

# 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 OCTOBER 2024

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Greetings from your Ragbill

I've been told that Summer is here, but this might just be a rumor started by other Shellholes. Regardless we have been enjoying some fantastic events and parades in spite of the weather. In this issue we will of course detail said events and also have a special guest article provided by our own Albert Massyn on behalf of Derek Stuart-Findlay. As you will see the Moths have been out and about this month.

So sit back, relax and enjoy a trip through October with your friends from Battledress!



"By Jove, it's this months issue of Battlecry!"

# WELFARE NEWS

Our beloved Moth Widows are all doing well. A heartfelt thanks to Moths Ricky De Wet and Vanessa Chambers for supplying the magazines that are delivered to Nerina every 2nd week. Helen De Wet keeps everyone updated via whatsapp with photos and current events.

We are happy to report no Sunset Calls this month!



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## INFIRMARY

We have members who are fighting battles on various fronts please keep them in your thoughts.



## ON THE MEND

The following Moth and Moth Family members are on the road to recovery and visited by Ricky De Wet.



## SPECIAL MENTIONS

The following members need a place in your heart. Please hold them in your thoughts and prayers.

Moth Richard Evans (visited by Ricky)

Moth Cindy de Kock

Moth Tony Stopford and Nicole Williams

Moth Bert Sachse

Moth John Lamont (physio)

Moth Preston Barnard

Moth Neil Bright

Moth Vin York

## The Shannon Bright Initiative



Shannon Bright, Neil Bright, Ricky De Wet, Helen De Wet  
John Lamont and Vanessa Chambers provided wonderful eats for the Sea Cadets at TS  
Woltemade training grounds. The initiative also supplied apples and oros before the parade.

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# EL-ALAMEIN COMMEMORATION SERVICE



On the 27th of October the Castle of Good Hope played host to an incredibly moving parade and service in honor of those who fought and gave their lives in the battle of El-Alamein. Battledress members could be proud in their strong turnout which helped make for a very memorable day at the castle. Keynote speaker Colonel (Ret) Bernie Ashlin implored us to be proud of the sacrifices we have made and not let our service ever be belittled and to take comfort in our comradeship. Lt Colonel Johan Johnson reminded us all that while a battle may be over, many of us bear scars inside that may never heal and how important it is we support each other after our arms are laid down.

**ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL.**





Battledress Moths and friends.



Now tha'ts a beautiful hat!



The cadets carried themselves with pride and dignity as usual.



The seating arrangements were comfortable and protected us against the elements that day.



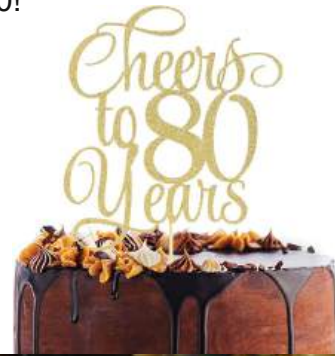
Still an amazing place to visit with lots to admire within.



# HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY TO THE BOMB ALLEY SHELLHOLE!



A few photos from what sounded like a fine evening. All the best for the next 80!



## RECRUITMENT PRESENTATION AT SAS WINGFIELD BY DUGOUT

Presented by Provincial Old Bill Ricky and Battledress Commander Julie Denham. Also present were DPOB Derek Berry and his daughter Annalise and Battledress MSS Helen de Wet. The main aim of the presentation was recruitment. Moth Daphne also contributed and spoke about the Moth cottages MESCA. The presentation was well received by those in attendance.

Leon assured us he was on his best behaviour that night. So far no witnesses have been forthcoming....





# WARNING! ELF SIGHTINGS AT BATTLEDRESS!

'Elf on the shelf' will be running from 6th November to 13th December. If sighted, please take note of the following instructions:

- Find the elf
- Take a picture
- Post on chit chat and tell us what he is doing
- Or send to Coral-Ann to post on +27 76 682 2244

Spotters stand a chance to win a small prize!

PLEASE EXERCISE CAUTION WHEN APPROACHING THE ELF. IT IS THOUGHT TO BE FERAL.



## Christmas Cheer Donation Requests



Christmas is now quite near  
So be sure to spread some good cheer.  
Making a donation\* should be your goal  
It's a good way to avoid a lump of coal!



