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The Shamrock



The official newsletter of the SA Irish Regiment

Happy New Year



Happy 2016



From the Editor

From: The Editor

On behalf of the incoming and outgoing Officers Commanding SA Irish Regiment and the editorial staff, I wish everyone a very a very prosperous 2016.

January 2016 marks the farewell of Lt Col. Bennett as our Officer Commanding. We will also welcome Lt. Col. W.W. Kinghorn as our new OC at the change of command parade scheduled for 30 January.

As we say our farewell to Lt. Col. Bennett, in this instance we are reminded of the speech of comradeship that only soldiers can share, by King Henry V, to his cold and demoralised soldiers before their victory at the battle of Agincourt. It is with these words of comradeship and brotherhood that we bid farewell to Lt Col. Bennett and welcome our new brother Lt. Col. Kinghorn.

*This day is call'd the feast of Crispian.
He that outlives this day, and comes
safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is
named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old
age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his
neighbours,
And say "To-morrow is Saint
Crispian."
Then will he strip his sleeve and show
his scars,
And say "These wounds I had on
Crispian's day."
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember, with advantages,
What feats he did that day. Then shall
our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household
words-
Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and
Gloucester-
Be in their flowing cups freshly
rememb' red.
This story shall the good man teach his
son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the
world,
But we in it shall be remembered-*

*We few, we happy few, we band of
brothers;
For he that sheds his blood with me to-
day
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition;
And gentlemen in England now-a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they
were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles
any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint
Crispin's day - **Faugh a Ballagh!**
o0o*

From the OC's Desk

By: Lt Col. M.A. Bennett

The Year 2015 marked my final year as Officer Commanding of the South African Irish Regiment. I will be handing over command to the newly appointed OC in January 2016.

As I reflect on my time as OC of the SA Irish, I can not help but feel a sense of pride in what my Regiment has accomplished.

Sixteen years ago our Regiment was in danger of being amalgamated into other regiments. Today we are one of the premier infantry regiments within the Infantry Formation. Our regiment has grown by leaps and bounds and this is all owed to the dedication of each and every member of the Regiment, past and present.

With this, the last article from my desk as OC, I am reminded of the comradeship we all shared within this fine Regiment. It is with these final words to my Regimental brothers and sisters that I say my goodbye as Officer Commanding to each and every member of this fine Regiment. I wish you all the best for the future.

Faugh a Ballagh!
Lt Col. M.A. Bennett
o0o

From the Honorary Colonel

By Col. B. Molefe (Colonel of the Regiment)

Firstly I want to wish every single member of the regiment and their families a very prosperous 2016.

As always this will prove to be a very busy year, with planning and preparation for any and all tasks given to us by our Commander-in-chief. As always I have every confidence that we will not disappoint and we will proudly complete any task given to us in this New Year.

It is with pride and sadness that we say farewell to Lt Col. Bennett as Officer Commanding of the Regiment. Sadness to lose him, but also pride in the fact that he will be moving to higher headquarters to accomplish great things. We wish him well in all his future endeavours.

I wish all of the best to every single member of the unit in the completion of their tasks. -Faugh a Ballagh!

Col. B. Molefe
o0o

Welcome message from our new OC.

By: Lt Col. W.W. Kinghorn

I first want to wish a very prosperous 2016 to all our members and their families. I have no doubt that we will all make 2016 a year to remember.

It was a tremendous honour for me to have been appointed as Officer Commanding of the SA Irish Regiment. I have always regarded the SA Irish as one of the prestigious regiments in the Army Reserves.

Together we will build on the successes of the past, through hard work and team work. Only by working together as a team can we continue to build on the successes of the past.

I have already seen the dedication of all my staff members and I know this to be a winning team.

I look forward to my time as your Officer Commanding and to continue with the concept that the Regiment is our second family.

Faugh a Ballagh!
Lt Col. W.W. Kinghorn
o0o

Regimental Events

By: *The Editor*

All dates for **2016** are still subject to change. Please contact your company commander for more details on Regimental events.

- 30 January** – Regimental Change of Command parade.
- 26 March** – Unit shooting exercise.
- 28 May** – Unit shooting exercise.
- 16 July** – Unit shooting exercise.
- 27 August** – Unit shooting exercise.
- 17 September** – Unit shooting exercise.
- 12 November** - Freedom Regiments Parade
- 13 November** - JHB Remembrance Parade – JHB Cenotaph
- 27 November** - Sidi Rezegh Commemoration Parade

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Did you know?

By: *The editor*

The Order of Mendi for Bravery is a South African honour, instituted on 30 November 2003.

It was originally called the "Mendi Decoration for Bravery", and was renamed as an order on 22 October 2004.

Although this is primarily a civilian honour, there have been a few military awards, including a collective award to the South African Air Force and South African Navy units which rescued the passengers from a sinking ocean liner in 1991, and a collective award to SAAF units which carried out flood relief operations in Mozambique in 2001.

The order is named after a World War I troopship, the SS Mendi, which sank after a collision in 1917, with the loss of more than 600 South African troops.

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From the Pipes and Drums.

By: *The Pipe Major*

On behalf of the pipes and drums I want to wish everyone a very prosperous new year.

We are all looking forward to all the challenges that 2016 has in store for us.

The calendar of events for 2016 has not been completed yet, so we will update everyone when our full list of events becomes available from the Pipe Band Association of South Africa (PBASA).

Faugh a Ballagh!

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News from the Regiment – Mess committee election.

Written by the Editor

On 19 January, during a combined mess AGM, the following members were elected to key positions in the combined mess.

Mess President: Major J.A. van Straaten
 Vice Mess: Major L. Ferguson
 Secretary: Lieutenant D.W. Chambers
 Treasurer: Lieutenant T. King

Additional Members:

Captain M.C. Pelser,
 Lieutenant G.R. Howard,
 WO2. A Bezuidenhout,
 Cpl. D. Naidoo

We wish them all the best in their new positions with regards to the management of the combined mess.

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News from the SANDF – Defence Trends of 2015.

Written by Jonathan Katzenellenbogen

War is not what it used to be. Rapidly advancing technologies are transforming its tools, and the world is facing a set of crises - rising terrorism, the battle against Islamic State, civil wars in Syria and Ukraine and several ominous conflicts in Africa -- that are forcing deep changes in the way we think about how and where those new weapons should be deployed, if at all.

In one of his dictums, Carl von Clausewitz, the Prussian military theorist, made clear that war's nature does not change, only its character. By nature, said Clausewitz, war is above all

an extension of politics by other means. But the characteristics of war -- its pace, intensity and strategies -- are subject to constant evolution. There are seven key trends presently driving the change.

The accelerating cyber revolution is all-pervasive in warfare. Cyber is now integral to every part of modern networked warfare, from the management and logistics of large military forces to situational awareness, signals intelligence, targeting, and electronic warfare. This is an area of constant flux as the big cyber players - the US, Russia, and China, as well as the UK - evolve their doctrines with technological change. All are investing heavily in cyber military capability, defined as the means to take out an enemy's networks while defending your own from similar attack. So far states have shown some restraint and there has been no outright cyber war, but an attack on critical infrastructure could yet mean that a cyber war translates into a real war.

In its most recent five-year Strategic Defence and Security Review, the UK committed itself to doubling its investment in cyber. Significantly, the document stated that the UK would respond to a cyber attack "in any way we choose." This could be taken to mean that a cyber attack on the UK might provoke what is now termed a "kinetic response" -- a war with bombs, and missiles.

The use of a cyber offensive capability also carries a risk of blowback, as seen in the case of the Stuxnet computer virus, launched against centrifuges used by Iran in its uranium enrichment programme by the US and Israel. Something went wrong somewhere and the virus infected many networks around the world.

As machine intelligence develops more sophisticated algorithms to allow networks to learn, and artificial intelligence permits greater automation and a leap in robotic capability, cyber will become ever more important.

