



# Military Despatches

Vol 14 August 2018

## Ten Women Warriors

Women that made their mark

## The Night Witches

Russia's female flyers of World War II

## The future is here

Sci-fi weapons that already exist

## The Warsaw Uprising

One of the greatest betrayals of World War II

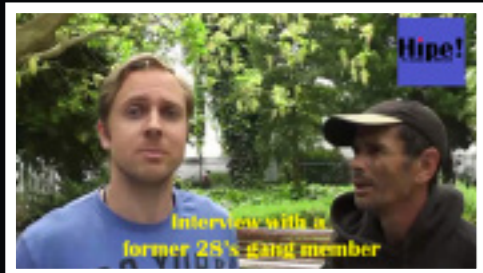
## Mary Edwards Walker

The only woman to win the Medal of Honour

*For the military enthusiast*



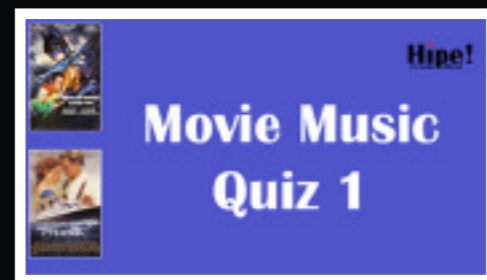
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How much do you know about movie theme songs? Take our quiz and find out.



The old South African Defence Force used a mixture of English, Afrikaans, slang and techno-speak that few outside the military could hope to understand. Some of the terms were humorous, some were clever, while others were downright crude.



Hipe's Wouter de Goede interviews former 28's gang boss David Williams.



Part of Hipe's "On the couch" series, this is an interview with one of author Herman Charles Bosman's most famous characters, Oom Schalk Lourens.



A taxi driver was shot dead in an ongoing war between rival taxi organisations.



Hipe spent time in Hanover Park, an area plagued with gang violence, to view first-hand how Project Ceasefire is dealing with the situation.

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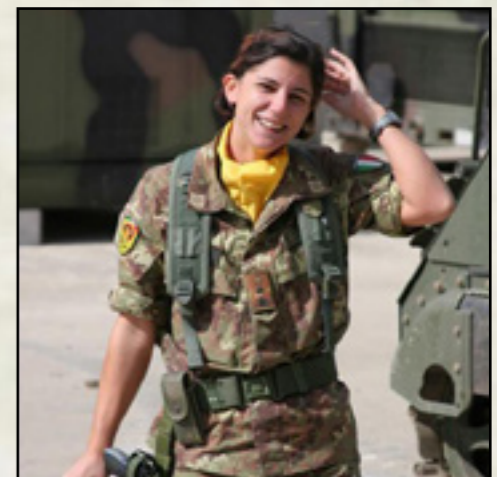
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## Editor's Sitrep

It's late afternoon on 31 July and I've only just finished putting the magazine together.

Normally I like to get everything done with a few days to spare. This was not the case this month. I had a multitude of other things to sort out. Like the fact that I sat without water for ten days.

They came and installed one of the fancy new digital water meters at my place, and after that I had not a single drop of water. And what a mission to try and get anything sorted out.

This month you will find that there are a number of articles that have a slight 'feminine' touch to them. That's because August is Women's Month and I thought it would be a good idea to pay homage to the contribution women have made to the military.

Well, actually it was my better half's idea. More of a subtle request rather than an idea. To be honest, it was really a direct threat.

Still, it was interesting. I had no idea that the list of countries that allow women to take an active part in combat has grown

so much over the past decade or so. How do you feel about women taking part in combat? Maybe some of you can drop me an e-mail about your thoughts. We can possibly do a follow-up article on it.

I also found Mary Walker an interesting individual. She was a doctor during the American Civil War and the only woman ever to win the Medal of Honour. From all accounts she was a pretty feisty character.

It's also interesting to note that Britain's highest award for bravery, the Victoria Cross, has been awarded 1,358 times to 1,355 people. And no woman has ever been awarded the medal.

We've started a new section in the magazine this month. It's called 'This month in military history' and is basically a day-by-day look at major events in military history for that month.

I'm sure that those of you that enjoy trivia will like it.

Until next month.

*Matt*

# Hipe! media

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## Back Issues

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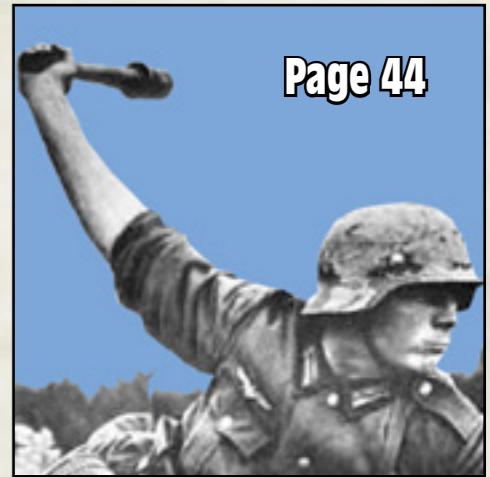
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## This month in history Military history in August

Our new section takes a day-by-day look at some of the major events in military history.



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# 10 modern day women warriors

*History abounds with legends of male warriors, but this is not the case for the fairer sex. Yet that is not to say that they didn't exist.*

Throughout history legends of male warriors are aplenty, but the same cannot be said of women warriors. Yet that is not to say that they didn't exist.

Some of these women warriors are well known. Most people will know about Joan of Arc, probably the most popular woman warrior in history. This 16 year old girl would go on to lead the French army in battle

## Maria Bochkareva

Not only did this Russian soldier fight in World War I, she also formed the Women's Battalion of Death and was the first Russian woman to command a military unit.

When World War I broke out in 1914 she tried to join the 25th Tomsk Reserve Battalion of the Imperial Russian Army, but was rejected. She was told that she should try joining the Red Cross instead.

Undeterred, she secured the personal permission of Tsar Nicholas II. After three months training she began front-line duty with 5th Corps, 28th Regiment of the Second Army. She was decorated for rescuing fifty wounded soldiers from the field.

She was wounded in the arm

against the English.

Another well known woman warrior was Boudicca, queen of the Iceni. After her husband died she led an army of 100,000 men and toppled the Roman capital in Britain, Camulodunum.

Yet there are other women warriors in history that are less well known. These include Triệu Thị Trinh (known as the Vietnamese Joan of Arc), Na-

and leg and worked as a medical sister until she was fit enough to return to the front with the rank of corporal. She suffered another injury that left her paralyzed for four months.

In 1917 she proposed the creation of an all-female combat unit which she believed would solve the Army's morale problem. She felt that it would shame the men into again supporting the war.

Permission was granted and she was placed in command of the unit. The 1st Russian Women's Battalion of Death initially attracted more than 2,000 women volunteers, but Bochkareva's strict discipline weeded out all but 300 of them.

Her unit was at the front at the time of the October Revolution and did not participate in the

kano Takeko (one of the only known *onna-bugeisha* - female samurai - in Japan's history, Grace O'Malley (the Irish pirate queen), Lozen (Apache warrior), and Rani Lakshmibai (India) are some of them.

In this article, however, we will be looking at modern day women warriors. Those whose achievements have been in the 20th century and beyond. They are in alphabetical order.



defence of the Winter Palace. Bochkareva's unit disbanded after facing increasing hostility from the remaining male troops at the front.

She was briefly detained by the Bolsheviks but released. In early 1918 she was detained a second time and scheduled to be executed.

She was rescued, however, by a soldier who had served

with her in the Imperial Army in 1915 and who convinced the Bolsheviks to stay her execution. She was granted an external passport and allowed to leave the country. In April 1918 she went to America.

Sponsored by socialite Florence Harriman, Bochkareva arrived in San Francisco and made her way to New York City and Washington, D.C. She was granted a meeting with President Woodrow Wilson on 10 July 1918, during which she begged the president to intervene in Russia. Wilson was apparently so moved by her emotional appeal that he responded

## Kristen Griest, Lisa Jaster and Shaye Haver

The United States Army Ranger School is a 61 day combat leadership course oriented toward small-unit tactics. The course is considered the premiere military leadership course in the world.

It is open to Soldiers (commissioned officer, warrant officer, or non-commissioned officers), Sailors, Airmen, and Marines in the U.S. Armed Forces, as well as select allied military students - as long as you were male.

In April 2015, 19 women were allowed to participate in the course as part of a one-time pilot program to see how women would do in Ranger School. To date, only three women have successfully passed the course.

Kristen Griest graduated from the United States Military Academy in 2011. She also served in Afghanistan as a military police officer.

On 21 August 2015, Griest, along with Shaye Haver, be-

with tears in his eyes and promised to do what he could.

After leaving the United States, she traveled to Great Britain where she was granted an audience with King George V. The British War Office gave her 500 rubles of funding to return to Russia.

Bochkareva arrived in Arkhangelsk in August 1918 and attempted to organise another unit, but failed. In April 1919, she returned to Tomsk and attempted to form a women's medical detachment under White Army Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak, but before she could complete this task she was re-

came the first woman to graduate from Ranger School.

When Griest graduated from Ranger school women were not allowed to serve in Ranger/Infantry roles due to the Pentagon's exclusion policies on women in combat. That policy changed on 3 December 2015 when Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced the US military would open combat positions to women with no exception.

In 2016, Griest became the first female infantry officer in the US Army when the Army approved her request to transfer there from a military police unit.

Shaye Haver graduated from the United States Military Academy in 2012.

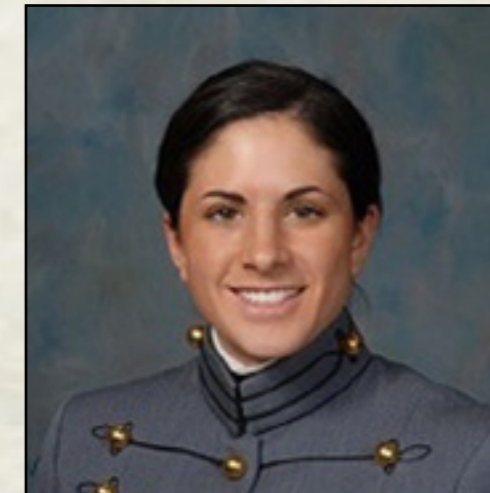
She followed in her father's footsteps and became a helicopter pilot. She flew an Apache attack helicopter in an aviation brigade.

On 21 August she graduated from Ranger School, receiving

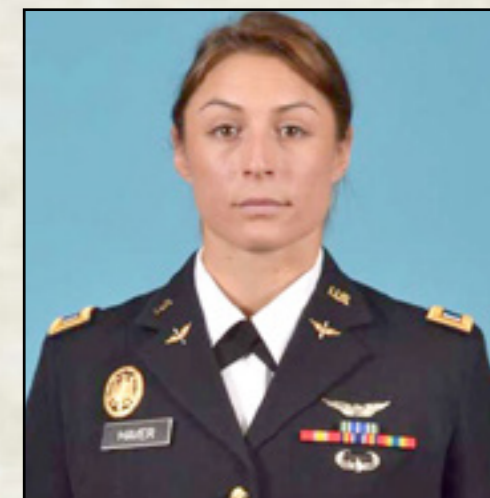
captured by the Bolsheviks.

She was sent to Krasnoyarsk where she was interrogated for four months. Ultimately, against Lenin's orders, she was sentenced to death and executed as an "enemy of the working class".

She was shot by the Cheka on 16 May 1920. She was posthumously pardoned and exonerated by Lenin. The Cheka (Secret Police who later became the NKVD and then the KGB) agents who ordered her execution were executed themselves for not following orders.



Kristen Griest



Shaye Haver

a certificate of completion and was awarded and authorized to wear the Ranger tab.

On 26 April 2018 Haver took command of Co C, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry of the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division.

Lisa Jaster graduated from the United States Military Academy in 2000 and was commissioned as an engineer officer with the 92nd Engineer Battalion.

She was deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom I and Operation Iraqi Freedom I. She was awarded a Bronze Star medal.

After getting married, she left active-duty in 2007 and start-

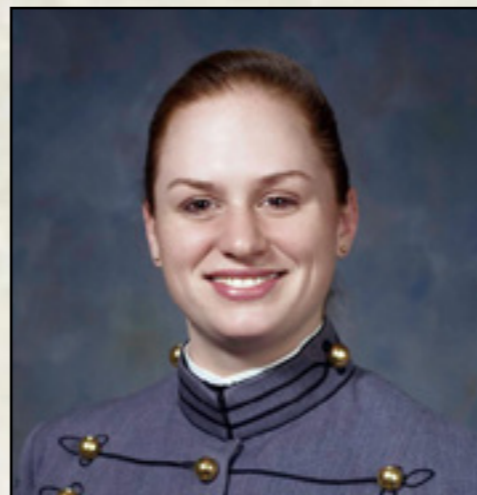
ed a family and civilian career with Shell, but returned to the Army as a reservist in 2014.

She was part of the pilot group to attend Ranger School. There were 400 participants on the course, including 19 women.

She graduated later than Kristen Griest and Shaye Haver because she had to repeat one of the phases of the course.

Of the 400 participants that started the course, only 90 earned the Ranger tab. While the average age of the trainees is 23, Jaster graduated at the age of 37.

She was the first female Unit-



**Lisa Jaster**

ed States Army Reserve officer to become a Ranger.

The Ranger Tab is a service school military decoration of the United States Army signifying completion of the 61 day long Ranger School course in small-unit infantry combat tactics in woodland, mountain, and swamp operations.

Those graduating from Ranger School are presented with the Ranger Tab, which is worn on the upper shoulder of the left sleeve of the Army Combat Uniform. Wearing the tab is permitted for the remainder of a soldier's military career.



### Mary Hallaren

Mary Hallaren joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1942. It later became the Women's Army Corps (WAC).

She was barely five feet tall and when a recruiter asked her how someone of her size could help the military, she replied "You don't have to be six feet tall to have a brain that works."

By 1943 she was a captain and she commanded the first women's battalion to go overseas.

She served as director of WAC personnel attached to the 8th and 9th Air Forces, and by 1945, as a lieutenant colonel, she commanded all WAC personnel in the European theater.

By 1947, Hallaren was a full colonel, and was appointed director of the entire WAC. On June 12, 1948, when the WAC was officially integrated into the Army, she became the first woman to serve as a regular Army officer.

She remained in this post until she retired from the army in 1960. She served in the United States Department of Labour as director of the Women in Community Service division until She retired in 1978, but continued to serve in an advisory capacity.

In the 1990s, she was a leading proponent of the Women's Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery, which was dedicated in 1997.



She died on 13 February 2005 at the Arleigh Burke Pavilion, an assisted living facility for retired military personnel in McLean, Virginia. She was 97.

### Elinor Joseph

Elinor Joseph is the first Arab woman ever to serve in a combat role in the Israeli military.

Her father, Charbel Joseph, served in the Israeli Paratroopers Brigade and when she finished high school he encouraged her to enlist in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF).

Although reluctant at first, she decided that she wanted to serve as a combat medic.

When she arrived at the recruitment base she was informed that she had already been selected to serve as an office clerk.

She was steadfast that she was going to be a combat medic and refused to be transported out to a new base.

Finally, after several days,

### Lydia Litvyak

A fighter pilot in the Soviet Air Force during World War II, Lydia Litvyak was the first female fighter pilot to shoot down an enemy aircraft, the first of two female fighter pilots who have earned the title of fighter ace and the holder of the record for the greatest number of kills by a female fighter pilot.

Born in Moscow to a Jewish family, she became interested in aviation at an early age. She enrolled at a flying club at the age of 14 and performed her first solo flight at the age of 15.

She became a flight instructor at Kalinin Airclub and by the time the Germans invaded Russia she had already trained 45 pilots.

She tried to join a military aviation unit, but was rejected due to a lack of experience. Not deterred in the least, she applied again. This time, however, she

a meeting was arranged between her and a colonel from the Northern Command. The colonel made Elinor a singular proposal: undergo regular basic training and, on the condition of being selected as an outstanding trainee, go on to attempt the medic's training course.

Elinor agreed. She completed basic training, was the outstanding trainee of her platoon, and subsequently proceeded to the medic's training course.

After successfully completing the medic's training course, Elinor Joseph was stationed in a military police base near the Palestinian city of Qalqilyah.

In response to a transfer request Elinor made, in 2010 she was reassigned to the Caracal

exaggerated her pre-war flight time by 100 hours.

She was accepted and posted to the all-female 586th Fighter Regiment of the Air Defense Force, a unit formed by Marina Raskova. Lydia trained on a Yakovlev Yak-1 aircraft.

In 1942 Lydia flew her first combat flights over Saratov. On 10 September she moved along with Katya Budanova, Maria M. Kuznetsova and Raisa Beliaeva, the commander of the group, and accompanying female ground crew, to the regiment airfield, at Verkhnaia Akhtuba, on the east bank of the Volga river. But when they arrived the base was empty and under attack, so they soon moved to Srednaia Akhtuba.

On 13 June 1943, she was appointed flight commander of the 3rd Aviation Squadron within 73rd GvIAP.

On 1 August 1943, at the age



battalion, which operates in the western Negev along Israel's border with Egypt. She thus became the first Arab woman ever to serve in the Israeli army in a combat role.



of 21, she was shot down and killed by two German fighter aircraft.

Nicknamed the "White Lily of Stalingrad", she was awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union, Order of Lenin, Order of the Red Banner, Order of the Patriotic War 1st class and Order of the Red Star decorations.

## Lyudmila Pavlichenko

Nicknamed Lady Death, Lyudmila Pavlichenko was a sniper in the Red Army.

Her total confirmed kills during World War II was 309, and this included 36 enemy snipers, making her the deadliest female sniper in history.

When the Germans invaded Russia in June 1941, Lyudmila was 24 years old and doing her fourth year of studies at Kiev University.

She immediately volunteered to join the army and was one of the first to report to the Odessa recruiting office. She requested that she join the infantry and was assigned to the Red Army's 25th Rifle Division.

She then became one of 2,000 female snipers in the Red Army. Only about 500 of them would survive the war.

In June 1942, she was wounded by mortar fire. Because of

her growing status, she was withdrawn from combat less than a month after recovering from her wound.

The government then decided to send Lyudmila on a publicity tour of Canada and the United States. She became the first Soviet citizen to be received by a US President when Franklin Delano Roosevelt welcomed her to the White House.

In Chicago, she stood before large crowds, chiding the men to support the second front.

"Gentlemen," she said, "I am 25 years old and I have killed 309 fascist invaders by now. Don't you think, gentlemen, that you have been hiding behind my back for too long?"

Her words settled on the crowd, then caused a surging roar of support.

In 1943, she was awarded the Gold Star of the Hero of the Soviet Union, and was com-

en to hospital in order for her wounds to be treated. Imagine the surprise of the attending physicians when they discovered her true gender.

She was called in front of her commanding officer, but he didn't really want to punish her. After all, she had proved herself in battle on ten separate occasions. But neither was it suitable for a young woman to be in combat.

She was offered a transfer to the Nursing division. Savic stood at attention and insisted she only wanted to fight for her country as a combatant. The officer said he'd think it over and give her his answer the next day. Still standing at attention, Savic responded, "I will wait."



memorated on a Soviet postage stamp.

After the war, she finished her education at Kiev University and began a career as a historian.

Lyudmila Pavlichenko died on 10 October 1974 at age 58, and was buried in the Novodevichye Cemetery in Moscow.



It is said he only made her stand an hour before agreeing to send her back to the infantry."

In 1914, in the early days of World War I, Savić was award-

ed her first Karadorde Star with Swords after the Battle of Kolubara. She received her second Karadorde Star (with Swords) after the Battle of the Crna Bend in 1916 when she captured 23 Bulgarian soldiers single-handedly.

She was also awarded the French Légion d'Honneur (Legion of Honour) twice, Russian Cross of St. George, British medal of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael,

## Hannie Schaft

Jannetje Schaft was a Dutch communist resistance fighter during World War II. She became known as *Het meisje met het rode haar* (Dutch for the girl with the red hair). Her secret name in the resistance movement was Hannie..

