

**MATOBO**



**SOCIETY**

PO Box FM 648, Famona. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Welfare No: W/0 30/94

## NEWSLETTER 24 / OCTOBER 1999

### **1 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Following the release of our last Newsletter, a number of dedicated members pointed out to us that our meeting clashed with the Rugby World Cup finals. Whilst your committee was reluctant to change the dates of the AGM, it was felt that the entire exercise was geared to allow for social interaction between members, and accommodate those members who cannot always attend our Sunday field trips, and so the AGM has been delayed until SATURDAY 27 NOVEMBER 1999. All other details remain the same.

However, our constitution requires that the AGM be held within 30 days of the financial year-end. Therefore, we are in breach of this requirement. Your committee advises that as this requirement is largely to ensure timeous production of the annual financial accounts, and that these will be available for inspection from 31 October, that you, the members, would indulge this transgression. If there are any objections, please lodge these in writing with the Hon. Secretary before 31 October.

The annual financial accounts will be available for inspection from either the Hon. Treasurer or from our auditors, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, after 31 October. Copies will be made available at the AGM itself. However, in order to allay any fears, your Society is financially sound, and made a significant profit for the year. More importantly, our expenses were less than our subscription income, which is a healthy position.

### **2 - COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Your society is becoming overwhelmed by the number of projects and appeals for advice / assistance. Please consider making yourself available to serve on the Committee. The Matopos needs you!

### **3 - NATIONAL PARKS FEES**

The ink was barely dry on our last newsletter when we received information that Park fees had been reversed and then changed again! Whilst it is gratifying to see that action has been taken, we fear that the damage has been done to our already battered image as a tourist destination. However, here are the latest fees in operation—

Entry	Zim	\$20	Foreign	USD10	weekly rate - double
Cars	All	\$50	4x4 / L-Trucks	\$100	Fishing \$20
Camping	All	\$300 per site, 6 pers	Picnic	\$10 per pers	Firewood \$40

Your Society has made submissions to The Hon. Minister of Mines, Environment and Tourism, the Bulawayo Publicity Association and to ZATSO on the position of fees. We have received no feedback from any of these sources, but hope that our views will be appreciated. In particular attention was drawn to the long outstanding wrangle over Parks and Museum fees, and the need for a single collection mechanism.

### **4 - ROCK ART WORKSHOP**

An important two-week workshop on rock art was held in the Matopos from 20 August. This brought together experts from Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa and Zimbabwe, as well as from Norway and Australia. There was also strong representation from the Rock Art Research Centre, based at Wits University. Your Chairman presented a paper that both introduced the MCS, and raised questions regarding the future of our heritage. The workshop itself conducted surveys, and produced important recommendations, which we intend to follow up. Any members who would like to get involved should contact the Chairman.

## 5 - NEXT EVENT

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date	Saturday 27 November 1999 <b>NOTE DATE CHANGE</b>
Venue	Gordon Park Scout Ground
Meet	2:00 am for 2:15am, at the Churchill Arms Hotel
Details	Evening braais available, bring your own food and drink, chairs and tables. There will be an introduction to Gordon Park during the afternoon, followed by the AGM at 5:00 pm. Entry into the park is free — advise that you are travelling to Gordon Park.

### FIELD TRIP

Date	Sunday 12 December 1999
Venue	Masiye Training Camp
Meet	8:45 am for 9:00am, at the Churchill Arms Hotel.
Details	The roads are good, and ordinary sedan vehicles will easily make the trip. The camp is situated on the Toghwana River, along the Tovi road, beyond Mtshelili dam, in the Khumalo Communal Land. This is a rarely visited part of the hills, and its remoteness is certainly one of the attractions of the day. We will be shown around the camp, and will picnic on the banks of the newly constructed dam on the river. Don't forget hats and water!
	Cecil John Rhodes Ndebele Cultural Village We also plan to visit the Cecil John Rhodes Ndebele Cultural Village after lunch. It is situated just 6 kms from Masiye. We have received very positive reports on this venture, and have been invited by the organizers to visit. We are sure that this will prove to be most interesting for all our city-bound members!

### IMPORTANT UPDATE ON MASIYE TRAINING CAMP FIELD TRIP

We have received a warm invitation from the Masiye Training camp for our visit to them on 12 December. They advise that they have a tea room, and that should members wish to support them, the facility will be operational. However, please advise Derek Darby as they will require an estimate of numbers. We do not want to commit members and then find that the tea room is not supported resulting in a waste of food etc. We will still have a picnic lunch on the dam, so bring your own lunch etc.

National Parks have given us permission to drive through the RMNP en route to Masiye Training Camp. The alternative route, via Kezi would have been much longer, so we are grateful to Mrs Moyo, warden RMNP, for this concession. However, we need to supply names and vehicle registration numbers so that a record is kept at the Sandy Spruit gate of those passing through. It is essential that these details are provided — so if you are in doubt, give us your name anyway.

Please contact Derek Darby on 44331 (evenings) or see him at the AGM. The lists will be handed to RMNP after the AGM.

## 6 - PROTEA ATLAS

Members of the Protea Atlas Project (affiliated to the South African Botanical Society) will be visiting Zimbabwe later this year to search for new data. Whilst most of their effort will be spent in the Eastern Highlands, following representation from the MCS, a party of enthusiastic botanists will return to South Africa via the Matopos. They will spend about a day with us. If there are any members who wish to meet with this group, or would like to join the Protea Atlas Project, or have an interest in Proteas or botany generally, please contact the Chairman.

## 7 - WOOD CARVING IN THE HILLS

We have received a submission from a member with some positive thoughts on possible solutions to the problem of the woodcarvers, and the loss of the *Kirkia acuminata*. It is hoped that following the AGM, we might establish a sub-committee to really tackle the problem — it's time we put our money where it counts! If any members would like to get involved in solving a serious threat to our hills, please advise the Chairman.

WE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH ALL OUR MEMBERS A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS, AND A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR, CENTENARY, AND MILLENIUM!