



CYBER SHELLHOLE Newsletter



CYBERNEWS, October 2011

Fellow Moths ~

I have to apologise for not getting this missive off to you all any sooner, but life can hand you a short, sharp one in the kidneys when you're not expecting it, and everything has to take a back seat until things have been squared away again, hey?

Since May, when it was decided that we "formalise" Cyber Shellhole to allow the unit to grow in the manner prescribed, there have been some good things come to pass. We now have a proper Nominal Roll, a GHQ-4 (a contact list for Executive members that appears in the MOTH Telephone Directory and which you will all get copies of), all the members are properly logged, a copy of the Charter is available (a copy of which is attached to this newsletter for your reference) and now the Unit is ready to roll.

As was stated in my intro letter posted on the MOTH website some months ago, I would like to create an international calendar of Remembrance Parades and Services that would be pertinent to us all, even though Cyber members are scattered across the globe. In South Africa, Moths annually commemorate those who Fell at Delville Wood (July), El Alamein (October), The Border War (February) and, of course, Remembrance Day in November. There are others that we attend, including church services for the Battle of Britain or for local regimental services, but these are not official Moth functions. In Australia (and New Zealand, I think) ANZAC Day is very important and there are similar days in other countries. In order to promote the MOTH in your neck of the woods, perhaps you could persuade the Event Organisers to allow you to take part in the Service and to be allowed to lay a Floral Tribute during the wreath-laying section of the ceremony. If you can swing that, then get photos – of yourself and of the Gathering – so that we can post them on the website.

Another thing: If you find anything of interest to the Veterans Community in general, in the news or in print, send that along as well. It's good to take note of what the rest of the world is doing for its vets. In the UK, for example, there's a very successful campaign on the go called "Help for Heroes", that raises funds for disabled veterans since 9/11 – especially those from Iraq and Afghanistan. Check it out, on www.helpforheroes.org.uk Of course, those punch-ups are very much in the Brits' faces, and they have good royal backing in the form of Princes Harry and William, so support should be a bit easier. The British Legion is also very proactive, as is the RSL Down Under. Veterans Affairs has been very much in the news in South Africa of late, when some proposed changes to the original wording to a V.A. Bill was presented in Parliament recently, which caused a huge stink because it, in effect, left many of us out of the Veteran Community. The proposed changes were retracted and the original wording has been left unchanged and to our satisfaction, and we await final signing off on the thing.

Within the MOTH community, we are at last beginning to take some positive strides to market the Order to the General Community. This has been a weak point in our structure in the past because the Order never really "needed" to market itself and changes in attitude and perception of later generations had left us on the back foot, having to play a catch-up game to make the population more aware of what we do and what we stand for. And, slowly, Moths are starting to make inroads. There has been an upturn in recruitment, most Shellholes are recording a "younger" average age, more functions and attractions are being offered, members are seen to be working with other service groups to the mutual benefit of their local communities, and closer ties are being formed with military establishments and related associations as well. I have noticed that many Shellholes have actually (informally) "adopted" a Regiment from its area of operations, and have been able to recruit a number of those chaps into the Shellhole. Blaauwberg Cuca Shellhole, for example, has got five past and present Officers Commanding from one single Regiment on their 'Rolls! What's the collective noun for a bunch of colonels? A husk of colonels, perhaps?



As mentioned above, October sees South Africa commemorating the Battle of El Alamein. In Cape Town the service will be held within the walls of the Castle and the Moth will be assisted by the Cape Town Highlanders. The turnout for this, and other services, is getting bigger and bigger and the fact that there are always a lot of

tourists traipsing through the grounds is also of great help in our Marketing efforts. The gathering for “refreshments” afterward is also something of a draw-card, I think.

I had the opportunity to be a spectator at the annual Artillery display, held at 4 Field Regt in Potchefstroom in September. There were some interesting bits of weaponry being used, including the G5 and G6 155mm howitzers, as well as some 120mm mortars – utilizing “indirect fire” – which I had never seen in action before, plus a couple of Bateleurs (SA version of Stalin’s Organ) firing off a battery of rockets. It was nice to see the noise-boys in operation. Just a pity that the display was so short, but each round fired off must have cost a few bob!



The South African Legion celebrates its 90th birthday this year and the various branches have got all sorts of events and functions on the go. A lot of Moths are also Legionnaires and substantial support for the SA Legion will come from us.

More importantly, however, is the Rugby World Cup. What a pleasure! The Pools phase is over and the usual culprits have made the final-8 cut. Reading the latest Sports Illustrated (SA) the other day, I was drawn to an article that made my day. “A James Dalton moment: In June 1998 the Springboks dished out a 96-13 *pakslae* of note to a pitiful Welsh team. Midway through the thrashing, Dalton meandered over to collect the ball at the touchline where the substitutes were sitting. Bullet turned to the players on the bench, shook his head, grinned and said: ‘Jissie, but you okes must really be *kak*, hey?’”

Face-paint and flag sales are up, pubs are open for business until all hours, everyone you meet has an opinion of our team (the Springbokke, I mean) and of the opposition teams and even my 17-year old daughter has been watching the games - although it should be said that her motives are a bit different. Every now and again she’ll come up with: “Ooh, he’s cute”. I wonder when Bismarck du Plessis was last called “cute”?

For your information, Cyber Shellhole has 14 members officially registered on the Nominal Rolls, with a number of potential new members waiting on the sidelines. This figure excludes all those chappies who contribute to the FaceBook site but who have not signed up as members of the Shellhole. The current average age of the members is 59 years – which is a good thing for the lifecycle of the Unit. The biblical “3-score-‘n-10” scenario..... And, speaking of age, there were two birthdays to be mentioned here, *viz.* **Moth Alan Markland**, in Wigan (Lancashire, UK), and **Mrs Angela Pownall**, in Glenfield (Leicester, UK) both celebrated birthdays in September.

Okay, so that’s all I have for now. I will try to have a newsletter out on a monthly basis. I will need your input, though. Send whatever info you would like to have included in this missive, and I look forward to hearing from you all. And please pass MOTH Greetings to any/all veterans that you meet in your travels, and at any related Veteran Association Gatherings that you might attend. Wear your Tin Hat with pride!

Yours Under the Tin Hat
BRIAN PORTER