



BATTLEDRESS SHELLHOLE
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BATTLECRY NEWSLETTER

Hello and welcome to another edition of the Battledress Shellhole newsletter.

This year is whizzing by and I cannot believe that 3 months of the year are gone already! Summer is almost over as winter has started its fast approach. Never the less, it's a good time to catch up on what has been happening since the Special Edition newsletter which was distributed last year November 2018.



Sunset Call – Moth Ex-Old Bill Edwin Walter ‘Ben’ Darby



EDWIN WALTER 'BEN' DARBY
10 April 1927 – 04 February 2019

It was with deep regret that Battledress Shellhole announced the passing to Higher Service of Moth Ben Darby on 04 February 2019. Moth Darby had served as a previous Old Bill at Battledress Shellhole from 1989 -1992. Having seen active service in both the Royal Navy and the South African Navy, Moth Darby's name will forever be engraved in the Roll of Honour Board at Battledress Shellhole. Moths from both Battledress and Snoekie Shellholes attended Moth Darby's funeral and condolences were paid to Moth Darby's wife, Iris, his children and grandchildren. We will remember Him.

Condolences were also paid to Moth Warren Cowan whose father passed away, as well as to Moth John Lamont and his wife Denise on the passing of Denise's brother.

BIRTHDAYS

In the November Special Edition newsletter it was mentioned that Mothwa Alice Laubscher was celebrating her 90 years young mile stone birthday on 16 December, but Alice chose to celebrate her birthday amongst Moths, family and friends at the Battle of River Plate Breakfast the following day. Commander Ricky De Wet and wife, Helen, presented Alice with a bespoke carrot cake decked with "90" birthday candles.

Adj. Bridget Coney (FOFR), Mothwa Alice Laubscher and Moth Vanessa Chambers



Other birthdays celebrated this year have been:

January

01	Moth John Lamont
05	Moth Neil Bright
10	Commander Ricky De Wet
12	Deon Van Der Merwe (Friend of the Founders Room)
18	Moth Eric Staine
21	Moth Leon Haralambous
24	Moth Gavin Cooke

February

06	Moth Phil de Villiers
12	Ros Barnett (Friend of the Founders Room)
15	Moth Craig Cruikshank
21	Moth Les Smith

March

03	Moth Donald Oliver
06	Moth Mark Wiley
10	Chockie Herring (Friend of the Founders Room)
14	Moth Eric Fraser
20	Diane Potgieter (Friend of the Founders Room)
26	Moth Glyn Murrell
28	Helen de Wet (Good Comradeship Member)



Many congratulations and may there be many more candles on your cakes, though the fire brigade will have to be on standby!

SICK LIST

Making speedy recoveries to good health are:

FOFR Roger Farmer

Moth George van Willingh



Battle of the River Plate Breakfast



Moths/FOFR, family and friends enjoyed a wonderful breakfast of note on Monday, 17 December. It was a breakfast feast that was talked about for weeks afterwards. Deputy Commander Julie Denham welcomed everyone to the breakfast followed by the Adjutant Bridget Coney who said Grace.

Julie then called upon Moth John Lamont to give a brief history of the Battle of the River Plate. Special thanks were extended to everyone who made the breakfast not just possible, but for setting a high standard for next year's breakfast. Diarise it because you won't want to miss it.

Also celebrating a 20th anniversary of his Ordination is our Padre Moth Errol Sadler. Alice Laubscher was there at St George's Cathedral to share that moment with him and his wife Erna 20 years ago.

A special certificate presentation of Good Comradeship plus a “G” Badge was awarded to Norma Galvin (Moth Keith Galvin’s wife) by Deputy Commander Julie Denham at the breakfast. Norma has supported us by helping serve the food at many functions, helped in the kitchen and has assisted Alice Laubscher with the smooth running of the Moth Morning Markets. Well deserved Norma!



Christmas Cheer and Annual New Year’s Day Photographs

On 22 December, Battledress hosted its annual Christmas Cheer for Moths/Mothwa and FOFR. Before many people left for the Christmas holidays, near or far, Commander Ricky De Wet wished all present safe and happy festivities and to return in good health, in time for the annual Battledress Shellhole photographs on New Year’s Day. And what a turnout there was on New Year’s Day!

19 Battledress Moths were present for their photograph, whilst 36 Moths/Mothwa/FOFR were present for the combined Battledress members photograph.



