



Warriors

Ten exceptional warriors in history

RIP General Viljoen

Soldier, scholar, politician and a gentleman

Erwin Rommel

We take a closer look at the Desert Fox

Operation Thunderbolt

One of the most audacious operations of all time

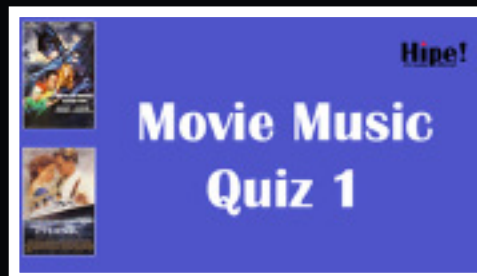


Click on any video below to view



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

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



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.

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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.



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

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Ranks

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Editor's Sitrep

It was Robert Burns that aid, "The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry."

I'm not sure if I'm a man or a mouse, but lately I've had this strange craving for cheese.

As you may have noticed, this issue of Military Despatches is only coming out on the 2nd of the month. This first time in nearly three years that this has happened.

What happened was that three days before deadline I had a problem with the software that I use to do the layout of the magazine.

We've had problems before, but we've always managed to get it sorted out before deadline. This time, however, it was a different story.

Normally I phone my computer guy and tell him to come and fix, pronto. And, to his credit, he does.

Now with our national lockdown it is not that easy to get things done. Especially with my computer guy.

Look, he's a nice enough fellow, but if you look up the word paranoia in the dictionary you will see a photograph of him there.

He doesn't even want to answer his phone because he's convinced that the virus can travel over the phone and infect him.

Eventually, in the early hours of this morning, I decided to reprint three articles from past issues. It was either that, or not get an issue of Military Despatches out this month.

And trust me, I've already had a number of e-mails from readers asking where the May issue is. Well here it is.

Talking about lockdown, I'm getting a bit gatvol of it. Not the actual lockdown, but the uncertainty behind everything. First the government says one thing, then they change their mind just as quickly.

The president makes a statement and a few days later the minister of funny hats overturns the decision. Who is actually running the country?

I should get my software sorted out soon and the I guess I will have to start on the June issue.

Until next time.

Matt

Hipe!

media

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General Constant Viljoen was guest speaker at the 2011 MOTH Border Boys Parade in Cape Town.



Ten exceptional warriors in history

Every war produces leaders, heroes and great warriors. In this article we take a look at ten great warriors in ancient history.

Wars have been around as long as there has been recorded history. And they were probably around long before history began to be recorded.

And as long as there have been wars they have produced leaders and followers, heroes and villains, and some great warriors. Some men, and women for that matter, seem to be born for battle.

In this article we will look at ten ancient warriors that have been immortalised in history.

All of them are before the fourteenth century. Back then there was no Kevlar body armour, automatic assault rifles and smart bombs. Fighting was normally up close and personal, using swords, bows, spears and axes.

The list is in chronological order.

10. Leonidas I of Sparta

Many of our readers will have no doubt seen the movie *300* in which the role of King Leonidas of Sparta was played by Gerard Butler.

In the movie, Leonidas leads a group of 300 Spartans against the armies of Xerxes I in 480 BC.

The film depicts Xerxes of having an army of over one million troops.

At the Battle of Thermopylae the Spartans make a stand in a narrow pass known as 'The Hot Gates'.

The Spartans hold off the Persian army for a week, inflicting huge casualties on them. They are then betrayed by Ephialtes, a deformed Spartan whose parents fled Sparta to spare him certain infanticide.

Ephialtes asks to redeem his father's name by joining Leonidas' army. Although sympathetic, Leonidas rejects him since his deformity physically prevents him from holding his shield high enough, potentially compromising the phalanx formation, and Ephialtes is enraged.

Ephialtes shows the Persians a secret route that they can take to outflank the Spartans and eventually overwhelm them.

History, however, tells the story a little differently.

There was a Battle of Thermopylae and it was where Leonidas proved his worth as a warrior.

Leonidas led the combined armies of the alliance of Greek city states. An army of around 7,000 men. A total of 300 men of this army were from Sparta.

They faced the armies of Xerxes I which totalled around 150,000 troops, and not one million as the movie suggests.

At the Hot Gates the Greeks under Leonidas held off the Persians for a week before they were betrayed by a local resident who showed the Persians a route whereby they could outflank the Greeks.

At that point Leonidas sent away all Greek troops and remained in the pass with his 300 Spartans.

What the movie doesn't tell us was that Leonidas also had 900 helots, 400 Thebans and 700 Thespians. That adds up to 2,300 men.

Leonidas and most of the remaining Greeks were killed but they succeeded in allowing the rest of the army to get away.

The following year a return engagement saw the Greeks soundly thrashing the Persians at the Battle of Plataea, ending their invasive tendencies for the time being.

Leonidas reigned from 489 BC until the time of his death in 480 BC. He was 60 years old when he died.

9. Alexander the Great

History usually doesn't give someone the moniker "the great" without reason, and there were more than enough reasons to give this title to Alexander.

Alexander III of Macedon ruled his ancient Grecian state of Macedon for thirteen years

from 336 to 323 BC, during which he built one of the ancient world's largest, albeit short-lived, empires and was one of the most successful military leaders in history, being undefeated in battle.

His was not one of those rags-to-riches stories as he came from what we would term today a privileged background.

As a child he was tutored by none other than Aristotle, which will have no doubt given him exceptional abilities to think well.

After his father, Philip II, was assassinated, Alexander succeeded his father to the throne. He was just 20 at the time.

He was fortunate enough to inherit not only a strong kingdom, but a highly experienced army as well.

He spent most of his ruling years on an unprecedented military campaign through western Asia and northeast Africa, and by the age of thirty, he had created one of the largest empires of the ancient world, stretching from Greece to northwestern India.

Alexander was awarded the generalship of Greece and used this authority to launch his father's pan-Hellenic project to lead the Greeks in the conquest of Persia.

In 334 BC, he invaded the Achaemenid Empire (Persian Empire) and began a series of campaigns that lasted 10 years.

Following the conquest of Anatolia, Alexander broke the power of Persia in a series of decisive battles, most notably the

battles of Issus and Gaugamela.

He subsequently overthrew Persian King Darius III and conquered the Achaemenid Empire in its entirety. At that point, his empire stretched from the Adriatic Sea to the Beas River.

Among the titles claimed by Alexander were King of Macedon, Hegemon of Hellenic League, Strategos autokrator of Greece, King of Persia, and Lord of Asia.

He died from a fever at the age of only 32. Unfortunately after his death his empire was torn apart by civil wars that ended in a number of states ruled by the various surviving generals and Alexander's heirs.

However, Alexander's legacy lives on. Some 20 cities founded by him bore his name, notably Alexandria in Egypt. Much of the Hellenistic civilisation grew out of his spreading Greek culture in the east, and his tactics are still taught in military academies around the world.

8. Hannibal Barca

Born in 247 BC, Hannibal came from a family of warriors. His father, Hamilcar Barca, was a leading Carthaginian commander during the First Punic War (264–241 BC). His younger brothers, Mago and Hasdruba, and his brother-in-law, Hasdrubal the Fair, all commanded Carthaginian armies.

Hannibal lived during a period of great tension in the western Mediterranean Basin, triggered by the emergence of the Roman Republic as a great power after it had established

its supremacy over Italy. A

lthough Rome had won the First Punic War, revanchism prevailed in Carthage, symbolised by the alleged pledge that Hannibal made to his father never to be a friend of Rome.

The Second Punic War broke out in 218 after Hannibal's attack on Saguntum, an ally of Rome in Hispania. He then made his famous military exploit of carrying war to Italy by crossing the Alps with his African elephants.

In his first few years in Italy, he won a succession of dramatic victories at the Trebia, Lake Trasimene, and Cannae. He distinguished himself for his ability to determine his and his opponent's respective strengths and weaknesses, and to plan battles accordingly. Hannibal's well-planned strategies allowed him to conquer several Italian cities allied to Rome.

Hannibal occupied most of southern Italy for 15 years, but could not win a decisive victory, as the Romans led by Fabius Maximus avoided confrontation with him, instead waging a war of attrition.

A counter-invasion of North Africa led by Scipio Africanus forced him to return to Carthage. Scipio eventually defeated Hannibal at the Battle of Zama, having previously driven Hannibal's brother Hasdrubal out of the Iberian Peninsula.

After the war, Hannibal successfully ran for the office of sufet (community leader). He enacted political and financial reforms to enable the payment

of the war indemnity imposed by Rome; however, those reforms were unpopular with members of the Carthaginian aristocracy and in Rome, and he fled into voluntary exile.

During this time, he lived at the Seleucid court, where he acted as military advisor to Antiochus III the Great in his war against Rome. Antiochus met defeat at the Battle of Magnesia and was forced to accept Rome's terms, and Hannibal fled again, making a stop in the Kingdom of Armenia.

His flight ended in the court of Bithynia. He was afterwards betrayed to the Romans and committed suicide by poisoning himself. He was 64 years old.

Hannibal is often regarded as one of the greatest military strategists in history and one of the greatest generals of Mediterranean antiquity.

7. Julius Caesar

Born June 100 BC, Gaius Julius Caesar was a Roman statesman and military general who played a critical role in the events that led to the demise of the Roman Republic and the rise of the Roman Empire. He was also a historian and author of Latin prose. Both his father and grandfather were also named Gaius Julius Caesar.

In 60 BC, Caesar, Crassus and Pompey formed the First Triumvirate, a political alliance that dominated Roman politics for several years. Their attempts to amass power as Populares were opposed by the

Optimates within the Roman Senate, among them Cato the Younger with the frequent support of Cicero. Caesar rose to become one of the most powerful politicians in the Roman Republic through a number of his accomplishments, notably his victories in the Gallic Wars, completed by 51 BC.

During this time, Caesar became the first Roman general to cross both the English Channel and the Rhine River, when he built a bridge across the Rhine and crossed the Channel to invade Britain.

Caesar's wars extended Rome's territory to Britain and past Gaul. These achievements granted him unmatched military power and threatened to eclipse the standing of Pompey, who had realigned himself with the Senate after the death of Crassus in 53 BC.

With the Gallic Wars concluded, the Senate ordered Caesar to step down from his military command and return to Rome. Leaving his command in Gaul meant losing his immunity from being charged as a criminal for waging unsanctioned wars.

As a result, Caesar found himself with no other options but to cross the Rubicon with the 13th Legion in 49 BC, leaving his province and illegally entering Roman Italy under arms. This began Caesar's civil war, and his victory in the war by 45 BC put him in an unrivalled position of power and influence.

After assuming control of government, Caesar began a program of social and govern-

mental reforms, including the creation of the Julian calendar. He gave citizenship to many residents of far regions of the Roman Republic. He initiated land reform and support for veterans. He centralized the bureaucracy of the Republic and was eventually proclaimed "dictator for life" (Latin: "dictator perpetuo"), giving him additional authority.

His populist and authoritarian reforms angered the elites, who began to conspire against him. On the Ides of March (15 March), 44 BC, Caesar was assassinated by a group of rebellious senators led by Gaius Cassius Longinus, Marcus Junius Brutus and Decimus Junius Brutus, who stabbed him to death.

Interestingly, most reports that Caesar said nothing as he was stabbed, with some saying he said "*Et tu, puero?*" (You too, child?). Yet none of the reports claim that he said anything about Brutus. It's thought that Shakespeare perpetuated the phrase "You too Brutus?" in his play simply because the phrase was popular when he wrote it.

A new series of civil wars broke out and the constitutional government of the Republic was never fully restored. Caesar's adopted heir Octavian, later known as Augustus, rose to sole power after defeating his opponents in the civil war. Octavian set about solidifying his power, and the era of the Roman Empire began.

Much of Caesar's life is



WARRIOR QUEEN: A statue of Boudica in London, a city she once burned to the ground. She is regarded as a British folk heroine.

known from his own accounts of his military campaigns and from other contemporary sources, mainly the letters and speeches of Cicero and the historical writings of Sallust. The later biographies of Caesar by Suetonius and Plutarch are also major sources.

Caesar is considered by many historians to be one of the greatest military commanders in history. His cognomen was subsequently adopted as a synonym for "Emperor"; the title "Caesar" was used throughout the Roman Empire, giving rise to modern cognates such as Kaiser and Tsar. He has frequently appeared in literary and artistic works, and his political philosophy, known as Caesarism, inspired politicians into the mod-

ern era.

6. Boudica

Boudica or Boudicca was a queen of the British Celtic Icení tribe who led an uprising against the occupying forces of the Roman Empire in AD 60 or 61.

Boudica's husband Prasutagus, with whom she had two daughters whose names are unknown, ruled as a nominally independent ally of Rome, and left his kingdom jointly to his daughters and to the Roman emperor in his will.

However, when he died, his will was ignored, and the kingdom was annexed and his property taken. According to Tacitus, a Roman historian and politician, Boudica was flogged

and her daughters raped.

Cassius Dio explains Boudica's response by saying that previous imperial donations to influential Britons were confiscated and the Roman financier and philosopher Seneca called in the loans he had forced on the reluctant Britons.

Now, as history recounts, Boudica was the wrong Celt to mess with. She put together an army of the Icení, the Trinovantes and others, determined to exact revenge on the Romans.

In AD 60 or 61, when the Roman governor Gaius Suetonius Paulinus was campaigning on the island of Mona (modern Anglesey) on the northwest coast of Wales, Boudica led the Icení, the Trinovantes, and others in revolt.

They destroyed Camulodunum (modern Colchester), earlier the capital of the Trinovantes but at that time a colonia, a settlement for discharged Roman soldiers and site of a temple to the former Emperor Claudius.

Upon hearing of the revolt, Suetonius hurried to Londinium (modern London), the 20-year-old commercial settlement that was the rebels' next target. He lacked sufficient numbers to defend the settlement, and he evacuated and abandoned Londinium. Boudica led a very large army of Icení, Trinovantes, and others against a detachment of Legio IX Hispana, defeating them, and burning Londinium and Verulamium.

An estimated 70,000–80,000

Romans and British were then killed in the three cities by those following Boudica, many by torture.

Suetonius, meanwhile, regrouped his forces, possibly in the West Midlands; despite being heavily outnumbered, he decisively defeated the Britons.

The crisis caused Nero to consider withdrawing all Roman forces from Britain, but Suetonius' victory over Boudica confirmed Roman control of the province.

Boudica then either killed herself to avoid capture (according to Tacitus), or died of illness (according to Cassius Dio).

5. Attila the Hun

Attila, frequently called Attila the Hun, was the ruler of the Huns from 434 until his death in March 453. He was also the leader of a tribal empire consisting of Huns, Ostrogoths, and Alans among others, in Central and Eastern Europe.

By all accounts not the nicest man to ever roam the earth. In fact Attila and his armies gave a whole new meaning to the words 'rape and pillage'.

During his reign, he was one of the most feared enemies of the Western and Eastern Roman Empires. He crossed the Danube twice and plundered the Balkans, but was unable to take Constantinople.

His unsuccessful campaign in Persia was followed in 441 by an invasion of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire, the success of which embold-

ened Attila to invade the West. He also attempted to conquer Roman Gaul (modern France), crossing the Rhine in 451 and marching as far as Aurelianum (Orléans) before being stopped in the Battle of the Catalaunian Plains.

He subsequently invaded Italy, devastating the northern provinces, but was unable to take Rome. He planned for further campaigns against the Romans, but died in 453.

After Attila's death, his close adviser, Ardaric of the Gepids, led a Germanic revolt against Hunnic rule, after which the Hunnic Empire quickly collapsed.

What is interesting is the manner in which Attila died. In 453 AD, Attila married a young girl named Ildico. Despite his reputation for ferocity on the battlefield, he tended to eat and drink lightly during large banquets.

On his wedding night, however, he really cut loose, pigging out on food and drink. Sometime during the night he suffered a nosebleed, but was too drunk to notice. He drowned in his own blood and was found dead the next morning.

Attila had lived through hundreds of battles, slaughtered thousands of people, and was probably one of the most feared men of his generation. And yet it was his own nose that killed him.

4. Saladin

An-Nasir Salah ad-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub, known as Saladin,

was the founder of his Ayyubid dynasty and the first Sultan of Syria and Egypt. A Kurdish Muslim who led the Muslim armies victorious against the European Crusaders. At its height his empire included a large part of North African and a chunk of the Middle East as well.

Born a commoner, he worked his way up the ranks of the government by military successes. It also helped that he knew the caliph al-Adid.

He became vizier, then on the caliph's death in 1171 he began to take over the government, at the same time personally leading major military campaigns that resulted in him being declared 'Sultan of Egypt and Syria in 1175.

Despite his warlike tendencies, his chivalrous and noble behaviour earned the respect of even the Christian Crusaders to whom he was a nemesis.

Saladin died of a fever on 4 March 1193, at Damascus, not long after King Richard's departure. In Saladin's possession at the time of his death were one piece of gold and forty pieces of silver.

He had given away his great wealth to his poor subjects, leaving nothing to pay for his funeral. He was buried in a mausoleum in the garden outside the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, Syria.

3. Richard the Lionheart

King of England for ten years, Richard I was better known as Richard the Lionheart because of his reputation as a great mil-



WARRIOR QUEEN: The Genghis Khan Mausoleum in the town of Ejin Horo Banner, Inner Mongolia, China

itary leader and warrior.

He is one of the few English kings remembered mostly by a nickname rather than his number.

Besides being King of England he also ruled as Duke of Normandy, Aquitaine and Gascony, Lord of Cyprus, Count of Poitiers, Anjou, Maine, and Nantes, and was overlord of Brittany at various times during the same period.

By the age of 16, Richard had taken command of his own army, putting down rebellions in Poitou against his father.

Richard was a central Christian commander during the Third Crusade, leading the campaign after the departure of Philip II of France and achieving considerable victories against his Muslim counterpart, Saladin, although he did not retake Jerusalem from Saladin.

Following his accession, he spent very little time, perhaps as little as six months, in England. Most of his life as king was spent on Crusade, in captivity, or actively defending his lands in France.

Rather than regarding his kingdom as a responsibility requiring his presence as ruler, he has been perceived as preferring to use it merely as a source of revenue to support his armies. Nevertheless, he was seen as a pious hero by his subjects.

On 26 March 1199, Richard was hit in the shoulder by a crossbow, and the wound turned gangrenous. Richard asked to have the crossbowman brought before him; called alternatively Pierre (or Peter) Basile, John Sabroz, Dudo, and Bertrand de Gourdon (from the town of Gourdon) by chroniclers, the man turned out (according to

some sources, but not all) to be a boy.

He said Richard had killed his father and two brothers, and that he had killed Richard in revenge. He expected to be executed, but as a final act of mercy Richard forgave him, saying "Live on, and by my bounty behold the light of day", before he ordered the boy to be freed and sent away with 100 shillings. Richard the Lionheart was only 41 when he died.

2. Genghis Khan

Genghis Khan was actually his title, not his name. He was born Temüjin Borjigin and he would go on to found the Mongol Empire. It would go on to become the largest empire ever known.

After founding the Empire and being proclaimed Genghis Khan, he launched the Mongol invasions that conquered most of Eurasia. Campaigns initiated in his lifetime include those against the Qara Khitai, Caucasus, and Khwarazmian, Western Xia and Jin dynasties.

When it came to conducting warfare, Genghis Khan made Attila the Hun seem like a saint.

Genghis Khan and his horde would often carry out large-scale massacres of the civilian populations, especially in the Khwarazmian and Western Xia-controlled lands. They would kill every man, woman, child, chicken, goat and dog - everything.

So bad was their reputation that when a town or city heard that the Khan and his horde was

TOP TEN

on the way they would flee en masse. Genghis Khan was not known for his benevolence.

Genghis Khan died in August 1227, during the fall of Yin-chuan, which is the capital of Western Xia. The exact cause of his death remains a mystery, and is variously attributed to being killed in action against the Western Xia, illness, falling from his horse, or wounds sustained in hunting or battle.

Years before his death, Genghis Khan asked to be buried without markings, according to the customs of his tribe. After he died, his body was returned to Mongolia and presumably to his birthplace in Khentii Aim-ag, where many assume he is buried somewhere close to the Onon River and the Burkhan Khaldun mountain (part of the Kentii mountain range).

According to legend, the funeral escort killed anyone and anything across their path to conceal where he was finally buried. The Genghis Khan Mausoleum, constructed many years after his death, is his memorial, but not his burial site.

It is thought that because of the size of his harem (around 2,000-3,000 women) and the fact that his sons had similar harems as rulers of their own kingdoms, around half of one percent of the entire current population of the earth may well be descended from this one man.

I guess it adds a whole new meaning to the phrase, “Who’s your daddy?”

1. William Wallace

Many of our readers will have seen the movie *Braveheart*. It featured some Australian guy wearing a dress and sporting a face painted blue. Actually, the movie starred Mel Gibson wearing a kilt.

Since his death, Wallace has obtained an iconic status far beyond his homeland. He is the protagonist of Blind Harry’s 15th-century epic poem *The Wallace* and the subject of literary works by Sir Walter Scott and Jane Porter, and of the above mentioned Academy Award-winning film *Braveheart*.

Sir William Wallace was a Scottish knight who became one of the main leaders during the First War of Scottish Independence.

William Wallace was a member of the lesser nobility, but little is definitely known of his family history or even his parentage. The origins of the Wallace surname and its association with southwest Scotland are also far from certain, other than the name’s being derived from the Old English *wylisc* (pronounced “wullish”), meaning “foreigner” or “Welshman”.

It is possible that all the Wallaces in the Clyde area were medieval immigrants from Wales, but as the term was also used for local Cumbric-speaking Strathclyde Welsh, it seems equally likely that the surname refers to people who were seen as being “Welsh” due to their Cumbric language.

The identity of Wallace’s wife is not known for certain. He ap-

parently fell in love with and married a young woman named Marion Braidfute.

Wallace’s violent assassination of the High Sheriff of Larnark was carried out as revenge for the killing of his wife according to Blind Harry’s 15th century poem.

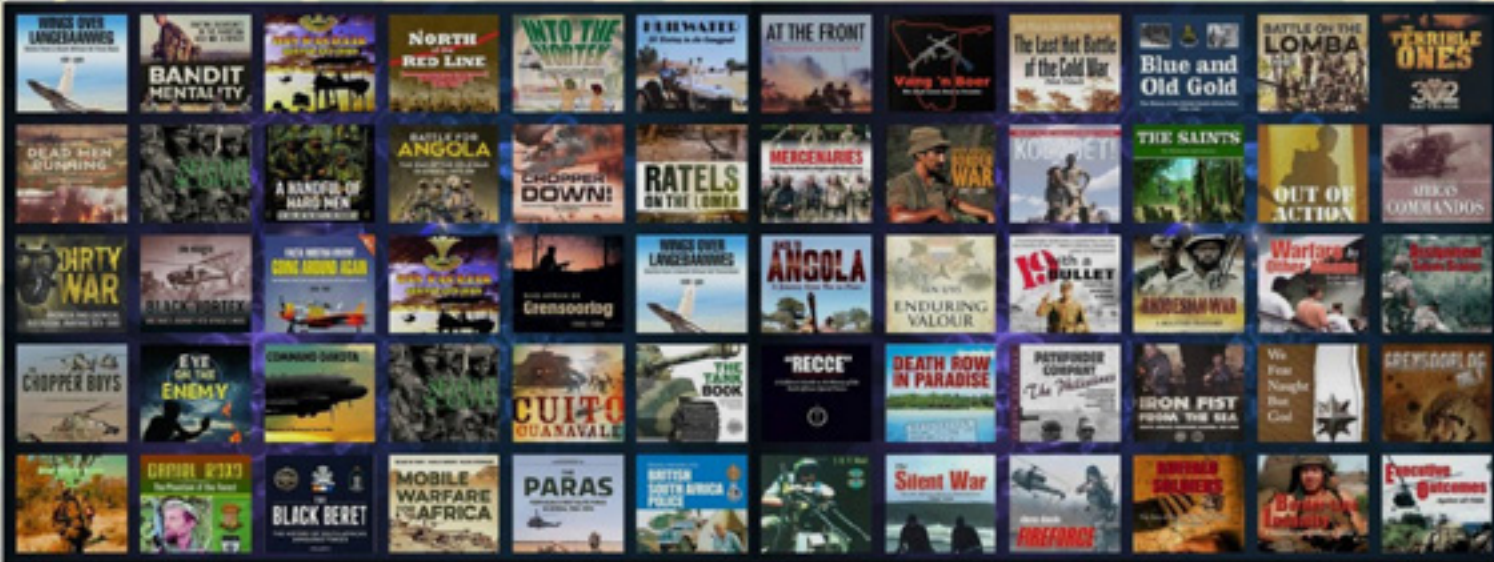
When King Alexander III of Scotland died his granddaughter, Margaret, Maid of Norway, was heir to the throne. She fell ill and died while returning to Scotland.

The lack of a clear heir led to a period known as the “Great Cause”, with several families laying claim to the throne.

With Scotland threatening to descend into civil war, King Edward I of England was invited in by the Scottish nobility to arbitrate. Edward saw this as an opportunity to take over Scotland.

He stormed Berwick-upon-Tweed, sacking the then-Scottish border town. In April, the Scots were defeated at the Battle of Dunbar in East Lothian and by July, Edward had forced John to abdicate.

Along with Andrew Moray, Wallace defeated an English army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in September 1297. He was appointed Guardian of Scotland and served until his defeat at the Battle of Falkirk in July 1298. In August 1305, Wallace was captured in Robroyston, near Glasgow, and handed over to King Edward I of England, who had him hanged, drawn and quartered for high treason and crimes against English civilians.



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

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

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

Special Forces - India

Part fifteen of a series that takes a look at Special Forces units around the world. This month we look at India's Special Forces.

