
January 2024



The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Rhodesian Services Association



As this newsletter is going out just before the end of the year, the Management of The Lion & Tusk Museum and its team of volunteers send season's greetings to all our members and best wishes for the New Year. Thank you for your continued support.

***** This issue is dedicated to the men of the RAR (Rhodesian African Rifles)***

Amid the festivities of the holidays, let's also take a moment to remember and reflect -

How Long Does It Take?

By Clive Sanders

How long does it take to train a man,
Whose family all love and adore,
To fight and kill as a soldier,
Who is ready to go to war?

How long does it take to calm a man,
Who no longer will fight in a war?
For now he's no longer a soldier
And will not have to kill any more.

How long does it take to heal a man,
Whose body is wounded and sore?
He was injured for being a soldier,
In the uniform that he proudly wore.

It takes many weeks to train a man,
The skills that he needs for a war.
It takes many months to heal a man,
Whose body is wounded and tore.

How long does it take to treat a man,
Whose mind was disturbed when he saw
The suffering and pains of the people
And the wounds that they sadly bore?

It takes many years to heal a mind
Of the horrors that lie in the store.
It takes the rest of the life of a veteran,
To forget all he did once before.

FROM OUR INBOX:

THE ENCOUNTER

By Corporal Peter F.* 1RAR

Mtoko, Northeastern Rhodesia, March 1976

At 0400 the sentry woke me from inside my basher. I got up and rolled up my sleeping bag and fastened it to my webbing. I then took my towel and washed my face with cold water before taking my rucksack and kit bag to the stores for safekeeping. It was still dark, but it was one of those nights when the moon decides not to set before the sun comes up and as a result it was still hanging up there in the western sky. So, by the light of the moon I checked my area and satisfied myself that the CSM would have nothing to discuss with me when I came back – you see he does not normally like to see bits and papers lying around.

By the time I finished checking my section area the east was red, the time was 0445 and I took my mug and went to the kitchen. The cook was in a good mood despite the early hour, and I got a full mug of tea. The whole platoon was there in the kitchen this morning and they were talking in low tones, joking and laughing quietly. We had been briefed the previous evening and everyone knew what he was going to do today but it seemed that no-one was worried at all.

At 0500 hours we were summoned to the Ops tent for more orders (the NCOs that is) and were briefed for 10 minutes. Helicopters were allocated to the various sticks and soon after we poured out of the tent to brief our sticks. As the sun peeped over the horizon we were sitting in our helicopters. The pilot in our helicopter switched on his engine and after a whining noise the huge rotors started to turn, as if they really did not intend to, then gathered momentum until they were a blur.

All five choppers were now roaring and slowly, one by one, they lifted off from the side of the bush airstrip. Soon we were up and circling the base camp waiting for the rest of the choppers to lift off. I looked down below me and saw amid the reddish-brown dust the last of the helicopters lifting off. Before long, the choppers were off to the north of our base camp. Up there the wind was cold and crisp, and it blew on my face from the open side of the chopper. Down below the trees were green and some turning grey, but they all seemed to be of identical height, so that looking down one was reminded of those advertisements for carpets.

I have enjoyed riding in a helicopter ever since I was a recruit and, right now, I was enjoying myself looking out there below as the world slid past. Then I got to thinking. I thought of the first day I came to Methuen Barracks, six years previously and of the jumble of years between; it was hard at times. There were moments of happiness and sorrow, and I thought of people, faces of



File photo

soldiers that had come and gone, faces of men who are and were a family that is one of the greatest and happiest of all families, the RAR.

