



NEWS FROM MASHONALAND

Issue Number 1 (May – October 2017)

My last newsletter (Central Newsletter 101) was the last of the Central Newsletters because with the adoption of the new Regimental Association Constitution the Central committee Branch became defunct and was replaced by the College of Branches. Thus came to an end a series of Central Newsletters that spanned 53 years from 1963 to 2016. Numbers 1 to 80 were written by the late Hugh Phillips over the period 1963 to 2003. Peter Bellingham wrote newsletters 81 to 89 over the period 2003 to 2012, and I took over the newsletter in 2015 and wrote numbers 99-101 over the period 2015/ 2016. So welcome to the first newsletter from the Mashonaland Branch.

Mashonaland Branch and Annual General Meeting

The Mashonaland Branch has not been very active socially for some time and it was felt that a concerted effort was needed in order to rekindle interest in the section. Thanks largely to the efforts of Andrew Field, who contacted as many members as he possible could via e-mail, the 2017 AGM held on the 14th May 2017 at the Biker's Club was attended by approx 40+ members, the best attendance for a number of years. Only 33 members and their guests signed the register which showed the following members and guests having attended :- 7615 Tok Arnold, 5111 Jack Bacon (on a visit from the UK), 7737 Brett Baines, 5281 Peter Bellingham, 5503/6384 Peter Birkett, Stella Blake, Ed Bosman, WP69 Eve Chapman, Connie Borra (De Kock), Andrew Field 8646, 5917 Rod Finnigan, 7458 Mike & Sue Fox, 9357 Charlie Hand, 6427 Peter Hind, Neville Hay, 6262 Nigel Gabriel, 111038 Cliff Johnson, Mike Lear, 8207 Alastair Lornie, 5652 Bill Linfield, 6319 Chris Looker, 6377 Tony Maycock, Tony Needham (Army), 9889 Don Macintosh, 7532 G J Oberholzer, 9406 Red O'connell, Jane Phillips, 8746 Rick Summers, 6029 Jamie Tennant, 6724/9210 John Van Zyl, Bob Warren Codrington (Army), WP 228 Shevaun Whiting, and 6783 Dave Young. Apologies were received from 9348 Bill Edwards, 10115 Dave Mackintosh and I was advised that quite a few apologies were received by e-mail. I was delighted to see my old friend Jack Bacon (over on a visit from the UK) at the AGM and we met up again later to enjoy lunch whilst reminiscing. A new committee comprising 5052 Bill Linfield (Chairman), 7458 Mike Fox (Secretary), 8646 Andrew Field (Treasurer), 6262 Nigel Gabriel (Almoner) and 9406 Red O'Connell (Member) was elected. A very pleasant lunch followed the meeting and our thanks are due to those members who organized and provided the lunch.

Victoria Cross

In Central Newsletters (Nos. 99-101) I mentioned members associated with the BSAP who had won the Victoria Cross, namely Lt Col Sherwood Kelly (1021 MMP), Capt (later Major) R C Nesbitt (BSAP), Sgt (later Capt) F C Booth (BSAP) and Sgt (Later Capt) Edmund O'Toole (Pioneer Column). Another VC recipient associated with the BSAP has now come to light. In the latest "Heritage Of Zimbabwe" magazine (number 34), the magazine issued by the Zimbabwe Historic Society, there is a very interesting article by Dr Bob Challis concerning Captain Alfred John Shout of the 1st Bn (NSW) Australian Imperial Force. Captain Shout was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously in 1915 at Gallipoli. Although born in New Zealand, Captain Shout became an Australian hero as he was the most highly decorated Australian soldier during the Gallipoli Campaign, having earlier won the Military Cross. His medals were sold in Sydney in 2006 for a

record price of A\$ 1. 2 million. Dr Challis's article, which is too long to include in this newsletter, has been intensely researched and records that Alfred John Shout served in the BSAP during the period 11. 7. 1906 to 16. 5. 1907, Regimental Number 803.

He had served in a number of South African military units prior to joining the BSAP. Captain Shout only served in the BSAP for ten months and the reasons for his leaving the force after so short a term remain unclear. A number of possibilities are mentioned by Dr Challis but you will need to read the article yourself to form your own opinion. This is a fascinating and intriguing story of a very brave and gallant man which is well worth reading. My thanks to Dr Challis for allowing me to quote his article in this newsletter.

