

Plant a tree, grow our future

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As is the custom, Naval Base Simon's Town Environmental Services, in partnership with the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, celebrated Arbor Week with various tree planting ceremonies.

Arbor Week takes place from 1 to 7 September each year. The theme for Arbor Week 2005 was "Plant a tree, grow our future". The trees of the year are *Schefflera umbellifera* (false cabbage tree) and *Adansonia digitata* (baobab tree).

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) donated 250 trees to Naval Base Simon's Town, which were distributed to various organisations in the SA Navy. A number of trees were also donated to schools as part of the community outreach programme of the SA Navy. Because of the educational worth of Arbor Week, the Environmental Services involve as many naval personnel as possible when planting trees at the various departments and schools.

Two main Arbor Week events were planned for the Simon's Town area. The first of these was on 1 September, which started with a tree planting ceremony at SAS SIMONSBURG. The Environmental Services invited 40 learners from Constantia Primary School to plant trees in Simon's Town with the ship's company of SAS SIMONSBURG. The assembly was addressed by Lt Cdr Van Rensburg, the executive officer of SAS SIMONSBURG, after which CPO KC Linderoth of Environmental Services planted the first tree and showed all present the proper way to plant a tree and how to care for it.

The second event took place at Stellenbosch on 2 September. Environmental Services were invited by DWAF and the Stellenbosch Municipality to participate in their

Arbor Day activities, which took place in Khaya Mandi, Stellenbosch.


To make the day more productive, the Environmental Services visited Lückhoff High School in Stellenbosch, where they planted ten trees. Prior to the tree planting, the learners conducted a stage play depicting Arbor Day and the importance of trees. The Environmental Services then proceeded to Idas Valley Primary School, which is adjacent to the high school. CPO Linderoth addressed the learners, after which they also planted ten trees.

On 6 September, Environmental Services and the ship's company of the mine hunter, SAS UMHLOTI, visited Mashiphumelele Primary School in Khayalitsha. WO2 B.V. Walters addressed the assembly on the importance of trees and why we had to look after our environment. The assembly then proceeded to plant ten trees on a barren patch of ground.

The second main tree-planting event of Naval Base Simon's Town took place at Da Gama Park on 7 September. Environmental Services invited R Adm H.V.E. Bester (Flag Officer Fleet), R Adm (JG) S.L. Pillay (Flag

Officer Commanding Naval Base Simon's Town) and Alderman Holderness, (Ward Councillor of Simon's Town) to participate in the tree planting in Da Gama Park. Because many alien trees had been eradicated in the Da Gama Park area, but never replaced by any other kind of trees, Environmental Services saw the need to plant a few indigenous trees in the area. R Adm Bester, Alderman Holderness and Sea Venter each planted a yellow-wood tree. The rest of the trees were planted by CPO M. Wyngaard and his maintenance crew.

Directly after the tree planting, WO2 Walters and CPO Linderoth proceeded to Touwsriver Military Training Area to attend the quarterly Environmental Services Regional Working Group conference. Four trees, donated by Naval Base Simon's Town Environmental Services, were planted at the training area to conclude the activities of Arbor Week.

Overall, the Arbor Week activities were a big success. All parties involved, uniformed and civilian, benefited a great deal as the emphasis was on education and beautification. 



CPO Keith Linderoth explaining to SAS SIMONSBURG and Constantia Primary School how to plant a tree.