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Department:
Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



The 2013 KZN Midlands Highland & Traditional Games Michaelhouse Balgowan

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Archery, kilted mile, shot-put, weight walk, caber tossing and tug-of-war were all part of this year's KZN Highland and Traditional Games where members of the community battled it out against their military counterparts. This year's gathering took place on Saturday 21 September 2013.

Michaelhouse Balgowan was the battlefield. Although there had been change of venue for the annual event, the competition between civilians and military personnel was still as intense as ever. Balgowan nestles in the green hills of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands which, with some imagination, could be mistaken for being in the Scottish Highlands.

Brigadier General Abel Maminze, Director SAMHS Reserves, was the general who took the salute to open the games officially. The Maclaine of Lochbuie, 26th Chief of the Clan Gillean of Lochbuie, Baron Maclaine of MOY, addressed the audience during the opening ceremony and thanked them for attending the gathering, including the significant support from the SANDF Reserves, the provincial office KZN and other stakeholders.

Over 5000 people came to cheer their heroes. The audience was entertained by massed pipe and drums band displays, traditional dances and entertainers on the big stage. KZN Reserve Force Units came prepared for the battle of the year and did not disappoint.

The traditions associated with the games were not forsaken; for example the ceremony of the famous Scottish dish, the Haggis which the audience marveled at.

There is nothing more quintessentially Scottish than the Highland Games, which today are celebrated around the world from the United States, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and of course Scotland, to right here at home in South Africa. With its historical ties to the early Scottish pioneers in the region and the relationship to military history with traditional regiments that were raised in the province from colonial times and which still exist today, interested parties were able to contribute significantly to the preparation and success of the 2013 games.

The games ended in high spirits, mission accomplished and the audience not disappointed. The awards were presented with the Reserve Force scooping lots of prizes.

*Some of the information was sourced from the official website of the Fort Nottingham Highland Games-
www.fortnottinghamhighlandgames.com*



Brigader General Abel Maminze (Director SAMHS Reserves), the Maclaine of Lochbuie, 26th Chief of the Clan Gillean of Lochbuie and Colonel Patrick Acutt, SSO Provincial Office KZN during the opening ceremony



The sporting action



Members competing in tug-of-war



Participants drawn from KZN Reserve Force Units



Massed pipes and drums



Overview of the set-up of the venue