

Springbok

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Chairperson of the Cape Town Branch of the South African Legion, Legionnaire Ray Nessel, paying a compliment having laid a wreath during the Remembrance Day Service at Rosedale, Cape Town on Sunday 12 November 2023.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



And so we have come to the end of the year 2023 and this is the last edition for the year. Let me start by thanking all the branches and Legionnaires that have regularly submitted articles, stories, and photos which made my task that much easier. **Kindly note that during 2024 the frequency of the distribution of the Springbok will change. Editions will be published in January, March, May, July, September and November.** Due to this change, the January edition may be thinner than usual. So my appeal is that you all keep sending your stories, reports, and photos. As this edition will be a bumper edition, I unfortunately will have to keep some of the stories and photos for inclusion in the January 2024 edition. Please forgive me!

Each of us would probably look back at the year 2023 with different emotions. For me, one thing stands out and that is that the world that we live in urgently needs peace. With the event on 7 October in the Middle East the war in the Ukraine seems to have 'disappeared off the radar screens' of the International media. Very little has been reported on this war in recent months. Then there are the many conflicts on the African continent. Members of our own SANDF are deployed in peace missions in the DRC and Mozambique. Let us all pray for peace in the world in 2024.

What will 2024 bring for you and me? For the Legion and the National Congress, For our country? The world that we live in? we don't have the answers. However, one thing that we are certain of is the presence of the Almighty. What is going to be very interesting will be the national elections. What will the political landscape look like after the elections?

On Wednesday 15 November 2023, I was awarded the Honorary Lapel Button from the Chairperson of the Council of Military Veterans Organisations South Africa (CMVO SA), Major General Lawrence Smith (SA Army Retired) for my work in the military veteran's environment.

All that remains for me is to wish you all a prosperous 2024 and in maritime language may you all enjoy 'fair winds and following seas'. God Bless us all and the Legion.



CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT



Dear fellow Legionnaires.

Sincere greetings to you all. I trust that this message finds you well.

Another year has nearly ended. It is time to reflect on this past year, the Legion in general has had a successful year thanks to the active members of the branches, attending parades, organising events etc. A few hiccups along the way but that is to be expected in any organisation which we will address this year. The Zululand branch has opened and will be officially inaugurated at the next congress in 2024.

It is satisfying to see the new members being inducted into the branches on a regular basis, especially now in Cape Town with over 300 members, long may this continue. Branch newsletters albeit being few and far between, show that the Legion all over South Africa and abroad is active and playing a vital role in supporting vulnerable veterans. Some times we lose sight of our reason for being, "Not for ourselves but for others", which I hope we will realign ourselves with in 2024.

My sincere gratitude to my Manco, NEC, Regional and Branch chairmen for their ongoing support, by working tirelessly to ensure that the Legion achieves its mandate.

As Christmas approaches, we must take the time to reflect upon what has been successful year so far and to commit ourselves to being more successful in the coming year. We must also remember those called to higher service and their families at this time, some for their first time.

My very best wishes go to all Legionnaires and your loved ones this Christmas time, may you all remain safe. May 2024 bring all of you happiness, prosperity and good health.

I am looking forward to one of the best years that the Legion has ever had, in 2024.

Take care and may Our Lord bless and keep you over this festive season.

Legion greetings
Brian Smith

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT



Message for Holidays Dec 2023 Springbok Magazine

by: National Vice President message

Dear Legionnaires

The holiday season has at last arrived after the frenetic period of the Poppy Appeal and remembrance services in November. We express our heartfelt gratitude to all the members and interested helpers for their remarkable efforts supporting our noble cause.

The annual Poppy Appeal has been an instrumental force in supporting indigent veterans nationally. The funds raised during this campaign have provided vital assistance to those in need, ensuring their well-being and honouring their service to our nation.

Holidays are the time for relaxation and introspection. I would like you to reflect on the positive impact your contributions have made in assisting your branch and the SA Legion to achieve our mission. It is through your dedication that we have been able to provide meaningful support to veterans and their dependents during hard times.

Looking ahead, I propose that we work actively to increase our national membership to amplify our impact during the Appeal and other fundraising initiatives. A larger collective means greater resources and, subsequently more extensive assistance for our mission, "Not for ourselves".

