

Sebakwe News

Editor : John Gripper

www.blackrhino.org

Registered Charity : 328461

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The New Unity Government

Has the new Unity Government made a difference to the life of ordinary people in Zimbabwe? During our visit to Zimbabwe in September we asked this question and the answers were mixed.

Dollarisation had stabilised the currency and brought about an end to hyperinflation. The shop shelves were full of food and other goods for sale and there was no shortage of fuel at the petrol stations, but these economic improvements were only of benefit if you had US dollars or S.A Rands to spend; people who were poor, unemployed or too old to work had to rely on funds transferred to them by family members who were living abroad or to rely on humanitarian aid.

It was obvious that agriculture was nowhere as productive as it had been in the past and much of this was due to the fact that the new owners had poor farming skills and were unwilling to make the necessary capital investment for seed, fertilisers and irrigation. The United Nations have warned that Zimbabwe will only grow one quarter of the food needed to feed its population – yet the land seizures still continue.

The roads had larger potholes and the electricity cuts were less frequent but there has been a major increase in the poaching of rhino and wildlife in the National Parks. The travel industry has not yet shown any signs of recovery in overseas tourism.

There has been some relaxation of Freedom of the Press in that foreign journalists can now enter the country, but much of the newspapers, radio and television are still State controlled and the Media Boards were not yet functioning.

The Unity Government was created in February 2009 by the signing of the Global Political Agreement but the two main parties are still failing to agree on some of the Ministerial and Provincial Governors appointments and there has been slow progress in agreeing a new Constitution to ensure democracy in Zimbabwe.

However despite these problems, the Zimbabwe people are very resilient and have shown that they can overcome many hardships. The general feeling was that there has been some improvement in economic conditions and this has been supported by an increase in the number of Zimbabweans returning home after leaving the country to work abroad but the political solution seems far away.



John Gripper OBE

We are very pleased to announce that John, The Chairman of Sebakwe Black Rhino Trust since its formation in 1989, has been awarded an OBE (Order of British Empire). In this year's Queen's Birthday Honours. The award was for 'Services to Rhino Conservation and Animal Welfare'.

Congratulations to John, it was well deserved!

John received his award in person from the Queen at an investiture ceremony at Windsor Castle on 1st December 2009.



Financial Matters

Financial Summary

The accounts show that expenditure has exceeded income over the last two years. This trend has continued during the current year and again we will have to draw on our reserves.

Appeal from The Trustees

Like many other charities we have seen our income drop during the recession. As a result of this at the last meeting of the UK Trustees it was agreed that unless we can secure more funding it will be necessary to reduce our financial support for MBRT Conservancy and some of the Education Centre projects.

We therefore are appealing to all our supporters for financial help !

* * * * *

| | <u>2006</u> | <u>2007</u> | <u>2008</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| <u>INCOME</u> | | | |
| Donations & Covenants | 36,396 | 17,885 | 29,424 |
| Membership subs | 1,418 | 1,226 | 1,311 |
| Adopt a rhino scherre | 925 | 923 | 1,374 |
| Gift Aid refund | 1,890 | 2,132 | 3,709 |
| Quiz | 215 | 485 | 435 |
| Dividends & Interest | 4,486 | 4,779 | 4,531 |
| Grants -SAVE | 3,710 | 8,780 | 5,271 |
| Grants RCVS & EAZA | 0 | 25,634 | 0 |
| Scholarship Fund | 1,585 | 725 | 1,000 |
| TOTAL | 50,625 | 62,569 | 47,055 |
| <u>EXPENDITURE</u> | | | |
| Printing, postage & telephone | 2,753 | 2,587 | 2,870 |
| Legacy Advertising | 350 | 490 | 395 |
| Travel | 2,221 | 5,310 | 832 |
| Mscellaneous | 139 | 291 | 313 |
| Transfer to Africa | 38,222 | 47,346 | 63,149 |
| Vehicle purchase/repair | 0 | 14,205 | 0 |
| Container costs | 0 | 533 | 700 |
| Surplus/Def inc over exp | 6,940 | -8,193 | -21,204 |
| TOTAL | 50,625 | 62,569 | 47,055 |

Retirement of Treasurer

Peter Borton has been our Treasurer for the past 20 years and has now decided to retire. We are most grateful to him for the work he has carried out as our Treasurer and wish him a long and happy retirement.

We are pleased that **Nigel Overall**, one of our UK Trustees will be the new Treasurer.

A Feast at Pauldale School

by Alastair Neale



We were able to visit Pauldale and Rockvale school to see how they were progressing. Pauldale has changed significantly since the last visit over a year ago. The main school building now has a good roof and concrete floor. It is used for teaching when the builders are not in and the children sit to learn on empty bags of cement.

