24 September 2026, Heritage Day (CAOSA)

TOWN	PLACE OF FIRING	GUN CALIBER	GUNNER	TIME FIRING	REMARKS
Simon's Town	Middle North Battery	9 inch	Martin Venter/Johan Venter	11:45	**Sorted**
Muizenberg	Het Posthuys	6 pdr	Peter Wright	11:50	**Sorted (Jason Codd)**
Cape Town	Castle	½ pdr	John Farelo	11:55	**Sorted**
Cape Town	Noon Gun	18 pdr	SA Navy	12:00	**Sorted**
Durbanville	Nitida	8 pdr	Erick Kellerman	12:05	**Sorted**
Durbanville	Signal Gun	6 pdr	Johan Brand	12:05	**Sorted**
Stellenbosch	Stirling Farms (Strictly Private)	4 pdr	Werner de Wet/Pierre Hatfield	12:10	**Sorted**
Piekeniers Kloof	Kardoesie	8 pdr	Theo van der Merwe Hanri Theron	12:15	**Sorted**
Worcester	HTS Drosdy	6 pdr	Bernard Strydom	12:20	**Sorted**
George	On Target Shooting Range	3 pdr	Gregg Carr	12:25	**Sorted**
Knysna	Kooigoed Huis: 33°57'46.7"S22°51'17.9"E	1 pdr	Wallace Vosloo	12:30	**Sorted**
Plettenbergbaai	NG Kerk	½ pdr	Ryk de Wit	12:35	**Sorted**
Baviaanskloof	Avondale	¾ pdr	Frans Marais	12:40	
Bathurst	Bathurst Agricultural Museum	½ pdr	Basil Mills	12:45	**Sorted**
Bloemfontein	War Museum	2 pdr	MC Heunis	12:50	**Sorted**
Clocolaan	Plaas met naam "Koringland"	4 pdr	Cronje Dietrichsen	12:55	**Sorted**
Bloodriver	Bloodriver Heritage Site	4 pdr 3 pdr	Anton Jansen van Vuuren	12:55 12:56	**Sorted**
Normandien pas	At Normandien pass narrowest point	6 pdr	Johan van der Westhuizen	12:55	**Sorted**
Parys	FAK plaas Udolpho	2 pdr	Dirk Bloem	13:00	**Sorted**
Sasolburg	**Jannie sal plek identifiseer**	2 pdr	Jannie Hefer	13:00	
Potchefstroom	4 Veld Regiment	2 pdr	Johan Wolfaard	13:00	**Sorted**
Pretoria	Voortrekker Monument	6 pdr Grietjie	Monique Lubbe, Chris vd Merwe, Jurrie van Staden Nico Hattingh	13:05 13:06	**Sorted**

Pretoria	Buffelsdrift	4 pdr	Coenraad Ziets	13:08	**Sorted**
Donkerhoek	Battle of Donkerhoek terrain 25°48'20.3"S28°29'26.2"E	12 pdr	Abrie van Vollensteen	13:10	**Sorted**
Balmoral	Balmoral Concentration Graveyard	4 pdr	Edward Rossiter	13:15	**Sorted**
Witbank	Geloftefees Terrein	12 pdr	Yosiah Oberholster	13:20	**Sorted**
Lydenburg	Longtom pas Lydenburg Museum	Longtom 4 pdr	Johan Greyling Hannes Joubert	13:25 13:26	**Sorted**
Waterval Boven	Elandsvallei Skietbaan	19 mm 50 mm	Dawie Schleich Lukas de Beer	13:30 13:31	**Sorted**
Bela Bela	Plot DB 78 - Bushbaby Park	20 mm	Johann Grobler	13:35	**Sorted**
Ellisras	Veilingkrale	4 pdr	Dr Willie Barnard	13:40	**Sorted**

SOUTH AFRICA TO THUNDER ON HERITAGE DAY: NATIONWIDE CANNON SIGNAL SYSTEM REVIVED FOR CAOSA's 21st ANNIVERSARY

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA – On Heritage Day (24 September 2026), the skies across South Africa will echo with the sound of living history. To celebrate its 21st anniversary, the Cannon Association of South Africa (CAOSA), in partnership with the ZAR and the South African Black Powder Association (SABPA), will orchestrate a historic, multi-province muzzle-loading cannon relay.

