



Military Despatches

Vol 72 June 2023

Conscription. Yes, no, maybe

Would military conscription in South Africa still work

Operation Neptune Spear

The raid to finally get Osama bin Laden

Kurt Knispel

The most successful tank ace of World War II



Armoured fist

Some iconic tanks of World War II

For the military enthusiast



Page 14



Special Forces Ops - Operation Neptune Spear

Click on any video below to view

Military Despatches

Paratrooper Wings Quiz

Paratrooper Wings Quiz

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

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

Military Despatches

Army Speak 101

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

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

Military Despatches

Army Speak 101

Military slang from the SADF and around the world

Military Despatches

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

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

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

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.

Features

6

10 German weapons of WW II
We look at ten iconic weapons used by the German *Wehrmacht* during World War II.

20
The war is history, get over it
In our modern-day politically correct woke society some believe that it is time to stop 'wasting time' on remembering wars and events from history and move on with more important matters.

24
Conscription. Yes, no, maybe
It's one thing to volunteer as a soldier. But what about those that are conscripted and have no choice in the matter. We take a closer look at compulsory military service.

30

When age means little

In South Africa, 16 June is celebrated as Youth Day. In this article we look at four notable military accomplishments by youngsters.

34
The fine art of 'gypping'
One of the first worlds new conscripts in the South African Defence Force learnt was "gyppo" - the way to get out of work or make life easier.

40
The Dicta Boelcke
In 1916 World War I German flying ace Oswald Boelcke was tasked to write a pamphlet on aerial combat tactics. The result was the 'Dicta Boelcke'.



42

Changing the world

In 2014 former US Navy SEAL Admiral William H. McRaven gave a speech to the graduating class at the University of Texas. It was a speech that everyone should hear.

Quiz

39

Grenades
This month we're looking at things that go bang We show you 15 grenades, you tell us what they are.

Please remember to subscribe to our channel.

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



Editor's Sitrep

Issue 72 of Military Despatches is done and dusted. And I must admit that there was a bit of pressure to make sure that it was done on time.

You may be wondering why this issue has been sent out one day early. Well there is a pretty good reason for that.

On 31 May I will be going into hospital for surgery. Both of my knees have finally said "enough is enough." The X-Rays show that both knees are currently bone on bone.

As you can imagine this makes simple tasks like walking a rather painful affair.

So I have to have a total knee replacement done on both knees. On 31 May they will start by replacing my left knee. They will then only do the right knee next year.

I must confess that I am not looking forward to undergoing surgery. After all, I am no longer a spring chicken.

If the operation is successful it appears that I have to then do rehab. That also sounds like a lot of fun.

So please, bear me in your thoughts over the next few days.

I finally had to splash out and

purchase a new inverter. Eskom is already hinting at Stage 8 loadshedding and personally I suspect it will get a lot worse than that.

I bought an Ecoflow Delta 2 inverter. When I first saw it I wasn't impressed. It looked so small compared to my old inverter. I soon discovered that the old saying, "dynamite comes in small packages" was true.

My old inverter had got to the stage where it wouldn't even last for two hours. One of the problems was that it would never get the chance to fully recharge the batteries before the next round of loadshedding.

The Ecoflow lasts for eight hours without a problem and, best of all, it recharges fully in about an hour.

As I say, it cost quite a bit, but it seems to be well worth the price.

That's about it for now. God willing I will see you again for the July issue of Military Despatches.

Until next time, stay safe and stay healthy.

Matt

Hipe! media

PUBLISHER

Hipe Media

EDITOR

Matt Tennyson

PHOTO EDITOR

Regine Lord

CONTRIBUTORS

Janine Cassidy, Raymond Fletcher, Bruce Jacobs, Ryan Murphy, Matt O'Brien, Matt Tennyson.

Military Despatches is published on-line every month. The articles used in **Military Despatches** are copyrighted and may not be used without prior permission from the editor.

The views stated in this magazine do not necessary reflect the views of **Military Despatches**, the editor, the staff, or Hipe Media.

email

editor@hipe.co.za

YouTube Channel

Click [here](#) to visit our channel

Back Issues

To view any back issues of Military Despatches, go to www.militarydespatches.co.za or click [here](#).

CONTENTS

Page 72



June in military history

Head-to-Head

46

Tanks of World War II

We look at some of the iconic tanks of World War II.

Famous Figures

56

Kurt Knispel

Credited as being the most successful tanker of World War II, he remained a non-commissioned officer throughout the war. And it was only his impressive track-record that saved him from ending up in a military prison.



Forged in Battle

60

Fokker Dr.I

The Fokker Triplane, flown by the Red Baron, and feared by the Allies.

Battlefield

64

Battle of Ia Drang

The American's first major battle in the Vietnam War. Also the first use of air cavalry.

Gaming

68

IL-2 Sturmovik - Great Battles

An excellent combat flight simulator.

Movie Review

70

We were soldiers

Vietnam movie based on the Battle of Ia Drag. Well worth watching.

Book Review

71

Dead Men Running

Gavin Manning's gripping account of serving with Koevoet during the 'Border War'.

Front Cover

A Russian T34/35 tank from World War II. It was regarded by many as one of the best tanks of the war.

This month in Head-to-Head we look at some of the iconic tanks of World War II.



10 German weapons of WWII

After the humiliation of Versailles and the strict restrictions placed on the German military, Nazi Germany was determined to rearm and rebuild its military power. They knew that not only did they have to design and produce their own weapons, but that they would have to be good.

The *Wehrmacht* were the unified armed forces of Nazi Germany from 1935 to 1945. It consisted of the *Heer* (army), the *Kriegsmarine* (navy) and the *Luftwaffe* (air force).

The designation “Wehrmacht” replaced the previously used term *Reichswehr* and was the manifestation of the Nazi regime’s efforts to rearm Germany to a greater extent than the Treaty of Versailles permitted.

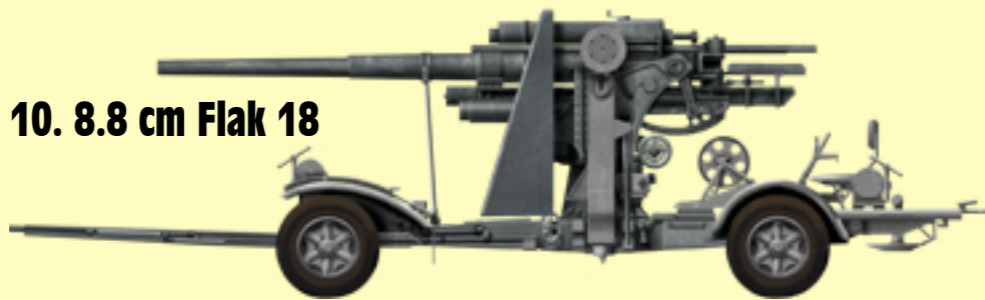
The *Wehrmacht* formed the heart of Germany’s politico-military power. In the early part of the Second World War, the *Wehrmacht* employed combined arms tactics (close-cover air-support, tanks and infantry) to devastating effect in what became known as *Blitzkrieg* (lightning war), although it must be said that the term *Blitzkrieg* was used more by the Allies than by the Germans.

Its campaigns in France (1940), the Soviet Union (1941) and North Africa (1941/42) are regarded by historians as acts of boldness.

This month we look at some of the best and/or most common weapons used by the *Wehrmacht*.

They are presented in alphabetical order.

10. 8.8 cm Flak 18



The 8.8 cm Flak 18/36/37/41 is a German 88 mm anti-aircraft and anti-tank artillery gun, developed in the 1930s. It was widely used by Germany throughout World War II and is one of the most recognized German weapons of the conflict. Development of the original model led to a wide variety of guns.

The 8.8 cm Flak 18 was originally designed as an anti-aircraft weapon (*Flugabwehrkanone*). It originally operated with the low-UHF band *Würzburg* radar. They were, however, not that accurate until the development of the Giant *Würzburg* radar.

If it performed well in its original role of an anti-aircraft gun, it proved to be a superb anti-tank gun.

Existing anti-tank guns were unable to pierce the armour of heavier enemy tanks. The 88 mm, however, went through armour like a hot knife through butter.

This led to the development of the 8.8 cm KwK 36 (*Kampfwagen-Kanone*). It became the primary armament of the PzK-pfw VI Tiger I tank. It also was

used as the primary weapon of the Tiger II (*Königtiger* or King Tiger).

The KwK 36 was very accurate and high-powered, and its high muzzle velocity produced a very flat trajectory. This allowed its gunners a higher margin of error in estimating range.

During the North African campaign, Rommel made the most effective use of the weapon, as he lured tanks of the British Eighth Army into traps by baiting them with apparently retreating German panzers. A mere two flak battalions destroyed 264 British tanks in 1941.

8.8 cm KwK 36 specs

- Designer: Krupp
- Barrel length: 492.8 cm bore (56 calibres)
- Shell: Fixed QF 88 × 571 mmR
- Calibre: 88 mm
- Elevation: -8° to +15°
- Rate of fire: 10 round per minute
- Maximum firing range: 10,500 metres

9. Fw 190

The Focke-Wulf Fw 190, nicknamed *Würger* (“Shrike”) is a German single-seat, single-engine fighter aircraft designed by Kurt Tank at Focke-Wulf in the late 1930s and widely used during World War II.

It was an excellent aircraft and could be used as a day fighter, fighter-bomber, ground-attack aircraft and to a lesser degree, night fighter.



Fw 190 specs

- Designer: Krupp
- Crew: One
- Length: 8.95 metres
- Gross weight: 4,417 kg
- Powerplant: 1 × BMW 801D-2 14-cylinder air-cooled radial piston engine 1,700 PS

(1,677 hp; 1,250 kW)

- Maximum speed: 652 km/h
- Range: 900–1,000 km
- Service ceiling: 10,350 metres
- Rate of climb: 15 m/s

Armament

- 2 × 13 mm synchronized

MG 131 machine guns

- 2 × 20 mm MG 151/20 E cannons, synchronized in the wing roots
- 2 × 20 mm MG 151/20 E cannons in mid-wing mounts
- Bombs: 1 bomb under fuselage or four bombs under wings.

8. Karabiner 98k

The *Karabiner 98 kurz* (carbine 98 short), often abbreviated *Karabiner 98k*, *Kar98k* or *K98k* and also sometimes incorrectly referred to as a *K98* (a *K98* is a Polish carbine and copy of the *Kar98a*), is a bolt-action rifle chambered for the 7.92×57mm Mauser cartridge.

It was adopted on 21 June 1935 as the standard service rifle by the German *Wehrmacht*. It was one of the final developments in the long line of Mauser military rifles.

Although supplemented by semi-automatic and fully automatic rifles during World War II, the *Karabiner 98k* remained the primary German service rifle until the end of the war in 1945.



Millions were captured by the Soviets at the conclusion of World War II and were widely distributed as military aid. The *Karabiner 98k* therefore continues to appear in conflicts across the world as they are taken out of storage during times of strife.

Karabiner 98k specs

- Weight: 3.7 - 4.1 kg
- Length: 1,110 mm
- Barrel length: 600 mm
- Cartridge: 7.92 × 57 mm Mauser

- Action: Bolt-action
- Muzzle velocity: 760 m/s
- Effective firing range: 500 metres with iron sights; 1,000 metres with telescopic sight
- Maximum firing range: 4,700 metres with *s.S. Patrone*
- Feed system: 5-round stripper clip, internal magazine
- Sights: Iron sights or telescopic sight.

7. Messerschmitt Bf 109

The Messerschmitt Bf 109 is a German World War II fighter aircraft that was, along with the Focke-Wulf Fw 190, the backbone of the Luftwaffe's fighter force.

The Bf 109 first saw operational service in 1937 during the Spanish Civil War and was still in service at the end of World War II in 1945.



General specs

- Crew: 1
- Length: 8.95 metres
- Wingspan: 9.925 metres
- Height: 2.6 metres
- Empty weight: 2,247 kg
- Powerplant: 1 × Daimler-Benz DB 605A-1 V-12 inverted liquid-cooled piston engine

Performance

- Maximum speed: 520 km/h
- Combat range: 440–572 km
- Service ceiling: 12,000 metres
- Rate of climb: 20.1 m/s

Armament

- 2 × 13 mm synchronized MG 131 machine guns
- 1 × 20 mm MG 151/20 cannon or 1 x 30 mm MK 108 cannon
- 2 × 20 mm MG 151/20 under-wing cannon pods

6. MP 40

The MP 40 (*Maschinenpistole 40*) is a submachine gun chambered for the 9×19mm Parabellum cartridge. It was developed in Nazi Germany and used extensively by the Axis powers during World War II.

It was heavily used by infantrymen (particularly platoon and squad leaders), and by paratroopers, on the Eastern and Western Fronts as well as armoured fighting vehicle crews.

Its advanced and modern features made it a favourite among soldiers and popular in countries from various parts of the world after the war. It was often called “Schmeisser” by the Allies.

During World War II, the resistance and the Allies some-



times captured MP 40s to replace or supplement their own weapons.

Starting in 1943, the German military moved to replace both the Karabiner 98k rifle and MP 40 with the new, revolutionary StG 44.

MP 40 specs

- Weight: 3.97 kg
- Length: 833 mm, stock extended
- Barrel length: 251 mm

- Cartridge: 9 × 19mm Parabellum
- Action: Straight blowback, open bolt
- Muzzle velocity: 400 m/s
- Rate of fire: 500 rounds/min
- Effective firing range: 100 - 200 metres
- Maximum firing range: 250 metres
- Feed system: 32-round detachable box magazine
- Sights: Hooded front blade

5. MG 42

The MG 42 (shortened from German: *Maschinengewehr 42*, or “machine gun 42”) is a German recoil-operated air-cooled general-purpose machine gun used extensively by the Wehrmacht and the Waffen-SS during the second half of World War II.

Entering production in 1942, it was intended to supplement and replace the earlier MG 34, which was more expensive and took much longer to produce, but both weapons were produced until the end of World War II.

The MG 42 proved to be highly reliable and easy to operate. It is most notable for its very high cyclic rate for a gun using full-power service car-



tridges, averaging about 1,200 rounds per minute.

MG 42 specs

- Weight: 11.6 kg
- Length: 1,220 mm
- Barrel length: 530 mm
- Cartridge: 7.92 × 57mm Mauser
- Action: Recoil operated, roller-locked
- Muzzle velocity: 400 m/s
- Rate of fire: 1,200 rounds/

- Effective firing range: 200 - 2,000 metres
- Maximum firing range: 4,700 metres
- Feed system: 50 or 250-round *Patronengurt* 33, 34, or 34/41 model belt; 50-round belt drum
- Sights: Iron sights, anti-aircraft sight or telescopic sights

4. Panzer IV

The German *Panzerkampfwagen IV* (Pz.Kpfw. IV), commonly known as the Panzer IV, was a medium tank that was used throughout World War II.

It was the brainchild of the German general and innovative armoured warfare theorist Heinz Guderian.

Panzer IV specs

- Crew: 5 (commander, gunner, loader, driver, radio operator/bow machine-gunner)
- Weight: 25.0 tonnes
- Length: 5.92 metres
- Width: 2.88 metres
- Height: 2.68 metres
- Armour: 80 mm (front), 30 mm (side), 20 mm (rear)



Performance

- Engine: Maybach HL120 TRM 12-cylinder petrol engine
- Operational range: 235–320 km
- Maximum speed: 38 to 42 km/h

Armament

- 75 mm KwK 40 L/48 main gun
- 2 × 7.92 mm MG 34 machine guns

3. StG 44

The StG 44 (abbreviation of *Sturmgewehr 44*) is a German assault rifle developed during World War II by Hugo Schmeisser.

The StG 44 was the first successful assault rifle, with features including an intermediate cartridge, controllable automatic fire, a more compact design than a battle rifle with a higher rate of fire, and being designed primarily for hitting targets within a few hundred metres.

The StG 44 fulfilled its role effectively, particularly on the Eastern Front, offering a greatly increased volume of fire compared to standard infantry rifles.

The StG largely influenced the Soviet AK-47, introduced two years after the war con-



cluded. The StG's influence can still be seen in modern assault rifles, which, after World War II, became the global standard for infantry rifles.

StG 44 specs

- Weight: 5.13 kg
- Length: 940 mm, stock extended
- Barrel length: 420 mm
- Cartridge: 7.92 × 33mm Kurz
- Action: Gas-operated long-

stroke piston, closed tilting bolt, selective fire

- Muzzle velocity: 685 m/s
- Rate of fire: 500-600 rounds/minute
- Effective firing range: 300 (automatic); 600 metres (semi-automatic)
- Feed system: 30-round detachable box magazine
- Sights: Adjustable sights, rear: V-notch; front: hooded post

2. Tiger I

The Tiger I was a German heavy tank of World War II that operated beginning in 1942 in Africa and in the Soviet Union, usually in independent heavy tank battalions. It gave the German Army its first armoured fighting vehicle that mounted the 88 mm KwK 36 gun.

While the Tiger I has been called an outstanding design for its time, in the early period the Tiger was prone to certain types of track failures and breakdowns.

On the Eastern Front it battled with the muddy *rasputitsa* season and with the extreme cold.



- erator)
- Weight: 54 tonnes
- Length: 6.316 metres
- Width: 3.56 metres
- Hight: 3.0 metres
- Armour: 25–120 mm

- Operational range: 195 km
- Maximum speed: 45.4 km/h

Armament

- 88 mm KwK 36 L/56
- 2 × 7.92 mm MG 34 machine guns

Performance

- Engine: Maybach HL230 P45 V-12 petrol engine

Tiger I specs

- Crew: 5 (commander, gunner, loader, driver, radio op-

1. Type VIIB & VIIC U-boats

Type VII U-boats were the most common type of German World War II U-boat. 703 boats were built by the end of the war.

The Type VIIB boats were the most successful of all World War II German submarines.

Type VIIBs included many of the most famous U-boats of World War II, including U-48 (the most successful), Günther Prien's U-47, Otto Kretschmer's U-99, and Joachim Schepke's U-100.

The Type VIIC was the workhorse of the German U-boat force, with 568 commissioned from 1940 to 1945.

Type VIIC differed from the VIIB only in the addition of an active sonar and a few minor mechanical improvements



Type VIIC specs

- Displacement: 769 tonnes surfaced
- Length: 67.10 metres
- Beam: 6.20 metres
- Height: 9.60 metres
- Draft: 4.74 metres
- Propulsion: 2 × supercharged 6-cylinder 4-stroke diesel engines totalling 2,800–3,200 PS
- Speed: 32.8 km/h (surfaced); 14.1 km/h (submerged)
- Range : 15,700 km at 10 knots
- Test depth: 230 metres

- Complement: 44–52 officers & ratings

Armament

- 5 × 53.3 cm torpedo tubes (4 bow, 1 stern)
- 14 × torpedoes or 26 TMA or 39 TMB mines
- 1 × 88 mm SK C/35 naval gun
- Various anti-aircraft weaponry



PANZER VORWÄRTS: A German Tiger 1 tank advances during an attack on Russian positions during World War II. Although it was prone to certain types of failures, the Tiger was both respected and feared by the Allies.

They said it

Throughout history there have been many quotes by and about the military. In this article we briefly look at some of the quotes made by two well known protagonists of World War II.

Some famous and infamous quotes have been made by and about the military. And this is especially true during times of war.

Military leaders and tacticians have been making quotes since the times of Aristotle, Confucius, Heraclitus, Julius Caesar, Sun Tzu, and Napoleon Bonaparte to name just a few.

In this article we are going to take a look at some of the quotes made by two well known protagonists of World War II - American General George S. Patton and the man known as 'The Desert Fox', German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel.

George S. Patton

"Superior firepower is an invaluable tool when entering negotiations."

"...an imperfect plan implemented immediately and violently will always succeed bet-

ter than a perfect plan."

"A pint of sweat will save a gallon of blood."

"Do everything you ask of those you command."

"Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do, and they will surprise you with their ingenuity."

"Moral courage is the most valuable and usually the most absent characteristic in men."

"I would rather have a German division in front of me than a French one behind me."

"May God have mercy on my enemies, because I won't."

"Lead me, follow me, or get the hell out of my way."

"I hear a lot of crap about what a glorious thing it is to die for your country. It isn't glorious - it's stupid! You don't go into battle to die for your country. You go into battle to make the other bastard die for his country."

Erwin Rommel

"Sweat saves blood, blood saves lives, but brains saves both."

"Don't fight a battle if you don't gain anything by winning."

"In a man-to-man fight, the winner is he who has one more round in his magazine."

"No plan survives contact with the enemy"

"I would rather be the hammer than the anvil"

"Mortal danger is an effective antidote for fixed ideas."

"When there's no clear option, it's better to do nothing."

"But courage which goes against military expediency is stupidity, or, if it is insisted upon by a commander, irresponsibility."

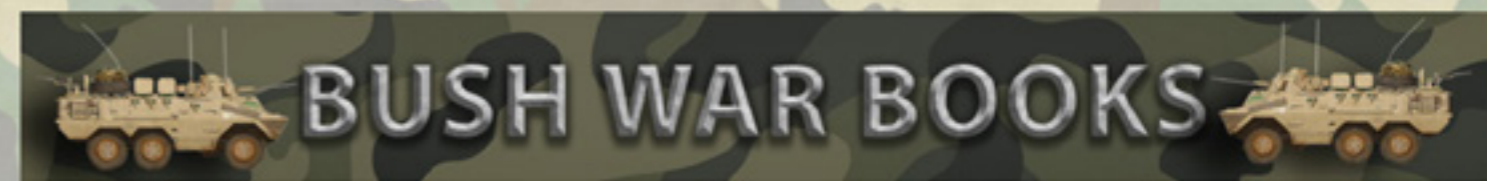
"Winning the men's confidence requires much of a commander. He must exercise care and caution, look after his men, live under the same hardships, and - above all - apply self discipline. But once he has their confidence, his men will follow him through hell and high water."



George S. Patton



Erwin Rommel



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"

Operation Neptune Spear

al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was the most wanted man in America. Now, after searching for him for ten years, the Americans had finally tracked his location. Operation Neptune Spear had one objective - kill or capture bin Laden.

- **Date:** 2 May 2011
- **Location:** Abbottabad, Pakistan
- **Units involved:** Seal Team Six & others



On 11 September 2001 four coordinated suicide terrorist attacks were carried out against targets in the United States of America. That morning, nineteen terrorists hijacked four commercial airliners scheduled to travel from the East Coast to California.

The hijackers crashed the first two planes into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York City, which were two of the top five tallest buildings in the world at the time.

Following the first two impacts, the third and fourth flights were similarly coordinated to attack targets in the Washington metropolitan area.

The third plane succeeded in crashing into the Pentagon - the headquarters of the U.S. Department of Defence - in Arlington County, Virginia, near the national capital of Washington, D.C.

The fourth was intended to strike a federal government building in D.C. itself, but crashed in a Stonycreek, Pennsylvania field following a passenger revolt. The attacks killed nearly 3,000 people.

The militant Islamist extremist network al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the attacks. At first al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden denied any involvement, but in 2004 he formally claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Al-Qaeda's cited motivations included U.S. support of Israel, the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, and sanctions against Iraq.

The American public was both shocked and enraged. They demanded retribution against both Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda.

Global War on Terrorism

Within hours of the attacks, the Central Intelligence Agency determined that al-Qaeda was responsible.

The United States formally responded by launching Operation Enduring Freedom, the war on terror, and invading Afghanistan to depose the Taliban, which had not complied with U.S. demands to expel al-Qaeda from Afghanistan and extradite its leader, Osama bin Laden.

The U.S.'s invocation of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty - its only usage to date - called upon allies to fight al-Qaeda.

As U.S. and NATO ground forces swept through Afghanistan, bin Laden fled to the White Mountains, where he narrow-

ly avoided capture by U.S.-led forces.

Search for bin Laden

Following the start of the War in Afghanistan, bin Laden went into hiding in order to avoid capture by the United States and/or its allies.

After evading capture at the Battle of Tora Bora in December 2001, his whereabouts became unclear, and various rumours about his health, continued role in al-Qaeda, and location were circulated. Bin Laden also released several video and audio recordings during this time.

A huge manhunt was launched in an attempt to establish the location of bin Laden. Yet for almost the next ten years the attempts bore no fruit.

Accounts of how bin Laden was located by U.S. intelligence differ. The White House and CIA director John Brennan stated that the process began with a fragment of information unearthed in 2002, resulting in years of investigation.

This account states that by September 2010, these leads followed a courier to the Abbottabad compound, where the U.S. began intensive multi-platform surveillance.

Yet according to journalist Seymour Hersh and NBC News, the U.S. was tipped off about bin Laden's location by a Pakistani intelligence officer in exchange for a large bounty.

Bin Laden's compound

It is difficult to comprehend that it took the Americans more than eight years to finally establish the location of Osama bin Laden.

The focus of attention centred on a three story compound at the end of a narrow dirt road. Google Earth maps made from satellite photographs show that the compound was not present in 2001 but had been built by the time that new images were taken in 2005.

It was located 4.0 kilometres northeast of the city centre of Abbottabad, about 160 km from the Afghanistan border on the far eastern side of Pakistan (about 30 km from India). The compound was 1.3 km southwest of the Pakistan Military Academy.

Located on a plot of land eight times larger than those of nearby houses, the compound was surrounded by a 3.7-to-5.5-metre concrete wall topped with barbed wire. It had two security gates, and the third-floor balcony had a 2.1-metre-high privacy wall, tall enough to hide the 1.93 metre bin Laden.

The CIA used surveillance photos and intelligence reports to determine the identities of the inhabitants of the Abbottabad compound to which the courier was traveling.

In September 2010, the CIA concluded that the compound was custom-built to hide someone of significance, very likely bin Laden. Officials surmised that he was living there with his youngest wife and family.

Operation Neptune Spear

By the end of 2010 US intelligence agencies were convinced that bin Laden was holed up at the compound in Abbottabad.

Yet despite what officials described as an extraordinarily concentrated collection effort



leading up to the operation, no U.S. spy agency was ever able to capture a photograph of bin Laden at the compound before the raid or a recording of the voice of the mysterious male figure whose family occupied the structure's top two floors.

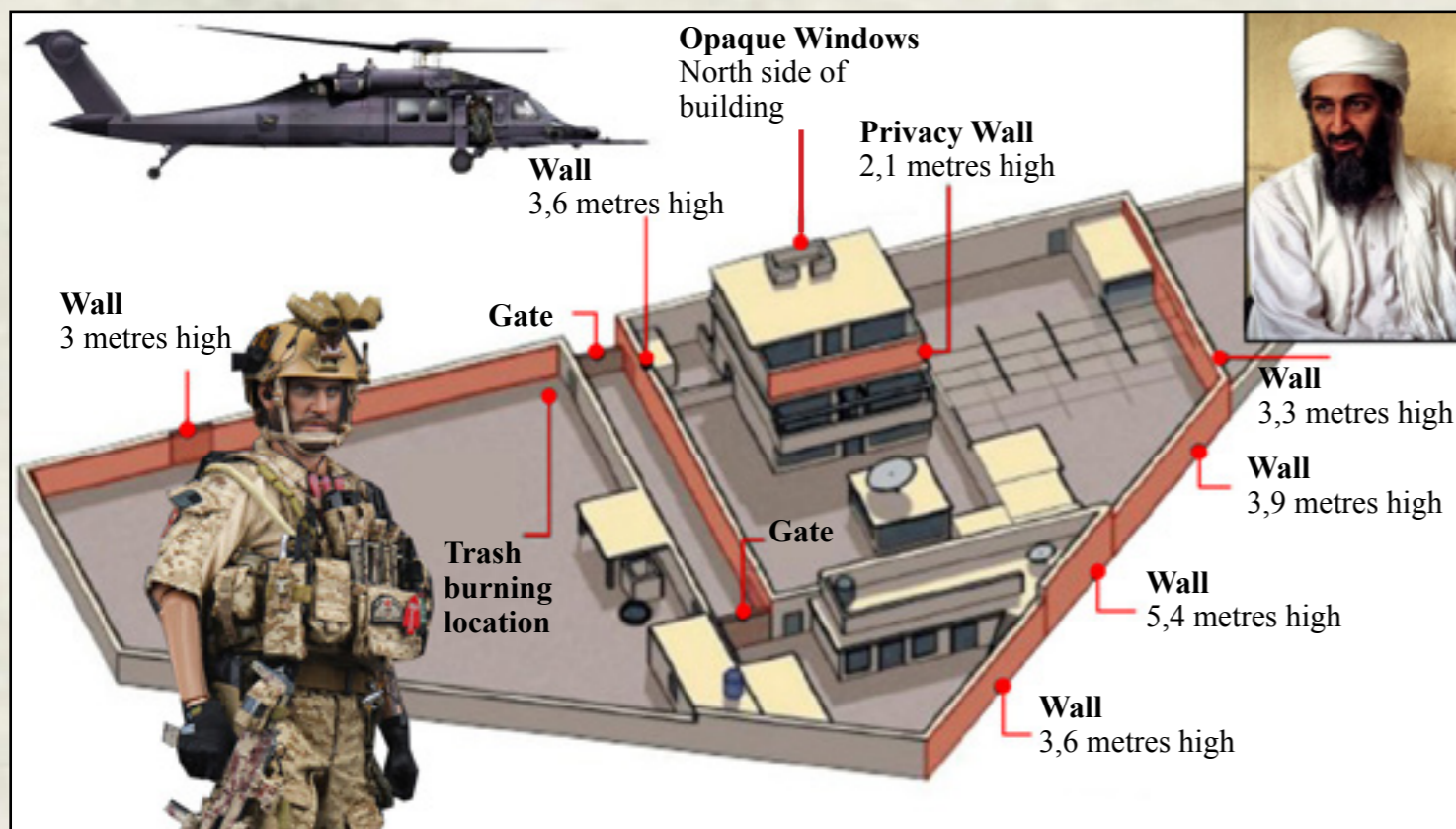
It was decided that an operation would be launched to kill or capture bin Laden if he was indeed in the compound.

