



Marshal Smuts Shellhole  
P.O.Box 246, Somerset West, 7129  
Cnr. Drama & Swalle Streets, Somerset West, 7130



# BULLSHEET

AUGUST 2011

## Editorial

Well the AGM has come and gone and we have a brand new executive Committee to run our affairs. They are:

- Old Bill - Moth Philip McLachlan
- Deputy Old Bill - Moth Pierre Olivier
- Adjutant - Moth Gerda Olivier
- Pay Bill - Moth Adriaan van Zyl
- Sergeant Major - Moth Bob Fisher (to be installed on return from overseas visit)
- Quartermaster - Associate Member Brian Simmonds
- Standard Orderly - Moth Adriaan van Zyl

We wish them every success for their term of office and judging by past contributions as members I am sure it will be a very good year for Marshal Smuts.

Also at the AGM we ratified our new Standing Orders with a couple of grammatical alterations.

The recipients of the Shellhole Awards were announced and Provincial Old Bill Graeme Stuck presented the awards. The recipients were:

- Giraffe Trophy - Moth Philip McLachlan
- Black Sheep Trophy - Moth Danie Truter (to be presented at the August meeting)
- Bull Trophy - Moth George Mann
- Shrapnel Trophy - Moth Tom Steenberg

### Shellhole Calendar

19 August:

Monthly Meeting at the Shellhole,

18:00.

2011-2012

### Executive members

#### Old Bill:

Philip McLachlan

Tel: 021-8514480

Cell: 0828235813

E-mail: [philipmac@telkomsa.net](mailto:philipmac@telkomsa.net)

#### Deputy Old Bill

Pierre Olivier

Tel: 021 852 4874(h)

E-mail: [pierre.gerda.olivier@gmail.com](mailto:pierre.gerda.olivier@gmail.com)

#### Adjutant

Gerda Olivier

Cell: 076 858 9164

E-mail: [pierre.gerda.olivier@gmail.com](mailto:pierre.gerda.olivier@gmail.com)

#### Paybill

Adriaan van Zyl

Cell: 084 517 4392

E-mail: [boesman@zazu.co.za](mailto:boesman@zazu.co.za)

#### Sergeant Major

Bob Fisher

Tel: 021-853-7827

Cell: 083 231 6677

E-mail: [hewitson.fisher@gmail.com](mailto:hewitson.fisher@gmail.com)

**M.O.T.H.**  
**R & R**  
 From 1 MAY TO THE 6 MAY 2012

Only forty kms south of Durban lies ATKV Natalia on the KZN south coast. This resort is a true paradise where the weather is mild and glorious all year round.



Caravan and camping sites or Elegantly furnished flats

Meet fellow Moths and old friends from other shellholes - maybe not seen for many years. A discounted bar will be available together with evening meals, bus tours, entertainment for all. The R&R Team is committed to providing a value for money holiday for Moths, their family and friends. Natalia rates will be forwarded shortly. Plan your next year's holiday with us.

**Contact**  
 R&R Chairman - Harold Zettler 082-449 4468 or R&R Adj. - Pat Zettler 082 469 0995  
 e-mail - [ipmsmoke@websterm.co.za](mailto:ipmsmoke@websterm.co.za)

**PLEASE NOTE !!**  
 This is a non profit Moth project to promote the three ideals of the Moth Order.  
 Dispatches to follow.

**2012 MOTH 85<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY**

Join the party from 1 to 6 May 2012. Plans have been made for the celebration of the MOTH 85<sup>th</sup> Birthday in Durban next year. Efforts are being made to get as many Moths from around the country to attend.

Should you wish to join the Marshal Smuts group please contact Old Bill Philip

**Sound Memory**

The 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Delville Wood was commemorated with the annual parade on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> of July at the Company Gardens Cape Town. Attending from Marshal Smuts Shellhole were Moths Alf Hilder, George Mann, Malcolm Bouwer, Daphne Foster-Sutherland, Angus Walker, Pierre Olivier, Gerda Olivier, Adriaan van Zyl (Standard Bearer), Brian Porter, Philip McLachlan and associate members Cam and Liz Walker. Moth Stephen Els performed his duties as a platoon sergeant, attached to the Cape Town Rifles Regiment.



**GHQ News**

**MOTH Paul Watkins - KIA - Afghanistan 17 July 2011**

It is with deep sadness and regret that the Eastern Cape Provincial Dugout, Settlers District Dugout and Outspan Shellhole announce the passing to higher service of Moth Paul Watkins at the age of 24 years on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2011. Paul is the eldest son of Rod and Gill Watkins, with Rod being a senior member of the MOTH having served as Provincial Old Bill and in a number of Executive positions at Shellhole, District and Provincial level.

