



**BATTLEDRESS SHELLHOLE**  
**CENTRAL CIRCLE, FISH HOEK**  
PO BOX 22033 FISH HOEK 7974  
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## **BATTLECRY! FEBRUARY 2020**

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the New Year and may it bring you everything you wish for yourselves, be it health, wealth and prosperity.

Thank you to those who sent in very positive comments about the newsletter. As long as you are enjoying it, I will keep on writing it – so it all depends on you, really! Congratulations to Tracey O'Reilly who won the R100 Woolworths voucher for correctly identifying one of the Rhodesian soldiers in the December newsletter. Many of you also expressed your appreciation for the selfless effort for the year end functions; the Battledress River Plate Breakfast\*, the Christmas Cheer Hampers and other incredible raffle prizes, and last but certainly not least, the HUGE Christmas donations to the Jones Safe House in Kommetjie from yourselves and Saveur Restaurants. It was a massive month of "In a world where you can be anything, be kind." You all deserve a round of applause. Apologies to Chockie Herring \* for leaving his name off the list of River Plate Breakfast chefs.



### **Sunset Call**

With prayers answered, there were no calls to Higher Service in January. Weather has been hot and humid and whilst the wind brought its own health related issues, none were serious enough to call out the Padre, or the Welfare Officer out.

### **Sick Parade**

The following Moths and FOFR need your best wishes for a speedy return to good health:

Moth Ena Burnett  
Moth Smudge Smith  
Moth Richard Evans  
Moth Phil De Villiers  
Moth Donald Oliver  
Moth George Van Willingh  
Moth Minnaar van der Merwe  
Moth Sam van der Poll  
Mothwa Pat Scott (wife of Moth Ian Scott)  
Liz Killian (widow of Battledress Moth Bill Killian)



Thanks to Padre Errol Sadler and Adjutant/Welfare Officer Moth Ian Scott who continue to visits those in need of prayers and compassion. The work done by both can be emotionally draining but they know how important the connection is, both physically and spiritually, reaching out to those in need.

\*Pat Scott has been seriously ill and special thoughts to Welfare Officer Ian Scott at this time.

## BIRTHDAYS

### February

06 Moth Phil de Villiers  
12 FOFR Ros Barnett  
15 Moth Craig Cruickshank  
21 Moth Les Smith

### March

03 Moth Donald Oliver  
06 Moth Mark Wiley  
09 GC (NM) Denise Thompson  
14 Moth Eric Fraser  
20 FOFR Diane Potgieter  
26 Moth Glyn Murrell  
28 GC (NM) Helen de Wet



Many happy returns to you all and have a wonderful year ahead.

## TRAINING

By Moth Keith Galvin

Dress Code and Conduct in the Founders Room.

Despite a recent article on the MOTH Dress Code at the Shellhole, it is again necessary to remind Moths, FOFR and respective visitors that the Dress Code and Conduct of persons visiting the Founders Room is contained in Battledress Shellhole Standing Orders Clauses 9, 10, 11 and 12. All Moths and FOFR should periodically refresh themselves with the provisions of these clauses. **The Founders Room is considered a "Battledress Shellhole MOTH Shrine" and should be respected as such.**

The Shellhole is **NOT a club, pub or café**. Common sense in appearance (Smart Casual) should therefore prevail when visiting the Founders Room. Casual Dress such as vests and barefoot will never be acceptable. Visitors should be made aware of the dress code or risk the embarrassment of being turned away. Caps are also not to be worn inside the Founder's Room.

It is also customary to **greet the Senior Moth present and all fellow Moths and/or FOFR** when visiting the Founders Room. Visitors must be signed into the Visitor's Book and be introduced accordingly. They must also leave when their host leaves the Shellhole.

## MOTH INDUCTIONS

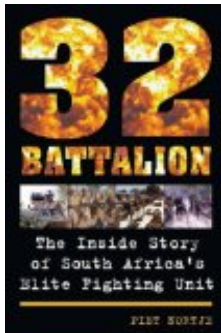
Recruits Andrew (Andy) Howie and Leonard (Len) Taylor were inducted into the MOTH Order at the monthly meeting on 06 February. Andy has the Pro Patria medal and was a serving member in an Ops area in the SA Navy. He and his wife, Cheryl, are keen supporters of Battledress's social events such as the darts evenings and weekend braais. Len Taylor is a member of the Reserve Forces and holds the Military Merit Medal. No stranger to Battledress's Founder's Room, Len was a member of the Dukes, along with Moths Len Smith and Ian Scott. He still plays the bugle at various ceremonial occasions over the years and as part of the Dukes at our Remembrance parades and at MOTH Founder Charles Evenden (Moth "O"s) funeral. Battledress Shellhole extends a warm welcome to both Andy and Len.



