



Jimmy's Own

Official Newsletter of the Signals Association

Issue 41- June 2026

Signaller of Note

Lynn Fordred



Wireless on the move

HF vs VHF in World War II

New MANCO Members

Meet the Signals Association's new members

Message from the Chairman and Editor

We are again 6 Months into 2026 a busy and challenging period on various fronts to say the least. In view of the foregoing, I have the need to pay tribute to each and every member of our management team for their continued willingness to serve in the hope of improving circumstances and for always being there when I need advice or guidance or adhering to requests to attend memorial parades etc. it is cause for great appreciation and amplifies my own enthusiasm and continued dedication.

We are still concerned and attempting to address the challenges experienced to recruit new and younger members to ensure sustainability of veteran organisations in general. The whole question of challenges experienced with succession planning and sustainability of Veteran Associations is a cause for major concern throughout the Military veterans Organisations Nationally and Inter- Nationally. This aspect should be one of the prime objectives of our Association and also other Veterans organisations Nationally. In this regard we are building relations with the Western Cape Reserve Signal Unit, other Signals Units throughout the Country are on list.

We had our Annual General meeting, scheduled for 23 May 2026. The new Manco have been duly elected and is announced further on in this edition. As I will be standing down as Chairperson this year, my wish is for you to continue your support for the incoming management team without your support the Association cannot



fulfil its tasks.

Thank you to all who had responded to nominate members to serve on Manco and for either joining into the Zoom AGM or those without zoom facilities who have gone to the trouble to provide input on items on the agenda via emailed means.

Let's hope that the remainder of 2026 will be good and healthy for all our members and the Association will grow from strength to strength.

Please support us in whatever way possible, the Association need and treasure each and every member to be successful in its quest to create camaraderie amongst former and serving signallers and to support, promote, preserve and maintain the Corps of Signals traditions and promote a spirit of remembrance .

Certa Cito Greetings
Geoff Laskey

What's in this issue of Jimmy's Own?

4 Signaller of note: Lynn Fordred

We are proud to recognise our first female Signaller of Note.



8 Wireless on the move

The HF versus VHF saga in World War II.



12 Regimental Memorial Wing opens

A Regimental Memorial Wing has opened at the Ditsong National Museum of Military History in Gauteng.

13 Braam Blom - a tribute

By Col (Ret) Diederick Reineke ex OC Heidelberg Gym.



14 MANCO

Meet the Signals Association's newly elected members.

15 Events

A few events from the past three months.

18 Birthdays

Upcoming birthdays.



Front Cover

Lynn Fordred.

Lynn Louisa Fordred

Article by our President, Robbie Roberts (edited by Lynn Fordred)

In 2017, the Signals Association began honouring “Signallers of Note” - individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the South African Corps of Signals (SACS).

The first honouree, featured in the September 2017 Issue No. 2 of Jimmy’s Own, was Colonel Bert Howes, who rose from 3rd Brigade Signal Company to Director Signals. This was followed by Dr Brian Austin in March 2018, a distinguished authority in radar and telecommunications, and General Georg Meiring in June 2018, the last Chief of the SADF and first Chief of the SANDF.

Subsequent recipients included Brigadier General (Ret) Denis Jelliman in December 2018 and Major General Gerrit Murphy in September 2020, the founding General Officer Commanding of today’s Signals Formation.

Today, we are especially proud to recognise our first female Signaller of Note.

It is with great honour that we present Mrs Lynn Louisa Fordred, whose lifelong dedication to the Corps of Signals has significantly contributed to preserving its history, traditions, and identity.

Lynn was born on 24 February in

London and raised in a family deeply rooted in military tradition. Surrounded by stories of service from her grandfather, father, and uncles, she developed an early passion for military history—particularly the Irish uprisings and the First World War.

After marrying Ian Fordred in 1977, she embraced military life and expanded her expertise to include South African military history, becoming particularly knowledgeable on the Anglo-Boer War and South Africa’s role in World War I.