The official mission code name was Operation Neptune Spear. Neptune's spear is the trident, which appears on the U.S. Navy's Special Warfare insignia, with the three prongs of the trident representing the operational capacity of SEALs on sea, air and land.

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

McRaven said a commando raid would be fairly straightforward but he was concerned about the Pakistani response. Administration attorneys considered legal implications and options before the raid.

In addition to a helicopter raid, planners considered attacking the compound with B-2 Spirit stealth bombers. They also considered a joint operation with Pakistani forces. Both were ruled out. There was a high chance of collateral damage in the case of a bombing raid.



Bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad

US President Barack Obama decided that the Pakistani government and military could not be trusted to maintain operational security for the operation against bin Laden.

McRaven hand-picked a team drawing from the most experienced and senior operators from Red Squadron (commonly known as Seal Team Six), one of four that make up DEVGRU.

Red Squadron was coming home from Afghanistan and could be redirected without attracting attention. The team had language skills and experience with cross-border operations into Pakistan. Almost all the Red Squadron operators had ten or more deployments to Afghanistan.

Without being told the exact nature of their mission, the team performed rehearsals of the raid in two locations in the United States.

Planners believed the SEALs

could get to Abbottabad and back without being challenged by the Pakistani military. The helicopters (modified Black Hawk helicopters) to be used in the raid had been designed to be quiet and to have low radar visibility. Since the U.S. had helped equip and train the Pakistanis, their defensive capabilities were known.

The U.S. had supplied F-16 Fighting Falcons to Pakistan on the condition they were kept at a Pakistani military base under 24-hour U.S. surveillance.

If bin Laden surrendered, he would be held near Bagram Air Base. If the SEALs were discovered by the Pakistanis in the middle of the raid, Joint Chiefs Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen would call Pakistan's army chief General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani and try to negotiate their release.

When the National Security Council (NSC) met again on 19

April, Obama gave provisional approval for the helicopter raid. Worried that the plan for dealing with the Pakistanis was too uncertain, Obama asked Admiral McRaven to equip the team to fight its way out if necessary.

McRaven and the SEALs left for Afghanistan to practice at a one-acre (4,000 m²), full-scale replica of the compound built on a restricted area of Bagram known as Camp Alpha.

The team departed the U.S. from Naval Air Station Oceana on 26 April in a C-17 aircraft, refuelled on the ground at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, landed at Bagram Air Base, then moved to Jalalabad on 27 April.

Approach and entry

The raid was carried out by approximately two dozen heli-borne U.S. Navy SEALs from DEVGRU's Red Squadron. 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 teams and used weapons including the HK416 assault rifle (their primary weapon), the Mark 48 machine gun for fire support, and the MP7 personal defence weapon used by some SEALs for close quarters and greater silence.

According to The New York Times, a total of "79 commandos and a dog" were involved in the raid. The military working dog was a Belgian Malinois named Cairo.

According to one report, the dog was tasked with tracking "anyone who tried to escape and to alert SEALs to any approaching Pakistani security forces".

The SEALs flew into Pakistan from a staging base in the city of Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan after originating at Bagram Air Base in northeastern Afghanistan.

The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR), a U.S. Army Special Operations Command unit known as the "Night Stalkers", provided the two modified Black Hawk helicopters that were used for the raid itself, as well as the much larger Chinook heavy-lift helicopters that were employed as backups.

The Black Hawks were previously unseen "stealth" versions that flew more quietly and were harder to detect on radar than conventional models; due to the extra weight of the stealth

equipment, their cargo was "calculated to the ounce, with the weather factored in.

The raid was scheduled for a time with little moonlight so the helicopters could enter Pakistan "low to the ground and undetected".

The helicopters used hilly terrain and nap-of-the-earth techniques to reach the compound without appearing on radar and alerting the Pakistani military. The flight from Jalalabad to Abbottabad took about 90 minutes.

According to the mission plan, the first helicopter would hover over the compound's yard while its full team of SEALs fast-roped to the ground. At the same time, the second helicopter would fly to the northeast corner of the compound and deploy the interpreter, the dog and handler, and four SEALs to secure the perimeter. The team in the courtyard was to enter the house from the ground floor.

As they hovered above the target the first helicopter experienced a hazardous airflow condition known as a vortex ring state. This was aggravated by higher than expected air temperature and the high compound walls, which stopped the rotor downwash from diffusing.

The helicopter's tail grazed one of the compound's walls, damaging its tail rotor, and the helicopter rolled onto its side. The pilot quickly buried the helicopter's nose to keep it from tipping over.

None of the SEALs, crew, or pilots on the helicopter were seriously injured in the soft crash landing, which ended with it pitched at a 45-degree angle resting against the wall.

The other helicopter landed outside the compound and the SEALs scaled the walls to get inside. The SEALs advanced into the house, breaching walls and doors with explosives.

House entry

The SEALs encountered the residents in the compound's guest house, in its main building on the first floor where two adult males lived, and on the second and third floors where bin Laden lived with his family.

The second and third floors were the last section of the compound to be cleared. There were reportedly "small knots of children ... on every level, including the balcony of bin Laden's room".

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.

An unnamed U.S. senior defence official said only one of the five people killed, Abu Ahmed al-Kuwaiti, was armed. The interior of the house was pitch dark, because CIA operatives had cut the power to the neighbourhood. The SEALs wore night vision goggles.

Killing bin Laden

The SEALs encountered bin Laden on the third floor of the main building. Bin Laden was unarmed, "wearing the local loose-fitting tunic and pants known as a *kurta pajama*", which were later found to have € 500 and two phone numbers sewn into the fabric.

Bin Laden peered through his bedroom door at the Americans advancing up the stairs, and the lead SEAL fired at him. Reports differ, though agree eventually he was hit by shots to the body and head.

The initial shots either missed, hit him in the chest, the side, or in the head. A number of bin Laden's female relatives were near him. According to journalist Nicholas Schmidle, one of bin Laden's wives, Amal Ahmed Abdul Fatah, motioned as if she were about to charge; the lead SEAL shot her in the leg, then grabbed both women and shoved them aside.

The weapon used to kill bin Laden was an HK416 using 5.56mm NATO 77-grain OTM

(open-tip match) rounds. The SEAL team leader radioed, "For God and country - Geronimo, Geronimo, Geronimo" and then, after being prompted by McRaven for confirmation, "Geronimo EKIA" (enemy killed in action). Watching the operation in the White House Situation Room, Obama simply said, "We got him."

As the SEALs encountered women and children during the raid, they restrained them with plastic handcuffs or zip ties. After the raid was over, U.S. forces moved the surviving residents outside "for Pakistani forces to discover".

The injured Amal Ahmed Abdul Fatah continued to harangue the raiders in Arabic. Bin Lad-

en's 12-year-old daughter Safia was allegedly struck in her foot or ankle by a piece of flying debris.

While bin Laden's body was taken by U.S. forces, the bodies of the four others killed in the raid were left behind at the compound and later taken into Pakistani custody.

Conclusion

The raid was intended to take 40 minutes. The time between the team's entry in and exit from the compound was 38 minutes. According to the Associated Press, the assault was completed in the first 15 minutes.

Time in the compound was spent killing defenders, "moving carefully through the compound, room to room, floor to floor" securing the women and children, clearing "weapons stashes and barricades" including a false door, and searching the compound for information.

U.S. personnel recovered three Kalashnikov rifles and two pistols, ten computer hard drives, documents, DVDs, almost a hundred thumb drives, a dozen cell phones, and "electronic equipment" for later analysis. The SEALs also discovered a large amount of opium stored in the house.

Since the helicopter that had made the emergency landing was damaged and unable to fly the team out, it was destroyed to safeguard its classified equipment, including an apparent stealth capability.

The pilot smashed the instrument panel, radio, and the other classified fixtures and the SEALs demolished the helicopter with explosives. Since



KEEPING A WATCHFUL EYE: The U.S. national security team with President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden (left) and Hillary Clinton gathered in the White House Situation Room to monitor the progress of Operation Neptune Spear.

the SEAL team was reduced to one operational helicopter, one of the two Chinooks held in reserve was dispatched to carry part of the team and bin Laden's body out of Pakistan.

While the American force gathered intelligence and destroyed the helicopter, a crowd of locals gathered outside the compound, curious about the noise and activity. An Urdu-speaking American officer, through a megaphone, told those gathered that it was a Pakistani military operation, and to remain at a distance.

While the official Department of Defence narrative did not mention the airbases used in the operation, later accounts indicated that the helicopters returned to Bagram Airfield.

The body of Osama bin Laden was flown from Bagram to the aircraft carrier Carl Vinson in a V-22 Osprey tiltrotor aircraft escorted by two U.S. Navy F/A-18 fighter jets.

Burial of bin Laden

According to U.S. officials, bin Laden was buried at sea because no country would accept his remains.

Before disposing of the body, the U.S. called the Saudi Arabian government, who approved of burying the body in the ocean. Muslim religious rites were performed aboard Carl Vinson in the North Arabian Sea within 24 hours of bin Laden's death. Preparations began at 10:10 local time and at-sea burial was completed at 11:00.

The body was washed, wrapped in a white sheet and placed in a weighted plastic bag. An officer read prepared religious remarks which were translated into Arabic by a native speaker. Afterward, bin Laden's body was placed onto a flat board. The board was tilted upward on one side and the body slid off into the sea.

In *Worthy Fights: A Memoir of Leadership in War and Peace*, Leon Panetta wrote that

bin Laden's body was draped in a white shroud, given final prayers in Arabic and placed inside a black bag loaded with 140 kg of iron chains, apparently to ensure that it would sink and never float.

The body bag was placed on a white table at the rail of the ship, and the table was tipped to let the body bag slide into the sea, but the body bag did not slide and took the table with it. The table bobbed on the surface while the weighted body sank.

Reactions

Before the official announcement, large crowds spontaneously gathered outside the White House, Ground Zero, The Pentagon, and in New York's Times Square to celebrate. In Dearborn, Michigan, where there is a large Muslim and Arab population, a small crowd gathered outside the City Hall in celebration, many of them of Middle Eastern descent.

Palestinian Authority leaders had contrasting reactions. Mahmoud Abbas welcomed bin Laden's death, while Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip, condemned what he saw as the assassination of an "Arab holy warrior".

A CBS/The New York Times poll taken after bin Laden's death showed that 16% of Americans feel safer as the result of his death while 60% of Americans of those polled believe killing bin Laden would likely increase the threat of terrorism against the U.S. in the short term.

Primary SEAL weapons used in Operation Neptune Spear



The war is history, get over it!

The vast majority of our readers were involved in the military at some stage of their lives. Many fought in a war. In our modern-day politically correct woke society some believe that it is time to stop 'wasting time' on remembering wars and events from history and move on with more important matters.

From time to time it is suggested to me that constant remembrances of past horrors is tantamount to "living in the past" and that we should all forget the less savoury things of the past so as to "move on" and not "waste time" by being "weighed down" by the things of the past.

This argument would seem to have merit. Particularly those that have no idea of what it is all about.

In 1969 someone pinned a note onto a notice board at

MACV (Military Assistance Command Vietnam).

The note read: "For those who fight for it, life has a flavour the sheltered will never know". It refers to a quote made by Theodore Roosevelt.

Those that claim that we need to "stop living in the past" and that we need to "move on" and "stop wasting time on the past" do have a point.

The world is beset by problems (as it has been throughout recorded history) and this includes poverty, racial and religious tension and injustice, unemployment, disease, political differences, and even things such as global warming.

Yet while we need to focus on the present and plan for the future, we cannot be allowed to forget the past.

It was writer and philosopher George Santayana that is credited with the quote, "Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it." What he actually said was, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

What Santayana is basically saying is that history tends

to repeat itself - time and time again. It's certainly a catchy phrase and it's a big one, because if it is true and if history is driven by human nature, is ugly (actually, it is), then this saying ought to guide our public and private policy.

War has been a part of history ever since Cain picked up a rock and hit his brother Able over the head with it.

July 1914 saw the start of the first war on a truly global scale. More than 30 nations around the world took part in it.

It was originally known as "The Great War" and "The war to end all wars". Incidentally, it was English writer H.G. Wells that coined the term "The war to end all wars".

It was a war that would last four years, three months and two weeks. It was also a war in which 20 million people would die and 21 million would be wounded. It was a war where more civilians would die than military personnel.

When Santayana said that if we do not learn from history we are doomed to repeat it, he could just as well have said

"Those that do learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

You would think that after a war that saw more than 40 million people die, the world would come to its senses and say "Never again!"

Yet it turns out that the "War to end all wars" actually wasn't the war to end all wars. Just over twenty years later that world was at it again. This time on an even grander scale. The "Great War" was renamed World War I.

World War II began on 1 September 1939. Strangely enough, H.G. Wells predicted World War II and wrote that it would begin in January 1940. He was only four months out.

World War II would last six years and one day and involve more than 50 nations.

In a total war directly involving more than 100 million personnel from more than 30 countries, the major participants threw their entire economic, industrial, and scientific capabilities behind the war effort, blurring the distinction between civilian and military resources.

Aircraft played a major role in the conflict, enabling the strategic bombing of population centres and the only two uses of nuclear weapons in war

to this day.

World War II was by far the deadliest conflict in human history; it resulted in 70 to 85 million fatalities, a majority being civilians. Tens of millions of people died due to genocides (including the Holocaust), starvation, massacres, and disease.

Yet did we learn anything from World War I and World War II? Of course not.

Since Japan surrendered on 2 September 1945, bringing World War II to an end, there has never been a 24-hour period where a war wasn't taking place somewhere in the world.

Many of these conflicts were never officially recognised as wars. The Korean War (25 June 1950 to 27 July 1953) was a "police action" and the Vietnam War (1 November 1955 to 30 April 1975) was merely America and a few NATO countries offered military assistance to South Vietnam.

Try telling the nearly five million people that died in the Korean War and the more than 1,3 million that died in Vietnam that it wasn't a war.

Even our own Border War, in which many of our readers fought, was not an official war.

South Africa never declared war on anyone, nor did anyone declare war on us. Yet it lasted for 23 years, four months, two weeks and six days.

A total of 791 members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) were killed in action or died as a direct result of combat. More would die as a result of non-combat related events. In fact during the entire 37 year history of the SADF, 2,573 members died while on active service.

You also need to take into account that more than 16,000 soldiers fighting on the Angolan side, including nearly 5,000 Cubans, were killed. And all in a war that wasn't actually a war.

These statistics do not take into account the thousands that were wounded, maimed or still suffer from the psychological effects of the war.

And now there are people telling us that we need to forget all about our war, and the countless wars that came before and after it.

We need to stop building monuments to these wars and stop holding parades such as the annual Remembrance Day

parade that honours those that paid the ultimate sacrifice during World War I, and those wars after it.

We need to “get over it” and stop “living in the past”. We need to “move on” and stop “wasting time” being “weighed down” by the things of the past.

I have one word to say to those that make these claims. And that word is “No!”

I was personally involved in a war and it was something that affects me to this day. Yes, I have moved on, but no, I cannot and will not forget the past. How can I.

I am also a member of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (also known as the Moths). This was an organisation formed after World War I to remember those that fell in the “Great War”. Membership was later extended to those that fought in World War II and our own Border War.

When I became a member I made an oath. It is an oath that we retake after every meeting. The oath says:

*They shall not grow old,
as we who are left grow old,
age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.*

*At the going down of the sun
and in the morning,*

We will remember them.

It is an oath that I take very seriously. And when I “remember them”, I remember all those that died. Not just those that fought on my side.

It is my sad duty to inform all of those that believe that we need to forget history is that this is impossible. It did happen, that’s why it’s called history.

It’s something that did hap-



BORDER BOYS: The late General Constand Viljoen, former Chief of the SADF, marches in the annual Border Boys Parade in Cape Town. The parade is held to remember those that died in the Border War. General Viljoen is on the far right of the first row.

pen. So get over it. You can try as hard as you like, but you can’t make it go away.

We live in a cancel culture where we just “cancel” anything that we don’t like or that doesn’t agree with our viewpoint. Sorry to let you know, you’re not going to be able to cancel history. Get over it.

I am also highly amused by those that say that if we didn’t have armies then we wouldn’t have any more wars. I sometimes wonder if their shoe size is not larger than their IQ.

Nearly every country in the world has a military force of some kind or another. Even the smallest country in the world, Vatican City, has an army - the Swiss Guard. Fair enough, it only has an army that is 120 men strong, but it’s still an army.

It is true that a huge amount of money and personnel is

spent each year on the military. The United States of America, regarded as the most powerful military in the world, has an armed force of 1,4 million personnel. They also spend a staggering \$740,5 trillion on defence every year.

The People’s Republic of China has an even larger armed forces with 2,185,000 active personnel.

Consider a country such as Bhutan. It currently has the weakest military force in the world with only 7,000 military personnel. Yet even Bhutan spends just over \$19 billion on its annual defence budget.

So why should nations spend so much money on defence? Surely that money could be put to better use. Think of how many jobs it could create, how it could alleviate poverty. How many hospitals, schools and houses could be built with that

kind of money. A good point. Unfortunately every nation needs to defend itself.

Let’s go back to that ideal scenario where no nation had armed forces. A place where all 195 countries that make up the world all live in peace and harmony and sit around the camp fire singing Khumbaya.

Now let’s say that one of those 195 countries is run by a person such as Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong (aka Mao Tse-Tung), Kim II Sung, Pol Pot, Bashar al-Assad or Idi Amin - some of the most brutal dictators in modern history.

They decide that this is just too good an opportunity to let slip and they start to build up a powerful armed force. They then start to invade other countries around them.

How are these unarmed coun-

tries supposed to defend themselves. What are you going to do - cancel them. Good luck with that.

That’s why even a peaceful country such as Switzerland, which remained neutral throughout two world wars, has an armed force of 21,00 active personnel and a reserve force of 280,000 personnel. It also has an annual defence budget of more than \$5 billion.

They will not attack any other nation, but they are both willing and able to defend themselves.

In conclusion we have to face facts that history is filled with wars that have taken place. Even as I write this article, there is a war going on somewhere in the world.

We cannot forget those wars throughout history, and we should never be allowed to for-

get them. Nor should we be allowed to forget the millions of people that died in these wars. To forget these people would be a crime against humanity.

We should have a duty to teach future generations about history because remembrance of such things is the most compelling deterrent to doing it all again. Perhaps certain things should be celebrated in remembrance - if only to maintain a semblance of sanity.

Santayana may have been right when he said that “Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.”

There is another quote from Santayana that may just put everything into context - “Only the dead have seen the end of war.”



Memorable Order of Tin Hats

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

Conscription

Yes, no or maybe?

It's one thing to volunteer as a soldier. But what about those that are conscripted and have no choice in the matter. We take a closer look at compulsory military service.



Just about every country in the world has an army of some sort. Even the Vatican (and yes, the Vatican is an actual country) has its own army. With just 110 men the Swiss Guard, the Vatican's army, is the smallest in the world.

Most countries around the world will have a permanent defence force that will normally have an army and often a navy and air force as well. The people who serve in these armed forces usually do so as a full-time career.

The vast majority of countries with a permanent armed force will also have a sizeable reserve force. The people that serve in the reserve force are volunteers and serve for a certain period of time each year.

Yet not everyone that serves in the military or fights in a war is there because they want to be. As far back as history can recall people have been forced to take up arms against their will. To this day rebel and guerilla armies will abduct people and force them to join their ranks. It's a case of "either you fight for us, or you are against us and we will kill you." Not much of a choice, is it.

Even the British Royal Navy came up with a unique method to recruit sailors. Working and living conditions for the average sailor in the Royal Navy in the 18th century were harsh by modern standards and generally much worse than conditions on British merchant ships; their pay was around half that paid by merchantmen and was lower than that paid to a farm labourer.

To recruit sailors to serve on Royal



YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW: A new intake of national servicemen report for their call up.

Navy warships, they came up with a system known as 'impressment'. Groups of Royal Navy recruiters, known as 'press gangs', would usually wait outside a pub at night. If some drunk walked out he would be hit over the head with a baton and knocked unconscious.

He would later wake up to find himself aboard a Royal Navy ship and be informed that he was now a serving member of the Royal Navy. And he had no choice in the matter. If he tried to leave or run away he would be tracked down, charged with desertion, and could be sentenced to death.

Many countries in the past used a system of conscription or compulsory military service. This in effect meant that the governments of those countries past legislation that made military service a law.

To this day there are numerous countries where conscription is still enforced. In Africa countries such as Angola, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Somalia and Sudan all have compulsory military service.

In Israel, for example, men and women over the age of 18 are liable for conscription. The men do three years and the women two.

South Africa is no stranger to conscription. From 1968 to 1993 South Africa had a system of compulsory military service that was known as 'national service'.

During this period the policy of apartheid was still the law of the country and the army, navy and air force fell under the command of the South African Defence Force (SADF).

National service began in 1968 when it was decided that

all white South African males would be required to do a period of compulsory military service. Note carefully the use of the word compulsory. It was not a request, it was an instruction and it was backed up by an act of parliament - Defence Act (this would later include the Defence Act Amendment, 1982).

Every white male who was a South Africa citizen or had permanent residence was required to register with the South African Defence Force in the year that he turned 16. Once you had completed your schooling or decided to leave school, the South African Defence Force required your services.

At first national service was for a period of nine months and then 12 months. Then, in 1978, it was increased to 24 months. Once this initial period of service was over they were then placed into the citizen force where they would have to serve between 30 and 90 days a year for the next 12 years.

You could, of course, refuse to do national service. It did mean that you would be arrested, charged, and sent to prison for three years. And you would not serve your time in a civilian prison. You would serve it in a military prison known as 'detention barracks'.

While there were indeed some who did opt to spend time in prison rather than serve in a military that they believed was fighting to maintain the policy of apartheid, the vast majority went ahead and reported for their national service.

There were two intakes or call ups per year. The larger

of the two was in January and another in July. You would receive a letter with your call up papers, or instructions to report for national service.

National servicemen could be called up to serve in either the army, navy or air force. Later on a fourth arm, the South African Medical Services (SAMS) was formed and they would also receive an allocation of the call up.

While national servicemen did get to serve in the navy, air force and medical services it was the army that claimed most of them. The Infantry Corps was by far the largest corps in the army. The majority of national servicemen were absorbed by the Infantry Corps where they received intensive training in the use of military weapons, field craft and counter-insurgency operations.

Eight infantry battalions were situated throughout South Africa at Bloemfontein, Walvis Bay, Potchefstroom, Middelburg, Ladysmith, Grahamstown, Upington and Phalaborwa. The infantry also had their own school at Oudtshoorn in the Western Cape.

You had absolutely no choice in where you were called up. You could be called up to do your training at a unit that was hundreds, sometimes thousands of kilometres from where you lived.

Once you arrived for your national service the first nine weeks were taken up by basic training. This began the process of taking what were essentially school boys and turning them into soldiers. For many of the youngsters it came as a harsh



A BURDEN TO BEAR: National servicemen on a route march during basic training.

realisation that their lives were about to be changed.

“The army didn’t care who you were or where you came from,” says Kyle who was 18 when he did his basic training with the infantry. “It didn’t make any difference if you had a university degree or a standard six education. They didn’t care if you came from a wealthy family or from the slums. As far as they were concerned you were the lowest form of life. It was their mission during basic to break everyone down to the same level and then build them up again.”

Many that did national service say that the military were very good at the breaking down part, but not always as good at building them up again.

There was a very strict rank structure in the military that was made up of officers, warrant officers (sergeant majors), non-commissioned officers (NCO) and other ranks.

National servicemen would begin with the lowest possible rank. If, for instance, they were in the infantry they would hold

the rank of ‘rifeman’.

A national serviceman could go on to become an NCO but could only go as high as the rank of corporal. If they successfully completed an officers course they could be promoted to the rank of 2nd lieutenant. If, however, they had a university degree they could become a full lieutenant.

An infantry battalion, for instance, was divided up into a number of companies. Each company would have a company commander (usually a captain) and a company sergeant major.

Companies were further divided into platoons which were in turn divided into squads. As a national serviceman you would find yourself in a squad with a corporal in charge of you.

During basic training it was the corporals (usually national servicemen themselves) that carried out the majority of the training. And it was frightening just how much power a corporal wielded.

It is an old adage that power corrupts and absolute power



DOUBLE TIME A large portion of basic training would be spent on the parade ground. Here the conscripts were taught how to drill and react to commands. Here a group is shown moving at double time.

corrupts absolutely. This was unfortunately the case with many of the corporals that were involved in training conscripts. Some of them were particularly brutal in their methods and it is a sad fact that more than one recruit died during basic training as a direct result of physical abuse from the instructors.

While the instructors were not officially permitted to physically or mentally abuse the troops, those in authority often looked the other way. This was particularly the case during the ‘70s and early ‘80s.

“Our corporal was a little weed of a guy,” says Craig who did national service in 1975. “I could have given him one slap and knocked his head off. But we were all terrified of him. If he said ‘jump’ you didn’t ask why, you didn’t argue, you just asked how high.”

And he does have a point. As a national serviceman you

were part of the huge military machine and if you didn’t go along with the flow the machine would eat you up and spit you out in pieces.

The military even had its own laws and regulations laid out in the Military Discipline Code (MDC). If you violated one of these regulations you could be formally charged and put on trial.

Minor offences would be handled with a process known as a ‘Summary Trial’. They could try you and, if found guilty, could sentence you up to 120 days in detention barracks. And something you have to realise is that time spent in detention did not count. If you spent 90 days in detention then you had to do an extra 90 days of your national service.

For serious offences you could receive a court martial. A court martial had the power to sentence you to death.

Taking the above into account, it’s little wonder that most national servicemen did what they were told and tried to avoid trouble as much as possible.

During basic training the day would normally begin at 06.00 with PT. Then, after breakfast, the rest of the morning would be spent on the parade ground learning to march. Afternoons would be spent doing field craft, first-aid training, map reading, and other military skills. Naturally the national servicemen would also spend time at the shooting range.

Most evenings were spent preparing for the next morning’s dreaded inspection. Your corporal would normally inspect your bungalow every morning from Monday to Thursday. Friday mornings, however, was the big inspection. This would be carried out by your company commander, company sergeant major, and your corporal.

After six weeks of basic training, national servicemen were supposed to be given leave from Friday evening to Sunday evening, known as a pass, every second weekend. This was not always the case and sometimes a national serviceman could go for months without every getting the opportunity to go home.

The Friday morning inspections were very strict and, if your squad was supposed to get a pass that afternoon, it could be cancelled if you failed to pass the inspection. If one person failed they could cancel the pass for everyone in the squad.

And an inspection involved more than just sweeping the floor and making your bed. The

floors had to be polished so that they shone. Beds had to be made up in a special way so that the edges had creases. All clothes had to be washed and perfectly ironed. Boots and shoes had to be polished. Every bit of equipment had to be cleaned. It was common for national servicemen to work right through the night to prepare for a Friday morning inspection.

“I remember one Friday morning inspection,” says Craig. “We were supposed to be on pass that weekend. Our company commander came around for inspection and he noticed a fly sitting on one of the window panes. He turned to our corporal and asked him why we were keeping pets in the bungalow. And so our pass was cancelled.”

After basic training national servicemen would go on to do individual and advanced training. After this they were posted out to various units where they carried out a multitude of functions.

Many, however, would be sent to the then South West Africa - to what become known as the ‘Border War’. Some of them would go on to see combat and, sadly, some of them would die.

Over 700 South African troops were killed in action during the Border War. And this does not take into account the many more that died in training accidents or road accidents during their national service.

National service was done away with in 1993, a year before South Africa’s first democratic elections. From 1968 to 1993 over 600,000 white South African males did national ser-



MORNING INSPECTION: Most national servicemen hated morning inspections with a passion.

vice.

There has been no conscription in South Africa for the past 30 years. The old SADF is a thing of the past and now the SANDF (South African National Defence Force) is responsible for the military security of the country. It is a military force that is made up of permanent staff and reserve force volunteers.

Yet some people would like to see conscription introduced once again. But this time it would not be only for whites, but for everyone that leaves school. They suggest that everyone who leaves school should spend at least six months in the military.

They say it would help with unemployment, give the youth discipline and that they could be well utilised during their period of conscription.

