

Western Front

Newsletter for ex-servicemen / women who were called up or who volunteered to serve their country, South Africa, in the SADF / SANDF, SAP / SAPS, or the South African Correctional Services, and who now reside in Western Australia.



"In grateful recognition and memory of our countrymen, the Immortal Dead of South Africa, who, at the call of Duty, made the supreme Sacrifice on the battlefields of Africa, Europe, Asia, on the Sea, and in the Air. They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old, age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them. Lest We Forget."

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Ben se Pen

We, as a Veteran's organisation, are being noticed! Not in a bad way either it might be added. Our new status is reflected in the ticket sales for our next formal mess dinner. Nearly a third of the tickets were sold to 'outsiders' which is good. A few veterans worked tirelessly 'behind the scenes' (and continues to do so) to get involved with the greater veteran's community here in Perth. It seems the better they get to know our organisation, who we are, who we were, what we did and achieved the more they want to know about us and where better to learn than all the functions, meetings and visits we've been having throughout the year and future ones to come. We need the exposure and the longer we stay the more embedded we become in the veterans society and society in general which is also a good thing. We did after all migrate here by choice and might as well make the best of the adventure. More veterans should get 'on board' and start participating in the planned events. Better still, start something in your neck of the woods with a bit of socialising amongst fellow veterans, 'n braai nou en dan, uitstappies and more. Veterans must do more to counter the 'would-should have' culture currently undermining our organisation. Sure, there are obstacles, work and family commitments and a lot more reasons not to attend the few activities we as an organisation have but please make a plan to take part in some of them. Knowing fellow veterans close to you can result in a group effort to drive and also supporting and motivating each other to get active. A lot of good can come from 'saamstaan'!

School of Armour, Tempe, Bloemfontein '77-78 Find your Editor



Answer last page / Antwoord laaste bladsy

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Minutes of SAMVOA (WA) Veterans Meeting - 14th September 2021

1. Opening

Attendees at Belmont RSL, 22 Leake Street, Ascot called to order at 19H00 by Chairman Veteran Dave Stevenson requesting Master-at-Arms Veteran Ian Higley to light the Flame of Remembrance.

Veterans called to order by Master-at-Arms for the reading of The Ode by the Chairman followed by singing "Old Soldiers Never Die, Never Die...."

Attendees called to stand at ease by Master-at-Arms and to take their seats.

2. Attendance

Well over 30 Veterans, friends and guests.

3. Welcome

Welcome to all our SAMVOA Members, our Friends and guests.

'n Hartlike welkom aan al ons Afrikaanse lede – lekker om julle hier by ons te hê vanaand.

We have a super interesting evening in store for you, with some very experienced speakers sharing some life skills with us!

Also welcome to a few new members that have joined us tonight

4. Apologies / New members

Veteran Vic van Loggerenberg not attending.

Those attending a meeting for the first time were asked to please take the opportunity to complete an application form on our website www.samvoint.org. It will only take a minute but it puts them on our mailing list for future events like this. We launched a recruiting 'blitz' on Facebook and no less than five new members signed on! Please welcome Veterans Ervin Bidlingmaier, Chris Swanepoel, Dave Newman, Andrew Dijkstra and Jaco du Preez. We recruited a new member for Victoria as well.

5. Important Announcements

5.1. Thank you Veteran Ron Lee for the snacks this evening.

5.2. Gold coin donation for the snacks.

5.3. SAMVOA WA Mess Dinner Raffle – SADF Medals and Custom Knives – Garth will be selling tickets - \$20 each or \$50 for 3

6. Feedback on Events in the last months

6.1. SADF 2,4km - The weather gave us a

chilly start to the morning but we still had a super good turnout.

6.2. Potjiekos-competition - We had a very successful Potjie Competition and we have requested all those that participated to please provide us with their recipes so that we can combine these into a "Manne can also Cook" recipe book that we will use to get some funding for SAMVOA. Read more about the competition in this months newsletter. Veteran Jess van der Nest was the winner.

Please could you provide Veteran Ben Opperman with your recipes asap.

7. Update on other Events coming up

7.1. Formal Mess Dinner on October 23rd - All the tickets have been sold! Those veterans who haven't paid are requested to do so immediately.

7.2. Civilisationists - Meeting at the RSL on Wednesday 13th October and the topic is "A Climate of Fear" - **Climate alarmism threatens our civilisation. An economy destroyed equals our culture lost.**

7.3. Spinifex Brewery - Adam Barnard has joined us at one of our previous meetings, as he is an associate producer of Jordan Prince-Wright's movie "Before Dawn". Adam was also one of the sponsors for our Military History Quiz Evening last year. I sent out an email to provide you with an opportunity to invest early. Well, it's going to be the fastest uptake of any crowd funded equity raising for a craft brewing company in history.

8. Recruitment

Last month we were 4 behind New Zealand but we have had 6 new members sign up in the past 2 weeks.

Keep going as we need a solid buffer, not like the Springboks on Saturday!

Please remember that we are always on a recruitment drive!

We are catching up on the eastern side but still need more folks to sign up.

Please take a recruitment card and hand it to a Saffer that you may know through work, school or kid's sports club.

9. Donations

Thanks to everyone that has kindly donated to our SAMVOA account – those that donate every month on a stop-order and those that have donated as a 'lump sum'.

10. SAMVOA Display Cabinet

The new display cabinet is taking shape with a few veterans working every available opportunity to finish it.

11. Western Front

Please let me know if you are not yet receiving the newsletter.

If you have your own business or wife has her own business, please let us have your business card and we will publish it in the advert section – All we request in return is a donation based on sales generated from this exposure.

