

MATOBO



SOCIETY

PO Box FM 648, Famona. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

www.matobo.org

Welfare No: W/O 30/94

NEWSLETTER 81 / JANUARY 2013

1 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We held a fairly well attended Annual General Meeting on 25th November at Rowallan Park, Matobo National Park. The rain held off for most of the morning – though we did have to seek shelter in the Hall during the meeting and after lunch, when a good shower hit the area, measuring 26mm. Area Manager, Dr Norman Monks spoke as our guest, and outlined both problems and solutions for the future of the National Park. This afforded members a great opportunity to get an update direct from the Area Manager for which we appreciate Norman's candidness! We thank all those who attended and participated in the interesting debate that followed the meeting.

2 – NEW COMMITTEE

Your committee remains the same and comprises office bearers Chairman Gavin Stephens, Vice-Chairman Gaynor Lightfoot, Secretary Jean Whiley and Treasurer Adele Edwards, and members, Duncan Purchase, Paul Hubbard and Shelagh Adams.

Whilst we are thankful to our regular committee stalwarts, we do need new blood with fresh ideas in the year ahead and can co-opt members who want to be more involved!

3 - MATOBO WORLD HERITAGE

Both National Parks and National Museums have recognised the need to resuscitate the Matobo Hills World Heritage Management Committee and plan. Your Society has played a part in this process and hopes to continue in its engagement. There is a real recognition that the two bodies have to work together to ensure that the site does not get listed as an “Endangered Site” and we are confident that progress will be made in the year ahead.

4 – RHINO NEWS

Four white rhinos poached on New Year's Day: Four white rhinos were on New Year's Day poached at Thertford Estate in Mazowe. Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority public relations manager Caroline Washaya-Moyo announced. What a sad start to the year!

5 - RAINFALL

The rainfall for the start of the 2012 / 2013 season was very disappointing. We can only hope that the long-range forecast of normal rains in the second half of the season will prove to be true.

We must have experienced one of the longest dry periods on record, with the last meaningful rains recorded in mid-December 2011. The heavy rains that hit Bulawayo in mid-December 2012 did not reach the Matopos, and so at the time of writing, the hills have endured twelve months with as little as 150mm. The streams and rivers are all dry – and yet amongst the Hills springs can still be found.

In the eastern Matopos rainfall for the current season (up to 31st December) has been recorded at 190 mm, in the central area at 90 mm and in the western part at 90 mm. The New Year started with widespread rain so we hope there will be a dramatic improvement by the time we next write!

Zim to receive normal rains until April: The Met Department has said Zimbabwe should brace for continued rainfall till the end of April. Speaking at a Rainfall Season Update meeting on Friday 4th January 2013, acting deputy director operations Terence Mushore said the country would receive normal to above normal rains until the end of April – *Herald, January 5.*

STOP NEWS – Heavy rains were recorded in the Matopos between 15th and 21st January 2013.

6 - NEXT EVENT

Date	10 February 2013
Venue	Lower Outspan
Meet	8:15am to leave by 8:30am, Churchill Arms Hotel
Travel	All vehicles
Details	Provide own chairs, tables, meals and drinks. Don't forget your hat!

Some members may want to leave early and enjoy breakfast at the Lower Outspan, just off the western leg of the Circular drive. Others may want to travel at different times, as long as we are all at the Lower Outspan by 9:30am. After morning tea, we will walk the original gun-carriage route up the World's View to the summit where we will visit the well-known monuments. However, we will enjoy the direction of Paul Hubbard who will share the special history. Paul will give us a talk at the Lower Outspan so that those members who can't do the walk will still find it interesting. And, please bring your costumes for an afternoon swim in a forest pool!

You will need to pay a Parks entrance fee of \$3 per person, and \$3 per car, and a museum entry fee of \$4.

7 – REPORT BACK

Editor - I received two reports from the last outing, and whilst I considered merging the two, I thought I would print both as they give different views on the outing. I appreciate both contributions.

