



SAAFA BANQUET 2013

It was time to stop and smell the roses. A busy year full of activities came to an end. Ladies dressed up as if they were going to a Royal Wedding while their husbands and boyfriends were showing off in their monkey suites. What a prestigious night it turned out to be.

The Pretoria Branch of SAAFA held their annual banquet on 11 October 2013 in the Pierre van Ryneveld Hall at the South African Air Force Headquarters. Guests received a red carpet welcome and gathered in the main entrance under the watchful eyes of Sir Pierre Van Ryneveld. While waiting for everybody to arrive, all enjoyed a sherry sun downer.

The dining hall was decorated to perfection and a breath taking scene awaited the people on arrival. As soft music was playing in the back ground people took their seats around the decorated tables in candle light atmosphere

Honourable guests included High Commissioner Skweyiya and his wife Ambassador Skweyiya, Maj Gen Johan Pelser representing the Chief of the South African Air Force, military guests from friendly armed forces like the USA, United Kingdom, South Korea, Pakistan and Thailand shared the moment.



Enjoying dinner at decorated tables

The musicians, Maj Gen Eddie Dert and Col Tony Cockbain treated us with live music receiving applause from the audience after an assortment of past and current hits.

Junior course members from SAAF College did a splendid job serving the guest with drinks. Hot meals were dished up by Pikkies restaurant who is now a regular at the branch annual banquet.



SAAF College Course Members



Pikkies food

All the raffle tickets were sold out making it one of the best this year. Some people were so lucky and manage to get three draws. (Cannot report on all the comments dished out from the floor). As a gesture, the multiple winners returned their prizes giving other persons a chance to win.



Leoni and Manie Germishuys



Raffle table run by Koos van Rensburg

From the Pretoria branch members and invited guests, we would like to extend our appreciation towards the organiser of all the fantastic events during 2013 of which the banquet was the cherry on the cake. Throughout the year Leoni Germishuys put great effort into the planning, arrangements and after party clean-up. Leoni, you are a star which shines amongst us. Thank you again.

Important dates on the Pretoria Memorial Service Calendar –November to December 2013

Date	Day	Activity	Venue	Time	Attendance
2 Nov	Saturday	Special Forces Services	Durban		Members
10 Nov	Sunday	Flame Lilley REM Service	Cape Town		
10 Nov	Sunday	Cornwall Hill Service	Cornwall Hill	17H30 for 18H00	All Moths & Members
10 Nov	Sunday	Flame Lilley REM Service	VTM Pretoria		
10 Nov	Sunday	Remembrance Sunday Service	War Memorial Union Buildings	PTA 11H00	Members
10 Nov	Sunday	Remembrance Sunday Service	War Memorial	JHB 15H00	
10 Nov	Sunday	Rhodesian Forces Memorial Service	Dickie Fritz Shell Hole Edenvale	11H00	Members
14 Nov	Thursday	Wits Rifles ASSN Meeting			
16 Nov	Saturday	Wits Rifles ASSN AGM & Braai			
18 Nov	Monday	PMSC Committee Meeting	Eveden House Lyttleton	18H00	All Members
24 Nov	Sunday	Signal ASSN Birthday			
1 Dec	Sunday	SAMS Veterans ASSM Memorial Service	1 Military Hospital	09H00	Members

Fridge for Sale



Put your bid in for this fridge at SAAFA offices AFB Zwartkop. Send your bid to saafa.pretoria@icon.co.za or contact Jaap during office hours at 012 651 5922. Closing date 15 November 2013

Photo Collage of the SAAFA Banquet



SAAFA Pretoria Branch Lunch November 2013

The next Pretoria Branch Lunch will be held on Friday 8 November 2013 at 12h30 at Generals House, Air Force College, Thaba Tshwane.

(Pre-ceeding the Lunch will be the State of the Air Force Address).

AGM Next Year

The SAAFA Pretoria Branch AGM will be held on Friday 17 January 2014 during the monthly luncheon at Hartbees Club AFB Swartkop.

Weal and Woe

Sun Set Calls (†)

The following sun set call has been answered.

✚ It is with sadness that we have to report that Barbara Bruton has answered the Sunset Call on Friday 4 October 2013 after a long fight with cancer.

✚ **Glen Dell:**

(9 April 1962 – 12 October 2013) was a South African commercial airline trainer and aerobatics pilot, who was qualified to race in the Red Bull Air Race World Championship in seasons 2008 and 2009.

Dell's father was a World War II pilot, and he himself got his Private Pilot License around the year 1979. He then joined the South African Air Force to fly helicopters. After obtaining his Commercial Pilot License, he joined South African Airways in 1994, where he became a Senior Training Captain.