Engineers could build roads and provide water for rural areas, infantry could be used to patrol game reserves and stop rhino poaching. They could

also assist the police with crime prevention.

They also reason that by giving the youth training and skills during their conscription period, it would make them far more employable once they had completed their service. All of this sounds very positive. But you have to look at the negative aspects as well.

First of all, how keen would the youth be to do some form of national service. What would you do with those that refused? Throw them into prisons that are already overcrowded?

Then you have to consider the financial implications. It’s not cheap to run a defence force. All of the conscripts would have to be fed, housed, clothed and provided with medical treatment if necessary. Naturally you would also have to pay them something. Where would this money come from?

The current defence budget would have to be drastically increased. Money would have to be diverted from other depart-



ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER PATROL: South African troops, most of the conscripts, carry out a patrol in Owamboland in the then South West Africa. Patrols could last up to eight days.

ments to pay for it.

Something else that needs to be taken into consideration is where would you train them. Many of the old military bases and units were closed down. So

where exactly would the conscripts be housed and where would they be given training.

Personally I don’t believe we will ever see conscription in South Africa again. It would be

an interesting experiment to see how the youth of today would handle something like that.

Can you imagine them spending nine weeks of basic training with no cellphones, no Facebook, no Twitter, no WhatsApp, no e-mails, no text messages, and no Internet.

As a last thought I asked Craig, who I had interviewed for this article, if he would like to see his own son doing national service.

“I don’t really know,” Craig said. “Maybe if it was for six months. And as long as if he didn’t have to go and fight in a war. I think it would probably do him some good. It would at least teach him a bit of respect and discipline and maybe how to make his own damn bed.”



Service Rendered

The story of conscription in South Africa. Between 1968 and 1992 white South African males were conscripted into the South African Defence Force for compulsory national service.

After completing basic training they were then trained in specific fields before being posted out to serve in units around South Africa.

Many would be sent as support or combat troops to what was then known as South West Africa to fight in what has now become known as the ‘Border War’.

This e-book tells the story of what it was like to be a national serviceman. It takes readers through basic and individual training, postings to various units, and to the border war.

With 300 pages and more than 200 photographs, this e-book is a must for anyone that served.

If you would like a copy of *Service Rendered* send an e-mail to editor@hipe.co.za and use Service Rendered in the subject line and we will e-mail you a copy.

When age means little

In South Africa, 16 June is celebrated as Youth Day. In this article we look at four notable military accomplishments by youngsters.

They say we're young and we don't know, we won't find out until we grow, or so said Cher in the hit song *I've Got You Babe*, which she sang with her late husband Sony Bono.

Let's face it, age sometimes does count against a person. In South Africa, for example, you can't legally vote, drive a car, or have a drink until you're 18. In fact you're not considered an adult until you turn 21.

But just because someone is young doesn't mean that they are incapable of doing great things. Just take a look at the list on the opposite page to get some idea of what I'm talking about.

Both Michael Jackson and Stevie Wonder had number one hit records at the age of just 13. Our own Karen Muir broke a world record at the age of 12. And David was just 14 when he put Goliath down for the count.

Yet while these are great achievements and worthy of articles on their own, this magazine is more interested in military matters and, therefore, military achievements.

First of all, let's take a look at the United States' highest award for bravery, the Medal of Honor.

Medal of Honor (MOH)

Contrary to popular belief, the official title of the highest U.S. military distinction is simply the Medal of Honor, not the Congressional Medal of Honor.



Army Medal of Honor, Air Force of Honor, Navy Medal of Honor.

The confusion may have arisen because the president presents the award "in the name of Congress."

The origin of the Medal of Honor dates back to 1861 and the early days of the Civil War. At the time, the Army and Navy had no formal decorations for heroism. It was hoped that a medal would encourage and reward bravery among the Union soldiers and sailors fighting the Confederates.

There are three different versions of the Medal of Honor: one for the Army, one for the Navy, and one for the Air Force.

A separate Coast Guard version has also been authorized, but it has yet to actually be awarded to anyone. In the meantime, personnel from the Coast Guard and Marine Corps receive the Navy version of the prestigious decoration.

A total of 3,492 different people have been awarded the Medal of Honor. Only 19 men have been awarded the honour twice. More than half of all Medals of Honor have been awarded post-

humously.

On 11 November 1865, President Andrew Johnson presented Mary Edwards Walker, a medical doctor who served as a volunteer with the Union Army, the Medal of Honor. This made her the first and only woman ever to be awarded the medal.

Only one US president has ever been awarded the Medal of Honor, and that was Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt.

Willie Johnston

The youngest recipient of the Medal of Honor was William H. Johnston.

In July 1862, at the age of 11 years and 11 months, he was a drummer boy in Company D of the 3rd Vermont Infantry during the Seven Days Retreat in the Peninsula Campaign in the US Civil War.

He was the only drummer in his division to come away with his instrument during a general rout. His superiors considered this a meritorious feat, when fellow soldiers had thrown away their guns.

Never too young

- Age 5 - Michael Jackson joins the Jackson 5, has his first hit single at the age of 11, and his first solo hit at the age of 13.
- Age 5 - Tori Amos is admitted to the famous Peabody Institute at the John Hopkins University. She is expelled at the age of 11.
- Age 10 - Tatum O'Neal wins a Best Supporting Actress Oscar.
- Age 11 - Stevie Wonder is signed by Motown Records. He has his first hit single at the age of 13.
- Age 12 - South African swimmer Karen Muir breaks the world record for the 110 yard backstroke.
- Age 13 - John wrote the first draft of the Gospel of John, one of the greatest written works of all time.
- Age 14 - David slays Goliath.
- Age 14 - Bobby Fischer became a Chess Grandmaster.
- Age 14 - Gymnast Nadia Comaneci becomes the first person to score a perfect 10 at the 1976 Olympic Games. She does it seven times.
- Age 19 - The average age of a soldier during the Vietnam War.
- Age 19 - Steve Jobs begins work on the personal computer.
- Age 19 - Bill Gates co-founds Microsoft.

During the retreat many men threw away all their equipment so they would have less weight to carry. Johnston, however, retained his drum and brought it safely to Harrison's Landing.

There, he had the honour of drumming for the division parade on 4 July, he being the only drummer to bring his instrument off the battlefields.

Neither General Smith, the division commander, nor General Brooks, the brigade commander, made any note of Willie's feat in their after-action reports.

President Lincoln arrived by gunboat and was present for the parade of the entire Army of the Potomac conducted on 8 July. It is suggested that Lincoln heard the story and wrote to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, suggesting the youth be given a medal, but no evidence exists.

In any case Stanton approved the award and Willie Johnston was presented his Medal of Honor on 16 September 1863, at the age of 13, for a deed performed when he was but 11 years and 11 months of age. This was the second Medal of Honor ever awarded.

Victoria Cross (VC)

Awarded for gallantry "in the presence of the enemy" to members of the British Armed forces, the Victoria Cross is the United Kingdom's highest award for bravery.

The Victoria Cross was introduced on 29 January 1856 by Queen Victoria to honour acts of bravery during the Crimean War. Since then the medal has been awarded 1,358 times to 1,355 individual recipients. Only three people have won the



medal twice.

Only 15 medals, 11 to members of the British Army, and four to the Australian Army, have been awarded since the Second World War.

Since the first awards were presented by Queen Victoria in 1857, two thirds of all awards have been personally presented by the British monarch. These investitures are usually held at Buckingham Palace.

The traditional explanation of the source of the metal from which the medals are struck is that it derives from Russian cannon captured at the Siege of Sevastopol.

Research has established that the metal for most of the medals made since December 1914 came from two Chinese cannons that were captured from the Russians in 1855.

Royal Navy officer Charles Lucas was the first recipient of the Victoria Cross, in recognition of an extraordinary act of bravery that took place two years before the medal existed. On 21 June 1854, Lucas was serving on the Hecla in the Baltic when a live shell landed on the deck. While every other sailor threw themselves to the floor for cover, Lucas ran forward, picked up the shell and hurled it into the water before the fuse burnt out.

No one on the Hecla was killed due to his courageous deed.

The Victoria Cross is inscribed with the words, 'For Valour'. The medal was originally going to read 'For the Brave' until Queen Victoria suggested it be changed - as it implied that not every soldier was brave.

In the aftermath of the Battle of Rorke's Drift in 1879, during the Anglo-Zulu War, 11 soldiers were deemed worthy of the Victoria Cross. Seven of these recipients were men of the 2nd/24th Foot, which is the most VCs awarded to a single regiment for one action.

The most VCs awarded in a single day was 16, awarded at the Battle of Inkerman on 5 November 1854. The most for a single campaign was 28 during the Second Relief of Lucknow from 14 to 22 November 1857.

The youngest person to be awarded a Victoria Cross is shared by Andrew Fitzgibbon and Thomas Flinn. Both were aged 15 years and three months when they were awarded the medal.

Andrew Fitzgibbon VC

Andrew Fitzgibbon was an Irish soldier who served as a Hospital Apprentice in the Indian Medical Establishment, Indian Army, attached to the 67th Regiment (later The Royal Hampshire Regiment) during the Third China War.

His citation for the Victoria Cross reads as follows:

On 21 August 1860 at the capture of the Northern of the Taku Forts, China, Hospital Apprentice Fitzgibbon accompanied a wing of the 67th Regiment when it took up a position with-

in 500 yards of the fort. He then proceeded, under heavy fire, to attend a dhoolie-bearer, whose wound he had been directed to bind up, and while the regiment was advancing under the enemy's fire, he ran across the open ground to attend to another wounded man. In doing so he was himself severely wounded.

Thomas Flinn VC

Thomas Flinn was another Irish recipient of the Victoria Cross.

At the age of 15 he became a drummer in the 64th Regiment of Foot (later The North Staffordshire Regiment - The Prince of Wales's), British Army during the Indian Mutiny.

He was awarded the Victoria Cross for a deed that took place at Cawnpore in India. His citation reads:

For conspicuous gallantry, in the charge on the Enemy's guns on the 28th November, 1857, when, being himself wounded, he engaged in a hand to hand encounter two of the Rebel Artillerymen.

He was later discharged with a very bad character reference, having been entered in the defaulter-book 47 times, and tried by Court Martial 15 times.

Flinn was awarded a pension of £10 a year for his valorous conduct. Unfortunately he had a serious drinking problem and he would drink out his annuity as soon as he received it.

He fell on hard times and was sent to Athlone Workhouse.

Youngest US general

I'm not sure how many of you have heard of Galusha Pennypacker. He was a Union general

during the American Civil War.

What makes him unique is that he remains the only general too young to vote for the president who appointed him.

He was just 16 years old when he enlisted as a quartermaster sergeant in the 9th Pennsylvania Infantry from West Chester, Pennsylvania.

In August 1861, he helped recruit a company of men for the 97th Pennsylvania Infantry, and was appointed as their Captain, and was promoted to major the following October.

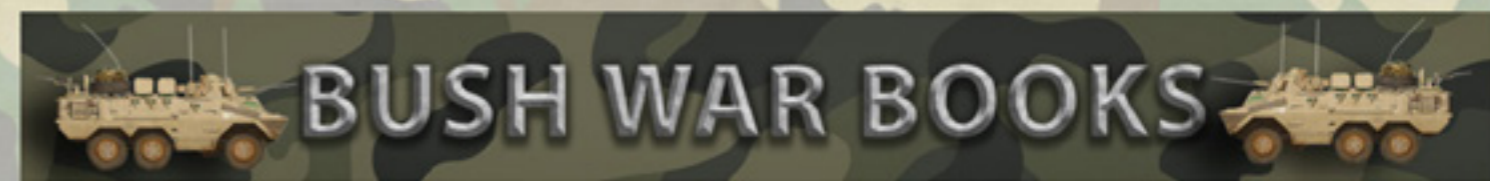
After the Battle of Cold Harbor and during the siege of Petersburg, he was appointed Colonel of his regiment, 15 August 1864. He assumed command of the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, X Corps of the Army of the James. He led his brigade into action at the Battle of New Market Heights and was wounded near Fort Gilmer.

At the Second Battle of Fort Fisher, 15 January 1865, he was severely wounded and the wound was considered fatal.

His commander, General Terry, promised the young officer that he would receive a brevet promotion for his conduct that day.

He received a brevet promotion to brigadier general dated 15 January 1865. He survived his wounds and on 28 April 1865, he received a full promotion to brigadier general of volunteers at age 20 (backdated to 18 February), making him the youngest officer to hold the rank of general to this day in the United States Army.

Pennypacker was much later awarded the Medal of Honor,



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”

The fine art of gypoing

The South African Defence Force had their own language - a mixture of English, Afrikaans, slang and techno-speak. One of the first worlds new conscripts learnt was "gypo" - the way to get out of work or make life easier.

National Servicemen in the South African Defence Force (SADF) used a strange mixture of Afrikaans, English, slang and techno-speak that few outside of the military could hope to understand. Some of the terms were humorous, some were clever, while others were downright crude.

One of the expressions that would often be heard was "gypo". Basically the word meant to avoid duties or work, or to find a way to make the work easier. A *gypo gat* (gypo arse) was someone that was lazy. You could even have gypo guts (diarrhoea).

For as long as there have been soldiers, there have been soldiers that are experts at finding an easier way to do things. More often than not these methods would be frowned upon by the military.

Here are a few examples of how troops would find a way to gypo.

Gary was 17 when he did his national service at 3 South African Infantry Battalion (3 SAI) in 1975. He tells the following story.

Besides weekend pass, one of the most important things for a troop was to receive mail from home. Whether it was a letter from your parents, one of your relatives, or even from a friend,

those letters let you know that people were thinking about you.

Of course the best was to receive a letter from you girlfriend.

During basic training the arrival of post for a national servicemen was too good an opportunity to let slip by.

After supper our corporal used to come to our bungalow with the post.

He would put the letters on a table and then pick up an envelope and read out the name. If your name was called you had to go forward and stand at attention in front of the corporal.

Before we were given our letters we had to go through the same process.

"Drop and give me twenty," the corporal would tell us.

We were expected to do twenty push-ups for each letter we received. Imagine if your girlfriend, mother and grandmother had all written you a letter. It would cost you 60 push-ups before you received them.

I came up with the perfect gypo. I contacted my girlfriend and all of the friends and relatives that used to write to me. I told them to seal their letter in an envelope but not to include a stamp.

Then they used to deliver the letters to my parents. My parents would take all the letters for me and place them in a large envelope and this was posted to

me.

So I would only receive 'one' letter and only have to do 20 push-ups. In reality I used to get ten to twelve letters in that envelope.

One thing that troops were not very fond of was morning inspections.

They would constantly be looking at ways to gypo inspections. Kobus (18) did his basic training at the Army Gymnasium in Heidelberg. Some of the members of his squad came up with what they thought was a perfect gypo.

One of the things that was always a pain in the butt was making your bed for inspection.

It sounds easy. After all, you just pull your blanket and sheets straight and there you go. Not in the army.

Your bed had to be made in a precise way. And the blanket had to have what was known as 'hospital corners' and it had to be pulled so tight that it was square. So it took valuable time and effort just to make your bed.

Our idea was to make the bed, get it perfect, and then make sure that it stayed that way. In order to this some of us decided to sleep on the floor next to the bed. Of course according to standing orders this was illegal.

Some of the guys even man-



CARRYING HANDLE GYPO: When marching with the rifle in the shoulder-arms position, the carrying handle of an R1 rifle could be tucked into your web belt, taking the strain of the 4,3 kg weapon off your forearm.

aged to organise a spare mattress. During the day these were stored up in the ceiling.

For two weeks our gypo seemed to be working. Then, one morning at about 2.00 am, the lights were switched on in the bungalow and our corporal, along with five or six other corporals, stormed in.

We were kicked awake and the offenders had to get dressed in our browns (nutria uniform) with our webbing, *staaldak* (steel helmet) and rifles and fall in outside.

From 2.30 to 6.00 am we were chased around the obstacle course. I thought I was going to die.

We were really stupid. Did we think that our corporals didn't know about the gypo of sleeping on the floor?

Of course there were occasions when a gypo would not go according to plan.

Mark was 18 when he did his basic training at 5 SAI in Ladysmith.

One night we were busy cleaning the floors for inspection the next morning. I was polishing the tile floor with some stuff that was called Dri-Brite.

It was a thick, creamy liquid and I spilled some of it on my boot. I wiped it off with a cloth and then noticed that it left my boot shinning.

I though I had discovered a new gypo. Instead of going to all the trouble of shinning my boots until they gleamed for inspection, I would use some of this Dri-Brite on them.

About half an hour before inspection I smeared this stuff on the toes of my boots and rubbed it over with a cloth. My boots were gleaming.

I was standing next to my bed for inspection. The corporal took one look at my boots and went ballistic.

"And that," he shouted, pointing down at my boots.

I looked down and nearly had a heart attack. Once the Dri-Brite had soaked into my boots and then become dry it left a milky white residue across the toes of my boots.

"Ja Mister Dri-Brite," the corporal said. "You and I are going to have a good chat at the obstacle course."

Now I knew why no-one else had tried the Dri-Brite gypo.

The SADF liked to make sure that troops weren't left sitting around with nothing to do. If

there was nothing to do, they would find something for you to do. And normally it would be something mundane and unpleasant.

Of course there were always people that found a way around this.

Brian did his national service at One Parachute Battalion. He remembers someone that perfected the art of gypoing.

I was a signaller and was in O-Company (Support Company). There was another national serviceman in my company, a lance corporal by the name of Kim.

Whenever I would see him he would be walking around the unit with a clipboard. Sometimes he would stop and count things and then write something down on his clipboard.

About two years after I finished national service I bumped into Kim when I was on holiday in Cape Town. We had a beer together and chatted about old times.

I asked him what his actual function was when he was at the unit. I remembered him and his clipboard.

"My actual function was to do as little as possible," Kim laughed. "I would wander around with my clipboard and, because it looked as if I had obviously been given a job to do, no-one bothered to stop me and ask what I was actually doing. I looked busy, so everyone naturally assumed that I was busy."

Brian also remembers an incident when he was doing his PT course when he was caught gypoing.

While on PT course a mate and myself got bust for gyping. One of the favourite things for the instructors to do was chase us around the parachute packing building.

This was just above the parachute training hangar and it was quite a big building. We would be standing in front of the hangar and one of the instructors would tell us to run around the parachute store.

“Een minuut om die pakhuis. Cheers!” (One minute around the stores. Cheers!)

Now the only way you could make it around the parachute stores was to sprint as fast as possible. It was almost impossible for everyone to finish in under a minute. So you would get sent again.

“Oh,” the instructor would say, “Your mates don’t want to work together. You are saying screw the corporal. Well the corporal says screw you. Around the stores, one minute. There you go.”

This little game could go on for some time and it was not uncommon to make six or seven trips around the parachute packing stores. The more trips you made, the more tired you became.

Anyway, on this one occasion we got chased around the parachute stores and my mate and I decided to be clever. On the first run around the building we dropped out and sat down behind the stores.

We reasoned that we always had to run at least four times before the instructor tired of the game. So what we would do was sit and wait until everyone came around for the fourth



LEOPARD CRAWL: A pair of extra socks could be used to protect the elbows when doing leopard crawl.

time and then we would join the group again.

True to my luck, the RSM of the unit came to give everyone a pep talk just as they got back from the first trip around the building. He spoke to them for a few minutes and the instructors then ran everyone down to the parade ground for another PT exercise.

After about ten minutes my mate and I realised that something was amiss. We sneaked around the side of the parachute stores and, to our dismay, saw that there was nobody outside the hangar.

We looked like two total idiots as we tried to sneak down the road and find the rest of the group. Of course we were dressed in PT smocks, so anyone could see that we were from the PT course.

We finally saw them on the parade ground but had no chance of joining them without being seen.

“Oh yes,” said one of the instructors as we approached the

group, “and just where have we been? Took a quick holiday in the Bahamas maybe?”

That evening when everyone else was dismissed my mate and I had to report for an extra hour of PT training. I can’t remember how many times we were chased around the obstacle course.

Tim was 17 when he did his basic training at 5 SAI in Ladysmith.

I hated it when we had to go to the shooting range. I enjoyed the shooting part of it, it’s all the other crap that went with it that I was not fond of.

If we weren’t actually shooting then our instructors would keep us occupied with stuff like leopard crawling all over the place.

The ground was always full of small stones and they used to kill my elbows. A mate of mine showed me a good gypo for it.

When we went to the shooting range I would take two sets



KEEP IT CLEAN: Lining the inside of your dioxies with a plastic Jiffy Bag would ensure that you didn’t need to wash them.

of old army socks with me. The toes had been cut off and I would pull these over my elbows. It helped a hell of a lot.

Another gypo that my mate showed me was when we were out doing field training. We would have to eat out of our dioxies. The biggest problem was cleaning them after each meal.

The food was often greasy and thought the cooks would put out a drum of hot water to wash our dioxies, the water wouldn’t stay hot for very long. And it would soon become greasy.

We would take a plastic Jiffy Bag and use it to line the inside of the dixie. After you had eaten you just threw the Jiffy bag away and your dixie was left spotless.

Marching any amount of time while carrying a rifle in the shoulder arms position could be a strain on the arm. Of course some troops found a way around this. Kevin was one of them.

During basics most morning would be spent on the parade ground doing drill.

Once we were issued with our rifles, they were R1s back then, we would have to drill with our rifles. Often you would spend 30 to 40 minutes marching up and down doing left turns, right turns, about turns, mark time and slow march.

The R1 weighed 4,3 kg and after a while it would feel as if it weighted 40 kg. Your left forearm would take strain.

We had a perfect gypo for it. The R1 had a carrying handle and we would tuck the handle into our web belt. That way all you needed to do was use your hand to make sure it stayed upright.

Of course it was too good to last. We all had to hand our rifles into the weapons tiffie (armourer) one afternoon and when we got them back the next morning all of the carrying handles had been cut off.

Back in the days before mobile phones, troops would have to make use of a coin-operated public telephone if they wanted to call home or speak to their girlfriend. These public telephones were known as ‘tickey

boxes’.

If you were calling long distance it could cost a fair amount of money. Especially if you were living off a national serviceman’s salary.

So naturally a method was found to gypo the phone.

One of the things that just about any national serviceman could tell you about was the ‘long tickey’.

This was an ingenious method that was used to save money when using the public telephones.

A piece of cotton thread was attached to a coin, usually a one rand coin, with the aid of a piece of tape.

The coin was then inserted into the coin slot on the telephone and the loose end of the thread was wrapped around the button that had to be pushed to deposit the coin.

The button was then pressed, allowing the coin to drop into the telephone. As it dropped into the phone, the coin depressed a lever that would register the fact that a coin had been deposited, as well as the denomination of the coin. The coin would then drop into a deposit box inside the phone.

What would happen with a ‘long tickey’ was that the coin would depress the lever but would not drop into the coin receptacle.

When the telephone required more money to continue a call you just pressed the button again and the same coin would depress the lever once again.

In this manner a single coin could be used to register hundreds of Rand worth of calls.

Naturally this was highly illegal and the telephone service company, which was the Post Office at that time, instructed the SADF to keep a wary eye out for this type of activity. If you were caught using a 'long tickey' you would find yourself in serious trouble.

Wednesday afternoons in the SADF were dedicated to sports parade.

There was a long list of sports that you could participate in and they would also try and accommodate sports that were not on the list.

Naturally sports parade was the perfect opportunity to gypo. A fair number of permanent force members would claim that they took part in sports that were off the base. Instead of actually taking part in these sports, they would use the time as an afternoon off.

For national servicemen this was not so easy. But there were those that made a plan.

Todd did his national service at the Army Gymnasium in Heidelberg. He remained at the unit for his entire two years. His gypo worked for the entire time he was there.

During our first sports parade we were told what sports were available. I told them that I played ice hockey. Not only that, but I was about to be selected to play at provincial level and was almost certain to be selected to play at national level.

If you played any sport at that level they would go to great lengths to try and accommodate you.

Obviously there was no ice

rink at the Army Gymnasium. There wasn't even an ice rink in Heidelberg. In fact the nearest ice rink was the Carlton Sky Rink in Johannesburg, 45 km away.

I had a letter from my club to say that not only did I play for them, but I was a valuable and essential member of the team.

The letter also stated that we had hockey practice on a Wednesday afternoon from 3.00 to 6.00 and on Saturday mornings from 9.00 to 11.00 and that we played our matches on Saturday afternoon from 3.00 to 4.00.

During basic training we were not allowed to keep our own cars on base. So they arranged that the duty driver would take me through to Johannesburg, drop me off at the ice rink, and then fetch me again just after 6.00.

On Saturday morning my girlfriend would drive through from Johannesburg to fetch me and then drop me off again on Saturday evening.

After basics I was allowed to keep my own car on the base and would drive through to Johannesburg on Wednesday afternoons.

We would also have a weekend pass every second week, so that was no problem. On the weekends when I didn't have a pass I could still go through on a Saturday morning and had to report back by 8.00 on the Saturday evening. I had a special sports pass. It was a great arrangement.

It's a good thing that they never bothered to check, because the thing is that I never played ice hockey. The fact



TICKEY BOX: A 'long tickey' could be used to gypo a public telephone.

is that I couldn't even skate. It was all a gypo.

My girlfriend's brother did play ice hockey. In fact he went on to play for South Africa. He arranged the letter for me from his coach who thought it was a good laugh.

On Wednesday afternoon my girlfriend would skip class at university, meet me in Johannesburg, and we would either go to a movie or she would take me through to her house where we had our own sports parade.

No matter where soldiers are, nor what army they are in, they will always find ways to make life easier.

If any of our readers know of any good gypo's that they can remember, drop me an e-mail and we can do a follow-up story at some stage.



Grenades

This month we're looking at things that go bang We show you 15 grenades, you tell us what they are. You'll find the answers to the quiz on page 92.

1 	2 	3 
4 	5 	6 
7 	8 	9 
10 	11 	12 
13 	14 	15 

The Dicta Boelcke

In 1916 World War I German flying ace Oswald Boelcke was tasked to write a pamphlet on aerial combat tactics. The result was the 'Dicta Boelcke'.

By 1915 the aircraft had become recognised as a weapon of war. They were used for observation and reconnaissance, as well as for bombing missions. Certain aircraft, however, were being developed almost exclusively as fighter aircraft.

Yet the word "fighter" did not become the official English term for such aircraft until after World War I. In Great Britain's Royal Flying Corps – later the Royal Air Force – these aircraft continued to be referred to as "scouts" into the early 1920s.

The U.S. Army called their fighters "pursuit" aircraft (reflected by their designation in the "P" series) from 1916 until the late 1940s. In the French, Portuguese and German languages the term used (and still in use) for fighters literally means "hunter".

This lead has been followed in most other languages, an exception being Russian, in which the fighter is called "*istrebitel*", meaning "exterminator".

During the first part of the war, there was no established tactical doctrine for air-to-air combat.

During this period of pioneering aerial warfare, the British Royal Flying Corps air effort could be summed up by, "Attack everything". The French *Aeronautique Militaire* was concentrating its efforts on building up its bomber force.

Pilots who shot down five or

more fighters became known as aces. One such pilot was Oswald Boelcke. During mid-May 1915, he began to fly one of the original fighter aircraft equipped with a synchronized gun. As he began to shoot down opposing French and British airplanes, he became one of the first German fighter aces.

Boelcke was tasked by Colonel Hermann von der Lieth-Thomsen with writing a pamphlet on aerial tactics. Completed in June 1916, it was distributed throughout the German Army's Air Service (*Die Fliegertruppen des Deutschen Kaiserreiches*). It would be almost two years before the French and British followed suit with their own tactical guides.

Often flying with Max Immelmann, Boelcke gained experience in the new realm of aerial combat as he discovered the utility of having a wingman, of massing fighter planes for increased fighting power, and of flying loose formations allowing individual pilots tactical independence.

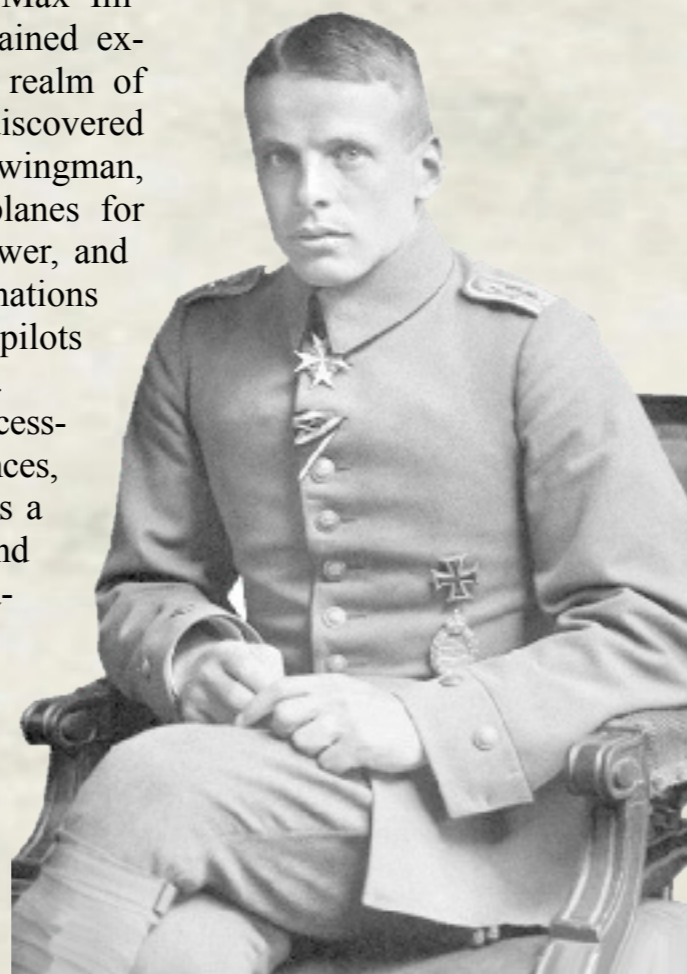
Based on his successful combat experiences, he used his training as a professional soldier and his powers as an analytic thinker to design tactics for the use of aircraft in battle.

