



Marshal Smuts Shellhole

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BULLSHEET

January 2011

Editorial.

Well here we are already at the start of a new calendar year. The Editor took a break from the computer hence the late distribution of this month's newsletter. We start off the year with feedback from our December activities and how we are progressing with our upgrading of the Shellhole facilities. As promised the trees were removed in December and make some interesting photographs. Acrophobia is not something these guys have to worry about. Our 65th Birthday celebration invitations have all been sent out and we eagerly await the RSVP's. It is really going to be a great day so if at all possible please accept your invitation. We have something for the Gunners and Part 4 on our series to live like a Moth featuring our oldest member Alf Hilder who will be 92 this month.

<p>Shellhole Calendar 21 January: Monthly Meeting 18:00 6 February: Pro Patria parade Dawn Patrol Shellhole: 11:00</p>

CHRISTMAS LUNCH 18 DECEMBER 2010

As has become customary our official December meeting was replaced by a Christmas function. Usually we braai but with the trees being felled a few days before we were unsure if our brick braai would still be in one piece so we organized cold meats and salads instead. What a success. This will probably be the format for the future. It was great to have our regular members with us as well as some widows as well as some members that we do not see often. A great time was had by all and thanks to all who contributed. Some graphic illustration of the day's events follows:



Some of our youngest: Liz, Philip and Bob



- and some of our oldest Daphne, featured last month with Alf featured in this edition.



Frank Joubert & René van der Merwe
and Bert) are both over 90,



Edith Lawsen Bert Johnson & Zelda de Kock (Frank



Joyce Dockrall & Shellhole Padre Angus Walker



Gerda Olivier and John Sowter



Gerda Olivier and QM Brian Simmonds.



Old Bill welcomes all - 'waiters' in the background

Erratum: Sorry Brian Simmonds. We were remiss in not congratulating our Quarter Master on his Birthday on 7 December in our last issue. We hope you had a wonderful day.

REMOVAL OF TREES 13 – 15 DECEMBER 2010

The trees that have occupied a large portion of our property have now been professionally felled and what a fine job they did. No fencing was removed or damage done during the process. The photographs tell the story:



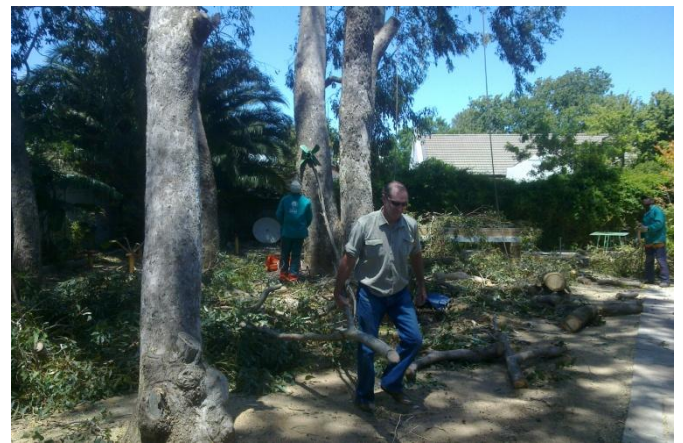
Soon after starting the job 13 Dec



late morning Monday 13 Dec



Temporary ground cover!



Day 2 in gale force south east wind



Enjoying the view before it's gone.



---and then it was gone.



The cleared area ready for renovation

THE ROBBEN ISLAND GUNS

Of the three Branches of Artillery - Field, Air Defence and Coast, the latter divides itself into Close Defence - which uses automatic sights on its guns to measure and set the target range, and Counter-bombardment guns - for shooting at longer range. More sophisticated methods of producing information to enable the heavier guns to fire accurately were necessary.

South African Coast Artillery ordnance on Robben Island during and after World War Two consisted of 6-inch close defence guns and 9.2-inch counter-bombardment guns. The piece, i.e. the barrels, of each of the guns on the Island were genuine antiques, the 6-inch guns having entered service in the late 1800s and the 9.2-inch Mk X guns in 1899. Their carriages, mountings, fire control equipment and ammunition had, however, been progressively developed and upgraded with the result that by the 1940s they had reached a peak of development and were, in fact, very up to date weapons, quite capable of undertaking the task they were called upon to do.

