



Rhodesian Services Association Newsletter April/May 2007

PO Box 13003, Tauranga 3141, New Zealand.

Web: www.rhodesianservices.org

Greetings

This newsletter covers April and May.

Our circulation is in the region of 450 addresses. If anyone is not receiving it directly please contact me to be added to the mailing list.

At a recent committee meeting it was decided that we will proceed with the necessary paperwork involved to get our Association registered as an Incorporated Society. As a part of this the Committee recommends that an annual membership fee of \$5 per person will initiate. This membership fee will begin at the next RV and will form part of the RV Registration Fee. For those unable to attend the RV they can make their payment from the 1st October. The membership will fall due on the 1st October every year.

The reason for the fee is to identify those who will have voting rights at the AGM. Non members will still continue to receive the newsletter and associated emails.

The reason for the date of collection of the fee is to make things more simple for administration and banking.

Later in the newsletter the saga of Mr Le Bomba continues and I would like to thank Richard Allport for the use of the cartoon from his website at <http://www.rhodesia.nl/>

Death Notices

On 29th March 2007 I was advised:- It with great sadness that I write to advise of the passing of one of our Saints - **Ian (Giles) "Star Wars" Gillespie**, who died yesterday in Perth after a relatively brief, but aggressive illness. Giles served with 12 Troop, 3 CDO, (1977-79) and having been rightly proud of his RLI service, was an enthusiastic supporter of the re-birthed Regt. Association and, was looking forward with great anticipation to attending the Sydney 2007 reunion.

Giles is survived by his wife Barbara & children Katherine & James.....if you would like to send your condolences (which I am sure would be appreciated) a contact email address is: gilesq@iinet.net.au

John MacIlwaine died in Kerikeri on 13th March 2007. He was the last Rhodesian WWII veteran that we know of residing in NZ. John served with the Southern Rhodesia Light Battery.

On the 9th April I was advised that former Selous Scout, **Joe Bresler** had been killed on operations in Iraq by a roadside bomb.

On the 15th April I was advised that **Bill Musgrave DFC** had died in the UK. Bill was a pilot in 237 (Rhodesia) Squadron and played a big part in preserving Rhodesian history.

Don Gregory died on 15 April 2007. Don ran the Central African and Federal Army Newsletter. He was always most supportive of the Rhodesian Services Association.

"We will remember them"

ANZAC Day 2007

The day before ANZAC four of us from Tauranga met up with Steve from Rotorua in Matamata and travelled up to Auckland. We managed to find the Devonport Naval Museum, despite our 2 navigators, Percy and Mrs Garmin having some disagreements which ended up with Percy's knowledge of Auckland winning out over the might of the American satellite fleet. Tony made a useful contact with the curator who is helping us out with some documentation that we need. We spent the night with Wolf and Alison where we were treated to a massive BBQ and breakfast to match the following day. Wolf certainly follows the doctrine that an army marches on it's stomach (some of us could probably do with a bit more marching I hear you say!). We had a brief committee meeting which I reported on in the editorial above.

ANZAC 'dawned' in our part of the world with a thick pea soup fog. I took some photos of us arriving but Colin is invisible and all you can see is black suits in the murk so they do not appear below. The sun burnt off the fog and a glorious day followed. The turnout over all was massive. We had between 38 and 40 Rhodesians on parade. Once again the Hobsonville RSA was bulging at the seams.

Shortly after ANZAC Day I received a letter from Brigadier John 'Digger' Essex-Clark DSM who served in the RLI in the early 1960's and then with the Australian Army in Vietnam and is the interim Patron of the RLI Assn. This letter says much of what I have seen and believed over the years. While it is written specifically from an RLI point of view, it pertains to all who served Rhodesia.

"Dear Hugh, This is my second set of congratulations for your excellent NZ Anzac Day representation.

The most important matter, to me, that came out of our RLI contingent assembling and marching in the huge Sydney commemoration, was the wonderful spirit the cheering crowds evoked in our men and their watching wives. This spirit was palpably emotional when I chatted with them after the march (I had had to lead the 1 Royal Australian Regiment Vietnam veterans' contingent and did not march, this year with my RLI lads).

Some had felt that they didn't belong to an Australian/New Zealand ANZAC Day commemoration. That was even though I had addressed them the night before and reminded them that they had fought the same enemy, communism and totalitarianism in Rhodesia, as had the Australians and New Zealanders in Korea and Vietnam; and as had Rhodesians who fought gallantly alongside their British Empire compatriots in two world wars before them. I reminded our lads that they (we) had every right to stand shoulder to shoulder with every Australian or New Zealander marching on that day. I bet them that the crowd would cheer the RLI contingent as loud and boisterously as they cheered any other marchers, and the crowds did so, bringing tears to the eyes of the wives and a spot of moisture to the eyes of many of our RLI lads. My God, they were smart in their berets and badged blazers and they marched with precision and pride! So much so that one of my daughters watching exclaimed, 'Dad, your mob were a shambles compared with the RLI men!' I expect we in Australia and New Zealand are very fortunate that we have an 'ANZAC Day' to get us RLI groups together in both a regimental and a national embrace.

