

Springbok

Journal of the South African Legion
Tydskrif van die Suid-Afrikaanse Legioen



ISSN: 221-9854

JUNE 2021



Legionnaire Basil Kriel from the Pretoria Branch about to lay a wreath on behalf of the South African Legion during the virtual memorial service of the Council of Military Veterans Organisations.

INDEX	Page
FROM THE EDITORS DESK	3
ROYAL COMMONWEALTH EX-SERVICE LEAGUE	3
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS	3
NATIONAL SECRETARY	3
NATIONAL OFFICE BEARERS	5
• Welfare	5
• Ceremonial and Disciplinary	5
REGIONAL NEWS	6
• Free State	6
• Kwazulu-Natal	6
BRANCH NEWS	6
• Bloemfontein	6
• Cape Town	8
• Kimberley	8
• Kroonstad	8
• North Coast	10
• Port Elizabeth	10
• Pretoria	13
OTHER STORIES	16
• Military Veterans' Database "Cleansing" Underway	16
• Improvement Expected In Military Veterans' Affairs With Own Budget	17
• D-Day Landings Memorials	18
• No Grave but the Sea. Part Two	21
OBITUARIES	26

FROM THE EDITORS DESK



Here we are halfway through 2021 and heading towards the Centenary Congress in October. Planning is doing very well and with a small challenge or two all seem to be falling in place for a very successful Congress. Various memorabilia is in the process of being finalised and more detail will be provided shortly. In the interim, the Centenary ties have arrived. See the report by the National Secretary later in this edition.

With regards to the Centenary edition of Springbok, branch chairmen are reminded to submit the history of their branches by the end of July. Thank you to Bloemfontein, North Coast and Pretoria that have already submitted their history and photos.

On the topic of the Springbok magazine, it is interesting to note that the magazine has its origin in two magazines/newsletters that existed before 1921 when the Legion was established. These are the "LEAGUER" which was the newsletter/magazine of the "League of Returned Soldiers and Sailors" that was established in Durban on 17 December 1917. It is not sure when the first edition was published. The other is the "COMRADES" which was the magazine/newsletter of the "Comrades of the Great War" which was established on 13 March 1918. The first edition is dated October 1918. Both these organisations are predecessors of the Legion. More about this in the Centenary edition.

Sadly our country is back at Alert Level 4 for the next 14 days due largely to the rapid spreading of the new variant of the Coronavirus in Gauteng over the past weeks. This will have an impact on branch activities and ceremonies such as the Battle of Delville Wood Memorial Services originally planned for early July which may have to be delayed or cancelled. However, the message is clear. Comply with the standard practice of wearing your mask, keep social distance and wash your hand regularly.

ROYAL COMMONWEALTH EX-SERVICE LEAGUE (RCEL)

Message from The Secretary-General

Dear Founder Members,

You will know that our Founder Nation and partner for 100 Years celebrates its centenary birthday tomorrow. You may be interested to know of the events they have planned to mark this remarkable achievement and hope you might find time to take a look at the email below. The Deputy Grand President has written to the National President of The Royal British Legion to congratulate them on their 100th birthday and send them our very best wishes.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

NATIONAL SECRETARY REPORT

Medal Project: Still waiting for SAL Durban to return medals. NHQ busy tracing some recipients.

Stock:

- Still have stock of white shirt embroidered SAL pocket badges @R35.00 each and 3-layer printed face masks @R55.00 each, without courier cost.
- Blazer badges are on order and SAL NHQ believes it will be available in SA by end of July 2021.
- SAL NHQ needs to order SAL Ties – out of stock. The new tie order will be for the design with several SAL badges on it and not the striped one.
- SAL Centenary Ties are available at SAL NHQ at R250.00 each excluding courier cost.



South African Legion Centenary Tie.

Membership cards: Membership cards have been sent to those branches that have submitted outstanding fees and information. These membership cards are valid for 3 years.

E-mail & Telephone System: Sandringham and certain areas of Johannesburg are still experiencing problems with the network dropping. This causes the telephone line to drop while we are busy with a call. NHQ's staff are using their personal cell phones to finish urgent calls until the system is back online.

Membership List: Lists need to be updated monthly, in the correct format and submitted to NHQ and the Regional Chairperson, with the monthly Branch Update. When NHQ queries branches, they "forgot" to take it off or long stories.

Monthly Branch Updates: Not all branches submit their branch reports every month, the correct format of the branch report is also not used by all branches. The correct forms in the correct format will again be submitted to all branches to make sure that they are up to date with their records.

NWF administration: Grants are paid every month.

The Life Verification: The life Verification process is done regularly.

Casual Relief: No casual Relief assistance was given since May 2019, and we did not have to access the funds through the NWF.

RCEL administration: All grants are paid monthly. Records are kept of payments.

DMV Database check & DMV Database Procedures: DMV is again not accepting any new application or queries currently as they are working with a skeleton staff. They will inform the NS when new applications may be dropped off again.

NATIONAL OFFICE BEARERS

WELFARE REPORT

Benoni Branch. Lgr. Jessie Farmery, Benoni's Secretary/Treasurer reported that from the beginning of January until today, Benoni Branch has handed out 112 food parcels containing a range of basic foods to the value of R 120.00 each. The total cost was R13440.00. They also appeal for clothing through the medium of social media and distribute the clothing to veterans, many of whom are residents of informal settlements.

