

out of africa

INTERNATIONAL

NOVEMBER 2002

KEEPING SOUTHERN AFRICANS IN TOUCH AROUND THE WORLD

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3

A man with short hair, wearing a light-colored shirt with vertical stripes, stands in what appears to be a shop or gallery. He is smiling slightly and has his hands on his hips. The background shows various items on display, including a large potted plant and a glass display case.

Rhodesiana's
HOT
property!

*Dream
job for
SA
tennis
coach*

Taken by Toowoomba

The faces of out of africa international



EDITOR Tom Henshaw. Born in Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, UK in 1943 as Adolf Hitler's Luftwaffe bombed towns in the area. Moved to Rhodesia in 1956 and attended various schools, including Chaplin, in Gwelo. Joined the Rhodesia Herald in 1960 and has been in newspapers ever since. After a stint in Zambia, moved to South Africa in the late 60s and worked for all the English-language newspapers in Durban at one time or another until the end of 1982. Emigrated with wife, Eileen and son Andrew to Australia in early 1983 - Brisbane, initially, but had already been seduced by Western Australia's pristine deserted beaches and moved to Perth at the end of that year. Still a full-time newspaper journalist and technology trainer.

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UK EDITOR Penny Willis. Emigrated with her parents to Southern Rhodesia in 1956, aged 2. She considers herself extremely privileged to have spent a totally secure and sunny childhood in Umniati, a small settlement halfway between Bulawayo and Harare. Penny was educated at Umniati Primary (approx 36 pupils) and Que Que High School, after which she moved on to the big smoke to work in the Public Health Labs and then Rhodesian Breweries. She then moved 'down South' to work for SAB in Joburg for 3 years before heading off on a working holiday to the UK.

She is still there 20 odd years down the line!

pen@ntlworld.com



US EDITOR Suzanne-Kelly. Born in Johannesburg, South Africa in the year voetsak. Family lived in Natal, Cape Town and Johannesburg. Schools: Bryneven Primary, Bryanston High, Epworth Girls High (in Pietermaritzburg) and finally at Hyde Park High. Has teaching degrees in all forms of performing arts and is a qualified nursery school teacher. Became a professional musical entertainer at 15 for PACT/ NAPAC / CAPAB - Musical and Opera departments and performed in many SA shows. Director of her own performing arts studio in Lonehill, Sandton and involved in many aspects of television. Lead entertainer on the QE 2 1991, where she met her future husband, David an American employed on the ship. After getting off the QE2 I travelled the US on my own first, and then settled (and eloped in Las Vegas) at the end of 1991. Many shows followed as well as a degree in television and radio broadcasting and production. Has two sons - Storm and Chase. Began doing inserts for SABC and M-Net, from Las Vegas and eventually started her own production company, PAL Productions - which produces entertainment television shows. Hosted TV shows in the US and "Behind the Scenes" of the Las Vegas and Los Angeles shows (Both T.V and Live Stage). Currently in addition to Entertainment Editor for OOAi, also in pre-production for numerous television shows as well as pursuing a degree in "Pilates".

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WINE EDITOR Monty Friendship has been involved with wine for 30 years, regularly travelling to all the major wine producing areas world-wide.

He writes wine columns for the newspaper The Independent and the National News and for several magazines including, Direct Report, the Institute of Directors Magazine, Hospitality, On Safari International, What's Cooking, Travel News, Traveller's Times, Africa Calls, Lifestyle and Skyhost. Monty lives in Stellenbosch, in the Cape, lectures at all levels for the Cape Wine Academy and presents wines for major importers within South Africa. He is Contributing Editor of World Wine Trader. He is a graduate of the Cape Wine Academy. He is past chairman of the Harare branch of the International Wine and Food Society, founded in London.

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Editor's corner

Not so socially secure . . .

BILL KIRBY is doing it tough. Stricken by ill health, he has returned to England after some 33 years in Zimbabwe, broke and dependant on the charity of his family.

Unable to afford even the basics and unable to work, he has been trying to get help from Britain's social security system. He's found it's not as simple as fronting up at the DSS and getting it.

It's a fond belief of many living in southern Africa that if they have a British passport they can always go to the UK and get "on the social".

But it ain't necessarily so, as Bill and many others have discovered.

The Britain of the new millennium is a world away from the socialist Nirvana they thought existed.

Bill's story on Page 11 is a timely reminder to those still thinking of gapping it to the UK that things could be just as tough - tougher maybe - than those they are leaving.

Bob and Wita Southey farmed Mazoe before independence in Zimbabwe. They decided to leave shortly after and after a sojourn in Europe and the Far East, ended up in Australia, where they settled in Toowoomba, Queensland. Bob's story is a lesson in going from rooster to feather duster and back.

Owen Hambrook would seem to have it made. He went to the US to further his studies and tennis career and moved into coaching after graduating. Today he is Assistant Womens' Tennis Coach at the University of Las Vegas. He is also involved in the Wayne Ferreira Foundation, which helps up and coming tennis players from South Africa who do not have the means to financially support themselves on the ATP tour. In our cover story, David Saffery tells how says

Rhodesiana is the biggest seller in his London shop, which deals in all things African.

Flags, badges, even old banknotes are snapped up by eager customers.

And last (but certainly not least!) Wine Editor Monty Friendship gives us a bottled history of what else at this time of the year, but champagne!

Happy festive season to you all.

*- Tom Henshaw and all at out
of africa international*



Out of Africa International is an Internet-based magazine published for those who have an interest in southern Africa and who are interested in how southern African emigrants have settled in other parts of the world.