Paul Watkins was inducted into the MOTH at Outspan Shellhole on 6 January 2010 at the age of 22 and was probably one of the youngest members of the Order. Moth Paul Watkins was a member of the

British Army and was part of the International Coalition fighting the war on terror in Afghanistan. Paul was on a routine partnered patrol with the Afghan National Army in the Nahr-e Saraj District of Helmand Province, to engage with the local population, when the patrol came under small arms fire. He was in a fire support position at a roadblock, tracking the progress of a foot patrol from his Jackal vehicle. The foot patrol was returning to the vehicle when both teams came under small arms fire. Paul received a fatal gunshot wound during this incident. Paul was the 332<sup>nd</sup> British soldier to have died as a result of hostile action while serving in Afghanistan since the start of operations in October 2001.

**11 July 2011** - Moths Allan Daubnet of Flame Lily aged 93 and Karl Raubach of Dawn Patrol answered their Sunset Calls.

## **GEN MAGNUS MALAN TELLS MOTHS AT CONVENTION** (abridged from news24.com)

### **The battle is only just beginning!**

*"Those of us who lead the SA Defence Force are fortunate in having such rich reserves of former Servicemen to draw upon; men and women who are still bound by that great bond of comradeship tempered by active military service in the defence of their country and their ideals in two World Wars. And I have news for you: the battle is only just beginning! Your role in it, albeit a somewhat changed one, is far from over."* This was part of a message by gen Magnus Malan, Chief of the SA Defence Force, at the National Convention of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats, on 5 April 1980 at Kempton Park. (Paratus May 1980)

Former South African defence minister Magnus Malan died at the age of 81 on Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> of July at his home in Durbanville, Cape Town. A friend and former colleague, General Gert Opperman, who is acting as a spokesperson for the family, told Sapa Malan had died of heart failure. *"He had been ill for quite some time, and his condition had deteriorated in the past few weeks,"* Opperman said.

Malan served as minister of defence from 1980 to 1991, an appointment that followed a long military career - stretching back to the 1950s - in the SA Defence Force. There, he rose through the ranks and was appointed chief of the defence force in 1976. Malan built up a reputation as a highly competent strategist, and became one of the leading exponents of the *"total onslaught"* theory against South Africa. After several command posts, he became chief of the SA Army in 1973 and chief of the SA Defence Force in 1976. In 1980, he was appointed to the Cabinet of PW Botha as minister of defence. The following year, he was elected National Party MP for Modderfontein. Malan also rose within National Party ranks, being elected to the Transvaal NP's executive committee in 1981, and rising to become one of the party's vice chairs in that province. In 1991, he became chairperson of the Ministers' Council in the House of Assembly.

Malan's public statements as SADF chief dealt mainly with the alleged *"total onslaught"* against South Africa, and the need to develop a *"total national strategy"* to counteract it at all levels. He also believed the answer to South Africa's problems was ultimately political, not military, in nature. During Malan's term as Minister of Defence, troops were used in the control of unrest in townships. In 1987, Malan admitted for the first time that South African troops were supporting Unita in Angola.

In 1988, he and then minister of foreign affairs, Pik Botha, participated in talks on South West Africa (SWA) and Angola on the Cape Verde Islands, in Brazzaville and Cairo, where they met Angolan representatives. The talks eventually led to a settlement in both countries, with SWA becoming the independent Namibia under a Swapo government in 1990. On February 3 1993, Malan retired from politics after 12 years in Parliament.

Magnus Malan married Margot van der Walt in 1962. The couple have two sons and a daughter.

## CALEDONIAN PIPE BAND SUCCESS

Many of our readers will remember the integral part that the Caledonian Pipe Band played in the Marshal Smuts Birthday celebrations earlier this year. Here is an abridged version of an e-mail received from Tony Reis, their Pipe Major of their participation in this year's national Championships.

*"After not competing for 4 years, the Cape Town Caledonian Pipe Band competed in the South African National Championships held in Benoni.*

*Coastal bands always battle with altitude in the Johannesburg area and with the weather playing up the way it did before Saturday, we knew we were in for a very tough ride. Fortunately on the day, the weather warmed slightly, but it still took a full 2 hours for me to get the pipes tuned to where we were 'sort of' satisfied.*

*Anyway, we competed in 2 events. We were on at 11H50 with our Selection of Marches ( $\pm$  5 minute performance), and on again at 12H20 with the March, Strathspey & Reel (also  $\pm$  5 minute performance).*

### **Results:**

*Selection of Marches - we came 1st*

*March, Strathspey & Reel - we came 3rd*

### **Overall - 2nd in our Grade!!**

*To crown off a reasonable, but enjoyable weekend, the Cape Town Caledonian Pipe Band won Drill, Dress & Discipline, which was not expected at all."*



Congratulations from Marshal Smuts for your most successful participation.

