

SWISS CLUB NATAL

SOUTH AFRICA



SWISS CLUB NATAL
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NOVEMBER 1992

YOUR COMMITTEE FOR 1992

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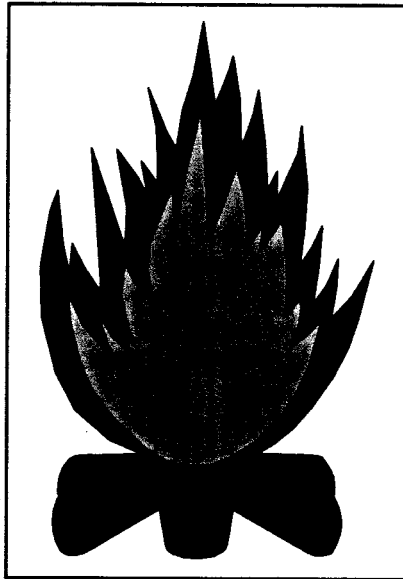
Dear Member,

hopefully you have reserved Saturday afternoon, the 5th of December for our last club function of this year.

FAMILY SHOOT AND BRAAI

5 December 1992 at Hammarsdale Shooting Range, starting at 14:00.

We would also like to invite those members who are not interested in shooting, to join us for the Braai, later in the afternoon. The Club is donating a sausage and bread roll to each member (and each of his immediate family) participating. Please bring your own drinks and any additional "eats" you would like.

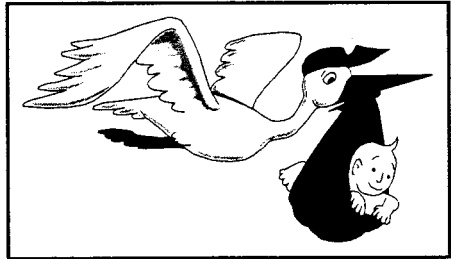


To Rex Guggisberg, who is recovering from an operation, we wish speedy recovery and say thank you for the interesting articles, and the bulletin news.

We would like to welcome the following new members : Family Albert Bucher
Family Kathy Busby
Family Hanspeter Schori
Family Robert Bachmann
Family William (Bill) Cooke

The club has also grown again, with the addition of two healthy and beautiful little babies;

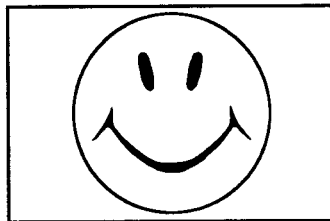
CONGRATULATIONS
to:



André and Pam Horisberger for their little son Pascal André, and to John and Martha Colvin for their little daughter Nadia Deborah. We wish you lots of joy and happiness (and hopefully some sleep) with your babies!

The Committee would like to thank you all for your support throughout this year and wish you a merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Regards



Walti

Dear Members,

As you can see, we have changed the appearance of our Bulletin considerably! Thanks to the kind sponsorship of **Kohler Carton and Print** we are proud to present the new and colourful look. Organising the new look took time and effort from all involved - but the result, we believe, speaks for itself. A great big Thank You to **Kohlers, Credit Suisse, Union Bank of Switzerland, Swiss Bank Corporation, Nestlé** and last but not least **Swissair**, all of whom advertise on the cover and thus contribute to making this Bulletin possible. We hope that our advertisers are equally thrilled with the new image. Further we hope that this improvement will in future draw more potential advertisers to make use of this unique exposure to the Swiss community in Natal.

The cost of a half-page advertisement in our bulletin is only R 50.00 a year and could prove to be money well spent. If you are interested in promoting your business this way, please contact Walter Grab or myself for further details.

We hope you will enjoy the contents of this bulletin as much as we enjoy the cover!

Regards

André

EDITORS CORNER..

SAT. 4 TH JULY.

With Hans-Peter on one of the coldest days of the year to Intertown Shoot (at least it was sunny). We had 15 present including two quite new members, who we hope will become "HAMMARSDALE REGULARS", they were Warner's son & Jean-Pierre George, who I discovered after he had left us at Colorado was the son of Rene George, so next time we meet I must have a chat to Jean-Pierre. It will be some time before we know how we scored against our other Swiss Clubs. The possible was 80, Hans-Peter top with 71, other good scores Fritz Koen 68, Mike 67, Albert 66, Wälti, Bob, Rene, & young Steiner all 64, Jean-Pierre 61 & Phil 60. Nic was unlucky putting a shot on the wrong target which put him off his stroke. We missed Hans-Rüdi, Hans Bomer, Fritz Kaufmann & Thomas. After 4p.m. it seemed to warm up before we made it to Colorado where we had a full house for harmony including Hans Deubelbeiss with a bad flu. Another good day together.