## Border Campaign Memorial

On 02 February, the Border Campaign Memorial Service was held at Dawn Patrol's Shellhole in Bergvliet. Remembering the South African Border War and those who fought the numerous battles in South West Africa and Angola, a high number of Moths were on parade, 18 from Battledress Shellhole.

The war was fought between 1966 – 1989 with South Africa in much the same position its northern counterpart, Rhodesia, had fought a bush war for similar reasons; keeping the South African government in power and keeping the communist threat from its borders. Historically, South Africa governed the previously held German territory of South West Africa. In 1974, a change in the Portuguese government and the withdrawal of its military presence in Angola saw an increased in-fighting between Angolan black political parties which were backed militarily by the Soviet Union and Cuba, and American and South African governments. Concerned about the destabilization within Angola, particularly the southern areas closest to the South African borders with ever increasing attacks and insurgencies into South West Africa, the South African government deployed its military forces to defend in Operation Savannah in 1975. America, reeling from its massive defeat and withdrawal from Vietnam withdrew its military support of UNITA forces, leaving South Africa without a superpower backing. Despite using the war to modernise its military weapons, vehicles, airplanes and helicopters, Cuba increased the number of its ground forces from 55000 in 1976 to over 350 000 by the end of the war in 1989. The culmination of the border war was at the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, the largest battle of the 23 year conflict. With casualties and claims of victory by both sides, a tri-lateral negotiation commenced resulting in South Africa's withdrawal from Angola and South West African territory, and the latter's independence as Namibia.



**Note: Several requests for South African Border Boys stories have been made but none have been forthcoming.**

A letter of thanks and appreciation to those who attended the Border Boys Service Parade was sent out to respective MOTH Shellholes and is copied below for the benefit of those who were unable to attend the Service.



Memorable Order of Tin Hats  
Cape Western Provincial Dugout  
P.O. Box 8 – Bergvliet – 7864

Tel: 021 799 6266  
Cell: 082 373 3934  
Email: dmoreira@hotmail.co.za

10 February 2020

The Old Bill, Shellholes Executives and Fellow Moths  
All Shellholes: Cape Western Provincial Dugout

### THANKS AND APPRECIATION BORDER CAMPAIGN MEMORIAL SERVICE

Greetings Old Bills and Fellow Moths,

The Cape Western Provincial Dugout Executive would like to extend sincere thanks and appreciation to every Moth, friend of the Moth, fellow veterans, family of those who have lost loved ones, family and visitors for attending the Border Campaign Memorial Service held on 2 February 2020 at Dawn Patrol Shellhole.

Weskus Quartel Shellhole opted for a special memorial service, which was well attended and a true reflection of living the Three Ideals of the Order; True Comradeship, Mutual Help and Sound Memory. Well done Weskus Quartel!

At the same time, the Dugout Committee regrets the disrespectful behaviour of some Moths during the proceedings at Dawn Patrol. The matter is under investigation and will be addressed in due course.

Yours in True Comradeship

Moth Deon van den Berg  
Office: Provincial Old Bill

## Snippet: The Parade Ground



After the battle, when retreat was sounded and the unit was re-assembled to call the roll and count the dead, a hollow square was formed. The dead were placed within the square and no one used this area as a thoroughfare. Today the Parade Ground represents this square, and hence a unit's dead. It is considered to be hallowed ground soaked with the blood of our fallen, and the area is respected as such.

Saluting The Trooper at the parade ground at 1RLI (Rhodesia Light Infantry) in Salisbury, Rhodesia, was a mark of respect to the fallen. Most army recruits, men and women, completed their basic training at 1 RLI's barracks and anyone caught not saluting The Trooper could be seen being drilled on the parade ground by the RSM!



