

Autumn
2003

SEBAKWE NEWS

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REGISTERED CHARITY : 328461

Schools Report by Annie Gripper

During our visit to Zimbabwe in January 2003, we were alarmed at the reduction of the number of children attending school. This was due to shortage of food causing a general weakness of the children who were not strong enough to walk up to 10 kilometers to school and then another 10 kilometers back home again each day.

We made arrangements with Mrs Swift to source a high protein drink which comes in powder form and is reconstituted with fresh water and cooked to make a type of porridge. Thank you Jenny Swift for the excellent job you did in locating, purchasing and distributing a supply of this 'drink' on our behalf.

This last term was their winter with cold weather, but I am delighted to tell you that all the children in four local schools have been supplied drinks on a daily basis on each school day. This has been a great success and at least the children – about 500 of them, are now certain to have some nourishment daily during school hours.

Many of our members have sent donations specifically for the children and this is how we have used the money. Thank you for all your generous support. Without your help this scheme would have been much harder to accomplish. It is our intention to continue providing these high protein drinks for next term. The children are delighted – the photograph says it all.



Hyper-Inflation in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has now entered its fifth year of economic decline and faces chronic shortages of foreign exchange which are needed to maintain the essential infrastructure and energy needs of the country.

At the end of June 2003 the inflation rate was 364.1% and it is expected to reach 500% by the end of the year. A loaf of bread which cost Z\$100 at the beginning of the year now costs Z\$1000. There is a dire shortage of cornmeal, cooking oil and fuel – which can only be obtained on the thriving black market at five times the official price. The crisis even affects the dead - Harare's morgue cannot cope with the increasing number of bodies waiting for cremation due to the lack of heating gas.

It has been announced that a new Z\$500 note will be issued and the old note will have to be exchanged within 30 days or it becomes invalid. Due to the hyper inflation the banks do not have sufficient supplies of bank notes and Zimbabwe's banks are surrounded by huge queues (see picture below) of hundreds of people trying to draw out their savings or hoping to cash their pay cheques - some banks are limiting drawings to a meager Z\$5000 to each person, until they can afford to have more notes printed. On last checking the official exchange rate for the Zimbabwe dollar against the US dollar was Z\$824. However on the parallel market (unofficial exchange rate) you could obtain up to Z\$3,000 for a US dollar

The industrial and agricultural sectors have been severely undermined causing 70% unemployment with worsening rural and urban poverty. A lack of skills in the health and social services due to emigration of professionals combined with the high amount of HIV/AIDS is a factor aggravating the crisis.

Agricultural production has fallen more than 50% in the last year. Zimbabwe again faces a severe food crisis in 2003/4 with a cereals deficit of 1.3 million tonnes – the country has enough food to feed its population for just 4 to 5 months and it is estimated that 5.5 million people in Zimbabwe will require food aid in the coming year.

It has been widely reported following President Bush's visit to South Africa and promise of recovery funds, that talks will take place between the government's Zanu PF party and the opposition MDC to discuss a retirement plan for 79 year old President Mugabe and the formation of a coalition government until new free and fair elections can take place - but we have heard all this talk before !!



Sebakwe Black Rhino Trust Accounts

<u>Income</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
	£	£		£	£
Profit from sale of goods	308	0	Printing, Postage, Telephone	2,011	1,926
Donations & Covenants	19,911	17,192	Advertising	755	845
Memberships & Subs	1,244	1,186	Travel	1,166	2,366
Adopt a Rhino Scheme	1,559	1,425	Miscellaneous	268	67
Income Tax Refund	849	1,265	Transfer to Africa	14,733	5,105
Dividends & Interest	8,026	8,404	Transfer to Reserve	10,000	16,000
Quiz	168	374	Excess inc over exp	3,132	3,537
TOTAL	32,065	29,846	TOTAL	32,065	29,846

The Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy

The Chairman

At the last AGM of the MBRC, Lockie Baird was elected to take over from Robert Swift, who has been Chairman for the last three years. We are very grateful for all the hard work Bob has put in during these difficult times.