*I was brought back to reality by the bank of the chopper; we were now in an area with a lot of small gomos** and we were flying at tree-top level along a small river with water and a lot of reeds. There were quite a lot of rocks on the riverbed itself, but the sand showed here and there. The suspected base camp was down near a waterfall next to a big rock, and I saw the leading helicopter circling around the rock. All around the area were very thick bushes and tall trees and, slightly right and away from the river, was a field. Already, one of the choppers had landed there while we were circling. The pilot indicated a clearing in the field and gave the sign that he was going to land and went down. As soon as the chopper touched down, we spilled out, took up defensive arc and cocked our weapons. I was ordered via the radio to join the other stick and move down the river on both sides. I took the left bank and the other stick commander the right, and we moved forward. Behind us could be heard the deep bark of the FN and the clatter of the AK.*

Occasionally a stray bullet went cracking above us. I thought any moment now a bullet would find its way into me, but the sound of the crack indicated that the bullets were well to the left. Then, without warning, automatic fire broke out about 75 metres in front of us. The bullets hit the rock in the riverbank and the ricochets made an ugly sound. We opened fire from both sides of the bank – aimed fire was impossible, because we could not see anyone, but only hear the firing. A grenade exploded, though I was not sure who threw it, our people or the terrorists. Ahead of us someone shouted an order, and I guessed the direction of the voice. Already we were moving from cover to cover in bounds towards the firing. The fire from the terrorists was not very effective because it was not aimed either. As we neared the place where the firing came from it stopped. We carried on firing and this time we were running as fast as we could.

Reaching the place, we spread out, then as I was passing a large tree, I saw a man lying face down. I stopped to look, he was dead, his AK carbine lying by his side. Here and there in the thick bush were well-concealed hideouts and it seemed they were empty. We went quickly through the area, then fanned out into all round defence. By that time, I was sweating a lot. I reported on my radio and sent a searching party into the camp, then I checked for any casualties in my stick – there were none. Ammunition state was satisfactory. When the searching party arrived, they reported two dead ters and about seven packs in the base camp. There were four hides of three men each. I reported that and was told to carry on sweeping until I met a stick that had been deployed 400 metres further on. There was a stick, and I was informed it was making its way into the area of my contact.

Then, as we prepared to advance, firing broke out about 300 metres ahead of us and we were told to lay an ambush on the riverbank, and we quickly did that and waited. It was getting very hot now as the sun was halfway up and sweat kept blinding me. I used my face veil to wipe my face. Then as the firing stopped ahead of us, one of my men kicked me and showed a thumbs down sign and pointed, and sure enough, moving along the riverbed were

two terrorists. One had an RPD and the other an SKS, and they were walking in the shallow water to lose tracks. We waited until they were parallel to us and let go. They never had a chance. Leaving two men covering me, I took the other man, and we went to pull the bodies from the water and recover the weapons. The helicopters came to take away the bodies. By that time the day was high, and the sun was very hot now.

We were told to rest as trackers were looking for tracks. Other sticks arrived and a follow-up was initiated. After a thorough search of the contact area, we were told to go to the clearing and the helicopters arrived. We ran to them, keeping our heads down, because you see, every soldier who is in love with his head bends down to keep it where it belongs. As the chopper lifted off, I looked down in the contact area, now so peaceful.

We climbed high and sped back to base, the wind blew on my face and, I thought, that was the life, never a dull moment. Then I got to thinking of that cold beer waiting for me and I settled back. Today is good and gone, and tomorrow out of sight.

*Full name withheld

** A *gomo* is a kopje, or small hill

Source: *The Lion & Tusk*, volume 17, number 2, 2011 (not affiliated with The Lion & Tusk Museum)

You can listen here to the inimitable harmonies of the RAR band, singing the song of their regimental march, 'Sweet Banana' -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHMIzYAWIBU>

WAR AND REMEMBRANCE

The Angel of Victory is a statue crafted by London-born sculptor Coeur de Lion McCarthy (1881–1979), installed in Montreal's Windsor Station in Quebec, Canada.

It was commissioned in 1922, in memory of the 1,116 Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) employees who died in World War I. Copies of the statue were also installed at CPR stations in Vancouver and Winnipeg.

