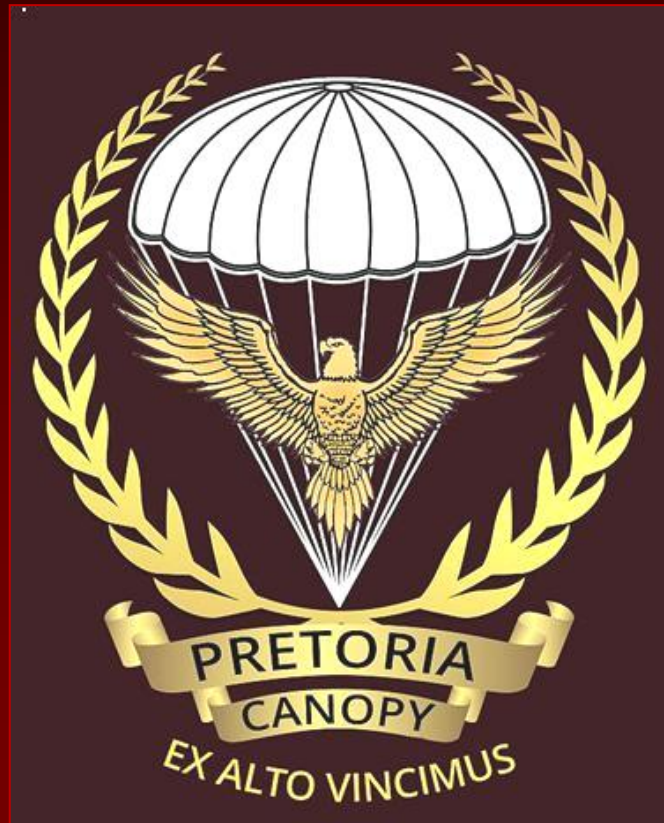


# BAT CHAT



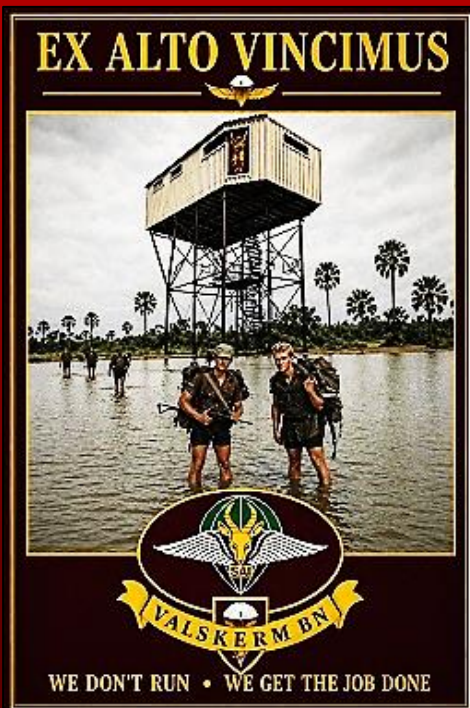
**DEDICATED TO THE 65 YEARS HISTORY**

**LETTERS / MESSAGES / ARTICLES / REPORTS / SNIPPETS**

**TRIBUTE TO THE AAPKAS**

**NUUS VANAF ORAL / NEWS FROM ALL OVER**

**UIT DIE VERLEDE / FROM THE PAST**



**PRETORIA CANOPY  
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**

**2/26**



Voorsitter: Chris Pohl  
 O/Voorsitter: Willoughby Brits  
 Sekretaris: Arduus vd Westhuizen  
 Tesourier: Wynand Fourie  
 Gedenkdiens: Roche Vermaak  
 Kommunikasie: Chris Pohl  
 Skakeling SANW: K. v Heerden  
 Gasvryheid: Johan le Roex  
 Ledesake: Leon J.V. Rensburg



## WOORD VAN DIE REDAKSIE WORD FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

### MESSAGE FROM THE PTA CANOPY CHAIRMAN

Die tweede kwartaal was weereens 'n bedrywige en betekenisvolle tydperk in die Parabat-geledere. Ek nooi elke lid uit om hierdie uitgawe van die BatChat te geniet—'n publikasie wat Paul Els, soos met al die vorige uitgawes, met groot sorg en toewyding saamgestel het.

Alle uitgawes vanaf Oktober 2018 tot vandag is beskikbaar op die PVO-webblad <https://parabat.org.za/newsletters-nuusbriefe/>

Pretoria Canopy het in April sy Algemene Jaarvergadering en verkiesing gehou, en dit is vir my 'n voorreg om die nuwe komitee vir die termyn aan te kondig:

**Voorsitter** - Chris Pohl      **Ondervoorsitter** - Willoughby Brits  
**Sekretaris** - Arduus van der Westhuizen  
**Penningmeester** - Wynand Fourie      **Gasvryheid** - Johan le Roex  
**SANW-skakeling** - Krige van Heerden  
**Ledesake** - Leon Janse van Rensburg/

Baie geluk aan elkeen van hierdie manne. Ek wens hulle voorspoed toe met hul diens en sien uit na die waardevolle bydraes wat hulle in die komende termyn gaan lewer

Groete  
 Chris Pohl



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Vader, dit maak nie saak wat vandag oor my pad kom nie, ek is dankbaar dat ek met selfvertroue kan sê dat "goedheid en guns my al die dae van my lewe sal volg", omdat U saam met my gaan. Dankie dat U my bron van krag en versekering is. Ek gee nou my bekommernisse van die dag vir U, want ek vertrou U met my lewe. In die Naam van Jesus. Amen.

### NEXT PTA CANOPY MEETINGS 14 JUL / 12 AUG / 9 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.

"Yster word nie koud gesmee nie. En 'n Bat word nie gevorm en sterk van karakter as hy sonder moeilikheid deur die lewe moet gaan nie. 'n Bat word wat hy is deur die stryd en die swaar kry, wat die lewe bring en daarom, terwyl ons die Voorsienigheid dikwels bid om orde en vrede, moet ons Hom ook dank dat hy ons in die smeltkroes stoot."

"Geen lid groei sonder smart en weê. Geen yster word ooit koud gesmee."

(Woorde gebruik van Dr Verwoerd)



# ADMINISTRATION

## The PVO website

[www.parabat.org.za](http://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.

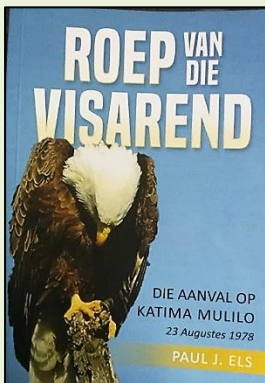
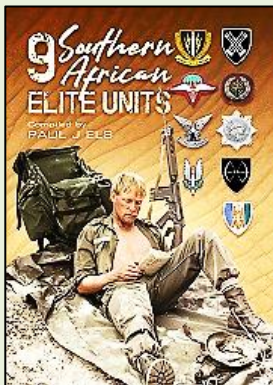
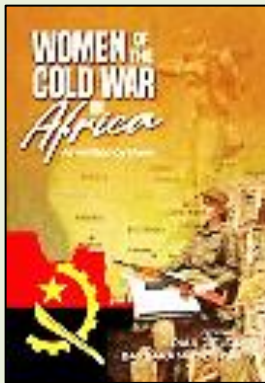
## THE PVO ENABLEMENT FUND

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.

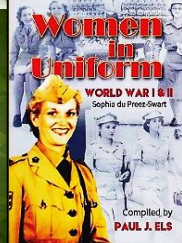
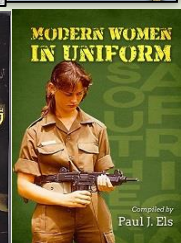
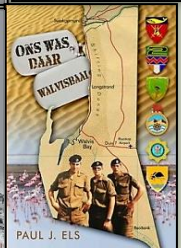
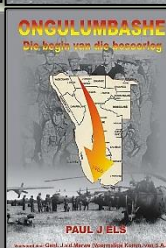
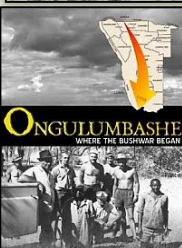
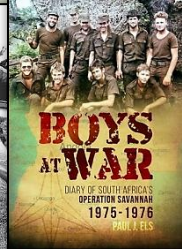
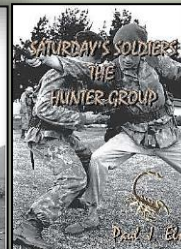
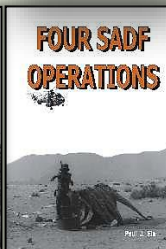
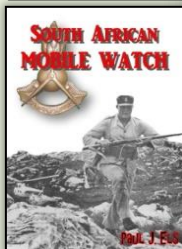
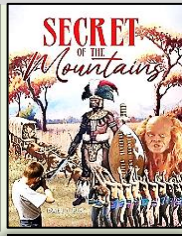
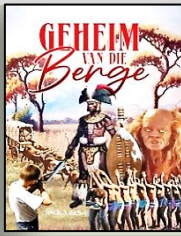
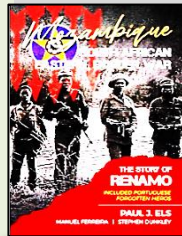
All these people need help and support in their daily lives.

PRETORIA CANOPY BESTUUR VRA DAT LEDE HELP OM OOM PAUL SE BOEKE TE BEMARK, WANT DIT IS SY ENIGSTE INKOMTE OP DIE TYDSTIP,

## NEW BOOKS



**Marked**  
PelsA Boeke  
Contact Paul J. Els [paul@who-els.co.za](mailto:paul@who-els.co.za)  
Order books from [epos@groep7.co.za](mailto:epos@groep7.co.za)





# LETTERS / MESSAGES ARTICLES / REPORTS / SNIPPETS

FROM ALL OVER



## VALSKERM BATTALJON EREKODE

Ek is 'n volwaardige en trotse lid van hierdie Valskerm bataljon.

Ek is lid van 'n eenheid wat geen duim terugstaan vir enige ander eenheid in die wêreld nie.

Ek beloof om my land en volk ten alle tye met trots en lojaliteit te dien tot die beste van my vermoë.

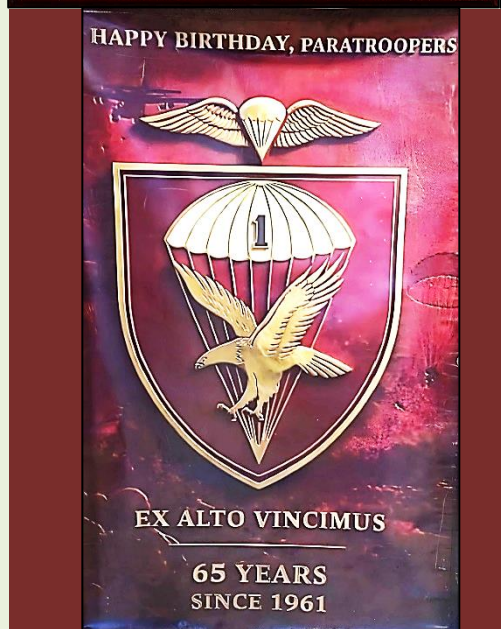
Ek beloof om my eenheid se kentekens met trots en onderskeiding te dra en dat my optrede ten alle tye sal wees soos dit 'n valskerm soldaat betaam.

Gedurende die ge-veg is ek bo alles 'n valskerm soldaat en beloof ek om my as sodanig te gedra, al sou die vyand ons in getalle ver oortref.

Ek beloof om die hoogste offer aan my land te bring indien dit van my verwag sou word.

Ek glo in myself, ek glo in my eenheid, en glo in my volk, en ek glo bo alles in GOD.

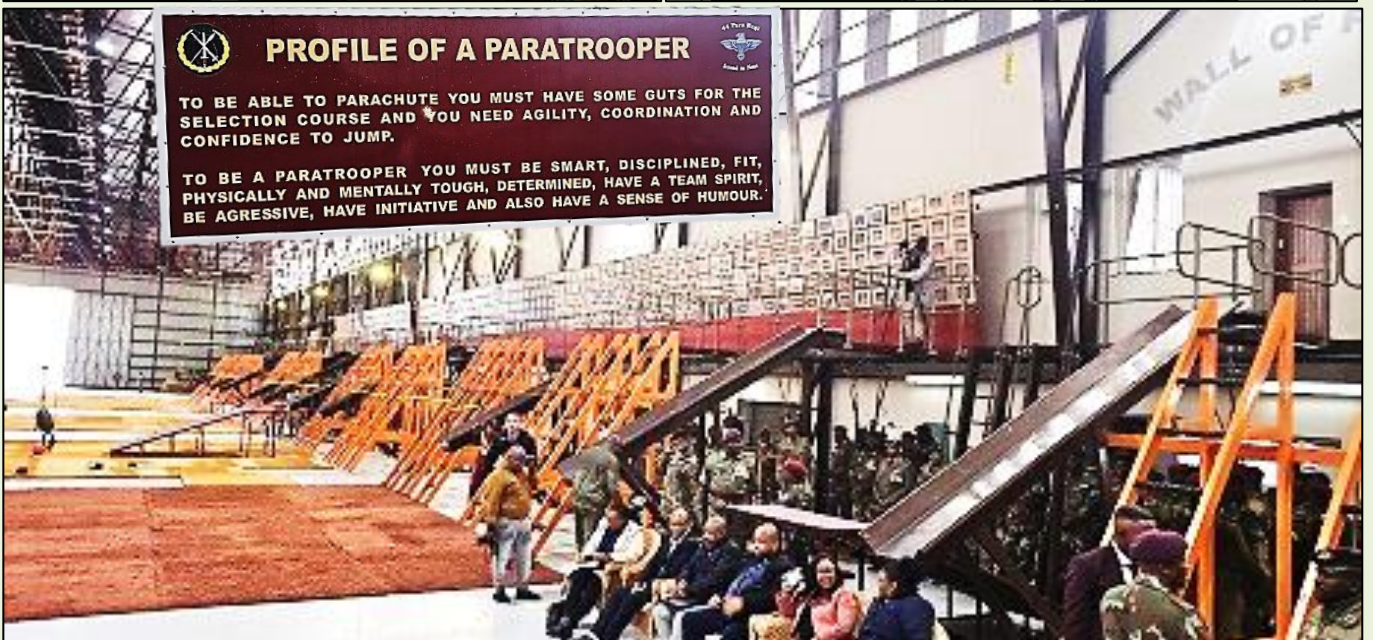
44 PARACHUTE REGIMENT





65<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration and opening  
of the new Aapkas at Bloemfontein  
30/04/2026





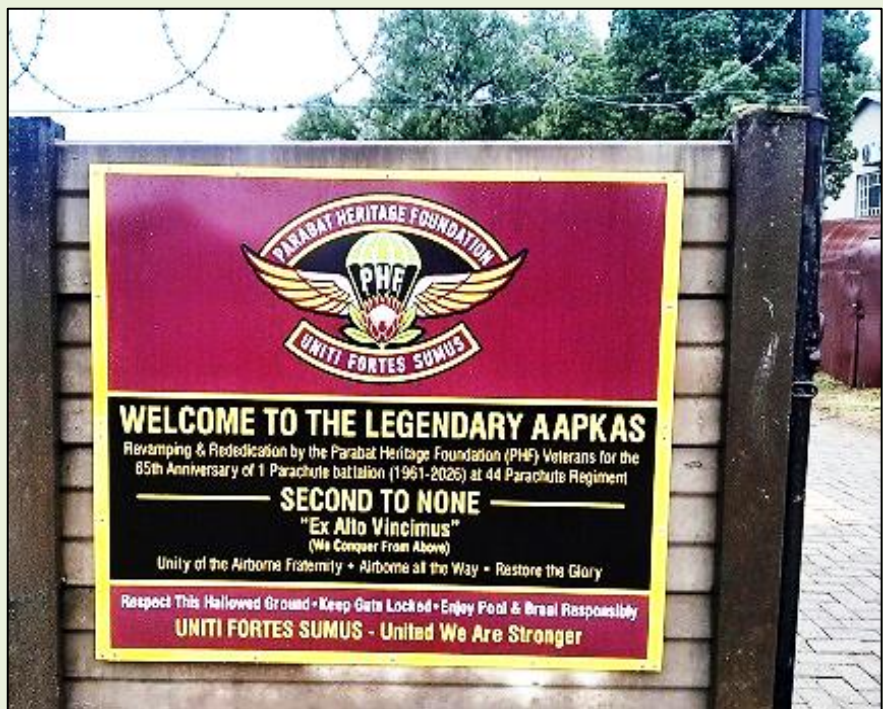
**PROFILE OF A PARATROOPER**

TO BE ABLE TO PARACHUTE YOU MUST HAVE SOME GUTS FOR THE SELECTION COURSE AND YOU NEED AGILITY, COORDINATION AND CONFIDENCE TO JUMP.