The children were very enthusiastic to see us and once again the community turned up to show off the school and thank us for all we are doing in the area. We had an impromptu meeting talking about the Trust and answering questions, the children sang and danced and then we were treated to a feast of nuts and beans. We felt very embarrassed to be given food when so many are hungry but the local adults were saying thank you to the Trust for all the help that we provide.

Once again I came away with a great sense of humility and I am always inspired by how hungry the children are to learn and how the local schools are so supported by the community. Rockvale is also doing well but the children have to bring their own water in to the school as there is no borehole at all and often the water they use is contaminated and the children get recurrent gastrointestinal infections.

The Health Centre

We were able to take some medical supplies out to the medical centre once again. We met the nurses and we were impressed to see that the centre is now also training many student nurses. The staff are very grateful for all that was brought over and were particularly pleased with the baby clothes as many mothers arrive to give birth but have no clothes for the baby once they leave the unit.



Sebakwe Conservation & Education Centre

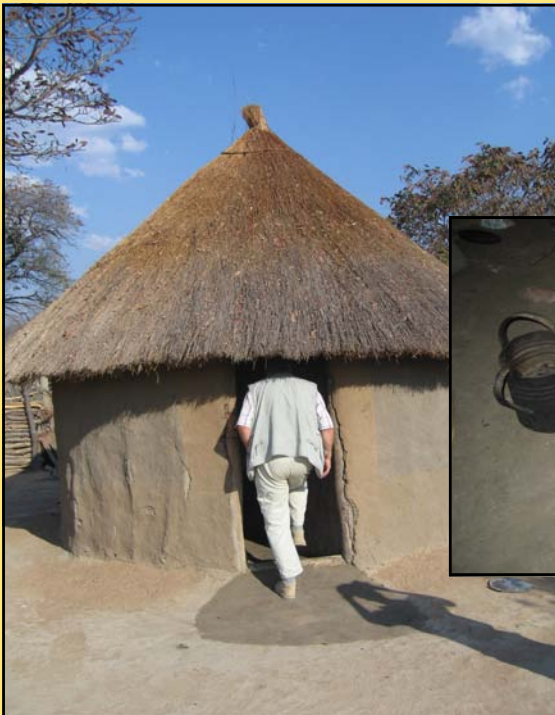
by Paul Holmes



Promoting environmental conservation

An objective of the Education centre is to promote conservation of the local environment and we were shown examples of this at a local village. People who had previously cooked on an open fire outdoors are now encouraged to build a small permanent fire in the centre of the house. This is sheltered from the wind and enclosed so that there is a considerable saving in the amount of fuel required for everyday cooking. The inside of the two houses that we visited revealed immaculate 'deceptively spacious' kitchens with an impressive display of crockery. However the ceilings were rather sooty!

The project should help promote the sustainable use of the environment as less wood will need to be harvested for fuel.



Allied to this is the encouragement of permanent nutrition gardens for local vegetables. Scrub and small trees tend to be cut down every year to protect each household's vegetable garden from livestock. This results in continual pressure on the local environment. Clayton Zazu (programme

manager at the Education centre) and his team are advising the construction of permanent communal vegetable gardens based around the use of a wire fence.

Although this depends on adequate supplies of wire, the overall effect should promote sustainable use of local resources. Clayton says that they are fundraising to buy barbed wire for the project.

Promoting collaboration with University Researchers

In Bulawayo we visited Professor Peter Mundy. He is Professor of Forest Resources and Wildlife Management at the National University of Science and Technology, Bulawayo.

I have known Peter Mundy for over 25 years since I was a student working with the Vulture Study Group in South Africa, so it was great to meet up with him again. We had a lively discussion about issues surrounding wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe. Students from Peter's department have already spent time on their research projects at the Sebakwe Conservation and Education Centre and we were able to describe the current possibilities and plans for the future. These included improved accommodation for visiting post grad students. It is hoped that a closer relationship between the Centre and the University will benefit both organisations and wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe.



New Vice Chairman of MBRT



Silas Chaduku was born in Gutu District and is married with 11 children. He has a career in the police force spanning 30 years, rising from a Constable to the rank of Senior Assistant Commissioner. He farms within the Conservancy at Mahamara. He has a keen interest in wildlife and his background and knowledge will bring great benefit to the Conservancy.

Jumpers for Guards

Lynda Strydom was very pleased to accept delivery of 24 donated jumpers that were taken over to Zimbabwe by the UK Trustees on their latest visit. These jumpers will keep the guards warm during the winter whilst they are out on night patrol.



