

SWISS CLUB NATAL

SOUTH AFRICA



SWISS CLUB NATAL.
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APRIL..1993.

YOUR COMMITTEE FOR 1993.

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ADVERT OR R 100.- FOR A FULL PAGE. PLEASE CONTACT
MR. WALTER GRAB OR MR. ANDRÉ HORISBERGER.

.....

Dear Members,

The election of our young committee members, Reto Frei and Haydon Michell was the only major change made at our 39th A.G.M. The venue at the Pietermaritzburg Turf-club proved to be most suitable. We were honoured to have Consul Myrtha Thüler and Mrs. Sonja Manhart from the Swiss Consulate in Johannesburg attend our meeting. These two charming ladies contributed to the very enjoyable atmosphere. Thank you all again for attending our 1993 A.G.M., especially those who made an effort to travel long distances.

On behalf of all our members I would like to thank our outgoing committee members, Annelies, Felix and Pat, for all their dedicated time they contributed towards our club.

It is with pleasure that I inform you that Swissair generously offered a return ticket to Switzerland. The committee decided to print raffle tickets again. Tickets will be priced at R 5.00 each and booklets of 10 tickets are sold to members at R 45.00. Tickets will be sold at each club function or can be ordered from our new elected Secretary, Reto Frei. The winning ticket will be drawn at the "Klaustag" at Hammersdale in December.

Please make a note of our exiting social programme. Röbi and Elizabeth are organising the ever popular beac breakfast again ! The car rally in June will be organised by our younger committee members. One of the highlights will be the October Fest, particularly as we have a visiting Swiss Band "Auwald-Musikanten" aus dem Thurgau, playing for us. Tschudi hui !!!

Thank you Lydia and Patrick for your letter on page 9. We miss you and wish you both a very happy time in the Cape. All the best for the future. Au-revoir !

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to our following new members :

Fam. Jakob + Ursula Kern
Mrs. Joy-Ann Schori
Mr. Stefan Blum
Mr. Marcel Henchoz

SOCIAL PROGRAMME 1993

Beach Breakfast, Winklespruit	16.May
Car Rally, Pietermaritzburg	20.June
1.August celebration, Hammersdale	01.Aug.
Prize Jassen, venue to be advised	18.Sept.
October Fest, Pietermaritzburg	08.Oct.
Klaustag, Hammersdale	05.Dec.

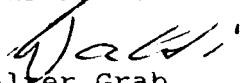
Jassen: Every second Friday of each month at
19:30 at German Club Durban-Westville

SHOOTING PROGRAMME 1993

St.Galler	01.May
Intertown	05.June
Nachschiessen	03.July
Prize Shoot / Nachschiessen	31.July
Inter-Club	04.Sept.
Fun Shoot	02.Oct.
Handicap	06.Nov.
Klaustag	05.Dec.
Einzelwettschiessen	05.Feb.'94
Obligatoirisch	05.March'94

Looking forward to see you at our next function,
kind regards

your President


Walter Grab

Well we start our first bulletin for 1993 on a good note. I am sure all of you were pleased with the colourful cover to our last issue. I had an idea this was the brain child of President Wälti, no doubt aided by our P.M.B. members, & so well produced by Kohler & Company, thanks to all concerned.

More good news, nearly history now is the addition to the Horisberger family, Pam produced a boy Pascal Andre on the 5th November, I suppose one can say he came into the world with a BANG & I was hoping Andre & Pam would call him Guy. How nice for Chantelle to have a little brother to boss around & keep an eye on in a couple of years time. The Colvin family also have an addition a girl Nadia Deborah, congratulations all round.

Thanks to all those who phoned & sent cards after my post operation snags & complications, I am fully recovered now. I am told the Jass evening on 14th November was well attended New members wishing to play on the second friday monthly should phone Silvia Richner 7016628.

I particularly wanted to attend the 7th November Handicap Shoot as I was going into hospital the next day also I had the manuscript for the last bulletin to hand over to Wälti, once again Hans-Peter turned up trumps & took me along. After so many cancelled shoots it was good to see our Hammarsdale friends again. We left Durban in a hell of a wind but at the range it was calm & sunny with a slight breeze. We had 13 present including our good friend Terry & his chum Kurt once again all the way from Jo-burg. Handicap Shoot is different in that our best shots really do have a handicap which sort of equals out as the results show, first Nic, second Albert & Kurt, third Fritz Kuhn & Terry & fourth Rene.

