



INFANTEER 2009

ANNUAL INFANTRY MEMORIAL SERVICE

25 JANUARY 2009

The annual infantry Memorial Service was held at Fort Klapperkop on Sunday 25 January 2009. This event is jointly arranged by the South African Army Infantry Formation and the Infantry Association and is held every year on the Sunday closest to the 22 January, as this is date when the proclamation of the South African Army Infantry Corps was announced in 1954. Therefore the South African Army Infantry Corps celebrates its 55th anniversary this year.

Several Infantry units and military veteran organizations as well as the Military Attachés laid wreaths. Families and friends were also given the opportunity to lay wreaths in honour of their loved ones who paid the highest sacrifice for the country.

The General Officer Commanding of the South African Army Infantry Formation, Major General Nkabinde said that the Infantry is often referred to being the “queen of the battlefield” as it is like the queen on the chessboard, the most versatile and it possesses numerous capabilities that enable it to fight under all conditions. This flexibility is also called the spirit of the Infantry Corps and the Infantry Corps has lived up to this spirit by being the core component of the landward defence capability.

Major General Nkabinde mentioned that our external deployments are not without casualties and made special mention of the two members we lost in the Sudan and the two we lost in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He also mentioned how quickly the xenophobic attacks were quelled after the Rapid Reaction Infantry Battalion (21 South African Army Infantry Battalion), was deployed, in support to the South African Police Service.

He also mentioned that our present challenge is recruitment, training and development of soldiers who will live up to the spirit of the corps, soldiers who understand and accept that they are serving in the South African National Defence Force, fulfilling the highest calling ever – defending the country and its people.

Major General Nkabinde also remembered two veteran Infanteers who past away last year, namely Lieutenant General Hattingh Pretorius, who was a previous Chief of the SA Army and Lieutenant General André van Deventer, who was the commander during Operation SAVANNAH and also the Deputy Honourary President of the Infantry Association.

Major General Nkabinde said; “Also honoured are all Infanteers who paid the supreme sacrifice in serving the country, and may their loved ones forever rejoice in the knowledge that they served the country with pride and dignity. They are the nation’s heroes.”