



# THE BULLYTIN

Official News Letter of Field Marshal Shellhole



# SEPTEMBER 2017

Dear Moth's,

This will be my first time at compiling "The Bullytin" Please feel free to send me articles and photographs. Your contributions will be appreciated.

YUTH,

Moth Leigh Roberts

## Battle of Cuito Cuanavale 1988

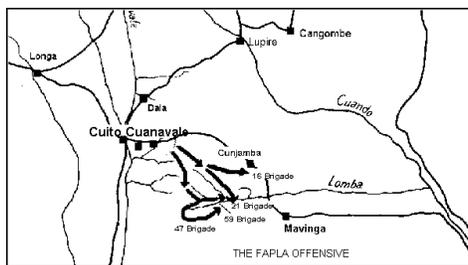
The **Battle of Cuito Cuanavale** in 1987-88 was a crucial event of the Angolan Civil War and the South African Border War. It comprised a series of engagements between the Cuban-backed People's Armed Forces of Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) on one side, and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) with help of the South African Defense Force (SADF) on the other side. It took place near the important military airfield of Cuito Cuanavale and the adjacent small town of the same name, in order to block a large-scale FAPLA attack against UNITA's primary operating bases at Jamba and Mavinga. Following a number of failed attempts to take the settlements in 1986, eight FAPLA brigades mustered for a final offensive "*Operação Salutando Outubro*" in August 1987 with extensive auxiliary support from one of Angola's closest military allies, the Soviet Union. They were joined by a number of Cuban armoured and motorised units, who had become more directly committed to the fighting for the first time during Cuba's lengthy intervention in the civil war. Soviet weapons deliveries to FAPLA were also accelerated, including over a hundred T-62 tanks and strike aircraft seconded from the Warsaw Pact's strategic reserve.

South Africa, which shared a common border with Angola through the contested territory of South West Africa (current Namibia), was then determined to prevent FAPLA from gaining control of Jamba and allowing insurgents of SWAPO to operate in the region. *Salutando Outubro* prompted the South African military to underpin the defence of Jamba and launch Operation Moduler with the objective of stopping FAPLA's offensive. The Angolan government and its Soviet advisory personnel had failed to make contingency plans for South African intervention, despite advance warnings from Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC of an imminent SADF counterattack.

The campaign which followed culminated in the largest battle on African soil since World War II, and according to some accounts, the second largest clash of African armed forces in history. FAPLA had poor discipline yet was well-equipped, and Cuban air power proved to be a decisive advantage over the SADF. Nevertheless, the advancing

FAPLA forces were frequently encircled and destroyed in running clashes with the much nimbler South African armoured cars. The FAPLA offensive was halted with heavy casualties, and abandoned shortly thereafter. As the SADF had a political imperative to avoid casualties wherever possible, and had orders to avoid the town unless it fell into their hands without a fight, it therefore made no attempt to follow up on its advantage and to capture the town. Both sides claimed victory.

BATTLE STATISTICS	CUBA/FAPLA	SADF
Tanks Destroyed	94	3
Troop carriers destroyed	100	5
Logistical vehicles destroyed	389	1
Soldiers killed	4785	31
Planes shot down	9 Migs	1 Merage



"In early October the Soviet-Fapla offensive was smashed at the Lomba River near Mavinga. It turned into a headlong retreat over the 120 miles back to the primary launching point at Cuito Cuanavale. In some of the bloodiest battles of the entire civil war, a combined force of some 8,000 Unita fighters and 4,000 SADF troops destroyed one Fapla brigade and mauled several others out of a total Fapla force of some 18,000 engaged in the three-pronged offensive. Estimates of Fapla losses ranged upward of 4,000 killed and wounded. This offensive had been a Soviet conception from start to finish. Senior Soviet officers played a central role in its execution. Over a thousand Soviet advisers were assigned to Angola in 1987 to help with Moscow's largest logistical effort to date in Angola: roughly \$1.5 billion in military hardware was delivered that year. Huge quantities of Soviet equipment were destroyed or fell into Unita and SADF hands when Fapla broke into a disorganized retreat... The 1987 military campaign represented a stunning humiliation for the Soviet Union, its arms and its strategy. It would take Fapla a year, or maybe two, to recover and regroup. Moreover the Angolan military disaster threatened to go from bad to worse. As of mid-November, the Unita/SADF force had destroyed the Cuito Cuanavale airfield and pinned down thousands of Fapla's best remaining units clinging onto the town's defensive perimeters."



#### References:

- Breytenbach, W. (1997). Cuito Cuanavale revisited, *Africa Insight*, vol. 27, no 1.
- Gleijeses, P. (2008). Cuito Cuanavale revisited, *Mail & Guardian*, 25 February.
- Liebenberg, B.J. & Spies, S.B. (eds) (1993). *South Africa in the 20th Century*, Pretoria: Van Schaik Academic.
- Mills, G. & Williams, D. (2006). *7 Battles that shaped South Africa*, Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- *A General's Story* by Jannie Geldenhuys (Jonathan Ball 1995)

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### **“INFORMATION TAKEN FROM THE MOTH WEB SITE”**

The Memorable Order of Tin Hats or the MOTH as it is more popularly known is an ex-serviceman's organisation founded in Durban, South Africa, in May 1927 by a remarkable man Charles Alfred Evenden by name. He was born in London on the 01<sup>st</sup> October 1894 and as a young man immigrated to Australia and served with the Australian forces in Gallipoli during World War I where he was wounded and evacuated to England. After returning to Australia, he was discharged from the army.