The ANZAC Day reunion recharged the spiritual and emotional batteries of all those RLI troopies attending, including mine. I can only hope that our Australian and New Zealand

ANZAC Day examples might motivate those in South Africa and the United Kingdom to get cracking. Perhaps the launch of 'The Saints' in London might be the spark they need in the UK to do just this; I shall be there to see. South Africa, of course, should have been streets ahead of us by now.

By the way, Tony Young and Marsh Ross' initiated Rhodesian 'Infantry Combat emblem' was an absolute winner!

Once again, congratulations on your wonderful ANZAC Day success in Auckland. And good luck to the Blacks in their preliminary games to the big ones.

Yours aye, Digger."

Hobsonville RSA, Auckland

With the Rhodesian contingent numbered just under 40 this year we outnumbered our hosts. Well done to all who made it. Some travelled for many hours to get there and took time of work to do this. People like Keith Kietzmann have been going to Hobsonville for many years now and we hope this annual migration continues for years to come. Lets make next year even bigger.



Photo above showing about 75% of the Rhodesian squad on the march. Note: all are in time despite the lack of practice and a drummer who changed beat half way through!!!



Above Wendy Graham (formerly BSAP WPO Wendy Lunderstedt 147), escorted by her husband John, collecting the Rhodesian wreath.



Above the Rhodesian contingent is at ease, listening to Rob Bates deliver his speech

Sydney

It rained for 3 days around the ANZAC parade which contributed to groups getting split up under various bits of cover which put a bit of a damper on things. The RLI Assn used the day (and the night before) for a reunion which was well attended with former Commandos arriving from around the world. Total numbers for their march was about the same as we had at Hobsonville.

I was interested to learn that in Australia poppies are not worn on ANZAC Day. Sprigs of rosemary are worn instead.



The picture below is Left to Right - Tony Coom formerly 3 Cdo, visiting from South Africa; Brigadier John 'Digger' Essex-Clark DSM, interim Patron of the RLI Assn; Tony Young interim Secretary of the RLI Assn

Rhodesian Forces Memorial in South Africa

A proposal has been put to the Dickie Fritz Shellhole that a Rhodesian Forces Memorial be established at their MOTH facility. For more information or input please contact John Redfern rasa@iafrica.com

Unofficial Rhodesian Combat Infantry Badge

Sales have gone very well in Australia and New Zealand, with the initial strike of 100 badges being almost sold out. A new strike will be done soon. To make an accurate assessment of how many need to be made we need your orders please.

Australian residents need to direct their orders to Tony Young ozemedic@bigpond.net.au The rest of the world can write to hbomford@clear.net.nz

Excluding postage, the price in Australia is Aus\$20; from NZ it is NZ\$22.50.

Orders from NZ will be offered engraving of the soldier's name, initials and regimental number for an extra NZ\$12.50. Full information is on the Rhodesian Services Association website on the CQ Store page. Use this link to go directly there <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/The%20Shop.htm>

"The Saints" Launch - June 2007

The Saints - The Rhodesian Light Infantry, the all new regimental history by Alexandre Binda; compiled and edited by Chris Cocks, bestselling author of *Fireforce - One man's war in the Rhodesian Light Infantry*.

The Rhodesian Light Infantry, a truly international airborne battalion, comprised of over 20 nationalities who fought the bitter Rhodesian 'bush war' for 15 years against the overwhelming tide of communist-trained terrorists. RLI soldiers were recipients of four Silver Crosses and 42 Bronze Crosses of Rhodesia. An RLI trooper holds the world record for operational parachute descents - a staggering 73 op jumps - most under 500 feet!

The Saints is a full colour, glossy, coffee-table book of 544 pages containing the history, personal accounts and previously unpublished photos of the RLI. On offer are 100 limited, numbered leather-bound editions, signed by Ian Smith; and 50 Souvenir Sets, consisting of a numbered leather-bound edition, an RLI plaque, a limited-edition Craig Bone print of the cover painting and a limited leather-bound edition of *Fireforce*. Also included is a 90-minute DVD with previously unseen combat footage. This pre-release subscription campaign is supporting the launch of the Standard Edition, to be released in June.

The Saints is going to be launched on 14 June 200, at the Guards Museum, Wellington Barracks, London, featuring 'Beating of the Retreat' by the Scots Guards in tribute to the RLI.

