

# Stick and Throttle



August 2017

**SAAFA**

**Pretoria Branch**

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## **RFMCF REPORT**

***From Mike Louw***

During the course of June 2017 the RFMCF sent out a communiqué to all its beneficiaries explaining a number of changes in its operating systems. Hereunder follows a verbatim extract from the communiqué.

“Dear Member

To ensure the financial sustainability of your fund during the challenging times we find ourselves in, the RFMCF has implemented a few measures to ensure that you and your dependants continue to enjoy your medical benefits for many years to come. More cost saving measures will be implemented soon.

### **Changes already implemented**

**Use of generic equivalents at private pharmacies:** Effective 01 March 2017, the RFMCF will only pay for the generic equivalent of your private pharmacy prescription. Payment of original medicine is subject to the submission of a clinical letter of motivation from your treating doctor. Motivations can be sent to [chonic@rfmcf.co.za](mailto:chonic@rfmcf.co.za).

**Implementation of a complaint e-mail address:** To ensure the proper escalation of your complaints, we have implemented a complaints e-mail address. [complaints@rfmcf.co.za](mailto:complaints@rfmcf.co.za). This may be used for all complaints relating to your service experience in dealing with service providers, the use of Military facilities and the RFMCF. Complaints should be as detailed as possible and to please include the following details:

- Rank/title, initials and surname of the person the complaint is lodged against
- Name and telephone number of the facility/service provider concerned.
- Date when the poor service was experienced.
- A brief explanation of what happened.

These complaints are escalated to the relevant structures by the Acting Principal Officer (Dr A Jamuna).

Thus far we have received and escalated the following complaints:

- Unavailability of Pharmacy Stock at some Military facilities
- Unanswered telephones at the Military facilities
- Poor service at the SAMHS.
- Military authorization process.
- Emergency services/authority process.

**New changes implemented/being investigated:**

**Payment of membership contributions:** As per the General Regulations, members below the age of 60 are still liable for increases, when approved by the Board. As of 01 July 2017, all subscriptions are payable in advance on the 15th of each month. If the payment has not reached the RFMCF by the 16th of each month, the membership benefits will be suspended.

**Implementation of a stale claims period:** Currently, members and service providers have 5 years within which they can submit accounts to the RFMCF. In line with best practices, the RFMCF decided to implement a stale claim period of 6 months as from service date 01 July 2017. This means that your claim will be rejected if received after 6 months from the service date.

**Payment tariff:** The RFMCF will soon be implementing a tariff rate that all service providers ought to use when they invoice the RFMCF. This will ensure that service providers do not overcharge for services rendered to you and your beneficiaries. Thus, the RFMCF tariff will be aligned to the SAMHS tariff. The RFMCF will send communication to service providers informing them of this change. It is important to note that as a member you should not have any co-payments due to this and that any co-payments should be reported to the RFMCF.

**Exclusion categories:** Effective 01 July 2017, certain medicines/items will not be covered by the fund anymore as they might not be considered clinically appropriate. Should you still wish to obtain these medicines/items it will be for your own account. A message will be sent directly to the pharmacy informing them of such an exclusion. The pharmacist will inform you when such claims have been rejected.

**Anxiolytics implementation:** In keeping with the RFMCF's philosophy of complying with good pharmacy practice as prescribed by the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa, we will be implementing measures to ensure the appropriate use of specific medicines that have high risk for patient dependence. Medicine falling in the category of sedatives, hypnotics and anxiolytics should not be used for a period longer than 2 weeks. The RFMCF is therefore implementing the guidelines on the quantity for non-chronic use of these medicines.

Please contact the RFMCF for any further enquiries in this regard and remember to update all your personal information and contact details.

Yours faithfully,

DR A JAMUNA  
ACTING PRINCIPAL OFFICER  
RFMCF"



Our own WO1 Renier Feldtmann on parade for the Commemoration Service of the Battle of Delville Wood Sunday 16 July 2017.

## WE REMEMBER OUR FALLEN COMRADES IN KOREA.

On 27 July the Korean Embassy in South Africa hosted their annual Memorial Service in remembrance of members of 2 Sqn, SAAF, who did not return from protecting South Korea from the communist North. As always a wonderfully moving ceremony, all the more special this year as the Two Minute Silence was terminated by Menno Parsons in his P-51 which was to understate it totally astonishingly moving, particularly as there were four Korean veteran Mustang pilots in attendance; Gen Mike Muller, Gen Denis Earp, Al Rae and Piet

