

BEST BOOT FORWARD: 15 MAINTENANCE UNIT SHRINKS NOT FROM ITS PURPOSE

Article and Photographs by: Maj M. Levin, 15 Maintenance Unit

Many Reserve units experienced significant budget cuts in 2017. 15 Maintenance was not spared and was forced to reduce its support to the stores at Army Support Base Kwa-Zulu Natal (ASB KZN) and Main Ordnance Support Depot (MOSD) Durban. Call-ups were cut by half. Nevertheless, the unit was determined to maintain its public profile on its shoestring budget.

During the 2017 Royal Show in Pietermaritzburg, the unit was again part of the prize-winning display mounted by the KZN Reserve Regiments. In June, the unit was represented at the Battlefields Festival in Ladysmith.

Then it was off to Tembe Elephant Park, where the unit supplied chefs for the joint training exercise with other Reserve Force units. Ex Inventshane was smaller than the previous ones in 2015 and 2016, but was a resounding success.

These annual exercises and the monthly continuation training are invaluable in improving the unit's combat readiness status.

The ceremonial role was not neglected either. 15 Maintenance also formed part of the Delville Wood and Annual Remembrance Parades. The latter was particularly sombre as the Durban Cenotaph had been vandalised in early November 2017. Brass panels inscribed with the names of the war dead had been stolen and sold to unscrupulous scrap metal dealers. Only four intact panels were recovered.

The old regiments continue to support the traditional schools which mount remembrance services for pupils who made the supreme sacrifice. The Officer Commanding, Maj Levin laid wreaths at the Delville Wood services at Glenwood Boys' and Glenwood Preparatory School in July and August 2017. In November, he laid wreaths at Durban High School and Maritzburg College. In each case, it was a privilege to attend these services which maintain such a high standard.

2017 was a tougher year, but when Maj Gen Nobanda, GOC Army Support Formation convened a two day Reserve Force Conference at the end of October, it gave his eleven Reserve Force units their first opportunity since 2008 to deal with the critical issues facing them. Hosted in Durban by 15 Maintenance, it was a robust affair, but a seed was planted for the future. May it germinate quickly.



The team at the Royal Show, Pietermaritzburg.



Eating out.



Part of the Parade at the Battlefields Festival passes Ladysmith's famous Town Hall.



The Delville Wood Parade at Durban's Cenotaph before it was vandalised.



Cpl Campos, NMR; Col Acutt, Defence Reserves POKZN; Mr Pinheiro, Headmaster DHS; Mr Zakariya Adam, Head Prefect DHS; Lt Col de Ricquebourg DLI; Monsignor Nadal and Maj Levin, 15 Maintenance at the DHS Service on 07 November 17.



The wreath party on 10 Nov 2017 at Maritzburg College included the Headmaster, Mr C. Luman (left), Maj Pascoe, 2IC Natal Carbineers and Maj Levin OC 15 Maint.