*\* Of preferably goodies to put in the hamper or money with the reference of Xmas Cheer in the bank.*

Another original work by yours truly, but this request is on behalf of the Playbill and Battle Axes.

# FLYWHEEL

## How British POWs created their own motoring magazine while imprisoned by the Nazis.

From the writings of Derek Stuart-Findlay, contributed by Moth Albert Massyn

One of the world's most unusual motor club magazines was published by WW2 POWs in the Stalag IVB Camp in Germany, from cold vermin infested, overcrowded wooden huts. Many of these prisoners had been captured in the North African desert campaign of 1942. Their zest for life gone, many lost their lives to sheer lethargy. To counter this, all sorts of organizations were set up and one of these was the Muhlberg Motor Club (MMC) founded in 1943 with 6 members.



Two meetings a week were held with regular talks on motorcycling and motoring and soon membership was growing rapidly. One of the biggest reasons for this growth was the club's magazine, 'Flywheel', aptly named by its editor, Pat Harrington-Johnson as both the magazine and its mechanical namesake 'keep the works going round on the idle strokes.' Pat was a South African who grew up in Natal before moving to Rhodesia.

Flywheel was published for the first time in early 1944 under the most incredibly demanding conditions. All of the founder members contributed; with Arthur Pill as producer, Tom Swallow as staff reporter, Bill Stobbs responsible for the artwork, Tom Rodger, whose speciality was meticulously neat lettering, responsible for scripting and Alan Vidow for circulation. Pat Harrington-Johnson, as an experienced motoring journalist for the Natal Mercury, was a logical choice as editor, with S.E 'Topper' Brown as assisting editor.



Many of the original works are now on display in the Imperial War Museum in London.



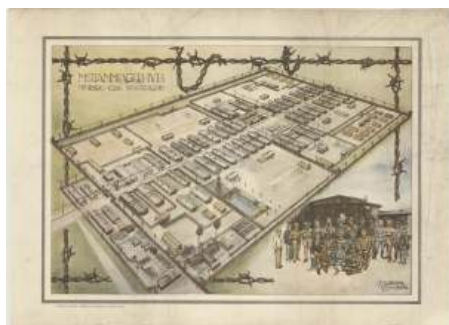
A labour of love

As the magazine developed they were joined by Bill Trevvett and Dudley Mumford as artists, Maurice Airey and Les 'Dai' Davies as sports car and diesel specialists, Ray Newell for pictures, 'Hari' Hopkins for cartoons and Roy Clackett for the editorial blocks. Their first difficulty was paper, solved, when a student donated a precious hard-cover exercise book provided by the Swedish Red Cross. All sketches were done from memory and had to be pasted into the book...but paste was unobtainable! It was then discovered that if thick barley or millet soup was allowed to stand for three days the result was a suitable adhesive.

Colour was, at first, limited to blue ink, then it was found that quinine tablets, when crushed in water, produced a yellow dye. A mixture of blue and yellow gave green. Later a kiddies paint box was obtained from one of the guards in exchange for Red Cross Cigarettes! Each edition was bound with an MMC badge on the cover cut with a razor blade from an aluminium mess can. The scripts had to be done by hand on the top bunk of a tier of three with knees up and ears shut to the many 'noises off'. An eight-man committee meeting on a top bunk almost proved fatal when it collapsed onto the poor fellow in the middle bunk! The 36 page magazine books were passed from hand to hand among the rapidly growing club membership. Later, the camp in general was catered for by a 'Flywheel Supplement' wall sheet backed by a plywood board from a Red Cross crate. Alan Vidow, as circulation manager, kept track of the magazine (time allowed, two hours per reader) and moved the supplement board to allow a half-day display per hut. Eventually readership of the wall sheet was estimated to be in the region of 10 000 per issue!



Bribes for the guards.



'Flywheel' was produced regularly for more than a year and the MMC, which by then had grown to 146 members, was the only camp organization to survive the 1944 winter. When liberation day arrived in May 1945, Flywheel No 11 was in production and it was agreed that this and all the previous issues would be taken home to Britain as a permanent record. A canister long enough to accept the rolled-up wall sheets was made from dried-milk cans and Arthur Pill sacrificed part of his groundsheet as a waterproof cover for the canister.



