



Pre Covid - pre "Uric" - pre "Nickle" but, only just pre "Miracle"! Our Patron, Col Ian "Tuffty" Bate (aged 6) - Gotcha, Sah!

Welcome to "THE SITREP" – your RLI RA (Africa) newsletter – Volume 13, July 2020.

Salutation

Greetings all ouens and crows wherever you may be – certainly not at Dickie Fritz, mind you!

As we gradually emerge (if we are emerging) from this incredibly demoralising COVID lockdown, many of us can report to our employers that we have been on a course. Yes – that’s correct – several golf clubs, around the world, have been renamed “The Covid Course” for this very excuse. It’s all part of an RLI troopie’s ability to turn an adverse situation around to his own advantage. We’ve seen home-videos featuring the rolling of mopani leaves into cigarettes - mixing sugar, yeast and apple-juice in order to maintain equilibrium – and homemade face-masks to prevent the detection of those winter snivels. In fact, we’ve seen it all, just about. – and we’ve had enough!

Whilst Churchill, Rhodes, Lincoln and Washington have been through the wars recently, Wayne Hanekom stands guard, ready to defend our regiment’s history. Some wag, on Facebook, commented

that the troopie statue would never be attacked because Hatfield Estate is not open to the public – Yer-Right! A group of ouens did visit, recently, and reported that all is well with the original troopie. Good job, ouens, and grateful thanks. Their “clean-up” campaign, however, was subsequently overshadowed by Brighton beach, down-town Liverpool, and “Bongwe’s” garden – begging the question, “Will the new-normal ever be normal?”

Prayer Meetings – April to July 2020

Summed up in true sitrep fashion –“NTR”!

Roll of Honour

The rolls for May, June and July are as follows:

KIA	Rank	First Name	Surname	Awards	Commando	DOD
	Capt	Leonard Paul "Len"	Pitch		3 Cdo	17-May-76
	Tpr	George William	Clarke		Spt Cdo	15-May-77
	Tpr	Earl Angus Cecil	MacDonald		Spt Cdo	15-May-77
	Tpr	Christopher John "Bobo"	Edmunds		2 Cdo	30-May-77
	Tpr	Andrew Irvine "Andy" "Ziets"	Zietsman		1 Cdo	11-May-78
	Tpr	Douglas Sydney "Dougie"	Muir		1 Cdo	12-May-79
	Tpr	Michael John "Mike"	Chance		11 Tp, 3 Cdo	15-May-79
	Tpr	Kenneth Herman "Ken"	Myburgh		Spt Cdo	16-May-79

KOAS

Tpr	Alan Thomas	Johnston		2 Cdo	13-May-69
Tpr	Bertie	Visser		2 Cdo	11-May-71
Tpr	Vernon	Clinton		Base Grp	08-May-73

L/Cpl	Raymond Edwin	Maguire		1 Cdo	14-May-77
2LT	John William	Walters		2 Cdo	27-May-79

DOAS

WO2	Raynor Laurence "Ray"	Bennett		Attd SchInf	01-May-77
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RLI

RoH

KIA

Rank	First Name	Surname	Awards	Commando	DOD
2LT	Fabio Giovanni	Falzo		1 Cdo	12-Jun-78
Tpr	Andre Johan	Botes		2 Cdo	22-Jun-78
Tpr	Christopher Francis "Chris"	Lang		1 Cdo	04-Jun-79
L/Cpl	Ewart Francois "Frans" "Ed"	Nel		1 Cdo	04-Jun-79
Cpl	Peter Oliver "Doc"	Rice		1 Cdo	04-Jun-79
Tpr	Robert "Robbie"	Francis		14 Tp, 3 Cdo	10-Jun-79
Tpr	W.E. "Eike"	Elsaesser		12 Tp, 3 Cdo	16-Jun-79
Tpr	Bruce John	McKend		12 Tp, 3 Cdo	16-Jun-79

