



# **Military Despatches**

**Vol 50 August 2021**

## **Women Warriors**

**Ten modern day women warriors**

## **The 'Nam**

**A few facts about the Vietnam War**

## **Who dares wins**

**Britain's Special Air Service**

## **David Stirling**

**Founder of the Special Air Service**

***For the military enthusiast***



**Military Despatches  
YouTube Channel**



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### **Paratrooper Wings Quiz**

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

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

### **Army Speak 101**

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

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



### **Elite Military Units Quiz**

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

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



### **Military Firearms Quiz**

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

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



### **Who said that?**

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

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

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## Editor's Sitrep

If this was a game of cricket our readers would be rising to their feet and applauding me on reaching a half century. After all, this is our 50th edition of Military Despatches.

The very first edition of Military Despatches was back in July 2017. How time flies when you're having fun.

What a month it has been. Gauteng and KZN were rocked by protests, looting, and general mayhem.

Call me naive, but I just don't get "I was hungry" as an excuse to go on a looting splurge that makes Attila the Hun look like a choir boy. Tell me, did you eat that Plasma TV and washing machine with salads?

And why, after you have finished looting everything available, did you have to destroy what was left and then set fire to everything?

What's more our lockdown level goes up and down like a yo-yo.

I would love to do normal things such as attend meetings and parades. Since the lockdown began I have attending exactly one MOTH meeting. I've also managed to attend one memorial

parade.

I haven't been able to see many of my friends for more than a year now.

Nearly every time there's a lockdown the first thing they do is ban the sale of alcohol. And all the shebeens clap their hands in glee.

I'm not too worried about the alcohol thing. Being Irish I'm well stocked up and have enough to last me for about a year.

I've also splurged out on an inverter so I'm not that bothered when Eskom turn off the power.

What I do miss is social contact. The last time I kissed a girl I must confess that I cried. I don't know if it was the emotion of the event or if it was as a result of the pepper spray she used on me.

It's my birthday this month and it dawned on me that I'm getting bloody old. PS - you can contact me via e-mail and I will tell you where to send your gifts.

On second thoughts, just subscribe to our YouTube Channel and I'll consider that a gift.

PS: Had my second COVID jab this month.

Until next time.

*Matt*

# Hipe! media

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Gal Gadot, model, actress, and former Miss Israel did her two years national service in the Israeli Defence Force where she was a physical training instructor (PTI).



# Ten modern day women warriors

*History abounds with legends of male warriors, but this is not the case for the fairer sex. Yet that is not to say that they didn't exist.*

Throughout history legends of male warriors are aplenty, but the same cannot be said of women warriors. Yet that is not to say that they didn't exist.

Some of these women warriors are well known. Most people will know about Joan of Arc, probably the most popular woman warrior in history. This 16 year old girl would go on to lead the French army in battle against the English.

Another well known woman warrior was Boudicca, queen of the Iceni. After her husband died she led an army of 100,000 men and toppled the Roman capital in Britain, Camulodunum.

Yet there are other women warriors in history that are less well known. These include Triệu Thị Trinh (known as the Vietnamese Joan of Arc), Nakano Takeko (one of the only known *onna-bugeisha* - female samurai - in Japan's history), Grace O'Malley (the Irish pirate queen), Lozen (Apache warrior), and Rani Lakshmibai (India) are some of them.

In this article, however, we will be looking at modern day women warriors. Those whose achievements have been in the 20th century and beyond. They are in alphabetical order.



**Maria Bochkareva**

Not only did this Russian soldier fight in World War I, she also formed the Women's Battalion of Death and was the first Russian woman to command a military unit.

When World War I broke out in 1914 she tried to join the 25th Tomsk Reserve Battalion of the Imperial Russian Army, but was rejected. She was told that she should try joining the Red Cross instead.

Undeterred, she secured the personal permission of Tsar Nicholas II. After three months training she began front-line duty with 5th Corps, 28th Regiment of the Second Army. She was decorated for rescuing fifty wounded soldiers from the field.

She was wounded in the arm and leg and worked as a medical sister until she was fit enough to return to the front with the rank of corporal. She suffered another injury that left her paralyzed

for four months.

In 1917 she proposed the creation of an all-female combat unit which she believed would solve the Army's morale problem. She felt that it would shame the men into again supporting the war.

Permission was granted and she was placed in command of the unit. The 1st Russian Women's Battalion of Death initially attracted more than 2,000 women volunteers, but Bochkareva's strict discipline weeded out all but 300 of them.

Her unit was at the front at the time of the October Revolution and did not participate in the defence of the Winter Palace. Bochkareva's unit disbanded after facing increasing hostility from the remaining male troops at the front.

She was briefly detained by the Bolsheviks but released. In early 1918 she was detained a second time and scheduled to be executed.

She was rescued, however, by a soldier who had served with her in the Imperial Army in 1915 and who convinced the Bolsheviks to stay her execution. She was granted an external passport and allowed to leave the country. In April 1918 she went to America.

Sponsored by socialite Florence Harriman, Bochkareva arrived in San Francisco and

made her way to New York City and Washington, D.C. She was granted a meeting with President Woodrow Wilson on 10 July 1918, during which she begged the president to intervene in Russia.

Wilson was apparently so moved by her emotional appeal that he responded with tears in his eyes and promised to do what he could.

After leaving the United States, she travelled to Great Britain where she was granted an audience with King George V. The British War Office gave her 500 rubles of funding to return to Russia.

Bochkareva arrived in Arkhangelsk in August 1918 and attempted to organise another unit, but failed. In April 1919, she returned to Tomsk and attempted to form a women's medical detachment under White Army Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak, but before she could complete this task she was recaptured by the Bolsheviks.

She was sent to Krasnoyarsk where she was interrogated for four months. Ultimately, against Lenin's orders, she was sentenced to death and executed as an "enemy of the working class".

She was shot by the Cheka on 16 May 1920. She was posthumously pardoned and exonerated by Lenin.

The Cheka (Secret Police who later became the NKVD and then the KGB) agents who ordered her execution were executed themselves for not following orders.



**Kristen Griest, Lisa Jaster and Shaye Haver**

The United States Army Ranger School is a 61 day combat leadership course oriented toward small-unit tactics. The course is considered the premiere military leadership course in the world.

It is open to Soldiers (commissioned officer, warrant officer, or non-commissioned officers), Sailors, Airmen, and Marines in the U.S. Armed Forces, as well as select allied military students - as long as you were male.

In April 2015, 19 women were allowed to participate in the course as part of a one-time pilot program to see how women would do in Ranger School. To date, only three women have successfully passed the course.

Kristen Griest graduated from the United States Military Academy in 2011. She also served in Afghanistan as a military police officer.

On 21 August 2015, Griest, along with Shaye Haver, became the first woman to graduate from Ranger School.

When Griest graduated from Ranger school women were

not allowed to serve in Ranger/Infantry roles due to the Pentagon's exclusion policies on women in combat. That policy changed on 3 December 2015 when Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced the US military would open combat positions to women with no exception.

In 2016, Griest became the first female infantry officer in the US Army when the Army approved her request to transfer there from a military police unit.

Shaye Haver graduated from the United States Military Academy in 2012.

She followed in her father's footsteps and became a helicopter pilot. She flew an Apache attack helicopter in an aviation brigade.

On 21 August she graduated from Ranger School, receiving a certificate of completion and was awarded and authorized to wear the Ranger tab.

On 26 April 2018 Haver took command of Co C, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry of the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division.

Lisa Jaster graduated from the United States Military Academy in 2000 and was commissioned as an engineer officer with the 92nd Engineer Battalion.

She was deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom I and Operation Iraqi Freedom I. She was awarded a Bronze Star medal.

After getting married, she left active-duty in 2007 and start-

ed a family and civilian career with Shell, but returned to the Army as a reservist in 2014.

She was part of the pilot group to attend Ranger School. There were 400 participants on the course, including 19 women.

She graduated later than Kristen Griest and Shaye Haver because she had to repeat one of the phases of the course.

Of the 400 participants that started the course, only 90 earned the Ranger tab. While the average age of the trainees is 23, Jaster graduated at the age of 37.

She was the first female United States Army Reserve officer to become a Ranger.



## Mary Hallaren

Mary Hallaren joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1942. It later became the Women's Army Corps (WAC).

This was less than a year after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and America's entry into World War II.

She was barely five feet tall and when a recruiter asked her

how someone of her size could help the military, she replied "You don't have to be six feet tall to have a brain that works."

By 1943 she was a captain and she commanded the first women's battalion to go overseas.

She served as director of WAC personnel attached to the 8th and 9th Air Forces, and by 1945, as a lieutenant colonel, she commanded all WAC personnel in the European theater.

By 1947, Hallaren was a full colonel, and was appointed director of the entire WAC.

On June 12, 1948, when the WAC was officially integrated into the Army, she became the first woman to serve as a regular Army officer.

She remained in this post until she retired from the army in 1960. She served in the United States Department of Labour as director of the Women in Community Service division until She retired in 1978, but continued to serve in an advisory capacity.

In the 1990s, she was a leading proponent of the Women's Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery, which was dedicated in 1997.

She died on 13 February 2005 at the Arleigh Burke Pavilion, an assisted living facility for retired military personnel in McLean, Virginia. She was 97.



## Elinor Joseph

Elinor Joseph is the first Arab woman ever to serve in a combat role in the Israeli military.

Her father, Charbel Joseph, served in the Israeli Paratroopers Brigade and when she finished high school he encouraged her to enlist in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF).

Although reluctant at first, she decided that she wanted to serve as a combat medic.

When she arrived at the recruitment base she was informed that she had already been selected to serve as an office clerk.

She was steadfast that she was going to be a combat medic and refused to be transported out to a new base.

Finally, after several days, a meeting was arranged between her and a colonel from the Northern Command. The colonel made Elinor a singular proposal: undergo regular basic training and, on the condition of being selected as an outstanding trainee, go on to attempt the medic's training course.

Elinor agreed. She complet-

ed basic training, was the outstanding trainee of her platoon, and subsequently proceeded to the medic's training course.

After successfully completing the medic's training course, Elinor Joseph was stationed in a military police base near the Palestinian city of Qalqilyah.

In response to a transfer request Elinor made, in 2010 she was reassigned to the Caracal battalion, which operates in the western Negev along Israel's border with Egypt. She thus became the first Arab woman ever to serve in the Israeli army in a combat role.



## Lydia Litvyak

A fighter pilot in the Soviet Air Force during World War II, Lydia Litvyak was the first female fighter pilot to shoot down an enemy aircraft, the first of two female fighter pilots who have earned the title of fighter ace and the holder of the record for the greatest number of kills by a female fighter pilot.

Born in Moscow to a Jewish family, she became interested

in aviation at an early age. She enrolled at a flying club at the age of 14 and performed her first solo flight at the age of 15.

She became a flight instructor at Kalinin Airclub and by the time the Germans invaded Russia she had already trained 45 pilots.

She tried to join a military aviation unit, but was rejected due to a lack of experience. Not deterred in the least, she applied again. This time, however, she exaggerated her pre-war flight time by 100 hours.

She was accepted and posted to the all-female 586th Fighter Regiment of the Air Defense Force, a unit formed by Marina Raskova. Lydia trained on a Yakovlev Yak-1 aircraft.

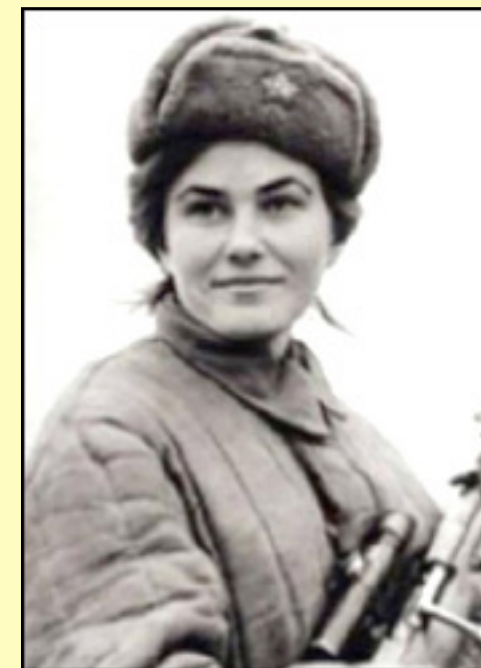
In 1942 Lydia flew her first combat flights over Saratov. On 10 September she moved along with Katya Budanova, Maria M. Kuznetsova and Raisa Beliaeva, the commander of the group, and accompanying female ground crew, to the regiment airfield, at Verkhnaia Akhtuba, on the east bank of the Volga river. But when they arrived the base was empty and under attack, so they soon moved to Srednaia Akhtuba.

On 13 June 1943, she was appointed flight commander of the 3rd Aviation Squadron within 73rd GvIAP.

On 1 August 1943, at the age of 21, she was shot down and killed by two German fighter aircraft.

Nicknamed the "White Lily of Stalingrad", she was awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union,

Order of Lenin, Order of the Red Banner, Order of the Patriotic War 1st class and Order of the Red Star decorations.



## Lyudmila Pavlichenko

Nicknamed Lady Death, Lyudmila Pavlichenko was a sniper in the Red Army.

Her total confirmed kills during World War II was 309, and this included 36 enemy snipers, making her the deadliest female sniper in history.

When the Germans invaded Russia in June 1941, Lyudmila was 24 years old and doing her forth year of studies at Kiev University.

She immediately volunteered to join the army and was one of the first to report to the Odessa recruiting office.

She requested that she join the infantry and was assigned to the Red Army's 25th Rifle Division.

She then became one of 2,000 female snipers in the Red Army. Only about 500 of them would survive the war.

In June 1942, she was wounded by mortar fire. Because of her growing status, she was withdrawn from combat less than a month after recovering from her wound.

The government then decided to send Lyudmila on a publicity tour of Canada and the United States.

She became the first Soviet citizen to be received by a US President when Franklin Delano Roosevelt welcomed her to the White House.

In Chicago, she stood before large crowds, chiding the men to support the second front.

"Gentlemen," she said, "I am 25 years old and I have killed 309 fascist invaders by now. Don't you think, gentlemen, that you have been hiding behind my back for too long?"

Her words settled on the crowd, then caused a surging roar of support.

In 1943, she was awarded the Gold Star of the Hero of the Soviet Union, and was commemorated on a Soviet postage stamp.

After the war, she finished her education at Kiev University and began a career as a historian.

Lyudmila Pavlichenko died on 10 October 1974 at age 58, and was buried in the Novodevichye Cemetery in Moscow.



### Milunka Savić

This Serbian war heroine, who fought in the Balkan Wars and in World War I, may be the most decorated female combatant in the entire history of warfare.

When her brother received his call-up papers for mobilization for the Second Balkan War, Milunka chose to go in his place.

She cut her hair, put on men's clothes, and joined the Serbian Army.

It wasn't long before she was in combat. She was promoted to corporal and was awarded a medal during the Battle of Bregalnica.

She was wounded and taken to hospital in order for her wounds to be treated. Imagine the surprise of the attending physicians when they discovered her true gender.

She was called in front of her commanding officer, but he didn't really want to punish her. After all, she had proved

herself in battle on ten separate occasions. But neither was it suitable for a young woman to be in combat.

She was offered a transfer to the Nursing division. Savić stood at attention and insisted she only wanted to fight for her country as a combatant. The officer said he'd think it over and give her his answer the next day. Still standing at attention, Savić responded, "I will wait." It is said he only made her stand an hour before agreeing to send her back to the infantry."

In 1914, in the early days of World War I, Savić was awarded her first Karadorđe Star with Swords after the Battle of Kolubara. She received her second Karadorđe Star (with Swords) after the Battle of the Crna Bend in 1916 when she captured 23 Bulgarian soldiers single-handedly.

She was also awarded the French Légion d'Honneur (Legion of Honour) twice, Russian Cross of St. George, British medal of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael, Serbian Miloš Obilić medal. She was the sole female recipient of the French Croix de Guerre 1914–1918 with the gold palm attribute for service in World War I.

She was demobilised in 1919, and turned down an offer to move to France, where she was eligible to collect a comfortable French army pension. Instead, she chose to live in Belgrade and found work as a postal worker.

During the German occupa-

tion of Serbia in World War II, Milunka refused to attend a banquet organised by Milan Nedić, which was to be attended by German generals and officers. She was arrested and taken to Banjica concentration camp, where she was imprisoned for ten months.

She died in Belgrade on 5 October 1973, aged 81.



### Hannie Schaft

Jannetje Schaft was a Dutch communist resistance fighter during World War II. She became known as *Het meisje met het rode haar* (Dutch for the girl with the red hair). Her secret name in the resistance movement was Hannie..

From a young age she was interested in politics and social justice. This led her to study law because she wanted to become a human rights lawyer.

During her time at the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* she became friends with the Jewish students Philine Polak and

Sonja Frenk.

When the Germans occupied the Netherlands in World War II, university students were required to sign a declaration of allegiance to the occupation authorities. When Schaft refused to sign the petition in support of the occupation forces, she could not continue her studies and moved in with her parents again.

She became a member of the *Raad van Verzet* (Council of Resistance), a resistance movement that had close ties to the Communist Party of the Netherlands.

She was not interested in becoming a courier, but wanted to work with weapons. She was responsible for sabotaging and assassinating various targets.

She carried out various attacks on Germans, Dutch Nazis, collaborators and traitors. She learned to speak German fluently and got involved with German soldiers.

The "girl with the red hair" was soon on the Nazi's most wanted list.

When one of her fellow resistance members was injured, he mistakenly gave her name away. The Dutch nurses that treated him were actually Germans disguised as resistance workers.

Hannie was arrested and in an attempt to get her to confess, her parents were sent to the Vught concentration camp.

Unable to get a confession out of her, Hannie's parents were eventually released. She had to

lay low for some time.

She dyed her hair black and returned to resistance work. Once again she contributed to assassinations and sabotage, as well as courier work, and the transportation of illegal weapons and the dissemination of illegal newspapers.

She was eventually arrested at a military checkpoint in Haarlem on 21 March 1945, while distributing the illegal communist newspaper *de Waarheid*. After much interrogation, torture, and solitary confinement, Schaft was identified by the roots of her red hair.

On 17 April 1945, three weeks before the end of the war, Hannie was executed by Dutch Nazi officials. She was 24 at the time of her death.



### Nancy Wake

Born in New Zealand, Nancy Wake ran away from home at the age of 16 and worked as a nurse.

## TOP TEN

Using £200 that she had inherited from an aunt, she journeyed to New York City, then London where she trained herself as a journalist.

She was working in France in 1937 when she met wealthy French industrialist Henri Edmond Fiocca. They were married on 30 November 1939.

She was living in Marseille,  
France when Germany invaded.

After the fall of France in 1940, she became a courier for the French Resistance and later joined the escape network of Captain Ian Garrow.

In reference to Wake's ability to elude capture, the Gestapo called her the "White Mouse".

The Resistance exercised caution with her missions; her life was in constant danger, with the Gestapo tapping her telephone and intercepting her mail.

By November 1942 Wake was the Gestapo's most wanted person in the Marseilles area, with a price of 5 million francs on her head.

When the network was betrayed that same year she decided to flee France. Her husband, Henri Fiocca, stayed behind.

He later was captured, tortured, and executed by the Gestapo because he would not betray her.

After reaching Britain, Wake joined the Special Operations Executive and was trained by them in several different training programs.

On 1 March 1944, Wake was parachuted into the Auvergne, becoming a liaison between

London and the local maquis group headed by Captain Henri Tardivat in the Forest of Tronçais.

Her duties included allocating arms and equipment that were parachuted in and minding the group's finances.

From March 1944 until the liberation of France, her 7,000 plus maquisards fought the Germans by any means they could.

Her French companions, especially Henri Tardivat, praised her fighting spirit, amply demonstrated when she killed an SS sentry with her bare hands to prevent him from raising the alarm during a raid.

Immediately after the war, Wake was awarded the George Medal, the United States Medal of Freedom, the Médaille de la Résistance, and the Croix de Guerre. She was awarded the last medal three times.

She learned that the Gestapo had tortured her husband to death in 1943 for refusing to disclose her whereabouts.

After the war, she worked for the intelligence department at the British Air Ministry, attached to embassies in Paris and Prague.

Wake was appointed a Chevalier (knight) of the Legion of Honour in 1970 and was promoted to Officer of the Legion of Honour in 1988.

She died on 7 August 2011 in London at the age of 98.



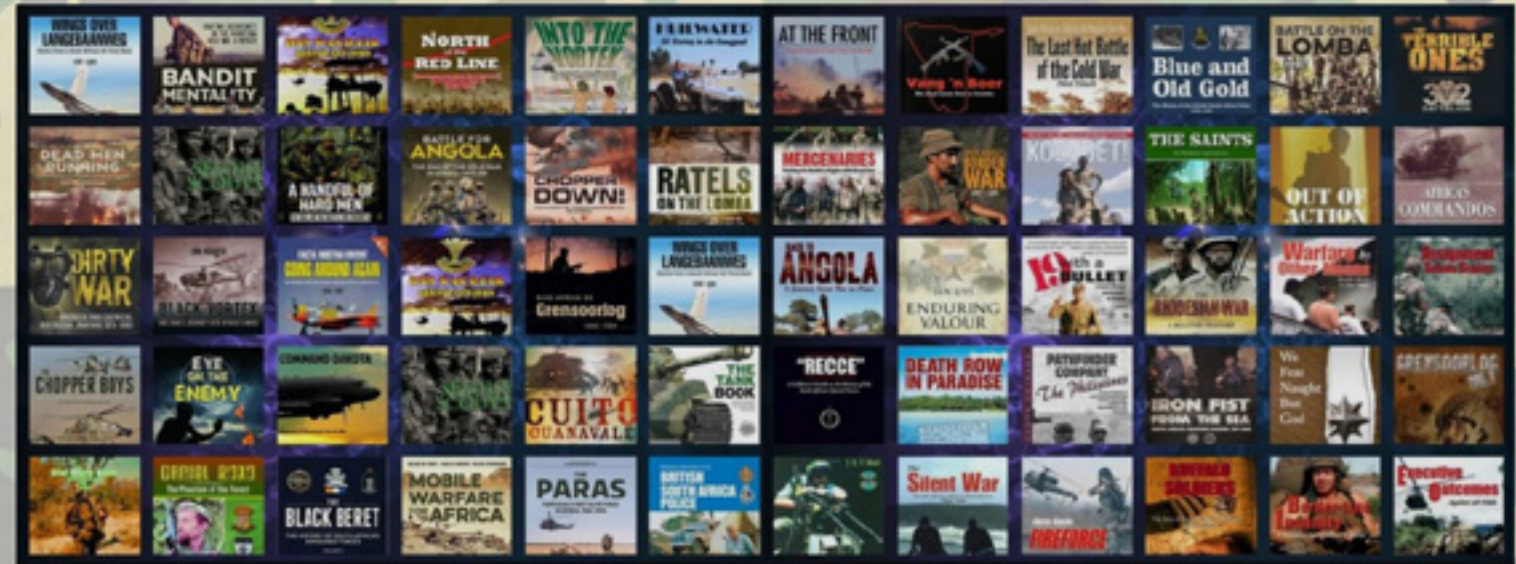
## Christy Wise

Major Christy Wise attended the United States Air Force Academy and, in 2009, commissioned as an officer in the United States Air Force and in 2011, she received her pilot wings to fly the HC-130.

She spent the next couple years stationed in Valdosta Georgia, and deployed to Afghanistan and Italy.

On 11 April 2015 she was visiting her friends for the weekend in Destin, Florida and she was on her paddleboard in a protected cove behind her friends' house when she was struck by a hit-and-run boat driver. Although Christy's life was miraculously saved, she lost her right leg above the knee in the incident.

Christy was determined not to let this change her life so she fought to stay in the Air Force and continue flying. In July 2016, she became the 6th Air Force pilot (and first female) to return to flying after an amputation.



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

# Special Forces - Special Air Service

*Part twenty-eight of a series that looks at Special Forces around the world. This month we feature the United Kingdom's Special Air Service, also known as the SAS.*

Britain's Special Air Service (SAS), along with the US Navy SEALs and Russian Spetsnaz, is probably the most famous special forces unit in the world.

The SAS gained fame and recognition worldwide after its televised rescue of all but two of the hostages held during the 1980 Iranian Embassy siege. Yet much of what they do and how they operate remains a secret.

Much of the information about the SAS is highly clas-

sified, and the unit is not commented on by either the British government or the Ministry of Defence due to the secrecy and sensitivity of its operations.

The SAS was founded in 1941 as a regiment, and later reconstituted as a corps in 1950. The unit specialises in a number of roles including counter-terrorism, hostage rescue, direct action and covert reconnaissance.

The corps currently consists of the 22nd Special Air Service Regiment, the regular component, as well as the 21 Special

Air Service Regiment (Artists) (Reserve) and the 23rd Special Air Service Regiment (Reserve), which are reserve units, all under the operational command of United Kingdom Special Forces.

Its sister unit is the Royal Navy's Special Boat Service which specialises in maritime counter-terrorism. Both units are under the operational control of the Director Special Forces.

The Special Air Service traces its origins to 1941 and the Second World War. It was re-

formed as part of the Territorial Army in 1947, named the 21st Special Air Service Regiment (Artists Rifles).

## History

The Special Air Service was formed in July 1941 by David Stirling. It was originally called L Detachment, Special Air Service Brigade.

The "L" designation and Air Service name being a tie-in to a British disinformation campaign, trying to deceive the Axis into thinking there was a paratrooper regiment with numerous units operating in the area.

It was conceived as a commando force to operate behind

enemy lines in the North African Campaign and initially consisted of five officers and 60 other ranks.

Its first mission, in November 1941, was a parachute drop in support of the Operation Crusader offensive. Due to German resistance and adverse weather conditions, the mission was a disaster; 22 men, a third of the unit, were killed or captured.

Its second mission was a major success. Transported by the Long Range Desert Group, it attacked three airfields in Libya, destroying 60 aircraft with the loss of two men and three Jeeps.

In September 1942, it was re-named 1st SAS, consisting at

that time of four British squadrons, one Free French, one Greek, and the Folboat Section (which would go on to become the Special Boat Section or SBS).

In January 1943, Colonel Stirling was captured in Tunisia and Paddy Mayne replaced him as commander.

In April 1943, the 1st SAS was reorganised into the Special Raiding Squadron under Mayne's command and the Special Boat Squadron was placed under the command of George Jellicoe.

The Special Raiding Squadron fought in Sicily and Italy along with the 2nd SAS, which had been formed in North Afri-



ca in 1943 in part by the renaming of the Small Scale Raiding Force.

The Special Boat Squadron fought in the Aegean Islands and Dodecanese until the end of the war. In 1944 the SAS Brigade was formed.

It was tasked with parachute operations behind the German lines in France and carried out operations supporting the Allied advance through France, (Operations Houndsworth, Bulbasket, Loyton and Wallace-Hardy) Belgium, the Netherlands (Operation Pegasus), and eventually into Germany (Operation Archway).

As a result of Hitler's issuing of the Commando Order on 18 October 1942, the members of the unit faced the additional danger that they would be summarily executed if captured by the Germans. In July 1944, following Operation Bulbasket, 34 captured SAS commandos were summarily executed by the Germans.