From a young age she was interested in politics and social justice. This led her to study law because she wanted to become a human rights lawyer.

During her time at the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* she became friends with the Jewish students Philine Polak and Sonja Frenk.

When the Germans occupied the Netherlands in World War II, university students were required to sign a declaration of allegiance to the occupation authorities. When Schaft refused to sign the petition in support of the occupation forces, she could not continue her studies and moved in with her parents again.

She became a member of the *Raad van Verzet* (Council of Resistance), a resistance movement that had close ties to the Communist Party of the Neth-

Serbian Miloš Obilić medal. She was the sole female recipient of the French Croix de Guerre 1914–1918 with the gold palm attribute for service in World War I.

She was demobilised in 1919, and turned down an offer to move to France, where she was eligible to collect a comfortable French army pension. Instead, she chose to live in Belgrade and found work as a postal worker.

erlands.

She was not interested in becoming a courier, but wanted to work with weapons. She was responsible for sabotaging and assassinating various targets.

She carried out various attacks on Germans, Dutch Nazis, collaborators and traitors. She learned to speak German fluently and got involved with German soldiers.

The "girl with the red hair" was soon on the Nazi's most wanted list.

When one of her fellow resistance members was injured, he mistakenly gave her name away. The Dutch nurses that treated him were actually Germans disguised as resistance workers.

Hannie was arrested and in an attempt to get her to confess, her parents were sent to the Vught concentration camp.

Unable to get a confession out of her, Hannie's parents were eventually released. She had to lay low for some time.

She dyed her hair black and returned to resistance work. Once again she contributed to assassinations and sabotage, as well as courier work, and the

During the German occupation of Serbia in World War II, Milunka refused to attend a banquet organised by Milan Nedić, which was to be attended by German generals and officers. She was arrested and taken to Banjica concentration camp, where she was imprisoned for ten months.

She died in Belgrade on 5 October 1973, aged 81.



transportation of illegal weapons and the dissemination of illegal newspapers.

She was eventually arrested at a military checkpoint in Haarlem on 21 March 1945, while distributing the illegal communist newspaper *de Waarheid*. After much interrogation, torture, and solitary confinement, Schaft was identified by the roots of her red hair.

On 17 April 1945, three weeks before the end of the war, Hannie was executed by Dutch Nazi officials. She was 24 at the time of her death.

## Nancy Wake

Born in New Zealand, Nancy Wake ran away from home at the age of 16 and worked as a nurse.

Using £200 that she had inherited from an aunt, she journeyed to New York City, then London where she trained herself as a journalist.

She was working in France in 1937 when she met wealthy French industrialist Henri Edmond Fiocca. They were married on 30 November 1939.

She was living in Marseille, France when Germany invaded. After the fall of France in 1940, she became a courier for the French Resistance and later joined the escape network of Captain Ian Garrow.

In reference to Wake's ability to elude capture, the Gestapo called her the "White Mouse". The Resistance exercised caution with her missions; her life was in constant danger, with the Gestapo tapping her telephone and intercepting her mail.

By November 1942 Wake was the Gestapo's most wanted person in the Marseilles area, with a price of 5 million francs on her head. When the network was betrayed that same year

## Mary Edwards Walker

Mary Walker wasn't a soldier, not did she ever serve in the military. Yet she was a true warrior.

She was a doctor, American abolitionist, prohibitionist, prisoner of war and surgeon during the American Civil War.

During the war she worked as a surgeon for the Union Army. She would often cross enemy lines to treat wounded.

she decided to flee France. Her husband, Henri Fiocca, stayed behind. He later was captured, tortured, and executed by the Gestapo because he would not betray her.

After reaching Britain, Wake joined the Special Operations Executive and was trained by them in several different training programs.

On 1 March 1944, Wake was parachuted into the Auvergne, becoming a liaison between London and the local maquis group headed by Captain Henri Tardivat in the Forest of Tronçais. Her duties included allocating arms and equipment that were parachuted in and minding the group's finances.

From March 1944 until the liberation of France, her 7,000 plus maquisards fought the Germans by any means they could. Her French companions, especially Henri Tardivat, praised her fighting spirit, amply demonstrated when she killed an SS sentry with her bare hands to prevent him from raising the alarm during a raid.

Immediately after the war, Wake was awarded the George Medal, the United States Medal of Freedom, the Médaille de la

She was captured by Confederate forces and arrested as a spy. She was sent to a POW camp until released in a prisoner exchange.

After the war she was approved for the Medal of Honor, becoming the first, and only woman, to earn the award. She was also one of only eight civilians to ever receive the award.

She died on 21 February 1919 at the age of 86.

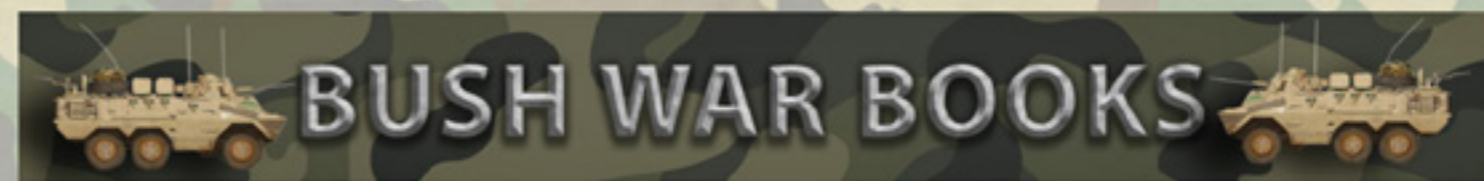


Résistance, and the Croix de Guerre. She was awarded the last medal three times.

She learned that the Gestapo had tortured her husband to death in 1943 for refusing to disclose her whereabouts. After the war, she worked for the intelligence department at the British Air Ministry, attached to embassies in Paris and Prague.

Wake was appointed a Chevalier (knight) of the Legion of Honour in 1970 and was promoted to Officer of the Legion of Honour in 1988.

She died on 7 August 2011 in London at the age of 98.



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**"War does not determine who is right - only who is left"**

# The Night Witches

The 588th Night Bomber Regiment became a crucial Soviet asset during World War II. They flew nearly 24,000 combat missions and dropped more than 23,000 tons of bombs on German targets. They were both hated and feared by the Germans. And they were an all female regiment.

The Germans nicknamed them the *Nachthexen*, or 'night witches', and they were so feared and hated by the Nazis that any German airman who downed one was automatically awarded the Iron Cross medal.

They flew under the cover of darkness in bare-bones plywood biplanes. They braved bullets and frostbite in the air, while battling skepticism and sexual harassment on the ground.

During World War II they flew 23,672 combat sorties and dropped more than 23,000 tons of bombs, and 26,000 incendiary shells on Nazi targets. They were the 588th Night Bomber Regiment - and they were all female.

## The Soviet Amelia Earhart

Marina Raskova was not only the first female navigator in the Soviet Air Force, she also held numerous records for long distance flights. In fact she was known as the 'Soviet Amelia Earhart'.

Women across the Soviet Union had been sending her letters. They all wanted to join the war effort. Many had lost brothers, sweethearts or even husbands while others had seen their homes and villages ravaged by the Germans.

While women had been allowed to participate in support roles, many of them wanted to be pilots or gunners. They

wanted to take an active part in combat and were not content with merely playing a supporting role.

Raskova decided to petition Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin and ask for permission to form an all-female fighting squadron.

Using female pilots in combat wasn't a first choice. While women had been previously barred from combat, the pressure of an encroaching enemy gave Soviet leaders a reason to rethink the policy.

Adolf Hitler had launched Operation Barbarossa, his massive invasion of the Soviet Union, in June 1941. By the fall the Germans were pressing on Moscow, Leningrad was under siege and the Red Army was struggling. The Soviets were desperate.

On 8 October 1941 Stalin gave orders for three all-female air force units to be deployed.

## Training begins

The Soviet Union was the first nation to officially allow women to engage in combat. Marina Raskova wanted to take full advantage of this fact and began to recruit her teams.

She selected 400 women from the more than 2,000 applications she received. Their ages ranged from 17 to 26.

Those selected then moved to Engels, a small town north of Stalingrad. They underwent a highly compressed training

schedule at Engels School of Aviation. They were expected to learn in months what it took others years to grasp. Each recruit had to train and perform as pilots, navigators, maintenance and ground crew.

## Into action

They were originally known as the 588th Night Bomber Regiment. Later they would become the 46th "Taman" Guards Night Bomber Aviation Regiment, of the Soviet Air Forces. Yevdokia Bershanskaya became the regiment's commanding officer.

The steep learning curve in their training wasn't the only problem facing the regiment. There was open skepticism from many of the male military personnel who believed that the women added no value to the combat effort. The men didn't like 'little girls' at the front line. After all, war was a man's job, wasn't it.

Raskova did her best to prepare her women for these attitudes, but they still faced sexual harassment, long nights and grueling conditions.

Another glaring problem was that the Soviet Air Force was not prepared for women pilots. They had no uniforms available and the women had to make do with hand-me-down uniforms from the men. It was difficult to find boots that were the right size and the women had to



**NIGHT WITCHES:** Pilots of the 588th Night Bomber Regiment are given a briefing before setting out on a mission.

tear up their bedding and stuff them into the boots, just to get them to fit.

The equipment they were given to use was not much better. The Soviet Air Force provided them with outdated Polikarpov Po-2 biplanes. These light two-seater, open-cockpit planes were never meant for combat, they were crop dusters from the 1920s and had been used as training vehicles.

The Polikarpov Po-2 was made out of plywood with canvas pulled over, the aircraft offered virtually no protection from the elements. Flying at night, pilots endured freezing temperatures, wind and frostbite. In the harsh Soviet winters, the planes became so cold, just touching them would rip off bare skin.

Due to both the planes' limited weight capacity and the military's limited funds, the pilots also lacked other "luxury" items their male counterparts enjoyed. Instead of parachutes (which were too heavy to carry), radar, guns and radios, they were forced to use more rudimentary tools such as rulers,

stopwatches, flashlights, pencils, maps and compasses.

There was, however, a plus side to those old aircraft. Their maximum speed was slower than the stall speed of the Nazi planes, which meant these wooden planes, ironically, could maneuver faster than the enemy, making them hard to target.

## Tactics

The Polikarpov Po-2 could only carry a single bomb under each wing. The regiment would

sent out up to 40 two-person crews at night. Each crew would carry out between eight and 18 missions per night. They would drop their bombs before heading back to re-arm before setting out once more.

The weight of the bombs forced them to fly at lower altitudes, making them a much easier target. This was why they could only fly missions at night.

Each plane would carry a pilot in front, with a navigator behind her. They would fly in packs, and only at night.

The first planes would go in and act as bait. They would attract German searchlights which provided much needed illumination. The navigator would then release a flare to light up the intended target.

The following planes would cut their engines to an idle and glide in darkness to the target before releasing their bombs.

German soldiers likened the sound of these gliding aircraft to broomsticks and named the pilots *Nachthexen* - Night Witches.



**FLYING COFFIN:** The Night Witches flew the Polikarpov Po-2, which was nicknamed the 'Flying Coffin'. Constructed from plywood and canvas it would often catch fire if hit by tracers.





**LEGENDS:** From left to right: **Marina Raskova** was known as the Soviet Amelia Earhart, she started the 588th Night Bomber Regiment. **Yevdokia Bershanskaya** was the regimental commander of the 46th Taman Guards Night Bomber Aviation Regiment during World War II and became the only woman ever awarded the Order of Suvorov. **Irina Sebrova** flew 1,008 sorties in the war and was awarded the title 'Hero of the Soviet Union'.

The Night Witches had 12 commandments that they followed, and the first one was “be proud you are a woman.”

While killing Germans was their job, a job they did very well, when they were off duty they behaved as most women their age did. They enjoyed needlework, patchwork, decorating their planes, listening to music, and dancing. They even put the pencils they used for navigation into double duty as eyeliner.

### Their record

They became the most highly decorated unit in the Soviet Air Force during the war.

In total the regiment collectively accumulated 28,676 flight hours, flew 23,672 combat sorties, dropped over 3,000 tons of bombs and over 26,000 incendiary shells, damaging or completely destroying 17 river crossings, nine railways, two railway stations, 26 warehouses, 12 fuel depots, 176 armored cars, 86 firing points,

and 11 searchlights. In addition to bombings the unit performed 155 supply drops of food and ammunition to Soviet forces.

A total of 261 people served in the regiment, of which 32 died of various causes including plane crashes, combat deaths and tuberculosis in addition to 28 aircraft written off.

Twenty-three personnel from the regiment were awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union, two were awarded Hero of the Russian Federation, and one was awarded Hero of Kazakhstan.

Nadia Popova was one of the first female military pilots in the Soviet Union, and also one of the most highly decorated. She was awarded the title ‘Hero of the Soviet Union’, the Gold Star Medal, the Order of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Star in Second World War, and three Orders of the Patriotic War.

Marina Raskova, the mother of the movement, died on 4 January 1943, when she was fi-

nally sent to the front line - her plane never made it. She was given the very first state funeral of World War II and her ashes were buried in the Kremlin.

### An inglorious end

They flew their last mission on 4 May 1945, operating within 60 kilometres of Berlin, during the Vistula–Oder Offensive. Three days later, Germany officially surrendered.

Five months later, despite being the most decorated unit in the Soviet Air Force, the Night Witches Regiment was disbanded without ceremony and service members were demobilized.

And when it came to the big victory-day parade in Moscow after the war, the Night Witches were not included. It was decided that their planes were too slow to take part in the parade.

Their determination and dedication proved that not only could women cope with war, they could excel at it.

# 2018 Sea Cadets Youth Day

By Lt Commander Glenn von Zijl. SA Navy Reserves

The Royal Cape Yacht Club (RCYC) played host to Sea Cadets from TS Woltemade on the 2018 Youth Day week end and included them in the Youth Regatta which was sailed.

Berths were made available on yachts Silver Girl and SV Storm as well as the Committee, rescue and buoy laying boats to provide the Sea Cadets an opportunity to get salt on their chests.

All the Sea Cadets were sail trained by SLt (Dr) David Walker, TS Woltemade sailing instructor and lecturer in Maritime Studies at CPUT.

A few weeks prior they had participated in the annual MAC 24 Hour dingy race hosted by the Milnerton Aquatic Club.

The Sea Cadets were divided daily between the yachts, committee, rescue and buoy laying boats. Cadet Seaman Dillan Geldenhuys said “it was exciting to pass through the fleet as photographer took photographs of each yacht.”

Cadet Able Seaman Rayton Morkel reflected “my first experience of waves was thrilling.”

Melvin Rautenbach, skipper of the yacht Silver Girl remarked that he would be “very happy to include the Sea Cadets as ship’s company in future.”

The practical seamanship and sail training provided by TS Woltemade and SLt David Walker was put to the test and the youth did themselves proud.

On Sunday there were unfortunately no sea berths for some

Sea Cadets. They used the time and opportunity to visit the Company Gardens, South African Natural History, Jewish and Holocaust Museums.

Cadet Petty Officer Sithemiso Dayi, from Masiphulele, reported that “the opportunity opened his eyes to aspects of South African history.” Furthermore he “appreciated the quality of the museums visited.”

After each days racing the Sea Cadets were included in the evening program and victualled in with the other sailors. This provided them with an opportunity to interact with the RCYC

youth development sailing academy sailors and adults who had hosted them.

The Sea Cadets attended the week end in uniform and during the prize giving all came to attention during the singing of the National Anthem.

This spontaneous display of discipline impressed the organisers and demonstrated that these Sea Cadets

Thank you to the RCYC, skippers Melvin Rautenbach and Mike Pepper, parents, TS Woltemade Officers and Instructors for making these opportunities available to the Sea Cadets.



**OUT TO SEA:** TS Woltemade Sea Cadets at Royal Cape Yacht Club Youth Day Regatta

# Sci-fi is coming to a battlefield near you

They may sound like something drawn from the imagination of science-fiction writers, but these weapons actually exist and will be making their way to a battlefield near you.

Warfare has changed a lot over the last century. Technology exists that, even twenty years ago, would have seemed inconceivable.

Take communications for instance. I can personally remember more than one occasion when the poor signaller was threatened with physical harm because he couldn't get communications with our base, which was only three kilometres away.

Or how about if you wanted to send a text message. Let's say you were a citizen force unit in Durban and one of your

companies was doing a camp at Ondangwa. The process of sending a message through to them was no simple procedure.

You would have to go through to Natal Command and go to the signals unit. They would then send through a telex message to Pretoria.

From Pretoria it would be sent through to Grootfontein. In turn they would send it through to Oshakati and from there it would be sent through to Ondangwa.

These days if you want to communicate with someone all you need to do is call them on your mobile phone. If you're using something like a Codex

phone then the conversation is fully encrypted.

Likewise, if you wanted to send them a text message you would SMS them. You could also attach photographs or even videos should you choose.

And the advancement of weapons and weapon technology has been nothing short of frightening.

A few decades ago it would have been difficult to image things such as drones, smart bombs, stealth technology and so on. Yet technology currently exists that makes all of those look prehistoric.

Much of this new technology has been developed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). They are an agency of the United States Department of Defense responsible for the development of emerging technologies for use by the military.

Let's take a look at just some of the technology that already exists.

## MAARS

Developed by British company Qinetiq, the Modular Advanced Armed Robotic Systems (MAARS) was designed for reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition



## MAARS

(RSTA) to increase security at forward locations. It can be configured for non-lethal, less-lethal, and lethal effects.

Its battery can last 3–12 hours, with a sleep mode to last for up to one week. The MAARS can move at 11 kmph and travel 800–1000 meters from its controller.

It has a seven cameras for driving, situational awareness, and for the weapon that can operate in daytime or thermal modes. MAARS is armed with an M240B machine gun and four M203 grenade launcher tubes on a 360 degree rotating turret. It carries 450 rounds of machine gun ammo and four grenade rounds.

Grenades can include sponge, buckshot, and tear gas for less-lethal purposes, and explosive and airburst for lethal purposes. Each tube is loaded individually, allowing lethal and less-lethal capabilities to be available and selected when needed.

Other features include an onboard loudspeaker to communicate, a siren, a laser dazzler, and a gunfire detection system.

They are not autonomous and always required a ground controller.

## XM-25 Grenade Launcher

Featuring an array of sights, sensors and lasers housed in a Target Acquisition Fire Control unit on top, an oversized magazine behind the trigger mechanism, and a short, ominous barrel wrapped by a recoil dampening sleeve, the XM-25 would look at home in a Sci-fi movie.

It can take out a target of distances up to 700 metres. What makes it so effective is the ability to target the enemy, pass on this information to the sensors and microchips of its 25 mm HEAB (High Explosive Air Burst) round, and have that round detonate over the target.

It can engage enemy forces located in the open and "in defilade" - behind cover, such as walls, rocks, trenches, or inside buildings.

The US Army hopes to arm every infantry squad and Special Forces unit with at least one of the big guns.

## Insect Drones

Anyone that spent any time in Ovamboland will have 'fond' memories of two things - the flies and the mosquitoes. It was often joked that the mosquitoes would carry you away at night and the flies would bring you back first thing in the morning.

Yet how would you feel it these insects were more than just an irritation?

Animals have been used by the military since the dawn of warfare. From mounted cavalry to message-carrying pigeons to bomb-sniffing dogs. Yet a recent project from DARPA takes it a step further.

The concept is called HI-

MEMS, or Hybrid Insect Micro-Electrical-Mechanical System.

Bugs are taken when they're pupae and electrical circuits are implanted in their bodies. When they take on their adult forms, signals sent via radio waves trigger those circuits, making them essentially remote-controlled. By attaching surveillance equipment, these "bugs" can be used for virtually undetectable battlefield exploration.

