



SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION

(CAPE TOWN BRANCH)

PBO 93000796

Cape Town Branch News – February 2025

New members

A warm welcome to new members Helen Sampson, Lorraine van Tonder, Wynand van Tonder and Adrienne Verney. We encourage you to get involved and to contribute to the success of the Legion.

Poppy Day 2024

A big thank you to convenor Pam Poole, the members of the MOTH, collectors, John Gandy for arranging the walk from Simonstown, those who took part and the sponsors. The amount raised after expenses was R102096.

An application to collect for 2025 has been submitted and we hope we can continue to rely on your support.

Activities at Rosedale

The branch hosted a well-attended Christmas Dinner for residents on 6 December. Here, Sue Bailey, Phyllis Webb, Del Davies and Maria Grace are about to tuck into a sumptuous three-course meal served up by members of the Pro Patria Shellhole



The Rosedale Club is well supported, and members are encouraged to attend on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings from 1700 to 1900. Alternatively, why not book for Sunday lunch and support the Club beforehand.

Parades

The branch was represented at the Border War Commemoration parade at Dawn Patrol Shellhole and at the South African Navy Veterans Association's service of remembrance for those who lost their lives in the sinking of the SAS President Kruger in 1982. The service with some 120 in attendance was held at Rosedale.



Exco's Peter Napier (Welfare) laying a wreath at the Wall of Remembrance.

Accommodation at Rosedale

The availability of accommodation at Rosedale is a moving target. If you're considering Rosedale as a retirement option, it's best to apply sooner rather than later and go onto the waiting list. If you would like more details, contact David Holmes on 021 6899771 or manager@salegion.co.za

World War 11 weapons that failed

One of the silliest weapons of World War II was the Great Panjandrum. It comprised a pair of 10-foot wooden wheels, the axle between them containing a 2-ton drum of TNT. The Panjandrum was designed to be launched from the ramp of a landing craft just off a Normandy beachhead, from which (in theory anyway) it would roar up the beach at 60 mph and smash into the Atlantic Wall defences, blowing a tank-size hole in the fortifications. Propelling it were 70 solid-fuel rockets around the rim of each wheel, spinning the entire affair like a crazed Catherine wheel firework.

Since the device was totally unguided, if just one rocket failed to fire or simply put out less power than the others anything could happen. Similarly, the effect of a sloping beach or of a rock in Panjandrum's path would impact the direction. Film survives of a test that shows the device veering, tipping and tilting causing the watching generals and admirals to scatter as it sheds rockets and careens across an English beach, finally coming to rest on its side, where it explodes and disintegrates.

The Soviets developed the idea to strap explosives to a dog's back and teach it to crawl beneath a German tank which was not just inhumane—it wasn't very bright either. Said "dog mines" exploded when a detonating rod hit the tank's belly. The problem was, the Soviets used their own T-34s to train the dogs, teaching them to seek treats beneath the tanks. T-34s had diesel engines while German tanks used petrol and smelled quite different. Amid the noise and confusion of battle, the dogs often sniffed out the familiar-smelling Soviet tanks, with predictable results.

The dogs also refused to run beneath moving tanks and were often frightened off by German gunfire, only to flee back to their own trenches and foxholes, where the mines obediently detonated.

On a lighter note

- I bought one of those tapes to teach you Spanish in your sleep. During the night the tape skipped and now I can only stutter is Spanish.
- My mother-in-law bought a talking parrot, but she took it back a week later. This parrot hasn't said anything yet, she complained to the shop owner. I haven't had a chance yet, replied the parrot.
- Why are military officer's orders vague? Because they always talk in General terms
- What do you call someone who sells prosthetics to the military? An arms dealer.