Also mounted on Robben Island were two or three 12-pdr 12-cwt Mk 1 guns. They were used for training purposes. There were various Marks of the 6-inch gun in service on the South African coast as well as the modern 6-pdr Twin, capable of a high rate of fire.

Britain had, as at 1 January 1946, one hundred 9.2-inch guns emplaced at a number of batteries world-wide. Most have gone. The 9.2-inch Mk X provided the main heavy gun defence for Table Bay, Simon's Town and Durban. In these fortresses there were a total of four batteries, Apostle (Llandudno), Robben Island, Scala (Simon's Town) and Da Gama (Durban), each with three 9.2-inch guns. They are still in place - more of these guns than in the rest of the world combined, and the restored 9.2-inch gun on the Island is in a class of its own. It has been so completely restored that there is not one such gun in existence at any place on the globe to compete with it.

The 9.2-inch Gun was correctly titled - ORDNANCE, B.L. 9.2-INCH MARK X ON MOUNTING B.L. MARK VII

The 9.2-inch gun Mk I and Mk II of which 19 of 26 calibres each were made from 1881 were intended for naval service, but both Marks proved unsatisfactory and none were mounted on naval vessels. The Mk III to Mk VII versions of 31.5 calibre were adopted by the Royal Navy.

Experiments with Mk IV and Mk VI as coast defence guns were made in the 1890s but it was the more successful Mk X version that entered naval service in 1899 and was adapted for land use in the same year. It remained in service until the 1950s, probably the most successful service history of any British heavy gun.

The 9.2-inch gun thus became the premier coast defence gun in the 1880s and the newer Marks retained this position until the demise of Coast Defence in 1956. There were larger guns but the 9.2-inch was installed in the greatest numbers and was the standard counter-bombardment gun.

There have been a vast number of variations of the 9.2, most of which were confined to naval service. Two Marks (or variations) were in use during World War Two. They were the Mark IX introduced in 1896 and the Mark X with a Welin screw block and capable of a higher rate of fire which was introduced in 1899. Both guns on the Island were Mk X but two were on Mk VII mountings and one was on a Mk IX mounting.

The 9.2-inch gun is a complicated piece of equipment, specially designed and built for the purpose of engaging enemy ships attempting to close the shores and bombard harbours, ships in anchorages and shore installations and so cause untold damage. The gun, and more especially its mounting and support structure, some of it underground, with all the supporting gear necessary in order to load, elevate, traverse, aim and fire, and the supporting installations to supply hydraulic power, air pressure, electricity, etc., to achieve this object, makes of it an immense and costly installation.

In guns of large calibre it is not practicable to enclose the propellant charge in a brass cartridge case (as in those of smaller calibre) for many technical reasons, including the enormously expensive cartridge case that would be required, and the difficulty in handling the case and extracting it from the breech after firing. In a BL or bagged propellant charge gun there is no empty cartridge case to be extracted after the gun fires; only the small fired tube from the lock on the outside of the breech mechanism hence the use of B.L. in the name of the ordnance.

As stated the 9.2-inch gun is a counter-bombardment weapon and was designed to defeat ships up to and including heavy cruisers armed with 8-inch guns. It is of built-up wire-wound construction, of 46.7 calibres and it has a barrel length of 35 feet 9 inches overall. It has a single motion breech mechanism and weighs 28.313 tons, including the breech, or 27 tons 8 cwt. without.

The rate of fire is about one to two rounds per minute and the muzzle velocity when new is 2748 fps with a standard charge and 2872 fps with supercharge. The approximate barrel life is 450 rounds. Elevation was 35 degrees and depression -5 degrees and the gun had a 360 degree traverse.

At maximum elevation and using standard charge it reached 29 200 yards (26 700m) and with supercharge about 32 600 yards (29 810m). The time of flight of the shell at 30 000 yards was five minutes and at this range the shell reached an altitude of 5 000 m.

Fired with armour-piercing shell with the 380lb (172.4kg) 2crh AP projectile filled with 33lbs of lyddite including 4oz picric powder exploder, the 9.2-inch round could penetrate 5.3in (13.5cm) of vertical steel KC plate at a range of 9000 yards.

The gun was hydraulically power-operated for laying, loading and ammunition supply and power was supplied by large diesel generators, generally situated for protection and concealment in an

underground facility. On Robben Island the generators were under a slight rise in the rear of the gun positions while at Apostle Battery near Llandudno the machinery room had, for instance, been dug into the mountain side. Complete construction of facilities and emplacement generally took about seven months.