Pennefather

Whilst on the subject of Force history, Michael Tucker (website www.zimfieldguide.com) recently sent me an very interesting article concerning Edward Graham Pennefather 1850 – 1928, who was of course the Officer Commanding of the BSAC Police and in overall charge of the Pioneer Column. This article is very informative and contains a great deal of personal detail which includes letters he and his mother exchanged during Pennefather's career and the progress of the Pioneer Corps expedition into Mashonaland. I highly recommend this article to readers interested in Rhodesia history and the history of the BSAP which can be viewed on Michael Tuckers website.

Sundowners

The monthly sun-downers continue to be held on the second Friday of each month at the Biker's Club in Mount Pleasant. I did not attend the June sundowner but I gather there were only a few people in attendance, no doubt the rain, potholes and Zimbabwe traffic would account for the small attendance. The attendance for the July sun-downer saw an improvement with a total of 12 members and their guests in attendance and with the warm weather now with us it is hoped we shall see an increase in attendances. A welcome guest was 9076 Graham Brand on a visit from Nigeria where he is now resident, other members and guests present were :- 7615 Tok Arnold, 5503/6384 Peter Birkett, Bill Birkett, 8646 Andrew Field, 7458 Mike Fox, 5917 Rod Finnigan, 5052 Bill Linfield, 6007 Bob Schonken, 8746 Rick and Roz Summers and 9094 Mike Wilton.

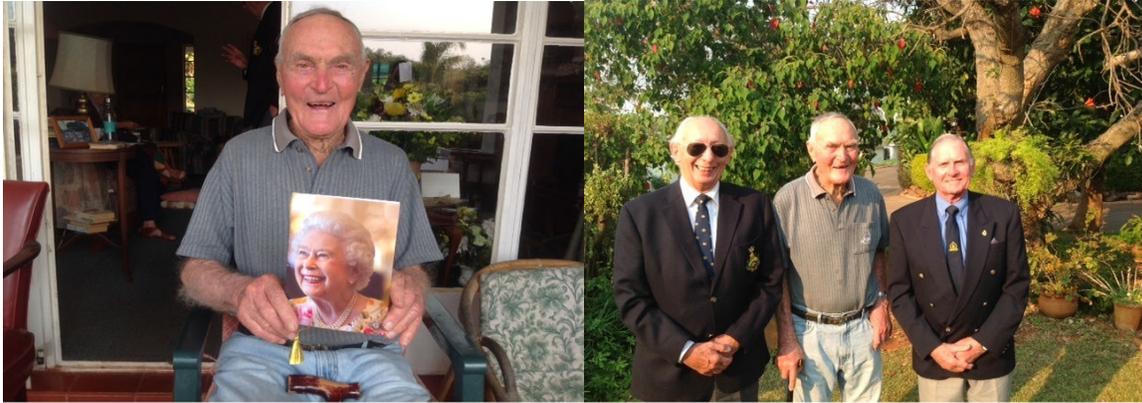
In Memoriam: Brian Taylor

I was sorry to hear of the death of my dear friend 5507 Brian Harry Taylor, in Portsmouth,UK on the 15th August 2017. In 1988 we both joined the Zimbabwe Medal Society. Brian was in fact a founder member of the Society and he was editor of the Society's journal for many years. Brian was an accomplished collector and extremely knowledgeable on the subject of military medals, specializing on medals awarded to members of the BSAP. When he died we not only lost a dear friend but one of the most accomplished and knowledgeable members of the Society. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

Ashley Staunton: 100th Birthday

On a happier note, Ashley Staunton celebrated his 100th birthday recently. Ashley was born on 26th August 1917 in Harare. He farmed on Clover farm in the Enterprise district for many years and was a keen member of the Police Reservist from the 1950's to the early 1980's. Bill Linfield (Chairman) and Nigel Gabriel (Almoner) went along to help Ashley celebrate this very special occasion at his home in Borrowdale Brook, Harare, and to offer the congratulations of the

Regimental Association to Ashley on this very special day. Ashley was delighted to have received a telegram and a card from Her Majesty the Queen. The photos below show Ashley with his card from The Queen and Ashley with Bill and Nigel.



August Sundowner

The August sundowner was attended by the following members and their guests :- 5568 Dennis Anderson, 7458 Mike and Sue Fox, 6262 Nigel Gabriel, 8374 Peter Jelliman, 5652 Bill Linfield, 5927 Maxie McDonald, 6377 Tony Maycock, 6007 Bob Schonken, 8746 Rick and Roz Summers and 6724 John Van Zyl. Tony Maycock is off to live in Knysna, South Africa in the near future and we all wish him and his family everything of the best for the future.