Boelcke tried to interest Immelmann in devising a tactical

doctrine for fighters, to no avail. In mid-1916, Boelcke codified his tactics in the Dicta Boelcke, which was the world's first tactical manual for an air force.

During early 1916, Boelcke wrote a brochure entitled "Experiences of Air Fighting", giving tips for attacking any one of three types of opposing aircraft. This was not unique; a few other fliers in the war were sharing such combat tips with one another on a personal level.

After Immelmann's death, Boelcke was withdrawn from combat on 27 June 1916, while he was the war's leading ace, and assigned to *Fliegertruppe* (Flying Troops) headquarters. His reassignment was in line



with the German military doctrine of *auftragstaktik*, or order tactics: The belief that the junior officer on the battlefield best knows the tactics needed there.

As part of his staff duties re-vamping the *Fliegertruppe* into the *Luftstreitkräfte* (Air Force) in early October 1916, Boelcke wrote the Dicta, which was then distributed throughout the *Luftstreitkräfte* as the world's first tactical manual.

Spurred by the example of the Dicta, many of the world's military air forces would eventually develop their own tactical manuals, codified as tactics, techniques, and procedures.

The Dicta Boelcke

1. Try to secure advantages before attacking. If possible, keep the sun behind you.
2. Always carry through an attack when you have started it.
3. Fire only at close range, and only when your opponent is properly in your sights.

4. Always keep your eye on your opponent, and never let yourself be deceived by ruses.

5. In any form of attack it is essential to assail your enemy from behind.

6. If your opponent dives on you, do not try to evade his onslaught, but fly to meet it.

7. When over the enemy's lines never forget your own line of retreat.

8. For the *Staffel* (squadron): Attack on principle in groups of four or six. When the fight breaks up into a series of single combats, take care that several do not go for the same opponent.

Legacy

After writing the Dicta, Boelcke's tactics were taught in the fighter school he had suggested founding. He suggested that fighter planes be organized into squadrons. He also organized and led one of these original German fighter squadrons,

Jagdstaffel 2.

By the time he died in action after his 40th victory, he had thoroughly schooled his squadron in his tactics. Jasta 2 went on to be one of the two most successful German fighter squadrons during the remainder of the war, scoring 336 victories, and achieving a victory ratio that ran as high as 12 to one.

The simple Dicta Boelcke manual has, over time, evolved into widespread use of tactics, techniques, and procedures manuals for air forces worldwide. The United States Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), the United States Navy (USN), and the United States Air Force (USAF) each have their own air tactics manuals. Under the auspices of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the USAF trains German, Dutch, Norwegian, Turkish, Italian, and Greek fighter pilots at Sheppard Air Force Base, using air tactics manuals descended from the Dicta Boelcke.

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.

Click on the logo to the left to visit the SA Legion website.

If you want to change the world

In 2014 former US Navy SEAL Admiral William H. McRaven gave a speech to the graduating class at the University of Texas. It was a speech that everyone should hear.

William Harry McRaven is a retired United States Navy four-star admiral who served as the ninth commander of the United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM) from August 8, 2011 to August 28, 2014.

McRaven previously served from June 13, 2008, to August 2011 as commander of Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) and from June 2006 to March 2008 as commander of Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR).

In addition to his duties as COMSOCEUR, he was designated as the first director of the NATO Special Operations Forces Coordination Centre (NSCC), where he was charged with enhancing the capabilities and inter-operability of all NATO Special Operations Forces.

McRaven retired from the U.S. Navy on August 28, 2014, after more than 37 years of service.

In 2014 McRaven was asked to give the Commencement Address to the 2014 graduating class at the University of Texas. McRaven was a former graduate from the University.

His address was probably one of the best motivational speeches I have ever heard.

What starts here changes the world. I have a few suggestions that may help you on your way to a better world, and while

these lessons were learned during my time in the military, I can assure you that it matters not whether you ever served a day in uniform.

It matters not your gender, your ethnic or religious background, your orientation or your social status.

Our struggles in this world are similar and the lessons to overcome those struggles and to move forward, changing ourselves and changing the world around us, will apply equally to all.

So here are the ten lessons I learned from basic SEAL training that hopefully will be of value to you as you move forward in life.

Every morning in SEAL training my instructors, who at the time were all Vietnam veterans, would show up in my barracks room, and the first thing they'd do is inspect my bed.

If you did it right the corners would be square, the covers would be pulled tight, the pillows centred just under the headboard and the extra blanket folded neatly at the foot of the rack.

It was a simple task, mundane at best, but every morning we were required to make our bed to perfection. It seemed a little ridiculous at the time, particularly in light of the fact that we were aspiring to be real warriors, tough battle-hardened SEALs.

But the wisdom of this sim-

ple act has been proven to me many times over. If you make your bed every morning you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride and it will encourage you to do another task and another and another, and by the end of the day that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed.

Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that the little things in life matter. If you can't do the little things right you'll never be able to do the big things right. And if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made. That you made. And a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better.

So if you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.

1. Start the day with a task completed

During SEAL training the students are all broken down into boat crews. Each crew is seven students, three on each side of a small rubber boat and one coxswain to help guide the dinghy.

Every day your boat crew forms up on the beach and is instructed to get through the surf zone and paddle several miles down the coast.

In winter the surf off San Die-



Admiral William H McRaven

go can get to be eight to ten feet high and it is exceedingly difficult to paddle hook through the plunging surf unless everyone digs in. Every paddle must be synchronized to the stroke count of the coxswain. Everyone must exert equal effort or the boat will turn against the wave and be unceremoniously dumped back on the beach.

For the boat to make it to its destination everyone must paddle. You can't change the world alone. You will need some help and to truly get from your starting point to your destination takes friends, colleagues, the good will of strangers, and a strong coxswain to guide you.

If you want to change the world, find someone to help you paddle.

2. Find someone to help you through life

Over a few weeks of difficult training my SEAL class, which started with 150 men, was down to just 42. There were now six

boat crews of seven men each.

I was in the boat with the tall guys. But the best boat crew we had was made up of little guys. The Munchkin crew we called them. No one was over five foot five.

The Munchkin boat crew had one American-Indian, one African-American, one Polish-American, one Greek-American, one Italian-American, and two tough kids from the Midwest. They out paddled, out ran, and out swam all the other boat crews.

The big men and the other boat crews would always make good-natured fun of the tiny little flippers the Munchkins put on their tiny little feet prior to every swim.

But somehow these little guys from every corner of the nation in the world always had the last laugh, swimming faster than everyone and reaching the shore long before the rest of us.

SEAL training was a great equalizer. Nothing mattered but your will to succeed. Not your colour. Not your ethnic background. Not your education. Not your social status.

If you want to change the world, measure a person by the size of their heart, not by the size of their flippers.

3. Respect everyone

Several times a week the instructors would line up the class and do a uniform inspection. It was exceptionally thorough.

Your hat had to be perfectly starched, your uniform immaculately pressed, your belt buckle shiny and void of any smudges.

But it seemed that no matter how much effort you put into starching your hat or pressing your uniform or polishing your belt buckle, it just wasn't good enough. The instructors would find something wrong.

For failing uniform inspection the student had to run fully clothed into the surf zone. Then, wet from head to toe, roll around on the beach until every part of your body was covered with sand. The effect was known as 'sugar cookie'.

You stayed in the uniform the rest of the day, cold, wet and sandy. There were many a student who just couldn't accept the fact that all their efforts were in vain, that no matter how hard they tried to get the uniform right, it went unappreciated. Those students didn't make it through training.

Those students didn't understand the purpose of the drill. You were never going to succeed. You were never going to have a perfect uniform. The instructors weren't going to allow it.

Sometimes no matter how well you prepare, or how well you perform, you still end up as a sugar cookie. It's just the way life is sometimes.

If you want to change the world, get over being a sugar cookie and keep moving forward.

4. Life is not always fair, move forward

Every day during training you were challenged with multiple physical events – long runs, long swims, obstacle courses, hours of callisthenics – some-

thing to test your mettle.

Every event had standards. Times you had to meet. If you failed to meet those times – those standards – your name was posted on a list and at the end of the day those on the list were invited to a circus.

A circus was two hours of additional callisthenics designed to wear you down. To break your spirit. To force you to quit. No one wanted a circus.

A circus meant that for that day you didn't measure up. A circus meant more fatigue and more fatigue meant that the following day would be more difficult and more circuses were likely.

But at some time during SEAL training everyone, everyone made the circus list. But an interesting thing happened to those who were constantly on the list.

Over time those students who did two hours of extra callisthenics got stronger and stronger. The pain of the circuses built inner strength and physical resiliency.

Life is filled with circuses. You will fail. You will likely fail often. It will be painful. It will be discouraging. At times it will test you to your very core.

But if you want to change the world, don't be afraid of the circuses.

5. Don't be afraid to fail often

At least twice a week the trainees were required to run the obstacle course. The obstacle course contained 25 obstacles, including the 10 foot wall, a 30 foot cargo net, a barbed

wire crawl to name a few. But the most challenging obstacle was the slide for life.

It had a three level 30 foot tower at one end and a one level tower at the other. In between was a 200 foot long rope. You had to climb the three tiered tower and once at the top you grabbed the rope, swung underneath the rope and pulled yourself hand over hand until you got to the other end.

The record for the obstacle course had stood for years when my class began in 1977. The record seemed unbeatable. Until one day a student decided to go down the slide for life head first.

Instead of swinging his body underneath the rope and inching his way down, he bravely mounted the top of the rope and thrust himself forward.

It was a dangerous move. Seemingly foolish and fraught with risk. Failure could be an injury and being dropped from the course. Without hesitation the student slid down the rope perilously fast. Instead of several minutes it only took him half that time and by the end of the course he had broken the record.

If you want to change the world sometimes you have to slide down the obstacles head first.

6. Take risks

During the land warfare phase of training the students are flown out to San Clement Island which lies off the coast of San Diego. The waters off San Clement are a breeding ground for the great white sharks.

To pass SEAL training there are a series of long swims that must be completed. One is the night swim.

Before the swim the instructors joyfully brief the students on all the species of sharks that inhabit the waters off San Clement. They assure you however that no student has ever been eaten by a shark. At least not that they can remember.

But you are also taught that if a shark begins to circle your position, stand your ground. Do not swim away. Do not act afraid. And if the shark, hungry for a midnight snack, darts towards you then summon up all your strength and punch him in the snout and he will turn and swim away.

There are a lot of sharks in the world. If you hope to complete the swim you will have to deal with them.

So if you want to change the world, don't back down from the sharks.

7. Face down the bullies

As Navy SEALs one of our jobs is to conduct underwater attacks against the enemy's shipping. We practice this technique extensively during training.

The ship attack mission is where a pair of SEAL divers is dropped off outside an enemy harbour and then swims well over two miles underwater, using nothing but a depth gauge and compass to get to the target.

During the entire swim, even well below the surface, there is some light that comes through. It is comforting to know that there is open water above you.

But as you approach the ship which is tied to a pier the light begins to fade.

The steel structure of the ship blocks the moonlight. It blocks the surrounding street lamps. It blocks all ambient light.

To be successful in your mission you have to swim under the ship and find the keel, the centreline, and the deepest part of the ship. This is your objective.

But the keel is also the darkest part of the show, where you cannot see your hand in front of your face. Where the noise from the ship's machinery is deafening and where it gets to be easily disoriented and you can fail.

Every SEAL knows that under the keel, at that darkest moment of the mission, is a time when you need to be calm. When you must be calm. When you must be composed. When all your tactical skills, your physical power and your inner strength must be brought to bear.

If you want to change the world, you must be your very best in the darkest moments.

8. Step up when times are toughest

The ninth week of training is referred to as 'Hell Week'. It is six days of no sleep, constant physical and mental harassment, and one special day at the mud flats.

The mud flats are an area between San Diego and Tijuana where the water runs off and creates the Tijuana sloughs. A swampy patch of terrain where the mud will engulf you.

It is on Wednesday of Hell

Week that you paddle down in the mud flats and spend the next 15 hours trying to survive this freezing cold, the howling wind and the incessant pressure to quit from your instructors.

As the sun began to set that Wednesday evening my training class, having committed some egregious infraction of the rules, was ordered into the mud. The mud consumed each man till there was nothing visible but our heads.

The instructors told us we could leave the mud if only five men would quit. Only five men, just five men and we could get out of the oppressive cold. Looking around the mud flat it was apparent that some students were about to give up.

It was still over eight hours till the sun came up. Eight more hours of bone-chilling cold. The chattering teeth and the shivering moans of the trainees were so loud it was hard to hear anything.

And then one voice began to echo through the night, one voice raised in song. The song was terribly out of tune, but sung with great enthusiasm. One voice became two and two became three and before long everyone in the class was singing.

The instructors threatened us with more time in the mud. If we kept up the singing, but the singing persisted and somehow the mud seemed a little warmer and the wind a little tamer and the dawn not so far away.

If I have learned anything in my time traveling the world it is the power of hope. The power of one person. The Washington, a Lincoln, King, Mande-

la, and even a young girl from Pakistan – Malala. One person can change the world by giving people hope.

So if you want to change the world start singing when you're up to your neck in mud.

9. Lift up the downtrodden

Finally, in SEAL training there is a bell. A brass bell that hangs in the centre of the compound for all the students to see. All you have to do to quit is ring the bell.

Ring the bell and you no longer have to wake up at 5 o'clock. Ring the bell and you no longer have to be in the freezing cold swims. Ring the bell and you no longer have to do the runs, the obstacle course, the PT, and you no longer have to endure the hardships of training. All you have to do is ring the bell to get out.

If you want to change the world don't ever, ever ring the bell.

10. Never give up

Life is a struggle and the potential for failure is ever present, but those who live in fear of failure, or hardship, or embarrassment will never achieve their potential. Without pushing your limits, without occasionally sliding down the rope head first, without daring greatly, you will never know what is truly possible in your life.

From 2015 to 2018 Admiral William H. McRaven served as the Chancellor of The University of Texas.

Tanks of World War II

First used during the Battle of the Somme in September 1916 the tank has become a mainstay of modern ground forces and a key part of combined arms combat.

The tank has become a versatile and often deadly weapon system platform. They usually mount a large-calibre cannon in a rotating gun turret and this is supplemented by mounted machine guns or other weapons.

All of this is combined with heavy vehicle armour that pro-

vides protection for the crew, the vehicle's weapons and its propulsion system. Steel armour plate was the earliest type of armour but later developments would see Chobham armour and reactive armour being used.

The use of tracks rather than wheels allows the tank to move over rugged terrain. Tanks are used in both the offensive and defensive roles.

During World War I tanks were classified as being either

male or female. A male tank was armed with both cannon and machine guns while a female tank carried only machine guns.

During World War II tanks were classified as light, medium or heavy. This was based on both their armour and weapon system.

In this article we will take a closer look at some of the tanks used by the British, German, Russian, Japanese and Americans during World War II.



British Tanks

While Britain relied on its navy to defend its interests, it also had modern and effective aircraft and a small army. Its armoured forces were not at all numerically equal to France or Nazi Germany.

Early British tanks were armed with the Ordnance QF (Quick Firing) 2-pounder (40 mm) gun. This was not very effective against Axis armour and the British later upgraded to a 6-pounder (57 mm) gun and the highly effective 17-pounder (76.2 mm) gun.

Cruiser Mk II (A10)

The Cruiser was classified as a heavy tank and saw service from 1940-1941.

It weighed 14.3 tonnes, had a length of 5.56 m, a width of 2.54 m and a height of 2.64 m.

It carried a crew of five - Commander, loader, gunner, driver and hull MG gunner.

Its armour ranged between 6 and 30 mm and it was armed with a OQF 2-pounder gun with 100 rounds of ammunition. There were also two Vickers machine guns which were later replaced by the BESA machine gun with 4,050 rounds.

The Cruiser was powered by a

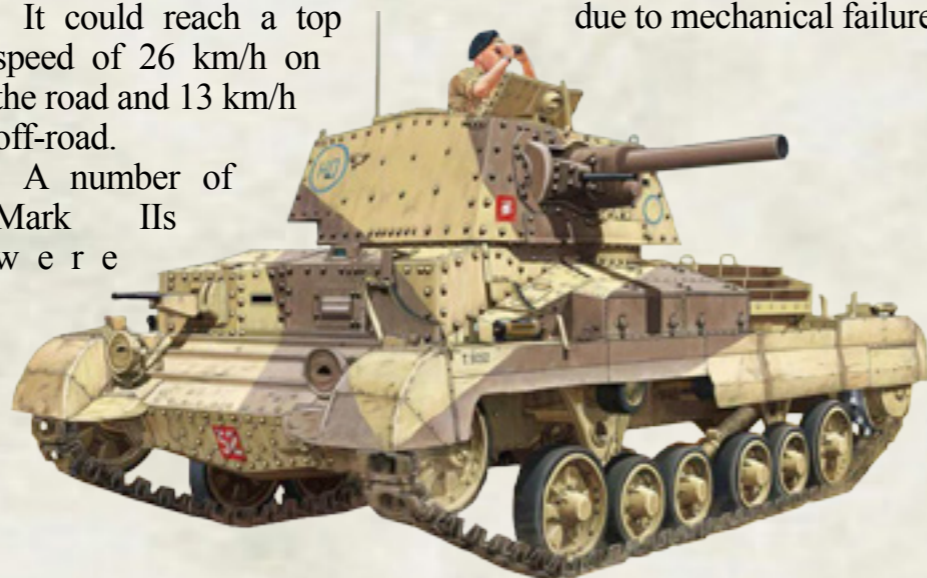
AEC Type A179 6-Cylinder Petrol 150 hp engine and had an operational range of 160 km when travelling via road.

It could reach a top speed of 26 km/h on the road and 13 km/h off-road.

A number of Mark IIs were

sent to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in the early stages of World War II.

Over 90% of Mark IIs were lost due to mechanical failure.



Cruiser Mk V Crusader

The Crusader was classified as a cruiser or heavy tank and it saw service between 1941-1945.

It made an important contribution to the British victories in North Africa.

It weighed 20 tonnes, had a length of 5.97 m, a width of 2.77m, and a height of 2.24 m.

It carried a crew of five - Commander, loader, gunner, driver and hull MG gunner.

It had a maximum of 51 mm of armour and was armed with a OQF 2-pounder gun with 110 rounds of ammunition. This was later upgraded to a OQF 6-pounder with 65 rounds. It also had one or two BESA machine guns with 4,950 rounds.

The Crusader was powered by a Nuffield Liberty 27-litre V-12 petrol engine and had an operational range of 322 km on road and 235 km off road.



It could reach a top speed of 42 km/h on road and 24 km/h off road.

As a result of several factors the Crusader suffered from serious reliability problems in the desert.

Tanks arriving in North Africa were missing essential tools and service manuals needed to maintain operation.

A lack of spare parts meant that tanks returning to base workshops were serviced with parts recovered from other tanks.

Cruiser, Mk VIII, Cromwell (A27M)

The Cromwell was a heavy tank that first saw action in the Battle of Normandy in 1944. It remained in service from 1944 until 1955.

It weighed 28 tonnes, had a length of 6.35 m, a width of 2.908 m, and a height of 2.49 m.

It carried a crew of five - Commander, gunner, loader/radio operator, driver, front gunner.

It had a maximum armour of

100 mm and was armed with the QF 75 mm gun with 64 rounds. It also carried two 7.92 mm BESA machine guns with 4,950 rounds.

The Cromwell was powered by a Rolls-Royce Meteor V12 petrol engine and had an operational range of 270 km on road and 130 km off road.

It could reach a top speed of 64 km/h on road and nearly 40 km/h off road.

The Cromwell had four advan-



tages - its low profile, its speed, its manoeuvrability, and its reliability.

The 75 mm cannon had the advantage of being able to fire both AP (armour piercing) and HE (high explosive) rounds. One major disadvantage was that it was unable to knock out heavy German tanks, such as the Tiger tank, from the front - even at point blank range.

The Cromwell saw extensive action with the British Army, forming part of the 6th Airborne Division.

After the war, the Cromwell remained in British service, and saw service in the Korean War with the 7th Royal Tank Regiment and the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars.

Matilda II

The Infantry Tank Mark II, best known as the Matilda, was the only British tank to serve from the start of the war to its end.

It weighed 25 tonnes, had a length of 4.9 m, a width of 2.6 m, and a height of 2.5 m. It carried a crew of 4 - Commander, gunner, loader and driver.

Its armour ranged from 20 to 78 mm and it was armed with a QF 2-pounder gun with 93 rounds. It also had a 7.92 mm BESA machine gun.

It was powered by two 6-cylinder diesel engines and had an operational range of 257 km. It had a top speed of 26 km/h on road and 14 km/h off road.

With its heavy armour, the Matilda II was an excellent infantry support tank, but it suffered due to its limited speed

and poor armament.

Due to the thickness of its armour it was largely immune to the guns of the German tanks and anti-tank guns in France.

The Germans found the 88 mm anti-aircraft guns were the only effective counter-measure against the Matilda.

In the war in North Africa the Matilda proved highly effective against Italian and German

tanks, although it was vulnerable to the larger calibre and medium calibre anti-tank guns.

As the Germans received new tanks with more powerful guns, as well as more powerful anti-tank guns and ammunition, the Matilda proved less and less effective.



Tank, Infantry, Mk III, Valentine

The Valentine Mk III was a British infantry tank that saw service from 1940 to 1960.

It weighed 17 tonnes, was 5.41 m in length, had a width of 2.629 m and a height of 2.273 m. It carried a crew of four - Commander, gunner, driver and loader.

The armour on the Valentine varied between 8-65 mm. It was armed with the QF 6-pounder (57 mm) gun and a 7.92 mm BESA machine gun.

It was powered by the AEC A190 diesel engine, had an operational range of 140 km on roads and a top speed of 24 km/h on road.

While the Mk III had a four-man crew, earlier versions only had a three-man crew - Commander, gunner and driver. The commander would also have to

act as the loader.

Its main advantage was its low profile. Yet the common complaint was the small interior of the turret and cramped interior.

The Valentine was extensively used in the North African Campaign, earning a reputation as a reliable and well-protected vehicle, which replaced the Matilda Tank.

By 1944,



the Valentine had been almost replaced in front-line units of the European theatre by the A22, Infantry Tank Mark IV (Churchill tank) and the US-made Sherman tank.

Tank, Infantry, Mk IV (A22) Churchill

The Churchill was one of the heaviest Allied tanks of the war. It was best known for its heavy armour and ability to climb steep slopes. It was also used as the basis of many specialist vehicles.

It weighed 40.1 tonnes, had a length of 7.44 m, a width of 3.25 m and a height of 2.49 m. It carried a crew of five - Commander, gunner, loader/radio operator,

driver, co-driver/hull gunner.

Armour ranged from 102 mm in front to 76 mm at the rear. It was armed with the QF 6-pounder (57 mm) gun and two 7.92 mm BESA machine guns.

It was powered by a Bedford 12-cylinder, 4 stroke, water-cooled, horizontally opposed, L-head petrol engine. It had an operational range of 90 km and a top speed of

24 km/h.

The Churchill first saw service in 1941 and remained in service until 1952.

The Churchill first saw combat on 19 August 1942, in the Dieppe Raid in France. It also saw limited action in the North African Campaign.

In one encounter on 21 April 1943, during the start of the Battle of Longstop Hill a Churchill tank of the 48th Royal Tank Regiment got the better of a German Tiger I heavy tank.



German Tanks

The Germans were the first to appreciate and make full use of armoured warfare. By May 1945 they had built around 90,000 armoured vehicles.

They were the first to use Blitzkrieg (Lightning War), the concept of armoured formations supported by mechanized infantry and artillery to break through an enemy line.

Panzerkampfwagen IV (PzKpfw IV)

The Panzer IV saw service in all combat theaters involving Germany and was the only German tank to remain in continuous production throughout the war.

Upgrades and design modifications, intended to counter new threats, extended its service life.

The Panzer IV was the workhorse of the Panzer Korps and saw action on every front where the Germans were involved.

Read more about the Panzer IV on page 9 of this month's issue of the magazine.



Panzerkampfwagen V Panther

The Panther was a medium tank deployed on both the Eastern and Western Fronts in Europe from mid-1943 to its end in 1945.

The Panther was intended to counter the Soviet T-34 and to replace the Panzer III and Panzer IV.

It is considered one of the best tanks of World War II for its excellent firepower and protection; although its reliability was not as impressive.

It weighed 44.1 tonnes had a length of 6.87 m, a width of 3.27 m and a height of 2.99 m. It carried a crew of five - Commander, driver, radio-operator/hull machine gunner, gunner, loader.

It had sloped armour of up to 80 mm. It was armed with a 75 mm KwK 42 L/70 with 79

rounds and two 7.92 mm MG 34 machine guns with 5,100 rounds.

It was powered by a V-12 petrol Maybach HL230 P30 engine and had an operational range of 200 km. It was a fast tank with a top speed of 55 km/h on road.

In open country and at long range the Panther was excellent.



The first production Panther tanks were plagued with mechanical problems. The engine was dangerously prone to overheating. Petrol leaks from the fuel pump or carburettor, as well as motor oil leaks from gaskets, produced fires in the engine compartment.

Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger Ausf. E

The Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger Ausf. E, often shortened to Tiger, was a heavy German tank. The Tiger I gave the Wehrmacht its first armoured fighting vehicle that mounted the 88 mm KwK 36 gun (not to be confused with the 88 mm Flak 36).

It weighed 57 tonnes, had a length of 6.616 m, a width of 6.56 m, and a height of 3.0 m. It carried a crew of five - Commander, gunner, loader, driver, assistant driver.

The Tiger's armour ranged from 25 to 120 mm. It was armed with an 88 mm KwK 36 L/56 with 92 AP and HE rounds. Its secondary armament consisted of two 7.92 mm MG 34 machine guns with 4,800 rounds.

It was powered by the May-

bach HL230 P45 V-12 and had an operational range of 195 km on road and a top road speed of 45.4 km/h.

The Tiger was feared by Allies on both the Eastern and Western Fronts. While only a small number of Tigers were produced (only 1,347) the psychological impact they had was impressive.



he Tiger gave fame to a few WWII tank aces, like Kurt Knispel, Michael Wittmann and Otto Carius, something rarely heard of before, since the life expectancy of a tank crew was always quite shorter than that of fighter pilots



Russian Tanks

In 1939, the USSR had the biggest armored force in the world, numerically superior to all western powers combined. Before 1936, the Red Army displayed brilliant and innovative armored tactics, well trained crews and experienced officers. But, starting in 1936, Stalin ordered a series of "great purges", out of fear of a military coup. New officers were also always chosen on loyalty over skill.

Kliment Voroshilov (KV-1)

The KV series were known for their heavy armour protection and were practically immune to the early Panzer III and Panzer IV tanks. Until more effective guns were developed by the Germans, the KV-1 was invulnerable to almost any German weapon except the 88 mm Flak gun.

The KV-1 weighed 45 tonnes, was 6.75 m in length, 63.32 m wide and 2.71 m high. It carried a crew of five.

Its armour was 90 mm in front, 75 mm on the side and 70 mm in the rear. It was armed

with a 76.2 mm L-11 gun and 2, 3, or 4 DT machine guns. Its top speed was 35 km/h.

It was powered by a Model V-2 V12 diesel engine and had an operational



T-34 and T34-85

The Soviet T-34 medium tank has often been credited as the most effective, efficient and influential tank design of WW2.

It provided an unprecedented combination of firepower, mobility, protection and ruggedness. It served from 1940 to the late 1960s.

It weighed 26.1 tonnes, had

a length of 6.68 m, a width of 3.0 m and a height of 2.45 m. The T-34 carried a crew of four while the later T-34-85 had a crew of five.

Its frontal armour was 47 mm thick while the rear armour was 45 mm. The T-34 had a 76.2 mm F-34 gun while the T-34-85 had a 85 mm ZiS-S-53 gun. Both with also armed with two 7.62 mm

DT machine guns.

Both were powered by the Model V-2-34 38.8 L V12 diesel engine and both had a top speed of 53 km/h. The T-34 had an operational range of 400 km and the T-34-85 and operational range of 240 km.

