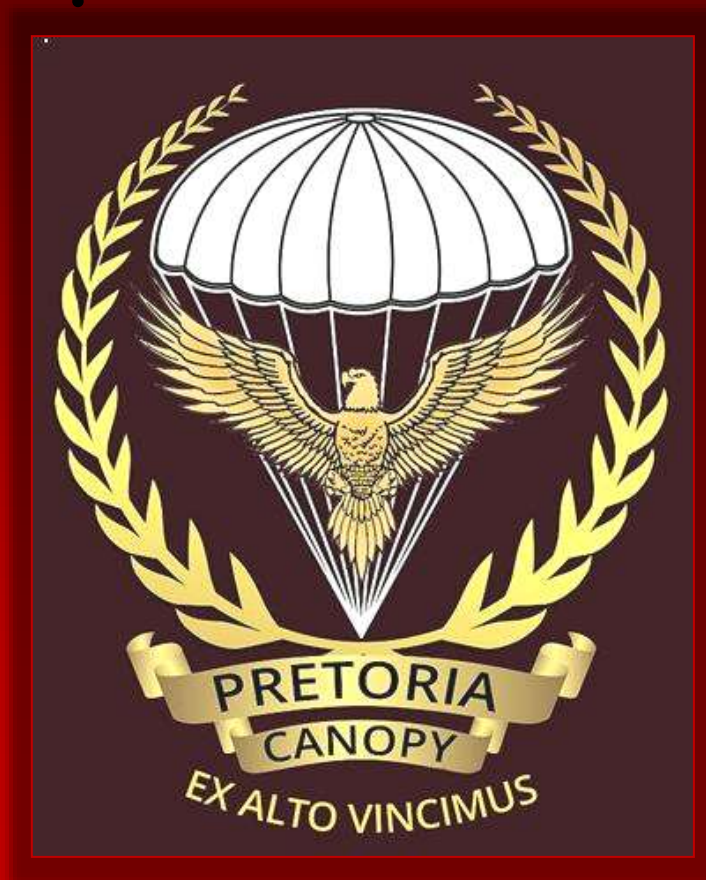


BAT CHAT



DEDICATED TO CASSINGA DAY

LETTERS / MESSAGES / ARTICLES / REPORTS / SNIPPETS

TRIBUTE TO ALL BATS

NUUS VANAF ORAL / NEWS FROM ALL OVER

UIT DIE VERLEDE / FROM THE PAST



**PRETORIA CANOPY
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**

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WOORD VAN DIE REDAKSIE

WORD FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

MESSAGE FROM THE PTA CANOPY CHAIRMAN

The Bat Chat is the official journal of the Pretoria Canopy, but also carries the interest of all Parabats worldwide.

Remember all Batchats are available on the PVO Canopy Website - <https://parabat.org.za/newsletters-nuusbriefe/>

In kwartaal 2 het PTA Canopy dit effens rustiger gevat, en bietjie asem geskep.

Die Militêre fees op 17 Mei was egter 'n hoogtepunt gewees vir ons en ons kon die jeug vermaak. Sien foto op bladsy 28.

Ons maandelikse byeenkomste bly 'n hoogtepunte, waar geleentheid geskep word vir Parabat veterane om mekaar te ondersteun, geselskap te geniet en belangrike sake te bespreek. Ons ere gas vir Junie was Koos Moorcroft wat 'n praatjie gegee het van sy militêre loopbaan. Die was deur elke lid asook die dames teenwoordig, baie geniet, en ons het almal geskaterlag vir Koos se kwikslae. Dankie Oom Koos!

Ons beplan 'n uitstalling by die 4 x 4 byeenkoms te Swartkop renbaan die 6de en 7de September. Kom ondersteun ons op die dae. Besoek ook ons ons eie Bats uitstalling by die PPM in Fort Schanskop.

Sterkte vir al ons Parabat Makers vir die komende kwartaal.

Elke man tell

Chris Pohl

Voorsitter - Pretoria Canopy

EX ALTO VINCIMUS

NEXT PTA CANOPY MEETINGS

11 JUL / 8 AUG / 12 SEP



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.



GOD SAL JOU VEILIGLEI

Dis is bemoedigend om te weet dat God nie alleen Skepper is nie, maar ook die getroue Onderhouer van sy skepping is. Daarom moet ons nooit onder die wanindruk verkeer dat ons alleen staan met ons lewensprobleem nie. Bekommernis los niks op nie, intendeel, dit is verlamrend en laat ons telkens met verleentheid as eindprodukt.

Waarom sou ons ons kwel en bekommer as ons weet dat ons 'n almagtige God het wat sorg en onderhou, wat life het en belangstel? Kwelling strek nie tot eer van God nie, maar is 'n openbaring van gebrek aan geloof in Hom.

Hy het aan ons sy kosbaarste en beste, sy Seun, gegee. Sal Hy ons dan nie ook die dinge gee wat ons op die lewensreis nodig het nie: genade vir elke beproewing; krag vir elke kruis; voedsel vir elke dag?

GEBED: Dankie, Here, dat U die getroue Onderhouer van U skepping is. Dankie dat U aan ons die dinge skenk waaraan ons waarlik 'n behoefte het.



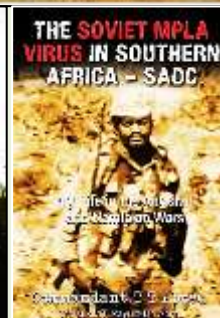
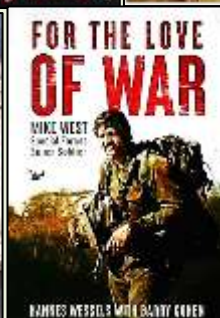
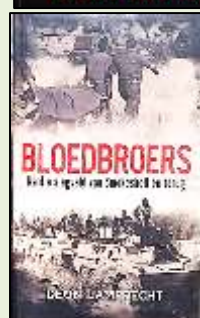
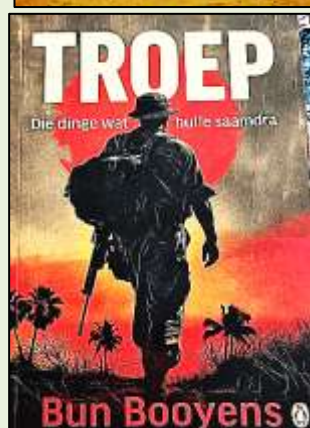
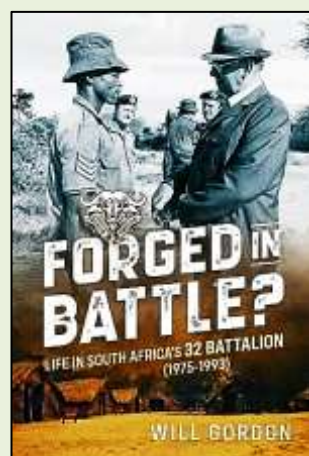
ADMINISTRATION

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



Marked

PelsA Boeke

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

Order books from epos@groep7.co.za



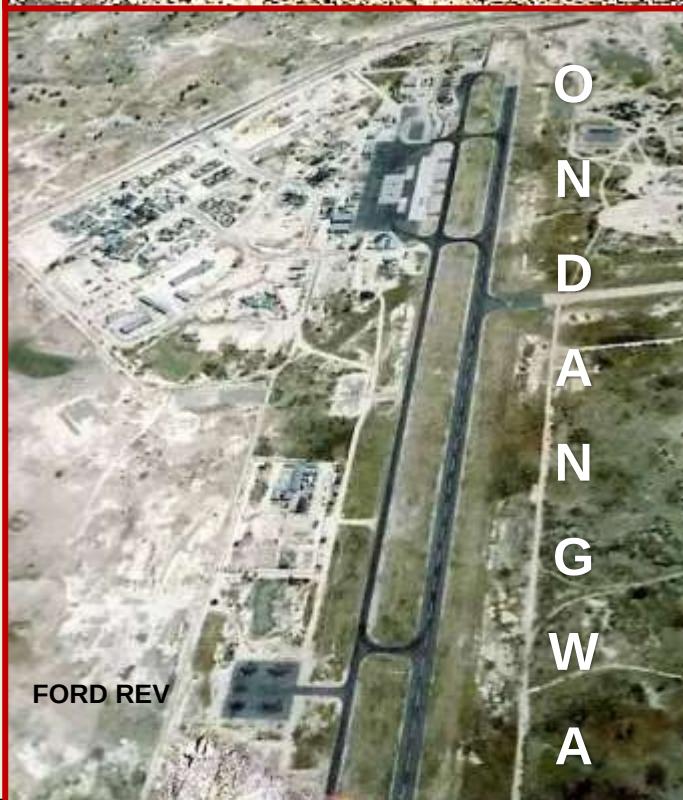
LETTERS / MESSAGES ARTICLES / REPORTS / SNIPPETS

FROM ALL OVER

Paul, Thank you and big Salute to you for being the fire behind this great and interesting Newsletter Bat Chat that keeps the SA Parabats connected. And thank you always for highlighting our Rooiplaas USA group that also pushes hard this side to keep our SA Parabat name high internationally.
Regards and respect
Granger



PAY UR SUBS!



FORD REV

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OUTBACK CANOPY

Hi Boys

Dave mention the WA Canopy boys got together and they are proposing a get together for the 10th anniversary from the 3 to 5 October in Sydney. A note has been sent to NZ, and NSW so far. Wives and partners invited. 3 Oct is a Canopy get together, 4 Oct is ladies night and 5 Oct to do whatever. Please share with the QLD contacts. We can discuss venues etc once we have an interest. Airborne regards Dave.

We are already a few blokes who will be going down from Brisbane, anyone from QLD who is interested, please let me know so we could organise it with the Sydney and Perth brothers. If any members are interested please indicate by say going, that will help Dave and those who organise with some numbers which will be crucial in organising something like this.

Thanks,
Baas Johan Meyer

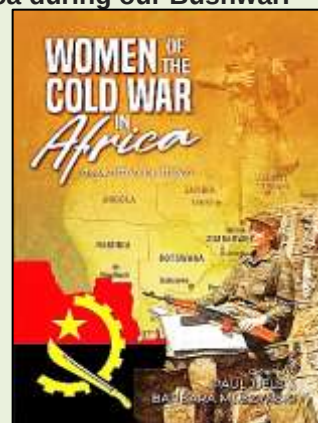
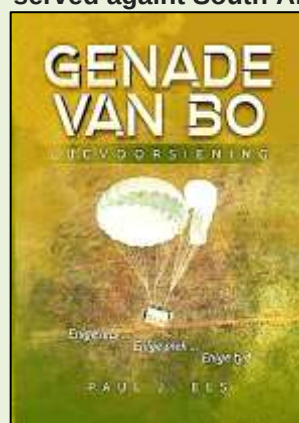


NEW BOOKS

Two new books which give for the first time information mostly never before published in a book.

Die eerste boek is 'Genade van bo – Lugvoorsiening 'waar sommige van ons in betrokke was tydens die Bosoorlog.