In October 1944, in the aftermath of Operation Loyton another 31 captured SAS commandos were summarily executed by the Germans.

## Post War

At the end of the war the British government saw no further need for the force and disbanded it on 8 October 1945.

The following year it was decided there was a need for a long-term deep-penetration commando unit and a new SAS regiment was to be raised as part of the Territorial Army.

Ultimately, the Artists Rifles, raised in 1860 and head-quartered at Dukes Road, Euston,

took on the SAS mantle as 21st SAS Regiment (V) on 1 January 1947.

## Malayan Scouts

In 1950, a 21 SAS squadron was raised to fight in the Korean War. After three months of training in Britain, it was informed that the squadron would no longer be required in Korea and so it instead volunteered to fight in the Malayan Emergency.

Upon arrival in Malaya, it came under the command of Mike "Mad Mike" Calvert who was forming a new unit called the Malayan Scouts (SAS).

Calvert had already formed one squadron from 100 volunteers in the Far East, which became A Squadron - the 21 SAS squadron then became B Squadron; and after a recruitment visit to Rhodesia by Calvert, C Squadron was formed from 1,000 Rhodesian volunteers.

The Rhodesians returned home after three years' service and were replaced by a New Zealand squadron. The Rhodesians would later go on to form the Rhodesian Special Air Service.

By this time the need for a regular army SAS regiment had been recognised; the 22 SAS Regiment was formally added to the army list in 1952 and has been based at Hereford since 1960.

In 1959 the third regiment, the 23 SAS Regiment, was formed by renaming the Reserve Reconnaissance Unit, which had succeeded MI9 and whose members were experts in escape and evasion.



The SAS cap badge is often incorrectly referred to as a winged dagger. It is actually Excalibur, the legendary sword of King Arthur, wreathed in flames. It is worked into the cloth of a Crusader shield with the motto Who Dares Wins.

## 22 SAS Regiment

Since serving in Malaya, men from the regular army 22 SAS Regiment have taken part in reconnaissance patrols and large scale raiding missions in the Jebel Akhdar War in Oman and conducted covert reconnaissance and surveillance patrols and some larger scale raiding missions in Borneo.

They returned to Oman in operations against Communist-backed rebels in the Dhofar Rebellion including the Battle of Mirbat.

They have also taken part in operations in the Aden Emergency, Northern Ireland, and Gambia. Their Special projects team assisted the West German counter-terrorism group GSG 9 at Mogadishu.

The SAS counter terrorist



**DESERT WARRIORS:** An SAS raiding party somewhere in the Western Desert. David Stirling, founder of the unit, is on the far right.

wing famously took part in a hostage rescue operation during the Iranian Embassy Siege in London.

SAS were heavily involved throughout the Soviet-Afghan War - they acted through private military contractor Keenie Meenie Services (or KMS Ltd), training the Afghan Mujaheddin in weapons, tactics and using explosives. Not only did they train the Mujaheddin in Afghanistan but also sent them to be trained in Pakistan, Oman and even parts of the UK.

During the Falklands War B squadron were prepared for Operation Mikado before it was subsequently cancelled while D and G squadrons were deployed and participated in the raid on Pebble Island.

Operation Flavius was a controversial operation in Gibraltar against the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA).

22 SAS also directed NATO aircraft onto Serb positions and

hunted war criminals in Bosnia. They were also involved in the Kosovo War helping KLA guerillas behind Serbian lines. According to Albanian sources one SAS sergeant was killed by Serbian special forces.

The Gulf War, in which A, B and D squadrons deployed, was the largest SAS mobilisation since the Second World War, also notable for the failure of the Bravo Two Zero mission.

In Sierra Leone it took part in Operation Barras (See this months 'Battlefield'), a hostage rescue operation, to extract members of the Royal Irish Regiment.

Following the September 11 attacks on the United States by al-Qaeda in 2001, two squadrons of 22 SAS, reinforced by members of both the territorial SAS units deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Coalition invasion at the start of the War in Afghanistan (2001-present), to dismantle and destroy al-Qaeda

and to deny it a safe base of operations in Afghanistan by removing the Taliban from power in the War on Terror.

The Regiment carried out Operation Trent, the largest operation in its history, which included its first wartime HALO parachute jump. Following the invasion, the Regiment continued to operate in Afghanistan against the Taliban and other insurgents until 2006, when its deployment to Iraq became its focus of operations, until 2009 when the SAS redeployed to Afghanistan.

The regiment took part in the Iraq War, notably carrying out operations in Iraq before the 2003 invasion. Following the invasion, it formed part of Task Force Black/Knight to combat the post-invasion insurgency; in late 2005/early 2006, the SAS were integrated into JSOC and focused its counterinsurgency efforts on combating al-Qaeda in Iraq and the Sunni insurgency alongside Delta Force.

The counter-insurgency was successful, and the UKSF mission in Iraq ended in May 2009. Overall, more than 3,500 terrorists were "taken off the streets" of Baghdad by 22 SAS.

Various British newspapers have speculated on SAS involvement in Operation Ellamy and the 2011 Libyan civil war.

The Daily Telegraph reports that "defence sources have confirmed that the SAS has been in Libya for several weeks, and played a key role in coordinating the fall of Tripoli." While The Guardian reports "They have been acting as forward air controllers - directing pilots to targets - and communicating

with NATO operational commanders. They have also been advising rebels on tactics.”

Members of the Special Air Service were deployed to Northern Iraq in late August 2014, and according to former MI6 chief Richard Barrett, would also be sent to Syria, tasked with trying to track down the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist group that the press labelled the Beatles.

In recent years SAS officers have risen to senior appointments in the British Army and Armed Forces. General Peter de la Billière was the commander in chief of the British forces in the 1990 Gulf War.

General Michael Rose became commander of the Unit-

ed Nations Protection Force in Bosnia in 1994.

In 1997 General Charles Guthrie became Chief of the Defence Staff the head of the British armed forces.

Lieutenant-General Cedric Delves was appointed commander of the Field Army and deputy commander in chief NATO Regional Headquarters Allied Forces North in 2002–2003.

**Squadrons**

22 SAS normally has a strength of 400 to 600. The regiment has four operational squadrons: A, B, D and G. Each squadron consists of approximately 65 members commanded by a major, divided into four

troops (each troop being commanded by a captain) and a small headquarters section.

Troops usually consist of 16 members (Members of the SAS are variously known as “blade” or “Operator”) and each patrol within a troop consists of four members, with each member possessing a particular skill e.g. signals, demolition, medic or linguist in addition to basic skills learned during the course of his training.

The term “squadron” dates back to the unit’s earliest days when the unit’s name was intended to confuse German intelligence. The four troops specialise in four different areas:

- Boat troop – specialists in maritime skills including



**WORLD-WIDE AUDIENCE:** Two members of the SAS during the assault to rescue hostages held captive in the Iranian Embassy in London. The event was captured live on television. It propelled the SAS into the limelight, something that they wished to avoid.

diving using rebreathers, using kayaks (canoes) and Rigid-hulled inflatable boats and often train with the Special Boat Service.

- Air troop – experts in free fall parachuting and high-altitude parachute operations including High-Altitude Low Opening (HALO) and High-Altitude High Opening (HAHO) techniques.
- Mobility troop – specialists in using vehicles and are experts in desert warfare. They are also trained in an advanced level of motor mechanics to field-repair any vehicular breakdown.
- Mountain troop – specialists in Arctic combat and survival, using specialist equipment such as skis, snowshoes and mountain climbing techniques.

In 1980 R Squadron (which has since been renamed L Detachment) was formed; its members are all ex-regular SAS

regiment soldiers who have a commitment to reserve service.

22 SAS squadron duty rotations are set up as such that one squadron is maintained on Counter-Terrorism duty in the UK; a second will be on a deployment; a third will be preparing for deployment whilst conducting short term training; and the fourth will be preparing for long-term overseas training such as jungle or desert exercises. In times of war, such as the 2003 invasion of Iraq, it is not uncommon for two squadrons to be deployed.

**Special Projects Team**

The special projects team is the official name for the Special Air Service anti-hijacking counter-terrorism team.

It is trained in Close Quarter Battle (CQB), sniper techniques and specialises in hostage rescue in buildings or on public transport.

The team was formed in the

early 1970s after the Prime Minister, Edward Heath, asked the Ministry of Defence to prepare for any possible terrorist attack similar to the massacre at the 1972 Summer Olympics therefore ordering that the SAS Counter Revolutionary Warfare (CRW) wing be raised.

Squadrons refresh their training every 16 months, on average. The CRW’s first deployment was during the Balcombe Street siege. The Metropolitan Police had trapped a PIRA unit; it surrendered when it heard on the BBC that the SAS were being sent in.

The first documented action abroad by the CRW wing was assisting the West German counter-terrorism group GSG 9 at Mogadishu.

The CT role was shared amongst the squadrons, initially on a 12-month and later six-month rotation basis to ensure that all members are eventually trained in CT and CQB techniques.

The SAS train for the CT role at Pontrilas Army Training Area in a facility that includes the Killing House (officially known as Close Quarter Battle House) and part of a Boeing 747 airliner that can be reconfigured to match the internal layouts of virtually any commercial aircraft.

The on-call CT squadron is split into four troops, two of which are on immediate notice to move and are restricted to the Hereford-Credenhill area, whilst the other two conduct training and exercises across the UK, but are available for operational deployment should the need arise.



Selection and Training

Except for the reserve component, the United Kingdom Special Forces do not recruit directly from the general public.

All current members of the UK Armed Forces can apply for Special Forces selection, but the majority of candidates have historically come from a Royal Marines or Parachute Regiment background. Selections are held twice a year, once in summer and again in winter.

Taking place in Wales, specifically Sennybridge and the Brecon Beacons, selection lasts for five weeks and normally starts with approximately 200 potential candidates.

Candidates complete a Personal Fitness Test (PFT) upon arrival, which consists of at least 50 sit-ups in two minutes, 60 press-ups in two minutes, and a 2.4 km run in 10 minutes and 30 seconds.

They then complete an Annual Fitness Test (AFT), which consists of marching 13 km in two hours while carrying 11 kg of equipment.

Candidates then march cross-country against the clock, increasing the distance covered each day; this culminates in an endurance test known as the Endurance, in which candidates march 64 km with full equipment before climbing up and down the mountain Pen y Fan (886 metres high) in 20 hours. This is nicknamed the “Fan dance”.

By the end of this phase, candidates must then be able to run 6.4 km in 30 minutes or less and swim 3.2 km in 90 minutes or less.

Following mountain training,

the jungle phase takes place in Belize, Brunei, or Malaysia.

Candidates are taught navigation, patrol formation and movement, and jungle survival skills.

They then return to the UK to begin training in battle plans and foreign weapons, and then take part in combat survival exercises, ending in week-long escape and evasion training.

Candidates are formed into patrols and, with nothing more than a tin can filled with survival equipment, are dressed in World War II-era uniforms and told to head for a particular destination by sunrise. During this phase they are hunted by teams, usually drawn from the Parachute Regiment, that will attempt to capture them.

The final selection test, resistance to interrogation (RTI), is arguably the most gruelling and lasts for 36 hours.

Typically, 15–20% of candidates make it through the initial selection process. From a group of approximately 200 candidates, most will drop out within the first few days, and less than 30 will remain by the end. Those who complete all phases of selection are transferred to an operational squadron.

For applicants to the reserve component, 21 SAS and 23 SAS, the pathway involves comparable elements, apart from jungle training, but taken in blocks, spread out over a longer period, to fit in with the demands of participants’ civilian careers.

In October 2018, recruitment policy changed to allow women to become members of the SAS for the first time.

The selection course for the SAS is not easy. As many as 20 soldiers have died during SAS selection in the Brecon Beacons, defence chiefs have admitted.

According to figures, almost one soldier has died every two years during SAS selection in the Welsh mountain range since 1984.

Memorial

The names of those members of the Regular SAS who have died on duty were inscribed on the regimental clock tower at Stirling Lines.

Originally funded by contributions of a day’s pay by members of the regiment and a donation from Handley Page in memory of Cpl. R.K. Norry who was killed in a freefall parachuting accident, this was rebuilt at the new barracks at Credenhill.

Those whose names are inscribed are said by surviving members to have “failed to beat the clock”.

At the suggestion of the then Commanding Officer, Dare Wilson, inscribed on the base of the clock is a verse from *The Golden Road to Samarkand* by James Elroy Flecker:

*We are the Pilgrims, master;  
we shall go  
Always a little further: it may be  
Beyond that last blue mountain  
barred with snow  
Across that angry or that  
glimmering sea...*



SAS CQB Kit

- 1. Nomex III Assault Suit
- 2. Nomex gloves
- 3. Nomex hood
- 4. Avon SF10 Respirator
- 5. AC200 helmet
- 6. Assault vest
- 7. PE assault belt
- 8. Aircrew knife
- 9. Leg rope bag
- 10. Leatherman
- 11. CS gas grenade
- 12. Stun grenade
- 13. GQ abseil harness
- 14. MBITR radio
- 15. Throat microphone
- 16. Adidas GSG9 assault boots

# Females on the front line

*Nearly every country in the world allows women to serve in its armed forces. In some countries women are eligible for conscription. Yet not that many countries allow women to take part in combat.*

Throughout history there has been a long and colourful narrative of women in combat, from the Amazons of Greek mythology to the very real Joan of Arc.

Some of it has been nothing more than mythology, but much of it has been very real.

## Amazons

According to Greek mythology, this race of female warriors lived in the Black Sea region before Greek colonization. Legend has it that the Greek hero Heracles led an expedition to capture the girdle of the Amazonian queen, Hippolyte, then conquered and expelled the Amazonians from the region.

But are the Amazons purely myth? Yet there may be a bit of truth in the legend.

Burial grounds used by ancient nomads known as the Sauromatians have yielded skeletons of women buried with weapons including iron swords or daggers and bronze arrowheads. The Sauromatians were said to be descendants of the Amazons and the Scythians, who lived in the 4th and 5th centuries B.C.

## Boudicca

Queen Boudicca was very real, and very scary. After the death of her husband left their kingdom of Iceni (now Norfolk, England) at the mercy of the corrupt Emperor Nero, Boud-

icca led a rebellion against the Roman Empire in 60 A.D.

By all accounts she was not a lady you wanted to get on the wrong side of.

Her army wreaked havoc in Roman Britain, defeating the Roman Ninth Legion and destroying the capital at Colchester, as well as Verulamium (St. Albans) and Londinium (London).

Defeated by Paulinus' army, Boudicca allegedly took poison to avoid capture.

## Valkyries

Norse mythology celebrates its own female warriors in the form of the Valkyries, a group of maidens who served the god Odin.

Riding horses and wearing helmets and shields, these women were sent to battlefields to choose those slain soldiers worthy of a place in Valhalla.

In reality, Viking women accompanied their men on their infamous raids in Britain starting in 900 A.D.

Almost half of the bodies found in an examination of 14 Viking burial grounds in Britain belonged to women, and some were buried with the swords and shields they presumably used in life.

## Joan of Arc

The Maid of Orleans, as she was known, began her short life as a simple peasant but rose

to become the patron saint of France through her leadership on the battlefield.

Believing God had chosen her to save her country during the Hundred Years' War, she commanded the French army in its victory over English forces at Orleans in 1429 and led King Charles VII to his coronation.

Captured by her enemies and tried for witchcraft and heresy, she was burned at the stake.

## The 20th Century and beyond

During the two world wars various partisan and resistance groups made use of women in a variety of roles, including combat.

The constant need for troops caused some countries to temporarily ease their restrictions on women in combat.

In World War I, Russia created the Women's Battalion, which attracted thousands of volunteers who saw action at the front against German troops.

During World War II, the Soviets again turned to female soldiers, who served as snipers and fighter pilots.

Even England temporarily eased their restrictions as well, recruiting thousands of women to operate anti-aircraft guns during the Battle of Britain. While they may not have been on the front line, they were still very much in harm's way.

These days most countries allow women to serve in the



**WONDER WOMAN:** Model, actress and former Miss Israel Gal Gadot (who played the lead role in Wonder Woman) served as a fitness instructor during her national service with the Israeli Defence Force.

armed Forces. Yet not that many countries allow women to participate in active combat roles.

Each of these nations has taken a different approach to integration of their armed forces.

## Armed Forces

These are the countries, in alphabetical order, that currently allow women to deploy in combat roles.

### Australia

The Australian military began a five-year plan to open combat roles to women in 2011.

Front line combat roles opened in January 2013.

The positions women can now fill are: Navy Ordnance disposal divers, airfield and ground defence guards, infantry, artillery and armoured units.

### Canada

In 1989, a tribunal appoint-

ed under the Canadian Human Rights Act ordered full integration of women in the Canadian Armed Forces "with all due speed," at least within the next ten years. Submarines remained closed to women until 2000.

### Denmark

In 1988, Denmark created a policy of "total inclusion". They proposed "combat trials" which they used to explore how women fight on the front lines.

A 2010 British Ministry of Defence study concluded that women performed the same as men. All positions in military are open to women - excluding Special Operations Forces because of physical requirements.

### Finland

Men are required to enlist whereas for women it is voluntary. If women do choose to enlist they are allowed to train for combat roles.

## France

Women comprise nearly one-fifth of the military in France. Women can serve in most areas of the military except submarines and riot control.

Women are allowed to serve in combat infantry but many women choose not to. 1.7% of women serve in combat infantry.

## Germany

In 2001, Germany opened all combat units to women. This greatly increased recruitment for female soldiers.

Since 2001, the number of women in the German Armed Forces has tripled. By 2009, 800 female soldiers were serving in combat units.

## India

Prior to 1992, Indian women could only serve in medical roles in the military. Since then India began recruiting women to non-medical positions in the armed forces.

In 2007 on 19 January, the United Nations first all female peacekeeping force made up of 105 Indian policewomen was deployed to Liberia.

In 2014, India's army had 3 per cent women, the Navy 2.8 per cent and the Air Force performed best with 8.5 per cent women.

In 2015 India opened new combat air force roles for women as fighter pilots, adding to their role as helicopter pilots in the Indian Air Force.

## Israel

In its early years, Israel allowed women to serve along-

side men in gender-neutral units, but switched to same-sex units in the 1950s.

Today, however, both men and women are required to do national service. So women make up a large portion of the army and nearly all positions are open to female candidates.

**New Zealand**

New Zealand has no restrictions on roles for women in its defence force. They are able to serve in the Special Air Service, infantry, armour and artillery. This came into effect in 2001 by subordinate legislation.

**Norway**

In 1985, Norway became the first country to allow women to serve on its submarines. The first female commander of a Norwegian submarine was Solveig Krey in 1995.

Norway was, along with Israel, the first to allow women to serve in all combat roles in the military in 1988.

In 2015, Norway made women eligible for compulsory military service.

**Pakistan**

Women have been part of the Pakistani military since 1947 after the establishment of Pakistan. There are currently around 4,000 women who are serving in the Pakistan Armed Forces.

In 2006, the first women fighter pilots batch joined the combat aerial mission command of PAF (Pakistani Air Force).

**Sri Lanka**

Female personnel of all three services play an active part in



**BATS:** These three young women are all qualified members of an Israeli Parachute Battalion.

ongoing operations. However, there are certain limitations in ‘direct combat’ duties such as special forces, pilot branch, and naval fast attack squadrons.

**Sweden**

Women have been able to serve in all positions in the Swedish military since 1989. Currently, about 5.5% of all officers are women.

**Turkey**

Turkish women have voluntarily taken tasks in the defence of their country. Nene Hatun, whose monument has been erected in Erzurum, fought during the Ottoman-Russian War. Turkish women also took main roles in combat in World War One and the Independence War.

Sabiha Gökçen was the first Turkish female combat pilot, having flown 22 different types

of aircraft for more than 8,000 hours, 32 hours of which were active combat and bombardment missions.

Women personnel are being employed as officers in the Turkish Armed Forces today. As of 2005, there are 1,245 female officers and NCOs in the Turkish Armed Forces.

Women officers serve in all branches except armour, infantry, and submarines. Assignments, promotions and training are considered on an equal basis with no gender bias.

**United Kingdom**

In July 2016 all exclusions on women serving in Ground Close Combat (GCC) roles were lifted.

All roles in the King’s Royal Hussars, the Royal Tank Regiment, and all Army Reserve Royal Armoured Corps units have been opened to women, and women



A Turkish signaller on deployment.



US Navy rescue diver.



French infantry unit on patrol.

will be permitted to join the rest of the previously closed GCC roles in the Royal Armoured Corps, British Army Infantry, Royal Marines and the RAF Regiment by the end of 2018.

It’s important to note, however, that even though GCC roles were closed to women until 2016, women have been previously on the “front line” and exposed to combat in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through other roles, such as all roles in the Royal Artillery, which despite being one of the combat arms is not classed as a GCC role.

Women were permitted to serve in Fire Support Teams and on 105mm L118 Light Gun crews. Women were also permitted to apply to join the Special Reconnaissance Regiment, which is one of the major components of the UK Special Forces alongside the Special Air Service, Special Boat Service and Special Forces Support Group.

Women also served as combat medics attached to Army Infantry, Royal Marines and other GCC units. Some were awarded the prestigious Military Cross for bravery under fire.

Six British women in the Iraq War, and three in the Afghanistan War were killed in action.

**United States**

In World War I and World War II women served in numerous roles such as the Army Nurse Corps, and the Women’s Army Corps (WAC). They carried out various roles such as clerical work, mechanical work, photo analysis, and sheet metal working; in some cases they were utilized as test pilots for fighter

planes as WASPS.

In 1979 enlistment qualifications became the same for men and women. While women were able to enlist, they were prohibited from direct combat roles or assignments. In 1994 the Department of Defence officially banned women from serving in combat. The United States has more women in its military than any other nation.

On 24 January 2013, Secretary of Defence Leon Panetta removed the military’s ban on women serving in combat.

Implementation of these rules is ongoing. There is some speculation that this could lead to women having to register with the Selective Service System.

On 21 November 2013, the first three women to ever complete the United States Marine Corps’ Infantry Training Battalion course graduated from the United States Marine Corps School of Infantry in Camp Geiger, North Carolina.

In August 2015, Capt. Kristen Griest and 1st Lt. Shaye Haver became the first two women to graduate from the U.S. Army Ranger School. In 2016, Griest became the first female infantry officer in the US Army when the Army approved her request to transfer there from a military police unit.

One significant female contribution was recognized on 16 June 2005, when Sgt. Ann Hester was awarded the Silver Star for her actions during a fire fight that took place outside Baghdad. This was the first Silver Star in U.S. military history awarded to a woman soldier.

# The Vietnam War - a few facts

*The Vietnam War lasted from 1 November 1955 to the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975. At least 21 countries became involved in the war. Here are a few facts about the Vietnam War that you may, or may not, have known.*

The Vietnam War, also known as the Second Indochina War, was a conflict in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia from 1 November 1955 to the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975.

It was the second of the Indochina Wars and was officially fought between North Vietnam and South Vietnam. North Vietnam was supported by the Soviet Union, China, and other communist allies; South Vietnam was supported by the United States, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, Thailand, and other anti-communist allies.

The war, considered a Cold War-era proxy war by some, lasted 19 years, with direct U.S. involvement ending in 1973,

and included the Laotian Civil War and the Cambodian Civil War, which ended with all three countries becoming communist in 1975.

While most readers will be familiar with the history of the Vietnam War, here are a few facts which you may, or may not, have known.

## Conflict or war?

From an American point of view it really should have been called the Vietnam Conflict and not the Vietnam War.

The Americans became formally involved in the war after the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, but never actually declared war. Successive American administrations wanted to keep Congress out of the affair and thereby avoid nasty debates in Congress.

So they never sought a formal declaration of war, which meant Congress couldn't

get involved.

This meant the war was technically a conflict, although neither side actually thought of it this way.

## The Americans weren't alone

Technically the Vietnam War was between North and South Vietnam.

North Vietnam consisted of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and the Viet Cong. South Vietnam consisted of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and the United States Armed Forces.

Yet this was only the tip of the iceberg as many other belligerents were involved.

Besides the NVA and Viet Cong, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG), Pathet Lao, Khmer Rouge, Royal Government of the National Union of Kampuchea (GRUNK), China, Soviet Union and North Korea all fought

on the side of North Vietnam.

They were supported by Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Cuba, and India.

Countries that fought on the side of South Vietnam, besides

the ARVN and America, included South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Laos, Cambodia, Khmer Republic, Thailand and Philippines. They were supported by Taiwan, Malaysia and Singapore.

## The U.S. and South Vietnamese Presidents were shot in 1963, and this would be significant

Both President John F. Kennedy and President Ngo Dinh Diem were Catholics. But that's where the similarities end.

The deaths of Kennedy and Diem were probably also the death of any coherent containment strategy in the country.

Diem was shot in an armoured personnel carrier on 2 November 1963. At the time, there were 16,000 U.S. advisors in Vietnam. President Kennedy was said to be shocked at the news.

Then-Secretary of Defence Robert McNamara said he "had never seen the President more upset." Both men knew the U.S. government was responsible "to some degree."

The Pentagon Papers leak explicitly stated the U.S. clandestinely maintained contact with Diem over-throwers and the U.S. government gave the generals in Vietnam the green light to start planning a coup. Twenty days later, Kennedy would himself be shot in the back of a vehicle.

## Kennedy wanted to get the U.S. military out of Vietnam but couldn't figure out how

President Kennedy was a fervent believer in the policy of containment and believed in

the Domino Theory, but not so much as to wage unending war with the Communists in Vietnam.

During his Presidency, he and McNamara actively pursued a way to leave Vietnam, while still maintaining their commitment to a free South through financial support and training. Kennedy wanted all U.S. personnel out by the end of 1965.

Many people refute this theory using a quote Kennedy gave Walter Cronkite: "These people who say we ought to withdraw from Vietnam are totally wrong, because if we withdrew from Vietnam, the communists would control... all of Southeast Asia... then India, Burma would be next."

The only problem with this quote is while Kennedy was in office, there was no open warfare in Vietnam and U.S. involvement was limited.

Their strategy was to bring the North to heel using strategic bombing and limited ground attacks.

Recordings between Kennedy and McNamara were since released to attest to their efforts in getting out of Vietnam.

## The Gulf of Tonkin - really?

The Gulf of Tonkin Incident is the catalyst for the escalation of American action in Vietnam. Yet the Gulf of Tonkin Incident only sort of happened.

It refers to two incidents in August 1964. On 2 August the destroyer USS Maddox was shelled by NVA torpedo boats. The Maddox responded by firing over 280 rounds in return. There was no official response from the Johnson Administra-

tion.

The pressure mounted however, with members of the military, both in and out of uniform, implying Johnson was a coward.

On 4 August the second incident was said to have happened, but Secretary McNamara admitted in Errol Morris' 2003 documentary The Fog of War the second attack never occurred.

The Pentagon Papers even implied the Maddox fired first in an effort to keep the Communists a certain distance away.

## The ARVN weren't that bad

The ARVN troops get mixed reviews from the Americans who fought with them. Most judge ARVN units on their leadership, which was definitely mixed.

Some of them became officers based not on their leadership or qualifications, but rather on their own or their family's political connections.

