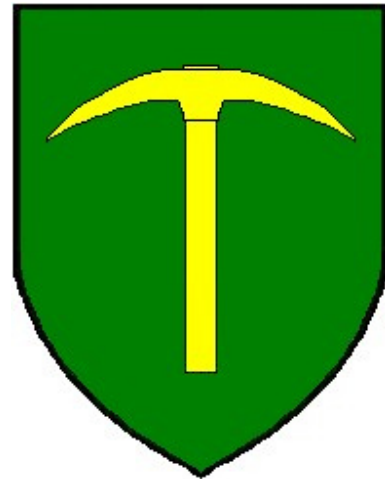




**May – August
2009**

Pioneer Trail



**Meeting
Mabukuwene Nature Reserve
Friday's 19:00 - 21:00 hrs**

**Scout Leader
Norman Scott
nclscott@netconnect.co.zw**

1st Bulawayo (Pioneer) Scout Group
www.angelfire.com/sc/matabeles/troops

Under the Pseudolachnostylis Maprouneifolia

On 23 February 2009, Mr John Landau a former Chief Scout of Zimbabwe passed away in South Africa. To honour John's lifelong commitment to the Boy Scout movement here in Zimbabwe, a Memorial Service was conducted by Dr. Eric Bloch in the St. George's Chapel, Gordon Park on Sunday 14 June 2009. In remembering John, who was invested into the Boy Scout Movement as a Wolf Cub in our Troop, I would like to thank Dr Eric Bloch for conducting the service and for agreeing that the text of the service may be reproduced in this edition of Pioneer Trail.

The activities for our Centenary Year of celebrations are unfolding at an ever increasing tempo. Following hard on the heels of the Troop's mini expedition to the Tuli Circle, (reported upon in the January – April 2009, Pioneer Trail) four members of the Troop undertook an exciting and challenging four day, One Hundred Kilometre Hike in the Matobo Hills.

At the Parent's Camp held on 20 June 2009, Michael Dodds was invested into the Troop. This investiture was followed by Christopher MacKenzie being awarded his Adventurer Badge and then his promotion to Patrol Leader of Cheetah Patrol. Congratulations to you both.

Throughout the school term many of our Scouts were to be seen out at Gordon Park with Rovers from Province over weekends, working tirelessly in preparing the Park for the Zimbabwe Scouting Centenary Camp that was held from 7 – 11 August, 2009. The Camp attracted 400 Cub Scouts, Scouts and Leaders from around Zimbabwe, making it the largest gathering of local Scouts in Zimbabwe to date, to be under canvas for five days. Our Troop hosted Andrew Barker from South Africa, Christopher FitzPatrick from England and Ken Nortje from Mutare. All but one of our members was in camp.

The activities offered on the Camp, were of a non-competitive nature and were designed to get Scouts to mix freely at the twenty-six activity bases that were operating. These bases were augmented by 30 kilometre overnight hikes to places of historical interest to us Scouts, where Baden-Powell had been scouting in 1896. To accommodate the Cub Scouts and the less adventurous, there were shorter hikes to the top of Shumba shaba and to near-by caves containing rock art executed by the San up to some eight thousand years ago. Each evening after supper, a camp-fire was held when the Scouts could entertain each other, bringing a mix of camp-fire songs and skits together from around Zimbabwe. Each day a newsletter was produced and placed on our webpage.

Our sausage sizzle this term was held at Mr. Rob Burrett's house. As can be expected, anything to do with food is always a hit with teenagers, the more so when the Scouts get together for the evening. Besides cooking their food there is always time for other activities and for this particular sausage sizzle the Scouts found that a plastic plate makes for a first class Frisbee. By the end of the evening, Rob's garden plants were a little rearranged, pruned and no doubt traumatised. Thank you Rob, you either have a few more grey hairs or you have been rejuvenated with the experience of having the Troop round for our sausage sizzle.

It was a pleasure to have Paul Carlsson, who now resides in England and is currently undertaking a degree in mechanical engineering, joining us on our August hike. I was also pleased to note that Paul had not lost his jovial character and interest in the personal development of the Scouts of our Troop.

An unexpected activity presented its self at very short notice when the Troop was invited to Mr Rosenfels' farm in the Mangwe District on Saturday 29 August, to take part in



On trek through the Mopane veldt

an ox wagon ride on his farm. For this opportunity, I would like to thank Mr. Shearfield who had organised the day outing, for the invitation to us Scouts to join his small group of enthusiasts. Once again, this activity fitted into the theme of our Centenary Celebrations.

A booklet of the history of our Troop is currently being prepared which will be available next year.

N. Scott
Scout Leader

Boy Scout Memorial Service for the Late John Landau **Gordon Park Chapel, Matopos.**

Conducted by Eric W. Bloch

14th June 2009

In leading today's Memorial service to the Late John Landau, at the outset I propose to start with the 121 Psalm, which I feel is particularly apposite to the surrounds in which we are right now:



Dr. Eric Bloch conducting the Memorial Service for the late John Landau

"I Will, lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD Which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore."

We will now proceed to a memorial prayer, and bearing in mind that the Late John Landau was Jewish this is a traditional Jewish memorial prayer but it is also wholly interdenominational.

"A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth. Hear the end of all things: Fear God, and keep his commands for this is the great duty of man.