OPERATION OF THE GUN

The gun detachment for a 9.2-inch coast gun consisted of eleven men, five manning the turret and six in the gun pit, with a further reserve detachment of eleven men who could be called upon in a prolonged action to assist in ammunition supply or hand operation of the gun if the power supply failed. Under normal power operation five men were required in the revolving gun house or turret, including the Sergeant in command and six men in the gun-pit for ammunition supply. Additional ammunition personnel were employed in the underground magazines.

To load the gun, shell and cordite charges were sent up from the gun-pit in the gun hoist ammunition cage and transferred to the hydraulic rammer with the charges inside the hollow rammer and the shell on the rammer loading tray. The gun was semi-automatically brought to the five degree elevation loading angle and the rammer operated to ram the shell into the gun and leave the charges in the chamber as it withdrew. There were several locking devices which ensured that the gun was locked at the correct loading angle before the rammer could be operated, and to prevent the gun being elevated back onto the target until the loading operation was completed.

Immediately after firing and as the breech was opened, a blast of air under high pressure was automatically directed up through the barrel to expel the cordite fumes and any burning residue from the charge. In addition a jet of water was mechanically directed onto the mushroom head of the breech mechanism to douse any smouldering residue and to cool the obturator pad seal.

The gun was continuously laid for line on the target by the line and elevation pointers. Each layer kept pointers coincident on electric data transmission dials. In effect one dial indicated the position of the target and the second one indicated the position or angle of the gun. Information for the follow-the-pointer dials for range and bearing came from what today would be considered unsophisticated locating instruments and plotting tables, that were housed in BOPs and FOPs,

The restoration of gun no.3, De Waal Battery, Robben Island; is the only B.L. 9.2inch Mk X gun mounted on an MkVII turret that traverses 360 deg and elevates from -5 deg to +35 deg on its own hydraulic power in the world. Other than what is being restored on Robben Island, only three other such guns have been restored to static display status, namely;

- 1 gun on Rottness Island (Australia)
- The gun at O'Hara Battery at Gibraltar
- The static display at the Imperial War Museum in London



BEFORE



AFTER

During WW2, Britain built 98 such guns throughout the Commonwealth for coastal defence of strategic choke points and harbours. Today only 18 such guns remain, namely;

- **SOUTH AFRICA = 12 guns**
 - DE WAAL BATTERY (Robben Island) = 3 guns
 - APOSTLE BATTERY (Llandudno) = 3 guns
 - SCALA BATTERY (Simon's Town) = 3 guns
 - DA GAMA BATTERY (Durban Bluff) = 3 guns
- **WESTERN AUSTRALIA = 3 guns**
 - ROTTNESS ISLAND (Perth) = 2 guns
 - GARDEN ISLAND (Perth) = 1 gun
- **GIBRALTAR = 2 guns**
 - O'HARA'S BATTERY = 1 gun
 - LORD AIREY'S BATTERY = 1 gun
- **IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM (LONDON) = 1 gun** as a static display relocated from one of the other dismantled gun emplacements

Phase one (Armcor Contract) of the restoration shall be completed by 28 Feb 2011; phases 2 – 4 shall commence mid 2011 and be completed in mid 2012; the only restored 9.2 inch battery of three guns all on its original emplacements in the world, with one gun a moving display.

To live like a MOTH – Part 4 - Alf Hilder

Edward Charles Alfred Hilder was born on the 21st of January 1919, at Fouriesburg in the Orange Free State.



Alf Hilder and future wife Ann – 1947

Dylan Thomas

*Do not go gentle into that good night,
old age should burn and rage at close of day;
rage, rage against the dying of the light.
Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
because their words had forked no lightning they
do not go gentle into that good night.*

After serving in WWII Alf continued to contribute significantly to society as an artisan, part-time soldier and very active member of the MOTHs. Upon retirement he lived for a time with his daughter who was married to a US Marine stationed at various embassies throughout the world. He has maintained a scrap book of some of his escapades and extracts of these provide an insight into his life.

1). Certificate of Service

I, Warrant Officer First Class, C. Lötter certify that, 75946, L-Cpl Hilder, Edward Charles Alfred, was posted for service on 1 July 1940, in the Fulltime Volunteer Forces, served in the 1st Battalion Pretoria Highlanders, and was discharged on 10 December 1945, and that particulars given herein correctly represent entries in his personal record. Dated at Pretoria this 24th day, of February 1987.

