



WHALE COAST FLIER

Newsletter of the South African Air Force Association Whale Coast Branch

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22 November 2023



Painting: Don Bell - "SAAF Atlas Impala Mk.II - Border Patrol"

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK/UIT DIE REDAKTEUR SE PEN

Ons is nou vinnig besig om die einde van die 2023-jaar te nader en word daaraan herinner in byna elke winkel sedert die aanvang van hierdie maand, met rakke vol Kersversierings.

Terwyl ons in die maand van November is, reflekteer ons in hierdie uitgawe graag ook op wat in hierdie maand, oor die afgelope jare, in die geskiedenis van die Lugmag gebeur het.

This edition is dedicated to the annual Remembrance Day Memorial Service and to include a poem or two that relates to this annual event. Furthermore, we will once again share the historical background as to why it is also referred to as the "11/11/11 Commemoration", paying tribute to fallen heroes during this time and ever since.

We trust that our readers will find this edition interesting and informative!

WEAL AND WOE

Wellbeing of our members. To those members who are battling illness or are recovering from surgeries, we uphold you all in our thoughts and prayers.



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SAAF/SAAFA

SAAF

What happened this month in SA Air Force (SAAF) History - NOVEMBER

03 November

- **1967** - Two members from 17 Squadron were accidentally killed when their Alouette III Helicopter struck High Tension cables and crashed while transporting three civilian members from the Department of Water Affairs. The SAAF casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant Anthony Siegfried Foxon (23). Air Corporal Johannes Christoffel Steyn (27).

04 November

- **1975** - Private Kevin Edward Laidlaw from 15 Squadron SAAF was asleep on his bed in his tent at Rundu when a fellow Private came into the tent on returning from guard duty and threw his UZI sub-machine gun onto the adjacent bed. As the weapon hit the bed, a shot went off and the bullet struck Kevin in the head, killing him instantly. He was 18.

08 November

- **1982** - Lieutenant Colin Brits from 41 Squadron was killed while giving flying instruction to a newly qualified pilot when his Atlas C4M Kudu crashed near Potchefstroom. He was 25.

14 November

- **1987** - Captain Andre Anthony Stapa was based at Air Force Base Ondangwa as a Station Pilot. He was subsequently Reported Missing when his Atlas MB326KM Impala Mk II failed to return from attacking enemy positions near Cuvelai in Southern Angola. The aircraft impacted the ground while pulling out after firing on the enemy positions and it is thought that the Pilot may have misjudged his altitude and flown into the ground. The possibility that his aircraft may have been hit or damaged by hostile ground fire was also not ruled out. He has no known grave. He was 30.

23 November

- **1993** - Captain Louis Joubert from 1 Squadron was Reported Missing when his Dassault Mirage F1AZ was seen to suddenly bank steeply and dive into the sea approximately 80km South, South West of Cape Point while carrying out a low level maritime strike. He was 24.

24 November

- **1973** - Four aircrew members from 24 Squadron were Reported Missing after two Hawker Siddeley S-50 Buccaneer aircraft, Serial Numbers 419 and 420 that had departed from Cape Town to conduct a maritime strike exercise against HMS Fearless during a Joint SA Navy and Royal Navy exercise referred to as CAPEX 73 failed to return. At 13h30 the aircraft were involved in a mid-air collision in thick fog over Walker Bay near Hermanus while en-route to the ship. The crews were: Major Johannes Jacob Stein Steinberg (32). Major Clement Roy Vice (29). Captain Hercules Du Preez (25). Captain Brian Maughan Antonis (26).



25 November

• **1971** - Four members from 22 Flight (later 22 Squadron) were killed while stationed on board the SAS President Steyn that was escorting a new Daphne Class submarine SAS Emily Hobhouse from France back to South Africa when their Westland Wasp helicopter burst into flames just after take-off. They were: Captain Christiaan Jacobus Tiedt (24). Sergeant Johannes Gerhardus Blom (34). Corporal Johann Stork (26). Corporal Nicolaas Francois Janse van Rensburg (33).

