



# Military Despatches

Vol 61 July 2022

## Surrender! Forget about it

Some of the best responses to be ordered to surrender

## The 'Wooden Wonder

The de Havilland Mosquito



## Military manifestations

Things that go bump in the night

## Stalingrad

A few facts about the deadliest battle of World War II

*For the military enthusiast*



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**Military Despatches**



**Paratrooper Wings Quiz**

**Paratrooper Wings Quiz**

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

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

**Military Despatches**

**Army Speak 101**

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

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

**Military Despatches**

**Army Speak 101**

Military slang from the SADF and around the world

**Military Despatches**

**New videos each week**

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**Military Despatches**

**Military Firearms Quiz**

**Military Firearms Quiz**

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

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**Elite Military Units Quiz**

**Elite Military Units Quiz**

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

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

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**Who said that?**

Famous military quotes quiz

**Who said that?**

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

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



**Special Forces Selection - Special Boat Service**

**Features**

**6**

**10 worst war movies**

Over the years there have been some brilliant war movies produced. These 10 are not them.

**14**

**Disobedient Heroes**

In the military it is expected that you obey orders. Yet there are cases where there is a good reason to disobey those orders.

**20**

**Military manifestations**

If there are such things as ghosts, lost spirits and supernatural manifestations, then it stands to reason that battlefields will be some of the most haunted places on the planet. **Matt O'Brien** takes a closer look at things that go bump in the night.

**24**

**The plot(s) to kill Hitler**

From the time Hitler came to power until he committed suicide on 30 April 1945, there were at least 28 assassination attempts on his life. We look at some of them.

**30**

**History - or is it?**

History often depends on who is writing the history. Often the true facts can be a little bit slanted. In fact often the facts are ignored altogether.

**34**

**Surrender! Forget about it**

On given an ultimatum to surrender, some responses have been rather surprising to say the least. In this article we look at some of them.



**38**

**Stalingrad - a few facts**

Fought between 23 August 1942 and 2 February 1943, the Battle of Stalingrad was the deadliest battle to take place during the Second World War and is one of the bloodiest battles in the history of warfare, with an estimated two million total casualties.

**Quiz**

**55**

**World War II Phonetic Alphabet**

This month we're looking at the Phonetic Alphabet. But do you know what words were used during World War II?

**Please remember to subscribe to our channel.**

**Feel free to leave a comment, and share this video.**



## Editor's Sitrep

So, just when you think things can't get work, Eskom steps in and proves you wrong.

Most of the country now has to deal with Stage Six load shedding. At least most of us in Cape Town are on Stage Four. I say most of us. For some reason, and I still can't work out why, I live in an area that has been excluded from load shedding. Not that I have a problem with this.

I know that many of our overseas readers will wonder what load shedding is. Well this is where Eskom, our national power provider, turn off the power to areas on a rotational basis. Some unlucky people can sit without any power for up to nine hours a day.

As you can imagine, this makes trying to work, cook food, or run a business an absolute nightmare.

I'm sure that at some stage Eskom will go to Stage 10. This is where they come around to your house, blow out your candles, and take the batteries from your torch.

In other news, the government has finally decided that we no longer have to wear a mask. I'm in two minds about it. I admit that

I was sick and tired of having to wear a mask every time I stuck my nose out of the door.

On the other hand, I must confess that I look far more handsome when most of my face is covered by a mask.

While working on this month's issue of the magazine I realised that it was Volume 61. That means that last month (Volume 60) was the fifth anniversary of the magazine.

Since November last year I've been pretty good with putting the magazine together. Normally I finish every at least a week before deadline. This month went tits up though.

It's 18:00 on 30 June and I'm only just getting everything finished so that it can go out at midnight. Oh well, at least it should still be in time.

That's about it from me this month. I trust that July will be a good month for you and that Eskom and insane fuel prices don't get you down too much.

Until next month, stay safe and stay healthy.

*Matt*

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# CONTENTS

Page 70



## June in military history

### Head-to-Head

42

#### 'Bullpup' Rifles

This month we take a look at the development and use of Bullpup rifles.

### Famous Figures

52

#### Lyudmila Pavlichenko & Simo Häyhä

Although they fought on opposing sides, they never faced each other in battle. Yet they were considered to be two of the most deadly snipers in World War II.



### Forged in Battle

56

#### Mosquito

The "Wooden Wonder", in 1941 it was one of the fastest operational aircraft in the world.

### Battlefield

62

#### Dien Bien Phu

In 1954 the French met their Waterloo once again. This time defeated by the Vient Minh.

### Gaming

66

#### Ultimate General: Civil War

Could you change history and lead the South to victory.

### Movie Review

68

#### The Last Resort

An excellent 13 part television series with plenty of plot twists and turns.

### Book Review

69

#### The Special Task Force

An excellent read about the South African Police Special Task Force.

### Front Cover

A de Havilland Mosquito that has been restored and is still flying.

Nicknamed the 'Wooden Wonder', it was one of World War II's fastest operational aircraft.



# 10 worst war movies

Over the years there have been some brilliant war movies produced. Yet for every good war movie produced, there are probably ten bad movies. This month we look at 10 of the worst war movies ever produced.

I think I'm fairly safe in saying that most of our readers enjoy a good war movie from time to time.

Over the years I've watched some brilliant war movies. I can remember sitting with a 74 year old American veteran and watching 'Saving Private Ryan'.

As a 19 year old, he had landed on Omaha Beach in the early hours of 6 June 1944. He was moved to tears by the movie. He told me that the movie got it spot on. "That's really what it was like," he told me.

The list of good war movies I've watched is a long one. It would have to include movies such as "A Bridge too Far", "Platoon", "Lawrence of Arabia", "The Bridge on the River Kwai", and "Das Boot".

The list of bad war movies that I've seen would be even longer.

Often a good war movie can lose a bit of credibility when they claim that it is based on a true story or is historically accurate, and then go and make really stupid mistakes.

Take "The Great Escape" for example. We reviewed it in the last edition of Military Despatches.

It's a movie that I regard as a classic and I've watched it numerous times over the years.

Yet there is one thing that really irks me about the movie. It stars American movie stars Steve McQueen (as Captain Virgil Hilts, the "Cooler King") and James Garner (as Flt. Lt. Robert Hendley, the "Scrounger").

In reality no American personnel were involved in the planning of the escape, or the actual escape itself.

Another decent movie was "Enemy at the Gates". It starred Jude Law as Vasily Zaytsev, a sniper at Stalingrad who became a Hero of the Soviet Union.

With Zaytsev taking an increasing toll on German officers the director of the Wehrmacht sniper school at Zossen, Major Erwin König, is deployed to Stalingrad to take out Zaytsev.

All well and good, except for a few things. No sniper named König has ever been identified in the German records. Secondly, the Germans never had a sniper school at Zossen - or anywhere else for that matter.

Enough harping on about mistakes in war movies. That would take an entire book.

Let's get to what this article is all about - ten of the worst war movies ever produced. They are presented in no particular order and this is our own personal choice. You are free to agree or disagree with us.

You can click on the movie posters to watch a trailer.



## Alexander (2004)

While Alexander may have been great, this movie sure as hell wasn't.

In 2001 "The Lord of the Rings" proved that there was a widespread public appetite for swords and sandals adventure/war epics. And for the next few years, audiences got several overly long, medieval/ancient war films that took themselves very seriously. Alexander was one of these.

Colin Farrell stars as Alexander the Great. But even after three hours of watching people in togas talk, ponder, pontificate, discuss, debate, and parley, you'll realize you still know frustratingly little about the legendary Macedonian conqueror.

The film makes no attempt

to separate myth from fact. Instead you're left with Ptolemy (a Greek mathematician, astronomer and geographer) narrating the film like a bedtime story rather than an examination of the historical record.

And although Alexander's sexuality is examined, the film isn't bold enough to make a definitive statement on the matter.

Some of the inaccuracies are staggering. The Persian armies are all wearing turbans. The turban is not even a Persian item.

The Persian armies are depicted as being totally disorganised. Yet it is a historical fact that the Persians actually had uniforms, marched in discipline, and had bands that led them into battle.

Some of the battle scenes are not too bad, but not enough to save this movie.

This movie is three hours of your life that you will never get back.



## Battle of the Bulge (1965)

With a stellar cast that included Henry Fonda, Robert Ryan, Telly Savalas, Charles Bronson,

Dana Andrews, George Montgomery and James MacArthur, what could go wrong with this movie? Everything to be honest.

They managed to get everything wrong - the uniforms, the equipment, the terrain, and even the history.

Less than a minute into the film, the narrator informs us: "To the south lay Patton's Third Army, to the North Montgomery's Eighth." Really?

Field Marshal Montgomery's Eighth Army, for which he rose to fame in the desert, was in Italy, not the Northern edge of the Bulge. In fact the Eighth Army was not even in the same country.

This should be your first clue that this movie was not going to get any better.

The German Tiger Tanks used in the movie were actually American M-47 Patton tanks and the American Sherman tanks were portrayed by M-24 Chaffee light tanks.

Not only does the M-47 Patton look nothing like a Tiger tank, the M-47 only went into service in 1952 - seven years after World War II ended.

The Battle of the Bulge took place in the heavily wooded, hilly Ardennes. Yet the movie was filmed entirely in Spain and the terrain did not bear even the slightest resemblance to the Ardennes.

No mention is made of the counter-attack from Patton's forces from the south, the 101st Airborne's holding of the key road junction of Bastogne or the Allied air power, which after the skies cleared, decimated the Germans on the ground.

Instead, this film would have you believe that the only thing that stopped the Germans from reaching Antwerp was the lack of gas.

The climactic tank battle at the end was another loosely based big tank battle at Celles. In the film, the Germans wipe out the American forces.

In reality, it was the opposite. The 2nd Armoured Division left 88 German tanks smoking in the hills. This film was so bad that General Eisenhower came out of retirement to excoriate it for its lack of historical accuracy.



## Inchon (1979)

Do any of the readers remember the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, head of the powerful Unification Church - the 'Moonies'. Well he produced this movie.

Reverend Moon claimed that the spirit of General Douglas MacArthur visited him during the filming, giving his blessing to the project. Do we need to say more?

Moon put up \$30 million of his own money to get the film made. Unfortunately for him, production costs sky-rocketed to \$46 million.

Sir Laurence Olivier was paid \$1 million to play the role of General Douglas MacArthur. It was clear that he was only there for the pay cheque.

The cast of Olivier, Ben Gazzara, and Jacqueline Bisset was wasted here with dialogue as dry as Rat Pack dog biscuits. Olivier looked more like Emperor Palpatine from Star Wars than MacArthur in this one.

And Moon threw in a little sex action between Gazzara and a Korean hottie while cheating on Bisset who was his wife at home. Probably to show that war is the main cause of marital infidelity.

The action scenes follow a simple script - here's a building or a bridge. Here's a big explosion that took it out. Throw in some screaming extras and do it a handful of times, and you've got yourself "Inchon."

Although the movie was filmed in 1979, it took Moon three years before he could find a studio dumb enough to release it.

I've tried to watch this movie on two occasions. Both times I fell asleep. So it is good for insomnia.

If you have 2 hours, 17 minutes, and three seconds to really waste, you can watch the entire movie [here](#) on YouTube.

The movie was so bad that MGM didn't even release it on video or DVD.



**Pearl Harbor (2001)**

At three hours long, the movie lasted twice as long as the actual attack on Pearl Harbour.

The film is essentially about a love-triangle between two America fighter pilots (Ben Affleck and Josh Hartnett) and an American nurse (Kate Beckinsale) before, during, and after the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbour.

Think 'Titanic' with lots of explosions - and director Michael Bay loves his explosions.

The inaccuracies in the movie were numerous. In one scene a sailor has a packet of Marlboro Lights cigarettes sticking out of his pocket. Marlboro Lights were only introduced in 1972.

A pretty amusing scene is where Affleck is talking to Colonel Doolittle in his office and behind the Colonel are his trophies for air racing. Look closely and there is an F-86 Saber jet from the Korean War.

Another major gaffe is where

Affleck travels to Britain to join the 'Eagle Squadron' with the Royal Air Force. No American Army pilots were allowed to join the RAF. They would first have to resign from the US Army and then join the RAF as a civilian.

This one at least had some good action scenes during the actual bombing of Pearl Harbour which Bay did well, although again inaccurately.

If you really want to watch a decent movie about Pearl Harbour, then try the 1970 movie Tora! Tora! Tora!



**Redacted (2009)**

If you've never heard of this one, don't be alarmed, you aren't missing anything.

Director Brian De Palma has made some pretty good movies. This is not one of them.

De Palma took a real incident about a rape of a young Iraqi girl and the murder of her family and tried to create an anti-war film about the U.S. involvement in Iraq.

He tried to shock the audience, right down to a slide show of gruesome pictures of Iraq's war dead. We aren't told who killed them, or who they are - it is just supposed to shock the viewer.

Naturally the PC, anti-war, woke brigade loved this movie. It gave a clear message that war turns American youth into monsters. Personally I thought it was unmitigated trash and exploitation.

This was one of De Palma's lesser efforts, the dialogue is atrocious and totally unbelievable for any soldiers and sounds like it was taken straight from the cliché dictionary.

And the squads interaction with each other was a joke. They looked like people that had met on the set just ten minutes before, and not a squad that had seen combat together.

It was just a crudely done, poorly defined film that even the "found camera footage" is unbelievable. It was a one-dimensional bit of schlock that is best left to the imagination.



**Revolution (1985)**

This movie starred an actor that I really admire. Some of Al Pacino's roles are legendary - Scarface, Heat, Scent of a Woman, the Godfather saga. Yet his leading role in this movie as New York fur trapper Tom Dobb did not suit him. His accent sounded more Italian Mafica than American Revolution.

It also starred Donald Sutherland as a British Sergeant Major. Who can forget him as 'Oddball' in Kelly's Heroes.

British soldiers are depicted as sadistic war criminals, despite no evidence existing to support this. German actress Nastassja Kinski, who provided the eye-candy in the movie, had a strong German accent and sounded nothing like the rest of her family. Was she perhaps adopted?

The film was also a critical let-down, with many criticizing the performances (especially the accents), writing, and choice to shoot a story of American history in England.

The director, Hugh Hudson, plunges us into gritty, muddy re-enactments of famous campaigns, but we don't find out what's going on in these campaigns, or what their importance is in the course of the war.

Even Mel Gibson's 'The Patriot' (infamous for its inaccuracies) is a better movie than this. And that's saying something.

This historic box office bomb was so poorly received that Al Pacino took a four-year hiatus from acting.



**Windtalkers (2002)**

The story of the Navajo code talkers - real-life Native Americans who used their language to produce an unbreakable secret code during World War II - deserves to be told. But not like this.

John Woo's "Windtalkers" is allegedly about them, but they're benched as side characters so that the film can instead focus on Marine Sergeant Joe Enders - a white character played by Nicolas Cage - who is tasked with babysitting one of the code talkers during the 1944 Battle of Saipan.

He initially resents this assignment but eventually bonds with the man and sacrifices himself to ensure his safety.

Viewers are told that the main task of the bodyguard is to ensure that their Navajo code talker does not fall into enemy hands. This is to prevent the code from falling into enemy hands.

Sgt Enders is instructed that if it appears there is any danger

of the code talker being captured, he must kill his code talker before this happens. Where did they suck this information from?

The bodyguard was there to protect the code talker, but not from the Japanese but rather from other American troops.

The Navajo's skin tone and facial features were similar to those of the Japanese. The main job of the bodyguard was to ensure that his code talker would not be mistaken for a Japanese soldier.

This could have been a good movie. Unfortunately it was not.

the impacts inflicted by a war this horrid on those who endured it. Instead, we're forced to suffer through scene after scene of mind-numbing action and stock characters.

And guess what? They had to throw in a melodramatic love story that is out of place and unwelcome. In fact, its very inclusion is proof that the filmmakers were scrambling for ideas to fill the run time.

Perhaps that explains all the overused slow-motion footage - a great way to fill up space.

Look, the action scenes are okay, and so is the acting. But it's an insufficient tribute to the men who fought, died, and arguably saved civilization in the actual battle.

being held at the POW camp he spent seven years in.

It could be described as a lame shoot-'em-up with 10 explosions a minute and hordes of enemies almost as uninteresting as the leads themselves.

It's essentially a rip-off of the Rambo movies - and they're not regarded as epic cinema themselves.



**The Green Berets (1968)**

John Wayne - The Duke - was probably one of the best movie cowboys ever. Yet as a Green Beret colonel in Vietnam, he just didn't make the grade.

He was 61, unhealthy, and overweight when he played the role of Colonel Mike Kirby.

He may have been the expert with six-shooters but in one scene he is actually trying to fire an M-16 rifle while holding it upside down.

The movie was torn to pieces by both critics and Vietnam veterans. The acting is not good, the dialogue is even worse.

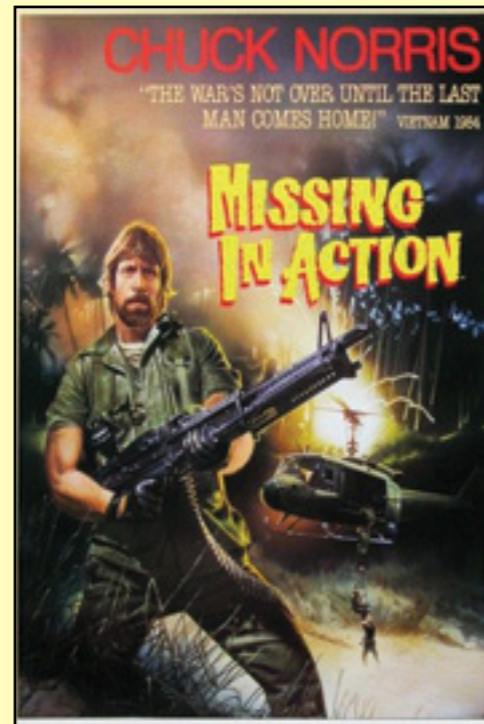
It has been described as 'Cowboys and Indians' in Vietnam.



**Stalingrad (2013)**

The 1993 movie 'Stalingrad', directed by Joseph Vilsmaier, rates as one of the finest war movies ever made. It is often referred to as the 'German' version.

The 2013 'Russian' version of the film is a CGI (Computer Generated Images) nightmare where nothing is said about the battle, the human condition, or



**Missing in Action (2013)**

Film actor Chuck Norris is famous for everything except the films he acts in because they don't tend to be very good. Case in point: "Missing in Action," which follows Colonel James Braddock in an attempt to rescue his men, who are still



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**"War does not determine who is right - only who is left"**

# Special Force Training - SBS

*In our seventh article on Special Forces selection and training, we look at the Special Boat Service.*

Anyone with even the remotest interest in military matters will have at least heard about the Special Air Service (SAS). Yet the same cannot be said about the Special Boat Service (SBS).

The Special Boat Service (SBS) is the special forces unit of the United Kingdom's Royal Navy. The SBS can trace its origins back to the Second World

War when the Army Special Boat Section was formed in 1940.

After the Second World War, the Royal Marines formed special forces with several name changes - Special Boat Company was adopted in 1951 and re-designated as the Special Boat Squadron in 1974 - until on 28 July 1987 when the unit was renamed as the Special Boat Service after assuming responsibility for maritime counter-terrorism.

Most of the operations conducted by the SBS are highly classified, and are rarely commented on by the British government or the Ministry of Defence due to their sensitive nature.

The Special Boat Service is the maritime special forces unit of the United Kingdom Special Forces and is described as the sister unit of the

British Army 22 Special Air Service Regiment (22 SAS), with both under the operational control of the Director Special Forces.

The Special Boat Service is the maritime special forces unit of the United Kingdom Special Forces and is described as the sister unit of the British Army 22 Special Air Service Regiment (22 SAS), with both

under the operational control of the Director Special Forces.

In October 2001, full command of the SBS was transferred from the Royal Marines to the Royal Navy; whilst retaining the green beret.

On 18 November 2003, the SBS were given their own cap badge with the motto "By Strength and Guile".

This follows opening recruitment from only the Royal Marines to all three services of the British Armed Forces. The SBS has traditionally been manned mostly by Royal Marines Commandos.

The principal roles of the SBS are Special reconnaissance (SR), including information reporting and target acquisition; Offensive Action (OA), including direction of air strikes, artillery and naval gunfire, designation for precision guided munitions, use of integral weapons and demolitions; and Support and Influence (SI), including overseas training tasks.

The SBS also provide immediate response Military Counter Terrorism (CT) and Maritime Counter Terrorism (MCT) teams.

The operational capabilities of the SBS and the SAS are broadly similar. However, the SBS (being the principal Royal Navy contribution to UKSF) has the additional training and equipment required to lead in the maritime, amphibious and riverine environments.

Both units come under the operational command of HQ Directorate of Special Forces (DSF) and undergo an identical selection process. They enjoy significant interoperability in training and on operations.

All of the SBS's four squadrons, C, Z, M and X, are configured for general operations, and rotate through the Maritime Counter Terrorism Role, also known as Black Role.

The SBS also operates on land, with recent operations in the mountains of landlocked Afghanistan and in the deserts of Iraq. Their main tasks include intelligence gathering, counter-terrorism operations (surveillance or offensive action), sabotage and the disruption of enemy infrastructure, capture of specific individuals, close protection of senior politicians and military personnel, plus reconnaissance and direct action in foreign territory.

## Recruitment

In the past, the SBS was staffed almost entirely by the Royal Marines. Volunteers for the SBS are now taken from all branches of the British Armed Forces, although volunteers still predominantly come from the Royal Marines Commandos.

Candidates wishing to serve with the Special Boat Service must have completed at least two years regular service and will only be accepted into the SBS after completion of the selection process.

Until recently, the SBS had its own independent selection programme to qualify as a Swimmer Canoeist, but its selection

programme has now been integrated into a joint UKSF selection alongside candidates for the Special Air Service.

All members of the United Kingdom Armed Forces can be considered for special forces selection, but approximately 40% of all UK Special Forces are recruited from the Royal Marines.

There are two selections a year, one in winter and the other in summer, and all the instructors are full members of the Special Air Service Regiment.

Before being accepted onto a UKSF Selection course, a candidate must complete a two-week [citation needed] Special Forces Briefing Course. The course tests the candidates' physical fitness and observes their willingness to conduct water-borne operations.

The UKSF course is broken down into two main parts, Selection and Continuation Training.

## Selection

Aptitude Phase (hill phase) – four weeks. This phase is conducted in the Brecon Beacons, South Wales.

The Aptitude Phase is designed to select those individuals who are suitable for special forces training.

The initial three weeks are devoted to gradual physical training and progressive exercises designed to develop physical and navigational ability.

Candidates will be expected to complete the Basic Combat Fitness Test (Infantry) on the first day of the course. Exercise HIGH WALK (Fan Dance) will take place on Day Six and



takes the form of an escorted hill march over approximately 23 km. As with all assessment marches, additional time may be added for inclement weather conditions.

Exercise HIGH WALK identifies those individuals that are not adequately prepared to continue on the course. All other training during this initial period is directed at preparing volunteers for "Test Week" which is the fourth and final week of the Aptitude phase.

"Test Week" consists of five timed marches of between 23–28 km conducted on consecutive days, followed by a final endurance march of 64 km; candidates must complete this within 20 hours. Bergen weights carried during "Test Week" increase from 18 kg to 25 kg for the endurance march; in addition a rifle without a sling is carried on all marches.

Volunteers are also required to pass the UKSF swimming test that consists of high water entry (3 metres), treading water for nine minutes followed immediately by a swim of 500





metres wearing Combat 95. The test finishes with an underwater swim of 10 metres including a retrieval of a small weight.

There is also a selection course for those wishing to join the reserve. This involves a number of tests over a four day initial selection course.

The tests include the Combat Fitness Test, Swim Test, Gym Tests and two Advanced Combat Fitness Tests.

Their training involves parachute exercises, helicopter training and boat training.

### Continuation training

Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) – 9 weeks.

Those who pass the Aptitude Phase will undertake an intensive period of instruction and assessment of Special Forces Tactics, Techniques and Pro-

cedures (TTPs), including SF weapons and Standard Operation Procedures.

The majority of this period is spent in the jungle, an environment that is suitable for SF training and ideal to achieve the purpose of this phase. Much of the training is aimed at discovering an individual's qualities.

Continuation training, which consists of SOP and Tactical training in temperate and jungle environments, lasts nine weeks. This is conducted in the UK and Brunei.

### Employment Training – 14 weeks

Employment Training consists of surveillance and reconnaissance training (2 weeks), army combat survival (2 weeks), SF parachute training (4 weeks), counter terrorist

course (3 weeks), signals training (1 week), patrol training and squadron induction training (2 weeks), and 1 week officers week for potential officers. At the end of the resistance to interrogation phase the surviving candidates are transferred to an operational squadron.

When accepted into an operational squadron, the candidates must complete the SBS Swimmer Canoeist Course, SC3 Course. The course lasts for several months and covers long distance Dives, Swims and Kayaks in open sea, often in poor weather. Underwater demolitions, Maritime counter terrorism, are also practised. On completing SBS troopers will be put on one year probation.



# Phonetic Alphabet World War II

In 1957 NATO introduced an international phonetic alphabet. Prior to that, many countries used their own version of the phonetic alphabet. This month we want to know which terms the US Military used during World War II. For example Kilo was known as King.

1

**Alpha**

2

**Bravo**

3

**Delta**

4

**Echo**

5

**Juliette**

6

**Lima**

7

**November**

8

**Oscar**

8

**Papa**

10

**Quebec**

11

**Romeo**

12

**Sierra**

13

**Uniform**

14

**Yankee**

15

**Zulu**



# Disobedient Heroes

*In the military it is expected that you obey orders. Yet there are cases where there is a good reason to disobey those orders.*

The military has a very strict code of conduct. When a soldier is given an order he/she is expected to carry it out immediately.

Commanding officers can order troops into a suicide mission if it serves the greater purpose. When obeying orders, it's necessary for those troops to believe a commander wouldn't order them into harm's way unless it was necessary, that the order serves a greater good, and it's not an illegal order.

The military takes a dim view on anyone that fails or refuses to obey an order. Those that refuse to carry out an order can be court martialled and, in some cases, even sentenced to death if found guilty.

Yet there are cases where there is a valid reason for disobeying an order. Such as when they believe that the order is putting the lives of friendly troops or innocent people at stake.

The following people not only disobeyed orders, they even became heroes because of it.

## Albert Battel

As a fifty-one-year-old reserve officer and a lawyer by profession, Oberleutnant Battel was stationed in Przemyśl in southern Poland as the adjutant to the local military commander, Major Max Liedtke. Battel had been a member of the Nazi Party since 1933.

When the SS prepared to launch their first large-scale "re-

settlement" (liquidation) action against the Jews of Przemyśl on 26 July 1942, Battel, in concert with his superior, ordered the bridge over the River San, the only access into the Jewish ghetto, to be blocked.

As the SS commando attempted to cross to the other side, the sergeant-major in charge of the bridge threatened to open fire unless they withdrew. All this happened in broad daylight, to the amazement of the local inhabitants.

Still later that same afternoon, an army detachment under the command of Oberleutnant Battel broke into the cordoned-off area of the ghetto and used army trucks to evacuate up to 100 Jews and their families to the barracks of the local military command.

These Jews were placed under the protection of the Wehrmacht and were thus sheltered from deportation to Belzec. The remaining ghetto inmates, including the head of the Judenrat, Dr. Duldig, underwent "resettlement" in the following days.

After this incident, the SS authorities began a secret investigation into the conduct of the army officer who had dared defy them under such embarrassing circumstances.

Heinrich Himmler, Reichsführer-SS, vowed to have the lawyer expelled from the Nazi party and arrested immediately after the war.

Battel's stand against the SS came to be recognised only a long time after his death; most notably, through the tenacious efforts of the Israeli researcher and lawyer Dr. Zeev Goshen. On 22 January 1981, almost 30 years after his death, Yad Vashem recognised Albert Battel as Righteous among the Nations.

Major Max Liedtke was also recognised as Righteous among the Nations.



**Albert Battel**

## Thomas Currie Derrick

Tom Derrick was an Australian who went by the nickname of 'Diver'.

During World War II he joined the 2/48th Battalion of the Second Australian Imperial Force.

At the Siege of Tobruk, he was recommended for the Military Medal and promoted to

corporal. He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal at El Alamein for knocking out three German machine gun posts, destroying two tanks, and capturing one hundred prisoners.

During the Battle of Sattelberg in the Pacific nation of New Guinea, Derrick was now a lieutenant.

On November 24, 1943, Lt. Derrick was ordered to withdraw his platoon because the CO didn't think he could capture the heights around Sattelberg.

Derrick's response: "Bugger the CO. Just give me twenty more minutes and we'll have this place."

Derrick climbed a vertical cliff by himself, holding on with one hand and throwing grenades with the other, stopping only to fire his rifle. He cleared out 10 machine gun nests that night and forced the Japanese to withdraw. The Aussies captured Sattelberg and Derrick was awarded the Victoria Cross.



**Thomas Derrick**

## Desmond Doss

This was a man that wanted to serve his country during World War II. As long as he didn't have to kill anyone.

He was a pacifist and refused every order to carry a weapon or fire one. He was given a court martial and the court eventually decided that he did not have to carry a firearm and would be allowed to serve as a medic.

As his unit climbed a vertical cliff side at Okinawa, the Japanese opened up with artillery, mortars, and machine guns, turning his unit back and killing or wounding 75 men. Doss retrieved them one by one, loading them onto a litter and down the cliff.

A few days later, in the mouth of a cave, he braved a shower of grenades thrown from eight yards away, dressed wounds, and made four trips to pull his soldiers out. He treated his own wounds and waited five hours for a litter to carry him off.

On the way back, the three men carrying him had to take cover from a tank attack. While waiting, Doss crawled off his litter, treated a more injured man, and told the litter bearers to take the other man.

While waiting for them to come back, he was hit in the arm by a sniper and crawled more than 250 metres to an aid station.

He was twice awarded the Bronze Star Medal for actions in Guam and the Philippines. For his exploits at Okinawa, Doss was awarded the Medal of Honour.

He was the first conscientious objector to earn the Medal of Honour and was promoted to

the rank of corporal.



**Desmond Doss**

## Daniel Hellings

Hellings was serving with the British Army in Afghanistan.

On 7 September 2010 he was on a joint patrol with Afghan allies in the Helmand Province. An IED (Improvised Explosive Device) was detonated in an alleyway.