Replicating the historic 18th-century VOC Signal Cannon System, the national event will commence at 11:45 with the firing of the iconic 9-inch gun at Simon's Town. From there, a staggered 5-minute rolling countdown will carry the signal through Cape Town, stretching across the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Free State, and Gauteng.

Operated under strict national safety protocols and authorized by the SAPS Explosives Section, this event honours the country's antique ordnance heritage while uniting South Africans through a synchronized national salute.

Members of the public, historical enthusiasts, and media houses are invited to witness this thunderous relay at designated local firing stations. A complete time schedule, listing exact geographical coordinates, firing times, and certified gunners

For media inquiries, interview requests, or local station details, please contact:
CAOSA CHAIRMAN
Martin Venter
martinventerwp@yahoo.com
083 598 7665

EST 2005
CAOSA

DUTCH CALL-UP GUN SIGNAL SYSTEM

HERITAGE DAY

— 24 SEPTEMBER 2026 —



1. The Muzzle Loading Cannon

The voice of the gun is a relatively new but powerful one in the history. When guns appeared on the political scene, leaders ruled by divine right, the rights of man were not esteemed, and the interests of nations were more clearly known than their boundaries. The gun is intrinsically alien to democracy, but no stranger to freedom.

It is now almost 529 years since the voice of the gun, in its awful hostility, was first heard in this part of the world. The date was 12 November 1497. It was fired by Vasco de Gama's gunners at Koina hunter-gatherers, on the shores of St Helena Bay. For four centuries after the unfortunate beginning, seaborne artillery travelled back and forth around Cape of Good Hope on the ships of the great trading rivals, the Portuguese, Dutch, English, French and others, sailing between the market places of Western Europe, and the sources in the East.

Locally, guns were first landed and mounted on a fort in 1647, to protect salvaged trade goods from the wreck NIEUW HAERLEM. The fort, Fort Sandenburgh, stood near the Riet Vlei in present day Table View. From then on, the gun-voice was frequently heard at the Cape. It represented authority, and was either welcoming allies, fighting the first of the slaves or the last of the pirates, or intimidating foreign visitors with much smoke and thunder. Whether the guns thundered in aggression, polite salutation or in joyful celebration, their great voices were accepted as part of the daily course of life. Some of their stories are sad, and some of it light-hearted.

2. Heritage Day, History and Origin

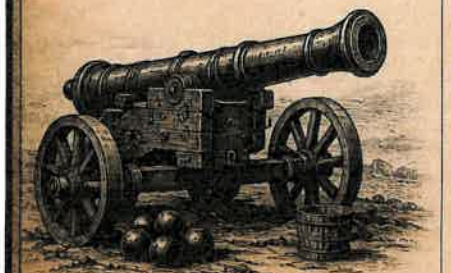
Shaka Day: The date was originally known as "Shaka Day" in KwaZulu-Natal, honouring the legendary Zulu King Shaka Zulu, who united the Zulu clans.

Creation of Heritage Day: When the new democratic government was drafting a list of public holidays in 1995, Shaka Day was initially omitted. Following objections from the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), a compromise was made to create an inclusive holiday that celebrates all South Africans, regardless of race or cultural background.

Cultural Attire: Citizens frequently wear vibrant traditional clothing to schools, work, and community gatherings to proudly display their cultural roots.

Braai Day: In mid-2000, the holiday gained an additional, unifying theme popularised as "Braai Day". This encourages friends and family to come together over a traditional South African barbecue.

Community Events: Festivities, food markets, and cultural performances are staged throughout the country, celebrating everything from Xhosa and Zulu traditions to Cape Malay, Afrikaner, and diverse heritage practices.



3. Cannon Association of South Africa (CAOSA)

We are a small band of likeminded enthusiast and to this end:

Our Vision

The preservation and appropriate utilisation of the historic muzzle loading ordnance in South Africa

Our Mission

To locate, record and identify the guns. Prevent their loss, recover them, where and when appropriate, display and fir them at suitable public place.

CAOSA was created on the 25 August 2005 and celebrated its 21st anniversary on 25 August 2026, thanks to the members, deceased, past and present loyally serving the Association all this time. To divine the existence of the Association, here is a short story and of cannons build in South Africa in the early days.

On own soil, the famous "Grietjie" had a tremendous role in our history. There after only four cannons were built in South Africa, three by Martinus Ras, (Ras gun) during the first Transvaal War of independence in December 1880 and been ordered by President Paul Kruger, with the third gun completed after the Battle of Amajuba, just too late to see action.

