

## **DAGABOYS NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2009**

For once it appears as though personal news out strips every thing else which is definitely a first! With information from 13 countries The Dagaboys News might be more aptly named “Who’s who in the Zoo’ With the months and the years slipping by it is sadly becoming almost the norm to say good bye to another colleague and friend who has been called home!

Since my note in April there has been quite some development as far as the book on the department is concerned – although still in it’s infancy it is all very positive.

On wildlife and conservation issues although ‘reports’ abound on malpractices, illegal hunting and, on odd occasions, interference in prosecutions much is hearsay. I don’t doubt most of what is being discussed is true but obtaining anything first hand, in writing or from a reliable source is difficult. A statement appears in the press one week only to be retracted with an apology the next!

### **In this Newsletter:**

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### **In Remembrance:**

#### **Bruce Couper**

Bruce passed away on the afternoon of the 16<sup>th</sup> of August. He had been hospitalized a few days earlier.

Joining the Department in November 1967 Bruce was posted to Tsetse Ops under Paul Coetsee and there after to a number of stations including Kariba and Main Camp. On promotion to Warden Bruce moved to the Matopos and

thereafter, at the request of the directorate and Southern Matabeleland ranchers was tasked to establish the Department's first Anti-poaching Unit, Bruce's position - Warden i/c Anti-Poaching Unit West Nicholson. Bruce's forte was, without doubt, law enforcement; quietly and diligently he recruited staff and informers carving out a niche for himself as he did so. Such was the success of the unit that Bruce's area of operations was expanded and Rangers Koos Herbst and Chris Wordon joined AP task force; Bruce then moved to Beit Bridge, the unit's new HQ and Koos Herbst took over the West Nicholson office. In recognition of his services to both the local farming community and the Department Bruce was awarded the M.L.M. (Order of the Legion of Merit – Civil Division) Our deepest sympathies go to Paula, Sally, Ross, Martin and Olivia.

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## **Dagaboys News**

It is a pleasure to 'introduce' four old faces but new Dagaboys – Anne Moore (CBO) Chris Lightfoot (Research) Roy Killick (Staff Department) and Ian Middleton.

### **1. South Africa**

#### **Stu Hulley-Miller**

Putting pen to paper from Nelspruit Stuart notes:

*'With regards the Hulley-Miller family all is well with life's normal ups and downs. Ros and I still live most of the time on our farm near Nelspruit where Ros runs Kavinga Guest House.*

*I am in Maputo for three or four days most weeks where I have an interest in an insurance company, Hollard Insurance.*

*Until recently I was involved in a hunting concession with Barrie Duckworth and have this year sold my shares and am no longer involved.*

Reading news of their family strikes a chord which is becoming more and more familiar each passing day – where are the years going to? I remember their children as just children and that thought and picture doesn't really change until we're told different!

*Kirsten, who is now 34, lives in Durban and is involved in project management/interior design etc. Kirsten is recently divorced with no kids.*

*Matthew, who is now 30 and Married to Louise, 2 children, Joshua and Lauren. He is the Managing Director of a Mozambique safari company, Safrique Limitada, and is based in Maputo. They operate 4 hunting concessions in the northern parts of Mozambique.*

*Nicholas is single, now 28 and is the Boson on a seagoing motorized yacht, owned by a well known music group, which operates between the Mediterranean and the Caribbean.*

### **Tony Conway**

From Tony in KwaZulu Natal.

*Nice to hear from you and catch up with all the news from the lads and lasses worldwide. Old Bob certainly did a good job of sending us to all the corners of the earth hay!!!!*

*I must say reading all these stories early this morning was hard to hold back the tears - they were and are wonderful people who were bonded for a special calling in a brief window of time on Africa's landscape - and made a difference still felt today in that awesome country...the legends will live on for sure....even if only in memory!!!*

*Glad you still coping with all the issues of life - not easy when you on the wrong side of 60...which is cool!*

*I'm still with KZN Wildlife (former Natal Parks Board) and am Conservation Manager for the iSimangaliso (former Greater St Lucia Wetland Park) World Heritage Site which is very challenging with its Marine, Terrestrial and Estuarine Environments with four RAMSAR sites.*

*Otherwise Tony has a fairly quiet home life working the usual 24/7 to keep up with the hectic issues around. Also chair the KZN Rhino Group for KZN Wildlife and have done for 18 years and yes we have not been without our poaching pressures with 14 rhino poached last year and eight so far this year - but onnit!!*

### **Peter Mitchell**

Peter has been off the screen for at least three years; I recently obtained his address, wrote and received back the following news –

*On leaving the department ‘Went from to Mala Mala (hated it too plastic and a major culture shock) then to Motswari, also a game lodge with similar results. Peter then moved to Durban and ventured into building; “a house for resale with a friend and got taken to the cleaners by him lost all my Zim pension and savings.”(Peter’s experience is not unique unfortunately, many ex Rhodesians have been conned and no doubt a few Dagaboys as well!) ‘Came up to Cathedral Peak in 1984 and stayed till 1994 doing buildings maintenance, horses and anything else. Moved to England in 1994 and returned here in October 2002.*

*Had a bad heart attack about 3 years ago requiring resuscitation; well otherwise with the exception of with sore knees!*

*Am now retired but still on contract to the Hotel, run the chicken farm, the horses, alien plant control and the vehicles. ’*

### **Ian van der Lingen**

At 80 years of age which makes him probably one of our most senior “Dagaboys” Ian is still going strong and writes from Klerksdorp  
*‘I had my four score year birthday this year, in May and am pretty fully occupied as minister to the Presbyterian Church in Klerksdorp, supposed to be part time and until they get a non retired minister. I find that it takes longer to do anything and then sometimes I forget I have done it and do it again ’*

From all your friends and ex colleagues please accept our belated birthday greetings – ‘Happy Birthday - Well done Ian.’

### **Jordy and Bobby Jordaan**

At long last and thanks to Michael, who lives in Australia, I am now in contact with Jordy and Bobby. I have received a couple of long letters from Jordy; at my request he kindly took time to reflect on some of his days and experiences in the Department, it is certainly interesting reading.

In his last letter dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October Jordy writes:

*‘The last month has been for Bobby and me one of anxious anticipation as we have been invited by Michael and family to visit them in Australia. We could not believe the amount of preparation necessary with having to go to Cape Town to get Medical acceptance and medical insurance cover, Visa and banking arrangements. But then I guess for those of you who have travelled will understand how it is for our fist ever flight overseas. The first joy was that I despite my heart op passed the tests required and Bobby’s Diabetes was no problem either. Permits and letters from the doctor for three months medication and medical aid insurance, it is almost as though we were emigrating.*

*Now with all that past the rush is on to clear the house so that friends and visitors can use it whilst we are away. Always better to have someone stay in the house especially in these times. Fortunately we have great friends and neighbours here who can keep an eye on the place but most of all is our assurance that this is God’s property and He camps his angels, keeping all darkness and evil out.*

*We leave for Escourt this weekend to spend a pre – Christmas with Robin, Lucy and Angellea and then depart from Johannesburg for Perth on 16<sup>th</sup> November. I guess it will only finally be ‘for me’ the moment of actual excitement when we board the plane.*

*We haven't seen the family for a year and it will be great spending Christmas and our combined anniversaries on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> January. So whilst we are being spoiled we hope and pray that for each one of you it will be a Christ filled time as well. **That you have God's richest blessings and will be blessed by His presence, love and protection, especially now when in these times of uncertainty world economics and politics plague our every day!***

Just by the by it is Jordy and Bobby's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in January – I don't know which sounds better – Golden or 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary but in any event, on behalf of all the Dagaboys congratulations to you both.

### **Dale and Morag Kenmuir**

I don't know quite how to précis Dale's recent correspondence. His literary achievements warrant greater cover than is the scope of this newsletter. It is obvious he has the most amazing talent writing books for children and adults as he does. History also plays a major part in Dale's life.

The Kenmuirs returned to Fish Hoek in 2000 after almost seven years in Zambia. Dale writes full time and Morag is back with UCT and now holds the position of Office Manager in the Research and Innovation Department. Where they stay in the Cape or yield to call of the north once again remains to be seen; much depends on changes to the financial climate and whether Dale's manuscripts can, as he notes '*see the light of day in published form*'

### **Steve Mitchell**

Steve's note is short and sweet. '*ex LKFRI under Frank Junor and then Inyanga Trout Research Center while Tim Paulett and then Bob Thompson were warden.*

*I retired from nearly 20 years service with the Water Research Commission in Pretoria and am now developing a small consulting business. We still live in Pretoria and will probably stay here until I decide that I have had enough of this! We sent August touring western Zambia, and highlights were a visit to the Zambezi River source and the Liuwa Plains National Park.*

### **Cliff and Wendy Freeman**

Cliff underwent major surgery toward the end of November. On the 4<sup>th</sup> December I received the following email from Wendy.

*Day 8 and still in ICU and the sense of humour gone with the dignity! But its not malignant with time being the healer. He had part of the colon removed so its bags and tubes. Unfortunately the blood pressure is highly irregular*

*so he needs constant monitoring and I guess in ICU one gets slightly better nursing than in general wards. We long to have him home.*

*Thanks Mike for your input - it has cheered Cliff hugely hearing from old muckers and a call from Pat Tomlinson. All the best to you and I will let you know when our dear Dagaboy is safely at home.*

*On the 18<sup>th</sup> Patricia Tomlinson sent me an update as to Cliff's recovery - On the way home I popped in to see the Freemans. I think Cliff had a pretty bad time of it with his op, but he's coming on well, just very tired and looks rather pale.*

I am sure both Cliff and Wendy would appreciate a call. Their home telephone number is SA 32 4820 170 and Wendy's cell number is SA 083 676 0882. Email – [wendyfreeman@yebo.co.za](mailto:wendyfreeman@yebo.co.za)

### **Tony and Sandy Ferrar**

*Still in Barberton and knowing Tony's perchance or susceptibility for 'accidents' I was alarmed to read in one of his recent emails – 'We got a climbing rope up the massive gum tree in prep for the erection of an eagle-owl nest box some time when the spirit of elevation moves me! 'hmmm, knowing Tony as I do I question the wiseness of this exercise! Further to this Tony writes 'Our WHS (World Heritage Site) project continues to behave like a FitzPatrick ox-wagon in the tsetse belt in February - going nowhere slowly. WE have had interesting study trips to Cradle of Humankind (Sterkfontien) and other WHS places and will be heading to St Lucia (iSimangaliso) in a week's time to pick up some tips. But it keeps me busy and paid. Too much of the former and comforting amounts of the latter, which is good news for one who has provided poorly for decrepitude. And that is steadily advancing, needless to relate.*

### **Dave and Gill Blake**

A couple of days back I received distressing news concerning Dave and Gill from Patricia Tomlinson.

*On Wednesday (16<sup>th</sup> December) I stayed overnight with the Blakes. Firstly Gill – she was very badly bitten by a dog last week and had to be hospitalised and taken to theatre to treat the wound as best they could. The dog bit a whole big chunk out of the back of her leg (which Dave had to bury!). The wound could not be repaired by stitching. She is back home, bandaged from knee to ankle and is hobbling around trying to cope with Dave and everything else that has to be coped with. If the wound doesn't heal over a period of time she will have to have skin grafting.*

*Dave has a serious problem with his one leg. This has been diagnosed as a burst Bakers cyst (a cyst that develops in the knee joint). His leg is very swollen, he's in constant pain, hands tremble, can barely walk and has aged terribly since I last saw him a few months ago. He's been to 2 specialists about the leg problem but they have not been able to help him thus far. As Dave or Gill do not have email I have written to their two boys in Australia and updated and advising them as to the situation of their parents. Although they are not too mobile I would ask you to phone Gill and Dave, they would enjoy receiving your call – SA 39 976 1708*

## **2 Namibia**

### **Pete and Hillary Morgan**

In Namibia as I am sure I mentioned in April's letter

*'The only ex Parks people we are in contact with are Bernie O'Hara and Judy Dunjey and I think you have their details. We are still running Kunene River Lodge in the north west of Namibia facing the Angolan border. It's going well, a steep learning curve and lots of challenges and a beautiful place. Our website is: [www.kuneneriverlodge.com](http://www.kuneneriverlodge.com) always happy to see any Parks folks - so please remember us if you are in Namibia. We did see Debbie Gibson who is now living in Windhoek. Norman Monks also came to visit in July this year.'*

## **3. CANADA / USA**

### **Peter and Jane Guy (03.11.09)**

Some interesting feed back from Pete:

*'I am right now sitting in northern Alberta on a very large oil sands development (temperature is minus 10 or so with daytime highs of about zero). When developed the site will add 15% to the world wide reserves of ExxonMobil so is HUGE (ExxonMobil made a profit of \$384 billion last year!) When I first came up in February this year it was regularly in the minus 30's day and night. I am working a consultant for ExxonMobil ensuring that they meet their regulatory commitments to the federal, provincial and municipal governments. Most of our work is focussed on ensuring the quality of the water leaving the site is as equal to or better than that in the receiving environment. You'll enjoy this: we were held up for 17 days at \$20,000 per day in July by a nighthawk (= nightjar) that nested in an area we were building a road through. All work was stopped while the bird hatched its eggs and then the day after they hatched a coyote got the bird and the chicks!!! (You should have heard the engineers). It is different work from any I have done before but I am enjoying the challenges. Our*

*days are long (6:00 a.m. (so up at 4:30 a.m.) to 6:00 p.m. - a late night is lights out at 9:00 p.m.!) We are on site (nearest town is about 2 hours away) and live in a large "camp" in trailers three storeys high, have catered meals, private bathrooms, = comfortable for two weeks and then home for a week. When fully staffed our camp will count as the biggest hotel in Canada because we are expecting a population of about 7,700. Our time sheets look great with 84 hours of work per week and we fully deserve our one week off!!*

*Jane is still at the university as an academic adviser in the Computer Science Department. Our daughter, Katherine, is in Vietnam on an internship with a consulting company having done a Masters at the London School of Economics in environment and development and our son, Simon, is still working in Victoria (we see him about every three weeks or so or when he is hungry)*

### **Deryk & Joan Langman**

On receipt of May's newsletter Derek comments

*'I reread the news letter and got the chuckles. All the new parks authors and I distinctly remember the buggers whining like stuck pigs when they had to complete their monthly reports. How the wheels turn - or should that be heels?'*

Anyway to continue - over the past few months I have received a few emails from Deryk. One in particular I feel compelled to share!

*'I have just sat and had some SA red wine, well a fair bit because no-one else likes it. My mind went back to a game of tennis and Basil Williamson - Baz of Wankie.*

*We were busy get drunk one night when at about 2 am some fool suggested we play tennis the next morning. A bigger fool suggested 7 am before it got hot.*

*Joan and I pitched bright and early, all togged up in our whites. Next came Baz, looking ghastly. Eyes like the privates of Merv the Verve - except they were red. He was clutching and sucking away at bottle of wine.*

*Next came the Coneybeare kids. They came to tell us that the folks were having a Mary and wouldn't be long. Apparently their folks were having a Bloody Mary but the kids weren't allowed to swear.*

*The tennis started and the standard was actually quite high. We had to lots of breaks though. Baz had to be refuelled. He would stop play and wander off to the fence where someone would put the neck of the wine bottle through the chicken mesh so he could have a long suck.*

*Every time he took a slug he would say "timid at first; but braver towards the back of the palate" Then sort of walk back to the game and say "I read that in a James Bond book" And then laugh and laugh and laugh.*

*Not even Borg could have beaten us that day.'*

The Langmans are in still in Jacksonville, pleased the summer heat is behind them and relishing the thought of winter!

On learning their street address bore the number 9520 I could not resist asking whether they lived on a very long street. To a rather inane question I received the following answer *'You ask about the numbers - so did I. I concluded that the street naming and numbering committee consists of drunks. The drunkest bugger names the streets and the second drunkest puts the numbers on. I am talking real drunks - not the slightly inebriated form found at Main Camp, or any of those blokes that come to your reunions. We battled a bit when we got here - but really, if you think about it, all towns only have about 6 or so roads - main drags that is. Once you know them it gets easy to flash about- on the wrong side of the road nog al'.*

Deryk comment on receiving the May Newsletter then signed off with an interesting tail piece *'Beer is getting warm so I will say cheers'*

### **Roy and Rene Vincent**

Now settled in the Texas! In a short note received late in October they mentioned they are maintaining their SA email address *'we just could not handle a new address together with all the other upheavals!'*

## **4 Sweden**

### **Don Heath**

Don has moved across to Sweden and is on a three year contract with Norma.

## **5. Norway**

### **Mike Jones**

Mike is another to have moved close to the Arctic; with Mark Bowler, who has been in the far north for quite some time, and now Don, the latest recruit, this brings to three the number of Dagaboys in Scandinavia.

Mike left Zimbabwe just over a year ago is now working out of the Stockholm Resilience Centre *'linking science with conservation practice.'*

Of hot verses cold and dark verses light Mike writes *'Stockholm is cold, damp and overcast. As October in Zim used to be called suicide month because of the heat, in Stockholm its November because of the short endless grey days. Winter snowfall brings reflected light and lifts the depression.'*

## **6. Australia**

I'm not too sure what's been happened in Australia. Quite amazing and very un-Australian or am I doing the locals there an injustice? I may be wrong but think everyone with a ".com.au or bigpond" address has written; I am both very appreciative and greatly impressed. Here then is what's been going on:

### **Mike Jordaan**

With the aid of Mark Brightman I eventually managed to track down Mike Jordaan and add his name to the mailing list.

*Of the past and present Mike pens - 'I was one of the Marongora bunch and was a ranger i/c Urungwe Safari Area based at Nyamumba. Olli Coltman was the warden when I arrived and then Willie De Beer. I remember Willie, always a stickler for neat uniforms, giving Dolf Sasseen and I a dressing down for our scruffy beards and demanded to know what had happened to the missing sleeves from our shirts.*

*I resigned in 1983 and moved to South Africa and joined the commercial forestry industry. I was eventually promoted into the corporate side of the industry which was financially great, but took me right out of the bush. I then decided to get back into the bush and dusted off my PH license and eventually managed a lodge and game farm in the Hoedspruit area. While there my wife and I started conducting eco/photographic safaris around SA, Namibia, Botswana, Kenya and Tanzania. With the advent of land claims the lodge was put on the market and we decided to make the move to Australia in 2007.*

*We are in partnership in a travel company and still conduct safaris to Africa so we can keep doing what we love and getting paid for it. My wife, Ester, and I have been married 23 years now and have two sons Richard (21) and JP (18). Richard is at uni doing a B.Min degree and JP is about to join the air force. We live near Margret River in a town called Busselton which is in the south west of WA. It is a great spot and reminds us of the western cape of SA with the wine farms and cold ocean.*

### **Dave and Erica Scammell**

Over the last few months I have been in touch with the Scammells on a regular basis – Snippets of their news –

*June saw Dave's foot well on the mend – 'Dave's foot almost 100%, he's back on the golf course and can manage to walk 18 holes which is good. He can wear shoes and sandals now and is quite comfortable so we can say the*

*op. was a success. ... will see the specialist in August and a decision will be made then as to when and if the screws in his heel can be removed.*

Post Script – the screws were removed on the 30<sup>th</sup> November.

Late in October Dave and Erica had the pleasure of having Em Coetsee to stay for a few days ‘*had a great time with Em and again had so much to remember and laugh about, a few sad stories of course. What a super person she is.*

### **Pete Shore**

Kindly providing me with more news on Em Pete writes ‘*we had the pleasure of a braai yesterday with Em Coetsee and Dave Scammell. She is visiting her sister and her niece here. She and the Scammells were staying with the Higgs and then she was on her way today up north to Bundaburg with them.*

*She of course hasn't changed a bit and it was really good to see her and hear all her news. She has already been here a month and is here until December.*

### **Clare Davies**

Clare moved to Australia a year or so back, Answering my question as to where exactly Toowoomba was and what she was doing Clare wrote – *Toowoomba is only 150kms west and inland from Brisbane – lots of SAs and Zimbos here – I work for the Queensland Government in basically equivalent of National Parks – though based in town and basically on a computer, but did finally spend a week this last month in the outback* Having visited Brisbane some twenty plus years ago I have a very vague idea where Toowoomba actually is, It doesn't sound if it's all that far off the beaten track if at all!

I presume Bob Thomson and Clare work for the same agency.

### **Anne Moore**

Some five years back the address I was given for Anne was ‘local’ - after a while mail began to bounce back and we lost contact. Thinking, that was that, I was most surprised to receive the following note from Anne in July. *‘I was so pleased to receive a phone call out of the blue from Roy Killick the other day and to be forwarded a copy of your newsletter. I had assumed that Dagaboys had ceased to exist since I lost contact. What a pleasant surprise to receive your latest edition which was so packed with news - as they say in this part of the world "Good onya"!*

*I believe that Roy has forwarded my contact details to you, but I thought that I would let you have an update on my life since I retired from Parks towards the end of 1992. After having spent some time at home sorting everything out and driving the "domestics" mad, I was roped in as the local wildlife tourism consultant for the World Bank project to plan the Gonarezhou. A couple of other local consultancies followed to help keep me out of the domestics' hair. Then followed a contract as Wildlife Tourism Specialist with what was then the EEC for what was supposed to be two years in northern Botswana. This was then extended and a further contract awarded for the sister project in southern Botswana - both contracts covering five-and-a-half years in all. The work involved mainly participation in park planning, design and development of new campsites and facilities, setting up a reservations system and the gathering of visitor statistics, and the training of staff - work that was right up my street. To spend considerable time in the protected areas such as Chobe, Moremi, Nxai Pan and Mkgadikgadi in the north and Central Kalahari, Kutse and Gemsbok in the south was to us a wonderful experience. My husband, Robin, left his corporate tree to be with me and we count our time in Botswana as among the best years of our lives. We left there with heavy hearts in 1999 to settle in Karoi to be near our daughter, who was teaching at Rydings School, and our son-in-law who was tobacco farming there. We did a bit of world travel in the year 2000, then returned to Karoi for what we thought would be a peaceful rural retirement. The rest is history, of course, and after the farm was seized, and we had experienced rather a torrid time security-wise, our daughter gave us an ultimatum that they were proposing to move to Australia but would not go unless we did. Well, that was that, the decision was not hard to make, especially as our son and other daughter were already resident in Western Australia. We moved here in September 2004 and now count ourselves lucky to have all our children and grandchildren nearby.*

*Since my second "retirement", I have written two books - the first, "Tatenda - Reminiscences of the Zimbabwe Bush" was published in the UK by Sable Publishing House in 2008 and can be purchased ONLINE at [www.Sable-Publishing-House.com](http://www.Sable-Publishing-House.com) or directly through me. The second book, which covers our time and experiences in Botswana, has not yet been submitted for publication.*

*We are now truly retired and coping with various health issues - as was said "growing old is not for sissies"!*

## **Roy Killick**

I cannot remember who put me in touch with Roy but within a day or so of writing our old 'staff boss' had replied.

*'I nearly fell off my perch when your note arrived. Great to hear from you. Yes I used to keep in touch with several of the chaps but with the passage of time, contacts have been lost. Barry Ball came and stayed with us a few years back, as he was visiting his daughter Catherine (who was at a mine in the outback but now in Perth). Graham Child also called on us a few years back. I am still in contact with Johnny and Janet Bunce (only Christmas Cards now) but haven't heard from Bobby and Jenny Thomson for ages now.*

*Sorry to hear of the deaths of old comrades. I had come across Tony Osborne's name in a Northern Rhodesia Police magazine. E-mailed to him via the Editor but never got a reply at all.*

*Pleased to say I am keeping reasonably well now. Had a knee replacement just over a year ago and nearly snuffed it due to a massive clot fragmenting in my lungs. Thankfully I was resuscitated and eventually was fit enough to leave hospital after 9 weeks, when we were expecting a stay of 10 days only!! Have just bought a second hand 'Gopher' so am able to get about again. Have never been allowed to work again since my discharge from the Dept after my heart attack in 1980. My medical Pension kept us going for a while till Mugabe put an end to that about 10 years ago. Luckily I get a small pension from the Aus Gov so we are keeping the wolf from the door. Please give my best wishes to all my old pals. I still miss Parks so very much. Was the best time I had in my working life in Rhodesia.*

## **John and Janet Bunce**

They too are in Queensland. I heard from them early last month.

*'We are about to return to Cape York to be the resident caretakers/managers for a 6 month contract starting 01 December on a Cattle station that has been purchased by Australian Wildlife Conservancy group. They now own 22 stations throughout Australia and their policy is to return the land to the original wilderness area and build up the native fauna and flora.*

The Bunces are big buddies with Trish Parsons (Tebbit) – with violent crime on the increase in Nelspruit and striking too close to home they too are very concerned for Trish's safety. (You will recall that Roy and Rene Vincent were attacked just out of town a couple of years back and were very fortunate to escape with their lives.)

## **Bob and Jenny Thomson**

From Bob and Jenny

*'Not a lot to report from this neck of the woods. I am still working full time and still enjoying what I am doing so am in no hurry to give it away. Having arrived in Oz so late in life (45) I still have some time to make up before I hang up my boots. Thankfully the current economic crisis has not been as bad in Oz as other parts of the world so our retirement portfolio has not been hit too hard. Oz has not had the economic downturn like other countries as we can't dig our resources out of the ground quick enough to support the demands from China. Economically we are doing well in the currently climate.*

*Work wise, I am going into my 20th turtle nesting season at one of my management units that has the most important Loggerhead Turtle rookery in the south-west Pacific. Just come back from Brisbane where our public information program attached to the rookery was nominated for a "Queensland Premier's Excellence Award in Public Service Delivery". There were only four finalists for the whole of Queensland so we did well to get this nomination.*

*I keep in contact with 'the Scammell' who lives not too far from us and we called and saw Em Coetsee last week who was staying with Dave and Erica for a few days. Great to see Em. Again and such a surprise to see her in Australia.*

*Jenny keeps busy caring for her parent who we have now moved from Brisbane to Bundaberg to be near us. At 90 and 88 they are both a handful and need a lot of our time. Thankfully they are in a very nice retirement complex and are still living independently in a small cottage.*

*We had a very pleasant three week break in New Zealand earlier in the year. Just love that country (at least in summer). New Zealand is highly recommended if anyone is looking for somewhere to go - holiday or otherwise.*

*There is now quite a large 'African' population in the local areas so we do get together occasionally and become real 'when wees' for a few hours. Local butchers now made quite good borewors for their 'African' clients and with South Africa wines and Mrs. Ball's chutney, our old haunts are not too far from our memory.*

## **7. New Zealand**

### **Rob & Ann Murray**

My last email from Rob and Ann arrived some ten days back. It is good to learn that his knee has responded well to the op, recovery has been slow and it's been a long haul for Rob.

*'We are both fine despite the usual aches and pains!! Am finally beginning to see some progress with the knee, particularly over the last month or so. Hopefully it won't be too much longer before I can pick up a fly rod and venture onto the rivers again. Unfortunately did myself an injury a couple of weeks ago. Jumping off the back of a pick - up truck I had a small protruding bolt hook under my wedding band resulting in my ring finger almost being ripped off my hand - very nasty!!! Anyway am now on the mend despite it going bad on me for a while.*

*We have had a very difficult season to date with below average rainfall and unseasonal cold spells which has seriously impaired grass growth. Needless to say production is down although the situation should improve over the next few weeks with the advent of summer. I say that tongue in cheek having just listened to the latest weather forecast predicting another dumping of snow on the lower South Island. On the positive side calving thankfully is now behind us and we are halfway into our A.I. programme. Another couple of weeks and it will all be over - just a case of shoving the bulls into the herds to finish the job. So by Xmas it will be back to routine milking and thankfully normality.'*

I am sure everyone joins me in wishing Rob and Ann success in their early bid for New Zealand Citizenship; with their Zimbabwean passports having expired they have made an urgent appeal to the authorities for their eligibility for New Zealand citizenship to be brought forward from November 2010. Let's hope they are successful.

### **Hans & Val van der Heiden**

*Looking back in time to 1967 and moving forward Hans writes;*

*'When I joined Parks in 1967 the Regional Wardens were JC Tebbit, John Hoole, Barry Ball, J Newmarch and Bruce Austin. I was wondering whether you have any information on any of them? What they did after Parks and outstanding work by them while in Parks? I would also like to know who wrote any books, and if so, where one might try to buy copies?'*

*As you know, Val and I are now in New Zealand, having moved from Kariba in 2005 after a 4 year stint in Malawi in the Liwonde Nat Park. After leaving Parks, we pioneered the kapenta industry and then went on to hunting, and then tourism. We spent 23 years in Kariba, building our businesses till it*

*became impossible to keep going. We now lease a Holiday Park (Various comfort levels of tourist accommodation and camp site with restaurant) and work at this with a few NZ ladies. I have been involved in the dairy industry as well since we arrived here in mid 2005. Initially I studied pasture and dairy production at farm manager level while we lived and milked cows on a farm near Hamilton (Morrinsville). I passed and got an award for producing the best whole farm plan for the year. One year we also reared 250 Friesian bull calves till they were 100kg and sold them on. Last year (2008) we moved here to the holiday park and I studied and trained to become an AI Technician (Artificial insemination for Dairy cows) - this year I have my own run starting in September. I have also just started another farm related course "Agribusiness Management" which will take two years to complete. It has been really cold in this area, and we find that we long for the more moderate climate we are so used to. Not sure if we are in the right spot right now, so will keep our feelers out for improvements which include warmer weather (North of the North Island?).*

*Like the years we were in Kariba, we welcome any of the Dagga Boys and Parks staff who want to come and stay and use us as a base from which to operate while exploring our area, which has a lot of tourist 'things to do'. Fishing for trout is unsurpassed and plenty of back country to wander about in. Hunting is also good (pigs and deer) not too far from us. If any of the chaps are in the country and want to visit, my email address is golden-springs@farmside.co.nz*

*Life has not quite turned out as we had thought it would, though we are lucky to have our two daughters 140km from us in Morrinsville at the moment. Their husbands are also involved in farming. My son Craig is in Florida USA with his family, and after getting a Masters Degree based on work with black rhino in Malawi, he is now almost finished a PhD studying freshwater prawns in the everglades.*

## **8. United Kingdom**

### **Spud Ludbrook**

A couple of things come to mind. Firstly the Ludbrooks are back on email; their email address is [Ludbrook@talktalk.net](mailto:Ludbrook@talktalk.net), Secondly Spud has recently undergone radiotherapy treatment which is pretty nasty. I am sure they would love to hear from their old friends – for those who might prefer to phone their number is + 44 1263 860 927. Ann wrote in mid October.

*'Spud is going through 15 radiotherapy treatments to shrink the cancer he has in his groin. 4 weeks after the end of the session he will have a CT scan to see if it has gone down. He is pretty frail now after the 2 strokes he had*

*last year and now the cancer, but he is still bright and cheerful, interested in the world news and armchair sport, so that is positive. The winter is arriving rapidly and the clocks change back at the end of this month.*

### **Brian Sherry**

In response to a couple of notes I was very pleased to receive the following email from Brian; dated 3<sup>rd</sup> November. *'After more than 8 years of searching for work in natural resource management here in the UK, luck at last came my way earlier this year and currently I'm in a 4-day-per-week post as Ranger for an environmental charity, The Greensand Trust. The trust is involved in partnership management of a 40-mile-wide swathe of countryside extending from Leighton Buzzard across Bedfordshire, to Cambridgeshire. My patch includes a number of sites in and around Leighton Buzzard, focussing primarily on maintaining and upgrading the wildlife and amenity status of the two riparian strips running through the town. Interesting and varied, mostly outdoor, work, ranging from riparian litter and rubbish clearance to habitat management, community liaison, and support on a wider range of sites. A far cry from 'Africa', but with its own challenges and rewards: In spite of my work in landscape management in Malawi and having run a tree-felling and sawmilling business in Zimbabwe, I am not allowed to touch a chain saw, until I am locally 'qualified'!*  
*(Details of our work can be found on: [www.greensandtrust.org](http://www.greensandtrust.org))*  
Good luck Brian, I hope everything 'pans' out the way you wish.

### **Tom Everett**

Other than receiving Tom's list of Parks Field and Research Officers, housekeepers and tourist officers I've heard little from Tom; however saying that Tom must be complimented on the roll he has drawn up, from a names and position aspect it is very comprehensive.

## **9. Zambia**

### **Rob Clifford**

From Rob – *'After nearly 5 years with Robin Pope Safaris I have finally begun to settle roots. I have finally been able to secure a plot of land on the banks of the Luangwa which is (in my opinion not a bad second to the Zambezi), I am in the beginning processes of planning to build my own house. This instead of buying and living in some else's dream home – not that I have done badly in the past. So once done all "Dagaboys" and family welcome!*

*This last season whilst not being our best has not been as bad as we predicted with us achieving 80% of last years business. We are however expecting a further decline in the year to come of at least another 10% - Not good but we will hold our own.*

*This year has been a great year for game viewing in the Luangwa from a number of aspects. Fewer people congesting the Park and being a true former National Parks Officer I prefer to have the park to myself rather than having to share it with other competition. Secondly after the mass die off of hippo and other animals at the end of last season, this season has seen food and water enough for all, all the way through. We have had some amazing new sightings in the Valley too, including mating Caracals, Maloneys Monkey (subspecies of Samango). A single Maloneys Monkey has taken up residence in the Riparian woodland in the Mfuwe area – a most bizarre sight!*

*On another note apart from fleeting glimpses of Mahara (Barney O'Hara) we don't see many Dagaboys in neck of the woods. If anyone does venture down here you are more then welcome to pull in.*

### **Terry Roach**

*Terry is still in Lusaka and from there writes: 'Yes still here, I am just trucking. But I have Darrell's watts game ranch 2.5 hours away. With every thing except Giraffe and lechwe. but including Yellow backed/ blue duiker sitatunga lion leopard buff elephants plus all the others kudu H/ beast sable roan (heaps) Puku water buck and good fishing , Not all bad I must say . Thanks for the news letter. They are fading fast we are all approaching the sell by date. Regards to any of the old crew that you see.*

## **10. Mozambique**

### **Vernon Booth**

Although much of Vernon's time is taken up consulting for the Niassa Reserve in Mozambique I do hear from on a regular basis. With the old Matetsi stalwarts he is being of great assistance to me.

I find the last sentence of Vernon's note interesting.

*My life has just been hectic these last 8 months: mostly working in Mozambique, but I spent two months (on and off) in Botswana at the beginning of the year, a month in South Africa in April attending my daughter's (Tara) MSc graduation and working with Niassa.*

*Niassa continues to occupy a great deal of my time - and yes, the likes of Rani and other operators are going through a rough time at the moment*

*with the downturn in the global economy. It will be interesting to see what 2010 brings because I believe that is when we will see the impact of the credit crunch on hunting.*

## **11. Zimbabwe**

### **Drew Coneybear**

*Winter on the river! ‘Tim B and I spent a week on the Zam with 4 other guys (not ex-NP) between Sesheke and Katambora in June, coming down by boat and sleeping on sandbanks next to the river, fishing and birding on the way. It was very pleasant though a little chilly at times until we got smashed up in Mambova and Katambora rapids and the trip was terminated ignominiously.’*

Chris Wordon

I have seen Chris subsequent to this note, he’s very positive about his move back to Zimbabwe and the Falls.

*As to what’s been happening and on his immediate plans Chris writes – ‘Been in the UK based in Devon the last 5 years but regularly do private photo safaris back to Southern and Central Africa a couple of times each year. Have had some interesting trips to Gabon recently, Francophone Central Africa certainly is 4th world!*

*Have been staying with Steve and Wendy Edwards in Vic Falls the last couple of months, in between safaris to Botswana and Zambia to test the market and see if Zim is coming back onto the safari circuit.*

*Had a great trip to Hwange in August, the Makalolo area has some of the best game viewing in Africa, right on our doorstep!*

*I am going back to the UK to pack up and move back to Vic Falls permanently in December where we will have a local booking office here and also be running an upmarket Bed and breakfast facility.*

### **Rob and Paddy Francis**

Mid November saw me spend most two most enjoyable nights with Rob and Paddy. Apart from meals which are had indoors no one needs an excuse to sit anywhere else but on their large veranda which over looks an amazing garden which cannot be better described than being an oasis of greenery in the rather drab Vic.Falls gusu.

One or two snippets from Paddy’s email shortly after they returned in July.

*‘As you may or may not know, we have completed the work project in Joburg – i.e. the Soweto balloon is up and running (or flying?) and the Montecasino rig was re-inflated with the new look envelope. We have*

*handed back the Company bakkie, cell phone and moved out of the flat. A lot of our stuff is still in Jo'burg, we hope to be able to bring that back, along with the Isuzu, in October.*

*The place is looking good – house actually rather clean, for once! The garden still looks amazing, and it's just so good to be in our own home once more. The plan is to stay until early October, when we may be heading back to Jo'burg, to complete the first of the bi-monthly checks on the two rigs. Of course, if the Sandton project is ready for us before October, we will be leaving sooner, but, frankly, after the Soweto experience . . . . . ‘*

### **Chris Lightfoot**

The ‘first’ of two new comers to the Dagaboys! It's good to have you aboard Chris and we all welcome your input.

*‘Leaving National Parks in 1981 brought to an end 15 years of ‘working for conservation’, and I entered the world of commercial, corporate agriculture to be able to provide a good education for my kids.*

*I have to say, firstly, I counted it a singular pleasure and an honour to have served (albeit almost as a specialist ‘Planner’) the Department amongst, or immediately after, the defining characters who shaped wildlife conservation in this country. Those 2 or 3 decades, following the ‘pioneers’, were undoubtedly the hey-day of the Department, and their substance must be recorded in a book before it is too late. Go, Mike, Go!*

*My second comment is that I found the professionalism of the Department was, to my surprise, not matched in the ‘commercial’ world!*

*During my time I planned several parks areas (Chimanimani, Hartley ‘A’ / Umfuli, Mkwazine Ranch, Ngezi, Sebakwe), did a national survey of game ranches, administered the Eland Domestication Project, and ministered to game ranches and Kyle, Mushandike and Matopos Parks ably assisted by Technical Officers Posselt and Anthony. My specialist species were giraffe and eland. Possibly pertinent but awkward planning questions like ‘if we care about the future shouldn't we be training a new herd of Black guys?’, and, ‘should Inyanga not be called ‘Trout Safari Park’’, were deftly avoided.*

*I then spent 14 years at Triangle sugar estates where (to Colin Saunders' disgust) I spent my time, not on wildlife matters, but in designing rail-haulage and ethanol stillage reticulation systems (engineering is so much simpler than any ecological system!).*

*I then hijacked Triangle MD's Secretary and together we moved to Tanganda's tea and coffee estates, where I found that total ignorance is no impediment to progress, as long as you're in charge and have a thick skin.*

*An exciting period of building dams and tea factories was followed by another exciting but less enjoyable time facing down fierce politicians and belligerent workers in defence of the estates.*

*With retirement looming, Celia and I were lucky enough to find a serviced kopje above Lake Mazvikadei on which to build our dream home. From whence I sally forth to 'consult', and we spend any spare time in wild areas. I am increasingly inclined to bother Parks and Wildlife about their practices. Anyway, I have influenced them to issue us residents with annual Fishing and 'Lake Usage' Permits – possibly the only such case in the country?*

*Can we (i.e. you Department guys) take some credit that at least the Parks Estate is still there (awaiting 'improved management')? I think so!*

*Unless I'm out of date, we have 9 grandchildren, some of whom share my love of granite kopjes. And, yes, these days they climb faster than I do! But not much.*

### **Ian Middleton**

Ian is the second 'local' newcomer. Since leaving the Department in 1980 Ian hasn't wandered further than from Southern Matabeleland and the South Eastern Lowveld.

In September 1980 I left Parks to join Liebigs Ranch as cattle manager and following the '84 drought moved to Nuanetsi Ranch.

*In 1986 I was offered a job at Triangle as the cattle manager. I got the job through Chris Lightfoot ex Parks Research in Bulawayo.*

*Brenda and I have been here ever since.*

*I am the executive manager for Tongaat Hullet Zimbabwe Livestock & Wildlife Operations. I am responsible for those operations on their 4 sugar estates, Triangle, Hippo Valley, Mkwazine and Mwenezana.*

*Hippo Valley Safaris and Mteri Lodges come under me.*

*The job is not the same largely because of the impact of land reform. Very difficult trying to run 10000 head of cattle in and amongst illegal timeshare beneficiaries.*

*Tore Balance is around as is young Mike Ball Barrie's son...*

*Em as you know is here, but I have not seen her in ages.*

*Other than that Mike, not much else. But quite honestly I miss the Parks way of life (our era) and the friendships that developed. Since I left Parks I have felt like being someone from the "Lost Tribe of Israel"*

## **Viv Wilson**

In early November I received notification that Paddy had passed away after a long illness. On behalf of everyone Viv we offer you and your family our sincere condolences.

Chipangali is highly dependent on funding and the future of two projects – the Children’s Wildlife & Environmental Education Programme and a major Biodiversity Survey of the Hwange National Park planned for 2010 is dependent on funds being forth coming.

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## **New Email Address Details**

Roy Killick	-	<a href="mailto:nitaroyk@tpg.com.au">nitaroyk@tpg.com.au</a>
Anne Moore	-	<a href="mailto:chura@tpg.com.au">chura@tpg.com.au</a>
Ian Middleton	-	<a href="mailto:imiddleton@triangle.co.zw">imiddleton@triangle.co.zw</a>
Chris Lightfoot	-	<a href="mailto:kiwane@mweb.co.zw">kiwane@mweb.co.zw</a>
Mike Jordaan	-	<a href="mailto:truN.mike@gmail.com">truN.mike@gmail.com</a>
Jordy Jordaan	-	<a href="mailto:ggreen@lantic.net">ggreen@lantic.net</a> *
Denis van Eyssen	-	<a href="mailto:denis@dynabyte.bw">denis@dynabyte.bw</a>
Steve Mitchell	-	<a href="mailto:smitch2503@gmail.com">smitch2503@gmail.com</a>
Spud Ludbrook	-	<a href="mailto:ludbrook@talktalk.net">ludbrook@talktalk.net</a>
Drew Coneybeare	-	<a href="mailto:drew@zol.co.zw">drew@zol.co.zw</a>
Russell Taylor	´	<a href="mailto:russelltaylor9@googlemail.com">russelltaylor9@googlemail.com</a>
Peter Mundy	´	<a href="mailto:pmundy@NUST.ac.zw">pmundy@NUST.ac.zw</a>
Mike Jones	-	<a href="mailto:mikejones.psa@gmail.com">mikejones.psa@gmail.com</a>
Alan Sparrow	-	<a href="mailto:alansparrow@yoafrica.com">alansparrow@yoafrica.com</a>
Bob Thomson	-	<a href="mailto:trojen33@aapt.net.au">trojen33@aapt.net.au</a>
Stu Hulley Miller	-	<a href="mailto:kavinga@aeronet.co.za">kavinga@aeronet.co.za</a>
Pete Mitchell	-	<a href="mailto:mkizem@mweb.co.za">mkizem@mweb.co.za</a>
Jules Turnbull-Kemp	-	<a href="mailto:gametrackers@telkomsa.net">gametrackers@telkomsa.net</a>
Jon Hutton	-	<a href="mailto:jon.hutton@unep-wcmc.org">jon.hutton@unep-wcmc.org</a>
Alan Sparrow	-	<a href="mailto:alansparrow@yoafrica.com">alansparrow@yoafrica.com</a>
Don Heath	-	<a href="mailto:don.heath@norma.cc">don.heath@norma.cc</a>

\*All Jordy’s mail goes via George Green who has very kindly offered and agreed to assist Jordy with regards to email.

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## Whereabouts Unknown

A big thank you to those who responded to my last letter and provided contact details for those on the 'wanted list' – unfortunately there are still close to 20 of our colleagues whose whereabouts are still unknown.

Paddy (Bloodnut) Curtis	-	<a href="mailto:blood@mweb.co.zw">blood@mweb.co.zw</a>
Richard Evans*	-	<a href="mailto:Richard@khalamanzi.com">Richard@khalamanzi.com</a>
Gail Peck**	-	<a href="mailto:gailpeck@absamail.co.za">gailpeck@absamail.co.za</a>
Richard Smith (Research)	-	<a href="mailto:procap@tiscali.co.za">procap@tiscali.co.za</a>
Pebbles Williamson	-	<a href="mailto:pebs@gatorzw.co.uk">pebs@gatorzw.co.uk</a>
Nick Drew #	-	No address or contact details
Sharon Fulton##	-	<a href="mailto:Sharonfulton@dynabyte.bw">Sharonfulton@dynabyte.bw</a>
Harry Hayden-Payne	-	<a href="mailto:haroldhp@zol.co.zw">haroldhp@zol.co.zw</a>
Doug & Heather Hensberg	-	<a href="mailto:catchcow@mweb.co.za">catchcow@mweb.co.za</a>
Glen Tatham	-	Zambia, no email details
Ian Riddle	-	<a href="mailto:gemsaf@mango.zw">gemsaf@mango.zw</a>
Ian & Carol van Heerden	-	<a href="mailto:anchorflowers@zol.co.zw">anchorflowers@zol.co.zw</a>
Phil Palmer	-	<a href="mailto:ppalmer@juctice.co">ppalmer@juctice.co</a>
Richard Clough	-	<a href="mailto:richardclough@candw.ky">richardclough@candw.ky</a>
Mike Bunce	-	<a href="mailto:mbunce@netconnect.co.zw">mbunce@netconnect.co.zw</a>
Kevin (Ducks) Donaldson	-	<a href="mailto:ducks@netconnect.co.zw">ducks@netconnect.co.zw</a>
Chris Owen	-	No address or contact details
Seb Audin	-	<a href="mailto:kimutorok@ntlworld.com">kimutorok@ntlworld.com</a>

\* Richard Evans – I cannot trace this name anywhere in my records yet have him on the mailing list – **WHO IS RICHARD EVANS?**

\*\* Gail Peck, Neville Peck's widow, mail is also being returned with the answer "Mail Box Full" **ROY & RENE VINCENT ARE YOU STILL IN CONTACT WITH GAIL**

# Nick Drew – **KEVIN THOMAS CAN YOU HELP WITH NICK'S ADDRESS?**

## Sharon Fulton – All information has gone astray –?

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## Pensions.

Good News at last? Although the information I have pertains to South Africa I hope and trust the Flame Lily Foundation will be in a position to offer suggestions as to how everyone should proceed. Details of the circular and forms requiring completion follow:

## **Important Message to all Zimbabwe Government Pensioners in South Africa**

Mr Turville Kille has maintained constant contact with the Director of the Government Pensions Office in Harare, on behalf of the Public Service Pensioners' Association. He has reported that the Director is now seriously hoping to be able to pay a pension allowance in US\$ to pensioners residing outside the country, whether they formally emigrated from Zimbabwe or just left the country. There will be no back pay because due to hyper-inflation in Zimbabwe the value of pensions not paid since 2003 has been wiped out. This information has been confirmed by the British Consul in Harare who discussed the scheme with the Director on 1 October. However, the Director has not yet obtained the necessary approval from the Government.

In order for the Pensions Office to commence paying this allowance (if duly authorized), each pensioner must submit three documents:

1. a completed Certificate of Life;
2. a bank instruction form (giving details of the bank account into which the allowance is to be paid);
3. a certified copy of the latest passport (the page with your photograph), or a certified copy of your Zimbabwe Rhodesia National Registration metal card.

Copies of the Certificate of Life and the bank instruction form can be obtained from the Flame Lily Foundation (FLF) office (address below). Send your request to the FLF by post, enclosing a stamped return addressed envelope. (Copies of the forms are also available in PDF format, and can be sent as e-mail attachments.) The FLF will then send you the forms. Return the completed forms by post, with the certified copy of the passport page, to the FLF for forwarding by secure means to the Government Pensions Office. (The Pensions Office requires original signatures.)

When replying, please attach to the Certificate of Life a note giving:

- your date of entry into Government service;
- your date of retirement from that service;
- your job title, rank or grade in which Department at time of your retirement.

If the pensioner has died and the spouse has not applied for a Widow's Pension, please let the FLF know so that a copy of the latest Widow's Pension application form can be provided.

The Pensions Office Director hopes to be able to start making payments by December and that they would be back dated to August.

**Requests for the two forms and replies to:**

Flame Lily Foundation (ZPA)

PO Box 95474  
Waterkloof  
0145  
Tel: 012 4602066  
Fax: 086 6484794  
Email: rasa@iafrica.com

**Please note:** The FLF cannot answer questions about pension entitlement, or related queries.

A similar message to this is going to OSPA members in their October magazine, and Mr Frank Taylor will be sending a Newsletter to all members of the Zimbabwe Service Pensioners' Group in Britain. 091026

**PLEASE SEE END OF NEWS LETTER FOR THE TWO FORMS WHICH REQUIRE COMPLETION.**

- **I would be grateful for information regarding ‘Zimbabwean Pensioners’ – Can any one help?**
- **A similar message for Zimbabwe Government Pensioners living in the UK or elsewhere is available on request from [mail@ospa.org.uk](mailto:mail@ospa.org.uk).)**

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### **Book on the Department**

There have been considerable developments since my last newsletter and the task of getting a book off the ground is progressing well, I can honestly say the project is now on its way.

At the beginning I was pretty sceptical but information has been forthcoming as have ideas and suggestions. It would be impossible to name and thank each and every one for their contributions to date but mention must be made of the likes of John White, Alistair Hull, Dave Scammell, Chris Lightfoot and Graham Child who have really gone out of their way to assist. I cannot ignore the roll others have played – I have asked questions and received detailed answers – a big thank you to each and every one of you; your input has been invaluable.

It has been muted that a history of the department was required. Another suggestion was to relate personal stories and anecdotes after all it was the people who made the department the success it was.

As time and funds do not permit the exacting task of compiling the department's history I have opted to take the middle road. To this end it is hoped to cover major events or some of the history of the Department and

relate personal accounts and anecdotes as appropriate; this will hopefully satisfy all needs.

The Department as we knew it – ‘the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management’ came into being in 1963. With as introductory chapter or chapters every effort will be made to follow events through until 1985 or five years after Independence; despite having set the parameters these are not cast in stone and there are at least two major events that fall outside the dates specified which require coverage. The window being examined is a mere twenty two years but saying that a great deal happened in the period under review. This is not my story but every ones. It for this reason I ask friends and colleagues to contribute as everyone played a roll in building up the Department into the finest conservation agency Africa has seen.

Accuracy is paramount - the best part of twenty five years has passed since the department began to dissolve; it is not yesterday that we are looking at, memories have faded. Every effort will be made to minimize error and to obtain input from as many role players as possible. Should it be necessary to précis a piece or make major alterations the amended passage or article will be returned to source for verification.

Credits will be given for all photographs and directly or indirectly for written material.

On game scouts and trackers their role cannot be underplayed; this is one important aspect of the book that I have basically no information. Nobody appears able to remember surnames; this makes it very difficult to trace the twenty odd scouts who received awards. I would really appreciate input with regards to the scouts, trackers and other junior staff, Munene (Main Camp Driver) and the Wankie pump attendants for example.

Calendar of events -Historic events / landmarks etc together with dates are to be recorded in an appendix. Once again I would appreciate input and to give basic guidelines as to what is required:

- 196? Matusadona headquarters moved from Maronga (Vulunduli) to Tashinga.
- 196? Sinamatella Camp Opened
- 196? Tar road between Main Camp and Shumba Picnic site completed.
- 198? Wankie elephant population assessed to be 20000.
- 198? Operation Strong hold begins.
- 197? Udu Rest camp opens in Inyanga national Park.
- 197? Trapping of Animals Control Act promulgated.

?? ? 79 Senior Ranger Gary Charsley abducted by the BDF (Botswana Defence Force) in Tuli.

Every little bit of information will tell its own story, as mentioned earlier I cannot do this myself. Please supply as much detail as possible and the specific date if known otherwise month and year or year alone.

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## **New Books on the Shelf and Comments**

### **Tatenda – Reminiscences of the Zimbabwe Bush – Anne Moore**

Having taken up a post of tourist officer in the then new Central Booking Office for the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management of Rhodesia in 1968, Anne Moore embarked upon what her husband, Robin, and she thought would be an interesting little job. Little did they know that this would become her lifelong career and that wild places and wildlife would not only become their major passion, but also part of their very beings.

In all twenty-four years were spent serving in National Parks; Governments came and went, children grew and had children of their own, and inevitably retirement age came. But during that time, every possible opportunity was taken to visit the parks, both officially and privately, and a deep love of those inspiring areas developed.

Over those years, during which the country became Zimbabwe, many wonderful memories were gleaned and many beautiful sights witnessed. There were numerous experiences gathered to inspire, amuse, or frighten, with this book recounting just a sample of them.

Published in the UK by Sable Publishing House books are available on line at [www.Sable-Publishing-House.com](http://www.Sable-Publishing-House.com) or directly from Anne herself ([chura@tpg.com.au](mailto:chura@tpg.com.au))

Nick Treger's – '*From Rhodesia to Mugabe's Zimbabwe*' has received very good reviews, it is a good read.

Some years back the newsletter became a medium to promote books authored by colleagues. I have never felt the need to criticize anyone's work until recently; on the contrary I have always felt proud of the writings that seemingly illustrate a humble dedication of the authors to their chosen career.

When it comes to the Department and the relating of historical events and occurrences anyone who expands on the truth, way beyond literary licence

to a point of distortion and falsehood for pure sensationalism and personal grandeur, cannot expect to remain unchallenged.

In chapters 11 and 12 in Ron Selley's '**West of the Moon**' Ron writes of his 'experiences' in Rhodesia with particular reference to his three odd years in National Parks.

Chapter 11 is entitled 'A Game Ranger in Rhodesia' deals with his time as Floating Ranger Mashonoland North. Here there are quite a number of flawed accounts, some seemingly to portray his supposed grandeur. Ron's recollection of dates is appalling and it is very obvious that his memory is sadly lacking in this regard.

Chapter 12 – 'Protecting the Wildlife in Mabalauta' for my own records I have chronicled the many discrepancies in this chapter. Quite a number of the incidents he depicts as having occurred are blatant untruths, his portrayal of some events are so far fetched as to border on the ridiculous and absurdity. Ron sees himself as a swash buckling hero, an indomitable adventurer, he was neither.

As Warden Mabalauta during Ron Selley's tenure as a ranger on that station I believe I am qualified to take Ron to task for his writings, he was on the station for little over a year before he resigned. As to what Ron thinks of me is of no consequence; everyone is entitled to their own opinion.

With the exception of one email to query an army officer's name Ron, during the course of his writings, made no other approach to verify facts, dates etc. Following the publication of the 'Gonarezhou – A Place for Elephants' by Dr Colin Saunders Ron wrote and criticised my account of the happenings at Mabalauta during the last two years of the war including my report of the elephant at Mwatombo Pools.

In his quest for personal esteem Ron has sadly butchered a story that needed to be told with compassion.

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### **Walk Across Hwange National Park**

This is a well written account of the highlights of a walk across Hwange National Park. The article is too large to copy. Adobe Reader is required to open the attachment.

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### **Conservation Issues**

Hwange Game Count - Due to the manner in which the data has been formatted it is not possible to reproduce tables and actual count figures.

Since the last newsletter the situation within the Parks estate has deteriorated further. The situation in Hwange National Park is of particular concern.

### **WEZ (Wildlife and Environment Zimbabwe) - General Overview of the 2009 Hwange Game Census**

*This year's 24-hour census took place from 1200 Hours on 3rd October 2009 to 1159 Hours on 4th October 2009. A total of 72 teams participated, as compared with 61 teams in 2008. There were 38 teams in the Main Camp area, 15 in the Robins Camp Area, 17 in the Sinamatella Area, and 2 in Forestry/Safari Lodge. There were quite a few teams and team members who were "new" to the WEZ Census this year. We thank them for their efforts and hope they were not overly disappointed by the affects of the weather this year. In the last 30 years of the WEZ Matabeleland Branch Census, this is only the fourth time that has occurred. Nature occasionally does not cooperate with our efforts and we hope you all will help us field an even larger number of teams next year*

*Unfortunately, weather conditions were very unfavourable. There was rain or drizzle and dark, cloudy conditions throughout the Census period at most pans. All teams reported extremely difficult viewing conditions, with clouds obscuring the moon and rain intermittent and from light to heavy in different locations. As a result, the total count (of all species) was very low, 8332 compared with 24,882 in 2008 and 34,461 in 2007. Quite a few teams reported seeing none of the surveyed species at all. The Hunting Proficiency Test being conducted in the Park at the same time further compromised census conditions.*

*The suggestion has been made that the Census be conducted earlier in the year, to minimize interference by rain. The WEZ Census data continues to be essential to researchers studying population trends and species interactions in the Park, and was a major source of data for two recent Ph.D. theses from the CIRAD group. A proposed change in date of the Census must therefore be evaluated in terms of potential affect on the scientific usefulness of the data.*

*First, how serious is the loss of data for the "rainy" years? As can be seen from Table 2 below, similarly low total counts were recorded in 1972, 1986, 1997 and 2009, - roughly once every 11 or 12 years. Results under such aberrant conditions are considered "outliers" and are excluded from scientific analysis. This represents a loss of only about 9% of data due to "rained out" counts. It should be noted that the 1997 census (which produced the lowest WEZ Census count ever recorded) was conducted on*

*September 14, the earliest date a Census was held in the past 15 years. Earlier dates than perhaps September 15 do not seem advisable. More serious than the loss of a few years of data is the year-to-year variability in the count, which reduces the value of the data in predicting population trends. This year-to-year variability due to surface water can be seen in the graphs included in this report. In recent years when there was little surface water in the park, total count numbers ranged from 30,000 to over 45,000. In a number of years when there was considerable surface water in the park, counts of less than 19,000 were recorded, because there were many other water sources than the pans being counted. Several such years and the Census dates were: 2000 (October 13); 2001 (October 1); 2004 (September 27) and 2006 (October 6). Even by late September or early-to-mid October, in these "wet" years there had not been sufficient time for surface water to dry up before the Census was taken. It seems clear from these observations that conducting the Census earlier in the year (e.g. Early September) would give less time for evaporation and increase the likelihood of encountering abundant surface water. As explained above, this would lower the number of animals counted for that year, thus increasing the year-to-year variability of the count data. The probability of rain during the Census (and loss of data for that year) would of course be decreased also. However, that would only reduce an already scientifically small loss of data. While detailed rainfall patterns would have to be considered, a Census held slightly later in October might allow more time for evaporation and therefore yield a useful decrease in data variability due to surface water, without a serious increase in the probability of losing a year's data due to rain during the count. This would be a small research project in itself. Game water conditions at the pans were generally good. The condition and behaviour of the animals was generally reported as normal, but with a few reports of "nervous" animals. Elephant however, were often described as quiet through the night, and very calm. There were few reports of snares or snare injuries, especially to Elephants. Some reports of behaviour indicative of stress to the animals is to be found in the "Team Comments" section. Because of the late and favourable rains the previous season and rain in September, there were many natural pans with water. This resulted in fewer animals seen drinking at pumped pans on the days both before and after the Census period. Relatively few Elephant were seen on these days at, for example, Nyamandhlovu and Makwa. Even without bad weather during the Census period, it seems likely that the count would have been quite low.*

*year, despite the October date. We can only try to improve the odds in our favour.*

*Just 43 species were seen this year (only 42 not counting DOORMOUSE), compared to 48 or 49 in recent years. Some of the rarer species were seen on the Count this year: Serval at Mtoa Pan; Aardwolf at Livingi; Klipspriger at Kashawe Spring; Bush Pig and Aardvark at Little Samavundhla; Wild Dog at Ostrich; Small-spotted Genet at The Hide. Only one Rhino (white) was seen, at airstrip 2.*

*Giraffe continue to amaze. The giraffe count of 225 was very close to the range of 226 - 271 for the last 7 years, while the total species count was down to one third or one quarter relative to those years. The giraffe count declined precipitously to this range following 2001, while as recently as 1998, 1999 the giraffe count was over 500. This may be a subject worthy of investigation.*

*We would like to thank the Management and Staff of the National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority for their assistance to us and to our counters prior to and during the census. Thanks also to the private operators within and outside the Park for their interest, assistance and co-operation.*

*Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the staff of the Game Water Supplies Division, including the pump attendants, who often risk their lives to ensure that faulty or broken engines are reported back to base and ensure an early response is made to restore water supplies. Without a conscientious team of workers looking after game water, there would be many animal casualties, particularly of the smaller species, who are unable to make the long distances necessary if water is not restored timeously. Thanks also to Karl Schmahl, who wrote the software used in preparing most of this report.*

### **Rhino Poaching**

Since the beginning of the year 71 rhino have been poached. Prior to the midyear translocation exercise to remove rhino from 'vulnerable' areas an average of nine rhinos per month were being poached. The 'loss' rate is now down to an average of two animals per month!

Law enforcement remains a problem. Despite thirty five arrests this year there have only been two convictions! In one case, a Bulawayo woman was fined US\$ 400 for being in possession of a rhino horn!

Contacts have resulted in nine poachers being shot dead.

***‘National Parks confirms Poaching Orgy.’***

This is the heading that appeared in the ‘The Zimbabwean’ (An independent newspaper) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November.

*‘Vast herds of elephant and endangered black rhino, cheetah, leopard and antelope have been snared, speared, shot or blown up in a orgy of savage poaching in Zimbabwe’s National parks as well as on farms and conservancies.’*

Although the focus is primarily on Hwange the writer goes on to say *‘The National Parks, which used to be a source of great pride, are being destroyed while pleas for help go unheeded. The journalist quoting a source notes ‘what we are seeing is unprecedented; rampant poaching, illegal hunting and downright slaughter on a daily basis. Describing the plunder as national suicide he warned that Zimbabwe was descending into lawless and savagery.’*

The article’s closing paragraph reads *‘In the Kariba area game rangers have found 33 elephants that have been shot and 65 landmines have been lifted from game paths, our source said, adding that law enforcement officers were too terrified to rattle the cage or defy orders from senior officials who continue to plunder the wildlife with impunity.’*

**Hwange National Park**

Although illegal hunting is on going in Chizarira and in the Lowveld Hwange is, without doubt, bearing the brunt as far as illegal activities and poaching are concerned.

It is understood that many reports cannot be substantiated as those who have witnessed illegal operations are too intimidated to make statements. In this contest names of certain safari companies, professional hunters, concessional holders, PWMA (Parks and Wildlife Management Authority) officials and politicians appear regularly.

Illegal hunting involves unscrupulous professional hunters who bring foreign clients into Zimbabwe to hunt illegally. These can only take place with the connivance of PWMA officials, involved for direct personal gain or who have been intimidated and are obeying instruction from a more senior official or politician.

In July, at Robins Camp five Romanian hunters, a PH and a PWMA official were arrested for illegally hunting elephant.

A legitimate professional hunter operating in the Matetsi Safari Area observed the illegal hunting and immediately reported the incident to the

Chairman of the Parks Board, George Pangetti, who was visiting the area together with other Parks Board Members and Trevor Lane Mr. Makoni, a professional hunter from Gwayi, together with the Romanians and the PWMA officer were taken into custody.

The case was never finalised, all individuals were released and their equipment returned. Minister Francis Nhema it is believed ordered their release (The Zimbabwean 12.11.09)

Robins Camp – 02.10.09

Riaan Vosloo, a South African professional hunter based at Sikumi Lodge with French clients stated that his client had bow hunted an elephant in the Robins area. He further went onto to say he had paid USD 5,000 which ‘goes into the pocket of the head warden’ (believed to be Ray Makwehe – Area Manager Umtshibi) in order for his client to be able to shoot within Hwange National Park and that the meat would be used for rations

Sinamatella – September’09

An American client complained to the Zimbabwe Professional Hunters and Guides Association as to the standard of his buffalo hunt and the trophy taken. On investigation it was discovered that the hunt had taken place in the Sinamatella area. Accompanying professional hunter Barry van Heerden during the course of the safari was a man described by the client as ‘the head parks guy.’

Sikumi Forest

In July PH Mitch Bunce caught Wilfred Belani (PH No.23) poaching elephant in Sikumi Forest. He was with a South African operator and foreign client. They had shot a tusked elephant cow (which National Parks issue no permits for) Mr Bunce apprehended the group with their equipment and took them to Ngamo Safaris Intundla Camp after which the Forestry anti-poaching unit took the accused to ZRP (Zimbabwe Republic Police) Jojsholo. The case is pending.

Sikumi Forest

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of August PH Pete Fick, hunting in the Ngamo and Sikumi Forest under Ngamo Safari Company, came across a South Africa registered vehicle (GTP 127FS) with a Lew Harris Safari Sticker on both doors on the Malindi (Farm35) and Sikumi Forest boundary (Isilwane block) After exchanging pleasantries Peter Fick learnt from the client’s wife that her husband had shot an elephant bull in Isilwane Block with a bow and

arrow, two shots were fired and the party was in the process of following up the wounded elephant. The PH accompanying the South African operator and American clients was Wilfred Belani who was apprehended a month earlier by Mitch Bunce. A telephone call to the Ngamo offices in Bulawayo later that day confirmed that PH Belani was hunting in the Forest Area illegally.

Peter Fick reported the incident to the Dett police and was given to police details to assist in the investigations. To cover all angles Pete Fick's next stop was Main Camp where Ranger Simeon was made available to them. To cover every aspect of the incident from there on would be tedious. It will suffice to say that despite denial by Wilfred Belani and some rather devious tactics Pete Fick's trackers finally located the spot where the elephant had been shot and recovered the arrow with blood on it. Belani's tracker Mukuli admitted that the elephant had been shot in the Forest area and that they had purchased Watermelons from Halfway House Hotel to attract the elephant out of park!

The hunting party was guilty of several offences including hunting without permission in Sikumi Forest, bow hunting without the necessary PWMA permit, and, using bait (watermelons) to entice elephant out of the park. This case is still pending with the Dett Police.

The American Client and his wife were way out of their depth and although frightened were extremely co-operative during the course of the investigations. On return to States the Client wrote a detailed account of his safari to his Outfitter – Butch Manasse of Butch Manasse Outdoor Adventures and Safaris Worldwide. The client notes in one paragraph following a comment relating to a misunderstanding by either Belani or Donovan Harris, the SA operator – *‘WHICH DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY WE WERE RUNNING AND HIDING FROM VEHICLES FOR FOUR DAYS! NOR DOES IT EXPLAIN WHY HE WENT TO THE BUSH TO COVER HIS TRACKS! NOR DOES IT EXPLAIN WHY HE TOOK THE POLICE, FORESTRY OFFICERS AND HWANGE PARK OFFICERS TO A BOGUS LOCATION!’*

Closing this unsavoury account mention is made that Donovan Harris of Lew Harris Safaris in South Africa paid US\$ 2000 to Belani and US\$ 2000 to the ‘owner’ of the Malindi concession Agatha Malingo to facilitate the shoot.

## Botswana

During the course of the 'fly over' proceeding the annual game count in Hwange two groups of campers were noted on the security road running along the border between Botswana and Hwange National Park. One camp was near Cement Pan and the other close to Hendricks Pan. The presence of these camps is of particular concern as there have a number of reports of South African hunters operating out of basis in Botswana and entering Zimbabwe each day through the Pandamatenga border post to hunt in the Robins area.

Apart from reports being made to Main Camp the sightings have been reported to the Botswana authorities together with reports of cross border poaching through the office of the Botswana Director of Wildlife and National Parks, Mr. Trevor Mmopelwa ([tmmopelwa@gov.bw](mailto:tmmopelwa@gov.bw))

## Outfitters / Operators advertising hunting in Hwange

Cape to Cairo Safaris advertised on their web site

([www.capetocairosafari.com](http://www.capetocairosafari.com)) hunts for 2009 with Hwange National Park – PH Cedric Nieuwoldt.

This matter was brought to the attention of the Director General of PWMA at the Safari Operators Association 2009 AGM. Dr. Mtsambiwa denied that such hunts were taking place but on learning that someone had actually booked a hunt he assured the meeting the matter would be investigated. Nothing further has been heard.

## Leopard Skin Smuggler

*ABERDEEN, South Dakota, October 30, 2009 (ENS) - A leopard shot seven years ago in South Africa caught up with a South Dakota man in an Aberdeen courtroom today.*

*A federal jury in Aberdeen found Wayne Breitag guilty of smuggling the skin of a leopard into the United States in violation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, a treaty to which the United States and 174 other countries are Parties.*

*Breitag was also found guilty of violating the Lacey Act, a U.S. federal Wildlife statute. Breitag faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and up to a \$250,000 fine for smuggling, while the Lacey Act violations are punishable by up to five years in prison and up to a \$250,000 fine.*

*According to a grand jury indictment issued in August, Breitag travelled to South Africa in August 2002 to hunt leopards while guided by a South African outfitter named Jan Groenewald Swart doing business as Trophy Hunting Safaris. Breitag shot and killed a leopard at that time.*

*Swart arranged to have the hides smuggled from South Africa into Zimbabwe, where he purchased a fraudulent CITES export permit for the leopard hide. Breitag then submitted an application to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service falsely claiming that he hunted and killed the leopard in Zimbabwe.*

*On November 5, 2004, Fish and Wildlife Service inspectors seized a shipment of five leopard hides and three leopard skulls at the Denver International Airport, which included the hide of the leopard that Breitag killed illegally in South Africa in 2002.*

*On May 21, 2007, Swart pleaded guilty to smuggling charges in Federal District court in Colorado for his role in the illegal hunts. Swart served an 18-month long prison sentence; he has since been released and deported. Leopards, *Panthera pardus*, are listed on CITES Appendix I, which prohibits all international commercial trade in live animals or their parts, with exceptions for scientific research and a quota system for certain African countries. Legal international traffic in leopard parts is limited to exports of skins and hunting trophies under a CITES Appendix I quota system by 13 African countries.*

*The CITES authorities in South Africa set a yearly quota on the number of export permits issued by that country for leopards. These permits are issued only for leopards that have been killed with a valid hunting permit.*

*The authoritative Red List of Threatened Species compiled by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, IUCN, classifies the leopard as Near Threatened.*

*Leopards have a wide range and are locally common in some parts of Africa and tropical Asia. Still, the IUCN says the species is declining in large parts of its range due to habitat loss and fragmentation, and hunting for trade and pest control. Scientists estimate that leopards have disappeared from at least 36 percent of their historical range in Africa. The most marked range loss has been in the Sahel belt, as well as in Nigeria and South Africa. The IUCN says, "The impact of trophy hunting on leopard populations is unclear, but may have impacts at the demographic and population level, especially when females are shot."*

### **In Closing**

Little remains to be said other than please contribute anecdotes, stories or details of events for the Book.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a great 2010

**Mike Bromwich**

Zimbabwe Pensions Office

P.O. Box 1382

HARARE

Zimbabwe

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(No further payment of pension will be made until this certificate, duly completed is received by the Pensions Office, P.O. Box 1382, HARARE, ZIMBABWE)

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hereby declare that I am the person whose signature appears below and that I am or entitled to a pension from the Zimbabwe Government. Further, that the dependants Passport No

enumerated below, for whom I am entitled to receive allowances/pension, are alive and being wholly maintained by me.  
(Additional declaration by widow)

Further, that I am the widow of the late

.....  
and have/have not remarried since my pension commenced.

Address ..... Pensioner's signature.....

Date.....

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### DETAILS OF DEPENDANTS

(TO BE COMPLETED ONLY IF IN RECEIPT OF A CHILDREN'S ALLOWANCE)

Children's Names ..... Date Of Birth

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### CERTIFICATE TO BE COMPLETED IN RESPECT OF ALL PENSIONERS

This is to certify that the foregoing declaration and signature was made by the above mentioned in my presence this day and I believe that declarant to be the person named herein.

NAME ..... SIGNATURE

ADDRESS .....

QUALIFICATION.....

OFFICIAL STAMP: DATE .....

To be signed by a Justice Of The Peace, Commissioner Of Oaths, District Administrator, Minister of Religion, Magistrate, Manager or Accountant of bank, Presiding Officer of Community Court, or Member of the Police above the rank of Sergeant.

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