

SWISS CLUB NATAL

SOUTH AFRICA



SWISS CLUB NATAL
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NOVEMBER 1994

YOUR COMMITTEE FOR 1994

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FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

We look forward, to seeing you all at our final Club function of the year. The **40 YEAR SWISS CLUB NATAL CELEBRATION.**

The shooting competition held in Cape Town was very well organized by our Cape Town friends. Rifle Club Cape Town won the competition with 36.800 points, Johannesburg came second with 36.120 points and Natal third with 34.600 points. We had a super time and enjoyed three sunny days in Stellenbosch and Cape Town. It was like good old times to have Lidy and Pat with us.

In Cape Town we realized, that we were the only Club without a Standard "Club Flag". Reto will give more details about our intentions to design a Club flag on page 4.

Our friend and popular Consul General Mr. Alfons Frey is retiring at the end of February 1995.

I am very pleased that Mr. Frey is able to find the time to attend our Annual General Meeting in order to bid us farewell. For this reason the date for our A.G.M. has been set for the 18. February 1995 at the Holiday Inn Marine Parade Durban.

Since this is our last Bulletin for 1994 I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members a very happy festive season and a prosperous and peaceful new year.

With best regards,



Walti

CONGRATULATIONS :

To Martha and John Colvin to their beautiful son STEVEN.

Dear Members,

40 YEAR CELEBRATION SWISS CLUB NATAL

1994 marks 40 years of existence for Swiss Club Natal, and so your Committee has arranged something special to mark this event.

Our OFFICIAL CELEBRATION will take place at:

HAMMARSDALE SHOOTING RANGE
SUNDAY 4 DECEMBER (From 11:00)

Upon arrival you will be treated to an aperitive (kindly donated by Mr Feigenwinter from the Swiss Consul). There will be something for everyone (pellet gun shooting, raffles, sweets for the children) so come and socialize, you won't be disappointed!

ALSO: Braaivleis and Music

As usual, sausages (Cervelat, Bratwurst and Frankfurters) kindly supplied by Köbi, will be on sale, as well as a few cold beers for those who left theirs behind.

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS, GLASSES, TABLES AND CHAIRS!

Prize-giving will be at ± 3:30 pm. For those wishing to participate in the events this means: please don't come too late.

A Reminder that Swissair Raffle tickets will be for sale, the lucky winner receives R3000 towards a return ticket to Zurich. The draw will be held at our AGM.

We look forward to seeing ALL of you at this memorable occasion.

Your secretary

RETO

DESIGN A FLAG COMPETITION

During our last committee meeting the subject of a flag or standard for our club came up - although it was noted that we do have one, the design is very plain and flag itself old and shabby.

It has thus been decided to hold a competition amongst the members to design a standard for the club.

RULES :

- 1. This competition is open to the members of the Swiss Club Natal and their families only.*
- 2. The standard should uniquely identify the Swiss Club Natal, so that it may be used by its members for social occasions and when representing the club.*
- 3. Designs should be in colour (please not too many).*
- 4. The closing date of the competition is the 18 February 1995 (AGM evening). Entries may either be handed in on this date or should be posted to reach the club no later than this date.*
- 5. All entries should contain the member's name and telephone number.*
- 6. Judging will be done at the AGM, where the most popular design will be chosen. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.*
- 7. Prizes will be displayed at the AGM, and the winning participant will be informed either at the AGM or later by phone.*

SO TAKE OUT THOSE CRAYONS AND BE ARTISTIC!!!

EDITORS CORNER.

SAT. 2ND JULY. To Nachschiesen with Hans-Peter on a chilly but sunny day. I had with me the M/S for next bulletin to give to our good President Walti who with 1st August coming up rather caught me on the hop, so next bulletin could be shorter than usual. In spite of Durban July & Wimbleton we had 13 shooting 3 different shoots for Nachschiesen & Hans-Peter & Phil trying to tests rifles to sort out the duds for return to Switzerland., but it really did not work with the changing & complications of A. & B. targets, I think we only manage to test 2 rifles. I think we had just about full house for Colcrado, including our new regulars Christopher & Jean-Piere.