(With acknowledgment to Mary Friend)

Expecting a scorching hot October day, we were pleasantly surprised by somewhat hazy, overcast weather with a gentle breeze as we set out to discover areas and a dam off the Old Gwanda Road which most of us had not seen before. The Lightfoots, Sellicks and Adele & Mary met at Churchill Arms at 7 a.m. and set off for Matobo Mission where we were to meet Gavin, who had been celebrating his birthday with family and friends at Camp Dwala. On reaching the mission Gaynor and Adele set off on foot to see what birds were near the upper dam while the rest of us enjoyed coffee and biscuits, and we were joined by Dot and Brenda Page. Moving on we parked near the mission cemetery, which Dot & Brenda went to look at while the others walked down to the lower dam – and in due course Alison & Hugh Roberts, Jean & Rob Whiley, and Judy Ross & Shaun Francis arrived from town as well as Gavin and Joan – others had decided to stay at Camp Dwala and who can blame them – it's a magic spot.

We proceeded along the Old Gwanda Road – which was in much better shape than when we last went that way, past the turn off to Matshashasha Falls and then turned left past a newly built church – I didn't take the mileage unfortunately – across farmlands which in the rains must be very wet and boggy. The road was pretty basic, with some interesting rock climbs and sharp bends, I was glad Adele was driving! We stopped to look at a magnificent tree orchid – in fact orchids, the higher one being different to the lower. The area had an abundance of aloes, must be wonderful in July, and also mountain acacias *Brachystegia glaucesens* some of which were in their spring colours of russet, red and lime green, while others had not even thought of pushing out a leaf, strange from trees that are usually at their peak in September – something to do with last season's poor rains perhaps? There were some magnificent views along the way and I thought how my old friend Tony Hunt, who was a District Commissioner in the area for a good while, always said that part of Matobo had some of the most spectacular scenery. We approached the dam with caution – the last few hundred meters posing a very steep, rocky incline – which the Page girls and Adele and I didn't risk – we may have got down but not back up – but kind friends carted us and our chairs, etc., down.

It is a delightful dam, lots of water, and we picnicked by the remains of the DC's weekend cottage – a basic two rooms and veranda – and an imposing fireplace – the roof was no more. The energetic members walked over the dam wall and across the other side, while the less mobile guarded the camp and I have to admit opened the beers. Gavin doesn't know the name of the dam and Hugh couldn't find the river on his map. Everyone enjoyed lunch, some more orchids were found, and I couldn't help feeling how privileged we were to be taken to places we wouldn't otherwise see if not for Gavin's wide knowledge of the Matobo Hills.

We stopped at Camp Dwala on the way home, for a welcome cup of tea and to see the latest arrival, a baby zebra born on Gavin's birthday. Other animal sightings on the drive out were one kudu seen by

Adele & I, while Judy & Shaun saw 4 kudu (in the same area) and then a bit further on 4 giraffe. Gavin thinks these may have wandered over from Tshabalala. Somehow the corrugations didn't seem so bad on the Old Gwanda Road going back, but the rubbish dumped near town is disgusting and makes me ashamed to be a Bulawayan.

(With acknowledgment to Adele Edwards)

‘So where are we going for the next MCS outing?’ ‘Mmm... not sure. Some dam without a name in the eastern Matopos’. And so, in a spirit of adventure we set out on Sunday 14th October. After a couple of weeks of scorching hot weather, we decide to set off a bit earlier than usual, agreeing to all meet up at the Matobo Mission by 9 a.m. Not surprisingly Saturday then turned cool, while Bulawayo received its first shower for the season. However, the weather on Sunday was ideal for our purposes, with fairly heavy cloud cover for most of the day taking the edge off the heat. Along the way we were delighted to spot kudu, impala and even 4 giraffe – presumably truants from Tshabalala, enjoying the flush of new grass in a burnt area. Those of us who arrived at the Mission early had the opportunity to do some birding, potter around the graves in the cemetery, or relax and chat over a cup of coffee. Both the dams were considerably lower than when we visited the Mission last November. A group of eight yellow-billed storks paddled and fed in a shallow pool at the edge of one of the dams. At 9 we regrouped and headed out on the next stage of our magical mystery tour.