We missed Andre (to be expected), Hans Bornar, Hans Deubel-Beiss, Hans Rüdi & Jeanne Pierre. Full house for beers & harmony at "Colorado" including Terry & Kurt.

We made Family Shoot DEG. 5TH thanks to good friends Felix & Win, Pat & Lydia also phoned to see if we would like a lift. Wonderful to see all our friends again particularly as I am now feeling so much better. All Family Grab were home for Christmas it was good to have a chat with Stefan & Daniel, Pam brought Andre Pascal along like Chantelle he was so well behaved. Glad to see Róbi & Elisabeth for the first time since Beach Breakfast. We had several new members, I said Hullo to Mrs Colvin who also brought along her new addition also so well behaved.

Odd weather, some short heavy down pours in between quite decent spells which must have made it hard for Fritz & his helpers to organize the shooting.

I think we had about 45 adults & lots of lovely children, I missed Nic, Springbok & the boys & two families I have not seen for ages Bob Wyss, Kate & Thomas & Ernie & Pam Ender.

Afraid I got a little lost with the shooting results, I know the men had First Phil, Second Rene, Third Hans-Peter The little Lady Winner was a stranger to me but I know Virginia Kuhn won the girls & I think her sister Marilyn was Second, just reward for helping their Dad with the shooting. When we left at dusk Robi's finger was up to conduct the singing. Another super day together in good company.

Thanks to all who made it possible.

To all members, if you have a change of address & still wish to keep in touch with the Club please notify Andre Horisberger (P.O. Box 393, PMB.) Phone 0331 / 428731) of your new address, otherwise we have no alternative but to remove your name from our mailing list.

6th Feb., with my good friend Hans-Peter to Hammarsdale for Einzellwettschiessen our first shoot of the year. Cool & overcast in Durban to one of the hottest afternoons we have ever had on the range. Everyone except the two shooting under the shade of our only tree. 16 present including 4 welcome new faces, Bill Cooke, Stefan Blum, Jacob Kern, & in from the cold (it must be a year) Noel Locher who brought his son - in- law Mark De Witt, we missed Rene, Albert & Andre who someone said was mucking about with mirrors, but Mike without any hassle took over the finances, score cards & ammo.,. The heat I think was responsible for only 2 making a score for medals, Noel & Jacob Kern both 82, some just missed, Hans-Peter 79, & Nic 77.

Extra good harmony at Colorado where I had a chance to chat to Mark who recently spent several months on an Israeli Kibbutz, not the same one I spent 3 weeks on in 1937. I often think South Africa somehow or other could make good use of the Israeli Kibbutzim system. Nice to have Bob & Thomas with us again. Thanks to our Shooting Master Fritz Kuhn for always doing his job so well.

In this issue I introduce you to "The Two Types" by John, one of the most popular cartoons of the War. These are two of the original Desert Rats who served in the Desert before the War, fought in all its campaigns & ended up in Italy. As you will see they are very individualistic in many ways particularly dress. The one with the Beret is Royal Tank Corps., the Peak Cap is typically Cavalry, Armored Cars or Light Tanks. Some times I see something of myself in the "The Two Types". Hope you enjoy their desert humour as I hope to have them in future bulletins

What a pity that things did not go very well in Natal for Pat & Lydia Slevin who are now back in the Cape where we hope they will have better luck. No doubt we will see them again when they visit Natal.

Aggie & I had a lovely surprise visit from Felix Thoma back in S.A., for a few weeks to keep an eye on his business he never fails to visit us when he is back in the country. Felix is looking so well Rita & the kids (now 18 & 19) are well, he sends regards to all.

SAT. 6TH. March. Hans-Peter as usual picked me up for Feldschiessen in hot sunny weather. Best turnout for ages 22 with "in from the cold" Hans Borner, Noel Locher, & Felix Thoma (still in S.A.) & 2 odd characters Eugen Ege & George Dawson (they should join us more often). Welcome to new faces Marcel Henchoz, Albert Britschgi, Jorg Vogelsang & Marc De Wet back again. Eight of those present had a score good enough for a medal, all except Fritz (who seldom misses Apres shoot) were at Colorado for harmony. President Wal^{ti} brought super bread sticks which went well with the beers. Once again a good day, good fun, good friends.