The second book is "Women of the Cold War in Africa". This is the first book on Soviet, Cuban and other women that was fighting or served against South Africa during our Bushwar.





Nepara, SADF base in Sector 20, 55 Bn, mostly unheard of. Note the uge sand walls surrounding the base. 80 km from Ongiva base and airstrip in Angola, occupied by 1 Para. Nepa base was never confronted in an enemy fire...if anyone has more info from that? I am sure at the very least, soek spoor patrols was send out as it was only 20 km from border. Were supplies kept there for RUNDU etc.? (Internet)



50 SKIP MIRAGE FORMASIE VLIEËNIERS

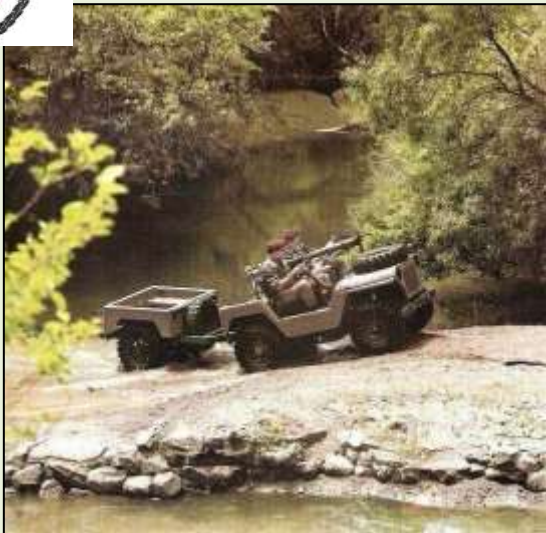
Agter vlnr: Gert Havenga; Dries Wehmeyer; Roelf Beukes; Gerrie Radloff; Fred du Toit; Willem Hechter; Bob Masson; Chris Lombard; Bertus Burger; Jack Grundlingh; Theo Nell.

2de ry vlnr: Bart Hauptfleisch; Steve Ferreira; Jan Marais; Spyker Jacobs; Dick Lord; Ollie Holmes; Mac van der Merwe; Thys du Toit; Piet Roos; Mossie Basson; Gawie Winterbach.

3de ry vlnr: Spook Geraty; Paddy Carolan; Andre van der Heever; Chris Brits; Derek Kirkland; George Snyman; Otto Schür; Coen van den Berg; Rick Culpan; Wassie Wasserman; IC du Plessis; Chris Eksteen; Johan Venter; Eric Schmulian.

4de ry vlnr: Danie Schabort; Bill Einkamerer; Pierre du Plessis; Dolf Prinsloo; Gavin Bornman; Dieter Ortman; Norman Minne; Johan Gerber.

Voor vlnr: Piet Truter; Darryl Lee; Bobby Crinall; Ed Deschamps; Thys Muller; Les Bennet; Duncan Jones; Geoff Garret; Ken Duncan; Mark Crookes.



44 VALSKERMBRIGADE
L A BATTERY
1993



44 PARACHUTE BRIGADE
A A BATTERY
1993





BRIGADIER GENERAL DICK LORD

Guy Mullins

I came across this story in my files about one of the great men of the SADF. Colonel Jan Breytenbach an old friend of Brigadier General Dick Lord (they had served in the Royal Navy together) and had both married English roses, needs no introduction, but Dick Lord is not as well known in our circles.

Brigadier General Dick Lord, the Fleet Air Arm pilot who has died aged 75, was instrumental in the development of America's Top Gun fighter pilot academy, made famous by the film of the same name. 06 November 2011 • 7:39pm Lord established his unusual role in 1968, when he was the foremost British instructor sent on exchange at Miramar, California, to train American pilots then suffering significant losses at the hands of MiG-21s flown by the North Vietnamese. While some criticised the performance of America's multi-million dollar Phantom jet, Lord concentrated on sharpening his pupils' Air Combat Manoeuvring (ACM) skills to improve their odds in a dogfight. He and a handful of other Fleet Air Arm graduates of the Royal Navy's gruelling Air Warfare Instructors (AWI) school in Lossiemouth, Scotland, introduced rigorous new methods for recording and scrutinising the performance of trainees during exercises. Lord, for example, scribbled notes on a pad on the knee of his flight suit during mock dogfights, which he then exhaustively analysed on a blackboard at post-flight debriefs. Such was the trust placed in Lord that he was granted access to classified American military documents comparing the performance of US aircraft against that of enemy fighters.



This access allowed him to write, with others, the US Navy's Air Combat Manoeuvring manual. A year after Lord's arrival, the tuition and methods introduced by British pilots, all graduates of the AWI School at Lossiemouth, made their way into the US Navy Fighter Weapons School, which was set up in 1969. Better known as Top Gun, it remains the most famous programme in the history of naval aviation. Soon after it was established a Phantom flown by one of its first students shot down a MiG-21, the first time a US Navy aircraft had succeeded in aerial combat in two years. Lord enjoyed the film Top Gun, but mused that it was "remarkable that any history book studiously avoids mention of any British involvement" and added that the film had not "given us due justice". He remained proud of his involvement, however, and during his time at Miramar had insisted on using the call sign "Brit 1". This meant that his wingman, though American, was forced to use the call sign "Brit 2".

Richard Stanley Lord was born on June 20 1936 in Johannesburg, where he was educated at Parktown Boys' High. His father, a soldier in the Imperial Light Horse, was captured at Tobruk and did not return from his POW camp until 1946. Richard's early fascination with flying was played out in imaginary games of "Biggles" high in the branches of a jacaranda tree. Lord was one of several English-speaking South Africans who, despairing in the 1950s and 1960s of a career in the Afrikaner-dominated South African Services, joined the Royal Navy. His initial naval training was at the Royal Naval Engineering College, Manadon, and he gained his wings in June 1959, flying Sea Venom and Sea Vixen fighters from the aircraft carriers Centaur, Victorious, Hermes and Ark Royal.

In 1966 he found himself flying from Ark Royal off Beira, Mozambique, to enforce the oil blockade of Rhodesia following its Unilateral Declaration of Independence. After one mission to intercept a suspected blockade-runner, he returned to find that the carrier had been overtaken by a tropical storm and that her flight deck was pitching through 65ft: his aircraft caught the third arrestor wire and damaged

its undercarriage – reckoned a near perfect landing in the conditions. Lord qualified as an Air Warfar Instructor and in 1968 began his two-year exchange tour with the US Navy, flying Skyhawks and Phantoms. On his return he was senior instructor with 764 Naval Air Squadron where he passed on the skills and confidence that had made such an impact in America.

He returned to South Africa in 1970, where he gained a civil licence and began to teach commercial pilots. But, as he said later, a visit to Cape Town by Ark Royal “struck a deep chord in my heart”, and rekindled his love of more adventurous flying. Though Brigadier General Dick Lord still was unable to pass the Afrikaans language test, he joined the South African Air Force, the second oldest air force in the world. With the SAAF Lord took part in the Border War, fought between South Africa and Cuban-backed Angola from 1966 to 1989. He flew Impala, Sabre and Mirage fighters against Cuban-piloted MiG fighters, and commanded No 1 Squadron SAAF from 1981 to 1983, later directing SAAF operations from Oshakati and Windhoek (now the capital of Namibia). He ended his career in charge of the Air Force Command Post in Pretoria, where he was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross for his role in helping to organise the rescue operations that saved all 581 passengers and crew of the Greek cruise-liner Oceanos, which sank off South Africa’s eastern coast on August 4, 1991.

Another highlight of his career was to organise, in 1994, the fly-past at the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa. Lord then retired as a Brigadier General and began writing about his life as an aviator. His books included *Fire, Flood and Ice* (1998), a description of SAAF search-and-rescue operations, conducted in conditions ranging from drought, to white-outs in Antarctica, to devastating deluges.

His biography, *From Tailhooker to Mudmover* (2000), which detailed his experiences as a pilot with the Royal Navy, the US Navy, and in the Border War, is regarded as one of the best and funniest books about flying in the 1950s and 1960s. He also wrote a history of the Mirage fighter in the SAAF, called *Vlamgat* (2000) or, in English, “flaming hole”. In *From Fledgling to Eagle: the South African Air Force during the Border War* (2008), Lord drew on his own diaries but also incorporated anecdotes from dozens of other aviators and squadrons, highlighting the close relationship which existed between the SAAF and South African Special Forces. Apart from flying, his passion was military music, his favourite piece being *Sarie Marais*, the march of the Royal Marines, which is based on an Afrikaner folk song. Dick Lord married, in 1968, June Beckett, a BOAC air-hostess. While he complained about the fantastical characterisations in *Top Gun*, she contended that the film’s portrayal of big-talking fighter pilots was extremely true-to-life. She survives him with their two sons. Brig Genl Dick Lord, born June 20 1936, died 26 October 2011.



1978 – SUID-AFRIKAANSE GRENSOORLOG: DIE VELDSLAG BY CASSINGA IN ANGOLA BEGIN

Suid-Afrika se tweede militêre aanval op SWAPO-kampe in Angola, Operasie Reindeer, het op 4 Mei 1978 op Cassinga begin. Dit was die eerste lugaanval in die Grensoorlog, met beskuldigings wat steeds gemaak word dat Cassinga 'n vlugtelingkamp was, eerder as 'n militêre opleidingskamp. Volgens die Angolese regering se amptelike verslag was daar slegs 12 soldate onder die 159 mans, 167 vroue en 298 kinders wat omgekom het. Buitelandse korrespondente het later gesê dat die slagoffers in twee massagrafte begrawe is.

Die Waarheids-en-Versoeningskommissie (WVK) het op sy beurt bevind dat die getalle nie geloofbaar is nie en dat die 12 soldate waarskynlik dui op regeringsoldate. Aanvalle is tydens Reindeer ook op Chetequera (bekend as Vietnam) gedoen waar meer as 300 mense dood en tussen 200 en 300 gevange geneem is. Volgens die WVK het sowat 1 200 Angolese, Namibiërs, Kubane en Suid-Afrikaners daardie dag by Cassinga en Chetequera omgekom en is meer as 600 gewond.

Die WVK het ook bevind dat die SAW volgens foto's en ander dokumente nie anders kon, as om te glo dat Cassinga 'n PLAN-opleidingskamp en dus 'n militêre teiken was nie. Die kommissie het wel bevind dat Operasie Reindeer 'n skending was van Angola se soewereiniteit wat gelei het tot menseregteskendings op die inwoners van Cassinga. Cassinga dag is 'n openbare vakansiedag in Namibië.

Lees ook <https://www.gelofteland.org/index.php/ons-geskiedenis/7503-kassinga-die-waarheid-oor-4-mei-1978>



WEG?

1 Valskerm Bateljon Paleton 2 is vroegaand besig om voor te berei vir inspeksie, dis 'n deurmekaar spul, die een makker maak bed-op die ander polish die vloer en ek is besig om geweer skoon te maak, dit raas en alles is deurmekaar!

