

# BATTLEDRESS

# SHELLHOLE



*We Will Remember Them...*

CENTRAL CIRCLE, FISH HOEK

Email [battledress.shellhole@gmail.com](mailto:battledress.shellhole@gmail.com)



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## BATTLECRY 2026 BUMPER NEWSLETTER

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Greetings from your Ragbill

The year has gotten off to a an explosive start. Each time we hope the new year will be more peaceful than the last, but alas, a new year has brought a new war. Some folks may not know this, but the MOTH order was created in the hopes that one day it would have no need to exist anymore, but as long as there are wars and conflicts there will be sons and daughters fighting them. We hope and pray they will come home safely, but those that don't, will not be forgotten, because, we will remember them.



May all soldiers return home.

# Sunset Calls to Service



Fortunately no Moths have answered the Sunset Call at the time of this publication.

However On behalf of the Shellhole, we extend our sincere condolences to Moth Leonard Marais on the loss of his Sister Debbie on 17 Feb and Moth Ricky's family on their loss on Sunday 22 Feb.

We also wish to remember Ellie Drayton, spouse of the late Moth Peter Drayton. She joined her husband on the 4th of February. Ellie also used to be the Quartermaster for the Dugout and Moth Peter served on the Dugout Top Table as the Provincial Adj. We remember Ellie for her playful side at the "Back of the line" concerts that Battledress took part in.

On the 25th of February Donald Oliver who was a Moth Member of Battledress for about 12 years and then he resigned in 2023 due to health reasons answered the Sunset Call. He relocated back to the UK to be with his wife Paquitta.

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## WIDOWS NEWS

All Moth Widows are doing well! Bless them and big thanks to Vanessa, Ricky and Cheryl for faithfully delivering their much loved magazines to them.



## INFIRMARY



Moth Bert Sachse continues to spend his time beating the hell out of cancer. We are all in his corner cheering him on.

Please always keep Moth Richard Evans in your thoughts. We feel his presence even when he is not with us at the shellhole and continues to be a beloved and valued member.

Please keep Moths Vin York and Preston Barnard in your thoughts as they continue to fight the challenges that are being thrust upon them. We are all rooting for them.

## ON THE MEND



The following Moth and Moth Family members are on the road to recovery

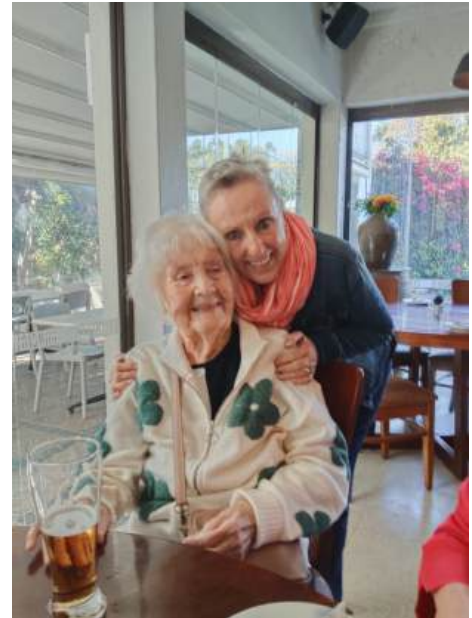
Our beloved Playbill, Moth Coral-Ann, recently was very sick for quite a while but she has thankfully recovered and is making her presence known with her usual good humor and organizing of great events.

## OTHER WELFARE NEWS



Moth Vanessa Chambers, MSS Helen de Wet and POB Moth Ricky de Wet recently went to visit our beloved Ena. The batteldress WW2 warrior is looking as spry as ever as she prepares to PARTY HARD at her 101st birthday like its 1945 as we will see on the next page...





Have you ever seen a better looking 101 year old? Moth Ena is our greatest treasure who keeps on giving. I hope when I turn 101 I can be as dignified and fun loving as her and be blessed with such great friends. Thank you Moth Ricky and MSS Helen De Wet, Moth Vanessa Chambers and Sue Bell. Happy Birthday Ena, we love you!

