

Cape Field Artillery



*Alliances and Bonds of
Friendship in the Military*

CAPE FIELD ARTILLERY

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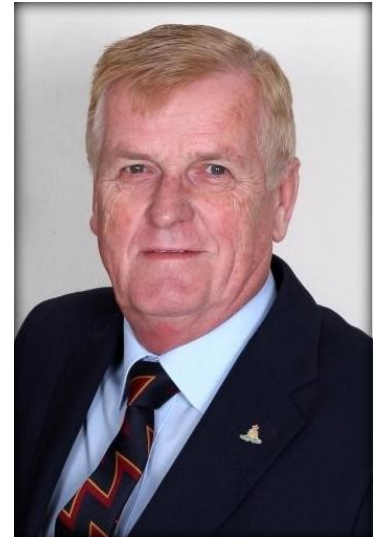
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PREFACE

This publication is my personal rendition as a former Commanding Officer of the activities of my regiment, the Cape Field Artillery, over a specific period of time in its history.



The regiment is a Reserve Force Artillery unit, stationed in Cape Town, and it operates within the higher command of the South African Army Artillery Formation that is based in Pretoria. The regiment fulfils its military obligations as ordered and planned, but similarly pursues activities based on social responsibility, participation in ceremonial events, exhibitions and shows as well as international relations.

The traditions of the artillery are steeped in history, and there exists a deep desire within the gunner fraternity towards keeping these traditions alive and relevant. Thus, reaching out to fellow gunner regiments by entering into official affiliations and bonds of friendship is still very relevant to this day.

This now has a direct bearing on the publication you are about to read, which is a sort of timeline story of the voyage to Plymouth, if you wish, beginning from how it all started, and covering historical events, political changes in South Africa and the subsequent easing of relations on the international front.

Should readers find it difficult to relate to some of the military jargon, such as the explanation of a Fire Mission, or the reference to military ranks, rest assured, the reading thereafter will not only be exciting and informative but a pleasure as well! It may even qualify, from a reader's perspective, as a bit of a travel story, let us see!!

This journey has had far-reaching effects and resulted in a number of reciprocal visits from both the Cape Field Artillery as well as 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery.

LtCol (retd) CA (Kees) de Haan
February 2024

FOREWORD

My good friend and fellow Gunner's memory of a very special and specific series of developments in South Africa will have an impact beyond those individuals who had the privilege of personally sharing in his experiences. History has shown that military conflict has universally had its fair share of surprising developments. In South Africa, armed conflicts between local citizens and the British, during the Anglo-Boer wars at the end of the 19th and start of the 20th century, are part of recorded history and yet, in the two world wars that followed, South Africa and Britain were Allies. To a large extent, the Union Defence Force, as well as the post-1961 South African Defence Force, followed much of their British counterparts' structure and doctrine. Unavoidably, this relationship led to deep roots and bonds between Corps and Units of these two countries. This was also the case with the Cape Field Artillery, which had a long-standing affiliation with 29 Commando Regiment of the Royal Artillery. Subsequent political developments post 1961, however, caused a noticeable cooling in alignment and in the existing relationships between the military structures of the two countries. This changed again after 1994, though, when broken ties were once again renewed and the pre-existing brotherhood was re-established. Kees' memories, which he shares in this book, reflect the unique bonds that most soldiers and military veterans can recognise. Not only did visitors (including Royalty) from the UK contribute visibly to this meaningful relationship, but it applies equally to a South African delegation's visit to the UK in 2000. In my capacity as General of the Gunners as well as General Officer Commanding Western Province Command, it was my privilege, honour and pleasure to accompany the South African delegation on this visit, and to participate in the hearty re-establishment of bonds with military comrades in the UK. The warm reception, the easy interactions and the visible Brotherhood of Soldiers was an honour but also a delight and pleasure to experience. Kees de Haan's documented record of the interactions between mutually respected comrades in arms is a proper and true reflection of history-in-reality.

UBIQUE!

Maj gen (ret'd) Chris van Zyl

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea of writing this publication was born out of a casual discussion with a former officer in my Regiment, Major Danie Farr. We were reminiscing, as usual, about our collective days in the Army and he, at some stage, dropped a firm hint! He himself had written about his restoration of an iconic British sports car, a TVR, and thought it would be great if I wrote about my regiment's travels to Plymouth.

It is impossible to write a publication of this nature without the assistance and encouragement of many people. I have made use of many inputs by two CFA band members who generously shared their recollections of facts and their photographs. In addition, stories and photographs from other members of the touring groups were of invaluable assistance. I am going to mention some by name but realise that I could, inadvertently, leave some out; I hope that my apologies will be accepted!

I express my gratitude to the following:

Mathilda, my dear wife, for allowing me to sneak away to my study at very odd hours during the day/night.

Rozanne (de Haan) Mouton for her amazing assistance in compiling my document.

Major General Chris van Zyl for his inspirational foreword.

Lieutenant-General Phillipus Du Preez, whom I visited at his home in Yzerfontein, for his valuable information regarding the "Ras-Kanon".

Great appreciation for Regina Lord for her proofreading and editing of my first serious attempt at putting words to paper.

Photo credit front page: Major Dalene Coetzee.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mike Gerber who took many photographs of our 2000 trip.

WO2 Alan Pentz who acted as my communications officer during our 2000 trip and who had produced a detailed fact file at the time.

Lead Drummer Staff Sergeant Ken Hundermark for his many stories that he shared with me via email. I will refer to him in more detail in my epilogue.

Current Drum Major, Sergeant Bill White, whom I could contact any time I was unsure of facts and with whom I could also share my progress.

Roberta Steenkamp for the final proofreading and invaluable recommendations.

LONG-RANGE FIRE MISSION

“Your attention please! Will all passengers travelling on British Airways Flight BA 58 to London Heathrow kindly commence boarding immediately through Gate 11 – thank you!”

This flight announcement was music to the ears of the members of the Cape Field Artillery, departing from Cape Town International Airport on the eve of 10th July 2000, on an epic journey to Plymouth, United Kingdom. There was no need to urge the 18 musicians of the Cape Field Artillery Pipes and Drums and the 7 Regimental members to obey this announcement – after all, this was our “dream come true”!! The main purpose of this visit was for the Regiment to cement its official alliance with 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery in Plymouth, and also for the band to participate in the prestigious Music of the Night Festival, hosted by 29 Commando Regiment at the Royal Citadel in Plymouth. This first visit would ultimately result in a lasting relationship between the two regiments with various reciprocal visits occurring over the years since then.

To those unfamiliar with military terminology, the reference to the term fire mission in the heading above requires some clarification. Artillery attacks targets by engaging these with fire missions. Such attacks are initiated by means of a ‘warning order’, which assigns the fire unit(s) that will participate in the engagement, i.e., Fire Mission Battery. This order therefore also warns the battery’s personnel that all its guns will be used for the attack. Following such a Warning Order comes the required information to prepare and execute the attack, such as target position/location, ammunition to be used, method of fire as well as when to fire. But that day, there was no need to wait for any orders: after months of private fundraising (we had received no financial support from the military), planning and organising, we were all “fired up” and ready to go!! This was the start of an epic adventure, one that would remain in the memories of all the travellers for a long time to come; in fact, some were given the opportunity to do it all again in 2008!! Never before in the history of the Cape Field Artillery had any overseas visits by members of the Regiment been undertaken by such a large group.

I was privileged to command the regiment between the years 1995 and 2004 and again from 2008 to 2014. I had undergone my initial basic army training in 1969 at the School of Artillery in Potchefstroom. I was nominated for a Junior Leaders Course during that year and, after successful completion thereof, was promoted to 2nd lieutenant. At the end of my time at Potchefstroom (1970), I was posted to Cape Field Artillery in Cape Town. My career as a reservist in the regiment eventually spanned a total of 45 years. Through various promotion courses I qualified as a Regimental Commander, and in 1995 was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. On Saturday 8th April 1995, I took over command of the regiment from Lieutenant Colonel Ernst Bester. It would be difficult to provide details regarding all activities during my period of command, as they are just too numerous to mention, but I will discuss some briefly, while others, like our trip to Plymouth in 2000 and again in 2008, will be covered in detail.

For now, I would like to introduce the reader to the Cape Field Artillery as well as the Pipes and Drums of the regiment.

CAPE FIELD ARTILLERY: A SHORT HISTORY

The following notice appeared in the “Local News” column of the Cape Argus on Wednesday 26th August 1857, which signalled the birth of the Cape Town Volunteer Artillery:

“The Cape Royal Corps, (later known as the Cape Town Rifles (Dukes) whose ranks are being daily augmented are about to aid in organising a Foot Artillery, in addition to the present corps. A meeting of those desirous of forming this new company will be held in the Town House this afternoon.”

The regiment was officially formed at this meeting, which was held in the Old Town House, Greenmarket Square, Cape Town on 26th August 1857, with its first Commanding Officer, the Chevalier Alfred Duprat, a member of the Anglo-Portuguese Commission dealing with captured slaves. He was second-in-command of the Rifles but, more importantly, he had been a Gunner in the Portuguese Army.

The regiment has undergone several name changes since its founding, and one in particular is noteworthy. In 1867, the visiting Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, was escorted to Cape Town from Simon’s Town by the Cape Town Cavalry and upon his arrival, as he and his entourage approached Adderley Street, the Cape Town Volunteer Artillery fired a royal Salute.

The Duke of Edinburgh was so impressed with the bearing of Cape Town’s volunteer soldiers that, a few weeks later on 3rd October 1867, the name was changed to *Prince Alfred’s Own Cape Town Volunteer Artillery (PAOCTVA)*. The words “Cape Town” were later dropped and the regiment’s title became *Prince Alfred’s Own Volunteer Artillery*. In 1896, the title was changed again to *Prince Alfred’s Own Cape Artillery*.

According to Lionel Crook’s “*South African Artillery Compendium*”, a variety of name changes, specifically for Cape Field Artillery, were the order of the day; some happened for operational reasons and some were political!!

Suffice to say that, on 1st November 1963, the regiment officially became the Cape Field Artillery (henceforth referred to as CFA).

The regiment is still very active today and fulfils its role as part of the operational reserve component of the South African Army Artillery Formation. It has its current Headquarters at the Fort Ikapa Military Base in Goodwood, Cape Town.



Members of the regiment after completion of conversion training on the GV5 artillery gun

CAPE FIELD ARTILLERY PIPES AND DRUMS: A SHORT HISTORY

The Cape Field Artillery Pipes and Drums were formed during 1972, but only placed on Regimental strength on 1st January 1974. They originated from a civilian pipe band, The Cape Town Stewarts Pipe Band, which had been established in 1952. In reference to its historical association with the Royal House of Stewart, of which the late Queen Elizabeth II was a descendant, the band wears kilts of the Royal Stewart tartan. It has the distinction of being the only pipe band within the South African Artillery Formation. Performances, however, are not confined to military occasions but include Caledonian and other social activities (weddings, funerals etc.), as well as cultural, charitable, sporting and prestigious events. Participation in a variety of concerts with other military bands is considered part of their normal functions.



A STEP BACK IN TIME

Towards the end of 1960, South Africa was seeking to become less dependent on the United Kingdom. On 5th October 1960, a referendum was held to decide whether South Africa should become a republic. The result showed that 52% of the voters were in favour of a republic. Dr H.F. Verwoerd, the then prime minister, went to London in March 1961 to give the Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers formal notice that South Africa was intending to change from a monarchy to a republic, and at the same time to request permission to remain within the British Commonwealth.

This request was strongly opposed by African States, joined by India and Canada. Interestingly, this was not because of the proposed constitutional change, but because of South Africa's policy of apartheid, and thus resulted in Dr Verwoerd withdrawing the application.

South Africa now entered a long period of being targeted for its racial policies. This resulted in numerous economic sanctions and specific embargoes being imposed on it. Contact with South Africa, in most spheres, was officially frowned upon.

Over the ensuing years, it became more and more apparent that South Africa's political arena required a serious shake-up, especially with regard to its racial policies.

On 2nd February 1990, the then State President, F.W. de Klerk, delivered a memorable speech in Parliament. After this, it soon became clear that changes in the South African political scene, initiated by that speech, were irreversible: South African politics would never be the same again. Nelson Mandela was released from prison on 11th February 1990 and, simultaneously with these changes, many questions of an international nature were raised. One of the most important questions was related to the possibility of South Africa re-entering the Commonwealth.

In October 1993, South Africa was invited to re-join the Commonwealth of Nations with effect from January 1994 (www.sahistory.org.za). This effectively put the clock back to the days when there were official ties and affiliations in place between South African Regiments and units abroad.

The new democratic South Africa found itself on a rollercoaster ride to full acceptance by the international community. On 10th May 1994, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as president and the first overseas dignitary, French President Francois Mitterrand, was due to arrive in Cape Town on 4th July 1994. The Cape Field Artillery Saluting Troop was tasked to fire the ceremonial 21-gun salute on that occasion. This can be viewed on the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5lqbniggbY>

ROYAL VISITS

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, accompanied by Prince Phillip, arrived in South Africa on 19th March 1995 for an official state visit. One of her numerous engagements was to pay a visit to the Commonwealth War Graves at the Maitland cemetery in Cape Town. Records show that the wartime casualties of WW1 and WW2 buried at this cemetery totalled 976. Prior to her visit, arrangements had been made to muster approximately 350 volunteers from various ex-service organisations.

The Cape Town branch of the Gunners' Association (more about this organisation later) was tasked to provide 25 members for the occasion, despite the fact that it was a public holiday and the weather was more suitable for the beach!!

The Queen and Prince Phillip visited the cemetery on 21st March 1995, where she was met by the South African Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Ronnie Kasrils. During the short ceremony the Last Post was sounded, a minute's silence was held and Reveille was played. Her Majesty then laid a wreath at the foot of the Cross of Sacrifice, and this was followed by a tour of the graves.

It is interesting to note that one of the tombstones reflects the last resting place of Horace Henry Glascock, VC. He was a driver in the six-gun Q battery of the Royal Horse Artillery. Being the only ex-serviceman who was awarded the Victoria Cross, this fact was specifically pointed out to the Royal couple.



THE PRINCE IN CAPE TOWN

Prince Phillip, The Duke of Edinburgh, visited Cape Town again in February 1996, albeit in a quite different capacity. An article in one of Cape Town's newspapers on 25th February 1996 told the following story:

Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh, re-opens ties with the Cape Field Artillery today, more than a century after the Regiment was named Prince Alfred's Own Cape Town Volunteer Artillery by an earlier Duke of Edinburgh. The Duke re-established a

proud royal link with one of Cape Town's oldest regiments when he attended a British Commonwealth Ex-Services League (BCEL) memorial service at the Cenotaph in the city centre.

The service marked the start of the BCEL's week-long conference in Cape Town. The conference itself coincided with the 75th anniversary of the founding of the BCEL's predecessor, the British Empire Services League, in Cape Town in 1921.

The firing of salvoes by Cape Field Artillery was especially significant given the presence of Prince Phillip, grand president of the BCEL.

In addition, the Cape Field Artillery Pipe Band led the Guard of Honour during the parade, with a CFA piper playing the Lament when 49 wreaths were laid by delegates from all over the world.

The programme of the conference allowed for a visit to the Castle of Good Hope, where Prince Phillip was particularly interested in visiting the officers' messes of the reserve force regiments at the Castle.

Prince Phillip visiting the Cape Field Officers' Mess with its Commanding Officer, LtCol de Haan in attendance



ARTILLERY EX-SERVICES ORGANISATIONS

In line with the objectives of organisations such as the BCEL, we find similar organisations at regimental level in the military. The normal activities for any military regiment centre on operational issues, such as training, exercises and participation in specific military deployments.

In addition, there are instances where time is spent on more social activities, as well as on interactions between groupings who share or support the same core values of regimental life.

The Gunners' Association of South Africa (www.gunners.org.za) is such an organisation, formed on 02/07/1943, for all gunners in South Africa; their mission clearly states:

"It is the mission of the Gunners' Association to promote fellowship and camaraderie amongst gunner, (field or anti-aircraft, serving or retired), to promote gunner traditions and to provide welfare and educational support to gunners and their families."



Similarly, in the United Kingdom, we would find the existence of the Royal Artillery Association (www.thegunners.org.uk), whose stated objective is:



"To promote the efficiency of the Royal Artillery by:

- (1) Maintaining contact between past and present members of the Royal Artillery, fostering mutual friendship between them and providing social gatherings for them and;*
- (2) Fostering esprit de corps, comradeship and the welfare of the Royal Artillery and preserving its traditions"*

It is against this background that the story of Plymouth, rather unobtrusively, had its early beginnings.

OFFICIAL RE-ALLIANCE IN WOOLWICH, UNITED KINGDOM (1996)

The two gunner associations (the Gunners' Association of South Africa and the Royal Artillery Association of the United Kingdom) had unofficially been in touch with

one another over time, and it was felt that a more official recognition of the corps of Artillery, in both countries, was an ideal next step. With these prospects in mind, LtCol John McGregor, a retired Royal Artillery officer, who also happened to be an ex South African Gunner and a member of the Cape Field Artillery Regimental Council, approached the Royal Artillery Association. The idea was to assist in re-establishing official links between the Royal Artillery and the South African Artillery. The liaison had in fact started in 1993, when John arranged with the Royal Artillery Association for the exchange of a copy of *Ultima Ratio Regum* (The Final Argument of Kings) and a copy of the *First World War Artillery Remembrance* book. This book now resides in the Officers' Mess in Potchefstroom.

This approach found favour in the right quarters and, in a communication from the General Secretary of the Royal Artillery Association, John was advised that a formal appointment would follow. A letter from Maj Gen Steele MBE, the Chairman of the Royal Artillery Association, dated 16th December 1994, formalised the appointment.

John was duly co-opted onto the Western Province Branch Committee, which would assist him in his liaison with the Gunners Association (National) and the South African Artillery. This appointment later proved to be beneficial to CFA as well in their quest to pursue their affiliation with 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery.

During 1995, the possibility of a re-alliance was further pursued. The April 1996 edition of the South African Gunner magazine, *Ubique*, reported that the National Chairman, F.J.R. Louw, had paid a visit to London. A meeting was held at Woolwich and attended by both the UK Master Gunner, Sir Martin Farndale, and representatives of the Royal Artillery Association and the Charitable Association. The main aim of this meeting was to discuss and resolve the details of the imminent re-alliance of the South African Artillery and the South African Anti-Aircraft Artillery with the Royal Regiment of Artillery UK.

It was concluded that the re-alliance would be divided into two sections via a parade and a lunch in London on 5th June 1996, as well as a visit to South Africa by Sir Martin and Lady Farndale in September 1996.

The Director Artillery at Defence Headquarters Pretoria, Colonel M. Schalekamp, had issued a letter to the various commanding officers of his artillery regiments, inviting them to attend this parade, albeit at own cost!! Being the officer commanding of Cape Field Artillery, I was the only person to accept this invitation and attend!