I had a note from Marion giving me her address in Switzerland Good Luck to Marion & Gunter.

In the July Bulletin we had several additional pages Thanks to all who contributed. I hope the next bulletin will include something similar:

Older members will be surprised & saddened to know that one of our members of many years Karl Bodmer passed away in France on 9th August. This was quite a shock to me as for many years Karl & I had been swimming together in the early mornings at Durban Beach Baths. Also we both lived in Egypt before the War. Our condolences to Giselle & Family.

Aggie & I missed all the 1st August celebrations. One evening end June I had an accident with my car, not colliding with another car but with a tree (in Durban we have trees that grow in the middle of the road). I have decided to try & cut out night driving. So we missed 1st August dinner. Felix Moser told me about a dozen attended & had a grand evening. I had the car back by Sat. 1st Aug., but wanted to make sure of its performance before driving to Hammarsdale. I think in over 25 years we have only missed 1st August celebrations on the two occasions we were in Switzerland. By all accounts quite a good turnout in spite of sudden change of date & All Blacks Rugby, & I am told a lovely day & atmosphere. I do know Hans Peter GRABER won the Rütli Cup & our Vice President Felix MOSER

second, Well Done!! The Swiss Air ticket was won by a good old member Hans-Rüdi Planzer, Good Show Hans-Rüdi. The Fun Shoot for 5th Sept., had to be cancelled at short notice as sugar farmers around the range were burning their cane & the whole range would be under smoke & ash. I think I managed to notify all the Durban based Regulars by phone.

Believe it or not the Inter Club Shoot 3rd Oct., was also cancelled, the range was closed as the farmers it seems were still burning cane. We should be back in business

for Handicap Shoot Nov., & Family Shoot Dec., Once again I managed to contact the Durban types.

For the benefit of our new members the club Jass players meet on 2nd Friday P.M., of every month at the German Club Westville. For further details phone Silvia Richner 7016628.

Aggie & I were looking forward to Midmar, all being well we would have gone with Felix & Win, as they had a previous engagement that fell away. Super weather in Durban so hope Midmar was a well attended & happy day. It has just not been our year for social functions apart from the Beach Breakfast. We were determined to make Chlause Shoot on 5th December, but now I have to go into hospital early November for a few days having a minor operation. & am told when I get out of hospital I cannot swim, play bowls, drive a car for 6 weeks which seems a bit of an exaggeration to me. Anyway we will see what happens & hope for the best.

Some Club news, President Walti & Janine are back after a lovely trip, Annelise Frey was also in Switzerland for a few weeks, Anni Deubelbeiss a holiday in Germany & the Guggisberg nearby Midmar. The Planzers seem to have completed their cottage in the Drakensberg, I am sure it will give them many happy times. Win had a really bad time with this horrible Flu which is doing the rounds, developing into Pneumonia. I met the Mosers on the Beach this morning & Win is now quite well.

With so many cancelled shoots & missing all the 1st Aug., celebrations this will be a rather curtailed Editors corner Anyway Merry Christmas to you all & perhaps some peace for for a change in 1993.

GUGGY.

2ND DESERT CAMPAIGN.. 1941.

THE SIEGE OF TOBRUK. PART.4.

Nearly a year of bombing & shelling had made Tobruk a dead town & area in many ways. Never to see or hear a bird except for a few seagulls & Terns around the harbour. Desert hares & foxes the jerboa (kangaroo rat) and emblem of our Desert Rats) had all been driven away. The only animals left were ordinary rats who perhaps helped in some way by feeding on rubbish & no doubt on bodies buried beneath the rubble. No snakes or lizards. Even insects had mostly disappeared, scorpions, spiders, ants etc., but all the bombing & shelling in the world could not get rid of sand fleas & of course flies.

