



# Contact! Contact!

**September 2012**

A monthly publication for the

## **Rhodesian Services Association Incorporated**

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PO Box 13003, Tauranga 3141, New Zealand.

Web: [www.rhodesianservices.org](http://www.rhodesianservices.org)

Secretary's e-mail [thesecretary@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:thesecretary@rhodesianservices.org)

Editor's e-mail [theeditor@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:theeditor@rhodesianservices.org)

Phone +64 7 576 9500 Fax +64 7 576 9501

**To view all previous publications go to our [Archives](#)**

Greetings,

The October RV and AGM are next month over the weekend 19<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> October. Please see details further on in this newsletter. It is essential for the smooth running of the event that you book and pay for your tickets before the 12<sup>th</sup> October. Everyone is welcome – come along and have a good time.

Anyone connected to Umtali and the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Rhodesia Regiment should make a special effort to attend this year's RV as we have a special event planned. Unfortunately we cannot publically disclose the details yet, but anyone is welcome to contact me to get a briefing.

In view of the upcoming AGM we encourage new blood to come on board the Committee for the purpose of learning the ropes and taking on positions of responsibility. In particular, the Editor and Webmaster positions are open for change. Job descriptions can be supplied on request. It is vital to the continuation of the work done by this Association that the younger generation build on the solid foundations that have been made by this Association.

This newsletter is another mammoth effort, so strap in and enjoy the next thirty odd pages.

### **Rhodesian Services Association Purpose & Web Links**

The Rhodesian Services Association Incorporated is an Incorporated Society as well as a Registered Charity under the New Zealand Charities Act 2005. The purpose of the Association is to provide benefit and education to the community. For detail and disclosure please refer to the opening page of our website [www.rhodesianservices.org](http://www.rhodesianservices.org)

We also have a Facebook group which you are welcome to join. We have loaded up a lot of photographs from various events, as well as others from our museum displays. We have found that Facebook is another platform assisting our purpose of preserving Rhodesian history. If you want to find us, search for Rhodesian Services Association on Facebook.

Please use these links on our website [www.rhodesianservices.org](http://www.rhodesianservices.org) for the following resources:

Guest Book <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/guest-book.htm>

Guest Map <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/guest-map.htm>

Events <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/events.htm>

**Please remember to let us know if you are changing your email address.**

## Obituaries

The Rhodesian Services Association holds a large Rhodesian flag for use at funerals. Please contact me at [hbomford@clear.net.nz](mailto:hbomford@clear.net.nz) to arrange delivery if required.



From ORAFS – Old Rhodesian Air Force Sods:

**“Errol Stainer** was hijacked and shot dead this morning (August 24<sup>th</sup> 2012) on his way to the local shops to buy his morning newspaper.

*Errol joined the Rhodesian Air Force 1964 and was an Airframes fitter. His son Stephen was at his side when he died. Errol worked for Reg Blumeris in Durban for many years before retirement. Condolences messages can be sent through Johnny Green on email [mwcjng@mweb.co.za](mailto:mwcjng@mweb.co.za) “*

And also from Leslie McKenzie via ORAFS:

*“It is my sad duty to tell you that my good friend and colleague for many years, **Chris Bennett**, died at 10 o'clock this morning.*

*He had not been well for some weeks, pneumonia, but was looking and feeling better on Friday. Last week he developed bronchitis, and since then was having difficulty breathing. He phoned me at 6.30 pm last evening, for our daily chat, but said only 'I'm not feeling too well, can hardly breathe, will call you tomorrow night'.*

*Later he called his neighbour Tegwyn who went across, could see he was in distress (she had been in the medical field) and called an ambulance. He was admitted late last night, and appeared to be responding well earlier this morning.*

*Chris and Bennie (who died in Dec 2010) came to Rhodesia in 1969, stayed with me in Borrowdale for a couple of years, then moved to their own place. We had been good mates, never an argument - well, not a serious one - in all these years.*

*You just never know, do you?*

*Leslie McKenzie”*

From Lewis Walter:

**“Valerie (“Val”) Tomlinson** passed away in Fish Hoek, Cape Peninsula, on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2012 at the age of 94. Members of her family travelled from Australia, USA, Zimbabwe and various parts of South Africa to be present at her Memorial Service, which was very well attended. Messages were received from all over the world.

*Val married Denis Tomlinson in 1939. He was the son of Col. AJ Tomlinson, who was commander of the Rhodesian Native Regiment in World War I, and later a Commissioner of the BSAP. Val was an accomplished water-colour artist, played golf for Rhodesia and wrote a book on the growing of fuchsias in Southern Africa.*

*On retiring to Fish Hoek in the Cape, Val soon became a well-loved member of the community. She was President of the Fish Hoek Art Society, Patron of the Fuchsia Society of South Africa, and a staunch member of the Flame Lily Foundation.*

*She will be greatly missed.”*

**Robert Lindley Strickland** age 59, of Culpeper, VA, passed away at UVA Hospital, Charlottesville, VA, Tuesday, January 3, 2012. Born May 9, 1952, in Namibia, South West Africa, to the late Jack Strickland and Mathilde Rowland Strickland, Robert worked with S.W.I.F.T in Culpeper, VA, as a software engineer.

Surviving Robert is his wife, Roseanna Strickland of Culpeper, VA, daughter, Molly Strickland of Roanoke, VA, mother, Mathilde Strickland of South Africa, siblings; John Strickland of South Africa, Rowland Strickland of Scotland and David Strickland of South Africa.

He will be remembered as ‘The Sheriff’ of the Rhodesian Government in Exile (RGiE) which was a group who set themselves up as an internet based social network group back in the late 1990’s, a long time before Facebook etc were invented. The RGiE was made up of a number of well-known Rhodesians and humourists whose Indaba Room virtual Rhodesian pub was always full of lively debate under the watchful eye of Baas Robert the Sheriff. He will be missed.

## October RV 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> October 2012

This is our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – be part of it! Book your ticket now by emailing [hbomford@clear.net.nz](mailto:hbomford@clear.net.nz)



**We want You at the 2012 RV!**

Registration cost for the RV - \$30 per adult and \$10 for under 12 year olds. The adult registration fee includes \$10 for annual membership of the Rhodesian Services Association. Should an under 12 wish to be a financial member then an additional \$10 will apply.

Please note: We need your RV subscription before the day. Diana and I personally fund the whole event and we have to make purchases and payments prior to the day. Times are tough and we cannot afford to act as a bank. Thank you for your cooperation on this.

Programme for the weekend:

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October. From 4.30pm the Garrison Club at the 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Group is open for an evening of socialising. We will have Rhodesian related multimedia playing during the evening. At 7pm we will show the DVD *Rhodesianaland*. There will be food and drink available at very reasonable rates.

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October. There will be a golf tournament in the morning. Golfers contact Paul Nes 027 4417 235 or email to book. The RV will kick off with assembly and welcome from 2.30pm. The annual auction is not to be missed (as those of you who have attended in the past well know!)

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> October. From 11am we will have the AGM at the Classic Flyers Museum followed by an excellent meal and free range of the whole museum complex. Wind up is around 2.30pm. Cost is \$12, payable on the day, which includes the meal, admission to the whole museum complex and entry in the draw for a flight for two in the Agcat biplane which can be taken at a date suitable to the winner.

Remember that Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> is a Public Holiday leaving you free to explore the area some more or take your time travelling home and for the organisers - a welcome day's rest!

Our annual auction is run during the RV on Saturday. Not only is it excellent entertainment but it raises money for our Association. We welcome more items for auction which can be in the form of goods or services. Please contact Hugh Bomford or Paul Nes [paulnes@xtra.co.nz](mailto:paulnes@xtra.co.nz) if you have something to donate or services you can offer from your business. The list below is of goods already donated. Full details of our supporters can be found at <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/our-supporters.htm> Please show your support for them in turn.

Absentee bids for the auction are very welcome. Please contact the coordinator Paul Nes [paulnes@xtra.co.nz](mailto:paulnes@xtra.co.nz) for the auction list.

- 30 Degrees South Publishing [www.30degreessouth.co.za](http://www.30degreessouth.co.za) – various books donated
- Timothy Bax and Charlee Griffiths 'Three Sips Of Gin' [www.threesipsogin.com](http://www.threesipsogin.com) – signed copy of Tim's book
- Bryony Bomford – Amarula Liquor
- Hugh & Diana Bomford 'Books For Africa' <http://rhodesianservices.org/Books.htm> – various books donated
- Buckles and Tees [www.bucklesandtees.co.nz](http://www.bucklesandtees.co.nz) – various goods

- Paul Cavendish 'Lost City' [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) – signed copy of his book
- Mel & Sue Clements [www.bookabach.co.nz/baches-and-holiday-homes/view/7199](http://www.bookabach.co.nz/baches-and-holiday-homes/view/7199) – a weekend in their Mangawai Heads holiday home
- John Edmond and Roan Antelope Music [www.johnedmond.co.za](http://www.johnedmond.co.za) - CDs
- Wolf & Alison Hucke – vintage liquor
- Ian Johnston 'Thru Thick 'n' Thin' [valj@mindsmail.co.za](mailto:valj@mindsmail.co.za) - signed copy of his book
- John Kelley 'The Way We Were' [treaclemine@zol.co.zw](mailto:treaclemine@zol.co.zw) – signed copy of his book
- Khukuri Imports Ltd [www.khukuriimports.co.nz](http://www.khukuriimports.co.nz)
- Tinka Mushett – a watercolour print
- Mike O'Rourke – flight in his gyrocopter
- Daryl Sahli 'A Skirmish In Africa' [www.mystorypublishing.com.au](http://www.mystorypublishing.com.au) - signed copy of his book
- Beaver Shaw 'Choppertech' [canic@mweb.co.za](mailto:canic@mweb.co.za) – signed copy of his book
- Bryan and Nancy Tichborne [www.watercolours.co.nz](http://www.watercolours.co.nz) – wonderful watercolour print
- Chris Walmsley 'Mugabe – My Part in His Victory' [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) – signed copy of his book

**This event is not to be missed, it is a great opportunity to kick back and have a good time. This is our Tenth Anniversary and we are hopeful of a few people making the trip from Aussie as well as from all over New Zealand. It is a great weekend and everyone is most welcome.**

Email me at [hbomford@clear.net.nz](mailto:hbomford@clear.net.nz) to place your booking.

## Grunter's Good Oil

Greetings everyone

WOW!!! That was my take of the recently completed Olympics and if anyone is not sure what I am talking about then they best get hold of their GP for a check-up!

From the opening to the closing ceremony and everything in between the event has had the world mesmerised by its beauty, its athleticism, the drama and tension that beamed into our houses at all hours of the day and night. Then of course there were the lucky ones who, living in England were able to get tickets and watch the events live amongst all the atmosphere that was so evident for us all to see. You have to hand it to the Brits, they sure know how to stage an event and this time they had the added bonus of coming third on the medals table. I don't know how far back you would have to go to see similar results by British athletes but in recent years they have certainly been well below their par. London 2012 would have had a huge effect on sport in Britain and morale in the country would be back up as similar results have done for NZ who had their best ever Games in terms of medals.



How refreshing was it to see the Jamaican 100m sprint relay team shatter the world record and then the runners entertain the world with their clean, confident, victory dances and salutes. It would be hard to measure what that did for young children in Jamaica who may now aspire to emulate the likes of superstars Usain Bolt, Nesta Carter, Michael Frater and Yohan Blake.

The games did have its downsides, such as drug cheat Belarusian women's shot put gold medallist Nadzeya Ostapchuk who robbed Valerie Adams of New Zealand. While Valerie will get the gold medal at a later stage, you can never make up for receiving that gold medal at the presentation ceremony to the sound of your national anthem in front of all those people. Happily these incidents were by far in the minority and generally the sportsmanship was of the highest order and was a great example to all viewers around the world.

There are still some sports that in my opinion should not be there and one of them would be tennis. Synchronized swimming, beach volleyball, rhythmic gymnastics and BMX riding are others that spring to mind. I will never question the dedication and their skill, but I just don't feel these are Olympic events. Two sports that are due to be introduced at the next Olympic games, golf and rugby sevens are two sports that I think should also be scrapped from the Olympics. They are just not Olympic sports.

All of the pessimists out there who predicted terrorist attacks and security issues must have been upset to see the whole world come together for two weeks, forget their differences and compete against each other at the highest level. The world became a better place because of it so "roll on Rio 2016" is all I can say. I can't wait.

One group of people who will be forever thankful for coverage of the Olympic Games is the Black Cap cricket team. What a woeful tour they have just had in the Caribbean winning only one game out of nine or ten. The Olympic Games has certainly kept the public away from this, but it is not over yet. They have since arrived in India for a tour there and if they struggled in the Caribbean, who knows what will happen on the sub-continent where many a better prepared side have failed in the past.

Yesterday South Africa won the third test at Lords against England to take the series and the World No 1 test mantle away from England at the same time. It has been a great sporting month all around with still more to come.

Next month we will be right in the middle of the Four Nations Rugby Championship and I hope to report back on progress on that front.

Remember to send us your thoughts on [fourstreams@xtra.co.nz](mailto:fourstreams@xtra.co.nz)

Regards,  
Grunter.



## Dateline Rhodesia 1890 – 1980 by Gerry van Tonder



### September

**Newsflash Headlines** +++ On 16 September 1915, the brave actions of Capt. James McQueen of 2RR in the raid on a German position at Longido in German East Africa, would earn him the Military Cross +++ On 12 September 1923, after rejecting union with South Africa, Southern Rhodesia becomes a Crown Colony +++ On 11 September 1933, the Honourable Godfrey Huggins becomes Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia +++ On 29 September 1952, Salisbury's main water supply, Lake Mcllwaine, is opened +++ On 20 September 1962, the Government bans the nationalist party ZAPU +++ On 18 September 1974, Prime Minister Ian Smith officially opens the new Rutenga-Beit Bridge rail link +++ On 24 September 1976 Prime Minister Ian Smith announces acceptance of the Kissinger deal, including majority rule in two years +++ On 1 September 1979, the Rhodesian flag is lowered for the last time, to be replaced the following day by the new flag of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia +++ On 10 September 1979, Lord Carrington opens the Lancaster House constitutional conference+++

#### **In Brief**

At 1000 hours on Saturday 13 September 1890, to the sound of a twenty-one gun salute from 7-pounder guns of the Naval Brigade, EC Tyndale-Biscoe of the Royal Navy and member of the Pioneer Column hoisted the Union Jack on a spot near Harari Kopje. The flagstaff was hewn from a Msasa tree. The place from then on would be known as Cecil Square, from which the city of Salisbury would grow. The salute was taken by Colonel SG Pennefather of the BSACo Police, overall commander of the column. In the words of Tyndale-Biscoe, Canon Francis Balfour, Chaplain to the BSACo Police, "... gave a short address and an extempore prayer of thanks for our deliverance. His cassock billowed in the breeze."

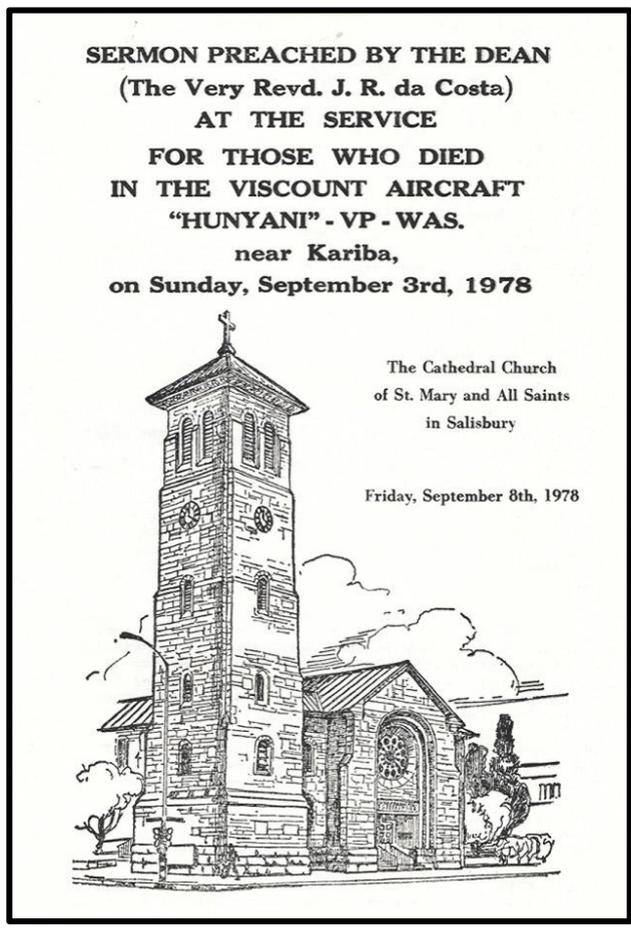


**The tents and wagons of the Pioneer Column**

On Friday 8 September 1978, the Dean of Salisbury's Anglican Cathedral, the Very Reverend John da Costa, launched a scathing attack on the world's political and religious leaders. He was speaking in a service to remember

those who perished at the hands of ZAPU terrorists when the Air Rhodesia Viscount "Hunyani" was shot down as it made its way to Salisbury the previous Sunday, 3 September. Ten survivors were gunned down in cold-blood at the crash site by the same gang of terrorists.

In what became known as The Deafening Silence service, da Costa demanded of the world why there had been no outright condemnation of this atrocity perpetrated against innocent civilians travelling in a civilian aircraft. There was only silence. Da Costa concluded his poignant address, "I have nothing but amazement at the silence of so many of the political leaders of the world. I have nothing but sadness that our churches have failed so badly to practise what we preach. May God forgive us all, and may He bring all those who died so suddenly and unprepared into the light of His glorious presence."

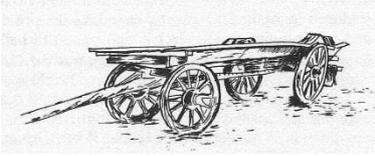


(Thanks to Dudley Wall for this)

**What's in a Name**

Established as a railway siding on the main line between Bulawayo and Salisbury, the small hamlet of Hunters Road is thirty kilometres south west of Que Que in the Rhodesian Midlands. Forming the centre of a mining and farming area, it was named after the so-called "Hunters Road," a bush trail used in earlier days by men such as FC Selous as they travelled into Mashonaland. The track followed a line from Inyati, then east of Que Que and finally on to the Hunyani River by the Hartley Hills. Connemara Mine, situated at Hunters Road, closed after many years as a significant producer of gold. It is now a prison centre.

Lying some 38 kilometres north of Salisbury, where the roads to Bindura and Umvukwes diverge, sits the village of **Mazoe**, known by the early natives as 'Maswe.' The first Portuguese explorers travelled down the Mazoe River for over three hundred years, while Henry Hartley on his hunting trips, discovered ancient gold workings here. This included evidence that the metal was crushed, washed and smelted in the area. With the arrival of the pioneers, many flocked to the Mazoe Valley, with dreams of an Eldorado. Lord Randolph Churchill, accompanied by Cecil Rhodes, also visited the place, but the reefs were not rich enough to attract large-scale overseas investment.



**Op Miracle: 26 September 1979**

In spite of previous Rhodesian Security Forces successes against ZANLA bases in the Manica Province of Mozambique, it became evident from reconnaissance missions that camps had again been established in a sixty kilometre radius from the town of Chimoio, not far from the Rhodesian border town of Umtali. Within this area, in what was now called the Chimoio Circle, and to the east of the Chimoio-Tete Road, aerial photographs revealed a large sprawling complex of five ZANLA camps. The whole 64 square kilometre area, named New Chimoio, was heavily fortified, with an extensive system of trenches and bunkers protected by heavy weaponry and anti-aircraft guns. ZANLA and their advisors had chosen a prominent 'bald' kopje to site a large force of men and anti-aircraft weapons to defend the camps below from air-strikes by the Rhodesian Air Force. The kopje was nicknamed Monte Cassino by the Rhodesians.

Based on initial estimates of one to two thousand insurgents housed in the camps, ComOps made the decision to mount a ground and air attack on the ZANLA complex, using a flying column of one hundred troops from the Selous Scouts and the Rhodesian Armoured Car Regiment. Canberra bombers would initiate the attack, with Hunters and field guns of the Rhodesian Artillery providing heavy support as the assault progressed. One hundred paratroopers from 2 Commando, 3 Commando and Support Commando of the Rhodesian Light Infantry would be dropped east of the camp to put stop groups in place.



**A Rhodesian artillery 25-pounder shelling the ZANLA positions at New Chimoio**

As a ploy to draw attention away from the real reason for this large gathering of troops, vehicles and aircraft near Umtali, RLI troops were deployed in mock fire force operations in the neighbouring TTLs, firing live ammunition to authenticate their presence.

It was however to prove a very costly deception, when a K-car carrying the Officer Commanding 3 Commando, Major Bruce Snelgar SCR (Post), flew into power lines. Bruce Snelgar, the pilot Air Lieutenant Paddy Bate and his tech Flight Sergeant Gary Carter all perished as Alouette R5705 crashed into the ground.



**The Flying Column moves through the Honde Valley en route to Ruda**

Under cover of darkness on 26 September 1979 the column, under the command of Captain Richard Passaportis of the Scouts, left Nkomo Barracks for Ruda Base Camp in the Honde Valley, just one kilometre from the Mozambique border. The convoy, which would pass through the Mutasa TTL, comprised Unimogs, Eland armoured cars with their 90mm guns, armoured troop carriers, the 25-pound artillery pieces, and the Scouts own armoured vehicle, the Pig. A bulldozer would be in place to assist with crossing the Gairezi River (see my note at the end of this feature) into Mozambique. Large numbers of troops and helicopters had also assembled at Lake Alexander just north of Umtali.

Overall command of the operation would rest with Lt Colonel Brian Robinson and Wing Commander Norman Walsh of ComOps, from a Dakota overflying the area. At night, Lt Colonel Ron Reid-Daly would take over from his command centre on a nearby kopje. ComOps Tactical Headquarters would be based at the Grand Reef airbase, FAF 8.

It was planned that the flying column, together with the artillery, would enter Mozambique early the following day and set itself up at a burnt-out store, codenamed Madison Square, ready to follow the Canberra bombing run at 0700 hours. At this point near the target, the artillery would also be unlimbered and be ready to support the Air Force strike. At the designated hour, however, the column with the important artillery support was still waiting to cross the Gairezi River.

The crossing onto Mozambique soil proved very problematic. Successive vehicles, weighed down with troops and war materiel, bogged down while attempting the river crossing. Eventually, the bulldozer had to individually drag each vehicle across, with the Puma APC-towed field guns being particularly awkward and resulting in them falling well behind in the column.

The twenty vehicles of the column had by this time become very fragmented, and as Canberras of No 5 Squadron were dropping their payloads over New Chimoio at the scheduled time of 0700 hours, most of the convoy was still stuck at the river crossing. By mid-morning, forward elements of the column had reached Madison Garden, but it was only by 1400 hours, seven hours after the Air Force bombing runs, that the main body of the convoy finally arrived at this staging post.



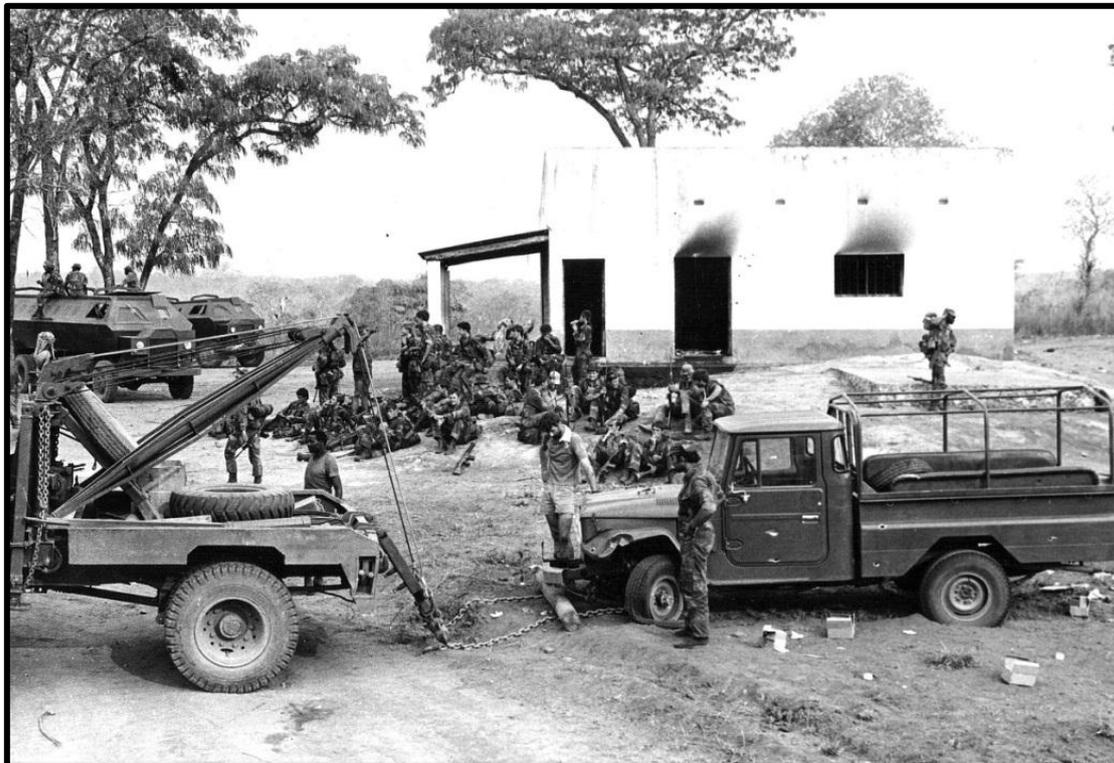
**Eland armoured cars struggle to scale the slippery banks of the river into Mozambique**

From Madison Square, the flying column of Scouts struck east, heading towards the road that would take them north to the camp. Arriving at the foot of Monte Cassino late that afternoon, the men were to spend an eventful night as the column was subjected to RPG-7 and 75mm recoilless rifle fire. While clearing trenches to secure their position, Trooper Gert O'Neill of the Selous Scouts was killed. The RLI stop groups, already in place, had an equally lively night, as fleeing insurgents stumbled into their ambush positions.

Come the following morning, further anti-aircraft defensive positions were identified on adjacent features, codenamed Hills 761 and 774, the latter being given the title Ack-Ack Hill. Flying through a cloud of flak, a Hunter strike from No 1 Squadron dropped sixteen 1000-pound Golf bombs on enemy positions, including Hill 774 which flanked Monte Cassino.

This allowed the Rhodesians to capture this hill which the defenders had vacated, taking their heavy weaponry with them. From this strategic point, Lieutenant Chris Gough and his men were able to direct mortar fire and Hunter strikes onto Monte Cassino.

On day three, Lieutenant Simon Willar's call-sign, with close-support from Hunters clearing his way, skirmished north towards Monte Cassino, clearing spot heights of ZANLA and neutralising their heavy weapons.



**Rhodesian troops congregate at "Madison Square"**

After successful questioning of an enemy capture, Captain Peter Stanton reported to Lt Colonel Tufty Bate of the RLI that information gleaned from the insurgent had provided a clear picture of what the attackers could expect at the top of Monte Cassino. With this in mind, further discussions were held with Richard Passaportis, leading to an infantry assault at 1000 hours. Two Selous Scouts troop call-signs led by Lieutenants Chris Gough and John Barnes, together with an RLI troop from 3 Commando commanded by Captain Bobby Harrison, began the challenging ascent. Chris Gough took the steep direct route, while the other two call-signs slowly made their way up the trench-latticed western route. Heavy supporting mortar fire was brought to bear on the top of the kopje immediately prior to the arrival of the Rhodesian troops. Elements of the Rhodesian Car Regiment had at this time also secured the adjoining Ack-Ack Hill.

The exhausted troops reached the top of Monte Cassino, finding it totally deserted. The Rhodesians now had strategic control of the base. Three soldiers were seriously wounded during the assault, and Trooper Ted Mann of the Selous Scouts was killed when a captured weapon he was trying to disarm exploded in his hands.

Chris and his men walked into a scene on top of Monte Cassino devastated by air and ground bombardments, littered with weaponry, supplies and other war materiel. The smell of dead insurgents permeated the hot air, but few bodies were actually found. Evidently, most of the insurgents had withdrawn in what appeared to be a relatively orderly manner.

Twelve 44-gallon drums of sadza (maize-meal porridge, the staple of central and Southern Africa) attested to the fact that the base must have housed several thousand insurgents and camp-followers. The occupants had been drilled to evacuate eastwards and pick up the road to Chimoio.

There were numerous anti-aircraft emplacements scattered amongst a vast and elaborate system of trenches and bunkers, the weapons ranging from the Russian 12.7mm to 37mm. Large stocks of ammunition, tinned goods, food and medical supplies were also found.



**A Rhodesian soldier inspects a Monte Cassino bunker**

That night, an RLI call-sign, Romeo One, positioned at a road block on the main road to Chimoio, saw a column of tanks and troop carriers approaching towards their position. As the Russian made tanks, backed up by what appeared to be a company of FRELIMO infantry came closer, Ron Reid -Daly, alerted to this fresh threat by radio, suggested to Richard Passaportis that Major Winkler move his Eland armoured cars into a protective cordon around Richard's Pig-based HQ, codenamed Hotdog.

Reid-Daly then guided the artillery onto the FRELIMO convoy. After five ranging rounds of gunfire, the next ten shells from the old British 25-pounders landed in quick succession amongst the attackers. The tanks immediately responded with some wild firing as they turned to flee the area. This was met by another salvo of shellfire from the Rhodesian guns, one round scoring a direct hit on a tank.

The FRELIMO rescue bid ended in a rapid withdrawal back towards Chimoio. Aerial reconnaissance the following morning revealed the FRELIMO column limping home, but before an air strike could be brought in, the convoy had camouflaged up in an area of thick bush, only moving out again when darkness fell.



**Rhodesian Light Infantry stop group east of Monte Cassino**

Editor's Note:

*This photo above is interesting as I never knew that the "horns up" sign that two of these blokes on the left are doing was around back in those days. The single digit salute on the right has been around a long time!*

On Sunday 30 September, the Rhodesians retired, leaving behind a few Scouts call-signs to monitor enemy activity.

A few days later, on 3 October, a large and heavily-armed FRELIMO column was sighted. The Scouts call-sign, remaining concealed, reported that the column had fired with anti-aircraft guns on the now vacant Monte Cassino with great accuracy. As the column moved north towards Cruzamento, concern grew that their objective was to carry out an attack on the Security Forces base at Ruda, in retaliation for the attack on New Chimoio.

Air Force aircraft were scrambled to deal with the threat. At about 1300 hours, low-flying Canberras flew over the convoy, dropping Golf bombs. Canberra R5203, crewed by Flight Lieutenants Kevin Peinke and "JJ" Strydom, only released half of its bombs, so the pilot decided to turn and do a reverse run, but this fateful decision would cost them their lives as the enemy, seeing the aircraft turn and come back, had sufficient time to concentrate ground fire at the vulnerable bomber. The stricken aircraft, having lost both engines, had been coaxed to glide back across the border. Sadly they did not make it, the Canberra crashing just short of the border, killing both men on board.

A while later, Hunter R1821, flown by Air Lieutenant Brian Gordon was also hit by ground fire, causing the aircraft to crash and kill the pilot. Whilst it was difficult in the thick haze for other aircraft to find the wreckage of the Hunter, it is known that FRELIMO had discovered the site, as they had recovered what they could to display in a museum in Maputo.



**Anti-aircraft weapons captured at Monte Cassino on display in Salisbury**

The months of September and October 1979 were very costly in terms of human lives lost due to aircraft coming down during two Rhodesian cross-border operations, Uric and Miracle. Eighteen men of the Rhodesian Armed Forces and three of the South African Air Force died when their aircraft were shot down by enemy fire in Mozambique. Their bodies remained where they fell. A further three died in Rhodesia just as Op Miracle was about to be launched. A Canberra bomber, a ground attack Hawker Hunter, a Cheetah helicopter, an Alouette helicopter and a South African Puma helicopter were all destroyed.

#### Author's Notes:

All the photographs that appear in this feature article are original Ministry of Information photographic prints which form part of my library. I have used four sources for my research; Ron Reid-Daly's Pamwe Chete, published by Covos Day in 2001; Beryl Salt's A Pride of Eagles, published by Covos Day in 2001; Alex Binda's The Saints, published by 30 Degrees South in 2007; and Peter Petter-Bowyer's Winds of Destruction, published by 30 Degrees South in 2005. I did find slight variations from one source to the next, but none were really significant.

There seems to be a question over whether the FRELIMO tanks were T-34s or T-54s, so I did not include the model. Also, and one I would like to resolve, is the name of the river which the flying column crossed into Mozambique. All the literature gives it as the Gairezi, but all the time while researching this operation, my brain was telling me that the Gairezi is near Troutbeck. I have let it stand, as I cannot find a map to confirm that there is either another Gairezi, or that it is the same river that flows east of Troutbeck. Does it flow south? Doubtful. Reading PB's account raised that

doubt again, as he refers to the Honde River, which to me is far more likely. Prof Richard Wood also says it is the Honde. Can someone come up with definite proof, one way or the other?

### Know the Medal

The Medal for Territorial or Reserve Service was awarded for long service in the territorial, volunteer and reserve forces. An oval, silver-plated medal carrying a bronze bar lion and tusk and cross batons. The reverse is plain, and would carry the recipient's name. It is apparent that the designer got inspiration from the British equivalent, the Efficiency Decoration.



**The Medal for Territorial or Reserve Service, left, and the British Efficiency Decoration**

Recipients needed to have served for twelve years to qualify, with silver clasps for successive six year periods. Since its inception, there were several hundred awards to members of the territorial or reserve units of the Army and Air Force.

### Above and Beyond

On 17 September 1976, two police launches from the post at Kanyemba, Sipolilo, while on patrol on the Zambezi River, came under heavy rocket and small-arms fire from Zambia. The second launch was hit, killing DPO Mike Sullivan. PO Rob Campbell sustained a serious head wound, and NSPO Simon Bunt was shot twice in the right leg.

Despite his wounds, NSPO Bunt managed to regain control of the stricken launch and ground it on the Rhodesian bank. This however now provided the assailants from across the river with a static target as they concentrated fire onto the boat. SO Bruce Matthews, Member-in-Charge at Kanyemba, beached the other launch some distance away from the disabled one and, together with PO Duncan Paul, NSPO Edge and FR Walter Bredenkamp, immediately set about rescuing their fellow officers. SO Matthews carried out one casevac to camp, leaving the two crew members to guard the other wounded man and DPO Sullivan's body. He returned under cover of darkness, fully aware of the high risk involved, with volunteers NSPO Purditt and FR Thornton to perform the second casevac and to uplift the remaining men.



**The Police Decoration for Gallantry (PDG) L-R Obverse (front) and Reverse (back)**

For their conduct above and beyond the call of duty that day, the Police Decoration for Gallantry, the BSAP equivalent of the Bronze Cross of Rhodesia, was awarded to:

- 9010 Section Officer Bruce Matthews
- 8980 Patrol Officer Duncan Paul
- 90314 Field Reservist Walter Bredenkamp



**The Commissioner's Silver Baton for Bravery**

For his brave actions despite his wounds, the Commissioner's Silver Baton for Bravery was awarded to:

- National Service Patrol Officer Simon Bunt



### The Commissioner's Bronze Baton for Bravery

For displaying qualities of determination, courage and devotion to duty of a high degree, the Commissioner's Bronze Baton for Bravery was awarded to:

- 901814 National Service Patrol Officer Purditt
- 901281 National Service Patrol Officer Edge
- Field Reservist Thornton

### A Snapshot In Time

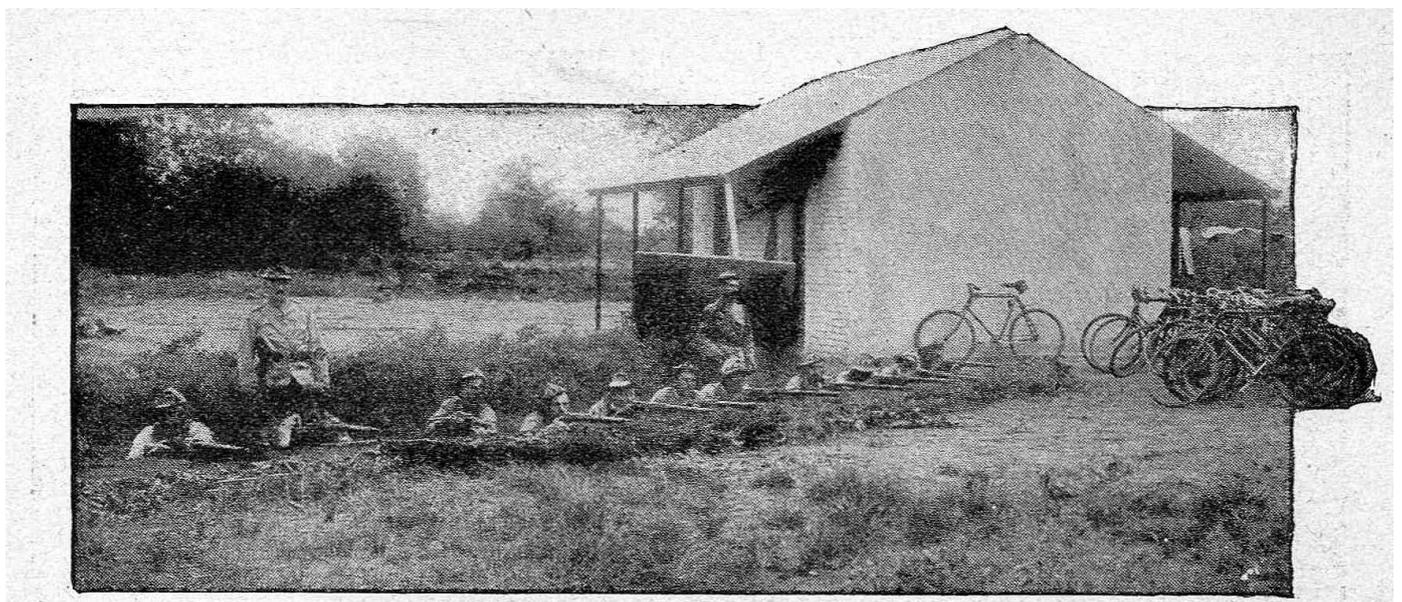
Paul Garnett, a noted historian who served with the BSAP, informs me that the Snapshot in Time from last month depicts the first steps in reforming the Grey's Scouts since the Matabele Rebellion, with the reviewing officer questioning the trooper on parade with his mount:



"What do you mean, 'It shrunk in the wash, Sir?'"

The picture is of course that of Lord Louis Mountbatten looking at the Depot Royal Rhodesia Regiment mascot during a visit to Southern Rhodesia in 1960. Lord Mountbatten was British Chief of Defence Staff at the time.

This month's Snapshot is a real oldie, so I apologise for the graininess, but the image itself is quite clear. Please let me have your comments to [g.van-tonder@sky.com](mailto:g.van-tonder@sky.com) or to the Editor.



## Arms at War

Weapon: FN MAG (*Mitrailleuse d'Appui General/Mitrailleur a Gaz*)

Type: General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG)

Calibre: 7.62x51mm NATO

Manufacturer: Fabrique Nationale, Belgium

Effective Range: 800-1500 metres (depending on mounting)

Designed in the 1950s by Belgian Ernest Vervier, this versatile infantry general purpose machine gun would see service in the armed forces of no fewer than eighty countries. This gas-operated weapon with an open-bolt action, weighs in at 11.8 kgs.



Adopted by the British army in 1957 as the L-7 GPMG and christened the Jimpy, the weapon known by the Rhodesians simply as the MAG, provided the small Rhodesian tactical units with devastating and comforting firepower. There were never enough of these valuable weapons to adequately equip all units, resulting in the active combat units being given priority when it came to distribution. Following the seizure in 1978 by law enforcement agents in Europe of 500 MAGs destined for Rhodesia, South Africa "loaned" some of these valuable weapons to their beleaguered northern neighbour.

The MAG was first used from an Alouette during the Battle of Sinoia in April 1966, when the Air Force and BSAP engaged the Armageddon group, seven ZANLA insurgents. The crude mounting and open sights did not however make for an economic use of ammunition, prompting Rogers and Petter-Bowyer of the Air Force to lead an initiative that would see improved mountings, weapon modifications, and introduction of reflective gun-sights.

The MAG would become the mainstay of the typical four-man stick.



## At the Going Down of the Sun

On Wednesday 5 September 1979, Rhodesian Security Forces launched a massive airborne assault into the Gaza Province of Mozambique, with the objective of permanently disrupting ZANLA and FRELIMO logistical lines by destroying scores of pre-targeted bridges. ZANLA and FRELIMO bases would also be attacked by heli-borne troops and the Air Force. A total of 31 helicopters were used to ferry men from the RLI, Engineers, SAS and 1 Recce Unit. The aircraft included Frelons and Pumas of the South Africa Air Force, teaming up with the Rhodesian Cheetahs (Agusta Bell 205) and Alouettes.

Following Hunter airstrikes on Barragem (Bridge 16, Target 25), the SAS troops were in the process of securing the eastern side of the bridge, when they sustained a casualty that needed urgent casevacating. Flight Lieutenant Dick Paxton with his tech LAC Alex Wesson responded in Cheetah R6098. As the aircraft hovered above the LZ, it was struck by an RPG-7 rocket, causing it to crash, killing Alex Wesson instantly. As flames engulfed the Cheetah, SAS troops managed to rescue a badly injured Dick Paxton, but they were unable to recover Alex Wesson's body.

The following day, Thursday 6 September 1979, twelve SAAF Pumas and a flight of Cheetahs carried 192 troops to a landing site near Mapai, already bombed by the Air Force. Puma 164 had replaced Paxton's Cheetah to make up the sixth aircraft in the Cheetah formation. Five kilometres out from the LZ, the helicopter formations overflew a now abandoned air-defence base. It would appear however that a FRELIMO straggler remained who, upon seeing the mass of helicopters flying overhead, took an opportunistic shot at the aircraft with his RPG-7 rocket launcher. The rocket struck Puma 164 and exploded, at the same time rupturing an auxiliary fuel tank. The doomed aircraft crashed in a ball of flame, instantly killing the fourteen Rhodesian troops on board and the SAAF crew of three. Their remains were never recovered.

We remember...

05 September 1979 at Aldeia de Barragem, Mozambique:



6656 LAC Alexander Wesson of No 8 Squadron, the Rhodesian Air Force

06 September 1979 at Mapai, Mozambique:



124307 Tpr Jacobus Briel of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



781343 2Lt Bruce Burns of 1 Squadron, the Rhodesian Corps of Engineers



730092 Tpr Aidan Colman of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



123929 Tpr Jeremy Crow of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



780949 Capt Johannes du Plooy of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



79641 Cpl LeRoy Duberly of 1 Squadron, the Rhodesian Corps of Engineers



119928 Tpr Brian Enslin of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



64081 L/Cpl Peter Fox of 1 Squadron, the Rhodesian Corps of Engineers



729689 Cpl Gordon Fry of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



94444 Sgt Michael Jones of 1 Squadron, the Rhodesian Corps of Engineers



729937 Tpr Stephen King of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



123027 Tpr Colin Neasham of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



730099 Tpr David Prosser of 1 Commando, the Rhodesian Light Infantry



781031 Capt Charles Small of the Rhodesian Corps of Engineers



Lt Nigel Osborne of the South African Air Force



Sgt Dirk Retief of the South African Air Force



Capt Paul Velleman of the South African Air Force



**A lone cross and candles mark the final resting place of the men of Puma 164 at Mapai  
(Thanks to Neill Jackson for the photo)**

Footnote:

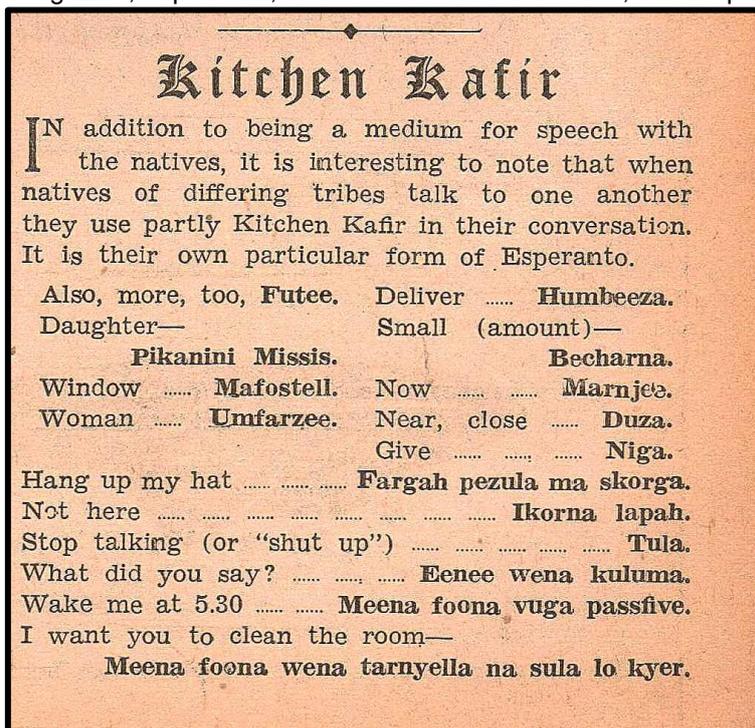
The full story of Puma 164 can be found in 'The Search for Puma 164' by Neill Jackson and Rick van Malsen, published by 30 Degrees South. It gives a detailed account of that sad day, and the subsequent journey by these two men and they tracked down the families of those who perished, and their ultimate pilgrimage to the crash site in Mozambique. Filled with life's irony and tragic coincidence that seem to haunt this special episode in Rhodesia's Bush War history, it is a real-life emotional roller-coaster that makes for compulsive reading. But above all, the book preserves their memory for all time.

**Across the Globe**

- On 3 September 1939, World War II breaks out
- On 9 September 1976, the Communist Chinese leader, Mao Zedong dies
- On 11 September 2001, terrorists demolish the Twin Towers, World Trade Centre, New York

**And.....**

... I found this in the RRAF magazine, Slipstream, of 15 October 1943. Not PC, but the phonetic spelling is priceless!



**Elands River Post Script**

Subsequent to my feature article in last month's column on the siege at Elands River, I received this email from Colleen O'Leary. As you may recall, Colleen, who is with the Queensland Committee of the Australian National Boer War Memorial Association, put me on to Peter Wilmot of their Victoria Branch. It was from Peter, who is writing a book on the siege, that I received so much open assistance. Colleen is suggesting that this whole relook at Elands River may throw new light on to how far back ANZACs actually go:

*"Hello Gerry,*

*How lovely to hear from you, I am so very happy to hear that you and Peter Wilmot connected so successfully. Great news to hear that you found the names of the Rhodesian soldiers, I am honoured that I could help you, what a great instrument the internet is that it can connect us all from every corner of the globe.*

*I read your well written article with great interest, ever since I first read the story of Elands River it has held me spell bound that so few could hold off against so many and it is not, from an Australian point of view, part of our military psyche as Gallipoli and the ANZAC tradition is. We are trying to correct the fact that soldiers who fought in the Boer War and the New Zealander's we fought alongside were indeed the first ANZAC's.*

*With your book and Peter Wilmot's maybe that will be corrected, I sincerely hope so. Thank you for acknowledging my small contribution.*

*Keep in touch.*

*Cheers*

*Colleen O'Leary*

*NBWMA*

*Queensland Committee"*

## Passage of Fire by Tim Bax

In last month's newsletter you will recall the piece titled 'Report on return trip to the Puma 164 crash site near Mapai, July 2012 by Neill Jackson'. In it there was reference Sergio Pais Mamede, the son of Orlando Pais Mamede, the man who founded and built Mapai as a ranch headquarters, along with a photo of what had been the town cinema where Selous Scouts, Jannie Nel was killed, Dale Collett seriously wounded and paralysed, and Tim Bax badly wounded, on 26 June, 1976, during Operation Long John. This month, thanks to Tim Bax, we are able to include the following excerpt from Tim's book 'Three Sips of Gin'. You can buy Three Sips of Gin from [www.threesipsofgin.com](http://www.threesipsofgin.com) As you will see from the excerpt below it is a book well worth buying.

This is Tim's story:

On June 25th, 1976, our Selous Scouts' column crossed the border, headed south-east along a cut-line, then turned due east along some power lines before intercepting the road that ran parallel to the railway line. There we regrouped and headed south-east toward Mapai. We were wearing an assortment of FRELIMO and ZANLA uniforms and carrying communist made weapons.

I was travelling in the last Unimog with eight others, including my old friend Bruce Fitzsimmons. Thirty miles down the road the column was stopped by a lone ZANLA sentry close to the secondary camp we intended attacking on our return. He was either a very plucky individual to be stopping a heavily armed column or very stupid. Perhaps he thought we were a FRELIMO supply column. The sentry was joined by three others who materialized from the darkness. We couldn't risk a fire-fight as we were too close to the ZANLA camp and we would lose the element of surprise when attacking our primary target in Mapai.

I was carrying the only silenced sub-machine gun in the column. I received a whispered message over my radio from Dale Collett, a fellow officer who was travelling in the column's lead vehicle. "Tim, we need you up here with your silenced weapon to take care of these guys before the whole operation is compromised. They're becoming suspicious of who we are."

I jumped out of my Unimog and ran to the front of the column just as the four ZANLA terrorists were raising their automatic weapons in Dale's direction. Seeing me, the leader swung his AK toward me, barrel levelled towards my chest. I didn't feel inclined to wait and see how good his aim was....I squeezed the trigger of my silenced sub-machine gun and swung it round in a shallow arc killing three of the terrorists instantly. The fourth managed to turn and bolt into the darkness shouting at the top of his lungs. He sprang through the bushes like a startled gazelle with Dale lunging after him like a marauding lion. The shouting suddenly stopped and shortly after, Dale reappeared from out of the inky blackness carrying the unfortunate terrorist's AK. After a brief pause to make sure that we hadn't unsettled the FRELIMO base, the column resumed its journey.

Just before dawn we stopped to refuel the vehicles from a bowser we were towing and prepare our kit before the last few miles into Mapai. It was freezing cold and I donned two pairs of nylon tracksuit bottoms under my fatigues and exchanged my silenced sub-machine gun for a folding butt AK. Each vehicle had been allocated a specific target in the town to attack, and at first light we roared into the town with each Unimog peeling off to its assigned task.

My target was a single-story residence that was alleged to accommodate the senior ZANLA hierarchy in the town. At the appointed time, I dismounted from the vehicle, arranged my squad into an assault formation and stormed the house. We smashed our way through a large plate glass window and were met by a burst of automatic fire from two ZANLA terrorists who had been sleeping in the well-appointed lounge. A brief fire-fight ensued during which the two terrorists were killed and a fine mahogany liquor cabinet standing in the corner of the lounge damaged. Miraculously, none of the numerous bottles of fine port and brandy, including a bottle of Bombay Sapphire gin were damaged. Either the terrorist hierarchy had a penchant for fine wines or we had come knocking at the wrong door. We started making our way cautiously through the rest of the house which was beginning to look more and more like a single family dwelling. The only other occupants we came across were a young Portuguese couple crouching in the corner of the master bedroom. Clearly this was not the target we had thought it to be, though sergeant Bruce Fitzsimmons had different feelings. "They're probably part of the Cuban delegation here to help FRELIMO," he growled, eyeing them suspiciously. "They must be pretty important having two gooks guarding them. If we don't cull them, let's bundle them onto the vehicle and take them prisoner." "Well, the two gooks are now dead and these two certainly don't look like combatants; neither of them is armed. In fact, they looked frightened out of their lives so let's leave them alone."

I calmed the couple down as best I could, telling them that we had no intention of harming them and apologizing for the mess we had made of their home. They were shaking in fear so I pulled a blanket from their bed to cover them and suggested to Bruce that he fetch them a tumbler of brandy from the lounge to soothe their nerves. I had been considering repatriating the contents of the liquor cabinet back to Rhodesia where it would have made a welcome addition to the bar stocks of the Officers Mess. The spoils of war are as synonymous to a soldier as corruption and graft to a politician. However, I didn't feel inclined to make the young Portuguese couple more uncomfortable than they already were by stealing their supply of expensive liquor. Much to the protestations of the rest, I decided to leave it behind. They would be more in need of the liquor once this was all over than us.....or so I thought.



**The ruins of Sergio's once-beautiful home, overlooking the Limpopo River, destroyed by Frelimo following the Selous Scout raids in 1976 (Operation Long John) and 1977 (Operation Aztec).**

I was busy searching the house for anything of intelligence value when I received a message over the radio that Lieutenant Dale Collett had been badly wounded. I left the rest of my group to secure the house, told Bruce to follow me and sprinted down to where I knew Dale's target to be.

It was a large double-story building in the centre of the town which might once have been a hall or a sporting arena during the days of the Portuguese rule. It comprised an enclosed area large enough for an indoor basketball court. At one end was an upper floor balcony accessible only from an external stairway. To the rear of the balcony, accessible from the same stairway, were a series of passages and offices. Intelligence reports had indicated the building was being used as an armoury for weapons being infiltrated into Rhodesia from Mozambique.

Dale had run up the exterior staircase to investigate what was in the upper level rooms. He had been moving cautiously along a passage when a burst of fire cut him down. He had managed to drag himself back along the passage and down the stairs using only his arms. We didn't realize at the time that Dale had been shot through his spinal cord and would never walk again. It was a terrible injury and a stunning loss not only to the operation, but to the Unit as a whole.

I was furious. After Dale had been placed under the care of our medic, we fired volleys of rocket propelled grenades through the open windows and door of the upper level in an effort to flush out whoever was inside. Nobody appeared. Telling Bruce Fitzsimmons and Jannie Nel to follow, I sprinted up the stairs. If whoever had injured Dale wasn't going to come out willingly we would go in and force them out. Inside the door was a ten foot long passageway, at the end of which were additional passages leading left and right. Taking the passageway on the right, I was about to throw a grenade into the first room I came to when there was a loud burst of gunfire behind me. I turned and saw Jannie Nel wheel around and start staggering back along the passage. His back was a bloody mess of gunshot wounds. Bruce and I followed Jannie, firing long bursts of automatic fire down the corridor as we withdrew. As soon as Jannie got to the head of the staircase he collapsed, using his last remaining strength to drag himself down the stairs. He was dead as he reached the bottom, falling into arms of his shocked friends waiting below.

Emotion is never a good thing, especially in combat. It clouds one's ability to act rationally and inhibits a logical thought process. I was stunned. In a matter of moments two of our most experienced operators and two good friends of mine had been cut down. I noticed one of our open-backed Unimog trucks parked some hundred yards in front of the staircase. On the back stood an African Corporal who I recognized as being from Jannie Nel's troop. Corporal Burundu was standing stoically behind a medium machine-gun mounted on the back of the vehicle. I ran to where the vehicle was parked, lit a cigarette and handed it up to the Corporal. Then I lit one for myself. "Ishe?" Ishe was a term of respect used by Africans....almost of reverence. "Why don't you stand behind the gun and cover me while I run up those stairs into the building. I want to be the one to avenge Sergeant-Major Nel's death. He was like a father to me." "No Corporal Burundu, you're better with that machine-gun than I am," I replied. "Let me be the one to avenge his death. You cover me as I go back inside the building."

I had barely finished talking when a camouflage clad figure suddenly burst out the door at the top of the staircase, fire stammering from his AK-47. Corporal Burundu's machine-gun barked back instantaneously in response, cutting the terrorist down. He tumbled off the top landing and lay sprawled at the bottom of the stairs, dead.

"Cover me Corporal Burundu, while I go and see if there's anyone else up there." I sucked hard at what remained of my cigarette, inhaled the smoke into my lungs and started running back towards the stairs.

I heard Corporal Burundu shouting behind me. "Ishe, be careful. I sense there is death still in that building."

Without a second thought I found myself bounding up the stairs for the second time that morning. Halfway up I realized the stupidity of my actions in not having anyone follow me up and cover me. By then it was too late, my momentum had already carried me up the stairs and through the door. This time I decided to take the passageway on the left. It was from there the firing that killed Jannie had come. I walked about ten paces down the passage and was cautiously approaching the first room on my right when I felt a searing pain in both my legs and at the same time heard the deafening sound of an automatic weapon being fired in a confined space at close range. My legs felt as though they were being pulled through a giant grinding machine. The burning smell of cordite assailed my nostrils. I staggered against the wall of the passage as another long burst of fire tore into my legs and I felt myself begin to buckle. Somehow I found the strength to stagger down the passage and into a room to my right. I half staggered and half fell across the room toward a bed positioned against a half wall at the far side. I collapsed onto it and lay still for a minute, listening for the sound of following footsteps. Thankfully, there was only a deathly silence after the cacophony of sound of a moment ago.

I quickly took stock of my situation. It wasn't looking particularly good. I had dropped my AK in the passageway as I stumbled away. Luckily I was carrying a Russian made Tokarev pistol holstered on my belt. I unholstered it and cocked it. If whoever had shot me intended coming in to administer the coup de grace, I would be ready. I was determined not to go alone.

I looked at my legs. The bullets had almost severed my right leg just below the knee. The two halves were attached only by pieces of skin and sinew. Jagged shards of smashed bone protruded from the tattered material of my fatigues. It looked as if somebody had removed the bottom part of my leg and tried to re-attach it backwards. I began to get morbidly amused by the fact that I seemed able to move my big toe and thought I must be hallucinating. My left leg had fared slightly better; all the skin, flesh and muscle had been shot away from the back of my knee together with a good portion of bone. I started to get a blinding headache. This worried me more than the pain in my legs. I have always hated headaches and found the pain extremely difficult to tolerate. I reached into my shirt pocket where I usually kept a supply of aspirin, but could find none. My girlfriend, Carol, had forgotten to send me away with some and I resolved to chastise her for her forgetfulness if I ever got out of this mess.



**Sergio Pais Mamede shows Rick van Malsen the ruins of the Ngala company club at Mapai, used as a cinema to show films to the company employees and later used as an armoury by Frelimo. It is on the upper floor of this building where Jannie Nel was killed, Dale Collett seriously wounded and paralysed, and Tim Bax badly wounded, on 26 June, 1976, during Operation Long John. Miguel Morais and Connor Matthews follow closely behind, listening intently to every word.**

I became surprised at the bright colour of the mattress I was lying on. Bright red was not a particularly clever colour for a military base. Then I realized it was blood. It was spurting from the severed arteries in both my legs and I realized that if I was going to survive for much longer, I had better start doing something about trying to get myself rescued. I found a small notebook in my shirt pocket. Feverishly, I began scribbling a note to fling over the half wall I was lying against. Hopefully, somebody in the hall below might see it and realize that I was still alive.

"Upstairs behind the half wall. Both legs out of commission. Need help urgently." I was about to toss the note over the wall when I decided to add one last thing. "Got an excruciating headache....please hurry!" I wrapped the note around a bullet I extracted from my Tokarev magazine and tossed it over the wall.

I began to wonder how I could possibly have got to where I was lying from where I had been shot. Effectively I had no legs and I knew that even if my life depended on it, I could not move another yard. My thoughts were interrupted by something landing near my bed. It was a piece of paper wrapped around a stone and by a stroke of good luck, it landed within easy reach.

"We're holding a mattress up. Clamber over the wall and we'll catch you." It was signed by Sergeant-Major Piet van der Riet.

I didn't know where I was going to find the strength to heave myself off the bed, let alone over the half wall! As to how I was going to do it without leaving my right leg behind was another matter. Eventually I decided that saving my life was more important than saving my leg, so with my last reserves of strength I pulled myself onto the top of the half wall and pushed myself over. I felt myself plunging into space like a ragdoll. I lost consciousness momentarily but woke up immediately I hit the mattress. I looked up to see four of the grimmest looking individuals I could ever recall seeing in my life. They were holding the mattress and smiling down at me, their whiskered faces blackened and streaked with blood and sweat.

"You guys certainly wouldn't win any beauty contests," I groaned through clenched teeth. "And you look like you've just been pulled through the business end of an abattoir," replied one of the four who had caught me. He was our medic, Bruce Laing, arguably one of the finest medical NCO's in the Rhodesian Army.

"Is my right leg still attached?" I asked. "Only just, though I'm not sure how," replied Bruce. "It must have been reluctant to remain behind, so it followed you over the wall like a loyal dog."

It was not unusual for our army medics to perform functions in the field which under normal circumstances would be performed only by experienced surgeons. Bruce took one look at my legs and gave me his considered prognosis.

"Your right leg will have to be amputated below the knee and your left leg will have to have extensive reconstructive surgery. If you want, I can chop the right one off now and be done with it?" "Leave it on for the time being, Doc. I've grown quite attached to it over the past twenty seven years."

"OK. I'll patch you up as best I can and let the surgeons at the hospital make the call. The good news is that if I get to work on you now and fill you up with some saline fluid, there's a chance you might survive. There's a chopper on its way to uplift you, Dale and Jannie. It should be here in the next thirty minutes."

With that I was carried outside to a shady and more secure spot on the side of the building and lowered gently to the ground. Bruce Laing rolled up his sleeves, administered a couple of ampoules of morphine and got to work stabilizing my injuries. I later learned from surgeons in Salisbury that it was only through his exceptional treatment that my right leg was eventually saved from immediate amputation.

I began to get concerned a few minutes later when I heard someone talking urgently on the radio to the pilot of the approaching helicopter. "How far out are you?" Whoever was talking was standing just outside my field of vision.

"About twenty minutes from your location," came the flat, hollow response from the pilot. "How many casualties can I expect?"

"Two critically wounded and one KIA." There was a slight pause and the voice added, "If you don't hurry-up it will be one critically wounded and two KIA."

My concern deepened when I saw the familiar figure of Bruce Fitzsimmons looming over my mattress. He looked pale and gaunt even through the dark mask of his camouflage. His face was streaked with grime, sweat and blood. He appeared to be on the verge of exhaustion.

"Mr Bax, we've been through a lot together, good times and bad. I'm going to miss you." He spoke gruffly trying to hide his emotion. "I've got to go and ambush the road leading into the town. Is there anything I can do for you before I go?" He spoke with an air of finality, as though not expecting to see me again.

"Bruce, the house we attacked this morning, the one with the liquor cabinet?" I croaked in a whisper. "Would you run up there quickly and ask the Portuguese lady if she would spare me a nip of her Bombay Gin?"

If I was going to die on the way home, a sip of gin would at least add some ceremony to the austere occasion. It seemed like a civilized thing to do.

"I'll be right back." Bruce abruptly turned and walked quickly up the rise towards the house.

He returned a short while later just as I began to hear the first, faint sounds of a helicopter approaching. In his hand was a porcelain cup he must have found. He knelt down next to me, gently lifting my head in his right arm and poured a long sip of gin down my parched throat. It burned, but it tasted good....it tasted very good.

Then I lost consciousness.

Editor's Note: Following the publication of last month's piece, Tim Bax has made contact with Sergio Pais Mamede, apologised for the damage to his family's property and made arrangements to replace the bottle of Bombay Gin.

## What's On In New Zealand

### AUCKLAND

If you reside in the Auckland area please email Wolf and Alison Hucke at [whucke@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:whucke@slingshot.co.nz) for more details of the monthly social meetings generally based around the Hobsonville RSA. All are most welcome.

### Viscount Disasters Commemoration Day Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2012

Venue: Birkenhead RSA, Recreation Drive, Birkenhead

Time: 10:30

Location: Private function in the Downstairs Function Room.

Details: Full finger-food sit down meal and coffee for \$8.00 per person. The bar will open from 11:00. The DVD *Viscount Down* will be shown along with other Rhodesian related material.

Contacts: John Glynn 09-832 1300 or Jack Maddox 09-488 9928 for more details.

### TAURANGA

The Garrison Club which is run by the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Hauraki Group Regimental Association, is open every Friday from 16:00 hrs and welcomes visitors. 'Graze and Movie Evenings' run by members of the Rhodesian Services Assn. are normally held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of every month with proceeds being donated to the Hauraki Museum. Email me at [hbomford@clear.net.nz](mailto:hbomford@clear.net.nz) to get on that mailing list, to see what is on and notification of any changes. Other local events are also advertised via email. The next Movie and Graze evening is 14<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

### OCTOBER RV – Labour Weekend 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2012

See full details near the beginning of this newsletter. Email [hbomford@clear.net.nz](mailto:hbomford@clear.net.nz) for tickets.

## CQ Store

Visit [www.rhodesianservices.org/The%20Shop.htm](http://www.rhodesianservices.org/The%20Shop.htm) to see what is in store for you. Please give our CQ Store consideration when buying a present for friends or family. Profits from the sale of these items go towards the Museum Fund.

All prices are in NZ\$ and do not include postage.

To order:

Email [thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org) with your requirements. We will get it weighed and priced and get back to you with a total.

Payment

NZ customers can pay by direct deposit with bank details being supplied on request

Overseas customers - we prefer payment by PayPal, personal or bank cheque. We can accept personal cheques from most countries with the exception of South Africa. If you elect payment by PayPal, we will bill you from [thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org) Please note that we can only process credit cards via PayPal. We do not accept postal orders or Western Union transfers. Rest assured, if you want to make a purchase we will make a plan to enable you to pay!



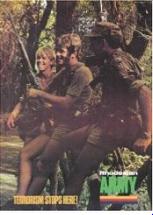
[Clothing](#) - shirts, jackets, caps, beanies, aprons, and regimental ties.



[Berets & Badges](#) – most Rhodesian units available.



[Medals & Ribbons](#) – an extensive range available.



[Posters & Maps](#) – high quality reproductions.



[DVDs & Phone tones](#) – historical footage, unique cell phone tones.



[Other goods](#) - flags, bumper stickers, lighters, and more, as well as quality products direct from our contributing supporters.

New products:

**Lapel Pin – Rhodesia Regiment.** These are in limited stock currently but we will be producing more in due course. Price NZ\$20 plus postage.



Made from brass it is 40mm. overall length. The RR badge is approx.. 20mm x 20mm

### Key Rings

Price NZ\$5 plus postage

Painted key rings donated by George Morgan. Hand painted and clear coated with hard varnish. As shown below all have the Green & White on one side and regimental colours on the other side.



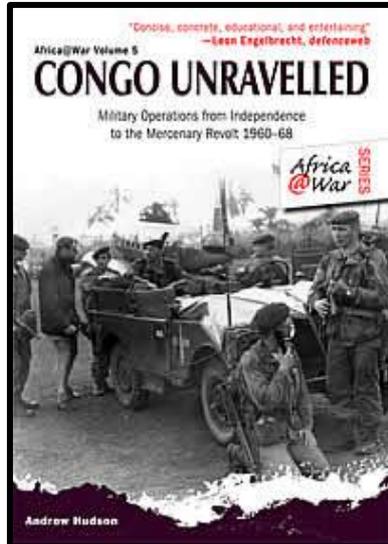
**Top - Reverse side all with Green & White**  
**Centre row: BSAP; Armoured Cars; Engineers; Grey's Scouts; Medics**  
**Bottom row: Pay Corps; RLI; Rhodesia Regiment; Service Corps; Selous Scouts; Signals.**

## Books for Africa

I again remind you that all the books and audio visual disks that I stock and sell are listed at [www.rhodesianservices.org/Books.htm](http://www.rhodesianservices.org/Books.htm) These sales are my own hobby and income from sales is directed to me and not the Rhodesian Services Association. However, the Association does benefit indirectly from these sales. A great selection of books, many with a Rhodesian connection, can be found on the link above. All prices are in NZ\$ and do not include postage.

This month's new title:

**Africa @ War Volume 6 Congo Unravalled by Andrew Hudson** Price NZ\$30



Stock of this latest publication in the Africa @ War series is arriving soon. Please book your copy now.

"Clearly and comprehensively explains the intrigues of the Congo wars" – Colonel Mike Hoare "Post-independence events in the Republic of the Congo are a veritable Gordian knot."

The ambitions of Congolese political leaders, Cold War rivalry, Pan-Africanism, Belgium's continued economic interests in the country's mineral wealth, and the strategic perceptions of other southern African states all conspired to wrack Africa's second largest country with uprisings, rebellions and military interventions for almost a decade. Congo Unravalled solves the intractable complexity of this violent period by dispassionately outlining the sequence of political and military events that took place in the troubled country.

The reader is systematically taken through the first military attempts to stabilize the country after independence and the two distinguishing military campaigns of the decade - the United Nations military operations (Opération des Nations Unies au Congo, or ONUC) to end the secession of the Katanga Province, and the Dragon Operations led by Belgian paratroopers, supported by the US Air Force, launched to end the insurgency in the east of the country - are chronicled in detail.

Finally, the mercenary revolt - an event that tainted the reputation of the modern mercenary in Africa - is described. Lesser known military events - Irish UN forces cut off from the outside world by Katangese gendarmes and mercenaries, and a combined military operation in which Belgian paratroopers were dropped from US Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft and supported by a mercenary ground force to achieve humanitarian ends - go far toward resolving the enigma surrounding post-independence Congo.



**The Rhodesia Regiment Book Project**



This project is on the path to publication in June 2013. We require information on the following:

- ❖ National Service Intake numbers, dates and details – please email Gerry van Tonder at [g.van-tonder@sky.com](mailto:g.van-tonder@sky.com) with details. See the list below of intakes that we have no information on.

- ❖ We have some conflicting information relating to Intakes 120 to 125. Please can anyone from those intakes, who has not already contacted Gerry van Tonder do so urgently on email [g.van-tonder@sky.com](mailto:g.van-tonder@sky.com)
- ❖ Leadership details – CO, 2I/C and RSM of all Battalions; OC, 2I/C and CSM of all Independent Companies up to 1978 - please email Gerry van Tonder at [g.van-tonder@sky.com](mailto:g.van-tonder@sky.com) with details.

Details required for the following intakes:

18	38	62	100
20	40	63	101
21	44	67	103
23	45	68	104
25	46	72	110
26	47	74	117
28	50	75	118
29	51	76	127
30	52	78	135
31	53	80	148
32	54	83	166
35	57	85	
36	58	86	
37	61	90	

## **Our Supporters** – please also view our webpage <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/our-supporters.htm>

This section is for individuals and businesses who support this Association either by giving us something for auction at the RV in October; by donations from sales generated from our listings of their product or service; by offering discount to buyers who mention the Rhodesian Services Association when making a purchase; contributing material to our Museum and Archives.

Email me at [theeditor@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:theeditor@rhodesianservices.org) for details of how you get a mention here.

The Association is very grateful to all our contributors; please reciprocate this support by supporting them in turn. Please don't forget to mention where you saw their advert.

## **Roan Antelope Music special for September 2012**

What's up at Roan Antelope in September 2012?

Apart from November, September is probably the most significant month for Rhodesians. It is the month that the pioneers raised the flag at fort Salisbury in 1890. It is also the month that the first Viscount was shot down and the month that the Green and White flag was lowered for the last time in 1979.

Although the flag came off the Salisbury pole in 1979, since then Rhodies have kept it flying in many corners of the globe. It flies to commemorate the sheer guts, resilience and courage of a brilliant nation that will never die.

Roan Antelope Music are no exception to the rule of preservation of the spirit. For the last five years they have hosted a Rhodie concert and weekend at Kunkuru. Last year, John Edmond was joined on stage by his two sons Grant and John Ross and this year his granddaughter Kelly will fly out from England to hopefully join the gang in song. She will also record an album in South Africa.

The Rhodesian Centenary Album is once again appropriately offered on special this September. All the songs and many artists that shaped the Rhodesian music industry are featured – artists Clem Tholet, Mike Westcott, The Greenstones, Nick Taylor, Ian and Ritchie and John Edmond with songs such as *Rhodesians Never Die*, *The UDI Song*, *Look Across The River*, *Ridgeback*, *Shumba Drinkers*, *Mukumbura*, *Mashonaland Farewell*, *Matabele Guitar*, *Agysymban Trilogy* and *The Great White Tribe*.

If you were part of, or knew anybody in the Rhodesian Schools combined Choir in the 1970's, you will hear them singing *Once a Column Came a Marching* which was probably the first song to ever be composed in Rhodesia going back as far as Cecil Rhodes' time!

This special offer is as follows:

Order any one of the two Centenary Albums and we add a CD called *All Night Razzle*, a party album by John Edmond and his Bushcats to celebrate September with more than forty great rocking tracks like *Bad Moon Rising*, *Jonny B Goode*, *Lodi*, *La Bamba*, *Memphis Tennessee*, *Kansas City*, *Cotton Fields*, *Oh Boy*, *Peggy Sue* and many more.

The *BSAP Album* contains tracks by the BSAP Military band and songs by John Edmond of epic stories that involved the BSAP like *Kum-a-kye*, *The Regiment Lives On*, *Trooper Thomas*, *Dad's Army*, *Black Boots*, *The Siege at Eland's River* and many more.

If these CD's are already part of your collection, keep a Christmas stocking in mind.

YOUR package will then consist of any one of the two Centenary Albums, PLUS *All Night Razzle* for R200. Additional international postage charges are in addition:

SA Free post; UK R105; USA R100; Australia R140 New Zealand R145

To order go to:

Roan Antelope Music [www.johnedmond.co.za](http://www.johnedmond.co.za)

Email: [info@johnedmond.co.za](mailto:info@johnedmond.co.za)

Tel: +27 (0)14 735 0774 / +27 (0)71 699 0362 Fax: +27 (0)86 273 5492

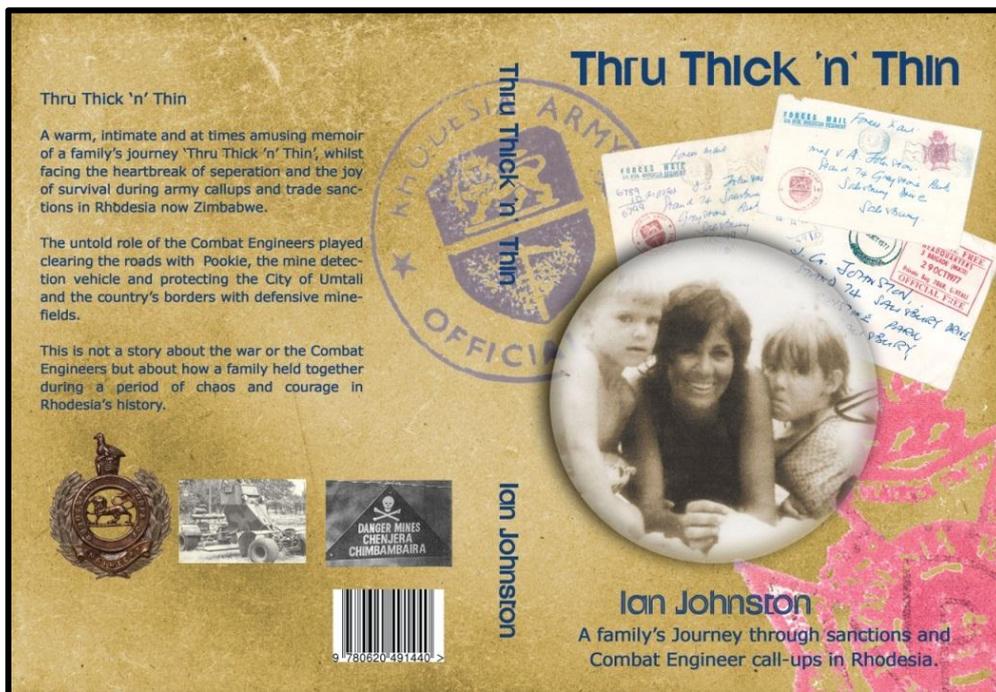
**Buckles and Tees** [www.bucklesandtees.co.nz](http://www.bucklesandtees.co.nz)

Mike Vivier has a number of Rhodesian related lines which include the 'Advice to Terrorists' image on t-shirts and aprons as well this stunning Rhodesia Regiment belt buckle which sells for NZ\$24.95 excluding postage. 100% New Zealand made.



Mike donates a portion of his income from all Rhodesian related items sold to the Rhodesian Services Association. Please email Mike at [mike\\_jovivier@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mike_jovivier@xtra.co.nz) with your order or query or go to [www.bucklesandtees.co.nz](http://www.bucklesandtees.co.nz) and do it on-line.

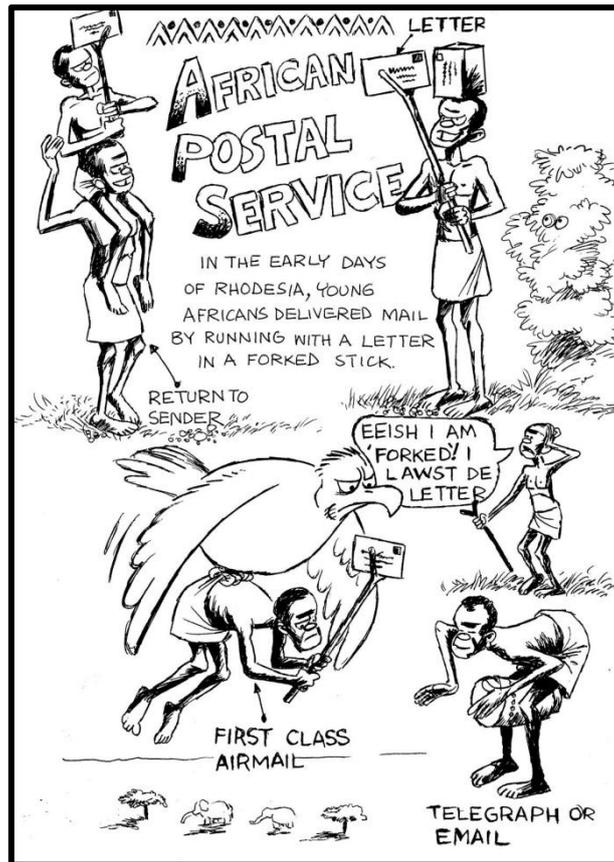
**Thru Thick 'n' Thin by Ian Johnston**



A warm, intimate and at times amusing memoir of a family's journey 'Through Thick 'n' Thin whilst facing the heartbreak of separation and the joy of survival during army callups and trade sanctions in Rhodesia as told by a Combat Engineer.

Email Ian Johnston [valj@mindsmail.co.za](mailto:valj@mindsmail.co.za) to order. Price is R160 with a percentage being donated to the Mdala Trust for Zimbabwe Pensioners.

## The Global Forked Stick - Snippets and Requests



With grateful thanks to Vic MacKenzie for use of this illustration to better explain the 'forked stick' connection for those who were not raised in Africa.

### Unveiling of Viscount Memorial – Media Release

At 11:00 on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2012 there will be an unveiling ceremony in the Memorial Grounds of the Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria, to honour the memory of 107 innocent souls who perished when two civilian Viscount aircraft were shot down during the guerrilla war in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

Family and friends of the victims will attend, and an open invitation is extended to members of the public. Unfortunately, none of the eight survivors of the first aircraft downed in 1978 is able to attend. There were no survivors in the second Viscount that was shot down in 1979.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1978 the Air Rhodesia Viscount Hunyani, on a routine flight from Kariba to Salisbury, was shot down by ZIPRA operatives using a SAM 7 missile. They followed up this crime against humanity by butchering a number of the survivors - men, women and children. Five months later on 12th February 1979 the same group shot down Air Rhodesia Viscount Umniati, using the same heinous method.

The world ignored these murders.

At the memorial service for victims of the first Viscount downed, the late Very Rev John Da Costa, Anglican Dean of St Mary's Cathedral in Salisbury, delivered a sermon condemning the acts and particularly the lack of response from world leaders, church leaders and politicians.

In his famous speech from the pulpit which became known as 'The Deafening Silence' he said, "The horror of the crash was bad enough, but that this should have been compounded by murder of the most savage and treacherous sort leaves us stunned with disbelief and brings revulsion in the minds of anyone deserving the name 'Human'.

"The ghastliness of this ill-fated Flight from Kariba will be burned upon our memories for years to come. For others, far from our borders it is an intellectual matter, not one which affects them deeply. Here is the tragedy!"

"I have nothing but sympathy with those who are here today, and whose grief we share. I have nothing but revulsion for the less than human act of murder which has so horrified us all. I have nothing but amazement at the silence of so many of the political leaders of the world."

Representatives of former Rhodesian military units who tracked down the perpetrators will be present, as well as members of the public who have never forgotten those tragic events and wish to remember and pay their respects to those whose lives ended so violently and abruptly.

Members of the media are cordially requested to contact Col John Redfern (ret) on cell number 083 739 2578 on arrival.

Released by Maj Gen Gert Opperman (Ret), Managing Director, The Heritage Foundation Tel 012 325 7885 Fax 086 615 9587 Email [bd@erfenisstigting.org.za](mailto:bd@erfenisstigting.org.za)

Foot Note from John Redfern Honorary National Secretary Flame Lily Foundation PO Box 95474 0145 Waterkloof Tel: 012 4602066 Fax: 086 6484794 Email: [rasa@iafrica.com](mailto:rasa@iafrica.com) Website: [www.flf-rasa.org](http://www.flf-rasa.org)

The project to provide a lasting memorial to the victims of the two disasters was initiated by Keith Nell. He and his team had the vision of a memorial that would honour the casualties for posterity, and break "The Deafening Silence". The Viscount Memorial will be accessible to the general public in the grounds of the Voortrekker Monument, providing an ideal setting for such a memorial.

A target of R130 000 was set for the memorial, of which R80 000 has been raised by private donations and the raffle of a painting donated by acclaimed Rhodesian artist Craig Bone. The Flame Lily Foundation has provided a facility for receipt of these funds, and payment to The Heritage Foundation. The latter has given full support for the establishment of the Viscount Memorial, and has administered all the work associated with it.

This is a memorial that should touch the heart of every Rhodesian. Those who cannot attend the formal unveiling ceremony are invited to visit the Voortrekker Monument to see the Viscount Memorial at some future date. Donations are most welcome to meet the shortfall. Bank details are available from John Redfern [rasa@iafrica.com](mailto:rasa@iafrica.com) on request.

### Rhodesian SAS Memorial, Hereford, England

One of our subscribers recently attended an official function at the SAS Chapel in Hereford, England where he was amazed to see a memorial plaque (pictured below) honouring the Rhodesian SAS who gave their lives from 1966 - 1979. It appears that the three men who served in Malaya (OH Ernst, JB Davies and VE Visagie) are not on this plaque and may be named elsewhere.



Rhodesian SAS Roll of Honour, Hereford, England

### Comment from General Sir Walter Walker KCB CBE DSO and bar, Daily News Bureau Dated January 30<sup>th</sup> 1978

The following extract has been doing the rounds on the internet recently and the source [www.ourstory.com](http://www.ourstory.com) is often ignored. The quote below has also been used by a number of authors including Prof Richard Wood.

Gen. Walker's obituary makes interesting background reading and can be found at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/military-obituaries/gurkha-obituaries/1337219/General-Sir-Walter-Walker.html>

LONDON: The Rhodesian Army is the most professional and battle worthy in the world today, according to a British general recently back from a visit to the operational area.

General Sir Walter Walker says in a letter to The Times: "Their army cannot be defeated in the field either by terrorists or even a much more sophisticated enemy.

"In my professional judgment, based on more than 20 years of experience, from lieutenant to general, of counter-insurgency and guerrilla-type operations, there is no doubt that Rhodesia now have the most professional and battle worthy army in the world today for this particular type of warfare."

After an unrestricted visit to the operational area, General Walker found troop morale to be "sky high", while the terrorists are "terrified of meeting them in pitched battle".

"Here is a breed of men the like of which has not been seen for many a long age. It made one feel almost ashamed to be British in these squalid and shameful times in which we live. As for Dr. Owen and his travelling circus, they are held in utter contempt," he concludes.

### **Choppers at Chirundu pre UDI**

*"Hi my name is Peter Humphreys.*

*I would like to know if anyone can help with information about the Rhodesian Air Force from around 1963/4 from when what were Federation forces were transferred from what was then Northern Rhodesia to Southern Rhodesia. As a young teenager living in Chirundu I remember two choppers landing at the Chirundu Hotel to be refuelled. My father was the manager at the time and I would like to know if there is any record of this or any photos. As a teenager it was a day of great excitement and if anyone does remember or has photos it would be nice to have prints."*

Please email Peter at [pantherapete@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pantherapete@yahoo.co.uk) if you can help with info or point him in the direction of someone who can.

### **Seeking Pete Dell and Stewart Pink**

Dave Stedman writes:

*"I am trying to track two NS officers who served at 3 Indep. Coy, Inyanga in around 1977/78 - Pete Dell and Stewart Pink."*

Email Dave at [stedman@mweb.co.za](mailto:stedman@mweb.co.za) if you can help.

### **Seeking information on Doug Jansen**

Charmaine Pawson, daughter of the late Doug Janson, is trying to find out more about her Dad's service in Rhodesia. It is known that he served with the Royal Rhodesian Air Force. He was 6 LAR and was an Armourer from 1960-1963. His number was 5233. He did his subsequent call ups with the Air Force and Charmaine thinks he may have done something in connection with the SAS.

Please email Charmaine at [pawsonc@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pawsonc@xtra.co.nz) if you can help.

### **Op Newton – June 1975**

Peter Baxter (author) writes:

*"Would anyone involved in Op Newton in June 1975, during which several TF companies supported the Selous Scouts in a cordon and search operation contact me please"*

Email Peter Baxter [jpeterbaxter@gmail.com](mailto:jpeterbaxter@gmail.com)

### **Thornhill Catering Section**

Terry Spencer writes:

*"I would love to know the whereabouts of any former members of the catering section at Thornhill where I was a Flight Sergeant. In particular I would like to make comms. with **John Lang, Dave Abrahams, Bill Plews and Tom Harrower.**"*

Email Terry at [terryumvue@aapt.net.au](mailto:terryumvue@aapt.net.au)

### **Seeking Des Chalmers**

From Malcolm Ross:

*"I am trying to make comms with my mate Des Chalmers. He went to the UK after he left Zimbabwe. He was a sergeant in the RLI then joined A Coy 9RR where he eventually became a Lieutenant in 1 Platoon"*

Email any info to Malcolm Ross at [lesmalross@yoafrica.com](mailto:lesmalross@yoafrica.com)

## **Rhodesian Air Force Aircraft Project**

Eduard Pietersen writes:

To Rhodesians where-ever you may be.

I have recently been asked to give some insight into the project recording Rhodesian Military Aircraft history which has been an on-going task for some years now.

The project was started eight years ago by a number of Rhodesians and a South African aviation enthusiast banding together in an attempt to document and describe the military aircraft that once served the proud nation of Rhodesia. This is from 1935 when the Air Unit was first formed until the country ceased to exist as Rhodesia in April 1980. Much has been written about the exploits of the Rhodesian Security Forces. Deliberate hindrance was exercised by all International communities against valiant efforts to save the country from disaster. Regrettably the West, though involved in a bitter cold war against Communist USSR, actually followed a path that brought about the disastrous communist takeover of Rhodesia. The calibre of the Rhodesian Security Forces and what they achieved against insurmountable odds has been, and continues to be, recognised all over the world. A wonderful and deeply researched history of the Rhodesian Air Force has been done - but little has been written about the vital importance of actual machines that were manned by superbly well trained technicians and aircrew.

The project has been made difficult because, after Rhodesia became Zimbabwe, the majority of her people who manned the Rhodesian Air Force dispersed to the four corners of the globe. However, thanks to the blessing of e-mail technology and the willingness of the Rhodesians desiring to record their proud history, we have been able to progress this very demanding project towards completion with a huge amount of information received over the years.

The project has become a labour of love for the team members (two having died in harness). But our main problem is that time is running out and there is still so much more to do before the final work reaches the publisher/s. Memories are fading, documents and photographs are deteriorating and so many Rhodesians with valuable knowledge have already passed on or may only have yet a short time in which to share knowledge or historical assets.

### What are we actually doing?

We are attempting to put together a book which illustrates, by way of photographs, profile drawings and narrative, all the types of aircraft used by the Rhodesian military from November 1935 when an Army controlled Air Unit was first formed to the end of the Rhodesian Air Force in April 1980. Thereafter this force changed its name to the Air Force of Zimbabwe and our project ends there. The project team's emphasis is on documenting the type of aircraft acquired, their sources - serial numbers - construction numbers - original colour schemes, camouflage and markings - graffiti and artwork - significant operations and operational employment - weapons and modifications - fittings - and attritions. The project hopes to document 36 different types of aircraft that served the Rhodesian military.

To achieve this, we require photographs and supporting descriptive notes. High quality photographs will appear in the book whereas lesser quality ones will be used only for the information they provide - even if only to corroborate what we already know or believe. The fact is - every photo has some value and those that can be dated are hugely important in pinpointing the timeline of events. In the latter years of the war all markings were removed from aircraft, making it difficult to identify aircraft individually. To this end pilot's Log Books are really important in identifying aircraft where dates can be established. It must be stated that we are not attempting to document or profile every aircraft on inventory - one or two aircraft of a type will suffice. From this information, profile drawings (plan and side views) have been or are yet to be finalised.

Consideration has been given to include a section on the World War Two squadrons (44 (Rhodesia) Squadron, 266 (Rhodesia) Squadron and 237 (Rhodesia) Squadron which were staffed mainly by Rhodesians. However, due to time constraints and a lack of appropriate material, our response to the many requests cannot be considered in this book. This may change after the present project has been completed by way of a later book.

### Who is it for?

Essentially the book is intended to provide for Rhodesians generally and aviation enthusiasts a graphic history of the Rhodesian Air Forces aircraft. It will provide a reference source of inestimable value for the enthusiast who wishes to make models of these historic aircraft. Surviving members of the project team were, or still are, model makers who are well aware of what is required.

It is our intention that, once the costs of publication are recovered, the proceeds of the book will be donated to Rhodesian charities for the welfare of those in need. We see this book as a means to keep our history and heritage alive, particularly for our children and those that will follow them.

### Who are we?

Initially the project was started by a coming together of Dave Cooke (deceased), Richard Proctor and myself (Ed Pietersen). All of us have had a passion as aviation enthusiasts with an emphasis on the Rhodesian Air Force! In addition we enjoyed the support and assistance of Ian Dixon.

Group Captain Peter Petter-Bowyer, affectionately known as "Boss PB", is a successful author and highly respected officer who served in the Rhodesian Air force. He is widely known within Rhodesia's security forces and has given us encouragement and advice as we have progressed. We thank him for having been a veritable goldmine of information and contacts.

I (Ed Pietersen) was born in Holland and emigrated to Rhodesia in 1958. I had been an avid aviation enthusiast and modeller from a very young age (something for which I had my ears boxed regularly at home during my formative years!! by Mum). During the bush war, I did my National Service in 1974 with the Rhodesian Army. In consequence of being a Fitter, Turner and Toolmaker by trade, I went on to work for a company that manufactured ordnance for the Rhodesian Air Force. Thereafter I moved into the civil aviation industry for a short time. Following the demise of Rhodesia, I emigrated back to Holland in 1986 and returned to college on various engineering courses and to enhance my portfolio as a technical draftsman. In consequence I do the technical research and profile drawings to ensure accuracy for our scaled drawings. Phil Wright does the artwork and we all keep our eyes tuned for mistakes and discrepancies.

My wife Pauline, born in Gwelo in 1957, joined the Rhodesian Air Force in 1979 and was posted to Air HQ, Unit Secretariat and worked with Squadron Leader Bill Sykes in the Public Relations Department. She accumulated a fair number of hours in Alouettes, flying around Rhodesia with Bill Sykes, an experienced helicopter pilot, visiting schools and attending the Salisbury Show and Bulawayo Trade Fair. Her role was promoting the Air Force and the various roles within the Force. Her long standing friendship with many people from that era has assisted enormously in finding people to consult about the project.

Dave Cooke was a South African who did his National Service in the South African Air Force and had an unwavering respect and admiration for the Rhodesian Air Force. He sought to join the Rhodesian Air Force for pilot training but, for personal reasons, was unable to do so. He was an exceptional technical draftsman by trade and, having been motivated to improve on what he had read in a modelling magazine about the Rhodesian Air Force, started to study and do drawings of Rhodesian military aircraft. He wrote articles and provided many drawings of the highest quality for books and magazines. Sadly Dave died on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2011, after a long battle with cancer.

Richard Proctor was born in Salisbury, Rhodesia. The youngest on the team, (but not by much!), he shares the same fanatical passion for aviation as the rest of us, and again particularly Rhodesian military aviation. He emigrated to the UK where he joined the Royal Air Force. Currently he serves at RAF Henlow, specialising in the analysis of engineering fault data and flies his own micro light when weather permits. As a keen modeller, Richard runs the "photo section" for the project. A master when it comes to photography - he performs wonders in cleaning, repairing and enlarging all photos received by us so that they can be rendered suitable for our work.

Ian Dixon was born in 1928 in Forest Gate, London and in 1948 moved to Rhodesia. While in Bulawayo he served in the BSAP until he left in 1954 as an Inspector. In 1965 Ian joined the Royal Rhodesian Air Force as a member of the Volunteer Reserve on 106 Squadron, rising to the rank of Flight Lieutenant. Having received his GSM and Long service Medals, Ian left the air force in 1983 and emigrated to South Africa. During the bush war he did numerous call ups on forward airfields and at times became commander of Forward Operational Airfields for which he was fully prepared through extensive VR training. An avid aviation enthusiast, he brought to the project a mass of photographs he had taken during his air force service. This gave the project its initial vast leap forward. Ian later suffered a stroke which curtailed his activities, yet never did he fail to continue providing project support whenever he could. Sadly, Ian passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

Phil Wright was the last to join the team. He did his National Service with the RRAF commencing 1970 and was there, as an armourer on 5 Squadron, when the RRAF title changed to Rhodesian Air Force. After re mustering to the security section to provide forward airfield security, he later joined the BSAP. In that service he spent most of his 11 years in the BSAP Support Unit (aka Blackboots), serving both as operational Troop Commander and Company Commander. Phil later emigrated to South Africa and followed a career in law enforcement, retiring in 2009. A keen model maker and "lover of things that flew" from childhood, he often worked with and witnessed first-hand the efficiency of the RhAF. This reinforced both his interest and absolute respect for "the best pocket air force in the world". Phil hangs the "artwork" around Dave's and Ed's drawings.

#### What do we want?

We want Rhodesians (or anyone else) who have photographs or documents relating to:

- Rhodesian military aircraft, (Pre War, WW2, Post War)
- The acquisition/attrition of aircraft
- Weapons
- Technical drawings
- Descriptions of equipment used
- Description of modifications

- South African aircraft used in Rhodesia
- South African aircraft on external Operation's with RhAF.
- "Op Sand" aircraft used by Rhodesians in RSA.
- South African MB 326 Impala aircraft the Rhodesian pilots flew as "C Flight".

It does not matter whatever quality they are. Please note that even partial shots can have great value, so please let us decide what is of value. If dates and serial numbers can be ascribed to photographs by reference to log books etc; so much the better.

Special Requests: we have very few or no photos or information on the following:

- The Auster J1 or J5.
- Colour photos of any SRAF aircraft.
- Pembroke C1 / RRAF 134 Beech Baron 55 with "Lion & Tusk" roundels.
- Photos taken of aircraft by Army troops at FAF Bases.
- Photos of Dakota wing camouflage patterns.
- Vampire FB9 with colour bands around the tail booms.
- Cessna 185 (both SAP & RhAF).
- A RRAF Hunter with the Coat of Arms of Bulawayo embellished on it.
- Photo of Alouette III with artwork captioned "The Sting" showing a Bee behind a firing machine gun (First Alouette with 20mm).
- Anyone with knowledge or a photo of a Cessna FTB337 "Lynx" carrying the big white "T" on top.
- A close-up photo of the Cessna FTB337 "Lynx" with the Malagasy fisheries Logo used to ferry the aircraft across.
- What roll/activities did Jack Malloch's DC-7 serial number 7230 play in the RhAF. When did she "join up", when was she camouflaged and why. Photo of top and bottom view camouflage patterns.
- Avro Anson C19 colour photo.
- We have information that an Aeromacchi AL60B2 Trojan may have had guns fitted, true or false.
- Augusta Bell 205 painted in Zambian colours on external Op's.
- We have information on a Harvard with Red and Black stripes on its cowling appearing at an air show. Any info or photos.
- Spitfire Mk22 painted up with Shark teeth, any photos taken from fuselage and the tail area.
- WW2 aircraft (Typhoons, Spitfire II's, Vb's, Hurricane I's and II's, Lysanders, Hampdens and Lancaster's).
- Gloster Gladiators/Gauntlet's.

Please note that the project has a very strict policy that we abide by relating to photographic or other submissions that we receive. We undertake not to give out or publish, without the specific permission of the owners, any submissions made, full acknowledgements will be given to the owners upon publication.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support - we greatly appreciate it.

On behalf of the team:

Peter Petter-Bowyer

Pauline Pietersen [paulrhodie@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:paulrhodie@yahoo.co.uk)

Richard Proctor [vainona21@gmail.com](mailto:vainona21@gmail.com)

Phil Wright [suephil@telkomsa.net](mailto:suephil@telkomsa.net)

Eddie Pietersen [e.pietersen@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:e.pietersen@yahoo.co.uk)

Best regards

Eddie Pietersen

Rhodesian Air Force Aircraft Project

### **Rhodesian Memories**

Chris Higginson writes:

*"After much procrastination I have combined two volumes of Rhodesian Memories into one "book" and put it on Kindle books. The reason is that the books are far too large to print, too expensive and the postage costs are rising all the time. Also, in the Kindle format I am able to add more chapters as more contributions arrive and the amended book will be available to all buyers at no cost. So all in all the book is available at about 5% of what it would be in physical form.*

If you want to have a look at it, it is available on this link: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0091U0YYC> "

### **Victoria Falls**

Some amazing shots of Vic Falls on this link <http://www.airpano.com/360Degree-VirtualTour.php?3D=Victoria-Falls-Zambia-Zimbabwe>

## Rhodesia Regiment “book”

The final piece is with thanks to the reader who wrote to me, excitedly informing me that we had “been beaten to the post” by the publication of a book on the Rhodesia Regiment. Sadly the reader was in too much of a hurry to study the details on Amazon which state:

*“Rhodesia Regiment by Jesse Russell and Ronald Cohn. Published in March 2012 by Bookvika; 86 pages; High Quality Content by WIKIPEDIA articles!”*

One published review of the book states:

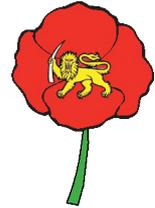
*“SCAM...DO NOT BUY Bookvika Publishing are well known scammers. All of their books are copied and pasted from Wikipedia articles. PLEASE DO NOT WASTE YOUR MONEY.”*

Save your money and be patient people – the ‘real deal’ on the Rhodesia Regiment by Peter Baxter will be published next year. The manuscript is a whopping 350 pages and that does not include photos, illustrations, appendices etc.

That’s all folks, so until next time – go well

Cheers

Hugh



**Celebrate ‘Rhodesia Day’\* on the 11<sup>th</sup> November each year**

\*The concept of ‘Rhodesia Day’ originates from Eddy Norris and family. During the 90 year life span of Rhodesia we experienced the best of times and the worst of times. I encourage everyone to use this day to remember the good times as well as remembering those who are no longer with us.

### Rhodesian Services Association donations.

You can make a donation to the Rhodesian Services Association by clicking on our ‘Collection Hat’ below which is a typical slouch hat of the type used by the Rhodesian Army up until the 1960’s. Click on the hat or this link:

[https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=\\_s-xclick&hosted\\_button\\_id=MLMB2B8Y2UY3G](https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=MLMB2B8Y2UY3G)

and if you are registered with PayPal the process will be immediate. If you are not a PayPal member you will be given instruction on how to make a credit card payment via PayPal. Thank you - every bit helps.



This newsletter is compiled by Hugh Bomford, Newsletter Editor of the Rhodesian Services Association. It contains many personal views and comments which may not always be the views of the Association or Committee.

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