The T-34's wide tracks gave it the ability to move over deep mud or snow and this was vital during the harsh Russian winter.

The combat statistics for 1941 show that the Soviets lost an average of over seven tanks for every German tank lost. This was mainly due to poorly trained crews and the fact that the Soviets at first used a four man crew with the tank commander also acting as the loader.



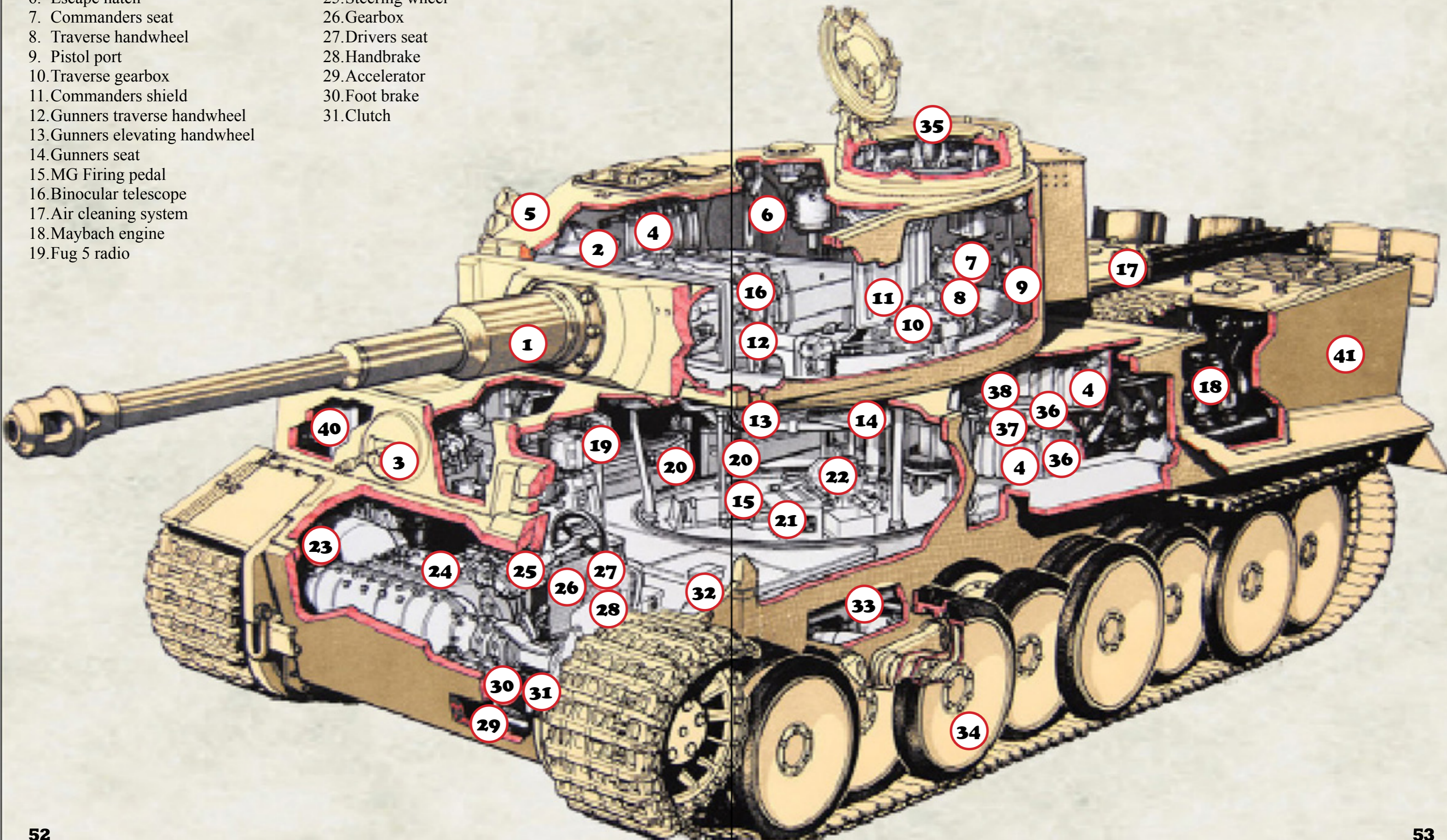
PzKpfw VI Tiger (SdKfz 181) Ausf E

1. 88 mm L/56 gun
2. 7.92 mm MG34
3. 7.92 mm MG34
4. MG34 Ammo pouch
5. Smoke dischargers
6. Escape hatch
7. Commanders seat
8. Traverse handwheel
9. Pistol port
10. Traverse gearbox
11. Commanders shield
12. Gunners traverse handwheel
13. Gunners elevating handwheel
14. Gunners seat
15. MG Firing pedal
16. Binocular telescope
17. Air cleaning system
18. Maybach engine
19. Fug 5 radio

20. 88 mm bins
21. Hydraulic traverse foot pedal
22. Hydraulic traverse control
23. Disc brake drum
24. Steering unit
25. Steering wheel
26. Gearbox
27. Drivers seat
28. Handbrake
29. Accelerator
30. Foot brake
31. Clutch

32. Shock absorber
33. Torsion bar suspension
34. Overlapping bogie wheels
35. Commanders cupola
36. Fan drive clutch lever
37. Air intake valve control
38. Petrol primer
39. Petrol tap

40. MG Ammo pouch
41. Zimmerit anti mine protection, 200 kg over whole tank





Japanese Tanks

Due to the war with China, Japan produced a large number of tanks. Although initially the Japanese used tanks to good effect in their campaigns, full-scale armored warfare did not occur in the Pacific and Southeast Asian theaters as it did in Europe, and tank development was neglected in favor of naval activities.

The best Japanese designs were never used in combat as they were kept back in expectation of defending the Japanese Home Islands.

Type 89 medium tank I-Go (Chi-Ro)

The Type 89 medium tank I-Go was a medium tank used by the Imperial Japanese Army from 1932 to 1942 in combat operations of the Second Sino-Japanese War, at Khalkhin Gol against the Soviet Union, and in WWII.

It weighed 14.10 tonnes, had a length of 5.73 m, a width of 2.15 m and a height of 2.56 m. It carried a crew of four - Commander/gunner, loader, driver and hull gunner.

Its armour ranged from 6 to 17 mm and it was armed with a 57 mm Type 90 gun with 100

rounds. Its secondary armament consisted of two 6.5 mm Type 91 machine gun (hull, turret rear).

The Chi-Ro was powered by a Mitsubishi A6120VD air-

cooled inline 6-cylinder diesel engine and had an operational range of 170 km. It had a top speed of 26 km/h.



The Battle of Kursk was a Second World War engagement between German and Soviet forces on the Eastern Front near Kursk (450 kilometres or 280 miles south-west of Moscow) in the Soviet Union during July and August 1943.

The German offensive was code-named Operation Citadel (German: *Unternehmen Zitadelle*) and led to one of the largest armoured clashes in history, the Battle of Prokhorovka. The German offensive was countered by two Soviet counter-offensives, Operation *Polkovodets Rumyantsev* and Operation *Kutuzov*. For the Germans, the battle was the

final strategic offensive that they were able to launch on the Eastern Front. Their extensive loss of men and tanks ensured that the victorious Soviet Red Army enjoyed the strategic initiative for the remainder of the war.

During the Battle of Kursk the Germans lost an estimated 760 tanks. The Russians lost 6,064 tanks and assault guns.



American Tanks

US tank doctrine in WWII emphasized that American tanks should avoid fighting enemy tanks. Killing enemy tanks would be left to anti-tank units, equipped with AT guns and purpose-built tank destroyers.

The M4 Sherman was to be used to support the infantry and to break holes in the enemy line and use their superior speed and maneuverability to outflank the enemy, cut off his supply lines, and hit vulnerable targets like artillery and supply dumps.

M3 Stuart

The M3 Stuart, officially Light Tank, M3, was an American light tank of World War II. It was supplied to British and Commonwealth forces under lend-lease prior to the entry of the U.S. into the war. The British nicknamed the tank the "Honey Tank".

Thereafter, it was used by U.S. and Allied forces until the end of the war.

It weighed 15.19 tonnes had a length of 4.84 m, a width of 2.23 m and a height of 2.26 m. It carried a crew of four - Commander, gunner, driver, assistant driver.

Its armour ranged from 9.5

to 63.5 mm and it was armed with a 37 mm M6 gun with 147 rounds. It had three 7.62 mm Browning M1919A4 machine guns with 6,750 rounds.

The Stuart was powered by twin Cadillac Series 42 220 hp. It had an operation-

al range of 160 km and a top speed of 58 km/h on road.



M4 Sherman

The M4 Sherman was the most numerous battle medium tank used by the United States and some of the other Western Allies in WWII.

It weighed 33.4 tonnes, had a length of 5.84 m, a width of 2.62 m and a height of 2.74 m. It carried a crew of five - Commander, gunner, loader, driver, assistant driver/bow gunner.

The Sherman's armour ranged from a minimum of 12.7 mm to 177.8 mm. It was armed with a 76 mm gun with 71 rounds. Its secondary armament consisted of a .50 calibre Browning M2HB machine gun (300-600 rounds) and two .30 calibre Browning M1919A4 machine guns (6,000-6,750 rounds).

It was powered by a Chrysler A57 30 cylinder gasoline engine; 370 hp. It had an operational range of 241 km on road and a top speed of 48 km/h.



Kurt Knispel

Credited as being the most successful tank ace of World War II, he became the only non-commissioned officer of the German tank arm to be named in a Wehrmacht communique. Yet it was only his impressive track-record that saved him from ending up in a military prison.

Kurt Knispel is regarded as the best tank ace of World War II, with the most kills. Yet he is also the most forgotten panzer ace of them all.

What is astounding is that even though he was credited with eliminating 168 enemy tanks, he never received the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross.

Early life

Not a lot is known about the early life of Kurt Knispel. We do know that he was born in Salisfeld (Salisov), a small settlement near the town of Zuckmantel in Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia, on 20 September 1921. He spent most of his childhood in nearby Niklasdorf.

Sudetenland was occupied by Nazi Germany on 1 October 1938. Knispel was 17 years old at the time.

That same year Knispel began an apprenticeship at an automobile factory.

In 1940, at the age of 19, Knispel applied to join the armoured branch of

the German Army.

Military career

Knispel joined the Heer forces, more specifically the Panzer-Ersatz und Ausbildungs-Abteilung 15. He was based in Sagan, Lower Silesia. The first months were spent doing basic infantry training and lessons related to armoured

warfare in tanks such as the Panzer I, II and IV.

Knispel was placed in the 3 Kompanie of the Panzer Regiment 29. The Panzer Regiment 29 was part of the 12th Panzer Division. From 1 October 1940 Knispel was trained as a loader and gunner in the short-barrelled Panzer IV.

In 1941 Knispel and his unit entered the battle against the Soviet Union. The 12 Panzer Division was a part of Heeresgruppe Mitte.

Knispel's first action was during Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union.

Knispel secured his first kills against regular infantry on 22 June 1941. Several days later the 12 Panzer Division found itself on the outskirts of Minsk, capital of Belarus. On 26 June

Knispel crossed the River Dvina.

In July Knispel's panzer was damaged and he had to change tanks.

On 20 July of the same year, Knispel's division was

transferred to Heeresgruppe Nord, and the unit set course for Leningrad.

Five days later Knispel and his Panzer IV were leading the column when they were hit by a Russian shell. The entire crew jumped out of the tank, with the exception of Knispel.

He looked through his periscope until he spotted the Russian T-34 tank that had fired on them. Knispel fired at the Russian tank and destroyed it. This became his first official tank kill.

Despite all efforts of the Germans, Leningrad remained in Soviet hands.

The Panzer Regiment 29 suffered heavy casualties and the 9th company was amalgamated with Knispel's 3rd. Knispel changed tanks and during the reformation of the regiment he met Obergefreiter Alfred Rubbel, a promising tank commander. Knispel and Rubbel would become close friends.

By January 1942 Knispel would add another seven tanks to his list together with various other vehicles such as trucks and cannons.

On 17 May 1942 Kurt Knispel and his unit returned to Germany. There a brand new Panzer IV with the long-barrelled 75mm gun was awaiting Rubbel and Knispel.

During their leave they heard that their unit would be attached to the III Abteilung Panzer Regiment 4 of the 13th Panzer Division.

The majority of the unit had already left for the Ukraine on

11 July, but as Rubbel and Knispel had to wait for their brand new tanks, they could only leave on 26 July.

On their way to the front the train stopped in Krakow, Poland. When Knispel heard a Soviet prisoner scream, he immediately rushed to the scene where he saw the prisoner being maltreated by an SS Guard.

Knispel, with pistol in his hand, intervened and his actions led to the fact that the SS guard landed on the train tracks. The German military police, the SS, and the army in general were far from pleased with what had happened.

From then on Knispel was treated very differently. He did not gain promotion and his actions in combat went unrewarded. He would receive medals far slower than anyone else of his calibre.

On 4 August Knispel arrived in Ukraine where he joined the rest of the Panzer Regiment 4, which was already in action at the Caucasus Mountains.

The 13th Panzer Division would nearly become encircled in the pocket of Ordjonikidze. The unit had to leave practically everything and force their way to the SS Wiking, who came to their rescue.

During the battle of the Caucasus Knispel in the Panzer IV F2 would add another 12 tanks to his list of kills.

For his actions Knispel was promoted to Unteroffizier and he also received the Iron Cross Second Class.

Several men of the Regiment

earned a spot to man the new Tiger I. Fortunately for Knispel he was one of the lucky ones chosen. He was granted leave over the Christmas and New Year's period, so he was able to spend time with his family.

In early 1943 Knispel was trained on the new 88mm gun. He came first in his class and he was placed in the 1Kompanie of the Schwere Panzer Abteilung 503.

In April Knispel and his new unit set out for the Ostfront where they would participate in Operation Zitadelle, also known as the Battle of Kursk - one of the biggest tank battles in history.

The Battle of Kursk began on 5 July 1943. Kurt Knispel and the 1st company, heavy tank battalion 503 were tasked with opening the road for the 6th Panzer Division on the right flank of the battle.

On the opening day of the battle, Knispel eliminated several anti-tank positions. On 7 July Knispel managed to destroy a Soviet T-34 tank from 1,500 metres with a single shot. One day later he destroyed seven tanks from ranges up to 2,000 metres.

When the Zug, a platoon of Tigers, bumped into a Soviet tank column of 14 tanks, they opened fire on the column and 11 Russian tanks were destroyed within a few minutes.

During the Kursk campaign Knispel was responsible for destroying no fewer than 27 tanks. For his remarkable actions at Kursk, Knispel would receive



the Iron Cross First Class.

As of 16 July the Germans were on the back foot at Kursk. Knispel and the platoon were ordered to help SS Kavallerie Brigade Fegelein from being over-run. In doing so Knispel managed to destroy a Soviet tank from a range of 3,000 metres.

In a night time action Knispel, who was then operating as a tank commander, and Rippl, a fellow tank commander were positioned around Osswetz. Knispel could hear Soviet tanks closing in on their location. When a third Tiger joined the party, all hell broke loose.

The German commanders opened fire and soon two Soviet tanks were ablaze. In return the Third Tiger was hit by a T-34. Shortly after this another eight T-34 tanks were burning. When Knispel's engine overheated his battle was over.

By the end of September 1943, Knispel had already racked up the impressive amount of 80 enemy tanks destroyed.

In January 1944 Knispel and the 34 Tigers of the 503rd Heavy Tank Battalion were integrated in the Armoured Kampfgruppe Bake.

They were tasked to liberate the encircled men at the famous Tcherkassy pocket. The Tigers managed to put an astonishing amount of 267 tanks out of action. On the axis of Boscovka – Frankovka – Buchanka, Knispel destroyed one Soviet tank after another.

By April of the same year Knispel's kill count now stood at 101 kills. For this impressive achievement, Knispel would receive the German Cross in Gold.

Just before 6 June – the Allied



KING TIGER: The crew of Kurt Knispel's Tiger II, or King Tiger, take some time out to perform maintenance of the vehicle.

invasion of Normandy – Knispel and his unit returned to Germany where they received the brand new Tiger II – the King Tiger. Not long afterwards the Schwere Panzer Abteilung 503 was sent to Normandy to deal with the incoming Allied threat.

Although Knispel racked up a crazy amount of kills on the Eastern Front, he only managed to destroy two Allied tanks and several other vehicles. This is probably due to the different nature in both combat and the battlefield.

At the end of August 1944 the battalion was once again back in Germany for reformation. Knispel was granted permission to travel to his hometown. Little did he know that it would be the last time he would see his parents.

On 8 October 1944 Knispel and the unit were sent towards Hungary. The unit was located near the town of Sconemedi and the unit immediately came under heavy fire. Knispel's good

friend Rubble was wounded for the fourth time in his career. Rubbel would survive the war and live to the ripe old age of 92.

At this time Knispel secured his 126th victory. Knispel's commanding officer, Dr Dienst-Korber, recommended Knispel for the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross - an award which Knispel would never receive. In fact throughout the war four different commanders had recommended Knispel for the Knights Cross for his outstanding bravery, superb marksmanship, and situational awareness. Yet Knispel would become the Ace of Aces without receiving the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross.

The situation on the Ostfront for the German worsened by the day. On 15 April 1945 Knispel and the Tiger II's of the 503 Heavy Tank battalion were located north of Vienna.

The unit had suffered dearly in the battles around Dubnik. By



GERMAN CROSS IN GOLD: This was awarded to Knispel after he had destroyed 100 enemy tanks.

April only eight Tigers survived. On 19 April Knispel knocked out another three T-24/85 tanks and destroyed an IS-2.

Two days later Knispel destroyed another four tanks in the morning. During the afternoon he racked up another three kills.

On 26 April the remnants of the 503rd were repositioned to



Vlasatice, a town between Brno and Vienna. Two days later, on the 28th, Knispel was promoted to Feldwebel. The day after Kurt Knispel departed for battle for the last time in his life.

Death

He went into battle in the area of Vrbovec. He finally secured his 168th tank kill, but at that point he was being overwhelmed by Soviet armour. Immobilised and encircled, his Tiger II received a finishing blow.

Kurt Knispel was mortally wounded and succumbed to his wounds several minutes later.

In April 2013 Czech archaeologists found the bodies of 15 German soldiers buried on the grounds of a church at Vrbovec. Knispel was identified by his dog tag that he was wearing around his neck.

On 12 November 2014 the Ace of Aces found his final resting place in the German Military Cemetery of Brno.

Legacy

Though he was recommended for it four times, Knispel never received the coveted Knight's Cross, a standard award for most other World War II German tank aces.

Other Panzer Aces such as Otto Car-

Cross with Oak Leaves), Hans Bolter (Knights Cross with Oak Leaves), Paul Egger (Knights Cross), and Michael Wittman (Knights Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords) were all recognised for their achievements. But not Knispel.

Unlike some other commanders, Knispel was not consumed by the pursuit of decorations and did not suffer from a "sore throat", army slang for those who lusted after the Knight's Cross.

When there were conflicting claims for a destroyed enemy tank, Knispel always stepped back, always willing to credit success to someone else. It is claimed that his actual total of kills was as high as 195.

The probable reason why Knispel never received the Knights Cross, nor received promotion beyond the rank of Feldwebel (Sergeant), was because of his military bearing and his constant conflicts with higher Nazi authorities.

Knispel was never a 'spit and polish' soldier. He sported a goatee beard, he had a tattoo, and his hair was far longer than regulations allowed.

He had a number of run-ins with Nazi authority, including the time when he had assaulted an SS Einsatzgruppen officer for mistreating Soviet prisoners.

It was rumoured that Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS, had no time for Knispel and took a special interest in his career.

In fact it was only his impressive track-record and the fact that many of the troops regarded him as a hero that saved him from ending up in a military prison.

Fokker Dr.I

Often known simply as the Fokker Triplane, the Dr.I saw widespread service in the spring of 1918. It became famous as the aircraft in which Manfred von Richthofen gained his last 19 victories, and in which he was killed on 21 April 1918.

According to the Smithsonian Institution and *Fédération Aéronautique Internationale* (FAI), on 17 December 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright made four brief flights at Kitty Hawk with their first powered aircraft. The Wright brothers had invented the first successful airplane.

Just eight years later, in 1911, powered aircraft were first used in war by the Italians against the Turks near Tripoli,

But it was not until the Great War of 1914–18 that their use became widespread. At first, aircraft were unarmed and employed for reconnaissance, serving basically as extensions of the eyes of the ground commander.

Soon, however, the need to

deny such reconnaissance to the enemy led to air-to-air combat in which each side tried to gain superiority in the air. Fighter planes were armed with fixed, forward-firing machine guns that allowed the pilot to aim his entire aircraft at the enemy, and the effective range of these weapons (no more than about 180 metres) meant that the first aerial combat took place at very short range.

By the second year of the war fighter tactics emerged on all sides emphasizing basic concepts that, with modification, remained applicable through the jet age.

Both the Allies and the Germans made use of biplanes, fixed-wing aircraft with two

main wings stacked one above the other.

In December 1915 the Fokker E.III *Eindecker* (literally meaning “one deck”) entered service on the Western Front. It was

the first single wing aircraft to enter combat and enjoyed limited success.

In early 1917 the British Sopwith Triplane entered service. It was the first military triplane to see operational service and was immediately successful. It was nevertheless built in comparatively small numbers and was withdrawn from active service as Sopwith Camels arrived in the latter half of 1917.

The Germans noted the success of the Sopwith Triplane and decided that it was time to come up with a triplane of their own design.

Design and Development

Despite its single Vickers machine gun ar-

mament, the Sopwith swiftly proved itself superior to the more heavily armed Albatros fighters then in use by the *Luftstreitkräfte* (Imperial German Air Service).

In April 1917, Anthony Fokker viewed a captured Sopwith Triplane while visiting Jasta 11. Upon his return to the Schwerin factory, Fokker instructed Reinhold Platz to build a triplane, but gave him no further information about the Sopwith design.

Platz responded with the V.4, a small, rotary-powered triplane with a steel tube fuselage and thick cantilever wings, first developed during Fokker’s government-mandated collaboration with Hugo Junkers. Initial tests revealed that the V.4 had unacceptably high control forces resulting from the use of unbalanced ailer-

ons and elevators.

Instead of submitting the V.4 for a type test, Fokker produced a revised prototype designated V.5. The most notable changes were the introduction of horn-balanced ailerons and elevators, as well as longer-span wings.

The V.5 also featured interplane struts, which were not necessary from a structural standpoint, but which minimized wing flexing.

On 14 July 1917, Idflieg issued an order for 20 pre-production aircraft. The V.5 prototype, serial 101/17, was tested to destruction at Adlershof on 11 August 1917.

Operational history

The first two pre-production triplanes were designated F.I, in accord with Idflieg’s early class prefix for triplanes. These aircraft, serials 102/17 and 103/17, were the only machines to receive the F.I designation and



could be distinguished from subsequent aircraft by a slight convex curve of the tailplane's leading edge.

The two aircraft were sent to Jastas 10 and 11 for combat evaluation, arriving at Markebeeke, Belgium on 28 August 1917.

Richthofen first flew 102/17 on 1 September 1917 and shot down two enemy aircraft in the next two days. He reported to the Kogenluft (Kommandierender General der Luftstreitkräfte) that the F.I was superior to the Sopwith Triplane.

Richthofen recommended that fighter squadrons be re-equipped with the new aircraft as soon as possible. The combat evaluation came to an abrupt conclusion when Oberleutnant Kurt Wolff, Staffelführer of Jasta 11, was shot down in 102/17 on 15 September, and Leutnant Werner Voss, Staffelführer of Jasta 10, was killed in 103/17 on 23 September.

The remaining pre-production aircraft, designated Dr.I, were delivered to Jasta 11. Idflieg issued a production order for 100 triplanes in September, followed by an order for 200 in November.

Apart from the straight leading edge of the tailplane, these aircraft were almost identical to the F.I. The primary distinguishing feature was the addition of wingtip skids, which proved necessary because the aircraft was tricky to land and prone to ground looping. In October, Fokker began delivering the Dr.I to squadrons within Richthofen's Jagdgeschwader I.

Compared with the Albatros

and Pfalz fighters, the Dr.I offered exceptional manoeuvrability. Though the ailerons were not very effective, the rudder and elevator controls were light and powerful.

Rapid turns, especially to the right, were facilitated by the triplane's marked directional instability. Vizefeldwebel Franz Hemer of Jasta 6 said, "The triplane was my favorite fighting machine because it had such wonderful flying qualities. I could let myself stunt – looping and rolling – and could avoid an enemy by diving with perfect safety. The triplane had to be given up because although it was very manoeuvrable, it was no longer fast enough."

As Hemer noted, the Dr.I was considerably slower than contemporary Allied fighters in level flight and in a dive. While initial rate of climb was excellent, performance fell off dramatically at higher altitudes because of the low compression of the Oberursel Ur.II, a clone of the Le Rhône 9J rotary engine.

As the war continued, chronic shortages of castor oil made rotary operation increasingly difficult. The poor quality of German ersatz lubricant resulted in many engine failures, particularly during the summer of 1918.

The Dr.I suffered other deficiencies. The pilot's view was poor during take off and landing. The cockpit was cramped and furnished with materials of inferior quality. Furthermore, the proximity of the gun butts to the cockpit, combined with inadequate crash padding, left the pilot vulnerable to serious head injury in the event of a

crash landing.

Wing failures

On 29 October 1917, Leutnant der Reserve Heinrich Gontermann, Staffelführer of Jasta 15, was performing aerobatics when his triplane broke up. Gontermann was fatally injured in the ensuing crash landing.

Leutnant der Reserve Günther Pastor of Jasta 11 was killed two days later when his triplane broke up in level flight. Inspection of the wrecked aircraft showed that the wings had been poorly constructed. Examination of other high-time triplanes confirmed these findings. On 2 November, Idflieg grounded all remaining triplanes pending an inquiry.

In response to the crash investigation, Fokker improved quality control on the production line, particularly varnishing of the wing spars and ribs, to combat moisture. Fokker also strengthened the rib structures and the attachment of the auxiliary spars to the ribs.

Existing triplanes were repaired and modified at Fokker's expense. After testing a modified wing at Adlershof, Idflieg authorized the triplane's return to service on 28 November 1917. Production resumed in early December.

By January 1918, Jastas 6 and 11 were fully equipped with the triplane. Only 14 squadrons used the Dr.I as their primary equipment. Most of these units were part of Jagdgeschwadern I, II, or III. Frontline inventory peaked in late April 1918, with 171 aircraft in service on the Western Front.

Despite corrective measures,

the Dr.I continued to suffer from wing failures. On 3 February 1918, Leutnant Hans Joachim Wolff of Jasta 11 successfully landed after suffering a failure of the upper wing leading edge and ribs.

On 18 March 1918, Lothar von Richthofen, Staffelführer of Jasta 11, suffered a failure of the upper wing leading edge during combat with Sopwith Camels of No. 73 Squadron and Bristol F.2Bs of No. 62 Squadron. Richthofen was seriously injured in the ensuing crash landing.

Postwar research revealed that poor workmanship was not the only cause of the triplane's structural failures. In 1929, National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) investigations found that the upper wing carried a higher lift coefficient than the lower wing – at high speeds it could be 2.55 times as much.

The triplane's chronic structural problems destroyed any prospect of large-scale orders. Production eventually ended in May 1918, by which time only 320 had been manufactured.

The Dr.I was withdrawn from frontline service as the Fokker D.VII entered widespread service in June and July. Jasta 19 was the last squadron to be fully equipped with the Dr.I.

Surviving triplanes were distributed to training and home defence units. Several training aircraft were re-engined with the 75 kW (100 hp) Goebel Goe.II.

At the time of the Armistice, many remaining triplanes were assigned to fighter training schools at Nivelles, Belgium,

and Valenciennes, France. Allied pilots tested several of these triplanes and found their handling qualities to be impressive.

Postwar

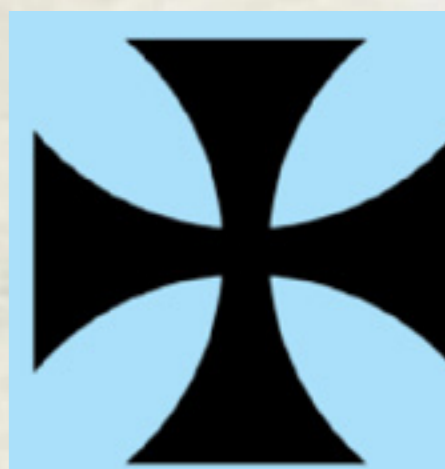
Three triplanes are known to have survived the Armistice. Serial 528/17 was retained as a testbed by the *Deutschen Versuchsanstalt für Luftfahrt* (German Aviation Research Institute) at Adlershof.

After being used in the filming of two movies, 528/17 is believed to have crashed sometime in the late 1930s. Serial 152/17, in which Manfred von Richthofen obtained three victories, was displayed at the Zeughaus museum in Berlin. This aircraft was destroyed in an Allied bombing raid during World War II.