## We Will Remember Them

### Burns Night 1830 at Battledress Shellhole

What an incredible evening at Battledress Shellhole on 01 February, celebrating (Robbie) Burns Night. The evening was a complete **“Sold Out”** Scottish affair well before the evening. Determined to hold Burns Night, Deputy Commander Moth Julie Denham, was even more pleased when the function became a



fund raiser for long time Battledress friend, Pipe Major Tony Reis and the Cape Town Caledonian Pipe Band who have been supporters of Battledress Shellhole and Moths at every parade in the last decade. Returning the spirit of camaraderie and friendship, Moth Commander Ricky De Wet, was Master of Ceremonies for the evening and thanked Tony and the band for their ongoing support. The Battledress Hall and tables was bedecked with Scottish regalia, with an ambience Robbie Burns

would have been proud of. The huge effort into decorating the Hall for the event was second to none. Thanks to everyone that assisted and also to Cecelia van der Merwe.

With the Pipe Band playing the rousing Highland Cathedral on entering the Shellhole, dinner guests were treated to an inspiring 10 minute performance of bagpipes and drums. Moth Ena Burnett, seated at the top table, gave a faultless rendition of “Selkirk Grace” ahead of the Parade of the Haggis, led by Caledonian Band member Wandisile Dalisile bearing the haggis, and whisky bearer, Brogan Reis. In her Address To A Haggis, Caledonian Band member Emily Craven, dagger in hand, stabbed the (not so) wee haggis which signaled the commencement of the evening's dinner to commence.





Flower of Scotland, and an emotional Auld Lang Syne. Truly, an evening to be remembered.

The haggis was made by Chef Gary O'Neill of Saveur Restaurant in Simon's Town and barring one or two vegans, the haggis was toasted with whisky and eaten with great gusto, even by those tasting the dish for the first time. Singing along to the Star of Robbie Burns, whisky and various raffles kept the 100 strong attendees in good spirits.

David Harkness, John McGill, John van Niekerk and Deputy Commander Moth Julie Denham gave the traditional Burns Night Toasts, with appropriate whisky-charged glasses; Commander Ricky de Wet thanked everyone who had contributed to making the evening a huge success. The Pipe Band played out with

## Naval Disasters

The Sinking of the SAS President Kruger – “Out of the storm came Courage”

Commander Ricky de Wet, in an impromptu gesture at Battledress Shellhole, raised a toast to absent shipmates for the 38th anniversary of the sinking of the South African Navy frigate, SAS President Kruger, which sank on 18 February 1982. Leaving Simon's Town naval base with 193 crew members on board, the PK, as it is fondly remembered, was partaking in naval military exercises together with the SAS President Pretorius, the replenishment ship the SAS Tafelberg and the submarine SAS Emily Hobhouse. The PK was struck by the Tafelberg at approximately 0400 in the morning of 18 February, sinking in just 45 minutes, 78 nautical miles (144 kms) south west of Cape Point. Whilst the majority of the survivors were rescued by the SAS President Pretorius, 16 of the PK's crew members lost their lives; some to the impact of the collision, others to drowning and one to a possible shark attack as his body was not recovered. At the subsequent inquest into the sinking of the PK, the ship's Captain was found to be “unqualified for the role and lacking seamanship”. The disaster resulted in both the unnecessary loss of life, but also the flagship of the SA Navy itself during South Africa's Border War.



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**We Will Remember Them.**

## Birkenhead Service, Danger Bay

On 26 February 1852 while transporting troops to Algoa Bay, the HMS Birkenhead sank at Danger Bay near Gaansbaai. With an insufficient number of life boats, only 193 of the 643 people on board survived the tragedy, with the ship's soldiers ordered to "stand fast" as women and children were first into the useable life boats. The order became famous and known as the Birkenhead Drill, encapsulating courageous behavior in impossible circumstances and was immortalized in the poem "Soldier an' Sailor Too", written by Rudyard Kipling:

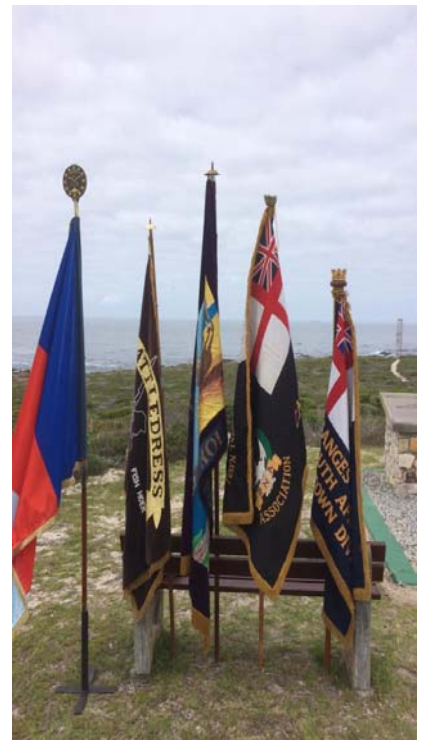


*To take your chance in the thick of a rush, with firing all about,  
Is nothing so bad when you've cover to 'and an' leave an' liking to shout,  
But to stand and be still to the Birken'ead drill is a damn tough bullet to chew,  
An' they done it, - the Jollies, - 'er Majesty's Jollies soldier and sailor too!  
Their work was done when it 'and't begun; they was younger nor me and you;  
Their choice it was plain between drownin' in 'eaps an' being mopped by the screw,  
So they stood an' be still to the Birken'ead Drill, soldier an' sailor too*

The wreck, lying at just 30 metres below the surface, was rumoured to be carrying gold coins but many searches by treasure hunters failed to find any gold.

In 1895 the lighthouse was erected at Danger Point, warning ships to be aware of the treacherous reef.

6 Battledress Moths attended the Birkenhead Service this year. Commander Ricky de Wet layed a wreath on behalf of Battledress Shellhole.



## The Movies

Some of the most famous (and infamous) film star careers were made after WW II. Do you recall Bridge on The River Kwai? Or, The Great Escape? What about The Longest Day? The Battle of Midway, Twelve O'Clock High, Patton, or The Guns of Navarone, Carve Her Name With Pride? Who could ever forget ZULU? More recently, movies like Saving Private Ryan, Inglourious Bastards, Good Morning Vietnam, and of course movies set in Africa, Hotel Rwanda, Raid on Entebbe, South African war and bush war movies like At Thy Call (about the bush war in Angola), Stories, Shadows & Dust (a documentary of servicemen's experiences in the bush war), Boetie Gaan Border Toe! and Boetie op Maneuvers.



Still in Africa, the film Wild Geese, based on the in/famous mercenary career of Lieutenant Colonel Mike "Mad Mike" Hoare. After WW II, Hoare left the British Army in 1948 and pursued a military career as a leader of mercenaries in the Congo. In 1981, Hoare and his group of mercenaries attempted a coup in the Seychelles but were foiled in their attempt and Hoare suffered massive embarrassment and was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for his farcical coup attempt, fleeing the Seychelles in a hijacked plane back to South Africa. "Mad Mike" or "Foie Gras" Mike died on 02 February in Durban at the age of 100.

## 1917 – The Movie

On the movie circuit at the moment and one which did well at the recent 2020 Oscars, is 1917. If you have ever wondered what the conditions and experiences of troops in the First World War trenches was like, this movie, like the Peter Jackson documentary "They Shall Not Grow Old", leaves no doubt as to the horrendous, appalling trench warfare of 1917.



### In Loving Memory

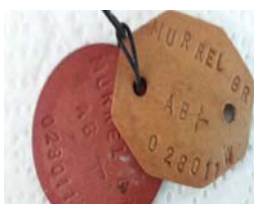
**75123 Private Thomas Lewis Jones**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Welsh Regiment**  
**Ypres 1917**

## Dog Tags – courtesy of Moth Glyn Murrell

Following on from the movie theme, in "Dunkirk", a French soldier, separated from his platoon and desperate to escape the beaches, removes and wears the dog tags from a dead British soldier in order to try and get on a rescue ship.

In an article sent in by Moth Glyn Murrell, the earliest discs of identifying a soldier dates back to Sparta and Romans. In many respects, the design of a metal disc on a leather string has not changed much over the centuries.

Whenever wars are fought there is a business behind it. Making identification tags was no exception. From the earliest tags made of lead, followed by wood, brass, asbestos fiber stainless steel and aluminum, factories manufactured the tags which were stamped with a soldier's name, number, unit, and sometimes religion, and in later years, blood type. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, soldiers wore two tags; in the event of a soldier's death, one tag would remain with the body and the second tag would be returned to the soldier's family.



