



The Western Cape Military History Society
Die Wes-Kaapse Krygshistoriese Vereniging
Umbutho weMbali yoMkhosi weNtshona Koloni

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A summary of the last meeting

Our chairman, Carl Burger opened the meeting and welcomed all. A special mention was made about our speaker for the evening, Prof. Heinz Rhode. After going through the correspondence and notices he handed over to Prof. Heinz.

Our Speaker: Prof. Heinz Rhode

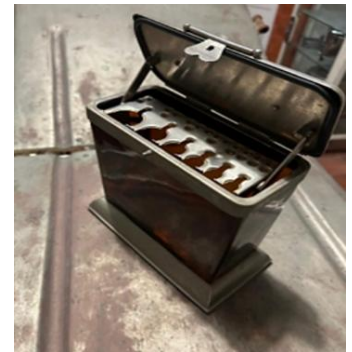
Here is a summary of his talk.

Hitler's Drug Addiction and WW1

The Medical Museum in Cape Town received a letter in 2004 and a "sterilizer" sent from Canada by Bernice Krafchik. Her father, during decommissioning after the WW11, "acquired" a sterilizer from Berchtesgaden which belonged to Adolf Hitler. It is now on display in the theatre complex in the Medical Museum in the Waterfront. This was the key of unlocking the history of drug abuse by Hitler and the deciding influence it had on the outcome of WW11.

The Treaty of Versailles was humiliating punishment after Germany lost WW1. The German population longed for salvation, and all drugs became available including morphine, cocaine and methamphetamine (Pervitin). The latter became the "Volksdroge". However, the Nazis hated drugs and wanted to be drugs themselves, promising salvation and hence Hitler became the "Drug".

There is a great paucity on Hitler's drug dependency in publish works about him. Joachim Fest's 900-page biography mentioned his "narcotic trance" and "fatal drug dependency" but remains unexplained.

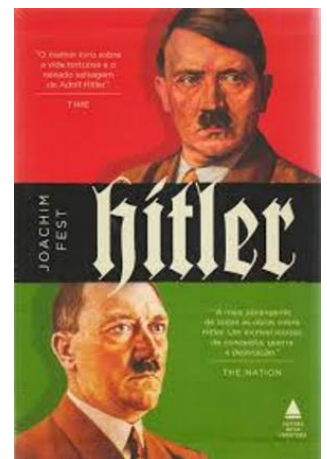


Hitler became "Drug-addicted from 1936 and this dependency can be **divided in 4 phases**. The **first** one was IV vitamins from 1936-1941. The **second phase** started in the fall of 1941 with opiate and hormone injections. Then in 1941-1943 the **third phase** was the heavy opiate period. The **fourth phase** was at the end of 1944 when drugs became virtually unobtainable and madness and withdrawal ensued. These drugs were provided to Hitler by his personal physician, Dr Theodor Morrel from 1936-1945.

It's a good thing you're here, doctor. This cocaine is wonderful. I'm glad you found the right remedy to free me from these headaches again for a while."

He received over 70 different drugs for 9 years which significantly contributed to his overconfidence and poor decision making, impaired judgement and paranoia, declining health and erratic decision making and finally his delusional ideas about Germany's victory. His drug addiction accelerated the downfall of Nazi Germany.

Drugs became "Apples from Hesperides" for him.



Drugs and Hitler's decisions can be summarised in 9 decisive acts

1.Capitulation of Czechoslovakia 15th May 1939. He convinced President Emil Hache to sign a piece of paper and sealed the fate of the country. The next day Germany invaded the Czech Republic without a shot been fired.

2.Stimulant decree 1940. He ordered the free availability to German troops of methamphetamines (Pervitin) which fuelled the German "Blitzkrieg". "A sleeping soldier is a useless soldier, incapable of action". Millions of pills were distributed and freely available to the troops.

3.Blitzkrieg. He was afraid that the Prussian General staff was too successful as German tanks covered 240 miles in 11 days, overcome the Ardennes forest and bypassing British and French troops during the invasion of France. He halted the "Blitzkrieg and disempowered the military leadership. After all it was his war.

4.Dunkirk, German land forces stopped for 10 days. Through the "Sickle-Cut" 340 000 French, British and Belgium troops were encircled and retreated to Dunkirk in Northern France. Goring (a morphine addict) convinced Hitler that the Luftwaffe and not the Wehrmacht's Prussian Aristocrats could deliver the glorious victory. Hence Hitler, though the "**Fuhrer principle**" at 12.45 May 24, 1940, stopped the German panzer divisions from advancing towards Dunkirk for 10 days until 4 June 1940. This allowed Operation Dynamo (May 26-June 4, 1940) to successfully evacuated all but 90 000 French troops. General Manstein entered a destroyed Dunkirk at 9.40 the morning of the 4th June. This "**Halt Order**" changed the outcome of WW2. Had Hitler not stopped the attack; England would have lost all their trained soldiers (General Edmund Iron side) and most likely the war.

5.Stalingrad instead of Moscow (Case Blue) August 1941. By now Hitler was a regular user of opiates (Eukodal) and Methamphetamine (Pervitin) which is an addictive psychostimulant, with rapid physical dependency and serious long term complications including insomnia, memory loss, anxiety, mood disturbances, psychosis and decreased cognitive functions.

Operation Barbarossa (August 1941) was a great strategic blunder. There was a serious conflict between Hitler and the General Staff. The Generals wanted to enter Moscow and end the war, while Hitler decided to divide the troops to conquer Stalingrad in the North and the oilfields in the Caucasus and Iran in the South. The army leadership warned of possible defeat, but Hitler had a fanatical resistance to advise.