In 1932, Fokker assembled a Dr.I from existing components. It was displayed in the Deutsche Luftfahrt-Sammlung in Berlin. In 1943, the aircraft was destroyed in an Allied bombing raid. Today, only a few original Dr.I artifacts survive in museums.

Replicas

Large numbers of replica and reproduction aircraft have been built for both individuals and museums. Bitz Flugzeugbau GmbH built two Dr.I replicas for use in Twentieth Century Fox's 1966 film *The Blue Max*. Because of the expense and scarcity of authentic rotary engines, most airworthy replicas are powered by a Warner Scarab or Continental R-670 radial engine. A few, however, feature vintage Le Rhône 9J or reproduction Oberursel Ur.II rotary engines.



Fokker Dr.1

General characteristics

- Crew: 1
- Length: 5.77 metres
- Upper wingspan: 7.19 metres
- Height: 2.95 metres
- Wing area: 18.7 m² Aspect ratio: 4.04
- Empty weight: 406 kg
- Gross weight: 586 kg
- Powerplant: 1 × Oberursel Ur.II 9-cylinder air-cooled rotary piston engine, 82 kW (110 hp)
- Propellers: Two-bladed fixed-pitch wooden propeller

Performance

- Maximum speed: 160 km/h at 2,600 metres
- Stall speed: 72 km/h
- Range: 300 km
- Service ceiling: 6,100 metres
- Rate of climb: 5.7 m/s
- Zero-lift drag coefficient: 0.0323
- Frontal area at zero-lift drag coefficient: 0.62 m²

Armament

- Guns: 2 × 7.92 mm Maschinengewehr 08 "Spandau" machine guns

The Battle of Ia Drang was the first major battle between the United States Army and the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), and was part of the Pleiku Campaign conducted early in the Vietnam War. Both sides claimed the battle as a victory.

The Battle of Ia Drang comprised two main engagements, centred on two previously scouted helicopter landing zones (LZs), known as LZ X-Ray and LZ Albany.

The first involved the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment and supporting units under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Hal Moore, and took place November 14–16, 1965 at LZ X-Ray, located at the eastern foot of the Chu Pong Massif in the central highlands of Vietnam.

The second engagement involved the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment plus supporting units under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Robert McDade, and took place on November 17 at LZ Albany, farther north in the Ia Drang Valley. It is notable for being the first large scale helicopter air assault and also the first use of Boeing B-52 Stratofortress strategic bombers in a tactical support role.

Surrounded and under heavy fire from a numerically superior force, the American forces at LZ X-ray were able to hold off and drive back the North Vietnamese forces over three days of battle, largely through the support of both air power and heavy artillery bombardment, which the North Vietnamese lacked. LZ X-ray was considered an American tactical victory, as the Americans were able to exact an almost 10:1 kill ratio.

At LZ Albany, the American forces were ambushed in close quarters. They were unable to use air and artillery support due to the close engagement of the North Vietnamese, the American forces were badly defeated, suffering a more than 50% casualty rate before being extricated from the battle. Both sides, therefore, were able to claim victory in the battle.

Background

By early 1965, the majority of rural South Vietnam was under limited Viet Cong (VC) control, increasingly supported by Vietnam Peo-

ple's Army (PAVN) regulars from North Vietnam. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) General William C. Westmoreland had secured the commitment of upward of 300,000 U.S. regulars from President Lyndon B. Johnson and a build-up of forces took place in the summer of 1965.

Viet Cong forces were in nominal control of most of the South Vietnamese countryside by 1965 and had established military infrastructure in the Central Highlands, to the northeast of the Saigon region. Vietnamese communist forces had operated in this area during the previous decade in the First Indochina War against the French, winning a notable victory at the Battle of Mang Yang Pass in 1954.

There were few reliable roads into the area, making it an ideal place for the communist forces to form bases, relatively immune from attack by the generally road-bound ARVN forces. During 1965, large groups of North Vietnamese Army regulars moved into the area to conduct offensive operations. Attacks to the southwest from these bases threatened to cut South Vietnam in two.

By 1964 North Vietnam had established the B3 Front in the central highlands of South Vietnam. By early November 1965 three PAVN regiments – the 32nd, 33rd and 66th – and the

H15 Local Force Battalion had been assembled in the area. The B3 Front commander,

Maj. Gen. Chu Huy Man, planned to target South Vietnamese positions in the Kon Tum and Pleiku provinces. The city of Pleiku was the location of the South Vietnamese II Corps headquarters, commanded by General Vinh Loc, who had at his disposal nine South Vietnamese battalions; four ranger, three airborne and two marine.

The U.S. command saw this as an ideal area to test new air mobility tactics. Air mobility called for battalion-sized forces to be delivered, supplied and extracted from an area of action using helicopters.

Since the heavy weapons of a normal combined-arms force could not follow, the infantry would be supported by coordinated close air support, artillery and aerial rocket fire, arranged from a distance and directed by local observers.

The new tactics had been developed in the U.S. by the 11th Air Assault Division (Test), which was renamed as the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

The division's troopers dubbed themselves the "Air Cav" (Air Cavalry) and in July 1965 began deploying to Camp Radcliff, An Khê, Vietnam. By November, most of the division's three brigades were ready for operations.

Landing Zones

Col. Brown selected Lt. Col. Moore and his men for the mission, with the explicit orders not to attempt to scale the mountain. There were several clearings in

the area that had been designated as possible helicopter landing zones, typically named for a letter of the NATO phonetic alphabet. Moore selected:

- LZ X-Ray as his landing zone, a flat clearing surrounded by low trees at the eastern base of the Chu Pong Massif and bordered by a dry creek bed on the west. The Ia Drang River was about 2 km to the northwest.
- LZ Albany: about 2.5 km to the northeast of X-Ray
- LZ Columbus: about 2.2 km east of Albany
- LZ Tango: about 2 km to the north of X-Ray
- LZ Yankee: a similar distance south of X-Ray. LZ Yankee was on sloping ground and could only fit about 6–8 helicopters at one time.
- LZ Whiskey: 2.1 km southeast
- LZ Victor: about 6 km to the south-southeast.
- Artillery support would be provided from firebase "FB Falcon", about 8 km to the northeast of X-Ray

General Knowles stated that he had selected the initial landing zone used by Hal Moore and his troops knowing quite well that the enemy lacked anti-aircraft guns and heavy mortars that had been destroyed during the attack on the Plei Me camp and that the enemy could have positioned on the hillsides overlooking the landing zone to gun down the helicopters and to decimate the cavalry troops landing on the ground.

LZ X-Ray was approximately the size of a misshapen football field, some 100 meters in length

(east to west). It was estimated that only eight UH-1 Hueys could fit in the clearing at a given time.

The 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry (1/7) was typical for U.S. Army units of the time, consisting of three rifle companies and a heavy weapons company: A-Alpha Company, B-Bravo Company, C-Charlie Company, and D-Delta Company - about 450 men in total of the 765 of the battalion's authorized strength.

They were to be shuttled by 16 Huey transport helicopters, which could generally carry 10 to 12 equipped troopers, so the battalion would have to be delivered in several "lifts" carrying just less than one complete company each time. Each lift would take about 30 minutes.

Lt. Col. Moore arranged the lifts to deliver Bravo Company first, along with his command team, followed by Alpha and Charlie Companies, and finally Delta Company. Moore's plan was to move Bravo and Alpha Companies northwest past the creek bed, and Charlie Company south toward the mountain.

Delta Company, which comprised special weapons forces including mortar, recon, and machine gun units, was to be used as the battlefield reserve. In the centre of the LZ was a large termite hill that was to become Moore's command post. Furthermore, the Bravo Company of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry closed in at 18h00.

The battle

The Battle of Ia Drang lasted for five days, from 14 November 1965 to 18 November 1965.

There is not enough space in this article to go into a detailed account of the five-day battle.

At 10:48, the first troops of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry (1/7) arrived at LZ X-Ray with members of B Company touching down after about 30 minutes of bombardment via artillery, aerial rockets, and air strikes. The troops were inserted about 200 meters from the position of the NVA 9th Battalion belonging to the 66th Regiment.

The last troops of the battalion were landed at 15:20, by which time the troops on the ground were already heavily engaged, with one platoon cut off. Faced with heavy casualties and unexpected opposition, 1st Battalion was reinforced by B Company 2nd Battalion 7th Cavalry.

Fighting continued the following day when the LZ was further reinforced by A Company 2/7 and also by 2nd Battalion 5th Cavalry, and the lost platoon was rescued.

The last Vietnamese assaults on the position were repulsed on the morning of the 16th. As the Vietnamese forces melted away, the remainder of 2/7 and A Company of 1st Battalion 5th Cavalry arrived.

By mid-afternoon 1/7 and B Company 2/7 had been airlifted to LZ Falcon, and on the 17th of November 2/5 marched out towards LZ Columbus while the remaining 2/7 and 1/5 companies marched towards LZ Albany.

The latter force became strung out and, in the early afternoon, were badly mauled in an ambush before they could be reinforced and extricated.



HELP FROM THE SKIES: Helicopters were used to bring in reinforcements and supplies. They were also used to casevac the wounded and dead.

Effects and aftermath

On the last day of the battle (18 November), General Westmoreland and General Cao Van Vien, visited the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry. They were briefed by Lt. Col. Moore about the battle at LZ X-Ray.

Westmoreland told them they were being recommended for a Presidential Unit Citation. They then flew to the 3rd Air Cavalry Brigade commanded by Col. Brown who gave them a briefing and they flew over the operation area.

Before leaving Pleiku, they also had a meeting with General Vinh Loc, II Corps Commander and General Larsen, IFFV Commander who were involved in the battle at corps level. In this session, with Col. Brown's presence, they reviewed and agreed that the execution of the Battle of Ia Drang was in line with the National Campaign Plan developed by General Thang and General DePuy, the two J-3's of the JGS

and MACV.

They then flew to Qui Nhon and went to the hospital to visit the troops of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry who were wounded in the LZ Albany engagement.

After the battle, General Westmoreland instructed his J2 and J3 Chiefs to gain more improvements and "to bring a B-52 strike down within seven hours after acquiring suitable intelligence".

As the fight at LZ Albany was coming to an end, the ARVN II Corps Command decided to "finish off" the campaign by introducing the ARVN Airborne Brigade into the battlefield on 17 November with the establishment of a new artillery support base at LZ Crooks, secured by the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry.

The 5-day B-52 airstrike operation were carried on for two more days: on 19 November the carpet bombing aimed at the positions of units of the 66th and 33rd Regiments; and on

20 November units of the 32nd Regiment.

The ARVN Airborne Brigade pursued the two remaining 635th and 334th Battalions of the 320th Regiments and executed two ambushes: the first on 20 November at the north side and the second on 24 November on the south side of the Ia Drang River. On 26 November, witnessing no further contact, the ARVN withdrew from the area.

A 1966 NVA Central Highlands Front report claimed that in five major engagements with U.S. forces, NVA forces suffered 559 soldiers killed and 669 wounded. NVA histories claim the United States suffered 1,500 to 1,700 casualties during the Ia Drang Campaign.

The U.S. military confirmed 305 killed and 524 wounded (including 234 killed and 242 wounded between 14 and 18 November, 1965), and claimed 3,561 NVA were killed and more than 1,000 were wounded during engagements with the 1st Cavalry Division troops.

According to ARVN intelligence sources, each of the three NVA regiments' initial strength was 2,200 soldiers: 1st Battalion-500, 2nd Battalion-500, 3rd Battalion-500, Mortar Company-150, Anti-Aircraft Company-150, Signal Company-120, Transportation Company-150, Medical Company-40, Engineer Company-60, Recon Company-50.

ARVN's II Corps Command recapitulates the losses of the NVA from 18 October to 26 November, as follows: KIA (body count) 4,254, KIA (est) 2,270, WIA 1293, CIA 179, weapons

(crew served) 169, (individual) 1,027.

NVA casualty figures advanced by II Corps Command relied especially on NVA regimental command posts' own loss reports (as indicated by Maj. Gen. Kinnard), intercepted by ARVN radio listening stations.

Furthermore, they include NVA troop casualties caused by the five-day Arc Light airstrike that the NVA and U.S. sides fail to take into account.

As the outcome of the entire campaign, the ARVN claimed that the NVA were unable to achieve their objectives of overrunning the relief column at Plei Me, which is confirmed in the B3 Front commander's account, as well as that the entire B3 Field Force strength had been wiped out and the survivors pushed over the Cambodian border.

This battle can be seen as a blueprint for tactics by both sides. The Americans used air mobility, artillery fire and close air support to accomplish battlefield objectives.

The NVA learned that they could neutralize that firepower by quickly engaging American forces at very close range. North Vietnamese Col. Nguyễn Hữu An included his lessons from the battle at X-ray in his orders for Albany, "Move inside the column, grab them by the belt, and thus avoid casualties from the artillery and air."

Both Westmoreland and An thought this battle to be a success. This battle was one of the few set piece battles of the war and was one of the first battles to popularize the U.S. concept of

the "body count" as a measure of success, as the U.S. claimed that the kill ratio was nearly 10 to 1.

The vast majority of casualties inflicted on US forces was through small-arms and light-mortar fire, with Lt. Col. Moore noting the NVA/PAVN's accurate shooting, well-placed ambushes and coordinated targeting of officers and overwhelmed US positions in small-unit tactics

On the other hand, US forces had emerged from the battle by inflicting casualties through B-52 strikes, aerial rockets and artillery and relying on overwhelming firepower.

Both sides probably inflated the estimates of their opponent's casualties.

Notable awards

Three US officers, 2nd Lt. Walter Marm and Capt. Ed Freeman and Maj. Bruce Crandall who were helicopter pilots during the battle, were awarded the Medal of Honour.

Lt. Col. Hal Moore was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Journalist Joseph Galloway was the only civilian awarded the Bronze Star Medal for heroism during the Vietnam War.

He had travelled into the battle on one of the helicopters and covered the entire battle. On 1 November 1965 he disregarded his own safety to help rescue two wounded soldiers while under fire.

He was finally awarded his Bronze Star on 8 January 1988.



SQUADRON LEADER MATT O'BRIEN heads into the wild blue yonder as he takes on the roll of a World War I and World War II pilot. Only problem is that he's more air than force.

I've always been a fan of flight simulators. In fact I bought MS Flight Simulator 2020 the day it was released.

And while I love Flight Sim 2020 and I've racked up hundreds of hours on it, there is one thing lacking - combat.

Over the years I've played plenty of combat flight simulators. Most, unfortunately, have been about as realistic as a politician's promises.

Then I discovered IL-2 Sturmovik - Great Battles. It's a series developed by 1C Game Studios and it's one of the best, if not the best, combat flight sim I've played.

The first thing you need to do is buy the base game. This is called IL-2 Sturmovik - Battle of Stalingrad.

As the title suggests, it is all about the aerial combat above the Russian city of Stalingrad.

It is a stand-alone game and you don't have to purchase anything else to play the game.

In the game you take the role of a pilot of either the German *Luftwaffe* or the Soviet Air Forces.

On the German side you can fly the Bf 109 F-4, Bf 109 G-2, Ju 87 D-3 (Stuka), or He 111 H-6 bomber.

For the Russians there are the LAGG-3, YAK-1, IL-2 AM-38, or PE-2 bomber.

Both the exterior and the interiors of the planes are well detailed. The game runs in both standard and VR (Virtual Reality) modes. You can play in single player or on-line in multi-player mode.

You can set the level of realism from making it fairly easy to fly right up to making it very realistic.

There are also various game modes to choose. For example you may choose to undertake a simple flight consisting of taking off, flying around, and then landing. It's a great way to familiarise yourself with the controls for a particular aircraft.

Or you could choose a dogfight where you will go up against one or two opponents. There is also the quick-mission mode that will generate a random mission for you.

Choosing a historic mission means that you get to undertake a mission that really happened. It may see you, as part of a fighter squadron, escort bombers to and from their target. Or you could do a combat air patrol.

There are also mission where you may have to attack ground targets such as a convoy, a train, or a bridge.

To me the best mode is career mode. This follows the real chronology of the battle starting with Germans crossing the Don

river and starting their advance to the Volga on August 23rd, 1942 and continues to the complete liberation of the city on February 2nd, 1943.

Learn about the real events of the war from the newspaper delivered weekly to your squadron.

Starting as a rookie pilot you will have to fly missions, gain experience, get promotion, and even earn medals and awards. Most of all, you will have to survive.

The action takes place on a 358 x 230 km map - The largest and most detailed recreation of the Battle of Stalingrad theatre ever modelled in a flight simulation with unique structures, buildings and landscapes.

Once you own Battle of Stalingrad you can then purchase DLC for the game. These include Battle of Moscow and Battle of Kuban. Both of these also focus on the Eastern Front.

Battle of Bodenplatte turns to late war aerial engagements between the U.S. Army Air Force, Royal Air Force and the *Luftwaffe* in the skies over western Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium during the winter of 1944 and early 1945. It introduces aircraft such as the German Me-262 A jet.

Battle of Normandy brings the air war surrounding the



successful Allied invasion on France in June 1944.

The first DLC I purchase was Flying Circus - Volume 1. This deals with an area of particular interest to me - World War I.

Here you can fly ten legendary World War I aircraft. On the German side you have the Fokker Dr-1, Pfalz D.IIIa, Albatros D.Va, Fokker D.VII and Halberstadt CL.II. The Allies feature the SPAD 13.C1, S.E.5.a, Sopwith Camel, Sopwith Dolphin and Bristol F2B.

Flying these wood and canvas machines is both fun and challenging. Your guns will often jam and you will need to clear them. Your engine can cut out if you try a climb that is too steep.

Your aim has to be good as dogfights are twisting, turning, chaotic affairs and many bullets just pass through the thin materials these planes are made of. Aim for the engine, radiator, wing supports or the enemy pilot himself to bring him down.

I've been flying a number of World War I missions and I've also tried a number of careers - both as a German and Allied pilot. These careers have not been all that successful.

On my first career as a British pilot and on my first mission, I was flying a Sopwith Camel. I got behind a Halberstadt and gave him a good burst, hitting the pilot and killing him. I then made a sharp left bank and flew straight into another British aircraft, bringing us both down.

During one of my careers as a German pilot I did have a unique experience. I ran out of ammo and had turned to head back home.

An allied Spad 13 pulled up alongside me, almost mocking me. I took out my service revolver (yes, you do have one of them), fired a single shot and hit him in the head.

It was just a pity that I ran out of fuel on the way back. I tried to land in an open field, but

managed to hit some trees.

IL-2 Sturmovik - Great Battles is a must for those of you that enjoy combat flight simulation. A word of advice though. They are expensive, but they often go on sale and that's the best time to get them.



Publisher - 1C-777 Limited

Genre - Simulation

Score - 8.5/10

Price - Various (on Steam)



Movie Review

We were Soldiers

Released: 2002
Running time: 138 minutes
Directed by: Randall Wallace

Released in 2002 and based on the book *We were soldiers once...and young* by by Lieutenant General (Ret.) Hal Moore and reporter Joseph L. Galloway, *We were Soldiers* was directed Randall Wallace.

The film is based on the Battle of Ia Drang on 14 November 1965.

The film opens with a French unit on patrol in Vietnam in 1954, during the final year of the First Indochina War. The patrol is ambushed and the Viet Minh commander, Nguyen Huu An (Don Duong), orders his soldiers to “kill all they send, and they will stop coming”.

Eleven years later, the United States is fighting the Vietnam War. U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Hal Moore (Mel Gibson) is chosen to train and lead a battalion.

After arriving in Vietnam, he learns that an American base has been attacked, and is ordered to take his 400 men after the enemy and eliminate the North Vietnamese attackers, despite the fact that intelligence has no idea of the number of enemy troops.

Moore leads a newly created air cavalry unit into the Ia Drang Valley. At his side is his Company Sergeant Major Basil L. Plumley (Sam Elliott).

After landing in the “Valley of Death”, the soldiers capture

a North Vietnamese soldier and learn from him that the location they were sent to is actually the base camp for a veteran North Vietnamese army division of 4,000 men.

Upon arrival in the area with a platoon of soldiers, 2nd Lt. Henry Herrick spots an enemy scout, runs after him, and orders reluctant soldiers to follow. The North Vietnamese scout lures them into an ambush, resulting in several men being killed, including Herrick and his subordinates. The surviving platoon members are surrounded with no chance of retreat and are cut off from the rest of the battalion. Sgt. Savage assumes command, calls in artillery, and uses the cover of night to keep the Vietnamese from overrunning their small defensive position.

Meanwhile, with helicopters constantly dropping off units, Moore manages to secure weak points before the North Vietnamese can take advantage of them.

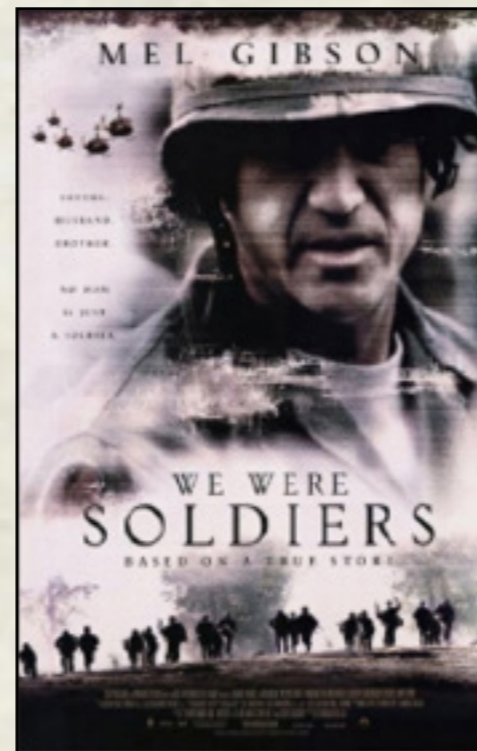
Back at the base reporter Joe Galloway (Barry Pepper) asks chopper pilot Major Bruce “Snake” Crandall (Greg Kinnear) if he can be dropped off in the combat zone.

On the second day, despite being trapped and desperately outnumbered, the main U.S. force manages to hold off the North Vietnamese with artillery, mortars, and helicopter airlifts

of supplies and reinforcements. Eventually, Nguyen Huu An, the commander of the North Vietnamese division, orders a large-scale attack on the American position.

Meanwhile, back in the United States, Julia Moore (Madeleine Stowe) has become the leader of the American wives living on the base. When the Army begins to use yellow cab drivers to deliver telegrams notifying the next of kin of soldiers’ deaths in combat, Julia personally assumes that emotional responsibility instead.

We were Soldiers is a movie well worth watching and has some really good action scenes.



Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

Dead Men Running

Imagine the most tenacious and skilled soldiers in the business fighting in the most brutal of bush wars, Gavin Manning was there, from 1982 - 88, on the border of northern Namibia and southern Angola - right in the thick of it.

The ultra-covert South African special forces unit known as Koevoet (or Special OPS-K) has been shrouded in mystery for three decades.

This book will blow the lid off the box and set all the misconceptions straight.

Manning gives a gripping account of tracking the Soviet-backed terrorists, often right on their heels, using elite skills and technology.

The finely honed instincts

and supreme ability of the Koevoet operators earned them the reputation of the best counter-insurgency and tracking unit that Africa and the world had ever see.

Dead Men Running is a vital book about the Angolan bush war that finally tells the truth.

But it is also Manning’s own story - how he realized his dream of becoming part of Koevoet, the brotherhood he inherited, and the friends he made who lost their lives.

Manning is a skillful writer who will sweep you up into the action with the precision of accurate gunfire.

This book is a must for those interested in the military history of Africa and particularly

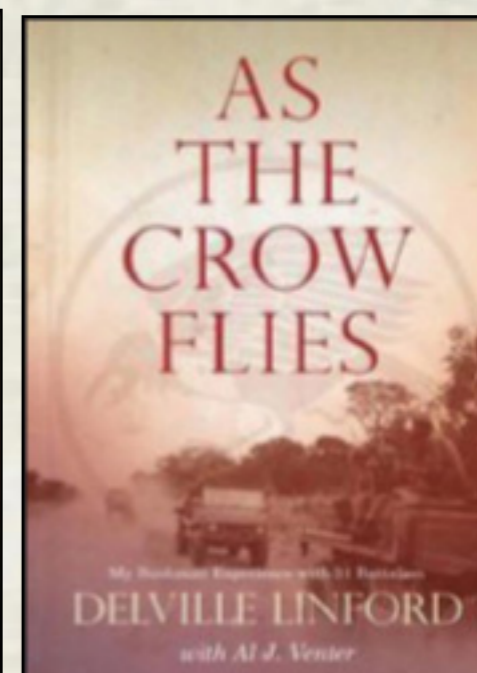


interested in the South African Border War.

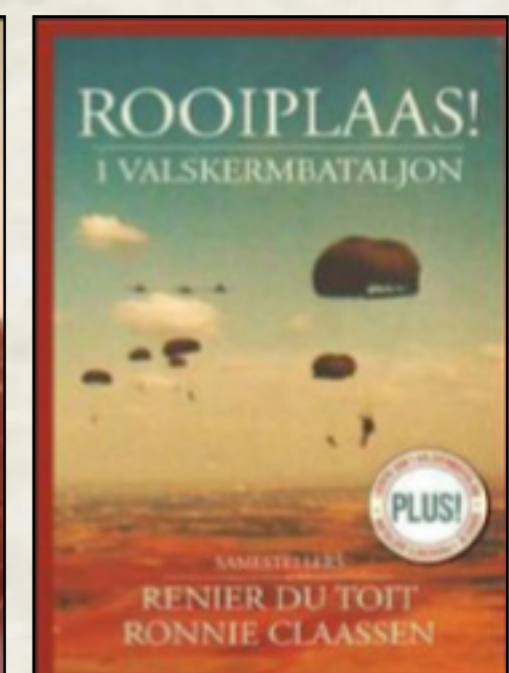
Cost: R400



1 Recce: The Night belongs to us R285



As The Crow Flies R280



Rooiplaas: 1 Valskermbataljon R240

All books are available from [Bush War Books](#)

This month in military history

Some of the significant military events that happened in June. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of June.

1 June

- **1879** - Eugene Louis Jean Joseph Napoleon, the 22 year old Prince Imperial of France, is killed in the Anglo-Zulu War when he and a British reconnaissance party are attacked by about forty Zulus in the vicinity of Itelezi Mountain and Ityotyozzi River in Zululand. The prince's horse, "Fate", bolts and the prince, in attempting to mount his fleeing horse, is stabbed to death.
- **1915** - First Zeppelin air raid over England.
- **1916** - Battle of Jutland: Fleets return to port.
- **1917** - The French Army "Mutinies" begin: Troops go on strike. Order is restored in about four weeks, with minimal violence, and the Germans never learn of them
- **1939** - The South African Police takes over the tasks of the German South-West African police. 423 members of the disbanded police force are incorporated into the force.
- **1943** - WWII: According to an entry in the squadron's diary, 28 Squadron of the SA Air Force is formed as a transport squadron at the SAAF Base Depot Almaza, Cairo.
- **1944** - Allied forces begin covering much of Britain with smoke screens, as troops crowd assembly areas for D-Day.
- **1948** - Cease-fire ends Israeli War for Independence.
- **1964** - Military coup installs a junta in Greece.
- **1976** - Lance Corporal Nollind Trevor Small from 4 SAI was killed just north of Grootfontein after he apparently suffered a seizure and blacked out while behind the wheel of the military Landrover he was driving. The vehicle left the road and collided with a water tower which collapsed on top of the vehicle. He was 19.
- **1977** - Private Johannes Jurgens Lensley from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed after being struck by a bullet during a shooting incident at Grootfontein. He was 18.
- **1978** - 2nd Lieutenant Philip Michael Dietlof Mare' from 6 Squadron was killed while on a routine training flight out of Air Force Base Port Elizabeth. He was 22.
- **1980** - Rifleman Petrus Johannes Bonnet from 61 Mechanised Battalion died of severe chest and lung injuries sustained when the Buffel Troop Carrier in which he was traveling, overturned outside the 61 Mech Base in Tsumeb. He was 19.
- **1980** - Umkhonto weSizwe strikes at the Sasol Complex, causing damage estimated at R66 million.
- **1980** - Two members from 102 Battalion SWATF were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in the Operational Area. They were: Rifleman B. Herunga ((22). Rifleman J. Matundu (20).
- **1981** - Festivities to mark the twentieth anniversary of the South African Republic reach a climax with a massive military display in Durban, attended by P.W. Botha, the Prime Minister.
- **1981** - Rifleman Gavin John Harvey from "B" Company, 1 Parachute Battalion was severely wounded during follow-up operations against SWAPO/PLAN insurgents on 22 May 1981. He was evacuated to the Hospital in Grootfontein where he was stabilised before being evacuated by air to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria the following day. He unfortunately succumbed to his wounds in 1 Military Hospital on 1 June 1981. He was 21.
- **1982** - Major Eugene Kotze SD, Station Pilot at Air Force Base Ondangwa was Killed in Action when his

- Atlas MB326KM Impala Mk II was shot down by anti-aircraft fire near Cuvelai in Southern Angola while carrying out close-air support operations. He was 35.
- **1982** - Private Robert William Benjamin Ostram from the Air Force Command Post in Windhoek was critically injured on 29 May 1982 when he fell off the back of a moving vehicle in Windhoek. He succumbed to his injuries in the Windhoek State Hospital on 1 June 1982. He was 21.
- **1988** - Two members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. They were: Rifleman G K Semba (24). Rifleman J Savinga (26).
- to an end.
- **1908** - Sir Redvers Henry Buller, British general during Second Anglo-Boer War, dies.
- **1940** - Heavy German bombing of the Dunkirk beachhead.
- **1944** - WWII: North Africa. North Africa is used as a base of operations for Operation Frantic – 130 Flying Fortresses fly to Russia, bombing targets in Romania and Hungary as they go.
- **1978** - US offers to airlift French paratroopers out of the escalating violence in southern Zaire.
- **1979** - Rifleman Abraham Johannes Willemse from the Infantry School was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Wellington while on a 7-day pass. He was 20.
- **1981** - 2nd Lieutenant Christoffel Petrus Taylor from 1 Parachute Battalion died in 1 Military Hospital after being critically injured on 29 May 1981. He was 20.
- **1982** - Special Constable Petrus Venasio from the South West Africa Police Counter –Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (KOEVOET) was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 25.
- **1986** - Rifleman T. Kefas from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents near the Cut-Line. He was 24.
- **1986** - Staff Sergeant L. Mutorwa from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents near the Angolan Border. He was 28.
- **1989** - Sapper Francois Crowley from the School of Engineers was accidentally killed when a telephone pole fell on top of him. He was 23.
- **1995** - USAF Capt Scott O'Grady's F-16C shot down over Bosnia.
- **2004** - DR Congo rebel leader General. Laurent Nkunda takes the town of Bukavu after a week of fighting with army troops.

