



WHALE COAST FLIER

Newsletter of the South African Air Force Association Whale Coast Branch

Volume 4, Issue 3

12 June 2023



Artwork - Charel Bezuidenhout

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

Dis nou voorwaar hierdie tyd van die jaar, enige tyd tussen Mei en Junie-maand, wat ons nie hoef te wonder nie – ons WEET die winter is hier. Danksy Eskom, maak dit ook dat van ons deesdae meer en meer staatmaak op alternatiewe vir elektriese verwarming, wat varieer van kerse, houtkaggels en gasverwarming tot die ouderwetse warmwatersakke vir die kooi.

No matter what the impact of the weather or the impact of Eskom, we are always thankful for blessings such as the warm and everlasting friendship and camaraderie that flourishes in our Whale Coast Branch. The fact that our branch keeps growing in membership numbers, adds to the enhancement of this core SAAFA objective.

This edition will mainly focus on events where Whale Coast Branch was involved such as the annual memorial service held in AFB Overberg, and the annual SAAFA Congress held in Port Elizabeth/Gqeberha and ultimately, our recent branch luncheon enjoyed at Hermanus Golf Club.

Bykomende tot the bogenoemde gedenkdien, gedenk ons in die afgelope maand ook hulle wat hul lewens verloor het tydens die tragiese gebeurtenis in Mei 1983 by Lugmaghoofkwarter tydens die Kerkstraat-bom. Hiermee saam, ook 'n brokkie oor die gedenkdien wat onlangs by die Voortrekkermonument gehou is.



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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.

MEDICAL HEALTH MATTERS – VPA MEMBERS

- **Staff visit by AMHUWC.** Given the fact that the visit on 05 May 2023 was cancelled, we haven't given up on efforts to get into discussion or conversation with the SA Military Health Services (SAMHS), the Officer Commanding, Area Military Health Unit, Western Cape (OC AMHU WC) in particular. Subsequently, the Branch Medical Liaison Officer (BLMO) and the convener of the Overstrand Veterans (David Peddle) commenced with a follow-up letter to the OC to request a one-on-one meeting with him. The response on this request also turned out not to be satisfactory. We are now, collectively, considering the way forward.
- **WA Groep vir VPA lede.** Die reaksie sover, vanaf lede wat op die groep gelys is ('n totaal van 41), blyk baie positief te wees – bewys dat die groep sy doel dien vir kort, dringende boodskappe.
- **Policy issues regarding the Regular Force Medical Continuation Fund (RFMCF).** The recent *Council of Military Veterans' Organisations of Republic of South Africa (CMVO SA) Rapport / Chronicle* dated 31 May 2023 included the Chairman CMVO Annual Report 2023 tabled at the AGM. Amongst other issues, it covered Highlights listed under "OUTCOMES ACHIEVED".

The following is an extract from the report regarding RFMCF issues:

"After being kicked around between the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans and the Director General of the DMV, C HR declared his support in clarifying policy issues regarding the Regular Force Medical Continuation Fund. The very useful inputs from, especially the South African Air Force Association, have already proved to be aligned with notions at the Military Command Council. We hope the latest set of proposals will prove to be as useful as those in the past."

Chairman CMVO Annual Report 2023

SNIPPETS/BROKKIES

Church Street Bomb – 20 May 1983. The *Military Despatches* newsletter recorded the incident as follows:

"A powerful car bomb placed by MK Operatives exploded outside the Air Force Headquarters building in Church Street during the afternoon rush-hour period killing seven members of the SADF and 10 civilians. Another 197 SADF personnel and civilians were wounded in the explosion that also killed the two MK Operatives who had placed the bomb.

The SADF casualties were Colonel Stefanus Sebastiaan Walters (43), Commandant Johan de Villiers (47), Commandant Izak Johannes Henning (60), Captain Rian Hendrik Liebenberg (26), Flight Sergeant Jacob Johannes Ras (38), Corporal Anton Nel (22) and Airman Wayne Lawrence Kirtley (19)."

Military Despatches – May 2023 Edition

Die Raad van Militêre Veterane Organisasies van Suid-Afrika (RMVO SA) Gedenkdiens – Voortrekkermonument: 28 Mei 2023. *Maroela Media* het op 29 Mei 2023 berig dat die RMVO gasheer was vir die jaarlikse gedenkdiens waartydens veterane, hul familieledede en vriende hulde gebring het aan diegene wat hulle lewe opgeoffer het in diens van Suid-Afrika.

