

**SOUTH AFRICAN KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION**

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## **NEWSLETTER NO 341**

### **JANUARY 2020**

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### **LETTER FROM THE EDITOR**

Dear Members and Friends,

The month of January was indeed a very hectic month but we have achieved a lot. I want to thank everybody who have responded to my requests for applications as well as the DNA drive. With regard to the DNA drive we have made contact with descendants in South Africa, Estonia, New Zealand and Australia. I am very optimistic that we might be successful taking in consideration that one of our pilots, Maj Davis, was already found in 1991 and was buried in Busan.

The Embassy will also commence with the planning of the Commemoration of the signing of the Armistice (67 years ago) and the outbreak of the Korean War 70 years ago. I need Veterans, Widows and Descendants to show our full support this year to attend the functions and to make this a year to remember.

### **Annual Korean War Veteran Revisit Program.**

I have send out the invitation to all members for the annual Korean War Veterans and Descendant Revisit Program. I want to thank all the members who have responded and was fortunate to allocate time slots to all applicants. We had the privileged to have 14 slots allocated to us this year this year. As I have specified in my letter, applicants will be prioritise in accordance with the E-Mail time and date. I now still have 2 slots still open for June and July. I urgently need applications for these two slots please.

The revisit program is scheduled for the following periods:

1. 22 to 27 June 2020.
2. 26 to 31 July 2020.
3. 9 to 14 November 2020.

The following applicants were successful (NB: the companion is the relation to the successful descendant) and their applications will be forwarded to the Korean Embassy.

### 1. June slots (3 Slots Occupied)

- a. Descendant of **2/Lt Piet Visser** (Son): **John Visser**/Companion: Spouse
- b. Descendant of **Capt Frank Richter** (Daughter): **Ann Hart**/Companion Spouse
- c. Descendant of **Capt Badenhorst** (Daughter): **Beulah Barber**/Companion Spouse

### 2. July Slots (3 Slots Occupied)

- a. Descendant **Col J.J.E. Louw** (Son): **Riaan Louw**/Companion: Spouse
- b. Descendant of **Lt Montanari** (Son): **John Montanari**/Companion
- c. Descendant of **Gen van Niekerk** (Daughter): **Leonora van Niekerk**/Companion: Dennis van Niekerk (Brother).

### 3. November Slots (All 6 Slots Occupied)

- a. Descendant of **Capt vd Spuy** (Daughter): **Catherine Stefanutti**/Companion: **Christine vd Spuy** (Sister)
- b. Descendant of **A/Cpl Gouws** (son): **Phillip Gouws**/Companion: spouse
- c. Descendant of **Cmdt Iamb** (Daughter): **Barbara Pipolo**/companion
- d. Descendant of **Capt Frank Richter** (Son): **Brian Richter**/Companion: Mark Richter (Son).
- e. Descendant of **LAM Barker** (son): **Maj Gen Des Barker**/Companion: spouse.
- f. Descendant of **Col J.J.E Louw** (son): **Dirk Louw**/Companion: Spouse

**DNA Sample Kits.** The DNA Sample kits have arrived from Korea (as I have stated in the December Newsletter) and I have received already eight responses from the following descendants/family members of South African Airmen who have been listed as “missing” after the Korean War who are willing to donate their DNA for the identification purposes. For record purposes, the status of collecting of DNA is as follow:

- 1. DNA Donation by Michael Krohn (Nephew of Lt G.H. Krohn): Estonia. DNA Sample was send on 27/12/2019. Wait for reply.



**Lt G.H. Krohn:**

- 2. DNA Donation by Wenda Verrijdt (Daughter of Lt Frisby): Valhalla, Pretoria. DNA Sample Test was send on 31/12/2019. Sample was received on 20/01/20.



**Lt A.G. Frisby**

3. DNA Donation by Roelf Kotzenberg (son of Maj Kotzenberg): St Helena bay, Western Cape. DNA Sample was send on 06/01/2020. Sample was received on 15/01/2020.