Arms races among states as well as between states and those intent on overthrowing them are intensifying as technology advances spread. The half-

life of a military technology advantage is rapidly decreasing as innovations -- and countermeasures -- become more widely available.

There is now far wider access to some of the technologies underlying high level encryption, cyber war, drones, guidance systems, and command and control networks. A reminder of this came four years ago when an Iranian cyber warfare unit captured an intact US stealth RQ-170 Unmanned Aerial Vehicle by hacking into its flight control system as it flew over the country.

In Africa higher end technologies are falling into the hands of rebel groups. For instance an African army operating against Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), in a remote part of central Africa found itself up against an adversary with equipment to intercept and locate the cell phones. The result was an ambush in which eight Special Forces soldiers were killed.

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) are playing an ever-larger role in warfare. UAVs are now manufactured around the world and extensively used for intelligence collection, surveillance, and increasingly for weapons delivery. Infantry sections in the most advanced countries now have mini-UAVS, some that can fit into hand, to provide a look at what lies around the next bend in the road. The US Predator can loiter for hours before releasing weapons and the Global Hawk is intercontinental in its surveillance reach.

Military analysts have speculated that the F-35 Lightning II might be the last manned fighter, with the future given over to Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles. In time, advances in robotics could mean humanity will be faced an unprecedented ethical challenge. Can we trust "killer robots" to make autonomous kill decisions?

The horizon for UAVs and robotics is immense. In one project the US Navy is looking into the idea of lower cost UAVs operating in a swarm, but with the individual craft relating to each other and coordinating tasks. Unmanned vehicles are also being used on land, at sea, and under the sea, and there is a

mule type robot that can transport military equipment.

Then there is field of emerging countermeasures against UAVs, which have yet to be battle tested in an environment where air superiority is denied.

The build up of expeditionary capability and special forces to ensure a faster response to crises is being undertaken by an increasing number of countries and defence alliances. With threats of international terrorism rising and some leaders demanding more boots on the ground in the Middle East, the UK, US and Europe are investing heavily in additional expeditionary capability. With this, the need for additional airlift and equipment that can be placed in the belly of military transports is likely to rise.

The requirements for precision and rapid response mean Special Forces are being used more often. The Russians used their Spetznaz forces in their takeover of the Crimea and Iran has used the al-Quds force of the Revolutionary Guards in a wide range of roles in Syria.

Modern conflicts tend to be of the hybrid warfare variety combining aspects of conventional and irregular warfare. Russia's attack on the Ukraine and its takeover of Crimea combined support for rebel groups, use of social media, as well as conventional weapons attacks with extensive use of artillery. Africa's conflicts against Boko Haram, Al Shabaab and the rebel groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo are so far all largely irregular in nature, but the use by these groups of social media and their use of heavier captured weapons shows that hybrid characteristics could emerge in time.

The lines between defence, border security and public security are becoming increasingly blurred. In SA, the army has been back in the business of border patrol for the last two years. In Europe, the surge of migrants from the Middle East and the threat of terrorism means that policing of borders will become increasingly militarised. A similar trend is visible in the USA. Around the world border forces are

buying equipment to locate and identify cell phones and sniper rifles to immobilise vehicles, for example.

Corruption and nepotism are eroding the capability of armies in key conflicts. A number of commentators have put the Nigerian failure to defeat Boko Haram down to weapons being sold to the enemy, under-equipped troops, and troops going without pay. The Iraqi army's poor performance is widely attributed to the corrosive influence on morale of corruption and nepotism.

Is this a risk in SA? A recent report by watchdog Transparency International said there is a risk of corruption on SA peacekeeping operations and political considerations were found to play role in appointments and promotions in the SANDF. Ensuring that even suspicion of this trend is eliminated might be a task for 2016.

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News from the SANDF – Budget makes provision for new equipment for SANDF.

Written by Guy Martin

An A-Darter air-to-air missile. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) will be acquiring medium and light transport aircraft, torpedoes, mobile communications and air launched missiles, as funding has been allocated for these items in the Department of Defence's budget.

In the 2014/15 Department of Defence (DoD) annual report, it is stated that, "The Department will be acquiring equipment and developing systems to maintain a modern, balanced and technologically advanced force. It has budgeted for medium and light transport aircraft, a new generation mobile communication capability, and precision-guided air force ammunition for air defence. For maritime defence, the Department plans to acquire a hydrographic vessel and offshore patrol vessels, upgrade frigates and static communication for the SANavy, and replace the heavyweight torpedo capability."

The South African Air Force was at one stage seeking new maritime surveillance and light transport aircraft under Project Saucepan, and then Projects Metsie and Kiepie. It urgently needs to replace the C-47TP fleet as some of these airframes were built during World War II.

It is assumed that the “precision-guided air force ammunition for air defence” refers to the A-Darter fifth generation short-range air-to-air missile being developed jointly with Brazil. The SA Air Force ordered the missile in March this year and Denel Dynamics has begun industrialisation ahead of deliveries of operational missiles in 2017 for the Gripen and Hawk Mk 120 aircraft.

The “new generation mobile communication capability” refers to a new digital system that will provide for all tactical communication requirements of all four arms of service – the SA Air Force, SA Army, SA Military Health Service and SA Navy.

According to the 2014/15 Armscor annual report, the new system will ensure complete inter-operability between all users across the SANDF’s services. The new system encompasses state of the art transmission and information security techniques, incorporating semi real-time data link performance characteristics, as well as digital voice communication capabilities.

“Development of the various elements in the systems has progressed exceptionally well and will result in the first tactical communications system in the world that will provide complete inter-operability between all element of the battlefield without making use of gateways or protocol convertors,” the report said.

There are seven major sub-systems in the system and development and industrialisation of the first four – HF (high frequency), V/UHF (very/ultra-high frequency), IPCS (intra platform communication systems) and SRCS (short range communication system) were successfully completed during the year under review.

Initial production orders for the complete system were placed in the latter part of the 2014/15 financial year and the first production equipment will be delivered in the first quarter of 2016.

The hydrographic and offshore patrol vessels are being acquired under projects Hotel and Biro respectively. The additional hardware for the SANDF is reflected in budget allocation increases for various arms of service. For instance, maritime defence will see a billion rand jump, from R3.75 billion in 2015/16 to R4.92 billion in 2016/17.

Other acquisitions for the SA Navy include two tugs, which are under construction. These will address the shortcomings in the Naval Harbour Services Simon’s Town and replace the two existing tugs, De Neys (52 years old) and De Mist (40 years old). The planned completion date for the first tug is June 2015 and early in 2016 for the second tug. The building is ahead of schedule, the annual report notes.

The unavailability of vessels due to delayed maintenance cycles was one of the reasons the Navy spent only 8 951.53 hours at sea in 2014/15, against the targeted 12 000 hours, but the DoD annual report states that the refit of the SA Navy frigate SAS Amatola was recently completed in Durban and the submarine SAS Manthatisi was overhauled in the Simon’s Town dockyard, the first time a Type 209 submarine refit has been completed in Africa.

Landward Defence was allocated R13.85 billion in 2014/15; R14.85 billion in 2015/16 and R15.64 billion in 2016/17. It is believed that much of this money is going towards the procurement of 238 Badger infantry fighting vehicles for the SA Army under Project Hoefyster, with final delivery planned for 2022.

In terms of items already being acquired, for the South African Military Health Service, 20 ambulances were procured and delivered during the last financial year for use in border safeguarding operations as part of Operation Corona. The remaining 36 will be delivered during the 2015/16 financial year.

The report notes that “modernisation of the landward system has remained stagnant, pending the finalisation of the Defence Review, which will inform the required future landward defence capabilities of the SANDF during force development phases, i.e. Milestone 2, “Reorganise and rebalance the Defence Force as the foundation for future growth”, Milestone 3, “Create the sustainable Defence Force that and meet ordered defence commitments”, Milestone 4, “Enhance the Defence Force’s capacity to respond to emerging threats” and Milestone 5, “Defend the Republic against an imminent or dire threat”.