“Die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermagvereniging (SAWV) en RMVO hou gereeld gedenkdiens by die Voortrekkermonument se weermag-gedenkmuur” en volgens ‘n verteenwoordiger van die Monument, “was Sondag se RMVO-gedenkdiens een van die grootste nog vanjaar.”

Maroela Media – 29 Mei 2023

Registration of Military Veterans. The registration of military veterans and the issue around the current DMV database has been a contentious issue over the past year or so.

The following important information regarding Registration of Military Veterans is captured in par 6.3 of minutes of a National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting held on 16 February 2023:

“VETERANS AFFAIRS – Colin Bowring. CMVO Council meeting took place on the 15th of February 2023. The registration of Military Veterans was discussed at the meeting. All requests will be handled by the CMVO.

SAAFA requests are to be sent to Colin Bowring who will in turn submit them to the CMVO.

Colin Bowring will hand over certified copies of documentation already submitted to the DMV.

It is imperative that all Veterans register with the DMV. Being a member of the DMV will give those in need, access to support with housing, medical and funeral benefits.”

NEC Minutes dd 16 February 2023

SAAF/SAAFA

SAAF

CLOSURE OF AFB SWARTKOP. *Pretoria News* published an article titled: “SAAF says Air Force Base Swartkop has ceased to exist becoming mobile deployment wing”. “The facility, which also held the status of the oldest operational base in the world, has for years hosted the SAAF Museum Airshow. The last edition of the event took place earlier this month.”

See ***Enclosure 1*** for the full report published in the *Pretoria News* of 25 May 2023.

AIR FORCE BASE (AFB) OVERBERG ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE: 19 MAY 2023.

Herewith extracts from an article, provided by Maj M. Kapp, AFB Overberg.

“AFB Overberg hosted its annual South African Air Force Memorial Service on Friday 19 May 2023. During this event the base honours members of the SA Air Force (SAAF) who have passed away while in service of their country. Both uniformed members as well as civilian members of AFB Overberg were acknowledged.

During the wreath laying ceremony, dignitaries, colleagues and families laid their wreaths at the memorial's fountain under the life size silhouette of a saluting airman.

Wreaths were laid by Brig Gen C.F. du Preez, on behalf of the Chief of the Air Force (CAF), Lt Gen W.S. Mbambo, Col D. Chetty, on behalf of AFB Overberg, Maj D. Magwayi on behalf of 525 Squadron and Brig Gen (Ret) M.M. Visser, Chairman SAAFA Whale Coast Branch, on behalf of the SAAF Association.

Wreaths were also laid by Dep Mayor Overberg District Municipality, Counsellor (Cllr) H. Coetzee, Mayor Cape Agulhas Municipality, Cllr Swart, Ms B. Salo (Denel Overberg Test Range), the Friends of the Air Force, Bredasdorp High School and Bredasdorp Primary School.



*Executive Mayor of Cape Agulhas Municipality,
Cllr P. Swart*



*Brig Gen C.F. Du Preez,
representing CAF*



Officer Commanding AFB Overberg, Col D. Chetty



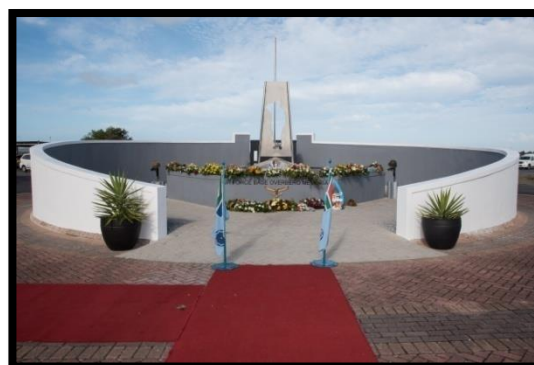


Chairman, SAAFA Whale Coast Branch, Marthie Visser

Several family members paid tribute to their loved ones who had passed away while serving at AFB Overberg, who all laid wreaths. Wreaths were also laid by Mr A. Franken, on behalf of 61 Mechanised Battalion Group and Mr Vlok, on behalf of 32 Battalion.



All guests present took the National Salute, after conclusion of the service



AFB Overberg Memorial Wall, covered with wreaths laid during the service

Among the invited guests who attended the service, were former Chief of the Air Force and Patron of the SAAF Association, Lt Gen Carlo Gagiano and his wife, Leonie.

The release of white doves from behind the memorial wall concluded the formalities.

The ceremony, once again, had been a moving and solemn occasion during which the members of AFB Overberg and invited guests could pay their last respects to colleagues and friends.