Wildlife in the Conservancy

With David Strydom as our guide we were able to have a good look round the conservancy to see what was going on and walk out to view one of the rhinos. It is all too apparent that there continues to be a huge problem with poaching and it is an ongoing struggle trying to prevent it. We were however lucky enough to see a variety of game and this reinforced our commitment to protect it. The conservancy has one of the best herds of Eland in Zimbabwe and we also saw giraffe, zebra, kudu and sable. Even on the day we went round, suspicious people were spotted illegally walking in the bush either looking for game or just as concerning, speculating for mineral rights.

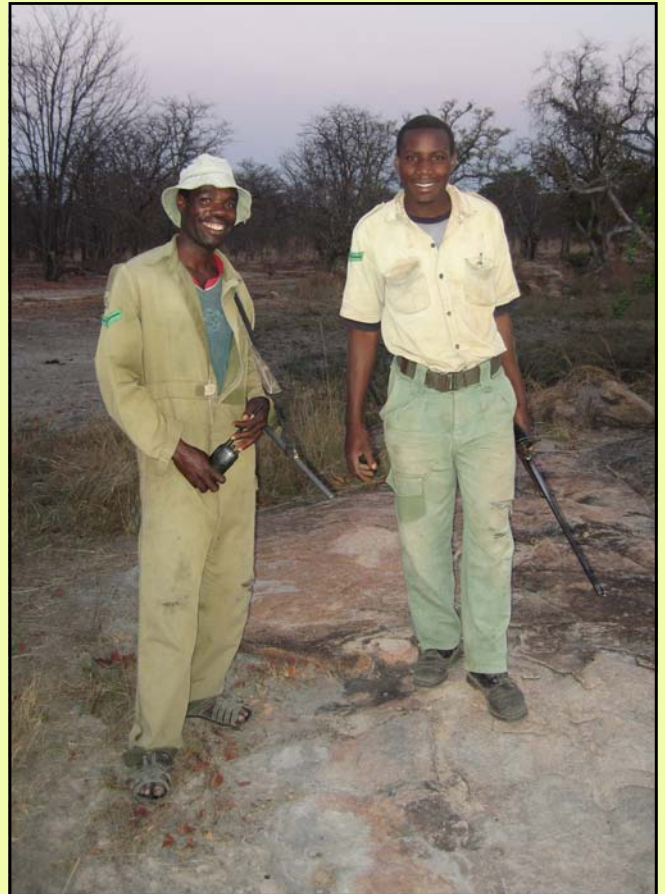


Serious farming is also beginning to return to Zimbabwe after years of neglect, but if this continues it will bring its own conflicts over the needs of the wildlife versus the needs of intensive farming and this maybe a dilemma the Trust will have to struggle with in the future.

Protecting the Rhino by Paul Holmes

Twenty four hour surveillance of the remaining rhinos is vital for their continuing survival in the Midlands. The Rhino monitors, who are funded by the Trust, carry out this task with enthusiasm. Each time we have visited the conservancy we have been lucky enough to have had the opportunity to see rhino in the bush and are always impressed with the monitors' skill and morale.

The monitors are armed and have radio communication with Dave Strydom, the conservator, and many of the landowners. This enables rapid communication of information about any suspicious people seen in the conservancy. When we were there the radios were buzzing with a sighting of unidentified people wandering about. Sometimes these people can have a legitimate reason, e.g. legally prospecting with official permission, or they can be illegally poaching wildlife with dogs, setting wire snares or even going after the rhino. All sightings are followed up and this has resulted in a staggering number of arrests and convictions for poaching, 68 in the first 8 months of 2009. Also 1048 poacher's wire snares have been removed in the same period!



Warning Sign

Boots or 'Tyre' Sandals - Which would you prefer when walking through the bush ?

The monitors are incredibly skilled at tracking the rhino all day without disturbing them, but in order to do this they need sturdy uniform. They have recently received new boots from a South African donor but still more are needed as well as new uniform, trousers, shirts and overalls. The wear and tear on clothing in the bush is severe. The photograph below illustrates 'traditional' sandals



made from car tyres used by one of the guards whilst out walking in the bush all day. One of the downsides of having inadequate uniform is the possibility that the guards themselves can become mistaken for trespassers. This results in time being wasted following up reports of suspicious men wandering in the bush.

With the onset of the rainy season there is also a dire need for lightweight two man tents for use on night patrols.