Our hard working Shooting Master Fritz Kuhn is off to Switzerland 8th July for a month, have a wonderful trip & my love to Malta.

I heard through the Club grape vine that Alf Sifrig is about to retire & he & Hoorah Mireille are off to Switzerland for a holiday. I have known the Sifrigs for too many years & we have always had a laugh & a chaff. The day Alf retires I think all the Schindler Lifts in Durban should stop for 2 minutes as a mark of respect Alf have a happy retirement & like me I am sure you will find plenty to occupy your time. Some years ago Alf was one of the best shottists we ever had in the Club, perhaps now Alf will be able to make a very welcome return to shooting. (For those of you who do not know in 1954 Alf Sifrig was a Foundation Member of our Swiss Club.)

MON. 1ST AUG. National Day Dinner for Durban Types at Holiday Inn, once again Hans Peter picked me up but Aggie still battling with Flu & Laryngitis had to miss the evening. Good turn out with 45 & 5 apologies. Started as usual with bells & the Swiss President's Speech. Super dinner from Thomas Bosch & a very good evening together. Pleased to have Dawn Adams & her husband with us again, seemed to be a lot of new faces. I thought Robi Gerhard was looking well. This year we were in The Sir Benjamin Room, smaller but ideal for a smaller party. The singing table Gerhards, Deubelbeiss, & Saunders in excellent voice got going about 9.30. & really made the evening. I hope our P.M.B. friends had as good a 1st August dinner. Thanks again to Anni & Hans for the hard work.

SUN. 7TH AUG., A perfect day for our National Days Celebration at Hammarisdale, Aggie was so much better was able to come with me at least for a few hours. I counted 46 cars, say 3 per car gave me 150 or more present. I missed Rene, Annelies, & the Eges, but we had Peter & Ronnie Waldburger & Families, Peter is now based in Durban & has joined the Club. I was so pleased to have a chat with Fay, the first of the Zimmermanns I have seen for a long time, all the older members will always remember 1st August celebrations on their farm Helvetia for so many many years. Lots of new faces again, our friend Consul Alphonse Frey had other appointments but his delegate Consul Feigen Winter was quite at home & enjoyed his day. Glad to talk to Ena, Noel is in New Zealand for the ear biting contest. I reckon every one had a lovely day & enjoyed Koebi's super sausages which gave Anni a busy day selling them. Thanks to all who worked so hard, We left early before the cold so missed the prize giving, Aggie & I were so pleased to meet all our friends again. Once again a lovely day together.

Some Club News.

Prisilla is enjoying Europe, & at the moment working in the lovely County of Cornwall.

Fritz Kuhn back he gave my regards to the goats of Malta & brought me back a super cap from the Island.

Our popular President & Janine soon off to Switzerland from us all have a wonderful holiday with their boys.

The Gerhards now have a grand daughter Congratulations all round.

I often wonder how Ernie & Pam Ender are getting along & also George & Mila Dawson.

I had a card from Prisilla she is not in Cornwall but almost next door in Devon which is just as lovely, Win & Felix also off to Switzerland end August have a good trip.

I missed the shoot 6th August but Hans-Peter told me a good turn out & more rifles tested.

As always had a card from the Grabs, they are having a good time and enjoying the hiking.

SAT. 3RD SEPT. At 10.45 with Hans-Peter to Inter Club Shoot between Swiss Club, C. Coy., Umkomaas Commando, & Natal Carbineers, on a warm sunny day, apart from our two Swiss rifles we had the Army R1 & R4. also our A Target

3.

