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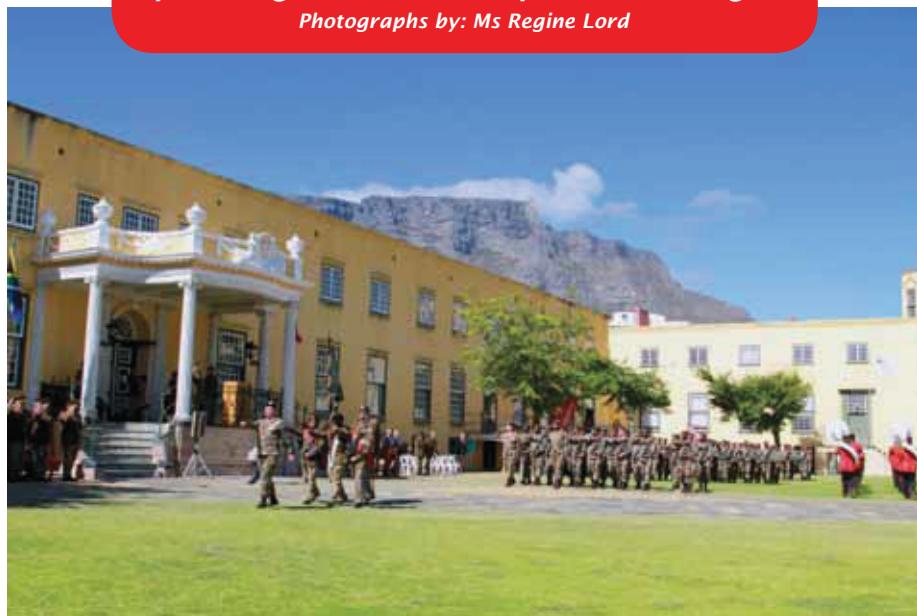
Department:
Defence:
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Cape Town Rifles Change of Command

By: Ms Regine Lord and Capt John Dorrington

Photographs by: Ms Regine Lord



*Led by Maj Boshoff and the Colour Party,
Cape Town Rifles salute their new Officer Commanding.*

Cape Town Rifles (Dukes), the Mother City's oldest serving regiment, has a new Commanding Officer. After serving in the Regiment for thirty-four years and commanding it for thirteen, Lt Col Ray Nessel MMM, JCD, has retired. He is replaced by Lt Col Francois Marais MMM, B Mil, a former Permanent Force officer.

The Change-of-Command Parade was held in perfect weather at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town on Sunday 9 February 2014. Among the many invited guests and members of the Defence Reserves and Regulars who attended were Brig Gen M.J. de Goede and Brig Gen G. Kamffer. The SA Army Band Cape Town under Drum Major WO2 Andre van Schalkwyk provided the music. Lt Col Nessel inspected his troops for the last time before thanking his colleagues and superiors for their support during his tenure as commanding officer. He then handed over the ceremonial Sword of Command to Lt Col Marais. The troops responded with three resounding cheers. Afterwards, the Dukes Officers' Mess was opened and refreshments were served.



*An emotional and historical moment as
Lt Col Ray Nessel hands over the symbolic
Sword of Command to his successor,
Lt Col Francois Marais, in front of the parade.*



Lt Col Francois Marais, the new commanding officer, has a definite vision for the Regiment:

'I am privileged and extremely proud to have been charged by the Chief SA Army and the GOC SA Army Infantry Formation to command the Cape Town Rifles. It is a responsibility I do not take lightly. It is a task greater than merely commanding, and one that requires a real understanding of our primary resource – our members.'

'It is therefore my mission to ensure that all our members are treated with the respect they deserve and with the professionalism the organisation expects from us. They are to be afforded the opportunity to show their individual ability and skills, as well as allowed to have equal opportunities for future development. All of this is to be combined with the single most important objective – to ensure a high level of morale within the unit. I have a vision of a Cape Town Rifles that will be renowned for its ability to execute orders and instructions; a Reserve Force unit that embraces the One-Force-Concept, and a unit that sets forth its proud and rich heritage and traditions. This vision of mine resonates with that of the unit and our motto Semper Eadem, and it is up to each member to ensure that we will be known as the most reliable, specialised infantry unit within the SA Army Infantry Formation.'

Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae:

Lt Col Francois Servaas Marais MMM, B Mil

Born in Cape Town in 1973, Lt Col Francois Marais was educated at the Eben Dönges High School, where he matriculated in 1991. Soon after commencing his national service, he was selected for officer training at the Infantry School in Oudtshoorn and received his commission as a second lieutenant. It was during this time that he joined the Permanent Force. In his third and final year at the Infantry School, he was promoted to lieutenant and enrolled for a B Mil degree at the Military Academy in Saldanha. Various appointments followed and he was promoted to captain in 1997.

Francois Marais has had a full and active military career. His appointments include serving as SO3 Training at Group 1 Headquarters at Youngsfield and as SO2 Operational Planning. During this time, he was deployed with 9 SAI Bn to combat crime and gangsterism on the Cape Flats. Having been promoted to major, he was transferred to Silvermine (Joint Task Force West), where he was appointed SO2 Area Protection. Two years later, he was transferred to Joint Operational Headquarters in Pretoria, where he served until August 2006, when he resigned from the Permanent Force. During his time in Pretoria, he was active in various internal and external operations, being involved predominantly in the training and preparation of forces prior to their deployment. Eager to continue serving the military, he joined the Defence Reserves in 2009 and was appointed as 2IC of the Cape Town Rifles (Dukes).

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Parade Commander Maj Boschoff and Cape Town Rifles (Dukes) on parade, with the Colour Party (RSM Daantjie Prins, Colour Sergeants Jikele and Prins, and Lt Ndzena, the Colour Ensign).