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News from the SANDF – New lady boss for SAS Umzimkulu.

Written by Defenceweb

The appointment of Lieutenant Commander Nicolette le Roux as Officer Commanding SAS Umzimkulu means two of the SA Navy’s mine counter-measures vessels are now commanded by women.

Le Roux took over command from Commander EM Nyathi during a change of command parade at fleet headquarters, Simon’s town, recently.

She joins Lieutenant Commander Zimasa Mabela as the second woman to take charge of a mine counter-measures vessel. This squadron comprises mine hunters and minesweepers.

Le Roux has been in the Navy since 1998 and successfully completed Military Training for Officers (Part One) and NBCD Part One at the SA Naval College in Gordon’s Bay after which she obtained her B.Mil at the University of Stellenbosch.

She served as a junior officer in training aboard SAS Outeniqua and was appointed gunnery and navigation officer in 2004. After this she served as communication and survey officer aboard the Navy’s hydrographic vessel, SAS Protea.

In 2007 Le Roux became the first South African naval officer to attend the Category B hydrography survey course aboard HMS Drake in the United Kingdom port of Plymouth.

In August 2013 she was detached to complete her command detachment aboard what is today Mabela's command, SAS Umhloti, and subsequently onto Umzimkulu.

In true Navy fashion he was piped aboard her vessel with the outgoing Officer Commanding receiving three cheers from the ship's company as he passed in a RHIB.

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News from the SANDF – SANDF aims to repair 4 000 vehicles.

Written by Guy Martin

The South African Army is aiming to repair 4 200 of its vehicles under Operation Thusano, using Cuban technicians to work on South African vehicles and train South African National Defence Force personnel.

Ninety-three Cuban technicians arrived in South Africa in February on a year-long contract to both refurbish vehicles and assist the SANDF build capacity and train mechanics.

In a briefing to Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula at 102 Field Workshop in Potchefstroom on Thursday, Army officials said that 1 105 Samil 20s, 1 667 Samil 50s and 1 240 Samil 100s will be repaired. Another 190 of these vehicles are to be back-loaded, bringing the total to 4 202.

515 vehicles have been earmarked for deactivation, including 190 Samil 20s, 100 Samil 50s, 123 Samil 100s, 7 Casspirs and 95 'others'. A large number of vehicles will also be preserved, including 357 in long term storage and 121 in short term storage. Of these, 35 Casspirs and 31 Ratels will be repaired when funds are available. A total of 115 Mamba Mk 2 and 3s will be preserved, 115 Casspirs and 128 Ratels as well as 50 Samil 50s.

According to the Cuban delegation, 450 vehicles have been made serviceable again through medium repairs and 469 through light repairs for a total of 919. 2 918 vehicles have been inspected and their fate decided on.

The South African Army possess more than 10 000 A and B vehicles with 2 000 diesel mechanics assigned to look after them. Vusi Masondo, South African Army chief, said that the Army was faced with a big problem whereby it was spending a lot of money on maintaining vehicles through the private sector, but that these would quickly break down. "We set ourselves a 60% level of serviceability but we were not able to achieve that." This was affecting the Army's ability to deploy, he said.

Brigadier General Elvis Mathaba, Director of Army Logistics, said the main aim of Operation Thusano is to create a sustainable system of transport for the SA Army. He said private industry was not delivering quality service to the SANDF, was not properly repairing vehicles and was reselling spares back to the Army. Private industry had also colluded to create a spare parts monopoly.

Operation Thusano was subsequently implemented to improve the serviceability of the SA Army's prime mission equipment and to empower the SA Army in terms of transport and technical capabilities so it is less reliant on the private sector for maintenance and repair.

The Cubans have been working with South African personnel to ensure skills transfer. A typical maintenance and repair team comprises a Cuban and South African engineer/mechanic and four South African apprentices. In total, 251 South African apprentices have been trained under Operation Thusano. The South African Army has also sent a group of engineers to Cuba for training.

Maintenance and repair is being done at four locations: Bloemfontein, Technical Services Unit in Lyttelton, Wallmansthal and Potchefstroom. Nine Cuban personnel are working on repairing ambulances at 8 Medical Battalion in Lyttelton.

In February 2015 it was decided that 102 Field Workshop at Potchefstroom would concentrate on vehicles in the North West area, with 230 Samils earmarked to be repaired. So far, 12 Samil 20s, 28 Samil 50s and 80 Samil 100s have been completed by 102 Field Workshop while 11 vehicles are under repair.

As part of the maintenance and repair process, a number of new capabilities were developed at 102 Field Workshop, including an auto-electrical section, trimmers section, spray painting section and engine test station. In total, across the country four engine test benches have been built under Operation Thusano. Mathaba said that when maintenance and repair was outsourced to industry, a lot of capabilities were lost, such as spray painting, body building and welding and that these have capabilities been revitalised.

R200 million a year has been budgeted for Operation Thusano, which has saved millions of rands already. For instance, repairing 122 vehicles at 102 Field Workshop has saved R36 million. Mathaba said that fixing a vehicle under Operation Thusano cost R137 000, versus R500 000 a vehicle for repair by private industry. He said that although the private sector is not happy about Thusano, there is still need for industry for things like fault line repairs.

The Cuban delegation has not just targeted Army vehicles, but has also preserved 243 'aviation bombs', re-established the serviceability of four aviation test equipment units, made recommendations to the Air Force and diagnosed electro medicine equipment. Cuban personnel have been active at places like Langebaan and Bloemspruit.

Mapisa-Nqakula said she was very excited about the project, which was something "we all need to support. Industry may have its own problems but they can see what we are doing here and appreciate why."

The SA Army said that Operation Thusano is part of Milestone One of the 2014 Defence Review: Arresting the Decline of the SANDF.

Due to progress with Thusano, Projects Sepula and Vistula, for the replacement of SA Army trucks and light armoured vehicles, has been deferred.

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News from the SANDF – It’s Naval Base Durban, not Station.

Written by Kim Helfrich

The upgrading of Naval Station Durban to a full naval base is part of bolstering South Africa’s military presence and its ability to successfully perform maritime operations on the country’s eastern seaboard.

Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula this week officiated at a sod turning ceremony to mark the commencement of refurbishment work at the station, now known as a naval base, on Salisbury Island.

She said the upgrading was the “right decision” taken after assessing the international, regional and domestic security situation.

“Situated alongside the busiest and biggest harbour in the southern hemisphere and on the continent, it makes more reason to establish a fully-fledged naval base here on the eastern seaboard. It is in fact a process to reverse what occurred in the past when there was a decision to downscale and eventually close what was a solid naval facility and move all facilities to Simon’s Town just over a decade ago.”

The Minister acknowledged she, the Defence Ministry and the SA National Defence Force were “now wiser”.

The Durban naval facility has been earmarked as home port for the maritime arm of service’s patrol squadron. This currently consists of three refurbished Warrior Class strikecraft that will in the next four to five years be joined by three inshore and three offshore patrol vessels. Tenders for the new platforms are currently being evaluated by Armscor and, as yet, no decisions have been announced on either the successful bidders or the construction timeframe.

Mapisa-Nqakula said the upgrade of the Durban base will further enhance maritime security along the east coast.

“We are, in fact, already reaping some of the dividends of having taken a decision to be part of the maritime security of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) on both the eastern and western coasts of our country.

“On the east coast we have established a tripartite agreement between Mozambique, Tanzania and ourselves. There has been a visible decline in any attempts at piracy since our deployment under the auspices of Operation Copper and the tripartite arrangement. On the west coast we are collaborating with Namibia, Angola and Guinea.

“These initiative and activities are an integral part of our maritime security strategy,” she said.

The Minister did not give an indication of the cost of the upgrade or when it is expected to be completed.

The Navy’s only other operational base is at Simon’s Town which is also fleet headquarters.