Special Forces of the Republic of India are specifically organised, trained, and are equipped to conduct and support special operations.

The three branches of the Indian Armed Forces have separate special forces units, namely the Para SF of Indian Army, MARCOS of Indian Navy and the Garud Commando Force of Indian Air Force.

However, small groups from these units are deputed in the Armed Forces Special Operations Division, which has a unified command and control

structure.

The Research and Analysis Wing, the external Intelligence agency of India, has its separate special forces unit called Special Group.

Para (Special Forces)

Para (Special Forces), commonly known as Para SF, is the special operations unit of the Indian Army. It is attached to the Parachute Regiment.

The unit's heritage stems

from World War II, with the creation of the 50th Parachute Brigade in October 1941. 9 Para SF, raised in 1966 as 9th Parachute Commando Battalion, is the oldest among the eight Para SF units of the Indian Army.

In the mid-1980s, there were plans to take the three para commando battalions from the Parachute Regiment and bring them together under an individual specialized organisation, the Special

Forces Regiment. However, after several logistic and administrative obstacles, these plans were abandoned, and they continue to be trained and recruited by the Parachute Regiment.

Para (SF) operate in assault teams, which work individually behind enemy lines, whereas the Paratroopers (Airborne) work in large teams and coordinate with other units as their role involves occupying large areas behind enemy lines.

The total strength of the regiment stands at about 10,000, this includes five airborne infantry battalions, one Rashtriya Rifles and two Territorial Army battalion personnel, while the Para (SF) includes between 5,000 and 6,000 personnel. They have to hide their identity from general public.

The Special Group, a confidential special forces unit of the Research and Analysis Wing, recruits soldiers from the Para SF.

The functions of the Para (SF) include:

- Intelligence collection, spe-

cial reconnaissance.

- Subversion and sabotage of vital enemy infrastructure and communications through deep penetration and surgical strikes behind enemy lines.
- Covert and overt/direct action special operations as part of the Indian Army's counter-terrorist and counter-insurgency operations.
- Hostage rescue operations within and beyond Indian territory.

The unit is tasked with missions such as special operations, direct action, hostage rescue, counter-terrorism, unconventional warfare, special reconnaissance, foreign internal



defence, counter-proliferation, counter-insurgency, seek and destroy and personnel recovery.

All Indian paratroopers are volunteers. Some enter the Para regiments fresh from recruitment, while others transfer in from regular army units.

They are put through a probationary period / selection process of three months for Paratroopers (Airborne) Battalions and six months for Para.

In order to be a Para (Special Forces) all personnel are first required to qualify as Paratroopers; once selected the candidates may choose to advance to the SF selection, which takes place twice a year in the spring and the autumn term.

There are four phases to become a Para (SF):

- Basic military training - to start the process a candidate first must join the Indian Army and complete the basic training requirements, which vary according to the training centre and prospective role.
- Pre-Selection - this stage encompasses administrative procedures and the soldier applying for the Para (Air) or Para (SF) and the necessary medical requirements.
- Selection (encompassing a selection process and basic SF training) - the duration of this stage has changed over the years. For the Para (Air) it was initially 28 days which became 45 days after 1999 and is now 90 days (approximately 3 months). The Para (SF) was 90 days long and hasn't been changed since. The intensity also differs according to the prospective battalion. Para (SF) selection takes place twice a year. Probationers undergo extreme physical and mental tests. The drop out rate is high. Those who fail go back to their parent regiment. Those who complete the probation are inducted into the Parachute Regiment. 10 Para (SF) selection: the probation for the 10 Para (SF) starts in the desert, with rigorous physical training being undertaken in desert climate. There is no training manual, so there is no specific routine. Probationers go without food for 4 days, they have to minimize water consumption up to 1 litre water for three days and be able to go without sleep for seven days. A 10 kg sandbag become a permanent buddy for the probationer. Routine speed marches and runs of 10 km, 20 km, 30 km and 40 km with full battle gears are conducted. Probationers must be exceptional navigators in areas where there is no network signal, no roads or landmarks and sand dunes that keep shifting every night. In Parachute training, candidates then complete a 3-week Basic Parachute Course at the Indian Army's Parachute Training School in Agra.
- Advanced SF Training - all those who opt for Para (SF) must first qualify for Para (Air). Although this is also a training phase, this is still part of the selection process. Here the soldiers undertake various different kinds of training with various organ-

isations overseen by the Parachute Regiment Training Centre and the Special Forces Training School. Training includes weapons handling training land navigation and field craft training, infiltration, assault and ambush tactics; close quarter battle (CQB) training; urban warfare; counter-terrorism; unarmed combat training and various other courses across training centres of the Indian defence forces.

Courses are run at various training centres which include:

- Commando Training Camp, Belgaum, Karnataka
- 4-week High-Altitude Commando Course, Parvat Ghat School in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh
- Desert Warfare School, Rajasthan
- High Altitude Warfare School (HAWS), Sonamarg, Kashmir
- Basic Combat Divers course, Indian Navy's Dive School, Kochi
- Counter insurgency, at the Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School (CIJWS) in Vairengte, Mizoram
- Indian Special Forces Training School, Nahan, Himachal Pradesh
- Combat free-fall training (HAHO and HALO) at the Parachute Training School, Agra.

Para (SF) personnel, like other parachute troops in the Indian military, wear a maroon beret. In addition, they wear a "Special Forces" tab on each shoulder. Personnel who serve in the Para (SF) are allowed to wear the "Balidan" (Sacrifice) patch



Para (SF)



Marcos



**Garud
Commando Force**

on their right pocket below the name plate, which is similar to the SAS beret insignia; only para commandos are allowed to wear the patch. Para (SF) personnel may grow beards, as this allows them to blend in with the civilian population, especially in Jammu and Kashmir. The insignia on their beret is drawn from the near identical insignia of the British Special Air Service.

MARCOS

The Marine Commandos, abbreviated to MARCOS and officially called the Marine Commando Force (MCF), is the special forces unit of the Indian Navy that is responsible for conducting special operations.

MARCOS was founded in February 1987. MARCOS are capable of operating in all types of environments; at sea, in air and on land.

The force has gradually acquired experience and an international reputation for professionalism. The MARCOS regularly undertake specialised maritime operations in Jammu and Kashmir through the Jhelum River and Wular Lake, a 65 square kilometres freshwater lake, and conduct counter-insurgency operations in the region.

MARCOS are reputedly called the Dadhiwala Fauj (The Bearded Army) by militants in Kashmir, owing to their bearded disguise.

Some MARCOS units are a part of the tri-services Armed Forces Special Operations Division.

The MARCOS are capable of undertaking operations in

all types of terrain but are specialised in maritime operations. The force has undertaken numerous joint exercises with special forces from around the world.

The MARCOS has about 2,000 personnel though the exact number remains classified. Operations undertaken by MARCOS usually remains classified.

As a specialised force, the MARCOS is responsible for cover operations at the strategic and the tactical level.

MARCO operations are usually conducted in support of naval forces, although MARCOS are also deployed in other domains.

The responsibilities of MARCOS has evolved with time. Some of the duties of MARCOS include:

- Providing support to amphibious operations.
- Special surveillance and amphibious reconnaissance operations.
- Clandestine operations inside hostile territory, including diving operations and special raids.
- Direct action
- Hostage rescue operations.
- Counter-terrorism operations.
- Asymmetric warfare.
- Foreign internal defence.

All MARCOS personnel are males selected from the Indian Navy when they are in their early 20s and have to go through a stringent selection process and training. The selection standards are extremely high. Training is a continuous process. All MARCOS personnel are free-fall qualified (HALO/HAHO).

The pre-training selection process is made up of two parts. Indian Navy personnel who want to join MARCOS must undergo a three-day physical fitness and aptitude test. Within this process, 80% of the applicants are screened out. A further screening process known as 'hell's week' is similar to the United States Navy SEALs' "Hell Week".

This involves a high degree of physical exercise and sleep deprivation. After this process, actual training begins. Around 98% of the volunteers who enrol fail to fully qualify as MARCOS.

Garud Commando Force

The Garud Commando Force is the special forces unit of the Indian Air Force. It was formed in September 2004 and has a current strength of over 1,500 personnel. The unit derives its name from Garuda, a divine bird-like creature in Hinduism.

Garud is tasked with the protection of critical Air Force bases and installations; search and rescue during peace and hostilities and disaster relief during calamities. Presently, Garuds are deployed in Congo as part of the UN peace keeping operations.

Garuds have diverse responsibilities. Besides base protection force to protect airfields and key assets in hostile environments, some advanced Garud units are trained like Army Para Commandos and the Naval MARCOS to undertake missions deep behind enemy lines. Note, that the security of IAF installations like radars, airfields and other establishments in border

areas is generally performed by the Air Force Police and the Defence Security Corps (DSC).

Garud personnel are enlisted as Airmen within the Indian Air Force rank structure. The entire force is currently under the command of a Wing Commander rank officer. The Garud force is organized into fifteen "Flights" - a flight is roughly the equivalent of a company in an infantry battalion, and is commanded by a Flight Lieutenant. Each flight is based at various Air Force stations, where they train and provide security.

Garud trainees undergo a 72-week. The Basic Training course, which is the longest among all the Indian special forces but it also includes basic training. The total duration of training before a trainee can qualify as a fully operational Garud is around three years.

The initial phase is a three-month probationary training which filters in the promising candidates for the next phases of training. This phase, which usually has a high attrition (Drop-out) rate is conducted at the Garud Regimental Training Centre located at Hindon, Ghaziabad which is near to New Delhi.

The subsequent phase of special operations training is imparted by the Special Group of the Special Frontier Force, the army special forces and NSG. Those who qualify, proceed to the Parachute Training School (PTS) at Agra to complete the basic airborne phase. Trainees are trained along with paratroopers of the Indian Army.

The remainder of the phases concentrates on niche fields

like jungle and snow survival, demolition, etc. Garuds also train at the diving school of the Indian Navy and the Army's Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School (CIJWS). The final phase of training is active operations on being attached to Special Force Units of the Indian Army, which helps the Garuds in gaining operational experience.

After induction, the commandos also undergo advanced training, including anti-hijack and counter-insurgency training, jungle and snow survival techniques, specialized weapon handling and advanced driving skills.

Other Special Forces units

The Special Group (SG)

The Special Group (SG) is the special forces unit of India's foreign intelligence agency, Research and Analysis Wing, and is tasked to undertake covert operations.

The unit is considered to be composed of the most elite soldiers of India and is responsible for conducting operations with which the Government of India may not wish to be overtly associated.

Since the unit is confidential in nature, most of the information about its activities is highly classified.

The responsibilities of the Special Group includes clandestine intelligence operations and covert operations, with which the Government of India may not wish to be overtly associated. The SG is also responsible for developing tactics and training procedures for other special forces of India.



FREE FALLING: A member of Para (SF) jumps from an Indian Army helicopter during a training jump.

The Special Group is considered to be the most capably trained special forces unit of India and is considered to be very well equipped.

Special Frontier Force

The Special Frontier Force, also known as Establishment 22, is a confidential special forces unit of the Research and Analysis Wing which was created on 14 November 1962 to undertake operations against the Chinese People's Liberation Army. It consists primarily of Tibetan people who are tasked to undertake operations in the tough terrain of the Himalayas and Tibet.

National Security Guard

The National Security Guard, which is a specialized counter-terrorism Federal Contingency Force. The NSG was formally created in 1986. It is modelled on the basis of the British Special Air Service and

the German GSG 9.

The NSG are popularly referred to as the 'Black Cats' due to their distinct black uniforms. It consists of the following two elements:

- SAG (Special Action Group), which recruits personnel from the Indian Army.
- SRG (Special Rangers Group), which recruits personnel from the Central Armed Police Forces.

Special Protection Group

The Special Protection Group is a specialised unit which provides protection to former Prime Ministers and the current Prime Minister of India, along with their family members for a minimum duration of 5 years. It was set up in 1985 after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

COBRA

COBRA, which stands for

Commando Battalion for Resolute Action, is a specialized jungle warfare unit of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to counter the internal insurgency in India. It is considered the best paramilitary law enforcement unit in India.

It has been actively deployed to counter the Naxalite-Maoist insurgency in India across various states since its inception in 2008.

Force One (Mumbai Police)

Force One is a specialised counter terrorism unit of the Mumbai Police on the lines of National Security Guards (NSG).

It is tasked with guarding the Mumbai metropolitan area, one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world. It was formed as a response to the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.

Greyhounds (Police)

Greyhounds is a police special forces unit operating in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and belongs to the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Police departments. Greyhounds specialises in anti-insurgency operations against Naxalite and Maoist terrorists.

Several senior Indian paramilitary and police officers have described the Greyhounds as the best anti-insurgency force that specialises in anti-Maoist operations and as experts in jungle warfare.

The Zimmerman Telegram

What was the Zimmerman Telegram and why was it, probably, the most significant Intelligence coup of World War I? By Paul Rosslee.

Before we go to that fateful day, 17th January 1917; let us begin on the 4th August 1914, the day that Britain declared war on Germany.

In the early hours of that morning, the British cable-ship Telconia, already stationed a few kilometres off the Dutch coast, cut the five main German transatlantic cables running through the English Channel, effectively cutting Germany's cable communication with the rest of the world. The burden of communication now fell on Nauen, a powerful radio station on the outskirts of Berlin. Unfortunately nothing stops an enemy from intercepting wireless messages, which is exactly what the cryptanalysis section of the British Admiralty (Directorate Naval Intelligence), known as "Room 40", run by Captain (later admiral) William Reginald ("Blinker") Hall, was able to do.

America's chosen position was one of strict neutrality which, however, did not stop her supplying Britain with arms and ammunition which she so sorely needed, or, as Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, British ambassador to America cynically said: "The majority want to make money and not make war".

President Woodrow Wilson had, through his personal envoy, Colonel Edward House, attempted, on four separate occasions between 1914 and 1916,

to make a negotiated peace between the powers but had been rebuffed each time. The Germans were prepared to accept peace terms, if they retained all that they occupied, the return of their captured colonies and be paid war reparation (this, from a country that started the war!); the Allies were not prepared to accept less than total surrender.

In 1915 Germany began sinking unarmed merchant ships on the open seas in an attempt to stop supplies reaching England. As these were often American ships (with American crews) President Wilson sent a sharply worded Diplomatic Note to Germany, which was simply ignored – as Lloyd George put it: "The click of the President's typewriter had no deadlier rattle behind it"!

On the 7th May 1915 the Lusitania was sunk with the loss of over 100 American lives. President Wilson again sent a Note of protest to Germany, Colonel House was in London at the time on another of his unsuccessful missions. His personal opinion was (by now) that America should enter the war on the side of the allies. This was not echoed by President Wilson who was determined to end the war with a negotiated peace.

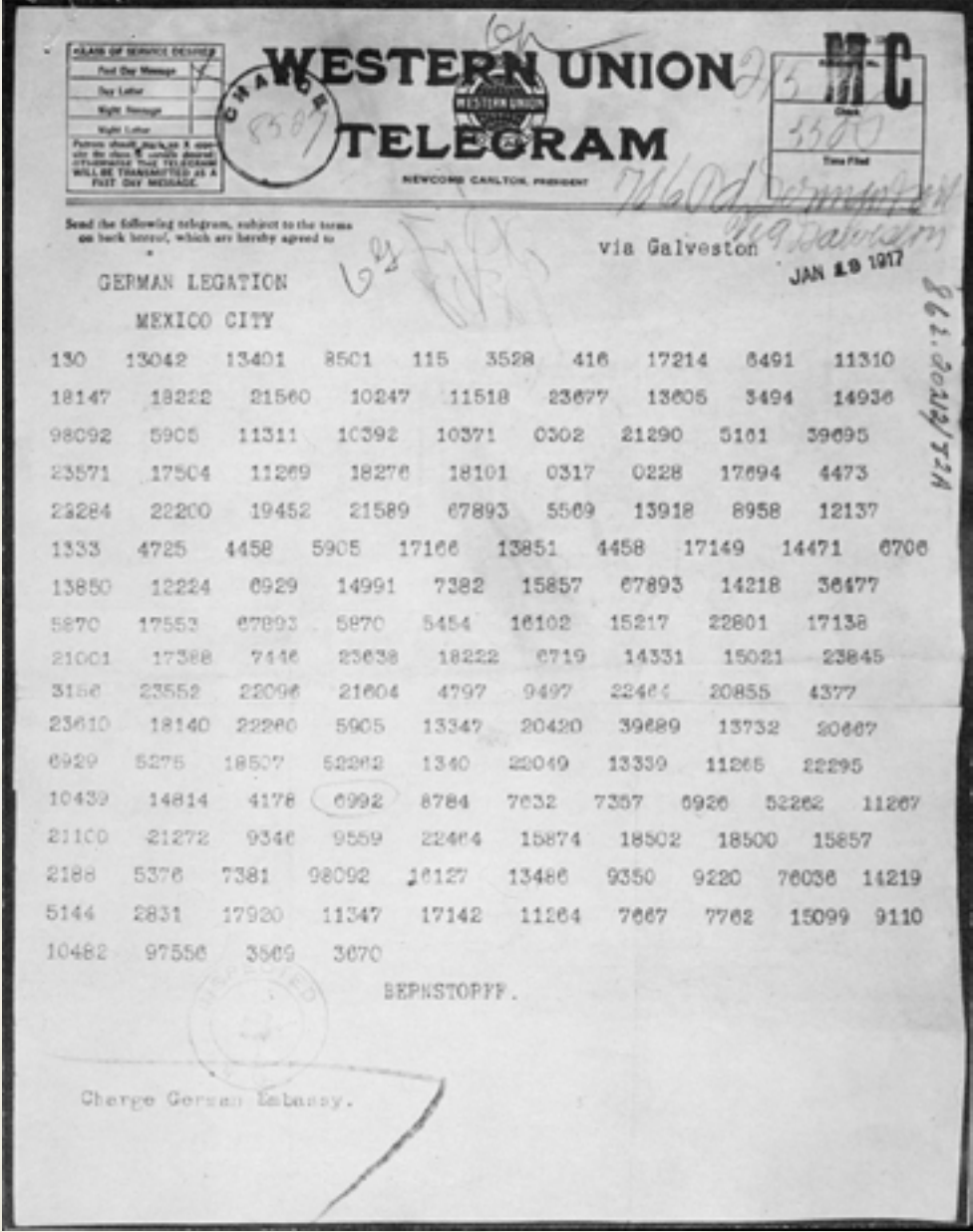
Despite all this, when the German Foreign Office appealed to the United States for use of their cable for diplomatic messages, as their telegraph cable

had been cut, President Wilson agreed, in the belief that such cooperation would create good relations with Germany, and that more efficient German-American diplomacy could assist Wilson's goal of a negotiated end to the war. The Germans would hand in messages to the United States embassy in Berlin, which were relayed to the embassy in Denmark and then to the United States by American telegraph operators. However, the United States placed the condition that all messages had to be in clear.

By 1917 both sides, the "Allies" (Britain, France, Russia, Italy) and the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Ottoman Empire) were exhausted, millions had died on either side without appreciable gains. Germany was starving because of a successful naval blockade on shipping by Britain, who in turn, was slowly being strangled by German's submarine campaign which was sending food and military supplies to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. Fresh ideas were needed, which is exactly what Arthur Zimmerman, German Foreign Minister, had.

DNI had intercepted a long, non-military signal, from Berlin to the German Embassy in Washington and on the morning of 17th January 1917, was handed to a cryptologist, Nigel de Grey, to decode.

When eventually decoded, it was found that the signal was



The Zimmerman telegram

in two parts. The first part, was to inform Count von Bernstorff, German Ambassador in the United States, of the German intention to begin "unrestricted" submarine warfare as from 1 February 1917 (and only deliver this intention on the morning of 1 February to the US government) and part two was to be forwarded to Ambassador Heinrich von Eckhardt, German Ambassador to Mexico and to inform him that:

We intend to begin on the first of February unrestricted submarine warfare. We shall endeavour in spite of this to keep the United States of America

neutral. In the event of this not succeeding, we make Mexico a proposal of alliance on the following basis: make war together, make peace together, generous financial support and an understanding on our part that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The settlement in detail is left to you. You will inform the President of the above most secretly as soon as the outbreak of war with the United States of America is certain, and add the suggestion that he should, on his own initiative, invite Japan to immediate adherence and at the same time

mediate between Japan and ourselves. Please call the President's attention to the fact that the ruthless employment of our submarines now offers the prospect of compelling England in a few months to make peace.

Signed, ZIMMERMANN

This proposal was not as farcical as it sounds. Japan had supplied arms and ammunition to Mexico during her revolution in 1900 and Germany had, since 1915, been attempting to promote a war between Mexico and the United States and had sent Victoriano Huerta (a Mexican rebel leader) \$12 million for that purpose, which would have again tied down American forces and slowed the export of American arms to the Allies. German High Command also believed that, if America joined the war, she would then be able "strangle" Britain before an American army could be trained and brought to Europe.

Mexico was America's main trouble spot and where twice, since 1911, American forces had entered. General Pershing, with his force of 6,000 men, had only been ordered out in April 1916 after attempting to capture Pancho Villa, another Mexican rebel.

On the 16th January 1917, the German Government approached the U.S. Ambassador, James Gerard, with a request to accept the telegram in coded form (and authorised by Col House on behalf of the President) was transmitted by diplomatic cable first to Copenhagen and then to London, for onward transmission over transatlantic cable to Washington.

At 16:00 on the 31st January

1917 Ambassador Bernstorff informed American Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, of Germany's decision to begin unrestricted submarine warfare from the next day 1st February 1917. This caused diplomatic relations to be broken off on the 3rd January 1917 when the German Embassy was sent back.

Many ask why, despite that the disclosure of the Telegram would sway public opinion in the United States further against Germany, Hall waited three weeks before he handed the deciphered copy to the Foreign Office (Lord Balfour)? There are two probable reasons :

1. It took long to decipher; and
2. it had to be handled in such a manner that the American Government would not realise that Britain was reading her "mail".

The telegram was then (allegedly) handed to Lord Balfour by Admiral Hall on the 5th February 1917 who then contacted Walter Hines Page, the US Ambassador to Britain and on "Friday, February 23 (1917), the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs formally presented the Zimmerman telegram to the American Ambassador" [The Zimmerman Telegram, Barbara W. Tuchman, May 1966].

On the 10th February 1917 Sir Thomas Hohler, (then British ambassador in Mexico, in his autobiography) apparently obtained a copy of the telegram by bribing an employee of Western Union in Mexico City and forwarded it onto Adm Hall. This copy could now be shown to the American Ambassador without any embarrassing confessions.

In any event Admiral Hall, on 19 February, Hall showed the telegram to Edward Bell, secretary of the United States Embassy in London. Bell was at first incredulous and thought it to be a forgery. Once Bell was convinced the telegram was genuine, he became enraged and it was arranged that Lord Balfour would present the telegram to Ambassador Page in person, so as to make it "country to country".

Lord Balfour then handed the telegram over to Ambassador Page on the 23rd February 1917, in what he later said, "was the most dramatic moment of my life". Page, in turn forwarded it to Washington where it was received on 24th February at 09:00. Lansing, who had been alerted to an important telegram was waiting and immediately took it to President Wilson; who in turn told Lansing to thank Balfour for (the) "information of such inestimable value.....so marked an act of friendliness on part of the British government". Wilson also instructed Lansing to inform the press and so Lansing gave the draft to E. Hood of Associated Press.

While popular feeling was somewhat anti-German (America just received news of the loss of the Laconia), there was also a notable Anti-British sentiment in the United States, particularly among German and Irish Americans; many other Americans simply wished to avoid the conflict in Europe.

When the story broke, Thursday 1st March 1917, it was widely believed at first, to be an elaborate forgery perpetrated by British intelligence, see-

ing that the public was told (the cover story) that the telegram had been stolen in Mexico.

This belief, which was not restricted to pacifist and pro-German lobbies, was promoted by German diplomats as well as some American newspapers (especially the Hearst press empire, who on the 2nd March 1917, personally told his editors that the telegram was "a fake and a forgery").

Confirmation came (ironically enough) via the Hearst newspaper, a few days later, when William Bayard Hale, Berlin's Hearst correspondent (and a paid German agent on a \$15,000/year retainer) said to Zimmerman : "Of course your excellency will deny this story!" to which Zimmerman answered: "I cannot deny it...it is true". This was followed when, on 29th March 1917, Zimmermann gave a speech in the Reichstag in which he admitted the telegram was genuine.

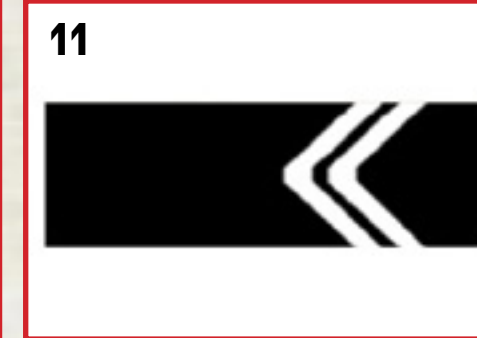
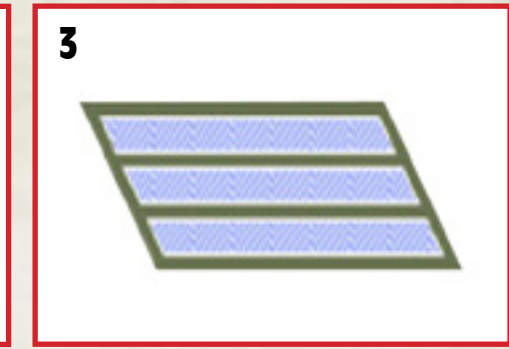
On the 9th March 1917, after a further three ships were sunk by German submarines, Wilson invoked his Executive Authority, overthrew a Congress decision and ordered that merchant ships were to be armed.

On 2nd April 1917, at 20:30, America declared war on Germany.....and the rest, so they say, is History.