"Staan op!" skree een ou... Almal spring op soos een man, doodse stilte volg "Greyling!!" Skree die korporaal "Ja!! koperaal!"

"Kom hier".... Ek draf na hom toe, kom tot halt en groet hard.

"Naand Koporaal!"

"Greyling die kolonel soek jou dadelik onder in die B-O-S."

Vir my koperaal?... Is ek skeel Greyling? Nee koporaal!

Die kolonel?... Is jy doof Greyling?... Nee koporaal!

"Wat is fout met Vossie?" vra ek myself, die ou kan my nie eers in die oë kyk nie, hy lyk soos n bang hond wat so pas pak gekry het. Ek bêre my geweer en verlaat die Bangelou. Greyling jou kop is mos reg aangeskroef, hoekom sal die kolonel jou soek? Iets is nie pluis nie, intendeel daars fout.

Stadig, maar onseker draf ek af ondertoe. Ek kom tot halt. "Naand kolonel".. en sien die ou in die pers uitrusting.

"Ontspan Greyling" sê die kolonel beleefd, ek gaan staan half ongemaklik, gemaklik. Eers begin die kolonel gesels en toe die ou in die pers uitrusting. Al twee is ongemaklik en dit voel of ek enige oomblik gaan wakker word, dis net 'n droom, nog 'n droom...'... 'n lang stilte volg....

"Greyling is jy oraait" "Ja kolonel?" Ek doen 'n omkeer en stap uit, terug bangelou toe.

Bewaar die donner wat nou vir my sê ek moet draf! Ek sal hom net daar en dan aanrand!

Het dit so lank geneem? Was ek so lank by die kolonel? dat almal al slaap, nee hulle is wakker ek kan 'n koppiespeld hoor val, toe ek instap. Vossie sit op my bed. Ek verstaan toe sy gedrag 'n paar oomblikke gelede, hy het geweet, almal weet, hy mompel 'n paar woorde en verlaat die bangelou.

Ek gaan lê op my bed kyk na die plafon, om die waarheid te sê, my oë vasgevang in die floresenlig bokant my. Ek begin dink, word later kwaad, vrae beweeg soos blits voor my, nog nie eers gedink aan 'n antwoord of die volgende is daar! Die lig, ek sien nie meer die lig,.... my keel! My keel is seer, dit voel of my mangels so pas verwyder is. Ek knip my oë en voel die trane afloop teen my slape.

Onbewus van die tydsverloop onthou ek van hom, hy was uit vir die aand, en is salig bewus enige iets? Ek weet dit is my plig. Sy deur is gesluit, ek klop, geen antwoord. Ek gaan sit plat op die vloer van die Onder- offisiere menasie se gang. Tyd is nie 'n faktor, tonele, vrae dit is al. Ek skat dit moet nou ongeveer 12uur die nag wees toe ek die breistem hoor, dis Landman Staf Landman, ek lig my kop. Wat maak jy hier? Vra hy, e... ek soek vir korporaal Greyling. Man jy kan wag tot more, jy weet jy mag nie hier wees nie. Ek kyk hom in sy oë, hy weet hy moet padgee, hy draai om en loop na sy kamer. Kyk weer na die vloer en merk n klomp druppels op die vloer.

Ek hoor iemand die trappe opkom, kyk op my horlosie, my oë voel hard, droog, ek sien dis omtrent 3uur, weer die knop in my keel. Yes Peet! Wat maak jy hier? Ek sê niks. Wat's fout? vra hy weer, ek sê niks. Hy sluit sy kamer deur oop, ek gaan sit op sy bed nadat hy vir my gese het dat ek moet inkom. Wat is fout? vra hy weer, vir die eerste keer kyk ek na Chris en hy is half onduidelik voor my, my oë blink alweer.

Hy's weg! Wat bedoel jy hy's weg..... Ek het dit geweet dit gaan nie werk nie, ek het vir ma gesê dit kan nie werk nie, drie broers dieselfde tyd in die army, dit kon nie werk nie.

Hy's weg Chris en hy het nie eers kom groet nie.....

Jy bedoel..... Frikkie... is hy?... Ja man Frikkie is weg ons gaan hom nooit weer sien nie. Hy's weg!"

Dit is stil, jy hoor net 'n paar voetstappe op die gruis van die Heldeakker, hier en daar iemand wat snik en 'n paar mense wat onbedaarlik sagies huil. Ek kyk net af grond toe vir die gat hier voor my. Oranje, Wit en Blou, Ons Landsvlag is mooi... probeer ek my aandag weglei van die werklikheid.

Die vlag is netjies oor die kis gespan.

So paar meter van ons begin trompette die "Laaste sinjaal" speel en die kis begin stadig en statig die aarde insak.

My lyf begin ruk, my keel is seer van al die dwang, ek kan dit nie meer terughou nie. Ek huil soos 'n kind onbedaarlik.

Daar sak hy, hy's weg ek sal hom nooit weer sien, nooit weer met hom kan praat nie.....

Ja.... hy is weg, weg vir altyd,

En ek, ek het hom lief gehad.





OMAPANDA

It was October 1979 and I had been at Ondangwa for a week and was as green as they come. This was my second bush tour as a Puma co-pilot, with the first being a month spent at Mkwazine in Rhodesia, which was a low key affair as the preparations for the general elections were well under way and all sides kept to the cease fire agreement. Strictly speaking, it didn't really count. We shared the facilities on a beautiful farm, and a typical day involved tennis and swimming, five star food prepared by the Rhodesian mess, and evenings spent drinking beer measured in gallonage, listening to music and talking shit. Ondangwa, on the other hand, was literally at the coal face of our war in South West Africa and Angola.

I remember lying in the sun in my speedo in the late morning. There must have been a dozen of us, a mixture of pilots, doctors and a few Bats, lazing around waiting either for something to happen or lunch. Polla, my Puma commander, had a small two way radio that was used to monitor the ops and control tower frequencies that crackled occasionally. It was a normal day. Plenty of aircraft movements and the whole base teeming with activity.

Suddenly the intensity on the radio increased dramatically. Everyone turned their attention to the radio.

Then it came: "S and R crews report to ops." That was us.

The next few minutes were a blur. An Impala, the jet aircraft we used for ground attack, had been shot down over a place called Omapanda in Angola. We scrambled getting our kit together. I went straight to the aircraft and did the preflight and start up checks while Polla went to the ops room for a briefing. Within minutes Polla was strapping in and the rotors were winding up to the singing of the turbines. A group of Bats, led by 2Lt John Parkin, piled in the back and we were off. Search and rescue involved two choppers. The idea was that one chopper did the rescue while the second one acted as a standby and backup.

The flying time was only about twenty minutes to Omapanda with the cutline, or border between the two countries, about half way. As we approached the cutline I could see a column of smoke far in the distance and the radio activity was intense.

According to Giep Vermeulen, the wingman, his formation leader, Aubrey Bell, had been shot up over the enemy camp, and his Impala had become uncontrollable. He ejected at tree top height and landed very close to the camp boundary. His aircraft hit the ground about a mile away. Giep had used the remains of his ammo to fire at the camp, and he reported frenzied activity. In the mean time two Imps were scrambled at Ondangwa to relieve Giep who at this stage had run out of ammo and barely had enough fuel to get back to base.

As we approached the camp Giep called us visual and talked us into the LZ. On long finals we got Aubrey's parachute in sight and I did the landing checks. Then I heard a sound it I hadn't heard before. An irregular pok-pok, much like someone tapping the side of the Puma with a hammer. We were drawing fire, and the closer we got to the parachute the more intense it became. We landed and the Bats were out in a split second. We took off and turned to the right, over the camp, and did an orbit. The camp was in a state of chaos. The gooks were running around like ants and seemed totally disorganised. The fresh Imps reported vehicles moving through the bush towards the wrecked Imp, no doubt thinking Aubrey would be there, and a bush fire was adding to the confusion. In retrospect all these things worked in our favour.

As we turned in on our second approach to the LZ we again used Aubrey's parachute as a reference for the landing. The intensity of the bullets hitting our Puma ratcheted up a few notches as the distinctive 'pok, pok' was a bit like hail hitting a car. The approach to landing in a Puma is a very deliberate affair as the airframe is designed for speed and carrying weight, so we were a bit like sitting ducks. It seemed like hours before we finally touched the ground. The confusion that followed is impossible to describe.

Above us the two Impalas providing top cover called over the radio. "You're drawing RPG fire!" one of them shouted. To my right the trenches of the SWAPO camp were about 50m away and the enemy seemed to be streaming into them. The Bats were shooting toward the trench line with great effect and some of the enemy up and ran back into the camp, and quite a few of them fell in the hail of bullets. Overhead the other Puma swooped low over us trying to divert enemy fire away from us. I saw Aubrey supported by two Bats scrambling out of the bush and bundled into the back of our Puma, followed by the remaining troops.



We took off with great authority. Luckily the Puma was relatively light. Polla swung the nose around and we accelerated hard across the camp with a steep angle of bank. The fire we drew became a cacophony from hell. They were also firing 14.5 ack-ack at us, a new, throaty sound that made my spine tingle.

Then, in the back of the chopper, one of the Bats screamed, "Fuck it's sore, fuck it's sore." Gibby Gibson had been hit in the thigh and forearm. His mates scrambled to help him.

We turned onto the road on the east side of the camp when Polla's head whipped back. In a split second I looked at him and realised he had been hit on the cheek by a bullet and his headset had shifted so that the one ear muff was over his nose and the other sat on the back of his head. With the shock he let go of the controls and we headed for the ground. Without thinking I grabbed the controls and pulled the nose up. The Puma leapt skyward and shaved the top of a large tree, shuddering as it clawed for air.

And then we were away. Polla quickly gathers himself. The bullet had just grazed his cheek, an absolute miracle, and but for a few millimetres the story would have been tragically different. He took back the controls.

Then the other Puma told us we were on fire! As any pilot knows this is in the top three of bad news. But there was no smell of smoke and no warning lights? Then we realised that there were so many holes in the fuel tanks (under the floor in a Puma) that the leaking fuel looked like smoke!

We landed in Oshkati about twenty minutes later and shut the chopper down as the two wounded (Aubrey had a broken ankle) were ambulated to the hospital.

As the Puma stood there the fuel was still pouring out of the bottom like a garden water feature. Polla decided to fly back to Ondangwa, about five minutes away, so we restarted and headed back. There must have been a hundred people waiting for us when we landed all cheering and slapping us on the back. Man, did we party that night!

So what did I learn?

1. Polla Kruger had balls made of cast iron. That was not the first time he proved it to me.
2. The next morning both Pumas were being stripped down before being flown home in a Hercules. I went to have a look and one of the engineers poured a handful of shrapnel into my hand. They were tracers taken out of the fuel tanks. I found out then why the Puma has bladder tanks. Because they had no air in them the tracers didn't combust the fuel.