& the Army Target, so everyone had to shoot with 3 different rifles on 2 different targets. We had 8 to shoot joined later by Rene, the Army had many more including 5 Ladies who all did well. After a long & somewhat complicated shoot well organized by Fritz as usual, the final score was;- Swiss Club 423, Natal Carbineers 384, C. Coy Umkomaas Comando 383.

Our Chaps had some difficulty with the R1 & R4. while the Army Lads had their best scores with the Swiss Carbine. Computer Wizard Andre worked out an average shots per rifle for every Shotist, the Swiss Carbine was ahead by about 33%, interesting!! Nic arrived late after the shoot just to say Hullo & have a chat. Our top scorers Albert, Phil, Hans-Peter, Prize giving, Beer, Swiss Sausage & Roll, & good company ended a super day enjoyed by all. As usual Thanks to All who made it possible. (Not forgetting Hans Deubelbeiss who always collects & sorts out the saugages)

We had a letter from Pat & Lydia they have moved again but still in beautiful Stellenbosch, hopefully says Lydia their last move. Pat went back to sea for a month in connection with the sinking of the Tanker "Tochal". Expect the will visit Natal again before long

Over a beer with the Georges; they told me our little friend Libero (Libby) Simioni was in hospital intensive care quite ill with a mystery complaint. I phoned the hospital a few days later hoping to visit him but only to find that he had just been discharged. I phoned Libby at home & had a chat he was much better but not a 100%, & hoped to return to work in about a week. His disease still a mystery a blood sample sent to UK which may help. We wish him a complete recovery & I will phone again in a weeks time. Eight of our Hammarisdale regulars are off to Cape Town for the week-end 15TH - 16TH October for a shoot against the Swiss Clubs of Cape Town & Johannesburg. The shoot will actually be in the beautiful town of Stellenbosch (& I bet Lydia & Pat will not be far away) & a good shoot & happy week-end to them all, perhaps one of them will give us a write up on their return. 1st Oct. with H.P. to Fun Shoot 2 blank targets with markings on reverse side, one as "A" target & one as a dartboard, all luck really, Thomas (back with us again) got an unbeatable 50 on the dart board, 2nd good old Fritz Kaufmann, 3rd Phil. Hans Peter & Albert finished testing the rifles. Also shooting with us Bill Cooke & A. Britschgi making a total of 15. Harmony & prize giving by Fritz Kuhn at Col@rado ended the day.
Guggy

THE 2ND DESERT CAMPAIGN 1941.
THE SIEGE OF TOBRUK PART 9.

Life in Tobruk went on with the usual question on everyone's lips "when the Hell are we going to get out of here." The Anti British Pro German Irishman William Joyce, known by the Allies as Lord Haw Haw broadcast daily his propaganda from Berlin, his broadcast to Tobruk told us as we did not have any planes the Germans would send plenty over to us. He also said that as we spent so much of our time in holes in the ground like rats that we like rats would be exterminated, & that in future we would be known as "the rats of Tobruk" a name that stuck the world over to the end of the siege & after. When the Allies occupied Berlin in 1945 William Joyce was arrested & eventually executed for War Crimes. (THE RAT EXTERMINATED).

We must have been surrounded for about 3 months when I had what I suppose was my greatest day of the War. I had got rid of the ridiculous Fiat Machine Gun, & now was the proud owner of a superb Besa Machine Gun which the 3 of us had removed one dark moonless night from a knocked out British heavy tank not a 100 meters from a forward German post, we could actually hear The Afrika Korps soldiers talking while we removed the gun. I think the Besa was the best MG of the War.