The group of South African gunners ultimately arrived at Heathrow on 4th June 1996 to attend this memorable occasion the following day. They were: Col and Mrs M. Schalekamp, Col P. Walters, Maj A.E. Hook, Col W.R. de Smidt (Honorary Colonel Cape Field Artillery), LtCol J. McGregor and LtCol C.A. de Haan. The South African Military Attaché in Spain, Col and Mrs J. Snyman would arrive from Lisbon a little later that morning. They would be met by Capt. (SAN) Arne Söderlund, South African Naval and Military Attaché in London. Accommodation had been arranged at the Army and Navy Club close to St James's Square in London.

The group left the following morning, Wednesday, 5th June 1996, to attend the special Ceremonial Parade at the historic Gunner home at Woolwich. The weather played its part, as it turned out to be a sparkling and clear English summer's day!

WOOLWICH – HOME OF THE ROYAL ARTILLERY SINCE 1716

Since medieval times, guns, powder and shot had normally been stored in the Tower of London, but they were then moved to Woolwich in the 17th century. When the Royal Regiment of Artillery was formed in 1716, it made sense for the soldiers to be quartered in Woolwich with their guns.



These original barracks, close by the river Thames at Woolwich, formed part of the Royal Arsenal, which would be the centre of England's manufacture of guns and ammunition for over 200 years, reaching its peak during the Great War (1914-1918).

As more and more artillery regiments were formed, the barracks soon became overcrowded. In consequence, between 1758 and 1780, new barracks were commissioned to be built on the high ground above Woolwich Town.

The Officers' Mess, believed to be the first purpose-built mess in the country, was established around 1780. The barracks were finally completed in 1802 and the Officers' Mess moved to its present location at the western end of the Front Parade. Numerous alterations were made over the years, and most



The front façade of the barracks

recently, the Minister of Defence had put forward plans to sell off most of the real estate comprising the barracks grounds. This is an ongoing debate but for the moment, King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery is housed at the Barracks.

THE PARADE

The parade, attended by the distinguished VIP party from South Africa as well as UK guests, comprised detachments from the Royal Regiment's three Batteries, all of which bear Honour Titles for outstanding actions fought in South Africa at the turn of the century.



The Statue of Liberty, across the parade ground, is a Crimean War Memorial, designed by John Bell and unveiled in 1860

They were Q (Sanna's Post) Battery – which also mounted the Regimental Guard of Honour; 14th (Cole's Kop) Battery, and 159th (Colenso) Battery Royal Artillery. A Mounted Detachment was provided by the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery and the music was played by the Royal Artillery Band. At 11h00, the parade having been formed, the Master Gunner, St James's Park, General Sir Martin and the General of The Gunners, Lieutenant-General Phillipus Du Preez, were received by General Salute.



Following their inspection of the parade, the two Generals signed the illuminated Alliance scroll and addressed the Parade.

In the *Journal of the Royal Artillery* of September 1996, an edited version of the proceedings was produced by Major General F.E.W. Fursdon CB MBE. The speeches by the two generals, as they appeared in the journal, are hereby quoted verbatim.

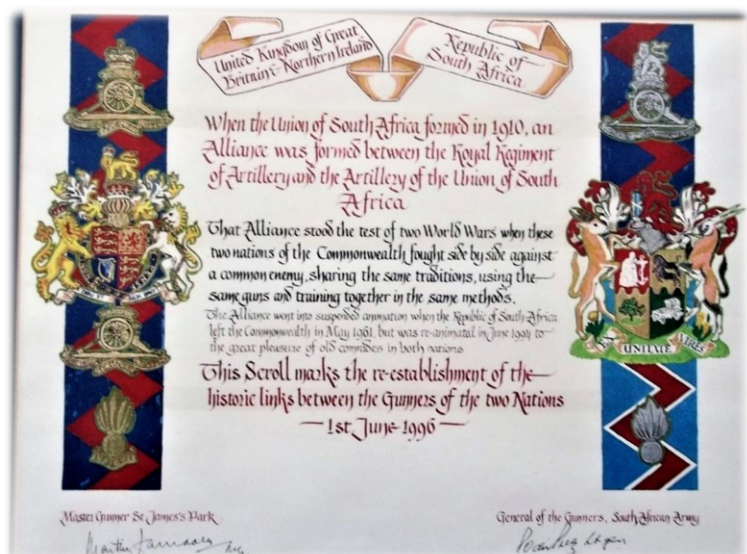
General Sir Martin Farndale gave his address first:

“To-day is a most important occasion for the Royal Regiment of Artillery. It marks the moment when we re-establish the old Alliance we have had for so long with the Gunners of South Africa. The idea for this parade was born at a meeting here at Woolwich last year between myself and General Du Preez, General of The Gunners of South Africa, whom I welcome most warmly here today. Our aim was to hold this parade as close as possible to the 1st of June, the day in 1994 when South Africa re-joined the Commonwealth. We decree that on 1st June each year henceforth our Regiments will exchange greetings to keep this link fresh in the minds of each generation of Gunners as they pass through our Regiments.

The joint story of the Gunners of South Africa and the Gunners of Great Britain is long, close and bound together by common aspirations, heritage, principles

and ideals. The first British Gunners set foot in South Africa at the end of the 17th Century as Coast Gunners. They came and went in the 18th Century and in the 19th Century they fought in the Kaffir and Zulu Wars of the 1870's. By this time the Militia Gunners had been raised in South Africa. The Prince Alfred's Own Cape Town Volunteer Artillery are to-day one of the oldest Territorial or Militia Regiments anywhere in the Commonwealth and are still going strong.

There is no doubt the tough fighting of the Boer War had great impact on the British Army and this was very much so in the case of the Gunners. The terrible losses to Gun Detachments by Boer direct fire and the great gallantry shown on so many occasions in defence of the guns is testimony to this. It was because of these battles that shields were first fixed to guns and that the guns themselves were deployed further back so that they should not be subject to direct enemy fire while carrying out their primary task.



South African Gunners were born as an independent force on 1st July 1912 and were soon locked in battle alongside their British comrades in the Great War. The new batteries fought with the greatest distinction in East Africa, in what was then Palestine and particularly on the Western Front. The gallantry of the South Africans at the great battles of Ypres, Passchendaele and Cambrai is now legend. The 6-inch 26cwt gun on parade to-day, presented to us by South Africa, fought in those battles and is here to remind us of those who gave their lives for the guns.

Again in 1940 the South African Gunners found themselves fighting alongside the guns of the Royal Artillery in East Africa, Abyssinia and Madagascar. But it was in the great battles of the Western Desert and Italy that the South African Gunners earned undying fame. Names like Sidi Rezegh, Bardia, Gazala, Tobruk, Alamein and Casino ring out over the generations and are shared honours between us. They mark the places where the men of our two Regiments stood shoulder to shoulder in combat.

In the years when we have been forced to lead independent lives you will like to know that we never forgot our South African comrades.

At our Ceremony of Remembrance held each year on Remembrance Day before our Great War Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, wreaths are laid by the Gunners of all our Regiments and by every Commonwealth Regiment as well. Throughout those years we always ensured that a wreath was laid beside all the rest for the Gunners of South Africa who died in the service of the guns.

General Du Preez, we have gathered here today so that you and I may sign the Instrument of Re-Affiliation in the form of an illuminated scroll. In doing so we mark for all to see the re-establishment of our old and treasured links. I am sure that those who have gone before us would approve our action today. We have gathered here, to witness this event, the officers and men of the batteries which are today in our Order of Battle and which still bear South African Honour Titles. They bear these with the greatest possible pride and strive constantly to live up to them.

Their names ring through our history as beacons of gallantry and bravery – Q (Sanna’s Post), 14th (Cole’s Kop) and 159th (Colenso) Batteries Royal Artillery. Today I charge them beyond all others to manifest our close links with you as the years go by.

When I last had audience with Her Majesty The Queen, Our Captain General, I told her of our plans which she warmly endorsed. Accordingly, last week I sent the following message to Buckingham Palace:

Would you please convey my humble duty to The Queen, our Captain General, and inform Her Majesty that at 11:00 hours on Wednesday 5th June a parade is to be held at Woolwich to mark the re-establishment of our Alliance with the South African Artillery. At this parade I will hand over an illuminated scroll to Lieutenant-General Du Preez, the General of the South African Gunners. Also on parade, will be our batteries with South African Honour Titles, Q (Sanna’s Post), 14th (Cole’s Kop) and 159th (Colenso) Batteries Royal Artillery.

And I have had the following reply:

Thank you for your letter of 23rd May. This has been passed on to the Queen, and Her Majesty, your Captain General, was delighted to hear of the occasion on 5th June. The Queen hopes that the Alliance between the Royal Artillery and the South African Artillery thrives for many years to come.

May I therefore end by saying on behalf of all ranks of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, how delighted we are to re-establish the long and cherished links between The Gunners of South Africa and The Gunners of Great Britain”.

In his address, General Du Preez said:

“What a magnificent Parade this is – and what a tremendous and auspicious day for all of us here. The day on which The South African Gunners are welcomed back into the Commonwealth family of Gunners. It is, in a sense, a homecoming. We have

fought alongside the Royal Artillery. During the last world conflict, we happily provided you with a number of trained Artillery and Anti-Aircraft Gunners, many with experience of war in the deserts of North Africa. We were honoured to do so, partly to repay the debt we owed to the Royal Regiment of Artillery who supplied Training Officers and NCO's in South Africa during the formative years of the South African Artillery and Anti-Aircraft.

There were many such men, all of them fine soldiers and excellent Gunners. One such man who will long be remembered was Ambrose Pratt who, we understand was the licensed jester of the Royal Artillery. True to form, he made an indelible impression on our Artillery training in the 1930's. In one corner of the Artillery Range at Potchefstroom there is to this day a river crossing which is known as 'Pratt's Drift'. In the time he served as an Instructor Gunner he played a practical joke on a practising battery which involved a certain amount of unexpected swimming.

One formal link with The Royal Regiment of Artillery was proclaimed in Army Order No 58 on the 1st of February 1919, and it was a sad day when this was broken in 1961. The link has now been re-instated. Family ties can never be truly broken, not even after 35 years. There is a strong bond of friendship with you and we honour the same traditions as you do.

Our Gunners have kept up that bond – unofficially, and so have you. The Transvaal Horse Artillery and The Honourable Artillery Company actively maintained their affiliation throughout this time. Quebec (Sanna's Post) Headquarter Battery of 5th Field Regiment RA visited South Africa in March 1993 to look over the battlefield where they won their Honour Title. And more recently, in 1994, 39th Regiment RA sent a party to the Cape March, while they and 29 Commando Regiment RA did so again in 1995. The Cape March is a two-day march around our beautiful Cape Peninsula. Royal Garrison Artillery Gunners, for many years, manned the Coastal Batteries around the shores of Table Bay and at Simon's Town, turning it into a veritable Gibraltar of the South.

South Africa has embarked on a new political dispensation. The significant changes that have to be brought about will mean that some old structures and customs will

have to be adapted. Traditions stem from many things, but mainly they evolve from group habits and customs, which have been passed from one generation to another. These traditions provide the group with a unique feeling of unity and pride – a particular Esprit de Corps. Gunners are privileged in that they enjoy an almost universal tradition. A tradition that unites them with a unique group – a group which takes pride in being Gunners and members of the gunner fraternity. The traditions of Gunners all stem from their service to the gun, which Louis XV of France aptly gave the title of “Ultima Ratio Regum” – the last argument of kings.

As part of a new political dispensation taking shape in South Africa, a new National Defence Force is being formed. This involves uniting the members of forces, some of which were previously in conflict with one another. In this regard, invaluable assistance is rendered by members of BMATT, the British Military Assistance Training Team, deployed in my country during this time of transition. In this process of integration, The South African Gunners will ensure that no old Gunner traditions will be lost. We will not only honour those old traditions, but we will actively identify with them. In this process we will undoubtedly also acquire new common values and traditions.

My congratulations to the Parade Commander and all those on parade today for a splendid performance. My sincere thanks to the Master Gunner for his leadership and guidance in bringing about this day. My sincere thanks also to Brigadier Peter Painter, the Regimental Secretary, for co-ordinating the events for today; and to Colonel Barrie Fairman, the Regimental Colonel, for hosting us all. To the Mounted Soldiers, the Trumpeter, the Guard, the Band, all Officers, NCO's and Gunners on parade – thank you.

The two words ‘thank you’ may not sound like much, but in them lie the sincere appreciation of the visiting South African Gunners. Please be assured that the welcome we have received here will be reciprocated towards you and any of your regiments visiting South Africa in the future.”

The addresses were followed by a General Salute and the playing of the National Anthems of the United Kingdom and the Republic of South Africa before the Guard Commander received General Du Preez's permission for the Parade to march off.

The Generals and the guests then moved to the Royal Artillery Sergeants Mess, where they were given excellent short presentations from representatives of the three batteries concerned on the battles, which had earned them the Honour Titles they now bear.

Presentations concluded with each battery outlining its plans to visit South Africa – and hopefully to be helped by the South African Gunners – to see the actual sites of the actions, in which they had won their Honour Titles.

The Ceremonies were fittingly concluded by a special Alliance Luncheon, held in the historic Royal Artillery Mess, Woolwich, at which General Sir Martin Farndale and Lieutenant General Phillipus Du Preez both spoke and made presentations on behalf of their respective Gunners. The Royal Regiment of Artillery received a magnificent silver centrepiece of a *Ras-Kanon* gun, and the South African Artillery received a print depicting a Royal Artillery Field Battery being brought into action in about 1850.

Major Albert Hook was the “baggage master” of the visiting South African gunners and was entrusted to ensure the arrival of the Ras-Kanon gun at Heathrow. This was not a task for the fainthearted, as he had to really convince the staff at the customs department that the item in question was certainly safe and not able to fire any sort of ammunition!

This silver replica gun had been manufactured by the staff of the South African Air Force No 1 Air Depot in Pretoria. I visited General Du Preez (now retired) in Yzerfontein (a coastal village on the West Coast of South Africa)



on 22nd September 2021, where I was delighted to learn from him that, as a token of appreciation and dedication to his involvement in the re-alliance of the British and South African gunners, No 1 Air Depot had produced for him an example (in bronze) of the Ras-Kanon! This is the gun in the photo on the previous page.

Everyone was delighted to hear that General Farndale had accepted General Du Preez's invitation to visit the South African Gunners in September 1996. Without doubt, the old alliance had been well and truly re-established in a most impressive and warm atmosphere of real friendship and mutual respect. Indeed, it was a most moving and memorable day for both the British and South African Gunners who had the privilege to be present.

The history of the so-called Ras-Kanon goes back to the First Boer War. Marthinus Nikolaas Ras, South African farmer and soldier, had realised that the Boer Forces needed artillery to be able to mount a successful assault on the British blockhouses and forts.



He thus successfully built two cannons (named Ras-Kanon): the first being a 3-inch calibre, 4 1/2 feet barrel cannon, named "*Martienie*" and the second one a 2-inch calibre, 5 1/2 feet barrel cannon, named "*Ras*".

This replica above can be found at Fort Schanskop, Pretoria. The Martienie cannon was used to great effect on a British fort near Rustenburg, firing 93 shots and resulting in the subsequent surrender of the fort. Marthinus Ras is therefore considered by historians to be the father of the South African Artillery.

Following the mutual undertaking in Woolwich, Sir Martin Farndale visited South Africa and arrived in Cape Town on 19th September 1996. Visits to Simon's Town and the Castle of Good Hope were arranged, as well as attendance of the National Gunners Association Congress in Kimberley. Visits to Magersfontein and a formal dinner at the Army College concluded his visit. At the same dinner, the exchange of the second Alliance scroll was finalised.



CFA Officers' Mess Cape Town Castle – Sir Martin Farndale, General Du Preez, LtCol de Haan and General Paul Lombard



(In uniform) General Officer Commanding (Western Province Command) Major-General Dan Lamprecht

THE FIRST TENTATIVE STEPS

The members of the Cape Field Artillery bade their farewells to Woolwich and returned to their accommodation at the Army and Navy Club. The next morning, they headed to Paddington Station for their rail journey to Plymouth. The objective was to meet with the then Commanding Officer of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery, LtCol Paddy Duncan, to discuss the possibility of an official affiliation.

The historical link between these two regiments goes back a long way. CFA, along with the Royal Artillery, saw action in the Frontier and the Anglo Boer Wars in South Africa. During World War 2, CFA was deployed, along with the Royal Artillery, in East Africa, North Africa and Italy. The CFA and 29 Field Regiment Royal Artillery (from which 29 Commando Regiment evolved) were also associated in the Western

Desert, North Africa in 1941-42. Both units fought side by side during the Battle of Tobruk in June 1942.

The group was warmly welcomed at the Royal Citadel, Plymouth, home of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery. The meeting was held over lunch in the Officers' Mess and the group was taken for a scenic walk around the Citadel, Plymouth Hoe and the Barbican. Stonehouse Barracks, home of 3 Commando Brigade, Royal Marines was made available for our accommodation.



Stonehouse Barracks



Entrance to the Officers' Mess, Stonehouse

The morning of 7th June 1995 saw the group depart from Plymouth back to London, confident that the idea of an affiliation between CFA and 29 Commando was a definite possibility.

General Du Preez started the administrative cycle by corresponding with the recently appointed Master Gunner St James's Park, Field Marshal The Lord Vincent, seeking approval of formally reinstating old alliances or establishing new alliances with Royal Regiment Artillery units.

This was ultimately approved and at a CFA Regimental Council meeting in early 1998, a decision was taken to proceed with the process of the affiliation and to take the bold step of visiting 29 Commando Regiment in Plymouth for the actual parade. It was also decided that our visit should coincide with the Music of the Night Festival hosted by 29 in the Royal Citadel.

This would allow the Pipes and Drums to participate in this very prestigious event and, in this way, CFA would gain maximum publicity and enhance its international image.

Implementing this decision necessitated some serious planning and even more serious fundraising. In order to obtain official approval for this visit, certain administrative requirements had to be met. Firstly, the Commanding Officer was tasked to compile a detailed submission to higher headquarters, providing all the necessary details regarding the visit. Secondly, the performance of the band, both musically as well as their drill and discipline, had to be evaluated via the SA Army Directorate of Music. This evaluation was conducted on 13th March 2000 at the regimental headquarters, and the band was found to be more than capable of performing at a level of competence that the Regiment and the SANDF would be proud of.

Permission to proceed with the visit was received on 2nd May 2000 via a letter issued by the Foreign Relations Section at Army Headquarters. Additional permission was granted to have the band members issued with specific items of military uniform.



The final stage of preparation for the visit was now in full swing, and this called for a concerted effort by all members to start preparing in earnest! The Director of Music of the Royal Artillery Band at Woolwich, Maj Kingston, was approached to liaise directly with CFA Pipe Major, WO1 Deacon, on matters musical. On 9th June, a copy of the final arrangements for our visit was provided by Captain Jason Carter of 29 Commando Regiment. It was clear from this document that they were anxious to do everything in their power to make our visit a memorable and successful one. On the local front, the forthcoming visit was widely publicised, with articles appearing in the local Community newspapers, the Constantiaberg Bulletin on 18th June 2000 as well as the Tyger Talk on 29th June 2000.

THE JOURNEY TO PLYMOUTH

A final order group was held at the CFA Regimental Headquarters on Saturday 8th July and a full list of instructions and information, compiled by the Commanding Officer, was issued to each member of the touring group.