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Family gathering: The Southey clan pose for a photograph

Taken by Tooowoomba

Rob and Wita Southey settled for Queensland after years on the move

I WAS born and lived on a farm in Mazoe (Mazowe), became a farmer and tobacco planter but changed direction after 16 years when the terrorist threat and sanctions made the possibility of owning my own farm impossible.

I then applied myself to marketing of the product instead and had achieved some recognition in the field of tobacco sales.

When the “free and fair” elections of 1980 were over and Mugabe had won, my wife Wita (Veeta) and I took stock.

We had three teenage, or near teen, children, who it seemed would never be given the opportunity to find their own potential but would be thwarted at every turn by virtue of their colour.

We searched for a country in Africa which had survived at least a decade of “new independence”.

With the possible exception of Malawi under Dr Banda, we could not find a single country surviving AND having a reasonable attitude towards white colonials.

After an enormous amount of heart searching and agonising, we decided to leave the country of my birth. (Third generation Rhodesian/ fifth generation South African); Wita was born in Austria and had lived nearly five years in Australia as well, before coming out as a new immigrant to Southern Rhodesia in 1962.

All my family (6 siblings and my parents) together with hundreds of cousins were still living in Zimbabwe.

We sold our 5br/2bath house in Bluff Hill, complete with swimming pool and all weather floodlit tennis court, and moved to a flat on



Home: The house that Rob and Wita built in Queensland.

North St. in Salisbury.

One morning we watched a cavalcade of about 40 motorcycle cops and six Mercedes Benz cars parading past the flat and I remembered how Ian Smith used to drive around in his old "bakkie" with no one else - unless Janet had to come into town as well.

I felt sick and promptly started trying to get to Australia.

At that time there was no consulate or office of any sort closer than Lusaka or Pretoria, and delays were quite enormous. So, when the Austrian Consulate approached us and said they would be prepared to accept us for unlimited entry to stay; we decided to accept their offer, so that we could deal directly with Australia from Vienna.

When we arrived in Vienna in August 1981, we made inquiries about employment, as the princely sum of \$1000 per family we were allowed to take with us was going to last us approximately two weeks.

We were naive to say the least - it never occurred to us that there were ways and means of leaving the country without actually emigrating and so being limited to that nominal amount.

To our horror we discovered that an "unbefristete" visa meant only "unlimited" in regard to entry and exit - there was NO provision for a work permit.

We needed to live there for five years before we could think of a work permit (even Wita who had been born there - as she had taken on my Rhodesian citizenship.)

Luckily, my brother had overheard the manager for ZLT complaining that he needed a burley tobacco man in Europe for work in the Orient.

He quickly informed Rod that I was now stationed in Vienna and offhand he couldn't think of a more experienced burley leaf man than the recent chief burley classifier of the Tobacco Marketing Board.

One thing led to another and a week later I had been interviewed in Vienna by Rod and was on my way to Seoul, South Korea.

This changed our lives from sheer panic to reasonable life again.

The problem with the oriental commitments of four months in Korea then three months in Philippines, two months in



'We thought our mortgage rate of 11.75 percent was high, so we got a shock when soon after my redundancy, the interest rates climbed steadily until they reached 17.5 per cent'

Thailand, four months in India, was that I saw nothing of my family except for a week or fortnight at the end of each stint - until one day I realised that, although they missed me and loved having me come home - I was IN THE WAY.

The flat wasn't big enough and we all got in each other's hair. So we made tracks between our little flat and the Australian Consulate and while I was away again, Wita and the kids made even more tracks - until one day we qualified for an interview early in 1983.

Everything was OK until in 1983 the Australian Labor Party under Bob Hawke came into power, with radical changes to immigration laws.

The 10 points granted for English speaking/ literate people was abolished and this dropped my points below the requisite.

On being told of the new rule, my 12-year-old daughter understood that we were being rejected, and burst into tears.

The woman at the office instantly became sympathetic and went to speak to her boss.

She came back with a smile to say that, as we had been within the number of points at the time we had applied, and as the new law was brought in to effect months after our application, they had agreed to allow us entry.

BUT, we would not be allowed more than three months from date of acceptance, before we needed to prove entry.

And so it came to pass, while I was in the middle of a stint in India, that I was sent a fax telling me to be in Australia before November 1983.

In fact, I flew in to Melbourne airport whilst listening to the end of the America's cup yacht race, won by Australia II in September 1983; followed two weeks later by my family.

Wita's brother (who had stood guarantor for us), was still living in Melbourne and was able to meet us and give a lot of advice about how to start our lives in Australia.

I was unlucky enough to lose a great opportunity to work for Philip Morris who were based in Melbourne at that time and simply could not find work in any line other than vacuum cleaner salesman.

So Wita and I decided to try further north.

We bought an old Cortina station wagon and a second-hand 14ft caravan from a dear old couple, who must have felt sorry

That's Africa!



New-age farmer - Zimbabwe-style

IMAGINE

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region's flag will get your advertisement.

for us, as they supplied bedding, cutlery and everything we could possibly need for our journey, including a B&W TV, and the five of us set out on our MOST enjoyable holiday ever.

The journey turned out to be the BEST “holiday” we had ever had with our children, and a tremendous bonding time for our family.

This has stood firm, even though we don’t all live in the same city, we always keep in touch with each other.

I think we had always imagined living in Queensland, which has a climate very similar to that of Rhodesia, in many ways.

As we drove north along the Eastern coast, I looked for employment everywhere. Each time I applied, I was either too old (46) or over/under qualified.

