



Military Despatches

Vol 65 November 2022

That's a bit cheeky

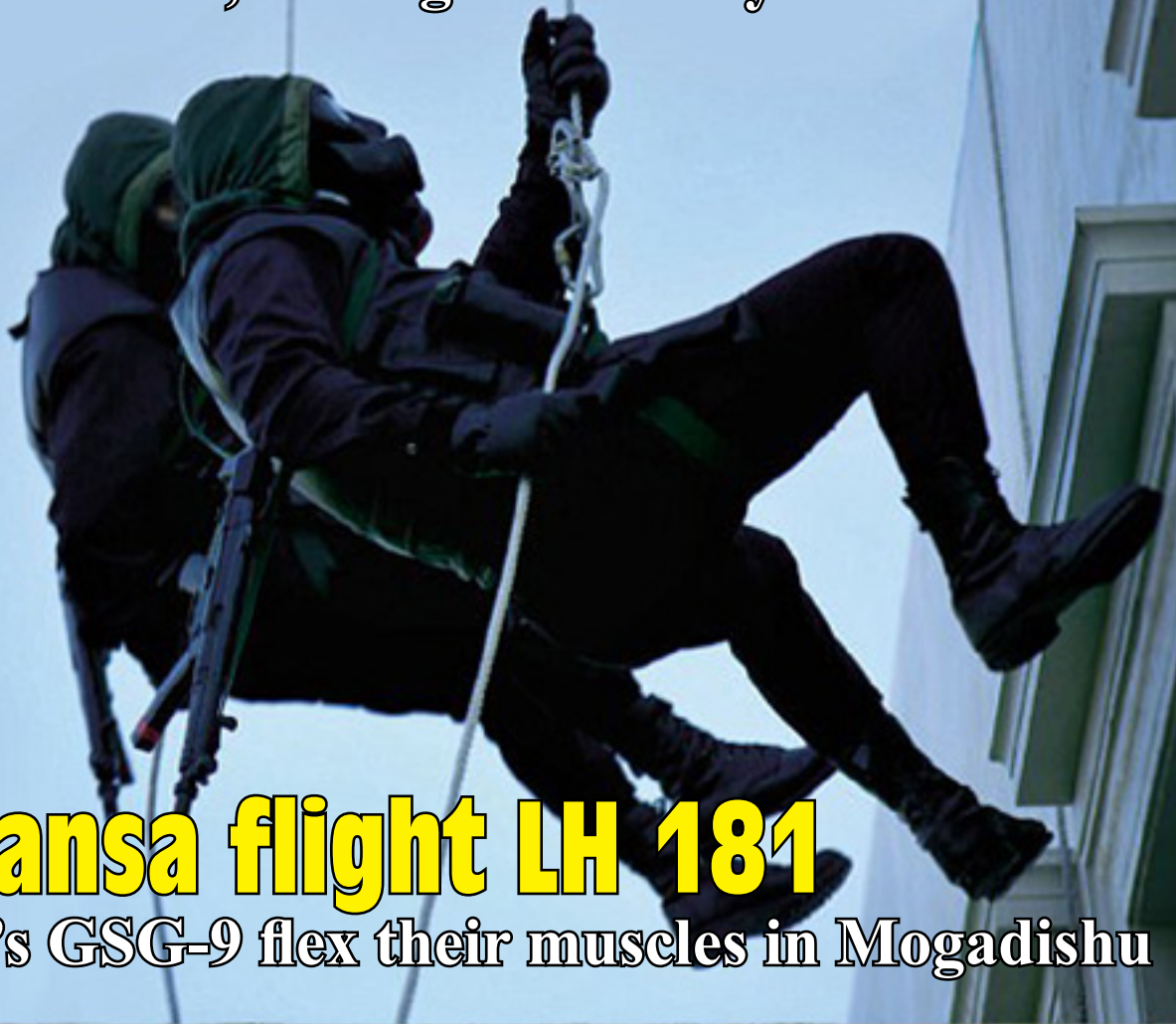
Ten audacious military raids

Bizarre and a bit fuzzy

Ten wars that history completely forgot

Fearless courage

For the Gurkhas, courage is a lifestyle



Lufthansa flight LH 181

German's GSG-9 flex their muscles in Mogadishu

For the military enthusiast



**Military Despatches
YouTube Channel**



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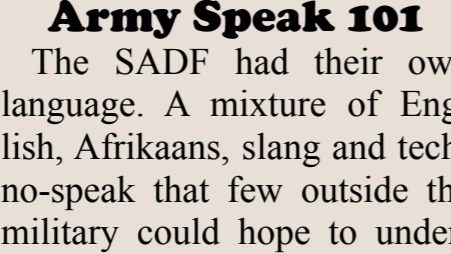


Military Despatches
Paratrooper Wings Quiz

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

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

New videos each week

We will be uploading new videos to our YouTube channel each week.

So remember to bookmark the channel and keep an eye out for new content.



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.



Military Despatches
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.



Military Despatches
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.



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The military loves nicknames and slang. US Marines are known as 'Grunts', while a 'Jimmy' is a member of the Signals Corps. How many of these nicknames do you know?

Please remember to subscribe to our channel.

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



Editor's Sitrep

It's the 11th month of 2022 and the 65th issue of Military Despatches. Next month - December - Christmas will be upon us and then the year is at an end. Joy to the world.

I've been a busy little beaver and I have basically finished the December issue as well. This mean I can have a bit of a break over Christmas.

I thought about going away for a few days but there were a few factors that influenced my decision not to do so.

First of all, December is not the ideal time to try and take a vacation. The price of everything seems to triple on 1 December, and everywhere is fully booked and crowded. Secondly I can't really afford to go anywhere.

So what I've decided to do is to climb on my trusty old motorcycle and head out for day trips or maybe overnight somewhere.

For a few months I was considering making the December issue of Military Despatches the last one. A few people, and I do mean only a few, have asked if I could please continue to publish the magazine.

So I have decided that I will continue to publish the maga-

zine until March 2023 and then re-evaluate things from there.

Someone asked me recently why it is called 'Military Despatches' and not 'Military Dispatches'. Well there is a good reason for that.

The word 'dispatch' can be defined as "to send something away towards a designated goal". This is where the word 'dispatch rider' originates.

A 'despatch' can be defined as "an official report (often sent in haste)". So there you have it.

I've been wondering how many people will attend the Remembrance Day Parades this year. There seem to be fewer people each year. So much for "We will remember them."

I trust that you will all have a good November and that Eskom can manage to keep the lights on for more than a day or two at a time. Yet I fear that this is something that will not happen. The next thing you know they'll be asking us to thank them for saving us from using too much electricity.

Until next month, stay safe and stay healthy.

Matt

Hipe! media

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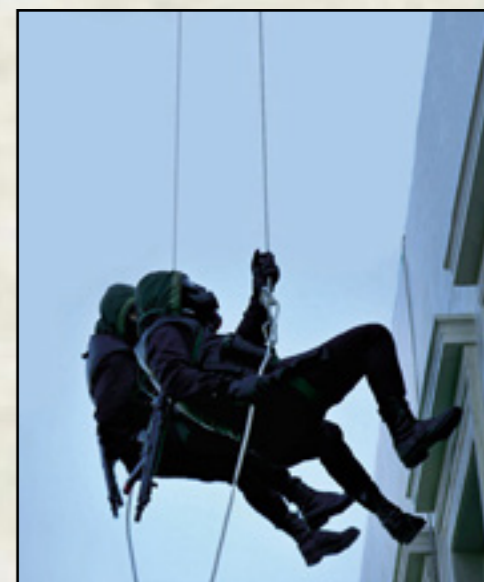
"Mad Mike" Hoare

A look at an African legend and mercenary leader.

Front Cover

Two members of Britain's elite Special Air Service (SAS) abseil from the roof of the Iranian embassy in London.

They were part of Operation Nimrod, the assault on the embassy and the rescue of the hostages.



INCOMING

Letters to the editor

Have your say. Want to leave a compliment or a criticism? Request that we do an article about a particular subject, or point out an error that we may have made. Ask a military related question. Then this is the section to do it. Send an e-mail to matt@hipe.co.za and we will try our best to publish it. Please mark your e-mail with 'Incoming' in the subject line.

Hi Matt

I've just finished reading the October issue. Congratulations on another fine magazine.

I found the article on Heinz Guderian interesting. What I really want to know is if he was a Nazi or not?

Regards
Kevin Thompson

Thanks Kevin. Glad you enjoyed the magazine.

To the best of my knowledge, Guderian was never a member of the Nazi Party. In fact by all accounts he had little time for Hitler or the Nazi Party. He was, however, a staunch anti-communist.

On more than one occasion he disobeyed orders and this led to him being relieved of command on 26 December 1941. He was then transferred to the reserve pool.

After the Battle of Stalingrad, Hitler realised that he needed Guderian and created a special post for him - "Inspector General of Armoured Troops".

Guderian agreed to return, but with a number of stipulations to ensure that he would be able to do his job without interference.

Hitler reluctantly agreed and on 1 March 1943 Guderian took up his new post.

On 21 July 1944, after the failure of the 20 July Plot to assassinate Hitler, Guderian was appointed Chief of Staff of the Army (Chef des Generalstabs des Heeres).

Guderian surrendered to U.S. forces on 10 May 1945. He remained as a prisoner of war in U.S. custody until his release on 17 June 1948. His conduct was investigated and no charges were brought.

Hi Matt

An interesting question for you. I believe that it is tradition that Scottish Regiments do not wear underpants under their kilts.

However it was apparently a ruling that if a queen is sitting on the throne, then they do have to wear underpants.

As Queen Elizabeth II was on the throne for 70 years I think it is safe to say that no-one currently serving in any Scottish Regiment has ever not worn underwear beneath their kilts.

Now that there is a king on the throne, King Charles III, will all the Jocks have to remove their underpants and go commando?

Best wishes,
Dave Munroe

Greeting Dave. An interesting



question indeed and I'm afraid I'm a bit out of my depth here.

As you may, or may not know, I am Irish. I was born there and grew up in Ireland until we moved to South Africa when I was 13.

It was we Irish that invented the kilt and we gave it to the Scottish. We also invented whisky and also gave it to them (even though they can't seem to spell it right). Finally, we invented the bagpipe and gave it to the Scottish as a joke. They still haven't seen the joke, because they still insist on playing the thing.

All jokes aside, I tried doing a bit of research on the matter and ended up being more confused that when I started.

The earliest forms of the kilt, called a plaid or "great kilt" (feileadh mòr), were worn over the existing garments of the time, such as trows or breeches with hose or leg wraps.

From the late 1600s onward, historical paintings start to show some kilts worn with high socks, with no covering on the visible part of the upper legs.

It is unknown exactly why the practice of wearing no undergarments under the kilt began. Even so, it is unknown if the practice was a dress code requirement, was left to individual

soldier's preference, or merely a false rumour that later evolved into an actual practice.

The kilt continued to be part of some regimental combat uniforms on the Western Front during the World War I. Every day the regiment would be inspected by a senior officer who would have a mirror to look under kilts. Anyone found wearing underpants would be sent back to take them off.

So I honestly have no idea if those serving in Scottish Regiments will now have to remove their underwear.

If any of our readers served in a Scottish Regiment or know more about the topic, please drop me an e-mail and let me know.

Dear Matt

Well done on a fine publication. This is one of the better military magazines out there.

Would it be possible to feature more stories about the South African Border War? This is an interesting subject and one that we are not that familiar with.

Regards
Major (Ret) Tim H. Bradshaw
US Army

Thank you for your e-mail Major. I will try and ensure that we do more articles on our own Border War in future issues of the magazine.

Once again, thank you for reading Military Despatches.

Hi Matt

I am interested by fighter aircraft and read everything I can get my hands on.

So I found the article on fighter aircraft with the most kills right up my alley.

My mate and I have been debating on which was the better aircraft between the Lockheed P-38 Lightning and the de Havilland Mosquito. He says Lightning while I go with Mosquito. What are your thoughts.

Mike Allan

I'm by no means an expert on aircraft. But I will give you the facts and figures, as well as my

opinion. Both were very fast aircraft with the Lightning having a maximum speed of 666 km/h. The Mosquito was only two kilometres quicker at 668 km/h.

Both also carried a fairly heavy bomb load, with the edge going slightly to the Mosquito.

Both had the same combat range which was 2,100 kilometres. At 13,000 metres, the Lightning had a higher service ceiling than the Mosquito which had a service ceiling of 11,000 metres.

The Mosquito did have a quicker rate of climb at 24.1 m/s, which was two metres a second quicker than the Lightning.

The Mosquito had a more powerful armament with 4 x 7.7 mm Browning machine guns and 4 x 20 mm Hispano cannons. The Lightning carried 1 x 20 mm Hispano cannon and 4 x M2 Browning machine guns.

Personally I believe that the Lightning was a better fighter and the Mosquito was a better strike bomber.

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](#)

10 wars history completely forgot

Ten rather bizarre wars that history seems a bit fuzzy about.

Most of us are fairly well versed in the history of the major wars such as the two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, and our own Border War.

Yet there are some wars that history hasn't paid much attention to. Wars that we either know nothing about, or our information is sketchy at best.

Let's take a closer look at ten of those wars.

Canada vs Croatia

Do you remember that time when Canada, despite being outnumbered three to one, knocked the daylights out of the Croatian Army. No? Well that's hardly surprising seeing as how the Canadian government banned all reports of the incident.

It began in 1991 with the collapse of Yugoslavia. A brutal ethnic war broke out between the new Croatian and Serbian governments.

Reports that the Croatians were massacring civilians forced the United Nations to intervene. In response they sent 900 Canadian troops into the region to act as a peacekeeping force.

Normally the Canadians are a peacefully and friendly bunch. That is until you put them in an ice-hockey rink. Then you will see just how aggressive they can become.

If you really wanted to see an effective fighting force, take the Canadian's guns away, give them an ice-hockey stick, and tell them the enemy has the puck.

The Croatians made the mistake of thinking that the Canadians would be a push-over and attacked them with a force of 2,500 soldiers. It was a costly error.

Not only did the Canadians manage to hold off the much larger force, they inflicted 87 casualties on the Croatians, including 27 dead, before the Croats retreated in disarray. And to top it all, the Canadians didn't suffer a single casualty.

Now you would think that the Canadian government would be proud of their troops and hail their bravery. This was not the case.

Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien actually banned the Canadian media from reporting the incident for nine years.

Supposedly this was to avoid ruining his administration's peace-loving image or upsetting Canada's Croatian population. Although we think it might just be that Canada was too polite to boast about it.

Anglo-Zanzibar War

Most readers will know about the Six-Day War. This took place in 1967 when Israel took on seven countries and defeated

them in only six days.

Let's be honest, six days is a pretty short war. Yet how about a war that lasted a mere 38 minutes. This made it the shortest recorded war in history.

The year was 1896, back at a time when Britain still ruled the waves, and often waived the rules.

Sultan Hamad bin Thuwaini ruled the island of Zanzibar, off the coast of present-day Tanzania. The sultan was very pro-British. When Thuwaini died on 25 August, 1896, he was succeeded by Sultan Khalid bin Barghash.

The British authorities were keen on Hamud bin Muhammed becoming the new sultan as he was also pro-British. And the British felt that they had a say in the matter of succession.

In accordance with a treaty signed in 1886, a condition for accession to the sultanate was that the candidate obtain the permission of the British consul, and Khalid had not bothered obtaining said permission.

The British considered this a *casus belli* (Latin expression meaning "an act or event that provokes or is used to justify war").

They sent an ultimatum to Khalid, demanding that he order his forces to stand down and that he leave the palace. In response, Khalid called up his palace guard and barricaded



ALL OVER BEFORE TEA: The entrance to the Palace in Stone Town, Zanzibar. This was the scene for the shortest war ever.

himself inside the palace. Not a wise move on his part.

When the ultimatum expired at 09:00 on 27 August, the British already had three cruisers, two gunboats, 150 marines and sailors, and 900 local auxiliary troops in the harbour.

Facing them was the Zanzibar royal yacht *HMS Glasgow*, two small vessels, and 2,800 of the Sultan's troops. Most of the Sultan's troops were recruited from the civilian population.

The defenders had several artillery pieces and machine guns that were set in front of the palace and aimed at the British ships.

At 09:02 the British opened fire. The palace was set ablaze and the artillery was disabled. At the same time *HMS Glasgow* and the two small ships were sunk.

The pro-British Zanzibari troops stormed the palace, the flag at the palace was shot down, and at 09:40 the palace defenders surrendered. A mere 38 minutes after the war had begun, it was over.

The sultan's forces suffered roughly 500 casualties, while only one British sailor was lightly injured.

By this stage Sultan Khalid had already fled, seeking asylum in the German consulate before fleeing to German East Africa.

The British quickly placed Sultan Hamud in power at the head of a puppet government. The war marked the end of the Zanzibar Sultanate as a sovereign state and the start of a period of heavy British influence.

Van Zandt vs America

After the American Civil War ended in 1865 the people of America got together to form the United States. Well, nearly everyone.

The people of the small county of Van Zandt in Texas were sick of both sides. So in 1867 they decided to secede from the United States and form their own country. They even went as far as drawing up their own Declaration of Independence, based on the American Declaration of Independence.

Not surprisingly the United States was not happy with this upstart country embarrassing them, and sent a cavalry unit to deal with them. Not to be outdone, the Van Zandt gathered their own troops and declared war on America.

The US Cavalry rode in assured of a quick victory. There were two factors that counted against them though.

First of all the Van Zandt were fighting on home ground that they knew like the back of their hand. Secondly the densely wooded conditions of Van Zandt County made cavalry useless.

The Americans were ambushed and defeated, forcing them to pull back. Having achieved the ultimate underdog victory, the Van Zandt did the only sensible thing to do - they held a victory celebration and got blind drunk.

In fact they were so drunk that the defeated American cavalry marched in and arrested them.

Watched over by only one

guard, the prisoners soon escaped and the US Army never bothered chasing them. The country's Declaration of Independence was never officially repealed, meaning to this day Van Zandt is technically its own nation.

Russia vs Japan

When the Russian Army rolled into Berlin and forced the Nazis to surrender, you would have thought that they would have called it a day.

After all, they had lost over 26 million people during the war. But Soviet leader Joseph Stalin was not prepared to sit back and take a breather. Uncle Joe sensed opportunity, and it was knocking very loudly.

After America dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on 6 August, 1945, it became clear that the war would not last much longer.

On 8 August, 1945, the USSR declared war on Japan and launched three separate invasions on Japanese territory in China. This sudden attack took Japan by surprise and they were driven out of China in a matter of days.

Russia's Allied partners, America and Britain, were probably just as surprised as the Japanese. Since the Yalta Conference in February 1945 they had been pleading with Stalin to declare war on Japan. They felt that this would force Japan to surrender, but Stalin's answer had been a resounding "heh".

Not done yet, the USSR then began to attack Japanese land in

Korea. The fighting lasted three weeks and killed 12,000 Japanese soldiers.

Eventually, on 2 September, 1945, Japan surrendered, bringing to an end World War II.

According to some historians, Stalin declared war on Japan to aid the Allies and bring the war to a quicker conclusion. Others think that Stalin was just out to grab as much land as possible before the war ended.

Taking Stalin's track record into account, most historians tend to favour the later option.

Netherlands vs Isles of Scilly

When you're at war for over three hundred years and there hasn't been a single casualty then either you're not trying hard enough, or someone is not taking the war seriously enough.

It all started with the English Civil War. Oliver Cromwell and his army of royal-hating Parliamentarians were on the verge of winning the war and driving the remaining Royalist forces of the king out of mainland England.

Pushed out of Cornwall, the Royalists settled on the Isles of Scilly. The Isles of Scilly are an archipelago off the Cornish coast, in southwest England.

In an act of solidarity with the Parliamentarians, the Netherlands declared war on the 9.5 square kilometre archipelago. The Dutch Navy arrived off the shores of Scilly and demanded money from the Royalist forces.

Receiving no answer from the Royalists, the Dutch packed up

and sailed home without firing a single shot. The Dutch quickly forgot about the incident and that, as they say in the classics, should have been that.

There was, however, one small detail that was overlooked - the Dutch had never bothered signing a peace treaty. It wasn't until 1986 that a historian from the Isles of Scilly pointed out that the area was still at war with the Dutch.

Rather than immediately invade the islands the Dutch did the grown-up, albeit rather tongue-in-cheek, thing and sent an ambassador down to sign a peace treaty.

The 'war' lasted 335 years, making it one of the longest wars in history.

Switzerland vs Switzerland

The land of banks, chocolate, and cuckoo clocks is well known for staying neutral. In fact the Swiss haven't picked a fight with another country since 1815. But that doesn't mean that they won't knock the stuffing out of each other from time to time.

In the nineteenth century Switzerland was more a loosely connected collection of regions than a country. There was a move to unite the areas under a single, centralised, government. Seven Catholic regions opposed the move. They distanced themselves from the rest of Switzerland and, ironically, bonded together to create their own nation under a centralised government.

The new country of Son-



NA ZDOROVIE COMRADE: The war between Moldova and Transnistria was known as the 'Drunken War' by the locals.

derbund formed at the bottom of Switzerland in 1847. The largely Protestant Switzerland wasn't amused with a new Catholic country on their doorstep and declared war on them.

Surprised that Switzerland of all places wanted a war, Sonderbund was caught off guard and they appealed for help from Austria and France. The two countries agreed to help, but then spent so much time discussing the right way to aid Sonderbund that they ended up doing nothing.

With an army 20,000 men stronger than Sonderbund's, the Swiss forces attacked at the beginning of November and forced a surrender before the month ended.

Mormons vs America

The last people you would

expect to get all rowdy and pick a fight would be the Mormons. After all, they are well known for being extremely nice and polite. However, there was once a time when the Mormons were more than prepared to take on the US Army.

Having met opposition to their polygamous lifestyle in the United States, the Church of Latter Day Saints formed their own territory in what is now Utah. While setting up a government there, Mormon leader Brigham Young kicked out all the officials he thought were too corrupt or inept.

This, as it turned out, was not a good idea. The disgruntled former officials returned to the US and started spreading rumours that Young wanted to attack America. President James Buchanan took the threat seri-

ously enough to send a military force of 55,000 troops to deal with the perceived threat.

Yet despite their superior numbers, the US troops kept losing skirmishes to the local Mormon forces. After a series of small battles, one of the Mormon militias attacked a train of civilian wagons. They were hoping that the US would believe that the area was populated by a tribe of bloodthirsty and dangerous Native Americans. 126 innocent men, women and children died in the massacre.

At this point the war had become an embarrassment, and both Buchanan and Young agreed it was best to stop the fighting and pretend it never happened. Utah would continue to be under Mormon rule for 40 years until it became a US state in 1896.

The Northern Crusades

Most of you are aware of the Crusades, the repeated attempts by the Catholic Church to capture Jerusalem. But there were other, less famous crusades you've probably never heard of.

One of these was the so-called 'Northern Crusade', also known as the Wendish Crusade. The object of this 12th century expedition was to wipe out paganism across Europe.

With the Kingdoms of Sweden and Denmark spearheading the campaign, these military forces were also backed up by the Teutonic Order and the Livonian Brothers, which were Christian religious orders.

The crusading armies marched into Northern Germany in 1147. Crushing their pagan opponents and either killing them or forcibly baptising them. By the end of the summer, the Christian forces had forced the largest pagan army, the Wends, to the edge of Europe.

The Wendish leader, Niklot, had little option but to agree to a mass baptism of his army as part of the terms of their surrender.

Moldova vs Transnistria

With the breakup of the Soviet Union, about one third of the citizens of Moldova wanted to remain close allies with Russia and Ukraine. The other two-thirds, however, preferred an allegiance with Romania and the West.

The Pro-Russian side attempted to form their own country called Transnistria on the eastern edge of Moldova. This resulted in Moldova and Transnistria go-

ing to war against each other in 1992.

Although the fighting only lasted just over four months, it was bloody. The Moldovans lost 324 men and the Transnistrians over 900. The war came to an end when both sides agreed that Transnistria could effectively operate as their own country, but with no other nations recognising them.

What makes this war unique is that the soldiers weren't going to let a thing like civil war ruin their social lives. Every evening opposing troops would meet up in no-man's land to have a few drinks together. Individual soldiers would sometimes form such close friendships with enemies that they would agree not to kill each other if they met on the battlefield.

This rather strange fight-by-day, booze-by-night attitude led to the conflict being

named 'The Drunken War' by locals.

Second Congo War

As a continent, Africa has seen far too many wars and conflicts.

Probably the worst conflict the continent has seen was the Second Congo War. Also known as the Great War of Africa, it was the deadliest conflict

worldwide since World War II.

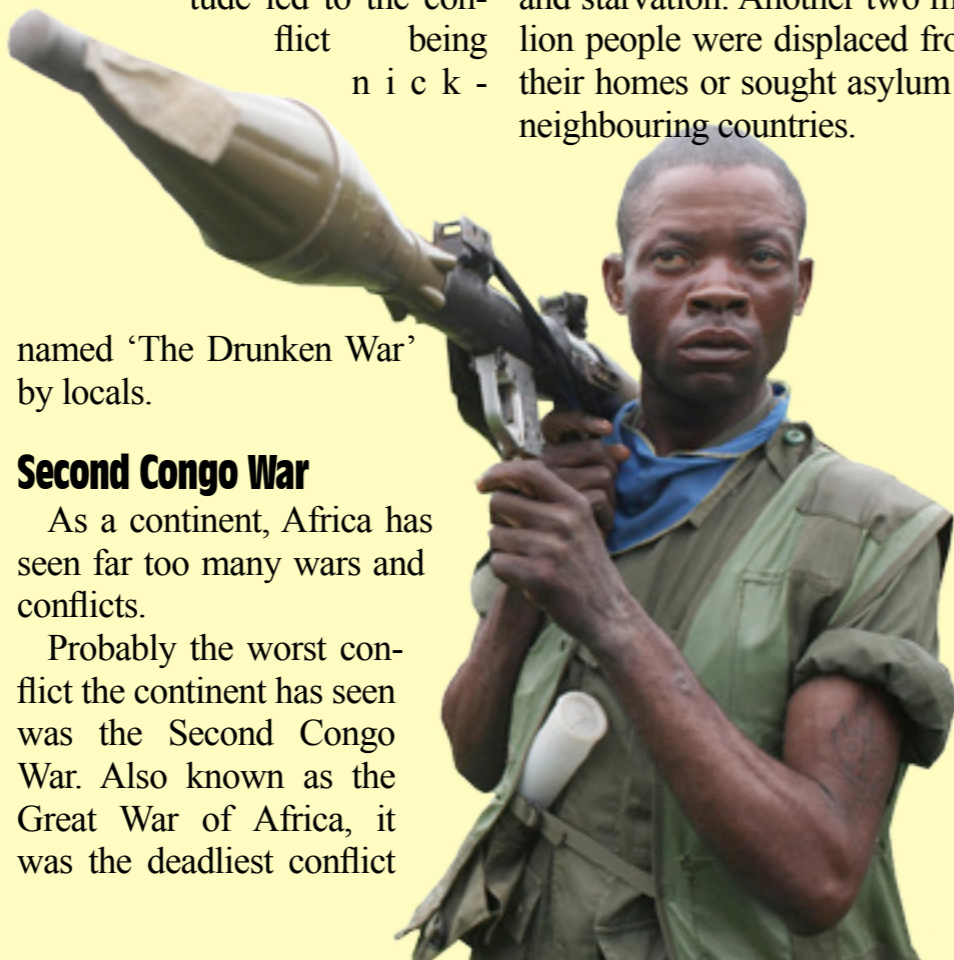
As with many conflicts in Africa, the war was driven by the trade in conflict materials among other things.

The war began in August 1998 and officially ended in July 2003 when the Transitional Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) took power.

Although a peace agreement was signed in 2002, violence continued in many regions of the country.

Ultimately nine African countries (DRC, Angola, Chad, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi), along with about twenty armed groups became involved in the war. These armed groups included the Lord's Resistance Army, Mai-Mai, Interahamwe, and Unita.

By 2008, the war and its aftermath has caused 5.4 million deaths, mainly through disease and starvation. Another two million people were displaced from their homes or sought asylum in neighbouring countries.



Bush War Books has probably one of the finest collections of military titles available. Especially on the South African Border War.

Click [here](#) to visit their website.

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

Lufthansa Flight 181

In the second of a series on classic Special Forces operations we look at West Germany's GSG-9 and their successful raid on a hijacked aircraft.

- **Date:** 13–18 October 1977
- **Location:** Mogadishu International Airport, Somalia
- **Unit involved:** GSG 9 (West Germany)



On 5 September 1972, the Palestinian terrorist movement Black September infiltrated the Summer Olympic Games in Munich, West Germany, to kidnap 11 Israeli athletes, killing two in the Olympic Village in the initial assault on the athletes' rooms.

The incident culminated when German police – who were neither trained nor equipped for counter-terrorism operations, and had underestimated the number of terrorists involved – attempted to rescue the athletes.

Police did not have a specialized tactical sniper team at that time. The army had snipers, but the German Constitution did not allow the use of German Armed Forces on German soil during peacetime.

The police rescue failed, and the operation led to the deaths of one policeman, five of the eight kidnappers and all nine of the remaining hostages.

Creation of GSG 9

As a consequence of the mismanagement of the Olympic tragedy, the West German government created the GSG 9 under the leadership of then *Oberstleutnant* Ulrich Wegener so that similar situations in the future could be responded to adequately and professionally.

Many German politicians opposed its formation, fearing GSG 9 would rekindle memories of the Nazi Party's *Schutzstaffel* (SS).

The decision was taken to form the unit from police forces, as opposed to the military similar to equivalent forces in other countries, on the ground that German federal law expressly forbids the use of the military forces against the civilian population. Composing the special force from police personnel would avoid that.

The unit was officially established on 26 September 1972 as a part of Germany's federal police agency, the *Bundesgrenzschutz* (Federal Border Guard Service, renamed *Bundespolizei* or Federal Police in 2005). The then-BGS did have something of a paramilitary nature, used military ranks (until 1976), had combatant status (until 1994), and could (at least theoretically) draw conscripts (until the present).

At 11:00 on Thursday 13 October 1977, Lufthansa flight LH 181, a Boeing 737 named *Landshut*, took off from Palma de Mallorca en route to Frankfurt with 86 passengers and five crew, piloted by Captain Jürgen Schumann, with co-pilot Jürgen Vietor at the controls.

Hijacking

About 30 minutes later, as it



was overflying Marseille, the aircraft was hijacked by four militants calling themselves "Commando Martyr Halima" in honour of fellow militant Brigitte Kuhlmann, who had been killed in Operation Entebbe the previous year.

The leader of the hijacker group was a 23 year old Palestinian terrorist Zohair Youssif Akache, who adopted the alias "Captain Martyr Mahmud". The other three were Suhaila Sayeh (24, female), a Palestinian, and two Lebanese people, Wabil Harb (23, male) and Hind Alameh (22, female).

Akache ("Mahmud") angrily burst into the cockpit, brandishing a fully loaded pistol in his hand. He forcibly removed Vietor from the cockpit, sending him to the economy class area to join the passengers and flight attendants, leaving Schumann to take over the flight controls.

As the other three hijackers knocked over food trays, ordering the hostages to put their hands up, Mahmud coerced Captain Schumann to fly east to Larnaca in Cyprus, but was told that the plane had insufficient fuel and would have to land in Rome first.

The hijacked aircraft changed course at around 14:30 (as noticed by air traffic controllers at Aix-en-Provence), diverting eastward and landed at Fiumicino Airport in Fiumicino, Rome at 15:45 for refuelling.

The hijackers made their first demands, acting in concert with a Red Army Faction group, the Siegfried Hausner Commando, which had kidnapped West German industrialist Hanns Martin Schleyer five weeks earlier: they demanded the release of ten Red Army Faction (RAF) terrorists detained at the JVA Stuttgart-Stammheim prison, plus two Palestinian compatriots held in Turkey, as well as US\$15 million.

West German Interior Minister Werner Maihofer contacted his Italian counterpart Francesco Cossiga and suggested the plane's tyres be shot out to prevent the aircraft from taking off.

After consulting with his colleagues, Cossiga decided that the most desirable solution for the Italian government was to rid itself of the problem altogether.

The aircraft was refuelled with a full 11 tons of fuel, allowing Mahmud to order co-pilot Vietor (who had been allowed to re-enter the cockpit on the ground at Fiumicino at Schumann's behest) to take off and fly the plane to Larnaca at 17:45 without even obtaining clearance from Rome air traffic control.

The *Landshut* landed in Larnaca, Cyprus, at 20:28. After about an hour, a local PLO representative arrived at the airport and over the radio tried to per-

suade Mahmud to release the hostages.

This only provoked a furious response from Mahmud, who started angrily screaming at him in Arabic until the PLO representative gave up and left.

The aircraft was then refuelled and Schumann asked flight control for a routing to Beirut. He was told that Beirut Airport was blockaded and closed to them and Mahmud suggested that they would fly to Damascus instead.

The *Landshut* took off at 22:50, heading for Beirut, but was refused permission to land there at 11:01. After also being denied landing permission in Damascus at 11:14, Baghdad at 12:13, and Kuwait at 12:58, they flew to Bahrain.

Schumann was told by a passing Qantas airliner that Bahrain Airport was also closed to them. Schumann radioed flight control and told them that they had insufficient fuel to fly elsewhere and despite being told again that the airport was closed, he was suddenly given an automatic landing frequency by the flight controller.