Another South African gun built was a 5-inch Howitzer "Wolf gun". At the siege of Mafeking during the Boer war, the British were very short of Artillery and needed a gun that could hit back at the surrounding Boers. This gun was manufactured in the workshop in Mafeking under the supervision of Major Pannera. It was made out of spare metal parts and the wheels were originally from a threshing machine. The British named it the "Wolf gun" after Colonel Baden-Powell who was present during the siege (it was his nickname) and used to bombard Boer positions.

Based on the above as can be seen the muzzle loading cannon does have big value on the history of South Africa and its Nation as far as protecting and shaping it to what it is today.

Dutch Call-Up Signal system

During the Dutch occupation a "Call-up signal system" was placed in the Western Cape. Once a clear threat to the colony had been recognised, the authorities needed to be able to rapidly summon the part time forces at their disposal. These forces consisted of soldiers serving at remote posts, VOC company officials and citizens, who undergone rudimentary military training but lived far inland.

The Call-up System had a modest beginning with one single gun being placed in 1687 on the farm "Rustenburg" situated on the lower slopes of Tygerberg, near the track which led from the Castle to Stellenbosch, (now Voortrekker Road).

By 1734 the Call-up System consisted of about 20 guns which formed a link between the Castle and Citrusdal in the North, Worcester in the North-East and Swellendam in the East

In 1757 a trial of the signal system proved to be a total failure. Some guns were not heard, some farmers were away from home and their guns not fired, and others had mouldy gunpowder which refused to ignite.

Based on the above, the Association was created to protect our countries ordnance heritage and as far as humanly possible prevent their loss or decay.

We are very fortunate to have more modern communication systems in place to assist with the accurately firing of these antique cannons. Not only are we going to revive the signal system, we are going to celebrate the existence of the Associations 21st anniversary, our heritage, the ordnance and the black powder which we don't have to import any more, but is now manufactured in our own country by our own South African people under the name of "ZAR". Our signal system thanks to modern communication assistance is now going to be expanded throughout South Africa and cannons will be fired on Heritage Day, 24 September 2026 the first time starting at 11:40am in Simon's Town at Middle North Battery with the 9-inch RML followed North, East and West with 5-minute intervals. A detailed programme will be published at a later stage.

4. ZAR Black Powder

With the import sanctions against South Africa as far as explosives concern and the unavailability of local manufactured black powder from governmental entities, "ZAR" was born. Not only is it the same products being used, it smells the same, burns and reacts the same as foreign manufactured black powder. ZAR is proudly manufactured by South Africans for South Africans on South African soil.

5. Thanks, and Appreciations

First a very big personal thanks to Colonel Jurie van Staden, Commander of the SAPS Explosives Section, who today fired a cannon at the Voortrekker Monument, for his assistance over the years towards CAOSA, ZAR and SA BPA. Without his guidance and numerous inputs this would not have been possible today. Colonel Van Staden retires the end on 2026, we all wish him a relaxed and very long and deserving retirement to make lots of memories with his family.

Secondly, thank you to Johan Greyling, not only the owner but the manufacturer of ZAR black powder. Without Johan's contribution as far as the manufacturing of South African black powder and the sponsoring of the powder for this day, this would also not have been possible to celebrate our heritage and the ordnance been used.

Last but not least, CAOSA, ZAR and SA Black Powder Association members who not only took part on this day but assisted all three these Associations in the preservation of our heritage, the public in general and the manufacturing of proudly own South African black powder to make all this possible. May there be more days like this and may we all grow from strength to bigger strengths, I salute you all.

EST 2005
CAOSA

DUTCH CALL-UP GUN SIGNAL SYSTEM



The Cannon Association of South Africa,

Welcome you

to the celebration of the Dutch Call-up System.

With the rich history of Muzzle Loading Cannon in South Africa, we see it fit to celebrate the occasion with Cannon firing

From North, South, East and West
of the Whole of Southern Africa.

