

DECEMBER 2014



AFRICAN ARMED FORCES

Covering Military Affairs since 1975

journal

**CONTRACTION OF
THE BRITISH ARMY
– LESSONS FOR
SOUTH AFRICA**



**CELEBRATING 20 YEARS
OF DEMOCRACY
AT THE CAPE TOWN MILITARY TATTOO 2014**

FEATURE ARTICLE: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY AT THE CAPE TOWN MILITARY TATTOO 2014

The Cape Town Military Tattoo has developed into a regular item on the South African military calendar. Modelled on its illustrious Edinburgh counterpart, the ceremony has grown in stature and prestige down the years with its reputation extending well beyond South Africa's borders. This year **Regine Lord** attended the awesome display and provided this alluring snapshot of the celebrations.

The CTMT is held under the authority of the Chief of the South African Army, Lieutenant General V. R. Masondo; he stated that it "provides an unrivalled evening of spectacle and entertainment that goes to the heart of our rich military heritage".

This year, a new producer took the reins: Captain Ian Long of the Cape Town Highlanders. A new Cape Tattoo website was created, as well as Facebook page and Twitter feed. The lively use of social media, which promoted the CTMT countrywide and around the world, no doubt contributed to the brisk ticket sales. From the dress rehearsal on Wednesday, 5 November, until the final performance on Saturday evening, 8 November, more than 4 700 people from near and far had seen the show. They were impressed by the stirring music, the vibrant pageantry, the action-packed 'deploy and protect' drill and the thunderous salvos of



REGINE LORD

Departure of the SAASIC motorcycles marking the end of the show

As the cavalcade of motorcycles bearing the South African flag purred slowly out of the arena, marking the end of the Cape Town Military Tattoo 2014, the lights dimmed for just a moment, and the Castle of Good

Hope fell silent. The spectators rose to their feet and slowly filed out of the massive steel-studded Van der Stel gate to the Castle, reminiscing animatedly about the colourful event they had just witnessed.

the guns during Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, the signature act of the Cape Town Military Tattoo (CTMT). The stands were filled to capacity at almost every performance. The Saturday afternoon matinee, which consisted of the full programme this year, was particularly popular among families with younger children.

Feedback from spectators, performers and VIPs, from civilians and the military, was positive and complimentary: "The best Tattoo I have ever attended. Fantastic" (Felicity Purchase), "Thoroughly enjoyed every part of the show. The Kroonstad Band was really entertaining. Keep up the good work and the organising. Brilliant" (S. Eddles), and "The best CT Tattoo so far. Comparable to Edinburgh. The bands are world class" (B.C. Canning).

The saluting dignitary at the dress rehearsal was Captain (SAN) Marcus Rammutloa, the new SSO (Senior Staff Officer) of the Defence Reserve Provincial Office Western Cape. It was the first time he had ever attended a Tattoo; he was impressed by the show and by the participants' professionalism.

The saluting dignitaries on the other evenings were Lieutenant General F. Msimang PSCJ ENSP (Chief of the SA Air Force), Rear Admiral W. Teuteberg SM MMM (Deputy Chief of the SA Navy), Major General S. Veldtman CLS MMM PB (Chief Director of the SA Army Corporate Service), and Brigadier General G. Kamffer SM MMM DWD (Chief Director of the SA Army Reserves). Lt Gen Msimang said, "Truly inspiring! This was a great experience, very well done and professional", while Admiral Teuteberg declared, "In Navy terms, BZ!"

Since the early days of the first CTMT of 2003, the event has always been hosted inside the thick walls of the

historic Castle of Good Hope. Static displays outside the main entrance greeted visitors: a Ratel from the Cape Town Highlanders, the Rooikat of Regiment Oranjerivier, the well-equipped SAMHS ambulance, the Oerlikon anti-aircraft cannon of Cape Garrison Artillery (CGA), and the four 25-pounder guns of the Cape Field Artillery Saluting Troop. Inside the Castle, spectators were welcomed by the mellow tones and vibrant African rhythms of the Camps Bay High

"The CTMT is held under the authority of the Chief of the South African Army, Lieutenant General V. R. Masondo."

Each show started with a loud bang, as the Cannon Association of South Africa (CAOSA) fired a quarter-pounder muzzle-loading signal cannon. Thereafter, a dramatic fanfare by the massed military bands provided the perfect introduction to a spectacular show. One act followed hot on the heels of another.

Four well-known military bands participated in the 2014 Tattoo.

The SA Army Band Western Cape (Drum Major Warrant Officer 1 André van Schalkwyk), the country's oldest Regular Force band, recreated a typical Zulu Impi attack by skirmishing, encircling and advancing. Vocals were provided by Corporal Godfrey Rahube, Tshepo Ramoipone and Private Bantu Nyoka. The entertaining routines of the SA Army Band Kroonstad (Drum Major Staff Sergeant Johan Labuschagne) are always popular with the audience. Certainly, no one



REGINE LORD

The Canon Association of South Africa fires a muzzle loading signal canon dating back to the 17th century

School marimba band. They took their seats on the stands, gazing up at the magnificent backdrop of iconic Table Mountain, painted golden by the last rays of the setting sun. It is difficult to imagine a more impressive venue for a military tattoo.

will forget their rendition of Michael Jackson's 'Thriller', complete with unexpected 'zombie walk'.