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News from the SANDF – SANDF commander to head UN's DRC mission.

Written by News24



New York - An experienced South African general is taking over as commander of the 20 000-strong peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the UN's largest mission, officials said on Tuesday, 29 December 2015.

Lieutenant General Derrick Mgwebi will head the MONUSCO force as it presses on with operations targeting rebel groups in the eastern DRC and as the country heads for elections next year.

Tensions have been rising ahead of the vote due in November over fears that President Joseph Kabila, in power since 2001, will seek changes to the constitution to stay in power.

Mgwebi, 59, served as head of the UN mission in Burundi from 2004 to 2006.

He is currently chief of joint operations of the South African Defence Forces, and has served as director of special forces and head of South Africa's army infantry formation.

Mgwebi replaces Brazilian Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz, who wrapped up his two years in the post in December.

MONUSCO has the strongest offensive mandate of all UN peacekeeping missions, with a particular focus on protection of civilians.

It was with this mandate that the mission helped the Congolese army

push back Rwandan-backed M23 rebels in 2013, deploying a special intervention brigade mainly made up of elite South African troops.

A UN statement announcing the MONUSCO appointment highlighted that Mgwebi "has more than 35 years of

national and international military experience”.

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News from the SANDF – Argentinean medal for Navy Deputy Chief.

Written by Defenceweb

The efforts of SA Navy Deputy Chief, Rear Admiral Hanno Teuteberg, in providing “exceptional service” to the Argentine Navy have been rewarded with the Argentine Naval Cross for Distinguished Service.

Teuteberg was presented with the medal by Minister Jorge Diaz de Biasi at the South American country’s embassy in Pretoria.

The award is for citizens, civilian or military, Argentine nationals or foreigners who have rendered exceptional service to the Argentine Navy. Teuteberg received the honour for efforts made to strengthen bilateral relations between the SA Navy and its Argentinean counterpart.

Days after he had been presented with the medal the Navy held its annual briefing for the military attaché advisory corps (MAAC) at the Naval Mess in Pretoria.

There are currently 88 MASC members representing 58 countries accredited to the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

SA Navy Chief, Vice Admiral Mosua Hlongwane, told those present “these international interactions bear testimony to the importance of diplomacy and foreign relations – the world you find yourself in and where you play an important part”.

The MAAC members were given a presentation on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) counter-piracy tasking Operation Copper in which South Africa has the lead role. In addition to providing all the maritime assets deployed, in the form of either an offshore patrol vessel or a Valour Class frigate, the SA Air Force provides a 35 Squadron C-47TP

for maritime patrol and reconnaissance duties.

The presentation by Commander Dieter Jones, Officer Commanding Naval Station Durban, highlighted operational experiences during the counter-piracy tasking as well as successes and limitations.

Teuteberg is a seasoned officer with decades of experience and has also served on submarines and later on as Director: Maritime Strategy, before he was appointed as Deputy Chief of the SA Navy.

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International News – President Zuma calls for peace in Africa.

Written by SA News

South African President Jacob Zuma has called on African leaders to work harder to build peace and promote inclusive growth and development in Africa.

He was addressing the opening session of the 15th Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg on 4 December 2015.

“Peace creates better conditions for the achievement of economic development and growth,” said President Zuma.

He said 2015 has brought about the painful humanitarian disaster caused by unparalleled global migration.

“Scores of migrants from Africa and the Middle East have perished in the Mediterranean sea in their attempts to reach Europe. This desperation is caused by the urgent need to flee from wars and conflict and from poverty and hopelessness,” he said.

He said there can be no lasting military solution to this problem - it needs political, social and economic solutions to ensure sustainability.

“We must give the African people who live in poverty hope that a better future is possible,” said President Zuma.

Africa has already taken steps to find African solutions to end conflicts and instability. The continent has committed to “silencing the guns” in Africa by 2020, in alignment with the Agenda 2063 commitment.

“We have already taken a significant step forward towards bringing the African Standby Force and its Rapid Deployment Capability into operation. The force will respond quickly in conflict situations to save lives and bring stability.

“I would like to acknowledge the tangible contribution of the People’s Republic of China’s with regard to peacekeeping in Africa,” said President Zuma.

In addition to participating in up to 16 United Nations Peacekeeping Missions in Africa, China currently has approximately 2 000 peacekeeping personnel on the ground.

“We appreciate this commitment to peace, development and progress... We must give our people hope that indeed the guns will be silenced and that peace can be achieved in every part of the continent,” he said.

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South African Battles – The Battle of Delville Wood

Written by the Editor

Sources: Wikipedia, B.H. Liddell Hart (1970) History of the First World War B. Nasson (2007) Springboks on the Somme I. Uys (1991). Rollcall: the Delville Wood Story

The year 2016 will mark the Centenary of the Battle of Delville Wood and we thought it fitting to make our readers more aware of this significant battle.

The background to the Battle: The Battle of Delville Wood (15 July – 3 September 1916) was a series of engagements in the 1916 **Battle of the Somme** in the First World War, between the armies of the German Empire and the British Empire. Delville Wood (Bois d'Elville), was a thick tangle of trees, chiefly beech and

hornbeam (the wood has been replanted with oak and birch by the South African government), with dense hazel thickets, intersected by grassy rides, to the east of Longueval. As part of a general offensive starting on 14 July, which became known as the Battle of Bazentin Ridge (14–17 July), General Douglas Haig, Commander of the British Expeditionary Force, intended to capture the German second position between Delville Wood and Bazentin le Petit.

The attack achieved this objective and was a considerable though costly success. British attacks and German counter-attacks on the wood continued for the next seven weeks, until just before the Battle of Flers–Courselette (15–17 September), the third British general attack in the Battle of the Somme. The 1st South African Infantry Brigade made its Western Front début as part of the 9th (Scottish) Division and captured Delville Wood on 15 July. The South Africans held the wood until 19 July, at a cost in casualties similar to those of many British brigades on 1 July.

When captured, the village and wood formed a salient, which could be fired on by German artillery from three sides. The ground rose from Bernafay and Trônes woods to the middle of the village and neither the village or the wood could be held without the other.

After the Battle of Bazentin Ridge, the British tried to advance on both flanks to straighten the salient at Delville Wood, to reach good jumping off positions for a general attack. The Germans tried to eliminate the salient and to retain the ground, which shielded German positions from view and overlooked British positions. For the rest of July and August, both sides fought for control of the wood and village but struggled to maintain the tempo of operations. Ammunition shortages, high casualties and wet weather, which reduced visibility and made the movement of troops and supplies much more difficult. Both sides were reduced to piecemeal attacks and piecemeal defence on narrow fronts, except for a small number of bigger and wider-front attacks, until early September. Most attacks were

defeated by defensive fire power and the inclement weather, which frequently turned the battlefield into a slough of mud. Delville Wood is well preserved with the remains of trenches, a museum and a monument to the South African Brigade at the Delville Wood South African National Memorial.

The Battle of the 1st South African Brigade: 14–16 July



Map 1: positions on 14 July

The divisions of XIII Corps and XV Corps attacked on 14 July, just before dawn at 3:25 a.m., on a 4-mile (6.4 km) front. The infantry moved forward over no man's land to within 500 yards (460 m) of the German front line and attacked after a five-minute hurricane bombardment, which gained a measure of tactical surprise.

Penetrating the German second line by a sudden blow on a limited front was relatively easy but consolidating and extending the breach against alerted defenders was far more difficult. The attack on Longueval met with initial success, as the thin German outpost line was rapidly overwhelmed. By mid-morning, the British troops had fought from house-to-house to the village square.

The effect of British artillery-fire diminished, as the north end of the

village was out of view on a slight north-facing slope; German reinforcements reached the village and artillery and machine-gun fire from Delville Wood and Longueval, raked the 26th Brigade.

By the afternoon, the western and south western parts of the village had been occupied and the 27th Brigade, intended for the attack on Delville Wood had

been used to reinforce the attack. At 1:00 p.m. Major-General W. T. Furse ordered the 1st South African Brigade to take over the attack on Delville Wood.