As we celebrate this holiday season, I wish our members both Christian and Jewish, Happy Holidays. May this festive period bring you shared joy and camaraderie. We look forward to a prosperous 2024 with continued success for the South African Legion.

Travel safe and keep your powder dry.

Mark Louw
National Vice President

BRANCH NEWS

CAPE TOWN.

November Rosedale Braai. Talk about a night out on the tiles! On this occasion, it was on the lawns of Rosedale where guests jived to the music of resident Clive Jordaan and his four fellow musicians who play under the banner Special Edition. Here the groupies are belting out Mustang Sally and bobbing to the beat at November's family braai.

Poppy Day Walk 2023. Last year John Gandy set the pace by walking 31km from Simon's Town to Rosebank and in so doing raised R17 000,00 for the Legion's Poppy Day initiative. This year his drive and determination motivated another 14 participants to join him on this epic walk. And so, at 06h00 on Saturday 11 November, they started at Jubilee Square in the naval dockyard with the statue of Just Nuisance to urge them on their way. Twelve managed to finish the walk on the grounds of Rosedale and were clapped in by a contingent of residents and other supporters. Thirsts quenched with water, orange juice, and bubbly, they were each awarded a rosette to mark the auspicious event. Money raised? Well, it's still being counted as the pledges become known to us, but we're looking at somewhere around R 25 000,00. Not too shabby, eh? And the organisers are in the throes of writing letters of thanks to all the supporters. As they say in the classics, just a walk in the park.

Cape Town Concert Brass Performance. A full house listened rapt to the stellar performance of the Cape Town Concert Brass at Rosedale on the afternoon of Saturday 11 November. They played jazz and they pumped out classic songs that had the audience's feet tapping. But it was their final tune – a tribute to those fallen in war – that left a lump in one's throat. The Last Post was followed by a sterling rendition of 'Nkosi Sikelel Afrika', after which the enthralled audience repaired to the Rosedale Club for drinks and hotdogs.

Annual General Meeting. The Cape Town branch held its 102nd AGM at Rosedale on Wednesday, November 22nd when Chairman Ray Nasset (3rd from left) addressed a complement of 84 members. Ray holds this position for another term of office and his incoming committee comprises (from l to r) David Holmes (Secretary), Adi Fourie (Treasurer), Peter Muirhead (new portfolio of Financial and Investment Oversight), Willie Millar (Facilities) and Peter Napier (Welfare). Not in picture Claudio Chistie (Parades and Discipline).

Induction of New Members. The AGM was the ideal platform for the induction of new legionnaires and here they listen intently to Ray Nasset as he asks the group to abide by and subscribe to the objectives of the Legion and to advance these in its name. In admitting them as new members, they were reminded of the motto of 'Not for ourselves, but for others'

Donation to Tommy Rendle VC Shellhole. The Cape Town Branch recently donated to the Tommy Rendle VC Shellhole toward the replacement of the roof of their premises. Chairman Ray Nasset handed the donation to Old Bill Tertius Pienaar.

Signaler's Lunch. The Signals Association held its 23rd birthday and Corps of Signals Centenary at Rosedale on Saturday, November 18th. Chair Geoff Laskey welcomed the 35 guests (seated below), after which president Robbie Roberts performed the Lighting, and later the Extinguishing, of the flame



Scenes from the November 2023 braai at Rosedale.





Scenes from the Annual Poppy Day Walk by members of Rosedale, Cape Town. The route was from Simon's Town to Rosedale.





Left: The Cape Town Concert Brass performing for residents of Rosedale.



Above and left: Scenes from the Annual General Meeting of the Cape Town Branch held at Rosedale.

New members of the Cape Town Branch that was inaugurated during the Annual General Meeting of the branch.



Above and right: The handing over of a donation to the Tommy Rendle VC Shellhole.





Left and below: Scenes from the Signal Association lunch held at Rosedale.



ritual and the Remembrance of 3rd Bde Sig Coy Reunion Association. Pastor Maurice Espin said Grace. The guest speaker for the occasion was Alderman Ian Neilson.

