



CANNON RESEARCH & PROJECTS



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Special Covid-19 Newsletter. (limited edition)

A free service to the lockdown survivors

There being no cannon activity and no AGM to report on yet, there is not much with which to fill this page.

I do know that Jurg Zimmerman has been busy trying to make sense of the complicated Ordnance time-line and accompanying stories for display at Nitida Cannon Station. Their proposed presentation will be pretty interesting.

There is an 8 pdr cannon near Paarl which the owners need proof fired, but the lockdown and extension have put the brakes on that project.

Peter Underwood has been collecting and sequencing the 74 CAOSA Newsletters for publication on our website.

Erick Kellerman reports that the Nitida Cannon Station has been moth-balled for the duration of the lockdown, all guns were painted, carriages oiled and all covered up snugly from the Cape weather. I suspect that Jurg's fingerprints are present.

The Castle of Good Hope has closed its doors and nobody knows when they will open again; and once they do open how long it will take for the tourism industry to recover. The prospects for the Castle staff and their unpaid resident gunner (me) are not good. My source of income died of Corona virus. The new reality is here!

Since I delivered the half pounder to the Castle in August 2011 we have fired a total of 3,706 shots and consumed 166 Kg of gunpowder in doing so. The original loading equipment was worn out and retired in early 2013. The second set suffered the same fate in late 2016 and the present set is on its last legs. The gun itself looks just like it did when it was new. The sponges were fitted with new sheepskin at my expense about every five or six months.

Our records show that our explanations and firings were attended by some 140,000 (yes! One hundred and forty thousand) spectators of all nationalities and ages.

It is interesting to note the different types of gunpowder used in the gun: at first it was the German WANO powder, then it was the locally made SANADDEX followed by OBATEX with Chinese Blasting Powder and Brazilian Elephant powder being used on occasion to fill gaps in availability. Now the ZAR powder is available but the gun is using the G-12 powder supplied by the SANDF.

Unless the Castle can make a rapid recovery I'm afraid that this will mean the end of firings and if we survive the lockdown Olivia and I will have to find something else to occupy and feed us.

Three and a half thousand shots in a confined space and in the presence of unpredictable public without a single incident. Not bad!

UBIQUE,

Gerry de Vries

13 April 2020