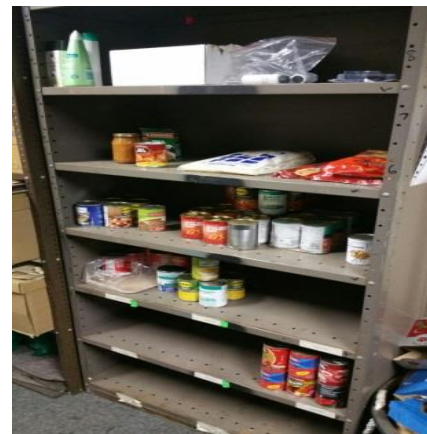


Visser. Sincere thanks to HE Ambassador Choi, Col Dirk Louw, Col Danie van der Westhuizen, Ansie Eveleigh and Menno Parsons. Our SAAF can also be very proud; they were first class in every respect!

## OUR CUPBOARDS ARE BARE - PLEASE HELP WITH BENEVOLENCE SUPPORT.

Please everyone, Marianne and her team are making a special effort for those who are less fortunate but the shelves of her stock room are nearly empty. Please assist and drop some items off at the banquet, next SAAFA lunch or at the SAAFA office.

Please contact Marianne Mostert on 082 459 5137 or SAAFA Pretoria at 012 651 5922. A big thank you to those who have supported our efforts so far. It is really appreciated.



## LAURIE SHUTTLEWORTH

*By At Spies*

Wow, wow and wow!!!!

Recently, on the 30th of June 2017 in fact, I had the honour and privilege to meet a true living legend of South African aviation.

I just must say that again. Wow!!! Yes, on the mentioned date, I met Mr. Laurie Shuttleworth, no, that is not quite correct, I met Squadron Leader, later to become Lieutenant Colonel, Lawrie Shuttleworth and believe me, for me the meeting really was an honour. Colonel Lawrie is a legendary, ex-South African Air Force pilot and hero from WW II. Having started his Air Force career in 1939, Lawrie probably now is the last surviving pilot from that distant, East African campaign, where the allied powers were fighting battles against Italy. Despite his age, Lawrie's mind and memory is as clear as a bell. The only bother for him is a bit of Presbycusis<sup>1</sup>, probably enhanced by his earlier exploits of sitting in between two thundering radial engines for hours on end. Lastly, I must mention that the man is the uncle of Marc Shuttleworth and was present in Russia when that famous man blasted off into Space.

Let me first tell you about the moment I met Lawrie. It was quite by chance, or was it by design, that we attended the same function in the small dusty little town called Boshof. I virtually bumped into the man as he walked out of the bar, beer in hand. Now, I must admit that a man fetching his own beer is probably not that remarkable but when realise you that

<sup>1</sup> Presbycusis is the most common type of Sensorineural Hearing Loss caused by the natural aging of the auditory system.



Lawrie will be celebrating his 103rd birthday in September, it puts a totally new perspective on that instance. How fortunate it was for me to share a beer and even two more with this remarkable man and let me add, both those latter beers were fetched by the great man himself. To these remarkable facts I can add that Lawrie stopped playing competitive bowls at the age of one hundred years, probably just to give the younger bowlers a chance to win now and then. Also, every morning, at 0800, he still visits his business empire to ensure that everything is absolutely "tickety-boo" and he even does his own grocery shopping, pushing his own cart. Really??? What a man!!! I had the privilege to spend a truly remarkable afternoon discussing my own, and of course his, favourite topic, which just happens to be flying and aircraft.

Allow me now to tell Lawrie's story, a story well worth reading about.

Lawrie started private flying at Baragwanath airport in April 1937 and eventually earned his wings in February 1939. As a newly qualified pilot, he was immediately placed on the South African Air Force's reserve list. With the outbreak of the war, during September 1939, he was called up to join 40 Squadron SAAF and by June 1940, he was posted to Kenya, flying Hawker Hartbeest planes and combat sorties against the Italians.



Lawrie Shuttleworth and at Spies

One of his first sorties was a bombing mission near Yarlle in southern Abyssinia. That was where he had his first encounter with an Italian Fiat fighter and Lawrie was almost shot down at the time. He survived that deadly encounter by entering into a violent spin, first to one side and then the other but in doing so, the legend lived on. Several weeks later, while flying observation missions for the Army near a place called Wajir, Lawrie again met up with two Fiat fighters in the air. He was flying "top cover" for an army convoy, en-route to Mogadishu when the Italians attacked him. This time, his rear gunner managed to hit one of the Fiats and that fighter had to limp home with smoke pouring from its engine.

