

Springbok

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November 10, 2024 (Remembrance Sunday): Lgr Steve Moritz with Tom Patterson of the Royal Navy Association, who carried the Spanish flag at the annual Remembrance Sunday service at Mil Palmeras Church in Pilar de la Horada, south of Alicante in Spain (Photo: Shirly Moritz)

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



The year 2025 is certainly galloping along, as here we are at the end of January. I sincerely hope that the year has been good for you so far. Reading the report by the National Vice President, it certainly looks like the rest of the year will be an exciting one. Every one of us, as members of the Legion, needs to get involved and do our part to make it a success. So, let us roll up our sleeves and get engaged.

An easy way for branches to contribute is by regularly submitting their reports, stories, and photos for inclusion in *The Springbok*. My sincere appreciation goes to all the branches that

consistently submitted their reports, stories, and photos throughout 2024. Without your support and contributions, *The Springbok* would cease to exist.

The unveiling of the new memorial in Cape Town—the Cape Town Labour Corps Memorial—by Her Royal Highness, Princess Royal, on Wednesday, 22 January 2025, marks the culmination of a long process of identifying and honouring these Black South African soldiers. Through this memorial, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) is fulfilling its responsibility by ensuring that every Commonwealth casualty is either buried with a headstone or commemorated on a memorial. The National Vice President Lgr Ray Nesset represented the South African Legion at the ceremony.

On the international front, the year started on a positive note with a temporary ceasefire in the Middle East, which seems to be holding, and hostages have been released. Let us pray that it holds and ultimately becomes a permanent ceasefire.

Sadly, the year also brought tragic news for South Africans with the death of 13 members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Let us all continue to pray for peace in the world.

NEW YEARS MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL VISE PRESIDENT – LGR. RAY NESSET



Much has happened over the past 5 months since the 88th Congress held in Cape Town, where a new Committee of office bearers was elected into office for the next 3 years.

The minutes of the Congress will be disseminated in February 2025 to the regions to allow branches, especially those branches that did not attend Congress, to familiarize themselves with what was discussed and the way forward.

The most important matter finalized besides the election of office bearers, was the consensus that the NHQ relocate from Johannesburg to Cape Town. Without going into all the pros and cons, on the relocation, the decision was necessary based primarily on a monetary, facility and management issue. The relocation also allowed us to restructure the Headquarters staffing in the short term, based on a monetary aspect.

The Cape Town Branch have been supportive in this decision, providing resources and facilities and even contributing financially to certain headquarters expenses. This was done for the short term to allow a smooth transition for the relocation. The full-time employee, Enrique Forbes now the General Secretary of the organization resides on Rosedale, renting an apartment in the residential facility.

A portrait and job description of each NEC member will be submitted in the ensuing *SPRINGBOK* magazine so that everybody concerned knows who is on the management team of the organization and what exactly they do.



The General Secretary currently manages the RCEL grant recipients and ensures communication and the funding flow to the individuals are uninterrupted. The South African War Fund has taken over grant payments of the South African Veterans and spouses.

The work on the Constitution amendments will resume in the new financial year. More discussion is required on the organization on its direction and future role before the amendments to the Constitution of 2010 can be proposed. Thereafter a special meeting of branches/members will have to be called to ratify the amendments.

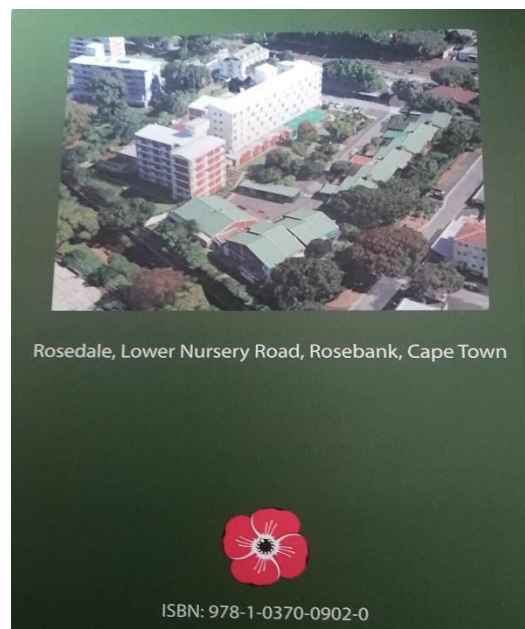
One may notice that the NEC post of Honorary Treasurer is vacant, with the retirement of Lgr Johnson in 2024. Currently the financial department is co-ordinated by a financial committee comprising 4 competent members with financial/business understanding chaired by the NVP. An honorary treasurer

has been earmarked to assume the role from 1 April 2025 on receipt of the independent auditor's report of the state of the finances to date.