To book your order or for further information on the subscription offer, the standard edition* or the launch event (by invitation only) email: info@30degreessouth.co.za or tel: +27 11 673 2118

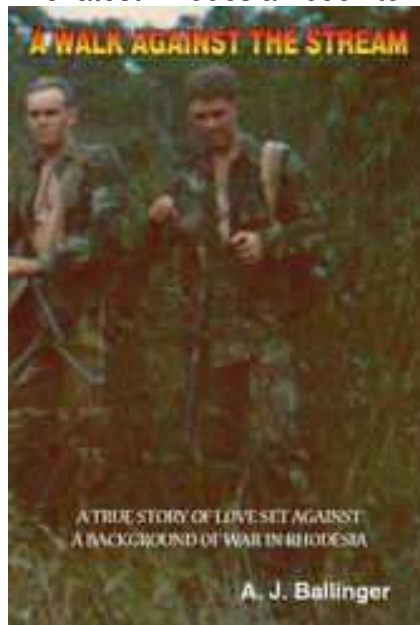
*The standard edition will be stocked by Hugh Bomford, for orders email hbomford@clear.net.nz

The Author's Corner

A request from Hans Wessels hw1@megaserve.net :-

"I'm working on a biography on PK van der Byl and wonder if you can pass the word to all and sundry. I'd be grateful to anyone out there who has memories they would like to share for possible inclusion in this memoir."

The latest Rhodesian book to hit the shelf is "A Walk Against The Stream" by Tony Ballinger



It is a true story that revolves around a young man called up to do his National Service (Intake 152) in war torn Rhodesia in the late 1970's. His army posting is to one of the country's premier tourist resorts and it is there that he falls in love with a young croupier from a nearby Casino. It is a fascinating insight into the life of two young people brought together by love and war.

The author was my platoon commander. He was brought up in a Salisbury and attended nearby Churchill High School where he graduated in 1972. Tony now lives in Britain.

For orders please email me hbomford@clear.net.nz Price from NZ is NZ\$55 plus P+P or you can contact the author direct on tony@ballinger5422.freemove.co.uk for a price in GB Pounds.

CQ Store

Don't forget folks, we have big selection of goodies that make ideal gifts. By supporting the Rhodesian Services Assn you are helping preserve our history. Most funds are directed towards the museum projects. This is the link to see what is on offer <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/The%20Shop.htm>

Tauranga Movie Weekend

It has been suggested by a number of people from Auckland that they would be interested in coming down to Tauranga for a weekend. What we thought was that they could join us down at the Garrison Club on the Friday for the movie night with braai and then on the Saturday the golfers could have a hack at one of the local golf courses. There are of course plenty of things to see and do around Tauranga and Mount Maunganui for those not interested in golf. The best weekends are either June 15-16th or July 20-21st. We envisage that people from the Waikato would also be interested. We will probably show 'Blood Diamond' or 'Whispering Death'.

Please discuss things with your mates and let me know what you would like so that we can coordinate something.

STOP PRESS!!

Our Tauranga reporter, Rodney Roadrage, filed this report a short time before publication. Entitled "The Rhodesians are coming, again" it reads:- For some time now there have been rumours of a Golf bomb being constructed. The name, Mr Le Bomba, is always associated with these rumours. While no one knows who Mr Le Bomba is, there has been speculation that he may be the legendary 'Green Leader'.

So it was with interest, that while stuck in one of this town's now infamous traffic jams caused by the new extension to the harbour bridge, I saw a convoy of vehicles travelling in the opposite direction. Unable to reach my camera I made this quick sketch of the lead vehicle. When I say 'quick', I was stationary for 45 minutes so I probably could have coloured it in as well! The road surface depicted is extremely accurate for that section of Hewlett's Road.



Observing my obvious interest, one of the occupants of the vehicle asked me if I knew where the Hawker Hunter was parked. I directed them to the Classic Flyers Museum on Jean Batten Drive where I knew there was an operational Hawker Hunter. I extricated myself from the traffic jam and followed them to the back of the museum where they allowed me to take these photographs.



Who are they and what they were doing? Are they planning to 'borrow' the Hunter or will they stick with the Toyota? Is the bomb live? They are a pretty desperate looking mob and anything is possible. One of them was wearing a gas mask, so have they turned this Rhodesian invention into a WoMD?

Stay tuned and all will be revealed in the next newsletter.

Until next time - go well.

Cheers
Hugh Bomford

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PLEASE NOTE:- This newsletter is compiled by Hugh Bomford secretary of the Rhodesian Services Association. It contains many personal views and comments which may not always be the views of the Association or Committee.