Military ranks

Not an easy one this month. We show you 15 military ranks. You tell what rank it is, and which army, navy or air force it's from. As a hint, all of these have featured in previous issues of Military Despatches. Answers on page 86.



Show a little respect

When Ryan Murphy had the opportunity to visit Auschwitz he was left feeling sick to the stomach. Not just by what had happened at Auschwitz, but by the behaviour of the tourists visiting this place of sorrow.

One of the major benefits of being a journalist is that it gave me the opportunity to travel.

While I never served in the military, I have spent a large portion of my life in war zones, covering conflicts and wars.

This has led to me having an interest, you could even call it a passion, for all things military. And this includes military history.

I am a firm believer in the words of philosopher George Santayana who said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

One aspect of World War II that I've had a morbid fascination with is the Holocaust. It was not the first genocide in history, and by no means the last.

Yet this crime against humanity was not committed by some primitive tribe where the spoils of war included, rape, pillage and eating the prisoners.

This was committed by a national that gave the world such great philosophers like Einstein, Kant, Nietzsche, Hegel and Heidegger. Musicians such as Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn, and Wagner.

The genocide committed by the Nazi's was not something that happened in the frenzy of war. It was calculated, planned and carried out with ruthless efficiency. And it's primary goal was the extermination of the Jewish population of Europe. The genocide of the Jews of Europe was the Third Reich's "Final Solution to the Jewish question".

Many people do not realise that there were different types of camps used by the Nazis.

The first Nazi camps were erected in Germany in March 1933 immediately after Hitler became Chancellor.

Concentration camps housed German Communists, Socialists, Social Democrats, Roma, Jehovah Witnesses, homosexuals, and persons accused of 'asocial' or socially 'deviant' behaviour by the Germans.

They were guarded by *SS-Totenkopfverbände* (SS-TV) and the camps were later expanded to hold Jews, Romanis/Sintis, Serbs, Soviet POWs, Poles, disabled people, and clergymen.

The Nazis also built labour camps and transit camps and by the end of the war there were camps in Germany, Poland, Serbia, Norway, Ukraine, Italy, Belgium, France, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Czech Republic and the Netherlands.

It was in 1941 that the Nazis started to build new camps as part of their 'Final Solution'.

These camps were not built to hold prisoners. They were known as *Todeslagers* (death



DEATH CAMPS: A diagram shows the six extermination camps in occupied Poland.

camps) or *Vernichtungslagers* (extermination camps) and their purpose was the systematic murder of those that entered the camp. A total of six death camps were built in Poland.

The first extermination camp built, and probably the most infamous, was Auschwitz. There were actually two camps - Auschwitz, which was a labour camp, and Auschwitz II Birkenau, which was an extermination camp.

The other camps were Majdanek, Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka.

There were also two other extermination camps, Maly Trostnits in Belarus and Sajmiste in Serbia.

Today Auschwitz is a UNESCO World Heritage Centre and every year thousands of tourists visit the site.

When I visited Poland one of my main goals was to travel to Auschwitz and experience in person a place that I had read so much about.

It is hard to describe my feeling as I walked up the train track that leads through the main gate into Auschwitz. The sign over the gate reads *Arbeit macht frei* (Work sets your free) gave me the shivers.

I stood on the ramp where the trains would arrive, usually packed with Jews. It was here that the selection took place. The arrivals would have to form two lines, one for the men and the other for the women and children. They were given a cursory examination by SS doctors. Those considered unfit for work, including young children, the elderly, pregnant women and the infirm, were

immediately sent to the gas chambers.

The others would be sent to the labour camp where they would be worked to death.

Those sent to the gas chambers would be stripped naked and their hair was shaved off. They were told that they would be taking showers to disinfect them. The gas chambers were disguised to give the appearance of being shower rooms.

At the end of the war, as the Soviets approached, the Nazis destroyed the gas chambers to try and conceal the evidence. One destroyed gas chamber at Auschwitz was reconstructed after the war to stand as a memorial.

As I stood in this place of horror a young couple decided that this was the perfect time to start kissing and fondling.

When we visited the reconstructed crematorium where fifty-two ovens were used to burn the bodies of up to 6,000 people every 24 hours, people were taking selfies and making insensitive comments.

Later when we visited some of the buildings and were shown rooms filled with suitcases, reading glasses and shoes, our guide asked us not to take any photographs because these items belonged to people that had been murdered. Many people took out their phones and began snapping photographs.

People if you do visit Auschwitz please show some respect. It is not an amusement park or a place for a fun day's outing. If you can't show respect for those that suffered and died in this place of sorrow, then don't go there.



The Ninja - fact or fiction

Who were the ninja? Were they real, or something dreamt up by Hollywood script writers? In this article we look at the historic ninja and try to separate fact from fiction.

Watch any martial arts movie that features ninjas and you're sure to learn a thing or two.

First of all they are easy to spot. They are always dressed in black, their face covered by a hood, and they wear *tabi* (split-toed boots) on their feet.

They could jump from the ground to the top of a five-storey building in a single leap.

In a puff of smoke they could change into a bird and fly away from their enemies. They could walk on water.

They were ruthless and nearly every one of them was evil.

While it all sounds perfect for

a Hollywood action movie it's all a load of codswallop. Yet the ninja really did exist in Japan.

Ninjutsu (the art used by the ninja) was founded and developed in Japan more than one thousand years ago.

At the time Japan was divided into many prefectures or provinces. Each one of these was ruled by a *daiymo* or warlord.

These warlords were the heads of *samurai* families and they controlled large armies. The samurai lived by a very strict code known as *bushido* (the way of the warrior).

Although Japan had an emperor, he was a figure-head and did not rule the country. The person that actually ruled Japan was the *shogun* (supreme warlord). Japan was in a constant state of war as various *daiymo* plotted and battled to become *shogun*.

The majority of *daiymo* were ruthless and let nothing stand in their way. If you were not a *samurai* you were considered as being less than worthless.

If you were not born into a samurai family there was no way that you could become one.

There was no school where

you could train to become a samurai.

The Iga and Koga prefectures of Japan were left alone by the *daiyos*. Dominated by mountains and swamps, they were not considered worth fighting over.

These two regions became refuge to a group of people known as *yamabushi* (mountain mystics). They studied an art known as *shugendo* and they devoted their lives to studying the forces of nature. They were experts in using plants to make medicines and potions.

If a *daiymo* was killed in battle it was considered as being a great disgrace for the *samurai* in his army. After all, they had allowed him to be killed.

As a way of atoning for this disgrace, the samurai were supposed to commit *seppuku* (ritual suicide).

To a samurai nothing was more important than *giri* (duty). First and foremost duty to his lord, then to his country, then to whichever god he believed in, and finally to his family.

The samurai had a saying, "*Gimu wa yama yori mo omoi, shi wa hane yori mo karui*". (Duty is heavier than a mountain, while death is lighter than a feather).

Most *samurai* would commit *seppuku* without thought. Yet there were those few that had second thoughts. Especially if they believed that their *daiymo* had been stupid and had not

taken advice before charging into a battle that he knew he would lose.

They decided that committing suicide was not a good idea. The problem was that this was considered a great loss of face, and for a Japanese person there is nothing worse than to lose face.

These samurai would become outcasts and would often be killed on sight. They became known as *ronin* (masterless samurai).

Most of the *ronin* fled to either Iga or Koga where they met up with the *yamabushi*. They began to form groups, exchanging and sharing their knowledge and skills.

During this time there was a great deal of upheaval in China. A revolution began and all the intellectuals and educated people were being killed. Many of them fled across the sea to Japan.

Much the same thing was happening in Tibet, where the Tantric monks were also being hunted down and killed. They fled to China, and from there to Japan.

On arriving in Japan they found that conditions were no better. If anything, they were worse.

The Japanese regarded them as being lower than scum and they were more often than not killed on sight. Those that did survive also found themselves in the Iga and Koga regions.

The Chinese brought with them where fighting skills, as well as a vast knowledge of chemistry, including the use of gunpowder.

The Tibetans brought with

their own fighting skills as well as their esoteric knowledge learnt over thousands of years.

It was not surprising that they teamed up with the *yamabushi* and *ronin*. From these combined skills was born the art that became known as ninjutsu.

These groups living in Iga and Koga formed what were known as *ryu* (schools or family groups). Their prime goal was survival and they did whatever was necessary to protect themselves and their families.

Because they were not bound by the code of *bushido*, they would often employ tactics that the samurai would never dream of using.

As they *ryu* became more powerful and had more influence, they began to come into contact with various *daiymo* and their armies. Many *daiymo* would hire ninja *ryu* to carry out certain tasks for them. Tasks that, due to the strict code of *bushido*, they were unable to carry out themselves.

As the centuries of Japanese history continued to unfold, the ninja families became more and more involved in their reputation as military specialists, and less attached to the original mystical understanding that their ancestors fought to protect.

The increased demand for ninja agents, resulting from the increased activity of *daiymo*, required a training system that could produce espionage or combat specialists in the shortest amount of time.

Physical tricks came to replace the developed natural abilities of the original ninja warriors. Systems of combat

skills based on the deception of the senses became the ninja's prime weapon, and the invisible warriors, once motivated by love for their families, came to be feared for the ruthlessness of their determination.

As a profession, ninjutsu drew on two primary bodies of knowledge as a basis for its teachings:

- *Hei-ho* or combat strategy to the greater degree, and
- *Bu-jutsu* or warrior arts to the lesser degree.

From the 13th through to the 17th centuries in Japan, countless ninja families operated out of a wide range of motivations and levels of sophistication.

Each family or clan had its own specific requirements for status as a ninja agents.

Some groups stressed physical skills. Some stressed mental alertness. Other systems stressed political contacts. The list is long and extensive.

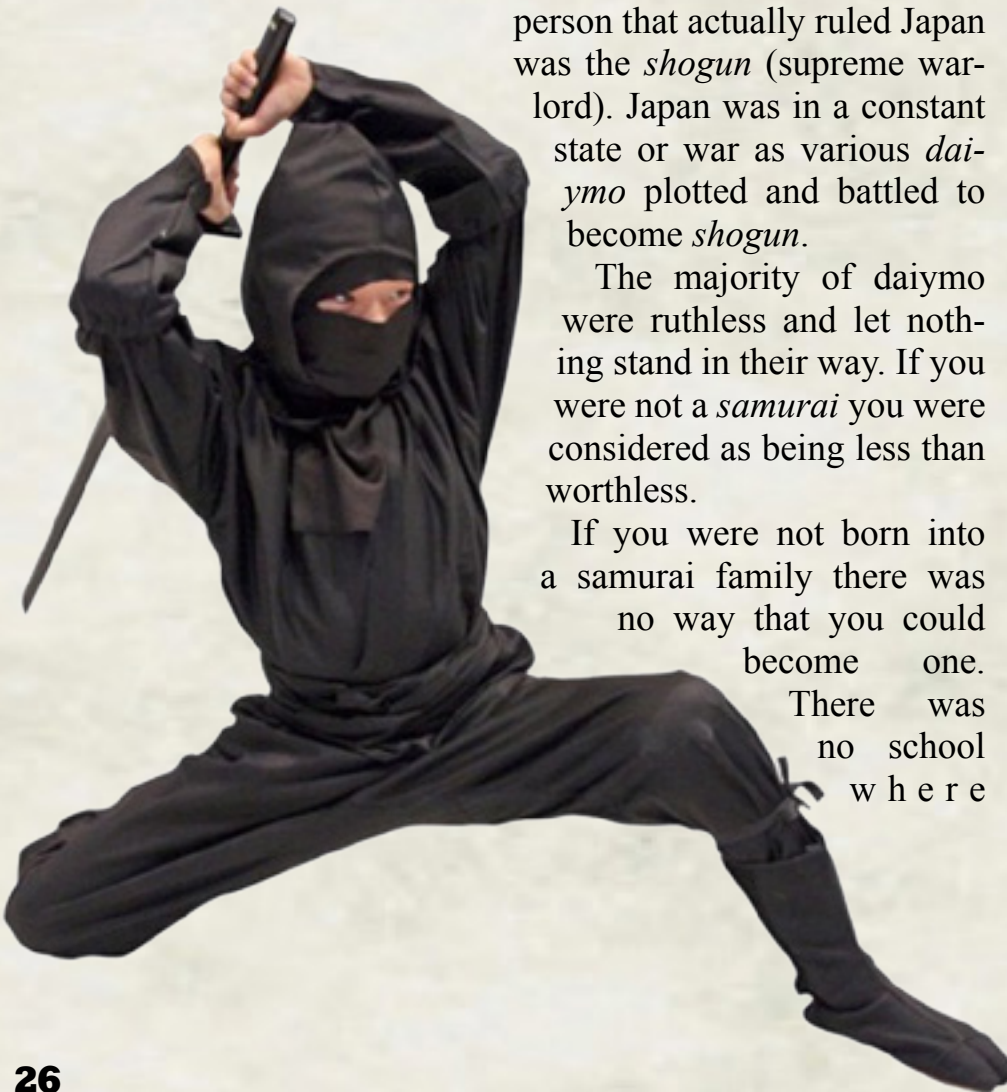
There are, however, eight fundamental areas in which all true ninja seemed to be proficient, regardless of family affiliation.

Tai-jutsu (Body skills)

The ninja was trained in the techniques of unarmed combat, including strikes, throws, locks and escapes. His fighting system was based on natural body movements and knowledge of the human body's weak points. Body skills also included leaping, tumbling, climbing and methods of silent movement.

Ken-po (Sword skills)

The ninja's sword was his primary weapon and it was usually shorter in length than the customary *samurai katana* swords of the period. Consequently a special method of close fight-



ing developed with the short straight blade.

In addition the ninja sword was often used for purposes other than combat. The *saya* (scabbard) had a steel tip that could be used for digging.

The ninja would often fill the bottom of the *saya* with *metsu-bushi* (blinding powder). This was made from crushed peppercorns and iron fillings. As the ninja drew his sword he would flick the scabbard across his opponents face, spraying the blinding powder into his eyes and blinding him.

Yari-jutsu (Spear skills)

Medium range fighting was carried out with a spear - a two or three edged blade mounted on a two to three metre pole. The Japanese spear was rarely thrown, and it was most often used in straight, direct thrusts between the pieces of *samurai* armour.

Shuriken-jutsu (Throwing blades)

For long range or individual targets the ninja used small, concealed blades which he threw at the hands or face of his adversary.

The ninja's throwing blades could be straight (*bo shuriken*) or multi-pointed designs and the could be thrown accurately of distances up to nine metres.

They were designed to injure or distract an opponent, not to kill them.

Ka-jutsu (Fire and explosives)

Useful for creating diversions, forcing evacuations, and taking out walls and doors, fire, smoke and explosives found many uses in the arsenal of the ninja families. Many ninja were skilled at preparing their own explosives and several of the larger ninja organ-

isations had their own chemists to produce large quantities of explosives.

In a culture such as Japan, where wood, paper and rice straw were relied upon for construction, the threat of fire was a potent one well used by ninja agents.

Yu gei (Traditional cultural arts)

The ninja was familiar with the traditional entertainment arts of the time, and he was often proficient in several of the arts himself.

Painting, the tea ceremony, flower arranging, playing musical instruments, telling jokes and stories, and performing Japanese dances are a few of the arts popular in the ninja's realm.

Besides the personal development afforded by them, a knowledge and appreciation of the arts was often needed to fill out a character identity being assumed for espionage purposes.

Kyo mon (Practical education)

During every active day of a ninja's life he was exposed to new and unfamiliar surroundings and experiences. His learning system had to be general enough and broad enough in scope to provide him with a means of handling any situation that came along.

Much of the ninja's practical knowledge of the world could be labelled as working common sense or "awareness". This is not the type of information learnt from books or covered by conventional educational systems, and so ninja families relied on word-of-mouth teaching and instructional experiences to pass on the knowledge of past

generations.

Considered far below the elite *samurai* status with its rigid codes of honour and propriety, the ninja were free to apply the naturalist teachings of their mystical heritage.

The philosophy of ninjutsu stressed the interrelated oneness of all things in the universe. Since man is not big enough to view the entire universe, the philosophy explains, the infinite number of its parts appear to man as the "ten thousand things," or everything that seems to exist independently.

To give some perspective to the view, all things were seen in classifications of *in* and *yo*, or negative and positive manifestations such as darkness and light, heaven and earth, male and female, firmness and softness, wetness and dryness, contraction and expansion, and endless combinations of extreme polarities.

More than merely grouping opposites under a simplistic theory, the *in* and *yo* classification scheme provided an understanding to free the ninja from the limits of viewing things as right or wrong, good and bad, or fair and unfair.

Any quality inherent in a thing or situation was based merely on its relationship to other manifestations of the same quality.

It is sometimes difficult for westerners to accept or even understand this lack of rigidity in what we would call morality or principles, and indeed this concept of flexibility is in direct opposition to the theories and philosophies of many contemporary martial art systems.

The ninja's outlook on his



THE SIGN: The symbol for ninjutsu. It comprises two Japanese *kanji* (written characters). The top one is the symbol for blade, the lower one is the symbol for heart. It is pronounced as *shinobi*.

purpose in life places major emphasis on the total picture. The ever-changing results are far more significant than their means of attainment alone.

The historical ninja's primary political contribution was to maintain balance and harmony in society in the most effective manner possible. If bold cavalry charges involving thousands of soldiers was considered positive aspects of war, capturing the battle codes of the enemy or the enemy commander himself was considered a negative balance in the war activity. What the enemy would call "deceit, cowardice and treachery," the ninja would call "strategy, cunningness and wit."

ningness and wit."

Generations ago, when the ninja families of Japan were at the height of their power, membership in the ninjutsu tradition was determined solely by birth.

The highly secret and invisible structure of the organisations prevented outsiders from working their way in, and left only the offspring of the ninja themselves as possible candidates for the roles of agent or officer in the family profession.

At the head of each clan or organisation presided a *jonin* director or commander-in-chief. Half philosopher, half warrior, the *jonin* took on the responsibility for determining to whom his ninja would lend their support.

In most ninja clans the identity of the *jonin* was concealed from the ordinary agents and operatives as a security precaution. The *jonin* could then observe the workings of history from a viewpoint free from the bias of his expectations of others, and free from concerns of personal safety.

This role was passed down within the immediate family of the original founder, generation after generation. As children of the *jonin* grew, they were exposed to the teachings and experiences which would then develop their abilities to view the world in a philosophical manner, understanding the motivations of others, and direct the operations of a widely dispersed, highly illegal, and heavily guarded organisation, to which one of them would succeed as leader.

Serving directly beneath the *jonin* heading each ninja clan

was a group of *chunin* middle men or executive officers. These men were responsible for interpreting and carrying out the orders of the *jonin*.

Acting as a go-between dividing the field agents from the head of the organisation, the *chunin* ensured the anonymity of the *jonin*, and prevented double-crosses or dangerous breaches of security.

The *chunin* possessed the skills of knowing how to get things done and a familiarity with the strengths and specialties of all the ninja field agents at his disposal.

Training for the role of *chunin* included lessons in time and logistics management and personnel motivation, as well as contemporary and unconventional methods of warfare.

At the base of the organised hierarchy were the *genin* operatives, or ninja field agents. Men and women possessing a wide range of espionage and combat skills, the *genin* were the ones responsible for getting the actual work accomplished. And yes, I did say women.

Japan was a very male-dominated society. The role of women was to be subservient to men. The ninja, however, had no problem with training and using women. They were known as *kunoichi*.

Because of their status in Japanese society, women could easily move beneath the radar. They could use their feminine charm to seduce men and extract information. They could also get close to men without being regarded as a danger.

Trained from birth by their ninja families, *genin* inherited

a legacy of total service to the unknown *jonin* commander, the lords to whom the *jonin* contracted, and to the welfare of the nation's people as a whole.

The children of *genin* agents began their training at an early age, practicing leaping, running and balancing exercises that were disguised as children's games.

As they moved into their teen years, the children began the study of combat techniques and weapons, and the psychological effects of the mental process on the body and its physical performance.

In the later teen years, skills of the trade of espionage were taught, preparing the young *genin* for a life of service as a ninja.

Different ninja *ryu* specialised in certain tactics. For example, some were masters of *hensojutsu*, the art of disguise and impersonation.

Others specialised in *kai ki*, techniques used to infiltrate secure locations. Some were masters of *koppojutsu*, bone smashing techniques, while others were masters of *saiminjutsu*, ninja hypnotism.

Now let's go back to the very beginning of this article and take a look at the myths perpetuated by Hollywood.

They are always dressed in black, their face covered by a hood, and they wear tabi on their feet.

Walking around dressed in black with a hood covering your face would make you just a little conspicuous. The ninja would normally wear the same type of clothing that was popular at the time. Sometimes they would be disguised as farmers, entertainers, priests or even beggars. Yet

if they were operating at night they would often wear dark clothing, usually dark grey, and would sometimes cover their face with a hood.

They could jump from the ground to the top of a five storey building in a single leap.

While the ninja were trained in climbing and jumping techniques there was no way in which they could perform an action such as this.

In a puff of smoke they could change into a bird and fly away from their enemies. They could walk on water.

No, they could not change into a bird or any other animal. Yet the ninja were masters of the art of deception and illusion. Often they would keep a small live animal, such as a rabbit, inside their jacket. When being pursued along a path through the woods they would turn around and throw a small flash bomb to the ground.

This would create a blinding flash of light and a billow of smoke, temporarily blinding his pursuers. At the same time the ninja would remove the rabbit from his jacket and drop it onto the path, rolling into the undergrowth at the same time.

When the smoke cleared and sight returned to the pursuers after a few seconds the ninja was gone and in his place was a rabbit. Their conclusion - the ninja had used *jaho* (magic) to turn himself into a rabbit.

While the ninja could not walk on water, he used the art of illusion to make it appear that he could.

The swamps of Iga and Koga prefecture meant that until at least mid-morning the ground

would be covered by thick mist that came up to about the thighs.

The ninja would step into two large cooking pots that were buoyant enough to support his weight and allow him to float on the water or swamp. He would then use his scabbard to row.

For anyone watching from even a short distance it appeared that the ninja was walking on water. They could not see that pots that covered his feet and lower legs.

They were ruthless and nearly every one of them was evil.

They could indeed be ruthless, but they never thought in terms of good or evil. The ninja would do whatever it took to ensure his survival, the survival of his *jonin* and *ryu*, and the survival of his family.

Not only were the ninja real, they were truly exceptional warriors. They were experts at the art of infiltration, espionage, sabotage, unarmed combat, escape and evasion, camouflage and disguise, and collection and coalition of intelligence. Many of their techniques are still used today by the modern military.

Today it is no longer necessary for ninja families to oversee the stability of benevolent and just governments. The art of ninjutsu has returned its emphasis to the original purposes of its founding ancestors, and the system is now taught as a method of personal enlightenment and mind-body-spirit harmony.

From the more than 200 ninja *ryu* that once existed, only three have survived. They are Tenshin Shoden Katori *ryu ninpo*, Togakure *ryu ninjutsu* and Genbukkan *ninpo*.

WWII veterans documentary

News of a new documentary series on World War II, including interviews from some South African World War II veterans.

By now most people are running out of things to watch on television or YouTube. If you're one of them, here is some good news.

Dr. Elina Komarova Tagar, a regular reader of Military Despatches, sent us the following information.

"Sending you a trailer of a short Documentary series, which are going to be released in two weeks time.

The project is an initiative of a young journalists from Russian BRICS TV towards 75 years Anniversary celebrations of a Great Victory in WWII.

I am deeply grateful to our South African Veterans Sydney Ireland, a Signaler, who fought

in Northern Africa and Josef Wilkinson, the Arctic Convoys Veteran, who gave the interviews. Warm words of appreciation to their families for the support of the project and care of their special parents!"

Short documentaries will be released in May and Russia is planning on celebrating Victory Day on 9 May when their lockdown is lifted.

In the meantime you can get a taste of some of the footage by clicking on the links below.

[The Trailer.](#)

[Joseph Wilkinson's interview](#)

[Brazil in World War II](#)

[Unknown Stalingrad](#)

[WWII and South Africa](#)



Sydney Ireland



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The Voice of the Valley on 88.5 fm

General Constant Viljoen (1933-2020)

On 3 April 2020, South Africa lost a soldier, scholar, politician, and a gentleman when Constant Viljoen answered the Sunset Call. We will remember him.

Constant Laubscher Viljoen was born on 28 October 1933 in Standerton, Transvaal in the then Union of South Africa. He had an identical twin brother, Abraham (Braam) Viljoen.

Constant Viljoen would go on to become the Chief of the South African Defence Force, while his brother came an anti-apartheid activist.

Viljoen matriculated from Standerton High School in 1951 and went on to study at the University of Pretoria.

Upon completing a degree in military science, Viljoen joined the Union Defence Force in 1956. He became a member of the South African Artillery Corps.

In 1962 Viljoen became the Chief Instructor Gunnery at the School of Artillery. He held this post until 1963. In 1966 he took over the post of Officer Commanding School of Artillery from Hendrik Greyvenstein, and served in this position until 1968.

In 1968 he replaced JW van Niekerk as Officer Commanding South African Army College and held the post until 1969.

In 1976 Viljoen was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General and replaced Lieutenant General Magnus Malan as Chief of the South African Army.

In 1980 Viljoen was promoted to General and assumed the post of Chief of the South Af-

rican Defence Force. It was a post he held until his retirement in 1985.

During Operation Savannah in 1975 he was the senior SADF military officer directing operations.

In 1978 he was credited with having planned the first major airborne assault in South African military history with Operation Reindeer, the raid carried out at Cassinga against SWAPO insurgents.

Despite his rank, Viljoen was present during the battle, offering what was described as a

‘swashbuckling’ front line leadership which earned him the respect of his troops.

When he retired from the SADF in 1985 he had won the respect of both friend and foe alike.