Consolidation of Legion regalia with updated pricing has been with finalized. This will be managed by the head office going forward with stock and delivery problems hopefully being a thing of the past. This is primarily due to hands on management of this portfolio by a committee and the up-front funding by the Cape Town Branch. Branches are encouraged to work through their regional structure to procure items. The contact person at NHQ is the General Secretary, Enrique Forbes.

An updated price list of items to be carried by NHQ will be disseminated before the end of January.

The Cape Town Branch has recently generated a 100-page Branch history. The early events of the organization are highlighted as an introduction to the branch history and is a worthwhile read. The cost is R100 and orders can be made via the branch secretary, Lgr David Holmes on email address: david@salegion.co.za



One of the priorities of the organization is to get a professional consolidated website up and running, allowing all branches to tap into and submit articles to promote the organization and create sustained interest in the SA Legion. There are some branches doing phenomenal work in their regions and not getting enough national acknowledgement. There are too many fragmented information bulletins on the organization and a consolidated communication platform is essential to strengthen and elevate our organization as a whole.

A considerable effort and funding were expended by the Cape Town Branch to propose a development on Rosedale to create additional accommodation and administrative facilities which would also compliment the headquarters. Detailed plans have been produced and the proposed development would include a museum and conference facility. This was presented at the last Congress. Once the headquarters has settled in to the current facility, and the funding of the current HQ is clear, we can revisit the proposal of this project with a viable business plan.



The South African Legion

Cape Town Branch

1921-2021
A Century and Beyond

Marianne Gertenbach



Rosedale, Lower Nursery Road, Rosebank, Cape Town



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I look forward to this challenging year and am already encouraged by the support of the people in my environment. There is a lot of work ahead, but together with a positive attitude and dedication, we can continue this organization's success story.

Legion Greetings

Lgr Ray Nasset
(SA Legion - National Vice President)

BRANCH NEWS

BRAKPAN BRANCH

Legionnaire Dot Sherriff recently received the Legion's Distinguished Service Award from the Chairperson of the Brakpan Branch, Legionnaire Rees Davies. Lgr Sherriff has been a Legionnaire since 1965. She served in the Women's Auxiliary until it merged with the male division of the Brakpan Branch in 2011. She is the only Life Member in our branch. We are very proud of her — a true role model.

The branch also recently celebrated Lgr [Ms] Dot Sherriff's 92nd birthday. Congratulations, Dot!

CAPE TOWN BRANCH

The Dukes celebrate 169 years

The Cape Town Rifles (Dukes), now known as the Chief Langalibalele Rifles, is a reserve infantry regiment of the South African Army. Founded on 28 November 1855, it was the first volunteer unit in the Cape Colony. On Friday, 29 November, members gathered at Rosedale to mark the regiment's 169th anniversary, with Alan Brashaw, the long-serving chairman of the Association, recounting some of the organisation's colourful history.

Annual Dinner for Rosedale Residents

The annual dinner for residents at Rosedale on Saturday, 7 December, was well attended and, by all accounts, a fun affair.

Christmas Carols

There's nothing quite like a group of little ones performing well-known Christmas carols — which is exactly what the learners from Kaydee Educare Centre in Mowbray did on Tuesday, 10 December. The residents at Rosedale thoroughly enjoyed an hour-long performance, especially their rendition of Queen's 'We Will Rock You'. These pictures tell the story of a delightful morning's entertainment.



The Chairperson of the Brakpan Branch, Lgr Rees Davies, handed Ms. Dot Sheriff the South African Legion Distinguished Service Award at a recent branch meeting.



The 169th Birthday of the Cape Town Rifles (Dukes).



Left and below are scenes from the carols at Rosedale.





Scenes from the annual dinner for residents at Rosedale.



Echo Brass Ensemble

The Echo Brass Ensemble treated residents, their families, and friends to a concert on Reconciliation Day, Monday, 16 December 2024. In the shadow of Table Mountain, these six musicians and close friends entertained us with light classics and singalong carols appropriate for the season.