Formed in the late 1960s, the South African Medical Health Services Band (Drum Major Staff Sergeant Daniel Lemos) is the only military band in the

country to have its own dedicated pipes and drums. The SAMHS Pipes & Drums were formed in 1987, and are an integral part of the band, adding to their unique tone. The fourth band was the popular South African Navy (SAN) Band (Drum Major WO2 Nkhululeku Magubane) in their pristine white uniforms.

All four bands perform regularly at official functions, military parades, memorial services, and ceremonial and state occasions; in addition, they also play at musical festivals, open air concerts, and military tattoos, both within the country and overseas. Their repertoire thus includes military, classical, romantic, pop, avant-garde and big-band pieces, as well as traditional African rhythms and 'Proudly South African' music.

Making a dramatic entrance, complete with clouds of smoke, thumping drums and the stirring sound of pipes, the Massed Pipes and Drums formed the number "20", as they lined up in the arena. This was a reference to the theme of the 2014 Tattoo, "Twenty Years of Democracy", which is in line with the national government's theme.

A record number of six pipe bands – three from Cape Town and three from further afield – performed at the 2014 Tattoo.

The Drums and Pipes of the Cape Town Highlanders, dressed in their distinctive Gordon tartan and green jackets, are the oldest military pipe band in South Africa, dating back to 1885. They have taken part in eleven international tattoos, including Basel in Switzerland, Berlin in Germany, and Edinburgh in Scotland. Pipe Major WO2 Charles Canning is one of only two non-British Army pipers ever to perform as the 'Lone Piper' at the famous Edinburgh Tattoo, as well as at the 2008 Basel Tattoo.

The Pipes and Drums of the Cape Field Artillery (Pipe Major is Staff Sergeant Andrew Imrie), in their scarlet Royal Stewart tartan, are a much younger band, although the regiment itself was founded in 1857.

The Pipes and Drums of Cape Garrison Artillery (Pipe Major Tony Reis) were created by the recent amalgamation of the Cape Town Caledonian Pipe Band and members of the CGA regiment. Established in 1924, the band is based at Fort Wynyard in Green Point; members wear the ancient MacDonald tartan. In 1949, the City of Cape Town adopted it as the official pipe band of Cape Town.

"Making a dramatic entrance, complete with clouds of smoke, thumping drums and the stirring sound of pipes, the Massed Pipes and Drums formed the number "20", as they lined up in the arena."

The Knysna & Districts Pipe Band (Pipe Major Steve Collins) was established in 2009, with the aim of promoting piping and drumming in the Garden Route. Wearing the modern Oliphant tartan, members perform at local events, festivals, and social functions, as well as at weddings and funerals.

The Algoa Caledonian Pipe Band (Pipe Major Derek Soutter) is the only pipe band in Port Elizabeth. Although

the band was formed in 1996, it can trace its heritage back to 1892, when Scottish settlers in the Cape created the Port Elizabeth Caledonian Pipe Band. Wearing the red MacPherson tartan, members are proud of their Scottish musical tradition and committed to promoting Scottish culture and music among the young generation of South Africans.

1 Med Pipe Band from Durban (Pipe Major Rohann Ludick) consists of Reserve Force members as well as civilians and volunteers. The band was formed in 1990, and wears the MacKenzie tartan with maroon glengarries in recognition of its Scottish connection to the Seaforth Highlanders and the MacKenzie clan.

The SANDF too is celebrating its 20th year of existence in 2014.

An act involving the soldiers and motorcycles of the SA Army Special Infantry Capability unit (SAASIC), under their instructor Staff Sergeant Rens, dramatized the formation of the new unified SANDF on 27 April 1994 by merging the previous statutory and non-statutory forces: the South African Defence Force and the defence forces of Bophuthatswana, Venda, Transkei and Ciskei, with the forces of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the Azanian People's Liberation Army and Inkatha. Demonstrating their motorcycle handling skills under extreme conditions, they roared into the arena, leaping through fire and clouds of smoke, to loud exclamation of awe and excitement by an appreciative audience.

The SAASIC motorised infantry soldiers starred in a 'deployment and protection' simulation, based on a border patrol making contact with a group of poachers. Racing into the arena, they dropped their motorbikes on the ground and dismounted in one fluid movement, while readying their

automatic weapons. Coming 'under fire' from the poachers, represented by a series of ear-splitting explosions of thunderflashes, the sharp reports of automatic fire, and the use of colourful smoke grenades, they adopted a battle formation and advanced relentlessly across the arena. Their very realistic demonstration was a vivid reminder of the fearsome capabilities of well trained SANDF soldiers – and a forceful vindication that one would not want to be on the sharp end of a contact with them!

