



January – April  
2007

# Pioneer Trail



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

**Scout Leader**  
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**1<sup>st</sup> Bulawayo (Pioneer) Scout Group**  
[www.angelfire.com/sc/matabeles/troops](http://www.angelfire.com/sc/matabeles/troops)

## Under the Pseudolachnostylis Maprouneifolia

Celebrations to mark the Centenary Year of World Scouting commenced here in Matabeleland with the holding of the Gordon Park Challenge, in the Matopos. This event was held at the end of December 2006 to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Gordon Park and into January of 2007, in order to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of World Scouting. One of our Troop members, Assistant Patrol Leader Dylan Sandwith attended this High Adventure activity, and his report is included in this edition of Pioneer Trail.

Whilst Dylan was participating in the G.P. Challenge, Patrol Leader Leon Wuyts was attending the South African Senior Scout Adventure in the Cedarburg Mountains, north of Cape Town. This too was a World Scouting Centenary event, and Leon reports on his experiences.

The Parent's Camp scheduled for 10 – 11 February was cancelled owing to a heavy downpour of rain, just as parents were arriving to set up camp. There had not been any rain for the previous six weeks, but just as we were about to set up camp, the heavens opened and within a two hour period of lightning and thunder we received 75mm of rain. It continued raining throughout the night, but cleared early on the Sunday morning. Having experienced a similar wet Parent's Camp several years previously, it was the right decision to cancel. Besides, I dissolve if I get wet.



Scouts, Guides, Parents and Friends gathered for the Baden-Powell Day Service, Gordon Park.

The Baden-Powell Camp from 23 – 25 February was well attended with two hundred and fifty two Scouts and Guides in camp. During the Baden-Powell Day Service on the Sunday, Patrol Leader Leon Wuyts received his Chief Scout's Award from Mr Nelson Sakala, Zimbabwe's Chief Scout Commissioner. Following this presentation, Leon was announced as the winner of the 2007 Mike George Hike Project. Mrs Liz George presented Leon with his certificate and monetary prize on behalf of her husband, Mike George. Congratulations Leon on attaining your Chief Scout's Award, and for winning the Mike George Hike Project.

Our weekly Troop meetings at Mabukuwene, our headquarters in Burnside, have in general, been well attended. School sports commitments and sundry activities being the reason for most excuses of non-attendance. Apart from the usual instruction and test passing during these evenings, new games were introduced, as our range of games was rather limited. Sadly, during the term we bade farewell to Scouts Shaun Daly and Liam FitzPatrick.

The monthly weekend hikes have all taken place and as usual they have been joyful events. By sheer coincidence all the hikes, which were held on the first weekend of the month, have coincided with a full or near full moon. However, from June to the end of the year, we will have no moon on our hike weekends.

Unfortunately, some of the Provincial Scout events have not taken place this past term. The situation is not likely to improve, as fewer Scout Commissioners are in a position to undertake the organization and running of these events owing to the harsh economic times our country is experiencing.

Our end of term Sausage Sizzle was held at our regular meeting venue, Mabukuwene, on a cold and wet Friday evening. Despite the rain, everybody managed to braai and have a nice warm dinner.

During the school holidays, Troop meetings have continued for those who did not have any other family commitments. The holidays also provided an opportunity for myself and three members of the Troop to undertake a One Hundred Kilometre hike in the Matopos. The choice of a One Hundred Kilometre hike was to make it a Centenary event. The report of the hike is recorded in this edition.



With an improvised tarpaulin, and plenty of laughter, the Sausage Sizzle was enjoyed by all.

And now, it is back to my hammock beneath my favourite *Pseudolachnostylis maprouneifolia* with my floppy hat pulled over my eyes as I dream of the fun to be had on the Join-in-Centenary Camp in Gordon Park during August, as we celebrate with the rest of Scouting at the World Jamboree in England, One Hundred Years of World Scouting.

N. Scott  
Scout Leader

### **Cederberg Senior Scout Adventure**

26<sup>th</sup> December 2006 – 13<sup>th</sup> January 2007

From when the plane first took off, I knew I was in for the time of my life. The date was the 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2007, and feeling nervous and very afraid, I was headed for the National Senior Scout Adventure in the Cederberg Mountains of South Africa. What an experience for me to go through, what a joy.

I had never flown before, and the flight from Bulies to Joburg, and then on to Cape Town, was an experience in itself. I sat with my nose glued to the window for both flights, and felt like an innocent country bumpkin in the huge airport terminals of Joburg and Cape Town. But with the trusted old Zimbo sense of direction, I didn't get too lost, and didn't have any hassles on the flight down.

I touched down in Cape Town in the dark, with the nebula of lights spread out below me, quite a sight. At Cape Town Airport, I was met by my brother, who took me out to the farm they run in the Elgin Valley, growing apples and vines, from which they produce their own brand of wine. The farm was quite different from the farms here, very domesticated and such like, without the real "farm feeling." But it was very enjoyable and relaxing being there.

I spent a day with my brother at the farm, looking around, and generally relaxing. The next day, we woke at the crack of dawn, and getting all my kit together, drove into town at about 5 o'clock a.m. At the Good Hope Centre, we found no busses but lots of Scouts waiting, and it turned out that the buses had left earlier, but due to Cederberg planning, we hadn't been informed. Luckily, one of the buses had had a problem, and so I wasn't left behind. This was one of the only oversights of the camp, the general transport of the participants.

Anyway, it wasn't long before we were all loaded up, and finding a place on the bus, I watched as the Cape Town scenery faded behind me, as we moved into the farmlands to the north of Cape Town itself. I sat with my nose out at the window most of the three-hour trip, savouring the scenery.



My first view of the mountains proper.

We didn't stop for anything, and with much joking and hilarity, we soon reached the mountains. With my first view of the mountains, I was enchanted. A lot like the Chimanimani's, they held a special beauty: rugged and fierce, with an air of age and grandeur. Bumping along the gravel roads, tossed from one side to the other, we were soon at the main Cederberg headquarters.

Feeling like a rather lost and abandoned sheep, I unloaded my kit and took it down to the tents set up for everyone, after first signing in. I then wandered around, hoping that with my unusual uniform, and hat (which I discovered was a very rare thing down there) I would be noticed. This is what eventually happened, and I was greeted by my new Patrol, who quickly made me welcome. I was introduced to all the guys, and we sat down to wait for the Opening Ceremony.

This was delayed for a long time, as we were waiting for a bus to arrive. And so we stood around and waited for quite a while, talking and chatting. Eventually, we held the Opening Parade, where I broke the Zimbabwe Flag, flying next to the flags of several other countries, such as Belgium, England, America, Namibia and Saudi Arabia, which all had contingents at the Adventure.

Following this, we basically arranged ourselves, whilst our P.L. sorted out our itinerary; I arranged the food side of things. Both these were very muddled, as our itinerary had been prepared wrong, and therefore the food rations we were given were also wrong. It was all sorted out in the end, and as we were to spend the first night at HQ, we found ourselves a tent and relaxed in the afternoon, looking around the activities prepared for us at HQ.