Veteran Ben Opperman publishes and circulates the newsletter on the 20th of each month and he certainly would appreciate any articles and photos for the newsletter.

12. Items for sale / Kit / Merchandise

For those that may be interested, we will place another order for polo shirts, softshell jackets and hoodies now that we are officially in Winter. Please let me know what you need...

13. The evenings presentation

We have an action-packed evening tonight...

First up, we have Stephen Hurworth talking to us about the Cape Independence Advocacy Group.

Then we have Kevin Rogers from the Military History Society of WA with a very interesting talk on the SAAF 15 Squadron KUFRA disaster in May 1942.

Lastly, but not least, we'll get some self-defence tips from Veteran Vincent Redpath on how to defend ourselves. Specifically if you get caught in a stranglehold.

14. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:00pm after which members engaged in last minute conversations and a few more beers before leaving.

The next meeting will be at 7pm on Tuesday 12th October 2021 at the RSL Belmont. ●



SADF 2,4km - KINGS PARK, PERTH - 4th August 2021

What a beautiful morning in Kings Park we had for our Spring SADF two-comma-fô! The temperatures didn't exactly match your typical Spring mornings but who cares? It was a bit chilly as the veterans turned up one after the other....all dressed up against the cold.

Of course....there were a few veterans who braved the chilly morning with 'kortbroeke', one with a t-shirt and no jacket! Nice of Lesley Wittstock and her two doggo's to join us. From where we usually assemble we could see mist rising off the ponds down below. Lucky for us no wind!

We set off up Riaan-se-koppie on the dot, the cold biting into our hands...pain first and then nothing. Up to Tim's Tower we went, touched the steel. The decent was mercifully easier and we had the sun on our backs. Life got better and it got a whole lot better when we switched on the barbeques and started our brekkies. Soon everybody was talking and laughing. Rug-

by, Afghanistan and Covid (in that order) were the big topics amongst the veterans. Christo Miller got a taste of just how sneaky those pesky Magpies can be when one swooped down from nowhere and relieved him of his Ouma's rusk as he was



about to put it in his mouth. It didn't touch him at all and the sneaky bird flew off and landed a safe distance away to enjoy it's bounty.

Why do this at all one might ask? Well, one will never know the true value of this once-a-month-activity but what is set in concrete is that veterans need to take time off to reacquaint with one another and thereby cement existing friendships

and forge new friendships. We remember all those who at the call of duty, paid the highest price. In a sense they are the lucky ones unlike the rest of us who were left to grow old and the years to condemn.

We are in a foreign country that we now call home where things can get a bit rough at times but we share the same story from way back – we were soldiers once - we were and still are brothers in arms. We share the hope and despair of all the veterans back in South-Africa, their families, our families, friends.....the list is long. We will pass, it's a matter of time and life will go on regardless.

Lesley Wittstock went off with permission I must add before our group photo. Those left (in usual order) were veterans Dave Stevenson, Johan Schoeman, Craig Goodson, Dion Clegg, Vintcent Redpath, Dean van Vuuren, Don Pengelly, Philip Niman, Ron Lee, Jess van der Nest, Johan Burr-Dixon, Christo Miller, Ian Higley, Craig Howard, Ben Opperman and Garth Pienaar kneeling. ●

SADF 2,4km - KINGS PARK, PERTH - 4th August 2021



Southern African 'Potjiekos' Competition, RSL Belmont 21 August 2021

It is getting bigger and better! We're talking 'potjiekos' competition here in Perth at the RSL Belmont where teams of South African and Rhodesian veterans compete for the coveted trophy of 'Potjiekoskonings'.

A record number of 16 pots were entered this year giving the three judges lots to taste and much to decide. They had their job cut out for them and they surely took their time but why not? With so much delicious food on offer and to taste....who can blame them! Well over a 140 patrons were in attendance wanting to have a taste of the pots and very hungry by the time they were called to line up. Apart from a good eat much enjoyment was had by all if one was to go by the noise and laughter. In the end all that was left were a few spoons full gravy in each pot.

There has to be a winner and this year Veteran Jess van der Nest walked off with the trophy with Veteran Craig Howard a close runner-up. In the end everyone was a winner no matter how you look at it. Being committed and with a strong sense of belonging makes the organisation what it is here in WA. What you put in is what you get out of it. It's a no-brainer.



Again it was a matter of if you weren't there you missed out big time. The atmosphere was one of everybody having great fun and much joy. Lots of banter going around and not even the light drizzle of rain now and then could dampen the spirits. All the teams came prepared and gazebos were put up in no time ensuring a carefree exercise in making a good pot. As soon as all the pots were under way the contestants settled down to some serious

'kuier'. Good to see the many young participants with some teams.

Now, Veteran Slade Healy started something when he coined the phrase 'Noble Order of the Brave Stayers' (NOBS) for all those brave and mature (I will not use the word 'old') veterans who cover the full nine yards at his annual bonfire. I think a 'Noble Order of the African Pot Stirrers' (NOAPS) are therefor in order for all those brave and mature veterans who take on the multiple challenges of prepping a pot, ensure it does not burn and get to the table on time with themselves still intact and still capable to converse intelligently. Henceforth they will be 'onnerable memba's' of NOAPS. Those who win the trophy will be 'onnerable onnerable memba's'.

Prepping your pot with the smell of fried onions and other marvellous odours around makes one very hungry and to quell the hungry pangs we (Team Potluck) decided to do a 'barbie' on the side. Some tasty 'boerewors' was thrown onto a rather flimsy five dollar disposable BBQ unit. It did the job to perfection and were soon able to still the hunger. Veteran Bill Mul-lany did the round asking if somebody had

a grill. They also had the same idea. We obliged by letting them have our baby BBQ unit. It was better than nothing. They added a few more briquettes and soon had their 'boerewors' ready to eat.

