile, visit their Facebook page, or follow their tweets on Twitter.

With the ease of social media, in any part of the globe at any time, a soldier or family member can post pictures from a deployment or talk about a military mission.

Often these seemingly innocent posts could actually contain sensitive information that endangers troops by revealing locations, security measures, mission operations, or troop

movements.

It's as easy as a click of a mouse or a tap on a smart phone, and in a few seconds sensitive information might be shared that could get troops killed.

There is also the danger of the geotagging feature that is automatically turned on in some smart phones and digital cameras. Geotagging is the equivalent to adding a 10-digit grid coordinate to a photograph telling where it was taken, which could reveal sensitive information about a location -- information that terrorists could use to target troops or military installations.

There is nothing wrong with allowing troops access to the Internet and smart phones. It is good for the morale of the troops and for their families that they

can communicate. Yet OPSEC (Operational Security) must be taken into account. Troops need to know what they can or cannot post to social media.

It is also just as important that friends and family be aware that information they post on social media can be a threat to security.

You may, for example, have sent your girlfriend an e-mail telling her that you will be coming home on a certain date. She then posts a photograph of you in your uniform with a caption "My man is coming home on 20 June."

Now let's say that the wrong people see the post. They also recognise the patches on the uniform so they can identify which unit the person is with. Security has now been compro-

mised.

The US Military takes the situation seriously enough to have produced an Army's Social Media Handbook and conducts training for Soldiers about the dos and don'ts of posting on social media.

While the Internet, smart phones and social media is an important part of daily living, we need to realise that it is not 100% safe.

Computer systems and e-mails can be hacked, smart phones can be monitored and can give away your exact location, and social media can be viewed by just about anyone.

Make use of technology, but don't abuse it. Always remember that as a member of the military what you say could put other's lives in danger.



Where the music does the talking

Catch Military Despatches editor Matt Tennyson on the Sunday Breakfast Zone from 09h00 to 12h00 every Sunday morning on Zone Radio 88.5 fm.

Matt brings you hits from the 60s, 70s, 80s and early 90s - the hits we love and remember. And you can WhatsApp your requests through on +27 72 447 8044

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Restoration of Cape Town Memorial Gun

Looking a little sad and forlorn, it was time for the memorial gun in the Cape Town Company Garden to receive a refurbishment. It was a problem that the Western Province Branch of the Gunners' Association had wrangled with for some time. Article by Kevin Ashton, photographs by Regine Lord.

Our memorial Gun in the Cape Town Company Garden was looking a little sad and forlorn.

For years we just spruced her up with a lick of paint just before the memorial service in March each year, thanks largely to NMAR's (CFA) MWO Bennie Havenga.

We were much like second cousins to the guns at the National Memorial in Potchefstroom and frankly I was a little embarrassed each time I visited the National Memorial.

What to be done, how do we raise the necessary funding to re-furbish. A problem the Western Province Branch Committee of the Gunners' Association wrangled with for a long time.

The Gun was rusting in certain areas and just slapping another coat of paint on was not working. So, we were mostly in a holding pattern.

One morning I was contacted by an attorney who said that they had been looking for us for some time and through a private investigator had come across our Facebook page.

One of our members had passed away and had left a substantial amount to the Western Province Branch.

The Committee immediately convened and amongst discussing investing this money at a good interest rate we also

discussed the refurbishment of our most prized possession, the 6 inch Memorial Gun. It was unanimous that we should go ahead and get quotes.

The best quote was from MRH a Cape Town based shot blasting company. My friends from the Cannon Association had recommended them as they had utilised their services before.

It was a great match of like-minded, passionate people who walked us through every step with love and care. She was in good hands.

On the morning of collection, I had already arranged with the Company Garden to allow the riggers to enter from the Mount Nelson side and drive down Government Avenue.

I had invited my friend and photographer, Reggie Lord to witness the occasion and to record the upliftment on camera. It was a little nerve racking to say the least waiting for the flatbed to arrive.

Would she come away off the plinth easily, maybe leave her wheels behind, what about weight distribution, would it all work out? Reggie could sense my slight angst and asked how I was feeling.

Ecstatic that this was happening and really looking forward to that journey but a little anxious at the same time. Somewhat like sending your

child off to school on their first day.

The riggers finally arrived with great noise of engine and hydraulics to much interest of tourists and the homeless alike standing shoulder to shoulder.

The area was duly taped off and the very competent team set about with straps under the important pieces.

Then it was time for lift off, but the balance was not quite right so down she went and more strapping now in different areas went into play. Will the wheels hold? was a thought that was constantly in my mind.

She is extremely strong as it turned out to my surprise. Still the balance is not right, up and down she goes and a lot of head scratching.

Time for a Gunner to take charge and direct operations. Then lift-off and safe delivery onto the flatbed. Now she is standing only on her wheels and looks amazing.

After safely strapping her down off she goes up Government Avenue. What a morning. I need a whiskey but settle on a cup of tea with Reggie and await the call which eventually comes to say the Gun has been safely delivered to the MRH factory. Step 1 completed, now for the refurbishment.

- Shot blast to remove all rust and 100% of the existing coating

- Stripe coat with zinc rich epoxy primer
- Spray apply one full coat of zinc rich epoxy at 100 microns thick
- Stripe coat with epoxy MIO
- Spray apply one full coat epoxy MIO at 150 microns thick
- Seal all gap to prevent corrosion creep
- Finally apply one full coat of Polyurethane at 50 microns thick

Two weeks later and the colour chosen, and the paint is dry; the Gun is finally ready for delivery back to the plinth in the Company Garden. The riggers have done a great job.

An extremely successful operation and our compliments go to the MRH team for the diligence and care taken in this project.

Now for a very proud mo-

ment at this year's Gunners Memorial' Service on 22 March 2020 and for years to come.

Footnote: This Gun is one of five 6-inch 26 cwt Howitzers of Major Nugent Fitzpatrick's six gun battery of Heavy Artillery used in France in WW1. The Gunners' Association has also restored another of these guns located at the Johannesburg Zoo.

BL 6 inch 26 cwt Howitzer

- In service: 1915 to 1945
- Designer: Vickers
- Designed 1915
- Manufacturer: Vickers, Beardmore, Coventry Ordnance Works, Woolwich Ordnance Factory, Midvale Steel Company
- Weight: 3,693 kg
- Length: 6.58 metres
- Barrel length: 2.03 metres

- Width: 2.08 metres
- Crew 10
- Shell: Gas; Incendiary; High explosive
- Shell weight: WWI - 45.4 kg; WWII - 39.0 kg
- Calibre: 152.4 mm
- Breech: Welin screw
- Recoil: Hydro-pneumatic, variable
- Carriage: Box trail
- Elevation: 0° to +45°
- Traverse: 4° L & R
- Rate of fire: Max: 2 rpm
- Muzzle velocity: Max 430 m/s
- Maximum firing range: WWI - 8,700 metres; WWII - 10,400 metres
- Sights Calibrating: (1930s) & reciprocating



WWII navy veteran revisits history

When Royal Navy veteran Joseph Wilkinson visited the Russian missile cruiser Marshal Ustinov in Cape Town Harbour, history had come a full circle. Regine Lord was there to record the event.

Last month we did an article on a visit by Royal Navy veteran Joseph Wilkinson to the Russian Navy's Slava-class missile cruiser Marshal Ustinov (055).

During a subsequent interview, Mr Wilkinson graciously shared some of his life story with me, focusing especially on his military service during World War II. Born in 1926, he had left school at 17 years old to enlist in the Royal Navy in 1943. After undergoing basic training, he was posted to a special Royal Navy Wireless Telegraphy Training School in Aberdeen (1943) to be trained as a radio operator; his rating was Telegraphist (Trained Operator).

Both of his older brothers were already serving. His oldest brother Thomas Wilkinson had been in the Royal Engineering Corps. He was on the Auxiliary Troopship SS Yoma, which was part of a convoy (GTX2) bound for the invasion of Sicily when, on 17 June 1943, it was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-81 off the Libyan coast near the port city of Derna (east of Benghazi). 484 lives, including his brother, were lost when the ship went down, barely 5 minutes after being hit by one, possibly two, torpedoes. Under the command of Oberleutnant zur See Johann-Otto Krieg, submarine U-81 sank numerous vessels, until it itself came under attack, and was

sunk, by US bombers while in Pola harbour, Croatia, on 9 January 1944.

Mr Wilkinson's middle brother Jack was deployed with the Fourteenth Army in Burma. The British Fourteenth Army, under the command of Lieutenant General William Slim, was a multi-national force formed in eastern India in 1943. It was made up of units from various Commonwealth countries, including units from the British Army and the Indian Army, and from West and East African divisions. It was called 'the Forgotten Army' because its operations in the Burma Campaign (1944-1945) did not receive much attention in the media.

At some stage, during his military service, Mr Joseph Wilkinson received a message that his brother Jack had been invalided back to England from Burma. He had fallen extremely ill, as did many of the soldiers who fought in the Far East; dysentery, malaria and other infectious diseases were common in the harsh conditions. Someone in the Royal Navy had kindly arranged for Joseph to get shore leave, so that he could go and visit his brother at the barracks somewhere in the Midlands of England. He really enjoyed his visit to his brother. "I was treated very well," he said, chuckling. "We even had a sergeant bringing us breakfast and tea. It was lovely."

After his training, young Mr

Wilkinson reported to the Wild Goose (U45), which was waiting at the port of Larne, north of Belfast in Northern Ireland. During World War II, mine-sweepers and anti-submarine vessels regularly departed from both Larne and Belfast to patrol the Irish Sea and the North Channel. Ships traveling from America and Canada to Britain found it safer to sail northwards past Northern Ireland to Britain, along the Western Approaches, rather than following the southern route past the Republic of Ireland, which was within easier reach of the German Luftwaffe and navy.

"We came over on the ferry from Stranraer in Scotland," Mr Wilkinson recalled, remembering how seasick he had felt. Although it was a fairly short trip (about 2-3 hours), the Irish Sea could be very rough indeed. "And the first thing I noticed when we came up to our ship was the smell," he declared, wrinkling his nose. "There was an overpowering stench of diesel and oil."

"At first, there was no bunk or hammock free for me," he added. "But there was a mess at the front of the ship, with a whole lot of lockers, where you could keep your uniforms and other things. So I said, 'Not to worry, I'll sleep here instead.' I could neatly tuck myself into this space. But I hadn't realised that, as soon as the ship reached the open ocean, it would start



MASTERS OF THE SEA: Captain 1st Rank Vladimir V. Kuzmin of the Marshal Ustinov meets with Royal Navy veteran Mr Joseph Wilkinson.

to roll and pitch, so throughout the night, I kept falling onto the deck. And don't forget, the deck was always wet – there was always water seeping in from somewhere, coupled with the smell and the oil and everything. So I got wet and dirty."

Later, thankfully, he was allocated a hammock. "That was great," he said, "no matter how much the ship moves, a hammock stays pretty much level, so you don't get tossed about and you can sleep. But the noise of the ocean was something else... When we travelled at speed through the waves, the bow of the ship would push downwards, so the water would be displaced upwards, and crash over the bow of the ship – and we were trying to sleep underneath that! It was so loud that

I at first thought we were being torpedoed or shot at!"

"The Atlantic was a terrible place," he declared solemnly. "The seas were really turbulent, with big waves, and our ship was small, so it was constantly pitching and rolling." He suffered badly from seasickness for the first week or two. "I just couldn't keep any food down," he said. "Whenever I stood watch, I took a bucket with me."

Eventually, he reported to the sickbay. The doctor on duty told him that there was a new and really powerful injection against seasickness, which would cure him. And indeed, after the doctor had given him the injection, his seasickness vanished completely. "I was never seasick again!" he exclaimed, laughing, "no matter how rough the sea was – nothing." It was only

a while later that the doctor told him, with a chuckle, that he had been given an injection of distilled water. 'See, it's all in your head,' he had said."

Although the ship carried supplies of weapons, ammunition, food and water, after the first week or two, food and water ran low. Water in particular was always scarce. Between the various convoy runs and the anti-submarine patrols, they returned to the harbour at Larne to replenish their supplies and to make repairs to the ships, which were sometimes damaged during the engagements with the enemy.

"You had to ration your drinking water, and you couldn't use it for showering or washing, so you can imagine the smell after a while. Sometimes we used sea water for washing, but it's not good for your skin; you end up with sores and boils. And no matter how hard we tried, our soap didn't lather with sea water!"

"We were always given a tot of rum at lunch time – it kills the taste of the food!" he exclaimed, jokingly. "But because I wasn't yet 20 years old, I wasn't allowed to drink any. But my mates would generously keep aside a little bit, and share it with me," he said, his eyes twinkling.

The Wild Goose was a Black Swan class sloop with a crew of about 80-100 people on board; the Commanding Officer was Lt Cdr David Edward Gillespie ('Dicky') Wemyss. It was part of the Royal Navy's 2nd Escort Group (referred to as the 2 EG, 2nd EG or 2 SG), a British anti-submarine formation, formed

in April 1943, not long before Mr Wilkinson joined the ship.

The 2 EG was made up of several sloops of the Black Swan class, all named after birds: Starling (U66) (Capt F.J. Walker), Wren (U28) (Cdr R.M. Aubrey), Woodpecker (U08) (Lt Cdr R.E.S. Hugonin), Cygnet (U38) (Lt Cdr F.B. Proudfoot), Wild Goose (U45) (Lt Cdr D.E.G. Wemyss), and Kite (U87) (Lt Cdr W.F. Segrave). The make-up of the group changed over time, with refits and repairs being necessary in-between deployments to the Atlantic, to the Bay of Biscay, back to the Atlantic, to the Arctic, and to the English Channel.

The 2 EG under the command of Captain Frederic John ('Johnnie') Walker was the most successful anti-submarine unit of World War II, destroying 24 U-boats during its two years of active service. Captain Walker was quite a character. Whenever his ship, the Starling (U66), left or entered a harbour,

the song "A-Hunting We Will Go!" would blare out over the loudhailer!

Captain Walker had an uncanny instinct for locating submarines and anticipating their moves. By this time in the war, the British had cracked the code on the Enigma machine, which the Germans were using to encode their communications. So they often knew in advance what was planned and where the submarines would be. They would then deploy the Allied forces in order to intercept them.

The 2 EG's main method of locating movement underwater was to use the ASDIC, which was a type of sonar that used quartz piezoelectric crystals to detect sound underwater. It had been developed before World War I; by the outbreak of World War II, different types of sets had already been incorporated into the various classes of surface ships and submarines.