The Hospital was always in urgent need of morphia for the badly wounded, some with missing limbs & having to wait a long time in agony before surgery of sorts. Also in our workshop we often had a couple of tanks that we could put back into action except for a spare part or two we did not have & would have to wait maybe a couple of weeks or more for the next sea convoy to reach us. Could the urgent morphia & spares be sent by air?, Tobruk was in range of our bombers, but any bomber in the vicinity of Tobruk would be shot down in no time. Fast Fighter Planes might manage a quick in & out dropping by small parachute but they just did not have the range even from our most forward Desert aerodromes in Egypt, but H.Q., solved the problem by fitting 2 Spitfires with 2 extra disposable petrol tanks each which would be used first & then dropped into the sea. The idea was for these fast (in those days) fighters to take off from the aerodrome & fly straight out to sea for a couple of miles always flying just above the waves to avoid German radar then turn sharp left (east) until opposite Tobruk

turn south & come in over the low sand & scrub hills which lay between our workshops & the coast, drop our spares within a few metres of the workshop, turn sharp right for the 2 or 3 miles to the hospital, dropping the morphia parachutes still flying fast & low, right again & over the hills over the sea & home. Well, it worked like a dream the planes were only over Tobruk for less than 5 minutes, & at 3.30p.m. the best time when the Luftwaffe pilots enjoyed siesta before hammering us with the usual sundowner raids. I do not think the Germans ever knew of the Spitfires visit, this now became a regular feature every few weeks always with success.

Geordie ofcourse had to be my No. 2. on the new Besa. First we tidied up the gun pit, new sand bags all around the walls, & we dug a couple of recesses to take the ammo boxes, I had mentioned before we had no shortage of Ammouk in Tobruk, pity the same could not be said for water & food. The Besa is a belt fed M. G. & we had boxes of ordinary, tracer, & armour piercing, but neither of us new the correct way to load a belt so we settled for 5 tracer, 10 ordinary & 10 armour piercing 5 tracer & so on, not that it mattered as I was damn sure we would never hit an enemy plane, only the Stukas dived low & they were mostly over the harbour area, but on the few occasions we fired the Besa it was a good feeling to be hitting back in some way, & perhaps we helped to keep the Luftwaffe at altitude which meant less accuracy.

Every day or so we check the Besa by firing a few shots about mid-afternoon. This is just what we were doing one afternoon, I had the Besa pointed over the sand hills above the beach & looking through the telescopic sights when to my surprise I saw 2 fighters coming in low over the hills & heading towards us, I shouted to Geordie "it is the Spitfires with our spares give them a wave", I am not quite sure what happened next, when about 400 metres away the planes suddenly turned right & to my horror the markings were not R.A.F. rondels but German crosses, these were Messerschmitts, I had the one plane in my sights & I think I got such a surprise that I must have pressed the trigger & kept it pressed because just about the whole tail plane disintegrated and the plane took a nose dive, when it was about 200 feet above the ground the Aussie Ack Ack gunners opened up with their machine guns & the plane exploded. I remembered Geordie saying something like "You shot the bloody thing down".

So both our workshops & the Aussies were credited with half a Messerschmitt each, much to Geordie's annoyance who reckoned we should have had a full credit, any way knocking the tail off was more luck than anything else. Our Colonel was thrilled & we were heroes for a couple of days. As you can imagine that night around our hurricane lamp the 3 of us & Geordie made quite a hole in the Stuka Juice Demi-John.

It must have been in the first few months of the siege that some Aussies discovered in the bombed town a bomb happy printing press and office which must have been the home of Tobruk's daily newspaper before the War. Some Ex newspaper men serving with the Aussies managed to dig out one printing press machine & actually managed to get it working, they also discovered a very limited amount of suitable news print. These Aussies decided it might be possible to produce a newspaper in the siege Tobruk, that is just what these characters by hard work & determination managed to do. With so little paper it could only be one page (both sides) & only about 6 copies to each unit which had to be passed around to each man, & was produced once a month. The little newspaper was called "The Dinkum Oil" (Australian For True News), which it was & kept us posted with good & bad news. There will be very few copies of "The Dinkum Oil" in the world today, maybe a few in Australia, & I think Warriors Gate (The M.O.T.H.S. museum in Durban) has one copy. I wish now I had kept a copy as it would be a Collectors Item.

GUGGY.

"You know — the things we used to wear in England."

