



Jimmy's Own

Official Newsletter of the Signals Association

Issue 14 - June 2020

Master of Signals

Congratulations to Dr Brian Austin

Call back the past

A photograph from
36 years ago brings
back memories

Is our Secretary General a cowboy?

Horses run in the family

Jimmy keeps safe

As you can see, even Jimmy wears a mask
these days



This second issue for 2020 brings us almost half way through the year! Regrettably just about nothing has happened this year, barring our participation in the 2020 Cape Town (formerly Argus) Cycle Race.

Last year we kicked off with a Golf Day which we hosted in conjunction with 71 Signal Unit at the Parow Golf Course on Friday, 29 March 2019. This year we kicked off by just-just managing to beat the cancellation of local, national and international sporting and other events brought about by the Covid-19 epidemic by participating as marshals in the 2020 Cape Town Cycle Race held on Sunday, 8 March 2020. Full details with photographs appeared in our Special Edition No 13 which we issued immediately after the race.

This then put an end to the renewed enthusiasm gained by our cycle race participation as soon afterwards came the Lock-Down and all associated therewith.

Clearly, the most disturbing and unfortunate event in our yearly calendar to be cancelled as a result of Covid-19 was our Annual Luncheon which was booked and planned to be held at the Parow Golf Club on Sunday, 3 May 2020.

On 1 May 2016 we, as an Association, laid down a promise to try follow in the footsteps of our WWII predecessors, the 3rd Brigade Signal Coy Reunion Association which, managed to hold a reunion luncheon, without fail for a whopping 70 years between 1946 and 2016. It took a world-wide virus to force us to break that promise. It would have not only been irresponsible to our fellow veterans and the community at large, but illegal should we have decided

to honour our 2016 promise and continue to stage the luncheon. Hopefully, our 3rd Brigade Signaller veterans will not turnover in their graves, but understand the predicament we found ourselves in, in cancelling the 2020 event.

In this regard we apologise to uncle (Sgt) Syd Ireland, who happens to be the last remaining signaller in South Africa who, no doubt, would have been present at our luncheon had it taken place. Those who attended our 2019 luncheon will recall that our guest speaker, Capt (SAN) Trunell Morrom, paid much tribute to uncle Syd in her speech to our association and our proud relationship with the 3rd Brigade Signallers. See accompanying photograph of Covid-19 prepared uncle Syd taken at Huis Luckoff, his place of residence.

We are honoured to welcome and report that Arnold (Tappa) Theron from Bloemfontein had joined our ranks. Nice to have you on board Tappa.

A former member of 3 Signal Squadron (later 71 Signal Unit) from the early 1960's, Peter Lemon of Mooiooi in North West Province also joined us. Regrettably, Peter passed away due to ailing health on 3 May 2020, just five months after joining. In the short period of Peter's membership he was largely influential in attracting a greater interest in our modest association from particularly former signallers in Gauteng and surround areas, judged by the fact that, lately, there had been over 100 "Likes" to our Facebook page which surely must have been as a result of Peter's marketing efforts. Rest in Peace dear Peter.

Also, before Peter could bid us farewell, he had been instrumental in "forcing" his brother-in-law, Bobby Dixon from *Continues on page 13...*

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Front Cover

In these trying and uncertain times, even Jimmy has taken to wearing a mask.

Dr Brian Austin - Master of Signals

We are proud of being associated with Dr Brian Austin who has just received the above special award.

The Commendation was awarded Brian a while back when Brian received the following letter in January 2020 from Colonel Tom F. Moncur, BSc CEng FIET MCIL MIOd, the Editor of the Royal Signals Institution Journal

“Many thanks for your recent e-mails on book reviews, and I agree

with your sentiments. On another matter, I am very pleased to tell you that the Master of Signals has decided to award you the Master of Signals Commendation, in recognition of your support to the Corps over the years, including articles for the Journal, lectures to the RSI and presentations to the Museum, as well as all the good advice and wisdom you have dispensed so readily over this time. The award takes the form of a rather nice medal and scroll, and it is intended to present this to you at a suitable event to be staged by your local Signals unit in Liverpool, at a time and date to be arranged. You will be contacted in the near future to arrange the details. Many congratulations on this well-deserved award, and I hope we will continue to have the benefit of your wise counsel for many years to come!”