Bloemfontein Branch Past President for life Lgr. Jurie Van Der Merwe reported that the branch subsidises the rent for 17 residents of the Legion Flats at an average cost of just under R1500 each. The total amount spent on this project is over R25000.

Brakpan Branch Brakpan Chairman Lgr. Rees Davies reported that since January this year the Branch has disbursed an amount of R4800.00 to assist 2 indigent veterans. The Branch assisted three applicants for grants from the RCEL and the Veteran who was provided with a set of tools is making good use of them to generate additional income.

Durban Branch Durban Branch disburses funds to assist with maintenance of the cottages when it is required. They did not specify the amount spent on this project.

Pretoria Branch Lgr. Bazil Kriel, Honorary life vice-president and Welfare officer for Pretoria Branch, reported that a mattress was purchased for a member of the branch. She received clothing and food parcels. The total spent on assisting her was R1900. Lgr. Kriel also assisted in obtaining an RCEL grant renewal.

CERMONIAL AND DISCIPLINE

Here are the newly approved National Awards.

NATIONAL PRESIDENTS COMMENDATION CERTIFICATE. This is a certificate and citation certificate and may be awarded to Legionnaires and employees of the SA Legion, as well as members of the private sector who have committed themselves to render a direct contribution and commendable service to the SA Legion in general, at National Level. The citation certificate is a brief articulation of the service the individual has performed to qualify for the National Presidents Commendation Certificate.

MERITORIUS SERVICE AWARD (MS). This is a certificate and badge and may be awarded to Legionnaires in recognition of their service of a high order over a sustained period of time, in a management or leadership position at Branch, Regional or National Level.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD (DS). This is a certificate and badge and may be awarded to Legionnaires who have distinguished themselves by rendering exceptional meritorious service and particular devotion to duty over a sustained period of time, in a management or leadership position at Branch, Regional or National Level.

OUTSTANDING DEVOTION SERVICE AWARD (OD). This is a certificate and badge and may be awarded to Legionnaires who have distinguished themselves by outstanding service of the highest order and utmost devotion to duty over a sustained period of time, in a management or leadership position at Branch, Regional or National Level.

SERVICE CERTIFICATE. This is a certificate and service button awarded to all Legionnaires who have distinguished themselves by good conduct and loyal and faithful service to the SA Legion of 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 and 70 years.

MERIT AND LOYALTY AWARD (EMPLOYEES ONLY). This is a certificate awarded only to the remunerated employees of the SA Legion for meritorious and loyal service in discharging their duties to the SA Legion.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION. This is a certificate awarded by the National President in appreciation of, and or to thank a Legionnaire, remunerated employee and or an organisation for their praiseworthy efforts in assisting the SA Legion at all levels.

REGIONAL NEWS

FREE STATE

The Free State Region report is addressed under the Branch reports of Bloemfontein and Kroonstad.

KWAZULU-NATAL

The KZN Regional Annual Conference, being hosted by the North Coast Branch, is being planned for either Saturday, 26 June or Saturday, 3 July – at a venue in Durban, still to be finalised. Due to Covid, we're limiting attendance to four delegates per branch, so 16 plus a few guests (Padré, Patron, etc). As usual, we'll start with the Act of Homage and the laying of wreaths. The business should be over by lunchtime, followed by lunch. Then everyone will be free to leave. It would be grateful if NHQ could be represented by one of the NP, NVP or NS, please. Final arrangements and a formal invitation to follow in due course.

BRANCH NEWS

BLOEMFONTEIN

Bloemfontein Branch functions efficiently as it is run responsibly with proper financial management by the general committee and office administration by the branch secretary.

All relevant matters pertaining to the Branch are reported on during the regular monthly meetings, this includes monthly financial statements by the bookkeeper. It enables the committee to make the necessary decisions and take the necessary steps to keep the Branch running smoothly. Our monthly committee meetings were held on 22 February 2021, 29 March 2021 and 19 April 2021 with no apologies.



Photos from the Centenary Annual General Meeting of the Bloemfontein Branch.



As the general committee is very small, we can have meetings where the members physically attend and can be socially distanced.

The Vice-Chairman Lgr. W Janse van Rensburg is acting chair until elections for the new chairman is held at our next Annual General Meeting to be held 31 May 2021. The Branch ensures that our veterans and/or widows are well looked after.

Membership No new members have joined the branch. We are fortunate that none of our members contracted and or passed away because of Covid 19. We currently have 44 Members.

Ex Volunteers Housing Organization. The finances of this well-run entity are sound. Maintenance is done as and when required. The garden/terrain is tended to daily.

Commemoration Services The preparations for the commemoration services are on course. The Delville Wood service is planned for 11 July 2021 and the Remembrance Day service is planned for 14 November 2021.