For the Fallen - by Laurence Binyon

They shall not grow old, as we that 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.

Content provided by Maj M. Kapp, AFB Overberg



SAAFA

SAAFA 2023 CONGRESS: 25-29 MAY 2023

- **25 May 2023:**

This year the SAAFA 78th Congress was hosted by the SAAFA Port Elizabeth Branch. Apart from a very busy programme for the branch representatives, the event once again, provided opportunity for another wonderful get-together with old friends. The afternoon of Day 1 included registration, SAAFA National President's interaction with Branch Chairpersons and a Welcoming Supper and Camaraderie at Ziggy's Restaurant.

- **26 May 2023:**

Formalities included Act of Homage, formal opening of the SAAFA AGM, by Chief of the Air Force (CAF) and almost two days of official SAAFA business.

- ❖ **Official opening of 78th National Annual General Meeting by CAF.**

CAF provided a comprehensive report on the current state of the SA Air Force (SAAF). In short, the following are highlights from his address:

"Challenges. The biggest elephant in the room still remains underfunding which has not changed."

"Establishment of Space Command Capability. As more militaries explore the use of space in warfare, the SANDF too has embarked on the development of a space command capability.

By virtue of the role the air force is mandated to play in the protection of the territorial integrity of the Republic of South Africa, via air defence, the SAAF was instructed by CSANDF to establish a Space Command Section. As per the instruction, emphasis is placed on assuring the sovereignty of South Africa's air and space, as integral to the DOD's mission."

CAF furthermore gave an overview of support to operations i.e. the SADC Mission to Mozambique (Op Vikela) and provided a long list of sports achievements.

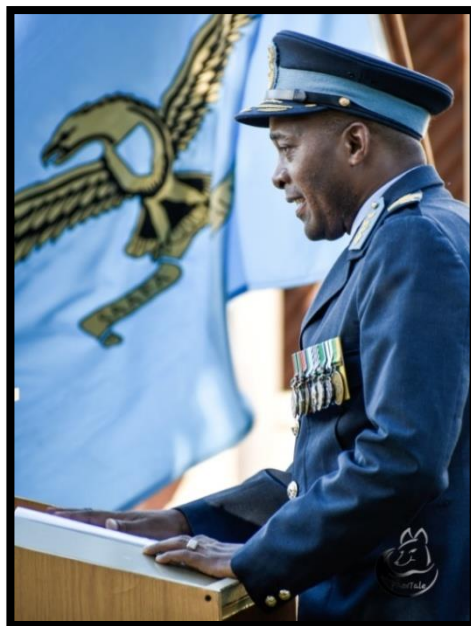
Reference was made about community relations and the SAAF's "high level of participation in public events" eg. SONA, air shows and outreach programmes.

He concluded with the following comment:

"As aviators we know that we are not designed to remain on the ground more than what is necessary. For this reason we become restless and short tempered when we are not in the air where we belong. Equally we know that when we are in the air we can come across all sorts of winds: head winds, cross winds. There is also thunder and storms ... but we also know that up there - there is also tail winds ... therefore SAAF will not rest till we can get back in the sky in big numbers ... because this is where we belong ...". "I THANK YOU"



Arrival of dignitaries: CAF, Lt Gen W. Mbambo & SAAFA National President



Lt Gen Mbambo delivering his Opening Address

- ❖ **Act of Homage.** Delegates, observers and guests attended the traditional Act of Homage memorial service, opened with scripture reading and prayer by Father Mark Barth, followed by the various branches paying tribute to fallen heroes.



Marthie Visser paying tribute on behalf of Whale Coast Branch



Johan Pentz paying tribute on behalf of Lower South Coast Branch





The Last Post – on bagpipe



Conclusion of the formalities - The National Salute



Group photo – provided on WeTransfer link (PhoxTale)



- ❖ **Sundown Function at Ziggy's Restaurant: 26 May 2023.** Guests were entertained by a spectacular fly-past of SAAF Museum aircraft just before sunset.



The entertainment for the evening included an auction that included a collection of alcoholic beverages and a unique publication.



SAAFA AGM BUSINESS: 26-27 MAY 2023.

Apart from the Branch Reports, a presentation was made by Brig Gen (Ret) Rod Penhall on his experience on "*United Nations Humanitarian Relief Operations*". On the second day of the AGM, the Electoral Appointments were confirmed i.e. Mike Louw re-elected as National President and Trevor Slade as National Vice President, both of them to serve the final year of their second term.

VISIT TO SAAF MUSEUM: 27 MAY 2023.