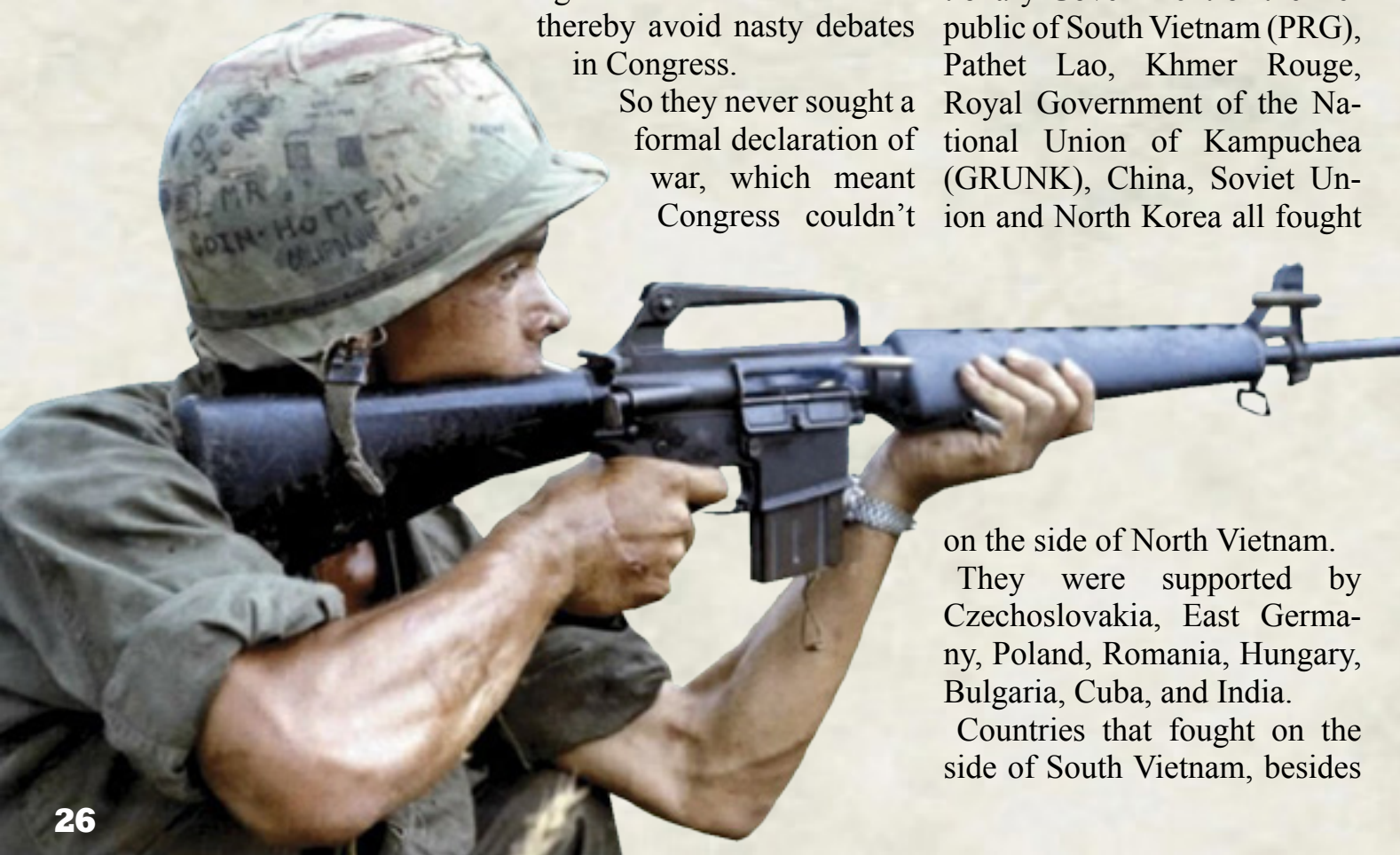
In the end the South Vietnamese lost the war because they ran out of fuel, ammunition and other supplies because of a lack of support from the US Congress in 1975, while the North Vietnamese were very well supplied by China and the Soviet Union.

Now why does that sound familiar?

## The NVA were also not that bad

The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) can't be faulted for lack of dedication, patriotism, or leadership.

It also can't be faulted for a lack of organization. The NVA



was a professional fighting force, organized under Soviet guidance.

They also had some pretty competent leaders. Men such as General Võ Nguyên Giáp who orchestrated successive defeats of the Japanese and French. Even Death had a hard time finishing off Giáp – he lived to 102.

The Viet Cong, on the other hand, were forced to use inferior equipment because the Chinese would swipe the good weapons and replace them with cheap Chinese knock-offs.

**War in the air**

The Vietnamese People's Air Force (VPAF) received its first jet fighter aircraft, the MiG-17 in February 1964, but they were initially stationed at air bases on Mainland China, while their pilots were being trained.

On 3 February 1964, the first fighter regiment No. 921 (*Trung đoàn Không quân Tiêm kích 921*), aka "Red Star squadron", was formed, and on 6 August it arrived from China in North Vietnam with its MiG-17s.

The Americans had at least 200 USAF F-4s and 140 USAF F-105s, plus at least 100 U.S. Navy aircraft (F-8s, A-4s and F-4s) which operated from the aircraft carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin, plus scores of other support aircraft. The Americans had a multiple numerical advantage.

In 1965, the VPAF were supplied with supersonic MiG-21s by the USSR which were used for high-speed Ground-controlled interception (GCI) controlled hit and run intercepts against American air strike groups.

The MiG-21 tactics became so

effective that by late 1966 an operation was mounted to especially deal with the MiG-21 threat. Led by Colonel Robin Olds on 2 January 1967, Operation Bolo lured MiG-21s into the air, thinking they were intercepting an F-105 strike group, but instead found a sky full of missile-armed F-4 Phantom IIs set for aerial combat.

The result was a loss of almost half the inventory of MiG-21 interceptors, at a cost of no U.S. losses. The VPAF stood down for additional training after this setback.

The Navy's Top Gun strike fighter tactics school was founded to respond to the loss rate of one aircraft for every thousand sorties during Operation Rolling Thunder. That's a lot of aircraft considering the combined 1.8 million sorties flown over Vietnam.

So who had the best pilots? It's hard to say, but consider these facts. At the end of the war the top ace in North Vietnam, Nguyen Van Coc, had nine kills, compared to Americas top ace, Captain Charles B. "Chuck" DeBellevue, with six.

A total of five US pilots became aces during the Vietnam War while the VPAF could boast 17.

A little known fact is that one Russian pilot also became an ace during the Vietnam War.

**The draft targeted the American working class and minorities**

Wrong! The draft didn't unfairly target the working class or minorities.

The demographics of troops deployed to Vietnam were close

to a reflection of the demographics of the U.S. at the time. 88.4% of troops deployed to Vietnam were Caucasian, 10.6% were African-American and 1% were of other races.

Just over 76% of those who served did come from working-class backgrounds but this was a time when most troops had at least a high school education, compared with enlisted men of wars past, among whom only half held a high school diploma.

Wealthier families could enrol in college for a draft deferment, but even so many of them dropped out of college to volunteer for the military and service in Vietnam.

**The majority of Americans who fought in Vietnam weren't drafted - they volunteered**

More than three-quarters of the men who fought in Vietnam volunteered to join the military. Of the roughly 8.7 million troops who served in the military between 1965 and 1973, only 1.8 million were drafted.

Only 30% of the American combat deaths during the war were draftees.

More Americans volunteered to fight in Vietnam than in World War II.

**Most American Vietnam Veterans ended up crazy, homeless or drug users**

Not at all. There is no difference in drug usage between Vietnam Veterans and non-Vietnam Veterans of the same age group.

97% of Vietnam vets hold honourable discharges and 85% of

Vietnam Veterans made successful transitions to civilian life.

The unemployment rate for Vietnam vets was only 4.8% in 1987, compared to the 6.2% rate for the rest of America.

**Medal of Honour**

During the Vietnam War and in the following twelve months, 235 Medals of Honour were awarded and since 1978 a further 26 awards have been presented.

Of the total of 261 awards, 174 were to the US Army, 15 to the US Navy, 58 to the USMC and 14 to the USAF. These totals do not include the award to the Vi-

etnam Unknown Soldier.

Thomas William Bennett was a U.S. Army medic and the second conscientious objector to receive the Medal of Honour (Desmond Doss, a medic in World War II, was the first). Bennett was killed in action during the Vietnam War and posthumously received the Medal of Honour.

Three chaplains received the medal, including Vincent R. Capodanno, who served with the Marine Corps and was known as the "Grunt Padre".

The unknown soldier from the Vietnam War who was buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns was

authorized a Medal of Honour and in 1998 was identified as 1st Lieutenant Michael Blassie, USAF.

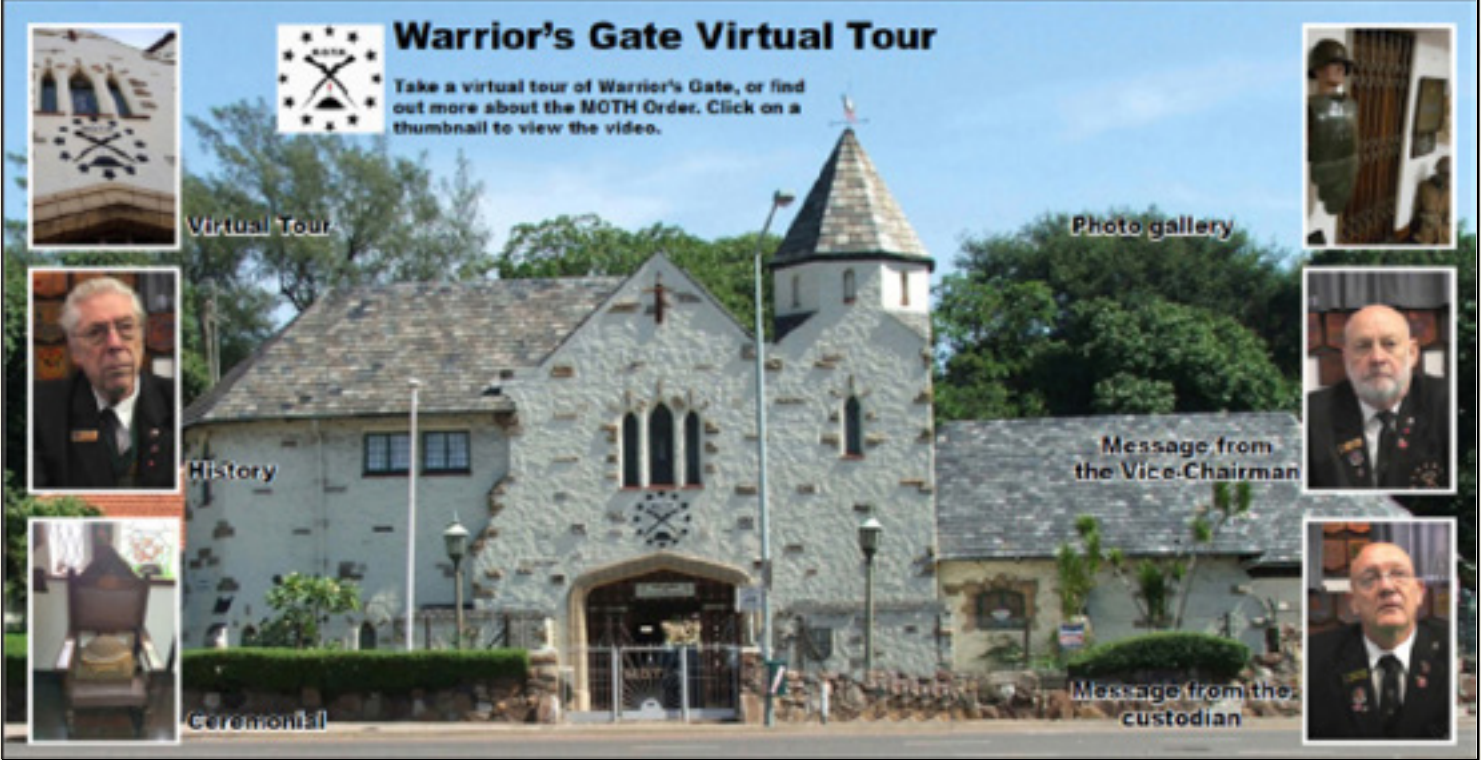
After DNA testing confirmed his identity, the remains were removed from the tomb and returned to Blassie's family, but the Medal of Honour did not transfer with him. It remains awarded to "the unknown soldier" as a tribute to the war dead who have not yet been identified.

The Blassie family requested that the Medal of Honour be granted to him but the request was denied by the Department of Defence.



# Memorable Order of Tin Hats

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



**Warrior's Gate Virtual Tour**

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

Virtual Tour

Photo gallery

History

Ceremonial

Message from the Vice-Chairman

Message from the custodian

## The Americans used people sniffers

Everyone knows about the defoliant, Agent Orange, because of the horrible birth defects it caused, but not many people know people sniffers - known as Operation Snoopy.

Northern troops on the Ho Chi Minh Trail were notoriously difficult to find, so the Americans used sensors to detect effluents of human sweat and urine. While they frequently turned up false results, leading to attacks on civilians and cattle, they did prove to be somewhat effective.

Though, the North Vietnamese Army eventually learned to hang buckets of mud mixed with urine from trees to throw off the sensors.

## You've been pronouncing an American atrocity incorrectly

The My Lai Massacre, where a company of American soldiers murdered hundreds of Vietnamese civilians, became

a rallying cry for anti-war protesters who argued that American involvement was far from the moral imperative their leaders often portrayed it as.

But, despite the global outrage, people have been doing the victims a disservice for decades by not even bothering to pronounce it correctly. It's actually pronounced: Me Lie.

## Labelled a traitor

Hugh Thomson, the man who had landed a helicopter in the line of fire to confront and stop American troops who had by that point killed close to 500 unarmed civilians in the My Lai Massacre, was labelled a traitor by Congress and ordered not to speak about the event.

## The card of death

As part of the mental war, American soldiers often put an ace of spades on the bodies of deceased enemy soldiers. They'd been told, incorrectly, that the card represented death in Vietnam.

It hadn't when the war start-

ed, but by the end, thanks to the Americans and their efforts to spook their enemies, it actually did come to represent death.

## US Troops hated the M-16

Gen. William Westmoreland, Commander of U.S. Forces in Vietnam, replaced the M-14 rifle with the new M-16 as the standard issue infantry rifle in the middle of 1966. There was no fanfare.

The first generation of the M-16 rifle was an awful mess with a tendency to experience a "failure to extract" jam in the middle of a firefight.

They were so bad that the Army was hammered by Congress in 1967 for delivering such a terrible rifle system and then failing to properly train troops to use it.

Later analyses showed that it was actually the gunpowder chosen by the US Army that caused jams.

In the middle of intense fire-fights, when Americans were close enough to see the whites of their enemies' eyes, their

M16 rifles would jam, forcing them to crawl out and take the more reliable AK-47 from the enemy dead.

## High casualty rate

One out of every 10 Americans who served in Vietnam was a casualty. 58,148 were killed and 304,000 wounded out of 2.7 million who served.

Although the percent that died

is similar to other wars, amputations or crippling wounds were 300 percent higher than in World War II. 75,000 Vietnam veterans are severely disabled.

## The conflict was nicknamed "The Helicopter War"

12,000 American helicopters saw action in the conflict. There were 11 different types of rota-

ry-winged craft used to back up troops, extract them from the battlefield, or rush them to hospital, but the one most often associated with the Vietnam conflict was the UH-1 Iroquois, better known as the "Huey".

We trust that you at least learnt something new. Look out for more in this series in next month's edition.

  
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The Official Centenary Edition of the South African Legion that will be used during the centenary year.



## Springbok

The SA Legion is a national organisation, part of a worldwide 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.

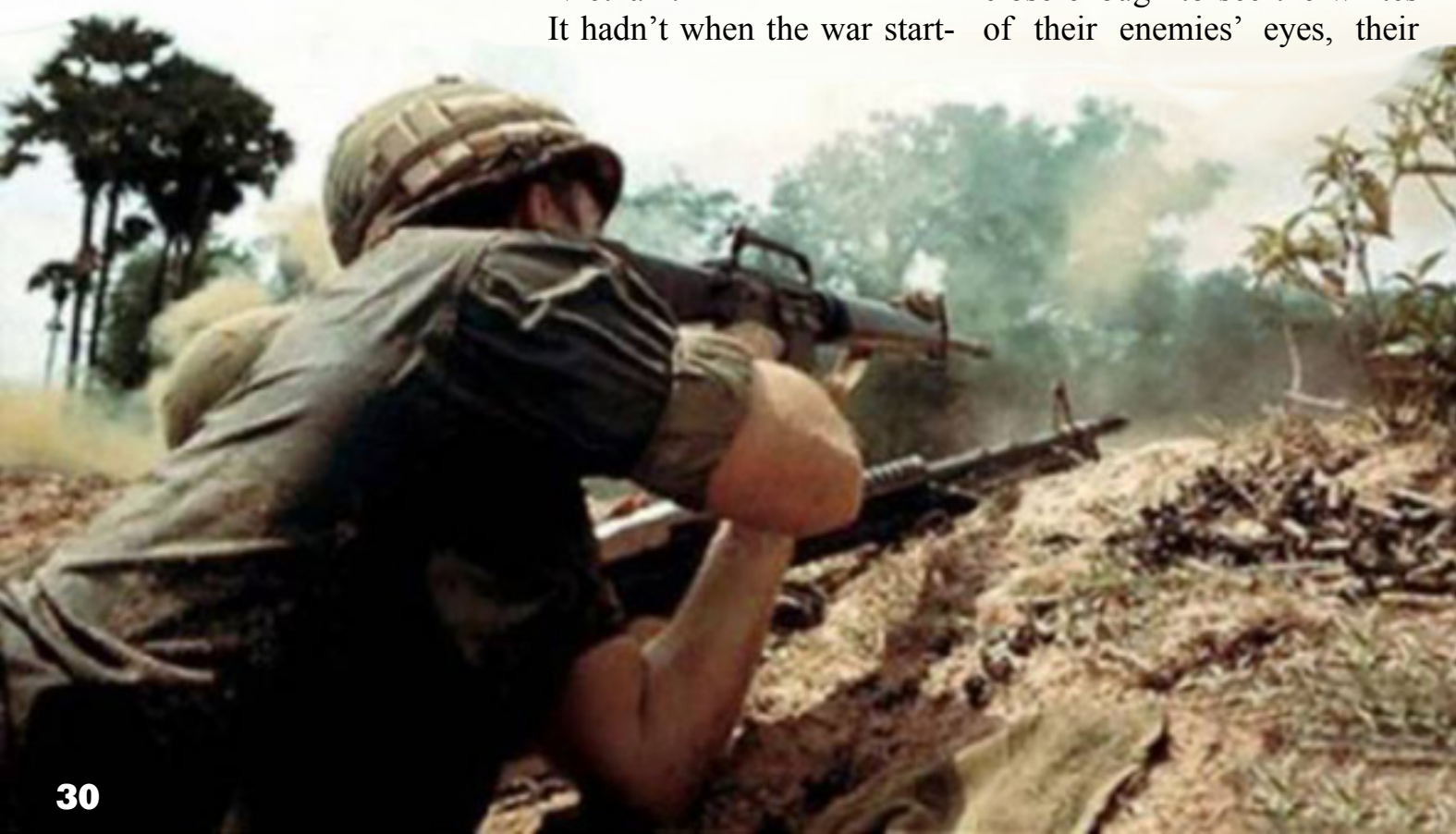
The Springbok is the official journal of the South African Legion. Read the February issue of Springbok by clicking on the cover to the left.



## SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

SAAFA is an all-ranks Association formed to perpetuate a tradition of comradeship, knowing no distinction of rank, race, language, gender or creed, which has developed over the years among members of the South African Air Force.

Click on the logo above to visit the SAAFA website



# Hope in a sea of uncertainty

TS Birkenhead gives Overstrand youth hope. By Lt Cdr Glenn von Zeil. Photographs by Regine Lord.

The Executive Officer of the South African Sea Cadets, Cdr Paul Jacobs, officiated at the naming and commissioning ceremony of TS Birkenhead and shared that the new unit would give the local Overstrand youth hope.

The event took place at the Fisherhaven Yacht Club on Saturday, 8th May 2021. A date which will in future be celebrated in the Overstrand and will be remembered for generations to come.

The ship HMS Birkenhead was wrecked at Danger Point on 26 February 1852. The soldiers and sailors stood fast and the call” women & children first” was born as the life boats were needed to transfer them safely to the shore. By this chivalrous act, these soldiers and sailors gave the women and children of HMS Birkenhead hope.

In the same way the South African Sea Cadets in conjunction with the community will presenting the youth of Overstrand with hope in a sea of uncertainty.

By using the Sea Cadet Compass of Life, the youth will find direction on their path to becoming valuable members and assets of our country.

The Commanding Officer of TS Birkenhead, Lt Noel Dreyer and his team of adult instructors, will through their perseverance and commit-

ment create a safe space for the youth of Overstrand.

Under the South African Sea Cadet banner, they will impart the knowledge of drill, discipline, integrity, nautical & life skills to these cadets.

The event was supported and attended by Adm Johan Retief SAN (Ret Chief of the Navy and Adm (JG) Koos Louw (Chairman of the Board of the Sea Cadet Company), several Sea Cadet officers, members of the SAPS, Section Head Corprate Communication Col. Wynoma Kleinbooi. the Executive Mayor of the Overstrand Municipality, Mr. Dudley Coetzee, Manager of the Green House Enviroment awareness Centre Mrs. She-raine van Wyk and especially the parents of the Sea Cadets.

Thank you to the Commo-

dore of Fisherhaven Yacht Club, Mr. Johan Fish and his wife Mrs. Deborah Fish, for the use of the premises, to the Officers and Senior Sea Cadets from TS Woltemade for assisting with the parade and to the many donations which made it possible.

Lt Noel Dreyer, the Commanding Officer of TS Birkenhead, grew up in Hawston and is a retired member of the SA Navy passionate about youth development and maritime training. Should you like to assist the unit or enquire about enlistment please contact him at tsbirkenhead@gmail.com.

To TS Birkenhead Sea Cadets and the youth of Overstrand we wish fair winds and following seas.



**INSPECTION:** Cdr Paul Jacobs, Executive Officer of Sea Cadets, accompanied by Lt Noel Dreyer, Commanding Officer of TB Birkenhead, speaking to a Sea Cadet during the inspection.

TS Birkenhead ship's company on parade at the Fisherhaven Yacht Club during their naming and commissioning parade.



Cdr Paul Jacobs, Executive Officer Sea Cadets, takes the salute from Ens Bradwyn Davids, while Lt Noel Dreyer, Commanding Officer TS Birkenhead, awaits to accompany him on the unit's first inspection.

Lt Noel Dreyer, Commanding Officer, with newly commissioned TS Birkenhead's ships company after the naming and commissioning parade.



Sea Cadets of TS Birkenhead signing the Sea Cadets Code of Conduct at the naming and commissioning parade.

# TS Woltemade change of command

*TS Woltemade legend hands over command. By Lt Cdr Glenn von Zeil.*

Cdr (SCC) Paul Jacobs, a legend amongst the TS Woltemade Sea Cadets whom he has been Commanding Officer to for the past 14 years, handed over command for the unit to Lt (SCC) Gaylene Pillay at a small COVID-19 compliant parade.

Cdr Jacobs has volunteered his spare time to develop TS Woltemade, including the youth, adult instructors and facilities as well as ensuring that the unit was represented in activities in Cape Town. This included attendance at memorial parades, SA Navy festival, cleaning up the vlei, beaches and Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital.

His passion has been the development of the Sea Cadets into young girls and boy's into responsible, accountable, disciplined and knowledgeable about maritime matters. This includes seamanship, sailing, fire fighting, first aid, basic engineering and catering training as well as providing practical opportunities. In addition, he has provided an excellent role model to the Sea Cadets and has lived by example the Sea Cadet Compass of life values.

His message to the Sea Cadets on parade was addressed to the Ship's company on parade:

"Thank you for taking this time to attend this parade, the last in my capacity as Commanding Officer of TS Woltemade.

In my 14-year journey as a servant to this unit and part of this family, I discovered TS Woltemade to be a "brand" of the highest calibre, and it was indeed an honour for me to serve under this banner.

I am so glad that I was accepted as an individual to become united with this family. I was able to grow and have gained even more than I have contributed.

To my team of officers or shall I say fellow servants, I appreciate the dedication, long hours, and passion that you have given to enrich the lives of these cadets, your family.

I will always cherish every project we have undertaken during my time. It has truly been an honor to serve as your commanding officer.

Our late nights and early mornings training for navy festivals and military tattoos and prize-giving was as much a painful yet joyous experience to see the cadets achieve the goals they have set.

To my successor, Lt Gaylene Pillay, it has been a joy to watch your professional development over the last 9 years. You have transformed into such an intuitive and insightful leader, and I have no doubt that you will ac-

complish even greater things at TS Woltemade.

You have a knack for inspiring the cadets. I am looking forward to and cannot wait to see the incredible work that comes out of this unit under your leadership.

I am going to miss being surrounded by such a brilliant, diverse, and dedicated group of officers and cadets as at this unit.

To the cadets I wish each one of you the best of luck and I trust that you will always uphold the standards that was instilled at TS Woltemade.



To the ship's company, thank you for by your standard's you reflected who I am. Thank you for creating memories with me that I will cherish for the rest of my life."

One of the Sea Cadets wrote this tribute to Cdr Jacobs.

"Your voyage and charter is now complete. Your ship has bunkered to the quay and the command has been handed over.

A sailor is born and the sea has a way of making a great sailor, you have the ocean water in your veins and Gods compass in your heart. The sea never stays still but throughout the swells and waves your eye never left the Gyro, your Radar was the King James Version. You never made use of the autopilot because you believe "living on autopilot means you aren't actively engaged in the moment so you're missing out on life".

You've taught us to pray, you've taught us to play, you've taught us to preserve and keep moving forward!

Your time on the bridge was exciting, astounding and impeccable to but just name a few.

We thank you, we stand on the gangway and salute the great legacy marked behind by your moulding hand. You've done us proud!"

LS Gracia Pillay

TS Woltemade & Lawhill Maritime School learner

Lt (SCC) Gaylene Pillay can be assured that she has taken over command of a functional and well oiled unit with competent adult officers as well as senior Sea Cadets.

As is the tradition in the SA Navy and demonstration of their appreciation the senior Sea Cadets pulled Cdr Jacobs ashore on-board a 3 pounder gun carriage.

The small parade was supported by representatives of the General Botha Old Boy's Association, several Sea Cadet Officers from TS Birkenhead, Knysna, TS Saldanha as well as family members who have supported his voluntary commitment to the Cape Town youth.

Cdr Paul Jacobs has taken up a position as the Executive Officer of the Sea Cadets and is the Senior Officer Sea Cadets designate. The latter he will take up shortly.

Bravo Zulu to Cdr Jacobs for his many years of commitment to giving Cape Town youth hope and in providing disciplined maritime training. We look forward to seeing you in action leading the South African Sea Cadets.