Get-Together

Ex-Rhodesian African Rifles combatant Peter Horsburgh and his late wife, Glenys, moved into Rosedale in March 2021, where they became active volunteers, both contributing to the smooth running of the social club's activities. Peter now lives with his daughter, Kathy Bluett, in England. They travelled to the Western Cape over the holiday period, staying at Rosedale, where they hosted a get-together, giving them the opportunity to catch up with old friends and family.

Rosedale Christmas Lunch

The Rosedale Social Centre took on the responsibility — and joy — of providing a sumptuous spread on Christmas Day. There was something for everyone to enjoy, especially when pudding time came around!

Walking the Walk

John Gandy certainly started something when he set off from Simon's Town two years ago, aiming to walk to Rosebank — a distance of 31km — and, in doing so, raise funds for Poppy Day. The exercise was repeated last year, leading to a substantial boost to the coffers. This time around, there were fewer walkers, but those who participated showed their mettle and attracted a generous sum in contributions. We applaud each and every one of you.

Birthday Party

Long-time resident John Gandy celebrated his birthday in the Rec Room at Rosedale during their Friday afternoon carpet bowls session. Abraham Ross and Marianne Minnaar joined in the fun.

Ex-Rhodesians

Needy ex-Rhodesians living in the Fish Hoek area were identified and, through the generosity of the Rhodesia Fund, treated to a morning tea party on Friday, 17 January. The event was hosted by Lgrs Peter Napier (Exco's Welfare), Glenn Bock, Beryl Lategan, Kevin Ashton (Exco's Chairperson), and John Dorrington.

DURBAN BRANCH

The SA Legion Durban Branch proudly attended the 125th commemoration service of the Battle of Spioenkop, actively assisting with the management of the wreath table to ensure a smooth and respectful ceremony. Wreaths were laid by various organisations in honour of those who lost their lives on the battlefield, paying tribute to their sacrifices. The event was graced by notable guests, including British soldiers, dignitaries such as the Mayor and the Indian Consul, as well as descendants



The Echo Brass Ensemble entertaining Rosedale residents.

Right: Visit by former Rhodesian Rifles member, Peter Horsburgh.



Above: Scenes from the Christmas lunch at Rosedale.



Above and left. Members that Walked the Walk.

Ex-Rhodesians residing in the Fish Hoek area were treated to a tea party.





Scenes from John Gandy's birthday party.





Scenes from the 125th Commemoration of the Battle of Spioenkop. In the photo left members of the Durban Branch is with the Indian Consul.



of Mahatma Gandhi and Winston Churchill, adding a profound sense of historical connection and international unity to the occasion.

PORT ELIZABETH BRANCH

After the hurly-burly of October and November in the veteran community, the quieter period of December and January is a slight anti-climax.

In December, we attended a local Christmas market where Lgr. Chris Papenphus manned a table selling general bric-a-brac associated with the SAL (such as poppy brooches) as well as various items made or donated by our members. The outcome was quite successful, with a significant sum raised for our Welfare Fund. Bravo Zulu, Chris!

In January, we attended the annual graveside remembrance service for James Dalton VC, a Rorke's Drift veteran, held on the anniversary of his death at a local Port Elizabeth cemetery. The service was well attended by both SAL personnel and MOTH, with all the relevant rituals observed.

SOUTH COAST BRANCH

The South Coast branch continues to struggle with numbers, but hopefully, this will change in 2025. Apart from this, there is nothing particularly newsworthy of inclusion.

COMMEMORATIONS

SA LEGION JOINS REMEMBRANCE EVENTS IN SPAIN

ALICANTE, SPAIN – The South African Legion (Europe Branch) has established a firm 'beachhead' in southeastern Spain, after Lgr Steve Moritz, who recently moved there from the UK, proudly represented the Legion on both November 10 (Remembrance Sunday), and November 11 (Armistice Day) in Spain.

On November 10, Lgr Steve and his wife Shirly attended the annual Remembrance Sunday service, hosted by the local branch of the Royal Navy Association in Mil Palmeras Church in Pilar de la Horada, south of Alicante.

The service was so well attended by locals and expats, that the small church provided outside seating. As well as the customary two minute's silence, the service also paused to honour those affected by the DANA (*Depresión Aislada en Niveles Altos*) storm that devastated Valencia in late October, which cost more than 200 people their lives, and left a swath of destruction in its wake.

Wreaths and crosses were then placed in the adjacent Garden of Remembrance.

On Armistice Day on 11 November, Lgr Steve represented the SA Legion once again at an event hosted by the Royal British Legion's Torrevieja Branch (BR3456). The service observed the Act Of



Annual graveside remembrance service for James Dalton VC, a Rorke's Drift veteran.





