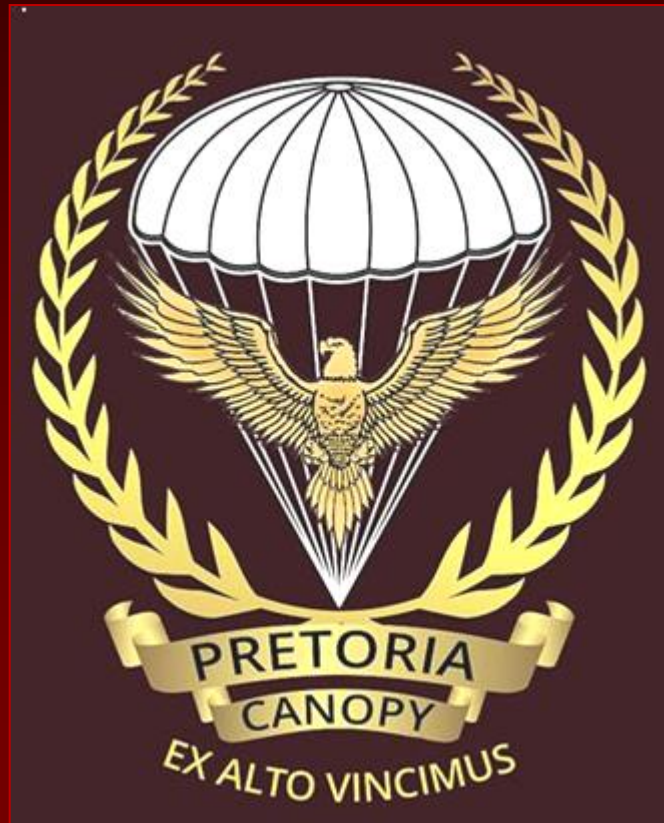


BAT CHAT



TRIBUTE TO W.P. LOUW

LETTERS / MESSAGES / ARTICLES / REPORTS / SNIPPETS

NUUS VANAF ORAL / NEWS FROM ALL OVER

UIT DIE VERLEDE / FROM THE PAST



**PRETORIA CANOPY
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**

3/25

CANOPY KOMITEE

Voorsitter: Chris Pohl

O/Voorsitter: Willoughby Brits

Sekretaris: Wynand Fourie

Tesourier: Wynand Erasmus

Gedenkdienste: Roche Vermaak

Kommunikasie: Chris Pohl

Skakeling SANW: K. v Heerden

Gasvryheid: Johan le Roex

Werwing: Attie van Niekerk



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WOORD VAN DIE REDAKSIE WORD FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

MESSAGE FROM THE PTA CANOPY CHAIRMAN

Die derde kwartaal van 2025 is 'n weer een om te onthou.

Soos verlede jaar is ons weer uitgenooi om by die "4 x 4 & Outdoor Show" betrokke te raak. Dit was 'n groot sukses en ons het weer baie besoekers gelok.

Van ons manne wat betrokke was by Operasie Savannah asook ander Parabats het ons verteenwoordig by die sluitings funksie en gedenkdien van die Veterane van Savannah bond.

Ons dank aan Roche Vermaak, Louwrens Swanepoel en Willoughby Brits wat by byna elke gedenkdien ons verteenwoordig.

'n Groot laagte punt is die hoeveelheid van ons makkers wat ons aan die dood afgestaan het die afgelope paar maande. By meeste se dienste het lede ons sterk verteenwoordig as 'n laaste eerbetoon gedoen.

Ons versoek weereens dat as enige lede enige ou Militêre uitrusting het wat in die garage of huis in die pad lê - skenk dit gerus aan ons uitstalling by die PPM, te Fort Schanskop. (Kontak my of Oom Paul.)

Parabat Groete,

Chris Pohl

NEXT PTA CANOPY MEETINGS 14 OCT / 12 NOV / 9 DEC



INDEMNITY

We know readers will smile about certain strange events they read or see in this newsletter. We also know readers will not hold the editorial board responsible for every statement! This newsletter is filled with very different personal opinions of military veterans who write mainly just on their own behalf. So, they say what they like.

VRYWARING

Ons weet lesers sal glimlag oor sekere vreemde gebeure wat hulle in hierdie nuusbrief lees en sien. Ons weet ook lesers sal die redaksie nie vir elke uitspraak verantwoordelik hou nie! Hierdie nuusbrief is propvol uiteenlopende persoonlike menings van militêre veterane wat veral net namens hulleself skryf. So, hulle sê wat hulle wil.



WERK SAAM MET GOD

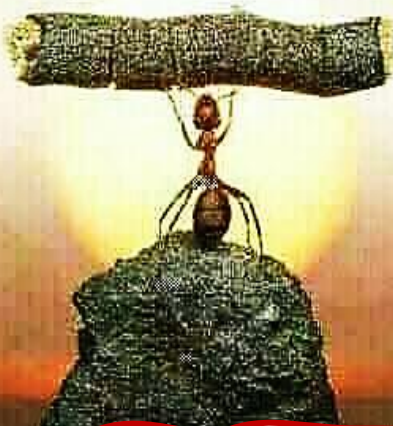
Baie mense is so intens individualisties dat hulle 'n teënsin daarin het dat iemand hulle raad moet aanbied. Hulle doen graag dinge op hulle eie manier – dikwels met rampspoedige gevolge. Hulle weier om enige taak te deleger, selfs aan die bekwaamste mense. Ten spite van die goeie werk wat hulle doen, kon hulle soveel meer in minder tyd verrig het as hulle slegs geleer het om met kollegas saam te werk.

Dieselfde beginsel is van toepassing op die geestelike lewe. Baie Christene is so afhanklik dat hulle nie in harmonie met mekaar kan saamwerk nie. Hulle organiseer geredelik maar is onwillig om konstruktiewe raad te aanvaar. As dinge nie volgens hulle plan gedoen word nie, is hulle kwaad.

Vers om te onthou! (Hag. 2. 4)

“Begin met die werk, want Ek is by julle, sê die Here die Almagtige.”

You never know how strong you are
until being strong is the ONLY option
you have left.





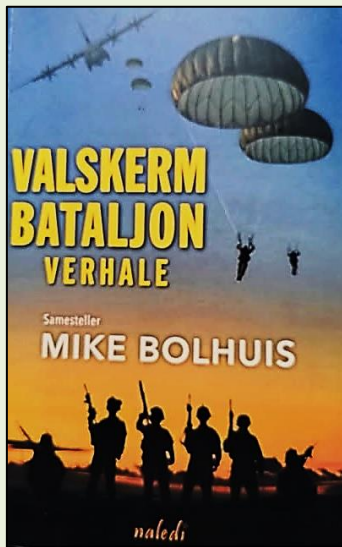
ADMINISTRATION

The PVO website

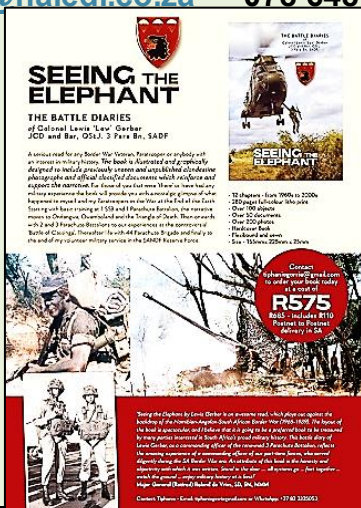
www.parabat.org.za is there to give you all the information you need on the organisation. Please visit it regularly. Any paratrooper who needs to know where his nearest PVO Canopy is will be helped from this website. New members are welcome and existing members who are unsure of any of the benefits on offer can make enquiries there.

#Neem asseblief kennis dat die finansiële state beskikbaar is vir enige opbetaalde lede vir besigtiging en vrae. Ons het strukture en ouditeure in plek om verantwoording te doen vir elke sent wat ge-in of spandeer word.

NEW BOOKS



Bestel vanaf:
lertia@naledi.co.za 078 648 8616



THE PVO ENABLEMENT FUND

Essentially, the wellbeing of all Parabats and their families is our primary concern. Many of us are reaching the age where retirement and redundancy become threats to our continued welfare. Some of us have been suffering from the strain of wounds and disabilities sustained during our years as soldiers as well as suffered after our military service ended. Others have been made redundant by retrenchments or affirmative action.

All these people need help and support in their daily lives.

Marked

PelsA Boeke

Contact Paul J. Els paul@who-els.co.za

Order books from epos@groep7.co.za





LETTERS / MESSAGES ARTICLES / REPORTS / SNIPPETS

FROM ALL OVER

W.P. LOUW.

Pa Willem or as he was fondly called DIE KOMMANDANT by many, was a stern disciplinarian to the troops, however being his first and only little daughter, I knew I was the 'apple of his eye' with me being able to twist him around his finger with my cute antics as a girl.



However, on the homefront, he managed to balance some fun time for hosting friends, preparing his favourite tomato soup, the braai being his favourite source of practising his skills with food. Following a Sunday lunch, we'd be spoilt with jaffles for the evening meal with leftovers and mouthwatering fillings being a family favourite. As kids (my brother Willie - nine years my junior) we were bundled into the car with the picnic basket for the odd trip to the DRIVE IN - always a simple treat in spending time together as a family. The fondest memories are of early caravan holidays to Keurboomstrand, where fishing and the smell of braaing meat with my Dad always telling stories that filled the air.

In 1953 my Dad left for London as part of the SA contingent of 4 officers who rode in the Mounted Escort at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. As a six year old at the time, I could not understand why it took so long for him to come back home! As he rose in rank and with the demands of work becoming more pressing, we saw less of him but living on military bases from a very young age has left indelible memories of childhood friends left behind in Voortrekkerhoogte, Tempe, Bethlehem and Upington, because of all the transfers. By 1959, the last term of the school year, I was enrolled in my ninth school as we were only stationed in Upington for 10 months! Because of all the moves the saying goes that a soldier had "dom kinders en stukkende meubels"!

In latter years, I recall him doing inspections at Voortrekkerhoogte where on one memorable occasion, he arrived on horseback instead of his official car - this of course became a talking point between guards and troops - all caught unaware!

The night of his passing will forever remain in my memory. Who's to say what triggered his need for open air at minus 4 degrees in the Winter Highveld to leave the house after midnight. My Dad was missing! Thanks to General Jan Fourie who rallied his men only to find my Dad in the veld near our house in the early hours of the morning. He was found in parabats landing position which gave my brother and I a degree of comfort with the knowledge that he died as a SOLDIER, not cosseted in the comfort of his bed. The autopsy revealed he'd had a massive stroke and a heartattack. It was the 4th of July 1980.

Ina Scholtz (daughter of Cmdt W.P. Louw).

LOUW, WILLEM. SSA, SM



Willem Petrus Louw was born on 29 November 1920 in Bloemhof in the Orange Free State. He completed his schooling at the Schweizer-Reneke Hoërskool.

He started his military career on 21 March 1938 at the age of 17 at the Special Service Battalion and attested as a soldier in the Permanent Force on 1 December of the same year as a private. He subsequently served as a Non-Commissioned Officer in the 'T' Service Corps (South African Ordnance Service Corps) until he successfully completed his Instructor's Course upon which he was seconded to the Infantry Corps and posted to the South African Military College as instructor on 3 August 1942.

After attending a Candidate Officer's course in 1943, he was appointed in the South African Armoured Corps with the rank of Temporary Second Lieutenant and was attached to the General Service Branch (Permanent Force) on 21 August 1943. Immediately thereafter he was transferred to 6 South African Armour Division and departed for the Middle East and Italy on 12 September 1943, for active service in the field. While serving abroad, he was promoted to War Substantive Lieutenant in February 1944 and transferred to the Central Mediterranean Forces on 15 April 1944.