2 June

- **1879** - A 1000-strong search party finds the body of the Prince Imperial of France, Louis Napoleon, who was killed when Zulu warriors attacked a small British reconnaissance party in the vicinity of Italezi Mountain and Ityotozi River in Zululand the previous day.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British Prime Minister Arthur Balfour reads the terms of surrender to the House of Commons in London after the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging in Pretoria on 31 May which brought the Second South African (Anglo-Boer) War

PW Botha



3 June

- **1935** - Two Italian outposts are attacked by Haile Selassie's troops in Ethiopia. Thirty Ethiopian soldiers are

killed.

- **1940** - World War II: The withdrawal of Allied Forces from Dunkirk ends.
- **1940** - Major German air raid on Paris.
- **1944** - Last Italian air raid on Gibraltar, by Mussolini's "Republican Air Force".
- **1959** - First US Air Force Academy graduation.
- **1978** - Security Police chief, Brigadier C.F. Zietsman, announces that about 4,000 South African exiles are undergoing guerrilla training in Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania and Libya; of these about three quarters have been recruited by the ANC.
- **1984** - Rifleman Gabriel Kampanza from 203 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action in a Landmine Explosion in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1985** - Rifleman Thomas Daniel from 101 Battalion SWATF was accidentally shot dead in a shooting incident in Northern Owamboland. He was 25.

4 June

- **1918** - US and French halt the Germans at Chateau-Thierry.
- **1942** - Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler's henchman, is assassinated at the age of 38.
- **1944** - During World War II in Europe, Rome was liberated by the U.S. 5th Army, led by General Mark Clark. Rome had been declared an open city by German Field Marshal Albert Kesselring

amid Allied concerns the Germans might stage a Stalingrad-style defense that would devastate the historic 'Eternal' city.

- **1963** - British Minister of War John Profumo resigns over an affair with Christine Keeler.
- **1969** - Joseph-Désiré Mobutu's troops kill over 100 students during a demonstration in the Congolese capital Kinshasa.
- **1969** - The Minister of Defence, P.W. Botha, accompanied by General Hiemstra, Lieutenant-General J.P. Verster, Chief of the Air Force and Lieutenant-General W.P. Louw, Chief of the Army, visits France (4-10 June). He denies that the visit involves the purchase of arms.
- **1973** - Over four thousand French troops are to be withdrawn from Madagascar at the request of Gabriel Ramanantsoa, the head of the recently imposed military government.
- **1974** - First Woman US Army Aviator: Sally Murphy.
- **1978** - Warrant Officer II Joseph Johannes Burger HCS from 2 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident at Messina. He was 38.
- **1979** - Rifleman David Johannes van Heerden from Eastern Province Command was killed at M'pacha after being struck by a bullet from a fellow soldiers rifle. He was 28.

- **1979** - Flight-Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings seizes power in his first military coup in Ghana.

- **1980** - Three members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action, south of Mutu-anjamba (approximately 80km inside Angola) during the first phase of Operation Sceptic. The casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant Pieter van der Walt (19). Staff Sergeant Simao Domingos Braz (27). Rifleman Joshua Joao (24).
- **1982** - Revised figures for the Defence Budget indicate the funds available to the South African Defence Force have been increased to R3,068 million.
- **1982** - Israel attacks targets in south Lebanon.
- **1989** - The Chinese government ordered its troops to open fire on unarmed protesters in Tiananmen Square in Beijing.
- **1992** - Colonel David Fredrik Strauss from Air Force Headquarters died in 1 Military Hospital from complications resulting from Brain Cancer. He was 49.
- **1997** - South Africa announces the development of a revolutionary canon an externally powered gun code-named EMAK3S, designed by Denel at the request of ARMSCOR.

5 June

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British troops enter Pretoria and Lord Roberts captures the capital of the

ZAR.

- **1916** - Lord Kitchener drowns when the SS Hampshire sinks after being hit by a German mine near the Orkney Islands.
- **1942** - Midway Campaign: Yamamoto orders the Combined Fleet to retire.
- **1942** - USA declares war on Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania.
- **1944** - First B-29 raid over Tokyo; one plane is lost due to engine failure.
- **1952** - The monument at Delville Wood, unveiled on 10 October 1926 to honour the thousands of SA soldiers who were killed there during the Battle of the Somme, World War I, is rededicated to include World War II.
- **1967** - The Six Day War between Israel and its neighbouring countries Egypt, Jordan and Syria breaks out with Israel launching air strikes on Egypt, destroying most of that country's air force on the ground. Syria, Jordan and Iraq enter the conflict.
- **1978** - Corporal Charles Benjamin de Villiers from 1 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident in Bloemfontein. He was 22.
- **1984** - Rifleman M. Sipipa from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents. He was 22.
- **1984** - Rifleman Andries Christiaan Jacobs from Regiment Port Natal was killed in a military vehicle accident

in Durban. He was 27.

- **1986** - Seven members from 250 Air Defence Artillery Group, South African Air Force were killed in a private motor vehicle accident in the early hours of the morning while traveling between Pretoria and Hammanskraal. They were returning to the Unit from a weekend sports pass. The accident occurred 25km from Hammanskraal. The casualties were: Corporal Michael Christopher Marx (19). Airman Deon Phillipus Beukes (19). Airman Grant Sinclair Strange Braithwaite (18). Airman Matthys Gideon Britz (19). Airman Dawid Lindeque (19). Airman Frans Cornelius Moolman (19). Airman Marthinus Louis Nel (19).
- 1987 - Two members from Infantry School were killed in a private motor vehicle accident 8km from Vrededorp while on weekend pass. They were: Rifleman Francois Nel (18). Rifleman Pieter van der Linde (18).
- **1993** - Forces of Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid ambush UN soldiers in Mogadishu, killing twenty-two Pakistani soldiers.
- **2006** - Islamic militants with alleged links to al-Qaida

seize control of Somalia's capital, unifying the city for the first time in 16 years and posing a direct challenge to the UN-backed government.

6 June

- **1918** - The US Marines secure Belleau Wood.
- **1944** - D-Day: The Allied Forces land on the beaches of Normandy in the largest sea and air operation in the military history of the world.
- **1968** - Sir Miles Dempsey, Commander of the Canadian First Army on D-Day, dies at the age of 69.
- **1975** - Britain, France, and the United States use their UN Security Council veto to stop a proposed arms embargo against South Africa.
- **1977** - Corporal Salmon Petrus Claasen from the Technical Service Corps Training Centre died in 1 Military Hospital after being



Albert Kesselring

- critically injured in a military vehicle accident. He was 20.
- **1978** - Sergeant Coenrad Jacobus Theron from 32 Battalion Died of Wounds in 1 Military Hospital after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in a friendly fire incident on 6 May. He was 19.
- **1979** - Lance Corporal Hendrik Swart from SWA SPES was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in the Oshivello area. He was 24.
- **1980** - Corporal Mario van Wyk from 32 Battalion was killed in action. He was 20.
- **1981** - Rifleman Robert Owen Brindle from SWA SPES died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained as a result of a accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle at Etale Base. He was 18.
- **1982** - 30,000 Israeli troops invade Lebanon to drive out the PLO.
- **1983** - Rifleman Vincent Mandla Mthembu from 121 Battalion was Killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Windhoek. He was 20.
- **1985** - Captain Curtis McLeod from 4 Squadron was killed when his Atlas MB-326KM Impala crashed at Sandfontein near Lanseria. He was 29.
- **1985** - 2nd Lieutenant Markus Wynand Pearson from 7 SAI was killed in action while on patrol in Southern Angola. He was 21.
- **1985** - Two members from

- the south West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were killed in action following a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. The casualties were: Special Warrant Officer J.M. Tsitula (34). Special Sergeant Lindu Valentino (26).
- **1988** - Airman Ian-Roy Francois Erasmus from the Air Force Gymnasium was killed in a private vehicle accident while returning to the Air Force Gymnasium from a weekend pass. He was 19.
- **1988** - With a border dispute escalating into bombing raids, hundreds of foreigners scramble out of Eritrea, fearing war with Ethiopia.
- **1991** - Rifleman Johannes Frederick Lombaard Nel from 8 SAI was accidentally killed when he was run over by a Ratel during field manoeuvres at the Army Battle School. He was 20.

7 June

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The battle of Roodewal Siding takes place near Koppies, OFS. General De Wet and eighty men attack two companies (172 men) guarding a train and supplies. Eight British soldiers are killed; twenty-four wounded and between 500 and 600 crates of ammunition are taken.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Units under General Hunter occupy Lichtenburg.
- **1912** - US Army Air Service

- tests an airplane-mounted machine gun.
- **1916** - Germans capture Fort Vaux, Verdun.
- **1917** - Battle of Messines: Mines totalling nearly 500 tons of explosives demolish the German trenches, and the Canadian Corps storms the ridge
- **1940** - British and French troops evacuate Narvik, Norway.
- **1942** - Battle of Midway: The USS 'Yorktown' (CV-5) goes down, after a desperate fight to save the ship.
- **1942** - The Germans capture Sebastopol.
- **1944** - British 50th division liberates Bayeux.
- **1962** - Phosphorous bombs are detonated at Algiers University by members of the *Organisation de l'Armee Secrete* (OAS), a secret (terrorist) French army organisation opposed to the withdrawal of French troops from Algeria.
- **1967** - Israeli forces reach Suez Canal in Egypt, two days into Six-Day War.
- **1977** - Lieutenant Alwyn Merwe van Zyl from Regiment Oranjerivier died in the Grootfontein Hospital after contracting malaria while serving in the Operational Area. He was 26.
- **1981** - Two members of the South African Medical Corps were killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion at Walvis Bay. They were: Private Henry John Pieterse (20). Private

- Kevin Henry Stanley (19).
- **1981** - Israeli air strikes destroy Iraqi nuclear weapons facilities.
- **1982** - Rifleman Carlos Everisto from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 21.
- **1982** - Sergeant Lloyd Mizwandile Mbele from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during a Contact with Enemy Forces in Southern Angola. He was 28.
- **1985** - Trooper Johannes Ludwig Basson from 701 Battalion SWATF was killed at M'pacha after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle. He was 19.
- **1990** - President F.W. de Klerk lifts the state of emergency in SA.
- **1991** - Several Lesotho army officers are arrested after attempting a counter-coup to reinstate Major-General Metsing Lekhanya, ousted on April 30.
- **1997** - Foreigners flee heavy fighting between rival militias in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo.

8 June

- **1900** - Botha's Pass in Natal comes under attack by General Buller's forces.
- **1948** - John Rudder becomes the first black officer in the US Marine Corps.
- **1953** - Colonel René Paul Fonck, Allied World War I

- "Ace of Aces" (74 confirmed kills, 30+ possibles), dies at the age of 59.
- **1960** - Argentine government demands Israel release Adolf Eichmann.
- **1965** - US troops ordered to fight offensively in Vietnam.
- **1976** - Corporal Hendrik Josias Stephanus Coetzee from 4 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Wenela Base in the East Caprivi. He was 19.
- **1979** - Rifleman Johannes Leonardus Truter from 8 SAI was critically wounded in the head when his Temporary Base near Beacon 6 was attacked by SWAPO/PLAN insurgents on 4 February. This serious head wound left him completely paralysed and he remained in intensive care in 1 Military Hospital until he succumbed to his wounds on 8 June 1979. He was 19.
- **1981** - 2nd Lieutenant Duncan Frederick Lahner from 32 Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Buffalo Base. He was 21.

- **1984** - Two members from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. They were: Corporal D. Shiningivali (24). Lance Corporal K. Awino (22).
- **1985** - Rifleman Izaskar Kariko from 911 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-line. He was 22.
- **1987** - Corporal Jacques Barand Zaayman from 1 SAI was killed on the Malsespoort to Glen Road outside Bloemfontein when his Ratel overturned while he was instructing a pupil in driving skills. He was 19.
- **1988** - Colonel Andre Bekker from the South African Air Force was killed when his civilian Christen Husky aircraft crashed at Wonder-



René Fonck

boom Airport during a routine training flight. He was 46.

- **1995** - Marines rescue downed USAF Capt Scott O'Grady in Bosnia.

9 June

- **1865** - The Second Basotho War, known as Siqiti war, breaks out.
- **1938** - The Chinese breach the Yellow River dykes at Huayangkuou, halting a Japanese offensive at the cost of perhaps 800,000 lives.
- **1940** - French government flees Paris for Tours, as German troops cross the Seine.
- **1940** - Norway surrenders to Germany, as King Haakon VII flees into exile in London.
- **1942** - Nazis raze Lidice, Czechoslovakia. About 1,400 people are slaughtered.
- **1944** - Normandy: U.S. VII & V Corps link up to form a continuous beachhead.
- **1959** - The first ballistic missile sub is launched from USS 'George Washington' (SSBN-598).
- **1967** - Military service becomes compulsory for White South African men.
- **1976** - 2nd Lieutenant Kevin Roy Winterbottom HC (P) from 4 Squadron had just taken off from Air Force base Waterkloof in his Atlas MB-326KM Impala Mk II, when it suffered engine failure due to a bird strike. There was a busy road ahead of him, so he began a left turn, which set him up on a heading di-

rectly for the built-up area of Monument Park. Realising this and although extremely low, he persisted with his left turn in a final effort to avoid damage to property and injury or death to persons on the ground. The aircraft was by this time so low as to exclude the possibility of ejection and it hit the ground just as it cleared the built-up area, disintegrating on impact and killing him instantly. For his actions he was awarded a posthumous Honoris Crux. He was 21.

10 June

- **1915** - British and French troops secure German Cameroon, Africa.
- **1917** - The South African Native Labour Contingent were recruited and employed to assist Britain in the First World War with labour duties.
- **1944** - Ouradour-sur-Glane: SS massacre 642 men, women, and children in a French village.
- **1967** - Cease fire ends the Six Day War (Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt vs. Israel).
- **1974** - Captain Petrus Johannes Coetzer from 6 SAI suffered severe brain injuries in a private motor vehicle accident on 8 June 1974 near Lichtenburg while on leave. He remained on life support in 1 Military Hospital until he succumbed to his injuries on 10 June 1974. He was 29.
- **1975** - Corporal Timothy Chadwick from 6 SAI was

accidentally killed while busy building a bunker at Bagani. He was 20.

- **1979** - Rifleman Johannes Wilhelmus Landerd Jans from the Johannesburg Regiment was Killed in Action in Southern Angola. He was 22.
- **1980** - Rifleman Jose Miguel from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion in Southern Angola during operations against enemy forces. He was 29.
- **1980** - Thirteen members of 61 Mechanised Battalion and 1 SAI (attached) were Killed in Action or Died of Wounds during the attack on the PLAN Smokeshell Base complex during Operation Sceptic in Southern Angola. The casualties were: Lieutenant Johannes Jacobus Du Toit (HC) (22). Rifleman Francois Johan Loubser (19). Rifleman Petrus Johannes Joubert (19). Rifleman Gert Johannes Venter (25). Rifleman Gerhardus Johannes Kemp (19). Rifleman Jacobus Hendrik Fourie (20). Corporal Paul Kruger (20). Rifleman Stephen Maritz Cronje (19). Rifleman Peter William Warrener (19). Rifleman Roberto Nicola de Vito (19). Rifleman Michael Clarence Luyt (19). Rifleman Francis John Lello (19). Rifleman Andrew John Madden (19).
- **1981** - Rifleman Antonio Johannes from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with

SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 24.

- **1982** - Rifleman K Comoxo from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-Line. He was 25.
- **1982** - Israeli troops reach outskirts of Beirut.
- **1991** - Ticker tape parade up Broadway to honour Gulf War veterans.

11 June

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Colonel B.T. Mahon occupies Potchefstroom.
- **1900** - The battle of Donkerhoek (Diamond Hill) marks the continuation of the South African War.
- **1904** - German Lieutenant-General Lothar von Trotha lands in Swakopmund, South West Africa.
- **1940** - World War II: North Africa. British planes raid Italian targets in Libya following Italy's declaration of war against Britain and France on the 10th.
- **1940** - Italian air raid on Malta.
- **1940** - RAF raids Genoa and Turin.
- **1960** - Libyan president Colonel Muammar Gadhafi admits to providing funds, munitions, and training to the IRA.
- **1968** - Lieutenant Johannes Viljoen from 1 Squadron was killed when his Canadair CL13B Sabre crashed near

Pietersburg during a routine training flight. He was 23.

- **1977** - Dutch Marines rescue hostages on a train held by Moluccan terrorists.
- **1985** - Rifleman Litwayi Herbert from 202 Battalion SWATF was killed in a military vehicle accident at Vungu-Yungu. He was 20.
- **1994** - After 49 years, the Soviet military occupation of East Germany ended. At one time there had been 337,800 Soviet troops stationed in Germany. Over 300,000 Russians died during World War II in the Battle for Berlin.

12 June

- **1898** - The Philippines declared their independence from Spain. The islands were named after King Philip II. Once freed from Spain, the islands were then invaded and occupied by U.S. forces. They became an American colony and remained so until after World War II.

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Redvers Henry Buller occupies Volksrust after a victory at Allemansnek.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: President Steyn issues a proclamation refuting Lord Robert's annexation proclamations. He points out that the Orange Free State government is still in existence and its military forces are still unconquered and thus in terms of the Hague Convention, military rule cannot be imposed.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The two-day Battle of Diamond Hill or Donkerhoek, started on the previous day, ends when darkness sets in and Comdt.-Gen. Botha orders his burghers to return to Bronkhorstspuit. The following day Lord Roberts withdraws to Christinen Hill, Sammy Marks' farm.
- **1918** - First air raid by an American aviation unit, France.
- **1937** - The Purges: Stalin

Muammar Gadhafi



initiates mass executions of senior military personnel

- **1943** - British King George IV lands in Algiers at the start of a North African tour of Allied troops.
- **1943** - Himmler orders extermination of all Polish ghettos.
- **1944** - First V-1 cruise missile attack on London.
- **1944** - US troops liberate Carentan and Chaumont, Normandy.
- **1962** - Two members from Central Flying School Dunnottar were killed instantly when their AT-6 Harvard struck the ground and disintegrated near Dunnottar while they were carrying out unauthorised low level aerobatics. The crew of the aircraft were: 2nd Lieutenant Bruce Erroll Gaylard (19). Air Mechanic Hermanus Lambertus Booyesen (18).
- **1967** - Israel declares it will keep some of ground won from Egypt, Jordan and Syria in Six-Day War.
- **1976** - A military coup in Uruguay overthrows civilian president Juan Bordaberry, beginning a nine-year dictatorship.
- **1983** - Staff Sergeant Donald Norman Coleby from Regiment Groot Karoo Died of Wounds 10 km south of Cuvelai. He was 27.
- **1983** - Special Constable K Kambirua 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.

- **1989** - Private Clive Dean MacKenzie from 1 Maintenance Unit was killed instantly when he was electrocuted after accidentally touching overhead high tension wires at the Bulkop Railway Station while in the process of offloading military supplies. He was 18.
- **1993** - US helicopters and gunships destroy four of Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid's arms depots, one week after his forces allegedly killed twenty-three Pakistani members of the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping forces in a series of fire fights.
- **1999** - NATO peacekeeping forces begin operating in Kosovo, Yugoslavia.

13 June

- **1900** - The "Boxer Rebellion" begins in China.
- **1917** - Major German bomber raid on London's East End, 162 die, including 18 children at the Upper North Street School.
- **1942** - World War II Britain loses 230 tanks in desert battles.
- **1942** - Peenemunde: First V-2 rocket reaches 1.3 km.
- **1944** - First V-1 raid: one of ten missiles fired strikes London, six die.
- **1951** - UN forces reach Pyongyang, Korea.
- **1956** - Last British troops leave Suez Canal base, turn-

ing the waterway over to Egypt after operating it for seventy-four years.

- **1970** - P.W. Botha announces that South Africa is establishing a new submarine base at Simonstown at a cost of \$7.7 million.
- **1973** - Captain Anthonie Johannes Brits from 8 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed near Bloemfontein during a routine training flight. He was 28.
- **1993** - Twenty Somalis are killed and fifty more wounded when Pakistani members of the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping forces fire into a crowd of demonstrators protesting UN attacks on warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid..

14 June

- **1775** - The first U.S. Military service, the Continental Army consisting of six companies of riflemen, was established by the Second Continental Congress. The next day, George Washington was appointed by a unanimous vote to command the army.
- **1912** - The headquarters of the defence force of the Union of South Africa is founded in Pretoria.
- **1917** - General John J. Pershing and his staff reach Paris.
- **1940** - The Nazis open concentration camps at Auschwitz and Oranienburg.
- **1944** - First B-29 raid on Japan; 60 bombers hit the steel

works on Honshu.

- **1952** - Keel laid for the USS 'Nautilus' (SSN-571), the first nuclear powered submarine.
- **1979** - Rifleman Lloyd Matthew Marthinus Kasoor from the South African Cape Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident at Grootfontein. He was 20.
- **1982** - Falklands: Argentines surrender to Britain, ending the 74 day war.
- **1985** - The SA Defence Force attacks alleged ANC homes and offices in Gaborone, Botswana, in Operation Plecksy. Twelve or thirteen people are killed.

15 June

- **1864** - General Robert E Lee's home, Arlington, becomes a US military cemetery.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Sergeant J. Rogers of the SA Constabulary earns a Victoria Cross near Thaba Nchu.
- **1915** - After the 1914 Rebellion, General Christiaan de Wet is found guilty of high treason in the High Court, Bloemfontein, and sentenced to six years' imprisonment and a fine of £2000. Within a few months the fine had been paid from voluntary contributions.
- **1934** - At a meeting in Rome Hitler meets Mussolini for the first time.
- **1940** - The Germans capture Verdun.
- **1962** - 2nd Lieutenant Johan

Andries De Bruine from 1 Squadron was killed in when his Canadair CL13B Sabre crashed near Pienaarsriver. He was 23.

- **1964** - Last French troops leave Algeria.
- **1974** - Minister of Defence P.W. Botha announces during a press visit to the Caprivi Strip that the Defence Force has taken over protection of the country's northern borders as a full military operation, replacing the police in the area.
- **1975** - Rifleman Rumai Tete-ko from Alpha Group (Later 31 Battalion) was killed after being attacked and trampled to death by an enraged Buffalo while on Patrol in Southern Angola. He was 22.
- **1978** - Bombardier Christo Loots from 4 Artillery Regiment was killed at Oshakati after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle. He was 19.
- **1981** - Rifleman Peter An-

dre Clifford Meyers from 6 SAI was accidentally killed after suffering severe head injuries when he fell 10m from a slide during training at Grootfontein. He was 26.

- **1984** - Ciskei's former Commander of the Armed Forces, Major-General Charles Sebe, brother of President Lennox Sebe, is sentenced to twelve years' imprisonment after being found guilty of incitement to public violence.
- **1988** - A meeting between the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) and the SADF takes place, with a main objective to discuss alternative national service. In August Minister of Defence Magnus Malan broke off relations with the ECC.
- **1993** - Rifleman Johan Cloete from 8 SAI died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained in a shooting incident at Boskop. He was 21.

16 June

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer

Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler



War: Start of the 'scorched earth' policy. Lord Roberts issues a proclamation warning the Republican forces that houses in the vicinity of Boer activities will be burnt and the inhabitants made prisoners of war.

- **1911** - The City of Fez, Morocco, is occupied by the French army.
- **1953** - Soviet tanks crush workers' protest in East Berlin.
- **1955** - Abortive coup against President Juan Peron of Argentina.
- **1957** - French offensive in Algeria.
- **1965** - Civil war starts in Chad.
- **1975** - The Simon's Town agreement on naval cooperation between Britain and South Africa is formally ended by mutual agreement after 169 years.
- **1976** - Rifleman Clifford Donald Holland from the Durban Light Infantry was killed at Ruacana when he was struck by bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle. He was 19.
- **1977** - Rifleman Stephen Jones from Regiment Schoonspruit died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained at the Oshivello Training Area. He was 27.
- **1984** - Rifleman Johann Jacobus Hurter from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 24.
- **1984** - Special Sergeant N.

Nghifino 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 32.

- **1992** - Two members from 117 Infantry Battalion were killed when their Military Vehicle was involved in a head on collision with civilian vehicle at Mankweng. They were: Corporal Sedima Johannes Lebepe (25). Rifleman Kgabo Theophilus Kubjana (25).
- **2006** - Up to 5,000 children still serve in the Ugandan armed forces even though they are officially banned from enlisting, a senior UN official said.

17 June

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: "Steinaecker's Horse", an irregular unit of about fifty mercenaries in British service, using Black armed tribesmen and operating from Swaziland, damages a bridge near Kaapmuiden. The rail traffic to Delagoa Bay is interrupted for about fourteen days.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: President M.T. Steyn appoints judge J.B.M. Hertzog as general.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British politician David Lloyd George denounces the concentration camp policy.
- **1940** - France asks Germany for terms of surrender.

- **1940** - Operation Ariel: Last British and Allied troops evacuated from France.
- **1942** - World War II: The first American expeditionary force lands in Africa.
- **1945** - Final Japanese defensive line on Okinawa breached.
- **1963** - Field Marshal Sir Alan Francis Brooke, Viscount Alanbrooke, dies at the age of 79.
- **1965** - Vietnam: First B-52 raid, 50 km north of Saigon.
- **1967** - China becomes world's fourth thermonuclear power.
- **1975** - The British Minister of State for Defence says that the ending of the Simon's Town Agreements means an end to all the military cooperation between Britain and South Africa.
- **1977** - Private Johannes Albertus Erasmus from 11 Squadron was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1978** - Rifleman (Mrs) Heyletta Swanepoel from the Bronkhorstspuit Commando collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack while on official duty at the Zonderwater Shooting Range at Cullinan. She was 40.
- **1979** - 2nd Lieutenant Samuel Walters Coetzee from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces. He was 20.
- **1980** - Rifleman M Tjisota from 37 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact

with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 20.

- **1982** - Two members of 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action during a Contact with Enemy Forces. They were: Sergeant Lloyd Mziwandile Mbele (28). Lance Corporal Oiva Shilongo (22).
- **1982** - Special Constable A. Ndawedapo 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.
- **1984** - Trooper Andre van Neel from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 19.
- **1985** - Rifleman Juston King from 6 SAI was killed in Private Vehicle Accident at Uitenhage while returning to his Unit from a leave pass to clear out on completion of his National Service. He was 21.
- **1987** - Two members from the Central Flying School at Dunnottar were killed when their AT-6 Harvard, Serial No. 7048 crashed on the farm Rietkuil, 10km South East of Delmas during a training sortie. The casualties were: Captain Bruce Matthew Nelson (26). Captain Ricardo Henrico Vergottini (26).
- **1989** - Rifleman Neill Knight from 4 SAI collapsed and died while at Rooikop

Base, Walvis Bay. The Post Mortem revealed that he was suffering from a brain tumour. He was 20.