Soon after that last encounter, Lawrie was stationed at Jiggiga in Abyssinia (now Ethiopia). At that time, he had reached the end of his operational tour with 40 Squadron and was posted to 41 Squadron in South Africa for R&R. By then, the Italians had already been subdued over most of Abyssinia but a large force was holding out near Gondor on the Blue Nile. Lawrie was soon sent back north and was then stationed at Alamata. He was now tasked to fly bombing sorties against the Italian general holding out at Gondor castle<sup>2</sup>. He

was also promoted and was acting Officer Commanding A-flight, of the Squadron stationed at Aksum.

A strong force of Italians was dug in at the top of Wolchefit Pass and no amount of attention from the Army could dislodge them, however, after a prolonged aerial bombing campaign by Lawrie and his 41 Squadron comrades, they eventually surrendered. While flying further sorties against the enemy at Gondor, Lawrie's aircraft was mistakenly identified as an Italian

<sup>2</sup> The Battle of Gondar was the last stand of the Italian forces in Italian East Africa during the Second World War. The battle took place in November 1941, during the East African Campaign. Gondar was the main town of Amhara in the mountains north of Lake Tana in Ethiopia, at an elevation of 7,000 ft (2,100 m) and had an Italian garrison of 40,000, commanded by *Generale* Guglielmo Nasi.

aircraft and was fired upon by heavily armed Abyssinian locals. The Hartebeest's engine quit and Lawrie attempted a forced landing on one of the few ploughed fields in the vicinity. Unfortunately, the field was very soft and the aircraft flipped onto its back during that forced landing. Despite this calamity, Lawrie and his gunner could get out of the wreck virtually unscathed but was now set upon by the Abyssinian locals. Fortunately, Lawrie's gunner, Jack Lamb, having an agricultural background and with great presence of mind, calmed down the armed men and convinced them that they were English aviators and not the enemy. Again, it was all's well that ended well.

When the Italian campaign finally came to an end, Lawrie was posted back to Rand Airport, Germiston. His stay at Germiston was short lived because he was soon posted to Bloemfontein to commence training on twin engine aircraft, flying the already antiquated Oxford.

The Oxford was only a stepping stone onto the more advanced PV Ventura Bomber.

With the Suez Canal closed to shipping during the war, the route around the Cape again became paramount to the Allies and Lawrie flew many an escort sortie in protection of those vulnerable ships. He was now the Commanding Officer of 25 Squadron, stationed at Port Elizabeth.

For months, they managed to keep the shipping convoys, around the Cape, safe from U-Boat attacks but eventually the Squadron was sent north, to be posted in Italy, based at Termoli on the Baltic Sea. From there, they flew across the Adriatic to bomb targets in Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece. It was on one of those missions that Lawrie experienced another close brush with death. Just after take-off from his home base, both engines of the Ventura quit and he had to ditch in the sea. Sadly, two of the persons onboard his aircraft drowned but a fishing boat rushed to the rescue of the survivors. Not much later, an Air-Sea Rescue flight, in an amphibian Catalina flying boat, landed near to the small boat and uplifted the surviving crew members, transporting them back to dry land.

For a while, Lawrie also flew Marauder bombers at 25 Sqn as part of the Balkan Air Force but then he and the OC of 15 Squadron, still called the "Desert Air Force" at the time, swapped places as Officer Commanding.

15 Squadron was located to the north and was the flying Baltimore bombers so again there was another conversion onto yet another aircraft. Lawrie's last brush with death came while flying the Baltimore. On one of the numerous bombing missions he flew, his bomber was hit in the left engine by ack-ack, setting it on fire. Struggling to control his seriously crippled bomber, Lawrie ordered his co-pilot to bail out which the man duly did. Unfortunately, the bail out was over enemy held territory and the man ultimately ended up in a POW camp. Despite the fire on board, Lawrie managed to fly his crippled aircraft into friendly territory where he crash-landed successfully. He and the gunners in the aircraft barely escaped the wreck before it exploded when the fire reached the fuel tanks. Again he lived to fight in later battles.

The above was just some of the adventures which a truly remarkable man experienced during several tours of duty in the war.

Lawrie, I salute you!!! What a life, what a man!!!

### **SAAFA PRETORIA BRANCH BANQUET**

Just a friendly reminder for those that still want to book for the Pretoria Branch Annual Banquet to do so now.

The Pretoria Branch Annual Banquet will be held on *Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> of August 2017* at 18h00 for 18h30 at the NCO's Mess, Zwartkop West (Old Air Force Gymnasium)

Costs: R250.00 per person – including sherry/wine/fruit juice.

Dress: Mess Dress with orders, decorations, and miniature medals for serving members. Dinner jacket with black tie and miniature medals, orders and decorations for members and their guests. Ladies appropriate.