The camp was overrun by the Cossacks of the 1st Ukrainian Army who detained the prisoners with very little food or water for another 6 weeks. Eventually they were marched out to be 'found' by the Americans who organised transport to get them home. In 1987 Tom Swallow and Arthur Pill decided to produce a book of selected articles from the various Flywheel editions with the proceeds donated to the British Red Cross Society in appreciation of their efforts on behalf of all those interred in Stalag IVB. 'Without them many of us would not have survived.'



Pat equipped for the almost 4000 mile jungle trek from Natal to Egypt.

Many of the articles in the book had been written by Pat Harrington-Johnson. These included his regular editorials, a report on a heated debate on the design of the ideal car and superbly illustrated articles on MG, Singer, BSA and Morgan sports cars. Another of his articles compared the design merits of the many British motorcycle marques, including the AJS, Scott, Sunbeam, BSA, Norton, Triumph, Douglas, Rudge and Royal Enfield. All his scripts contained detailed technical information written from memory.



Royal Enfield Flying Flea



Triumph TRW 500

After the war Pat moved to Bulawayo and joined the head office of Rhodesian Railways. He married his wife Joan and had 2 sons, the family was well loved and had many friends **including our own Albert Massyn!** Albert a fellow motorcycle enthusiast had much in common with Pat. Sadly, Pat Harrington-Johnson died in the mid 1980s, around the time that Tom Swallow and Arthur Pill were planning to publish the articles from the Flywheel magazines. The book 'Flywheel, Memories of the Open Road' proved to be extremely popular and readers were amazed at the quality of the articles and illustrations written and drawn from memory under appalling conditions. In 1995 Tom visited South Africa as a guest of the MG Car Club on the 50th Anniversary of both the Allied Victory in Europe and the launch of the MC TC. He brought 135 copies of the book were sold during his Red Cross Lecture in memory of Pat.

The Massyns moved to Cape Town in 1989, where Albert joined the Crankhandle Club. Now 90 years old, he has a prized copy of the book and pre-war photos of his friend Pat riding his motorcycle and BSA cyclecar in the rural areas of Natal. Albert is really proud of his South African friend who played such a crucial role in this intriguing story.

*Acknowledgments: Flywheel, Memories of the Open Road by Tom Swallow and Arthur Pill, The Classic Motorcycle, Aug 1985 and of course, Albert Massyn*

The HMS Irresistible had a ship's mascot, a cat named Togo. He apparently had a little bit of an attitude. That cat was obviously king of his world. Sadly the HMS Irresistible was mined and Togo died despite the heroic efforts of one of the crew diving into the water to try to save him. It's believed it was William C Burrows who tried to save him and lost his own life in the process. We do what we can to protect our comrades, big and small.



His favorite resting spot

### Upcoming Birthdays for November

19 November Moth Albert Sachse

20 November Moth Neville Welthagen

22 November Moth Iain Groom

27 November Moth Wife Rebecca  
Wolmarans

30 November Moth Angelique Visser



## 30th of November Market!!

Saturday the 30th of November is a special date for the market. Please take note and **bring** notes to help you walk off with some incredible bargains!



## Darts and Bingo

Bingo takes place on the **15th of November**. Please join us for a fun filled evening. Everyone is welcome and more really is merrier! This bingo will have a little bit of Christmas to it. The same can be said for Darts, where the main target is just having fun and laughs with friends old and new at Battledress on the **30th of November**.



## Joker Draw!

Achtung! **the Joker Draw has still not been claimed!** The prize is bigger AND so are your chances of winning it...but you gotta be in it! The Joker Draw is on Friday and that Engelbert Humperdinck box set you've had your eyes on could finally be yours! Take a chance. Battle Axe burgers will be for sale so if you don't win at least your appetite will!



"I have a very particular set of skills. I will find you."



# Moths and Social Events in November

7th November Battledress meeting

8th November Joker Draw

11th November Remembrance Day Commemoration at the Castle of Good Hope at 11h00. Firing of a smaller gun and wreath laying by Cannon Assoc and SA legion.

15th November Social Bingo

30th November Morning Market

30th November Darts

## 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.

That is it for this Battlecry, It's been an eventful couple of weeks. Stay tuned for the next issue when we cover the amazing Remembrance Parade and Service hosted by Battledress!

Best wishes,

**MIKE**

Battlecry! Rag Bill

Moth Mike Wolmarans

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