The Old Gwanda Road has been graded recently. The section between town and the Mission was in much better condition than the last time I drove out that way but has already redeveloped some corrugated patches. However beyond the Mission the road was excellent, and as a result we could pick up a bit of speed. A pity in a way as my head kept turning from side-to-side with so much to see. ‘Look at the colour of that lichen’. ‘Did you see the way that fig was growing out the side of that rock face?’ ‘Look at the colour of that tree’. ‘How can that rock possibly stay balanced there? It defies gravity!’ And then we tuned off into an area none of us was familiar with and the real fun began; Dakar Rally here we come. Across a field apparently following the tracks of a scotch cart, sharp turn around a boulder, alongside the homestead fence (where the fence poles are now starting to sprout), over the granite at the edge of a long, low, flat dwala, until the final descent to the dam – less than 100m, quite a steep slope, lots of big, loose boulders. At which point a couple of us decided to leave our vehicles. But there was a lot of space in the other cars, and plenty of willing hands to help shift our kit across, and in no time we were all down at our chosen spot. What a delightful dam! It has quite a substantial concrete wall and is still relatively full. Apparently, a number of such dams were built throughout the Matopos in the fifties for water storage. Some have been equipped with pipes and pumps to supply water to nearby villages but many, like this one, have not. During the course of the day we saw a couple of donkeys and a few cattle come for a drink, and one homestead appeared to have a vegetable patch but otherwise we saw no sign of use or human habitation. Where we picnicked, there was the shell of a cottage believed to have been built and used by the DC (District Commissioner). They must have had some great times there. Piles of scales showed there must be some good fish in the dam, while a heap of crushed shell found down by the water's edge presumably means there are otters there.

After a refreshment break the party split up with the largest group heading off to look for Mbelele cave, while others took a gentler stroll, and some remained comfortably in camp. About 2 hours later everyone wandered back for lunch. We chatted about birds: there were African black duck, white-faced duck and Egyptian geese on the dam; three southern ground hornbill foraged on the hillside and then flew off over the dam, with surprising grace for such large ungainly birds; and recently returned European bee-eaters dipped and swooped over the water. We talked about plants: the *Brachystegia* were a bit of a puzzle - we'd hoped to find them full of spring colour and new leaf but while some were already green (but such a bright green that it looked as if each leaf was lit up from the inside), many had no leaf at all, but there was also a glorious mix of all the colours in between – yellow, orange and maroon; we stopped to look at two giant specimens of flowering leopard spot tree orchids (*ansellia africana*); and agreed we must return when the aloes were in flower – some of the *aloe excelsa* stood 2m high. We spoke about rocks and rock art and the cave we never found (good excuse for a future visit!). We talked about GPSs and maps and pondered where we were and the name of the dam and the river – a mystery we have yet to solve. And we debated about water and water supplies and the lack thereof!

All too soon it was time to start heading home. The climb out from the dam was a bit of a challenge for the drivers but once again with a little help from friends we soon had all the vehicles and all the adventurers out and set and ready to go. A magical day out, thoroughly enjoyed by all those who participated.

Adele Edwards

(Subsequent to our visit, we learnt that the dam was built in 1963 and is called "Jeezie dam." It is located on the Sigitu River)

8 – LITTER

Polyfoil / Nampak have generously donated litter bags that were delivered to Dr Norman Monks at our AGM at the end of November, so as to support the National Park's "Carry in, Carry out" policy. We ask our members to help Parks in their on-going efforts to keep the place clean – and to report any litter bugs! Dr Monks was able to show our members a proposed "lid" that should be animal proof, and so keep the litter in the bins! He also acknowledged that in the past rubbish collected at various sites had been dumped behind the nearest rock by Nat park's staff, but that this policy has come to an end and that a clean-up is underway. A big effort has been made at Maleme – but if you find any "dumps" please let either Dr Monks, or us, know so that it can be cleaned up.