Basically these activities were a volleyball court and a climbing wall, along with a tuck-shop, souvenir shop, and of course the bistro, which did a roaring trade when we were around, especially me! An added feature of the HQ area was the freezing cold river at the bottom, where we sometimes (when the urge hit us) went to have a swim, with lots of noise entering and exiting the water, which I could swear actually had little icebergs floating in it!

The next day was our first base, electronics, and was quite cool, as we got to make a digital clock, which also showed the temperature. I fitted in well with my new band of friends. Most of them were German's from Joburg (as they quickly became known), along with three Namibians; we were truly an international Patrol. Each guy in the Patrol had his own characteristics, and it was really great learning about each guy, and getting to know them.

One thing that stuck in my mind real early about my Patrol was our wits, as we spent nearly all the time laughing loudly about something someone had said. Even our instructors and base staff were not immune to this, and when they weren't the object of a joke, they too were laughing with us. A lot of what we laughed at was situational, things that struck us as funny at the time, and formed memories for me that get me smiling just thinking about them.

Anyway, that afternoon we followed the small river at the base of HQ about 2 kilometres downstream, to diving. This was a bit of a let-down, as the weather was freezing cold, one guy even suffering from a touch of hypothermia. Afterwards, we were quick to light a fire, as much for the staff's comfort as our own, and sat around it and defrosted for a bit, before setting off for our next base: pizza oven, where we would spend the night.

We soon made it to pizza oven, where we met another Patrol: the actual Namibian contingent. It wasn't long before we were preparing our own pizzas, and if all our mothers could have seen what we produced, such mouth-watering examples of fine cuisine, I'm sure we would have become the in-residence family chef! We cooked our pizzas in a real home-made pizza oven, straight from Scouting for Boys, so B-P would have been proud. The only complaint we had was that the pizzas were so small, but they were soon wolfed down.

We settled into our sleeping places quite snug that night, after a quick bit of socialising at the Namibians' fire; with the wind howling, and promising rain. I had set up my bivvi in a lovely clump of leaves, and slept like an absolute log. We were up the next morning at the ungodly hour of four a.m. all sleepy eyed, as we were set to climb up onto the Wolfberg that morning. It was freezing cold, as we were right by a river, and it wasn't long before we were stamping around, and then hiking off along the road, to follow a sort of path up the mountain.

When we reached the mountain we separated, and here I sped up a bit to heat up, and overestimated the other guys' speed. We met up at the top though, and had our breakfast (nothing like Matopos Style: just a packet of rather gruelly oats stuff, which you added water to, and no time for a nice warming cup of coffee.) On the top of the mountain, we got a bit off itinerary course, and missed the Wolfberg Arch completely, which was a natural rock arch which we were supposed to see. Following the planned itinerary proved quite difficult to us, and so we just walked our own way most of the time.



Some of the rocks formed weird and wonderful shapes, like this one on the Wolfberg Ridge.

We made good time along the mountain, following its ridge, until we reached the descent. We slowed down a bit here, as it was quite steep, allowing us to have long chats about all sorts of stuff, such as how the South Africans saw Scouting there, and having girls in Scouting. I found that the South Africans, and particularly Adam, our "adult" advisor, had a lot of similar ideas to me, which was great. I say Adam was our "adult" advisor, because he was both underage, and very non-adult. He laughed with us and joked with us, and did all the things we did. He became part of the group, and in many places he was actually the most adventurous and care-free of us all. We never got into any real hassles though, nearly always due to Adam's guidance and control.

Down from the mountain we followed a major road until we reached ecology, with a bit of a delay in passing through a farmer's roibos crop on the way, as we got a bit confused, and made ourselves comfortable there. We slept the night at ecology, the best looking base of them all, and had the actual base the next morning. We checked traps that had been set up to trap insects and critters of the veld, or which we only found spiders and ants, and had an interesting talk on the flora of the veld.

That afternoon, we left ecology and hiked off up the steep valley pass ecology was at the base of, and soon reached the Tafelberg Mountain. We climbed over the shoulder, dropped down onto the other side, and camped the night at a cave just below the actual mountain. It was New Year's Eve that night, and we were joined by another Patrol of rather rowdy South Africans, who stayed up to welcome the New Year. My Patrol on the other hand, was so exhausted, we just collapsed where we were, and were blind to all noise until morning light.

With a very belated welcome, the New Year started bright and early the next morning, with us climbing up the Tafelberg Mountain itself, a real monster. We were met by the Mountaineering



The prominent peak of Tafelberg, though lower than Sneuberg, a mountain we later climbed.

Base Staff, really super people, whom we would keep meeting throughout the Adventure. We climbed up onto the tip top of Tafelberg, which has two beacons (must have been an Irishman who put up the second one – to be sure, to be sure) before doing a bit of abseiling and rock climbing, which the Patrol all did like real pro's! The climb down was strenuous, but we eventually made it back down to the cave where we had spent the night, to pick up the kit we had left there.

We then climbed off the mountain completely, descending into the valley of the river which flowed past HQ, and following a road at the bottom, we soon made it to Aids Awareness, the most boring of bases, where we were

lectured to for about 15 minutes, and then given a lollipop. As we had all had Aids Awareness lectures like this at school, it wasn't very interesting, but the thought was there.

We soon made it to HQ, where we were to spend the night, and after lovely warm showers, we relaxed for the rest of the evening, cooking a whole chicken on the braai fires provided. That night we slept very well, building up energy for the next day, where we'd have the Commando Course, along with Dutch Oven Cooking, before being transported to Water Base that afternoon.

The Commando Course was fun, though it seemed to test more whether we could withstand physical pain than work as a team. Not trying for a time or anything, and just out to have fun, we soon finished, and went for a welcome shower afterwards, before Dutch Oven Cooking. This was really super, as we made a casserole, bread and pudding, all of which we wolfed down, and even took some away with us to eat later, which we did not that much later!!

That evening we had our first transport of the Adventure, from HQ to Clanwilliam Dam, in a huge overlander bus. We first had to get the bus moving – a difficult feat, push-starting a two tonne bus – and eventually, with the intelligent help of a starter cable, we were zooming along to Clanwilliam. With some clever bribing we managed to persuade the driver to take us to Clanwilliam town, where we raided the one and only supermarket there, buying up nearly all their supplies of coke, sweeties, chocolates and most importantly: condensed milk.

We eventually arrived at the water-base, way overdue, with some half-hearted excuses about bus troubles, which I doubt were believed, and settled in at our campsite along the dam shore, where we had our supper and a nice warm cup of coffee. The wind was freezing that night, and I don't think anyone slept very much, as we were all wide awake the next morning, preparing for our full English breakfast of toast, eggs, bacon, mushrooms, tomatoes, and onion, all cooked by Adam, who looked a bit displeased about it, but we all had a wonderful breakfast.