The plane finally touched down in Bahrain at 01:52 in the early hours of 14 October. On arrival, the aircraft was immediately surrounded by armed troops and Mahmud radioed the tower that unless the soldiers were withdrawn, he would shoot the co-pilot.

After a stand-off with the tower, with Mahmud setting a five-minute deadline and holding a loaded pistol to Vietor's head, the troops were withdrawn. The aircraft was then refuelled and took off for Dubai

at 03:24.

Approaching Dubai, the 737 was again denied landing permission. Overflying the Dubai airport in the early light of dawn, the hijackers and pilots saw the runway blocked with military jeeps, trucks and fire engines. Running short of fuel, Schumann radioed the tower to announce that they were going to land anyway.

As they made a low pass over the airport, the vehicles were finally being removed. At 05:40 (14 October), the pilots made a smooth touchdown on the airport's main runway at sunrise. The plane was parked at the parking bay around 05:51 at daybreak.

In Dubai, the terrorists instructed the control tower to send airport crew staffers to empty the toilet tanks, supply food, water, medicine, newspapers, and take away the rubbish.

Captain Schumann was able to communicate the number of hijackers on board, specifying that there were two male and two female hijackers by dropping different types of cigarettes on the tarmac from out of the cockpit window.

In an interview with journalists, this information was revealed by Dubai's Sheikh Mohammed, then Minister of Defence.

The hijackers learned about this, possibly from the radio, causing an enraged Mahmud to angrily threaten Schumann's life for secretly sharing this coded message.

The aircraft remained parked on the tarmac stationed at Dubai airport all throughout Saturday 15 October, during which



ON THE GROUND: Lufthansa Flight 181 *Landshut* sits on the ground at Mogadishu International Airport.

the jetliner experienced technical snags with the electrical generator, air conditioning and auxiliary power unit breaking down. The hijackers demanded that engineers fix the plane.

On the morning of Sunday October 16, Mahmud threatened to start shooting hostages if the aircraft was not refuelled, and Dubai authorities eventually agreed to refuel the plane.

In the meantime, both Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, the West German minister responsible for handling the hijacking, and Colonel Ulrich Wegener, commander of elite German anti-terrorist squad GSG 9, had arrived in Dubai to try to persuade the government to agree to let GSG 9 commandos into Dubai to storm the aircraft.

However, after permission was granted for GSG 9 commandos to storm the aircraft, SAS and GSG 9 senior operatives insisted on additional combat exercises and dry-runs on an adjacent airstrip.

And yes, we did say SAS. Two members of Britain's 22 Special Air Service Regiment were with GSG 9 in the role of

'advisors' to assist with logistics and planning.

Reports suggest up to 45 hours of training was conducted while in Dubai (over a period of 80 hours). While Wegener was contemplating his options, the jetliner was on the move again after the Arabs fully refuelled the *Landshut* plane and the pilots started up the engines.

At 12:19 on Sunday 16 October it took off, bound for Salalah and Masirah in Oman, where permission to land was once again denied and both airports were blockaded.

After Riyadh also closed and blockaded its airport runways at 14:50 on 16 October (three days after the hijacking began), a course was set to Aden in South Yemen, at the limit of the plane's fuel range.

Approaching and overflying Aden, the flight was yet again denied permission to land, this time at Aden International Airport, and both main runways (including the apron) were blocked by military jeeps, tanks and other vehicles.

The plane was running dangerously low on fuel, but the

Aden airport authorities adamantly refused to clear the runways, leaving co-pilot Vietor little choice but to make an emergency landing on an unpaved sand strip roughly parallel to (in-between) both runways.

The plane remained largely intact following the ground roll but when the Aden authorities told the hijackers and pilots that they needed to fly away, both pilots were concerned about the aircraft's airworthiness after its rough, hard landing on rugged, rocky and sandy terrain, deeming it unsafe to take off and fly the jetliner again until a thorough engineering inspection had been made.

After the engineers claimed that everything was all right with the airframe, Mahmud consequently allowed Schumann to check the condition of the landing gear and the engines.

Both engines had ingested a copious amount of sand and dirt at maximum reverse thrust and were clogged up. The landing gear had not collapsed, but its structure was weakened and its extension/retraction mechanism was damaged.

Schumann did not immediately return to the plane after inspecting it, even after numerous calls by the hijackers threatening to detonate the aircraft because of his departure.

The reasons for his prolonged absence remain unclear to this day. Some news reports, including interviews with Yemeni airport authorities, imply that Schumann was asking ground crews to prevent the flight from taking off and to refuse to ac-

cede to the terrorists' demands.

Schumann subsequently boarded the plane to face the wrath of Mahmud, who furiously forced him to kneel on the passenger cabin floor before fatally shooting him in the head, without giving him a chance to explain himself.

The hijacked plane was refuelled at 01:00 on 17 October and at 02:02, coaxed by co-pilot Vietor, it dangerously and sluggishly took off from Aden on course for the Somali capital of Mogadishu.

On the morning of 17 October at daybreak, around 06:34 local time, the *Landshut* made an unannounced and textbook landing on the main runway at Aden Adde airport in Mogadishu.

The Somali government had initially refused the plane permission to land, but relented when the jet appeared in Somali air space, for fear of endangering the passengers' lives by turning the aircraft away.

The chief hijacker leader Mahmud (Akache) told co-pilot Vietor that he was very impressed by Vietor's impressive flying skills and that consequently he was free to disembark and flee, since the crippled plane was in no state to fly elsewhere.

Vietor, however, opted to remain with the 82 passengers and three other crew members on board. After the twin-engine aircraft was parked in front of the main airport terminal, it was surrounded at a distance by armed Somali troops. Schumann's corpse (which had been stored in a coat closet on board the flight throughout the final

leg of the journey) was dumped via the aircraft's right rear emergency evacuation slide onto the tarmac, and whisked away in an ambulance.

During the day, the hijackers asked for food and drugs, which were sent after the Somali government gave its permission; a Somali request that the hijackers release the women and children in exchange for the supplies was rejected.

The hijackers set a 16:00 deadline for the Red Army Faction prisoners to be released, at which time they threatened to blow up the aircraft.

The hijackers poured the duty-free spirits over the hostages in preparation for the destruction of the aircraft, which did not eventuate, the hijackers were told that the West German government had agreed to release the RAF prisoners but that their transfer to Mogadishu would take several more hours. The hijackers agreed to extend the deadline to 02:30 the following morning (18 October).

Operation Feuerzauber

Meanwhile, while West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt attempted to negotiate an agreement with Somali President Siad Barre, special envoy Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski and GSG 9 commander Ulrich Wegener arrived at Mogadishu airport from Jeddah in a Lufthansa 707 aircraft co-piloted by Rüdiger von Lutzu (Gabriele Dillmann's fiancé).

In West Germany, a team of 30 GSG 9 commandos under deputy commander Major Klaus Blatte had assembled at Hangelar airfield near Bonn,



OPERATION MAGIC FIRE: GSG 9 operators approach the rear of the hijacked aircraft. Minutes later they would launch their raid.

awaiting instructions.

The commandos took off from Cologne-Bonn Airport on a Boeing 707 on Monday morning (17 October) en route to Djibouti, within a short flying time of Somalia, while Schmidt negotiated with the Somalis.

While the team was flying over Ethiopia, an agreement was reached and permission given to land at Mogadishu. The aircraft landed at 20:00 local time with all its lights out to avoid detection by the hijackers.

After four hours, unloading all of their equipment and undertaking the necessary reconnaissance, Wegener and Blatte finalised the assault plan, scheduled to begin at 02:00 local time.

They decided to approach from the rear of the aircraft, its blind spot, in six teams using black-painted aluminium ladders to gain access to the air-

craft through the escape hatches on the bottom of the fuselage and via the overwing doors.

In the meantime, a fictitious progress report on the journey being taken by the released prisoners was being fed to Mahmud by German representatives in the airport tower. Just after 02:00, Mahmud was told that the plane carrying the prisoners had just departed from Cairo after refuelling and he was asked to provide the conditions of the prisoner/hostage exchange over the radio.

As a small force, the GSG-9 relied on their Somali counterparts to maintain ground defence around the aircraft as well as deception operations.

Several minutes before the rescue, Somali soldiers lit a fire 60 metres in front of the jet as a diversionary tactic, prompting Akache and two of the other three hijackers to rush to the cockpit to observe what was going on, isolating them from

the hostages in the cabin.

At 02:07 local time, the GSG 9 commandos silently climbed up their ladders and opened the emergency doors. Wegener, at the head of one group, opened the forward door, and two other groups, led by Sergeant-Major Dieter Fox and Sergeant Joachim Huemmer, stormed the aircraft using ladders to climb up onto the wings and open both overwing emergency doors at the same time.

Shouting in German for the passengers and crew to get on the floor, the commandos shot all four terrorists, killing Wabil Harb and Hind Alameh and wounding Zohair Akache and Suhaila Sayeh. Akache died of his injuries hours later.

One GSG 9 commando was wounded by return fire from the terrorists. Three passengers and a flight attendant were slightly wounded in the cross-fire.

An American passenger

Ulrich Wegener



Ulrich Klaus "Ricky" Wegener was a German police officer and founding member of the counter-terrorist force GSG 9.

Wegener witnessed the botched attempt to rescue the Israeli hostages held by Palestinian terrorists at Munich in 1972 and was subsequently assigned to create an elite counter-terrorist unit by the West German government after the disaster. Counter-terrorist units were still a relatively unheard-of form of combating terrorism and the only truly established groups at the time were Britain's Special Air Service and Israel's Sayeret Matkal.

To this end, Colonel Wegener trained with both groups, assimilating many of their methods into the doctrine he would establish for the GSG 9. Wegener's time with the SAS is well documented, but his training with the Sayeret (and alleged participation in the rescue of the Israeli hostages in the Operation Entebbe) is less publicized.

Wegener was the GSG 9 commander at Mogadishu.

aboard the plane described the rescue: "I saw the door open and a man appears. His face was painted black and he starts shouting in German 'We're here to rescue you, get down!' [*Wir sind hier, um euch zu retten, runter!*] and they started shooting."

What is known is that at least one of the SAS operators took part in the actual raid because he was the person that shot and wounded Suhaila Sayeh.

The emergency escape chutes were deployed, and passengers and crew were ordered to quickly evacuate the aircraft.

At 02:12 local time, just five minutes after the assault had commenced, the commandos radioed: "*Frühlingszeit! Frühlingszeit!*" ("Springtime! Springtime!"), which was the code word for the successful completion of the operation.

A few moments later, a radio signal was sent to Chancellor Schmidt in Bonn: "Four opponents down – hostages free – four hostages slightly wounded – one commando slightly wounded".

The rescuers escorted all 86 passengers to safety, and a few hours later they were all flown to Cologne-Bonn Airport, landing in the early afternoon of Tuesday 18 October and given a hero's welcome.

Aftermath

News of the rescue of the hostages was followed by the deaths (and alleged suicides) of RAF members Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin and Jan-Carl Raspe at JVA Stuttgart-Stammheim Prison. RAF

member Irmgard Möller also attempted suicide but survived her injuries.

On Wednesday 19 October, the body of Hanns-Martin Schleyer, who had been kidnapped by the RAF some five weeks prior to the hijacking, was found in the trunk of a car on a side street in Mulhouse; the RAF had shot him dead upon hearing about the deaths of their imprisoned comrades.

They contacted French newspaper *Libération* to announce his 'execution'; a subsequent post-mortem examination indicated that he had been killed the previous day.

After the Landshut crisis, the German government stated it would never again negotiate with terrorists (as it previously had with Lufthansa Flight 649 and Lufthansa Flight 615 hijackers).

Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was widely praised among western countries for his decision to storm the aircraft to rescue the hostages, although some criticized the risky action.

West German-Somali relations received a significant boost after the successful operation. Lufthansa henceforth serviced all Somali Airlines planes in West Germany, while Frankfurt became Somali Airlines' new gateway to Europe.

The West German government, as a sign of gratitude, issued two multi-million dollar loans to the Somali government to assist in the development of the country's fisheries, agriculture and other sectors.

That was a bit cheeky

Raids have been around as long as there has been warfare. Yet these raids were not only audacious, they were effective and far-reaching.

Raiding, also known as depredation, has been around for as long as there has been warfare.

Among many tribal societies, raiding was the most common and lethal form of warfare. Taking place at night, the goal was to catch the enemy sleeping to avoid casualties to the raiding party.

Used as a military tactic, raids usually have a specific purpose and are not normally intended to capture and hold terrain.

A raiding group may consist of specially trained troops, such as special forces, or as a special mission assigned to any general troops.

The purposes of a raid may include:

- to demoralise, confuse or exhaust the enemy.
- to ransack, pillage or plunder.
- to destroy specific goods or installations of military or economic value.
- to free hostages or POWs.
- to capture enemy soldiers for interrogation.
- to kill or capture specific key persons.
- to gather intelligence.

In this article we will take a closer look at raids that were audacious, effective and far reaching.

They have been placed in alphabetical order.

Operation Barras

The civil war in Sierra Leone, a former British colony in West Africa, had started in March 1991. In the later half of 2000, nearly ten years later, the war was still going strong.

On 25 August 2000, a patrol from the Royal Irish Regiment were returning from a visit to Jordanian peacekeepers attached to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) at Masiaka.

When the patrol turned off the main road and drove down a track towards the village of Magbeni, they were overwhelmed by a large number of heavily armed rebels.

The 11 members of the Royal Irish Regiment patrol, along with their Sierra Leone Army liaison officer, were taken prisoner and move to Gberi Bana on the opposite side of Rokel Creek.

The rebels were a group known as the West Side Boys, under the leadership of Foday Kallay. They were well armed and particularly vicious. Their frequent use of cannabis, cocaine and local palm wine made their behaviour erratic at the best of times.

The British Army negotiated the release of six of the eleven men on patrol, but were not able to gain the freedom of their Sierra Leone Army liaison officer and the other men before the West Side Boys' demands be-

came increasingly unrealistic.

The negotiators concluded that the demands made by the West Side Boys were delaying tactics rather than an effort to resolve the crisis.

By 9 September the soldiers had been held for over a fortnight. There was a fear that the soldiers would be killed or moved to another location from which it would be more difficult to extract them. The British government authorised an assault on the West Side Boys' base to take place at dawn the following day.

The ground operation, code named Operation Barras, would be carried out by D Squadron, 22 Regiment Special Air Services and elements of 1st Battalion, Parachute Regiment.

The SAS would carry out the assault on Gberi Bana to extract the Royal Irish. 1 Para would launch a diversionary assault on Magbeni.

SAS observation teams had been in the area for some time, keeping Gberi Bana under close observation.

The two Chinook helicopter carrying the SAS assault team took up a holding position about 15 minutes flying time from the West Side Boys' camp. This meant that they were out of visual and hearing range.

This gave the observation teams time to get into position to prevent the West Side Boys from attacking any of the cap-



BEHIND ENEMY LINES: Some of the raiders that freed POWs at Cabanatuan.

tives before the assault teams were on the ground.

As the assault teams came into position, two Lynx attack helicopters strafed the village to make the landing zones as safe as possible. The observation teams engaged West Side Boys in the vicinity of the captives to prevent the gang members from attempting to kill them.

The assault teams fast-roped to the ground and swept through the village, engaging targets.

Less than 20 minutes after the arrival of the SAS assault team the five Royal Irish soldiers were freed, as was Lieutenant Musa Bangura, the patrol's SLA liaison, and had been evacuated from the area. 22 Sierra Leonean civilians who had been held captive by the West Side Boys were also released.

One SAS member, Trooper Bradley Tinnion, was killed in the raid. At least 25 West Side Boys were killed, although this number was probably much higher.

Eighteen West Side Boys, including the gang's leader, Foday Kallay, were taken prisoner

and later transferred to the custody of the Sierra Leone Police. Many West Side Boys fled the area during the assault, and over 300 surrendered to UNAMSIL forces within a fortnight.

Several decorations were awarded to the personnel who took part in Operation Barras, including two Conspicuous Gallantry Crosses, five Military Crosses, and five Distinguished Flying Crosses. Bradley Tinnion received a posthumous Mention in Despatches.

Raid at Cabanatuan

After the Battle of Bataan in the Philippines during 1942, tens of thousands of American troops surrendered to the Japanese.

Following the Bataan Death March, most of the prisoners were transferred to other areas. Just over 500 American and other Allied POWs, along with some civilians, were sent to the Cabanatuan prison camp.

The conditions in the camp were horrific. They included disease, torture and malnourishment. Prisoners were exe-

cuted for the slightest offence.

When the Americans, under General Douglas MacArthur, invaded the Philippines, the prisoners feared that they would be executed by their captors before the invading force could arrive at Cabanatuan.

In late January 1945 a plan was developed by Sixth Army leaders and Filipino guerrillas to send a small force behind enemy lines to rescue the prisoners.

A group of over a hundred US Army Rangers and Scouts and a couple of hundred guerrillas were tasked for the mission. They would travel 48 kilometres behind the Japanese lines to reach the camp.

Using a P-61 Black Widow aircraft as a distraction and under the cover of darkness, the raiders surprised the Japanese forces in and around the camp.

Hundreds of Japanese troops were killed in the 30 minute coordinated attack, with the American's suffering minimal casualties. The POWs were then escorted back to American lines.

The rescue allowed the prisoners to tell of the death march and prison camp atrocities, which sparked a new rush of resolve for the war against Japan. The rescuers were awarded commendations by MacArthur, and were also recognized by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. A memorial now sits on the site of the former camp.

Operation Chariot

On 24 May 1941, the Battle of the Denmark Strait was fought between the Royal Navy ships HMS Prince of Wales and

HMS Hood and the German ships Bismarck and Prinz Eugen.

HMS Hood was sunk and HMS Prince of Wales was damaged and had to retire. The Bismarck was also damaged and she headed for the French port of Saint-Nazaire, which was the only port on the Atlantic coast with a dry dock able to accommodate a ship of her size. She was intercepted by the British and sunk en route.

When the dry dock at Saint-Nazaire was completed in 1932 it was the largest dry dock in the world.

When the German battleship Tirpitz was declared operational in January 1942, the Royal Navy (RN) and Royal Air Force (RAF) were already drawing up plans to attack her.

Planners from Combined Operations Headquarters were looking at potential scenarios if Tirpitz escaped the naval blockade and reached the Atlantic. They decided the only port able to accommodate her was St Nazaire, especially if, like the Bismarck, she was damaged en route and needed repairs.

They came to the conclusion that if the dock at Saint-Nazaire were unavailable the Germans were unlikely to risk sending Tirpitz into the Atlantic.

Combined Operations examined a number of options, including a bombing attack by the Royal Air Force, a sabotage by agents of the Special Operations Executive, and an attack by the Royal Navy. All were ruled out for various reasons. An attack by a Commando force was decided upon.

The obsolete destroyer HMS



SET TO BLOW: HMS Campbelltown after it had rammed the dry dock at Saint-Nazaire.

Campbelltown was stripped down to make it lighter and it was packed with delayed-action explosives that were well hidden within a steel and concrete case.

Accompanied by 18 smaller craft, the HMS Campbelltown crossed the English Channel to the Atlantic coast of France.

At 00:30 on 28 March 1942 the convoy crossed over the shoals at the mouth of the Loire estuary, with Campbelltown scraping the bottom twice. Each time she was able to pull free, and the group proceeded on up toward the harbour in darkness.

At 01:28, with the convoy 1.6 km from the dry dock gates, the commander of HMS Campbelltown, Lieutenant Commander Stephen Halden Beattie, ordered the German flag they were flying to be lowered and the White Ensign raised. The convoy immediately came under intense German fire.

At 01:34, only three minutes later than scheduled, the HMS Campbelltown struck home. The force of the impact drove the ship 10 metres onto the gates.

The Commandos on the HMS Campbelltown and the smaller craft disembarked and headed

for their objectives. Their task was to secure the Old Mole and eliminate the anti-aircraft positions around the southern quays. They were then to move into the old town and blow up the power station, bridges and locks for the new entrance into the basin.

Heavy German gunfire sank, set ablaze, or immobilised virtually all the small craft intended to transport the commandos back to England; the commandos had to fight their way out through the town to try to escape overland.

Almost all were forced to surrender when their ammunition was expended and they were surrounded and captured by the Wehrmacht defending Saint-Nazaire.

At noon, while being inspected by a group of 40 senior German officers and civilians, the HMS Campbelltown exploded.

Just before the explosion, Lt Commander Beattie was being interrogated by a German naval officer who was saying that it wouldn't take very long to repair the damage the Campbelltown has caused.

Just at that moment, she went up. Beattie smiled at the officer and said, 'We're not quite as



IL DUCE IS FREE: Benito Mussolini along with Otto Skorzeny.

foolish as you think!'

Not only were the dry docks put out of action for the rest of the war, they remained so until five years after the war had ended.

After the raid, only 228 men of the force of 611 returned to Britain; 169 were killed and 215 became prisoners of war. German casualties were over 360 dead, some killed after the raid when Campbelltown exploded.

To recognise their bravery, 89 decorations were awarded to members of the raiding party, including five Victoria Crosses.

Lt Commander Beattie was one of those awarded the VC.

After the war, Saint-Nazaire was one of 38 battle honours awarded to the Commandos.

The Doolittle Raid

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941 had brought America into the war.

Since then the country had suffered a number of defeats and setbacks. Morale in America was at a low. Something needed to be done and Lieutenant Colonel James "Jimmy"

Doolittle of the United States Army Air Forces believed he had just the plan - bomb Japan!

There were, however, a problem with this plan. The Americans had no aircraft capable of getting even close to Japan from any Allied base. Doolittle believed he had the solution.

His plan was to take an aircraft carrier within flying distance of Japan, and then launch B-25B Mitchell bombers from the carrier. As it was impossible to land a medium bomber on a carrier, the bombers would then continue westward to land in China.

On 18 April 1942, sixteen B-25B Mitchell medium bombers took off from the US Navy's aircraft carrier USS Hornet (CV-8) deep in the Western Pacific Ocean.

Without any fighter escort the bombers flew to Japan and attacked the capital Tokyo and other places on the island of Honshu.

Fifteen aircraft reached China, but all crashed. The 16th aircraft reached Vladivostok in the Soviet Union. It was confiscated and its crew were interned

for more than a year.

All but three of the 80 crew initially survived the mission. Eight were captured by the Japanese Army in China. Four of them died in captivity - three were executed and one died of disease. Fourteen complete crews, except for one crewman who was killed in action, returned either to the United States or to American forces.

The raid caused little material damage to Japan, 50 Japanese were killed and about 400 injured (including civilians). But it achieved its goal of raising American morale and casting doubt in Japan on the ability of its military leaders to defend their home islands.

Doolittle, who initially believed that the loss of all his aircraft would lead to his court-martial, received the Medal of Honour and was promoted two ranks to brigadier general.

Operation Eiche (Oak)

On the night of 24 and 25 July 1943, mere weeks after the Allied invasion of Sicily and the bombing of Rome, the Italian Grand Council of Fascism voted a motion of no confidence (*Ordine del Giorno Grandi*) against Italian dictator Benito Mussolini.

On the same day King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy had Mussolini arrested and replaced by Marshal Pietro Badoglio.

Mussolini was being transported around Italy by his captors. First to Ponza, then to La Maddalena, both small islands in the Tyrrhenian Sea.

In the meantime *Hauptsturmführer* (SS Captain) Otto

Skorzeny was tracking him. Skorzeny had been personally selected for the mission by Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler and Ernst Kaltenbrunner, the head of the RSHA (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt* - Reich Main Security Office).

Skorzeny intercepted a coded Italian radio message. Using reconnaissance provided by agents and informants of *SS-Obersturmbannführer* Herbert Kappler, he was able to determine where Mussolini was being held.

Mussolini was being held high in the Apennine Mountains at Campo Imperatore Hotel, a ski resort at Campo Imperatore in Italy's Gran Sasso massif.

An airborne operation to free Mussolini was planned by Major Otto-Harald Mors, a battalion commander with the *Fallschirmjäger* (paratroopers). The plan was approved by General Kurt Student and given the go ahead by Hitler personally.

On 12 September 1943, 26 of Skorzeny's SS troopers joined a team of 82 *Fallschirmjäger* to rescue Mussolini in a high-risk glider mission.

The raiding group landed their dozen DFS 230 gliders on the mountain. One glider crashed, causing minor injuries.

Mussolini was being guarded by 200 well-equipped *Carabinieri* (Italian military force charged with police duties) guards. They were quickly overwhelmed without a single shot being fired.

This was helped by the fact that General Fernando Soletti of the *Polizia* (police) flew in with Skorzeny and told the guards to stand down or be executed for



COCKLESHELL HEROES: Major Herbert 'Blondie' Hasler (right) and a marine during training.

treason.

Skorzeny attacked the *Carabinieri* radio operator and his equipment, then he formally greeted Mussolini with "Duce, the Führer has sent me to set you free!", to which Mussolini replied "I knew that my friend would not forsake me!"

Escorted by Skorzeny, Mussolini was flown first to Rome, then to Vienna, and finally to Berlin.

Although the operation had been planned by the *Luftwaffe Fallschirmjäger* (German air force paratroopers), at the behest of Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels, Skorzeny and his Special Forces of the *Waffen-SS* were granted the majority of the credit for the operation.

Mussolini was made leader of the Italian Social Republic (a German puppet state consisting of the German-occupied portion of Italy). Otto Skorzeny gained a large amount of success from this mission; he received a promotion to *Sturmbannführer* (assault unit leader), the award of

the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross and fame that led to his "most dangerous man in Europe" image. Winston Churchill himself described the mission as "one of great daring".

As it turned out, however, this was one of the last of Hitler's spectacular gambles to bear fruit.

Operation Frankton

The Royal Marines Boom Patrol Detachment (RMBPD) had been formed on 6 July 1942. Based at Southsea, Portsmouth, it was under the command of Royal Marines Major Herbert 'Blondie' Hasler with Captain J. D. Stewart as second in command.

The Bay of Biscay port of Bordeaux was a major destination for goods to support the German war effort, and Hasler came up with a bold plan to attack it.

The initial plan called for a force of three canoes to be transported to the Gironde estuary by submarine then paddle by night and hide by day until they reached Bordeaux 97 km

from the sea, thus hoping to avoid the 32 mixed *Kriegsmarine* (German Navy) ships that patrolled or used the port. On arrival they hoped to sink between six and 12 cargo ships then escape overland to Spain.

Chief of Combined Operations, Admiral Louis Mountbatten, granted permission for the raid. He increased the size of the force from three canoes to six.

Initially Mountbatten ordered that Hasler could not take part in the raid. However Mountbatten was forced to reconsider as Hasler was the chief canoeing specialist. His experience would be vital to the mission.

The RMBPD started training for the raid on 20 October 1942, which included canoe handling, submarine rehearsals, limpet mine handling and escape and evasion exercises.

They practised for the raid with a simulated attack against Deptford, starting from Margate and canoeing up the Swale.

On 30 November 1942, under the command of Lieutenant-Commander Dick Raikes DSO the Royal Navy submarine HMS Tuna (N94) sailed

Colonel Arthur Simons



from Holy Loch in Scotland with the six canoes and raiders on board.

The mission was scheduled to start on 6 December 1942, but bad weather and the need to negotiate a minefield en route meant that it started a day later.

The Mk II collapsible canoes were given the code name 'Cockle'. The hull of one of the canoes was damaged while being passed out of the submarine hatch, leaving just five canoes to carry out the raid.

On the first night, 7/8 December, one of the canoes was lost while battling strong winds and cross tides. Later on a second canoe capsized in high waves and was lost.

Another canoe and its crew had been captured at daybreak near Pointe de Grave lighthouse.

The original plan had been to attack on 10 December, but Hasler changed the plan. Because of the strength of the ebb tide they still had a short distance to paddle, so Hasler ordered they hide for another day and set off to reach Bordeaux on the night of 11/12 December.

The two canoes split up and Hasler placed eight limpet mines on four vessels. The other crew placed eight limpet mines on two vessels, five on a large cargo ship and three on a small liner.

The two canoes met up downriver and, after sinking their canoes, the two teams split up and set out on foot for the Spanish border.

One of the teams was captured, while Hasler and his crew member, Marine Bill Sparks, finally made it to safety.

Six vessels were damaged by the limpet mines. For their part in the raid Hasler was awarded a Distinguished Service Order and Sparks the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM). They were the only two of the 10 men that set out on the raid that survived. Six were captured and executed, and two died of hypothermia.

The RMBPD would later go on to form the Special Boat Service

Operation Ivory Coast

The briefing given by US Special Forces Colonel Arthur "Bull" Simons was simple.

"We are going to rescue 70 American prisoners of war, maybe more, from a camp called Son Tay. This is something American prisoners have a right to expect from their fellow soldiers. The target is 23 miles (37 km) west of Hanoi."

By the spring on 1970 there were more than 450 known American POWs held in North Vietnam. Another 970 American servicemen were listed as missing in action.

Some of them had been in captivity for more than five years, the longest period in any war in American history.

Intelligence reports told of brutal conditions, torture, and even deaths of the POWs.

In May 1970 aerial reconnaissance photographs revealed the existence of two prison camps west of Hanoi, the capital of North Vietnam.

At Son Tay, one photograph showed a large 'K' drawn in the dirt. This was the code for "come and get us".

The other camp, at Ap Lo,

showed a photograph of the letters SAR (Search and Rescue) spelled out by the prisoner's laundry. An arrow with the number '8' indicated the distance the men had to travel to the fields they worked in.

Air Force Brigadier General LeRoy J. Manor and Army Colonel Arthur D. "Bull" Simons began to plan an operation to rescue the prisoners from Son Tay.

Reconnaissance photos taken by SR-71 "Blackbirds" revealed that Son Tay "was active". SR-71 reconnaissance aircraft took most of the Son Tay target photos from above 24,000 metres while streaking over North Vietnam at more than three times the speed of sound.

There were numerous obstacles that had to be considered. The camp itself was in the open and surrounded by rice paddies. In close proximity was the 12th North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Regiment totalling approximately 12,000 troops. Also nearby was an artillery school, a supply depot, and an air defence installation.

500 metres south was another compound called the "secondary school", which was an administration centre housing 45 guards. To make matters more difficult, Phuc Yen Air Base was only 32 kilometres north-east of Son Tay.

The raiders would have to get in and out very quickly, before anyone could react to the situation.

Simons recruited 103 personnel from interviews of 500 volunteers, mostly Special Forces personnel of the 6th and 7th Special Forces Groups at Fort



FINAL APPROACH: A computer-generated image shows the compound where Osama bin Laden was killed.

Bragg, North Carolina. USAF planners selected key Air Force commanders, who then picked personnel for their crews. Helicopter and A-1 Skyraider crews were put together from instructors at Eglin and personnel returned from Southeast Asia.

On 21 November 1970, 56 US Army Special Forces soldiers, led by Bull Simons, landed by helicopter in and around Son Tay prison. A-1 Skyraiders provided air support.

The plan was executed to near perfection. The raiders suffered two lightly wounded and the loss of one aircraft and one helicopter. The loss of the helicopter, which was crash-landed in the compound of Son Tay, had been planned from the start. 42 guards at the camp were reportedly killed.

The helicopter returned to the extraction landing zone and the raiders were airlifted back to safety. The entire raid had taken only 27 minutes.

While the raid had gone according to plan, there was one major problem - there were no POWs in the camp, it was empty.

There had been 65 prisoners at Son Tay, but they had been moved on 14 July because the well for drinking water had been contaminated by flooding.

Criticism of the raid, particularly in the news media and by political opponents of the Vietnam War and the Nixon Administration, was widespread and of long duration.

Not only was the failure denounced as the result of poor or outdated intelligence, but charges were made that the operation caused increased mistreatment of the prisoners.

However, as a result of the raid, the North Vietnamese consolidated their POW camps to central prison complexes. An area of the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" formerly housing civilian and South Vietnamese pris-



GOING IN: As the world watches on television, the SAS carry out their assault on the Iranian embassy.

oners became "Camp Unity", a block of large communal areas housing 50 POWs each.

After their repatriation, many POWs said that being in close contact with other Americans lifted their morale, as did knowledge of the rescue attempt. Some POWs said that food, medical care, and even seemingly basic things like mail delivery vastly improved after the raid.

For their actions, members of the task force received six Distinguished Service Crosses, five Air Force Crosses, and at least 85 Silver Stars, including all 50 members of the ground force who did not receive the DSC.

Operation Neptune Spear

After claiming responsibility for the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon, the founder and first leader of the Islamist group Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, was a prime target for the US military.

For ten years the United States had been searching for bin Laden. Now, the Americans

had strong evidence that bin Laden was in a compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The US began intensive multi-platform surveillance.

The commander of the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), Vice Admiral William H. McRaven, was briefed about the compound in January 2011.

McRaven said a commando raid would be fairly straightforward but he was concerned about the Pakistani response.

He assigned a captain from the U.S. Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU) to work with a CIA team at their campus in Langley, Virginia. The captain, named "Brian", set up an office in the printing plant in the CIA's Langley compound and, with six other JSOC officers, began to plan the raid. The raid was given the code name 'Operation Neptune Spear'.

The raid was carried out by approximately two dozen helicopterborne US Navy SEALs from DEVGRU's Red Squadron shortly after 01:00 on 2 May 2011.

For legal reasons (namely that the U.S. was not at war with Pakistan), the military personnel assigned to the mission were temporarily transferred to the control of the civilian Central Intelligence Agency.