TO BE A PARATROOPER YOU MUST BE SMART, DISCIPLINED, FIT, PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY TOUGH, DETERMINED, HAVE A TEAM SPIRIT, BE AGGRESSIVE, HAVE INITIATIVE AND ALSO HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOUR.



Above: Chief of the SA Army and Honorary Colonel Kramer. Below: Coen vd Merwe PTA canopy.





## PRETORIA CANOPY JAAR VERSLAG

### **Lede van die Pretoria Canopy.**

Baie dankie vir nog 'n besonder suksesvolle byeenkoms en Algemene Jaarvergadering. 'n totaal van 54 proxy-stemme ontvang. In kombinasie met die uitstekende bywoning, het ons 'n oorweldigende meerderheid gehad om die vergadering formeel voort te sit.

Ons spreek ons opregte waardering uit teenoor al ons lede wat hul proxy-stemme beskikbaar gestel het. Julle betrokkenheid en bydrae, selfs in afwesigheid, word hoog op prys gestel.

### **VERANDERINGE IN DIE KOMITEE -**

Wynand Erasmus tree uit as Penningmeester en Attie van Niekerk uit sy rol in Ledesake. Ons spreek ons opregte dank en waardering uit teenoor hierdie twee manne vir hul uitstaande bydrae en onskatbare werk oor die afgelope jare.

Die nuwe lede is eenparig tot hul onderskeie portefeuljes verkies.

Wynand Fourie skuif van Sekretaris na Penningmeester.

Sekretaris: Ardus van der Westhuizen.

Ledesake: Leon J.V. Rensburg.

### **NUWE KOMITEE:**

Voorsitter: Chris Pohl

Ondervoorsitter: Willoughby Brits

Sekretaris: Ardus van der Westhuizen

Penningmeester: Wynand Fourie

Gasvryheid: Johan le Roux

Ledesake: Leon J.V. Rensburg

SANW-skakeling: Krige van Heerden

Baie sterkte aan ons nuwe komitee. Ons is 'n sterk span met 'n wen-"canopy" wat ons dra en vorentoe neem.

Laastens, opregte dank aan elke Canopy-lid en ondersteuner. Ons broederskap en eensgesindheid bly 'n bron van krag en trots.

### **VOORSITTER JAAR VERSLAG 1 APRIL 2025 - 31 MAART 2026 PRETORIA**

Pretoria Canopy is 'n toon aangewende PVO Canopy.

Die afgelope verslagjaar was gekenmerk deur volgehoue groei, aktiewe betrokkenheid en die versterking van die kernwaardes van die PVO Pretoria Canopy, naamlik broederskap, erfenisbewaring en ondersteuning aan valskerm veterane. Die PTA Canopy het voortgegaan om 'n betekenisvolle rol te speel in die behoud van die Parabat-gees en die samehorigheid onder lede. Ons leef ons Broederskap en Sosiale Samehorigheid uit met eensgesindheid. Ons is trots op die feit dat Pretoria Canopy 'n familie Canopy is waar ons familie en gesinne welkom is.

Ons opbetaalde lede getalle is huidiglik 122 lede. Nuwe lede word verwelkom en geïntegreer in die organisasie, wat bygedra tot die versterking van die Canopy se dinamika en volhoubaarheid.

Ek wil weereens 'n baie spesiale woord van dank rig aan elkeen van ons lede. Dis 'n eer en voorreg om deel te wees van hierdie besondere broederskap. Kom ons bou voort hierop en maak 'n verskil in mekaar se lewens en ook na buite.

Spesiale dank aan ons komitee wat met eensgesingheid saamwerk en persoonlike tyd opoffer. Daar word baie tyd en moeite agter die skerms ingesit om sake te reël en te verseker dat ons Canopy goed funksioneer.

Spesiale woord van dank aan oom Paul J. Els wat elke kwartaal, sedert 2018 die Batchat gereed het en so ons erfenis en gebeurlikhede vas lê. Hy lewer 'n reuse bydrae vir ons Parabat erfenis, en dit is ook waarom hy die Spartacus trofee vir 2025 ontvang het.

Pretoria Canopy poog om 'n positiewe impak te bring vir ons lede, maar ook vir die breër gemeenskap. Ons teenwoordigheid by veteran gedenkdae en ook ons suksusse by die Militere Dag met ons "jeug in die tuig projek" asook ons samewerking met die 4x4 & Outdoor Show getuig hiervan.

PTA Canopy lede is goed verteenwoordig op die PVO Nasionale Raad.

Willoughby Brits - President

Wynand Erasmus - Tesourier

Krige van Heerden - SANDF Liason

Jhacco Truter - Branding and Marketing

• Chris Pohl - PTA Canopy Chairman en Information Technology

**ONS DOELSTELLING:** "Handhaaf die trotse valskermerfenis en broederskap met 'n arendsoog op goeie landings!"

Opsomming van aktiwiteite die afgelopen jaar.

1. Kernaktiwiteit - is ons Maandelikse Canopy byeenkomste.
2. Herdenking en Militêre Erfenis - Bywoning van Gedenkdiens (bv. Parabat gedenkdiens, Cassinga, RMVO, Fort Klapperkop, Voortrekker Monument) asook Remembrance Day en ander militêre herdenkings.
3. Ons Organisasionele en Administratiewe Aktiwiteite dui op 'n gesonde organisasie, met maandelikse finansiële terugvoer asook goeie kontantvloei.

4. Nuwe Klub 50 lede:

- i. Jan Bierman
- ii. Danie Blom
- iii. Louis du Plessis
- iv. Thys Rautenbach
- v. Rowan Gandy
- vi. Pieter Schlechter
- vii. Johan Saunders
- viii. RAT Thomson
- ix. Chris Koen
- x. Thinus Kruger
- xi. Natie Potgieter
- xii. Leon van der Merwe
- xiii. Maans Coetzee
- xiv. Gideon Nel



5. Gasprekers en Kennisdeling:

- Militêre veterane (Johan vd Mescht, Louis du Plessis)
- Spesiale gaste (bv. Dries Marais en Genl Kaas vd Waals)
- Aktuele temas (bv. Geopolitiek - Japie Kok).

6. Eksterne Aktiwiteite en Deelname

- Militêre feeste (PPM Military Fair)
- 4x4 skou
- Reünies (bv. Parabat reunie)
- Golfdag (RMVO)
- Internasionale deelname (bv. VSA waterjump).

## 7. Ondersteuning en Welstand

"Lief en Leed" fokus:

- Erkenning van verjaarsdae.
- Hulde aan oorledenes.
- Ondersteuningsinisiatiewe - "Storms of Life" program.
- Gesondheidsbewustheid vir lede.

## 8. Fondse en Bydraes:

- a. Maandelikse Staaldak bydraes.
- b. Maandelikse donasie vir lede ondersteuning.
- c. Ander borgskappe en bydraes.
- d. Samevatting: Die aktiwiteite toon dat PVO Pretoria Canopy funksioneer as: 'n Broederskap - Sterk fokus op kameraadskap, tradisie en identiteit 'n Herdenkingsorganisasie - Aktiewe bewaring van Parabat-geskiedenis en offers 'n Sosiale en ondersteuningsnetwerk - Fokus op welstand, families en samehorigheid.

9. 'n Aktiewe veterane-organisasie = Deelname aan eksterne geleenthede en gemeenskapsaktiwiteite.

Dit is vir my 'n voorreg en 'n eer om deel te wees van hierdie uitgelese groep manne en hierdie Canopy!

Baie dankie

Chris Pohl - **Voorsitter PVO Pretoria Canopy**



Voor: Ardu van der Westhuizen; Willoughy Brits; Chris Pohl; Beskermheer Ronnie Claassen; en Krige van Heerden. Agter: Leon J.V. Rensburg; Johan le Roux; Wynand Fourie

### Goeiemôre ouens.

Weereens geluk aan die gekose Voorsitter en Komiteede van die Pretoria Canopy van die PVO. Ek is so gelukkig om die Beskermheer van die PVO te wees.

Om vergadering na vergadering hier by die Pretoria Canopy by te woon en die gees van welwillendheid en broederskap te ervaar is 'n belewenis. Daar word nie gestry of baklei oor kleinighede nie en die aande se samesyn gevolg deur die braai is 'n ystlike plesier. Die gassprekers se aanbiedings is ook oor die algemeen interessant.

Dit is die dinge wat my 'n baie trotse, lid van die Pretoria Canopy en die PVO maak. So, Chris en die komitee. Ek wens julle baie sterkte toe vir die komende jaar en ek moedig ook die lede aan om gereeld die vergaderings en ander geleenthede by te woon.

**Ex Alto Vincimus.**

Oom Ronnie Claassen.

Beskermheer van die PVO'

### 13/06/2026, Goeienaand Makker.

Ek moet weereens jou en jou span gelukwens met gisteraand se PVO byeenkoms. Ek ken vir Frans baie jare. Hy verdien die grooste repek.

Kruber Nel was ook daar. Ons was saam op stafkursus 1993. Daarna het hy "verdwyn" tot gisteraand toe. Het jy 'n foto van hom?

Ek moet jou as Voorsitter van Pretoria PVO Canopy gelukwens dat jy al die ou manne kan saamsmee as een hegte BROEDERSKAP Eenheid.

Die sukses faktore is:

1. \*High performance Leierskap\* - Genl Roland de Vries se woorde. Die komitee weet wat om te doen, te beplan en uit te voer.
2. \*Die kwaliteit gasspreker\* is die GROOT MAGNEET en die sement van samesyn.
3. \*Sosiale samesyn\*. Daardie kuier braai na die vergadering is die sement van Broederskap.
4. Ook die \*vroue se bywoning\* dra by dat die manne "ontspan vere".
5. Die \*venue is uitstekend\* om grondplate vas te skiet.
6. Gee vir mekaar om. \*Help mekaar\* waar daar nood is.
7. \*Volgehoue suksesvolle maandelikse canopy byeenkomste.

Ek mis daardie samesyn hier in die Wes Kaap.

Johan Andries Ferreira PTA-PVO:



**15th PARABAT REUNION**  
Help Underprivileged  
Help Behoeftiges

Hosted by  
In His Honour Outreach Foundation

**Celebrate  
65 Years of the Battalion!**  
• 31 October 2026 •

Join Us for a Day of Brotherhood & Remembrance

- Schoemansville Resort • Hartbeespoort
- 10:00 AM •
- R100 per person • 2 Tins of Food
- Lunch Included • Cash Bar Available
- No Cooler Boxes Please

RSVP by 30 September 2026  
Email: [parabat@inhishonour.co.za](mailto:parabat@inhishonour.co.za)

Please Include:  
• Name • Force Number • Coy • Year  
• Number of persons attending

• Mike: 071 595 6300 • Dianne: 082 442 5807

*Ex Alto Vincimus*



Suid-Afrikaanse Weermagtevereniging  
**60 - Jarige Herdenking**

**BOSBOORLOG**  
1966 - 2026

Aangebied deur Klein Karoo Camino  
24 - 27 September 2026

QUDTSHOORN

Bring jou gesin en kom kuier saam met jou eertydse makkers. Bespreek 'n volgende palmet met a les Inlutt: VERBLYF/ ETES/ VERMAAK Fondse ten bate van SAWV

071 209 1977

Sien besonderhede by: <https://www.kleinkaroo.camino.co.za/bosoorlog>



# PVO MAKKERHULP

## PARABATS ONDERSTEUNINGSINISIATIEF

### INLEIDING

Die PVO Makkerhulp-inisiatief is gestig met die doel om ondersteuning, bystand en hoop aan Parabats (Paratrooper-veterane) en hul gesinne te bied. Die organisasie funksioneer op die beginsel van makkerskap, diensbaarheid en samewerking, met die fokus op die verbetering van lewenskwaliteit en langtermyn volhoubaarheid vir veterane wat ondersteuning benodig.

Sedert die ontstaan van die projek is meer as 280 makkers reeds gehelp deur middel van direkte ondersteuning, strategiese vennootskappe en verwysingsnetwerke. Die organisasie werk nou saam met Canopys, veteranegroepes, kerke, besighede en ondersteuningsorganisasies om 'n geïntegreerde ondersteuningsnetwerk vir die Parabat-gemeenskap te bou.

Die PVO glo sterk in die beginsel:

### "STRONGER TOGETHER"

Samewerking bly die kern van suksesvolle bystandverlening en effektiewe ondersteuning aan veterane en hul families.

### KERNFOKUS VAN DIE PVO MAKKERHULP

Die PVO bied gereelde ondersteuning aan Parabats in verskeie uitdagende omstandighede, insluitend:

- Finansiële nood, ons het makkers al gehelp met meer as R600 000 kontant
- Gesondheidsprobleme, hospitaalbeddens en rolstoel voorsien gratis
- Trauma en emosionele ondersteuning
- Werksverlies
- Huisvestingsprobleme
- Besigheidsontwikkeling
- Regs- en administratiewe ondersteuning
- Pensioen- en DMV-aangeleenthede.

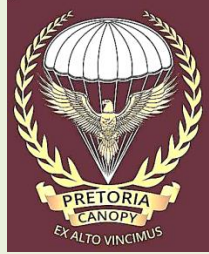
Die organisasie tree vinnig op in noodgevalle en poog om waardigheid, stabiliteit en hoop aan veterane terug te gee.

### HOOFAREAS VAN ONDERSTEUNING

1. Hulp met DMV Aansoeke
  2. Werksgeleentheid en Loopbaanondersteuning
  3. Finansiële en Besigheidsondersteuning
  4. Pensioenstrategie vir Parabats R3 miljoen per jaar
- Tipes Hulp wat aan Parabats en hul gesinne verskaf word:
- Kos- en Mediese Hulp
  - Skuldberading
  - Maatskaplike Dienste
  - Akkommodasie Hulp
  - Opvoedkundige Ondersteuning
  - Regshulp
  - Sielkundige Ondersteuning en Berading
  - Senior Sorg en Aftreehuise
  - Werkswinkels en Vaardigheidsontwikkeling
  - Finansiële Hulp en Bydraes

**EX ALTO VINCIMUS**





## HUIS HJ PIEK

085-628-NPO



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**25 Junie 2026**

**AANDAG: WILLOUGHBY BRITS NASIONALE PRESIDENT PARABAT VETERANE**

**ORGANISASIE** Beste Mnr Brits Namens Huis HJ Piek spreek ons graag ons opregte dank uit vir die skenking van die rolstoel wat onlangs ontvang is.

Die kwaliteit van die rolstoel spreek van deeglike oorweging en 'n opregte begeerte om 'n verskil te maak vir ons bejaardes. Sulke geskenke bied nie net praktiese ondersteuning nie, maar dra ook by tot die waardigheid, gemak en onafhanklikheid van elkeen wie daarvan gebruik maak.

U ruimhartigheid maak 'n tasbare verskil in ons daaglikse lewe en word met groot waardering ontvang. Die Bybel herinner ons daaraan: "Wie die een van hierdie geringstes 'n beker koue water gee omdat hy my dissipel is - voorwaar Ek sê vir julle, hy sal beslis nie sy beloning verloor nie." **Matteus 10:42** Baie dankie vir u betrokkenheid en ondersteuning. Mag u ruimhartigheid oor en oor na u terugkeer.