100th Annual General Meeting of the Bloemfontein Branch. The Bloemfontein Branch of the South African Legion held its 100th Annual General Meeting on 31 May 2021 at Springbok Park. During the meeting, the following branch office bearers were elected Lgr. T Lessing(Chaplin), Lgr. M van der Merwe, Lgr. W de Beer, Lgr. H Hough, Lgr. H van Heerden, Lgr. I Coetzer (Vice-Chair), Lgr. H Steyn(bookkeeper), Lgr. K Stofberg, Lgr. W Stofberg(Bfn Branch Vice President), Lgr. De Wet du Toit, Branch President Lgr. JJ van der Merwe and Chairman Lgr. Willie Janse van Rensburg.

CAPE TOWN

The very localised function of Ramona Fourie, Robbie Roberts (past vice-chair, exco, Cape Town branch) and Pierre Fourie (exco fund-raising) who attended a lunch at The Brass Bell, Kalk Bay Harbour on Saturday, May 15 by way of thanks for the many favours they have done for the Rosedale Service Centre – and we know will continue to support.

Peter Napier (exco's welfare portfolio, Cape Town branch) explains to Desmond Barnard (I) and two residents at Beth Rogelim (Salvation Army) how the veterans' support program works. Looking on in the background is Glenn Bock from Rosedale.

KIMBERLEY

Monthly meetings have not yet resumed due to Covid-19 safety protocols. The administration continues to be done remotely. There is very little activity at the Branch. The Secretary is available via email.

KROONSTAD

Activities. Kroonstad Branch resumed normal activities in January 2021, therefore three branch meetings have already been held. Covid19 regulations are still adhered to during branch meetings.



The photo above is the visit to the Brass Bell Restaurant in Kalk Bay and the photo below is the Veterans Support Programme of the Cape Town Branch.



Parade. This year's upcoming Commemorative parade will be discussed during the July 2021 branch meeting.

Projects. The branch will, during the 2021 Financial year hold another raffle to enable the branch to have a fund-raising project.

Recruiting. The Kroonstad Branch will recruit more members in 2021.

General. On 15 May 2021 Kroonstad branch participated together with FAK, Voortrekkers, AFRIFORUM, Naude Construction, FF+ and SADFA in cleaning the Kroonstad Boer War Concentration Camp. The Volksblad covered the activities.

NORTH COAST

Members of the branch met at the Natal Mounted Rifles Headquarters on Saturday 22 May for a short branch meeting. After the meeting, the members gathered with family and friends of the late Legionnaire Anthony Pattison for a wreath-laying ceremony.

The branch met once again on Saturday 26 June for a branch meeting. Apart from the branch members, several visitors attended. The branch meeting was again followed by a social and a "braai".

PORT ELIZABETH

The 2021 Annual General Meeting took place in the Maritime Club, Port Elizabeth on the 2nd May at 11:00. Notwithstanding the Covid Virus and the Lockdown 1 regulations, the Covid Protocols strictly adhered to. Some 15 Legionnaires were present but regretfully the Chairman, Lgr Pattison, was confined to bed at home having had a serious eye operation. In the absence of the Chairman the Vice-Chairman, Lgr Noel Smith took the Chair. Our Padre was absent too which necessitated Lgr Bartie doing the devotions (supplied from the Rev Mark!). The Chairman's Report, which can be read on the Branch website at www.salegionpe.co.za/review, made note of a more or less successful 2020-2021. And whilst the Branch had succeeded in continuing it did suffer a loss of its major income, ie the Annual Poppy Appeal.

Lgr Bartie presented the audited financials on behalf of the Treasurer (who was acting Secretary for the meeting). He too highlighted the significance of the impact of Covid on the lack of permission from the municipality to hold the annual Poppy Appeal. This resulted in a significant reduction in the income to the Branch, yet it was significant that Woodridge School and several Churches made contributions to the Branches income, the Branch was highly appreciative of their rendering. The main factor was that the Branch has been able to remain financially solvent even with the restrictions posed by Covid.

The Branch will be holding a Social Function on the 13th June so please watch your emails for details from the Secretary. The Annual Poppy Appeal will be held on Saturday, 6 November 2021 and the Annual Poppy Graveyard Run will take place on Sunday, 7 November 2021. The Annual Remembrance Day Parade will be held on Sunday, 14th November 2021. More details of these events will be announced nearer the time.



In these photos members of the North Coast Branch attend a branch meeting on Saturday 22 May which was followed by the wreath laying in honour of Lgr Anthony Patterson.





Attendees at the wreath laying ceremony at the Natal Mounted Rifles Headquarters in honour of Lgr Anthony Patterson.



The traditional "braai" following the North Coast Branch meeting on 26 June.

All photos of the North Coast Branch courtesy Lgr Peter Shattock.

The election of the EXCO for the following 12 months took place with Lgr Burman taking the Chair temporary:

- Chairman- Lgr T Pattison.
- Vice-Chair – Lgr N Smith
- Secretary – Lgr T Pattison.
- Treasurer – Lgr T van der Linde
- Ceremonial Officer – Lgr J S B Smit
- Committee Members - LgrC Papenfus and Lgr G Hagermann
- The Reverend Canon Mark Barth – Branch Padre.

The meeting was followed by a finger lunch and harmony.