# Aérospatiale ALOUETTE III

The Aérospatiale Alouette III SA 316B is a single-engine, light utility helicopter developed by Sud Aviation and later manufactured by Aérospatiale of France. A successor to the Alouette II being larger and having more seating, it was originally powered by a Turbomeca Artouste IIIB turboshaft engine.

Recognised for its mountain rescue capabilities and adaptability, the first version the SE 3160 prototype flew on 28 February 1959.

Production of the SA 316A began in 1961 and the type remained in production until the early 1980's when the main production line in France was closed down.

However, HAL of India continues to licence-build Alouette IIIs as the Chetak. Versions of the Alouette III were also either licence-built or assembled by IAR in Romania (as the IAR 316), F+W Emmen in Switzerland, and by Fokker and Lichtwerk in the Netherlands.



Rhodesian SAS Troopers alongside an Alouette III Helicopter



Alouette III (French for "Lark")

On 28 February 1959, the first prototype SE 3160 performed its maiden flight, piloted by French aviator Jean Boulet.

Shortly thereafter, the SE 3160 would become more commonly known as the Alouette III. During its flight test programme, the prototype demonstrated its high altitude capabilities on several occasions; in June 1959, it landed at an altitude of over 4,000 metres in the Mont Blanc mountain range and, during October 1960, it was able to achieve the same feat at an altitude more than 6,000 metres in the Himalayas.

During these attempts, it was flown by Jean Boulet, who was accompanied by a pair of passengers and 250 kg of equipment.



Rhodesian Heat

## RHODESIA

The nation of Rhodesia emerged as a prolific user of both the Alouette II and its enlarged sibling, the Alouette III. Early operations were flown with an emphasis on its use by the Rhodesian Army and British South Africa Police, including paramilitary and aerial reconnaissance operations. Throughout the 1960s, the type progressively spread into additional roles, including aerial supply, casualty evacuation, communications relays, and troop-transports.

Rhodesian aerial operations would typically involve flying under relatively high and hot conditions, which reduced the efficiency of aircraft in general; however, the Alouette II proved to be both hardy and relatively resistant to battle damage. In order to extend the inadequate range of the type, fuel caches were strategically deployed across the country to be used for refuelling purposes.



Bottoms up! (Commander Julie Denham said takeoffs were "wonderful.")

At its peak, No. 7 Squadron of the Rhodesian Air Force operated a force of 34 Alouette IIIs, which would normally operate in conjunction with a smaller number of Alouette IIs. They played a major part in the Rhodesian Forces' Fireforce doctrine, in which they would rapidly deploy ground troops, function as aerial observation and command posts, and provide mobile fire support as armed gunships. In order to improve performance, Rhodesia's Alouette fleet was subject to extensive modifications during its service life, including changes to their refueling apparatus, gun sights, and cabin fittings, along with the installation of additional armouring and armaments.

Over time, the Rhodesian Security Forces developed an innovative deployment tactic of rapidly encircling and enveloping enemies, known as the Fireforce, for which the Alouette II was a core component. The quick-reaction Fireforce battalions were typically centred at Centenary and Mount Darwin; however, a deliberate emphasis was placed on locating both rotorcraft and troops as close to a current or anticipated theatre of operations as would be feasibly possible.

Our own Commander Moth Julie Denham was onboard this fine bird of prey on occasion. Be sure to ask her about takeoffs...she loved them!

## Key Statistics (SA 316B Variant):

Role: Light utility helicopter  
Crew: 2 (Pilot and Co-pilot/Observer)  
Capacity: Up to 5 passengers or 2 stretchers  
Engine: 1x Turbomeca Artouste IIIB turboshaft (649 kW/ 870 hp derated to 425 kW/570 hp)  
Maximum Speed: 210 km/h (130 mph/110 knots)  
Cruise Speed: 185 km/h (115 mph/100 knots)  
Range: Approx. 540 km (335 miles)  
Endurance: ~2h 45min (up to 3-4 hours with extra fuel)  
Service Ceiling: 6,500 meters (21,325 ft)  
Empty Weight: ~1,100 kg  
Maximum Takeoff Weight: 2,200 kg  
Main Rotor Diameter: 11.02 meters  
Length: 10.03 meters (fuselage)