Two troops were injured in the initial blast, one blinded and the second with severe leg wounds, and a third was wounded when he triggered another bomb just metres away from Private Hellings.

Private Hellings was ordered to withdraw from the alley by his commander but the young soldier realised there was no time to find an alternative route to recover the casualties and volunteered to return to the task.

With his metal detector rendered all but useless because so much metallic debris lay on the ground, he carried out an hour-long fingertip search for further IEDs.

One hidden bomb he found

had wires stretching the width of the alley, which would normally have prevented him going any further. But Private Hellings knew that his injured comrades would almost certainly die if he waited for a bomb disposal team.

He disregarded the danger to himself and continued clearing the ground around the IEDs so he could reach the three casualties, giving them life-saving first aid and helping to evacuate them.

For his bravery and quick thinking, he was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal.



**Daniel Hellings**

**Frank Luke Jr**

Frank Luke Jr was an U.S. Army Air Service during World War I. He held the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

He was an ace with 18 confirmed kills, second only to Captain Eddie Rickenbacker. Luke's nickname was the 'Arizona Balloon Buster'.

On 29 September 1918 he had been grounded by his squadron's commanding officer, Captain Alfred A. Grant, and told that if he took off he would be considered AWOL.

He knocked out three balloons that day before his aircraft was hit by machine gun fire and he was forced down behind enemy lines.

He managed to land, climbed out of his aircraft and, using his side-arm, opened fire on the Germans that were heading to take him prisoner. He was killed in the one-sided fight.

He was later awarded the Medal of Honour, becoming the first pilot to receive the award.



**Frank Luke Jr.**

**Dakota Meyer**

Meyer was a member of the United States Marine Corps and in 2009 was at the Battle of Ganjgal in Afghanistan.

His commander ordered him to disregard a distress call from ambushed Afghan and American troops, four of them friends, pinned down by possibly hundreds of enemy fighters.

He repeatedly asked permission to drive his truck to help relieve his outnumbered and surrounded friends and allies. Each time the request was denied.

Taking matter into his own hands he and another Marine hopped in a Humvee. Meyer

manned the gun while the other drove the vehicle.

They drove right into the firestorm, loading the beleaguered Afghans, mostly wounded, onto their Humvee. As weapons jammed, Meyer would grab another, and another. They drove into the melee five times, until they came across Meyer's friends, now fallen, and pulled them out too.

For his actions Meyer was awarded the Medal of Honour. He is the second-youngest living Medal of Honour recipient.



**Dakota Meyer**

**Stanislav Petrov**

On 26 September 1983, three weeks after the Soviet military had shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007, Lt Colonel Petrov was the duty officer at the command centre for the Oko nuclear early-warning system when the system reported that a missile had been launched from the United States, followed by up to five more

Standing orders were clear - report it immediately to his commanding officers, who would have likely launched a counter-strike with their nuclear arsenal.

Suspecting that it was a false alarm he disobeyed the standing orders and, in doing so, averted World War III and mutually assured destruction.



**Stanislav Petrov**

**Benaya Rein**

During the Second Lebanon War several Israeli soldiers, lacking accurate maps, became lost in 2006 while in Southern Lebanon. As they attempted to get their bearings, about 20 men appeared in the distance, and the commander, convinced they were Hezbollah fighters, ordered Benaya Rein to open fire.

Rein wasn't so sure. Instead, he took a tank out to the location to investigate. When he arrived, he found 20 of his fellow IDF soldiers.

Rein would later be killed after the tank he was commanding was hit by a Hezbollah missile. He was one of the last Israelis killed during the war.



**Benaya Rein**

**Daniel Sickles**

Major General Sickles' slight disobedience to orders during the Battle of Gettysburg changed the momentum of the war and may have changed the entire history of the United States. In a move historians haven't stopped talking about for 150 years, Sickles moved his men to Peach Orchard instead of Little Round Top, as Gen. George G. Meade ordered him. This move prompted Confederate Gen. James Longstreet to attack the Union troops in the orchard and the wheat field, nearly destroying the Union forces there. Which, admittedly, sounds terrible.

The Confederate move allowed Union troops to flank them in a counter-offensive and completely rout the Confederate forces, winning Gettysburg for the Union and ending Robert E. Lee's invasion of the North. Sickles himself lost a leg in the fighting, but received the Medal of Honour.



**Daniel Sickles**

**David Teich**

During the Korean War, US Army Lieutenant David Teich was in a tank company near the 38th parallel in 1951 when a radio distress call came in from the Eighth Ranger Company. Wounded, outnumbered, and under heavy fire, the Rangers were near Teich's tanks, and facing 300,000 Communist troops, moving steadily toward their position.

Teich wanted to help, but was ordered to withdraw instead, his captain saying "We've got orders to move out. Screw them. Let them fight their own battles."

Teich went anyway. He led four tanks over to the Rangers' position and took out so many Rangers on each tank, they covered up the tank's turrets. He still gets letters from the troops he saved that day, thanking him for disobeying his order to move out.



**David Teich**

# Military Manifestations

If there are such things as ghosts, lost spirits and supernatural manifestations, then it stands to reason that battlefields will be some of the most haunted places on the planet. **Matt O'Brien** takes a closer look at things that go bump in the night.

How many of you have seen a ghost? Or maybe you've experienced the strange and supernatural. Then again, maybe you're convinced it's just a load of malarkey.

Personally, I'm a bit of a sceptic. The only spirits I've had dealings with normally come in a bottle marked 'Bushmills'.

Yet while I say that, I must confess that I once did have an experience that left me more than a bit perplexed.

I was privileged to visit the Delville Wood South African National Memorial near Longueval in France.

Afterwards I took a walk into the actual woods where the battle had taken place. I stood there with my head bowed, trying to imagine what it must have been like back in 1916.

As I stood there, something strange happened. I didn't see anything. Nor did I hear anything out of the ordinary. Yet I was overcome by an overwhelming feeling of sadness. I started to sob like a baby.

Now while I don't believe in things that go bump in the night, there are many people that do. And even I have to admit that there may be more to it than meets the eye.

If things such as ghosts, spirits, apparitions and like do exist, then it makes sense that battlefields would have their fair share of them. After all, most of them are places where people

met an untimely and often violent death.

So let's take a look at some of the most haunted battlefields and military installations.

## Fort Meigs

William Henry Harrison was the ninth president of the United States. Yet before that he had been a military man. A general to be exact.

During the War of 1812 he established Fort Meigs in Ohio. For over a year he defended it against British attacks before it was finally abandoned and burnt down.

In 1974 it was reconstructed and opened to the public. Since then many people have claimed to hear cannon fire, muskets, and the sounds of fifes and drums being played.

Still more people have stated they hear footsteps and, when walking around outside, have seen apparitions staring at them through the windows.

It's believed that over 500 dead American, British, and Indian soldiers are buried in unmarked graves around and underneath the fort.

## Battle Abbey

If you know your history then you will remember that the Battle of Hastings took place in 1066.

King Harold II, along with 7,500 of his Saxons, went up against the invading Normans

who were led by William, Duke of Normandy. Or course William was better known as William the Conqueror and sometimes William the Bastard.

William defeated Harold and went on to become the first Norman king of England.

An abbey was built on Senlac Hill with the high altar said to have been placed on the exact spot where King Harold was slain.

Now building an abbey on the site of that much bloodshed was probably not the brightest idea. Over the years there have been numerous bizarre reports.

Most of the sightings have been of ghostly monks rather than soldiers.

There are some other claims, such as the high altar bleeding and a soldier marching through the Great Hall carrying a sword, but those tales are considerably less substantiated.

## Marston Moor

As we all know, politics can sometimes become a bit heated. Throughout history it has often led to civil war.

The English actually had three civil wars in a row, fought mainly about how the government should be run.

The wars were fought between the Parliamentarians ("Roundheads") and Royalists ("Cavaliers")

The First English Civil War took place between 1642 and



**BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATERS:** It looks peaceful enough now, but Antietam Creek was the scene of one of the bloodiest battles of the US Civil War.

1646. The Second English Civil War lasted from 1648 to 1649, and the Third English Civil War was fought between 1649 and 1651.

The three civil wars cost more than 84,000 people their lives. More than 100,000 civilians also died as a result of the English Civil Wars.

The Battle of Marston Moor took place on 2 July 1644. The Royalists suffered a heavy defeat, with some 4,000 of them being killed.

The Parliamentarians were led by Oliver Cromwell. He used the Old Hall as his base of operations and, according to legend, he's still there to this day.

And that's not even mentioning the fact that, apparently, the spirits of the Royalists that were slain in the battle still roam the area.

There have been reports over the years of phantom soldiers marching in Marston Moor, including possible sightings in 1932, 1968, and 1992, when people reportedly observed long haired, finely dressed soldiers marching along the roads.

## Dieppe

Before the invasion of Normandy on 6 June 1944, the Allies wanted to test the feasibility of an amphibious landing on an enemy coastline.

To this end they launched Operation Jubilee, which was also known as the Dieppe Raid.

On 19 August 1942 a force consisting mainly of Canadian troops, along with some British and a few Americans, landed on the French coast at Dieppe. The operation was a spectacular failure.

From the time they landed at 05h00 until they retreated back across the English Channel at 14h00 they suffered more than 4,000 casualties.

Now let's fast forward nine years later to 1951. A pair of tourists are enjoying their summer holiday in Puys, nearby to Dieppe. At 04h00 they are awakened by what sounded like heavy gunfire. Then there is small arms fire, shouting voices and other sounds of battle. It is coming from the beach nearby their hotel.

For the next three hours they document all of the sounds they

heard. Later the Society for Paranormal Research determined that their notes matched up, almost to the second, to the events of the Dieppe Raid, which had taken place on that exact beach.

## Antietam

The American Civil War resulted in the deaths of between 785,000 and a million people. Many of the battles were notable for the high number of casualties that occurred. The Battle of Antietam was no exception.

The battle took place on 17 September 1862 at Antietam Creek in Maryland. The battle only lasted four hours and was fought in a very confined area. Yet more than 23,000 men were killed, wounded or reported missing.

Today, the small road near Antietam Creek is known as Bloody Lane. And for good reason. Visitors have often reported hearing the sound of gunfire and getting the smell of gunpowder. Others claim to have both seen and heard spirits in the area.

Virtually everything surrounding the Battle of Antietam has had reports of haunting, from Burnside's Bridge, where Ambrose Burnside's Union soldiers pushed back the Confederates and where the dead were quickly buried in shallow, unmarked graves, to the nearby St. Paul Episcopal Church, which was used as a Confederate hospital in the aftermath of the battle.

According to the local legends, the floorboards of the church are so stained in blood that not even sandpaper will take it out.

## Gettysburg

Fought from 1 July to 3 July 1863 in the small town of Gettysburg in south-eastern Pennsylvania, the Battle of Gettysburg is viewed as the turning point for the Union in the Civil War. The battle resulted in more than 50,000 casualties.

Since then almost everyone that has visited Gettysburg will have some spooky story to share.

At the Daniel Lady Farm, which served as the Confederate field hospital, it is believed that more than 10,000 deceased soldiers still haunt the grounds.

Cashtown Inn, where the first soldier in the Battle of Gettysburg was killed, also has some bizarre tales, and the owners claim to have photographic evidence of spirits on the premises, as well as guests reporting hearing knocking on doors, lights turning on and off, and doors locking and unlocking themselves.

Those are only a small sampling of the alleged ghostly sightings, which have also been reported at the Gettysburg Hotel and the Baladerry Inn, as well as on the battlefields themselves.

## Passchendaele

The Battle of Passchendaele, also known as the Third Battle of Ypres, lasted just over three months between July and November 1917.

The Germans were pounded by artillery, with as many as one million rounds being fired. The Germans were up against a force consisting of British, Canadian, New Zealand and South African troops. Australian forces joined in as well.



**DOOMED CITY:** If cities can be haunted, then Stalingrad has to be a candidate. More than two million people died there in five months of fighting during World War II.

Due to the countless shell holes, heavy rains and thick mud, the battlefield was difficult to navigate. One wrong slip and you could disappear into the mud, never to be seen again.

Nearly 400,000 would die on all sides and almost 100,000 soldiers who died were never identified.

Now, it's said the village is haunted with sounds of battle, screams, gunfire and other phantom noises that can be heard at random times.

## Culloden

The Battle of Culloden marked the crushing of the Jacobite Rebellion in the mid-1700s.

The Scottish clans were heavily outnumbered by the troops of Bonnie Prince Charles. The terrain did not favour the Scots and some reports say that the battle was over in under an hour.

The anniversary of the battle is 16 April and it's said that on that day, the ghostly fallen soldiers reappear, and sounds of battle, including clashing swords, can be heard. Some tales say individuals have encountered fallen soldiers on

the battlefield, as well as one soldier who roams the area in a stunned state.

It's also reported that birds do not sing near the burial mounds, due to the creepy atmosphere.

## Little Bighorn

Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer of the US 7th Cavalry really knew how to pick a fight.

Twelve companies of the 7th Cavalry were involved in a campaign against the Lakota, Northern Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes.

On 25 and 26 June 1876, five companies, a force of about 700 cavalrymen and scouts, engaged in battle against the Indians.

Under the command of Custer, they faced a foe numbering around 2,500. In the Battle of Little Bighorn, sometimes known as Custer's Last Stand, the cavalry were annihilated.

These days hauntings are widely reported at the sight of the battle. Visitors say they instantly become overwhelmed with a feeling of hopelessness. Others say they experience hal-



**THE CASTLE:** Most people that have spent time at the Castle will have at least one good ghost story to tell.

lucinations of the battle. One grounds keeper says her on-site home was haunted by a Calvary soldier.

## Stalingrad

It has often been called one of the most deadly battles in all of human history. And with more than two million deaths, it certainly earned the title.

The battle lasted for just over five months, from 23 August 1942 to 2 February 1943. German troops, supported by Romanian, Italian, Hungarian and Croatian troops fought the Russians for control of the city. Many say that this was where Germany lost World War II.

Today the city is called Volgograd, named after the Volga River.

Now, entire sections of neighborhoods in the city are said to be extremely haunted by the dead.

It's reported that the dead have continued living their normal lives as ghostly figures,

roaming the places where they once lived, fought, and died.

## Towton

Early we mentioned the three English Civil Wars that took place between 1642 and 1651. Well, it wasn't the first time that the English had tried their hand at civil War.

From May 1455 to August 1485, a total of 30 years, two English rival branches of the royal House of Plantagenet: the House of Lancaster (associated with a red rose), and the House of York (whose symbol was a white rose), fought for control of the throne. It comes as no big surprise to discover that it was called the War of the Roses.

Eventually, the wars eliminated the male lines of both houses.

One of the bloodiest battles of the War of the Roses took place in early 1461 at Towton. As many as 80,000 men were involved in the battle that lasted for 10 hours. Approximately

30,000 individuals died, in total. The battle is said to have taken place during heavy snowfall.

Now, it's reported that, every seven years, the town of Towton will experience a similar heavy snowstorm. If one walks out into the storm, to the site of the battle, they'll see the two armies fighting for a little more than three hours.

## Castle of Good Hope

Lastly, we head for Cape Town and our own Castle of Good Hope.

Built by the Dutch East India Company between 1666 and 1679, the Castle is the oldest existing colonial building in South Africa. The Castle was the centre of civilian, administrative and military activity at the Cape for 150 years and also the site of gruesome punishments, torture and executions. Obviously this has left a legacy of disturbed and restless spirits.

Most people that spent time at the Castle will have a ghost story or two to tell. Stories have been told of footsteps pacing along the battlements between the two bastions of Leerdam and Buren.

National servicemen that did guard duties at the Castle would refuse to go past the *Donker Gat* (dark hole) dungeon when making rounds late at night. They said it felt as if a powerful force or vacuum wanted to suck them in.

If you have any 'spooky' stories from your time in the military, drop us an e-mail and we will do a follow-up story.

# The Plot(s) to kill Hitler

Even before the Nazis came to power in 1933 there were at least four attempts on Adolf Hitler's life. From the time Hitler came to power until he committed suicide on 30 April 1945, there were at least 28 assassination attempts on his life. We look at some of them.

There is no denying that Adolf Hitler was popular with a lot of people. Especially in Germany. After the debacle of World War I many regarded him as the saviour of Germany.

Yet when you become one of the most despised tyrants in human history, spread totalitarianism through Europe, orchestrate the invasion of numerous countries, commit countless war crimes, including the attempted genocide of the Jewish people, and basically start a world war, then you are going to lose popularity.

A lot of people wanted Hitler dead. And it wasn't only the Allies that organised secret plots to kill Hitler. Members of the German High Command wanted him dead as well.

Many hoped his death would bring about an end to the Second World War; others simply wanted to put an end to his atrocities.

As we will see in this article, there were as many reasons for killing Hitler as there were attempts made and methods used.

Yet, as people discovered, killing Hitler was not as easy as it sounded.

Adolf Hitler was a strong believer in *Vorsehung*, or "providence." The Führer felt that if anything was going to happen to him, such as assassination, there was nothing he could do about it. He had been selected

by fate to achieve something great; he would not die, either by accident or assassination, until he had fulfilled that God-given mission. And for the better part of two decades, it appeared as if providence was on his side.

Even before the Nazis came to power in 1933 there were at least four attempts to kill Hitler. This included one where they tried to poison him at the Hotel Kaiserhof in 1930.

Once Hitler came to power there were many who conspired to kill or depose him. Most of the early attempts were divided between half-crazed lone gunmen and half-hearted former government officials.

The former tended to fail because they were disorganised, careless, and inept. The later failed because they were naively convinced that all they had to do was arrest Hitler and depose his government.

Here are just some of the attempts that failed.

## Beppo Römer

Josef "Beppo" Römer was a veteran of World War I. He was a member of the *Freikorps Oberland*, one of the paramilitary organizations that sprang up around Germany as soldiers returned in defeat from World War I.

When he was kicked out of his own organisation in the mid-1920s he had a change of heart

and converted to communism. He earned a law degree and started organising workers into labour unions.

He was appalled at Hitler's rise to power and, when the Nazis came to power in 1933, he conspired with a handful of other communists to kill the new Chancellor.

There plot never even got past the planning stages before they were arrested. Römer was lucky to escape execution and he was thrown into Dachau concentration camp.

After his release in 1939, Römer immediately got back to work organising plots to kill Hitler. He seemed oblivious to the fact that the Gestapo would be watching him like a hawk and in 1942 he was back in prison.

In September 1944, Römer was finally executed.

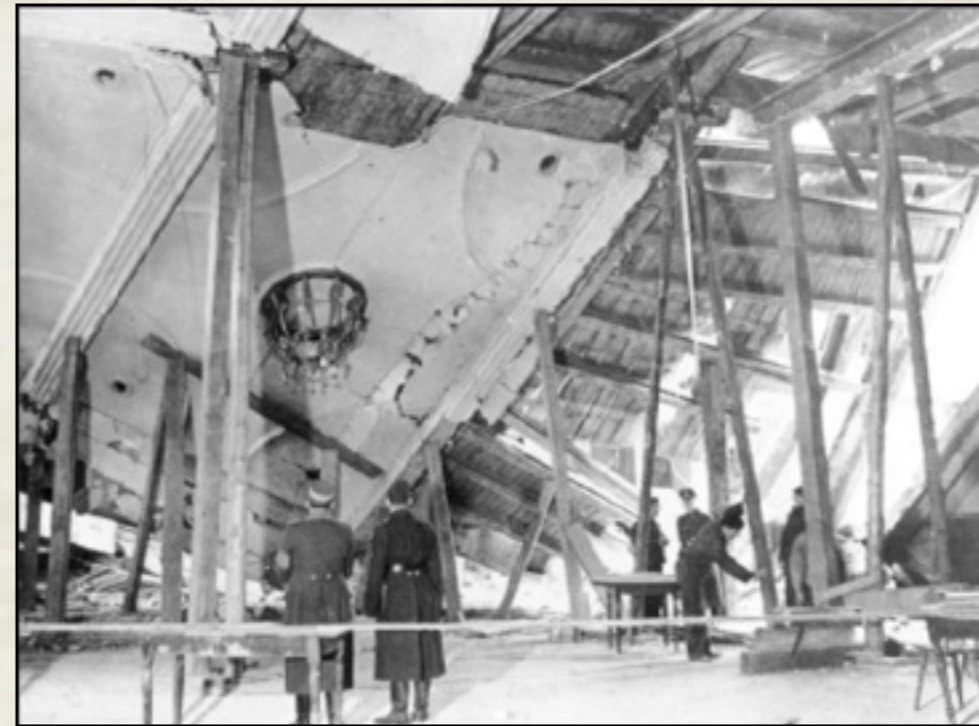
## Helmut Hirsch

If anyone had a grievance it would have been Helmut Hirsch.

He was born in Stuttgart but was technically an American citizen, even though he had never even visited the United States.

Add to that the fact that he was Jewish and also had a doubtful legal status in Hitler's Germany and it's not difficult to see why he joined a Czechoslovakian anti-Nazi group.

The group was known as the



**MINUTES TOO LATE:** The aftermath of the bomb planted by Georg Elser at the Bürgerbräukeller in Munich. It missed killing Hitler by only 13 minutes.

Black Front. Unfortunately for Hirsch the group had been thoroughly penetrated by German intelligence.

In 1938, somebody in the group – possibly the Nazi agent who later gave evidence at Hirsch's trial – sent him across the German border with instructions to pick up a couple of bombs and kill Hitler. Instead, Hirsch was picked up at the border, interrogated by the Gestapo, and beheaded in 1939.

## Maurice Bavaud

To say that Maurice Bavaud was an odd man would be an understatement.

A devout Catholic, he travelled from Switzerland to Germany in 1938 with the intention of killing Hitler. His orders were given to him by a man that Bavaud believed - of all things - was the heir to the Romanov dynasty.

Bavaud's multiple attempts on Hitler's life could have

come straight from the pages of a Monty Python script.

At the 1938 Nuremberg rally, Bavaud positioned himself on an overpass. When Hitler passed underneath him, Bavaud would take a .25 pistol from his pocket and shoot Hitler.

As Hitler approached, Bavaud reached for his gun, ready to take his shot. The problem is that the crowd all stood up in front of Bavaud and saluted their Führer, blocking his view. He lost sight of his target and the opportunity was lost.

Bavaud resorted to plan B. He had heard that Hitler would be relaxing in Berchtesgaden after the rally. He bought a train ticket for Berchtesgaden, only to discover on his arrival that Hitler was still in Munich.

Badaud bought another train ticket to Munich, only to learn when he got there that Hitler was now in Berchtesgaden.

The problem was that he had now run out of money. He was

arrested at the train station for vagrancy.

The police found the gun, a forged letter of introduction, and another document that was addressed to Hitler himself.

He was handed over to the Gestapo, who could be very persuasive with their interrogation methods, and Bavaud soon confessed to everything. He was sent to the guillotine in 1941.

This, however, was not the end of the story. For some bizarre reason the German government put Bavaud on trial twice after his death. The first time in 1955 and a year later in 1956.

In his first retrial his death sentence was commuted to five years in prison, which would have been nice to hear 14 years earlier. A year after that, Bavaud's conviction was overturned entirely and his family given a pension for his anti-Hitler activities.

## Georg Elser

A mere 13 minutes is all that stood between success and failure for Georg Elser.

On 8 November 1939, Adolf Hitler would be giving his customary speech at the *Bürgerbräukeller* in Munich. This was to commemorate the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch.

Elser had spent two months planning and planting a bomb behind the speaker's podium. It was set to detonate while Hitler was making his speech.

Unknown to Elser, Hitler had initially cancelled his speech at the *Bürgerbräukeller* to devote his attention to planning the imminent war with France, but

changed his mind and attended after all.

The start time of the reunion was brought forward half an hour to 20h00, and Hitler cut his speech from the planned two hours to a one-hour duration.

The high-ranking Nazis who accompanied Adolf Hitler to the anniversary of the Beer Hall Putsch on 8 November 1939 were Joseph Goebbels, Reinhard Heydrich, Rudolf Hess, Robert Ley, Alfred Rosenberg, Julius Streicher, August Frank, Hermann Esser and Heinrich Himmler. Hitler was welcomed to the platform by Christian Weber.

Only 13 minutes after Hitler and his entourage had left, the bomb exploded.

The bomb brought down part of the ceiling and roof and caused the gallery and an external wall to collapse, leaving a mountain of rubble. About 120 people were still in the hall at the time. Seven were killed. Another sixty-three were injured, sixteen seriously, with one dying later.

Elser was arrested trying to cross the Swiss border. He had wires and bomb components in his pockets, photographs of the beer cellar, and diagrams of the explosive device he had built.

Elser was remanded to the Gestapo. According to a witness, non other than Heinrich Himmler himself took part in the beating Elser got. After several delays, Elser was sent to Dachau concentration camp.

He was executed on 9 April 1945, only days before the camp was liberated.



**PEACE IN OUR TIME:** Neville Chamberlain's agreement with Hitler over the Sudetenland was a spoke in the wheels of the generals' plans to arrest Hitler.

### Internal plots

All of the attempts we've looked at so far were made by civilians, most of them amateurs at the assassination game. The attempts were carried out with little or no outside help.

Starting in 1938, however, a series of increasingly desperate plots were hatched by members of the German military elite.

Following several scandals that discredited high-ranking German officers in 1938, Hitler took the opportunity to clean house. The German War Minister was fired for having married an ex-prostitute, and the Army Chief of Staff was cashiered for disloyalty. One field marshal was even court-martialed for suspected (later disproved) homosexuality.

Senior officers were outraged by Hitler's purges. Some of these officers got together and started plotting to remove Hitler.

The leader was Ludwig Beck, who had recently been fired as

Chief of Staff. It was his task to coordinate efforts to dispose of Hitler in the name of the German people.

While none of their efforts were successful, it wasn't for lack of trying. For almost seven years the conspirators cooked up one plot after another. And, like the good staff officers they were, they committed all of their plans to paper.

Again and again, bad luck dashed the plotters' hopes and let Hitler unwittingly stroll right past men who were ready to die for the chance to kill him.

### Hitler's unwitting ally

With help from members of the *Abwehr* (German military intelligence), Beck made contact with British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and other members of the British government. He was looking for their support, but there is no evidence that they received any support whatsoever. This left the generals operating alone for



**SAFELY HOME:** Adolf Hitler arrives back in Berlin after visiting the Russian Front. A plot to blow up his aircraft was unsuccessful when the bombs failed to explode.

the time being.

Czechoslovakia had been created in 1919. The new nation was created out of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire and it contained numerous nationalities, including 3,2 million Germans.

Most of the Germans lived in the region on the western border with Germany – the Sudetenland.

Hitler wanted the Sudetenland back as part of Germany. And he was quite prepared to send his army in to do the job.

The plan was for the generals to overthrow and arrest Hitler if he fomented crisis over the Sudetenland. The plans for the putsch were all but finalised when Hitler was assisted by an unwitting ally.

Chamberlain announced that

he would meet with Hitler in Munich. Everybody knew right away this meant Hitler had won his gambit, which made arresting him impossible. The plan was shelved.

### The Spirit of Zossen

The next attempt took shape while Hitler was planning the invasion of France.

The generals were all veterans of World War I and they remembered what had happened the last time Germany had gone to war against the French.

They were convinced that Hitler's plan would spell the doom of Germany. Their old plans were updated and they got ready to move.

One of the plotters, serving Chief of Staff Franz Halder, insisted on waiting for the out-

come of one last meeting with Hitler, where the staff's objections would be formally presented. The meeting didn't go quite the way Halder expected.

Hitler flew into one of his trademark rages, ranting about how he knew all about the generals' disloyalty and promised to crush what he called "the spirit of Zossen" (Zossen was where the general staff were head quartered).

The tirade was probably nothing more than Hitler blowing off steam – something he did frequently. But Halder was convinced that the plot had been exposed. Once again the plans were shelved.

On 10 May 1940 the Germans invaded France. Six weeks later, on 25 June, it was all over. France had surrendered and in just 46 days the Germans had achieved what they couldn't do in four years from 1914 to 1918. The generals could hardly arrest Hitler now.

### Operation Valkyrie

With the Germans achieving success after success, the generals were left with little to do but bide their time.

Then, after Germany had invaded Russia, their armies were bogged down outside Moscow in 1941. The time was right for another attempt to get rid of Hitler.

Henning von Tresckow, the commander of the Moscow military district, took charge of the plot and worked it up into a full-scale plan codenamed Operation Valkyrie.

The plotters made contact with both British and American intelligence and prepared for a

military occupation of Berlin. Most importantly, the plotters' resolve had hardened. This time it would not be enough to just arrest Hitler - he would have to die.

On March 13, 1943, shortly after the surrender at Stalingrad and just before the disaster at Kursk, Hitler arrived in Smolensk for consultations.

One of the plotters, Helmuth Stieff, gave one of Hitler's aides a case of brandy for the plane trip back. Two of the bottles inside were not filled with brandy, but rather with explosives prepared by British intelligence. They were set with a 30-minute timer.

It was the perfect plan. Except for one small flaw. Two hours after take off, Hitler's plane landed safely in Berlin. The bombs had both failed to detonate.

Another plotter hurried to switch the case with another case of real brandy. On investigation it was discovered that both of the bombs had been duds.

One week after the failed bomb plot, Hitler was scheduled to speak at an exhibition of war trophies in Berlin. A German colonel got there first with a bomb in his pocket. His plan was to set the bomb's 10-minute timer and stand next to Hitler until it went off.

At the last moment, the colonel was told Hitler would only be staying for around eight minutes. That was cutting it too close. The would-be bomber disabled the device and gave up.

A few months later, in November 1943, Hitler was sched-

uled to have a look at some winter uniforms the *Wehrmacht* had ordered.

One of those selected to model the uniforms was Axel von dem Bussche, a *Wehrmacht* colonel. He had once witnessed a mass shooting in the east and since then had no love for Hitler or the Nazis.

His plan was simple. He would carry a grenade in his pocket. Then, as Hitler approached him, he would pull the pin and tackle Hitler.

The plan would probably have worked. Yet, as had happened in the past, the plan was thwarted by the Allies.

An Allied bombing raid destroyed the train that was carrying the uniforms and the show was cancelled.

## The 20 July plot

Operation Valkyrie's big plot finally came off on 20 July 1944.

The attempt to kill Hitler took place at *Wolfsschanze* (Wolf's Lair). It was Hitler's first Eastern Front military headquarters and was built for the start of Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941.