**Maj R.P.G. Kotzenberg:**

4. DNA Donation by Debbie Marx (Granddaughter of Mike Parsonsons): Port Elizabeth. DNA was send on 06/0/2020: Wait for reply.



**Lt L.W. Parsonson**

5. DNA Donation by Ian Morgans (Nephew of Ian De Jongh): Australia: Sample was send on 31/12/19. DNA Sample was received on 16/01/2020.



**2/Lt C.L. De Jongh**

6. DNA Donation by Beulah Barber (Daughter of Capt W.J.J. Badenhorst): New Zealand. Sample was send on 06 01/2020. DNA Sample was received on 22/01/2020.



**Capt W.J.J. Badenhorst**

7. DNA Donation by John Montanari (Son of Lt F.A. Montanari): Durban: Sample was send on 7/01/2020. Wait for reply.



**Lt F.A. Montanari**

8. DNA Donation by Andrew Pappas (Nephew of 2/Lt C.J. Pappas): Nelspruit: DNA Sample was send on 24/01/2020. DNA Sample was received on 24/01/2020.



: 2/Lt C.J. Pappas.

**K-Scholarship Bursaries to direct descendants of South African Korean War Veterans.** I have met a very kind en generous member of the Korean Community in South Africa who approached me two years ago with the purpose to offer study opportunities (in the form of bursaries) to direct descendants of South African Korean War Veterans.

The Korean Businessman, Sankei Jang, who was born during the Korean War in 1952, has after years of hard work decided to make South Africa his home. This kind gentleman who is very passionate about his quest to share his good fortune with his fellow Koreans, disabled people and the descendant of South African Soldiers who fought for the Korean Peoples freedom, has decided to start helping other while watching the sunset one evening. He created this scholarship (K-Scholarship Foundation) to make his dream come true. He wrote the following poem to capture his intention with the scholarship:

*Leaning on my study on the window side  
Watching a sunset on the Westside  
How beautiful he is, even while passing away*

*Like the Sun setting on the Westside  
Widely helping with his last shining  
I want to harvest my life in his way*

This year I am pleased to say that members of the Association have submitted five applications for consideration by the K-Scholarship Panel of Judges which will be judged in accordance with strict qualifying criteria. The K-Scholarship Program will announce the successful candidates and I will publish the names of the successful candidates in the next Newsletter. On behalf of the Association I want to extent my deepest appreciation to this Sankei Jang for his wonderful and generous initiative.

**Karma.** I need to repeat the story about Karma once again this month.

The Korean Nation, has expressed their appreciation to those who have helped them so many times in the few years that I am involved in the Association, that I sometimes wonder why they still do it. The only conclusion I could come to is captured in the belief of "Karma" of which I am a firm believer.

For those who don't know what Karma is, I did the following search on the Internet.

***"Is getting what you give" or the result of a person's action as well as the actions themselves.***

***It is a term about the cycle of cause and effect. According to the theory of Karma, what happens to a person, happens because they cause it with their actions (Wikipedia).***

### **Sunset Call: Brig General Crow Stannard. Author of the book “Beyond the Edge of the Sky”.**

It is with deep regret that I have to announce the passing Brig Gen Crow Stannard on 7 January 2020. Gen Stannard was the author of the book” **Beyond the Edge of the Sky. Captivating stories from the life of Lt Gen Denis Earp SSA, SD, SOE, SM”.**

A want to extent a special word of gratitude to Brig Gen Stannard for all his support while he was still alive and also the trust he placed in me by allowing the Association to print the book in the future. I also had the privilege to hand over the Korean translation of the book to him in December 2019 and also to tell him that the Korean Producers of the “**Last Wish**”, a documentary for the Korean Department of Patriots and Veterans, will use his book for research purposes.

We will remember him.