Every year, several local youth groups have an opportunity to display their talents at the CTMT, as part of the military's involvement in social upliftment and responsibility programmes targeting the youth. In addition to the Camps Bay High School Marimba Band, which entertained spectators during the pre-show, the young lasses of Project 021 gave a creative interpretation, using drum and dance, of a poem performed by Siphokazi Jonas about the changes that South Africa has undergone in the transition to democracy. Project 021 was founded in response to the disappearance of arts education from the school curriculum. Its aim is to encourage young people to explore the arts, drama and music, and to express themselves creatively while breaking down social barriers and fostering a united South Africa.

The third youth group to participate at the 2014 Tattoo were the Sea Cadets of Training Ship (TS) Woltemade, boys and girls who range in age from 12 to 18 years. Neatly attired in their black and white uniforms, they take great pride in their precision marching skills and in the positive values and skills they have been taught in the Cadets programme, which is run by volunteers, parents, and former and present SA Naval Officers. They



REGINE LORD

SAASIC infantry soldiers demonstrate their motorcycle handling skills

“The third youth group to participate at the 2014 Tattoo were the Sea Cadets of Training Ship (TS) Woltemade, boys and girls who range in age from 12 to 18 years.”

performed a silent marching drill, consisting of 82 separate movements, executed without any commands – a routine that took over 100 hours to perfect. Their commanding officer, Lieutenant (SAN) Paul Jacobs, can rightly be proud of his young charges.

As in previous years, a group of young men of Chrysalis Academy, situated at the Porter Estate in Tokai, acted as ushers during the CTMT. Chrysalis is a youth development organisation that targets youth at risk (both girls and boys) between the ages of 17 and 25 years, teaching them how

to become socially responsible adults and strong community leaders. Their polite demeanour as they greeted spectators and assisted them made a good impression. They worked alongside ushers from the SA Air Force, SA Navy and SA Military Health Services, with wranglers supplied by Regiment Oranjerivier.

As 2014 marks the centenary of the start of World War I, this year's programme included a moving tribute to the more than 600 members of the Fifth Battalion of the SA Native Labour Corps, who drowned when the troopship, the SS Mendi, sunk after colliding with another vessel on her way across the English Channel to the battlefields of Europe. The young girls of Project 021 re-created the stormy ocean waves, beneath which the SS Mendi sank, while the Sea Cadets stood as sentries for the fallen soldiers. A musical backdrop was provided by the SA Navy Band Marimba Group, with Lieutenant Lindela Madikizela narrating the story of the tragic event. He quoted the words of Rev Isaac Dyobha's speech

“No Cape Town Military Tattoo is complete without its signature act – Tchaikovsky’s famous 1812 Overture, written to commemorate Russia’s defence of Moscow against Napoleon’s advancing army at the Battle of Borodino in 1812.”

to the troops, as they stamped the dance of death on the deck of the sinking ship: “I, a Xhosa, say you are my brothers ... Swazis, Pondos, Basotho ... so let us die like brothers. We are the sons of Africa!”

No Cape Town Military Tattoo is complete without its signature act – Tchaikovsky’s famous 1812 Overture, written to commemorate Russia’s defence of Moscow against Napoleon’s advancing army at the Battle of Borodino in 1812. The thunderous salvos of the 25-pounder guns, perfectly synchronised with the musical score, reverberated around the city centre. It was conducted by Capt Vernon Michels, with Battery Sergeant Major Bennie Havenga in charge of the Saluting Troop, and Staff Sergeant Andrew Imrie in his traditional role of fire control officer. This year, the re-arrangement of the seating stands meant that there was no clear line of sight from the arena to the 25-pounder guns outside – adding considerably to the challenge of synchronising the firing of the guns! Impressively, it went extremely well –

no doubt thanks to the many years of experience of SSgt Imrie and his crew.

As the echoes of the final salvo died away, and the clouds of smoke from the guns rolled over the Castle walls, the participants of the 2014 Tattoo gathered for the Final Muster. With vocals by Corporal Godfrey Rahube and Jacqueline Canning, they performed the inspirational

It ranged from the early days of the Cape of Good Hope to the tragic sinking of the SS Mendi in World War I, and concluded with the formation of the new SANDF and a dramatic demonstration of the capabilities of our well-trained soldiers. The Executive Committee can rightly declare the CTMT 2014 a success.



REGINE LORD

SA Navy sea cadets of TS Woltemade during their silent drill

“You Raise Me Up”. The flags of the regiments, corps and services who took part in the 2014 Tattoo were on parade. After the lone piper had played Balmoral’s Lament/The Skye Boat Song from the roof of the Kat balcony, the massed military bands and the massed pipes and drums departed. The last to withdraw were the SAASIC motorcycles bearing the South African national flag.

The organisers of the Cape Town Military Tattoo 2014 had created an exciting and colourful programme in celebration of 20 years of democracy.

“The organisers of the Cape Town Military Tattoo 2014 had created an exciting and colourful programme in celebration of 20 years of democracy.”