



Rhodesian Services Association Newsletter #1 2004

PO Box 13003, Tauranga 3141, New Zealand.

Web: www.rhodesianservices.org

Welcome to 2004. Hope you had a good break. For the first time in many years we managed to close our business and stay at home 'kicking back'. During that planned time off I had intended doing all the stuff I had let get overdue but instead I spent many an hour with my head buried in one book or another. It seems like everyone brings their books out for the Christmas trade! Well its what I enjoy doing so I can say I had an enjoyable two weeks off when I probably should have been doing..... this newsletter etc etc. Suffice to say this newsletter reflects some of what I did read that pertains to our unique history.

If you get sick of what I have to say then have your own say, your input is always most welcome - please contact me.

Museum News

Cynthia and Paul Niewoudt and family of Auckland have generously donated a number of items for the museum display at the Hauraki Regiment Hall in Tauranga. We are most grateful to them - thank you.

All pieces for the museum are considered to be 'on loan' and can be returned at any point if required by the owners or their family.

The authors of 'SAS Rhodesia' have generously donated one copy of their book to the museum. As well as this, they will donate 10% of sales generated by this newsletter and associated advertising to our Museum Fund. So when ordering (see below) please quote this newsletter and do your bit for the museum.

We must look to our future as there will come a time when we will need a larger area for display. Even in the UK, where a vast amount of material is stored at the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum, I understand that it is only there in storage, and not fully displayed. Part of that collection is a fully operational 'K' Car Alouette 'gunship' which is housed at a separate museum.

Anyone who has anything that they would like to loan to the museum display in Tauranga is most welcome to contact me.

We are always looking to raise funds for the museum display. Better lighting is the next project. You are welcome to make a cash contribution or donate items that can be auctioned with the proceeds going to the Museum Fund. The auction that was held at the October RV was both successful and entertaining and we will be sure to do it again this coming October.

ANZAC Day Sunday 25th April 2004

Here in New Zealand this day has become one of significance to those of us who have migrated to the Antipodes. Down here it is the day on which those who gave their lives at Gallipoli are remembered, as well as all those Kiwis and Aussies who have subsequently made the supreme sacrifice for their country. We Rhodesians have become a part of these parades and services from the Cape to Bluff in New Zealand and from Sydney to Perth in Australia.

Every town in New Zealand has a service and dedication. Rhodesian veterans are always welcomed. If you wish to partake in your town I suggest that you contact your local RSA for details.

Hobsonville in Auckland has become the focus of our efforts here in New Zealand on ANZAC Day. I urge as many of you as possible to come and join us at Hobsonville. Make the trip and I guarantee you will find it a unique experience. Make sure you leave yourself time to relax afterwards and have a few beers and listen to a few lies!

Hobsonville order for the day:-

09:30 to 10am Meet at Hobsonville RSA. (Refreshments are available at this time and your assistance with arranging the seating is always appreciated).

10:40 Parade assembles at Hobsonville Hall (1km from the Hobsonville RSA)

10:45 March to the RSA (Rhodesians march as a squad, servicemen/women as well as anyone else who wishes to be part of the march)

11:00 ETA at RSA

12:00 Services concludes with wreath laying

12:10 Rhodesian service begins

12:30 Rhodesian service concludes

12:35 Socialising starts.

Hobsonville dress:- Men - Jacket, tie, longs.

Women - as appropriate.

Berets with regimental insignia may be worn. Medals - full size if possible. Medals worn in memorial on right breast.

For any further details please contact Paul Nes by paulnes@xtra.co.nz

NOTE:- For refurbishment of medals or to obtain berets contact Tony Fraser 0274 804 812. Please don't leave it too late - he is a busy man.

SAS Rhodesia Vol. 2

Yes that is right folks, the authors had a surplus of material for Vol. 1 (see review below) and so they are going to do Vol. 2. In order to make Vol. 2 as authoritative as possible the authors require feedback, correction, criticism etc on Vol. 1. They also require input for Vol. 2 from SAS operators, their family or anyone who has information. The authors are especially keen to hear from any operator who has photographs from operations. The authors carry the blessing of the SAS Assn. of South Africa in their endeavours. Vol. 2 is planned to have 100 pages more than Vol. 1 i.e.: about 400 pages!

PLEASE spread the word of this appeal and contact the authors Jonathan Pittaway and Craig Fourie as soon as possible at:- Box 50178 Musgrave, 4062 South Africa or email: agencies@iafrica.com I can assure you that any photographs or material is treated with the utmost care and consideration. This may be the last opportunity, ever, for the history of this unit to be preserved for future generations. They need your help, don't hang back or put it off for 'some other time' - that time will be TOO LATE.

Book Reviews

Like I said I have been extremely lucky this Christmas. In addition to 'an early prezzy' which was an original picture by Kevin Woods (one of the "Forgotten 3" still in Chikarubi Prison), I was given 3 very good books, as well as some other goodies which have made me 'bulk up more than intended'!!