Come experience the occasion with us in the following Locations

#	LOCATION	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	NOTES
1	Simon's Town – Middle North Battery	-34.1749	18.4241	
2	Muizenberg – Het Posthuys	-34.1104	18.4670	
3	Cape Town – Castle of Good Hope	-33.9259	18.4278	
4	Cape Town – Noon Gun (Signal Hill)	-33.9091	18.4070	
5	Durbanville – Nitida Wine Farm	-33.8493	18.6372	
6	Durbanville – Signal Gun Wines	-33.8201	18.6110	
7	Stellenbosch – Stirling Farms (Strictly Private)	–	–	Strictly Private
8	Piekenierskloof – Kardoesie	-32.6300	18.9507	
9	Worcester – HTS Drostdy	-33.6495	19.4340	
10	George – On Target Shooting Range	-33.9898	22.4169	
11	Knysna – Kooigoed Huis	-33.9629	22.8549	
12	Plettenbergbaai – NG Kerk	-34.0549	23.3667	
13	Baviaanskloof – Avondale	-33.8839	24.6403	
14	Bathurst – Agricultural Museum	-33.4975	26.8270	
15	Bloemfontein – War Museum (Anglo-Boer)	-29.1406	26.2086	
16	Clocolan – Koringland Farm	-27.3296	29.2157	
17	Blood River – Heritage Site	-28.1025	30.5349	
18	Normandien Pass	-27.7628	29.9239	
19	Jan Kempdorp	-27.9225	24.8305	
20	Parys – Udolpho Farm	-26.8625	27.4972	
21	Sasolburg	-26.8136	27.8170	
22	Potchefstroom – 4 Veld Regiment	-26.6379	27.0469	
23	Pretoria – Voortrekker Monument	-25.7764	28.1758	
24	Donkerhoek – Battle of Diamond Hill	-25.7833	28.4667	
25	Balmoral – Concentration Camp Graveyard	-25.8676	28.9673	(approx. from cemetery records)
26	Witbank – Geloftefees Terrein	-26.0014	29.2333	
27	Lydenburg – Long Tom Pass	-25.1527	30.6220	
28	Lydenburg Museum	-25.1036	30.4865	(approx. Gustav Klingbiel Reserve)
29	Waterval Boven – Elandsvallei Shooting Range	-25.6500	30.3333	
30	Bela Bela – Bushbaby Park	-24.8519	28.3582	
31	Ellisras (Lephalale) – Veilingkrale	-23.6514	27.7578	(auction site)



A SYSTEM OF SMOKE, FIRE AND SOUND THAT CONNECTED A COLONY.
THE CALL-UP GUN SIGNAL SYSTEM – A PROUD PART OF OUR HERITAGE.

THE DUTCH "CALL-UP" GUN SIGNAL SYSTEM

TIMELINE

EST 2005 CAOSA

c. 1652
Early Origins

The Dutch East India Company (VOC) uses gun signals between coastal posts to warn of danger and relay important news.

c. 1680
System Formalised

A structured network of signal stations is developed along the Cape routes to improve communication across great distances.

c. 1700 – 1750
Expansion

More stations are established inland and along the coast, strengthening the 'Call-Up' network across the colony.

c. 1770
Operational Maturity

The system operates with accuracy and speed, using a coded sequence of gun shots to send messages.

c. 1800
Peak Efficiency

At its height, the system links more than 40 stations from the Cape to the interior, a vital lifeline for the colony.

c. 1830 – 1850
Decline

New technologies such as heliographs and telegraph lines begin to replace gun signals, and the system gradually falls out of use.

1652 – 1800
Purpose

Used to warn of enemy ships, summon help, report movements and danger, and relay official orders across long distances.

Over 40 Stations
From Cape Town to Riversonderend and inland to Citrusdal, Piketberg, Tulbagh, Worcester and beyond.

Coded Messages
Different numbers of gun shots stood for different messages. Accuracy, timing and visibility were essential.