While stationed in Windhoek, Lynn served as an artist at Headquarters



ABOVE: Opening of the SACS Museum on 1 December 1988. From left to right - Lynn Fordred, Husband Ian Fordred, Brig Gen Chris Labuschagne (D Sigs) and Col Denis Jelliman (OC Army Gym).



INSERT: Museum Committee: Back row - WO1 Van Vuuren, Cmdt Fordred, WO1 Moss, WO1 Hubbard. Front row - Sgt Geldenhuys, S/Sgt Viljoen, Mrs Fordred, WO1 Bannister, WO1 Theron.

Unit, SWA Area Force. She played a major role in the design and heraldic approval of military flashes and badges, contributed to operational planning presentations, and became a qualified film editor working on informational films and news releases. She also completed SANDF Public Relations and Personnel courses, including Psychological Integration Programmes,

and is fluent in English, Afrikaans, and French.

During this period, she was co-opted onto the Shows and Exhibitions team and contributed to the SANDF Language Education Project.

Her most significant contribution began at the SA Army Gymnasium in Heidelberg, where she was tasked with establishing and curating the SACS

Museum for the Corps' 75th anniversary. Following its successful launch, she became its permanent curator. In this role, she educated generations of soldiers and visitors, fostering esprit de corps through the preservation and presentation of Signals history.

While in Heidelberg, Lynn also qualified as a SATOUR guide, specialising in military history tours across South Africa, as well as the specific history of Heidelberg. After relocating to Pretoria in 1993, she expanded her portfolio to include the history of Pretoria and surrounding areas.

Following her transfer to Wonderboom Military Base, Lynn served as Communications Officer and was responsible for safeguarding the museum collection until a new permanent site could be established.

As Communications Officer and Corps Historian, her responsibilities included:

- Maintaining and updating the official history of the Corps of Signals
- Ensuring accurate archival submissions to SANDF Archives
- Advising units on ceremonial events, exhibitions, and parades
- Liaising with museums, institutions, and stakeholders

Her broader contributions included:

- Supporting Project SHIELD and Reserve Force initiatives
- Serving as Curator of the CMI Museum and Secretary of the original Signals Association
- Writing for Hermes, as well as



PALACE GUARD: Lynn when she recently visited the Royal Palace in Rabat, Morocco.

- contributing to Salute and Certa Cito
- Supporting ceremonial, social, cultural, and sporting events
- Managing corporate identity, insignia, and presentations Acting as Media Liaison Officer for official engagements

During the post-1994 integration period, Lynn served as liaison officer for BMATT personnel, playing a vital role in supporting the transition into the new SANDF.

Demonstrating exceptional initiative, she sourced thousands of books from publishers worldwide, establishing lending libraries at SANDF



THE FORDRED FAMILY: From left - Gordon, Lynn, Ian and Claire.

deployment bases across Africa. She also ensured the regular distribution of magazines and newspapers to deployed members, maintaining an important connection to home.

Her dedication to the Signals community extended to veterans, where she organised the annual "Olds and Bolds" commemorative luncheons and maintained strong ties with past members.

Lynn also contributed to the 1999 BBC documentary marking the centenary of the Anglo-Boer War, assisting with the telecommunications history component.

In retirement, her passion for military history remains undiminished.

Together with Ian, she continues to visit historical sites both locally and abroad. She is also an avid reader and accomplished artist.

Lynn and Ian have two children: Gordon, who runs his own financial company, and Claire, who holds a doctorate in environmental science.

Throughout her life, Lynn Fordred has been a steadfast ambassador for the Corps of Signals - preserving its heritage, promoting its values, and sharing its story with dedication and enthusiasm.

It is therefore with great pleasure that we honour this remarkable lady as our latest Signaller of Note.