## Performance & Features

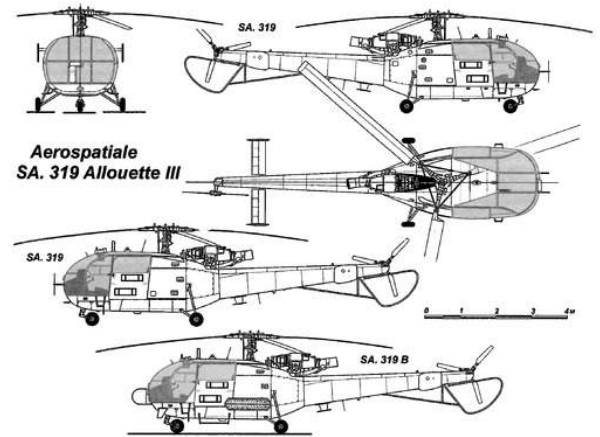
Hover Capability: At MTOW, it hovers in ground effect at roughly 4,250 meters.

Payload: Can carry up to 750 kg on its barycentric hook.

Combat Capabilities: Often fitted with a 20mm autocannon, machine guns, or anti-tank missiles, particularly in the Rhodesian and South African conflicts.

License Production: Produced under license in India as the HAL Chetak, in Romania as the IAR 316, and in Switzerland.

Total Production: Over 2,000 units were built.



Predator of the Skies



A good looking bird!

# Border Boys Parade at Dawn Patrol



An incredible turnout for the 2026 Border Boys parade on the 1st of Feb at the Dawn Patrol shellhole. The pictures speak for themselves regarding the turnout. A beautiful sight and a fitting tribute to a conflict that must never be forgotten.

Thank you to Gavin Withers for the amazing photography.



So many great pictures...not enough room for all captions. We can see the proud band, the famed Moths (spot The Commander!) The MMA were out in full force and our beloved beautiful Mothwa joined in numbers! (Following page)





Special mention must always be made for the Sea Cadets who joined on that day. A parade would just not be the same without them.



Our own Padre Errol Sadler conducting the service.



Images of wreath laying from Moth John Lamont, Moth Renee Rossi and POB Moth Ricky De Wet



The Honour Guard

# SAS President Kruger Memorial Service and Wreath Laying Ceremony



Battledress attended the annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the At SA Legion Rosedale on 15th February. The talks included harrowing first person accounts of the incident and a moving ceremony. Special mention was made over the attendance of Moth Preston Barnard and we thank Moth Coral-Ann for her generous work in ensuring he could attend. It was a proud moment for Battledress.



Moth Preston, Honoured.



Joining together in song.



Friends united through service.



A Deputy, a Commander, a Provincial Old Bill and a Provincial Sergeant Major



POB Ricky De Wet and Moth John Lamont, both missing the open seas.



The Sea Cadets, sharp as always.

# THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF POB AND GOOSE

A look into the life of a Provincial Old Bill and his handler. ;)



The POB with some random sports fan...the guy seemed to know a about rugby...



The secret to his success...the luck of the Irish!



POB Ricky receiving an award from the SA Legion for the Moths successful efforts in fundraising on Poppy Day



MSS Helen recently was awarded the very rare "O" Badge. (Outstanding) the highest accolade a non-Moth can receive. This was for all her incredible and selfless welfare work and she is without a doubt deserving of it.



What a privilege, invited to medal parade for Captain Paul Jacobs.



Representing Battledress at Propatria

# SATS General Botha Memorial Service and Wreath laying



Battledress attending faithfully.

Battledress attended the Memorial to former cadets of the South African Training Ship General Botha who lost their lives in World War II and other conflicts in the service of their country and liberation

The service was held on Jubilee Square, Simon's Town on March the 15th. It was a great atmosphere with a rousing band and solid attendance.



Moth Robbie Abrahamse paying respects.



Commander Julie in a solemn moment.



Moth John Lamont. Always faithful.



