



# TALE DRAGGER



## **SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION – PORT ALFRED APRIL 2024**

Welcome to the April 2024 edition of Tale Dragger, the official newsletter of the South African Air Force Association (SAAFA), Port Alfred Branch. As we soar through the skies of imagination and honor the legacy of the South African Air Force, we invite you to embark on a captivating journey filled with stories, achievements, and a deep appreciation for the men and women who have dedicated their lives to serving our nation.

Tale Dragger is dedicated to celebrating the rich heritage and inspiring stories that define the South African Air Force. Through the pages of this newsletter, we pay tribute to the bravery, skill, and unwavering commitment of our servicemen and women, past and present. It is a testament to their sacrifices and achievements that have shaped our nation's aviation history



## Welcome 2024 – News Flash

Yep, believe it, 2024 has arrived and as a branch we kicked off with the annual Victory Cup Golf Day, our main fund-raising event to support the branch's benevolence commitments.

Our monthly meetings are still being held at The Royal St Andrews Hotel which are regularly attended by about 25 to 30 members.

During February we held our AGM and Koos, Anton and Tim were re-elected and Adrew Winkelmann joined the Branch Executive Committee (BEC).

## Membership

Our PA Branch boasts with 85 members of which 38 are active members whom have paid their annual levies and attend our monthly meetings regularly. BEC will keep up its effort to 're-activate' those that are classified non-active. We do understand that most of these non-active members are quite aged and therefore find it difficult to participate actively.

Andrew Winkelmann, the new BEC member responsible for membership will focus his efforts on maintaining the membership data records and he will contact the non-active member to see how we as a branch can assist those who have difficulty attending our events and find out what possible issues could be resolved.

## Heritage: New SAAF book launched

A new book on the personal history of the SAAF has been launched. Titled "Tumult in the Clouds - Stories from the South African Air Force, 1920 - 2010", the book has been compiled by Dean Wingrin who personally interviewed and corresponded with nearly all the contributors.

The South African Air Force (SAAF), formed on 1 February 1920, is the second oldest air force in the Commonwealth. The air arm played a major role in securing victory for the Allies during the Second World War, in the 1948/49 Berlin Airlift, and in Korea in the 1950s. The SAAF assisted Rhodesia in the 1960s and '70s, made a major contribution to the 'Border' or 'Bush' war in South West Africa and Angola, participated in the transition to a new democracy in South Africa and continuously supports South African peace missions in Africa. It has also assisted in countless relief and rescue missions in southern Africa throughout this entire period.

However, the SAAF is not just about aircraft and ordnance; it is made up of people and it is in this compilation that these people, airmen and ground crew alike, find their voice. These are their stories, all told in the first person by



Annetjie Rogers – Congress 2023

Annetjie is now stepping down from BEC. We thank her for her devoted service to PA Branch. Go well

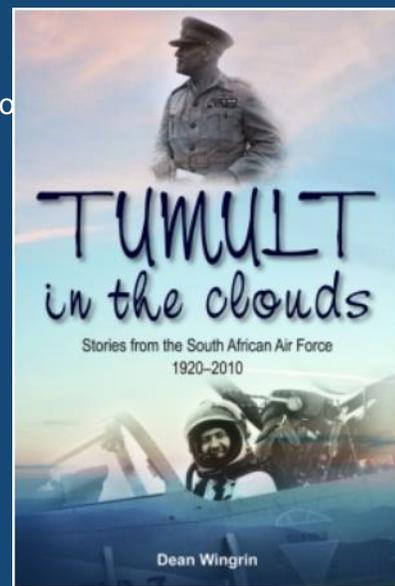
the actual participants as unvarnished, unabbreviated and intensely immediate and personal recollections.

Through their stories of heroism, duty, adventure and tragedy, the reader will follow the history of the SAAF prior to 1939 to the present day.

To complement the stories, the final chapter includes a collection of squadron pub songs from the Second World War, Korea and the Border War.