O eternal God, in whose hands are the souls of all living and the spirits of all flesh, to thee we direct our eyes, whether in grief or in joy; for thou dost never withdraw thy tender mercies from us, but dost continually sustain us with thy grace and thy truth. Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, for thou art with us; thy rod and thy staff will be our consolation. Thou, O Lord, hast been pleased to take from our midst thy servant John Landau. Act, we beseech thee, toward him according to thine infinite mercy, so that his portion may be in life everlasting.

Do thou also grant that the memory of his life and his goodness may prove a blessing and a comfort to those who mourn him. May it incline their hearts to remain firm in their faith, and to walk in the paths of righteousness and loving service. Deign, O most merciful God, to regard all who are bereaved, and to consider their grief of spirit. Cheer their darkness, and bring consolation to them and to all sorrowing hearts. And it is said: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so, will I comfort you. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon

withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine ever-lasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

At this stage, in memory of John Landau, I think we should have a look at who John Landau was.

He was born on the 21 January, 1930. Within not even seven years of his birth he first became involved with Scouting joining the 1st Bulawayo Wolf Cub Pack, the Pack that 20 years later I became its Akela, but by then he had moved on. In fact he moved on only one year after having joined the 1st Bulawayo Cub Pack, when his family moved from Bulawayo to what was then Salisbury - now Harare, and immediately he joined the 2nd Salisbury Wolf Cub Pack, where he progressively rose to Senior Sixer. In 1941 he left the Cubs and became a Scout, in the same group the 2nd Salisbury Scout Group, and at that time he also went to Prince Edward School.

His Scouting was immensely active where he progressively became Troop Leader and attained the King Scout Badge. When he finished being a Boy Scout, he was still dedicated to Scouting, and became an Assistant Scout Master in the 2nd Salisbury Scout Troop and from that, in 1950, three years later he took over as the Troop Scout Master. Concurrently he was now trying to progress his career. He attained a Bachelor of Commerce Degree with the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, and after one year of service in the accounting profession, he went into the family business, a business which had been started in Bulawayo by his grandfather known as Landau Trading. That business had started in 1890, and he joined it in the early 1950s. In the years ahead, John Landau became a highly successful businessman, involved in wholesale trade and as a hotelier, (He was one of the founders of the MonteClair Hotel in the Eastern Districts), as a casino operator and with numerous other business interests. And, due to his love for this country, in 1963 he became politically active. But, all of those activities did not distract from his love and his involvement in Scouting.

As far back as 1953, three years after he had become a Scout Master, he did the Wood Badge course. Three years later, in 1955 he became the Group Scout Master of the 2nd Salisbury Scout Group and, in that same year, he led this country's contingent to the World Jamboree in Canada. A year later he attended the World Scout Indaba in England. Two years after that he became Assistant District Commissioner for Salisbury Central. In 1959 it is a year that sticks particularly in my mind, as it was the fiftieth anniversary of Scouting in this country and we had a Jamboree at Ruwa Park, just outside what is now Harare, and that is where I first had the privilege of meeting John Landau. I was the Treasurer at that Jamboree. John Landau was very active in the entire arrangements for and the administration of that Jamboree. In fact, I will never forget how, on the third day of the Jamboree I and many others who were involved in the administration of the Jamboree were sitting around the campfire having our supper and people said "You know, there is only one thing wrong with this Jamboree, and that there is far too much protocol. Every day we have got some other dignitary, whether it is the Prime Minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Sir Roy Welensky, whether it was the Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Edgar Whitehead or others, and there was protocol associated with all of that." All of sudden John Landau disappeared, and came back a moment later carrying a big bundle and he said "This is the protocol" and he put it on the fire so that it would burn, and he said "That is the end of protocol".

In 1960 he became the District Commissioner for Salisbury West, and in 1962 Assistant District Commissioner of Cubs, but a year later he became the District Commissioner of Salisbury Central and, in that year, was awarded the Medal of Merit. So, he progressed actively in Scouting and, in 1975, he was the Contingent Leader to the World Jamboree in Norway, and became the Assistant Chief Commissioner of Boy Scouts in this country.

A year later, in recognition of his remarkable achievements in Scouting, he was awarded the Silver Acorn Award. In 1981 he became Chief Scout of Zimbabwe and received the Silver Wolf Award. One year later, the Golden Lion Award and, in 1983, John Landau was made a Baden-Powell Fellow. Four years after that, he received the African Elephant Award and, from the King of Sweden, a Medal of Merit. That was the year in which John Landau completed fifty years of active Scouting. In 1992 he was awarded the Bronze Wolf Award. Until his death, less than 5 months ago, he was a Committee Member

of the World Organization of Boy Scouts. Over 70 years of Scouting, and at all times driven by what he had learnt back in 1937: the Cub Motto "Do Your Best". That drove him, at all times, as he was always "prepared".

John Landau was the epitome of the dedicated, motivated Scout. What he developed in Scouting he extended into all facets of his life, be they the facets of business, of community service (which included being a very active Rotarian), of family and of all else. John Landau was a remarkable example of what should be emulated by all.

Now I would like to take another Psalm equally well known, the 23rd Psalm:

*"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD, for ever.*

Before proceeding to a final prayer, I shall ask Mrs Moody to come up and say a few words:

Ecclesiastes Chapter 6. Verse 2 says :

"God gives a man wealth, possessions and honour."

Ecclesiastes Chapter 5 Verses 19-20 says:

"When God gives any man wealth and possessions and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work, this is a gift of God.