Some of the tactics Captain Walker conceived to hunt the German U-boats, which often travelled in groups known as 'wolf packs', were subsequently used in naval warfare for many years. One of these was the "creeping attack", which Captain Walker used for the first time when he was in charge of 36 Escort Group of the Royal Navy. He developed this particular tactic because the ASDIC searched forward from the ship, while the depth charges were released from the stern. The brief delay, as the ship sped up in order to release the depth charges above

Captain 'Johnnie' Walker (left) and Lieutenant Commander D E G Wemyss.

the U-boat, coupled with the loss of contact by the ASDIC, often gave the U-boat enough time to evade. Captain Walker's creeping attack thus involved two ships: the first maintained ASDIC contact, while guiding the second slowly into position above the target, in order not to alert the U-boat that it had been spotted and that attack was imminent. It was very effective. In addition, a weapon known as a 'hedgehog', which was made up of 24 spigot mortars, could be fired forward from the ship. It had contact fuzes, which detonated against a hard surface, such as the hull of a submarine; this made them far more effective and more deadly than the slowly sinking depth charges, which sent hydrostatic shockwaves through the water.

Another tactic was the "barrage attack", which was used by the 2 EG when a U-boat had gone deep, and was able to evade the depth charges. These had to explode within 26 feet



BRAVO ZULU: Captain F.J. Walker, DSO, RN, addresses the men of the HMS Wild Goose at Liverpool on 9 June 1943, after they had recently sunk two German U-boats within nine hours in the North Atlantic.

PHOTO: Imperial War Museum

of the U-boat, in order to have an effective impact on the reinforced hull. In a barrage attack, three ships moved in line abreast over the target area, where the submarine was suspected to be located, until each of them, at the same time, released a series of depth charges, set to explode at different depths. The resulting barrage of explosions right after each other had a devastating impact on the submarine.

As Mr Joseph Wilkinson was a radio operator on the Wild Goose, he spent many hours at the radio, with two different ear pieces on: with one ear, he listened for inter-escort messages, and with the other, he listened to convoy messages. It required considerable focus and concentration. He vividly remembered the first time that he received a message from another ship that said, "Gnats in the water, bearing so and so..." As it was

his first patrol, he did not know what it meant, but, puzzled, relayed the message to the leading watch telegraphist.

"I don't know what this message means, but it's 'gnats in the water, bearing so and so'", he told him. "I've never seen anyone move that fast!" he said, laughing. "I didn't know that 'gnats' were acoustic torpedoes!" he explained. "You see, the German submarines often lined up ahead of the convoy, in an area they knew we would have to move through, and then fired off these torpedoes, which had a sensor in the front. This picked up any sound in the water, and then aimed straight for it. They didn't have to direct it at a specific target – these gnats would home in on anything that made a sound underwater, and of course the ships' engines and propellers made a lot of noise."

GNAT was an acronym for

'German Navy Acoustic Torpedo', the British name for what the Germans called the G7es (T5) or 'Zaunkönig' (wren). They were able to travel at about 24 knots (44km/h) and had an effective range of about 5,000 metres against convoy escort vessels. Their homing system had two hydrophone receivers, which picked up the pitch of the ship's propellers, and usually exploded at the stern. They began to be used from August 1943, and although they were initially very effective, the British soon developed countermeasures in the form of an acoustic decoy (codenamed Foxer). Consisting of hollow metal pipes with holes in them, they were towed about 200 metres behind the ship. They generated more noise than the ship's propellers; the torpedo thus homed in on the decoy instead, and circled it until they ran out of fuel. However, these decoys also made the ASDIC ineffective, which meant that the ship could not track any nearby submarines. Also, they could not be towed faster than 14 knots (26 km/h), which meant the ships could only travel at slow speed, and the sound of the Foxers travelled long distances underwater, thus giving away the ship's position to U-boats that were searching for convoys.

Another weapon developed by the Germans was the 'glider bomb', which was rocket-propelled, fitted with small stabilising wings and radio-controlled onto the target from the aircraft that had launched it. The British nicknamed it a 'Chase me Charlie', and fortunately dis-

covered quite by accident that it was affected by the electric waves given off by electrical razors, which confused its targeting system.

When submarines are sunk, wreckage and remains – and oil – rise to the surface,” explained Mr Wilkinson. “The German submariners were an elite fighting force, and they were incredibly brave; those small subs in particular were really cramped and life was extremely hard for the submariners. The Germans produced the U-boats in large numbers later in the war, so they weren’t sturdily built.”

“When we gave chase and hunted down enemy vessels, we were focused entirely on chasing and killing them,” he explained. “But, once the enemy vessel was destroyed, we always tried to pick up and rescue survivors. We had rope nets that we hung down over the sides of the ship, to enable people floating in the water to grasp them and scramble aboard more easily. And if they struggled, the sailors often climbed down to help them up. Also, the POWs were usually given the sailors’ own bunks, and looked after. Bear in mind that space and supplies on these small ships were limited; we didn’t really have space for POWs.”

One particularly memorable patrol for the 2 EG happened in early 1944, when they successfully sunk six German U-boats in the Atlantic, southwest of Ireland:

- 31 January 1944, U-592 (Wild Goose, Starling and Magpie were the main ships involved)
- 8 February 1944, U-762



WELCOME HOME: Cheering spectators welcome the Wild Goose (and the other ships of the 2 EG) to Gladstone Docks on 25 February 1944.

PHOTO: Imperial War Museum

- (Wild Goose, Woodpecker)
- 9 February 1944, U-734 (Wild Goose, Starling)
- 9 February 1944, U-238 (Starling, Magpie, Kite)
- 11 February 1944, U-424 (Wild Goose, Woodpecker)
- 19 February 1944, U-264 (Starling, Woodpecker)

After this record-breaking trip, as the convoy of ships made their way into Gladstone Docks in Liverpool on 25 February 1944, they were greeted by loudly cheering crowds, and formally welcomed by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr A V Alexander.

During World War II, Britain was being supplied with armaments from Canada and North America to help fight Nazi Germany. The Germans, aware of this, sent fleets of submarines, surface ships and planes to intercept and sink the merchant vessels that transported this precious cargo. In response, the

American, Canadian and Royal Navies began to escort these supply ships across the Atlantic; when a submarine was spotted, the job of the escort vessels was to sink it. During the Battle of the Atlantic, some 3,500 merchant vessels and 175 Allied warships were lost, and 757 Axis U-boats were destroyed. To give a sense of the devastating human cost, some 36,200 Allied sailors and airmen, 36,000 Allied merchant seamen and 30,000 German seamen were killed.

Mr Wilkinson not only participated in the Atlantic convoys between America and Britain, but also in one of the Arctic Convoy runs between Britain and Iceland, and northern ports of the Soviet Union – specifically Murmansk and Archangelsk. At the time, the Soviet Union was relying heavily on the West to supply tanks, fighter planes, fuel, ammunition, raw materials and food. World



YES YOUR MAJESTY: King George VI visiting the HMS Wild Goose at Birkenhead on 27 March 1945. Mr Wilkinson is the fourth sailor from the left. Photo from his personal collection.

War II was, after all, fought on two fronts – the Western and the Eastern, although it is the Western Front that has received most of the attention. The Germans, who had established bases in Norway and Finland, sent warships, submarines and fighter planes to the Arctic Sea, once they realised that Britain and America were supplying the Soviet Union under the Lend-Lease Agreement.

There were 78 convoys in total between August 1941 and May 1945, with several interruptions, mainly during the summer months. The lack of darkness during the summer-time made it more dangerous for the convoys, as they were easier to spot and thus more likely to come under attack. Conversely, the winter convoys faced different hazardous conditions – drift ice, extreme cold, severe weather and heavy storms, fog, and constant darkness, which made navigation and convoy cohesion more challenging.

The first series of convoys,

which were numbered sequentially and referred to as PQ for outbound and QP for home-bound, ran from September 1941 to September 1942, while the second series, which were referred to as JW for outbound and RA for home-bound, ran from December 1942 until May 1945. They followed different routes in summer and winter time, as the Arctic ice spread south in winter and contracted north in summer. There was a narrow strait between the Arctic ice and northern Norway, where the Germans had bases with aircraft, ships and submarines – and this was where the convoys most frequently encountered German forces.

Shortly after their record-breaking 6-in-1 trip in February 1944, during which the 2 EG had destroyed 6 U-boats within twelve days, they were assigned to Arctic Convoy JW 58 and return convoy RA 58. Having departed from Liverpool on 27 March 1944, HM sloops Starling, Wild Goose,

Magpie, Wren and Whimbrel sailed from Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands off northern Scotland the next day, joining two other groups of escorts.

Whenever convoys travelled through an area, there was a core of cargo ships and merchantmen in the middle, surrounded on all sides by destroyers, cruisers, minesweepers and submarines, with a party of ships up ahead, and another cluster of ships following behind. “There was usually a tug or other support vessel at the back,” explained Mr Wilkinson. “Their job was to pick up survivors, if any of the ships in the convoy were destroyed, because the ships in the convoy itself could not turn around, they had to keep going.”

On 29 March 1944, along their route through the so-called ‘Rose garden’ (evidently an ironic name!), some 150 nautical miles (280 km) north of the Faroe Islands, the Starling detected German U-boat U-961 and immediately launched depth charges, which destroyed it before the U-boat even realised what had happened. Other ships in the convoy destroyed three further U-boats on the way to northern Russia: on 1 April 1944, aircraft from the aircraft carriers Beagle and Tracker sank German submarine U-355 in the Arctic Sea; U-360 was sunk on 2 April, and U-288 on 3 April. One merchantman had to turn back, but the remaining 48 ships all reached Kola Inlet near Murmansk, Russia, on 4 or 5 April 1944. The Navy sailors were not allowed ashore, and the naval escort remained outside, while the merchant ships

came alongside to offload their cargoes. The harbour itself was protected with heavy artillery.

This particular convoy (JW 58) had included the USS Milwaukee, a four-funnelled American cruiser, which was a gift from President Theodore Roosevelt to Joseph Stalin as Leader of the Soviet Union. On receipt by the Soviets, she was commissioned as the Murmansk and performed convoy and patrol duty in the Arctic Ocean until the end of World War II; thereafter, she became a training ship. A few years later, in March 1949, she was returned to the United States, and scrapped.

On 7 April, mere days after their arrival, convoy RA 58, with 36 merchantmen, departed from the Kola Inlet and made its way back through the Arctic Sea, reaching Loch Ewe in Scotland a week later, on 14 April 1944. Although they were attacked on the return journey, neither ships nor U-boats were sunk on either side, making this an extremely successful trip. At more or less the same time, a Fleet Air Arm attack was launched on the heavy German battleship, Tirpitz, which was stationed in Altafjord, northern Norway, inflicting significant damage on the just-repaired ship and incapacitating it.

Talking about his experiences on the Arctic Convoys, Mr Joseph Wilkinson recalled that the room in which he and his fellow radio operators sat was always cosy and warm, because the instruments generated so much heat. The radio sets used huge valves, on which they dried their wet clothes, as

it was that warm. The lookout, who was standing above on the bridge, would be exposed to the elements – and it was bitterly cold in the Arctic. “Every so often, the poor lad would come down the stairs, absolutely blue with cold, and try to get warm before going back up again,” he said. “We were lucky to work inside most of the time, where it was warm.”

On most of the Arctic Convoys, the conditions were so severe and the water so icy that, if someone fell overboard, they had barely minutes to be rescued; otherwise, they would freeze to death. Eyewitness accounts of the winter-time convoys describe how the water that surged over the ships in heavy seas would freeze on the ship. As the weight of the ice could make the ships top-heavy and more likely to capsize, the crews had to keep chopping the ice off chains, railings, guns and the deck, throwing it overboard. Fortunately for Mr Wilkinson, his convoy travelled in April, when the weather was slightly warmer.

Thereafter, 2 EG returned to the Atlantic for several months, before being sent down to the South-Western Approaches, an area off the south coast of Ireland, in order to participate in ‘Operation Neptune’, the invasion of Normandy, on 6 June 1944. The Allies were concerned that the Germans might send a large fleet of U-boats, ships and planes to attack the various transport ships in the English Channel, and thus protected them on all sides. The Wild Goose was part of that group too, and so Mr Wilkinson

was also involved in the historic D-Day landings.

About a month later, on 2 July 1944, Captain Walker unexpectedly died of a cerebral haemorrhage, caused by stress and overwork. Lt Cdr Wemyss took over command of the 2 EG, and they continued hunting U-boats until the end of World War II. In total, it was confirmed that the 2 EG had destroyed 24 U-boats during World War II, between 1 June 1943 and 15 August 1945, which made them the most successful anti-submarine unit of the entire war.

On 27 March 1945, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited the HMS Wild Goose at Birkenhead to congratulate the sailors personally. A photograph taken at the time has pride of place in Mr Wilkinson’s home; it shows King George VI, and the Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander R.W. Tretheway with Lt Cdr Wemyss peering over his shoulder, walking past a row of sailors – one of them is Mr Wilkinson. I asked him whether the King had spoken to him, and he replied with a shy smile, “Yes.” “Do you remember what he said to you?” “Yes, he asked me, ‘And what do you do on the ship, my boy?’ I remember that, because he was right to call me a boy; I was only 18 at the time.”

After the end of World War II, the Wild Goose was assigned to the Persian Gulf Division of the East Indies Station; here she served until 1954. Mr Wilkinson was posted to an aircraft carrier that had been converted to a troop ship and travelled through the Mediterranean and

the Suez Canal many times, bringing back troops and equipment from the East, including Singapore and Burma. After demobbing in 1947, he relocated to South Africa, fell in love and married; he and his wife had four children. He became an active member of the Ex-Servicemen’s Association, and worked for the Old Mutual Insurance Company for many years as the Printing Works manager. The Chairman of Old Mutual at the time was Brigadier George Werdmuller. As he was a veteran himself, he tried to find employment opportunities for ex-servicemen wherever possible. Mr Wilkinson worked for Old Mutual for 38 years until his retirement.

Over the years, Mr Joseph Wilkinson was awarded several medals in acknowledgement of his military service during World War II: the 1939-1945 star (6 months’ service on active operations for Army and Navy), the Atlantic Star (6 months’ operational service afloat) with bar for France and Germany, the Arctic Star (for service north of the Arctic service, including during the Arctic convoys), and the War Medal (1939-1945) (for all full-time personnel who served for at least 28 days in the Armed Forces between 1939 and 1945). In addition, he received a medal from the Russian Federation called the Jubilee Medal of 70 Years of Victory in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945. This was given to him in 2016 by a representative of the government of the Russian Federation.

The Arctic Convoys transported some four million tons

of supplies and munitions to the Soviet Union between 1941 and 1945. Thousands of brave sailors, airmen and soldiers risked their lives under indescribably harsh and dangerous conditions, constantly under attack by the German Luftwaffe, Navy and U-boats. More than 3,000 Allied seamen died, and 104 merchant ships and 16 Royal Navy vessels were destroyed. It is estimated that some 66,500 men sailed on these convoys, though by 2012, only 200 were still alive, and at a very advanced age.