The US Army Research Lab are also working on a robotic drone based on an insect with a wingspan of 3-4 cm.

Currently the world's smallest drone comes from Harvard which weighs in at 60 milligram and has a size of 3 cm. The military is working on a drone that is three times smaller.

## Powered Exoskeletons

Lockheed Martin have developed the Human Universal Load Carrier (HULC).

This is a mechanical exoskeleton for soldiers to wear in the field, consisting of a pair of mechanized titanium leg braces that allowed the wearers to carry up to 90 kilograms at a speed of 16 kilometres per hour for an almost limitless period of time without fatigue. The onboard computer monitors movements and load levels and keeps the frame moving in synch with the wearer.

Another similar program is the Warrior Web (from Ekso Bionics in association with DARPA), which is a light weight, low power, under the clothes exoskeleton that allows wearers to walk, climb and run faster without any extra effort.



Boeing Laser Avenger

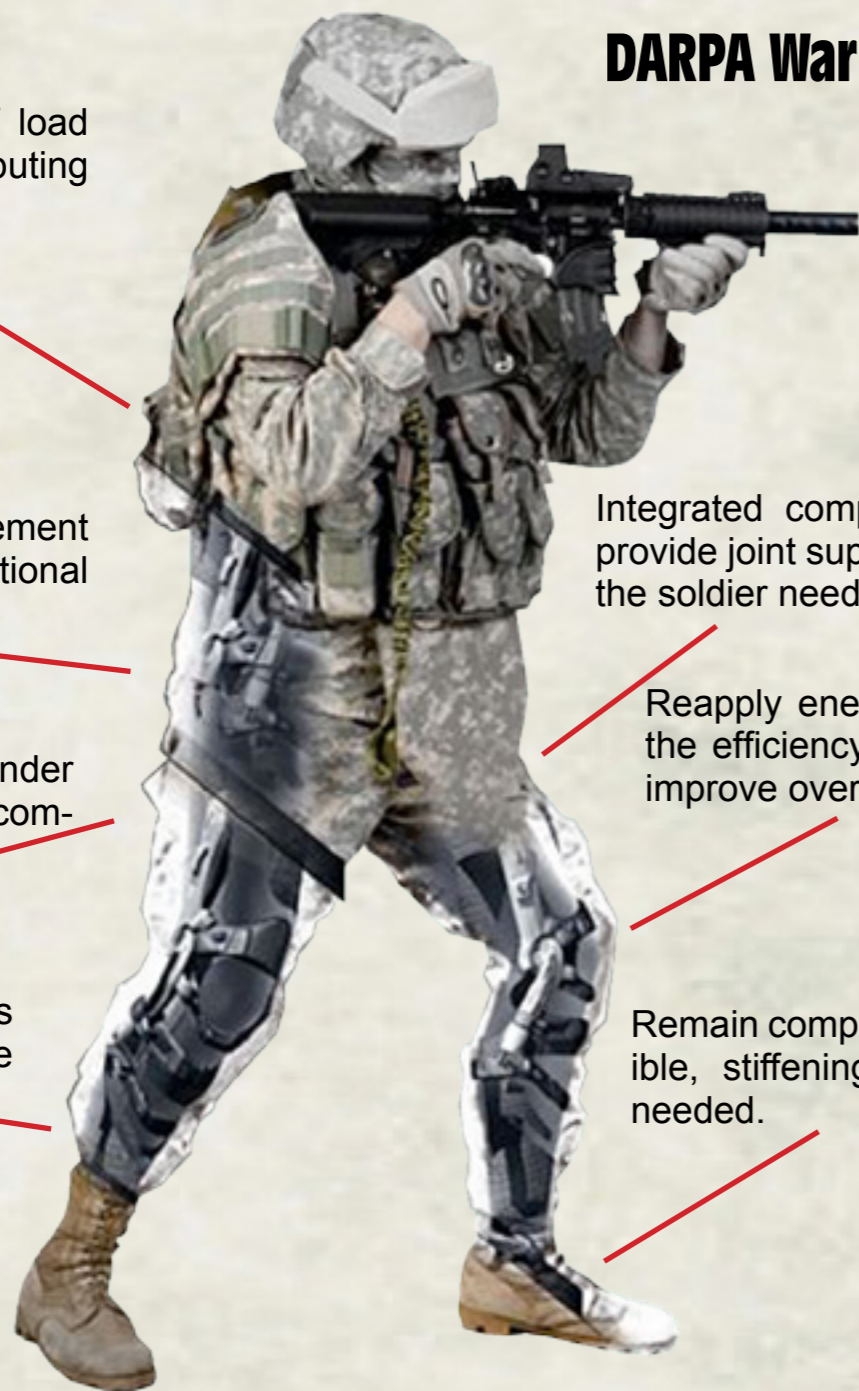
## DARPA Warrior Web

A reduced impact of load by intelligently distributing weight on the body.

Low power requirement means little additional weight for batteries.

Low suit profile to fit under the existing uniform comfortably.

Provide sensor cues to the soldier to reduce injuries.



Integrated components to provide joint support where the soldier needs it most.

Reapply energy to enhance the efficiency of motion and improve overall metabolics.

Remain compliant and flexible, stiffening only when needed.

One of the more hard-core programs is the TALOS from Special Operations Command (SOCOM) which is an Iron Man inspired suit whose primary objective is to protect commandos and special operations forces from insurgent gunfire during building raids.

On top of that it is also supposed to provide extra strength and endurance to the bearer. The major issues plaguing the program are power supply, allowing the operator freedom of movement, and latency issues

on the helmet visor.

### Quantum Camouflage

Camouflage has been around ever since armies decided that perhaps it wasn't a good idea to go into battle wearing white pants and bright red or blue jackets.

Camouflage is designed to approximate the colours and textures of an environment, but will never perfectly blend in.

The University of California San Diego created an 'invisibility cloak', better known as a

"dielectric meta surface cloak", a material that functions by manipulating electromagnetic waves such as visible light as well as radio waves, such as the ones used in radar systems.

The invisibility cloak is among the top ten unbelievable sci-fi weapons that already exist. Its material is composed of teflon and ceramic making it cheap to produce compared to competitive cloaking technologies.

Because of its ability to scatter electromagnetic waves, the

material can be used to camouflage an object from radar or the human eye

### Railgun

Yet another weapon that currently exists is the railgun. Unlike a conventional gun, it does not utilize explosive charge to propel a projectile, rather it relies on magnetic force (Lorentz force more specifically), generated by passing current through two rails to accelerate a metallic armature to fire a projectile at speeds as high as 8,700 kilometres per hour over huge ranges, exceeding a 160 kilometres.

The US Navy has already developed prototypes and plans to install them on warships within a few years. This gun is expected to be effective against a whole variety of threats such as aircraft, small boats, land targets for bombardment and even other warships.

While conventional warheads and cruise missiles used to accomplish the same tasks cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, each railgun projectile costs about \$25,000 only, making it highly economical.

### Plasma Force Fields

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs) such as the RPG-7 pose a real threat to soft-skin and lightly armoured vehicles.

Aerospace giants Boeing have tested and been granted a patent for a force-field like defence system designed to protect targets such as vehicles or small structure from shock waves resulting from explosions.

The system utilizes an elec-

tromagnetic shield of plasma (a super heated air pocket) generated via lasers, microwaves and high voltage electric arcs. This region of super heated and ionized air intercepts the shock wave and attenuates (decreases or disperses) its energy before the shock wave reaches a protected target.

Considering that in cases of explosion, shock waves and debris are the main causes of damage, this is a great solution to protect vulnerable targets. However this is a temporary field and relies on a sensor that detects an explosion before it creates the protective field around the target.

### Thunder Generators

The concept of using sound as a weapon has been around since Joshua did a demolition job on the walls of Jericho.

Low intensity sound can also be used as a non-lethal weapon, which is good because the sight of shredded bodies on the battlefield isn't good for public relations.

The Thunder Generator is a crowd control device that the Israeli military has been using for the past few years.

It was originally developed as a device to scare birds away from fields of grain.

The device uses pulse detonation technology to funnel an explosion into a huge, resonant barrel, where it releases high-velocity shock waves into the air.

Those waves are strong enough to knock back and temporarily deafen targets up to 30 metres away. Closer than three metres, though, and it can cause

gruesome, painful death.

Currently new technology is being tested that will knock down and stun enemies up to 100 metres away.

### Lasers

Lasers have been around for a long time. Many firearms make use of laser sights and many of us have a laser pointer that we use for presentations. Yet the holy grail of sci-fi military technology is weaponized laser beam.

Say hello to the Laser Avenger. Boeing has developed a cannon that can be used to take down incoming targets.

Boeing was able to shoot a drone out of the sky with the hummer-mounted laser, even though it's not particularly high-powered. It cooked the remote-controlled aircraft using a somewhat feeble 1-kilowatt beam.

More recently, the company shot down another UAV using a low-power laser paired with its Mobile Active Targeting Resource for Integrated eXperiments, or Matrix, system during a test in White Sands, New Mexico.

Northrop Grumman is hard at work on a 100-kilowatt laser weapon, which could do far more damage, but it's not quite ready for prime time. It's fully operational, but looks like a refrigerator.

Boeing announced in late December that the Avenger has been used to destroy 50 different improvised explosive devices, during tests at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama.

### Precision-Guided Firearms

# Air Force Insignia

This month we're looking Air Force insignia. We show you the insignia, you tell us which air force it is from. And here's a clue - they are all from Africa.

Answers on page 55.



LA-9/P

According to a statistic that I read, in World War II an incredible 100,000 rounds were fired for every kill. During the Vietnam War it took between 50,000 and 60,000 rounds per kill.

Statistics also revealed that during the Vietnam War a sniper used 1,33 rounds to achieve a kill.

Well if DARPA has their way, being a highly deadly sniper won't require rare skill and natural talent, but simply the ability to operate their new smart gun.

This new system operates with a smart, long-range, superior tracking system. You simply aim at the target and pull the trigger. The system will not fire until the gun is on target. But that's not where it ends.

DARPA's Exacto program has developed a round with inbound computer guidance systems that manipulate small fins on the bullet's surface that allow it to make course corrections during flight to take environmental factors into account.

They even work to home in on moving targets, which is pretty scary to see in action.

## Active Denial System

One of the problems with having a military base or key point is that it needs to be guarded against intruders.

The old method of doing this was to have towers or posts around the perimeter. Or you could have roving pickets that patrolled around the perimeter. Of course these would need to be manned. The Active Denial System is an alternative.

The system works by transmitting a microwave beam of millimetre-wave radiation a cer-

tain distance.

Approach to within a certain distance of the perimeter and you will feel a burning sensation on your skin. The closer you get, the more intense the burning sensation. And it works through any clothing or protective gear you may be wearing. The best thing about this system is that it is non-lethal.

The problem is that the current version of the system is bulky, but the military is hard at work developing a stronger, lighter version.

## LA-9/P

A person or a group of people is approaching your position. They maybe moving in for an attack, but you're not completely sure of their intent. This is where the LA-9/P comes in.

Also known as 'green laser pointers', the Marines like to call them "ocular interruption devices."

Shine one in someone's face and your target immediately gets the message that it's time to back off. It fires a 250-milliwatt beam up to a distance of four kilometres. The beam is rough-

ly 1/4,000 the strength of the smallest anti-aircraft lasers.

Caution must be used when handling the device. If the target is too close it can cause serious damage to the eyes.

Over a few months in Iraq, a dozen soldiers were wounded in dazzler "friendly fire." Several troops may have been injured while messing around with laser target designators, which are substantially more powerful than the less-lethal devices.

## Flash Bang Grenades

Designed to stun people, flash bang grenades are often used indoors to clear rooms.

They don't, however, have a good safety record. The shockwaves have dismembered at least one soldier and caused hearing loss in others.

To remedy that problem Sandia National Laboratory built the Improved Flash Bang Grenade. It hurls flaming aluminum particles into the air, causing a bright flash without an accompanying shockwave.

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# A matter of survival - Water

Over the next few months we will be running a series of articles looking at survival, something that has always been important for those in the military. This month is all about water - the need for water, and how to find it.

**W**ater is essential to life. All life depends on it and without it life will die.

The average person can survive for three weeks without food, but for only three days without water. It is the number one priority.

Don't make the mistake of waiting until you run out of water before you look for it. Conserve what you have and seek a source as soon as possible.

Fresh, running water is best, but all water can be sterilized by boiling or the use of chemical purifiers.

The human body is made up of 75% water. It is the coolant that keeps the body at an even temperature and is needed to keep the kidneys functioning. They eliminate waste and water and are in some ways the conductor for nerve impulses.

## Water loss

The average person loses 2-3 litres of water each day. Even someone resting in the shade will lose about one litre of water.

The mere act of breathing loses fluids, and loss through respiration and perspiration increases with work rate and temperature. Vomiting and diarrhoea increase loss even more.

This loss must be replaced to preserve the critical water balance, either by actual water or water contained in food.

## How to retain fluids

To keep fluid loss to the minimum, take the following precautions.

- Avoid exertion. Rest as much as possible.
- Don't smoke.
- Keep cool and stay in the shade. If there is none, erect a cover to provide shade.
- Do not lie on hot ground or heated surfaces.
- Don't eat, or eat as little as possible. Fluid will be taken from the vital organs to digest food, increasing dehydration.
- Never drink alcohol. This also takes fluid from vital organs to break it down.
- Don't talk, and breathe through the nose, not the mouth.

## Finding water

The first place to look for water is in valley bottoms where water naturally drains.

If there is no obvious stream or pool, look for patches of green vegetation and try digging there. Often you will find water just below the surface.

Even digging in gullies and dry stream beds may reveal a spring beneath the surface. In mountains, look for water trapped in crevices.

On the coast, digging above the high water line has a good chance of producing water.

## Warning!



Be suspicious of any pool of water with no green vegetations around it, or animal bones present.

It is likely to be polluted by chemicals in the ground close to the surface. Drinking this water can make you very sick, or could even kill you. Always boil water from pools.

In deserts there are lakes with no outlets. These become salt lakes. Their water must be distilled before drinking.

## Dew and rain collection

Rainwater everywhere is drinkable and only needs to be collected.

Use as big a catchment area as possible, running the water off into containers of every kind.

A hole dug in the ground and lined with clay will hold water efficiently, but keep it covered. If you have no impermeable sheeting, metal sheets or bark can be used to catch water in. If you have any doubt about the water you have collected, boil it.

In climates where it is very hot during the day and cold during the nights, you're going to get heavy dew. When it condenses on metal objects it can be sponged or licked off.

You can also use clothing to soak up dew and then wring it out. One way is to tie clean



**MORNING DEW:** In climates that are hot during the day and cold at night, there will be dew to provide water.

clothes around the legs and ankles and walk through wet vegetation. This can be wrung out or sucked from the cloth.

## Ration your sweat, not your water

Water discipline is vital in a survival situation. If you have to ration your water, take it in sips.

After going for a long time without water, don't guzzle it down when you do find some.

Take only small sips at first. Large gulps will make a dehydrated person vomit and you'll end up losing even more water.

## Condensation

Trees and plants need water to survive. Their roots draw wa-

ter from the ground. But a tree may take it from a water table that is 15 metres or more below.

This is far too deep to dig down to reach. Let the tree do the work and pump it up for you by tying a plastic bag around a leafy branch. Evaporation from the leaves will produce condensation in the bag.



**Figure A**

Choose healthy vegetation and bushy branches. On trees keep the mouth of the bag at the top with a corner hanging lower to collect condensed evaporation.

## ANIMALS AS SIGNS OF WATER

### ■ Mammals

Most animals require water regularly. Grazing animals are usually never far from water, although some kinds travel thousands of kilometres to avoid the dry season. They need to drink at dawn and at dusk.

Converging game trails often lead to water. Follow them downhill. Carnivores can go for a long period without water. They get moisture from their prey, so they are not a positive indication of local water.

### ■ Birds

Grain eaters such as finches and pigeons are never far from water. They also drink at dawn and at dusk. When they fly straight and low they are heading for water. When returning from water they are full and fly from tree to tree. Plot their direction and water can be found.

### ■ Reptiles

They are never a good indicator of water. They collect dew and get moisture from prey. So they can go for ages without water.

### ■ Insects

Bees fly at most 6.5 km from their nests or hives, but have no regular watering time.

Ants are dependent on water. A column of ants marching up a tree is going to a small reservoir of trapped water.

Most flies keep within 90 metres of water.

### ■ Human tracks

Tracks will usually lead to a well, bore hole or soak. It may be covered with scrubs or rocks.



**Figure B**

Placing a polythene tent over any vegetation will collect moisture by evaporation which will condense on the plastic as it cools.

Suspend the tent from the apex or support with a padded stick. Avoid foliage touching the sides of the trap or it will divert water droplets which should collect in the plastic lined channels at the bottom.



**Figure C**

Even cut vegetation will produce some condensation as it warms up when placed in a large plastic bag.

Keep the foliage off the bottom with stones so that the water collects below it. And keep the foliage clear of the plastic,

Use stones to keep the bag taut. Support the top of the bag with a padded stick. Arrange the bag on a slight slope so that the condensation runs down to the collection point.

When no longer productive, carefully replace with fresh foliage.

None of these methods will give you litres of water, but they will help.

## Solar still

Dig a hole in the ground about 90 cm across and 45 cm deep. Place a container in the centre, and then cover the hole with a sheet of plastic.

Put a stone in the centre of the plastic so that it forms a cone pointing down to the container.

The sun's heat will raise the temperature of the air and soil below and vapour is produced.

As the air becomes saturated water condenses on the underside of the plastic and will run down into the container.

This works particularly well in desert regions where it is hot during the day and cold at night. The plastic cools much quicker than the air and this causes heavy condensation.

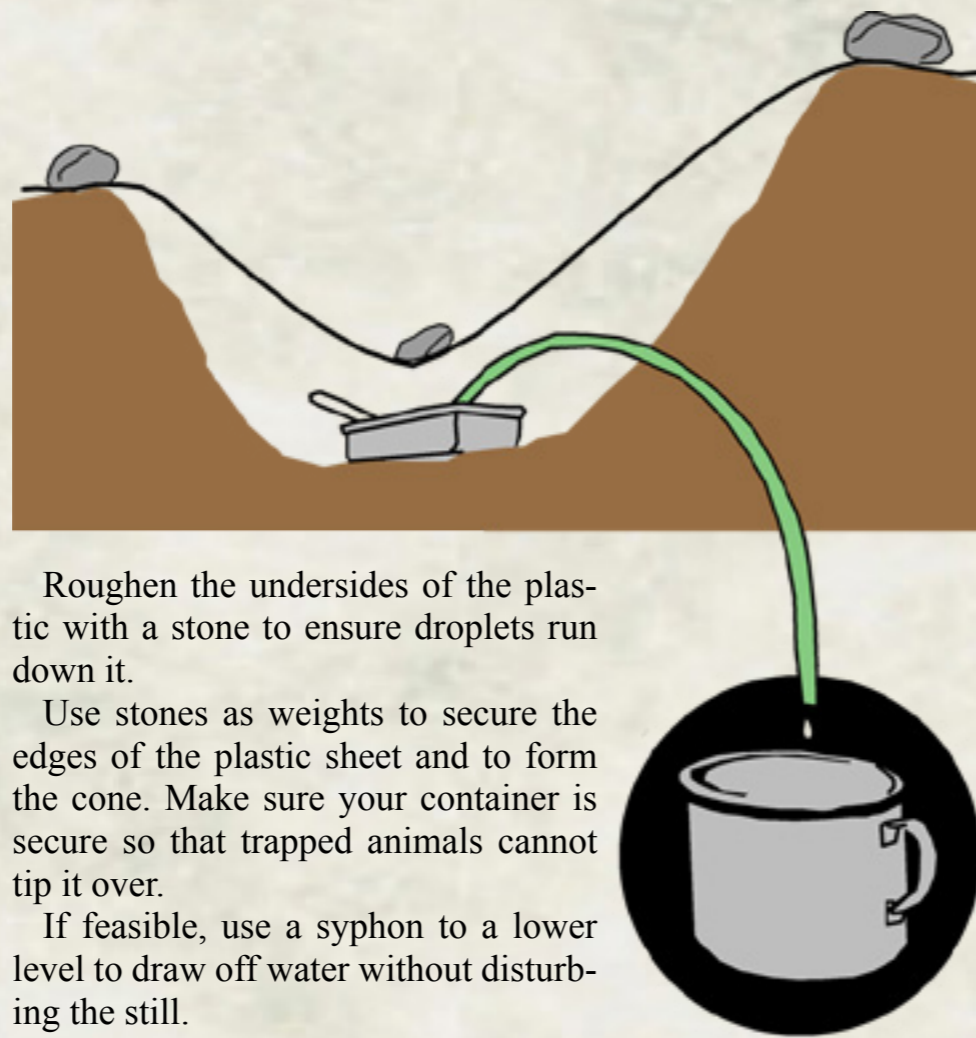
This type of still can collect as much as 500 ml of water over a 24-hour period.