Met waardering,

vriendelike groete,

Greta van Rensburg.

**BESTUURDER HUIS HJ PIEK**

**REDAKTEUR:** Hiermee 'n voorbeeld van wat gedoen word.

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HE'S NOT  
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BROTHER

\*FUBAR  
Acronym for  
"I'm not up to speed  
at all regarding this".  
It proves useful in  
a situation where  
you're FUBAR.



The term  
"SKAAPDRA"  
means to carry a fellow  
soldier over your shoulder



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## AO1 MOORCROFT IN BELGIË



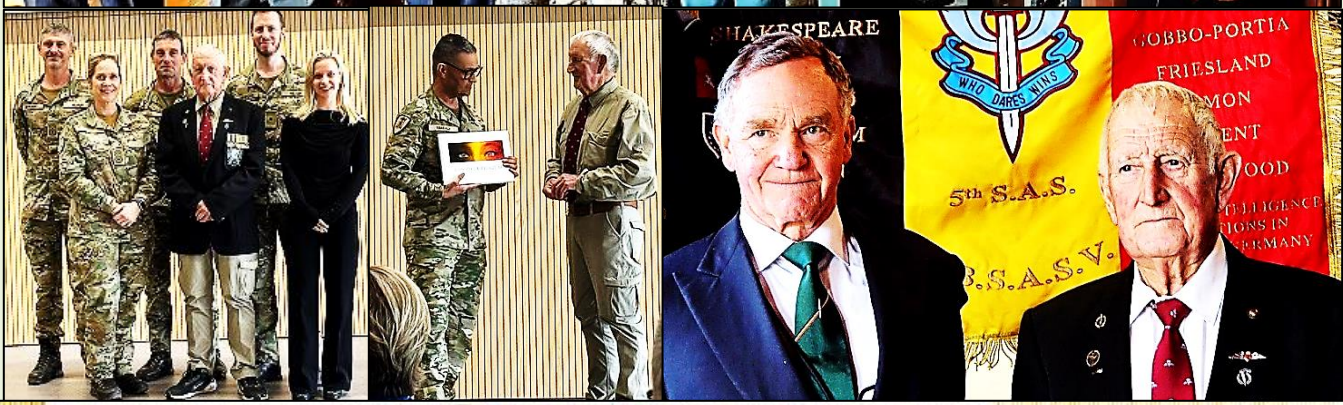
Die SAWV se beskermer van Sammajore, AO1 Koos Moorcroft, is so pas terug vanaf België. Sammajoor Moorcroft was genooi as gasspreker om te praat oor sy rol in die ontwikkeling van die SA Spesiale Magte, sy operasionele ondervinding en spesifiek oor leierskap.

Sammajoor Moorcroft het die "Belgian SAS Association" op 29 Maart toegesprek. Hy het ook by nog 'n geleentheid van die "Belgian Non-Commissioned Officers Corps" op hulle "Regimental Sergeant Major Intervision Day" hulle RSM's toegesprek waar hy spesifiek oor leierskap gepraat het.

Sammajoor Moorcroft het terugvoer gegee en gesê dat dit 'n baie positiewe ervaring was en dat dit vir hom gevoel het soos van ouds toe die dinge nog op standaard was soos wat ons dit geken het.

Baie geluk Sammajoor Moorcroft. Jy het soos altyd weer jou merk gemaak en ons naam hoog gehou.

Hier is 'n paar fotos van Sammajoor Moorcroft se besoek aan België.





## WHALES TO WINE - 'GEES'

**"It's not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves." - Sir Edmund Hillary**

My first Whales to Wine began, as all great adventures do, with the natural alarm for the unknown and a touch of chaos. A week before the race my trusted Scott Spark went in for a service. The mechanic returned with the kind of expression usually reserved for doctors delivering sombre news. My rear-stay was cracked—dangerously so—and suddenly I was a mountain-biker without a mountain bike. Fortunately, my longtime friend Sandow Rossow—who had invited me to W2W in the first place—immediately initiated Plan B, because Sandow always has a Plan B. He asked his wife, Anette, if I could borrow her brand-new Norco with less than 50km on the clock.

Being the kind-hearted saint she is, she agreed. (Had she known what awaited her saddle and mountain bike, she might've reconsidered.) Before leaving Mmalogaga Private Game Ranch (Zeerust district) on Friday 31 October, we meticulously checked every stitch, bolt, cable and packet of energy gel—a habit drilled into us during our Parachute Battalion days in the early 80s. Veteran paratroopers don't leave things to chance. Except, apparently, iPhones... Day 0: Crime, in the Northern Cape and Coping Mechanisms Just outside Warrenton we stopped for water. While I was inside, Sandow guarded the Hilux and its valuable cargo. A man approached him, asking about mountain bikes.

In true cyclist fashion, Sandow enthusiastically engaged. Meanwhile, the man's accomplice helped himself to Sandow's two iPhones and everything on the console. We only realised the crime a few kilometres later. The police officer we reported it to delivered his verdict with the enthusiasm of a sedated sloth: "It's as difficult to trace iPhones as it is to trace lost change." Two hours lost. A new iPhone purchased. A costly affair. By the time we reached Travalia Guest House near Three Sisters, we were exhausted. Sandow poured himself a stiff Johnny Walker Black, and for me... more than two doubles of Vaalhond Brandy on the rocks.

After a day like that, hydration comes in many forms. Saturday: Lamb chops and rugby The next morning, we headed for Voëlklip, Hermanus. We stocked up on Karoo lamb chops—essential survival rations—and arrived just in time for the Springboks vs Japan. It was a freezing November day, but nothing beats Karoo lamb chops and braai-broodjies for morale. Sunday: The Real Adventure Begins Lourens Ford was our administrative base. Sandow: 107-1. Me: 107-2. He bought me a pair of W2W arm covers as a gift. Spoiler alert: their lifespan was tragically short. Wait you will understand later Monday 3 November: It's official - Terra incognita The start line buzzed with nerves and excitement. Max Cluer stretched the tension like a violin string, then sent us off. The road to Oaklands was no joyride—tough, merciless and sprinkled with technical traps. I slammed down twice. The Norco's saddle began twisting like a restless meerkat, but I blamed "modern technology" instead of simple physics. Crossing the finish line felt like salvation. Max welcomed the Paratrooper group with: "Don't let the old man in." We didn't. Day 2: A Saddle from the Dark Side The next morning, Sandow announced: "No cycling for me today." A prior injury had returned with vengeance. I was on my own. At 2km into the route, the bike slipped, and I hit the ground hard at a 90-degree gravel turn.

The saddle swivelled 180 degrees. A second fall followed soon, it completed the full 360. The saddle was now spinning freely like a possessed weather vane. My concentration and cycle skills were severely compromised on this technical track. Keeping it between my thighs felt like bull riding without the fun. At the first waterpoint, the tech tent technicians stared at the Norco in awe. "I've heard of this," said one, "but never seen it before. Your



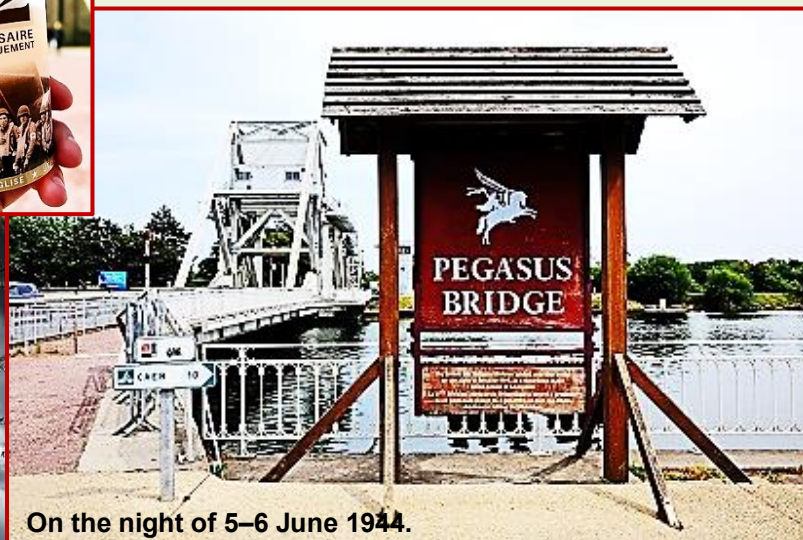
race is over," they declared. "This is a lab issue." But I took two MSN energy bars and pushed on. Ahead lay a gruelling 47km. With no control over my saddle, I repeatedly fell. The steep inclines and declines with sharp turns became combination of a horror movie and a bad nightmare.

The Tolkien-esque forest singletracks— beautiful if you're a hobbit, terrifying if your saddle rotates like a helicopter blade. I eventually lost track of how many times I fell. The support team caught up with me in the final quarter. "You're the last man," they informed me cheerfully. They offered me a lift. I declined. Paratroopers don't quit. They did; however, attempt repairs with duct tape and cable ties—proof that South Africans can fix anything except this saddle. Lizel, from the support team backed me till the finish line. I salute the backup team. I crossed the line after more than six and a half hours, beaten only by a bald-headed Colonel who arrived dead last. Well done to him! The toughest second-last I ever experienced, Colonel. The milkshake at the finish tasted like heaven in a bottle. My shower base turned brown with dirt and dried blood. The Medicare tent under supervision of Doctor Chris, patched me up most professionally: stitches in the elbow, bruises everywhere specially in the region where one uses a saddle. My dignity mildly fractured.

Then I got a voice note from Shannon from the 'Epic Team': "Are you coming to the awards tonight?" Strange, but I went anyway. To my shock, Max called: "Gees Man of the Day — Johannes de Wet!" Stage fright hit me like a bucket of ice water. "Johannes de Wet, sound very Afrikaans. Can you speak any English?" he teased. Before I could take hold of my reward, I had to address the crowd. I walked away with two bottles of Oakdale Sauvignon Blanc and a Norflex gift pack. The applause was loud, appreciative and slightly disbelieving. That night, when I the bed I heard no snoring... Day 3: Heat, Hills and Heroics My body protested loudly, but we set off. The saddle was now fixed—miracles do happen.

It was brutally hot. The mountain winds helped at times, but mostly the route demanded blood, sweat and stubbornness. At the last waterpoint, Sandow pointed out that my shirt had turned white—from saltpetre. The last 10 km felt like 100 miles. A senior official told us the uphill ahead were "just a short distance"—a classic paratrooper psychological trick. They were neither short nor merciful. No crashes on Day 3. Thank heavens. Crossing the final finish line felt like ticking off a bucket-list item and reclaiming a piece of one's soul. Back at Lourens Ford, our Hilux was parked next to Schalk Burger's Cruiser. Even the giant Springbok legend complained about severe fatigue.

That made me feel slightly better. My torn, bloodstained W2W arm covers remain unwashed. Perhaps I should frame them. Whales to Wine? Simply unforgettable. Will I do it again? I am still thinking... "Man's maturity: to have regained the seriousness he had as a child at play." -**Fredrich Nietzsche**



On the night of 5-6 June 1944.



## RSA SWA RHOD OORLOG...

### Recce Officers 1980s

Officers in the South African Defence Force (SADF) occupied a position that blended professional military command with deeply rooted tradition inherited from European, particularly British and Afrikaner republican, military systems. Prior to 1994, the SADF officer corps was shaped by formal hierarchy, regimental loyalty, and a strong emphasis on discipline, bearing, and ceremonial custom. One of the most visible expressions of this tradition was the officers' mess and its associated mess dress.

The officers' mess was not merely a dining facility but a social and institutional centre where rank structure, camaraderie, and regimental identity were reinforced. Mess customs regulated conduct, speech, and etiquette, reflecting the belief that an officer's behaviour off the battlefield was as important as his conduct on it. These customs were closely tied to mess dress, which served as a symbol of professional status and regimental pride. Mess dress in the SADF evolved primarily from British military tradition, adapted over time to suit South African conditions and identities. Generally worn for formal evening functions, mess dinners, and ceremonial occasions, it consisted of a short jacket, high-waisted trousers, waistcoat or cummerbund, miniature medals, and regimental insignia. While standardised in outline by the SADF, mess dress allowed for significant variation between corps and regiments, reinforcing unit identity.

Army regiments maintained strong distinctions.

Infantry regiments such as the Cape Town Highlanders, Transvaal Scottish, and Natal Carbineers preserved clear Scottish or colonial influences. These units incorporated tartan waistcoats or cummerbunds, clan-pattern colours, and unique buttons and badges. Afrikaans regiments, including the Regiment De Wet or Regiment Louw Wepener, reflected Boer republican heritage through simpler, more austere styling and symbolism drawn from commando traditions rather than British pageantry.

Armoured and artillery units emphasised technical prestige and battlefield lineage. Artillery officers traditionally wore red piping or facings, echoing international gunner traditions, while armour units incorporated black elements symbolising steel and mechanisation. Engineers and signals officers often favoured restrained designs that reflected professional competence over ornamentation.

The South African Air Force developed its own mess dress tradition distinct from the Army. Air Force officers wore dark blue mess dress with light blue or silver detailing, mirroring Royal Air Force influence but incorporating uniquely South African insignia.

Pilot wings, squadron badges, and operational ribbons were central to identity, reinforcing the elite status of aircrew within the officer corps.

The South African Navy maintained the most formal mess dress standards, closely aligned with Royal Navy heritage. Naval officers wore dark blue or white mess dress depending on season, with gold lace rank distinctions and naval buttons. Ceremony, etiquette, and hierarchy were especially rigid within naval mess culture, reflecting centuries-old maritime traditions. Special forces units stood apart from conventional regiments. Officers of 1 Reconnaissance Commando and other covert units adopted deliberately understated mess dress. While conforming to SADF regulations, these officers avoided excessive ornamentation. Insignia such as the Operators proficiency badge carried profound meaning, and simplicity was viewed as a mark of professionalism and operational credibility.

Across the SADF, mess dress functioned as a visual language. It communicated rank, regiment, corps, and history without words.



# 1 PARACHUTE BATALJON MEN

**Wit Willem Pretorius**

John Kendrick Murphy Jr. came from a long line of warriors and rebels. His great-great-grandfather died during the last days of the American Civil War, fighting to the bitter end in the last days of the American Civil War in 1865 with the Alabama infantry. His father John K. Murphy Sr. had fought in the Second World War, where he would earn a Silver Star, a Bronze Star with cluster, and a Purple Heart.

Lieutenant Colonel John K. Murphy Sr. died prematurely aged on 42, but left a lasting impression of service on John Jr., who was only 16 at the time of his father's death. He quickly joined the USMC and deployed to Vietnam. Despite being himself wounded in combat, and also received two Bronze Stars for combat actions, John Jr. came home to a very different reception than his father.

Like many Vietnam veterans, he was derided by society as a dangerous killer and openly harassed in public. Betrayed and scorned, these men formed the nucleus of the "Crippled Eagles", who volunteered their military expertise to the fight in Rhodesia.

John Jr. proved his worth serving as a volunteer commando in the Rhodesian Light Infantry. The gung-ho Marine quickly sought more of a challenge and was selected as an officer in the elite Rhodesian SAS, and later re-mustering to the Selous Scouts. A stalwart leader, he was known affectionately by his men as "Fire 'Em Up" Murphy, and also at times as "Captain America".

He definitely fired some things up when he a team of 72 Selous Scouts into Mozambique over four days in 1977 during Op Aztec. As he stepped off, he jovially radioed to his men "Tally Ho! AND AWAY WE GO!" It set the tone for the mission at hand.

He disregarded orders to operate within a tight 20km radius and pushed far more aggressively than expected. Instead, he rolled around in mock-up FRELIMO trucks, annihilating communist cadres and infrastructure as far away as 75km behind enemy lines. The Selous Scouts only suffered 1 trooper killed during the operation, while ZANLA and FRELIMO forces suffered at least 60 dead and a devastating blow to their morale.