The SEALs operated in multiple teams, and were equipped with a variety of gear and weaponry.

Osama bin Laden was killed in the raid and initial versions said three other men and a woman were killed as well: bin Laden's adult son Khalid, bin Laden's courier Abu Ahmed al-Kuwaiti, al-Kuwaiti's brother Abrar, and Abrar's wife Bushra.

After the raid bin Laden's body was taken to Afghanistan for identification, then buried at sea within 24 hours of his death in accordance with Islamic tradition.

The US lost one helicopter during the raid when it crashed landed in the compound. There were no other casualties.

Operation Nimrod

When six armed men stormed the Iranian embassy in South Kensington, London, on 30 April 1980, it set into motion a series of events that would become world-wide news.

The gunmen were members of Arabs of KSA Group. They were campaigning for Arab national sovereignty in the southern Iranian region.

They took 26 hostages, mostly embassy staff, but also several visitors as well as a British police officer who had been guarding the embassy.

The gunmen made a series of demands as well as wanting safe passage out of the United

Kingdom. Margaret Thatcher's government quickly resolved that safe passage would not be granted and a siege ensued.

The police did their best to negotiate, but by the sixth day of the siege the gunmen were becoming increasingly frustrated at the lack of progress in meeting their demands. That evening, they killed one of the hostages and threw his body out of the embassy.

As a result the government ordered an assault on the embassy. The police handed over control of the situation to the military.

A group from Britain's elite Special Air Service (SAS) had been on standby since the start of the siege and had already drawn up plans and carried out rehearsals.

At 19:23 two SAS teams, Red Team and Blue Team, abseiled from the roof of the building and forced entry through the windows.

The raid, which was watched live on television, took only 17 minutes. All but one of the remaining hostages were rescued and five of the six gunmen were killed. The sole remaining gunman was prosecuted and served 27 years in British prisons.

Operation Thunderbolt

On the afternoon of 27 June 1976, Air France Flight 139 from Tel Aviv, Israel, was hijacked by two Palestinians from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - External Operations, and two Germans from the German Revolutionary Cells.

The plane was first diverted to Benghazi in Libya where it was refueled. Then it took off



AMIN'S WHEELS: The black Mercedes Benz used during the raid stands in front of one of the C-130s that took part.

for its final destination - Entebbe Airport in Uganda.

It soon became obvious that not only was the Ugandan government supporting the hijackers, they were expecting them. They were personally welcomed by Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. The four original hijackers were met at Entebbe by at least four others.

Over the following two days, 148 non-Israeli hostages were released and flown out to Paris. Ninety-four, mainly Israeli, passengers along with the 12 member Air France crew, remained as hostages and were threatened with death.

The hijackers issued a list of demands and threatened that if these demands were not met, they would begin to kill hostages on 1 July 1976.

While the Israeli government negotiated for the release of the hostages, the military was told to prepare an operation to rescue them.

This was no simple matter. First of all, Entebbe was more than 5,000 km away from Tel Aviv and they would have to

cross the airspace of at least three countries to get there.

The plan that was adopted was simple. Fly a rescue force from Israel to Entebbe, rescue the hostages, and fly back to Israel. It was given the code name 'Operation Thunderbolt'.

The task force was made up of approximately 100 men. A 29 man assault unit, led by Lt. Col. Yonatan Netanyahu, was composed entirely of commandos from *Sayeret Matkal* (The Unit), and was given the primary task of assaulting the old terminal and rescuing the hostages.

The securing element included a paratroopers force led by Col. Matan Vilnai – tasked with securing the civilian airport field, clearing and securing the runways, and protection and fuelling of the Israeli aircraft in Entebbe.

The Golani force led by Col. Uri Sagi – tasked with securing the C-130 Hercules aircraft for the hostages' evacuation, getting it as close as possible to the terminal and boarding the hostages; also while acting as gen-

eral reserves.

The Sayeret Matkal force led by Major Shaul Mofaz – tasked with clearing the military airstrip, and destroying the squadron of MiG fighter jets on the ground, to prevent any possible interceptions by the Ugandan Air Force; also with holding off hostile ground forces.

The task force took off from Sharm el-Sheikh in Hercules C-130 aircraft and flew along the international flight path over the Red Sea. They flew at a height of no more than 30 metres to avoid radar detection by Egyptian, Sudanese, and Saudi Arabian forces.

Following the C-130s were two Boeing 707 jets. One contained medical facilities and it landed at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi,

Kenya. The commander of the operation, General Yekutiel Adam, was on board the second Boeing, which circled over Entebbe Airport during the raid.

The first C-130 landed at Entebbe on 3 July at 23:00 with their cargo bay doors already open.

The control tower had turned the landing lights on. The aircraft stopped at the end of the runway and three vehicles were driven out.

One was a black Mercedes Benz that looked like Idi Amin's personal vehicle. It was accompanied by two Land Rovers that usually acted as his escort.

The raid was a stunning success. During the raid, which lasted 30 minutes, all seven hijackers were killed, as were between 33 and 45 Ugandan

soldiers.


Eleven Soviet-built MiG-17 and MiG-21 Ugandan Air Force fighter planes were destroyed on the ground at Entebbe Airport.

Of the 106 hostages, three were killed, one was left in Uganda, and approximately 10 were wounded. The Israeli casualties were one dead and five wounded. The Israeli soldier that was killed was Lt. Col. Yonatan 'Yoni' Netanyahu.

After the raid the task force flew to Nairobi Airport in Kenya where the planes were refueled before returning to Israel. Operation Thunderbolt has been described as one of the most audacious military operations executed.





Click on the photograph below to take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate and find out more about the MOTH Order.




Warrior's Gate Virtual Tour

Take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate, or find out more about the MOTH Order. Click on a thumbnail to view the video.







Virtual Tour




History




Ceremonial



Message from the Vice-Chairman



Message from the custodian



Thank you for the music

Sometimes you will hear a song and it will immediately rekindle memories. For many of us a song has the ability to remind us of the days we spent in uniform. **Matt O'Brien** takes a look at the close relationship that the military and music have always shared. Click on any blue underlined link to listen to the actual song.

You've probably heard the quote "Music soothes the savage beast" or "Musics tames the savage beast."

Unfortunately both of these quotes are incorrect. The actual quote is "Music has charms to soothe the savage breast." The phrase was coined to William Congreve in his play *The Mourning Bride*, written way back in 1697.

But this article is not about misheard quotes. Rather it is an article about music, and the close association that music and the military have always had.

Around the world many regiments and corps have their own band and many have their own dedicated march. In fact in the November 2017 issue of *Military Despatches* we had an article about it.

This article, however, looks more at music that was popular with soldiers during certain wars. Music that cheered them up or made them feel closer to home. Music that inspired them or caused them to think of loved ones. It was music that had the ability to evoke strong emotions.

It may have been music that was popular on the radio, or listened to on a vinyl record or cassette tape. Sometimes it was music that was performed live, or even sung by the troops themselves.

American Civil War

[Dixie](#) originated in the minstrel shows of the 1850s and quickly became popular throughout the United States.

In 1861, during the American Civil War, it was adopted as a *de facto* national anthem of the Confederate States of America.

Most sources credit Ohio-born Daniel Decatur Emmett with the song's composition.

The song was a favourite of President Abraham Lincoln; he had it played at some of his political rallies and at the announcement of General Robert E. Lee's surrender.

[John Brown's Body](#) is a United States marching song about the abolitionist John Brown. The song was popular in the Union during the American Civil War.

Many other lyrics have been written and set to the tune of John Brown's Body, including [Blood On The Risers](#), which was sung by American paratroopers during World War II.

The [Battle Hymn Of The Republic](#) is a lyric by the American writer Julia Ward Howe using the music from the song John Brown's Body. Howe's more famous lyrics were written in November 1861, and first published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in February 1862. The song links the judgment of the wicked at the end of the age

(Old Testament, Isaiah 63; New Testament, Rev. 19) with the American Civil War. Since that time, it has become an extremely popular and well-known American patriotic song.

The [Battle Cry Of Freedom](#), also known as "Rally 'Round the Flag", is a song written in 1862 by American composer George Frederick Root during the American Civil War. A patriotic song advocating the causes of Unionism and abolitionism, it became so popular that composer H. L. Schreiner and lyricist W.H. Barnes adapted it for the Confederacy.

[Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! \(The Prisoner's Hope\)](#) was one of the most popular songs of the American Civil War. George F. Root wrote both the words and music and published it in 1864 to give hope to the Union prisoners of war. The song is written from the prisoner's point of view. The chorus tells his fellow prisoners that hope is coming.

World War I

[It's A Long Way To Tipperary](#) is a British music hall song written by Henry James "Harry" Williams and co-credited to Jack Judge. It became popular among soldiers in the First World War and is remembered as a song of that war.

During the First World War, Daily Mail correspondent



WHAT'S THE USE OF WORRYING? Music and song kept the troops spirits up during the horrors of World War I.

George Curnock saw the Irish regiment the Connaught Rangers singing this song as they marched through Boulogne on 13 August 1914 and reported it on 18 August 1914. The song was quickly picked up by other units of the British Army.

In November 1914, it was recorded by Irish tenor John McCormack, which helped its worldwide popularity.

[K-K-K-Katy](#) was a popular World War I-era song written by Canadian American composer Geoffrey O'Hara in 1917 and published in 1918.

The lyrics tell of a brave but awkward soldier called Jimmy who is lovesick over the beautiful Katy. He buys a wedding ring before going to fight in France.

[Keep The Home Fires Burning \('Till The Boys Come Home\)](#) is a British patriotic First World War song composed in 1914 by Ivor Novello with words by Lena Guilbert Ford.

[Pack Up Your Troubles In Your Old Kit Bag](#) is a World

War I marching song, published in 1915 in London. It was written by Welsh songwriter George Henry Powell under the pseudonym of "George Asaf", and set to music by his brother Felix Powell.

It became very popular, boosting British morale despite the horrors of that war. It was one of a large number of music hall songs aimed at maintaining morale, recruiting for the forces, or defending Britain's war aims.

World War II

[Bless 'Em All](#), also known as "The Long And The Short And The Tall" is a war song credited as being written by Fred Godfrey in 1917 to music composed by Robert Kewley. It was first recorded by George Formby, Jr. in 1940.

[Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree \(With Anyone Else But Me\)](#) is a popular song that was made famous by Glenn Miller and by the Andrews Sisters during World War II. Its lyrics are the words of two young lovers

who pledge their fidelity while one of them is away serving in the war.

[Kiss Me Goodnight, Sergeant Major](#) is a World War II soldier's song normally credited to Art Noel and Don Pelosi in 1939.

[We'll Meet Again](#) is a 1939 British song made famous by singer Vera Lynn with music and lyrics composed and written by Ross Parker and Hughie Charles.

The song is one of the most famous of the Second World War era, and resonated with soldiers going off to fight and their families and sweethearts.

[\(There'll Be Bluebirds Over\) The White Cliffs Of Dover](#) is a popular World War II song composed in 1941 by Walter Kent to lyrics by Nat Burton.

Made famous in Vera Lynn's 1942 version, it was one of Lynn's best-known recordings and among the most popular World War II tunes.

[Lili Marleen](#) is a German love song performed by Lale Andersen. Marlene Dietrich recorded both a German and English version of the song.

Erwin Rommel, commander of the Afrika Korps, admired the song and it became their theme song. The British 8th Army, the Desert Rats, who fought against the Afrika Korps, also adopted the [English version](#) of the song.

[Katyusha](#) is a Russian folk song. It was composed by Matvey Blanter in 1938, and gained fame during World War II as a patriotic song, inspiring the population to serve and defend their land in the war effort. In

Russia, the song is still popular.

The song is about a Russian woman called Katyusha. Standing on a steep riverbank, she sends her song to her lover, a soldier serving far away. The theme of the song is that the soldier will protect the Motherland and its people while his grateful girl will remain true to him.

The song was sung by female students from a Soviet industrial school in Moscow, bidding farewell to soldiers going to the battle front against Nazi Germany.

The song is the source of the nickname of the BM-8, BM-13, and BM-31 "Katyusha" rocket launchers.

Erika is a marching song of the German military. The song was composed by Herms Niel in the 1930s, and it soon came into usage by the Wehrmacht, especially the Heer and, to a lesser extent, the Kriegsmarine.

It would go on to become the marching song of the Waffen SS. Erika is both a common German female name and the German word for heather.

Known in German as the *Westwall* but referred to by the Allies as the Siegfried Line, it was a German chain of fortifications built during the 1930s opposite the French Maginot Line.

This line stretched more than 630 km and featured more than 18,000 bunkers, tunnels and tank traps. The network of defensive structures stretched from Kleve on the border with the Netherlands, along the western border of the old German Empire, to the town of Weil am Rhein on the border to Switzerland. It was planned



BLOWING IN THE WIND: The Vietnam War had its own unique music that defined a generation.

in 1936 and built between 1938 and 1940.

[We're Going to Hang out the Washing on the Siegfried Line](#) is a popular song by Ulster songwriter Jimmy Kennedy, written whilst he was a Captain in the British Expeditionary Force during the early stages of the Second World War, with music by Michael Carr.

Vietnam War

The music of the Vietnam War was the music of the late 60s and early 70s. US Forces in Vietnam even had their own radio station, American Forces Vietnam Network (AFVN).

Adrian Cronauer was a United States Air Force Sergeant and radio personality whose experiences as an innovative disc jockey on American Forces Network during the Vietnam War inspired the 1987 film *Good Morning, Vietnam* which starred the late Robin Williams.

Popular songs including the Rolling Stone's [Paint It Black](#), [The Letter](#) by the Four Tops, and [Fortunate Son](#) by Creedence Clearwater Revival.

African American troops

had their own favourite tunes and these included the likes of [Chain Of Fools](#) by Aretha Franklin, [Dock Of The Bay](#) by Otis Redding, and [Tracks Of My Tears](#) by Smokey Robinson & the Miracles.

A member of the Green Berets, Sergeant Barry Sadler, wrote and sang his own song, [The Ballad Of The Green Berets](#). The song went on to become a number one hit.

The Border War

The music of the 70s and 80s was the soundtrack to the Border War, and to national service in general.

It must be remember that national servicemen came from a wide range of backgrounds, and this was reflected in the music.

There would be pop, rock, country and western, disco, Afrikaans and even gospel music.

Music played a major part in a serviceman's life. It was one of his few contacts with real world. In any bungalow or tent at least one person would have a transistor radio and it brightened up many a long night preparing for inspection.



SOLDIER BOY: An LP compiled by Par Kerr of some of her favourite songs she played on her show.

Harry did his national service at the Army Gymnasium in Heidelberg in 1977. He relates some of his memories.

"About three or four guys in our bungalow had radios. One of them had a real 'Ghetto Blaster' and it had fairly decent speakers.

"At night we used to listen to his radio. Hell, there was some good music in those days. I remember that one of the songs they used to play often was [Dancing Queen](#) by Abba.

"Sometimes the radio was tuned in to Radio Highveld but most of the time though it was on Radio 5 (now 5FM). They had some damn good deejays on Radio 5 in those days. I can still remember people like John Berks, Peter de Nobrega, and Harold West.

"The radio kept us company and at night we would be washing and ironing our clothes, cleaning rifles and equipment, and polishing the floors, all to the music on the radio.

"I can't remember the name of the deejay who was on Radio 5 on a Thursday night but I guess that he must have done

national service at some stage because he would always think of us on a Thursday night.

"And to all you guys out there getting ready for inspection tomorrow morning, vasbyt and hope you pass inspection. This next song is just for you guys."

"We would all cheer like crazy. It felt good to know that someone out there was thinking about us. Those were good deejays, not like some of the ones you get today.

"It's strange, but whenever I hear 'Dancing Queen' I'm instantly transported back to 1977 and back to the Army Gym. Look, I'm not saying that I enjoyed my national service, but it does make me nostalgic for those days."

Springbok Radio had two programmes dedicated to the troops serving in the military. These were programmes where family, friends, and especially girlfriends could write in and send a dedication to someone serving in the SADF. It wasn't a request programme, so you couldn't ask them to play a particular song.

Pat Kerr presented the show in English, while Esme Everard did a similar show in Afrikaans.

Marie van Zyl presented Stand at ease/Op die plek rus on Radio 5.

On these programmes you would normally hear dedications such as "To my boyfriend Corporal Joe Blogs somewhere on the border, I love you and miss you and can't wait for you to be back home."

While this was very touching, there was one slight problem. There was a more than good chance that Corporal Joe Blogs

would never hear the message. Radio reception on the border was virtually non-existent.

Alan, who did national service in 1978, recalls.

"I was in Ovamboland and we couldn't pick up Springbok Radio or any other South African radio stations. There was even less of a chance of picking up Radio 5 which still used to broadcast on medium wave.

"The only station we could get was Radio Ovambo. I couldn't speak Ovambo, so it didn't help me. The one good thing was that on a Saturday afternoon they would have the 'Radio Ovambo Top Ten', and it was in English.

"I remember that the very first time I ever heard Paul McCartney's [Mull Of Kintyre](#) was on the Radio Ovambo Top Ten. Even though the announcer said that the song was called 'Mother of gentiles'."

From time to time concerts would be arranged to tour the Border. These would usually consist of a few local artists or bands, a comedian, and other entertainers. They would visit the larger bases such as Grootfontein, Oshakati, Rundu and Katima Mulilo.

Steve served on the border in 1978 and he remembers one of the concerts.

"I was at Rundu when they had a concert. We really enjoyed it. I remember that there was this group of Spanish dancers that we all really appreciated.

"And I remember that Glenys Lynne was there. She was with Four Jacks and a Jill. One of the songs that she sang was called [Ramaja](#) and we all went mad

when she sang it.

“What I will never forget was there was this young singer who sang about three or four songs. I can’t remember what her name was, or even what songs she sang.

“But if I close my eyes I can still picture her as if it were yesterday. She had a good voice, that I can remember. She had long blonde hair and she wore a pair of hot pants, a boob tube, and these knee-high boots. I fell in love with her instantly. And I

don’t think I was the only one.”

For most troops though, the way they listened to music was on cassette tapes.

“I took my radio/cassette player to the border with me,” says Jeremy. “I only took about six cassettes with. So we had to listen to the same songs over and over again.

“The other big problem was batteries for the player. Luckily we used these rechargeable nickel-cadmium (nickel-cadmium) batteries for our army radios. The signaler gave us one of the battery’s and we connected it up to the cassette player.”

For many troops, if they wanted music they

had to make their own.

Dale did border duty during the latter part of 1978.

“I was with Delta Company, 4 SAI. We were based at a place called Okalongo in Ovamboland.

“We had two guys that were really brilliant guitarists and both

Cliff Richard

of them had brought their guitars with. One of them was nicknamed Junior and, if I remember correctly, the other guy’s name was Dave.

“Then there was Malcolm, our chef. This guy had an incredible voice. Often in the evening the three of them would sit in one of the tents and entertain us.

“I was convinced that after they finished national service all three of them would go on to become big names in the music industry.

“Yet afterwards I lost contact with them and never heard anything about them again.”

I spoke to a few of my mates that had also spent time in the old SADF. We racked our brains to come up with one song that was special to all those that did national service. And we did manage to find that one song.

One day that was special to all national servicemen was when they had only 40 days of their national service left. They would celebrate the event with a ‘Forty Days’ party.

I’m not sure where, when, or how the tradition began. Maybe one of our readers could provide more information.

The song that was always played at any Forty Days celebration was Cliff Richard’s [Forty Days](#).

It’s been a long time since anyone celebrated their forty days. Maybe Sir Cliff should think of rewriting the song and calling it ‘Forty Years’.

Music and the military have always shared a close bond and I’m pretty convinced that as long as there is a military they will always have their songs.

Am I impressed?

Established more than a year ago, editor Matt Tennyson is not in the least impressed by the amount of support shown to the ‘Military Despatches YouTube channel’.

Back in 2007 I was lecturing in journalism at three local colleges. This was on a part-time basis.

At that stage I realised how difficult it was for students and young journalists to get published. I decided to do something about it.

I started an online monthly magazine and I hoped that a few people would actually read it.

It was called ‘Hipe’ and it ended up doing far better than I had ever hoped. It ran for nearly ten years and in the end had just over 800,000 monthly readers.

I also started a YouTube channel to generate some income. The channel also did well and ended up with 153,000 subscribers. Two of the videos on the channel were viewed over

200,000 times and another two had more than 100,000 views.

All of the videos carried advertising (placed by Google) and this meant that I received a regular income from Google - enough to pay the monthly bills.

When I started Military Despatches in 2017 I was both surprised and delighted with the number of people that began to read the publication. Currently we have just over 600,000 monthly readers - and these are the ones that I know about.

Military Despatches is free to read, and does not bring me any income in the least.

More than a year ago I started a YouTube channel. It was my hope that with more than a half a million readers I could at least get enough of them to

subscribe to the channel. You need to have 1,000 subscribers before Google will start placing ads. The revenue generated from these ads depends on how many people view your video.

I put up five videos to see how it would go. Not that great it appears.

One of the videos has been viewed 1,075 times, two have over 100 views, and the other two have less than a hundred views.

The best news is that we only have 17 subscribers - and only one of these is an actual reader of Military Despatches.

I know that many readers will have the attitude of “get over it. If you don’t want to publish a magazine every month, then don’t.”

It’s something to think about.



SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

SAAFA is an all-ranks Association formed to perpetuate a tradition of comradeship, knowing no distinction of rank, race, language, gender or creed, which has developed over the years among members of the South African Air Force.

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Daralagdo Sahasa*

Roughly translated, the Nepali expression Daralago sahasa means 'fearless courage'. And for many Gurkha it is not merely an expression, but a way of life.

Sam Manekshaw was the first Indian Army officer to be promoted to the rank of field marshal.

Manekshaw once said, "If a man says he is not afraid of dying, he is either lying or is a Gurkha."

Gurkha is a name traditionally given to soldiers recruited into the British or Indian military from Nepal. The word Gurkha is taken from an area once known as the "Gorkha kingdom" which was folded into, and became part of, Nepal around the turn of the 20th century.

The Gurkha were originally formed after British soldiers fighting in Nepal were simultaneously impressed and terrified by the soldiers they encountered during the Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814.

After the war ended in 1816, the British, spying an opportunity to bolster their ranks, offered these fearless Nepalese soldiers a chance to volunteer to serve in the British army, referring to them collectively as Gurkha, a name that is still used today regardless of which area of Nepal a given soldier happens to hail from.

And Manekshaw wasn't joking when he spoke about the courage of the Gurkha. Since World War I, no fewer than 13 Gurkha have been awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy

that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces.

Kulbir Thapa Magar VC was the first Nepalese Gurkha recipient of the Victoria Cross.

During the Battle of Loos in September 1915, Kulbir Thapa rescued three wounded soldiers from behind the German lines. Even though he was wounded himself.

Lalbahadur Thapa was the first Gurkha to be awarded the VC in World War II. Ten Gurkha won the VC during World War II.

Then there was Lachhiman Gurung, a rifleman with the 8th Gurkha Rifles. On 12/13 May 1945 at Taungdaw, Burma, Rifleman Lachhiman Gurung was manning the most forward post of his platoon which bore the brunt of an attack by at least 200 Japanese.

Part of his citation for the Victoria Cross reads:

Gurung was manning the most forward post of his platoon which bore the brunt of an attack by at least 200 of the Japanese enemy.

Twice he hurled back grenades which had fallen on his trench, but the third exploded in his right hand, blowing off his fingers, shattering his arm and severely wounding him in the face, body and right leg.

His two comrades were also badly wounded but the rifleman, now alone and disregarding his wounds, loaded and fired his rifle with his left hand for four

hours, calmly waiting for each attack which he met with fire at point blank range.

Afterwards, when the casualties were counted, it is reported that there were 31 dead Japanese around his position which he had killed, with only one arm.

Despite losing the use of his hand and right eye during that battle, among other injuries, Gurung lived until 12 December 2010, dying at the ripe old age of 92. Apparently it took the man with the scythe a while to build up the courage to pay Gurung a visit.

If anyone demonstrated the fighting spirit of the Gurkha, it was Bhanbhagta Gurung.

He was born in the small Nepalese village of Phalpu in September of 1921. In 1940, at just 18 years of age, Bhanbhagta joined the British army a few months after World War II began, at which point he was drafted to the "third battalion of the 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles."

He didn't get his first taste of combat until 1943 when he fought alongside several thousand other men behind enemy lines in Burma. During this time, Bhanbhagta was promoted from rifleman to the rank of Naik (the equivalent of a corporal).

However, he would later be demoted back to rifleman in 1944 when his commanding officer told him to patrol the



FOR VALOUR: Havildar Bhanbhagta Gurung VC.

wrong area and then refused to admit he'd made a mistake, instead putting the blame on Bhanbhagta.

On 5 March he single-handedly took out five entrenched Japanese positions under heavy fire and out of ammunition for his gun.

Bhanbhagta was part of a platoon of men given the singular goal of taking a hill colloquially known as "Snowdon East". The hill was a strategic foothold that had been overrun by the Japanese who, in the process, killed about half the Gurkha company after the Gurkhas had run out of ammunition and been forced to fight their way through the enemy lines with nothing but their *kukri* (knives) while under heavy fire. Bhanbhagta's platoon was told to take the hill back "regardless of cost." Bhanbhagta apparently took this command quite literally.

While Bhanbhagta and his men were sneaking up on the position, they were spotted

and initially pinned down by machine gun and mortar fire. Because of their extreme close proximity to the enemy troops, support artillery from their own side wasn't possible. They were pinned down.

While all of this was happening, an enemy sniper from a tree approximately 75 meters to the south began picking off Bhanbhagta's comrades one by one.

Realising that he couldn't get a clean shot if he was lying down, Bhanbhagta stood up while still being shot at from several enemy positions and managed to take out the sniper.

Bhanbhagta then signalled to his men to follow him as he sprinted up the hill in the face of the enemy fire raining down. Several Gurkha were killed in the dash and they were again pinned down.

Apparently not one to just sit around while being shot at, Bhanbhagta sprinted the remaining 20 meters or so to the nearest enemy trench and quickly dispatched those inside with a couple of well thrown grenades.

He then ran towards a second enemy position, killing the armed soldiers inside with his bayonet. Bhanbhagta then rushed two other positions, taking them out with his now trademark combo of grenades and furious rifle-stabs.

All of this happened while Bhanbhagta was being "subjected to almost continuous and point-blank machine-gun fire," particularly from a fifth position slightly further up the hill.

Bhanbhagta then headed towards the final position, a small bunker where a machine gun-

ner was raining down heavy fire and doing a boatload of damage to the Gurkhas.

Nevertheless, Bhanbhagta managed to get on top of the roof of the bunker without being shot, and then, being out of explosive grenades, hurled two smoke grenades into the opening from which the machine-gun was firing.

When two Japanese soldiers emerged, Bhanbhagta pounced on them with his *kukri*, dispatching them both. He then ran into the machine-gun nest, having to kill the machine-gunner with a rock instead of his *kukri*, because of the extreme close quarters.

Bhanbhagta and his men then took possession of the machine gun and managed to hold the position from the counter attack by the enemy soldiers.

His regiment gained the battle honour "Tamandu" as a result of the engagement and he received his Victoria Cross from King George VI at Buckingham Palace.

Soon after the war ended, Gurung's company commander tried to persuade him to continue serving, but he declined as he had a frail widowed mother as well as a young wife and children to take care of in Nepal.

When he left the regiment in January 1946 he had regained his former rank of Naik and had been given the rank of Honorary Havildar. In addition to his VC he was also awarded the Star of Nepal, 3rd Class, in 1945.

In 2000 the Gurkha training company block at Catterick (England) was named after him.

The weapon defeating the Russians

The prime objective of any war or battle is to defeat the enemy. And if you can come up with a weapon or tactics that can achieve this, then you're ahead of the game.

The idea of a weapon that can fire multiple projectiles has been around for a long time.

The first multiple rocket launchers were invented during the medieval Chinese Song dynasty, in which the Chinese fire lance was fixed backward on a pike or arrow and shot at an enemy as early as 1180.

The first self-propelled MRLs – and probably the most famous – was the Soviet BM-13 Katyusha, first used during World War II and exported to Soviet allies afterwards.

They were simple systems in which a rack of launch rails was mounted on the back of a truck. This set the template for modern MRLs.

The Americans mounted tubular launchers atop M4 Sherman tanks to create the T34 Calliope rocket launching tank, only used in small numbers, as their closest equivalent to the Katyusha.

The Germans began using a towed six-tube multiple rocket launcher during World War II, the *Nebelwerfer*, called the “Screaming Mimi” by the Al-

lies. The system was developed before the war to skirt the limitations of the Treaty of Versailles. Later in the war, 15 cm Nebelwerfer 41s were mounted on modified Opel Maultier “Mule” half-tracks, becoming *Panzerwerfer 42 4/1s*.

Another version produced in limited numbers towards the end of the war was a conversion of the *Schwerer Wehrmachtschlepper* (“heavy military transport”, sWS) halftrack to a configuration similar to the Panzerwerfer 42 4/1, mounting the 10-barreled 15 cm Nebelwerfer.

Another German half-track MRL system was inspired by the Russian BM-13. Keeping the Soviet 82 mm rocket calibre as well

as the launch and rocket stabilisation designs, it was developed into a system of two rows of 12 guide rails mounted to a Maultier chassis, each row providing the capacity for 24 rockets, underslung as well as on top of the rails, for 48 rockets total.

This vehicle was designated 8 cm *Raketen-Vielfachwerfer* (8 cm multiple rocket launcher). As the launch system was inspired by and looked similar to the BM-13, which the Germans had nicknamed “*Stalin-Organ*” or “*Stalin-Organ*”, the *Vielfachwerfer* soon became known as the “*Himmler-Organ*”, or “*Himmler-Organ*”.

After coming up against Russian BM-21 Grad Multiple-Rocket Launchers (MRL) during Operation Savannah during the Angolan Civil War in 1975/76, the South African Defence Force (SADF) developed their own MRL.

It was a 24 barrel 127 mm MRL with an effective range of 36 kilometres. It was mounted on a Uimog truck and named the Valkiri-22 Mk 1.

The SADF troops gave it the nickname, ‘Vorster Orrel’ or ‘Vorster Or-

gan’. It was named after South African Prime Minister John Vorster.

The system was later mounted on an armoured Samil 100 6x6 truck and renamed the Bateleur.

While rocket launchers have retained the same basic mechanisms, they have become more sophisticated in terms of range and accuracy.

Then in 1993 the US Army first revealed an MRL that would develop into a real game changer.

It was called the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS).

M142 HIMARS

The M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) is a light multiple rocket launcher developed in the late 1990s for the United States Army and mounted on a standard United States Army M1140 truck frame.

The HIMARS carries one pod with either six GMLRS rockets or one ATACMS missile. It is based on the United States Army’s Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles (FMTV) five-ton truck, and is capable of launching all rockets specified in the Multiple Launch Rocket System Family of Munitions (MFOM).

HIMARS ammunition pods are interchangeable with the M270 MLRS; however, it is limited to a single pod as opposed to the standard two for the M270 and its variants.

The launcher can be transported by Lockheed C-130 Hercules aircraft. The chassis was initially produced by BAE Systems Mobility & Protec-

tion Systems (formerly Armor Holdings Aerospace and Defense Group Tactical Vehicle Systems Division), the original equipment manufacturer of the FMTV.

It was produced by the Oshkosh Corporation from 2010 to 2017. Both chassis and launcher system are now produced by Lockheed Martin Missiles & Fire Control in Camden, Arkansas.

Design

The HIMARS is similar in design to the M270 Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), with the main exception being that it is a wheeled vehicle as opposed to tracked vehicle.

The HIMARS carries one ordnance pod, which is identical to the pods used by the M270. The windows are made of sheets of sapphire laminated with glass and polycarbonate.

The HIMARS was also tested as a unified launch system for both artillery rockets and the SLAMRAAM surface-launched variant of the AMRAAM anti-aircraft missile.

In October 2017, a Marine Corps HIMARS fired a rocket while at sea against a land target for the first time from the deck of the amphibious transport dock USS Anchorage, demonstrating the system’s ability to operate while on ships to deliver precision fire from a standoff range against shore defences.

The vehicle’s targeting software was reworked so it can better fire while on a launch platform that is in motion.

Operational history

Although the HIMARS was in development in 1998, it was only in 2010 that the MRL went operational.

In February 2010, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) for Afghanistan indicated in a press release that two rockets fired from a HIMARS were believed to have fallen 300 metres short of their intended target, killing 12 civilians during Operation Mosh-tarak. ISAF suspended the use of the HIMARS until a full review of the incident was completed.

A British officer later said that the rockets were on target, that the target was in use by the Taliban, and that use of the system had been reinstated.

Reports indicated that the civilian deaths were due to the Taliban’s use of human shields; the presence of civilians at that location had not been known to the ISAF forces.

A report in the New York Times in October 2010 credited the HIMARS with aiding the NATO offensive in Kandahar by targeting Taliban commanders’ hideouts, forcing many to flee to Pakistan, at least temporarily.

In November 2015, the U.S. Army revealed that it had deployed the HIMARS to Iraq, firing at least 400 rockets at Islamic State (ISIL) targets since the beginning of that summer.

HIMARS detachments were sent to Al Asad Airbase and Al-Taqaddum Air Base in Al Anbar Governorate.

In March 2016, a U.S. Army HIMARS fired rockets into Syria for the first time in sup-



port of Syrian rebels fighting ISIL, from launchers based in neighbouring Jordan.