The still can also act as a trap. Insects and small snakes are attracted by the plastic and may crawl under it and fall into the hole. So not only can it provide water, it can also be a source of food.

A solar still can also be used to distil pure water from poisonous or contaminated liquids.

And that's about it for this issue. Next month we will carry on looking at finding water.

We will look at how to build a distillation kit, getting water from plants, and getting water from animals.



Roughen the undersides of the plastic with a stone to ensure droplets run down it.

Use stones as weights to secure the edges of the plastic sheet and to form the cone. Make sure your container is secure so that trapped animals cannot tip it over.

If feasible, use a syphon to a lower level to draw off water without disturbing the still.

# Rank Structure - World War II Italy

Over the next few months we will be running a series of articles looking at the rank structure of various armed forces. This month we look at the Italian Military in World War II

During World War II the Italian military consisted of four branches.

These were the *Regio Esercito* (Italian Royal Army), the *Regia Marina* (Royal Navy), the *Regia Aeronautica Italiana* (Italian Royal Air Force) and the *Milizia*

*Volontaria per la Sicurezza Nazionale* (Voluntary Militia for National Security) who were more commonly known as the Blackshirts or *squadristi*.

In 1946 the Italian Royal Army changed their name to *Esercito Italiano*. The Royal Navy

became *Marina Militare*. The Italian Royal Air Force became *Aeronautica Militare*.

In 1943, following the fall of the Fascist regime, the Blackshirts were integrated into the Royal Italian Army and disbanded.

## Italian Royal Army

### Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officer



Caporale  
(Corporal)



Caporal Maggiore  
(Corporal Major)



Sergente  
(Sergeant)



Sergente Maggiore  
(Sergeant Major)



Maresciallo  
Ordinario  
(Warrant Officer 4)



Maresciallo Capo  
(Warrant Officer 3)



Maresciallo  
maggiore  
(Warrant Officer 2)



Aiutante di battaglia  
(Warrant Officer 1)

### Officers



Aspirante  
(Cadet)



Sottotenente  
(2nd Lieutenant)



Tenente  
(Lieutenant)



Primo Tenente  
(1st Lieutenant)



Capitano  
(Captain)



Primo capitano  
(First Captain)



Maggiore  
(Major)



Tenente  
Colonnello  
(Lt Colonel)



Colonnello  
(Colonel)



Colonnello  
Comandante  
(Colonel Commander)



*Generale di Brigata*  
(Major General)



*Generale di Divisione*  
(Lieutenant General)



*Generale di Corpo d'Armata*  
(General)



*Generale designato d'Armata*  
(General of the Army)



*Maresciallo d'Italia*  
(Marshal of Italy)



*Primo maresciallo dell'Impero*  
(Marshal of the Empire)

## Royal Navy

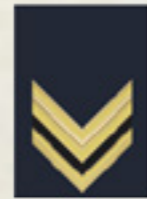
### Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officer



*Comune di 1ª classe*  
(Seaman 1st class)



*Sottocapo*  
(Deputy Chief)



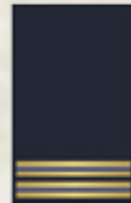
*Sergente*  
(Sergeant)



*Secondo Capo*  
(Second Chief)



*Capo di Terza Classe*  
(Third Class Leader)



*Capo di Seconda Classe*  
(Second Class Head)



*Capo di Prima Classe*  
(First Class Leader)

### Officers



*Aspirante Guardiamarina*  
(Ensign)



*Guardiamarina*  
(Sub Lieutenant)



*Sottotenente di Vascello*  
(Second Lieutenant)



*Tenente di Vascello*  
(Lieutenant)



*Primo Tenente di Vascello*  
(First Lieutenant)



*Capitano di Corvetta*  
(Captain of Corvette)



*Capitano di Fregata*  
(Captain of Frigate)



*Capitano di Vascello*  
(Captain of Vessel)



*Contrammiraglio*  
(Rear Admiral)



*Ammiraglio di Divisione*  
(Division Admiral)



*Ammiraglio di Squadra*  
(Squadron Admiral)



*Ammiraglio designato d'armata*  
(Vice Admiral)



*Ammiraglio d'armata*  
(Admiral)



*Grande ammiraglio*  
(Grand Admiral)

## Italian Royal Air Force

### Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officer



*Caporale*  
(Corporal)



*Caporal Maggiore*  
(Corporal Major)



*Sergente*  
(Sergeant)



*Sergente Maggiore*  
(Sergeant Major)



*Capo di Terza Classe*  
(Third Class Leader)



*Capo di Seconda Classe*  
(Second Class Leader)



*Capo di Prima Classe*  
(First Class Leader)

### Officers



*Sottotenente*  
(2nd Lieutenant)



*Tenente*  
(Lieutenant)



*Capitano*  
(Captain)



*Primo Capitano*  
(1st Captain)



*Maggiore*  
(Major)



*Tenente Colonnello*  
(Lt Colonel)



*Colonnello*  
(Colonel)



*Generale di Brigata Aerea*  
(Air Brigade General)



*Generale di Divisione Aerea*  
(Air Division General)



*Generale di Corpo d'Armata Aerea*  
(General of Air Corps)



*Generale designato d'Armata Aerea*  
(Air Army General)



*Generale d'Armata Aerea*  
(General)



*Maresciallo dell'Aria*  
(Marshal of the Air)



*Primo Seniore*  
(First Senior)



*Console*  
(Consul)



*Console Generale*  
(Consul-General)



*Luogotenente Generale*  
(Lieutenant-General)



*Luogotenente Generale Capo di Stato Maggiore*  
(Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General)



*Comandante Generale*  
(Commandant General)



*Caporale d'Onore*  
(Honorary Corporal of the MVSN)



*Primo Caporale d'Onore*  
(First Honorary Corporal of the MVSN)

## Blackshirts

### Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officer



*Camicia Nera Scelta*  
(Select Blackshirt)



*Vice Capo Squadra*  
(Vice-Squad Chief)



*Capo Squadra*  
(Squad Chief)



*Primo Capo Squadra*  
(First Squad Chief)



*Aiutante*  
(Adjutant)



*Aiutante Capo*  
(Chief Adjutant)



*Primo Aiutante*  
(First Adjutant)

## Officers



*Sotto Capo Manipolo*  
(Sub-Chief Maniple)



*Capo Manipolo*  
(Chief Maniple)



*Centurione*  
(Centurion)



*Seniore*  
(Senior)



**Blackshirt emblem**



**Benito Mussolini "Il Duce"**  
**WW II Leader of Italy**



# Females on the front line

Nearly every country in the world allows women to serve in its armed forces. In some countries women are eligible for conscription. Yet not that many countries allow women to take part in combat.

Throughout history there has been a long and colourful narrative of women in combat, from the Amazons of Greek mythology to the very real Joan of Arc.

Some of it has been nothing more than mythology, but much of it has been very real.

## Amazons

According to Greek mythology, this race of female warriors lived in the Black Sea region before Greek colonization. Legend has it that the Greek hero Heracles led an expedition to capture the girdle of the Amazonian queen, Hippolyte, then conquered and expelled the Amazonians from the region.

But are the Amazons purely myth? Yet there may be a bit of truth in the legend.

Burial grounds used by ancient nomads known as the Sauromatians have yielded skeletons of women buried with weapons including iron swords or daggers and bronze arrowheads. The Sauromatians were said to be descendants of the Amazons and the Scythians, who lived in the 4th and 5th centuries B.C.

## Boudicca

Queen Boudicca was very real, and very scary. After the death of her husband left their kingdom of Icenii (now Norfolk, England) at the mercy of the corrupt Emperor Nero, Boud-

icca led a rebellion against the Roman Empire in 60 A.D.

By all accounts she was not a lady you wanted to get on the wrong side of.

Her army wreaked havoc in Roman Britain, defeating the Roman Ninth Legion and destroying the capital at Colchester, as well as Verulamium (St. Albans) and Londinium (London).

Defeated by Paulinus' army, Boudicca allegedly took poison to avoid capture.

## Valkyries

Norse mythology celebrates its own female warriors in the form of the Valkyries, a group of maidens who served the god Odin.

Riding horses and wearing helmets and shields, these women were sent to battlefields to choose those slain soldiers worthy of a place in Valhalla.

In reality, Viking women accompanied their men on their infamous raids in Britain starting in 900 A.D.

Almost half of the bodies found in an examination of 14 Viking burial grounds in Britain belonged to women, and some were buried with the swords and shields they presumably used in life.

## Joan of Arc

The Maid of Orleans, as she was known, began her short life as a simple peasant but rose

to become the patron saint of France through her leadership on the battlefield.

Believing God had chosen her to save her country during the Hundred Years' War, she commanded the French army in its victory over English forces at Orleans in 1429 and led King Charles VII to his coronation.

Captured by her enemies and tried for witchcraft and heresy, she was burned at the stake.

## The 20th Century and beyond

During the two world wars various partisan and resistance groups made use of women in a variety of roles, including combat.

The constant need for troops caused some countries to temporarily ease their restrictions on women in combat.

In World War I, Russia created the Women's Battalion, which attracted thousands of volunteers who saw action at the front against German troops.

During World War II, the Soviets again turned to female soldiers, who served as snipers and fighter pilots.

Even England temporarily eased their restrictions as well, recruiting thousands of women to operate anti-aircraft guns during the Battle of Britain. While they may not have been on the front line, they were still very much in harm's way.

These days most countries allow women to serve in the



**WONDER WOMAN:** Model and actress Gal Gadot (who played the lead role in Wonder Woman) served as a fitness instructor during her national service with the Israeli Defence Force. I swear we never had PTI's that looked like this.

armed Forces. Yet not that many countries allow women to participate in active combat roles.

Each of these nations has taken a different approach to integration of their armed forces.

## Armed Forces

These are the countries, in alphabetical order, that currently allow women to deploy in combat roles.

### Australia

The Australian military began a five-year plan to open combat roles to women in 2011.

Front line combat roles opened in January 2013.

The positions women can now fill are: Navy Ordnance disposal divers, airfield and ground defence guards, infantry, artillery and armoured units.

### Canada

In 1989, a tribunal appoint-

ed under the Canadian Human Rights Act ordered full integration of women in the Canadian Armed Forces "with all due speed," at least within the next ten years. Submarines remained closed to women until 2000.

### Denmark

In 1988, Denmark created a policy of "total inclusion". They proposed "combat trials" which they used to explore how women fight on the front lines.

A 2010 British Ministry of Defence study concluded that women performed the same as men. All positions in military are open to women - excluding Special Operations Forces because of physical requirements.

### Finland

Men are required to enlist whereas for women it is voluntary. If women do choose to enlist they are allowed to train for combat roles.

## France

Women comprise nearly one-fifth of the military in France. Women can serve in most areas of the military except submarines and riot control.

Women are allowed to serve in combat infantry but many women choose not to. 1.7% of women serve in combat infantry.

## Germany

In 2001, Germany opened all combat units to women. This greatly increased recruitment for female soldiers.

Since 2001, the number of women in the German Armed Forces has tripled. By 2009, 800 female soldiers were serving in combat units.

## India

Prior to 1992, Indian women could only serve in medical roles in the military. Since then India began recruiting women to non-medical positions in the armed forces.

In 2007 on 19 January, the United Nations first all female peacekeeping force made up of 105 Indian policewomen was deployed to Liberia.

In 2014, India's army had 3 per cent women, the Navy 2.8 per cent and the Air Force performed best with 8.5 per cent women.

In 2015 India opened new combat air force roles for women as fighter pilots, adding to their role as helicopter pilots in the Indian Air Force.

## Israel

In its early years, Israel allowed women to serve alongside men in gender-neutral

units, but switched to same-sex units in the 1950s.

Today, however, both men and women are required to do national service. So women make up a large portion of the army and nearly all positions are open to female candidates.

### New Zealand

New Zealand has no restrictions on roles for women in its defence force. They are able to serve in the Special Air Service, infantry, armour and artillery. This came into effect in 2001 by subordinate legislation.

### Norway

In 1985, Norway became the first country to allow women to serve on its submarines. The first female commander of a Norwegian submarine was Solveig Krey in 1995.

Norway was, along with Israel, the first to allow women to serve in all combat roles in the military in 1988.

In 2015, Norway made women eligible for compulsory military service.

### Pakistan

Women have been part of the Pakistani military since 1947 after the establishment of Pakistan. There are currently around 4,000 women who are serving in the Pakistan Armed Forces.

In 2006, the first women fighter pilots batch joined the combat aerial mission command of PAF (Pakistani Air Force).

### Sri Lanka

Female personnel of all three services play an active part in ongoing operations. However, there are certain limitations in



**BATS:** These three young women are all qualified members of an Israeli Parachute Battalion.

‘direct combat’ duties such as special forces, pilot branch, and naval fast attack squadrons.

### Sweden

Women have been able to serve in all positions in the Swedish military since 1989. Currently, about 5.5% of all officers are women.

### Turkey

Turkish women have voluntarily taken tasks in the defence of their country. Nene Hatun, whose monument has been erected in Erzurum, fought during the Ottoman-Russian War. Turkish women also took main roles in combat in World War One and the Independence War.

Sabiha Gökçen was the first Turkish female combat pilot, having flown 22 different types of aircraft for more than 8,000

hours, 32 hours of which were active combat and bombardment missions.

Women personnel are being employed as officers in the Turkish Armed Forces today. As of 2005, there are 1,245 female officers and NCOs in the Turkish Armed Forces.

Women officers serve in all branches except armour, infantry, and submarines. Assignments, promotions and training are considered on an equal basis with no gender bias.

### United Kingdom

In July 2016 all exclusions on women serving in Ground Close Combat (GCC) roles were lifted.

All roles in the King’s Royal Hussars, the Royal Tank Regiment, and all Army Reserve Royal Armoured Corps units have been opened to women,



A Turkish signaller on deployment.



US Navy rescue diver.



French infantry unit on patrol.

and women will be permitted to join the rest of the previously closed GCC roles in the Royal Armoured Corps, British Army Infantry, Royal Marines and the RAF Regiment by the end of 2018.

It’s important to note, however, that even though GCC roles were closed to women until 2016, women have been previously on the “front line” and exposed to combat in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through other roles, such as all roles in the Royal Artillery, which despite being one of the combat arms is not classed as a GCC role.

Women were permitted to serve in Fire Support Teams and on 105mm L118 Light Gun crews. Women were also permitted to apply to join the Special Reconnaissance Regiment, which is one of the major components of the UK Special Forces alongside the Special Air Service, Special Boat Service and Special Forces Support Group.

Women also served as combat medics attached to Army Infantry, Royal Marines and other GCC units. Some were awarded the prestigious Military Cross for bravery under fire.

Six British women in the Iraq War, and three in the Afghanistan War were killed in action.

### United States

In WWI and WWII women served in numerous roles such as the Army Nurse Corps, and the Women’s Army Corps (WAC). They carried out various roles such as clerical work, mechanical work, photo analysis, and sheet metal working; in

some cases they were utilized as test pilots for fighter planes as WASPS.

In 1979 enlistment qualifications became the same for men and women. While women were able to enlist, they were prohibited from direct combat roles or assignments. In 1994 the Department of Defence officially banned women from serving in combat. The United States has more women in its military than any other nation.

On 24 January 2013, Secretary of Defence Leon Panetta removed the military’s ban on women serving in combat.

Implementation of these rules is ongoing. There is some speculation that this could lead to women having to register with the Selective Service System.

On 21 November 2013, the first three women to ever complete the United States Marine Corps’ Infantry Training Battalion course graduated from the United States Marine Corps School of Infantry in Camp Geiger, North Carolina.

In August 2015, Capt. Kristen Griest and 1st Lt. Shaye Haver became the first two women to graduate from the U.S. Army Ranger School. In 2016, Griest became the first female infantry officer in the US Army when the Army approved her request to transfer there from a military police unit.

One significant female contribution was recognized on 16 June 2005, when Sgt. Ann Hester was awarded the Silver Star for her actions during a firefight that took place outside Baghdad. This was the first Silver Star in U.S. military history awarded to a woman soldier.

# Africa's strongest armies

This month the ten strongest armies in Africa go head-to-head.

This month we look at the ten African countries with the best military strength and fire power.

A number of factors and parameters are looked at. These include active front-line units, reserve personnel, number of tanks and armoured fighting vehicles, artillery, air force strength, navy strength, logistics, resources and annual defence budget.

Source: CIA World Factbook

## 10. DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Throughout its history, the country has been no stranger to war. The most recent conflicts include the M23 Rebellion, the ADF Insurgency, the Séléka Rebellion, and the Kamwina Nsapu Rebellion.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
2,344,858 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
37 km  
**Shared borders**  
10,481 km

### Population

83,301,151  
**Total military personnel**  
144,625

### Army strength

200 combat tanks  
210 Armoured Fighting Vehicles

cles  
100 towed artillery pieces

### Aircraft strength

40 aircraft  
2 fighter aircraft  
7 attack aircraft  
36 transport aircraft  
27 helicopters  
8 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

20 naval assets  
1 patrol craft

## 9. Libya

Wars in Libya go back to the First Italo-Senussi War from 1911 to 1917.

The most recent conflicts include the First Libyan Civil War in 2011 which saw Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi being killed, to the ongoing Second Libyan Civil War.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
1,759,540 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
1,770 km  
**Shared borders**  
4,339 km

### Population

6,653,000  
**Total military personnel**  
100,000

### Army strength

340 combat tanks  
699 Armoured Fighting Vehicles

50 Self-propelled artillery  
150 towed artillery pieces  
100 Rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

118 aircraft  
18 fighter aircraft  
17 attack aircraft  
32 transport aircraft  
63 trainer aircraft  
26 helicopters  
8 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

5 naval assets  
1 frigate  
1 corvette  
5 mine warfare vessels

## 8. Sudan

Besides having two civil wars, Sudan is also involved in the ongoing Saudi-led intervention in Yemen which began in 2015.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
1,861,484 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
853 km  
**Shared borders**  
6,819 km

### Population

37,345,935  
**Total military personnel**  
282,150

### Army strength

360 combat tanks  
415 Armoured Fighting Vehicles



**MOROCCO:** Troops from the Royal Moroccan Army on parade. Morocco is rated 55th out of 136 countries.

cles  
16 Self-propelled artillery  
750 towed artillery pieces  
25 Rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

186 aircraft  
46 fighter aircraft  
81 attack aircraft  
93 transport aircraft  
6 trainer aircraft  
71 helicopters  
41 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

18 naval assets  
12 patrol craft

## 7. Morocco

Morocco can trace wars dating back to the Punic Wars in 264 BC during the Carthaginian Empire

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
446,550 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
1,835 km  
**Shared borders**  
6,819 km

### Population

33,986,655  
**Total military personnel**  
373,000

### Army strength

1,276 combat tanks  
2,348 Armoured Fighting Vehicles  
448 Self-propelled artillery  
192 towed artillery pieces  
72 Rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

284 aircraft  
56 fighter aircraft  
56 attack aircraft  
116 transport aircraft  
80 trainer aircraft  
130 helicopters  
0 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

121 naval assets  
6 frigates  
1 corvette  
22 patrol craft

## 6. Ethiopia

Prior to World War II, Ethi-

opia was invaded by Italy and they've had a few punch ups with neighbouring Eritrea.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
1,101,300 square kilometres  
**Shared borders**  
5,925 km

### Population

105,350,020  
**Total military personnel**  
162,000

### Army strength

800 combat tanks  
800 Armoured Fighting Vehicles  
85 Self-propelled artillery  
700 towed artillery pieces  
183 Rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

80 aircraft  
24 fighter aircraft  
4 attack aircraft  
42 transport aircraft  
14 trainer aircraft  
33 helicopters  
8 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

Ethiopia is a landlocked country and has no navy

## 5. Angola

Angola was a Portuguese colony for a long time and various resistance movements tried to overthrow the Portuguese.