## Mutual Help

On a recent business trip to the fairest Cape, Moth Clive Emmerson of Cinder City Shellhole, Sea Park, was unfortunately involved in a vehicle accident at Bellville and had to be hospitalised. His wife, Adele, immediately contacted Moth Brian Porter and asked for assistance. Moth Porter set the Cape Western wheels in motion and Moths Pat Tate and Daphne Moreira assisted with logistical support to make his stay in hospital as comfortable as possible.

Adele flew down on Friday and was collected at the Airport by the 32 Battalions Veterans Organization who also housed her for the evening. Clive was released from hospital on Sunday, fortunately the damage was not too serious and both were entertained to true Marshal Smuts's hospitality at the Shellhole.



We wish Clive a speedy recovery and hopefully the next time we meet, it will not be by accident!

*Clive (back row far right) with neck brace, holding the Marshal Smuts tile, which was presented to him during the braai.*

## S.A. Legion News

Legionnaire Jimmy Seaman was elected as the Chairperson of the local branch at the AGM held on 5 July while Legionnaire Pierre Olivier was elected as the Deputy Chairperson. Other familiar faces at the meeting included Moths Jordaan, Mann, McLachlan, Gerda Olivier, Truter and Van Zyl while Moth Fisher tendered his apology. Except for Legionnaires Pierre Olivier and Jordaan, the other Marshal Smuts Shellhole members all decided to join the Legion after an appeal for membership was made at the Shellhole's April monthly meeting.

## Cape Western Dugout Calendar – August 2011

Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup>	19:00	AGM	Battledress
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	10:30	AGM	Tommy Rendle VC
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	11:00	AGM	Bomb Alley
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup>	18:00	AGM	Seagull
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	19:15	AGM	Red Barn/ToTS
Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup>	10:30	AGM	Admiral Halifax
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup>	19:15	AGM	Dawn Patrol
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup>	20:00	AGM	Snoekie
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	19:30	AGM	Blaauwberg Cuca
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Dugout AGM</b>	<b>Tommy Rendle VC</b>

## The Warsaw Airlift - Pieter Moller

The contribution made by crews of 31 and 34 Squadrons to the Warsaw Airlift represents one of the most outstanding accomplishments in South Africa's military history. Soon after the German occupation of Poland in September 1939, Polish liberation movements were formed to co-ordinate all resistance activities against the Germans. On 1 August 1944, the Polish partisans led an uprising in Warsaw and occupied major sectors of the city. The Germans reacted quickly and isolated the areas occupied by the partisans. Owing to the fact that the Russian forces abruptly stopped their advance towards Warsaw, the situation in the city itself soon became desperate for the partisans. They needed armour and ammunition, as well as medical supplies.

On 3 August 1944, the Polish partisans in Warsaw called for urgent help from the Allies. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill decided to send assistance. He ordered 205 Group, commanded by a South African officer, Brigadier J T (Jimmy) Durant, to start with extensive flights to Warsaw, despite the extremely difficult circumstances that would seriously hamper these supply flights. 205 Group included 1 586 Special Polish Duty Squadron, 178 and 148 Squadrons (334 Wing) Royal Air Force, and 31 and 34 Squadrons (2 Wing) SAAF. This operation became known as the Warsaw Airlift.

The flights to Warsaw took place from 13 August to 22 September and represented a round trip of 2 815km. For the greater part of this distance, the aircraft flew over enemy territory and in broad daylight, although they were timed to reach the city in the dark. The aircraft did not fly in close formation, although they left at approximately the same time. In close formation, enemy searchlight batteries would have spotted them and pinpointed them more easily as targets for German night-fighters. The route from the Italian bases extended from Celone or Foggia to the Adriatic Sea. From there they crossed the Scutari Lake in Albania, flew north over Yugoslavia, across the Danube to Hungary and Czechoslovakia and then over the Carpathian Mountains. Pilots then had to follow the

Vistula River for the last leg to Warsaw. Supplies had to be accurately dropped on identified street areas or into specified air-supply zones.

The Liberator bomber used for this exercise weighed 25 480kg (28 tons) and was equipped with four engines, each developing approximately 150kW. Each aircraft carried twelve 150kg metal containers, a total of approximately 1 800kg. Fuel capacity was roughly 9 000 litres. The aircraft could fly a distance of 3 714km and were armed with ten half-inch machine guns. Only a small amount of ammunition and arms could be carried on each flight since the larger part of the carrying capacity of the aircraft was taken up by fuel. Usually, during ordinary flights, the calculated fuel reserve would be 25% to account for possible emergencies. For Warsaw, the estimated reserve was only nine percent.

The risk of enemy fire or interception over such a long flight distance caused great stress and anxiety amongst the aircrew. Many aircraft were damaged so badly that they had to carry out forced landings. Others were shot down by night-fighters or antiaircraft guns. For most of the flight, navigators were unable to communicate with radio transmission from ground stations, owing to these being out of range. Pilots had to be on the alert to spot high mountain ranges.