Fun Quiz – Rosedale. Saturday afternoon November 25 saw the fourth Fun Quiz of the year. Humdingers posed by Ralph Kelly, longtime resident at Rosedale, had the audience scratching their heads. In the background is monitor John Dorrington.

Rosedale Residents Picnic. Residents their family and friends enjoyed a picnic supper on the lawns of Rosedale before being entertained by the Cape Town Children’s Choir, led by Bronwen Leith. This annual gathering is the highlight in the diary of the Rosedale Activities and Fund-raising Club (previously the Rosedale Service Centre) and attracts a wide and appreciative audience.

Donation to Ex-Rhodesians. A group of ex-Rhodesians benefit from the Legion’s Rhodesia Fund and once again this year – on December 5 – eleven of them met over morning tea and cake at the Battledress Shellhole in Fish Hoek. Peter Napier (Welfare portfolio on the Cape Town branch’s exco) thanked the Shellhole commander Ricky de Wet for making the facility available. Each guest was handed a shopping voucher from the Legion to help brighten their festive season.

Visit by the Kaydee Creche to Rosedale. We don’t know who enjoyed themselves more - the children or the residents at Rosedale – but what is for sure is that a great time was had by all, as we were entertained by Odette Leach’s little ones from Kaydee Creche. *We Will Rock You* and *Silent Night* competed for their attention on Thursday morning December 7th.

Rosedale Dinner. The Legion’s executive committee once again hosted 114 Rosedale residents on Saturday December 9 when a sumptuous 3-course dinner was served up by members of the Pro Patria Shellhole. The tables were gloriously decorated in true Christmas style, with celebratory drinks from the Rosedale Club.

Induction of a New Member. Pat Huddy joined the Legion some years ago. As he and Louisa both still teach in George where they live, there was seldom an occasion to visit the Cape. So, when we got wind of their pending holiday here – specifically to spend with Anne, Pat’s sister, who has been a resident of Rosedale since 2012 - it was regarded as a perfect time to conduct a one-on-one induction. Chairperson Legionnaire Ray Nessel pinned the Legion’s badge on Paddy’s lapel, watched by a supportive crowd who were saluting his induction in the Rosedale Club on Friday December 22.

PORT ELIZABETH

The Port Elizabeth “Poppy” Run . On Sunday 5th November 2023, it was the yearly SA Legion poppy run at the various cemeteries in and around Port Elizabeth. Our PE branch had a good event with various organisations enjoying the fun day including ladies from the MOTHWA, MOTHS, and Sea Cadets. Lgr. Chris Papenfus visited the North End cemetery putting poppies on all the graves of the fallen, including a monument of the (Anglo Boer) South African War (1899 - 1902) for the victims that passed away at a local concentration camp site. It was also good to discover some new graves again.



Above and right: Scenes from the Fun Quiz at Rosedale.



Left: Residents of Rosedale are entertained by the Cape Town Children's Choir during a picnic.



Left: Ex-Rhodesians receiving shopping vouchers from Legionnaire Peter Napier.



Right: Residents were entertained by children from the Kaydee Creche.



Scenes from the Rosedale residents dinner.





Left: Chairperson of the Cape Town Branch pinning the Legion lapel pin on the lapel of new member Legionnaire Pat Huddy.

Right: Legionnaire Chris Papenfus placing a Poppy on a monument for South African War 1899 – 1902 (Anglo-Boer War) during the Poppy run.



The Port Elizabeth “TIN SHAKE”. On Saturday, the 11th of November 2023 it was the SAL’s PE branch's annual fund-raising event at various shopping centres in the City. At the new Boardwalk Mall Lgr.’s Chris Papenfus, Hendrik van der Linde, and Chris’s wife Belinda did their duty for nearly four hours. A good day was had by all with good support from the community and with Chris’s collection table and marketing poster the SAL had a good focus point with positive results.

PRETORIA

Veterans Day. Under the guidance of the Pretoria Branch of the South African Legion Veterans from Pretoria met at the MOTH Evenden House in Lyttelton on Saturday morning, 4 November 2023, for the annual Veterans Day. On the day Poppies are placed on the graves of those who have died in wars and are buried in the various cemeteries in Pretoria. Sadly only four veterans reported and it was decided to visit the Rebecca Street Cemetery. Those in attendance were Ray Cumming and Charles Ross from the Legion, Renier Feldtman from the South African Air Force Association, and Frank Smith from the South African Police. After placing Poppies on numerous graves, including a large number of Police graves, the team returned to MOTH Evenden House for a ‘boerewors’ roll and something cold.