### Rhodesia

Rhodesia used two WW2 British-style compressed asbestos fibre tags, a No. 1 octagonal (grey) tag and a No. 2 circular (red) tag, stamped with identical information. The red tag was supposedly fireproof and the grey tag rotproof. The following information was stamped on the tags: Number, Name, Initials, & Religion; Blood Type was stamped on reverse. The air force and BSAP often stamped their service on the reverse side above the blood group.

## South Africa



The South African Defence Force use two long, rectangular stainless steel tags with oval ends, stamped with serial number, name and initials, religion, and blood type.

Pictured is a SA Navy WW II tag.

### Snippets: DNA Identification of Sailors and Airmen

As previously mentioned in an earlier edition of Battlecry! it was mentioned that through the use of DNA, remains of soldiers found in WW I graves in France had been identified. Now, a sailor killed on the USS Oklahoma in the Battle of the Midway in 1941 has been identified, 78 years later.

In 1943, Doris Miller (and you thought a Boy Named Sue was bad!), was a mess attendant in the US Navy. Politics prevented Miller from being anything but a mess attendant in the segregated armed forces. After acts of heroism at Pearl Harbour when his ship was attacked, he was the first African American to receive the Navy Cross. As the news of his heroism spread, the US began enlisting African Americans into general service. Miller was killed in 1943 when his ship was torpedoed. 77 years later, the USS Navy announced his remains had been identified and, a new aircraft carrier in the US Navy was launched and the first to be named after an African American: the USS Doris Miller.



Recently, the remains of a British airman, Sergeant Charles Bell went missing 72 years ago in a Short Sterling BK 716. The remains of the plane and that of Sergeant Bell were found in Lake Markameer, Amsterdam. Authorities are trying to find any living relatives of Sergeant Bell other men found in the plane and will attempt a recovery of the plane in March this year.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT - RAT PACKS



Watching a documentary on the SAS a few nights ago, I was somewhat in awe at the contents of the soldiers "rat packs" whilst on a 30 km hike, carrying full kit. It brought back some memories of Rhodesian rat packs which were always 'interesting'. Soldiers became culinary magicians whilst in the bush. Unlike their SADF counterparts who were spoiled with tins of Lucky Star sardines Fray Bentos, the "Jam Stealer Gift Boxes" (a nod to the logistics/stores personnel), soldiers could always count on the following items to chew over; 200gr tins of hamburgers, chicken mornay, spaghetti, baked beans, corned beef, orange segments and condensed milk. Dry rations were potato, rice, curry powder, milk powder, tea and sugar and of course, biscuits which were so hard they were referred to as 'dog' biscuits, impossible to eat unless soaked in water for a long time. By virtue of a box of Lion matches, meals were cooked in stainless steel containers with many a soldier's mantra being "Contemplation ... Concentration ... Constipation"!



## FANYs

If you heard of one specialised voluntary service in the war years which was formed in 1907 and by 1918, its members which included resistance fighters Noor Inayat and Violet Szabo, were awarded 17 military medals, 27 Croix de Guerre and a Legion d'Honneur, then you'd be correct in knowing the



service was the FANYs, or the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry.

Inayat and Szabo were just two of the known 39 women who operated behind enemy lines for the SOE – Special Operations Executive – and who were captured and executed by the German Gestapo.

The history of the FANYs tells of bravery, and heroism during appalling

frontline conditions, particularly in the First World War when nurses were deployed to assist the wounded and assist in field hospitals while battles raged. Working not only as nurses but also as ambulance drivers, mechanics, setting up relief hospitals or soup kitchens. The FANYs continued to provide additional services as Coders and Decoders, Wireless Operators, running safe houses for resistance members and continued training new recruits who joined the all-female independent Corps.



## Woolworths Gift Voucher Winner



Congratulations to Tracey O'Reilly who won the R100 Woolworths gift voucher by identifying one of the "Then and Now" Rhodesian soldiers in the December 2019 newsletter. Many people said they were not aware of the competition – it just indicates who reads the newsletter and is on the ball to send through replies. A number of printed copies, aside from the email format are available in the Founders Room. Well done, Tracey and enjoy the Woolworths voucher.