Louw returned to South Africa on 27 May 1945. He subsequently served in different Permanent Force Headquarters and Units where he occupied a variety of regimental and staff posts. He attended various courses and was promoted to the ranks of Lieutenant in May 1946, Captain in December 1951 and Major in December 1958.

In January 1959 he was appointed Officer Commanding, North West Cape Command. Appointment as Officer Commanding 2 Mobile Watch and a promotion to the rank of Temporary Commandant followed in October 1959.

He attended a Parachute Instructor's Course with 14 other members of the Permanent Force in the United Kingdom during the latter part of 1960. On 1 January 1961, he was promoted to Substantive Commandant, after which he was appointed Officer Commanding 1 Parachute Battalion with effect from 1 April 1961. He was personally responsible for establishing the unit and the building of all training installations and resources required for the training of the paratroopers of our country. The subsequent development of this unit into one of the elite combat units of the South African Army took place under his personal and energetic leadership.

After a long Staff Course he attended during 1964 at the South African Military College, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel on 1 November 1964 and became Officer Commanding the South African Military College in Voortrekkerhoogte.

On 1 July 1966 he was appointed Officer Commanding, Northern Transvaal Command and promoted to the rank of Brigadier. His appointment as Chief of the Army and promotion to the rank of Lieutenant General took effect on 1 December 1967. During his term as Chief of the Army, he was invited by the French Government to attend the Paris Air Show in France during June 1971.

Louw was appointed Inspector General in the Defence Force in 1974. Due to the functional reorganisation of the top structure of the South African Defence Force, it was decided to do away with this post. As it was not possible to utilise General Louw



advantageously in another post in his current rank, he retired, prematurely, at the age of 54 years, at close of duty on 31 March 1975.

Louw was married to Beulah Nel, born 20 July 1927. Their daughter Ina was born on 29 June 1947 and their son Willem on 24 November 1957. They also have an adopted son Hein. W.P. Louw passed away on 4 July 1980 and was laid to rest in the Voortrekkerhoogte (new cemetery).

DECORATIONS AND MEDALS

Star of South Africa Decoration (1974)

Southern Cross Medal (1962)

Coronation Medal (1953)

Medal for Good Service in the Permanent Force

1939/1945 Star

Italy Star

Defence Medal (British)

War Medal (1939/45)

Africa Service Medal

Honourable Mention in Despatches (M.I.D.)

PROFICIENCY BADGES

Instructor's Parachute Wings

[Taken from the book *We conquer from Above* by Paul J. Els.]

W.P. Louw Jump log book.

NO.	DATE	LOCATION	AIRCRAFT TYPE	LICENSED PARACHUTIST OR PILOT SIGNATURE AND LICENSE NO.	BACK CHUTE		CHEST CHUTE NUMBER	TYPE JUMP	ALT. JUMP	DELAY SEC.	MANEUVERS	DIST. TO TARGET	SUR. WIND	REMARKS
					TYPE	NUMBER								
1	13-10-60	WESTON ON THE GREEN	BALLOON	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				STATIC	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
2	13-10-60	WESTON ON THE GREEN	BALLOON	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
3	14-10-60	"	BEVERLEY	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
4	18-10-60	"	HASTINGS	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
5	19-10-60	"	BEVERLEY	WITH EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
6	31-10-60	"	HASTINGS	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
7	31-10-60	"	HASTINGS	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
8	5-11-60	"	BEVERLEY	WITH EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
9	5-11-60	"	BEVERLEY	WITH EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
10	7-11-60	"	HASTINGS	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				"	TRG.		NIGHT	ABuyse		
END OF COURSE 520.														

NO.	DATE	LOCATION	AIRCRAFT TYPE	LICENSED PARACHUTIST OR PILOT SIGNATURE AND LICENSE NO.	BACK CHUTE		CHEST CHUTE NUMBER	TYPE JUMP	ALT. JUMP	DELAY SEC.	MANEUVERS	DIST. TO TARGET	SUR. WIND	REMARKS
					TYPE	NUMBER								
11	16-11-60	WESTON ON THE GREEN	BEVERLEY	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				STATIC	PROG TRG.		DAY	ABuyse		
12	18-11-60	"	"	WITH EQUIPMENT.				"	"		"	ABuyse		
13	20-11-60	HOUGHTON	BALLOON	"				"	"		"	ABuyse		
14	20-11-60	"	"	"				"	"		"	ABuyse		
15	2-12-60	WESTON ON THE GREEN	BEVERLEY	"				"	"		"	ABuyse		
16	10-2-61	"	DAKOTA	WITHOUT EQUIPMENT.				"	"		"	ABuyse		
17	11-3-61	VOORTREKKER HOOGE	"	"				"	"		"	ABuyse		
18	12-8-61	"	"	"				"	"		"	ABuyse		
19	12-8-61	"	"	"				"	"		"	ABuyse		
20	14-8-61	"	"	"				"	"		"	ABuyse		



FOTOS UIT W.P. LOUW ALBUMS





FIFTY YEARS DOWN THE LINE

On Wednesday 3rd of September during a visit by former paratroopers from A-Company 1975 at 44 Parachute Regiment, Tempe, Bloemfontein, to commemorate their fiftieth anniversary, Lieutenant Colonel Mokwena, 2nd in Command of 44 Parachute Regiment welcomed them. While they were waiting his arrival in a conference room that will stand up to any blue-chip corporate boardroom, Paratroop Warrant Officer Jaza briefed the visitors on the tour's itinerary. It soon became clear that Warrant Officer Jaza not only have the physique of a professional paratrooper but is also a disciplinarian of note that would not tolerate any nonsense on his base, whether from within his own ranks or visitors, regardless of their age, gender, or status.



44 Parachute Brigade entrance with Corporal Deon Schoeman in the foreground

The reason for the visit took shape during a reunion when it became evident during that the old paratroopers viewed their concerns about what today's paratroopers represent. The only way to dispel these perceptions was to arrange a visit to the battalion. With A-Company's half-century reunion upcoming it seemed the perfect occasion. The 75 Parabats, or better known as the Savannah Parabats, decided to celebrate their reunion in Bloemfontein and, if possible, visit the Regiment to connect with current paratroopers.

Their organizer, Tommy Viljoen, as usual took the task upon himself and, by leveraging the right connections, arranged the visit. Tommy immediately undertook the challenging task of coordinating a date that would suit everyone, which was indeed a challenging task.

During the induction meeting, Lieutenant Colonel Mokwena was quick to dismiss any rumours that the dreaded physical training course and strict qualification criteria for entry into the jump course had been compromised over the years. However, modern times required keeping up with changing circumstances and different threats facing South Africa. Therefore, the training of a paratrooper in the modern era has taken a more scientific and psychological approach. The standards are still as it was fifty years ago, if not better. A statement that was at first met with a level of scepticism, but the wry smile on the Colonel's face would soon prove them all wrong. For example, while the physical training duration was curtailed, the additional psychological aspect would ensure that the standards of the past are not compromised.

A visit to the parade ground where many an aspiring paratrooper's spirit was broken brought back memories that would be better forgotten. The veterans were surprised to find that memorials dating back half a century were still maintained amidst new ones in memory of the fallen heroes of the past and present who fought bravely in various battles on local and foreign soil. It was heartening to hear first-hand that parades are still held regularly in memory of these soldiers who paid the ultimate price for what they believed was the right thing to do, praise the Lord.

Highlight of the day was a visit to the new Parachute Training Wing which took the visitors on a walk around the base. What a revelation for those doomsayers, contrary to the normal perceptions of military bases plunged into total anarchy. They had to admit that 44 Parachute Regiment is in better condition than they found it in 1975.

That was it for them, paratroopers are still the best and have no equal in the military. The renovated obstacle course reminded them of days gone by and it was hard to believe that once upon a time they also sailed over those obstacles, especially on a wet rainy day with their raincoats on so they would not get too wet.



Members of A-Coy 1975 posing in front of the Parachute Training school.

The height of their visit was the SANDF Parachute Training School where Captain Malgas and her team were waiting. Yes, they were surprised to find a lady in charge of such an important phase of the paratroopers training. However, she quickly silenced even the most outspoken amongst them when she demonstrated the first lesson all paratroopers receive, the jumpers posture. It goes without saying that Captain Malgas captured everyone's attention as they sat in silence watching her and her team of professional paratroopers perform a flawless demonstration, absolute textbook stuff!

Just when they thought the demonstration was over, the usual outspoken among the visitors questioned the absence of the infamous "Aapkas", then Captain Malgas summoned them to follow in her usual self-assured manner. Awaiting them was the most amazing real-time aircraft exit simulator facility for which one could wish. After another flawless demonstration of how to exit an aircraft, everybody was gobsmacked to say the least. Most remarkable observation was that the training centre had also become an international facility where paratroopers from across the globe come to receive their parachute training. A major feather in cap for South Africa's standing in the airborne fraternity.



Simulating the different stages of exiting an aircraft.

The visit soon ended while observing a group of candidates preparing for one of those gruelling training sessions, male, and female alike.

Neatly packed out next to each team were a paratrooper in training's tools of trade; a marble, a pole, a used rocket cylinder and steel stretcher manufactured from heavy duty angle iron. The determined expression on the faces of these soldiers, fighting for that maroon beret, was clearly visible. For some, however, it would not be the case, as fatigue had already taken its toll after weeks of relentless, rigorous training. The expression in their eyes told a story that only an experienced paratrooper could relate.

The stretcher was a new device and the brave ones among the old boys could not stop themselves from resisting the temptation to pick it up. However, when they learned that the final test for a paratrooper is to carry the stretcher for 72 hours straight, it left them with no doubt that the Paratrooper tradition of being tougher than the rest will never die.

In conclusion and without doubt, the Regiment is in good and capable hands and everybody were proud to mention that once, many years ago they were members of 1 Parachute Battalion, an experience that had forged them into a unit that had to be reckoned with under difficult conditions.

To the current and future paratroopers of 44 Parachute Regiment, it was an honour and privilege to meet you. A-Company of 1975 will spread your message to all corners of the world, well done.

Ex alto Vincimus. God Bless 44 Parachute Regiment!

A special note of appreciation:

We, as A-Company 1975 would like to extend our gratitude to the following people who made this visit possible.

Colonel L.H. Gordon - OC of 44 Parachute Regiment

Lt Colonel R.M. Mokwena - 2ndIC of 44 Parachute Regiment

Lt Colonel Z. Biyela - Commander Para Training School

Major S.S. Tyale - PTB Commander

MWO Z. Jaza - PSM 44 Parachute Regiment

Captain C. Malgas - Instructor

Lieutenant L.L. Kleyn - Corporate Communications.

A Special thanks from A-Coy 75 to Col (Ret.) Butch Williamson.