Count Claus von Stauffenberg, a *Wehrmacht* colonel, would place a British-made suitcase bomb in Hitler's situation room. It would detonate while Hitler was attending a briefing.

What many people may not know was that there were three previous plots to kill Hitler at the Wolf's Lair.

In 1943 an unknown Pole tried to kill Hitler at the Wolf's Lair. Little information is avail-

able on this plot, but the attempt didn't even come close.

The attempt in November 1943 by Colonel Axel von dem Bussche would also have taken place at the Wolf's Lair.

When the demonstration of the new winter uniforms was finally set to go ahead at the Wolf's Lair, von dem Bussche was no longer available. He had been wounded in action earlier.

A young infantry officer, Ewald-Heinrich von Kleist-Schmenzin, was then designated to kill Hitler.

Kleist planned to set off explosives hidden in his briefcase. But like earlier attempts, the plan was not carried out, as Hitler kept putting off the scheduled uniform demonstration.

After the plot's failure, he managed to cover up his resistance activities and proceedings against him were dropped in December 1944 for want of evidence.

He was, thereby, spared a trial before the *Volksgerechtshof*, (People's Court) which would almost certainly have ended with a death sentence, as it did for many of his fellow plotters, including his own father. However, he was imprisoned at the Ravensbrück concentration camp, and subsequently sent to the front, where he remained until the war ended. He died in Munich on 8 March 2013 at the age of 80.

The attempt on 20 July 1944 came very close to succeeding. The location of the briefing had been unexpectedly changed from the subterranean *Führerbunker* to Albert Speer's wooden hut due to it being a hot summer's day.



**AFTERMATH:** Members of the German High Command survey the damage cause by the bomb on 20 July 1944. To the left are Martin Bormann and head of the *Luftwaffe* Hermann Göring.

Von Stauffenberg entered the briefing room carrying a briefcase containing two small bombs. He left the room to arm the first bomb with specially adapted pliers, a task made difficult because he had lost his right hand and had only three fingers on his left. A guard knocked and opened the door, urging him to hurry as the meeting was about to begin.

As a result, Stauffenberg was able to arm only one of the bombs. He left the second bomb with his aide-de-camp, Werner von Haeften, and returned to the briefing room, where he placed the briefcase under the conference table, as close as he could to Hitler. Some minutes later, he excused himself and left the room. After his exit, the briefcase was inadvertently moved behind a thick wooden table leg by Colonel Heinz Brandt. This action probably saved Hitler's life.

When the bomb went off the

table shield Hitler from the main force of the explosion. The bomb wasn't designed with any shrapnel, so everybody who wasn't killed by the blast force alone was more-or-less okay and Hitler was only slightly wounded.

It eventually turned out that the conspiracy had been compromised by the SS, and Himmler himself knew the names of almost every plotter, thanks to an outrageous act of negligence on the part of American intelligence.

The plotters had been in regular contact with Allen Dulles, the Organisation of Strategic Services (OSS) station chief in Switzerland. Dulles would later go on to head the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

The liaison, Hans Bernd Gisevius, visited Dulles and gave him a list of the conspirators. Gisevius hated von Stauffenberg for personal reasons, so he didn't include the man's name

on the list. That's why, when Dulles transmitted the names over a compromised channel, the SS agents who intercepted the message were at a loss to know who the actual bomber was.

In the 24 hours following the bombing, the Gestapo effortlessly rounded up almost all of the conspirators who survived. Beck had committed suicide with a gunshot to the head on the night Valkyrie failed. Von Tresckow, at his post on the Eastern Front, got news of the failure over the radio, grabbed a grenade, walked out toward the Soviet lines, and blew himself to pieces.

The SS reaction to the July 20 plot was as brutal as it was swift. Thousands of people, both real and alleged plotters, were rounded up and executed. Many were tortured for days before execution. Leading plotters were given a show trial and slowly hung from piano wire suspended on meat hooks.

*Abwehr* chief Wilhelm Canaris, who had been swept up in the July 20 backlash, was executed at Flossenbürg concentration camp on 9 April 1945. He was survived by a widow who spent the rest of her life collecting a pension from the CIA, hinting at the role American intelligence had played in these failed plots.

Four months after the last attempt on his life, Hitler moved into a bunker under the Chancellery building in Berlin. Five months after that, he took his own life with cyanide and a self-inflicted gunshot, finally achieving what so many other had failed to do.

# History - or is it?

*History often depends on who is writing the history. Often the true facts can be a little bit slanted. In fact often the facts are ignored altogether.*

History is written by the victors,' is a well-known quote that is often wrongly attributed to Winston Churchill.

Hermann Göring, Churchill's enemy in World War II, voiced this sentiment at the Nuremberg Trials well before Churchill did.

In the original German, Göring is reported to have said, "Der Sieger wird immer der Richter und der Besiegte stets der Angeklagte sein," which more or less translates as "The victor will always be the judge, and the vanquished the accused."

There's actually no concretely documented instance in which Churchill is known to have uttered "History is written by the victors."

There's a good chance part of the confusion here comes from a joke Churchill actually did say, in a speech before the House of Commons on 23 January 1948: "For my part, I consider that it will be found much better by all parties to leave the past to history, especially as I propose to write that history myself."

Churchill was apparently fond of the line, as he had been using versions of it since the 1930s.

So who really coined the phrase? It was in use long before either Churchill or Göring uttered their variations. There are versions of the saying in English, French, Italian, and German.

For example, a French quote from 1842 says "*Histoire est juste peut-être, mais qu'on ne l'oublie pas, elle a été écrite par les vainqueurs*", which translates as, "History is right perhaps, but let us not forget, it was written by the victors."

The truth of the matter is that history is not written by the victors, but by those who are skilled at documentation.

There are many examples of conquerors being depicted negatively if historians belonged to the enemy camp.

During his campaigns, Alexander burned cities, razed them to the ground, and killed many men, women, and children, but historians regard him as a hero who overthrew Persian tyranny over the Greeks.

But, when Genghis Khan did the same in his conquests, they depict him as a ruthless warlord who wanted nothing more than to kill and loot.

Both were victorious, but we see one as a hero and the other as a villain. If victors wrote history, then we would hail both Alexander and Genghis in equal regard.

Thus, when reading history, it is reasonable to be sceptical of the narration and take things with a pinch of salt.

With this in mind, it is perhaps not a bad idea to take a closer, unbiased look at certain events in history. What do the historians write about an event, and what really took place.

A good example of this is World War II, and in particular the early events of this war.

Throughout the summer of 1938 German Chancellor Adolf Hitler was making waves in Europe. He was demanding international action to protect the rights of oppressed Germans living in the western provinces of Czechoslovakia.

This came after the German reoccupation of the Rhineland in 1936 and the *Anschluss* with Austria in 1938. Both these actions were highly questionable, yet Europe and the rest of the world did nothing about it.

Now Hitler was demanding that a part of Czechoslovakia be ceded to Germany. What would have happened if Britain, and the other major European powers, had told Hitler "No!"

What if they had told Hitler that if a single German troop entered Czechoslovakia then they would declare war on Germany? Would Hitler have backed down at that stage?

The thing is that Hitler's demands raised the fear of another devastating European war. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain received broad approval throughout Europe for his determined efforts to keep the peace.

Representatives from the governments of Italy, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom met in Germany for lengthy discussions.

On 30 September 1938 they

signed the Munich Agreement. They believed that they had come up with the perfect solution to the problem created by those ethnic Germans living in western Czechoslovakia. They gave the Sudetenland to Germany.

The best of all was that representatives from the government of Czechoslovakia, the country that was the focus of everything, were not even invited to attend the conference.

Chamberlain had taken the lead in negotiations at the Munich Conference. He and Adolf Hitler had also signed an agreement declaring it was indicative "of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again."

On returning to London, Chamberlain was greeted with great enthusiasm. He told the welcoming crowd, "I believe it is peace for our time."

One can understand Britain's reluctance to be drawn into another war in Europe. The 'Great War' of 1914-1918 had been devastating to the United Kingdom.

The war had cost the lives of 908,371 British men. For the first two years of the war, the majority of them were volunteers. The cream of the British youth had been slaughtered on the battlefields of Europe.

It was only in January 1916 that the Military Service Act was passed. This imposed conscription on all single men aged between 18 and 41. In essence, Britain had run out of volunteers. The country could not afford another war.

Unfortunately, it did not take long for Chamberlain's "peace



**PEACE FOR OUR TIME:** British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain proudly displays a copy of the Munich Agreement. He believed that it would keep Britain out of any possible war in Europe.

for our time" to unravel. The Munich Conference would leave a bitter taste in many British mouths.

It worsened after Hitler occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia. Basically what Hitler was saying was "You gave us the Sudetenland without a shot being fired. Now sit back and relax while we take the rest of the country."

A British statesman in the Foreign Office, while searching for an explanation of his government's failure to act, declared: "Nothing can be done to stop Germany ... the less we interfere in this crisis the better."

Prior to World War II, British diplomats sought to reach an accommodation with nearly every state in Europe.

Throughout the 1930s the British government feared Russian communism as much as they feared German fascism.

The British did not put much effort into attempting to reach any form of agreement with the Russians.

This left Hitler free to negotiate a treaty with Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin. The German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was signed on 23 August 1939, and barely one week later Hitler attacked Poland.

The attack came as no great surprise to Poland. The Poles had been doing all they could to modernize their army and air force. They asked the British for a loan of 60 million pounds.

In return Britain said they would be willing to lend Poland eight million pounds, but with certain conditions attached. It would not be a loan but rather a credit which the Poles could use to purchase armaments from British factories.

No credit had passed by the time the war broke out, and no British bomb or rifle went to Poland.

At 04:45 on 1 September 1939, German troops crossed the Polish frontier, and by 06:00 German planes were bombing Warsaw.

This was a clear violation of



the guarantee that the British and French had given to Poland and good cause for an immediate declaration of war against Germany, but nothing happened.

The governments of Britain and France, panicked by their fear, continued to look for ways out of the war with Germany.

First, there was a peace conference proposed by Italy's Mussolini, but that fell apart. Then the French protested that they needed extra time for mobilization.

While Chamberlain desperately sought a peaceful way to settle the disagreement between Poland and Germany, public opinion had turned against him.

The British public had not forgotten about Chamberlain's "peace in our time" statement and the disaster of the Munich Agreement. Ministers warned Chamberlain that the government would fall unless it sent an ultimatum to Hitler before the House met again. Chamberlain gave way.

The British ultimatum was delivered to the Germans at 09:00 on 3 September 1939. When it expired at 11:00, Great Britain was once again at war with Germany.

The British often try to cast themselves as the "white knights of freedom and democracy" riding to the aid of the poor Poles in Eastern Europe.

They had thrown the lives of the British Tommy into the cauldron of a continental war against the tyranny of German fascism.

This may have been true. But at the time it was completely irrelevant to the Poles.

Ultimately, however, British principle does not appear to have been a matter of any great concern because no British soldier gave his life for it.

While Britain, as well as France, had declared war on Germany in September 1939, it was only eight months later before either country would become truly involved in the war.

It was a period that became known as the *Sitzkrieg*, the Sitting War, or the Phony War.

The British sat and watched as their Polish ally fell to the Germans, and later the Russians, without firing even a single shot. No British aid found its way to Poland, no British soldier gave his life for Polish freedom.

During the first year of the 'Great War' Britain had sent 50 well-trained and equipped divisions to France. In 1939 all they could manage was the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). A paltry collection of 10 infantry divisions and a few armoured brigades that were both poorly equipped and untrained in the combined arms tactics employed by the Germans.

By this stage the British people had tired of appeasement and the shameful stain that the policy left on their national honour. They demanded a war.

It was, however, not a war that their army were prepared, nor equipped, to fight.

On 10 May 1940 the Germans launched their attack on France. The Germans put an army of 157 divisions onto the field of battle, of which 135 were detailed for their May offensive against the Western Allies.

The French Army had 80 of

its 117 divisions available for the defence of northern France. Compare this to the contribution of 10 British divisions and it's hardly surprising that they were left open to French charges of failing to share the sacrifices of their war against Germany.

What had been obvious to Adolf Hitler from the beginning soon became obvious to everyone else.

The British and French would not fight to save anyone but themselves, and this they would do rather poorly. Indeed, Hitler was counting on their lack of involvement while his army was fully engaged in Poland.

The Western Allies threw away their last, best chance to defeat Hitler while his back was turned in Poland.

What if Britain has sent a stronger force to France? What might have happened had they summoned the courage to attack Germany while its army was fighting in Poland? Could it have become known by history as "The War of 1939" and not as "World War II"?

The end of World War II presented historians in Great Britain with an opportunity to recast these events in a more favourable light.

The betrayal of Czechoslovakia at Munich and the "Phony War" on Poland's behalf are barely mentioned.

It appears that the real culprit all along had been none other than America. After all, they had clearly seen the tragedy unfolding in Europe and they had not lifted a finger to do anything about it.

In fact they only became involved in the war because they

were attacked by the Japanese Imperial Navy at Pearl Harbour and not as a matter of higher principle like the British and French.

Once again, this is not 100% true. Japan did attack the American naval base at Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941. A day later, on 8 December, American President Franklin Roosevelt declared war on Japan.

Note, however, that Roosevelt did not declare war on Germany. No matter how much Roosevelt personally supported Britain, the average American citizen had no desire to become involved in a war in Europe. A war that was being fought nearly 7,000 kilometres away, and a war which they felt did not concern them directly.

During the 'Great War' the American had lost more than

116,00 men in Europe and they saw no reason why this should happen again.

In fact the real reason why America became involved in the war against Germany was because on 11 December 1941, four days after the attack on Pearl Harbour, Hitler had declared war on America.

Hitler claimed that it was in response to a series of provocations by the United States government when the U.S. was still officially neutral.

Roosevelt had no choice but to return the compliment and later the same day America declared war on Germany, officially bringing the USA into World War II.

There is no guarantee that America would have ever declared war on Germany. After all, America's beef was with Ja-

pan and not Germany.

How would the war have turned out if America had not entered the war in Europe? Would Britain ever have been strong enough on their own to carry out the D-Day landings and open a Second Front? How long would the war have lasted? These are all questions that have never been fully answered.

So remember, when looking at history it's always a good idea to read between the lines.

Always take into account that a coin has two sides. If you truly want to know what happened or what could have happened, then you need to examine both sides of the coin very carefully.

History is often written by those that were not actually there at the time.

# Springbok



The SA Legion is a national organisation, part of a world-wide family that addresses the needs of ex-service personnel and their dependents by way of housing, pensions, employment and general welfare. It is apolitical, non-sectarian, non-racial, non-sexist and non-partisan.

The Springbok is the official journal of the South African Legion. Read the December 2021 issue of Springbok by clicking on the cover to the left.

# Surrender! Forget about it.

On given an ultimatum to surrender, some responses have been rather surprising to say the least. In this article we look at some of them.

When I was in my late teens, many years ago, I had a tee-shirt with a slogan on it that I really enjoyed.

It featured an eagle swooping down on a mouse. The mouse was sitting on its hind legs with its right paw in the air with the middle finger extended. The slogan read, "The last great act of defiance."

When faced with overwhelming odds and greatly outnumbered and given the ultimatum to surrender, the logical thing to do would be exactly that - surrender.

The following people, however, did not follow the rules. When given an ultimatum to surrender, they had other ideas.

## The Spartans

Many people will have seen the film *300* where a mere 300 Spartans, wearing little more than tight little Speedo swimsuits, held out against hordes of invading Persians.

While the movie was a bit over the top, it was based on a real battle - the Battle of Thermopylae.

The battle took place during the Greco-Persian Wars, which were ultimately little more than a grudge match between the ancient Greeks and the kings of the Persian Empire.

The Persian kings were Xerxes the Great, and his subsequent successor Artaxerxes I. I always wonder if Artaxerxes was also known as Artaxerxes

the not as great?

During the First Greco-Persian War the Greek victory at the Battle of Marathon put a spoke in the Persian's wheels and brought the war to a close.

King Xerxes I was not all that impressed with the defeat and vowed to overthrow and destroy Greece. He amassed an invasion force which, according to the 'Father of History', Herodotus, was the largest ever to have walked the earth. He estimated the Persian army to measure well over one million men.

In order to buy the Greek army some time, a contingent of 300 Spartan troops gathered in the narrow coastal path of Thermopylae (The Hot Gates).

The Persian generals ordered them to lay down their arms. The Spartans' reply was "Come and take them!"

And make no mistake, the Persian army did exactly that. The thing is that it took them more than three days to achieve. The Spartans achieved their objective of buying time for the Greek army.

The Spartans were destroyed to the last man. A commemorative epitaph engraved on a plaque marks the spot where the last of the Spartans perished; it reads "Go tell the Spartans, thou who passest by, that here, obedient to their laws, we lie..."

Inspired by the courage of the Spartans, the Greeks united and successfully drove the Persians

out of the nation, winning the second Greco-Persian War in one of the greatest military upsets of all time.

Yet while "Come and take them" was a great response to a demand to surrender, the Spartans really outdid themselves over a century later.

Once again the Spartans found themselves threatened and imposed upon by the expansion of empire. This was in the mid 300s B.C. when the Macedonian Kingdom under Phillip II, predecessor of Alexander the Great, approached the heavily defended city of Laconia.

The Macedonian's warned that if the Laconians chose to resist, all inhabitants of the city would be slain if the Spartans were defeated.

The Spartan's replied with a single word: "If...."

## Commander John Paul Jones

Often referred to as the "Father of the United States Navy", John Paul Jones is perhaps best



**DEFIANCE:** The slogan on a tee-shirt that inspired this article.

remembered for his actions during a scrap between the Continental Navy and the British Royal Navy during the American Revolutionary War.

Jones was a mere 13 years old when he began his career at sea. He served on private merchant vessels before volunteering for the Continental Navy in 1775.

Jones distinguished himself in maritime military service and, as a result, was awarded command of the USS *Bonhomme Richard*, a rebuilt French merchant cargo ship gifted to the Continental Navy by Jacques Donatien LeRay.

On 23 September 1779, Jones ran into two escorts of the Baltic merchant fleet, the HMS *Serapis* and the Countess of Scarborough.

Logic dictates that the wise thing for Jones do have done was cut and run. Instead he decided to engage both British vessels.

HMS *Serapis* was armed with 44 guns, while the Countess of Scarborough had 22 guns. The USS *Bonhomme Richard* had 42 guns.

Not long after the battle began, the USS *Bonhomme Richard* was badly damaged. The captain of the HMS *Serapis* instructed Jones to surrender. Jones replied, "I have not yet begun to fight!"

And then, true to his word, Jones did begin to fight. Mounting a furious counterattack, the listing and heavily damaged USS *Bonhomme Richard* defeated and captured both enemy vessels in a surprising victory.

The USS *Bonhomme Richard* sank the following day, and Jones took command of the cap-

tured HMS *Serapis*. The victory not only enhanced Jones' reputation, it stunned the British Royal Navy.

## Ioannis Metaxas

To say that Ioannis Metaxas was a controversial figure in Greek political history would be putting it mildly.

His tenure as Prime Minister of Greece was marred with authoritarianism and elements of a fascist, strongman regime.

A former soldier, Metaxas was elected Prime Minister in 1936. For the first four months he toed the line and complied with Greek Constitutional Law.

It didn't last long and he soon began to abuse his power as he observed the rise of fascism in both Italy and Germany. Whatever Adolf and Benito could do, he could do just as well.

Yet his most famous moment came during the early years of World War II, towards the very end of his career.

As the German Wehrmacht blitzkrieged their way across Europe, it soon became clear that the Nazi war machine was unstoppable.

The Germans had already taken Luxembourg, France, Holland, and most of Belgium by the time Italian forces under the command of Benito Mussolini, ally of the German state, arrived on the doorstep of Greece.

On 28 October, 1940, Italian ambassador to Greece Emanuele Grazzi demanded unconditional Greek surrender and total cooperation with Axis occupation. Metaxas gave a clear and simple answer - "No!"

The Italians crossed the bor-

der and attacked Greece. This initiated the Greco-Italian War and Greece's brief participation in World War II.

That same day Greek citizens poured into the streets shouting *Ohi* (No), in open defiance of the Italian invasion.

It all ended with a decisive Axis victory, with Athens being captured on 27 April, 1941, and the Battle of Greece ending on 30 April, 1941.

To this day 28 October is observed in Greece as *Epeteios tou "Ohi"* ("No" Day).

## Maor Digby Tatham-Warter

The following incident may or may not have taken place. But it's worth a look at.

In a scene from the epic film *A Bridge Too Far* Lt Col John Frost and Major Harry Carlyle of the British Parachute Regiment watch as an SS *panzer* officer approaches their position during a lull in the Battle of Arnhem. The SS officer is under a white flag.

"Rather interesting development, sir," says Major Carlyle to Lt Col Frost. He then addressed the German. "That's far enough! We can hear you from there!"

"My general says there is no point in continuing this fighting! He wishes to discuss terms of a surrender!" shouts the SS officer.

"Shall I answer him, sir?" Carlyle asks Frost.

"Tell him to go to hell," says Frost.

"We haven't the proper facilities to take you all prisoner! Sorry!" Carlyle shouts to the SS officer.

"What?" says the SS officer,

looking very confused.

“We’d like to, but we can’t accept your surrender! Was there anything else?” shouts Carlyle.

The German walks off shaking his head.

“Well, that’s that,” says Frost.

The German officers returns to General Wilhelm Bittrich, commander of the 2nd SS Panzer Corps.

“They rejected our surrender offer. What are your orders, Herr General?” he tells the general.

“Flatten Arnhem,” General Bittrich says.

Now while this makes a great scene for the movie, there is debate as to whether this incident really occurred as it was portrayed in the film.

It is a fact that General Bittrich did give the British an ultimatum to surrender at Arnhem.

What makes the dialogue above seem authentic was that the character in the film, Major Harry Carlyle, was based on the real life Major Allison Digby Tatham-Warter.

Better known as Digby Tatham-Warter, or simply Digby, he was a legendary figure in the Parachute Regiment.

He always had an umbrella with him which he carried into battle. When asked why, he said that he had trouble remembering passwords and felt that anyone who saw him with it would think that “only a bloody fool of an Englishman” would carry an umbrella into battle.

During Operation Market Garden he was part of A Company of the British Parachute Regiment. They were dropped kilometres away from Arnhem Bridge, their intended

drop zone. To reach the bridge they had to go through Arnhem where the streets were blocked by German forces.

Digby led his men through back gardens of nearby houses, avoiding the Germans. They travelled nearly 13 kilometres in seven hours while also taking 150 German soldiers, including members of the SS, prisoner.

During the battle, Digby wore his red beret instead of a helmet and waved his umbrella while walking about the defences despite heavy mortar fire.

When the Germans started using tanks to cross the bridge, Digby led a bayonet charge against them wearing a bowler hat. He later disabled a German armoured car with his umbrella, incapacitating the driver by shoving the umbrella through the car’s observational slit and poking the driver in the eye.

When the Regiment Padre was pinned down by enemy fire, Digby walked over, opened the umbrella as if to give him cover from the fire, and calmly escorted the padre to safety.

Injured by shrapnel during the Battle of Arnhem, Digby was captured. Because of his injury, Digby was sent to St. Elizabeth’s Hospital but escaped out of a window with his second in command Captain Tony Frank.

Having made contact with the Dutch Resistance, Digby was given a bicycle and a fake Dutch identity card that allowed him to pose as Peter Jensen, a deaf-mute son of a lawyer.

Digby used the bicycle to visit fellow soldiers in hiding. At one stage during his travels he helped push a German staff car out of a ditch.



**LEGEND:** Major Allison Digby Tatham-Warter, British Parachute Regiment.

He managed to gather 150 escaped British soldiers and led them towards the front line. Once there he used a torch to flash a V for Victory sign.

Members of XXX Corps then ferried them across the river. Upon return to the United Kingdom, Digby was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

So considering the type of character that Digby Tatham-Warter was, it would not have been unusual for him to give the type of answer depicted in the film.

### **Brigadier General Anthony Clement McAuliffe**

During the winter of late 1944 things were not looking too promising for the Germans.

Since the D-Day landings in June 1944 in Normandy, the Allies had advanced across the Rhine River and into Germany. At the same time on the Eastern Front, the Russians were



**NUTS:** Brigadier General Anthony Clement McAuliffe (middle) poses with some of his officers at Bastogne.

pushing forward. It became clear that they would have to do something drastic if they were not going to lose the war.

The plan was *Unternehmen Wacht am Rhein* (Operation Watch on the Rhine). The Germans would launch an offensive through the densely forested Ardennes region of Wallonia in eastern Belgium, northeast France, and Luxembourg.

The offensive was intended to stop Allied use of the Belgian port of Antwerp and to split the Allied lines, allowing the Germans to encircle and destroy four Allied armies and force the Western Allies to negotiate a peace treaty in the Axis powers’ favour.

Once that was accomplished, Hitler believed he could fully concentrate on the Soviets on the Eastern Front. The offensive was planned by the German forces with utmost secrecy, with minimal radio traffic and movements of troops and equipment under cover of darkness.

Intercepted German communications indicating a substantial German offensive preparation were not acted upon by the Allies.

The Germans launched their attack on the morning of 16 December 1944. The Allies were overconfident and preoccupied with their own offensive plans, so the Germans achieved total surprise.

The Americans retreated in disarray, causing a massive bulge in their defenses.

The US 101st Airborne, the “Screaming Eagles”, retreated as far as the Belgian town of Bastogne. It was here that the commander of the 101st, Brigadier General Anthony Clement McAuliffe, decided to make a stand.

While the Allies held overwhelming air superiority, the dense overcast weather meant that they were effectively grounded. The 101st were surrounded and outnumbered by 5 to 1. The Germans demanded that

McAuliffe surrender. Like the Spartans and Ioannis Metaxas before him, McAuliffe’s replied with a single word - “Nuts!”

The demand to surrender had been typed out and delivered by two German officers under a white flag. McAuliffe’s response had also been typed out. When it was given to the two German officers they obviously did not understand American slang and asked if “nuts” was an affirmative or negative response to their demand.

PFC Ernest Premetz, a German-speaking medic, told the German officers, “Du kannst zum Teufel gehen.” (You can go to hell.”). That they did understand and they stormed off to take the reply back to their commanding officer.

Against all odds, despite being surrounded, outnumbered and outgunned, the 101st held Bastogne for a remarkable one month.

Then the weather cleared and the Allies were able to launch a counter-offensive. Bastogne was relieved by General George S. Patton and the US 3rd Army.

While officially known as the Ardennes Counteroffensive, it was also known as the Battle of the Bulge.

Patton rallied the American troops, and, in a brilliant counter thrust offensive, broke through the German line and pushed the German military back across the border.

The Germans never recovered, and continued retreating back towards Berlin for the remainder of the war.

# Stalingrad - a few facts

*Fought between 23 August 1942 and 2 February 1943, the Battle of Stalingrad was the deadliest battle to take place during the Second World War and is one of the bloodiest battles in the history of warfare, with an estimated two million total casualties.*

The Battle of Stalingrad was the deadliest battle to take place during World War II and is one of the bloodiest battles in the history of warfare.

It took place between 23 August 1942 and 2 February 1943 and is considered a turning point in the war.

It resulted in an estimated two million casualties and saw the total destruction of both the Ger-

man 6th Army and the Italian 8th Army.

Although the result was a victory for the Soviet Union, it did come at a terrible cost. 478,741 Russians were killed or missing and 650,878 were wounded. They also lost 2,769 aircraft, 4,341 tanks, and 15,728 guns.

The battle was marked by fierce close-quarters combat and direct assaults on civilians in air raids, with the battle being the very epitome of urban

warfare. *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* (German High Command) were forced to withdraw considerable military forces from other areas in occupied Europe to replace German losses on the Eastern Front.

The victory at Stalingrad energized the Red Army and shifted the balance of power in the favour of the Soviets.

Here are a few facts about the Battle of Stalingrad that you may, or may not, have known.

## Despot versus Despot

The main objective of the German summer campaign of 1942 was ultimately to capture and gain control of the Caucasus oilfields.

It was Hitler himself who rewrote the objectives of the campaign to include the occupation of Stalin's namesake city.

The Germans wanted to destroy the city's industrial capacity and also disrupt the Volga river on which it sat.

Yet what really irked Hitler was the fact that the city was named after his sworn enemy - Joseph Stalin.

By October most of the city was in German hands. The Soviets kept control of areas along the Volga's banks, however, which allowed them to transport supplies across.

Meanwhile, Soviet General Georgi Zhukov was gathering new forces on either side of the city in preparation for an assault.

If Hitler was determined to take Stalingrad, Joseph Stalin was just as determined to hold

it. After all, this city was named after himself. He ordered the city held, no matter the cost.

Every available Russian soldier and civilian was mobilised to defend it. Stalin prohibited evacuation from the city, including children. In Stalingrad, the average life expectancy of a Soviet soldier was just 24 hours.

On 19 November the Red Army launched Operation Uranus, a two-pronged attack targeting the weaker Romanian armies protecting the 6th Army's flanks.

The Axis flanks were overrun and the 6th Army was cut off



and surrounded in the Stalin-grad area. Adolf Hitler was determined to hold the city at all costs and forbade the 6th Army from attempting a breakout; instead, attempts were made to supply it by air and to break the encirclement from the outside.

The Soviets were successful in denying the Germans the ability to resupply through the air which strained the German forces to their breaking point.

Hitler promoted General Friedrich Paulus, the commander of the 6th Army, to the rank of Field Marshal and ordered him to fight to the last man and the last bullet.

On 2 February 1943, the German 6th army, having exhausted their ammunition and food, finally capitulated, making it the first of Hitler's field armies to surrender during World War II, after five months, one week, and three days of fighting.

## Mamayev Kurgan

Mamayev Kurgan was originally a Tartar burial mound near the city centre. It became the scene for a brutal series of attacks and counter-attacks.

It was originally captured by the Germans on 13 September 1942. The next day the 13th Guards Rifle Division launched a counter-attack and by 16 September the hill had been recaptured. The three days of fighting would cost the lives of 10,000 men.

Over the next few weeks, the hill changed hands time and time again.

By the time the fight for Mamayev Kurgan was over there would be around a thousand pieces of shrapnel and bone per

square metre. The area was so scorched by shelling and gunfire that it would be more than a year before the grass would even begin to grow.

Finally, what had once been a hill had become completely flattened during the numerous attempts to capture and hold it.

