ABOUT THE EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

MAJ (RET) AJIT SINGH NAGPAL

Ajit had already joined the SAF before applying for the first SAFTI officer cadet programme. On commissioning, he was an instructor for the next two officer cadet cohorts, following which, he served as Company Commander in the 2nd Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (2 SIR) and attended the School of Advanced Training for Officers. He converted to Armour and later re-specialised as a logistics officer leading to the command of the Ordnance Supply Base. On no-pay leave abroad, he earned a Masters in Management. On his return, he was assigned to the SAF Transport Battalion and G4 MINDEF. He chose to retire early to pursue a second career with a multi-national firm.

LTC (RET) SWEE BOON CHAI

Boon Chye had joined the Malaysian Territorial Army in 1964, Singapore then being part of Malaysia. On separation, he was mobilised and posted to HQ People’s Defence Force (HQ PDF). His boss asked him to apply for the officer cadet programme that MINDEF had just launched. He performed well enough to earn prizes during the course as a marksman and top trainee in his company. During his 31 years of service, he was the organiser of choice for the SAF shooting competitions, which included neighbouring armed forces. He was variously Commanding Officer (CO) 2 SIR, Commander 23 Singapore Infantry Brigade, Commander 1 People’s Defence Force (PDF) Training Centre, and before retirement, Commandant, National Cadet Corps.

CPT (RET) HWEE MAN LOK

Man Lok read for a BA degree on a government bursary in 1962. On completion of his studies, he was bonded to serve the government for three years. He opted to serve with the then Ministry of Interior and Defence. He left after serving the mandatory three-year bond in 1969. However, he continued to serve in the SAF when he was drafted as a reservist officer into national service. He was demobilised after completing the mandatory 14-year train cycle.
LTC (RET) CHAN SECK SUNG

Seck Sung was a youth leader in the People’s Association before applying for the first officer training programme in SAFTI. He was sent to Fort Georgia in the United States for Green Beret training as a commissioned officer ahead of the whole first batch six weeks before the actual commissioning ceremony. On his return, he set up the Commandos and the Guards formation. He calls himself the most re-cycled battalion commander in the SAF, if not military history. He commanded in turn, 2 SIR, 8 SIR, 2 Guards (stood down) and the 1st Commando Battalion. His last job was Base Commander, MINDEF HQ. A large amount of material for One Of A Kind came from his private collection, and he continues to collect material for the group’s records.

MAJ (RET) LAM YING KIT, VICTOR

Victor, reticent to a fault, stoical and tough, asked leave of nobody, including his father, an ASP in the Singapore Police Force, before joining the SAF. A keen sportsman, he had represented Singapore in the Under 23 category in rugby. He naturally gravitated towards physical training and became head of the School of Physical Training (PT) in SAFTI after attending the Advanced PT Course in Aldershot, UK. Apart from service in the SAF, he also served two separate terms as Warden of the Singapore Outward Bound School. Early in his career, he co-organised an overland expedition to the UK with other SAF personnel supported by MID. After his retirement, he continued to indulge in his passion for exploring exotic places including Tibet. He also became skilled in IT and social media. He maintains a Facebook record of developments among SAFTI’s “First Batch”.

MAJ (RET) LIONEL STANLEY THOMAS

Lionel was prepared for the stress of Pasir Laba training because he had been a sportsman in school and had completed the Outward Bound Course in Lemut, Perak. In fact, he is on record as saying that life in SAFTI was practically heavenly. He was in the first group of first batch officers sent to the Jungle Warfare School, Johor. He was appointed General Staff Officer of 3rd Brigade in 1974. After completing the Singapore Command and Staff College course in 1985, he was appointed CO, 5 SIR and later, G3, HQ PDF. He retired in August 1994 but volunteered to be a facilitator at the Singapore Discovery Centre for 12 years more during which he took on assignments to make presentations in SAF detention centres to rehabilitate soldiers under detention as part of the SAF Veterans League contributions to the military family.
ABOUT THE EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

MAJOR (RET) ABDUL SAMAD ATHAMBAVA

Abdul Samad s/o Athambava was already a Lance Corporal in the Signals Platoon of 2 SIR before joining the first officer cadet course. He had enlisted in the Singapore Military Forces against his father’s wishes. As a signaller, he was deployed against Indonesian guerillas in east and Peninsular Malaysia. After commissioning, he was posted to the fledgling Armour formation and was trained abroad as a ‘tankee’. Samad was a good source of material for this publication because he had compulsively filed his records. He retired as a major and went on a full Haj. He is currently with the Singapore Discovery Centre as a Veteran Guide and a Commitment to Defence (C2D) Ambassador conducting national education talks in schools.

MAJ (RET) RAM JANAM MISIR

Ram Janam had intended to be a lawyer, but was diverted by a friend into the SAF when MID started recruiting for officer candidates. He had enlisted in the Singapore Military Forces against his father’s wishes. As a signaller, he was deployed against Indonesian guerillas in east and Peninsular Malaysia. After commissioning, he was posted to the fledgling Armour formation and was trained abroad as a ‘tankee’. Janam was a good source of material for this publication because he had compulsively filed his records. He retired in 1996 but continued to serve as a formation safety officer in the Guards and the Army Safety Inspectorate. He was awarded a Letter of Commendation for Bravery in 1968 at the first SAF Day Parade. He is now fully retired and spends most of his time in Mt. Abu, Rajastan.

LTC (RET) ERROL NEUBRONNER

At age 18, Errol barely qualified for recruitment with the first cohort at SAFTI. With his effervescent personality, he was got on well with just about everybody. His earlier appointments were mostly staff and instruction. They included Chief Instructor, School of Advanced Training for Officers (SATO) and Senior Directing Staff of the Singapore Command and Staff College. He was also appointed CO 74 SIR and Commander, 22nd Singapore Infantry Brigade. As captain of the SAFSA Hockey Team, he brought home several national titles to the SAF. He retired from full-time service in 1996 and reserve service in 1998. Errol put together the graphics and other contents in the CD accompanying the first edition of One Of A Kind and his daughter Jill did the commentary. He now divides his time between taking care of his grandchildren and consolidating his family genealogy and is happy to be called a contented recluse.
COL (RET) RAMACHANDRAN MENON

Menon enlisted in the first intake for officer cadet training although he was already a qualified graduate teacher in the Ministry of Education. At 26, he was one of the oldest enlistees. After several staff and command assignments, his senior appointments in personnel management and army training and as Singapore’s Defence Attache in Washington and as Director, Public Affairs and MINDEF Spokesman gave him a broad perspective of critical aspects of military life. Fortunately, from his point of view, it was all in peacetime. He retired in January 1995.