Just Nuisance seemed proudly on alert that day.



The wreaths looked beautiful.

# CAESAR

Dogs were employed in various roles during the First World War, and almost all nations involved had use for these loyal and selfless animals. They served as mascots to particular units, providing companionship and helping boost morale. There were also practical reasons why they were utilised. Dogs could cover ground on almost any terrain and were dependable message carriers, faster than any human runner, and more discreet. They were also used as guards and sentries and also for scouting missions, as their keen sense of smell could allow them to signal possible enemy approaches and hideouts much more accurately than their human counterparts. Some were pack dogs, who pulled guns along on carts and carried machine guns and ammunition. Dogs also played a huge part in search and rescue, and this is what Caesar would be trained for.

Caesar and his handler, Rifleman Thomas Samuel Tooman took part in the Battalion's parade up Auckland's Queen Street in 1916 before they embarked for Egypt on H.M.N.Z.T. 43, the 'Mokoia' which arrived in Egypt in February 1916. Caesar was wearing his studded leather collar which is in the museum collections, Caesar is also spelled incorrectly on the name badge! His name, spelled correctly, was also printed prominently in the 'Mokoian', the troopship magazine of the voyage.



His stylish collar.

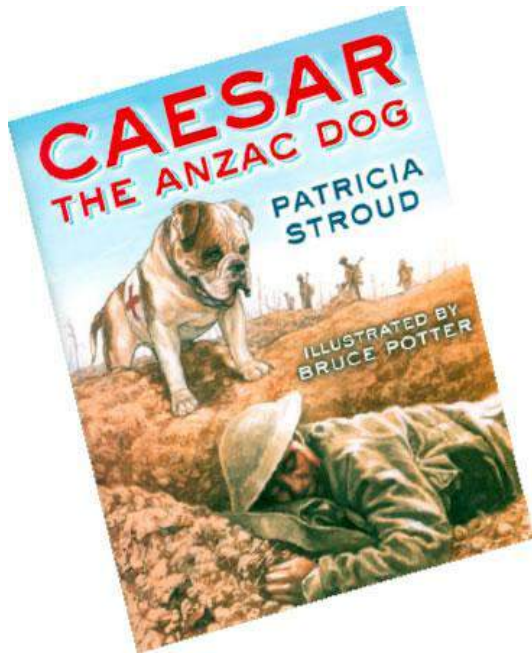


Loved by the troops.



Good boy Caesar (Incorrectly spelt Ceaser again.)

The dogs had harnesses which were equipped with medical supplies like bandages, water and also writing materials. If a soldier was lightly injured, he could use the bandages to patch himself up and the dog would guide him back to the trenches and if unable to move but conscious, he could write of anything that that might hamper the rescuers, such as enemies nearby or unexploded shells. Caesar was also trained to take a piece of a soldier's kit if he was unconscious, to bring back to show the rescue party, such as a cap or piece of torn clothing as evidence.



After intensive training, Caesar left Egypt and embarked for France and would later head for a scene of utter devastation: The Somme. This was one of many costly battles that New Zealanders were involved in, during the Western Front Campaign. There were many Red Cross dogs kept at the New Zealand Headquarters and there were also human members of the Red Cross. Many were utilised as stretcher bearers. Injured soldiers would be sent to the nearest Casualty Clearing Station, where doctors and nurses would be on hand to help patch them up as best they could.

The Somme was a world away from Egypt, muddy, barbed wire scattered about and full of craters left by shells, it was difficult terrain. Especially for a dog with short legs, like a bulldog!

Good reading.



An Australian War Memorial.

Caesar was personally responsible for locating many men who were wounded on the Somme battlefield, many of who would not have survived without the brave bulldogs help.

Caesar was killed in action and was found in No Man's Land, shot presumably by a sniper alongside a soldier who had died with his hand resting on Caesar's head. Most likely, Caesar had come across the wounded man and they had died together.