Thanks to Felix & Win for taking us to the Club's 39TH A.G.M., held at a new venue Scottsville Race Course. The whole set up was really quite lovely with a superb view of the entire course. Members present 45 with a few extra for dinner. Two ladies from the Consulate in JHB., including the Consul Mrs Myrtha Th^uler who gave us a short sensible speech & offered to supply the wine for dinner I hope she enjoyed herself as we would like to see more of this charming lady. A short to the point meeting some changes & new young blood on the committee. Wal^{ti} Grab President again full support from all, Andre "The Greatest Secretary" now Vice President, his job now in the capable hands of young Reto Frei, who if he models himself on

Andre cannot go wrong. Treasurer young Haydon Mitchell who is going to be a gem judging by the way he handled the finances at the A.G.M., I think we are so lucky to have two such fine young men so willing to work in the Clubs interest. Hard working Fritz Kuhn Shootmaster of course. Advisers stalwart Hans Deubelbeis, Silvia Richner, (thank goodness still staying in S.A.) & Hans Peter Graber back on the committee again where he will be quite at home. I think I am still Editor !!!.

Subs remain the same R20. reminder.. now due. There was nothing under general & Fritz sorted out trophies, medals, cards, in record time. To my surprise I was awarded the most beautiful floating trophy for "recognition" I am not sure for 14 years as editor or just being an Ancient Egyptian Wälti closed the meeting at 6.40p.m.

New faces, new members, Kate Busby all the way from Empan geni hope she enjoyed herself & will join us again, Stefan Blum who has also been shooting with us. I was so pleased to see Libbi & Cherry with their friends Bricknells-Fahrni & all the Hans-Rüdi Planzers.

Singing took some time to get going, we had the singing table thanks to Derek & (good to see him & Marlies again) Felix Moser & Peter Richner aided by Robi & Anni. A good A.G.M. with good friends & comradeship.

All looks well for Swiss Club 1993.

GUGGY.

The following from Andre Horisberger refers to a Golf Club but the message applies to any Club.....

Shouldn't we think about changing our attitudes to our Clubs?? So much is taken for granted by club members who do not hesitate to criticise if they think the Management Committee has erred.

The Committee was installed by members in an honorary position, & as such are giving of their free time to run the affairs of the Club. Whether they are unintentionally negligent in some of their administrative duties during their term is a matter which will have to be drawn to their attention in a manner which does not detract from the spirit of the Club & the interests & pleasures of all members.

Very well stated don't go moaning at the bar. If you have a gripe or suggestion make an approach through the proper channels. You will be doing your Club & your fellow members a service in giving the Management Committee an opportunity to address the situation.

SWISSAIR SA PTY LTD

18TH MARCH 1993

SWISSAIR ANNOUNCES EXTENSIONS OF JOHANNESBURG FLIGHTS TO
CAPETOWN & HARARE WITH ITS FOURTH WEEKLY NON STOP SERVICE
BETWEEN JOHANNESBURG AND ZÜRICH

AFTER CAREFUL EXAMINATION SWISSAIR IS HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THE
ADDITION OF THE TWO NEW DESTINATIONS CAPETOWN AND HARARE TO ITS
SOUTHERN AFRICAN NETWORK. TWICE WEEKLY FREQUENCIES TO CAPETOWN
ON SATURDAY AND MONDAYS, AND HARARE ON SUNDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS
ARE PLANNED TO START EARLY JULY. TO AVOID OVERCAPACITIES THESE
FLIGHTS ARE OPERATED AS EXTENSIONS OF OUR ZÜRICH-JOHANNESBURG-
ZÜRICH NON STOP MD11 SERVICES.