As a result of the Corona Virus outbreak Brian’s commendation could not be handed to him on a special award ceremony but he did receive the Certificate, medal and a Royal Corps of Signals Tie in the interim. It is expected that a suitable formal occasion

will be arranged at a later stage once the viral situation is something of the past.

Brian says he was truly astounded when told he’d be getting this commendation and it has taken some getting used to. In fact, he still can’t come to terms with it as, according to him, it is a huge honour to be awarded this recognition from the British Corps of Signals for which he has always had the very highest regard..

The Corps, he says, alongside many other branches of Britain’s armed forces, are playing a massive part in the fight against this new deadly enemy (the Corona Virus).

Around ten years ago, Brian addressed a packed main hall at the RoySigs HQ in Blandford on the history of signalling in southern Africa, including the former Rhodesia. Since then he has fed the editor of the RSI Journal with occasional articles and had donated to the RoySigs Museum some SACS items, Brian’s



SACS stable belt, a SACS Jimmy, some rank insignia plus other oddments which the museum found fit to place on display in the section devoted to the affiliated Signal Corps of the Commonwealth.

Salute and congratulations Brian. Your Signals Association is proud of you.

Brian’s Certificate, medal and Tie which, apparently, is not given to all and sundry, reflects in the photographs in this article.



Too good to be true

Urban legends -we've all heard them. In fact some of us probably believe them. Here are three classic local urban legends.

At some stage of our lives we've all heard an urban legend. There were enough of them in the army - like the sergeant major that drilled his own son to death. Or the guy that stole a Noddy Car and drove it home for a weekend pass.

Well these following stories are also urban legends. Who knows, some of them may even be true. It's just that I've heard them from so many sources that all swear they were either there or heard the story from an eyewitness.

Whether they're true or not isn't that important. What is important is that they're damn good stories.

The Security Officer

The first story is about a guy that worked as a security officer at a timber factory. This factory supplied timber and hardware tools to the building industry. His job was to stand at the main gate and check everyone going out.

Trucks would fill up with supplies and he would then check the contents of the truck against their delivery note.

Because of the huge amounts of timber that were cut there were always large piles of sawdust. Anyone was welcome to come and take sawdust for free, as long as they transported it themselves. And this is what caused a huge problem for our security officer.

Everyday an elderly gentleman would come and collect a wheelbarrow full of sawdust and cart it off.

The security officer was very suspicious of this gentleman. He just knew that the guy was up to something.

Every afternoon the elderly man would arrive at the gate with his wheelbarrow full of sawdust. The security officer would dig through the sawdust, convinced that the man was trying to smuggle something out. Yet he could never find a thing.

After a few years the security officer went on pension and moved to another province to stay with his son and daughter-in-law.

A few years later he went back on holiday to the town where he had worked as a security officer.

Walking down the street he happened to bump into the same old gentleman that had collected his wheelbarrow of sawdust every day. Seeing the man again he was determined to find out what he had been up to.

"Listen," he said to the old man. "I don't work as a security officer anymore. I've been retired for some years now. But please, just to satisfy my curiosity, tell me what you up to. I know you were doing something, but I could never work out what it was. Please tell me because there is nothing I can do

about it anymore."

"Yes sir," the old man said with a smile. "I was stealing wheelbarrows."

Everyday the old man would arrive at the timber yards, take a brand new wheelbarrow from the showroom, fill it with sawdust, and then push it out of the gate. He would then sell the wheelbarrow to one of the local builders at a greatly reduced price.

A good deal

One morning a man was reading through the classified ads of his local newspaper. One of the ads under the for sale section caught his attention.

"Porsche 918 cabriolet in mint condition. Radio/tape, aircon, leather seats, full house. R1.00" the ad read and it provided a phone number.

The man was convinced that the ad was either a joke or that there had been a printing error. Still, just for a laugh, he phoned the number provided.

A woman with a very sexy voice answered the phone and confirmed that she did have a Porsche for sale and that it was indeed on sale for one Rand.

He immediately drove over to the address she had provided, still convinced that he was the victim of some sort of prank.

When he arrived at the address, in an upmarket suburb, he was greeted by a very attractive woman in her mid-30s.