COMMEMORATION SERVICES

GLENWOOD HIGH SCHOOL REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE.

Glenwood High School, Durban held its annual Remembrance Day Service on the school fields on Thursday 9 November 2023. In addition to the staff and learners present, many dignitaries and members of the public attended. These included representatives from the Queen Nandi Mounted Rifles Regiment, the Durban Light Infantry Regiment, the Parabat Battalion, the South African Legion and various local Moth Shellholes, including Rhumbelow, Long Distance Snipers, Rough but Ready, Victory, Mills Bomb and Mainline. Various speakers explained the significance of the day and the symbolism of the poppies. The School Houses were named after old boys who in WWI and this was explained to the boys. The traditional Last Post, minute’s silence and Reveille were part of the ceremony, which ended with a final prayer by Padre Dan Finlay, of the QNMR. After the service a group photo of all who had served, was taken. There were 54 veterans present.

GREY HIGH SCHOOL PARADE, PORT ELIZABETH

On the 10th November 2023 various Legionnaires and the chairman of the SA Legion branch in PE, Lgr. TJ Pattison attended the Grey High School Remembrance Day Service. Many veterans and other organisations laid wreaths. There was also a beautiful flypast of two Harvard aircraft at exactly H hour courtesy of Stu Davidson.

ST ANDREW’S SCHOOL REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE - BLOEMFONTEIN

St Andrew's School held its annual Remembrance Day Service on, Friday 10 November 2023, to commemorate the 56 boys that paid the ultimate price to defend our country. In a moving service, 18 wreath layers represented military organisations, schools, associations and others laying a wreath in



Left: At the new Boardwalk Mall Lgr's Chris Papenfus, Hendrik van der Linde and Chris's wife Belinda from the Port Elizabeth Branch did their duty for nearly four hours.



Above and left. Scenes from the Veterans Day in Pretoria when Poppies were placed on graves of veterans in the Rebecca Street Cemetery.



Above: A group photo of attendees at the Glenwood High School Remembrance Day Service.



Left: Legionnaire Tony Pattison from the Port Elizabeth Branch laying a wreath during the Grey High School Remembrance Day Service.

Right: Legionnaire Des Macaskill laid a wreath at the St Andrews School Remembrance Day Service on behalf of the Bloemfontein Branch.



honour of their members. St Andrew's hold this event dear and are humbled that in our 160th Anniversary year we can continue to commemorate our fallen brothers.

Lest we forget."

Lgr. Des Macaskill represented the South African Legion Bloemfontein Branch and laid a Wreath. Thank you Lgr. Des

WESTVILLE BOYS HIGH SCHOOL REMEMBRANCE DAY

This week, the Boys are encouraged to donate towards Remembrance Day — a day in our calendar that is set aside to mark the end of the First World War. Monies raised will go towards supporting the South African Legion, a national organisation that addresses the needs of ex-service personnel and their dependents by way of housing, pensions, employment and general welfare. Poppy Pins will be given out in exchange for a donation, and can be collected from the History Faculty Room.

RED CROSS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

The Annual Remembrance Day service took place at the Red Cross Children's Hospital, Cape Town, on Friday 10 November 2023. Legionnaire Peter Muirhead laid a wreath on behalf of the South African Legion.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE – ROSEDALE

Rev Ralph Thornley, the Cape Town branch's honorary chaplain, delivered the address at this year's Remembrance Day Service. His message of the tragedy of war, the devastation left in its wake, was carried home to a full house in the gardens of Rosedale on a fine summer's day on Sunday November 12th.

WALMER REMEMBRANCE PARADE

On Sunday 12/11/23 the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro (PE) held its annual Remembrance Day parade at the Walmer Cenotaph. It was well supported by various veteran organisations, Sea Cadets, Grey High School, various schools, Boy Scouts, including the SA Legion, and many other dignitaries. The parade was led by the Algoa Caledonian Pipe Band. Our flag-bearer in the parade was Lgr. Jan Nel.