SAS Rhodesia by Jonathan Pittaway and Craig Fourie Price is US\$49 plus US\$29 for registered postage. This converts to approx NZ\$125.00.

This book is extremely good value for money. The authors have written this book with the intention of preserving the history of this unit and not to make money for themselves. The book starts with the origins of the unit under David Stirling in the deserts of North Africa during W.W.II and ends when the unit was effectively disbanded in December 1980.

320 pages hardbound and containing over 1,000 previously unpublished photographs as well as maps, diagrams and pieces by and about 40 renowned SAS operators. Every chapter is fascinating, whether in Europe during W.W.II, Korea in the 1950's, Northern and Southern Rhodesia during the Federation days or the 'Bush War' in Rhodesia that followed.

With due respect to Barbara Cole, the only other author to have written at length, factually, about the Rhodesian SAS, no book has covered this unit's full history as thoroughly as Pittaway and Fourie have, and they are not finished yet! They are currently compiling Vol. 2 which will be bigger and better they tell me.

The book contains many rolls which include a number of familiar names. I am certain that there are many recent arrivals here in New Zealand whose family have links with the SAS. This book is a lasting piece of history - You would be a fool to miss out owning a copy of SAS Rhodesia.

Copies can only be obtained from the authors - Box 50178 Musgrave, 4062 South Africa or email: agencies@iafrica.com When ordering 'SAS Rhodesia' please remember to mention that you saw the advert in this newsletter in order for the museum in Tauranga to benefit from the author's donation for generated sales.

Burnham - King of Scouts by Peter van Wyk This was the first book that I had got hold of that has been published and printed in a unique way. It is printed 'on demand'. In other words each copy is only printed when someone orders it, the book can be updated and amended between each printing. This method makes it a lot more economic for authors to publish their works on subjects that will not sell millions of copies but at the same time are sought after by people like me who are interested in the subject. It is published by Trafford in Canada.

The book has been written in a unique manner and is described as a 'biographical novel'. The author does not give a list of his reference material which is unfortunate as Fred Burnham DSO is a fascinating and controversial character. Burnham was, together with 2 others, the sole survivor of Maj. Allan Wilson's ill fated patrol. He and two others rode back to warn the rest of the Shangani Patrol and request that the Maxim guns and reinforcements be brought across the Shangani River, the rest is history, as they say.

From this episode as well as the killing of the witchdoctor or M'limo during the Matabele War, Burnham became a person about whom many stories arose. Was he hero or coward? That is the question that has been with me ever since I first heard of this American who came to Africa to seek fortune.

This book didn't answer my questions with any conviction due to the author's omission to authenticate his sources of reference sufficiently. Despite this criticism I thoroughly enjoyed reading every one of the 568 pages and am quite comfortable in recommending it to others to buy. The book takes you from the Prairies of America, to Europe and Africa and back again as the story of this man's life unfurls. Burnham led an interesting life and came into contact with a great number of famous people including Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the instigator of the Boy Scout movement on which Burnham's teachings were based. The beginnings of Rhodesia are told in this easily read book.

Strangely enough there is a link between this book and the book above - 'SAS Rhodesia'. Lord Cecil was Baden-Powell's 2IC during the Boer siege of Mafeking. Lord Cecil's grandson(?) Richard Cecil came to Rhodesia as a journalist to cover the 'Bush War' and was killed during a contact with the RAR. A chapter covering his time spent with the Rhodesian SAS has been written by Mike Graham in 'SAS Rhodesia'.

Price is about US\$26 - say NZ\$40 (depending on what postage option you choose) and can be ordered from www.trafford.com

Winds of Destruction by Grp. Capt. PJH Petter-Bowyer MLM (Ops) DCD MFC (Ops)

Author's Note:- This book is was by Trafford in Canada but has subsequently been reprinted by 30 Degrees South Publishing and can be purchased from elsewhere on this website at this page <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/Books.htm>

The title and authors credentials alone tell you that this is one hell of a book. For you non blue jobs, a Group Captain equates to a Colonel. The author explains how he had kept diaries but destroyed them when it became unsafe to be found with such material in the aftermath of the destruction by sabotage of a number of the Zimbabwe Air Force's planes leading to this book being written mainly from memory.

The author tells a unique story of his life beginning in the Royal Rhodesian Air Force and finishing when the country became Zimbabwe. He was certainly no desk jockey. From flying Vampires in Aden to Alouettes in the Zambezi valley, he was also involved with the implementation of some very innovative weapons systems and bombs. The book is interspersed with humorous moments, that particular brand of Rhodesian humour that developed through hardship and adversity.