Battle for Longueval

Three battalions of the 1st South African Brigade were to attack Delville Wood, while the 1st Battalion continued as a reinforcement of the 26th and 27th brigades in Longueval. The attack at 5:00 p.m. was postponed to 7:00 p.m. and then to 5:00 a.m. on 15 July, due to the slow progress in Longueval. Brigadier-General Henry Lukin was ordered to take the wood at all costs and that his advance was to proceed, even if the 26th and 27th Brigades had not captured the north end of the village.

Lukin ordered an attack from the south-west corner of the wood on a battalion front, with the 2nd Battalion forward,

The Shamrock

the 3rd Battalion in support and the 4th Battalion in reserve. The three battalions moved forward from Montauban before first light, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel W. E. C. Tanner of the 2nd Battalion. On the approach, Tanner received instructions to detach two companies to the 26th Brigade in Longueval and sent B and C companies of the 4th Battalion.

The 2nd Battalion reached a trench occupied by the 5th Camerons, which ran parallel to the wood and used this as a jumping-off line for the attack at 6:00 a.m.

The attack met little resistance and by 7:00 a.m. the South Africans had

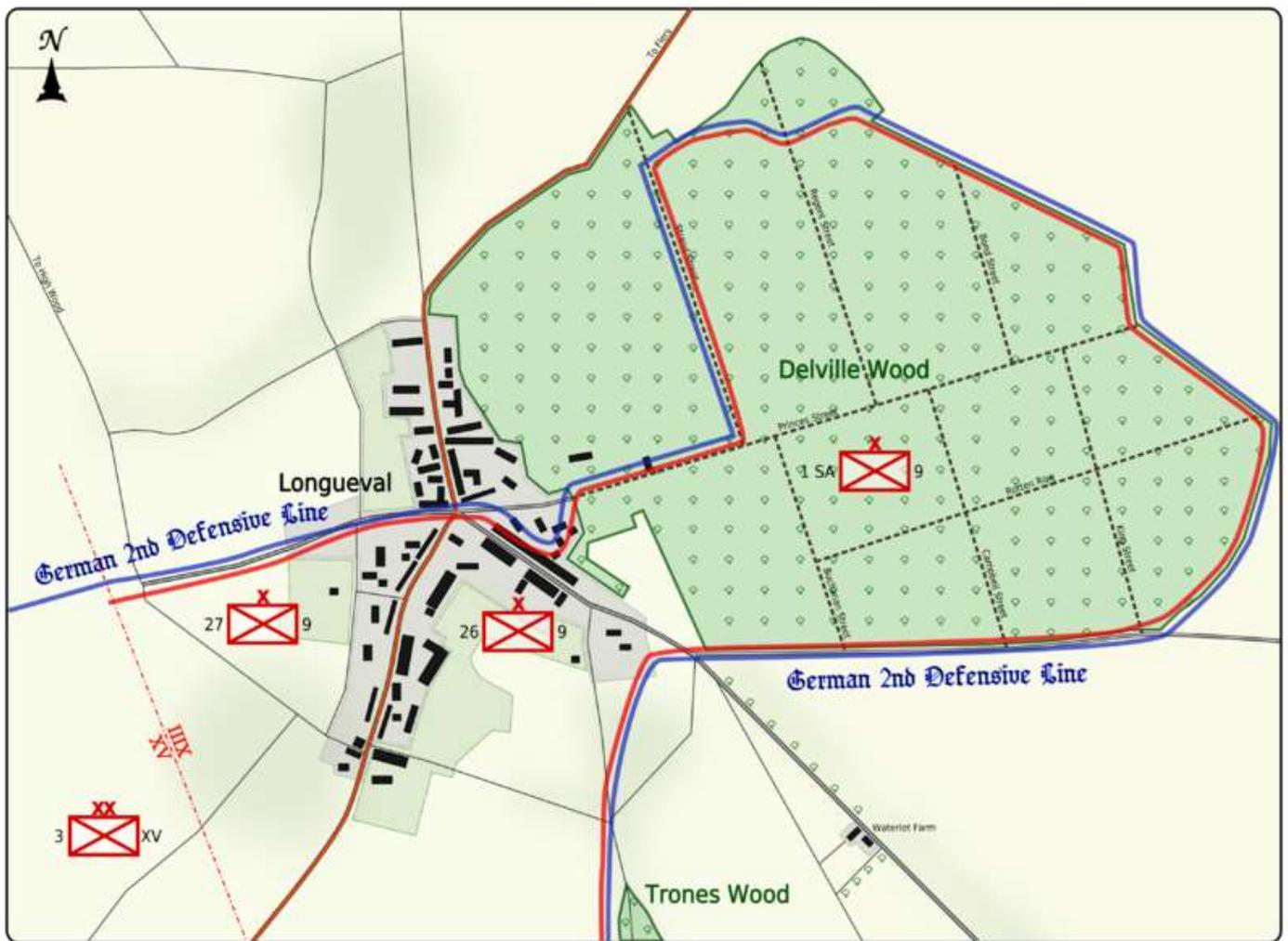
secured the wood except for a strong German position in the north-western corner adjoining Longueval.

The South African Brigade began to dig in around the fringe of the wood, in groups forming strong-points supported by machine-guns. The brigade occupied a salient, in contact with the 26th Brigade only along the south-western edge of the wood adjoining Longueval.

The troops carried spades but digging through roots and remnants of tree trunks, made it impossible to dig proper trenches and only shallow shell scrapes could be prepared before German troops began to counter-attack the wood.

managed to advance to within 80 yards (73 m) of the wood before being forced to dig in. An attack by a second battalion from the Ginchy-Flers road was also repulsed, the battalions losing 528 men. In the early afternoon a battalion of the 8th Division attacked the north-eastern face of the wood and was also repulsed, after losing all its officers.

At 3:00 p.m. on 15 July Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment 6 of the 10th Bavarian Division attacked in force from the east but was partially driven back by rifle and machine-gun fire. At 4:40 p.m. Tanner reported to Lukin that German forces were massing to the north of the wood and he called for