Should you wish to support the Sea Cadets please contact Cdr Jacobs at [cxo.seacadets-sa@gmail.com](mailto:cxo.seacadets-sa@gmail.com) / 083-674-1024.



**NAVAL TRADITION:** TS Woltemade Senior Sea Cadets pull outgoing Commanding Officer Cdr (SCC) Paul Jacobs ashore after he handed over command to Lt (SCC) Gaylene Pillay.

**Photograph: Nomad Photography**

# Sniper rifles

*One shot - one kill.*

Military sniper rifles traditionally derived from two sources: first, the improved military rifle, fitted with a telescopic sight and firing match-grade ammunition; and secondly, the hunting rifle, which although highly accurate was often insufficiently robust for field conditions.

During the late 1960s, small-arms designers finally began to produce rifles specifically designed for sniping. The M40 and the SS69 led the way, and were followed by a succession of superbly accurate firearms, such as the L96A1.

Recent developments include the introduction of the 50-caliber heavy sniper rifle, and the .300 Winchester and .338 Lapua Magnum



**M40 Sniper Rifle**

rounds, which are increasingly replacing the standard 7.62mm NATO cartridge.



**Steyr SSG69**



**Heckler & Koch PSG-1**



**Dragunov SVD**



**L96A1**



**Walther WA2000**



**Barrett Model 90**



**Hecate II Sniper Rifle**



**C14 Timberwolf Sniper Rifle**

Heckler & Koch PSG1

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Date 1985           |
| Origin Germany      |
| Weight 8.1 kg       |
| Barrel 65 cm        |
| Calibre 7.62 × 51mm |

Intended as a sniper rifle for the German police, the Heckler & Koch PSG-1 employed a semi-automatic action and was fitted with a heavy free-floating barrel, an adjustable butt stock, and a six-power telescopic sight.

Dragunov SVD

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Date 1963           |
| Origin Soviet Union |
| Weight 4.3 kg       |
| Barrel 61 cm        |
| Calibre 7.62 × 54R  |

The SVD came to be used as a sharpshooter platoon-support weapon by Warsaw Pact armies in the 1960s. Its four-power PSO-1 telescopic sight has limited infrared capability.

Walther WA2000

|                            |
|----------------------------|
| Date 1978                  |
| Origin Germany             |
| Weight 6.95 kg             |
| Barrel 65 cm               |
| Calibre 300 Win Mag/7.62mm |

Developed primarily for police use, the WA2000 employed a “bullpup” configuration and a semi-automatic action fed by a six-round magazine. High manufacturing costs ended its production in 1988

M40 Sniper Rifle

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Date 1966           |
| Origin US           |
| Weight 3.1 kg       |
| Barrel 61 cm        |
| Calibre 7.62 × 51mm |

A military version of the Remington 700 sporting rifle, the M40 was first used by the US Marine Corps in Vietnam. Subsequent models were equipped with a fibreglass stock and a Unertl ten-power scope.

L96A1

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Date 1984           |
| Origin UK           |
| Weight 6.5 kg       |
| Barrel 65.5 cm      |
| Calibre 7.62 × 51mm |

The British Army’s L96A1 sniper rifle was the first to be developed specifically for sniping, and it became the forerunner of a whole series of sniper rifles produced in a variety of calibres.

Barrett Model 90

|                 |
|-----------------|
| Date 1995       |
| Origin US       |
| Weight 10.7 kg  |
| Barrel 73.7 cm  |
| Calibre .50 BMG |

Ronnie Barrett pioneered the anti-materiel (AM) rifle in the early 1980s. This model, noteworthy for its compact “bullpup” design, is an effective sniping weapon for ranges in excess of 1,800 metres

Hecate II Sniper Rifle

|                 |
|-----------------|
| Date 1993       |
| Origin France   |
| Weight 13.8 kg  |
| Barrel 70 cm    |
| Calibre .50 BMG |

As with other Western heavy sniper rifles, the Hecate II fires the .50 BMG (12.7 × 99mm NATO) round, and is based around PGM’s metallic skeleton system, complete with a high-efficiency muzzle brake.

Steyr SSG69

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Date 1969           |
| Origin Austria      |
| Weight 3.9 kg       |
| Barrel 65 cm        |
| Calibre 7.62 × 51mm |

Based on a similar pistol, the LeMat Revolver Rifle had two barrels. The lower, charged with shot, acted as the axis pin for the nine-chambered cylinder, which was charged with ball cartridges.

C14 Timberwolf Sniper Rifle

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| Date 2005                   |
| Origin Canada               |
| Weight 6.8 kg               |
| Barrel 66 cm                |
| Calibre .338in Lapua Magnum |

Following recent trends in anti-personnel sniper-rifle design, the Timberwolf has been chambered for the powerful .338in Lapua Magnum round, which extends a rifle’s effective range to over 1,200 metres.

Snipers - facts and trivia

- The Germans did not have a word for ‘sniper’. Instead they were referred to as ‘Scharfschütze’ or sharpshooters.
- Wind and gravity can veer a bullet off the target by a whopping 10 metres. A shot was once made where the bullet curved in the wind for 17 metres before hitting the target.
- In today’s combat system, a sniper is almost useless without a spotter. A spotter helps the sniper refine and correctly hit the target. The spotter calculates the range, wind velocity and relays it to the sniper who can then make a kill quickly.
- The camouflage suit a sniper wears is called a ghillie.
- Snipers usually wait for an

artillery or a tank shell to fire, because that will mask the sniper noise, keeping their position hidden. Sniper rifles are powerful and hence very loud. Rifle shot can give away the position of the sniper, which can compromise his life. That’s why, if possible, they shoot only when other shots are fired, so that their rifle sound is drowned in ambient noise.

- The reason why officer’s insignia is camouflaged and you are not supposed to salute an officer on field are because of the existence of snipers. Officers are a prime target for snipers.
- Snipers use baits such as leaving ammunition and weapons unattended and shoot the enemy when he comes to retrieve them.
- Captured snipers are often immediately executed. Thus, when they are about to be captured, they throw away everything they think

- will make the enemy recognize them as snipers.
- Snipers seldom look for head shots. They are largely avoided, because the head is a very small target over a big distance. They look for blood loss, tissue damage and destroying vital organs.
- Finnish Lance Corporal Simo Häyhä, also known as the ‘White Death’ holds the title of the most effective sniper with 505 sniper kills in less than 100 days. And all achieved without the use of a scope.
- The longest recorded and confirmed kill by any sniper was made a Canadian special forces sniper. The soldier shot an IS militant dead from 3,540 metres.
- World War II Soviet sniper Lieutenant Lyudmila Pavlichenko is known to be the most successful female sniper with 309 confirmed kills.
- It is believed that the Soviet Union employed over 2000 female snipers during the World War II.
- Mike Plumb, a Police SWAT sniper in Columbus, Ohio, prevented a suicide by

Lyudmila Pavlichenko



shooting the revolver out of the person’s hand without any harm done to the target.

# Military firsts for women in the USA

*Women lay down their mark in the United States Armed Forces. All of these women have become the first to achieve things that were once the sole domain of men.*

We all know that when it comes to war, the men go out and do the fighting while the women stay home and make sure that the house is clean and supper is waiting when the men return home. Well that's not quite true.

Throughout history women have been involved in the military, with many of them taking part in combat. Some women have even led men into battle.

Sometimes it is difficult to ascertain facts such as who was the first woman to take part in combat, or who was the first woman to lead an army into battle.

So in this article we will take a look at "firsts" in the United States Armed Forces.

- The first, and only, woman to receive The Medal of Honour, America's highest award for bravery, was Dr. Mary E. Walker, a contract surgeon during the Civil War.
- The first woman to receive The Purple Heart was Annie G. Fox while serving at Hickam Field during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941.
- The first woman to receive The Bronze Star was 1st Lieutenant Cordelia E. Cook, Army Nurse Corps, during WWII in Italy. She was also awarded The Purple Heart, becoming the

first woman to receive two awards.

- Lieutenant Edith Greenwood was awarded The Soldiers Medal in 1943 for heroism during a fire at a military hospital in Yuma Arizona - the first woman to receive this award.
- The first woman to receive The Air Medal was Lieutenant Elsie S. Ott awarded for her actions in 1943 as an air evacuation nurse.
- Barbara Olive Barnwell was the first woman awarded the Navy-Marine Corps Medal for heroism in 1953. Barbara Barnwell, a staff sergeant from Pittsburgh Pennsylvania and a member of the Marine Reserve, saved a soldier from drowning in 1952.
- Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby, the first Director of the WAC, was the first woman to receive The U.S. Army Distinguished Service Medal in 1945.
- Loretta Walsh enlisted in the US Navy in March of 1917 and became the first Yeoman (F) in the Navy.
- In August of 1918 Opha M. Johnson enlisted as the first woman in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.
- The first woman to be commissioned into the Army Medical Corps was Dr. Margaret D. Craighill. She was given the rank of major.
- The first military all wom-

en band was the Women's Army Band organized at Fort Des Moines in 1942.

- In 1967 Master Sergeant Barbara J. Dulinsky, who had volunteered for duty in Vietnam, reported to the Military Assistance Command in Saigon - the first woman Marine ordered to a combat zone.
- Lieutenant Kara Hultgreen, the Navy's first fully qualified female fleet fighter pilot, was only 29 when her Tomcat slammed into the Pacific Ocean in 1994 - sadly making her the first woman combat pilot to die in service.
- In July 1993 2nd Lieutenant Sarah Deal became the first woman Marine selected for Naval aviation training. She received her wings on 21 Apr 1995 and served as a CH-53E pilot.
- In 1995 Air Force Academy graduate Lieutenant Kelly Flinn became the first woman B-52 Bomber Pilot.
- In 1990 Commander Darlene Iskra became the first woman to command a US Navy ship - the USS Opportune.
- Debby (Larson) Mongeau graduated from Aircrew Survival Equipmentman "A" school in Lakehurst New Jersey in May 1973, making her the first female parachute rigger in the US Navy.



**FIGHTER PILOT:** Lieutenant Colonel Christine Mau, the first US female pilot to fly the F-35 Lightning II.

- In 2016, Captain Kristen Griest became the first female Army infantry officer in the nation's history. A year earlier, Griest and Lieutenant Shaye Haver were also the first women to graduate from the Army's famed Ranger School.
- Admiral Michelle Howard (Ret) made history in 2014 when she became the first four-star woman in US Navy history. Howard served as commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe before retiring in 2017.
- In 2008, Air Force Captain Jammie Jamieson became the first female fighter pilot to qualify in the F-22A Raptor.
- In January 2016, Army Captain Kate Alfin, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilot, became the first female soldier from an allied NATO

military to complete the Allied Winter Course at the Norwegian School of Winter Warfare.

- 2nd Lieutenants Virginia Brodie and Katherine Boy made US Marine Corps history in 2016 when they became the service's first female artillery officers.
- Air Force Captain Christy Wise became the first female amputee to regain her wings when she was medically cleared in 2016. Wise, who was injured when she was hit by a boat while paddle boarding, endured 15 months of rehabilitation, learning to walk, run and fly again.
- Air Force General Lori Robinson (Ret) took over as leader of U.S. Northern Command in 2016, becoming the first woman to lead a combatant command and,

at the same time, the highest-ranking woman in US military history. She retired from the military in 2018.

- Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Christine Mau (Ret) became the first US female pilot to fly the F-35 Lightning II, when she took to the skies from Florida's Elgin Air Force Base in 2015.
- Lieutenant Colonel Caroline "Blaze" Jensen in 2012 became the first female Air Force reservist named to the U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron - better known as the US Air Force Thunderbirds.
- Senator Tammy Duckworth, is an Iraq War veteran who lost both legs in 2004 when the Black Hawk helicopter she was flying was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. When she was elected to Congress in 2012, she became the first disabled female to do so. She retired from the Army National Guard as a lieutenant colonel in 2014.
- In addition to being the first female fighter pilot to fly in combat, Representative Martha McSally, an A-10 Thunderbolt II pilot, is also the first female to command a fighter squadron in combat. McSally, a retired colonel, was first elected to Congress in 2014.
- When she was named superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy in 2011, Vice Admiral Sandra Stosz (Ret) became the first woman to lead a US military service academy.

# Rank Structure - British Armed Forces

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 British Armed Forces.

The British Armed forces are divided into four branches. The Royal Navy is the oldest of the four branches and is often referred to as the 'Senior Service'. The other branches are the British Army, Royal Air Force, and Royal Marines. All new soldiers in the British Army start as Privates, although the title may be Trooper, Gunner, Signaller, Sapper, Guardsman, Rifleman or even Kingsman depending on the Corps/Regiment. All new soldiers in the Royal Air Force begin with the rank of Aircraftman. New soldiers in the Royal Marines begin with the rank of Marine. A new sailor in the Royal Navy begins with the rank of Able Rate. The rank structure of the British Armed Forces falls into Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs), Warrant Officers, and Commissioned Officers. Many armed forces around the world base their rank structure on that of the British Armed Forces.



## Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO)

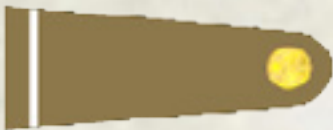


In the Artillery Corps a lance corporal or corporal is known as Bombadier (\* Bombs).



The senior warrant officer at a unit would often be the Regimental Sergeant Major or RSM. In the navy he/she would be referred to as the Master at Arms.

Commissioned Officers



Officer Cadet



Acting Pilot Officer



Officer Cadet

An Officer Cadet is someone that is undergoing an officer's course or has completed an officers course and is waiting to be commissioned as an officer. The rank holds no authority as such.



2nd Lieutenant  
*\* Lieutenant*



Pilot Officer



2nd Lieutenant  
*\* Lieutenant*



Midshipman



Lieutenant



Flying Officer



2nd Lieutenant



Sub Lieutenant  
*\* Lieutenant*



Captain



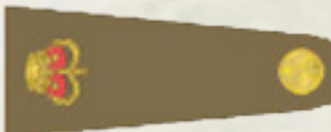
Flight Lieutenant



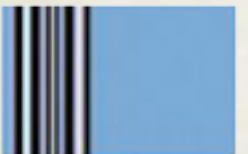
Captain



Lieutenant



Major



Squadron Leader



Major



Lt Commander  
*\* Commander*



Lt Colonel



Wing Commander



Lt Colonel



Commander



Colonel



Group Captain



Colonel



Captain



Brigadier



Air Commodore



Brigadier



Commodore



Major General  
*\* General*



Air Vice Marshall



Major General  
*\* General*



Rear Admiral  
*\* Admiral*



Lt General  
*\* General*



Air Marshall



Lt General  
*\* General*



Vice Admiral  
*\* Admiral*



General  
*\* General*



Air Chief Marshall



General  
*\* General*



Admiral  
*\* Admiral*



Field Marshall



Marshall of the Royal Air Force



Field Marshall



Admiral of the Fleet

## Strongest military forces in Africa

This month we look at the ten strongest military forces in Africa in 2021.

This month we look at the ten African countries with the best military strength and fire power in 2021.

A number of factors and parameters are looked at. These include active front-line units, reserve personnel, number of tanks and armoured fighting vehicles, artillery, air force strength, navy strength, logistics, resources and annual defence budget.

Source: Global Fire Power



### 10. Sudan

During the Omar al-Bashir era, the Sudanese armed forces consisted of the Land Forces, the Sudanese Navy, the Sudanese Air Force, and the Popular Defence Forces.

The modern Sudanese Armed Forces is equipped mainly with Soviet, Russian, Chinese, Ukrainian, and Sudanese manufactured weaponry.

#### By the numbers

**Total land area**

1,861,484 km

**Coastline**

853 km

**Shared borders**

6,819 km

#### Population

45,561,556

#### Total military personnel

210,000

#### Defence Budget

US\$4,000,000,000

#### Army strength

- 830 combat tanks
- 450 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 10 self-propelled artillery

#### Aircraft strength

- 190 aircraft
- 45 fighter aircraft
- 38 attack aircraft
- 22 transport aircraft
- 73 helicopters
- 43 attack helicopters

#### Naval strength

- 18 naval assets
- 10 patrol craft



### 9. Tunisia

The Tunisian Armed Forces consist of the Tunisian Army, Air Force and Navy.

Tunisia participates in United Nations peacekeeping efforts in the DROC (MONUSCO) and Côte d'Ivoire.

Previous United Nations peacekeeping deployments for the Tunisian armed forces have included Cambodia (UNTAC),

Namibia (UNTAG), Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia/Eritrea (UNMEE), and the 1960s mission in the Congo, ONUC.

#### By the numbers

**Total land area**

163,610 km

**Coastline**

1,148 km

**Shared borders**

1,495 km

#### Population

11,721,177

#### Total military personnel

48,000

#### Defence Budget

US\$810,000,000

#### Army strength

- 170 combat tanks
- 1,200 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 67 self-propelled artillery
- 162 towed artillery

#### Aircraft strength

- 156 aircraft
- 27 fighter aircraft
- 14 transport aircraft
- 29 trainers
- 101 helicopters

#### Naval strength

- 50 naval assets
- 33 patrol craft



**ON PARADE:** Members of the Libyan Armed Forces parade in front of their vehicles. Currently Libya is ranked as the eighth most powerful military force in Africa.



### 8. Libya

The Libyan Armed Forces are, in principle, the state organisation responsible for the military defence of Libya, including ground, air and naval forces.

#### By the numbers

**Total land area**

1,759,540 km

**Coastline**

1,770 km

**Shared borders**

4,339 km

#### Population

6,890,535

#### Total military personnel

30,000

#### Defence Budget

US\$4,900,000,000

#### Army strength

- 200 combat tanks
- 4,550 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 365 self-propelled artillery
- 250 towed artillery
- 900 rocket launchers

#### Aircraft strength

- 118 aircraft
- 20 fighter aircraft
- 2 attack aircraft
- 6 transport aircraft
- 64 trainers
- 26 helicopters
- 7 attack helicopters

#### Naval strength

- 5 naval assets
- 1 frigate
- 1 corvette
- 1 patrol craft
- 2 mine warfare vessels



### 7. Angola

The Angolan Armed Forces or FAA are the military of Angola. The FAA include the General Staff of the Armed Forces and three components: the Army, the Navy and the National Air Force.

The FAPLA's main counter-insurgency effort was directed

against UNITA in the southeast, and its conventional capabilities were demonstrated principally in the undeclared South African Border War.

## By the numbers

### Total land area

1,246,700 km

### Coastline

1,600 km

### Shared borders

5,369 km

### Population

32,522,339

### Total military personnel

120,000

### Defence Budget

US\$7,650,000,000

### Army strength

- 389 combat tanks
- 600 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 28 self-propelled artillery
- 350 towed artillery
- 115 rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

- 300 aircraft
- 72 fighter aircraft
- 18 attack aircraft
- 28 transport aircraft
- 54 trainers
- 126 helicopters
- 15 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

- 57 naval assets
- 37 patrol craft
- 2 mine warfare vessels



## 6. Ethiopia

The Ethiopian National Defence Force is the military force of Ethiopia. Civil direction of the military is carried out through the Ministry of Defence, which oversees the ground forces, air force, as well as the Defence Industry Sector.

Being a landlocked country, Ethiopia today has no navy. Ethiopia reacquired a coastline on the Red Sea in 1950 and created the Ethiopian Navy in 1955.

Eritrean independence in 1991 left Ethiopia landlocked again, but the Ethiopian Navy continued to operate from foreign ports until it finally was disbanded in 1996.

## By the numbers

### Total land area

1,104,300 km

### Coastline

Landlocked

### Shared borders

5,925 km

### Population

108,113,150

### Total military personnel

162,000

### Defence Budget

US\$520,000,000

### Army strength

- 365 combat tanks
- 130 armoured Fighting Vehicles

hicles

- 65 self-propelled artillery
- 480 towed artillery
- 180 rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

- 92 aircraft
- 24 fighter aircraft
- 9 transport aircraft
- 26 trainers
- 33 helicopters
- 8 attack helicopters



## 5. Morocco

The Royal Moroccan Armed Forces are the military forces of the Kingdom of Morocco. They consist of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Royal Gendarmerie, and the Royal Guard.

The Royal Moroccan Armed Forces are large, expensive and well-trained with extensive experience in counter-insurgency, desert warfare and combined air-land operations. Further experience has come from participating in peace-keeping operations.

However, as Morocco has not fought a conventional interstate war since the Algerian-Moroccan war of 1963, they have little experience in state-on-state warfare.

## By the numbers

### Total land area

446,550 km

### Coastline

1,835 km

### Shared borders

2,363 km

### Population

35,561,654

### Total military personnel

510,000

### Defence Budget

US\$6,000,000,000

### Army strength

- 3,303 combat tanks
- 8,000 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 510 self-propelled artillery
- 156 towed artillery
- 144 rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

- 249 aircraft
- 83 fighter aircraft
- 29 transport aircraft
- 67 trainers
- 2 aerial tankers
- 64 helicopters

### Naval strength

- 121 naval assets
- 6 frigates
- 1 corvette
- 22 patrol craft



## 4. Nigeria

The Nigerian Armed Forces are the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. They are composed of: the Army, the Air Force and the Navy.

At any given time, however,

much of the army's equipment is non-operational and operational readiness low. Since 2006, Nigeria has attempted to instill greater democratic principles into the army in an effort to professionalize the force.

## By the numbers

### Total land area

923,759 km

### Coastline

853 km

### Shared borders

4,477 km

### Population

35,561,654

### Total military personnel

510,000

### Defence Budget

US\$6,000,000,000

### Army strength

- 3,303 combat tanks
- 8,000 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 510 self-propelled artillery
- 156 towed artillery
- 144 rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

- 249 aircraft
- 83 fighter aircraft
- 29 transport aircraft
- 67 trainers
- 2 aerial tankers
- 64 helicopters

### Naval strength

- 121 naval assets
- 6 frigates
- 1 corvette
- 22 patrol craft



## 3. South Africa

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) comprises the armed forces of South Africa. The commander of the SANDF is appointed by the President of South Africa from one of the armed services. They are in turn accountable to the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans of the Defence Department.

The military as it exists today was created in 1994, following South Africa's first multiracial election in April of that year and the adoption of a new constitution.

It replaced the South African Defence Force (SADF) and also integrated uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) guerrilla forces.

## By the numbers

### Total land area

1,219,090 km

### Coastline

2,798 km

### Shared borders

5,244 km

### Population

56,463,613

### Total military personnel

81,500

### Defence Budget

US\$3,597,000,000

## Army strength

- 195 combat tanks
- 3,000 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 43 self-propelled artillery
- 72 towed artillery
- 50 rocket launchers

## Aircraft strength

- 221 aircraft
- 17 fighter aircraft
- 22 transport aircraft
- 88 trainers
- 87 helicopters
- 12 attack helicopters

## Naval strength

- 30 naval assets
- 4 frigates
- 3 submarines
- 31 patrol craft
- 2 mine warfare vessels



## 2. Algeria

The Algerian People's National Armed Forces is the military forces of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. Algeria has a large military to counter foreign and domestic threats

## By the numbers

### Total land area

2,381,741 km

### Coastline

998 km

### Shared borders

6,734 km

## Population

42,972,878

## Total military personnel

470,000

## Defence Budget

US\$13,904,000,000

## Army strength

- 2,024 combat tanks
- 7,000 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 324 self-propelled artillery
- 396 towed artillery
- 300 rocket launchers

## Aircraft strength

- 551 aircraft
- 102 fighter aircraft
- 22 attack aircraft
- 60 transport aircraft
- 87 trainers
- 3 aerial tankers
- 268 helicopters
- 45 attack helicopters

## Naval strength

- 201 naval assets
- 8 frigates
- 10 corvettes
- 8 submarines
- 65 patrol craft
- 2 mine warfare vessels



## 1. Egypt

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

The President of the Republic serves as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

In 2021 it is the 13th most powerful military force in the world.

## By the numbers

### Total land area

1,001,450 km

### Coastline

2,450 km

### Shared borders

2,612 km

## Population

104,124,440

## Total military personnel

1,330,000

## Defence Budget

US\$10,000,000,000

## Army strength

- 3,735 combat tanks
- 11,000 armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 1,165 self-propelled artillery
- 2,200 towed artillery
- 1,235 rocket launchers

## Aircraft strength

- 1,053 aircraft
- 250 fighter aircraft
- 88 attack aircraft
- 59 transport aircraft
- 331 trainers
- 304 helicopters
- 91 attack helicopters

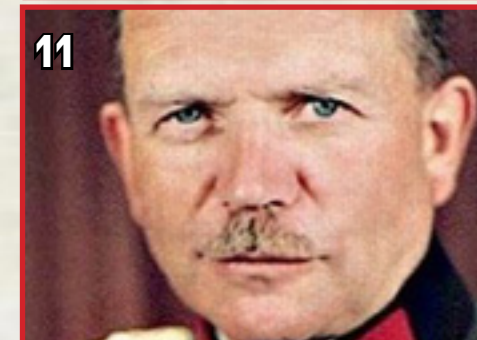
## Naval strength

- 316 naval assets
- 2 helicopter carriers
- 9 frigates
- 7 corvettes
- 8 submarines
- 50 patrol craft
- 23 mine warfare vessels



## Who am I?

This month we're looking at famous figures in military history. We show you a close up of someone's face, you tell us who they are. Most of them have been featured in Military Despatches. Answers on page 90.



# David Stirling

*Scottish officer in the British Army, accomplished mountaineer, and founder of the famed Special Air Service. A man that was described by Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery as "mad, quite mad". This was David Stirling.*

A Scottish landowner, a keen mountaineer, officer in the British Army during World War II, and founder of the Special Air Service, David Stirling would become a famous figure in military history.

## Early life

Archibald David Stirling was born at his family's ancestral home, Keir House in the parish of Lecropt, Perthshire.

He was the son of Brigadier General Archibald Stirling, of Keir, and Margaret Fraser, daughter of Simon Fraser, the Lord Lovat (a descendant of Charles II, King of Scots); hence Simon Fraser, 15th Lord Lovat was a first cousin.

His paternal grandparents were Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, 9th Baronet and Lady Anna Maria Leslie-Melville.

He was educated at the Catholic boarding school Ampleforth College, but attended only a year at Trinity College, Cambridge before departing to Paris to become an artist.

A tall 6 feet 6 inches (1.98 m) and athletic figure, he was training to climb Mount Everest when World War II broke out.

## World War II

Stirling was commissioned into the Scots Guards from Ampleforth College Contingent Officer Training Corps on

24 July 1937.

In June 1940, he volunteered for the new No. 8 (Guards) Commando under Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Laycock, which became part of Force Z (later named "Layforce").

On 1 February 1941, Layforce sailed for the Middle East, in support of the capture of Rhodes, but were soon disbanded after suffering heavy casualties in the Battle of Crete and the Battle of the Litani River.

Stirling remained convinced that due to the mechanised nature of war, a small team of highly trained soldiers with the advantage of surprise could attack several targets from the desert in a single night.

Believing that taking his idea up through the chain of command was unlikely to work,

Stirling decided to go straight to the top. On crutches following a parachuting accident, he stealthily entered Middle East headquarters in Cairo (under, through, or over a fence) in an effort to see Commander-in-Chief General Claude Auchinleck.