AS A RESULT OUR SWISSAIR'S CUSTOMERS ARE BENEFITING FROM THE NEW
FOURTH WEEKLY FREQUENCY JOHANNESBURG TO ZÜRICH TO BE INTRODUCED
AS OF 11TH APRIL, EASTER SUNDAY

THE FIRST YEAR WITH OUR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MODERN MD11
FLAGSHIP AND ITS VERY COMPETITIVE COMFORT AND SERVICE IN FIRST,
BUSINESS (2+2+2 seat version) AND ECONOMY CLASS HAS BEEN VERY
ENCOURAGING.

THE IDEAL SCHEDULES OFFERING EXCELLENT WORLDWIDE AND REGIONAL
CONNECTIONS WILL REMAIN FOR ALL FOUR JOHANNESBURG-ZÜRICH FLIGHTS
SOUTH AFRICAN MEMBERS OF OUR SOPHISTICATED LOYALTY BONUS
PROGRAMME - QUALIFLYER WILL RECEIVE TRIPLE BONUS MILES ON
THE FOURTH FLIGHT (SAT/SUN) DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL 93.
AFTER 25 YEARS OF UNINTERRUPTED YEARS OF SERVICE TO SOUTH
AFRICA SWISSAIR CUSTOMERS KEEP BENEFITING.

Dear Friends/Committee Members,

I am probably the only duly elected Committee Member who never attended even one committee meeting, then left the Club and the Province without too much ceremony!
I must, therefore, regretfully and apologetically tender my resignation.

Much has happened in the past.- Our departure was quite eventful; we had intended to leave Westville about 2 pm. However, due to delay by the removers, we only left about 5 pm. and got to Harrismith after 8 pm. If we had got away earlier we would have missed the foul rainy weather which hit us long before we arrived. Our 2 suitcases on the roof rack were completely penetrated by the rain, some clothing was stained from the suitcase dye and the rest was completely soaked. We had to dry everything before continuing on Saturday morning.

The rest of the trip was uneventful and enjoyable. We stopped over at Graaf Reinet and can thoroughly recommend the Karroo Park Guest House and Holiday Cottages as a nice stopover on your way to come and visit us! We arrived on schedule here in Somerset West on Sunday evening and the sea and mountains were greeting us in glorious sunshine. Already the following day we started our house/home hunting and at the end of the day our heads were like a beehive.

Then out of the blue, our ex-neighbour mentioned to us about a house in a retirement village in Stellenbosch was up for rent to suitable tenants for a low rent and indefinite lease. Well, there we were again deciding what to do and eventually we opted for the latter. We are moving in on the 1st of March and look much forward to this new event. By now we have become experts in packing and almost got used to the Gipsy life!!:

Our new home is situated in Stellenbosch on the last row bordering on a wine farm and a lovely view to the mountains. We will have a spare bed again for visitors and friends and we look forward to have them. A visit to the Cape is definitely a MUST as this is the most beautiful place in this country, especially at this time of the year, - es git Suuser .-

We had already a very enjoyable evening at the Libertas Amphitheater, "A Midsummer Nights Dream" in Ballet. Next is a show at the Nico, KISMET, and then a good old Jazz Session on a nearby wine farm. Also 2 lovely hikes up the mountains I must not forget to mention.

Our lives will take a new turn next month, when Patrick is not working any longer, but hopefully he will still find something to do in order to supplement our income. However, we must look positive into the future and make the best out of everything.

I am sorry that our stay was merely a "Hello" and "Goodbye" and we did not even manage to see all the faces of the olden days. But we will always remember the good times we had with the Club and all its people.

We wish you all well for the future and please,

KEEP IN TOUCH

Patrick +
Lydia

Fritz Kuhn received the following letter from: Mr. Ferdi Pfister.

We thank Mr. Pfister for sharing his very interesting life-story with us. Mr. Pfister lives in Pietermaritzburg and sells plants on the market in Alexandra Park.

WHAT RETIREMENT? Having been on pension for donkeys years I see no prospect in it!

My interest has always been collecting cacti and succulents.

(Having owned a large nursery in Durban) now at last I have the opportunity of travelling in and outside the country, studying and collecting these fascinating plants.

Initial travels took me into Mozambique, entry point, Namaacha. Establishing my "Headquarters" in Maputo where my brother had a business and armed with the necessary permits I soon spread out in all directions, but mainly along the Lebombo mountains, on the Mozambique side, a very wild and hot area. This whole range is of volcanis origin, climbing over huge boulders and slipping on steep inclines was not always easy. Never-the-less very rewarding, finding such rarities as "Pachypodium Saundersii," various "Euphorbias" "Stapeliads" and "Caudiciforms"(Succulents with large underground bulbs).