So it is great that God is happy with a man with riches, if he spends it to the glory of God.

And John was a good example. He used his money to the glory of God by one thing, his generosity to the Scout movement, and we have a great deal to thank him for. I think I am right in saying that the Headquarters in Harare were financed by John, and lots of other things which we have not heard about. So, we can be rich, God wants us – some of us to be rich, but it depends on how you use those riches. I did not know John when he was a Scouter – when he was a Cub. But, I did know him when he used to go to Commissioners' Conferences, and always felt that he was such a good listener. He would listen to other people's point of views very patiently, and that he was a good leader, he was prepared to listen. And, I thank God for his example to me personally and his dedication to the Scout Movement.

Thank you John, thank you.

Let us conclude with one further prayer, with John in our minds:

"O God, who art full of compassion, who dwellest on high, grant perfect rest beneath the shadow of thy divine presence, in the exalted places among the holy and pure, who shine as the brightness of the firmament, to John Landau who hath gone to his eternal rest. We beseech thee, O Lord of compassion, shelter his soul for evermore under the cover of thy wings. The Lord is his portion. May he rest in peace? And let us say, Amen!

One Hundred Kilometre Hike

“Celebrating a Century of Scouting”

27th April – 1st May 2009

Our second, One Hundredth Anniversary event, was held during the last week of the April – May school holidays, just eight days after our mini expedition to the Tuli Circle. This time, our mission was to undertake a One Hundred Kilometre Hike through an area of the Matobo hills that we had not been to before on our monthly hikes and to visit places of historical importance in our country’s history, in those areas where our Founder, Lord Baden–Powell had been present in 1896. The scenic eastern Matopos met both criterion and so a demanding, but interesting route was planned to make the most of what this area had to offer. The hike was to be of four days duration, to be of at least one hundred kilometres in distance, going cross-country and over rough terrain. With this physically and mentally demanding challenge in mind, I considered only those Scouts who had proved themselves during our monthly hikes over the past year. Of the four Scouts who met the requirements I was looking for, one had a family commitment, so leaving three, Christopher MacKenzie (16 years) Dale van Aarde (13 years) and Declan FitzPatrick (12 years), to whom I extended an invitation to join me in this hike to mark our Troop’s One Hundredth Anniversary.



The obelisk at Fort Umlugulu cemetery

When possible in undertaking such a challenging hike, I arrange to start the hike in the late afternoon and to hike at the most ten kilometres, so as to get into a hiking frame of mind. This would also provide an opportunity of adjusting our ruck sacks, in which we would be carrying all our requirements for the duration of the hike. And so our journey began late on Monday with Mr. MacKenzie, Chris’ father, taking us to Esibomvu, a small settlement some seventy kilometres south east of Bulawayo, near the Mzingwane Dam. Having arrived at our starting point at 16.00 hours, we shouldered our ruck sacks, bade Mr MacKenzie farewell and headed for a dam on the Oama River, one kilometre to the west.

On crossing the wall of the dam, we easily found the Pioneer cemetery containing the graves of men who were killed in skirmishes in the nearby hills between the Ndebele and the troops manning Fort Umlugulu. Unfortunately, the cemetery has not been looked after and is heavily overgrown by the bush. Also the name plates on the graves had been removed, most probably by thieves who would have stolen them for their metal. They were still there in 1994 when I had visited the cemetery.

Our next stop was at the site of Fort Umlugulu some five hundred metres away. The fort is approximately 50 metres square and consists of earthworks, a section of which is stone faced, with gun emplacements on the four corners. It too is heavily overgrown and the earthworks badly eroded. Baden-Powell was one of a small party that used the fort, but no action took place here. It is from this fort that Mr. J.P. Richardson, a Native Commissioner and Zulu linguist, went alone into the hills at very great personal risk to arrange the meeting which culminated in the first *Indaba*. This first *Indaba* was held between Mr. Rhodes, Dr. Sauer, Mr. Vere Stent, Mr. Colenbrander and a friendly native, John Grootboom. These men went into the hills on 21st August 1896, to confer with the Matabele Chiefs. This first *Indaba* provided the foundation of further meetings and a return to peace. It is most likely that Baden-Powell included many of the skills he wrote into his hand book, “Scouting for Boys”, from his personal experiences in these very hills during his military scouting, whilst reconnoitring the Matabele positions in the Matobo hills in 1896.

By the time we had looked around, the sun was low in the sky, so we “bundu bashed” for about a kilometre until we came upon the dusty road leading to Diana’s Pool, which we followed in the growing darkness for the next nine kilometres. On arriving at the Pool, we quickly selected a campsite, lit a fire and ate our supper. It was not long before we were sound asleep. Distance ten kilometres.

We awoke to a glorious Tuesday morning, with high cirrus clouds, with those in the eastern sky tinged with pink from the rising sun. Whilst I set about preparing breakfast, the others went to view the Pool, as this was the first time that they had been to this place. The large pool carved out of the solid granite by natural processes was named after Diana, Mr. J.P. Richardson’s wife. After breakfast we left our packs next to the trees under which we had slept and went to the Pool again, for our morning wash. Then, we continued a further four hundred



Our campsite at Diana's Pool

metres down stream to look at the Orbicular Granite site. Orbicular Granite is a freak occurrence in granite which, as its name implies are spheres of granite, the layers of which are formed like onion rings around a nucleus with each layer being clearly visible. The site covers a very small area and is located in the bed of the Mbilamboya River, the water of which has weathered the rock showing the nodules of the orbicular granite quite clearly. The site is a protected national monument.