The day's activities were super, with tubing being my favourite. We also tried a bit of water-skiing, which I fell off countless times, and some of the guys managed to do some parasailing before the weather turned. The real highlight of the day though was the flying, in which we flew around the dam in a small four-seater Cessna, with amazing views of the dam and the surrounding mountains.

That evening we were again transported back close to HQ, but dropped off along the road, next to the 4x4 track leading to Sneuberg (the spelling of which I'm still not sure of) Mountain, which we were to climb the next morning. That evening we hiked along the road, climbing almost continuously, which led us straight to the mountain hut, where we spent the night.

The next morning we began the ascent of Sneuberg, a huge mountain, with some of the Mountaineering Staff along with us. Close to the second-most ridge, we left all our kit, and only carried our bare necessities for the rest of the climb up. This was exhausting, and it took all day to eventually reach the shoulder of the mountain. Guided by the mountaineering staff, we ascended close to the summit, where there was a natural ledge, where we stopped the night, after doing a bit of abseiling first.

At the ledge we unloaded our stuff, made ourselves comfortable, and settled down to wait. As the sun was just setting, we climbed to the top of the mountain, which had a beacon (just one this time) and watched the sun set, and the moon rise just after this. It was quite a magical moment and well worth the terrifying climb up.



The whole Patrol together: the summit of Sneuberg.

That night we slept on the platform close to the summit, waking up real early the next morning to descend the mountain, heading for our next base, astrology. The climb down took only a fraction of the climb up, and no, we didn't roll down the mountain, though there were some spectacular slips on my part, and we were soon back onto normal, level ground, zooming along the road to astrology, where we arrived 10 hours early. We arrived for most bases much earlier than they expected, as we woke early, and set a good pace, which was excellent because then we had longer rests at each of the bases.

Astrology was very interesting, though we spent most of the day just messing about; the base that night was well worth it. We were told a whole hobbo about the stars, and even got to look at some galaxies and suchlike through the telescopes set up for us.

We woke at the crack of dawn the next day, bidding farewell with a lovely steaming cup of coffee to some Girl Guides who had camped the night with us, and who were about to climb Sneuberg. With wicked grins, we set them on their way, telling them it was just an easy stroll up and down the mountain.

That day we had transport down the road to marksmanship, which was a bit boring due to the numbers, as we had to wait and wait for a chance to shoot, though the shooting itself was quite fun. Clay pigeon shooting was especially good, something I'd never tried before.

We had to hike down the road to our night-stop, archery, which we were scheduled to do the next morning, though we stopped off at some cave paintings along the way. These were rather small and insignificant in my eyes, though the South African's were quite besotted by them, as they are very unusual and rare down there.

Archery base the next morning was not the greatest, as the bows were unsuited to some of us, who kept slicing open our hands when firing and we spent a long time looking for stray arrows. We enjoyed ourselves though, and as the Adventure was nearly closed, we hijacked most of their spare food rations, and had quite a feast that night.

That afternoon, we were expecting transport to take us to 4x4, but there was a bit of confusion here, and 4x4 didn't materialise, so we found our own way back to HQ, commandeering one of the buses at marksmanship. At HQ, we had a welcome shower before the final campfire, which wasn't brilliant, but was enjoyed by most of us. At this campfire, the Adventure was officially brought to a close, though we would have the final Closing Parade the next day.

That night, the Germans were leaving early, at about 3 o'clock in the morning, so I slept close to their car for the night to say goodbye when they went. It had been quite an experience, and in the short time I had been with them, we had become firm friends.



The last day dawned bright and early, and I found myself in a pensive mood watching the sun rise over the mountains for the last time. I had grown quite fond of the mountains in the ten days I had been there, and it was hard now to leave.

The Last Sunset.

At the Closing Parade, we had some very inspiring speeches, and then the flags were lowered once again. I felt proud to stand there and lower my country's flag, for to me, it had shown to the world that though my country faces such problems and difficulties, they can be overcome. Each time we had returned to HQ, I had glanced at the flags, and each time, though the others looked dreary and drooping, the Zimbabwe flag had been fluttering free, and even one of the Girl Guides had seen this and remarked on it. There is still hope, no matter what happens.

After the Closing Parade, I helped to clean up as much as I could, keeping an anxious eye on the buses waiting to leave. Eventually my bus was ready to go, and I hopped aboard and waved a final farewell to the mountains. The drive into town was long, and I fell asleep several times. I was absolutely exhausted, and it was with some relief that I saw my brother waiting for me when we arrived back in town.

My Cederberg Adventure had come to an end, and burdened by the memories I had made, the experiences had, and the friendships forged, I felt happy, and at peace with the world, though tired beyond anything else.

I spent the next three days with my brother, who kindly looked after me, and showed me around the farm, whilst my sister-in-law showed me around Cape Town. I climbed Table Mountain, and visited Hermanus and Cape Point, and visited Mr. Carlyle and his wife, who was an old friend of Norm's, which was really great. All in all, it was an amazing time, seeing new sceneries, swimming in the sea, and feeling the feelings of Cape Town.

I spent the last night in Cape Town with my sister, who kindly drove me to the airport the next morning, feeling tired and exhausted, but happy and free. My first real foray from home, my first challenge to the world outside my hometown, had been rewarded with a great feeling of achievement and amazement.

In thinking back of my experiences, I am deeply indebted to those who made it come true: to Norman for providing me with the training and inspiration; to those who sponsored and helped me find the money to pay for the Adventure, my thanks can never be repaid; to the South African Scouts, who showed me hospitality and love, and gave me a taste of Adventure; to my parent's for their support; and to my brother and sister for looking after me so well, even when things were a bit hectic. And my deep thanks to Baden-Powell and the idea he created, for allowing me to live the Adventure.

Flying back home, with the amazing vista of a glorious Africa laid out before me, the feeling grew in my heart, becoming stronger with each metre I travelled closer to home: there are so many things left to see in this world, so many things left to do, so many places to go and people to meet. So many brilliant sunsets to watch, and sunrises to see; would I be able to see them all?

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Shakespeare - Hamlet

Leon Wuyts  
Patrol Leader

### **Gordon Park Challenge**

28<sup>th</sup> December 2006 – 4<sup>th</sup> January 2007



Preparing the hike menus with Mrs. Graham – Provincial HQ.

Out of eight challengers, only five arrived at the Provincial Headquarters at the start of the Challenge: Jonathan, Bekhe, Lewis, Tumelo and myself. Our first event was with Mrs Penny Graham, who spoke about menus, and then it was up to us to plan our hike menu in order that she could buy and bring the rations to Gordon Park. After that, Ken Nortje showed us some of the knots we would be doing for our Spare Time Activities. At 12:30 pm. we went for lunch at Mrs Graham's house, and an hour later we were on the road to Gordon Park. Once there, every one unpacked the trailer, followed by the opening Parade. Ken took the first session, and asked us why we were here, and what we were hoping to gain. Then he inspected our kit, which we had made

for the four day hike. The catering staff came with our dinner. After dinner we had a Management Game, in which we had to organise a Troop camp. This took two hours.