(Chairperson Parabats Veterans Organisation - Bloemfontein Canopy for facilitating and coordinated the visit with 44 Parachute Regiment)

Article written by L/Cpl Stephan (Blackie) Swart

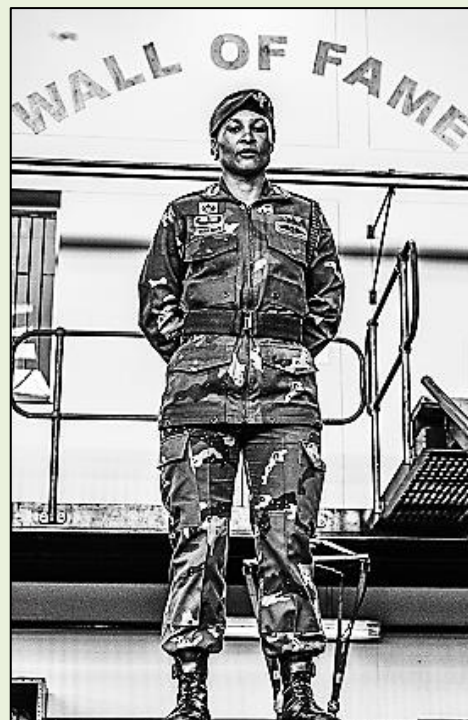
www.stephanswart.org



A Komp 1975 by Doringbos Lodge
Bloemfontein 03/09/2025



Captain Chavonn Carmen Malgas is breaking barriers and soaring higher as one of the SA National Defence Force's most decorated female paratroopers. Right: Hit hard when it's your turn to be the hammer." Captain Malgas stands at the Wall of Fame, a testament to unwavering strength and determination X



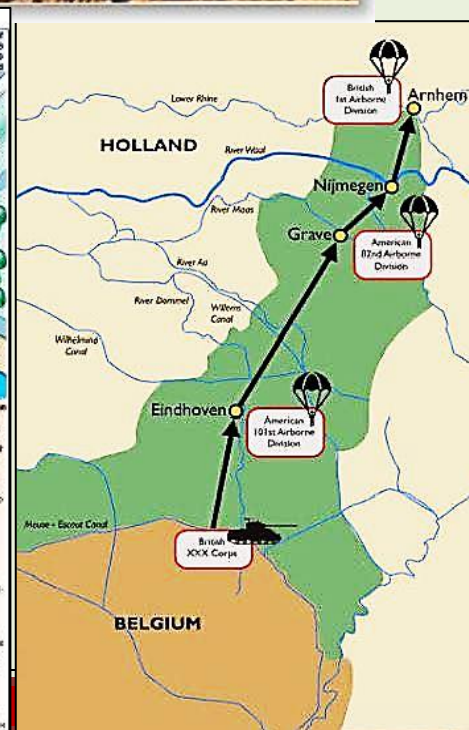
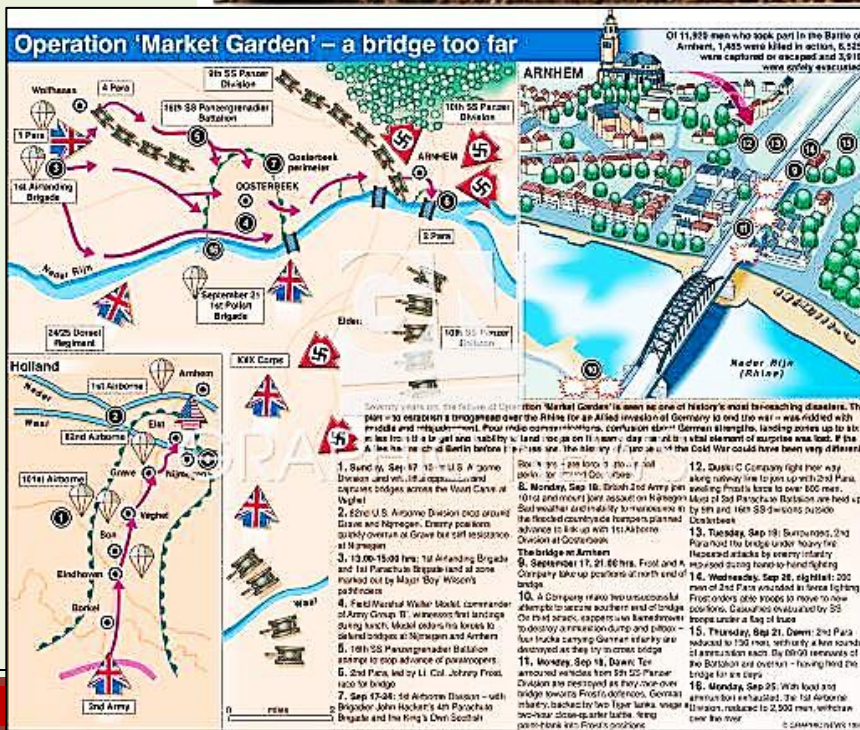
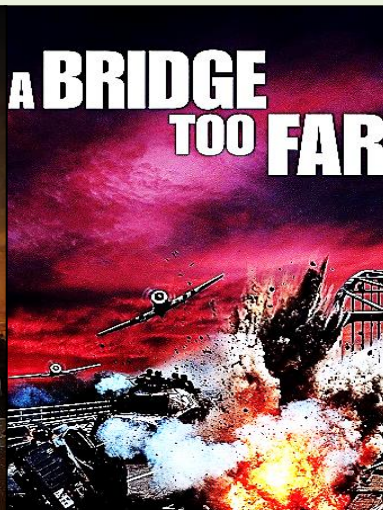
Captain Malgas leads her team in "the calm before the storm" as they walk towards the aircraft, prepared to display their natural airborne skill and fearless spirit.



From sky to soil, Captain Malgas executes a perfect landing, marking yet another successful mission.



The smile of a warrior who conquered the skies, Captain Malgas, lands with pride and poise.





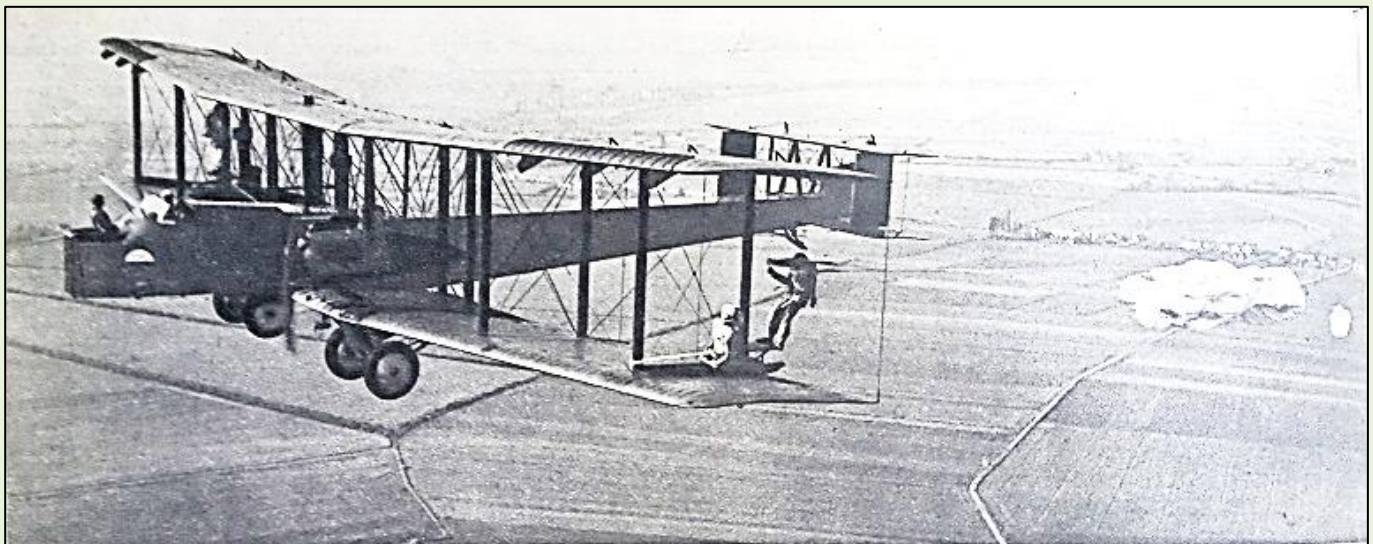
22ND SPECIAL AIR SERVICE REGIMENT

Twelve years ago, 25-year-old Lance Corporal Joshua Leakey of the Parachute Regiment faced a storm of gunfire in Afghanistan. When a U.S. Marine officer lay wounded and his team was on the brink, Leakey sprinted across open ground under relentless fire to start the evacuation.

Not once, but three times, he ran through that deadly gauntlet—dragging heavy machine guns into stronger positions, laying down suppressive fire, and rallying his comrades. For 45 minutes he fought with fearless resolve, turning near collapse into defiance until air support arrived.

For his actions, Leakey was awarded the Victoria Cross—the only living British soldier to receive it for Afghanistan. His story reminds us that true courage is not about rank, but about stepping forward when everything hangs in the balance

(Internet)



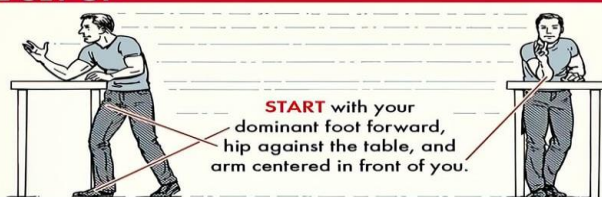
A parachute drop from a Vickers Virginia bomber. This picture illustrates the method used by the first parachutists, who dropped from the ends of each of the wings.



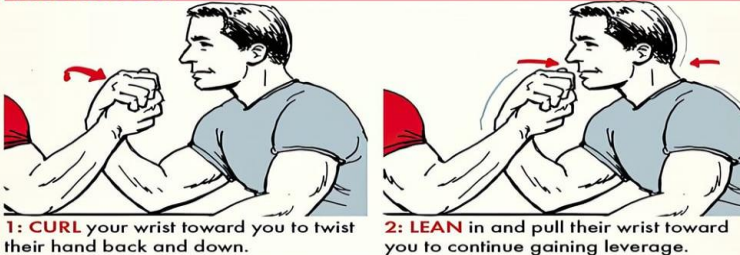


HOW TO WIN AN ARM WRESTLING MATCH

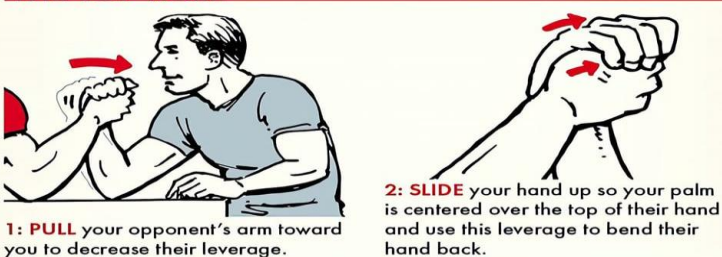
THE SET-UP



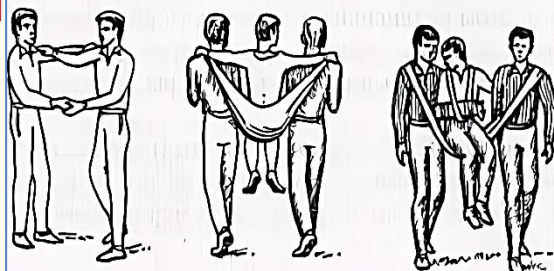
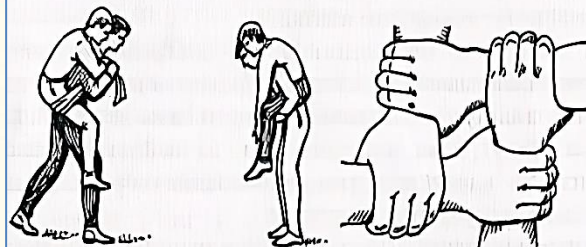
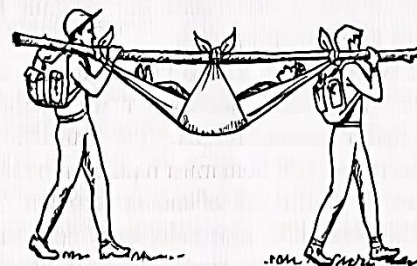
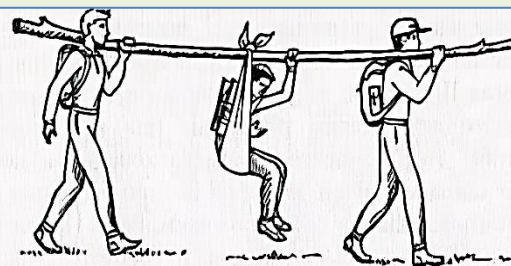
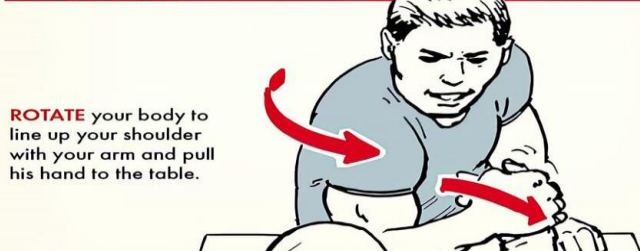
THE HOOK