Spotted by guards, he abandoned his crutches and entered the building, only to come face-to-face with an officer with whom he had previously fallen out.

Retreating rapidly, he entered the office of the deputy chief of staff General Ritchie. Stirling explained his plan to Ritchie, the latter immediately persuaded Auchinleck to allow Stirling to form a new special opera-

tions unit.

The unit was given the deliberately misleading name "L Detachment, Special Air Service Brigade" to reinforce Dudley Clarke's deception of a parachute brigade existing in North Africa.

They were short of equipment, particularly tents and related gear, at the outset when they set up base at Kibrit Air Base. The first operation of the new SAS was to relieve a nearby well-equipped New Zealand regiment of tents, bedding, tables, chairs, numerous other supplies, including a piano. After at least four trips, they had a well stocked camp.

After a brief period of training, an initial attempt at attacking a German airfield by parachute landing on 16 November 1941 in support of Operation Crusader was disastrous.

Of the original 55 men, some 34 were killed, wounded or captured far from the target after being blown off course or landing in the wrong area, during one of the biggest storms to hit the area.

Escaping only with the help of the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG) who were designated to pick up the unit after the attack, Stirling agreed that approaching by land under the cover of night would be safer and more effective than parachuting. The SAS nicknamed the LRDG the "Libyan Desert Taxi Service".

As quickly as possible he organised raids on ports using this simple method, often bluffing

through checkpoints at night using the language skills of some of his soldiers.

Under his leadership, the Lewes bomb, the first handheld dual explosive and incendiary device, was invented by Jock Lewes. American Jeeps, which were able to deal with the harsh desert terrain better than other transport, were cut down, adapted and fitted with Vickers K machine guns fore and aft.

He also pioneered the use of small groups to escape detection. Finding it difficult to lead from the rear, Stirling often led from the front, his SAS units driving through enemy airfields to shoot up aircraft and crew, replacing the early operational strategy of attaching bombs to enemy aircraft on foot.

When, in early 1942, German and Italian security around likely targets was increased to stop these raids, Stirling decided to acquire a number of heavily armed Jeeps to carry out attacks much more swiftly, giving the SAS more chance to evade or overwhelm enemy patrols.

The first Jeep-borne airfield raid occurred soon after acquiring the first batch of Jeeps in June 1942, when Stirling's SAS group attacked Italian-held Bagush airfield along with two other Axis airfields all in the same night.

After returning to Cairo, Stirling collected a consignment of more Jeeps for further airfield raids. His biggest success was on the night of 26–27 July 1942 when his SAS squadron with 18

jeeps raided the Sidi Haneish landing strip and destroyed 37 Axis aircraft, mostly bombers and heavy transport, for the loss of one man killed.

After a drive through the desert and evading enemy patrols and aircraft, Stirling and his men reached the safety of their advance camp at Qaret Tartura on the edge of the Qattara Depression.

These hit-and-run operations eventually proved Stirling's undoing; he was captured by the Germans in January 1943 having been dubbed "The Phantom Major" by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel.

Although he escaped, he was subsequently re-captured by the Italians, who took great delight in the embarrassment this caused to their German allies. A further four escape attempts were made, before Stirling was finally sent to Colditz Castle, where he remained for the rest of the war.

He arrived on 20 August 1944 and was given the task of setting up the Colditz British Intelligence Unit. After his capture Paddy Mayne took command of the SAS.

In North Africa, in the fifteen months before Stirling's capture, the SAS had destroyed over 250 aircraft on the ground, dozens of supply dumps, wrecked railways and telecommunications, and had put hundreds of enemy vehicles out of action.

His commander at the time, Field Marshal Montgomery, was quoted as saying: "The



boy Stirling is quite mad, quite, quite mad. However, in a war there is often a place for mad people.”

For his service during the war Stirling was awarded the Distinguished Service Order and was mentioned in despatches.

## Private military company

After the war Stirling initially settled in Rhodesia but later moved back to Britain. Worried that Britain was losing its power after the war, Stirling organised deals to provide British weapons and military personnel to other countries, like Saudi Arabia, for various privatised foreign policy operations.

Along with several associates, Stirling formed Watchguard International Ltd, formerly with offices in Sloane Street (where the Chelsea Hotel later opened) before moving to South Audley Street in Mayfair.

Business was chiefly with the Gulf States. He was linked, along with Denys Rowley, to a failed attempt to overthrow the Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi in 1970 or 1971. Stirling was the founder of private military company KAS International, also known as KAS Enterprises.

Watchguard International Ltd was a private military company, registered in Jersey in 1965 by Stirling and John Woodhouse, a former Lieutenant Colonel in the British Army credited with helping to reform the Special Air Service.

Woodhouse’s first assignment was to go to Yemen to report on

the state of the royalist forces when a cease-fire was declared. At the same time Stirling was cultivating his contacts in the Iranian government and exploring the chances of obtaining work in Africa.

The company operated in Zambia and in Sierra Leone, providing training teams and advising on security matters, but its founders’ maverick ways of doing business caused its eventual downfall. Woodhouse resigned as Director of Operations after a series of disagreements and Stirling ceased to take an active part in 1972.

## Great Britain 75

In mid-1970s, Stirling became increasingly worried that an “undemocratic event” would occur and decided to take action. He created an organisation called Great Britain 75 and recruited members from the aristocratic clubs in Mayfair; these were mainly ex-military men, and often former SAS members.

The plan was that in the event of civil unrest resulting in the breakdown of normal Government operations, they would take over its running. He described this in detail in an interview from 1974, part of which is featured in Adam Curtis’s documentary *The Mayfair Set*, episode 1: “Who Pays Wins”.

In August 1974, before Stirling was ready to go public with GB75, the pacifist magazine Peace News obtained and published his plans, and eventually Stirling – dismayed by the

right-wing character of many of those seeking to join GB75 – abandoned the scheme.

His biographer Alan Hoe rebutted the newspaper’s disparaging portrayal of Stirling as a rightist ‘Colonel Blimp’.

## Undermining trade unionism

During the mid to late 1970s, Stirling created a secret organisation designed to undermine trade unionism from within. He recruited like-minded individuals from within the trade union movement, with the express intention that they should cause as much trouble during conferences as permissible. One such member was Kate Losinska, who was Head of the Civil and Public Services Association. Funding for this “operation” came primarily from his friend Sir James Goldsmith.

## Later life

Transferred to the Regular Army Reserve of Officers in 1947, Stirling was granted the honorary rank of lieutenant colonel, a rank he retained on his retirement in 1965.[14][15] Stirling was the founder of the Capricorn Africa Society, a society for promoting an Africa free from racial discrimination. Founded in 1949, while Africa was still under colonial rule, it had its high point at the 1956 Salima Conference. However, because of his emphasis on a qualified and highly elitist voting franchise, similar to Disraeli’s “fancy franchises”, educated Africans were divided on it. Consequently, the society’s at-



**DESERT RAIDERS:** An SAS Jeep in the Western Desert. They were able to negotiate the rough terrain of the desert and were well armed.

tempt to deal with the problem of different levels of social development in a non-racial way was ineffective, although it received a surprising validation when the South African Communist Party used Stirling’s multi-racial elitist model for its 1955 “Congress Alliance”.

Stirling resigned as Chairman of the Society in 1959. That year his younger brother William incurred huge gambling debts and was obliged to note to casino owner John Aspinall - I owe you £173,500 in the accountant’s ledger. One night in 1967, he lost a further £150,000. In 1968, he won substantial damages in libel against author Len Deighton, among others.

Stirling died on 4 November 1990 at the age of 74. He was buried at St Cumin’s Church, on the shores of Loch Morar at Morar. Since 2002 the David Stirling Memorial has stood on the Hill of Row, near his ancestral home, looking towards the

Perthshire mountains.

## Honours

Stirling was awarded the Distinguished Service Order in recognition of gallant and distinguished service in the Middle East on 24 February 1942, appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of gallant and distinguished service in the field on 14 November 1946 and appointed a Knight Bachelor in the 1990 New Year Honours for services to the military.

In 2002 the SAS memorial, a statue of Stirling standing on a rock, was unveiled on the Hill of Row near his family’s estate at Park of Keir. Two bronze plaques were stolen from the statue sometime around the end of May 2014.

The current Laird of the Keir estate is his nephew Archie Stirling, a millionaire businessman and former Scots Guards officer.

In 1960, the SAS moved to

a former Royal Artillery boys’ training unit, Bradbury Lines in Hereford, which was renamed in 1984 to Stirling Lines in honour of the regiment’s founder, Lieutenant Colonel Sir David Stirling.



The SAS Memorial statue of Lieutenant Colonel Sir David Stirling was unveiled in 2002.

It stands on the Hill of Row near his family’s estate at Park of Keir.

# Utrique Paratus

## The Parachute Regiment

*Formed more than 78 years ago and colloquially known as the Paras, the Parachute Regiment is regarded as one of the most elite units in the world. And they have the battle honours to prove it.*

**I**t was none other than British Prime Minister Winston Churchill that directed the War Office to investigate the possibility of creating a corps of 5,000 parachute corps.

Churchill had been impressed by the success of German airborne troops during the Battle of France. If it worked for the Germans then Churchill was determined that it would work for the British as well.

On 22 June 1940 No. 2 Com-

mando was turned over to parachute duties and on 21 November it was re-designated the 11th Special Air Service Battalion, with a parachute and glider wing. It was these men who took part in the first British airborne operation, Operation Colossus, on 10 February 1941.

On 10 February 1941 In September,

the battalion was re-designated the 1st Parachute Battalion and assigned to the 1st Parachute Brigade.

To fill out the brigade, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Parachute Battalions were raised by calling for volunteers from all units in the British Army. The first operation by the Parachute Regiment was Operation Biting in February 1942. The objective was to capture a Würzburg radar on the coast of France. The raid was carried out by 'C' Company, 2nd Parachute Battalion, under the command of Major John Frost.

In India,  
the 50th

Indian Parachute Brigade was raised on 27 October 1941, comprising 151 (British), 152 (Indian) and 153 (Gurkha) Parachute Battalions along with the brigade signals, sapper squadron and 80 Parachute Field Ambulance.

### Training

Volunteers would have to do a 12 day course carried out at the No. 1 Parachute Training School at Royal Air Force base Ringway.

The initial jumps were made from a converted barrage balloon and this was finished with five parachute jumps from an aircraft. Anyone that failed to complete a parachute jump was returned to his old unit.

At the end of the course those that had qualified were presented with their maroon beret and parachute wings. They were then posted to a parachute battalion.

Parachute training was not without its dangers. During the first 2,000 jumps at Ringway three men were killed.

Paratroopers were expected to fight against superior numbers of the enemy that was equipped with artillery and tanks. There had to be a

strong *esprit de corps* for them to have any chance of success.

Training was designed to encourage a spirit of self-discipline, self-reliance, and aggressiveness. Emphasis was given to physical fitness, marksmanship and fieldcraft.

A large part of the training focused on assault courses and route marches.

Equipment

The Paras did have their own distinctive uniform. First was the maroon beret at first with the Army Air Corps cap badge and from May 1943 the Parachute Regiment cap badge which is still in use today.

Parachute wings were worn on the right shoulder above the airborne forces patch of Bellerophon riding the flying horse Pegasus.

On operations, Paras wore the airborne forces pattern steel helmet instead of the normal Brodie helmet. After 1942, the Denison smock was issued as the first camouflaged uniform for the British Army.

The British Paras did not use a reserve parachute. At a cost of £60 each, the War Office considered them a waste of money.

The Paras were not issued with any special weapons and their small arms were the same as the rest of the army.

They used the standard bolt action Lee–Enfield rifle and the Enfield or Webley revolver or the M1911 pistol.

For a submachine gun, they used the British Sten in North-west Europe, which was issued in higher numbers than to a normal infantry battalion. Paratroopers attached to Eighth



**STALEMATE:** The Paras controlled one side of the bridge, the SS the other. The above image is a still photo from the film ‘A Bridge too Far’.

Army used the Thompson sub-machine gun in the North African and Mediterranean theatre and during Operation Dragoon.

Each section had a Bren light machine gun and the platoon had a 2-inch mortar. The only battalion heavy weapons were eight 3-inch mortars, four Vickers machine guns and after 1943, ten PIAT anti tank weapons.

World War II Battle Honours

During World War II the Parachute Regiment earned no fewer than 23 battle honours.

These were:

North West Europe 1942

- Bruneval

North Africa 1942–43

- Oudna
- Soudia
- Djebel Azzag
- Djebel Alliliga
- El Hadjeba
- Tamera
- Dejebel Dahara
- Kefel Debna

Sicily 1943

- Primosole Bridge

Italy 1943–44

- Taranto
- Orsogna

Greece 1944–45

- Athens

North West Europe 1944–45

- Normandy Landing
- Pegasus Bridge
- Merville Battery
- Breville
- Dives Crossing
- La Touques Crossing
- Southern France
- Arnhem
- Ourthe
- Rhine

Arnhem

Operation Market Garden was an ambitious plan to shorten the war in Europe.

The strategic goal was to encircle the heart of German industry, the Ruhr Area, in a pincer movement. The aim of Operation Market Garden was to establish the northern end of



a pincer ready to project deeper into Germany.

The success of the operation depended on taking a series of nine bridges, the last being at the city of Arnhem over the Rhine river.

Market was the airborne element of the operation. The American 101st Airborne Division would be responsible for capturing the bridges around Oosterbeek while American 82nd Airborne Division would take care of the bridges around Nijmegen. The final bridge at Arnhem would be left to the Parachute Regiment.

They would have to capture the road, rail and pontoon bridges over the Lower Rhine at Arnhem and hold them until relieved, which was expected to occur two or three days later.

On 17 September the 1st Parachute Brigade landed and headed towards Arnhem, but

only the 2nd Battalion, largely unopposed, made it to the bridges.

The railway bridge was blown up as they approached and the pontoon bridge was missing a section.

By dusk, most of the 2nd Battalion and some supporting units, including the Brigade Headquarters, numbering about 740 men, had taken the northern end of the Arnhem road bridge.

According to Allied intelligence, the bridges at Arnhem would be defended by nothing more than German Home Guard.

What they did not know was that the 9th SS Panzer Division, under SS-Obergruppenführer Wilhelm Bittrich, had been withdrawn from the front lines and stationed just outside of Arnhem for a period of rest and refitment. They arrived in Arnhem on the second day.

At the start of the operation the Allies captured several bridges between Eindhoven and Nijmegen.

Lieutenant-General Brian Horrocks' XXX Corps ground force advance was delayed by the initial failure of the airborne units to secure bridges at Son en Breugel and Nijmegen, and German forces demolished the bridge over the Wilhelmina Canal at Son before it could be secured by the 101st Airborne Division.

The 82nd Airborne Division's failure to capture the main highway bridge over the Waal River at Nijmegen before 20 September also delayed the advance of XXX Corps.

Although they were only supposed to capture and hold the

bridge for 48 hours, the Paras held it for nine days against a panzer division.

The only awards of the Victoria Cross to the Parachute Regiment in the war were for the Battle of Arnhem. The two recipients were Captain John Hollington Grayburn of the 2nd Battalion, and Captain Lionel Ernest Queripel of the 10th Battalion. Both awards were posthumous.

Arnhem has since become a byword for the fighting spirit of British paratroops and set a standard for the Parachute Regiment.

Post War

For most of the next 20 years, the Parachute Regiment was involved in numerous peacekeeping and small scale operations associated with the withdrawal from empire.

This included operations in Cyprus and the Suez during the 1950s, and in Kuwait, Aden and Malaysia during the 1960s.

From 1970 the British spent 38 years in Northern Ireland during Operation Banner.

The 2nd Battalion spent more time there than any other infantry battalion. Between 1971 and 1996, 51 men of the Parachute Regiment were killed while serving in Northern Ireland.

The Falklands War

On 2 April 1982, the Falklands War began when Argentine forces began the invasion of the British Overseas Territories of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher announced on 3 April that a naval task force was

being sent to the South Atlantic to “restore British administration” to the Falkland Islands”.

Part of the force that was sent to the Falklands included the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, Parachute Regiment.

On 21 May, the 2nd Battalion was the first major unit to land in the Falklands, just south of San Carlos on the eastern side of San Carlos Water.

The first battle in the campaign was the Battle of Goose Green, undertaken by the 2nd Battalion on 28 May. On 29 May, after a day long battle, the Argentine commanders, agreed to surrender.

The battle had cost the battalion 15 dead and 37 wounded.

The Argentinians had lost 55 dead, about 100 wounded and 1,500 were taken prisoner. Lieutenant-Colonel H.

Jones was later awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross, amongst other awards, were one DSO, and two DCMs.

The Parachute Regiment won four battle honours during the War. These were:

- Falkland Islands
- Goose Green
- Mount Longdon
- Wireless Ridge

## The 21st Century

In May 1999, the British government decided to send a force of 17,400 troops to take part in operations in Kosovo, saying that the troops would be needed to rebuild the infrastructure after the Kosovo War. This force included the 1st Battalion, Parachute Regiment.

In August 2001, the 2nd Battalion took part in NATO’s intervention in the Republic of Macedonia (Operation Essential Harvest) to disarm the rebel National Liberation Army.

In May 2000, Operation Palliser was the name given to the evacuation of British, Commonwealth and European Union citizens from Sierra Leone.

Included in the task force was 1st Battalion, less ‘A’ Company but reinforced by ‘D’ Company,

In May 2006, as part of the 16 Air Assault Brigade, the 3rd Battalion were sent to Afghanistan for Operation Herrick.

In December 2006, it was announced that Corporal Bryan Budd 3rd Battalion had been awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for two separate acts of “inspirational leadership and the greatest valour” which led to his death during actions against the Taliban in Afghanistan in July and August 2006.

## In conclusion

Nowadays the 1st Battalion is permanently under the command of the Director Special Forces in the Special Forces Support Group. The 2nd and 3rd Battalion are parachute infantry, and the 4th Battalion falls under Army Reserve.

During World War II the Parachute Regiment was given the nickname ‘Red Devils’, both for their distinctive maroon berets and their fighting spirit.

Their motto is *Utrique Paratus* (Ready for anything), is something they have proved countless times. They are a regiment that was forged in battle.

## World War II Paratrooper

- A - Combat boots.
- B - Mk II helmet.
- C - Lee Enfield No.4 Mk.I.
- D - Sten gun.
- E - Bren gun.
- F - Webley revolver.
- G - Fairbairn-Sykes knife.
- H - Trenching tool.
- I - Mess kit.
- J - Canteen.

- K - Mills bomb.
- L - Back pack.
- M - Sten ammo pouch.
- N - Parachute Regiment beret.
- O - Parachute wings.
- P - Toggle rope.
- Q - Scarf.



*The mission - rescue five British soldiers and their local liaison officer from a vicious militia group in a war-torn African country. Those taking part in the hostage rescue nicknamed the mission 'Operation Certain Death'.*

Situated close to the equator and covering an area of 71,740 square kilometres, Sierra Leone is a former British colony in West Africa.

By 2000 the country had been consumed by a vicious civil war that had begun nine years earlier in 1991.

The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was a rebel army opposed to the government. They were aided by a number of militia groups. One such group was the Wild Boys.

While they starting off fighting for the RUF, the Wild Boys soon changed allegiance and fought on the side of the government against the RUF. They were involved in at least one operation directed by British officers in exchange for weapons and medical supplies.

The Wild Boys, however, refused to integrate into the reconstituted Sierra Leone Army and began operating as bandits from the abandoned villages of Magbeni and Gberi Bana, on opposite sides of Rokel Creek.

British forces were deployed to Sierra Leone in May 2000, initially for a non-combatant evacuation operation under the codename Operation Palliser, in which they were tasked with evacuating foreign nationals - particularly those from the United Kingdom, other Commonwealth countries, and others for whom the British government had accepted consular responsibility.

As part of the mission, British forces secured Sierra Leone's main airport, Lungi. Having secured Freetown and Lungi, and evacuated the foreign nationals who wished to leave, the initial forces left and were replaced by a "Short Term Training Team" (STTT), whose mission was to train and rebuild the Sierra Leone Army. The STTT was initially formed from a detachment from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, who were replaced in July 2000 by 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment (1 R IRISH).

## Capture

On 25 August 2000, a patrol led by Major Allan Marshall consisting of 11 men from the 1 R IRISH & an official from the Sierra Leone Army acting as interpreter, Lieutenant Musa Bangura, left their base in Waterloo to visit Jordanian peacekeepers attached to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and based at Masiaka.

Over lunch, they were informed that the West Side Boys had begun to disarm, despite their initial reluctance, and Marshall decided to take the patrol to investigate en route back to their base.

The patrol turned off the main road onto a dirt track that led to the village of Magbeni, where the West Side Boys were based. As they approached the base, they were surrounded by a large group of West Side Boys, who used an anti-aircraft gun mounted on a Bedford truck to block the patrol's route. Marshall dismounted his vehicle, then resisted an attempt to grab his rifle and was beaten.

He and the rest of the patrol were then forced into canoes at the bank of Rokel Creak and transported to Gberi Bana, a village on the other side of the river, just upstream from the point of the initial confrontation.

British forces in Sierra Leone were operating on the authority of the Sierra Leone government, but President Ahmad Kabbah



**WILD BOYS:** Local militia group the Wild Boys were a law unto themselves and unpredictable at best.

allowed British forces to negotiate for the soldiers' release themselves, as his government lacked the requisite expertise.

The negotiations were led by Lieutenant Colonel Simon Fordham, commanding officer of 1 R IRISH, who was assisted by a small team which included hostage negotiators from the Metropolitan Police.

The West Side Boys would not allow negotiators any closer to the village of Magbeni than the end of the track from the main road, so Fordham met there with the self-styled "Brigadier" Foday Kallay, the gang's leader, to negotiate for the soldiers' release.

On 29 August, Fordham demanded proof that the captive soldiers were still alive, and Kallay brought with him to that day's meeting the two officers from the group—Marshall, the company commander, and Captain Flaherty, the regimental signals officer. During the meeting, Flaherty shook hands with Fordham and covertly passed him a sketch map of Gberi Bana which detailed

the layout of the village and the building in which the soldiers were being held.

Two days later, on 31 August, five of the eleven hostages were released in exchange for a satellite telephone and medical supplies.

The OC of the captured soldiers had originally decided to release the youngest first, but this was changed to the married men last minute. However, out of the married men the West Side Boys wanted two of them to remain due to their signals experience.

The released soldiers included the Sergeant Major, two corporals and two rangers. The West Side Boys told the British negotiators that the remaining captured soldiers would not be released until the gang's remaining demands were met. The released soldiers were flown for debriefing to RFA Sir Percivale, of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, off the coast.

After the release of the soldiers, the West Side Boys' spokesman, the self-styled "Colonel Cambodia", used the

satellite telephone to contact the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) for a lengthy interview in which they outlined a series of demands, including a re-negotiation of the Lomé Peace Accord and the release of prisoners held by the Sierra Leone authorities.

The BBC had prior warning from the Foreign Office that the interview would take place. "Colonel Cambodia" quickly depleted the batteries in the telephone, but his call to the BBC enabled specialists from the Royal Corps of Signals to determine the exact position of the telephone.

## The situation deteriorates

The West Side Boys were both unstable and unpredictable. They were more often than not high on cannabis, cocaine and the potent local moonshine known as palm wine.

The gang's drug habits also posed a problem for the British negotiators as the cannabis and palm wine often caused them to forget discussions and agreements they had made just the previous day. The cocaine made them distrustful and paranoid.

The drugs and alcohol also had the effect of making their behaviour erratic. Kallay conducted a mock execution in which he threatened to shoot the soldiers unless they told him why they had entered the West Side Boys' territory. Lieutenant Bangura was treated far worse than the Irish soldiers, often receiving beatings.

The demands of the West Side Boys was becoming more demanding with each passing day. The wanted immunity

from prosecution, safe passage to the UK to take up university courses, and guaranteed acceptance to the re-formed Sierra Leone Army.

## Military planning

One of the negotiating team, posing as a Royal Irish major, was in fact a member of the Special Air Service (SAS). His job was to provide reconnaissance and gather intelligence in case an assault was required.

As planning for a potential military operation to release the captive soldiers progressed, it became clear that, given the number of West Side Boys and their separation between two locations (Gberi Bana as well as the village of Magbeni; see below), the operation could not be conducted by special forces alone.

The headquarters of 1st Battalion The Parachute Regiment (1 Para) was ordered to assemble an enhanced company group, which would support special forces if such an operation was launched. The battalion's commanding officer selected A Company, led by Major Matthew Lowe, which had been on exercise in Jamaica at the time of the initial British deployment to Sierra Leone.

Several members of A Company were new recruits who had only completed basic training two weeks prior. Lowe decided that replacing them with more experienced soldiers would risk undermining the cohesion and morale of the company, but several specialist units from elsewhere in 1 Para were attached to A Company to bring the company group up to

the required strength, including a signals group, snipers, heavy machine gun sections, and a mortar section.

By 5 September, the British media was openly speculating on the possibility that an operation would be launched to free the remaining soldiers, having picked up on 1 Para's heightened readiness.

The following day, the media was reporting that British forces had arrived in Sierra Leone "as a contingency". The British special forces kept a low profile, as was traditional, and the media interest surrounding 1 Para allowed D Squadron, 22 SAS to enter Sierra Leone unnoticed.

A pair of SAS observation teams (one on each side of Rokel Creek) were inserted near the villages by assault boats manned by the Special Boat Service (SBS). They began monitoring the West Side Boys' movements and gathering intelligence, such as details of weapons, as well as identifying viable landing sites for helicopters.

## The assault

On 9 September the SAS teams near the West Side Boys' base reported that they had seen no sign of the captive soldiers during the four days they had been in position. There were also concerns that the West Side Boys might move further inland, and either kill the soldiers or move them to a location from which it would be more difficult for British forces to extract them. The combination of these factors led to the assault being given the green light.

The operation was to commence at first light the next day,

10 September. The two villages were to be assaulted simultaneously - Gberi Bana, where the Royal Irish were held, by the SAS and Magbeni by the paras. In addition to the remaining Royal Irish soldiers, the SAS were also tasked with extracting Lieutenant Musa Bangura and a group of Sierra Leonean civilians who were being held by the West Side Boys.

The task force left Hastings - approximately 15 minutes' flying time from the West Side Boys' camp - at approximately 06h15.

Downstream from the villages—approximately 15 minutes' flying time, just out of the West Side Boys' visual and hearing range, the helicopters went into a holding pattern to allow the SAS observation teams time to get into position to prevent the West Side Boys from attacking any of the captives before the extraction teams were on the ground.

Once the observation teams were in position, the helicopters proceeded up the line of Rokel Creek, the Chinooks flying low enough that the downdraft tore off the corrugated iron roofs of several huts in the villages, including the roof of the building in which the Royal Irish were being held.

As the helicopters approached, the SAS observation team at Gberi Bana engaged West Side Boys in the vicinity of the captives to prevent any gang members from attempting to kill them before the area was secured.

Upon their arrival, the two Lynx attack helicopters strafed the villages to make the landing zones as safe as possible for the



**DON'T MOVE:** SAS troopers keep a suspected Wild Boy under close guard after the assault.

Chinooks and destroy the heavy weapons that had been identified by the SAS observation teams.