On the morning of Day 2, we went for a run at Scout Pace, after which Mr Ken Blake and his sister Betty came, and we went for a walk around the Park identifying trees. He also told us what berries we could eat and not eat. He told us the Latin names of the trees we saw. Returning to the Lodge, Norm gave us maps and the co-ordinates to the places we were going to go on the hike. After having gone through compass instruction we then plotted our hike route on the maps. At 12:50 pm we had lunch. Between 1:15 and 2:00 we did our STA's. Then we went with Mr and



Shooting practice with Mr and Mrs Francis.

Mrs Francis to the Mike George Camp Ground for instruction on pistol and rifle shooting and then a bit of target practice. There Bekhe was silly and pointed a hand gun at Mr Francis. Mr Francis reacted fast and told him never to play with a gun as he didn't know if it as loaded. At 4:30 Mrs van Aarde took us for First Aid in the Lodge, where Jonathan wanted to amputate everyone's body parts. When it was over we had dinner. Ken then gave a talk on hypothermia. He also told us how to make a Maori oven, as we were to make and use one latter on during the Challenge.

Everyone woke up early on Day 3 to pack their bags. We had breakfast and a morning parade. We then left GP to go to Shumba Shaba Lodge, which was an hour away on the eastern side of the Matopos. Once there, we set up our bivvies and started on our projects. Jonathan, Bekhe and Lewis built the raft, whilst Tumelo and I made a Maori oven. After work comes play, so we had fun on the dam with the raft. Then Mr Parke and his son Mike and a friend Chris came to stay the night. When we got tired of the raft, Mike and Chris decided to build a dam wall in the river that takes water out the dam. There we all struggled to stop the water from breaking our wall. In the end, we built a small wall in front, one in the middle and a very big one at the back. It was very dark when we got back to camp. And that is when we tested if the Maori oven had worked. By the time we ate the stew, I thought it was pretty good. In bed we worried about the rain, and at about 3:00 am, everyone, except Lewis, dived under Norm's tarpaulin.

Most of us struggled to wake up on Day 4, because of the rain, but we still had to repack and have breakfast. We started the hike on top of Mwazi, the highest mountain above sea level in the Matopos. We hiked past Morning Glory Farm. On the other side, Jonathan asked one of the ladies there where the path was that led down to the Mtshabezi River. She then led us to the path, on the way we met a relative of Bekhe's. Half way down we decided to have lunch and looked down at the amazing view. After 10 minutes, we struggled down the steep path. At the bottom, the bush was so thick that Tumelo had to throw himself into the shrubs to make a way through. When we reached the Mtshabezi River, on the way down river, we lost the path and struggled through the rapids.



fooling around with the raft on the dam.

Eventually Jonathan found the path and we flew past the rapids. At 5:20 we came to the Mashasha Falls. Then a kilometre later we set up camp in the rain.

At 5:10 on Day 5 we were on our way to one of the schools on the Old Gwanda Road, and across the road was a shop where Lewis and I asked if they had seen a man in a white Land Rover. They said that he had gone past at 5:00pm the night before. We decided to change course, and walked about eight kilometres before we had brunch. After three more kilometres, we told a man we met on the road that we were going to Masiye Camp on the Gwandavale Road. The man said that he knew a short cut, and so we followed his directions, but on the way Jonathan, Bekhe, Lewis and Tumelo asked the people the way, just to make sure. I really got annoyed with them because they said that there was only one path, and we would not find another one, but we walked a few metres and there were just paths leading in all directions. So we took the one most used. Then the next person we met said it was only three kilometres to Masiye Camp, but it turned out to be much further than this.

Finally, at about 7:00pm we reached Masiye Camp, and very politely I asked if I could use a phone, but all the phones were down and there was no signal. Then I asked if we could stay the night, and they were very kind to us and put us in one of the buildings looking down onto the dam below. Our sleeping bags were very wet, so Jonathan decided to use the grass mats on the floor as blankets.

At 5:30 the next morning, I woke the others up, and at 6:10 we left Masiye Camp. An hour and a half later, we reached Mtsheli Dam. On the way to Silorswi shops, a man gave Tumelo, Bekhe and Lewis a lift to the shops, while Jonathan waited for me, and we walked to the shops together. When the two of us arrived, the other three told us that if we gave the man two thousand dollars he'd take us to Gordon Park, but Jonathan said he wanted to walk, and so we decided to stick together. As I fell back because my pack was hurting my back, and my feet were painful, because of the big blisters I had, I was about 500 metres behind Lewis, when one of the men from Masiye Camp stopped and asked me to jump in. He picked up everyone except Jonathan, who only put his pack in the truck.

On the way to the turn off to World's View, I looked at Tumelo, and I knew he was thinking of Jonathan, and how stubborn he was. By the turn off I decided that I didn't want to see World's View, so we waited for Jonathan at the curio sellers. The women took one look at us and made us all sit by their fire and gave us tea. By the time Jonathan came I had had three cups of tea. At about 12:00 we were on our way to White Rhino Shelter, which we reached in half an hour. On the way down to HQ, we met Ken and Norm, and went to say hello. During lunch, we told Ken and Norm about the hike, and the rest of the afternoon was spent sorting kit and lounging around.



Dylan receiving his Challenge Certificate from Mr. Parke.

The next morning, Norm blew the kudu horn to wake us up, and once we were awake, Norm told us to stay away from the kitchen, as the caterers wanted to be alone while they prepared the Challenge Survivor's Dinner. So for most of the day we did some Spare Time Activities. While Jonathan and Tumelo were getting lost attempting an orienteering course, Lewis, Bekhe and I did the Six Knot Challenge. That evening, we put on our uniforms for dinner. We had a lovely butternut soup, followed by a delicious roast chicken with potatoes, butternut and rice. Before dessert Mr G. Parke gave a beautiful speech, and presented us with our G.P. Challenge certificates. Then Tumelo gave a speech of thanks. The speeches were followed by ice-cream and chocolate sauce. We then left the dishes for the next morning.

Everyone woke up excited the next morning, as it was the last day. We started by organising our kit, then Norm blew the horn again. He then told us to wash the dishes, but we carried on with what we were doing. Half an hour later Norm came back in a bad mood telling us to go and wash the dishes. So we ran down and washed dishes.

At 8:30 we had a lovely breakfast. After breakfast we finished washing and put the cutlery and plates away, and finished packing our kit. At 9:00 we had our Closing Parade, then Jonathan, Tumelo and I said our goodbyes to Norm and Ken and the other Scouts, and Beverly Viljoen and her mother brought us home.