It was 08.30 hours by the time we left Diana’s Pool and headed for Mazhowe, a large dwala or whale backed kopje, three kilometres to the south. Walking in between the fields of the villages we were pleasantly surprised as to the ingenuity of the people. In order to water their fields, the villagers had laid the ends of long lengths of black polythene pipes in the small rivers upstream and then led them downstream to their fields. The result was that their crops were flooded by water, using gravity.

Having climbed a steep incline, we stood at last on top of Mazhowe at 1541 metres above sea-level; it most rewarding. Looking down in the direction of where we had come from, we clearly saw Diana’s Pool some 4.5 kilometres as the crow flies to the north east and 300 metres below us. In the middle distance, we saw the settlement of Esibomvu and on the far northern horizon, hills of the gold bearing greenstone belt, at the foot of which nestled the small village of Esigodini. In the opposite direction, directly below us were the homesteads and fields of the local people and beyond, the jumbled mass of granite kopjes of the Matobo Hills. The sight was truly awe-inspiring.



Filling our water bottles from a crystal clear stream along the hike

The falls on the Lumene River were our immediate destination and although only some eight kilometres away, we knew that it would take at least another three hours to reach them. The decent off Mazhowe was like walking along a gently sloping highway. At the bottom we followed a footpath along the bank of a small river in a southern direction until the river made a sharp turn to the west and tumbled down through a series of rapids in a narrow gorge for about a kilometre, before joining the much larger Lumene River, flowing south. At the confluence of these two rivers, the Scouts removed their hiking boots and splashed through the gently flowing water for the rest of the way to the falls. I dissolve in water, so I hiked on the river’s bank.

The top of the falls which flows through a narrow gorge is hidden by huge boulders and thick vegetation, but as we proceeded further, the gorge opened out revealing a magnificent view of the falls as the water cascaded down over a jumbled mass of granite boulders to the valley 140 metres below. These falls are the highest in the Matopos. We back tracked up the falls to where the river entered the narrow pass between the range of kopjes and made camp for our

lunch stop. For lunch we tried a new idea; we made savoury jaffels, baking them over our lunch time fire. The Scouts all agreed that it was a great idea, especially as they had not carried the heavy jaffle iron.

Having had a good two hour rest, it was time to get moving in order to reach our intended night campsite at the Mtshabezi Dam, nine to ten kilometres away. Our progress was made easy, for we followed the bush paths criss-crossing from one village to the next through the Matopo Communal Land. It was not a problem choosing the right paths to lead us to the dam, as we just followed the most well worn path for the people go to the dam to fish. The people were very friendly and offered us sticks of sweet-reed to munch on, as we trekked. Further, they were totally amazed to see such young boys carrying their heavy ruck sacks and to hear of how far we had already hiked and how far we still had to go. No pity for me, the old *madalha*, with buckling knees, at the weight of my pack.

Leaving the homesteads and fields of crops behind, we entered into the grazing and forested areas which are purposely left in their natural state so as to provide grazing for their livestock and wood for the construction of their houses and cooking fires. Our route dropped gently down to the Mtshabezi valley and it wasn't long before we sighted the waters of the dam. Breaking out of the forested area we found ourselves at the off-river spillway, over which the excess water of the dam was spilling. The waters of this dam are contained in a deep sided valley, which does not lend its self to finding a flat area in which to camp, well, not near the wall where we found ourselves just before sun down. Having been to this dam before on a previous hike, I knew where the water Bailiff's house was, so we headed for it and requested to camp near his house for the night. This plan also ensured that we would have water. Our first full day of hiking was over, during which we had hiked twenty two kilometres. (Total distance thirty two kilometres)

Wednesday morning dawned too early, even though the nights were getting longer as winter approached. Having our usual oats porridge for breakfast to ensure that our stomachs would be firmly glued together until lunch time, we then bade our host farewell and toddled down the steep foot path to the dam wall.



The old course of the river was fifty metres below.

The wall is a double-curvature mass concrete arch. It is 50, 5 metres in height and 258 metres along the top. The surface of the water was only five metres below us as the dam, which was full to capacity, stretched out up the Mtshabezi valley for nine kilometres. A light breeze created ripples on the water's surface. Having taken our pictures, we proceeded across the wall, down the steep stone steps to the level of the river bed and stopped briefly at the plaques recording details of the construction of the dam. Then, continuing with our hike southward following the

narrow road alongside the river, us happy hikers commenced on our second full day of hiking.



On the Mtshabezi Dam wall

The cool morning air in the shadows cast by the range of kopjes on our left was refreshing and we were able to set a brisk pace. Our first stop was four kilometres down stream from the wall. Checking the map to decide on the next section of our route, we left the road and followed a footpath, crossing the Mtshabezi River where the water was knee deep. Poor Dale, the bottom of his shorts got wet. Shorty! Once away from the river the footpath we followed took us back in a southerly direction along the base of a long ridge of broken kopjes. This area was open woodland where the local people grazed their cattle and collected fire wood. It was not long before we rounded the southern end of the kopjes and headed west toward Dula Business Centre about four kilometres away. Our path

wound between a broken mass of granite boulders, took us alongside picturesque streams along which the local people had established their gardens and brought us finally to the Business centre and the old road to Gwanda, a small mining town along the main Bulawayo – Beitbridge road.