Camfed

We visited the new Camfed headquarters in Harare and this proved to be very useful as we met Faith who is a product of the charity and an example of how improved education for girls can make massive differences. We were left with the notion that in a few years the whole country might be run by Camfed graduates! The meeting helped us iron out some of the communication difficulties that have arisen and plan for the future. At the moment we have decided to continue only with boarding scholarships, One problem will be however that since transferring to the dollar, schools have significantly raised their fees meaning we will have to raise more money or send less children into the system in years to come.



Time in Harare



Despite ongoing difficulties it was apparent that the switch to the dollar has made a big difference in Harare with more people out and about and spending money, this is not getting through to the rural areas but we were at least able to see some signs of hope for the future.

Whilst in Harare we were able to visit the new British embassy and meet with a representative to look at gaining grants to support some aspects of the Trust, we hope that we might be able to gain some financial support for the education centre to enable more children to attend free of charge and also we are looking for help to provide boreholes in the schools around the Trust. Arrangements have also been made to bring over more learning materials, books, clothes and as much as we can muster in another container.

Chromium Mining in the Conservancy by Paul Holmes

Zimbabwe has extensive mineral reserves and some of these are now being mined in the conservancy. During our stay we visited a new Chromium mine which is busy 24 hours a day extracting chromite from the soils of the bush. This involves what looks like a relatively simple process once an area with a high chromite concentration has been found. The 'soil' is dug up and effectively centrifuged with water to separate the heavy ore from the soil.

The final black product seen in the photograph, ready for export, is incredibly dense with one shovel full being deceptively heavy.

The visible effects of the mining that we could see were the destruction of the bush that had been dug up for processing, the building of new roads for the heavy plant and the production of large pools of water used for the washing process.



The mining should be a benefit to the economy of this impoverished country, even if it does not benefit the landowner. We hope that there will be suitable reinstatement of the land.

Time will tell what the final environmental impact will be.



Matopos National Park by Paul Holmes

Matopos National Park is only a short drive south of Bulawayo and we took the opportunity to visit during our brief trip to Zimbabwe in October. This UNESCO world heritage area is known for its spectacular scenery and rock paintings. Over 2000 million years ago the hills were formed as granite was forced to the surface. After years of erosion of the softer material there are now stunning rock formations with massive granite boulders seemingly teetering in unbelievable structures. As you drive past you wonder why no one has given them a nudge and pushed them off. It is only when you get up close that you realise the sheer size of the boulders. Cecil Rhodes was so impressed that he chose a hill top, known as World's View, for his grave, surrounded by a ring of gigantic boulders.

As is often the way, the beauty and tranquillity of the surroundings hides a turbulent past. There has been human occupation since the early Stone Age with periods of disagreement and conflict up until recent times.

I camped in the park on my honeymoon with Alison over 15 years ago and remember the beautiful scenery and plentiful game. Disappointingly, on my present visit, during the five hour drive around the game park the herds of antelope and other game were rarely to be seen (very shy or non existent?). We were meant to be reassured when the guard at the gate said they were all hiding as they had been frightened by a helicopter....!

However we were lucky enough to see three white rhino, including one male very close up as he marked his territory at one of his roadside middens or dung piles.



Please Help Us !!!

Adopting a rhino cost just £30 for two years and is an excellent Birthday or Wedding present for your friends or relations. Our Website (www.blackrhino.org) has a full list and display of pictures of the rhinos for adoption.

Membership, Adoption, Quiz, Scholarship & Donations form

| Tick | | Amount £ |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Family Membership - | £25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adult Membership - | £15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Junior Membership - | £ 5 |
| | (12 years and below) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adoption Donation - | £30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Quiz - | £ 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Scholarship Fund - | £ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tenashe feeding - | £ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Schools Water Project - | £ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | General donations - | £ |

Total enclosed £

Cheques - Please make payable to SBRT

Visa/Mastercard

Card Number

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Signature.....

I wish to ADOPT for TWO YEARS:-

TANGARIRA

TENASHE

RONDA

Name of Adopter for certificate.....Special date (if required).....

PLEASE PRINT

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Tel:.....

Completed forms to be returned to:-

**Annie Gripper
Manor Farm
Ascott under Wychwood
OXON
OX7 6AL**

Tel: +44 (0)1993 830 278

Fax: +44 (0)1993 830 395

For Adoptions - Send (with or without) card to:-

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Post Code.....

From.....

.....

Tel:.....

Please sign the following form so that we can reclaim 28% GIFT AID tax relief.

I am a UK taxpayer and want the Sebakwe Black Rhino Trust to treat all donations I have made since 6th April 2000 and all donations that I make from the date of this declaration, unless I notify you otherwise, as gift donations.

Signature.....

Date.....