Approximately 200 people attended including the visitors and a representative of the Mayor's office. At the parade, chairman Lgr.TJ Pattison laid a wreath on behalf of the SA Legion. This was the first parade since the restoration of the Cenotaph, initiated by the SA Legion PE Branch Chairman, Lgr Terry Pattison. unveiled by the Earl of Athlone on the 24 th March 1925.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE – KIMBERLEY

The National Remembrance Day Service was held on Sunday, 12 November, under different circumstances with the Kimberley Regiment troops not being on parade due to a SANDF exercise at

Right: Learners from the Westwill High School proudly wearing their Poppies.



Left: Legionnaire Peter Muirhead from the Cape Town Branch laid a wreath at the Red Cross Children's Hospital Remembrance Day Service.

Right: Members from the local Sea Cadet Training Ship provided the sentries at the Walmer Remembrance Day Service.





Scenes from the Walmer Remembrance Day Service.



Lohathla. There were no military personnel from local Units present at the Service due to the exercise at Lohathla. However, the Service, a civic function, assisted by the Branch, went ahead and was well supported by Veteran Organisations and Municipal Departmental representation. We may record, too, that the Chairman attended and laid a wreath at the annual Kimberley Boys' High School Service on Friday 10 November as well as the St Patrick's CBC Service of Remembrance later in the day.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE – PRETORIA

The Annual Remembrance Day Service took place in the Commonwealth war graves plot of the Thaba Tshwane New Military Cemetery in Thaba Tshwane on Sunday 12 November 2023 at 11:00. The service was once again very well attended by Military Attaches from Belgium, Canada, France, the United Kingdom and United States of America in attendance. A large number of Military Veteran organisations were in attendance and displayed their standards.

On arrival, everyone received a small cross with a Poppy on it as well as a card with the South African Legion's Poppy on it. The service started with the deploying of the Sentries followed by the Religious service, call to remembrance, the Last Post, two-minute silence, and Reveille. Lgr Debra De Billot laid a wreath on behalf of the South African Legion. This was followed by the laying of wreaths. Near the end of the wreath laying a dog laid a wreath on behalf of all animals who have died in conflict.

On completion of the service and wreath laying attendees were requested to place the small cross that received on arrival at a grave in the plot. The Belgium planted her cross at the grave of the Belgium buried in the cemetery.

The service was jointly organised by the Memorable Order Tin Hats (MOTH), Pretoria Dugout and the Pretoria Memorial Services Council. The service was supported by the South African National Defence Force.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE – DUTCH REFORM CHURCH (NG KERK) UPINGTON WEST

Under the leading Retired Colonel Jan Victor and Pieter De Kock a Remembrance Day Service was held in the Dutch Reform Church (NG Kerk) Upington West on Sunday 12 November 2023. Pieter De Kock contacted the Cape Town Branch for advice and a supply of Poppies for the service. The service was well attended. We trust that the service will be held annually in the future. Well done to all involved. Thank you to Carina Victor who provided the photos.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE HERMANUS with acknowledgement to Overstrand Municipal Manager, Dean O'Neill.

As is customary, the annual Remembrance Day service and parade was held on Sunday morning, 12 November 2023, in Hermanus where war veterans, serving personnel, friends and family gathered at the Cenotaph War Memorial at the Old Harbour to pay tribute to the members of our armed forces who have died in the line of duty.



Scenes from the Remembrance Day Service in Pretoria.





Scenes from the Remembrance Day service held in the Dutch Reform Church (NG Kerk) Upington West.





Scenes from the Remembrance Day Service in Hermanus.

The Cenotaph War Memorial was built in 1929 to commemorate the 11 volunteers from Hermanus who never returned after the 1st World War. It is of interest to note that Hermanus had the highest level of volunteering per size of population in the British Empire during World War I.

Almost without fail, the sounds of the bugles from the local Hawston based, SA Sea Cadettes - TS Birkenhead, playing the Last Post, the Colours slowly being lowered to half mast, the two minute silence maintained in homage and the solemn laying of numerous wreaths, brought a tear to the eye of many an onlooker participating in this sacred ritual.