The Bats are an uncommon breed of human. Those lads were doing National Service and all teenagers. I found out recently the Omapanda terrorist camp was occupied by about 800 troops. And just six Bats took them on!

None of this would have been possible if not for the exceptional quality of our training. I had the pleasure of flying Elise Botha, wife of our then President P.W. Botha, around and we did a night landing in Margate during a total power failure. It tested my skills to the maximum. After we landed I felt a hand on my arm as she drew me close. "Now I know we have the best pilots in the world," she whispered. God bless you Tannie Elise. Those few words made a lifelong impression on me. I have a feeling we had the best Parabats as well.



ACCELERATED FREEFALL TRAINING

In South African skydiving circles, AFF, or Accelerated Freefall training, remains the fastest and most effective form of skydive training, and there are numerous occasions during which AFF was attempted on a short term basis in civilian skydiving.

A visit from UK instructor / examiner Pete Allen in the late 80's resulted in a group from the Cape, Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg being certified under the UK AFF certification, a few full-time AFF schools began to operate.

The real truth of the matter however, is that the civvies were way behind the 8-ball.

The first AFF in the country, was run by South African Special Force Operators, members of the unit that was formerly known as 1 Recce Commando, based at the Bluff in Durban.

Operator Frans Van Dyk tells the story, taken with permission from the April newsletter of the South African Special Forces Association 'Fort Outeniqua' branch. **(Jeff Ayliffe)**

"During 1977 WO2 Koos Moorcroft was deployed in Rhodesia with the Selous Scouts. There he met an American, John Urley, who served with the Selous Scouts. Urley told Koos about a technique they used at the US Marines to speed-up freefall training.

Moorcroft realised the potential of this kind of training, and he request permission from Cmdt Jakes Swart to try it out. Permission was granted.

A freefall course was scheduled to try out this new technique, called accelerated freefall. The methodology of this is that the freefall students started jumping at 10 000 feet from the first jump. This is where the harness-jumps come in. Experienced freefall instructors do a harness-jump with the students during the first 2-4 jumps whereafter students go solo.

During the harness-jumps the instructors hold -on to the parachute harness of the jumper and ensure that he falls stable and that he is aware of his surroundings. At approximately 3500 feet the instructor indicates to the jumper that he must pull the ripcord to deploy his parachute. This technique worked well, and the student progressed much faster in executing various manoeuvres in the air before deploying his parachute.

At 1 Parachute Battalion the freefall instructors were very sceptical about this kind of freefall training. WO1 Johnny Kieser the RSM of 1 Parachute Battalion and a highly experienced parachutist did not like the accelerated freefall way of training.

Koos Moorcroft arranged for Kieser to do a standard freefall course parallel to an accelerated freefall course. The training took place at 1 Recce.

Johnny Kieser and his course were still busy doing static line freefall jumps while Moorcroft and his jumpers advanced quickly and executing various freefall manoeuvres. On completion of the training Johnny Kieser admits that accelerated freefall is the way to go. However, the Parachute Battalion never accepted accelerated freefall.

This group of Recce jumpers were trained by using the accelerated freefall technique and progressed to high altitude freefall jumps. For years to come the Recce freefall instructors used this technique to train high altitude jumpers." - Frans Van Dyk.

Frans Van Dyk, Jimmy Oberholzer, Koos Moorcroft and many of the Recce operator's became great friends of the Pietermaritzburg Parachute Club, and other SA clubs, and many top civilian skydivers developed bonds of friendship with the recce's.

Nothing was ever spoken about the first AFF, and it remains a testament to the unit's secrecy during the bush war era, that the true birth of AFF was kept so silent, even whilst taking place right under our noses!



Standing: Harry Botha (2 Recce), Frans van Dyk, Koos Moorcroft, Jimmy Oberholzer.
Kneeling: Spik Botha and Ralph (The Rat) Moore (all 1 Recce).



A one-man army

Gurkha used 400 bullets, 17 grenades, a mine and even a tripod to defeat 30 Taliban on his own

Courageous: Acting Sgt Dipprasad Pun came under fire from the enemy for 15 minutes
Picture: PA

A GURKHA who fired 400 bullets and 17 grenades while single-handedly fighting off 30 Taliban militants is to receive the second highest military honour for bravery.

Acting Sgt Dipprasad Pun, 31, was on sentry duty alone at night when he discovered two insurgents preparing to plant a bomb outside.

As enemy fighters launched wave after wave of attacks, the 1.7m (5ft 7in) Gurkha opened fire with a machine gun, a rifle and a grenade launcher.

When he exhausted all ammunition he tried to batter one militant with a sandbag before bludgeoning him with a machine gun tripod, as he roared in Nepali: 'I will kill you!'

The soldier, from the Royal Gurkha Rifles, was alerted to the enemy when he heard what he thought was a cow or a donkey near his sentry post.

But, when he climbed on to the roof,

By Fred Attewill

he found two insurgents digging a trench to lay an improvised explosive device at the checkpoint's front gate.

He then found himself pinned down under attack from rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47s for more than 15 minutes, as he frantically radioed for back-up.

At first, he was afraid but he said yesterday: 'As soon as I opened fire, that was gone - before they kill me I have to kill some.'

When the fight was over, his company commander arrived, casually slapped him on the back and asked if he was OK.

The third-generation Gurkha, from Kent, will receive the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross, one of 136 awards to be announced today.



Dit het als in 1961 begin...

DIE ware rede hockom Suid-Afrikaanse boere in die moeilikheid is, het alles in 1961 begin.

Toe ons geldstelsel van ponde na rande verander het, het my oortrokke rekening verdubbel.

Ek was net besig om daaraan gewoond te raak, toe bring hulle kilogramme in die plek van ponde en my oes verminder dus met die helfte.

Toe verander hulle die reënval van duime na millimeters en ons het sedert daardie tyd nog nie weer 'n duim reën gehad nie.

Wat doen hulle toe? Hulle bring 'n ding genaamd celsius in en die

temperatuur het met 20 grade verminder.

Geen wonder my mielies wil nie groei nie.

En asof dit nie genoeg was nie, verander hulle my grond na hektaar en my plaas verminder met die helfte van wat ek oorspronklik gehad het.

Dis toe dat ek besluit om my plaas te verkoop.

Ek het pas my plaas in die mark gesit, toe verander hulle myle na kilometers en nou is my plaas so ver uit die dorp dat niemand hom wil koop nie.

En hulle noem dit vooruitgang!



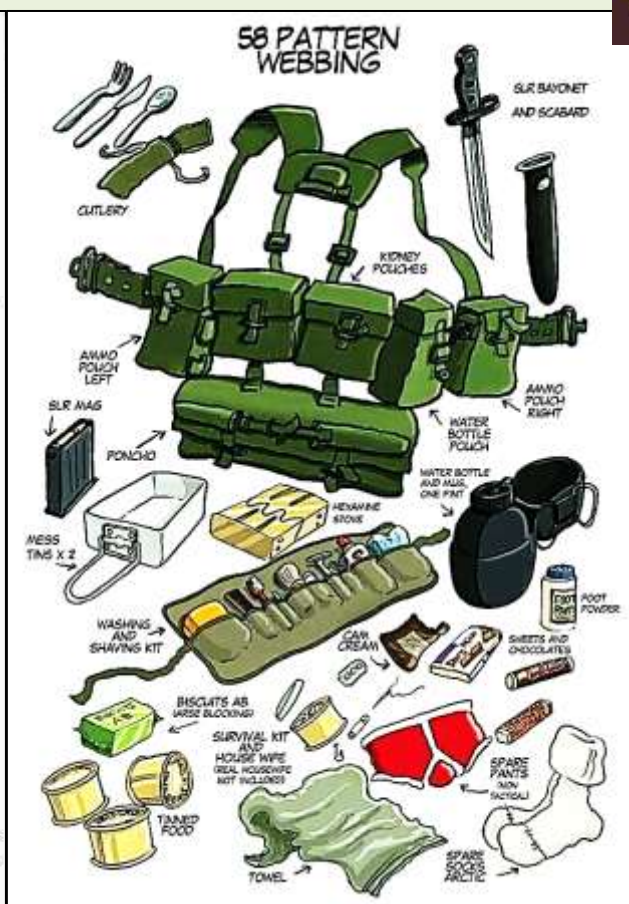
On July 18, 1948, Operation "Little" Vittles (the special name given to the candy parachutes) took to the air. Colonel Gail Halvonsen kept his promise to the children, dropping parachutes of sweets from the sky. People began calling him Uncle "Wiggly Wings" and The Berlin Candy Bomber because of these heroic acts of kindness. (Internet.).



A01 (Oom Colin) Deyzel (RIV) is 'n ou legende wat die oudste lid, 46 jaar oud, was toe hy die twee weke PT kursus en Springkursus gedoen het. Oom Colin het ook in die LWT gesorg dat die wiele draai.

Hy was ook 'n grootgees by die afrigting van 1 Valsk Bn se Bokspan wat menigmaal die inter-eenheid boks gewen het.

Ons het altyd onderlangs vir mekaar gesê Oom Colin het nie 'n wielspanner nodig om 'n Samil se wheel nuts vas te draai nie hy, sy arms en bo arms was so groot en sterk dat hy dit sommer met die hand doen.



Badger	Bear	Beaver	Cat	Cow	Crow
Dog	Duck	Eagle	Ferret	Fox	Frog
Gerbil	Goat	Hedgehog	Heron	Horse	Lynx
Marten	Moose	Mouse	Otter	Owl	Partridge
Pig	Pigeon	Rabbit	Raccoon	Rat	Sparrow
Red Deer	Roe Deer	Sheep	Squirrel	Weasel	Wolf



SPESIALE MAGTE SKOOL
BASIESE VALSKERMSPRING KURSUS
REC 8291
Tydperk: 10 Mei – 18 Junie 1982



SPECIAL FORCES SCHOOL
BASIC PARACHUTE JUMPING COURSE
REC 8291
Period: 10 May – 18 June 1982



Standing L to R: Capt C Oelofse, 2Lt CAH Pearse, 2Lt GP Human, 2Lt AM van den Aardweg, Maj A Retief (Instr), Lt JH Kotze, Capt PA Myburgh, 2Lt DE Erasmus, 2Lt CF Strauss, 2Lt CJ Blunden

Kneeling L to R: 2Lt CJR van Jaarsveld, 2Lt CVE van der Walt, Lt G van Blerk, 2Lt JA van Rensburg, Cpl J Botes

Instructors: Col JN de Jager, Maj A Retief, Maj WP van der Linde, WO1 T Floyd





Parabat Reunion 2025

Date: 01 November 2025

Time: 10h00

Cost: R100 per person & any groceries
Lunch is included in entrance fee

Address: Schoemansville Resort
Corner Waterfront & Marais street
Hartbeespoort

RSVP: Email latest 30 September 2025 to
parabat@inhishonour.co.za

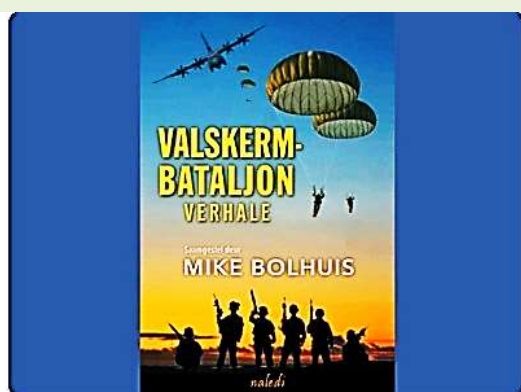
Contact: Mike 071 595 6300
Dianne 082 442 5807





CASH BAR ONLY





Valskerm-Bataljon verhale

Valskerm-Bataljon verhale features real stories by real Parabats – the elite paratroopers who fell through the sky and fought on the ground. From the thrill and fear before a jump to the camaraderie that can only be forged in the heat of action, these are stories of courage, perseverance, danger, humour, grit, and loss. Some will make you sit up straight; others will make you think deeply. Honest. Raw. Straightforward. *Valskerm-Bataljon verhale* brings their experiences to life – just as they remember them.

