

SWISS CLUB NATAL

SOUTH AFRICA



SWISS CLUB NATAL
P.O. BOX 393
PIETERMARITZBURG
3200

FAX 0331-452938

APRIL 1994

YOUR COMMITTEE FOR 1994

PRESIDENT	WALTER GRAB	0331-472654 H 0331-428731 B
VICE PRESIDENT	ANDRÉ HORISBERGER	0331-441393 H 0331-428731 B
SECRETARY	RETO FREI	0331-471113 H
TREASURER	HAYDON MITCHELL V23 V22	461339 0331-429462 H 0331-946702 B
SHOOTING MASTER	FRITZ KUHN	0331-451923 H 0331-422990 B
EDITOR	REX GUGGISBERG	031- 288008 H
ADVISORS	HANS DEUBELBEISS	031- 724977 H
	HANSPETER GRABER	031- 4652344 H
	PHIL STEVENS	0331-940860 H 0331- 63200 B

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Thank you again for contributing to the successful Annual General Meeting. We thank our popular Consul General Alphons Frey for spending the evening with us and for sponsoring us the Aperitive. Alphons very cheerfully entertained us by serving delicious desserts!

The lucky winner of the Swissair ticket was our Treasurer Haydon Mitchell. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dawn Harris for helping with the draw. Our sincere thanks to Swissair for the generous sponsorship.

Landscaping and relocation of the farm road at the Hammersdale Shooting range will soon be put into action. We were pleased to receive information, that our 300 m firing point will be secure for the near future. Improved control and safety standards have to be implemented by all Shooting Clubs in order to maintain our shooting range on this private farm. I should inform you that shooting on the range is only permitted during our allocated time and under the control of our Shooting Master. Hanspeter Graber has accepted to serve in the Nkonka Shooting Club Committee in order to represent the Swiss Club.

MEMBERS

CONGRATULATIONS: to Mike and Dee Robertson who are proud parents of son David.

Our popular members Hans and Edeltraut Borner have moved back to Johannesburg. We thank them for their friendship and we wish them all the best of luck for the future.

SOCIAL PROGRAMME 1994

Lunch and meeting at the Holiday Inn Marine Parade Dbn.	01. May
Beach Breakfast, Winkelspruit	22. May
Car rally, Midmar Dam	26. June
1. August Dinner Dbn / PMB	01. Aug.
National Day Celebration at Hammersdale	07. Aug.
Jazz Evening, Durban	09. Sept.
40 Year Club Celebration	04. Dec.

SHOOTING PROGRAMME 1994

St. Galler	07. May
Inter-town (Nachschiesen not permitted)	04. June
Nachschiesen	05. July
Nachschiesen	06. Aug.
Inter-club	03. Sept.
Fun Shoot	01. Oct.
Cape Town	15./16. Oct.
Handicap	05. Nov.

Members who are interested in participating at the Cape Town Shooting Competition on the 15./16. October please contact :
Walter Grab or André Horisberger.

I am looking forward to see you at our
next function, kind regards

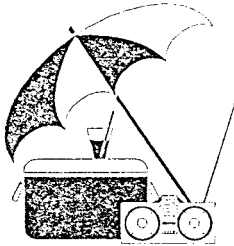
your President



Walter Grab

10th ANNUAL BEACH BREAKFAST

SUNDAY, 22 MAY 1994



Its time once again for our traditional Beach Breakfast. We thought that this popular event is a tremendous starter for our social year, especially to get acquainted with all the new members.

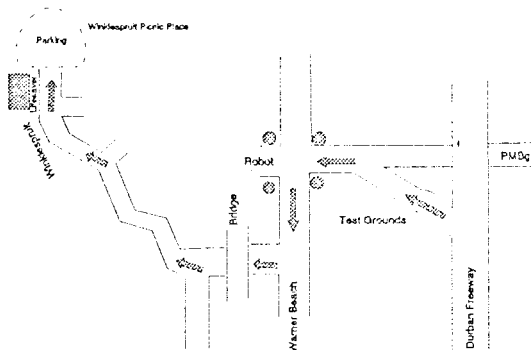
Please bring your own food and drinks as well as skottelbraai or gas-cooker; tables and chairs if possible.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH AT THE BEACH ON SUNDAY 22 MAY.
We meet at the WINKLESPRUIT MUNICIPAL BREAKFAST AREA at 09:00 for A CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST followed by a BRAAI later in the day.

Your Committee looks forward to seeing you all, and remember the special invitation to all our new members.

Reto

P.S. Directions on how to get to your destination are as follows :



EDITORS CORNER.

FRI- 13TH. AUG.