On one occasion an uncomfortable feeling that I was being watched, true enough, a distance away on a huge boulder stood a leopard, curiously observing me. Knowing these sly creatures from my hunting days up northern in Mozambique I hastily moved into more open ground. He stalked me for a short distance. All I possessed was a small spade and my hunting knife, however we seemed to agree on "peace accord" and we both went our ways. From then my brother insisted on a native guide, after all where would they ever look for me if anything did happen. We soon became great friend as I was able to communicate with "Franscico" in portuguese.

With the guerilla war becoming more fierce and spreading south and having been stopped by a group of half drunk troops who proceeded to confiscate all my tin food and other rations and after generously offering them my tin opener which was now useless to me, I decided to call it a day.

However, not before I received a request from my botanist friend out from England, Ken Horwood to undertake a further exploration trip through to Zululand, Swaziland and Mozambique, this all along the Lebombo mountain.

To me, the highlight of this trip, upon arrival late evening in Mabuto at a stop street, a young african newspaper vendor rushed up to Ken, shouting "Mr. Mr. you want nice white girl?"

The disgust on Kens face showed for a long time, mummering, "What kind of reception is this?" The following days I jokingly urged him to reconsider the offer.....

Ken Horwoods interest was also studying life in the Mangrove swamps and we spent hours taking close ups of the beautiful and varied coloured crabs plus other living creatures.

At the entrance of the harbour quite a large island and a few buffaloes still roam there. During low tide it is possible to wade over, though the going is very rough and slippery.

We did not get far when we suddenly realized the fast moving incoming tide upon us. A very hasty retreat scattering thousands of shrimps. Our main concern being our photographic equipment which we had to carry above our heads.

From Durban to a farm just outside Greytown, city life was not for me! I soon found myself spending hours, even days in the vast Tugela valley. One suddenly descends into a wild, rugged country, the vegetation being mainly Euphorbias Aloes and thorn trees, inhibited by thousands of goats. These destructive animals are even seen climbing acacia trees, denying all foliage within reach.

Gathering seeds from various plants under the blazing sun was often very tiring and time consuming, then always keeping a sharp eye for snakes and scorpions.

Then it happened, on arriving home one day I promptly passed out. Recovering, I was seized with uncontrollable shaking. Thinking of another bout of malaria from years gone by, I was rushed to the Doctor who diagnosed, Dehydration. I refused hospitalization. After a few injections and tons of pills plus a few days in bed I was back in the bush again, this time with a large straw hat and a bucket of drinking water!

Other travels were to Zimbabwe, however the highlight of all these trips was an exploratory trip with DR. Downs, to Mozamedes on the Atlantic coast of Angola, covering 6000 miles return..... One of the earliest excursions was through the borderpost of GOBA, (now closed).

Upon arrival I was warned that the steep road was only suitable for a 4-wheel drive, not for a Peugeot station-wagon. However, having come so far, no turning back. But where was the road? Had it not been for two "Mozambiquanos" passing by, I would still be there filling large holes, moving tree trunks etc. At last reaching the sandy bottom of the road and dropping the lads at their nearby village. But no sooner I felt more relaxed, then to be confronted by a wash-away bridge. The short detour proved fatal with the backwheels sinking deep into the soft sand. Situations like these I like to console myself that things could be worse, after all, a sudden flash flood could wash me out to sea.

So back a considerable distance to the village and soon was pushed back onto the road again and with it went part of my ration as reward.

Arriving at my brothers house very tired and dusty only to be told that the family were taking me out for a prawn dinner. Well, who said I was tired?

Spent the next day in town, the local market always a very popular venue. Purchased 4 tins of Cashew nuts. Cashew nuts (anacardium occidentale) originated from the West Indies and now widely spread along the Mozambique coast. Kidney shaped nut borne on the outside of the fruit which is unique. The fruit itself is very fleshy and sweet. The inhabitants ferment a very powerful intoxicating brew guaranteed to knock one out for a couple of days, (highly recommended for some Mother-in-laws!)