Dylan Sandwith  
Assistant Patrol Leader

### **A Spirit of Adventure**

The following is Mr. Parke's address to those Scouts who completed the Gordon Park Challenge, given at the Survivor's Dinner.

Scouts, Scouter's, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Firstly I would like to welcome you all here and to thank you for allowing me to speak tonight. It is indeed an honour. To Norman and Ken, a very big thank you for all of planning and hard work which have made this Challenge a reality. You are probably not aware of the incredible amount of work and a great deal of expense that has gone into this Challenge, and if I may say you have been very privileged to be one of just five Scouts to have benefited from this. I hope you are aware of your fortune in having this pair of "old codgers" who have given of themselves to lead you through the paths of Scouting this past week. They are without a doubt two of the most committed, dedicated and knowledgeable Scouters that this country has seen and is likely to ever see. I was privileged to be a member of the 8<sup>th</sup> Bulawayo (Hillside) Scout Troop when Norman was Scout Leader, and I also attended Ken's Patrol Leader Training Courses in Ruwa. A big thank you too to the wonderful catering team and all those who helped behind the scenes.

Speaking of Ken, I must tell you that I used to be quite terrified of him. In his younger days, he was an exceptionally hard task master and like today, one could never be too sure when he was joking or being sarcastic or not - with often dire consequences! Actually, when I look at Ken and Norman now, I think they have both become somewhat soft over the years - maybe they just never quite recovered from what we got up to or seeing the way some of us turned out!! In our day, they never molly coddled us like I see they do now. What with tucking you all into bed at night, making fires for you, and if you could have seen the worry on their faces when you guys set off on your hike... quite dismal indeed. Then when you had gone, they worried if you were lost or cold and wet... I had to refrain them both from running after you with their treasured pink night dresses to offer to you to keep you warm!

I would also like to say thank you to you all for hosting me and my family both the other night and tonight for your dinner. It has been a number of years since I have been involved in ground level Scouting and spending a night in the bush camping out with you, brought back many happy memories for me and has been most enjoyable and much appreciated.

Secondly, I would like to say well done on completing the challenge. If I could (and I won't go on like Ken, I promise), I would like to take a few moments to congratulate you all. Now that you are finished, it is right and good to sit back and consider what you have achieved and to sing some praises and give yourselves a big pat on the back. What you have done is commendable. I have to say that there are very few boys your age, even of those involved with Scouting, who would

even want to take part in a Challenge like this, let alone to do so with the attitude, gusto and determination that you all have. I have been so impressed with you all and am really in awe at what you have achieved. Well done to you all.

I would like you to reflect a bit on why you have chosen to take part in this G.P. Challenge and more importantly what you have learnt and can take away from it.

#### Why do a G.P. challenge?

Just as school is not just about Geography and Maths (they are just part of it, they are things that you learn and may even use a bit later in life), but is about the whole experience. Scouting and particularly this Challenge is not just about learning about pioneering, hiking and hypothermia. They again are all good things to learn but it is about much more important things like having fun, setting and achieving goals, personal development, relationships and being a better person. It would be interesting to have asked you all before the challenge what your reasons for doing it were and to see if they are different now. What you have done (perhaps without realizing it) is to set yourself a goal. Guys, goals are important and they are what set you apart from those peers that chose not to do the Challenge and those non-Scouts that wasted their holidays sitting around. The fact that you are here puts you ahead of them and tells me something about each of your personalities. The fact that you have set and achieved this goal means that you have set and achieved other goals in your life and that you will continue to do so. History has shown that it is those of you that set and focus on achieving set goals that achieve great things and fulfilment in this life.

#### What have you learnt?

I am sure that there were times during your hike when you wondered what the heck you were doing. I am sure when your blisters were hurting and your back was sore, you felt sick, cold and wet you probably cursed us all and its true you were probably not having fun at that particular moment in time. I know from some of the ultra marathons I have run when at 70km into the run, I promise myself never to run again and to take up bowls. The funny thing about any challenge is that as soon as we have finished we are so happy with ourselves, we forget the hard parts and start planning the next challenge. It's that sense of achievement. So how do you feel now? Good and ready for another challenge I bet.

I can assure you that even if you don't think so now, in many years to come, you will never forget the experiences of this past week of your life. You will tell war stories of it to your friends and even to your children one day (you can ask my son Mike here, he is sick of all mine!) Furthermore, the experience you have gained will not be forgotten and will benefit you for the rest of your life.

In closing, the memories you have gained, the friends you have made and your Scouting experiences in general must be treasured. They are valuable and will help you throughout your life. I urge you to make the most of your Scouting and of what it has to offer.

Norman told me a story the other night about one of his parents who made a comment that their little son had gone out on a Scout trip as a boy and had returned a week later as a man. They could not believe the change. I think that some of you maybe came a week ago as boys but can assure you that when you leave here tomorrow, you will be proud young men.

Be always prepared, be proud, live by the Scout Law and most of all, have as much fun as you can doing it.

Well done to you all.

Thank you.

G. Parke

## The Hula Hula Hike

5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2007

Having arrived at Gordon Park from Bulawayo early on Friday evening, Shaun's dad agreed to take us to the starting point of our hike, which was Gali Hill near Fort Usher. Gali in the language of the BaRoswi means beer-pot, or so Norm told us.

We, that is Shaun, Dale, Brendan and Norm, were dropped off in the middle of no-where. Putting our rucksacks on our backs, we hiked for about a kilometre ending up on the top of Gali, where we found a dale – a shallow depression – nicely covered in short grass with lots of trees, and made our hike camp. We put up a large trail sheet in case it rained, for a few dark rain clouds were building up away to the east. As it turned out, the clouds disappeared around 8pm and we enjoyed the light from a near full moon all night long.

After supper we had an interesting conversation about all sorts of things, but mainly about the hike and what animals we hoped to see. After hours of chatting, Dale suddenly leapt up out of his sleeping bag and started to do a hula dance, minus the hula hoop. He was hilarious. It didn't take long before Shaun and Brendan joined him. Norm just lay there laughing his head off. Finally, exhausted, we got back into our sleeping bags and dozed off to sleep. At one thirty in the morning, we all awoke for no reason and started chatting again. Shaun and Dale opened their sweetie bags and so we had a midnight feast. Then off to sleep once more.

Early in the morning, we woke up and made our breakfast of mealie meal porridge. After this we packed up and got ready for the hike. However, before we left we wrote our names on an empty gas cylinder, from Norm's hike cooker, and hid it in a place that only we know. When ever one of us camps there again, we will look for it and it will remind us of the great night we had had.



Look, Shumba's not that far now...

We left Gali and headed for Shumba Shaba hill, which we could see in the distance. At the bottom of Gali we met our first villager, whom we greeted. We were all in high spirits as we hiked along the winding footpaths to Hlankanza Dam. At the dam, which did not have much water in it, although it was now the rainy season, were two Egyptian Geese. Also, Brendan saw shining in the wet grass, many spider webs. They shone because the sun's rays were glinting off the dew drops on the webs.