Our combined (DBN & PMB) club National Day Dinner held at Marine Parade Holiday Inn. Somewhat belated due to an invasion of Swiss Chefs for a promotion lasting a week of Swiss food in aid of a charity drive for Operation Hunger & The Valley Trust. What a menu those chefs produced, so much & such variety, from smoked trout, hot & cold meats just about every vegetable & salad to an unbelievable selection of sweets & swiss cheeses & breads, most of the dishes were traditional swiss & everyone received a beautiful designed chocolate. Many thanks to the chefs of Switzerland. An evening like this resulted in a record Club attendance of 103. (this figure from our always hard working Anni Deubelbeiss). The decorations by the food display mostly fresh fruit, vegetables & bread were quite something & the tables excellent. Several wonderful prizes from sponsors for lucky ticket holders.

The time passed so quickly that I must apologise to many of my friends for not having a chance to have a chat. I met for the first time in years Eugen & Irene Woerz, also back in Natal John & Wendy Packham with us again, Felix Thoma back in S.A- was enjoying himself so he will probably join us next shoot 4th Sept. Thanks to Norma & Rene George for giving us a lift. Singing led by Finger Robi, Eugen Egè, & Derek ended a super swiss evening. Many thanks to Holiday Inn & Swiss chefs.

SAT.- 4TH. SEPT. Inter Club Shoot, that is Swiss Club, Umkomaas Commando, Natal Carbineers. Due to work pressure Hans Peter kindly again picked me up in time to make the range at 3pm. A perfect day to meet all my friends again. We had 16 present, back with us Hans Borner, JP. George, Fritz Kaufman, Felix still in S.A., Nic back from U.K., & Andre back from Switzerland working hard as usual from his field office, Rene & Reto make a regular father & son attendance. The other two clubs had much the same number competing which made a long shoot, I believe some started at 11a.m. Final results taking top 3 scores from each club, Swiss Club 362, Natal Carbineers 351, Umkomaas Commando 317. Well Done Swiss Club & our top three scorers Albert Schmid 126, Jean Pierre George 122, Felix Thoma 114.

I remember several years ago the late Fritz Waldburger (Fritz passed away 1986) making the speech after the same Inter Club Shoot telling us that day was the 21st Shoot

against Umkomaas Commando (Natal Carbineers came in later) so it seems to me it must be nearly 30 years that Swiss Club & Umkomaas Commando have been shooting together, that is quite something!!.

Hans Deubelbeiss must have spent most of the day in "the Butts" I only found him when it was time to go home. Many thanks & well done to Fritz Kuhn who had a very busy day & thanks to all the other helpers. Beer & sausages ended a good day in good company.

.....

Some Club News. Felix Thoma back to Switzerland 10th Sept, he tells me back in S.A. November. Nic Hames & family back after a wonderful holiday in U.K., & an eye opener to the first world.

Horisbergers are back, had a card from Pam telling me she & little Chantelle had walked the few kilos from Andre's village of Riffenmatt to the next village of Guggisberg whereof course she thought of me, thanks Pam.

President Walti & Janine are in Switzerland & will be back Mid Sept., had a card from them telling me they are really enjoying the hiking.

Sad news the passing of one of our oldest members, a lovely old lady with an infectious laugh & great sense of humour Olga Hirsch wife of Max. I first met Olga & Max at perhaps the first club A.G.M., I attended 30 years ago or more. Held at the Hirsch's "Goodwill Hotel" on the Amanzimtoti beach front, one of the most popular Hotels in Transvaal & Natal for holiday makers. Thanks to Win & Felix for taking us to the monastery church at Mariannhill, for the funeral. Our condolences & sympathy to dear old Max & the family. Anni Deubelbeiss is off to Switzerland & Germany for six weeks early Octobef. Have a super holiday Anni from us all.

After three days of non stop rain, the 4th day Sat. 2nd October Fun Shoot the weather still looked grim & I agreed with Hans-Peter that it was not worth the trip to Hammarsdale. At this moment of writing I do not know if the shoot took place or not. I have since found out about 12 attended the fun shoot in bad weather but enjoyed by all with Fritz' odd fun targets.

SAT. 6th NOV., off with Hans-Peter for Handicap Shoot.

Twelve present including Felix Thoma back with us again but returning to Switzerland for Christmas. I missed Hans Deubelbeiss, Hans Borner, Fritz Kaufmann, Jeanne Piere, Rene & Reto & Nic Hames, Bill Cooke is now a "regular".

3.