The massive destruction of railway infrastructure caused by Murphy's raid almost eliminated Mozambique's Gaza Province to freely smuggle arms and munitions to terrorists in Rhodesia. An untold number of lives of civilians both black and white would be saved by this action as terrorist forces lost much the critical ordnance to target them.

After the raid, John Murphy transferred to the South African 1st Reconnaissance Regiment. While conducting a qualification para jump in Westonaria, South Africa on 20 October 1980, his parachute failed to deploy. He died instantly as he plummeted.

As he was still an American citizen at the time of his death, his body was returned to the United States and interred in Florida where he still lies today. A warrior through and through, he deserves our remembrance. A man, among men.

79000717PN Major John Kendrick Murphy - Rest in Peace

[#MenAmongMenStories](#) [#Rhodesia](#) [#SAS](#) [#SelousScout](#) [#RLI](#) [#USMC](#)

## UNSOLVED MYSTERIES & NATURAL WONDER FACTS.

In May 1944, a young woman named Phyllis Latour parachuted from a military plane into occupied France. She was only twenty-three, and her mission was one of extraordinary courage—gather intelligence on Nazi positions to help prepare for the D-Day landings. Once she touched the ground, she quickly buried her parachute and the clothes she had worn for the jump, transforming herself into the disguise that would carry her through the next four months: a poor French teenager.

Phyllis had been trained by the British Special Operations Executive, a secret wartime organization that demanded skill, toughness, and nerve. Her training was grueling. She mastered Morse code, learned to operate and repair radios, and trained her body to withstand the roughest of conditions in the Scottish Highlands. One of her instructors was even a former cat burglar, who taught her how to scale walls and slip away unnoticed. For Phyllis, the work wasn't just about duty—it was personal. Her godfather had been killed by the Nazis, and she was determined to strike back in the only way she could.

The work was perilous. She later admitted she knew the men sent before her had been captured and killed. But her youth and appearance gave her an advantage—she could pass for harmless, an innocent girl on a bicycle selling soap. That disguise allowed her to cycle through villages, chat idly with German soldiers, and slip vital messages to the British. She had to be constantly on the move, often sleeping outdoors and foraging for food, never knowing who she could trust.

Her ingenuity saved her life more than once. She kept her secret codes written on a piece of silk, hidden inside a simple hair tie. Each time she used a code, she pricked the fabric with a pin. When German soldiers briefly detained her and searched her belongings, she let her hair tumble loose, handing them the hair tie as if it were nothing. They found nothing suspicious, and she walked away unharmed. Over the summer of 1944, she sent 135 coded messages—guiding Allied bombers and helping to change the course of the war.

When peace returned, Phyllis put her dangerous past behind her. She married, moved to New Zealand, and raised four children. For decades, she never spoke of her secret life, and her children only discovered the truth by accident, when her oldest son came across her story online. In 2014, on the 70th anniversary of D-Day, France recognized her bravery with one of its highest honors, naming her Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. She lived a long life, passing away in 2023, leaving behind not just her family, but a legacy of quiet, unshakable courage.



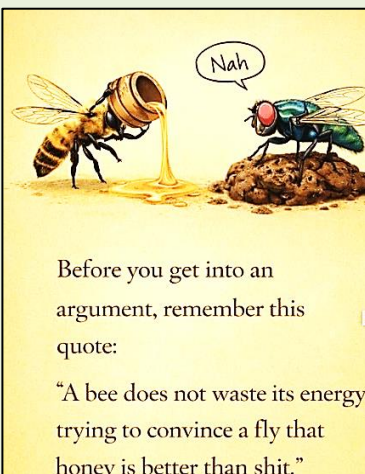
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## 'n KUBAANSE SPESIALE MAGTE SOLDAAT PRAAT

Ek volg van die Kubaanse Facebook bladsye oor Angola. Daar is 'n post waar 'n Kubaanse spesiale magte soldaat sy weergawe vertel. Sy naam is Pedro Hernandez. Die foto is die verkennings peloton wat gestuur is om die Suid-Afrikakaanse observasie pos uit te haal. Hulle het inligting gehad oor die rotasie van die observasie pos en 'n "bazooka" saam gevat om die helikopter af te skiet. Die Suid Afrikaanse magte het hulle leier (en een van hulle skepskutters) dood geskiet waar hy by 'n klein huisie in die koelte geskuil het.

Die manne op die fotos is: Voor van links na regs - VietNam - Onbekend - Pascual Mora Prieto - Conrado Burgos Coss - Colonel Gaston Braffo Fernandez (met die PKM - dis hy wat doodgeskiet is) Agter van links na regs: Perdo Fernandez met die AK met slencer (hy het Puma 134 afgeskiet) - Claro Medina Tartabull - Honduras - Forteza - Carlitos - "The Corporal" - die laaste drie is onbekend.

Die is die Kubaanse weergawe van die Observation Post waar Natie van A Kompanie 75 hulle gewond was. Enjoy. Danie.



**WE CONQUER FROM ABOVE**



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## OPERATION JUPITER.

1968, in Guinea, BCP 12 paratroopers caused more casualties to the enemy (a total of 131), was also, paradoxically, BCP 12 suffered fewer combat casualties (4) except 1966 and 1974, years in which Paratroopers' actions began and ended, while Battalion in this Overseas Territory.

They may have contributed to these numbers, the fact that it was the year of Spinola's arrival in Guinea, before modifying the military device to their liking, and gradually introducing changes to the BCP 12 operational employment policy. The short-term helicopter missions are finished, and under the direct command of the Battalion CMTD, in association with the FAP! Operational Commandos are created, and Paratroopers are deployed, for extended periods of time, in conjunction with Army Units, often under commands unknown to BCP 12.

Interestingly, Operation Jupiter, in August this year, is the first to put this Operational Command into action, and perhaps despite two paratroopers falling into action, the success of the operation (with 450 kilos of war material captured from the enemy) results in the progressive abandonment of Cantanhez, something that the Paratroopers had helped to reoccupy, before the arrival of Spinola, and in the words of Colonel Mira Vaz, in his book *Masks of Mars*, were the brightest six months in the history of the Battalion, translated into Cyclone Operations.

It was on this night, following Gandembel, that at the end of Operation Jupiter,

Lieutenant José Braz, CMTD of CP122, in the fainted light of the dock, and while his men are trimming the bodies of Soldiers António Simão and Luis Santos mentions the Company:

"Soldiers! We have achieved today, by our own hands, a victory we are all proud of. With no hope of help, we dared and won.

Nothing has stopped us and nothing will stop us There is no one who can stop Paras from accomplishing their mission. But there are these dead for revenge. None of us can forget them... "

And that night, after asking volunteers to return to the IN camp, where Simon and the Saints had fallen, the rows of staggering shadows, fools of fatigue, move one step forward as one body.

Article Support:

History of the Paratrooper Troops- Volume BCP12.

Colonel Mira Vaz "Masks of Mars"

Verde Beetle Magazines.

\*Sergio Silva

Bat  
On The Move

Ons het uit vliegtuie gesprong met niks behalwe moed en geloof.  
In die lewe spring jy ook.... En jy val hard, maar jy staan op!  
'n Val beteken niks vir 'n ou valskerm-soldaat nie, dis hoe jy land, opstaan en aanhou wat jou vorm. So is die lewe ook.

Bat  
On The Move

Ex Alto Vincimus



## CASSINGA

Gert Strydom

Soos in die herfs wat die blou lug vol blare is wat val,  
is daar drie honderd en sewentig valskerms wat neerdaal  
op 'n dag waarop onheil wag  
met lugafweer kanonne wat van onder af aanhoudend knal  
en die vyand is meer as 'n duisend en 'n half in getal.

Vyandelike ZPU-4 kanonne se lope word laat sak om ons te knak  
en vee alles skietend voor hulle plat  
en probeer verwoesting saai  
deur ons af te maai.

Vanuit die bome skiet vyandelike skerpskutters en orals is daar skote wat klap  
en stukke uit mense hap.

Van agter murasies word voortdurend geskiet op loopgrawe wat aan die vyand skuiling bied  
en mortier bomme kom orals donderend af terwyl koeëls soos reën neergiet.

Daar word op die vyand by die kannone gevuur en voortdurend word nuwes gestuur  
en is daar ander wat hulle vervang en die geveg in die weegskaal laat hang.

Skoot op skoot hou aan klap en die reuk van dood  
hang sterk in die lug en daar is nêrens vir die vyand om heen te vlug.

Die laaste weerstand verdwyn en skynbare vrede verskyn.  
Van ons makkers klim in twaalf puma's wat land en die res van ons wag gestrand.

Die grens is te ver weg om te loop en daar is niks om mee weg te ry  
toe kubaanse tenks en pantserkarre ons daar kry en ons kan net op die terugkomende puma's hoop.

Met 'n Rpg-7 ystervuis word vier tenks 'n les gewys  
en 'n landmyn laat nog 'n tenk in die stof kwyn, maar slegs valskerm soldate teen oprukkende pantser  
is kanonvoer wat manne in hulle moer stuur en laat nie die gevaar verdwyn  
van 'n kubaanse gemeganiseerde bataljon wat verskyn.

Tot twee Mirage's tien pantserkarre laat ontplof en orals is daar rook en stof  
en 'n Bucanneer wat deur die lug skeur uit die son se verblinde gloed 'n oomblik 'n ewigheid laat duur  
en keer op keer sy vuurpyle op die naderende tenks vuur  
en oor skietende lugafweer kannone doodsveragterend  
afduik om tenks in verskillende rigtings te stuur.

Dit gaan verskriklik rof,  
maar die laaste puma helikopters land in 'n wolk van stof  
en pik ons vinnig op terwyl vyandelike tenks skote aftrek  
en ek skietend met 'n LMG die agterhoede probeer dek;  
voordat die uitgeskiete murasies weggyn in die bos en ons veertig vyandelike gevangenes lewend agter los  
en ons is almal veilig vort  
behalwe vier dapper mans van wie die lewe skort.





## THE DAY OF CASSINGA

Thirty-Nine years ago, today (2017), at 08:04 on a chilly morning, 367 Parabats stepped out of the doors of their lumbering aircraft over the fortified base camp Cassinga. 250 Kilometers behind the lines, it was a matter of victory or death. If the Paratroopers did not prevail, walking back to the border was going to be a deadly business, harassed by Angolan, Cuban and PLAN enemy. Due to a photo scaling error, the drop was a shambles. The box drops which was meant to seal the base ended up scattering the Parabats into positions that put them into mortal danger. Some dropped right on top of the enemy, some landed kilometers away from their intended positions. Some in trees and others into the river, or on the wrong bank.

The essential element of surprise was lost, giving the enemy ample time to set themselves up in the extensive trench and bunker system that surrounded the camp.

Instead of the short, sharp skirmish planned, the attack was an extended affair. The enemy brought their anti-aircraft cannons to bear while the Parabats were exiting the aircraft, and these powerful guns were not silenced until mid afternoon.

The battle raged most of the day and ended with the surrender of the enemy after the big cannons were silenced.

The first wave of helicopters extracted half the Parabats, leaving the remainder to mop up while waiting to be evacuated themselves.

At half their strength, the Parabats were warned by a circling aircraft that a column of twenty armored vehicles was approaching the base.

A Cuban detachment from nearby Techamutete was charging to the rescue of their SWAPo comrades.

This was a grave threat to the few remaining Parabats. Their LZ's came under tank fire and APCs full of Cubans threatened to swamp the remaining Parabats.

A combination of rocket fire from two Mirages that screamed in from Ondongwa destroyed a number of vehicles, but the Mirages couldn't hang around as they were at their range limit and could spend only a minute or two over the target.

A landmine that the Parabats had laid that morning for just this kind of eventuality blew up the leading tank, stopping the Cuban advance for a while.

The Parabats hit the armor with all they had. RPGs and LMGs opened up on the column, buying time for the helicopters to refuel and return to extract the small remaining force.

With the LZs under fire, the helicopters returned. A lone Buccanneer overhead, out of ammo, protected the Parabats scrambling for their lifts home. The Buccanneer pilot, repeatedly buzzed the tanks at treetop level keeping them buttoned up while the Bats were extracted.

Four Parabats lost their lives that day. JC De Waal, Martin Kaplan, Eddie Backhouse and tragically, Skillie Human was Missing in Action.

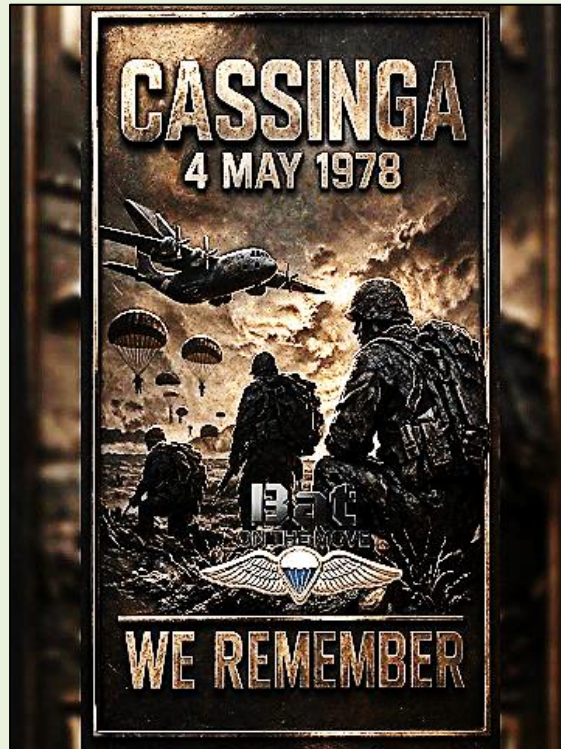
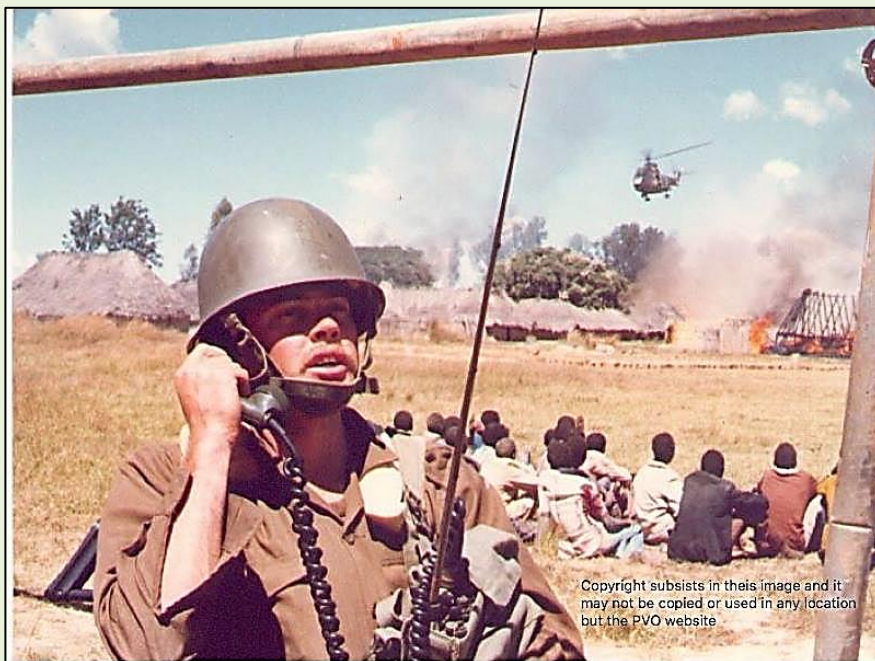
After all this time, we have only recently established what happened to Skillie Human. He landed in the river and drowned.

Through years of detective work, we have now located Skillies unmarked grave where he was buried by a local chief. The time has come to Bring Skillie Home.

If you do anything today in remembrance, please give a donation to enable us to bring our last one back.