R40 Naledi Uitgewers 19 Jul 11:00
ATKV Boeke-oase
Mike Bolhuis, Lieb Liebenberg, Elzabé Zietsman
60 min Afrikaans



CATCH US THE SHOW ON 6 & 7 SEPTEMBER 2025

















CMVO Golf Day 2025

12 September 2025

Services Golf Club, R3 000 per 4 ball

Willoughby 079 749 0019

Entries: golfday-2025@cmvo.org.za

A COY 1975 SAVANNAH BATS



PROGRAM 2 SEPTEMBER TO 7 SEPTEMBER 2025

2 SEPTEMBER 2025

15H00 - 18H00 START BOOKING IN AT DORINGBOS LODGE

18H00 OFFICIAL WELCOME AND PRESENTATION OF 50TH-YEAR CAP AT JAKKELBESSIE LAPA WITH BOEREWORS BRAAI PAP, AND ROLLS TILL LATE

Reino will contribute the wors (or bring your own chop, or steak to braai)

3 SEPTEMBER 2025

06H00 - 08H00 COFFEE AND RUSKS

08H00 - 10H00 COWBOY BREAKFAST (BAKED BEANS, EGGS, BACON, AND TOAST)

10H00 - 13H00 LEAVE TO ATTEND A TOUR OF 1 PARACHUTE BN AND TO TAKE A GROUP FOTO AT THE NEW HANGER.)

13H00 - SPITBRAAI TILL LATE Jabus and Reino contribution + Sivvie to contribute Piglet. Side dishes: chicken pieces, roasted veggies, baby potatoes, and curry noodles salad, plus Kevin's special bread.

4 SEPTEMBER 2025

06H00 - 08H00 COFFEE AND RUSKS

08H00 - 10H00 COWBOY BREAKFAST (BAKED BEANS, EGGS, BACON, AND TOAST)

10H00 - TILL LATE POTJIE COMPETITION:

Six teams according to battle groups during 75, i.e. Savannah, Alpha, Bravo, Zulu, Fox-bat, and Orange Groups

Each group is responsible for bringing their own ingredients for their potjie.

5 SEPTEMBER 2025

06H00 - 10H00 COFFEE AND RUSKS

10H00 - LEAVE FOR PRETORIA ALL BROTHERS WHO WILL ATTEND THE SAVANNAH FUNCTIONS AND LAST PARADE

15H00 - BOOK IN AT BIRCHWAY LODGE

16H00 - UNTIL LATE ATTEND THE SAVANNAH SKOUER SKUUR FUNCTION AT FORT SCHANSKOP (bring and braai)

6 SEPTEMBER 2025

06H00 - 8H30 BREAKFAST all to contribute something according to their taste

08H30 Join to watch the rugby game on the Big Screen from Auckland NZ, Springboks vs All Blacks in the Voortrekker Hall at Pretoria Monument.

12H00 - TILL LATE ATTENDING THE SAVANNAH SPITBRAAI AT FORT SCHANSKOP

7 SEPTEMBER 2025

07H00 - 08H00 BREAKFAST all to contribute something according to their taste

08H00 - BOOKOUT FROM BEIRCHWAY LODGE AND LEAVE FOR PARADE

09H00 - ATTEND THE LAST PARADE AT THE SAVANNAH CALTROP AT THE MONUMENT

12H00 - ALL DISBURSE HOME

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.

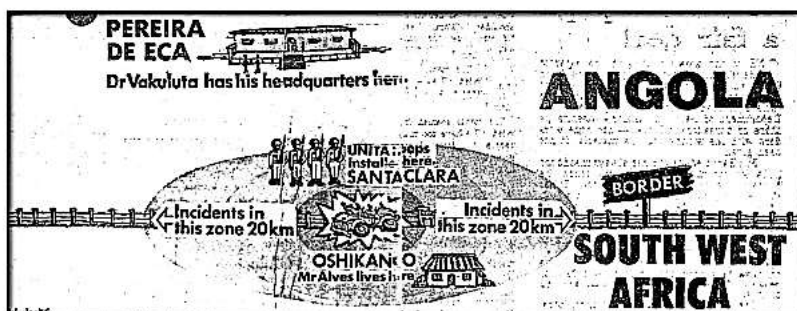
Now grey of hair, I raise a glass. To fallen
friends, and peace at last.

It was written by my son Richard Koller and I
(Peter Koller) with the maroon beret and flag.
It was the PVO 10-year parade or the annual
parade held at the Voortrekker Monument on
Sunday, 23 February 2025.



1.

[Shooting incident between SA Army and Unita]



The Star's Africa News Service

PEREIRA DE ECA - The shots which crackled out in the dry heat here across the Angola/South West Africa border last month seriously but temporarily disrupted the otherwise peaceable relations between the UNITA liberation army and the South African authorities.

The shooting was confirmed by the Portuguese governor of Cunene Province, Mr Peasanha Viegas.

Patrols

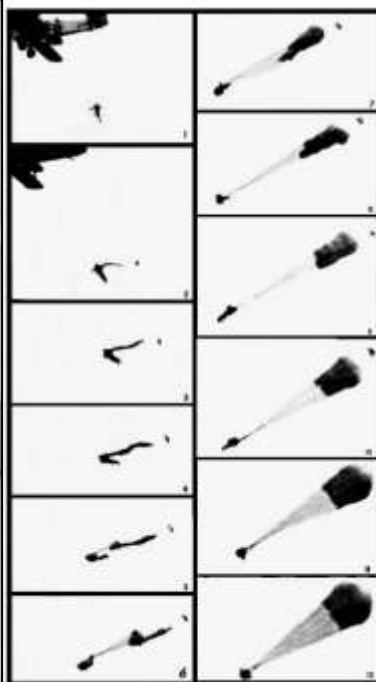
But all he would say was: "Two patrols were passing each other and inexplicably began firing at each other."

"Our patrol suffered no casualties. Such incidents are deplored. We do not start them, but when fired on we have no option but to retaliate."

Details were supplied by Dr Antonio Vakulukuta, leader of UNITA in Cunene and a tough veteran of the bush war against the Portuguese Army.

The incident started when a UNITA patrol - (the movement's men continuously patrol their side of the common border with South West Africa) - set out in three jeeps on what was described as a routine exercise.

They set off in the direction of the wood processing factory owned by a local businessman, Mr Antonio "Banana" Alves.



LUGMAG MUSEUM SWARTKOP LUGHAW

In die museum gebou by Swartkop Lughawe is daar nog steeds hake in die dak waaraan valskerms gehang het. Wanneer dit so ingerig is, is nog nie bekend nie. Die verpakking, herstel en maak van valskerm in die vertrek is gestaak toe die verantwoordelikheid na 1 Valskerm in Bloemfontein verskuif het einde 1969.

In die uitstalling is daar 'n naaimasjiene wat gebruik was vir maak en herstel van valskerms so gesien in drie fotos. Links 'n skildery van hoe valskerms aan gepas word.

My vermoede is dat die eers was vir valskerm vir vlieëniers, want in 1927 het Pierre van Ryneveld reeds die eerste valskerm sprong gedoen by Swartkop. Foto bo middle. Sy eerste sprong is gedoen in 1926 in Britanje

Dukubat 04/06/2025



01/07/2025 – 31/09/2025



Generaal Du Plessis (93) in middel - 1 Para Bn stigterslid (saam ander) - nou Vrydagaand in Bloem - Recce Storieaand - 9 Dae Oorlog en einde van Bos Oorlog te Tempe. 28/03/20258



Bo: Jan Bierman en onder Johan met SAP lid by die Koevoet gedenkdiens.



Left: Taking the liberty of having an impromptu medal parade on LA sidewalk presenting Cassinga and Rhodesia veteran Parabat Derek Greeff his looong awaited Southern Africa 'Cross Border' Operations medal.

Granger Korff 14 Feb



PTA CANOPY 11/04/2025





Twee ou skydivers bymekaar....een met hare en baard. ander met net n halwe baard! Wally Schutte een van my oud 1977 deel 1's mag studente verras my vandag. Dit was 45 jaar gelede!! lewers in die 90's het ek n tandem saam met jou gedoen uit 'n diensbare lugmag casa op tempe...was baie lekker om net weer oor snellers, chutes en velskoenveters te gesels!!! Mooiloop maters!! **Quintin Lategan 11/04/2025**



Bo: Genie bats reunie 2025 Boland canopy 18 Apr.
Below: Happy birthday to **Fanie Joubert**, H Coy CSM. Celebrated his 80th today with some H Coy & 32 members. All the best Sergeant Major. **Chris Beath 20/04/2025**





Rustenburg Canopy. 23/04/2025. Vanaand se troopie. Dankie vir die manne wat daar was. Dit was 'n baie lekker kuier. Drie nuwe manne het gisteraand saam gekuier het. Van nou af die eerste donderdag elke maand. Paratrooper brotherhood is die enigste ware brotherhood. Onder: ANZAC parade dag in Sydney Australia **25/04/2025**





Dankie Manie Grove. 28/04/2025

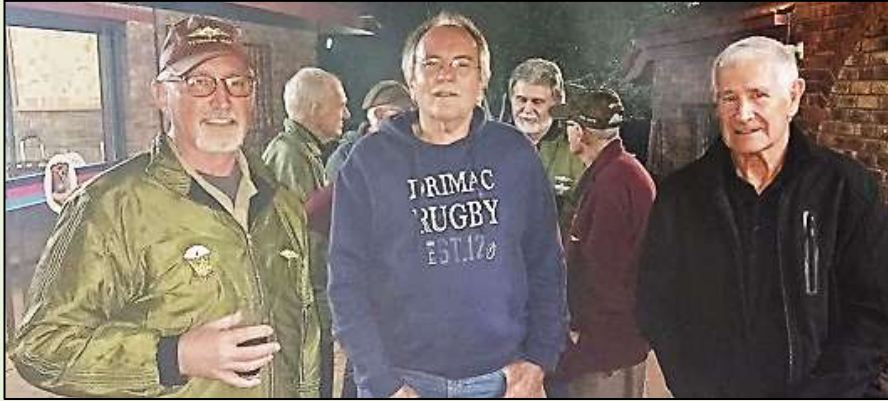




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KZN







Laeveld Canopy kuier 08/05/2025 Regs: Ons sien mekaar seker vir die eerste keer in 43 jaar. JoJo Bruyns toe ons saam was by Spes Magte. Dukubat. 28/04/2025

Reünie 45jr Dewetsdorp 8 Mei 2025



PUIK PPM MILITÊRE FEES - 'N DAG OM TE ONTHOU 17/05/2025

Wat 'n ongelooflike dag was dit nie vandag by die Voortrekkermonument tydens die PPM Militêre Fees nie! In ware Parabat-gees het die Parabat Veterane Organisasie (PVO) in groot getalle opgedaag en die dag ondersteun. Dankie aan al die manne wat kom wys het wat kameraadskap beteken.

