

BATTLEDRESS

SHELLHOLE



We Will Remember Them...

CENTRAL CIRCLE, FISH HOEK

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BATTLECRY 2026 NEW YEAR RETROSPECTIVE

Greetings from your Ragbill

A new dawn awaits us in 2026. 2025 was an eventful year to be sure, one which we all endured together in the spirit of the order. Now once again we face a new year, with new possibilities and challenges which we shall face together as comrades in our order, the best veterans order...The MOTHS!

Let us always take the time in our very busy schedules to never forget those friends and loved ones who were called to higher service this past year. We Will Remember Them.



A new dawn on the battlefields of this world, our homes and hearts.

Sunset Calls to Service



We are fortunate that none of our members have decided to make the journey to higher service without us during these past months. However we would like to acknowledge two recent passings within the order.

Old Bill Moth Leon Van Der Westhuizen of Bomb Alley Shellhole journeyed onward to Higher Command on 21 December 2025. A big man with an even bigger heart. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and Bomb Alley. He will be sorely missed.

Moth George Frederick 'Gericke' Vercuil of Weskus Quartel Shellhole passed to Higher Command on 28 January 2026. Intervention from POB Ricky de Wet enabled him to receive his tin hat. It was his great desire to become a Moth and he will be one for eternity.

Our sincere condolences to wife Petro and children Annelle, Doret, Julia and Edericka.
He joined the Order on 02 December 2025.

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



Our favorite gentleman Bert Sachse' is too tough to be put down by chemo or cancer. We are grateful, but hold him in our thoughts all the same. He will hear more results soon.

Please always keep Moth Richard Evans in your thoughts. We could not do without his good humor.

Moth Preston Barnard needs special mention, valiant in the face of adversity, he is as faithful in his attendance as ever.

FOFR John Lewis is undergoing some tests, we are keeping him in our thoughts.

OTHER WELFARE NEWS

Moth Vanessa Chambers has really been bringing joy to our beloved Moth Ena with regular visits from friends. As she nears her one hundred and first year on this earth, she is looking as spry as ever and making new memories with good comrades.

ON THE MEND



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

Meggan Groom, the ever-patient and ever lovable wife of our Adjutant has had some downtime recently, but is recovering and doing better.

Moth Vin York is once again ready to take on the world in a dapper fashion.

Moth Chris Smith visited the hospital recently and got so comfortable he spent a few days there. He is out now.

Colleen, wife of Moth Donald Grove got tired of her old knee and decided she wants a new one. We hope her appointment with the specialist went well.

Moth Vanessa Chambers and MSS Helen "Goose" de Wet fought the lurgy and came out swinging.

Moth Richard Evans spent some time in hospital, but it was nothing he could not handle.



Movember raised R1 330.00! Thanks so much to Moth Vansessa Chambers, Moth Leon Haralambous and all those who helped support this worthy cause. Proceeds will be assisting the Tygerberg Hospital. Much appreciated!



MOVEMBER

THE M2 **FLAMETHROWER!**

Fire is known as an equalizer. Since its discovery by our ancient ancestors, mankind has sought to use and control it. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that we made early work at militarizing fire but it would not be until World War I that the modern concept of a military flamethrower made its debut. Created and developed by German Richard Fiedler in 1901, the Flammenwerfer would not see large-scale action until the Battle of Verdun in 1916. This weapon could spray fire at a distance of up to 120 feet and was so horrible that an anonymous French officer at the time described it as "something too terrible for words." Those early flamethrowers were bulky, requiring two-man teams to manage. The U.S. military would improve upon the design and function with the introduction of the M1 in 1942 followed by the more refined M2 in 1944.



Trick your friends! Fun at parties!

It allows a particularly high firepower to be obtained in the context of reducing an isolated insulated resistance in a bunker or in any other enclosed space. The user carried three bottles on his back (two 2-gallon gas oil bottles each and a half-gallon nitrogen bottle) and carried a pistol in his hands. The total weight of the flamethrower M2 in combat order is just over 30 kilograms.