## Air support

By late November the German 6th Army was in serious trouble. A successful pincer movement by the Red Army had them trapped inside Stalingrad.

There was, however, still a chance for the 230,000 German troops. They could attempt a break-out at the weakest point of the Soviet encirclement. And it had a good chance at succeeding.

This is where Hitler made his second major mistake in Stalingrad (his first mistake was attacking the city in the first place). He refused General Paulus permission to attempt a break-out and told him to fight to the last man and the last bullet.

The major problem was that the 6th Army needed food and ammunition desperately. Of course Hitler had the perfect solution for this - the 6th Army would be resupplied by air. Hermann Göring assured Hitler that his *Luftwaffe* could get the job done. This is where another of those little problems crept in.

The besieged 6th Army required 800 tons of supplies daily. Yet the most that the *Luftwaffe* could deliver in a single day was 117 tons. You don't have to be a genius to do the maths.

In reality, the numbers didn't even begin to factor in other variables, including weather conditions and aircraft being shot down, the *Luftwaffe* only managed to deliver around 94 tons of supplies daily.

And of course not all the supplies were exactly what the 6th Army needed.

Imagine you're starving to death, it's freezing cold, and you're down to your last magazine of ammunition. Then the *Luftwaffe* manage to drop 20 tons of supplies. Your spirits are immediately lifted - until you discover that the 20 tons consists entirely of German summer uniforms. Just what was needed in the middle of a bitter Russian winter.

## Stalingrad Tractor Factory

By the time the Germans attacked Stalingrad, the Stalingrad Tractor Factory was no longer producing tractors. Instead it had been refitted to produce tanks - most the T-34.

Because the Russians were short of trained tank crews, most of the T-34s were driven straight off the factory floor into battle by volunteer factory workers.

Most of the time, in the rush to drive the Germans back, the tanks went off the the factory floor unpainted and lacking gun sights, crewed by the very people who a short time ago were putting them together.

To the trained and experienced German Panzer Divisions it was like a turkey shoot. Yet for every 20 Russian tanks the Germans would destroy, they would lose one of their own.

This was not a problem for

the Russians. As quickly as the Panzer Divisions would destroy them, the tractor factory would push wave after wave of new tanks out the door and into battle.

This makeshift battlefield production line proved invaluable in holding off the Nazi invasion until reinforcements and a counter-attack could be planned.

After the war the Stalingrad Tractor Factory was rebuilt and named the Dzerzhinsky Tractor Works. It manufactured both tractors and military equipment until it went bankrupt in 2005.

## Conditions in Stalingrad

Conditions on the ground in Stalingrad often went beyond belief. At the start of the battle the life expectancy of a Red Army conscript was just 24 hours. If you were a Soviet officer you could expect to last for three days.

For the civilian population of Stalingrad, things were even worse. The German *Luftwaffe* had reduced the city to rubble with continuous bombing raids.

Food was so scarce that cannibalism was a common occurrence. Rats became the staple diet and soldiers and citizens alike would go around picking dead horses clean of meat.

The Russian soldiers were so poorly supplied they had to strip their dead comrades of their uniform to outfit the continual stream of new draftees.

When the tide of the battle turned it was now the Germans that sat with a supply problem. They began to Stalingrad as "The Cauldron".

Fighting had been reduced

not only to a house-to-house affair, but rather to a room-by-room battle. It was not uncommon for an engagement where the Russians were holding the living room adjacent the to Germans in the kitchen.

The Germans were also faced with another problem - the cold. Hitler, in all his might and wisdom, had refused to issue winter uniforms to his troops. He had arrogantly proclaimed that the Russian campaign would be over before winter.

The Germans now had to face temperatures of minus 30 degrees Celsius (for comparison the temperature in your freezer is about minus 18 to 19 degrees Celsius).

Many Germans that were not killed in the fighting or who had starved to death, simply froze to death.

## Surrender

When Hitler promoted General Paulus to the rank of Field Marshall, it was not as a reward. Rather it was an encouragement to commit suicide as no German Field Marshall had ever been taken alive before.

Obviously Paulus didn't think much of the idea because he surrendered on 31 January 1943. By 2 February the remaining Axis forces had also surrendered. By all accounts Hitler was not amused.

Now if the Germans thought they would be treated as normal Prisoners of War, they had another think coming. Stalin wasn't known for looking after his own people all that well. So they couldn't look forward to any form of small mercy.

The German prisoners were

immediately sent on a series of death marches to Gulags or put to work rebuilding Stalingrad.

Weakened by starvation, disease and wounds, 75,000 German prisoners of war died within three months of their surrender.

In an attempt to reduce the death rate, the Soviets abandoned the death marches and put the remainder on transports, however this did little to help and the amount of survivors again plummeted from 35,000 to around 17,000.

In total, of the 110,000 captured, only 5,000 would ever return home to Germany. This was in 1955 - a full 13 years after the battle had ended.

## Aftermath

The Battle of Stalingrad is believed by many to be the single largest death toll in any battle in mankind's history.

What had started as an attempt to seize a city had descended into madness amongst nothing but rubble.

Both Hitler and Stalin became obsessed over the battle for the city. The outcome of the battle would've proven a major coup or a disaster in morale to each prospective side.

In the end it would all become irrelevant, Nikita Krushchev, one of the generals who fought in Stalingrad and who would later go on to become the Soviet Premier changed the city's name to Volgograd in 1961.

We trust that you enjoyed those few facts about the Battle of Stalingrad.

# 'Bullpup' rifles

*This month we take a look at the development and use of Bullpup rifles*

Before we can even start to compare various bullpup rifles, we need to establish what exactly a bullpup rifle is.

A bullpup firearm is one with its firing grip located in front of the breech of the weapon, instead of behind it.

This creates a weapon with a shorter overall length for a given barrel length, and one that is often lighter, more compact, and more manoeuvrable than a conventionally-configured firearm.

Where it is desirable for troops to be issued a more compact weapon, the use of a bullpup configuration allows for barrel length to be retained, thus preserving muzzle velocity and effective range.

The bullpup concept was first tested militarily in 1901 with the British Thorneycroft carbine, but it was not until the Cold War that more successful designs and improvements led to wider adoption.

In 1977, the Austrian Army became the first military force in the world to adopt a bullpup rifle, the Steyr AUG, as a principal combat weapon.

Since then the militaries in many countries have followed suit with other bullpup designs, such as the Chinese QBZ-95, Israeli IWI Tavor, French FAMAS and British SA80.

The benefits of a bullpup weapon include:

- The primary benefit of a bullpup weapon is that the weapon's overall length can be significantly decreased without reducing the barrel length. This allows a bullpup weapon to be more easily manoeuvred and concealed than a conventional weapon with a similar barrel length, especially in tight spaces.
- In some designs, the shorter length of stock reduces the weight compared to a conventional rifle with the same action.
- The centre of mass of a bullpup weapon is more posterior, thus closer to the shooter's core. This means less torque when moved around, making the handling kinematically more comfortable, especially when the shooter is running.
- Due to the shorter distance between the action and the butt plate, the recoil impulse is transmitted more directly into the shooter's shoulder, with less leverage to create muzzle rise.

A bullpup weapons does, however, come with certain limitations.

When using a bullpup weapon, the user's face is much closer to the action. This can increase noise issues and cause

irritation to the shooter's eye and nose from exhaust gas.

Spent cartridge cases may be ejected directly into the face of left-handed shooters. It can be difficult for a right-handed shooter to "off-hand" the weapon.

For weapons with reciprocating charging handles, there is also the risk of their charging handles striking left-handed users.

The process of changing the ejection side varies in complexity depending on the weapon, but as a general rule it requires at least some disassembly and cannot be done "on the fly," such as when an unusual shooting position might call for the weapon to be used on the other shoulder.

On some weapons, such as the SA80, changing the ejection side is simply not possible.

As a result, bullpups often require unusual ejection mechanisms to allow easy ambidextrous operation.

This is solved on some designs with ejection downward (FN P90, Kel-Tec RDB) or forward (FN F2000, Kel-Tec RFB).

The following are not the only bullpup weapons ever developed, but include some of the more significant developments made since their introduction.

## TKB-408

The TKB-408 Korobov was a bullpup assault rifle prototype by Soviet designer German A. Korobov presented in 1946

The TKB-408 was submitted to a set of official trials conducted in 1946 to select an assault rifle for the Red Army.

The Soviet Army commission found it unsatisfactory, with the trials eventually selecting Mikhail Kalashnikov's AK-47.

The TKB-408 is gas operated, with locked breech action, with a vertically tilting bolt to lock the barrel. It can be fired on semi- or full-automatic.

Its cocking handle is located at the left side of the weapon, above the wooden hand guard, being non-reciprocating.



The firing mode selector is located on the left side of the receiver, above the pistol grip. A separate safety switch is located within the trigger guard, in front of the trigger. The design incorporates no provisions for firing from the left shoulder. The ejection port is located at the right side of the weapon, above the magazine; having a flip-down dust cover.

- Designer: German A. Korobov
- Designed: 1946
- Weight: 4.3 kg
- Length: 790 mm
- Cartridge: 7.62×39mm
- Calibre: 7.62 mm
- Action: Gas-operated, tilting bolt
- Rate of fire: 600 rounds/min
- Feed system: 30 round detachable AK magazine
- Sights: Iron sights

## Steyr AUG

The Steyr AUG (German: *Armee-Universal-Gewehr*) is an Austrian bullpup assault rifle chambered for the 5.56×45mm NATO intermediate cartridge, designed in the 1960s by Steyr-Daimler-Puch, and now manufactured by Steyr Arms GmbH & Co KG.

It was adopted by the Austrian Army in 1978 as the StG 77 (Sturmgewehr 77), where it replaced the 7.62×51mm NATO StG 58 automatic rifle (a licence-built FN FAL).

In production since 1978, it is the standard small arm of the *Bundesheer* and various Austrian federal police units, and its variants have also been adopted by the armed forces of dozens of countries, with some using it as a standard-issue service rifle.



Both the Irish and Australian military have adopted the Steyr AUG as their standard issue assault rifle.

- Designer: Horst Wesp, Karl Wagner, Karl Möse
- Designed: 1977
- Manufacturer: Steyr Arms
- Weight: 3.6 kg
- Length: 790 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm NATO
- Action: Gas-operated, rotating bolt

- Rate of fire: 680-750 RPM
- Effective firing range: 300 m
- Maximum firing range: 2,700 metres
- Feed system: 30 or 42-round detachable box magazine, or STANAG magazine
- Sights: Swarovski 1.5× telescopic sight, emergency battle sights, and Picatinny rail for various optics

## FAMAS F1

The FAMAS (*Fusil d'Assaut de la Manufacture d'Armes de Saint-Étienne*) is a bullpup assault rifle designed and manufactured in France by MAS in 1978, a year after the Austrian Steyr AUG.

It is known by French troops as *Le Clairon* (The Bugle) due to its distinctive shape. The FAMAS is recognised for its high rate of fire at 1,100 rounds per minute.

Beginning in 2017, the FAMAS was replaced in most frontline units in the French Army by the HK416F. The FAMAS is expected to remain in limited service until 2028.

The F1 was followed by the G1 version that included several minor improvements, such



as redesigned grips and an enlarged trigger guard for operation with gloves.

- Designer: Paul Tellie
- Designed: 1978
- Manufacturer: GIAT Industries
- Weight: 3.61 kg
- Length: 757 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56 × 45mm NATO
- Action: Lever- delayed

- blowback
- Rate of fire: 680 - 750 RPM
- Effective firing range: 300 m
- Maximum firing range: 3,200 metres
- Feed system: 25-round detachable box magazine
- Sights: Rear aperture fitted with tritium night inserts, front post

## Norinco Type 86S

The Norinco Type 86S is an AKM-type bullpup rifle that was produced by Norinco. Many major parts are interchangeable with other standard Kalashnikov rifles.

The Type 86S design departs from the AK-47 in several ways. The trigger-sear-hammer group is housed in a rear extension of the receiver, well behind the pistol grip.

The operating mechanism is exactly the same as in the standard AK-47/AKM, with the exception of a connecting rod between the trigger and sear. The weapon itself is built based on the Type 56.

The carrying handle has integral sights built in, which was based on the FAMAS rifle.



A bayonet can also be attached underneath the barrel.

- Designer: Unknown
- Designed: 1980s
- Manufacturer: Norinco
- Weight: 3.59 kg
- Length: 667 mm
- Cartridge: 7.62×39mm
- Action: Gas-operated, rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 600 RPM
- Effective firing range: 300 m

- Maximum firing range: 400 metres
- Feed system: 30-round detachable box magazine
- Sights: Open, Iron sight. Scopes can be mounted to the carrying handle

## SA80

The SA80 (Small Arms for the 1980s) is a British family of 5.56×45mm NATO service weapons used by the British Army.

The L85 Rifle variant has been the standard issue service rifle of the British Armed Forces since 1987, replacing the L1A1 Self-Loading Rifle.

The first prototypes were created in 1976, with production of the A1 variant starting in 1985 and ending in 1994.

The A2 variant came to be as the result of a significant upgrade in the early 2000s by Heckler & Koch and remains in service as of 2020. The A3 variant was first issued in 2018 with several new improvements.



The SA80 was the last in a long line of British weapons to come from the Royal Small Arms Factory before its weapons factory was closed down in 1988.

- Designed: 1970s-1980s
- Manufacturer: RSAF Enfield, Royal Ordnance
- Weight: 4.98 kg
- Length: 785 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm NATO

- Action: Gas-operated, rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 775 RPM
- Effective firing range: 300 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,200 metres
- Feed system: 30-round detachable STANAG magazine
- Sights: Telescopic SU-SAT, ACOG and ELCAN LDS scopes, aperture iron sights

## Steyr ACR

The Steyr ACR (Advanced Combat Rifle) was a prototype flechette-firing assault rifle built for the US Army's Advanced Combat Rifle program of 1989/90.

Although the Steyr design proved effective, as did most of the weapons submitted, the entire ACR program ended with none of the entrants achieving performance 100% better than the M16A2, the baseline for a successful ACR weapon.

The Steyr ACR has some superficial resemblance to the Steyr AUG, although it is rounder and the barrel is covered for almost its entire length, as opposed to the AUG where much of the barrel was exposed. Like the AUG the ACR is a bullpup



design with the 24-round magazine located quite close to the buttstock of the gun.

- Designer: Ulrich Zedrosser
- Designed: 1987
- Manufacturer: Steyr Mannlicher
- Weight: 3.2 kg
- Length: 780 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm annular-primed SCF (synthetic case flechette)

- Action: Gas-operated, vertically sliding chamber
- Rate of fire: 1,200 RPM
- Effective firing range: 500 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,200 metres
- Feed system: 24-round detachable box magazine
- Sights: Opticals

## A-91

The A-91 is a bullpup assault rifle developed during the 1990s by KBP Instrument Design Bureau in Tula, Soviet Union as an offspring of the 9A-91 firearm family.

The A-91 retains the simple gas-operated, rotating bolt action and a trigger unit design from the 9A-91, it features a bullpup polymer housing, with an integral 40 mm single-shot grenade launcher mounted under the barrel.

The earliest prototypes of the A-91 bullpup were added with the grenade launcher above the barrel, and with a frontal vertical foregrip; current models are fitted with the underbarrel launcher, which serves as a forearm.



In this system, the ejection port is located right above the pistol grip, and is directed forward.

- Designer: KBP Instrument Design Bureau
- Designed: 1990
- Manufacturer: KBP Instrument Design Bureau
- Weight: 4.3 kg
- Length: 660 mm
- Cartridge: 7.62×39mm,

5.45×39mm, 5.56×45mm NATO

- Action: Gas-operated, rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 800 RPM
- Effective firing range: 300 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,000 metres
- Feed system: 30-round detachable box magazine
- Sights: Dioptic sight, Grenade launcher sight

## FN P90

The FN P90 is a compact 5.7×28mm personal defence weapon designed and manufactured by FN Herstal in Belgium. It can also be considered a submachine gun.

Created in response to NATO requests for a replacement for 9×19mm Parabellum firearms, the P90 was designed as a compact but powerful firearm for vehicle crews, operators of crew-served weapons, support personnel, special forces, and counter-terrorist groups.

Featuring a compact bullpup design with an integrated reflex sight and fully ambidextrous controls, the P90 is an unconventional weapon with a futuristic appearance.

Additional integrated fea-



tures include interchangeable visible or infrared laser and tritium light source.

- Designer: FN Herstal
- Designed: 1986-1990
- Manufacturer: FN Herstal
- Weight: 2.6 kg
- Length: 505 mm
- Cartridge: FN 5.7×28mm
- Action: Straight blowback, closed bolt
- Rate of fire: 1,100 RPM

- Effective firing range: 200 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,800 metres
- Feed system: 50-round detachable box magazine
- Sights: Tritium-illuminated reflex sight, back-up iron sights

## IWI Tavor TAR-21

The IWI Tavor TAR-21 is an Israeli bullpup assault rifle chambered in 5.56×45mm NATO calibre with a selective fire system, selecting between semi-automatic mode and full automatic fire mode.

The Tavor is designed and produced by Israel Weapon Industries (IWI). It is produced in two main variants: the TAR-21 and the CTAR-21.

In 2009, the Tavor X95 (also known as the Micro Tavor or MTAR) was selected by the Israeli Defence Forces to gradually replace the M16 assault rifle and M4 carbine variants as the standard-issued weapon of the Israeli infantry by the end of 2018.

The first X95 bullpup rifles were issued to infantry units in



2013. Both the TAR-21 and X95 are part of the Tavor family of rifles, along with the Tavor 7.

- Designer: Israel Military Industries
- Designed: 1995-2003
- Manufacturer: Israel Weapon Industries
- Weight: 3.27 kg
- Length: 720 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm NATO

- Action: Long-stroke gas-operated, closed rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 900 RPM
- Effective firing range: 550 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,200 metres
- Feed system: 30-round detachable box STANAG Magazine
- Sights: Backup iron sights and integrated Picatinny rails

## QBZ-95

The Type 95 automatic rifle or QBZ-95 is a bullpup assault rifle designed and manufactured by Norinco, and issued since 1995 as the service rifle for the People's Liberation Army, People's Armed Police and various paramilitary law enforcement agencies in the People's Republic of China.

An improved version called the "QBZ-95-1" was first seen undergoing trials in early 2010.

The first formal public display of the improved version was with the Hong Kong Garrison, the first unit to receive the original QBZ-95, in a military parade in July 2012. Some improvements were ergonomic, with the safety switch moved to above the pistol grip and



the right-sided ejection port moved forward with ejection of cartridges at an angle to allow left-handed firing.

- Designer: Duo Yingxian
- Designed: 1989-1991
- Manufacturer: Norinco
- Weight: 2.9 kg
- Length: 609 mm
- Cartridge: 5.8×42mm DBP87
- Action: Short-stroke piston,

- rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 650 RPM
- Effective firing range: 400 m
- Maximum firing range: 900 metres
- Feed system: 30-round detachable box magazine, 75-round detachable drum
- Sights: Hooded post front sight and aperture rear sight, IR5118 thermal scope (1x)



## SAR 21

The SAR 21 (Singapore Assault Rifle - 21st Century) is a bullpup assault rifle designed and manufactured in Singapore, chambered for the 5.56x45mm cartridge.

First revealed and subsequently adopted by the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) as its standard service weapon in 1999.

Many of its design features are directly intended to address the weaknesses of the M16S1 as encountered operationally by some infantrymen.

The rifle is being sold for export use aside from domestic use. In the United States, it was marketed by ST Kinetics via its American subsidiary, VT Systems.



The SAR 21 would potentially be replaced in production by the BR18 in the near future.

- Designer: Tuck Wah Chee and Felix Tsai
- Designed: 1996
- Manufacturer: ST Kinetics
- Weight: 4 kg
- Length: 805 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm NATO
- Action: Gas-operated, rotat-

- ing bolt
- Rate of fire: 650 RPM
- Effective firing range: 460 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,000 metres
- Feed system: 30-round detachable plastic box magazine
- Sights: 1.5x or 3x optical sight; back-up iron sights

## Vektor CR-21

The Vektor CR-21 is a prototype South African assault rifle ("CR-21" being an abbreviation of Combat Rifle 21st Century) chambered for 5.56×45mm NATO ammunition.

It was designed by Denel Land Systems as a possible replacement for the South African National Defence Force's current R4 assault rifle, however Denel Land Systems has since shifted focus to offering an upgraded R4 assault rifle to the SANDF instead.

The rifle is being marketed for export customers, but no sales have been achieved.

First unveiled in 1997, the rifle uses the bullpup layout. This enables the rifle to be as short as a typical carbine, whilst still



retaining the muzzle velocity of longer assault rifles.

However, this makes the CR-21 only capable of being fired from the right hand as the ejection port is located on the back right side of the rifle. The port can not be changed from side to side.

- Designer: Denel
- Designed: 1997
- Manufacturer: Denel
- Weight: 3.72 kg

- Length: 760 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm NATO
- Action: Gas-operated, rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 700 RPM
- Effective firing range: 500 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,200 metres
- Feed system: 20 or 35-round detachable R4 magazines
- Sights: Fibre optic illuminated reflex sight

## S&T Daewoo K11 DAW

The S&T Daewoo K11 DAW (Dual-barrel Air-burst Weapon) is a multi-weapon resembling the earlier US Objective Individual Combat Weapon in concept, design and operation.

It consists of two separate weapons combined into a single unit: a lower assault rifle chambered to fire 5.56×45mm NATO rounds and an upper 20×30mm (calibre of shell x length of propellant case) grenade launcher firing both conventional and air-bursting "smart" grenades, along with its integrated digital sighting unit.

The weapon was adopted by the Republic of Korea Armed Forces in 2008 and was distributed within the Republic of Korea Army during 2010, making



it the world's first army to use an air-burst rifle as standard issue in the military.

- Designer: Agency for Defence Development
- Designed: 2000-2008
- Manufacturer: S&T Motiv
- Weight: 6.1 kg
- Length: 860 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm NATO + 20×30mm grenade

- Action: Gas-operated, rotating bolt (rifle section) + Bolt action (launcher section)
- Rate of fire: 700 RPM
- Effective firing range: 300 m (rifle) + 500 m (grenade)
- Feed system: STANAG Magazines + 5-round detachable box magazine (HE)
- Sights: Ballistics computer

## FN F2000

The FNF2000 is a 5.56×45mm NATO bullpup rifle, designed by FN Herstal in Belgium.

The F2000 made its debut in March 2001 at the IDEX defence exhibition held in Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates.

The F2000 is a gas-operated, fully automatic and ambidextrous bullpup rifle. Both the safety system and trigger mechanism were adopted from the P90 personal defence weapon; the selector toggle is a rotating disc located below the trigger.

The fire selector doubles as the weapon's manual safety and secures the firearm against accidental discharge (the selector/safety disc has 3 settings: "S" safe, "1" semi-automatic mode,



"A" fully automatic fire). The "safe" setting disables the trigger. The hammers, group pins, and springs are steel while all other components are nylon injection moulding.

- Designer: FN Herstal
- Designed: 1995-2001
- Manufacturer: FN Herstal
- Weight: 3.6 kg
- Length: 688 mm
- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm

- NATO
- Action: Gas-operated, rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 850 RPM
- Effective firing range: 500 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,200 metres
- Feed system: 30-round detachable box STANAG
- Sights: 1.6× magnified telescopic sight, notch back-up sight

## HEAD TO HEAD

### ADS amphibious rifle

The ADS is a Russian assault rifle specially made for combat divers. It is of a bullpup layout and is chambered in the 5.45×39mm M74 round. The ADS can adapt a suppressor and optical sights.

For several decades, Soviet and then Russian combat divers and naval commando units were armed with special weapons for underwater combat, including the SPP-1 pistol and APS underwater assault rifle.

The main drawback of these weapons was that they had to carry two types of weapons - one for underwater use and another for use when on shore or on board of enemy surface vessels.

The ADS amphibious rifle



was developed from the ASM-DT experimental as a solution.

- Designer: KBP Instrument Design Bureau
- Designed: 2007
- Manufacturer: KBP Instrument Design Bureau
- Weight: 4.6 kg
- Length: 685 mm
- Cartridge: 5.45×39mm M74 7N6 / 7N10 / 7N22 for above-water fire

- 5.45×39mm PSP for under-water fire
- Action: Gas-operated, rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 700 RPM
- Effective firing range: 200 m
- Maximum firing range: 500 metres
- Feed system: 30-round AK-74 detachable box magazine
- Sights: Iron sights, Picatinny rail

### Desert Tech MDRX

The MDR (an acronym for micro dynamic rifle) is a family of autoloading bullpup rifles designed by Desert Tech (formerly Desert Tactical Arms) in 2014.

A second generation version of the rifle is marketed as the MDRX (an acronym for micro dynamic rifle eXtreme).

In 2018 a military version of the MDR, the NGSAR, was one of the finalists in the United States Army Next Generation Squad Weapon Program trials to replace standard issue US army Infantry Weapons.

The MDR rifle is designed to be ambidextrous. The MDR contains an ambidextrous forward and side eject port and viewing window that allows for tool free forward ejector side change.



A non reciprocating ambidextrous charging handle is installed on both sides of the gun, and two or three-position safety / selector levers and magazine release are provided on both sides of the pistol grip.

- Designer: Desert Tech
- Designed: 2020-present
- Manufacturer: Desert Tech
- Weight: 3.72 kg
- Length: 698 mm

- Cartridge: 5.56×45mm NATO
- Action: Short-stroke gas-operated piston, rotating bolt
- Rate of fire: 650 RPM
- Effective firing range: 900 m
- Maximum firing range: 1,500 metres
- Feed system: 10, 20, & 30-round box magazine
- Sights: Picatinny rail for mounting various optical sights

## The Sunday Breakfast Zone



Catch Military Despatches editor Matt Tennyson every Sunday morning from 09h00 to 12h00 on the 'Sunday Breakfast Zone' on Zone Radio. Bringing you the best music of the 60s, 70s and 80s.

On Sunday morning at 09h30 you can catch the Retro Top 20 and listen to the Top 20 hit singles on the South African charts for a particular week or even a particular year.

[Click here to listen live](#)

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



## Lyudmila Pavlichenko & Simo Häyhä

*Although they fought on opposing sides, they never faced each other in battle. Yet they were considered to be two of the most deadly snipers in World War II.*

Not everyone is cut out to be a sniper. There are certain skills and characteristics that go hand in hand with the job.

First and foremost, you have to be a good shot. But there is far more to it than just that.

You need nerves of steel and the patience of Job. Often you will get to look into the eyes of the person that you are going to kill.

You will need to select the best sniping platform. One that will offer you good cover while still giving you a good view of your target.

Then you have to infiltrate to the sniping platform that you have chosen. Often you have to remain in position for a long time, sometimes

even days, before you can take the shot. And you have to know exactly when to take that shot.

Once that is accomplished you have to exfiltrate from your position, often while being hunted by the enemy.

The Japanese made effective use of snipers during World War II. Yet the most prolific arena for snipers during that war was on the Eastern Front. Especially at places such as Stalingrad.

This month we feature two people that were probably the most deadly snipers of World War II. Between them they killed more than 800 of the enemy.

### Lady Death

Lyudmila Pavlichenko was a sniper in the Red Army. She is regarded as one of the top military snipers of all time, and the

most successful female sniper in history.

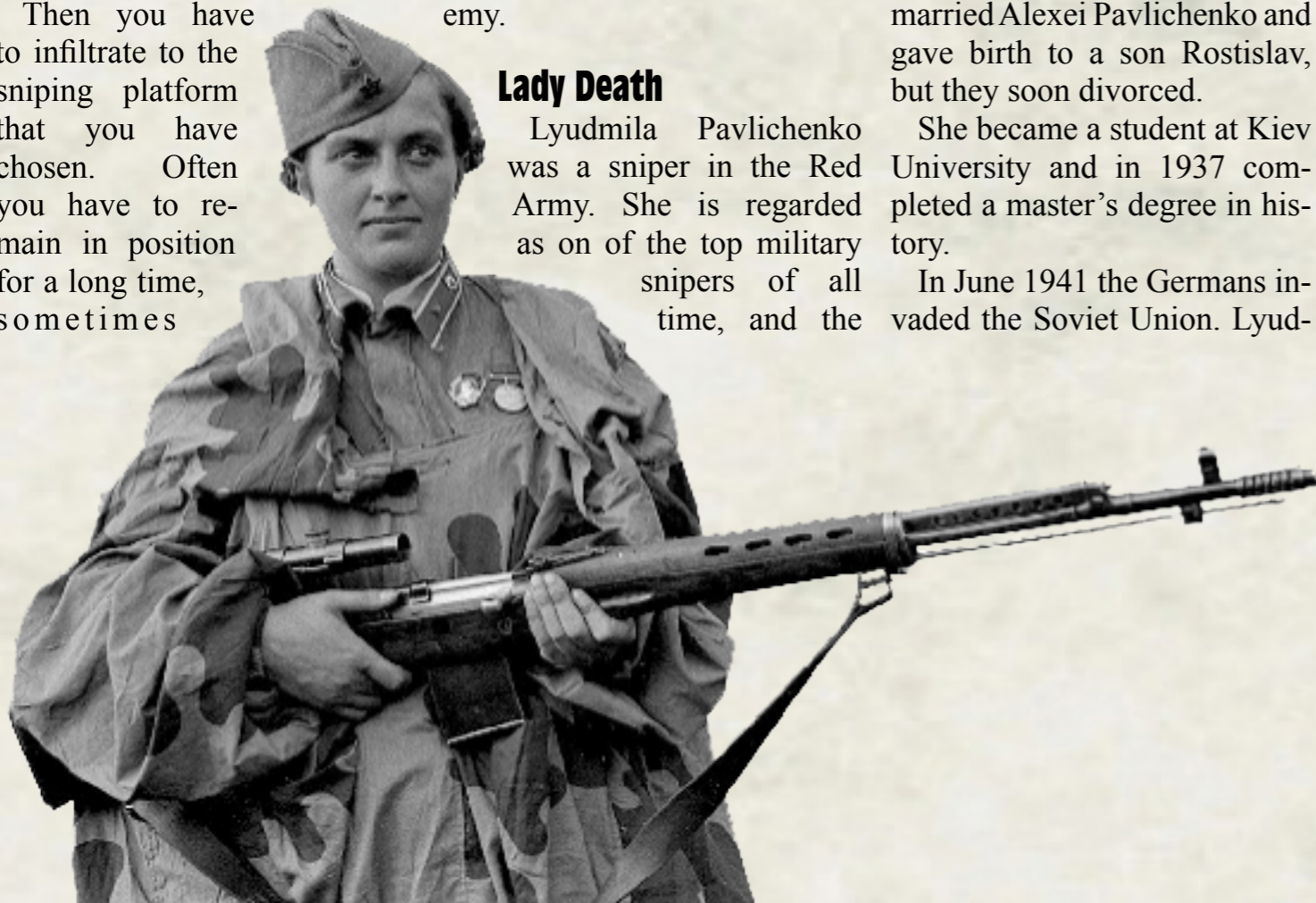
She was born Lyudmila Mikhailovna Belova in Bila Tserkva in the Russian Empire (now Ukraine) on 12 July 1916.

