

# HERITAGE of ZIMBABWE

Publication No. 39 — 2020



THE HISTORY SOCIETY OF ZIMBABWE  
Harare  
Zimbabwe



# Editor's Foreword

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This is the 39th (2020) edition of *Heritage of Zimbabwe* and the 79th volume produced by your Society since publications commenced in 1956 (following the formation of the History Society of Zimbabwe in 1953).

It opens with a well-researched article of high calibre by first time contributor, young American historian Brooks Marmon, on aspects of the life and times, and “political reinvention”, of parliamentarian Dr Ahm Palley (a controversial character to some and often a thorn in the side of the Rhodesia Front government). Ambivalent is possibly the best word to describe the attitude to him of those of the white population who followed his contributions to parliamentary debates and political life, but he was nevertheless sufficiently respected by that electorate to be elected and later, as an independent, returned to Parliament by his Greendale constituency, notwithstanding Edgar Whitehead’s comment in 1961 that “the views Palley expressed upon entering the territorial parliament in 1958 were precisely the opposite of the views that he is expressing today”. We hope for more from this accomplished author.

Well-known guide, historian, “Matabelophile” and regular contributor Paul Hubbard’s labour of love on the Lancaster House Conference 40 years on appears next and is equally well-researched and a thorough, balanced and easy-reading review and analysis of a momentous event in the history of our country. After the settlement was signed many in Zimbabwe hoped for a secure peace, albeit a more accurate prediction was that “there is not going to be a great big, glorious finale. We will just muddle through and I want to be around for the muddle”.

Another new contributor, Ken Rice, (now living in the United Kingdom), outlines a very interesting history of the first 20 years of St Joseph’s House for Boys where he spent much of his youth as the son of a long-time Warden and Matron. As to the other occupants, “separation, divorce, abandonment, bastardy, poverty, war, alcoholism, abuse, educational deprivation, illness or death featured somewhere in the unhappy lives of the 52 boys”. The article has been a few years in the finishing, with Ken being very particular about matters of confidentiality. The end result is, in your editor’s opinion, a fascinating account and a substantial contribution to the heritage of our land.

Following on is the fourth in a series of trivia extracted by your editor from old BSA Co. Gazettes, in this case of 1897, which will hopefully prove of mild interest and amusement.

John Brettell in a short piece, adds useful information on the two pioneer Mack namesakes (further to his detailed story in *Heritage* 34 of the life of the remarkable John Mack).

The fifth in Jono Waters’ series on the graves of remarkable personalities in the history of Zimbabwe deals with four men who “did not make it off the continent before going to their final resting places” viz. Thomas Baines, Ellerton Fry, Pennefather and Johan Colenbrander. Long may this valuable series continue, (from one of the keenest supporters of your Society).

The prolific Peter Fey is without doubt the world’s leading authority on the Geological Survey of this country (and a book is expected from him on that and related topics). In this edition we carry the stories of the fifth and seventh Directors Frank Leslie Amm and John Walter Wiles respectively. Peter’s research is impeccable and, a geologist himself, he is a perfectionist in his field of study and in his writings and is a highly valued contributor to this journal. His further works will appear in next year’s edition.

Jono Waters weighs in again with an account of the lesser-known siege and relief of Abercorn (Shamva) Store, of which Jono does well to remind us because, as he rightly puts it, “the rescue demonstrated true bravery” and “a selfless act in which the odds of coming back alive were finely balanced”.

Benny Leon and Rob Burrett collaborate in the next article on aspects of the early days of Kadoma, a dusty settlement which developed principally from gold mining and the cotton and textile industry into a busy town bustling with amenities. Benny and Rob challenge readers to produce their own accounts of the early days of other smaller towns around Zimbabwe. These



need not be erudite nor widely researched (and personal experiences are always of greatest interest). Will anyone take up the challenge?

George Hulme has kindly permitted us to print extracts from his published works on the indigenous cattle of Zimbabwe. George is the leading authority in this field, and we think our readership will enjoy what space permits us to reproduce in this edition.

The story of the finalisation of the exact border between Zimbabwe and Mozambique is a fascinating tale, concerning which both Mike Tucker and Paul Hubbard have spoken and written at length, and we are pleased to reproduce Mike's excellent account in this edition. Mike Tucker is a prolific and knowledgeable historian and readers are referred to his vast array of articles on his website [www.zimfieldguide.com](http://www.zimfieldguide.com).

Jono Waters returns with an account of the first aeroplane ("*Rhodesia*") to land in Harare one hundred years ago, and the first passenger flights around Zimbabwe that resulted therefrom, (The first plane to land in Zimbabwe, at Bulawayo, was of course the *Silver Queen II*). Piloted by Earle Rutherford and C. R. Thompson, great excitement attended its arrival and many were the bumps and scrapes during its sojourn in Zimbabwe thereafter, all of which makes highly entertaining reading.

The record of Sharrad Gilbert's stay of less than 15 months in Zimbabwe in 1900-1 provides interesting and not widely-known details of the aftermath of the First Chimurenga, (during his unit's stopover in Zimbabwe via Beira, before joining the British forces in South Africa during the Anglo Boer War), the ongoing pacification of the countryside and discouragement of any further rebellion whilst the settlers were also partly pre-occupied with that war on their southern border being crucial. Chief Mapondera, for example, was still regarded as something of an "outlaw". Another excellent article by Mike Tucker.

Robin Taylor follows up the account by John McCarthy in *Heritage* 18 of the conception in 1913 and eventual theft in 1998 of the Thousand Guinea Trophy, awarded annually at the Bulawayo Agricultural Show for the Champion Bull on show. Robin deals with a 9-inch replica ordered 100 years ago which re-surfaced in 2019 and is now in the Bulawayo Club.

Chris Halse provides a history of the Salisbury Vespa Club, active for over a decade, in its account of sometimes thousand plus miles expeditions by devotees of this classic scooter (the "wasp") which took the world by storm for a time and produced great friendships, camaraderie and sometimes marriage. The handsome young author appears on page 195.

Kris Pirozynski arrived in Zimbabwe in 1944 as a young pre-teen Polish refugee. His rural Rhodesian experience in camps near Marondera, Rusape, Lusaka and Kadoma make very interesting reading. Kris lives now in Canada, but regular contributor Rob Burrett managed to get his story and it is most illuminating. Can anyone suggest who the married couple mentioned at page 212 might have been? Such a union was most unusual for the times.

A series of book reviews by Ray Roberts and by Duncan Clarke (a major benefactor of your Society), wind-up this edition, (those relating to the redoubtable Mike Holman and the doughty George Nolan making particularly entertaining reading).

Volume 39 ends with the usual annual reports from your National Committee and the Mashonaland Branch and it is earnestly hoped you will enjoy the fine efforts of our authors.

I extend my thanks to Anna and John McCarthy for additional proofreading, my secretary Felicity Naidoo (one of Zimbabwe's leading legal secretaries) for her sterling efforts in working on the several edits of the articles in this volume, and to the inimitable Rhona Chapman for her expert advice in the layout and type-setting of *Heritage* each year.

**F. A. EDKINS**  
EDITOR, HERITAGE OF ZIMBABWE  
[edkins@cwg.co.zw](mailto:edkins@cwg.co.zw)



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