THE TOP ROLL



THE FINISH

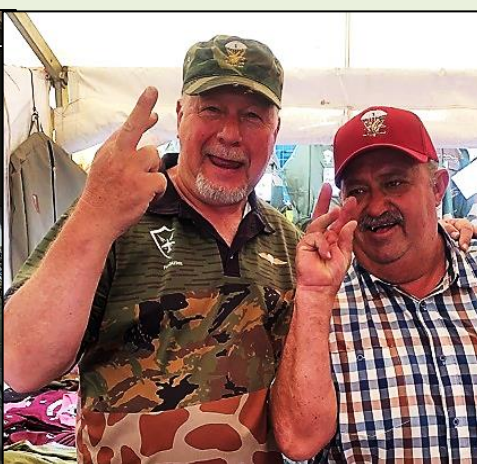
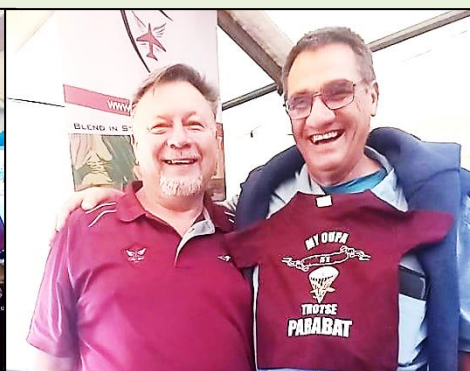


NUUS VANAF ORAL / NEWS FROM ALL OVER

01/07/2025 – 31/09/2025



Gedenkdienst ter ere van Ben Loots te VTM kapel.





LAEVELD CANOPY 11/07/2025 PRETORIA CANOPY





OUTBACK CANOPY

Slade Healy 08/07/2025

What a fascinating talk last night by the author of the Mig Diaries, ex chopper and current SAA pilot Lionel Reid. And the story of a SAAF Hercules C130 nearly shot down and one of the pilots, Marc Bignoux, living right here in Perth and also attendee. Good turnout too for a wet winters night with Peter Krop winning the raffle on the autographed book and John McCrum winning the Lotto half of the eve and promptly donating the \$75 back into SAMVOA funds Thanks all.



Danie Blom. 11/07/2025



Outback Canopy: Farewell to ill Mullaney going off sailing for two who knows how long 12/07/2025 Dave Stevenson, Slade Healy Bill Mullaney Alf Steel and Chris Beath. All Bats.



Delville Wood gedendiens te Thaba Tshwane bgrafplaas. 13/07/2025
Below: 61 Meg Memorial service 23/08/2025



TIN
Gedenk-
Diens
30/08/202





SAP TIN gedenkdiens.



Boland Canopy 30/08/2025

NUUS NEWS 5

DESTYDSE VALSKERMSOLDATE GENOOI

Dit is vanjaar 50 jaar gelede dat 'n groep van 40 valskerm-soldate aan Operasie Savanna as deel van die Grensoorlog in Angola deelgeneem het.

In 1975 was dié jong manne 18 of 19 jaar oud.

Tom Viljoen, een van die oud-soldate, sê hulle wil op 3 September 'n reünie hou en 'n spesiale groepfoto by 44 Valskerm-bataljon op Tempe laat neem.

'n Kuiergeleentheid word ook op Doringbos buite Bloemfontein beplan.

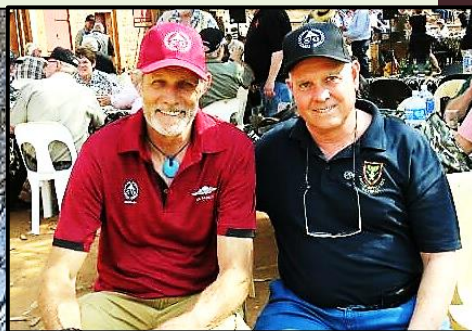
Veggroep Zulu het in 1975 aan die voerpunt van die Suid-Afrikaanse magte in die Grensoorlog geveg en het maande lank in die veld geleef.

Teen Januarie 1976 was die groep reeds ses maande in die oorlog – 1 000km oor die grens tussen die destydse Suidwes-Af-

rika, nou Namibië, en Angola; net 150km van die hoofstad Luanda – toe die Suid-Afrikaanse magte onttrek is.

Viljoen sê hy hoop om soveel as moontlik van dié oudsoldate in September op die reünie te sien.

Stuur enige navrae oor die reünie aan Viljoen per e-pos na tom.westhaven@gmail.com, of bel hom by 074 288 3914.



A Komp 75 Savannah, kuier by Fort Schanskop tydens 'n skaap braai. 06/09/2025
Onder: Savannah veterane.





Oprigting van uitstalling by 4 X 4 Swartkop renbaan. Chris Pohl, Louis Buys (PPM) en Willoughby Brits. 05/09/2025



Uitstallers by 4 X 4 Swartkop renbaan. Gert Steenkamp (Tiffy), Chris Pohl, Leon Janse van Rensburg, Paul J. Els en Willoughby Brits. 06/09/2025.



Memorial for Chopper 164 that was shot down 46 years ago. Slade Healy in Australia.





OPERASIE SAVANNAH 50 JAAR LATER:

'Tyd om te groet; moo

Hanti Otto

Dit was 'n tyd toe hulle "made in South Africa" op hul mandepasta-buissies moes doodskryp.

Niemand kon vir sy man net skryf en se: "Ek gaan 'n rukkie Noord weg wees nie."

Dit was 'n geheime oorlogs-operasie. Dit was 'n operasie wat die begin van 21 jaar se Bos-orlog sou inlei.

Gister was die 50ste herdenking van Operasie Savannah en gebou by die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag (SAW) se Muur van Herinnering by die Voortrekker-monument in Pretoria.

Dit was ook die laaste een.

Daar is besluit dat dié merkwaardige gedenktyd gepas is om die Bond van Savannah-veterane met waardigheid te onthou.

Dié wat sedert daardie eerste kruising oor die Angola-grens tuisende kilometers ver nog leef, is yl gesaai.

Operasie Savannah sal van nou deel vorm van die groot gedenkdiens onder die leiding van die Raad vir Militêre Veterane (RMVVO).

Lt.kol. (afg.) Renaud Booysen, voorsitter van die Bond van Savannah-veterane, het gisteroggend die intieme groepie bekyk, hoofdeksels steeds perlek getrek, medaljes glimmend.

"Ek het nie verwag wat ek hier sien nie. Ons het 200 stoele bespreek. Gister is nog 170 afstelewer. En almal is vol – met nog mense wat daar agter op die muurtjie sit."

Dit was die verteenwoordigers van die 2 800 lede – dienspligtiges, staande nag, burgermag, vloot, lugmag en medici – wat Unita en die FNL-moos gaan help na onafhanklike wordende in Angola en die uitreiking van Portugal.

"'n Burgeroorlog het gevolg waarby die destydse weermag moes inryp."

"Vandag groet ons met groot hartseer die hegte Bond van Savannah-veterane. Ons is trots, want ons het gedoen wat van ons verwag word," het Booysen gesê.

"Dit was 'n halfuut gelede se onthou. Hy het 'n brief van PW Botha – in daardie stadium minister van verdediging – voorgelees. Ook dié inhoud was destyds hoogs geheim."

Herin is in 1975 gelas dat van die manne wat eintlik besaam was om huis toe te kom, wie se dienspligtig verstryk het, nog moet aanblyf, want daar was niemand om hulle af te los tot dat burgermagiede in Januarie 1976 ontplooi kon word nie.

Onderaan het Botha geskryf deelname aan die optrede in Angola is "vrywillig".

Hierop het die veterane gister geginnik, sommige hardop gele. Hulle is nie meer die "seuns", jong manne van daardie tyd nie. Nou is die jongste onder hulle reeds om 70 jaar oud. Sommige het met kleries geloop, gebou.

Die nostalgie en herinneringe en staaltjies van daardie 138 doe wat hulle in Angola moes help om waterprojekte te bevallig, vlugtelings by te staan, en Rusland en Kuba op Afrika grond te bevog, het nie vervaag nie.

Lt.genl. (afg.) Joffel van der Westhuizen, 'n voormalige artillerie-bevelvoerder, se eerste woorde op die diens was: "Vandag is uniek. Nog nooit was daar 'n (Savannah) samekoms van dié omvang nie – en daar gaan waarskynlik nie weer een wees nie."

Hy het "Ops Savannah" as "enig, uniek" beskryf.

Met emosies van onthou wat soms in sy stem gekraak het, het hy gesê toe Unita destyds hulp gegee het, het hy nie die "Weste" gegee nie, maar vir Suid-Afrika.

Van der Westhuizen se dat die destydse kabinet, met die mededewer van Amerika, opdrag gegee het om die grens te kruis. Die Amerikaanse CIA het ook gewoet.

Dit sou begin het met opleiding en wapens aan Unita, maar toe word Suid-Afrika deel van die oorlog. En skielik het almal hulle "dom" gebou oor Suid-Afrika se



Glede Nel plaas die Bond van Savannah-veterane se banier in die sakke gedurende die ontbindingseremonie van die Bond.

Foto's: DEAN VIVIES

'Civvystaat' moes eers wag

Die brief met ténasien-letters is boaan gemerk: UITERS GHEIM.

Die getikte deel is gedateer 18 Desember 1975. Dit is (onder meer):

"Operasie Savannah: A. Verleëning van opleidingstydperk van Dienspligtiges.

B. Oproep van Burgermagenehede en personeel vir aansoek vir spesiale ononderbroke diens.

C. Oproep van SM Reserviste.

"Soos u van bewus is, is die groot meerderheid van personeel tans in Angola ontplooi. Nasionale Dienspligtiges waarvan sekere se normale dienspligtig op 7 Jan 76 verstryk."

Dit verduidelik dan dat, weens tyd, afstand en die onmiddellike

"nibesikbaardheid" van ander troepe, dit onmoontlik is om die manne in Angola af te los, maar ook "onprakties en ongewens" is om hulle te onttrek sonder dat hulle vervang kan word.

Die dienspligtig van ongeveer 1300 nasionale dienspligtiges, wat reeds die dag begin af het terug na "civvystaat", is verleng.

Die bedoeling was, verduidelik die brief om dienspligtiges geleidelik in fases uit Angola te onttrek, en dan te vervang met burgermagenehede. Dan sal dienspligtiges in die noordelike Suidwes-Afrika en aangrensende gebied van Angola en in Suid-Afrika "aangewend" word.

Hieroor moet burgermagiede opgeroep word, maar hul dienspligtig

sou "heelwat langer" as 19 dae moes wees, sodat daar oorriveling van die oproep van eenhede kon wees.

Dit blyk dat die minister (van verdediging – destyds PW Botha) reeds voorheen mondelings magtiging hiervoor gegee het, en die brief net om dit formeel op skrif te stel.

Dit is geteken deur die "Hoof van die SAW".