(We never lost heart in spite of the knockbacks, as we always felt confident that if you really WANT to work, you will always find some sort of paid work).

When we reached Brisbane and were still unable to find work, Wita remembered an article from a magazine she had read in Vienna proclaiming that Toowoomba, the Garden City, was a place to see.

This had also been suggested by Sydney as well as Melbourne-based friends. We wound our way up the escarpment in the vilest “Guti” type weather and booked into a caravan park.

About a week after we arrived here in November 1983, I got my first offer of a job, at Gyril Farm Machinery and I worked there for two years until the drought forced my boss to retrench from 35 to 15 staff.

With fixed employment, I had been able to get a mortgage for a block of 1 acre about 16km from Toowoomba and was able to build our own home which was completed in May 1984.

The building was done by a locally qualified builder but only up to lock up stage. Due to the value of mortgage I was able to borrow, I was unable to have the work completed by the builder but had to do all the finishing work myself, including making cupboards and wardrobes, plaster finishing and painting inside and out.

We thought our mortgage rate of 11.75 percent was high, so we got a shock when soon after my redundancy, the interest rates climbed steadily until they reached 17.5 per cent.

In desperation, I applied for the dole and finally went into Social Security to collect my first fortnightly pay.

The whole episode left me feeling embarrassed and demeaned, so I refused to collect the next payment, simply allowed the whole thing to cancel.

Meanwhile, I applied to write both the Queensland and the Commonwealth government entrance exams. In order to keep body and soul together, I found work as the janitor at the local YMCA sports complex.

This involved a good deal of cleaning work as well as supervising certain functions.

I learned what it means to be a “wekka” and wondered often what my old domestic staff would have thought if they could see me now.

When the YMCA folded up and sold the premises to a gym club, I was once again redundant.

Almost a year after I had completed the Government entrance exam, I phoned to see how I was faring and was advised that they select from the top of the list and nobody knew when a selection would come up.



Cool spot: The Southeys shady porch.

They said that after a year, I would be entitled to try again. Within about a week, I got a phone call to ask whether I was still interested in joining the government as a ‘public servant’. They had hardly stopped talking before I said YES!

During the next 12 years, I worked my way up the ladder to a supervisory position in the Government and contended with frequent changes of system, method until in 1997 they introduced a restructuring program as so many businesses do these days from time to time.

This program effectively removed the supervisor grade which I had achieved, replacing it with a self-checking computer system.

The new setup required that we should all be capable of touch typing at over 50wpm while speaking to clients.

As I was at an age which allowed me the choice of retiring and as my long service leave was available to me, I decided to wrap it up and retire. My family felt that my health was more important than keeping a stressful job simply to make a bit more money in the next few years.

At this point I want to say what a fulfilling time we have had in Australia with NO regrets (other than the fact that my mother, siblings and friends are all far away and we miss being able to see them whenever).

As an ex-tobacco farmer-cum-classifier-cum buyer, it was not as easy to make a start in Australia, as it is for people who have suitable backgrounds. We have never had a lot of money but have managed to pay off our home and improve it over the years, (even though we never thought this might be possible in view of the age I was when we arrived here.) We owe nothing in debts and live a comfortable life out in the country, which we love. Our children are all happily married to local folk and have done well. We now have five lovely and healthy grandchildren whom we enjoy seeing as often as possible. Now in 2002. We are settled and happy!

Australia is a land in which opportunity is available for those who are prepared to knuckle down and apply themselves.

If you are prepared to drop a few levels from previous positions, you can always work your way back up the ladder - obviously the younger you are, the better.

We started off joining the local ex-Rhodies club, but after a while felt that too much time was being wasted on “whenwe” attitudes, and decided to concentrate on being Aussies instead.

Later, the club folded anyway, as everybody was too busy trying to earn a living I think - or maybe they had similar views about “whenwes”.

That's Africa!

Only in SA . . .

The following are genuine extracts (OK, we'll take that on advisement!) of letters received by the MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SOUTH AFRICA) from people inquiring after money on the grounds of hardship.

They are exact copies as they were received. Neither the wording nor the spelling has been altered.

Letters to the Ministry of Labour

1. I am glad to state that my husband died yesterday. I will be glad if you get me a pension. If you don't hurry up I will have to get public resistance.

2. I am enclosing my marriage certificate with three children. One of them is a mistake as you can see when you look into it. I am writing to say my youngest son is born two years old. Why not getting allowances for it.

3. I am enclosing certificate with six children. One of them twins died. You asked if he is christened: yes he was baptized on half a sheet of paper by a certain Captain in the Salvation Army.

4. The man I live with won't work and he wants to know if my husband is dead. Will you please search through your records office for him and let me know.

5. In accordance with your Instructions I have given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope.

6. I want money as badly as quick as you can send it. I have been in bed under the doctor for weeks and he doesn't seem to be doing me any good. If things don't improve I shall have another doctor.

7. Milk is needed for my baby. Father is unable to supply it.

8. Re your dental enquiry, the teeth at the top are still alright, but the ones in my bottom are hurting me terrible.

9. Please send me a form for cheap milk. I have a baby 2 month old and did not know about it until the neighbor told me.

10. My son is unable to attend school. He has had diarrhea through a hole in his shoe.

These are actual letters sent by council building dwellers in Johannesburg:

1. I want some repairs done to my cooker as it has backfired and burnt my knob off.

2. I wish to complain that my father hurt his ankle very badly when he put his foot in the hole in his back passage.

3. Their 18 year old son is continuously banging his balls against my fence.

4. I wish to report that tiles are missing from the roof of the outside toilet and I think it was bad wind the other night that blew them off.