Die atmosfeer was vol opwinding. Kinders en grootmense het in die valskermharnasse gehang, foto's geneem en ervaar hoe dit voel om 'n Parabat te wees - ten minste vir 'n oomblik!



Die glimlagte, die entoesiasme en die opwinding op elke gesig was opmerklik. Dit was hartlik om te sien hoe die jonger geslag met verwondering luister na stories en gewys is hoe dinge gedoen word - reg en regop, soos net 'n Parabat kan.

Die PVO het ook die handgranaat gooi stalletjie beman, en die jongspan is gewys hoe 'n handgranaat reg te gooi! Hulle is gou reggehelp om krom arms reguit te maak en die granaat te bou! Daar was gelukkig geen ongevalle nie.

Die dag se uitstallings, vertonings en stalletjies het iets vir elkeen aangebied. Daar was iets vir almal om te geniet.

Die groot verteenwoordiging van die Parabats en lojaliteit het ons trots gemaak!

Dit is hierdie kameraadskap wat maak dat ons erfenis voortleef -

Groot dank aan die PPM bestuur en span wat 'n eersteklas dag gereël het - Ons veterane se saak is reg - ons vertel self ons storie!

Ons maak volgende jaar weer so!

Parabat-groete!

Ex Alto Vincimus





Bats span by PPM en regs Genl Lawrens Smit (PPM) en Genl Staperberg.



32 BN GEDENKDIENS 18/05/2025





RMVO gala aand 31/05/2025



Manne met
genl Doep se
verjaarsdag
en 'n klein
geskenkie
aan hom
word
oorhandig.





RMVOSA CMVOSA

JAARLIKSE HERDENKINGSDIENS 01/06/2025 **ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE**









Mosselbaai. 01/06/2025



Ek het in 2023 die haelgeweer Wêreld kampioenskap vir praktiese haelgeweer in Thailand gewen nadat ek laas in 2002 op die vlak deelgeneem het. Destyds as Springbok, hierdie keer vir Britanje as super senior. (Bo 60).

Ek het nou net 'n tweede Wêreldkampioenskap in Czech Republiek gewen, weereens vir Britanje as super senior, maar die keer in "mini-rifle". Sover my kennis strek is ek die enigste SA wat twee wêreld kampioenskappe kon wen in praktiese skiet en in twee verskillende afdelings. In Britanje is ek die enigste persoon wat dit kon regkry om 'n praktiese skiet wêreldkampioenskap te kon wen.

Hier is ek saam met die nuutste junior Springbokke. Ek was die oudste (en enigste) Bok daar. Die res almal Proteas.

Nick du Plessis (Bat 1983) 05/06/2025



Potchefstroom lughawe 07/06/2025



PTA CANOPY 06/06/2025









Louis Massyn completes his 50th Comrades | Comrades Marathon 2025

Louis Massyn writes himself into Comrades history as he becomes the first athlete to complete 50 marathons.



DATES TO REMEMBER

- 11 Jul Canopy
- 8 Aug Canopy
- 2 -7 Sept Savannah Bats
- 6-7 Sept 4 x4
- 7 Sept Savannah Memorial
- 12 Sept Canopy
- 12 Sept CMVO golf day



SAPPERS MEMORIAL 08/06/2025



LAEVELD CANOPY 13/06/2025





Lede van die SA Antartika klub verader by Gemvillage. Agter tweede van regs is Paul J. Els, Gough Eiland 1968/69. **22/06/2025.**



Bats Noord Wes Potch **25/06/2025.**

Els gee 'n stem aan veterane se stryd

Elize Parker Rekort 28/06/2025

Paul J. Els skryf nie boeke om helde van soldate te maak nie. Hy skryf om die waarheid te bewaar. Sy werk is 'n monument vir diegene wat nooit een gekry het nie. Dalk, in elke bladsy, vind 'n veteraan 'n bietjie van sy stem terug.

Tydens Paul J. Els se navorsing oor die Bosoorlog het hy baie teenkantiing ondervind om iets daaroor te publiseer. Vir hom was dit nie aanvaarbaar nie en met die gedagte dat hierdie geskiedenis vir die nageslag bewaar moet word, het hy daaroor begin boeke publiseer.

Wanneer 'n mens met skrywer Paul J. Els gesels, hoor jy nie net die stories van die verlede nie: jy hoor die stem van 'n hele geslag soldate wie se stemme stil geword het, of dalk nooit eers gehoor is nie.

Vir Els is die geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika se militêre verlede nie net 'n versameling datums en plekke nie, maar lewende herinneringe, menslik, rou en dikwels pynlik en daarom des te meer werd om vas te lê.

"Toe ek in 1996 klaargemaak het met die Weermag na 32 jaar diens," vertel Els, "het ek stories en foto's gehad oor Spesiale Magte (Recce) waarin ek vir 'n paar jaar gedien het. Ek het begin uitkyk vir boeke oor die Weermag se dienende eenhede en gevind dat daar min boeke beskikbaar was behalwe oor die Burgermag en Kommando's. Dit was vir my onaanvaarbaar."

Paul J. Els, skrywer: Daar was 'n behoefte, nie net by homself nie, maar by 'n groter gemeenskap van veterane, dat die ware stories van die Bosoorlog vasgelê moes word.

Nie vir glorie of sensasie nie, maar omdat, soos hy dit stel, "ons geskiedenis vir ons nageslag bewaar moet word".

Hierdie dryfkrag het gelei tot die publikasie van sy eerste boek in 2000 en vandag is daar reeds tientalle publikasies agter sy naam.

Els se boeke is nie net 'n lys van operasies of wapenstelsels nie.

Die boeke toon ook 'n sagter blik op soldate en hul lewens. Dit is juis hierin waar hul trefkrag lê.

Ten spyte van sy agtergrond in hoogs-geheime operasies in vyf Afrika-lande, weet hy watter stories vertel kan word en watter nie.

"Omdat ek 'n uiters geheime klaring gehad het, het dit my voorberei om nie na sekere gebeure te verwys of sekere manne se dade te gebruik nie."

In sy boek, Ons was daar Sektor 10, kry ons 'n blik op die persoonlike verhale agter die uniforms.

Een persoonlike verhaal wat hy vertel, was toe hy 'n makker verloor het in die bos.

"Sy laaste woorde aan my die vorige aand was: 'As die patroon jou naam op het, kan jy hom nie keer nie'. Daardie woorde bly by jou."

Vir Els is die grootste wanopvatting oor die Bosoorlog en die soldate wat daaraan deelgeneem het, dat dit as "onnodig" of selfs "sinloos" afgemaak word.

Dis 'n persepsie wat hy daagliks moes regstel in sy rol by die Pro Patria Museum by Fort Schanskop, 'n bestemming waar besoekers gereeld erken hulle het nie werklik geweet waaroor die oorlog gegaan het nie.

Dis juis daardie onkunde, veral onder jonger generasies, wat hy teen wil veg met feite, stories en getuïenisse.

"Hulle het 'n wanbegrip oor wat werklik gebeur het, en ek gee vir hulle die feite."

Wanneer mens Els vra oor die kultuurverskille tussen die verskeie eenhede, byvoorbeeld die Recces teenoor die Valskerm Bataljon (Bats), is dit duidelik dat hy groot respek het vir die unieke uitdagings van elke eenheid.

"Daar is dalk 700 kandidate vir Recce-keuring, maar net 16 slaag. Dis 'n ander tipe mens, ja. Maar as jy nie daardie paal gehaal het nie en jy dien in 'n ander eenheid as stoorman, sjef, of drywer, maak jy jouself tuis. Jy bou jou trots daarop."



Wat betref die proses om veterane se stories te bekom, erken Els dat dit nie altyd maklik is nie, veral toe hy begin het.

Hy verduidelik wanneer jy die benadering verander van "vertel my jou storie" na "vertel my wat in jou eenheid gebeur het," begin die herinneringe stadig vloei.

Selfs al is die boeke nie altyd gefokus op individuele stories nie, weerspieël hulle 'n kollektiewe geskiedenis van 'n samehorigheid wat nie verdwyn het nie.

Skrywer Paul J. Els het gevoel die verhale van die vrouesoldate tydens die Eerste- en Tweede Wêreldoorloë sowel as ander konflikte was nie goed geboekstaaf nie en het hom dit ten doel gestel om ook die verhale te vertel.

Tydens Paul J. Els se navorsing oor die Bosoorlog het hy baie teenkanting ondervind om iets daarvoor te publiseer. Vir hom was dit nie aanvaarbaar nie en met die gedagte dat hierdie geskiedenis vir die nageslag bewaar moet word, het hy daarvoor begin boeke publiseer.

Die gemeenskappe waarin oud-soldate hulself bevind, speel ook 'n belangrike rol in hoe hulle daardie geskiedenis dra.

In plekke soos Valhalla, naby militêre fasiliteite en strukture, is daar 'n sigbare samehorigheid en 'n geleentheid om makkers raak te loop, saam te onthou en te genees.

"Generaal Jannie Geldenhuys het jare gelede die SA Weermag Vereniging gestig om veterane bymekaar te bring. Dis 'n ware ondersteuningstelsel."

Els se insig en empatie strek ook tot die minder bekende stories soos dié van vroue in uniform.

Hierdie boeke spruit uit 'n besef dat vroulike dienspligtiges, verpleegsters en selfs vrouesoldate van teenstanderbewegings, grotendeels afwesig is in die militêre geskiedskrywing van Suid-Afrika.

"Daardie vroue het strawwe opleiding ontvang. Hulle verdien ook die krediet vir hulle diens."

Van boerevroue in die Anglo-Boereoorlog tot vrouesoldate in Angola: Els het 'n passie om dié verhale na die voorgrond te bring.

Wat wil hy hê moet jong Suid-Afrikaners leer uit sy skryfwerk?

"Dat hulle die waarheid moet weet. Wat ons deurgemaak het. Wat ons gedoen het vir hul voortbestaan. Hulle moet dit sien en hoor en dis hoekom ons die museum daarstel. Jy leer dit nie in skole nie."