The day of departure, Monday 10th July 2000, finally arrived and the touring group was ordered to report at Cape Town International Airport at 17h30. Relatives of the touring group as well as a number of regimental members gathered at the airport to bid farewell. The late arrival of the official regimental golf shirts had caused a bit of anxiety for the commanding officer, but this was “amicably resolved” and they were ultimately handed out to everyone.



Some serious final instructions from the Commanding Officer, and “Yes, gate No 11 is that way”!

Flight BA 058 departed at 20h30 and the group settled in for the long haul to London, although sleep did not come easily to some of the members, as they excitedly chatted the night away. It was Piper Ian Grant’s birthday and, after asking permission, he was allowed to entertain the passengers with a few jigs and reels, much to the delight of the cabin staff who did their own version of a Scottish dance! Moments before touching down at Heathrow on 11th July, the captain made a special announcement on the intercom about our “presence” on board and wished us well for the rest of our stay in England.



Piper Iain Grant entertaining, as usual



Coffee anyone?

The process of moving through customs and immigration took a lengthy two-and-a-half hours, but something strange happened whilst we were waiting at the carousel for our luggage and band equipment. A chain was seen dragging along underneath the carousel, eventually identified as a sporran chain from Piper Ray Petersen's uniform! To this day, it still remains a mystery as to how it ended up there!

In the meantime, it was noticed that CFA RSM Boltman was in deep discussion with a customs official regarding the large cases being brought in by the group. His explanation was accepted, and we finally left the building unhindered. The group was met by the hosting staff of 29 Commando Regiment, Captain Jason Carter, Sergeant Nick Limbrick and Lance Bombardier Nigel Craig.

Transport for the band consisted of two minibuses and a luggage vehicle, with the 3 officers travelling in a Vauxhall staff car driven by Capt. Jason Carter. Whilst outside the building, Piper Ray Petersen was given time to escort his wife to a coach bound for Somerset. Unfortunately, in the excitement of loading baggage and equipment, nobody took notice of Piper Petersen's whereabouts and only after about a third of the trip to Plymouth, Piper Petersen was reported as missing!!

Somehow, he found his way to Plymouth, arriving about 3 days later!

ARRIVAL AT THE ROYAL CITADEL – PLYMOUTH

The trip to the Royal Citadel (home of 29 Commando Regiment) took all of four hours (“pit stop” included) and, upon arrival, the group was warmly welcomed by the Commanding Officer, LtCol Jeff Simms. He assured us that his regiment would do their utmost to make us feel at home.



Our hosting Officer, Capt. Jason Carter on the left

The officers, LtCol Ernst Bester (my predecessor), LtCol Mike Gerber (ex-CO of Regiment Simonsberg) and I were booked into the Mess at the Citadel, whilst the band and the Regimental NCO's were accommodated at Her Majesty's Naval Base Davenport (HMS Drake). Pipe Sergeant Ronnie Stewart inadvertently caused an awkward moment upon this group's arrival. He was merrily operating his video camera right up to the moment the vehicle stopped at the reception area inside the base.



The Main Gate of the Royal Citadel – Home to 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery since 1962

The officer of the guard was already waiting and, after chastising the driver for allowing one of his passengers to use a video camera, he pounced on the unsuspecting photographer. Ronnie tried to placate the officer by continuously telling him: “*What a good job*” he was doing! The guard officer was not impressed and spoke on his radio to some unseen person.

The video camera was seized, the footage checked and duly erased. With a word of warning, the camera was handed back, the officer withdrew and Pipe Sergeant Ronnie Stewart was unsuccessful in becoming the first CFA intern in a UK military prison!!

The group duly settled in and, as appropriate for a Naval Base, NCO's were allotted individual rooms, while lesser mortals were confined to a room with at least six beds. Very early on, it was discovered that "rooms" were in fact "cabins", and that the entire building was laid out as if aboard a ship.



The entrance gate to HMNB Davenport with the reception just inside the boom

The touring group was allowed to settle in for the rest of the day and to prepare for the evening night out. It was clear from the outset that the hosting team was adamant to ensure that our visit would be a memorable one. After supper the group was taken to the Barbican, the local waterfront of Plymouth, in Sutton Harbour – what a great place to spend an evening!



Up to 30 pubs could be found in the precinct, and we managed to visit a number of them (I think!!). Upon enquiry, we were told that the word Barbican means a fortified gate, and here the name probably derived from the “Castle Barbican”, which was an entrance to Plymouth Castle, the late medieval fortress that guarded access to the open expanse of water called the Plymouth Sound, prior to the building of the Royal Citadel.

The evening proved to be a tremendous success and, at some stage, it was decided to “call it a day”, as the band group had to commence with preparations for their performance in the Music of the Night Festival.



Picturesque Barbican

THE VISIT

12th July: Introductory briefing and guided tour of the Citadel

Captain Docherty of 29 had arranged for the whole group to attend a briefing at the Commando Training Wing situated in the Citadel. He briefed us on the history of the regiment, and on its role and function within the operational control of 3 Commando Brigade, to which it provides artillery support and gunnery observation.



Directly after lunch, an official tour of the Citadel was conducted by Blue Badge Tours. This proved to be an extremely fascinating excursion, seeing that the Citadel was constructed in the late 1660s to the design of Sir Bernard de Gomme. It is located at the eastern end of the Plymouth Hoe, overlooking Plymouth Sound, and encompasses the site of the earlier fort that had been built here at the time of Sir Francis Drake.



Aerial view of the Royal Citadel



The old and the new - silent cannons and noisy helicopters at the Citadel

The officers were hosted by the CO of 29 to an informal dinner at his official military house of residence, just up the road from the Royal Citadel.



From left to right - Lt Cols Jeff Sims, Kees de Haan, Ernst Bester and Mike Gerber

The band was occupied throughout the day with their practice sessions, whilst the

regimental group was

taken on a tour of

Cornwall. A visit to

Pendennis Castle

was particularly

interesting, as the

castle was an artillery

fort constructed by

Henry VIII near Falmouth, Cornwall between 1540 and 1542. It formed part of the

programme to protect the country against invasion from France and the Holy Roman

Empire, and defended the Carrick Roads waterway at the mouth of the river Fall.



14th July: Welcoming the General of the SA Gunners

Major General C.H. van Zyl, the General of the South African Gunners and Mrs Marilyn van Zyl arrived at Heathrow Airport earlier in the morning. They were collected and driven to the Citadel, where they arrived at approximately 12h00. They were met by LtCol Jeff Sims, CO of 29, and lunched in the officers' mess. An official briefing was conducted, together with a tour of the Citadel. The guests were then taken to HMS Drake to settle in.

The evening was quite a surprise, as Jeff hosted the General, Mrs van Zyl and the 3 CFA Officers to a supper at the Artillery Tower Restaurant. What a splendid evening it turned out to be; some pictures of the event will tell it all!!!!



The Artillery Tower Restaurant sits in a 15th century tower overlooking the sea with views to Drake's Island and Mount Edgecombe. It is one of the oldest complete military buildings on Plymouth's sea front. Since 1998, it had been run by owners Peter and Debbie Constable.



The band were kept very busy with their practices and rehearsal routines, but found time to do some “private entertaining” at HMS Drake. The Devon County Police Department had arranged a dance at the Frazer Cunningham Hall, HMS Drake. Pipe Major Deacon was quick off the mark and had arranged for the band to play at the function. They marched in unannounced, and gave a very polished performance in so much that, during the evening, with Sergeant Chris Deacon on drums and drummer Ceasar Alexander on vocals, they entertained the partygoers with an admirable rendition of some well-known Elvis Presley songs.



From left to right - Front row: Gen. van Zyl, Mrs van Zyl, Lt Cols Mike Gerber, Ernst Bester, Kees de Haan and Captain Jason Carter

Back row: Jeff Sims, Captain Carter's partner and Mrs Angela Sims



Not sure what the handshake was all about—maybe “who is paying”?

During the practice week, the band was presented with the music for the tune “The Gael”, which had been written by Trevor Jones, a South African composer, for the film “The Last of the Mohicans”. Unfortunately, due to the music being rather complex, the band was not able to master this particular piece in time. Piper Alister Wilson persevered, however, managing to get it right, and accordingly appeared with the combined Royal Marines and Royal Artillery bands for all of the evening performances. Piper Eddie Morgan, in turn, was not to be outdone, as he was chosen to play the piping solo for the Highland Cathedral every evening.

15th July: Band performance in Plymouth

The morning was dedicated to some activity by the band in the city centre of Plymouth. This was seen as their contribution to promoting the Music of the Night Festival to be held in the Royal Citadel from 17th to 22nd July 2000. The regimental group, together with General and Mrs van Zyl, were also in attendance. Last minute frantic telephone calls to Cape Town were required to obtain the necessary Public Liability insurance that would allow the band to perform in a public place.



15th July: Official Alliance Parade and Function

The afternoon, at 15h00 and in perfect summer weather, the official affiliation parade took place on the battlements of the Royal Citadel.

The honour guard, provided by 29 Commando Regiment RA, were marched on parade by the CFA Pipes and Drums playing Highland Laddie. After General van Zyl had taken the salute and completed the inspection of the men on parade, speeches by both Commanding Officers



were given. The official scroll was signed and appropriate presents were exchanged; the one from CFA was a porcelain figurine of the CO CFA dressed in uniform of 1857, while a replica of the Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge, Scotland was presented by 29 Commando Regiment.



"On Parade"



*Parade ready for inspection by
General Van Zyl*



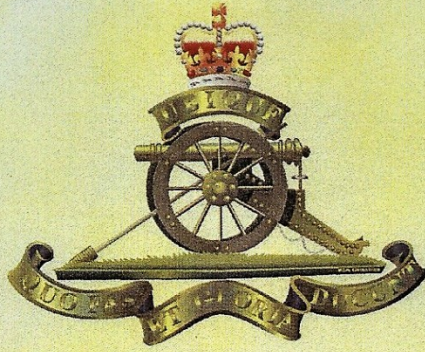
*Speeches by the respective
Commanding Officers – General Van
Zyl looking on!*



*Lt Cols Ernst Bester, Kees de Haan and
Mike Gerber all looking smart*

*Warrant Officers Roger Boltman, Nico
Vosloo, Alan Pentz and Sargeant Shaun
McKinney*





When the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910, an alliance was formed between the Royal Regiment of Artillery and the Artillery of the Union of South Africa.

That alliance stood the test of two World Wars.

The alliance went into suspended animation when the Republic of South Africa left the Commonwealth in May 1961, but was re-animated in June 1994 to the great pleasure of Old Comrades from both nations.

The Master Gunner, St James's Park has been pleased to approve the alliance between:

29 Commando Regiment RA and the Cape Field Artillery

We, the Commanding Officers of 29 Commando Regiment RA and the Cape Field Artillery, undertake to maintain and foster the close association established during the Second World War when our two nations of the Commonwealth fought side by side against a common enemy, sharing the same traditions, using the same guns and training together in the same methods.

Signed at a joint parade held at The Royal Citadel, Plymouth, United Kingdom on 15 July 2000

*The Commanding Officer
29 Commando Regiment
Royal Artillery*

*The Commanding Officer
Cape Field Artillery*

Refreshments were served on the battlements after the parade. Then, with everyone pleased with the successful outcome of the proceedings, it was time for the evening functions. The officers were hosted to a formal Ladies Night in the mess, whilst the rest of the touring group were hosted by the RSM of 29 to, would you believe, a “barbeque”!



Pre-dinner drinks on the battlements

Gen. and Mrs van Zyl, Angela and Jeff Sims

General van Zyl was the guest speaker at the officers' function; he was really at his best, and the British particularly loved his “Free State English”. During the evening, we discovered that one of the 29 gunners on duty who was a wine steward happened to be a South African from George. He was sent to Mrs Van Zyl to ask her, in Afrikaans, whether she would like some more wine. The first time round she did not click, so we sent him back! The surprised look on her face when she realised that she had been spoken to in Afrikaans was priceless.

We also sent him to General Van Zyl with the same request and with the same results; however, the general reacted one better. He jumped up and said, in Afrikaans and quite loudly, to everyone's delight: “*Vertel my, boet, wie is jy en waar kom jy vandaan??*” (Tell me, son, who are you and where do you come from?). Needless to say, the rest of the evening was a pleasant and relaxed affair, the room buzzing with conversation and laughter.



An unsuspecting Mrs Van Zyl, moments before the wine steward arrived!



Dashing in formal attire



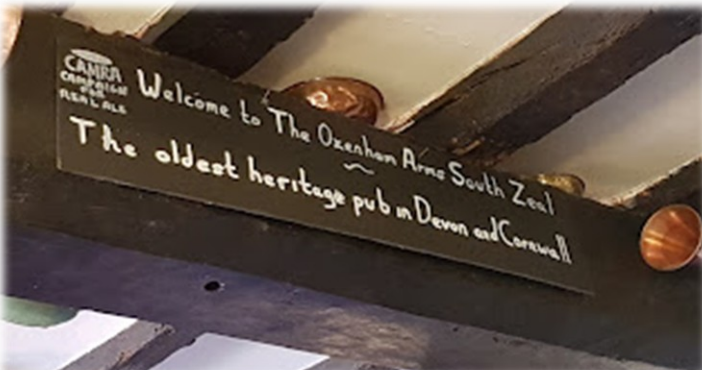
29 Regimental Honorary Colonel – Maj Gen (Retd) BT Pennicott CVO) and Maj Gen van Zyl

The dinner culminated in a visit to the officers' bar, where LtCol Ernst Bester presented some examples of a very special South African brandy.

Needless to say, we soon realised that we were in for a fairly long night, but we managed to keep the South African flag flying! All that has to be reported is that we were not the first to leave!

16th July: Day trip to Dartmoor

Sunday was earmarked, for obvious reasons, to be a day of rest, but it turned out quite differently. 29 Regiment had arranged some transport for us, and Capt. Jason Carter was our hosting officer on a day trip through Dartmoor National Park. The group consisted of General van Zyl, Mrs van Zyl, LtCol John McGregor and Finola McGregor and the 3 CFA Officers. By midday, we had reached the little town of South Zeal and decided to visit the local Oxenham Arms for lunch. This proved to be an excellent choice, as the building, as well as the surrounding area, had a fascinating history (<https://www.theoxenhamarms.com>).



The Oxenham Arms is the oldest heritage inn in Devon and Cornwall, and is one of the most famous old coaching inns in the United Kingdom. Currently operated as a hotel under the ownership of Simon and Lyn Powell, the origins of the building go back to the Neolithic Period some 5000 years ago. A feature of those times, relating to methods of pagan worship, was that the Neolithic people of Dartmoor produced what is termed a Menhir Standing Stone. It was cut from granite, 27 feet high, weighing around 17 tons, and was rolled down into a wooded hillside where the Oxenham Arms is now located. In the late 12th century, Benedictine Monks came to the village, which was then known as Zale, and constructed a nine-roomed 2-storey granite and oak monastery around the South Zeal Menhir Standing Stone. Still completely intact today, both the monastery and the Menhir form all of the centre, rear and first floor of today's Oxenham Hotel. Three of the hotel guest rooms, The Bovey Room, The Belstone Room and The Widecombe Room were the original monks' cell rooms in that monastery.



The Burgoyne family acquired the monastery estate in the early 14th century and constructed a fine granite manor house on the front of the monastery building. This formed their home, and came to be known as the Burgoyne Manor.

In the late 1400s the Earls of Oxenham purchased the entire estate, and in 1477, the building that was now known as Oxenham Manor, became an Inn, with a trading licence obtained from the Exeter Justice Office. The wording of this licence still retains a reminder of the building's past history:



“If requested by a member of the active armed forces to serve a drink any time of night or day, the Inn must open up and duly serve a drink!”



Once the group had sat down to lunch at the Oxenham Arms, the General declared himself “The Lord of the Manor”, and at some stage, he even referred to himself as “Tom Jones”!!

During lunch, LtCol Mike surprised us with his singing talent by doing an impromptu rendition of Luciano Pavarotti’s “Nessun dorma”, to the great delight of Mrs van Zyl and the others.

Although it was a Sunday, the band were in full practising mode.

17th July

General van Zyl and Marilyn left in the morning on a tour to the Royal School of Artillery at Larkhill, where they met with the Director Royal Artillery, Brigadier J.B.A. Bailey MBE. They would return the following day to Plymouth to attend the opening performance of Music of the Night 2000.

18th July: Opening Performance ‘Music of the Night V’

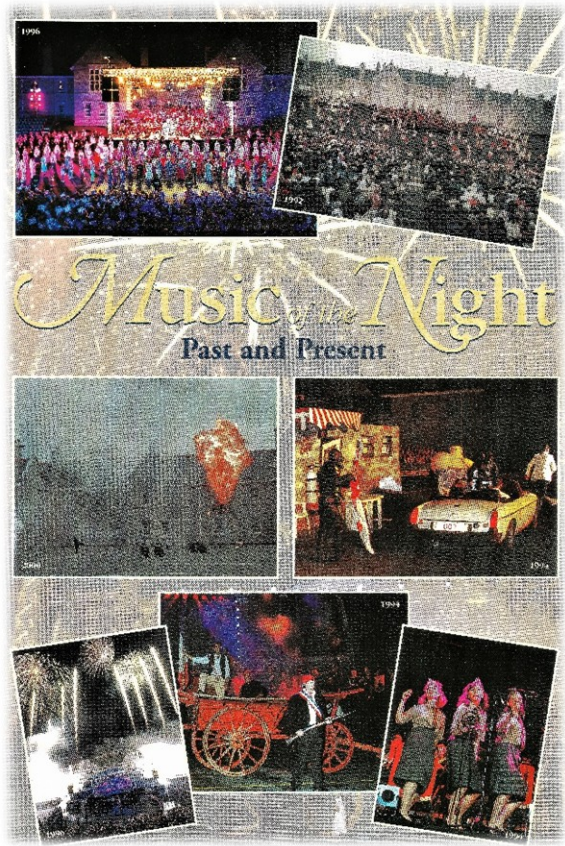
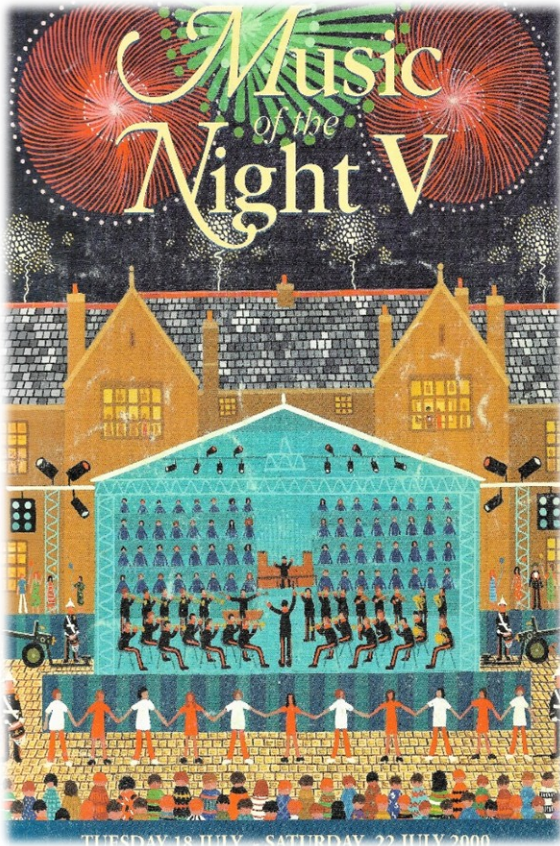
General and Mrs van Zyl, together with the CFA officers, were hosted by the OC of 29 firstly to drinks on the battlement of the Citadel and thereafter, a pre-show dinner in the mess. The entire regimental group was given complimentary tickets for the show, and we definitely had the best seats in town!