(to be continued)

2ND DESERT CAMPAIGN. 1941.
THE SIEGE OF TOBRUK. PART 5.

The warehouse in which we had spent our first night in Tobruk was completely destroyed the following night. The Luftwaffe were dropping sea mines by parachute into the harbour, one parachute caught in a wayward wind & blown off course had landed its huge mine on the roof of the warehouse the whole block ended up as a pile of rubble. Just as well our arrival in Tobruk was not delayed by 24 hours or our entire Unit of 60 odd men would have been blown to bits. It seems survival in Tobruk was a matter of being in the right place at the right time. The Commander of the 9TH Australian Division General Leslie Morshead was also Commander of the besieged Garrison. In the 1914/18 War he was awarded C.M.G., D.S.O., & the French Legion D'Honneur, not bad for a school master. He was assisted by Colonel Birks who commanded tanks & Colonel "Gaffer" Lloyd, both British. The three made a good team & must have driven Rommel mad, who after eight months had in the end to retreat before the advancing British Desert Army without hardly having penetrated our perimeter.

A couple of days after the loss of our Mess we had another misfortune. I think it was our third night that the three of us were sharing the double story house with George & his pal. It must have been a "Bombers Moon" as the Luftwaffe started dropping their bombs about 9p.m. The five of us grabbed our rifles, steel helmets etc., & dived for the slit trench where we crouched to nearly dawn when a terrific explosion just about flattened our slit trench, George said "thats the bloody house gone" he was right for when we staggered out of the bomb happy slit trench we saw our fancy house was nothing but a pile of bricks & concrete. George & his pal lost all their kit (not that any one in Tobruk had much in the way of kit.) The three of us were lucky as we had left our back packs in the workshops until we were settled, I think all I lost was a paper back & packet of cigs. So in less than a week we had been bombed out of Mess & our first house.

I found another house just south of the town square a bungalow with a bit of shell damage on the east side, windows & frames all blown out ofcourse & rooms bare not a stick of furniture but all the floors of beautiful Italian tiles, lovely to look at but a bit hard to sleep on. I think we lived in that house for about three months before being bombed out again.

For the Luftwaffe bombing Tobruk was a piece of cake, they operated from the big desert aerodrome of El Adam used at various times during these ding-dong Desert Campaigns by Italian, British, & German Air Forces. El Adam was less than 20 miles from Tobruk's southern perimeter, so in less than 5 minutes from take off they were releasing their bombs on any part of Tobruk. How different to some of the bombing raids in Europe when pilots had to fly 2 to 3 hours or more before being over target. On a still silent desert night with the breeze from the south we often heard the German pilots warming up their engines. Some wit suggested they probably drop a few bombs while waiting for their coffee to cool. Our air-raid warning system was pretty good, outside the town H.Q., about 400 metres east of our workshop & on one of the highest parts of town was the tallest flag pole I have ever seen which flew an enormous red flag when a raid was expected, this flag could be seen from just about everywhere, this would start the numerous loud horrible wailing sirens with an uneven beat. A long continuous wail was the "All Clear". The R.E.M.E., were lucky for we had an additional warning, in fact two. Before the War there was one of our W.O.'S unmarried & living in a house in a Cairo suburb where he bred Scotch Terriers, black ones, very popular with English people living in Cairo. When we went into the Desert early 1940 he tried to get rid of his dogs but was left with two, both male, he asked H.Q., if he could take his dogs with him, which was granted. This could only happen in the 1ST Desert Campaign where General Wavell's little force of original Desert Rats were like one big happy family having served together for so many years in the deserts of Egypt before the War. So the W.O., a Tank Expert went off to War in his own Desert vehicle with his two terriers. He got caught in the retreat & ended up in the Siege Of Tobruk with his dogs, which we all loved. Many times I saw these terriers suddenly stop dead still, ears up, the best air raid warning we had, I think with their acute hearing they could hear the approaching bombers long before we humans could. I believe they really did save a couple of lives. I know several times they helped me take a dive into a slit trench well before the bombs came down. Both dogs survived the Siege, but at the end they were listed as "Walking Wounded", The one had a front leg amputated by a flying piece of shrapnel