In January 2016, Lockheed announced that the HIMARS had reached one million operational hours with U.S. forces, achieving a 99 percent operational readiness rate.

In April 2016, it was announced that the U.S. would be deploying the HIMARS in Turkey near the border with Syria as part of the battle with ISIL.

In early September, international media and the U.S. State Department reported a newly deployed HIMARS had engaged ISIL targets in Syria near the Turkish border.

In October 2016, HIMARS were stationed at Qayyarah Airfield West, some 65 kilometres south of Mosul, taking part in the Battle of Mosul.

In June 2017, a HIMARS was deployed at Al-Tanf, Syria, to support U.S.-backed rebels in the area.

On 24 May 2018, a HIMARS strike killed 50 Taliban fighters and leaders in Musa Qala, Afghanistan. Three rockets struck the building within a 14-second timespan.

In September 2018, US support forces coordinated with Syrian Democratic Forces fighting to defeat ISIS in east Syria in the Deir ez-Zor campaign, sometimes striking ISIS positions with GMLRS rockets 30 times per day.

The HIMARS used in this support operation were located in the Omar oilfields, some 25 km north of the ISIS-controlled targets.



LOADED: A troop reloads a HIMARS with a pod of six rockets.

Ukraine

On 31 May 2022, the US announced that it would be supplying HIMARS to Ukraine with M31 GMLRS unitary rockets.

The next day, it was reported that four units would be sent. Under Secretary of Defence for Policy Colin Kahl said that the US would be able to send more systems as the fighting evolves.

On 23 June, the first HIMARS arrived in Ukraine, according to Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov.

On 25 June 2022, Ukraine started deploying the system against Russian forces during the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine.

According to Ukraine's Chief of General Staff, Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, "Artillerymen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine hit ... military targets of the enemy on our, Ukrainian, territory".

The Ukrainian military claimed that this first strike, on a Russian base in Izyum, killed over 40 soldiers. The day before, a second batch of four was

announced to be delivered in mid-July.

On 1 July, a US defence official told reporters that Ukraine had been using the system to destroy Russian command posts: "selecting targets and then accurately hitting them ... degrading Russian capability".

On 18 July, Zaluzhnyi said: "An important factor contributing to our retention of defensive lines and positions is the timely arrival of M142 HIMARS, which deliver surgical strikes on enemy control posts, ammunition and fuel storage depots."

Another four were announced for delivery on 8 July; the weeks-long process to train Ukrainian troops on how to use the platform is a limiting factor, which is why they are delivered in batches of four at a time.

Ukraine is restricted by the US from firing HIMARS rockets into Russian territory to avoid escalating the conflict, but Russian forces within Ukraine are legitimate targets.

A fourth batch of four was announced on 20 July, bringing



DIRECT HIT: Russian armour destroyed by a direct hit from HIMARS rockets.

the total number of HIMARS committed to Ukraine to 16.

Ukrainian Defence Minister Reznikov claimed that the country needed "at least 100" of the system and that by that point, eight systems had destroyed 30 command stations and ammunition storage facilities, decreasing the intensity of Russian shelling and slowing their advance.

In that announcement, it was revealed that the number delivered had reached 12 launchers. That number had increased to 16 by 1 August.

On 30 August, 2022, the Washington Post reported on Ukrainian claims to have successfully used decoy HIMARS units made out of wood to draw at least 10 Russian 3M-54 Kalibr cruise missiles.

One US diplomat was reported to state that Russian sources had claimed more HIMARS destroyed than the US had sent. A Pentagon official had earlier in the month asserted that no HIMARS had been destroyed at that time.

On 8 September, US Gener-

al Mark Milley told reporters: "We are seeing real and measurable gains from Ukraine in the use of these systems. For example, the Ukrainians have struck over 400 targets with the HIMARS and they've had devastating effect".

The HIMARS has two major benefits. The Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) rockets have an extended range and add GPS-aided guidance to their Inertial Navigation System.

This means that they are able to put a rocket down within ten metres of its intended target.

The M30A1 rockets with Alternative Warhead (AW) contains approximately 182,000 pre-formed tungsten fragments for area effects.

One of the disadvantages of the HIMARS is that it is a "shoot and scoot" weapon. The rockets leave an exhaust trail that is easy to spot and can be used by counter-battery fire.

To avoid this, the standard tactic is to fire and then move quickly to a different firing point. By the time counter-bat-

HIMARS



- **Type:** Rocket artillery; Tactical ballistic missile
- **Place of origin:** United States
- **In service:** 2010–present
- **Manufacturer:** Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control
- **Weight:** 16,250 kg
- **Length:** 7 metres
- **Width:** 2.4 metres
- **Height:** 3.2 metres
- **Crew:** Three
- **Traverse:** 360°
- **Effective firing range:** 92 km M30/31 GMLRS; 300 km ATACMS
- **Armour:** Light
- **Main armament:** 6 × 227 mm M30/M31 series rockets or 1 × 610 mm ATACMS missile
- **Engine:** Caterpillar 3115 ATAAC 6.6-liter diesel, 290 hp
- **Operational range:** 480 km
- **Maximum speed:** 85 km/h

tery fire is directed at them, the HIMARS have long since left the area.

Currently these weapons are causing havoc among the Russian forces. And this is being achieved with only 16 HIMARS. If more of these are delivered to the Ukraine, the Russians could face defeat.

Clothes maketh the man

When sending millions of men off to fight in a war there are a multitude of factors that need to be considered. One of these factors is ensuring that they have something to wear.

Jane Tynan, the author of *British Army Uniform and the First World War: Men in Khaki*, reveals 10 surprising facts about the wartime apparel.

Khaki was first adopted in India

The word 'khaki' comes from the Persian portion of the Hindustani language.

The use of khaki for military camouflage is thought to have begun with Harry Lumsden, who raised the Corps of Guides

in 1846, a regiment of the British Indian Army. He bought up white cotton cloth at the bazaar at Lahore, which was then taken down to the riverbank, where his troops soaked the cloth in water and rubbed mud into it. Lumsden's second in command was convinced that khaki would make his men "invisible in a land of dust".

By the First World War, the British Army had transitioned from red to khaki uniforms in response to new technologies: aerial reconnaissance and smokeless guns were making soldiers' visibility a real problem on the battlefield.

British khaki dyes came from Germany

Before the war, Germany was the centre of the synthetic dye-stuffs industry. By 1913, it was exporting more than 20 times the volume of dyes coming out of Britain.

During the First World War the only khaki dye available for British Army uniforms was manufactured in Germany, which, at first, it secretly imported.

For a time, khaki was replaced by 'Kitchener blue'

'Kitchener blue' was the collective name given to replacement uniforms used by the British Army when it ran out of khaki in 1914. The War Office had failed to obtain enough

khaki uniforms in the opening weeks of the war, and early recruits were forced to wear replacement uniforms.

They were obtained from a range of unlikely sources: 500,000 suits of blue serge uniforms from Post Office stocks, and approximately 500,000 greatcoats purchased from the clothing trade. The War Office also ordered a huge volume of jackets, trousers and greatcoats from Canada and the United States.

Some soldiers were issued with old full-dress parade tunics – scarlet with colourful facings and blue trousers from various reserve stores. A 1914 article in the trade periodical the *Tailor and Cutter* reported that one of the alternative outfits was "not at all liked, the first men to wear it being mistaken for inmates of an industrial home".

Most uniforms were not made by the army

Most were, in fact, made by various civilian tailoring firms. War Office plans for dealing with an outbreak of war were insufficient for the scale of this conflict. In August 1914, reserves were capable of supplying no more than the original expeditionary force and first-line units of the Territorial Force for a few weeks.

Clothing an expanding volunteer army overwhelmed the official army factories. By November 1914 a new director of

army contracts had reorganised the system of supply, which led to a boom in 'khaki contracts' in the British tailoring trade – a system the war office regulated by public competition. It seems that war was good for business.

Official knitting patterns were introduced to discourage 'rogue knitters'

Civilians were busily knitting garments for British soldiers during the First World War. The gloves, socks, mittens, jerseys and balaclavas made by civilians became affectionately known as 'comforts'.

But what started as a response to small gaps in uniform supply became a mass knitting frenzy, which made the government very nervous about the colourful, quirky garments reaching soldiers at the front. Hence knitting patterns were issued, warning women – thought to be the typical knitters – to narrow the range of garments, and to use only khaki wools.

But the success of the knitting projects often highlighted army failures. The First World War was a step into the unknown – much of the war effort had to be improvised. When the efforts of volunteer knitters threatened to expose official shortcomings, the state intervened; one such gesture was the issue of the official Kitchener stitch, which improved the comfort of knitted socks for men in the trenches!

Turbans were worn by soldiers on the western front

By November 1914, one third of the British Army on the western front came from India and

fought with the Indian Expeditionary Force (serving from September 1914 to December 1915). An official photograph taken in France depicts Indian troops marching along the road while young women rush up to pin flowers on them as they pass. They wear turbans and have long tunics –resembling the Indian Kurta – falling to their knees.

For Sikh soldiers, these distinctive features described their colonial status, but it also became part of war propaganda. In July 1915 *The Graphic* newspaper ran a feature to celebrate the spectacle of Indian soldiers marching to battle, in which they reported that the Germans "themselves admit their surprise at this rally of India".

Photographs were a bit more realistic; one from July 1916 shows Indian cyclists – despatch riders – at the crossroads on Fricourt-Mametz Road wearing khaki service dress with traditional Sikh turbans. Unfortunately, rather than reflect a proud military tradition, their distinctive clothing often symbolised their lowly rank on the western front.

The First World War saw the invention of the trench coat

Well, not really, since this weatherproof sports coat had been around since the late 19th century, but as the name suggests, its re-invention as the trench coat is certainly attributed to its use in the First World War.

It was an optional item of military kit for officers on the western front. Initially, soldiers were kitted out with the great-

coat, which was far too heavy for the rain and mud. When uniform manufacture went out to the trade, a range of civilian outfitters began to supply mass-produced garments to officers. This was how various firms, including Burberry and Aquascutum, began to sell versions of the trench coat.

The coat was a practical garment for British officers enduring the muddy conditions of the trenches, and was a great improvement on the heavy, cumbersome greatcoat. The light fabric gave soldiers mobility, while water-repellent material protected them from wet weather: large pockets kept maps dry, and cleverly placed flaps offered ventilation. Protecting the body, and keeping mobility at a maximum, was vital in trench conditions – this light, weather-proof sports coat was the ideal solution.

Conscientious Objectors were forced to wear uniforms against their will

Following conscription, COs who were arrested for failing to respond to the call to military duty often refused to wear the uniform. Treated as enlisted soldiers, their disobedience brought the full force of the law upon them, and they could then be sentenced to imprisonment.

COs might refuse to strip for a medical examination or resist having their measurements taken. Often, soldiers would forcibly remove their clothes, or attempt to dress them in military uniform against their will. Fred Murfin recalls his arrival in France, when he defied



the authorities by deliberately and mischievously leaving his puttees on the ship. Their refusal to wear khaki was a powerful protest, and the penalty was often violence and humiliation.

An outfit allowance was introduced for officers who could not afford a uniform

As the war progressed, it became clear to British Army authorities that officers' uniforms would have to be subsidised. Many new army officers struggled to meet the expense of getting a uniform made. Hence outfit grants were issued to them, so that they could be commissioned from the ranks, without concern as to how they might meet the cost of the uniform.

Heavy losses meant that officers were being recruited from a wider range of social classes than before the war, and many of these men could not afford the traditional trip to the tailor. The introduction of an outfit grant ensured their continued recruitment. This might be why the established officer class were quick to label them 'improvised officers' or worse, 'temporary gentlemen'.

More than one million civilian suits were issued to discharged soldiers at the end of the war

Legally, a man could not wear his uniform more than 28 days after discharge, so upon demobilisation they were supplied with civilian suits by the Roy-

al Army Clothing Department. Before he left his unit, each man was given a plain clothes form and a certificate of employment.

When he went to a dispersal centre he received a protection certificate, a railway ticket to get home, a pay advance, a fortnight's ration book, and a voucher for the return of his greatcoat. Here he had the option of a clothing allowance or a suit of plain clothes.

The army issued a total of 1,413,760 suits to demobilised men at the end of the war, in dark blue, brown or grey. However, the trade press were quick to criticise the quality of the suits, which were thought to be an insult to returning war heroes.

Remembering World War I

11 November this year marks the 104th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice, bringing World War I to an end.

It was called 'The Great War' and 'The War to end all Wars'. Later it became known simply as World War I.

From 28 July 1914 to 11 November

1918 more than 70 million military personnel were mobilised in one of the largest wars in history.

It was a war fought on a global scale and would result in the deaths of over nine million combatants and seven million civilians.

It was one of the deadliest conflicts in history, and paved the way for major political changes, including revolutions in many of the nations involved.

It would also contribute to the start of the Second World War only twenty-one years later.

Here are some facts, figures and trivia from World War I.

- More than 70 million men from 30 countries fought in WWI. Nearly 10 million died. The Allies (The Entente Powers) lost about six million soldiers. The Central Powers lost about four million.
- Nearly two-thirds of military deaths in World War I were in battle. In previous conflicts, most deaths were due to disease.
- Germans were the first to use flamethrowers in WWI. Their flamethrowers could fire jets of flame as far as 40 metres.
- Artillery barrage and mines created immense noise. In 1917, explosives blowing up beneath the German lines on Messines Ridge at Ypres in Belgium could be heard in London, 220 km away.
- The Pool of Peace is a 12 metre deep lake near Messines, Belgium. It fills a crater made in 1917 when the British detonated a mine containing 45 tons of explosives under the German lines.
- Big Bertha was a 48-ton howitzer used by the Germans in World War I. It was named after the wife of its designer Gustav Krupp. It could fire a 930 kg shell a distance of 15 km. However, it took a crew of 200 men six hours or more to assemble. Germany had 13 of these huge guns or "wonder weapons."
- Tanks were initially called "landships." However, in an attempt to disguise them as water storage tanks rather than as weapons, the British decided to code name them "tanks."
- "Little Willie" was the first prototype tank in World War I. Built in 1915, it carried a crew of three and could travel as fast as 4.8 km/h.
- During World War I British tanks were initially categorized into "males" and "females." Male tanks had cannons, while females had

heavy machine guns.

The war left thousands of soldiers disfigured and disabled. Reconstructive surgery was used to repair facial damage, but masks were also used to cover the most horrific disfigurement. Some soldiers stayed in nursing homes their entire lives.

World War I helped hasten medical advances. Physicians learned better wound management and the setting of bones. Harold Gillies, an English doctor, pioneered skin graft surgery. The huge scale of those who needed medical care in World War I helped teach physicians and nurses the advantages of specialization and professional management.

Russia mobilised 12 million troops during World War I, making it the largest army in the war. More than three-quarters were killed, wounded, or went missing in action.

For the span of World War I, from 1914-1918, 274 German U-boats sank 6,596 ships. The five most successful U-boats were U-35 (sank 224 ships), U-39 (154 ships), U-38 (137 ships), U-34 (121 ships), and U-33 (84 ships). Most of these were sunk near the coast, particularly in the English Channel.

German trenches were in stark contrast to British

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.

trenches. German trenches were built to last and included bunk beds, furniture, cupboards, water tanks with taps, electric lights, and even doorbells.

- France, not Germany, was the first country to use gas against enemy troops in World War I. In August 1914, they fired the first tear gas grenades (xylyl bromide) against the Germans.
- In January 1915, Germany first used tear gas against Russian armies, but the gas turned to liquid in the cold air. In April 1915, the Germans were the first to use poisonous chlorine gas.
- During World War I, the Germans released about 68,000 tons of gas, and the British and French released 51,000 tons. In total, 1,200,000 soldiers on both sides were gassed, of which 91,198 died horrible deaths.
- Approximately 30 different poisonous gases were used during World War I. Soldiers were told to hold a urine-soaked cloth over their

faces in an emergency. By 1918, gas masks with filter respirators usually provided effective protection. At the end of the war, many countries signed treaties outlawing chemical weapons.

- World War I introduced the widespread use of the machine gun, a weapon Hiram Maxim patented in the U.S. in 1884. The Maxim weighed just over 45 kg and was water cooled. It could fire about 450-600 rounds per minute. Most machine guns used in World War I were based on the Maxim design.
- The term “dogfight” originated during World War I. The pilot had to turn off the plane’s engine from time to time so it would not stall when the plane turned quickly in the air. When a pilot restarted his engine mid-air, it sounded like dogs barking.
- Millions of soldiers suffered “shell shock,” or post traumatic stress disorder, due to the horrors of trench warfare. Those that had shell-

shock often had uncontrollable diarrhoea, couldn’t sleep, stopped speaking, whimpered for hours, and twitched uncontrollably. While some soldiers recovered, others suffered for the rest of their lives.

- On Christmas Eve in 1914, soldiers on both sides of the Western Front sung carols to each other. On Christmas Day troops along two-thirds of the Front declared a truce. In some places the truce lasted a week. A year later, sentries on both sides were ordered to shoot anyone who attempted a repeat performance. The British High Command ordered artillery bombardments to start on Christmas Eve and carry on for three days.
- Margaretha Zelle (1876-1917), also known as Mata Hari, was a Dutch exotic dancer accused of being a double agent. Though she always denied being a spy, the French executed her in 1917.
- The most decorated Amer-



REST IN PEACE: More than nine million combatants died during World War I. As did seven million civilians.

ican of World War I was Alvin Cullum York (1887-1964). York led an attack on a German gun nest, taking 32 machine guns, killing 28 German soldiers, and capturing 132 more. He returned home with a Medal of Honour, a promotion to Sergeant, the French *Croix de Guerre*, and a gift of 400 acres of good farmland.

- Even though the U.S. government didn’t grant Native Americans citizenship until 1924, nearly 13,000 of them served in World War I.
- More than 200,000 African Americans served in World War I, but only about 11 percent of them were in combat forces. The rest were put in labour units, loading cargo, building roads, and digging ditches. They served in segregated divisions (the 92nd and 93rd) and trained separately.
- The Harlem Hell Fighters were one of the few African

American units that saw the front lines. For their extraordinary acts of heroism, the soldiers received the French *Croix de Guerre*, a medal awarded to soldiers from Allied countries for bravery in combat. However, in the U.S their deeds were largely ignored.

- The trench network of World War I stretched approximately 40,200 km from the English Channel to Switzerland. The area was known as the Western Front. British poet Siegfried Sassoon wrote, “When all is done and said, the war was mainly a matter of holes and ditches.”
- World War I was also known as the Great War, the World War, the War of the Nations, and the War to End All Wars.
- World War I is the sixth deadliest conflict in world history.
- Nine out of 10 soldiers survived the trenches. Being in the firing line was rare

for a British soldier. They constantly moved around the trench system - meaning more often than not they were kept from the dangers of enemy fire. The more typical experience for the British Tommy would have been a life of boredom and regular routine.

- Blood banks were developed during WW1. The British Army began the routine use of blood transfusion in treating wounded soldiers. Blood was transferred directly from one person to another.
- The trench network of World War I stretched approximately 40,200 km from the English Channel to Switzerland. The area was known as the Western Front. British poet Siegfried Sassoon wrote, “When all is done and said, the war was mainly a matter of holes and ditches.”
- The greatest single loss of life in the history of the British army occurred during the Battle of Somme, when the British suffered 60,000 casualties in one day. More British men were killed in that one WWI battle than the U.S. lost from all of its armed forces and the National Guard combined.
- During WWI, American hamburgers (named after the German city of Hamburg) were renamed Salisbury steak. Frankfurters, which were named after Frankfurt, Germany, were called “liberty sausages,” and dachshunds became “liberty dogs.”



Little Willie

Hollywood hogwash

Hollywood spends millions of dollars on the production of a movie. Yet many of the movies supposedly based "on a real life story" are rife with mistakes. Perhaps they should consider hiring actual military veterans as technical advisors.

When it comes to retelling history, Hollywood is well known for taking what they like to call 'artistic license'.

Nevertheless, watching so called 'realistic' military films that are supposed to be 'based on a true story' can leave one with a distorted view on history.

When you look at real historic events from which the film is derived you often discover that the movie makers have mixed up the facts, dramatizing certain aspects for effect, or breezing over parts of the story that don't suit the particular narrative.

Of course, this is even more apparent if you've actually served in the military or know anything about history.

Enemy at the Gates

Take the 2001 film *Enemy at the Gates* for example. The film is based on the exploits of Russian sniper Vasily Zaytsev during the Battle of Stalingrad.

Yes there was a real Vasily Zaytsev and he was a sniper and a Hero of the Soviet Union. Yet the movie grossly exaggerates the role that Zaytsev played.

According to the movie, all the Germans had to do was kill Zaytsev and it would have changed the course of the entire battle.

The main catalyst of the film is a sniper duel between Zaytsev and a German sniper sent specifically to kill Zaytsev.

The sniper the Germans send is a Major Erwin König, the head instructor of their Sniper School.

In his memoirs, *Notes of a Russian Sniper: Vassili Zaitsev and the Battle of Stalingrad*, Zaytsev claimed that this event did take place.

Yet there is no record in German archives of a Major Erwin König. And while the Germans did indeed have a snipers school, it was only established in 1943, after the Battle of Stalingrad.

U-571

Naturally if Hollywood is producing a movie, then the Americans have to be the heroes. The movie *U-571* is a classic example of this.

This film was so distorted that British Prime Minister Tony Blair called it "an affront" to British sailors who had fought in WWII."

The film shows the capture of the very first top secret German coding machine, the Enigma.

In the movie it is an American planned operation in which US sailors, disguised as German submariners, board a German submarine and capture the machine. They then hold off attacking German Navy ships in order to escape.

The reality, however, was a bit different. The first Enigma machine captured was by a British warship in 1941 - seven

months before the Americans even entered the war.

The Battle of the Bulge

Produced in 1965, the movie focuses on the Battle of the Bulge which took place during the Ardennes Campaign.

A crucial element of the initial German success of the Ardennes attack was the bad weather. Heavy snow and overcast, stormy weather meant that the Allies did not have air superiority as nothing could fly at that stage.

Yet many of the battles depicted in the movie take place in clear weather and the terrain is entirely clear of snow. Moreover, these battles take place in flat and level terrain, unlike the Ardennes forest where the actual combat took place.

The German King Tiger tanks used in the film are not even German. They are the distinctive American M47 Patton tanks, which only entered service in the US Army in 1952 - seven years after the war ended.

Finally, all of the jeeps used by the Americans in the film were models designed and produced after the war.

Windtalkers

John Woo's 2002 film *Windtalkers* at least got one thing right - the use of Navajo as a code in World War II.

Navajo Native American



NOT THE WILD WEST: A scene from the 1968 movie *The Green Berets*. From left: John Wayne, Jim Hutton and George Takei.

were used to transmit messages for the US Marine Corps. Not only would they transmit radio messages in the Navajo language, they would also use code words.

They had at least two or three words for each letter of the phonetic alphabet as well as code words for common words and phrases.

For example the Navajo code for a colonel was *Atsah-besh-le-gai* (silver eagle). Likewise the code for a submarine was *besh-lo* (iron fish).

In the film *Windtalkers*, each Navajo code talker is given a bodyguard who was ordered to kill code talkers, if necessary, in order to prevent them falling into enemy hands.

This was absolute rubbish. The Navajos' physical resemblance to the Japanese led to confusion that resulted in several Navajos almost becoming casualties of 'friendly fire' by their fellow-Americans. The bodyguards' main job was to protect the code talkers and prevent them being mistaken for

Japanese.

The combat in the film is also unrealistic with troops advancing without any covering fire, and almost all of the contacts taking place at less than three metres.

Pearl Harbor

This movie has more flaws than a used car bought from Honest Al's.

The premise of the movie features two American Army pilots both in love with the same nurse, with the attack on Pearl Harbour and subsequent events as a backdrop.

One of the pilots, Rafe McCauley (Ben Affleck) is shot down and missing in action while serving with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in England.

This would never have happened. Serving member of the US Army Air Force were prohibited from flying with the RAF.

Many US recruits simply crossed the border into Canada and joined the Royal Canadian

Air Force (RCAF) to learn to fly and fight.

Others, many of them already qualified pilots, had gone across to England and joined the RAF. There were three fighter squadrons, known as Eagle Squadrons, formed with volunteer pilots from America. But none of them were serving members of the US Military at the time.

Another major flaw was that during the actual attack on Pearl Harbour, a number of mistakes are also made. Admiral Kimmel, the commander of the Pearl Harbor naval base, was not playing golf on the morning of the raid, and he was not forewarned of Japanese intentions or of the fact that their embassy had left Washington.

The Green Berets

Personally, I was a big fan of John Wayne. The Duke was probably one of the best cowboys on the silver screen.

But a 60 year old, overweight John Wayne was just not convincing as an American Green Beret colonel in the 1968 film *The Green Berets*.

His character looked as if he should have been given a medical discharge rather than leading a special forces team in combat. He actually holds his rifle upside down in some scenes.

There were also more than enough technical mistakes in the movie. For instance the jungle around the American fire base included pine trees and red clay, not even remotely resembling the terrain of Vietnam.

The critics called it a "cowboys and Indians" movie that glorified a messy war and reduced it to a series of clichés.



NOT AN ADVERT FOR SPEEDO: Come on Hollywood, the Spartans wore more clothes than that.

The Hurt Locker

The *Hurt Locker* received widespread acclaim and won six Academy Awards, including the award for Best Picture.

Kathryn Bigelow won the award for Best Director, the first female director to win the award in either category. Bigelow is the former wife of another Oscar winner, James Cameron.

Critics billed it as “a near perfect movie.” I wonder if any of them ever actually served in the military.

The Hurt Locker follows an elite team of bomb disposal experts in Iraq. While the movie is an excellent human drama, many scenes are implausibly melodramatic in their depiction of combat.

Veterans who watched the movie aimed particular criticism at the character of Sergeant James (Jeremy Renner).

His defusing of 870 bombs during his career was seen as unbelievable, since in a typical tour of duty, it would require him to deal with around three improvised explosive devices (IEDs) a day.

The character was also criticized for putting the lives of his men at risk by failing to follow proper procedure. The three-man squad is shown routinely operating without support in hostile environments – and engaging in sniper battles and combat – while individuals are shown being insubordinate to superior officers.

Former British bomb disposal officer Guy Marot said, “James makes us look like hot-headed, irrational adrenaline junkies with no self-discipline. It’s immensely disrespectful to the many officers who have lost their lives.”

300

A fictionalised account of the Battle of Thermopylae during the Persian Wars, the movie *300* deals with the attempts of 300 Spartan warriors, under King Leonidas, to hold off the 300,000 strong army of Persian King Xerxes.

The movie is more historical fantasy than historical fact. For one thing the Spartans were protected by more than just shields, helmets, and a toned torso. They wore armour. Even Spartan archers wore light armour.

The only troops that had little or no armour were new recruits that could not yet afford to buy their own armour.

Nearly every action or war movie will involve firearms or military equipment of some kind. And this is where they often get it wrong.

The exploding bullet theory

The villain in the movie is busy escaping in a car. No problem. The hero takes out his pistol, takes careful aim at the speeding car, and fires a shot into the petrol tank. The car explodes in a ball of flame and the villain is burnt to a crisp.

A good ending to an exciting movie. With one small problem - it will never happen.

If cars exploded because something ruptured the fuel tank car manufacturers would be up to their ears in lawsuits. In most accidents it would mean that the cars would explode. It’s not the type of selling point that will want to make you rush out and buy one of their cars.

The bullet-proof vest

The hero in the movie is ambushed and the villain empties an entire magazine of bullets from an AK-47 into his chest before running away.

Seconds later the hero gets to his feet and opens his shirt to reveal a bulletproof vest that now has 30 7,62 mm bullets stuck into it. It’s not going to happen in real life.

The type of protection that is worn under clothing is a vest made from a material called Kevlar. It will stop a knife or small pieces of shrapnel penetrating, but will not stop most handguns from close range.

In order to stop a handgun, trauma plates, usually made from ceramic material, have to be inserted into the front and back of the vest. This makes it bulky and it has to be worn

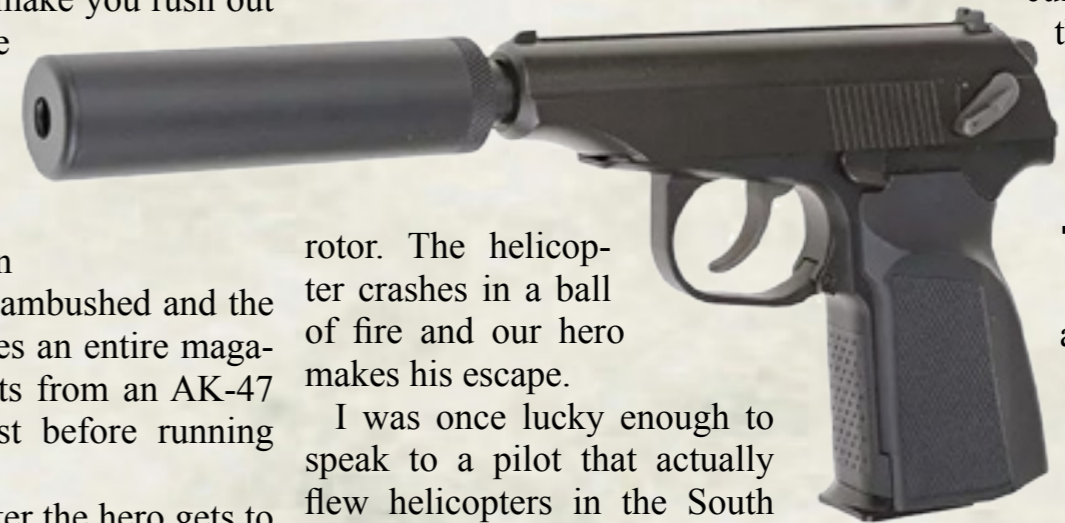
over the clothing. It also makes it heavy (about 15 kg).

Many soldiers wear full military body armour, which has a higher chance of stopping a rifle bullet.

One shot - kill anything

Armed only with a pistol, our hero is being chased through the desert by an army of villains.

Using just his pistol, he’s already killed half of them. But now they have a helicopter after him. Down to his last bullet, our hero takes aim, fires and by some miracle he hits the helicopter in just the right spot to destroy the engine or the



rotor. The helicopter crashes in a ball of fire and our hero makes his escape.

I was once lucky enough to speak to a pilot that actually flew helicopters in the South African Border War. He told me that on more than one occasion his helicopter had been hit numerous times by ground fire and never once did it cause his helicopter to crash or explode in a ball of fire.

The silent silencer

The hero is sneaking into the enemies building. To succeed he has to enter without making a sound. Suddenly he is confronted by an armed guard.

Before the guard can shout our hero fires two shots from his 9 mm pistol fitted with a silencer. The pistol makes two soft

phut sounds and the guard falls down dead. Enemies standing a few metres away don’t even hear the shots.

Sounds great except for one small problem - it doesn’t work that way. Exploding gunpowder is loud. Very loud in fact.

An unsilenced gunshot is around 140 to 160 decibels--that’s in the range where hearing it once can permanently damage your ears. A silencer will reduce that to around 120 or 130 decibels.

So what’s the point of using a silencer in the first place? Well in an outdoor or noisy environment a silencer makes it difficult to tell where the shot is coming from or how far away it is.

Time travel

I once saw a movie that was set during World War Two. The Germans were

attacking an American position with tanks. The German tanks were supposed to be Panzer Mk IV tanks.

The problem was that the Germans were using American M60 Patton tanks. And this wasn’t even the biggest fault.

The M60 Patton tank was only developed in 1960 - 15 years after World War Two ended.

The magic gun

Our hero is trapped. 150 armed villains are coming for him, all of them armed to the

teeth.

Our hero is armed only with a 9 mm HK MP5 sub-machine gun. Firing on full automatic he begins to take down the enemy with accurate bursts that decimate their number. Yet even though the MP5 holds only 30 bullets, he never has to reload once.

You see it in so many movies. The cowboy that fires 25 shots from a six-shooter revolver. The cop who fires 30 bullets from a pistol that only holds 15 rounds.

The MP5, for example, has a rate of fire of 800 rounds per minute. This means that on full automatic fire the 30-round magazine would be empty in just under three seconds.

Most soldiers carry an assault rifle into battle. They also carry about 210 rounds of ammunition. Assault rifles have a rate of fire of about 700 rounds per minute. So on full automatic they would have used their rounds up in about four sec-

onds. Which is why soldiers will hardly ever fire on full automatic.

The other type of magic gun in the movies is those with absolutely no recoil. I've seen more than one movie where the hero has a M60 machine gun tucked under each arm and is busy cutting down the enemy.

First of all the M60 is a crew-served weapon that is operated with either two or three people. It weighs 10.5 kg and has a fierce recoil. It takes a large, powerful individual to control the weapon while firing in a standing position.

Even better was the movie where the hero was running with an M2 Browning and firing it from the hip. This weapon is known as a heavy machine gun. It fires 12.7 mm rounds and the gun weighs 38 kg. Try firing it from the hip and you're going to go flying. It is normally mounted on a tripod.

Super hand grenades

We've seen in time and time again. The hero throws a grenade into a building, there is a massive ball of flame, and the

building is demolished, killing everyone inside.

The hero throws a grenade through the open hatch of a tank. A few seconds later there is a huge explosion and the tank is blown to pieces.

The hero throws a grenade into a group of enemy soldiers. Once again there is an explosion, a fire ball, and the soldiers go flying 10 metres into the air.