Scenes from the Remembrance Day Service in the South-East of Spain.



Remembrance, and here also, locals and expats paused to honour and remember the victims of the DANA – an event that is still very raw in the community's memory.

It also proved a great opportunity to network and strengthen contact with fellow veterans, so we're sure to get more dispatches from Lgr Steve in España.

OTHER STORIES

HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL INAUGURATES NEW MEMORIAL IN CAPE TOWN

HRH The Princess Royal, President of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, formally opens the new Cape Town Labour Corps Memorial

Guests from South Africa and beyond gathered to honour the fallen

The first permanent redress tribute by the CWGC, part of its commitment to ensure all dead of the two World Wars are commemorated equally

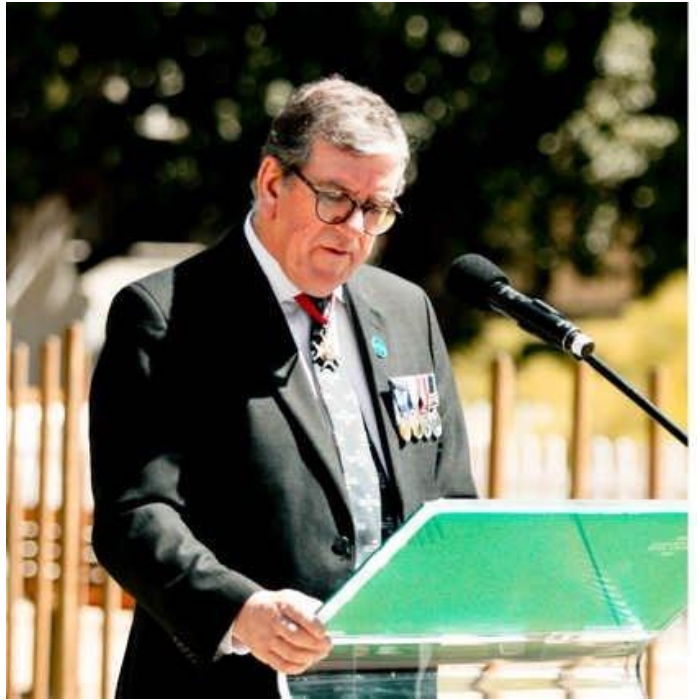
22 JANUARY 2025, Cape Town: A new Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) memorial, which honours the contribution of South African military labourers of the First World War, has been inaugurated by HRH The Princess Royal today.

The new Cape Town Labour Corps Memorial is situated in the Company's Garden, Cape Town, near Cape Town's prominent cultural landmarks. As a site of remembrance, it addresses past inequalities in commemoration.

Retired teacher Elliot Malunga Delihlazo is the great nephew of Bhesengile Delihlazo, now commemorated on the memorial. He said: *"It makes us proud really, that at last, we can be one of the families that people can talk about in the due course of history. That we have made a mark, not just any mark, but an indelible mark"*

Director General of the CWGC, Claire Horton CBE, said: *"We are deeply honoured and grateful to our President for joining us in unveiling this truly remarkable memorial today, in the presence of descendants whose relatives put their lives on the line for the freedoms we all enjoy today. This landmark memorial, designed and built collaboratively in South Africa, testifies to our shared global history and responsibility to honour all those who gave their lives in service. It acts as a poignant tribute to the predominantly black South Africans who fought in Africa during the First World War and who were not commemorated at the time. The careful and deliberate design of this new memorial offers visitors the space to contemplate the scale of loss of military labourers who gave their lives - ensuring their contribution to the war effort is never forgotten."*

The Mayor of Cape Town Mayor, Geordin Hill-Lewis, said: *"We are proud to honour, through this Cape Town Labour Corps Memorial, more than 1700 servicemen who made the ultimate contribution in the fight against tyranny more than a century ago. This memorial is a wonderful tribute to black South African servicemen who perished in the First World War, and whose stories were often"*



Scenes from the unveiling of the Cape Town Labour Corps Memorial in Cape Town by HRH Princess Royal.



overlooked in the telling of that history. I can think of no better place to remember their contribution than right here in our beautiful and much-loved Company's Garden in the heart of the Mother City."

The story of the memorial

It is now known that the (then) Imperial War Graves Commission, alongside colonial administrations, failed to honour at least 100,000 African and Indian service personnel with the same recognition given to Europeans. The landmark new memorial stands as a tribute to the long-overlooked contributions of South Africa's military labourers during the First World War. It uses contemporary design to share a fuller, inclusive historical narrative of global conflict.