**The audited non profit fund account to help this happen is:**

**Parabat Veterans Organisation NPC, Nedbank Account Number 1131959035  
Branch 11414500 with your Surname and "Skillie" as identification.**



## A PERSONAL MEMORY OF SNAKES SNYMAN.

It was February 1970 when I first caught sight of Snakes.

Looking like a young Paul Newman, he had a swagger that brekers all over the country would try to copy. A broad-shouldered, slim hiped, forward-leaning strut that told onlookers that here was more a force of nature than a mere Sergeant, albeit of the country's premier unit, 1 Parachute Battalion.

Snakes became my third Platoon Sergeant after the great gentleman of the Battalion, Ronnie Claassen and Ouboet Kruger, the man with a heart of gold who ate barbed-wire for breakfast.

Snakes had a terrific sense of humour that was often tested to extreme by Rifleman McWilliams.

On a hot and sleepy Bloemfontein afternoon, just after lunch, Snakes was giving us one of those boring lessons under a shady tree at De Brug. I was as usual dozing off when Snakes shouted. "McWilliams, you sleg Joburg soutie. Have you been drinking LSD again?"

My eyes snapped open and I answered in a daze. "No Sarge, I was just resting my eyes."

OK, vinnig nou. Wat is die tromp snelheid van die R1?"

"Blits vinning Sersant" I replied.

Naturally, Snakes went red in the face and asked whether I could see the lone thorn tree on the horizon and asked whether I was back already.

When I answered "Yes", he couldnt maintain his composure any longer and burst into laughter.

This incident began a love-hate relationship between the platoon and Snakes that lasted the rest of the year. The troops loved Snakes and Snakes hated me.

Well, the hate period didnt actually last very long at all because some time later, we trekked down to the Infantry Trials in Oudshoorn.

Snakes had made me Rifleman Number One, Section One, Platoon One, A Coy, 1 Parachute Battalion and we won all our events. Best Section, Best Platoon, Best Company, Veerpoort, Mortar Section, Anti-tank section, absolutely everything.

Snakes was so proud of his boys that he even suggested that the Joburg riflemen had probably been unable to get their LSD in Oudshoorn.

Snakes were a one of a kind in a unit that produced many legends. He was reputed to have scored the first kill in the bushwar at Ongulumbashe, South Africas first punchup with SWAPO in South West Africa. I only heard of this feat much later and it was typical of Snakes that one had to hear of his actions from someone else.

He was not one to blow his own trumpet.

The halls of Valhalla will be ringing with the cheers of welcoming heroes as Snakes walks down the isles with his swaggering, long-legged stride tonight.

Rest in peace after the party Snakes.



Snakes 2<sup>nd</sup> from left.



**Ninda, Angola 1973**

Portuguese Parabats, from BCP21 about to board a South African Air Force A10 III for a jump.



No one has ever complained of a parachute not opening!



Actually my parachute didn't open once, and I got a full refund!

### Ciskeian Paratroopers

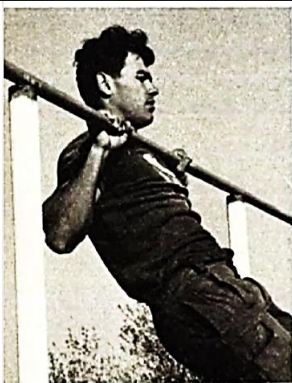
On 20 August 1991 eight Ciskeian paratroopers drowned in the Fish River. A squad of sixteen soldiers, all carrying 60 kilograms of equipment, had been dropped near the river. Ten of them landed in the water. The official version was that a strong wind near the ground had blown the men off course (*Daily Dispatch 21 August 1991*). It was later reported that a Ciskeian officer had approached a conservation officer on the South African side of the river for permission to bring trucks onto the land to collect the soldiers after the jump. The plan was for them to land on a strip of wetland next to the river about 250 to 300 metres wide. The conservation officer, a former SADF Parachute Battalion officer, had pointed out the danger of dropping the men so close to such a large and deep body of water but had been ignored. No safety precautions were taken (*Daily Dispatch 30 September 1991*).



**Headline in 1963: You'll be able to carry phone in pocket in future.**



## 1 Valskermbataljon se troepe fiksste



Die wenner, 2 lt I.W. Sinclair van 1 Valskermbataljon, besig met sy 18 optreкке.

**1 VALSKERMBATALJON** in Bloemfontein het bewys dat hy in 1986 die fiksste troepe in Kommandement OVS opgelei het toe dié eenheid die eerste drie plekke verower het in 'n kompetisie om die fiksste troep aan te wys. Die wenner van die kompetisie dring deur na die Leërspole.

Die fiksste man in die Kommandement is 2 lt I.W. Sinclair, van D-Kompanie in 1 Valskermbataljon. Tweede was lt C. Buchanan en derde sktr G. Whitby, albei ook van 1 Valskermbataljon.

fanteriebataljon, 2 Veldgenieregiment, Panterskool en Genieskool, wat elk drie deelnemers in die stryd gehad het. Die kompetisie het bestaan uit batterytoets (optreкке, opstote en opsitte), 2,4 km hardloop en 15 km stap.

Die deelnemers het bogemiddelde standaarde gehandhaaf en die beste in elke afdeling was: 2 lt Sinclair (18 optreкке en 90 opsitte), lt C. Buchanan (102 opsitte), spr J.J. Pansegrouw (2 Veldgenieregiment — 2,4 km in 9,9 min) en KO P.F. Sasse (Panterskool, 15 km in 1,40 min, 37 sek).





# H Coy

During the peak of the Angolan war operational requirements deemed it necessary to have an additional company in the Parachute Battalion, thus H Coy was formed to work with Delta Company. Hotel Company was the one and only H Coy in the Battalion.

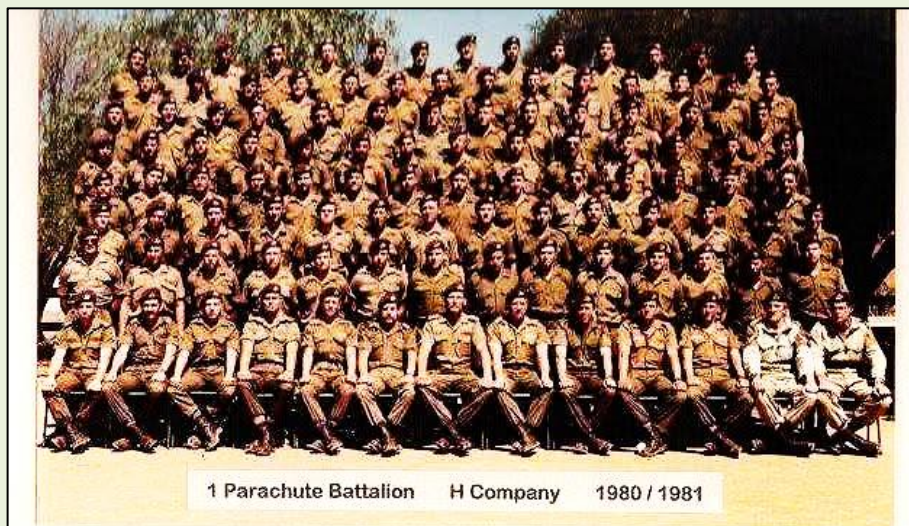
SM Faan Fanie Joubert was our SM who later went on to become a RSM at 32 Battalion, a Brigade SM at 44 Parachute Battalion and also 7 Divison SM.

## H Company Operations.

- Carnation
- Daisy
- Protea
- Zulu
- Ceiling and Bergflam.



## Vincent L Stewart



1 Parachute Battalion H Company 1980 / 1981



Foto: Du 'Nol  
 Voor: 2Lt J W Meining, 2Lt C H Minnaar, Lt B I Bowles, Lt D J Spika, Lt P Veldman, Lt A L R Steynmet (Kamp ZIB), Kopt A J van der Walt (Kamp Bev), AO I Joubert, (KSM), Sers A G Bass (KSKM), Kpl P B van der Merwe, Jk C D W Grayling, Kpl M A Hulberg, Kpl M J L Badenhorst.  
 Tweede Ry: Kpl J A de Kock, Kpl J G de Beer, Sgr R A Mack, Sgr M J Spies, Sgr N D Leubsdorff, Sgr V van der Merwe, Sgr M D Pieterse, Sgr D Steyn, Sgr A M Almer, Sgr F G Van der Merwe, Sgr D C Venter, Sgr P van Zyl, Sgr J E Kwaas, Kpl L G Breyer.  
 Derde Ry: Sgr S du Wae, Sgr L M Michau, O/Kpl A N D Higgs, Sgr D J Wood, O/Kpl J D Herby, Sgr C J Vreeman, Sgr P T Poggelaar, Sgr W J van Aard, Sgr J G de Bruyn, Sgr R O Meyer, Sgr C F Olivier, Sgr T H Burtel, O/Kpl J H van Jaarsveld, Sgr A I Swart.  
 Vierde Ry: Sgr J S Kooze, Sgr C H Brander, Sgr C M Ellis, Sgr A H Beale, Sgr J J Munn, Sgr W G Meiso, Sgr V L Steward, Sgr R B Shimwell, O/Kpl N F Pretorius, Sgr G J Webb, Sgr J J P Rossouw, Sgr A J Kleinhans, Sgr F R Moltenan, Sgr E J Janse van Rensburg.  
 Vyfde Ry: Sgr P J Joubert, Sgr G S Phisoane, Sgr J de Jager, Kpl A R Palm, O/Kpl C P Lloyd, Sgr D R Summers, Sgr W Claas, Sgr J A la Roux, Sgr A van der Merwe, Sgr W Prinsloo, Sgr F G van der Berg, Sgr E L la Grange, Sgr C W Basson, Sgr Y J Swart.  
 Sesde Ry: Sgr A W Coetzer, Sgr P H Poggelaar, Sgr T C Sibbert, Sgr R A Driole, Sgr M D Skrad, O/Kpl H de Preez, O/Kpl R A Erasmus, Sgr G P H Heyderich, Sgr A B Groenewald, Sgr J J Swanevool, Sgr D Janse van Vuuren, O/Kpl F J Maritz, Sgr A R Geyls.  
 Sewende Ry: O/Kpl L J de Groot, Sgr J S Gaus, Sgr M J J van der Merwe, Kpl B Barend, Sgr M Munnik, Sgr N J Pretorius, Sgr K W Rock, Sgr R S Linneman, O/Kpl S Prinsloo, Sgr T S Visser, O/Kpl H C J Nodden, Sgr K H J van Ameyden, Sgr S W Krosouw, Sgr A Ellis.  
 Agste Ry: Sgr C F R Bamein, O/Kpl C C Beale, Sgr B D Leeu, O/Kpl J P C A Lochner, Kpl P B Campiun, Sgr C Coetzee, O/Kpl A J H Collins, Sgr P H Roff, O/Kpl J J M de Wit, Kpl J F Perold, Kpl J J F Kockmoer, Sgr G F Holtshausen, O/Kpl B S Morris, Kpl G J P van Jaarsveld.



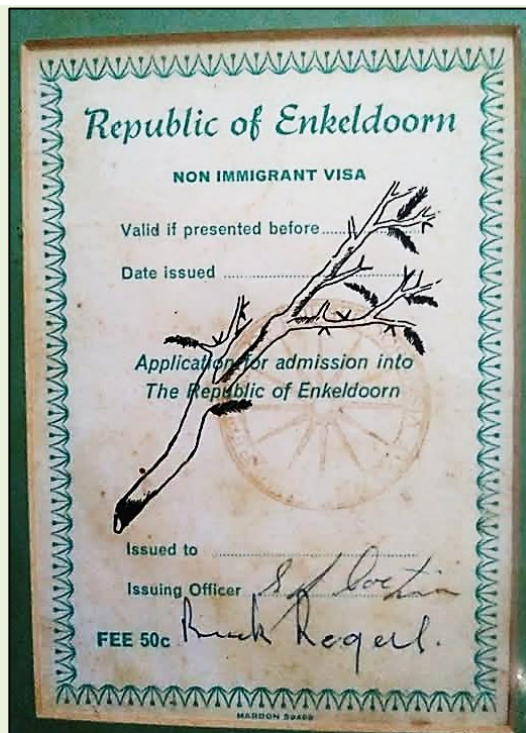
## THE REPUBLIC OF ENKELDOORN

**The editor:** This was taken from FB and I decided to add it into for us, as I visited Enkeldoorn in 1972. This always fascinated me and my wife great parents is buried in Enkeldoorn. The jail had skeleton in. The road to Enkeldoorn was a two-strip road those days.

### ANYONE HERE EVER LOCKED UP IN THE ENKELDOORN HOTEL PUBS JAIL?

If you were passing through Enkeldoorn and didnt have a non-resident visa you were locked in the pub's jail and had to finish a certain amount of beer before you were released. The late Buck Rodgers (barman of the pub) who also owned Rodgers garage in town was the president and mayor of the Republic of Enkeldoorn.

I have still have my late Dads visa which he did'nt fill in and I still have his Republic of Enkeldoorn tie. Author unknown.



### OPERATION FIREWOOD

Simon Campbell Young (left) is a South African tech entrepreneur and military veteran who served as a paratrooper in the 1 Parachute Battalion ("The Parabats") of the South African Defence Force (SADF) during the Border War. He is widely known in military history circles for his firsthand account of Operation Firewood, an intense, behind the lines battle fought in Angola on 31 October 1987. Campbell Young fought in Delta Company during Operation Firewood, a fierce assault targeting a SWAPO/PLAN base at Chetequera, roughly 300 km inside Angola.

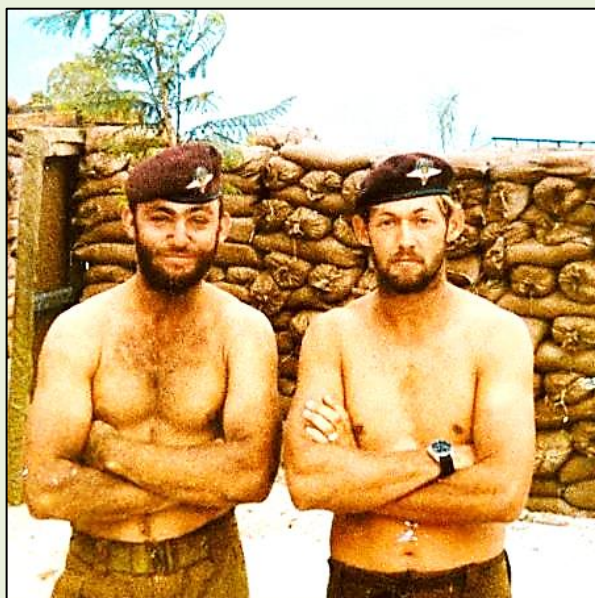
During the battle, his close friend and fellow paratrooper, Corporal Nico Olivier, was killed. Campbell Young was part of the team that evacuated Olivier's body via a Puma helicopter. Roughly six weeks later, Campbell-Young was wounded after hitting a landmine and was treated at 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria.

He detailed his experiences with life as a paratrooper, combat leadership, and the psychological impact of the Bush War in a comprehensive interview on the popular veteran archive channel Legacy Conversations.