PRETORIA

In its centenary year, the Pretoria Branch of the South African Legion held its Annual General Meeting at the MOTH Evenden House in Lyttelton on Saturday 12 July 2021. The meeting was attended by 17 members of the branch. Also in attendance was the Chairman of the Gauteng Region, Legionnaire Rees Davies. Following the approval of the Chairman's report and Financial report the following committee was elected:

- Chairman: Legionnaire André Le Grange.
- Vice-Chairman. Legionnaire Charles Ross.
- Treasurer. Legionnaire Ray Cumming.
- Secretary/Communication. Legionnaire Debra De Billot.
- Welfare. Legionnaire Bazil Kriel.
- Ceremonial. Legionnaire Jaco Lötter.

Legionnaire Brenda Kriel stepped down after many years as the Secretary. The Chairman, Legionnaire André Le Grange thanked her for her services and presented her with a gift from the branch.

After the AGM branch meeting took place during which Adriaan Knoetze was inducted as a member of the branch. After the closing ritual, those in attendance enjoyed refreshments.



Photos from the Annual General Meeting of the Pretoria Branch.





Photos from the Annual General Meeting of the Pretoria Branch.



OTHER STORIES

MILITARY VETERANS' DATABASE "CLEANSING" UNDERWAY Written by DefenceWeb - 17th May 2021

Indications are a long and tedious process that awaits those involved in "cleansing" the national military veterans' database with three verification sessions held to date.

The sessions, under the aegis of the Department of Military Veterans (DMV) with retired general Derrick Mgwebi in charge as acting director-general, will evaluate 5 921 personnel files from three former liberation forces. They are Apla (Azanian People's Liberation Army), Azanla (Azanian National Liberation Army) and MK (uMkhonto we Sizwe).

Presenting the latest available information on what is officially termed the "cleansing of the national military veterans database" to Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Defence (JSCD) last week, Mgwebi said a database cleansing, verification and enhancement task team (DCVETT) was appointed to "reinforce" the cleansing process. This, when complete, will ensure the names and details captured are in fact military veterans and entitled to benefits including healthcare, assistance with education and business opportunities as well as funeral benefits.

Mgwebi's presentation showed a total of 19 725 non-statutory force (NSF) soldiers from three "liberation forces" registered on the national database. Of these, 12 569 are reportedly still alive with 7 156, according to the DMV, deceased.

When it comes to dependents, Thabang Makwetla's responsibility for military veterans as the deputy minister in Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula's Department of Defence and Military Veterans is to see to the overall welfare of 7 900 registered dependents. The DMV knows of over 23 000 dependents from Apla, Azanla and MK.

Mgwebi's presentation dealt only with former "liberation forces" and gave no indication of the number of former SA Defence Force (SADF) veterans.

The data cleansing process entails ensuring applications must have, among others, service affidavit from the relevant veterans' organisation and three similar legally attested documents from former commanders. In turn as part of its commitment to ensuring only those whose bona fides entitle them to military veteran' benefits, the DMV will assist in obtaining outstanding documentation.

To date, the DMV has checked 1 634 personnel files with 913 found not to contain service certificates. These can be in four forms – 2012 DMV medal recipients, Robben Island prisoners, re-interred MK combatants and members who died in action or in exile. Where duplicate files were encountered these were "synchronised".

IMPROVEMENT EXPECTED IN MILITARY VETERANS' AFFAIRS WITH OWN BUDGET Written by defenceWeb - 21st May 2021

South Africa's military veterans now have an own budget rather than being an add-on to the defence budget, the senior government representative with special responsibility for veterans' affairs said in the National Assembly this week.

Thabang Makwetla, deputy to Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula in the Department of Defence and Military Veterans (DoDMV), indicated the separate vote for veterans came about because of a perception among old and retired soldiers that "things are not happening for them or their interests are neglected" due to the absence of a dedicated military veterans ministry.

He pointed out the separate vote for military veterans sees the responsibility of accounting for own budget through Department of Military Veterans (DMV) accounting and budget systems.

"This concludes the bureaucratic process of establishing a stand-alone department for military veterans which commenced a decade ago," he told parliamentarians.

Makwetla indicated "steady progress" at the DMV, under acting Director-General, retired General Derrick Mgwebi, adding it was "modest" because the establishment of the department "stalled midway".

"DMV budget allocations plateaued before a full department could be realised. As a result the department only exists nationally. It lacks meaningful infrastructure in the provinces which deprives military veterans access to its services."

This constraint, coupled with an internal environment "characterised by several debilitating subjective weaknesses" further contributed to the lack of progress.

The deputy minister singled out lack of skills, planning capacity and policy gaps as contributing to "widespread dissatisfaction among military veterans".

Dissatisfaction came to a head with petitions from military veterans to President Cyril Ramaphosa. This saw South Africa's first citizen meet with the department headed by Mapisa-Nqakula and Makwetla.

"The political intervention was a major relief and shot in the arm to the mandate and mission of DMV, bringing the needed executive weight to resolve some obstacles constraining support for military veterans.

"The President appreciated the need for extraordinary measures to bring instant relief to the needs of military veterans," Makwetla said, adding this came in the form of three pillars.