After the first sweep by the attack helicopters, two Chinooks carried the SAS to Gberi Bana. The troopers fast-roped into the village and immediately came under fire from the West Side Boys.

Early on in the confrontation, the British operation sustained its first casualty. Trooper Bradley Tinnion was shot and seriously injured. He was dragged back to the helicopter and flown to the medical team aboard the RFA Sir Percivale, dying despite intensive resuscitation attempts on board.

The SAS proceeded to clear the village, engaging those West Side Boys who offered resistance and capturing those who surrendered, including Foday Kallay.

The SAS located the captive British soldiers from the latter's shouts of "British Army, British Army!", though Bangura had been held separately and proved more difficult to locate. He was found in a squalid open pit, which had been used by the

West Side Boys as a toilet, and had been starved and beaten during his captivity, and thus had to be carried to the helicopter. Less than 20 minutes after the arrival of the SAS, the remaining members of the Royal Irish patrol, including Bangura, had been evacuated from the area.

The third Chinook carried half of the enhanced A Company group from 1 Para to Magbeni. The helicopter hovered low above the landing zone that had been identified by the second SAS observation team and the paras jumped from the rear ramp.

The returning Chinook, carrying the remainder of the A Company group came under fire from a heavy machine gun in Magbeni, which was promptly strafed by one of the 657 Squadron Lynx helicopters until it ceased firing.

As the company group moved forward, an explosion - possibly a mortar fired by the British fire support group - injured seven men, including company commander Major Matthew Lowe.

The West Side Boys' ammu-

nition store was found and secured and, once the rest of the buildings had been cleared, the paras took up defensive positions to block any potential counter-attack and patrols went into the immediate jungle in search of any West Side Boys hiding in the bushes. The village was completely secure by 08h00.

## Conclusion

After medical checks, the Royal Irish soldiers, who had been held for 17 days, were allowed to telephone their families and then rejoined their battalion in Freetown. The paras were flown to RFA Argus, where they spent the night before being flown back to the United Kingdom the next day.

D Squadron, 22 SAS also left Sierra Leone the day after the operation, along with Director Special Forces and his headquarters staff.

Operation Barras achieved its mission of freeing all the hostages. Operation Barras also freed 22 Sierra Leonean civilians who had been held captive by the West Side Boys.

The British suffered one soldier killed and 12 wounded. At least 25 Wild Boys were killed and 18 were captured.

Two Conspicuous Gallantry Crosses, five Military Crosses, and five Distinguished Flying Crosses were awarded. Brigadier John Holmes (Director Special Forces) was awarded the Distinguished Service Order for his part in the operation. Trooper Tinnion received a posthumous Mention in Despatches.



*The assault team stands ready to storm the building. But with **Matt O'Brien** as part of the assault team the hostages should be afraid. Very afraid.*

Some games have incredible graphics and large open worlds. Doorkickers is not one of those games.

In fact the graphics are reminiscent of games from the early 1980s. It's a 2D top down view with graphics that are nothing to write home about. But bugger me sideways if Doorkickers is not both fun and challenging.

It's not a new game either. It was released for Windows on PC back in 2014. But, as I said, it's well worth playing.

Door Kickers allows the player to create a squad of up to ten playable characters, each of which is able customized with classes, weapons, armour, utilities, and gear. Every class has a unique variety of weapons, each of which caters to particular situations and play styles. As the team completes missions they will level up, both as a squad and individually.

After each mission you will earn stars and doctrine points. The doctrine points can be allocated to improve the squad with abilities and perks. The stars are used to unlock new weapons and equipment.

Your squad can be allocated as one of five different classes. They are Pointman, Assaulter, Breacher, Stealth, and Shield. Each member of the squad can be equipped with either a pri-

mary or secondary weapon, or both. All classes can also be equipped with armour and have a utility pouch that can carry two items. Lastly they can carry support gear.

Items that you can choose for the utility pouch include flashband and stinger grenades, breaching charge, lockpick machine, and Tazer.

Support gear includes a spy camera, dynamic hammer, bolt cutter, and breaching kit.

Pointmen have no primary weapons and are equipped with only a sidearm. They do, however, have the highest mobility.

The assault class can choose between submachine guns and rifles, and breachers have shotguns.

The Stealth class allows players to silently dispatch enemies with suppressed weaponry, and the Shield is equipped with a riot shield and a sidearm, with no other gear.

There are seven different types of missions: Eliminating all hostile forces, Rescuing hostages, Stopping executions, Retrieving evidence, Defusing bombs, Arresting suspects, Rescuing and escorting a primary VIP to safety.

The eliminate hostile forces mission is straight forward. Assault the place and take out all Tangos (terrorists). Rescuing

hostages is a bit more difficult. Not only do you have to take out the tangos, you also have to ensure that no hostages are harmed.

Stopping executions is similar to rescuing hostages. This time, however, the tangos will execute a hostage within a certain amount of time. You have to complete the mission before the time runs out.

Retrieving evidence is also known as the 'Dope Raid'. The aim is to retrieve at least one piece of evidence, arrest any unarmed criminals not killed in the crossfire, and eliminate all armed combatants.

In defusing bombs, the terrorists have placed a bomb somewhere on the map, usually hidden. You have a certain amount of time to find it and defuse it.

Arresting suspects involves arresting an unarmed suspect, normally guarded by henchmen.

The last mission type involves rescuing a VIP and escorting them to safety.

There are single player missions which are great to get the hang of the game and also to earn stars and doctrine points.

Besides the official single player missions, you can also generate random missions.

The campaign involves completing a number of missions.



The campaigns are: A hard day's work, Drug bust, The cell, Terror at sea, Suits and masks, and iTerror Strike.

The difference between single player and campaigns is that when one of your squad is killed in the campaign, they are permanently removed from your roster and you can't use them for the rest of the campaign.

You can also go on-line and play any mission or campaign in co-op mode with a friend.

The best thing is that the Steam Workshop for Doorkickers means that they are thousands of mods out there.

You can download maps, missions, campaigns and different types of weapons and equipment.

At the start of each scenario you have certain places where you can place your squad. This can consist of between one to ten members of the squad.

You can then pause the game and plan your route and orders. Once this is done you un-

pause and they will carry out your orders.

This is where planning and strategy is vital. If, for example, you have to assault a building with eight rooms and you have only two squad members to do it, who do you choose?

For something like that I would normally use a pointman and an assaulter. Sometimes I will get the pointman to use his spy camera to check under the door so I can see if anyone is in the room, and how many there are.

If you just get him to kick the door in and burst into the room, it's fine if there is only one tango in the room. The pointman will drop him quickly.

If however you burst into the room with a pointman and there are four or five tangos in the room, he's in serious trouble. He only has a pistol and some of them may be armed with submachine guns.

In this case it's better to breach the door, throw in a flashbang

and then let the assaulter and pointman enter the room at the same time.

Doorkickers is a great game and it will run on most computers.

They have just released Doorkickers 2 which I will review in the next edition of the magazine.



Publisher - Killhouse Games

Genre - Real Time Strategy

Score - 8/10

Price - R43.80 (on Steam)



## Movie Review

# My Father's War

Released: 2016  
Running time: 97 minutes  
Director: Peter Lamberti

This locally produced film is one of the best I've seen in a long while. It is a movie that every military veteran needs to watch. Especially those that were involved in the Border War.

In fact whether you're a former soldier, a wife, or child (in South Africa or anywhere in the world), this is a must-see film.

Written and directed by Craig Gardner and produced by Peter Lamberti, the bilingual film (Afrikaans/English) focuses on the broken relationship between a father and a rebellious teenage son.

Set in 2003, 19 year old Dap Smit is at constant loggerheads with his father Dawid, a veteran of the Border War. They two of them cannot see eye to eye on anything. Caught between them is Karina, Dawid's wife and Dap's mother.

Dawid has no idea of how to communicate with his son. Dap on the other hand seems to hate his father. He feels that he was not there while he was growing up, and that his father abandoned both him and his mother because he preferred being on the border.

He also believes that he is an only child because his father didn't want any more children after him.

Eventually Dap tells his father that he hates him and says that he wished that he had died in the war.

Dawid is heartbroken and

prays to God to somehow show his son what it had really been like. It is a prayer that does not go unanswered.

Dap has a troubling dream in which he is a combat soldier in the Border War. In the dream everyone calls him Dap. The dream seems so realistic and the following morning he cannot get it out of his mind.

Then he has another dream. This time he meets his father who, in the dream, is the same age as him. They are both together in the same unit. He experiences events in great detail during the dream.

Dap realises that in his dream he is a member of the elite Special Forces unit, 5 Reconnaissance Regiment and that they are somewhere in Angola.

He begins doing research on the Internet and finds that all the facts he has dreamt about seem to check out.

As he has more dreams he begins to understand his father more. The dreams give him insight and compassion, and he is finally able to let go of his life-long feelings of abandonment and anger.

Finally father and son are reconciled. He accompanies his father to a reunion of some of the men that were in his unit.

There Dap learns why he was named Dap. He also learns the reason why he was an only child.

I watched this film with a mate of mine, himself a veteran of the

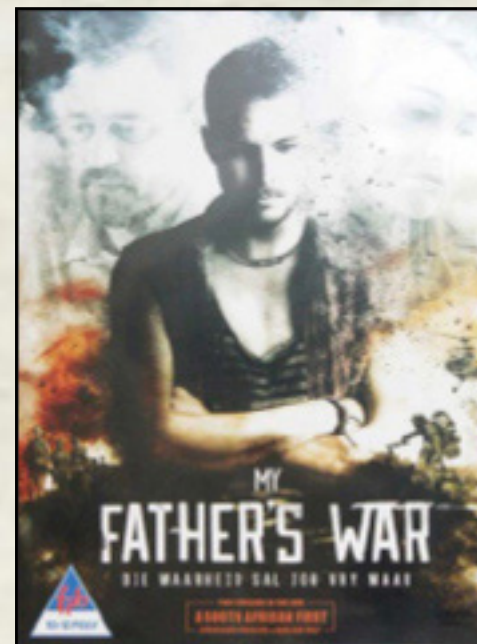
Border War.

"I wish my ex-wife and children could see this movie," he said.

If you haven't seen My Father's War, then go out and rent it. Or even better, buy a copy of the movie.

### Cast

Stian Bam - David Smit  
Edwin van der Walt - Dap Smit  
Erica Wessels - Karina Smit  
Richard Lukunku - Joao  
Duane Behrens - Kobus  
David Dukas - Bill  
Vian Singleton - Young Dap  
Francois Jacobs - Warrick  
Damon Berry - Carrots  
Neels Clasen - Wynand  
David Rees - Colonel Swartz  
Alan Glauber - Army chaplain  
Nathaniel Ramabulana - Chunky



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

# Pilgrim Days

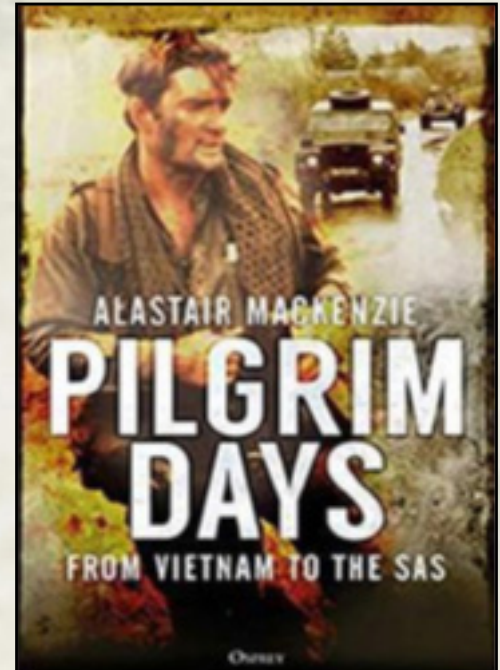
Pilgrim Days - From Vietnam to the SAS by Alastair MacKenzie is a really good read.

If there was ever anyone who went a little further, a little beyond, it was Alastair MacKenzie.

In a career spanning 30 years, MacKenzie served uniquely with the New Zealand Army in Vietnam, the British Parachute Regiment, the British Special Air Service (SAS), the South African Defence Force's famed ParaBats, the Sultan of Oman's Special Forces and a host of private security agencies and defence contractors.

MacKenzie lived the soldier's life to the full as he

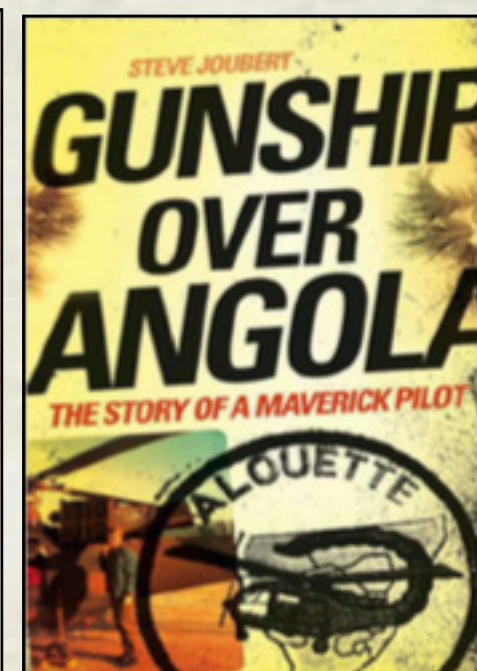
journeyed 'the Golden Road to Samarkand'. This extraordinary new work from the author of Special Force: The Untold Story of 22nd Special Air Service Regiment (SAS) vividly documents, in a detail that stuns, the experience of infantry combat in Vietnam, life with the Paras, the tempo of selection for UK Special Forces, covert SAS operations in South Armagh and SAS Counter Terrorist training on the UK mainland, vehicle-mounted Pathfinder Brigade insertions into Angola and maritime counter-terrorism work in Oman.



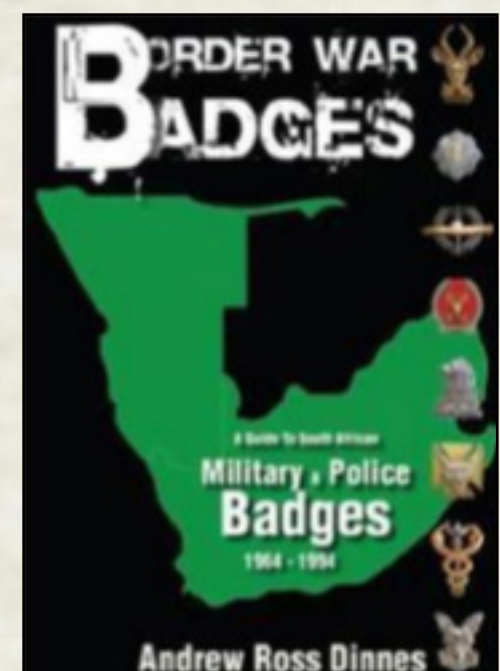
Paperback - 224 pages  
Cost - R550



Weekend Warriors  
R350



Gunship over Angola  
R260



Border War Badges  
R400

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

# This month in military history

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

## 1 August

- **1798** - The British fleet under Lord Nelson defeats the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile, at Aboukir Bay, Egypt, thus thwarting Napoleon's conquest of the Middle East. Napoleon Bonaparte and his forces are left stranded in Egypt.
- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War General Ian Hamilton, commanding a force of about 6,000 men with twenty-six field guns, is sent to capture Commando Nek and Silkaatsnek, between Brits and Pretoria, and to cover Baden-Powell's retreat to Pretoria.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the British parliament votes an additional £12,500 00 for munitions.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Sir G. Lagden, formerly Resident Commissioner in Basutoland, is appointed by the British as the Commissioner of Native Affairs in the Transvaal and the 'Orange River Colony'.
- **1938** - Air Force Base Waterkloof is founded with two hangars, a runway and No's 1 and 2 Fighter-bomber Squadrons and No 3 Communication Squadron, mainly equipped with Hawker Hartbeest Aircraft. Lt. Col. H.G. Willmot is first permanent Officer Commanding.
- **1944** - The Warsaw Uprising began as the Polish Home Army, numbering about 40,000 Polish patriots, began shooting at German troops in the streets. The Nazis then sent eight divisions to battle the Poles, who had hoped for, but did not receive, assistance from the Allies. Two months later, the rebellion was quashed.
- **1946** - Andrei Vlasov, Russian general (who fought for both the Red Army and the German Wehrmacht) is executed at age 45.
- **1957** - The United States and Canada form the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD).
- **1975** - An order is issued withdrawing the remaining South African Police from Rhodesia.
- **1979** - Lieutenant Sidney Edward Watts from 1 South West Africa Squadron SWATF was killed when his private Cessna 182 aircraft crashed at Eros Airport outside Windhoek during Squadron night flying exercises. He was 28.
- **1981** - Private Rocco Bernard Du Plooy from 2 Squadron was accidentally killed while on official duty but the exact cause of his death is unknown. He was 17.
- **1982** - The Kenyan Air Force disbands following an attempted coup by non-commissioned officers in which 159 died.
- **1987** - Corporal Marius Albertus van Zyl from Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Oudshoorn while on weekend pass. He was 20.
- **1988** - Seaman Willem Schalk van der Merwe from SAS Rand was killed in a military bus accident in Durban. He was 19.
- **1990** - ANC and its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) suspends armed actions after twenty-nine years.
- **1990** - Two members of the Cape Regiment were killed in a military vehicle accident at Hammersdale. The casualties were: Rifleman Johannes Jacobus Lourens (27). Rifleman Cupido Johannes Mentoor (21).
- **1992** - Corporal Michael Paul Bankenberg from Group 39 was shot dead by a fellow soldier in Queens-town. He was 21. The soldier who did the shooting then committed suicide. He was 21.
- **1993** - Two members from 3 SAI were killed when their

- Mamba Armoured Personnel Carrier overturned near Table Mountain outside Pietermaritzburg. The casualties were: Lance Corporal L. P. Petersen (19). Lance Corporal Johnathan Mervin Thomas (20).
  - **1996** - Mohammed Farah Aidid, who has controlled much of Somalia during its civil war, dies of wounds suffered during a skirmish with another faction.
- ## 2 August
- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Lord Roberts sends his Chief of Staff, Lord Kitchener, to take overall command of the forces engaged against Gen. De Wet.
  - **1934** - Paul von Hindenburg, German WW1 general and President of Germany (1925-34), dies of lung cancer at 86.
  - **1956** - Having held talks on the escalating crisis over control of the Suez Canal with France and the US, Britain mobilises its forces.
  - **1965** - Assistant Veldkornet N.R. Pullen from the 42 Army Air Reconnaissance Squadron was killed when his Cessna 185A crashed near Derby while on a routine low level reconnaissance training flight. He was 20.
  - **1976** - French officials disclose that France is to supply South Africa with two destroyer escorts.
  - **1982** - Lance Corporal Matheus Bambi from 32

- Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 27.
- **1983** - Rifleman Schaullum Lennox Silverton from Regiment Christiaan Beyers was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion in the Kaokoveld. He was 21.
- **1989** - Private Jacobus Petrus Du Plessis from Quartermaster General was shot dead while on duty at the Karl Kling Building in Pretoria. He was 18.
- **1989** - Rifleman Rudolph Ernst Thiel from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was accidentally killed in the Duku-Duku Forest Training area near Mtubatuba when his Unimog overturned on a gravel road during a training exercise. He was 19.
- **1990** - The Iraqi army invaded Kuwait amid claims that Kuwait threatened Iraq's economic existence by overproducing oil and driving prices down on the world market. An Iraqi military government was then installed in Kuwait which was annexed by Iraq on the claim that Kuwait was historically part of Iraq. This resulted in Desert Shield, the massive Allied military buildup, and later the 100-hour war against Iraq, Desert Storm.
- **1999** - At least twelve people are killed in rebel attacks on

a police station, airport and the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) in and around Katima Mulilo.

- **2007** - Holden Roberto, Angolan founder and leader of the FNLA, dies at 84.

## 3 August

- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War, in a breach of neutrality, Colonel Stowe, Consul-General of the USA, allows a British Intelligence officer, carrying important papers from Milner to Kitchener, to hide from Danie Theron in his railway carriage.
- **1900** - War correspondent Ernie Pyle (1900-1945) was born in Dana, Indiana. His syndicated column offered sympathetic insights into the experiences of common soldiers during World War II. He received a Pulitzer Prize for his reports of the bombing of London in 1940 and later war reports from Africa, Sicily, Italy and France. He was killed by machine-gun fire near Okinawa in the South Pacific on April 18, 1945.



Jonas Savimbi

- **1900** - President Paul Kruger and Commandant General Louis Botha issued a proclamation in Pretoria which promised to pay those Burghers who remained active with their Commandos for damage done to their farms by the British troops.
- **1911** - An Italian, Commander Piazza, is the world's first pilot to fly a military mission he flies reconnaissance missions over Tripoli.
- **1934** - Jonas Savimbi, former leader of Unita, was born on this day in Munhango, Angola.
- **1940** - Italy begins occupation of British Somaliland.
- **1956** - An event unique in the SAAF history takes place. The SAAF squadron that was placed at the disposal of the United Nations Organisation during the Korean War, is presented with the prestigious United States presidential unit citation, awarded for 'extraordinary heroism against the armed enemy of the United Nations from November 1951 to April 1952'.
- **1974** - Lieutenant Henri Cornelius Lotz from 41 Squadron was killed when his AM-3C Bosbok crashed near Johannesburg. He was 25.
- **1978** - Captain Anthony Howard Brinkworth from 24 Squadron was Reported Missing when his Buccaneer SMk.50, flown by Captain Dries Marais, suffered a double flame-out and crashed into the sea 28 miles off Green Point near Scottburgh and exploded on impact with the water. He was 27.
- **1979** - President Francisco Macías Nguema of Equatorial Guinea is overthrown in a military coup by his nephew Colonel Teodoro Obiang Ngueme Mbasogo.
- **1980** - Two members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action in Southern Angola when they triggered a booby trap inside an enemy bunker during Operation Vastrap. They were: Corporal Michael Christian Coetzee (26). Corporal Daniel Heinrich Grobler (20).
- **1983** - Rifleman Adriaan Jacobus Booysen Thirion from the Boksburg Commando was killed in an accidental mortar bomb explosion during operations in Southern Angola. He was 25.
- **1985** - Rifleman Mark John Littrell from 1 Parachute Battalion Died of Wounds accidentally sustained while based in the Northern Operational Area. He was 19.
- **1986** - Three members from Durban Regiment were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Durban. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Robert Dennis Sterling (26). Rifleman Trevor Reginald William Holland (24). Rifleman Eric Cornelius Koekemoer (21).
- **2004** - General Muhamed

Lamari, head of Algeria's army, resigns for health reasons.

- **2005** - The Military Council for Justice and Democracy overthrows President Taya of Mauritania in a coup, while he is in Saudi Arabia for the funeral of King Fahd.

#### 4 August

- **1578** - A Portuguese attempt at an invasion against the Moors of Morocco is thwarted at the Battle of Alcazar-el-Kebir. King Sebastian of Portugal, the King of Fez and the Moorish pretender to the throne of Fez, are all killed.
- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the Battle of Elands River (Brakfontein), near present-day Swartruggens, that lasted several days, starts.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Lord Methuen, British general, destroys the village of Schweizer-Reneke, leaving only the church standing.
- **1907** - The French fleet bombards Casablanca, northwest Morocco, following anti-foreign outbreaks.
- **1914** - Germany invades Belgium and when London's ultimatum to Berlin to withdraw expires at midnight, Britain declares war on Germany.
- **1940** - Italy invades British Somaliland and occupies some towns in Sudan and Kenya. General Godwin-Austin and his small

garrison of British troops was unable to stop the Duke d'Acota's 25,000 soldiers who swarmed across the border.

- **1967** - Military conscription became compulsory for all White men in South Africa over the age of 16. Deferment to complete schooling or a university degree was granted, but hardly any White men were exempt from conscription.
- **1972** - Signaler Victor Donald Devenish from 23 Squadron, 2 Signals Regiment was accidentally killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Binga in Rhodesia while deployed there during Ops Falcon (Clandestine Electronic Warfare Deployment). He was 18.
- **1978** - Corporal Barend Phillippus Hendrikus Du Plessis from the South African Air Force died in H.F. Verwoerd Hospital in Pretoria from injuries sustained in a private motor cycle accident. He was 21.
- **1983** - Captain Thomas Sankara seizes power in a military coup in Burkina Faso.
- **1987** - Private Francois du Preez Smit from the Provost School was killed in a military vehicle accident at the Far North Command Headquarters Unit in Pietersburg. He was 18.
- **1988** - Staff Sergeant Marius Horn from 5 SAI was accidentally killed near Eshowe. He was 27.
- **1990** - Lance Corporal

Craig Adrian Maguire from the Army Battle School died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained in the Army Battle School training area. He was 21

- **2003** - The first 200 members of a West African peacekeeping force arrive in Liberia in an effort to stop more than two months of fighting between government forces and rebels, and allow food and medicine to enter Monrovia.

#### 5 August

- **1815** - A peace treaty with Tripoli, which follows treaties with Algeria and Tunis, brings an end to the Barbary Wars.
- **1863** - The Alabama, an American Civil War raider, captures the Northern bark, Sea Bride, outside Table Bay. The Alabama was built during the American Civil War to prey on the mercantile shipping of the Northern states. Her captain and officers were Southerners, her crew British. The Malays composed the well-known folksong *Daar Kom Die Alibama* with reference to this ship.
- **1916** - The British navy defeats the Ottomans at the naval battle off Port Said, Egypt.
- **1971** - PW Botha, the Minister of Defence, says that South Africa has become

self-sufficient in the manufacture of arms. The country is considering exporting weapons.

- **1983** - Rifleman Johannes Jacobus Christoffel Stols from 3 SAI Support Company attached to 52 Battalion, was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a boosted TMA-3 Cheese Mine while on patrol near Ogongo. He was 20.
- **1990** - The United States sends a Marine company into Monrovia, Liberia's capital, to evacuate US citizens because of a rebel threat to arrest Americans in order to provoke foreign intervention in the civil war.
- **1985** - Gunner Riaan Jakob Rautenbach from 61 Mechanised Battalion was accidentally killed when a 120mm Mortar Tube exploded after firing an over-boosted mortar bomb during training at Omuthiya. He was 20.
- **1986** - Four members from the Intelligence School in Kimberley were killed when their SAMIL 50 vehicle overturned approximately



**Hugo Bierman**

5 km from the Unit Headquarters. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Alan Bernard Clarke (18). Lance Corporal Jacob Johannes de Jager (18). Lance Corporal Jacques Delport (18). Lance Corporal Jacobus Frans Hamman (18).

- **1998** - Otto Kretschmer, German U-boat commander, dies at 86.