On behalf: Chief of the SADF – General

2). Honours and Awards

1939/45 Star, Africa Star, War Medal (1939/45), South Africa Service Medal

POW Letter (22 November 1942): Hilder Edward Charles Alfred Corporal 75946; Campo 13 Zettare Italy Gefangenesnummor 80842

Vincent & Fuller Swaziland: Mr E.C.A. Hilder has been employed by us since 14/7/1960 in the capacity of Mechanic and Serviceman. We found him extremely willing and keen in all his work.

Amalgamated Engineering Union of South Africa – Transvaal Division: 1963/64 Mr E.C.A. Hilder; A33703; Tractor Mechanic and Fitter & Turner; 13 Westonaria Road, P.O. Box 547, Klerksdorp

District Mail 16 August 1968:

It gives me much pleasure to congratulate the ladies of Somerset West and Strand who intend to start a Ladies Auxiliary Service in this area. From discussions with Sergeant Alf Hilder, who will act as

instructor to the L.A.S. and who is also an N.C.O. in my Unit, it appears that quite a number of ladies are very keen to join. Besides instruction in parade work and the handling of firearms in self-defence, members will also be trained in First Aid and the driving of all types of vehicles. - Commandant L.P. Zaaiman, Stellenbosch Commando

Die Burger 19 Maart 1969:

Hierdie vroue sal in die voorste linies kan veg

Hul opleiding het reeds so ver gevorder dat hulle geensins vir mans hoef terug te staan nie. Hul instrukteur, Sersant E. Hilder van Stellenbosch Kommando, het met trots verklaar dat die vroue hul opleiding besonder geniet en dit met groot geesdrif aanpak.

Sarie Marais 29 July 1970:

Blitsdiens vir vroue

Die vader van die diens en die man wat nou nog vierkantig aan die stuur van sake staan, is 'n bekende Strandse sakeman, mnr. E. Hilder. Hy is 'n man wat deur die harde skool van oorlog gegaan het en vir wie die instelling van so 'n hulpdiens 'n lewensideaal geword het. Van meet af het hy gesê: Al wat ek verlang is twee uur van 'n week van jul vrye tyd en vier ure op een Saterdag in die maand. Blote lag en plesier gaan dit nie wees nie, julle sal moet opoffer, maar as julle die kursus deurloop het sal jul kan verklaar, ons is nie van ander afhanklik vir ons veiligheid nie. Volgens mnr. Hilder moes die kursus geen militêre opleiding wees nie. Juis daarom het hy byvoorbeeld die offisierstrepe wat in militêre kringe algemeen bekend is onderstebo gedraai.

In samewerking met die verskillende munisipaliteite het mnr. Hilder as hoof-superintendent, gereël dat die vroue vroeg-vroeg opgelei word om die verkeer te beheer. Mnr. Hilder het reeds soveel welslae behaal dat hy nou voluit werk om soortgelyke hulpgroepen regdeur Suid-Afrika te stig.

Willem Barendsz Ltd: Mr E.C.A. Hilder was employed as a Diesel Fitter abroad the factory ship Willem Barendsz from 01 August 1971 to 31 January 1972, and during this period he carried out his duties conscientiously and diligently.

Diamond Quarzite Industries: Mr E.C.A. Hilder was employed by the above mentioned company from 01 June 1972 to 30 November 1972. We wish to advise that he was in charge of the maintenance and repair of all the Plant & Equipment at the Quarries at Lekkersing. We have no hesitation in recommending him to any future employee as a good and reliable worker.

Tygerberg Hospital: Mnr. E.C.A. Hilder is sedert 18 Desember 1972 tot 31 Oktober 1975 as Passer by die hospitaal werksaam. Hy is 'n baie bekwame en goed opgeleide ambagsman wat 'n intensiewe belangstelling in sy werk toon. Hy sal sonder die minste beswaar enige addisionele dienspligte uitvoer. Hy word deur sy kollegas en toesighouers gerespekteer en hulle voel tot hom aangetrokke weens sy aangename persoonlikheid en joviale houding.

Lourensford Estate: Mr E.C.A. Hilder was employed by this company from 01 May 1976 to 19 July 1977 as a Diesel Mechanic. In the course of his work he was involved with all types of farm machinery. He was a good timekeeper and hard-working employee during his whole period with us.