Lockie Baird was born in Kwe Kwe and educated in Zimbabwe. He then took his diploma in Agriculture at the Royal Agriculture College in Cirencester and also obtained a second diploma at Blackfordby Tobacco Training Institute in Zimbabwe.

He is currently Manager of Sebakwe Farms, Kwe Kwe which grows wheat, barley, maize, soya beans and paprika. He also manages the family property at Mananzwa which is next to the Munyati River and is part of the Midlands Conservancy.



Lockie holds a private pilots license and flew Ray and John Gripper in his Cessna plane for an aerial view of the Conservancy.

The Conservator



Glenn Tatham has been appointed as the new Conservator in the Midlands Conservancy. Glenn was born and bred in Zimbabwe. He took a diploma of Agriculture at Gwebi Agricultural College and then joined National Parks where he has worked for 32 years – the last 13 years as Chief Warden. He was responsible for anti-poaching in Operation Stronghold and helped implement the Campfire Project.

He retired from National Parks in 1999 and has since been developing his own walking safari business. He has a bush pilots license and as a Professional Guide and Hunter, has spent his lifetime dedicated to the conservation of wildlife in Zimbabwe.

We are fortunate in gaining a Conservator with Glenn's experience, especially with the ever increasing problem of the poaching of wildlife that is now rampant throughout the country.

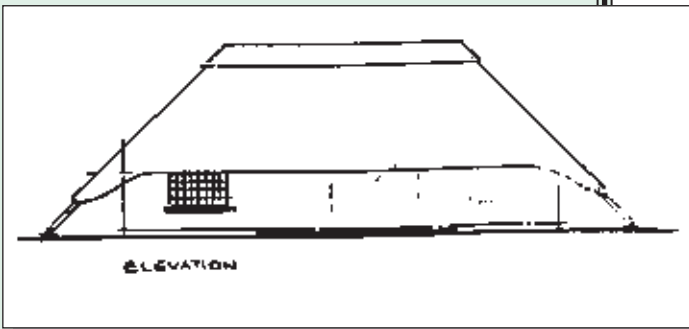
Ferdie Terblanche has been the Conservator in the Midlands Conservancy for the last three years, but he has now accepted an offer of a similar job in South Africa where he will be helping to establish a new Wildlife Conservancy. We wish him every success in his new venture and thank him and his wife Velia for the contribution they have made to the Conservancy.

The Sebakwe Education Centre

The Sebakwe Black Rhino Trust has now signed the Sebakwe Club, where we have received permission for this site. We have now entered into a contract with the Midlands Conservancy, where sourcing the necessary materials has begun. Building work by Midlands Conservancy has commenced. The total building cost will be around £150,000 and will be completed by this Christmas. This is a large project and we will be able to help us with the funding towards the Education Centre.



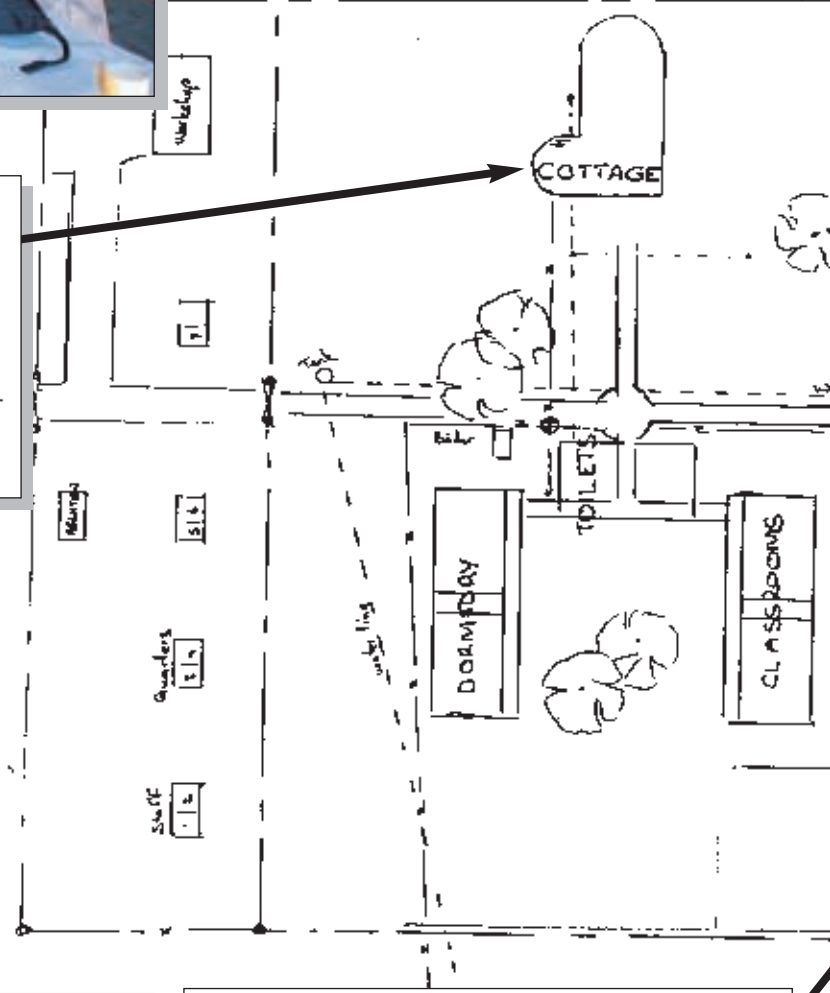
J. Gripper, D. Herbert & R. Gripper reviewing plans