En die pad vorentoe? Els rus nie.

Sy komende publikasie, *Genade van Bo - Lugvoorsiening*, sal fokus op die amper onbekende rol wat lugvoorsiening gespeel het.

Dis 'n boek wat hy vergelyk met die Bybelse manna uit die hemel.

"Min mense weet van voorsiening van antibiotika aan die Antarktika-span per lug. Dit was soos lewensredding."

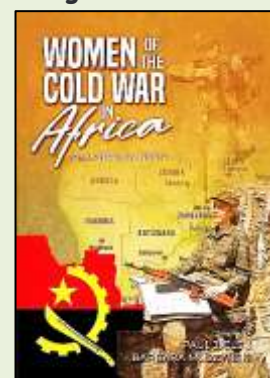
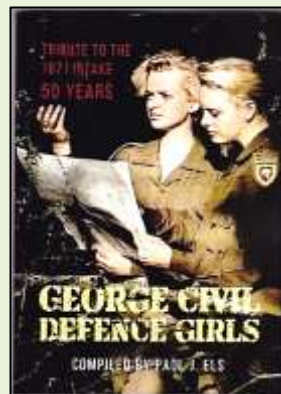
Sy ander boek, die vierde in sy dames-reeks, gee 'n blik op vrouesoldate van weerstandsbewegings: hul verhale, hul opleiding, hul lyding.

Dis die ander kant van 'n oorlog wat nog steeds nie ten volle begryp word nie.

Het jy dalk meer inligting rakende dié storie?

Stuur gerus vir ons 'n epos na bennittb@rekord.co.za of skakel ons by 083-625-4114.

Vir jou daaglikse gratis gemeenskapsnuus, besoek Rekord se webwerf: Rekord. Besoek ook ons [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) en [Instagram](#) en [TikTok](#).



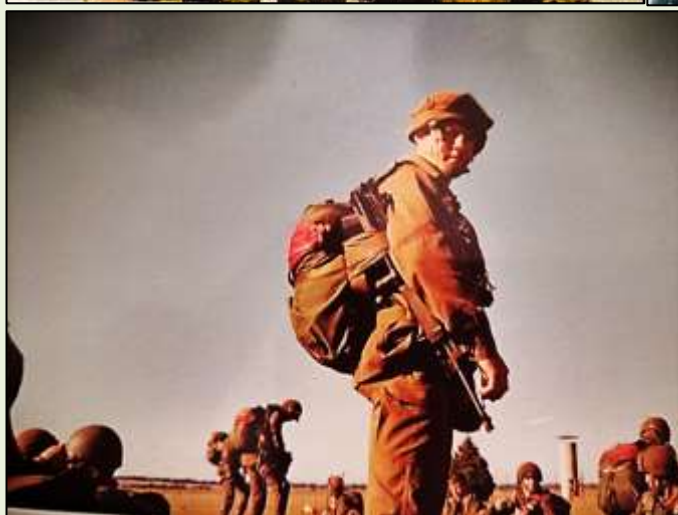
Sy boeke kan bestel word vanaf epos@groep7.co.za www.grieo7.co.za of persoonlik by hom bekom. Ondersteun hom om ons geskiedenis te bewaar. Op bladsy 3 is van sy boeke te sien.



UIT DIE VERLEDE / FROM THE PAST

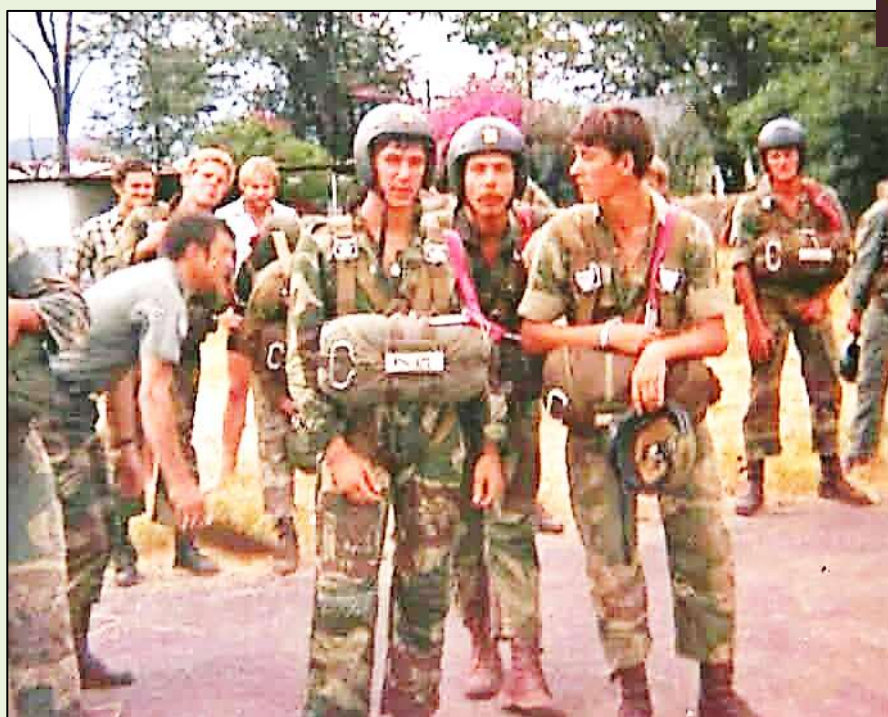
"DOWN MEMORY LANE"

SA PARATROOPERS





Lt Kemp 32 Bn



Ken Gaudet in the middle, Vietnam Vet, RLI and SADF 44 Para Pathfinder.



Bo: 32 Bn Regs: Net ou verlange na jare wat vinnig verby gevlieg het soos die foto, die foto is geneem seker in die omgewing 2009-2011 met een of ander oefening, die foto het blykbaar 'n prys gewen, nie om my looks nie maar om Maj Liebenberg. (Arrie Helberg.) Onder links: onbekend. Regs: Peter Koller tydens die Bats gedenkdiens in Feb.

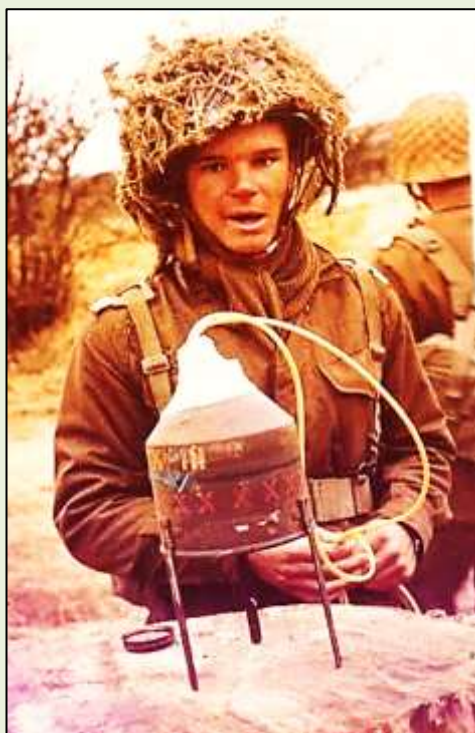




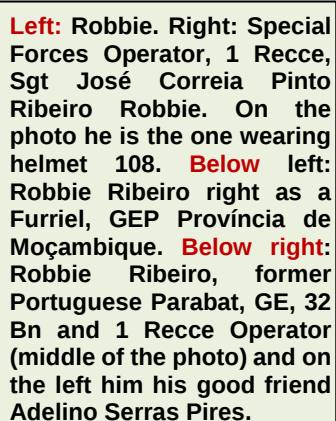
WO2 Amandio de Abreu.



S/Sgt Scheffer, Special Forces Operator & Ops Medic.
Below: 1974 SADF Engineers training Douw Steyn, Honoris Crux Operation Savannah 1975, later SF.



Op 29 Junie 2024 ontvang Klaas sy 40 Comradestoeke' van Boland Canopy, oorhandig deur ons President, Johan Blaauw. 1



The photo on the right Julian du Plessis (Alpha Coy, Platoon 1, 1 Parachute Bn. 1975).

The original 1st Para Bn, Alpha Company Platoon 1, 1975 national servicemen, came from this course photo above and no other. This doesn't include some of our instructors, like Cpl Anton Broodryk, 2nd Lt Carstens, and permanent force 1st Lt Johan Blaauw ret. as Col. There are lots of accounts. But the names of national servicemen can be verified and cross-checked from this PARA 7505 jumping course photo left.

A bit of background: Here is a photo attached below showing our para-camouflaged battle dress, SADF kit and some of our weapons used.

We kept our own FN FAL 7.62 issued weapons throughout our operations: LMGs, heavy barrel FN FALs, and my anti-tank 3.5 mm rocket launcher (we only had one with us as far as I can recall), as well as 60mm mortars on patrol and 81mm mortars at our US Vietnam-style circular dug-in base camp.



RAAD DAILY MAIL - JUNE 14, 1975

Parabat gets his wings from father

By BOB HITCHCOCK
Military Correspondent

BLOEMFONTEIN. — A former British paratrooper presented his son with parachutist wings at a moving ceremony at the Free State headquarters of No 1 Parachute Battalion at Tempe yesterday.

The father was Commandant "Ossie" Baker, who commands Westpark Commando in Johannesburg.

His son, Rod, was among 80 teenage national servicemen to qualify as "Red Berets".

Before the ceremony, Commandant Baker and his wife, Midge, stood with about 180 other parents, grandparents and girlfriends in the jumping zone to watch the young soldiers leap from transport planes at 1 000 ft. It was Friday 13, but there were no casualties.

More than 30 years ago, Commandant Baker, a Second World War hero, parachuted with the British forces into France, Italy and Greece.

He said last night: "This is a very proud day for the Baker family."

At yesterday's ceremony in a training hanger at



Commandant "Ossie" Baker, of Johannesburg, presents his son, Rod, with his parachutist wings yesterday.

Tempe, Commandant Baker was called out of the audience to personally present his son with his newly won wings.

The presentation of wings to the other 79 parachutists were made by the 33-year-old commanding officer of the Parachute Battalion, Commandant Ewald Olckers.

His comment on the intake: "A good bunch of lads."

From yesterday, the newly-qualified parachutists are entitled to wear the coveted red beret. But their gruelling training is not over.

On Monday, they go into the bush to live without shelter from the freezing winter nights for two weeks. Then they go on to tackle advanced anti-insurgency training. Only then will they be regarded as fully trained paratroops.

AS JY GEE,
moenie onthou nie;
AS JY ONTVANG,
moenie vergeet nie.