KOAS

Tpr	Robin Rex	Ashmead		Signals Depot	08-Jun-70
L/Cpl	Alistair John	Kerswell		Base Grp	30-Jun-71
Rct	Victor William	Wright		Base Grp	08-Jun-75
T Cpl	Lucas Gerhardis	Klopper		10 Tp, 2 Cdo	19-Jun-76

Tpr	Rene "Wally"	Koellner		2 Tp, 1 Cdo	28-Jun-79
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RLI
RoH
KIA

Rank	First Name	Surname	Awards	Commando	DOD
Cpl	John Alan	Coey		2 Cdo	19-Jul-75
A Cpl	Marthinus Johannes "Jannie"	de Beer		10 Tp, 2 Cdo	19-Jul-75
Tpr	Eben "Hennie"	Potgieter		2 Cdo	19-Jul-75
Rfn	David Ian Ferguson "Dave"	Barclay		Spt Cdo	07-Jul-77
Tpr	Stephen Michael "Steve"	Dwyer		11 Tp, 3 Cdo	16-Jul-79
Act Sgt	Hugh John	McCall		11 Tp, 3 Cdo	16-Jul-79

KOAS

Rct	Michael Patrick	Oosthuizen		Base Grp	01-Jul-71
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DOAS

Capt	Gerrit Pieter	Engela		Ex 2 Cdo, I RLI (SchInf)	26-Jul-72
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Sunset Calls

Apologies here if any ouens are omitted. It's been a hellava time. Entries have been taken from various postings on social-media pages.

From Dave Charles – “Lt Gavin Coumts (781370), ex1 RLI, passed away at about 16h00 GMT today 19 Apr 2020 at his flat near Birmingham. Gavin had been under the “hammer of life” for a long time. Rest in Peace comrade in arms. The Association extends its most sincere condolences to the family and friends of Gavin and shares in the thoughts of Gavin’s sudden departure.



Melvyn Sher (Sonny), a Signaller in 3 Commando, passed away in London on Sunday 26 April 2020. Of all the sunset-calls, in the past three months, Sonny’s death is only direct COVID-related case to date. Having served as a troopie, Sonny went on to become a doctor, in Israel, and later a surgeon, in England. The boy did good!



It is with great sadness that we received news of the Danielson on Sunday 26 April 2020 at the age of 61. member of 2Cdo.



passing of Graham Edward Danny (727776) was a

On 13 May we (724498, 1



received the sad news that WO2 Anthony “Tony” Edwards (Commando) passed away in the UK.

On 24th May we were advised that Allen Cauvin passed away in the land of Oz from cancer. A true 2 Cdo brother who would never hide from any fight that came his way. Condolences to his wife and son and family.



It is with regret that we inform you of the death of Brian (Lofty) Cawthorne.

Brian passed away in hospital in 27th May 2020 after a decline in his



Nelspruit, Mpumalanga, South Africa on the health these past few years, Lofty was 77.

27th June 2020. We regret to advise that Paul Abbott passed away early yesterday morning in the UK. Paul had been under a protracted illness for quite some time. Paul served in 3 Commando, 14 Troop. He is survived by wife Gill, son David and stepson Matt.



May their dear souls all RIP.

A note on Sunset Calls

When Brian Lewis was Chairman of the RLIRA (Gauteng) he repeated a constant reminder, to those living, about the “rights to die”! He did, of course, have “tongue in cheek” but, must have been reminded by the following extract from Alex Binda’s book “The Saints”. The extract is not of Alex’s authoring – it was a contribution by Maj Terry Griffin (RhE) who, in turn, may or may not be, the original author.

Incidentally, should anyone see Maj Terry Griffin, or know of his whereabouts, be aware that an APB (All Points Bulletin), for the arrest of Maj Griffin, has been in existence for over 40 years. Maj Griffin, then a mere Lt, is wanted by a certain Principal of The Teachers’ College, Bulawayo (TTC), Mr Tom Seymour (RIP), for damages to:

1. Certain articles of Government moveable assets and

2. The destruction of, hitherto, impeccable reputations of a number of female students at the college. There is evidence to suggest that 1. (above) was caused by way of “thunder-flash” (or multiples thereof) but, the instrument used for 2 (above) remains a mystery, albeit investigators believe such instrument might be similar in shape to that of “thunder-flash”!