5. The lavatory seat is cracked, where do I stand?

6. I am writing on behalf of my sink which is coming away from the wall.

7. Will you please send someone to mend the garden path. My wife tripped and fell on it yesterday and now she is pregnant.

8. I request your permission to remove my drawers in the kitchen.

9. Can you please tell me when the repairs will be done as my wife is about to become an expectant mother.

10. I am still having trouble with smoke in my built-in drawers.

11. The toilet is blocked and we cannot bath the children until it is cleared.

12. Will you please send a man to look at my water, it is a funny color and not fit to drink.

13. Our lavatory seat is broken in half and now it is in three pieces.

14. Would you please send a man to repair my sprout. I am an old age pensioner and need it straight away.

15. I want to complain about the farmer across the road; every morning at 5am his cock wakes me up and it's getting too much.

16. The man next door has a large erection in the back garden,

which is unsightly and dangerous.

17. Our kitchen floor is damp. We have two children and would like a third so will you please send someone around to do something about it.

18. I am a single woman living in a downstairs flat and would be pleased if you could do something about the noise made by the man I have on top of me every night.

19. Please send a man with clean tools to finish the job and satisfy the wife.

20. I have had the Clerk of the Works down on the floor six times, but still have no satisfaction.

21. We are getting married in September and would like it in the garden before we move into the house.

22. This is to let you know that our lavatory seat is broken and we can't get SABC2 (a TV channel).

23. I try to take just one day at a time but lately several days have attacked me at once!!

***An advertisement here will be seen
around the world . . .***



Owen Hambrook: Realised how important coaching was for aspiring tennis stars.

Game, set and coach!

Pretoria-born Owen Hambrook turned to coaching when injury forced him to give up to give up college tennis in the US. Today he is the assistant women's tennis coach at the University of Las Vegas

I WAS born in Pretoria and attended Pretoria Boys High School from 1980 to 1984. I then attended University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg for a year before going back to Pretoria to continue my studies at the University of Pretoria. I suffered a bad shoulder injury in my matric year of high school and wanted to attend a junior college in the US on a tennis scholarship right after my matric year.

The injury forced me to stay in South Africa and after obtaining my B. Comm degree from the University of Pretoria I came to the US in June of 1988 and studied at Northwest Missouri State University.

Northwest is in the small town of Maryville with a population of 10,000 which swells to about 17,000 when school is in. Being on the tennis team enabled me to see a lot of the Midwest which I grew to love. I found the people to be genuine, honest, and down to earth.

It was quite a change from a big city like Pretoria. I went through fraternity Rush and ended up becoming a member of the Delta Chi fraternity which was a great experience for a college student. I still keep in touch with a lot of my fraternity "brothers".

My tennis career at Northwest was hampered by my shoulder and a coach who was a joke!

It made me realise how important a coach can be in the development and well-being of the athlete.

While finishing up my studies I took the United States Professional Tennis Association exam and became a certified tennis professional, which enabled me to work in the summer and part-time during school.

It was at Northwest where I met my wife Julie. After graduation in December 1991, I got a job teaching tennis at a club in Kansas City working for a guy by the name of Ben Ford. I consider my experience working for him to be extremely valuable and he really is a huge influence on my coaching style today. While I was in Kansas City Julie got an



From Sue-Kelly Ryder, in Las Vegas

elementary teaching position in Las Vegas and we had a long-distance relationship for a year before I packed up and moved to Las Vegas in the summer of 1993.

I was fortunate enough to get the job as the tennis pro at the MGM Grand and spent two years working there and building my local clientele.

I played and taught some well-known celebrities, which was pretty interesting at times! I remember giving Michael Bolton a playing lesson about 70 plus people were watching and cheering every time he hit a good shot. My buddy from the bar went and got some employees and waitresses to come over and cheer for me every time I won a point!

In January 1996 I started the junior tennis program at the Green Valley Athletic Club and ran a Nike tennis camp at the club during the summers.

During these years I worked hard at developing a number of juniors who were very successful on a national level and in the summer of 2000 I got my USTA certification as a High Performance Coach.

I assisted the UNLV men's and women's teams during the Spring of 2000 and moved over to UNLV in January 2001 to work full-time as the assistant women's tennis coach.

In November 2000 Julie gave birth to our son Jack and in June 2002 she gave birth to our daughter Hannah.

I have been involved in assisting the Wayne Ferreira Foundation which assists up and coming tennis players from South Africa who do not have the means to financially support themselves on the ATP tour. I have also just started coaching a girl by the name of Sarah Borwell who was ranked in the top ten in college in the US and will be based here in Las Vegas.

A lot of these projects involve seeking out investors who are interested in making an investment to support these players during their first few years on the tour.

I miss South Africa a lot but I am very happy in the US and I still have my cup of Joko tea every day and find any excuse to buy SA goodies from the UK foods store here in town.

That's Africa!

Desert ordeal for wayward croc

A TWO-METRE crocodile has survived a six-day ordeal in the scorching Namibian scrub. The Nile croc, named Dundee is now safely back with his human keeper after falling off a bakkie travelling at high speed.

The South African Press Association reports that the seven-year-old reptile was being transported to an agricultural show in Windhoek when he apparently broke open his cage and fell on to the main road in Namibia between the South African border at Noordoewer and Windhoek.

His keeper, Bryan Vorster of the Cape Town Snake Park, only realised Dundee was missing when he stopped for petrol 300 kilometres after the border.