In 1993, Viljoen and fellow retired generals formed the Afrikaner Volksfront (Afrikaner People’s Front), an umbrella body for conservative Afrikaners.

However, Viljoen reportedly had strained relationships with the leaders of other right-wing parties, who considered him too

moderate.

Immediately prior to the 1994 general elections Viljoen had a force of between 50,000 and 60,000 trained paramilitary personnel at his command, with the ability to seize large sections of the country.

The force was assembled in preparation for war with Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the African National Congress (ANC), as a potential contingency to protect Afrikaner interests.

In March 1994, Viljoen led an effort by several thousand Volksfront militia to protect the bantustan president, Lucas Mangope, in Bophuthatswana against a coup d’état.

Despite being requested not to participate in the action because of extremist views, militants of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging also advanced into Bophuthatswana, sparking clashes with the security forces.

Immediately after the incident, Viljoen split from the Volksfront and initiated a legitimate election campaign, co-founding and becoming leader of the Freedom Front (Vryheidsfront), a new political party representing white conservatives. His decision to take part in the elections is believed to have prevented armed resistance by the far right and on the occasion of his retirement from politics, the South African government recognised him for preventing bloodshed.

In the 1994 general election, the Freedom Front, under the leadership of Viljoen, received 2.2% of the national vote and nine seats in the National Assembly. It became the strongest

party outside Nelson Mandela’s Government of National Unity.

Although his supporters were at odds with the government and the ANC, Viljoen praised Mandela on the occasion of his retreat from politics in 1999, even ending his Parliamentary speech speaking in Mandela’s native language, Xhosa: Go rest in peace. Go rest in the shadow of a tree at your home.

In 2001, Viljoen handed over the leadership of the Freedom Front to Pieter Mulder and retired from politics, citing his frustration working with a parliament dominated by the ANC.

In 2003, it emerged that Viljoen had been a target of the Boeremag paramilitary right-wing group, which considered him a traitor who had underhandedly sold out the Afrikaner people.

Current Freedom Front Plus leader Pieter Groenewald announced on 3 April 2020 that Viljoen had died on his farm in Ohrigstad, Limpopo. He was 86 and was surrounded by his children. Viljoen died of natural causes. He is survived by his wife Christina Susanna Heckroodt, four sons and a daughter.

I had the honour of meeting General Viljoen when I served in the military.

In later years, as a journalist, it was my privilege to interview him a number of times as a politician.

The last time I met with General Viljoen was at the MOTH Border Boy’s Parade in Cape Town in 2011. He was the guest speaker.

Rest in peace sir. You were always the living embodiment of the phrase, “an officer and a gentleman.”



Decorations



1. Star of South Africa
2. Southern Cross Decoration
3. South African Police Star for Outstanding Service
4. Southern Cross Medal
5. Military Merit Medal
6. Pro Patria Medal
7. Good Service Medal, Gold
8. Good Service Medal, Silver
9. Permanent Force Good Service Medal
10. Order of the Cloud and Banner - with Grand Cordon (2nd Grade) (Taiwan)

A matter of survival - Making camp

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 making camp.

Whether you are the victim of some sort of a disaster such as a plane crash, or whether you're a soldier stuck out in the bush, you're going to need to sleep at some stage. This is where shelter is vital.

Shelter is necessary to give shade, to repel wind and rain, and to keep in warmth. Sleep and adequate rest are essential and the time and effort you put into making your shelter will make them easier to obtain.

If you are the victim of a plane crash or a vehicle that has broken down in the middle of nowhere, they may provide a shelter or materials from which one can be built.

If, however, there is a fire or the threat of the fuel tanks exploding, wait until it has burned out before attempting salvage.

If you are the unequipped victim of an accident, are trapped by unexpected mist or caught by nightfall in terrain where it is not safe to proceed, or if exhaustion and injury prevents you going further, you may have to make do with any natural shelter you can find for the night. Or until you can at least access the situation.

In this case, virtually any protection from wind, rain and cold will be welcome. If movement down a slope is risky, traversing even a short

way along a contour may bring you out of the wind.

If no cave or crevice is available to give shelter, make use of any hollow in the ground. Add to its height, if possible, by piling up rocks. Just make sure that it is stable - you don't want it to fall on you during the night.

If you have one, you can use a backpack to add height and increase your windshield before settling down on the leeward side.

If there is still daylight to see by and you have no injuries to handicap you, it will be worth seeking better places in the vicinity. Just remember that in some areas in can get dark very quickly. So make sure you select a spot before darkness falls.

For a long-term camp you should find a secure site with convenient access to your major needs.

Where to camp

If you are on high ground go lower down to find a sheltered spot, but on low, wet ground you will need to climb higher to find somewhere securely dry.

Look for somewhere sheltered from the wind, on rising ground that has no risk of flooding and is safe from rock falls or avalanches.

Hot air rises, cold air sinks, so valley bottoms will often contain pockets of colder air and, in cold weather, be susceptible to frost and damp mist.

In areas that get plenty of rainfall terraces across a slope will often be damper than the steeper ground above and below them, for water collects there before flowing further downward.

Ideally you should be near water, with a plentiful supply of wood nearby at hand. Pitching camp too close to

Bad places to camp

1. Hilltops exposed to wind (move down and look for shelter on the leeward side).
2. Valley bottoms and deep hollows - could be damp and, especially when the sky is clear, more liable to frost at night.
3. Hillside terraces where the ground holds moisture.
4. Spurs which lead down to water, which are often routes to animals' watering places.

water, however, may lead you to be troubled by insects, and the sound of running water can hide other noises which might indicate danger, or the sound of search or rescue parties.

On river banks look for the high water mark. In mountain regions streams can become torrents in minutes, rising as much as five metres in an hour.

Even on plains keep out of old watercourses, no matter how dry they are. Heavy rain in nearby hills can easily send water rushing down them in flash floods, with practically no warning.

Choose ground that is reasonably flat and free of rocks and make sure that you have space to lay out signals and that you can be easily spotted by rescue parties.

Check above your head for bees' or hornets' nests and for dead wood in trees that could come crashing down in the next storm or high wind.

Keep away from solitary trees, they can attract lightning, and in forest areas keep to the edges, where you can see what is going on around you.

Don't camp across a game trail - the last thing you need is marauding animals as unwelcome guests or to find your camp flattened by a herd of animals on their way to a waterhole - but stay near to any obvious human tracks.

Types of shelter

The type of shelter you build will depend upon local conditions and the materials available - and upon how long you expect to need it.

For immediate protection from the elements, rig up a makeshift shelter while you construct something better and more permanent.

If you decide to stay put and wait for rescue, a more long-term shelter can be built and improved on as time and energy permit.

For those walking to safety, on the other hand, temporary shelters can be built at each stopping point. They can even be carried with you if they are sufficiently light and there is significant risk that materials may not be available at the next camp site.

A more permanent shelter will certainly be worthwhile for sick or injured, who must

rest in order to regain their strength, or where it is necessary to wait for the weather to clear before attempting a journey.

Use the time to stockpile equipment and provisions.

Hasty shelter

If no materials are available for constructing a shelter make use of any cover and protection that is available - cliff faces, overhangs, gradients and so forth, which will shield you from the wind or rain.

Incorporate natural windbreaks to quickly constructed shelters.

In completely open plains, sit with your back to the wind and pile any equipment behind you as a windbreak.

Next month we will look at building various types of shelters.



Rank Structure Indian Army

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 Indian Army.

The Indian Army is the third largest standing army in the world, with over 1,325,000 active troops and 2,143,000 reserve troops.

Their ranks structure is based on that of the British Army.



Sepoy

The Sepoys identify themselves according to the Corps that they serve in. For example, a sepoy from Signals will identify him as Signaller, from Infantry as Rifleman and from the Armoured Corps as Gunner.

Non-Commissioned Officers

Lance Naik (Infantry) Acting Lance Daffadar (Cavalry and Armoured Regiments)

Promotion is by selection.

Retirement – After 22 years service or at the age of 48, whichever is earlier.



Naik (Infantry) Lance Daffadar (Cavalry and Armoured Regiments)

Retirement – After 24 years service or at the age of 49, whichever is earlier.

Havildar (Infantry) Daffadar (Cavalry and Armoured Regiments)

Promotion is by selection.

Retirement – After 26 years service or at the age of 49, whichever is earlier.



Quarter Master Havildar (Infantry) Quarter Master Daffadar (Cavalry and Armoured Regiments)

Promotion is by selection.

Retirement – After 26 years service or at the age of 49, whichever is earlier.

Junior Commissioned Officers

Naib Subedar (Infantry) Naib Risaldar (Cavalry and Armoured Regiments)

Promotion by selection.

Retirement – After 28 years service or at the age of 52, whichever is earlier.



Subedar (Infantry) Risaldar (Cavalry and Armoured Regiments)

Promotion by selection.

Retirement – After 30 years service or at the age of 52, whichever is earlier.

Subedar Major (Infantry) Risaldar Major (Cavalry and Armoured Regiments)

Promotion by selection.

Retirement – After 34 years service or at the age of 54, whichever is earlier



Commissioned Officers

Lieutenant

Rank achieved on commissioning into Indian Army as an Officer.



Captain

Time-bound promotion on completion of two years commissioned service.



Major

Time-bound promotion on completion of six years commissioned service.



Lieutenant Colonel

Time-bound promotion on completion of 13 years commissioned service.



Colonel

Colonels may be promoted by selection (after 15 years of commissioned service) or may be promoted (time-scale) after 26 years of commissioned service. Time-scale Colonels may, however, only hold the portfolio of a Lt. Colonel.

Retirement – At the age of 54.



Brigadier

Brigadiers are promoted by selection (after 25 years of commissioned service).

Retirement – At the age of 56.



Major General

Major Generals are promoted by selection (after 32 years of commissioned service).

Retirement – At the age of 58.



Lieutenant General

Lieutenant generals are appointed only by selection (after 36 years of commissioned service) and may hold the position of a Vice Chief of Army Staff or Army Commanders.

Retirement – At the age of 60.



General

Apart from the honorary rank of Field Marshal, this is the highest rank held by an Army officer. It is only the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) who holds this rank.

Retirement – After three years as COAS or at the age of 62, whichever is earlier.



Field Marshal

The Field Marshal rank is the highest rank in the Indian Army. It is a ceremonial or wartime rank and Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw and Field Marshal KM Cariappa have been the only two officers to be elevated to the rank of Field Marshal.



Military Strength

In the eighth of a series of articles, we examine attack helicopters used by the ten strongest current military forces.

Last month we looked at the self-propelled artillery of the ten strongest military forces.

This month we turn our attention to the skies as we look at the attack helicopters used by these forces.

An attack helicopter is an

armed helicopter with the primary role of an attack aircraft, with the capability of engaging targets on the ground, such as enemy infantry and armoured fighting vehicles. Due to their heavy armament they are sometimes called helicopter gunships.

Weapons used on attack helicopters can include auto-cannons, machine guns, rockets, and guided anti-tank missiles such as the Hellfire. Many attack helicopters are also capable of carrying air-to-air missiles, though mostly for purposes of self-defence.



10. Germany

Total military personnel – 210,305

Eurocopter Tiger

The Eurocopter (now Airbus Helicopters) Tiger is a four-bladed, twin-engined attack helicopter which first entered service in 2003. It is manufactured by Eurocopter (now Airbus Helicopters), the successor company to Aérospatiale's and DASA's respective helicopter divisions, which designate it as the EC665.

Development of the Tiger started during the Cold War, and it was initially intended as an anti-tank helicopter platform to be used against a Soviet ground invasion of Western Europe. During its prolonged development period the Soviet Union collapsed, but France and Germany chose to proceed with the Tiger, developing it instead as a multi-role attack helicopter. It achieved operational



readiness in 2008.

- Manufacturer: Eurocopter
- Gross weight: 5,090 kg
- Length: 14.08 metres
- Height: 3.83 metres
- Crew: Two (pilot and weapon systems officer)
- Armament: 1× 30 mm (1.18 in) GIAT 30 cannon in chin turret, with up to 450 rounds;

- various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 2 × MTR MTR390 turboshaft engines, 972 kW
- Operational range: 800 km
- Service ceiling: 4,000 metres
- Rate of climb: 10.7 m/s
- Max Speed: 290 km/h



9. Turkey

Total military personnel – 891,300

T129 ATAK

The TAI/AgustaWestland T129 ATAK is a twin-engine, tandem seat, multi-role, all-weather attack helicopter based on the Agusta A129 Mangusta platform. The T129 was developed by Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) with partner AgustaWestland. The helicopter is designed for advanced attack and reconnaissance missions in hot and high environments and rough geography in both day and night conditions.

- Manufacturer: Turkish Aerospace Industries
- Gross weight: 5,000 kg
- Length: 13.45 metres



- Height: 3.4 metres
- Crew: Two (pilot and co-pilot/gunner)
- Armament: 1× M197 20x102 mm three-barrel rotary cannon (500 rounds); various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 2 × LHTEC CTS800-4A turboshaft, 1,014 kW
- Operational range: 561 km
- Service ceiling: 6,096 metres
- Rate of climb: 14.0 m/s
- Max Speed: 278 km/h



8. United Kingdom

Total military personnel – 157,500

Apache AH1

The AgustaWestland Apache is a licence-built version of the Boeing AH-64D Apache Longbow attack helicopter for the British Army Air Corps.

The Apache was a valued form of close air support in the conflict in Afghanistan, being deployed to the region in 2006.

- Manufacturer: Westland Helicopters



HEAD TO HEAD

- Gross weight: 8,006 kg
- Length: 17.7 metres
- Height: 3.87 metres
- Crew: Two
- Armament: M230 Chain Gun, 1200 rounds; various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 2 × Rolls-Royce/Turbomeca RTM322 turboshaft, 1,693 kW
- Operational range: 537 km
- Service ceiling: 6,400 metres
- Rate of climb: 12.7 m/s
- Max Speed: 293 km/h



7. Republic of Korea

Total military personnel – 3,699,000

AH-64 Apache

The Boeing AH-64 Apache (/əˈpætʃi/) is an American twin-turboshaft attack helicopter with a tailwheel-type landing gear arrangement and a tandem cockpit for a crew of two. It features a nose-mounted sensor suite for target acquisition and night vision systems.

The AH-64 has significant systems redundancy to improve combat survivability.



- Manufacturer: Boeing Defense, Space & Security
- Gross weight: 8,006 kg
- Length: 17.73 metres
- Height: 3.87 metres
- Crew: Two (pilot, and co-pilot/gunner)
- Armament: 1 × 30 mm M230 Chain Gun with 1,200 rounds; various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 2 × General Electric T700-GE-701 turboshaft engines, 1,260 kW
- Operational range: 480 km
- Service ceiling: 6,000 metres
- Max Speed: 293 km/h

Rooivalk

The Rooivalk project began in early 1984 under the auspices of the Atlas Aircraft Corporation, a predecessor of Denel Aviation. Faced with the increasingly conventional nature of the South African Border War, the South African Defence Force recognised the need for a dedicated attack helicopter and accordingly set along the process of developing a suitable aircraft.

The Atlas XH-1 Alpha was the first prototype to emerge from the program. It was developed from an Aérospatiale Alouette III airframe, retaining that helicopter's engine and dynamic components, but replacing the original cockpit with a stepped tandem one, adding a 20 mm cannon on the nose and converting the undercarriage to tail-dragger configuration. The XH-1 first flew on 3 February 1985. The results were ultimately good enough to convince Atlas and the SAAF that the concept was feasible, opening the door for the development of the Rooivalk.

HEAD TO HEAD



6. Japan

Total military personnel – 310,457

Bell AH-1 Cobra

The Bell AH-1 Cobra is a two-blade rotor, single-engine attack helicopter manufactured by Bell Helicopter. It was developed using the engine, transmission and rotor system of the Bell UH-1 Iroquois.



- Manufacturer: Bell Helicopter
- Gross weight: 4,309 kg
- Length: 16 metres
- Height: 4.11 metres
- Crew: Two (pilot, and co-pilot/gunner)
- Armament: 2 × 7.62 mm multi-barrel Miniguns; various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 1 × Lycoming T53-L-13 turboshaft, 820 kW
- Operational range: 570 km
- Service ceiling: 3,500 metres
- Rate of climb: 6.2 m/s
- Max Speed: 276 km/h



5. France

Total military personnel – 426,265

Eurocopter Tiger

Like Germany, France uses the Eurocopter Tiger.



- Manufacturer: Eurocopter
- Gross weight: 5,090 kg
- Length: 14.08 metres
- Height: 3.83 metres
- Crew: Two (pilot and weapon systems officer)
- Armament: 1 × 30 mm (1.18 in) GIAT 30 cannon in chin turret, with up to 450 rounds; various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 2 × MTR MTR390 turboshaft engines, 972 kW
- Operational range: 800 km
- Service ceiling: 4,000 metres
- Rate of climb: 10.7 m/s
- Max Speed: 290 km/h



4. India

Total military personnel – 2,598,921

AH-64 Apache

The Indian military have begun using the AH-64 Apache.

- Manufacturer: Boeing Defense, Space & Security
- Gross weight: 8,006 kg
- Length: 17.73 metres
- Height: 3.87 metres
- Crew: Two (pilot, and co-pilot/gunner)
- Armament: 1 × 30 mm M230 Chain Gun with 1,200 rounds; various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 2 × General Electric T700-GE-701 turboshaft engines, 1,260 kW



- Operational range: 480 km
- Service ceiling: 6,000 metres
- Max Speed: 293 km/h



3. China

Total military personnel – 2,545,000

CAIC Z-10

The CAIC Z-10 is designed primarily for anti-tank warfare missions but has secondary air-to-air capability as well.

- Manufacturer: Changhe Aircraft Industries Corporation
- Gross weight: 5,100 kg
- Length: 14.15 metres
- Height: 3.85 metres
- Crew: Two
- Armament: 1 x 25 mm M242 Bushmaster chain gun; various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 2 × WoZhou-9 (WZ-9) turboshaft engines, 1,000 kW



- Operational range: 800 km
- Service ceiling: 6,400 metres
- Rate of climb: 10 m/s
- Max Speed: 270 km/h



2. Russia

Total military personnel – 3,586,128

Mil Mi-28

The Mil Mi-28 (NATO reporting name “Havoc”) is a Russian all-weather, day-night, military tandem, two-seat anti-armour attack helicopter.

- Manufacturer: Mil
- Gross weight: 10,700 kg
- Length: 17.01 metres
- Height: 3.82 metres
- Crew: Two (pilot, and weapons officer)
- Armament: 1 × chin-mounted 30 mm Shipunov 2A42 cannon with 250 rounds; various rockets and missiles



- Powerplant: 2 × Klimov TV3-117 turboshaft engines, 1,636 kW
- Operational range: 435 km
- Service ceiling: 5,700 metres
- Max Speed: 320 km/h



1. United States

Total military personnel – 4,397,128

AH-64 Apache

The US Military are still using the AH-64 Apache as their front-line attack helicopter.

- Manufacturer: Boeing Defense, Space & Security
- Gross weight: 8,006 kg
- Length: 17.73 metres
- Height: 3.87 metres
- Crew: Two (pilot, and co-pilot/gunner)
- Armament: 1 × 30 mm M230 Chain Gun with 1,200 rounds; various rockets and missiles
- Powerplant: 2 × General Electric T700-GE-701 turboshaft engines, 1,260 kW



- Operational range: 480 km
- Service ceiling: 6,000 metres
- Max Speed: 293 km/h

Erwin Rommel

One of the best generals of World War II, a man that was respected by both friend and foe, the Desert Fox was a man to be reckoned with.

Regarded as one of the most able tank commanders of the war, respected by friend and foe alike, Erwin Rommel earned the nickname *der Wüstenfuchs* or the Desert Fox.

Johannes Erwin Eugen Rommel was born on 15 November 1891 in Heidenheim, Kingdom of Württemberg, German Empire.

At the age of 18 Rommel decided to join the army. He was rejected by both the artillery and engineers. In 1910 he was accepted into the infantry and joined the local 124th Württemberg Infantry Regiment as a *Fähnrich* (ensign), studying at the Officer Cadet School in Danzig.

He graduated in November 1911 and was commissioned as a lieutenant in January 1912 and was assigned to the 124th Infantry in Weingarten.

World War I

Rommel would go on to distinguish himself during World War I. Rommel was awarded the Iron Cross, Second Class, and was promoted to *Oberleutnant* (first lieutenant) and transferred to the newly created Royal Wurttemberg Mountain Battalion of the Alpenkorps in September 1915, as a company commander.

Acting as advance guard in the capture of Longarone on

9 November 1917, Rommel decided to attack with a much smaller force. Convinced that they were surrounded by an entire German division, the 1st Italian Infantry Division – 10,000 men – surrendered to Rommel. For this and earlier

actions, he received the order of *Pour le Mérite*, also known as the Blue Max.

In January 1918, Rommel was promoted to *Hauptmann* (captain) and assigned to a staff position with XLIV Army Corps, where he served for the remainder of the war.



RIISING STAR: Rommel (right) had already made a name for himself by the end of World War I.

Yet Rommel paid a heavy price during the war. In September 1914, for example, Rommel charged three French soldiers with a bayonet after running out of ammunition, only to be shot in the thigh so badly that a hole opened up as big as his fist. Three years later in Romania, he lost a considerable amount of blood from a bullet to the arm, and he also continuously suffered from stomach ailments, fevers and exhaustion.

Between the wars

Rommel remained with the 124th Regiment until 1 October 1920, when he was named company commander of the 13th Infantry Regiment in Stuttgart, a post he held with the rank of captain for the next nine years.

His regiment was involved in quelling riots and civil disturbances that were occurring throughout Germany at this time. Wherever possible, he avoided the use of force in these con-

frontations. He decided against storming the city of Lindau, which had been taken by revolutionary communists. Instead, Rommel negotiated with the city council and managed to return it to the legitimate government through diplomatic means.

He was assigned as an instructor at the Dresden Infantry School from 1929 to 1933, and was promoted to major in April 1932.

While at Dresden, he wrote a manual on infantry training, published in 1934. Rommel was promoted to *Oberstleutnant* (lieutenant colonel) in October 1933, and given his next command, the 3rd Jäger Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, stationed at Goslar.

Here he first met Hitler, who inspected his troops on 30 September 1934. In September 1935 Rommel was moved to the War Academy at Potsdam as an instructor, a post he held for the next three years.

Hearing of Rommel's reputation as an outstanding military instructor, in February 1937 Hitler assigned him as the War Ministry liaison officer to the Hitler Youth, in charge of military training. Here he clashed with Baldur von Schirach, the Hitler Youth leader, over the training that the boys should receive.

Consequently, Rommel was quietly removed from the project in 1938. He was promoted to *Oberst* (colonel) on 1 August 1937, and in 1938 Rommel, was appointed commandant of the Theresian Military Academy War Academy at Wiener Neustadt.

In October 1938 Hitler specially requested that Rommel be seconded to command the *Führerbegleitbrigade* (his escort battalion). This unit accompanied him whenever he traveled outside of Germany.

World War II

Rommel was promoted to *Generalmajor* on 23 August 1939 and assigned as commander of the *Führerbegleitbrigade* battalion, tasked with guarding Hitler and his field headquarters during the invasion of Poland, which began on 1 September.

Following the Poland campaign, Rommel was keen to take command of one of Germany's panzer divisions, of which there were only ten. Despite being turned down by the army's personnel office, Rommel was given command of a panzer division. Some say on the personal intervention of Hitler.

His outstanding leadership in France seemed to justify his appointment as a general and commander of a tank division. During the invasion of Belgium and France, Rommel had proved himself to be a daring and resourceful leader. For his actions he was awarded the Knight's Cross.

North Africa

On 6 February 1941, Rommel was appointed commander of the newly created *Deutsches Afrika Korps* (DAK), consisting of the 5th Light Division (later redesignated 21st Panzer Division) and of the 15th Panzer Division.

He was promoted to the rank of Generalleutnant three days later and flew to Tripoli on 12 February. The DAK had been sent to Libya in *Operation Sonnenblume*, to support Italian troops that had been severely defeated by British Commonwealth forces in Operation Compass.

His efforts in the Western Desert Campaign earned Rommel the nickname the "Desert Fox" from British journalists.

Rommel and his troops were technically subordinate to Italian commander-in-chief General Italo Gariboldi. Disagreeing with the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* (OKW)'s orders to assume a defensive posture along the front line at Sirte, Rommel resorted to subterfuge and insubordination to take the war to the British.

In March 1941 Rommel went on the offensive against the British. The British Western Desert Force had been weakened by the transfer in mid-February of three divisions to help defend



CHEERS: Rommel (left) shares a drink of water with one of his officers somewhere in the Western Desert.

Greece. They fell back to Mersa El Brega and started constructing defensive works.

Rommel continued his attack against these positions to prevent the British from building up their fortifications. After a day of fierce fighting on 31 March, the Germans captured Mersa El Brega.

Splitting his force into three groups, Rommel resumed the advance on 3 April. Benghazi fell that night as the British pulled out of the city.

The port city of Tobruk held out. Even though it was surrounded on land, they still had access to supplies coming in by boat.

Rommel launched two attacks on Tobruk. One on 14 April and another on 30 April, but both failed.

A series of attacks and counter-attacks followed. First one side then the other was forced to retreat.

On 26 May 1942, Rommel launched an attack on the Allied fortifications at Gazala and the

Battle of Gazala began.

Threatened with being cut off, the British began a retreat eastwards towards Egypt in what became known as the "Gazala Gallop".

With this task completed, Rommel struck for Tobruk while the enemy was still confused and disorganised.

Tobruk's defenders were at this point the 2nd South African Infantry Division, 4th Antiaircraft Brigade, 11th Indian Infantry, 32nd Army Tank, and 201st Guards Brigades, all under command of General Hendrik Klopper. The assault on Tobruk began at dawn on 20 June, and Klopper surrendered at dawn the following day.