On reaching the Vistula, the aircrews would become aware of a dim glow on the horizon. As they approached, it would slowly become bigger until it developed into a bright inferno. This was Warsaw burning. Owing to the thermal effects of the fires in the burning city, the aircraft would shake wildly as they flew over at approximately 350 metres. The hot air and smoke inside the aircraft would become almost intolerable. The fires that lit the sky would make the aircraft easy targets for enemy machine guns positioned on the rooftops. Pilots might be blinded by searchlights. The air would be streaked with tracer bullets and when a Liberator exploded after a direct hit, it would appear as a small spark against the fiery background. As their altitude was too low, it was impossible for the crew to use their parachutes.

The Polish uprising was one of the most disastrous in the history of modern warfare. However, in terms of the Allied war effort, it was not a total failure. Nearly 10 000 Germans were killed, 7 000 went missing and 7 000 were wounded. This meant a loss of manpower, something the Germans could ill afford at that stage of the war. As far as the Warsaw Airlift is concerned, however, a military lesson is to be learned from this episode: Adventurous initiatives which are unlikely to work should not be undertaken for purely political motives. The flights undertaken from Italy were conducted under the most hazardous circumstances and, as indicated very clearly in the individual flight reports, the crews were battling against overwhelming odds. Their objectives were unrealistic and militarily catastrophic. Seen from a military perspective, this was a reckless operation and should never have been attempted. The airlift was, in many instances, futile and utterly senseless. When Bor-Komorowski surrendered to the Germans, the partisans had tried for 63 days, in vain, to liberate their capital. Of the approximately 40 000 men and women who were members of the underground army, roughly 18 000 lost their lives, about 25 000 were wounded (6 500 seriously) and the total number of civilian casualties was estimated at 180 000 people. Nevertheless, the airlift invokes feelings of deep respect for the aircrews that participated in the flights to Warsaw and risked their own lives.

The Warsaw operation resulted in a firm bond of friendship between the crew members who took part in the task flights to Warsaw and the Polish community in South Africa. Today, the aircrews are honoured for their brave actions when the Polish community gathers in Johannesburg in September every year to commemorate these events. Squadrons are widely praised for the courageous conduct, perseverance and sense of duty which they exhibited whilst participating in the Warsaw Airlift. Several individuals received awards for gallantry, including the Distinguished Flying Cross. It is one of the tragedies of war that sacrifices like those of the Allied airmen who gave their lives to assist their Polish allies were ultimately in vain

## South Africa and the War against Japan 1941-1945 - Andre Wessels (part 4)

### South Africa and the military struggle against Japan, 1941-1945

The threat of a Japanese invasion declined after the battle of Midway (4-6 June 1942), but still hung over South Africa until the United States started to roll back the Japanese by the end of 1942. Throughout the war against Japan, South Africa's contribution was mostly of an indirect nature, with the emphasis on coastal defence and safeguarding the Cape sea-route.

Although more than three years would lapse before units of the UDF were actually sent to the Far East in the war against Japan, South African naval personnel, seconded to the Royal Navy almost immediately after Pearl Harbour, saw action against the Japanese. Having dealt the American navy in the Pacific a severe blow at Pearl Harbour, the Japanese invaded, inter alia, the Philippines, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, the Gilberts and Wake and set out to destroy Allied naval units operating in the Pacific Ocean. Amongst the first vessels to fall prey to the Japanese were the British battleship HMS Prince of Wales and the battle-cruiser HMS Repulse. Both vessels had stopped at Cape Town and Durban on their way to the East, forming part of a British naval task force, also including four destroyers, which had been sent out to intercept the attacking Japanese task force. Both capital ships were sunk on 10 December 1941, off the east coast of Malaya, by shore-based naval aircraft. Of 1 612 crew members of the Prince of Wales, 325 perished, as well as 513 (including a South African) of the Repulse's complement of 1309.

From 27 February to 1 March 1942, the battle of the Java Sea occurred when an Allied force of five cruisers and eleven destroyers (including ships from four nations) challenged a Japanese force, which was escorting a convoy carrying troops for the invasion of Java. Two Dutch cruisers and one Dutch and two British destroyers were sunk in the ensuing running battle and one British and one US cruiser were damaged. The Japanese suffered only minor damage and went ahead with the invasion. During the clash, one South African was killed on 1 March 1942, when the 'E' Class destroyer HMS Encounter was sunk by Japanese

surface craft. With the Japanese almost completely in control of the skies, they started mopping up the little remaining Allied resistance and April 1942 became a very bleak month for the Allies. On 5 April, Japanese dive-bombers caught and sank the British heavy cruisers HMS Cornwall and HMS Dorsetshire off the west coast of Ceylon. Amongst the Cornwall's casualties were 25 South Africans and sixteen of their compatriots died when the Dorsetshire went down. Of the two ships' total complements of 1 546, 424 were killed.