Vorster retraced his journey but he found no sign of his charge.

He offered a R1000 reward for Dundee's recapture and pressed on to the capital for the show.

Days later, Vorster had given Dundee up for dead in the semi-desert where the average temperature is 25 degrees Celsius and often as high as 40 degrees.

And if the heat didn't kill him, he had to contend with 18-wheel trucks and armed sheep farmers.

But Omaruru tour operator and former nature

conservation officer Pieter Mostert spotted what he thought was a rubber bakkie loadbox lining lying on the highway outside Grunau.

He realised it was a croc as he drove past but took a closer inspection to convince his sceptical wife Tessa that it was not a leguan, fairly common in the area.

The spot where the Mosterts found Dundee is more than 1300 kilometres from Namibia's nearest native crocs in the Kunene and Kavango rivers.

Mostert got a similar reaction when he visited a nearby farm for assistance to remove the crocodile.

The farmer, his manager and two workers, along with Mostert, returned with a rope and a fishing net and, after some snappy work, captured the hot and bothered reptile and took him back to the farm and a long, cool drink and a bath.

Mostert tracked Vorster down with the help of Die Republiekin newspaper in Windhoek and the delighted keeper gave him the reward on the spot before arranging to have Dundee transported to his final destination in the Namibian capital.

Aside from a few scratches, Dundee appeared to have survived his Namibian safari intact.

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Social insecurity

Bill Kirby returned to the UK after years in Zimbabwe to find authorities less than sympathetic to his plight,

I AM afraid that not all experiences are good, as you will see in my case. But perhaps we can change that. Also I'm not 100% fit or healthy, but this is not an appeal, or a sob story for help, it is just an illustration of what is happening. To set the scene: I was born and brought up in the UK, served in the Royal Engineers for 12 years and then became a printer.

I moved to Rhodesia in 1969 - just as the situation there began to worsen. I spent my last 8 years in Zimbabwe lecturing in printing, and turning the Print Club at PE School into a commercial venture for the benefit of the school.

Having returned recently to UK from Zimbabwe I am disgusted by the reception and treatment Zimbabweans of British stock are getting here from the authorities.

I had to return to the UK in late June 2002 after suffering a stroke. With the diabolical political situation in Zimbabwe, the ever-present threat of violence and stress and medical and daily basic living costs rising, I simply had to leave the country.

I left my 18-year-old daughter in the care of a relation, for her to complete her A Levels at Chisipite school. I left all my money in Zimbabwe, to see my daughter through her important final terms.

I arrived back in the UK in June aged 61 and am now getting physiotherapy on the National Health for my condition.

My two unmarried sons, who moved from Zimbabwe earlier, both work and I presently live with them in a house in Ruislip, shared with a work colleague of theirs.

As much as I would like to, I cannot work because of the stroke, so I have no income.

Although we are a very close family, my sons feel they cannot support me indefinitely, especially as their sister will join us in December.

I have applied for the various Social Security benefits and registered with a government agency which helps disabled people find jobs.

But so far I have received no benefits and have heard other Zimbabweans are having similar problems despite an appeal to Prime Minister Tony Blair by Prince Charles on their behalf in August.

It appears nothing has changed.

In August, the Sunday Times ran an article about a British-born Zimbabwe farmer who took the Department of Social Security to court. He won his case but still is not receiving any benefits.

There seems to be a sickening double standard though.

I understand that foreigners can arrive in UK in similar circumstances and claim claim refugee/asylum status.

For these people, taxi fares are paid from the airport, accommodation/housing is found, food vouchers and Social Security monetary grants/packages are given to them immediately they arrive.

In my case it is all rather strange, because I am a born and bred Briton, have served in the British armed forces and hold a valid National Insurance number.

Was my crime going to Rhodesia I wonder?

I feel I have done all that I can and have come to the end of the line.

To make matters worse the local Council Housing Scheme office, to which I had applied for subsidised accommodation, says that because I'm not on Social Security benefits my application will not be considered.

I have also been informed by mail, after three months that my application for Disability Living Allowance has been Refused.

I know I'm not an isolated case and I'm hoping to contact others in a similar situation to mine in the hope that we can do something about it.

Do you have an experience with the UK social security system? Write in and let us know about it and we'll publish it in next edition. Send your account to editor@outofafrica.com

From the Press

18 women beat robber to death

THREE women were arrested on charges of beating an alleged armed robber to death at a factory in Chamdor, Krugersdorp, West Rand police said.

Inspector Yolande Bouwer said the women surrounded the suspect and started beating him up with broomsticks and hose-pipes. He died in the factory.

The man was one of six gunmen who entered the factory, held the staff at gunpoint and stole about R17 000. The suspects, armed with handguns, ran away after the robbery.

Bouwer said as they left the factory, one fired at the workers. The bullet ricocheted off a wall and hit a truck driver in the arm.

He returned fire and shot one in a leg, but the suspect kept running.

The truck driver and his employer chased the robbers and caught the wounded suspect. They took him back to the factory, Bouwer said. The 18 women, aged between 35 and 47, all employees of the company, gathered around the suspect and started beating him.

When police got there, he was already dead. Three of the women were charged with murder.



Hansie Cronje's widow Bertha has received a special award from the George sports academy for her and her late husband's contribution to the development of sport for the handicapped in the southern Cape. (Picture: Jan Taljaard, Die Burger)

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Rhodesiana

- it's

HOT STUFF!



David Saffery deals in African memorabilia from his shop Afribilia, in London. He says there has been a big demand for all things Rhodesian recently.