With Tobruk, Rommel achieved the capture of 32,000 defenders, the port, and huge quantities of supplies. Only at the fall of Singapore, earlier that year, had more British Commonwealth troops been captured at one time.

On 22 June, Hitler promoted Rommel to *Generalfeld-*



NAZI FARCE: Rommel was given a State Funeral and mourned as a hero. Even though Hitler had ordered his death.

marschall for this victory.

Allied strategists feared that if Rommel captured Egypt, the Middle East and possibly the Caucasus would be next to fall. However, Hitler viewed the North African campaign primarily as a way to assist his Italian allies, not as an objective in and of itself. He would not consider sending Rommel the reinforcements and supplies he needed to take and hold Egypt, as this would have required diverting men and supplies from his primary focus: the Eastern Front.

From then on the tide turned against Rommel in North Africa. His defeat at the Second Battle of El Alamein was followed by a series of defeats. Eventually Rommel had to retreat all the way to Tunisia.

On 23 July 1943 Rommel was moved to Greece as commander of Army Group E to counter a possible British invasion of the Greek coast. He arrived in Greece on 25 July but was recalled to Berlin the same date due to the overthrow of Mussolini. Rommel was to be posted to Italy as commander of the newly

formed Army Group B.

On 16 August 1943 Rommel's headquarters moved to Lake Garda in northern Italy and formally assumed command of the army group, which consisted of 44th Infantry Division, 26th Panzer Division and SS Division *Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler*.

On 21 November Hitler gave Kesselring overall command of the Italian theater, moving Rommel and Army Group B to Normandy in France with responsibility for defending the French coast against the long anticipated Allied invasion.

The death of Rommel

Upon arriving in Northern France Rommel was dismayed by the lack of completed works.

He set out to improve the fortifications along the Atlantic Wall with great energy and engineering skill. He had millions of mines laid and thousands of tank traps and obstacles set up on the beaches and throughout the countryside, including in fields suitable for glider aircraft landings.

On 17 July 1944, Rommel

was returning from visiting the headquarters of the I SS Panzer Corps. His car was attacked by a Spitfire and a 20 mm round shattered the driver's left arm, causing the vehicle to come off the road and crash into some trees. Rommel was thrown from the car, suffering injuries to the left side of his face from glass shards and three fractures to his skull. He was hospitalised with major head injuries.

On 20 July an attempt was made on Hitler's life by senior German army officers. Rommel was implicated in the plot.

Hitler knew that having Rommel branded and executed as a traitor would severely damage morale on the home front. He decided to offer Rommel the chance to take his own life.

If he took his own life Rommel would be given a full military funeral and his family would receive a full pension. If not he would be tried and executed and his family would have suffered. Rommel took a cyanide capsule.

The German public were told that Rommel had died as a result of the injuries he suffered after the air attack.

Erwin Rommel died on 14 October 1944 at the age of 52. Rommel's grave is located in Herrlingen, a short distance west of Ulm. For decades after the war on the anniversary of his death, veterans of the Africa campaign, including former opponents, would gather at Rommel's tomb in Herrlingen to pay their respects.

Tiger I

Tiger! The very name was enough to invoke fear. Regarded as one of the best tanks during World War II, the Tiger tank was forged in battle.

Designated the Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger Ausf, it was often shortened to just 'Tiger'.

It was the first German armoured vehicle that mounted the 8.8 cm KwK 36 gun (not to be confused with the 8.8 cm Flak 36).

The tank was given its nickname "Tiger" by Ferdinand

Porsche, and the Roman numeral was added after the later Tiger II entered production. The initial designation was Panzerkampfwagen VI Ausführung H ("Panzer VI version H", abbreviated PzKpfw VI Ausf. H) where 'H' denoted Henschel as the designer/manufacturer.

It was classified with ordnance inventory designation

Sd.Kfz. 182. The tank was later re-designated as PzKpfw VI Ausf. E in March 1943, with ordnance inventory designation Sd.Kfz. 181.

While the Tiger I was an outstanding design for its time and devastating on the battle field, it was not without its faults.

One of the problems was

that it was over-engineered, using expensive materials and labour-intensive production methods.

The Tiger was prone to certain types of track failures and breakdowns, and was limited in range by its high fuel consumption.

It was expensive to maintain, but generally mechanically reliable. It was difficult to transport, and vulnerable to immobilisation when mud, ice, and snow froze between its overlapping and interleaved

Schachtellaufwerk-pattern road wheels, often jamming them solid. This was a problem on the Eastern Front in the muddy *rasputitsa* season and during periods of extreme cold.

Some 1,347 were built between August 1942 and August 1944. After August 1944, production of the Tiger I was phased out in favour of the Tiger II.

Early history

Henschel & Sohn began the development of a large tank

design in January 1937 when the *Waffenamt* (German Army Weapons Agency) requested Henschel to develop a *Durchbruchwagen* ("breakthrough vehicle") in the 30–33 tonne range. Only one prototype hull was ever built and it was never fitted with a turret.

Combat experience against the French SOMUA S35 cavalry tank and Char B1 heavy tank, and the British Matilda II infantry tanks during the Battle of France in June 1940 showed that the German Army needed better armed and armoured tanks.



On 26 May 1941, Henschel and Ferdinand Porsche were asked to submit designs for a 45-tonne heavy tank, to be ready by June 1942.

Porsche worked on an updated version of their VK 30.01 (P) Leopard tank prototype while Henschel worked on an improved VK 36.01 (H) tank. Henschel built two prototypes: a VK 45.01 (H) H1 with an 8.8 cm L/56 cannon, and a VK 45.01 (H) H2 with a 7.5 cm L/70 cannon.

Design

On 22 June 1941, Germany launched Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union. The Germans were shocked to encounter Soviet T-34 medium and KV-1 heavy tanks, and, according to Henschel designer Erwin Aders: "There was great consternation when it was discovered that the Soviet tanks were superior to anything available to the *Heer* (Army)."

An immediate weight increase to 45 tonnes and an increase in gun calibre to 8.8 cm was ordered. The due date for the new prototypes was set for 20 April 1942, Adolf Hitler's 53rd birthday. Unlike the Panther tank, the designs did not incorporate sloped armour, an innovation taken from the T-34.

Porsche and Henschel submitted prototype designs, each making use of the Krupp-designed turret. They were demonstrated at Rastenburg in front of Hitler.

The Henschel design was accepted, mainly because the Porsche VK 4501 (P) prototype design used a troubled gaso-

line-electric hybrid power unit which needed large quantities of copper for manufacture of its electrical drivetrain components, a strategic war material of which Germany had limited supplies with acceptable electrical properties for such uses. Production of the *Panzerkampfwagen VI Ausf. H* began in August 1942.

Expecting an order for his tank, Porsche built 100 chassis. After the contract was awarded to Henschel, they were used for a new turretless, casemate-style tank destroyer; 91 hulls were converted into the *Panzerjäger* Tiger (P) in early 1943.

The Tiger I had frontal hull armour 100 mm thick, frontal turret armour of 100 mm and a 120 mm thick gun mantlet.

The Tiger had 60 mm thick hull side plates and 80 mm armour on the side superstructure/sponsons, while turret sides and rear were 80 mm. The top and bottom armour was 25 mm thick; from March 1944, the turret roof was thickened to 40 mm.

Armour plates were mostly flat, with interlocking construction. The armour joints were of high quality, being stepped and welded rather than riveted and were made of maraging steel.

The 56-calibre long 8.8 cm KwK 36 was chosen for the Tiger. A combination of a flat trajectory from the high muzzle velocity and precision from Leitz Turmzielfernrohr TZF 9b sight (later replaced by the monocular TZF 9c) made it very accurate.

Compared with the other contemporary German tank guns, the 8.8 cm KwK 36 had supe-

Specifications

- Designer - Erwin Aders, Henschel & Son
- Designed - 1938–41
- Manufacturer - Henschel
- Weight - 54 tonnes. 57 tonnes (Ausf. E)
- Length - 6.316 m. 8.45 m gun forward
- Width - 3.56 m
- Height - 3.0 m
- Crew - 5 (commander, gunner, loader, driver, assistant driver)
- Armour - 25-120 mm
- Main armament - 1 x 8.8 cm KwK 36 L/56. 92 AP and HE rounds
- Secondary armament - 2 x 7.92 mm MG 34. 4,500 rounds. 4,800 rounds (Ausf. E)
- Engine - Maybach HL230 P45 V-12 690 hp, 515 kW)
- Power/weight - 9.5 kW / tonne
- Suspension - Torsion bar
- Ground clearance - 0.47 m
- Operational range - Road: 195 km. Cross country: 110 km
- Speed - Maximum, road: 45.4 km/h. Sustained, road: 40 km/h. Cross country: 20–25 km/h

rior penetration to the 7.5 cm KwK 40 on the Sturmgeschütz III and Panzer IV but inferior to the 7.5 cm KwK 42 on the Panther tank under ranges of 2,500 metres. At greater ranges, the 8.8 cm KwK 36 was superior in penetration and accuracy.

The ammunition for the Tiger had electrically fired primers. Four types of ammunition were available but not all were



PANZER MARCH: German Tiger I's roll across the Russian steppes.

fully available; the PzGr 40 shell used tungsten, which was in short supply as the war progressed.

- PzGr. 39 (armour-piercing, capped, ballistic cap)
- PzGr. 40 (armour-piercing, composite rigid)
- Hl. Gr. 39 (high explosive anti-tank)
- sch. Sprgr. Patr. L/4.5 (incendiary shrapnel).

The internal layout was typical of German tanks. Forward was an open crew compartment, with the driver and radio-operator seated at the front on either side of the gearbox.

Behind them the turret floor was surrounded by panels forming a continuous level surface. This helped the loader to retrieve the ammunition, which was mostly stowed above the tracks. Three men were seated in the turret; the loader to the right of the gun facing to the rear, the gunner to the left of the gun, and the commander behind him. There was also a folding seat on the right for the loader.

The turret had a full circular floor and 157 cm headroom.

Early versions of the Tiger I's turret included two pistol ports however one these was replaced with a loader escape hatch and the other deleted from later designs.

Combat

German doctrine placed great emphasis upon the heavy tanks destruction of enemy tanks in both the defence and the offence.

The Germans based their figures on the number of enemy tanks killed against the number of German Tiger tanks lost.

If you use this method to determine the effectiveness of the Tiger tank, then they did very well in combat.

A total of 713 Tiger tanks were lost in combat. This number includes the Tiger I, Tiger II and the King Tiger. In contrast Tiger's killed 8,600 enemy tanks. That is a ratio of 11.52 enemy tanks destroyed for every Tiger lost.

Yet this doesn't taken into account the number of Tiger tanks that were lost due to other reasons.

Tigers would be abandoned

because they had suffered a mechanical breakdown, or had become stuck in the mud or a swamp and couldn't be recovered.

A total of 868 Tigers were lost due to reasons other than combat.

The Tiger I had an advantage over most British, American and Russian tanks in that was effective at a greater range than they were.

The other major advantages they held over the Russians was that they had a crew of five, while the Russians used a crew of four. In Russian tanks the crew commander also acted as the gunner.

The Germans had a separate crew commander and he was able to search for targets without also having to concentrate on firing the main gun.

All the German tanks also had radios, so they were able to communicate with each constantly. Only the lead Russian tanks had radios and they communicated with the other tanks using a system of flags.

This meant that the crew commander had to stand up in the cupola to do this, not an ideal situation in the heat of battle.

For all of its faults, the Tiger was still regarded as one of the best tanks of World War II. It was a weapon that was forged in battle.

Today, only seven Tiger I tanks survive in museums and private collections worldwide. Tiger 131 at the UK's Tank Museum, which was captured during the North Africa Campaign, is currently the only one restored to running order.

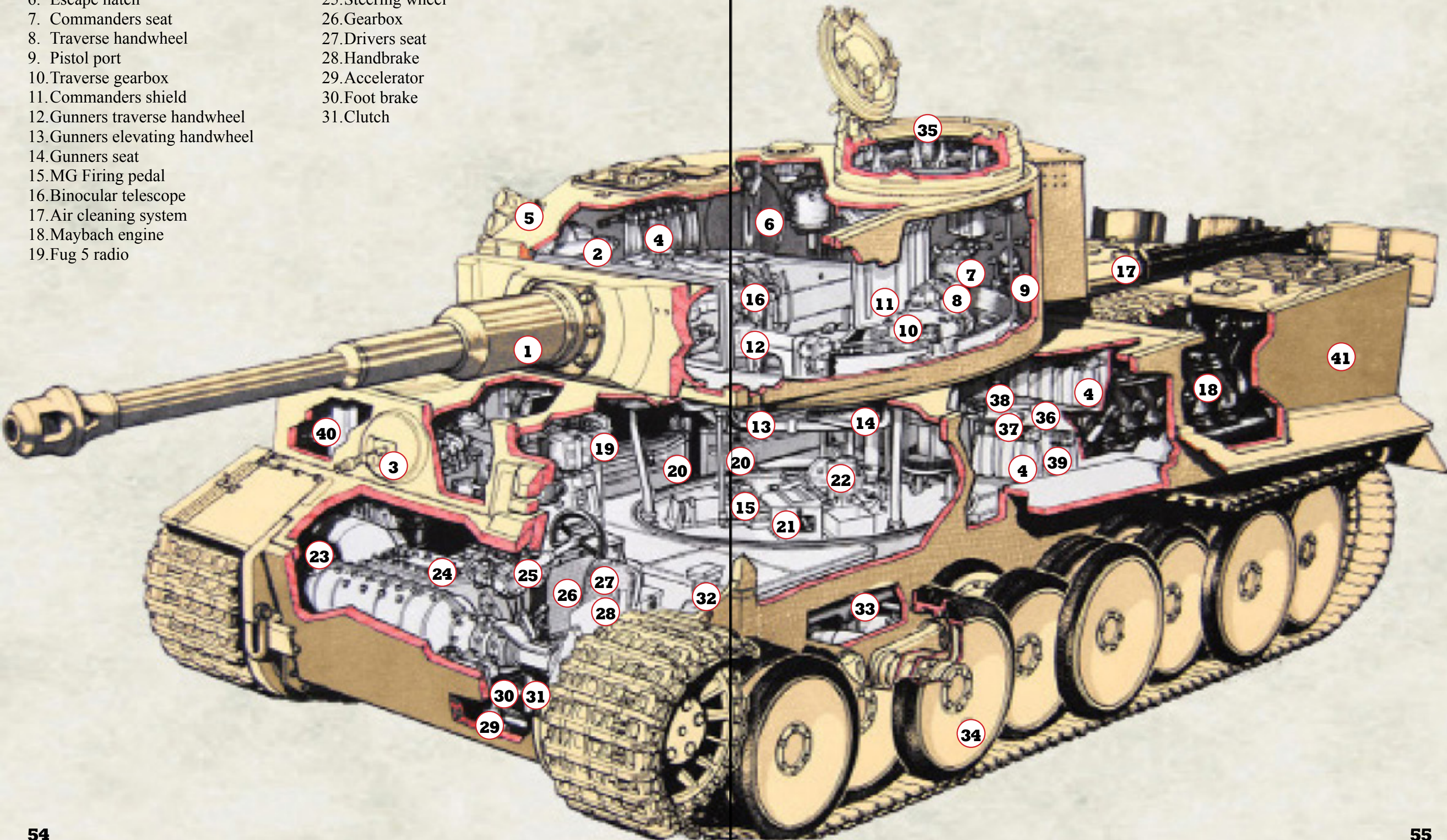
Pzkpfw VI Tiger (SdKfz 181) Ausf E

1. 88 mm L/56 gun
2. 7.92 mm MG34
3. 7.92 mm MG34
4. MG34 Ammo pouch
5. Smoke dischargers
6. Escape hatch
7. Commanders seat
8. Traverse handwheel
9. Pistol port
10. Traverse gearbox
11. Commanders shield
12. Gunners traverse handwheel
13. Gunners elevating handwheel
14. Gunners seat
15. MG Firing pedal
16. Binocular telescope
17. Air cleaning system
18. Maybach engine
19. Fug 5 radio

20. 88 mm bins
21. Hydraulic traverse foot pedal
22. Hydraulic traverse control
23. Disc brake drum
24. Steering unit
25. Steering wheel
26. Gearbox
27. Drivers seat
28. Handbrake
29. Accelerator
30. Foot brake
31. Clutch

32. Shock absorber
33. Torsion bar suspension
34. Overlapping bogie wheels
35. Commanders cupola
36. Fan drive clutch lever
37. Air intake valve control
38. Petrol primer
39. Petrol tap

40. MG Ammo pouch
41. Zimmerit anti mine protection, 200 kg over whole tank



On the night of 3 and 4 July, 1976, a group of Israeli commandos carried out one of the most audacious special forces raids in history - and they travelled more than 5,000 kilometres to carry it out.

On the morning of 27 June, 1973, Air France Flight 139 departed from Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, Israel.

There were 246 passengers and a crew of 12 on board. Most of the passengers were Israeli.

The plane flew to Athens, Greece, where it picked up another 58 passengers, including four hijackers.

Flight 139 departed for Paris at 12h30. Acting under the orders of Wadie Haddad (who had earlier broken away from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) of George Habash), two Palestinians from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – External Operations (PFLP-EO), and by two Germans, Wilfried Böse and Brigitte Kuhlmann, from the German Revolutionary Cells, sprung into action shortly after takeoff.

The hijackers diverted the flight to Benghazi, Libya. It remained on the ground for seven hours while it was refueled.

During this time the hijackers released British-born Israeli citizen Patricia Martell who pretended to have a miscarriage.

The flight left Benghazi and at 15h15 touched down at its final destination - Entebbe Airport in Uganda.

Hostage situation

It soon became evident that not only was the Ugandan government supporting the hijackers, they were expecting them. They were personally welcomed by Ugandan dictator Idi Amin.

The four original hijackers were met at Entebbe by at least four others.

The passengers and crew were transferred to the transit hall of the disused former airport terminal where they were kept under guard for the following days. Amin came to visit the hostages almost on a daily basis, updating them on developments and promising to use his efforts to have them freed through negotiations.

The hijackers separated all Israelis and sev-

eral non-Israeli Jews from the larger group and forced them into a separate room.

Over the following two days, 148 non-Israeli hostages were released and flown out to Paris. Ninety-four, mainly Israeli, passengers along with the 12 member Air France crew, remained as hostages and were threatened with death.

On 28 June, a PFLP-EO hijacker issued a declaration and formulated their demands: In addition to a ransom of five million US Dollars for the release of the airplane, they demanded the release of 53 Palestinian and Pro-Palestinian militants, 40 of whom were prisoners in Israel.

They threatened that if these demands were not met, they would begin to kill hostages on 1 July 1976.

Plans are prepared

Israel tried using political avenues to obtain the release of the hostages. A retired Israeli Defence Force (IDF) officer, Baruch "Burka" Bar-Lev, had known Idi Amin for many years and was considered to have a strong personal relationship with him. At the request of the cabinet, he spoke with Amin on the phone many times, trying to gain the release of the hostages, without success.

The Israelis also approached the United States government to deliver a message to Egyptian president Anwar Sadat,

asking him to request Amin to release the hostages.

Meanwhile the IDF was tasked to prepare a military solution.

On the 1 July deadline the Israeli cabinet said that they were willing to negotiate with the hijackers if they were prepared to extend the deadline to 4 July.

Unknown to the Israelis, Amin had also asked the hijackers to extend the deadline to 4 July. He needed to take a diplomatic trip to Port Louis, Mauritius, to officially hand over chairmanship of the Organisation of African Unity to Seewoosagur Ramgoolam.

This extension of the deadline would prove crucial in giving the IDF enough time to get to Entebbe.

The raid

Even though the Israelis were trying to negotiate a political solution, they realised that their only real option was a military operation to rescue the hostages.

Naturally a rescue mission posed certain problems. First of all Entebbe was more than 5,000 km away from Tel Aviv. They would have to cross the airspace of at least three countries to get there.

They initially conceived a plan that involved dropping naval commandos into Lake Victoria.

Entebbe Airport is located on the edge of the huge lake. The commandos would then use rubber boats to travel to the airport. They would then kill the hijackers and free the hostages. They would then ask Amin for safe passage home.

The plan was abandoned because of three important factors. First of all they lacked the necessary time to plan the operation. Secondly, Amin was supporting the hijackers and would probably have not been prepared to give the commandos safe passage out of the country. The third reason was because the Israelis received word that Lake Victoria was infested with crocodiles.

The plan that was adopted was simple. Fly a rescue force from Israel to Entebbe, rescue the hostages, and fly back to Israel.

The planes selected to be used were Lockheed C-130 Hercules aircraft. The problem was that they would have to be refueled during the journey. The Israelis did not have the capacity to refuel four to six aircraft in flight so far from Israeli airspace. They would have to find somewhere they could land and refuel.

While several East African nations, including the logistically preferred choice Kenya, were sympathetic, none wished to incur the wrath of Amin or the Palestinians by allowing the Israelis to land their aircraft within their borders.

The raid could not proceed without assistance from at least one East African government. The Jewish owner of the Block hotels chain in Kenya, along with other members of the Jewish and Israeli community in Nairobi, may have used their political and economic influence to help persuade Kenya's President Jomo Kenyatta to help Israel. The Israeli government secured permission from

Kenya for the IDF task force to cross Kenyan airspace and refuel at what is today Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

The Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, built an accurate picture of the whereabouts of the hostages, the number of hijackers, and the involvement of Ugandan troops from the released hostages in Paris.

Then the Israelis had a lucky break. The terminal where the hostages were being held had actually been built by Solel Boneh, a large Israeli construction company. While planning the military operation the IDF erected a partial replica of the airport terminal with the assistance of civilians who had helped build the original.

One of the French-Jewish passengers that had been released by the hijackers had a military background and a 'phenomenal memory'. He was able to provide Mossad with detailed information about the number of weapons carried by the hijackers, their number, and the location of where the hostages were being kept.

Task Force

On 3 July, at 18h30, the Israeli cabinet approved a rescue mission, presented by Major General Yekutiel "Kuti" Adam and Brig. Gen. Dan Shomron. The rescue mission was code named 'Operation Thunderbolt'.

The Israeli ground task force would comprise of approximately 100 personnel. They would be made up as follows:

The ground command and control element

This small group comprised the operation and overall

ground commander, Brigadier General Dan Shomron, the air force representative Col. Ami Ayalon and the communications and support personnel.

The assault element

A 29 man assault unit led by Lt. Col. Yonatan Netanyahu – this force was composed entirely of commandos from *Sayeret Matkal* (The Unit), and was given the primary task of assaulting the old terminal and rescuing the hostages.

The securing element

The Paratroopers force led by Col. Matan Vilnai – tasked with securing the civilian airport field, clearing and securing the runways, and protection and fuelling of the Israeli aircraft in Entebbe.

The Golani force led by Col. Uri Sagi – tasked with securing the C-130 Hercules aircraft for the hostages' evacuation, getting it as close as possible to the terminal and boarding the hostages; also while acting as general reserves.

The Sayeret Matkal force led by Major Shaul Mofaz – tasked with clearing the military airstrip, and destroying the squadron of MiG fighter jets on the ground, to prevent any possible interceptions by the Ugandan Air Force; also with holding off hostile ground forces from the city of Entebbe.

The route in

The task force took off from Sharm el-Sheikh and flew along the international flight path over the Red Sea. The flew at a height of no more than 30 metres to avoid radar detection by Egyptian, Sudanese, and Saudi Arabian forces.



AMIN'S WHEELS: The black Mercedes Benz used during the raid stands in front of one of the C-130s that took part.

Near the south outlet of the Red Sea the C-130s turned south and passed south of Djibouti. From there, they went to a point northeast of Nairobi, Kenya, likely across Somalia and the Ogaden area of Ethiopia. They turned west, passing through the African Rift Valley and over Lake Victoria.

Following the C-130s were two Boeing 707 jets. One contained medical facilities and it landed at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, Kenya. The commander of the operation, General Yekutiel Adam, was on board the second Boeing, which circled over Entebbe Airport during the raid.

The first C-130 landed at Entebbe on 3 July at 23h00 with their cargo bay doors already open. The control tower had turned the landing lights on.

The aircraft stopped at the end of the runway and three vehicles were driven out. One was a black Mercedes Benz that looked like Idi Amin's vehicle. It was accompanied by two Land Rovers that usually acted as his escort.

The Israelis were hoping that

the vehicles would allow them to bypass security checkpoints. The vehicles drove to the terminal building just as Amin himself would do.

At they approached the terminal two Ugandan sentries ordered them to stop. The sentries were aware that Amin had recently purchased a new white Mercedes Benz.

The commandos shot the sentries with silenced pistols, but did not kill them. As they pulled away, an Israeli commando in one of the following Land Rovers killed the sentries with an unsuppressed rifle.

The task force now feared that the hijackers would have been alerted by the gunfire, so the assault team quickly approached the terminal.

The hostage rescue

The Israelis leapt from their vehicles and sprinted towards the terminal.

The hostages were in the main hall of the airport building, directly adjacent to the runway. Entering the terminal, the commandos shouted through a megaphone, "Stay down! Stay



SCRAP METAL: Some of the remains of the Ugandan Air Force that were stationed at Entebbe.

down! We are Israeli soldiers," in both Hebrew and English.

Jean-Jacques Maimoni, a 19 year old French immigrant to Israel, stood up and was killed when Israeli company commander Muki Betzer and another soldier mistook him for a hijacker and fired at him.

Another hostage, Pasco Cohen, 52, a region manager at the Meuhedet health fund, was also fatally wounded by gunfire from the commandos. In addition, a third hostage, 56 year old Ida Borochovit, a Russian Jew who had emigrated to Israel, was killed by a hijacker in the crossfire.