The little BBQ unit was by now taking serious strain having done two strenuous rounds. Just when it was thought it couldn't get any worse the poor little thing was burdened with a fresh load of heated bri-

quettes and a huge Texan steak thrown on the grill nearly obscuring it! It was up to the task and the steak was cooked to perfection. Bill cut it into small 'machonchas' and did a few rounds offering it to those around the pots. It was delicious! And thus the tradition set by our late friend Tim Chadwick continuous. It all adds to the Esprit de Corps. Well done to the 'bats'!

Some of the names the teams came up with....Nesties, Kalahari Curry Kings, Aladdin's Kitchen, RLI (Rhodesian Light Infantry), Infantry Kip-Kip, Kaprivi Captains, Triple B, Echo Airborne, Skabenga's, Cape Independence, Potluck, Hookoo's, Non-Practising Veg, I&J Higley, Pot Food Junkies.....

Sometime during all the festivities someone came up with the great idea of publishing a book with the recipes of the day's 'potjies'. The idea was kicked around a bit and everybody asked about the idea thought it was great and thus it was decided to go ahead. Word was put out to all the contestants to forward their recipes, and hints and pictures. The booklet, albeit in digital format will be on sale for a few dollars which will be used to help fund the new display units that are due to start shortly.

Back home the pots were thoroughly cleaned as would have been the case in all the 'potjie'-builders's homes, dried out, wiped with an oily rag, stuffed full of crumpled newspaper and put back on the shelf until next time when we do it all over again. To all those stepping up a big thank you!

This from the RSL - ***"Greater than any fairground, filled with fun, thrills, excitement, high noise levels, eating far more than we should and challenges, Our Southern African Potjies Evening - Sat 21 August, had it ALL - plus. I would like to publicly acknowledge all those, who's planning, efforts and contributions, has etched this event into our calendars for more years than imaginable. More importantly, the 140 or so guests, which brought it all together, "filled with fun, thrills, excitement, high noise levels, eating far more than we should and challenges" Thanks guys. With sixteen competing in the competition. Sadly, there could only be one Winner, Congratulations to Jess van der Nest and his talented team "Nesties".***

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Pamwe Chete - 'We Are Together'

'n Groot Hartseer - Medalje te Koop

Ek het op FB op hierdie storie afgekom en dadelik gedink hoe hartseer en tragies moet dit net nie wees om jou medalje(s) op die internet te koop aan te bied. Daar is sekerlik baie redes vir so 'n stap wat ek as drasties beskou. Maar was dit regtig nodig? Tyd heel die meeste wonde en ongeregtighede en om iets te verkoop of sommer net weg te gooi wat jy met baie sweet en ja, moontlik angs verdien het is drasties. Daar kom spyt agterna en is dit baie moeilik om gedane sake ongedaan te maak.

Veteraan Francois Lotriet het die oorspronklike storie gedeel en ek deel dit nou weer op my beurt - Red.

Môre Askaris mooi dag vir julle. Ek lees vanoggend die wat deur n ops medic geskryf is en deel dit met julle - Mercurius Maximus

Charles Marais : Pro Patria R 400

Ek sien die Pro Patria by 'n vlooiemark. Dit het 'n prysetiket: R400. Ek draai dit om. Myne het 'n nommer gehad: 70749. Die een het 'n ander nommer. Dalk het al die Pro Patria's verskillende nommers gehad. Wie sal weet.

Destyds het almal gespot, die troepe het dit die aambeil medalje of die pro nutro medalje genoem. Elke 2de poe...! in die army het een, is gesê. Mens kry dit sommer in 'n boks ontbytmap het ander gespot.

Ek het nie 70749 in 'n boks gekry nie. Dit was op 'n medaljeparade deur 'n kolonel Coetzer oorhandig. Ek het hom gesalueel en hy het dit op my stepouts se tunic gehaak. By die Suid Afrikaanse Geneeskundige Dienste Opleidingsentrum in 1978.

'n Huiswerkster het myne gesteel. Wonder hoeveel geld sy vir myne gekry het. Defnitiesief nie vierhonderd Rand nie.

'n Jong outjie skuur by my verby. Hy is blykbaar 'n ywerige versamelaar van militêre aandenkings. "R 400 is te veel vir daardie medalje oom," fluister hy. "Oom kan een op ebay vir R 180 kry."

R 180? R 400?

Vierhonderd Rand te veel ? Vir al die wagstaan, vir al die klaarstaan, patrollie loop met toerusting wat amper gelyk is aan mens se liggaamsgewig?

Kan vierhonderd Rand betaal vir al die vlieë op Oshivello, al die 2,4's, al die paal PT, stretcher PT, tyres flip en nog meer? Net vierhonderd Rand, is dit al?

As ek vierhonderd Rand gehad het en ek kon teruggaan in tyd sou ek dalk die



kroegrekening kon betaal die aand voor ons inname ops medics die eerste keer grens toe is. Maar 'n kommandant Peppie Coetzee het dit destyds goedgunstelik vereffen. Daardie aand het hy 'n speech gemaak, die speech afgesluit met 'n dramatiese heildronk. "Kom ons drink op die van ons wat nie gaan terugkom nie."

Waar woorde daardie heildronk. Van die ops medics saam daardie aand het vier nie teruggekom nie. Drie het by Ogongo agtergebly, een by Katima Mulilo toe die basis gerev is. Vierhonderd Rand.

