



## FLEMMER, Waldemar

Wally FLEMMER | 23 Dec 1925

WALDEMAR<sup>7</sup> FLEMMER (WALDEMAR KJELDBERG<sup>6</sup>, HANS CHRISTIAN<sup>5</sup>) was born on 23 December 1925 in Johannesburg, South Africa. He married WILLIAMINA GIVEN THOM on 11 April 1953 in Johannesburg, South Africa. She was born on 13 June 1923 in Edinburgh, Scotland.

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Transcribed from an article in the MOTH Gaicka Shellhole Magazine

When Wally left school he started work as an articled clerk/accountant in Johannesburg with G.K. Tucker and Wilson. He joined up with the Transvaal Scottish in 1944 based in Potchefstroom. Wally had been classed as a B1 because of poor eyesight and should never actually have left the Union of South Africa at all. By 'devious means' he had never denied that he was B1 but had never told anyone that he was one either... When the Colonel of the Regiment had interviewed everyone who wanted to join up, and he came to Wally, he asked him to remove his glasses. He said he didn't want anyone to shoot him by mistake! After asking various questions about schooling and Cadet career, he asked Wally what position he was applying for? Wally said on account of his being a Signaller in the Cadets, he thought a Wireless Operator - which was not the most popular job - would be most suitable because of his eyesight. Upon being dismissed, Wally saluted, and with his specs still in his hand, turned sharp right and marched straight into the marquee tent pole.... To his amazement he was accepted.

Wally did three months training at Potchefstroom before going by Dakota in December 1944 to Cairo North Africa. Then on to Taranto on the boat 'Victoria Castle'. From there they travelled by cattle truck to Santa Barbara in Italy.. Then they found that there were no more Transvaal Scottish there and so they were recruited into the Pretoria Regiment (Princess Alice's Own).

His first action came in the line outside Bologna when the Driver, Co-Driver and Gunner were all wounded in his tank. The Crew Commander and Wally managed to limp back to the Regiment. When the new replacement recruits arrived Wally had become the Second in Command and Gunner-by natural succession. Their tank was called 'Bashful' but was better known as 'Boozeful'. Only after the war was it discovered that Wally should never have been out there at all. After peace was declared Wally flew back to Pretoria by Dakota on compassionate leave, as his mother was very ill.

Wally returned to articles working for G.K. Tucker and Wilson in Johannesburg and completed his Articles in 1948 but never qualified. He then worked as a Bookkeeper/Accountant for various different firms in Johannesburg. Horses had always played a large part in Wally's life and he took part in show jumping at the Rand Easter Show and also hunted with the East Rand Hunt Club and rode in the first steeplechase authorised by the Jockey Club. He later became a show jumping judge and was active in the Transvaal for fifteen years before moving to Bulwer in Natal. Wally's sons all inherited their Dad's love of horses and each excelled in various aspects of riding. Guy in show jumping, cross country and steeplechase, Mark in show jumping, instructing and race horse training and Kevin in endurance riding, stable management and farriering.

Wally married Nina Given nee Thom formerly Brownie on 11th April 1953. Nina was born in Edinburgh on the 13th June 1923. She joined the WRNS at the age of 18 in 1941. After training she was posted to London 'HMS Stag' and worked at Port London Authority. From there she was later posted to Port Said where she met and married Major Wilfred Howard Brownie of the Transvaal Horse Artillery in December 1944. Nina was demobbed in Port Said in 1945 and returned to Johannesburg with her husband. They had a son Timothy Graeme Brownie, to whom Wally was the godfather, but the marriage was later dissolved.

Wally and Nina moved to Cathcart in 1992 to help their son Guy and his wife Teresa to run the Astoria Café which they had bought. Wally has since spent several years in the employ of McEwans Nissan.