“The Saints”, by Binda, is all about the regiment and, therefore, one would assume that most of the ouens and crows will have read this before. No matter – take heed again.

... It has been brought to the attention of Army HQ that men have been dying without the previous permission of a superior officer. This practice will cease forthwith. It must be fully understood by all ranks that the manpower shortage is still acute and any man dying without first obtaining permission, commits a serious offence, to which the only answer is disciplinary action. The attention of all ranks is drawn to Army HQ circular 4/1974.

Dying: The following drill will be carried out by all members of IRLI:

1. No man below the rank of sergeant may give the order to die.
2. The person ordered/given permission to die will be known in all cases as the victim.

Under no circumstances will the victim be allowed to die in his own time. On receipt of orders the victim will die by numbers as follows:

Victim 1: The victim will stagger forward a full pace of 30 inches followed by two short paces of 27 and 25 inches respectively, at the same time allowing the eyes to glaze over.

Victim 2: He will sink slowly and smartly to his knees, counting out the correct time 1 2 3 1, then fall on his face, arms outstretched, thumbs to the front and in line with the ears.

Victim 3: He will lower his legs, toes resting on the ground, heels at an angle of 30 degrees and in line with the shoulder blades.

Victim 4: Then in his own time, the victim will be allowed to draw his last breath. The death rattle will not be used, except for ceremonial parades or when ordered by an officer (not below the rank of major).

- a. Before dying, a map showing the route to Heaven will be drawn from the QM. Uneaten portions of the day's rations will be drawn to be eaten en route.
 - b. There will be no overtaking on the route to Heaven. Any officer passed on the way will be paid the usual compliments.
 - c. On arrival at the destination the victim will report to the Orderly Room of No. 18 Angel Corps for angelification. He will draw on arrival the following articles of kit: Harps Brass x 1, Wings Pairs x 1, Clouds Fleecy x 1.
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- d. Harps will be clean, bright and highly strung at all times.
- e. Wings will be balanced with flickering stardust No. 3.
- f. Clouds will be checked for condensation and refilled with anti-freeze as necessary.
- g. Victim will parade one hour after arrival for halo fitting.
Dress: Loose order, wings at the glide, harps at the port.
For No. 18 Angel Corps only. There will be a duty angel in the orderly room at all times, holding the rank of not less than P/A/L/ Saint.
Dist. Copy: St. Peter

A Little Nostalgia



A Real Character of the RLI - MARK WROTTESLEY

Much of what follows is taken from the RLIRA web-page and acknowledgements are extended to the unknown author thereof. There are, however, some other truths included here in order to embellish (elaborate rather than exaggerate) this story.



Mark Wrottesley (reposed) in the Zambezi River.

Corporal the Honourable Mark Wrottesley was born on 21 June 1951 at Westminster in England. His father was Major Richard Wrottesley MC (1918 - 1977) who, upon the death of his uncle, Victor Wrottesley, in 1962, became the 5th Baron Wrottesley. Until it was sold in 1963, the Wrottesley family had owned the Manor of Wrottesley Hall in Staffordshire since the 13th century. The family numbers several High Sheriffs of Staffordshire among its members, including Richard Wrottesley (died 1521) who married a descendent of King Edward III. Major Wrottesley won his Military Cross during Operation Market Garden when he led his Household Cavalry troop of armoured cars through the German lines and established contact with the Polish Parachute Brigade on the south bank of the River Rhine at Arnhem. After the war, Dick Wrottesley met the officer commanding the German tanks to whom he had given the slip. The German informed Dick's wife, Mary, that: "I went to Berlin to get a blast from Hitler, and Dick went to get a medal from the King."