When the country was finally given independence three resistance movements - the FNLA, Unita and the MPLA - fought for control. The MPLA were successful and this led to a long and bitter internal war that involved the MPLA, Unita, South Africa, Cuba, East Ger-

many, Russia and the USA.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
1,246,700 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
1,600 km  
**Shared borders**  
175,000 km

**Population**  
29,310,273  
**Total military personnel**  
373,000

**Army strength**  
244 combat tanks  
538 Armoured Fighting Vehicles  
28 Self-propelled artillery  
332 towed artillery pieces  
115 Rocket launchers

**Aircraft strength**  
284 aircraft  
56 fighter aircraft  
56 attack aircraft  
116 transport aircraft  
80 trainer aircraft  
130 helicopters  
0 attack helicopters

**Naval strength**  
57 naval assets  
38 patrol craft  
2 mine warfare vessels

### 4. Nigeria

Nigeria has a long history of war. Just since 2000 they've been involved in the insurgency in the Maghreb, the conflict in the Niger Delta, the Somali Civil War, the Boko Haram insurgency, the Northern Mali conflict, and the invasion of the Gambia.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**



**SOUTH AFRICA:** Currently South Africa is ranked 33rd out of 136 countries and is rated the 3rd most powerful army in Africa.

923,768 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
853 km  
**Shared borders**  
4,477 km

**Population**  
190,632,261  
**Total military personnel**  
181,000

**Army strength**  
148 combat tanks  
1,420 Armoured Fighting Vehicles  
25 Self-propelled artillery  
339 towed artillery pieces  
30 Rocket launchers

**Aircraft strength**  
124 aircraft  
9 fighter aircraft  
21 attack aircraft  
52 transport aircraft  
47 trainer aircraft  
42 helicopters  
11 attack helicopters

**Naval strength**  
75 naval assets  
4 frigates  
96 patrol craft

### 3. South Africa

South Africa fought two wars against the British in the early part of the 20th century. They then fought on the side of the British during World War I and World War II.

Many South Africans fought in the 'Border War' and some took part in operations in Angola.

Since 1994 they have been involved in peace keeping missions in Africa.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
1,219,090 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
2,798 km  
**Shared borders**  
5,244 km

**Population**  
54,841,552  
**Total military personnel**  
94,050

**Army strength**  
195 combat tanks  
2,265 Armoured Fighting Vehicles



**EGYPT:** The most powerful army in Africa. Their naval strength includes two aircraft carriers.

43 Self-propelled artillery  
97 towed artillery pieces  
50 Rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

209 aircraft  
17 fighter aircraft  
17 attack aircraft  
100 transport aircraft  
67 trainer aircraft  
94 helicopters  
12 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

30 naval assets  
4 frigates  
3 submarines  
31 patrol craft  
2 mine warfare vessels

### 2. Algeria

Algeria has fought against France, Morocco, Israel and, more recently, against al-Qaeda.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
2,381,741 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
998 km  
**Shared borders**  
6,734 km

**Population**  
40,969,443  
**Total military personnel**  
792,350

### Army strength

2,405 combat tanks  
6,754 Armoured Fighting Vehicles  
220 Self-propelled artillery  
270 towed artillery pieces  
176 Rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

528 aircraft  
97 fighter aircraft  
107 attack aircraft  
326 transport aircraft  
70 trainer aircraft  
280 helicopters  
46 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

85 naval assets  
8 frigates  
13 corvettes  
8 submarines  
43 patrol craft  
1 mine warfare vessels

### 1. Egypt

While Egypt is heavily involved in the Middle East, it is still a part of Africa.

Egypt is an ancient culture and has taken part in many wars throughout history.

Modern day wars include three wars against Israel, including the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War.

### By the numbers

**Total land area**  
1,001,450 square kilometres  
**Coastline**  
2,450 km  
**Shared borders**  
2,612 km

**Population**  
97,041,072  
**Total military personnel**  
1,329,250

### Army strength

4,946 combat tanks  
15,695 Armoured Fighting Vehicles  
1,139 Self-propelled artillery  
2,189 towed artillery pieces  
1,216 Rocket launchers

### Aircraft strength

1,132 aircraft  
309 fighter aircraft  
409 attack aircraft  
183 transport aircraft  
384 trainer aircraft  
269 helicopters  
10 attack helicopters

### Naval strength

219 naval assets  
2 aircraft carriers  
9 frigates  
4 corvettes  
6 submarines  
33 patrol craft  
23 mine warfare vessels

# Mary Edwards Walker

*The only woman to ever be awarded the Medal of Honour, the United States Armed Forces Highest decoration for bravery. And she wasn't even a part of the military.*

In January 2013 the US military lifted the ban on women serving in combat. Technically this means that women can now be decorated for acts of valour in combat.

In fact one woman, Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester, was awarded the Silver Star, the US Armed Forces third-highest decoration for valour in combat. And this was back in 2005, eight years before women could officially serve in combat units.

Sergeant Hester was a United States Army National Guard soldier assigned to the 617th Military Police Company.

On 20 March 2005 she was part of a supply convoy that was ambushed near the town of Salman Pak in Iraq. For her heroic actions during the ambush she was awarded the Silver Star in June 2005.

Hester was the first female US Army soldier to receive the Silver Star since World War II, and the first ever to be cited for valour in close quarters combat.

America's

highest award for bravery is the Medal of Honour. Since it was instituted in 1861 the medal has been awarded 3,519 times. The first Medal of Honour was awarded on 25 March 1863. The last was awarded on 26 June 2018. Only 19 people have been awarded the medal twice, and 622 awards were made posthumously.

Only one woman has ever been awarded the Medal of Honour. Her name was Mary

Edwards Walker. Doctor Mary Walker to be precise. And she wasn't a soldier. In fact she never even served in the military.

## Early life

Mary Edwards Walker was born on 26 November 1832 in Oswego, New York. She was the youngest of seven children with five sisters and a brother.

Her parents, Alvah and Vesta, were devout Christians, but regarded as 'free thinkers' and it was in this environment that Mary was raised.

Her parents raised the children to question the regulations and restrictions of various denominations, as well as traditional gender roles. The Walkers lived on a farm and the work load was shared among the children.

Mary did not wear women's clothing during farm labour because she considered it too restricting. Her mother agreed with her and thought that corsets and tights were unhealthy.

## Education

At the time it was common practice for boys to receive some form of education. For

girls, however, it was not that important.

The Walkers had different ideas. They were determined that their daughters would be as well educated as their son.

To achieve this, the Walkers established the first free schoolhouse in Oswego in the late 1830s and it was here that Mary received her primary school education.

Mary and two of her older sisters then attended Falley Seminary in Fulton, New York. It had been carefully chosen by the Walkers. Not only was it an institution of higher learning, but a place that emphasized modern social reform in gender roles, education, and hygiene.

This all further cemented Mary's determination to defy traditional feminine standards on a principle of injustice.

From an early age Mary displayed an interest in medicine. She would pore over medical texts on anatomy and physiology.

After graduating from Falley Seminary, Mary worked as a teacher at a school in Minetto, New York. She saved until she had enough money to pay her way through Syracuse Medical College.

She was the only woman in her class and, in 1855, she graduated with honours as a medical doctor. She became only the second woman in the country to become a medical doctor.

On 16 November 1855 she married fellow medical school student Albert Miller. She was 23 years old at the time.

At her wedding she wore a short skirt with trousers underneath, refused to include the

word 'obey' in her vows, and retained her last name. These were all characteristic of her obstinate nonconformity.

They set up a joint practice in Rome, New York. It did not do well as most men refused to be treated by a female doctor. They were generally not trusted nor respected at the time.

As a result of her husband's infidelity, Mary sought a divorce. She had to fight for ten years before it was finally granted.

Mary briefly attended Bowen Collegiate Institute (later named Lenox College) in Hopkinton, Iowa, in 1860, until she was suspended for refusing to resign from the school's debating society, which until she joined had been all male.

## Doing things her way

Inspired by her parents 'free thinking' and her education, Mary was infamous for contesting traditional female dress.

In 1871, she wrote, "The greatest sorrows from which women suffer to-day are those physical, moral, and mental ones, that are caused by their unhygienic manner of dressing!"

She strongly opposed women's long skirts with numerous petticoats, not only for their discomfort and their inhibition to the wearer's mobility but for their collection and spread of dust and dirt.

As a young woman, she began experimenting with various skirt-lengths and layers, all with men's trousers underneath. By 1861, her typical ensemble included trousers with suspenders under a knee-length dress with

a tight waist and full skirt.

While her parents may have supported her views, she was often faced with criticism. As a school teacher she was often teased about her wardrobe choice and was once even attacked by a neighbouring farmer and a group of boys.

Colleagues in medical school were critical about the way she dressed and patients often teased her. Some even refused to be treated by her. She nevertheless persisted in her mission to reform women's dress.

In 1870 she was arrested in New Orleans and mocked by men because she was dressed as a man. The arresting officer twisted her arm and asked her if she had ever had sex with a man. Mary was released from custody when she was recognized at Police Court.

## The Civil War

At the outbreak of the American Civil War, Mary saw it as her duty to volunteer.

She tried to join the army as a surgeon but, even though the army, but even though they had fewer than 100 licensed surgeons at the beginning of the war, the Army refused to hire her.

The army her offered her a position as a nurse, but she declined and chose to volunteer as a surgeon for the Union Army as a civilian.

During this period, she served at the First Battle of Bull Run (Manassas), 21 July 21 1861, and at the Patent Office Hospital in Washington, D.C. She worked as an unpaid field surgeon near the Union front lines, including at the Battle of Fred-



ericksburg and in Chattanooga after the Battle of Chickamauga. She wore men's clothing during her work, claiming it to be easier for high demands of her work.

She she was finally given an appointment as a contract surgeon for the 52nd Ohio Infantry Regiment in 1863, albeit as a civilian. The move was regarded as "a medical monstrosity" by colleagues who objected to practicing medicine next to a woman.

In September 1862 Mary wrote to the War Department and requested that she be employed as a spy. They declined.

Eventually she was employed as a 'Contract Acting Assistant Surgeon (civilian)' by the Army of the Cumberland, becoming the first female surgeon employed by the U.S. Army Surgeon.

She was later appointed assistant surgeon of the 52nd Ohio Infantry. Technically though, she remained a civilian.

The common method of treating a serious wound to a limb was to amputate. Mary's philosophy that amputations should be avoided whenever possible was incompatible with prevailing Army practices, and multiple colleagues requested that she be removed from her post.

During her service she would frequently cross battle lines to treat civilians.

On 10 April 1864 she was captured by Confederate troops, and arrested as a spy, just after she finished helping a Confederate doctor perform an amputation.

She was sent to Castle Thunder, a Richmond prison known



**AMPUTATION BOX:** The most common operation performed on soldiers during the Civil War was amputation. The best surgeon could have a limb severed and discarded within five minutes. Civil War doctors were nicknamed "sawbones." There were 60,000 partial or complete amputations during the war. Surgeons never washed their hands after an operation, because all blood was assumed to be the same, nor did they wash their instruments.

for its brutality. While she was imprisoned, she refused to wear the clothes provided her, said to be more "becoming of her sex" On 12 August 1864 she was released as part of a prisoner exchange.

### Medal of Honour

After the war Mary Walker was recommended for the Medal of Honour by Generals William Tecumseh Sherman and George Henry Thomas.

The citation read:

*Where as it appears from official reports that Dr. Mary E. Walker, a graduate of medicine, "has rendered valuable service to the Government, and her efforts have been earnest and untiring in a variety of ways," and that she was assigned to duty and served as an assistant surgeon in charge of female prisoners at Louisville, Ky., upon the recommendation of Major-Generals Sherman and Thomas, and faithfully served*

*as contract surgeon in the service of the United States, and has devoted herself with much patriotic zeal to the sick and wounded soldiers, both in the field and hospitals, to the detriment of her own health, and has also endured hardships as a prisoner of war four months in a Southern prison while acting as contract surgeon; and Whereas by reason of her not being a commissioned officer in the military service, a brevet or honorary rank cannot, under existing laws, be conferred upon her; and Whereas in the opinion of the President an honorable recognition of her services and sufferings should be made.*

*It is ordered, That a testimonial thereof shall be hereby made and given to the said Dr. Mary E. Walker, and that the usual medal of honor for meritorious services be given her.*

On 11 November 1865, President Andrew Johnson signed a



**MEDAL OF HONOUR RECIPIENT:** Mary Walker proudly wore her Medal of Honour until the day she died.

bill to award her the medal.

In 1917 the US Congress created a pension act for Medal of Honour recipients, and in doing so created separate Army and Navy Medal of Honor Rolls. Only the Army decided to review eligibility for inclusion on the Army Medal of Honor Roll.

The 1917 Medal of Honor Board deleted 911 names from the Army Medal of Honor Roll, including those of Dr. Mary Edwards Walker and William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody (who also fought in the Civil War as a civilian).

Those stripped of the medal were ordered to return their medals. Mary refused to send her medal back and wore it daily for the rest of her life, reportedly telling the government that "you will receive it over my dead body."

In 1977 President Jimmy Carter restored her medal posthumously. She is one of only six

people to regain the award, as well as only one of six civilians ever to be awarded the medal.

### Later life

She went on to serve as supervisor of a female prison in Louisville, Kentucky, and as the head of an orphanage in Tennessee.

After the war, she was awarded a disability pension for partial muscular atrophy suffered while she was imprisoned by the enemy. She was given \$8.50 a month, beginning 13 June 1865, but in 1899 that amount was raised to \$20 per month.

She became a writer and lecturer, supporting such issues as health care, temperance, women's rights, and dress reform for women. She was frequently arrested for wearing men's clothing, and insisted on her right to wear clothing that she thought appropriate.

After a long illness, Walker

died at home on 21 February 1919, at the age of eighty-six. She was buried at Rural Cemetery in Oswego, New York, in a plain funeral, with an American flag draped over her casket, and wearing a black suit instead of a dress.

Her death in 1919 came one year before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which guaranteed women the right to vote.

### Legacy

- During World War II, a Liberty ship, the SS Mary Walker, was named for her.
- In 1982, the U.S. Postal Service issued a twenty-cent stamp in her honour, marking the anniversary of her birth.
- The medical facilities at SUNY Oswego are named in her honour.
- There is a United States Army Reserve centre named for her in Walker, Michigan.
- The Whitman-Walker Clinic in Washington, D.C., is named in honour of Walker and the poet Walt Whitman.
- The Mary Walker Clinic at Fort Irwin National Training Centre in California is named in honour of Walker.
- The Mary E. Walker House is a thirty-bed transitional residence run by the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Centre for homeless women veterans.
- In May 2012, a 400 kilogram bronze statue honouring Walker was unveiled in front of the Oswego, New York Town Hall.

# Grenades

Each month 'Forged in Battle' looks at weapons, equipment or units that have been tried and test on the battlefield. This month we look at grenades.

The use of grenades as a weapon has been around for a long time. In fact rudimentary incendiary grenades appeared in the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire as far back as 741 AD.

The previous century, the Byzantines had invented Greek Fire, a very basic type of flame-thrower.

They then discovered that Greek Fire could be put into stone and ceramic jugs and thrown at the enemy. The use of Greek fire spread to Muslim armies in the Near East, from where it reached China by the 10th century.

The first cast iron bombshells and grenades did not appear in Europe until 1467.

The word "grenade" originated during the events surrounding the Glorious Revolution in 1688, where cricket ball-sized iron spheres packed with gunpowder and fitted with slow-burning wicks were first used against the Jacobites in the battles of Killiecrankie and Glen Shiel.

The word "grenade" is likely derived from Old French pomegranate and influenced by Spanish *granada*, as the fragmenting bomb is reminiscent of the many-seeded fruit, together with its size and shape.

Improvised grenades were increasingly used from the mid-

19th century, being especially useful in trench warfare. In the American Civil War, both sides used hand grenades equipped with a plunger that detonated the device on impact. Improved hand grenades were also used to great effect by the Russian defenders of Port Arthur during the Russo-Japanese War.

The problem with early grenades was that they were often as dangerous for the user as they were for the intended target.

The lack of an effective hand grenade, coupled with their perceived danger to the user and their lack of utility meant that they were regarded as increasingly obsolete pieces of military equipment.

In 1902, the British War Office announced that hand grenades were obsolete and had no place in modern warfare.

Within two years, following the success of improvised grenades in the trench warfare conditions of the Russo-Japanese War, and reports from General Sir Aylmer Haldane, a British observer of the conflict, a reassessment was quickly made and the Board of Ordnance was instructed to develop a practical hand grenade.

## Fragmentation grenade

William Mills, a hand grenade designer from Sunderland, patented, developed and

manufactured the "Mills bomb" at the Mills Munition Factory in Birmingham, England in 1915, designating it the No.5. It was described as the first "safe grenade".

The Mills had a grooved cast iron "pineapple" with a central striker held by a close hand lever and secured with a pin. A competent thrower could manage 15 metres with reasonable accuracy, but the grenade could throw lethal fragments farther than this; after throwing, the user had to take cover immediately.

Approximately 75,000,000 grenades were manufactured during World War I, used in the war and remaining in use through to the Second World War. At first, the grenade was fitted with a seven-second fuse, but during combat in the Battle of France in 1940, this delay proved too long, giving defenders time to escape the explosion or to throw the grenade back, so the delay was reduced to four seconds.

## Stick grenade

Stick grenades have a long handle attached to the grenade proper, providing leverage for longer throwing distance, at the cost of additional weight.

The term "stick grenade" commonly refers to the German *Stielhandgranate* introduced in



### A. M67

The M67 grenade is used by the United States military and is a replacement for the M26 series grenade.

### B. Mills Bomb

Developed by William Mills, this was the standard British grenade for many years. It was first used during

World War I.

### C. M26

The M26 was used by the United States military during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. It was also the standard grenade used by the SADF.

### D. RGD-5

The Ruchnaya Granata Dis-

tantsionnaya is a post-World War II Soviet grenade that is still in service with many of Russia's client states.

### E. Stielhandgranate

The iconic German stick grenade was a common German weapon during the two World Wars. The British nicknamed it the 'potato masher'.

1915 and developed throughout World War I. A friction igniter was used; this method was uncommon in other countries but widely used for German grenades.

A pull cord ran down the hollow handle from the detonator within the explosive head, terminating in a porcelain ball held in place by a detachable base closing cap. To use the grenade, the base cap was unscrewed, permitting the ball and cord to fall out. Pulling the cord dragged a roughened steel rod through the igniter, causing it to spark and start the five-second fuse burning. This simple design (popularly known as the "potato masher") continued to evolve throughout the First and Second World Wars, with the Model 24 grenade becoming

one of the most easily recognized of all German small arms.

Other stick grenades were made, including the Russian RGD-33 and Model 1914 grenades, the German Model 43 grenade and the British No 1 Grenade and Sticky bomb.