After conclusion of the AGM Programme on 27 May 2023, a guided tour was arranged to the SAAF Museum. This tour included all Congress attendees and spouses.



BANQUET: 27 MAY 2023.

The traditional Banquet was lined up for the evening and happened to be a highlight for Whale Coast Branch, with a phenomenal total of 10 SAAFA awards being announced, based on nominations submitted for three members of the BEC, five members of the branch and for two public entities that normally host the branch activities i.e. as follows:

- **OSAFA Silver:** Johan Pentz (BEC Vice Chairman & Secretary).
- **OSAFA Bronze:** Koos Nel (BEC Camaraderie) and André Pentz (BEC Treasurer).
- **SAAFA Certificate of Merit to Private Catering & Hospitality Services:**
 - Hermanus Golf Club – Two Chefs Facilities Management (Pty) Ltd.
 - Hermanus Old Boys Club.
- **SAAFA Certificate of Merit to Branch Members:**
 - Jerry & Eunice Coetzee.
 - Peter & Marie Dagg.
 - Theo & Val de Munnink.
 - Charlie & Averil Luyt.
 - Toekie & Annetjie Snyman.





*SAAFA National President,
Mike Louw & wife, Vanessa*



*Congress 2023 Hosts,
Trevor Bernberg & wife Debbie*



*Congress 2023 Co-hosts,
Mark Kelbrick & wife Megan*



Johan Pentz, being awarded the OSAFA Silver



THE 2-DAY LADIES PROGRAMME. The programme for the ladies over the two days of 26-27 May 2023, hosted by Megan Kelbrick, proved to be most entertaining and was enjoyed by all. It included the following:

- The *Sacramento* tour and being briefed by Mr Gerry Van Niekerk, who was one of the professional, salvage divers who discovered the *Sacramento* and raised the cannons from the ocean floor.
- Wine tour to the *Theescombe Estate Wine Farm*, with snacks and some wine tasting.
- Visit to the *South African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB)* and experiencing the feeding of the penguins.
- A visit to the world-famous *Gutsche Family Investments Art Gallery* where a lot of the famous Ron Belling paintings are protected, amongst other displays.

Salutations to PE Branch Chairman, Trevor Bernberg and his team, for their warm hospitality and for presenting a professional and memorable event.

BRANCH LUNCHEON – HERMANUS GOLF CLUB: 09 JUNE 2023.

Die kwartaallikse ete van ons tak het weereens 'n wonderlike opkoms van 45 gehad, wat meestal uit aktiewe lede bestaan het, maar ook 4 gaste ingesluit het.

Two of our guests who travelled all the way from Cape Town and who joined us for lunch happen to be the branch's Country Vice-President, Derrick Page, visiting for the first time since the establishment of Whale Coast Branch, as well as Nick Havenga, Chairman of Cape Town Branch.





Nuwe lede van ons Tak wat vir die eerste keer bygewoon het, was Glenn & Anna-Marie Gamble, wat onlangs hul aftree-tuiste kom vind het in Kleinmond.



The new SAAFA "Pan-mate Fedora" Hat, a Cape Town Branch Project, introduced by Nick Havenga and modelled by Eunice Coetzee

The highlight at our luncheon was the handing over of SAAF Association awards announced at the annual Congress. The Branch was honoured with a phenomenal total of **10 awards** as follows:

- **OSAAFA Awards (3):**

- (1) **OSAAFA Silver** - for "long and distinguished exceptional service to the Association": Johan Pentz (received his award at Congress).
- (2) **OSAAFA Bronze** - for "distinguished continuous service to the Association": André Pentz and Koos Nel.

- **SAAFA Certificate of Merit to members of Whale Coast Branch (5):**

- (1) Jerry & Eunice Coetzee.
- (2) Peter & Marie Dagg.
- (3) Theo & Val de Munnink.
- (4) Charlie & Averil Luyt.
- (5) Toekie & Anekie Snyman.

- **SAAFA Certificate of Merit to Private Catering & Hospitality Services (2):**

- (1) Hermanus Golf Club – Two Chefs Facilities Management (Pty) Ltd.
- (2) Hermanus Old Boys Club.



JT Strauss receiving award on behalf of Hermanus Golf Club



Johan Pentz



André Pentz



Theo & Val de Munnink



Peter & Marie Dagg



Charlie & Averil Luyt





Jerry & Eunice Coetzee

Congratulations to all recipients, with their well-deserved awards!