“May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest”



Photo: Joanne Lévesque, Wikimedia Commons

HONOURS AND AWARDS

The Rhodesia Native Regiment (RNR) was active in World War I, during the years 1916-1918. The regiment was succeeded by the Rhodesian African Rifles (RAR), which was granted the RNR's battle honours, earned fighting in the East African Campaign. The RAR was formed in May 1940, in Southern Rhodesia (then a British colony), and was the second-oldest regiment of the Rhodesian Army, after the Rhodesia Regiment, which was raised in 1899.

This is the first page of a list of Rhodesia Native Regiment's African recipients of the British War Medal and Victory Medal. These names are listed in a volume titled, 'UK, World War I Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920'.

52

RHODESIA NATIVE REGIMENT OR CORPS.

ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the..... **BRITISH WAR + V MEDAL** granted under Army Order..... 266..... of 1919. 1

Held by an individual in the corps in respect of which the rolls are submitted.		NAME	In sequence of rank and corps previously served with by each individual and Reg. No. therein; the highest rank, whether permanent or temporary, recorded as having been held for any period in a theatre of war, unless entered, or otherwise, being shown against the name of the regiment or corps which is to be inserted on the medal.	Theatres of War in which served.		Clasps awarded.	Record of disposal of decorations. (a) Presented. (b) Dispatched by post. (c) Taken into stock.	Remarks.
Reg. No.	Rank.							
M1779	Private	AMEBI	Rhod. Nat. Regt.	17.9.17	to 25.11.18	African Theatre -do-(a)		
M1624	Private	ANKI AMUOI	Rhod. Nat. Regt.	27.8.17	to 25.11.18	-do-(a)		
M1637	Private	ANKI Sampson	Rhod. Nat. Regt.	17.9.17	to 25.11.18	-do-(a)		
M1969	Private	BILLIE	-do-	28.7.18	to 25.11.18	-do-(a)		
49 54	Sergt.	BRANDY	-do-	19.7.16	to 25.11.18	-do-(a)		
M1093	A/Corpl.	CHIKOMBALI	-do-	27.8.17	to 25.11.18	-do-(a)		
M483	Private	CHOKWENDA	-do-	28.2.17	to 25.11.18	-do-(a)		
M775	Private	DAIROS	-do-	17.9.17	to 25.11.18	-do-(a)		
M248	Private	FRANCIS	-do-	17.9.17	to 25.11.18	-do-(a)		

Place: Salisbury
 Date: 28.3.22
 No. 3570 BWRV
 T.V. 189/8
 Date 28.3.22

Chief Staff Officer to the
 Commandant General
 Signature and rank of officer certifying

Private Phinias F.*

1RAR Bronze Cross of Rhodesia awarded 13 September, 1974

Citation:

“For gallantry and determination in action. During anti-terrorist operations in the northeastern border area, the platoon of which Private Phinias was a member was engaged in a contact with twelve to fourteen terrorists. During the engagement Pte Phinias was shot at point blank range through the upper arm by a terrorist. Realising that he could not handle his weapon, he dropped his rifle and attacked the terrorist with his hands, forcing him to the ground before another shot could be fired. During the struggle, while he was attempting to overcome the terrorist with his bare hands, Private Phinias was again shot in the back by another terrorist. In spite of his wounds, Private Phinias continued to grapple with the terrorist, refusing to let go until the terrorist was shot and killed and he was assisted off the body. Private Phinias, who had only recently completed his recruit training, displayed outstanding determination, courage and aggressive spirit for such a young and inexperienced soldier.”

