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Department:
Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



THE UNIVERSITY RESERVE TRAINING PROGRAMME (URTP): THE FORMAL DINNER - THEORY PUT INTO PRACTICE

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The final module of the 2013/14 URTP Officer Formative course, presented under the auspices of the GOC SA Army Armour Formation, included the unit standard “officership”. On Friday evening, 12 December 2014 the theoretical training was put into practice when the Officer Commanding of Regiment Mooirivier (RMR), Maj Heinko Stark, hosted a formal dinner. Amongst the invited guests were Col Gert van der Walt (Hon Col of the Regiment), several Commanders and Regimental Sergeant Majors of neighbouring units, invited guests from Army HQ and Defence HQ and the 97 URTP members under instruction.

For the young URTP members, who are all enrolled members of the Reserve Force and full-time university students, the formal dinner was a welcome change of venue as a few days ago they have returned from a grueling 3 day field exercise executed in trying conditions over a 60 kilometer route. The purpose of the dinner was not only to assess the standard of training achieved but it also offered an opportunity to these young members to socialize with the senior guests in attendance.

The dinner was presented in typical military tradition and style – in all aspects according to the book. With the flame of the Armour burning and the Regimental colour of RMR displayed, the guests enjoyed a well prepared and excellently served five course meal. As it has always been the case in the past with novices at formal dinners, there were a few hesitant movements when the port decanter was passed on.

A high light of the evening was the short address in English and Setswana of the Col van der Walt who had everyone in stitches with his humorous antics. He told the URTP members that as young people the future of the SANDF and the country was in their hands. During his address he inter alia said the following:

- *Tlhomp batho bao berekang le bona.*
- *Tlhokomela tshelete ya gago, oe dirise ka bothale*
- *Tlhokomela mmele wag ago, ikatise ka metlha*
- *Seke wa ikgantsa, O seke wa nagana gore o betere go feta batho ba bangwe.*
- *Tlhompang bomme, re ba katise.*

In conclusion he said “if you consider joining the SANDF now is the time...Tsela tshweu”. On his return to his seat Col van der Walt was well applauded by a relaxed audience.

The dinner took place under the watchful eye of the Mess President, Maj Isak van der Merwe (Sqn Commander) and MWO Johan Wagner (RSM, RMR). According to tradition, a few fines were issued for transgressions which took place at the dinner table.

Not only from a training point of view the dinner was a huge success but also provided an opportunity for interaction between the Candidate Officers and senior members of the SANDF whereby the latter could experience the passion and aspirations these young people have for a future career in the SANDF.



Maj Stark (OC, RMR) collects his sherry in the anteroom



Guests taking up their places for the dinner



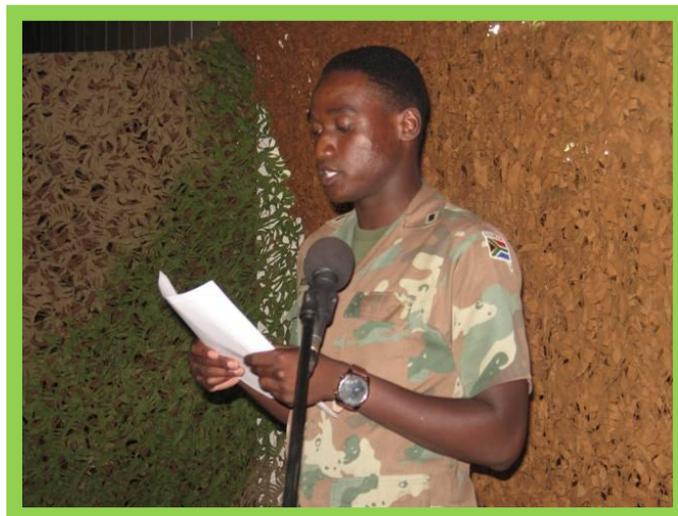
An evening to remember



Invited guests, staff and URTP members waiting for the formalities to follow



The Regimental Colour of RMR and MWO Wagner (RSM)



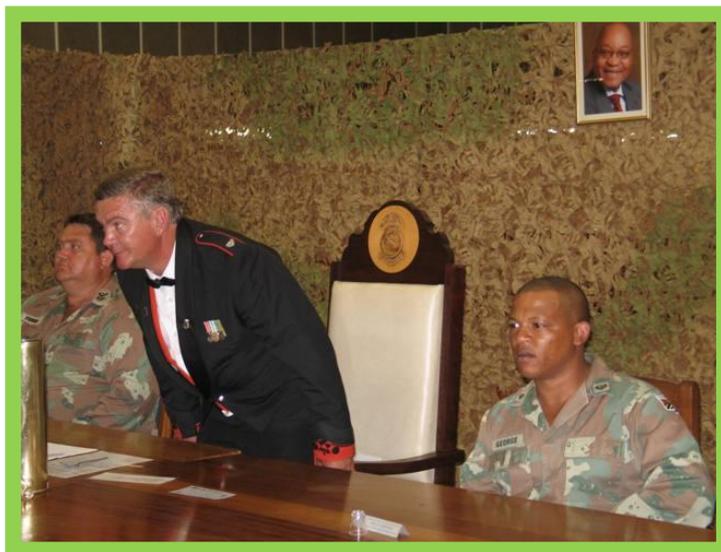
The reading of the Code of Conduct for uniformed members



Ready for the entrée



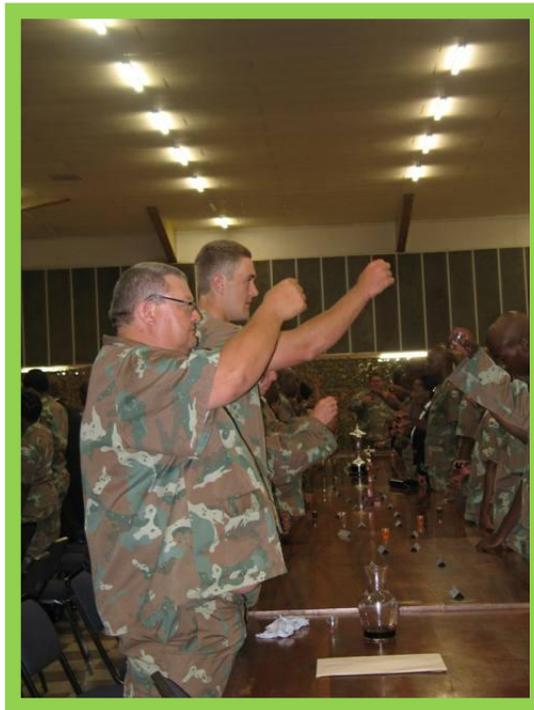
Col van der Walt (Hon Col, RMR) addresses the guests



Proceedings taking place under the watchful eye of Maj v.d. Merwe (Sqn Cdr & Mess President) and Maj George (OFT Course Leader, Army Gymnasium)



Preparing for the toast



Toast to the President



MWO Wagner (RSM, RMR) issuing the fines