



CAPE SAAACA

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CAPE SAAACA certified as a member of NAACCSA Ref No 2005/14
SAPS CFR Accreditation No: 1300077

AUGUST 2007 NEWSLETTER

JULY TALK

Notes on the July talks at the end of the newsletter.



UPCOMING AUGUST TALKS:

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 30th of August, at 19:00 at the CTH Officers Mess inside the Cape Castle. (Parking inside the grounds behind the Castle off Strand Street)

The speaker at the next meeting is:

André Olivier will discuss and display examples of the weapons and armour of the Japanese Samurai warrior. The artefacts that André will be putting on display are from his own collection. André has over the last decade focused on this fascinating facet of collecting and is fast becoming one of the foremost experts in South Africa on the subject – therefore, a talk not too missed!

If you want to bring along an artefact for display and discussion purposes, please do so. Members are reminded that strict safety protocol on the handling of any firearm will apply; ALL MOVING PARTS MUST BE REMOVED and displayed separately, unless prior cleared with the Chairman. NO live ammunition will be handled.



OUTSTANDING RE-LICENSING APPLICATIONS DUE 31ST MARCH 2007

There are still some outstanding categorisation applications as at the 31st March 2007 towards which CAPE SAAACA issued "Deferment Letters" pending the members' final outstanding Field of Interest submissions to the Cape SAAACA Membership Committee. The SAPS CFR has requested us to finalise same within 30 days.

All outstanding members have until 30 Sept 2007 to submit final submissions for final review, pending which the "Deferment letters" lapse and Members would not be able to re-license those firearms.

This is clearly very important and we request those not to procrastinate further as we will not be able to help them after that date.

We will post letters to those involved to warn them individually.

Further arrangements were also made around the handling of further applications.



SAPS CFR 31st OF MARCH 2008 RE-LICENSE APPLICATIONS:

Relevant to those born in the months July/August/Sept.

If they have not already done so, members are requested to start working on their collections' Fields of Interest that first has to be considered and duly approved by the CAPE SAAACA membership committee before they can apply to have any firearms relicenced. New applications takes about three months to work through, and it will be wise to submit it before the end of December as no guarantees can be given on any applications submitted from January, given the deadline of end March 2008 for this cycle. Contact your Chairman should you need any help to get it done.

Late submissions place huge demands on the membership Committee with great costs and effort to all involved. During the two months Feb/march 2007 the Mem. Comm. met 12 times in order to facilitate these late applications.



SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS:

It constitutes legal documents which contains sensitive information, and as such requires appropriate due diligence control. As such NO applications may be submitted via any individual committee member or at meetings. To allow proper control, it may only be submitted via registered mail or direct submission at our Offices. A dated receipt will be issued against which the application status may be monitored.



EXCO FEEDBACK:

With the basic structures well entrenched and operating, we are focusing on the following projects to develop our various interests into a wider value adding base.

1. **Web site redevelopment** to allow a continual flow of information, facilitate as many diverse interests that make our association alive and to provide admin and management services online.
2. Communications with the **SAPS Western Cape DFO (Dir S. Japhta)** to specifically promote private collectors' interest on various matters.
3. Communications with Ms R. Isaacs from the South Africa Heritage Resources Agency (**SAHRA**) to protect historic South African firearm assets being exported or destroyed.
4. A **Cape SAAACA accredited dealers system** through which we aim to promote various dealers that offer products/services specifically relevant to collectors, and to offer beneficial discounts to our members.
5. Establishment of a **members trading forum**, through which we will also make available firearms for sale that are offered to us by individual firearm owners who do not wish to have it destroyed.
6. **Historical Military Re-enactment group** "Fort Knokke Militia" under John Lamont.
7. Development of **regular historical shoots** to facilitate shooting disciplines of various types of collectable firearms against each other in structured format. The Atlantis shoots will be under the control of Francois du Toit.
8. A **junior collector awareness program** through talks and illustrations on historical topics at schools inside the Western Cape area. Interested parties may contact the Chairman.
9. **Annual social events** and functions.
10. **Membership market survey questionnaire** to determine current expectations and needs from amongst our members.
11. **Annual General Meeting** for all paid up members in the last quarter of 2007.

Members are invited to contact the Chairman on any of these topics.

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING ADMINISTRATION COSTS AND FEES:

The costs related to specifically Field of Interest Organogram submissions place a heavy burden out of context to the benefit to the Members at large as only those involved benefit from it.