South African Breweries: This is to certify that Alf Hilder was employed by S.A. Breweries in the capacity of Signwriter in the Northern and Eastern Transvaal from June 1980 to March 1987. Mr Hilder was an exemplary worker who frequently extended himself above and beyond the call of duty; on many occasions he produced work of outstanding quality.

MOTH & MOTHWA Directory 1988: Crater Shellhole Witbank – Old Bill Alf Hilder

Home Front MOTH Magazine – February 1988:

Witbank looks back down the years.

This was a fantastic effort done virtually single-handed by MOTH Alf Hilder, Old Bill of Crater Shellhole. It was a real eye-opener to see what an organiser this man is. He arranged for exhibits by the S.A.A.F. in the form of the rebuilt Sikorsky helicopter, as well as the Alouette II. He had a massive display from Armscor worth hundreds of thousands of Rands, as well as a superb display put on by Musgrave Arms. There was also a display of various vehicles and armour dating from the last war to the present time. On the second day came the biggest treat when Alf, resplendent in his old uniform, led the parade that brought the visiting dignitaries to the show on his magnificent horse, Devil. He had the Mayor brought in, in the original staff car used by Field Marshal Smuts, the well-remembered black 1942 Ford, which he had borrowed from its present owner. I promise you, the citizens of Witbank as well as the dignitaries, who included high ranking officers of the military and police, were much impressed by this show. It just goes to show that the Old Guard can still match a lot of people when it comes to organisation. - Deputy District Old Bill Frank Coetzee

Ministry of Law and Order:

Dear Colonel Hilder - MOTH Crater Shellhole - Witbank

Met vriendelike groete - Adriaan Vlok - Minister van Wet en Orde – 28 November 1988

MOTH & MOTHWA Directory 1989: Coalfields District Dugout – District Old Bill Alf Hilder

Witbank Commando Certificate: Toegeken aan Kol A. Hilder, vir positiewe gesindheid en bydrae tot die eenheid se welvaart. 17 November 1989

Witbank News 11 December 1992:

Alf Hilder shares his memories

At the age of 18, he joined the SA Defence Force's Special Services Battalion just a year before World War II broke out in September 1939. Three years later, after being involved in frontline action in Abyssinia, he joined the elite British group of Special Air Services with the rank of lieutenant. Promoted to Major the highlight of his career was his acceptance during 1941 for Special Forces training at the home of America's legendary Green Berets at West Point Military Academy. As a Green Beret Colonel Hilder carried out covert missions in Italy, Germany, France, Austria and the Middle East behind enemy lines. Today he is the only Green Beret in South Africa. Captured by the Germans at Tobruk, eight of his escape attempts were foiled before he made a successful getaway on his ninth try. – Attie Dippenaar

Group 33 HQ: Geagte Kolonel Hilder – Graag wil ek van die geleentheid gebruik maak om u hartlik te bedank vir die bydrae wat u gelewer het tot die Laeveldskou. U betrokkenheid het bygedra dat die SA Weermag in 'n gunstige lig by die publiek tuisgebring is. U aandeel het ook bygedra dat die SA Weermag bekroon is met 'n goue medalje. Waarnemende Bevelvoerder – Kmdt. B.M. Fourie

Witbank News 8 January 1993:

Beneath the flag, Colonel Alf Hilder

Colonel Alf Hilder arranged a display of his military memorabilia at Commando HQ on December 12. Part of his service in Italy was to demolish tunnels in the Brenner Pass.

Witbank News 1 April 1994:

Kolonel Alf Hilder wat gereeld by die Witbank Nuus inloer vir 'n koppie koffie, het redaksielede onlangs verbaas toe hy laat blyk het dat hy nog 'n ander verborge talent ook het – 'n sekuurvat hand vir die maak van miniatuur kakebeenwaens.

Witbank News 14 April 1995:

Mr Graham Cousins, a former prisoner of war in World War II has embarked on a 670km walk through the Eastern Transvaal and Gauteng to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the so-called death marches of that time. Graham reached Witbank on Thursday and was met by Rotarians Rodney Francis, Mike Maurits and Peter Martin and Colonel Alf Hilder, another POW who also took part in the original march.