We thank Polyfoil / Nampak for their generous donation.

9 – BIRDLIFE HERITAGE

The Chairman received the following e-mail which was forwarded to Cecilia Hubbard, Chairman of BirdLife Matabeleland. The reply is recorded below. Cecilia's number is recorded below, and members can contact her directly – or via our MCS Secretary. We ask members to keep a watch for this bird in the Hills – and you have permission to shoot on sight!

"On 20 November 2012, I drove up to Zimbabwe and when passing through Gwanda spotted an Indian Myna on the telephone/electricity lines as I drove into Gwanda from the Beitbridge side in the vicinity of the petrol station which is on the right hand side (I think it is a BP garage).

I know that there has always been conjecture that the Indian Mynas would not be able to make it from Beitbridge to Gwanda, but I can confirm that there is at least one who has made it.

It will be a sad day indeed if they get a foothold in Zimbabwe."

Cecilia Hubbard replies:

"Thank you for the mail received via Paul regarding the Common (Indian) Myna.

Unfortunately, the Myna arrived in Zimbabwe a few years back. Unfortunately, they are spreading. There are many of them in Gwanda – not just the couple your correspondent spotted. They are resident in West Nicholson, Colleen Bawn, and recently recorded in Esigodini.

I have been travelling fairly extensively between Gwanda and Bulawayo, and so far I have not seen or heard of any birds between the towns yet. However, I would ask you keep an eye out for them and let BirdLife know. We are recording their sightings.

At this stage it appears they seem to be mostly in towns, but no one knows for sure. The reason being most reports seem to come from town residents. The couple first seen in Bulawayo about two years ago, are now far more than just a 'couple'.

Last year, there was a report of them from Hwange Safari Lodge, and a pair was seen at Shapi Pan in the Game Park. The only other report of them in the 'wild' was from the Matetsi area.

A couple of weeks ago, the first reports of them being seen in Harare were received.

They are considered a nuisance, and no one knows with any certainty if they will have no, little, or huge effect on our indigenous birds – especially an effect on what are considered the 'garden' species such as barbets and woodpeckers. Will they or will they not take over their nesting sites? Questions such as this one remain unanswered at this time.

In view of so little being known about the effect they may have, and the fact that they breed all year round and are pretty aggressive birds – we are appealing for as much information as we can get. Sightings, inter-actions with other species etc.

I certainly hope they fly straight past our beloved Matobo Hills!

Regards

Cecilia Hubbard

Chairman, BirdLife Zimbabwe – Matabeleland Branch

Mobile No : 0772 433 733"

10 – ZIMBABWE TOURISM UP 17%

“The number of tourists who visited Zimbabwe during the first six months of 2012 went up by 17 percent from 637,389 last year to 767,939, the African Development Bank (AFDB) has said. “Zimbabwe received a total of 675,721 tourists from Africa, reflecting a 19 percent increase from 2011. The European market is the second highest visitors, contributing 40,915 tourists (which is a very positive 18 percent increase compared to the same period last year),” The UK remains the main European source, supplying 26 percent of tourists from Europe. The AFDB also said mid-year hotel room occupancy also increased slightly from 38 percent in 2011 to 39 percent in 2012. They anticipate that the introduction of new airlines, such as Emirates, KLM Royal Dutch Airline, Air Botswana and Mozambique Airlines would facilitate tourism growth ahead of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation general assembly. Zimbabwe and Zambia won the bid to co-host the 2013 UNWTO Assembly, to be held in Victoria Falls and Livingstone respectively, beating Russia, Turkey, Jordan and Qatar. The General Assembly is the supreme organ of the UNWTO and its ordinary sessions, held every two years, are attended by delegates from full and associate members, as well as representatives from the business council. The event will bring 186 countries to the Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It will be the largest world gathering of countries in Zimbabwe since the Commonwealth Heads of State and Government Meeting held in the resort town, about two decades ago.”