Our current financial review reflect an expected deficit of R15,000.00 per annum which will require either that we increase our annual membership dues or recoup it from those actions placing the most financial demands on our limited resources. The EXCO decided to follow the latter course.

With immediate effect the following arrangements were determined;

APPLICATION FEES:

New membership application fees consist of an R150.00 administration fee as well as the annual membership dues of R450.00. This excludes Field of Interest fees reflected below.

Field of Interest (New and reviews) Organogram submissions	=	R250.00
Field of Interest Organograms received after 15 th Dec till the end of Feb.	=	R500.00*
Field of interest Organogram submissions received 1 st – 31 st March.	=	R1000.00*
Collectibility applications	=	R50.00

* Only applicable to applications subject to the immediate SAPS CFR re-licensing cut-off date 31st March. These were decided upon to pass the costs directly to those 11th hour crisis management applications that place the heaviest burden on our limited resources. Members are requested to make due allowance when planning their applications.

2007 AGM

Notice is given that our 2007 AGM will be held on Saturday the 3rd of November 2007 at the CTH Officers Mess inside the Cape Castle.



EVENTS:

Regular monthly talks last Thursday of the month at the CTH Officers Mess in The Castle in Cape Town.

Shoots:

Atlantis Shoots: Range Officer Francois du Toit 084 909 9317

Fun shoots:

NSVO Range in Cape Town and Reinders Range in Joostenberg Vlakte.

Visit web site for dates.

We envisage formal functions and will request members' input as to the format in a future member research questionnaire.

Members are invited to keep us informed of interesting "other" events of general interest, which we could include in our "annual event" web site calendar currently under construction. (Please visit www.capesaaaca.co.za)



TRADE NEWS

The recently-held Arms Fair, at the SA Museum for Military History in Johannesburg, took place on the weekend of 11-12 August. It was attended by the chairperson and some of our members, who can give some feedback if time allows it.

Classic Arms Auction held on the 11th of August 2007:

- It was interesting to note that not less than 6 CAPE SAAACA members attended.
- That the prices of firearms in general stiffened considerably, reflecting a recovery on that front which is good news for the industry. Visit www.classicarms.co.za

The long-awaited hardcover publication of *The Saints - The Rhodesian Light Infantry*, is now available from one of our accredited book dealers, The Military Bookshop; contact Johan van den Berg at warbooks@mweb.co.za or 082 579 0386. It sells for R750,00 in the trade, but Cape SAAACA members enjoy a 10% discount.

Any Dealers interested in becoming an accredited Cape SAAACA Dealer, are invited to contact the Chairman for further details.

CAPE SAAACA Accredited Dealer annual dues = R500,00

Selections criteria apply.

Benefits:

- Discount to paid up CAPE SAAACA members
- Dealers may display their services and products at cost on our events.
- Dealers may display the A4 "CAPE SAAACA Accredited Dealer" decal on their shop fronts and letterheads.
- Dealers act as referral points for new memberships.



JULY 2007 TALK:

The meeting of the 26th of July's main topic was the display of some more of the weapons from the CTH collection, as shown to us by Pierre de Villiers, and historically/technically elaborated on by the scribe, Johan van den Berg. The weapons discussed were the machine-guns in the collection, dating from the First and Second World Wars. First on the list was a German heavy machine-gun, the **MG 08/15**, dating from the First World War. The MG 08/15 is a water-cooled, belt-fed machine-gun, and is in fact a lightened version of the standard MG 08, fitted with a bipod, butt stock and pistol-grip. Influenced by the air-cooled Lewis gun with its drum magazine, the Germans looked for various options to equip their own troops with a light-weight, portable machine-gun. Although they tested a range of more suitable machine-guns such as the air-cooled Model 1915 Bergmann, the air-cooled weapons quickly over-heated under prolonged firing, barrel exchange being virtually non-existent, as well as not being mechanically very reliable. The German interim solution to the problem was the MG 08/15, which became the most prolific standard German

machine-gun, some 72 000 being manufactured between 1915 and 1918. The design, based upon a patent of the Maxim machine-gun, is a direct relative of the British standard heavy machine-gun, the Vickers, and was, like all Maxim derivatives, mechanically very reliable. As a portable machine-gun, it still weighed 18 kg, unloaded and without coolant in the barrel-jacket. The calibre was the standard German military cartridge of both world wars, the rimless 7,92 x 57 mm, and the type of ammunition feed was either a 50-, 100- or 250-round fabric belt. Although being notorious for its lack of accuracy due to the placement of the bipod at the point of balance, the gun still saw service (as non-frontline and fortification weapons) up to the end of the Second World War in 1945! The CTH gun is missing its butt stock and the story of how it became war booty, has unfortunately been lost over the intervening years.