At one point, an Israeli commando called out in Hebrew, "Where are the rest of them?" referring to the hijackers. The hostages pointed to a connecting door of the airport's main hall, into which the commandos threw several hand grenades. Then, they entered the room and shot dead the three

remaining hijackers, ending the assault.

In the meantime the runway lights had been switched off. This was not a problem as the Israelis had placed infrared markers along the runway. Two more C-130s landed. Each of the C-130s carried two armoured personnel carriers. Two were used to guard against a possible attack by Ugandan forces.

The Israelis were worried that the Ugandans might scramble the squadron of MiG fighters based at Entebbe. They could have pursued the Israeli C-130s and attacked them. To prevent this the other two armoured personnel carriers were used to destroy the MiGs. They then conducted a sweep of the airfield to gather intelligence.

The forth C-130 landed and taxied directly up to the terminal building. It would be used to evacuate the assault team and the hostages.

The departure

After the assault was completed the Israelis began loading the hostages onto the waiting C-130.

Ugandan soldiers began to shoot at them from the airport control tower. A brief but intense fire-fight took place as the Israelis returned fire with the AK-47s.

At least five commandos were wounded and the Israeli unit commander, Lt. Col Yonatan Netanyahu was killed. His second in command, Major Muki Betzer, then took command.

They returned fire at the control tower with light machine guns and a rocket-propelled grenade, suppressing the Ugandans fire. One of Idi Amin's sons later said that the soldier who shot Netanyahu, a cousin of the Amin family, was killed in the return fire.

The Israelis finished evacuating the hostages, loaded Netanyahu's body onto the plane, and

one by one the planes took off. They flew to Nairobi, Kenya, where they refueled before setting off on the return leg of the journey.

The C-130 carrying the hostages arrived in Tel Aviv shortly after midday on 4 July. They were given a rapturous welcome by family and friends. Spontaneous celebrations broke out all over Israel as the news of the rescue spread.

The Ugandan reaction

Dora Bloch, a 74 year old Israeli who also held British citizenship, was left behind in Uganda.

During the hostage drama she had choked on a chicken bone while eating. She was taken to Mulago Hospital in Kampala.

After the raid she was murdered by officers of the Ugandan Army, as were some of her doctors and nurses that had tried to intervene.

Amin also ordered the killing of hundreds of Kenyans living in Uganda in retaliation for Kenya’s assistance to Israel in the raid.

It was Kenyan Minister of Agriculture Bruce MacKenzie that had persuaded Kenyan President Kenyatta to permit Mossad to collect intelligence prior to the operation, and to allow the Israeli Air Force access to the Nairobi airport.

In retaliation, Ugandan President Idi Amin ordered Ugandan agents to assassinate MacKenzie. He was killed on 24 May 1978 when a bomb attached to his aircraft exploded.

The Aftermath

During Operation Thunder-



THE ROUTE TO ENTEBBE: This was the flight path followed by the Israelis on their way to Entebbe Airport in Uganda.

bolt, of which the actual assault lasted only 30 minutes, All seven hijackers were killed, as were between 33 and 45 Ugandan soldiers. Eleven Soviet-built MiG-17 and MiG-21 Ugandan Air Force fighter planes were destroyed on the ground at Entebbe Airport.

Of the 106 hostages, three were killed, one was left in Uganda, and approximately 10 were wounded. The Israeli casualties were one dead and five wounded.

The new Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity laid a charge with the United Nations Security Council, accusing Israel of an “act of aggression.”

The resolution failed to receive the required number of affirmative votes due to two abstentions and seven absences.

Western nations, however, spoke in support of the raid. West Germany called the raid “an act of self-defence”. Switzerland and France praised the operation. Representatives of the United Kingdom and United States offered significant

praise, calling the Entebbe raid “an impossible operation”.

It was an audacious military operation, planned and executed in only six days and carried out more than 5,000 km away.

Something that is interesting to note is that no fewer than three future Israeli prime ministers played a role in the raid.

Yitzhak Rabin was the serving prime minister who signed off on the rescue. His Defence Minister was Shimon Peres, a future PM, and Ehud Barak, yet another future PM was dispatched to Keya to make the arrangements for the refueling on the C-130 aircraft on the way home.

Finally, Benjamin Netanyahu, the current Prime Minister of Israel, was a member of *Sayeret Matkal* at the time of the raid. He did not take part in the raid because his elder brother, Lt. Col Yonatan “Yoni” Netanyahu, was already taking part.



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.

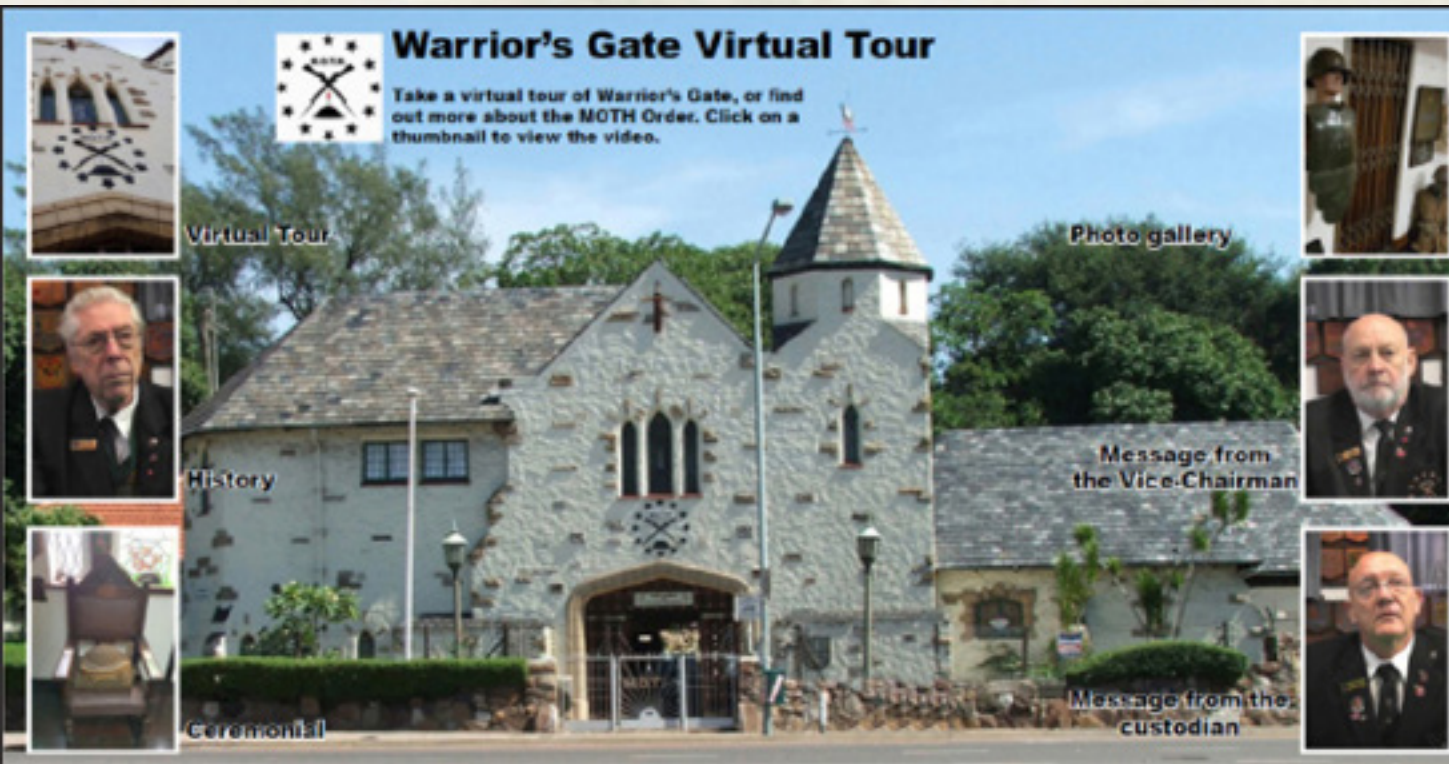
Editor’s Note

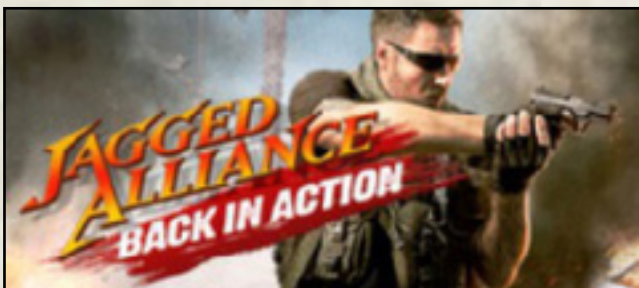
The SA Legion is an organisation that all South African military veterans should consider becoming a member of.

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.





*Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war. Although in this case **Matt O' Brien** is more a mangy mutt than a thoroughbred as he plans to overthrow a dictator with his force of motley mercenaries.*

Way back in the mid 1990s I used to play a game called Jagged Alliance. It was a turn-based game, the graphics were not that great, but damn it was fun to play

Then, in 2012, a revamped version of the game, "Jagged Alliance: Back in Action", was released. While the game is now six years old, it's still a lot of fun to play.

The concept of the game is that the king of a fictitious island called Arulco has been overthrown by his wife, Queen Dedriana. She is not a nice lady by any means. The king wants his crown back, and he has hired you to do the job.

You begin the game with a laptop and a budget. The first thing you need to do is go onto a website called AIM. This stands for Association of International Mercenaries.

There are a large number of mercenaries available to choose from. Each of them comes with a background story and certain attributes and skills.

The attributes are: agility, dexterity, strength, intelligence, and perception. The skills are: medical, explosives, mechanical, marksmanship, and stealth.

You can have up to six mercenaries in a squad, and you can

have up to three squads. You can contact each mercenary via a video call on the AIM website. You can then hire them or hang up the call.

Now the obvious thing to do is hire the best 18 mercenaries, and off you go. Nope, that's not going to happen.

First of all, some mercenaries may not be currently available. They may already be on an assignment somewhere, and you'll have to wait until they are available before you can hire them.

Then there's your budget. The better mercenaries do not come cheap. When you start the game there is no ways that you can afford them. And even if you can afford them, many of them will refuse to work with you. They consider you an amateur and a danger to yourself. When you've earned a bit of a reputation they may then consider working for you.

So you'll probably end up starting with two or three mercenaries that would battle to shoot themselves in the foot.

Your first objective is to capture Drassen Airport. The map of the island is divided up into sectors and you will need to capture them to control them.

Drassen is vital. This is where new mercenaries will arrive and

where any new weapons, ammunition and equipment will be delivered.

Talking about weapons and the like, each mercenary has a load-out screen. This is where you will equip them. There are slots for headgear (helmet, bush hat, beret, etc), eye wear such as night vision or sunglasses, shirt, pants, footwear, and protection gear such as a Kevlar vest and pants.

There are also three weapon slots and 15 slots for other equipment. The range of weapons is vast. They range from knives, axes, machetes, pistols, revolvers, submachine guns, assault rifles, light machine guns, sniper rifles, and rocket launchers. Some weapons can be fitted with items such as silencers or scopes.

Other items include everything from grenades (HE, smoke, stun & gas), first aid kits, medical kits, weapon cleaning kits, tool box, explosives, lock pick kit, crowbar and much more.

You will want to equip your team with the best weapons and gear. This costs money. You can loot the corpses of enemies and often you will find 'cases' with items in them. But the real good stuff needs to be bought.

There are various merchants



around that buy and sell stuff. Their stock is often limited. The best place to buy stuff is online at Bobby Ray's Guns. He has a wide range of stock to choose from, but it comes at a cost. You order what you want from him, pay for it, and he will deliver it to Drassen Airport. This will often take a few days. You can pay extra for priority delivery.

When putting a team together you need to make sure that it is balanced. A mercenary with a high marksmanship value will be excellent in combat or for long range sniping. While all mercenaries are able to patch themselves up with a first aid kit, those with high medical skills will be able to treat serious wounds with a medical kit. The last thing you want is for one of your better mercs to bleed out because there is no one able to treat them.

A mercenary with high explosive skills can defuse landmines or use an explosive charge to

take down a door or wall.

Weapons and equipment will deteriorate with use, to the point where weapons will jam. A merc with high mechanical skills can repair them or make modifications to them. They are also able to pick locks.

The game play consists of two parts. You can give your team orders to move to a certain location on the map, and off they go. When there are enemy nearby you enter the combat phase of the game.

You can use a pause function to give each member of your team specific orders, such as go prone, crawl to there, aim at that enemy, and fire.

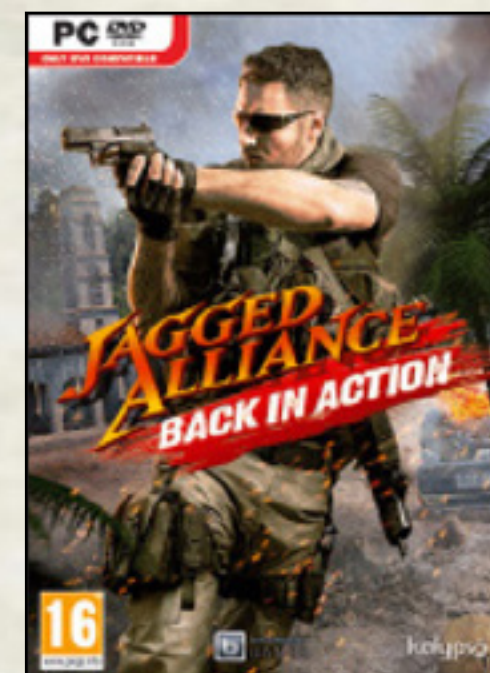
When you kill all the enemy in an area you take control of it. But be aware that they will often launch a counter-attack and retake an area.

Jagged Alliance is a pretty decent game that will keep you occupied for hours.

With each mercenary having

their own unique characteristics, it means that each team will be different. Some of them refuse to work with each other because of past incidents.

Jagged Alliance is well worth the price.



Publisher - Kalypso

Genre - RTS

Score - 8.5/10

Price - R219 (on Steam)



A Bridge too Far

Released: 1977

Running time: 176 minutes

Director: Richard Attenborough

Directed by Richard Attenborough, *A Bridge Too Far* is a 1977 British-American war film based on the 1974 book of the same name by Cornelius Ryan.

The film tells the story of Operation Market Garden, a bold plan by the Allies during World War II to break through German lines and seize several bridges in the occupied Netherlands, including one at Arnhem, with the main objective of outflanking German defences in order to end the war by Christmas of 1944.

The name for the film comes from an unconfirmed comment attributed to British Lieutenant-General Frederick Browning, deputy commander of the First Allied Airborne Army, who told Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, the operation's architect, before the operation: "I think we may be going a bridge too far", in reference to the intention of seizing the Arnhem bridgehead over the Rhine river.

The plan sees 35,000 men being flown 480 kilometres from air bases in England and dropped behind enemy lines in the Netherlands. Two divisions of U.S. paratroopers, the 82nd and 101st Airborne, are responsible for securing the road and bridges as far as Nijmegen. A British division, the 1st Airborne, under Major-General Roy Urquhart, is to land near Arnhem and hold both sides

of the bridge there, backed by a brigade of Polish paratroopers under General Stanisław Sosabowski. XXX Armoured Corps are to push up the road over the bridges captured by the American paratroopers and reach Arnhem two days after the drop.

Speed is the vital factor. Arnhem's is the crucial bridge, the last means of escape for the German forces in the Netherlands and an excellent route to Germany for Allied forces. The road to it, however, is only a single highway linking the various key bridges - trucks and tanks have to squeeze to the shoulder to pass. The road is also elevated, causing anything moving on the road to stand out.

The British are told that resistance at Arnhem will consist entirely of "Hitler Youth or old men on bicycles". They are wrong. The 9th and 10th SS Panzer Divisions have been withdrawn from the front and placed near Arnhem for rest and refitting.

The ground forces are held up when Son bridge is blown up by the Germans just before the 101st Airborne secures it.

Meant to capture and hold the bridges at Arnhem for just two days, the British paratroopers hold out for nine days before the outgunned troops are captured or forced to withdraw.

A great movie with a remark-

able cast.

Cast

Dirk Bogarde - Lieutenant-General Frederick "Boy" Browning
James Caan - Staff Sergeant Eddie Dohun
Michael Caine - Lieutenant-Colonel J.O.E. Vandeleur
Sean Connery - Major General Roy Urquhart
Edward Fox - Lt. Gen. Brian Horrocks
Elliott Gould - Col. Robert Stout
Gene Hackman - Maj. Gen. Stanisław Sosabowski
Anthony Hopkins - Lt. Col. John Frost
Hardy Krüger - Generalmajor der Waffen-SS Karl Ludwig
Ryan O'Neal - Brig. Gen. James Gavin



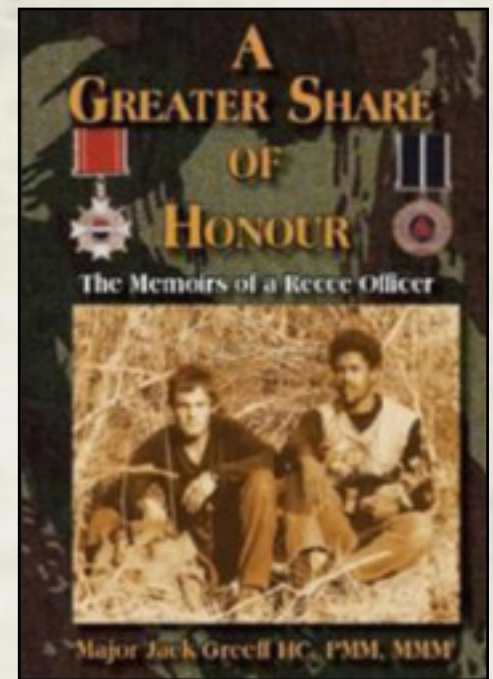
Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

A Greater Share of Honour

A Greater Share of Honour - The Memoirs of a Reconnaissance Officer by Major Jack Greef is one of the better books about the elite Reconnaissance Regiment - the Recces.

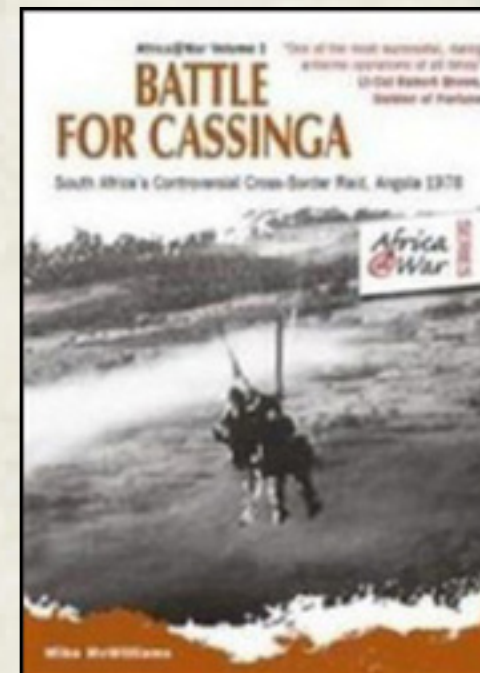
As a young Staff Sergeant in the Recces, Jack Greeff became one of the most decorated soldiers in the SADF. Leading two-man reconnaissance patrols deep into enemy held territories and operating under the noses of the enemy, they collected vital strategic information on enemy movements and installations. Using the information gathered, he led raiding parties to the targets to execute what were probably the biggest and most daring acts of sabotage in recent military history.

After five years service with 5 South African Infantry Battalion, both as an instructor and as a platoon sergeant in the operational area, he passed selection for the Recces and qualified as a combat operator. He served in the Recces for 11 years and was the recipient of the Golden Operator's Badge for 10 or more years as a combat operator in Special Forces. He became one of the most decorated soldiers in the SADF - all awarded for achievements and bravery during special operations. This included a well-deserved Honoris Crux. After rising to the rank of major he resigned to pursue a career as a game ranger. He has since successfully directed anti-poaching operations, firstly in South Africa's world-renowned

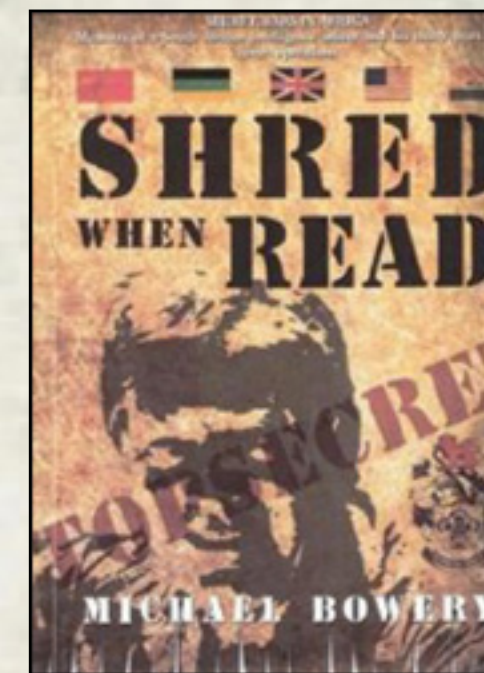


Kruger National Park and later elsewhere in Africa.

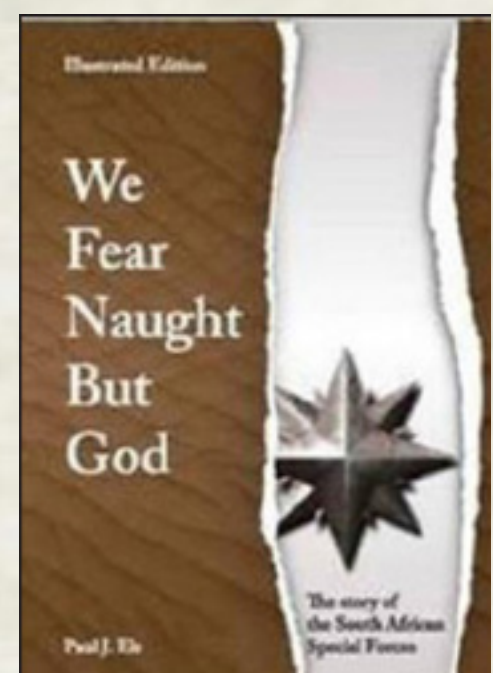
A Greater Share of Honour - Major Jack Greef
Softcover, 390 pages
Cost: R375



Battle for Cassinga
R220



Shred when Read
R300



We fear naught but God
R395

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

Some of the significant military events that happened in May. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of May.

1 May

- **1915** - A German U-boat sinks the American tanker 'Gulflight', three killed.
- **1936** - Emperor Haile Selassie leaves Ethiopia as the Italians rout his army.
- **1941** - German assault on Tobruk.
- **1947** - Vice Adm Roscoe Hillenkoeter becomes 1st CIA director.
- **1960** - An American U-2 spy plane was shot down over Sverdlovsk in central Russia on the eve of a summit meeting between President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Soviet Russia's Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The pilot, CIA agent Francis Gary Powers, survived the crash, and was tried, convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison by a Russian court.
- **1962** - First French underground nuclear blast, in the Sahara.
- **1982** - Two members from Infantry School were killed in a private motor vehicle accident between Edenburg and Bloemfontein while on weekend pass. The casualties were: Rifleman Marnes van Jaarsveld (18). Rifleman Jurgen Swaak (18).
- **1982** - Rifleman Hans Jurie Storm from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a private motor vehicle accident near Bloemfontein while on weekend pass. He was 19.

- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Gerhardus Terblanche from 1 SAI was killed instantly when his Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle overturned during exercises at the De Brug Training Area. He was 20.

2 May

- **1863** - Stonewall Jackson is wounded by his own men at Chancellorsville, he dies on 10 May.
- **1943** - Japanese aircraft bomb Darwin, Australia.
- **1945** - Berlin formally surrenders to the Red Army.
- **1945** - German forces in Italy surrender.
- **1982** - Falklands War: British sub HMS 'Conqueror' sinks Argentine light cruiser 'General Belgrano', 323 members of the crew are killed.
- **1982** - Rifleman Karel Titus from the South African Cape Corps was killed when he was knocked down and run over by a civilian vehicle while carrying road block duties at Eersterivier. He was 29.
- **1982** - Captain Leon van Wyk from 1 Parachute Battalion was Killed in Action east of Otavi during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 26.
- **1984** - Special Warrant Officer Benyamen Joseph from the SWA Police Counter-In-

surgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 37.

- **1985** - Rifleman Piet De-fransa from 201 Battalion SWATF was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 21.
- **1987** - Three members from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces at Otchinjau in Southern Angola during Ops Bauwer. They were: Corporal Augusta Fernando (26). Corporal Martin Nyamhunga (24). Corporal Obadiah Malose Sebata (25).
- **1988** - A self-confessed SA spy of the security police in the ANC, Olivia Forsyth, who was held prisoner at ANC Quatro prison camp for seven months and spent another fifteen months under ANC guard in Luanda, evades her guards and takes refuge in the British embassy in Luanda.
- **1990** - Two members from the Cape Regiment were accidentally killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Mpumalanga. They were: Corporal Andrew Afrika (23). Rifleman Jan Geduld (36).
- **1990** - Lieutenant Mike Schillings from Group 17

was killed in military vehicle accident at Vereeniging. He was 22.

- **2011** - U.S. Special Operations Forces killed Osama bin Laden during a raid on his secret compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

3 May

- **1846** - The Mexican Army invades Texas.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A battle takes place between the British forces under Lord Roberts and the Boers under Gen. De la Rey at Brandfort OFS. De la Rey retreats at nightfall.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Lord Roberts departs from Bloemfontein and begins the 'March to Pretoria' with almost 44,000 men, 18,000 horses, and 1,200 field-guns. He leaves to the strains of "We are marching to Pretoria" which is heard for the first time.
- **1941** - US supply ships finally reach the British Middle East army at the Suez Canal.