Vir 'n Honoris Crux betaal mens meer sien ek op ebay. Tussen vier en agtduisend Rand. Vir vier van die ouens by daardie heildronk was daar 'n Honoris Crux in die toekoms. Drie vir die ouens by Ogongo, postuum. Nog een later jare vir 'n ops medic van '78 tydens 'n kamp. Dis dalk meer as net vierhonderd Rand maar dit klink steeds vir my na verniet.

Vierhonderd Rand. Hoeveel onthou koop mens vir vierhonderd Rand? Ek weet van my makkers wat nie teruggekom het nie. Ek weet baie minder van die wat nog in hul onthou daar vasevang is. Ek dink aan die ou wat die oorskot van gestorwe makkers moes probeer netjies maak voor die oorskot in 'n body bag gerepatrieer is. Hy het elke dag stiller geword, meer in 'n wêreld van sy eie. Wou nie meer praat nie. Vierhonderd Rand vir sy gedagtes? Of vir die ouens wat in uitgebrande voertuie moes rondkrap vir iets om huis toe te stuur na hul geliefdes. Vierhonderd Rand se onthou.

Of vierhonderd Rand se medalje vir ons pasiënt wat in die gesig getref is deur 'n geweergrenaat. So erg dat 'n deel van sy verhemelte binne in sy mond vertikaal gedruk is dat sy boonste tande 90 grade gedraai het. Of ander wat stukkend geskiet is. Vierhonderd Rand se onthou vir iemand wat 'n myn getrap en ledemate verloor het.

Vierhonderd Rand maar dit is iemand anders se herinneringe, nie die wat aan Pro Patria 70749 gebind is nie. Ja, miskien onthou ons albei die witwarm Ondangwa die eerste keer as jy daar by die Flossie uitstap. Miskien weet daardie Pro Patria van daardie stilte wat heers wanneer die laaste TB vir die nag ingeneem word. Net geluide van slaapsakke se ritsluiters, 'n geweermagasyn wat teen 'n firebucket stamp wat die nag bietjie breek.

Of dalk weet daardie vierhonderd Rand van myne vee op oom Willie se pad. Of van Buffel of Kwêvoel bestuur tussen Ondangwa en Eenhana. Wie weet, vir vierhonderd Rand kry jy 'n storie wat sommige van ons dalk goed ken. Of dalk koop jy op ebay 'n Pro Patria wat 'n heel ander pad geloop het.

Dalk hou ek die medalje vas van die ou wat ons in die nag vanaf Mpacha moes casevac (Sorry my vriend, het nooit kennis gemaak. Ek is jammer ek het vir jou gelieg. Die dokter het gesê ek moet jou vertel jou hand is OK, al het ons dit op Mpacha agtergelos. Die waarheid kon jou dalk in skok laat gaan het die dokter beveel. Jy was erg gewond. Die loods het op Swartkop swaar gebriek, hy het nie eers op Waterkloof gaan land nie. Sorry, ek hoop jy het dit gemaak).

Dalk is die vierhonderd Rand in my hand vir die ou wat skrapnel deur die rug gekry het. (Sorry ou maat dat ek op jou geskreue het dat jy nog twee ure moes wag vir morfien. Dit is moer seer as hulle jou moet regmaak deur jou maag oop te sny al is die skrapnel deur jou rug. Sorry maar dit was die orders, ek kon jou net elke vier uur spuit, al het jy gehuil en gesoebat. Jou Pro Patria het jy met bloed en trane gekoop, baie meer as vierhonderd Rand. Jou Pro Patria is baie meer werd as myne. Myne is dalk die een op ebay. Dalk word die ouens wat 'n hoër prys betaal het se Pro Patrias op die vlooiemark verkoop, die ander op ebay).

Ander het hulle onthou verdien saam met diere. Soos die ou van berede wat net wou vuur en beweeg. (Sorry oor jou perd wat dood is toe julle die myn getrap het. Sorry oor jou been wat jy verloor het. Jy het ons vertel hoe jy wou hardloop om vuur te lewer en jy kon nie verstaan hoekom jy elke keer val nie. Tot jy teruggekyk het en sien jou been is nie meer daar nie.) Ek sal my huis moet verkoop om jou Pro Patria te koop en dan sal ek nog te min geld hê. Ander het seker nie 'n Pro Patria gekry nie.

(Vervolg op Bladsy 10)

Operation Boles, the Lesotho Uprising - by Veteran Troy Hosking.

Veteran Troy Hosking shared a picture of him on duty and I asked him if he would mind writing about his exploits. He obliged and here are his words outlining his part in it - Ed.

During the Lesotho uprising in September of 1998, Natal Command became concerned about possible retaliation action against civilians hiking in the mountain passes of KZN Drakensburg. Natalia Regiment under the command of Lt Col. D De Beer was tasked with supplying troops to monitor these passes to provide early warning of any troop movement in these areas.

Five two-man teams were hastily arranged to gear up and be airlifted into the areas identified as high risk to hikers. The teams frantically arranged provisions and gear to deploy, the main concern were weather conditions changing rapidly as the Drakensberg in September was still prone to late winter snow falls. We were lucky enough to secure some heavy-duty sub-zero sleeping bags which was a good result, although our standard issue sleeping bags and inners which were good were not up to the task.

After prepping and getting our gear to Oribi, there was the usual hurry up and wait while an Orynx was dispatched from Durban to drop us off. Some strange glances from the people as some geared up troops arrived at the airport and sat waiting around fort helicopter to arrive.

The Orynx arrived and we boarded to be uplifted to our drop off points. The main



objective was early warning to Natal command if there was any possible troop build-up on the Lesotho side so that assets could be assigned to intervene in time. The tasking also did not want to alarm any tourists in the berg so minimal interaction between the two-man teams and civilians was the main concern of Natal command.