She showed him the car and it was exactly as described. It was in immaculate condition. She confirmed that the car was for sale at R1.00.

He gave her R1.00 and she brought the papers for the car as well as the keys. He still couldn't believe what was happening.

"I'm thrilled with the car," he told her, "and believe me, I'm not looking a gift horse in the mouth. But I have to know what the story is. Why are you selling this for only a rand?"

"My husband left last week for Europe on a business trip," she explained. "He took his 20-year-old secretary with him. Then yesterday I received a communication from his lawyer telling me that my husband wants a divorce because he wants to marry his little bimbo. We are married in community of property and his lawyer gave me instructions that I have to sell the house and all the contents as soon as possible.

"This car is his pride and joy and I've always thought that he cares more about the car than he ever cared about me. So, as per his instructions, I am selling the car as well. And don't worry, I'll make sure he gets his 50c."

One for the road

This story was said to have taken place in KZN back when it was still known simply as Natal.

A man worked in Durban and lived in Kloof, about 35-40km outside of Durban.

One Friday afternoon one of his colleagues was leaving the company to take up another position. So they decided to have a farewell party for him at the office pub.

He had far too much to drink and when he left the party just after 9.00pm he was more than a little tipsy. Still, he felt that he was still fine to drive and set off for home.

As he came around a corner of the N3 highway, just before Pinetown, he saw the flashing blue lights and his heart skipped a beat as he realised that it was a roadblock.

It was a joint roadblock held by the South African Police (SAP) and the traffic division of the Natal Provincial Authorities (NPA), the traffic police.

When he stopped and opened his window the young policeman could smell the alcohol on his breath. He was given a breathalyser test, which he failed. He was instructed to pull his car off the road next to a caravan.

In the caravan was a doctor and a nurse, ready to take blood samples for evidence. He was shown into the caravan and took a seat with about six or seven other people also waiting to have their blood taken.

While he was sitting there he heard a tremendous crash from outside. A car had driven into the last car waiting at the roadblock and, by the sound of the crash, it must have been travelling at some speed.

The doctor and the nurse rushed out to see what the problem was and if their assistance was required. It also appeared as if all the police officials at the roadblock had done the same.

Realising that nobody was watching him, the man decided to take a chance.

After all no-one had taken his name yet and he was sure that none of them had taken note of his car registration number.

So he went outside and saw that the keys were still in the ignition of his white 2.0 litre Ford Sierra. He climbed into the car and drove off home.

When he arrived home he quickly explained the situation to his wife.

“Look, I don’t think they got my name or registration number. But just in case I’m going to go and jump into bed. If the cops do come and ask questions you tell them that I’ve been in bed with the flu all day.”

About half an hour later there was a knock at the door. The wife answered and found two policemen and two NPA traffic cops at the door. They asked if her husband drove a white Ford Sierra and gave her the registration number. She confirmed that he did but that he was asleep in bed and had been there all day with the flu. They then asked if they could see his car.

She led them to the garage and opened it. There was the white 2.0 litre Ford Sierra - with a huge set of blue lights on top of it. The NPA also used white 2.0 litre Ford Sierra’s.

In his slightly inebriated state the man had climbed into one of the NPA cars and driven it home, leaving his own car at the roadblock and making it oh so easy for them to track him down.

And that, as they say in the classics, is that.

Call back the past

It will be a good idea if members could follow in the steps of Lt Col (Ret’d) Marc Goodleser who has sent us a photograph of the 71 Signal Unit contingent that marched past the City Hall in Darling Street, Cape Town some may years ago as part of a military parade in which all units and regiments of 71 Brigade took part.

Our chairman Robbie remembers he was part of the Brigade HQ staff in the audience when the Brigade Commander and the other unit OCs in attendance all stood up giving the Signaller contingent a standing ovation because of their extremely neat and

paraat drilling performance which, no doubt was the result of days of prior practising by then RSM JD Krüger.

In the accompanying photograph is our own Marc Goodleser leading the “pack” of signallers. What a handsome and neat officer he then was. Now no longer a soldier but still very much a *paraat* veteran.