Osama bin Laden

- **1943** - US 1st Armoured Division captures Mateur, Tunisia.
- **1945** - British troops liberate Rangoon from the Japanese.
- **1945** - Polish 10th Armoured Brigade captures Wilhelms-hafen.
- **1945** - RAF sinks several German prison-ships in Lubeck Bay. About 7,500 are killed.
- **1946** - The Allied Military Tribunal in Tokyo begins war crimes trials.
- **1961** - Defence legislation is amended to enable use of the armed forces for the suppression of internal disorder and reorganise the police so as to co-ordinate its command headquarters with that of the military.
- **1969** - Lieutenant Andre Weilbach from 4 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard failed to recover from a spin and crashed near Hartebeespoortdam during a routine general flying training sortie. He was 25.
- **1976** - Two members of the Kempton Park Commando were killed in a military vehicle accident in Pretoria. They were: Lance Corporal Johannes Petrus Hendrik Barnard (20). Rifleman Lawrence William Custard (24).
- **1978** - Three thousand members of the Congolese National Liberation Front

(FNLC) invade Zaire's Shaba Province from Angola.

- **1979** - Captain Gabriel Johannes Jacobus Basson from 4 SAI accidentally drowned when his boat struck an underwater obstruction and he was thrown overboard by the impact. He was 28.
- **1982** - Falklands War: Argentine Exocet missile sinks HMS 'Sheffield'.
- **1987** - Corporal Cornelius Johannes Du Toit from Regiment Bloemspruit died from a gunshot wound resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while at Fouriesburg. He was 24.
- **1988** - Representatives of South Africa, United States, Angola and Cuba meet in London (3-4 May) in search of a solution to the Angolan war and independence for Namibia.

4 May

- **1860** - The Orange Free State signs a peace treaty with Moshesh at Wittebergen, near Winburg, after the first Basuto war.
- **1902** - General Smuts, on his way to the national delegation at Vereeniging to start peace negotiations, meets with General Lord Kitchener at Kroonstad, OFS.
- **1916** - Germany abandons unrestricted submarine warfare, at the "request" of the US.
- **1945** - German troops in the Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway surrender

- **1965** - Units of the SADF are now being equipped with a rifle made completely in South Africa. It is the R1-7.62 mm rifle, developed from the Belgian FN rifle, with improvements.
- **1970** - At Kent State University, four students were killed by National Guardsmen who opened fire on a crowd of 1,000 students protesting President Richard Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia.
- **1978** - South African airborne attack on a South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) military base at the former town of Cassinga, Angola. Conducted as one of the three major actions of Operation Reindeer during the South African Border War, it was the South African Army's first major air assault.
- **1978** - Four members from 2 and 3 Parachute Battalion were Killed in Action during Operation Reindeer and the subsequent assault on Cassinga in Southern Angola. The casualties were: Rifleman Edward James Backhouse (22). Rifleman Martin Kaplan (25). Rifleman Jacob Conrad De Waal (23). Rifleman Andries Petrus Human (29) was reported Missing in Action after jumping from the aircraft at Cassinga. It was later learnt that he had landed in the river and drowned.
- **1978** - Corporal Terence Michael Bridgeman, an Eland 90 Armoured Car Crew Commander from 2 Special Service Battalion "D" Squadron Walvis Bay, was Killed in Action when his Eland 90 armoured car was hit by a Soviet 82mm B10 recoilless anti-tank rocket. He was 19.
- **1981** - Signaller Ronald Christo van Hamersveld from 2 Signal Regiment was killed in Military Vehicle Accident in Pretoria. He was 21.
- **1982** - Special Sergeant N. Tamunila 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.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Gerhardus Daniel Blignaut from 6 SAI was Killed in Action after suffering fatal gunshot wounds when his patrol walked into a SWAPO/PLAN ambush. He was 21.
- **1988** - Six members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with a numerically superior enemy force at Donguena, North of Calueque in Southern Angola. Private Papenfus from the

Technical Service Corps was captured during this encounter and later taken to Cuba. He was released a few years later. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Hendrik Jacobus Venter (20). Lance Corporal F. Petrus (22). Rifleman L. Haifiku (24). Rifleman H. Haimbodi (22). Rifleman W. Robert (23). Rifleman J. Petrus (20).

5 May

- **1821** - France's Napoleon Bonaparte dies in exile on the island of St. Helena.
- **1941** - Emperor Haile Selassie returns to Addis Ababa.
- **1942** - US begins rationing sugar during WW II.
- **1942** - A combined British military and naval force land on Madagascar and by the afternoon the town of Diego Suarez is captured.
- **1945** - Okinawa: 131 Kamikaze sink 17 ships.
- **1945** - German troops in the Netherlands surrender to the Allies.
- **1965** - First large US ground units arrive in South Vietnam.
- **1969** - P.W. Botha, the Minister of Defence, announces that an air-to-air projectile has been perfected by South Africa.
- **1977** - Rifleman Hendrik Johannes Jordaan from Regiment Westelike Provinsie was Killed in Action when he detonated a landmine while on patrol in the Jati Strip. He was 21.
- **1977** - Willem Johannes Pi-

etersen drowned while on Observation Post duties on the Kavango River. He was 20.

- **1980** - Rifleman Simon Kapuna from (35 Battalion) 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 24.
- **1980** - Two members of 8 SAI were Killed in Action after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds when their TB came under attack from SWAPO/PLAN insurgents using mortars and RPG-7 Anti-Tank Rockets. The casualties were: Rifleman Derek van den Berg (21). Rifleman Andre Johannes Redelinghuys (20).
- **1987** - Lance Corporal Rodney Abraham Scott from Group 39 was killed in a motor vehicle accident at Barkley East. He was 21.
- **2000** - Sierra Leone rebels seize peacekeepers from Zambia, raising to more



Claude Choules

than 300 the number of UN personnel they are believed to be holding captive and dealing another blow to UN peacekeeping efforts in Africa.

- **2011** - Claude Stanley Choules dies in Australia at the age of 110. He was the last combat veteran of World War I and also the last veteran to have served in both World Wars.

6 May

- **1906** - British troops kill over sixty Zulus during a punitive expedition near Durban, Natal.
- **1915** - Gallipoli: Allies attack Cape Hellas.
- **1942** - Corregidor and the Philippines surrender to the Japanese
- **1943** - Allied forces on their way to Tunis wipe out German 15th Panzer Division.
- **1945** - Axis Sally makes her last broadcast.
- **1955** - West Germany joins NATO.
- **1962** - USS 'Ethan Allen' (SSBN-608) fires the first nuclear warhead from a submerged submarine.
- **1976** - Two crew members from 27 Squadron were Reported Missing when their Piaggio P166S Albatross disappeared south of Dassen Island while returning from a long range West Coast Sea Patrol. The crew have no known grave and re-

main unaccounted for. They were: Major Raymond Hall Carter (52). Captain Gideon Machiel Albertus Rossouw (25).

- **1978** - South Africa is condemned by the United States of America for its recent raid into Angola (Operation Reindeer).
- **1982** - Lieutenant Raymond Roderick Hughes from 6 Squadron was killed near Port Elizabeth while approaching to land in Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I while returning from a routine training flight. He was 25.
- **1983** - Rifleman Louis Smit from Regiment Westelike Provinsie suffered a fatal heart attack and died while on a foot patrol in the Operational Area. He was 25.
- **1991** - Gunner Phillipus Andries van der Merwe from 25 Field Regiment was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Batavia. He was 18.
- **1992** - Rifleman Ralph Jeffrey Steyn from 3 SAI was killed at Imbali Township near Pietermaritzburg when his Buffel Troop Carrier suffered brake failure and overturned. He was 22.

7 May

- **1915** - The British passenger ship Lusitania was torpedoed by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland, losing 1,198 of its 1,924 passengers, including 114 Americans. The attack hastened neutral America's entry into

- World War I.
- **1937** - Germany's Condor Legion arrives in Spain to help the Nationalists.
- **1939** - Germany and Italy announce a military and political alliance known as the Rome-Berlin Axis.
- **1942** - World War II: East Africa. Naval bases on Madagascar are surrendered to the British by Vichy forces.
- **1943** - World War II: Final Allied Offensive, Tunisia. General Sir Harold Alexander's 18th Army Group captures Bizerte and Tunis. All that remains of the German force is General Gustav von Vaerst's 5th Panzer Army on the Cape Bon peninsula.
- **1945** - World War II: Germany signs an unconditional surrender at Allied headquarters in Rheims, France, to take effect the following day, ending the European conflict of World War II.
- **1946** - British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, announces plans to withdraw British troops from Egypt, dependent upon agreement for a military alliance for the protection of the Suez Canal.
- **1954** - The French Indochina War ended with the fall of Dien Bien Phu, in a stunning victory by the Vietnamese over French colonial forces in northern Vietnam. The country was then divided in half at the 17th parallel, with South Vietnam created in 1955.
- **1982** - Corporal Hercules Petrus Bester from 5 SAI
- **1982** - Private Barry Andre van Tonder from the Technical Service Corps was accidentally electrocuted at Lohatla and could not be revived. He was 22.
- **1983** - 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 Warrant Officer Lebeus Vilho (36). Constable Nico Johannes Swiegers (22).
- **1984** - Special Sergeant Filupus Matheus 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.
- **1985** - Gunner Conrad Heathcote from 10 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack during Junior Leaders Course at Youngsfield. He was 24.
- **1985** - Rifleman A.H. Ambrosius from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-Line. He was 19.
- **1987** - Rifleman Christo-

was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents at Tsumeb. He was 20.

pher George Docherty from 7 SAI was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Barberton. He was 23.

- **1997** - Former Defence Minister Magnus Malan takes full responsibility for secret apartheid raids into neighbouring countries but says they were all state-sanctioned and legal.
- **2000** - Rebels in Sierra Leone use civilians as shields while fighting UN forces.

8 May

- **1902** - A combined force of British soldiers and armed Blacks attempts to surround General C.H. Muller's commando, commanded in his absence by Col. Trichardt, near Belfast. The attackers are repulsed.
- **1940** - The Cape Corps, consisting of Cape Coloured men, is reformed under Col. C.N. Hoy.
- **1941** - Royal Navy captures 'U-110', with an intact Enigma machine.
- **1942** - During World War II in the Pacific, the Battle of the Coral Sea began in which Japan would suffer its first defeat of the war.
- **1943** - World War II: Final Allied Offensive, Tunisia. Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet launches Operation 'Retribution', to prevent Axis forces from evacuating North Africa.
- **1945** - A second German sur-

render ceremony was held in Berlin. Soviet Russia's leader Josef Stalin had refused to recognize the German surrender document signed a day earlier at Reims.

- **1950** - General Douglas MacArthur is appointed commander of the United Nations (UN) forces in Korea, including South Africans.
- **1952** - US conducts the first H-Bomb test at Eniwetok Atoll.
- **1966** - WO1 Louis Matthys Jakobus Pienaar from the Artillery School was killed when his Landrover was involved in a head-on collision with a civilian vehicle near Heidelberg. He was 45.
- **1980** - Rifleman Simon Kanunu from 35 Battalion (Later 202 Battalion) SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1980** - Two members of 36 Battalion (Later 203 Battalion)

ion) SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Rifleman Kumsa Ntamshe (22). Rifleman David Twi (20).

- **1981** - Two members from 2 SAI were Killed in action in a landmine explosion in Northern Owamboland. They were: Lance Corporal Johannes Petrus Botha (19). Rifleman Johannes Willem Hanekom (22).
- **1985** - Rifleman Petrus Johannes Theron from the Germiston Commando was killed in a head-on collision between two Buffel Troop Carriers in the Kathlehong Township. He was 26.
- **1985** - Special Constable Linus Abraham 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 24.

9 May

- **1936** - Five days after Italy captured the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, Mussolini annexes Ethiopia and announces that Abyssinia is now part of the Italian Empire.
- **1945** - Czechoslovakia liberated from Nazi occupation.



Joseph Stalin

- **1945** - German troops in the Channel Islands surrender to the British.
- **1975** - Sergeant (Flight Engineer) Jacobus Johannes Crause from 16 Squadron was killed when his Alouette III Helicopter ditched into the sea off Port Elizabeth after suffering engine failure. He was 28.
- **1977** - A Second Defence Amendment Bill passes its final stages in the House of Assembly, with the support of the entire opposition. The existing twelve months' maximum national service will be increased to twenty-four months and the subsequent period of service increased to a maximum of 240 days.
- **1986** - Sapper Jacobus Petrus van den Berg from 25 Field Engineer Squadron was killed at Oshakati after being struck by a bullet resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle. He was 19.

10 May

- **1857** - Sepoy uprising at Meerut initiates the Indian Mutiny.
- **1918** - Royal Navy commando raid on Ostend: HMS 'Vindictive' is sunk to block the Harbour.
- **1940** - British form the Home Guard (Dad's Army).
- **1940** - Germany invades France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg.
- **1940** - Kurt Student becomes the first general to make

combat parachute jump, over Rotterdam.

- **1940** - Luftwaffe bombs Freiburg, Germany, by mistake; Goebbels blames the RAF.
- **1940** - Winston S. Churchill becomes Prime Minister of the UK.
- **1941** - Rudolf Hess, Adolph Hitler's deputy, parachutes into Scotland.
- **1946** - Italy's former colonies in North Africa are to be placed under UN control.
- **1956** - France sends 50,000 reservists to Algeria.
- **1968** - Vietnam War: Paris peace talks begin, as does the Battle of Hamburger Hill.
- **1983** - Four members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during fierce engagement with a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Sergeant A. Willem (27). Special Constable U. Maundu (25). Special Constable T. Mben-dura (28). Special Constable J. Musaso (24).

11 May

- **1862** - To prevent its capture by Union forces advancing in Virginia, the Confederate Ironclad Merrimac was destroyed by the Confederate Navy.
- **1914** - Taza, Morocco, is occupied by French troops.
- **1915** - World War I: The force of the Union of South

Africa enters Windhoek, capital of South West Africa.

- **1943** - World War II: Final Allied Offensive, Tunisia. General Gustav von Vaerst's 5th Panzer Army finally surrenders on the Cape Bon peninsula, Tunisia.
- **1943** - RMS 'Queen Mary' arrives at New York with Winston Churchill and the British Chiefs of Staff, en route to Washington, as well as 5,000 Afrika Korps veterans bound for POW camps, and the 300 troops guarding them.
- **1955** - Israeli raid on Gaza.
- **1960** - Israeli agents capture Adolf Eichmann in Buenos Aires.
- **1966** - Lieutenant Ian Pieter Roos from 1 Squadron was killed when his Canadair CL13B Sabre crashed near Waterkloof during a routine general flying training flight. He was 21.
- **1978** - Private Pieter Benade from 84 Technical Stores Depot was killed in a military motor vehicle accident at Grahamstown. He was 20.
- **1982** - Rifleman Jaques Samuae Du Preez from the Army Intelligence Corps was Killed in Action during an attack on the "Kanjimi Marenga" school where he was serving as a teacher. He was 19.
- **1982** - Corporal Don Stoffel Olyn from 911 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during a patrol in the Etosha Pan. He was 18.

- **1985** - Corporal Mark Anthony Pond from 905 Special Services Company was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola.
- **1986** - Three members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a fierce contact with heavily armed PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland when their Z5S Casspir was hit by a Soviet RPG-7 Anti-Tank Rocket. The casualties were: Constable Ignatius Francois van Zyl (25). Special Constable Simeon Shindele (25). Special Constable Simon Toivo (24).

12 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lord Roberts enters Kroonstad. President M.T. Steyn proclaims Heilbron in the Orange Free State as his new capital.
- **1941** - Urgent supplies, including tanks and aircraft arrive at the Egyptian port of Alexandria with the convoy, code-named 'Tiger'. General Wavell can now prepare for operation 'Brevity', and the push against Rommel's forces on the Egypt-Libya border.
- **1949** - Soviet Russia lifted its blockade of Berlin.
- **1973** - 2nd Lieutenant Jacobus Petrus Kolver from 6 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard spun into

the ground near the Sundays River during a routine general flying training flight. He was 21.

- **1975** - Trooper Pieter Gabriel Eybers from 2 Special Service Battalion was accidentally killed when he fell out of a patrol observation post in the Operational Area. He was 20.
- **1980** - Rifleman Cornelius Johannes Nortje from 1 SAI attached to 61 Mech Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1982** - Lance Corporal Michael Simon Ngoma from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment died from gunshot wounds accidentally sustained. He was 24.
- **1983** - Rifleman Frank Paul Couvelis from 912 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action in Southern Angola when his convoy was ambushed by a numerically superior enemy force.



Kurt Student

- **1988** - Rifleman Dean Anthony Lones from Regiment Dan Pienaar was killed in a military vehicle accident at Hazyview near White River. He was 25.
- **2000** - Ignoring international pleas to end their two-year border conflict, Ethiopia and Eritrea return to open war with fighting reported on three fronts.

13 May

- **1940** - Churchill promises "blood, toil, tears, and sweat."
- **1940** - Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands flees to England to avoid capture by the Germans.
- **1943** - World War II: The Italian commander-in-chief in Tunisia surrenders a day after his German counterpart, with the Allies holding some 250,000 prisoners of war.
- **1946** - US sentences 58 Mauthausen concentration camp guards to death.
- **1964** - Rifleman Paul Jacobus Krogh from 1 Parachute Battalion was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier in the Barracks in Tempe, Bloemfontein. He was 20.
- **1981** - Rifleman Mike Williams from the South African Intelligence Corps was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident, at Madimbo. He was 21.

- **1988** - Foreign Affairs Minister Pik Botha and Defence Minister Magnus Malan hold talks in Brazzaville, Congo, with an Angolan delegation headed by Minister of Justice Fernando van Dunem.

14 May

- **1942** - During World War II, an Act of Congress allowed women to enlist for non-combat duties in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC), the Women Appointed for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES), Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS), and Semper Paratus Always Ready Service (SPARS), the Women's Reserve of the Marine Corp.
- **1943** - Japanese submarine sinks Australian hospital ship 'Centaur' off Brisbane, 268 of 332 persons aboard die; wreck is found in 2009, with the Red Cross still prominent on her sides.
- **1976** - 2nd Lieutenant Lionel John Kidson from 6 SAI was critically injured when his Unimog vehicle overturned on the "Wit Pad", close to Eenhana. He and the other injured were airlifted to the Grootfontein Hospital where he died during the night. He was 19.
- **1978** - Communist-backed Katangan gendarmes, who had been living in neighbouring Angola, invade the region around Kolwezi in southern Zaire. Zairian troops are sent into quell the

violence.

- **1980** - Three members from 8 SAI were killed after receiving multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental M26 hand grenade explosion at Okalongo in Northern Owamboland. They were: Lance Corporal Andre David Naude (21). Rifleman Frederick Engelbrecht (18). Rifleman Willem Johannes Landman (20).
 - **1982** - Rifleman Andre Jodt from the South West Africa Territory Force Gymnasium was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 29.
 - **1986** - Staff Sergeant Jan Carl Bergh from the Soutpansberg Commando was killed in a private vehicle accident while on his way to the Unit Headquarters after being called up for duty during the state of emergency. He was 42.
 - **1987** - Rifleman L. Emmanuel from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 24.
- py Amsterdam as the Dutch Army surrenders.
- **1941** - World War II: Operation 'Brevity'. British forces regain Halfaya Pass and capture the towns of Sollum and Capuzzo on the Egypt-Libya border.
 - **1944** - Eisenhower & Montgomery brief George VI & Churchill on the D-Day plan.
 - **1957** - First British A-bomb explosion, Christmas Island, the Pacific.
 - **1973** - Private Harry Cornelius Theron from 1 Maintenance Unit was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier at the 1 Maintenance Unit weapons store while they were in the process of cleaning and checking fire-arms. He was 18.
 - **1980** - Rifleman Glen Andrew Paul from 8 SAI was critically wounded after receiving multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion at Okalongo in Northern Owamboland on 14 May 1980, he unfortunately succumbed to his wounds on 15 May 1980. He was 20.
 - **1981** - Rifleman Willie Elefante from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
 - **1984** - Rifleman Malekudu Johannes Nkada from 113 Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned while on patrol near Messina. He was 23.

15 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Buller and Lord Dundonald enter Dundee. Lyttelton's division captures Glencoe.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Vereeniging conference begins. The sixty Boer representatives elect General C.F. Beyers as chairman.
- **1940** - German troops occu-

- **1985** - Special Constable K. Tjindunda 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.
- **1986** - Lance Corporal Isaac Londo from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.

16 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A 'flying' column that has sped its way straight from Kimberley (reinforced further by Canadian troops) comes to the aid of Mafeking who is under siege by Boer forces.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Hunter occupies Christiana, the first ZAR town to be captured.
- **1941** - World War II: North Africa. Believing that previous day's advance by British forces into Sollum and Fort Capuzzo was the start of an attack on Tobruk, General Rommel attacks and forces the British back to Halfaya Pass.
- **1943** - German troops destroy the main synagogue of Warsaw.
- **1964** - Six members of the SADF were killed when their Military Vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with a Military Recovery vehicle while return-

ing from a sports event at Uniondale. The casualties were: Staff Sergeant Abraham Carel Prinsloo (30). Sergeant Johannes Hendrik August Agenbach (22). Corporal Pieter Johannes Kotze (22). Trooper Izak Sybrand Visagie (20). Bombardier Johannes Adrianas Du Toit (21). Rifleman Johannes Frederick Wepener (18).

- **1981** - WO II Isak Philipus Venter from North West Command Headquarters was accidentally killed at Stilfontein when he was knocked down by a civilian vehicle during the Republic Day preparation festivities. He was 47.
- **1981** - Rifleman Benjamin Buys from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed when his private motor vehicle overturned at Grootfontein. It appears that he had fallen asleep behind the wheel. He was 20.
- **1997** - Mobutu Sese Seko, who has ruled Zaire for more



than 30 years, looting it of billions of dollars, flees the capital city as rebel forces advance. The rebels enter the city the next day and Laurent Kabila declares himself head of state.

17 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: After 216 days Boer forces abandon the siege of Mafeking and Colonel Mahon's relief column enters the town.
- **1940** - Germans capture Brussels.
- **1941** - World War II: North Africa. Rommel is instructed by Berlin to leave Tobruk to the Italians and concentrate his *Deutsches Afrika Korps* on the fight along the Egypt-Libya border.
- **1943** - Operation Chastise: RAF 617 Squadron ("The Dam Busters") destroys the Ruhr Valley dams.
- **1981** - Signaler Albert Peter Jordaen from the Army Signals Training Centre at Heidelberg was killed in a private motor vehicle accident between Heidelberg and Grootvlei, on the N3. He was travelling home on weekend pass after standing guard duty the whole night. He was 18.
- **1987** - USS 'Stark' (FFG-31) hit by Iraqi missiles, 37 sailors die.
- **1988** - Former information officer of the SADF, Brig-

Mobutu Sese Seko

adier J. Bosman, reveals in Parliament that one third of the 3 000 troops involved in SA's operation in south-east Angola are not White. In addition 65% to 70% of the soldiers in the operational area were 'people of colour'.

- **1989** - A military coup fails to remove Mengistu Haile Mariam as president of Ethiopia.
- **1991** - Rifleman Antonio Joao Sampaio from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action after being struck in the neck by an AK-47 bullet fired from an unknown gunman while he was on patrol in Tokoza Township. He was 34.

18 May

- **1804** - Napoleon Bonaparte became Emperor of France, snatching the crown from the hands of Pope Pius VII during the actual coronation ceremony, and then crowning himself.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Boer negotiators, Generals Botha, De Wet, De la Rey, Smuts and Hertzog attend peace talks in Pretoria with Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener. They are still asking for a continued independence of the former republics.
- **1941** - World War II: East Africa. The 5th Indian Division, part of General William Platt's Northern Force, takes Amba Alagi after eighteen days of fighting. The Italian commander, Duke d'Aosta, is the last one to leave the

- fortress.
- **1944** - The Polish II Corps storms Monte Cassino.
- **1967** - UN agrees to Egyptian demand to withdraw UN forces from Gaza Strip.
- **1973** - Staff Sergeant Kevin Everitt Potgieter from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a parachute accident at Tempe. He was 27.
- **1980** - Four members from 41 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. The casualties were: Rifleman Hendrik Balie (21). Rifleman Dawid Goliath (29). Rifleman Vincent Sekopomashe (25). Rifleman Joseph Tjipuna (22).
- **1982** - Rifleman Likambo Zecks Maxwell from 701 Battalion SWATF was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental mortar bomb explosion at Nkongo Base. He was 21.
- **1994** - Military observers returning to the Rwandan countryside report ethnic killings of at least 200,000.
- **1997** - Rebels led by Laurent Kabila take control of Kinshasa, capital of Zaire now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, after overrunning the country in seven months.
- **1999** - Sierra Leone's government and the country's rebels agree to a cease-fire to end seven years of savage fighting.
- **2000** - The UN Security

Council unanimously approves an arms embargo against Ethiopia and Eritrea following the latest flare-up in their two-year border war.

19 May

- **1931** - "Pocket Battleship" 'Deutschland' launched in Germany.
- **1935** - T. E. Lawrence, better known as 'Lawrence of Arabia', is killed in a motorcycle accident at the age of 46.
- **1940** - Charles De Gaulle's 4th Armoured Division counter-attacks the Germans at Péronne.
- **1951** - UN begins counter offensive in Korea.
- **1958** - The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is established.
- **1967** - US bombs Hanoi.
- **1978** - Rifleman Adriaan Adolf Jonker from the Midlands Commando died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while he was serving in the Operational Area. He was 24.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Colin Watson Kindness from 4 SAI, attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while the platoon was 'Falling In' during musketry training. He was 22.
- **1986** - South African troops

carry out raids in Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, killing three people.

- **1987** - Rifleman John Barnard from Regiment Bloemspruit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Van Stadensrus. He was 25.
- **1996** - French troops move into downtown Bangui, Central African Republic, to help quell an army uprising.
- **1998** - The name of the military base, Voortrekkerhoogte is officially changed to Thaba Tshwane.