& the other got in the way of a Messers chmitt strafing our area & had a groove carved along his back from a machine gun bullet. Both were patched up by our own Medics. After the Siege I never saw the W.O., or his terriers again, I often wonder if they went back to breeding. The Colonel did say we could help ourselves to anything that we thought could be of use that was just laying around. So in a matter of days we did quite well, first while I was searching the suburbs for timber I came across one of those ridiculous little Italian two man tanks (driver & M/Gunner) that we played merry hell with in the 1st Campaign knocking them about like billiard balls. The Fiat machine gun was working, it is belt fed & I fixed the remains of a belt, there was plenty of ammo inside the tank but no tracer or armour piercing. The Fiat is probably the most useless M/G in the world always breaking down or jamming. Anyway we dug a pit close to my workshop door & Lofty made a stand for it. I did not expect to reduce the strength of the Luftwaffe but I could at least join in the Tobruk Firework Display & get rid of some frustration, & maybe help to keep our attackers at altitude. I used the Fiat for about three months before replacing it with a super B.E.S. A. from a knocked out British tank. It was a good feeling to be "Hitting Back" but quite sure most planes I fired at were out of range. A few days later Lofty found a Fiat One Ton Lorry, he reckoned with Topper's help they could get it running & soon had it moving, I think there was some clutch trouble as it always started in great bounding leaps so we christened it "Leaping Lena". We were still making good use of that Fiat on the day the siege ended. We travelled to & from the workshops in style picking up some of the lads on route, a sort of free bus service (there was never a shortage of petrol in Tobruk). "Lena" was most useful when anyone of us had an hour free to drive to the little beach near the harbour mouth with our salt water soap to wash our dirty bodies & clothes. They say everything goes in threes, Lofty also found a bicycle the front wheel was not a complete circle more square I think, so we called it "P.I.", this was Lofty's pride & he had it for about 4 months before hitting a pile of rubble at full speed trying to get away from a part of town that was being bombed. So in a few days we had acquired a ridiculous, inefficient machine gun, a leaping lorry & a bomb happy bicycle

4.

Before we left Alex., strict orders were that no one would take any type of camera in their kit bag. Just one rebel took his folding Kodak with him, he only had two films, that is 24 photos I think, of course he had to wait nearly a year before his films could be developed. in Alex., which resulted in his photos not being too clear. When back in Alex., I took about a dozen of his pictures, there is quite a good one of Bardia Bill at our workshops when it was brought into Tobruk after the siege was lifted. Not a bad one of me in the gun pit with the Fiat machine gun, at the time I was 24 years but looked 44 & very haggard. A good one of about 12 W.O.'S & SGTS sitting on the steps of our 2ND mess I see the windows are blown out but strange the wooden shutters in pretty good shape, in this hot part of the world shutters are on all windows just like Switzerland only for opposite reasons. I noticed the building is pock marked with bullet & shrapnel scars, it was many months before we were bombed out of the second mess. All the other photos were to me a waste, all very hazy of the area in front of our workshops, a hash of mostly knocked out tanks etc., British, Italian & German, only one of interest a German half-track with the Afrika Korps crest of a Palm tree above a Swastika. The rebel was never found out, anyway thanks to him I have just those few photos of the siege.

During the entire siege all our staff received after each evening meal a generous tot of strong Royal Navy Rum, this was to help us withstand the air raids during the night ahead. I cannot remember how Lofty & Topper got on, but I soon found one of my lads who did not drink so in exchange for a couple of cigarettes I had a double ration, our evening tot was known as "Stuka Juice" & we always kept a couple of mouthfuls for after a raid, when one sometimes really had the "shakes". So after the first month Rommel & his 5TH Panzer & 5TH light division & some Italian Regiments were unable to penetrate our perimeter defenses.

GUGGY
I am reading "THE ROMMEL PAPERS". DAILY ROMMEL WROTE TO HIS WIFE ON 6TH DAY OF THE SIEGE HE WROTE "TOMORROW I WILL TAKE TOBRUK". 8 MONTHS LATER HE WAS STILL TRYING WHEN DRIVEN FROM CYRENAICA BY THE ALLIED DESERT ARMY.

GUGGY.