

GENERAL OF THE GUNNERS CHANGE OF OFFICE CEREMONY 27 MAY 2017



Article by Capt J.C. Grundlingh

The **General of the Gunners** has been an honorary and prestigious title in the South African gunner fraternity for more than thirty years. The General of the Gunners' duties are of a ceremonial nature. One of the primary duties is to promote the interests and traditions of both the Artillery and Air Defence Artillery corps. The General of the Gunners' is a spokesman for all South African gunners, serving and non-serving at national and international level.

Lt Gen JJ Geldenhuys approved the ceremonial post of Master Gunner of the SAA in 1982. In 1990, this title was changed to General of the Artillery and subsequently General of the Gunners with the incumbent CS Plan as Lt Gen (then) FEC vd Berg as the GoG. When he retired, in 1991, he kept on being the General of the Gunners till 1992.

Maj Gen R.C. Andersen was the first Reserve Force officer appointed as the General of the Gunners in 2005 until laying down the title in May 2015. Maj Gen J.S. Mbuli was inducted as the General of the Gunners after his appointment by Chief of the SA Army on 10 February 2017.

The Change of Office Ceremony took place on Saturday 27 May 2017 at Cape Field Artillery Gun Park, Fort Ikapa.



Photo 1: Maj Gen R.C. Andersen addressing the members attending the ceremony. Photograph taken by Maj Dalene Coetzee

Maj Gen N. Mpaxa attended on behalf of Chief of the SA Army and ceremonially received the symbols of office from Maj Gen R. Andersen and handed them to Maj Gen J.S. Mbuli.

The prestigious event was also attended by Brig Gen K. Makina, GOC Artillery Formation, Brig Gen S. Hlongwa, GOC Air Defence Artillery Formation, Mr Carl Kies, CEO Reutech Radar Systems, Veterans, the Gunners' Association, Gunners and fellow Officers, Warrant officers and non-commissioned officers.



Photo 1: Maj Gen J.S. Mbuli, Maj Gen N. Mpaxa and Maj Gen R.C. Andersen. Photograph taken by Cornelius Bezuidenhout

Maj Gen R.C. Andersen commented that during his 50-year career in the South African National Defence Force and as the General of the Gunners' he attended many ceremonial and public events. He realised that attending these events as the General of the Gunners' has a far deeper meaning. The General of the Gunners' sets the tone and ensures that traditions are maintained.

Maj Gen J.S. Mbuli assured Gunners' during his address that he will be a worthy spokesperson for the Gunners. Once a Gunner; always a Gunner.



Photo 2: Maj Gen R.C. Andersen firing the GV1 Gun. Photograph taken by Maj Dalene Coetzee



Photo 3: The gun crew that assisted Maj Gen Andersen and Maj Gen Mbuli firing the GV1 Gun. MWO van Zyl, MWO Radebe, MWO Dlamini, MWO Mokoena, MWO Havenga and CWO Niemand. Photograph taken by Maj Dalene Coetzee