

PRESS RELEASE

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On the 27th of April 2013 Mr. Garnet de la Hunt will receive the Presidential Silver Supreme Counsellor of the Order of the Baobab. The Order of the Baobab recognises and awards people for their commitment to the upliftment and empowerment of generations and as such the development and growth of the country as a whole. This award will be bestowed on him by South African President Zuma for his exceptional, inspirational volunteerism and dedication to community service and youth empowerment within the South African Scout Movement.

At 79 years old, and despite his ongoing battle with cancer, Mr. Garnet de la Hunt is currently the Chairman of the National Scout Council and is the driving force behind the revitalisation of the South African Scout Movement that is currently being implemented. He has been a key figure within the Scout Movement on a national and international level for decades. He has shown global leaders that South Africans are people with integrity, courage, tolerance, respect, determination and heart.

Mr. Herbert William Garnet de la Hunt was born on the 25th of August 1933 in South Africa. Before the age of 16, he received the King's Scout badge which is the highest obtainable award for a Scout under the age of 18. In 1976 he played a key role in uniting the four Scout Movements into one unified non-racial entity, despite the political regime of segregation. In 1977 he was elected Provincial Commissioner for the Western Cape where he then actively promoted the programmes of the single unified non-racial South African Scout Movement despite the politics of the day. In 1985 he became the Chief Scout of South Africa.

Internationally people started taking notice of the progressive and innovative nature of Scouting in South Africa. The World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) elected him as the first person from South Africa to be the Vice Chairman of the Africa Region Committee from 1990 to 1996 and in 1999 South Africa hosted the World Scout Conference in Durban. It was at this conference that he was elected Chairman of the World Scout Committee, a first for Southern Africa. Currently he is still a board member of the World Scout Foundation, the financial lifeblood for scouting worldwide.

As a Scout, a leader, a trainer and chairman, he has inspired, taught and supported a generation of South Africans that have made good citizenship, duty to God, duty to others and duty to oneself a way of life. As a member of the task force that drafted the WOSM publication "What is Scouting", he redefined and updated Baden Powell's fundamental values and principles that guide over 32 million children and youths in over 161 countries worldwide today. Not only has he guided hundreds of children, youths and young adults to grow up to be successful players in their societies as entrepreneurs, sports celebrities, environmentalists and family men and women, but he has influenced World Scouting for generations to come.

For his services to Scouting, amongst others, he was awarded the Order of the Silver Springbok which is the highest award in South African Scouting. He also received the Order of St. Mark (Greek Orthodox), The Silver Wolf which is an award from the Swedish Scout Association in recognition of his service to International Scouting and the Bronze Wolf that is awarded by WOSM in recognition of his service to World Scouting. These awards are only given to people that have provided a lifetime of selfless and voluntary service to the upliftment and service of youth and country.

"It was through the values, method and philosophy of Robert Baden-Powel that I learned the things that men should know and I was shown the mountains and beyond. I have seen Scouting change the lives of young people, irrespective of culture, colour, class or creed. It is a Movement that has met the needs of young people in a prison in Hong Kong, the slums of Nairobi, the elite of Europe, the United States or Japan; as well as the squatter camps, the townships and the rural areas of my own country. I will never be able to repay my personal debt to this magnificent Movement," says the notably humble but excellent and distinguished man of stature and importance when describing what Scouting means to him.

Additional to his service to the South African Scouting Movement, Mr. de la Hunt has had a successful professional career in mining and as the Chairman of the family owned group Heavy Clay Products Pty. Ltd. Furthermore he is a long time Methodist Lay Preacher and has been actively involved in various management roles within the Methodist Church as well as the Scripture Union of South Africa. From 2007 to 2011 he was the National Chairman of the Scripture Union and served on their National Finance committee from 1998 to 2011.

SCOUTS South Africa is an independent, non-profit educational movement dedicated to the development of young people in achieving their full potential as individuals and responsible citizens. Central in this programme is a continuous transference of values such as honesty, loyalty, responsibility, respect; all aimed at governing individual behaviour and the development of strong leadership skills that will equip members to be of service to others and to their communities.

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