

Edition 42 - Bullsheet - December 2013

Wie nie kan lees nie moet maar prentjies kyk!

Marshal Smuts Shellhole - Since 1946 - Somerset West

MOTH BACK-O'-THE-LINE TRADITION

"Many Shellholes having been formed in Durban and district, it became our duty to book the big Town Hall for our first MOTH Armistice Rally, 11th November 1927. It began with Teddy Rose, Jock Harley, I and others, preparing a programme for a back-o'-the-line concert."
Moth 'O' – Old Soldiers Never Die

THE FUNCTION OF THEATRE ENTERTAINMENT DURING WORLD WAR ONE: By Larry Collins

"The usual location for entertainments was at depots and rest camps in the rear, but there was always the YMCA canteen hut situated a short distance behind the front-line trenches. At one end of the hut stood the ubiquitous piano, which was intended as an aid to the singing of hymns at church services – but it was not always light airs or hymns for which it provided accompaniment!

The battalion canteen shows varied in quality. They included crude comedians as well as singers. They were often organised, wrote a reporter, by '*some grey-haired old member of the permanent staff*' who had a walrus moustache and '*probably sported ribbons of the Zulu campaign and the Boer War*'. He had the unenviable task of acting as Master of Ceremonies at these boisterous and bawdy entertainments. The division concert parties were altogether more sophisticated affairs. The divisional concert troupe drew men from different regiments and corps, and was judged to be of such importance that its provision became a statutory requirement in some base camps.

The staple diet of all concerts was the songs, especially those in which the troops had the opportunity to join in the chorus. The soldiers needed to laugh and sing as a release from the tensions of trench life and the stench of death. Most of the division concert parties mirrored the Pierrot troupes that performed in the music halls and at the end of the pier at seaside resorts. The standard dress of ruffles and skull cap was thus a common feature of military concert parties. Many of the troupes were run by ex-pros and it was they who, through their theatrical connections, obtained the requisite costumes and props. The assembling of a cast was a constant problem, and it was difficult to maintain a permanent theatre company due to the movement of battalions and the ever-increasing casualty list. The losses were not always attributable to the enemy; on one occasion the concert party producer was relieved to hear that the baritone had been released from '*clink*' in time to do the show.