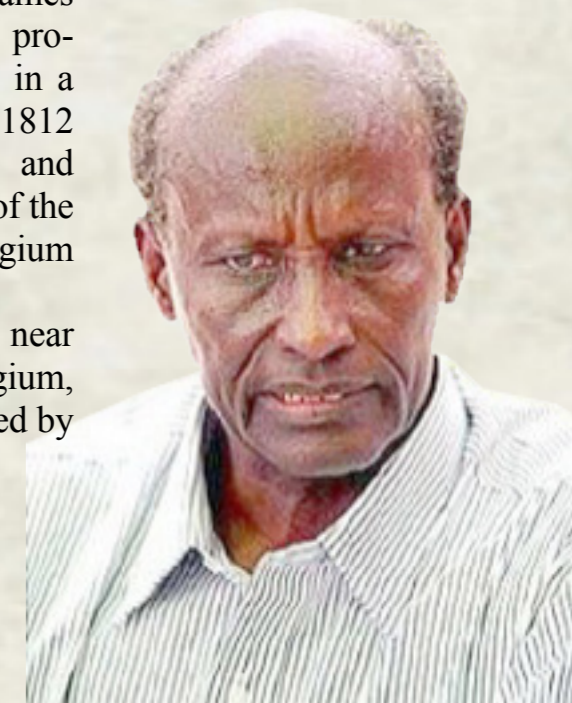
- **1993** - United Nations (UN) troops storm the headquarters of Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid in Mogadishu, but he is not there.
- **1997** - Sierra Leone's military leader, Johnny Paul Koroma, is sworn in as head of state and pledge to restore peace to the war-weary West African nation.
- **1998** - USS 'Missouri' (BB-63) is dedicated as a war memorial, Pearl Harbour..

18 June

- **1812** - After much debate, the U.S. Senate voted 19 to 13 in favour of a declaration of war against Great Britain, prompted by Britain's violation of America's rights on the high seas and British incitement of Indian warfare on the Western frontier. The next day, President James Madison officially proclaimed the U.S. to be in a state of war. The War of 1812 lasted over two years and ended with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent in Belgium on December 24, 1814.
- **1815** - On the fields near Waterloo in central Belgium, 72,000 French troops, led by

Napoleon, suffered a crushing military defeat from a combined Allied army of 113,000 British, Dutch, Belgian, and Prussian troops.

- **1823** - The British Army adopts trousers for infantry, in lieu of breeches & gaiters.
- **1940** - Hitler and Mussolini confer in Munich, discuss the imminent surrender of France and plans for an invasion of Switzerland.
- **1940** - Winston Churchill says "this was their finest hour".
- **1942** - Dr. Bernard Whitfield Robinson becomes the first black officer in the U.S. Navy.
- **1945** - William "Lord Haw-Haw" Joyce is charged with treason.
- **1974** - Marshal of the Soviet Union Georgi Zhukov, dies at the age of 78.
- **1975** - Two members from Infantry School accidentally drowned at Gamkaskloof. They were: Rifleman Gabri-



Mohammed Farah Aidid

- el Johannes Erasmus (19). Rifleman Gerhard Joshua Franzen (19).
- **1983** - Rifleman Johan Steyn from 3 SAI died from a gunshot wound accidentally self-inflicted while at Potchefstroom. He was 18.
- **1984** - Rifleman Paulus Hausiku from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 20.
- **1985** - Private Kurt Preuss from the Technical service Corps was killed when struck by a bullet resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 21.
- **1987** - Five members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces near Evale in Southern Angola during Operation Radbraak. The casualties were: Corporal Bernard Sokola (34). Lance Corporal Joao Vocolo (32). Rifleman Joao Goncalves (38). Rifleman Paulus Kapinga (22). Rifleman Lituya Ntjamba (19).
- **1988** - Special Warrant Officer Daniel Katapotle from the SWA Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 37.

19 June

- **1864** - The Alabama, American raider, is sunk outside Cherbourg harbour, France,

by the U.S.S. Kearsarge.

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Buller enters Volksrust, the first town in the ZAR to fall into his hands.
- **1948** - USSR blocks access to West-Berlin: Berlin Blockade begins.
- **1953** - Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed by electrocution at Sing Sing Prison in New York. They had been found guilty of providing vital information on the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union during 1944-45.
- **1968** - Candidate Officer Alwyn Johannes Botha from Regiment Molopo was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident 11 kilometres from Zeerust. He was 18.
- **1973** - 2nd Lieutenant Hendrik Willem Alberts from 4 Squadron was killed when his Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I crashed near Masito while engaged in Operation Brolly Tree 3, a training exercise that was being carried out in the Zeerust area. He was 23.
- **1975** - Sergeant Daniel Johannes Labuschagne from 19 Squadron was killed in a military vehicle accident in Rhodesia. He was 30.
- **1975** - Rifleman Diederick Johannes Vorster from Services School was accidentally killed when struck by a bullet resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while he was stationed at Oshakati. He was 19.

- **1976** - Corporal Robert Sheppard Gibbon from 1 Special Service Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1979** - Two members from 8 SAI were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Oshivello. They were: Rifleman Daniel Johannes Mocke (19). Rifleman Gerritt Franchois Roos (19).
- **1980** - Rifleman Jacobus Frederick van den Bergh from 53 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action when his patrol was ambushed by SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Etale Base. He was 19.
- **1985** - Private Johannes Philippus Prinsloo from 101 Base Workshops was killed in a military vehicle accident at Bagani. He was 20.
- **1987** - Lance Corporal Gerhardus Christiaan Meyer from the Technical Service Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident at the Army Battle School at Lohatla. He was 24.
- **1987** - Rifleman Adriaan Gerhardus Riekert from the Brakpan Commando was killed in a military vehicle accident in Brakpan. He was 24.
- **1987** - Rifleman Willem Uithaler from the South African Cape Corps was killed after being struck bullet resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while at the Touw's River Training Area. He was 23.

- **1992** - Warrant Officer 1 Johannes Jacobus Fourie from 10 Engineer Squadron was critically injured in a military vehicle accident on 15 June 1992. He was admitted to the Pietersburg Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on 19 June 1992. He was 45.
- **1992** - The Goldstone Commission recommends that the 32nd Battalion "should not again be used for peacekeeping duties anywhere in South Africa". The Commission's Tokoza Committee says that the battalion has committed acts of violence against residents of the Phola Park squatter camp.

20 June

- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The British execute P.W. Kloppert, a Cape rebel, by hanging. Cloete claimed that he was not a rebel because he had Orange Free State citizenship.
- **1939** - Heinkel He-176 rocket plane flies for first time, at Peenemunde.
- **1941** - The U.S. Army Air Corps is reorganized as the Army Air Forces.
- **1963** - Cold War: Washington-Moscow "hot line" established.
- **1963** - Air Mechanic Robert Henry Mentis died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while stationed at Voortrekkerhoogte. He was 17.
- **1968** - Candidate Officer Pieter Frans Jurgens was

killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed near Dunnottar while on a routine training flight. He was 19.

- **1973** - The Minister of Defence denies that South African troops are supporting Portuguese armed forces in Mozambique, as alleged by FRELIMO.
- **1983** - Trooper Jan Hendrik de Lange from 2 Special Service Battalion was killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle. He was 17.
- **1984** - Two members from the 2nd Battalion Transvaal Scottish accidentally drowned while their patrol was crossing the Cunene River near the Ruacana Falls. They were: Rifleman Arthur Hendrik Boshoff (21). Rifleman Leslie George Wasas (21).

- **1984** - Special Constable Blasius Kutenda 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 25.
- **1987** - Rifleman K. Tjihote from 102 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1988** - Rifleman Ian Michael Webb from 6 SAI died in hospital at Tsumeb after sustaining severe head injuries when the right front tyre of a SAMIL truck burst causing the driver to lose control approximately 5km past the Tsumeb turn-off. He was 20.

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg



21 June

- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: "In a letter to St John Broderick, Secretary of War, Lord Kitchener declares, 'It was a mistake to regard the Boers as a civilized race which could ever be an asset to the British Empire: they are uncivilized Afrikaner savages with a thin White veneer ...' He asks the cabinet to endorse a scheme that will allow the permanent banishment of all Boers who at any time have fought against Britain, as well as their families... He suggests the Fiji Islands in the South Pacific."
- **1919** - Scapa Flow: Germans scuttle over 400,000 tons of warships.
- **1942** - World War II: The Second South African Division under Major-General H.B. Klopper surrenders and the German force under General Rommel captures 25,000 Allied troops, under whom 10 722 South Africans at Tobruk on the coast of Libya.
- **1948** - Berlin Airlift begins.
- **1967** - Air Mechanic Adam Hendrik Schoeman from 1 Squadron was accidentally killed at AFB Pietersburg after he was sucked into the engine air intake of a Canadair C13L Sabre while setting the fuel pumps during a full engine run. He was 19.
- **1977** - Rifleman Raymond Ward from the SWA SPES was killed in a military vehicle accident while travelling to De Aar. He was 24.

- **1979** - Two members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola near Beacon 32. They were: 2nd Lieutenant Willem Adriaan de Vos (19). Rifleman S. Mukonda (27).
- **1980** - Corporal Petrus Johannes Badenhorst from 5 SAI was critically wounded on 20 June 1980 in an explosion while doing evening "Klaarstaan" in the Ops Room at Concor Base, east of Ruacana. He succumbed to his wounds and resultant blood loss in the early hours of 21 June. He was 20.
- **1980** - Corporal Willem Adriaan Finnie from 41 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents. He was 18.
- **1982** - Bombardier Dirk Hero Onne Hassebroek from 84 Motorised Brigade was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident in Sector 70. He was 23.
- **1982** - Three members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Constable Paulus Antonius (20). Special Constable Immanuel Kavulu (29). Special Constable Theophillus Ndevelo (26).
- **1983** - Sergeant Terrence Moffat Atkinson from 1

Construction Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Musese in Western Kavango. He was 56.

22 June

- **1939** - World War II: France surrenders to Germany eight days after the German forces invaded the country.
- **1940** - About 10,000 Afrikaner women, led by Mrs H.C. Steyn, march to the Union Buildings to protest about the South African involvement in World War II on the side of Britain. The women protested against South Africa's participation in World War II on the side of Britain and requested that South Africa should withdraw from the war.
- **1941** - Starting at 3:15 am Operation Barbarossa begins, as some 3.2 million German soldiers plunged headlong into Russia across an 2,987 kilometre front, in a major turning point of World War II. At 7 am that morning, a proclamation from Hitler to the German people announced, "At this moment a march is taking place that, for its extent, compares with the greatest the world has ever seen..."
- **1942** - The heaviest single day's loss of life in Australian military history; 845 soldiers and 208 civilians aboard the Japanese prisoner-of-war ship 'Montevideo Maru' was sunk by the American submarine 'Sturgeon' (SS 187) in the South

China Sea.

- **1944** - Russians begin "Operation Bagration", the Destruction of German Army Group Centre.
- **1945** - Okinawa secured: 110,000 Japanese troops, 100,000 civilians, 17,520 US troops died.
- **1955** - Soviets shoot down US patrol plane over the Bering Sea.
- **1984** - Rifleman Andries Kees from the South African Cape Corps died from gunshot wounds accidentally sustained. He was 18.
- **1985** - Corporal Johannes Gobe from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-line. He was 29.
- **1987** - Airman John Liam Corrigan from the Lowveld Airspace Control Sector was accidentally shot dead by a visitor at Mariepskop while he was on guard duty. He was 20.
- **1990** - Signaller Ronald Leon Wheeler from Group 10 was killed in a military vehicle accident at Umkomaas. He was 20.
- **1993** - The UN resumes food distribution in Mogadishu, Somalia, ten days after fighting between UN troops and those of warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid halt.
- **2003** - A US Marine is killed and eight other service members are injured by errant bombs dropped by a US B-52 Stratofortress in Dji-

bouti, the United States' only base in Africa.

23 June

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British forces advance. General Clements reaches Winburg. General Hamilton enters Heidelberg after a slight skirmish. General Clery joins Buller at Standerton.
- **1902** - Field-cornet Salmon van As is executed by a firing squad after being found guilty by a British Court Martial of murdering Captain Richard Miers.
- **1940** - Hitler orders preparations for an invasion of Switzerland.
- **1942** - Rommel breaks the Gazala Line and drives on Egypt.
- **1970** - Two members from 42 Squadron were killed when their Cessna 185A crashed at Vaal River near

Potchefstroom after flying into High Tension Wires. The aircraft crew were: 2nd Lieutenant Johan van Sittert (21). Candidate Officer Petrus Johannes van Deventer (22).

- **1974** - Lieutenant Freddie Johannes Zeelie from 1 Reconnaissance Commando was Killed in Action while engaged on anti-insurgent operations in Southern Angola. He was the first South African soldier to be Killed in Action during the Border War. He was also the only member of Special Forces to ever receive the Louw Wepener Decoration. He was 22.
- **1980** - Sergeant Jacobus Daniel Cilliers from 17 Squadron was Killed in action when his Alouette III was shot down by an RPG-

Erwin Rommel



7 anti-tank rocket during the later stages of Ops Sceptic. He was 23.

- **1982** - A Defence Amendment Bill provides for a re-organisation of the defence system intended to give the South African Defence Force (SADF) adequate manpower to deal with almost every conceivable threat.
- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Christiaan Theunissen from 7 SAI was Killed in Action. He was 21.
- **1994** - Some 2,500 French troops head into Rwanda to protect civilians, the first outside forces sent there since UN. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali appealed for international involvement to stop the genocide.
- **1997** - In the Central African Republic, soldiers fire on foreign peacekeepers in the third major rebellion since May.

24 June

- **1916** - World War I: The first Battle of the Somme begins. It lasted five months and the death toll of more than 1 million resulted in an allied advance of 125 square miles. Many SA troops were killed in action.
- **1917** - Russian Black Sea fleet mutinies at Sebastopol.
- **1940** - France signs an armistice with Italy.
- **1945** - Victory parade in Red Square in Moscow.
- **1978** - Private Anton Nel

from 1 Satellite Radar Station at Mariepskop died from head injuries received in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 20.

- **1980** - Private Michael Johannes Range from the South African Defence Force Institute (SADFI/SAWI) in Pietersburg was killed when the military vehicle in which he was travelling, overturned. He was 18.
- **1983** - Corporal George Louis Steytler from 1 Parachute Battalion Died of Wounds after being critically wounded in the head when his Patrol TB was attacked by a FAPLA/Cuban force while in an area approximately 38km from Cahama. He succumbed to his wounds while on the Casevac helicopter ferry flight back to AFB Ondangwa. He was 19.
- **1997** - Defence Minister Joe Modise warns that the proposed R1,4 billion cut in the defence budget could seriously disrupt the defence force's ability to function and to contribute to the fight against crime.

25 June

- **1677** - Governor Johan Bax of the Cape, who waged war against the Hottentot (Khoi-Khoi) Chief Gonnema from 1676, concludes 'a good, lasting peace'.
- **1862** - Custer's Last Stand. 250 men of the US 7th Cavalry, under General George Armstrong Custer, are attacked by between 2,000 and

4,000 Indian Braves near the Little Bighorn River. Only one scout and one horse on the US side survive the battle.

- **1940** - Hitler tours Paris, taking in the Eiffel Tower, Napoleon's Tomb, and the Opera.
- **1941** - Finland declares war on the Soviet Union.
- **1942** - World War II: General Sir Claude Auchinleck becomes commander of the British Eighth Army in North Africa.
- **1942** - World War II: British Air Force stages 1,000-bomber raid on Bremen, Germany.
- **1942** - Eisenhower takes command of U.S. forces in Europe.
- **1950** - The Korean War breaks out. Nearly 90,000 North Korean soldiers and hundreds of Russian-built T-34 tanks cross the border into South Korea. South Africa, as one of the founding members of the United Nations, decide to assign a fighter squadron to the UN forces to help defeat North Korea. The Korean War claimed the lives of thirty-six SA Air Force members.
- **1960** - Corporal Petrus Cornelius van der Merwe of the South African Air Force was killed when his Defence Flying Club Piper Cub crashed and burnt out near Pretoria while on a routine general flying training flight. He was 24.
- **1972** - Rifleman Arno Roesstroff from 1 SAI was

killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle. He was 19.

- **1979** - Gunner Jeffrey James Mitchell from 4 Artillery Regiment died in 1 Military Hospital after suffering extensive burns accidentally sustained when a fuel tank exploded at the Regiment in Potchefstroom. He was 20.
- **1980** - Two Members from Central Flying School Dunottar were killed when their AT-6 Harvard crashed 1,6 kilometres North of Dunottar while carrying out simulated instrument flying. They were: Lieutenant Donald Gordon Stanbury (22). Candidate Officer Lloyd Douglas Liebenberg (19).
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Frederick Aspeling from North West Command was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident, at Oudtshoorn. He was 19.
- **1981** - Corporal Johan Cornelius Du Toit from Regiment Langenhoven was Killed in Action in Southern Angola. He was 24.
- **1981** - Staff Sergeant Willem Marthinus Roothman from the South African Corps of Military Police was killed in a military vehicle accident in Oudtshoorn while on a call-out to investigate a case. He was 41.
- **1981** - Signaler Dirk Jacobus Venter from 84 Signals Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 22.
- **1982** - Two members from

32 Battalion were accidentally shot dead by own forces in a friendly fire incident near Evale in Southern Angola during Operation Groenslang. They were: Corporal James Conroy (20). Rifleman Antonio Pedro Manuel (32).

- **1983** - Leading Seaman George Edward Wellington Ford from the 1st Marine Brigade, South African Marines was killed in a military vehicle accident while on deployment in Eastern Caprivi. He was 20.
- **1988** - Angolan, Cuban, South African and United States officials meet in Cairo, in search of independence for Namibia in tandem with a withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.
- **1991** - The last Soviet troops leave Czechoslovakia.

26 June

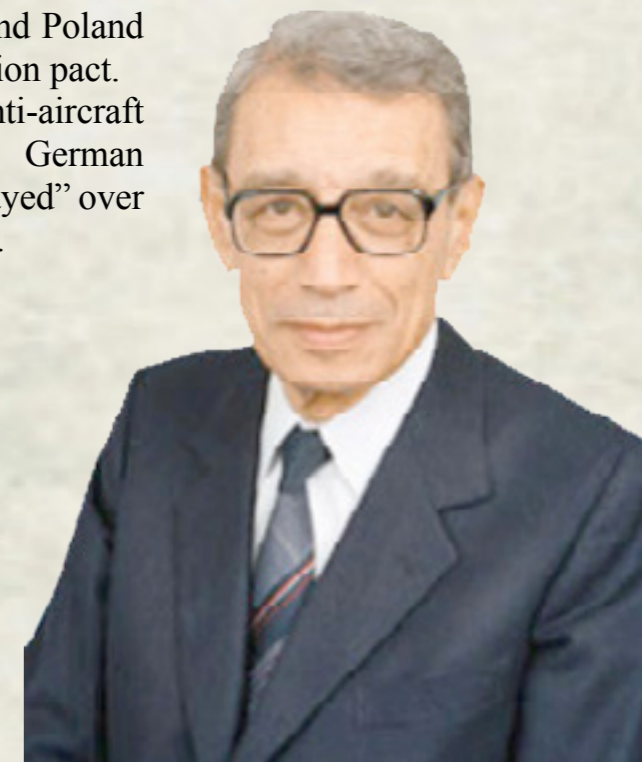
- **1917** - First American combat troops arrive in France.
- **1934** - Germany and Poland sign a non-aggression pact.
- **1939** - Polish anti-aircraft gunners down a German plane that had "strayed" over the Hela Peninsula.

• **1977** - Gunner Willem Christiaan Lentink from 14 Artillery Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident in Pretoria. He was 20.

• **1977** - Rifleman Christiaan Hendrik van der Westhuizen from the Witwatersrand Rifles was killed when he accidentally fell off the back of a moving Unimog. He was 21.

27 June

- **1905** - Mutiny in the Russian battleship 'Potemkin'.
- **1918** - First use of parachutes to escape an aircraft in combat: two German airmen jump.
- **1941** - The Germans capture Bialystok.
- **1942** - As the Eighth Army abandons Mersa Matruh, North Africa, Rommel's forces claim to have captured another 6,000 British troops.
- **1944** - American troops liberate Cherbourg from the



Boutros Boutros-Ghali

Germans.

- **1950** - North Korean troops reach Seoul, as the Security Council calls on UN members to aid South Korea and Truman orders USAF & USN into action.
- **1950** - US sends 35 military advisers to South Vietnam.
- **1971** - The Chairman of Armscor announces that under an agreement with a French aviation company, Mirage III and F jet fighters will be built in South Africa with the help of French personnel.
- **1976** - First women cadets enter the Air Force Academy.
- **1977** - Private Hendrik Johannes Naude from 42 Squadron was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 18.
- **1980** - Rifleman Nicolaas Johannes Kruger from 25 Field Squadron was Killed in Action when he stepped on and detonated a boosted anti-personnel mine near Okatope in Northern Owamboland. He was 20.
- **1985** - Rifleman J. Filimon from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 23.
- **1986** - Rifleman Frikkie Carolus from the South African Cape Corps died from a gunshot wound sustained during the accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle at De Aar. He was 26.
- **1988** - 2nd Lieutenant Muller Meiring of 61 Mechanised Battalion was Killed

in Action North East of Calueque. He was 19.

- **1988** - Eleven members of the SADF were Killed in Action during a retaliatory air strike by Angolan Air Force MiG-23 aircraft on SADF positions near the Calueque Dam after SADF Artillery had accurately bombarded Cuban and FAPLA positions in the town of Techipa on 26 and 27 June 1988 causing heavy casualties. The casualties were: Lieutenant Noah Tucker of 8 SAI (23). Corporal Ewert Phillipus Koorts of 8 SAI (19). Lance Corporal Johannes Reinhard Gerhardus Holder 8 SAI (19). Rifleman Johannes Mattheus Strauss Venter of 8 SAI (19). Rifleman Thomas Benjamin Rudman of 8 SAI (20). Rifleman Phillipus Rudolph Marx of 8 SAI (19). Rifleman Andries Stephanus Johannes Els of 8 SAI (19). Trooper Michael John van Heerden of 8 SAI (19). Lance Corporal Wynand Albert van Wyk of 1 SSB (19). Trooper Gregory Scott of 2 SSB (19). Trooper Emile Erasmus of 10 Armoured Car Squadron (20).
- **1990** - Lance Corporal C Chimongaia from 201 Battalion Died from Natural Causes at Omega. He was 27.
- **1995** - SA signs a protocol of intent on military cooperation between the Ministry of Defence of South Africa and the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic.

28 June

- **1914** - Archduke Frans Ferdinand, Austrian heir to the throne, and his wife are shot and killed by a student in Sarajevo. This leads to World War I.
- **1919** - The signing of the Treaty of Versailles formally ended World War I.
- **1942** - British 8th Army in North Africa retreats from German attack to El Alamein.
- **1942** - North Africa. General Rommel and his *Panzerarmee Afrika* capture Fuqa.
- **1965** - President Johnson orders US ground forces to Vietnam.
- **1975** - Private Gerhard Erasmus Smith De Beer from 1 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident in Grootfontein. He was 18.
- **1976** - Three British mercenaries, Andrew McKenzie, John Barker and Costas Georgiou and an American, Daniel Gearhert, are sentenced to death in Luanda for their part in the Angolan civil war.
- **1986** - Rifleman Geelbooi Zamblenzini Mthimunye from 115 Battalion was murdered at Weltevrede after being attacked by persons unknown and burned to death. He was 20.

29 June

- **1913** - Bulgarian troops initiate hostilities with Serbia in Macedonia, triggering the Second Balkan War.
- **1944** - Bobriusk: Soviets

encircle portions of German Army Group Centre.

- **1945** - Operation Olympic: President Truman set the invasion of Japan for 1 November.
- **1949** - US troops withdraw from Korea after World War II.
- **1965** - Lieutenant Lourens Benjamin Schlesinger from 1 Squadron was killed near Louis Trichardt when his Canadair CL13B Sabre suffered a suspected bird strike. He failed to eject from the aircraft before it struck the ground, exploding on impact. He was 24.
- **1965** - Captain Peter Maxwell from Central Flying School Dunnottar, a veteran of the Korean War, was killed instantly when his AT-6 Harvard crashed at Potchefstroom Airfield after the left wing of the aircraft struck the ground when he attempted to execute a roll at low level. He was 42.
- **1966** - North Vietnam: US bombs fuel storage facilities.
- **1970** - US/ARVN end two month military offensive into Cambodia.
- **1977** - Rifleman M. Makehe from 34 Battalion (Later 202 Battalion) SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 22.
- **1982** - Lance Corporal Jacobus Johannes Gerhardus van Staden from 61 Base Workshops was accidentally killed when he was crushed between two military vehicles

during a vehicle recovery operation at Tsumeb. He was 22.

- **1985** - Rifleman H. Andreas from 101 Battalion SWATF died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while in Northern Owamboland. He was 23.
- **1988** - Rifleman Christiaan Fick from 1 SAI was critically injured in a private vehicle accident and died later that day. He was 19.

30 June

- **1851** - The Battle of Viervoet, in the British-Basotho War, takes place. The British under Warden suffers a reverse.
- **1917** - Greece declares war on the Central Powers.
- **1934** - "The Night of Long Knives": Hitler's "blood purge".
- **1936** - Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia appears before the League of Nations to appeal for help following Italy's invasion of Ethiopia and his exile.
- **1941** - Leading German Protestant clergymen congratulate Hitler on the invasion of the Soviet Union.
- **1960** - The Belgian Congo becomes the independent Republic of the Congo, with Joseph Kasavubu as president and Patrice Lumumba as prime minister. Civil war soon erupts.
- **1962** - The French Foreign Legion leaves Algeria for the last time.
- **1980** - Corporal Theo Bence van Niekerk from 1 Recon-

naissance Regiment died from a gunshot accidentally sustained while at Fort Doppies, Caprivi Strip. He was 22.

- **1986** - Rifleman L.N.D. Jonas from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a Contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola near the Cut-line. He was 26.
- **1988** - The SA Defence Force claims that 200 Angolan and Cuban troops died in a clash at Calueque earlier in the week.
- **1988** - Zimbabwe foils a South African commando attempt to rescue five alleged South African agents awaiting trial for bomb attacks against the ANC in Zimbabwe.
- **1989** - Sudanese military leader Omar Hassan al-Bashir topples the civilian administration of Sadeq al-Mahdi.
- **1992** - Four members from 9 SAI were killed when their Samil 20 vehicle overturned at Middelrust. The casualties were: Sergeant Clinton Donovan Elliot (25). Lance Corporal Cleston Beukes (19). Rifleman Jacobus Adams (24). Rifleman Aubrey John Ruiters (19).



QUIZ

Grenades

1. Mills Bomb No. 8
2. M84 stun grenade
3. M67 grenade
4. RGD-33 grenade
5. M26 grenade
6. M7A3 tear gas grenade
7. Mk3A2 offensive grenade
8. Model 24 Stielhandgranate
9. No. 82 grenade (Gammon bomb)
10. Mk 2 grenade
11. No. 74 Mk 2 sticky bomb
12. Type 97 grenade
13. Type 67 Chicom grenade
14. RGD-5 grenade
15. F1 grenade



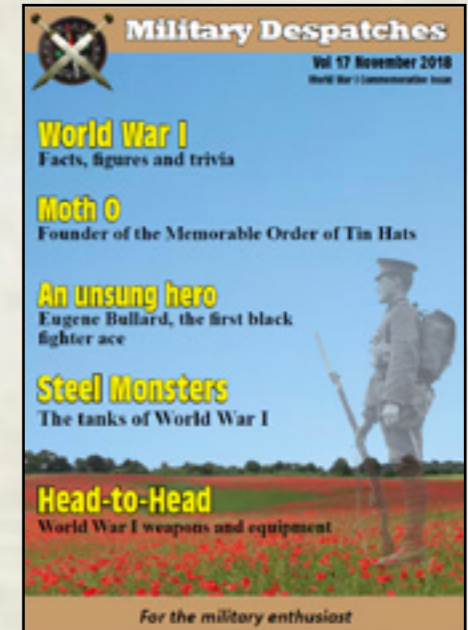
Useful links

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 five years as well as video clips and documentaries.

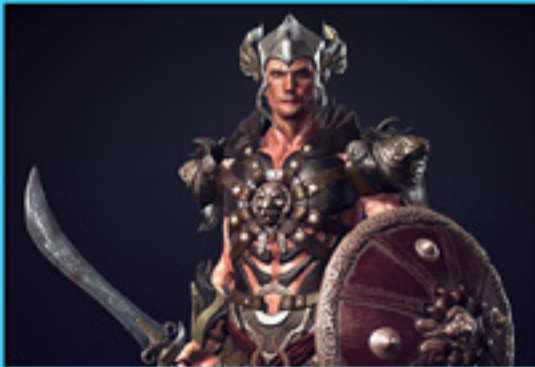
Hipe! media

E-mail
editor@hipe.co.za



Online Magazines

Flip book magazines with pages that can be turned.



E-books

Produced in any electronic format required.



2D & 3D Animation

Produced in any video format.



Video Production

Scripting, storyboard, filming and editing done to any video format required. We also do aerial and underwater video and stills.



Still Photography

If you're thinking digital media then think Hipe Media.