• **1975** - Two members from 11 Squadron and one from 8 SAI were Reported Missing during Operation Savannah William L. Calley when their Cessna 185D was presumed to have been shot down over or near the town of Ebo in Central Angola. The casualties were: Captain Daniel Jakob Taljaard (32). 2nd Lieutenant Keith Arthur Williamson (21). 2nd Lieutenant Eric Brian Thompson (20).

26 November

• **1969** - Major Johannes Petrus Britz LWD from 1 Squadron SAAF was killed instantly near Pietersburg, when his Canadair CL13B Sabre Mk VI, Serial Number 368 suffered catastrophic engine failure and caught fire while he was carrying out bombing practice exercises. He was 29.

28 November

• **1980** - Four SAAF members from the Air Defence School in Pretoria were killed in a private aircraft crash while on a weekend pass. The casualties were: Private Pieter Barand De Villiers (18). Private Gabriel De Wet van Eeden (20). Private Leonard Wilhelm Kruger (24). Private Abraham Daniel Roux (18).

Source: Military Despatches Vol 77 November 2023

Appointment and Promotion of a Whale Coast Branch member: A senior serving SA Air Force (SAAF) officer. The most recent SAAF Bulletin was issued in the past week, announcing the appointment and promotion of Brigadier Generals/Rear Admirals for the FY 2023/24.

Among the SAAF appointments, we took note of the appointment of one of our active branch members, Colonel Donovan Chetty (currently Officer Commanding, AFB Overberg), as the new Defence Corporate Staff Services (DCSS) at Air Force Headquarters. This appointment comes with promotion to the substantive rank of Brigadier General with effect from 01 December 2023. We would like to congratulate Donovan and we wish him well in the new post in the higher headquarters in Pretoria.

SAAFA

Remembrance Day Memorial Service: 12 November 2023. The annual Poppy Day proved to be another memorable event held at The Cenotaph War Memorial, Old Harbour, Hermanus and arranged by The South African Legion and The Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTH) Seagull Shellhole and where a number of veterans organisations were presented.

An attachment of the Sea Cadets honoured the ceremony with an impressive parade, regardless of the extreme heat conditions that they experienced during the formalities.



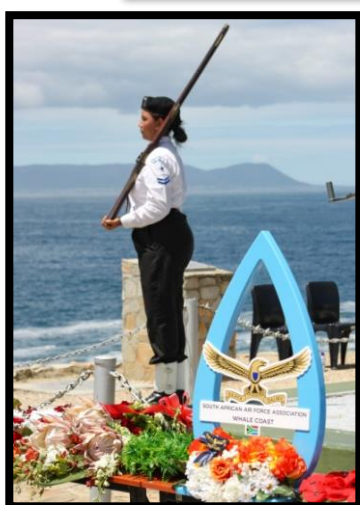
We include some extracts from the address delivered by the Deputy Mayor of the Overstrand Municipality, Councillor, Lindile Ntsabo, issued by the Overstrand Municipal Manager, Dean O'Neill and published in the latest edition of local paper, *The Village News*, and as follows:

"Having laid a wreath on behalf of the Overstrand community, Deputy Mayor Lindile Ntsabo said he is proud to honour the wartime sacrifices that veterans and uniformed serving personnel, including the emergency services, have made. He re-enforced the message that Remembrance Sunday stood for the military sacrifice of all South Africans of every race, colour and creed in all the wars they have ever fought in. He gave the assurance that the Overstrand Municipality will continue its commitment to remember the fallen."

The Deputy Mayor thanked all who were involved in arranging the event, especially the Old Bill of the Seagull Shellhole, the Hermanus unit of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTH's), who organised the event as well as the Hermanus 1st Sea-Scouts and the SA Sea Cadets, TS Birkenhead, who partook in the parade. The Sea Cadets stood in for the duties on behalf of the Jan Smuts Regiment, who could not attend this year's function as they are currently operational.

For those who leave never to return, for those who return but are never the same. We remember them."