Handicap Shoot is worked out by the score lessons handicap which evens things up, the results 1st Bill Cooke, 2nd Hans Peter Graber, 3rd Thomas Amman, 4th Felix Thoma. Good fun at Colorado all present, & it was Andre's birthday (he never seems to age must be Bob Martins Dog Pills!! so an extra beer from our Vice President to the sound of happy birthday. Another good day in good company.

Max Hofer had a couple of weeks with his friend Father Dominic at Mary Help Mission Ixopo, I had a card from the two of them, they are both well & it was so nice to hear from them.

A.G.M., is coming up which means 1994 due, some members have still to pay for 1993 only R20. per year, so if those concerned are still interested in our Club & do not wish to be omitted from our mailing membership list, pay up'' be happy! Thanks to Norma Georges for Family Christmas Shoot 5TH DEC. for last function of the year. After several days of rain it was still raining on the 5TH not heavy but persistent. At the range at least breaks between showers made shooting with the air rifles possible, but kept many members away apart from the usual stalwarts & to Noel Locher, Ena & daughter welcome back. Felix Thoma with us before returning home for Christmas, Sylvia & Gunter enjoying their last function with the Club as they too are returning for good Good Luck to a fine couple.

I think we had 50 plus including kids & I reckon our Club kids could win any beauty contest. Prizes for the shooting winners & chocolates for all from Nestles. A super day enjoyed by all. Thanks to the workers who made it all possible. A few final words from our popular President Walti ended a good day together.

GUGGY.

P.S. I think in this issue you really meet up with the TWO TYPES, two of my fellow Desert Rats who like myself served in the deserts of Egypt before & during the War.

GUGGY.

25

1954

Foundation Members
of the Swiss Rifle Club Tujan and District.

Mr. Paul Kurt Wunder.
Mr. Fritz Wehrli.
Mr. André Troz.
Mr. Edward Troz.
Mr. Eugen Vogel.
Mr. Eugen Geiser.
Mr. Fritz Tschanz.
Mr. Wilhelm Albert Scherzer.
Mr. Karl Sertem.
Mr. Fritz Waldburger.
Mr. Felix Moser.
Mr. Alfred Siftig.
Mr. Oskar Götz.
Mr. Marcel Kopp.
Mr. Wilhelm Müller.

THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DURBAN SWISS RIFLE CLUB

The foundation of the Durban Swiss Rifle Club took place at the Palmerston Hotel on the 19th November 1954. At the Meeting it was decided to elect a working Committee. Mr. P. Wunder was appointed to make the necessary arrangements for the import of Swiss Rifles and Ammunition.

At a special appointment with our Swiss Consul, ^{also} Berchtold, in Johannesburg, it was decided to import five rifles and 10,000 bullets. An import permit was granted, but unfortunately the "free duty" permit, was refused. Only after many enquiries, Mr. Wunder was able to obtain the licence for the rifles on his own name, at the cost of £2. 10. 0d. Mr. Wunder wishes all members to kindly bear in mind that all rifles are his personal responsibility.

It was also necessary to make an application to the Natal Command to get permission to use the Athlone Shooting Range; which was granted by Captain Grove for every third Saturday afternoon of each month, on condition that they are not responsible for any accidents.

We have insured members and non-members for the sum of £10,000., at a rate of £10. 10. 0d. per annum.

In the meantime we were notified by the Swiss authorities in Bern that they had accepted our application. It was necessary for Mr. Wunder to pay 912 Swiss Francs before the rifles and ammunition could be shipped. The rifles and ammunition were shipped from Basél to Amsterdam then loaded on a Swiss ship bound for Durban. The total cost of imports amounts to £143. 11. 1d.

The first official meeting of the club was held in the Eden Roc Hotel on the 2nd April, 1955. At this meeting the committee was elected:-

Chairman	:	P.K. Wunder	Vice-Chairman	:	E. Geiser
Treasurer	:	F. Waldburger	Secretary	:	W. Muller
Schutzenmeister	:	E. Vogel	Two Reserve	:	
Moterialverwalter:		F. Tschantz	Members	:	F. Wehrli F. Moser

The Durban Swiss committee opened our funds with a generous donation of £10. also due to generous donations from Club members the total now is £72. 8. 3d.

During the year we held four Committee Meetings.

The following are the fifteen Foundation Members:-

Eugen Geiser	Edward Droz	Alfred Sifrig
Fritz Wehrli	Fritz Waldburger	Oskar Gutz
Eugen Vogel	Willi Scherzer	Willi Muller
Fritz Tschantz	Carl Sereen	Marcel Kopp
Andre Droz	Felix Moser	Faul Wunder

The total active members for the year 1955, are twenty one and one passive.