The other two machine-guns in the CTH inventory are likewise captured German machine-guns, but dating from the 1939-1945 conflict. The first of these, chronologically speaking, is the **MG 34**. The air-cooled MG 34 is the first truly successful general-purpose (universal) machine-gun (GPMG), adaptable to the dual role of heavy, support machine-gun in the sustained-fire role, as well as a light, portable machine-gun, in the infantry squad-support role. This came about with the solution of the overheating of the barrels by the innovative feature of providing for quick barrel-changes in the sustained-fire role, a common feature with all modern GPMGs. Other than its distinctive aesthetically slim design and perforated barrel-sleeve, the MG 34 introduced an innovative and highly effective rotary interrupted-thread locking bolt head actuated by cams, resulting in a form of short recoil mechanism, augmented by the distinctive booster cup at the end of the barrel. The barrel-change mechanism consists of depressing a single latch to enable the receiver/stock assembly to swivel out of the way so that the heated barrel can be tipped out of the barrel sleeve, to be replaced with a spare barrel, executed in under ten seconds by an experienced gun-crew. The MG 34 was a very popular support weapon and served in many varied roles in the German armed and satellite forces during the Second World War, and was encountered post-war all over the world, even in the SA Border War/Angolan conflict! The MG 34 was an expensive weapon to manufacture, requiring intricate machining processes. It weighed 11,42 kg (empty) and used either a non-disintegrating or disintegrating 50-round metal belt (normally linked together to provide a continuous 250-round belt), a 50-round drum or a 75-round saddle drum (to enhance mobility). Cyclic rate of fire is 900 rounds/min. Mounted on the Lafette-34 (23,6 kg) or the less complicated Dreibein-Lafette-34 (6,75 kg) it was used in the sustained-fire role, necessitating barrel-changes after every 250 rounds fired.

The final machine-gun displayed was the German **MG 42**. During the course of the Second World War the German authorities came to the realisation that the exigencies of modern (and total) warfare required weapons that could be mass-produced and parts-manufacture sub-contracted – in short, a revolutionary approach that went contrary to the German norm of meticulousness and precision. Out of this requirement was born a weapon that could be rated of one of the greatest weapons ever developed. It was a weapon not only innovative in production techniques and ease of manufacture, but also in revolutionary design features and ease of operation, that remains the yardstick against which subsequent machine-gun development – to the modern day – must be gauged. The manufacturing process made use of a spot-welded metal sheet-pressing which held the essential components – the barrel, receiver and bolt – in place, and cut production time considerably. The barrel-change was also much faster than the MG 34 and a trained crew could accomplish it in under 7 seconds by simply flipping open a latch on the right-hand side of the gun, in front of the receiver, slipping out the hot barrel and inserting a

fresh barrel and closing the latch. The MG 42 uses the same disintegrating/non-disintegrating link belt as the MG 34, but no drum magazines. Unloaded it weighs 10,6 kg (empty) and its only drawback was the high cyclic rate of 1 200-1 500 rpm, which consumed ammunition at a terrific rate and negatively impacted on the controllability of the MG 42. In the sustained-fire role the MG 42 could be mounted on the purpose-designed MG-Lafette 42, which afforded better controllability and accuracy (a captured copy of which is also in the collection of the CTH). The MG 42 introduced a revolutionary bolt-locking system which was safe, practical and reliable with the high rate of fire that was characteristic of the MG 42. It consists of two roller-bearings that are cammed into recesses in the receiver when in battery. When the gun fires the recoil booster at the barrel end collects recoil gasses that force the barrel and receiver, locked together by the roller bearings, back for a short distance, by which time the pressure has dropped to safe levels. The rollers are forced back into their respective recesses in the bolt-head which recoils fully to pick up a fresh cartridge and repeat the cycle – up to 20-25 times a second, depending on the cyclic rate.

The origin of the copies of the latter two machine-guns that reside in the CTH collection is unclear, but is assumed to be Italy. The MG-Lafette 42 was captured in North Africa and is still painted in the distinctive “desert tan” yellow colour scheme of that theatre of operations.

A word of thanks again to Pierre for sharing the treasures in the CTH collection with us, and Johan for fleshing out the display with interesting facts and details.

Stephan Fourie