Salute Veteran. **Glin Massey-Hicks**

Photo: Combat360

[#history](#) [#memories](#) [#storytelling](#)  
[#WhenWeWereSoldiers](#) [#sadf](#) [#BorderWar](#)



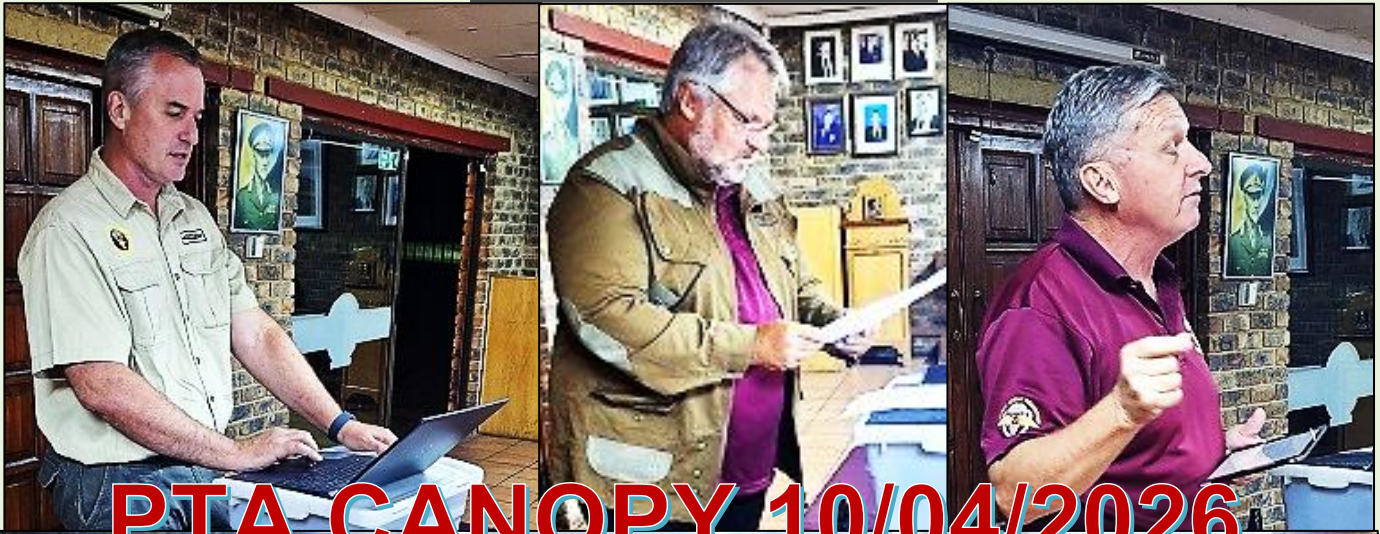
A GROUP OF EAGLES IS CALLED???

A PARABAT WALK



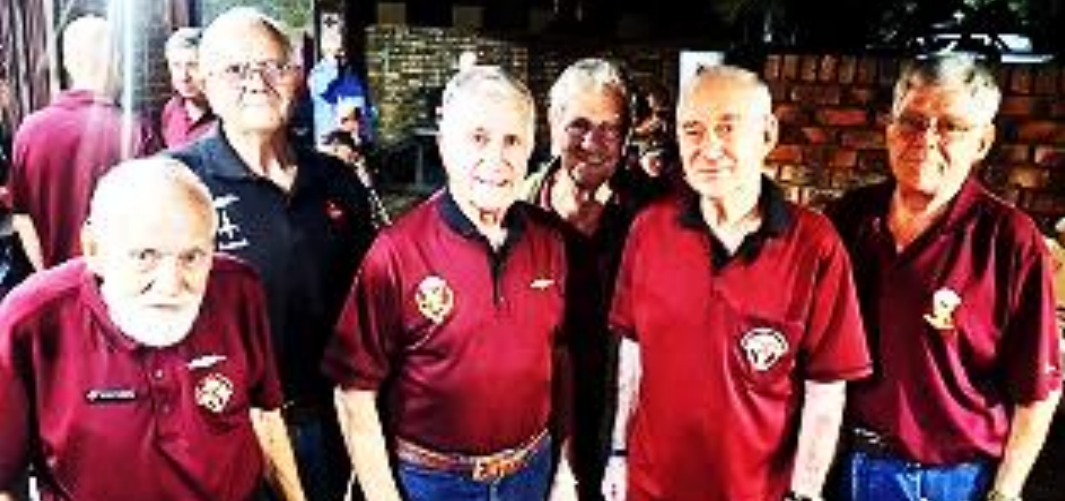
# NUUS VANAF ORAL / NEWS FROM ALL OVER

01/04/2026 – 30/06/2026



## PTA CANOPY 10/04/2026







LAEVELD CANOPY ETE 10 APR





Jas Blaau and Johnny Kerswill, my Comp Commader at 1 Parachute Battalion B Company. **26 Apr.**  
**Outback Canopy** Anzac Day march with SAMVOA in the City of Sydney **26 Apl.** Dennis Davy and wife.



**Die Bats was WEER die BESTE!**

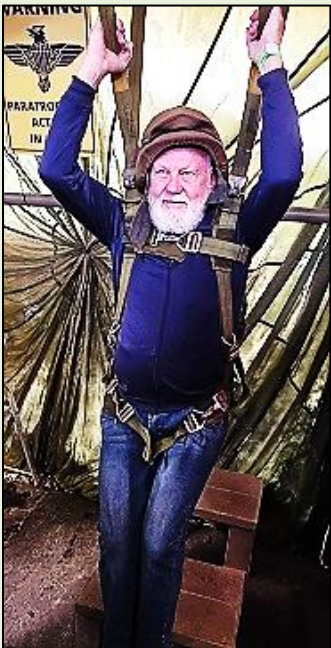
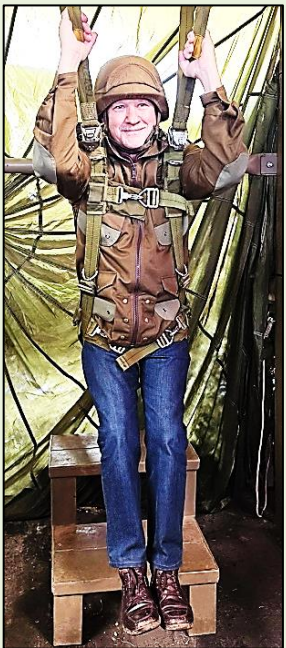
Nog 'n PUIK dag by die Militêre Skou in Pretoria. Ons Parabat veterane het nogmaals met trots ons erfenis en nalatenskap van die Bats verteenwoordig. Dit was 'n dag vol kameraadskap, stories en gedeelde trots— en 'n ervaring wat die hele gesin kon geniet. **01/05/2026**

**ExAltoVincimus**



Willoughby en Koos Camo / Barbara Muszynskie en Paul Els beskenstelling van hul nuwe boek. / Oom Paul en Tant Annelie by hul boekstalletjie. Onder links Chris Pohl by PVO stalletjie.





01 May 2026 10:07 am



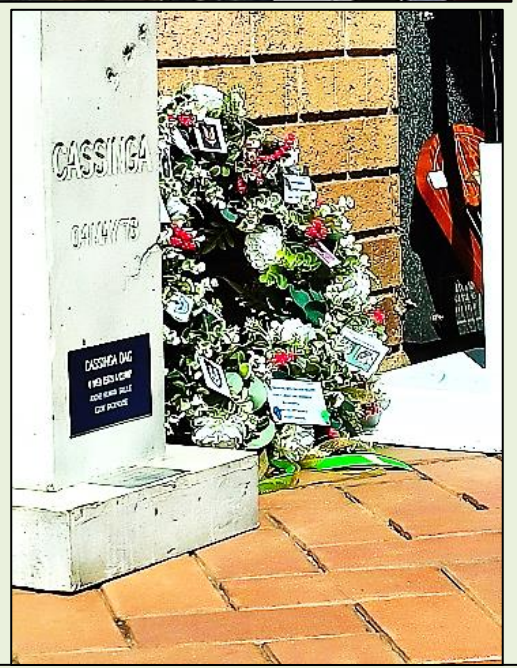
01 May 2026 12:38 pm

**“VOETE BY  
MEKAAR TROEP!!**



# CASSINGA 02/05/2026

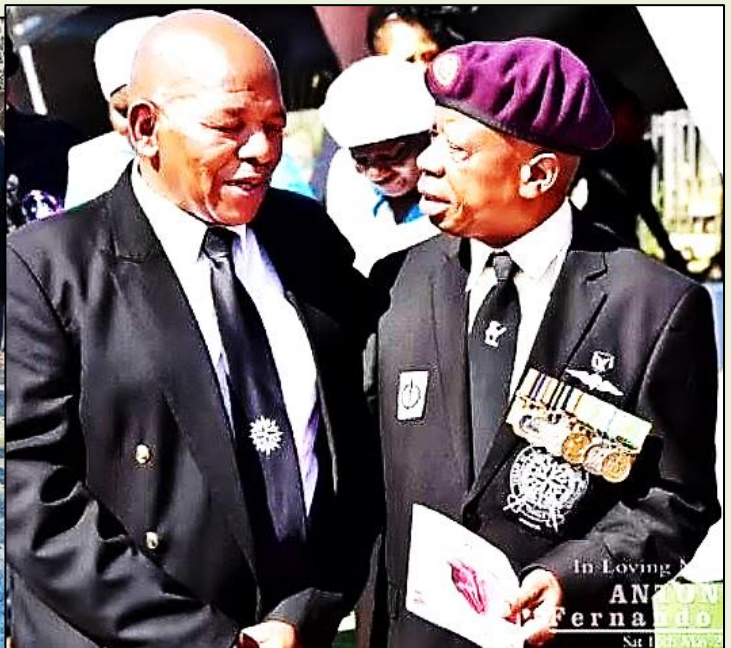








Alex Deacon se gedenkdiens (SM) 06/05/2026.



Left: Jan Smuts Parade 17/05/2026 Cape Town.

Right: SF members WO Sam Manyathela and Cmdt Mbambo at Antonio Fernando Zaire funeral. 22/05/2026.



# PTA CANOPY 08/05/2026



# RUSTENBURG CANOPY 13/05/2026



SANDEF PARACHUTE TRAINING SCHOOL



# AIRBORN RIDERS 15/05/2026





RESTRICTED



**sa army**

Department:  
Defence  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

44 Para Regt/R/406/2

Telephone: (051) 402-1500  
Fax: (051) 402 1504  
Cell: 072 5839804  
Enquiries: Col L.H. Gordon

Headquarters  
44 Parachute Regiment  
Private Bag X40008  
Tempe  
Bloemfontein  
9318  
15 May 2026

Attention: Col (Hon.) R.C. Kramer  
SA Army Infantry Formation

Col R.C. Kramer

1. Refer your letter dd 13 MAY 2026 from Airborne Riders, requesting a visit to 44 Parachute Regiment on Friday 15 May 2026.
2. As Officer Commanding 44 Parachute Regiment, I am prepared to allow the visit on condition that Protocol are followed on a one – time basis only.
3. You mentioned that you stipulated to the President of Airborne Riders that any visitors to the Regiment should behave with decorum, respect the rules and not cause any embarrassment to the unit, for which the President and organisation shall take full responsibility.
4. Any future applications for visits of groups or Veterans to 44 Parachute Regiment should be coordinated through you as the point of contact (POC) to ensure respectful behaviour and maintain the Esprit De Corps.
5. I thank you for your dedication and commitment to uplifting 44 Parachute Regiment to its former glory and eite and proud status it deserves.
6. I thank you

Airborne Greetings!

(L.H. GORDON)  
OFFICER COMMANDING 44 PARACHUTE REGIMENT: COL



Lufwaffe is Benamandla: Umrangwa wezakoVikela. Ngqirho ye Tshabalala: Isitha lesiKhwesi. Department of Defence: Mkhatho wa Tonkela. Umphezantsi Wezokufikele: Nibizwalo ye siseVuzozizwani. Lufwaffe is Tshabalala: Dikwemantso ezeVuzozizwani. U/Thixo is Tonkela.

RESTRICTED



## GEVALLE SOLDATE VAN BLOEMFONTEIN GEDENK 11/05/2026

Hulde is in Bloemfontein gebring aan soldate van die stad wat in oorloë die afgelope eeu die hoogste prys betaal het.

Saluut vir gevalle makers luitenant kolonel Dawie Fourie, voormalige bevelvoerder van 1 Valskermbataljon in Tempe, Bloemfontein, gee hier 'n saluut voor die Kruis van Herinnering in die Hamilot-miltêre begrafplaas in die stad. Die statebond se kommissievir oorlogsgrafte wat die begraafplaas onderhou, het Donderdag 'n spesiale geleentheid hier gehou wat deur verskeie veteran bygewoon is. Verskeie soldate van die stad wat in die Eerste Wêreldoorlog, die Tweede Wêreldoorlog, die Grensoolog en ook die Verenigde Nasies se vredesmissies in Afrika omgekom het, is hier begrawe.

Lourens de Lange van die Valskerm-veteraneorganisasie het gesê die begrafplaas het spesiale betekenis vir die organisasie aangesien valskermersoldate hier te ruste le wie se dapperheid, opoffering en toewyding deel is van die erfenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse valskemtroepe.

Hy het sesiale hulde gebring aan kaptein Leon van Wyk van 1 Valskermbrigade in Tempe wat op 2 Mei 1982 net oos van Otavi in die Grensoorlog gesneuwel het, asook korporaal Thomas Janse van Rensburg van die eenheid wat op 15 November 1986 in 'n ongeluk byTsande dood is.

Daarby het hy hulde gebring aan korporaal Andrew Mogorsi en skutter Jim Mxhosana en Samuel Thulo, almal van 1 Valskermbrigade, wat op 23 Maart 2013 in die Slag van Bangui in die Sentraal Afrikaanse Republiek gesterk het.

Altesame 13 Suid-Afrikaansetroepe is in 'n aanval deur rebelle op die dorp gedood en 27 is gewond. Nog twee soldate het later aan hulle wornde beswyk.

De Lagne en luitenant kolonel Dawie Fourie, voormalige bevelvoerder van 3 Valskermbatajon by Tempe, het die slag as van die ergste ooit beskryf vain Suid-Afrikaanse valskermersoldate in oorloë betrokke was.

**Chris Smith.**



Lourens de Lange van die Valskerm-veteraneorganisaie en lt kol Dawie Fourie eertydse bev van 3 Vals Bn, by die graf van sktr Jim Nanabu Mxhosana van 1 Valskermbrigade. Foto: Charles Smith.



Dear fellow Paratrooper veterans,

On Sunday, 24 May 2026, at the DITSONG National Museum of Military History in Johannesburg, one of the finest military history museums in the world, we celebrated a truly historic and deeply moving day for our Airborne fraternity: the Grand Opening of the new Regiments Room.

In a moment of perfect timing and decisive action under intense pressure, SAPMEA secured the very last available exhibition stand, just before we would have lost this irreplaceable opportunity to showcase our proud history forever. A huge thank you to veteran DPJ for stepping up to secure our last stand.

First and foremost, I wish to express our profound appreciation and deepest respect to the leadership and management of the DITSONG National Museum of Military History, as well as the management of the Regiments Room.

Coming in at the absolute last minute, we were met with incredible grace, flexibility, and unwavering support. Furthermore, to all the participating Regiments and Associations, the bond, solidarity, and camaraderie experienced between our units was nothing short of amazing. It was a powerful reminder of our shared values and mutual respect. We thank you all for standing shoulder-to-shoulder with us.

The new Regiments Room now proudly displays the rich legacy of The SA Paratrooper Veterans (SAPMEA) alongside our distinguished brothers, in, arms. It was an honour to share this historic space with all the official participants who made this day a reality:

SA Paratrooper Veterans (SAPMEA)

Transvaal Horse Artillery Heritage Trust

Witwatersrand Rifles Heritage Trust

Johannesburg Regiment Association

SA Irish Regimental Association (now the Andrew Mlangeni Regiment)

SA Cape Corps Military Veterans Association (SACCMVA)

Rand Light Infantry Regimental Association

7 Medium Regiment Association

Johannesburg South Regiment Association

SA Special Forces Heritage Foundation

The SA Reserves Trophies Trust

The Freedom of the City of Johannesburg Regiments Association

Transvaal Scottish Regimental Council

32 Battalion Association

Crucially, our own exhibition space captures our complete history, spanning from the historic day 1 Parachute Battalion first opened its doors, all the way to the modern achievements of Operation Restore the Glory.



