

# Slain soldiers venerated

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**B**omb Alley Shellhole in Brackenfell is on a mission to trace the descendants of the soldiers, sailors and airmen who sacrificed their lives for their country.

The Shellhole, who recently moved to Brackenfell Cricket Club and meets on the third Thursday of every month, is one of the oldest units of the Memorable Order of the Tin Hats (MOTH) in the Western Cape and this year celebrates 75 years, having been established in November 1944 in Bellville.

Founded in Durban on 7 May 1927, MOTH, is the second oldest military veteran's organisation in South Africa.

"The concepts of true comradeship, mutual help and sound memory have become the

inspiration of our remarkable organisation of former soldiers, sailors, airmen and medics of all ranks," says Gail Jordaan, Old Bill at MOTH.

"It operates independently of race, religion or politics in the same way as front-line service, but with full democracy".

The ideal of true comradeship are expressed through the organisation by practising front line friendship in civilian life, he explains; and the principle of sound memory, by remembering the fallen as a living companionship.

"We serve their memory in practical actions which rise above divisions of social status, race, or politics," he says.

Although there are many memorial services for specific battles all over the country, the MOTH has a dedicated war commemoration service in Bellville which commemorates South African participation in all wars.

This is hosted annually in August by Bomb Alley Shellhole in collaboration with the Bellville sub-council at the Cenotaph at the Bellville Civic Centre.

"Because the names of the brave men and women who died in battles are not always recognised, we want to try and trace their living descendants," he says.

"We realise that this will be a long process and have decided to start with the northern suburbs of Cape Town as that is where our annual memorial service is held.

"We have the names of those inscribed on memorials in the northern suburbs of Cape Town as well as their addresses at the time of death for the WW1 and WW2 veterans, but need the assistance and input of the public and living relatives to obtain up-to-date information."

Due to privacy restrictions these names may not be published.

Gail invites living relatives of deceased service men to assist MOTH, or to request information from them at [gj@sun.ac.za](mailto:gj@sun.ac.za) or [bryansterne@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bryansterne@yahoo.co.uk).



Wreaths laid at the Cenotaph in August this year.