### **Birthdays in February 2020**

Anim Louw (19), Paul Coxon (19), Annemarie Immelman (4), Genive Fernhout (17), Merle Hefer (13), Trish Holthausen (27) Basil Letherbarrow (19), Colleen Newton (9), Gillie Smith (2), Nickey Hearne (08), Robin Basson (4), Jean Louis Nell (17), Nicole Garzouzie (04) and Richard Turner (23), Donna Bolus (16), Dennis van Niekerk (24) and Mark Richter (18) and Peter Copson (18).

To all the members and friends of the Association “**Have a splendid 2020!**”

**Dirk Louw**

### **REMEMBERING OUR VETERANS**



### **REMEMBERING OUR VETERANS: CAPTURING THE DETAILED HISTORY OF 2 SQUADRON IN KOREA**

This month I continue with Chapter V of the detailed daily history of 2 Squadron based on the official files on this topic in the Air Force Museum. This record will be enhanced with info in the 2 Squadron War Dairy, the 18<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber Wing War Dairy (TRUCKBUSTERS from DOGPATCH by Tracy D. Connors) as well as other official documents. There was also, except for the photographs published in the 18<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber Wing War Dairy “**TRUCKBUSTERS from DOGPATCH**” by Tracy D. Connors no photographs taken by 2 Squadron while deployed in Pyongyang and Suwon. This was because the Squadron’s official photographer was still in Japan, Johnson Air base waiting to move to Korea. I have also made use of photographs published in the book by Winston Brent “**2 Squadron in Korea, Flying Cheetahs 1950 to 1951**”.

**Important Dates.** For reference purposes to keep track of all the movements of the Squadron the following detail will be displayed every month:

Departure date Durban: 27<sup>th</sup> of September 1950.

Arrival in Yokohama: 4<sup>th</sup> of November 1950.

Arrival at Johnson Air Base: 4<sup>th</sup> November 1950.

Receipt of the first 16 Aircraft at Johnson Air Base: 5<sup>th</sup> November 1950.

Arrival of the 2 Squadron detachment’s at K-9: 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1950.

Arrival of the 2 Squadron detachment at K-24: 19<sup>th</sup> of November 1950.

2 Squadron First Operational Mission: 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 1950.

2 Squadron's Detachment's evacuation to K-13 in Suwon: 01 December 1950.

2 Squadron Headquarters move from Johnson Air Base in Japan to K-10: 17<sup>th</sup> December 1950.

Last remaining Detachment pilots at K-13 flew down to K-10: 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1950

Last 2 Squadron pilot arrive in Korea from JAB at K-10 bringing the Squadron to full strength: 30<sup>th</sup> December 1950.

Last ground crew evacuated from K-13: 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1951.

**Personnel Losses:** Period 4/11/50 to 28/12/50 = **0**. All personnel losses will be listed here in future newsletters for record purposes.

**Aircraft Losses.** Period 4/11/50 to 28/12/50 = **2**. The following aircraft losses have occurred after receipt of the first aircraft on 5 November 1950.

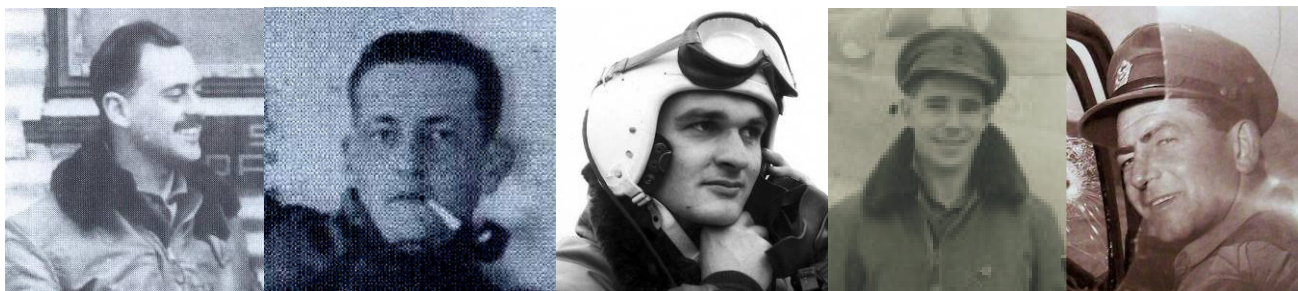
- 04 December 1950 (Mustang 325): Non-fatal aircraft crash landing at Johnson Air Base: Pilot: Capt Joe Joubert. Not part of official losses due to mechanical failure upon receipt. Was replaced.
- 05 December 1950 (Mustang 311): Non-fatal aircraft crash landing (battle damage): Pilot: Capt John Davis.