In December 2012, the British government, which had been arguing that the Atlantic star covered the Arctic Convoys too and that these thus did not merit a separate campaign star, finally delivered on their much-delayed promise to create a medal specifically for the Arctic Convoys – the Arctic Star. Unfortunately, it was already too late for the thousands of veterans who had passed away in the intervening 67 years; this understandably caused much frustration and heartache to these veterans, and their families and descendants. The fact that the Russian government was already awarding medals to these veterans in acknowledgement of their courageous service most likely added to the pressure on the British government.

A Soviet medal dating back to 1944, the Medal of Ushakov, honours all Naval personnel and officers who for bravery and courage in naval theatres of military operations. It is named after Fyodor Ushakov, an 18th century naval commander who never lost a battle and is in fact

the patron saint of the Russian Navy. In recent years, it has been presented to a number of foreign recipients too, specifically for personal courage and valour shown during World War II while participating in the Arctic Convoys. Initially, the British government did not permit Royal Navy veterans to accept this medal, because it was against the rules that govern the receipt of medals from foreign countries; in 2013, however, after much lobbying from the by-then very elderly veterans of these convoys, the awarding of the Medal of Ushakov was made an exception to these rules. Since then, it has been presented to numerous foreign veterans who were involved in the Arctic Convoys.

Interestingly, the Russian government has issued additional medals to mark several anniversaries of ‘Victory in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945’, i.e., 40 years, 50 years, 60 years, 65 years and 70 years. It is the last one, the 70 years’ anniversary medal, which Mr Wilkinson received in 2016. It is evident, that the Russian people hold the men of the Arctic Convoys in very high regard; this was also brought home during Mr Wilkinson’s visit to the Marshal Ustinov missile cruiser in the V&A Waterfront, when he was treated with such respect and gratitude by the officers and sailors on the ship.

In May 2013, just a few months after the decision had been made with regard to the Arctic Star, the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic was marked in Liverpool, the home of the Western Approach-

es operations room. Twenty-one warships from six countries sailed into the port: they including the German minehunter Grömitz, the Belgian frigate Louise-Marie, the Canadian destroyer Iroquois, the Polish frigate Gen T Kosciuszko, and the Russian destroyer Vice Admiral Kulakov. Among many other events – including dramatic fly-pasts and re-enactments – a Royal commemoration service and a military veterans’ parade were held in the Anglican Cathedral, and a 1940’s themed party was held at St George’s Hall. Mr Wilkinson and his son Brian flew over for the celebrations. When I asked him what the most memorable aspect of this trip was for him, he replied, “One of the highlights was a concert at the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, where the band of the Royal Marines played, and the other was the opportunity to meet up with some of my old shipmates.”

In response to a question how he felt about the role he had played in this part of history, he said, “Looking back, I can see a lot of things that weren’t right, and I witnessed the tragedy that is war. Conditions were brutal, but I am proud to have served my country, and proud of what was achieved.”

The men from the Atlantic and Arctic Convoys were all profoundly affected and changed by their experiences, both physically and emotionally. They witnessed ships blown to pieces and disappearing beneath the sea; they saw men – whether their own shipmates, sailors on other vessels, submariners or airmen – being badly injured or



Mr. Wilkinson’s medals

dying in horrific ways. Somehow, they found the courage to fight on, in the face of unimaginable and unrelenting dangers. They found camaraderie and brotherhood with their shipmates, drew from the strength and courage of their officers, and did everything they could to save their fellow sailors, whether on their own ships or from other vessels. Some buried the memories deep and never spoke about the things they had seen and done; some were wracked by survivors’ guilt; some bore physical and emotional scars that affected their lives until the end. Some found comfort in sharing their memories with only their closest family; some sought the company of their shipmates who understood best what they were going through, even without a word spoken. Others shared their stories freely and generously, hoping that it would impress upon the next

generation that there is always a terrible cost to war, and that all efforts should instead be focused on encouraging peace to flourish.

Regardless of what their specific role was in the Atlantic and Arctic Convoys, we owe these men a debt of gratitude. In fact, we owe them our lives. If they had not done what they did, our world would be a very, very different place today.

Author’s note: With much gratitude to Mr Joseph Wilkinson for sharing his life story with me so generously; I am also indebted to his son Brian and daughter Michele for their gracious assistance and feedback, and for giving me access to their archive material. And I am very grateful to Dr Elina Komarova Tagar for arranging the visit to the Marshal Ustinov and her feedback on this article.



World War II tanks

Quiz

These 15 weapons all saw action in World War II. You tell us what they are. You’ll find the answers to the quiz on page 88. The photos are from 1/35 scale models made by modeling company Tamiya.

1 	2 	3 
4 	5 	6 
7 	8 	9 
10 	11 	12 
13 	14 	15 

A matter of survival - Fish and fishing

Over the next few months we will be running a series of articles looking at survival, something that has always been important for those in the military. This month we look at fish as a food source.

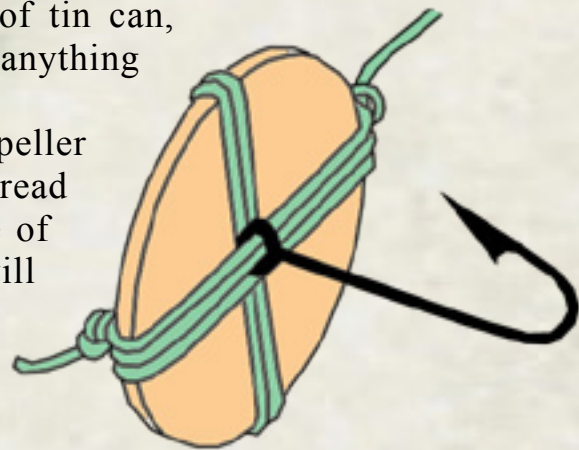
Last month we took a look at fishing as a source of food in a survival situation.

This month we continue to look at other methods of fishing and offer some tips and tricks.

Spinning

Curious fish will attack a shiny object drawn through the water. Try coins, buttons, pieces of tin can, buckles - anything that glitter.

Make a propeller shape to thread on to a piece of wire and it will



Bait

Bait native to the fishes' own water is most likely to be taken - berries that overhand the water, insects that breed in and near it.

Scavenger fish will take pieces of meat, raw fish, ants and other insects.

Once you have a catch examine the stomach contents of the fish and eliminate the guesswork as to diet. If one bait is unsuccessful, change to another type.

Ground Bait

Bait scattered in the area you want to fish will attract fish to it.

A termites' nest or ants' nest suspended over a river is one excellent method. As the insects fall into the river the fish will take them.

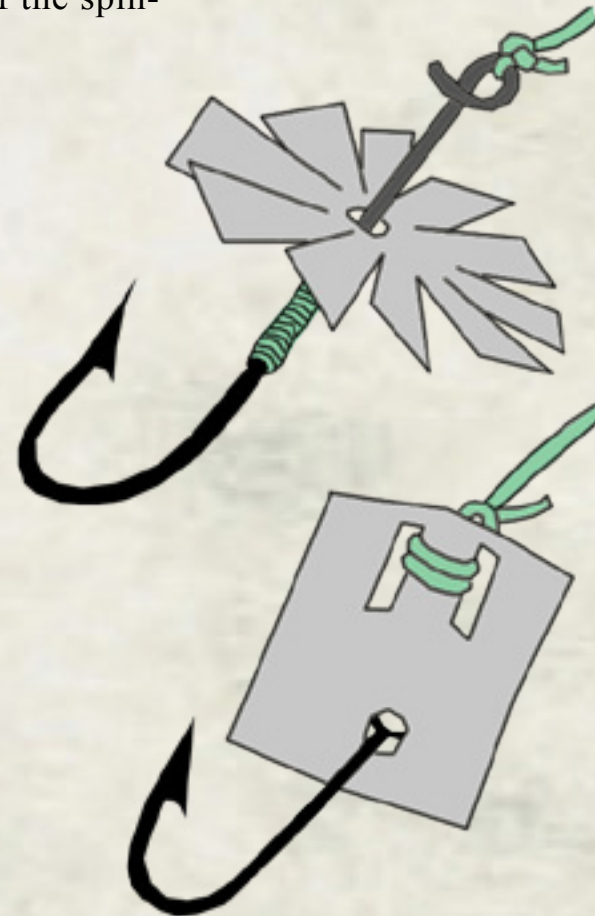
Bait your hook with them as well and success is sure. Any suitable bait, scattered on the water, can be used to draw fish but it is always best to put the same bait on your hook.

Artificial Bait

This can be made from brightly coloured cloth, feathers and shiny metal. Try to make them look like real bait.

A few feathers tied to a hook with thread can simulate a fly, or carve a small fish out of wood and decorate it with colour or glitter. If you make it jointed it will move more naturally.

Try to make the lures move in the water like live bait.

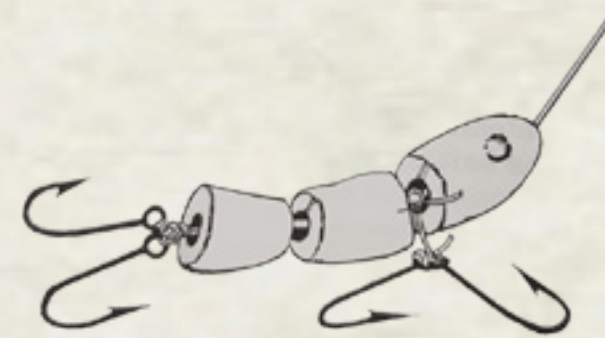


Live Bait

Worms, maggots, insects and small fish can be used as live bait.

Cover the hook completely with the bait. You can place the hook through the meaty part of small fish without killing them, or through the body of a grasshopper.

Their distressed movement in the water will attract the fish.



Night lines

Weight one end of a length of line and attach hooks at intervals along it. Bait them with worms.

Lowered into the water this gives you the chance of catching surface, mid, and bottom feeders.

Anchor the free end securely on the bank.

You can put this out all night and leave it until the morning. Use it in daytime as well, but change the worms at intervals, even if you haven't caught a fish yet, because fresh wriggling worms will attract more attention.

Otter board

To fish far from the bank, further than you can cast a line - for example where fish are feeding in the middle of a lake - make a board with a moveable, pivoted rudder.

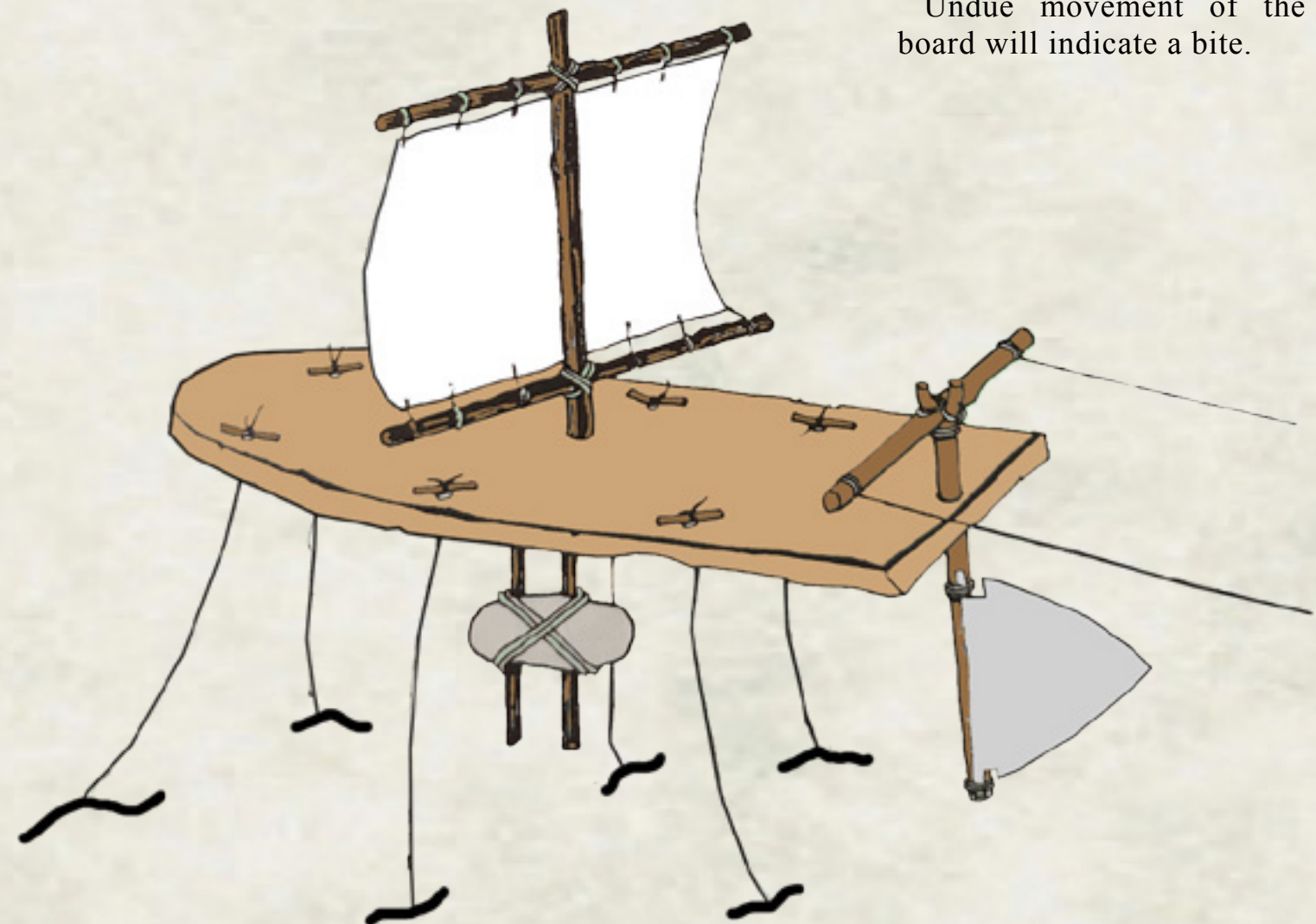
Set a bar at the front end of the rudder to which two control lines can be attached.

Beneath it suspend baited hooks. Float the board out into the lake.

If winds are favourable you could mount a sail, but then a stabilising keel will also be needed to stop it blowing over.

Gouge holes to fix dowl supports and tie to a flat stone. Don't make the keel bigger than the rudder.

Undue movement of the board will indicate a bite.



Rank Structure - Russia

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 army of the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation inherited the ranks of the Soviet Union, although the insignia and uniform were altered slightly. The Russian Armed Forces have two styles of ranks: army-style ranks and navy-style ranks. The army and air force use only army-style ranks. As a result of the 2008 to 2011 defence reform the Russian Army's 90,000 warrant officer positions have been removed but on 27 February 2013 the expanded board of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, Russian Defence Minister S. Shoigu announced the return of the warrant officer to the Armed Forces of Russia.