With the high, level backing of Major General Z.V. Ngcobo, GOC, General Officer Commanding SA Infantry Formation, I am deeply humbled to have been able to assist our fellow regiments. When Brigadier General N.A. Nthejane, Chief of Staff of the SA Army Infantry Formation, came out personally last Saturday to conduct an inspection alongside the Officers Commanding of the South African Irish Regiment (Andrew Mlangeni Regiment) and the Rand Light Infantry, they graciously agreed to support and hand over the much, required regalia and items needed for the other units. I am incredibly grateful that we could pull together in such a short period to ensure these regiments received everything required in time.

As windgat as we Parabats are, we showed true Ubuntu by helping fellow veterans, proving that United we are strong, with no room for egos.

Over 300 distinguished guests and veterans filled the venue. The Parabats stood out proudly, bringing unmatched energy and spirit.

Our AAPKAS restoration video, celebrating the outdoor exit trainer tower successfully unveiled this year on 30 April 2026 at 44 Parachute Regiment, played on stage beside every speaker. This was an incredible marketing feat that had heads turning and hearts swelling with pride.

An exceptional and heartfelt thank you goes to Colonel L.H. Gordon, Officer Commanding 44 Parachute Regiment, for his magnificent leadership and unwavering commitment to our cause. Colonel Gordon not only arranged the loan of the iconic Parabat Jakkals utility vehicle, which is now being fully restored, but he also ensured that numerous other vital and much, required exhibition items were provided to complete our display.

The exceptional support we have received from our beloved Regiment for Operation Restore the Glory, driven through the Parabat Heritage Foundation (PHF) and SAPMEA, has been absolutely amazing. It is a powerful testament to the unbreakable bond between our serving members and our veteran community.

Special thanks also to Fires van Vuuren for the lightning, fast transport from Bloemfontein, to Willie de Beer and his team for their excellence in record time, and to my dedicated crew: Mike McWilliams, Steve Camp, Glenn Lambert, Wit Willem Pretorius, Chris Koen, plus every veteran who made it happen.

Heartfelt appreciation to Colonel Z. Biyela, 2IC of 44 Parachute Regiment, for representing us from Tempe, and to my former GOC, Major General H.D. Mashego (Ret), former OC 5 Special Forces Regiment, who, together with Col Biyela, handed over certificates of appreciation to the deserving Paratrooper veterans.

The moment was made even more special when Lieb Liebenberg led a rousing Paratrooper song that echoed powerfully through the venue, with Maj Gen Mashego and our Special Forces brothers joining in with great spirit!

Your stories of courage and sacrifice are now preserved forever so our children, grandchildren, and future generations can visit, enjoy tours, and draw strength from our legacy. This beautiful preservation of our history perfectly mirrors the historic milestone we achieved on 30 April 2026 with the formal unveiling of the refurbished



**AAPKAS Outdoor Exit Trainer Tower, which coincided with the 65th Birthday Anniversary of 1 Parachute Battalion.**

### **The Greater Vision: Shifting the Worldview of Our "Lost Youth"**

**Beyond preserving history, this movement forms part of a much larger, vital vision. There is a profound opportunity for the SA Army to play a transformative role in reshaping the worldview of our country's "lost youth." By demonstrating the values of discipline, structural support, and patriotic purpose, we can anchor a generation that has drifted off course.**

**This vision comes alive through our direct collaboration with the Guardian Angel Wildlife and Marine Trust (GAWMT). This year on Mandela Day, GAWMT shall be hosting its 2nd massive Youth Environmental Education Day in Alexandra Township, mobilizing approximately 3,000 GAWMT Scouts.**

**We are establishing a massive strategic footprint by focusing directly on one concentrated area.**

**Under our clear slogan, "Keep Kasi Clean," we are starting with the absolute fundamentals of community service: instilling accountability, pride, and the basic civic discipline of not littering. Against all odds, in an environment often neglected, we are determined to set a shining example for South Africa of what disciplined structure can achieve.**

**This is an integrated, multi, stakeholder operation. Standing shoulder, to, shoulder on the day will be the SA Army, the DPCI/Hawks, SAPS, JMPD, and other key stakeholders. This collective presence shows these children that the state and its veterans care about their future, changing the worldview of a generation too often labeled as "lost."**

**GAWMT is actively building the largest Scout movement in the country, focusing its efforts right in Alexandra Township, situated just a stone's throw from Sandton, the richest square kilometre in Africa. Through learning and living by the Scout Laws, these young minds aged 7 to 18 are equipped with character, accountability, and self, worth, intentionally steering them away from the destructive paths of drugs, alcohol, and crime. As a fundamental part of their character, building journey, these Scouts will be brought directly to the new Regiments Room and the military museum, teaching them that they belong to a legacy of strength, honor, and resilience.**

### **A Call to Arms: Pushing Back the Storm.**

**We, as veterans, possess an unparalleled treasury of combined skills, operational experience, and tested leadership. We have a distinct and urgent duty to play a leading role in "pushing back" against the perfect storm of crime, social decay, and lawlessness that threatens our horizon. This looming crisis will eventually breach the borders of comfort and affect the lives of all South Africans currently living in a bubble.**



Our efforts through Operation Restore the Glory are not just about looking backward. They are the frontline of a larger, positive vision. It proves that military veterans, armed with a constructive attitude and a passion to make a concrete change, can act as a stabilizing, transforming force for the future.

The time has come to step up, roll up our sleeves, and do the heavy lifting required to secure our grandchildren's future. We must leave the empty complaining on social media to others. Cynicism changes absolutely nothing. Action changes everything. Get involved, get excited, and let's lead from the front once again.

If you share this passion, possess the skills to contribute, and are ready to stand up for the next generation, you are warmly welcome to join us at [www.gawmtrust.org](http://www.gawmtrust.org).

Operation Restore the Glory continues.

United we are strong. Second to None. Ex Alto Vincimus.

With sincere appreciation and the greatest respect,

**Colonel (Hon) Raymond C. Kramer**

Chairman, SA Paratroopers Museum Exhibition Association (SAPMEA)

Chairman, Parabat Heritage Foundation (PHF)

Project Leader, Operation Restore the Glory

Founder & Trustee, Guardian Angel Wildlife and Marine Trust (GAWMT)





24/05/2026





# CMVO SA- 31 MAY – 2026

## ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE









## CMVO COMMEMORATION PARADE\*

A sincere thank you to Oom Dan for laying the SASFA cross on behalf of the Association, and to everyone who attended the parade. As always, the event was conducted with great professionalism and was a fitting and successful commemoration.

It was also encouraging to have Jack Greeff in attendance, providing him with the opportunity to personally view the correction of the HCS inscription on the granite plates at the Memorial Wall. Our sincere appreciation to Fort Oranje for their support and assistance in making these corrections possible.

Thank you to all involved for helping to honour the memory and legacy of our fallen comrades.  
SASFA Greetings, Chris.



**Cheers!! West Rand Canopy has started their own official Brandy Production line, with sole distribution rights. Watch this space for more progress and information on our official launch. Have a great weekend West Rand Bats!**  
**Also remember to join our official West Rand Canopy Facebook [06/06/2026](#).**



RESTRICTED



**sa army**

Department:  
Defence  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Telephone: (051) 402-1500  
 Fax: (051) 402 1504  
 Cell: 072 5839804  
 Enquiries: Col L.H. Gordon  
 Email: [louiwiangordon@yahoo.com](mailto:louiwiangordon@yahoo.com)

Headquarters  
 44 Parachute Regiment  
 Private Bag X40008  
 Tempe  
 Bloemfontein  
 9318

4 June 2026

Attention: Colonel (Honorary) R. Kramer  
 Chairman – Parabat Heritage Foundation (PHF)

Col R. C. Kramer,

1. Letter dated 21 May 2026, requesting important calendar dates for the year 2026 from the Regiment, as well as the subsequent letter issued on 22 May 2026, has reference.
2. Further to the above, the Officer Commanding 44 Parachute Regiment herewith wishes to inform the Parabat Heritage Foundation (PHF) that the 200 selected Paratrooper Veterans will be allowed to participate in the Practical Water Jump, scheduled to take place on 11 and 12 December 2026 at Bloemhof Dam, in combination with current serving Paratroopers and selected Diamond Veterans.
3. Those identified will be required to conduct retraining over a period of three (3) days prior to the jump and are to ensure that they are on active call-up and/or medically covered. It is not an obligation and it represents a significant expense to the Department of Defence (DOD). Only those nominated by the Chairperson of the PHF who have proven themselves during every step of Operation Restore the Glory will be authorised to participate.
4. Airborne Greetings!

(L.H. GORDON)  
 OFFICER COMMANDING 44 PARACHUTE REGIMENT: COL



Jim Holtzhausen kuier by Yserman [9/06/2026](#)



11/06/2026 Willoughbt Brits; Fred Nel; Rudolf du Plessis; Louis du Plessis; Chris Badenhorst; Malcolm Cox.

**ONDER: LAEVELD ETE 12/06/2026**



# PTA Canopy Meeting Call Up

**Stand in the Door ...**

Date: Fri, 12 June 2026  
 Time: 18h30 for 19h00  
 Venue: Everdeen Hotel, Matho DZ  
 Address: 120 Claverly Avenue, Conaklous  
 GPS: 33°25'49" S 25° 25' 11" E  
 Description: Smart Informal / Casual. Eating & drink afterwards, Cash bar available  
 Topic: "Overview of his MIL services at 1 Para Bn, 32 Bn & 1A Special Forces - highlights of Operation(s) involved"  
 Guest speaker: Recce Col (Ret.) Frans Fourie, MC 3M MMH

All members of other Para Companies, 3F, LAARSA, Boesmans, 1A&F @ invite welcome!

Kom wysaer ons Paratroopers se hereroedskap en gesellige sameen, terwyl die vuur hoog brand!

Col. Frans Fourie - 'n offisier en 'n ware heer ...



Die manne van Pretoria Canopy het weer Vrydagaand **12/06/2026** bymekaar gekom vir ons maandelikse saamkuier. Soos gewoonlik was die vuur vroeg al aan die gang en het die stories en gesels lekker dik geloop.

'n Hoogtepunt van die aand was beslis ons gasspreker, Recce Kol. Frans Fourie, wat die manne vasgenael gehou het met sy vertellings.

Ons het ook die voorreg gehad om Generaals Krubert en Swart by ons te verwelkom.

'n Besondere woord ook vir Oom Ronnie wat getrou elke maand die samekomste bywoon. Dit is altyd spesiaal en 'n voorreg om hom by ons te hê.

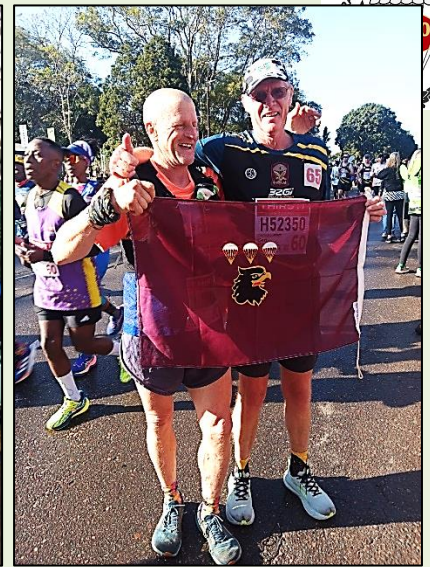
Die maandelikse skouerskuur is eersteklas kameraadskap en 'n hoogtepunt wat ons elke maand laat uitsien na die samekoms. Lekker lag, korswel (soos in die army dae), herinneringe word opgehaal en sommer net lekker gekuier soos net Paratroopers kan.

Dankie aan elke man wat die moeite gedoen het om daar te wees. Dis hierdie aande wat mens herinner hoekom die band tussen ou makkers nooit verdwyn nie.

Groete,  
 Chris







Comrades 2026 KZN CANOPY at Hilcrest **14/05/2026**. Right: Clive Mingay and Gert van Zyl, Below left: Eric Williamson Bloem Canopy. Right: Maroon parade.



## OUTBACK CANOPY SLADE HEALY

Arrived in South Africa Tuesday night and the very next night **16 Junie** straight off to a fantastic talk by Recce Douw Steyn, author of Iron Fist from the Sea, at the Wanderers Golf Club. Must have been 20 operators there and I was driven there by old friend Johan Burr-Dixon who I did jump course with way back in '73. And got to see my first accident happen right in front of us. What a welcome back. Photo below:





**27/06/2026** The day at the PPM. Left: Hans Human; Andries Marais; Renaud Booyesen, during the presentation of Maius of Buccaneer in Cassinga. Right: Oom Paul and Arduus van der Westhuizen. Below left: Arduus got a hand full. Right: Mosselbay **29/06/2026** memorial service/





# UIT DIE VERLEDE / FROM THE PAST "DOWN MEMORY LANE" SA PARATROOPERS



Scholz  
Sybie vd Spuy



Hannekom  
Koos Moorcroft



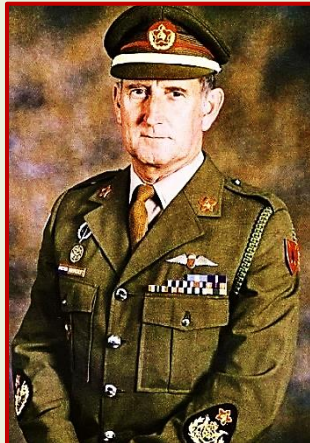
James Teitge  
Johnny Kerswill



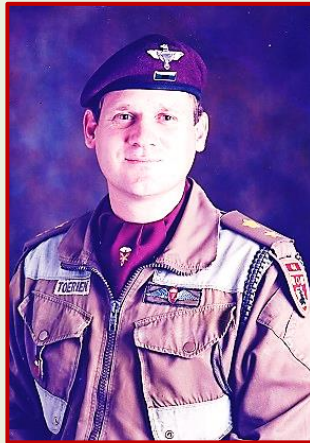
Smile vd Merwe  
Okkie Snyman



Andry Diedericks  
Gert van Zyl



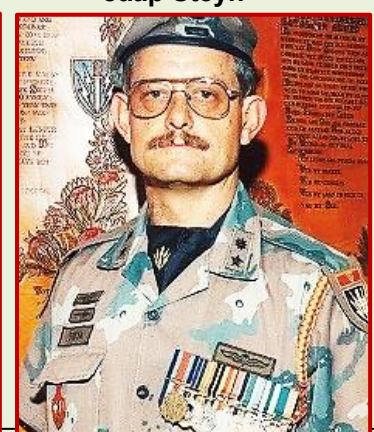
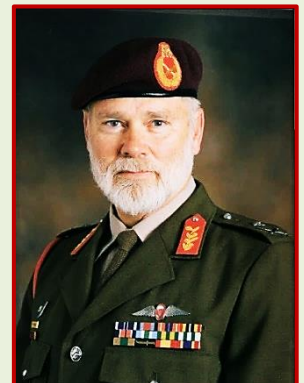
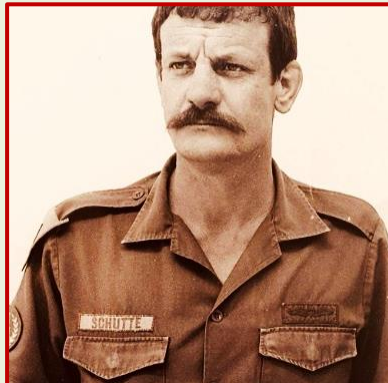
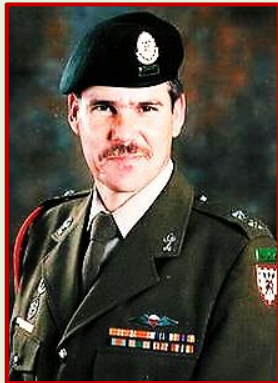
Schutte  
Roland de Vries



Kobus Human  
Mac Beets



MaGill Alexander  
Jaap Steyn



## KZN CANOPY DISPLAY ROOM

Final touches to the KZN Canopy Display Room, at Highway Shellhole. Come and support the Display, bring your family members, grandchildren, and friends to see and chat about your glory days.