The teams were dropped off from North Peak to Giants Castle at various points pre designated in the O group before we left. As comms were an issue, we were supplied Sat phones and had pre designated call in times to provide sit-reps. After being dropped off, my team was lucky enough to find a small under hanging cliff face which provided good cover from weather and close enough to the main hiking trails to provide overwatch.

Our initial deployment was to be 7 days depending on what happened in Lesotho itself. Luckily have the warm sleeping bags paid off as a large cold front came through and temperatures dropped to Zero quickly. It was interesting to watch the coming and going of hikers during these days and to see the mountain Reedbuck and Eland walking around that high up as well.

Luckily during this time no action was taken against the hikers by Lesotho so was an uneventful deployment overall. After 7 days we were advised that pick up would start at 9 am in the morning from the northern deployments and proceed south till all had been picked up. The most exciting thing to happen was the flight of Allouettes that had come from Bloemfontein during the trainee pilot's completion of there flying school.

We heard around eight allo's and were unsure if they were our pick up or not, we had set up on a flat escarpment for pick up and watched the allo's bounce from peak to peak. We spotted a flight of four flying towards us pretty much about 6 foot above the escarpment, as we were pretty well camouflaged they did not see us until my team mate stood up and caused the lead allo to panic and climb away from us. For a few minutes the allo's circled us unsure as to what we were doing up there, during the debrief we heard that they had frantically called Durban and reported us as possible Lesotho forces in the area.

Around 1pm the Orynx showed up and we were extracted back to Oribi in PMB, picked up at the airport and after a debrief and kit return had a well-deserved hot shower and sleep in a warm bed. So ended our contribution to the Lesotho crisis. ●



Pamwe Chete - 'We Are Together'

The Southern African Development Community intervention in Lesotho, codenamed Operation Boleas, was a military invasion launched by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and led by South Africa through its South African National Defence Force into Lesotho to quell a coup d'état.

Prelude

In May 1998, parliamentary elections in Lesotho resulted in an overwhelming majority for the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy Party, which won 79 out of 80 seats. However allegations of vote fraud soon surfaced, and after a failed lawsuit by the opposition parties, widespread rioting broke out. Under President Nelson Mandela the ANC-led government in South Africa (which complete-

ly land locks Lesotho) announced it would hold a formal inquiry to determine the allegations of corruption. Controversially, the report only alleged minor irregularities.

Intervention

At the time of the intervention, both Mandela and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki were out of South Africa, with Home Affairs Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi serving as acting president. Mandela approved the deployment of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to Lesotho on 22 September 1998 to quell the rioting and maintain order. Botswana Defence Force soldiers were also deployed. The operation was described as an "intervention to restore democracy and the rule of law." The SANDF contingent included a squadron of Ratel-

90 and Rooikat armoured fighting vehicles seconded from 1 Special Service Battalion. Widespread arson, violence, and looting occurred despite the presence of SANDF soldiers. The last South African troops were pulled out in May 1999 after seven months of occupation. The capital city of Maseru was heavily damaged, requiring a period of several years for rebuilding.

Aftermath

South Africa was accused in some quarters of using its military and diplomatic superiority as a regional hegemon to dominate and meddle in the internal affairs of its much smaller, weaker neighbour to further its own strategic interests, in particular the water supply to its economic hub, Gauteng Province. South Africa is the largest economic and military power in the SADC. ●

Strategic Failure or just Pure Ineptness? by Veteran Eeben Barlow

Veteran Eeben Barlow needs no introduction to many of us. I found this piece on FB where he also weighed in on the current situation in South Africa and found it interesting. I'm taking the liberty of publishing his words - Ed.

Many are questioning the monumental failure of the South African government regarding the uncontrolled anarchy, looting and criminality that recently shook the country and its increasingly inept parliament to its foundations.

South Africa has, however, a record of consistent failure by its self-righteous government, so none of what happened ought to be a surprise to any thinking person.

Many more discussions and investigations will no doubt be held on what went wrong during the latest days of rampant anarchy, chaos, and criminality. Many will also question why the government claimed it didn't know what was coming or who was to blame for what unfolded. Our gigantic parliament and many of the other so-called political leaders and appointees whose salaries we pay took their eyes off the ball—a very long time ago, while others kept their eyes firmly on the nation's cash register.

For fear of sounding like a stuck record, the answer to what unfolded lies in the fact that South Africa has no realistic or determined National Strategy, nor is there a National Security Strategy to support it.

If these critical strategies indeed exist, then they are feeble, not actioned, and disconnected with reality.

The aim of a National Strategy is to envisage where a country wishes to position itself on the domestic, regional, continental, and international stages. Simplistically put, it sets the trajectory of where we want to go as a country, in a unified manner and that is beneficial to all citizens.

In turn, the National Security Strategy (intelligence, law enforcement, and defence) guides (intelligence), protects (law enforcement) and defends (armed forces) the National Strategy. The NSS, along with other government department strategies ought to be aligned and synchronised to realise the National Strategy.

Having such strategies but being unable to implement them reflects a lack of both political courage and will, along with non-existent leadership.

Underpinning these critical strategies and policies, are those of governance, education, and the economy.

Currently, governance is almost non-existent, and in many areas, has completely failed.

Education? Well that too is aimed at dumbing down everyone who passes through our 'revolutionary' system.

With anti-business policies, and an ever-dwindling economy where almost half the adult population live on approx. R 1 200 a month, and with youth unemployment estimated to be around a staggering 70



percent, one can ask if we even have an economic strategy. What we do have are economic policies aimed at bankrupting the country, continually adding new taxes, and making us a world leader in poverty and unemployment.