When she was 14 her family moved to Kiev where she worked at the Kiev Arsenal factory as a grinder. She also joined a OSOAVIAKhIM (Union of Societies of Assistance to Defence and Aviation-Chemical Construction of the USSR) shooting club where she soon proved herself as an amateur sharpshooter.

In 1932, at the age of 16, she married Alexei Pavlichenko and gave birth to a son Rostislav, but they soon divorced.

She became a student at Kiev University and in 1937 completed a master's degree in history.

In June 1941 the Germans invaded the Soviet Union. Lyud-



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

She had the option of becoming a nurse, but she refused. "I joined the army when women were not yet accepted."

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

In August 1941, using a Tokarev SVT-40 semi-automatic rifle with 3.5X telescopic sight, she made her first two kills as a sniper near Belyayevka.

She spent the next two and a half months fighting near Odessa where she recorded 187 kills.

When she reached 100 confirmed kills in August 1941 she was promoted to Senior Sergeant.

On 15 October 1941 the Romanians gained control of Odessa and her unit was withdrawn to Sevastopol on the Crimean Peninsula.

It was here that she would spend the next eight months fighting.

She was promoted to lieutenant in May 1942, as well as being cited by the Southern Army Council for 257 German soldiers.

It was common practice to lay down mortar fire or an artillery barrage in an area where a sniper was suspected to be hiding.

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

The government then decided to send Lyudmila on a publicity tour of Canada and the United States. She became the first Soviet citizen to be received by a US President when Franklin Delano Roosevelt welcomed

her to the White House.

Eleanor Roosevelt invited her to tour America and relate her experiences.

She appeared before the International Student Assembly being held in Washington, D.C., and later attended the meetings of the Congress of Industrial Organizations and made appearances and speeches in New York City and Chicago.

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

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

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

The United States gave her a Colt semi-automatic pistol. In Canada she was presented with a sighted Winchester rifle now on display at the Central Armed Forces Museum in Moscow.

While visiting in Canada along with fellow sniper Vladimir Pchelintsev and Moscow fuel commissioner Nikolai Kravchenko they were greeted by thousands of people at Toronto's Union Station.

From there they went to the United Kingdom and on 21 November 1942 she visited Coventry. She accepted a donation



from Coventry workers for £4,516 which was used to buy three X-ray units for the Red Army.

She also visited Coventry Cathedral ruins, then the Alfred Herbert works and Standard Car Factory from where most funds had been raised.

On returning to Russia she was promoted to the rank of major.

She never returned to combat and became an instructor, training Soviet snipers until the end of the war.

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

Her total confirmed kills during World War II was 309, and this included 36 enemy snipers. She was given the nickname, 'Lady Death'.

After the war, she finished her education at Kiev University and began a career as a historian. From 1945 to 1953, she was a research assistant of the Chief HQ of the Soviet Navy.

She was later active in the Soviet Committee of the Veterans of War.

Lyudmila Pavlichenko died on 10 October 1974 at age 58, and was buried in the Novodevichye Cemetery in Moscow. In 1976 a second Soviet commemorative stamp featuring her portrait was issued.

Her lists of awards included:

- Hero of the Soviet Union
- Order of Lenin (twice)
- Medal for Battle Merit
- Medal "For the Defence of



**LADY DEATH:** Lyudmila Pavlichenko, regarded as the most successful female sniper in military history.

Odessa”

- Medal “For the Defence of Sevastopol”
- Medal “For the Victory over Germany in the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945”

### The White Death

Simo “Simuna” Häyhä was a Finnish sniper during the 1939–40 Winter War between Finland and Russia.

Nicknamed ‘White Death’ he is reported by western sources to have killed 505 men during the Winter War, the highest recorded number of sniper kills in any major war.

He used a Finnish-produced M/28-30 rifle (a variant of the Mosin–Nagant rifle) and the Suomi KP/-31 submachine gun.

Simo Häyhä was born in the municipality of Rautjärvi in the Grand Duchy of Finland.

He came from a Lutheran heritage family and was the second youngest of eight children.

He was a farmer and hunter and had earned a reputation as a good shot. He took part in many sports shooting competitions in the Viipuri Province and it was said that his home was filled with trophies for marksmanship.

In 1925, at the age of 20, he joined the Finnish voluntary militia *Suojeluskunta* (White Guard).

In late 1939 the Soviet Union demanded that Finland cede substantial border territories in exchange for land elsewhere,



**WHITE DEATH:** A photograph of Häyhä taken in the 1940s after he was wounded in 1940.

claiming security reasons, primarily the protection of Leningrad, 32 km from the Finnish border.

Finland refused and on 30 November 1939, just three months after the outbreak of World War II, Russia invaded Finland.

The Soviets possessed more than twice as many soldiers as Finland, thirty times as many aircraft, and a hundred times as many tanks.

However, the Red Army had been crippled by Joseph Stalin’s Great Purge of 1936–1938. With over 36,000 of its officers executed or imprisoned, the Red Army had many inexperienced senior and mid-level officers.

Häyhä was deployed as a sniper in the 6th Company of JR 34. He took part in the Battle of Kollaa, which was fought in temperatures that ranged between  $-20\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-40\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

Soviet troops were not issued

with white camouflage suits for most of the war, making them highly visible and easy targets for Finnish snipers in winter conditions.

Häyhä soon proved himself to be an excellent sniper. He became one of the leading themes of Finnish propaganda. The Finnish newspapers frequently featured the invisible Finnish soldier, thus creating a hero of mythical proportions.

He was feared by the Russian, who gave him the nickname *Belaya Smert* (White Death).

Unlike most snipers, he preferred iron sights over telescopic sights. He did not have prior training with scoped rifles, and therefore preferred not to switch to the Soviet scoped rifle (m/91-30 PE or PEM).

He said that iron sights enabled a sniper to present a smaller target as a sniper must raise his head a few centimeters higher when using a telescopic sight.

He also said that sunlight can reflect off telescopic sights and that they can cloud up in cold weather.

He would frequently pack dense mounds of snow in front of his position to conceal himself, provide padding for his rifle and reduce the characteristic puff of snow stirred up by the muzzle blast.

He was also known to keep snow in his mouth while sniping, to prevent his steamy breaths from giving away his position in the cold air.

In his diary, military chaplain Antti Rantamaa reported that

Häyhä had 259 confirmed sniper kills and an equal number of kills by machine/submachine gun from the beginning of the war until 7 March 1940, one day after Häyhä was seriously wounded.

The Russians made every effort possible to kill Häyhä. They used counter-snipers and artillery barrages in their efforts.

On 6 March 1940 Häyhä was hit his lower left jaw by an explosive shell fired by a Red Army soldier.

Fellow soldiers that found him said that half his face was missing and that they did not expect him to survive.

He was taken to hospital where he remained unconscious until 13 March, the day peace was declared.

Shortly after the war, Häyhä was promoted from *alikersantti* (Corporal) to *vänrikki* (Second lieutenant) by Finnish Field Marshal Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim.

Although it took a long time, Häyhä recovered from his horrific wounds. He became a successful moose hunter and dog breeder.

Simo Häyhä died in a war veterans’ nursing home in Hamina in 2002 at the age of 96, and was buried in Ruokolahti.

# de Havilland Mosquito

*Nicknamed the “Wooden Wonder”, in 1941 it was one of the fastest operational aircraft in the world. Originally conceived as an unarmed fast bomber, the Mosquito would evolve during the war into many roles and would be forged in battle.*

**T**he de Havilland DH.98 Mosquito is a British twin-engined, shoulder-winged multi-role combat aircraft, introduced during the Second World War.

Unusual in that its frame is constructed mostly of wood, it was nicknamed the “Wooden Wonder”, or “Mos-sie”.

Lord Beaverbrook, Minister

to medium-altitude daytime tactical bomber, high-altitude night bomber, pathfinder, day or night fighter, fighter-bomber, intruder, maritime strike, and photo-reconnaissance aircraft.

The crew of two, pilot and navigator, sat side by side.

A single passenger could ride in the aircraft’s bomb bay when necessary.

The Mosquito FBVI was often flown in special raids, such as Operation Jericho – an attack on Amiens

The Mosquito flew with the Royal Air Force (RAF) and other air forces in the European, Mediterranean and Italian theatres. The Mosquito was also operated by the RAF in the Southeast Asian theatre and by the Royal Australian Air Force based in the Halmaheras and Borneo during the Pacific War. During the 1950s, the RAF replaced the Mosquito with the jet-powered English Electric Canberra.

## Background

By the early to mid-1930s, de Havilland had a reputation for

of Aircraft Production, nicknamed it “Freeman’s Folly”, alluding to Air Chief Marshal Sir Wilfrid Freeman, who defended Geoffrey de Havilland and his design concept against orders to scrap the project.

In 1941, it was one of the fastest operational aircraft in the world.

Originally conceived as an unarmed fast bomber, the Mosquito’s use evolved during the war into many roles, including low-

Prison in early 1944, and precision attacks against military intelligence, security, and police facilities (such as Gestapo headquarters).

On 30 January 1943, the 10th anniversary of the Nazis’ seizure of power, a morning Mosquito attack knocked out the main Berlin broadcasting station while Hermann Göring was speaking, putting his speech off the air.

innovative high-speed aircraft with the DH.88 Comet racer. The later DH.91 Albatross airliner pioneered the composite wood construction used for the Mosquito.

Based on his experience with the Albatross, Geoffrey de Havilland believed that a bomber

with a good aerodynamic design and smooth, minimal skin area, would exceed the P.13/36 specification.

Furthermore, adapting the Albatross principles could save time. In April 1938, performance estimates were produced for a twin Rolls-Royce Merlin-powered DH.91, with the Bristol Hercules (radial engine) and Napier Sabre (H-engine) as alternatives.

De Havilland settled on designing a new aircraft that would be aerodynamically clean, wooden, and powered by the Merlin, which offered substantial future development.

The new design would be

anti-aircraft guns more likely. Instead, high speed and good manoeuvrability would make evading fighters and ground fire easier.

On 7 October 1939, a month into the war, the nucleus of a design team under Eric Bishop moved to the security and secrecy of Salisbury Hall to work on what was later known as the DH.98.

The DH.98 was too radical for the ministry, which wanted a heavily armed, multirole aircraft, combining medium bomber, reconnaissance, and general-purpose roles, as well as capable of carrying torpedoes. With outbreak of war, the ministry became more receptive, but still sceptical about an unarmed bomber.

promise, de Havilland made no changes..

With design of the DH.98 started, mock-ups were built, the most detailed at Salisbury Hall, where E0234 was later constructed.

Initially, the concept was for the crew to be enclosed in the fuselage behind a transparent nose (similar to the Bristol Blenheim or Heinkel He 111H), but this was quickly altered to a more solid nose with a conventional canopy.

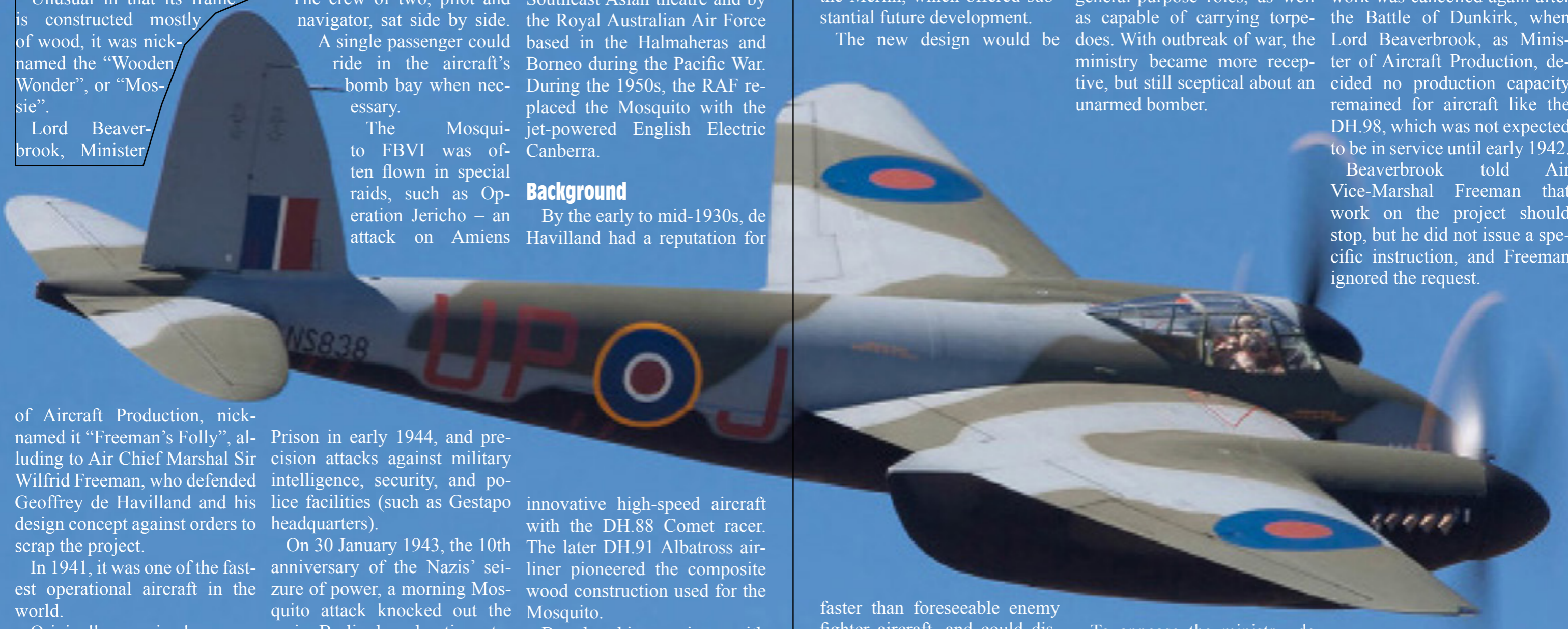
The construction of the prototype began in March 1940, but work was cancelled again after the Battle of Dunkirk, when Lord Beaverbrook, as Minister of Aircraft Production, decided no production capacity remained for aircraft like the DH.98, which was not expected to be in service until early 1942.

Beaverbrook told Air Vice-Marshal Freeman that work on the project should stop, but he did not issue a specific instruction, and Freeman ignored the request.

faster than foreseeable enemy fighter aircraft, and could dispense with a defensive armament, which would slow it and make interception or losses to

To appease the ministry, de Havilland built mock-ups with a gun turret just aft of the cockpit, but apart from this com-

In June 1940, however, Lord Beaverbrook and the Air Staff ordered that production should



focus on five existing types, namely the Supermarine Spitfire, Hawker Hurricane fighter, Vickers Wellington, Armstrong-Whitworth Whitley, and Bristol Blenheim bombers.

Work on the DH.98 prototype stopped. Apparently, the project shut down when the design team were denied materials for the prototype.

In the aftermath of the Battle of Britain, the original order was changed to 20 bomber variants and 30 fighters. Whether the fighter version should have dual or single controls, or should carry a turret, was still uncertain, so three prototypes were built: W4052, W4053, and W4073.

The second and third, both turret armed, were later disarmed, to become the prototypes for the T.III trainer. This caused some delays, since half-built wing components had to be strengthened for the required higher combat loading. The nose sections also had to be changed from a design with a clear perspex bomb-aimer's position, to one with a solid nose housing four .303 machine guns and their ammunition.

On 3 November 1940, the aircraft, painted in "prototype yellow" and still coded E0234, was dismantled, transported by road to Hatfield and placed in a small, blast-proof assembly building.

Two Merlin 21 two-speed, single-stage supercharged engines were installed, driving three-bladed de Havilland Hydromatic constant-speed controllable-pitch propellers. Engine runs were made on 19 November.



**WOODEN WONDER:** Pilots and crew pose in front of a Mosquito. Note the four .303 machine guns in the nose.

On 24 November, taxiing trials were carried out by Geoffrey de Havilland Jr., the de Havilland test pilot. On 25 November, the prototype made its first flight, piloted by de Havilland Jr., accompanied by John E. Walker, the chief engine installation designer.

### Operational history

The de Havilland Mosquito operated in many roles, performing medium bomber, reconnaissance, tactical strike, anti-submarine warfare and shipping attacks and night fighter duties, until the end of the war.

In July 1941, the first production Mosquito W4051 was sent to No. 1 Photographic Reconnaissance Unit (PRU), at RAF Benson. The secret reconnaissance flights of this aircraft were the first operational missions of the Mosquito.

On 15 November 1941, 105 Squadron, RAF, took delivery at RAF Swanton Morley, Nor-

folk, of the first operational Mosquito Mk. B.IV bomber, serial no. W4064.

Throughout 1942, 105 Squadron, based next at RAF Horsham St. Faith, then from 29 September, RAF Marham, undertook daylight low-level and shallow dive attacks.

Apart from the Oslo and Berlin raids, the strikes were mainly on industrial and infrastructure targets in occupied Netherlands and Norway, France and northern and western Germany.

The crews faced deadly flak and fighters, particularly Focke-Wulf Fw 190s, which they called snappers. Germany still controlled continental airspace and the Fw 190s were often already airborne and at an advantageous altitude.

Collisions within the formations also caused casualties. It was the Mosquito's excellent handling capabilities, rather than pure speed, that facilitated those evasions that were successful.

From mid-1942 to mid-1943, Mosquito bombers flew high-speed, medium or low-altitude daylight missions against factories, railways and other pinpoint targets in Germany and German-occupied Europe.

From June 1943, Mosquito bombers were formed into the Light Night Striking Force to guide RAF Bomber Command heavy bomber raids and as "nuisance" bombers, dropping Blockbuster bombs - 1,800 kg "cookies" - in high-altitude, high-speed raids that German night fighters were almost powerless to intercept.

As a night fighter from mid-1942, the Mosquito intercepted Luftwaffe raids on Britain, notably those of Operation Steinbock in 1944. Starting in July 1942, Mosquito night-fighter units raided Luftwaffe airfields. As part of 100 Group, it was flown as a night fighter and as an intruder supporting Bomber Command heavy bombers that reduced losses during 1944 and 1945.

In another example of the daylight precision raids carried out by the Mosquitos of Nos. 105 and 139 Squadrons, on 30 January 1943, the 10th anniversary of the Nazis' seizure of power, a morning Mosquito attack knocked out the main Berlin broadcasting station while Commander in Chief Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring was speaking, putting his speech off the air. A second sortie in the afternoon inconvenienced another speech, by Goebbels.

Lecturing a group of German aircraft manufacturers, Göring said:

"In 1940 I could at least fly as far as Glasgow in most of my aircraft, but not now! It makes me furious when I see the Mosquito. I turn green and yellow with envy. The British, who can afford aluminium better than we can, knock together a beautiful wooden aircraft that every piano factory over there is building, and they give it a speed which they have now increased yet again. What do you make of that? There is nothing the British do not have. They have the geniuses and we have the nincompoops. After the war is over I'm going to buy a British radio set - then at least I'll own something that has always worked."

From 1943, Mosquitos with RAF Coastal Command attacked Kriegsmarine U-boats and intercepted transport ship concentrations.

The Mosquito also proved a very capable night fighter. Some of the most successful RAF pilots flew these variants. For example, Wing Commander Branse Burbridge claimed 21 kills, and Wing Commander John Cunningham claimed 19 of his 20 victories at night on Mosquitos.

The Mosquito flew its last official European war mission on 21 May 1945, when Mosquitos of 143 Squadron and 248 Squadron RAF were ordered to continue to hunt German submarines that might be tempted to continue the fight; instead of submarines all the Mosquitos encountered were passive E-boats.

The last operational RAF Mosquitos were the Mosquito TT.35's, which were finally

retired from No. 3 Civilian Anti-Aircraft Co-Operation Unit (CAACU) in May 1963.

No fewer than 21 countries, including South Africa, operated Mosquitos at some stage.

There are approximately 30 non-flying Mosquitos around the world with four airworthy examples, three in the United States and one in Canada.

The largest collection of Mosquitos is at the de Havilland Aircraft Heritage Centre in the United Kingdom, which owns three aircraft, including the first prototype, W4050, the only initial prototype of a Second World War British aircraft design still in existence in the 21st century.

### Specifications (B Mk.XVI) General characteristics

- Crew: 2 (pilot, bombardier/navigator)
- Length: 13.56 metres
- Wingspan: 16.51 metres
- Height: 6.31 metres
- Gross weight: 8,210 kg
- Engines: 2 x Rolls-Royce Merlin 76V-12 liquid-cooled piston engine, 1,710 hp
- Propellers: 3-bladed constant-speed propellers

### Performance

- Max speed: 668 km/h
- Range: 2,100 km
- Service ceiling: 11,000 metres
- Rate of climb: 14.5 m/s

### Armament

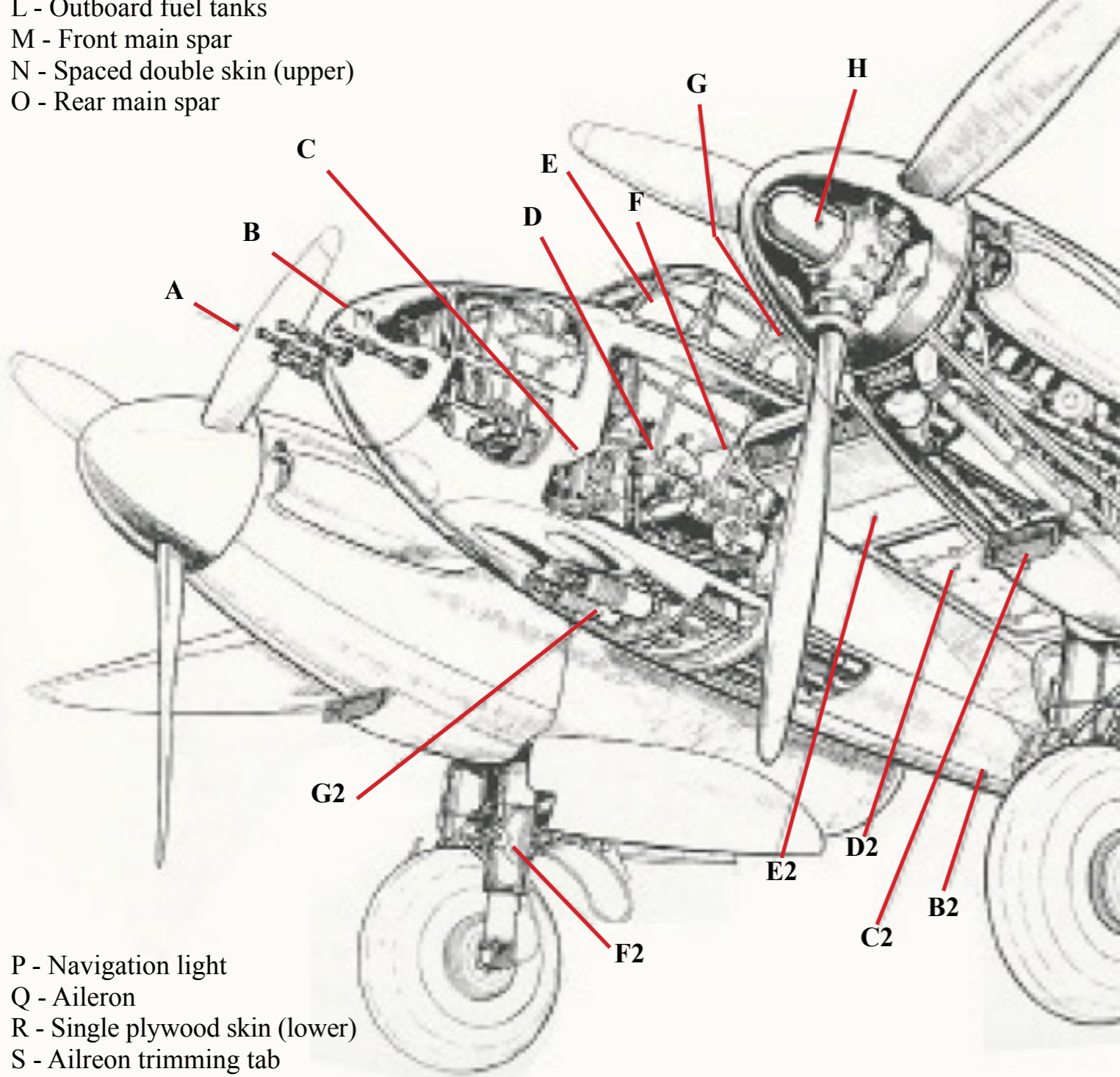
- Bombs: 1,800 kg

### Avionics

GEE radio-navigation

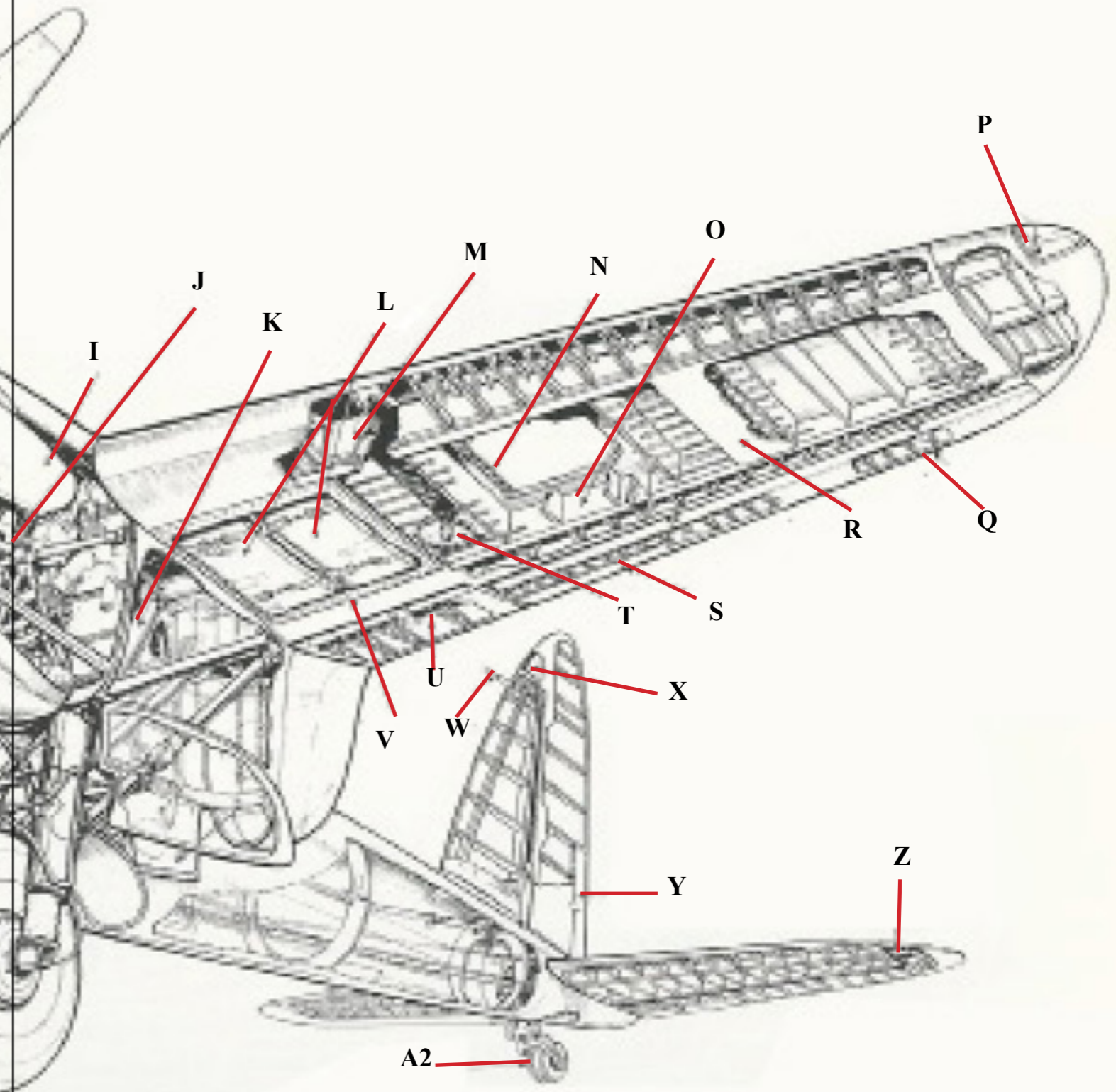
- A - Four .303 machine guns
- B - Camera
- C - Ruder pedals
- D- Control column
- E - Bullet proof screen
- F - Pilot's seat
- G - Oil and Glycol radiators
- H - Hydromatic airscrews
- I - Exhaust flame damper
- J - Rolls Royce Merlin engine
- K - Undercarriage hydraulic jack
- L - Outboard fuel tanks
- M - Front main spar
- N - Spaced double skin (upper)
- O - Rear main spar

- X - Rudder mass balanced
- Y - Rudder trimming tab
- Z - Elevator mass balance
- A2 - Retractable tail wheel
- B2 - Gun bay folding doors
- C2 - Carburettor air intake
- D2 - Inboard fuel tanks
- E2 - Radiator shutter
- F2 - Compression rubber undercarriage leg
- G2 - Four 20 mm cannon



- P - Navigation light
- Q - Aileron
- R - Single plywood skin (lower)
- S - Ailreon trimming tab
- T - Landing light
- U - Flap
- V - Petrol tank cover
- W - Pitot head

# de Havilland Mosquito



## BATTLEFIELD

# Dien Bien Phu

*In 1815 the French, under Napoleon, were defeated by the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo. In 1954 the French once again met their Waterloo. This time they were defeated by the Viet Minh at a place named Dien Bien Phu.*

By 1953 the First Indochina War was not going well for the French. A succession of commanders – Philippe Leclerc de Hauteclocque, Jean Étienne Valluy, Roger Blaizot, Marcel Carpentier, Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, and Raoul Salan – had proven incapable of suppressing the insurrection of the Viet Minh fighting for independence.