While this is all very dramatic, it is also absolute hogwash.

Anyone that knows anything about weapons will know that a hand grenade is made up of a number of parts. There is the pin, the handle, the firing pin, a fuse and detonator, a small amount of explosives, and the outer casing.

The pin basically keeps the handle in place. Once the pin is pulled and the grenade is dropped or thrown, the handle flies off. This releases the firing pin which strikes a plate and causes a spark. This ignites the fuse which will then trigger the detonator which then sets off the explosives. The resulting explosion will burst the outer casing, causing shrapnel.

It is this flying shrapnel that will cause casualties, not the explosion, which is relatively small. And, by the way, there is no huge ball of flame.

Everyone dies

The epic battle is over. Dazed and shell shocked survivors wander around the battlefield, surveying the carnage. Every last one of the enemy is dead or dying. While it did happen on occasions, these were rather rare. You'd actually be hard-pressed to find a complete bat-



BIG BANG: No, this is not a hand grenade exploding. It was actually the detonation of an unexploded World War II 500 lb bomb that was discovered outside London recently.

tlefield massacre.

The Battle of Verdun during World War I is considered to be one of the deadliest battles in human history. Yet most of those that took part in the battle survived.

The casualty rate for Verdun was about 40%. Of the 2,4 million soldiers that took part in the battle, 976,000 of them became casualties. Of those, 305,000

were killed.

During the American Civil War there were an estimated 1,5 million casualties, with 620,000 dead. At the Battle of Gettysburg only about 6% of the losing Confederate Army was killed on the battlefield.

All dressed up

Hollywood can often get it wrong when it comes to war

movies.

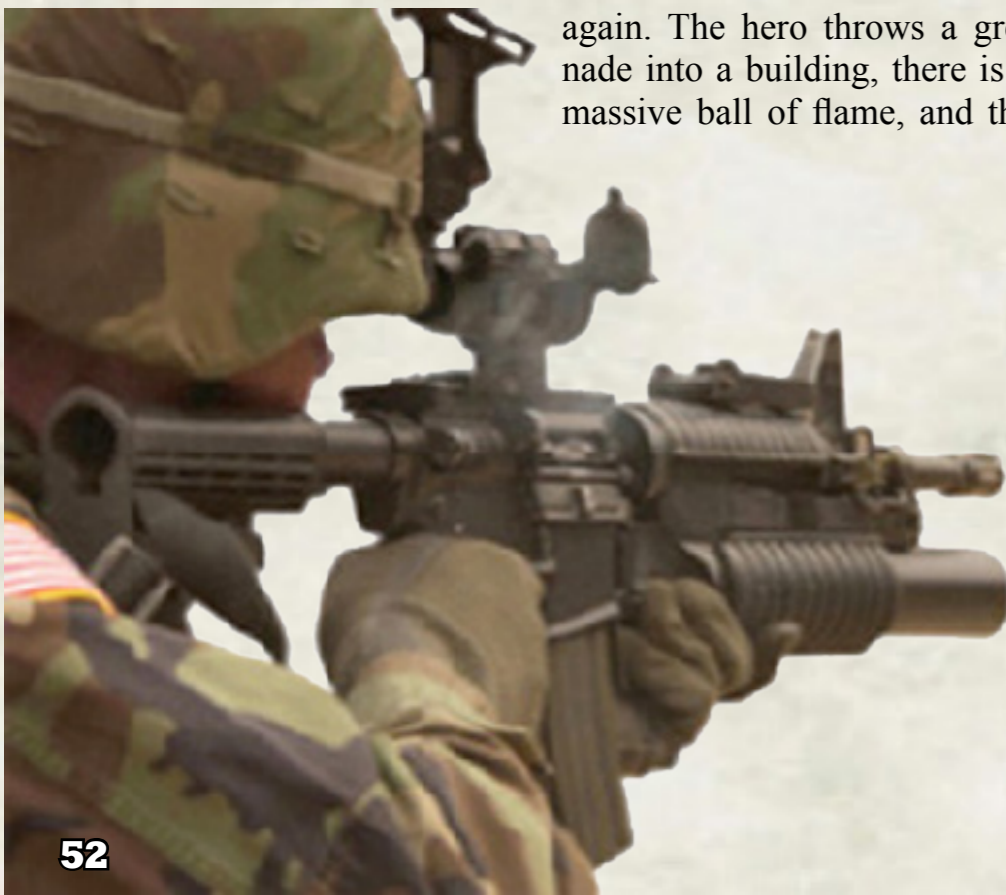
Soldiers are wearing uniforms and carrying weapons that were not even invented during the period that the film is depicting.

Often a movie about a particular battle or military campaign will leave out large chunks of what really happened. Or change the real events to suit the movie. Look, I know it's a movie, but then don't try to promote it as being "historically accurate". Rather say that it is "based on real events".

I love action movies, but I wish they would get it right every now and again. After all it's not that difficult to do a bit of research.

Hey, here's a crazy idea. Why not spent a little money and hire a military veteran? After all, they should know something about the subject matter.

They will probably know a little bit about the uniforms worn at the time, the terminology used, what weapons were used and what they could or could not do, and many other little details that could turn a good movie into a great movie.



Weapons & Equipment: Paras

This month we compare the weapons and equipment of the World War II paratroopers.

Germany

The German *Fallschirmjäger* can trace their history back to April 1935.

They were part of the *Luftwaffe* (Air Force) and not the army.

While they were successful at the start of the war, they took heavy casualties during the invasion of Crete.

The worst parachutes used by a major power were those of the Germans which were based on the Italian *Salvatore* design.

Because of the rather athletic forward landing roll necessitated by their parachute harness, the German paratrooper could carry little more than a pistol

and some grenades on his person. Therefore, many weapons containers, called *Waffenhalter*, had to be carried and dropped.

The *Fallschirmjäger* had a wide variety of special clothing. As they were Luftwaffe personnel, the basic uniform was that of the flying units and in blue rather than the field grey of the Army.

While most were armed with either the standard K98 bolt-action rifle or the MP-40 submachine gun, some of them were armed with the FG-42.

The FG-42 was a gas operated semi-automatic rifle made only for the Airborne. Only about 10,000 were made. It had a 20

round magazine and a small bipod.

Paratrooper Equipment

- A - Jump boots.
- B - M38 Helmet.
- C - K98 Mauser.
- D - MP-40.
- E - Walther P-38.
- F - FG-42.
- G - Gravity knife.
- H - M24 *Stielhandgranate*.
- I - Canteen.
- J - *Göffel* (Fork and spoon).
- K - Trenching tool.
- L - Mess kit.
- M - MP-40 ammo pouches.
- N - Parachute badge.
- O - Jump gloves.
- P - Knee pads.

Britain

The Parachute Regiment was formed on 22 June 1940 when No. 2 Commando was turned over to parachute duties

During World War II they won no fewer than 23 battle honours, including Pegasus Bridge and Arnhem.

They wore the distinctive maroon beret and the Denison smock was the first camouflaged uniform issued to the British Army.

On landing from a parachute jump, many paras would remove their steel helmet and replace it with their maroon beret. This led to the Germans giving them the nickname *Die Roten*

Teufel (the Red Devils).

The Paras were not issued with any special weapons and their small arms were the same as the rest of the army.

They used the standard bolt action Lee-Enfield rifle and the Enfield or Webley revolver or the M1911 pistol.

For a submachine gun, they used the British Sten in North-west Europe, which was issued in higher numbers than to a normal infantry battalion.

Each section had a Bren light machine gun and the platoon had a 2-inch mortar. The only battalion heavy weapons were eight 3-inch mortars, four Vickers machine guns and after 1943,

ten PIAT anti tank weapons.

Paratrooper Equipment

- A - Combat boots.
- B - Mk II helmet.
- C - Lee Enfield No.4 Mk.I.
- D - Sten gun.
- E - Bren gun.
- F - Webley revolver.
- G - Fairbairn-Sykes knife.
- H - Trenching tool.
- I - Mess kit.
- J - Canteen.
- K - Mills bomb.
- L - Back pack.
- M - Sten ammo pouch.
- N - Parachute Regiment beret.
- O - Parachute wings.
- P - Toggle rope.
- Q - Scarf.

United States

The first U.S. airborne unit began as a test platoon formed from part of the 29th Infantry Regiment, in July 1940. The platoon leader was 1st Lieutenant William T. Ryder, who made the first jump on August 16, 1940 at Lawson Field, Fort Benning, Georgia from a B-18 Bomber.

Although airborne units were not popular with the top U.S. Armed Forces commanders, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sponsored the concept, and Major General William C. Lee organized the first paratroop platoon. This led to the Provisional Parachute Group, and then the United States Army Airborne Command. General Lee was the first commander at the new par-

achute school at Fort Benning, in west-central Georgia.

The first U.S. combat jump was near Oran, Algeria, in North Africa on November 8, 1942, conducted by elements of the 2nd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

The 82nd Airborne Division, known as the All American, and the 101st Airborne Division (Screaming Eagles) made a total of 13 combat jumps during World War II, including during Operation Overlord as well as Operation Market Garden.

A folding butt version of the M1A1 carbine was produced especially for the paratroopers. It was stored in a special rifle bag while jumping.

Paratrooper Equipment

- A - Jump boots.
- B - M1C Helmet.
- C - M1A1 carbine.
- D - M1A1 Thompson.
- E - M1918A2 Browning Automatic Rifle.
- F - M1911A1 Colt pistol.
- G - M3 fighting knife.
- H - Trenching tool.
- I - Mess kit.
- J - M1 carbine ammo pouch.
- K - Mk II hand grenade.
- L - Canteen.
- M - Parachute wings.
- N - 82nd Airborne patch.
- O - 101st Airborne patch.
- P - M1936 Musette bag.

Other Airborne Forces

Other countries also had their own airborne forces.

France

Following the Battle of France, General Charles de Gaulle formed the *1ère Compagnie d'Infanterie de l'Air* in September 1940 from members of the Free French forces who had escaped to Britain. It was transformed into the *Compagnie de Chasseurs Parachutistes* in October 1941.

Italy

The *Paracadutisti* was a parachute division formed in 1941 and was designated the 185th Parachute Division *Folgore*.

Japan

The *Teishin Shudan* was a Japanese special forces/airborne unit during World War II.

Poland

The 1st (Polish) Independent Parachute Brigade was a parachute brigade under the command of Major General Stanisław Sosabowski, created in the Second World War Scotland in September 1941, with the exclusive mission to drop into occupied Poland in order to help liberate the country.

Russia

The Russian Airborne Troops or VDV (Vozdushno-desantnye voyska Rossii) were first formed in the Soviet Union during the mid-1930s and arguably were the

first regular paratrooper units in the world. During World War II, they formed ten Airborne Corps plus numerous Independent Airborne Brigades, with most or all achieving Guards status.

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- I - Japanese Type 2 rifle.
- J - Italian fighting knife.
- K - Italian Beretta M938A.
- L - Russian PPsH-41.
- M - Free French parachute wings.
- N - Italian parachute wings.
- O - Polish parachute wings.



Germany



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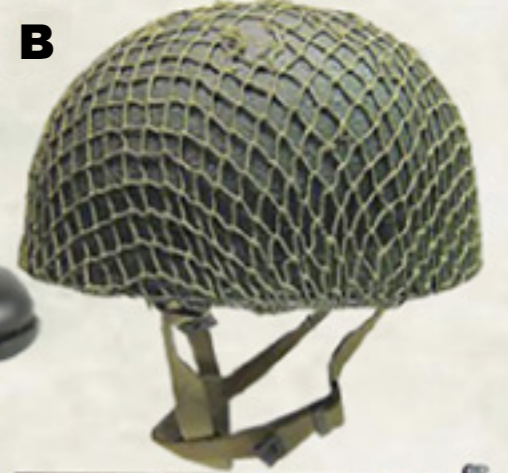
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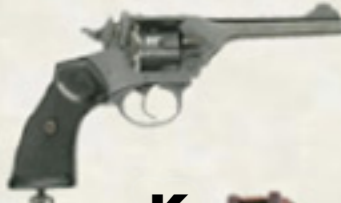
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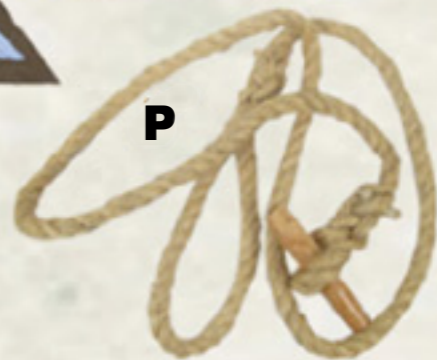
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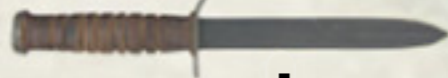
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Alvin York

Uneducated, a violent alcoholic, Alvin York became a born-again Christian and a pacifist. Yet in World War I he would win the Medal of Honour.

A devoted Christian and a pacifist, he initially claimed conscientious objector status on the grounds that his denomination forbade violence. Yet Alvin York would go on to win the Medal of Honour and become one of the most decorated United States Army soldiers of World War I.

Alvin Cullum York was born on 13 December 1887 in Pall Mall, Tennessee. He was the third oldest of 11 children.

The York family was dirt poor. The family farmed and harvested their own food, while the mother made all of the family's clothing.

Each of the boys, including Alvin, attended school for only nine months. They received no further education because William York, the father of the family, needed his sons to help him work the family farm and hunt and fish in order to feed the family.

When William York died in November 1911 at the age of 49, it was left to Alvin to help his mother raise his younger siblings.

His two elder brothers, Henry and Joseph,

had already married and relocated. To supplement the family's income, York worked in railroad construction and then as a logger.

Although he was devoted to the welfare of his family, York was also a violent alcoholic. He would often be involved in bar room brawls and had been arrested on a number of occasions.

His mother was a member of a pacifist Protestant denomination and she was forever trying

to get him to change his ways.

York would regularly attend church and often led the hymn singing, despite his history of drinking and fighting.

It was a revival meeting at the end of 1914 that changed his life. On 1 January 1915 he underwent a conversion experience and he became a devoted born-again Christian.

His congregation was the Church of Christ in Christian Union, a Protestant denomination that shunned secular politics.

Although the church had no specific doctrine of pacifism, York was a firm believer in the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill".

With the outbreak of World War I, he was worried that at some stage America may become involved. "I was worried clean through. I didn't want to go and kill. I believed in my Bible," he said.

In June 1917 all American men between the ages of 21 and 31 years of age were required to register for the draft. York was 29 years old at the time.

When he registered for



the draft, he answered the question "Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)?" by writing "Yes. Don't Want To Fight."

His request for conscientious objector status was denied and he appealed.

In World War I those with conscientious objector status were not exempt from military duties. They could still be drafted and were given assignments that did not conflict with their anti-war principles.

In November 1917, while his application was considered, York was drafted and began his army service at Camp Gordon in Georgia.

He served in Company G, 328th Infantry Regiment, 82nd Infantry Division. York was deeply troubled by the conflict between his pacifism and his training for war.

He spoke at length with his company commander, Captain Edward Courtney Bullock Dan-

forth, and his battalion commander, Major G. Edward Buxton.

Buxton, a devout Christian himself, cited three biblical verses for York to think about.

- "He that hath no sword, let him sell his cloak and buy one." - Luke 22:36.
- "Render unto to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." - Mark 12:17.
- "... if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight..." - John 18:36.

It caused York to reconsider the morality of his participation in the war.

He was given 10 days leave to visit home, and it was a very different Alvin York that returned. He was now convinced that God meant for him to fight and would keep him safe. He was now as committed to his new mission as he had been to pacifism.

His Division was sent to France and in October 1918 took part in the St. Mihiel Offensive.

During an attack by his battalion to capture German positions near Hill 223 along the Decaerville rail-line north of Chatel-Chéhéry, France, on October 8, 1918, York's actions earned him the Medal of Honour.

He recalled:
The Germans got us, and they got us right smart. They just stopped us dead in our tracks. Their machine guns were up there on the heights overlooking us and well hidden, and we couldn't tell for certain where the terrible heavy fire was coming from ... And I'm telling you they

were shooting straight. Our boys just went down like the long grass before the mowing machine at home. Our attack just faded out ... And there we were, lying down, about halfway across [the valley] and those German machine guns and big shells getting us hard.

With Sergeant Bernard Early in command, four non-commissioned officers, including the recently promoted Corporal York, and 13 privates were ordered to infiltrate behind the German lines and silence the machine guns.

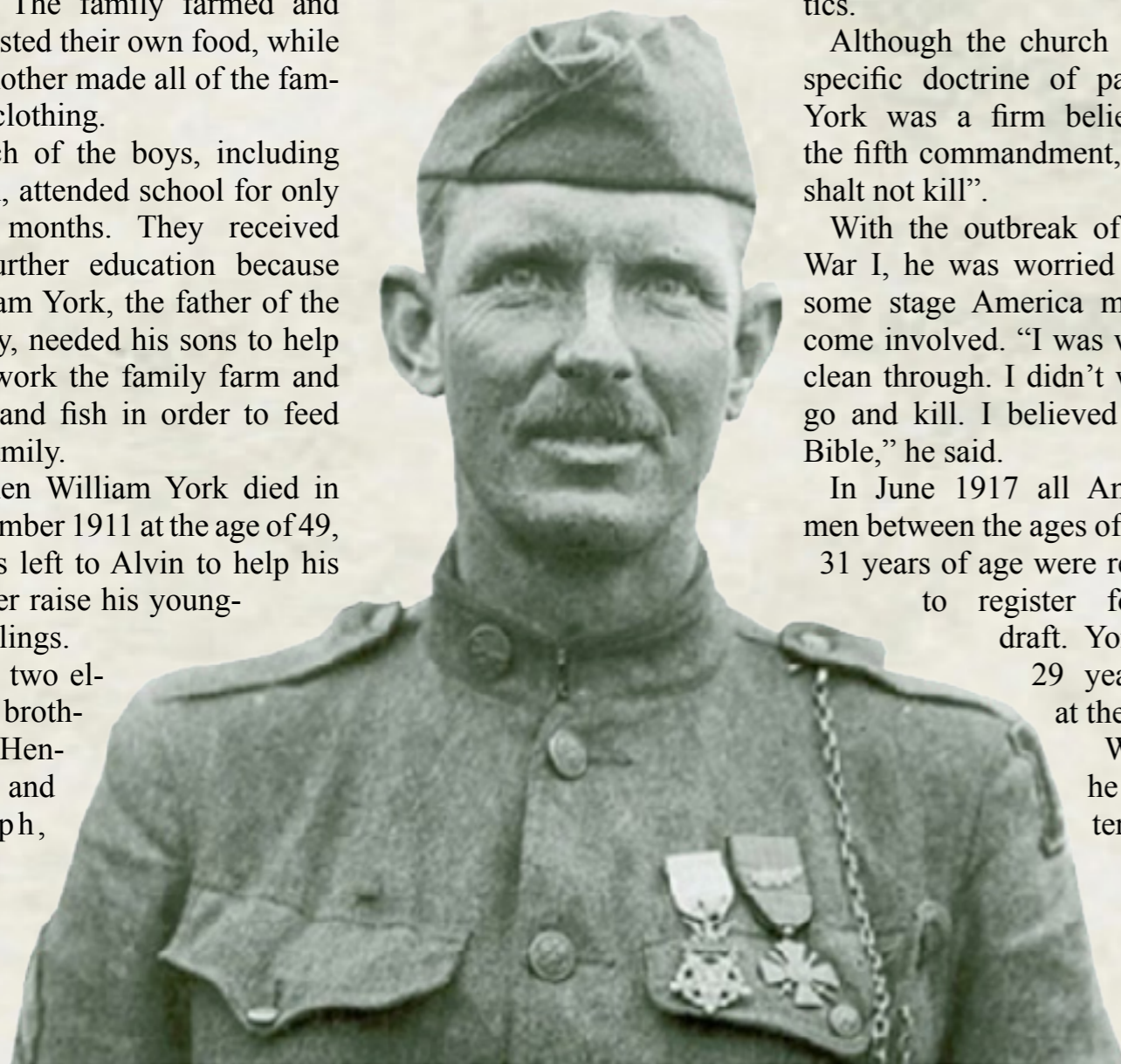
The Germans were preparing for a counter-attack when their headquarters were overrun by Early's group and taken prisoner.

While they were dealing with the prisoners the area was hit by machine gun fire, killing six Americans and wounding three others. The fire came from German machine guns on the ridge.

With the loss of the nine men, York found himself in charge of the remaining seven US soldiers.

York told his men to remain under cover and guard the prisoners. He then worked his way into position to silence the German machine guns. He recalled:

And those machine guns were spitting fire and cutting down the undergrowth all around me something awful. And the Germans were yelling orders. You never heard such a racket in all of your life. I didn't have time to dodge behind a tree or dive into the brush... As soon as the machine guns opened fire on me, I began to exchange shots with them. There were over thirty of them in continuous action, and all I could do was touch the Ger-



mans off just as fast as I could. I was sharp shooting... All the time I kept yelling at them to come down. I didn't want to kill any more than I had to. But it was they or I. And I was giving them the best I had.

It must be remembered that York had spent much of his youth hunting, so he was an excellent shot.

During the assault, six German soldiers in a nearby trench rushed at York with fixed bayonets. He had already fired all the round in his M1917 Enfield rifle. He drew his M1911 semi-automatic pistol and shot all six soldiers before they could reach him.

While York was contending with the German machine guns, German First Lieutenant Paul Jürgen Vollmer, commander of the First Battalion, 120th Landwehr Infantry, emptied his pistol trying to kill York.

After failing to hit York with even a single shot and seeing his losses mounting, Vollmer called out in English, offering to surrender his unit to York. The offer was accepted by York.

By the end of the engagement York and his seven men marched 132 German prisoners back to the American lines.

When York reported back, his brigade commander, Brigadier General Julian Robert Lindsey, remarked, "Well York, I hear you have captured the whole damn German army."

"No sir. I got only 132," was York's reply.

His actions silenced the German machine guns and were responsible for enabling the 328th

Infantry to renew its attack to capture the Decauville Railroad.

York's actions had silenced or captured 35 machine guns, killed at least 25 enemy soldiers, and taken 132 prisoners.

York was promptly promoted to Sergeant and received the Distinguished Service Cross. A few months later, an investigation by York's chain of command resulted in an upgrade of his Distinguished Service Cross to the Medal of Honour, which was presented by the commanding general of the American Expeditionary Forces, General John J. Pershing.

The French Republic awarded him the *Croix de Guerre*, the *Médaille Militaire* and the Legion of Honour. When decorating York with the *Croix de Guerre*, Marshal Ferdinand Foch told York "What you did was the greatest thing accomplished by any soldier of all the armies of Europe."

In addition to his French medals, Italy awarded York the *Croce al Merito di Guerra* and Montenegro decorated him with its War Medal. He eventually received nearly 50 decorations.

York's Medal of Honour citation reads: *After his platoon suffered heavy casualties and 3 other noncommissioned officers had become casualties, Cpl. York assumed command. Fearlessly leading seven men, he charged with great daring a machine gun nest which was pouring deadly and incessant fire upon his platoon. In this heroic feat the machine gun nest was taken, together with 4 officers and 128 men and several guns.*

In attempting to explain his actions during the 1919 investigation that resulted in the Medal of Honor, York told General Lindsey "A higher power than man guided and watched over me and told me what to do." Lindsey replied "York, you are right."

When America entered World War II, York attempted to re-enlist in the army. However at fifty-four years of age, overweight, near-diabetic, and with evidence of arthritis, he was denied enlistment as a combat soldier. Instead, he was commissioned as a major in the Army Signal Corps and he toured training camps and participated in bond drives in support of the war effort, usually paying his own travel expenses.

Although York served during the war with the rank of major in the Army Signal Corps and as a Colonel with the 7th Regiment of the Tennessee State Guard, newspapers continued to refer to him as "Sgt. York."

York died at the Veterans Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, on 2 September 1964, of a cerebral hemorrhage. After a funeral service in his Jamestown church, with Gen. Matthew Ridgway representing President Lyndon Johnson, York was buried at the Wolf River Cemetery in Pall Mall.

He left behind his wife Grace and eight children, six sons and two daughters

Seven public buildings have been named for Alvin York, including the Alvin C. York Veterans Hospital located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.



Military Nicknames

The military loves nicknames and slang. US Marines are known as 'Grunts', while a 'Jimmy' is a member of the Signals Corps. Troops would often become NAAFI and the situation could become a SNAFU.

Here are a few questions about nicknames. See if you know the answers. Answers on page 00.

1. What nickname was given to the M3 Stuart tank?
2. Which World War II German fighter ace had the nickname 'Dolfo'?
3. By what nickname was US Civil War General Thomas J. Jackson better known?
4. Which World War II American tank was known as the 'Ronson' by the British and the 'Tommycooker' by the Germans?
5. Who earned the nickname 'Butcher of the Somme'?
6. Which German weapon did American GI's nickname 'Screaming Mimi'?
7. What aircraft was better known as the 'Stuka'?
8. Who was known as 'Blood-n-Guts'?
9. Which American unit is nicknamed 'Screaming Eagles'?
10. What as the nickname given to the leading fighter ace of World War II, Erich Hartmann?
11. What was the BM-13 Katyusha better known as?
12. What was the nickname given to the America M3 sub-machine gun?
13. Which former British officer and mercenary leader was nicknamed 'Mad Mike'?
14. Which South African fighter ace was nicknamed 'Sailor'?
15. Which Rhodesian Army unit were better known as 'The Saints'?
16. What nickname did the Russians give to Finish sniper Simo Häyhä?
17. What did the Allies call the German Stielhandgranate.
18. What was a 'Chicago Typewriter'?
19. What was the nickname given to the Royal Air Force 617 Squadron?
20. What nickname was given to the South African designed and built Valikri 127 mm multiple rocket launcher?
21. To Allies he was known as the 'Red Baron'. But what nickname did the Germans give Manfred von Richthofen?
22. By what name were the British Home Guard known during World War II?
23. What was the nickname given to the British Parachute Regiment?
24. Who or what was a 'Noddy Car'?
25. What derogatory nickname did German General Erich von Manstein give to Adolf Hitler?



Boeing AH-64 Apache

In this month's 'Forged in Battle', we look at the Boeing AH-64 Apache helicopter.

The Boeing AH-64 Apache is an American twin-turboshaft attack helicopter with a tailwheel-type landing gear arrangement and a tandem cockpit for a crew of two. It features a nose-mounted sensor suite for target acquisition and night vision systems.

It is armed with a 30 mm M230

chain gun carried between the main landing gear, under the aircraft's forward fuselage, and four hardpoints mounted on stub-wing pylons for carrying armament and stores, typically a mixture of AGM-114 Hellfire missiles and Hydra 70 rocket pods. The AH-64 has significant systems redundancy to improve combat survivability.

The U.S. Army is the primary operator of the AH-64. It has also become the primary attack helicopter of multiple nations, including Greece, Japan, Israel, the Netherlands, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates. It has been built under license in the United Kingdom as the AgustaWestland Apache.

American AH-64s have served in conflicts in Panama, the Persian Gulf, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Israel.

Israel

used the Apache in its military conflicts in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. British and Dutch Apaches have seen deployments in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Development

Following the cancellation of the AH-56 Cheyenne in 1972, in favour of projects like the U.S. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II and the Marine Corps AV-8A Harrier, the United States Army sought an aircraft to fill an anti-armour attack role that would still be under Army command.

The 1948 Key West Agreement forbade the Army from owning combat fixed-wing air-

craft. The Army wanted an aircraft better than the AH-1 Cobra in firepower, performance and range. It would have the manoeuvrability for terrain following nap-of-the-earth (NoE) flying.

To this end, the U.S. Army issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the Advanced Attack Helicopter (AAH) program on 15 November 1972. As a sign of the importance of this project, in September 1973 the Army designated its five most important projects as the "Big Five", with the AAH included.

Proposals were submitted by Bell, Boeing Vertol/Grumman team, Hughes, Lockheed, and Sikorsky. In July 1973, the U.S. Department of Defence select-

ed finalists Bell and Hughes Aircraft's Toolco Aircraft Division (later Hughes Helicopters).

This began the phase 1 of the competition. Each company built prototype helicopters and went through a flight test program. Hughes' Model 77/YAH-64A prototype first flew on 30 September 1975, while Bell's Model 409/YAH-63A prototype first flew on 1 October 1975.

After evaluating the test results, the Army selected Hughes' YAH-64A over Bell's YAH-63A in 1976. Reasons for selecting the YAH-64A included its more damage tolerant four-blade main rotor and the instability of the YAH-63's tricycle landing gear arrangement. The AH-64A then entered phase 2 of



the AAH program under which three pre-production AH-64s would be built, additionally, the two YAH-64A flight prototypes and the ground test unit were upgraded to the same standard.

Weapons and sensor systems were integrated and tested during this time, including the laser-guided AGM-114 Hellfire missile.

Development of the Hellfire missile had begun in 1974, originally known by the name of Helicopter Launched, Fire and Forget Missile ('Hellfire' being a shortened acronym), for the purpose of arming helicopter platforms with an effective anti-tank missile.

In 1981, three pre-production AH-64As were handed over to the U.S. Army for Operational Test II. The Army testing was successful, but afterward it was decided to upgrade to the more powerful T700-GE-701 version of engine, rated at 1,690 shp (1,260 kW).

The AH-64 was named the Apache in late 1981, following the tradition of naming Army helicopters after Native American tribes. It was approved for full-scale production in 1982.

In 1983, the first production helicopter was rolled out at Hughes Helicopter's facility at Mesa, Arizona. Hughes Helicopters was purchased by McDonnell Douglas for \$470 million in 1984 (equivalent to \$1,226,000,000 in 2021).

A 1985 Department of Defence engineering analysis by the inspector general's office reported that significant design deficiencies still needed to be addressed by the contractor.

The Army project manager



EYE IN THE SKY: An Apache helicopter of the Israeli Air Force on patrol.

Col. William H. Forster published a list of 101 action items. In 1986, the four 6.7 metre long main rotor blades, each made from steel and composite material glued together to maximize strength and minimize weight by the Composite Structures Division of Alcoa Composites, were added to the list.

The Army specification of 1,500 flight hours was not being met and replacement was required after only 146 hours. After six changes to the design, the rotor blade life had been extended to 1,400 hours by early 1991.

During the 1980s, McDonnell Douglas studied an AH-64B, featuring an updated cockpit, new fire control system and other upgrades. In 1988, funding was approved for a multi-stage upgrade program to improve sensor and weapon systems.

Technological advance led to the program's cancellation in favour of more ambitious changes. In August 1990, development of the AH-64D Apache Longbow was approved by the Defence Acquisition Board.

The first AH-64D prototype flew on 15 April 1992. Prototype testing ended in April 1995. During testing, six AH-64D helicopters were pitted against a bigger group of AH-64As.

The results demonstrated the AH-64D to have a sevenfold increase in survivability and fourfold increase in lethality compared to the AH-64A.

On 13 October 1995, full-scale production was approved; a \$1.9-billion five-year contract was signed in August 1996 to upgrade 232 AH-64As into AH-64Ds. On 17 March 1997, the first production AH-64D flew. It was delivered on 31 March.

The AH-64D program cost a total of \$11 billion through 2007. In April 2006, Boeing was awarded a \$67.6 million fixed-price contract for the re-manufacture of several existing U.S. AH-64As to the AH-64D configuration. Between May 2009 and July 2011, a further five contracts were issued to re-manufacture batches of AH-64As to the upgraded D variant.

Since 2008, nations operating the older AH-64A have been urged to undertake modernization programs to become AH-64Ds, as Boeing and the U.S. Army plan to terminate support for the A-model.

Design

The AH-64 Apache has a four-blade main rotor and a four-blade tail rotor. The crew sits in tandem, with the pilot sitting behind and above the co-pilot/gunner.

Both crew members are capable of flying the aircraft and performing methods of weapon engagements independently.

The AH-64 is powered by two General Electric T700 turboshaft engines with high-mounted exhausts on either side of the fuselage.

Various models of engines have been used on the Apache; those in British service use engines from Rolls-Royce. In 2004, General Electric Aviation began producing more powerful T700-GE-701D engines, rated at 2,000 shp (1,500 kW) for AH-64Ds.

The crew compartment has shielding between the cockpits, such that at least one crew member can survive hits. The compartment and the rotor blades are designed to sustain a hit from 23 mm rounds.

The airframe includes some 1,100 kg of protection and has a self-sealing fuel system to protect against ballistic projectiles. The aircraft was designed to meet the crashworthiness requirements of MIL-STD-1290, which specifies minimum requirement for crash impact energy attenuation to minimize

crew injuries and fatalities. This was achieved through incorporation of increased structural strength, crash-worthy landing gear, seats and fuel system.

On a standard day, when temperatures are 15 °C, the AH-64 has a vertical rate of climb of 541 m/min, and a service ceiling of 6,400 metres.

However, on a hot day, when temperatures are 21 °C, its vertical rate of climb is reduced to 486 m/min, and service ceiling is reduced to 5,900 metres due to less dense air.

One of the revolutionary features of the Apache was its helmet mounted display, the Integrated Helmet and Display Sighting System (IHADSS); among its capabilities, either the pilot or gunner can slave the helicopter's 30 mm automatic M230 Chain Gun to their helmet, making the gun track head movements to point where they look.

The M230E1 can be alternatively fixed to a locked forward firing position, or controlled via the Target Acquisition and Designation System (TADS). On more modern AH-64s, the TADS/PNVS has been replaced by Lockheed Martin's Arrowhead (MTADS) targeting system.