Carrying on we crossed another small dam wall of a few metres in length. Here Dale was the first to see a pregnant ubabemi (donkey). Shumba Shaba now looked quite close, but Norm decided to get us lost – the Dodo. So off we walked in circles looking for a path to lead us to Shumba. Shaun was in his usual dwaal and didn't know that we were walking in circles.

Eventually, Norm the Dodo found the way up the southern side of Shumba after having to go bundu bashing, crossing little gushing streams of cool clear water and thick jungle bush. Getting onto a long granite ridge, we followed this to Witch Doctor's cave with its grain bins and a piece of sable jaw bone. We explored the cave for a while before continuing on our trek to the top of the

kopje. Eventually we came to the steep part of Shumba where we had to crawl on all fours with our heavy rucksacks. At the top we were greeted by nice cool pools of manzie (water). A cooling swim refreshed us as we waited for Shaun to join us, as he was not climbing as quickly as we had. When we were all together, Brendan took out a packet of chips from his pack and shared them.



The four tired hikers relax for a minute at Witchdoctor's Cave.

Down the mountain we trekked, heading for Gordon Park. Near the Park we met two lady cyclists with whom we chatted for quite a while. We arrived in Gordon Park via the wall of Lake Scott, putting our packs down at the stables. Dale and Shaun's parents were waiting for us, and very importantly they had tea and cake waiting for us hungry hikers to feast on.

And so ended our ten kilometre hike at 11:00am.

Dale van Aarde  
Brendan Judge

### **Matobo Cave Hike**

2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2007

We all got picked up at Christ the King. We first went to Gordon Park, then we left for Matobo Cave, where we slept the night, taken by Mr Mackenzie. We lit a fire and had our supper around the fire. In the morning at quarter to six we got up and started eating breakfast. At about 6 we left for a nearby dam. We had a quick tea break there, and met a guy fishing.

When we left, we started hiking for Mount Inungu. When we finally reached Inungu we climbed up the mountain following a forgotten path, until we reached the top, and then we came down. We had run out of water and so we went to a store a short way back along the road to get some water.

Then we had to hike back along the road. We followed the road for quite a long time until we reached the path to World's View, where Norm, Leon and Brendan, who were ahead of us, were waiting for us. When we all caught up we climbed World's View. We climbed up to the car park and waited there for a while, before finally going down the road to Circular Drive, which we followed to White Rhino Shelter, which we climbed and went over, into Gordon Park. Then we had a shower and lots to drink – completely exhausted.



A quick rest to recover some energy.

Chris Mackenzie

## Water, water everywhere!!

2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2007

Like any other hike, this hike began at Christ the King Church at about 5 o'clock on the Friday afternoon. Everyone was happy that school was over for another week, and, more than that, we were going out hiking in the Matopos! What bliss!!

Well, this week for some reason or other only four of us arrived to embark on this latest adventure: Leon, Dale, Chris and of course the indefatigable Norm. Well, the less the merrier, so we all climbed into the landie and nosed our way out onto the open road, ready and eager for our next hike.

Speeding along in Norm's landie, the miles just flew past. At the turn off to Fort Usher, we did the unpredictable and turned, heading away from Gordon Park and the National Park towards a side road, branching just before the actual Fort, moving south towards Toghwana Dam. Along this side road, Norm eventually found the road he was looking for, and we progressed down this road until we finally reached a kraal, where we asked permission of the lady there to camp close by, which was quickly granted.

So we moved off about 100 metres and set up a quick camp, and began our supper preparations. Chris, ever the pyromaniac, set off to find wood (of which he found lots – mainly thorn trees, with the cuts and scars to prove it) whilst the rest of us cooked our dinner. Norm was trying out a paraffin cooker he had dug up out of somewhere in his museum, sorry, house, and so after having a brief lecture on how things were done in the dark ages before gas (with practical examples – vis the paraffin cooker) we settled down to our supper.



Some peaceful calves we found, who just begged to be photographed.

Not long after, we arranged our sleeping material in a suitable nest, but as we were feeling not very tired, we retired around the now blazing almost-bushfire that Chris had stoked up, and sitting about 10 metres away (and still losing considerable amounts of body hair and moisture) we chatted a bit about inconsequential things, such as school and politics, watching the stars shine above us.

When all nearby trees had been burnt to ashes, we finally crawled into our sleeping bags, feeling very tired and ready for a good night's sleep. Unfortunately, in this we were not rewarded, as the kraal dogs, no doubt alerted by the flaming beacon of Chris's, soon arrived, and began a howl chorus, at the top of their voices. We struggled in silence to try and fall asleep, counting sheep, cows, goats and all manner of mammals in a vain effort to induce sleep, with no success.

Eventually, enraged, Norm arose like a spectre in the night, and clothed in his demonic sleeping bag, proceeded to give the dogs a fair portion of his mind (hopefully he kept some for himself) and then picked up the largest boulder in sight (a fair sized 3 tonne gomo in fact) and tried, if unsuccessfully, to hurl it at the offending dogs. Do not fear, dog lovers, as Norm was in more danger of breaking his back and pinkie toe in the effort than actually hitting the dogs, as the rock sailed gracefully through the air, and landed about 2 feet from Norm, who swore, shrugged and hopped back to his bed place, slumped down, swore again, and smothered his head under whatever loose clothing he could find.

Unfortunately, he had not smothered himself, as I'm sure his intention was, and woke up the next morning, aggrieved, and looking much the worse for wear. A strong cup of coffee soon remedied this, and vowing to sleep well that night, we began to get ourselves organised for breakfast and an early start on our hike.

This we did, and it wasn't long before we were back at the kraal, where we were to leave the car, glowering at the dogs with every show of fierceness we could find, loaded our packs on our bags, and started trudging off along a very well-worn path, which Norm assured us he knew intimately, and which would guide us straight to Maholoholo Cave, our first stop.

Though we hadn't had a good night, and our energy reserves were quite low, we covered the intervening ground tremendously fast, moving through lovely forests of Mountain Acacia, chatting all the while. Norm led most of the way, as he knew this area well, having been on the same walk countless times with Father Odilo, who loved this area of the Matopos.

We did find one interesting thing, which was an old abandoned Ranger's station. This old stone building had been used by the Rangers in long ago times, when things still ran smoothly, as an outpost for anti-poaching patrols. Now it stands lost and abandoned, missing a roof and windows, left to the plants and animals.

Chatting away, it wasn't long before we began the climb up Maholoholo Mountain, a sort of spur of rock, with a gentle slope on one end, and a steep dip into a valley on the other. We planned to cross straight over, visiting the cave first, coming from the gentle side and descending the steep side. This we did, first reaching the top of Maholoholo, for some breathtaking views of Matopos scenery, before finding and visiting the cave itself.



Leon, Dale and Chris at Maholoholo Cave.