On addressing those present, Peter Dickens, Old Bill of the local M.O.T.H. Seagull Shellhole Hermanus (SSH) and Honorary President of the South African Legion, UK and Europe Branch, said Remembrance Day, also known as Poppy Day, commemorates the armistice agreement that ended the First World War at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918 - 11 /11/11.

COMMONWEALTH SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE, THE HAGUE

THE HAGUE – Sunday November 12, 2023

The annual Commonwealth Remembrance Sunday ceremony in The Hague, was hosted by the South African Embassy in the Netherlands, and attended by an array of ambassadors, consular representatives, defence attachés, officials of the Netherlands government and Dutch Armed Forces, the Mayor and Aldermen of The Hague, as well as representatives of veterans' and other related organisations.

The Act of Remembrance and wreath laying at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission section of Westduin Cemetery in The Hague was preceded by a moving service at the Anglican Church of St John & St Philip.

Addressing the gathering, South African Ambassador Vusi Madonsela, spoke of the continued need for people and nations to negotiate and compromise, rather than indulge in conflicts, that are still causing pain, suffering, and death to soldiers and civilians around the world.

At 12h00 (CEST), to synch with the 11h00 GMT observances across the UK, with the Dutch, British, and South African flags at half mast, a bugler sounded Last Post, and all observed the Act of Remembrance and customary two minutes' silence, to mark the moment when the guns of the First World War fell silent on the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.

Wreaths were laid at the Cross of Sacrifice, the South African Legion was represented by Europe Chair Andrew Bergman. Veteranen Noordwijk, whose town hosts the graves of casualties of the SS Mendj, and with whom we have built-up a warm camaraderie over many years, also laid a wreath.

Scouts and Guides then laid flowers at the graves of 70 identified and many more unidentified WWII casualties who lie buried there. The piper then led a procession to pay tribute at the nearby graves of the Stijkel Group – 47 men and women who were actively involved in the resistance against German



Scenes from the Commonwealth Remembrance Day Service The Hague, Netherlands.



occupation after the invasion of the Netherlands on 10 May 1940, who were eventually betrayed, of whom 32 were executed on 4 June 1941 and 11 subsequently died in captivity.

The ceremony was followed by an informal lunch, hosted at the sumptuous residence of British Ambassador, Joanna Roper.

The hosting of the Commonwealth ceremony is rotated annually between the UK, South Africa, Canada, New Zealand, India, Pakistan. In fact, it was South Africa's turn to host the 2022 event, however the baton on that occasion was passed to the British embassy, in the immediate aftermath of the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE, CENOTAPH, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

Members from the England Branch of the South African Legion again participated in the veterans march past during the Remembrance Day parade at the Cenotaph in London the United Kingdom.

SIDI REZEGH MEMORIAL SERVICE – ROSEDALE

Sidi Rezegh is a Kramat located about 35km from Tobruk and was the site of the battle in the North African campaign in the Western Desert in 1941. It was where the South African 5th Brigade, a combination of 5th Engineers and 3rd Battalion Transvaal Scottish and others fell to the might of the German forces. Here Sergeant Peter Bolton representing the TS and Keeper of the Banner Sapper Daniel van der Merwe pay tribute to the fallen at the Wall of Remembrance in the grounds of Rosedale on 26 November.

OTHER STORIES

FLOTSAM, JETSAM AND THE POPPY RUN

It is quite strange just how often History has a habit of creeping up on you and giving you a reminder that most things in life are connected and have usually happened before!

During the recent annual "Poppy Run" to place a Haig Poppy on the tombstones of all the military graves in the Port Elizabeth area as a token of remembrance, we came across a tombstone in the South End Cemetery of the four Merchant Navy Seamen who had perished when their ship the *SS Helmspey* was torpedoed by a German U boat in February 1943 off the coast of Cape St. Francis, just a short 70 km from Port Elizabeth. This coincided with the washing up of and the discovery of numerous bales of raw rubber along the beaches from Cape St. Francis to Blue Water Bay, all of which were approx. 1m cubes, very heavy and very smelly! A Google search advised me that the *SS Helmspey* was wrecked off the coast of Cornwall in the U.K. I am not an Oceanographer or an expert in the movement of the Oceans but even to me this seemed a bit far-fetched for her cargo to have washed up on the Southern tip of Africa! The truth however was far simpler and easy to verify. A simple spelling mistake by the stonemason when he engraved the stone back in 1943, the correct name of the ship was the *SS Helmspey*!