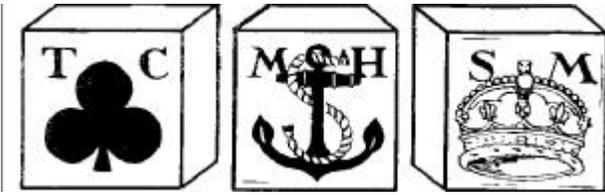
Witnessing the annual ANZAC parades, Charles Evenden turned his thoughts to the formation of an association of front line soldiers to perpetuate the comradeship gained from front line service. Later, he settled in South Africa where he worked as a cartoonist on the staff of the *Mercury*, a morning paper in Durban, under the pseudonym of “EVO” by which name he soon became popularly known to most people.

In 1927 he saw a war film that included an impressive scene of marching troops wearing tin hats, and muddy uniforms all carrying trench equipment. Looking at the scene, it made him wonder what had become of his comrades in the army; where they were and what they were doing. This line of thought inspired a cartoon on forgetfulness of a comradeship that had apparently ceased to exist. From this one idea other ideas came to the fore, then discussions with colleagues and friends and, eventually, the founding on the 07<sup>th</sup> May 1927 of an ex-serviceman's organisation known as the Memorable Order of Tin Hats or simply MOTH.

The Order is added on concord and harmony and operates independently of race, religion or politics in the same way as front line service, but with full democracy.

## **The three MOTH ideals**

True Comradeship, Mutual Help, Sound Memory



**T.C.** (True Comradeship) by practising front line friendship in civilian life;  
**M.H.** (Mutual Help) by acknowledging the personal and collective obligation to help each other as in front line service;  
**S.M.** (Sound Memory) by remembering the fallen as a living companionship and to serve their memory in practical actions  
which rise above divisions of social status, race, or politics.

To protect and advance the interests of war veterans and their kin by carrying out benevolent activities of an ex-service character.

## Our Emblem

The centre of the emblem of our Order is the Tin Hat, hallowed by the Light of Service. Our complete emblem includes the crossed rifles of sacrifice, surrounded by 12 stars that signify Mutual Help, the whole within an unending circle, expressing life and harmony without end



### PRETORIA DISTRICT DUGOUT



#### Meeting:

The 3rd Thursday monthly at 19:00. Evenden House, 139 Glover Ave, Lyttelton, Pretoria.

GPS Co-ordinates: S25°49'48" E28°11'11"

#### Contact:

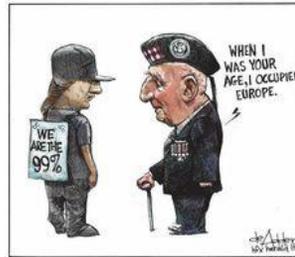
Old Bill: Thinus Prinsloo Cell: 082-376-241 E-mail: [thinusp@tshwane.gov.za](mailto:thinusp@tshwane.gov.za)

Wee Bill: George Butler Cell: 084 597 4656 E-mail: [george@webchamp.co.za](mailto:george@webchamp.co.za)

Adjutant: Marina Valentine Cell: 060 967 1211 E-mail: [pddadjutant@gmail.com](mailto:pddadjutant@gmail.com)

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## SOME HUMOUR




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## "The Deck Of Cards" by T Texas Tyler

During the North African Campaign, a bunch of soldier boys had been on a long hike. They arrived in a little town called Casino. The next morning being Sunday, several of the boys went to church. A sergeant commanded the boys in church.

After the Chaplain read the prayer, the text was taken up next. Those of the boys that had a prayer book took them out. One boy had only a deck of cards, and he spread them out. The sergeant saw the cards and said, "Soldier, put away those cards." After the service was over, the soldier was taken prisoner and brought before the Provost Marshal.

The Marshal said, "Sergeant, why have you brought this man here?"

"For playing cards in church, Sir," was the response.

The Marshal asked the soldier, "And what have you to say for yourself, son?"

"Much, Sir," replied the soldier.

The Marshal stated, "I hope so, for if not I will punish you more than any man was ever punished."

The soldier said, "Sir, I have been on the march for about six months. I have neither bible nor a prayer book, but I hope to satisfy you, sir, with the purity of my intentions." And with that, the boy started his story...

"You see, sir, when I look at the Ace, it reminds me that there is but one God. And the deuce reminds me that the bible is divided into two parts: the Old and the New Testaments.