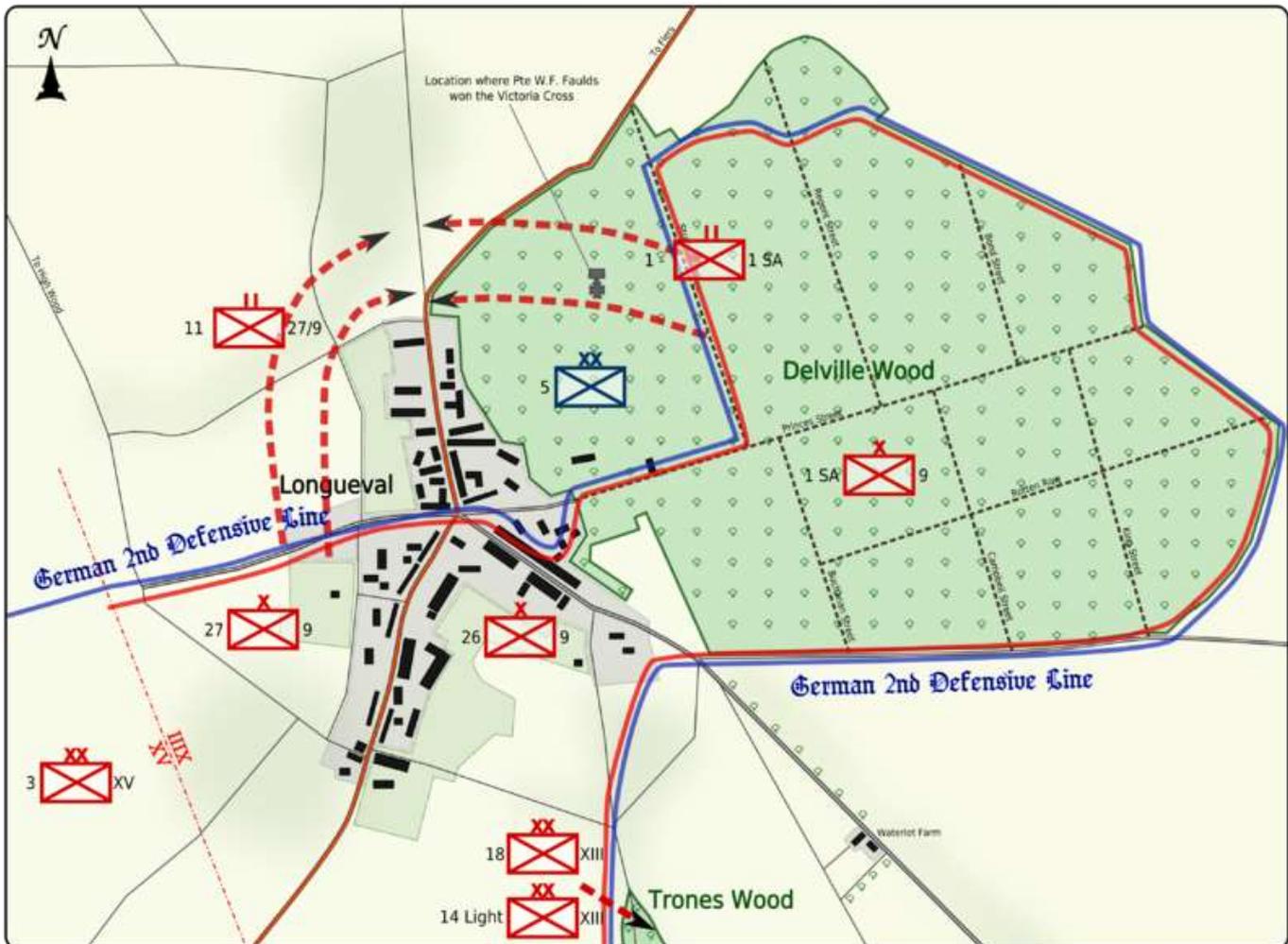
captured the wood south of Prince's Street. Tanner sent two companies to secure the northern perimeter of the wood. Later during the morning, the 3rd Battalion advanced towards the east and north-east of the wood and by 2:40 a.m. Tanner reported to Lukin that he had

Map 2:
Positions at 2:40 p.m. on 15 July 1916

A battalion of the 24th Reserve Division counter-attacked from the south-east at 11:30 a.m., having been given five minutes' notice but only

reinforcements, as the South Africans had already lost a company from the 2nd (Natal and Free State) Battalion.

Tanner had received one company from the 4th (Scottish) Battalion from



Longueval and

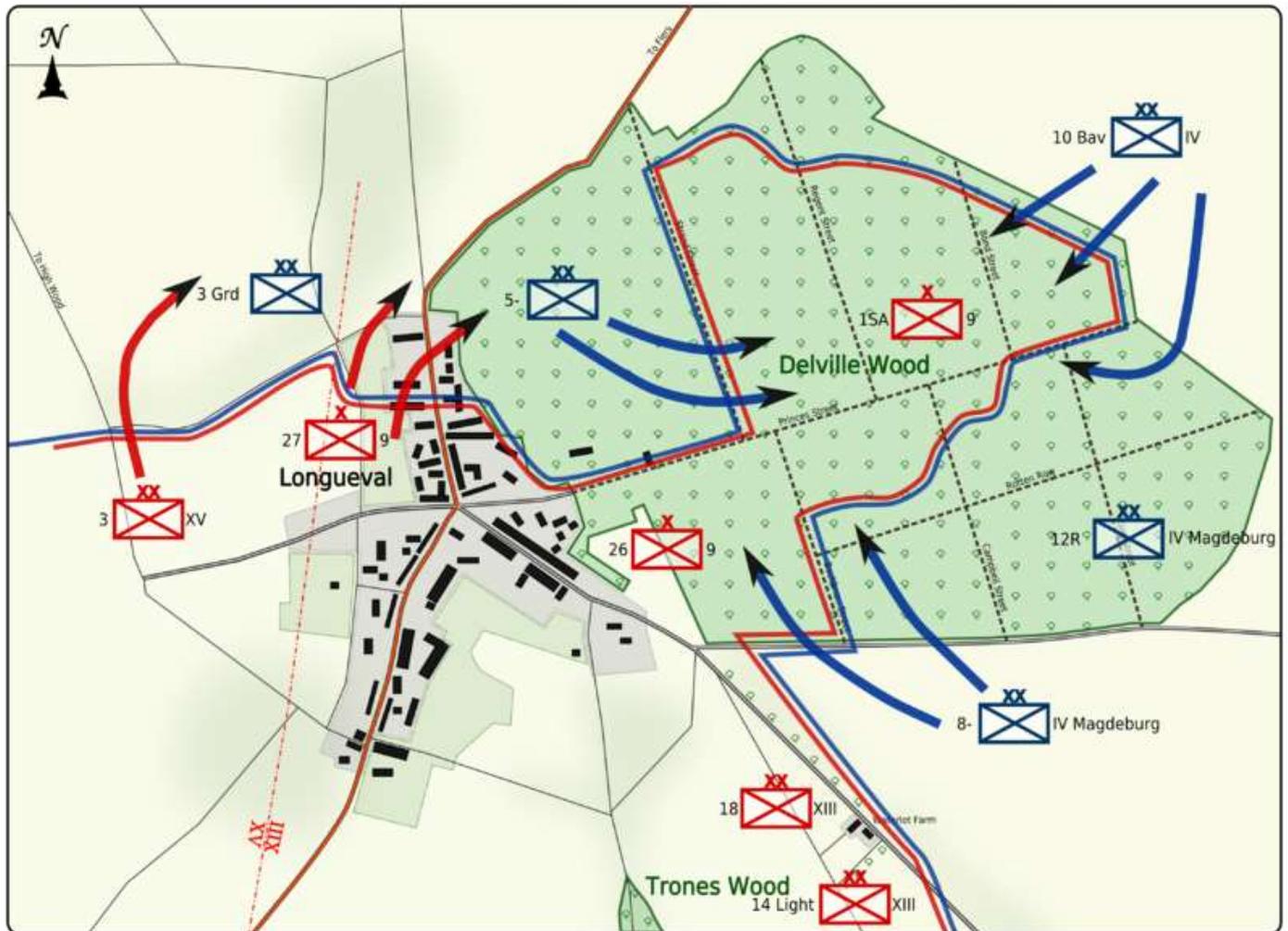
Lukin sent a second company forward to reinforce the 3rd (Transvaal & Rhodesia) Battalion. Lukin sent messages urging Tanner and the battalion commanders to dig in regardless of fatigue, as heavy artillery fire was expected during the night or early the next morning.

As night fell German high explosive and gas shelling increased in intensity and a German counter-attack began at midnight with orders to recapture the wood "at all costs". The attack was made by three battalions from the 8th and 12th Reserve divisions and managed to reach within 50 yards (46 m), before being driven under cover by artillery and machine-gun fire. Later that night fire into Delville Wood from four German Feldartillerie brigades reached a rate of 400 shells per minute.

Map 3: Plan for the attack on the northern corner on 16 July 1916

On 14–15 July the 18th Division had cleared Trônes Wood to the south and had established a line up to Maltz Horn Farm, adjacent to the French 153rd Division.

At 12:35 a.m. Lukin was ordered to capture the north-west part of Delville Wood at all costs and then to advance westwards to meet the 27th Brigade, as it attacked north and north-eastwards through Longueval. The advance began on 16 July at 10:00 a.m. but the casualties of the South Africans had reduced the weight of the attack, which was repulsed by the German defenders. The 27th Brigade advance were pinned down in the village by machine-gun fire from an orchard in the north end of Longueval. The survivors fell back to their trenches midway in the wood and were bombarded for the rest of the day. The situation became desperate and was made worse by an attack by Thuringian Infantry Regiment 153.