Whilst the report above is positive and we all yearn for a recovery in tourism, we have to ask ourselves if the Matopos is in fact ready to receive an increase in tourist arrivals. We all remember those heady days in the mid to late ‘90’s when the Park was very busy – but do we recall the problems that were encountered? The environment certainly suffered – and it cannot support considerable numbers of visitors. Certain tree species are all but extinct in some parts due to the demand for wood curios. Footpaths require repair, direction arrows need to be re-painted, parking upgraded. Roads need attention. How do we control dust in the caves? How do we prevent tour operators from abusing our heritage as occurred in the 90’s? Are the guides working the Matopos up to the task? Are they qualified to talk about the Hills and its delicate environment – and can they be trusted to place conservation ahead of monetary gain? Do visitors have appropriate facilities – especially clean and working toilets? The MCS believes that a rapid uncontrolled growth in tourism could indeed pose one of the most significant risks to the Matopos heritage.

The Matobo National Park Management Plan has expired, and in any event risks and scenarios change. Nat Park’s administration is aware of the need to update its management plan and strategic vision, and we hope that this will be done in conjunction with National Museum’s and the MCS to ensure that the appropriate risks are identified. But what can be done to protect those parts of the hills that lie outside the Park?

11 – NEWS FROM THE PARK

(With appreciation to Dr Norman Monks, Area Manager, Matobo National Park)

General

Matopos National Park as tourists know it is 453km² in extent and includes Hazelside, Whitewaters, Maleme, the Game Park (Whovi), Mtshелеle dam and Toghwana Dam. It is one entity with the headquarters and administrative centre at Maleme and with a number of sub-stations (Whitewaters, Hazelside, Mtshелеle and Toghwana) feeding into the mother station. Matopos Dam and Tshabalala also come under the Park administration. What many people may not realise is that the Matopos Research Station is leased from Parks to Ministry of Agriculture and so the area from the north of the Park almost into Bulawayo comes under the jurisdiction of the Park.

Administration of the Park

In October of 2011 two new Area Managers (what were known as Wardens) were transferred to the Park. Mr Nyathi is in charge of law-enforcement for the whole Park (a daunting task which he has carried out well). Dr Norman Monks’s jurisdiction is Tourism, Administration, Research and Conservation for the whole Park. The placement of two area Managers in a Park as small as Matopos is unusual but because of the presence of rhino in the Park it was thought that it would be best to have a full-time law enforcement person whose activities would be focussed on this task.

Funding the management of the Park

The Rhodes Matopos National Park and the Rhodes Nyanga National Park are the only two Parks in Zimbabwe where the funds generated on station remain on station and are used to run the Park. This is a mixed blessing: the two Parks do not get subsidies from Government or from the Parks Authority (apart from salaries). This means that the entire running of the Park (vehicles, fuel, workshop repairs, roads, fireguards, building maintenance, patrol rations, field allowances and so on) is reliant on revenue collected on station. The public may want to consider this when they are reluctant to pay entry, fishing, accommodation and camping fees since their payments are what keep the Park functioning. This is your Park and your support is vital.

Rhino protection

No rhinos were poached from October 2011 to October 2012 and then unfortunately one white rhino was poached in October and a black rhino in November. This was a blow to staff who had spent many hours in uncomfortable conditions looking after the rhino. Unfortunately poachers changed strategy and their method of killing the rhino was not detected immediately. However through information received, six people were arrested soon after the second rhino was killed. There have been admissions of guilt and the accused are in jail at this time.

Accommodation

Most of the lodges and chalets and ablution blocks are in need of refurbishment. Staff work hard to keep the deteriorating accommodation units clean and most tourists acknowledge this and accept the fact that the units are not up to scratch but are at least presentable. It was planned to have six units refurbished by the end of 2012. Unfortunately due to financial constraints, only three units have been refurbished (apart from new furniture). These are Lodges 8, 9 and 10. Each week whatever money that could be spared was used to by floor and wall tiles, paint and building materials until sufficient had been accumulated to completely re-do a lodge. Refurbishment will continue and hopefully a time will come when each lodge or chalet is of a quality that the public are happy with.