Back Row (L to R) Moths : John Lamont, Eric Staine, Vanessa Chambers, Les Lancaster, Charlie Phillipson, Dirk Slingerland, Patrick O’Reilly, Leon Haralambous, Gavin Cooke
 Front Row (L to R) Moths: Skatie Fourie, Keith Galvin, Smudge Smith, Neil Bright, Ricky de Wet, Ena Burnett, Les Smith, Donald Oliver, Glyn Murrell, Richard Evans



Back Row (L to R): Alan Godsiff, 'Chockie' Herring, Keith Galvin, Adrianne Godsiff, Patrick O’Rielly, Roger Farmer, Penny McClimens, Gavin Cooke, Sue Bell, Charlie Phillipson, Dirk Slingerland, Trevor Simpson, Leon Haralambous
 Middle Row (L to R): Ricky de Wet, Helen de Wet, Kate Parr, Eric Staine, Vanessa Chambers, Les Lancaster, Denise Thompson, Gladys Curry, Mary Kosta, Joan Farmer, Glynn Murrell.
 Front Row (L to R): 'Skattie' Fourie, Shannon Bright, Neil Bright, Pat Smith, Denise Lamont, Ena Burnett, Bridget Coney, Les Smith, Don Oliver, Richard Evans, Brenda Murrell, 'Smudge' Smith (Front).

Battledress Shellhole's The Biggest Loser Competition

Sitting around the bar in the Founder's Room, comments were being made about having "a dry January (nothing to do with rain showers!)", or "I must cut down on eating carbs". So to encourage a healthy start to the new year, The Biggest Loser competition was launched at Battledress. The competition was for fun and all money raised from weigh-ins went to Battledress Shellhole's fund raising efforts.



On 02 January, 14 participants were weigh-ed by FOFR 'Nurse' Joan Farmer, and a total of 1 253 kilograms tipping the scale.

For the next six weeks, excited participants actually looked forward to their weigh-ins and either lost, gained or stayed the same weight. On 01 February, after 6 weigh-ins during the month of January, the new combined total was 1 225.2 kilograms, showing a huge loss of 27.8 kilograms in just a month.

The participants, all of whom are to be congratulated, were:

Men

Commander Ricky De Wet
Sgt. Maj. Moth Neil Bright
Moth Leon Haralambous
Moth Charlie Phillipson
Moth Donald Oliver
Moth Trevor Floyd

Women

Deputy Commander Julie Denham
Moth Vanessa Chambers
FOFR Mary Koster
FOFR Kate Parr
Pat Smith
Helen de Wet
Sue Bell
Moth Daphne Floyd (Cape Western Dugout Adjutant)



Not only was the 27.8 kg loss an amazing achievement, but the 14 participants raised an impressive R700 for their efforts. Congratulations to everyone who participated, and to Moth Donald Oliver who won the Biggest Loser (Male) and to Moth Vanessa Chambers (Female).

New Moth

The latest Moth to join Battledress Shellhole and who passed muster on 28 January is Moth Angelique Visser. Her husband, Henry, watched proudly as Moth Visser joined the 'ranks' at Battledress. Angelique currently serves at the Institute for Maritime Medicine in Simon's Town. She joined the South African Military Health Services in 1993 and is now the Operational Manager holding the rank of Major.

Burns Night



Celebrating Robbie Burns Night at Battledress Shellhole had become almost legendary. Memories of kilts, music by the Cape Town Caledonian Pipes and Drums Band, a few drams of whisky and of course the Haggis. Sadly, there was little interest in having a Burns Night in January, not least perhaps because the Shellhole lost its favourite Scottish sons, Moth Ronnie Gilbert to the Heavenly choir, and Moth Artie Elliott to Port Elizabeth. Let us hope in 2020, Robbie Burns will be toasted once again!

Snippets

Break-in at Shellhole

Battledress Shellhole had yet another break-in in January. Would-be opportunists removed a window in the men's toilet and attempted to break through the security gate to the stock room. Fortunately, they were not successful and the following morning Moths Richard Evans, Warren Cowan and Leon Haralambous were able to repair the damage and secure the toilet window area. SAPS were called and did manage to obtain a clear finger print which can hopefully identify one of the opportunists. Previously in 2018, thieves stole a large gas braai which had been donated by FOFR Roger Farmer from the Shellhole's outside braai area.

November Competition Winner

There was only one reply to the Special Edition November newsletter's competition and the winner was Tracy O'Reilly who won the R50 CNA gift voucher. Congratulations Tracy!