## 6 August

- **1891** - British Field Marshall William Joseph Slim is born on this day.
- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the Battle of Elands River takes place. British Gen. Carrington retreats to the Marico River and Zeerust, Western Transvaal, pursued for part of the way by Boer forces. He burns his baggage train and surplus supplies and retires towards Mafeking.
- **1916** - Admiral Hugo (Hendrik) Bierman, former Chief of the Navy and Chief of the SADF, is born in Johannesburg.
- **1945** - The first Atomic Bomb was dropped over the center of Hiroshima at 08h15, by the American B-29 bomber Enola Gay. The bomb detonated about 850 metres above ground, killing over 105,000 persons and destroying the city. Another estimated 100,000 persons later died as a result of radiation effects.
- **1980** - Rifleman Petrus Jacobus from 35 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.

cob from 35 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.

- **1980** - Rifleman Neels Jacobus Reynolds from 41 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 18.
- **1986** - Lance Corporal Jacobus Andries Cornelius Nel from the Intelligence School in Kimberley died in the Universitas Hospital after being critically injured on 05 August 1986 when his SAMIL 50 vehicle overturned 5km from the Unit Headquarters. He was 18.
- **1997** - The SA Air Force announces that Mirages will be phased out because of a cut to the defence budget.

## 7 August

- **1795** - The Battle of Muizenberg takes place during the Napoleonic War when British troops disembark at Muizenberg and move towards Cape Town, notwithstanding brave defence by Lieut. P.W. Marnitz and Capt. C. Kemper after De Lille vacated his position.
- **1876** - International spy Mata Hari (1876-1917) was born (as Margaret Gertrude Zelle) in Leewarden, Netherlands. Arrested by the French in 1917 as a German spy, she was tried, convicted and sentenced to death. At

her execution, she refused a blindfold and instead threw a kiss to the French firing squad.

- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the Battle of Tygerpoort (Venterskroon) takes place between the British under Lord Methuen and the Boers under De Wet. De Wet, with the aid of Capt. Danie Theron and fourteen of his men, escapes and Methuen falls back to regroup.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Lord Kitchenier publishes his most famous of what the Boers call his 'paper bombs', proclaiming that all officers of the 'late Republics still engaged in fighting and all members of their governments will be permanently banished from South Africa unless they surrender before 15 September.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the Battle of Fort Mpisane, the final big battle of this war fought in the Lowveld, takes place.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Commandant Manie Maritz attacks Vanrhynsdorp in the Cape Province. Many vehicles, including three laden supply wagons, are taken from the British.
- **1942** - The U.S. 1st Marine Division lands on the islands of Guadalcanal and Tulagi in the Solomon Islands. It is the first American amphibious landing of the war.

- **1963** - The United States (US) informed the United Nations (UN) that it would suspend sales of arms to South Africa. The Security Council adopted Resolution 181 calling upon all states to cease the sale and shipment of arms, ammunition and military vehicles to South Africa. The arms embargo was made mandatory on 4 November, 1977.
- **1964** - Following an attack on two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin off North Vietnam, the U.S. Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, granting President Lyndon B. Johnson authority "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression."
- **1970** - Fighting along the Egyptian-Israeli border is brought to a halt as a new 90-day cease-fire takes effect.
- **1973** - Three members from 2 SAI were killed while undergoing Driver and Maintenance training when their Bedford truck collided with an Eland Armoured Car on a narrow bridge on the Walvis Bay to Windhoek road and overturned. The casualties were: Rifleman Kenneth Frampton Beghin (18). Rifleman Christos Constatinou (18). Rifleman Ralph George Leggett (18).
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Jan Mathys de Beer from Air Force Base Waterkloof died

in the H.F. Verwoerd Hospital in Pretoria after being critically injured in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 21.

- **1983** - Two members from 202 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. The casualties were: Rifleman S. Kavarata (21). Rifleman A.H. Katanaga (22).
- **1984** - Rifleman Johannes Hendrik Strydom from the Infantry School died from a gunshot wound sustained as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while at the De Brug Training Area. He was 19.
- **1987** - Two members from 121 Battalion were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Ngwavuma near Pongola. They were: Rifleman Sikhumbuzo Eric Mbambo (21). Rifleman Alpheus Dumdum Mbambo (24).
- **1988** - Angola, Cuba and South Africa agreed to a formal ceasefire. Under the terms of the ceasefire and later treaty, Cuba was to withdraw its forces from Angola, and South Africa was to grant Namibia independence and withdraw its forces and elections were to be held in Angola. The treaty was signed on 22 December 1988.

George H. Bush

- **1989** - Rifleman Jacques Stefan Barkhuizen from Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Hopetown while on route to a tug of war competition. He was 19.
- **1990** - Just five days after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, President George Bush ordered Desert Shield, a massive military buildup to prevent further Iraqi advances.
- **1991** - Commandant Frederick Marthinus Ferreira from Eastern Province Command was killed when his military vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with a civilian vehicle at Grahamstown. He was 51.
- **1998** - Terrorist bombs detonate within minutes of each other outside US embassies in buildings in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania killing more than 250 people and wounding approximately 5,000.

## 8 August

- **1802** - Tjaart van der Walt, frontier farmer and field commandant who played an important role in the third



frontier war against the combined force of the Xhosa and Khoi-Khoi, is killed in a skirmish in the Kouga mountains, district Humansdorp.

- **1945** - Soviet Russia declared war on Japan and sent troops into Japanese-held Manchuria.
- **1960** - Dag Hammarskjöld, UN secretary-general, instructs Belgium to withdraw its troops from the Congo.
- **1963** - During Operation CAPEX (Cape Exercise), a joint training exercise involving elements of Britain's Royal Navy and both the SA Navy and Air Force, a 35 Squadron Avro MR. Mk 3 Shackleton struck high ground before crashing into the Wemmershook mountain range just outside the town of Worcester, some 96 km east of its destination. All thirteen crew members on board were killed. The casualties were: Captain Thomas Howard Sivertsen (34). Captain Jaques Guillaume Labuschagne (29). 2nd Lieutenant George James Smith (21). Lieutenant Abraham Gert Willem Coetzee (24). 2nd Lieutenant Charles Alwyn du Plooy (19). Candidate Officer Derrick Ian Strauss (19). Warrant Officer II Sydney Shields Scully (46). Flight Sergeant David Hope Sheasby (27). Lance Corporal Charl Paul Viljoen (28). Lance Corporal Marthienus Christoffel Vorster (23).

Lance Corporal Michel Adolf Brodreiss (21). Lance Corporal Matthys Johannes Taljaard (27). Air Mechanic Johannes Chamberlain (20).

- **1988** - South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha announces agreement has been reached for a cease-fire in the Angolan conflict between South Africa, Angola and Cuba. This ends twenty years of bush warfare. The treaty is formally signed at Ruacana in late August.
- **1945** - The second Atomic bombing of Japan occurred as an American B-29 bomber headed for the city of Kokura, but because of poor visibility then chose a secondary target, Nagasaki. About noon, the bomb detonated killing an estimated 70,000 persons and destroying about half the city.
- **1967** - Biafran troops, under the command of Colonel Ojukwu, have crossed the Niger River into Nigeria's Mid-Western State and are heading towards Benin City. Nigeria's leader General Yakubu Gowon, promoted since his reinstatement of Federal rule, is planning an offensive against the Biafran capital Enugu.
- **1975** - The French government has decided to supply no further continental (ground or air) armaments to South Africa. This political decision does not affect naval armaments or existing contracts.
- **1981** - Two members from

5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action while carrying out pseudo operations in enemy territory. They were: Rifleman Mahlomola Samuel Mokoena (25). Lance Corporal I van Maleta (23).

- **1983** - Rifleman M. Frans from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action while carrying out operations against enemy forces. He was 22.
- **1983** - Two members from 40 Squadron were killed when their Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I crashed near Centurion. The casualties were: Lieutenant Leon Jacobs (22). Lance Corporal Pieter Johannes Terburgh (21).
- **1984** - Rifleman Stephanus Badenhorst from 1 Parachute Battalion died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained at the De Brug Training Area during COIN OPS Training. He was 19.
- **1985** - Bombardier Hendrik Petrus Uys from the School of Artillery was killed in a military vehicle accident near Potchefstroom. He was 20.
- **1985** - Rifleman Edwin Williams from 8 SAI died from a gunshot wound resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while he was stationed at Ondangwa. He was 23.
- **1986** - Rifleman M.C. Joao from 32 Battalion was burnt to death at Buffalo when his house caught fire and burnt

down during the night. He was 32.

- **2004** - Several military officers and civilians are arrested in Mauritania for plotting a coup.

## 10 August

- **1900** - British General Carrington reaches Mafeking and narrowly avoids being court-martialled for his inexplicable flight from Elands River (Brakfontein). He later explains his actions to Lord Roberts in Pretoria but a furious Roberts transfers him back to Bulawayo in Rhodesia.
- **1945** - Japan offers to surrender in World War 2 if Emperor Hirohito is permitted to keep his throne.
- **1961** - First use of the Agent Orange in Vietnam by the U.S. Army.
- **1972** - Naval Headquarters at Simon's Town announce that the second series of joint British South African exercises off the Cape Coast will begin on 14 August 1972 and will continue for seven days.
- **1973** - Leading Seaman Hendrik van der Merwe from SAS Protea was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 27.
- **1978** - Two members from 5 SAI attached to "B" Company, 2nd Platoon, 54 Battalion SWATF, were killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental Rifle Grenade explosion. The casualties were: Lance Cor-

poral Karl Paul Viljoen (22). Rifleman Johannes Gerber le Roux (18).

- **1983** - With support from Libya in their long-running civil war, Chadian insurgents overrun the outpost of Faya-Largeau in northern Chad.
- **1985** - Two members from Sector 30 SWATF were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Welinitschia. The casualties were: Corporal Albert Johan Kotze (19). Rifleman Johannes Frederik Louw (20).

## 11 August

- **1940** - A week before Mussolini orders General Rodolfo Graziani to invade Egypt from Libya, the British RAF raids airfields and Italian military bases.
- **1977** - Rifleman Michael Gerrard Lemmer from 2 SAI was accidentally killed during a training exercise near Otjiwarongo. He left the confines of the Temporary Base (TB) during the night and on returning, was shot dead by the Bren Gunner who mistook him for an insurgent. He was 18.
- **1982** - The South African government has released details of a South African Defence Force (SADF) raid into Southern Angola. Between two and three hundred South West African People's

Organisation (SWAPO) fighters are believed to have been killed, with upwards of another hundred injured at a forward base in the Cambeno Valley. A significant amount of equipment and material was taken and destroyed, including rations originally obtained from the UN High Commission for Refugees.

- **1990** - Egyptian and Moroccan troops land in Saudi Arabia to prevent Iraqi invasion.
- **1993** - UN forces kill seven Somali gunmen who shot at a surveillance helicopter, as militias of warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid intensify an offensive against peacekeepers.
- **1998** - Congolese rebels fighting President Laurent Kabila say they are closing in on the capital, while the government rounds up Tut-sis, suspected of supporting the rebellion.



**Emperor Hitohito**

## 12 August

- **1900** - The rearguard of the Boer forces under De Wet fights a running battle with Lord Methuen's British force. Methuen seizes wagons and prisoners abandoned by the Republicans, as well as one of the Armstrong guns captured at Stormberg.
- **1918** - Wing Commander Guy Penrose Gibson, VC, DSO & Bar, DFC & Bar, was the first Commanding Officer of the Royal Air Force's No. 617 Squadron, which he led in the "Dam Busters" raid in 1943, was born on this day.
- **1960** - UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld and UN troops enter rebel province of Katanga in Zaire.
- **1968** - Over 5,000 soldiers supported by tanks, armoured cars and air force units begin manoeuvres in an exercise code named Operation Subasa designed to test the ability of South African defence forces to deal with terrorist activities.
- **1970** - Rifleman Christopher Coetzee from 2 Parachute Regiment was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 21.
- **1975** - Able Seaman Hugo Johan Jacobus Bus from SAS Kimberley accidentally drowned at East London when the boat in which he was a passenger, capsized near Stoney Point during a Naval beach landing exercise. He was 23.
- **1978** - Three members from 1 Parachute Battalion were Killed in Action after walking into an enemy ambush in Southern Angola while in hot pursuit of a SWAPO/PLAN insurgent group approximately 45 men strong. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Pierre Johannes Du Bois (19). Rifleman Johannes Barend Greyling (20). Rifleman Cornelis Frederik van der Nest (20).
- **1981** - Two members from 6 SAI were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola near the Cut-line. They were: Corporal Marthinus Johannes van Staden (19). Rifleman Jacob Jacobus Blom (19).
- **1981** - Four rockets exploded in Voortrekkerhoogte (renamed Thaba Tshwane on 19 May 1998), a large military base in Verwoerdburg (now Centurion) close to Pretoria. The African National Congress (ANC) accepted responsibility.
- **1993** - US marines open fire on 3,000 Somali demonstrators protesting against the US presence in the country.

## 13 August

- **1900** - During the Battle of Elands River, one of Col. Hore's men, having sneaked through the besieger's lines, reaches the British lines near Mafeking and confirms that the Australians and Rhodesians are still holding out. Lord Roberts orders Kitchener to divert three brigades

from the hunt on De Wet to relieve Col. Hore.

- **1926** - Communist revolutionary and President of Cuba, Fidel Castro, was born on this day.
- **1967** - Umkhonto we Sizwe's (MK) Luthuli Detachment in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Zimbabwean African People's Union (ZAPU) guerrillas engaged Rhodesian forces in Wankie (now Hwange) Game Reserve, near the border of Zambia and Botswana. The operation became known as the Wankie Campaign.
- **1973** - Captain Dietlof Ziegfried Weyers from 2 SAI died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while stationed at Walvis Bay. He was 31.
- **1975** - Lance Corporal Machiel Casparus Eksteen Potgieter was accidentally shot dead after being struck by a bullet resulting from the accidental discharge of a 7.62 MAG machine-gun. He was 18.
- **1980** - Rifleman Johan Calitz from 3 SAI Died of Wounds received while on patrol in the Okatopi area when his Section was ambushed by approximately 50 PLAN insurgents. He was 20.
- **1981** - Two members from SWATF were killed while returning to Sector 50 Headquarters when the privately owned civilian aircraft in which they were flying as passengers, crashed shortly after take-off from Gobabis.

## 14 August

- The casualties were: Colonel Jacobus Cornelius Theron (63). Lieutenant Josef Johannes Fourie (41).
- **1983** - Rifleman Gavin Viljoen from 7 SAI was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident near Phalaborwa. He was 19.
- **1984** - Two members from the South African Cape Corps were killed when their Buffel Troop carrier overturned at Eersterivier. The casualties were: Rifleman Jannie van Wyk (18). Rifleman Jan Johannes Jacobus Wildschutt (20).
- **1988** - Lance Corporal Arthur Mark Fletcher from 5 SAI died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained due to an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while undergoing training at Henley Dam. He was 18.
- **1988** - Special Constable Andreas Ipinge from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.
- **1997** - Heavy fighting rages in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, between forces of the president and those of a former military ruler.
- **1998** - Rebels fighting Congolese President Laurent Kabila capture a power transformer in western Congo, sending the capital, Kinshasa, into darkness.
- **1870** - David Farragut, American Admiral who coined the phrase "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!", dies at 69.
- **1896** - English World War I fighter pilot Albert Ball VC, DSO & Two Bars, MC was born on this day. At the time of his death he was the United Kingdom's leading flying ace, with 44 victories.
- **1900** - End of the 'first De Wet hunt'. De Wet's entire force crosses the unoccupied Olifants Nek Pass near Rustenburg and camps on the banks of the Hex River. He has achieved all his objectives: captured a train, inflicted losses on the enemy, increased his own numbers and managed to rest some of his burghers, while occupying the attention of 50,000 British troops.
- **1945** - Following the two Atomic Bomb drops and believing that continuation of the war would only result in further loss of Japanese lives, delegates of Emperor Hirohito accepted Allied surrender terms originally issued at Potsdam on 26 July 1945, with the exception that the Japanese Emperor's sovereignty would be maintained. Japanese Emperor Hirohito, who had never spoken on radio, then recorded an announcement admitting Japan's surrender,

without actually using the word. The announcement was broadcast via radio to the Japanese people at noon the next day. The formal surrender ceremony occurred later, on 2 September 1945, on board the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

- **1960** - UN peace-keeping forces finally replace Belgian troops in the Republic of Congo.
- **1974** - A sharp increase in South African defence expenditure is announced.
- **1980** - Three members from 6 SAI were Killed in Action when their patrol was ambushed by a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Eenhana. The casualties were: Corporal Daniel Johannes Deyzel (20). Lance Corporal Avril Jewaskiewitz (19). Rifleman Christoffel Jacobus Mijburgh (20).
- **1981** - Corporal Cecil Charles McAlister from Regiment Schoonspruit, was Killed in Action dur-



**Fidel Castro**

ing an attack on their TB by SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Opuwa in the Kaokoveld. He was 27.

- **1981** - Lance Corporal Wynand Spies from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was Reported Missing in Action during operations in Southern Angola while acting as part of a 3-man rearguard protecting the evacuation of two wounded personnel after an attack. He was shot and presumably killed during this rear-guard action but owing to extremely heavy and concentrated enemy fire, his body could not be recovered. After prolonged political negotiations, his remains were eventually returned to South Africa three years later. He was 20.
- **1986** - Sergeant Johannes Petrus Coetzer from 911 Battalion SWATF was killed in a private motor vehicle accident near Keetmanshoop. He was 22.
- **2004** - Germany apologises for the massacre of some 65,000 Hereros in South-West Africa (Namibia) by their soldiers during the 1904 rebellion, but rules out compensation.

## 15 August

- **1769** - French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) was born on the island of Corsica. Originally an officer in King Louis' Army, he rose to become Emperor amid the political chaos that followed the French Revolution.

lution.

- **1865** - Comdt Louw Wepener (53) is killed in combat during an attack on Moshesh at Thaba Bosigo in the Free State.
- **1973** - Leading Seaman Ivan William Kearns from SAS Protea died from injuries received in a military vehicle accident near Bredasdorp on 10 August 1973. He was 26.
- **1973** - Rifleman Mark Cornelius van Heerden from 1 SAI died at Potchefstroom after contracting meningitis while on his way to participate in a military exercise in Gazankulu. He was 18.
- **1979** - Sergeant Barend Cornelius Roux from the Regiment De Wet, attached to 53 Battalion was Killed in Action in Southern Angola when his patrol was ambushed by a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents just North of Oshigambo. He was 26.
- **1981** - Rifleman Melato Chamba from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action when his patrol was ambushed by a numerically superior enemy force in Southern Angola. He was 24.
- **1988** - Rifleman Brink Stander from 1 SAI was killed in a private motor vehicle accident on the Brandfort to Bloemfontein Road while he was on a weekend pass. He was 31.
- **1994** - Carlos the Jackal, freelance terrorist, is arrested in Sudan and flown to

Paris for trial. He is eventually sentenced to life in prison by a Paris court for the 1975 murders of two French secret agents and an alleged informer.

## 16 August

- **1777** - During the American Revolutionary War, the Battle of Bennington, Vermont, occurred as militiamen from Vermont, aided by Massachusetts troops, wiped out a detachment of 800 German-Hessians sent by British General Burgoyne to seize horses.
- **1780** - The Battle of Camden in South Carolina occurred during the American Revolutionary War. The battle was a big defeat for the Americans as forces under General Gates were defeated by troops of British General Charles Cornwallis, resulting in 900 Americans killed and 1,000 captured.
- **1888** - Thomas Edward Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia (1888-1935), British adventurer, soldier, and author, is born in Tremadoc, Wales.
- **1917** - In a renewed thrust of the Allied offensive launched at the end of July in the Flanders region of Belgium - known as the Third Battle of Ypres, or simply as Passchendaele, for the village that saw the heaviest fighting - British troops capture the village of Langemarck from the Germans.

- **1901** - General De la Rey protests the British mistreatment of women and children.
- **1942** - US Army Air Force planes see action for the first time in North Africa, bombing German military positions from their base in Egypt.
- **1959** - William "Bull" F Halsey, US vice-admiral (WW II Pacific), dies.
- **1979** - Rifleman Erasmus Albertus Venter from 4 SAI was killed during Operation Safraan after a fellow soldier picked up an unexploded SAAF Impala DEFA 30 mm High Explosive cannon projectile and between the two of them, attempted to take the shell apart with a Swiss Army knife. During this process, the cannon projectile exploded, killing him instantly. He was 20.
- **1980** - Lance Corporal Hendrik Jacobus van der Walt from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed at Luhebu in South West Africa when the military vehicle he was driving, overturned. He was 18.
- **1981** - Rifleman B Jacob from 101 Battalion SWATF was critically wounded on 14 August 1981 during a contact with PLAN insurgents in the Koakoveld. He succumbed to his wounds in hospital on 16 August 1981. He was 22.
- **1982** - Rifleman William Edwin van Heerden from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during

a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-Line. He was 19.

- **1986** - Lance Corporal Andre Hercolli Erasmus from the Cape Regiment was Killed in Action after suffering shrapnel wounds during a SWAPO/PLAN stand-off attack on Ruacana. He was 20.
- **1986** - Candidate Officer Christopher Hugh Snyman from 101 Air Commando Squadron was killed when his private aircraft flew into High Tension wires and crashed near Hoedspruit. He was 37.
- **1988** - Staff Sergeant Gideon van Rooyen from 2 Special Service Battalion was killed instantly when his Armoured Car overturned at the Rooisloot Training Area, crushing him in the turret hatch. He was 26.
- **1991** - Rifleman Mark William Hein from 8 SAI was accidentally shot dead while on duty in Tokoza Township by a fellow soldier who was playing around with his loaded rifle. He was 18.
- **2003** - Ugandan military ruler Idi Amin, 78, who presided over an eight-year reign of terror from 1971-1979, where an estimated 300,000 people were killed and tortured to death, dies of multiple organ failure.

Carlos the Jackal

## 17 August

- **1901** - The ZAR Executive Council instructs Commandant-General Louis Botha to investigate and, if necessary, to punish Assistant Commandant-General Tobias Smuts for the burning of Bremersdorp, because his actions were not according to the 'customs of civilized warfare'.
- **1940** - The Italian invasion of British Somaliland, which began on August 4, is complete. The Royal Navy successfully evacuated British troops via the port of Berbera. There is now little to stop the Italians controlling the southern entrance to the Red Sea. Meanwhile the 5th Indian Division, newly arrived in East Africa, is deployed along the Sudan-Abbyssinia and Sudan-Eritrea border as part of the Sudan Defence Force, and a revolt is started in Abyssinia by those loyal to the Emperor, Haile Selassie.



- **1943** - During World War II in Europe, the Allies completed the conquest of the island of Sicily after just 38 days. This gave the Allies control of the Mediterranean and also led to the downfall of Benito Mussolini and Italy's eventual withdrawal from the war. However, the Germans managed to evacuate 39,569 troops, 47 tanks, 94 heavy guns, over 9,000 vehicles and 2,000 tons of ammunition back to the Italian mainland from Sicily.
- **1962** - The South African Minister of Defence, J.J. Fouché, announces that the striking power of the Defence Force has been increased twenty-fold as compared with two years earlier, while that of Navy is to be increased ten-fold in the next few years.
- **1962** - Two members from 17 Squadron were killed when their Alouette II Helicopter flew into High Tension Cables in Du Toit's Kloof and crashed in flames. The crew were: Lieutenant Keith Lynford Martin (22). Sergeant Andrew Robert Foote (39).
- **1963** - Captain Richard William Davies from 40 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard, Serial No. 7322 struck High Tension Cables and crashed near Benoni. He was 27.
- **1977** - Lance Corporal George Allen Deacon from 2 Field Engineer Regiment was killed in an accidental explosion at Okalongo. He was 19.
- **1977** - Two members, one from 5 Squadron and the other from 8 Squadron were killed when their Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I crashed at Riemvasmaak Bombing Range near Upington while carrying out a night bombing exercise. The crew were: Major James McFarlane Wilson Kerr (30). Major Barry Leonard Moody (38).
- **1981** - Two members from 4 Field Regiment were killed in Military Vehicle accident at Oshivello. The casualties were: Lance Bombardier Henri Victor Louis Olver (19). Gunner Dirk Jacobus Loubser (20).
- **1988** - Special Constable Filimon Ndevumba from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 29.
- **1990** - Two members from Eastern Transvaal Command were killed when their Samil 20 vehicle overturned at Pafuri. The casualties were: Rifleman Agus Mlahlekm Khoza (28). Rifleman Mphakati Isaiah Mkhombo (age unknown).
- **1991** - Major Harper Martin Geldenhuys from 32 Battalion was accidentally killed at Pomfret while making a video of a C-47 Dakota as it was taking off from the

runway. He was standing on the end of the runway and as the aircraft passed overhead, the aircraft tail wheel struck him on the head, killing him instantly. He was 26.

## 18 August

- **1914** - Germany declares war on Russia while President Woodrow Wilson issues his Proclamation of Neutrality.
- **1957** - The first two Avro Shackleton Mk III anti-submarine aircraft arrive in South Africa.
- **1979** - Rifleman Glen Colin Coppard from 4 SAI was Killed in Action in a land-mine explosion when he stepped on the device while assisting with a wounded soldier. He was 20.
- **1979** - Three members from 3 SAI were Killed in Action in Southern Angola when they triggered a Soviet POMZ-2M anti-personnel picket mine during clearing operations inside an enemy base. The casualties were: Corporal Johannes Petrus Maritz (20). Lance Corporal Frank Nienaber (21). Rifleman Joseph Benjamin Ruben Jordaan (20).
- **1981** - Rifleman Gavin Dickenson Elliott from 5 SAI died from multiple shrapnel wounds accidentally sustained when a 90mm High Explosive Shell exploded. He was 22.
- **1982** - Two members from 44 Parachute Pathfinder Company and one mem-

- ber from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Reported Missing approximately 40 miles inside Matabeleland during Operation Drama, a clandestine mission in Zimbabwe. All three men have no known grave and remain unaccounted for. The casualties were: Staff Sergeant Peter David Berry (33). Sergeant Robert Trevor Beech (27). Sergeant John Andrew Wessels (24).
- **1982** - Private Wynand van Rhyn from the South African Medical Corps, attached to 2 Military Hospital, Wynberg was Reported Missing when he failed to return after going hiking alone on Table Mountain. His body was later located by other hikers the following day and recovered. It appeared that he had lost his way and in the dark, fallen and broken his leg and had subsequently died from shock and exposure during the night. He was 19.
- **1993** - Sergeant M. Dube from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was accidentally killed when his parachute failed to deploy while carrying out a freefall parachute jump. He was 35.
- **1998** - Congolese rebels send President Laurent Kabila's troops fleeing as they advance to within 200 km of the capital, now deprived of electricity.

## 19 August

- **1901** - At Graaff-Reinet, P.J. Fourie, J. van Rensburg and

L.F.S. Pfeiffer are executed by a British firing squad for treason and the murder of British troops.

- **1940** - First flight of the B-25 Mitchell medium bomber.
- **1942** - Dieppe Raid. An Allied force of 7,000 men carry out a large daytime raid against German positions at the French seaport of Dieppe. Aided by tanks and aircraft, the commando force—made up of approximately 5,000 Canadians, 2,000 British soldiers, and a handful of American and Free French troops—gained a foothold on the beach in the face of a furious German defense. During nine hours of fighting, the Allies failed to destroy more than a handful of their targets and suffered the death of 3,600 men. More than 100 aircraft, a destroyer, 33 landing craft, and 30 tanks were also lost.
- **1944** - The 6th Division entered Florence, Italy and was active there until 1945.
- **1968** - Nigeria's Federal troops have launched a major offensive against multiple targets in Biafra. Despite claims of 2,000 people being massacred, the leader of the Nigerian military government, General Yakubu Gowon, has stated that his troops are 'behaving correctly.'