We stayed here for a short while, but as it wasn't yet tea-time, we didn't have any tea, and just gazed at the interesting paintings, trying to make sense of drawings many, many years old, which perhaps didn't have meanings when they were drawn. We will never truly know, and can only guess what the Bushmen were trying to show us.

Descending the steep side was a bit hairy, with the rock slippery with lichen, but we all made it down alright, and began the strenuous climb up the other side of the valley, on the route to Nanke Cave, our expected tea-break. The climb up this side was extremely hard, and

only by just pushing your muscles up and down without stopping did we all reach the top okay. At the top, we stopped to regain our breath, and then carried on, following a well-worn and well-known (by Norm anyway) path to Nanke cave.

This we soon reached, and climbed down to the cave from the top of Nanke, after a quick orienteering session on the very top, and had a good look at all the paintings. But, before the packs even hit the ground, tea was on everyone's mind, and a billy was soon full of water and bubbling away, with the biscuits magically opening and being passed around. Dale and Chris went off to swim in the pools of water on the mountain top, whilst the two old fogies sat over their cup of bush-brewed tea, munching biscuits and discussing the serious affairs of life, like whose pack weighed more or hurt most, and such like.

Once tired of this, we packed up our tea stuff, had one last look at the paintings, and went down to meet Chris and Dale, and began the long trek down the mountain, along an easy forest path to the Toghwana Dam. This was perhaps the most enjoyable part of the hike, with the sun peeking through the thick branches overhead, climbing over huge barrels of long fallen trees, until eventually we came across... a pool. And, simply irresistible, a beautiful rock slide. Half an hour, three quarters of an hour, just where does the time go when Scouts are messing around in the Matobo Hills?

Well, with prods and pushes from Norm, we eventually got under way, down the easy slope to the Toghwana Dam, following what was basically a tourist path, and here we sighted one of the rarest sights in the Matopos these days, a sight so rare, even Norm was stunned. There, in the path ahead of us, bold as can be, strolling up the path towards us without even a glance was a... tourist!! Yes, a genuine tourist in the depths of the Matopos! It was quite a sight, and returned hope to our chests that not all the tourists had fled our land for good. The lost ones were still lost!!

Anyway, recovering from this shock, we eventually reached Toghwana Dam, after passing the rare ferns along the way, and several very tempting pools in the stream we followed. The Dam soon came into sight, and we arrived at the spillway very quickly. Here, Chris and Dale decided to stay and play around, whilst Norm and I continued to the main administrative block, hopefully to leave our bags there, as we were going to hike back to the car and drive back to pick up the other two. But we found no-one there. The warden was obviously having a stiff drink in the back room, no doubt to recover from the shock of seeing tourists in his Park, but he soon appeared when we hollered, and he allowed us to leave our bags in the room of the building so they wouldn't get stolen.



Nothing's much more fun than zooming down a water-slide, Matopos style!

And so off Norm and me set, and here the real hiking began. It was by now about 12:00 and the sun beat down mercilessly. It was boiling hot, and every step seemed to take an age. We covered the time back to the car in record time, and even found a shortcut across the river to the kraal where we parked the car. By chatting about Norm's life, and about mine, and what I wanted to do with mine, we soon reached the car, and dove instantly into the back to drown in a vat of water!!

After recovering, and paying our respects to the old man of the kraal, who looked close to ninety in the shade, we drove off in a veil of dust (to confuse those blasted dogs) and made good time back to Toghwana Dam, following an old, almost abandoned Warden's track to the Dam. Here we pricked up Chris, Dale and our bags, and began the drive back to Gordon Park, following what we call the Valley Road up the Mtshelili Valley right up to the Park gates.

Finally there, the first thing on the agenda were showers, followed by lunch, and then a relaxing afternoon, away, hopefully forever, from the annoying, pesky, irritating, yapping barks of those wretched dogs!!

Leon Wuyts  
Patrol Leader

## Centenary Challenge Hike

16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2007

On Monday we met at Christ the King Church at 3 o'clock, to get ready for our hike. Brendan's dad was taking us to Gordon Park, where we would leave Norm's landie. At G.P. Norm had not arrived yet, so while we waited for him, we had some of Leon's rusks, which tasted wonderful. When Norm finally arrived, we all put our packs in Brendan's dad's car, and set off for the hike, excited.

At Mwazi, a kopje on the eastern side of the Matopos, we put on our packs, but left our water bottles at the car, because Brendan's dad and little brother wanted to climb Mwazi with us. When we got to the top we took photos and had a look around, and went back down again to pick up our water bottles, and finally began our hike, setting off for Morning Glory Farm.

When we got to the Farm, it was already dark, and all the farm dogs decided to bark at us. Leon saw the cutest puppy ever, and tried to steal it and put it in his pack! We had supper there, and were well looked after by the people there. In the morning we had breakfast, and the little puppy climbed into Leon's sleeping bag and slept there!

We began our first real day of hiking at about 7:00, heading for our next stop which was the Chavez River. We followed the local footpaths, which led to the kraal of a man named David, who once worked on a neighbouring farm, and was a friend of Norm's. This man's son, named Phineas, showed us the path to the river, and guided us to the cliff leading to the river. We followed the river downstream to the first high-river weir, which measured the amount of flow into the Mtshabezi Dam further downstream.



Dale and Brendan swimming in the pool at the base of the Mashasha Falls.

We stopped for only a short time, and soon met the Mashasha River, which came down to join the main river. We followed this upstream to the Mashasha Falls, but before we got there, we crossed the river, which was not easy, and Leon nearly got us lost. We reached the first large pool at the base of the falls, and all Dale and Brendan wanted to do was to go and swim.

We didn't stay there long, because we wanted to get to the top, where we going to have lunch. We rested here for along time, recovering our energy, though we did find the time to play around in the pools and falls – and build a highly successful dam to stop the river permanently!!

After lunch we had 7 kilometres to our night stop, which was next to the Lushowe River, and as soon as we arrived there, Dale got a nice warm fire going. Later we found otter prints in the river, when we went down for another swim, whilst Leon very cleverly dug a hole in the sand to get lovely fresh water the next day. Once we had our water, we cooked our supper of steak, potatoes, beans and onion relish – most delicious. We climbed into our sleeping bags and watched the satellites overhead.

The next morning we had mealie meal porridge, with tea, and Norm did all the cooking. It wasn't long before we were headed for our lunch stop, which was at the confluence of the Tuli and Lushowe Rivers. We followed the river downstream, and once while Dale was leading he saw a black mamba.



One of the many waterfalls along the Lushowe River.

The walk down the river was highly enjoyable, following a forest path through towering *Brachestegia* (Mountain Acacia). We found several fast flowing, gurgling rapids and waterfalls.

Quite exhausted, we followed the bush paths to a place on the Lushowe above the confluence with the Tuli. Here we stopped for our second lunch, shorter than the one the day before. We happened to stop by the crossroads of two major paths, and had a chance to chat and talk to several local people.