The Public who enjoy staying at Matopos may like to consider this idea: If you enjoy staying at Matopos and want to assist in the refurbishment of a lodge, you could undertake to refurbish a lodge of your choice and in return obtain preferential bookings and “free” accommodation to the value of the refurbishment. If you are interested please e-mail Norman Monks nmonks2009@yahoo.co.uk for details.

Assistance from the public and societies

The Park is very fortunate in having many people who are willing to offer support to the management of the area. WEZ assisted with signs, maps, repeater-link 12 volt batteries for radio communication, bins and brilliant baboon-proof bin lids. The latter has made a huge difference in the rest camp where the open bins were a mecca for baboons and monkeys - with resultant trash being scattered around. Sadly many baboons and monkeys are showing signs of emotional stress and frustration as they move from impenetrable bin to impenetrable bin! The manufacturer of the bin top has offered to employ the first baboon to work out how to open a bin so we wait with bated breath...!

Dambari Trust has been a constant support with items for rhino protection, as well as assisting in the data collection. In addition they have assisted the Park in sourcing goods and materials urgently needed. SAVE Foundation based in Australia has been an untiring support base to the Park and has supplied motor-bikes, a landrover and many other support items that help the station to function.

Just recently interested parties have come together to collect funds to erect a fence around Whovi Game Park. SAVE has donated a substantial amount to this project. Negotiations are underway to ensure that the whole Park can be fenced. This is important to staff morale, to the many communities surrounding the whole park and to the public who would like to see holistic development. There is a danger in having a National Park split into various segments due to the preference of one group of people over a particular area.

PPC Zimbabwe donated 50 pockets of cement to the Park, some of which has been used to repair Maleme Dam wall.

Community Participation

The surrounding Communities are often forgotten when managing a Park and a “hard boundary” develops where the Community sees a line on a map (or a fence in the case of Matopos National Park), forming an unfriendly barrier between them and what was theirs but is now a Conservation area.

We have made efforts to meet with the Communities surrounding the Park; to introduce new Management; to offer assistance and to appeal for reciprocal assistance. To date the Park has provided transport in the form a 7 tonne truck to carry Communal fertilizer and grain and to carry school children visiting other schools for sports and functions. The Community was encouraged to cut thatching grass

for their own use with a small percentage coming to the Park. A project to supply firewood to the Community from selected areas where there are dead trees and bush encroachment is being worked on. The Park will also benefit from the harvesting of wood. Naturally this is a benefit that needs to be very well controlled. Due to the Community's commitment, there were no fires this year in the Park from the entrance gate to Maleme Dam.

Wildlife Viewing

Wildlife viewing has improved with sightings being regularly made of wildebeest, zebra, eland, impala, warthog, klipspringers, bushbuck, dassies, sable and of course black and white rhino. The writer recently saw three wild pigs at close quarters whilst on a game-drive. A number of sightings of leopards have been made. Camera Traps put out by Dambari Trust indicates that there is a healthy population of brown hyaena in the National Park. Game-viewing from the tar is not good due to the fact that the roads are public ones with heavy disruptive traffic. The dirt roads that have been opened up are well worth travelling on for game viewing.

Matopos National Park in its entirety is your Park and your support and commitment to maintain its integrity is vital. Management is committed to ensuring that the flora and fauna is protected and at the same time ensuring that where possible, funds are generated to undertake essential management. Please continue to support the Park and look upon it as a privilege this amazingly beautiful area so near your doorstep. Thank you for your support and interest. Please feel free to come in and see me (Norman Monks) if you need to talk about the park or if you have any suggestions or complaints. For the latter please come with workable solutions!

14 – SUBSCRIPTIONS

The AGM maintained subscriptions for the year 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013 at the same level as that which prevailed in 2012.

US\$ 20	Individual/Family
US\$ 5	Special Member (Pensioner/Student)
US\$100	Corporate

We urge members to settle their dues. At the same time, you are encouraged to invite potential members to join the Society. Friends are always welcome at our quarterly events – and hopefully will join the Society thereafter. New subscriptions were due from 1 October 2012.