It was decided to invite Captain Grove and Sgt. de Villiers to have the honour of opening our Shooting Meeting on the 24th June 1955. Mr. E. Droz took official photographs of the opening which were forwarded with a report to Switzerland where they appeared in the Sport and Schw. Schützen Zeitung.

Twenty members and visitors took part at our opening meeting when two hundred and fifty shots were fired.

In July	12	members	and	visitors	fired	216	shots
" August	13	"	"	"	"	120	"
" Sept.	15	"	"	"	"	213	"
" Oct.	17	"	"	"	"	408	"
" Nov.	23	"	"	"	"	683	"

Total shots fired - 1,997. It is to be noted that six members managed to attend all meetings.

The following reports were forwarded to Switzerland and published in the November Schützen Zeitung.

- A. Feldschiessen
- B. Houptschiessen
- C. Auslandschiessen

By special request we arranged a Skittles Evening and sixteen members attended.

My dear friends I have tried my best to give you a full report of all our activities since we decided to open the Shooting Club.

I wish to extend my thanks to committee members for their help and support. I would also like to thank all members for their co-operation and true club spirit. It is my duty to ask all members to please handle the rifles carefully and on no condition are members allowed to smoke while shooting, this is very important. Please make sure your rifles are unloaded before handing them over to the next member. It is in each member's interest as well as his fellow Clubmen, that we should avoid accidents at all costs, as it can mean someone's life.

In conclusion I am appealing to all members to try and make a bigger effort to attend our shooting meetings regularly; in the same spirit as our friends from Pietermaritzburg, who have to travel over fifty miles to attend meetings.

Once again I thank you all and Bonne Chance for 1956.

P. K. WUNDER

CHAIRMAN.

DURBAN, Natal.
17th February, 1956.

2ND. DESERT CAMPAIGN. 1941.
THE SIEGE OF TOBRUK PART. 7.

Liquor of course was just about unobtainable but every member of our field workshop had his tot of navy rum Sgts & above had two tots the three of us had now & again extra tots from the few lads who did not drink. I gave one of my lads half my cigarette ration (20 a week) in exchange for his daily tot. Topper, Lofty & I decided we would drink our two tots together around our hurricane lamp before curling up in our blankets to await the first air raid. We also decided that the extra tots would be kept as a reserve along with the occasional bottle Lofty received from the Royal Navy for helping them out by making spare parts they couldn't manage themselves. The Royal Navy were the only ones in Tobruk with a small supply of liquor brought up by their friends on the ships which now & again arrived with supplies to the besieged garrison. We got hold of one of the big glass containers which were used to hold the rough red wine which was the daily issue to the Italian troops. This we would keep for our extra tots & anything Lofty brought us from the R.N., even pouring good whisky into rum. We painted on the glass "Stuka Juice", for shakes only". This we would only drink when we really did have the Shakes only after a particularly bad raid, it was to keep us going to the end of the siege. We must have been in the 5th month of the siege when our Field Workshop had its most tragic day of the eight months. Now & again I would pop into Corporal Joe's cookhouse he always had half a mug of seawater tea for me (which may seem peanuts but it meant a lot in thirsty Tobruk). Corporal Joe seemed O.K. but I had a feeling it was only a matter of time before he would have a mental break down. I was making my way across to the workshops when the air raid siren wailed & I saw the huge red flag go up the high flag pole. Then I heard a plane to my left, it was just a single big Heinkel, the Australian Ack Ack guns opened up & I could not believe it when one of the first shells must have exploded where the left wing joined the body, the wing came tumbling down like a leaf in the wind. Then so much happened at once I saw two parachutes leave the plane (Heinkels I think had a crew of four pilot & co.pilot German the other two Italian.) The pilot I suppose knowing he was finished jettisoned his stick of bombs, one wayward bomb fell behind me & exploded somewhere near our house.. The rest I noticed exploded to the east nearer the harbour. It

2.

was just bad luck that a Chaplain to the Forces had got hold of a 3 Tonne & was driving around picking up off duty men for a swim & clean up at a beach by the harbour he had three of our lads in a party of twelve I think it was plus himself & a driver. One of the bombs landed smack on the lorry all were killed..

I watched the Heinkel with its one wing spinning round & round as it hurtled to the ground, I know it is impossible but it really seemed as if that German pilot (who was probably dead anyway) was actually aiming the Heinkel for our 3rd smaller workshop, for the Heinkel came to earth right into the main double doors of the workshop. There was the most terrible explosion as the petrol blew, & I think there was still a bomb aboard, in a second the 3rd workshop was a flaming inferno. Inside two of our instrument mech's were repairing radios & three tank crew watching & waiting for their radios, all five were incinerated (at least it was a quick death). Without water there was of course nothing we could do about the burning workshop, it just had to burn itself out. More important to help those who were wounded when the plane exploded.