Starting in 1985, he won the National Aerobatic Championships in various categories 12 times. He competed in the World Aerobatic Championships since 1994, and became Advanced World Aerobatic Champion in 2004.

Dell died in Sunninghill Hospital in Johannesburg suffering burns sustained when his aircraft, an Extra EA-300 crashed on 12 October 2013 at the Secunda air show.

"Lest we forget"

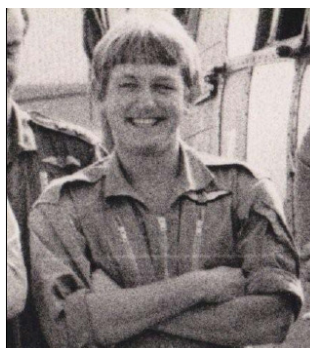
Brokkies / Snippets

A Tribute to the Crew of Puma 164 – Neil Jackson Jan 2010

Captain Paul Velleman



Lieutenant Nigel Osborne



Sergeant Dick Retief



In September 1979, a massive air and ground strike against Frelimo and ZANLA positions in the Gaza Province of Mozambique was planned. This action was given the codename Operation Bootlace in South Africa. 12 Aerospatiale Puma troop-carrying helicopters, plus one spare aircraft, provided by SAAF.

Events Leading to the Downing of Puma 164

In the early hours of Saturday morning, 1st September 1979, 13 SA 330 Puma and 2 Super Frelon helicopters took off from AFB Swartkops near Pretoria, and routed via AFB Pietersburg, where the crews were briefed on the upcoming operation in Gaza Province. Capt John Church flew the one spare aircraft to Chipinda Pools. This was Puma 164, and it was the thirteenth helicopter in the formation.

After the week involved on Operation Bootlace, only two of the thirteen Pumas returned to South Africa without damage from enemy fire, and these two were reported to have had most of the paint missing from their undersides, due to the ultra-low level flying of their cautious pilots!

Paul Velleman and Mark Dutton, operating as a pair of aircraft, were returning to the base at Chipinda Pools after a re-supply run, when Mark Dutton's Puma suffered a fuel booster pump failure, which rendered a significant amount of their fuel unusable.

Whilst Mark and his co-pilot Craig Reid were searching around frantically for a suitable landing zone, the Puma's engines suffered a flame-out due to fuel starvation, necessitating a forced landing in amongst some dense bush and trees. This resulted in severe tip damage to the main and tail rotor blades of their aircraft.

After Flight Engineer Pine Pienaar had refuelled from a spare drum on board the Puma, Mark Dutton lifted off carefully and flew the damaged helicopter slowly back to the base at Chipinda Pools.

Immediately after landing, the two pilots were tasked with another re-supply run to the external Admin Base, and Mark Dutton, Craig Reid and Pine Pienaar transferred their kit over to the spare Puma, whilst their damaged aircraft was attended to by the SAAF ground technicians.

This spare aircraft was Puma 164

Taking off again as a pair, with Paul Velleman in the lead, the two Pumas set off into Mozambique once again. About halfway to their destination, Paul called that he had just passed a group of buildings to his left, and both choppers veered to the right. However Mark Dutton's flight path took him directly over the buildings, and the anti-aircraft artillery opened up on them. Despite taking some strikes Mark flew on doggedly, nervously watching his instruments for any warning lights that would indicate they had taken hits to the Puma's engines. Landing at the Admin Area, they discovered that Puma 164 had suffered a 12,7mm strike through the main spar of one main rotor blade, grounding the aircraft overnight whilst a new blade was flown in via Chipinda Pools the next day.



On 5th September the bridge demolition phase was launched. Four Pumas of Hotel Formation were

tasked to fly the 48 Infantry and Engineer troops, under the command of Captains Joe du Plooy and Charlie Small, plus their explosive kits, to their target bridge over the Limpopo at Canicado. During this briefing fate started playing its hand. The task of carrying the bridge demolition team and explosives was designated to Hotel Four in the orders, but Paul Velleman, being the more experienced commander, took over this assignment and Mark Dutton was moved to the Hotel Three position as a trooping helicopter. The two pilots switched call signs and Paul became Hotel Four, in Puma 164.

After dropping the troops and demolition team at the small town of Canicado, the formation flew a short distance away and landed in a clearing, where they waited for the troops to carry out their tasks on the bridge and in the adjacent town. This they accomplished without any trouble, and then radioed to the waiting helicopters that they were ready for uplift.