Convenient storage.

The flamethrower model M2 allows to reach a target at a distance of 20 meters for 7 seconds. The weak point of such an armament lies in the fact that the shooter must expose himself during the projection of the flames. It is also very vulnerable during combat phases because it is encumbered by this equipment which can also threaten the soldiers in the vicinity in case of explosion of the bottles.



A hot time in the old bunker tonight.

The M2 entered the war late but was extremely useful to Army soldiers and Marines in combating entrenched Japanese forces. The Japanese had proven adept at constructing bunkers, pillboxes, and tunnel fortifications that were resistant to normal weapons during the Pacific campaign. To get at these enemy positions, soldiers and marines equipped with M2s would be called in to sanitize the location. The fearsome power of the M2 flamethrower was so infamous that Japanese defenders chose to kill themselves rather than be burned alive

The development of tanks equipped with flamethrowers such as the Churchill Crocodile caused a gradual withdrawal of this weaponry on the battlefield. They are, however, very useful in the Pacific because of the tactics of using caches to excess by the Japanese. The M2 Flamethrower was used until the end of the Second World War and especially during the Battle of Normandy.



Fortunately our crocodiles have not figured out how to use flamethrowers.....yet.



Hey buddy, got a light?

Those soldiers that went into battle with the M2 had a terrifying weapon to use, but one that also made them targets for enemy snipers. A single bullet could ignite their fuel tanks causing an explosion that would kill them and anyone else nearby. Even with these fears, the M2 Flamethrower was used to great effect in the island-hopping strategy by many brave servicemen. This is exemplified by Cpl. Hershel "Wood" Williams on February 23, 1945, when, as dictated in his Medal of Honor citation, "daringly mounted a pillbox to insert the nozzle of his flame thrower through the air vent, kill the occupants and silence the gun; on another he grimly charged the enemy riflemen who attempted to stop him with bayonets and destroyed them with a burst of flame from his weapon."

Battledress Remembrance Day and Service



A moment that will forever be in my heart was when I got to play my part in hosting the Remembrance Day Parade. I was deeply honored for the opportunity and tried my very best not to show how nervous I was. Well done to everyone who took part and supported. It was a great day.



Red Barn at the muster.



Mechanised unit leads the parade.



Moths at the ready.



Colors held high.



The band loud and proud.



An eternal flame.



The Commander speaks.



The deputy reads the roll for those who did not come home.



The POB recites the tenets.



Brothers in arms.



Moth Salute!



Discipline and dignity.

Cape Town Remembrance Day and Service



A strong presence of Moths and veterans braved the sweltering heat on the 9th of November to join the well attended and well organised Remembrance Parade. A stunning arrangement of wreaths and generous catering on behalf of the city helped to reflect on the sacrifices made by our selfless comrades from all walks of life.



Beautiful wreaths...



Faithful Moth Alan doing us proud as always.



The most I've ever seen...



Ready to go.



The band was magnificent.



Banners up!



Moths on parade.

CHRISTMAS CHEER

The Shellhole was literally transformed into a Winter Wonderland thanks to the combined efforts of the Battleaxes and Nicole's direction. A true team effort that made for an unforgettable day filled with festivities, good food, prizes and good cheer. Thank you all so much for your amazing work, it would not be Christmas without it.



The hall was beautiful.



I thought it was a real reindeer!



Queen of the Snows, Nicole



The amazing staff who took care of us so well.



So festive!



Commanders love Christmas.



The settings were amazing as well.



Nicole keeping us entertained.



Waiting patiently for ice-cream.



Wonderful attendance.

MOTHS NEW YEARS 2025-2026

Battledress once again celebrated the turning of the year with friendship, laughter and love. A great way to start this new chapter in our order,



Old Bill Johann Strydom from Coalbox MkII Shellhole in Pretoria receiving a Battledress Pennant...