The highly successful formal launch took place at the SAAF Museum Flying Training Day, Zwartkop airfield, on Saturday 2 February 2013. Lt Gen Denis Earp, who wrote the Foreword, was guest of honour, together with Maj Gen Tsoku Khumalo and Lt Col Mike O'Conner.

This book can be purchased on-line at [https://www.saairforce.co.za/shop/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=1249/](https://www.saairforce.co.za/shop/product_info.php?products_id=1249/)

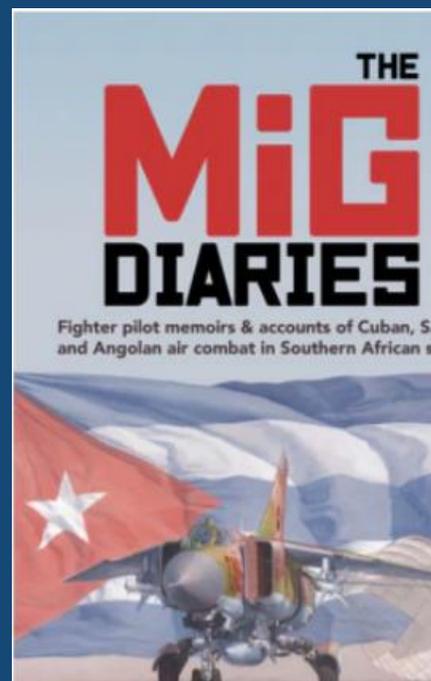


Another book, launched in 2023 that is really worth reading is **MIG DIARIES**.

Most books on the Angolan Bush War present the South African perspective of events. Now a former MiG-23 Squadron Commander of the Cuban Air Force has collaborated with an ex-SAAF pilot to paint a remarkable new picture of the aerial conflict over Angola in the 1980s. The sketches by Sean Thackwray, himself a former SAAF fighter pilot, help to bring this unique story to life, along with select images, including many not seen in print in South Africa.

Our vice-chairman, Anton Knoetze who was a 28 Sqn navigator at the time features in this book when the author fired two air-to-air missiles at a SAAF C130 at night and over Angolan territory.

The book is available at Exclusive Books (online <https://exclusivebooks.co.za/products/9781990956546>)



### **KOREAN WAR: 2 Squadron's first tactical encounter**

The first 2 Squadron sortie comprised two Mustangs, piloted by Commandant Theron, the seasoned commander, and Captain G.B. Lipawsky.<sup>54</sup> Taking off from K-9 airfield at 07:10 on 19 November, they destroyed thirteen camouflaged objects as well as five vehicles. The results of the mission were recorded as "satisfactory" in 2 Squadron's war diary. On completion of their mission, they landed in K-24.<sup>55</sup> The recording of operations during a war is generally influenced by the norms of a given military. There is little or no space for emotion in these accounts - a factual recording was the standard practice

## Welfare of Members

Sadly Rodney Keet has answered The Sunset Call. Rodey's daughter, Vanessa is still an active member of our branch and can be seen often at our monthly luncheons.

Koos, our chairman had a stroke in September 2023 but recovered remarkably well.

John Wesley, our past chairman has recovered well and attended our March Lunch.

## Birthdays

### April

John Roger (24<sup>th</sup>)  
Tim Cockbain (24<sup>th</sup>)  
Glen Mc Creath (27<sup>th</sup>)  
Helen Holmes (28<sup>th</sup>)

### May

Connie Abbot (9<sup>th</sup>)  
Annetjie Rogers (11<sup>th</sup>)

### June

Ivan Erasmus (15<sup>th</sup>)  
Robert Godfrey (24<sup>th</sup>)  
Helen Somers (25<sup>th</sup>)  
Peggy Goosen (29<sup>th</sup>)

Editor's apology if any birthdays are missing.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting and lunch will be held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May, 12:30 for 13:00 at the Royal St Andrews Hotel.

Please advise by email at [pa@saafa.co.za](mailto:pa@saafa.co.za) if you are attending or apologising by no later than 26 April 2023.

2024 – Outeniqua Branch, Wilderness – 23-26 May 2024



2 Sqn during Korean War – Dec 1950