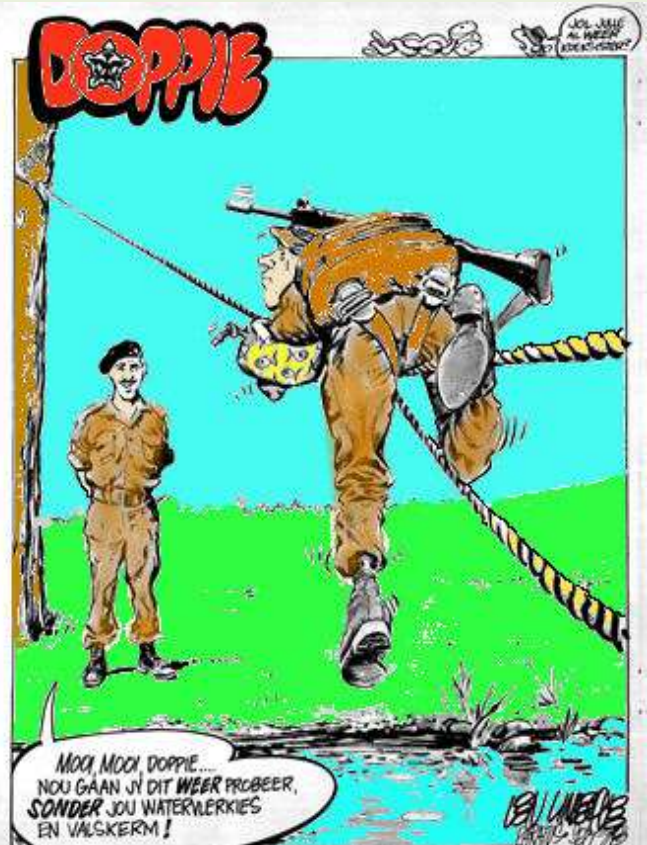
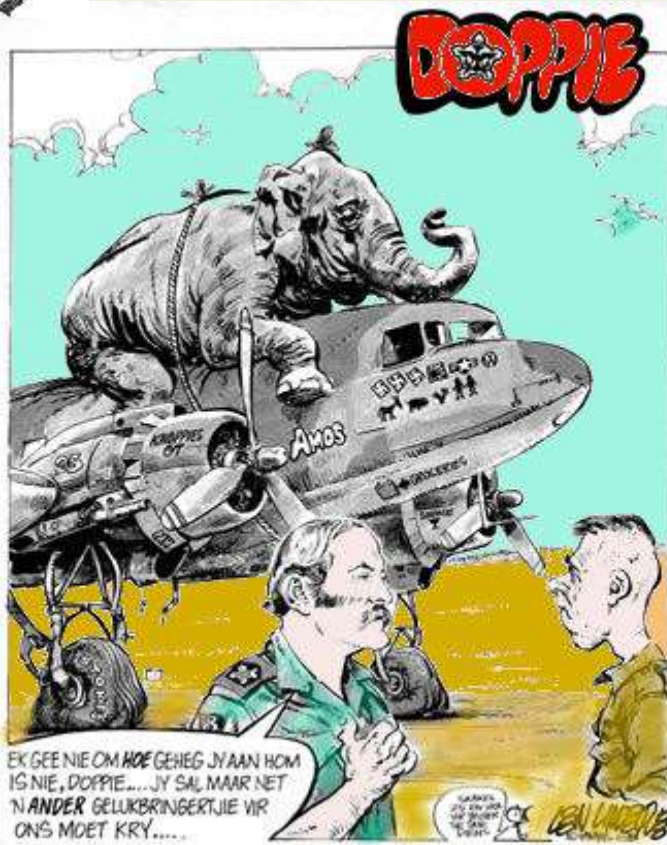
Charles Back se nektar.



This group of parabats gathered to form a Paratroopers Association.

Standing: Nic Grobler; Mike Callingworth; Matt Loots; Chris Viljoen; Jannie Greyling; Andre du Plessis; Sampie Eilers; Harry Finlay; Ted Manderson; Ras Laubscher.

Front: Hans Human; Ronnie Claassen; Marius Wittle; Theo Nel; JC van Wyk.

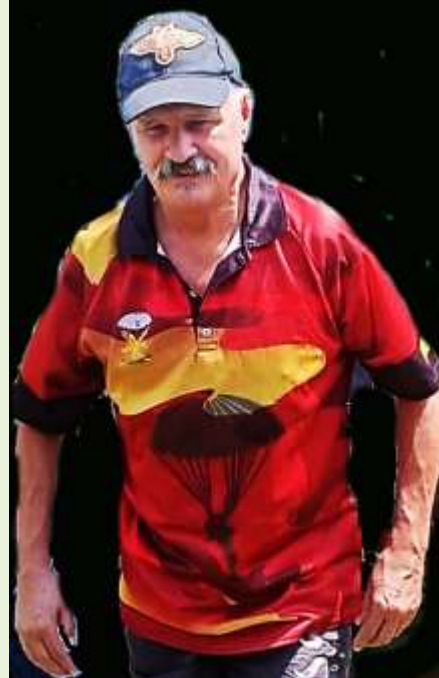


Eugène Geyer

Ek deel graag met julle, n familie delegasie het Theuns Kruger se 2 seuns/ gades gevat om eerste keer sy graf te besoek in Zambië

19:58

Eugène Geyer



Oom Mickey Ferriera en Willoughby Brits woon Gideon vd Heever se begrafnis by vir alle PVO lede. **06/05/2025** Dankie.

DIEDERIK JOHANNES BOTHA

11 Januarie 1956 - 19 April 2025





Johann Strauss



Soos 'n ratel; vreesloos, taai en volhard tot die einde.
Ons groet in geliefde man, pa, oupa, en rolmodel vir baie.
Jy los 'n leemte in ons harte en gaan gemis word.

6 Desember 1950 - 17 Mei 2025



Begrafnis van Johann Strauss 27/05/2025



Begrafnis van Gert van Niekerk 02/06/2025

JUL	JUL	AUG	SEPT
Chales Schreiber 01 Jul	Danie Blom 22 Jul	Renaud Booysen 06 Aug	Willem Pretorius 03 Sept
Hennie Coleman 07 Jul	Williem van Zyl 23 Jul	Dr Higgins 10 Aug	Butch Webber 03 Sept
Roche Vermaak 09 Jul	Johan Le Roex 27 Jul	Johan Prinsloo 11 Aug	Coen vd Merwe 07 Sept
Ockert Venter 11 Jul	Natie Potgieter 28 Jul	Du Plessis 16 Aug	Koos de Klerk 09 Sept
Paul J. Els 12 Jul	Willem Scheepers 28 Jul	Philippus du Plessis 16 Aug	John Smith 09 Sept
Ghane Gorden 13 Jul		Rowan Gandy 16 Aug	Herman Coetzee 12 Sept
Gideon Roets 14 Jul		Msnie Troskie 18 Aug	Ryno van Wyk 16 Sept
Willie Meyer 15 Jul		Wimpie Pieterse 22 Aug	Leon vd Merwe 17 Sept
Jaco Steenkamp 17 Jul		Gerhardus Nel 25 Aug	Johan Ferreira 18 Sept
Matt Rautenbach 17 Jul			Andre Ferreira 18 Sept
Lourens Kruger 18 Jul			Daniel Roux 20 Sept
			Bruce McLaren 22 Sept

PRETORIA CANOPY BIRTHDAYS

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 Sept 2025 and we need your inset by Sept 15.

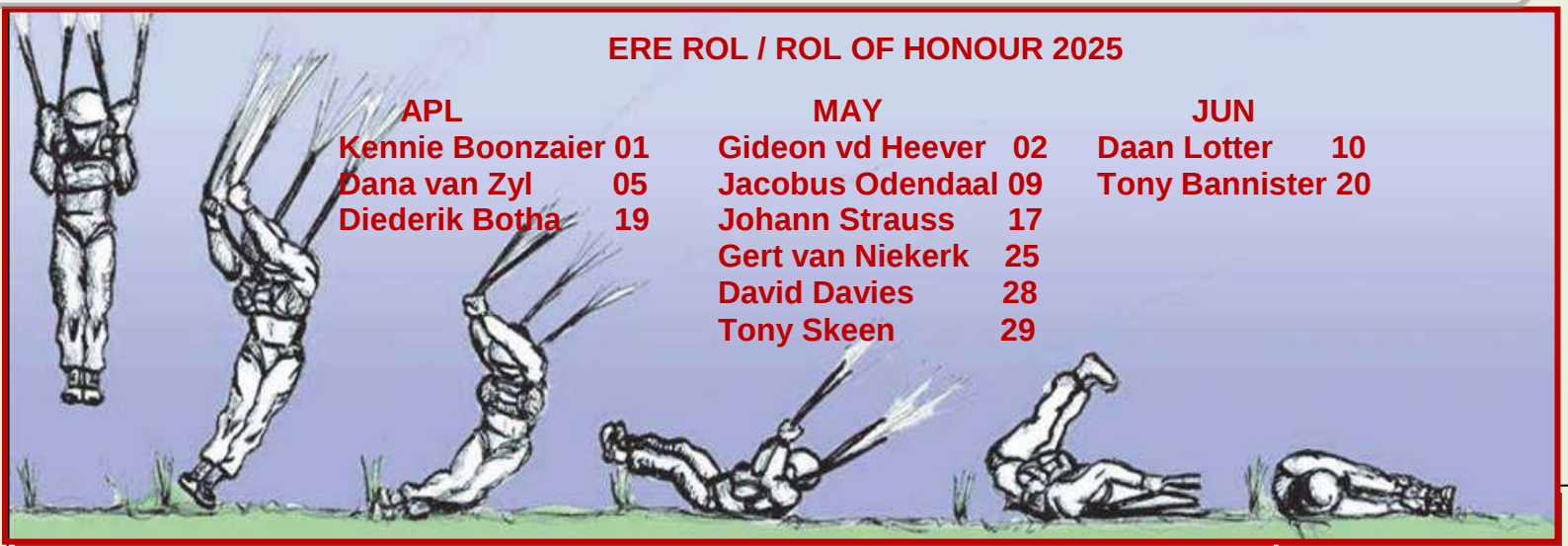
chris.pohl@parabat.org.za
Chris Pohl

EX ALTO VINCIMUS

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

ERE ROL / ROL OF HONOUR 2025

APL	MAY	JUN
Kennie Boonzaier 01	Gideon vd Heever 02	Daan Lotter 10
Dana van Zyl 05	Jacobus Odendaal 09	Tony Bannister 20
Diederik Botha 19	Johann Strauss 17	
	Gert van Niekerk 25	
	David Davies 28	
	Tony Skeen 29	



An elephant stands in a savanna landscape at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow across the sky and reflecting in a body of water in the foreground. A large, leafy acacia tree stands behind the elephant, its branches silhouetted against the bright sky. The elephant is facing forward, with its trunk slightly curved. The background shows a flat savanna with scattered trees and a hazy horizon.

There is no greater courage than
for a man to spend himself to
a cause no other would even dare
dreaming of doing....
To walk where brave men fear to tread...
To stand in the face of adversity and
keep on standing for all those
that went before him even until
the last post rings in his ears....
(Author unknown)

EX ALTO VINCIMUS