Onderaan, in sy eie handskrif, het Botha op 19 Desember 1975 bygeskryf: "Ek wil herhaal wat ek tevore mondelings as besluit neregte het.

"Alle lede van die SAW wat aan die Angola-kant van die grens diens doen, moet vrywillig dien."

"Ek hoop die beleid word streng uitgevoer."

nesting van letsele van daardie tyd, vir hulle wat lewend verloor het. Hy het gepreek uit Johannes 15:12 en 13, dat daar geen groter liefde is as iemand wat sy lewe vir sy vriende afleë nie.

Sy "amen" was die begin van die finale hoofstuk van die Bond van Savannah-veterane, 50 jaar nadat die eerste steele oor die grens is.

Gedurende die ontbindingseremonie is fondse aan die Voortrekkermonument oorhandig om die Ops Savannah-gedenkteken te onderhou.

"Die Dop" – 'n 14-ponder-artillerie kanonkoeldop wat gedurende die operasie afgevoer is – en wat later 'n herdenkingsimbool geword het, sowel as die bosgroen Savannah-banier, sou aan die Pro Patria-museum oorhandig word.

Die beethlaser het weer die "Laeste Taptoe" lant weerklank. Stadig, respektvol, is die Savannah-banier opgevoel. Dit is met 'n rou fineliet in 'n sakke geploas. Geen eggenidsinjal het gevolg nie.

Soos Booysen afgesluit het: "Dit is tyd om te groet. Julle almal moet mooi loop."



Waarskynlik die laaste foto van Operasie Savannah-veterane, geneem op die 50-jarige gedenkdiens gister van dié destydse militêre operasie in Angola.



Genl. Tony Dippenaar sakkeer nadat hy 'n roos by die Bond van Savannah-veterane se gedenkdiens neregte het. Dit was gister die 50ste herdenking van dié operasie in Angola.

Erich van Rensburg (vlagdraer), Glede Nel (draer van "Die Dop" – 'n kanonkoeldop van Operasie Savannah se dae) en sanna/joor Frank Frankenburg maak gereed om dié memorabilia aan die Pro Patria-museum te oorhandig vir veilige bewaring.



betrokkenheid.

Die grens met die destydse Suidwes-Afrika (SWA) is in daardie stadium bedreig.

"Ons het 'ja' gesê, want 6 000 Kubane, 1 000 sogenaamde Russiese raadgevers, Swapo's en 30 000 MPLA-lede het in daardie stadium soos 'n onweerswolk oor SWA (nou Namibië) gehang en ons de facto 'vyfde provinsie' se

noordgrens bedreig.

"En wie het aan die front gegee? Agtienjarige nasionale dienspligtiges – selfs Julie-kinnemes wat skaars basiese opleiding voltooi het," se Van der Westhuizen.

Vir talle was dit 'n vuurdoop in oorlogsvaerding wat moes aanpas van die ongelukkige metode, waar bloedbande gesmee is

tussen mortiere, landmyne, donderstoms en die dood.

En, soos Van der Westhuizen, se: toe trums as woord en begrip vir hulle net so vreemd was soos die woord "Kubaan".

In daardie tyd is ongeveer 350 000 Portugese vlugtelinge uit Angola gehelp en Russiese uitbreiding is ontmoedig.

En 41 manne het nie weer huis toe gekaan nie.

Van der Westhuizen het afgesluit: "Savannah is dood, lank lewe Savannah."

Die 41 gesneuweldes se name is hierna gelees, soos wat hulle op die SAW se Muur van Herinnering ingeskrif is.

Hulle was troepe, kolonels, kapteins. Die dood het nie onderskeid getref nie. Volgens die sterfartikels is daar soms sommer ses op een dag gedood.

In ander gevalle volg die datums van gevalle makkers se laaste dag die een na die ander.

Die "Laeste Taptoe" het opgeklank. Die landswag is stadig halfstok gestryk.

In die twee minute van stilte is baie onthou.

Soos die man en 'n "bloedbroer" van kinderjare, wat net 4 km van mekaar af geveg het.

Die een is gedood in Desember 1975. Die ander een het eers uitgevind toe hy in Januarie 1976 op pad was huis toe, terug uit Angola.

Of soos skutter Adam Schonveld, destyds net 20, en sy spoor-snyerhond, Rinty, wat gedood is deur 'n landmyne – Rinty was een van die eerste diere "dode" wat in die operasie verloor is.

Na die oomblik van stilte het die eggenidsinjal herinner aan die son wat altyd weer opkom, dat hoop altyd verries, 'n opstanding en 'n nuwe dag en begin.

Soos die tweede kans wat brig.genl. (afg.) Chris Hartzenberg en sy manne gekry het toe hul Puma-helikopter in Desember 1975 neergeskiet is.

Al vyf insittendes het oorleef, maar moes 'n waghalsige ontsnappingsplan, ten spyte van die seer en skok, uitvoer om die agtervolgende vyand te ontduik, voordat hulle veiligheid bereik het.

Die kapelaan het gebied. Vir ge-



Bo: Spes Magte lede: Frans Fourie HC; Johan Burr-Dixon; Paul J. Els (PVO). Voor: Dewalt de Beer en onbekend. Regs: Paul J. Els; Charl Naude en Vossie Vorster.



Voor: Bam de Wet; Johan Burr-Dixon; Genl Dan Lamprecht; Dewald de Beer; Brain Walls; Mike Tippett; Charl Naude; Alan Mann. Agter: De Bruin; Paul Els; Krige van Heerden; Frans Fourie HC; Barry Visser; ; ; Roy Marais; ; Chris Serfontein.



Links: Louwrens Swanepoel en Nanette Vermaak met Inga. Regs: Paul J. Els en Genl Gert van Niekerk. Die foto is gestuur aan 'n Porugese lid wat bekend was tydens Savannah wat vrywillig saam met die Inligting manne gewerk het, Tony Banana. Weens ouderdom en afstand vanaf Portugal kon hy ons geleentheid nie by woon nie.



Alwyn Whitfield, Genl Hartzenberg, Natie Potgieter en Willie Viljoen.

Net na die gedenkdiens tydens die neem van die groep foto kom ons agter die persoon by ons is Genl Chris Hartzenberg en daar kom dit uit dat hy ons 50 jaar gelede op 22 Desember 1975 met sy Puma vir Alwyn ander neer gelaat het op 'n koppie tydens Savannah. Hy was baie emosioneel en se hy het gewonder wat het van die Bats geword 50 jaar gelde. Sy boodskap aan ons: "Dit was vir my net so 'n voorreg om julle te kon ontmoet, en 22 Desember 1975 weer te laat herleef. En die Here te eer dat ons vandag ook kon saam beleef!"





Bo: Ons Coen vd Merwe se 75 verjaarsdag ete. Links oorhandig Willem 'n geskenk aan hom. 13/09/2025

PRETORIA CANOPY 12/09/2025





LOWVELD CANOPY 19/09/2025





Square Hill Gedenkdiens 21/06/2025

VAAL CANOPY 23/09/2025



PPM MANNE AAND
23/09/2025





Willem GFFS Gaz loop vir Oom Mickey na 35 jaar raak in 'n winkel. **22/09/2025.**



"Hoe ry die Bats sit sit so sit sit so!!!"



"AUDACISSIMOS SERVAMUS - Serving the bravest"

The 7 Medical Battalion Group solemnly hosted a Memorial Parade and Wreath Laying Ceremony in honour of its fallen heroes and heroines on **25 September 2025** inside the Unit Lines at 7 Medical Battalion Group, Lyttelton.

This solemn occasion served as a time of remembrance and gratitude, paying tribute to the brave men and women of the Unit who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country across the world.

The Memorial Parade stood as a powerful reminder of the courage, dedication, and selflessness of those who served before us. Their memory continues to inspire the Unit's commitment to excellence and to carry forward their proud legacy of service. Article by Maier M.J. Mioli.



BOLAND CANOPY 27/09/2025



UIT DIE VERLEDE / FROM THE PAST “DOWN MEMORY LANE” SA PARATROOPERS



ONDANGWA





Granger Korff

Just looking back. Look back and contemplate the “craziness” factor in this one and the different between being young and now ... a bit older.

Here is a good example of the ‘vasbyt’ needed to pass notoriously harsh two-week PT course selection at 1 Parachute Bn in order to go on jump course to get your Paratrooper wings.

Amongst many other very harsh activates all day long for 2 weeks designed by instructors to make you quit/give up - Return to Unit (RTU) - This one took the CAKE

Steel hard edged very heavy metal parachute pallets (designed for dropping equipment)

We struggled to even pick them up onto our shoulders - with the hard edge immediately cutting into bone - no place to hold - we could barley make it shuffle step down to the gate of Parachute Bn (we thought that this was surely joke as it was clearly impossible to do this and they would turn us around at the gate to get telephone poles which was the usus!) - but no , out the gate , turn right and off we go 21 km (13 miles!) half running shuffle step! No walk/No stop not once / no put down once or RTU, but we made it!

The pic is our team coming back into base first if I remember - the final few yards before putting it down

And they wonder why we’re crazy now!

If one could have recorded the ‘battle talk’ that went on between our team, or any other team for those minds bending 13 miles would be real interesting!

(The metal pallets were banned from carrying on the 21 km after this as the toll was to high - and they went back to using telephone poles.)

Yours truly at far back left corner of pallet.

Airborne all the way.



OORLEWINGS KURSUS IN DIE KNYSNA BOS.
Simon Riekert, Ronnie Claassen en Sakkie Marais.
Drie Daks van Rhodesia gereed om manne af te gooi.



VRYVAL (SM)

66V



FREE FALL (PF)

66V

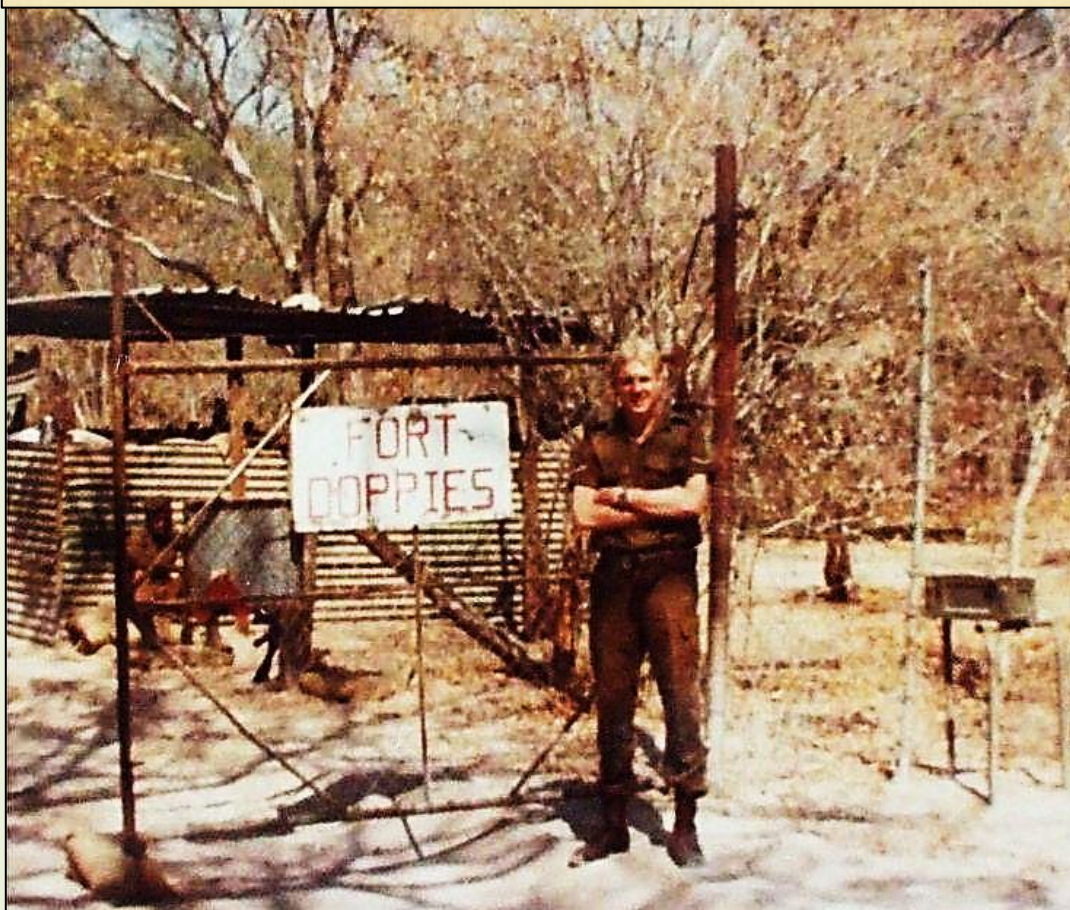
6/9/1969 — 3/10/1969



FOTO DEUR/PHOTO BY:

CHRISTOS, BLOEMFONTEIN.