U.S. Army engagement training is performed under the Aerial Weapons Scoring System Integration with Longbow Apache Tactical Engagement Simulation System (AWSS-LBA TESS), using live 30 mm and rocket ammunition as well as simulated Hellfire missiles.

The Smart Onboard Data Interface Module (SMODIM) transmits Apache data to an

AWSS ground station for gunnery evaluation.

The AH-64's standard of performance for aerial gunnery is to achieve at least 1 hit for every 30 shots fired at a wheeled vehicle at a range of 800–1,200 metres.

The AH-64 was designed to perform in front-line environments, and to operate at night or day and during adverse weather conditions.

Various sensors and on-board avionics allows the Apache to perform in these conditions; such systems include the Target Acquisition and Designation System (TADS/PNVS), passive infrared countermeasures, GPS, and the IHADSS.

Longbow-equipped Apaches can locate up to 256 targets simultaneously within 50 km. In August 2012, 24 U.S. Army AH-64Ds were equipped with the Ground Fire Acquisition System (GFAS), which detects and targets ground-based weapons fire sources in all-light conditions and with a 120° visual field.

The GFAS consists of two sensor pods working with the AH-64's other sensors, and a thermographic camera that precisely locates muzzle flashes.

In 2014, it was announced that new targeting and surveillance sensors were under development to provide high-resolution colour imagery to crews, replacing older low definition black-and-white imaging systems.

Lockheed received the first contract in January 2016, upgrading the Arrowhead turret to provide higher-resolution col-

our imaging with longer ranges and a wider field of view.

In 2014, the U.S. Army was adapting its Apaches for increased maritime performance as part of the Pentagon's rebalance to the Pacific. Additional avionics and sensor improvements includes an extended-range radar capable of detecting small ships in littoral environments, software adaptations to handle maritime targets, and adding Link 16 data-links for better communications with friendly assets.

Armament & configurations

The AH-64 is adaptable to numerous different roles within its context as Close Combat Attack (CCA).

In addition to the 30 mm M230E1 Chain Gun, the Apache carries a range of external stores and weapons on its stub-wing pylons, typically a mixture of AGM-114 Hellfire anti-tank missiles, and Hydra 70 general-purpose unguided 70 mm rockets.

An 18-aircraft Apache battalion can carry 288 Hellfire missiles, each capable of destroying a tank. Since 2005, the Hellfire missile is sometimes outfitted with a thermobaric warhead; designated AGM-114N, it is intended for use against ground forces and urban warfare operations.

The use of thermobaric "enhanced blast" weapons, such as the AGM-114N, has been a point of controversy. In October 2015, the U.S. Army ordered its first batch of Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) guided 70 mm rock-



MOSA: An Apache helicopter demonstrates its Modular Open Systems Approach (MOSA).

ets for the Apache.

Starting in the 1980s, the Stinger and AIM-9 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles and the AGM-122 Sidarm anti-radiation missile were evaluated for use upon the AH-64.

The Stinger was initially selected; the U.S. Army was also considering the Starstreak air-to-air missile. External fuel tanks can also be carried on the stub wings to increase range and mission time.

The stub-wing pylons have mounting points for maintenance access; these mountings can also be used to secure personnel externally for emergency transport.

Stinger missiles are often used on non-U.S. Apaches, as foreign forces do not have as many air superiority aircraft to control the skies.

The AH-64E initially lacked the ability to use the Stinger to make room for self-defence equipment, but the capability was added back following a South Korean demand.

The AH-64E is able to control unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), used by the U.S. Army

to perform aerial scouting missions previously performed by the OH-58 Kiowa. Apaches can request to take control of an RQ-7 Shadow or MQ-1C Grey Eagle from ground control stations to safely scout via datalink communications.

There are four levels of UAV interoperability (LOI): LOI 1 indirectly receives payload data; LOI 2 receives payload data through direct communication; LOI 3 deploys the UAV's armaments; and LOI 4 takes over flight control. UAVs can search for enemies and, if equipped with a laser designator, target them for the Apache or other friendly aircraft.

Boeing has suggested that the AH-64 could be fitted with a directed energy weapon. The company has developed a small laser weapon, initially designed to engage small UAVs, that uses a high-resolution telescope to direct a 2–10 kW beam with the diameter of a penny out to a range of 10.0 km. On the Apache, the laser could be used to destroy enemy communications or radio equipment. On 26 June 2017, the Army

and Raytheon announced they had successfully completed the first-ever helicopter-based flight demonstration of a high energy laser system from an AH-64.

On 14 July 2016, it was reported that the AH-64 had successfully completed testing of the MBDA Brimstone anti-armour missile. In January 2020, the U.S. Army announced it was fielding the Spike NLOS missile on AH-64E Apaches as an interim solution to acquire new munitions that provide greater stand-off capabilities.

Operational history

The Apache was first used in combat by the United States in 1989, during Operation Just Cause, the invasion of Panama. It participated in over 240 combat hours, attacking various targets, mostly at night.

Nearly half of all U.S. Apaches were deployed to Saudi Arabia following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. During Operation Desert Storm on 17 January 1991, eight AH-64As guided by four MH-53 Pave Low IIIs destroyed part of Iraq's radar network in the operation's first attack, allowing the attack aircraft to evade detection.

The AH-64 played roles in the Balkans during separate conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s. U.S. Apaches served in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan from 2001. They also served in 2003 during Operation Iraqi Freedom, the invasion of Iraq.

In July 2014, the Pentagon announced that Apaches had been dispatched to Baghdad to protect embassy personnel from Is-

lamic State militant attacks. On 4 October 2014, Apaches began performing missions in Operation Inherent Resolve against Islamic State ground forces.

Since receiving AH-64As in 1990, Israel has used the Apache in numerous operations. These include Operation Grapes of Wrath in 1996 and Operation Cast Lead in 2008.

The United Kingdom currently operates a modified version of the AH-64D Block I Apache Longbow; initially called the Westland WAH-64 Apache, it is designated the Apache AH1 by the British Army. Westland built 67 WAH-64 Apaches under license from Boeing.

Other countries that use the AH-64 are the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, India, Greece, Singapore, Kuwait, Indonesia, Japan, Taiwan and South Korea.

Variants

A number of variants of the AH-64 have been produced. These are:

- AH-64A
- AH-64B
- AH-64C
- AH-64D
- AH-64E
- AH-64F
- Compound Apache
- Sea Apache

From its first flight on 30 September 1975, nearly 2,500 AH-64 Apache's have been built. It is a weapon system that had earned the title "Forged in Battle".

AH-64 Apache

General characteristics

- Crew: 2 (pilot, and co-pilot/gunner)
- Length: 17.73 metres
- Height: 3.87 metres
- Empty weight: 5,165 kg
- Powerplant: 2 × General Electric T700-GE-701 turboshaft engines, 1,690 shp (1,260 kW) each (upgraded to 1,890 shp (1,409 kW) T700-GE-701C for AH-64A/D)

Performance

- Maximum speed: 293 km/h
- Cruise speed: 265 km/h
- Range: 476 km with Longbow radar mast
- Combat range: 480 km
- Ferry range: 1,896 km
- Service ceiling: 6,100 metres

Armament

- Guns: 1× 30 mm M230 Chain Gun with 1,200 rounds as part of the Area Weapon Subsystem
- Hardpoints: Four pylon stations on the stub wings. Longbows also have a station on each wingtip for an AIM-92 Stinger twin missile pack.
- Rockets: Hydra 70 70 mm, CRV7 70 mm, and APKWS 70 mm air-to-ground rockets
- Missiles: Typically AGM-114 Hellfire variants; Air-to-Air Stinger (ATAS); AGM-65 Maverick[354] and Spike missiles may also be carried.

With an advantage of two-to-one in tanks and with total air superiority, the outcome of the Battle of Abu-Ageila was a forgone conclusion for the Israeli Defence Force during the 1967 Six-Day War.

On 5 June 1967 the Israeli Defence Force had launched a pre-emptive strike against the united Arab forces of Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

In the first hours of the war the Arab air forces had been all but neutralised, giving the Israeli Air Force air supremacy and removing the threat of Arab air attack.

Yet while the war was all but over on the first day, there were still ground battles to be fought. The Battle of Abu-Ageila was one such battle.

The Battle of Abu-Ageila (also known as the Battle of Umm-Qatef) was a military confrontation between the Israel Defence Forces and the Egyptian Army in the Six-Day War of June 1967.

The decisive defeat of the Egyptians was critical to the eventual loss of the entire Sinai Peninsula to Israel.

Leading Israeli forces was Major General Ariel Sharon, later a prominent politician and prime minister of Israel.

Background

The Israeli attack at Abu-Ageila was part of the Israeli offensive into the Sinai Desert. Southern Command's offensive consisted of three divisions: Israel Tal's 84th Division, Avraham Yoffe's 31st Division, and Ariel Sharon's 38th Division.

Sharon was tasked with the capture of the road junction at Abu-Ageila, in order to gain access to the central route into the Sinai Desert. The Egyptians had taken considerable preparations to prevent a breach there.

Egyptian defences had focused on the Um-Katef (or Umm-Qatef) plateau to the east of Abu-Ageila, roughly 25 kilometers (16 mi) from the Israeli border. The defences were an important part of the overall defence plan, called Qahir, in the preparations for the expected war, later known as the Six-Day War.

Opposing Forces

Israeli troops numbered about 14,000. Egyptian troop strengths have been estimated at 8,000. More

importantly, the Israelis had significant advantage in armour: Against 66 Egyptian World War II-era Soviet T34/85 with 85 mm guns and 22 SU-100 with 100 mm guns, the Israeli forces fielded a total of 150 modern tanks: light AMX-13s with 75 mm guns, as well as a hundred British Centurion and both M-50 and M-51 Sherman tanks, considerably upgraded from their WWII vintage and armed with French 75 mm and 105 mm tank guns.

The guns used by the Centurions here were the 105 mm Royal Ordnance L7 tank guns, specifically designed to defeat the Soviet T-54 (much more modern than both types of tanks used by the Egyptians in this battle).

On the other side, the best tank gun available for the Egyptians was the 100 mm cannon used by the 22 SU-100 tank destroyers (a late-WWII artillery piece over-matched by Centurion's frontal armour, although it posed a threat to AMX-13s). As a result, in addition to the IDF's numerical superiority, the Israeli tanks also had a greater effective range and firepower than their Egyptian opponents.

Order of battle

Israeli forces

- 38th Armoured Division
- Divisional Mechanised Reconnaissance Battalion
- 14th Armoured Brigade (with Super Sherman tanks)



Maj General Ariel Sharon

- 63rd armoured battalion (with Centurion tanks)
- 99th "Negev" Infantry Brigade
- 80th Paratroopers Brigade
- 6 artillery battalions (105 mm & 155 mm Howitzers)
- Divisional engineering battalion
- Force A-B, improvised brigade-size battle group

Egyptian forces

- 2nd Infantry Division
- 12th Infantry Brigade
- 37th, 38th, 39th Infantry Battalions
- 51st Artillery Brigade
- 330th, 332nd, 334th Artillery Battalions
- 2 Anti-aircraft Companies
- 1 Anti-tank Rocket Company

Attached to 12th Brigade

- 6th Tank Regiment (66 T34/85)
- 288 Tank Battalion
- 1 Mechanised Antitank Battalion (22 SU-100)
- 352nd Infantry Battalion
- 299th Artillery Battalion
- 336th Medium Artillery Battalion

Egyptian defences

The Egyptian defence was constructed as follows: the 2nd infantry Division prepared defenses in the area between Abu-Ageila and Kusseima, with the center placed at the area Um-Katef Plateau – Ruafa Dam, with the 12th Infantry Brigade defending Um-Katef and the 10th Infantry Brigade Kusseima.

Um-Katef made a good position, because it was bordered by an area of sand dunes to the north and rocky mountains to the south.

On this plateau, the Egyptians constructed three parallel trenches of about five kilometres each, reinforced by concrete bunkers.

Every trench was defended by an infantry battalion, with the forward trench reinforced by a dug-in tank squadron. To the rear were two supporting artillery battalions (330th, 334th), behind them the balance of 288th Tank Battalion ready to counter-attack.

To the north, blocking the Batur Track at Position 181, were 38th Infantry Battalion, 299th Artillery Battalion and an antitank company of ten SU-100. They were to protect the flank of the main position to the southeast.

Five kilometres to the West of the Um-Katef Plateau perimeter was the Ruafa Dam. Dug in here were the 352nd Infantry Battalion, and the 332nd and 336th Artillery Battalions. Five kilometres to the northwest of Abu-Ageila, at the well and logistic center at Awlad Ali, the balance of the 6th Tank Regiment (one tank battalion) was positioned to block enemy forces coming from the northeast or

against the positions of the 12th Brigade to the east or southeast.

To the east in front of the 12th Brigade positions on the ridge at Umm Tarafa was an outpost manned by an infantry company of 38th Battalion, a squadron of tanks from 288th Battalion, and two B-10 recoilless guns.

At Position 239, south of Umm Tafara was a platoon of 37th Infantry Battalion, with two B-10 recoilless guns and two antitank weapons. Further east at Tarat Umm Basis near the Israeli border was the 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, which was to give warning of any Israeli attack.

Battle

The Israeli attack-plan was based on intelligence gathered two days before the war started, which indicated Um-Katef was defended by only one infantry battalion.

Based on this information, the Israelis planned a frontal attack by their reinforced independent tank battalion. After aerial bombardments, this tank battalion started its attack on Um-Katef on the 5 June at 08:15.

The attack came to a halt however, due to resistance from an unknown Egyptian formation and an unknown minefield, causing the loss of seven Israeli Centurions.

New orders for the independent tank battalion were to break off the attack and to attack from the north, through the sand dunes. Now the 14th armoured brigade (two tank battalions Super Shermans and two armoured infantry battalions in halftracks) was ordered to attack frontally further south. After a short aerial bombardment, this attack com-

menced at 12:30, but was forced to a halt as well.

Now that strength and positions of the Egyptians were known, General Sharon changed his plans. The independent tank battalion was ordered to drive through the sand dunes following a camel-path and attack the Egyptian armour at the Ruafa Dam.

At the same time, the 14th armoured brigade would attack from the East. However, before this could happen, Um-Katef would have to be taken, a task given to Sharon's infantry brigade, held in reserve up till then.

This infantry attack was to occur under the cover of darkness, following a secondary approach to Um-Katef through the sand dunes. Meanwhile, the Israeli armour would provide support and all Israeli artillery would be used in support of this attack.

This meant there would be no suppressing fire on the Egyptian artillery, making the Israeli infantry extremely vulnerable. It was decided that the Egyptian artillery would be taken out of action prior to the attack using the brigade of paratroopers.

However, with only six helicopters available, only a limited number of units could be used.

Meanwhile, the independent tank battalion was engaged by the Egyptian defenders in the sand dunes by 16:00 and were able to continue to their positions near Abu-Ageila and the Ruafa Dam at 18:00.

The infantry brigade was in place at around 23:00, while the paratroopers, after being discovered and fired upon by Egyptian artillery, made it to their attack positions at 23:00.



The attack started on 5 June, at 00:00 hours, after the Israeli artillery had been firing from 23:30–00:00 hours with Israeli tanks moving into position under the noise of the artillery.

After heavy fighting, the Israeli infantry battalions broke through the trenches at Um-Katef, with one-third of them cleared by 02:30. Now the engineers started clearing a way through the minefield which was completed at 04:00, allowing the 14th armoured brigade to roll on to the Ruafa Dam.

On 6 June at 07:00, the Israelis attacked the Egyptian tank battalions and antitank battalions from two sides, with the Centurion tanks of the 14th from the east and the Super Sherman tanks from the west.

After three hours of fighting, these Egyptian units were destroyed, after which remnants of the 12th Egyptian Brigade were cleared. At around 12:00, the road junction at Abu-Ageila was in Israeli hands and the road to the Sinai was open.

The battle ended with 40 KIA and 19 tanks lost for the Israelis, and 2,000 killed and 60 tanks lost on the Egyptian side.

It was a one-side victory for the IDF.

Battle

The victory at Abu-Ageila meant the road to the Central Sinai was open for the Israelis in general, Sharon and his forces in particular.

Many of the Egyptian units remained intact and could have tried to prevent the Israelis from reaching the Suez Canal. However, when the Egyptian Minister of Defense, Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer heard about the fall of Abu-Ageila, he panicked and ordered all units in the Sinai to retreat to the west bank of the Suez canal within a single day.

There was no plan for the retreat, so the units left behind heavy equipment, and sometimes even outpaced their commanders. This resulted in the Israelis racing to capture abandoned sites, and obtaining significant amounts of abandoned tanks and equipment.

So much was captured intact that after the war three mechanized and two armoured brigades were created from this abandoned equipment. The withdrawal order effectively meant the defeat of Egypt. By 8 June, most of the Sinai area had been occupied by Israeli forces.

Armour at Abu-Ageila



Super Sherman

Modified version of the American M4 Sherman tank.

- Crew: Five
- Main armament: 75 mm CN-75-50 L/61.5
- Range: 300 km
- Max Speed: 38–42 km/h



Centurion

Post World War II British tank.

- Crew: Four
- Main armament: 105 mm L7 rifled gun
- Range: 52.3 km
- Max Speed: 34.6 km/h



SU-100

Post World War II Russian tank.

- Crew: Four
- Main armament: 105 mm L7 rifled gun
- Range: 52.3 km
- Max Speed: 34.6 km/h



T34/85

World War II Russian tank.

- Crew: Four
- Main armament: 100 mm D-10S gun
- Range: 140 km
- Max Speed: 48 km/h





As a tank commander Matt “Panzer” O’Brien is about as useful as a chocolate teapot. In other words - not that great.

There are more than enough games around that feature tanks and armoured warfare.

Yet in most of these games you get to control a squadron of tanks. For ages I’ve been looking for a ‘tank’ game that is more detailed.

The closest thing has always been ‘World of Tanks’. It’s a “free” online game that is fairly popular. While the base game is free, it’s going to cost you a small fortune if you actually want to get anywhere in the game.

To have even a slight chance of success you’re going to have to fork out a fortune on buying new and better tanks, better armour, better guns, and just about everything else.

Recently I obtained a copy of Gunner - Heat- PC. It’s an early-access game developed and published by Radian Simulations LLC.

And even though it’s an early access title, it is already showing lots of promise.

Any early-access game comes with disadvantages as well as advantages. The disadvantages include the fact that the game will normally come with plenty of bugs that need to be ironed out before it can be released as a full game.

The advantages means that

you act as a test player. You can communicate with the developers and make them aware of problems. You can also make suggestions that you feel would make it a better game.

The main advantage is that you get the game at a really good price.

The game is called ‘Gunner, HEAT, PC!’ or simply ‘GHPC’. The game will blend game and simulation in just the right amounts, providing awesome fire control and ballistics simulation behind deceptively simple controls. This core feature set serves as the foundation for a rich single player campaign mode, skirmish missions, and cooperative multi-player modes that offer modern tanks, realistic system and damage models, and a focus on fun over all.

When in a tank or armoured vehicle there are four crew positions - three of which you can control.

The driver can control the speed and direction of the vehicle. He can also set a cruise speed and all tanks shift gear automatically.

The commander is able to view the terrain, direct the direction of the vehicle, and spot targets and communicate these to the gunner. The commander also has the ability to use the map.

The gunner can engage targets using the main gun, coaxial machine gun and, if available, wire guided missiles.

He can also take advantage of the vehicle’s various system features such as a Laser Range Finder, Lead Competition, Night vision, and Thermal Imagery.

The loader position isn’t available to be played. Instead, after you fire a shell, the loader will automatically start to load whatever shell you have selected when you fire the main cannon. You can select a different shell type to be loaded next at any time. Your next shell to load will be indicated on the HUD. In combat your tank commander can designate the shell to be loaded for you if you have the “AI Can Select Ammo” box ticked in the game settings.

The gunner’s view is critical to firing at targets. The gunner will need to traverse the turret to line the sight up on the target. He will also have to fire the weapon that he has selected. This will deplete your ammo by one and your loader will start loading the next round.

Coaxial machine guns and auto-cannons can be fired in bursts or continually.

The gunner can also make use of Thermal Optics or Night Vision if it is available.



Each Vehicle’s Main Gun Sight has a different appearance or works differently. Depending on the vehicle’s country of origin you will get different styles of optics and sight. Certain Tanks have the ability to change their Optics magnification level.

In GHPC it is important to use the right shell type for the job. Different targets will be better suited for some types of ammunition than others.

APFSDS - Armour Piercing Fin Stabilized Discarding Sabot. This shell is a high velocity, high penetration dedicated anti-tank round.

HEAT-FS - High Explosive Anti-Tank Sin Stabilized. This shell is a perfect mix of blast radius and armour penetration. This shell is best used against lightly armoured vehicles such as the BMP-1 or Anti-Tank launchers.

Missiles (or ATGMs) - These are used by a few vehicles and emplacements and are very dangerous. These missiles

have a very strong HEAT warhead and are capable of engaging every type of threat they can see.

HE - High Explosive. This is currently one of the less useful shell types. However once Infantry is added this will be very useful. In the future these can be used to engage infantry, buildings and emplacements.

Currently there are 13 vehicles in the game, but I’m sure that this will grow as the game develops.

Vehicles available are M1, M1IP, M60A3 TTS, and M60A1 RISE Passive tanks; M2 Bradley IFV; M113 APC; and M220 TOW Launcher. These are all NATO vehicles.

On the Warsaw Pact side there are T-72M, T-72M1, and T-55A tanks; BMP-1 and BDRM-2 APC; and 9P135M 9M111 - Wire Guided Missile.

So far I’m enjoying this game. It feels good to send a round off at a target and then watch through your gunner’s sight as the turret of a tank goes

flying into the air, or its bursts into fierce flames.

As this game develops, it’s going to become even better and, at the current price, it’s well worth it.

Now I need to go and hunt down a few T-72M tanks.



Publisher - Radian Simulations LLC

Genre - Simulation

Score - 8/10

Price - R175 (on Steam)



Movie Review

Flight of the Intruder

Released: 1991
Running time: 115 minutes
Director: John Milius

Flight of the Intruder is a 1991 war film directed by John Milius, and starring Danny Glover, Willem Dafoe, and Brad Johnson. It is based on the novel of the same name by former Grumman A-6 Intruder pilot Stephen Coonts.

Lieutenant Jake "Cool Hand" Grafton (Brad Johnson) and his bombardier/navigator and best friend Lieutenant Morgan "Morg" McPherson (Christopher Rich) are flying a Grumman A-6 Intruder during the Vietnam War over the Gulf of Tonkin towards North Vietnam. They hit their target, a 'suspected truck park', which actually turns out to be trees.

On the return to carrier, Morg is fatally shot in the neck by an armed Vietnamese peasant. Landing on the USS Independence with Morg dead, a disturbed Jake, covered in blood, walks into a debriefing with Commander Frank Camparelli (Danny Glover) and Executive Officer, Commander "Cowboy" Parker (J. Kenneth Campbell).

Camparelli tells Jake to put Morgan's death behind him and to write a letter to Sharon, Morg's wife. New pilot Jack Barlow (Jared Chandler), nicknamed "Razor" because of his youthful appearance, is then introduced.

Lieutenant Commander Virgil Cole (Willem Dafoe) ar-

rives on board and reports to Camparelli, who later tells Jake's roommate Sammy Lundeen (Justin Williams) to take Jake, Bob "Boxman" Walkowitz (Tom Sizemore) and "Mad Jack" (Dann Florek) to fly into Subic Bay the next day and help Jake unwind. Jake goes to see Sharon, but she has already departed.

He runs into a woman named Callie Troy (Rosanna Arquette), who is packing Sharon's things, and they have a small, tense encounter. After an altercation with civilian merchant sailors in the Tailhook Bar, Jake runs into Callie again.

After they reconcile, dance and spend the night together, she reveals her husband was a Navy pilot himself and was killed on a solo mission over Vietnam.

Cole and Jake are paired on "Iron Hand" A-6Bs loaded with Standard and Shrike anti-radiation missiles for SAM suppression. During the mission, after a successful strike, they encounter and manage to evade a North Vietnamese MiG-17.

Jake suggests to Cole that they bomb Hanoi, which would be a violation of the restrictive rules of engagement (ROE) and could get them court-martialed. Cole initially rejects the idea. On the next raid, Boxman

hits the suspected target, but is shot down by another SAM and killed.

The North Vietnamese in Hanoi gloat on TV over the downing of U.S. aircraft. Cole then agrees with Jake's plan to attack Hanoi, deciding to hit "SAM City," a surface-to-air missile depot.

Sent to bomb a power plant in the vicinity of Hanoi, they drop two of their Mark 83 bombs, keeping eight for the missile depot and set a new course for Hanoi for their independent bombing mission.

While the movie didn't receive favourable reviews from the critics, it is not a bad movie and is well worth a watch.



Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

"Mad Mike" Hoare: The Legend

Colonel Mike Hoare led 300 'Wild Geese' across the Congo to crush a communist rebellion, rescue 2000 nuns and priests from barbarity, beat Che Guevara ... and become a legend.

Of Irish blood, Mike was schooled in England and, during World War 2, was the 'best bloody soldier in the British Army'. He demobbed as major, qualified in London as a chartered accountant and emigrated to South Africa.

Going rogue, he started living dangerously to get more out of life, including trans-Africa motorbike trips, bluewater sailing, exploring remote areas, and leading safaris in the Kalahari Desert.

Here Mike got to know the

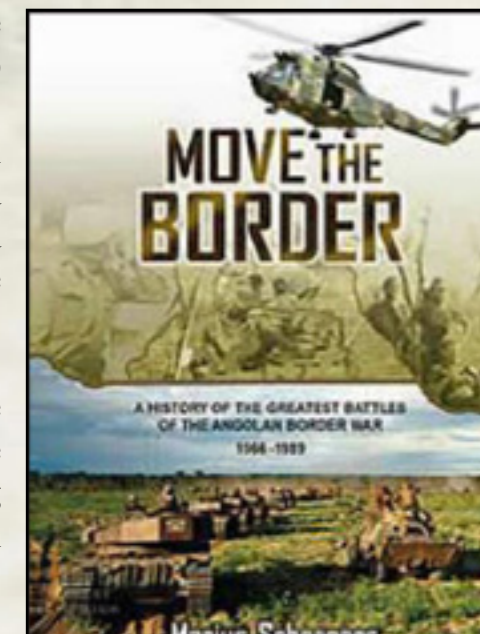
CIA agent who was to change his life ... and who was to stop Nelson Mandela.

Later Mike was technical advisor to the film The Wild Geese, which starred Richard Burton playing the Mike Hoare character.

In 1981 Mike led 50 'Frothblowers' in a bid to depose the socialist government of the Seychelles. Things went wrong and Mike was sentenced to ten years in jail for hijacking a Boeing 707.

In this biography – rich in new material – Chris Hoare separates the man from the myth in a way only a son can, and concludes his 'mad dad' was an officer and a gentleman with a bit of pirate thrown in.

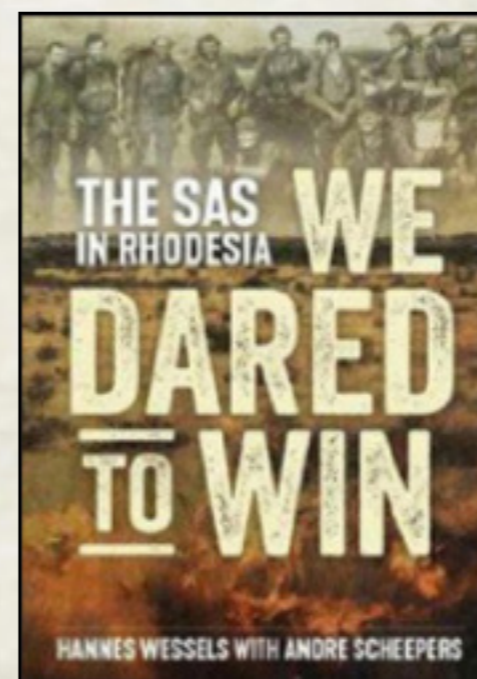
Mike Hoare passed away on



2 February 2020 at the age of 100.

Softcover, 302 pages with photos.

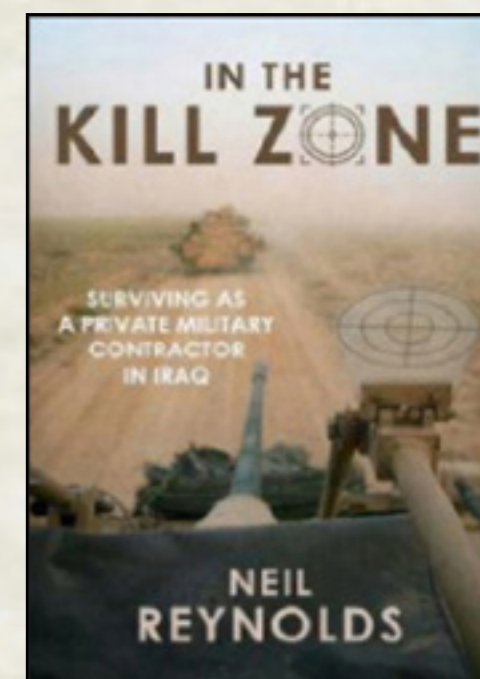
Price: R350



We Dared to Win
R300



Against All Odds
R650



In The Kill Zone
R300

All books are available from [Bush War Books](#)

Some of the significant military events that happened in November. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of November.

1 November

- **1893** - The decisive Battle of Bembesi (Bembasi) is fought in the Ndebele War, Rhodesia. The Ngubi, Mbezu and Nsukamini regiments fought bravely, but were defeated by machine-gun fire. The plaque on the war memorial records the result of the battle and also the bravery of the Ndebele.
- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Boer forces invade the Cape Colony.
- **1904** - The US Army War College opens.
- **1911** - Italy performs its first aerial bombing on Tanguira oasis in Libya.
- **1914** - Battle of Coronel: Admiral Von Spee's German cruisers annihilate a weaker British squadron off Chile.
- **1914** - Paul von Hindenburg is named commander-in-chief of German forces on the Eastern Front.
- 1918 - Italian naval special operations forces sink the Austrian battleship 'Viribus Unitis', which is in Yugoslav hands.
- **1932** - Wernher von Braun named head of German liquid-fuel rocket program.
- **1933** - German Army creates its first panzer unit.
- **1936** - The Rome-Berlin Axis was proclaimed by Italian Dictator Benito Mussolini following a visit to Berlin by Italian Foreign Secretary Ciano.
- **1936** - Mussolini coins the phrase "The Axis".
- 1939 - Maiden flight of the Heinkel He 178, the first jet
- **1950** - Korean War. South African No 2 Squadron, known as Cheetah Squadron, comprising of fifty officers and 157 other ranks, including thirty-eight pilots, all volunteers and highly experienced, arrives in Japan. Two weeks later, and after acquainting themselves with the F 51 Mustang, they leave for the operational area. At the end of the war SAAF casualties were thirty-four pilots and ground staff killed, eight pilots taken POW and a number wounded.
- **1951** - The Algerian National Liberation Front began guerrilla warfare against the French.
- **1951** - President Syngman Rhee presents the South African Air Force (SAAF) squadron, placed at the disposal of the United Nations organisation during the Korean War, with the Korean presidential unit citation.
- **1952** - First hydrogen device exploded, Eniwetok Atoll.
- **1954** - Algeria starts rebellion against French rule. Nationalist rioters led by Ahmed Ben Bella (based in Cairo) have wreaked destruction across the Algerian district of Aures. This day later became known as Revolution Day.
- **1956** - The Imre Nagy government of Hungary withdraws from the Warsaw Pact.
- **1963** - South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu were killed in a military coup.
- **1980** - Rifleman Musandiwa Bernard Ralkwatha from 112 Battalion was a member of the SADF soccer team who died from injuries when the military vehicle in which he was a passenger, overturned 10km north of Makuya in Venda. He was 26.
- **1981** - Private Louis Brian Schoeman from the Cape Corps Maintenance Unit was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned near Rundu. He was 17.
- **1983** - Rifleman Thomas Lochner from 8 SAI was accidentally electrocuted at the Riemvasmaak training facility. He was 19.
- **1986** - Corporal Pieter Johann van Oordt Barnard from the Kirkwood Commando accidentally killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Kirkwood. He was 31.
- **1987** - Rifleman Jean Marc Schuurman from 1 Par-

- achute Battalion Died of Wounds received in combat on 31 October 1987 during Ops Firewood. He was 20.
- **1987** - Sergeant Michiel George Pienaar from the Pretoria Regiment was accidentally killed during Ops Modular. He was 21.
- **1988** - Sergeant Johann Jacobs from the South African Army was accidentally killed in a private motor vehicle accident near Kimberley. He was 25.
- **1994** - Angolan government forces take the oil-producing town of Soyo from the rebel group Unita, which captured it the year before.
- **1996** - Rwandan and Zairian forces bombard each another with artillery along the border, while rebels in Zaire, supported by Rwanda, close in on the town of Goma.
- **2007** - Brig Gen Paul W. Tibbets Jr., who commanded the 'Enola Gay' and dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, dies at the age of 92.
- recapture Ft Vaux.
- **1917** - The first US troops are killed in action in France.
- **1930** - Ras (Duke) Tafari is crowned as Emperor Haile Selassie in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, after the death of Empress Zaudito (Zewditu).
- **1942** - Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower arrives in Gibraltar to set up an American command post for the invasion of North Africa.
- **1942** - British breakthrough the Axis lines during the Battle of El Alamein.
- **1951** - More British troops are sent to the Suez Canal Zone (the biggest troop airlift since the Second World War).
- **1962** - During the Cuban Missile Crisis, President John F. Kennedy announced on TV, "the Soviet bases in Cuba are being dismantled, their missiles and related equipment being crated, and the fixed installations at these sites are being destroyed."
- **1976** - White mercenaries and Black troops invade Congo from Portuguese Angola.
- **1979** - Two members from 1 SAI were killed when their private motor vehicle drove into the rear of a truck on Van Reenen's Pass while they were on a weekend pass. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Kevin Donald Fison (18). Rifleman Gregory Ormond Barker (18).
- **1980** - Rifleman Naledzani Asher Netshidzivhani from 112 Battalion died from injuries accidentally sustained in a military motor vehicle accident. He was 20.
- **1982** - Rifleman Gideon Breytenbach from 11 Commando Regiment was killed in a private motor vehicle accident on the Witbank Highway. He was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal M. Mbinge from 102 Battalion SWATF accidentally drowned while crossing a river during operations against SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 24.
- **1986** - Lance Corporal Albertus Marthinus le Roux from 7 SAI was Killed in Action when his horse detonated a landmine planted by MK Operatives at Diepgezet near Barberton as part of Ops Ceshwayo. He was 20.
- **1989** - Trooper Rodger Eric

2 November

- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. The siege of Ladysmith in Natal starts.
- 1899 - The Canadian government offered a second contingent of troops consisting of infantry, cavalry and field artillery to bolster British troops in the South African War.
- **1914** - Russia declares war on the Ottoman Empire.
- **1916** - Verdun: The French

Paul W. Tibbets Jr.