On 9 April 1942, Japanese dive-bombers attacked and sank the aircraft carrier HMS Hermes off the east coast of Ceylon. Amongst those who died, were another sixteen South Africans. On that same day, the 'Flower' Class corvette, the HMS Hollyhock, was sunk by Japanese aircraft east of Ceylon and amongst the fatalities were five South Africans. Some time elapsed before the next South African died in action against the Japanese. This occurred on 12 February 1944 when the British troopship SS Khedive Ismail was sunk by submarine I-27. About 2 000 of those on board died, including one South African. This appears to have been the last seconded South African to die in action against the Japanese, although at least another two South Africans died while on duty in the Far East: one at HMS Highflyer, a base in Trincomalee and the other at HMS Lanka, a Royal Navy shore establishment at Colombo. In total, some 4 000 South Africans served in the Royal Navy at one time or another during the war. Of these, 191 are believed to have died while on active service, at least 67 of them in the war against Japan.

The threat of a Japanese penetration into the Indian Ocean rendered the defence of the Union against invasion a matter of urgency. Accordingly, in June 1942, the UDF in South Africa was reorganised into an Inland Area (comprising the Northern, Central and Witwatersrand Commands, with headquarters at Johannesburg) and a Coastal Area (comprising the Fortress Commands of the Cape, Outeniqua, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban, with headquarters at Cape

Town). Defences at the country's ports were strengthened and sea and air patrols along the coasts were intensified. Those ACF units that remained in the country were organised into a Mobile Field Force with headquarters at Ermelo. Defence Headquarters called for special vigilance against possible attacks from the sea, as well as for the stepping up of internal security. When relations with Japan became strained in July 1941 and especially after the fall of Singapore in February 1942, the threat to the Union's coastline was greatly increased and all coastal batteries were manned with a greater degree of alertness. Towards the end of 1941, the first coloured (Cape Corps) troops made their appearance in the Coast Artillery. They proved to be apt pupils and, by June 1942, formed the largest portion of the detail manning the various batteries. South Africa's coast artillery defences were gradually improved and a few South African coast gunners also served outside the Union, such as at Kismayu and Mogadishu in the former Italian Somaliland, which, it was feared, might be threatened by the Japanese. As the threat of invasion decreased during 1944, so too did the strength of coastal artillery units and, by November 1944, all batteries were placed in care and maintenance. Despite South Africa having invested heavily in coast defence during the war, the coastal defence units never fired a shot in anger. Nevertheless, it was a necessary precaution and may well have been a good deterrent.

Over and above coastal guns, South Africa's harbours were also protected by other means. The Japanese had attacked Sydney harbour (Australia) and Diego Suarez (Madagascar) with midget submarines and, with a Japanese submarine force operating in the Indian Ocean, Durban harbour, with its long entrance channel, was considered to be exceptionally vulnerable. Loops of electric cable were installed at the harbour entrance and later also at Cape Town and depth-charge throwers were introduced at Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth, Simon's Town and Cape Town. Saldanha Bay was earmarked as a convoy assembly port and, to protect the assembly area in the land-locked bay, a controlled minefield was layered there in 1943.

As the situation in the East deteriorated at the beginning of 1942, South Africa braced itself for possible attacks from the sea and air. Towards the end of February 1942, the British War Cabinet's Subcommittee on Defence Arrangements for the Indian Ocean envisaged the possibility of brief bombardments of the Union's ports by Japanese battleships, operations by torpedo and mine laying craft, infantry landings, as well as attacks by up to 200 carrier-borne aircraft. Consequently, more anti-aircraft guns were ordered for the defence of the country's ports. By 23 April 1942, the following anti-aircraft guns existed at the ports: two 3, 7-inch guns, four old 3-inch guns and four Bofors guns. By September 1942, the increasing availability of equipment had turned the country's anti-aircraft port defences into a respectable force, with a total of 104 3, 7-inch and 104 40 mm guns and 60 searchlights at Saldanha Bay, Table Bay, False Bay, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban.

From the beginning of the war, South African air - and later also naval - forces played an important role in watching over the trade routes along the country's shores. By February 1942, there were 2 002 aircraft in the Union, but of those only 179 were of the operational type and serviceable. Ventura aircraft were used to seek out and attack enemy submarines and, later, the SAAF took over the Royal Air Force (RAF) Catalina squadron that was stationed at Durban. In 1945 this squadron (No 35) switched to Sunderland aircraft.

When Japan entered the war, the SDF was fully occupied in patrolling South African waters against possible enemy submarine attacks and sweeping mines where necessary. The threat of a Japanese invasion meant that these patrols were to be stepped up. On 1 August 1942, the SDF and Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (South African Division) were amalgamated under a new designation, the South African Naval Forces (SANF). All South African officers and men serving in the Royal Navy automatically became SANF seconded personnel. By the end of 1943, when the war at sea and the threat of a Japanese invasion began to abate as the Allies gradually rolled back the Japanese forces, there were about 4 000 officers and ratings in the SANF and, on 7

December 1943, the SANF had eighteen small antisubmarine vessels and 40 minesweepers. By the end of hostilities in 1945, more than 10 000 officers and men had served in South Africa's naval forces and 89 vessels had, at one stage or other, been in commission.