- **1976** - Lance Corporal Carlos Alberto Correia Pinto Ribeiro from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was Reported Missing in South Eastern Angola during a contact with enemy forces between Luenge and Coutada de Mucusso. He was driving a Unimog loaded with a ton or more of High Explosive. The South African Force was ambushed while the company was returning to Buffalo. His vehicle was hit by a Soviet RPG-7 Anti-Tank Rocket causing the explosive cargo to detonate. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. For administrative purposes, he was officially declared dead in 1983. He was 25.
- **1982** - Rifleman R. Moses from 101 Battalion SWATF was killed in a military vehicle accident in Northern Owamboland. He was 24.
- **1984** - Corporal Albert Ryan from 32 Battalion died of injuries sustained in a private motor vehicle accident at Port Shepstone. He was 25.



**Rudolf Hess**

- **1987** - Rudolf Hess, German Nazi official (Deputy Fuhrer who dramatically escaped to Britain in 1941, sentenced to life in Spandau Prison), commits suicide at 93.
- **1988** - Lance Corporal Raymond Victor Jagga, an Ops Medic from the Central Medical Command was assigned to F Squadron School of Armour and attached to 61 Mechanised Brigade. He was Killed in Action when his Ratel was struck by two rockets. He was 19.
- **1988** - Gunner Jaco Petrus van der Merwe from 10 Artillery Brigade was Reported Missing after he went swimming in the Cunene river and disappeared. It is thought that he was taken by a crocodile. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 20.
- **1993** - Lance Corporal Douglas Gardiner Scott from 1 Special Service Battalion was killed when two Rooikat armoured cars were involved in a collision and overturned at Deduza. He was 18.
- the second anniversary of the French deposition of the Sultan of Morocco, Siyyidi Mohammed V ibn Youssef, in favour of Muhammad Ben Aarafa.
- **1968** - Approximately 200,000 Warsaw Pact troops and 5,000 tanks invade Czechoslovakia to crush the "Prague Spring"—a brief period of liberalization in the communist country.
- **1975** - Trooper Leon William Bessinger from the Prince Alfred's Guard was killed in a military vehicle accident near Peddie in the Eastern Cape. He was 26.
- **1977** - Two members from 40 Squadron were killed when their AT-6 Harvard crashed while carrying out a routine general flying sortie. The aircraft went into a spin from which the pilot was unable to recover and the aircraft crashed near Delmas. The casualties were: Captain Keith Neil Smith (27). 2nd Lieutenant Paul Christopher Sarbutt (24).
- **1978** - Private Jacobus Johannes Etienne Bothma from the Defence Headquarters Personnel Unit died from a gunshot wound to the neck, accidentally sustained in a shooting incident while he was on duty in Pretoria. He was rushed to 1 Military Hospital but succumbed to his injuries the same day. He was 19.
- **1988** - Lance Corporal Brian Albert Hoy from Regiment

## 20 August

- **1955** - Simultaneous attacks by Algerian rebels against French targets in the Constantine district of Algeria have resulted in over 500 deaths and 200 wounded. At the same time nationalists have taken to the streets in Morocco. The attacks and demonstrations mark

Noord Transvaal was accidentally killed after being crushed in the Commanders turret when his Ratel overturned approximately 40km South of Ruacana. He was 26.

- **1995** - Liberia's main warring factions signed a peace accord calling for a ceasefire after more than five years of civil war and the start of democratic rule in one year.
- **1998** - US military forces attack a chemical plant in Sudan and what they describe as a terrorist camp in Afghanistan. Said to be linked with terrorists, the attacks are in response to the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania 13 days earlier.
- **1998** - Zimbabwe intervenes in the Democratic Republic of Congo to support the regime against a rebellion. The last Zimbabwean soldiers withdraw at the end of 2002. Troops from Angola, Namibia, Chad, and Sudan also intervened to support the Kinshasa regime.

## 21 August

- **1863** - During the American Civil War, William Quantrill led 450 irregular Confederate raiders on a pre-dawn terrorist raid of Lawrence, Kansas, leaving 150 civilians dead, 30 wounded and much of the town a smoking ruin. In 1862, Quantrill had been denied a Confederate

- commission by the Confederate Secretary of War, who labeled Quantrill's notions of war as 'barbarism.'
- **1900** - The Battle of Bergendal, near Vanwyksvlei, starts. Gen. Joachim Fourie's men force the 11th Hussars to retreat at 20.00, with 7 killed, 3 missing, presumed dead, and 26 wounded.
- **1918** - The Second Battle of the Somme begins.
- **1912** - Lord Roberts, commander-in-chief of the British forces during the 3rd Anglo-Boer War, congratulates Gen. Louis Botha on his appointment as honorary general in the British army.
- **1939** - The Soviet Union and Germany sign the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, a 10-year non-aggression treaty, with a secret addendum, to partition Poland.
- **1940** - Leon Trotsky, Russian Marxist revolutionary, political theorist and founder of the Red Army, assassinated at 62 by an ice-pick wielded by Ramón Mercader.
- **1965** - Air Mechanic James Roland Bolzern from 3 Satellite Radar Station died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained in a shooting incident at Mafeking. He was 24.
- **1973** - Four members from 85 Advanced Flying School were killed when an Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I was involved in a mid-air collision with another Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I during a training exercise near Pietersburg. The casualties were: Captain Christiaan Lemmer Smith (29). 2nd Lieutenant David Lanian James Snadden (22). Captain Frans Reitz van Zyl (29). 2nd Lieutenant Clifford Yates (23).
- **1976** - Rifleman Dale Robert Whitter from 2 SAI died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained at the Farm "Woodholme No. 202". He was 18.
- **1978** - Rifleman Jacobus Alwyn van der Berg from the Kaffrarian Rifles died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained at Oshakati due to the accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 25.
- **1980** - The United States and Somalia sign an agreement giving US naval and air forces access to military facilities in the East African country in return for American military aid.
- **1981** - Rifleman Jan Jacobus Minnie from the Infantry School was accidentally killed when he inadvertently used a dud high explosive mortar bomb as a hammer, causing the device to explode, killing him instantly. He was 18.
- **1986** - Staff Sergeant Johannes Petrus van Niekerk from Sector 20 Headquarters Intelligence Section

died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained at Rundu. He was 32.

- **1987** - Rifleman C.A. Augusto from 32 Battalion died from causes unknown while stationed at Buffalo. He was 27.
- **1994** - The last French troops pull out of Rwanda, ending their controversial humanitarian mission.
- **1998** - Angolan troops enter the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) war on Laurent Kabila's side.

## 22 August

- **1864** - The first Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field is signed by 12 countries. The international treaty, known as the Geneva Convention, also guarantees the neutrality of members of the Red Cross and is honoured in South Africa.
- **1922** - Michael Collins, Irish nationalist leader, killed in



**Michael Collins**

ambush by anti-treaty forces during the Irish Civil War at 31.

- **1934** - General Herbert Norman Schwarzkopf Jr (1934-2012) was born on this day. While serving as Commander-in-chief, United States Central Command, he led all coalition forces in the Gulf War in 1990/1991.
- **1979** - Rifleman Barend Gabriel Bester from 1 SAI died of wounds in 3 Military Hospital in Bloemfontein after being struck in the chest by a piece of shrapnel in an accidental hand grenade explosion at the General De Wet Training Range. He was 19.
- **1980** - Two members from 4 SAI were Killed in Action when their Section was ambushed by SWAPO/PLAN insurgents between Eenhana and Oshigambo whilst sweeping the road for landmines. The casualties were: Rifleman Pieter Jacobus De Beer (19). Rifleman Andries Petrus Wiese (19).
- **1984** - Private Udo Louis Gevers from the South African Intelligence Corps attached to Sector 20 Headquarters was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Kavangoland. He was 20.

## 23 August

- **1901** - A group of eight surrendered Boer prisoners of war are shot by the Bushveld Carbineers and a German missionary, Reverend

C.A. Daniel Heese murdered, because he may have witnessed the atrocity.

- **1974** - Two members from the School of Artillery were killed in a private motor vehicle accident on the Potchefstroom to Johannesburg road while on weekend pass when their vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with another vehicle while overtaking. The casualties were: Lance Bombardier Michael David Loxton (18). Gunner Joseph Speding Baggott (18).
- **1976** - Rifleman Reinhard Walter Klingenberg from Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Three Sisters while on Weekend Pass. He was 19.
- **1976** - Two members from 1 Reconnaissance Commando were Killed in Action during a patrol near the Okavango river when the Wolf vehicle in which they were traveling detonated a landmine and overturned killing Sergeant Soeiro instantly and crushing Staff Sergeant Roxo underneath. The casualties in this incident were: Staff Sergeant Francisco Daniel Roxo HC (43). Sergeant Ponciano Gomes Silva Soeiro (35).
- **1978** - Eight members from 1 Special Service Battalion, one member from 2 Special Service Battalion and one member from the South African Medical Corps were Killed in Action during the

early hours of the morning when the Bungalow in which they were sleeping at Katima Mulilo received a direct hit from a Soviet GRAD-P 122mm High Explosive Katyusha Rocket. The casualties were: Trooper Kevin John Biggs (18). Private Willem Hendrik Christoffel Britz (18). Trooper Hendrik Willem De Lange (18). Trooper Dennis Michael Elworthy (20). Trooper Gerhardus Petrus Erasmus (18). Trooper Laurie Johannes Lesch (19). Trooper Jan Jurgens Rotschutte (20). Trooper Gideon Johannes Smit (18). Trooper Willem Stephanus Smuts (19). Trooper Abraham Daniel van der Merwe (18).

- **1980** - Rifleman Helgard Brink Colling from SWA SPES (SWATF) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1981** - Rifleman Antonio Catamba from 32 Battalion died from a gunshot wound sustained during a shooting incident at Buffalo. He was 42.
- **1994** - Eugene Bullard, the only black pilot in World War I, is posthumously commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force.

## 24 August

- **1814** - During the War of 1812, Washington, D.C., was invaded by British forces

es that burned the Capitol, the White House and most other public buildings along with a number of private homes. The burning was in retaliation for the earlier American burning of York (Toronto).

- **1951** - The Mau Mau rebellion starts in Kenya.
- **1973** - Private Waldemar Adriaan Nelson from the Technical Service Corps was accidentally killed in a military vehicle accident in Bloemfontein. He was 19.
- **1980** - Lance Corporal Daniel Langman from 41 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.
- **1981** - Rifleman Adao Joaquim from 32 Battalion was accidentally killed by friendly fire during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 26.
- **1981** - Two members from 1 SAI were Killed in Action during the attack on "Target Yankee" in Southern Angola during Ops Protea. The casualties in this incident were: Rifleman Florence Cornelius Smit (18). Rifleman Martinus Godfrey Stapelberg (19).
- **1986** - Sapper Leon Bryan Kuyler from 1 Construction Regiment died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained in a shooting incident at the Unit while he was on Guard Duty. He was 20.
- **1986** - Lance Corporal Con-

rad du Bois Nelson from the Intelligence School in Kimberley succumbed to injuries in the Universitas Hospital after being critically injured on 05 August 1986 when his SAMIL vehicle overturned 5km from the Unit Headquarters. He was 18.

- **1987** - Rifleman Maliphathwe Godfrey Ndela from 21 Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident in Soweto. He was 21.
- **1988** - Gunner William Faul van Niekerk from the Witwatersrand Command Intelligence Section was killed in a military vehicle accident at Doornkop. He was 19.
- 1991 - Two members from 113 Battalion were killed when their water tanker vehicle overturned at Tzaneen. The casualties were: Lance Corporal John Sidney Shisari (26). Rifleman Milleon Bullus Khoza (31).

## 25 August

- **1911** - Võ Nguyên Giáp (1911-2013) was born on this day. Giáp was a general in the Vietnam People's Army and a politician. He is considered one of the greatest military strategists of the 20th century.
- **1966** - Candidate Officer G.A.K. Howson from 41 Squadron was killed when his Cessna 185D crashed near Krugersdorp while on

a low level reconnaissance flight. He was 23.

- **1976** - Sergeant José Correia Pinto Ribeiro from 1 Reconnaissance Commando was killed in a military vehicle accident while evacuating battle casualties to a hospital in South West Africa. He was 27.
- **1978** - Rifleman Johannes Hendrik De Jager from 5 SAI was killed in a private motor vehicle accident 5km outside Ladysmith on the Colenso Road. He was 19.
- **1981** - One member from 17 Squadron and one member from 87 Helicopter Flying School were Killed in Action when their Alouette III Helicopter Gunship was shot down by enemy 14,5mm anti-aircraft fire about 500m from the target area while providing close-air support operations over Mongua in Southern Angola just prior to the launch of Ops Protea in Angola. The crew were: Lieutenant Johannes Gysbertus Roos (24). Sergeant Clifton Stacey (21).



**Eugene Bullard**

- **1981** - Captain Louis Harmse from 1 SAI was Killed in Action during Ops Protea in Southern Angola during enemy bunker clearing operations. He was 27.
  - **1981** - Lance Bombardier Hendrik Abraham Johannes Grobler from 4 Artillery Regiment was Killed in Action in Southern Angola during Ops Protea. He was 20.
  - **1988** - Trooper Owen Leon Wolfaardt from 1 Special Service Battalion was killed when his armoured car overturned during an exercise at the General de Wet Training Area. He was 20.
  - **1988** - Special Constable Tsaanda Mbunguha from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.
  - **1989** - Signaller Andre' Rousseau from 2 Signals Regiment died in the Klerksdorp Hospital from injuries received in a motor vehicle accident at Sannieshof. He was 20.
  - **1991** - Rifleman Ambros Nijanyana Sekonjela from 21 Battalion was Killed in Action after being shot dead by persons unknown at Mandelaview during a riot-related incident while he was on foot patrol in Katlehong. He was 21.
- Charles de Gaulle enters Paris, which had formally been liberated the day before. As he entered the Place de l'Hotel, French collaborationists took a few sniper shots at him.
- **1966** - The People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), the armed wing of SWAPO, fought in a battle against South African occupying forces at Omugulugwombashe in northern South West Africa (Namibia).
  - **1974** - A Defence Bill is passed in South Africa laying down penalties for any person or organization inciting anyone to avoid military service.
  - **1976** - Two members of Bravo Group were killed when their Unimog overturned near Rundu. They were: Rifleman Harry Albert Bekker (19). Rifleman Andries Jacobus Pretorius (19).
  - **1978** - Lance Corporal Francois Louw from the South African Cape Corps was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Ruacana. He was 21.
  - **2011** - John McAleese, British SAS Trooper, Team leader during 1980 Iranian Embassy Siege, dies aged 62.

## 27 August

- **1914** - German Togo is occupied by British and French troops.
- **1916** - Romania declares war on Austria-Hungary, formally entering World War I. Romanian troops cross the bor-

der of the Austro-Hungarian Empire into the much-contested province of Transylvania.

- **1945** - US troops land in Japan after Japanese surrender.
- **1965** - Air Mechanic Johann Andre' Venter from Central Flying School Dunnottar was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed on the farm "Rusplaas" near Piet Retief while on a routine low level navigation exercise. He was 17.
- **1969** - Israeli commando force penetrates deep into Egyptian territory to stage mortar attack on regional army headquarters in Nile Valley of Upper Egypt.
- **1974** - 2nd Lieutenant Albertus Stephanus Gouws from 4 Squadron was killed when his Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I crashed near Potchefstroom while on a routing training exercise. He was 21.
- **1975** - Rifleman Gert Antonie Senekal from 2 SAI was Killed in Action during the attack to capture the town of Pereira D'Eca (Ongiva) in Southern Angola during Ops Savannah. He was 19.
- **1977** - Ordinary Seaman (Diver) Barry Juan Moolman from SAS Donkin accidentally drowned during a diving training exercise at Port Elizabeth. He was 27.
- **1979** - Rifleman Frans Lilungwe from Sector 70 Headquarters SWATF was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 23.
- **1979** - Louis Mountbatten,

1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma, British naval officer and statesman, last Viceroy of India (1947), is assassinated by an IRA bomb on his boat in Ireland at 79.

- **1981** - Two members from 5 SAI were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces near Ongiva in Southern Angola during Ops Protea. The casualties were: Rifleman David Nicolas Janse van Rensburg (20). Rifleman Ettienne Marius Snyman (19).
- **1983** - two members attached to 54 Battalion were killed in action. The casualties were: Rifleman Joseph Wayne Muller (20). Rifleman David Prins (24).
- **1985** - Rifleman Jan Buijense from the North West Command Maintenance Unit died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained at Potchefstroom as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle. He was 21.
- **1988** - Lance Corporal Gary Lamb from 1 SAI, attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was shot dead by a fellow soldier during an argument while they were stationed at Lohatla. He was 19.
- **1990** - Rifleman Jose' Joaquim from 201 Battalion SWATF was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 24.
- **1992** - Former commander of the Simon's Town naval base Dieter Gerhard is released from prison where he has

been serving a life sentence since 1983 after being convicted of acting as an agent for the Soviet Union. He is deported to Switzerland.

- **1993** - Colonel Pieter Jacobus Bakkes from the South African Military Health Service died from cancer in 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria. He was 49.

## 28 August

- **1940** - The South African Air Force flying out from Kenya bombs Italian bases in Somaliland.
- **1941** - SS General Franz Jaeckeln marched more than 23,000 Hungarian Jews to bomb craters at Kamenets Podolsk, ordered them to undress, and riddled them with machine gun fire. Those who didn't die from the spray of bullets were buried alive under the weight of corpses that piled atop them. All told, more than 600,000 Jews had been murdered in Ukraine by war's end.
- **1974** - Rifleman Albino Moreira Christello from 11 Commando Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident 140km East of Rundu. He was 18.
- **1980** - Two members from 41 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Rifleman Jacob

Fredericks (18). Rifleman Joseph van Rensburg (19).

- **1981** - A member from 6 SAI and a member from the South African Medical Corps were both Killed in Action while on patrol in Southern Angola. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Petrus Kruger (20). Lance Corporal Mark Anthony Plateel (19).
- **1981** - Rifleman Domingos Paulo from 32 Battalion died from a gunshot wound sustained in a shooting accident at Fort Doppies in the Caprivi Strip. He was 32.
- **1983** - Rifleman Jorge Nambi from 32 Battalion was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident while in pursuit of an enemy patrol in Southern Angola. He was 28.
- **1990** - Rifleman Laurens Stef Mdaka from the Kruger National Park Commando was critically injured in a military vehicle accident at Letaba Bridge on 17 August 1990. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on 28 August 1990. He was 25.



**Roger Bushell**

## 26 August

- **1944** - French General

## 29 August

- **1792** - In one of the worst maritime disasters, 900 men drowned on the British battleship Royal George. As the ship was being repaired, a gust of wind allowed water to flood into open gun ports. The ship sank within minutes.
- **1848** - The Battle of Boomplaats, where the British under Governor Harry Smith conquer the Voortrekkers under Commandant Andries W. Pretorius, takes place.
- **1973** - Constable M.C. Mancini from the South African Police was Killed in Action during a contact with insurgents when his patrol was ambushed at Mount Darwin, Rhodesia. He was 22.
- **1974** - Lance Corporal Stephanus Marais from 1 Reconnaissance Commando drowned in a diving accident in Mossel Bay Harbour during a Training Exercise. His body was recovered the following day. He was 19.
- **1985** - Sergeant Petrus Cornelius Frederick Du Plessis Cohen from the Soutpansberg Military Area Provost Unit was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Messina. He was 27.
- **1985** - Lance Corporal Marcell Stephen Lombard from 2 Field Engineer Regiment was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 29.
- **1986** - Sapper Willem Jacobus Coad from 1 Construc-

tion Regiment was killed when the water tanker vehicle he was driving, overturned at Komatipoort. He was 18.

- **1987** - Corporal Kirk Hendriksen from 5 SAI was killed when he accidentally fell off a moving train while trying to prevent a prisoner in his custody from escaping. He was 22.
- **1987** - Rifleman Cornelis Dilman from 1 Special Service Battalion died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained during a shooting incident in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.

## 30 August

- **1900** - General Ben Viljoen releases about 2,000 British prisoners of war from the camp at Nooitgedacht.
- **1910** - Squadron Leader Roger Joyce Bushell (1910-1944) was a South African-born British military aviator, who became famous as the organiser of a mass escape from a German prisoner of war camp in 1944 was born on this day. The film *The Great Escape* was based on this event.
- **1977** - Corporal Johannes Jacobus Basson from Regiment Mooi River Died of Wounds after being grievously burned during a mortar bomb attack by SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Etale Base. He was 19.
- **1978** - Rifleman Howard D'Arcy Remington from Infantry School was killed

when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned near Oshivello during a night pursuit of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in the Tsumeb area. He was 20.

- **1978** - Rifleman Jacobus Paulus Jansen from Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Oudtshoorn when his vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with a delivery truck in Victoria Street. He was 18.
- **1980** - Lance Corporal Willem Hendrik Smit from 2 SAI was Killed in Action while searching as Kraal in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1980** - Rifleman Jose Cabinda from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola, just north of Rundu. He was 23.
- **1980** - Private Herman Nico Booysen from 1 Maintenance Unit was killed in a motorcycle accident between Stilfontein and Klerksdorp while on leave. He lost control of his motor cycle and hit a lamp post. He was thrown clear of his motorcycle but was struck by another motorcycle and killed instantly. He was 19.
- **1982** - Corporal Josef Johannes de Beer from 1 Maintenance Unit was killed in a private motorcycle accident at Christiana. He was 19.
- **1982** - Rifleman Reginald Chivovo from 5 Reconnaissance

sance Regiment was killed when his parachute failed to open during a practice jump at Phalaborwa. He was 23.

- **1986** - Private Andrew Morris Byrd from the South African Medical Corps was killed in a self-inflicted shooting accident. He was 20.
- **1990** - Rifleman Tears Mashile from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was killed while carrying out helicopter insertion training near Madimbo. He accidentally became entangled in the rappelling ropes when the helicopter got airborne and fell to his death. He was 25.
- **1998** - Troops allied with the government of Congo capture the strategic port town of Matadi from rebel forces trying to oust President Laurent Kabila.
- **1988** - South African troops are withdrawn from Angola.

## 31 August

- **1900** - Commandant Danie Theron captures a train and 30 soldiers at Klip Station, near the present-day Soweto.
- **1942** - The British army under General Bernard Law Montgomery defeats Field

Marshal Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps in the Battle of Alam al-Halfa in Egypt, thereby stopping the German offensive in North Africa.

- **1965** - Air Mechanic (Pilot Under Training) Johannes Jurie Delpont was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed near Ermelo during a solo night navigation exercise. He was 21.
- **1976** - Captain Jack Steven Cloete from the Danie Theron Combat School was killed when his military vehicle overturned at Wolmaranstad. He was 36.
- **1977** - Rifleman George Frederick Morkel Langenhoven from 4 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident at Alldays. He was 18.
- **1979** - Sapper Leon Lambert from 2 Field Engineer Regiment, attached to 5 Military Works Unit at the Army Battle School in Lohatla, was accidentally killed when the Bedford truck in which he was traveling as a passenger, overturned 30km outside Vryburg on the Lohatla to Vryburg road after the vehicles front tyre burst. He

was 18.

- **1979** - 2nd Lieutenant Frederick Francois de Wit from 2 Signal Regiment was accidentally killed at Carolina in a non-military related incident. He was 23.
- **1980** - Rifleman Izak Gabriel Du Plessis from Noordvaal Commando was killed in a private motor cycle accident while on duty. He was 24.
- **1981** - The US vetoes a UN Security Council resolution criticising South Africa for raids in Angola.
- **1983** - Rifleman Pieter Frederick van Eeden from 1 SAI was accidentally killed at the General De Wet Training Terrain in Bloemfontein when he picked up an unexploded 40mm High Explosive "Snotneus" grenade in the veld. While he was handling the device, it exploded, killing him instantly. He was 19.





## QUIZ

### Who am I?

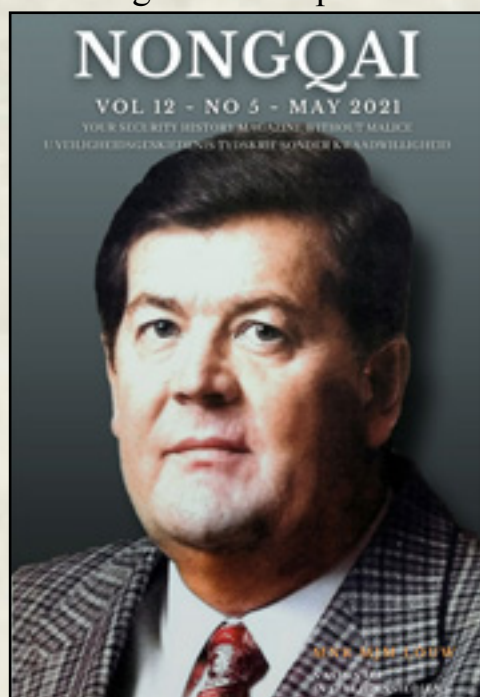
1. George S Patton Jr
2. Võ Nguyên Giáp
3. Norman Swartzkopf
4. Paddy Maine
5. Dame Vera Lynn
6. Heinrich Himmler
7. Constand Viljoen
8. Erwin Rommel
9. Winston Churchill
10. Bernard Montgomery
11. Heinz Guderian
12. Douglas Bader
13. Joseph Stalin
14. Herman Goering
15. Andreas “Kat” Liebenberg



### Useful links

Every month we will be featuring a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and on-line magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.



# Military Despatches Website



“Things don’t have to change the world to be important.”

*Steve Jobs*



Our aim is to make the Military Despatches website easy to use. Even more important to us, we want to make the website informative and interesting. The latest edition of the magazine will be available, as will all the previous editions. More over, there will be links to videos, websites, and articles that our readers may find interesting. So check out the website, bookmark it, and pass the URL on to everyone that you think may be interested.



Have you checked out the bookshelf on the website? Here you can open and read individual articles on screen with no need to download anything.

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

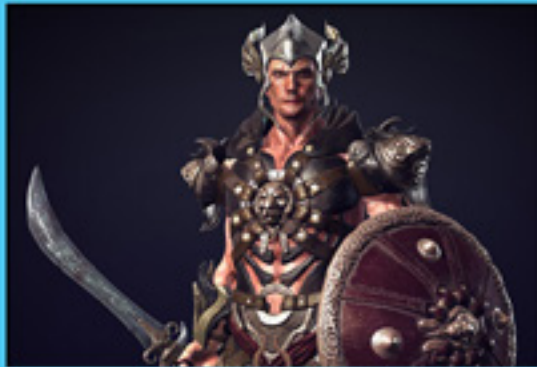
# Hipe! media

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## Online Magazines

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## 2D & 3D Animation

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



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