BULLSHEET in SHORT

Sunday 15 December: Christmas Lunch at Shellhole

BIRTHDAYS

06 December 1937:
Quartermaster Brian Simmonds

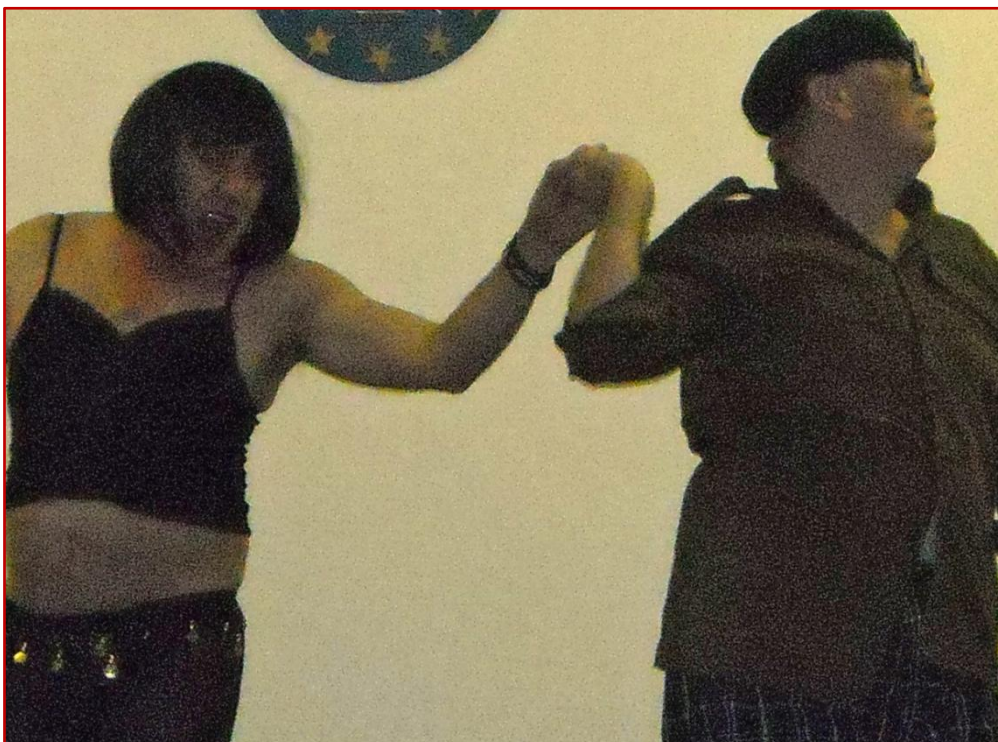
22 December 1931: Moth Angus Walker

23 December 1926: Moth Daphne Foster-Sutherland

At division level, auditions were held. Musicians, singers, and comedians were not too hard to find, although the quality varied. But the show stopper was always the female impersonator. So when a young Highland Light Infantry soldier, who had worked professionally as a female impersonator, turned up for audition, he immediately became part of the concert party. A problem arose when his division had to move and the remaining division wanted to retain him, as he was the star of the show. The latter, in order to keep the impersonator, offered to exchange *'her'* for *'two radial machine-gun mountings'*. The offer was rejected, so they kidnapped the performer. This caused considerable enmity between the two divisional commanders; a problem finally resolved when the army commander was invited to a show. It was pointed out to the high-ranking guests that the young Highlander was of more use entertaining the troops; they agreed and he was transferred."

Within the Cape Western Provincial Dugout, Red Barn Tavern of the Seas is the only Shellhole that currently upholds this worthy tradition. According to Moth Peter Drayton the Shellhole has been hosting an annual concert for at least the past fifteen years. This year Marshal Smuts also entered an act, consisting of Moths Adriaan van Zyl and Bob Fisher; choreographed under the watchful eye of Playbill Chantèl Marais. Judging by the fact that the spectators called for an encore, it must have been a resounding success! Included for the evening was a lovely meal of Bangers, mash and peas!

Female impersonator Adriaan van Zyl and Bob Fisher entertaining the audience



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2013

Marshal Smuts again hosted a well organised and supported Memorial Parade on Sunday the 10th of November. Due to the Somerset West Town Hall being used on the day for voter registration, the Parade and Service was conducted at the Shellhole premises.

Chairperson of Subcouncil 8 of the City of Cape Town, Councillor Stuart Pringle delivered the welcoming address and laid a wreath on behalf of the citizens of the Helderberg. Other honoured guests included Mrs Lorraine Wehmeyer, Mrs Adane van Brede and World War Two Veterans, Christie Jooste, George Mann, Harry Bent, Malcolm Bouwer, Daphne Foster-Sutherland and Jimmy Seaman. Poppy Day collections on the day amounted to R570.00. The Cape Town Caledonian Pipe Band again out did themselves whilst the S.A. Naval College performed the military duties!



Marshal Smuts Shellhole Old Bill

I must sincerely congratulate you, and the members of the Shellhole, for a hugely successful Memorial Parade on Sunday 10 November. The Parade was well organised and extremely well conducted and it was a pleasure to mingle with your guests afterwards and partake in such a sumptuous feast!

I felt particularly honoured, and privileged, to lay a wreath on behalf of the Rhodesian Army Association and I did so with a mixture of pride, and pain, as I

thought of the thousands of Rhodesian men and woman who gave up their lives in the two World Wars and the Rhodesian War of Independence. I thank you, most earnestly, for this opportunity.

My wife Eleanor joins me in thanking you and your members for your wonderful hospitality. Sincerely, Trevor Des Fountain

REMEMBERED DOORS

By the late Moth Widow Dulcie Buston (18 February 1919 to 24 June 2013)

Maybe I should start with one that comes to mind from my childhood years on the farm. It was a plain green, ever open door that lead to a gun room from a long vine-covered stoep. It was also our school room with a long narrow table down the middle with drawers at either end in which we kept our pens and pencils; my brother and I sitting opposite one another. The gun rack with all those dangerous rifles and shotguns which we were never allowed to touch, at our backs. I hated being taught at home and could not wait to escape through that plain green doorway; call up the dog and be away.

The next door I recall more affectionately was a big white door with glass panes at the top and was approached through a wicket gate, up a tiled path and steps into the large hallway of the house I shared with various other lively, young office workers. It was a cool and inviting space with couches, cushions, chairs, but best of all was the mail board hanging on the wall over a polished mahogany table our letters stuck in criss-crossed tapes. It was always worth dashing back at lunchtime just in case to see whether there was a letter from home!

To reach our front door in the Far East, you had to cross the ubiquitous monsoon ditch by a small bridge and up wide steps to a rather imposing, ornately carved front door that was lit by a Chinese lantern hanging in the archway of the porch. It is hot and sultry outside, the air heavy with the scent of frangipane but cooling on crossing the threshold with the ceiling fans turning. My husband, resplendent in his white sharkskin jacket, stands pouring drinks for our guests, for it is party time in Singapore!

Memories of living in the Middle East with my young family drift in and I remember going one evening to unlock and open the rather shabby door to our ground floor apartment. My son was returning from cub scouts and he was followed in by a strange Arab man who accosted me whilst I ran down the long passage to our lounge. I was terrified and screamed my lungs out until neighbours started opening their doors and he thankfully took fright, disappearing into the night.