The following is an operational situation in January 1951 in Korea as background (as documented in the 18<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber Wing War Dairy "**TRUCKBUSTERS from DOGPATCH**" by Tracy D. Connors on the situation over this period. This will give some insight into the threats posed to the United Nations Forces over this period.

**Summary of the situation in Korea for the month of January 1951.** The reason for including the operational situation in the history of 2 Squadron in Korea is to ensure that readers understand the actions of the United Nations forces at the specific time and place.

On New Year's Day Communist Forces launched a powerful new attack that pushed UN Forces out of Seoul and the nearby Kimpo and Suwon Airfields. Soon Wonju, the North central crossroad of South Korea was engulfed in a see-saw battle. Air power, lots of it was urgently called for and delivered by FEAF. By mid-January, the enemy offensive had ground to a halt on a line between Pyontaek on the west coast and Samchok on the east coast. Overall air superiority by the UNF played a critical role in stalling the bloody offensive. By late January, UN Forces had regrouped and were again on the offensive.

On the **28<sup>th</sup> of December 1950**, confirmation was received of the news that the Chinese Communists had pushed reconnaissance patrols across the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel and Chinese groups had been identified two miles south of the parallel. The build-up of Communist power for an offensive was continuing and a new drive was expected any time. Two days later on the **30<sup>th</sup> of December 1950** it was disclosed that an enemy build-up was taking place along the Eastern Sector of the Korean battle line and that an attack was generally expected. In the morning Lieutenant P.S. Cilliers arrived from Johnson Airbase in a F.51 aircraft and later on during the day Lieutenant D.W. Featherstone arrived after having been delayed at Itazuka. With his arrival the Squadron was brought up to full strength.



Lt D.D. Grace

Lt J.C. Ansell

Lt P.S. Cilliers

Lt D.W. Featherstone

Lt F.E. Potgieter



The last day of 1950 (**31<sup>st</sup> December 1950**) saw a return of the very cold weather, but a feature of the Squadron activities was the way in which all personnel were standing up to the arduous conditions. Only a few have been reported sick with minor ailments. In the evening at 1800 hours the Squadron Padre conducted a well-attended church service. The spiritual welfare of the Squadron was being well catered for and all ranks felt very grateful to Captain Cloete for all his hard work. After the Church Service a Squadron party was held to mark the passing of the old year. This was made possible by the generosity of the South African Gifts and Comfort Fund and the Squadron was especially grateful to the organisers of the Fund for the pains they took to make Christmas in Korea a pleasurable one.



**So 1950 came to an end.** The Squadron had accomplished much in the brief time it had been in the Far East. It had established itself as a unit at a permanent base in Korea. The pilots had shown themselves to be both skilful and aggressive while the ground crew had proved themselves cheerful, keen and competent. Three hundred and eighty one sorties had been flown with the loss of only one machine (Mustang 311). (Mustang 325 was considered as an aircraft accident due to mechanical failure and was replaced free of charge by the U.S.A.F.). The New Year dawned and all ranks were looking forward eagerly to further successes in their operations against the communists.