Wireless on the move

The HF versus VHF saga in WW2

By Dr Brian Austin

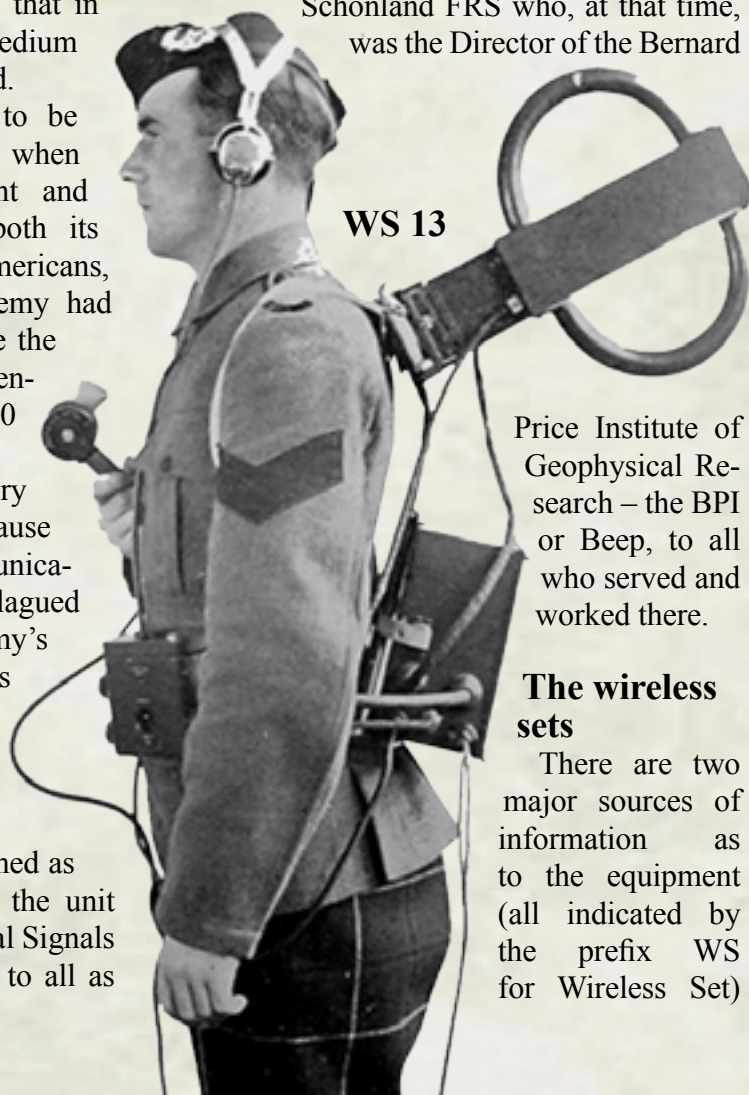
British Army mobile radio communications throughout the Second World War took place, almost without exception, at the lower end of the HF (3 – 30 MHz) spectrum with some wireless sets even using frequencies lower than that in what is called the medium frequency (MF) band.

This turned out to be a fateful decision when viewed in hindsight and particularly since both its major ally, the Americans, and its German enemy had shown how effective the much higher frequencies, at VHF (30 – 300 MHz), could be.

It was also a very costly decision because of the serious communication problems that plagued many of the Army's major operations throughout the war and none more so than at Arnhem in September 1944.

They were all trained as radar operators and the unit was called the Special Signals Services but known to all as

the SSS. Formed in the earliest days of the war at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) with the purpose of designing and building South Africa's own radar equipment, it was commanded by Lt Col (Professor) Basil Schonland FRS who, at that time, was the Director of the Bernard



WS 13

Price Institute of Geophysical Research – the BPI or Beep, to all who served and worked there.

The wireless sets

There are two major sources of information as to the equipment (all indicated by the prefix WS for Wireless Set)

used by the British forces throughout their various campaigns in North Africa, in Western Europe and in the Far East. The first is Major General R.F.H. Nalder's "British Army Signals in the Second World War", published in 1953, and the other is a much more recent book in the Birmingham War Studies series which is based on the PhD research of Dr Simon Godfrey.

It appeared in 2013 with almost the same title as Nalder's. Nalder's Signals became Godfrey's Communications plus a sub-title that involves Lifting the Fog of Battle. Both books contain listings of the technical details of the various categories of equipment added to the Signals inventory over many years up to and including the six wartime years.

Nalder's are the more comprehensive in that he quotes both the frequency range covered and the power of the relevant transmitters. For our purposes here both are vital pieces of information.