A performance of this magnitude is very difficult to describe, not having had the opportunity to attend any previous shows. At best one should look at the official programme booklet and at the many photographs and videos.

A huge stage had been built in the centre of the Citadel, big enough to accommodate the combined bands of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Marines, as well as a 200-strong choir. The rest of the area was taken up by a 5000-seat stand, food kiosks, beer tents and exhibition points.

The 3-hour-long show includes song, dance, music and light and featured items such as selections from “Phantom of the Opera”, “Fiddler on the Roof”, “Les Misérables” and “Oliver”. Members of 29 Commando entertained the crowds with an action-packed “tongue-in-cheek” extract from one of the James Bond films, complete with lots of fire, shooting and noise. A beautiful girl, a BMW Z3 and a Mini Cooper were all part of the act.

It was quite fitting that “James Bond” chose to run up into the audience and present Mrs van Zyl with a box of chocolates, and, in true Bond fashion, a parting kiss!! In addition, the Pipes combined with both military bands in a moving rendition of Highland Cathedral. My personal favourite was the combined bands playing the 1812 Overture. The effect of real gunfire (25 pounders), as well as huge amounts of fireworks during the playing of this piece left all of us absolutely breathless! We had no option but to retire to the mess afterwards and to toast the huge success of the opening night.



Music of the Night V

Presented by
29 COMMANDO REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY
in aid of local and military charities.

Director & Choreographer
ANGELA COLLINS

Chorus Musical Director
BRIAN GERRY

featuring
THE ROYAL ARTILLERY BAND

Director of Music
MAJOR STEPHEN SMITH TRSM ARCM psm RA

and
THE BAND OF HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL MARINES

Director of Music
MAJOR BARRIE MILLS BA (Hons) LRAM ARCM Royal Marines
CAPE FIELD ARTILLERY PIPES AND DRUMS (South Africa)

and Compère
DOUGLAS MOUNCE

We are delighted to offer our grateful thanks to our sponsors



Our cover depicts Brian Pollard's Music of the Night painting by
kind permission of the Artist and the Barbican gallery.



A proud Drum Major, WO2 Steven Leibbrandt, introduces the band to the audience



19th July: MEETING AT 148 (MEIKTILA) BATTERY – POOLE

General and Mrs van Zyl travelled back to London and were accommodated at Woolwich Artillery Barracks. They would meet with the Master Gunner St James's Park – Field Marshall, the Lord and Lady Vincent GBE KCB and be hosted by the Master Gunner to a dinner at the House of Lords.

The regimental group had a wonderful excursion arranged for them by 29 Commando, and we travelled to visit 148 (Meiktila) Forward Observation Battery, which is stationed at Poole. The Battery supports 3 Commando Brigade and UK Special Forces with the co-ordination and direction of artillery and naval gunfire and Close Air Support. The Battery is highly trained and extremely well-travelled, completing operations and exercises worldwide.

The group was minus one member, Sgt Shaun McKinney, who had become great friends with the 29 gunners. He was roped into being a number 3 on one of the 25-pounder gun detachments for the firing of the 1812 Overture. The band remained at Plymouth for the rest of the week's evening performances.

The journey to Poole was a lengthy one, lasting all of 3 hours, and we arrived at around 12h30. We were booked into our accommodation and enjoyed a light lunch. After lunch, we attended a briefing by the Battery Commander and viewed their display of weapons and the equipment they use, as well as their simulator called Invertron. The afternoon was free and we were taken to visit the very picturesque Poole Quay, where we stopped at the Lord Nelson pub!



Sight-seeing was not over yet and after dinner it was suggested that we should visit the village of Corfe, a short 20 km trip from our base in Poole.



The age-old and historical village of



Corfe lies more or less in the centre of the Isle of Purbeck, a beautiful corner of England covering about 60 square

miles. The village takes its name from the castle, which is strategically sited in a gap in the Purbeck Hills.



It is safe to conclude that the construction of a fortified building came first, and only later did people gather to live at its feet. The growing size and importance of the castle created work for the little community, and so it was that the fortunes of both village and castle were to be closely linked for over five centuries.

Time was running out to visit more places in the town, and the party expressed the hope of a possible return visit to Corfe Castle. We had learned by then that pubs are in abundance in virtually every village and town in England, and we visited both The Fox Inn and The Bankes Arms!!



Whilst travelling back to Poole, someone in the group commented that it appeared the British public spent much of their free time in pubs! Answers to this question were varied, but the website (<https://londondrinksguide.com>) provides insight into the British pub culture in some detail.

The above website covers the history and origin of British pubs, the different types of pubs and their specific architecture, the fact that they are a hub for entertaining and socialising, and lastly food and drinks of British pub life. By the end of the 18th century, pubs and similar establishments had started to provide entertainment of some sort – whether singing, gaming or sports. In bygone years, pubs used to gather local communities to solve problems together, and modern pubs nowadays also play an important role in British culture as a place to socialise.

Today, pubs are where the locals meet their friends and simply unwind, and it is also said that it is perfectly normal in British pub culture for strangers to talk to each other! Below are some interesting facts about pubs in Britain:

- The town of Rhayader in mid-Wales has the most pubs per person with 12 pubs per 2075 residents.
- The lowest pub in England is the Admiral Wells in Peterborough, situated at 9 feet below sea level.



The Old Forge Pub in Knoydart, North-West Scotland is one of the most remote pubs on the planet and cannot be reached by car. A mountain hike of 29km or a sea crossing of 11km is required to enjoy a pint there

20th July: Visit to Royal Marine Landing Craft Base and Royal Naval Museum

A visit to the Royal Marine Landing Craft Base was arranged for just after breakfast. The group attended a short briefing on roles and methods of deployment, and then

we were taken out to sea! We all boarded a large landing craft (each of us was given a turn at the helm) and later transferred at sea to a smaller 8-man Rigid Raider Commando craft.



Back on dry land, the group travelled to the Royal Naval Museum at the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. This is truly a magnificent collection of British Naval history, and the place where three of the greatest British warships ever were built: HMS Warrior, HMS Victory and the Mary Rose, can be seen. These magnificent ships, in combination with the historic buildings and docks, embody Britain's naval history.



HMS Victory – Lord Nelson's Flagship – bristling with cannons

HMS Warrior was completed in 1861 and, because of her unique design, she instantly made all other warships obsolete. Combining for the first time an iron hull, a steam engine and armour-plating, she was the world's first modern battleship and the epitome of Victorian Britain's technological prowess. She could out-run and out-gun any existing battleship, and her long sleek lines made them all look old-fashioned.



HMS Warrior

Her armament consisted of 10 new 110-pound breach-loading guns designed by Sir William Armstrong. She fired new elongated shells, which were given a spin so that they flew straighter and faster. In addition, she carried twenty-six 68-pounder guns, of conventional design, on her gun deck.

The *Mary Rose* was one of the earliest warships built to carry heavy guns. The challenge faced by Henry VIII's shipwrights was to get more and bigger guns onto the ship without making it unstable. This was done by placing the guns nearer the waterline, although this presented the problem of making the gun ports watertight in rough seas. The introduction of the newly designed method of edge-to-edge carvel planking gave a smooth finish to the lower hull, which allowed the insertion of gun ports with lids that could be sealed.



Mary Rose

The *Mary Rose* capsized on 19th July 1545 in the Solent during a skirmish with the French Fleet. The exact reasons for this capsizing remain vague, although it is mooted that one of the survivors was of the opinion that some of the lids in the gun ports had been left open, causing it to capsize.

Unsuccessful attempts to locate the ship were conducted in 1546 and 1836. Pioneering divers John and Charles Deane rediscovered the site of the ship in 1836 and raised some items including guns. Alexander McKee in turn started searching for the ship in 1965.



In 1971, some divers found the first exposed timbers of the *Mary Rose* and in 1978, work was started to stabilize the hull, and structures were built around the remains to prepare it for lifting. On 11th October 1982, millions of people around the world watched on live television, as the huge crane *Tog Mor* lifted the whole package of 570 tonnes to the surface in what was then described as the world's largest underwater excavation.



The hull of the *Mary Rose* was placed in an atmospherically controlled dry dock and a temporary ship hall was built over this dock. Conservation scientists started trials to establish the best methods of preserving ancient water-logged timbers.

Over the years, the ship hall has evolved into an enormous laboratory, where visitors can see the preservation process taking place from enclosed galleries. Since 1994, the ship has been sprayed with a water-soluble wax, polyethylene glycol, which penetrates the wood. The process will take at least 15 years and will preserve the *Mary Rose* for all time.

HMS Victory was most famous for her participation in the battle of Trafalgar. Her keel was laid at Chatham in 1759 and she was completed in 1765, but put in reserve. This long period of weathering meant that her timbers were well seasoned and was a major reason for her eventual long life of service.

HMS Victory served as the flagship to a series of distinguished Admirals, including Kempenfelt, Howe, Hood, Jervis and Saumarez. She participated in the battles at Ushant in 1781 and St Vincent in 1797. At the end of 1797, she was pronounced unfit for further service and orders were given for her conversion into a hospital ship.



Admiral Horatio Nelson

The loss of *HMS Impregnable* in 1799 saw this decision reversed, and what became the “Great Refit” took place at Chatham between 1800 and 1803.

The ship’s statistics after the refit make for interesting reading:

Length : 69m/226.6 ft
Beam : 15.7m/52.10 ft
Complement : 821



Her vast armament consisted of 30x32 pounder (Lower Gun Deck), 28X24 pounder (Middle Gun Deck), 30x12 pounder long (Quarter Gun Deck), 12x12 pounder short (Forecastle) and 2x12 pounder medium, 2x68 pounder carronades. The carronade was a short heavy gun, which fired large quantities of shot at short ranges.

It would be loaded with 68-pound round balls and 500 musket balls, which were fired with devastating effect at the French fleet.

HMS Victory's most famous Admiral was Horatio Nelson, who flew his flag from her between May 1803 and October 1805 as Commander in Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet. For eighteen months, Nelson blockaded the French fleet under Admiral Villeneuve in Toulon.

In March 1805, Villeneuve's fleet slipped out of harbour and Nelson chased it to the West Indies and back without meeting it in battle. The French ended up being bottled up in Cadiz harbour in Spain and



when, on 19th October 1805, they set sail for the Mediterranean, Nelson was waiting.

On 21st October 1805, Nelson, on *HMS Victory*, departed from Portsmouth and led the British fleet into the battle off Cape Trafalgar against the Franco-Spanish force. At 11h48 the most famous signal in the history of the Royal Navy, "*England Expects That Every Man Will Do His Duty*" flew from her masthead. Nelson first engaged the French flagship *Bucentaure*, followed by the *Redoubtable*. He was shot by a French marksman from the *Redoubtable* at the height of the battle, and died at 16h30 when victory was assured. Out of a crew of 821, 57 men were killed and 102 wounded, demonstrating the serious nature of the fighting.

After this fascinating history lesson, the group returned to Poole for supper and were in need of some quiet time, as it had proved to be a very eventful day!



A contented Commanding Officer taking some time out!

21st July: Farewell to Poole, and return to Plymouth

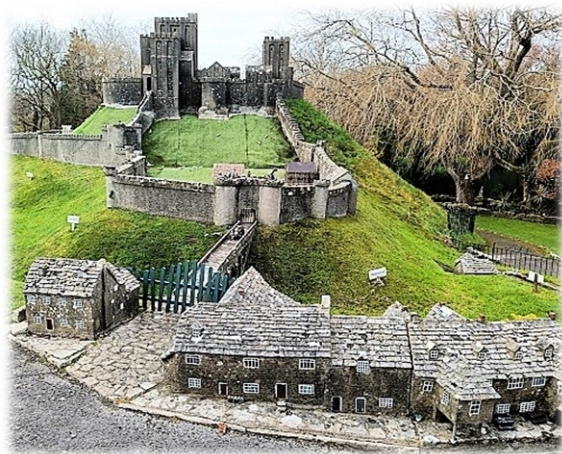
It was time to say goodbye to Major Dunk and his staff before heading back to Plymouth.



Our trip back to Plymouth resulted in two stops along the way, Corfe Castle for a second time, and the tank museum at Bovington – both really good choices!



The Corfe Castle Model Village in West Street was our next stop; it was a wonderful collection of all the major buildings and houses in the town.



The church was made out of Purbeck stone at a scale of one-twentieth.

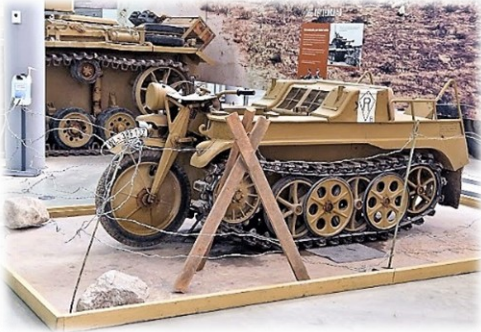


In the far corner of the Model Village, some (“miniature”) seniors were playing a game of croquet!



The tank museum at Bovington, we realised upon arrival, is really not a place for a brief visit and run through all the main exhibits. The museum can best be described as a piece of living history, with over 300 armoured vehicles from 26 countries, giving visitors a realistic look at what ground warfare is all about. The entire spectrum of tank design and manufacture is covered, from the early prototypes to the most modern examples. For the old soldier, it rekindles memories of battles fought years ago and for the younger generation, it provides a valuable and exciting learning experience.





The group spent a lot more time at the museum than planned and only arrived back in Plymouth rather late for dinner. A suggestion was then made to go down to the Barbican and visit an Indian restaurant. Food and company were excellent!

22nd July: Farewells, Larkhill and London

LtCol Bester departed by train for London en route to South Africa and his farm near Malmesbury, whilst the rest of us “took the day off”. We had a surprise visit from our previous 2 i/c Major Stephan Smit and his wife, Sonja, who had come all the way from their residence in London to be with us. I managed to obtain two tickets for the evening show for them (can anyone be so lucky?). The band made use of the opportunity to have a farewell gathering at the mess to show their appreciation for the two members of 29, Sgt Nick Limbrick and L/Bdr Nigel Craig. These were the guys who had transported the band members around during their entire stay in Plymouth.



About an hour before the start of the show, I was informed that two of the VIP guests were unable to attend the evening – would we mind taking their seats? What a question and what more luck! Both myself and LtCol Mike Gerber dashed off to change into appropriate uniforms for the show.

Everyone was in high spirits for the last show and it turned out to be the best one ever. The Pipes and Drums all had small Union Jack Flags attached to their pipes and gave their best performance yet.



The organisers had cunningly held back on the stocks of fireworks all week and, during the playing of “Land of Hope and Glory” at the end of the show, threw every last bit of fireworks into the night sky. Combined with laser lights, water fountains and random gunfire from the 25 pounders (our Sgt Shaun McKinney no doubt), the show came to a tumultuous ending, to cries of “encore, encore”.

We were all physically and mentally drained and retired to the Officers’ Mess afterwards, but for a different reason. Yes, the after-party!

This included the entire cast as well as anyone who happened to be in a party mood and wanted to stay. I knew we were in for a torrid time and yes, we saw the sunrise, but what a party!



23rd July: Last Sunday in Plymouth

The last Sunday in Plymouth was used by all to prepare for our departure the next morning. The plan was to use the opportunity to say our goodbyes to the many friends we had made during our stay and to promise that we would return one day. Little did we realise that this “returning one day” would indeed happen in the years to come!

Our small group, myself, LtCol Mike Gerber, Regimental Sergeant Major Rodger Boltman and WO2 Allan Pentz, made our way to the Thistle Park Tavern to say goodbye to the owner, Quintin Style. He happened to be a South African and ex South African Policeman, and to top it all, was a good friend of Commander John Martin, well known South African yachtsman. We thought it wise to make him a bit homesick by presenting him with a bottle of KWV brandy!



The Fishermans Arms is just down the road from the Royal Citadel and it was our last stop for the day. We chose to have supper with the owners, Brian and Carol.



24th July: Journey to London and Woolwich Barracks

All good things must come to an end, however, and so our departure back to London was imminent. The band and the senior NCO's bade their farewells to the staff at HMS Drake and were transported to the Royal Citadel. Members of 29 came to say their goodbyes, and Commanding Officer, LtCol Jeff Simms, made special mention of the great performance by the Pipes and Drums and thanked them for their contribution to the success of Music of the Night. I presented him with a CFA tie as well as a unit plaque for their Headquarters.

A number of the band members headed for Scotland to participate in the Marie Curie Millennium March. On the day of the march, about 8500 pipers and drummers from all over the world marched down Princes Street in Edinburgh. This march raised approximately 500,000 British pounds for the Marie Curie Cancer Care organisation.

The rest of the group travelled back to London and stopped at the Royal School of Artillery in Larkhill, where we were taken on a short tour of the facility. Their mobile tracking system as well as the 155mm AS90 tracked howitzer were quite impressive.



The group arrived at Woolwich Barracks (home of the Royal Artillery Regiment) towards the early evening, where we booked into our accommodation, and enjoyed a late supper.

The idea of an early night was not met with real enthusiasm, and the group visited some places of interest in the area, one of them being O'Reilly's Pub and Grill!

25th July: Imperial War Museum

The day was earmarked for sightseeing and I suggested that the group break up into smaller units to cater for the variety of personal interests. The Imperial War Museum was a popular choice and most of my group's time was spent there. The vast array of exhibits is rather overwhelming, and one should really spend more than one day to fully appreciate this impressive museum.



Piccadilly Circus, Trafalgar Square and Covent Garden were some of the places visited; again, time was not on our side!



26th July: Royal Artillery Barracks at Woolwich

Today was our last day in London and much still to do!! The Royal Artillery Barracks at Woolwich is a vast military complex and is truly imposing, and there was time for some photographs inside the complex.



A visit was planned to the Rotunda Museum situated on the grounds of the military complex.



This structure dates back to 1814. It began its life as a temporary building for the Prince Regent (the future George IV) in the gardens of Carlton House and was utilised as a ballroom for the Wellington Fete of that year.

In 1818, the structure was dismantled and transferred to Woolwich for the use of the Royal Military Repository. The Rotunda was rebuilt and reopened on its new site as a museum in mid-1820, and intended for use both by military men and civilians. The interior was formed of a large single space filled with military collections. The building remained a museum until the turn of the twenty-first century. The bulk of the Rotunda's vast collection of artillery exhibits were transferred to Firepower, the new Royal Artillery Museum, which opened in Woolwich in May 2001. The group did visit the construction site of this new museum and were looking forward to visiting it during our next trip to Woolwich!

The group returned to base for final packing and lunch. I bade them farewell, as I was on my way to St Pancras Station to board the Eurostar for my trip to Rotterdam via Brussels. I was to meet up with my wife, Mathilda, to spend some time with our eldest daughter Arnél and husband Reino.