On arriving at Dula Business Centre we were in for a big disappointment. The one and only store at this once thriving centre did not have any cold drinks in stock. We did, however, buy a packet of imported biscuits, which were absolutely disgusting and not even fit to feed to the rats. The Tuli River, where we had planned on having lunch was seven kilometres away, so a brisk pace was set to get there in an hour. Well, owing to the thick sand we had to walk through, it took us one hour twenty minutes. Exhausted, we flopped down on the river's bank and had lunch. Our lunch stops are always of at least two hours. This ensures that we are fully rested and ready for the afternoon hike, in this instance, approximately ten kilometres. During lunch, whilst I 'spaced' out, the scouts played in the river for most of our rest time. Starting off again at three o'clock when the heat of the day was beginning to subside, we continued in a westerly direction into the setting sun, heading for the dwala kopje of Tovi.

On arriving at the base of Tovi, Dale and I were back on familiar ground, for we were last here in 2007, on a previous one hundred kilometre hike, that time to celebrate World Scouting's Centenary. It was not difficult finding the campsite we had established in the forest on that hike. It was as if we had only been away for a week.

There were the stones encircling our camp fire with their long dead coals, the excess wood we had collected, the stones we had sat on next to the fire, even our sleeping places were still clearly defined and the stream had flowing water. What a magic moment.

Now, two years later, almost to the week, our new camp fire burst into life with the flames flickering straight upwards to the heavens, radiating light and warmth, as we prepared our dinner and talked of the day's journey. And, once again the stars shone brightly, and we were even treated to a number of 'shooting stars' before finally falling into 'the arms of Morpheus'. On this, our second day we had hiked twenty eight kilometres. (Total distance sixty kilometres)

The night had been cool, as was Thursday morning, so we re-kindled the fire and warmed ourselves whilst sipping a mug of hot Milo. Chris prepared breakfast. Then at seven-thirty Declan took the lead as we headed off through the forest following a game trail. Unfortunately, the trail soon disappeared and we found ourselves trapped by encircling kopjes. We had two options. One, retrace our steps back to our campsite and take another direction or to climb



After a good night's sleep, we continue our hike

up the kopjes and find a way out from there. We decided on the latter, much to our regret later, as the climb was strenuous, being blocked by a mass of tangled bush, grass and vines. We wasted an hour trying to get through to an open area, where we were able to make progress. Oh well, another lesson in life, when all else fails, read the instructions. In this case, read the map instead of hiking blindly.

Tovi had been the most southerly point of our hike and now we swung to the north. Our lunch time destination was Lushumbe School some seven kilometres to the north. However, we took a wrong path in going through a village complex and ended up hiking eleven kilometres instead. This did not worry us, as the area was a joy to hike through. It was 13.00 hours by the time we found a site next to a small stream just inside the Matobo National Park boundary, to have our lunch and then for me, a siesta.

On leaving from our lunch rest just before three o'clock, our route followed the edge of a long vlel in a northerly direction. Being in the National Park, the grass cover was good and in many places had grown above our heads. Most of the streams we crossed had water and the trees were still in full leaf. Nanke kopje loomed large in the distance and it was to this landmark that we headed.

Climbing Nanke to get to the cave was quite exhausting, but well worth it. We found that the small stream near the cave was flowing, so enabling us to get water for our cooking needs. We made camp, cooked our meal on our hike cookers, but did not, for the first time of an evening, make a fire so as not to disturb the environs of the cave. We had hiked a distance of eighteen kilometres and ascended about three hundred metres since leaving Tovi, on this our third full day. (Total distance seventy eight kilometres)

We awoke early, as today Friday would be the last day of our hike. We were both excited and sad, for although our challenge was nearly over, we were enjoying ourselves. Our ruck sacks were a fraction of the weight they were when we had left from Esibomvu on late Monday afternoon. We were fit, although Dale and Declan had blisters forming, they did not complain. Having had our breakfast we packed our rubbish into the plastic bags we carried for this purpose into our packs and headed out of the cave to the top of the kopje. From here we could see Shumba shaba, which looms over Gordon Park, but that was many kilometres distant. Hiking along what amounted to be a high ridge joining a series of kopjes, we made good progress and only after an hour we found ourselves at a village in the Gulati Communal Land on the northern boundary of the National Park.

In order to ensure that our hike would in deed be slightly over our one hundred kilometre target, we did not head straight for Gordon Park, but instead took a longer route northwards, before swinging round to the west and toward our final destination. We were now in familiar country for we all had done many monthly hikes in this area. Climbing up Shumba shaba from the eastern side and looking down on Gordon Park two hundred metres below us, was a most rewarding and satisfying feeling.



Finally at Gordon Park, one hundred kilometres later

Our hike ended at headquarters in Gordon Park at 12.45 hours. We were tired, but well pleased with our efforts. The only injuries we sustained were a few blisters and sore shoulders from the heavy packs that we had carried. Then it

was lunch and later we were treated to a second lunch when Dale's mother arrived with fresh meat pies and cold drinks.

My thanks and admiration is extended to Christopher, Dale and Declan, who had made the hike possible. Although so young, they proved themselves by meeting the challenge and I am sure that they will remember the hike for the rest of their lives, although I am sure they will enjoy many more. As for me; well my hiking boots are wearing thin, but there is still enough tread on them to continue for a few more years.