Army

NCO's & Warrant Officer



Ryadovoy
Private Second Class



Yefreytor
Private First Class



Mladshiy Serzhant
Corporal



Serzhant
Sergeant



Starshiy serzhant
Staff Sergeant



Starshina
Sergeant First Class



Praporshchik
Warrant Officer



Starshy praporshchik
Chief Warrant Officer

Officers



Kursant
Officer Cadet



Mladshiy Leytenant
Lieutenant Junior Grade



Leytenant
Second Lieutenant



Starshiy Leytenant
First Lieutenant



Kapitan
Captain



Mayor
Major



Podpolkovnik
Lieutenant Colonel



Polkovnik
Colonel



General-mayor
Major General



Generál-lejtenánt
Lieutenant General



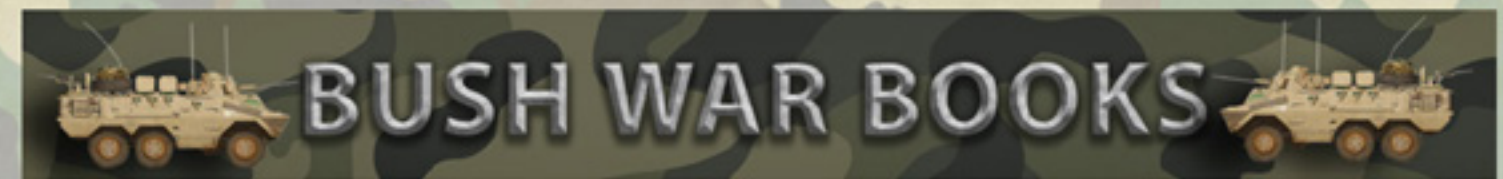
Generál-polkóvnik
General



Generál armii
General of the Army



Mārshal Rossiyskoy Federatsii
Marshal of the
Russian Federation



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

Military Strength

In the seventh of a series of articles, we examine self-propelled artillery (SPA) used by the ten strongest current military forces.

Last month we looked at the Infantry Fighting Vehicles (IFV) of the ten strongest military forces.

This month we look at artillery, and in particular self-propelled artillery.

Since the invention of the cannon, artillery has played an important part in military tactics. Be it in a defensive role or an attacking one.

One of the problems with artillery, however, was that it

was static. Once the enemy knew where your artillery was it could be subjected to counter-battery fire.

This is where self-propelled artillery is useful. It can fire and then move position rapidly.



10. Germany

Total military personnel – 210,305

PzH 2000

The Panzerhaubitze 2000 is a German 155 mm self-propelled howitzer and is one of the most powerful conventional artillery systems deployed in the 2010s. It is capable of a very high rate of fire; in burst mode it can fire three rounds in nine seconds, ten rounds in 56 seconds, and can - depending on barrel heating - fire between 10 and 13 rounds per minute continuously.

It replaced the M109 howitzer.

- Designer: Krauss-Maffei Wegmann (KMW) and Rheinmetall
- Designed: 1987–1996
- Weight: 55.8 tonnes
- Length: 11.7 metres
- Width: 3.6 metres
- Height: 3.1 metres



- Crew: Five (commander, driver, gunner and two loaders)
- Rate of fire: 3 rounds in nine seconds (burst); 10 rpm
- Effective firing range: 40-47 km
- Armour: Welded steel, 14.5 mm resistant; additional bomblet protection
- Main armament: Rheinmetall 155 mm L52 Artillery Gun
- Secondary armament: 7.62 mm Rheinmetall MG3 machine gun
- Engine: MTU 881 Ka-500 986 hp
- Operational range: 420 km
- Speed: Road - 65 km/h; Off-road - 45 km/h



9. Turkey

Total military personnel – 891,300

T-155 Firtina

T-155 Firtina (Storm) is a Turkish 155 mm self-propelled howitzer based on the K9 Thunder that was developed by South Korea's Samsung Techwin.

- Designer: Samsung Techwin
- Designed: 1988–2001
- Weight: 56 tonnes
- Length: 12 metres
- Width: 3.5 metres
- Height: 3.43 metres
- Crew: Five (commander, driver, gunner and two loaders)



- Main armament: 155 mm L52 Artillery Gun
- Engine: MTU-881 KA 500 power pack 1,000+ hp
- Secondary armament: 12.7 mm machine gun
- Operational range: 480 km
- Speed: 66 km/h



8. United Kingdom

Total military personnel – 157,500

AS-90

The AS-90, known officially as Gun Equipment 155 mm L131, is an armoured self-propelled artillery weapon used by the British Army.

- Designer: Vickers Shipbuilding and Engineering
- Weight: 45 tonnes
- Length: 9.07 metres
- Width: 3.5 metres
- Height: 2.49 metres
- Armour: max. 17 mm steel
- Main armament: 155 mm L31 39 calibre gun
- Secondary armament: 17.62



- mm NATO L7 GPMG
- Engine: Cummins VTA903T V8 diesel 660 hp
- Operational range: 420 km
- Speed: 53 km/h



7. Republic of Korea

Total military personnel – 3,699,000

T-155 Firtina

South Korea uses the T-155 Firtina, a SPG which South Korea developed for the Turkish Land Forces. They also use the American M110 and M107.

- Designer: Samsung Techwin
- Designed: 1988–2001
- Weight: 56 tonnes
- Length: 12 metres
- Width: 3.5 metres
- Height: 3.43 metres
- Crew: Five (commander, driver, gunner and two loaders)
- Main armament: 155 mm



- L52 Artillery Gun
- Secondary armament: 12.7 mm machine gun
- Engine: MTU-881 KA 500
- power pack 1,000+ hp
- Operational range: 480 km
- Speed: 66 km/h



6. Japan

Total military personnel – 310,457

PzH 2000

The Japanese Ground Self-Defence Force does not currently have any Self-Propelled Artillery. They use the Type 75 130 mm Multiple Rocket Launcher which replaced the Type 74 105 mm Self-propelled howitzer. The Type 75 MRL is now being replaced with the American 227 mm M270 Multiple Launch Rocket System.



- Designer: Komatsu
- Designed: 1973–1975
- Weight: 16.5 tonnes
- Length: 5.8 metres
- Width: 2.8 metres
- Height: 2.67 metres
- Crew: Three
- Effective firing range: 15 km
- Armour: aluminium
- Main armament: 130 mm rockets

- Secondary armament: 1 x .50 calibre M2 machine gun
- Engine: Mitsubishi 4ZF diesel
- sel 300 hp
- Operational range: 300 km
- Speed: 53 km/h



5. France

Total military personnel – 426,265

AMX-30 AuF1

The AMX-30 AuF1 replaced the former Mk F3 155mm in French Army service. The AuF1 saw combat with the Iraqi Army in the Iran–Iraq War.

- Designer: GIAT Industries
- Designed: 1972
- Weight: 43.5 tonnes
- Length: 10.25 metres
- Width: 3.15 metres
- Height: 3.25 metres
- Crew: Four (commander, driver, gunner and loader)
- Armour: 20 mm (turret)
- Main armament: 1 × 155 mm CN 155 AUF1 howitzer



- Secondary armament: 1 × Browning M2 12.7mm heavy machine gun
- Engine: Hispano-Suiza HS-110 680 hp
- Operational range: 420 km
- Speed: Road - 60 km/h



4. India

Total military personnel – 2,598,921

K9 Thunder

The K9 Thunder is the Indian version of the South Korean T-155 Firtina. The Indian Army also uses the Russian 2S1 Gvozdika SPG.

- Designer: Samsung Techwin
- Designed: 1988–2001
- Weight: 56 tonnes
- Length: 12 metres



HEAD TO HEAD

- Width: 3.5 metres
- Height: 3.43 metres
- Crew: Five (commander, driver, gunner and two loaders)
- Main armament: 155 mm L52 Artillery Gun
- Secondary armament: 12.7 mm machine gun
- Engine: MTU-881 KA 500
- power pack 1,000+ hp
- Operational range: 480 km
- Speed: 66 km/h



3. China

Total military personnel – 2,545,000

The People's Liberation Army Ground Force makes use of ten different types of SPG. These are:

- **PLL-09** – 120 mm gun-mortar variant of Type 08 modular infantry fighting vehicle.
- **PLZ-09** – 122 mm self-propelled howitzer variant of Type 08 modular infantry fighting vehicle.
- **PLZ-07** – 122 mm self-propelled howitzer.
- **PLZ-05** – 155 mm self-propelled howitzer.
- **PLZ-89** – amphibious capable 122 mm self-propelled howitzer, replacing Type 70.
- **PLL05** – 120 mm gun-mortar.
- **Type 96** – Modified howitzer.
- **Type 83** – 152 mm self-propelled howitzer.
- **W90 SPG** – 203 mm self-propelled howitzer.
- **Type 70** – 122 mm self-propelled howitzer.

PLZ-05

The PLZ-05 or the Type 05 is a 155 mm self-propelled howitzer developed by the People's Liberation Army of China to replace the Type 59-1 130mm. The PLZ-05 was officially unveiled at the Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution to mark the 80th anniversary of the PLA in July 2007, and first entered service with the PLA in 2008.



- Designer: Norinco
- Designed: 1990s
- Weight: 35 tonnes
- Length: 11.6 metres
- Width: 3.38 metres
- Height: 3.55 metres
- Crew: Four
- Rate of fire: 10 rpm
- Main armament: 155 mm howitzer
- Secondary armament: 12.7 mm anti-aircraft machine gun; 2 sets of 4-barrel grenade launchers
- Engine: 8V150-cooled turbocharged diesel 800 hp
- Operational range: 550 km
- Speed: Road - 56 km/h

HEAD TO HEAD



2. Russia

Total military personnel – 3,586,128

2S19 "Msta-S"

The 2S19 "Msta-S" is a 152.4 mm self-propelled howitzer designed by Soviet Union, which entered service in 1989 as the successor to the 2S3 Akatsiya. It will be replaced by the 2S35 Koalitsiya-SV.



- Designer: Uraltransmash
- Designed: 1980
- Weight: 42 tonnes
- Length: 7.15 metres
- Width: 3.38 metres
- Height: 2.99 metres
- Crew: Five
- Rate of fire: 6-8 rpm
- Effective firing range: 45 km
- Main armament: 152.4 mm howitzer 2A65
- Secondary armament: 12.7 mm NSVT anti-aircraft machine gun
- Engine: Diesel V-84A 840 hp
- Operational range: 500 km
- Speed: Road - 60 km/h



1. United States

Total military personnel – 4,397,128

M109

The M109 is an American 155 mm turreted self-propelled howitzer, first introduced in the early 1960s to replace the M44. It has been upgraded a number of times, most recently to the M109A7.



- Designer: United Defense LP
- Designed: 1960s
- Weight: 27.5 tonnes
- Length: 9.1 metres
- Width: 3.15 metres
- Height: 3.25 metres
- Crew: Seven
- Rate of fire: 4 rpm
- Main armament: M126 155 mm Howitzer
- Secondary armament: 12.7 mm M2 machine gun
- Engine: Detroit Diesel 8V71T 450 hp
- Operational range: 350 km
- Speed: Road - 56 km/h

Joseph Stalin

Revolutionary, politician and dictator, Joseph Stalin was all this and more. He was the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Premier of the Soviet Union, and led the country through the Great War. His policies would go on to become known as Stalinism. But who was Joseph Stalin?

To write an article on Joseph Stalin would probably take a book rather than a few pages. So in this article we will focus mainly on his leadership during World War II. Despite initially governing the Soviet Union as part of a collective leadership, by the 1930s he had consolidated power to become the country's de facto dictator.

Early Life

Ioseb Besarionis dze Djughashvili (he would later change his name to Joseph Stalin) was born on 18 December 1878 in the Georgian town of Gori, then part of the Tiflis Governorate of the Russian Empire and home to a mix of Georgian, Armenian, Russian, and Jewish communities.

He was their only child to survive past infancy, and was nicknamed "Soso", a

diminutive of "Ioseb". His father was an alcoholic who would often beat his wife and son.

In September 1888, Stalin enrolled at the Gori Church School and, although he got into many fights, Stalin excelled academically, displaying talent in painting and drama classes, writing his own poetry, and singing as a choirboy.

Stalin faced several severe health problems; an 1884 smallpox infection left him with facial pock scars, and aged 12, he was seriously injured after being hit by a phaeton (a type of carriage), which was the likely

cause of a lifelong disability to his left arm.

In August 1894, Stalin enrolled in the Spiritual Seminary in Tiflis, enabled by a scholarship that allowed him to study at a reduced rate. Here he joined 600 trainee priests who boarded at the institution. Stalin was again academically successful and gained high grades.

As he grew older, Stalin lost interest in priestly studies, his grades dropped, and he was repeatedly confined to a cell for his rebellious behaviour.

The seminary's journal noted that he declared himself an atheist, stalked out of prayers and refused to doff his hat to monks.

Stalin was impressed by *Capital*, the 1867 book by German sociological theorist Karl Marx. Stalin devoted himself to Marx's socio-political theory, Marxism, which was then on the rise in Georgia,

one of various forms of socialism opposed to the empire's governing Tsarist authorities.

At night, he attended secret workers' meetings, and was introduced to Silibistro "Silva" Jibladze, the Marxist founder of Mesame Dasi ('Third Group'), a Georgian socialist group. Stalin left the seminary in April 1899 and never returned.

In October 1899, Stalin began work as a meteorologist at a Tiflis observatory. He attracted a group of supporters through his classes in socialist theory, and co-organised a secret workers' mass meeting for May Day 1900, at which he successfully encouraged many of the men to take strike action.

By this point, the empire's secret police - the Okhrana - were aware of Stalin's activities within Tiflis' revolutionary milieu. They attempted to arrest him in March 1901, but he escaped and went into hiding, living off the donations of friends and sympathisers.

In January 1905, government troops massacred protesters in Saint Petersburg. Unrest soon spread across the Russian Empire in what came to be known as the Revolution of 1905.

Stalin was in Baku in February when ethnic violence broke out between Armenians and Azeris; at least 2,000 were killed.

He publicly lambasted the "pogroms against Jews and Armenians" as being part of Tsar Nicholas II's attempts to "butress his despicable throne".

Stalin formed a Bolshevik Battle Squad which he used to

try to keep Baku's warring ethnic factions apart; he also used the unrest as a cover for stealing printing equipment.

Amid the growing violence throughout Georgia he formed further Battle Squads which disarmed local police and troops, raided government arsenals, and raised funds through protection rackets on large local businesses and mines. They launched attacks on the government's Cossack troops and pro-Tsarist Black Hundreds.