Zweletu Hlakula, a bank manager in Port St Johns, Eastern Cape, is the great grandson of Job Hlakula who was part of the Labour Corps and who is commemorated on the new memorial. He said: *"We are very proud of him. We even rejoice when we talk about Job, it's a pride that we've got in our name, for him to be remembered, for him to be in the history of our South Africa, that makes us very humble."*

The new CWGC site welcomes South Africans and international visitors to pause, reflect and honour these individuals who are, at last, now rightfully commemorated.

Integral to the design is a specially commissioned poem and epitaph, which was part of a joint project between the CWGC and the Royal Society of Literature. Poets Koleka Putuma and Daljit Nagra collaborated on the verse, which expresses the sentiment of loss and retrospective recognition in the context of modern-day South Africa.

Wording from this new poem, *your legacies are preserved here*, has been etched on to the new memorial.

Contacts

South Africa: Kalay Maistry or Ima Peter, TeamCWGC@razorpr.co.za + 0824 190 170 ***Courtesy the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.***

WINSTON'S BOY

By late December in Anchorage, Alaska, the streets are sheeted in bumpy ice with crusts of snow mounding at the road shoulders. It made for tricky driving and tiring night shifts at work.

I was eager to fall asleep, glad to be almost home. Just before turning off the main road for the final blocks to home - I saw the body.

The little dog was at the edge of the street and appeared undamaged except for the smallest bit of dried blood on his nose. Undoubtedly, he'd been hit by a car and there his life had ended. His coat was a lovely cinnamon with thick rich fur. I checked the tag on his collar and learned that "Winston" had only been a couple of blocks from home when he died. He was small enough that I could have picked him up, but something made me hesitate and instead I left him there and drove alone to the address inscribed on the tag.

The front yard of the house had sleds and balls and assorted bright plastic toys. I went past these things with a lowered head, held my breath while I knocked, and sighed with relief when no young faces, nor any adults, came to the door. I thought about leaving a note, but again hesitated, not knowing what to write. How could a note let the parents know what had happened and yet not tell the children?

Winston's tag had the phone number as well, so in the end, I simply left a message on the owners' answering machine, giving my name and number, asking that they call me about their dog. Before going to bed, I called the animal shelter and asked that they pick up the body.

The sad situation was gone from my mind as I awoke and went back to work, but when I came home again, there were messages waiting on the answering machine. A young boy was calling over and over, wanting to know if I had a dog.

Yes, I had a dog. Jack was a large, strikingly beautiful Golden Retriever, feathered in every shade of yellow from the palest silvery gild to a honey red as burnished as Winston's coat. With the dawning realization that the family must have called the shelter, I felt my mind lurch. Suppose the boy thought that I was the one who had hit his dog? I called him back with reluctance, dreading talking about his loss at all, hesitant to see his sorrow.

His voice sounded as shaky as I felt. "I was wondering if you have a dog," he asked. "And if so, if I could give Winston's Christmas presents... to your dog?"

Jack and I went over right away. The boy was older than I thought he'd be, maybe ten or eleven and he was alone at home. With the friendly enthusiasm typical of his breed, Jack went right up and plunged his face into the large grocery bag the boy was holding. Wrapped present after wrapped present came up, clasped gently in Jack's jaws. Dog treats, a rawhide chew toy, a ball. With tears on his cheeks, the boy helped Jack pull the paper off each gift and inspect them one by one.

I don't know if the boy told me his name. I couldn't have remembered, could hardly trust my voice not to crack when I thanked him and drove Jack home with his new belongings.

That boy's profound sense of Christmas, wanting to give gifts in his grief, was an experience to keep in the heart forever and so, while it was a brief encounter and I was sad for his loss, always treasure that time I had with Winston's boy. *Submitted by Lgr Rick Andries.*

OBITUARIES

East London

Lgr Sean Harrington.



The Cape Town International Tattoo

TICKETS SALES ARE
OPEN

19-22 MARCH 2025

CAPE-TOWN-TATTOO.CO.ZA



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD



SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION



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SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION STRUCTURE

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SOUTH AFRICAN LEGION,

nsadmin@salegion.org

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- Benoni
- Bloemfontein
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- Cape Town
- Johannesburg - Central
- Witwatersrand
- Durban
- East London
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- North Coast
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