Map 4:
Dispositions, evening of 17 July

In the evening of 16 July, the South Africans withdrew south of Prince's Street and east of Strand Street, for a bombardment on the north-west corner of the wood and the north end of Longueval. On 17 July, the 27th Brigade attacked northwards in Longueval and the 2nd South African Battalion plus two companies of the 1st Battalion, attacked westwards in the wood. The South African attack was a costly failure and the survivors were driven back to their original positions, which came under increased German artillery-fire in the afternoon.

In the evening Tanner was wounded and replaced by Lieutenant-Colonel E. F. Thackeray, of the 3rd Battalion, as commander in Delville Wood. The 9th Division drew in its left flank and the 3rd Division (Major-General J. A. L. Haldane), was ordered to attack

Longueval from the west during the night. Huge numbers of shells were fired into the wood and Lukin ordered the men into the north-western sector, to support the attack on Longueval due at 3:45 a.m. During the night, the German 3rd Guards Division advanced behind a creeping barrage of 116 field guns and over 70 medium guns. The Germans reached Buchanan and Princes streets, driving the South Africans back from their forward trenches, with many casualties.

The Germans spotted the forming up of the troops in the wood and fired an unprecedented bombardment; every part of the area was searched and smothered by shells. During the barrage, German troops attacked and infiltrated the South African left flank, from the north-west corner of the wood. By 2:00 p.m., the South African position had become desperate as German attacks were received from the north, north-west and

east, after the failure of a second attempt to clear the north-western corner. At 6:15 p.m., news was received that the South Africans were to be relieved by the 26th Brigade. The 3rd Division attack on Longueval had taken part of the north end of the village and Armin ordered an attack by the fresh 8th Division, against the Buchanan Street line from the south east, forcing Thackeray to cling to the south western corner of the wood for two days and nights, the last link to the remainder of the 9th Division.

Fighting in Delville Wood, 18 July

On the morning of 18 July, the South Africans received support from the relatively fresh 76th Brigade of the 3rd Division, which attacked through Longueval into the south-western part of the wood, to join up with A Company of the 2nd South African Battalion, until the 76th Brigade was

forced back by German artillery-fire. In the south, the South Africans recovered some ground because the Germans had made limited withdrawals ready for counter-attacks in other areas.

A German bombardment during the night became intense at sunrise and about 400 shells per minute fell into Longueval and the wood, along with heavy rain, which filled shell-craters.

At 3:15 p.m., German infantry attacked Longueval and the wood from the east, north and north-east. Reserve Infantry Regiment 107 attacked westwards along the Ginchy–Longueval road, towards the 3rd South African Regiment, which was dug in along the eastern fringe of the wood, which commanded Ginchy. The German infantry were cut down by small-arms fire as soon as they advanced and no more attempts were made to advance beyond the intermediate line.

The main German attack was made by the 8th Division and part of the 5th Division from the north and north-east. Elements of nine battalions attacked with 6,000 men. Infantry Regiment 153 was to advance from south of Flers, to recapture Delville Wood and reach the second position along the southern edge of the wood, the leading battalion to occupy the original second line from the Longueval–Guillemont road to Waterlot Farm, the second battalion to dig in along the southern edge of the wood and the third battalion to occupy Prince's Street along the centre of the wood. At first the advance moved along the sunken Flers road, 150 yards (140 m) north of the wood, which was confronted by the 2nd South African Regiment along the north edge of the wood. By afternoon, the north perimeter had been pushed further south by German attacks. Hand-to-hand fighting occurred all over the wood, as the South Africans could no longer hold a

consolidated and continuous line, many of them being split into small groups without mutual support. By the afternoon of 18 July, the fresh Branderberger Regiment had also engaged. A German officer wrote

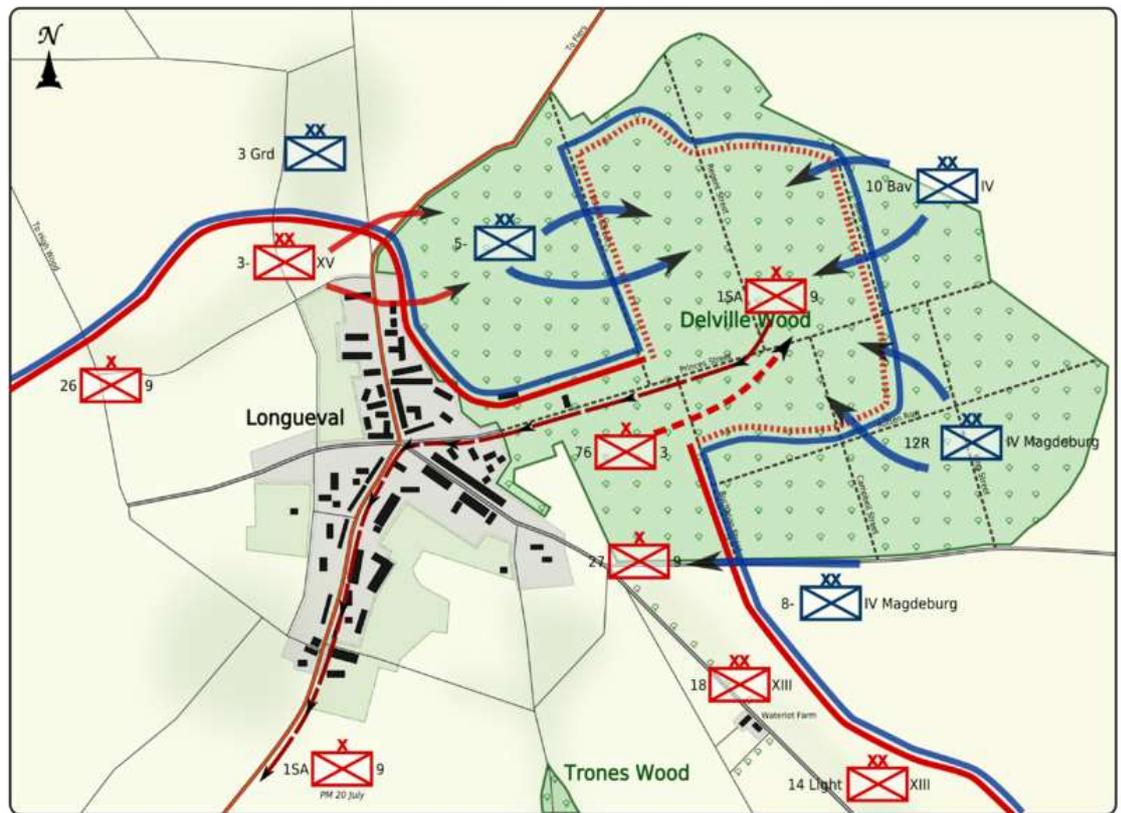
... Delville Wood had disintegrated into a shattered wasteland of shattered trees, charred and burning stumps, craters thick with mud and blood, and corpses, corpses everywhere. In places they were piled four deep. Worst of all was the lowing of the wounded. It sounded like a cattle ring at the spring fair....

and by 19 July, the South African survivors were shelled and sniped from extremely close range.

By mid-morning, The Black Watch, The Seaforth and Cameron Highlanders in Longueval tried to charge into the wood but were repulsed by German small-arms fire from the north-west corner of the wood. The brigade was short of water, without food and unable to evacuate wounded; many isolated groups surrendered, after they ran out of ammunition. In the afternoon, the 53rd Brigade advanced from the base of the salient to reach Thackeray at the South African headquarters but were unable to reach the forward elements of the South African brigade. This situation prevailed through the night of 19–20 July.

20 July

On 20 July, the 76th Brigade of the 3rd



Map 5:
Situation from 18 to 20 July

In the early morning, Reserve Infantry Regiment 153 and two companies of Infantry Regiment 52, entered the wood from the north and wheeled to attack the 3rd South African Battalion from behind, capturing six officers and 185 men from the Transvaal Battalion; the rest were killed.