"Firstly, there was agreement that as a matter of urgency provinces should be roped in to facilitate immediate accessibility of services to military veterans through provincial line-function departments,

including metro and district councils. Secondly, all national departments whose mandates address some military veterans' needs be brought onto the agenda of the task team (the Presidential Task Team on Military Veterans headed by Deputy President David Mabuza). Thirdly, the military pension provided for in DMV legislated policy, be introduced as a matter of agency (sic) and that the R350 SRD (social relief of distress) COVID-19 grant be paid out to all destitute military veterans with immediate effect."

Mabuza's task team has, according to the deputy minister, met all military veterans' associations representing former statutory and non-statutory forces. Grievances were "processed and negotiated, barring a demand by one group for a once-off payment of R2 million per person, for participation in the struggle. This was considered virtually impossible and set aside".

Seven work streams have to date been set up by the task team. Their areas of action are verification and cleansing of the veterans' database; a legislative review; restructuring the DMV; the issue of military pensions; social services; a Presidential pardon and heritage and memorialisation. Makwetla did not give any indication of progress or report back on achievements.

HONOURED ON THE SOIL THEY FREED: IT HAS TAKEN 77 YEARS - BUT FINALLY, SOARING ABOVE THE NORMANDY BEACHES, BRITISH WARRIORS HAVE A MAGNIFICENT MEMORIAL IN NORTHERN FRANCE. ROBERT HARDMAN SALUTES THE STORIES OF SACRIFICE THAT INSPIRED THE CAMPAIGN BY ROBERT HARDMAN FOR THE DAILY MAIL **PUBLISHED: 22:11 BST, 3 JUNE 2021 | UPDATED: 09:00 BST, 4 JUNE 2021**

This time exactly 77 years ago, they were nervously waiting to board their ships, planes, gliders and landing craft. Some were terrified, a few were excited, most just wanted to get it over with. But they all did their duty. And more than 24,000 of them never came home.

Yet it has taken all this time for Britain's Normandy heroes to be honoured with a proper, national memorial in the place where they fell.

However, at long last, their surviving comrades and all their loved ones can rest assured that this country has finally done the decent thing.

Because this weekend, on the anniversary of D-Day itself, the Normandy Memorial to all the British servicemen and women killed in the greatest assault in our history will be unveiled. True, this wretched pandemic means that none of the veterans can be there on the beaches to see the proper royal unveiling which had been planned.

But dozens of them will be gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, along with hundreds of relatives whose loved ones are engraved on these immaculate stone columns, their names all listed under the date they fell during that pivotal summer of 1944.

They will be greeted by a special video message from the Prince of Wales, the royal patron of the appeal. They will then watch a live video link by satellite as the British ambassador, Lord Llewellyn, formally unveils the memorial above the sands at Ver-sur-Mer.



© Getty Images for Normandy Memori



D-Day landing memorials.



And since no one else can be there, the Mail is proud to offer this exclusive preview of the site. Because it is in no small part down to our outstanding readers that this spectacular memorial — laid out like the Union flag — came about in the first place.

Not only did Mail readers raise more than £1 million towards this project but your passion and your powerful messages ensured that the Chancellor's LIBOR fund — the penalty pot for errant banks — agreed to come up with the lion's share.

All the other allied nations who took part in D-Day, including the Americans, Canadians and French, have long had a national memorial on the soil they liberated. As of this weekend, the nation which sent more men and machinery into the hell of Normandy than any other will finally have one too.

Last night, George Batts, 95, the former secretary of the Normandy Veterans Association and one of the founding fathers of this project, reiterated his gratitude to all those Mail readers who played their part. 'You have all helped make this dream come true for a lot of us who never thought it could happen,' he tells me from his home in Kent.

Indeed, your generosity is formally recognised forevermore since it is carved into these limestone pillars, alongside the names of the other principal donors, including the Michael and Sarah Spencer Foundation of philanthropist Lord Spencer of Alresford.

A former Royal Engineer, who spent D-Day and the following week crawling over Gold Beach clearing landmines, Mr Batts is keen to point out that while all the veterans are delighted to see this thing finally take shape, it is not about them. 'It's about those poor devils we left behind.'

These events might have happened 77 years ago but they are still etched in the mind of Anthea Ionides, as surely as the name of her father is now engraved on the memorial: Lt Theo Ionides.

'Some of us are still living with the consequences,' says the sprightly retired schoolteacher from her home in Hampstead, North London. Her father was an Oxford-educated engineer who had been just old enough to serve in World War I and was just young enough to serve in Naval Intelligence during the Second.

He worked on mine disposal in the very same Admiralty office as James Bond creator, Ian Fleming. Ahead of D-Day, Lt Ionides was part of a British commando unit that landed in the American sector, heading for Cherbourg, and was killed near St Mere Eglise four days after D-Day.

'I was nine when I came home from school and my mother got the telegram which changed our lives,' says Anthea, who cherishes a photograph of a family day out at Hampton Court.

'My memory of my father is that he was just great fun. My mother was the sensible one with a sensible job and he was always off on secret assignments.'

Her father is buried in the Commonwealth cemetery at Bayeux and when her son, called Theo in his honour, was killed in a car crash at the age of 22, she placed his ashes at the same spot. She has the name Theo tattooed on each shoulder.