6. Slowly the National Socialist Reign of terror poisoned itself from within. Between 1941 and 1944 medications were recorded >1 100 times, 28 different pills daily and more than 1000 injections in 800 days. He was obviously drug dependant. The drug Eukodal (Oxycodon an opiate) became the buffer between Hitler and the world and had a profound influence on all his decisions especially after 1942. Opiads and Methamphetamine became his life-lines to function.

7.Mussolini 1943. Hitler, artificially pepped up by Dr Morell, met the leader of Italy and convinced him not to surrender while Rome has been bombed. Another drug induced decision that contributed to the final destruction of Italy.

8.Wolfsschanze 1941-1944. This was Hitler's Bunker in the Masurian lake district of Poland. He survived the attempt on his life. Here he holed up for weeks in the bunker as the fronts were closing in from all sides. He worked, slept and vegetated there in total isolation with a pharmacological barrier around him provided by Theodore Morell.

D-Day ,6 June 1944 found Hitler was in East Prussia and responded late to the invasion. By this time, he was a complete drug addict with impaired functions but with a fanatical self-belief.

"Here, in the bunker the needle remorselessly penetrated his ruined veins, the plunger was pulled back, the stuff shot into the veins and again and again he escaped into self-delusion". The total irony of his drug addiction was that he denied the effects it had on him. In 1944 he quoted "You must be healthy; you must stay away from which poisons your body. We need a sober people. In the future the German will be judged by the works of his mind and the strength of his health"

9.Final Phase 1945. Hitler, now in a destructive phase of withdrawal, as there were no more drugs of happiness, stated that "I will leave all the men of history behind me. I want to be the greatest, even if the whole German people perishes in the process". He then ordered the complete destruction of German infrastructure through the "Nero Decree", March 19th, 1945.

Germany lost the WW2 for various reasons. There was military overreach, many strategic errors, economic limitations, Allied industrial power, failure of the Nazi leadership, the chemical stimulants and Hitler's drug addiction.

Our next meeting

16th July 2026

Notification is given of the June Meeting to be held at the Rosedale Complex, Lower Nursery Road, Rosebank at 19h30.

Our speaker for the evening is Rear Admiral (rtd) Theo Honiball.

Submarines and the Angolan War

On Thursday 16th July we will have the pleasure of hosting Rear Admiral (rtd) Theo Honiball.

Some of his highlights include the Argentinian Navy around-the-world training course and serving at sea on 19 different naval ships, and submarines of five navies during a 30-year period.

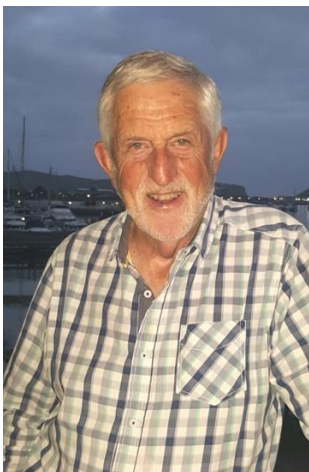
Theo was chosen to undergo submarine training at the Mediterranean Submarine Squadron and this entailed going to Paris to learn French as one of the conditions. It was the French Navy so all the training was in French.

He attended the French Naval War College in Paris for two years and was then selected as naval attaché in France for three years. He was submarine commander of two submarines for five years and the commanding officer of the SA submarine Flotilla. Admiral Honiball was awarded the Southern Cross Medal and the Military Merit Medal, while serving in France.

Chosen as honorary aide de camp to the state president, he embarked on a new career by being seconded to the national intelligence service for three years.

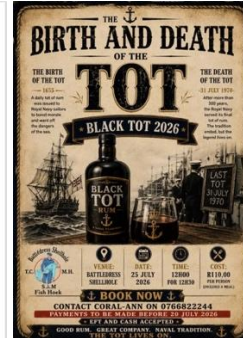
Theo will share with us his experiences as a submarine commander during the Border War. He was involved in the secret operations along the Angolan coast.

You can still see Theo's sub today as its preserved on land at the Submarine Museum in Simonstown. SAS Assegai (S99, formerly SAS Johanna van der Merwe), the third of three Daphne Class submarine built in France for the SA Navy, was commissioned in 1971. She served her country well and with the acquisition of three new Type 209 submarines, she was decommissioned in November 2003. Unlike her two sisters which were cut up for scrap, she was retained for preservation as an exhibit at the SA Naval Museum.



Notice Board

If you have any events that you would like us to add to this page please feel free to email me on woodworkgavin@gmail.com with the details.



Parades

Delville Wood	19 July 2026	Cape Town Gardens
Black Tot function	25 July 2026	Battledress MOTH Shellhole
El Alamein	18 Oct 2026	Cape Town Gardens
Remembrance Day	11 November 2026	Royal Cape Yacht Club
Remembrance Parade	1 November 2026	Battledress MOTH Shellhole
Remembrance Day	6 November 2026	Red Cross Children's Hospital
Remembrance Day	8 November	Cape Town Cenotaph

Upcoming Meetings

16 July 2026	Adm(rtd) Theo Honiball	Submarines and the Angolan War
20 August 2026	Richard Rosenthal	Mission Impossible. The SA pre 1994 negotiations
17 September 2026.	Walter Volker	The secret world of military intelligence
15 October 2026	Gerrie van der Merwe.	A pilot involved in the border war from both sides
19 November 2026	Michael Schaaf.	Following up with the H Bomb

Important Information

Our meetings starts promptly at 19h30 at the Rosedale Complex, Rosebank
 Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month, February - November
 A donation of R10.00 is requested, this is payable on arrival, this assists to cover the cost of the hire of the Rosedale facilities.
 Membership costs R80.00 a year.
 Tea/coffee and biscuits are served after the meeting.

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