In November 1905, the Georgian Bolsheviks elected Stalin as one of their delegates to a Bolshevik conference in Saint Petersburg. At the conference Stalin met Lenin for the first time. While Stalin had great respect for Lenin, he didn't always agree with him.

In Baku, Stalin secured Bolshevik domination of the local RSDLP branch, and edited two Bolshevik newspapers, *Bakinsky Proletary* and *Gudok* ("Whistle").

In Baku he had reassembled his gang, the Outfit, which continued to attack Black Hundreds and raised finances by running protection rackets, counterfeiting currency, and carrying out robberies. They also kidnapped the children of several wealthy figures to extract ransom money.

In March 1908, Stalin was arrested and interned in Bailov Prison in Baku. There, he led the imprisoned Bolsheviks, organised discussion groups, and ordered the killing of suspected informants.

He was eventually sentenced to two years exile in the village of Solvychegodsk, Vologda Province, arriving there in February 1909.

In June, he escaped the village and made it to Kotlas disguised as a woman and from there to Saint Petersburg. In March 1910, he was arrested again, and sent back to Solvychegodsk.

He escaped to Saint Petersburg, where he was arrested in September 1911, and sentenced to a further three-year exile in Vologda.

In January 1912, while Stalin was in exile, the first Bolshevik Central Committee had been elected at the Prague Conference. Shortly after the conference, Lenin and Grigory Zinoviev decided to co-opt Stalin to the committee. Still in Vologda, Stalin agreed, remaining a Central Committee member for the rest of his life.

In February 1912, Stalin again escaped to Saint Petersburg, tasked with converting the Bolshevik weekly newspaper, *Zvezda* ("Star") into a daily, *Pravda* ("Truth"). The new newspaper was launched in April 1912, although Stalin's role as editor was kept secret. It was in 1912 that he began writing under the pseudonym of "K. Stalin" (Man of steel).

While Stalin was in exile, Russia entered the First World War, and in October 1916 Stalin and other exiled Bolsheviks were conscripted into the Russian Army, leaving for Monastyrskoe.



They arrived in Krasnoyarsk in February 1917, where a medical examiner ruled Stalin unfit for military service due to his crippled arm.

Rise to power

When Lenin died in January 1924, Stalin began his rise to power.

As General Secretary, Stalin had had a free hand in making appointments to his own staff, implanting his loyalists throughout the party and administration.

In the wake of Lenin's death, various protagonists emerged in the struggle to become his successor: alongside Stalin was Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Alexei Rykov, and Mikhail Tomsky. Stalin saw Trotsky - whom he personally despised - as the main obstacle to his dominance within the party.

By late 1937, all remnants of collective leadership were gone from the Politburo, which was controlled entirely by Stalin. There were mass expulsions from the party, with Stalin commanding foreign communist parties to also purge anti-Stalinist elements. Stalin was now the party's supreme leader.

During the 1930s and 1940s, NKVD groups assassinated defectors and opponents abroad. In August 1940, Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico, eliminating the last of Stalin's opponents among the former Party leadership.

In May, this was followed by the arrest of most members of the military Supreme Command and mass arrests throughout the military, often on fabri-



LEADER AND FUTURE LEADER: Joseph Stalin (right) in conversation with an ailing Lenin.

cated charges.

These purges replaced most of the party's old guard with younger officials who did not remember a time before Stalin's leadership and who were regarded as more personally loyal to him.

World War II

As a Marxist-Leninist, Stalin expected an inevitable conflict between competing capitalist powers; after Nazi Germany annexed Austria and then part of Czechoslovakia in 1938, Stalin recognised a war was looming.

He sought to maintain Soviet neutrality, hoping that a German war against France and Britain would lead to Soviet

dominance in Europe.

Militarily, the Soviets also faced a threat from the east, with Soviet troops clashing with the expansionist Japanese in the latter part of the 1930s.

Stalin initiated a military build-up, with the Red Army more than doubling between January 1939 and June 1941, although in its haste to expand many of its officers were poorly trained.

Between 1940 and 1941 he also purged the military, leaving it with a severe shortage of trained officers when war broke out.

In August 1939, the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact with Germany, negotiated

by Molotov and German foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop.

A week later, Germany invaded Poland, sparking the UK and France to declare war on it. On 17 September, the Red Army entered eastern Poland, officially to restore order amid the collapse of the Polish state.

On 28 September, Germany and the Soviet Union exchanged some of their newly conquered territories; Germany gained the linguistically Polish-dominated areas of Lublin Province and part of Warsaw Province while the Soviets gained Lithuania.

A German-Soviet Frontier Treaty was signed shortly after, in Stalin's presence. The two states continued trading, undermining the British blockade of Germany.

The Soviets further demanded parts of eastern Finland, but the Finnish government refused. The Soviets invaded Finland in November 1939, yet despite numerical inferiority, the Finns kept the Red Army at bay.

International opinion backed Finland, with the Soviets being expelled from the League of Nations. Embarrassed by their inability to defeat the Finns, the Soviets signed an interim peace treaty, in which they received territorial concessions from Finland.

In June 1940, the Red Army occupied the Baltic states, which were forcibly merged into the Soviet Union in August; they also invaded and annexed Bessarabia and northern Bukovina, parts of Romania.

The Soviets sought to forestall dissent in these new East European territories with mass

repressions. One of the most noted instances was the Katyn massacre of April and May 1940, in which around 22,000 members of the Polish armed forces, police, and intelligentsia were executed.

The speed of the German victory over and occupation of France in mid-1940 took Stalin by surprise. He increasingly focused on appeasement with the Germans to delay any conflict with them.

After the Tripartite Pact was signed by Axis Powers Germany, Japan and Italy, in October 1940, Stalin proposed that the USSR also join the Axis alliance.

To demonstrate peaceful intentions toward Germany, in April 1941 the Soviets signed a neutrality pact with Japan.

Although de facto head of government for a decade and a half, Stalin concluded that relations with Germany had deteriorated to such an extent that he needed to deal with the problem as de jure head of government as well: on 6 May, Stalin replaced Molotov as Premier of the Soviet Union.

In June 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union, initiating the war on the Eastern Front.

Although intelligence agencies had repeatedly warned him of Germany's intentions, Stalin was taken by surprise. He formed a State Defence Committee, which he headed as Supreme Commander, as well as a military Supreme Command (Stavka), with Georgy Zhukov as its Chief of Staff.

The German tactic of blitzkrieg was initially highly effec-

tive; the Soviet air force in the western borderlands was destroyed within two days.

The German Wehrmacht pushed deep into Soviet territory; soon, Ukraine, Belorussia, and the Baltic states were under German occupation, and Leningrad was under siege; and Soviet refugees were flooding into Moscow and surrounding cities.

By July, Germany's Luftwaffe was bombing Moscow, and by October the Wehrmacht was amassing for a full assault on the capital. Plans were made for the Soviet government to evacuate to Kuibyshev, although Stalin decided to remain in Moscow, believing his flight would damage troop morale.

The German advance on Moscow was halted after two months of battle in increasingly harsh weather conditions.

Against the advice of Zhukov and other generals, Stalin emphasised attack over defence. In June 1941, he ordered a scorched earth policy of destroying infrastructure and food supplies before the Germans could seize them, also commanding the NKVD to kill around 100,000 political prisoners in areas the Wehrmacht approached.

He purged the military command; several high-ranking figures were demoted or reassigned and others were arrested and executed.

With Order No. 270, Stalin commanded soldiers risking capture to fight to the death describing the captured as traitors.

Stalin issued Order No. 227 in July 1942, which directed that those retreating unauthor-

ised would be placed in “penal battalions” used as cannon fodder on the front lines.

Amid the fighting, both the German and Soviet armies disregarded the law of war set forth in the Geneva Conventions.

In April 1942, Stalin overrode Stavka by ordering the Soviets’ first serious counter-attack, an attempt to seize German-held Kharkov in eastern Ukraine. This attack proved unsuccessful.

That year, Hitler shifted his primary goal from an overall victory on the Eastern Front, to the goal of securing the oil fields southern Soviet Union crucial to a long-term German war effort.

While Red Army generals saw evidence that Hitler would shift efforts south, Stalin considered this to be a flanking move in a renewed effort to take Moscow.

In June 1942, the German Army began a major offensive in Southern Russia, threatening Stalingrad; Stalin ordered the Red Army to hold the city at all costs.

This resulted in the protracted Battle of Stalingrad.[509] In December 1942, he placed Konstantin Rokossovski in charge of holding the city.

In February 1943, the German troops attacking Stalingrad surrendered. The Soviet victory there marked a major turning point in the war. In commemoration, Stalin declared himself Marshal of the Soviet Union.

By November 1942, the Soviets had begun to repulse the important German strategic southern campaign and, although there were 2.5 million Soviet casualties in that effort, it permitted the Soviets to take the offensive for most of the rest of



THE BIG THREE: Joseph Stalin, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill at the Tehran Conference.

the war on the Eastern Front.

Germany attempted an encirclement attack at Kursk, which was successfully repulsed by the Soviets.

By the end of 1943, the Soviets occupied half of the territory taken by the Germans from 1941 to 1942.

Stalin received good press in the Allied countries and Time magazine named him “Man of the Year” in 1942.

When Stalin learned that people in Western countries affectionately called him “Uncle Joe” he was initially offended, regarding it as undignified.

There remained mutual suspicions between Stalin, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who were together known as the “Big Three”.

In 1944, the Soviet Union made significant advances across Eastern Europe toward Germany, including Operation Bagration, a massive offensive in the Byelorussian SSR against

the German Army Group Centre.

In 1944 the German armies were pushed out of the Baltic states, which were then re-annexed into the Soviet Union.

As the Red Army reconquered the Caucasus and Crimea, various ethnic groups living in the region were accused of having collaborated with the Germans.

Using the idea of collective responsibility as a basis, Stalin’s government abolished their autonomous republics and between late 1943 and 1944 deported the majority of their populations to Central Asia and Siberia. Over one million people were deported as a result of the policy.

In February 1945, the three leaders met at the Yalta Conference. Roosevelt and Churchill conceded to Stalin’s demand that Germany pay the Soviet Union 20 billion dollars in reparations, and that his country be permitted to annex Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands in exchange for entering the war against Japan.

In April 1945, the Red Army seized Berlin, Hitler committed suicide, and Germany surrendered in May.

Stalin had wanted Hitler captured alive; he had his remains brought to Moscow to prevent them becoming a relic for Nazi sympathisers.

Many Soviet soldiers engaged in looting, pillaging, and rape, both in Germany and parts of Eastern Europe. Stalin refused to punish the offenders.

After receiving a complaint about this from Yugoslav communist Milovan Djilas, Stalin asked how after experiencing the traumas of war a soldier could “react normally? And what is so awful in his having fun with a woman, after such horrors?”

With Germany defeated, Stalin switched focus to the war with Japan, transferring half a million troops to the Far East.

Stalin was pressed by his allies to enter the war and wanted to cement the Soviet Union’s strategic position in Asia.

On 8 August, in between the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Soviet army invaded Japanese-occupied Manchuria and defeated the Kwantung Army.

These events led to the Japanese surrender and the war’s end. Soviet forces continued to expand until they occupied all their territorial concessions, but the U.S. rebuffed Stalin’s desire for the Red Army to take a role in the Allied occupation of Japan.

After the war, Stalin was regarded within the Soviet Union as the embodiment of victory and patriotism. His armies controlled Central and Eastern Eu-

rope up to the River Elbe.

In June 1945, Stalin adopted the title of Generalissimus, and stood atop Lenin’s Mausoleum to watch a celebratory parade led by Zhukov through Red Square.

Post War

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the British Empire declined, leaving the U.S. and USSR as the dominant world powers. Tensions among these former Allies grew, resulting in the Cold War.

In August 1949, the bomb was successfully tested in the deserts outside Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan. Stalin also initiated a new military build-up; the Soviet army was expanded from 2.9 million soldiers, as it stood in 1949, to 5.8 million by 1953.

Within Western countries, Stalin was increasingly portrayed as the “most evil dictator alive” and compared to Hitler.

In his later years, Stalin was in poor health. He took increasingly long holidays; in 1950 and again in 1951 he spent almost five months on vacation at his Abkhazian dacha. Stalin nevertheless mistrusted his doctors; in January 1952 he had one imprisoned after they suggested that he should retire to improve his health.

Death

On 1 March 1953, Stalin’s staff found him semi-conscious on the bedroom floor of his Volynskoe dacha.

He had suffered a cerebral haemorrhage. He was moved onto a couch and remained there for three days. He was hand-fed

using a spoon, given various medicines and injections, and leeches were applied to him.

Stalin died on 5 March 1953. An autopsy revealed that he had died of a cerebral haemorrhage and that he also suffered from severe damage to his cerebral arteries due to atherosclerosis.

It is possible that Stalin was murdered. Lavrentiy Beria has been suspected of murder, although no firm evidence has ever appeared.

Stalin’s body was embalmed, and then placed on display in Moscow’s House of Unions for three days. The funeral involved the body being laid to rest in Lenin’s Mausoleum in Red Square on 9 March.

Legacy

Shortly after his death, the Soviet Union went through a period of de-Stalinization. Malenkov denounced the Stalin personality cult, which was subsequently criticised in Pravda.

In 1956, Khrushchev gave his “Secret Speech”, titled “On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences”, to a closed session of the Party’s 20th Congress. There, Khrushchev denounced Stalin for both his mass repression and his personality cult.

He repeated these denunciations at the 22nd Party Congress in October 1962.

In October 1961, Stalin’s body was removed from the mausoleum and buried in the Kremlin Wall Necropolis next to the Kremlin walls, the location marked only by a simple bust. Stalingrad was renamed Volgograd.

de Havilland Mosquito

Nicknamed the “Wooden Wonder”, in 1941 it was one of the fastest operational aircraft in the world. Originally conceived as an unarmed fast bomber, the Mosquito would evolve during the war into many roles and would be forged in battle.

The de Havilland DH.98 Mosquito is a British twin-engined, shoulder-winged multi-role combat aircraft, introduced during the Second World War.

Unusual in that its frame is constructed mostly of wood, it was nicknamed the “Wooden Wonder”, or “Mos-sie”.

Lord Beaverbrook, Minister

to medium-altitude daytime tactical bomber, high-altitude night bomber, pathfinder, day or night fighter, fighter-bomber, intruder, maritime strike, and photo-reconnaissance aircraft.

The crew of two, pilot and navigator, sat side by side.

A single passenger could ride in the aircraft’s bomb bay when necessary.

The Mosquito FBVI was often flown in special raids, such as Operation Jericho – an attack on Amiens

The Mosquito flew with the Royal Air Force (RAF) and other air forces in the European, Mediterranean and Italian theatres. The Mosquito was also operated by the RAF in the Southeast Asian theatre and by the Royal Australian Air Force based in the Halmaheras and Borneo during the Pacific War. During the 1950s, the RAF replaced the Mosquito with the jet-powered English Electric Canberra.

