



The South African Military History Society

Die Suid-Afrikaanse Krygshistoriese Vereniging

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NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 2024

Past JOHANNESBURG ZOOMeeting

Dr Graham Winton, speaking from the UK about *Horsing the British Army: Die Tweede Anglo-Boere Oorlog 1899-1902*, told an appreciative audience about the trials and tribulations surrounding the horses which were used by the British Army during the Anglo-Boer War.

He explained the British Army's position prior to the outbreak of hostilities, when regiments were responsible for their own horses; for example the first veterinarians to care for the horses were only appointed in 1859. From 1888 the British National Defence Act included requisitioning as a way for the Army to obtain horses.

African horse-sickness was only one of the problems which beset the imported horses. Several Remount Depots were established in the Cape and Natal where animals could recover and be rehabilitated for return to active service. Separation into many paddocks to avoid spreading disease made these establishments large in area.

Countries as far away as Argentina and Russia, Hungary and the USA, sold animals to the British Army. More than a thousand ships were used in transporting horses!

The sheer scale of operations - by early 1902 the requirements were for 14 000 horses and 2 000 mules per month - was most impressive. By war's end over 377 000 horses had been sent to South Africa - not counting any "captured" equines.

And then there was the feeding ... the South African grasslands could not produce enough for the Boers' animals, much less for the British horses. Next time you admire the roadside Cosmos flowers, think of them as having been imported as part of the horse food sent from South America during the Anglo-Boer War... as was Khakibos!

It was obvious that Graham was **the expert** speaker on the topic - hardly surprising given that his *magnum opus* is *Theirs not to Reason Why - Horsing the British Army 1875-*

1925. He was thanked by Anne Irwin, who had spoken to the Eastern Cape branch on this topic in pre-ZOOM days.

Graham's lecture has been added to the Video Library.

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FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS - ZOOMINARS - in date order -

Eastern Cape Branch (SAMHSEC) Zoominars

Monday **9 December 2024** at 19h30 and then at 20h15:

In session 1

Speaker: *Claude Wessels*

Subject: **Friends of the Port Elizabeth SAAF Museum**

In session 2

Speaker: *Stephen Bowker*

Subject: **SAMHSEC's field trip to the Lower Fish River area
on 17 November 2024.**

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Johannesburg

Thursday **12th December 2024** at 19h30 and then 20h15

Speaker: *Johann Ahlers*

Subject: **"Kalahari Escapades: Legends, Lore and War 1900-1915"**

"The Kalahari is a small place! Did you know that those who entered the Kalahari during the South African War in 1900 were also active in the area at the start of World War I in 1914 - wearing different hats? Did you know that one of those pursued in 1900, commanded the pursuers in 1914? Did you know that Manie Maritz entered 'South Africa' into a non-aggression pact with Germany? Did you know that the famous Boer general Christiaan de Wet was eventually captured in the Kalahari? Did you know that South Africa's Robin Hood was active in the area and that he probably was a British spy? Time to tune into "Kalahari Escapades: Legends, Lore and War 1900-1915"."

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SAMHSEC RPC

The next RPC (Request the Pleasure of your Company) Zoominar will be next year.

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**Members of all Branches are always
welcome to Attend all ZOOM Meetings**

Let scribe@samilitaryhistory.org know in order to be sent an invitation to the next ZOOMinar

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KwaZulu-Natal Branch Meetings

Next Meeting - Sat 14th December 2024

Main talk - Col Steve Bekker

Subject - *The Assistance of the SAAF with 2010 Soccer World Cup in Durban*

The starting time is 1.30 for 2.00pm. The venue remains the St Cyprians Church Hall off Umbilo Rd, with secure parking and liquid refreshments available for cash.

Entry is free and open to all. A donation of R10 for the raffle and R10 for the car guard are requested from all attendees. Snacks will be served as is usual for the December meeting.

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Time to join the Zoominars

For those members still anxious about Zoom lectures, please give them a try! Go onto the internet and open your web browser at www.zoom.us. If using a cellphone visit the app store. Once you have the app on your device - computer or cellphone - choose to join a meeting. Either use the link which is provided in the invitation or type in the meeting code and then the password, also from the invitation, as requested. There are usually two Zoom sessions per evening.

You do NOT need to have a camera - unless you are the speaker or a chairman- although it is always interesting to match faces to voices. As in the auditorium, you do not HAVE to ask the speaker any questions, but there are ways in which you can draw the chair's attention so you can do so.

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Help requested for research

1) Lewis, Lewes and or Lewies family

Alta Jamison is currently enrolled for a PhD thesis in the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies at the University of Pretoria. Her research study is entitled:

“The genealogical biography: An alternate historical archive and methodology”.

This study investigates the family tree and history of the Afrikaans-speaking Lewis family of South Africa and seeks to establish a connection with Lewis family lines perpetuating in the United Kingdom. John Lewis, the South African progenitor, was born in Glasgow in Scotland as the son of Joseph Lewis and Anna Butterworth. His son, Joseph Johannes Lewis (1820 – 1908) was the first generation born on African soil.

In compliance with the requirements of a doctoral study, she needs to do primary research. This will include archival research as well as certain field research which will take the form of open-ended interviews with volunteering individuals with first-hand knowledge or information relevant to her study,

as well as the collection of biological material for ancestral genetic analysis. All costs related to the genetic testing will be covered by herself.

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2) WWI Artists sought

Was your grandfather/great-grandfather an artist during WWI?

Allyson Kreuiter<kreuiad@unisa.ac.za> writes:

“I am trying to locate SA soldier artists who served on the Western Front...” South Africa did not have official artists in the First World War. But there might well be families like Allyson’s where her grandfather was involved and did produce artwork during his military service. Please contact her directly if you are able to help.

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3) Rupert John Stevens

Karen Horn asks as follows:

“I am trying to find information on Rupert John Stevens, he was a fighter pilot and one of the great escape members. The military archives have nothing except his service record. Do you perhaps have any information or can you point me in the right direction? perhaps to family or previous speakers who mentioned him or the great escape?”

Reply to karenhorn421@gmail.com

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Subscriptions for 2025

It will be necessary to increase the Subscriptions for 2025 by about 6%. Invoices will be sent out in early January

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BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

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