Norman

Troop Camp

23rd – 25th May 2009

We were at Christ the King Church at a quarter past nine and were packing to go for our Troop camp. There was Norman, Chris and Myself. Everybody else was involved in sporting activities, even though it was a holiday weekend for schools.

When we arrived at Gordon Park, we lit the boiler and the stove fires and then got some ropes out of our store and did some whippings. Norman was working on the small wooden crosses that are along the path leading up Mount Inungu. When we had finished our whippings, we had our lunch. For lunch we had bread and cold meats with mayonnaise and avocado. After lunch we went and put the pump in the Land Rover and went down to the well where we put the pump and started it up.

Going back to Headquarters, we loaded up the Land Rover with our camp gear and took it to our campsite. Here we lit our cooking fire and then Chris and I started on making a camp toilet. This project was one of the camp tests that Chris had to do for his Adventurer badge. While we were looking for some rocks for the toilet, we found a dead tree and Chris told me to get the axe and cut it up. I did what he told me to do and when I had finished we took the wood to our camp and built a campfire in our campsite and lit the fire.

Chris then started to cook dinner. I dug a hole and lit a fire in it. Chris prepared the fish, and then when the fire was just coals we placed the packets of fish on the coals and covered the hole in with earth and left it. For dinner we had fish and chips. It tasted just great. After dinner we laid our sleeping bags out near the campfire and went to sleep.



**Having cooked dinner
"backwoods" style it is shared
out between the three of us**

For breakfast we had oats and then at about 9 o'clock we went to mount Inungu to put up the little wooden crosses along the path leading to the top. This took until lunch time. We then returned to the Park, had lunch of pancakes. In the afternoon, Chris and I continued working on the toilet we had started the day before. Later, Chris asked me to lay another camp fire ready for the night. Chris made our dinner. After dinner we had Milo and then went to bed.

On Monday morning I struggled to start the fire, but eventually I did start it. For breakfast we had oats again but this time we added some nuts. This made it taste very nice. We then finished making the toilet. It had taken us all weekend to make. Near lunch time, Chris made a fire under the camp oven and made us pizza for lunch. My pizza was very nice. After lunch we packed up our camping things and went home.

Kevin FitzPatrick

White Waters to Maleme Dam

5th – 6th June 2009

We were dropped off at the fence line between the Kumalo Communal Land and the Matobo National Park on the Kezi main road just beyond the, White Waters National Park's office. From here Chris, Kevin, Norman and I, headed off along a track passing by some fields and homesteads in the Communal Land. It was fairly cold when we found a place away from the villages, to rest for the night. It did not take long for us to collect wood to make a fire, not so much to give us light, as it was nearly full moon, but more to provide some warmth and a fire always brings joy on a hike.

I took out my pre-cooked dinner and munched away as the others did the same. Finally we all got comfy in our respective sleeping areas under the shade of the trees, for the moon was bright and lay down to rest for the night. Somehow we managed to get some sleep, besides nearly freezing as it was so cold.

All too soon it was time to wake up, then we had breakfast and a welcome mug of warm coffee, before setting off in a south easterly direction following a winding track through the veldt. The hike was long and interesting, going past empty fields where maize had been grown and now reaped. We crossed over low granite ridges and saw in the distance the kopjes of Bulale to the west of us and Njelele, the sacred mountain, about thirteen kilometres to the south west. I was fascinated by all the different footprints, from cattle, goats and dogs in the Communal Land and to the fresh spoor of kudu, duiker and even those of a big leopard, when we finally crossed into the National Park, later in the morning.

After about seven kilometres we rested next to some big boulders, where Chris went exploring and found a number of paintings on the rock faces. Norm then led us across a marshy area and up into a kopje to quite a big cave, where we saw the most beautiful rock paintings. There were kudu, eland, people hunting, people dancing and even what looked like women giving birth. We then made our way down again and followed a very old and washed out track to an unnamed tributary of the Maleme River. Here we joined a well used track and followed it all the way to the Maleme rest camp, where we had left Norm's Landy the night before. It was now one o'clock and since leaving our campsite at seven thirty in the morning we had hiked fifteen kilometres.



Michael studying the paintings executed by the San.

I would like to thank to Mr. Tipler for taking us to the start of our hike on the Friday night.

Michael Dodds

Family Social Camp

20th – 21st June 2009

Well this time around there was some degree of apprehension about going on the parents' camp – this time of the year in the Matopos promises to be chilly, and unless armed with suitable bedding, can be freezing! So having packed the trailer and double checked the bedding (and added another blanket as Plan Z) I headed for the "hills". Packing had taken a bit longer than usual as both of my helpers are now part of the Troop and had already gone out with Norman on Friday (Exeat Weekend) but I wasn't too late for morning tea. I headed straight for the 1st Pioneer's camp site and found Norman chatting around the camp-fire circle with Michael Dodds' family (his parents, brother Matthew and sister Melissa, aunt and uncle and grandmother). It was a lovely relaxed scene and most of the boys (Dale, Michael, Declan and Kevin) were 'out-and-about' having fun. Only Chris was at the camp so tea was quickly sorted while he told me that they had found an enormous, but dead Python close by. I have to admit being sceptical about his descriptions or the size of this snake, but before long curiosity got the better of me, so with match box in hand to verify size in a photo, we went to have a look. I was shocked at the sheer size of the beast, never having seen a snake so large, and realizing that the snakes out in the Matopos are not limited to a few little 1 or 2 metre cobras! It was unclear how the snake had died, whether falling from the tree above where it lay or down the steep rock face to the side or perhaps by a baboon as the carcass showed signs of having been torn, whether before or after death. It soon became a topic of discussion and viewing by more of the group.