During their 1952–53 campaign, the Viet Minh had overrun vast swathes of Laos, a French ally and Vietnam's western neighbor, advancing as far as Luang Prabang and the Plain of Jars.

The French were unable to slow the Viet Minh advance and they only thing stopping the Viet Minh from running amok was their always-tenuous supply lines.

In 1953, the French had begun to strengthen their defences in the Hanoi delta region to prepare for a series of offensives against Viet Minh staging areas in northwest Vietnam. They set up fortified towns and outposts in the area, including Lai Châu near the Chinese border to the north, Nà Sản to the west of Hanoi, and the Plain of Jars in northern Laos.

In May 1953, French Premier René Mayer appointed Henri Navarre, a trusted colleague, to take command of French Union Forces in Indochina. Mayer had given Navarre a single order—to create military conditions that would lead to an “honorable political solution”

### The Hedgehog Concept

Navarre needed a way of stopping the Viet Minh threat to Laos. His planner, Colonel Louis Berteil, formulated the *hérisson* (hedgehog) concept.

It was a simple concept - establish a

fortified camp, supplied only by air, adjacent to a key Viet Minh supply line to Laos. This would cut off Viet Minh soldiers fighting in Laos and force them to withdraw.

The concept was based on French experiences at the Battle of Nà Sản. In late November and early December 1952, Giáp attacked the French outpost at Nà Sản. Giáp's forces were repeatedly beaten back, causing them to suffer heavy losses.

The French hoped that by repeating the strategy on a much larger scale, they would be able to lure Giáp into committing the bulk of his forces in a massed assault. This would enable superior French artillery, armour, and air support to decimate the exposed Viet Minh forces.

### Dien Bien Phu

The best place to establish the new fortification was undoubtedly Dien Bien Phu, a flat valley in the mist of the T'ai mountains, a region still loyal to the French.

From there they could mount anti-guerrilla raids into enemy rear areas, using the new base as a central mooring point.

Misgivings about the isolation of Dien Bien Phu - it was 275 km by air from Hanoi and lacking ground contact with other French garrisons - were countered by the reference to Nà Sản, so successfully defended the year before.

On 20 November 1953 Airborne Battle Group I jumped into Dien Bien Phu. They met some opposition from Viet Minh regulars using the valley as a training area. Airborne Battle Group II jumped in later in the day.

The Paras found themselves in pos-



**DOOMED:** Part of the defences at Dien Bien Phu. The defenders couldn't hold out for more than two months.

session of heart-shaped valley, 19 km long and 13 km wide. It was surrounded by low, heavily wooded hills. Two airstrips, one near the village of Dien Bien Phu and the other to the south already existed.

The base was hurriedly reinforced and transformed into a fortified camp with barbed-wire, minefields and shelters on the pattern of Nà Sản.

By the New Year the valley consisted of a series of strongpoints, all reputedly named after the mistresses of the garrison commander, General Christian de Castries.

In the centre of the original village was the Command HQ, with strongpoints *Huguette* to the west, *Claudine* to the south, *Elaine* to the east and *Dominique* to the north-east.

Similar posts existed some way to the north-west (*Anne-Marie*), 1 km to the north-east (*Beatrice*), 3 km to the north (*Gabrielle*), and around the smaller airstrip 6.5 km to the south (*Isabelle*).

They were all isolated from

the main location.

There were several crucial differences between Nà Sản and Dien Bien Phu. Something that the French staff officers failed to take seriously.

At Nà Sản the French commanded the high ground and had overwhelming artillery support. At Dien Bien Phu they did not feel that it was necessary to control the high ground because, although the hills were low, they were too steep to get artillery up them.

At Nà Sản Giáp made the mistake of committing his forces to reckless frontal attacks before being fully prepared. It was a mistake that he would not repeat at Dien Bien Phu.

He spent months manhandling heavy artillery, heavy mortars and anti-aircraft guns into position on the high ground. He also meticulously stockpiled ammunition for the guns.

At Nà Sản the aerial resupply lines were never severed, despite Viet Minh anti-aircraft fire. At Điện Biên Phủ, Giáp amassed anti-aircraft batteries

that quickly shut down the runway, and made it extremely difficult and costly for the French to bring in reinforcements

### Prelude to battle

French military forces had committed 10,800 troops, together with yet more reinforcements, totalling nearly 16,000 men, to the defense of a monsoon-affected valley surrounded by heavily-wooded hills and high ground that had not been secured. Artillery as well as ten American M24 Chaffee light tanks and numerous aircraft (attack and supply types) were committed to the garrison.

This included France's regular troops (notably elite paratrooper units, plus those of the artillery), French Foreign Legionnaires, Algerian and Moroccan *tirailleurs* (colonial troops from North Africa) and locally-recruited Indochinese (Laotian, Vietnamese and Cambodian) infantry.

In comparison the Viet Minh had moved up to 50,000 regular troops into the hills surrounding the French-held valley, totalling five divisions, including the 351st Heavy Division, which was an artillery formation and was entirely equipped with medium artillery, such as the US M101 105mm howitzer, supplied by the neighbouring People's Republic of China (PRC), together with some heavier field-guns as well as anti-aircraft artillery.

Various types of artillery and anti-aircraft guns (mainly of Soviet origin), which outnumbered their French counterparts by about four to one, were moved into strategic positions



and locations overlooking the valley and the French forces based there.

Teams of Viet Minh volunteers were sent into the French camp to scout the disposition of the French artillery. Artillery pieces were located within well constructed and camouflaged casemates. As a result, when the battle finally began, the Viet Minh knew exactly where the French artillery pieces were, while the French did not even know how many guns Giáp possessed.

## Battle of Dien Bien Phu

On 13 March 1954 the Viet Minh launched a fierce artillery bombardment on the northwestern outpost *Béatrice*.

A shell hit the French command post, killing the legionnaires commander, Major Paul Pégot, and his entire staff. A few minutes later, Lieutenant-colonel Jules Gaucher, commander of the entire central sector, was also killed by Viet Minh artillery.

Using sappers to defeat French obstacles, the Viet Minh 312th Division then launched a massive infantry assault.

Shortly after midnight French resistance at *Béatrice* collapsed. Roughly 350 French legionnaires were killed, wounded or captured. About 100 managed to escape and rejoin the French lines. The French estimated that Viet Minh losses totalled 600 dead and 1,200 wounded.

Much to the shock of the French, the Viet Minh artillery were using direct fire. The artillery had been dug in by single pieces and they were installed in shellproof dugouts.



**JUMPING IN:** Reinforcements were parachuted into Dien Bien Phu to bolster the defences. It was too little, too late.

Two days later, the French artillery commander, Colonel Charles Piroth, distraught at his inability to bring counterfire on the well-camouflaged Viet Minh batteries, went into his dugout and committed suicide with a hand grenade. He was buried there in secret to prevent loss of morale among the French troops.

On 14 March the Viet Minh artillery resumed their attack. The air strip, already closed since 16h00 the day before due to a light bombardment, was now put permanently out of commission. Any further French supplies would have to be delivered by parachute.

That night, the Viet Minh launched an attack on the northern outpost *Gabrielle*, held by an elite Algerian battalion. The attack began with a concentrated artillery barrage at 17h00. This was very effective and stunned the defenders.

Two regiments from the crack 308th Division attacked starting at 20h00. At 04h00 the following morning, an artillery

shell hit the battalion headquarters, severely wounding the battalion commander and most of his staff.

At 08h00 the next day, the Algerian battalion fell back, abandoning *Gabrielle* to the Viet Minh. The French lost around 1,000 men defending *Gabrielle*, and the Viet Minh between 1,000 and 2,000 attacking the strongpoint.

The northeastern outpost *Anne-Marie* was defended by Tai troops, members of a Vietnamese ethnic minority loyal to the French. For weeks, Giáp had distributed subversive propaganda leaflets, telling the Tais that this was not their fight.

The fall of *Beatrice* and *Gabrielle* had severely demoralized them. On the morning of 17 March, under the cover of fog, the bulk of the Tais left or defected. The French and the few remaining Tais on *Anne-Marie* were then forced to withdraw.

17 March through 30 March saw a lull in fighting. The Viet Minh further tightened the noose around the French cen-



**PRISONERS OF WAR:** Guarded by Viet Minh troops, thousands of French soldiers are marched off to prison camps. 11,721 French troops were captured.

tral area (formed by the strongpoints *Huguette*, *Dominique*, *Claudine*, and *Eliane*), effectively cutting off the *Isabelle* and its 1,809 personnel to the south.

The next phase of the battle, from 30 March to 5 April, saw more massed Viet Minh assaults against French positions in the central Dien Bien Phu, particularly at *Eliane* and *Dominique*, the two remaining outposts east of the Nam Yum river.

Those two areas were held by five understrength battalions, composed of Frenchmen, Legionnaires, Vietnamese, North Africans, and Tais. Giáp planned to use the tactics from the *Beatrice* and *Gabrielle* skirmishes.

## Closing in for the kill

Between 5 April and 1 May, Giáp turned away from the costly concept of massed attacks in favour of a policy of steady encroachment.

Viet Minh soldiers and sappers built a complex series of

trenches, gradually pushing them closer to the French positions under cover of fire from about 300 105 mm guns dug into the surrounding hills.

French air strikes, using air-to-ground rockers and napalm, made little impression on the Viet Minh artillery, particularly in the face of solid anti-aircraft fire.

The air defences, which included at least one complete Red Chinese regiment equipped with 64 37 mm weapons, exacted a heavy toll on the French. Especially on the transport aircraft which were now forced to fly regular sorties at the limits of their range just to keep the besieged garrison alive.

By the end of the battle 62 French aircraft had been shot down or badly damaged. Between 20 and 30 percent of all supplies dropped had fallen into Viet Minh hands, having missed the small French perimeter.

On 22 April the monsoon began. Dien Bien Phu records and

average annual rainfall of 1,525 mm. and many of the French strongpoints were flooded or became waterlogged.

With no prospect of evacuation and with the supply situation deteriorating by the hour, Dien Bien Phu was doomed.

On 1 May Viet Minh forces attacked from all sides. Bolstered by a parachute battalion dropped in on 2 May, the French continued to resist. The resistance was valiant but futile. The end result was inevitable.

On 7 May, after a siege lasting 55 days and nights, General Christian de Castries and 11,000 of his men surrendered. The *Isabelle* garrison followed suit 24 hours later. The Battle of Dien Bien Phu was over.

## Aftermath

Dien Bien Phu had been nothing short of a disaster for the French. They had lost 7,184 men in six months. A total of 11,721 men were taken prisoner, of whom 4,436 were wounded.

By comparison the Viet Minh had lost an estimated 20,000 men. But they had destroyed the cream of the enemy force, leaving the French with no alternative short of political surrender at the Geneva conference two months later.

The last French forces withdrew from Vietnam in 1956. The country was partitioned into two zones - communist North Vietnam and the State of Vietnam to the south. The partition was supposed to be temporary, and the two zones were meant to be reunited through national elections in 1956, which were never held.



While Stonewall Jackson may have been one of the South's greatest generals, **Matt 'Stone brain' O' Brien** does not quite fall into the same category. He's a general that can snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

**U**ltimate General: Civil War is a tactical real time strategy war game that looks at the bloodiest period of U.S. history - the American Civil War of 1861-1865.

I must admit that it's one of the better Real Time Strategy (RTS) games that I've played in a long while.

The full campaign mode allows you to fight in the American Civil War campaign and participate in 50+ battles from small engagements to massive battles that can last several days over hundreds of square miles of terrain.

Campaign fully depends on player actions and battle results. Historical battles can also be played separately.

The game includes the following battles in the campaign:

- Battle of Aquia Creek
- Battle of Philippi
- 1st Battle of Bull Run
- Battle of Shiloh
- Battle of Gaines' Mill
- Battle of Malvern Hill
- 2nd Battle of Bull Run
- Battle of Antietam
- Battle of Fredericksburg
- Battle of Stones River
- Battle of Chancellorsville
- Battle of Gettysburg
- Battle of Chickamauga
- Battle of Cold Harbour

- Battle of Richmond
- Battle of Washington
- + 48 smaller scale battles

**Army management:** You are the general. You have full control over the army composition. Based on your successes and reputation you might get access to more corps, divisions and brigades. Keep your soldiers alive and they will learn to fight better, turning from green rookies to crack veterans.

Lose a lot of your soldiers and you might not have enough reinforcements to deliver victories. Your reputation will suffer, army morale will drop and you will be forced to resign.

**Innovative command system:** You decide which level of control you want.

Command every unit individually or just give them a main goal with one button click and watch if they can take that hill. Army divisions commanders can make decisions on their own and help you control the largest army.

Draw a defensive line and allocated brigades will defend it like lions. Or design a deep flanking manoeuvre by just drawing an arrow and send the whole army to the enemy flank or the rear. Your generals will try to fulfil your orders, al-

though "no plan survives contact with the enemy".

**Officer progression:** Historical unit commanders progress and become better fighters together with the player. The Officers rank up based on their units' performance, but it's war and they can be wounded or even get killed in action. New ranks open new possibilities and allow officers to lead bigger units without efficiency loss.

Winning battles also opens new possibilities for you as a general, increasing skills such as reconnaissance or political influence.

**Historical weapons:** There is huge variety of Civil War weaponry from mass produced Enfield pattern rifles to rare Whitworths. Historical availability has also been implemented.

Certain weapons can only be captured by raiding supplies or taken from the enemy on the battlefield.

**Enhanced unit control:** Detach skirmishers to send them to scout those hills ahead. Or merge several brigades into one bigger division if it's needed.

Dismount the cavalry to become less visible to the enemy or mount for fast flanking charges and supply raids. Supplies are extremely important and



you have to plan and defend the provisions otherwise the battle might end for you early.

**Advanced Artificial Intelligence:** You will face a strong enemy. AI will flank you, will hit your weak spots and undefended high ground, will chase and cut your supplies and will try to destroy unguarded artillery batteries.

AI will use terrain and will take cover and retreat if overwhelmed.

Terrain matters: Trenches, lines, fences, houses, fields – everything can help to achieve victory, if you know how to use it. Hills will allow you to see enemy units earlier. Rivers and bridges can become natural obstacles that will help you to defend. Forests can help you hide your movements and flank the enemy.

**Beautiful maps:** In this game, every historical battle landscape is accurately hand-drawn, utilizing data from satellite and historical maps. The topogra-

phy plays immense strategic role and helps to understand how battles were fought and to learn history.

At this stage there is no multi-player, which I don't really have a problem with.

Another plus about the game is that it does not require a high-end computer to run it. You can still play the game on Windows 7.

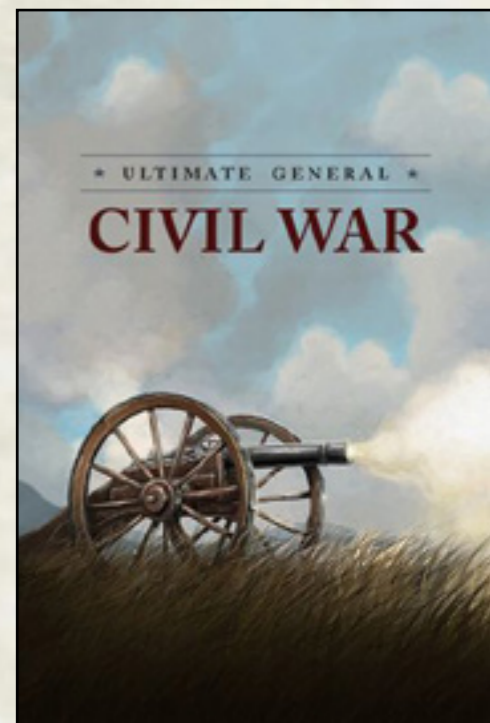
The game is basically a follow up to Ultimate General: Gettysburg, which was released in 2014. That was a great game, but it only dealt with a single battle. In Ultimate General: Civil War you get it all.

Something else that I enjoy about the game is that you can set up custom battles. These are great for short battles and it gives you an opportunity to try different tactics and see the effect of various weapons.

You can play on various modes such as easy, normal, and hard. I recommend that when you start your first cam-

paign, try it on easy mode until you get the hang of things.

This is a great game for anyone interested in military history, especially those interested in the US Civil War.



Publisher - Game-Labs

Genre - RTS

Score - 8.5/10

Price - R319.00



# The Last Resort

Released: 2012  
 Running time: 13 x 42 minute episodes  
 Distributed by: Sony Pictures Television

The Last Resort is one of those television series that had me hooked from the very first episode.

The US Navy Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine, the USS Colorado (SSBN-753) is taking part in fleet manoeuvres when it is ordered to pick up a team of US Navy SEALs off the coast of Pakistan.

Shortly after they have picked up the SEAL team the Colorado receives an order to fire two nuclear ballistic missiles at Pakistan.

Colorado's Commanding Officer, Captain Marcus Chaplin asks for confirmation of the firing order because the orders were received through a legacy Cold War secondary communication channel, only to be used in the event that Washington, D.C. has already been destroyed.

After confirming Washington's continued existence and refusing to fire the missiles until the command is sent through the proper system, Chaplin is relieved of command by the Deputy Secretary of Defence William Curry, and the Colorado's second in command, Lieutenant Commander Sam Kendal is given command instead.

When Kendal also questions the orders and asks for confirmation all communication goes dead.

The Colorado then tracks that

a missile has been fired at them. They crash dive and managed to survive without too much damage.

They then discover that the missile had been fired from the US Navy Virginia-class attack submarine USS Illinois. Two nuclear missile strikes are subsequently made on Pakistan by other American submarines.

Kendal hands command back to Captain Chaplin. He realises that they been declared enemies of their own country, and the Colorado seeks refuge on the island of Sainte Marina (a fictional French island located in the Indian Ocean) and commandeers a NATO communications and early missile warning facility.

When a pair of B-1 bombers is sent to attack the submarine and island, Chaplin informs his superiors that if the aircraft do not pull back within two minutes, he will launch a nuclear strike on Washington.

The bombers do pull back, but not within the two minutes that Chaplin had specified. He launches a Trident nuclear missile towards Washington, D.C. to impress upon the national leadership that he's serious.

Chaplin has programmed the missile to fly over Washington and explode 200 miles out to sea. The event is witnessed live on television.

Chaplin then informs them

that he still has 17 nuclear missiles left and declares a 200-mile exclusion zone around Sainte Marina.

Now, the crew must find a way to prove their innocence and find out who in the US government has set them up, so they can finally return home.

Chaplin has more than enough problems to deal with such as the scheming of the local drug lord Julian Serrat. The senior NCO, Chief of the Boat (COB) Joseph Prosser has organised a mutiny by half of the crew.

This is really a good series and well worth watching if you can get your hands on it.

The story plays out right until the final episode and there are plenty of plot twists and turns.



Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the series.

# The Special Task Force

The South African Police Special Task Force is the Special Operation element of the South African Police. They are considered to be amongst the best of such Units in the world. They have a formidable reputation in Counter-Terrorism, Counter-Insurgency, and Hostage Rescue.

The Special Task Force, like their Military Special Forces counterparts, is internationally regarded as being deadly exponents in the art of bush warfare.

This book is written as accurately as possible: the content coming from years of research and straight from the Operators on the ground; some of the best the Task Force has ever seen. It goes deep into the heart of the Unit, it tells of the history, the rise

and some of the most successful and daring hostage release dramas the Task Force has completed with their impeccable record and more.

In 1967, about 2,000 members of the South African Police were deployed to guard the northern border of Rhodesia (modern day Zimbabwe) to assist Rhodesian security forces in maintaining law and order in the country as guerrilla attacks became more frequent during the Rhodesian Bush War.

These police members proved to be ill-equipped and ineffective at dealing with guerrilla warfare and terrorism. As a result of these events the Security Branch of the Police began to envision a special police unit to deal with high-risk situations such as hostage

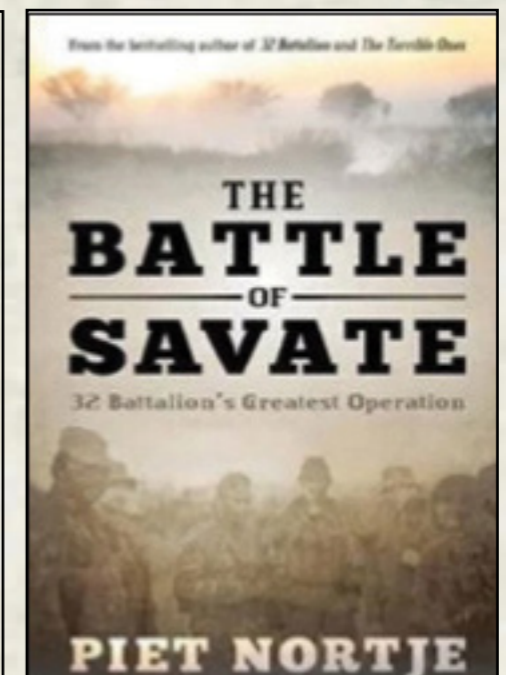


situations. The SAP Special Task Force was formed in 1976.

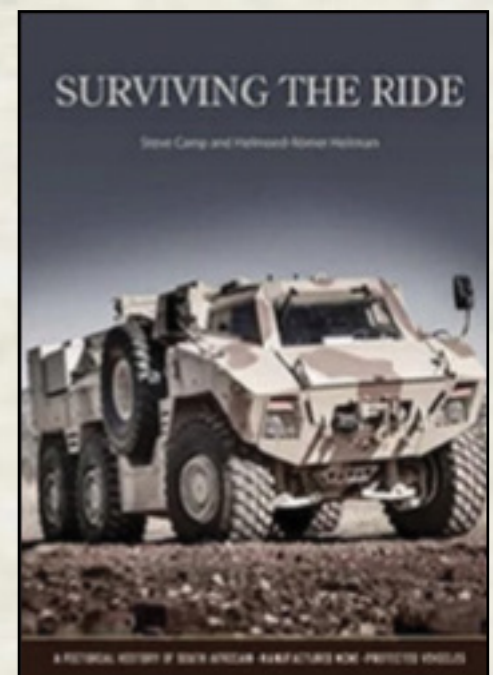
Paperback: 300 pages  
 Cost: R450  
 Available from 31 January



Born To Storm  
 R395



The Battle of Savate  
 R300



Surviving the Ride  
 R500

All books are available from [Bush War Books](#)

# This month in military history

Some of the significant military events that happened in July. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of July.

## 1 July

- **1863** - Beginning of the Battle of Gettysburg during the American Civil War.
- **1911** - A German gunboat, *Panther*, reaches Agadir, Morocco, claiming that the French has ignored the terms of the 1906 Algeciras Conference. Thereby Germany precipitates the second Moroccan crisis, deepening divisions, which would ultimately lead to the outbreak of World War I in 1914.
- **1912** - The South African Department of Defence becomes a separate state department under Law no 13 of 1912.
- **1913** - The 12th Infantry (Pretoria Regiment) later known as the Princess Alice's Own Pretoria Regiment, but since 31 May 1961 again known as Pretoria Regiment, is formed from the Northern Mounted Rifles, part of the Central South African Railways volunteers.
- **1913** - Second Balkan War: Serbia & Greece declare war on Bulgaria.
- **1916** - Battle of the Somme begins.
- **1918** - The US 4th Marine Brigade secures Belleau Wood.
- **1940** - German troops occupy the Channel Islands.
- **1942** - World War II: North Africa. Hampered by sandstorms, General Erwin Rommel's Panzerarmee Afrika overrun an infantry brigade at Dier el Shein as his troops move towards El Alamein.
- **1942** - The Germans capture Sevastopol after a long siege.
- **1943** - The "Women's Army Auxiliary Corps" is renamed the "Women's Army Corps".
- Admiral Chuichi Nagumo, Victor of Pearl Harbour, Loser of Midway, commits suicide on Saipan at the age of 57.
- **1946** - US atomic bomb test at Bikini Atoll, the forth nuclear explosion.
- **1948** - The Berlin airlift, in which South Africa also takes part, starts. It lasted until 12 May 1949.
- **1950** - First US ground troops arrive in Korea.
- **1955** - The basic agreement about the transfer of Simonstown naval base to the Union of South Africa by the United Kingdom is concluded. The formal transfer took place at a historic ceremony on 2 April 1957.
- **1961** - British troops land in Kuwait to prevent an Iraqi invasion.
- **1968** - Britain, Soviet Union, United States and fifty-eight non-nuclear nations, including South Africa, sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, to curb the spread of nuclear weapons.
- **1968** - Two members from Central Flying School Dunnottar were killed when their AT-6 Harvard crashed shortly after take-off after striking High Tension Cables near Dunnottar. They were: Captain Ernest Lodewicus Groenewald (27). 2nd Lieutenant Anton Fick Bosch (21).
- **1982** - 2nd Lieutenant Campbell Uys from 32 Battalion died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while he was at Buffalo Base. He was 19.
- **1983** - Sapper Andries Petrus Burger from 1 Construction Regiment was killed when he was accidentally run over by a construction vehicle. He was 19.
- **1983** - Two members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces during Ops Dolfyn in Southern Angola. They were: Sergeant Gerrit Hendrik Du Rand (21). Rifleman Edwin Kasera (23).
- **1983** - Corporal Andries Petrus Malan from 701 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop carrier overturned in the Operational Area. He was 19.

- **1983** - Rifleman Johannes Albertus Wessels from Regiment Christiaan Beyers died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while he was stationed at Vhembe Base. He was 18.
- **1986** - Rifleman Gavin Bazil Glinski from 7 SAI was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Ackorhoek. He was 18.
- **1989** - Lieutenant Nikolaos Sataras from Group 13 was Killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Gravelotte near Tzaneen while on official duty. He was 19.
- **1983** - Rifleman Daniel Gerhardus van Brakel from 61 Mechanised Battalion died from a gunshot wound sustained at stand-to as a result of an accidental discharge at of a fellow soldiers rifle while at Omathiya. He was 19.
- **1982** - Special Sergeant Hilalius Thomas from the South West Africa Police Counter Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 32.
- **1987** - Rifleman Augustinus Mbambo from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN Insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 19.
- **1988** - Corporal Anton Prinsloo from 203 Battalion SWATF was killed in action East of Cuito Cuanavale in South Eastern Angola. He was 21.
- **1988** - A car bomb explodes battle last well into the night with Rommel's limited forces holding off the British through the use of 88 mm Flak Guns used as anti-tank artillery.
- **1943** - Lt Charles Hall, 99th Pursuit Sqn, becomes the first black USAAF pilot to shoot down a Nazi plane, a Focke-Wulf 190 over Pantelleria.
- **1944** - Marshal von Kluge replaces von Rundstedt in command in France.
- **1966** - First French nuclear explosion, Mururoa atoll.
- **1976** - Gunner Cornelius Johannes Holtzhausen from 14 Field Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident, at Potchefstroom. He was 18.
- **1979** - Gunner Rolf Eduard Ortmann from 10 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment was killed when the military ambulance he was driving at high speed, overturned and caught fire in Wynberg, Cape town. He was 20.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: the British forces occupy Utrecht after the defending burgers had to retire the previous day.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Six unarmed Boer prisoners (later called the Geyser group) are murdered by members of the Bushveld Carabineers who operated as a special British unit in the Spelonken area, not far from Louis Trichardt.
- **1926** - Congress authorizes the Distinguished Flying Cross.
- **1942** - World War II: North Africa. British Commander-in-Chief (Middle East) Claude Auchinleck, acting on information obtained by Ultra, sends troops south to outflank General Erwin Rommel's Panzerarmee Afrika but hits them head-on instead. The ensuing tank

Claude Auchinleck



at the Ellis Park Rugby Stadium. Two spectators are killed and thirty-seven injured.

### 3 July

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The British abandon Utrecht, occupied the previous day, on receiving reports of General Grobler's approach.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lord Roberts orders Col. Baden-Powell to evacuate Rustenburg and to occupy Commando Nek and Silkaatsnek.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A general council of war with President Steyn presiding, hears the case against Barend Cilliers, accused of the murder of Lieut. Cecil Boyle. The accused is acquitted. The court finds that Cilliers had received a direct order from General Philip Botha to shoot the prisoner. General Botha has subsequently been killed in action.
- **1940** - World War II: The British Royal Navy sinks the French fleet in North Africa.
- **1950** - First US-North Korean clash during the Korean War.
- **1954** - World War II food rationing ends in Britain.
- **1962** - The Algerian Revolution against the French ends. Algeria eventually gains independence after 132 years of French rule. Abderrahman Farès is appointed as President of the Provisional

Executive.

- **1976** - 103 hostages are rescued by an Israeli commando unit at the raid on Entebbe airport in Uganda in operation Thunderball (later re-named Operation Yoni). Seven pro-Palestinian guerrilla hijackers, twenty Ugandan soldiers and three hostages are killed in the raid.
- **1983** - Corporal Frederick Coenraad Greyling from 5 SAI was accidentally killed at Itenga Base near Opuwa in an explosion inside the Ops Room. The Platoon Commander and Signaller were both injured in the explosion and they were evacuated to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria. He was 21.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Karools Jonkers from the South African Cape Corps was Killed in Action when his patrol walked into a PLAN ambush in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1987** - Two members from 1 Special Service Battalion, attached to the 10th Armoured Car Regiment were Killed in Action when they walked into a "kraal", unaware that two PLAN insurgents were hiding in one of the huts. The casualties were: Trooper Joseph Johannes Cloete (18). Trooper Van Zyl Jac van Heerden (19).
- **1988** - Iran Air Flight 655 was destroyed while flying over the Persian Gulf after the U.S. Navy Warship Vincennes fired two surface-to-air missiles, killing all

290 passengers aboard. A subsequent U.S. military inquiry cited stress related human failure for the mistaken identification of the civilian Airbus as an enemy F-14 fighter jet.

- **1992** - Two members from 116 Battalion were killed near Punda Maria, in the Kruger National Park when their Mamba vehicle collided with a tree during a follow-up operation against MK Operatives that had entered the area from Mocambique. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Nicholas Bizeki (34). Rifleman Tonki Frans Kekana (18).