The **1<sup>st</sup> of January 1951** found No 2 Squadron S.A.A.F. in Korea as a member of the United Nations Air Team, actively employed on operations and determined to use all means at its disposal to be worthy of South Africa's contribution to the cause for which the United Nations were fighting. The New Year's Communist offensive around Seoul, the capital of South Korea, was anticipated and there was no doubt that the Squadron would be fully engaged during the month of January. The weather at K-10 was still very cold and the entire area was covered with snow and ice. The Detachment (ground crew) at K-13 was working under sub-zero climate conditions and although the weather was very much colder than that to which South Africans were accustomed, all the men were in good health and morale was high. On the morning of New Year's Day, (**1<sup>st</sup> of January 1951**) Captain P.A. Le Grange, Captain M.D.V. Cloete and Sgt B. Koekemoer left to visit the detachment. On their arrival there all ranks were paid and

outstanding matters were attended to. During the day six missions comprising twenty-four sorties were flown, most of them close support in the battle area.



Sub-Zero conditions: A 2 Squadron Mustang covered with blankets to avoid the fuselage being iced-up

A break through by the enemy in two places was reported the next day (**2<sup>nd</sup> of January 1951**) and it was also revealed that Kimpo Airfield, next to Seoul, had fallen. On the **3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1951**, nineteen other ranks were detailed to proceed to K-13 to replace personnel who had been there for more than 10 days. However, at 1500 hours the move was cancelled as information was received that K-14 and K-16 airfields were being evacuated. Very essential spare parts for unserviceable aircraft and motor vehicles were being rushed to K-13 and it was expected that the airfield might also be evacuated within the next few days.



During the day a letter was received from the Headquarters, 18<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber Wing, which set out the policy covering the reimbursement for materials and labour supplied to the Squadron. This dealt with the necessary paper work involved and was intended to prevent administrative difficulties which might arise due to incorrect returns. At K-10 at the time living conditions were adequate, if not good, but it was felt that the food in the Wing Officers Mess left much to desire. The general opinion was that



most of the meals were not worth more than 20 cents, whereas the officers had to pay forty cents, which means approximately three shillings and sixpence per meal.

At 2015 hours on the evening of the **3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1951** the Squadron Operations Officer was advised that K-13 airfield was to be evacuated as from noon the next day. At 0800 hours on the **4<sup>th</sup> of January 1951**, the Squadron Commander, left for K-13 to supervise the evacuation of the Detachment ground personnel. Late in the afternoon the first C.47 aircraft arrived from K-13 with ten personnel and all the equipment used by the Detachment. The last twenty three personnel arrived at K-10 at 2010 hours. All the personnel and equipment had been evacuated safely from K-13 and for the first time since the **16<sup>th</sup> of November 1950** all the personnel of the Squadron were together again. As a result of the Communist advances the Wing had now retreated according to plan, approximately one hundred and fifty miles and in the future all operations against the enemy would be carried out from K-10 Airfield. An indication of the gravity of the situation was the fact that at 1600 hours, General Weyland from the 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force Headquarters, while visiting the base, paid a visit to No. 2 Squadron Headquarters. Twenty-four sorties were flown during the day, most of them directed against advancing enemy troop. Pilots reported seeing big fires burning in Seoul, and that the position of the bombing-line was confused.

The next day (**5<sup>th</sup> of January 1951**) a visit was paid to the Squadron by Maj P.T. McPherson, the Public Information Officer of General MacArthur's Headquarters in Tokyo. The purpose of his visit was to make recordings of some of the experiences of the pilots and ground personnel. It was felt that it was a great pity that the Squadrons establishment did not make provision for a similar facility as they were considered an excellent method of publicizing the activities of the South African Air Force. Since it seems likely that the Squadron would be at K-10 for some time to come, the Equipment Officer and his staff began taking stock of the U.D.F. clothing in order to determine the requirements of the Squadron for the next six months. His section also began to return all surplus technical equipment to the Base Supplies as it was impractical to carry surplus stores under the existing conditions. As a result of stock-taking, the Equipment Officer was compelled to report that the peace-time accounting system was totally impractical under active service conditions. It was decided to draw up a modified system in the near future. In order to assist the Equipment Section the Staff Officer Equipment, Major Swanepoel was requested to come from Liaison Headquarters in Tokyo to visit the Squadron.