For her, the unveiling of this memorial is long overdue, intensely emotional and deeply appreciated.

'I love going back to Normandy and meeting all the veterans and they always say: "It's your Dad we're here for." It always makes me cry.'

To all those who have donated, Anthea has a simple message: 'It's just the most enormous thank you.'

So says Tom Warby Clitherow, a retired leisure centre executive from Chorley, Lancashire. He will be at the arboretum on Sunday in memory of the father he never knew. Tom was 15 months old when his father, Gunner Thomas Warby of the Royal Artillery, was killed by enemy mortar fire at Herouvillette in July 1944. He is a reminder that the worst British losses were not sustained on the beaches but in the murderous Battle of Normandy which raged on through the countryside and around the city of Caen until the end of August 1944.

'I grew up knowing that my father held me in his arms when I was 12 months old when he was last at home on leave,' says Tom. 'And we have a photograph of him at the time in the garden at home. My mother sent it to him and it came back, with all his possessions, with damage from the mortar fire.'

Over the years, Tom has made friends with a local French family who regularly visit his father's grave on his behalf and like to stay in touch. For him, that goes to the heart of this memorial: 'These men died so that Europe could be free.'

Like more and more people, he has signed up to be a 'guardian' of the memorial, making monthly donations that will not just ensure it remains in good condition but will help it raise funds for the next big project. 'We badly need an education centre,' says George Batts. 'Schoolchildren are going to be visiting this memorial long after we're all gone and we need them all to understand.'

For now, though, I think Mr Batts and his fellow veterans should take a modest bow and enjoy the sight of their magnificent handiwork. Overdue it may be. But let no one say they have not done their 22,442 fallen comrades justice.

NO GRAVE, BUT THE SEA: HOW THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION COMMEMORATE THOSE THAT HAVE NO GRAVE, BUT THE SEA – PART TWO

MERCHANT NAVY

In the First World War, the civilian navy's duty was to be the supply service of the Royal Navy, to transport troops and supplies to the armies, to transport raw materials to overseas munitions factories and munitions from those factories, to maintain, on a reduced scale, the ordinary import and export trade, to supply food to the home country and - despite greatly enlarged risks and responsibilities - to provide both personnel and ships to supplement the existing resources of the Royal Navy.

Losses of vessels were high from the outset, but had peaked in 1917 when in January the German government announced the adoption of "unrestricted submarine warfare". The subsequent preventative measures introduced by the Ministry of Shipping - including the setting up of the convoy system where warships were used to escort merchant vessels - led to a decrease in losses but by the end of the war, 3,305 merchant ships had been lost.



Tower Hill Memorial.

Liverpool Naval Memorial.



Lee-On-Solent Memorial.

In the Second World War, losses were again considerable in the early years, reaching a peak in 1942. The heaviest losses were suffered in the Atlantic, but convoys making their way to Russia around the North Cape, and those supplying Malta in the Mediterranean were also particularly vulnerable to attack. In all, 4,786 merchant ships were lost during the war.

TOWER HILL NAVAL MEMORIAL

The First World War section contains the names of 12 177 merchant sailors who lost their lives and have no known grave. This section was unveiled by Queen Mary on 12 December 1928.

The Second World War section contains the names of 23 883 merchant sailors who lost their lives and have no known grave. This section was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II on 5 November 1955.

Some of the vessels whose sailors are commemorated on this memorial include

- *SS Nova Scotia*
- *SS Erinpura*
- *HMHS Anglia*
- *HMTS Donegal*

LIVERPOOL NAVAL MEMORIAL

At the outbreak of the Second World War, it was evident that the Royal Navy would not be able to man all the auxiliary vessels that would serve with it. To deal with the shortfall in manpower, several officers and men of the Merchant Navy agreed to serve with the Royal Navy under the terms of a T.124 agreement, which made them subject to Naval discipline while generally retaining their Merchant Navy rates of pay and other conditions. The manning port established to administer these men was at Liverpool.

More than 13,000 seamen served under these conditions in various types of auxiliary vessels, at first mainly in armed merchant cruisers, but also armed boarding vessels, cable ships, rescue tugs, and others on special service.

The Liverpool Naval Memorial commemorates 1,400 of these officers and men, who died on active service aboard more than 120 ships, and who have no grave but the sea.

Unveiled by the Admiral of the Fleet on 12 November 1952.

FLEET AIR ARM

LEE-ON-SOLENT

During the Second World War, the Fleet Air Arm served in almost every theatre. In a reconnaissance role, they supported land operations in France, the Netherlands, North Africa, Italy, and the Far East.



Malta Memorial.



Lowestoft Memorial.



Runnymede Air Force Memorial

Operating from aircraft carriers (seven of which were lost during the war), they were one of the chief weapons against the U-boats in the Atlantic and in support of the Russian convoys.

In November 1940, Fleet Air Arm Swordfish biplanes carrying torpedoes undertook a night raid on the harbour at Taranto, resulting in disaster for the Italian navy. Aircraft from HMS Victorious and Ark Royal took part in the sinking of the German battleship Bismark in May 1941 and in February 1942, when the Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prinz Eugen attempted a daring dash along the English Channel from the Atlantic to the relative safety of the North Sea, they were attacked by Swordfish of the Fleet Air Arm.