VOORSTE RY / FRONT ROW (v.l.n.r.): Sers/Sgt P. P. Stevenson, Kap/Capt L. J. Holtzhausen, Kap/Capt A. van Driel, Lt M. Oelschig.
 AGTERSTE RY / BACK ROW (v.l.n.r.): AGH/WOII J. H. Kiser (Vlind SM/Wing SM), Sers/Sgt R. Murphy (Intr.), Kap/Capt D. J. Moore (Vlind Bev/Wing OC),
 AGH/WOI G. A. Erasmus PMM („Spotter“).



STAAN IN DIE DEUR! SPRING



DOG SCHOOL'S OC DECORATED

MAJ Derek van Nierop, Officer Commanding SADF Dog School, poses with the PF Long Service Medal awarded him recently after 18 years service. The presentation was made by Col M. C. A. Kotze, SM, OC of SA Army College. Maj Van Nierop has given dedicated service to Special Service Battalion, 7 Ordnance Depot, QMG, SA Army College, Services School and 1 Para Battalion. Maj Van Nierop joined the Dog School in May, 1968.



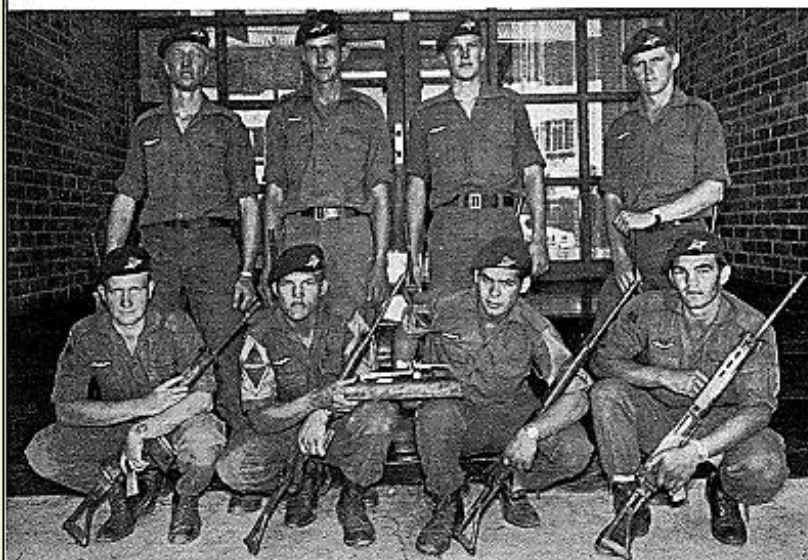
Maj A. Fennie, SM, die besoeker van 71 Ekippe op Wimpel, beëindig het voor in die reëte die lundro stuit wende die swaai 5 700 man gelyk was.

Gevegsproewe

Die tenkafweerske van 1 Valskerm-bataljoen by die tenkafweerske wat hulle gewen het. Hulle is voor vir: Sktr P. W. Gordon Grant, o.kpl G.

Meyer, kpl J. Borgh, aktr M. J. van Papendorp. Agter: Sktr G. Langlas, A. J. Stander, T. P. Potgieter, T. M. Meenahan.

28 PARATUS • NOVEMBER, 1972



Hierdie lede van 1 Valskernbataljoen by Tempe in Bloemfontein was deel van 'n groep van vyftig wat hul Eenheid se standerd koep gehou het met hul prestasies tydens opleiding. Voor sit Francis Lechapt wat nam onderskei het as die beste student tydens die basiese opvoedingsfase met B-Kompanie se gelukwinger, die bosbokkie genaamd Chilla. Agter regs staan Nlingana Joseph Dlamini by kpl Phyllimon Thame en Joseph Tsietsi Ranyalanyane, die Nassele student wat hierdie kursus opgelewer het. - Foto: Malcom Botes.



Valskermspringer van formaat

EEN van ons land se mees ervare valskermspringers, maj J. H. v. d. M. (Blikkies) Blignaut, het onlangs die Wereldvalskermspringkampioenskap in Australië bygewoon. Maj Blignaut is as individuele waarnemer deur die Aero-klub van Suid-Afrika gestuur omdat spanne van Suid-Afrika nie by die kampioenskap toegelaat is nie.

Maj Blignaut, senior instrukteur by die Danie Theron Krygskool in Kimberley, het sy besoek aan Australië baie leersaam gevind en hy het die hoop uitgespreek dat hy al die kennis wat hy opgedoen het hier sal kan oordra. Hy het al 750 spronge agter die blad en hy is onder meer ook die voorsitter van die Weermag se valskermspringkomitee.



Two members of the SADF Skydiving Club at Voortrekkerhoogte make a linked exit from a Puma helicopter high above Pretoria.



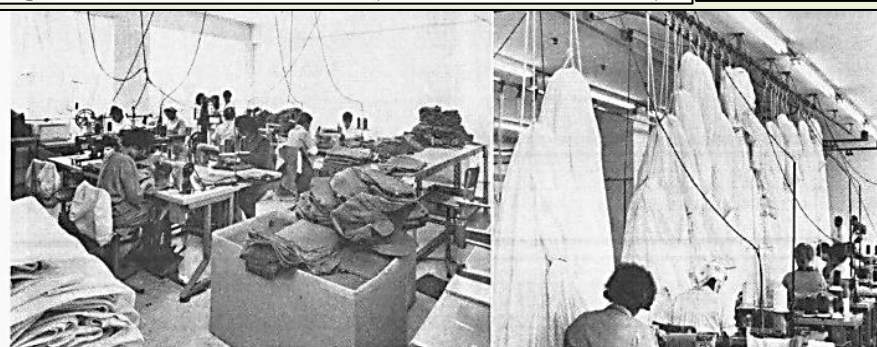
Christie Coen 2008



Parabats from 1 Parachute Battalion, Bloemfontein, seconds away from touchdown. They were to join the ground forces, forming a vital section of the assault. — (Photo: Lt Alex de Velasco)



Paratus May 1965
Die opvou van die valskerm na 'n landing maak 'n belangrike deel uit van die valskermopleiding. Die toue van die draagdoek word nader getrek sodat die valskerm van onder inmekaar vou.



On the left is a view of the pack section of the PISA factory in Johannesburg and on the right the main canopy section — could look kinda spooky at night. Photos by R. H. Scrimgeour, A.I.B.P., Johannesburg.

SOUTH AFRICA is now fully independent of all overseas sources for its requirements of parachutes for the Defence Force and for civilian purposes.

Manufacture of this strategically vital item of equipment is now being undertaken by a South African company — the only one in the Republic — which was officially opened today by Commandant General R. C. Hiemstra, head of the South African Defence Force. Air Force officers and prominent personalities connected with civilian flying in South Africa attended the function which took place at the Johannesburg premises of Parachute Industries of Southern Africa (Pty.) Limited.

With a total of 80 machines the factory is able to handle all orders emanating from the Defence Force and from civilian sources and is still able to meet any demands for export that might arise.

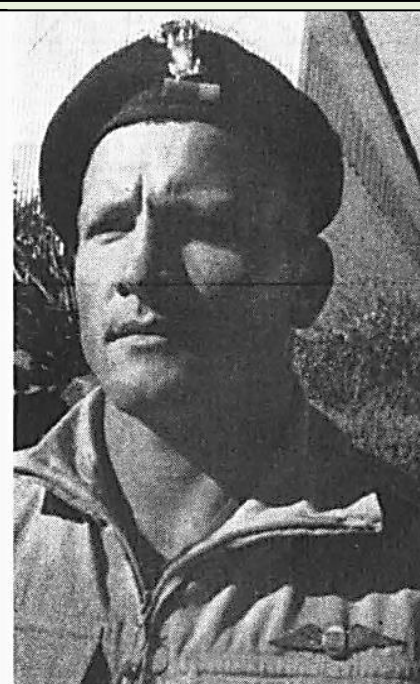
PARACHUTES NOW MADE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The decision to establish a parachute factory in South Africa was taken in Paris in 1965 in the light of the Government's policy encouraging the establishment of factories for the manufacture of items of strategic military importance. The full co-operation of the Munitions Board has been accorded the enterprise.

As a result of discussions with representatives of some of the world's leading parachute manufacturing companies, including Irving Air Chute Co. Inc. and Pioneer Aerodynamic Systems Inc. of the United States, Bruggemann and Brand K.G., of Germany, and a locally registered company, Irving Air Chute Company of Southern Africa (Pty.) Limited, the consortium agreed to form the local company.

Full technical know-how has been forthcoming from the overseas companies and all the necessary equipment for the whole manufacturing process, from cutting the canopy material to final stringent testing to ensure maximum performance to international standards, has been installed by the company. About 80 per cent of material requirements and all labour needs have been obtained locally.

Mr. A. W. Hartley is chairman and managing director of the company and Col. Stanley Walters, E.D., managing director of Irving Air Chute Company of Southern Africa (Pty.) Limited, is sales director. ★



Sers A. H. S. Schoeman

Sers A. H. S. Schoeman, valskerminstrukteur by 1 Valskerm Bataljon het gedurende die S.A. Vyfkampkampioenskappe vir 'n groot verrassing gesorg toe hy die kampioenskappe gewen het. Hy het 'n totaal van 4238 uit 'n moontlike 5000 behaal. Die Olimpiese standaard vir vyfkamp is 4000 punte. Sers Schoeman het ook Provinsiale kleure vir Boks, Atletiek, Landloop, Stoei, Swem en Vyfkamp verwerf.

Paratus Oct 1967.

Paratus Aug 1968.