The Equipment Section's Personnel "Store Bods" outside their tent with the store in the corrugated iron building at the back (1951). (L-R) Cpl van der Westhuizen, F/Sgt. Heydenrych, F/Sgt Bob Monro, John, Cpl. van der Westhuizen, Sgt Deroy Beanie (U.S.A.F.) and A/Sgt. Alton (Flying Cheetahs in Korea).



Twenty sorties were flown during the day and pilots reported a large number of friendly troops and vehicles retreating southwards. In the afternoon Lieutenant Swemmer's aircraft developed engine trouble while on a close support mission, and he was forced to land at K-13. Fortunately although the airfield had been evacuated the previous day, it was still in friendly hands. Plans were immediately made to send a party to K-13 to make the aircraft serviceable and fly it back to K-10. It was reported that Seoul, the capital of South Korea, had change hands for the third time since the beginning of the war. The city had been successfully evacuated by all United Nations troops.

Early on the morning of the **6<sup>th</sup> of January 1951**, Commandant S.v.B. Theron, A/Sgt W.J. Wessels, A/Cpl Posthumus, A/M J.R. Eloff and A/M M.G. Le Roux left by C.47 aircraft for K-13 in order to investigate the state of the unserviceability of Lieutenant F.A. Swemmer's aircraft. As the enemy was about only fifteen miles away from the airfield, no time was wasted in getting the aircraft serviceable once more, and Commandant Theron flew it back to K-10. Lieutenant F.A. Swemmer and the other four ranks returned home by courier service. Sixteen missions were flown, both close support and armed reconnaissance.



The runway at K-10. Note how close it is to the hangars. The South side of the airstrip was on the water. Approximately 50 feet separate the entire length of the runway from the bay (Krakovsky)

Living conditions at K-10, although not pleasant, were not giving rise to complaints. The men were living either in tents or in Mission Huts. There was no particular preferences for any of the two types of accommodation since provision was made in all living quarters for oil stoves, which made both huts and tents comfortable in the cold weather.

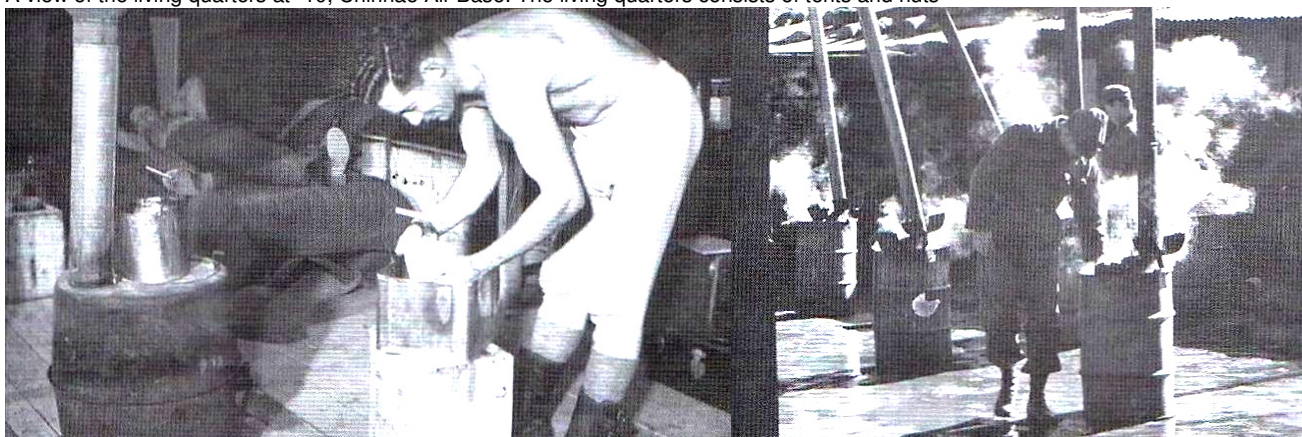
However, working conditions out in the open were trying in the extreme. In a report on his section to the Commanding Officer, the Armament Officer, Lieutenant M. Brady stated that only the keenness of his senior N.C.O's and armourers had enable him to maintain a high standard of serviceability. Due to a number of casualties in the Armament Section, caused by illness and minor enquiries, a crew system had been adopted. Separate crews had been organised for maintenance, bombs, rockets and ammunition. This system had worked successfully but the strain was telling on the men. However, it