The principal base of the Fleet Air Arm, Lee-on-the-Solent, Hampshire, was chosen as the site for the memorial to 1 928 men of that service who died during the Second World War and who have no known grave.

ROYAL NAVY PATROL SERVICE

The Depot for the Royal Naval Patrol Service, developed from the pre-war Royal Naval Reserve Trawler Section was at Lowestoft during the 1939-1945 War. At the outset of the war, the men of this service were mainly the fishermen of the requisitioned trawlers and drifters used on patrol work, but later it included men from all walks of life and various types of small craft. In the spring of 1944, the Royal Naval Patrol Service reached its maximum strength of some 57,000. Between 1942 and 1946 new construction ships and craft manned by the Service totalled 1,637, among them minesweepers of various kinds, corvettes, fuel carriers, motor launches and naval seaplane tenders. Their objective was to maintain wartime patrols and safeguard the coasts of Britain. Lowestoft was chosen as the site for the Memorial to those men of the Royal Naval Patrol Service who have no other grave than the sea.

AIRMEN

RUNNYMEDE AIR FORCE MEMORIAL

The Air Forces Memorial, Runnymede, Surrey is the home of all the Airmen who lost their lives and have no known grave. A total of 20 401 airmen are commemorated on the panels of the memorial. Included in this number is 17 from the South African Air Force. Those who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe, and who have no known graves. They served in Bomber, Fighter, Coastal, Transport, Flying Training and Maintenance Commands, and came from all parts of the Commonwealth. Some were from countries in continental Europe that had been overrun but whose airmen continued to fight in the ranks of the Royal Air Force.

During the early stages of the Battle of Britain, the Air Chiefs assumed that the high volume of shipping in British waters would mean that downed airmen would be spotted and rescued. Sadly this did not happen and many airmen drowned having been shot down over the English Channel.

Given this situation, flight controllers in the South were ordered not to vector aircraft over the channel. This contributed to a reduction in the loss of airmen by drowning. Not only were fighter pilots lost at sea but also returning bomber crews.

On 22 August 1940, an emergency meeting was held under the chairmanship of Air Marshal Harris from Bomber Command to address the shortcomings of the Air Sea Rescue service. This set in motion the development of a dedicated Air Sea Rescue Service which only came into effect in February 1941 when a Rescue Directorate was established. Once again operationalizing the service took a long time and it was only operational by the end of 1941. The service rapidly expanded and many airmen who otherwise would have certainly drowned were rescued.

Elsewhere several Air Sea Rescue Squadrons were formed for service. These include 282 Squadron that was formed on 01 January 1943 and operated initially from Scotland and later from South-west England and 283 Squadron who was formed on 11 February 1943 and provided cover for most parts of the Mediterranean. Unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II on 17 October 1953.

MALTA MEMORIAL

The Malta Memorial commemorates 2 291 airmen who lost their lives during the Second World War whilst serving with the Commonwealth Air Forces flying from bases in Austria, Italy, Sicily, islands of the Adriatic and Mediterranean, Malta, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, West Africa, Yugoslavia and Gibraltar, and who have no known grave. 172 of those commemorated are South Africans. The Memorial was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II on 3 May 1954.

OBITUARIES

BENONI

Lgr Deek Fishwick

BLOEMFONTEIN

Lgr JJ Rogers

CAPE TOWN

Lgr S.T. Ireland

DURBAN

Lgr Bev van Niekerk

EAST LONDON

Lgr Phillip Sorrenson.

National President. Phil Sorensen was one of the "Triple Pillars" of the East London Branch. The other two pillars (the late, great Dave



Attendees at the funeral of Lgr Syd Ireland, Lgr's Pierre Fourie, Johan Johnson and William Roberts.

Forsyth and the ever-faithful Stephanie Foxcroft) toppled some years ago. Lgr. Phil has now joined them.

Phil was the quintessential Legionnaire; nothing was ever too much for the cause. He was a quiet, unassuming man, who performed every task given him with diligence and a total lack of fuss. I was always favourably impressed with his "can do" approach to Branch and Regional problems when these arose. Indeed, I was humbled by Phil's readiness to address and resolve issues without rancour or apportioning blame. He was every inch a gentleman and his dry sense of humour endeared him to all. The SA Legion in general and the Eastern Cape Region in particular, are much the poorer for his loss. Whilst it is true that no-one is irreplaceable in the general sense, the likes of Phil Sorensen cannot be replaced. They come once in a lifetime.

May his dearly departed soul find eternal solace and repose in the mansion of Almighty God. My condolences go to the Sorensen family in these dark hours of irretrievable loss and consummate sadness.

We will remember him!

Sincere condolences,
Brian Klopper.

KIMBERLEY

Lgr Peter Sterley.
Lgr John Underwood.