The huge, but dead python Chris found in our campsite

Norman then suggested we take a walk to plan for the afternoon activity. I had seen in the timetable for the camp that Norman had a plan to get the parents involved in an afternoon activity, and suspected something fun like cutting logs or the like. Well, having seen the pieces of railway line to be loaded onto Emma and the pieces of granite that formed part of his plan, I realized that this was going to be quite an exercise, and hoped that a few more strong men were going to arrive! During the walk we saw and pondered over the large pieces of flat granite that lay on top of termite mounds and concluded that the rocks had been lifted off the original resting place by the expansion of the termites' clay whenever it got damp. It was this phenomenon and the water polished rock in an area where water rarely flows that reminded me that we are only visiting this world for a brief moment in the bigger 'picture' of this world/universe, and felt very humbled.

We took a short break for lunch and then set out to flex our muscles. Having retrieved the pieces of railway line from down in the circular drive we headed for the chosen piece of granite. Norman skilfully maneuvered Emma backwards through the trees to within a few metres of the selected rock. I noticed a few sceptical faces when they saw the size of the piece – a beautiful flat rock some 1m wide and at least 1,5m tall and probably an average thickness of 60mm. These rocks always seem to give one a false sense of their mass because they often "rock" or move slightly when stepped on, but we soon realized just how heavy a chunk of granite can be. With levers we were able to slide the rock about half way up the rails onto the rear of Emma, but reached a point where progress had literally ground to a halt. Fortunately Rob and Wendy arrived during this phase so it was a case of more hands on deck. It is always interesting to hear peoples' concerns and suggestions when trying to find the safest and easiest way of doing something strenuous and so having decided upon the best plan, we were soon back on track with the help of a chain winch pulling while levers shoved the rock up the rails. The loading had taken a while longer than anticipated which prompted the ladies to come looking for us.



The last haul onto the back of "Emma" needed the use of a chain winch

It was decided that it was best to forfeit afternoon tea and continue to the site where we would unload the rock. Again there were numerous concerns and suggestions but after a short while the rock was sliding down the rails to the ground and before long it was implanted in the ground. The purpose of this feat will be revealed during the forthcoming Centenary Camp.

By this time the rest of the visitors had arrived (Dale's mom Kerry and Gran Shirley and Johnny Kleynhans) and we returned to the Camp-site and enjoyed so much needed refreshments while quickly setting up tents and preparing for the braai dinner before campfire. It was good to see the boys getting more involved cooking for the parents who just kept a watchful eye or maybe just enjoyed a few "chef's perks".



Michael Dodds is invested into the Scout Troop.

Norman asked me to lead the campfire so voices and coordination were once again put to the test leading up to the more serious moment when Michael Dodds was invested into the Troop. As is tradition, Norman explained to those gathered about all that Scouting offered and the importance of parental support in the current times. He then went on to commend Christopher on the progress he has made over the last months and promoted him to Patrol Leader. After a few more tunes Norman gave a more detailed talk about the Scout movement and its benefits and achievements before the campfire broke up and flap jacks were soon being cooked

in multiples over the remains of the campfire, along with roasted marshmallows. The evening had drifted along and it was now late so the townies headed back for the bright lights and their warm beds while the rest of us prepared our bedrolls, and before long were dreaming about the afternoon's activity.

When Norman said we would not be rising so early in the morning, I had developed high hopes of a lie-in, but these were soon shattered when he stirred us at about 6.15am to climb Shumba shaba. Only He, Declan and I raised the energy to climb while the rest of the boys decided to stay in camp and start breakfast. I was soon wondering if I had made the right choice, as it was clear that Norman and Declan wanted to reach the top before sunrise and being one of those who rarely push much more than buttons on a key board, I was left puffing and panting while searching for their tracks! It was traditionally windy at the top so after a short breather we headed down while building an appetite for what was to follow.



**Patrol Leader
Christopher MacKenzie**

While taking it easy after breakfast and having coffee the boys were again enjoying a rough & tumble on the mattresses near the remains of the camp fire. The relaxed atmosphere was soon broken by the call for help as Declan was in pain clutching his arm. It was clear that all was not well so leaving Kevin with basic instructions Declan and I headed for town and medical help. I must say I was relieved and impressed with the assistance given at Galen House and before long we were heading home with Declan sporting his cast on which Kylie had already claimed rights to make the first inscription.

Declan decided not to return to the camp so I returned alone to see how they were doing, only to find Norman and the boys about to go out on another afternoon activity. We all climbed aboard Emma and headed off in another direction to collect firewood for the upcoming camp. The boys had visited the route previously and so had mapped out the various collection points, so it was not too long before Emma was fully loaded and we returned to the 1st Pioneer campsite to unload. Thinking that at least another 10 or more such loads would need to be collected before the forthcoming Centenary Camp was quite daunting and made me realize just how much work is required in just one aspect of organizing a camp at which some 500 scouts are expected in August.

Fortunately tea was on the go so we stopped for a 'cuppa' after which it was time to head back to town after another exciting and enjoyable parents' camp. Again I had been amazed at all the real life experiences that our children are being provided while taking part in Scouting. Thanks to Norman and the boys for a wonderful Parents' camp.