After picking up the troops the Puma formation set a heading back to the Admin Base. All was going smoothly until suddenly Paul called on the radio saying that he had flown into wires, and was losing pressure in one hydraulic system. He immediately landed and the other aircraft turned back to see what was happening. They saw Flight Engineer Dick Retief removing the wires which had snagged around the left undercarriage and which had severed a hydraulic pipe. After Dick had made makeshift repairs Paul took off again, and made it safely back to the Admin Base.

The Fateful Day

At the briefing for the assault on Mapai on the 6th September, the plan was for Hotel Four to join the formation of Rhodesian Bells, as a replacement for Dick Paxton's aircraft, for the trooping task into the target area.

Mark Dutton expected to revert to his original formation position, but Paul said that he would rather remain as Hotel Four, and take the opportunity to fly with the legendary Bells. The two formations flew alongside each other on their way to the target, with the Bells flying to the right of the Puma flight, and with Paul's Puma 164 bringing up the rear of the Bell formation.

Flight Lieutenant Martin Bouwer, immediately ahead of Puma 164, suddenly experienced severe tail rotor malfunction, and had to pull out of the formation and make an emergency landing in the Mozambican bush. Paul Velleman moved up to take his position behind the last Bell.

Approximately 5 kilometres from the target area, the low-flying helicopter armada overflew a small satellite air-defence base, which had been abandoned by most of the defenders as soon as the initial Hunter strikes had gone in on the Brigade HQ at Mapai, earlier that morning. However, a lone Frelimo soldier, armed with an RPG-7 rocket launcher, had remained at his post to confront the enemy.

As the helicopters thundered at high speed over a low rise towards him, he took aim and fired his rocket towards the massed aircraft, just as they drew level with his position.

His rocket struck the right side of the last helicopter in the nearest formation, immediately behind the pilot's seat, detonating on impact and, it is thought, simultaneously igniting the fuel in the tank behind the pilot.

The stricken Puma 164 rolled to the right and plunged immediately into the ground, exploding on impact in a huge ball of flame.

Everything happened so quickly, and the helicopters were all flying so low, and so fast, that the eye witnesses on board the other aircraft say that they heard two loud, almost simultaneous bangs, and by the time they looked across, all that could be seen of Hotel Four was a rapidly-forming pall of black, oily smoke billowing skywards from the ball of flame on the ground.

The shocked pilots called in the tragedy to the Command Dakota, and one of the Bell pilots immediately dropped his troops to search for survivors. The rest of the helicopters were ordered to continue on to

Mapai.

The whole area was eerily deserted, and strangely silent.

The Puma was found in a sparse tree line at the edge of a grassy clearing.

Immediately the soldiers realised that there could have been no survivors; the helicopter was totally destroyed, with only the engines remaining relatively intact.

The bodies of the men on board Puma 164 had been scattered around the crash site by the impact of the aircraft and the subsequent explosion, and were reportedly still intact, but unrecognizably burnt.

They had all died instantly in the searing heat of the explosions.

Towards the end of 2011 it became obvious to the search team that some family members of the victims of the Puma 164 tragedy desired to visit the crash site in order to pay their last respects to their men, but did not have the wherewithal to undertake the trip. Rick van Malsen and Neill Jackson consequently decided that they would offer to lead a group of next of kin to the site during the July school holidays. Accordingly an e-mail was sent out to family members in January 2012, giving dates for the proposed trip and requesting commitments from interested parties.

With the main group being made up predominantly of families of the SA Air Force men, it was decided to approach the SA Air Force Association to provide a cross to be erected at the smaller of the two graves at the crash site. This was arranged by old friend and former Puma pilot Ola Grinaker and the cross was presented to Neill Jackson by Association members at the SAAF Memorial in Pretoria on Thursday 28 June.



L to R: Philip Weyers, Immediate Past President, SAAFA; Neill Jackson; Brigadier General Neville Greyling, National President, SAAFA; Major General Hugh Paine, Vice Chairman of the Pretoria branch of SAAFA.

On arrival at the crash site the family members were shown the two graves and informed of the sequence of events that had unfolded on the morning of Thursday 06 September 1979. The menfolk then took turns digging in the hard clay soil to prepare a hole to place the SAAFA cross. Two plaques were countersunk into the top of the grave dedicated to Paul Velleman and Nigel Osborne, by their respective families. The family members then positioned their Limpopo River stones around the cross and the plaques and a short memorial service was conducted.



4 Air Depot – (Stephan Botha)

Established as No. 4 Aircraft Repair Depot (A.R.D.) at Lyttleton with effect 1st August 1940. Re-designated No. 4 Air Depot (Repair) with effect from 11th November 1940.

Purpose:

Major repair and overhaul of approximately 660 airframes.