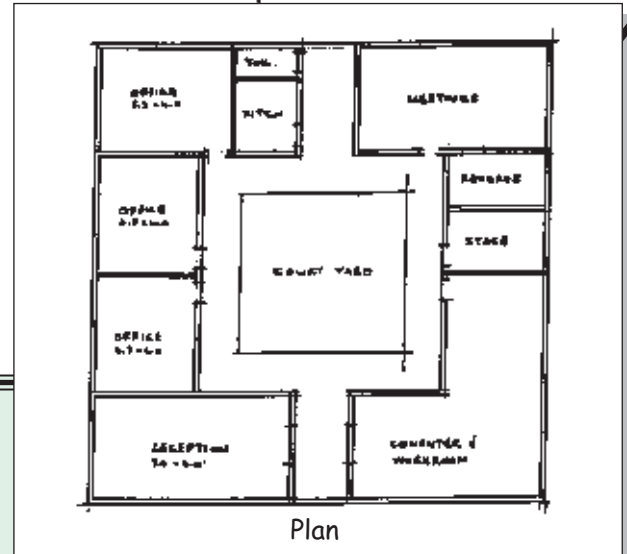
The Education Officer's Cottage

The Building complex will consist of the following:-

Conservancy Headquarters	-	212 m2
Education Classroom	-	191 m2
Kitchen/Dining	-	109 m2
Bungalows (2 No)	-	60 m2
Dormitories (2 No)	-	236 m2
Education Officer's Cottage	-	180 m2
Domestic Staff Quarters	-	145 m2
Toilet & Shower Block	-	84 m2