ASK me what the most fiercely sought after pieces in my London shop are, and you might be surprised at the reply.

No, the answer isn't African masks - fashionable though they might be.

Tribal carvings? Sorry: try again.

In fact, some of the most desirable African collectibles around at the moment don't have an ethnic African origin at all. Instead they come from an African country which existed for less than a century and no longer survives except in the memories of its former citizens, now scattered across the world.

The trade in Rhodesian collectibles is experiencing a boom.

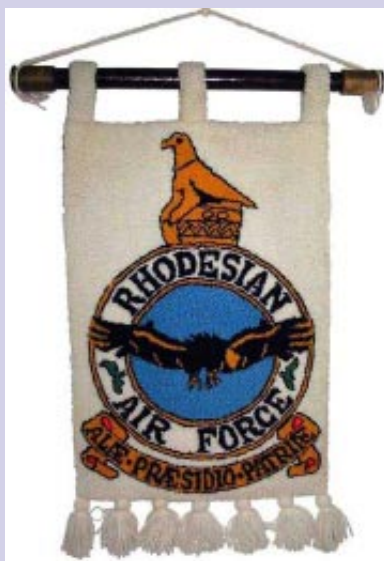
Just 22 years after the green-and-white flag was lowered for the last time, the market in historical articles from the country now known as Zimbabwe has reached fever pitch.

Recent auctions in Johannesburg have seen a wide range of pieces go under the hammer - everything from a Selous Scouts flag (estimated to sell for about US\$350) to an Automobile Association of Rhodesia chrome car radiator badge (estimated to achieve about US\$35).

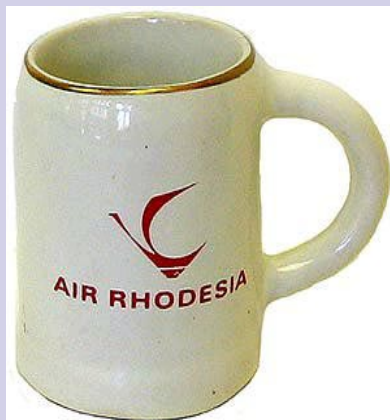
Even the old green-and-white itself can change hands for anything up to a mind-blowing US\$500 for a mint-condition, full-size, woollen flag by William Smith and Gourcock of Salisbury.

Some uncirculated Rhodesian banknotes exceed their published catalogue values in on-line auctions like eBay, while the robust market for early colonial Rhodesian stamps and postal history shows no sign of abating.

Post-UDI Rhodesian medals have seen a combined surge in value and



Wall hanging showing the Rhodesian Air Force badge c1975



Air Rhodesia spirit measure c1975

popularity out of all proportion to the overall recent medal market.

A stunning group of medals belonging to a major who left the British Army in 1967 to join the Rhodesian African Rifles - and was subsequently awarded the Rhodesian Army Meritorious Service Medal - were sold on auction in London last year for £3500 (US\$5600). Nine months later they changed hands for nearly twice that sum.

Even the news that the Zimbabwean government is about to sell off 9000 unclaimed Rhodesian General Service Medals doesn't seem to have depressed the collectors' market.

Three or four years ago, Rhodesian General Service Medals could be picked up for five or six pounds (US\$10) each in the UK; now you'll be lucky to pay a dealer less than £12 (US\$18) for one - and maybe five times that for an army major's GSM.

So who's collecting? Almost all of the people who buy from me have some connection with Rhodesia; most of them still describe themselves as Rhodesians, although they might live in London, Connecticut or Sweden.

Some collectors are bound by area - Matabeleland only, for example - or by topic, like the customer who collects anything to do with the Rhodesia Light Infantry, or another customer who collects postcards of pre-1965 Rhodesian street scenes.

Not everyone has a direct link to the country: one of the finest collections of British South Africa Police memorabilia in the world belongs to a charming and knowledgeable Canadian who has never even been to Zimbabwe!

And where do these bits of memorabilia come from? Well, that's more difficult. Many soldiers who had



Rhodesian Chrome Mines cheque 1939

served in the Rhodesian Armed Forces quietly sold their medals, badges and other souvenirs soon after majority government in 1980, while most of the army messes raffled off their regimental china and silver at the same time.

Some Zimbabwean embassies and high commissions are rumoured to have allowed dealers and collectors to buy wholesale amounts of obsolete Rhodesian passports, official documents, crockery, furniture and other embassy property from the 1980s onwards.

Some most unlikely items managed to find their way out of the country as the Rhodesian state handed over to the government of Zimbabwe - the "troopie" statue of the Rhodesia Light Infantry was removed from Cranborne Barracks to South Africa, and from there to the UK, where it now forms one of the centrepieces of the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum exhibition in Bristol.

Rumour has it that the entire collection of personnel records of the Rhodesian Army, which were for many years stored in Durban, has also been transported to a secret location in the UK.

So why is interest peaking now, 20 years after Rhodesia ceased to be a sovereign nation?

It's clear that the Internet has helped to fuel demand for and interest in Rhodesian collectors' items; on-line auctions like eBay and Speedbid attract a massive worldwide audience, while email makes it easy to communicate with buyers and sellers across the globe.

In addition, many of those who left Zimbabwe after independence are now in their 40s and 50s, with good jobs and cash to spend on recording a slice of their shared history that might otherwise be lost.

Perhaps most worryingly, many collectors are openly concerned that the long-term safety and preservation of items of historical significance located in Zimbabwe can no longer be guaranteed and are making an individual effort to preserve them in their own collections instead.