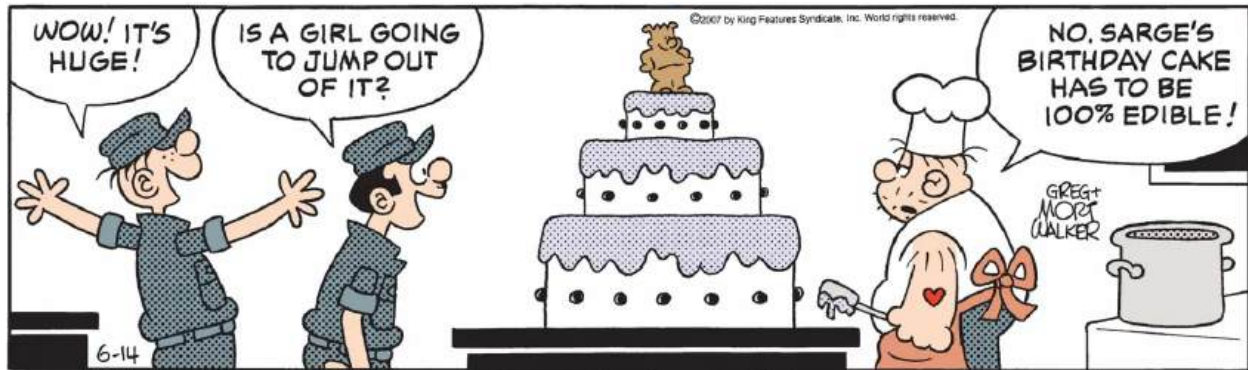
Caesar was buried with the soldier he had found and with others, near the Casualty Clearing Station. Rifleman Tooman was understandably very upset, but went on. After being severely gassed in battle, he recovered with the help of Kath, a Volunteer Aid Detachment Nurse who he had met in France, who he later married. They hung a portrait of Caesar in their dining room back when they returned to New Zealand.

Lest we forget the great contribution that Caesar and other animals played in the story of the First World War, and may we remember all the animals that have served in conflicts around the world. As London's Hyde Park Animals in War Memorial states:

"They had no choice"

*Caesar the Anzac dog. Auckland War Memorial Museum - Tāmaki Paenga Hira. First published: 29 November 2016. Updated: 18 February 2022.*

# THE BIG BIRTHDAY BACKLOG!



## DECEMBER

- 9 December Moth Christo Nel
- 14 December Spouse Erna Sadler
- 17 December Moth Craig Boucher
- 18 December Spouse Danie de Kock
- 19 December Moth Alan Green
- 24 December FOFR Bridget Coney
- 26 December Widow Wendy Kent
- 28 December Moth Rinaldo 'Pikkie' Pikker **MILESTONE!!**

## JANUARY

- 1 January Moth John Lamont
- 4 January Spouse Jenni Rother Weston
- 5 January Moth Neil Bright
- 6 January Moth Mike Wolmarans
- 6 January FOFR Greg Haralambous
- 7 January Spouse Cheryl Howie
- 10 January Moth Ricky De Wet
- 18 January Moth Eric Staine
- 21 January Moth Leon Haralambous
- 27 January Spouse Sue Bell

## FEBRUARY

- 4 February Moth Tony Diessel
- 5 February Widow Lynne Laver
- 12 February Spouse Ros Barnett
- 24 February Spouse Jennifer Maree





## MARCH

5	March	Moth Minnaar van der Merwe
6	March	Moth Mark Wiley
10	March	FOFR Robert (Chockie) Herring
14	March	Moth Eric Fraser
15	March	Spouse Meggan Groom
26	March	Moth Glyn Murrell
27	March	Widow Carol Parish
28	March	MSS Helen De Wet

## APRIL

2	April	Moth Andy Howie
6	April	Moth Cindy de Kock
8	April	Moth Darren Geldard MILESTONE 60!!!
9	April	FOFR Michelle Thompson
12	April	FOFR Roger Farmer MILESTONE 80!!!
17	April	Spouse Colleen Grove
8	April	Moth Leonard Marais
18	April	Moth Leon Maree
20	April	Moth Patrick O'Reilly
26	April	Spouse Tracey O'Reilly
27	April	FOFR Theo van de Merwe
27	April	Widow Marilyn Maloney
29	April	Moth Ena Burnett (101!!!)
29	April	Moth Keith Galvin