The members departed for Heathrow at 15h00, and were a little perturbed to realise that the one vehicle carrying their luggage had missed a turnoff and eventually arrived at the airport an hour and a half later! Frantic booking in and last minute shopping followed, and the final departure happened at 20h00 UK time. I was informed after my return from Rotterdam that the flight had been a pleasant one and that excellent service was provided by the cabin crew!

In conclusion, our visit had been very successful indeed, and all the members of the Cape Field Artillery touring group had an unforgettable experience.

The Pipes and Drums of the Cape Field Artillery acquitted themselves extremely well and made many friends along the way; the reciprocal visits to the UK will prove this fact! We were extremely well looked after by our hosts, and every effort was made to make our stay as comfortable and enjoyable as possible.

GUNNER FRIENDSHIP

Life at the Cape Field Artillery slowly returned to normal after all the excitement and experiences of our trip to Plymouth. I had to contend with the usual report and feedback requirements to higher Headquarters, and it was generally accepted that the regiment had indeed succeeded in establishing sound bonds of friendship with 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery.

Correspondence was received early in December 2000, from the commanding officer of 29 Commando Regiment, LtCol Jeff Simms, expressing a wish to come to South Africa and to visit the Cape Field Artillery. This was great news, as it was felt that we were in a position to accommodate them as well as affording them the hospitality. The wheels were swiftly set in motion, and a programme was proposed and forwarded to the UK.

Fast forward to the morning of 18th April 2001, when the group arrived at Cape Town International Airport.

We welcomed Jeff, Major Justin Barber – Battery Commander 8 Alma Battery, WO Gibson Barclay – Regimental Sergeant Major and WO2 Mark Godsell – Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Technical). They were taken to CFA Headquarters for the official welcome and refreshments. Their accommodation was provided by the Air Force Base at Ysterplaat. After lunch, a tour of the Castle of Good Hope was undertaken, followed by an evening function at the Officers' Mess.



From left to right - LtCol Ernst Bester, LtCol Jeff Sims and LtCol Kees de Haan

LtCol Ernst Bester (my predecessor) had arranged for a visit to KWV in Paarl (Ko-Operatiewe Wijnbouwers Vereniging van Zuid Afrika). This company has a fascinating history and was established in 1918, the same year that Nelson Mandela was born.

The significance of this company's many achievements was pointed out to our UK group by two interesting facts. Firstly, in 1926, the company was one of the first brandy producers in the Cape; its first commercial brandy was bottled that same year, and exported to the UK. Secondly, in 2006, KWV launched its Diamond Jubilee Brandy (a blend of 10, 12, 15 and 23 year-old brandies) to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's 60th anniversary on the throne!





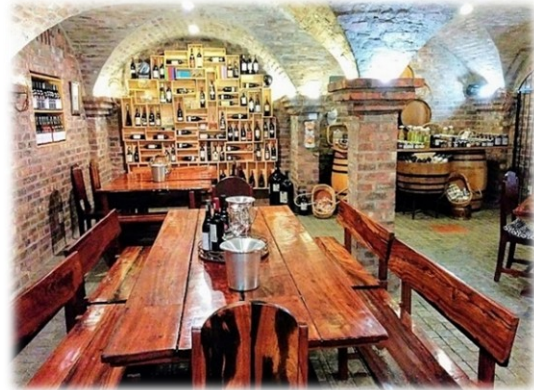
The next visit was to Boland Kelders (Cellars) in Paarl. Ernst Bester, being a wine farmer himself, provides all his harvest to this particular cellar.

RSM Gibson Barclay was given a short lesson in the art of opening a bottle of champagne by means of a sword (Sabrage), and judging by his action photograph and eventual group show, his efforts were very successful!!



Skilful RSM Gibson Barclay

Wine tasting is normally followed by lunch, and this was no exception!!



The next and final destination for the group for the day was John, fellow gunner, and Vinola McGregor's Groote Valleï farm in the Tulbagh district. John has done wonders with the farm, having planted a wide variety of olive trees as well as building a number of quaint chalets as guest accommodation.



John and Viola McGregor – flanked by the UK gunners



The Tulbagh Valley is perhaps best known for its production of some of the country's finest wines. Estate wines such as Twee Jonge Gezellen, Drostdyhof and Theuniskraal originate in the valley known as Het

Land van Waveren, where wines have been cultivated since 1906. The Tulbagh Wine Route links together a total of 11 estates and cellars in the region.



Evening drinks on the farm are always a pleasant and relaxing affair, and John had planned excursions to a few wine estates the next morning for the overseas visitors.

The group was also very interested in visiting the blockhouse on the farm. Stone blockhouses had been built by the British during the Anglo Boer War in 1901 to protect the railway bridges across several ravines from Boer attacks. They were of the utmost importance, as the railway line from south to north was the main transport artery for the British Army between Cape Town and the Boer Republics in the North.

The blockhouse on John's farm is situated just across the Boontjiesrivier and next to the railway line. At the time of their visit, it was still in reasonable condition, although it needed care and possible restoration. Unfortunately by 2015, both this blockhouse and the one at Wellington had sadly been vandalised and stripped of many of the original wooden and steel building components. It appears that no organisation or private person is willing to look into the matter and prevent further decay and destruction.

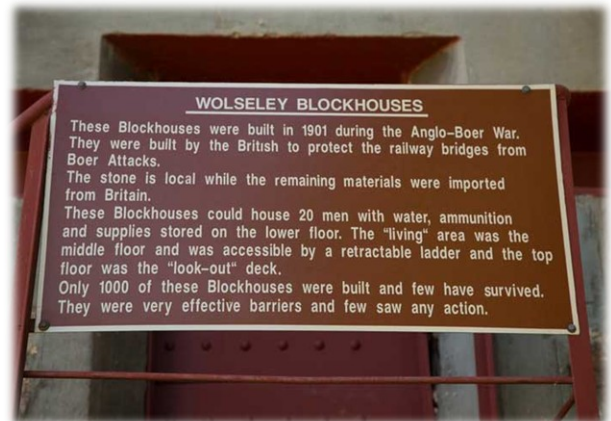
Photographs taken in 2015/16 by Francois Swanepoel show the sad condition then of the blockhouse at Boontjiesrivier.



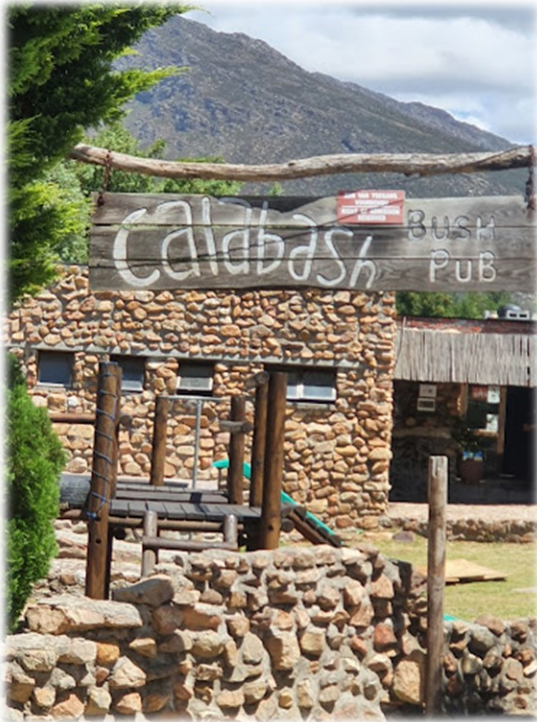
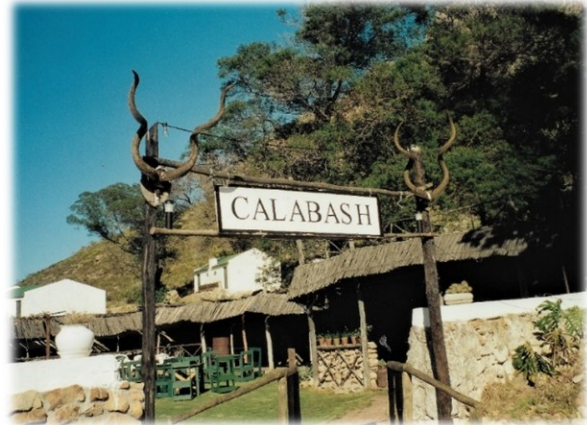
In the town of Wolseley, approximately 17 km from Tulbagh, two relatively well-preserved blockhouses can be found. Fortunately, these two blockhouses are situated on private ground, thus escaping the onslaught of vandalism.



Francois Swanepoel is again credited with the photographs of the two blockhouses, one in a field and the other near the railway line. Wolseley Tourism actively promotes these blockhouses, and they arrange regular tours and visits to the sites.



The group left Groote Valleï farm midmorning on 21st April 2001, after a most memorable visit to Tulbagh. Their route took them via the Bainskloof Pass, with a short stopover at Calabash, a bush pub at the beginning of the pass.



The Bainskloof Pass is a mountain pass on the R301 regional road that links the towns of Ceres and Wellington. The 18 kilometre pass, opened in 1854, was constructed by road engineer, Andrew Geddes Bain, with the use of convict labour.

Arriving back at the Air Force Base, Ysterplaat, the group hastily unpacked and readied themselves for lunch.



The Honorary Colonel of Cape Field Artillery, Col W.R. (Ray) de Smidt, had extended an invitation to join him for lunch at Kelvin Grove in Newlands.

Kelvin Grove is situated in close proximity to the Newlands cricket grounds, as well as the then Western Province rugby stadium.



Colonel de Smidt and Jeff Sims in conversation

A visit to Robben Island was planned for 22nd April 2001, and the group duly reported at SAS Unities, a Reserve Force Naval Unit with its Headquarters in Cape Town Harbour.

The unit is equipped with Namacurra Harbour Patrol vessels and, with the kind permission of their Commanding Officer, Trunell Morom, the group set off for Robben Island.



Robben Island is an island in Table Bay, 8km west of the mainland and 10km north of Cape Town, and covers an approximate area of 13 square km. It takes its name from the Dutch word for seals (*robben*), hence the Dutch/Afrikaans name *Robbeneiland*, which thus translates to *Seal(s) Island*.

The island was discovered by Bartolomeu Dias, the Portuguese explorer, in 1488, and it was used for many years by Portuguese navigators and later by the Dutch and English as a



refueling station. The island is inhabited by a variety of wildlife, including birds, penguins, seals and tortoises. It also has a plentiful supply of fresh water available from a number of springs.

Since the end of the 17th century, Robben Island had been used for the incarceration of chiefly political prisoners. The Dutch settlers were the first to use the island as a prison, and the first prisoner was probably Autshumato (also known as Harry die Strandloper).

The island was also used as a leper colony and animal quarantine station. Starting in 1845, lepers from the *Hemel-en-Aarde* (Heaven and Earth) leper colony near Caledon were moved to Robben Island. The practice of accommodating lepers lasted until 1931, when more suitable institutions were made available on the mainland.



During the Second World War, the island was fortified and BL 9.2 inch guns as well as some 6 inch guns were installed as part of the coastal defences around the Cape Peninsula.

From 1961, Robben Island was used by the South African government as a maximum-security prison for political prisoners as well as convicted criminals. Most inmates, including Nelson Mandela, were black men who had been incarcerated for political offenses. The



last of these prisoners were released in 1991, but the prison continued to serve as a medium-security prison for criminal offenders until 1996.

In 1997, it was turned into a museum and declared a national monument and in 1999, it received its designation as a World Heritage Site.



The entrance to the prison building



A typical cell at Robben Island



The resident guide, himself a former inmate, took visitors through the history and events surrounding the life of political prisoners on the island.



The group paid a visit to the lime quarry, where a pile of stones can be seen. This was started by the late Nelson Mandela when he returned to visit Robben Island as the first black president of South Africa. He placed the first stone on the ground, and subsequently 1200 former prisoners placed stones on top.



After their visit to the prison building and the museum, the group asked to visit the coastal guns found on the island. The existence of these guns was generally downplayed by the staff on the island, and little or no reference was made to them. Our

visitors, being artillery men themselves, however showed keen interest in viewing the coastal guns. The lack of maintenance and upkeep of these guns was quite noticeable and their condition had deteriorated significantly over time.



The history of the military involvement on the island is well documented and goes back to the start of the Second World War in 1939. The strategic importance of the island was recognised in the defence of Table Bay and ultimately Cape Town harbour itself.

The Suez Canal was seen to be vulnerable to enemy attack (and possible closure), and therefore the shipping traffic in South African waters was expected to increase dramatically during World War II. It had thus been decided to establish a 9.2 inch gun battery on Robben Island to bolster the coastal defences of the Cape Peninsula. The execution of this decision called for some serious planning and a great number of staff were transferred to the island to assist in building this gun battery.

Some initial challenges were encountered, such as the fact that the island had no permanent harbour, only a small jetty at Murray's Bay.

The new harbour was eventually built at Murray's Bay with stones from the former leper hospital, and took almost 2 years to complete. Work had begun in June 1939 on the gun emplacements and accompanying military buildings. According to the plan, a 6-inch battery (Cornelia) and a 9.2-inch battery (Robben Island) would be situated on the northern and southern sides of the island respectively.

Fast forward to late in the year 2009. A group of concerned enthusiasts came upon the idea of possibly restoring one of the 9.2-inch guns on the island. In collaboration with the Robben Island Museum, ARMSCOR and MLB Architects (Andre Vom Hagen), the gun was brought back to life. Sadly, the guns at Cornelia Battery had been removed over time and only some remnants of the site can be seen, such as the concrete structures.



The task of restoring the 9.2-inch gun was complicated, and the contract for completion had to be extended from the initial date of 28th October 2010 to 28th February 2011. In the end, the gun was so thoroughly restored, however, that both the magazine supply mechanism and the mechanical loader were made operational. It was also able to traverse the entire 360 degrees. Moreover, the gun was now able to depress and elevate between minus 5 degrees and plus 35 degrees. All this, for the benefit of tourists, is controlled by a hand-held electronic keyboard.

It would even, in fact, be possible to fire the gun if suitable ammunition was available. It is believed that gun No 3 is the only semi-operational 9.2-inch gun in the world!



Pictures of the restoration process (www.robberisland.org/gunrestoration.html)



On Friday, 4th March 2011, a ceremony was held to officially unveil the newly restored gun. Guests invited to this ceremony included 99-year-old Major General Graham Dunbar Moodie, who had spent many years of service in the coastal artillery. SANDF personnel on parade included representatives of the Cape Field Artillery, the Cape Garrison Artillery and the Marine Branch of the SA Navy.



Back on the mainland, the group of visitors from the UK was taken on a scenic drive to Hout Bay, where they enjoyed a traditional Cape Malay lunch at the home of gunner Cecil and Rae Graham. Maj General van Zyl had requested that we stop at his official residence at the Wynberg Military Base. Towards evening, it became clear that dinner was on the agenda, and General van Zyl did not disappoint; in fact, he described it as a "*Free State potjie!*" (a traditional meal cooked in a three-legged cast iron pot).

General van Zyl had asked me to keep the 23rd of April open, as he had a special programme in mind. The UK visitors were duly collected from Air Force Base Ysterplaat and were flown by helicopter across to Robben Island, past Clifton, Hout Bay and Cape Point. Returning via Simon's Town, the helicopter landed at the military base of Youngsfield for a tour, followed by a visit to some of the local townships. Thereafter it was time for lunch and a briefing by General van Zyl at Task Force West Headquarters, with the group arriving back at Air Force Base Ysterplaat in the late afternoon to prepare for the evening farewell function.

This function was held in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess at the then CFA Headquarters in Wingfield. It was clear that from the lively chatter around the room that the group had enjoyed their stay, and Jeff made specific mention of the fact that CFA had outdone themselves to make their visit so memorable. The usual exchange of gifts took place at the end of the evening. The gift to 29 from CFA, a small wine barrel, was deemed rather appropriate, judging from the group's experience of tasting some of the splendid products of our region!



24th April was to be their last day in Cape Town, and LtCol Ian McKinney and RSM Roger Boltman accompanied the group to Somchem (a division of Denel Pty Ltd) near Somerset West, for a tour at their factory. The company is a world leader in artillery charge technology, and supplier of bi-modular combustible charges to UK and other NATO forces.

Back in Cape Town, and allowing for some last minute shopping, the group reported to Cape Town International Airport for their planned departure at 19h35. We had done ourselves proud by ensuring that our visitors experienced real South African hospitality, and this very successful visit strengthened the bonds between the two regiments, judging from the follow-up correspondence from Jeff Sims and Justin Barber (the latter had bought South African wine in the UK and also obtained a pocket dictionary to splash some Afrikaans words in his further writings to me!).

The CFA Pipes and Drums had made some good friends too, and band members took it upon themselves to remain in regular contact with the City of Plymouth Pipe Band as well as some members of 29 Regiment. W02 Steve Leibbrandt, Sergeant Ken Hundermark and Corporal Bill White paid a goodwill visit to Plymouth in July 2002. Hosted by Capt. Datsun of 29 during their stay, they were also privileged to attend the next Music of the Night.

VISITING EAST FORT BATTERY (2002)

During October 2002, CFA hosted 2 members of 29 Commando Royal Artillery who were on a visit to Cape Town; their main purpose was to perform a “mini” recruitment drive to attract young people to join the British Army. I took the opportunity to arrange for WO2 Graham Humphrey and Bombardier Neil Harrison to visit East Fort Battery in Hout Bay with them. There is a fascinating history attached to both the East and West Forts at Hout Bay, and the below short summary, with pictures, is a must to be shared.

East Fort Battery (c1782) is one of four coastal fortifications that had been built and developed in Hout Bay during the period 1781-1806. Hout Bay was seen by the government of the day as the soft underbelly of Cape Town, exposing the city to a possible marine invasion from the South. Its predecessor was the West Fort, situated on the western side of Hout Bay, established by the Dutch East India Company in 1781.

East Fort was established the following year, also by the Pondicherry Regiment, and consists of a 64Ha site that is today bisected by Chapmans Peak Drive. The site includes four ruined buildings and a battery, located below the road, of 8 x 18 pounder guns, all of which have been restored, proofed and licensed. These guns are regularly ceremonially fired on many special occasions. The restoration, maintenance, repair and firing are handled by members of the Hout Bay and Llandudno Heritage Trust.





The significance of the two Forts can be best illustrated by recording the events on 15th September 1795. On this day, the guns were fired in anger for the first time, thus foiling the possible entry to the Bay of a squadron of British warships. HMS Echo, a 16-gun sloop, had entered the Bay and promptly drew fire from both East and West Forts, forcing Echo's speedy withdrawal. HOUT BAY WON THE DAY!! The British squadron sailed on to Table Bay. Later on the same day, the Dutch forces capitulated, following discussions near Wynberg, and the administration of the Cape was handed over to the British Generals. This particular event was re-enacted in 2003, where the *Freedom of the Republic of Hout Bay* was bestowed on the Cape Field Artillery (more about that later).

The Chairperson of the Hout Bay and Llandudno Heritage trust, Dave Cowley, was a keen gunner and very much involved in the restoration of the guns at the East Fort. He was also quite keen to show our two British visitors the battery and also allow them to fire one of the cannons at the Fort. The pictures taken on the day will tell the full story, from identifying the enemy, loading and sighting the guns, firing them and, in the end, participating in the traditional "toasting the guns".