15 – CALENDAR 2013

Proposed dates for the 2013 field trips are being finalised and will be advised in the next Newsletter. We welcome any suggestions.

Next Trip	May 2013 (date tbc)
MCS AGM	Sunday 25 November 2013

16 – www.matobo.org

We continue to get "visitors" to our web-site from around the world. Have you checked in yet?

17 – MCS APPAREL

The Society has stocks of hats and caps (at \$10 each) and we are looking into shirts and other apparel.

18 – CONDOLENCES

Paddy Vickery (29/11/1926 - 06/12/2012)

We are saddened to see that Paddy Vickery passed away peacefully on Thursday 6th December at about 0630, in her sleep. She was living in Surbiton in Surrey UK, after leaving Zimbabwe about 10 years ago. She had just celebrated her 86th Birthday on the 29th November and had been in reasonable health right up to the end. Fortunately her family was visiting her at the time and she was happy to have her family there with her. It came as a shock that she died suddenly the next morning but she died happy and with dignity. Our Paddy was an enthusiastic supporter of the Society and attended most, if not all, outings whilst she was in Bulawayo. She particularly enjoyed leading some of our more historic field trips, and came prepared with drawings, diagrams and pictures!

Condolences are extended to Bill, Ted and family.

19 – OBITUARY

Trevor John Hemans (1929-2012)

Trevor was born on 27th June 1929 in Rusape where his father was a Native Commissioner. After his father's death, when Trevor was six years old, his mother moved to Bulawayo with Trevor and his older sister Audrey. Trevor was educated firstly at the Convent, followed by Milton Junior and then completing his secondary education at Milton.

Despite achieving good grades in his examinations, he turned down the opportunity to go University. His father had had a book published called "The Log of a Native Commissioner". Trevor had read this book over and over again and had never had any ambitions but to follow in his father's footsteps. He joined the Department of Native Affairs on the 2nd of January 1946 and as 16 year old clerk dressed in shirt, tie, shorts and long socks and earning nine shillings per day. That was the start of a 36 year career in the department which was later rebranded as the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Trevor's bachelor life was spent in many locations in the country, mostly out in the bush. These included Plumtree, Gwanda, Marandellas, the village of his birth Rusapi and two and a half years in Belingwe. He enjoyed the great outdoors in these places, hunting, motorcycling and climbing hills. He inherited the nickname Matandidwala from his father and he did indeed love the hills. He also had a short spell in what was then Essexvale. While he was there he planned to visit old friends in Belingwe. He was however asked to officiate at the annual sports day between Mzingwani and Tegwani schools and reluctantly had to cancel these plans while delivering a speech at the opening of the sports day he noticed a young lady in the audience and was smitten. Her name was Judith Shepstone and she had recently moved to Bulawayo from Durban. They were married for 52 years.

He moved to Bulawayo in March 1977 as Provincial Commissioner for Matabeleland North. 35 years later he was still in Bulawayo which more than any other place was truly home. Following independence he left government service and held various posts including the Bulawayo City Council and Samuel Osborne. He also worked at the Pioneer Society.

Trevor served the MCS as secretary for many years, until he found his hearing an impediment. His "on the ground" knowledge, and his experience from working in the civil service, was invaluable to the Society. Trevor was recognised as an Honorary Member of the Society in 2011.

Trevor will be remembered fondly by all who knew him as a true gentleman.

He is survived by his four children, Jenifer, Michael, Valerie and Barry, his 7 grandchildren Richard, James, Terence, Barry, Jade, Rebecca and Rachel, his two great grandchildren Caleb and Jonah and his sister Audrey.

The Chairman and members express their condolences to the family.

20 – COMING UP

Our next Newsletter will have an update on the proposed National Park Fence project, the Matobo 33 Miler Ultra-Marathon on 6th April, and the Matopos Heritage MTB Challenge that starts on 13th March.

WE WISH ALL OUR MEMBERS ALL THE BEST FOR THE NEW YEAR.