



Please reply to:

PO Box FM 648, Famona. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

### NEWSLETTER 4 / SEPTEMBER 1994

Since the last newsletter in June, three more committee meetings have been held.

#### FINANCE

The Society's finances are in a healthy state. During the past three months a \$500 donation has been received from Janet Rachlow for the Whitewaters Staff Building Fund. Two requests totalling \$3 656. 60 have been approved for cement, frames and doors for these buildings, paid from the fund raised especially for the Staff Buildings. Also, an amount of \$1 250 for Mr Vernon Tarr for his McKinders Owl Study Programme. With this amount, Vernon and Rhir Tarr now have \$3 150 towards the project. The Committee hopes to place some of the total revenue received into the money market to earn additional interest.

#### MTSAHBEZI VALLEY AND DAM

Four members of your Committee met a similar number of members of the Umzingwane Rural Council on top of the newly completed wall on Saturday 30 July 1994, when a cordial reception was given to them, and when Mr Gavin Stephens, the Society's Chairman, presented the Society's views on suggested developments which would benefit the local people. The U.R.C subsequently adopted the proposal to protect the valley and authorised the formation of a sub-committee to see to the implementation of the programme. Consequently, the society was invited to send three representatives to the next meeting in Esigodini. This particular area might well be an excellent one for a 'Campfire' project. Members can expect to hear much more about this programme as it gets underway.

#### PROTECTION OF HISTORIAL AND SACRED SITES

The Society was invited to be represented at the official opening of the Pomongwe Cave Museum on Friday 1 July 1994 by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Hon. Dumisa Dabengwa. During this event, it was announced that there would be no further funding for National Museums this year, which means that it is unlikely that the Rock Art in the various caves in the area will get the protection they should have.

#### WORLD HERITAGE SITE

A letter from UNESCO concerning this, referred the Society to the Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO. The Society is not prepared to let this matter be left "in the air".

#### DASSIE AND MCKINDERS OWL RESEARCH

A full report on these projects, which have received assistance from your Society, will be obtained soon.

#### GATE FEES MATOBO

The Society has now been waiting six months for an official reply to letters it had written to the Hon. Minister of Tourism; Chairman of the National Parks Board; the Director, National

Parks and Wildlife Management; the Chairman, the Matobo Committee and the Provincial Warden Matabeleland South, National Parks and Wildlife Management. It is now a year since the fees were arbitrarily introduced without any consultation with those concerned, but the committee is pursuing the matter as best it can. We understand that a review committee has been set up by the Parks Board, but the collection of data is taking longer than expected. Members are informed that, all fees quoted are the FOREIGN rates and that Zimbabwean citizens/residents must ask for the LOCAL DISCOUNT (50%). Proof of citizenship/residence may be asked for, failing which, Parks staff are instructed to charge the foreign rate. Entry fees have therefore not increased.

Some information that recently came to our attention as regards the park fees at Matopos National Park:

	MAY 1992 - JUNE 1993	MAY 1993 - JUNE 1994
NUMBER OF PERSONS VISITING	55 000	15 500
AMOUNT RAISED	\$136 000	\$470 000

The data speaks for itself.

On a positive note, however, a sum of \$800 000 has been budgeted for the upgrading / refurbishment of Maleme Rest Camp, whilst the condition of the park in general is much improved

#### **FUN DAY AT MATOBO RAIL TERMINUS**

[In response to suggestions that a "get together" should be held for members, a Fun Day - "Doing Things Day" was held at the old Railway Terminus on 28 August. Unfortunately, the turnout was poor, but those who attended had a good morning and a pleasant braai, whilst much useful restoration work was done.

The next society function is likely to be in the Mtshabezi Valley. Any members who have ideas for such projects should please get in touch with -the committee.

#### **RHINO PROTECTION**

A report on this and other subjects dealt with by the Society during the year will be made at the

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING be held on WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 1994 at 5:15 p.m. in the NEWMAN HALL, NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, corner Park Road and Leopold Takawira Avenue.**

Members are reminded to renew their subscriptions by 30 September 1994 on which date they fall due. Members with outstanding subs are prevented from voting in terms of the constitution.