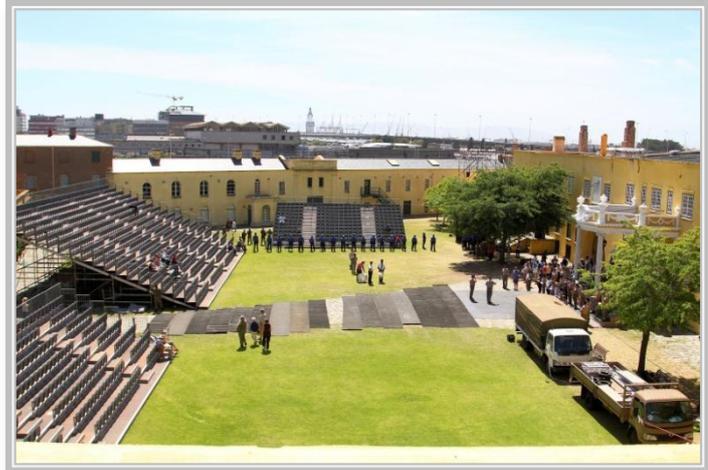


# PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAPE TOWN MILITARY TATTOO 2012 AT THE CASTLE OF GOOD HOPE

Article and photos supplied by Mrs Regine Lord.

Much has been happening at the Castle of Good Hope in central Cape Town in anticipation of the start of the Cape Town Military Tattoo, which starts on Wednesday, 31 October and runs until Saturday, 3 November 2012.

Performances will take place every evening between 20h00 and 22h00, with the pre-show beginning around 19h00. Gates open at 17h30 already, and secure parking for visitors is available on the Grand Parade opposite the main gates to the Castle. Tickets can be purchased at Computicket, who will also have a stand outside the main entrance every evening, for those who want to wait until the last minute to buy tickets. Tickets for adults cost R120.00 on the centre stand and R100.00 on the side stands, and R50.00 for children from 6 to 12 years of age.



**Photo 1: The black rubber mats that were laid down to protect the old paving stones were all lifted up by the strong southeaster wind despite being very heavy**

The mood at the Castle was one of excitement and anticipation. It is a challenging task to coordinate the rehearsals of all the participating acts in the show, and to make sure that everyone knows exactly what is expected of them. In addition, much work was still on-the-go backstage.



**Photo 2: A special wooden boardwalk is being constructed for the VIPs in wheelchairs**

Saturday, 27 October 2012, began quite early with a briefing of all the organisers, act coordinators, behind-the-scenes personnel and representatives of the various acts. In the large almost rectangular front arena, two large seating stands had been set up to face the Kat balcony, and two smaller stands had been erected on the shorter lengths of the arena.

The lighting towers and audio equipment were still being installed by 3 Electrical Workshop, involving much vertigo-inducing balancing acts on the scaffolding and the laying of spiderwebs of cables all over the terrain. The men of 30 Field were hard at work, constructing a special “red

carpet” boardwalk for the VIPs and people in wheelchairs. Four tents had been erected in the rear courtyard, to provide shelter for the participants before and during the show.



**Photo 3: Maj Charles de Cruz, the producer of the 2012 Tattoo, is teaching the girls and boys of Westcott Primary School how to form a silent guard of honour for the functionary**

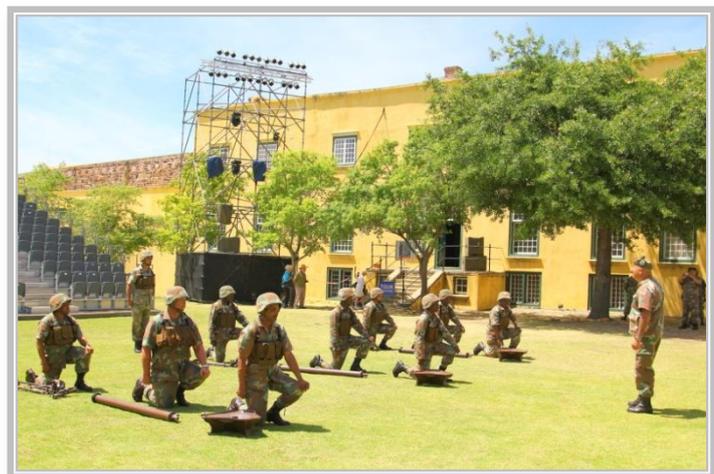
The groundsmen were busy nailing down the black rubber mats that are used as a protective cover for the historic paving stones leading from the main entrance gate to the Kat balcony and to the archway, through which one accesses the rear courtyard. The sheets also help to create a more even surface for the performers, as the paving stones are rather uneven. The heat of the early summer sun, beating down on these sheets, very soon made them unpleasantly hot.

The emergency evacuation plan was rehearsed, under the guidance of Lt Col Eddie Nijeboer who is responsible for event safety. The purpose was to make sure that the ushers and the guards were familiar with the emergency exit routes, the locations of the exits and the process of escorting the spectators safely off the stands and out of the Castle.

The young girls and boys from the Westcott Primary School rehearsed on the stage with their soprano and treble recorders plus Orff xylophones, glockenspiels and Djembe drums. They practiced forming the silent guard of honour for the arrival of the functionary under the watchful eyes of Major Charles de Cruz, the producer of the Tattoo, and his assistant WO1 Leon Robertson.

A group of soldiers from the Cape Town Highlanders and the Cape Field Artillery, with WO2 Alfie Wort as the act coordinator, practiced their mortar run on the front arena.

The SA Army Band Cape Town were on the stage, sorting out their march-on and march-off; the dimensions of the arena and the positioning of the stands are important factors, as they determine when and where they need to turn.



**Photo 4: WO2 Alfie Wort is supervising the mortar run teams**

A group of cadets from the SA Navy in their striking blue uniforms practiced a marching drill under the instructions of two naval officers; the young men and women in the squad seemed a little nervous of all the people watching them from the sidelines.



**Photo 5: The long-legged beauties of the Celtic Dance Tapestry**

The South African Medical Health Services band ran through their routine, trying to work out how best to utilise the entire space, while making sure that the spectators on the side stands would also have good lines of sight.

The lovely long-legged girls of the Celtic Dance group briefly practiced their routine on the stage, much to the delight of the spectators.

Crowds of curious tourists and visitors to the Castle were milling around throughout the day, enjoying all the activity and excitement. Hopefully, some will return to attend the Tattoo!

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More photographs can be found here:

<http://namibsands.wordpress.com/2012/10/28/preparations-for-the-cape-town-military-tattoo-2012/>

<http://namibsands.wordpress.com/2012/10/29/the-preparations-continue-for-the-cape-town-military-tattoo-2012/>