Completed site clearance & preliminary excavation works



The Conservancy Headquarters Building

Education Centre

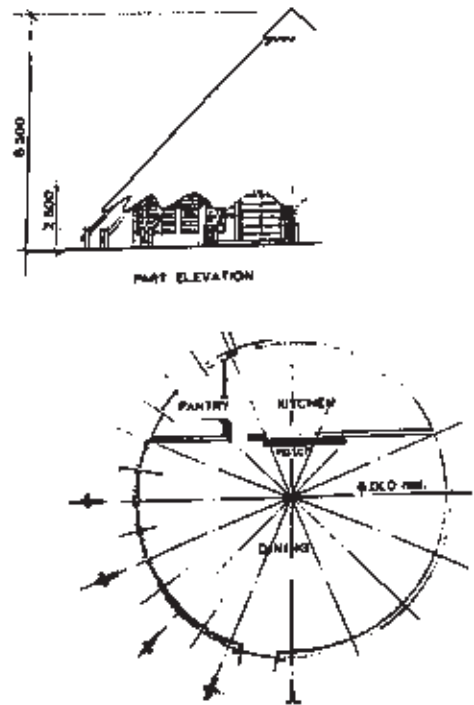
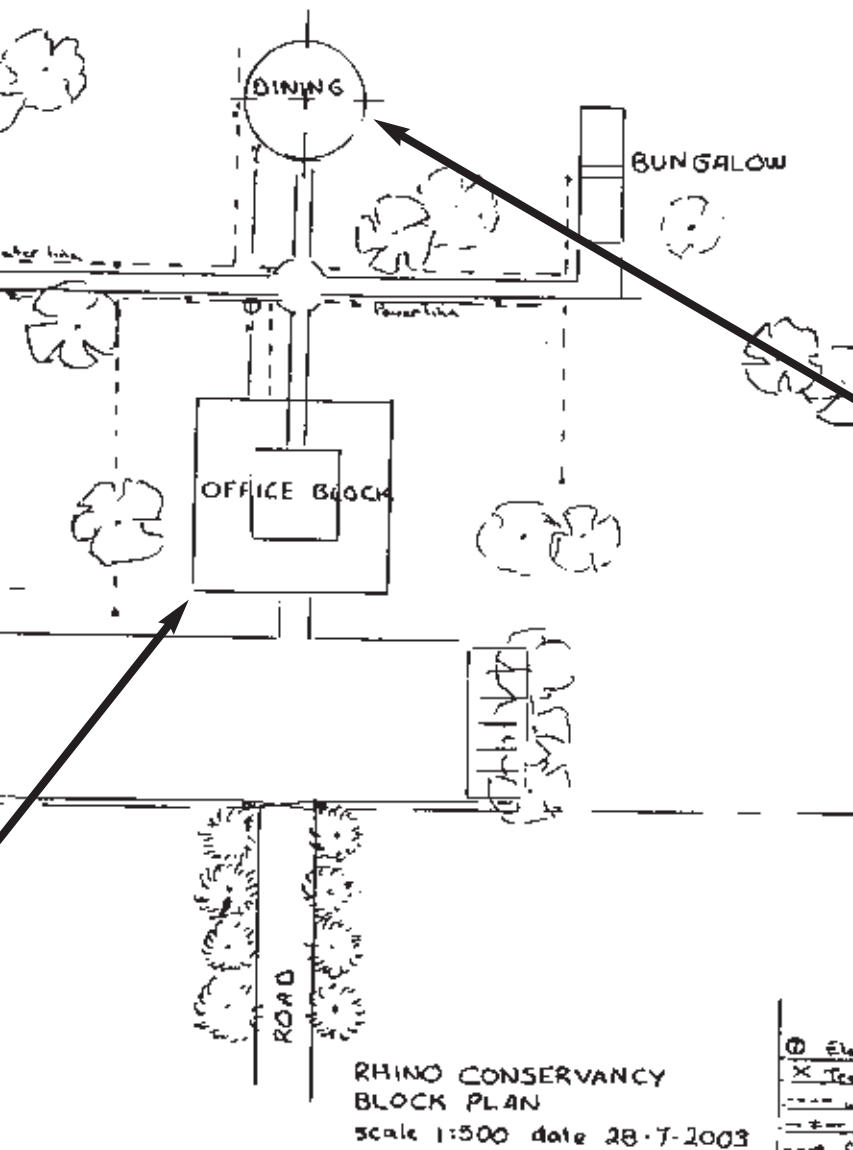
the lease on the 37 hectare of land adjacent to
 mission from the Provincial Governor to develop
 with Derek Herbert, our builder and the task of
 ending work of the Education Centre for the

and we hope that these building works will be
 ect for a small charity and we hope our supporters
 the building and finishing costs of this Education



Ray Gripper inspecting on site Publicity Sign

The object of this Educational Centre is to raise the levels of environmental awareness amongst young people, both from the local communities and also the townships. The centre will have facilities for a large classroom and overnight stay, where groups of school children, young people and students will have an opportunity to become familiar with Rhino and other wildlife and their habitats and learn to care for their fragile natural resources



The Kitchen / Dining Block

The Conservancy Headquarters will have a Reception Area, 3 Staff Offices, a Meeting room and 2 Store rooms. There will be a Research Students Work room which can also be used as a Computer Training room. All these facilities will be positioned around a Central Courtyard.