Windhoek Koerant 5 Mei 1995:

'n Legende Kuier in Windhoek

Alf Hilder is een van daardie legendes wat oorlogsargiewe lewe gee en leesbaar maak. In die Tweede Wêreld Oorlog was hy een van daardie seldsame valskermsoldate van die spesiale magte waarvan 'n mens lees in Jack Higgins en Alistair MacLean se boeke. Hy kon net sowel 'n karakter uit *The Eagle has landed* gewees het, of een van die wat die rotsgebergtes in *The Guns of Navarone* geklim het. Toe oorlog uitbreek is hy by die elite 9de Lansiers op Ladysmith. Die eenheid word in 'n pantser eenheid omskep en onder bevel geplaas van Gen Maj Dan Pienaar waarna dit vertrek na Abessinië. Oor Pienaar spreek Hilder hom soos volg uit, *een van die vernuftigste generaals ooit*. Terwyl hy in die woestyn is, word hy deur die Britse Special Air Services (SAS) gewerf vir gevaarlike take agter vyandelike linies. Hulle word opgelei aan die Britse Militêre Akademie en Hilder is die enigste kandidaat uit sestig wat die moordende kursus voltooi. Hy word tot luitenant bevorder en gestuur na die Amerikaanse Militêre Akademie te West Point. Die kursus wat normaalweg drie jaar sou duur word in 10 maande ingeprop en na voltooiing ontvang hy die gesogte *Green Beret*. Van die 120 man wat die kursus begin het, voltooi slegs drie van hulle die kursus. Na afloop van die kursus word hulle vir verdere opleiding na Frans-Marokko gestuur waar hulle by 'n regiment van die Franse Vreemdelegioen aansluit. Nadat hulle 'n reeks woestyn opmarse voltooi het word die groep agter die Duitse linies in Noord Afrika ontplooi in 'n poging om die bevelvoerder van die Afrika Korps, Genl. Erwin Rommel te ontvoer. Die groep word gevange geneem net voor die val van Tobruk, en in 'n latere gesprek met Rommel word Kolonel Hilder meegedeel: *Ek was saam met my troepe, dit is waarom ek tien minute laat was en julle my nie kon vang nie*.

Chris Vermaak

Virginia Review August 15, 1996:

Retired Colonel, Veteran of WWII, Retires to Highlands

Edward Charles Alfred Hilder, a retired decorated veteran of 50 years in the Republic of South Africa Army who served during World War II in special services units operating behind German lines, will soon be settling in the Alleghany Highlands area as a permanent resident.

Colonel Hilder began his military career in South Africa with a special services battalion in 1938. After two later assignments to other units within his country, Hilder heard the military was looking for some blokes to volunteer for elite special services units. When all the physical and written tests of 2000 volunteers for these special forces assignments was completed, Hilder was among only two men who qualified for overseas assignments. He was sent to England for paratrooper training with the British First Paratrooper Division, and then took three months of additional advanced training in the U.S.A. Hilder then joined the Special Forces men and carried out espionage operations in places like Germany and German occupied Finland. While on duty in Africa, Hilder was captured by the Germans at Tobruk. During his eight months in prison, Hilder had made eight attempts to escape and was recaptured every time. On his ninth attempt he and one other prisoner manage to escape with the help of French Resistance underground fighters. They left in a captured German crash boat which was still flying the German flag to fool the Germans; soon however, they came under fire from a British submarine and were taken into custody by the British.

Once released, Hilder had a number of other adventures behind enemy lines between then and the D-Day invasion of Normandy. On the midnight before the morning of the D-Day invasion, Hilder was one of the Special Forces paratroopers who jumped from bomber aircraft behind enemy lines in the dark with the mission of blowing up as many of the beach defences and obstacles as possible before the main invasion force hit the beaches.

Hilder got the chance to meet with and talk to Generals Eisenhower, Patton and Montgomery at planning meetings on behind-the-enemy-lines espionage operations. He recalled that Patton personally once called him *a son of a b...h* and describes Patton as being a peculiar kind of character.
– Bill Lumpkin

American Embassy Lagos Nigeria: Dear Colonel Hilder – I would like to express our appreciation for all of your hard work and efforts to keep our operations running smoothly throughout the year. Your contributions throughout 1997 have constituted a very necessary part of our success as a recreation association. We are glad that you are part of our team at the U.S. Embassy community. – 25 December 1997.