## MAY

8	May	Moth Coral-Ann Viviers
8	May	Spouse Sonia Hopfeldt
15	May	Spouse Henry Visser
20	May	Moth Preston Barnard
24	May	Moth Vince York



**LORD ALBERT'S  
WORDS OF BRITISH WIT:**

"I read that during the war the English referred to Adolf Hilter as "badger man," although it might have said bad German"

"I used to live next to a farm and every time I passed the cows in the field I used to inexplicably shout abuse at them. Turns out I'm dairy intolerant."



**GUESS THE MEMBER  
ANSWER:**

If good looks alone were not enough to tip you off, this was Robbie and Donna Abrahamse!



**GUESS THE MEMBER  
WIN A DRINK!**

Who is this strapping young serviceman? Answer before the next issue and your Ragbill will buy you a drink!



# JOKER DRAW!



The new Joker Draw is going great and the numbers are climbing!! The joker draw now takes place TWICE a month and now includes -free- tickets starting with R20 purchases and upwards. The more tickets you buy, the more free chances you get to win big! The next draw is on Friday May 22nd.



Just a couple of jokers.



## BATTLEDRESS DARTS

We have a new dartboard in the founders room, it's been a huge hit and really adds to the fun. Be sure to check it out and pretend the Deputy Commander is the bullseye!



On Wednesdays and Saturdays join us in the founders room for Happy Hour. (5-6pm.) A great selection of liquid refreshments at special prices just for you!

## The Moth Market

The Moth Market remains as popular as ever. Some amazing finds to be had at bargain prices. Also be sure to sample the bacon and egg rolls supplied by our Battle Axes. They are so good they literally bring people in from the surrounding area to have a bite to eat. A bargain at R30 and they go fast! To accompany your breakfast rolls, we have coffee, tea and hot chocolate as well as biscuits. Fuel for bargain hunting. Always on the first Saturday of every 2nd month. Reminders will be found here and in the area of Battledress.



Please consider donating any unwanted goods to the Moth Table. All will be gratefully accepted.

Join us for an awesome fun filled night of music, laughs and friendship at the Battledress Music Quiz!

Contact Coral-Ann on 076 682 2244 to book a table

**MUSIC QUIZ NIGHT!**

**Venue:** Battledress Shellhole (MOTH Hall, Central Circle, Fish Hoek)

**Date:** Friday, 08 May 2026

**Quiz Starts:** 19h00

**Entry Fee:** R10 per person

**Food Available**  
Chicken & Beef Burgers  
From 18h00  
Only R35 each!

**What to Expect:**

- A mix of music across the decades
- Artists, albums, lyrics & more
- Fun, friendly & competitive vibes!

Bring your friends, form a team, and test your music knowledge!

**All are welcome – don't miss out!**

K.C.C. M.H. K.C.C. M.H.

## Snowball lucky draw



Saturdays @ 4pm

Join us at the Shellhole on Saturdays @ 4pm for our Snowball Lucky Draw which kicks off this month. Draw will start @ R100 and will be topped up weekly with R50. You have to be present to win otherwise the prize is carried forward.

# Upcoming Moth Events

7 May Moth Year 99

8 May Music Quiz at Battledress

May 9th Restarted Snowball Draw

16 May Dukes Luncheon at Rosedale (Armed Forces Day)

17th May Jan Smuts Remembrance at Riebeek Wes

31st May Red Barn Market Day

## FOUNDERS ROOM HOURS

Wednesday 17:00 - 22:00

Friday 17:00 - 23:00

Saturday 14:00- 23:00

Public Holidays 14:00 - 22:00

Founders room hours will be adjusted for sporting events as per the authority of the exco committee and bar management.

Thats it for this super bumper issue.  
As always we wish you all the best for you and your loved ones and hope to see you soon!



Best wishes,

**MIKE**

Battlecry! Rag Bill

Moth Mike Wolmarans

Email: [battledressragbill@gmail.com](mailto:battledressragbill@gmail.com)

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