Of particular interest too are those wireless sets intended for mobile and man-carried operations. The so-called transportable units also mentioned are very large and cumbersome because they had to generate considerable amounts of power for long-distance applications. Some 45 transmitter/receivers are included in those references with around 27 of them being designated for mobile and man-carried roles.

The equipment operated on wire-



FAILURE: WS68P the inadequate HF manpack used at Arnhem.

less telegraphy (WT) or CW, as it's also known, and/or on radio telephony (RT) with some being dedicated specifically to radioteletype or teleprinter circuits, also known as RTTY. Further designations define the actual application such as Short Range (Vehicle Stations), Short Range (Man-Pack), Armoured Fighting Vehicle, Radio Link, Anti-Aircraft and Ground-to-Air.

The range of frequencies covered extends from as low as 290 kHz for the WS 14 providing RT communications between moving armoured fighting vehicles up to 17.5 MHz in the case of the WS 12 mounted in a 15-cwt truck. The power involved at those two extremes of frequency were 5 W and 25 W.

One oddity in all this was the so-called B-set of the famous WS19 of which no fewer than 115,000 were manufactured during the war. Whereas the WS 19 A-set operated in the HF frequency band between 2 and 8 MHz

with a power level of up to 30 W in its high-power variant it also contained VHF transmitter-receiver known as the B-set. It was intended for very short-range communications between tanks in close formation and on the move, and it worked from 229 to 241 MHz at a power of 400 mW making it quite unique among all the equipment used by the British Army during WW2.

Given the preponderance of HF equipment in the British Army at this time prompts one to ask why so little attention was paid by the S.E.E. to the use of the very high frequency (VHF) range above 30 MHz as both Britain's major ally and its greatest foe had done.

The WS 13 imbroglio

According to Nalder it was in 1936 that work commenced on the design of a special wireless set suitable for the infantry. The immediate requirement was that the set should be small. What resulted was the WS 13 which turned out to be such an oddity both in its appearance and in its performance that it never went into production. And with it died the British Army's embrace of the VHF range of frequencies.

The WS 13 was designed to work on RT between 51 and 64 MHz, hence at a wavelength of around 5m. Its power output was 300 mW. The oddity was its antenna. For some reason, not explained by either of our authors, the designers chose a loop-type antenna instead of the conventional and much

more convenient rod or whip typical of all other mobile and portable sets.

To add to its oddness the loop was mounted on a supporting framework that protruded, at an upwards angle, a good 40 cm from the soldier's back giving it the appearance of a railway signal. The roughly elliptical loop had a major dimension of about 30 cm and was mounted roughly vertically.

Whatever radiation there was from the antenna would have been predominantly vertically-polarised while having its maximum intensity both forward and aft of its wearer.

However definite nulls in the radiation pattern would have existed in the broadside directions. By contrast, a vertical rod or whip would have produced an omnidirectional radiation pattern in azimuth and, hence, would have been far more useful to the man on the move.

Field trials with this strange creation were disappointing. To the S.E.E. the reason for the poor performance was assumed to be because the "path of the rays was too nearly optical". This observation betrayed the designers' preconceptions that such short radio wavelengths behaved just like light rays and so would travel in perfectly straight lines and would be subject to blockage by any obstacle in their path.

This is a fallacy because the difference between the wavelength of light and radio waves is huge – tens of millions of times – and making such a simplistic comparison between them

makes no sense. In technical terms the diffraction produced when such waves encounter obstacles is enormously different, being inversely proportional to the square root of the wavelength with the radio signals able to skirt round such obstacles with relative ease compared with those rays of light.

No mention was made about the range obtained or even about the quality of the radio communications between two WS 13 sets but it was evidently well below expectations and so the set was abandoned and never went into production. The subsequent decision to abandon the use of the VHF band soon followed as a result of this farrago.

Henceforth all subsequent radio developments at the S.E.E. concentrated on frequencies considerably less than 30 MHz. As a result, all the radiating radio frequency energy either hugged the surface of the earth or was reflected from the ionosphere some hundreds of kilometres up above.