John FitzPatrick
Parent

Nanke Cave Hike

14th – 15th August 2009

I had phoned Norm on the Wednesday and asked him about the possibility of a hike while I was in Zimbabwe, we all know Norm and his ability to make things happen. Low and behold Friday came along and we were off on a hike. Norm came to my house at about 17.30pm with Chris. I hadn't seen Chris in 2 years and found that he had shot up considerably since our last meeting. We proceeded to Greenvale supermarket to try and find some condensed milk, but we could not find any, so we went to Hillside shops where we were again unsuccessful in our search. Finally we found some in Bonza together with a couple "chocies". We then headed off towards the Matopos.

As it had been two years since I was last in Bulawayo we had lots of catching up to do. We talked enthusiastically about what had been happening in our lives and reflecting on where we have come from. I thought continuously of my old Scouting days and how much this hike reminded me of them.

Just before the Matobo National Park gate we turned off onto the Fort Usher road, which was in a bad state. We had to slow down considerably. We were now travelling through the Gulati Communal lands, which Norm knows very well. After several kilometres we turned off the road and headed along another well beaten track after a while we decided to make camp as it was dark and we thought we may miss the road that we wanted to go on. It was a clear, cool, late winter's night; the stars that night were amazing, it seemed to me that I had never seen them like this before. Meanwhile Chris started to collect firewood, while Norm boiled some water for coffee on a small gas cooker. We then settled down to a very satisfying cup of coffee. Chris brought out the burgers we were going to have for dinner. They were very tasty, I compared them to the burgers I have eaten in the UK, but Chris' were far superior. After dinner we talked for a while, then got into our sleeping bags as the air temperature seemed to be dropping. I piled on layers of clothing as I have lost my ruggedness living in the UK. We continued to talk while in our bags constantly gazing at the stars. We saw several shooting stars and constellations, including the Southern Cross and Orion's Belt. Gradually the conversation died down until we fell asleep at 10pm. It was a cold night and even though I had many layers of clothing on, I still froze. It was Leon's old sleeping bag. I don't know how he survived with it so long!

We got up early before the sun had risen above the kopjes behind us. After a very satisfying breakfast of oats we drove to our starting point of the hike near a kraal, along the way we had crossed the Toghwana River in the Landy. We set off at about 7.30 in the morning. We began our hike crossing the Park fence or at least where it was supposed to be (it had been stolen!). We hiked through some beautiful country along our way to Nanke Cave. I stopped often to take a few pictures of the breath-taking scenery. It was a lovely clear day, nothing but blue skies and a cool gentle



Paul and Chris in Nanke cave

breeze constantly refreshing us as we hiked along. We arrived at the cave at around 9.30 in the morning, where we took a few group pictures and discussed about some of the peculiar cave paintings. Nanke Cave is also the site of a GPS challenge module. Chris knew exactly where to find it at the back of the cave. In it we found a pen, piece of paper and some very old sweets. The GPS module, made me think about my phone, which has a GPS logging application, so from Nanke I recorded the hike route and will have a look at it when I get back to London. At this point Chris gave us some chocolate which he brought along on the hike. It was quickly gobbled up.

From Nanke cave we followed the tourist route back to Toghwana dam, a route which, for me brought back many warm memories of previous hikes. I decided that seeing as it was such a nice day and that I have been living in the UK, I would continue the rest of the hike with my shirt off to get a little extra sun. This was a decision that I later regretted, as I got badly sun burnt. We stopped to rest at the top of a "bum slide" and had some more chocolate (just like when I used to go on hikes). Along our way we passed a huge Black Eagle's nest high up on the face of a cliff and again some spectacular scenery. From Toghwana dam we followed the road for some of the way before turning off, following a short cut back to the Landy, Chris and I raced the last 200m back to the Landy, ending a very enjoyable hike, bringing back some very fond memories from my Scouting days. From the Kraal where the Landy was parked, we headed off to Gordon Park. Along the way we stopped off at Chief Moyo's house as Norm wished to thank him for allowing us to hike in his area.

Thanks Norm for a great time

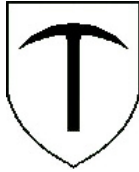
Paul Carlsson.



**I wish you the beauty of silence, the glory of sunlight,
the mystery of darkness, the force of flame,
the power of water, the sweetness of air,
the quiet strength of earth, the love that lies at the very root
of things.**

I wish you the wonder of living.

Helen Exley



1st Bulawayo (Pioneer) Scout Troop

“Celebrating One Hundred Years of Scouting”
1909 - 2009

Troop Programme of Activities for September to December 2009

September

4	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
5	Boys Skills Course: P.H.Q.
11	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
13	Gordon Park Service: 12.00 noon
18	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
25	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
26	Provincial Cookout Competition

October

2-3	Monthly Hike
9	Troop meeting: Mabukuwene
10-11	Parent's Camp
11	Gordon Park Service: 12.00 noon
16-18	JOTA/JOTI
23-25	Arnold Carnegie Assegai Competition
30	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene

November

6-7	Monthly Hike
8	Gordon Park Service: 12.00 noon
13	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
20	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
27	Troop Meeting: Sausage sizzle
28-29	Inter Provincial Patrols Competition

December

1	World Aids Day
3	Schools close
4	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
7-12	Chimanimani Hike
13	Gordon Park Service: 12.00 noon
18	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene – Last meeting of the year.
25	Christmas Day

Additional Activities may be Added to the Programm