## Concussion grenade

The concussion or blast grenade is an anti-personnel device that is designed to damage its target with explosive power alone.

These grenades are usually classed as offensive weapons because the small effective casualty radius is much less than the distance it can be thrown. The concussion effect, rather than any expelled fragments, is the effective killer.

They have also been used as

anti-personnel depth charges around watercraft; some, such as the US Mk 40 concussion grenade, are specifically designed for use against enemy divers and frogmen. Underwater explosions kill or otherwise incapacitate the target by creating a lethal shockwave underwater.

## Anti-tank grenade

A range of hand-thrown grenades has been designed for use against armoured vehicles. An early, fairly weak example was the British Sticky bomb of 1940. Designs such as the German *Panzerwurfmine* (L) and the Soviet RPG-43, RPG-40, RPG-6 and RKG-3 series of grenades used a HEAT warhead on one end and some method to stabilize flight and increase the

likelihood of the 90 degree hit necessary for the shaped charge to be effective.

Due to improvements in modern tank armour, anti-tank hand grenades are generally considered obsolete. However, they can still be used with modest success against lightly armoured vehicles.

### Stun grenade

A stun grenade, also known as a flash grenade or a flash-bang, is a non-lethal weapon. The first devices like this were created in the 1960s at the order of the British Special Air Service as an incapacitate.

It is designed to produce a blinding flash of light and loud noise without causing permanent injury. The flash produced momentarily activates all light sensitive cells in the eye, making vision impossible for approximately five seconds, until the eye restores itself to its normal, unstimulated state. The loud blast causes temporary loss of hearing, and also disturbs the fluid in the ear, causing loss of balance.

These grenades are designed to temporarily neutralize the combat effectiveness of enemies by disorienting their senses.

### Sting grenade

Sting grenades, also known as stingball or sting ball grenades, are stun grenades based on the design of the fragmentation grenade. Instead of using a metal casing to produce shrapnel, they are made from hard rubber and are filled with around 100 rubber balls. On detonation, the rubber balls, and shrapnel from

the rubber casing explode outward in all directions as a form of less-lethal shrapnel. These projectiles may ricochet. It is intended that people struck by the projectiles will receive a series of fast, painful stings, without serious injury. Some types have an additional payload of CS gas.

Sting grenades do not reliably incapacitate people, so they can be dangerous to use against armed subjects. They can cause serious physical injury, especially the rubber shrapnel from the casing.

### Smoke grenade

Smoke grenades are used as ground-to-ground or ground-to-air signalling devices, target or landing zone marking devices,

and to create a smoke-screen for concealment. The body is a sheet-steel cylinder with emission holes in the top and bottom. These allow the smoke to be released when the grenade is ignited.

There are two main types, one producing coloured smoke for signalling, and the other for screening smoke. In coloured smoke grenades, the filler consists of 250 to 350 grams of coloured smoke mixture (mostly potassium chlorate, lactose and a dye).

Screening smoke grenades usually contain HC (hexachloroethane/zinc) smoke mixture or TA (terephthalic acid) smoke mixture. HC smoke contains hydrochloric acid and is harmful to breathe. These grenades

can become hot enough to scald or burn unprotected skin.

### Riot grenade

Tear gas grenades are similar to smoke grenades in shape and operation. In tear gas grenades the filler is generally 80 to 120 grams of CS gas (2-chlorobenzalmalononitrile) combined with a pyrotechnic composition which burns to generate an aerosol of CS-laden smoke. This causes extreme irritation to the eyes and, if inhaled, to the nose and throat.

They were used in the Waco Siege. Occasionally CR gas (dibenzoxazepine) is used instead of CS.

### Incendiary grenade

Incendiary grenades (or thermite grenades) produce intense heat by means of a chemical reaction. Seventh-century "Greek fire" first used by the Byzantine Empire, which could be lit and thrown in breakable pottery, could be considered the earliest form of incendiary grenade.

The body of modern incendiary grenades is practically the same as that of a smoke grenade. The filler is 600 to 800 grams of thermite, which is an

improved version of World War II-era thermite. The chemical reaction that produces the heat is called a thermite reaction. In this reaction, powdered aluminium metal and iron oxide react to produce a stream of molten iron and aluminium oxide. This reaction produces a tremendous amount of heat, burning at 2,200 °C. This makes incendiary grenades useful for destroying weapons caches, artillery, and vehicles. The thermite burns without an external oxygen source, allowing it to burn underwater. Thermite incendiary grenades are not intended to be thrown and generally have a shorter delay fuse than other grenades (e.g. two seconds).

White phosphorus can be used as an incendiary agent. It burns at a temperature of 2,800 °C. White phosphorus was used in the No 76 Special Incendiary Grenade by the British Home Guard during World War II.

Thermite and white phosphorus cause some of the worst and most painful burn injuries because they burn so quickly and at such a high temperature. In addition, white phosphorus is very poisonous: a dose of 50–100 milligrams is lethal to the average human.

### Practice grenade

Practice grenades are similar in handling and function to other hand grenades, except that they only produce a loud popping noise and a puff of smoke on detonation. The grenade body can be reused.

Another type is

the throwing practice grenade which is completely inert and often cast in one piece. It is used to give soldiers a feel for the weight and shape of real grenades and for practicing precision throwing.

Various fuses can be used, depending on the purpose of the grenade.

### Impact fuse

Examples of grenades fitted with impact fuses are the German M1913 and M1915 *Diskushandgranate*, and any British grenade fitted with the Allways fuse such as the No 69 grenade, No 77 grenade and No 82 grenade (Gammon bomb).

### Timed fuse

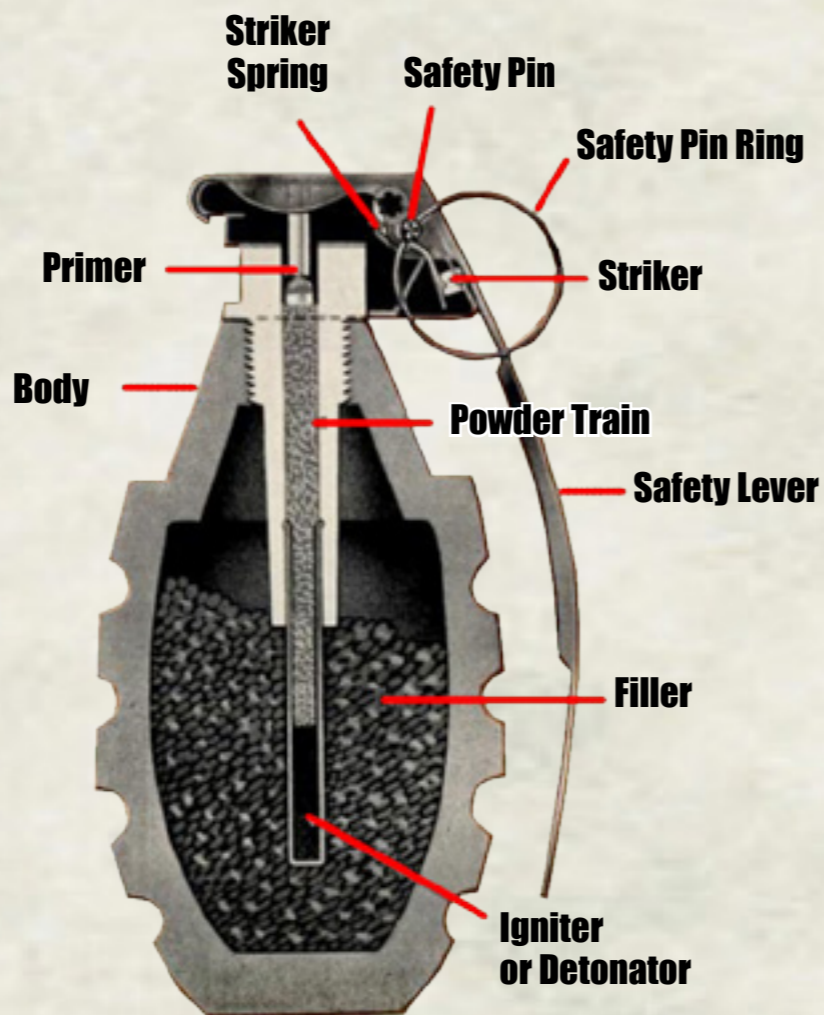
In a timed fuse grenade, the fuse is ignited on the release of the safety lever, and detonation occurs following a timed delay.

Timed fuse grenades are generally preferred to hand-thrown percussion grenades because their fusing mechanisms are safer and more robust than those used in percussion grenades.

Fuses are frequently fixed, though the Russian UZRGM fuses are interchangeable and allow the delay to be varied, or replaced by a zero-delay pull fuse. This is potentially dangerous due to the risk of confusion.

### Pull fuse

A pull fuse is a zero-delay fuse used in booby traps: the grenade detonates immediately when the striker retaining pin is removed. The pin is typically attached to a tripwire.





# The Warsaw Uprising

*With the Germans retreating from Poland ahead of the Soviet advance, the Polish underground resistance, led by the Home Army, launched an operation to liberate Warsaw. What followed was one of the most tragic betrayals of the war.*

At precisely 17h00 on 1 August sirens will begin to wail in Warsaw, Poland. People will stop and stand with their head bowed solemnly. Cars will stop and people will get out and stand next to the vehicle. At various places flares are set off.

After a minute people will resume whatever they were doing and get on with their lives. This is how Warsaw remembers one of the central events in its history - the Uprising of 1944.

## Background

By the Summer of 1944 the tides of war were turning against the Germans. The Americans and the British had landed in Normandy, and the Red Army was rapidly advancing from the East. And the Russian were approaching Warsaw, the capital of Poland.

The Poles had been waiting for their opportunity since the Nazi's first occupied Warsaw.

On 1 August 1944 General 'Bor' Komorowski finally ordered the *Armia Krajowa* (AK), the Home Army, to rise up and claim Warsaw back from the Nazis.

The Nazis had held the city for four years. Now it was time to take it back.

At 17h00 on 1 August between 25,000 and 50,000 sol-

diers and civilian volunteers (including women and children) took up arms and began an assault on key strategic positions throughout the city.

Only about 10% of them were armed at the start, but they quickly helped themselves to captured German weapons.

The timing of the operation seemed perfect. The Germans were retreating and the Red Army was approaching the outskirts of Warsaw.

The Germans were taken by surprise and in the first few days the Home Army won several bloody skirmishes. The red and white of the Polish national flag flew over the Old Town.

The mood was triumphant in those areas liberated by the Home Army. Varsovians, as those from Warsaw are known, held concerts, had poetry reading, and generally celebrated their newly earned freedom. Unbeknown to them it was to be the city's last taste of freedom for forty-four years.

## Betrayal

General Komorowski knew from the outset that the Home Army had no chance of ever holding Warsaw against the Germans, and it had never been part of the plan.

All they needed to do was displace the German troops sta-

tioned in the city and hold the town for several days before the Russians arrived.

For some time the Polish service of Radio Moscow had been appealing for Warsaw to rise up.

On 25 July, the Union of Polish Patriots, in a broadcast from Moscow, stated: "The Polish Army of Polish Patriots ... calls on the thousands of brothers thirsting to fight, to smash the foe before he can recover from his defeat ... Every Polish homestead must become a stronghold in the struggle against the invaders ... Not a moment is to be lost."

On 29 July 1944 Radio Station Kosciuszko located in Moscow emitted a few times its "Appeal to Warsaw" and called to "Fight The Germans!": "No doubt Warsaw already hears the guns of the battle which is soon to bring her liberation. ... The Polish Army now entering Polish territory, trained in the Soviet Union, is now joined to the People's Army to form the Corps of the Polish Armed Forces, the armed arm of our nation in its struggle for independence. Its ranks will be joined tomorrow by the sons of Warsaw. They will all together, with the Allied Army pursue the enemy westwards, wipe out the Hitlerite vermin from Polish



**WARSAW BURNS:** A German Ju-87 'Stuka' bombs the Old Town of Warsaw.

land and strike a mortal blow at the beast of Prussian Imperialism."

While the Germans may have initially been taken by surprise, they soon reacted. When German *Reichsführer* of the SS Heinrich Himmler heard about the uprising he decreed that the whole city and its population should be destroyed as an example to the rest of Europe.

"The city must completely disappear from the surface of the earth and serve only as a transport station for the Wehrmacht. No stone can remain standing. Every building must be razed to its foundation," Himmler told an SS officers conference on 17 October 1944.

The Germans brought in heavy reinforcements and the full force of their firepower: tanks, rocket launchers, and air raids were just some of the hazards the ill-equipped Poles had to contend with. The city became a giant war zone and civilians were not spared.

What was supposed to have been a coup lasting two or three days turned into a bloody and bitter struggle that lasted for 63 days.

But wait! Where was the Red Army? Why had they not come to the rescue of the doomed Poles? They were sitting on the sidelines, watching the events unfold.

## Betrayal

The Red Army had reached the Vistula River. All they had to do was cross the river, and Warsaw was theirs for the taking.

Yet when they reached the Vistula, they halted on the orders of none other than Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. They sat and watched while the Germans regained control of the city.

But what was the reason for this inaction? It was simple. Stalin hated the Poles almost as much as he hated the Germans.

Stalin considered the Poles his arch-enemy. And it all stemmed

back to the Soviet-Polish War between 1919 and 1921. It was a war in which the Bolsheviks were humiliated and the Poles were able to claim all disputed territories from the Russians, including Lwow (now Lviv, in the Ukraine) and Wilno (now Vilnius, in Lithuania).

It was during the same war that Stalin was almost court-martialled for his inadequacies a military commander.

Now that the Germans were doing such a good job of destroying his bitter enemies, Stalin certainly didn't want to stop them. Moreover, with the last of Poland's home-based soldiers and leaders destroyed, he would be free to work his will over the ruined country.

Moreover, kindly 'Uncle Joe' deliberately obstructed the rest of the Allies from dispatching aid to the insurgents - refusing even to allow the Americans and the Brits to use precious air bases that were now under Soviet control.

## The Wola Massacre

The Uprising reached its peak on 4 August when the Home Army soldiers managed to establish front lines in the westernmost boroughs of Wola and Ochota.

It was at this stage, however, that German reinforcements began to arrive. On the same day SS General Erich von dem Bach was appointed commander of all the forces employed against the Uprising.

As the Germans advanced, special SS, police and Wehrmacht groups went from house to house, shooting the inhabitants regardless of age or gen-

der and burning their bodies. Estimates of civilians killed in Wola and Ochota range from 20,000 to as high as 100,000.

The main perpetrators were Oskar Dirlewanger and Bronislav Kaminski, whose forces committed the cruelest atrocities.

The actions against the civilian population were designed to crush the Poles' will to fight and put the uprising to an end without having to commit to heavy city fighting. All it did was stiffen the Pole's will to fight.

Until mid-September, the Germans shot all captured resistance fighters on the spot, but from the end of September, some of the captured Polish soldiers were treated as POWs.

## Airdrops

From 4 August the Western Allies began supporting the Uprising with airdrops of munitions and other supplies.

The flights were carried out by the 1568th Polish Special Duties Flight of the Polish Air Force, No. 148 and No. 178 RAF Squadrons, and No. 31 and No. 34 Squadrons of the South African Air Force.

The Soviet Union did not allow the Western Allies to use its airports for the airdrops for several weeks, so the planes had to use bases in the United Kingdom and Italy which reduced their carrying weight and number of sorties. The Allies' specific request for the use of landing strips made on 20 August was denied by Stalin on 22 August.

Stalin referred to the Polish resistance as "a handful of



**RESISTANCE:** Members of the Polish Home Army. Many of them are wearing captured German uniforms.

criminals" and stated that the Uprising was inspired by "enemies of the Soviet Union".

Thus, by denying landing rights to Allied aircraft on Soviet-controlled territory the Soviets vastly limited effectiveness of Allied assistance to the Uprising, and even fired at Allied airplanes which carried supplies from Italy and strayed into Soviet-controlled airspace.

American support was also limited. After Stalin's objections to supporting the uprising, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill telegraphed U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt on 25 August and proposed sending planes in defiance of Stalin, to "see what happens".

American wanted Russia to declare war on Japan. Unwilling to upset Stalin before the Yalta Conference on 26 August, Roosevelt was not willing to upset Stalin in any way. And Stalin knew it.

Finally on 18 September the Soviets allowed a USAAF flight of 107 B-17 Flying Fortresses

of the Eighth Air Force's 3rd Division to re-fuel and reload at Soviet airfields used in Operation Frantic, but it was too little too late.

The planes dropped 100 tons of supplies but only 20 were recovered by the resistance due to the wide area over which they were spread. The vast majority of supplies fell into German-held areas.

## The inevitable end

There was no way that the Home Army could compete with the reinforced German troops.

The Polish insurgents were forced into hiding, often into the sewers, from where they continued to orchestrate and co-ordinate attacks.

The Home Army lacked supplies of any kind. They were almost out of ammunition and food was almost non-existent. Every animal in the city had been eaten - even the vermin.

Moreover, the Germans were in control of the water and power supplies.

As the battle for the city raged on, with Varsovians dying at a rate of 2,000 a day, it became only a matter of time before the rebels were forced to capitulate. They finally did so on October 2nd, 63 days after the Uprising began.

In the two month struggle 18,000 Home Army soldiers died and 12,000 were wounded with the survivors either sent to German POW camps or managing to go into hiding. A staggering 250,000 civilians were killed during the Uprising. Meanwhile the German suffered 10,000 fatalities with nearly as many again wounded.

## The aftermath

For 63 days the people of Warsaw had struggled and suffered. Yet that was only the be-

ginning of their suffering.

The Germans were the first to punish Warsaw and its people for daring to defend its freedom. Hitler ordered the city to be all but wiped off the face of the earth and special units were brought in to systematically detonate any building of the remotest importance to Polish culture.

The city was effectively destroyed block by block, and when the Russians finally crossed the Vistula to liberate the city, they inherited only ruins.

Later, in the years directly following the War, as the Poles tried to rebuild their shattered country under Communist leadership, it was forbidden to talk of the brave soldiers of the Uprising.

The movement was denounced as illegal and every effort was made to slander those involved. Keen to behead Polish society of its heroes and intelligentsia Stalin sent many of the surviving members of the AK to Siberia for lengthy spells of hard labour, whilst he executed those whom he perceived as particularly dangerous.

On 1 August I will come to attention and bow my head and observe a minute's silence.

When I became a member of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTH), I took an oath that "we will remember them". And surely those brave souls that took part in the Warsaw Uprising should be remembered. I suggest that other veterans do the same.

## Useful links

Every month we will be featuring a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and on-line magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.





*Hitting the beaches with his sun tan lotion and water wings, Matt O' Brien realises that Normandy on 6th June 1944 was not the ideal place for a holiday.*

In the very first edition of Military Despatches, back in July 2017, the very first game I reviewed was Company of Heroes 2.

This month, however, I'm going back to a classic - the original Company of Heroes.

The game won numerous awards for Game of the Year, Best Strategy Game, Best Use of Sound. It was released in 2006, so it's not a new game by any stretch of the imagination. The good news is that it will run on most old computers.

The game is part of a package and comes with the original game as well as two add-ons - Opposing Fronts and Tales of Valour.

The original game comes with two playable factions - the US Army and the German Wehrmacht. There are three different games modes.

First of all you can play against other players online or you can play skirmish mode.

In skirmish mode you pick a side, pick one of the available maps, and then battle against the AI (computer).

There is also a campaign mode where you will take the US Army through a series of six missions, each with a number of objectives that must be achieved.

The six missions are D-Day,

Battle of Carentan, Battle of Cherbourg, Operation Cobra, Operation Lüttich, and the Falaise Pocket.

The game play is simple. You take control of a point on the map where your headquarters is situated and you will start with a squad of engineers.

You need to collect three different types of resources: manpower, munitions, and fuel.

Manpower is necessary to produce all units. Munitions allows players to upgrade individual squads or vehicles and use special abilities. Fuel allows players to purchase tanks and other vehicles, build base buildings and acquire global upgrades.