20 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A squadron of Colonel E.C. Bethune, under Captain Geoff, runs into a well-placed ambush under Commandant Blignaut at Scheepers Nek, ten km south west of Vryheid. The British lose twenty-seven killed, twenty-five wounded, eleven taken prisoner and twenty-nine horses killed. The Boers capture a machine gun and twenty-six horses, while losing one burgher killed, one wounded and one captured by the British.
- **1902** - US military occupation of Cuba (since June of 1898) ends.
- **1940** - German tanks reach the Channel.
- **1940** - World War II: The 1st SA Infantry Brigade is called up for continuous training, to be followed by other units, including the SA Artillery Corps, Engineer Corps and the newly formed Tank

Corps.

- **1942** - Japanese submarine-borne aircraft reconnoiter Durban, South Africa.
- **1970** - Two members from Flying Training School Langebaanweg were killed when their Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I flipped over on the runway during a landing at Air Force Base Langebaanweg. They were: Major Gabriel Hendrik van Dyk (31). Captain Phillip Spencer Weyer (25).
- **1979** - Special Constable Petrus Mabashe 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.
- **1981** - Three members of the SADF were Killed in Action while on a vehicle patrol from Okankolo northeast along the Odilla River bed. The casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant Stephen

Soloman Hansen (19). Sapper Jan Hendrik Smith (19). Sapper Anthonie Christoffel Strydom (19).

- **1982** - Corporal Brian Gerald Peterson from 701 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1983** - A powerful car bomb placed by MK Operatives exploded outside the Air Force Headquarters building in Church Street during the afternoon rush-hour period killing seven members of the SADF and 10 civilians. Another 197 SADF personnel and civilians were wounded in the explosion that also killed the two MK Operatives who had placed the bomb. The SADF casualties were: Colonel Stefanus Sebastiaan Walters (43). Commandant Johan de Villiers (47). Commandant Izak Johannes Henning (60). Captain Rian Hendrik Liebenberg (26). Flight Sergeant Jacob Johannes Ras (38). Corporal Anton Nel (22). Airman Wayne Lawrence Kirtley (19).
- **1983** - Rifleman John Philip Olivier from Regiment Groot Karoo was Killed in Action near Mupa. He was 24.
- **1987** - Chief Petty Officer Jan Johannes Barend Mostert was killed in a military vehi-

cle accident at Nelspoort. He was returning from Simons-town after collecting sports equipment when his vehicle overturned. He was 38.

- **1987** - Private Clifton Brian Kilian from 97 Ammunition Depot was killed in a military vehicle accident at Mokerong. He was 19.
- **1988** - Rifleman Motsemoholo Joseph Mpembe from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was killed in a parachuting accident at Kenilworth. He was 23.
- **1988** - Rifleman Andre Petrus Prinsloo from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident 10km South of Windhoek. He was 21.
- **1998** - Ethiopia and Eritrea amass thousands of troops along their border, ready to fight over a 640-square km triangle of disputed land.

21 May

- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The proposed peace proposals agreed on by a commission of five, Botha, De la Rey, De Wet and Hertzog, with Kitchener and Milner, are received in London.
- **1941** - SS 'Robin Moore' is sunk off Brazil, first U-boat kill of an American ship in World War II.
- **1944** - World War II: Allied forces break through the Hitler Line in Italy.
- **1951** - USSR announces it will sell arms to Egypt.
- **1956** - US explodes the first airdropped hydrogen bomb,



T E Lawrence

- Bikini Atoll
- **1974** - The British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, states in the House of Commons that the export license for a Westland Wasp helicopter to South Africa will be revoked.
- **1976** - Private Adriaan Johannes van der Merwe from the 4th Provost Company, South African Corps of Military Police was killed in Military Vehicle Accident at Grootfontein. He was 19.
- **1978** - French and Belgian paratroopers who were flown into Kolwezi, Zaire's main copper producing town, to rescue the 3,000 White residents, have discovered over 150 bodies lying in the town's main streets. Most have been badly mutilated. Communist-backed Katangese gendarmes, who had invaded the region earlier this month, are blamed. Zairian troops, who had been sent in a week ago, appear to have joined with the Katangese gendarmes, getting high on drugs and going on the murder spree.
- **1980** - Fifteen members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during heavy close-quarter fighting against a vastly numerically superior enemy force of FAPLA troops and PLAN insurgents during an engagement to neutralise an enemy base complex at Savate in Southern Angola during Operation Tiro a Tiro. The casualties were: Captain An-
- dre Erasmus (28). Lieutenant Charl de Jongh Muller (23). 2nd Lieutenant Timothy Simmons Patrick (18). 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Mattheus Heyns Muller (19). Corporal Eduard Coetzee Engelbrecht (19). Lance Corporal Andrew Jeremy Falkus (20). Lance Corporal Joao Kaumba (21). Rifleman Rodrigues Alberto (27). Rifleman Benedito Albino (25). Rifleman Sebastiao Angelo (22). Rifleman Manuel Augusto (26). Rifleman Antonio Caliang (31). Rifleman Abel Livingue (23). Rifleman Casto Marcelino (24). Rifleman Joaquim Matamba (22).
- **1985** - Three members of the Air Force Base Waterkloof Fire Section were Killed in Action after being called to assist the Pretoria Fire Department in extinguishing a massive fire at the SASOL Bulk Storage Depot in Pretoria West after Soviet SPM limpet mines planted by MK Operatives had exploded and damaged some of the large fuel storage tanks. The casualties were: Sergeant Wynand Jacobus Hawkins (30). Corporal Donald Graham Clench (22). Airman Michael Sydney Knoetze (23).
- **1985** - A SADF unit is ambushed at the Cabinda oil refinery in Angola and Special Forces Captain Wynand du Toit is taken captive.
- **1985** - Two members from 4 Reconnaissance Regiment

were Killed in Action during a Reconnaissance Operation in Cabinda Province of Northern Angola. Captain Wynand du Toit is captured. The casualties were: Corporal Rowland Ridgard Liebenberg (25). Corporal Louis Pieter van Breda (25).

- **1985** - Three members from 101 Battalion SWATF were killed when their Caspir Vehicle overturned at Ondangwa. They were: Rifleman J Kandjii (27). Rifleman M Domingos (26). Rifleman J Felosiano (25).
- **1986** - Rifleman Gabriel Gerhardus Malan from 7 SAI was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Kwan-debele. He was 19.
- **1986** - Corporal D Maurioco from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 24.

22 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: USA President McKinley says he will not intervene in the war in South Africa despite direct requests by Boer representatives visiting the White House.
- **1915** - Italy declares war on Austria-Hungary.
- **1941** - World War II: East Africa. Caught between a pincer movement of the 11th and 12th African Divisions, the Abyssinian town of Soddu is captured. It was the penultimate point of resistance to the Allied campaign in

East Africa; only Gondar, to the north, still remains under Italian control.

- **1941** - British troops take Baghdad, deposing pro-Nazi Iraqi regime.
- **1942** - Mexico declares war on Nazi Germany and Japan.
- **1945** - The Allies dissolve the "Dönitz Government," and abolish German sovereignty.
- **1945** - After being captured by the British, Heinrich Himmler commits suicide. He was 44.
- **1960** - Israel announces the capture of Nazi Adolf Eichmann in Argentina.
- **1965** - Minister of Defence Jim Fouché announces that R12m. has been spent on the defence radar screen in the Transvaal.
- **1969** - Trooper Hendrik Erlank Pieterse from 84 Technical Stores Depot was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1983** - Rifleman Johannes Engelbrecht from the Infantry School was critically injured in a private motor



Kat Liebenberg

vehicle accident near Colesburg and later succumbed to his injuries in the Universitas Hospital, Bloemfontein. He was 22.

- **1985** - Major Jan Pen Wesels from 85 Combat Flying School was killed when his Dassault Mirage IID2Z crashed near Pietersburg. He was 36.
- **1994** - Rwandan rebels seize the key government army barracks in Kigali, removing the biggest obstacle in their drive to capture the capital.

23 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British troops arrive at the Renoster River only to find that the Boers have destroyed the bridge.
- **1966** - The Fort Klapperkop military museum, Pretoria, mainly illustrating the period from the Great Trek to 1902, is opened by President C.R. Swart.
- **1979** - Two members from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action at Shona Mutamanjamba in Southern Angola while carrying out reconnaissance mission to locate a suspected SWAPO/PLAN Base in the area. The casualties were: Captain Johannes Cornelius van Wyk HC (27). Corporal Johan Kloosterziel (22).
- **1983** - Rifleman Coenraad Jacobus Bezuidenhout from Regiment De La Rey was

killed instantly when a Soviet PG-7 Anti-Tank Rocket was accidentally detonated inside their Buffel Troop Carrier while travelling on the Oshakati-Oshikuku road. He was 24.

- **1983** - 2nd Lieutenant Jacobus Edward Visser from 202 Battalion SWATF was killed in a motor cycle accident at Rundu. He was 23.
- **1983** - In response to a car bomb attack in Pretoria on 20 May, the South African Air Force bombs ANC bases in a Maputo suburb, Mozambique, killing six.
- **1998** - General Andreas "Kat" Liebenberg, ex-chief of the SA defence force, dies of cancer in Pretoria.

24 May

- **1870** - Jan Christian Smuts, who was to become the Union of South Africa's second prime minister, is born on the farm Bovenplaats near Riebeeck West in the Cape.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Britain annexes the Orange Free State. Lord Roberts changes the name to Orange River Colony.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Colonel Robert Baden-Powell occupies Zeerust.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British General Sir Ian Hamilton attends General Jan Christiaan Smuts' birthday party: "I sat between Botha and De la Ray. On Botha's right was De Wet, on De la Ray's left sat Smuts.

I had the most enchanting evening, and never wish to eat my dinner in better company."

- **1916** - Britain introduces conscription.
- **1916** - Germans capture Ft. Douaumont, Verdun, from the French.
- **1921** - The British Legion, now the Royal British Legion, is formed by Great War veterans.
- **1941** - Battle of the Denmark Straits: the 'Bismarck' sinks HMS 'Hood', 1,416 are killed. There are only three survivors.
- **1979** - Private Albertus Mundy from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Grootfontein. He was 21.
- **1991** - Corporal Revis Omie Khoza from the Kruger Park Commando was killed after he was attacked and trampled to death by an enraged buffalo while on patrol in the Kruger National Park. He was 35.

25 May

- **1857** - In an attempt to unite the two Boer republics, the commandoes of the Free State and Transvaal (Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek) confront each other at the Renoster River, but an armed clash is averted through mediation of Paul Kruger and others.
- **1940** - German troops reach the Channel near Boulogne.
- **1977** - US raises concern over the presence of Cuban

military advisers in Ethiopia.

- **1977** - Sergeant William Henry Bernard Gildenhuys HC (Posthumous) from the Cape Town Highlanders was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds while detached to Alpha Company, 1 Parachute Battalion for special duties. He was 28.
- **1981** - Special Warrant Officer Antonio Chiwale 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.
- **1982** - Rifleman Daniel de Klerk from 4 SAI was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 19.
- **1982** - Private Wayne Peter Lourens from 86 Technical Stores Depot went for dental treatment in Bloemfontein. After receiving a dental injection, he suddenly lapsed into a coma and was rushed to hospital where he later died. He was 21.
- **1982** - Three members from 202 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy Forces in Southern Angola. They were: Rifleman G. Muronga (24). Rifleman A.H. Kudumo (25). Rifleman L. Kudumo (26).
- **1983** - Sergeant Alberto Costa 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 25.

- **1984** - Rifleman Craig Rudolph Olivier from the Durban Light Infantry died in 1 Military Hospital after being critically injured in a military vehicle accident. He was 22.
- **1987** - Two members from 111 Battalion were killed in a military vehicle accident on the Carolina Road approximately 30 km from Amsterdam. They were: Rifleman Menzie Albert Moyo (22). Rifleman Passport Johannes Zulu (21).
- **1994** - The UN arms embargo on South Africa is finally lifted following the election of Nelson Mandela as president of the government of National Unity.
- **1997** - Rebels topple the government of Sierra Leone in a violent coup.

26 May

- **1940** - The Dunkirk evacuation began in order to save the British Expeditionary Force trapped by advancing German armies on the northern coast of France. Boats and vessels of all shapes and sizes ferried 200,000 British and 140,000 French and Belgian soldiers across the English Channel by 2 June.
- **1940** - The Crown detains British Fascist Oswald Mosley.
- **1942** - North Africa: Rommel attacks the Gazala Line.

- **1967** - Egyptian premier Gamal Abdel Nasser vows to destroy Israel if war is provoked.
- **1971** - Eleven SAAF members, nine from 21 Squadron and two from 24 Squadron were killed when a formation of three Hawker Siddeley Mercurius HS125 aircraft flew into the side of Devil's Peak during an aircraft formation practice rehearsal for the Republic Day 10th Anniversary celebrations in Cape Town. The casualties were: Major Michael Christiaan de Graaff Genis (37). Captain Daniel du Plessis Lombard (37). Commandant Lourens Adrian Francois Henning (40). Major George Johannes Euvrard (32). Major Nico Beetge (31). Captain Gerald Nicol Snyman (27). Major Herwie Herman Albert Cornelius Lamoral (37). Major Willem Abram Prinsloo (37). Corporal Reiner Nicolaas Grobler (24). Lance Corporal Eugene Hayes (22). Private



Oswald Mosley

Gerhardus Hermanus Waserman (21).

- **1972** - US-USSR sign SALT I (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty).
- **1973** - Rifleman Jeffrey Gerald Holm from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident, in Eastern Caprivi. Jeffrey was the first SADF soldier to die on service in the Border area after the SADF took over the border area protection role from the South African Police. He was 19.
- **1977** - Rifleman Charles Henry Janse van Noordwyk from 3 SAI was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion at Potchefstroom. He was 18.
- **1977** - The Shaba War in Zaire comes to an end.
- **1980** - Rifleman Johannes Stephanus van der Merwe from Sector 10 Headquarters was killed when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while serving at Oshakati. He was 20.
- **1986** - Rifleman Ivan Conradie from the South African Cape Corps, attached to Sector 10 Headquarters, was killed in a military vehicle accident at Oshakati. He was 21.
- **1987** - Corporal Willem Johannes Gysberg Venter from Northern Transvaal Com-

mand was killed in a military motor cycle accident at Cullinan. He was 21.

- **1989** - WO1 Roland Stanley Sheppard from South West Africa Medical Command was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident on the Tsumeb-Ondangwa Road. He was 50.
- **1991** - South African Air Force pioneer Major-General Ken van der Spuy, veteran of both world wars and holder of fourteen decorations from several countries, dies at the age of 99.

27 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Lord Roberts crosses the Vaal River and occupies the town of Ver-eeniging.
- **1918** - Battle of the Aisne: Allies begin pressing back the Germans.
- **1941** - World War II: North Africa. General Erwin Rommel, now reinforced with the 15th Panzer Division, recaptures Halfaya Pass.
- **1941** - The Royal Navy sinks the 'Bismarck'.
- **1956** - The Casbah area of Algiers is sealed off as French troops search for weapons caches.
- **1969** - Two members of 28 Squadron were killed instantly when the private motorcycle they were riding crashed at the notorious "Death Bend" in Johannesburg. They were: Air Sergeant Terence McKelvin (24). Air Mechanic Anthony

- Edward Dwyer (20).
- **1980** - RENAMO denies in Lisbon that the movement is receiving assistance or supplies from South Africa.
- **1981** - Rifleman Terence Rodney le Roux from 5 SAI was Killed in Action while on patrol from Etale base close to the Charlie pipeline. He was 22.
- **1990** - Signaller Alan Vernon Campbell from 2 Signal Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident on the Pietersburg Highway. He was 21.

28 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The annexation of the Orange Free State is announced by Lord Roberts, and back-dated to coincide with the Queen's birthday on 24 May.
- **1924** - A serious peacetime air force accident takes place when a 20-lb bomb falls from a military DH9 bomber, which was damaged during a forced landing at Kuruman. The bomb explodes among a crowd of spectators, killing three and injuring thirty-nine.
- **1940** - King Leopold III surrenders Belgium to the Germans.
- **1940** - Norway: Anglo-French forces capture Narvik.
- **1941** - World War II: General Jan Smuts, premier of SA, becomes a field marshal of the British army.
- **1942** - World War II: North Africa. Colonel General Erwin Rommel begins his third offensive to push the British back into Egypt: Operation 'Venezia'.
- **1970** - Private Bartholomeus Stephanus Diedericks from the Technical Service Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 18.
- **1978** - Candidate Officer Stephanus Rudolph Strydom from the Infantry School Instructor Group was killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while at Grootfontein. He was 20.
- **1979** - Special Warrant Officer David Gabriel from the SWA Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was driving from Ondangwa to Oshakati and gave a lift to a man who, unknown to him, was a member of SWAPO/PLAN. Halfway to Oshakati Warrant Gabriel stopped alongside the road to relieve himself, leaving his FN rifle in the vehicle with the passenger. The SWAPO/PLAN passenger took the rifle and shot him dead before successfully making his escape. He was 36.
- **1980** - The first 55 women graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Frank Pieter Leendert van der Bijl from 101 Field Workshops was killed after he accidentally fell under the wheels of a moving Samil truck. He was 20.

- **1984** - Signaller Daniel Hendrik Klue from the South African Corps of Signals was killed in a military vehicle accident at Olifantshoek. He was 19.
- **1985** - Lieutenant Michael Robert Borthwick from the Personnel Services Corps was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident on the Pietersburg Highway. He was 27.
- **1985** - 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: Constable Johannes Jurgens Vos (20). Special Constable Frans Bajiyu (24).
- **1986** - Trooper Johann Pretorius from 1 Special Service Battalion was Killed in Action when his armoured car detonated a landmine near the Cut-line. He was 21.
- **1991** - Ethiopian rebels seize Addis Ababa.

29 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Louis Botha visits Johannesburg two days before British occupation and asks the residents not to resist and not to destroy the gold mines.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The Battle of Klipriviersberg or Doornkop starts.
- **1945** - Okinawa: the 5th Marines storm Shuri Castle.
- **1981** - Lieutenant Jeremy

- John van der Wath from 42 Squadron was killed instantly while flying Atlas AM3C Bosbok, Serial No. 958. The aircraft crashed near Eenhana while flying low level ration drops over a shona. He was 20.
- **1981** - Lieutenant Immo Klaus Kruger from 32 Battalion was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion in the 32 Battalion training area. He flung himself onto the hand grenade to protect those around him. He was 25.
- **1982** - Lance Corporal Adam Cecil Lennox from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment died at Phalaborwa as a result of an accidentally self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head while playing with a privately owned revolver. He was 18.
- **1983** - Rifleman Noreneus Philipus from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with



Georg Meiring

- SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-Line. He was 23.
- **1984** - WO1 Willem de Ruyter Genis from Northern Logistics Command was killed in a military vehicle accident at Grootfontein. He was 48.
- **1990** - Private Charl de Villiers from the Technical Service Corps was accidentally killed in Pretoria when his Ratel overturned on the road in front of Special Forces Headquarters. He was 19.
- **1998** - Accepting a seventeen-gun salute, outgoing South African National Defence Force (SANDF) chief, General Georg Meiring, formally hands over command of the SANDF to Lt Gen. Sipiwe Nyanda in the sports stadium in Thaba Tshwane, Pretoria.

30 May

- **1815** - The British troopship Arniston is wrecked on the rocks at Waenhuiskrans (later called Arniston). 372 of the 378 people on board are drowned.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lady Edward (Violet) Cecil writes to Lord Salisbury on the conditions in Bloemfontein: "Far more people have been killed in our hospitals than by Boer bullets... Men are dying by the hundreds who could easily be saved."

- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The officially reported camp population of the White concentration camps is 116,572 and the deaths for May are 196.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The officially reported Black concentration camp population in the sixty-six Black camps reach 115,700. 523 deaths are recorded for May. The total recorded deaths are calculated at a minimum of 14,154 (more than 1 in 10). 81% of the fatalities are children.
- **1941** - The Luftwaffe bombs Dublin.
- **1942** - First Allied air raid on Cologne.
- **1942** - World War II: East Africa. Japanese submarines shell Sydney and Diego Suarez naval bases on Madagascar.
- **1966** - 300 US airplanes bomb North Vietnam.
- **1967** - Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser and Jordan's King Hussein sign a mutual defence treaty, prompting Israel to strike pre-emptively a week later, starting the Six-Day War.
- **1970** - 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Jacobus Theron from 4 Artillery Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident at Messina. He was 19.
- **1974** - South Africa tells Britain that unless the Wasp helicopter is delivered, the Simonstown Agreement on naval cooperation will have to be reviewed.

- **1982** - Spain becomes the 16th member of NATO.
- **1997** - US Marines evacuate 900 civilians from Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, wracked by looting and violence after a military coup.
- **2003** - The UN Security Council votes unanimously to send a peacekeeping force to Congo's north-eastern Ituri province. The European Union approves the force to restore order and security in a region plagued by violence among ethnic militias.
- **1916** - The Battle of Jutland: The British Grand Fleet wins a strategic victory over the German High Sea Fleet, which never goes to sea again.
- **1937** - German ships bombard Almeria, Spain, retaliating for an accidental air attack on a German warship.
- **1943** - World War II: North Africa. Charles de Gaulle and Henri Honoré Giraud set up the Committee of National Liberation in Algiers to represent France until the end of the war.

31 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British troops under Lord Roberts enter Johannesburg as the Boers withdraw to Pretoria. The British flag is hoisted in Johannesburg.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: At Vlakfontein (the present day Derby), General Kemp attacks Brigadier-General Dixon and captures the field guns. Dixon launches a counter-attack and Kemp withdraws.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Boer delegates at the Vereeniging national delegation agree fifty-four to six to accept the British proposals for peace. Representatives of both sides at Melrose House, Pretoria, sign the Treaty of Vereeniging.
- **1915** - Zeppelin 'LZ-38' makes the first airship raid on London, dropping 1.5 tons of bombs, killing seven people
- **1962** - Adolf Eichmann, war criminal, is hanged in Israel at the age of 55.
- **1966** - The Republic of South Africa celebrates its fifth anniversary with a massive military demonstration in Pretoria. A crowd of more than 500,000 sees nearly 20,000 troops and 200 aircraft take part in the proceedings.
- **1966** - Brigadier Jan Harmse Burger SM OBE from 16 Combat Group collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack while attending a Parade at Voortrekkerhoogte. He was 49.
- **1977** - Salisbury announces that Rhodesian troops have captured and occupied the town of Mapai, 100 km inside Mozambique.
- **1978** - Lance Corporal Yvan Mark L'Hoest from 1 SAI Died of Wounds in 1 Military Hospital after suffering

multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion in Northern Owamboland. He was 20.

- **1982** - Corporal Mario Jose from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 26.
- **1984** - Rifleman Kevin James Morrow from Regiment Port Natal was killed in a military vehicle accident on the road to Ondangwa. He was 29.
- **1991** - The civil war in Angola ends officially after seventeen years, though fighting still occurs occasionally.



Adolf Eichmann



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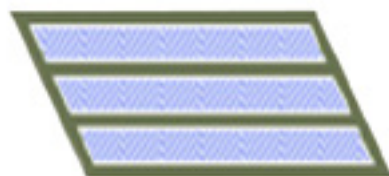
Military Ranks

1. Flight Sergeant (SADF)
2. Master Sergeant (US Army)
3. Samal - Sergeant (Israeli Defence Force)
4. Colonel (French Foreign Legion)
5. Naik - Corporal (Indian Army)
6. Sierzant - Sergeant (Polish Army)
7. Teniente Primero - First Lieutenant (Argentinian Army)
8. Cabo - Corporal (Brazilian Army)
9. Raqib awwal - Staff Sergeant (Egyptian Army)
10. Oberst - Colonel (German Army)
11. Sergent - Sergeant (French Army)
12. Epilochias - Staff Sergeant (Greek Army)
13. Wonsa - Sergeant Major (South Korean Army)
14. Corporal (People's Liberation Army - China)
15. Sargento Primero - First Sergeant (Columbian Army)

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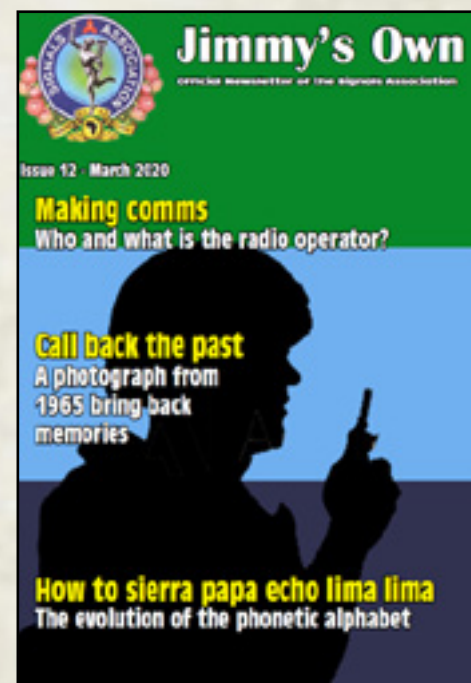
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Useful links

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



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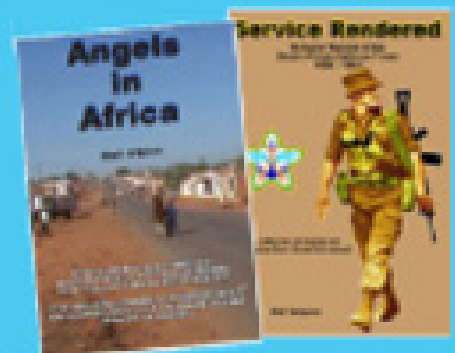
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