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Department:
Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



RETIREMENT CELEBRATION IN HONOUR OF COLONEL MONICA MULLER (SSO RESERVE FORCE PROJECTS)

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“Parting is such a sweet sorrow” says an old Shakespeare adage. The legendary English writer’s words were prophetic when the staff of the Chief Defence Reserves and Trustees of the SANDF Education Trust said goodbye to Colonel Monica Cornelia Gertruida Muller. It was so appropriate to bid her farewell during women’s month as she played such a leading role since 1971 in opening career opportunities for women in uniform.

On Friday, 28 August the Defence Reserves bid an emotional farewell to one of its serving and dedicated officers. She served five fruitful years in her second stint of duty in the SANDF. Colonel Muller served with discipline and excellence and she was an exemplary figure of perfection in the execution of her duties and always willing and happy to lend a helping hand and felt serious about skills transfer.

Colonel Muller was one of the first females to be appointed in the SADF in 1971 and after 1994 served with the same enthusiasm and dedication in the SANDF.

In his tribute to Col Muller, Maj Gen Roy Andersen, Chief Defence Reserves inter alia said “Colonel Muller played a key role in changing the lives of many young people through her work in the SANDF Education Trust and the University Reserve Training Programme. Almost 300 students graduated through the University Reserve Training Programme and of these 198 were commissioned in the SA Army. A further 90 learners and students who are the dependents of deceased and severely injured SANDF members, who were killed or severely injured in the line of duty, have received financial assistance from the SANDF Education Trust. Both these projects were spearheaded by Col Muller. Surely one of the best staff officers I have worked with”.

In a short tribute to Col Muller, Mrs Venete Klein, a prominent business leader and Trustee of the SANDF Education Trust stated that today’s women have no excuse not to succeed in their careers as there are many opportunities available for them within the SANDF compared to four decades ago when officers like Col Muller had to fight for and justify their presence in a then male-dominated environment.

Brigadier General Debbie Molefe, the Director Defence Reserves and her staff members expressed their sadness at her departure but they also shared fond memories of this phenomenal woman. They came in numbers to give Col Muller a well-deserved send-off.

The befitting theme of the day, which was chosen by the organizers was “Let the work I have done, speak for me”. This and the special white carpet and huge white chair at the head of the table was overwhelming and met Col Muller with mixed emotions. In her reply to the tributes paid to her by her superior officers and colleagues, she said that her last tour of duty at the Defence Reserves completed the full circle in her military career and she will take with her fond memories of those with whom she had the privilege to serve.



Chief Defence Reserves, Maj Gen Roy Andersen giving his keynote address to the guests on his experiences while working together with Col Muller.



Chaplain General of the SANDF and the SANDF Education Fund Trustee, Brig Gen M.A. Jamangile and Lt Col R. Rademeyer formed part of this prestige event.



Some of the staff members who attended the event.



L to R: Staff members from office of the Chief Defence Reserves, Sgt V.R. Digashu, Sgt Malatji, ME. D. and Mr. P. Mocuminyane.



Ms. R.D. Khashane, Ms. M. Stamples and Col M. van Wyk sharing a jolly moment.



Setup overview.



Brig Gen S.D. Molefe, Director Defence Reserves also shared her experiences with this phenomenal woman.



Setup overview.



Maj Gen L.M. Dlulane, acting Chief Corporate Staff also a SANDF Education Fund Trustee, also attended to bid his farewell.



Mrs Venete Klein, a prominent business leader and Trustee of the SANDF Education Trust paying tribute to the Defence Reserve's stalwart.



Attendees.



Ms. R.D. Khashane presenting a gift to Col Muller.



Col Muller and Brig Gen Molefe laughing, reminiscing old times.



Col Muller responding to guests and appreciating all the efforts made by the staff members of Chief Defence Reserves and SANDF Education Trust.



L to R: Capt C. Grundlingh, Major Gen R.C. Andersen and Col G.I. Jansen van Rensburg celebrating the life of a loyal Reserve Force member.



Col Muller with Ms. Z.J. Mahlangu and Sgt V.R. Digashu.



Col Muller with Maj Gen Roy Andersen.



Col Muller with Brig Gen Molefe.



Col Muller with Maj Gen Dlulani.



Col Muller with SCWO Jan Viljoen.



WO1 M. Dyasi, Col M.D. Shibambo and SCWO Jan Viljoen