It is estimated that less than 30 percent of middle-class South Africans are positive about the country's future, and approximately 27 percent at looking at options to emigrate. And these are the folks that actually drive the economy—not the parliamentarians who devise new policies to make more money for themselves.

(Continues next page)

Strategic Failure or Pure Ineptness? (Continues)

Some may argue that we are just 'another African country', and others may argue that to progress, we need to experience pain. (Those who advocate the latter make sure they feel no pain).

But this also assumes these strategies have even been considered, let alone developed—and in the unlikely event that they exist, are frequently reviewed, and adjusted to circumstances.

In view of the above, it becomes clear that South Africa has no realistic strategy, thus making the rules and principles of our Constitution that set out how the state should be governed somewhat redundant. The Constitution also sets out the rights of everyone which must be respected by the state and therefore establishes the relationship between the government and the people.

It seems that 'strategy' and 'the Constitution' are soundbytes but not actioned.

It was therefore obvious that it was only a matter of time before anger, frustration and numbers began to count against the state. The hungry, impoverished, and unemployed only needed a spark to set them off. Recent events gave them that spark.

Of course, the growing feeling of discontent is further resultant in the government and its allies propagating a false and hateful narrative aimed at minorities in the country to deflect from their failures.

However, if one assumes these strategies do indeed exist as realistic, coherent, and sustainable strategies, they need to be driven and implemented with decisive and strong leadership—another essential that appears to be sorely lacking. Our so-called leaders neither act nor talk like leaders.

However, if the strategic building blocks required for a successful state are non-existent, then it can be argued that there wasn't a strategic failure as a non-existent strategy cannot fail.

In my view, the answer lies in strategic ineptness—and this is driving us towards state failure. ●

Pro Patria (Vervolg)

Soos die tingerige civvy suster Wilna Gouws wat met haar klein lyfie op 'n sterwende makker se bed gespring het en wydsbeen bo-op hom sy hart weer aan die gang wou masseer het terwyl ek suurstof in sy longe probeer kry het. (Sorry my vriend, waar jy ookal is, ons het ons bes probeer om jou hier te hou maar dit was nie goed genoeg nie. Sorry suster Gouws dat ek gehuil het, dis darem meer as 40 jaar terug. Ek voel nou beter daarvoor, hoop jy ook). As ek my Pro Patria nie gesteel was nie sou ek dit vir Suster Gouws wou gee, sy was sterker in my oomblik van swakheid.

En so sal elke ontvanger van daardie

medalje 'n storie hê, 'n onthou. Die werksster wat myne gesteel het het seker saam met haar vriendinne 'n kruisie getrek om my hede en toekoms moeiliker te maak. Maar soos ons almal het ek reeds betaal vir my onthou en niemand kan dit onteien sonder vergoeding nie.

Nee my jong vriend van die vlooiemark, vierhonderd Rand is te min. Nie ek of jy kan vir daardie medalje betaal wat dit dalk werd is nie. Daardie stukkie metaal was dalk niks vir sy eerste en werklike eienaar. Of alles. Want vir vierhonderd Rand bly 'n deel van hom dalk vir altyd êrens tussen Namibië en Angola. Ek kan jou probeer vertel, maar ek dink nie jy sal verstaan nie. Vir jou is dit maar net iets op ebay, al bedoel jy dit hoe goed. ●

TRENDS by Veteran Joe Keyter

Veteran Joe Keyter's monthly contribution is not happening this month due to him being in hospital for a procedure. We wish Joe a speedy and successful recovery and is looking forward to his next article. - Ed.



Yip....we all had a corporal like this.....



Stories

Lugmagveteraan Johan Gouws van Wooroloo het 'n handvol geskrewe petaljes aangestuur van sy tyd in die Lugmag - genoeg om vir die volgende paar maande een of twee stukkie te plaas. Ons plaas vandeemaand die laaste stukkie avontuur.

Airforce veteran Johan Gouws from Wooroloo (East of Perth) kindly send in a number of stories on his time in the Air Force - This month's story is the last of his adventures. - Ed.

NADRAAI VAN AWOL

Ek het voorheen vertel van my skielike laatmiddag oorplasing van 1 Mil-hospitaal na Ou 1 Mil, na 'n skoueroperasie en hoe dit gelei het tot my eerste AWOL. Die klerke by Ou 1 Mil het nie gebodder om laat in die dag nuwe pasiënte op te neem nie en het gereken ek kan maar oornag in die wagkamer sit. Gelukkig het een van hulle in my oor gefluister dit beteken ek kan nie-amptelik vir die aand huistoe gaan. Ek het van sy manier van dink gehou, want dié einste plan was toe al besig om in my kop te begin broei.

My vrou het my kort daarna kom oplaai. Daar was egter 'n ander nuwe troep van Deurgangskamp ook in die wagkamer, wat toe sê hy het geen manier om by sy huis te kom vir die aand nie. Ek besef toe dat dit nie 'n goeie plan sal wees om hom daar te los terwyl ek vir die aand verdwyn nie; en ons bied toe aan om hom na sy ouerhuis toe te vat in Pretoria-Wes, mits hy self vroeg die volgende oggend sou terugkom en belowe om nooit daarvan te praat nie. Hy belowe dit toe plegtig en daar gaan ons. Toe ons in die kar klim vra my vrou "Watse goetertjies loop daar op julle klere?" Toe ons mooi kyk is dit luise! Na ons die ander man by sy ouerhuis afgelaai het, is ons huistoe, waar ons eers alles moes ontluise en klere was en stryk, voor ons tot ruste kon kom.