In Memoriam: Peter Robinson

On the 6th September 2017, we were deeply saddened to hear that 4059 Peter John (PJ) Robinson PMM had died at his home in Harare after a short illness. Peter was an Honorary Life Member of the Regimental Association and a Life Member of the Mashonaland Branch. Peter was for many



years a very active and generous member of the Association. Peter (92) was also the oldest active member of the Mashonaland Branch. After a distinguished Police career (1946 to 1975) Peter entered the world of private security and in 1982 he established Guard Alert, which is today one of the largest private security companies in the country. Peter's memorial service was held on the 15th

September 2017 at St Georges College Chapel, Harare. The very large number of family, friends, members of the Regimental Association and colleagues and employees from Guard Alert who

attended the memorial service bore testimony to a devoted family man, a loyal and friendly colleague who was highly respected by all who knew him. The funeral service concluded with the Last Post, very well played by buglers from the ZRP Band. Above are photos of the late Peter Robinson and one of the buglers who played the Last Post at Peter's memorial service.

September Sundowner

The September 2017 sundowner was attended by 7456 Mike and Sue Fox, 6262 Nigel Gabriel, 5917 Rod Finnigan, 8646 Andrew Field, 6007 Bob Schonken, 8746 Rick and Roz Summers, 8477 Peter Quick who was here on a 3 week visit from the UK, 7997 Gordon Law who brought along his brother Chris, and a most welcome visit from 8303 Rob Bristow up on a visit from South Africa. Rob is a regular visitor to Harare and never misses a sundowner if he is in town, it is always a pleasure to see you Rob.

Late Olive Osbourne MBE

On the 23rd September 2017 I attended the memorial service held at the Athol Evans Chapel, Harare, for Olive Egleton Osbourne MBE (25 June 1928-10 September 2017) the widow of 4086 C/Inspector Bill Osbourne. Olive died in Harare on the 10th September 2017. Olive was awarded her MBE for her dedicated and untiring services to ex-servicemen in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and for her services to the Royal British Legion and The Legion over many years. The memorial service was conducted by Matron Katharine Howard (herself an MBE if I recall correctly) and was a well deserved tribute to a lovely lady. Olive's late husband Bill Osbourne was of course an ex serviceman. Prior to joining the BSAP, he served in the RAF during the Second World War as a pilot, I seem to recall he flew mosquitoes. Bill was my boss in the 1960's and I ascertained that we both hailed from Portsmouth and that Bill, prior to joining the RAF had served in the Portsmouth City Police, which happened to be the force with whom I started my own police career.

Braai Luncheon

A lunch-time braai was held at Larmenier, Harare, on the 24th September 2017 and a most enjoyable afternoon was enjoyed by all who attended. The attendance was disappointing but the



shortage of fuel that weekend may have been a contributing factor. Members and guests present were :- 5281 Peter Bellingham, 7458 Mike and Sue Fox, 6262 Nigel Gabriel, 5652 Bill and Merle Linfield, 8207 Alistair Lournie, 6007 Bob and Phillipa Schonken, 6123 Brian Pym, on a brief visit from the UK, 8746 Rick and Roz Summers, 6783 Dave Young, WP 228 Shevaun Whiting, and 5917 Rod and Laura Finnigan who were celebrating their 51st wedding anniversary and who were joined by their entire family, namely

their son Rodney and his wife Kerry and their children Adam and Paige, daughter Trish Elkington and her husband 110796 Kevin, and their daughter Jordyn. Many thanks to Bill Linfield and helpers who made all the necessary preparations for the braai. The photo aside Shows, front row,

Bob Schonken, Dave Young, Nigel Gabriel, Peter Bellingham and Brian Pym, back row, Rick Summers, Mike Fox, Rod Finnigan (complete with hat, soft, blue for the use of), Alistair Lournie and Bill Linfield. My thanks to Bill and Nigel for the photos shown in this newsletter.

October Sundowner

The October sun-downer held at Biker's club was attended by :- 5503/6384 Peter Birkett, 6262 Nigel Gabriel, 8646 Andrew Field, 5917 Rod Finnigan, 902015 Mike Lear, 7458 Mike and Sue Fox, 5652 Bill Linfield, 5927 Max McDonald, 6007 Bob Schonken. Apologies were received from 8746 Rick and Roz Summers and 6724/9210 John Van Zyl.

Please remember that the BSAP Website is [www. bsap. org](http://www.bsap.org) and please get your friends to use it and please do not hesitate to let me know if you have material for the newsletter.

Rod Finnigan
October 2017