Thanks Marc for sharing this photograph with us. Pity it is not in colour and that we cannot remember the date/year of the parade, which must have been round 1984. At our ripe age the memories does seem to fade.



Happy Birthday!

Please join me in wishing a very Happy Birthday to the following members who will be celebrating their birthdays during the next three months.

Birthdays during the remainder of 2020 will be published in our next issue.

We publish the photographs of the two members on our Management team who are amongst those celebrating their special occasions. We also have pleasure in placing a photograph of our honoured publisher of Jimmy's Own, none other than the famous (or is it notorious?) Matt Tennyson.

By the way Matt's wife Karen is also celebrating her birthday only four days after her husband.

- 16th – Karen Tennyson
- 21st – Ed Wittert
- 23rd – Jessica Siew
- 28th - Bobby Dixon
- 30th – Trunell Morom



Alfred



Willie



Matt

Karen

June

- 3rd – Fanie Bekker
- 6th – Alfred de Vries
- 9th – Willie van der Merwe
- 18th – Nolan Meyer

July

- 8th – Joe Coetzee
- 8th - Themba Mbali
- 12th – Tim Reilly
- 14th – Jerome Solomon
- 17th – Simphiwe Mtyenene
- 30th – Abu Baker Daniels

August

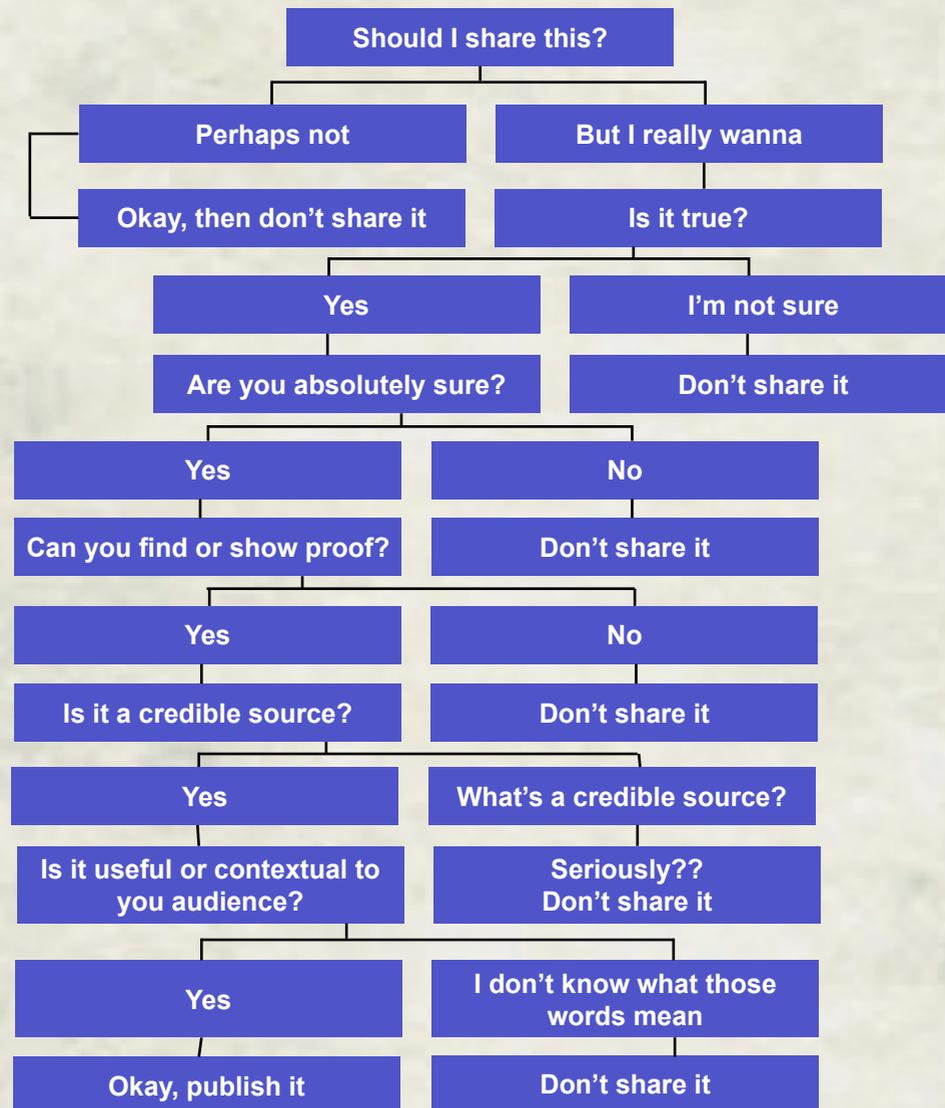
- 12th – Matt Tennyson
- 14th – Warren Oor

Should I share this?

