

Announcing the Cape Town Military Tattoo 2012

Article and photos supplied by Mrs Regine Lord.

From 31 October to 3 November 2012, the magnificent Castle of Good Hope will proudly host the seventh Cape Town Military Tattoo 2012.

The word “tattoo” is derived from a centuries-old military ritual, which originated in the Low Countries during the 80 Years’ War in the 16th and 17th centuries. Each evening, before nightfall, patrols would be sent out to warn off-duty soldiers that it was time to return to the garrison for the evening parade and guard duties. Tavern-keepers would be ordered:

“Doe den tap toe!” (Close the taps on your beer-barrels). All the armies in the Low Countries adopted this nightly ritual. Over the centuries, it became a unique and colourful show, known as a “tattoo” in English, “taptoe” in Dutch and “Zapfenstreich” in German.

At the Castle of Good Hope, the oldest military headquarters in the country, a drummer would be sent up to the Leerdam Bastion to beat his drum, thus signalling the off-duty soldiers to return to their barracks. To mark the start of the Cape Town Military Tattoo, the smartly dressed Castle Guard Halberdiers re-enact the traditional Key Ceremony, locking the massive gates of the Castle for the evening.

As in previous years, Tchaikovsky’s famous 1812 Overture will be performed, as it *should* be – to the accompaniment of thunderous gunfire from the ceremonial 25-pounder guns of the Saluting



Photo 2: Lt Col Johan Conradie of the DRPOWC, Brig Gen BC Gildenhuys, GOC of the SA Army Armour Formation and Col W van der Linde



Photo 1: At the start of the media launch at the Castle of Good Hope in central Cape Town, the organisers, supporters and media representatives enjoy some drinks

Troop of Cape Field Artillery: always an unforgettable experience! During the Final Muster, all the performers return to the arena to wish the audience farewell, and the show concludes with the Lone Piper on the roof of the Castle, bidding a final good night to the audience.

Last year’s Tattoo had to be cancelled for operational reasons, and a relaxing sunset picnic on the lawns of the Castle, followed by a wonderful concert of military music, was held instead.

It is thus exciting news that the 2012 Tattoo is going full-steam ahead!

The production team is already hard at work preparing a fabulous programme that is certain to thrill and delight both locals and visitors from afar. These dedicated Regular and Reserve Force members of the South African National Defence Force contribute an enormous range of diverse skills in many fields, and can draw on previous years' experience of organising the Tattoo.



Photo 3: The SA Army Band Cape Town arrive under Drum Major WO2 André van Schalkwyk

This event is also actively supported by the City of Cape Town. Experience around the world has proven that a first-class Tattoo is an invaluable long-term strategy for growing the tourism industry; an outstanding example of this is the Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Scotland, which takes place in August every year.

On Thursday, 20 September 2012, the media launch for the 2012 Tattoo was held at the Castle. The SA Army Band Cape Town in their striking scarlet tunics gave a polished display of their musical and marching skills, once again demonstrating why they are such crowd-pleasing favourites. Cape Field Artillery Pipes and Drums, in their scarlet Royal Stewart tartan kilts, brilliantly white shirts and black vests, were led out by Pipe Major Staff Sergeant Andrew Imrie. Together, the two bands performed 'Highland Cathedral'. Thereafter, the guests were taken outside the main Castle gates, where Lt Col Kees de Haan, OC of Cape Field Artillery, spoke briefly about the CFA's 25-pounder guns. The show ended with a single thunderous shot from one of these guns, amidst billowing smoke.

A media briefing followed in the Het Bakhuis Simon van der Stel room, with Brig Gen BC Gildenhuys, GOC of the SA Army Armour Formation, giving a presentation on the 2012



Photo 4: The Cape Field Artillery Pipes and Drums arrive under Pipe Major Staff Sergeant Andrew Imrie

Tattoo. He pointed out that the greater purpose of this event was to promote a positive image of the SANDF, to foster a good relationship between the armed forces and the community, and to involve the youth of Cape Town.

The theme of the 2010 Tattoo had been "A Tribute to the Unsung Heroes" – an acknowledgement of the men and women of the military support services, who provide combat support. It thus featured a

breath-taking mock attack on the Castle to illustrate the important role played by the medics, as well as a historical stretcher drill dating back 100 years, which was re-enacted by 3 Medical Battalion Group.

The theme of this year's Tattoo is **“A Tribute to the Military Musicians”**, with homage being paid to the men and women of the military who support the services with their music.

Much-loved favourite bands, such as SA Army Bands of Cape Town and Kroonstad, the Pipes and Drums of Cape Field Artillery and of 1 Medical Battalion Group, as well as the Drums and Pipes of the Cape Town Highlanders, will be participating in the

2012 Tattoo. They will be joined by two visiting bands that have not been seen here before: the Botswana Army Band and the Het Historisch Tamboerkorps van der Koninklijke Marechaussee of the Netherlands. In addition, spectators will also be entertained by several youth groups, including the Orchestra Band of Wynberg Boys High School, the Celtic Dancers, and the Drill Squad of Chrysalis Academy.

This year, there will be four performances, from Wednesday 31 October to Saturday 03 November 2012. Tickets for adults cost R120.00 on the centre stand and R100.00 on the side stands, and R50.00 for children from 6 to 12 years of age. Children under 6 years get in free. Bookings can be made online at Computicket.

Gates open at 17h30, and spectators must be seated at 19h45, as the show begins punctually at 20h00. Safe parking will be available on the Grand Parade in front of the Castle. Refreshments

will be on sale at the De Goewerneur Restaurant. For further information, you can contact the Defence Reserves Provincial Office Western Cape (DRPOWC) at the Castle on 021 787 1162 or via email defencereserveswc@gmail.com.

Call up your friends, email your colleagues, make your travel plans, and **book your seats!**

Whatever you do, do not miss the Cape Town Military Tattoo 2012!



Photo 5: Billowing smoke from the gunfire of Cape Field Artillery's 25-pounder gun



Photo 6: Capt (SAN) Trunell Morom, the Chairperson of the Organising Committee, introduces Maj Dalene Coetzee (Media Liaison), Brig Gen Gildenhuys and Major Charles de Cruz (Producer)