

A Social Evening at the Castle in preparation for the Cape Town Military Tattoo 2010

Article supplied by Mrs Regine Lord. Photos supplied by Mrs Regine Lord and guests

On Friday, 2 July 2010, a meet-and-greet social function was held in the Cape Field Artillery Officers' Mess at the Castle of Good Hope. It was attended by Col S.A. Motswadira, SSO Promotions and Marketing at Chief Defense Reserves (C Def Res), WO1 S. Boehme from 3 Electronic Workshop, sound and lighting consultants and members of the Tattoo Committee.



Col S.A. Motswadira and Lt Col Uys van der Westhuijzen shared a light-hearted moment

Before the social function, there had been a technical meeting to discuss sound and lighting for the Cape Town Military Tattoo 2010, which was attended by all the photographers, journalists, members of the band and sound and lighting specialists. Most of these also stayed on for the function.

Lt Col Kees de Haan welcomed the guests to the Officers Mess and briefly introduced the unit. Thereafter, Lt Col Johan Conradie informed the invited guests that he had arranged a little surprise for them in the front courtyard.

The guests were treated to an excellent performance by a group of seven young drummers, who are known as the Limited Edition Drum Corps. They originated from the Nurul Mubeen Children Brigade, which was established in 1988. They will make up the new Cape Town Military Tattoo 2010 Drum Corps, and will thus be performing for the entire duration of the 2010 Tattoo from 3 to 6 November. It is envisaged that more youngsters will be trained in the coming months, so that the drum corps will be considerably larger (12 to 15 drummers) by the time the Tattoo is staged in November.



The CT Mil Tattoo Drum Corps marched into the beautifully lit-up front courtyard

With their drums beating out an energetic rhythm, they marched through the archway from the rear courtyard, and took up position in the corner of the front courtyard closest to the Leerdam Bastion. The seven young lads were dressed entirely in black, with the white band round their hats creating a dramatic contrast. Decorative ostrich feathers, in alternating white and black, were affixed to their hatbands. The drums – one bass and six tenor drums – were all painted in the colours of the South African flag.



The youthful drummers entertained the guests with a skilful and lively performance

The youngsters all come from Manenberg on the Cape Flats. Their participation in the drum corps is entirely voluntary, and they rehearse in their own time after school, 2 to 3 times a week. Interestingly, they are also all related to each other, which would certainly make it easier for them to arrange rehearsals. In fact, it is the youngest and smallest of the group, affectionately known as Smiley, a mere 15 years of age, who has written all the pieces they perform. This is a remarkable achievement.



This talented drummer is Smiley, the youngest drummer in the Drum Corps

Smiley is also a drummer in the Cape Town Highlanders Drums and Pipes, and, together with some of the other members, he has already participated in the Basel Tattoo, Switzerland. They have also recently performed at the Cape Town Fashion Show, held at the CTICC, and took to the stage at Kirstenbosch, where they performed with Prime Circle, a South African rock band. Throughout the four weeks of the FIFA World Cup, they played at the Fan Park and on the Fan Walks.

Their skilful, passionate and lively performance was duly acknowledged by loud applause all around.



A final roll of the drums signalled the end of their performance

Once all the guests had reassembled upstairs, Lt Col Conradie gave a speech, thanking all those who were giving so generously of their time and resources to ensure that this year's event would be even more successful and spectacular than the last. He thanked individuals from the military, both Regular and Reserve, as well as individuals from civil society and business. He pointed out that many of those who work so hard behind the scenes do so voluntarily.

Lt Col Conradie specifically mentioned the two caterers' chefs, WO1 Afrika and Ssgt N.J. Mwezo, who had prepared the excellent meal of traditional bobotie, yellow rice and mixed salad, as well as the delicious malva pudding for dessert.



WO1 Afrika and Ssgt N.J. Mwezo prepared the delicious meal

Mr Mark Wiley, the Chairman of the Western Cape's Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Community Safety, gave a short speech. He explained that he had previously been an active member of 3 Para Bn, C Coy. At the 2007 Cape Military Tattoo, during a thrilling battle re-enactment, both he and Lt Col Conradie had ziplined down into the courtyard of the Castle as part of a group of paratroopers who had come to rescue some captured prisoners.



Guests enjoyed the malva pudding

Throughout the proceedings, Lt Col Conradie emphasised the immense amount of effort, planning and organisation that is necessary behind the scenes, as well as the importance of close cooperation between all the different role players to ensure the smooth running of the Tattoo.

With the planning almost completed and the tempo of logistical, administrative and Tattoo program preparation being increased, Tattoo enthusiasts can track the progress to the next

milestone, which is the media launch. The details for the launch will soon be available and progress can be monitored on the following websites:

Cape Military Tattoo - <http://www.capetattoo.co.za>

Defence Reserves - <http://www.rfdiv.mil.za>

Department of Defence - <http://www.dod.mil.za>

Castle of Good Hope - www.castleofgoodhope.co.za