From an historian's point of view current events in Zimbabwe continue to leave dealers, collectors and archivists gloomy: "Most of my friends are just burning their belongings when they leave," says one of my suppliers, who is based in Bulawayo.

"Nobody has the time or the inclination to save anything. I have no idea what sort of precious items are going up in smoke."

The short-term prospect for the preservation of some aspects of Zimbabwe's history may be grim; however, it is clear that the history of Rhodesia will live on as long as the magic and romance of southern Africa continues to attract collectors.

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Rhodesian General Service Medal and Zimbabwe Independence Medal awarded to a Special Reservist c1979

Website: <http://www.pauldutoit.com>
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Happily murdering the real: the art of Paul du Toit

By Chris Roper

PLEASURE is the driving force behind Paul du Toit's art, the very engine of its bright being. It's impossible to look at his multicoloured portraits and not feel this.

Happiness is worked into the texture of the canvas, slashed into it with a variety of homemade tools that remind one of a Faustian toymaker's toolbox.

There's more art than artifice in the bold lines of the distorted faces and mutant eyeballs, zigzag smiles and startled grimaces. The bright colours mask the faces as a carnival grotesquerie that alludes more to the dark torment of the freakshow carny than the mundane hilarity of the circus clown.

So there's pleasure, yes, but it's a pleasure not untroubled by pain. The endless, almost obsessive repetition of Paul du Toit's ungainly portraiture is a search for perfection, perhaps, but it's also a ritualistic figuration and refiguration of the agony of that futile search.

When I talk of repetition, I don't mean that the paintings look similar. Far from it: each apparently crude face is different from the previous, sometimes subtly, at other times wildly.

Each painting is unique, with its own quirky characteristics. You can find Paul du Toit's work in every far-flung corner of

the globe, and this isn't just another cliché: in his geometry of gawkiness, globes do have corners, in the same way that his faces and bodies have angles that mock representation, but that convey a certain reality.

I'm tempted to say, stealing from Baudrillard, that Du Toit's paintings murder the real and that they are more industrial simulacrum than representation. They exist inside their own economy, in more ways than one.

In an economy of meaning, what they are (both in the way Du Toit produces them, and in the way people look at them) is determined by an exchange that takes place within themselves, in an uninterrupted circuit that doesn't need external reference or institutional circumference.

Forget the real world, forget the art world. These paintings are all about themselves, obsessively so. And if the viewer is happy to share in that sense of self, and partake of its joys, then the paintings have worked. In an economy of money, the value of the paintings mimics this same exchange.

People - a lot of people - buy them because they like them. I have no idea why they like them, I can only tell you why I do.

I could speculate, of course.

Maybe the people who clamour to buy them like the pleasure they see there, maybe their finely judged naivete' reminds people of some happy childhood that never existed. Maybe the cheerful colours go with the furniture. It doesn't matter.

The endlessly repeated pattern of desire and gratification, that determines the way they are painted, also determines the pleasure they bring to people.

I like them because they aren't real. They don't even attempt to mime reality. They are paintings of imitations of reality. You don't have to know what that reality once was, in Paul du Toit's brain, because his work doesn't live in the time of that reality.

It lives in the force of its colour, line and balance, and in the pleasure of that moment of looking at a crazily happy face, and seeing it look back at you.

Chris Roper is a cultural critic who contributes to various publications across a variety of media and genres, including the Mail & Guardian and M-Web.





Champagne - the festive fizz

DOES it happen to you too, or is it just me? Every time I drive in an unknown area the road signs never refer to the place I want to go to.

The direction to everywhere else on the planet will be nailed up at the intersection but not the one bloody town I am looking for.

I was driving through Champagne recently looking for a producer and I came to an intersection.

There was a sign indicating the place I wanted was to the left. The problem was that there was a similar sign pointing to the right. I took the one to the left and ended up at a dead-end railway station.

Madame, who was working in her garden, was not the least bit put out, she probably had dozens of people following the fictitious sign every day.

I eventually discovered that the direction I should take was neither left nor right, but straight on. The only direction with no markings at all!

Maybe it's their way of getting back at the English, who drink more champagne than the French do anyway.

You know, they say Dom Pérignon (1658-1715) "invented" champagne. Supposedly, he had bottled some white wine because in the cool of winter the wine had stopped fermenting.

When spring and warmer weather came along the wine started fermenting again and the gas built up in the bottles and when he tasted the wine he allegedly shouted to his fellow monks,

"Come brothers, hurry, I am drinking stars!"

Very romantic. I think it



*I drink it when I'm happy and
when I'm sad. Sometimes
I drink it when I'm alone.
When I have company, I
consider it obligatory. I trifle
With it if I'm not hungry and
Drink it when I am. Otherwise
I never touch it . . . unless I'm
thirsty.*

**Madame Lilly Bollinger
(1899-1976)**

*Some take their gold
In minted mold,
And some in harps
hereafter,
But give me mine
In bubbles fine
And keep the change
In laughter.*

**Oliver Herford
(1863-1935)**

more likely that he actually shouted: "Come here you idle buggers, these bloody bottles are exploding all over the place!"

It's the pressure, I am told. Enough gas to shoot the cork out at a fairly lethal rate. The pressure in your car tyres is around 2 bars. The pressure in a bottle of champagne is 6 bars, about the same as a really heavy vehicle tyre exploding. You don't mess with this stuff!

"We make the bottle extra strong to withstand this pressure and because the bubbles have nowhere to go they incorporate themselves into the wine and only become evident when the bottle is opened."