Patterson from 1 Special Service Battalion suffered multiple skull fractures when he was accidentally crushed between a SAMIL 20 truck and a trailer at the Army Battle School Lohatla. He was 21.

- **1990** - Rifleman Mentoer Jacobs from the Cape Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident on the Inanda Highway. He was 24.
- **1990** - Trooper Leon Ferreira from 2 Special Service Battalion was killed at Zeerust in a military vehicle accident. He was 18.
- **1990** - Odile Harrington, a South African convicted and imprisoned for espionage in Zimbabwe in 1987, was released and returned to South Africa.
- **1995** - The former South African defence minister, General Magnus Malan, and several former high-ranking officials are arrested and charged with murder. All were acquitted after a trial in 1996.

3 November

- **1839** - The first Opium War between China and Britain began after British frigates blew up several Chinese junks.
- **1893** - Forces of the British South Africa Company force Matabele King Lobengula, son of Mzilikazi, to flee his Great Place in Bulawayo. Lobengula later dies while retreating towards the

Zambezi.

- **1918** - Part of the German fleet mutinied at Kiel in the closing days of World War I.
- **1942** - In Egypt, the German Afrika Korps and Italian forces under Rommel begin a retreat westwards after a renewed campaign by the allies under Montgomery. About 9,000 German troops are captured.
- **1942** - Guadalcanal: Marines clear Japanese from Point Cruz.
- **1944** - Japanese begin releasing 9,000 incendiary balloons to drift to America.
- **1956** - Britain and France agree to accept a Middle East cease-fire in the Suez War if UN forces can keep the peace.
- **1967** - Two members from 17 Squadron were accidentally killed when their Alouette III Helicopter struck High Tension cables and crashed while transporting three civilian members from the Department of Water Affairs. The SAAF casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant Anthony Siegfried Foxon (23). Air Corporal Johannes Christoffel Steyn (27).
- **1973** - Trooper Jan Adriaan Smit van Heerden from the School of Armour died from injuries accidentally sustained during training. He was 19.
- **1973** - UN Emergency Force reports success in easing tension between Egyptian and Israeli troops at posi-

tions west of Suez Canal.

- **1979** - Teheran: Iranians storm the US embassy to take 63 hostages, initiating decades of acrimony and hostility.
- **1980** - Rifleman Leon Bester from 6 SAI was killed when his private vehicle overturned on the road between Queenstown and Sterkstroom. He was returning to Camp from a weekend pass. He was 19.
- **1983** - Corporal Gregory Frederick Beelders from 18 Corps was killed when the military vehicle in which he was traveling, struck a storm water bridge at Kamanjab. He was 21.
- **1989** - Rifleman Manuel S. Antonio from 32 Battalion was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned near Pomfret. He was 44.

4 November

- **1862** - Richard Gatling patented his first rapid-fire machine-gun which used revolving barrels rotating around a central mechanism to load, fire, and extract the cartridges.
- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. The siege of Ladysmith in Natal starts.
- **1918** - Austria-Hungary concludes an armistice with Italy.
- **1942** - Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower arrives in Gibraltar to set up an American command post

for the invasion of North Africa.

- **1942** - During World War II, British troops led by Bernard Montgomery defeated the Germans under Erwin Rommel at El Alamein after a twelve-day battle.
- **1950** - US troops retreat from Pyongyang, North Korea.
- **1951** - More British troops are sent to the Suez Canal Zone (the biggest troop airlift since the Second World War).
- **1956** - Soviet Russian troops moved in to crush an uprising in Hungary.
- **1956** - Israeli troops capture the Straits of Tiran and reach the Suez Canal.
- **1956** - British forces enter Gaza, on the western Mediterranean seashore 32 km north of the Egyptian border.
- **1975** - Private Kevin Edward Laidlaw from 15 Squadron SAAF was asleep on his bed in his tent at Rundu when a fellow Private came into the tent on returning from guard duty and threw his UZI sub-machine gun onto the adjacent bed. As the weapon hit the bed, a shot went off and the bullet struck Kevin in the head, killing him instantly. He was 18.
- **1976** - White mercenaries and Black troops invade Congo from Portuguese Angola.
- **1979** - About 500 young Iranian militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Teheran,

Iran, and took 90 hostages, including 52 Americans that they held captive for 444 days.

- **1980** - Lieutenant (Doctor) Peter William Geddes from the Medical Training Centre was Killed in Action while attached to 53 Battalion at Okotopi. He was 28.
- **1981** - Corporal Johan Louis Potgieter from 1 SAI, attached to 61 Mech was Killed in Action during Ops Daisy. He was 23.
- **1981** - Rifleman A. Dala from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Ops Daisy. He was 22.
- **1981** - Lieutenant Gerrit van Zyl from 61 Mech was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces during Ops Daisy. He was 23.
- **1982** - Rifleman Lionel Gerald Brown from 3 SAI was killed in a private motorcycle accident in Port Elizabeth. He was 20.
- **1991** - Gunner Grant Mann from 14 Artillery Regiment was accidentally killed while at 10 Artillery Brigade. He was 21.
- **1996** - The former South African defence minister, General Magnus Malan, and several former high-rank-

ing officials are arrested and charged with murder. All were acquitted after a trial in 1995.

5 November

- **1799** - The 64-gun HMS Sceptre is wrecked in Table Bay and 300 lives are lost.
- **1902** - The "Mad Mullah" and 17,000 troops are advancing on the British at Boshodle, Somaliland.
- **1911** - Italy declares war on Turkey.
- **1914** - Indian 6th Div lands at Basra, securing the oil fields.
- **1915** - First US shipboard catapult launch: LT CDR Henry Mustin, off 'North Carolina' (ACR-12) in a Curtiss AB-ZF.
- **1916** - Germany and Austria-Hungary proclaim an "independent" Kingdom of Poland.
- **1917** - Maj. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr, leads the first American patrol into "No Man's Land".



Magnus Malan

- **1940** - Gallant fight of the armed merchant cruiser HMS 'Jervis Bay' in defense of a convoy from the German pocket battleship 'Admiral Scheer'.
- **1942** - Madagascar: Vichy French surrender to the British at Fort Dauphin.
- **1943** - American aircraft accidentally drop two bombs on the Vatican, which cause minor damage and no casualties.
- **1956** - Britain and France land troops in Egypt during fighting between Egyptian and Israeli forces around the Suez Canal. A cease-fire is declared two days later.
- **1971** - Corporal Nicolaas Frederick van Rensburg from 22 Flight (later 22 Squadron) was killed in a private vehicle accident in Cape Town. He was 20.
- **1975** - Numbers of Cuban soldiers and shipments of Russian military equipment arrive in Luanda, Angola, while SA was clandestinely supporting Unita. When SA realised that the USA did not support the operation, the SA troops were withdrawn. The withdrawal was completed by 27 March 1976.
- **1978** - Private Michael Kidd from Air Force Base Hoodspruit was accidentally killed in a shooting incident at Pilgrims Rest involving his Guard Duty partner at the Base. He was 19.
- **1981** - Candidate Officer Stephanus Francois Stephan Coetzee from 25 Field Squadron was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion in Southern Angola during Ops Daisy while attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group. He was 22.
- **1981** - Private Louis Brian Schoeman from the S.A. Cape Corps Maintenance Unit was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned near Rundu. He was 17.
- **1985** - Sergeant Leonardus Johannes Coetzee from Air Force Headquarters was killed in a military vehicle accident at Kamieskroon. He was 30.
- **1985** - Rifleman Nicolaas William Smuts from 1 Parachute Battalion was Killed in Action when his patrol was ambushed near Alpha Tower by SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 20.
- **1988** - Rifleman John Norman Botha from the 2nd Battalion Cape Corps was shot and killed by another soldier during an argument at 97 Ammunition Depot at De Aar. He was 19.
- **1988** - Sergeant B. Calipe from 32 Battalion collapsed and died after suffering kidney failure while stationed at Buffalo. He was 34.
- **2005** - Pirates fire a rocket-propelled grenade and machine guns in an attack on the luxury cruise liner Seabourn Spirit off the coast of the east African state of Somalia. The attack is repulsed and the more than 300 passengers, including six South Africans, escape

without injury.

6 November

- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Battle of Bothaville or Doornkraal is fought with General De Wet surrendering, after heavy losses on both sides.
- **1914** - France declares war on the Ottoman Empire.
- **1917** - During World War I, the Third Battle of Ypres concluded after five months as Canadian and Australian troops took Passchendaele. Their advance, measuring eight kilometres, cost at least 240,000 soldiers.
- **1941** - USS 'Omaha' (CL 4) & USS 'Somers' (DD 381) intercept the German blockade runner 'Oldenwald' in the mid-Atlantic near the Equator.
- **1960** - *Großadmiral* Erich Johann Albert Raeder, Commander-in-Chief of the *Reichsmarine* (1935-1943), dies on this day at the age of 84.
- **1965** - Air Mechanic Barend Jacobus Phillipus Schutte from 68 Air School died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while he was in Pretoria. He was 20.
- **1978** - Private Paul Burger from 61 Base Workshop Technical Service Corps was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 20.
- **1979** - Rifleman M.L. Lifasi for Sector 70 Headquarters SWATF was killed in a military vehicle accident in the Caprivi. He was 19.

- **1979** - Two members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. They were: Corporal M. Djolomien (27). Rifleman J. Akaando (24).
- **1979** - Private Anthony Raul Da Costa Miranda from Services School was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier who was busy cleaning his private firearm. He was 19.
- **1983** - Rifleman Daniel Pieter Oosthuizen from 4 SAI attached to 62 Mechanised Battalion Group was accidentally killed when his Unimog 127mm MRL vehicle overturned near Otjiwarongo. He was 19.
- **1990** - Lance Corporal Dirk Johannes Jacobus Kotze from the School of Armour was accidentally killed during military exercises at the General De Wet Training Terrain. He was 21.
- **2004** - Nine French soldiers and an American aid consultant are killed in bombing attacks in Ivory Coast's rebel-held north, after the government broke the cease-fire agreement on 4 November. French troops destroy the Ivory Coast air force fleet in retaliation.
- **2004** - New York's "Fighting 69th" arrives at Bagdad to assume its duties in "Operation Iraqi Freedom".

7 November

- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. From his conning tower

er in the besieged Kimberley Colonel Kekewich sees a "living mass" of men approaching and his artillery opens up at almost point-blank range until they realise that the men are 3,000 unarmed Black mine-workers released by De Beer's from the compounds, without informing the military.

- **1901** - Second Anglo Boer War. The National Scouts Corps of doubtful repute, consisting of surrendered Boers who were willing to fight on the side of their erstwhile enemies, is formed under direct British command. They were allocated to various British units as scouts and after the war were ostracised by the whole community.
- **1936** - Spanish Civil War: Battle for Madrid begins.
- **1954** - US spy plane shot down by Russians over Sea of Japan.
- **1956** - The United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopts a resolution calling upon Britain, France and Israel to withdraw their troops from Egypt immediately. British and French declare a cease-fire in Egypt, but Britain says it will evacuate troops only on arrival of UN Emergency Force.

- **1978** - Two members from 41 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents while on patrol in Northern Owamboland. The casualties were: Rifleman Abraham Roman (36). Corporal Willem Petrus Swartbooi (28).
- **1982** - Corporal Andries Johannes Strauss from 201 Battalion SWATF was Reported Missing after being dropped off 50km from Omega Base at 13h00 and told to walk back to the Base as a punishment exercise. Despite an intensive search of the area over a number of days, no trace of him or his equipment was ever found. He remains unaccounted for and has no known grave. He was 20.



Erich Raeder

- **1987** - Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba, in office since independence in 1956, is overthrown in a bloodless coup.
- **1994** - Over 2,000 Umkhonto we Sizwe soldiers of the ANC's armed wing are dismissed from the SANDF for failing to report for duty.
- **2010** - The German Army holds a formal military ceremony at a restored monument honouring Jewish soldiers who fought in the Kaiser's War.
- **2013** - Manfred Rommel, Luftwaffe veteran and son of Field Marshal Eriwn Rommel, dies at the age of 84.

8 November

- **1745** - Bonnie Prince Charlie invades England from Scotland.
- **1923** - Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch took place in the Buergerbraukeller in Munich. Hitler, Goering and armed Nazis attempted, but ultimately failed, to forcibly seize power and overthrow democracy in Germany.
- **1939** - An assassination attempt on Hitler failed at the Buergerbraukeller in Munich. A bomb exploded soon after Hitler had exited following a speech commemorating the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch. Seven others were killed.
- **1940** - The Royal Air Force bombs Munich.
- **1942** - Allied forces under Lieutenant-General Dwight

D. Eisenhower begin landings in North Africa, starting the Algeria-Morocco Campaign of World War II. More than 400,000 Allied soldiers take part in the invasion.

- **1942** - Hitler proclaims the fall of Stalingrad, somewhat prematurely.
- **1950** - The first jet fighter air duel: Lt. Russell J. Brown's F-86 scores a North Korean MiG-15.
- **1957** - Britain tests its first hydrogen bomb, Kirimati Atoll, in the Pacific.
- **1977** - The French Ministry of Defence will no longer permit delivery of two escort vessels (corvettes) and two submarines, under construction in French naval yards, to South Africa.
- **1979** - Captain John Alexander Anderson Howitson from Services School was accidentally killed in a shooting incident at the Impala Base near Phalaborwa while supervising a Junior Leadership Training Camp (OSC) at the Letaba training camp.
- **1980** - Rifleman Gideon Karupa from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 25.
- **1982** - Lieutenant Colin Brits from 41 Squadron was killed while giving flying instruction to a newly qualified pilot when his Atlas C4M Kudu crashed near Potchefstroom. He was 25.

- **1983** - Rifleman I. Haikera from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 26.

- **1984** - Sergeant Norman Keith Abrahams from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.

- **1990** - Gunner Pieter Benjamin Koekemoer from 4 Artillery Regiment was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Imbali. He was 18.

- **1990** - President GHW Bush orders 100,000 additional US troops to the Persian Gulf.

- **1995** - Lieutenant Colonel Francois Stephanus Botha from the South African Medical Corps attached to Air Force Base Hoedspruit, died of injuries received in a military vehicle accident at Dendron. He was 40.

- **1996** - UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali calls for an international military force to aid and protect a million refugees caught in a civil war in Zaire, but is blocked by the United States in the Security Council.

9 November

- **1914** - HMAS 'Sydney' destroys the German raiding

cruiser SMS 'Emden' in the Cocos Islands.

- **1916** - Munitions disaster at Bakaritsa, near Arkhangel, Russia -- 30,000 tons explode, thousands die.
- **1918** - German Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated his throne in the closing days of World War I and fled to Holland. In Germany, Philip Scheidemann, a Socialist leader, then proclaimed a democratic Republic and became its first Chancellor.
- **1921** - The Unknown Soldier arrives at Washington aboard USS 'Olympia'.
- **1925** - Hitler forms the SS within the Brown Shirts.
- **1937** - The Japanese capture Shanghai.
- **1938** - *Kristallnacht* (the night of broken glass) occurred in Germany as Nazi mobs burned synagogues and vandalized Jewish shops and homes.
- **1938** - Marshal of the Soviet Union Vasily Konstantinovich Blyukher, 48, executed by Stalin for 'espionage'.
- **1977** - The Prime Minister of Swaziland says that his government will not allow the country to be used as a base for guerrilla attacks against South Africa. He denies that there are training camps within Swaziland.
- **1979** - Trooper Paul Stephanus Buys from 1 SSB was Killed in Action when his Eland 90 Armoured Car detonated a landmine while

carrying out a patrol in Northern Owamboland. He was 20.

- **1979** - Rifleman Frederick Christoffel van den Berg from 4 SAI was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a landmine in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.

- **1980** - Corporal Josias Johannes Botha from Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in George while on weekend pass. He was 19.

- **1980** - Lance Corporal Roy Taylor from the Infantry School was critically injured in a private motor vehicle accident near Somerset West on 8 November 1980. He succumbed to his injuries in the Tygerberg Hospital on 9 November 1980. He was 18.

- **1982** - Sapper Adriaan Francois van Wyngaardt from 2 Field Engineer Regiment was Killed in Action when he detonated a boosted Anti-Personnel Mine during minesweeping and clearing Operations in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.

- **1983** - Airman Jan Joachim Janse van Rensburg attached to Air Force Base Ondangwa was killed when the Buffel Troop Carrier in which he was travelling as a passenger, was involved in

a collision with a South African Police Casspir in Ondangwa town. He was 18.

- **1987** - Six members from 4 SAI were Killed in Action during Ops Modular. They were: Sergeant Pierre James Digue (28). Corporal Theunis Antonie Duvenhage (18). Rifleman Frederick Augustus Muhlenbeck HC (P) (19). Rifleman Adrian Murray Thom HC (P) (19). Rifleman Anthony Stewart (20). Rifleman Pieter Gerrit Claasen (19).

- **2004** - In Abuja, Nigeria, Sudan and Darfur rebels sign accords on Tuesday to end hostilities and guarantee aid groups' access to 1.6 million civilians uprooted by conflict in the troubled western Sudan region of Darfur.

- **1979** - NORAD goes on full alert, when a computer glitch indicates a massive wave of incoming Soviet missiles.
- **1989** - The Berlin Wall comes down.

10 November

- **1775** - The U.S. Marine Corps was established as



Adolf Hitler

part of the U.S. Navy. It became a separate unit on July 11, 1789.

- **1915** - Fourth Battle of the Isonzo begins and continues to 2 December.
- **1939** - The SA Corps of Military Police (S.A.C.M.P.) is formed as an independent unit under Lt.-Col. R.D. Pilkington-Jordan.
- **1940** - Former British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain dies at the age of 71.
- **1942** - North Africa Vichy military chief in Algeria, Admiral Darlan, orders an end to the resistance against the Allies.
- **1942** - Following the British victory at El Alamein in North Africa during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill stated, "This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."
- **1951** - Allister Mackintosh, pilot and 'father' of SA aviation dies in Port Elizabeth. He earned a D.S.O. in the Battle of the Somme in April 1916.
- **1954** - USMC ("Two Jima") Memorial dedicated in Arlington.
- **1970** - Charles de Gaulle, leader of the 'Free French', President of France (1959-1969), dies at the age of 79.
- **1975** - Two members from 5 Squadron were accidentally killed when their Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I struck trees on top of a

hill near Nottingham Road and crashed. The casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant John Harold Cox (23). Sergeant Cornelius Andries Petrus van Tonder (27).

- **1976** - Sapper Barend Kruger Engelbrecht from 2 Engineer Regiment accidentally drowned during a training exercise at Bethlehem. He was 19.
- **1982** - Private Andre Ignatius Steffens from the Technical Service Corps died in the Universitas Hospital in Bloemfontein after being critically injured in a military vehicle accident. He was 20.
- **1983** - Rifleman George Murray Boshoff from the Witbank Commando was Killed in Action. He was 22.
- **1983** - Rifleman Harold Hebblethwaite from the Jozini Military Base suffered critical head injuries in a private motor vehicle. He was admitted to hospital but unfortunately succumbed to his injuries shortly after admission. He was 23.
- **1984** - Rifleman Anthony Joseph Brandt from Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident while on weekend pass. He was 18.
- **1985** - Sergeant William Stephan Butler from Air Force Headquarters was killed in a military vehicle accident at Kamieskroon. He was 37.
- **1988** - Following a press conference of General Staff

Lieutenant-Colonel Antonio dos Santos Franca Ndalú, Chief of *Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola* (FAPLA), during which he declared that his forces had killed over 230 South African troops in the course of an offensive and had destroyed large numbers of vehicles, the South African Defence Force (SADF) responded by claiming that not all the soldiers that were killed were theirs. SADF admitted to the loss of only twelve soldiers, meaning the rest that were claimed by Dos Santos belonged to South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO).

- **2012** - Birger Stromsheim, Norwegian commando who led the "Heroes of Telemark", dies aged 101.

11 November

- **1865** - Surgeon Mary Edward Walker is awarded the US Medal of Honor.
- **1885** - World War II General George S. Patton was born in San Gabriel, California.
- **1889** - Second Anglo Boer War. Commandant J.H. Visser with 200 men attacks Kuruman, defended by only 35 members of the Cape Police, 33 local volunteers and a few armed Blacks. They refuse to surrender and the attack develops into a siege.
- **1909** - The US Navy begins construction of a base at Pearl Harbour.
- **1914** - First Battle of Ypres:

The British I Corps hold off a desperate attack by German two corps, as the battle ends.

- **1918** - World War 1 ends with Germany and the Allies signing an armistice in a railroad car at Compiegne, France. "At the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the guns fell silent and World War 1 came to an end."
- **1920** - The "Unknown Warrior" is interred in Westminster Abbey & the "Soldat Inconnu" beneath the Arc de Triomphe.
- **1923** - An Eternal Flame" is lit at the Tomb of the "Soldat Inconnu" at the Arc de Triomphe.
- **1961** - Congolese rebels murder 13 Italian airmen in UN service.
- **1965** - Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, issues a Unilateral Declaration of Independence. Britain says the regime is illegal.
- **1972** - The U.S. turned over its military base at Long Binh to the South Vietnamese, symbolizing the end of direct American military participation in the Vietnam War.
- **1973** - Egypt and Israel sign a cease-fire agreement sponsored by the United States, and begin discussions to carry out the pact.
- **1975** - Angola gains independence from the colonial ruler Portugal with Dr Agostinho Neto as president and is known as the People's

Republic of Angola.

- **1980** - Rifleman Richard Paul Baillie from 6 SAI died in 1 Military Hospital after being critically injured in a private vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1983** - US cruise missiles arrive in Great Britain.
- **1986** - Two members from 8 SAI were killed when their military vehicle was involved in an accident at Prieska. They were: Corporal Nicolaas Ernst Pattenden (21). Rifleman David John Fowler (21).
- **1986** - Private Johannes Hendrik Snyman from North West Command was accidentally killed at Vryburg after being crushed between a military vehicle and a trailer. He was 18.
- **1987** - Two members from 4 SAI attached to 62 Mechanised Battalion Group were Killed in Action during Ops Modular. They were: Rifleman John Mark Howes (19). Rifleman Daniel Willem Hendrik van Zyl (20).
- **1987** - Three members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola during Ops Modular. They were: Rifleman Ernest Ndala Kapepura (25). Rifleman Gabriel Dala (26). Rifleman Fernando Mauricio (33).

- **1987** - Rifleman Pieter Marthinus Schutte from 4 SAI was Killed in Action during Ops Modular. He was 20.

- **1992** - The Goldstone Commission raids offices of the SADF's Directorate.

12 November

- **1901** - The most southern battle is fought at Kraalbospan, near Darling, Western Cape, with General Manie Maritz leading the Boers.
- **1911** - Combined Turkish and Arab forces in Libya are badly mauled by the Italian Army.
- **1914** - Rebellion leader General C.R. de Wet suffers a crushing defeat by government forces at Winburg, OFS.
- **1942** - SA armoured cars are in pursuit of the German forces and re-enter Tobruk, continuing as far as Benghazi, east Libya.



Ian Smith

- **1942** - During World War II in North Africa, the city of Tobruk was captured by the British Eighth Army under General Bernard Montgomery.
- **1944** - RAF sinks the German battleship 'Tirpitz' in a Norwegian fjord.
- **1948** - Japanese General Hideki Tojo and six others were sentenced to death by an Allied war crimes tribunal.
- **1963** - Bombardier Gideon Jacobus Visser from 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 33.
- **1974** - Rifleman Barend Johannes Andries Vorster from 2 SAI was Reported Missing after he went to collect water from the river at Bagani. He was seen to suddenly disappear under the water and it is thought that he may have been taken by a crocodile. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 18.
- **1975** - Rifleman Gideon Joubert Klopper from 3 SAI was killed instantly after being struck by lightning during a thunderstorm. He was 19.
- **1975** - Rifleman Bartholomeus Venter from 11 Commando Regiment was Killed in Action by enemy mortar fire during a contact with enemy forces while participating in Operation Savannah. He was 20.
- **1980** - Rifleman Nicolaas Jacobus van der Walt from 3 SAI attached to 53 Battalion was accidentally killed in Northern Owamboland when a hand grenade exploded while he was still handling it. He was 19.
- **1980** - Rifleman Jowert Hessel Dijkstra from the Infantry School suffered severe brain injuries in a private motor vehicle accident during August 1980 while travelling home on a weekend pass. He succumbed to his injuries in the H.F. Verwoerd Hospital in Pretoria on 12 November 1980. He was 18.
- **1982** - Corporal Carlo Marcel Bosch from the Finance Service Corps was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 20.
- **1983** - Rifleman Pierre Hanekom from 8 SAI was Killed in Action near Chiede in Southern Angola. He was 18.
- **1985** - 2nd Lieutenant Robert Allan Broekmeyer from 2 SAI died in the Windhoek Hospital from wounds accidentally sustained in a shooting training incident at the Swartkoppe Shooting Range. He was 20.
- **1985** - Rifleman Andrew Steward Dougall from Natal Command collapsed and died of suspected heart failure while running a 2.4 at the Greyville race course. He was 21.
- **1985** - Over 600 people killed in Liberia in an unsuccessful military coup against President Samuel Doe, led

by former Brigadier-General Thomas Quiwonlpa.

- **1991** - Lance Corporal Petrus Hendrik Theodorus Tait from 6 SAI was killed when the South African Police Boerbok vehicle in which he was travelling as a passenger, overturned near Richmond. He was 19.
- **1995** - Britain ends arm sales to Nigeria.
- **2001** - The Taliban abandons Kabul, as Northern Alliance forces approach.

13 November

- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. Generals Piet Joubert and Louis Botha cross the Tugela River and head down the railway line to Pietermaritzburg.
- **1942** - The five Sullivan Brothers from Waterloo, Iowa, were lost in the sinking of the cruiser USS Juneau by a Japanese torpedo off Guadalcanal during World War II in the Pacific. Following their deaths, the U.S. Navy changed regulations to prohibit close relatives from serving on the same ship.
- **1942** - Minimum US draft age reduced from 21 to 18.
- **1954** - Generalfeldmarschall Paul Ludwig Ewald von Kleist, 73, war criminal, died in Soviet captivity.
- **1975** - 2nd Lieutenant Christopher James Robin from 4 Field Artillery was killed in action. He was 20.
- **1979** - Rifleman P.S. Lafitila from Sector 70 Headquar-

- ters SWATF was critically injured in a military vehicle accident on 06 November 1979. He unfortunately succumbed to his injuries in hospital on 13 November 1979. He was 20.
- **1986** - Two members from 2 and 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action during Ops Colosseum. The casualties were: Corporal Andries Dawid Renken (27). Corporal Marsh Lazarus Mashavave (30).
- **1988** - Rifleman Jacobus Gert Bock from 53 Battalion received a severe skull fracture after being assaulted by members of the local population outside the base. He was flown back to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria where he succumbed to his injuries later in the day. He was 23.
- **1990** - Corporal Gert Gerhardus Boorman from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during a training exercise between Tarraririma and Vorstershoop. He was 20.
- **1995** - Israel began pulling its troops out of the West Bank city of Jenin, ending 28 years of occupation.
- **1982** - Vietnam War Memorial dedicated.

14 November

- **1914** - Lord Frederick Sleigh Roberts, (Field Marshall Earl Roberts of Khartoum) commander-in-chief of the British forces during the Second Anglo Boer War,

dies in St Omer, France.

- **1919** - Red Army captures Omsk, Siberia, from the Whites.
- **1926** - Major Friedrich W.R. Albrecht (78), founder of the OFS State Artillery, dies in Bloemfontein.
- **1941** - Aircraft carrier HMS 'Ark Royal' sinks in the Mediterranean after being torpedoed by the 'U-81' the day before.
- **1975** - Gunner Christo Retief from 4 Field Regiment was Killed in Action. He was 18.
- **1975** - Rifleman Adam Johannes Hendrikus Schonveldt from the Tactical Platoon of the SADF Horse and Dog Centre was killed in action. He was 20.
- **1976** - Warrant Officer Class II Michael Grahame Craul from Regiment Algoa Bay was shot dead at Ondangwa by a guard on duty. He was 24.
- **1978** - 2nd Lieutenant Roelof Nicolas Britz from 32 Battalion was Reported Missing after being attacked by a crocodile while swimming in the Kavango River near Buffalo. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 23.
- **1978** - Rifleman P.P. De Amorim from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces

near Omutwewondjaba in Southern Angola. He was 27.

- **1979** - Rifleman Patrick Charles Wolmarans from 4 SAI was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Paulus Gouws from the South African Cape Corps was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a TMA-3 "Cheese" Anti-Tank Mine. He was 21.
- **1985** - 2nd Lieutenant Willem Stephanus van der Merwe from 1 Parachute Battalion died of multiple shrapnel wounds in 1 Military Hospital after an accidental mortar bomb explosion during a weapons demonstration on 22 October 1985. He was 20.
- **1987** - Captain Andre Anthony Stapa was based at Air Force Base Ondangwa as a Station Pilot. He was subsequently Reported Missing when his Atlas MB326KM



Samuel Doe

Impala Mk II failed to return from attacking enemy positions near Cuvelai in Southern Angola. The aircraft impacted the ground while pulling out after firing on the enemy positions and it is thought that the Pilot may have misjudged his altitude and flown into the ground. The possibility that his aircraft may have been hit or damaged by hostile ground fire was also not ruled out. He has no known grave. He was 30.

- **1987** - Rifleman Andre Taylor Veltman from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a private motor vehicle accident near Fouriesburg while on a weekend pass. He was 20.
- **1994** - Having been dismissed from the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) for their illegal strike about poor living standards in Wallmannstal military camp previously in November, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) guerrillas, through their spokesperson Salvador Mkhari, threaten to resume the armed struggle unless their demands were met.
- **1996** - American troops arrive in Kigali, Rwanda's capital, in advance of a multinational operation to feed and help send home more than one million refugees in Zaire, now called Congo.
- **2001** - Operation Enduring Freedom: Northern Alliance forces liberate Kabul from

the Taliban.

- **2005** - Former defence minister Magnus Malan joins former SA Defence Force chief Constand Viljoen in denying any knowledge of mass graves found near a former South African military base in northern Namibia. People's Liberation Army of Namibia (Plan) fighters killed by the SA army and South-West African Territory Force by law had to be handed to the South-West African police for identification and burial. Malan says that questions about the graves should be directed at the United Nations as they were in command in Namibia at the time.

15 November

- **1891** - German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was born at Heidenheim, in Wurttemberg, Germany.
- **1899** - Winston Churchill, war correspondent of The Morning Post, is captured near Chieveley, Natal, when the Boers ambush an armoured train.
- **1942** - Church bells ring across Britain for the first time since the German invasion threat of 1940, to celebrate victory in the Battle of El Alamein.
- **1943** - During the Holocaust, Heinrich Himmler ordered Gypsies and part-Gypsies to be sent to concentration camps. The number of Gypsies killed by Nazis is estimated up to 500,000.

ated up to 500,000.

- **1969** - The largest antiwar rally in U.S. History occurred as 250,000 persons gathered in Washington, D.C., to protest the Vietnam War.
- **1980** - Corporal Quintino Abel from 32 Battalion was Reported Missing when he disappeared after being attacked by a crocodile while swimming in the Okavango River near Buffalo Base. He was no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 24.
- **1982** - Rifleman Jacobus Albertus van Zyl from the Kimberley Commando was killed instantly after being struck by lightning while participating in a training exercise at Schmidtsdrift. He was 26.
- **1986** - Two members of 1 Parachute Battalion were killed when the Casspir in which they were travelling, overturned near Tsande while travelling from Ombalantu to Ondangwa. The casualties were: Corporal Thomas Wilhelm Janse van Rensburg (23). Rifleman Christo Badenhorst (20).
- **1988** - Grintek of SA, Saab of Sweden and British aerospace sign a historic contract for supplying military equipment worth about R60 million.
- **1990** - Trooper Warren John Pieters from 1 Special Service Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident approximately 25km from

Koopmansfontein. He was 19.