It must be noted that, on the eve of the war, there had been, for all intents and purposes, no armaments industry in South Africa. Within a remarkable short space of time, a formidable armaments industry had been built up and, by the end of the war, the following arms and ammunition had been produced in the country: 5 770 armoured cars, about 300 3,7-inch ordinary and pack howitzers, at least 300 6-pdr and 100 2-pdr anti-tank guns, 11 323 3-inch mortars, 4 970 502 hand-grenades, 768 314 966 rounds of .303 rifle ammunition, 2 568 652 mortar bombs, more than four million shell bodies and 3 660 216 aerial bombs, including 3 057 717 practice bombs. Although the country's armaments industry was never specifically geared towards the struggle

against Japan, certain locally manufactured items found their way to the East. For example, most of the 3, 7-inch howitzers were exported to India, some of the 6-pdr anti-tank guns were exported to Burma and many 3-inch mortars, armoured cars and hand-grenades went to India.



Sixteen Fairmile 'B' motor launches were built at Cape Town and Knysna in 1942 and early 1943, all for the Royal Navy and, although these boats were not built for South Africa, they were crewed mainly by South Africans who were originally recruited by the RNVRSA. These Fairmiles first served in the Persian Gulf and later in the Burmese Arakan front campaign against the Japanese. Thereafter, they were handed over to the Indian Navy. (To be continued)

### Lockheed Ventura and Harpoon by Emmanuel Gustin

(<http://www.uboaat.net/allies/aircraft/ventura.htm>)



In September 1939 Lockheed proposed to the British representatives a military development of the Lockheed 18 Lodestar, as a follow-up for [Hudson](#). The Hudson itself had been hastily developed from the smaller Lockheed 14 Super Electra. But this time, a more extensive militarisation was proposed. In June 1940, the proposal was accepted, and 675 aircraft were ordered.

The Lodestar, the Super Electra and the Hudson were all powered by either the Wright R-1820 or the Pratt & Whitney R-1830; in the 1000hp to 1200hp class. For the Ventura the Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp was chosen; an engine in the 2000hp class. (The number in the designation indicates the cylinder volume in cubic

inches.) This engine change implied that range was sacrificed for speed, and was prompted by a British decision to consider the Ventura as a medium bomber rather than as a maritime patrol aircraft.

The Ventura had an all-metal stressed-skin construction. The fuselage had an elliptical cross-section, but was less portly than that of the Hudson. The wing was built in three parts, the centre section constructed integral with the fuselage. Again, Fowler flaps of generous area were installed. The twin tailfins had the elliptical shape typical for Lockheed aircraft. Like the Hudson, the Ventura was provided with a dorsal turret, but it had a better field of fire. In addition, the lower rear fuselage was modified to create a

step, so that a ventral gun position could be installed. Normally there was a crew of four: pilot, navigator / bomb aimer, radio operator / gunner, and turret gunner.

The Ventura had a high wing loading, and especially the later, heavier versions had a marginal take-off performance. Great care was required during take-off and landing. But it was fairly fast, especially at low level, and a fine aircraft to fly on instruments, in bad weather. The Ventura handled well with one engine out. While the Ventura was a superior combat aircraft than the Hudson, range was reduced. This was perhaps felt the most by the crews who had to make the transatlantic ferry flights: Even with extra fuel tanks added to a total of 1100 gallons, it could cross the Atlantic only with an average 25-knot tailwind.

Production of the Ventura was undertaken by Vega, a subsidiary of Lockheed, which later was completely integrated into Lockheed. The first one flew on 31 July 1941. Deliveries began in September; the Ventura Mk.I was powered by 1850hp R-2800-S1A4-G engines. Most Mk.Is reached the RAF, with the exception of 21 that were retained in Canada for use as trainers, and a few that were sent to South Africa. After 188 Mk.Is had been delivered, production switched to the Mk.II with 2000hp R-2800-31 engines and a

redesigned bomb bay. After Pearl Harbour the US military seized all combat aircraft it could get, and of the 487 Mk.IIs built, 264 were taken over by the USAF and 27 by the US Navy, which called them PV-3. Although some US Venturas flew antisubmarine patrols, most were used as trainers. A number of Mk.IIs were retained in Canada, and over 100 were delivered to the South African Air Force. The next model was the Mk.IIA, which had American equipment and guns instead of British, because it was built to Lend-Lease contracts. The RAF received only 25, and 45 were sent to Canada. The balance was again impounded by the USAF, that called these aircraft B-34 Lexington. Most of them were modified to B-34A and B-34B standards, again for training purposes.