Certificates handed out by Dave Cowley, thereby bestowing the title of Honorary Gunner of the Republic of Hout Bay, on Neil and Jan



The traditional toast after every successful mission:

The Guns

HERITAGE DAY (2003)

One of a number of public holidays in South Africa is 24th September, designated as Heritage Day. All South Africans are encouraged to appreciate the immense cultural wealth of our nation and to celebrate the day by honouring the heritage of the many cultures of our population.

In 2003, the various civil organisations of Hout Bay had planned a number of activities in the town on Heritage Day, and had even extended the programme to a full month. The town's name is derived from Houtbaai (a Dutch word meaning "Wood Bay"), a name given by Dutch settlers who came across the bay while exploring the area behind Table Mountain. Its heavily wooded valley became the main source of timber for the building and repair of ships, as well as for buildings such as the Castle of Good Hope.

Between the 1980s and early 1990s, the town even brought out its very own passport as evidence of "citizenship of the Republic of Hout Bay". The passport was a tourism stunt to create more of a personality for the town and raise funds. This initiative proved very effective, as visitor numbers to the town increased significantly over time.

Cecil Graham (ex CFA gunner) and Dave Cowley had proposed that the freedom of the Republic of Hout Bay should be bestowed on the Regiment, and that they would participate in the re-enactment of the event of 15th September 1795, when HMS Echo had attempted to enter the Bay and been fired upon from the East and West Forts.

FREEDOM OF ENTRY PARADE IN HOUT BAY (2003)



The President of the Hout Bay and Llandudno Heritage Trust, Dr Ross Parry-Davies, delivering his speech, thanked the functionaries on stage, BrigGen Notshweleka and LtCol de Haan, for their commitment and participation in the day, as well as acknowledging the participation of the CFA gunners.





The guns of CFA were quickly prepared and placed in position.

A rider arrived on horseback all the way from the Castle of Good Hope with an urgent message from the Governor to warn Hout Bay that British warships were on the way. All necessary preparations were to be put in place to ward off the enemy.



*HMS "Echo"
South Atlantic
24th Sept*

*Dear Captain Todd
We know you are around somewhere.
Be aware, we are ready for you.*

Hout Bay Allied command.



Hout Bay Allied Command arranged a quick aerial reconnaissance by means of a motorised paraglider to establish the whereabouts of the enemy!



A warning shot was fired, and a message was sent to the East Fort to engage the enemy!



The Spirit of Victoria, impersonating HMS Echo, was spotted heading into the Bay.



The guns of CFA in action!! The Spirit of Victoria found the enemy too strong and hastily retreated to fight another day!!

The Dutch and British Commanders on the day both agreed that the battle was deemed successful and they would meet up soon in the local pub for some cold refreshments!!



Brigadier General Notshweleka had one more official function to perform before we could all retire for lunch at the Mariner's Wharf. He was asked to fire one of the guns at the East Fort and, in so doing, would assume the title of Honorary Gunner of the Republic of Hout Bay.



BrigGen Notshweleka seems to be happy with his shot?

The day proved to be a tremendous success and, judging from the feedback received from the many people in attendance, Heritage Day 2003 in Hout Bay was a stunner!

Lunch for the dignitaries was held at the Mariner's Wharf across the Bay. A fantastic menu was presented and a most enjoyable afternoon was experienced by all.



Dr Ross Parry-Davies, BrigGen Notshweleka and LtCol de Haan

HANDING OVER OF MY COMMAND (2004)

Commanding Officers in the Reserve Force do not necessarily have a fixed term of commanding a regiment. I had felt, at the beginning of 2004, that the time had come to hand over command of the regiment. My successor was duly identified, LtCol Hennie Theart, and 27th March 2004 was decided on for the official handing over parade to be held at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town.



The Castle of Good Hope is the oldest existing colonial building in South Africa. Built between 1666 and 1679, it has been the centre of civilian, political and military life at the Cape since 1679. Historically, however, it is only the third fort to be erected at the Cape; the first was erected by castaways from a ship, the *Nieuwe Haarlem*, wrecked in 1647 in Table Bay. They built a small fort of sods, in which they lived for a year before being rescued. When Jan van Riebeeck arrived at the Cape in 1652, directed by the VOC (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie – Dutch East India Company*), he built a four-pointed earthen-



walled fort on the site of today's Grand Parade in Cape Town. This particular fort could not withstand the wet Cape Town winters and needed much maintenance, with the earthen walls forever collapsing. Prompted by a loss of the Dutch settlement to the English, coupled with the mounting fears that this crumbling earthen fort would not be able to withstand an attack by a European enemy, instructions were received in 1665 to replace it with a structure made of stone.



Commander Wagenaer arrived in 1665, identified a new site, and instructed 200 soldiers to start digging the moat. Plans for the pentagonal castle were only received in 1666. The structure was built, first and foremost, as a military fortification. It comprised five bastions, named after the titles of the Prince of Orange, namely: Buren, Katzenellenbogen, Oranje, Nassau and Leerdam.

Visitors to the Castle are able to explore the William Fehr Collection of paintings, prints, watercolours, furniture, porcelain, glass and metalware dating from the 17th to the mid-19th century. The Castle Museum, Het Bakhuy's Restaurant (for functions), a gift shop and public restaurant are all worth visiting.

The traditional Cape Town Reserve Force regiments, namely the Cape Field Artillery, Cape Town Rifles (Dukes), Cape Town Highlanders, Cape Garrison Artillery and Regiment Westelike Provincie (sic) all occupy space in the Castle in the form of traditional messes. These messes are in essence ceremonial facilities and mainly utilised for regimental functions, and are thus not accessible to the general public.

I had sent an official invitation to the new commanding officer of 29 Commando Regiment, LtCol Simon Wolsey, to be present at the parade and was pleased that he accepted. His wife, Jill, the Adjutant, Captain Matt Birch and the RSM, WO1 Alan Lackey, accompanied him on this visit.

Simon took the opportunity to visit the parents of one of his gunners, Lance Bombardier Ross Clark, a South African soldier doing duty with 29 Commando Regiment at the time. The parents resided in Somerset West and, as they were Simon's guests, I invited them to the parade.



Sightseeing, as well as a visit to a well-known wine cellar (Boland Cellars), was arranged for our visitors prior to the parade; again, true South African hospitality prevailed!!



The visiting group



The CFA regimental colour gun, 13 pounder and limber behind a WW2 Austin Jeep



RSM Havenga and gunners ready for the parade



From left to right - RSM (WO1) Alan Lackey, Simon Wolsey, myself and Adjutant, Capt. Matt

The parade was followed by a function held in the Officers' Mess, and the final farewell to the outgoing commanding officer was held that evening at the regimental headquarters in Wingfield.



Simon and Jill Wolsey

According to Artillery traditions, the outgoing commanding officer is placed on the seat of an artillery gun (see picture below), which is then wheeled out of the hangar, pulled by crew members.



The CFA Pipe Band surprised everybody present, including myself, by calling in the support of their rock ensemble, which played a lively rendition of Going Home, the theme song of the film “Local Hero”. This was really a very emotional send-off, one I will remember for a long time!



FOLLOW-UP VISIT TO PLYMOUTH (2006)

Retired commanding officers still have a role to play within the regiment, albeit in a supporting and advisory capacity. I was thus asked by LtCol Theart, to assist in preparing documentation for a visit by some members of the regiment to 29 Commando Regiment in Plymouth. This was as a result of an invitation, dated 27th March 2006, received from LtCol Richard Haldenby, newly appointed Officer Commanding of 29 Regiment. His aim for the visit was to bring the South African gunners up to date on the development of UK artillery techniques, tactics and procedures. The invitation was also extended to the group to attend Music of the Night VIII at the Royal Citadel in Plymouth.

The visit was duly authorised and BrigGen Notshweleka (GOC SA Army Artillery Formation), WO1 (FSM) Niemand and seven CFA members departed for the United Kingdom on 17th July 2006. The aim was to include a visit to 266 Battery (Volunteers) Royal Artillery in Bristol. The group was keen to engage with those members so as to gain insight into the general functioning of this volunteer battery. In addition, initial planning was to be done in preparation for a possible return visit by the CFA Pipes and Drums to participate in the Music of the Night Festival in 2008. Rumour had it that the 2008 show was the last one ever to be held.

True to form, 29 Commando excelled again by arranging a variety of excursions that included the following: Visits to 266 Battery in Bristol, the Plymouth Gin Distillery, the Fire Power Museum at Woolwich, the Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London and, of course, the Music of the Night Festival.

The visit was deemed to be successful and on Sunday 25th July 2006, the group departed from London on their return journey to South Africa. The feedback from the CO of 29 Commando, LtCol Haldenby, was very positive, and it was confirmed that CFA would soon be receiving an official invitation for the Pipes and Drums to participate in the Music of the Night in 2008.



266 Battery (GVA) in Bristol



Plymouth Gin Distillery



Trust South Africans to find a place they can relate to!!



LtCol Hennie Theart (CFA) and the General lunching in the 29 Commando Officers' Mess



I happened to be on a visit to my daughter and her husband, living in Woking, Surrey, and “persuaded” them to take a trip to Plymouth with me!

Arriving at the Citadel, I met up with Maj Justin Barber, a member of 29 group during their 2001 visit to CFA. He was instrumental in arranging tickets for us to attend the Music of the Night Festival on Friday 23rd July!!

Gunner camaraderie at its best!!

He was also keen to show me around and pointed out the current equipment being used by 29 Commando Regiment.





BV206 Haggglunds over snow vehicle, which is mainly used in Norway to tow the 105 Light Gun. It is also described/known as a Gun Limber or simply a gun-towing vehicle



The regiment uses the Pinzgauer 716M model as a gun-towing vehicle for all other terrains



L118 -105mm gun



A familiar sight of the vehicle used in the show, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang: the Magical Car from a children's novel written by Ian Fleming



150th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS (2007)

The Cape Field Artillery reached a significant milestone by celebrating its 150th year since its inception on 26th August 1857. The festivities included a parade through the streets of Cape Town, with the regiment exercising its Freedom of Entry to the city, followed by a formal dinner in the Castle of Good Hope (and “wind down” in the Officers’ Mess afterwards), as well as the church service at the Regimental Headquarters in Wingfield.

Early in August, the eagerly awaited invitation from 29 Commando was received! The CO, LtCol Neil Wilson made it all official and appointed one of his officers, Capt. Paul Crysell, as the CFA Liaison Officer to coordinate our visit. I was also pleasantly surprised to learn that Paul and Lt Lawrence Kay would be able to attend the CFA birthday celebrations.



Colonel Bernie Ashlin (on the left), ex CO Cape Town Highlanders was allowed to join the 3 gunners!!



Bernie explaining his medals to Paul, with Ian McKinney looking on.



Picture of the Pipes and Drums together with the two representatives of 29 Commando Regiment. This was taken in anticipation of the 2008 visit to Plymouth, and I managed to get it across in time to be placed in the official programme of Music of the Night.

RETURNING TO PLYMOUTH (2008)

With the birthday celebrations now over, planning could begin for the upcoming 2008 visit to Plymouth. I had again indicated my willingness to assist in the process, and was therefore dependent on the Commanding Officer to include me.



South Africans are experts in sending our visitors home with "the right stuff"!

On 17th September 2007, I duly chaired the first planning meeting at CFA RHQ Wingfield. Emanating from this meeting was a host of instructions / fact finding questions to various committee members for action and to report back for the next meeting. The fact that this particular visit was now official and also funded fully by the military made the entire endeavour rather more complex and involved than our original visit in 2000. It was a lot easier back then, as we had paid our own way, booked our own flights, made a couple of phone calls and away we went!

This time around, however, there would be the dreaded “red tape” to conquer, and the myriad of additional requirements to be met. Applications had to be made timeously for diplomatic passports for the touring group, in and of itself a time-consuming exercise! The band had to be assessed by the Director of Music, Pretoria, in terms of their drill, dress and discipline as well as their musical performance. This was done, and the band passed with flying colours. In addition, quotes had to be obtained for the cost of airfreight, mainly for the band’s drum equipment. This proved costly, but fortunately we could arrange to borrow the necessary drums from the City of Plymouth Pipe Band (we were to meet up with them and also perform together in Plymouth).

My main concern was the approval by the Chief of the South African Army and the supporting budget allocation. This finally came through on Monday 21st April 2008, and I could then inform the band that the trip was on, which left us with just over 9 weeks before our departure!

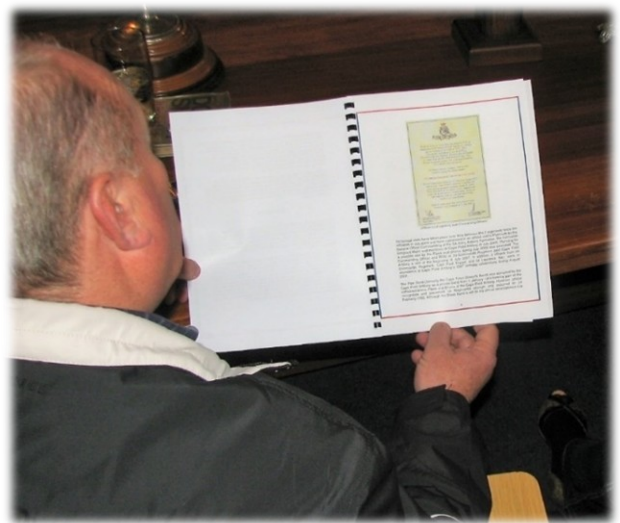
Fast forward to Friday 30th May 2008. I was contacted by June, our secretary at CFA, informing me that a signal had arrived from BrigGen Notshweleka stating that I was to replace the incumbent Commanding Officer, Hennie Theart, with immediate effect and to take command of the regiment. This caused quite a stir and I had to make some very frantic telephone calls to inform senior members of the regiment, as well as the chairman of the CFA Regimental Council, Col Lionel Crook. With effect from Monday 2nd June, I had to ensure that it was “business as usual”!

The arrangements for the visit to Plymouth went ahead as planned in the meantime, and I was eager to ensure that the new members in the band were to be properly documented and medically cleared for the visit.

On Saturday 5th July, I called for a final check and briefing to all members of the touring group. I was informed by Pipe Major Tony Reis that all preparations for the band had been completed, and that he was ready to go!



I had prepared and produced a detailed travel brochure/booklet (see page 150 for a full version) to give to the touring group, and specifically the new members of the band, which included everything they needed to know.





Lance Bombardier Reagan Daniels looking quite relaxed, but not for long; more about his exploits later!!



Pipe Major Tony Reis doing the checking



Handing out band T-shirts to Matthew Hutton



"After a hard day's work"??

A final pre-departure meeting was held at CFA HQ on Monday evening 7th July and it was "all systems go"!!

A direct evening flight took us to London on 8th July, arriving at Heathrow the next morning, where the drivers from 29 Commando were waiting to take us to Plymouth.

The band was taken to their accommodation at HMS Raleigh, the largest Royal Navy training establishment (239 acres) in the South West of England; it is situated on the banks of the river Lynher in Cornwall.



Once settled

in, the band members had to go to the base security office to be registered and issued with official ID cards. Drummer Marwaan de Bruin walked in with his usual

nonchalant attitude, greeted those on duty and announced that he was a Manchester United fan! This was met with a shocked silence, as the area, unbeknownst to Marwaan, had its own team in the English Premier League! He was also the one who left his key in his room, and thus the maintenance staff had to obtain entry via a ladder to the first floor of the building to get into his room and retrieve his card!!



Access to HMS Raleigh is via car and pedestrian ferry, which crosses the Hamoaze (a stretch of water at the mouth of the River Tamar between Devonport in Plymouth and Torpoint in Cornwall).



Thursday and Friday were earmarked for band practice and rehearsals for the Music of the Night performances. The band had been in constant contact with the City of Plymouth Pipe Band during the previous months, and had communicated extensively on matters musical prior to meeting them at the first practice.



The 2 days of practice proved very successful, and the band members were allowed the weekend free to explore Plymouth and specifically the picturesque Barbican waterfront area.

Transport was arranged for Saturday morning to bring the group through to the Barbican for some well earned relaxation.





View of Sutton Harbour

Plymouth's famous "Barbican Prawn" (depicted in the photo alongside) has a fascinating history. The sculpture was designed by metalworker Brian Fell, from Glossop in Derbyshire, and was partly funded by the Plymouth Arts Council. Unveiled in 1996, it seemingly amalgamated as many kinds of sea creatures as it could, as part of an effort to represent the variety of fish and shellfish landed on the Barbican. It has a cormorant's feet, a plesiosaurus's tail, the fin of a John Dory, a lobster's claws and the head of an angler fish.



Sometimes known at the time as "The Plymouth Sea Monster", it is definitely not a prawn, and the sculpture's official name is The Leviathan!



All work and no play make Jack a dull boy and thus a bit of relaxing, sightseeing and a boat trip rounded off the afternoon.

The Fishermans Arms is a pub just round the corner from the Royal Citadel, and it is frequently visited by the young 29 soldiers over the weekend. They had cunningly written on the noticeboard at the entrance that we were in town, knowing full well that we all had to pass the pub on our way back to the Citadel!



On Sunday, some of the group boarded the train for a 30-minute trip to Calstock. The train runs through the beautiful countryside of Cornwall to Calstock, which is a village on the River Tamar, 6 miles south west of Tavistock and 10 miles north of Plymouth.



The train crosses a spectacular viaduct as it reaches the village.



We chose to select a typical English “Ploughman’s” lunch at the Tamar Inn on the banks of the river.



The evening of Monday 14th July was earmarked for the final dress rehearsal for the Music of the Night and proved to be very successful. The band was free for the day, however, and was only tasked to report to the Citadel at 18h00.

This gave them a welcome opportunity to visit the tank museum at Bovington, and their dedicated driver, Neil Harrison, was only happy to take them there. They were fortunate to, not only view all the exhibits, but also be able to take rides on some of the equipment on display in the arena.



Ken and Matthew looking rather pleased



Lee-Ann getting into the driver's seat (note the L plate?)