### 4 July

- **1879** - The Battle of Ulundi, decisive battle during the Zulu War, takes place with the British forces gaining the upper hand and Cetshwayo, king of the Zulus, suffers his final defeat.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Republican General C.F. Beyers captures a troop train near Naboomspruit, Transvaal, killing nine soldiers.
- **1913** - Fighting breaks out as a riotous crowd on the Johannesburg market square is confronted by police and mounted soldiers during the first miners' strike.
- **1936** - League of Nations applies sanctions on Italy for the invasion of Ethiopia.
- **1940** - World War II: East Africa. British posts at Kassala and Gallabat, on the

borders of Abyssinia (now Ethiopia), Eritrea, and Sudan, are attacked and captured by the Italian Northern Army under the command of the Duke of Acosta.

- **1942** - First American bombing mission over Nazi-occupied Europe.
- **1955** - The basic agreement about the transfer of Simonstown naval base to the Union of South Africa by the United Kingdom is concluded. The formal transfer took place at a historic ceremony on 2 April 1957.
- **1960** - The Congolese army mutinies.
- **1974** - Trooper Jan Albertus Kotze from 1 Special Service Battalion was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident in Eastern Caprivi. He was 19.
- **1979** - Rifleman Balthazer Johannes Carolus van der Walt from SWA SPES was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned near Ruacana. He was 19.
- **1979** - Rifleman Carlo Johannes Kotze from 1 SAI was critically injured in a military vehicle accident at Otjiwarongo Base on 3 July 1979. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria where he succumbed to his injuries on 04 July 1979. He was 19.
- **1981** - Rifleman Pieter Adriaan van Niekerk from 6 SAI was accidentally shot dead by own forces in Southern Angola in a friendly fire incident during Ops

Carnation. He was 20.

- **1983** - Staff Sergeant John Christian Anthony Oliver from the South African Engineer Corps was critically injured when his Samil 50 vehicle overturned at Moshesh near Rundu. He succumbed to his injuries a short while later. He was 33.
- **1984** - Sergeant Johnny Ralph Adams from the Army Catering Corps was grievously burned on 2 July 1984 when a phosphorus grenade exploded while he was playing with it in a bunker at Hurricane Base, Ruacana. He died in 1 Military Hospital on 4 Jul 1984. He was 23.
- **1986** - Two members from 1 Parachute Battalion were killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Richmond in the Cape. They were: Corporal Jacobus Nicolaas Claase(21). Rifleman Richard Alexander Knipe (20).
- **2001** - Congolese President Joseph Kabila and Ugandan

President Yoweri Museveni meet for first face-to-face peace talks in Tanzania as part of an effort to end the three-year war in Congo.

### 5 July

- **1830** - The French occupy the North African city of Algiers. The colonisation of Algeria was seen as a way of providing employment for veterans of the Napoleonic wars.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Commandant-General Louis Botha receives a telegram from President Kruger urging him to continue fighting.
- **1943** - The Battle of Kursk: Despite a massive German assault; the Soviets lose some ground, but halt the attack in about a week.
- **1975** - Otto Skorzeny, World War II Waffen SS *Obersturmbannführer* and the man that led the rescue mission that freed the deposed Italian dictator Benito Mus-



**Otto Skorzeny**

solini from captivity, dies at the age of 67.

- **1977** - Pakistan: coup by General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq.
- **1977** - Corporal Peter Noel Wiggell HC from the Technical Services Corps was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents while attached to Bravo Company Regiment Algoabaai. He was 25.
- **1977** - Sapper William Thomas Wiggell from 2 Field Engineer Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Bethlehem. He was 20.
- **1980** - Rifleman J. Dingombo from 31 Battalion (210 Battalion) SWATF was accidentally killed when he fell from a horse and broke his neck. He was 23.
- **1981** - Rifleman Aubrey Leonard Neveling from 6 SAI was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 18.
- **1982** - Corporal Andre van der Walt from 4 Vehicle Reserve Park was killed in a private motor vehicle accident approximately 20km from Bloemfontein on the Winburg - Bloemfontein road. He was 21.
- **1985** - Airman Benjamin Arthur Nell from the South African Air Force was accidentally shot dead at his Guard Post at Eros Airport, Windhoek as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 18.

### 6 July

- **1865** - The Pretoria Rifle Corps is founded under Stephanus Schoeman as a volunteer corps to defend Pretoria and surroundings. The local police force was instituted at a later date.
- **1916** - Second-Lieutenant William Nimmo Brown of the 1st SA Infantry is killed in the Battle of the Somme and becomes the first South African officer killed in France during World War I.
- **1917** - Arab horsemen led by British officer T.E. Lawrence also known as Lawrence of Arabia capture the heavily garrisoned Turkish fort at Aqaba.
- **1942** - German troops capture Voronez, USSR.
- **1945** - Movement to the US of captured German scientists and equipment begins.
- **1967** - The Biafran War erupts as Nigerian forces invade the Republic of Biafra. The war claimed some 600,000 lives. About one million died of starvation.
- **1976** - Women are admitted to the U.S. Naval Academy for the first time.
- **1980** - Rifleman Francis Mukweli from 33 Battalion SWATF was killed in a Military Vehicle accident in the Caprivi Strip. He was 37.
- **1982** - Five members from 201 Battalion SWATF were Killed when their Buffel Troop carrier overturned on the White Road between Bagani and Rundu, just east of Mashari. They were: Cor-

poral Frans Adonio (31). Rifleman Kafuru Bango (29). Rifleman Pedro Kadamba (30). Rifleman Petrus Kapango (28). Rifleman Oscar Nando (23).

- **1983** - Rifleman B. Ngarukua from 102 Battalion SWATF was Killed in an accidental Hand Grenade Explosion in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.

### 7 July

- **1798** - Napoleon Bonaparte's army begins its march towards Cairo from Alexandria, Napoleon's desert nemesis.
- **1944** - RAF drops 2,572 tons on Caen, to support ground attack.
- **1944** - Saipan: Japanese troops make a final "banzai" charge.
- **1944** - U.S. B-29s from China attack Japan.
- **1944** - US troops capture Rosignano, NW of Rome.
- **1948** - First women sworn into the US Naval Reserve.
- **1960** - USSR shoots down a US aircraft over the Barents Sea.
- **1960** - Belgium sends troops to the newly independent Congo.
- **1966** - Vietnam: Marines initiate "Operation Hasting" - to clear NVA from the DMZ.
- **1976** - Rifleman Leon Hendrik Delpont from the Durban Regiment was accidentally shot dead at the Oshivelo shooting range when he took up a position behind one of the targets

during a fire and movement drill. He was 23.

- **1980** - Rifleman Johannes Jacobus Joubert from 1 Maintenance Unit was killed when he accidentally fell off the rear of a moving military vehicle. He was 23.
- **1981** - Private Wayne Ivor Purdon from the Jozini Military Base was killed in a military vehicle accident between Magudu and Candover. He was 18.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Alexander John Tucker from 1 Parachute Battalion was Killed in Action when his Patrol was ambushed by combined FAPLA/Cuban force while operating in an area North of Xangongo, approximately 32km from Cahama, He was 19.
- **1983** - Rifleman V. Kamundiro from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 19.
- **1990** - An illegal demonstration in Kenya becomes known as the "Saba Saba" (Seven Seven the date in Swahili). The government sends in police and military, killing at least twenty and arresting several hundreds, including politicians, human rights activists and journalists.

### 8 July

- **1943** - During the Nazi occupation of France, Resistance leader Jean Moulin died following his arrest and

subsequent torture by the Gestapo.

- **1944** - British troops capture Caen, a month behind schedule.
- **1950** - General Douglas MacArthur is named commander-in-chief of United Nations (UN) forces in Korea, including more than 800 South Africans.
- **1960** - The newly independent Republic of Congo's army mutinies against Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba's government. Europeans are reported to be fleeing the country. Belgium sends troops to Congo Republic. Patrice Lumumba appeals to the UN for military assistance.
- **1979** - Lance Corporal Gerhardus Johannes Jordaan (SAAF) from 2 Satellite Radar Station, Ellisras died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained. He was 18.
- **1980** - Corporal Pierre Babin from 1 Construction Regiment was accidentally killed while towing a broken down military vehicle when he lost control of his vehicle, causing it to overturn between Omega and Chetto. He was 24.

- **1981** - Rifleman T. Tjakuva from 102 Battalion SWATF died from Malaria contracted while serving in the Operational Area. He was 27.
- **1982** - Rifleman Vegkurid Kavari from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when the Buffel Troop carrier in which he was travelling, overturned at Opuwa. He was 24.
- **1982** - Two members from 201 Battalion SWATF were Killed when the Buffel Troop carrier in which they were travelling, overturned. The casualties were: Rifleman T.A.S. Mesongo (27). Rifleman Joas Masonga (29).
- **1987** - Angolan news agency Angop reports that South African troops, backed by planes, tanks and artillery, used chemical weapons in attacks inside Angola. The SA Defence Force says the allegations are an attempt to minimise setbacks incurred



**T.E. Lawrence**

by Unita victories in the area.

- **1988** - Rifleman Leon Volschenk was critically wounded in the stomach on 30 June 1988 after being accidentally shot by an LMG during a live fire and movement exercise at Oshivello. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria where he succumbed to his wounds on 08 July 1988. He was 20.

### 9 July

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lieutenant General Hunter and Brigadier-General Sir Hector A. MacDonald arrive at Bethlehem, OFS. Hunter takes over command of all the British forces in the north-eastern Free State.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: 'Long Cecil', the gun designed and manufactured by G.F. Labram and used by the British during the siege, is taken from Kimberley by train to be exhibited during the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall, later King George V and Queen Mary.
- **1915** - World War I: Dr Theodore Seitz, governor of German South West Africa, surrenders at the farm Khorab, between Otavi and Tsumeb, to General Louis Botha.
- **1934** - Reichsführer-SS Himmler takes command of German Concentration Camps.

- **1940** - RAF bombs Germany.
- **1941** - The British break Germany's air-ground ops code used on the Russian Front.
- **1944** - US secures Saipan: 3,200 US, 27,000 Japanese KIA, & many civilian suicides.
- **1979** - Rifleman Stephanus Petrus Janse van Vuuren from SWA SPES (SWATF) was Killed in Action when his horse detonated a landmine while on patrol along the pipeline North of Etale. He was 18.
- **1980** - Rifleman H. Muhenje from 102 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.
- **1985** - Corporal Pieter Apollis from the South African Cape Corps attached to 53 Battalion was killed after suffering a fatal gunshot wound as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 24.
- **1985** - Chad and Zaire sign an agreement on military co-operation.
- **1988** - Corporal M. Kavetu from 102 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action when he triggered a Soviet POMZ-2 Anti-Personnel Picket Mine while on patrol. He was 27. Corporal Kavetu was the last 102 Battalion Bush War Operational Casualty.

### 10 July

- **1899** - Second Anglo-Boer

War: Queensland, Australia, offers military aid to Britain.

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: In a letter to Lord Roberts, Chief Commandant de Wet protests against the indiscriminate destruction of private property by British troops.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Colonel Lawson reports that the De Beer and Van Rooyen's commando, raiding the upper Tugela from the Free State, includes thirty armed Basotho and twenty other armed Blacks.
- **1913** - Second Balkan War: Romania declares war on Bulgaria.
- **1943** - The Allied invasion of Italy began with an attack on the island of Sicily. The British entry into Syracuse was the first Allied success in Europe. General Dwight D. Eisenhower labelled the invasion "the first page in the liberation of the European Continent."
- **1953** - American troops abandon Pork Chop Hill, Korea.
- **1960** - Belgium sends troops to Congo.
- **1978** - A military coup takes place in Mauritania.
- **1980** - Corporal Clive Roland Hardenberg from 4 Reconnaissance Regiment accidentally drowned during a training exercise at Salamander Bay, Langebaan. He was 20.
- **1981** - Rifleman Lionel van Rooyen from 1 South African Infantry attached

61 Mechanised Battalion Group died from multiple shrapnel wounds accidentally sustained when a 120mm mortar round exploded prematurely during a live fire training exercise between Tsintsabis and Omuthiya, prior to the launch of Ops Protea. He was 19.

- **1982** - Two members from 42 Squadron were flying over an Army column near Ondangwa in their Atlas AM3C Bosbok when the pilot decided to execute an unauthorised stall turn at low level for the benefit of the troops on the ground. The aircraft failed to recover and crashed nearby, killing both crew members on board. The casualties were: Lieutenant Otto Carel Janse van Rensburg (24). Candidate Officer Anton Geno Roux (20).
- **1985** - Corporal A.L. Tefo from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was killed instantly after being struck by lightning during a thunderstorm while on operations in Southern Angola. He was 24.
- **1985** - Four British men are jailed for conspiring to smuggle military components into South Africa.
- **1986** - Rifleman R Tjiposa from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 25.
- **1986** - Special Constable Tjiposa Virero from the

South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 29.

### 11 July

- **1882** - The British fleet bombards Alexandria, Egypt.
- **1899** - The Battle of Silkaatsnek, west of Pretoria, starts with General De la Rey launching a three-pronged attack on the British forces. The British, under Colonel Roberts, surrenders the next morning.
- **1901** - With dawn approaching, General Broadwood surprises the Free State force, accompanied by President Steyn, in Reitz. Pres. Steyn's Griqua groom, Jan Ruiter, wakes the President, borrows a saddle and helps the president to mount and, mounting another horse, gallops away. When stopped by a British soldier, Ruiter dismounts and distracts the soldier, allowing the president to escape into darkness without hat or coat. After the battle Ruiter and the other Blacks are left behind and he rejoins his employer.
- **1901** - The complete Free State Executive Council,

except the president who escaped with the help of Ruiter, 29 persons, is captured in Reitz by General Broadwood and sent to Heilbron as prisoners.

- **1915** - The German cruiser 'Konigsberg' is scuttled near Dar-es-Salam, Tanganyika.
- **1942** - Japanese GHQ acknowledges the results of the Battle of Midway.
- **1979** - Rifleman Peter Wayne Bowry Atherton from 11 Commando Regiment died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained at Jan Kemp Dorp as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 17.
- **1982** - Rifleman Munehemba Muharukua from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when the Buffel Troop Carrier in which he was a passenger, overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.



Heinrich Himmler

- **1985** - Sapper Kenneth Claude Cole from 2 Field Engineer Regiment died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained as a result of the accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was standing guard duty at 2 Field Engineer Regiment in Bethlehem at the time of the incident. He was 19.
- **1985** - Special Constable U. Ngombe from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.
- **1986** - Rifleman L. Sivanda from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents. He was 22.
- **1989** - WO I Johannes Petrus Coetzee from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident 10km from the Mangetti Dunes. He was 50.
- **1990** - Private Iain Bruce Robertson from the Technical Service Corps was critically injured when the Ratel in which he was travelling, overturned on the road in front of Special Forces Head Quarters in Pretoria. He succumbed to his injuries a short while later. He was 27.

**12 July**

- **1899** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lord Brassey of Victoria, Australia, offers Britain volunteers for service in

- South Africa.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A court martial at Fouriesburg confirms Boer ex-Commandant S.G. Viljoen's sentence of five years hard labour for treason.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lord Kitchener receives a hero's welcome in London on his return.
- **1941** - First Luftwaffe air raid on Moscow.
- **1943** - During World War II, in the Battle of Kursk, the largest tank battle in history took place outside the small village of Prohorovka, Russia. About nine hundred Russian tanks attacked an equal number of German tanks fighting at close range. When Hitler ordered a cease-fire, 300 German tanks remained strewn over the battlefield.
- **1944** - Theresienstadt Concentration Camp disbanded, with 4,000 people gassed.
- **1984** - A car bomb explodes in Durban, killing five and injuring twenty-seven people.
- **1973** - Rifleman Abraham Frederik Greeff from 3 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident at Rundu. He was 18.
- **1979** - Lance Corporal J.L. Samutiki from 33 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop carrier overturned in the Operational Area. He was 27.
- **1980** - Rifleman T. Josef from 35 Battalion SWATF died from a gunshot wound

- accidentally sustained in the Operational Area. He was 24.
- **1982** - Rifleman Katopora Tjiharukua from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned near Opuwa. He was 25.
- **1983** - Lieutenant Bruce Charles Chinery from 40 Squadron was killed when his Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I suffered engine failure shortly after take-off from Air Force Base Waterkloof. He was 22.
- **1994** - Germany's Constitutional Court ended the ban on sending German troops to fight outside the country. The ban had been in effect since the end of World War II. The ruling allowed German troops to join in United Nations and NATO peace-keeping missions.

**13 July**

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: At a council of war, Chief Commandant De Wet explains the shortcomings of the Republican concentration in the Brandwater Basin and the importance of moving out before they are bottled up.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: J.P. Coetzee, Cape rebel, is executed by the British and all male adults are ordered to attend.
- **1936** - 15,000 World War I veterans from all nations swear an "Oath of Peace" and observe a minute of si-

- lence at the Ossuary at Ft. Douaumont, Verdun.
- **1966** - Candidate Officer Christo Cornelius Johannes Joubert from Air Operations School Langebaanweg was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed near Velddrif during a routine training exercise. He was 19.
- **1971** - Firing squads in Morocco execute ten army officers accused of trying to overthrow King Hassan.
- **1982** - Rifleman Jean Louis Moerdyk from SWA SPES (SWATF) was killed in a military vehicle accident at Bagani. He was 20.
- **1982** - Rifleman Karetu Muhenje from 102 Battalion SWATF was critically wounded on 12 July 1982 during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He succumbed to his injuries at 05h00 the following morning. He was 26.
- **1998** - Unita again occupies two towns in Angola and hundreds of inhabitants flee.

**14 July**

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The Free State government is to dispense with the idea of a capital, and they become a government 'in the field'.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British General French drives Scheepers out of the Camdeboo Mountains and Major Moore, with a detachment of Connaught Rangers, defeats the Boers under

- Myburgh at Zuurvlaakte and captures his laager.
- **1942** - Japanese Admiral Yamamoto creates the Eighth Fleet for operations in the South Pacific.
- **1972** - Vietnam: Jane Fonda makes first of 10 broadcasts on Radio Hanoi.
- **1976** - Two members from 11 Squadron and two ground crew personnel from 19 Squadron were killed when an 11 Squadron Cessna 185A crashed at the Umtali River Mouth. The casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant Mario Almeroe Janse van Rensburg (21). Corporal Charles Lloyd van der Merwe (23). Private Izak Jacob Joubert Geyser (18). Private Gerhard Nicholaas van Rooyen (19).
- **1982** - Three crew and five passengers of a SAAF 21 Squadron Swearingen Merlin 4A and four members of a civilian Piper Navajo were killed when the aircraft were involved in a mid-air collision at night over the residential area of Swartkops. The SADF casualties were: Captain Jan

- Izak Tobias de Villiers (25). Lieutenant Leon Goldstein (21). Flight Sergeant (Miss) (Air Hostess) Annerie Niemand (23). Major General Dirk Johannes van Niekerk (53). Major General Jacobus Marthinus Crafford (48). Colonel Johan Adam Coetzer (48).
- **1992** - President de Klerk announces the future disbandment of two security force units, the 31 and 32 battalions, and the dissolution of the controversial police unit, Koevoet.
- **1993** - Somali militiamen fire on UN headquarters in a new wave of assaults hours after Somali militants distribute leaflets calling for revenge attacks on American soldiers.
- **1995** - South Africa and Russia sign a military cooperation agreement.



**Isoroku Yamamoto**



**15 July**

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Chief Commandant De Wet, Pres. Steyn and members of the Free State government break out of the Brandwater Basin through Slabbert's Nek, with about 2,000 men, 400 vehicles and five field-guns. Their column passes within three km of Paget's (British) camp at Sebastopol, OFS.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Dr K. Franks, camp doctor at the Mafeking concentration camp reports that the camp is "overwhelmed" by 1,270 women and children brought in after sweeps on the western ZAR. Lack of facilities adds to the hardships encountered by the new arrivals.
- **1916** - World War I: The Battle of Delville Wood, the bloodiest battle ever fought by South Africans, starts. It lasted till 20 July. Of the 121 SA officers and 2,032 soldiers, only 750 soldiers survived.
- **1918** - World War I: During the Battle of the Marne in World War I, German General Erich Ludendorff launched Germany's fifth, and last, offensive to break through the Chateau-Thierry salient.
- **1937** - Buchenwald Concentration Camp opens.
- **1944** - Britain's Greenwich Observatory is damaged by a German V-1 flying bomb.
- **1948** - US World War I General of the Armies John J

Pershing, dies at the age of 87.

- **1960** - UN troops arrive to help deal with the political crisis following Moïse Kapependa Tshombe's declaration of independence for Katanga province on 11 July. Meanwhile the province of South Kasai also declares independence, calling itself the Federal State of South Kasai, with Joseph Ngalula as head of parliament.
- **1981** - Rifleman Ettienné Zwanepoel from 1 SAI was accidentally shot dead during a training exercise at the Wepener Training Area. He was 18.
- **1982** - Special Constable Vusi Tsiposa from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.
- **1984** - Three members from the Special Forces Headquarters Unit were killed when their Unimog Troop Carrier overturned near M'pacha. The casualties were: Rifleman Christoffel Booysen (21). Rifleman Marthinus Hendrik Grobler (20). Sapper Nicolaas Jacobus Gerhardus Helberg (17).
- **2000** - In a rare display of force, UN troops launch a rescue mission that frees all 222 peacekeepers and eleven military observers trapped by rebels inside a UN base in eastern Sierra

Leone.

**16 July**

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lord Methuen reoccupies Rustenburg. This is the third British occupation of the town.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Three commandos under the newly appointed Combat General Viljoen, attack about 4,650 British soldiers with twenty field guns and four to five machine guns under General Hutton at Tierpoort, Rietvlei and Olifantsfontein, ZAR. The burghers are supported by three field guns and two pom-poms, but they have to charge over open ground. Commandant-General Botha, who observes the Republican charge from a vantage point, later says he has never seen a braver and more determined attack. The heaviest resistance comes from the New Zealanders and Irish Fusiliers.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The British Colonial Office appoints a Ladies Commission to investigate the concentration camps in SA. The commission, whose members are reputed to be impartial, includes Mrs Millicent G. Fawcett who recently criticised Emily Hobhouse and Dr. Jane Watson, daughter of a British general, who recently wrote against "the hysterical whining going on in England" while "we feed and pamper people who had not even the

grace to say thank you for the care bestowed on them".

- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: In the Free State, Lieutenant-General E.L. Elliot's drive ends. At the cost of only three British casualties, the drive has resulted in three burghers killed and wounded, sixty-one prisoners, 7,000 horses, 7,000 cattle, 6,000 rounds of ammunition and 300 vehicles captured.
- **1916** - World War I: The South African brigade is called to capture Delville Wood in France in a fierce two-day battle.
- **1940** - Hitler orders preparations for "Operation Sea Lion".
- **1944** - With the aid of the Polish Resistance, the Soviets capture Vilna, Lithuania, from the Germans.
- **1945** - The experimental Atomic bomb "Fat Boy" was set off at 05h30. in the desert of New Mexico desert, creating a mushroom cloud rising 12,497 metres. The bomb emitted heat three times the temperature of the interior of the sun and wiped out all plant and animal life within 1,6 kilometres.
- **1946** - A US court sentences 46 SS-men to death for the Malmedy massacre.
- **1960** - Albert Kesselring, German airman and field marshal, dies at the age of 74.
- **1977** - Soviet advisers are expelled from the Republic of Somali by orders of the

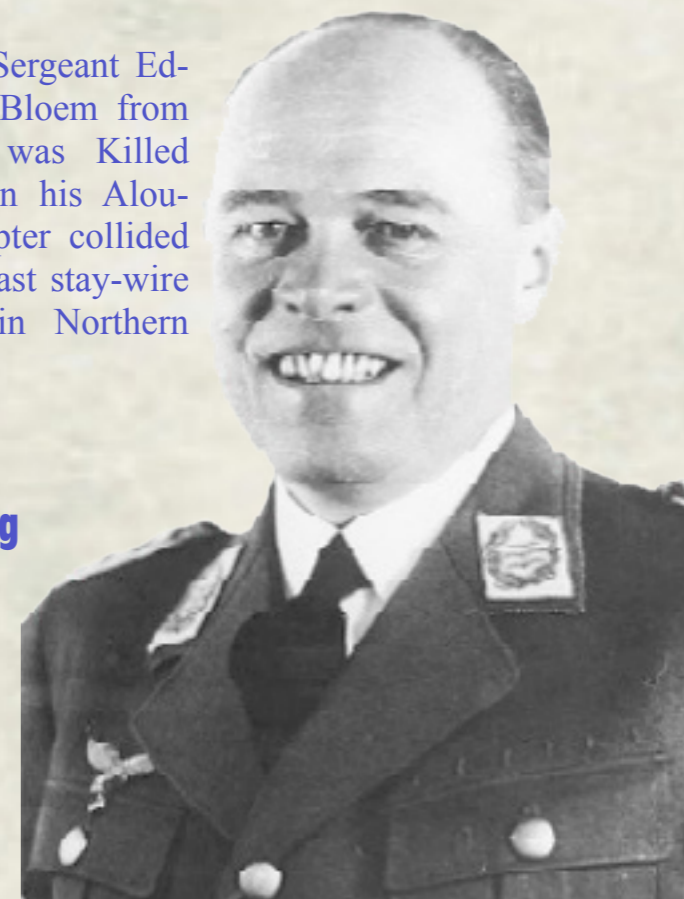
president, Muhammad Siyad Barre.

- **1977** - Rifleman Christiaan Michael Albert Tesnar from the Lydenburg Commando was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents near Ruacana. He was 24.
- **1981** - Rifleman G. Ruhuzo from 102 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents. He was 26.
- **1984** - Private Gabriel Johannes Jacobus Frederik Crouse from 72 Motorised Brigade was killed in a military vehicle accident in Alberton. He was 19.
- **1984** - Rifleman Daniel Adonis Douwrie from the South African Cape Corps was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion in Northern Owamboland. He was 25.
- **1986** - Flight Sergeant Edward Michael Bloem from 31 Squadron was Killed in Action when his Alouette III Helicopter collided with a radio mast stay-wire at Okankolo in Northern

Owamboland during late afternoon counter-insurgency operations in the area. He was 39.

- **1993** - Staff Sergeant Richard Ebanhaezer Gericke from 31 Battalion SWATF was killed in a motor vehicle accident between Schmidtsdrift and Kimberley. He was 27.
- **2006** - The first of South Africa's fleet of Gripen aircraft ordered to re-equip the SA National Defence Force is transported by road to Ysterplaat Air Force Base from Cape Town Harbour.
- **2006** - Maluleke George, the deputy defence minister, attends the 90th commemoration of the Battle of Delville Wood in France. During the ceremony, a new South African coat of arms is unveiled

**Albert Kesselring**



at the South African memorial on the site. The names of Black members of the South African Labour Corps who died at Arques-la-Bataille and those who perished on board the SAS Mendi are also unveiled at the museum.

**17 July**

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lieutenant-Colonel M.O. Little, commanding the 3rd Cavalry Brigade of 738 mounted men, is ordered in the direction of Lindley to join the hunt for De Wet.
- **1917** - World War I: King George V orders the British royal family to dispense with German titles and surnames. Saxe-Coburg becomes Windsor and Battenburg becomes Mountbatten.
- **1943** - RAF bombs German rocket research base at Peenemunde, on the Baltic.
- **1944** - Having helped the Russians to liberate Vilna from the Germans, the leaders of the Polish resistance "Army Krajowa" are arrested by Stalin.
- **1945** - US Third Fleet undertakes surface and air attacks on targets near Tokyo.
- **1975** - Captain Geoffrey Dennis Law from 40 Squadron was killed instantly during a weapons demonstration exercise at Bloemfontein when the complete main plane of his AT-6 Harvard separated in flight while the aircraft was diving onto the target. He was 29.

- **1976** - Rifleman Andries Johannes Blaauw from 2 Parachute Battalion was Killed in Action after he and his twin brother Pieter, had a brief contact with a group of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents while on patrol.
- **1981** - Private David Gordon Munro from Sector 70 Headquarters died in 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria from Malaria contracted while serving in the Operational Area. He was 18.
- **1986** - Trooper Willem Jan Pienaar from the School of Armour died in the Universitas Hospital in Bloemfontein after being critically injured in a military vehicle accident in Bloemfontein. He was 18.

**18 July**

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: In the first drive in the Cape Colony, the British under overall command of General French are deployed along the Beaufort West Graaff-Reinet line and march north.
- **1914** - The British Royal Navy extends an invitation to the German Imperial Navy to take part in a fleet week in August
- **1935** - Ethiopian King Haile Selassie urges his countrymen to fight to the last man against the invading Italian army.
- **1936** - The Spanish Civil War begins in the early morning hours with a revolt at Melilla in Spanish Mo-

- **1942** - Maiden flight of the Messerschmitt Me 262, the first operational jet fighter.
- **1944** - US troops capture St. Lo, Normandy.
- **1963** - Candidate Officer Matthys Marthinus Hattingh from Air Operations School at Langebaanweg was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed into a mountain-side near Porterville in bad weather. He was 19.
- **1972** - Egypt demands the Soviet Union remove its 20,000 advisers from the country, accusing it of failing to supply promised arms.
- **1973** - Rifleman Keith Hahn from 1 SAI was killed when the Bedford vehicle in which he was travelling as a passenger, overturned at Kandelaars River Station. He was 18.
- **1980** - Lance Corporal Nicolaas Jacobus van der Merwe from 1 Special Service Battalion was Killed in Action while on patrol 10km from Ondangwa.
- **1981** - Rifleman James Findlay-Marshall from the Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident on the National road between De Rust and Uniondale while on weekend pass. He was 18.
- **1982** - Rifleman Frisiano Dala from 201 Battalion SWATF died in 1 Military Hospital from injuries received in a Military Vehicle Accident at Rundu on 06 July 1982. He was 24.

- **1983** - Rifleman Jan Harm Kruger from 1 Parachute Battalion died after suffering severe brain injuries in a non-military related accident. He was 23.
- **1985** - Rifleman George Mike Thompson from the Army Catering Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Oshakati. He was 22.
- **1988** - Angola, Cuba, and South Africa, after talks in New York from 11-13 July under US mediation, announce that they have reached tentative agreement on a document containing principles for a settlement in south-western Africa.
- **2005** - General William Westmoreland, Commander of the US forces in Vietnam, between 1964-1968, dies at the age of 91.