'PB' Petter-Bowyer sat on the Cease-Fire Commission after Lt. General Walls withdrew from the task saying that "I refuse to sit with those bloody Brits and communists or give them any sense of equal rank with myself or any of the service commanders". The British had conferred the rank of 'General' on the 'commanders' of the two terrorist factions. His book gives an interesting insight into dealing with these people who suffered from daily reoccurring hangovers:- Nhongo, who seemed more interested in the return of his landcruiser that had been captured by the Selous Scouts at Chimoio; Tungamirai, who was there to replace the recently deceased and comparatively moderate Tongogara; Masuku and Dabengwa representing ZIPRA.

I have only just begun to read the book but what I have skimmed through makes fascinating reading and looks to give answers to some of the questions that have been in my head for the last 20 plus years.

My only criticism is that it has not been published in a manner befitting such a wonderful book. Due to the printing method the very unique photographs are not in colour. Just like the times he served in this book has been funded on the 'smell of an oily rag', a truly Rhodesian book which I highly recommend.

Requests

From time to time I get requests made directly to me, 3 of which appear below.

Operation Nickel (1967)

Anyone involved in or who has knowledge of the events involving the terrorist incursion in Northern Matabeleland in 1967 please contact Michael King miviking@optusnet.com.au

The Black Berets - The history of the South African Armoured Corps (Including the Rhodesian RhACR). Paul Els (author of 'We Fear Naught but God - the history of the South African Recces) is working on a this new book. In particular he is looking for the list of OC's and RSM's of the RhACR. He is also wanting information on Capt Joe du Plooy who was in the SAS and killed when a chopper was shot down. Please contact Paul at paul@who-els.co.za

Finally a request from an American (who is not previously known to me and communicating with him is at your discretion), who writes:- My name is Ryan N Van and I am 34 years old, a veteran of the US ARMY (1987-1994) and live in Oklahoma USA. I am a collector and military historian I am currently involved in creating a website that honours Veterans from Vietnam, Rhodesia, and South Africa for their contributions to the world-wide fight against Communism and oppression. I am in the process of collecting stories as well as any photo images available from these men. Please any Veterans of these wars contact me with your memories and stories along with copies of pics and maps as well as images of memorabilia that you may have. I appreciate any help available and all contributors will receive credit for their help. This is a tribute for all of you who helped in the fight for Democracy in Africa and Asia.

Email me direct at savagetactical@caddoelectric.net please remember to title your email accordingly and as untitled emails with attachments will be deleted.

Many many thanks, your brother in arms
Ryan N Van

Committee Report

The committee is currently debating and working on a name for a formalised association incorporating all branches of Rhodesian armed forces as well as suitable logo. There will be a committee meeting 24th April which is the Saturday night prior to ANZAC Day. Once details have been agreed to notice will be issued.

The following forms can be obtained from the Secretary:-

Hauraki Regimental Assn membership form - \$20 for the first years membership and \$15 per year after that, renewal due 1st April each year.

We urge as many of you to join the Hauraki Regimental Assn as possible. They support us so lets support them.

Hobsonville RSA. Joining an RSA in New Zealand gives you access to moderately priced food, drink and entertainment through out New Zealand. Hobsonville supports us Rhodesians so again lets support them. \$35 per year. All memberships are renewed on 1st January every year.

Rhodesian Army Assn (UK) membership forms for Full Members, Associate Members and Honorary Members. To subscribe to the Lion & Tusk magazine email David Heppenstall d.heppenstall@virgin.net and/or Iain Harper iain@umgusa.fsnet.co.uk The Lion & Tusk is printed 2 times a year. Cost includes airmail - 15 Pounds (approx NZ\$45). Please note I have some free copies of this very good magazine for anyone who wants to subscribe.

Rhodesians World Wide quarterly magazine - NZ\$34 per annum. A worthwhile subscription which makes a good gift. Complimentary copies available for potential subscribers are with various people in Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay and Canterbury - email me for details.

Chairman/Treasurer - Paul Nes
Vice Chairman - Keith Kietzmann
Secretary - Hugh Bomford

Committee - Rob Bates, John Glynn, Colin Logie, Wolf Hucke

Address for communication:- PO Box 13003, Tauranga 3030 email: hbomford@clear.net.nz

October Rv 2004

This is your advance warning. Remember to keep Labour Weekend free for this event this year, mark it on your calendar now and put in for leave, at work or domestically!

Old Rhodesian Air Force Sods (ORAFS)

Eddy Norris runs a very good line of communications and puts out some very interesting newsletters, far more frequent than mine I might add. I recommend anyone, Blue or Brown, to list with Eddy. The process is simple email Eddy at orafs1@gmail.com

That is all till next time which will be sometime in May after ANZAC Day. Don't forget if you know someone who should be getting this newsletter please let me know.

Cheers,
Hugh
PO Box 13003,
Tauranga,
New Zealand 3030
Ph +64 7 571 8401 Fax +64 7 571 8412