NORTH COAST

LGR A.C. PATTISON Legionnaire Anthony Pattison very sadly died in a (crayfish) diving accident off Westbrook Beach on the KZN North Coast on Sunday, 16 May. Anthony joined the Durban Branch of the South African Legion in 2015 and was a founding member of the Durban and District Club (affiliated to Durban Branch) in the same year, he later transferred to the North Coast Branch when it was established in 2019. Before joining the SA Legion, Anthony joined the Journey's End Moths in July 2012 where he was fondly adopted as the resident Shellhole, District and KZN Provincial Dugout piper playing in many memorable raids & parades throughout KZN. His love of music had him involved with piping and pipe bands in KZN for many years, he immediately made a grand impression, particularly when he attracted the public by playing his pipes at our Poppy Day collections. Anthony was a well-liked and popular member of the KZN piping and drumming community. During the time when the KZN bands were struggling, he played with One Medical Battalion B Band and also with Natal Mounted Rifles Pipe Band (now Queen Nandi Mounted Rifles Pipe Band) and became a member of that latter band.

Anthony was very enthusiastic about his piping and very sharing with his abilities and apart from band events quite frequently played at weddings, funerals and other events. From time to time he also assisted the MOTH band by playing at their parades. In his civilian occupation, he was a member of the Durban Metro Police and well respected by his colleagues reaching the rank of inspector. He was instrumental in starting the bicycle unit being one of the first bicycle patrol officers, (He also served

as a Reservist with the SA Police Service). Anthony was also a hard-working member of the Scottish Masonic Lodge. His death came as a shock to all of us and he will be sorely missed. He leaves his loving wife, Sharon and son Gareth.

We Salute you Lgr Anthony Pattison, you were an example to all of us and we bid you farewell until we meet again amongst the ranks of our elder brethren.

*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 HIM.*

PORT ELIZABETH

Lgr C J Wolfaardt born on 2 May 1951, passed away on 2 May 2021. Indeed a sad day for his family to Pass Away on one's 70th birthday. The Major was a long time supporter of the Legion and served on the EXCO for several terms. The Chairman, EXCO and Legionnaires mourn his passing and convey their collective condolences to his wife and family. May he rest in the peace of the Lord.

National President. It was my privilege to know the late Major "Wolf" for the past 15 years and I make bold to say that the SA Legion, the MOTH Order and the PAG Old Comrades Association are all much the poorer for his passing. Major Wolf was at all times dignified, restrained, compassionate and professional in his approach to all and sundry; veterans and non-veterans alike. One was struck by his gravitas from the outset of meeting him. This was in many ways attributable to his devout Christian faith. He was always ready to step into the devotional breach whenever a Padre was unavoidably delayed or absent from a parade or general meeting. Major Wolf lived the 3 Ideals of the MOTH Order and the credo of the SA Legion to the full. He personified those ideals and that credo. He was universally respected and admired in all the institutions to which he gave so selflessly of his time and prodigious effort. He amounted to an institution at his beloved PAG and was a solid, prevailing presence at both his MOTH Shellhole and SA Legion Branch. May the dearly departed soul of this fine man find eternal solace and repose in the mansion of Almighty God. Our condolences go to Estelle, his devoted and supportive wife and their two daughters. You are in our thoughts and prayers as you come to terms with this tragic and irretrievable loss.

"Stil broers. Daar gaan 'n man verby". We will remember him!

Brian Klopper.

PRETORIA

Wife of Lgr Harry Keefe.

STRAND

Lgr Jimmy Seaman.

SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION



Springbok, the Journal of the South African Legion, ISSN number 2221-9854, is the responsibility of the Communication Officer Lgr Charles Ross. Body text was set in Calibri 11 and headers, Calibri 12 pt.

SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION STRUCTURE

Patron in Chief:

President of the Republic of South Africa

Past Presidents for Life:

- Lgr Jurie Van der Merwe
- Lgr Chris PC de B Venter

Honorary Life Vice Presidents:

- Lgr Jurie van der Merwe
- Lgr Arthur Blake
- Lgr Bazil Kriel
- Lgr Rick Andriès
- Lgr Quentin Gibson

National President: Lgr Brian Klopper.

National V/President: Lgr Brian Smith.

National Treasurer: Lgr George Booth.

National Secretary: Lgr Riana Venter van Zyl.

National Liaison/Membership: Vacant.

National Wellbeing: Lgr Rees Davies.

National Ceremonial/Discipline: Lgr Shaun Booth.

National Communication: Lgr Charles Ross.

SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION,

PO Box 1936, Houghton, 2041

Tel: 010 595 4222

reception@salegion.org

Branches:

- Alexandria
- Atteridgeville
- Benoni
- Bloemfontein
- Botshabelo
- Brakpan
- Cape Canopy
- Cape Town
- Central Wits
- Durban
- East London
- England
- Europe
- Grahamstown
- Kagiso-West Rand
- Kimberley
- King Williams Town
- Kroonstad
- Lower South Coast
- North Coast
- Pietermaritzburg
- Port Alfred
- Port Elizabeth
- Pretoria
- Scotland
- Soweto
- Strand

Regional Chairmen:

- Eastern Cape: Lgr Basil Dukas.
- Free State: Lgr Jurie Van Der Merwe.
- Gauteng: Lgr Rees Davies.
- Kwa-Zulu Natal: Lgr Rick Andriès
- UK & Europe: Lgr Cameron Kinnear