



CYBER SHELLHOLE

MEMORABLE ORDER of TIN HATS

Founded in 1927

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CYBER SHELLHOLE YEAR-END REPORT, July 2021.

Total Members: 39 (plus 1 seconded Administrator)
Members in Process: 2 (awaiting documentation)
Average Age: 61,9 years.

Cyber Shellhole has seen a very definite and positive turnaround taking place with the Shellhole. Moth Alwyn Harding, a full member of Cyber Shellhole and currently residing in Kuwait, is the *de facto* Old Bill and is responsible for Communications, while I concentrate of recruitment and administration.

Recruiting

Moth Harding made substantial headway to contact every member on the Shellhole membership list and, as a result, the nominal roll is as up to date as possible.

We also inducted 6 new members – one based in Florida USA, one in New Zealand and others in Queensland Australia. There are a further 2 more in process and we await documentation.

In terms of age-spread, the youngest member is 42,9 years (there are two members who are still in their '40s) and the oldest is 87,4 years. 12 members are in their 50's, 18 are 60-plus and 6 are in their '70s.

Finances

Capitation & Subscription Fees

Capitation fees for 2021/22 are the same as for all Shellholes and a once-off Administration Fee is imposed on new members to cover the costs of certain stores and postage. Any surplus fees, or rounded-up amount from membership fees (due to exchange rate variances) are earmarked for donation to the Warriors Gate Maintenance Fund.

However: The Administrators have agreed that, for the time being and even though the members have been informed of the subscription costs, we do not consciously chase payment, preferring to see the membership as Marketers of the Order to the International community. There is very little that we can offer a Cyber member, after all, other than to stay in touch and to assist him to promote the MOTH.

The initiative to produce an audio version of the book "Old Soldiers" by Moth O has been successfully concluded, and copies of the book are available from Warriors Gate at ZAR75,00 per copy. We have asked that the book be purchased, rather than copied, since all profits arising from sales are targeted to the Warriors Gate Maintenance Fund.

Communication

This point features strongly with Cyber members simply due to the uniqueness of the unit. Members continue to use FaceBook in both open and personal forums, and e-mails between individuals or in group format is common. Covid-19 has actually proved beneficial in that it has pushed the members and the administrators toward more effective use of electronic communication types such as Whatsapp, Zoom (and similar) and Skype.

Moth Harding remains involved with communication on FaceBook.

One of last years' plans that have been actioned was to host regular Video conferences with the members. One logistical problem to overcome is the varying Time-Zones relevant to the members, but the Shellhole has successfully held regular bi-monthly meetings with the Eastern Group (Australasia) during this past financial year.

All Inductions of new members are now carried out in the proper MOTH manner via video conference, with both administrators officiating. This procedure has proved most beneficial, compared to the original "electronic" oath that used to be communicated to a new member via e-mail.

Footprint

Most members are very keen to "fly the MOTH flag" in their various regions and, through membership via Cyber Shellhole, these Moths have represented the Order at Commemoration services all over the world, and Floral Tributes have been laid on behalf of the Shellhole and, therefore, the Order.

An important factor in the structure of Cyber Shellhole is the potential for new Shellholes to be opened in other parts of the world. We saw R1 Shellhole in Ireland being Chartered in 2019, with founder members transferring to it from Cyber and, now, there are very positive indications that we might see yet another new Shellhole being Chartered in Queensland Australia. This idea is still in its infancy, but signs are positive.

Summary

It remains a difficult task to promote the Order from afar. Communications, we would hope, keep the members informed regarding news within the MOTH and about the Shellhole, but the members' knowledge of the Order and Workings cannot be monitored with much effect.

There remains the fact that there are a number of new Veteran Groups – not only of ex-SADF origin but also of overseas services – and to which a substantial number of potential members have subscribed. In fact, a recent report indicated that there are more than 80 such veteran-targeted associations in the UK alone. In Australasia, as we are well aware, the RSL and RSA remain very strong. SAMVOA has a good footprint in many centres over there. The USA has an extremely strong and well-organised Veteran Administration, although these are not open to non-American veterans. These factors make recruitment to the MOTH quite difficult.

Many current members of Cyber Shellhole have actually been Moths before, prior to their move to "greener pastures".

The Shellhole's continued focus is to push the "Each One Reach One" idea to existing membership on the understanding that Ex-Pats tend to gather together.

ALWYN HARDING
Administrator

BRIAN PORTER
Administrator