16 November

- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Battle of Sprinakaansnek is fought, with General Philip Botha forcing a passage through the neck.
- **1939** - German U-boat torpedoes tanker 'Sliedrecht' near Ireland.
- **1941** - US intelligence loses track of Japanese aircraft carriers.
- **1950** - King Farouk, Egypt, demands the "total and immediate evacuation" of all British troops from the Suez Canal Zone.
- **1961** - After the bodies of thirteen Italian UN soldiers are "sold" in a Congo market, UN Secretary-General U Thant orders UN forces to punish those responsible.
- **1975** - British newspapers report that South African mercenaries are helping UNITA against the MPLA in Angola.
- **1976** - Sapper Matthys Philipus Fourie from 2 Field Engineer Regiment was Killed in Action. He was 18.
- **1976** - Two members from 1 SAI were accidentally killed while carrying out driver training near the Knysna-Uniondale Crossroads. They were: Corporal Joseph Edward Flood Ashpole (19). Corporal Andries Johannes Blom (21).
- **1978** - Lance Corporal Johannes Petrus Nel from Reg-

iment Louw Wepener was Killed in Action. He was 26.

- **1983** - Lieutenant Timothy David Short from 6 Squadron was killed when his Atlas MB326KM Impala Mk II crashed into the sea 5km off Brighton Beach near Durban while on a training flight. He was 21.
- **1985** - Ordinary Marine Victor Ernest Bastion de Klerk from 123 Harbour Protection Unit, South African Marines was killed during the Cape Riots when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Mitchell's Plain. He was 18.
- **1987** - Two members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. The casualties were: Staff Sergeant Arsenio Nicolau Domignos Batisda (33). Rifleman Joaquim Pedro (29).
- **1987** - Corporal Jacob Carel van Heerden from 4 SAI was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola during Ops Modular. He was 20.
- **1995** - The United Nations charged Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, and his military commander, Ratko Mladic, with genocide.

17 November

- **1887** - British General Bernard L. Montgomery was

born in St. Mark's Vicarage, Kennington Oval, London.

- **1922** - Samuel Alfred (Taffy) Long, Herbert Hull and David Lewis, strikers during the revolt, are hung in the Central Prison in Pretoria for committing murder.
- **1958** - The civilian government of Sudan is overthrown by the military; Ibrahim Abboud becomes prime minister.
- **1964** - Harold Wilson, the British Prime Minister, announces in the House of Commons that the British government has decided to impose an embargo on the export of arms to South Africa. Outstanding commitments by the Ministry of Defence will be fulfilled, but no new contracts will be accepted. The contract to supply sixteen Buccaneer aircraft is under review.
- **1975** - A ban on the publication of military involvements in Angola is imposed on South African newspapers.



Erwin Rommel

- **1980** - Sapper Hendrik Johannes Jacobus Jacobs from 1 Construction Regiment was shot dead by a Sentry on guard duty at Chetto Base in Sector 20 after he entered a restricted area during the night and failed to identify himself after being challenged by the Sentry. He was 18.
- **1981** - Rifleman Gert Johannes de Lange from 4 Vehicle Reserve Park was accidentally killed after suffering shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion at the Maryland Training Base. He was 20.
- **1986** - Corporal James Eric Cooper from Group 46 was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop carrier overturned at Kwanobuhle. He was 26.
- **1986** - Rifleman W. Mbandjeu from 102 Battalion SWATF was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 23.
- **1987** - Lance Corporal Johann Redelinghuys from the South African Medical Corps was attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was killed in action during Operation Modular. He was 20.
- **1988** - Private Alwyn Lubbe from 1 Maintenance Unit was accidentally killed when he fell off a moving vehicle while in a convoy that was travelling from Kimberley to Eenhana. He was 19.
- **1988** - A SA woman, Olivia

Forsyth, allegedly a spy for the SA government against the ANC, who has been holed up in the British Embassy in Luanda since May, leaves for London after being granted an exit visa by the Angolan authorities.

- **1993** - Military rule is re-imposed in Nigeria when General Sani Abacha ousts civilian leader Ernest Shonekan.
- **1993** - The United Nations opened its first war crimes tribunal since the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials following World War II. Judges from 11 nations were sworn in to examine recent mass murders in Yugoslavia characterized as ethnic cleansing.
- **1997** - Six militants open fire at the Temple of Hatshepsut in Luxor, Egypt, killing seventy-four people, sixty-one of them foreign tourists. The attackers are killed by police.

18 November

- **1914** - Naval Battle of Cape Sarych: the Russian Black Sea Fleet defeats a Turko-German squadron.
- **1916** - During World War I, Allied General Douglas Haig called off the First Battle of the Somme after five months. The Allies had advanced 201 square kilometres at a cost of 420,000 British and 195,000 French soldiers. German losses were over 650,000 men.
- **1936** - Germany & Italy recognized Franco government

in Spain.

- **1941** - Operation Barbarossa: A Soviet counterattack near Tula causes the German 112th Infantry Division to break.
- **1941** - Last Italian forces in Ethiopia surrender to the British, ending 15 months of resistance.
- **1961** - President John F. Kennedy sends 18,000 military advisors to South Vietnam.
- **1962** - Corporal Johannes George Wolmarans from 1 Parachute Battalion was admitted to 1 Military Hospital after being diagnosed with myocarditis. He died later in hospital after suffering heart failure. He was 19.
- **1971** - 2nd Lieutenant Douglas Angus Morrison from the School of Engineers was accidentally electrocuted while serving at Kroonstad. He was 20.
- **1984** - Leading Seaman Sydney Harry de Jongh from 111 Harbour Protection Unit, South African Marines accidentally drowned in a river mishap while based at Wene-la in the Eastern Caprivi. He was 28.
- **1987** - Cuba denies its troops are engaged in fighting against SA forces in Angola.
- **1988** - The three Zimbabwean intelligence officers standing trial for a bomb attack on an ANC house in Bulawayo are sentenced to death.
- **1989** - Rifleman Robert Antonio Gache from 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was killed when his Buffel Troop

Carrier overturned 50km north of Okahandja. He was 20.

- **1992** - After a marathon ten-hour Cabinet meeting, President F.W. de Klerk appointed Lt.-Gen. Pierre Steyn as head of all intelligence functions of the South African Defence Force (SADF), including the Military Intelligence (MI).
- **1993** - Nigeria's new military ruler, General Sani Abacha, dissolves all democratic institutions.

19 November

- **1812** - Napoleon begins his retreat from Moscow.
- **1863** - President Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address during ceremonies dedicating 17 acres of the Gettysburg Battlefield as a National Cemetery.
- **1915** - Russia and Italy declare war on Bulgaria
- **1941** - HMAS 'Sydney' and the German merchant cruiser 'Kormoran' clash off the western coast of Australia, both sinking, 'Sydney' with no survivors. The wrecks were located in 2008.
- **1942** - The Russian Army began a massive counter-offensive against the Germans at Stalingrad during World War II.
- **1943** - Following an attempted uprising, the Nazis liquidate the Janowska concentration camp near Lemberg, at least 6,000 Jews are murdered.
- **1950** - General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower be-

comes the supreme commander of NATO.

- **1969** - The first news reports emerged that American troops in Vietnam had massacred civilians in My Lai Village back in March of 1968.
- **1978** - Signaler Arnold Charles Lewin from the South African Corps of Signals stationed at Grootfontein, collapsed from heat exhaustion. He was rushed to the Grootfontein Hospital but died soon after admission. He was 18.
- **1987** - Major Petrus Abraham van der Merwe from 1 Parachute Battalion was wounded in a grenade explosion on 18 November. He succumbed to his wounds on 19 November 1987. He was 27.
- **1987** - US warships destroy Iranian oil platforms in Persian Gulf.
- **1989** - Signaler Jan Gabriel Kriel from 2 Signals Regiment was killed after he was accidentally run over by a Ratel 20 at Keetmanshoop. He was 20.
- **1990** - The Cold War came to an end during a summit in Paris as leaders of NATO and the Warsaw Pact signed a Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, vastly reducing their military arsenals.

20 November

- **1917** - The first use of tanks in battle occurred at Cambrai, France, during World War I. Over 300 tanks commanded by British General Sir Douglas Haig went into battle against the Germans.
- **1918** - The 369th "Colored" Infantry, New York National Guard, becomes the first American unit to reach the Rhine and take up occupation duties in Germany.
- **1942** - British Eighth Army recaptures Benghazi, Lybia.
- **1943** - The Battle of Tarawa began in the Pacific War as American troops attacked the Japanese on the heavily fortified Gilbert Islands.
- **1944** - US First Army secures Aachen.
- **1945** - The Nuremberg War Crime Trials began in which 24 former leaders of Nazi Germany were charged with conspiracy to wage wars of aggression, crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.



Olivia Forsyth

- **1962** - The Cuban Missile Crisis concluded as President John F. Kennedy announced he had lifted the U.S. Naval blockade of Cuba stating, "the evidence to date indicates that all known offensive missile sites in Cuba have been dismantled."
- **1983** - Corporal Raymond Kenneth Eaton from Technical Service Corps attached to the Army Battle School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Boshoff. He was 17.
- **1983** - Chaplain Gerhardus Jacobus Rossouw from SWATF Headquarters was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Windhoek. He was 29.
- **1985** - Marine Ferdinand Ben Els from the 111 Harbour Protection Unit, South African Marines was killed in a military vehicle accident at Katima Mulilo. He was 18.
- **1987** - Bombardier Lukas Marthinus Charl Havenga from 4 Artillery Regiment was attached to the 120mm Mortar section at the Lomba River during Ops Modular where he suffered a heart attack during operations and died before he could be evacuated to Rundu. He was 22.
- **1988** - Three members from 6 Maintenance Unit were accidentally killed when their military vehicle overturned on the Bagani-Rundu road. They were: Private

- John Marloh (20). Private Rodney Izaak Nelson (20). Private Neville Swartz (18).
- **1990** - Anti-Gulf War protest marches begin in 20 US cities.
- **1994** - Angolan government signs peace treaty with UNITA.

21 November

- **1894** - Port Arthur is captured by the Japanese from the Chinese, amidst great slaughter.
- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Battle of De Wetsdorp, which was to end on the 23rd with the surrender of the British to Chief Commandant C.R. de Wet, starts.
- **1918** - German ammunition trains explode in Hamont, Belgium, 1,750 die.
- **1968** - Trooper Brian Wesley Dyer from 1 Special Service Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident at Katima Mulilo. He was 17.
- **1970** - Operation Ivory Coast: A joint Army-Air Force commando raid on the Son Tây prisoner-of-war camp finds all Americans have been moved elsewhere.
- **1980** - Rifleman Armando Eduardo from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 32.
- **1981** - Trooper Marthinus Christoffel Botha from 1 Special Service Battalion was accidentally killed by

lightning while on manoeuvres at the Army Battle School. He was 18.

- **1981** - Rifleman Coenraad Christoffel van Wyk from 1 Parachute Battalion accidentally drowned in the swimming pool in the Paratrooper Fire-Force Camp at AFB Ondangwa. He was 20.
- **1984** - Three members from 202 Battalion SWATF were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in the Operational Area. The casualties were: Trooper W.A. Basson (19). Trooper H. Diergaardt (20). Trooper C. McNab (20).
- **1984** - 2nd Lieutenant Gustav Brink from 1 Special Service Battalion was accidentally killed during the night in Owamboland when his armoured car drove into a water-well at dusk and overturned. He was 20.
- **1986** - Rifleman Nicolaas Carel Martinus Bronkhorst from the Ermelo Commando died after suffering a fatal heart attack while participating in a shooting exercise at the Amsterdam shooting range. He was 39.
- **1989** - Colonel Cornelius Alwyn Johannes Meerholz HCS from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was accidentally killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Gravelot. He was 37.
- **1989** - The Citizen reports that the remaining 1,500 South African troops in Namibia have been withdrawn in November.

- **2005** - Alfred Anderson, veteran of the Black Watch, the last survivor of the Christmas Truce of 1914, the last Scottish veteran of the war, and the oldest man in Scotland, dies at the age of 109.

22 November

- **1847** - General Jacobus Herculaas de la Rey, known as Koos de la Rey, is born.
- **1890** - Charles De Gaulle was born in Lille, France. He led the Free French against the Nazis during World War II and later became President of France, serving from 1958-69.
- **1914** - Ypres burns under German bombardment.
- **1917** - German L59 Zeppelin starts flight from Bulgaria to Khartoum carrying much needed supplies to General von Lettow in East Africa.
- **1943** - The Cairo Conference occurred as President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek, met to discuss the war in the Pacific against Japan.
- **1963** - US President John F. Kennedy is assassinated.
- **1980** - Two members from Infantry School were killed in a private motor vehicle accident between George and the Wilderness while they were on a weekend pass. The casualties were: Corporal Ferdinand Johannes Louw (20). Corporal

- Andre Seaman (21).
- **1988** - Rifleman Felokwakhe Andreas Magagula from 121 Battalion died in the King Edward VIII Hospital from injuries received when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned while on an operational patrol at Kwa Ngwanase. He was 28.
- **1988** - South African government announces it has joined Cuba and Angola in endorsing a plan to remove Cuban troops from Angola.
- **1990** - Lance Corporal Sibusiso Dlomo from Natal Command was killed in a military vehicle accident in Durban. He was 30.
- **1991** - Airman Martin Jacobsz from the Air Force Gymnasium was killed in a private motor vehicle accident after his vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with another vehicle on the Delmas to Pretoria Road. He was 19.

23 November

- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. Major-General Smith-Dorrien, leaving only the church standing, razes the town of Dullstroom to the ground.
- **1939** - The German battleships 'Scharnhorst' & 'Gneisenau' sink the greatly

outclassed armed merchant cruiser HMS 'Rawalpindi' in the North Atlantic off the Faroes.

- **1942** - Japanese bomb Port Darwin, Australia.
- **1946** - Bombardment of Haiphong: The French fleet shells the port, held by the Viet Minh, inflicting heavy casualties and initiating the "First Indochina War".
- **1966** - Gen. R.C. Hiemstra opens the Castle of Good Hope military museum in Cape Town, reflecting various aspects of military history since 1652.
- **1975** - Captain George Frederick Schoeman from 2 SSB was critically wounded on 9 November 1975 during Operation Savannah in Southern Angola. He succumbed to his wounds on 23 November 1975. He was 31.
- **1975** - Warrant Officer Class II Alwyn Johannes Benson from 4 SAI was Killed in Action during Operation Savannah. He was 30.
- **1975** - Captain Johan Wolf-



Charles De Gaulle

gang Holm HC (P) from the Danie Theron Combat School was Killed in Action during Operation Savannah. He was 36.

- **1975** - Trooper Neil Lombard from B Squadron 1SSB was Reported Missing during Ops Savannah. His body could not be recovered. He was 20.
- **1975** - Corporal Jochemus Jacobus Taljaard from 2 Special Service Battalion was Killed in Action during Operation Savannah. He was 20.
- **1975** - Lance Corporal Gerhard Vollgraaff from 2 Special Service Battalion Died of Wounds received in Action during Operation Savannah during the Battle of Ebo. He was 19.
- **1976** - Rifleman Stephanus Johannes Swartz from 6 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident at Bedford in the Eastern Cape. He was 21.
- **1977** - Rhodesian forces attack nationalist guerrilla bases at Tembue and Chimoi in Mozambique, killing allegedly over a thousand people.
- **1978** - Corporal Nicolaas Marthinus Dekker from Quartermaster General was killed by shrapnel at Potchefstroom when a G2 140mm Medium Gun High Explosive projectile exploded in the cannon breach during a training exercise. He was 18.
- **1981** - Rifleman R. Mukoya

from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces. He was 25.

- **1983** - The Beirut Barracks Bombing: 241 US & 58 French military peacekeepers, and six civilians are killed when two members of Islamic Jihad detonate a truck bomb.
- **1985** - Fifty-eight die as Egyptian commandos storm a hijacked Egyptian jet in Malta.
- **1986** - Sergeant Gert Benjamin Labuschagne from the Virginia Commando was found dead during a military training exercise. It appeared that he suffered a fatal heart attack while he was asleep. He was 36.
- **1993** - Captain Louis Joubert from 1 Squadron was Reported Missing when his Dassault Mirage F1AZ was seen to suddenly bank steeply and dive into the sea approximately 80km South, South West of Cape Point while carrying out a low level maritime strike. He was 24.

24 November

- **1874** - Joseph Glidden patented his invention of barbed wire.
- **1887** - German Field Marshal Erich von Manstein was born in Berlin.
- **1941** - The great tank battle of Sidi Rezegh in North Africa rages unabated in World War 2. The South Africans,

outnumbered by their German opponents, are stranded in the open desert but manage to destroy fifty of the German tanks. At about 16:30 all the SA guns are out of action after running short of ammunition and the South Africans are forced to surrender.

- **1944** - First B-29 raid from Saipan; 111 bombers hit Tokyo.
- **1956** - Soviet troops invade Hungary as Imre Nagy becomes prime minister.
- **1964** - Belgian paratroopers, the Congolese army and mercenaries recapture Stanleyville in the Congo from rebels.
- **1969** - The U.S. Army announced that Lt. William L. Calley had been charged with premeditated murder in the massacre of civilians in the Vietnamese village of My Lai in March of 1968. Calley was ordered to stand trial by court martial and was later convicted and sentenced to life in prison. However, his sentence was later commuted to three years of house arrest by President Richard Nixon.
- **1973** - Four aircrew members from 24 Squadron were Reported Missing after two Hawker Siddeley S-50 Buccaneer aircraft, Serial Numbers 419 and 420 that had departed from Cape Town to conduct a maritime strike exercise against HMS Fearless during a Joint SA Navy and Royal Navy exercise referred to as CAPEX 73 failed to return. At 13h30 the aircraft

were involved in a mid-air collision in thick fog over Walker Bay near Hermanus while en-route to the ship. The crews were: Major Johannes Jacob Steinberg (32). Major Clement Roy Vice (29). Captain Hercules Du Preez (25). Captain Brian Maughan Antonis (26).

- **1975** - Trooper Gideon Marthinus Frederick Obbes from 2 SAI was Killed in Action. He was 20.
- **1978** - Rifleman Nicolaas Mostert Hofmeyer van der Spuy van Rooyen from 31 Battalion was killed instantly in an accidental hand grenade explosion at the Omega shooting range during a training exercise. He was 18.
- **1981** - Private Johannes Petrus Coetzee from 1 Maintenance Unit was killed when the military vehicle in which he was traveling overturned. He was 19.
- **1982** - Lance Corporal Saxon Kaputo from 102 Battalion SWATF was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned near Opuwa. He was 22.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Andre Dan Mostert from 1 SWA SPES was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Opuwa. He was 19.
- **1986** - Rifleman William Haalsward Opperman from 8 SAI died in the Johannesburg General Hospital from injuries received after he was knocked down by a civilian vehicle that failed to stop at

a road block he was manning in Soweto. He was 19.

- **1986** - Special Constable Johannes Sem from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 33.
- **1992** - The U.S. military departed the Philippines after nearly a century of military presence. In 1991, the Philippine Senate had voted to reject a renewal of the lease for the American military base.

25 November

- **1854** - During the Battle of Balaclava, the famous "Charge of the Light Brigade" takes place. Nearly 600 British light cavalry undertook a frontal attack down a narrow, mile long valley, an action that had no impact whatsoever on the outcome of the battle, while leaving literally hundreds of the troopers dead or wounded.
- **1915** - Chilean military leader Augusto Pinochet was born in Valparaiso, Chile.
- **1936** - Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, an agreement to collaborate in opposing the spread of Communism.

• **1940** - Maiden flights of the de Havilland Mosquito & the Martin B-26 Marauder, one on each side of the pond.

- **1961** - USS 'Enterprise' (CVN 65), the first nuclear-powered carrier, is commissioned, to commence 51 years of service; decommissioned 2012.
- **1971** - Four members from 22 Flight (later 22 Squadron) were killed while stationed on board the SAS President Steyn that was escorting a new Daphne Class submarine SAS Emily Hobhouse from France back to South Africa when their Westland Wasp helicopter burst into flames just after take-off. They were: Captain Christiaan Jacobus Tiedt (24). Sergeant Johannes Gerhardus Blom (34). Corporal Johann Stork (26). Corporal Nicolaas Francois Janse van Rensburg (33).
- **1975** - Two members from 11 Squadron and one from 8 SAI were Reported Missing during Operation Savannah



William L. Calley

when their Cessna 185D was presumed to have been shot down over or near the town of Ebo in Central Angola. The casualties were: Captain Daniel Jakob Taljaard (32). 2nd Lieutenant Keith Arthur Williamson (21). 2nd Lieutenant Eric Brian Thompson (20).

- **1979** - Rifleman Thomas Ignatius Louw from 2 SAI was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 18.
- **1981** - Forty-five mercenaries from South Africa under Colonel Mike Hoare land in Seychelles, attack the airport and cause heavy damage. Those who are not captured and detained by Seychelles security forces flee by hijacking an Air India plane, which they divert to South Africa. The TRC in 1998 rules the SA government responsible for the attack.
- **1982** - Special Constable Tuhfeni Nekundi from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 34.
- **1983** - Syria & Saudi Arabia announce cease-fire in PLO civil war in Lebanon.
- **1987** - Trooper Johann Raubenheimer Meyer from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in South East-

ern Angola. He was 20.

- **1987** - Rifleman Marius Johannes Mitton HC (P) was critically wounded during Ops Modular on 11 November 1987 and succumbed to his wounds on 25 November 1987. He was 20.

26 November

- **1832** - Doctor Mary Edwards Walker, the only woman to win the Medal of Honor, is born.
- **1943** - British troop transport 'Rohna' is sunk in the Mediterranean by a Luftwaffe Henschel Hs 293 guided glide bomb. 1,138 men are killed, including 1,015 American troops.
- **1940** - During the Holocaust, Nazis began walling off the Jewish Ghetto in Warsaw, sealing in 400,000 inhabitants while denying them adequate food, sanitation and housing.
- **1944** - Himmler orders destruction of Auschwitz & Birkenau crematoria.
- **1969** - Major Johannes Petrus Britz LWD from 1 Squadron SAAF was killed instantly near Pietersburg, when his Canadair CL13B Sabre Mk VI, Serial Number 368 suffered catastrophic engine failure and caught fire while he was carrying out bombing practice exercises. He was 29.
- **1970** - Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., the first black American general, dies at 93.
- **1973** - Rifleman Leon Holscher from 2 SAI was

Reported Missing after being attacked by a crocodile while he swimming in the Cunene River. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 19.

- **1975** - Two members from 2 Parachute Regiment were accidentally killed as a result of being dragged under canopy in high winds after landing during a parachute training exercise at the General de Wet Training Area. The casualties were: Sergeant Dirk Johannes Human (28). Rifleman Alan Taylor Bate (23).
- **1978** - Signaler Hendrik Lambertus Johann Brown from the Army Gymnasium was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 22.
- **1979** - Trooper Louis Petrus Badenhorst from 1 Special Service Battalion was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1982** - Private Jannie Louw from 61 Base Workshops was accidentally killed when he was crushed between a military vehicle and a guard tower at Centurion, Pretoria. He was 22.

27 November

- **1941** - HMAS 'Parramatta' is sunk off Tobruk by 'U-559'.
- **1941** - Operation Crusader: British troops break the seven month Axis siege of Tobruk.
- **1941** - Joint Army-Navy signal to senior commanders in the Pacific ends with,

"This dispatch is to be considered a war warning," and CNO adds to CINCUS Kimmel "an aggressive move by Japan is expected within the next few days".

- **1942** - The French Navy scuttles its ships at Toulon to prevent Nazis from capturing them.
- **1951** - First successful surface-to-air missile test is carried out at White Sands.
- **1976** - Sapper Petrus Johannes Du Toit from 2 Field Engineer Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Rundu. He was 19.
- **1976** - Rifleman Donald Robert Pretorius from 1 SAI was killed in a military Bedford accident at Colesburg. He was 19.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Johan Martins from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 19.

28 November

- **1887** - Nazi leader Ernst Rohm is born.
- **1899** - Second Anglo Boer War. The Battle of Modder River or Tweerivieren takes place, in which both Gen. Methuen and Gen. De la Rey are wounded. Gen. De la Rey's son, Adriaan, is fatally wounded.
- **1916** - First German air raid on London.
- **1939** - USSR revokes the Soviet-Finnish non-aggression pact.

- **1943** - The Teheran Conference began, attended by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet Premier Josef Stalin. Among the major topics discussed, a second front in Western Europe, resulting in D-Day, the seaborne invasion of Normandy in northern France on June 6, 1944.
- **1951** - Military coup under Col Adib el-Shishakli in Syria.
- **1976** - Corporal Terence Paul Leonard from 2 SAI was killed when the vehicle he was traveling in overturned, crushing him underneath. The accident happened while traveling in convoy from Grootfontein to Walvis Bay. He was 19.
- **1976** - Rifleman Friedrich Erwin Abraham from Infantry School died in a private motorcycle accident at Rawsonville in the Cape while on weekend pass. He was 20.
- **1977** - Rifleman Lawrence Dennis Kretzmann from 11 Commando Regiment attached to 53 Battalion, was critically injured on 11 November 1977 when his Unimog Troop Carrier overturned after striking an animal. He was 19.

- **1978** - Lance Corporal Waldemar Heinrich Grobler from 5 SAI was Killed in Action. He was 22.
- **1978** - Rifleman Robert Sentefol from 2 SAI was killed instantly after being struck by lightning. He was 18.
- **1980** - Four SAAF members from the Air Defence School in Pretoria were killed in a private aircraft crash while on a weekend pass. The casualties were: Private Pieter Barand De Villiers (18). Private Gabriel De Wet van Eeden (20). Private Leonard Wilhelm Kruger (24). Private Abraham Daniel Roux (18).
- **1983** - Corporal Gary Richard Milne from Western Province Command was killed in a military vehicle accident at Garries. He was 23.
- **1984** - Sergeant Marius Melville Bekker from Natal Command Headquarters Unit died in the Addington Hospital from injuries sus-



Heinrich Himmler

tained when his military motorcycle was struck by a civilian motor vehicle in Argyle Road, Durban. He was 26.

- **1986** - Rifleman Gregory Bruce Gerald Marshall from Infantry School was killed in a private motorcycle accident. He was 19.
- **1988** - Lance Corporal Izak Johannes van Rooyen from the Medical Base Depot was killed in a private vehicle accident in Springs. He was 28.
- **1992** - Four APLA Gunmen burst into the King William's Town Golf Club as 55 members of the King Wine Circle, a wine-tasting club that includes much of the town gentry, were having their annual Christmas dinner. Five guests were killed instantly when the men sprayed the room with Automatic weapon gunfire and lobbed in hand grenades. Three hand grenades exploded in the dining room, the bar and in a shed outside the clubhouse. Fifteen diners and two waitresses were injured, some seriously, by gunfire, shrapnel and flying glass. The four APLA operatives subsequently escaped by vehicle. All four APLA operatives were later granted amnesty for this attack.
- **1997** - Fighting breaks out among President Laurent Kabila's soldiers in Kinshasa, Congo, when he orders the arrest of one of his

aides. Eighteen people are killed.

29 November

- **1900** - Second Anglo Boer War. Lord Kitchener succeeds Lord Roberts as commander-in-chief of the British forces in SA and Lord Roberts succeeds Wolseley as commander-in-chief of the British army.
- **1917** - The Women's Royal Naval Service (WRENS) is established.
- **1932** - France and the USSR sign a non-aggression pact.
- **1951** - The first underground atomic explosion, Frenchman's Flat, Nevada.
- **1974** - Corporal Allan Geoffrey Becker from Regiment Noord Transvaal was accidentally killed while servicing a military vehicle in Leydsdorp. The vehicle slipped off the jacks and crushed him. He was 24.
- **1977** - Trooper Ruben van Niekerk from 1 Special Service Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident while serving in the Operational Area. He was 18.
- **1986** - Gunner Gerrit Meintjies from 4 Artillery Regiment was killed in a private vehicle accident on the Potgietersrus road while on leave. He was 20.
- **1987** - Private Alexander Talbat Nelson Sadler from 101 Base Workshops was critically injured, suffering massive internal injuries

in Southern Angola during Operation Modular when he was accidentally run over by a Kwé supply vehicle. He unfortunately succumbed to his injuries before he could be medically evacuated. He was 20.

- **1991** - Red Cross says clan battles in Somalia's capital of Mogadishu have killed more than 1,000 people.
- **1996** - U.N. war crimes tribunal sentences Bosnian Serb Drazen Erdemovic to 10 years for the massacre of 1,200 Muslims.

30 November

- **1874** - Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, war correspondent during Second Anglo Boer War and later premier of Britain, is born in Oxfordshire, England.
- **1885** - Albrecht Kesselring, German field marshal, was born.
- **1934** - Dedication of the Anzac Memorial at Gallipoli, presided over by Kemal Ataturk.
- **1939** - Finland was invaded by more than 20 Russian divisions in the Winter War.
- **1943** - Teheran Conference: FDR, Churchill, & Stalin agree that Operation Overlord will take place in May of 1944.
- **1945** - British Admiral Louis Mountbatten accepts the surrender of Japanese Field Marshal Hisaichi Terauchi, who hands over

his sword, Saigon.

- **1978** - Gunner Carel Hendrik Smit from 14 Artillery Regiment was killed when the military vehicle he was traveling in, overturned between Kuruman and Katu. He was 21.
- **1981** - Captain Abraham Jacobus Petrus de Kock from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action in a premature explosion while laying demolition charges at the Oil Refinery in Luanda during Ops Kerslig. He was 26.
- **1982** - Major Michael Al-

bert Bondesio from 35 Squadron suffered a fatal heart attack while sitting behind the controls flying Shackleton 1717. He was 44.

- **1983** - Lieutenant Andre Viljoen from 30 Maintenance Unit was killed in a Military Vehicle accident 10km east of Otjovazendu. The vehicle went into a corner too fast and the trailer overturned. He was pinned under the vehicle and succumbed to his injuries before help arrived. He was 23.

• **1983** - Rifleman Oscar Mungango from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 24.

- **1984** - Rifleman Kachinga Chiamba from 201 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.
- **1988** - South African, Angolan and Cuban representatives meet in Brazzaville for peace talks.





Military Nicknames

1. Honey tank.
2. Adolf Galland.
3. Stonewall.
4. M4 Sherman. The British named it the 'Ronson' after a cigarette lighter because they said it "lights up first time, every time" when hit.
5. British Field Marshall Douglas Haig.
6. The Nebelwerfer Rocket Launcher.
7. Junkers Ju 87.
8. General George S. Patton Jnr.
9. 101st Airborne Division.
10. Bubi (A German word meaning "young boy" or "kid".)
11. Stalin Organ.



12. Grease Gun.
13. Mike Hoare.
14. Adolph Malan.
15. Jimmy.
16. White Death.
17. The potato masher or the stick grenade.
18. Thompson submachine gun or Tommy Gun.

19. The Dam Busters.
20. Vorster Orrel.
21. Der rote Kampfflieger - the Red Battle-Flyer.
22. Dad's Army.
23. The Red Devils (*Rote Teufeln*).
24. Eland 60 armoured car.
25. Bohemian Corporal.



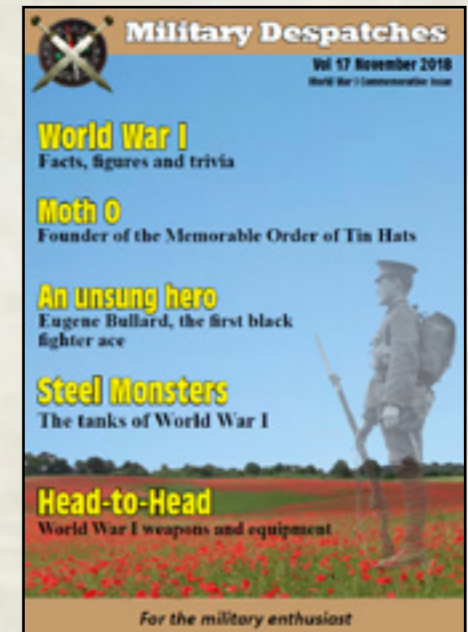
Useful links

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

Our aim is to make the Military Despatches website easy to use. Even more important to us, we want to make the website informative and interesting. The latest edition of the magazine will be available, as will all the previous editions. More over, there will be links to videos, websites, and articles that our readers may find interesting. So check out the website, bookmark it, and pass the URL on to everyone that you think may be interested.



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.

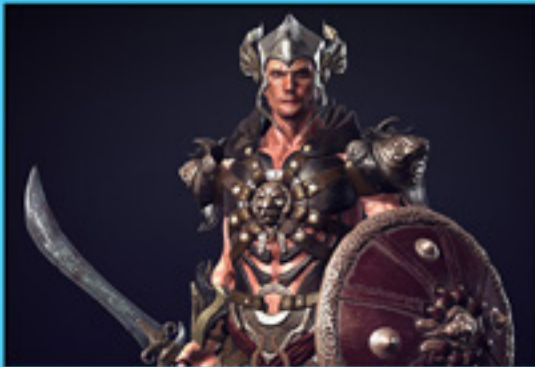
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