RHINO CHRISTMAS BIRD QUIZ 2009

The figures show the number of letters in each word of the answers

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----|-------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Initial | J.A.Y (example).....3 | 26 | Batman's side kick | 5 |
| 2 | Speedy | 5 | 27 | Snooker Surname | 6 |
| 3 | Bruised breast | 4.3 | 28 | RMFALU (anag) | 6 |
| 4 | One for sorrow, two for joy | 6 | 29 | Insane, Crazy | 6 |
| 5 | Coloured Arm | 7 | 30 | Convoy support | 7 |
| 6 | Gulp | 7 | 31 | Toed, hole or chest | 6 |
| 7 | Pick me up | 7 | 32 | Predatory person | 7 |
| 8 | Greedy | 6 | 33 | Flightless Aussie | 3 |
| 9 | Parapet Climber | 4.7 | 34 | Bovine songster | 9 |
| 10 | A cheat's entrance | 6 | 35 | Gilded Wader | 6.6 |
| 11 | Glossy black colour | 5 | 36 | Ice crystal streamer | 4.7 |
| 12 | Rock Talk | 5.4 | 37 | Extremely cold change | 5.4 |
| 13 | A ruby grumbler | 3.6 | 38 | Bye Bye | 9 |
| 14 | Cry Baby | 7 | 39 | Polished appendage | 7 |
| 15 | Headwig | 5.3 | 40 | Extra h in cough | 6 |
| 16 | Uneven tangled mass | 4 | 41 | Share? (anag) | 5 |
| 17 | Three strokes less than par | 9 | 42 | Scarlet beginning | 8 |
| 18 | Ladies party | 3 | 43 | Ebony hat | 5.3 |
| 19 | And gander | 5 | 44 | Speckled insect taker | 7.10. |
| 20 | Lady of the lamp | 11 | 45 | Home to Dean? | 5.6 |
| 21 | Mining bird | 6 | 46 | Brazil or money opening | 3.5 |
| 22 | Satsuma out for nil | 8.4 | 47 | Musical fungal growth | 4.6 |
| 23 | Soap? | 4 | 48 | Bright cod family fish | 8 |
| 24 | Dark container | 8 | 49 | GDRRBIEGUA (anag) | 10 |
| 25 | Vesta | 4 | 50 | Office pin-up | 9.4 |

More →

→ Cont

| | | | | | |
|----|------------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| 51 | Bit of fun | 4 | 76 | Anyone for tennis? | 6 |
| 52 | Better see Dr | 6 | 77 | FAILFREED (anag) | 9 |
| 53 | Tree Tapper | 10 | 78 | Feline reveille | 9 |
| 54 | String to this one | 4 | 79 | Knight mate | 4 |
| 55 | Neckware | 4 | 80 | Merry dog | 7 |
| 56 | Nearly illegitimate | 7 | 81 | Daft as a..... | 4 |
| 57 | Brave man of the North | 5 | 82 | Flatfish baby | 8 |
| 58 | Angry William | 9 | 83 | Piper and singer | 4.7 |
| 59 | Part of B & Q | 10 | 84 | Swampy jet | 5.7 |
| 60 | Pillow filler | 5.4 | 85 | Live as cheaply | 6 |
| 61 | Finger ornament | 6 | 86 | Cat cheer story (anag) | 6.7 |
| 62 | Green Male | 7 | 87 | 10 - 0 (anag) | 6 |
| 63 | Health line | 7 | 88 | Leaves footprints | 4 |
| 64 | Dolly's perhaps? | 5.3 | 89 | Show fear | 5 |
| 65 | Big mouth crossing | 7 | 90 | Cattle beware | 8 |
| 66 | Famous engine | 7 | 91 | Stretch your neck | 5 |
| 67 | Architect | 4 | 92 | Red-hot beauty | 8 |
| 68 | Sounds fishy | 7.4 | 93 | Hebridean hunter | 6.4 |
| 69 | Magician | 6 | 94 | She's related | 6 |
| 70 | Beach musician | 4.5 | 95 | Finished hit | 7 |
| 71 | Quiet lover | 6 | 96 | Wealthy bone | 7 |
| 72 | Shaver charge | 9 | 97 | Baby buggy | 5 |
| 73 | In a pear tree ? | 9 | 98 | A pastime | 5 |
| 74 | Songster for Kent | 8.7 | 99 | Mum's metal on the beach | 4.6 |
| 75 | Clever widdler | 6 | 100 | Poet and.....? | 8 |

Please return your entry with £2 donation by 27th February 2010
to Annie Gripper, Manor Farm, Ascott-under-Wychwood, OXON, OX7 6AL.
If you would like a copy of the correct answers then please enclose a s.a.e.