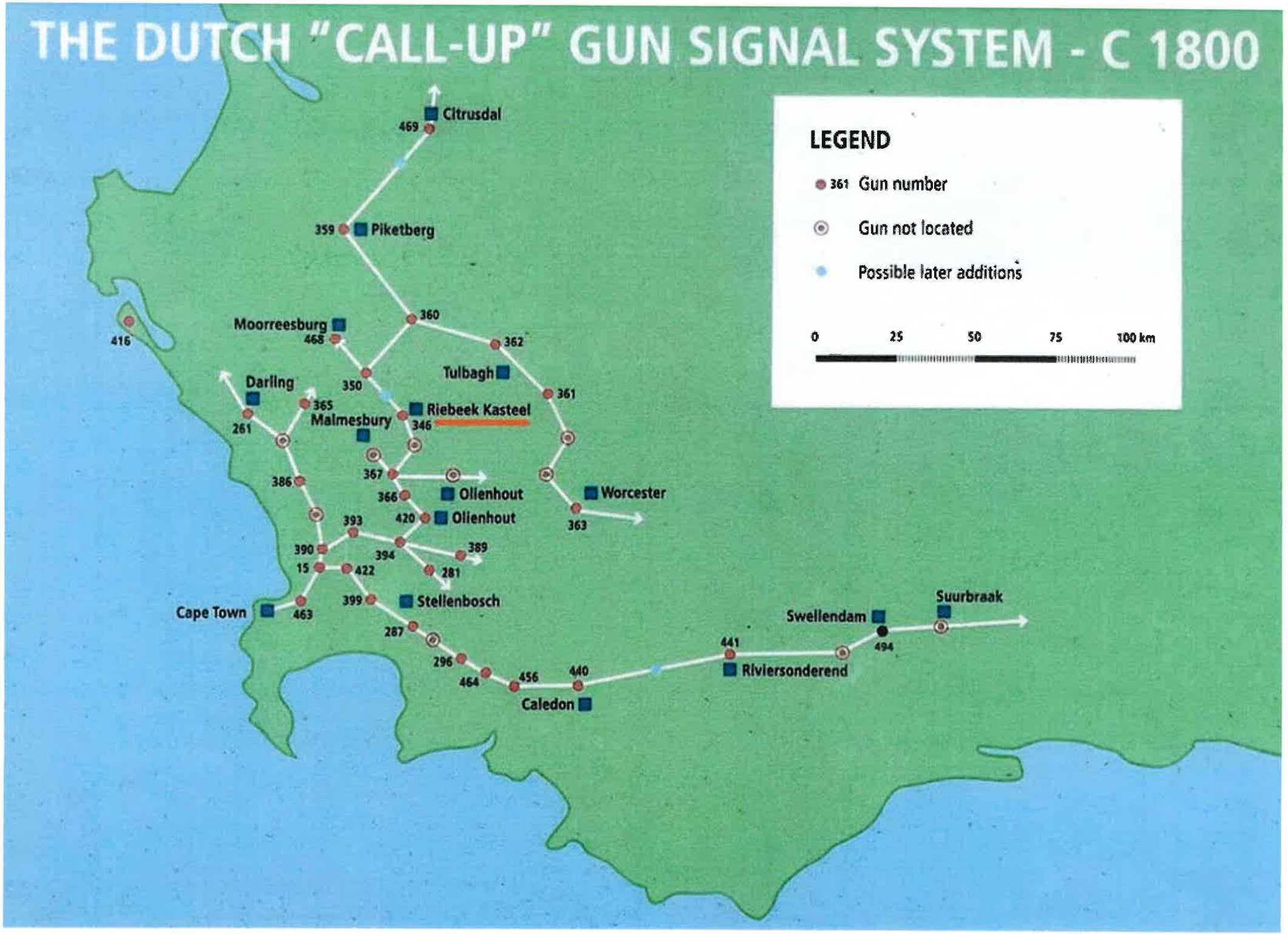
Staff & Discipline
Stations were manned by trained gunners. Strict discipline ensured messages were sent and received correctly.

Legacy
A remarkable example of early long-distance communication and Dutch ingenuity in one of the world's most challenging terrains.

A SYSTEM OF SMOKE, FIRE AND SOUND THAT CONNECTED A COLONY.
THE CALL-UP GUN SIGNAL SYSTEM – A PROUD PART OF OUR HERITAGE.

THE DUTCH "CALL-UP" GUN SIGNAL SYSTEM – c1800




THE DUTCH "CALL-UP" GUN SIGNAL SYSTEM - C 1800
LEGEND
361 Gun number
Gun not located
Possible later additions
0 25 50 75 100 km
Citrusdal
469
359
Piketberg
360
Moorreesburg
468
416
362
Tulbagh
Darling
350
361
365
Riebeek Kasteel
Malmesbury
346
261
367
386
366
Olienhout
Worcester
420
Olienhout
363
393
390
394
389
15
422
281
399
Stellenbosch
Cape Town
463
Suurbraak
Swellendam
287
494
441
296
464
456
440
Riviersonderend
Caledon