14 VALSKERM BN GP



14 PARACHUTE BN GP

BEVELSGROEP / COMMAND GROUP
AUG / SEPT 1988



Fotoland Pta Tel. 21 8230

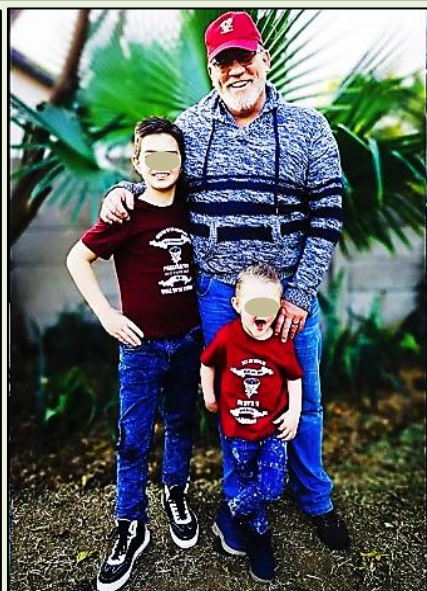
1ste Ry / 1st Row L—R : AO2 W H Byleveld (RSKM), Maj F C Grové (BN 2IB), Kmdt J E H T van Zyl (BN GP BEV), Kapt S B Smith (BN Adj), AO1 P M Loftus, J C D (RSM), Kapt H J Fritz (Lof Offisier), Kpln D S Liebenberg (Kapelaan), Kapt K F van Heerden (Genie Eskn Bev).
2de Ry / 2nd Row : S/Sers A L J van Vuuren (ESM Genie), Maj D Willemse (A Komp Bev), Maj P J Introna (B Komp Bev), Maj F J Cheetham (Ondh Komp Bev), Maj I J le R Louw (181 Bty Bev), Kapt R G Schulz (C Komp Bev), AO2 N P van Heerden (LA), Kapt H J Scheepers (Lug Adj).
3de Ry / 3rd Row : Lt E A N van Dyk, Kpl A M Galt-Smith (44 Maint KSM), S/Sers W I Cornelissen (O Komp KSM), Kapt D Lombaard (44 TKA Bev), Sers D J van Heerden (44 Genie), S/Sers W P Hennings (181 Bty BSM), Sers S J Ueckermann (BN HK KSM), Lt A A Erasmus (Adj 44 Genie), S/Sers H J van Wyk (C Komp KSM), S/Sers G K van Niekerk (KSM 44 Genie).



These are the NCO's and men of Special Forces Parachute Packing Team, pictured shortly before their first jump.



Links: Sakkie Marais kuier by PPM. Bo Wessie en oupa se trots. Onbekende Oupa se trots.





AO1 S.J. Joubert. RSM SA 9 Div.

Genl Mkhwanazi has more qualifications and Degrees, than anyone else in the service! (Internet).





Beste Paul,
Jy weet ek het die re-unie van Paratroopers en B Komp te Hartebeespoortdam die 29ste Oktober die jaar bygewoon, daar was oor die 2 000 paratroopers bymekaar, My hand was so seer vir omtrent n week van al die groet. En die foto's wat daai manne agterna gestuur het, was ongelooflik.

Ronnie was daai naweek van 29ste ook 50jr getroud en hy en Suzette was Drakensberge toe.

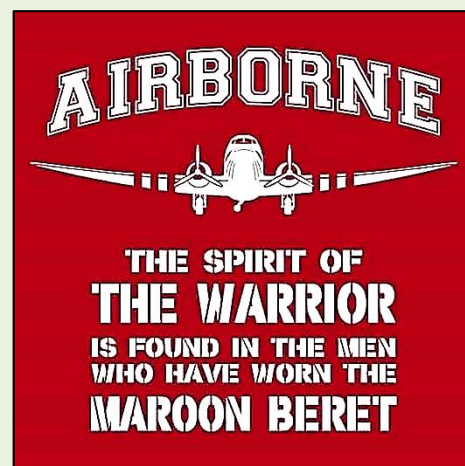
Groetnis vir eers en mooi loop.

64' Bat,

Kitcha.

Ek en Daan Potgieter, n ou Bat troep van my way back. Hy was n bankbestuurder by Landbank in Nylstroom.

(Datum onbekend.)



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MORE than 800 paratroopers took part in the biggest mobile airborne exercise in the history of the SANDF which was held in Bethlehem.

Photo: Sonja van Dijkhorst

Exercise Iron Eagle biggest ever

Sonja van Dijkhorst

MORE than 900 soldiers took part in the biggest mobile airborne exercise in the history of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) hosted by 44 Parachute Regiment from Bloemfontein.

Preparations for Exercise Iron Eagle started as early as March 2001, said Capt. Catha Strydom, liaison officer: 44 Parachute Regiment. Spectators watched a sham attack when more than 900 paratroopers and some cargo were dropped by C-130's. When all the soldiers were in position, they jogged-crawled across the burnt earth to the trenches where the "enemy" was hiding.

Bombs were detonated and under heavy artillery the enemy was captured and their weapons confiscated.

The exercise was held at the Bethlehem Airport.

In Muller Street spectators saw the Rooivalk combat support helicopter acting as a gun ship. The Oryx helicopters demonstrated fast roping, repelling, hot extraction hang tilting and cessive hoisting.

Strydom said this exercise served as a force preparation exercise to fully prepare all forces, permanent and reserve force members, of the airborne family prior to the combat training exercise.

The goals of Exercise Iron Eagle include the practice of all phases of an airborne attack, the planning cycle, all airborne deployment techniques and all types of airborne operations.

The SANDF also wanted to test command and control systems, all delivery systems and airborne logistics.

tical systems.

Aircraft of the South African Air Force used in Exercise Iron Eagle were: three C-130's; two CASA 212's; one Caravan; two Rooivalk combat support helicopters; four Oryx helicopters and one Alouette III.

A paratrooper, Lt Bosse Boschhoff, reserve force member of 3 Parachute Battalion in Pretoria, was almost killed when his parachute failed to open. When he tried the safety parachute, it also did not open. A few feet from the ground the wind lifted the parachute a little. He only sustained torn shoulder ligaments and a dislocated hip.

A total of four paratroopers hurt their ankles. One got stuck in a tree (see photo) and had to be cut down and lowered to safety by a crane of the Diklaaberg Municipality.

AS with any exercise, something is likely to go wrong. Sgt. M.W. Maphikwana of 44 Parachute Regiment in Bloemfontein landed in an old blue gum tree near Yvam outside Bethlehem. He hung there for some time before a 35-foot crane of the Diklaaberg Municipality was used to lower him down.

Photo: Sonja van Dijkhorst



The army's new mini jeep, a Noddy-car-size 'Jakkals', made its debut at Exercise Iron Eagle, the biggest ever peace-time parachute drop of paratroopers and equipment, within sight of the Botswana border yesterday.

Photo by DOUG LEE

500 parabats in biggest drop in peacetime

By KEITH ABENDROTH

SA Air Force transport squadrons and the army's 44 Parachute Brigade yesterday carried out the biggest ever peace-time drop of paratroopers.

The exercise took place close to the Botswana border.

More than 500 of the cream of the army's paratroopers, in battalion strength and brought in by 14 transport aircraft, dived smoothly to the ground without incident in a drop some less than 4 sq km.

And dropped before them were pilot car-carrying two Ferret scout cars, two Jakkals mini-

bomber or bombers entered the Republic from Botswana.

A senior officer said that the exercise had been on the drawing board for some time, and that the Botswana Government had been warned well ahead of time that it was to take place.

Captain Archie Moore, officer commanding 44 Parachute Brigade, said that the aim of the exercise was to test certain doctrines, command and control procedures and concepts and non-technical procedures.

And the whole exercise had been made cost effective by combining

THE CITIZEN

Tues



Parabats plunge from a C-160 transport aircraft as it comes in low over the drop zone in yesterday's Exercise Iron Eagle. Later two paratroopers trudged to their platoon rallying points, carrying full combat kit.



Biggest peacetime

FROM PAGE 1

it with the annual call-up for former servicemen who would otherwise have been brought in by road transport.

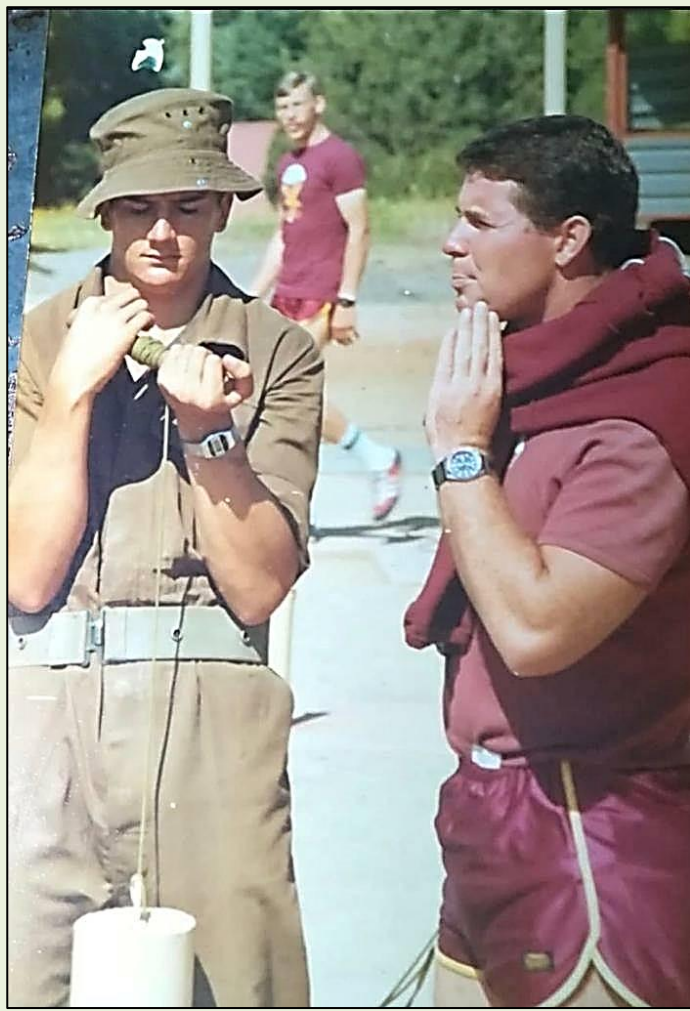
"We killed two birds with one stone," said Col Moore. "The troops were brought in by air after a brushup course at the weekend, and in the process did their necessary annual operational jump."

The whole operation was over within minutes, after the first three C130 and C160 transport aircraft had arrived and dropped their cargo.

Hard on their heels were three more Hercules aircraft, followed by two waves of three C-47 Dakotas flying in at 1 200 and 1 400 ft respectively.

Flying in droiles above were two Dakotas containing the command post and a backup command post.

Then, as the troops were getting together on the ground, the command post aircraft dropped its command team and the team on the second Dakota took over until the main command post was set up on the ground.



Sky divers back

MILITARY DELEGATION - TAIPEI 1984

Friend Reporter

FOR Col. Chris le Roux and his team of 12 parachutists, it's a pleasure to be back home in the open air after a "crowded" tour to the Republic of China, where they took part in a parachuting contest.

Five members of the team were from 1 Parachute Battalion in

Bloemfontein, and the rest were from Pretoria.

It was Col. le Roux's second visit to the tiny island republic, but for his team it was a "wide-eyed experience of a lifetime".

"We were treated like heroes by Taiwanese, who are extremely friendly and courteous", he said.

The competition took place from March 19 to 28,

and the team was able to tour most of the island and Hong Kong.

"In Taipei, with a population of three million, all I wanted was a bit of fresh air and space", said Col le Roux.

TRADITION

"To eat with these people is very interesting, especially when you understand their 6000 years of tradition", he added.

Among the most "interesting" items served to the team were shark's fin and fried pigeon.

HONOURS

In the parachuting contest, the Chinese scored top points in the accuracy competition which, according to Col. le Roux, was dropped in South Africa about 10 years ago, but in the other sections, the South Africans took the honours.

PLANS

Col le Roux said there were plans for a team from the Republic of China to visit South Africa next year.



With mementoes of their visit to the Republic of China are (from left) Col. Chris le Roux, Private Riaan Hepburn and Mai J. Kieser of 1 Parachute Battalion.



Ek en my 2 seksie leiers Valk 4 D Komp 80 81 Parabats - Ops Protea - 41 42 jaar gelede. Aan my regs Lukie Strydom en my links Willem Noddy Naude. Die 2 manne het as leiers vir my 'n great job gedoen en my lewe makliker gemaak. Nog atyd met baie respek aan hulle.