This Education centre will be part of our Neighbour Outreach Programme whereby through a trusting relationship with our Conservancy neighbours, we can support social welfare and education, stimulate and encourage rural development initiatives and foster the sustainable use of land and other natural resources.

Painted Dog Research Project by Peter Blinston

Greg Rasmussen has suffered a bad air crash breaking both legs.

At 17.00hr on Wednesday July 23rd, Greg landed his Ultralight aircraft on the National Parks runway at Sinamatella at the Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ) in the North-west corner of Hwange National Park. Greg had been asked by the ecologist Dr Madzikunda to assist National Parks with locating and monitoring black rhino in that area, prior to a dehorning operation. Since last September there has been a loss of 11 black rhino in Sinamatella from poaching.

At 06.45 the next day he took off from the bush airstrip at Sinamatella, heading north to locate the first rhino. The signal from the radio transmitter came in clearly; these are implanted in the rhino's horn as the more traditional radio collars cause horrific wounds to a rhino's surprisingly sensitive skin.

He descended to 500 feet above the harsh rocky landscape homing in on a signal emanating from a rhino's transmitter. At that moment his right wing dropped suddenly sending him plummeting to the ground. At 11.00 the alarm was raised. Greg was not back. Norman English, the hugely experienced warden of Sinamatella immediately started a thorough search, deploying his scouts into the bush while he and 'Doc' jumped into vehicles to search the roads.

I received a phone call at midday to say that Greg was missing and that a full search was underway. Jealous and Sikhosana quickly prepared my land rover for the bush with food, water and bedrolls and we set off on the three hour drive at break neck speed. We arrived at Sinamatella and the scouts were still in the bush, a plane from Southern Cross Aviation was landing and the Ultralight from the Hwange Lion Research Project was already in the air. As the minutes turned into hours there was no radio call and our spirits sank.

Next morning, three planes were in the air and 30 men on the ground checking the area. At 10.45 the wreckage of the plane had been spotted. We arrived at the scene some thirty minutes later, walking the last kilometer through the harshest of African bush imaginable.

As we approached Greg lifted his head!!! He was alive. We raced in quickly, set up a drip line and gave him water to alleviate his terrible thirst. The medical air rescue service (MARS) were called in and a helicopter took him swiftly to Victoria Falls Hospital and from there to Avenues Clinic in Harare.

Greg remained conscious throughout, even managing a joke or two. He told us how he had dragged himself out of the wreckage of the plane, fearing that it would catch fire, this with both legs badly broken. He then dragged himself back to the plane and tried to call for help on his radio but it had been damaged on impact, Somehow he managed to remove his shoes as his feet began to swell due to internal bleeding, all the time dragging himself along the ground to keep under the shade of the planes wing and so out of the scorching sun.

As darkness fell and the realization that he would not be rescued set in, he dragged himself back towards the fuselage of the plane, affording himself as much protection as possible. A hyena moved in towards him but he was able to drive it away. Later a lioness came, but by making a noise banging a rock on the planes metal frame, she left him. The strength of resolve and determination to survive can only be imagined, as can the pain he must have been suffering.

That stubbornness that told me he was still alive, had kept him alive. He underwent surgery for fractures of both femur, both ankles and a fracture of his left tibia. A fractured pelvis and dislocated big toes completes the injury list. But he is alive and so is the Painted Dog Research project.



Unfortunately neither Greg nor the Ultra light plane were insured and the Project would welcome any donations.

To keep up to date with Gregg's recovery and the work of the Painted Dog Research team visit their web site :-

www.painteddogconservation.iinet.net.au

Water Buffalo in Iraq by John Gripper

The world population of Water Buffalo is 148 million and is made up of two main general types -**Swamp Buffalo** which are found from the Philippines to as far west as India and **River Buffalo** which are found west of India in Egypt and Europe including 750,000 in Iraq.

In June 2003, in the aftermath of the war in Iraq, I was delivering humanitarian relief aid to veterinary hospitals for farm livestock in Iraq and had the opportunity to visit a large herd of water buffalo in a village a few miles from the town of Al Kut.