The first of these was called the ground-wave and the second, naturally enough, became the sky-wave. The ground-wave thus became the Army's major mode of communications between all mobile and man-carried equipment but, under certain circumstances, the sky-wave would propagate as well and the consequences of that could be serious.

A feature of ground-wave propagation is that the signal is rapidly attenuated as it travels over the surface of the

earth – a frequency-dependent effect depending upon the electrical characteristics of the ground below.

Therefore, the communications range can be significantly different in different geographical areas. This would certainly prove to be the case around Arnhem in 1944.

By comparison VHF signals tend to travel predominantly in the region of space some distance above the surface of the earth without any ground-induced attenuation.

Those space-waves can therefore reach the horizon (and even somewhat beyond it) with the ultimate range being dependent on the height of the transmitting and receiving antennas above the ground.

It is worth quoting Major General Nalder's comments on this sorry state of VHF affairs within the British Army at that time. "The choice of 5 metres was particularly unfortunate, for besides the time wasted in producing an ineffective set, the trials acted as a deterrent for several years to further experiments with the very high frequency band". It was more than a deterrent; it was an outright rejection. To this day we remain mystified as to what those trials with the WS 13 revealed but they were clearly a calamity. Three years later the world was at war and the British Army had abandoned VHF altogether whereas others had embraced it.

To be continued in the September issue of Jimmy's Own.

Regimental Memorial Wing is opened

By Jeff Marcus

A Regimental Memorial Wing has been opened at the Ditsong National Museum of Military History (formerly the South African National War Museum), in Saxonwold Gauteng.

It was officially opened on Sunday, 24 May 2026. Present were Manco Member of the Signals Association Jeff Marcus.

The Regimental Memorial Wing (also known as the Regiments Room) at the Saxonwold War Museum is a dedicated exhibition space created in the museum's old workshop area.

Each South African regiment and

unit funds and maintains its own display section, showcasing their unique memorabilia, history, and heritage. Units represented include the Rand Light Infantry, Reconnaissance regiments, 1 Parachute Battalion, 44 Parachute Brigade, the Gunners, 32 Battalion, and various other regimental associations.

Major General Roy Andersen played a central role in establishing and completing the project. This self-funded initiative ensures that the stories and traditions of these proud units live on for future generations.



REGIMENTAL WING: From left to right Marcus Goldring (The Gunners Locating) and Chairman of the Jewish Ex Servicemen's League, Jeff Marcus (Signals Association) ,Selwyn Rogoff (Rand Light Infantry) and Ivan Levi (Rand Light Infantry)

Braam Blom - a tribute

By Col (Ret) Diederick Reineke ex OC Heidelberg Gym

ZERO stuur oor
Seiner vir Jan Breytenbach se
Lugstorm operasie
Casinga
Taai en vasberade is hy beleef elke
beslissing van geveg

Deur die range
Werk hy hom op
Kursusse en diens
Is sy toewyding om te slaag
Valskerm Bn Sein Troep Bevelvo-
erder
Leergim aanstelling na aanstelling
Volg
Wilverdiend prestasie
Word beloon
Met RSM

Nuwe dimensie van werk
Die trots van die eenheid word sy
deel
Disipline sy verantwoordelikheid
Bevelvoerder op Bevelvorder ervaar
hy soos die tyd aanstap
Swaai daai arms deur is sy woorde
Waar hy parade afrig tot perfeksie
Met passtok
Onder die arm is hy die koning
Ongetwyfeld elke keer

Regop is sy houding
Voorbeeld vir almal tussen die lyne
Respekvol met mense
Van arbeider tot generaal
Wat maak dat hul hom eer

Kanntoorhouding doen hy saam
et Bevelvoerder. Van droogmaak tot

aanprys
Is deel van sy waarde toevoeging
Sonder hom sou my beslissing armer
wees
Hy het insig gebring na die tafel toe
Met sy dragracing was hy kampio-
en op kampioen
Sy Ford was sy trots
Puik versorg. Van carburators het hy
alles geweet

Nuwejaarsnag het hy altyd
klappers geskiet op die gras
By Danie Theron
Blyplek van hom
Nou sal die klappers stil wees vir
altyd