Mark's mother was Major Wrottesley's second wife. Joyce Marion Wallace was born in 1923 in Shanghai, the daughter of the Director-General of Burmah Oil, Dare Frederick Wallace. In Shanghai, in 1940, she married an Irish soldier, Sean Rainey, who was serving in the Seaforth Highlanders. There were two children from the marriage. Back in England in 1949 and single again, she married

Dick Wrottesley, who, according to her 2006 obituary in the Daily Telegraph, is reputed to have "locked her in the lavatory until she had agreed to marry him". The marriage, however, soon broke down with Dick telling her that he had "only married her for her tarty qualities". Later she gained a reputation, on the society party circuit, for flirting with every man in the room and mixing with such luminaries as the Kray twins and Somerset Maugham. The marriage ended in divorce in 1953 with Mark being the only child of the marriage.

Dick Wrottesley's mother and elder brother had been born in the Eastern Cape; after the war, his mother and step-father settled there. Dick followed them out to the Cape in 1952 after he had left the army. In 1955 Dick married for the third time, to Mary Ada van Echten Tudhope, by whom he had a further two sons. (Dick Wrottesley also had a surviving son in 1942 by his first wife, Roshnara Wingfield-Stafford.) In 1952, the one-year-old Mark was left behind in England and these early years are reported to have been a traumatic time for him. On the 20 September 1956, however, now five, Mark sailed from Southampton for Cape Town aboard the Athlone Castle to join his father and his step-mother.

Growing up in South Africa, Mark was one of four half-brothers. The other three were schooled at Eton and Harrow and all went on to university, including the eldest, Richard, to Cambridge. Mark was sent to St Andrew's College, Grahamstown, where he is on the register from 1965 to 1970. School records also show that he was good at fencing and drama. Indeed, his step-mother, Lady Wrottesley, states, "He could be very convincing about things because he could act well."

Lee Hall also attended St Andrew's and recalls that: "Mark and I played for the same undistinguished hockey team in a house which was rampantly rugby-oriented, and I remember him as a keen, and by no means ineffective goalie - probably the most over-worked member of the team. He was always the guy yelling encouragement at the rest of us. I don't recall whether he was actually captain but, if not, he should have been." Lee goes on to say, "He had no airs and graces and clowned around quite a bit but, under the clowning, there was something solid and rather decent about him." Not considered 'university material', on leaving St Andrew's, Mark headed north to Rhodesia, where in 1962 Lt-Gen John Hickman recalls that Mark's father had served as TF Liaison Officer at HQ 2 Brigade. Mark attended the School of Infantry (SchInf) in Gwelo as an officer cadet, but withdrew before completion of the course as he wanted to be a troopie in the Rhodesian Light Infantry. There is a degree of question here – did Mark withdraw, or fail, the course? Perhaps the answer lies below.

It is interesting to note that, during this OSBs (Officer Selection Board) course, Dale Collett (SCR) of Selous Scouts fame, was also an officer in the making. Dale recalls a fond memory of Wrotters during their Clas-War (Classical Warfare) section of the course. These classical warfare modules were traditionally held away from the SchInf, on the Somabula Flats, some 40 km south of the school. Those who have experienced the place will recall the bitter winds of winter that chilled the bones and set teeth a-chatter. Having dug his "shell-scrape" (a very long one at that), Mark settled down for the night, wrapped in every garment he had in his bergen. Sleep was impossible, as a result of the biting wind finding its way into Mark's bone-marrow. A very tall, very stiff and aching Wrotters was pleased to escape his "hotel-room" at first-light. The class was soon gathered together by the course instructor and ordered to keep their eyes peeled on the horizon. Sure enough, and before long, a convoy of 6 Bedford RLs (troop-carrying lorries) appeared in the distance.

"Right, men", began the instructor, "I want you to imagine those trucks are enemy tanks. You have been spotted and the tanks are heading this way. What are you going to do?"

"That shouldn't be too difficult, **SAH**" volunteered Wrotters in his plum-English accent.

"Very good, Wrottesley. What is your plan?", enquired the instructor.