To complete the picture of the siege I must mention "Bardia Bill", the name the troops gave to an enormous gun 1914/18 vintage & I think of French origin which fired I believe at least a 6 inch shell with a maximum range of, 12 miles & a spread of about 300 metres. The Germans had installed the gun inside a cave enlarged by their engineers in the cliff face just the 12 miles from our R.E.M.E., complex & workshops so when "Bardia Bill" was on maximum range we received most of its shells. Perhaps there was a limited supply of shells, as some days it only fired once or twice other days we might get four to six shells. One can at least hear a bomb screaming down, but a shell moving faster than the speed of sound explodes before you hear it coming or the bang of the gun, which I suppose makes being shelled more dangerous than being bombed. "Bardia Bill" shelled us for the full 8 months until 3 days before the end of the siege when it was captured by the advancing British Army & eventually brought into our workshops where the lads got their own back by using it as a urinal. Today cleaned & painted it is I have been told in a London war museum. In one of my many war books there is a photo of Guggy & others pushing this huge piece of artillery into the workshops.

Well, that is the picture of Tobruk at the start of the siege. So back to the night of our arrival spent in the warehouse.

Next A.M. early the young officer was back as promised with 3 Tonners to take us to the R.E.M.E., complex which comprised a cookhouse, dining hall store rooms & out buildings which had been used by the Italian Airforce, but no living quarters. All this was on the south side of what had been the Aerodrome.

The 3 workshops buildings were 300 metres across on the north side. The aerodrome was now a mass of bomb craters & shell holes (Bardia Bill) & an assortment of bomb happy derelict vehicles, British, Italian & German. We were given the usual mini breakfast, I think it was powdered egg scrambled & half a mug of tea. After which we were addressed by our young Colonel, who told us Tobruk was most unusual in many ways, no barracks, no camp, no tents, we had the whole of battered Tobruk to find our own accommodation. (In the early days of the siege some buildings did have four walls & a roof.) We could also take any car, lorry or motor cycle that we found in working order or could repair. Also any type of gun that would help in the anti aircraft barrage. One good thing there was no shortage of petrol or ammo, (mostly for machine guns captured or our own.)

Breakfast at 6:30, parade at big air raid shelter by workshops at 7:00 am. for news update & state of the siege by the Colonel. Working hours based on honesty with half hour lunch break, work would only stop when too dark to see as of course no lights in Tobruk's total black out. Most of the men put in 12 hours which was hard going as with the nightly air raids we had very little sleep. Our first job was to check out our workshops where we would spend most of our time. Three workshops, two big & one small, the latter of wood & corrugated iron roof to be used by the radio & instrument mechanics. The two big ones had been hangars & workshops for the Italian air force, the workshops at the back luckily of concrete. My wood butchers workshop also of concrete was at the rear of the first workshop, apart from windows blown out it was in good condition & well equipped, still thinking in inches it had a 24 inch circular saw, an 18 inch planer, a big bandsaw, a super wood turners lathe, a compressor, & a moulder (for plane wing struts, most Italian planes were made of wood & canvas in those days.) I realised my main problem was to be lack of timber in the ruins of Tobruk.

Our next job was to find a place to live. Luckily I met a little Cockney Warrant Officer George that the three of us had known some years before the War. He was living with another W.O. in a big double story near the town square. We were welcome to a big bedroom upper floor with only a small section of one corner missing from a bomb blast. We had a good laugh at the bed, a huge four poster & canopy so beloved by the Italians,

50 years ago Oct., 1942 was the Battle Of El Alamein.

The following is taken from our Club bulletin 10 years ago Dec. 1982. from one of the many articles I wrote on the 1st Desert Campaign. Older members would of course have read it, newer members maybe surprised to know we did have a Swiss Club in Alexandria Egypt for many years before & during the War.

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Looking ahead now nearly 2 years to Oct., 1942, my very last visit to Swiss Club Alex., & a very sad one too. The Kegelbahn was silent, most of the Swiss were at the long bar with long drinks & even longer faces, & no wonder for Rommel & his Afrika Korps., were at El Alamein, less than 60 miles from the bar. I hope I cheered them up by saying that I thought the new British General Montgomery with his huge 8TH Army equipped with the very latest & best Tanks & Guns from America & Britain would defeat Rommel. Well, it is all History now - "Monty" won the Battle of El Alamein & in a rapid advance drove the Germans out of Africa forever. I have always considered this to be the turning point of the War.

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In this same bulletin in the Editors Corner I see Andre Horisberger won a Ford Escort with a R2. raffle ticket taken at a school fete. Andre 10 years later Congratul again !!!!!

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GUGGY.