Above: Free fall instructors.

Left: Alan Mann. Andrew McDonald. Greg Aston. Lady unknown

DOD Ammunition Subdepot Naboomspruit marked a milestone that will be remembered for years to come. Cpl S.T. Mndebele from the town of Ermelo, Mpumalanga has officially qualified as the first paratrooper for the ammunition corp in DOD Ammunition SubDepot Naboomspruit earning his wings and setting a new standard of courage and commitment for the corp.  
**15/05/2026**

**VALSKERMOPLEIDINGSENTRUM**  
**STATIESE LYN VALSKERM AFSTUURDERS KURSUS**  
 701 PARA 3-9602  
 7 OKTOBER - 1 NOVEMBER 1996



**PARACHUTE TRAINING CENTRE**  
**STATIC LINE PARACHUTE DESPATCHERS COURSE**  
 701 PARA 3-9602  
 7 OCTOBER 1996 - 1 NOVEMBER 1996



09/HEL/ATEL/AE

SEATED: Lt Col J.H. Kruyer (Course Leader), Sgt W. Krühenrich (Chief Instr.)  
 STANDING: Lt N.J. Mwanani, Cpl J.P. Kruger, Cpl M. Blackie, Lt E. Foschi, WO2 W.J.E. Dobson

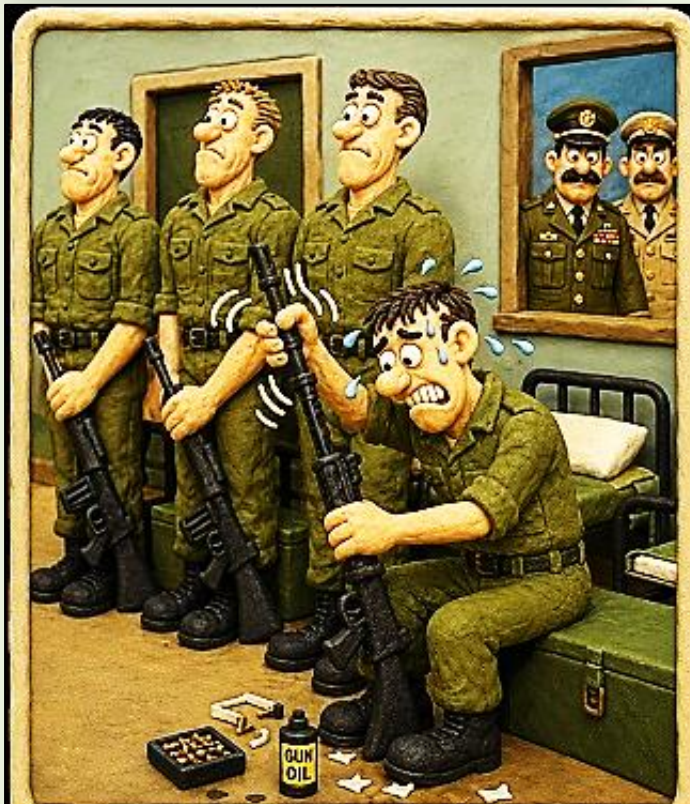
TEL (051)477 3443



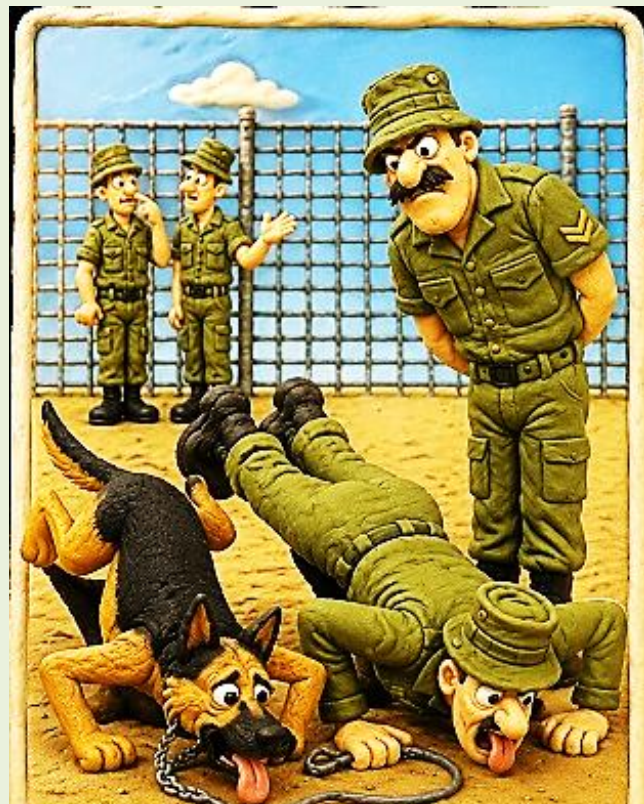
I know one has to chain one's washing up at the camp because it gets pinched. But don't you think you're taking your precautions too far?



Come on *maaltjie*, climb out of your *frommel*. Sooner or later you'll have to start your basic training.



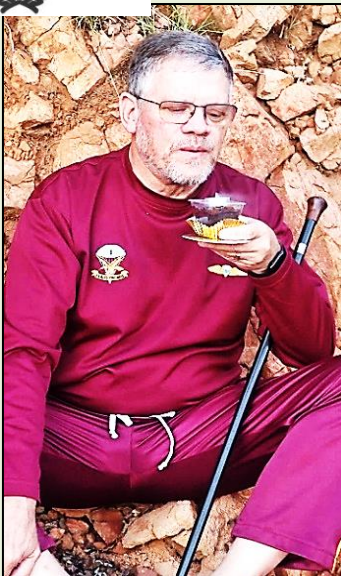
Ten seconds before the Colonel's inspection and a \$ \* \* 5% \* moth decides to fly into my barrel!



Now that's what I call a mean Corporal - He's even giving the dog-handler's dog push ups!

# HULDEBLYKE / GELUKWENSE

## DAMES HOEKIE



Arnoldus vd Westhuisen vier sy verjaarsdag **16 Apl**

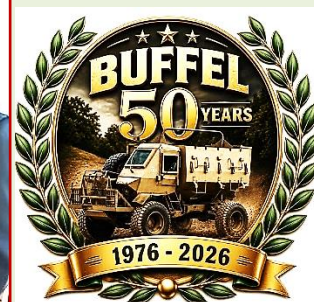
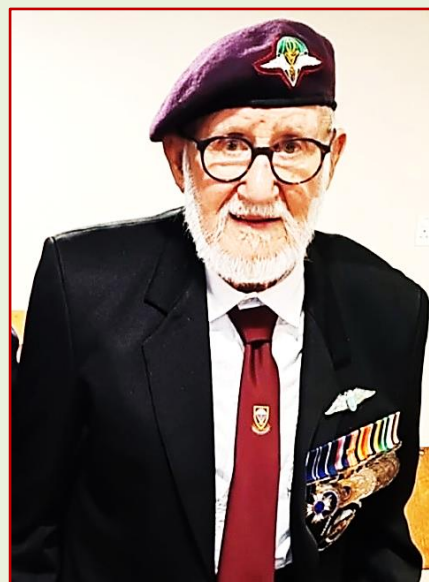
Annelize **15/05/2026** 60 jaar

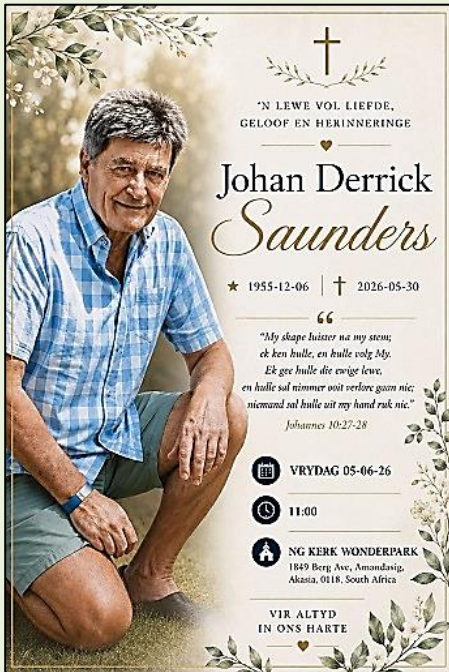


Thiart vier sy verjaarsdag **24 Mei**  
Oom Doepa verjaar 95 **02/06/2026**



Ons het gister die voorreg gehad om vir 'n makker, Mike Nicholas, te gaan kuier waar hy tans by JAFTA in Johannesburg versorg word. Hy het so ruk gelede beroerte gehad en is aan sy linkerkant verlam. Bly om te sê dat hy nog helder van gedagte en verstand is en dat ons lekker oor ons tyd in die weermag kon gesels. Groetnis. BRAVO KOMPANIE 1971 / 72.





✠  
"N LEWE VOL LIEFDE,  
GELOOF EN HERINNERINGE

**Johan Derrick  
Saunders**

★ 1955-12-06 ✠ 2026-05-30

“  
"My skape buiter na my stem;  
ek ken hulle, en hulle volg My.  
Ek gee hulle die ewige lewe,  
en hulle sal nimmer ooit verlore gaan nie;  
niemand sal hulle uit my hand rak nie."  
Johannes 10:27-28

📅 **VRYDAG 05-06-26**  
🕒 **11:00**  
🏛️ **NG KERK WONDERPARK**  
1849 Berg Ave, Amandadrip,  
Akasia, 0118, South Africa

VIR ALTYD  
IN ONS HARTE



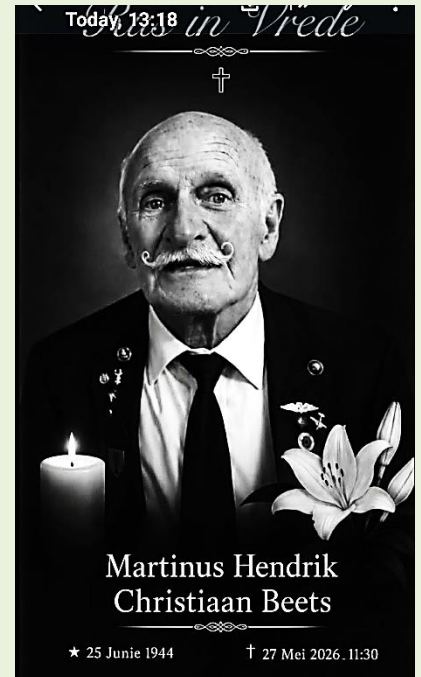
### PRETORIA CANOPY BIRTHDAYS

JUL	
Roche Vermaak	09 Jul
Ockert Venter	11 Jul
Paul J. Els	12 Jul
Gideon Roets	14 Jul
Willie Meyer	15 Jul
Johan Le Roex	27 Jul
AUG	
Johan Prinsloo	11 Aug
Philippus du Plessis	16 Aug
Rowan Gandy	16 Aug
Emanuel Troskie	18 Aug
Wimpie Pieterse	22 Aug
Gerhardus Nel	25 Aug
SEPT	
Willem Pretorius	03 Sept
Coen vd Merwe	07 Sept
Herman Coetzee	12 Sept
Ryno van Wyk	16 Sept
Leon vd Merwe	17 Sept
Johan Ferreira	18 Sept
Andries Ferreira	18 Sept
Daniel Roux	20 Sept

Today 13:18

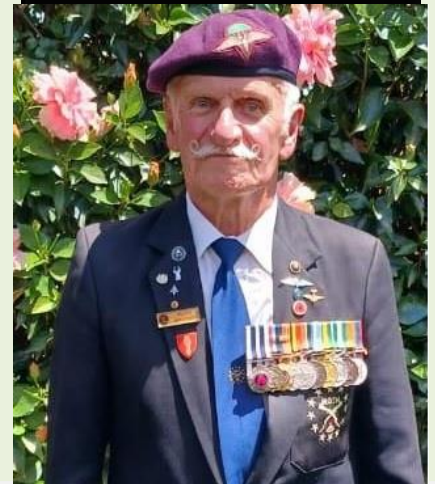
*Was in Vrede*

✠



**Martinus Hendrik  
Christiaan Beets**

★ 25 Junie 1944 ✠ 27 Mei 2026. 11:30



### 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 2026 and we need your inset by Sept 15. VASBYT

[chris.pohl@parabat.org.za](mailto:chris.pohl@parabat.org.za)

Chris Pohl

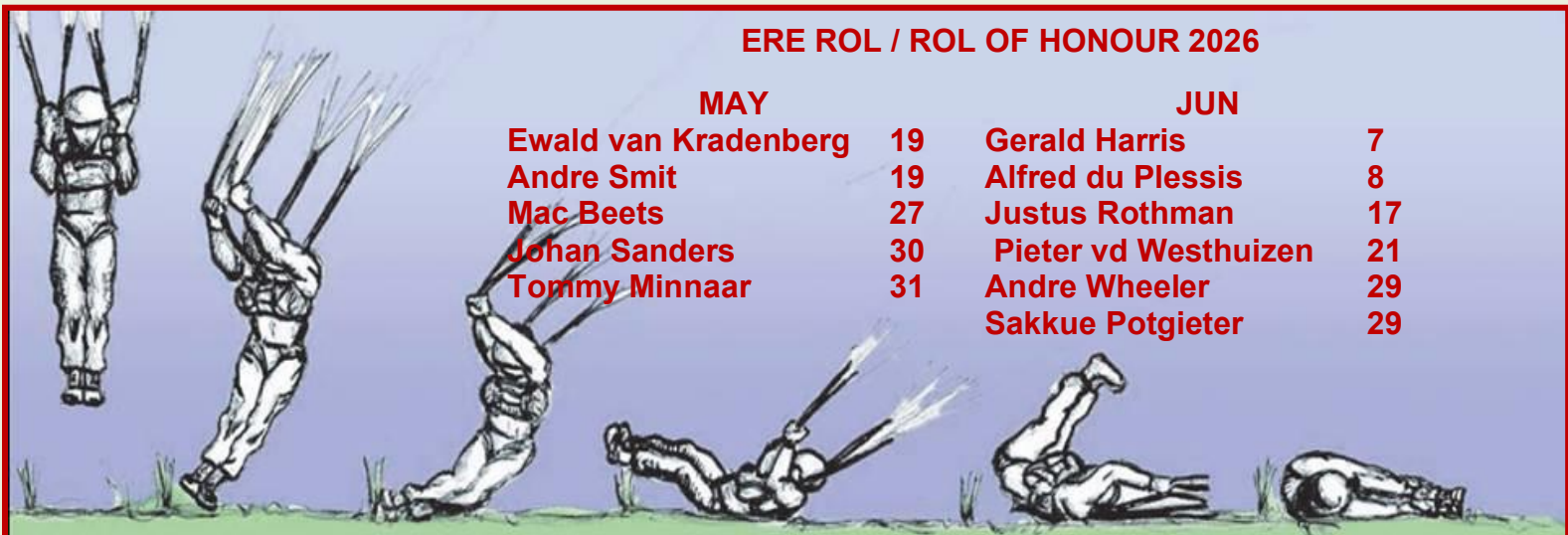
[paul@who-els.co.za](mailto:paul@who-els.co.za)


Paul J. Els

### EX ALTO VINCIMUS

#### ERE ROL / ROL OF HONOUR 2026

MAY		JUN	
Ewald van Kradenberg	19	Gerald Harris	7
Andre Smit	19	Alfred du Plessis	8
Mac Beets	27	Justus Rothman	17
Johan Sanders	30	Pieter vd Westhuizen	21
Tommy Minnaar	31	Andre Wheeler	29
		Sakkue Potgieter	29





"... Sal elkeen as hy  
magteloos  
naby die sterwe lê  
net hierdie eensaam wete  
uiteindelik nog hê:  
dat ons nie kon gebuig word  
soos hul geweld dit wou,  
en dat ons hoog kon lewe  
net aan ons bloed getrou."

N.P. van Wyk Louw

**EX ALTO VINCIMUS**