**19 July**

- **1863** - During the American Civil War, Union troops made a second attempt to capture Fort Wagner near Charleston, South Carolina. The attack was led by the 54th Massachusetts Coloured Infantry, commanded by Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, who was killed along with half of the 600 men in the regiment. This battle marked the first use of black Union troops in the war.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lord Kitchener writes in a letter concerning the Ladies' Commission sent out to investigate into con-

ditions in the concentration camps: "... I doubt there being much for them to do here as the camps are very well looked after. Kendal Franks was quite astonished at the excellence of some of the camps ...".

- **1918** - German armies retreat across the Marne.
- **1941** - Winston Churchill flashes "V for Victory" for the first time.
- **1942** - German occupiers confiscate bicycles in the Netherlands.
- **1991** - In a report published in the New Nation, a former South African army sergeant, Mr. Felix Ndimene, alleges that members of the Five Reconnaissance Regiment, which is part of South Africa's special forces, carried out an attack on a Soweto-bound train in September 1990. Twenty-six persons

died in that attack.

- **1997** - Charles Taylor, a rebel leader with a reputation for brutality, wins Liberia's first peaceful presidential election following a seven-year civil war.

**20 July**

- **1871** - Queen Victoria abolishes the practice of purchasing commissions in the British Army.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Boer General C.J. Spruyt is killed in action while attempting to cross the railway line between Val Station and Vlaklaagte on his way to invade Natal.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: At Paardekop, in the Gatsrand, near Vereeniging, General J.C. Smuts and a small party are surprised in their sleep. His Black or-



**William Westmoreland**

derly, Kleinbooi, is shot and killed but General Smuts manages to get away by shouting orders in English and stealing away on bare feet. He later retrieves all the documents he has had to leave behind in the dark.

- **1916** - World War I: Only three SA officers and 140 men march out of Delville Wood. Six days earlier, on moving in, the strength of the brigade was 3,433. In 1920 the SA government bought the wood and erected a monument.
- **1922** - The League of Nations agrees to award former German colonies as mandates.
- **1944** - US Marines land on Guam.
- **1944** - A plot by senior army officers to assassinate Adolf Hitler fails.
- **1949** - Israel's 19 month war of independence ends.
- **1954** - An agreement was signed in Geneva, Switzerland, ending hostilities between French forces in Vietnam and the People's Army of Vietnam.
- **1976** - Last US troops leave Thailand.
- **1982** - Corporal Michael Daniel Otto from 912 Battalion SWATF was killed when his SAMIL 20 vehicle overturned at Okahandja.
- **1983** - Rifleman James Tjuima a SWATF basic trainee, died in hospital from complications after contracting Pneumonia while undergoing basic training.

**21 July**

- **1798** - Napoleon defeats the Arab Mameluke warriors at the Battle of the Pyramids in Egypt.
- **1899** - Second Anglo-Boer War: New South Wales,

He was 19.

- **1983** - Two members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Constable Frans Hamutewa (27). Special Constable Klemens Mpase (22).
- **1987** - Captain Barend Jacobus Vorster from 8 Squadron was killed when his Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I crashed into the sea off Durban during a joint training exercise with the South African Navy. He was 24.
- **1988** - Corporal Johannes David Gerhardus van der Merwe from 3 Parachute Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Batavia. He was 25.
- **1988** - South Africa, Angola and Cuba formally accept the principles of an Angola/Namibia peace plan. The three countries, in separate statements, announce their agreement on the withdrawal of foreign troops from Angola and independence for South West Africa/Namibia.

Australia, offers 1,860 officers, non-commissioned officers and men to Britain for service in SA.

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British General Lord Robert's advance along the eastern line begins, starting from his outposts east of Pretoria along the Delagoa Bay railway line for more than 56 km. Commandant-General Louis Botha split his force of about 2,200 men into small groups to render isolated local resistance to the huge army moving eastwards.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Captain Danie Theron and his men capture a train from the Welsh fusiliers. After looting what they could carry, they placed the wounded under medical care in a railway carriage, which they push out of danger and set the train on fire. The next day he was congratulated by De Wet and promoted to the rank of commandant.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The burning of Bremersdorp.
- **1941** - Himmler orders building of Majanek Concentration Camp.
- **1944** - Colonel Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg (37), executed by firing squad, & General Ludwig Beck (64), assisted suicide, for their part in the plot to assassinate Hitler.
- **1945** - U.S. radio broadcasts demand that Japan surrender or be destroyed.

- **1962** - Indian and Chinese troops skirmish in the Himalayas.
- **1975** - Lance Corporal Douglas Brian Snell from 11 Commando Regiment died from a gunshot wound resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while stationed in Northern Owamboland. He was 18.
- **1984** - Private Johannes Ricardo Mathee from 16 Maintenance Unit died from a gunshot wound resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while stationed at Grootfontein. He was 21.
- **1985** - Rifleman Christiaan Jack from the Army Catering Corps was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Oshikuku. He was 26.
- **1986** - Corporal Mark Twain Whiteley from 701 Battalion SWATF was accidentally shot dead by own forces. He left the TB at night to relieve himself and was mistaken for a SWAPO/PLAN insurgent on his return. He was 24.
- **1987** - Rifleman George Immelman was stationed at the Army Battle School. He was accidentally killed when he was crushed between a loader and a tipper during construction work. He was 22.
- **2004** - An Egyptian and three Kenyans, along with four other truck drivers, are taken hostage by a militant Iraqi group.

**22 July**

- **1942** - Defeated on all fronts in 16 day war with Peru, Ecuador agrees to a cease fire.
- **1942** - 1st Battle of Alamein: British halt German-Italian drive under Rommel.
- **1942** - 300,000 Warsaw Ghetto Jews are sent to Treblinka extermination camp.
- **1943** - Patton captures Palermo.
- **1946** - Jerusalem: The Irgun bombs British HQ in the King David Hotel, 90 die.
- **1983** - Sergeant Walter Alexander Robinson from 61 Base Workshop, Technical Service Corps died in his sleep in the Single Quarters at TEK Base after apparently suffering a fatal heart attack. He was 42.
- **1984** - Rifleman Gerhard Ernst De Lange from 1 Parachute Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents while on patrol north of Ondangwa. He was 20.
- **1987** - Corporal Adriaan Jonker from 2 SWA SPES (SWATF) was accidentally killed in Windhoek when his parachute failed during a practice jump at the J. G. Strydom Airport. He was 20.
- **1987** - Rifleman Lyall Gregory Sole from 2 SAI died

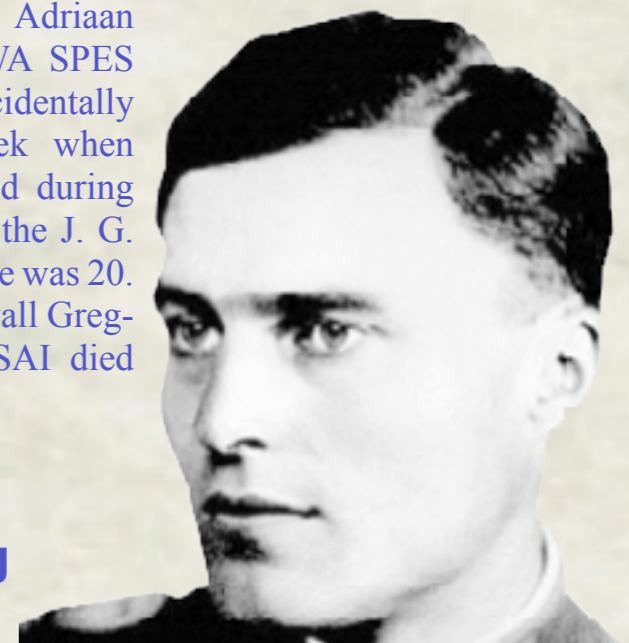
of injuries sustained during a training exercise when he was accidentally run over by an armoured vehicle in conditions of poor visibility. He was 20.

- **1987** - Soviet PM Gorbachev agrees to negotiate a ban on intermediate-range nuclear missiles.
- **2001** - Bertie Felstead of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, the last known survivor of the Christmas Truce of 1914, dies at the age of 106.

**23 July**

- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lord Milner is presented with the freedom of the City of London at the Guildhall.
- **1940** - The "Blitz" begins: the first all-night Luftwaffe raid on London.
- **1942** - German troops capture Rostov.
- **1942** - World War II: Hurricanes of No.1 Squadron shoot down thirteen Ju-87s over the South African positions in the Alamein line,

**Claus von Stauffenberg**



North Africa.

- **1943** - Battle of Kursk ends: Soviets win the greatest tank battle in history.
- **1944** - Soviet Army captures Lublin, Poland.
- **1951** - Lieutenant FM Bekker and Lieutenant RM du Plooy, serving with the SAAF Cheetah Squadron in the Korean War, are killed in action.
- **1951** - Henri Philippe Pétain, Marshal of France, Vichyite, dies in prison at the age of 95.
- **1952** - Egyptian military officers led by Gamal Abdel Nasser overthrow King Farouk I.
- **1970** - UN Security Council adopts resolution 282 (1970) calling on States to take a series of measures to strengthen the arms embargo against South Africa. The vote was 12 in favour and 3 abstentions (France, UK, USA).
- **1973** - Eddie Rickenbacker, the top American ace of World War I with 26 kills, dies at the age of 82.
- **1973** - Rifleman Stuart Craig McGregor from 4 SAI died from a gunshot wound to the stomach while stationed at Greefswald. He was 18.
- **1974** - Greek military dictatorship collapses.
- **1984** - Rifleman K. Murongo from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 22.
- **1988** - A surprise top-level

military meeting between Angola, South Africa and Cuba ends in Cape Verde. The talks follow reports that a fresh contingent of 2,000 Cuban troops, combined with Angolan forces, is moving along the front.

- **1989** - Airman (Miss) Marianna Christina Murphy from the Highveld Airspace Control Sector died in the H.F. Verwoerd Hospital from injuries received in a private motor vehicle accident on the N1 highway near Witbank. She was 18.
- **1994** - Gambian soldiers proclaim military government in Dakar, Senegal.

### 24 July

- **1897** - A combined force of the Seventh Hussars, local troops and the newly recruited British South Africa Police attacks Mashona chief Mashayamombe's kraal. The Chief was killed and the rebellion, started in June 1896, came to an end in November 1897, with the surrender of Nyanda and Kagubi.
- **1936** - Spanish Nationalists form a junta to conduct the civil war with the Spanish Republic.
- **1943** - RAF bombs Hamburg, initiating a firestorm.
- **1943** - During World War II in Europe, the Royal Air Force conducted Operation Gomorrah, raiding Hamburg, while tossing bales of aluminum foil strips overboard to cause German ra-

dar screens to see a blizzard of false echoes. As a result, only twelve of 791 Allied bombers involved were shot down.

- **1945** - At the conclusion of the Potsdam Conference in Germany, Winston Churchill, Harry Truman and China's representatives issued a demand for unconditional Japanese surrender. The Japanese, unaware the demand was backed up by an Atomic bomb, rejected the Potsdam Declaration on 26 July.
- **1969** - Muhammad Ali is convicted of refusing induction in the US Army.
- **1973** - Four men from the Japanese Red Army, a militant group dedicated to a worldwide communist revolution, hijack a Japan Airlines plane. They release the 137 occupants, then blow it up and are arrested in Libya.
- **1977** - Egypt's President Anwar Sadat orders his troops to observe immediate ceasefire in fighting with Libya.
- **1977** - Sergeant Izak Cornelius Du Plessis from 1 Air Depot died in 1 Military Hospital. He was suffering from cancer. He was 25.
- **1984** - Rifleman Arthur James Henn from the South African Cape Corps died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained. He was 20.
- **2000** - In Sierra Leone, dozens of rebels, including children, surrender to UN forces in the eastern city of Kenema and turn over their weapons.

### 25 July

- **1866** - Ulysses S. Grant is named the first full general in the history of the US Army.
- **1898** - During the Spanish-American War, the U.S. invaded Puerto Rico, which was then a Spanish colony. In 1917, Puerto Ricans became American citizens and Puerto Rico became an unincorporated territory of the U.S. Partial self-government was granted in 1947 allowing citizens to elect their own governor.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: In the month since 25 June, Emily Hobhouse has addressed 26 public meetings in Britain on the concentration camps, raising money to improve conditions.
- **1934** - Nazi coup fails in Austria.
- **1938** - Spanish Republican Army begins an offensive on the Ebro.
- **1943** - RAF bombs Fokker airplane factory in Amsterdam.
- **1943** - Mussolini was deposed just two weeks after the Allied attack on Sicily.
- **1944** - Allied breakthrough at St-Lo, Patton begins his drive across France.
- **1944** - First jet fighter used in combat, the Messerschmitt 262.
- **1945** - Japan says it will surrender, but not unconditionally.
- **1946** - US detonates an un-

derwater A-bomb at Bikini, the fifth atomic explosion.

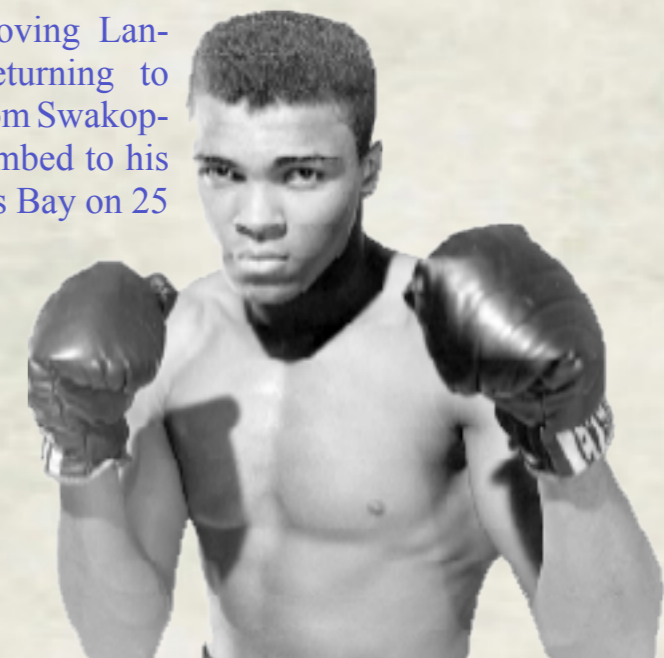
- **1947** - The US Army, Navy, & Air Force are subordinated to the new Department of Defence.
- **1982** - Rifleman M.J.J. Mahlio from 113 Battalion died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while stationed at Phalaborwa. He was 26.
- **1983** - Special Sergeant Leonard Mattheus from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was the Driver of Koevoet Casspir Zulu Foxtrot 2. He was Killed in Action when his vehicle was hit by a Soviet RPG-7 Anti-Tank Rocket after the vehicle ran into a SWAPO/PLAN ambush just North of Okatopi. He was 26.
- **1987** - Flight Sergeant Hendrik Andries Prinsloo Engelbrecht from Air Force Base Rooikop was critically injured on 22 July 1987 when he accidentally fell off the backing of a moving Landrover while returning to AFB Rooikop from Swakopmund. He succumbed to his injuries in Walvis Bay on 25

July 1987. He was 35.

- **1987** - Private Cornelius Johannes Kriel from 93 Ammunition Depot was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Jan Kempdorp. He was 21.
- **1988** - Rifleman Roelof van Aswegen from the Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident near Curries Post while on leave pass. He was 18.
- **1990** - Liberian rebels attack an airfield in Monrovia, closing off that city's last link to outside world.
- **1994** - Israel & Jordan formally end a state of war that existed since 1948.
- **2006** - Carl M. Brashear, the first black diver in the US Navy, dies at the age of 75.
- **2009** - Harry Patch, the last British Army veteran of the World War I trenches, dies at the age of 111.

### 26 July

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Piet de Wet,



**Muhammad Ali**

- brother of Chief Commandant C.R. de Wet, and his staff lay down their arms at Kroonstad. The two brothers were never reconciled again.
- **1942** - RAF bombs Hamburg.
- **1944** - The U.S. Army began desegregating its training camp facilities. Black platoons were then assigned to white companies in a first step toward battlefield integration. However, the official order integrating the armed forces didn't come until July 26, 1948, signed by President Harry Truman.
- **1944** - Russian troops arrive on the Vistula.
- **1945** - The U.S. Cruiser Indianapolis arrived at Tinian Island in the Marianas with an unassembled Atomic bomb, met by scientists ready to complete the assembly.
- **1953** - The beginning of Fidel Castro's revolutionary "26th of July Movement." In 1959, Castro led the rebellion that drove out dictator Fulgencio Batista. Although he once declared that Cuba would never again be ruled by a dictator, Castro's government became a Communist dictatorship.
- **1957** - USSR launches its first intercontinental multi-stage ballistic missile.
- **1968** - Candidate Officer Bruce Spafford Human from Central Flying School Dunnottar was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed near Balfour while on a routine general flying training

- flight. He was flying solo at the time of the accident. He was 19.
- **1973** - Rifleman Joseph Petrus Hermanus Viviers from 3 SAI accidentally drowned while his patrol was crossing the Kavango River. His foot got stuck between rocks in deep water and by the time assistance arrived and he was freed, he had already drowned. He was 18.
- **1979** - Corporal David Michael Muller from 2 Special Service Battalion died from injuries sustained in a military vehicle accident on the 23 July 1979 when his Landrover overturned approximately 8km from Jozini. He was 22.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Michael Steven Hadlow from 44 Parachute Regiment Pathfinder Company was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 25.
- **1981** - Two members from Jozini Military Base were killed when their military vehicle overturned near Jozini. They were: Corporal Rory Clyde Joliffe (19). Rifleman Samuel Matenjwa (34).
- **1988** - Swapo claims SA is moving military equipment and troops to the Angola-South West Africa border.
- **1989** - Private Johannes Gysbertus de Klerk from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed in a Military Vehicle

- Accident 15 km south of Tosca. He was 18.
- **1991** - Rifleman Mohapi Petrus Mdakane from 21 Battalion was accidentally killed when he was run over by a Samil 20 in Lenz Base. He was 23.
- **1994** - The Department of Defence is allocated some R10.5 billion, more than 8.7 per cent of the budget.

**27 July**

- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Chief Commandant C.R. De Wet, operating in the Bethlehem district, issues instructions to Commandant Willem D. Fouche in the Eastern Cape Colony to summarily execute any armed Blacks they capture.
- **1909** - Orville Wright demonstrates a plane for the US Army, flying 72 minutes.
- **1943** - Stalin issues Order No. 227: "Panic makers and cowards must be liquidated on the spot. Not one step backward...!"
- **1944** - First British jet fighter enters combat, the Gloster Meteor.
- **1944** - Soviets liberate Majanek Concentration Camp.
- **1953** - The undeclared Korean War ends, after three years of fighting between North Korean and Chinese Communists against the United Nations forces (mainly South Korean and American).
- **1954** - Armistice divides Vietnam in two.

- **1954** - Britain and Egypt initial an agreement to end British occupation of the Suez Canal Zone.
- **1978** - UN Security Council endorses Western plan for ending guerrilla warfare in Southwest Africa and making it independent new state of Namibia.
- **1985** - Rifleman James Richard Willard Rudd from 3 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident at Omauni. He was 18.
- **1987** - Rifleman Andre Hartzenberg from Infantry School was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at the Infantry School Training Centre in Oudtshoorn. He was 19.
- **1990** - Rifleman Alan Fuller from 3 SAI was accidentally killed at the Vooruitsig Shooting Range after being struck by a bullet that ricocheted off a stone wall at the range. He was 21.
- **1995** - Korean War Veterans Memorial dedicated in Washington.
- **2004** - Sixty-seven of the sixty-nine suspected mercenaries plead guilty to lesser charges of violating Zimbabwe's immigration and civil aviation laws.

**28 July**

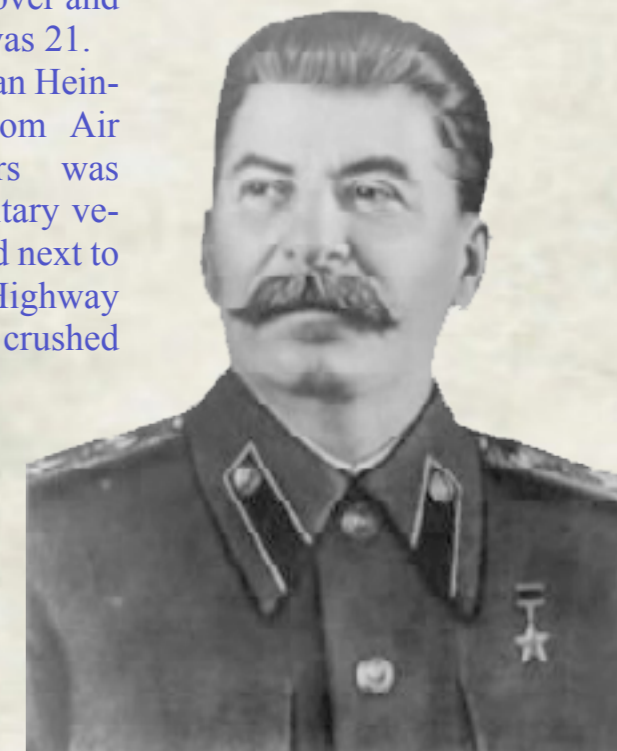
- **1914** - World War I: Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia a month after the murder on Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo. World War I begins.
- **1943** - During World War II,

- a firestorm killed 42,000 civilians in Hamburg, Germany. The firestorm occurred after 2,326 tons of bombs and incendiaries were dropped by the Allies.
- **1945** - Kamikaze sink their last ship, the USS 'Callaghan' (DD-792), off Okinawa.
- **1960** - Dag Hammarskjold, secretary-general of the UN, arrives in the Congo to try to end the civil war.
- **1972** - Two members from the Army Services School were killed in a military vehicle accident at Voortrekkerhoogte. They were: Private Carel David Aucamp Labuschagne (18). Private Jonathan Peter Knight (18).
- **1979** - Rifleman Ignatius Matheus Fick Du Plessis from 5 SAI was accidentally killed at Elundu after being struck by a bullet from a fellow soldiers unattended rifle when the weapon discharged after it fell over and hit the ground. He was 21.
- **1980** - Corporal Johan Heinrich Wasserman from Air Force Headquarters was killed when his military vehicle that was parked next to the Ben Schoeman Highway near Pretoria, was crushed

- after being struck by an extra heavy articulate vehicle. He was 23.
- **1983** - Rifleman Eduard Cornelius Mostert from 5 SAI, attached to SWA SPES (SWATF) was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 18.
- **1988** - Rifleman Sipho Brian Msomi from 121 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with FRELIMO Forces at Muzi, near Jozini on the Mozambique border. He was 27.

**29 July**

- **1900** - The Alabama, American raider of the Southern States during the American Civil War, arrives in Saldana Bay for provisions.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Marthinus Prinsloo, leader of the Republican forces in the



**Joseph Stalin**

Brandwater Basin, sends an emissary to Gen. Hunter, asking a 4-day armistice. Hunter refuses and insists on unconditional surrender.

- **1949** - Berlin Airlift ends, as Soviets end blockade.
- **1953** - Soviets shoot down US patrol bomber northeast of Vladivostok.
- **1965** - Private Petrus Frederick Johannes Kruger from the Army Service Corps died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained at Brits. He was 18.
- **1969** - Lieutenant Andrew le Roux from 8 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed into the Rustfontein Dam. He was 23.
- **1980** - Sapper Hans Wolfgang Pfeffer from the South African Engineer Corps died in 1 Military Hospital after contracting cerebral meningitis while serving in the Operational Area. He was 24.
- **1982** - Rifleman Johan Wilhelm Christiaan Scheepers from 5 SAI was killed while on official duty when his private motor vehicle overturned while he was on his way to attend a military parade. He was 18.
- **1983** - Rifleman Andre Jordaan from 3 SAI was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1986** - Rifleman Martin Johannes Botes from 2 SAI was killed while standing guard duty at the Selelekelela High School in Soweto

when a fellow guard accidentally dropped his loaded rifle and a shot went off, hitting him in the head. He was 19.

- **1988** - Sergeant Zacharias Eduardo from 32 Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 35.
- **1991** - Major Wilfred de Koker from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was accidentally killed while participating in a night parachute training exercise at the Hellsgate Training Area. He was 32
- **2003** - Sierra Leonean rebel leader Foday Sankoh, who had been in United Nations custody since 2000 and was awaiting trial on charges of mass murder and other crimes, dies at a hospital in Freetown, after a stroke.

### 30 July

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Marthinus Prinsloo surrenders in the Brandwater Basin, near Clarens. Some generals refuse to surrender and escape through Golden Gate with about 1,500 men.
- **1909** - US Army accepts delivery of its first military airplane.
- **1966** - US airplanes bomb demilitarized zone in Vietnam.
- **1979** - Sapper Colin Stephen Rees from the School of Engineers died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while he was stationed at Kroonstad. He was

24.

- **1982** - Rifleman Daryl Peter Croeser of 61 Mechanised Battalion was Killed in Action in Southern Angola during Ops Meebos when Ratel 72 detonated a double boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese mine. He was 19.
- **1986** - Lance Corporal R.H. Makaranga from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 25.
- **1987** - Rifleman Johannes Petrus Wessels Groenewald from 8 SAI was critically Injured and paralysed in a landmine explosion near Katima Mulilo on 14 July 1983. He was placed into a care facility after discharge from 1 Military Hospital but three years later, complications arose as a result of these injuries and gangrene set in. He was re-admitted to 1 Military Hospital where he died on 30 July 1987. He was 24.
- **1987** - An ANC car bomb attack directed at the headquarters of the Wits Command, takes place in Quartz Street, Johannesburg. One person is killed and sixty-eight are injured.
- **2002** - President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwandan President Paul Kagame sign a peace agreement intended to bring an end to the civil war that started in 1998. More than 2,5-million people died.

### 31 July

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General De la Rey arrests ex-General Schoeman on his farm near Pretoria for refusing to obey an order to escort a convoy of supply wagons.
- **1917** - World War I: Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) begins (ends Nov. 10th), perhaps 500,000 die or are injured on both sides.
- **1925** - Last Allied occupation forces leave the Rhineland.
- **1970** - Black Tot Day: Parliament abolishes the Royal Navy's 330 year tradition of a daily issue of grog, replacing it with a daily can of beer.
- **1978** - Sapper Louis Francois Porter from 46 Survey Squadron, South African Corps of Engineers, was

killed in a military vehicle accident at Kimbezi in Eastern Caprivi. He was 21.

- **1982** - Rifleman Domingo Dala Denge from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 30.
- **1987** - Airman Jacques de Villiers Snyders from TEK Base was killed in a private motorcycle accident in Central Pretoria when his motorcycle collided with a truck at the intersection of Church and Rebecca Street. He was 18.
- **1987** - Rifleman Louis Samuel Du Piesanie from Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident 8km from Beaufort West. He was 23.
- **1989** - Private Edward Stephen Cooper from the Prov-

ost School was killed when his SAMIL 50 overturned at the Army Battle School. He was 18.

- **1990** - The chief of the SA defence force, Gen. Jannie Geldenhuys, announces that the Citizens Cooperation Bureau (CCB) will be disbanded.
- **1991** - Two members from 111 Battalion were killed when their military vehicle that was transporting patients to 1 Military Hospital, overturned on the N4 Highway near Cullinan. They were: Rifleman Bonisani Abednego Sibuyi (27). Rifleman Morris Mavabaza Simbine (33).
- **1991** - George H.W. Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev sign the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.



Third Battle of Ypres



# Phonetic Alphabet World War II

1. Able.
2. Baker.
3. Dog.
4. Easy.
5. Jig.
6. Love.
7. Nan.
8. Oboe.
9. Peter.
10. Queen.
11. Roger.
12. Sugar.
13. Uncle.
14. Yoke.
15. Zebra.



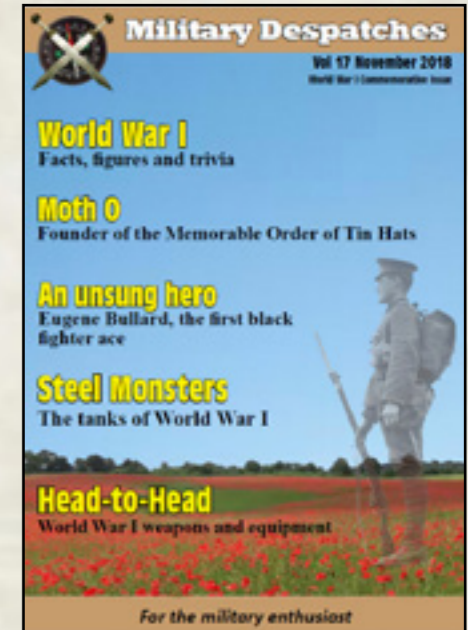
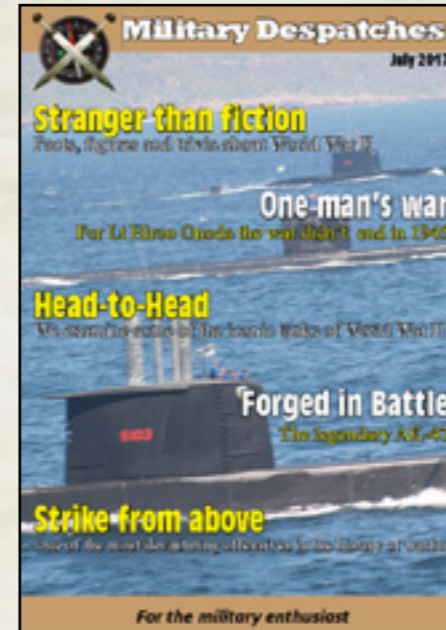
## Useful links

Every month we feature a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and online magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.



# Military Despatches Website



“Things don’t have to change the world to be important.”

*Steve Jobs*

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Have you checked out the bookshelf on the website? Here you can gain access to individual articles.

You will find articles on numerous different topics that have been published over the past four years as well as video clips and documentaries.

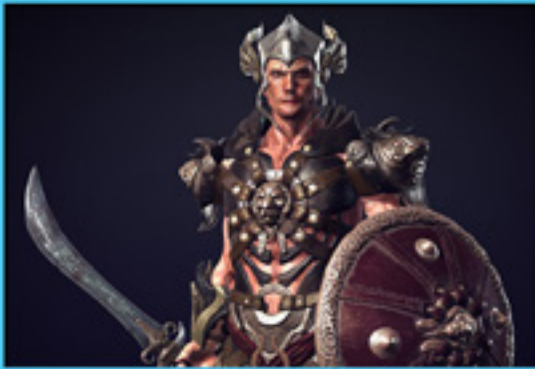
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