was hoped that if replacements could be speeded up, the problem of maintaining a high serviceability rate would be achieved.



A view of the living quarters at -10, Chinhae Air Base. The living quarters consists of tents and huts



At K-10 huts and tents were fitted with stoves. Water in a paraffin tin was used for washing and hot water drums at the Mess to wash the Dixies after meals.



A few SAAF Officers in front of the Officers Club. On the left Lt Doveton, second from left Lt Deans, Capt John Davis, Lt Sweeny and on the right Lt Kruger. (The only pilots I could identify)



An unexpected problem which appeared on the running of the Squadron in January was that up to the seventh of the month (**7 January 1951**), fourteen personnel had submitted applications for their discharge from the S.A.A.F. on expiration of their Permanent Force Contracts. It was considered possible also that more personnel might decide to leave the service, as and when, their contracts expire. It was felt that under the circumstances there was nothing to prevent personnel from purchasing their discharge or decline re-engagement, and that steps should be taken to ensure that personnel could not terminate their contracts while on service outside South Africa. It was recommended that in order to prevent expenditures to return personnel to the Union as and when they might be desirous of discontinuing their Permanent Force Contracts, either by purchase or by expiring time, that each and every member of the S.A.A.F. who should volunteer for service outside South Africa, should also sign a contract to serve anywhere in the world for the duration of the hostilities.

Bad weather now began to hamper operations, but nevertheless close support and reconnaissance missions were flown to harass the advancing enemy and to provide accurate information for friendly ground forces. The main target continued to be the enemy troops, transport and supplies, but on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 1951 there was a change in the shape of a mission escorting B.26 Bombers. The last mission of that day was compelled to return to base without having reached the target due to bad weather. Engine troubles began to appear too and cause individual pilots to have to abort missions. However, on the **8<sup>th</sup> of January 1951**, the Squadron had a good day. Twenty-three sorties were flown with very satisfactory results. Targets were attacked in the Seoul area and pilots reported that thousands of refugees were crowding the roads South of Suwon, all moving south to the ocean and Pyeongtaek and it was obvious that Communists were pressing hard on their drive South wards. The next day three missions of two aircraft each took off before 0800 hours. It was a cold and rainy day with very poor visibility and as a result only the mission led by Captain Badenhorst achieved any results. This was a reconnaissance mission along the Soul river areas and some camouflage stores were located which blew up after being bombed and strafed by Captain Badenhorst and Lieutenant Ansell. The United Nations forces were still retreating on all fronts. Some withdrawals were not due to enemy pressure, but in order to occupy better defensive positions. The infiltration of guerrilla and Communist troops created a major problem and an immediate danger for the Air Force units behind the front line. In view of this both heavy and light anti-aircraft guns were moved into K-10 Airfield. In the future the Ack-Ack Regiment was responsible for the defence of the airfield.



Lt Odendal, Padre Cloete and Capt Badenhorst at the K-10 Operations Tent



Capt Badenhorst with a Korean child at K-10

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Don't worry about failures, worry about the chances you miss, when you don't even try.

*Jack Canfield*