Background

By the early to mid-1930s, de Havilland had a reputation for

with a good aerodynamic design and smooth, minimal skin area, would exceed the P.13/36 specification.

Furthermore, adapting the Albatross principles could save time. In April 1938, performance estimates were produced for a twin Rolls-Royce Merlin-powered DH.91, with the Bristol Hercules (radial engine) and Napier Sabre (H-engine) as alternatives.

De Havilland settled on designing a new aircraft that would be aerodynamically clean, wooden, and powered by the Merlin, which offered substantial future development.

The new design would be

anti-aircraft guns more likely. Instead, high speed and good manoeuvrability would make evading fighters and ground fire easier.

On 7 October 1939, a month into the war, the nucleus of a design team under Eric Bishop moved to the security and secrecy of Salisbury Hall to work on what was later known as the DH.98.

The DH.98 was too radical for the ministry, which wanted a heavily armed, multirole aircraft, combining medium bomber, reconnaissance, and general-purpose roles, as well as capable of carrying torpedoes. With outbreak of war, the ministry became more receptive, but still sceptical about an unarmed bomber.

promise, de Havilland made no changes..

With design of the DH.98 started, mock-ups were built, the most detailed at Salisbury Hall, where E0234 was later constructed.

Initially, the concept was for the crew to be enclosed in the fuselage behind a transparent nose (similar to the Bristol Blenheim or Heinkel He 111H), but this was quickly altered to a more solid nose with a conventional canopy.

The construction of the prototype began in March 1940, but work was cancelled again after the Battle of Dunkirk, when Lord Beaverbrook, as Minister of Aircraft Production, decided no production capacity remained for aircraft like the DH.98, which was not expected to be in service until early 1942.

Beaverbrook told Air Vice-Marshal Freeman that work on the project should stop, but he did not issue a specific instruction, and Freeman ignored the request.

of Aircraft Production, nicknamed it “Freeman’s Folly”, alluding to Air Chief Marshal Sir Wilfrid Freeman, who defended Geoffrey de Havilland and his design concept against orders to scrap the project.

In 1941, it was one of the fastest operational aircraft in the world.

Originally conceived as an unarmed fast bomber, the Mosquito’s use evolved during the war into many roles, including low-

Prison in early 1944, and precision attacks against military intelligence, security, and police facilities (such as Gestapo headquarters).

On 30 January 1943, the 10th anniversary of the Nazis’ seizure of power, a morning Mosquito attack knocked out the main Berlin broadcasting station while Hermann Göring was speaking, putting his speech off the air.

innovative high-speed aircraft with the DH.88 Comet racer. The later DH.91 Albatross airliner pioneered the composite wood construction used for the Mosquito.

Based on his experience with the Albatross, Geoffrey de Havilland believed that a bomber

faster than foreseeable enemy fighter aircraft, and could dispense with a defensive armament, which would slow it and make interception or losses to

To appease the ministry, de Havilland built mock-ups with a gun turret just aft of the cockpit, but apart from this com-

In June 1940, however, Lord Beaverbrook and the Air Staff ordered that production should

focus on five existing types, namely the Supermarine Spitfire, Hawker Hurricane fighter, Vickers Wellington, Armstrong-Whitworth Whitley, and Bristol Blenheim bombers.

Work on the DH.98 prototype stopped. Apparently, the project shut down when the design team were denied materials for the prototype.

In the aftermath of the Battle of Britain, the original order was changed to 20 bomber variants and 30 fighters. Whether the fighter version should have dual or single controls, or should carry a turret, was still uncertain, so three prototypes were built: W4052, W4053, and W4073.

The second and third, both turret armed, were later disarmed, to become the prototypes for the T.III trainer. This caused some delays, since half-built wing components had to be strengthened for the required higher combat loading. The nose sections also had to be changed from a design with a clear perspex bomb-aimer's position, to one with a solid nose housing four .303 machine guns and their ammunition.

On 3 November 1940, the aircraft, painted in "prototype yellow" and still coded E0234, was dismantled, transported by road to Hatfield and placed in a small, blast-proof assembly building.

Two Merlin 21 two-speed, single-stage supercharged engines were installed, driving three-bladed de Havilland Hydromatic constant-speed controllable-pitch propellers. Engine runs were made on 19 November.



WOODEN WONDER: Pilots and crew pose in front of a Mosquito. Note the four .303 machine guns in the nose.

On 24 November, taxiing trials were carried out by Geoffrey de Havilland Jr., the de Havilland test pilot. On 25 November, the prototype made its first flight, piloted by de Havilland Jr., accompanied by John E. Walker, the chief engine installation designer.

Operational history

The de Havilland Mosquito operated in many roles, performing medium bomber, reconnaissance, tactical strike, anti-submarine warfare and shipping attacks and night fighter duties, until the end of the war.

In July 1941, the first production Mosquito W4051 was sent to No. 1 Photographic Reconnaissance Unit (PRU), at RAF Benson. The secret reconnaissance flights of this aircraft were the first operational missions of the Mosquito.

On 15 November 1941, 105 Squadron, RAF, took delivery at RAF Swanton Morley, Nor-

folk, of the first operational Mosquito Mk. B.IV bomber, serial no. W4064.

Throughout 1942, 105 Squadron, based next at RAF Horsham St. Faith, then from 29 September, RAF Marham, undertook daylight low-level and shallow dive attacks.

Apart from the Oslo and Berlin raids, the strikes were mainly on industrial and infrastructure targets in occupied Netherlands and Norway, France and northern and western Germany.

The crews faced deadly flak and fighters, particularly Focke-Wulf Fw 190s, which they called snappers. Germany still controlled continental airspace and the Fw 190s were often already airborne and at an advantageous altitude.

Collisions within the formations also caused casualties. It was the Mosquito's excellent handling capabilities, rather than pure speed, that facilitated those evasions that were successful.

From mid-1942 to mid-1943, Mosquito bombers flew high-speed, medium or low-altitude daylight missions against factories, railways and other pinpoint targets in Germany and German-occupied Europe.

From June 1943, Mosquito bombers were formed into the Light Night Striking Force to guide RAF Bomber Command heavy bomber raids and as "nuisance" bombers, dropping Blockbuster bombs - 1,800 kg "cookies" - in high-altitude, high-speed raids that German night fighters were almost powerless to intercept.

As a night fighter from mid-1942, the Mosquito intercepted Luftwaffe raids on Britain, notably those of Operation Steinbock in 1944. Starting in July 1942, Mosquito night-fighter units raided Luftwaffe airfields. As part of 100 Group, it was flown as a night fighter and as an intruder supporting Bomber Command heavy bombers that reduced losses during 1944 and 1945.

In another example of the daylight precision raids carried out by the Mosquitos of Nos. 105 and 139 Squadrons, on 30 January 1943, the 10th anniversary of the Nazis' seizure of power, a morning Mosquito attack knocked out the main Berlin broadcasting station while Commander in Chief Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring was speaking, putting his speech off the air. A second sortie in the afternoon inconvenienced another speech, by Goebbels.

Lecturing a group of German aircraft manufacturers, Göring said:

"In 1940 I could at least fly as far as Glasgow in most of my aircraft, but not now! It makes me furious when I see the Mosquito. I turn green and yellow with envy. The British, who can afford aluminium better than we can, knock together a beautiful wooden aircraft that every piano factory over there is building, and they give it a speed which they have now increased yet again. What do you make of that? There is nothing the British do not have. They have the geniuses and we have the nincompoops. After the war is over I'm going to buy a British radio set - then at least I'll own something that has always worked."

From 1943, Mosquitos with RAF Coastal Command attacked Kriegsmarine U-boats and intercepted transport ship concentrations.

The Mosquito also proved a very capable night fighter. Some of the most successful RAF pilots flew these variants. For example, Wing Commander Branse Burbridge claimed 21 kills, and Wing Commander John Cunningham claimed 19 of his 20 victories at night on Mosquitos.

The Mosquito flew its last official European war mission on 21 May 1945, when Mosquitos of 143 Squadron and 248 Squadron RAF were ordered to continue to hunt German submarines that might be tempted to continue the fight; instead of submarines all the Mosquitos encountered were passive E-boats.

The last operational RAF Mosquitos were the Mosquito TT.35's, which were finally

retired from No. 3 Civilian Anti-Aircraft Co-Operation Unit (CAACU) in May 1963.

No fewer than 21 countries, including South Africa, operated Mosquitos at some stage.

There are approximately 30 non-flying Mosquitos around the world with four airworthy examples, three in the United States and one in Canada.

The largest collection of Mosquitos is at the de Havilland Aircraft Heritage Centre in the United Kingdom, which owns three aircraft, including the first prototype, W4050, the only initial prototype of a Second World War British aircraft design still in existence in the 21st century.

Specifications (B Mk.XVI) General characteristics

- Crew: 2 (pilot, bombardier/navigator)
- Length: 13.56 metres
- Wingspan: 16.51 metres
- Height: 6.31 metres
- Gross weight: 8,210 kg
- Engines: 2 x Rolls-Royce Merlin 76 V-12 liquid-cooled piston engine, 1,710 hp
- Propellers: 3-bladed constant-speed propellers

Performance

- Max speed: 668 km/h
- Range: 2,100 km
- Service ceiling: 11,000 metres
- Rate of climb: 14.5 m/s

Armament

- Bombs: 1,800 kg

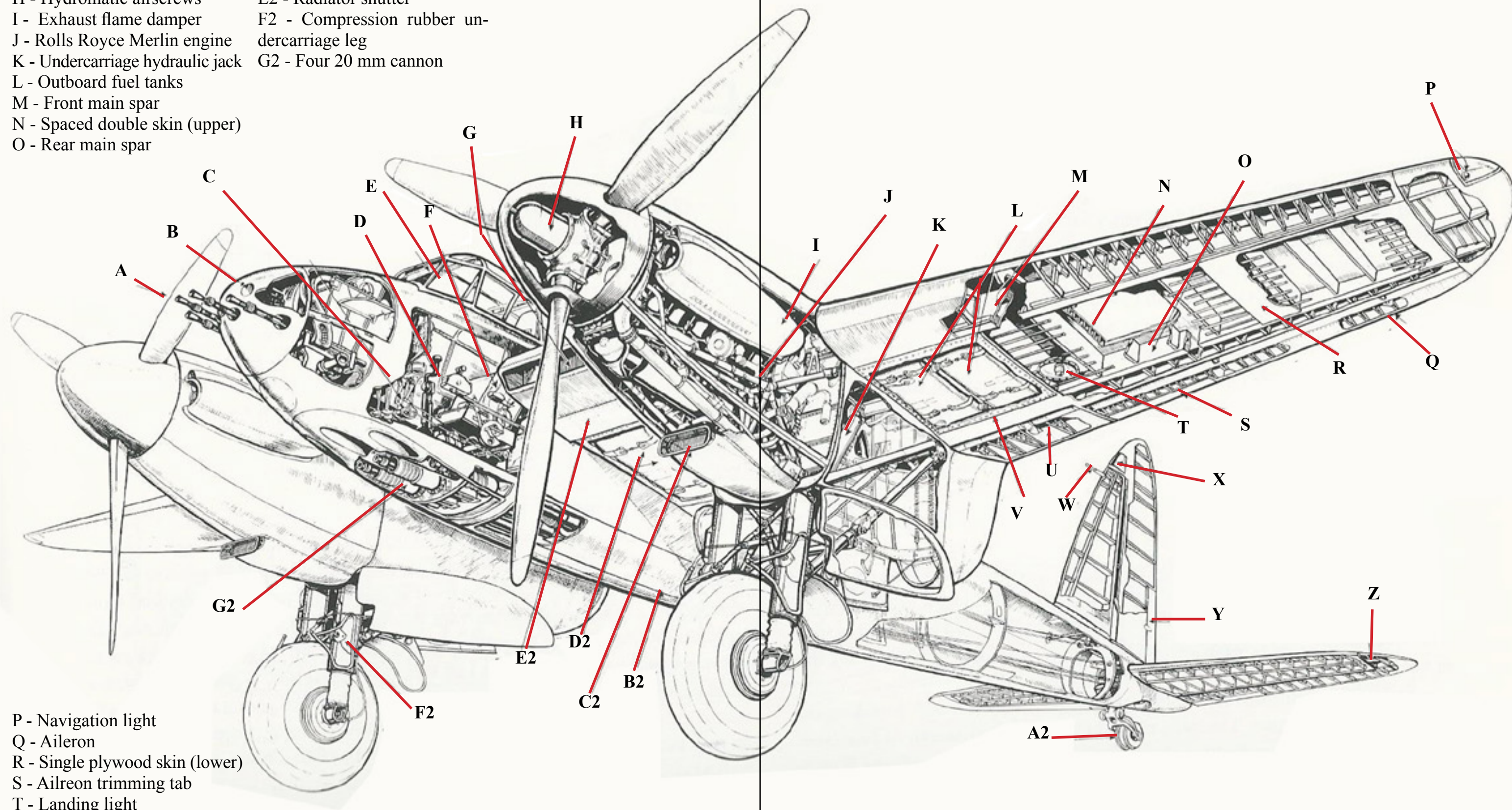
Avionics

GEE radio-navigation

A - Four .303 machine guns
 B - Camera
 C - Ruder pedals
 D- Control column
 E - Bullet proof screen
 F - Pilot's seat
 G - Oil and Glycol radiators
 H - Hydromatic airscrews
 I - Exhaust flame damper
 J - Rolls Royce Merlin engine
 K - Undercarriage hydraulic jack
 L - Outboard fuel tanks
 M - Front main spar
 N - Spaced double skin (upper)
 O - Rear main spar

X - Rudder mass balanced
 Y - Rudder trimming tab
 Z - Elevator mass balance
 A2 - Retractable tail wheel
 B2 - Gun bay folding doors
 C2 - Carburettor air intake
 D2 - Inboard fuel tanks
 E2 - Radiator shutter
 F2 - Compression rubber undercarriage leg
 G2 - Four 20 mm cannon

de Havilland Mosquito



P - Navigation light
 Q - Aileron
 R - Single plywood skin (lower)
 S - Ailreon trimming tab
 T - Landing light
 U - Flap
 V - Petrol tank cover
 W - Pitot head

On 31 October 1944, 25 Mosquitos from 140 Wing Royal Air Force (RAF) of the 2nd Tactical Air Force, bombed the Gestapo headquarters at the University of Aarhus. After World War II, the RAF called the mission the most successful of its kind during the war.

During World War II most countries occupied by the Nazis had an active resistance movement. As far as possible, the Allies provided support to resistance movements. This support was often in the form of weapons, equipment, training and intelligence.