This from Jean Pierre Mareignier, winemaker at Gosset, in the town of Ay in Champagne.

The frothing over of bottles of champagne always brings visions of leading sports figures celebrating their victories by spraying anything within range with good champagne. This should be outlawed by the rules of the sport.

Drink the stuff! Spray fizzy drinks all over your fellow competitors and the Press, if you have to, but not Champagne, for God's sake!

I wander around the huge chalk caverns which spread out for miles underneath the various towns of Champagne and which were created by the Romans excavating building materials when the original towns were built.

Kilometre after kilometre of wine stacked in "A" frame racks spread away as far as I can see.

"These are called pupitres", Jean Pierre explains.

"They say they were invented by the Widow Cliquot, who cut up her kitchen table for

the very first one.

“Why not just stack the wines normally?”, I ask.

“Well, the second fermentation which makes the bubbles, leaves dead yeast cells in the bottle, these are harmless, but don’t look very nice and would make the wine milky if you shook it up, so buyers prefer absolutely clear wines.”

“What we do is stack the bottle horizontal to the ground with their necks in the hole in the pupitre, we have men go through the racks regularly and they twist the bottle and slowly, over a period of several weeks, they move the bottle towards the vertical. All those dead yeast cells then end up right at the neck, which at this stage is sealed by a Crown closure, exactly like a Coke bottle”.

I can see the few millimeters of white dust in the neck of the bottle.

Getting it out of there must be a problem, surely?

“Not really. We quickly freeze the neck of the bottle in a bath of water and salt at about minus 25 degrees C. The plug of ice that forms in the neck imprisons all the dead yeast cells and when we pop off the cork, the plug and waste matter shoot out.”

“How come all the original wine is completely dry, but you get some finished champagnes with varying degree of sweetness?”, I asked Jean Pierre.

“You are right. All champagne starts out dry, but we top it

up to replace any wine lost when we take out the ice plug. If we want a sweeter style we add a little sweetener at that stage.”

“I know champagne tastes just great, but it is not much more expensive to produce than any other wine. How come you guys still charge like wounded buffaloes?”

“Well, it is more expensive to produce than ordinary wine. The special bottles cost more as do the labels and gold foil. The time and effort of the second fermentation and clearing the dead yeast cells takes manpower.

“We also store the wine for at least three years before release and sometimes much longer. This all costs. Most governments impose a ‘luxury tax’ on champagne and this also pushes the price up.

“But it is true that producers of champagne want their product to be perceived as ‘special’. To be used on special occasions with a little reverence and to be associated with treasured moments. Successes, marriages, births. Memories to be recalled throughout life.”

Perhaps Remi Krug, director general of Krug champagne, put it better,

“A luxury good enriches our lives . . . It’s like going to the opera. Those three hours, for which you’re willing to pay a great deal, are so much more intense than an ordinary three weeks. They heighten your reality.”

Screw Christmas!



Waiter's
Friend



Screwfull



IT JUST seems like ten minutes ago that we were going through this horrific time of year! Parties, shopping, incredible prices. Hangovers. Searching in crowds of increasingly desperate shoppers, for something that might be vaguely acceptable as a present, for someone who you don’t really like and haven’t spoken to since last Xmas anyway.

If you are one of the three dedicated readers of my column then you might like to know what is available for you.

A really good corkscrew will always be well received. There are only two styles I particularly like, these are the *Waiter’s Friend* and the *Screwpull*.

There are various models of the very fine Screwpull corkscrews around. These are my idea of the best in the world and although they are quite expensive they work effortlessly. You just keep screwing in one direction and the screw goes in and comes out with the cork. For people a little older, with less tugging power, this would be a great gift.

The Waiters Friend is the one you see in most restaurants. You need one with a fine screw, one that looks hollow when you look at it from the point end. Not the thick gimbel type, which appears solid when similarly viewed.

This thick screw is a real cork destroyer. There is usually one side attachment, which is placed on the lip of the bottle when the screw is fully inserted. Upward pressure with the body of the device against the bottle’s rim, pulls the cork out. The very best ones have a two-stage device so that when you run out of leverage, with the cork still in, you have another step to bring into play.

You might find *wine temperature sets* about, but these are really ingenious solutions to non-existent problems. They tell you the obvious. If the bottle is too hot, cool it down and vice-versa.

The very necessary, specially designed *stoppers*, for closing up unfinished Champagne and Sparkling wine are a great choice. I am not suggesting that there is ever any wine left in the bottle, but it does keep the lovely bubbles in whilst you drink.

How do I keep from getting the awful *hangovers* that appear endemic at this time of year? Well, I don’t mix wines and beers and spirits too much to start with. There is no problem mixing red and white wines, that will not affect you. I do try to drink as much water as I drink wine during a dinner or party.

The hangover comes from the alcohol de-hydrating the body and the water consumption offsets this phenomenon.

Try to drink a very large glass of water when you go to bed as well. You may need to get up for a pee, but at least you won’t feel like suicide in the morning.

Everything in moderation, including moderation!

SA club contacts

United States

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The Protea Club Edmonton is a non-profit, social organisation promoting social events and activities among local residents of South African origin and among all those who are interested in South Africa.

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North East Branch (Leeds)

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Meet every fourth Sunday, ring for next date.

Devon & Cornwall Branch

Chairman: Graham Parish

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Meetings: 1st Sunday of the month

Three Counties Branch

Chairman: Bernard Terry

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Meetings: 2nd Sunday of the month

Lavington Branch

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Meetings: 3rd Sunday of the month

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News South Wales

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