It was now early dusk & I stumbled over what I thought was a bundle of rags but the rags gave a scream, it was a tank crew lad waiting for his tank to be repaired, he was I think the most terrible sight I was to see during the entire war he seemed to be just a bundle of blackened burned rags, his face was burnt like charcoal flaking in the evening breeze with just holes where his nose & mouth should have been his one leg from knee down was just a black bone, no flesh, leading into a burnt desert boot, he screamed again & I could not believe this thing could be alive, I felt quite queasy but dashed off to try & find a medic with a morphia syringe, but I don't think any part of his burnt body could have taken a needle. No medic & by the time I got back to the poor chap, he was thank God dead. Some times when I wake during the night I still think of what was left of that tank crew lad.

As to the two parachutes, one an Italian landed near the Aussie gunners was captured & packed off to our P.O.W. compound. The other the German co-pilot came to earth by our workshops, he was badly wounded seemed to be shrapnel probably from the shell that brought his plane down. It was now dark when a W. O., asked me if I would

3.

take "Leaping Lena" up to the hospital with two stretcher cases & one walking wounded. In Tobruk vehicles were only allowed to move at night in an emergency, & then with a thin strip of light from the blued glass giving a faint light for maybe 2 metres in front of the bonnet. Lofty said I should drive & he would lean out of the cab directing me as the road to the hospital was always a mass of shell holes & bomb craters in spite of the R.E.'S good work trying to repair it. One of the stretcher cases was another tank crew lad in a very bad way, I think he got the full treatment when the plane exploded, the other was the german pilot who the W.D., told me was a real unfriendly, arrogant Nazi. (This was unusual as there was quite a comradeship between the German Afrika Korps & our Desert Rats I have even heard of swapping addresses with a view to meeting up after the War. I have been trying to get a book on the Desert Campaigns by a German entitled "Krieg Ohne Hass" .)

It was dark when we left for the hospital bumping along at about 10 miles an hour, afraid our patients were having a rough ride. On the way ~~there~~ there was another blasted air-raid we could not do much except switch off the engine & our dim lights & just sit, but we did with great care have a cigarette each. we drove into the courtyard of the little hospital where an orderly in a blood red smock which had once been white helped us with the stretchers, he took one look at the German & told us to put him with several other dead bodies under a canvas, he said there had been quite a battle that day on the perimeter but once again Rommel had been repulsed. The tank crew lad was taken into the hospital & we heard next day that he had died during the night. During the air-raid Lofty told me I was right about the wayward bomb, which had landed on the corner of our house where we had a roof & four walls Lofty said we now had three & a half walls & three quarters of a roof but with a pile of blankets he had fixed a lean-to inside the roof where we could at least light our hurricane lamp for a chat together with our "Stuka Juice" before curling up in our blankets. Topper joined us & needless to say after such a tragic day we made a big hole in that "Stuka Juice Jar"

Looking back, our 3rd workshop completely destroyed, so many killed, tank crew, & our own lads, & those with the Chaplain on his swimming party, plus a 3 tonner. I suppose it would have been better if the Aussie gunners had missed the Heinkel, it would probably have dropped its

10

bombs on open ground or buildings already destroyed.

In the morning we would go house hunting for our 4th house having been bombed out of our so called first 3 homes. But our first job in the morning was the sad task of shifting through the ashes of the workshop to find the charred remains of our comrades which would be put into sand bags for burial in the cemetery on the other side of the harbour where friend & foe were buried side by side. About 30 metres from where the Heinkel exploded we came across the shape of a body in ashes legs & arms outstretched this was the German pilot he must have been blown out as a ball of fire, his ashes were also swept into a sand bag Beneath the ashes on the blackened sand was a badly burnt Iron Cross, I mad a grab for it but another N.C.O., beat me to it, a pity, it would have made quite a souvenir of Tobruk.

I had an idea for our new home when looking for timber in the suburbs I remembered a long building which must have been single quarters for Italian officers, long passage with rooms either side, the one half had been flattened but the other was in pretty good condition & several of our lads were living there, the only damage to our half was at the extreme end. It must have been a big lounge or mess with a huge window no glass now of course but instead the tail end of a Blenheim Bomber, this I was told was the last plane to leave Tobruk taking out some V.I.P.'S & journalists before the town was surrounded but the Luftwaffe was waiting for them & shot the Blenheim down before it was hardly air born. If anyone wanted to know where we lived, we told them we lived in the long building with a Blenheim Bomber in the lounge.

GUGGY.

"Obviously a this year's model, old man!"