The Special Operations Executive (SOE) was a British World War II organisation. It was officially formed on 22 July 1940 under Minister of Economic Warfare Hugh Dalton, from the amalgamation of three existing secret organisations. Its purpose was to conduct espionage, sabotage and reconnaissance in occupied Europe (and later, also in occupied Southeast Asia) against the Axis powers, and to aid local resistance movements.

SOE agents would be parachuted into occupied countries or sometimes landed from a submarine. Their main task was to liaise with local resistance movements and provide training.

During the war SOE agents operated in many occupied countries including France, Italy, Crete, Denmark, Norway, Yugoslavia and Holland. They would be fluent in the local language and could blend in with the civilian population.

One of the many dangers facing agents operating in enemy territory was the risk of being captured. Any prisoners captured by the Nazis that were regarded as high-value prisoners would be handed over to the Gestapo for interrogation.

The Geheime Staatspolizei (Secret State Police), abbreviated Gestapo, was the official secret police of Nazi Germany and German-occupied Europe.

The force was created by Hermann Göring in 1933 by combining the various security police agencies of Prussia into one organisation. The Gestapo were brutal in their interrogation methods and were experts when it came to torture, both physical and psychological.

Background

Aarhus was occupied by German forces, which established their headquarters for the Jutland area in the eastern parts of the University of Aarhus, placing their main offices and archives in the buildings usually reserved for student dormitories.

In Aarhus, the Gestapo was headed by Eugen Schwitzgebel; the Sicherheitsdienst, led by Obersturmbannführer Lonechun and the Abwehr, commanded by Oberstleutnant Lutze, were also based there.

The 577th Volksgrenadier Division was based in Aarhus during the raid. On 25 August 1944 the unit was established; by September its draftees were transferred to the 47th Infantry Division and the last members left Aarhus on 10 November to fight later on the Western Front.

The summer and autumn of 1944 was a difficult time for the resistance in Jutland. On 13 December 1943, the British paratrooper Jakob Jensen was caught by the Gestapo in Aarhus.

During interrogation he supplied information about the networks of supply groups in Jutland which resulted in many groups being destroyed and 145 people being arrested, including the Hvidsten Group on 11 March 1944.

The resistance movement throughout the peninsula was



UP IN FLAMES: A rare photograph of the Aarhus Air Raid. A Mosquito can be seen in the upper left of the photograph as, below, one of the targeted buildings is hit by another bomb.

crippled as supplies dried up. In Aarhus the resistance groups faced another problem as Grethe Bartram from communist and resistance circles in Aarhus was hired as an informant by the Gestapo in March–April 1944.

Bartram informed on some 50 resistance members leading to many groups in and around the city being dismantled by German authorities, including the Samsing Group in June 1944.

On 7 October the Gestapo arrested the courier Ruth Philipsen who worked directly for the leadership of the Jutland resistance. Vagn Bennike, the chief of operations in Jutland, immediately called an emergency meeting. Plans to assault the Gestapo headquarters were discussed but deemed infeasible. Bennike finally sent a telegram to his contacts in London.

“The resistance in Jutland is about to be torn up by the Gestapo. I insistently ask that dormitories 4 and 5 may be destroyed by aerial attack.”

The British evaluated the situation and on 26 October 1944

conducted a reconnaissance mission with 544 Squadron. Plans were drawn up and the date for the raid was set for 31 October 1944.

Planning

The attack was planned by members of the British Special Operations Executive and the American Office of Strategic Services. They identified the raid as an especially challenging one because the main targets, the university dormitories in which Gestapo had their headquarters, had civilian hospitals on both sides nearby so precision was needed to minimise civilian casualties.

A training area in 1:1 scale was drawn with chalk, where the pilots picked for the attack made two test runs before the raid.

It was eventually decided that the attack would take place in four waves, about one minute apart: the first waves would carry regular bombs to blast open the buildings containing the Gestapo offices, while the

last waves would attack with incendiary bombs to maximise the damage to the Gestapo archives.

The bombs were set to explode with a delay of eleven seconds since in such a low level attack, the bombs had the potential to damage the aircraft that dropped them. It was also decided that it would take place on a workday, between 11h30 and noon, since few Danish prisoners would be held in the offices at this time, as most of them would have been escorted back to their cells elsewhere on campus for lunch, while the majority of the Gestapo staff would be present and preparing for the lunch break at noon.

Three squadrons were to supply 25 aircraft, 24 Mosquito Mk.VI fighter-bombers and a Mosquito Mk. IV reconnaissance aircraft from the Royal Air Force Film Production Unit, to film the raid. Twelve Mustang Mk. III fighters from 315 (Polish) Squadron would escort them, to defend the bombers from fighters based at the Ger-

man airbase at Grove and create confusion by attacking minor German targets around central Jutland.

All aircraft would carry extra fuel tanks to make sure they could make the long trip across the North Sea. The destination and target of the mission were not disclosed to the pilots until their final briefing at 08h00 on 31 October.

On 30 October, the date and time for the raid was settled for the next day at 11h30. As a final preparation, the aircraft and crews involved in the raid gathered at the airbase at Swanton Morley at 08h00 on the day of the attack for a final briefing. When the fighters from 315 (Polish) Squadron landed, it was discovered that four of them had broken tailwheels, so it was decided to proceed with just the remaining eight. At 08h40, take off began in pairs and at 09h20 all thirty-three were in the air.

Bombing

The attack force entered Jutland around the coastal town of Henne around 11h20 and the Germans were alerted at 11h36. As planned, 315 Squadron broke off around Grove and 140 Wing continued on towards Skanderborg.

At 11h38, the first wave reached the rendezvous at Skanderborg Lake, followed shortly after by the other three waves. While the other waves circled the lake waiting their turn, the first wave broke off and reached Aarhus in about three minutes.

The crews got a sighting of the dorms with the Gestapo offices and dropped 4,1 tons of bombs. At 11h41, the first

bombs exploded and four minutes later, they were followed by the second wave, then the third and fourth, attacking with incendiaries.

The later waves were engaged by flak crews from the German light cruiser Nürnberg, present in Aarhus Harbor and a Mosquito from the fourth wave was severely damaged. Instead of returning to base, another Mosquito escorted it across the Kattegat, where it continued on alone to Sweden, landed safely and was destroyed by the crew before they were apprehended by Swedish authorities.

The rest of the aircraft exited Danish airspace in their designated waves between 12h16 and 12h34 - about two hours later, they landed safely in England.

Aftermath

The Danish underground press estimated that 150–200 Gestapo members and some 30 Danes perished in the attack. An internal German report set their losses from the offices in the dormitories to 39, of whom 27 were SS officers employed in the Gestapo, including Eugen Schwitzgebel and the remaining twelve were from other departments of the German police, mostly office workers.

Another 20 German casualties were reported from the Langelandsgade barracks, 18 being soldiers. Three prisoners from the Danish resistance were present for interrogation inside the dorms during the attack: Ruth Philipsen, the resistance leader Harald Sandbæk and a third prisoner.

The third prisoner perished in the attack but Philipsen and

Sandbæk managed to escape in the confusion. Philipsen got off relatively unscathed but Sandbæk was badly injured and had to receive secret medical treatment to recover from his wounds. Both of them reached the safety of Sweden soon thereafter.

Though the bombing was precise, destroying dorms 4 and 5 and doing considerable damage to the Langelandsgade barracks, several bombs missed.

The university main building, which was being built at the time, was accidentally struck by a bomb that had somehow managed to skip down the halls of the building, killing about ten members of the construction crew and injuring the chief architect, C. F. Møller.

Most of the Gestapo archives, including many of the files on the Danish resistance, were destroyed in the attack; the extent of the damage remains unknown, though it is clear that the loss of files and experienced personnel severely hampered the Gestapo's efficiency in Denmark. The Gestapo reinforced their numbers in Denmark after the attack, to the point where the number of agents were almost doubled.

Similar raids were carried out by Mosquitos and these included:

- Operation Carthage, a similar attack on Gestapo headquarters in Copenhagen, Denmark
- Operation Jericho, a similar attack on Amiens Prison in France
- Oslo Mosquito raid, a similar attack on Gestapo headquarters in Oslo, Norway.



Springbok

Journal of the South African Legion
Tydskrif van die Suid-Afrikaanse Legioen



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.

The Springbok is the official journal of the South African Legion. Read the February issue of Springbok by clicking on the cover to the left.

Editor's Note

The SA Legion is an organisation that all South African military veterans should consider becoming a member of.

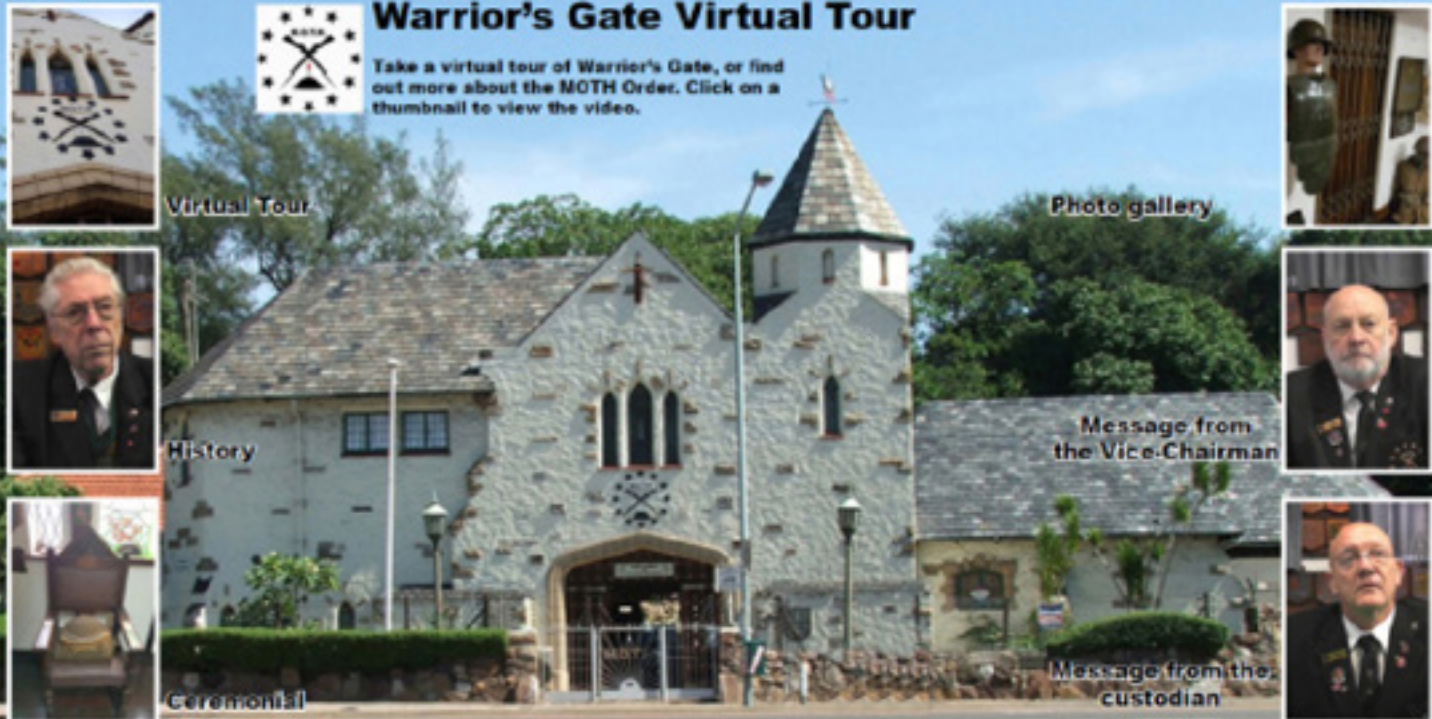
The SA Legion is dedicated to:

- Fostering the spirit of self-sacrifice, comradeship and co-operation that inspired members of the armed forces to work together in the common interest of their country.
 - Perpetuating the memory of those who fell and were left behind to lie in foreign fields.
- Find out more about the SA Legion by visiting their website by clicking [here](#).

Click on the photograph below to take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate and find out more about the Memorable Order of Tin Hats.

Warrior's Gate Virtual Tour

Take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate, or find out more about the MOTH Order. Click on a thumbnail to view the video.





TANK MECHANIC SIMULATOR

Matt O' Brien is now in the tank repairing and restoration business. He's just wondering what to do with all the parts left over once he's finished.

Over the past year or so mechanic simulator games have become popular.

First of all there was Car Mechanic Simulator. Then there was a Motorbike Mechanic Simulator and, recently, a Plane Mechanic Simulator (which we reviewed in the February issue of Military Despatches).

The premise of each of these games was similar. You were given a car, motorcycle or aircraft which you had to repair.

The latest offering in the mechanic simulator games is Tank Mechanic Simulator, and naturally I had to give this one a go.

This game is slightly different to the other mechanic simulator games. This time you start off with a workshop where you can repair and restore tanks. You also have a tank museum.

People will send you an e-mail and offer you a contract to repair or restore a tank. If you accept the contract then the tank will be delivered to your workshop. Nearly all of the tanks you receive will be covered in rust.

The tank is placed over an inspection pit and is ready for you to start work. Also in your workshop you have an engine stand and a turret stand.

The first thing you need to do is remove the engine and hang

it from the engine stand. Then you remove the turret and place it on the turret stand.

You will then need to remove all of the parts from the engine, turret and also from both the hull exterior and hull interior. And trust me, there are a lot of parts.

I tend to start with the engine, I remove all parts that can be removed and then I use the rust removal tool to remove the rust from the engine block. I then use the sandblasting tool to get it clean and shiny.

I then start to reassemble the engine. As I put each part back I remove the rust and sandblast it.

As you assemble the engine you may find that there are parts missing. For instance it may require an oil filter, dipstick, fuel pump and exhaust.

You have a number of options to get hold of these parts. First of all you can open your computer and go to the Tank Repair Shop. Here you will find various parts that you can purchase. You can buy a part in various stages of repair. For example you can buy a part that is rusted, dirty, primed or painted.

Obviously a painted part is far more expensive than one that is rusted. I tend to buy a rusted part, fit it, then de-rust and sandblast it.

You can also go into your inventory and see if you have any of the parts that are missing. If you do you can then outsource the repairs. This, however, can work out rather expensive.

Once I have restored the engine to 100% condition I then turn my attention to the turret.

Once again every part that can be removed must be taken off. This time, however, you need to do more than just de-rust and sandblast the turret and parts. You will need to spray it with a primer and then paint it.

Once you've replaced any missing parts, de-rusted, sandblasted, primed, painted, and assembled the tank the repairs are done and you can complete the contract.