After we had finished our lunch, we began the afternoon's hike – we would be stopping at the base of Torvi, a large mountain we would climb the next day. We managed to reach

Torvi in time, just as night was falling. We set up our campsite not far from a small stream and made a wonderful fire (not forgetting to put rocks around it and start it with 'fuzz' sticks – wouldn't B-P be proud!) and began to cook supper. This time it was spaghetti, mince and tomato relish – superbly cooked by Norm again.

Once again, tired but happy, we snuggled into our sleeping bags and watched the satellites go past – two seemingly almost colliding – until we slowly dropped off to sleep. The night was a bit cold, but we all slept fine, and woke refreshed the next morning, ready to climb Torvi.

But not before a hearty meal of oats and coffee, quite delicious; lugging our packs on our backs we headed off up the rocks to climb Torvi. Half way up the mountain, we hid our packs in a small hollow, and taking the maps, water bottles, cameras, and most importantly, biscuits with us, we continued up to the top.



Dale, Brendan and Norm on the top of Torvi, the world covered in low cloud.

Close to the top, we found a forest, in which we searched for the big bad wolf – commonly known as Leon. We went around the forest, and climbed right to the top, where we ate our biscuits and took lots of photos. Then we headed down, because the wind was quite cold.

We retrieved our packs and climbed down into a valley and followed this down into the communal lands at the bottom. We followed the bush paths we found to the Toghwana River, which we had to cross.

He we met a bit of a problem finding a suitable crossing over the river, though we did find one below where we intended, below the confluence of the Toghwana with the Mtshelili. We were quite close to the main road to Silozwe.

This we followed to our lunch stop at Silozwe School, at the base of Silozwe Mountain – a huge massif, rising from the surrounding lands. We stopped at the school for lunch, and stopped for even less time than we had before. After a short rest we set off again – suitably refreshed. We followed the bush paths past Silozwane, which had an interesting cave painting on it, but which we didn't go and see.

We followed the paths we found to the National Parks fence, between the mountains Mtombo and Nyamangwe. Here we entered National Parks, and as the light was fading fast we made as much time as we could to the Maleme River. By luck, our path led us right to a suitable campsite, right next door to some lovely gushing rapids.

Here we lit another fire, and got supper on the go before going down to the rapids to bath. Supper that night was soya mince and rice, again cooked by Norm. He only realised then that he had cooked all the meals for the whole hike. No one complained as each meal was excellent.



Dale having supper at our final night-stop.

We didn't stay up long, and were soon sound asleep. We woke up early, and had our last hike breakfast: mealie meal and oats mixed. Soon we were on our way up the Maleme River, to the compound at Maleme Dam.

From here on, it was all tar roads home. We were getting close, and the feeling that each step was one step closer to home was growing stronger.

This was perhaps the longest part of the hike – in thought, though not in mileage. The sun blazed down, and with much hilarity to pass the time, we made great progress to home. Eventually we crossed over White Rhino and began the long walk to the final stop. Much joy and happiness when we finally arrived!!

At last, us four rugged adventurers had beaten the odds, had stuck together through 100 kilometres, had laughed, seen, talked, listened and all the other hundred emotions felt on such a hike, when each passing kilometre brings with it something new. The four of us together had celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year of Scouting in real Matopos style, with the same determination and steadfastness shown by the hundreds of Scouts who had come before us.

Truly, luck had been on our side the whole hike, and God had watched over us. In so many things we were blessed: we had perfect weather throughout the whole hike, with not a drop of rain to dampen our spirits; we always seemed to find the right path, and when once or twice we strayed, we always made it back okay; we always managed to find the best place to spend the night, close to water nearly every time; and, the greatest co-incidence of all, it occurred to us that if we added all our ages together, we reached the total... go on, guess... 100!!

And so, in the midst of the fierce Matopos bush veld, loved and adored by so many, not least Baden-Powell himself, us four rugged adventures welcomed the 100<sup>th</sup> Year of World Scouting with real enthusiasm; and may there be many, many more such starlit nights around a blazing campfire in the majestic Matopos.

The Rugged Adventurers

## **A Thought of Inspiration**

The following poem was found in an old edition of Tramp, the 8<sup>th</sup> Bulawayo (Hillside) Scout Group's magazine, and encompasses in it all the values and ideals of the Scout Movement.

### **IF**

(with apologies to Rudyard Kipling)

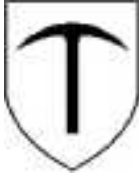
If you can light a fire with soggy matches  
While standing in a steady stream of rain,  
And see it fizzle out before it catches,  
And hold your tongue, and light the thing again;  
If you can fix a brew for all your brothers  
When they are in their blankets, warm and dry,  
And rather you get wet than all the others,  
And laugh when you are tired enough to cry;

If you can tie a knot that never fails you,  
And trust it, if the worst comes to the worst,  
To save your life when nothing else awaits you,  
But put the other fellow's safety first;  
If you can give first aid to those who need it,  
And treat for shock when you are shaken too,  
And though you suffer badly, never heed it,  
Until you've done the best that you can do.

If you can go on working when you're weary,  
And go on singing till your throat is dry;  
If you can meet with sadness, and be cheery,  
And when you fail, just have another try;  
If you can trust your friends and those about you,  
And yet forgive them if they should forget,  
And though the whole world sometimes seems to doubt you,  
Be loyal to the task which you are set;

If you don't put yourself before the others,  
And never your Patrol before your Troop;  
If you salute all races as your brothers,  
In one united, universal group;  
If you can see the aim, and help to win it,  
And never falter till the job is done:  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And – which is more – you'll be a Scout, my son!

M. Hill



## 1<sup>st</sup> Bulawayo (Pioneer) Scout Troop

### **100 Years of World Scouting One World – One Promise**

#### **Troop Programme of Activities for May to August 2007**

##### **May**

4 – 5	Monthly Hike
7	Schools open
11	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
12 – 13	Pioneering Course (Provincial)
13	Gordon Park Service: 12:00 noon
18	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
25 – 27	Voluntary Service: Round Table Conference: Gordon Park

##### **June**

1 – 3	Colin Turner Memorial Pioneering Competition: Gordon Park
8 – 9	Monthly Hike
9 – 10	Parent's Camp
10	Gordon Park Service: 12:00 noon
15	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
16	Voluntary Service: Matopos Conservation Society
17	Matopos Conservation Society Outing
22	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
29	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene

##### **July**

6 – 8	William Arnold Carnegie Assegai Competition
8	Gordon Park Service: 12:00 noon
13 – 14	Monthly Hike
20	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
27	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene: Sausage Sizzle

##### **August**

1	Sunrise Ceremony (Provincial)
3	Schools Close
3 – 4	Monthly Hike
10 – 13	Centenary Camp (National): Gordon Park
12	Gordon Park Service: 12:00 noon
17	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
24	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene
31	Troop Meeting: Mabukuwene

**Additional Activities may be added to the Programme**