Farewell to Moth George Kleinhans

We say farewell and good luck to George on his transfer to Staaldak Shellhole in Montagu. We will miss our Toast Master for "Ons Land" at our monthly Shellhole meetings!

Honorary Member Len Taylor - "The Battledress Bugler"

Congratulations Len on becoming an Honorary Member of the Founder's Room. Len has played the Bugle at various ceremonial occasions and as part of the Dukes at our Remembrance parades over the years.

It is also an honour to recognize that Len played at MOTH Founder Charles Evenden (Moth "O"s) funeral. This is also a connection that is very dear to Bridget Coney who is the granddaughter of Moth "O".



Border Campaign Memorial Parade Boy's

On 3 February 13 Moths and FOFR from Battledress Shellhole attended the Border Boy's Campaign Memorial Parade which was hosted by Dawn Patrol Shellhole. Led by the Cape Town Caledonian Pipes and Drums band, a large number of Moths and Mothwas marched through the streets of Bergvliet. A short service to remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice during the border war followed the march.

Kevin Vos, an ex parabat, also gave a short, candid account of his Border service in Angola. His book "Salute The Eagle" was published as a novel but is based on his experiences of his war from joining the army at 17 years of age through to Operation Savannah, as well suffering with issues of PTSD, depression and his recovery back to normal life.

SS Mendi Memorial Service

On 21 February 1917, the SS Mendi, a troop ship, collided with RMS Darro off the coast of the Isle of White. The ship sank with 30 crew members and 616 black South African soldiers who were on their way to fight for the Allied cause of World War 1. Now embroiled in current political point scoring, the memorial service to honour the memories of the brave South African contingent was held on 24 February at the University of Cape Town. Also in honour of those who lost their lives on the SS Mendi, the Provincial Old Bill of CWPDP extended an invitation to Roll of Honour km Walk on 23 February.



HMS Birkenhead Service

A disaster on the sea in 1852 and which is commemorated each year at Danger Bay near Gansbaai is the sinking of HMS Birkenhead. Held on 26 February each year, Moths from Battledress Shellhole attended the service commemorating the loss of all but 193 of the 643 men, women and children on board the ship. Lacking the number of life boats to carry everyone to safety, the courage and bravery of the men who stood fast on the ship's deck on the premise of "women and children first" are immortalised in the poem by Rudyard Kipling:

Soldier An' Sailor Too

*"But to stand an' be still to the Birken'ead drill is a damn tough bullet to chew.
An' they done it, the Jollies – 'er Majesty's Jollies – soldier an' sailor too!
Now there isn't no room for to say ye don't know they 'ave proved it plain and true-
That whether it's Widow or whether it's ship, Victorier's work is to do
So they stood an' was still to the Birken'ead drill, soldier an' sailor too!"*



Who Are You?

Many of you have interesting stories to tell. Where you come from, what your role was doing your active service, what are your interests now? Each month in the newsletter a pen picture of either a Moth/Mothwa or FOFR will be included, so you don't just hear a name, you can put a face to it as well.

This month we are featuring a relative newcomer to Battledress, because he is eager to share his stories and interests, namely;



Moth Dirk Slingerland

Dirk joined the South African navy in 1959 and found his calling for his love of electronics. From years spent in cramped spaces in submarines, Dirk's 34 years in the navy gave him another kind of calling when he left – open spaces and a yearning to do something that made him to say "I never thought I'd be 60!"

While other friends thought him to be slightly crazy, Dirk at the time decided to celebrate his 60th birthday differently – abseiling down the world's highest natural commercial

abseiling site – Table Mountain! As Dirk explained, there are higher abseiling sites, but they are man-made construction, without the natural beauty of Table Mountain itself. The thrill, the exhilaration and the sheer awesomeness of completing the abseil is something he is deservedly proud of and eager to surpass – on another milestone birthday perhaps, but for now he's not breathing a word of it.

Would you like to share your story and interests in the March/April newsletter? Send your details and a photograph to battledress.shellhole@gmail.com and a telephone number on which you can be reached.

Until we meet again,

Yours in True Comradeship

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FOUNDERS ROOM OPENING TIMES

Wednesday 16h00 -20h00

Friday 17h00-22h00

Saturday 13h00 to 20h00

Sunday and Public Holidays 13h00-18h00

Closed Good Friday and Christmas Day

Monthly Quiz on the first Friday of the month
(General Knowledge and Musical Quiz is held on alternate months)

Bingo on the third Friday of the month