Die volgende oggend het my vrou my teruggevat Ou 1 Mil toe. Ek het nog nooit vantevore soveel verskillende range in voertuie en langs die pad opgelet nie, as daai oggend toe ons van Rooihuiskraal af Voortrekkerhoogte toe gery het. Dit het gevoel of almal vir my kyk en of ten minste helfte Militêre Polisie was. Dit

moes vir enigeen, wat enigsins oplettend was, duidelik gewees het dat hierdie 'n splinternuwe troepie was, heel uit sy plek, wat oogkontak vermy het en almal sover moontlik geïgnoreer het, terwyl hy nie geweet het of hy moet strek, salueer, of net tanne uitpak nie. Later het ek besef dit is maar net hoe dit lyk as al die SAW personeel soggens begin roer en dat bittermin van hulle enigsins geïnteresseerd was in ander se doen en late langs die pad.

Ek het met selfvertroue by Ou 1 Mil ingestap en gevra dat hulle reël dat ek na Deurgangskamp toe gevat word. Ek was beslis nie lus om in daardie luisnes opgeneem te word nie. Die klerke het geen vrae gevra nie en gesê hulle reël dit so, en later daardie Vrydagoggend was ek terug in Basiese Opleiding, asof ek nooit weg was nie. Van die troep wat ons die vorige aand gaan aflaai het, was daar egter geen teken nie, en dít het my bekommer. Hy het besluit om tot na die naweek weg te bly, wat nie so goed vir hom uitgewerk het nie, en hy het die Saterdagoggend onder begeleiding by Deurgangskamp aangekom.

Die gerugte het gou deur die kamp versprei dat hy alles vertel het hoe hy saam met iemand anders ge-AWOL het, maar dat hy nie die ander een se naam geken het nie, en dat hy onseker was of die ander een ook in Deurgangskamp of selfs in die Lugmag was. Ons was in verskillende eskaders, wat nie baie gemeng het nie, en ook omdat alle troepe in Basies amper dieselfde lyk, het hy my nooit herken nie, en kon hy my dus nie uitwys nie.

Ons Eskader-luitenant het 'n sterk vermoede gehad dit was ek, maar kon dit nie bewys nie. Hy het heel omgekrap

gevra wat daar by die twee hospitale gebeur het, en ek het hom vertel van my oorplasing en dat die klerke gesê het ek moet maar die nag in die wagkamer deurbring. Dit het nie vir hom sin gemaak nie. Toe wou hy weet watse kar my vrou het, maar my antwoord het nie met die ander troep se inligting ooreengestem nie, want my vrou het die vorige aand met my kar gery om ons op te laai, nie haar kar nie!

Die luitenant het nie die regte vrae gevra nie! Hy sou nie 'n goeie speurder uitmaak nie. Ek het vir niemand vertel van my aand by die huis nie, want ek het mos geweet in hoe om met weermag geheime inligting te werk! Die luitenant het 'n paar keer die triek probeer om tydens oggendparade af te kondig dat hy verseker geweet het wie die troep was wat van die hospitaal af ge-AWOL het, en dat hy dié sleg troep die geleentheid gee om self na vore te kom, dan sal sy straf nie so erg wees nie. Vreemd genoeg het niemand na vore gekom nie, en mettertyd het die stof min of meer gaan lê.

Die luitenant het egter vir die res van Basies rede gesoek om my vas te trap, en alhoewel hy 'n paar keer naby gekom het, het ek gelukkig altyd net-net so 'n halwe tree voor hom gebly. Dit was 'n behoorlike kat-en-muis speletjie, en dit alles oor een aand se AWOL, met geen waardering nie dat ek die SAW geld gespaar het deur my eie akkomodasie, aandete en ontbyt te voorsien; en boonop 'n luisprobleem ontdek en laat oplos het!

My vrou het saam met 'n Brigadier se dogter gewerk, en nadat hulle gesels het oor die luise, het sy dit vir haar pa vertel. Hy het glo self gaan kyk, en blykbaar baie gou dié probleem laat uitsorteer. ●



10 Wars started for stupid reasons

Wars have often been started for really crazy reasons. We look at some of them.

According to many people, all wars are started for stupid reasons. And rest assured, those that start wars are usually not the people that fight in them.

Yet often there are valid reasons for a war. It is known as a 'Just War'.

A war is only just if it is fought for a reason that is justified, and that carries sufficient moral weight. The country that wishes to use military force must demonstrate that there is a just cause to do so.

Some wars, however, have been started for really stupid reasons. Wars that, with a bit of common sense, could easily have been avoided. Here are ten examples.

3. War of the Golden Stool

The Ashanti Kingdom is now part of modern-day Ghana. Yet it was once coveted by the British Empire.

In 1896 King Prempeh, leader of the Ashanti, refused to become part of the British Protectorate. Not used to take 'no' for an answer, the British forcibly 'protected' his island.

The Ashanti people did not give up easily however, and fought bitterly against their invaders.

In 1900 the Ashanti staged an uprising. The British suppressed the violence and captured the city of Kumasi. Ashanti's traditional king, the Asantehene, and his counsellors were deported.

The Golden Stool had long symbolized governing power for the Ashanti people. It was supposed to have descended from the sky to land at the feet of the first King of Ashanti, and was believed to hold the soul of the Ashanti nation.

Made from solid gold, the stool was only 45 centimetres high and 60 centimetres long, and was considered so sacred, that no one was allowed to sit on it. It was an artefact of immense cultural significance.

Then in 1900, the British Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Frederick Hodgson, decided that he wanted to sit on the stool.

He travelled to Kumasi with a small British force where he was accorded traditional honours upon entering the city with children singing "God Save the Queen" to Lady Hodgson. However the good will shown by the Ashanti did not last long.