### ***MENU***

#### ***Starter***

*Grilled Fillet of Hake with Lemon Butter Sauce and Fresh Coriander*

#### ***Main Meal***

*Roasted Chicken Breast with Orange Glaze  
Grilled Fillet of Beef served with Mushroom Sauce  
Roasted Baby Potatoes  
Sweet Butternut  
Roasted baby vegetables  
Greek salad (separate)*

#### ***Dessert***

*Baked Cheesecake served with Mix Berries  
Coffee and Tea*

Cash Bar available.

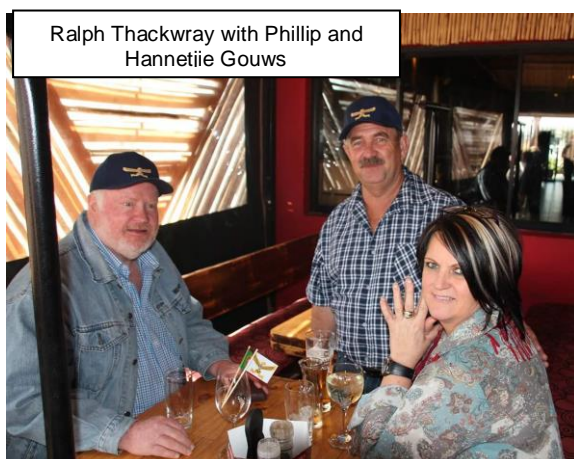
**Please Note:** Book before Friday 11 August 2017 @ 012 651 5922 (office hours) Cell: 083 271 3153 e-mail: [pta@saafa.co.za](mailto:pta@saafa.co.za) or [jaapross@gmail.com](mailto:jaapross@gmail.com) (limited seats available - book early).

### **SAAFA PRETORIA PORTUGUESE EVENT**

Four of our Pretoria Branch "Movers & Shakers"; Nick and Carol Havenga and Johann and Marianne Mostert felt that we were in need of exposure to some international culture and cuisine, and arranged a function at Eugene's Casa Portuguesa in Centurion on 29 July, and what a splendid event it was!

Attended by nearly sixty members, family and friends, the initial activity was to consume really good Katemba's, intended as a welcoming drink. Some of us, however, were welcomed on numerous occasions! Splendidly prepared Espetada beef cubes were provided as a starter followed by a splendid selection of Portuguese dishes. The waiters found it hard going to keep the SAAFA patrons suitably hydrated!

The usual Pretoria Branch spirit prevailed for the entire afternoon, with much good camaraderie, humour and banter. An experience to be repeated for sure!



Ralph Thackwray with Phillip and Hannelië Gouws



IPP Philip Weyers with Pretoria Chairman Dave Jackson.





National President Hugh Paine with SAAFA East Rand member Roelf Rossouw

Our Lady Movers and Shakers; Carol Havenga and Marianne



Please don't count the empties!



The life and soul of many of our events, Cyril Pearce and Nik Petrohilos.



Fun in the Sun

Photographs by kind favour of Roelf and Joey Rossouw, welcome visitors from SAAFA East Rand.

## DATES TO DIARISE

Event	Date
Annual Branch Banquet – Warrant's and NCO's Mess Zwartkop West.	18 August 2017

## MEMORIAL SERVICES – August 2017 to September 2017

Date	Day	Activity	Venue	Time	Attendance
20 Aug	Sunday	Border Boys Parade Pretoria District MOTH	MOTH Cottages Eloffsdal	10.30	All MOTHS and Members
2 Sept	Saturday	Warsaw Flights Commemoration Service	Kayton Memorial Johannesburg	11.00	Members
10 Sept	Sunday	Savannah Wreath Laying	SADF Wall of Remembrance	11.00	Members
17 Sept	Sunday	RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Service	Thaba Tshwane	10.15	Members
17 Sept	Sunday	International Day of Peace Memorial Service	NG Kerk Rasslouw	09.00	All Members

## TAIL END

### Appraisals.

1. His men would follow him anywhere but only out of curiosity.
2. I would not breed from this Officer.
3. This man is depriving a village somewhere of its idiot.
4. This Officer can be likened to a small puppy - he runs around excitedly, leaving little messes for other people to clean up.
5. This Officer is really not so much of a has-been, more of a definitely won't-be.
6. When she opens her mouth it seems only to change whichever foot was previously in there.

**Reserve Force Council**  
**Representing: South African National Defence Force Reserves**  
**Please look at the RFC website [www.rfcza.org](http://www.rfcza.org).**  
**Let us create awareness about your Regiment, send us some news**

*Please send any contributions to the Editor:*

*Crow Stannard: [crowbar@lantic.net](mailto:crowbar@lantic.net)*