Capturing new control points will give you more resources. Resource points must always be connected as any unconnected captured points can not produce resources.

Your engineers can build certain buildings and structures. The Americans can build a barracks and weapons support center to deploy infantry, a motor pool and tank depot for tanks, vehicles and anti-tank guns.

The triage center can heal nearby units that have been wounded from enemy fire. A supply yard is also required to be built before building a motor pool or tank depot which enables up-

grades to reduce costs of infantry and tanks.

The Germans can build a variety of structures. The Wehrmacht quarters, Krieg barracks and Sturm armory lets players create infantry. The Wehrmacht Quarters and Krieg Barracks can build light vehicles and other infantry, while the Sturm Armory and the Panzer Command deploys German tanks at the player's disposal.

Units and vehicles can be upgraded, making them even more useful.

At the start of a skirmish game you can choose a company type (US Army) or a doctrine type (Wehrmacht).

The choices for the US Army are:

- Infantry Company.
  - Airborne Company.
  - Armor Company
- The German choices are:
- Defensive Doctrine.
  - Blitzkrieg Doctrine.
  - Terror Doctrine.

In skirmish mode you can play either Victory Point Control or Annihilation. In the first mode you need to control a certain number of victory points to win the game.

In annihilation mode you have to take out every opposition unit, vehicle and building.

Opposing Fronts adds two new playable factions to the



game. - the British Army and the Panzer Elite. The British give you the choice of using:

- Royal Canadian Artillery.
- Royal Commandos.
- Royal Engineers

It also comes with two new campaigns. The British campaign is based on the Liberation of Caen and features six missions. These are D-Day+1, Operation Epsom, Operation Windsor, Operation Jupiter, Operation Charnwood, and Operation Goodwood.

The Panzer Elite have three doctrines. They are:

- Scorched Earth.
- Luftwaffe Tactics.
- Tank Destroyer Tactics.

The Panzer Elite campaign is centred around Operation Market Garden and their missions are Wolfheze, Oosterbeek, Hell's Highway, and Cleaning up.

Company of Heroes is a pretty decent game. And it's also a good game for those that have never played an RTS (Real Time Strategy) game.

You will need to make good use of the troops and vehicles that you have available and careful plan upgrades to them. You also need to use them to the best advantage.

As on any battlefield, terrain is important, and you need to make good use of it. The use of cover is also vital.

It's no use sending a squad of infantry up a road that is covered by an Mg-42 machine gun. You will need to try and outflank the position. Or if your troops have smoke grenades available, use them to create a smoke screen before advancing on the position.

Besides just erecting buildings, your engineers can also build defensive structures such as sandbags, barbed wire and tank traps. They can also lay down mines or even demolish structures such as bridges.

Engineers can also repair vehicles and structures. If there is only a single bridge across a river, your engineers can blow the bridge. This will give you time

to build up your forces. You can use mortars to cover the bridge to stop the enemy from attempting to repair it. When you are ready, you can repair the bridge and go on the offensive.

Company of Heroes is a good game and one that I can recommend.



Publisher - THQ

Genre - RTS

Score - 8/10

Price - R480 (on Steam)

# Hanover Street

Seeing as how August is 'Women's Month', I decided to review a movie that would appeal to both the guys and the girls. The movie in question is Hanover Street.

Released back in 1979, Hanover Street is a wartime romantic film written and directed by Peter Hyams.

It stars a young Harrison Ford, Lesley-Anne Down, and Christopher Plummer.

In London during World War II, Lieutenant David Halloran (Harrison Ford) is an American B-25 bomber pilot with the Eighth Air Force based in England.

In a chance encounter he meets Margaret Sellinger (Lesley-Anne Down), a British nurse. The meeting takes place on Hanover Street.

Halloran has a reputation for being a fearless pilot. The day after his meeting with Sellinger, his squadron is sent to bomb Rouen.

The plane's starboard engine is hit, but they manage to put the fire out. 2nd Lt. Jerry Cimino, Halloran's bombardier/navigator, begs Halloran to let him drop the bombs early.

Halloran doesn't care about danger, however, and tells Cimino to wait until they are over the target. Cimino tells Halloran how much he hates him.

Two weeks later Halloran and Sellinger meet again on Hanover Street. It ends in an intimate encounter and the pair find them-

selves quickly falling in love, although Sellinger tries to resist.

Sellinger has a slight problem though. She is married and has a young daughter.

In contrast to the charismatic Halloran her husband, Paul Sellinger, is by his own admission suave, pleasant, but very dull.

Paul is a former school teacher who now works for British Intelligence. He speaks fluent German and it is his job to train agents in the nuances of the language.

Halloran undergoes a huge change. From being fearless he becomes scared of death because he now has a reason to live.

During the next few missions, Halloran orders Cimino to drop the bombs early, much to co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Martin Hyer, anger and disappointment.

Weeks later, before take-off, Halloran thinks he can hear an odd noise in one of the bomber's engine. Another pilot, Patman, takes over as lead bomber.

That night Halloran learns that Patman's plane was hit in the bomb bay with the bombs still on board. Everyone was killed in the explosion.

Ashamed of his actions, Halloran volunteers for an undercover mission in Nazi-occupied France to deliver a British agent.

The agent in question is Paul Sellinger. He has volunteered for the mission to prove himself and make his wife proud of him.

Halloran's plane is hit and he

and Sellinger are the only ones to bail out. Sellinger has to pose as an SS officer and photograph an important document that lists the German double-agents in British intelligence. Halloran agrees to help.

There is action aplenty as the pair carry out the mission. During the mission Sellinger shows Halloran a photograph of his wife and explains to Halloran why he undertook the mission. Halloran realises that it is Margaret, the woman he has fallen in love with.

Will the two of them make it back to safety? Will Margaret be forced to choose between them? And, if so, which one will she choose?

You'll just have to see the movie to find out.



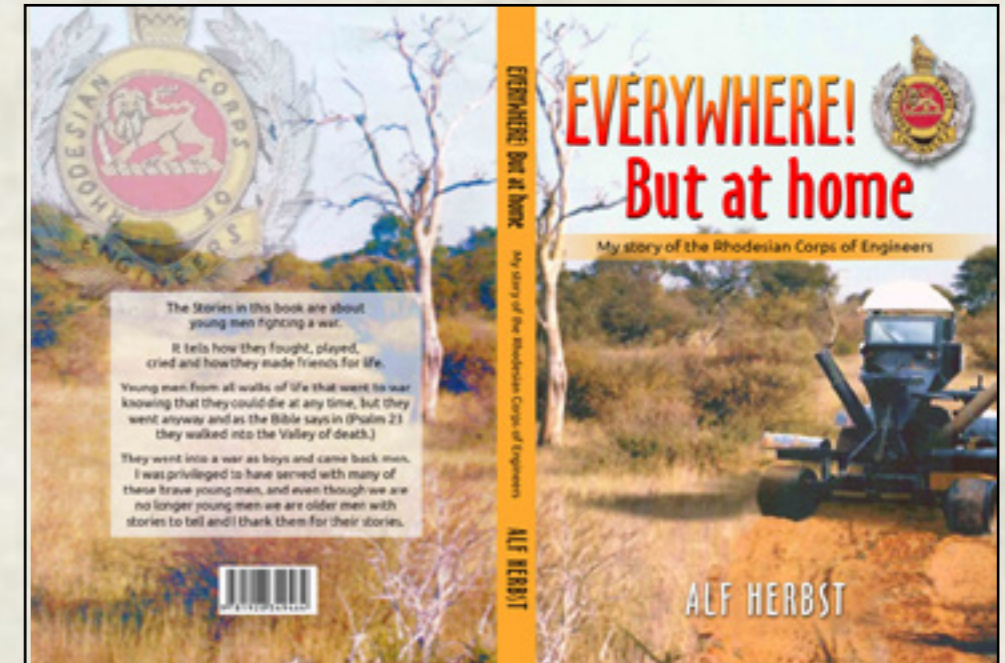
Click on the box cover to watch a trailer of the film.

# Everywhere! But at home

The Stories in this book are about young men fighting a war. It is story of Alf Herbst of the Rhodesian Corps of Engineers. It is not a history/political or technical book.

There has never been a book written about the Rhodesian Corps of Engineers, now there is. It takes you from beginning to the end of the Corps in which Herbst served for 13 years. His wife also put pen to paper in her story of a wife of a serving Sapper.

17 chapters, covering the beginning, corps commanders, dress, the good, the not so bad, and the ugly and even a chapter



on the enemy sappers to name but a few.

The corps motto is UBIQUE (Everywhere) hence the title of

the book.

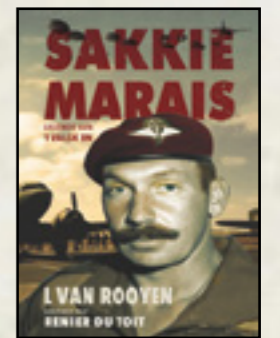
The book is A5 with 243 pages. It costs R250 and can be ordered from [epos@groep7.co.za](mailto:epos@groep7.co.za)



Paratus Magazine  
Nov 1970 - Apr 1994 -R3.99



Eye of the Firestorm  
R255



Sakkie Marais  
R240

Available from [Bush War Books](#)

## Quiz Answers

So how did you do with this months quiz? Here are the answers.

- |              |                                       |              |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Ethiopia. | 7. Botswana.                          | 12. Malawi.  |
| 2. Zambia.   | 8. Nigeria.                           | 13. Ghana.   |
| 3. Algeria   | 9. Burkina Faso                       | 14. Lesotho. |
| 4. Tanzania. | 10. Niger.                            | 15. Kenya.   |
| 5. Angola.   | 11. Democratic Republic of the Congo. |              |
| 6. Senegal.  |                                       |              |

# August in Military History

Some of the events with military significance that happened during August.

For the next 12 issues we will be looking at significant events that took place during each month of the year.

The following events took place during the month of August.

## 1 August

- **1798** - The British fleet under Lord Nelson defeats the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile, at Aboukir Bay, Egypt, thus thwarting Napoleon's conquest of the Middle East. Napoleon Bonaparte and his forces are left stranded in Egypt.
- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War General Ian Hamilton, commanding a force of about 6,000 men with twenty-six field guns, is sent to capture Commando Nek and Silkaatsnek, between Brits and Pretoria, and to cover Baden-Powell's retreat to Pretoria.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the British parliament votes an additional £12,500 00 for munitions.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Sir G. Lagden, formerly Resident Commissioner in Basutoland, is appointed by the British as the Commissioner of Native Affairs in the Transvaal and the 'Orange River Colony'.
- **1938** - Air Force Base Wa-

terkloof is founded with two hangars, a runway and No's 1 and 2 Fighter-bomber Squadrons and No 3 Communication Squadron, mainly equipped with Hawker Hartebeest Aircraft. Lt. Col. H.G. Willmot is first permanent Officer Commanding.

- **1944** - The Warsaw Uprising began as the Polish Home Army, numbering about 40,000 Polish patriots, began shooting at German troops in the streets. The Nazis then sent eight divisions to battle the Poles, who had hoped for, but did not receive, assistance from the Allies. Two months later, the rebellion was quashed.
- **1946** - Andrei Vlasov, Russian general (who fought for both the Red Army and the German Wehrmacht) is executed at age 45.
- **1957** - The United States and Canada form the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD).
- **1975** - An order is issued withdrawing the remaining South African Police from Rhodesia.
- **1982** - The Kenyan Air Force disbands following an attempted coup by non-commissioned officers in which 159 died.
- **1990** - ANC and its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) suspends armed actions after twenty-nine

years.

- **1996** - Mohammed Farah Aidid, who has controlled much of Somalia during its civil war, dies of wounds suffered during a skirmish with another faction.

## 2 August

- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Lord Roberts sends his Chief of Staff, Lord Kitchener, to take overall command of the forces engaged against Gen. De Wet.
- **1934** - Paul von Hindenburg, German WW1 general and President of Germany (1925-34), dies of lung cancer at 86.
- **1956** - Having held talks on the escalating crisis over control of the Suez Canal with France and the US, Britain mobilises its forces.
- **1976** - French officials disclose that France is to supply South Africa with two destroyer escorts.
- **1990** - The Iraqi army invaded Kuwait amid claims that Kuwait threatened Iraq's economic existence by overproducing oil and driving prices down on the world market. An Iraqi military government was then installed in Kuwait which was annexed by Iraq on the claim that Kuwait was historically part of Iraq. This resulted in Desert Shield,



**3 AUGUST 1934:** Unita leader Jonas Savimbi was born on this day.

- the massive Allied military buildup, and later the 100-hour war against Iraq, Desert Storm.
- **1999** - At least twelve people are killed in rebel attacks on a police station, airport and the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) in and around Katima Mulilo.
- **2007** - Holden Roberto, Angolan founder and leader of the FNLA, dies at 84.

## 3 August

- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War, in a breach of neutrality, Colonel Stowe, Consul-General of the USA, allows a British Intelligence officer, carrying important papers from Milner to Kitchener, to hide from Danie Theron in his railway carriage.
- **1900** - War correspondent Ernie Pyle (1900-1945) was born in Dana, Indiana. His syndicated column offered sympathetic insights into the experiences of common soldiers during World War II.

He received a Pulitzer Prize for his reports of the bombing of London in 1940 and later war reports from Africa, Sicily, Italy and France. He was killed by machine-gun fire near Okinawa in the South Pacific on April 18, 1945.

- **1900** - President Paul Kruger and Commandant General Louis Botha issued a proclamation in Pretoria which promised to pay those Burgers who remained active with their Commandos for damage done to their farms by the British troops.
- **1911** - An Italian, Commander Piazza, is the world's first pilot to fly a military mission he flies reconnaissance missions over Tripoli.
- **1934** - Jonas Savimbi, former leader of Unita, was born on this day in Munhango, Angola.
- **1940** - Italy begins occupation of British Somaliland.
- **1956** - An event unique in the SAAF history takes place. The SAAF squadron that was placed at the disposal of the United Nations Organisation during the Korean War, is presented with the prestigious United States presidential unit citation, awarded for 'extraordinary heroism against the armed enemy of the United Nations from November 1951 to April 1952'.
- **1979** - President Francisco Macías Nguema of Equatorial Guinea is overthrown in a military coup by his nephew Colonel Teodoro Obiang Ngueme Mbasogo.
- **2004** - General Muhamed

Lamari, head of Algeria's army, resigns for health reasons.

- **2005** - The Military Council for Justice and Democracy overthrows President Taya of Mauritania in a coup, while he is in Saudi Arabia for the funeral of King Fahd.

## 4 August

- **1578** - A Portuguese attempt at an invasion against the Moors of Morocco is thwarted at the Battle of Alcazar-el-Kebir. King Sebastian of Portugal, the King of Fez and the Moorish pretender to the throne of Fez, are all killed.
- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the Battle of Elands River (Brakfontein), near present-day Swartruggens, that lasted several days, starts.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Lord Methuen, British general, destroys the village of Schweizer-Reneke, leaving only the church standing.
- **1907** - The French fleet bombards Casablanca, northwest Morocco, following anti-foreign outbreaks.
- **1914** - Germany invades Belgium and when London's ultimatum to Berlin to withdraw expires at midnight, Britain declares war on Germany.
- **1940** - Italy invades British Somaliland and occupies some towns in Sudan and Kenya. General Godwin-Austin and his small garrison of British troops was unable to stop the Duke d'Acota's 25,000 soldiers

- who swarmed across the border.
- **1967** - Military conscription became compulsory for all White men in South Africa over the age of 16. Deferment to complete schooling or a university degree was granted, but hardly any White men were exempt from conscription.
- **1983** - Captain Thomas Sankara seizes power in a military coup in Burkina Faso.
- **2003** - The first 200 members of a West African peacekeeping force arrive in Liberia in an effort to stop more than two months of fighting between government forces and rebels, and allow food and medicine to enter Monrovia.

## 5 August

- **1815** - A peace treaty with Tripoli, which follows treaties with Algeria and Tunis, brings an end to the Barbary Wars.
- **1863** - The Alabama, an American Civil War raider, captures the Northern bark, Sea Bride, outside Table Bay. The Alabama was built during the American Civil War to prey on the mercantile shipping of the Northern states. Her captain and officers were Southerners, her crew British. The Malays composed the well-known folksong *Daar Kom Die Alabama* with reference to this ship.
- **1916** - The British navy defeats the Ottomans at the naval battle off Port Said, Egypt.
- **1971** - PW Botha, the Min-

ister of Defence, says that South Africa has become self-sufficient in the manufacture of arms. The country is considering exporting weapons.

- **1990** - The United States sends a Marine company into Monrovia, Liberia's capital, to evacuate US citizens because of a rebel threat to arrest Americans in order to provoke foreign intervention in the civil war.
- **1998** - Otto Kretschmer, German U-boat commander, dies at 86.

## 6 August

- **1891** - British Field Marshall William Joseph Slim is born on this day.
- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the Battle of Elands River takes place. British Gen. Carrington retreats to the Marico River and Zeerust, Western Transvaal, pursued for part of the way by Boer forces. He burns his baggage train and surplus supplies and retires towards Mafeking.
- **1916** - Admiral Hugo (Hendrik) Bierman, former Chief of the Navy and Chief of the SADF, is born in Johannesburg.
- **1945** - The first Atomic Bomb was dropped over the center of Hiroshima at 08h15, by the American B-29 bomber Enola Gay. The bomb detonated about 850 metres above ground, killing over 105,000 persons and destroying the city. Another estimated 100,000 persons later died as a result of radiation effects.



**6 AUGUST 1934:** Former Chief of the SADF Admiral Hugo Bierman was born.

- **1997** - The SA Air Force announces that Mirages will be phased out because of a cut to the defence budget.

## 7 August

- **1795** - The Battle of Muizenberg takes place during the Napoleonic War when British troops disembark at Muizenberg and move towards Cape Town, notwithstanding brave defence by Lieut. P.W. Marnitz and Capt. C. Kemper after De Lille vacated his position.
- **1876** - International spy Mata Hari (1876-1917) was born (as Margaret Gertrude Zelle) in Leewarden, Netherlands. Arrested by the French in 1917 as a German spy, she was tried, convicted and sentenced to death. At her execution, she refused a blindfold and instead threw a kiss to the French firing squad.
- **1900** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the Battle of Tygerpoort (Venterskroon) takes place between the British under Lord Methuen



**9 AUGUST 1910:** Florence Nightingale dies aged 90.

- and the Boers under De Wet. De Wet, with the aid of Capt. Danie Theron and fourteen of his men, escapes and Methuen falls back to regroup.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Lord Kitchener publishes his most famous of what the Boers call his 'paper bombs', proclaiming that all officers of the 'late Republics still engaged in fighting and all members of their governments will be permanently banished from South Africa unless they surrender before 15 September.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War the Battle of Fort Mpisane, the final big battle of this war fought in the Lowveld, takes place.
- **1901** - During the 2nd Anglo-Boer War Commandant Manie Maritz attacks Vanrhynsdorp in the Cape Province. Many vehicles, including three laden supply wagons, are taken from the British.

- **1942** - The U.S. 1st Marine Division lands on the islands of Guadalcanal and Tulagi in the Solomon Islands. It is the first American amphibious landing of the war.
- **1963** - The United States (US) informed the United Nations (UN) that it would suspend sales of arms to South Africa. The Security Council adopted Resolution 181 calling upon all states to cease the sale and shipment of arms, ammunition and military vehicles to South Africa. The arms embargo was made mandatory on 4 November, 1977.
- **1964** - Following an attack on two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin off North Vietnam, the U.S. Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, granting President Lyndon B. Johnson authority "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression."
- **1970** - Fighting along the Egyptian-Israeli border is brought to a halt as a new 90-day cease-fire takes effect.
- **1988** - Angola, Cuba and South Africa agreed to a formal ceasefire. Under the terms of the ceasefire and later treaty, Cuba was to withdraw its forces from Angola, and South Africa was to grant Namibia independence and withdraw its forces and elections were to be held in Angola. The treaty was signed on 22 December 1988.
- **1990** - Just five days after

the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, President George Bush ordered Desert Shield, a massive military buildup to prevent further Iraqi advances.