Above and left: Scenes from the Remembrance Day Service at the Cenotaph, London, United Kingdom.

Right: Sidi Rezegh memorial service held at Rosedale.



The SS *Helmspey* was torpedoed 11 miles off the South African coast by U516 on the 11th February 1943. She was en route from East London to Cape Town where she was due to meet up with a UK bound convoy. Her cargo of manganese, raw rubber, tea and general cargo had been loaded in Colombo, Ceylon. The initial torpedo strike halted the ship and caused her Master, Captain Harry Jones, to order "abandon ship – launch the lifeboats". The ship was evacuated safely but while the starboard lifeboat was waiting alongside for the Master and his 2 IC, a second torpedo was fired which exploded mid-ships under the waiting lifeboat. Four crew members died instantly with a fifth succumbing to his wounds the next day in Port Elizabeth. A May Day signal had been sent as soon as the 1st torpedo struck, which was received in the Port Captain's Office in Port Elizabeth, who then alerted the SAAF fast boat stationed there as a rescue tender. Fast boat R4 was dispatched and picked up the survivors and brought them back to Port Elizabeth where they were cared for before eventual return to the UK. As mentioned, the deceased were interred in the South End Cemetery with due Military Honours .

As for the cargo, it remained at the bottom of the Indian Ocean until the recent severe Spring Storms caused the wreck to breach, spilling its cargo, some of which eventually ended up on our beaches. With regards to the U516 – she survived the war having sunk some 16 merchant vessels and surrendered to the Royal Navy off the coast of Scotland in 1945. She was eventually scuttled.

POPPY DAY COLLECTION HERMANUS

Seagull Shellhole Hermanus opened up our SA Legion Poppy collection drive at the Hermanus country market on 4 November in conjunction with the TS Birkenhead Sea Cadets from Hawston. A successful day of Poppy collections in Hermanus on Armistice Day, 11 November, for the South African Legion, assisted by the TS Birkenhead Sea Cadets from Hawston who did an amazing job.

OBITUARIES

DURBAN

Lgr Hilton Naish.

PIETERMARITZBURG

Lgr A W Riggien.

PORT ALFRED

Lgr Walter Rennie Probart.

PORT ELIZABETH

Lgr Chris Schutte.

VIRTUAL

Lgr Giovanni Vincenzo Mariano.



SS Helmspey



Piece of rubber that washed ashore.



Left: Grave of a casualty from the SS Helmspey.



SA Air Force Fast Boat R 4



Scenes from the Poppy Day collection in Hermanus.



SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION



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SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION STRUCTURE

Patron in Chief: President of the Republic of South Africa

Past Presidents for Life

- Lgr Chris PC de B Venter.

Honorary Life Past President

- Lgr Brian Klopper.

Honorary Life Vice Presidents:

- Lgr Arthur Blake.
- Lgr Bazil Kriel.
- Lgr Rick Andriès.
- Lgr Quentin Gibson.

National President: Lgr Brian Smith.

National V/President: Lgr Mark Louw.

National Treasurer: Lgr Johan Johnson.

National Secretary: Izelle Potgieter (Acting).

National Comms and Liaison: Lgr Debra De Billot.

National Wellbeing and Relief: Lgr Rick Andriès.

National Ceremonial/Conduct: Lgr Peter Smit.

National Fundraising: Vacant.

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- Port Elizabeth
- Pretoria
- Scotland
- Soweto
- Strand

Outposts

- Midlands (England)
- Southern (England)

Regional Chairmen:

- Cape: Lgr Ray Nessel.
- Eastern Cape: Lgr Brian Klopper.
- Free State: Lgr Willie Janse Van Rensburg.
- Gauteng: Lgr A. Le Grange.
- Kwa-Zulu Natal: Lgr Steve Leahy.
- United Kingdom: Lgr Russel Mattushek.
- Europe: Lgr Andrew Bergman.