The first operational RAF squadron with Venturas was No.21, in May 1942. It was followed by No.464 (RAAF) and No.487 (RZNAF). All three participated in the first combat mission of the type, a low-level attack on the Philips factories at Eindhoven, in the Netherlands, on 6 December 1942. This was a disaster: Of the 47 Venturas 9 were shot down and only one escaped without damage. The Venturas switched to medium level bombing, but they were mediocre as bombers. In the summer of 1943 they were replaced by the Mosquito



A Ventura GR Mk.V

The Venturas were then converted to maritime patrol aircraft. The first Venturas GR Mk.I served with No.519 and 521 squadrons in the Atlantic, and No.13 and 500 in the Mediterranean. The Ventura began to replace the [Hudson](#) as maritime patrol aircraft.

The next version was powered by 1700hp Wright R-2600-13 engines. The USAF initially called it O-56, reflecting its purpose as a reconnaissance (Observation) aircraft. Before it flew, it was renamed B-37. The RAF called it Ventura GR

Mk.III, but would receive none. Only 18 B-37s were built, because in the summer of 1942, the USAF agreed with the US Navy that the latter could take over land-based anti-submarine patrols, and acquire some land-based bombers. Part of the deal was that Lockheed would switch production from the B-34 and B-37 for the USAF, to the PV-1 for the Navy.

The PV-1 was very similar to the B-34, but it had reduced defensive armament and more fuel. The bomb bay was redesigned again, to enable the

PV-1 to carry a torpedo. A radar was installed in the nose. A bomb-aiming window was initially retained, but later deleted in favour of three additional forward-firing machineguns in a pack under the nose. The PV-1 became the most built model, and the first of 600 flew on 3 November 1942. The PV-1s were extensively used in the Pacific. Because of its good performance and the lack of more suitable alternatives, the Ventura was also briefly used as a night fighter.

More than half the production of the PV-1 was diverted to RAF and Commonwealth forces, where it was known as the Ventura GR Mk.V. It entered service at a time when the balance was shifting in favour of the Allied. Illustrative is the experience of U-960: It was spotted by two destroyers on 17 May 1944, in the western Mediterranean. The destroyers did not attack, but five destroyers were sent to the area, and about 70 aircraft were called on for support, most of them Wellingtons and Venturas. (This tactic was known as *The Swamp*. See page on [U-371](#) for info). The next night, a Wellington GR Mk.XIV re-established contact. U-960 was hunted by aircraft and chased

by two destroyers throughout the next night. In the morning the destroyers reached her and attacked with depth charges. The submarine was forced to the surface, where she was bombed by a Ventura and shot at by the destroyers. It was quickly sunk. Only 20 of her crew of 51 were rescued.

The final twist in the development of the Ventura was a major redesign, the **PV-2 Harpoon**, first flown on 3 December 1943. The PV-2 had larger outer wing panels with integral fuel tanks, and a larger tail plane and tailfins. The bomb bay was redesigned again. The Harpoon could carry more bombs than the Ventura, and when a torpedo was carried it was now completely enclosed by the bomb bay doors. These changes were intended to make the aircraft more suitable as a patrol aircraft, by increasing range, at some cost in speed. Unfortunately, the original wing design was unsatisfactory. The first 69 aircraft, designated PV-2C, could only be used as trainers. A complete redesign of the wing cured the problem, but only 35 aircraft could be delivered before the end of the war.

### **Specifications**

**Lockheed Ventura Mk.I** Two 1850hp Pratt & Whitney R-2800-S1A4-G radial engines Wing span 19.96m, length 15.67m, height 3.37m, wing area 51.2m<sup>2</sup>. Empty weight 7824kg, max take-off weight 11804kg. Max. speed 502km/h at 4725m. Cruising speed 434km/h. Service ceiling 7620m. Normal range 1490km. Armament: Dorsal turret with two .303 guns, later increase to four. Two .303 guns in the ventral position. Two fixed forward-firing .50 guns in the nose decking, and two flexible .303 guns in the nose. Bombs load up to 2500lb (1135kg).

**Lockheed PV-1 Ventura** Two 2000hp Pratt & Whitney R-2800-31 radial engines Wing span 19.96m, length 15.77m, height 3.63m, wing area 51.19m<sup>2</sup>. Empty weight 9161kg, max take-off weight 14096kg. Max. speed 518km/h at 4205m. Service ceiling 8015m. Normal range 2190km. Armament: Dorsal turret with two .50 guns. Two .30 guns in the ventral position. Two fixed forward-firing .50 guns in the nose decking. Bombs up to 1361kg, or six 147kg depth charges, or a torpedo.