## Joker Draw

The latest Joker Draw jackpot took place at Battledress Shellhole on Friday 14 February. The draw fell on



Valentine's Day and John 'The Joker' Lewis, dressed appropriately and wore his hearts on his sleeves. There was palpable excitement on the evening when the four lucky ticket holders held their breath whilst their cards were turned over and ..... NO winner! The amount to be won at the next Joker draw on Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> March will be over R2000. Can you afford not to buy a



ticket and perhaps be the jackpot winner? Remember, you have to be in it to win it, and be in attendance when the tickets are draw.



## Butterflies

Earlier this year, the Butterflies made a trip to the Slave Lodge at the Company Gardens in Cape Town, a popular venue with local and overseas visitors. Bridget Coney said “There is so much to see of nature let alone the museums and the Art Gallery, beautiful statues, cheeky little squirrels and a family of Egyptian Geese in front of the SA Art Gallery.” The Slave Lodge housed slaves for 31 years and was known as the South African Cultural History Museum before being renamed, The Slave Lodge in 1998, becoming an independent cultural museum in 2000.

The Slave Lodge itself can be visited where a few items brought up from a slave shipwreck can be viewed as part of an on-going project just off Clifton Beach. Shocking accounts of the number of slaves who drowned whilst shackled in chains, and an example of the cruelty of the times is one of the

Lodge’s highlighting today’s human rights issues. The abolition of slavery in the Cape colony was abolished on 01 January 1834, despite the lucrative trading of slaves between the British colonies being banned in 1807.



## MOTH and Social Events in March

02 Exco Meeting

05 Moths Monthly Shellhole Meeting

06 Music Quiz

### 14 Battledress 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary/St Patrick’s Day Celebrations

Regular social get togethers are back at the Shellhole. These include:

Weekend Braais

Joker Draw

Bingo

Darts

General Knowledge & Music Quiz evenings

MOTH Morning Market – Next one is on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April (no market in March)

Please note that FOFR Pat Coombs has taken over doing the Moth Markets due to Pat Scott’s illness and their move to the Haven.

If you wish to book a table phone Pat on 083-383-4000.

## Who Are You?

### Moth Vanessa Chambers

Shw mae, shwd ych chi, pawb? No, you do not have to book a Specsavers’s appointment; it is Moth Vanessa Chambers, Battledress’s Ragbill, greeting you in Welsh. Originally from a small Welsh village called Ystradgynlais, Vanessa moved to Rhodesia with her family in 1965 and her first job was working in the Central Intelligence Organisation in Salisbury. Vanessa subsequently joined the Rhodesian (RWS) Army, seeing active service during her years as a NCO and whilst on her Officer Cadet course.

Receiving her commission in 1979, she served at Army HQ, Armoured Cars Regiment and (“for my sins”) at the Corps of Chaplains, inclusive of Social Services which provided trauma and social counselling for soldiers.

Moving to South Africa, Vanessa pursued her passion for people by completing her BA degree in Abnormal Psychology, Criminology and History, all of which stood her in good



stead to follow a career in Human Resources, capping her career as a Human Resources Director of a call centre company with more than 2500 managers and staff. Retiring to the city she loves the most, Cape Town, Vanessa loves writing, music, reading, online Scrabble, and is currently researching her Welsh family-tree ancestry, discovering relations who were coal miners, blacksmiths and university lecturers and even someone arrested for larceny (Not Guilty, M'lud!"

Pob hwyl (So long)

Until we meet again,

*Vanessa Chambers*

Battlecry! Rag Bill

Moth Vanessa Chambers

Email: [battledress.shellhole@gmail.com](mailto:battledress.shellhole@gmail.com)

Website: [www.moth.org.za](http://www.moth.org.za)



### 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)

Joker Draw on the second Friday of the month

Bingo on the third Friday of the month

Darts on the last Friday of the month

Weekend braais

The above are normally held every month except in the month of January when the Shellhole functions are on a break, but may change as and when needs be.

SPORT VIEWING TIMES ARE ON THE SHELLHOLE NOTICE BOARD

Approved opening times will be adjusted for certain events, functions and televised sporting events as per the Shellhole Notice Board.