Hodgson made a speech to the assembled Ashanti leaders. He informed them that King Prem-

peh I was in exile and would not return to Ashanti. His power and authority would be taken over by the Representative of the Queen of Britain, namely himself.

If this wasn't enough of a slap in the face, he went on to say that the Queen is entitled to the stool and she must receive it.

The Ashanti people were outraged, and a fierce war broke out, during which 2,000 Ashanti people and 1,000 British troops died.

The war raged for six months until Yaa Asantewaa, the Queen Mother and Gate Keeper of the Golden Stool, was captured.

Hodgson was not granted his wish to sit upon the Golden Stool. The Ashanti had spirited it away and hidden it from the British.

It was only many years later before it was finally restored to its ceremonial home.

-o0o-



Due to popular demand Veterans from all over can buy tickets. Overseas buyers will however bear the cost of shipment.

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SADF Medal Knives

A unique set of the drop point version of the medal series of boot knives mounted and framed along with a Pro Patria at the top and a plaque at the bottom explaining the Medals. The knives are unique in that only one side has been made, the obverse has been left flat to facilitate framing and actual ribbons were used.

The frame measures at 55cm by 58.5cm and the knives measure at 20cm in length.

The knives are made by a professional South African knife maker Seán Culhane.

Please contact your Regional Chairman for more information.

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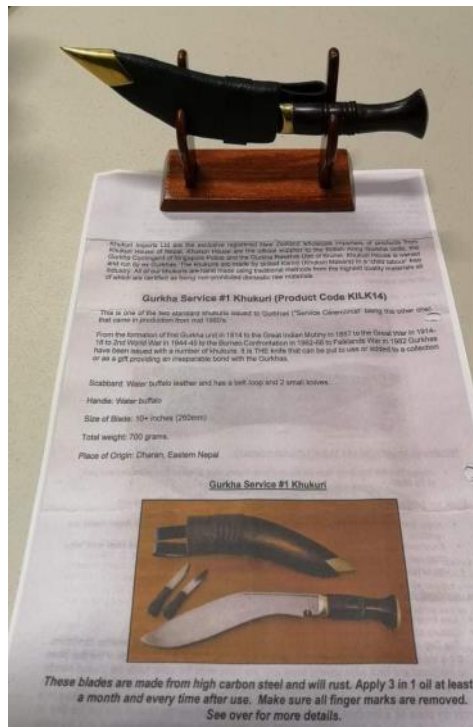
NZ - Ashley Brown
ajbrownconsulting@gmail.com



Raffle tickets are \$20.00 each
or 3 for \$50.00

Hanging out with the Rhodesians.

A Saturday afternoon with assorted curries, hosted by the Rhodesian Services Association of Western Australia, were enjoyed by visiting SAMVOA veterans Vintcent Redpath, Don Pengelly, Slade Healy and Johan Burr-Dixon. Johan Burr-Dixon's raffle number won him a miniature Khukuri.



My Business / My Besigheid

Members who have their own businesses are invited to submit their business cards for publication in the advert section with the only request in return that a donation be made towards SAMVOA WA based on sales generated from this exposure. The other members are likewise encouraged to support those members.

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☺ How to make your Editor happy

- Please submit something with a military slant, anything....no really!
- Please send text in a Word document
- Please send photos as separate JPEG's at high resolution
- Please do not embed your photos/images in a word document
- Please do not send me links to online services
- Last but not least – ALL errors of whatsoever kind in the Newsletter are SOLELY the fault of your humble Editor. So if you find an error – give yourself a pat on the back...!

Humour in Uniform



Gosh! I didn't realise that that swine of an R.S.M. you were talking about was my father

Acknowledgments / Bedankings

We sincerely thank the following Veterans for their generous donations received during February.

Chris Beath*, Gerhard Slabber*, Ben Opperman*, Dave Stevenson*, Garth Pienaar*, Zander Opperman*, Ian Higley*, Ron Fouche*, Basil Elliot*, Don Pengelly*, Jess van der Nest*, Peter Celliers*, Alfred Steel*, Baren van Heerden*, Peter Celliers*, Bill Mullany, Johan Burr-Dixon and Stephan Higley.

(*) Denotes monthly contributions.

Should you wish to make a contribution or even consider a monthly contribution of \$5, \$10, \$20 or more, our banking details are as follows: CBA / Belmont

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Raai waar? / Guess where?

Every picture has a story. This one was taken outside one of the lecture rooms during a break. I was still a 'CO' then. As the only two PF CO's in the group myself and August Katzke (second left) stayed in the officers mess at Free State Command. We had a ball there while the others up on the hill were at the mercy of the sergeants. Somewhere along the line myself and our course leader one lieutenant Piet Venter HC were involved in a tiff at De Brug during a training exercise. With our final selection board meeting where we fronted the big brass from Armour Directorate in Pretoria, said lieutenant told the board I wasn't very keen on following orders and as a result busted down (or is it up?) to lance-corporal again. We had six weeks to go. Said lieutenant were very much in favour of his students thinking 'outside the box' when it came to planning and executing manoeuvres and the like but apparently didn't like one particular trick I pulled and standing up to him in my own defence. I resigned to leave on completion of the course. Unfortunately for me the course was extended by a few weeks and with commitments already in place didn't finish the course. What a bummer but it probably saved me from harm as I was put back on Reserve after that whilst the 'war that never happened' went on.

Many years later I happened to work with a cousin of said lieutenant who by the way won his Honoris Crux medal during Ops Savannah. Apparently he made it to lieutenant-colonel before retiring from the army. According to his cousin he wasn't a happy man and found himself living with his mother somewhere in the Eastern Cape. The signs were there al along.

So, anyone else have a picture with a story? Let's have it!



Veteran Ben Opperman