Sound Advice before deciding whether (or not) to forward messages received via social media or elsewhere

Geoff Laskey, a Manco member, has sent us the following chart which is sound advice before merely forwarding messages/articles received from elsewhere.

It is suggested that members print this chart as a reminder to ponder over whether (or not) to forward something onto other people. Thank you Geoff for sharing this with us all:



If we don't laugh, we're going to cry

Our member Clive Justus has sent us the following light hearted comments.

- Half of us are going to come out of this quarantine as amazing cooks. The other half will come out with a drinking problem.
- I used to spin that toilet paper like I was on Wheel of Fortune. Now I turn it like I'm cracking a safe.
- I need to practice social-distancing from the refrigerator.
- Still haven't decided where to go for Easter - The Living Room or The Bedroom
- PSA: every few days try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Pyjamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.
- Home schooling is going well. Two students suspended for fighting and one teacher fired for drinking on the job.
- I don't think anyone expected that when we changed the clocks we'd go from Standard Time to the Twilight Zone.
- This morning I saw a neighbour talking to her cat. It was obvious she thought her cat understood her. I came into my house, told my dog..... we laughed a lot.
- So, after this quarantine....will the producers of My 600 Pound Life just find me or do I find them?
- My body has absorbed so much soap and disinfectant lately that when I pee it cleans the toilet.
- Day Five of Home schooling: One of these little monsters called in a bomb threat.
- I'm so excited - it's time to take out the garbage. What should I wear.
- I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to Puerto Backyarda. I'm getting tired of Los Livingroom.
- Classified Ad: Single man with toilet paper seeks woman with hand sanitizer for good clean fun.
- Day Six of Home schooling: My child just said "I hope I don't have the same teacher next year".... I'm offended.

Better six feet apart than six feet under.

REMEMBER, NO STORM LASTS FOREVER. HOLD ON, BE BRAVE, HAVE FAITH.

Every storm is temporary and we never face the storm alone. We Have Each Other.

General gives valuable feed back

Our March issue contained an interesting article submitted by our Manco member Pierre Fourie regarding the tragic day in SA military history when two Buccaneers crashed during the Capex 73 naval exercise.

Brig Gen (Ret'd) Daan Badenhorst, a local friend of our association, responded as follows to our article:

"Thank you for this issue which was as interesting as all the previous issues I have received from you over the years.

On a very personal note, referring to the article on the Buccaneer disaster, it brought back so many good memories of my friendship with Brian Antonis.

In 1963 I met Brian when I lived in the Officers Mess in Potchefstroom. I was an Artillery 2nd Lt serving at 10Field Battery and Brian an Infantry

2nd Lt serving on 42 Army Air Reconnaissance Sqn. We had adjoining rooms in the Mess.

This friendship led to me also requesting to be trained as a Pilot. Brian preceded me in being transferred to the SAAF in 1968. I followed a year later and was transferred to Advanced Flying School Pietersburg where Brian was already serving on 1 Sqn Flying Sabres. We both got married in the meantime and we lived in the married quarters AFB Pietersburg. He was thereafter transferred to 24 Sqn AFB Waterkloof (Buccaneers) and I, to 12 Squadron AFB Waterkloof (Canberra's) in 1973.

When the sad news of this tragic accident was received it was quite a shock losing a friend of so many years.

I have forwarded Jimmy's Own to our management

Continued from page 2

Cape Town to also join us. Bobby, I also remember from the 1960's, him having served as a sergeant with 3 Signal Squadron to which both Peter Lemon and I served during our initial compulsory military days. Welcome back Bobby to the local signaller "family".

We also bid welcome to new members Desmond de Beer of Durbanville and Nigel House of Simonstown. It is always nice to receive new blood into our midst.