*Full name withheld



THE LION & TUSK MUSEUM

~ Hugh Bomford

As this year draws to a close, I look back with a sense of achievement on another successful year preserving Rhodesian history through The Lion and Tusk Museum. We have achieved this through the income derived from our Financial Members, CQ Store sales, donations, and fund-raising projects – this is our ‘fuel’, if you like. The ‘engine’ that powers the museum is all the dedicated personnel who directly influence what happens

there: our Curator, Tony Fraser; Diana Bomford's never-ending input on the finances; the volunteers who work the shifts; the newsletter editors, Gerry van Tonder (*Rhodesian Dispatches*) and Jackie Jackson (*The Sentinel*); the members of the committee, as well as all the good people who provide products and services at discounted prices. Coordinating the acquisition of 'fuel' is largely my department, i.e. encouraging Financial Membership, development of new products, and running the emailing processes to keep our members and subscribers informed and in touch with us.

We are the only publicly accessible Rhodesian museum outside Africa.

THE CQ STORE

Please support our CQ Store. We have an ever-expanding range of quality goods in stock, including John Edmond Music products, for the New Zealand and Australian markets.

To inquire or order and receive a quote, please email: thecqstore@rhodesianservices.org

All profits from sales go to supporting The Lion and Tusk Museum. Where possible we manufacture ourselves, or procure from New Zealand, Australia, the UK and USA.

This is a recent video taken in the store:

<https://youtu.be/BoUDqjb4x28>

Also, please consider subscribing to our YouTube channel, so that you are notified when we upload new videos.

We have a new product that is listed here:

<https://www.rhodesianservices.org/assorted.htm>

Copy of Rhodesian mine sign

\$60, plus P&P

These signs are made in New Zealand from ACM (aluminium composite panel), which is PVC sandwiched between aluminium. The printed vinyl images are covered in clear laminate to give it longevity, if placed outside.

Size is 280mm wide x 245mm high.

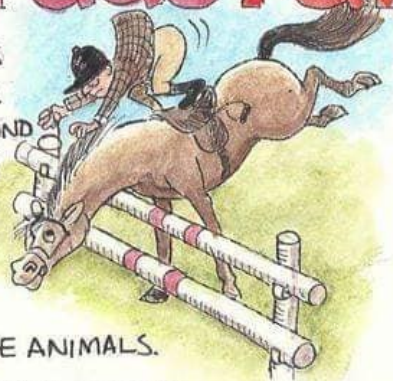
The white-on-red sign faced outside the minefield, so if you came across the red-on-white you were lucky to get that far and needed an immediate aerial extraction!



When you buy from the Rhodesian Services Association CQ Store and you are supporting the preservation of Rhodesian history through The Lion and Tusk Museum.

Rhodesian Trade Fair

I NEVER MISSED THE SHOWS IN BULAWAYO OR SALISBURY. AS I GOT OLDER I ALWAYS FOUND JOBS AT THE FAIR. ONE YEAR ZOE SHEARER HIRED ME TO PAINT 250 LARGE SIGNS FOR THE BULAWAYO T.F.

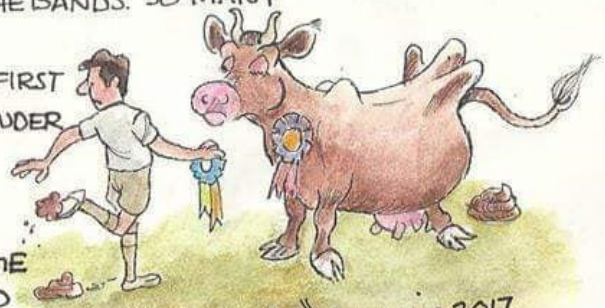


I LOVED THE HORSE JUMPING AND SEEING THE ANIMALS. THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE SHOW FOR ME WAS THE "BATTLE OF THE BANDS" SO MANY TALENTED GROUPS.



I IN 1967 WE WERE THE FIRST VANDALS TO PUT WASHING POWDER INTO THE FOUNTAINS AT THE BULAWAYO TRADE FAIR.

AS A YOUNGSTER I ALWAYS CAME HOME WITH A THOUSAND PAMPHLETS.



VIC Mackenzie 2017

This newsletter is compiled by Jackie Jackson for the Rhodesian Services Association, 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 19th 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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