American Embassy Lagos Nigeria: Certificate of Appreciation – Presented to Colonel Hilder – in recognition of your dedicated service to the American Employees Recreation Association – March 1998 – Maria E Brewer

*When you go home tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow we gave our today.
Our gift was great but you must give a greater to complete the plan, we died, now you must nobly live to make, man brother unto man.*

No little child will ever starve or suffer needles pain

The aged will live their twilight years in sunshine not rain

The cripple we will help to walk, the blind we'll help to see the wonders of the world

To feed, to clothe, to build again, where hopes should shattered be

This is the crowning MOTH ideal – to help Humanity – I. Morgan



Alf Hilder - Veterans Parade in the U.S.A.

Happening at Marshal Smuts

Scattering of the ashes of Moth Widow Ria Swart

On Wednesday the 22nd of December the ashes of Ria Swart were scattered in the Garden of Remembrance, near those of her late husband, by her daughter Mrs Ria van Heerden. Ria was the widow of Moth Lukas Johannes (Blackie) Swart who passed away on the 12th of November 2003. Blackie Swart first joined the SSB during the late 1930s before being transferred to the Union Defence Force. As a member of the UDF he saw service with the 1st South African Infantry Division in North Africa and with the 6th South African Armoured Division in Italy during the Second World War. He remained as an officer with the UDF and with the coming of the Republic in 1961 was transferred to the South African Defence Force. He retired from the SADF at the end of 1975 with the rank of Major-General and held the post of Director Army Supplies (QM General). His wife Ria passed away on the 2nd of October 2008.



Ria (Swart) van Heerden

(Thank you for the kind contribution towards our Mutual Help Fund!)

We will remember them!

4th Letter from the Home Front

September 1978: The following members were duly appointed to the executive committee – Old Bill MOTH Danie Wiehan, Wee Bill MOTH Taffy Lloyd, Adjutant MOTH Bill Paris, Pay Bill MOTH Stan Watson and Sgt-Major MOTH Harry Russell.

October 1978: Old Bill expressed regrets that MOTH Paris had been forced to resign as Adjutant, due to ill health of his wife. MOTH Lloyd became the new Adjutant and MOTH John Delgano became the new Wee Bill.

November 1978: MOTH Paris said that he could not understand the doubt about the plaque for the Johnny Farrell Memorial Gates as he himself had given the names to Quarter Master Vigar. On a suggestion by MOTH Coyle it was decided to leave this matter to the committee.

January 1979: MOTH Paris pointed out that on the death of Old Bill Johnny Farrell; Mrs Farrell had requested that there be no flowers at the funeral. Consequently all donations went toward the Johnny Farrell Memorial Gates, and it was decided at the time to put a plaque naming all

those who had donated towards them; this has so far not been done.

February 1979: Old Bill opened the meeting with a tribute to the late MOTH Len Rowan who passed away on the 6th of February. Old Bill spoke on the difficulty of gaining entry to the cupboard at the rear of the hall due to chairs being stacked against it.

March 1979: The framed list of donors to the Johnny Farrell Memorial Gates as prepared by the Adjutant for display in the hall was approved. The Play Bill to have plaque made up with previously approved wording to fix on one of the gates. Old Bill spoke of the Mutual Aid practised by MOTH's Petersen and Prinsloo, when they cleaned up his garden on his discharge from hospital.

April 1979: Play Bill Jim Woods had had a plaque manufactured for the Johnny Farrell Gates at a cost of 41.00 ZAR and attached it to one of the pillars. Old Bill called on the Adjutant to explain the proposed addition of a room to accommodate the Ladies Auxiliary.

May 1979: Old Bill paid tribute to the late MOTH Mark Laidler, who had passed to higher service on the 11th of April. A suggestion by MOTH Jim Woods, that an Honours Board for those holding Certificates of Merit and Certificates of Comradeship be displayed in the hall, was accepted unanimously.

June 1979: MOTH Bill Paris wished to know why money collected at the door by the Orderly Sergeant was not reflected in the financial statements. The Pay Bill informed him that the monies went directly to the Ladies Auxiliary. There was a discussion over the proposed Honours Board, MOTH Hobart had prepared two boards and wanted to enter the names.

July 1979: Old Bill initiated a discussion on the bar prices and a variety of opinions were expressed. It was proposed by MOTH Bouwer and seconded by MOTH Waring, that the price of beer should be increased to 45c. A counter motion proposed by MOTH Delgano and seconded by MOTH Woods that bar prices remained as they are, was carried 11 votes to 10 with 5 abstained votes. That is, bar prices stay as they are. Old Bill announced that the extension for the Ladies Auxiliary would be available for the August meeting.