As for the remainder of 2020, or at least until our next edition in September this year,

only time will tell as to what will happen to us all and our beloved association.

In the meantime, I trust you will enjoy reading this issue. Please feel free to pass it on. One good thing that comes from the Covid-19 lockdown is that it created more time to devote to writing articles for publication –the reason why this is a jolly good bumper edition, full of lekker stuff to keep everyone busy.

Certa Cito (Signals) greetings from Chairman Robbie Roberts

Horses run in the family

When we say that our secretary general (SG) is a cowboy, this is what we mean.

Howard Shagom started taking people on outrides when he was 17, including experienced riders into bush over weekends for 20 years.

He and his wife Amanda had two female ponies which they housed in an old ammo dump in Tamboerskloof. The ponies often strolled into town and Sea Point resulting in “mom and dad” eventually becoming well known by both the traffic department and SPCA which used to bring the ponies back.

They managed to breed three ponies with the help of a friend’s stallion. As a matter of fact Howard and Amanda were such good “parents” for their horses that they even slept inside the stable waiting for the horse to give birth

When the two horse lovers had their own two boys they gave away all their horses as it became just too much to rear both children and horses. When their first son, Adam, was born mom and dad put him onto horseback even before the baby was taken home from hospital.

Howard still rides twice a week at Silvermist Equestrian Centre in Joostenberg Vlakte with the result that we are probably the only veteran association in the country with a cowboy as an SG.

Following in dad's footsteps

Adam, Howard’s eldest son followed

in dad’s footsteps and is now an apprentice Farrier (a smith who shoes horses). Adam works daily from the early hours of each morning, even during lockdown, as such trade is regarded an essential service.

Horses need to get trimmed every five weeks. If not, the horse can get laminitis and other sicknesses causing it not to be able to walk and resultantly having to be put down.

When a horse’s hooves grows too long it prevents the natural brake over leading to many issues in the legs.

Laminitis (also termed founder) is inflammation of the laminae of the foot – the soft tissue structures that attach the coffin or pedal bone of the foot to the hoof wall. The inflammation and damage to the laminae causes extreme pain and leads to instability of the coffin bone in the hoof.

Laminitis is caused by many things in horses so instead of laminitis we could rather say horses become Chronically lame and sport horses are at high risk of pulling a tendons.

The farrier has an extremely important role in the prevention and treatment of laminitis, a crippling disease a horse can get. Furthermore, client education about the risk factors that lead to laminitis can save many horses.



Adam deals with extremely valuable and expensive horses. As horses are in his blood, he works hard to keep them fit and healthy.

Left: Our handsome secretary general on horseback.

Below left: Adam fitting a shoe onto a horse.

Below right: It’s a tiring job, as clearly demonstrated by Adam in this photo.



World War II Trivia

And to end this issue of Jimmy's Own, some World War II trivia. See you in the September issue.

- The first German serviceman killed in the war was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937).
- The first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940).
- At the time of Pearl Harbour, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced "sink us"), the shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry division was the swastika, and Hitler's private train was named "Amerika". All three were soon changed for PR purposes.
- German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City but it wasn't worth the effort.
- The Russians destroyed over 500 German aircraft by ramming them in mid-air (they also sometimes cleared minefields by marching over them). "It takes a brave man not to be a hero in the Red Army". - Joseph Stalin
- Most members of the Waffen SS were not even German.
- The only nation that Germany declared war on was the USA.

Why men who have been to war yearn to reunite

Signals Association member Peter Longbottom sent through the following poem.

I know why men who have
been to war yearn to reunite.

Not to tell stories or look at
old pictures.

Not to weep or laugh.

Comrades gather because they
long to be with the people who
once acted their best.

Who once sacrificed, who
were stripped of their humanity.

I did not pick these men, they
were delivered by fate and
the military.

But I know them in a
way I know no other men.

I have never given anyone such trust.
They were willing to guard
something more precious
than my life.

They would have carried my reputa-
tion. The memory of me.

It was part of the bargain we all made
The reason we were all willing to die
for one another.

As long as I have memory, I will think
of them all. Every day.

I am sure that when I leave this world,
my last thoughts will be of my family,
and my comrades.

Such good men.