### **The Light of Remembrance**

C.T. Brooke	- Dorset Regiment	- 22 August 1917
T. Youd	- 2 SA Infantry Brigade	- 13 August 1918
E.C. Santer	- RN HMS Bridgewater	- 26 August 1941
N.W.J. Coldrey	- RAF 616 Squadron	- 19 August 1942
R. Field	- SAAF 145 Squadron	- 31 August 1944
Ian de Jongh	- SAAF 2 Squadron	- 14 August 1951

**We will remember them**



## Important Dates

### Birthdays:

#### 01 August

1901: Pancho Villa

1924: Frank Worrell

**1926: Moth Malcolm Bouwer**

1931: Trevor Goddard

1936: Yves Saint Laurent

#### 19 August

1871: Orville Wright

1883: Coco Chanel

1946: Bill Clinton

**1947: Moth Bob Fisher**

1948: Tipper Gore

#### 30 August

1930: Warren Buffett

1937: Bruce McLaren

**1963: Moth Stephen Els**

1972: Cameron Diaz

### Events:

#### 19 August

1934: The creation of the position of Führer is approved by the German electorate with 89.9% of the popular vote

1942: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division leads an amphibious attack on Dieppe

1944: The Liberation of Paris

1960: Sputnik 5 with dogs Belka and Strelka, 40 mice, 2 rats and a variety of plants on board is launched into space

**2011: Marshal Smuts Shellhole monthly meeting at 18:10**

## Der Bentschottischemann – Deutschland Über Nix Mai 6 1943

### Saucy tail-gunner admits sex-change

Ace airman and former bookies' runner Derek McLean has a secret under his belt. *"I always knew I was different from my chums,"* says the several times and unrepentant defrocked priest.

McLean's secret was revealed when caught lurking about in the WAAF's ablutions. *"Now that my sex-change secret is out I expect to be posted to the Queen Alexandra Nursing Corps somewhere well behind the lines,"* says the obviously distressed former tail-gunner. Some less-charitable colleagues claim the wily Scot is again in the act of malingering. *"How cruel!"* replies the delicate youth?

Suspicious that there was something odd about McLean first surfaced in 1938 when he appeared in the Wimbledon youth championships wearing cami-knickers. *"It was the fashion at the time and I've always been a bit of a trend-setter. There were a lot of people then, just as they are now, jealous of me,"* says McLean.

Meanwhile the Spanish parliament met in crisis yesterday amid claims that Derek McLean, Pretender to and Dog Catcher of the Fiefdom of Uhart was the illegitimate offspring of General Franco. Scouse nightingale Gracie Fields admits a tryst with Franco but says not even they could produce a McLean.

### Hitler's piece of fluff risks all for love of George

Gestapo top brass are probing a series of midnight trysts between the Fuhrer's bint, Eva Braun and an elusive South African *Tiffy*, known as the Scarlet Pimp. *"Ve vill ketch him yet"* vows Commandant Heinz Beans; *"der schvine cannot cover his trecks forever."*

It is believed Mann and Braun met when she caught him stealing milk bottles on a recent visit of hers to Rome. *"I took pity on him. Just one look at that pathetic figure and anyone would see,"* Eva told her interrogators. According to a statement made to the Gestapo, Eva Braun described how she was knobbled on the stairs of the Vatican by saying: *"Mann, a rough type if ever there was one, at first tried to pass himself off as George Manning and then he asked me to...Censored in the interest of family values...I woke up when two kind SS men were helping me into an ambulance."* Low scoundrel Mann claims: *"All I simply asked the girl to do was...Censored in the interest of family values...and the next thing I heard was the Pope shouting at us to not make such a noise."* A delegation of 17 distraught Army nurses is picketing the secret air base, on a more sensitive matter, where Mann is being held.

### **Goering should award Hilder Iron Cross**

The United States is threatening to pull out of the war unless South African soldier Alf Hilder is put where he can do no more harm to the Allied effort. *"Once over the Ruhr bombing zone our seven squadrons of B17s were unlucky to run into Hilder on his way back from a black market deal with some Gypsies"* says Allied Supreme Commander Eisenhower. General Montgomery is furious at Hilder's latest escapade. He says: *"I knew he was up to something when he asked me to postpone El Alamein for 48 hours. The man and his chef Idi Amin are true menaces."*

Interesting reads on the Internet:

[www.samilitaryhistory.org](http://www.samilitaryhistory.org)

[www.dod.mil.za](http://www.dod.mil.za)

[www.firstworldwar.com](http://www.firstworldwar.com)

[www.secondworldwar.com](http://www.secondworldwar.com)

[www.61mech.org.za](http://www.61mech.org.za)

[www.redsockfriday.com](http://www.redsockfriday.com)

[www.30degreessouth.co.za](http://www.30degreessouth.co.za)

[www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)

[www.ninefoxtrot.org](http://www.ninefoxtrot.org)

<http://www.ww2ships.com>

**Contributions to [gfj@sun.ac.za](mailto:gfj@sun.ac.za)**