Each family in the village owns and looks after their own small herd of water buffalo - these are run as a collective enterprise, where all the farmers cooperate together for the purchase of food and straw and the sale of milk and meat. Water Buffalo have been used as draft animals for centuries and are managed as sturdy work animals in Asia as an integral part of the structure of village farming.

They are the most adaptable and versatile of all work animals and used in the village community to plough, cultivate crops, haul carts and carry people. The small farmer often cannot afford the cost of tractors, so the buffalo are the most economic source of draft power, which does not require diesel fuel and provides free fertilizer.

These Buffalo were kept in holding pens at night and each morning they are herded down to the river Tigris, where the humidity and temperature was very high (45 to 50 degrees Celsius). Water buffalo prefer to cool off in a wallow rather than seek shade.



They like to immerse themselves in water or mud, chew the cud and with half closed eyes appear to be a picture of bliss.

Water Buffalo are intelligent animals with a placid nature – they are naturally timid and startle easily, so must be herded quietly and calmly. They can be easily herded by children on horseback or, because of their docility on foot like sheep.

Their horns are seldom removed because of their docile nature – some of the Asians do not allow the practice of dehorning as it is a disgrace and insult to the animal.

Buffalo milk contains more fat and protein than cow's milk and has a higher butterfat content with a high energy value. In many countries it is preferred to cow's milk and commands a 50% higher price. I found the milk to have a slightly bitter taste. Buffalo are more efficient than cows in the conversion into nutritious milk of fibre and other low grade food such as straw. They also offer a major source of meat which is as acceptable as that of cattle and the production of buffaloes solely for meat is expanding.



The Autumn 2003

Rhino Quiz

All the answers are culinary terms.

You get given the initial letter and the number of letters in each work of the answer. eg - C7 Boiled sugar = Caramel

1	Y-7	Try Hugo	31	C-10	Can she end on one?
2	S-9	Junction	32	D-9	Money brazils
3	P-9	It happened after 1210	33	M-8	Nora in coma
4	B-7	Good citizens ?	34	M-9	Male drama with sticky end
5	F-9	Hysterical sailors	35	N-6	Simpleton
6	T-4.2.3.4	Buried amphibian	36	R-7	Dour ale
7	B-7	German citizens	37	K-5	Add bee and bake
8	G-11	Spicy money	38	F-10	Italian city dweller ?
9	M-6	Scottish rodent	39	C-7	Dog not all derelict
10	R-7	Its scarce	40	T-8	Spanish omlette
11	H-3.3	Fire dish	41	G-8	Cold tomato soup
12	H-11	Lowland dressing	42	G-4	Clarified butter
13	D-7	Noble spud	43	P- 7.4	The end
14	B-10	White dog itch	44	C-6	Sturgeon roe
15	O-5	Out of almost everything	45	S-10	Pickled cabbage
16	E-9	Between the ribs	46	B-8	French white sauce
17	A-5.3	Found in a bed ?	47	K-8	Fishy rice
18	B-5.7	Neither white nor dessert	48	C-8	Its clearly soup
19	S-7.4	Noticed Richard	49	T-5	English herb
20	P-7	Sharp	50	R-7	Sweet elephant after drink
21	M-9	Mixed fruit or vegs	51	S-10	Danish sandwich
22	B-5	Iced pudding	52	M-8	Ring me out of the EU
23	A-5	Savory jelly	53	S-10	Frog on fast
24	J-8	Sliced & strips	54	R-6	High seasoned rich stew
25	T-6	Nothing important	55	P-7	Burnt almond
26	A-9	Start in Italy	56	P-5	Pulp or mash
27	L-7	Pasta layers	57	B-8	Puff pastry patties
28	C-5	Also type of comb?	58	F-4.4	Goose liver
29	O-8	Spanish or cheese	59	F-8	White meat casserole
30	P-8	African spicing	60	C-8	Man at half time

Many thanks to Gladys Innes for this Quiz

Your Name.....

Address.....

.....

Please send your entry with £1 to :- Annie Gripper, Manor Farm, Ascott-u-Wychwood, Oxon OX7 6AL

Closing date :- 31st October 2003

If you would like a copy of the correct answers then please enclose a s.a.e.