

## 75<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF REGIMENT MOOIRIVIER

By: Lt Col J.D. Hartzenberg Defence Reserves PONW

Photographs by: Lt Col J.D. Hartzenberg Defence Reserves PONW; Maj B. Brooks RMR

On 31 August 2017, the Defence Reserves Provincial Office North West and Regiment Mooirivier combined effort to host a Formal Dinner in order to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Regiment Mooirivier.

Regiment Mooirivier is the successor to 2 Anti-Tank Regiment, captured at **Matruh** in June 1942, shortly after 2 SA Division, its parent, surrendered at **Tobruk**.

2 Anti-Tank Regiment was formally established on 25 January 1941, under command of Lt Col W.M.P. Johnstone.

From 1941 the Unit fought with distinction at **Bardia, Halfaya Pass, and Sollum** and supported the British 2<sup>nd</sup> Armoured Brigade at **Msus** and the 3<sup>rd</sup> SA Brigade in the **Gazala** battles. The unit was also withdrawn to **El Alamein** and again pushed forward to **Matruh** to assist the British 50<sup>th</sup> Division.

Surrounded, the gallant Unit was forced to surrender, shortly after 2 SA Division, its parent, surrendered at **Tobruk**.

Never formally closed down, the Regiment was reconstituted in 1954 by the first Vice Rector of the Potchefstroom University (North West University), Cmdt (Prof) J.S. du Plessis.

The Unit was converted in 1955 to an Armoured Car Regiment and officially renamed to *Regiment Hendrik Potgieter* on 1 January 1956 only to change name again on 1 January 1960 to *Regiment Mooirivier*.

In November 1969 the design of the current regimental badge was accepted, in conjunction with the motto "SEMPER PRORSUM", meaning "always forward".

The eagle with spread wings symbolizes Mobility, Strength, Alertness and Vigilance. The circle represents the Mobility of the armoured car. The diagonal waving line refers to the Mooirivier, flowing through Potchefstroom. The eagle is also symbolically mentioned in the Regimental Psalm (Psalm 91 verse 4).

In December 1970, the Official colour was approved by the Chief of the Army. The background is "Union Jack" : Blue with the regimental badge in the centre.

On 9 September 1972 Regiment Mooirivier received the Freedom of the City from the Potchefstroom Town Council.

The Guest of Honour during this event was Maj Gen Roy Andersen, the Chief Defence Reserves. Brig Gen (Dr) G. Kamffer, Director Army Reserves, Brig Gen A. Retief, GOC SA Army Armour Formation as well as Capt (SAN) S Khumalo, acting Director Defence Reserves also honoured us with their presence.

SCWO J. Viljoen, WO Defence Reserves, CWO T. Mabote, Formation WO of the SA Army Armour Formation, CWO E Twigg, WO of SA Intelligence Formation were also present.

After the Code of Conduct was read by 2Lt M.A. Mosasi, the colours were marched in by WO2 A. Stapelberg, who also lit the Flame of the Armour after the Regimental Song had been played.

Cpln M van Rooyen said grace whereafter the LOG Book Prayer was read. A well prepared meal was served by Reserve Force members of Regiment Moirivier.

Maj Gen Andersen addressed the attendees and congratulated the Members of Regiment Moirivier on the Units' birthday and all their achievements.

Maj Gen R. Andersen also explained the aim of the SANDF Education Trust which was formed by a task team under his leadership, implemented on 23 October 2013. The beneficiaries of this Trust are specifically dependants of members of the SANDF who made sacrifices and lost their lives or who were severely injured while on official duty and unable to support their dependants, by providing funds for education.

Brig Gen A. Retief addressed the attendees and proposed a toast on the Armour. He also handed a gift to the Officer Commanding of Regiment Moirivier.

Lt Col H. Stark addressed the attendees, thanking each member of the Regiment for their unconditional loyal service, support, commitment, endurance, pride, as well as striving to put the Regiment first. He proposed a toast to the next 75 years....."Semper Prorsum"



Lt Col H. Stark welcomes the Guest of Honour, Maj Gen R. Andersen.



Eland 90 displayed at the Gate of Constand Viljoen Mess during the Formal Dinner.



### **Symbolism of the Flame of the Armour**

The flame reminds us of the following qualities:

- Energy - because it radiates inner strength.
- Light - because it changes insecurity into certainty and confidence.
- Life - because it is constantly in motion.
- Purity - because it separates, cleanses and refines.
- Unity - because it confirms our dependency, for alone we can achieve nothing.

The flame also reminds us of the fire within every armour Soldier, inspiring him or her to deliver an extraordinary performance and achievements. Irrespective the enemy, we will advance and go forward with the flame in our hearts.

The flame also reminds us of a destructive firepower that the armour can concentrate on the enemy of our country in order to ensure peace and stability for all our people.

The flame of the Armour also embraces the national torch of tolerance symbolising that outwards we are people of many colours, races, cultures, languages, religions and origins, yet we are all tied to one another by a million visible and invisible threads sharing a common destiny from which no one can escape.

This is an inspiration to the Armour to always stand firm and proud, faithful to God, our country and our task.

Faithful, true and ready – come what may, we are ready.



Brig Gen (Dr) G. Kamffer arrives at the function.



Capt (SAN) S. Khumalo and Lt Col J.D. Hartzenberg.



Lt Col H. Stark, Brig Gen A. Retief and Cpln van Rooyen propose an informal toast.



Maj B. Brooks, Lt Col H. Stark, Maj I.W. van der Merwe (Mess President) and Brig Genl A. Retief enjoy a social moment at the function.



Lt Col M. Thakamakgooa, Lt Col D. Koetaan and Lt Col M.E. Matimbe.



Maj Gen R. Andersen and Col R. Harris.



WO2 Koaishe (Vice President) welcomed members on arrival at Constand Viljoen Mess.

### **Background of the Log Book Prayer**

During 2004 with the renovations of the Headquarters at Regiment Moirivier, an old 90mm Car Log Book was discovered. In the back of the Log Book was an inscription of an unknown author.

The inscription made such an impact on the reader as well as the other members of the Regiment, that a decision was made to read the inscription, referred to as the Log Book Prayer during every formal event.

### **THE LOG BOOK PRAYER**

We are quick to ask but slow to thank  
Here in our armoured car or tank

We are still alive due to You  
What more can You carry us through

Here I work on engine and sight  
Just little proof of our armour might

There they call for ammo and ratpack  
No God ..... don't go  
I'll be Back