Back in chilly England, going shopping one Christmas Eve with two excitable children in a department store comes to mind. They are whizzing round in the revolving doors giggling and laughing at my vain attempts to stop them whilst other shoppers look on and good naturedly grin while I manage to take control.

The door to our long-time marital home is in a shady tree-lined street. A short path leads onto a wide step to a Georgian style white double door flanked by urns of hydrangeas. A grieving mother, I unbolt the door and stand aside whilst my beloved son's coffin may pass through to the awaiting hearse. Some months later in the sunshine, the same doors open to reveal my radiant daughter in her bridal gown, her proud father at her side, laughing and waving to the neighbours who have gathered to admire, take photographs and wish her luck.

Oh yes, a different kind of door this time. I vividly recall heavy train doors slamming in concertina fashion along carriages of the commuter express I board, having stood on the edge of the platform peering down the icy tracks on cold winter mornings. My feet frozen and the sun barely over the horizon, misty vapours from a nearby lake give way to a v-formation of flying Canada geese; they take off honking on their long flight south.

An old woman now, I live alone in my new house, its door being blue, glass-panelled with a brass knocker. It is set in the customary stoep garlanded with bougainvillea. My husband has gone to his resting place through this door; but I don't know which door will open for my own final farewell!

GOLF AT THE WHITE HOUSE

By Adam Schupak – Golf Week

As golfer in chief, President Dwight D. Eisenhower brought golf to the White House lawn and played nearly 800 rounds while in office. Not since Mary Queen of Scots has a head of state done so much to popularize the game. Fred Corcoran, the legendary golf promoter, once said Eisenhower's devotion to golf was *"the greatest thing that ever happened to the game."*

For being the game's unofficial ambassador, Eisenhower was selected for induction to the World Golf Hall of Fame in the Lifetime Achievement Category. In a word, Eisenhower inspired. Together with Arnold Palmer, their charisma changed how Americans viewed golf and sparked the nation's interest in the sport. Don Van Natta Jr., author of *"First Off the Tee,"* wrote that when Eisenhower assumed office in 1953, an estimated 3.2 million Americans played golf; by 1961, that number had doubled. *"Whatever remained to be done to remove the last traces of the average man's carefully nurtured prejudice against a game originally linked with the wealthy and aloof was done by President Eisenhower,"* historian Herbert Warren Wind, a Hall of Fame member, wrote. *"Probably few men in the long history of the game have ever been bitten by the golf bug as badly as the president."*

In 1925, Eisenhower played his first round while attending the Army's Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He had a putting green installed on the White House grounds. Near the end of most days, Eisenhower slipped on his golf spikes, grabbed his putter, wedge and 8-iron and marched to the South Lawn, cleats clacking.

Golfers could identify with Ike, *"a congenital slicer"* with an adequate short game and an unreliable putter. Like a regular duffer, Ike loved the game no matter how badly he played and sneaked in a round whenever possible. He drew the line, however, when asked to divulge his score. *"If I don't improve,"* Eisenhower once said, *"I'm going to pass a law that no one can ask me my golf score."* The president's preoccupation with the game became a national punch line. Democrats joked that Eisenhower put in a 36-hole workweek. That often was true. He played Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings at Burning Tree Country Club.

Of Eisenhower's several course associations, he is most closely connected to Augusta National Golf Club. Eisenhower was a member there for 21 years and visited 29 times in his two terms, playing 210 rounds, according to presidential records. Eisenhower's love of golf is spotlighted each year during The Masters when announcers note several features of Augusta National named after the president.

Ike's Pond is part of the Par-3 Course at Augusta; named after Eisenhower because he's the one who suggested impounding a spring to form the pond (he wanted a secluded fishing spot). The Eisenhower Cabin is used by club members and was added to Augusta in 1953.

With a handicap ranging between 14 and 18, Eisenhower broke 80 four times at Augusta in eight years. He might've achieved the feat more often if not for a loblolly pine tree located left-centre of the 17th fairway, which gave him fits. At a meeting of the club's governors, Eisenhower proposed chopping it down. *"I quickly adjourned the meeting to prevent a mutiny in the club's ranks,"* said the late Clifford Roberts, Augusta's co-founder. The Eisenhower Tree stands today.



Born October 14, 1890 in Denison, Texas, Eisenhower was a soldier, politician and statesman. He graduated from West Point, rose to five-star general and commanded Allied Forces in Europe in World War II. Elected in 1952, Eisenhower served two terms as the 34th U.S. president. After leaving office, Eisenhower was asked how life had changed since being president: *"I don't get as many short putts,"* he answered. Eisenhower died on March 28, 1969. Arnold Palmer, who had become a dear friend, feted Eisenhower at the induction. Said Palmer: *"Other than my father, no man had a bigger impact on my life than President Dwight David Eisenhower; whose time with me I will always cherish!"*