...and then paying a fine for no tin hat.



Pikkie was really grateful for his milestone birthday certificate!



Our raffle winners



A beautiful couple

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF POB AND GOOSE

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



It's a little known fact that Santa is a pool fiend.



As well as a bagpipe technician.



Commanders in their natural habitat: Christmas Cheer.



Ricky said this guy was a really big fan of Rugby.



Dawn Patrol clearly parties hard at Christmas!



Paying respect to the Battle of Blouberg in Melkbosstrand.



Moth Bill Quinn 90th Birthday Marshall Smuts Shellhole

BAMSE

Bamse the St Bernard is being remembered for his heroic service in the Second World War.

The Norwegian dog not only saved the lives of sailors, he also broke up fights between the men and made sure they never missed a curfew by fetching them from the pub.

He belonged to the captain of the Norwegian fighting ship Thorod, which escaped to the UK after the occupation of Norway in 1940.

Bamse was bought in Oslo, Norway, by Captain Erling Hafto, the master of the Norwegian whale-catcher Thorodd, and he was taken to sea from an early age. In her childhood memories of pre-war Honningsvåg, Captain Hafto's daughter Vigdis remembers Bamse as a very kind dog that would look after the children while they were playing.

Bamse was able to instantly recognise when a sailor was missing from the ship – and even went on to save two members of the crew. He protected one from an attack by a knifeman, while the other had fallen overboard and Bamse dragged him back to shore. As a reward, he was inducted onto the Thorod as an official crew member in 1940.

The St Bernard was also known for breaking up fights amongst his crewmates by putting his paws on their shoulders and calming them down



Statue of Bamse erected in 2006.

Bamse died on 22 July 1944. He was buried with full military honours. Hundreds of Norwegian sailors, Allied servicemen, schoolchildren and townsfolk from Montrose and Dundee attended his funeral.

His grave site lies off Ferry Road/Barracks Road in the eastern section of Montrose harbour on a section of pedestrian walkway beyond the industrial estate. It is cared for by local people, and the Royal Norwegian Navy holds a commemorative ceremony every ten years.



Bamse (Norwegian word for "(male) bear", "teddy bear" or "big boy")

He also travelled on buses unaccompanied in order to fetch the crew from their favourite pub and escort them back to the ship in time for curfew.

The dog had a bus pass attached to his collar, and if he couldn't find the men, would return back to the ship on the bus by himself.

Bamse was later made the official mascot of the Royal Norwegian Navy and became a symbol for the country's freedom.



Goodbye Bamse. You were a good boy.

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





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

"There are only three things against living in Britain:
"

- 1) The place
- 2) The climate
- 3) The people."



**GUESS THE MEMBER
ANSWER:**

This is none other than our own Sue Bell. Just as adorable now as she was back then!



**GUESS THE
MEMBERS?**

Who is this beautiful couple If you don't know, you can find out in the next issue!



The Moth Market

The Moth Market is starting again this Saturday (7th of Feb at 9am.) Some amazing finds to be had at bargain prices. Also be sure to check out 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. 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.

Joker Draw On the Rise!

A new era for the Joker Draw begins! The next draw is on Friday the 6th of February. A real break from the Januworry hangover would be good right about now...and that's no joke!

VALENTINE QUIZ TIME!

A special romantic music and general knowledge quiz will be held on **SATURDAY 14th FEBRUARY.**

For more information, please contact Coral-Ann on 076 682 2244

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!



Upcoming Moth Events

7th February Moth Morning Market

14th February Valentines Music and General Knowledge Quiz

15th February SAS President Kruger Memorial Service and Wreath Laying Ceremony

20th February Battledress BingSocial Bingo

26th February - HMS Birkenhead Commemoration

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.



A new year with new beginnings. I dearly look forward to spending it with all of you once more, my extended family...The Moths!

Best wishes,

MIKE

Battlecry! Rag Bill

Moth Mike Wolmarans

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