Out on the training range



Andrew Imrie



Mogamat Opperman



Tony Reis

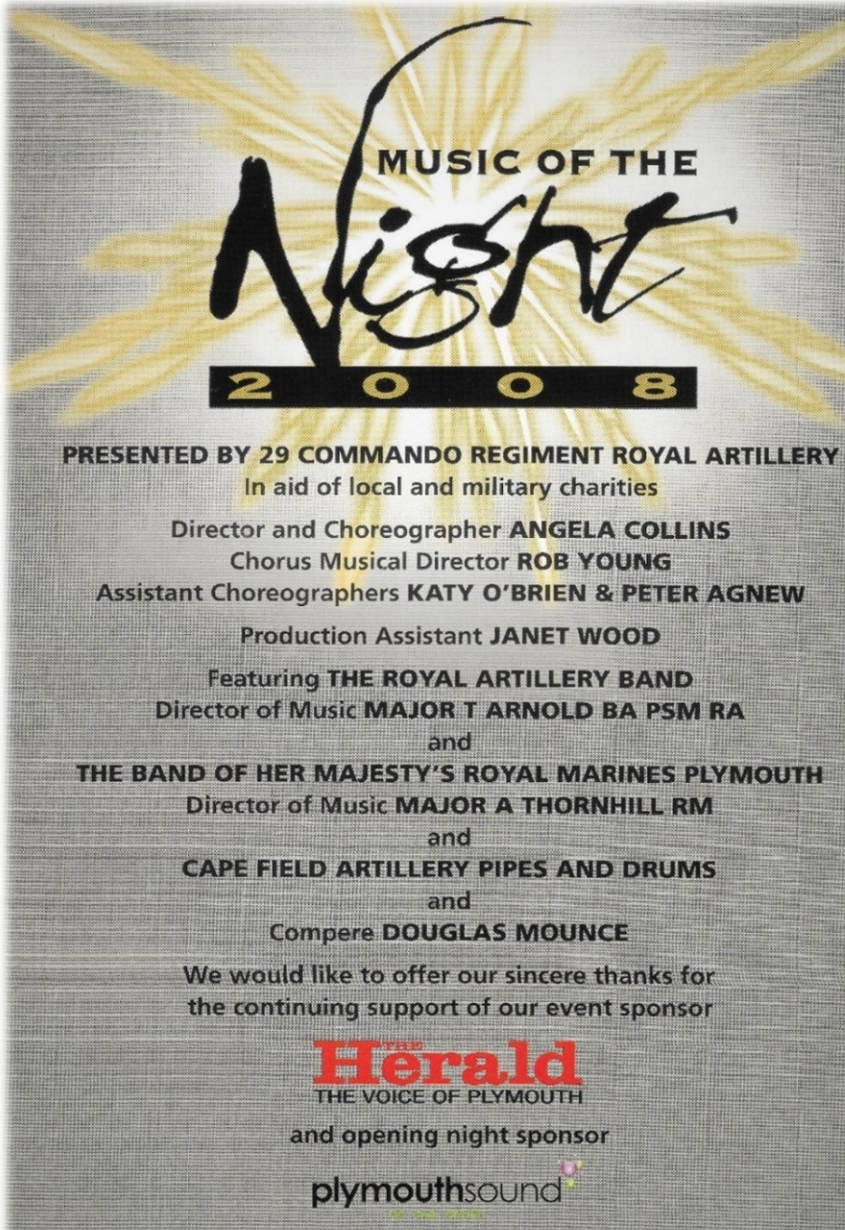
Tuesday 15th July, the long-awaited opening night performance arrived! The two bands combined for the first time at the show, entertaining the crowds prior to the start and during the interval, as well as post-show.



The official programme of Music of the Night contained some very interesting facts. The first ever show was held in 1992, and continued every second year thereafter. The current Commanding Officer, LtCol Neil Wilson, had been involved in three of the first four Music of the Night Festivals, including being the Project Officer for the second Music of the Night. (He was a 'young' Captain Neil Wilson at the time!).

Over the eight productions to date, more than 500,000 British Pounds had been raised and donated to a wide range of military and local civilian charities (nine in total this year alone), something all eight Project Officers and everybody else connected with the show had been very proud of.

Quoting from notes in the programme by Jeanette Nichols, Lesley Shorrocks and Janet Wood on Music of the Night – *A Look Back*: “*The real reason we have all put our lives on hold for at least six months every 2 years? Perhaps it’s because whatever part we have played in the magical Music of the Night, we have all, military and civilian alike, just enjoyed ourselves so darn much.*”



MUSIC OF THE
Night
2008

PRESENTED BY 29 COMMANDO REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY
In aid of local and military charities

Director and Choreographer **ANGELA COLLINS**
Chorus Musical Director **ROB YOUNG**
Assistant Choreographers **KATY O'BRIEN & PETER AGNEW**
Production Assistant **JANET WOOD**

Featuring **THE ROYAL ARTILLERY BAND**
Director of Music **MAJOR T ARNOLD BA PSM RA**
and
THE BAND OF HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL MARINES PLYMOUTH
Director of Music **MAJOR A THORNHILL RM**
and
CAPE FIELD ARTILLERY PIPES AND DRUMS
and
Compere **DOUGLAS MOUNCE**

We would like to offer our sincere thanks for
the continuing support of our event sponsor

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THE VOICE OF PLYMOUTH
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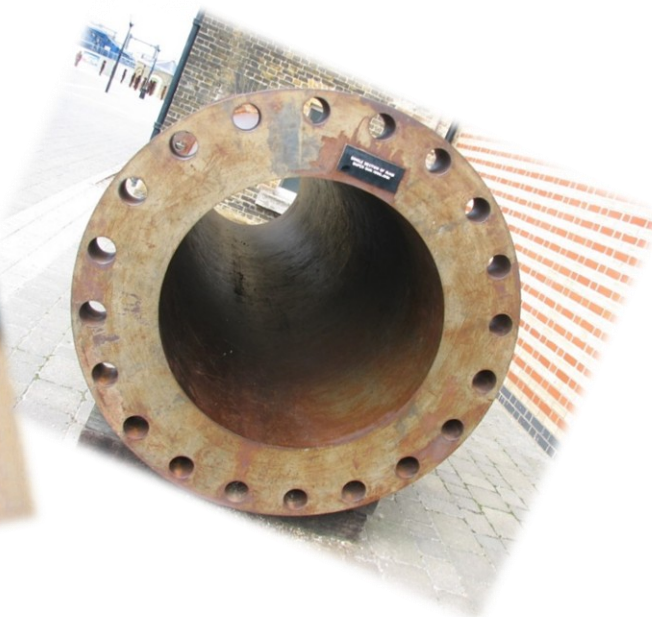
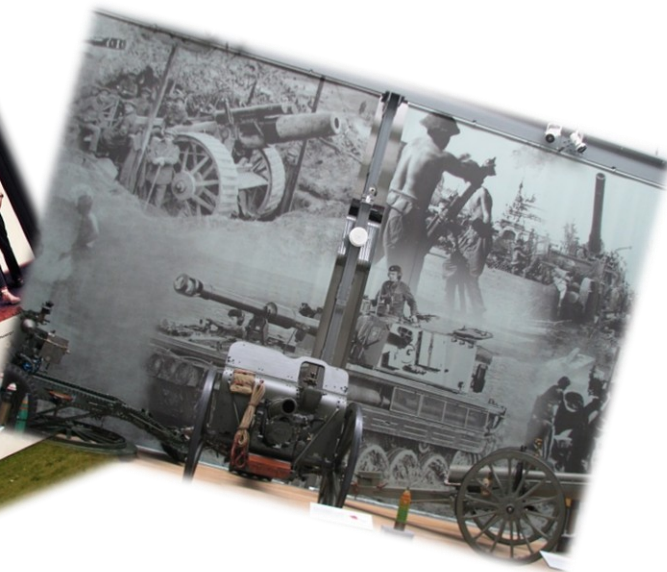
I had made arrangements to meet BrigGen Notshweleka, WO1 Niemand and my RSM, WO1 Havenga, on 15th July at Heathrow Airport upon their arrival from Johannesburg. They would be part of the rest of the touring group until our return to South Africa on 20th July.

Neil Harrison and I left for London early on Monday 14th July and booked in at Woolwich Barracks, which gave us an opportunity to visit the Firepower Museum. I had visited the construction site of the proposed new Firepower Museum in July 2000 and was thus keen to experience this new development.



I was pleasantly surprised to find a vast variety of equipment and artefacts relating to the history of artillery as well as involvement in battles of the past.

It would be impossible to reflect (via pictures) on every exhibit in the museum, therefore a selection of interesting ones will have to do!!





OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

The history of Operation Iraqi Freedom, in which British, American and other forces invaded Iraq to topple the regime of Saddam Hussein, has yet to be written. What can be said is that the war demonstrated the enormous technological superiority of Western armed forces.

In every encounter the intensity and accuracy of Western firepower overwhelmed Iraqi forces. The huge disparity between the conventional armed forces of developed and developing nations may mean that future conflicts will take a new course. Terrorism, rather than conventional armed resistance by organised armies, has become the characteristic response of a variety of groups which feel threatened by the West's economic, political and cultural dominance. The heavy mechanised armies of the Cold War era may need to adapt to a new kind of threat.





I was delighted to find Lance Bombardier Daniels (in blue golf shirt) with the group. His passport had not arrived by the time the band had left Cape Town on 8th July! He had thus flown in from Cape Town by himself, his first time ever in an aeroplane and on a long-haul flight to boot!

Fortunately for him, the SAA flight from Johannesburg had landed at Heathrow just before his own flight, and thus he, much to his relief, met the group in the same queue moving towards customs!

In Plymouth, accommodation had been arranged at the Citadel for the Warrant Officers, whilst the General was housed at Casa Mia, a B&B not far from the Citadel.



The General was keen to meet the band group; Pipe Major Tony Reis briefed the General regarding the band's activities up to that stage.

Tony had also set aside some golf shirts for our General as well as Sergeants Major Niemand and Havenga; the shirts were white and blue with the regimental logo.



WO1 Niemand looks quite pleased with his CFA Pipes and Drums golf shirts!

Lunch at the Barbican was next on the list, and the numerous eating establishments available made the choice very difficult! Some members directed us to a specific one, where the fish and chips were of very good quality!!



An invitation had been received from the office of the Mayor of Plymouth to join him for afternoon tea at his residence on the Hoe on Wednesday 16th July. The word 'Hoe' is derived from old English; appropriately meaning "high ground", the area overlooks the vast waters of the Plymouth Sound. Popular legend has it that it was there, on 20th July 1588, that the Elizabethan Sea Captain, Sir Frances Drake was playing bowls when the first news of the sightings of the invading Spanish Armada was brought to him.

View from the Mayor's residence on Armada Way, the Hoe.



WO2 Neil Harrison and Captain Jan Humphreys, our 29 hosts!



We would meet the Lord Mayor again later in the evening at a formal dinner in the Officers' Mess at the Citadel.



Brigadier General Notshweleka, Lord Mayor, Alderman Brian Vincent and Lady Mayoress, Councillor Pauline Murphy



I am not sure what Neil was trying to explain, maybe: "Cape Town is that way, General!!"



Guests at the main table



Captain Jan Humphrey looking dashing in his formal Mess Dress!

On Thursday 17th July a visit to 148 Battery RA in Poole was planned, with a detour to the tank museum at Bovington on the way back to Plymouth.

29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery is an Army Regiment embedded within 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines. It provides indirect fire support for the Brigade

with its 3 batteries of 105mm L118 Light Guns and offensive support advice at all levels of command, and terminal control of artillery, mortars, air (be it jets of all allied nations or attack helicopters) and naval gunfire using the ships of the Royal Navy.

The Regiment is unique in that it is spread across three locations; 8, 79 and 23 Batteries are in the Royal Citadel, Plymouth, 7 Battery is situated in Arbroath, Scotland, and 148 Forward Observation Battery can be found at the Royal Marines Base, Poole, Dorset.

The men of 148 are commando and parachute trained, and are proficient in stealth insertion via parachute, boat and helicopter. 148 Battery Fire Support Teams (FST) can accompany UK Special Forces (UKSF) teams into action, using their specialist skills in controlling artillery and air strikes. Their particular expertise lies in calling in Naval Gunfire Support. Fire control computers and gyroscope guns in modern British destroyers allow for highly accurate shelling of targets. The battery also supplies FST's for the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) for 3 Commando Brigade.



A briefing by the Battery Commando 148 Battery

Our visit culminated on a high note with a trip out to sea in one of the Royal Marines ORC's (Offshore Raiding Craft). They are powered by Twin Styer M256 high-speed inboard diesels, each developing 250Hp/184Kw and thus giving the craft a maximum speed of 40Kts.



It is quite an exhilarating experience, given the above technical data! We were all wearing special rubber suits due to the possibility of being thrown overboard! Judging from anxious looks, this was always a possibility. The General was given an opportunity at the helm and proved to be quite capable of piloting the craft, even attempting a couple of "evasive" swerves!!



Soon we were back on dry land and neatly dressed again!! The next part of our journey would be via the tank museum at Bovington and then back to Plymouth.

The customary handshake and small gift ended our visit to 148 Battery.



The exhibits at the Tank Museum are all great to see, but the German King Tiger tank remains an impressive sight.



With so many exhibits, I do not blame my RSM for looking rather bemused, or is he just lost?

Tank technology and construction has come a long way and to experience the sight of a British Mark 1 tank during a simulated attack exhibit (by means of audio-visual, sound and lighting) is quite sobering.



This picture illustrates aptly how it must have felt for the soldiers who were fighting in the trenches during World War 1.

Friday 18th July was spent sightseeing with members of the band.



Ken Hundermark capturing memories!



Lee-Anne taking control!



A quick group photo before we continued our sightseeing and pub visits.



Saturday 19th July was our last day in Plymouth, and it was always going to be very hectic indeed! The first public outing of the combined City of Plymouth and CFA Pipe Bands took place at Antony House.



This 18th century property is located between the town of Torpoint and the village of Antony in Cornwall. Built between 1718 and 1724 for Sir William Carew, the property was given into care of the National Trust in 1961, on the understanding that the family could continue to reside

there. On this occasion, the massed bands entertained the crowds at the grounds in support of a fund-raising Fete organised by the Torpoint & Rame Lions Club.



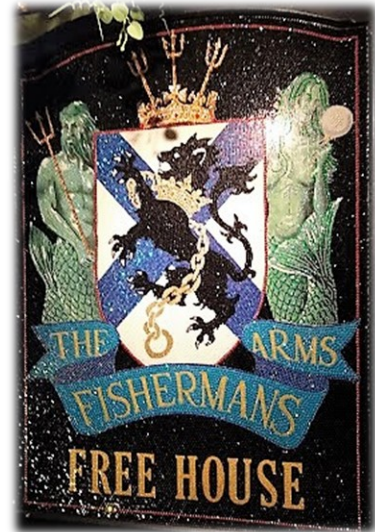


Tony was happy to guide the band towards refreshments.... Not sure if he was going to foot the bill!!

A group photo with the Swans from HMS Raleigh

After the performance at Antony House, the band decided to pay the Fishermans Arms in Plymouth a surprise visit to say their goodbyes. This pub was a favourite amongst the 29 gunners and obviously the band members had made some very good friends there!

The Fishermans Arms on a rainy day (with dog) but fortunately for our stay, it was high summer in England!



Tony Reis had established that a 29 gunner was a Welshman and promptly surprised him by playing the Welsh National Anthem!!



Music brings us all together – not so?



LtCol Neil Wilson asked the touring group to gather at the Citadel in the afternoon to personally thank the band for their contribution to the success of the Music of the Night Festival. A short ceremony followed to exchange some tokens of appreciation from General Notshweleka and LtCol Wilson.



The General receiving a 29 Commando plaque



I received, for the regiment, a statuette of the Commando Memorial that is situated at Spean Bridge in Scotland. The inscription at the bottom reads as follows:

“Presented to all ranks of the Cape Field Artillery from all members of 29 Commando Regt RA-MOTN July 2008”

The Commando Memorial overlooks the training areas of the Commando Training Depot established in 1942 at Achnacarry Castle in the Scottish Highlands. This statue stands some 5.2 m high. It comprises a group of three bronze commandos dressed in typical World War Two uniforms and equipment, including cap comforters, ammunition pouches and weapons. They are looking south towards *Ben Nevis*, the highest mountain in Scotland, the United Kingdom and the British Isles. A large inscription on the plinth just beneath their feet reads: *“United We Conquer”*, while the plaque on the front of the plinth reads: *“In memory of the officers and men of the commandos who died in the Second World War 1939-1945. This country was their training ground.”*

Later in the afternoon time was set aside to start saying our goodbyes to a number of people and generally mingle with the crowds who were arriving early for the final Saturday performance of Music of the Night.

It was also time to show our appreciation to our very friendly and able “29 hosting duo”, Captain Jan Humphreys and WO2 Neil Harrison.



*Drum Major Steve Leibbrandt handing a gift to
Capt. Humphreys*



*Tony Reis doing the honours with WO2 Neil
Harrison*



Preparations and practices soon started for the band’s final appearance in the Music of the Night Festival.

The guns stand ready for firing the rounds during the rendition of Tchaikovsky’s 1812 Overture. One of the guns was manned by visiting gunners from 4 Regiment Royal Australian Artillery during the week: up the Aussies!!!





At the end of the performance, Drum Major Steve Leibbrandt led, for the last time, the combined bands of the Cape Field Artillery and the City of Plymouth from the arena.



The band transport left the Citadel rather late that evening back to HMS Raleigh, as all the members had enjoyed the so-called traditional “after party”.



Sunday 20th July called for an early breakfast to begin the long trip back to London. Final pictures were taken at Raleigh and then we were on the road aboard the luxury bus provided by 29 Commando.



The command group taken at the bust figure of Sir Walter Raleigh - the Naval Base was named after him.



Happy feet or tired feet?



Accommodation for the Sunday evening was arranged at the Royal Air Force Base Uxbridge. Some members had requested to be officially released from the group, as they had indicated earlier that they wanted to extend their stay in Britain.

RAF Uxbridge was a Royal Air Force station in Uxbridge (since closed on 31/03/2010), within the London Borough of Hillingdon. The Battle of Britain Bunker, an underground operations room, was built at the base in 1938, which was formerly used by No 11 Group Fighter Command during the Second World War. Fighter aircraft operations were controlled from there throughout the War, but most notably during the Battle of Britain and on D-Day. The bunker had been restored and forms part of the museum complex at the base.



(To read the full story of its existence please go to:

<https://www.airshows-present.com/raf-uxbridge-battle-of-britain-bunker.html>)



Entrance to the underground operations room



Entrance foyer



WW2 Hurricane aeroplane



Prime Minister Winston Churchill spent many hours in this bunker during the war



Plotting room for air force operations

The rest of the group were free to explore London at their leisure, whilst I had arranged for my daughter, who lived nearby in West Ruislip, to collect the command group and be treated to a typical South African braai at their home!



There was enough time left on the Sunday for the rest of the band to enjoy their sightseeing and, as convenient transport was available on the tube from Uxbridge station into London, they made the most of it!



Our first point of call on Monday was South Africa House, where we were met by the South African High Commissioner.

The building, designed by Sir Herbert Baker, can be found on the corner of Duncannon Street and Trafalgar Square. It houses the offices of the High Commissioner and also hosts the South African consulate.



Any South African would find this building quite easily by honing in on its very distinctive signpost!!



This building boasts some beautiful exhibits as well as a fascinating mural of our country, South Africa.



During our sightseeing, we experienced the Horse Guards Parade ground, St James's Park and iconic tourist attractions.





Doing some map reading near the Thames River



A brisk walk in a specific direction??



Empty kegs after the South Africans visited some pubs?

Sightseeing can be exhausting at times, and so we enjoyed a well-deserved moment of relaxation on the banks of the Thames!



Soon we were back at London Heathrow International Airport awaiting our flight back home.

This brought to an end a very successful visit to the United Kingdom and specifically to 29 Commando Regiment in Plymouth. There had been lots of good vibes and many friends were made and, as usual, the hope was expressed by all the members that we would meet up again someday!