Een eienskap van hom wat ek be-
wonder het is sy nederigheid
Sy geloof het dit laat leef
Nou het die tyd aangebreek om my
RSM
Vir eers te groet
Tot die finale kantoorkhouding plaas-
vind
Ek staan op aandag en salueer jou. Jy
was deel van my lewe
My RSM

Die SAWV se beskermheer van Sammajore, AO1 Koos Moorcroft

Die SAWV se beskermheer van Sammajore, AO1 Koos Moorcroft, is so pas terug vanaf België. Sammajoor Moorcroft was genooi as gasspreker om te praat oor sy rol in die ontwikkeling van die SA Spesiale Magte, sy operasionele ondervinding en spesifiek oor leierskap.

Sammajoor Moorcroft het die “Belgian SAS Association” op 29 Maart toegesprek. Hy het ook by nog ‘n geleentheid van die “Belgian Non-Commissioned Officers Corps” op hulle “Regimental Sergeant Major Intervention Day” hulle RSM’s toegesprek waar hy spesifiek oor leierskap gepraat het.

Sammajoor Moorcroft het terugvoer gegee en gesê dat dit ‘n baie positiewe ervaring was en dat dit vir hom gevoel het soos van ouds toe die dinge



AO1 Koos Moorcroft

nog op standaard was soos wat ons dit geken het.

Baie geluk Sammajoor Moorcroft. Jy het soos altyd weer jou merk gemaak en ons naam hoog gehou.

Meet the Signals Association's Newly Elected Members

The elected members of Manco for 2026/27 are as follows;

Chairperson - Ian Robertson

Deputy Chairperson - Geoff Laskey

Secretary General - Maurice Espin

Treasurer - Marina Valentine

Public Relations Off - Piet Jordaan

Member 1 - Jeff Marcus

Member 2 - Tim Reilly

Member 3 - Ian Fordred

Member 4 - Adi Fourie

Member 5 - Matt Tennyson

Events



Yom Hashoah Vehageuvura memorial 14 April 2026

Jeff Marcus and Maurice Espin, Laying the Signals Association wreath at the Yom Hashoah Vehageuvura memorial at the Jewish cemetery commemorating 90 years of the Jewish refugees who fled Nazi Germany in 1936.

From left to right: Maurice Espin and Jeff Marcus.



71 Sigs OC's Reunion 2 April 2026

71 Sigs OC's Reunion 2 April 2026
4 Previous OC's of 71 Signal Unit had a reunion on 2 April 2026 during the visit to Cape Town of John Arendson who now reside in Los Angeles for the past 47 years.

Fltr Back Lt Col (Ret) Geoff Laskey, Lt Col (Ret) Marc Goodleser, Maj (Ret) John Anderson.

Front Lt Col (Ret) Robbie Roberts



Signals Association 25th AGM 23 May 2026

Present from Left to Right, Maurice Espin SG, Piet Jordaan PRO, Tim Reilly, MM, Robbie Roberts Pres, Adi Fourie MM, Rodney Pritchard, Ian Robertson Chair, Geoff Laskey Dep Chair, Adriaan Campbell, and Ed Wittert.



Dukes Association 80th Birthday lunch 16 May 2026

FLTR Piet Jordaan (Pro Sigs Ass), Geoff Laskey (Chair Sigs Ass) David Holmes (SA Legion)



Happy Birthday!

The Signals Association's President, Chairperson and Manco members wish all the members below on their birthdays in the next quarter.

We wish you a very special birthday and a wonderful year ahead! We hope your birthday is full of sunshine, rainbows, love, and laughter!

The Association sends you many good wishes on your special day.

June 2026

6th Alfred de Vries
10th Frans Conradie
18th Andre Grobblers
30th John Arenson

July 2026

12th Tim Reilly
14th Jerome Solomon
16th Diederik Kruger
18th Theuns Neeethling
19th Adriaan Campbell
22nd Ivor Markman
24th Ronnie Taylor

August 2026

9th George Coomer
12th Matt Tennyson
13th Jeanette Kok-Kritzenger
21st Ed Wittert
23rd Neville Meyer
28th Bobby Dixon
30th Trunell Morom