Just look at you! I can't wait to see the army make a man out of you.



So, you want some tips about doing your national service... Get into shape now before next year's intake.

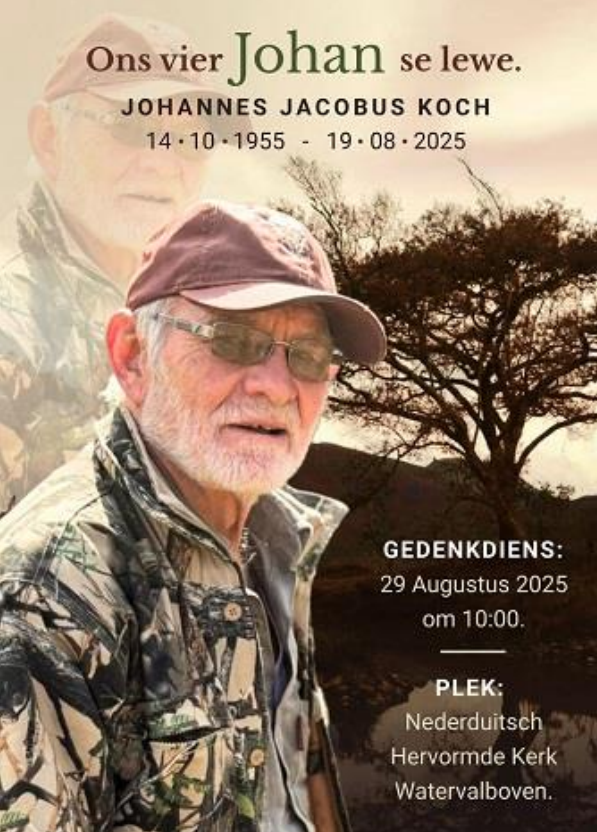


She's coming with me... I'm not taking any chances receiving a 'Dear John' letter from her later.



Please Corporal, take good care of my baby while he's in the army.

Ons vier **Johan** se lewe.
JOHANNES JACOBUS KOCH
 14.10.1955 - 19.08.2025



GEDENKDIENS:
 29 Augustus 2025
 om 10:00.

PLEK:
 Nederduitsch
 Hervormde Kerk
 Watervalboven.



**Kom
 STAAN IN DIE DEUR**
 en vier saam met ons

Albertus
OPPERMAN
 se Lewe

Woensdag
 24 September 2025
 10:00am
 NG Kerk Pellissier
 Bloemfontein

“Het Ek jou  nie beveel nie:
 Wees sterk en vol moed, wees
 nie bevrees of verskrik nie;
 want die Here jou God
 is met jou, oral waar
 jy heengaan.”

JOSUA 1:9

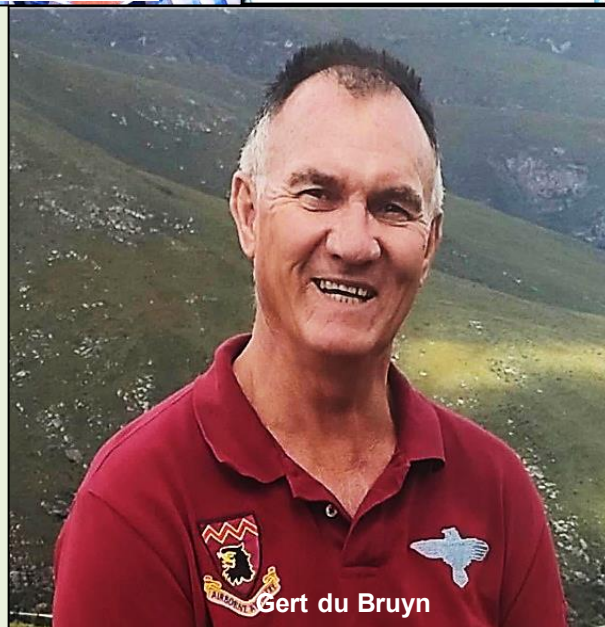
One **OK** - Stick **OK**  **GOOO!**



Chris du Plessis



Renier van Rooyen



Gert du Bruyn

24/06/2025



In Doedeluskoper het die kultuursendings van Albertus Opperman, eerste RSM van 5 Vabarmbrigade in Tsepe, in die NG kerk Pelizier in Bloemfontein ingesit. Regs is kol. Etch Willemse van die Militêre veterane-organisasie.



Tel is oorskeidsmaats en spoorings-keers het die rouers van Albertus Opperman in die NG kerk Pelizier in Bloemfontein bygewoon. Van links is kol. Gideon Nel, oudlid van 2 Verbindingskommando wat in 1970 saam met Opperman in matrik aan die Hoërskool Sentraal in Bloemfontein was, AO2 Faabla Mamba, oudlid van 44 Vabarmbrigade by Tsepe, en kol. Etch Willemse, oudlid van 44 Vabarmbrigade en Speurings-keers van Pelizier.



Veterane het by die NG kerk Pelizier in Bloemfontein 'n eerwag gevorm vir die familie van Albertus Opperman (75), wat se rouers hier gebou is. Voor is kol. Dawie Rose (73), eerste lid van 1 Vabarmbrigade en 2 Vabarmbrigade (waar hy as burgermagtig diens gedien en sy rang verloor het). Lange term is AO1 Douglas Bots (58), eerste lid van 5 Verbindingskommando by Pelizier.





OCT

Monty Monnery	4
Stefanus Roets	7
Trevor Porter	8
Willie Philips	9
Oale vd Wakt	9
Onnie Kok	13
Ralph Bennoy	17
Rudolf du Plessis	17
Chris Alers	20
Ralph Benoy	21t
Louwrens Swanepoel	31

PRETORIA CANOPY BIRTHDAYS

NOV

Johan Pieterse	3
Riaan Wessels	4
Ashleigh Carr	5
Christiaan Kruger	10
Snakes Snyman	13
William de Beer	22
Jimmy Sloane	26
Aldo Nel	29
Leon	

DEC

Johan Saunders	6
Krige van Heerden	10
Henry Smith	10
Slim Meyer	5
Willoughby Brits	16
Lizette vd Walt	20
Piet Viljoen	22
Anthony Modena	23
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Lood Pepler	29
Eddy Gordon	29

WORD FROM THE EDITORS

This is your newsletter. Please make contributions to it in the line of news, personal stories of training or operations, reports on parades attended, as well as any news of bats. The next Bat Chat will be in Dec 2025 and we need your inset by Dec 10. VASBYT

chris.pohl@parabat.org.za

Chris Pohl

paul@who-els.co.za

Paul J. Els



ERE ROL / ROL OF HONOUR 2025

JUL

Reino du Plessis
Buks vd Berg
Bryan Gibson
Aidre Maaitens

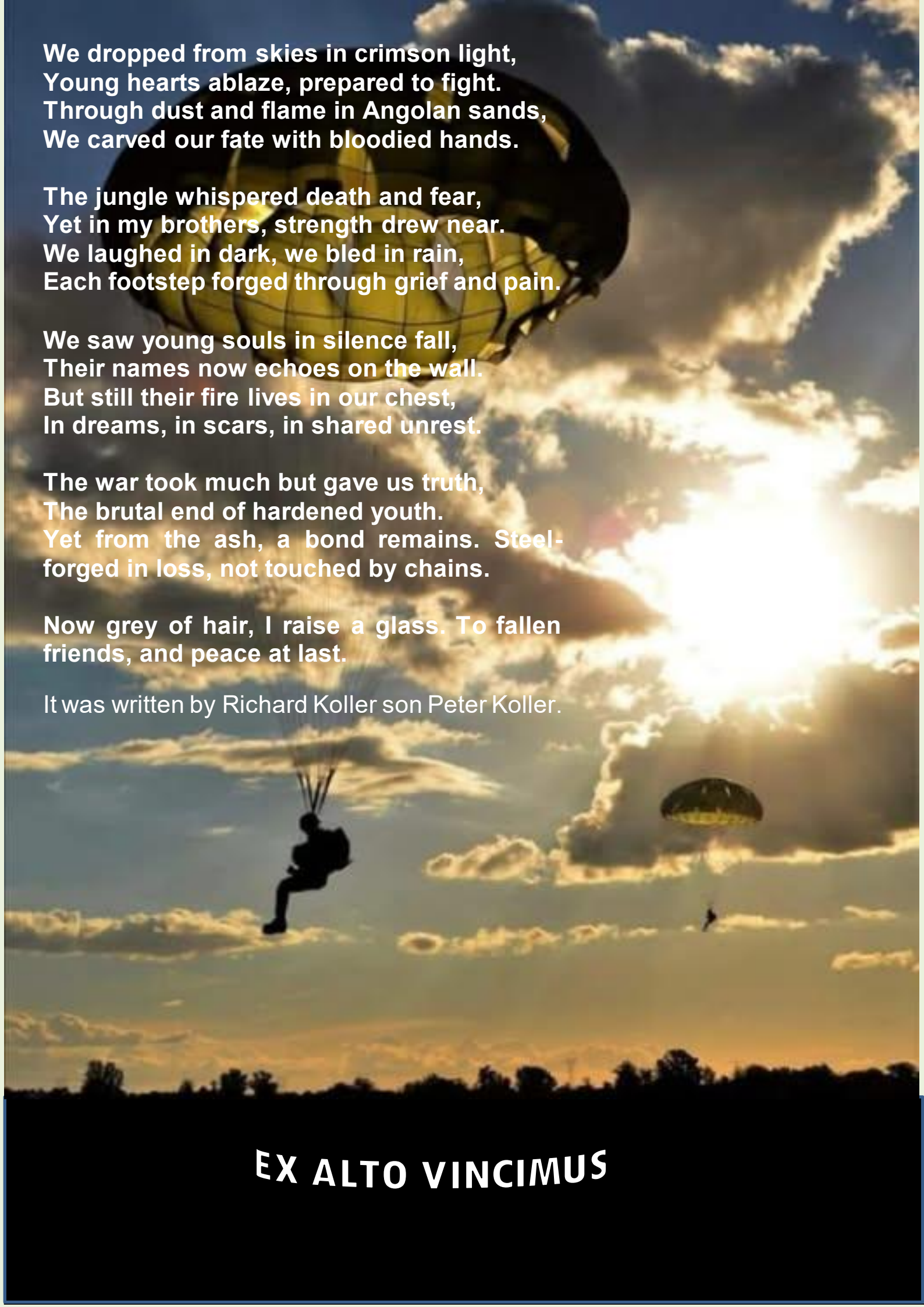
AUG

14 Theuns Bezuidenhout
20 Stanley Kruger
22 Johan Koch
Koekies Koekemoer 28?
Schalk Swanepoel 31

SEP

Torries Pretorius 08
Gert du Bruyn 08
Bertus Opperman 12
Gert v Copenhagen 12
Chris du Plessis 14
Renier van Rooyen 15
Danie Schutte 25
Chris vd Walt 29

EX ALTO VINCIMUS



**We dropped from skies in crimson light,
Young hearts ablaze, prepared to fight.
Through dust and flame in Angolan sands,
We carved our fate with bloodied hands.**

**The jungle whispered death and fear,
Yet in my brothers, strength drew near.
We laughed in dark, we bled in rain,
Each footstep forged through grief and pain.**

**We saw young souls in silence fall,
Their names now echoes on the wall.
But still their fire lives in our chest,
In dreams, in scars, in shared unrest.**

**The war took much but gave us truth,
The brutal end of hardened youth.
Yet from the ash, a bond remains. Steel-
forged in loss, not touched by chains.**

**Now grey of hair, I raise a glass. To fallen
friends, and peace at last.**

It was written by Richard Koller son Peter Koller.

EX ALTO VINCIMUS