August 1979: Old Bill congratulated MOTH Charles Larkin on his 80th birthday and MOTH Frigant pointed out that MOTH Reeves recently celebrated his 84th birthday. Old Bill said that there had been a minor setback concerning the Woman's Auxiliary room. It had been agreed that many of the surplus chairs would be used in the new extension, but the ladies had now acquired their own chairs. This leaves the Shellhole with the old problem of chairs being stacked against the rear exit. A discussion followed on the Honours Roll. MOTH Hobart proposed and seconded by MOTH Bouwer, that only the names of current members should be recorded and the motion was carried unanimously.

Old Bill Report 1978/79:

Brother MOTH's

When looking back at this year, we can do so with justified pride. We started off slightly in the

doldrums but things started picking up, and for this I would like to thank the floor members. Their loyalty in getting back some of the older members who had lost interest, meant a lot to our Shellhole.

We also decided (with some trepidation) to start a Ladies Auxiliary. We soon found that our hall could not accommodate both MOTH's and LA at the same time. It was decided to extend by an additional room for the ladies, which is now an accomplished fact and everyone is now satisfied. There seems to be much more life in our meetings (lovely snacks organised by our ladies). Our Play Bill, Jim Woods, has organised a lot of entertainment during the year and Quarter Master Lionel Vigar has done an excellent job of managing the Hole in the Wall.

I am also very pleased that the SA Legion, R.A.F.A. and our Order are working together in such wonderful harmony in our area. It does indeed, auger well for the future.

Sick Bay: We unfortunately had quite a spate of illnesses during the year (we have to expect seeing we are not getting any younger). Bill Paris, George du Plessis, Led Nicholls, Kierie Prinsloo and Stan Watson have all thankfully recovered, and are all back on active duty again.

Last Post: We lost three staunch members who were called to Higher Service namely, MOTH's Rowan, Veary and Laidler. We will remember them.

On the positive side, seven recruits were found wandering in no man's land and they are now proud members of the Order. The Shellhole also has the proud record of having been represented at all Dug Out meetings. Visits to other Shellholes in our Province were disappointing, but let us blame the fuel crisis for that.

Before closing I would like to thank the following floor members who were always ready to give a helping hand when most needed, MOTH's Kierie Prinsloo, John Hobart, Bill Coyne, Hymie Barr and Doc Dockrall.

In conclusion a special word of thanks to our Adjutant for being always ready to give advice of the highest order. In the coming year, let's make Marshal Smuts the gem of the Western Province again.

Yours under the Tin Hat
Danie Wiehan – Old Bill

Important JANUARY Dates

07 January (Birthdays)

1502: Pope Gregory XIII

1746: George Elphinstone, 1st Viscount Keith, Royal Navy Admiral

1768: Joseph Bonaparte, King of Naples

1946: Moth Pierre Olivier

1958: Donna Rice, American sex scandal figure

20 January (Birthdays)

1435: Ashikaga Yoshimasa, Japanese shogun

1755: Sir Albemarle Bertie, Royal Navy admiral

1798: Anson Jones, 5th and last President of Texas

1922: Moth Derek McLean

1956: Moth Gail Jordaan

21 January (Birthdays)

1721: James Murray, British Military Officer and Governor of Quebec

1824: Confederate Army General Stonewall Jackson

1867: Maxime Weygand, French Army General

1918: Richard D Waters, American Soldier, Company Commander of Easy Company (Band of Brothers)

1919: Moth Alf Hilder

21 January (Events)

1919: Sinn Fein adopts Ireland's first constitution

1950: Alger Hiss, alleged Soviet Spy is convicted of perjury

1954: The first nuclear-powered submarine, the USS Nautilus is launched

1958: The last Fokker CX in military service (Finland), crashes

1981: After being kept hostage for 444 days, Tehran releases the first Americans

2011: Marshal Smuts Shellhole monthly meeting at 18:00

Interesting reads on the Internet:

www.samilitaryhistory.org

www.ninefoxtrot.org

www.dod.mil.za

www.firstworldwar.com

www.secondworldwar.com

www.61mech.org.za

Contributions to gfj@sun.ac.za