Division was again pushed forward to attempt to relieve the 1st South African Brigade. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers attacked towards the South Africans but by 1:00 p.m., Thackeray had informed Lukin that his men were exhausted, desperate for water and could not repel a further attack.

Troops of the Suffolk Regiment and the 6th Royal Berkshires broke through and joined with the last remaining South

The Shamrock

African troops, in the segment of the wood still under South African control. Thackeray marched out of the wood, leading two wounded officers and 140 other ranks, the last remnant of the South African Brigade.

Piper Sandy Grieve of the Black Watch, who had fought against the South African Boers as part of the Highland Brigade, in the Battle of Magersfontein in 1899 and been wounded through the cheeks, played the South Africans out. The survivors spent the night at Talus Boise and next day withdrew to Happy Valley south of Longueval.

The battle for Delville Wood was costly for both sides and the 9th Division had 7,517 casualties from 1–20 July, of which the 1st (South African) Infantry Brigade lost 2,536 men.

German losses are incomplete due to the loss of records during both world wars.

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From the Chaplain

Read James 1:1-12 New International Version (NIV)

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

Trials and Temptations

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

8 Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

9 Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position.

10 But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower.

11 For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

12 Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

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Guide on the older medals of the SANDF

On 27 April 2003 a new set of honours was introduced for Bravery, meritorious service and long service in the SANDF.

The aim of this column is to educate the newer members about the older and obsolete medals of the SANDF's honour system.

The Castle of Good Hope Decoration, post-nominal letters **CGH**, was a military decoration for bravery that was instituted by the Union of South Africa on 6 April 1952 and discontinued on 27 April 2003. It was one of the few awards that was never awarded.

The decoration was intended for award to members of the SADF/SANDF for a signal act of valour or most conspicuous bravery or some daring or pre-eminent act of self-sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy.

The Castle of Good Hope Decoration, post-nominal letters CGH, was instituted by Queen Elizabeth II on 6 April 1952, as the most senior of a series of military decorations and medals that substituted many of the British and Commonwealth awards which had earlier been used.

The Castle of Good Hope Decoration could be awarded to members of the South African Defence Force for a signal act of valour or most conspicuous

bravery or some daring or pre-eminent act of self-sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy in wartime. A Bar could be awarded for a further similar deed of bravery.

It was instituted as the most senior of all South African orders, decorations and medals (even higher than the old Honoris Crux series) from 1952 to 2003. It was formally authorised by Queen Elizabeth II on 26 January 1953 as a South African substitute for the Victoria Cross (VC), for which South African servicemen had previously been eligible.



The Castle of Good Hope Decoration still appeared in the official order of precedence table that was published on 3 September 1993 but, since it was never awarded and was officially discontinued on 27 April 2003, it was no longer listed when a new table was published on 11 March 2005.

Awards:
Never Awarded

Source list: Wikipedia
SA Medal Site
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2016 Calendar



2016

JANUARY

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
4	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
6	31						

FEBRUARY

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
6		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
10	28	29					

MARCH

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
10			1	2	3	4	5
11	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
13	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
14	27	28	29	30	31		

APRIL

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
14						1	2
15	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
18	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

MAY

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
19	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
23	29	30	31				

JUNE

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
23			1	2	3	4	
24	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
25	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
26	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	26	27	28	29	30		

JULY

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27						1	2
28	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
29	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
30	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
31	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
32	31						

AUGUST

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
32		1	2	3	4	5	6
33	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
34	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
35	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
36	28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
36					1	2	3
37	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
38	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
39	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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OCTOBER

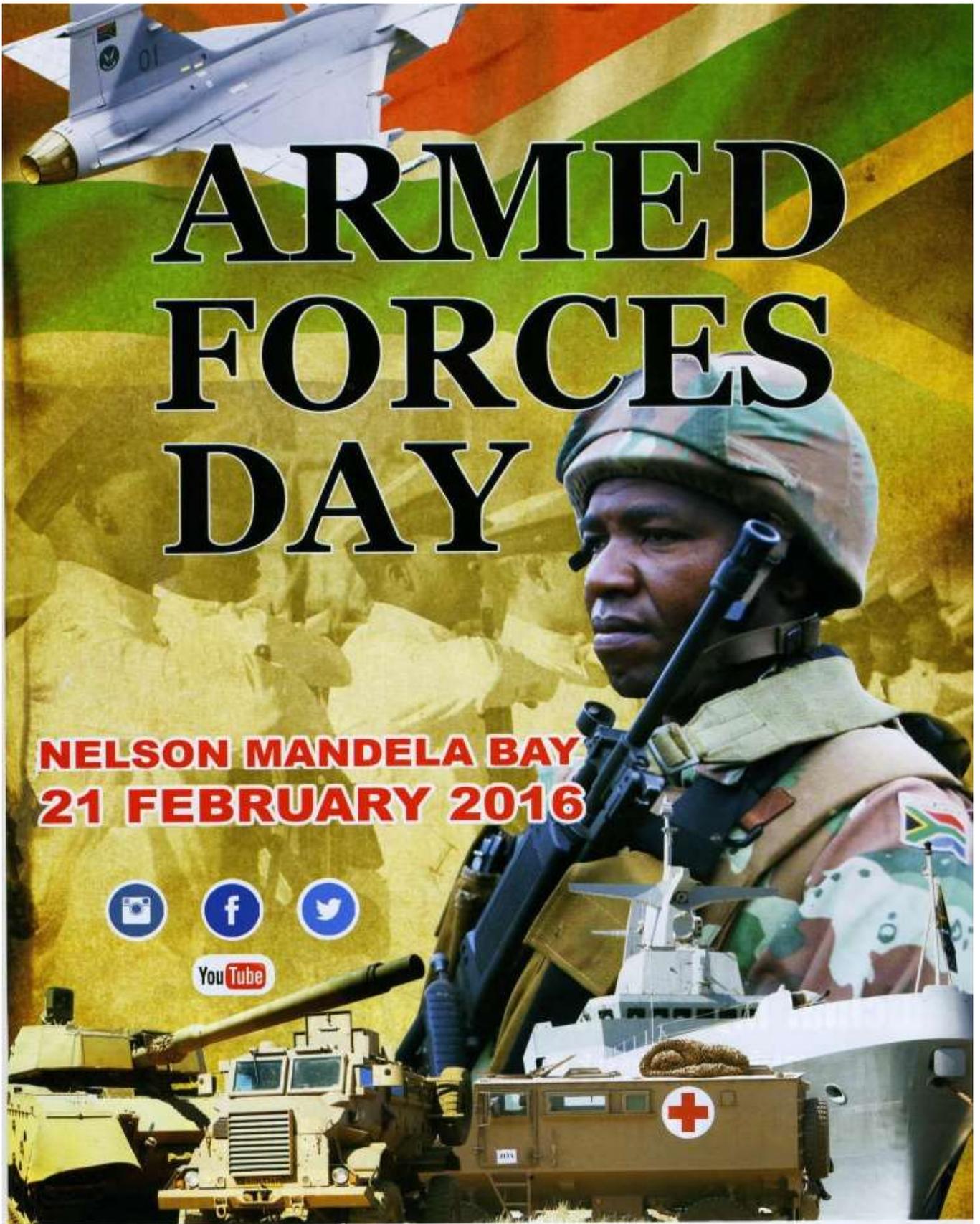
WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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41	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
42	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
43	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
44	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
45	30	31					

NOVEMBER

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
45			1	2	3	4	5
46	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
47	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
48	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
49	27	28	29	30			

DECEMBER

WK	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
49					1	2	3
50	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
51	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
52	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
53	25	26	27	28	29	30	31



ARMED FORCES DAY

**NELSON MANDELA BAY
21 FEBRUARY 2016**

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 **defence**
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA