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*January 2023*

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# *The Sentinel*

*Newsletter of the Rhodesian Services Association*



**Another year has flown by and it's time once more to send Christmas greetings to all our members, as well as our best wishes for 2023.**

## **Merry Christmas, My Friend**

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,  
In a one-bedroom house made of plaster and stone.  
I had come down the chimney, with presents to give,  
And to see just who in this home did live.

As I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,  
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.  
No stocking by the fire, just boots filled with sand,  
On the wall hung pictures of a far distant land.

With medals and badges, awards of all kind,  
A sobering thought soon came to my mind.  
For this house was different, unlike any I'd seen,  
This was the home of a U.S. Marine.

I'd heard stories about them, I had to see more,  
So I walked down the hall and pushed open the door.  
And there he lay sleeping, silent, alone,  
Curled up on the floor in his one-bedroom home.

He seemed so gentle, his face so serene,  
Not how I pictured a U.S. Marine.  
Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?  
Curled up in his poncho, a floor for his bed?

His head was clean-shaven, his weathered face tan.  
I soon understood this was more than a man.  
For I realized the families that I saw that night,  
Owed their lives to these men, who were willing to fight.

Soon around the nation, the children would play,  
And grown-ups would celebrate on a bright Christmas day.  
They all enjoyed freedom, each month and all year,  
Because of Marines like this one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,  
On a cold Christmas Eve, in a land far from home.  
Just the very thought brought a tear to my eye.  
I dropped to my knees and I started to cry.

He must have awoken, for I heard a rough voice,  
"Santa, don't cry, this life is my choice.  
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more.  
My life is my God, my country, my Corps."

With that he rolled over, drifted off into sleep,  
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.  
I watched him for hours, so silent and still,  
I noticed he shivered from the cold night's chill.

So I took off my jacket, the one made of red,  
And covered this Marine from his toes to his head.  
Then I put on his T-shirt of scarlet and gold,  
With an eagle, globe and anchor emblazoned so bold.

And although it barely fit me, I began to swell with pride,  
And for one shining moment, I was Marine Corps deep inside.  
I didn't want to leave him, so quiet in the night,  
This guardian of honor, so willing to fight.

But, half asleep, he rolled over and in a voice clean and pure,  
Said "Carry on, Santa, it's Christmas Day, all secure."  
One look at my watch and I knew he was right,  
Merry Christmas, my friend, Semper Fi and goodnight.

Composed by James M. Schmidt in 1986; Schmidt was a Lance Corporal stationed at the U.S. Marine Corps Barracks in Washington, D.C. and his poem was published in *'Leatherneck: Magazine of the Marines'*, in December 1991.

## **FROM OUR INBOX:**

**Correction:** in our October feature on the unveiling in 2015 of the RAR memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum, we mistakenly indicated that former RAR soldier, WO2 Pisayi Muzerecho, had passed away; we are glad to report that he is in fact alive and well.

**Membership matters** – we thank you for your loyal support. Financial membership is now over 850 and we're aiming to increase that to 1,200 in the coming year. If you haven't yet renewed your membership (just NZ\$25/year) and wish to do so, please email us. We also have a number of sponsored subs to place on behalf of those in reduced circumstances. Although we rely heavily on our volunteers, we are dependent on the income from our membership fees to continue operating the Lion and Tusk Museum.

## **No. 266 (Rhodesia) Squadron RAF**

One of our success stories this year was a request for assistance from John Duncan, who lives in Brittany, France, in his quest to trace the families of two Rhodesian airmen. As reported in our October newsletter, the men were RAF pilots with No. 266 (Rhodesia)

Squadron, who lost their lives in combat over a small French village, during World War Two. In August 2023, the memory of these men will be honoured at a commemorative service in that village, to mark the 80-year anniversary of their deaths.

We joined forces with John, as he sought to notify the families of this very special occasion. Due to this combined effort, involving online research, social media posts, and personal contacts, several relatives of Johnnie Small and Brian 'Fred' Biddulph were contacted in England, South Africa, Harare, and Fife, Scotland.

**“They came from far away to liberate France. They are not forgotten.”**

Vic Mackenzie subsequently posted on the Association’s Facebook page -



The Commonwealth War Graves of Squadron Leader A. S. MacIntyre and Flight Lieutenant J. Small (R.I.P.) Photo: Remembrance in North Finistère Facebook group

*In the latest newsletter, they had a picture of Rhodesian pilots. I live in southern California and my neighbor Penelope Parker, a very good friend, was visiting and saw the picture on my computer screen. She instantly recognized the man on the far right, who was her*

*father. He was a British RAF pilot who was the squadron leader of the Malta division which included many Rhodesians. He later crashed his Hurricane, lost a few fingers, and was offered the job of training new pilots in Cranborne, Rhodesia or in*



Arrowed left to right: Sandy MacIntyre, Jonnie Small, Brian Biddulph

Arizona. He chose Arizona. He married an American and his young family grew up in the USA. His name was Squadron Leader Parker and I have all his flight logs if anyone is interested. Small world. The other photos are from the Parker family and show him with some British and Rhodesian pilots on R&R and in a bus, on their way to the Malta Airfield.

I did a count of the number of countries on our Roll of Honour, 1890 to 1980, where Rhodesians are buried and I seem to recall it was over 40 worldwide. One of the most unusual is a Rhodesian WWII pilot who is buried in the Bahamas. Keith A. Bishop very kindly (and after quite a bit of inquiring in order to locate the grave) obtained photos of his headstone for us.

Squadron Leader Parker died of a stroke in New Zealand, while on holiday in the 1990s.

YEAR	AIRCRAFT		PILOT, OR 1ST PILOT	2ND PILOT, POPUL OR PASSENGER	DUTY (INCLUDING RESULTS AND REMARKS)	DURATION DAY	
	Type	No.				INIT	FINAL
8	P.T.17	B.P.31	SELF		Landings; Chandelles; loops; Slow Rolls	21:51	19:45
8	P.T.17	B.P.12	JACKSON	SELF	Landings; chandelles; loops; low flying	1:20	1:05
9	P.T.17	B.P.6	JACKSON	SELF	Landings; spins; 10mins instruments	:52	
9	P.T.17	B.P.22	SELF		Landings; spins; Chandelles; loops	:52	:55
9	P.T.17	B.P.2	GOSARD	SELF	Check flight including 10mins instrument		
9	P.T.17	B.P.22	SELF		Slow rolls; loops; chandelles		1:18
9	P.T.17	B.P.34	SELF		Loops; Slow rolls; chandelles		1:00
9	P.T.17	B.P.3	JACKSON	SELF	Night flying in pattern		
9	P.T.17	B.P.6	JACKSON	SELF	Landings; loops; Slow rolls; Snap rolls	1:01	
9	P.T.17	B.P.22	SELF		Loops; Slow rolls; Snap rolls		1:10
9	P.T.17	B.P.31	SELF		Loops; Slow rolls; Snap rolls; Cights		1:20
9	P.T.17	B.P.6	JACKSON	SELF	Slow rolls; 45mins instruments	1:02	
9	P.T.17	B.P.2	GOSARD	SELF	15mins instruments. Check flight	:41	
9	P.T.17	B.P.31	SELF		Loops; Slow Rolls; Snap Rolls		1:00
9	P.T.17	B.P.35	SELF		Light turns; spins; chandelles; loops		1:10
9	P.T.17	B.P.6	JACKSON	SELF	Light turns; Stalls; spins; landings	:40	
9	P.T.17	B.P.10	SELF		Light turns; Chandelles; Side Slips		1:05
9	P.T.17	B.P.11	SELF		Snap rolls; slow rolls; loops		1:55
9	P.T.17	B.P.31	SELF		Light turns; stalls; spins; chandelles		1:00
9	P.T.17	B.P.6	JACKSON	SELF	Instrument flying	1:16	
GRAND TOTAL (Cols (1) to (6))					TOTALS CARRIED FORWARD	21:35	29:40
						III	III



## WAR AND REMEMBRANCE

### THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR

At the west end of the nave of Westminster Abbey is the grave of the Unknown Warrior, whose body was brought from France to be buried there on 11th November 1920. The grave, which contains soil from France, is covered by a slab of black marble from a quarry near Namur, Belgium.

The idea of such a burial seems first to have come to a chaplain at the Western Front, the Reverend David Railton (1884-1955), when he noticed in 1916 in a back garden at Armentières, a grave with a rough cross on which were pencilled the words, "An Unknown British Soldier". In August 1920, he wrote to the Dean of Westminster, Herbert Ryle, through whose energies this memorial became a reality. The body was chosen from unknown British servicemen exhumed from four battle areas: the Aisne, the Somme, Arras and Ypres.

The remains were brought to the chapel at St. Pol on the night of 7th November 1920. The General Officer in charge of troops in France and Flanders, Brigadier General L. J. Wyatt, with Colonel Gell, went into the chapel alone, where the bodies on stretchers were covered by Union Flags. They had no idea which area the bodies had come from. Brigadier Wyatt selected one and the two officers placed it in a plain coffin and sealed it. The other three bodies were reburied. Wyatt said they were re-buried at the St Pol cemetery but according to Major General Sir Cecil Smith, they were buried beside the Albert-Baupaume road, to be discovered there by parties searching for bodies in the area.

The following morning, several multi-denominational chaplains held a service in the chapel before the body was escorted to Boulogne to rest overnight. The coffin was made from an oak tree that had grown in the garden of Hampton Court Palace. It was lined with zinc and placed inside another, sent over from England. The flag that covered it had been used by David Railton as an altar cloth during the Great War (known as the Ypres or Padre's Flag and now hanging in St George's Chapel). Within the wrought iron bands of this coffin was placed a 16th century Crusader's sword from the Tower of London collection.

The coffin plate bore the inscription:

*A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914-1918 for King and Country*

The destroyer HMS Verdun, whose ship's bell was presented to the Abbey and now hangs near the grave, transported the coffin to Dover and it was taken by train to Victoria Station in London, where it remained overnight.



## The Burial

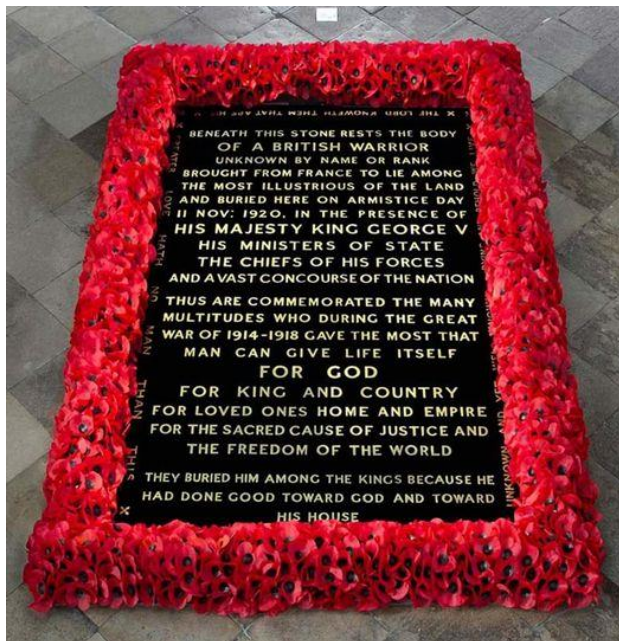
On the morning of 11th November, the coffin was placed by the bearer party from the 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards, on a gun carriage drawn by six black horses of the Royal Horse Artillery. It began its journey through the crowd-lined streets, making its first stop in Whitehall, where the Cenotaph was unveiled by King George V. The King placed his wreath of red roses and bay leaves on the coffin. His card read, "In proud memory of those Warriors who died unknown in the Great War. Unknown, and yet well-known; as dying, and behold they live. George R.I. November 11th 1920".

Then the carriage, with the escorting pall bearers, followed by the King, members of the Royal Family and Ministers of State, made its way to the north door of Westminster Abbey.



During the burial service, the coffin was borne to the west end of the nave, through the congregation of around 1,000 mourners and a guard of honour of 100 holders of the Victoria Cross (from all three services). As the coffin was lowered into the grave, the King

stepped forward and dropped a handful of French earth onto it. Servicemen kept watch at each corner of the grave, while thousands of mourners filed past.



On 18<sup>th</sup> November, the grave was filled in, using 100 sandbags of earth from the battlefields; it was covered by a temporary stone with a gilded inscription on it:

*A BRITISH WARRIOR WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-1918 FOR KING AND COUNTRY. GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS.*

On 11th November 1921, the present black marble stone was unveiled at a special service.

The body of the Unknown Warrior may be from any of the three services, Army, Navy or Air Force, and from any part of the British Isles, the then dominions or colonies. It represents all those who died, who have no other memorial or known grave.

When the Duke of York (later King George VI) married Lady Elizabeth Bowes Lyon in the Abbey in 1923, as she left, she laid her wedding bouquet on the grave as a mark of respect (she had lost a brother during the war). All royal brides married in the Abbey since then have sent back their bouquets to be laid on the grave.

<https://www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-commemorations/commemorations/unknown-warrior>

## Remembrance Day, 2022

In memory of fallen Rhodesians, the Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey.



Photos: Lyndsey Cave

## HONOURS AND AWARDS

### **Lance Corporal Malcolm Spence 'Callum' Forsyth**

Tracker Platoon, 4th (Manicaland) Battalion, Rhodesia Regiment

Awarded The Bronze Cross of Rhodesia on 15 October, 1976

His citation states:

*On 16 May 1976, Lance Corporal Malcolm Spence Forsyth, with two members of the Criminal Investigation Department of the BSA Police, while investigating damage to a civilian vehicle in the Eastern Border operational area located spoor of a number of terrorists.*

*The spoor was followed by Lance Corporal Forsyth with the two members of the BSA Police for a short distance, when, crossing a river, they were fired upon by approximately five terrorists using a machine gun and heavy automatic rifle fire. Lance Corporal Forsyth, without regard for his own personal safety, stood his ground taking the full brunt of the firing. He immediately engaged the enemy at very close range, ignoring the lack of cover, calmly reloading his weapon under fire.*

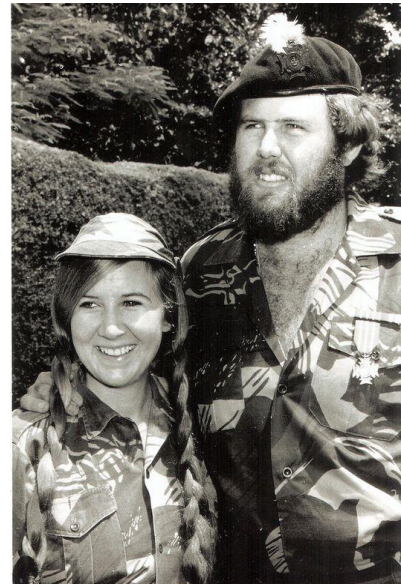
*This courageous action by Lance Corporal Forsyth allowed the two members of the BSA Police to withdraw to a position from which to engage the terrorists. After the two members of the BSA Police had withdrawn to a position of safety, Lance Corporal Forsyth then withdrew to the river and once again engaged the terrorists, who were now engaging the helicopter which had come to their assistance, thus drawing the fire of the terrorists away from the aircraft onto himself.*

*Throughout this action, Lance Corporal Forsyth displayed a great deal of courage and disregard for his own personal safety.*

**In September 2022, we sadly reported the passing of Callum Forsyth BCR. Condolences to his family. May he rest in peace.**



L/Cpl M.S. Forsyth receives  
The Bronze Cross of Rhodesia  
from President John Wratnall on 11 November 1976.  
Photo credit: Page 466 'Rhodesia Regiment 1899-1981'



Following Callum's investiture, with his sister Belinda who was in the Rhodesian Women's Service



## **THE LION & TUSK MUSEUM**

~Hugh Bomford

### **Artefact imports**

Five deactivated firearms have been donated to The Lion and Tusk Museum and we are currently working through the shipping and import processes. We have three .303 rifles that formed a lamp stand in the 1<sup>st</sup> Rhodesia Regiment Officers' mess; these will be coming from Zimbabwe. In South Africa, we have an AK47 and SKS that were presented to Major General Leon Jacobs, Commander JOC Repulse, by Comrade Agnew Kambeu who was ZANLA Musikivanhu Sector Commander, in 1980.

It is important that these historic items are retained as part of our history and displayed in a publicly accessible location. The process of licensing and shipping them is complex, despite the fact that they are all deactivated and can never fire bullets. The fact that they are firearms makes it difficult to find available shipping companies. We are receiving valued assistance from several people in Africa and we hope to have them packed and shipped in the near future.



The total cost of shipping is going to be around NZD 4,500 (USD 2,870) and we are seeking your assistance with meeting these costs. If you would like to make a donation,

please see the payment/banking details at the end of this newsletter, or email Hugh Bomford on [thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org)

We will also be running a number of fundraising raffles in which the prizes are knives. However, as these are not allowed into certain countries, participants for the raffles will be limited. If funds are raised in excess of the required amount, that money will go to other museum-related projects, such as building a suitable display cabinet for the weaponry.

We wish to record our sincere gratitude to the donors of these items and to the people on the ground who are assisting with the licensing and shipping.

## **CQ STORE**

We are continually increasing our range of stock – please take a look at our website portal: <http://www.rhodesianservices.org/cq-store.htm>

# Rhodesian Trees



JACARANDAS CAME TO RHODESIA IN 1897. MR. HOLLAND WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE TREES PLANTED AROUND SALISBURY

OUR TREE LINED STREETS MADE OUR CITIES SOME OF THE PRETTIEST IN AFRICA.



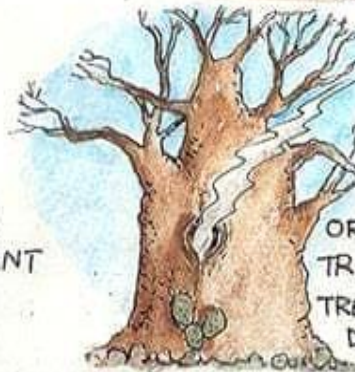
FLAMBOYANT TREE



FRANGI-PANI TREE



MR. HOLLAND ALSO PLANTED FLAMBOYANT AND FRANGI-PANI TREES.



THE MOST COMMON TREES WERE THE MSASA AND THE MOPANI.

AFRICANS BELIEVED THAT TRIBAL ANCESTORS ORIGINATED IN THE SACRED TREE OF THE VILLAGE. SUCH TREES WERE NEVER CUT DOWN.

VIC Akanzio  
AUGUST 2016

## OPTIONS FOR DONATIONS TOWARDS ARTEFACT IMPORTS

**Please note** that New Zealand banks no longer accept cheques.

### **We offer the following payment options:**

- **Givealittle donation** by credit card <https://givealittle.co.nz/org/rhodesian-services-association-incorporated>
- **Cash or EFTPOS** at The Lion and Tusk Museum during opening hours.
- **Arrange to pay by Visa or MasterCard:**  
Contact Hugh Bomford on email: [thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org) to arrange a secure exchange of your credit card details.
- **PayPal**
  - Ask us to bill you
  - Or send payment to [thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org)
- **World Remit**  
Contact Hugh Bomford on email: [thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org) for details
- **Electronic Funds Transfer** - we hold accounts in the countries listed below.  
**When depositing please:**
  - Use your surname for reference
  - Email so we can reconcile your payment.
  - Ensure that you have used the correct bank account numbers
- **New Zealand:**  
Account name: Rhodesian Services Assn Inc  
Bank: BNZ  
Account number: 02 0466 0382047 00  
Please use your surname and initials for reference
- **Australia:**  
Account name: Rhodesian Services Association (Incorporated); abbreviate if necessary  
BSB code: 802-985 – (this is with Cuscal Limited)  
Account number: 517730483  
Bank address: Transferwise, 36-38 Gipps Street, Collingwood 3066, Australia  
Please use your surname and initials for reference

- **Euro:**  
Account name: Rhodesian Services Association (Incorporated); abbreviate if necessary  
BIC: TRWIBEB1XXX  
IBAN: BE33 9671 8147 5646  
Bank address: TransferWise Europe SA, Avenue Louise 54, Room S52, Brussels, 1050, Belgium  
Please use your surname and initials for reference
  
- **Singapore:**  
Account name: Rhodesian Services Association (Incorporated); abbreviate if necessary  
Bank code: 7171  
Account number: 885-074-151-128  
Bank address: DBS Bank Ltd, 12 Marina Boulevard, Singapore 018982  
Please use your surname and initials for reference
  
- **United Kingdom:**  
Account name: Rhodesian Services Association (Incorporated); abbreviate if necessary  
Sort code: 23-14-70  
Account number: 64451060  
Bank address: TransferWise, 56 Shoreditch High Street, London, E1 6JJ, United Kingdom  
Please use your surname and initials for reference

Thank you for supporting the preservation of Rhodesian history.



This newsletter is compiled by Jackie Jackson for the Rhodesian Services Association, [jackie@rhodesianservices.org](mailto:jackie@rhodesianservices.org)

To view previous newsletters, go to our [Archives](#)

**Views, language, and information expressed in 'The Sentinel' may not reflect current understanding, they are provided in a historical context.**

**The Lion and Tusk Museum is a collection of historical, cultural, artistic, and scientific information displays, videos, photos, and writings. These depict Rhodesia and Rhodesians of all races, from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until the country's transition to Zimbabwe in 1980. Neither the museum management, nor its team of volunteers, have political, racial, or gender-specific agendas, and they unreservedly condemn any scandal-mongering misconceptions to the contrary.**



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