



PO Box FM 648, Fomona. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Welfare No: W/O 30/94

NEWSLETTER 8 / NOVEMBER 1995

1. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was successfully held on the 27th October 1995 at the Natural History Museum with 61 members and guests present. The proposed amendments to the constitution, as previously advised, were approved.

2. NEW COMMITTEE

The committee for the next year is :-

CHAIRMAN	GR Stephens	Nat. Parks & Matobo Comm Liaison
VICE-CHAIRMAN	J Moger	National Museums & WHS Liaison
SECRETARY	T Hemans	
TREASURER	B Knight	Accounts & Trust Funds
MEMBERS	J Bishop	Public Relations & Newsletter
	D Erwee	Education & Research
	M Ncube	
	M Phillipson	NRB and Mtshabezi Project Liaison
	P O'Hare	Events
	I Sheasby	Membership Secretary

We are sure that we can count on the support of all our members in the year ahead.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Society enjoyed an increase of about 26% in membership during the past year, and we have the following profile: 10 Life members, 76 members, 3 Associate Members and 9 Corporate members. However, we welcome new members and hope to mount a campaign in the next few months. Invite your friends to join!

4. WORLD HERITAGE

Our efforts with our submission have been delayed within the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management. However, National Museums and Monuments, who had received and contributed to our submission, prepared a report of their own, drawing information from our efforts, which was presented at the joint WHC and ICOMOS Conference in Harare from 11 to 15 October. The presentation was well received, and will now be reviewed for final submission by July 1996. Mr J Muringanisa, Regional Inspector of Monuments, will be coordinating this exercise for the Department of National Museums and Monuments.

Your society will continue to liaise with NMM's to ensure that this takes place, and will offer as much help as possible, drawing upon our considerable records that have been gathered during the time we have been pursuing this objective. The major obstacle to be addressed is one of defining the area, and management thereof. It is felt that the National Park is too small an area, but by incorporating the "greater region" one has to deal with three administrations, i.e. National Parks, Rural District Councils (Communal Land) and Commercial Land Owners.

There is no objection to their inclusion, but the UNESCO prefers to deal with only one official (government) authority.

5. NEXT EVENT

We have arranged the following function for the Society:

WHERE	Amalinda Lodge, (Members are asked to keep away from the lodge itself)
WHEN	17 December 1995 10:00am MEET Churchill Arms, 9:00am
WHY	Christmas Social.
WHO	Mr A Packenham will be present to guide, and talk to, us.
WHAT	Own braai lunch, own drinks, chairs etc. HAT AND SUNCREAM!

Whilst any vehicle can make it to Amalinda, trucks are preferred for the subsequent drives. Hope to see you all there!

6. PARK FEES

Your Chairman and Vice Chairman met with the Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism to discuss problems regarding fees in the Matobo National Park. We stressed that there was considerable damage being caused to the archaeological deposit, and the environment by people visiting formerly closed sites to avoid fees. The Deputy Minister assured us that the matter was being discussed, and that a new system, whereby all necessary tickets would be for sale at the gates, was proposed.

Plans have been prepared for the construction of a more appropriate "gate house" for the main entry into the National Park, to be followed by the other entry points. At this stage the Sandy Spruit gate will not include a visitor centre as recommended by your society. However, with the establishment of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management as a separate fund (target date 1 January 1996) the public must be prepared for an increase in rates. At present Zimbabwe has the lowest fees in the region.

7. WATER

The water situation in the National Park is serious, and in particular the hippo and crocodile in Mpopoma dam face a bleak future unless rains fall soon. We also understand that an illegal weir has been constructed upstream of the Park, and this is the cause of much of the problem. Legal advice has been sought, and the society is assisting National Parks in this matter. Boreholes are to be drilled at all the major camping grounds (and in the game park) whilst a borehole at Maleme is to be repaired.

The Chairman will be accompanying local reporters on a visit to the Park so that they can assess the situation for themselves. A meeting with Mr Ruzwa, Warden, Matobo National Park is to be held to update the reporters.

8. DAMAGE TO ROCK ART

Damage to rock art sites has taken on a new dimension since the National Museums and Monuments introduced fees. Whilst the Society understands the enormous frustration that this has caused, we are more concerned with those individuals and operators who have now taken to visiting formerly concealed sites. This is causing untold damage to the archaeological deposits found at the sites; it is the excavation of this material that provides us with the full story of the people who executed their art upon the rock walls. In essence, the visible art is only a small part of the ancient story. With thousands of sites to protect in the Matopos, National Museums and Monuments have found that the most effective way to protect this heritage is to leave it concealed, where nature will continue to preserve the sites as it has done for many thousands of years. Every "open" site has suffered damage (some even destroyed) and we appeal to all to respect National Museums intentions.



**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS? \$50 Family / Ind, \$100 Corp.
ANY QUESTIONS? SOMETHING OF INTEREST? ANY NEWS?
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**