Tasks:

Every alternate 360 hour inspection of aircraft at Nigel, Standerton, Zwartkop A.S., Waterkloof A.S. and the Photographic School at Z.A.S.

The repair of minor crashes which would take over 7 days to repair, within the capacity of the Depot.

The repair of components, which are normally changed by a flight, within the capacity of the A.R.D.; Work beyond this will be returned to No. 1 A.R.D.

Assembled Tiger Moth, Hornet Moth, Miles Master and other light aircraft types.

Disbanded with effect from 30th November 1944 when incorporated into 12 or 14 Air Depot.

Re-established as 4 Air Depot with effect from 1st January 1964 at Tek Base, AFS Snake Valley.

The aim was to render logistical support for the re-organisation of the Air Defence system, "Project Nassau".

The Radio Air and Mobile Telecommunication Station were moved from 1 Air Depot to 4 Air Depot.

In August 1965 the Radar Section also joined 4 Air Depot.

Aircraft Roles: Assisted with aircraft modifications. 1965 to 1970 – Responsible for radio installation in Vampire and Dakota aircraft. Modification of the Turbo DC3 transporter.

1976 – Responsible for servicing of Cactus Air Defense System and Hilda short range SAM.

Depot level repair, maintenance and servicing of electro-technical ground-, aircraft- and weapon systems.

Any additional information on Air Depots and Servicing Units can be addresses to gsbotha@absamail.co.za

Blapse in Kerkblaadjies

- Dames, moenie die krap-en-koop aand vergeet nie. Dis ook jou kans om van al die onnodige goed in jou huis ontslae te raak. Onthou om jou man saam te bring.
- Die interkerklike vredesberaad is gekanselleer weens sinodale konflik.
- Moenie dat bekommernis jou doodmaak nie. Laat die kerk help.
- Die koste vir bywoning van die gebed- en vas-konferensie sluit die koste van die etes in.
- Vanoggend se erediens handel oor "Ons Redder loop op die Water". Vanaand se preek: "Waar is ons Redder?"
- Me Charlene Mason van die Metodiste gemeente het vir ons "I will not pass this way again" gesing, wat ons almal groot vreugde verskaf het.
- Volgende Donderdag is daar oudisies vir die kerkkoor. Kom gerus as jy niks aan het nie.
- Barbara is nog in die hospitaal vir bloedoortappings. Sy sukkel om te slaap, en het kassette van Ds. Giel se preke gevra.
- Die dominee gaan sy afskeidspreek lewer, waarna die koor gaan sing "O blye dag".
- Klaas Buitendag en Debbie Prinsloo is op 3 Oktober getroud. En so eindig 'n mooi vriendskap wat in hul skooljare begin het.
- 'n Boontjiesop-aand gaan in die kerk se lapa gehou word. Bring 'n baadjie saam ingeval dit winderig en onplesierig raak.
- Die onderwerp van Maandagaand se gemeentebiduur is: "Die hemel, hoe kan jy daar kom?" Vervoer vertrek om 19:00 van die bushalte oorkant die ouetehuis.
- Die lae selfbeeld-ondersteuningsgroep vergader Donderdagmiddag om 15:00 in die sypaal. Gebruik asseblief die agterdeur.
- Die Weight Watchers-groep vergader Donderdag om 14:00 in die saal. Gebruik asb die dubbeldeure by die sy-ingang.

Kitty Hawk

Frozen in the sands of time: Eerie Second World War RAF fighter plane discovered in the Sahara... 70 years after it crashed in the desert

Pilot of the Kittyhawk P-40 was thought to have survived crash, but died trying to walk out of the desert

Aircraft was found almost perfectly preserved, unseen and untouched, after it came down in 1942

Historian describes find as 'an incredible time capsule' and 'the aviation equivalent of Tutankhamun's Tomb'



Final Thought

“Your best teacher is your last mistake”.

Baie dankie vir al die bydraes wat ingestuur is. Hou vol daarmee en deel julle wonderlike ervarings in die SALM met almal. Die “Stick and Throttle” verskyn weer vroeg in Novemebr en die hoof berig gaan oor die Bier Fees wat plaasvind einde Oktober. Tot dan S&T groete.

<p style="text-align: center;">Editor:</p> <p>Stick and Throttle Fax: 086 592 0460 Mail: pretlogistic@gmail.com/saafa.pretoria@icon.co.za We're on the web! See us at: www.saafa.co.za</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Note:</p> <p>The editor extends his thanks for all contributions. Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or Branch Executive Committee The Editor reserves the right to amend or reject any editorial matter submitted for publication</p>
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