“Well, **SAH**”, continued “Wrotters, with growing confidence. “We’ll simply take them out with missiles, **SAH**.”

“**MISSILES!**”, barked the instructor, “We don’t have any bloody **MISSILES** in the Rhodesian Army. Are you out of your bloody mind?”

“Not at all, **SAH**.”, responded Wrotters, “You asked us to imagine those trucks as tanks – did you not, **SAH?**”

“I did indeed.”, replied the instructor, “Now what’s your bloody point?”

“Well, **SAH**. If you look East, towards those hills over there, the Selukwe Hills I believe – and if you look very carefully, with the same imagination you entrusted to us – you will see a set of missiles, mounted on a “Starlin-organ” – do you see them, **SAH?** - problem solved, **SAH** – or “QED”, as my form-master used to say, **SAH**”

It does beg the question – RTU’d, or not?

It was when Mark Wrottesley re-joined his beloved 2 Cdo that uncertainty set in amongst his peers. Some believed he was Baron Wrottesley, whilst others thought he was Earl Wrottesley. Neither of the two titles mattered to Mark – he wanted to be an “ouen”, be amongst the “ouens”, and any reference to his title mattered not. In September 1971, 2 Commando was on exercise at Cleveland Range - and after a strenuous run-down, Mark turned to the CSM and gasped, in his upper-class voice, "My dear sergeant-major, in future I think I shall abstain from run-downs." The CSM's response cannot be printed here!

Charlie Aust, then OC of 2 Commando, remembers Wrotters as “very intelligent and a wonderful guy”. His good nature made an impression on the RLI ouens, cheerfully accepting the ribbing that his accent and aristocratic background brought his way. He was immensely tall, being well over six foot; John van Stan said this made him very useful on OP duties as he could see a lot further than the other ouens at ground level. With his immense height came a pair of extremely large feet that also feature in the memories of the RLI ouens. Sandy Miller, the CSM of 2 Commando tells of one op where a pair of size 13 boots had to be dropped to Mark in a container all of their own. RSM Harry Springer remembers how, on one parade, he came to inspect Mark's boots and he could not get over how huge they were - and he didn't "think they were particularly shiny either". By 1974, Mark had been promoted to lance-corporal and was undertaking new duties as 2 Commando's clerk.

It was during this time that Mark was granted one of his R&Rs. “What are you going to do with your R&R, Wrotters?”, asked one of the troopies.

“I’ve booked my lady-friend and I into a suite at the Jameson Hotel, old boy. Nine nights, in a double-bed, should suit me fine, don’t you think?”

“For your whole R&R?”, exclaimed the troopie.

“Well, old chum – you’ve met the lady. Can you think of a better suggestion?”, retorted Wrotters.

On retuning to barracks, early Monday morning, ten days later, the same troopie asked Wrotters how his R&R had gone.

“Absolutely spiffing, old boy – absolutely spiffing! My lady-friend even bought her mother along.”

“*Her mother?*”, enquired the troopie, somewhat incredulously. “Where the hell did you put the mother?”

“Nudge-nudge, wink-wink”, responded Wrotters, “we RLI troopies can’t afford two rooms, old chap!”

In 1975 Mark transferred out of the RLI and became one of the first six members of the Grey's Scouts. Neville Croxford of the Grey's Scouts Association knew him well and states he was a very good horseman. Again, his jovial good nature left an impression on those around him. By now a corporal, Mark left the Grey's Scouts, and the army, in 1979. Mark had married Marie-Louise du Plooy in 1975 by whom he had two daughters, Caroline and Veronica. Unfortunately, the marriage did not last and they divorced in 1978. He was married for a second time in 1981 to Judy Matthews. Mark is reported to have been managing the golf course at Ermelo, Eastern Transvaal when on 11 October 1986 he took his own life at the age of thirty-five. RIP the honourable Mark Wrottesley.

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Cheers.

2019 – Stay away from negative people.

2020 – Stay away from positive people.

Keep your head down, pecker up, and pay your subs. Until next time.

Ed