- **1998** - Terrorist bombs detonate within minutes of each other outside US embassies in buildings in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania killing more than 250 people and wounding approximately 5,000.

## 8 August

- **1802** - Tjaart van der Walt, frontier farmer and field commandant who played an important role in the third frontier war against the combined force of the Xhosa and Khoi-Khoi, is killed in a skirmish in the Kouga mountains, district Humansdorp.
- **1945** - Soviet Russia declared war on Japan and sent troops into Japanese-held Manchuria.
- **1960** - Dag Hammarskjöld, UN secretary-general, instructs Belgium to withdraw its troops from the Congo.
- **1988** - South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha announces agreement has been reached for a cease-fire in the Angolan conflict between South Africa, Angola and Cuba. This ends twenty years of bush warfare. The treaty is formally signed at Ruacana in late August.

## 9 August

- **1910** - Florence Nightingale, British nurse, who became famous during the Crimean War, dies at 90.
- **1945** - The second Atom

- ic bombing of Japan occurred as an American B-29 bomber headed for the city of Kokura, but because of poor visibility then chose a secondary target, Nagasaki. About noon, the bomb detonated killing an estimated 70,000 persons and destroying about half the city.
- **1967** - Biafran troops, under the command of Colonel Ojukwu, have crossed the Niger River into Nigeria's Mid-Western State and are heading towards Benin City. Nigeria's leader General Yakubu Gowon, promoted since his reinstatement of Federal rule, is planning an offensive against the Biafran capital Enugu.
- **1975** - The French government has decided to supply no further continental (ground or air) armaments to South Africa. This political decision does not affect naval armaments or existing contracts.
- **2004** - Several military officers and civilians are arrested in Mauritania for plotting a coup.

## 10 August

- **1900** - British General Carrington reaches Mafeking and narrowly avoids being court-martialled for his inexplicable flight from Elands River (Brakfontein). He later explains his actions to Lord Roberts in Pretoria but a furious Roberts transfers him back to Bulawayo in Rhodesia.
- **1945** - Japan offers to surrender in World War 2 if Emperor Hirohito is permitted to keep his throne.

- **1961** - First use of the Agent Orange in Vietnam by the U.S. Army.
- **1972** - Naval Headquarters at Simon's Town announce that the second series of joint British South African exercises off the Cape Coast will begin on 14 August 1972 and will continue for seven days.
- **1983** - With support from Libya in their long-running civil war, Chadian insurgents overrun the outpost of Faya-Largeau in northern Chad.

## 11 August

- **1940** - A week before Mussolini orders General Rodolfo Graziani to invade Egypt from Libya, the British RAF raids airfields and Italian military bases.
- **1982** - The South African government has released details of a South African Defence Force (SADF) raid into Southern Angola. Between two and three hundred South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) fighters are believed to have been killed, with upwards of another hundred injured at a forward base in the Cambeno Valley. A significant amount of equipment and material was taken and destroyed, including rations originally obtained from the UN High Commission for Refugees.
- **1990** - Egyptian and Moroccan troops land in Saudi Arabia to prevent Iraqi invasion.
- **1993** - UN forces kill seven



**12 AUGUST 1918:** Wing Commander Guy Gibson is born.

Somali gunmen who shot at a surveillance helicopter, as militias of warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid intensify an offensive against peacekeepers.

- **1998** - Congolese rebels fighting President Laurent Kabila say they are closing in on the capital, while the government rounds up Tutsis, suspected of supporting the rebellion.

## 12 August

- **1900** - The rearguard of the Boer forces under De Wet fights a running battle with Lord Methuen's British force. Methuen seizes wagons and prisoners abandoned by the Republicans, as well as one of the Armstrong guns captured at Stormberg.
- **1918** - Wing Commander Guy Penrose Gibson, VC, DSO & Bar, DFC & Bar, was the first Commanding Officer of the Royal Air Force's No. 617 Squadron,



**14 AUGUST 1945:** Emperor Hirohito of Japan accepts Allied terms of surrender.

which he led in the "Dam Busters" raid in 1943, was born on this day.

- **1960** - UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold and UN troops enter rebel province of Katanga in Zaire.
- **1968** - Over 5,000 soldiers supported by tanks, armoured cars and air force units begin manoeuvres in an exercise code named Operation Subasa designed to test the ability of South African defence forces to deal with terrorist activities.
- **1981** - Four rockets exploded in Voortrekkerhoogte (renamed Thaba Tshwane on 19 May 1998), a large military base in Verwoerdburg (now Centurion) close to Pretoria. The African National Congress (ANC) accepted responsibility.
- **1993** - US marines open fire on 3,000 Somali demonstrators protesting against the US presence in the country.

## 13 August

- **1900** - During the Battle of Elands River, one of Col.

Hore's men, having sneaked through the besieger's lines, reaches the British lines near Mafeking and confirms that the Australians and Rhodesians are still holding out. Lord Roberts orders Kitchener to divert three brigades from the hunt on De Wet to relieve Col. Hore.

- **1926** - Communist revolutionary and President of Cuba, Fidel Castro, was born on this day.
- **1967** - Umkhonto we Sizwe's (MK) Luthuli Detachment in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Zimbabwean African People's Union (ZAPU) guerrillas engaged Rhodesian forces in Wankie (now Hwange) Game Reserve, near the border of Zambia and Botswana. The operation became known as the Wankie Campaign.
- **1997** - Heavy fighting rages in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, between forces of the president and those of a former military ruler.
- **1998** - Rebels fighting Congolese President Laurent Kabila capture a power transformer in western Congo, sending the capital, Kinshasa, into darkness.

## 14 August

- **1870** - David Farragut, American Admiral who coined the phrase "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!", dies at 69.
- **1896** - English World War I fighter pilot Albert Ball VC, DSO & Two Bars, MC was born on this day. At the time of his death he was the United Kingdom's leading flying

ace, with 44 victories.

- **1900** - End of the 'first De Wet hunt'. De Wet's entire force crosses the unoccupied Olifants Nek Pass near Rustenburg and camps on the banks of the Hex River. He has achieved all his objectives: captured a train, inflicted losses on the enemy, increased his own numbers and managed to rest some of his burghers, while occupying the attention of 50,000 British troops.
- **1945** - Following the two Atomic Bomb drops and believing that continuation of the war would only result in further loss of Japanese lives, delegates of Emperor Hirohito accepted Allied surrender terms originally issued at Potsdam on 26 July 1945, with the exception that the Japanese Emperor's sovereignty would be maintained. Japanese Emperor Hirohito, who had never spoken on radio, then recorded an announcement admitting Japan's surrender, without actually using the word. The announcement was broadcast via radio to the Japanese people at noon the next day. The formal surrender ceremony occurred later, on 2 September 1945, on board the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.
- **1960** - UN peace-keeping forces finally replace Belgian troops in the Republic of Congo.
- **1974** - A sharp increase in South African defence expenditure is announced.
- **2004** - Germany apologises for the massacre of some

- 65,000 Hereros in South-West Africa (Namibia) by their soldiers during the 1904 rebellion, but rules out compensation.

## 15 August

- **1769** - French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) was born on the island of Corsica. Originally an officer in King Louis' Army, he rose to become Emperor amid the political chaos that followed the French Revolution.
- **1865** - Comdt Louw Wepener (53) is killed in combat during an attack on Moshesh at Thaba Bosigo in the Free State.
- **1994** - Carlos the Jackal, freelance terrorist, is arrested in Sudan and flown to Paris for trial. He is eventually sentenced to life in prison by a Paris court for the 1975 murders of two French secret agents and an alleged informer.

## 16 August

- **1777** - During the American Revolutionary War, the Battle of Bennington, Vermont, occurred as militiamen from Vermont, aided by Massachusetts troops, wiped out a detachment of 800 German-Hessians sent by British General Burgoyne to seize horses.
- **1780** - The Battle of Camden in South Carolina occurred during the American Revolutionary War. The battle was a big defeat for the Americans as forces under General Gates were defeated by troops of British General

Charles Cornwallis, resulting in 900 Americans killed and 1,000 captured.

- **1888** - Thomas Edward Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia (1888-1935), British adventurer, soldier, and author, is born in Tremadoc, Wales.
- **1917** - In a renewed thrust of the Allied offensive launched at the end of July in the Flanders region of Belgium - known as the Third Battle of Ypres, or simply as Passchendaele, for the village that saw the heaviest fighting - British troops capture the village of Langemarck from the Germans.
- **1901** - General De la Rey protests the British mistreatment of women and children.
- **1942** - US Army Air Force planes see action for the first time in North Africa, bombing German military positions from their base in Egypt.
- **1959** - William "Bull" F Halsey, US vice-admiral (WW II Pacific), dies.
- **2003** - Ugandan military ruler Idi Amin, 78, who presided over an eight-year reign of terror from 1971-1979, where an estimated 300,000 people were killed and tortured to death, dies of multiple organ failure.

## 17 August

- **1901** - The ZAR Executive Council instructs Commandant-General Louis Botha to investigate and, if necessary, to punish Assistant Commandant-General To-



**15 AUGUST 1994:** International terrorist Carlos the Jackal is arrested in Sudan.

bias Smuts for the burning of Bremersdorp, because his actions were not according to the 'customs of civilized warfare'.

- **1940** - The Italian invasion of British Somaliland, which began on August 4, is complete. The Royal Navy successfully evacuated British troops via the port of Berbera. There is now little to stop the Italians controlling the southern entrance to the Red Sea. Meanwhile the 5th Indian Division, newly arrived in East Africa, is deployed along the Sudan-Abbyssinia and Sudan-Eritrea border as part of the Sudan Defence Force, and a revolt is started in Abyssinia by those loyal to the Emperor, Haile Selassie.
- **1943** - During World War II in Europe, the Allies completed the conquest of the island of Sicily after just 38 days. This gave the Allies control of the Mediterranean and also led to the downfall of Benito Mussolini and



**18 AUGUST 1998:** President Laurent Kabila's troops are sent fleeing in the DRC.

Italy's eventual withdrawal from the war. However, the Germans managed to evacuate 39,569 troops, 47 tanks, 94 heavy guns, over 9,000 vehicles and 2,000 tons of ammunition back to the Italian mainland from Sicily.

- **1962** - The South African Minister of Defence, J.J. Fouché, announces that the striking power of the Defence Force has been increased twenty-fold as compared with two years earlier, while that of Navy is to be increased ten-fold in the next few years.

## 18 August

- **1914** - Germany declares war on Russia while President Woodrow Wilson issues his Proclamation of Neutrality.
- **1957** - The first two Avro Shackleton Mk III anti-submarine aircraft arrive in South Africa.
- **1998** - Congolese rebels send President Laurent Kabila's troops fleeing as they advance to within 200

km of the capital, now deprived of electricity.

## 19 August

- **1901** - At Graaff-Reinet, P.J. Fourie, J. van Rensburg and L.F.S. Pfeiffer are executed by a British firing squad for treason and the murder of British troops.
- **1940** - First flight of the B-25 Mitchell medium bomber.
- **1942** - Dieppe Raid. An Allied force of 7,000 men carry out a large daytime raid against German positions at the French seaport of Dieppe. Aided by tanks and aircraft, the commando force—made up of approximately 5,000 Canadians, 2,000 British soldiers, and a handful of American and Free French troops—gained a foothold on the beach in the face of a furious German defense. During nine hours of fighting, the Allies failed to destroy more than a handful of their targets and suffered the death of 3,600 men. More than 100 aircraft, a destroyer, 33 landing craft, and 30 tanks were also lost.
- **1944** - The 6th Division entered Florence, Italy and was active there until 1945.
- **1968** - Nigeria's Federal troops have launched a major offensive against multiple targets in Biafra. Despite claims of 2,000 people being massacred, the leader of the Nigerian military government, General Yakubu Gowon, has stated that his troops are 'behaving correctly.'
- **1987** - Rudolf Hess, German

Nazi official (Deputy Fuhrer who dramatically escaped to Britain in 1941, sentenced to life in Spandau Prison), commits suicide at 93.

## 20 August

- **1955** - Simultaneous attacks by Algerian rebels against French targets in the Constantine district of Algeria have resulted in over 500 deaths and 200 wounded. At the same time nationalists have taken to the streets in Morocco. The attacks and demonstrations mark the second anniversary of the French deposition of the Sultan of Morocco, Siyyidi Mohammed V ibn Youssef, in favour of Muhammad Ben Aarafa.
- **1968** - Approximately 200,000 Warsaw Pact troops and 5,000 tanks invade Czechoslovakia to crush the "Prague Spring"—a brief period of liberalization in the communist country.
- **1995** - Liberia's main warring factions signed a peace accord calling for a ceasefire after more than five years of civil war and the start of democratic rule in one year.
- **1998** - US military forces attack a chemical plant in Sudan and what they describe as a terrorist camp in Afghanistan. Said to be linked with terrorists, the attacks are in response to the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania 13 days earlier.
- **1998** - Zimbabwe intervenes in the Democratic Republic of Congo to support the



- regime against a rebellion. The last Zimbabwean soldiers withdraw at the end of 2002. Troops from Angola, Namibia, Chad, and Sudan also intervened to support the Kinshasa regime.

## 21 August

- **1863** - During the American Civil War, William Quantrill led 450 irregular Confederate raiders on a pre-dawn terrorist raid of Lawrence, Kansas, leaving 150 civilians dead, 30 wounded and much of the town a smoking ruin. In 1862, Quantrill had been denied a Confederate commission by the Confederate Secretary of War, who labeled Quantrill's notions of war as 'barbarism.'
- **1900** - The Battle of Bergendal, near Vanwyksvlei, starts. Gen. Joachim Fourie's men force the 11th Hussars to retreat at 20.00, with 7 killed, 3 missing, presumed dead, and 26 wounded.
- **1918** - The Second Battle of the Somme begins.
- **1912** - Lord Roberts, commander-in-chief of the British forces during the 3rd Anglo-Boer War, congratulates Gen. Louis Botha on his appointment as honorary general in the British army.
- **1939** - The Soviet Union and Germany sign the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, a 10-year non-aggression treaty, with a secret addendum, to partition Poland.
- **1940** - Leon Trotsky, Russian Marxist revolutionary, political theorist and founder of the Red Army, assassinated at 62 by an ice-pick

- wielding Ramón Mercader.
- **1980** - The United States and Somalia sign an agreement giving US naval and air forces access to military facilities in the East African country in return for American military aid.
- **1994** - The last French troops pull out of Rwanda, ending their controversial humanitarian mission.
- **1998** - Angolan troops enter the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) war on Laurent Kabila's side.

## 22 August

- **1864** - The first Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field is signed by 12 countries. The international treaty, known as the Geneva Convention, also guarantees the neutrality of members of the Red Cross and is honoured in South Africa.
- **1922** - Michael Collins, Irish nationalist leader, killed in ambush by anti-treaty forces during the Irish Civil War at 31.
- **1934** - General Herbert Norman Schwarzkopf Jr (1934-2012) was born on this day. While serving as Commander-in-chief, United States Central Command, he led all coalition forces in the Gulf War in 1990/1991.

## 23 August

- **1901** - A group of eight surrendered Boer prisoners of war are shot by the Bushveld Carbineers and a German missionary, Reverend



**25 AUGUST 1911:** Vietnamese General Võ Nguyên Giáp was born on this day.

- C.A. Daniel Heese murdered, because he may have witnessed the atrocity.
- **1994** - Eugene Bullard, the only black pilot in World War I, is posthumously commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force.

## 24 August

- **1814** - During the War of 1812, Washington, D.C., was invaded by British forces that burned the Capitol, the White House and most other public buildings along with a number of private homes. The burning was in retaliation for the earlier American burning of York (Toronto).
- **1951** - The Mau Mau rebellion starts in Kenya.

## 25 August

- **1911** - Võ Nguyên Giáp (1911-2013) was born on this day. Giáp was a general in the Vietnam People's

Army and a politician. He is considered one of the greatest military strategists of the 20th century.

## 26 August

- **1944** - French General Charles de Gaulle enters Paris, which had formally been liberated the day before. As he entered the Place de l'Hotel, French collaborationists took a few sniper shots at him.
- **1966** - The People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), the armed wing of SWAPO, fought in a battle against South African occupying forces at Omugulugwombashe in northern South West Africa (Namibia).
- **1974** - A Defence Bill is passed in South Africa laying down penalties for any person or organization inciting anyone to avoid military service.
- **2011** - John McAleese, British SAS Trooper, Team leader during 1980 Iranian Embassy Siege, dies aged 62.

## 27 August

- **1914** - German Togo is occupied by British and French troops.
- **1916** - Romania declares war on Austria-Hungary, formally entering World War I. Romanian troops cross the border of the Austro-Hungarian Empire into the much-contested province of Transylvania.
- **1945** - US troops land in Japan after Japanese surrender.
- **1969** - Israeli commando force penetrates deep into Egyptian territory to stage

mortar attack on regional army headquarters in Nile Valley of Upper Egypt.

- **1979** - Louis Mountbatten, 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma, British naval officer and statesman, last Viceroy of India (1947), is assassinated by an IRA bomb on his boat in Ireland at 79.
- **1992** - Former commander of the Simon's Town naval base Dieter Gerhard is released from prison where he has been serving a life sentence since 1983 after being convicted of acting as an agent for the Soviet Union. He is deported to Switzerland.

## 28 August

- **1940** - The South African Air Force flying out from Kenya bombs Italian bases in Somaliland.
- **1941** - SS General Franz Jaeckeln marched more than 23,000 Hungarian Jews to bomb craters at Kamenets Podolsk, ordered them to undress, and riddled them with machine gun fire. Those who didn't die from the spray of bullets were buried alive under the weight of corpses that piled atop them. All told, more than 600,000 Jews had been murdered in Ukraine by war's end.

## 29 August

- **1792** - In one of the worst maritime disasters, 900 men drowned on the British battleship Royal George. As the ship was being repaired, a gust of wind allowed water to flood into open gun ports. The ship sank within minutes.

- **1848** - The Battle of Boomp-laats, where the British under Governor Harry Smith conquer the Voortrekkers under Commandant Andries W. Pretorius, takes place.

## 30 August

- **1900** - General Ben Viljoen releases about 2,000 British prisoners of war from the camp at Nooitgedacht.
- **1910** - Squadron Leader Roger Joyce Bushell (1910-1944) was a South African-born British military aviator, who became famous as the organiser of a mass escape from a German prisoner of war camp in 1944 was born on this day. The film *The Great Escape* was based on this event.
- **1998** - Troops allied with the government of Congo capture the strategic port town of Matadi from rebel forces trying to oust President Laurent Kabila.
- **1988** - South African troops are withdrawn from Angola.

## 31 August

- **1900** - Commandant Danie Theron captures a train and 30 soldiers at Klip Station, near the present-day Soweto.
- **1942** - The British army under General Bernard Law Montgomery defeats Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps in the Battle of Alam al-Halfa in Egypt, thereby stopping the German offensive in North Africa.
- **1981** - The US vetoes a UN Security Council resolution criticising South Africa for raids in Angola.

# Hipe!

## media

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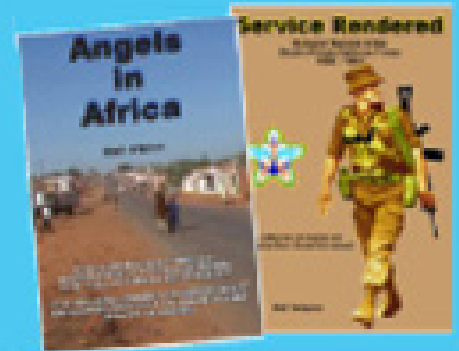
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