Issued by: Overstrand Municipal Manager, Dean O'Neill



Photos: Peter Dickens and Barbara Hays (The Village News)

It was also the first time since the branch attended this annual event, that we heard the Afrikaans version of the well-known poem “In Flanders Fields”, read out by Karen Dickens, wife of MOTHS Seagull Shellhole Old Bill, Peter Dickens.

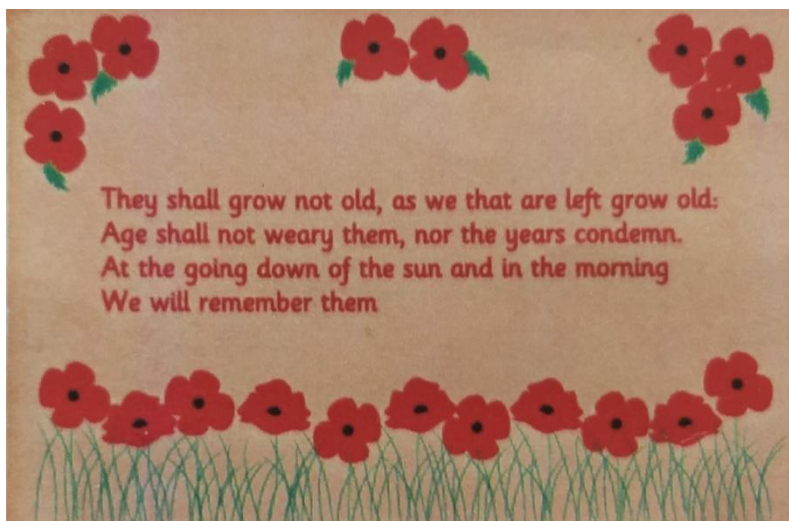
Peter Dickens remarked the following: *“As the Battle of Delville Wood involved South Africans of both British and Afrikaner origin, and it was the battle which forged the young Union of South Africa’s identity, it was felt that it would be appropriate to translate ‘In Flanders Fields’ into Afrikaans and read it at the centenary ceremony. The poem up to that point had already been translated into a variety of languages, but not Afrikaans.*

This Afrikaans translation is the result of a dedicated collaborative effort.”

In Vlaandere se Velde – Deur Lt. Kol John McCrae

In Vlaand’re wieg papawers sag
 Tussen kruise, grag op grag,
 As bakens; en deur dit alles deur
 Die lewerikke tjilpend in dapper vlug,
 Skaars hoorbaar bo die grofgeskut van kanonne.
 Ons is die Dooies.
 Dae gelede het ons geleef
 die dagbreek en sonsondergloed beleef.
 Was bemind en was verlief,
 nou lê ons in Vlaandere se velde.
 Veg voort my Kind met alle mag;
 neem uit my hand die lig,
 met krag moet jul die fakkel dra, met eer.
 Wie durf Ons dood verloën, onteer –
 ons sal steeds dwaal, ons sal nie slaap,
 solank papawers groei in Vlaandere se velde.

The original English version, composed by Colonel McCrae after he buried Alexis Helmer, a close friend, who was killed during the battle of Ypres. McCrae performed the burial service himself, at which time he noted how poppies quickly grew around the graves of those who died. The next day, he composed the poem while sitting in the back of an ambulance at an Advanced Dressing Station just outside the town of Ypres. This location is today known as the John McCrae Memorial Site.”



As usual, a number of Whale Coast Branch members were in attendance and the Chairman laid a wreath on behalf of the branch and ultimately, on behalf of the SAAF Association.



Photo: Barbara Hays (The Village News)



Back, from L to R: Ken Bannister, Rob Tannahill.
Front: Lynda Bannister, Marthie Visser, Marie & Peter Dagg
 (Photo provided by Ken Bannister)



FUTURE BRANCH ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

- **Branch Executive Committee (BEC) Meeting: 22 November 2023.**
- **Branch Luncheon (Braai) – Hermanus Old Boys Club: 15 December 2023.**



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The Editorial Committee would appreciate contributions from the Members of SAAFA Whale Coast Branch and extends their thanks for all contributions received. Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or of SAAFA National Executive or of the Branch Executive Committee. The Editor reserves the right to amend or reject any editorial matter submitted for publication.