When I see the trey, I think of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

And when I see the four, I think of the four evangelists who preached the Gospel: there was Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

And when I see the five, it reminds me of the five wise virgins who trimmed their lamps; there were ten of them: five were wise and were saved, five were foolish and were shut out.

When I see the six, it reminds me that in six days God made this heaven and earth.

And when I see the seven, it reminds me that on the seventh day, God rested from his great work.

And when I see the eight, I think of the eight righteous persons that God saved when he destroyed the earth: there was Noah, his wife, their sons and their wives.

And when I see the nine, I think of the lepers our saviour cleansed, and that nine of the ten didn't even thank him.

When I see the ten, I think of the ten commandments that God handed down to Moses on a tablet of stone.

When I see the King, it reminds me that there is but one King of Heaven, God Almighty.

And when I see the Queen, I think of the blessed Virgin Mary who is the Queen of Heaven.

And the Jack or Knave is the Devil.

When I count the number of spots in a deck of cards, I find 365, the number of days in a year.

There are 52 cards, the number of weeks in a year.

There are four suits, the number of weeks in a month.

There are twelve picture cards, the number of months in a year.

There are thirteen tricks, the number of weeks in a quarter.

So you see, Sir, my deck of cards serves me as a bible, an almanac and a prayer book."

And friends, this story is true. I know... I was that soldier

# Olifant Mk1B Main Battle Tank, South Africa



The Olifant mk1B main battle tank was developed and produced by the Olifant Manufacturing Company, OMC Engineering pty Ltd, based in South Africa. Development of the Olifant started in 1976 and first entered service with the South African Armoured Corps in the late 1970s. OMC Engineering later became Reumech OMC, then Vickers OMC and, in September 2002 was renamed Alvis OMC, following the acquisition of Vickers Defence by Alvis plc. In September 2004, Alvis OMC became part of BAE Systems Land Systems.

## **Olifant main battle tank development**

The layout of the Olifant mk1 was very similar to that of the South African Semel tank which was based on an upgraded conversion of the British Centurion tanks. The Olifant has been continually upgraded. The mk1A entered full-scale production in 1983 and the first were in service by 1985. In the same year that the mk1A entered the production phase, development work was started on the mk1B, and these tanks were in production during the 1990s and are operational in the South African Armed Forces.

The South African Army has 172 Olifant mk1A/B main battle tanks in operation. The Olifant 1B entered service in 1991. The upgrades included the installation of a more powerful 105mm L7 cannon, a hand-held laser rangefinder and a first generation image intensifier. The range of the tank was increased by the installation of a diesel engine and additional fuel tanks.

In September 2003, BAE Systems Land Systems OMC was awarded a contract by Armscor (the South African Department of Defence procurement agency) to upgrade 13 Olifant mk1B tanks. The upgrade programme included a new powerpack from Delkon which increases power by 15%, upgrade of gun and turret drives by Reutech Defence Logistics, new fire control system and target detection and engagement system with thermal imaging capability, both supplied by IST Dynamics. A follow-on contract for a further 13 tanks upgraded to Olifant mk2 standard was awarded in September 2005. The Olifant mk2 entered service in 2007.

## **Olifant weapons**

The Olifant mk1B main battle tank is armed with the 105mm L7 rifled cannon main gun. The gun on the mk1B is fitted with a thermal sleeve for sustained accuracy in firing. The mk1B carries 68 rounds of 105mm ammunition.

The tank is also fitted with a 7.62mm general purpose co-axial machine gun and a 7.62mm anti-aircraft machine gun.

## **Fire control**

The driver's station is equipped with a day and night sight and the gunner's station is fitted with day and night sights and an integrated laser rangefinder.

## **Self-protection**

The glacis plate and nose of the hull have been upgraded with the addition of passive armour and the turret has been fitted with stand-off armour. The installation of a double-armour floor gives the crew additional protection against mines. The running gear is protected against HEAT missiles by new skirts.

A smoke screen can be laid by a fuel injection system in the engine's exhaust. A fire detection and suppression system improves the level of survivability.

## **Engine**

"The mk1B Olifant is armed with the 105mm L7 rifled cannon main gun."

The V-12 air-cooled turbo diesel engine provides 900hp. The tank has been equipped with torsion bar running gear and hydraulic dampers have been fitted to the first and last pair of wheels.

## **Mobility**

The tank achieves a maximum road speed of 58km/h and the maximum range on internal fuel is 350km. The tank can ford water to a depth of 1.5m, negotiate gradients and slopes of 60% and 30% and vertical obstacles up to 1m in height.

## **Olifant 2 main battle tank turret upgrade**

LIW, a division of Denel, has developed the Olifant 2 main battle tank turret, which can be fitted on an upgraded Olifant mk1B chassis, providing the tank with hunter killer modes of operation, fire on the move and day and night time engagement. The turret can be armed with either LIW's GT8 105mm or an LIW 120mm smoothbore gun and features periscopic stabilised day / thermal gunner's sight with laser rangefinder, panoramic commander's sight, full solution fire control system and modular armour package.

**From: Army Technology.com**

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They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