You will then receive both money and reputation points for the job. The money is used to buy tank parts and can also be used to buy blue prints for a tank or even a brand new tank.

Reputation points are also important. You use these to purchase upgrades, and trust me, you will need them.

The first thing you will need to upgrade is from a normal wrench to a wrench gun. This will undo bolts far quicker and also undo rusted bolts - something a normal wrench cannot do.

Now earlier I said that you



also get a tank museum. Sometimes you will get an e-mail saying that someone thinks they know where a tank is buried.

You then go to the area and, using a jeep and a metal detector, try and discover where it is buried. Once you have found it you can dig it up and transport it back to your workshop. Once you have repaired and restored it, you can place it in your museum. The public will then pay to visit the museum.

Reputation points will allow you to buy a quad bike, magnetometer and even a drone. The drone is vital in actually finding buried tanks.

You can also find collectible articles in the area such as weapons, helmets, medals and badges, and these can also be displayed in your museum.

The more tanks and collectibles you have, the more you can charge visitors to the museum.

Upgrades will also allow you to buy a crafting bench. If you

have purchased the blue prints to a tank then you can craft spare parts.

You can also purchase a paint room where you can repaint your tanks in different colours, place decals on them, or even camouflage them.

Currently the game is still in early access, so it means that the developers are still working on it.

It already has 14 tanks available and they are:

Russian

- KV-1
- KV-2
- T34/76
- T35/85

German

- PzKpfw VI Tiger Ausf. H
- PzKpfw V Panther Ausf. A
- PzKpfw IV Ausf. G
- PzKpfw III Ausf. J
- PzKpfw III Ausf. M
- StuG III Ausf. G
- SdLfz 251/1 Ausf. D half-track

American

- M4A3E8 Sherman

- M26 Pershing
- M10 Wolverine

A lot more tanks, including British ones, are coming soon.

If you're interested in tanks, then this game is a must. And I must admit that I'm having a lot of fun with it.



Publisher - PlayWay SA

Genre - Simulator

Score - 8/10

Price - R130 (on Steam)



Saving Private Ryan

Released: 1998

Running time: 169 minutes

Director: Steven Spielberg

Saving Private Ryan is a 1998 American epic war film directed by Steven Spielberg and written by Robert Rodat. Set during the Invasion of Normandy in World War II, the film is notable for its graphic portrayal of war and for the intensity of its opening 27 minutes, which includes a depiction of the Omaha Beach assault during the Normandy landings.

Captain John H. Miller (Tom Hanks) is a United States Army Ranger taking part in the landings at Omaha Beach.

After the beach has been captured Miller is given a special assignment. He must take his squad (Tom Sizemore, Edward Burns, Barry Pepper, Giovanni Ribisi, Vin Diesel, Adam Goldberg, and Jeremy Davies) and find Private First Class James Francis Ryan (Matt Damon).

Ryan is one of four brothers and three of them have died within the space of a few days while serving in the US military.

When the US War Department learns that three of the four sons of the Ryan family have been killed in action, they order that the remaining son be found, withdrawn from combat, and sent home.

The problem is that James Ryan is a member of the 101st Airborne Division. They parachuted into Normandy during the night, hours before the land-

ings took place. Before they can withdraw James Ryan from combat they first have to locate him.

Miller and his squad move out to Neuville, where they meet a squad of the 101st engaged against the enemy. Caparzo is killed by a German sniper who is then killed by Jackson. They locate a Private James Ryan, only to learn that he is not the right one. From passing soldiers, Miller learns that Ryan is defending an important bridge in Ramelle.

Near Ramelle, Miller decides to neutralize a German machine gun position at a derelict radar station, despite his men's misgivings. Wade is killed in the skirmish. At Upham's urging, Miller declines to execute a surviving German soldier, and sets him free. Losing confidence in Miller's leadership, Reiben declares his intention to desert, prompting a confrontation with Horvath. Miller defuses the standoff by disclosing his civilian career as a high school English teacher, about which his men had set up a betting pool; Reiben decides to stay.

At Ramelle, they find Ryan among a small group of paratroopers preparing to defend the key bridge against an imminent German attack. Miller tells Ryan that his brothers are dead, and that he was ordered to bring him home.

Ryan is distressed about his brothers, but is unwilling to leave his post. Miller combines his unit with the paratroopers in defense of the bridge. He devises a plan to ambush the enemy with two .30-caliber guns, Molotov cocktails, anti-tank mines and improvised satchel charges made from socks.

Elements of the 2nd SS Panzer Division arrive with two Tiger tanks and two Marder tank destroyers, all protected by German infantry. Will Miller succeed? Will Ryan be rescued? Watch the movie to find out.

The film was nominated for eleven Academy Awards at the 71st Academy Awards.



Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

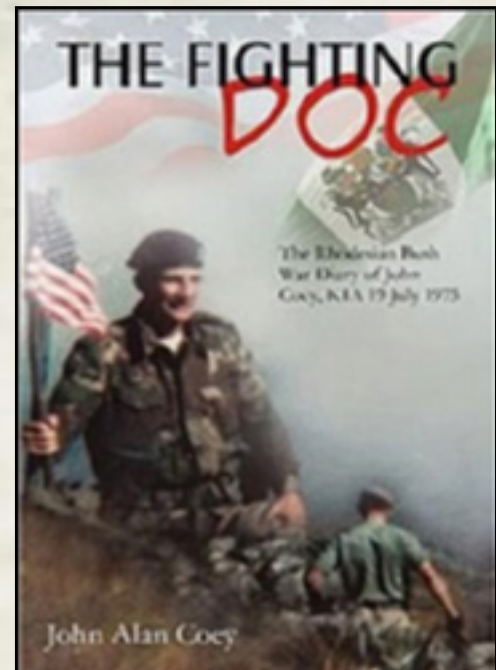
The Fighting Doc

It is Saturday afternoon, 19 July 1975, next to a dry riverbed in Rhodesia's north-eastern operational area, in a war against communist-backed guerrillas.

A Rhodesian combat medic receives an order to descend into the riverbed to attend to two critically wounded troopers, their figures seemingly lifeless on the sand. The whereabouts of the insurgents is not known. As the medic, displaying a red cross, moves in, shots ring out and he sustains a fatal head wound. That medic is 24-year-old American John Alan Coey.

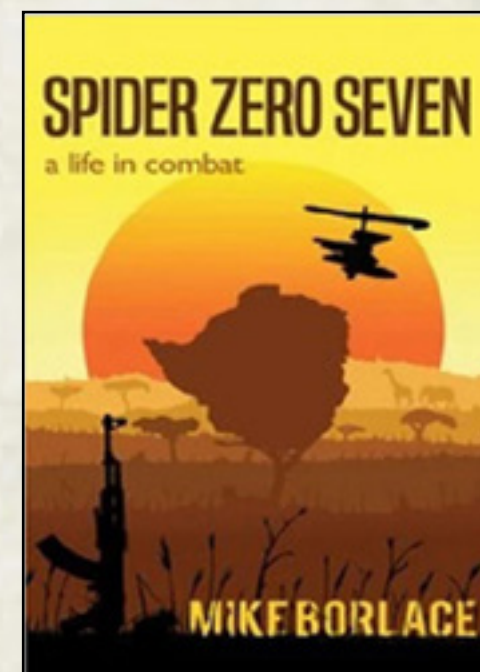
Driven by his Christian faith and an ardent belief in the threat of global communist hegemony, Coey had come to Rhodesia

to fulfil an overriding passion to help the beleaguered southern African country in its fight against what he perceived to be a communist bid to secure the sub-continent. John was a very complex individual who, right until his death, was in a permanent state of internal conflict as to his mission in life: he wishes he had a wife; he tells young American girls that they must produce strong sons who will fight the good fight; he is disillusioned by his failures; he admits he is a weak leader, virtually offering an apology for his own shortcomings; he vacillates endlessly; he admits to being unable to identify the path he needs to take to achieve his mission.

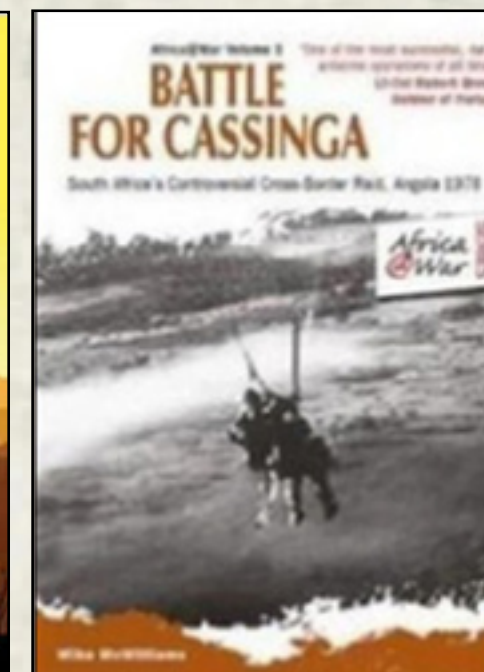


But, finally, as a combat medic - a pioneer in this concept - he finds his much sought-after destiny.

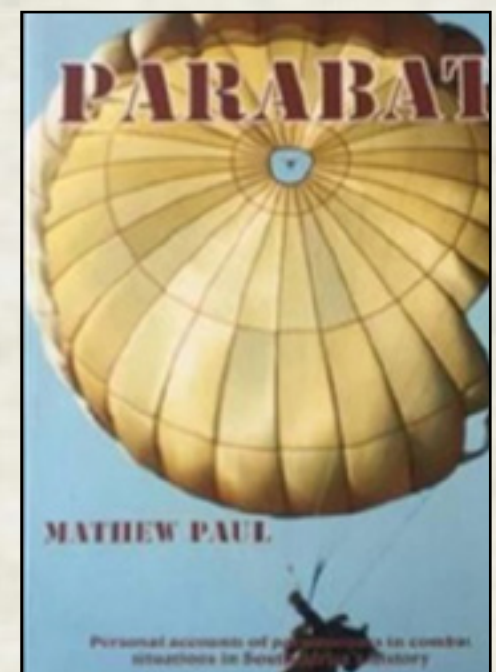
Paperback: 200 pages
Cost: R250



Spider Zero Seven
R370



Battle for Cassinga
R220



Parabat
R280

All books are available from [Bush War Books](#)

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 Rjiposa (27). Special Constable Daniel Sakaria (28). Special Constable Zaako Uaapulana (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 Omalapa-

pa. He was 26.

- **1981** - Lance Corporal Ean Andrew Chapman Pettit from H Company, 1 Parachute Battalion was accidentally killed after he and his 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 exporting 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



Erwin Rommel

was Reported Missing while on patrol near Buffalo. He went for a swim amongst the 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 Apr '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 received 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



Isoroku Yamamoto

Namaqualand starts as Gen. Smuts demands the surrender of the town but is curtly rejected by Col. W.A.D. 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).

ANC insurgents launch a rifle, rocket and grenade attack on Booysens Police 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 IIID2Z 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 Muam-

mar 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 through-

out 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



Paul Biya

Military Vehicle Accident in Mamelodi during Operation Xenon. He was 23.

- **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 sur-

rendered 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



Omar Bradley

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 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. Chicoto 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 Comman-

do 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 Kernels 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 Iteleni. 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 Ar-

- thur Wienand from 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment was killed when his Unimog vehicle overturned in Kavanagoland. 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



PW Botha

- 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 polit-

ical 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 vehicle 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 'Guerreiro', 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 concen-

tration camp.

- **1952** - First test flight of a prototype B-52.
- **1982** - Rifleman Brian Richard Butland 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 Mpumalanga. He was 24.

16 April

- **1916** - The French Army forms the *Escadrille Americaine*.
- **1938** - Britain recognizes the Italian annexation of Ab-



yssinia.

- **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.
- **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

Ronald Reagan

- **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 ac-

cident 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 Owamboland. 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 Massa-

chusetts, 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 Mander, 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:



Adolf Hitler

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 Richtofen) was shot down 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 Sachsen-

hausen 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 Techipa 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).
- **1988** - Sapper Carl Sachse from 13 Field Engineer Regiment was killed when he accidentally detonated an anti-personnel mine while in the process of laying out a minefield. He was 26.

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



Manfred von Richtofen

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-Bo-

er 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 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 Kanghede 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 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

Muhammad Ali

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 Fourié 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.

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 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 Booi Julies (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.



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QUIZ

World War II tanks

1. Cruiser Mk V Crusader (Britain)
2. M3 Stuart (USA)
3. Panzer IV (Germany)
4. KV-1 (Russia)
5. StuG III (Germany)
6. Matilda Mk II (Britain)
7. Panzer III (Germany)
8. T34/76 (Russia)
9. Cruiser Mk VIII Cromwell (Britain)
10. Panzer V Panther (Germany)
11. M10 Wolverine (USA)
12. Joseph Stalin-2 (Russia)
13. Panzer VI Tiger 1 (Germany)
14. M4 Sherman (USA)
15. Mk IV Churchill (Britain)

2



8



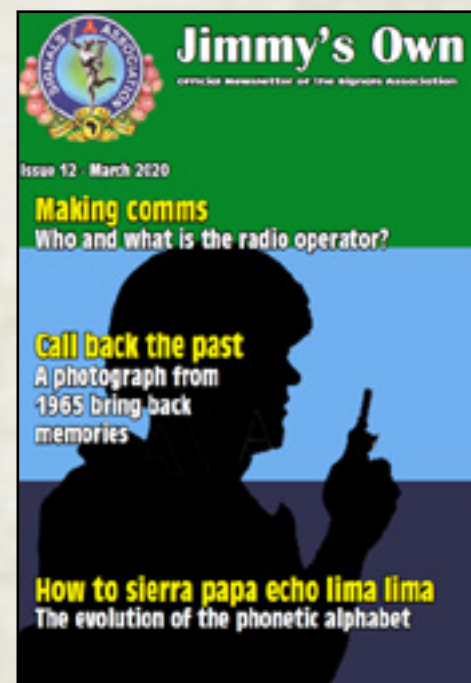
13



Useful links

Every month we will be featuring a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and on-line 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 open and read individual articles on screen with no need to download anything.

You will find articles on numerous different topics that have been published over the past two years as well as video clips and documentaries.



Hipe!

media

E-mail
editor@hipe.co.za



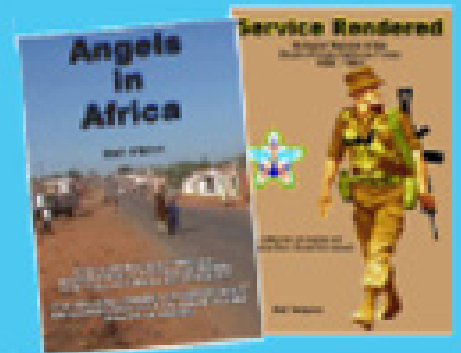
Online Magazines

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.