Those recipients who could not manage to be in attendance will be presented with their awards at the next branch event i.e. Koos Nel and Toekie & Annetie Snyman and Hermanus Old Boys Club.

Die laaste aktiwiteit op 'n vol program vir die dag, was 'n fondsinsamelingpoging, georganiseer deur Des Cloete en Susan van der Walt, met die uitloting van 'n kniekomers vir die winter, geheel en geskenk deur Annette Gerber.

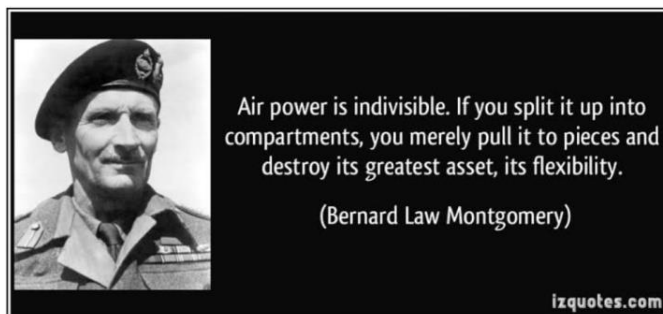


Die gelukkig wenner van hierdie kombers was Anfra Pentz. Baie geluk!

FUTURE BRANCH ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

The following activities are scheduled for June/August 2023:

- **Branch Executive Committee Meeting: 21 June 2023.**
- **Branch Braai – Old Boys Club: 18 August 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.

Enclosure 1 to
Whale Coast Flier
Volume 4, Issue 3 dd 31 May 2023

SAAF says Air Force Base Swartkop has ceased to exist becoming mobile deployment wing

Published May 25, 2023

Written by

[Mashudu Sadike](#)

Multimedia Journalist, Pretoria News



Picture: SAAF

Pretoria - Air Force Base Swartkop, the oldest base in South Africa, has ceased to exist, the SA Air Force (SAAF) has said.

The facility, which also held the status of being the oldest operational base in the world, has for years hosted the SAAF Museum Airshow.

The last edition of the event took place early this month.

A national heritage site, the land was donated to the country by the then-queen of England 130 years ago. It will now be a mobile deployment wing.

This was revealed by director for command and control systems at the SAAF, Brigadier-General Jacobus Eduard Crous, also the officer in command of Swartkop.

Narrating the history of the facility to Pretoria News at the SAAF headquarters this week, Crous said the changes were necessary because the SAAF had gone through various stages which required adaptation.

“The base was built on a portion of a farm called Swartkop. That is where the name comes from. In the late 1990s it was decided to close air force base because we had Air Force Base Waterkloof and the amount of aircraft flying was reduced.

"It's a costly affair to keep a base going with another one close by. There was no need for a second base at the time so it was a closed base but the facility still existed, the runway was still there and a decision was made that it would host the air force museum mostly and maybe a small contingent of air force if need be," said Crous.

He said just after the year 2000 there was an issue with water under the runway at Waterkloof and it had to be rebuilt which forced them to move operations to Swartkop which reopened.

Activities returned to Waterkloof after the runway was rebuilt, but the helicopter squad and the heritage flight remained, said Crous.

"By 2010 we realised that there were some military activities still taking place and the decision was made to maybe fully reopen Swartkop.

"We had to ask for permission to reopen Swartkop, which was problematic because we all knew we were supposed to downscale because of financial constraints.

"While we were waiting for permission to open up the Air Force Base Swartkop again we would use the mobile deployment wing. The name Swartkop Air Force Base came up again.

"All we had to do was to put the air force base more on the Swartkop side, under the control of the mobile deployment wing."

After deciding to reverse the decision to reopen the base they put the wing under the base that already existed.

"So therefore there is no air base Swartkop; there is only a mobile deployment wing," Crous explained.

Crous insisted that the name Swartkop would be preserved, saying the geographical area is naturally called Swartkop.

"But for historical purposes, you will see when you drive down old Joburg road that there is still a board there that is written "Swartkop" because that area is known as Swartkop."

He added that even though the museum aircraft were still flying from there and Swartkop was maintained as a functional entity, the reason for reverting to the mobile deployment wing was because there is a big requirement for it.

"It's an operational concept which is critical to the air force ... It's more under whose command it is ... rather than a complete change. The mobile deployment wing's responsibility is to deploy all the mobile equipment of the air force other than the aircraft like the mobile radars, mobile communication systems and mobile airbases."

Crous said it was emotional to aviation community, historians and older air force enthusiasts to see the name go.

"The aviation community is very passionate about the airbases and runway," he said.

Pretoria News