Back in South Africa after our trip, life at the Regiment returned to its normal routine once again, and many a story and our memories were shared at Mess evenings. The Music of the Night Festival had been such a success every time and a hit with the general public that requests for putting the show on again were constantly received! I was aware that, on my previous visits, it had been mentioned that a particular year was going to be the last. The show in 2008 was earmarked to be the last.

There was a strong commitment between the two regiments to keep the affiliation alive and regular visits by members of the band to Plymouth ensured that this was indeed the case.

On 6th June 2011, I was pleasantly surprised to receive a letter from Major Oxley at 29 Commando Regiment. It contained a formal invitation for the CFA Pipes and Drums to participate in the final Music of the Night Festival. It was originally thought that the festival would be held for the final time in 2008, but then 29 Commando Regiment decided to hold one more Festival in 2012 to coincide with their 50th Anniversary of Commando Gunners. The letter also included an invitation for the CFA band to combine with the Royal Marine Band on Saturday 21st July at a Special Beating the Retreat service to be held in the Royal Citadel. This would mark 29 Regiment's continued affiliation with CFA and also signal the commencement of the 50th Anniversary celebrations. In addition, the invitation letter clearly stated that 29 Regiment was able and willing to provide accommodation as well as transport for this particular visit! A letter to this effect was also received from WO1 (Master at Arms) Robbins at HMS Raleigh (Royal Navy Police), confirming that accommodation was set aside at the base for 6 Senior NCO's and 16 Junior NCO's. The excitement ran high amongst all of us, and I started the planning process for this visit as a matter of urgency.

A number of new members had joined the band after the last visit to the UK in 2008. It was therefore necessary to apply for military status for these members as

bandsmen, to enable them to be taken on official strength. Little did I realise at the time that this would ultimately result in the visit not taking place.

The next level of command to which I had to report, the South African Army Artillery Formation HQ, did everything in their power to complete this process at Army HQ level but to no avail. I was never given the real reason for this fiasco, but I will say that, to my mind, it fell foul as a result of the dreaded 'quota system' having been applied, meaning that the new members did not reflect the 'representation of the general population of South Africa'.

GOING IT ALONE (2012)

One of the least memorable moments of my military career was the evening at which I had to officially announce that we would not be going to Plymouth after all. The news was not well received at all, as months of planning and provisional arrangements had come to nothing. The members came up with a variety of suggestions, as well as a proposal to "go it alone" by paying our own way. This proved not to be a viable solution and in the end, a request was received from certain members whether they would still be allowed to go but at their own cost. Permission for this was granted, and WO2 Steven Leibbrandt, Private Leibbrandt and Sergeant Bill White would represent the Cape Field Artillery.



They were well received and brought back some good memories as well as numerous photographs, which are shared in the following pages.



Freedom of Entry Parade in the City of Plymouth.

LtCol Dawes leading his regiment through the streets of Plymouth.



Memorial service and wreath laying ceremony on Sunday 22nd July 2012.



Special commemorative medallion produced for this occasion.



Relaxing and reconnecting over a pint or two after the busy weekend of festivities.



Bill, Jan and wife Debbie and Steve

EPILOGUE

I have enjoyed putting to paper the story of *The Road to Plymouth*. My initial thoughts were to concentrate on our first visit only; however, the more I delved into the background, the history and the involvement of so many people and numerous photographs, I realised that the story had much more to offer.

My subsequent retirement in 2014, after a career spanning 45 years, brought about the end to my time in uniform. I knew from the start that the effort to keep the affiliation with 29 Commando Regiment going would be challenging, to say the least. The fact that the last Music of the Night Festival was held in 2012 to coincide with the celebrations of the “First Fifty Years of Commando Gunners” had brought this curtain down for the final time. In general, reduced funding and increased budget cuts were the order of the day, both for CFA as well as 29 Commando. Personnel changes on both sides of the ocean resulted, in my opinion, in waning interest towards the affiliation between our two regiments. In addition, the name of the Cape Field Artillery had in the meantime changed to Nelson Mandela Artillery Regiment. I was personally opposed to any name change of my regiment, as I was adamant that our current name was very appropriate, given our history and our close relationship with the City of Cape Town. But unfortunately, the regiment’s name change was implemented in 2019.

Fortunately, some of the band members, and specifically Sgt Bill White, have made it their mission to visit 29 Commando Regiment in Plymouth as and when they were able to do so. One such visit was during Armed Forces Day in Plymouth in 2016. Sgt Bill White and Piper Iain Grant travelled to the UK at their own expense and were accommodated at the Royal Marine Stonehouse Barracks.



They participated in the massed pipes and drums performance on the Hoe, and Ian was later asked to march the Mayoral Party from the Citadel entrance to the Officers' Mess.

Both he and Bill were asked to join the guests on the battlements for canapes and Pimm's, and were specifically made welcome as representing Cape Field Artillery.



This journey, which has been shared in this document, has been a thoroughly pleasant one, filled with great experiences, which have resulted in meeting so many different people – and with the knowledge that we, as gunners, have been part of it all.

The Cape Field Artillery Pipes and Drums, now known as the Nelson Mandela Artillery Pipes and Drums, are as active as ever today. The desire to keep piping music alive and well is strong, judging by the number of new recruits in training. It is also sad when, recently, one of its members was called to higher duty. Ken Hundermark, a long-serving member, became ill at the parade on Sunday 23rd July 2023. He was taken to the Christiaan Barnard Hospital on the Foreshore, Cape Town, where he later passed away of a heart attack. He was part of the band participating in the Delville Wood parade that was held in the Company's Garden in Cape Town.

This picture was taken at the 154th Anniversary Celebrations Church Service in 2011, an appropriate toast to a fine gentleman. We will remember him.



Readers may have noticed the reference to the word UBIQUE at the end of General Van Zyl's Foreword. This is in fact the motto of the artillery and goes back to the United Kingdom of the early 1880s. At that time, each artillery unit wore its own individual battle honours; however, these had become so numerous by then that, in 1883, the word "UBIQUE" (Everywhere) was granted to replace them. At the same time, the privilege of bearing the motto "QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT" (Whither Right and Glory lead) was granted.

The motto of the South African Artillery is again PRIMUS INCEDERE EXIRE ULTIMUS, meaning "First in and Last Out", an inspired motto produced in 1976. The cap badge (approved but never manufactured) also bears the battle honour, UBIQUE. Resulting from the unique South African



Picture credit – Brent and Lorraine Best

regimental traditions, a number of artillery units have their own cap badges and mottos. The cap badge of the Cape Field Artillery (see below) carries both these mottos as well as the words Spes Bona (Good Hope), reflecting its connections to the City of Cape Town/Cape of Good Hope.



UBIQUE

(Everywhere - /u 'bi.kwe)

TRAVEL BROCHURE / BOOKLET



CAPE FIELD ARTILLERY PIPES AND DRUMS

MUSIC OF THE NIGHT

ROYAL CITADEL – PLYMOUTH – JULY 2008

UNITED KINGDOM



(Sutton Harbour)



(Music of the Night - 2006)



(Barbican Cafes/Cap'n Jaspers/Famous Fish Statute)



(Entrance to the Royal Citadel)

INTRODUCTION

The Cape Field Artillery Pipes and Drums have been invited by 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery to visit Plymouth during July 2008. The band will be participating in the Music of the Night Festival to be held at the Royal Citadel, Plymouth from 15th until 19th July 2008. The show is presented by 29 Commando Regiment RA at the Royal Citadel and this will be the ninth production since 1992. Music, song, dance, lasers, fireworks and gunfire all combine with military bands and a cast of hundreds of talented local performers to produce a fantastic outdoor extravaganza. Since its first production, the show has raised over £500,000 for charity. This visit is the culmination of festivities of the Cape Field Artillery's 150th birthday celebrations held during August 2007. This will be the second time the band has participated in the Music of the Night Festival, and it promises to be as successful as the first visit in July 2000. The Royal Citadel is situated on the Hoe, overlooking the Plymouth Sound. The city is famous in that Sir Francis Drake was said to have played bowls on the Plymouth Hoe in 1588, whilst the Spanish Armada was approaching. He knew however that the tide was against the Spanish Armada and, as soon as the tide had in fact turned, he sailed with the English Fleet from Plymouth Harbour and defeated them by running burning ships into the Armada! Drake lived near Tavistock, just a few miles from Plymouth.

Just below the Citadel, you will find the historic waterfront area called the Barbican. There are a number of interesting shops, pubs and restaurants around this area, which is popular with both locals and visitors. You will find the famous Cap'n Jaspers, noted for their delicious burgers and not forgetting their "half a yard of hotdog"!! Other places of interest around the Barbican are the Glass Works, the National Marine Aquarium and the Black Friars Distillery, the home of Plymouth Gin.

BACKGROUND

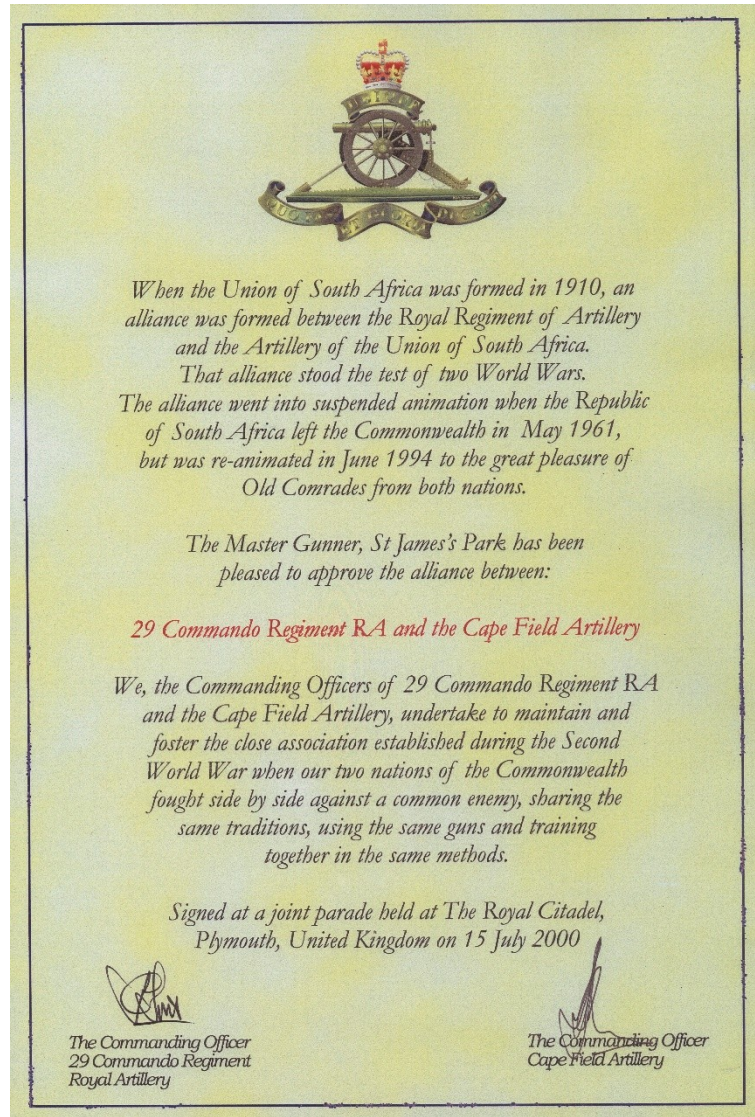
The historical link between the South African Artillery and the Royal Artillery goes back to World War II. The South African Artillery deployed together with the Royal Artillery in East Africa, North Africa and in Italy. In 1942, 2nd Battery, Cape Field Artillery served under command of 25 Field Regiment Royal Artillery in the Western Desert, North Africa. After the war, 25 Field Regiment RA was first remustered as 29 Field Regiment RA and in 1962 became 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery.

In June 1996, an official parade of the re-alliance between the Royal Artillery and the South African Artillery took place at Woolwich, London. Cape Field Artillery was the only Reserve

Force Regiment present on parade. After the parade, the members of Cape Field Artillery visited 29 Commando Regiment at the Royal Citadel in Plymouth. During the visit, the possibility of an official affiliation between the two regiments was discussed, as well as the possibility of the Pipes and Drums participating in the Music of the Night Festival. The said visit materialised and the official affiliation parade took place in Plymouth on 15 July 2000 at the Citadel. The CFA Pipes and Drums acquitted themselves extremely well at the Music of the Night Festival. The General of the Gunners (at the time, Major General Chris van Zyl) led the contingent.

Reciprocal visits have taken place over time between the 2 regiments since the affiliation in July 2000 and have culminated in an official visit to Plymouth by the General Officer Commanding of the SA Army Artillery Formation, the Formation Sergeant-Major and members of Cape Field Artillery in July 2006. Planning for a possible visit by the Pipes and Drums during July 2008 was executed. The Commanding Officer and RSM of 29 Commando Regiment paid Cape Field Artillery a visit at the beginning of July 2007. In addition, 2 officers from 29 Commando Regiment, Capt. Paul Crysell and Lt Lawrence Kay, were in attendance at Cape Field Artillery's 150th birthday celebrations during August 2007.

The Pipe Band (formerly the Cape Town Stewarts Band) was accepted by the Cape Field Artillery as a private band from 1 January 1974, forming part of the combined Brass, Pipes and Drums of the Cape Field Artillery. However, official recognition and placement on Regimental strength only occurred on 24 February 1982. Although the Brass Band is still on the official establishment, it is currently not operational. The Pipe Band performs all the duties as the official Regimental Band. The band has a reputation for punctuality, neatness, smartness and availability, and is much in demand by the Military Authorities, as well as being a favourite with the local Cape Town community. Their performances number in excess of 50 in any given year. These performances are not confined to military occasions such as parades, tattoos, concerts, gala dinners, etc., but include Caledonian and other cultural, charitable, sporting and prestigious events.



Official scroll signed by both Commanding Officers

The band wears kilts of Royal Stewart tartan and is presently under the leadership of Pipe Major Staff Sergeant Tony Reis. The Drum Major is Warrant Officer, Class 2, Stephen Leibbrandt with LtCol Kees de Haan, and Acting Commanding Officer of the Cape Field Artillery, as the Mission Commander.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The travelling party will be departing from Cape Town International on Tuesday, 8 July 2008.

Carrier	South African Airways
Flight Number	SA220
Reporting time at airport	15:30***
Time of departure	19:00
Arrival London Heathrow	06:20 (UK Time) on 9 July 2008
Terminal	No 1.

***** We need to report at the travel agent (Rennies) in order to collect our S&T funding in British pounds. They are situated in the Domestic Arrivals Hall at the airport.**

Members of 29 Commando Regiment will meet us at Heathrow and transport the group to Plymouth. Duration of the trip is in the region of 4 hours, and we will most certainly have a "pit stop" along the way!

Upon arrival in Plymouth, we will be taken to our accommodation, allowed to settle in, and I will brief the group on the rest of the day's/evening's activities. The band members will be staying at HMS Raleigh, which is situated across the river in Saltash. Transport between HMS Raleigh and the Citadel will be provided by 29 Commando Regiment.

TOURING PARTY

Departing Cape Town

LtCol CA de Haan **(Mission Commander)**

WO2 SP Leibbrandt **(Drum major)**

SSgt AJ Reis **(Pipe Major)**

Sgt KR Hundermark

Sgt PJ Marwick

Cpl AJM Imrie

Cpl WS White

L/Cpl RR Daniels

L/Cpl TMP Hutton

Pte L-A Allison

Pte TA Leibbrandt

Pte TJ Marwick

Pte MR Leighton

Pte MS Hutton

Pte M de Bruyn

Pte MS Opperman

Pte EA Trofimczyk



Second group ex Johannesburg



BrigGen MR Notshweleka



WO 1 J Niemand



WO 1 B Havenga

Carrier	South African Airways
Flight Number	SA236
Reporting time at airport	18:00
Time of Departure	20:15
Arrival London Heathrow	06:55 (UK Time) on 15 July 2008
Terminal	No 1

This group, departing from Johannesburg on 14 July 2008, will spend the first day or two in London and will join us for the remainder of the visit. The full contingent will leave Plymouth together on 20 July 2008 (am) to be transported back to London and specifically to Uxbridge Barracks on the M40 highway. The group is free to explore London for the rest of Sunday, and it is suggested that we leave Uxbridge Barracks after breakfast on Monday 21 July, proceed to Heathrow to locker the baggage and then spend the rest of the day in London.

Those members who have elected to remain in the UK for a longer period will be officially released from duties upon arrival at Heathrow.

Travel details (to Cape Town):

Carrier: South African Airways
Flight Number: SA221
Departure time: 21:00
Arrival at Cape Town: 09:50 (SA time) on 22 July 2008

Travel Details (to Johannesburg):

Carrier: South African Airways
Flight Number: SA235
Departure Time: 19:00
Arrival at Johannesburg: 07:10 (SA time) on 22 July 2008

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

- 10 July 2008: Rehearsals - Pipe Major and Drum Major to coordinate.
- 11 July 2008: Rehearsals - Pipe Major and Drum Major to coordinate.
- 12 & 13 July 2008: To be advised.
- 14 July 2008 (evening): Final dress rehearsal.
- 15 to 19 July 2008 (evening): Music of the Night performances.
- 19 July 2008 (afternoon): Performance with City of Plymouth Pipe Band at a Country Estate near Plymouth.
- 20 July 2008 (am): Depart Plymouth for Uxbridge Barracks.
- 21 July 2008 (pm): Departure back to Cape Town/Johannesburg.

Activities of the band during the day will be confirmed upon arrival at Plymouth and after consultation with 29 and the City of Plymouth Pipe Band. Other than the planned combined performance on 19 July 2008 (afternoon), there may be performances in the City Centre.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

You should be in possession of the following:

- Official passport
- Airline ticket
- Checked baggage (in aircraft hold)
- Hand baggage
- Bagpipes!! (weight 3 Kg)
- Spending money.
- Uniforms and dress as per guidelines issued (weight approx. 9 Kg)

TRAVEL TIPS

Some general tips that may be useful to members.

- Label your checked baggage inside and out with your name, destination address, e-mail address and mobile or cell number.
- **Your destination address is: 29 Commando Regiment RA, Royal Citadel, the Hoe, Plymouth. Tel. number:0044(0)1752236130**
- Useful to have copies of all your travel documents placed inside your checked baggage.
- Remove tags and labels left from previous flights!
- Do not pack any valuable items in your checked baggage.
- You may wish to have your baggage plastic wrapped at Cape Town International (cost R25.00 per item)
- Should you be taking a camera or video camera, you need to declare it at the SA Police kiosk (just before we go through to the checking-in counters). Keep this form handy for customs both outbound and inbound.
- Do not take any sharp objects such as pocket knives etc. in your hand baggage.

Generally the size and allowed weight of baggage is:

Checked baggage: 90cm in length, 72cm in height and 45cm in width with a total weight of 23kg.

Hand baggage: 52cm in length, 40cm in height and 23cm in width with a total weight of 8kg.

I trust that this brochure will be found useful as well as informative to all members of the party. It is expected of us to bond together as a group, show respect towards our hosts and, above all, act as true ambassadors for our Regiment, the Artillery Formation as well as the South African National Defence Force as a whole.

All that remains to be said is:

Bon Voyage!!

(Compiled & produced by LtCol CA de Haan)

