



**Sep - Dec
2003**

**PIONEER
TRAIL**



**Meeting
Mabukuwene Nature Reserve
Fridays 19:00 - 21:00 hrs**

**Scout Leader
Norman Scott
P O Box 129, Bulawayo**

1st BULAWAYO (PIONEER) SCOUT GROUP

UNDER THE PSEUDOLACHNOSTYLIS MAPROUNEIFOLIA

As 2003 draws to a close we can look back on a fun filled year of achievements. Our activities have been very wide ranging from the ruggedness of hikes in sunshine and rain, of the Matopos terrain - to the challenge of the Chimanimani Mountains on our eastern border. In contrast, we have enjoyed a relaxing mini-safari by Land Rover in the historically rich Bulalima Mangwe District of Matabeleland South; sleeping in luxury lodges and fishing in the placid waters of the Shashani dam. In a more refined vein we have attended and even conducted the Provincial Scout's Owns at Gordon Park and done voluntary service at the annual pantomime at the Bulawayo Theatre. Then, in competition with other troops in Matabeleland, we have carried off all the trophies. However, of concern is the fact that we are still a very small Troop with our Scouts becoming older and no juniors to fill the lower echelons of Troop life. I did mention some time back that we would have to recruit new young members but with the changes in my own circumstances I felt it wise to wait a year and then make decisions on the future of the Troop. Also, with the current scouts heavily involved in their public examinations, bringing in new members may have put too much strain on them for our troop activities are adventurous, and demanding on time, energy, personnel and resources. Next year promises to be better suited to expansion but then our environment may dictate otherwise. The current volatile situation reminds me of a little book written some years ago, "Next Year will be better," and yes, we are all hoping it will be, and yes, somehow we must make it better.

In the May - August 2003 edition of Pioneer Trail, I noted that our programme for the last three months of the year would be throttled back. Well, it was to a certain degree but in reality for Patrol Leader Mark Perry and Assistant Patrol Leader Joseph Rose, they were determined to finish the requirements for their Chief Scout Award. This they successfully did, for they submitted their completed applications to National Headquarters before the year end. The presentation of their Chief Scout Awards will be made at the Annual Baden-Powell Day Service on 22 February 2004. Well done for putting in the effort required to complete the requirements, even though you were writing your "O" level examinations. In mentioning their determination to complete their Chief Scout Award, even though they were in the midst of writing their "O" levels, Baden - Powell in his writings uses the word "stickability" in connection with setting ones' ideals and goals. It is this "stickability" that sets people apart, the leaders and the followers, those who aim high and go all out to meet their goals. I have told many Scouts that there is nothing difficult or impossible in Scouting, for the syllabus is designed for all to progress towards the Sable Award and most Scouts are capable of achieving the award if they put their mind to it. Granted, the opportunities must be made available for them to achieve, but most important is the desire of the individual to push himself forward, the same determination found in any successful career person irrespective of career.



Jonathan de Jong taking the September Service at Gordon Park

Scouting provides the challenges and the rewards for the young man and if applied in the right spirit, scouting provides the most progressive means of character training any young person could ever be offered. This I say with complete confidence because of my personal experience of the many Scouts that I have worked with during my connection with the Scout movement.

No person between the ages of 11 and 18 years can go through seven years of scouting without being influenced, nor without experiencing the benefits, nor without the personal growth, the opportunities Scouting provides. Unfortunately very few have "stickability", for so few gain their Chief Scout Award and even fewer gain the Sable Award.

And now, until the next time, it is back to my hammock beneath my favorite *Pseudolachnostylis Maprouneifolia* with a floppy hat pulled over my eyes as I dream of our forthcoming Tanzanian Expedition and climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Norman Scott
Scout Leader

COOK OUT

On September the 27th around midday we left home with a truckload of cooking equipment and supplies including economic sawdust burners, and an environmentally friendly sun oven (I must say that both generated a lot of interest).

Upon arrival at Milton Junior School we found that we were almost too late to get a good sunny spot, however on looking around we did manage to find a site in the sun. Thank goodness as the sun was our main source of cooking power.



Mark, Paul and Jonathan with the sun oven



Jonathan demonstrating the sawdust burner

After the opening parade, Gumbee, Paul and I got cracking on preparing separate dishes, as we had a three course meal to prepare. When the stoves were hot, Gumbee cooked a delicious Monkey Gland Steak and prepared a Salad. Paul made a lovely creamy Mushroom soup and Coffee, I baked an Apple crumble in the sun oven. After a number of very hot hours we were ready to present our three course meal to the judges. We were dismayed to find ourselves having to wait in line while other team's meals were judged, watching our food get cold. We held no hope of getting any points.

Finally, at the closing parade, our little trio were amazed and ecstatic that, while our coffee was cold, our soup had a skin on it, our steak was tough, our apple crumble was undercooked and we only entered one team, it was announced that we had won the Competition !



Mark, Paul and Jonathan receiving the Cook Out Trophy

Mark Perry

COLIN TURNER PIONEERING COMPETITION

Paul, Mark and I were to meet at Mark's house at 9.00 in the morning . We had to have a model crane at least 30 cm. high for the competition as well as all our own equipment. When I arrived at Mark's home; Paul and I walked to the campsite which was at the jamborally site at Hillside Dams to find a suitable place to pitch our camp. It didn't take long seeing that the campsite Mark and Paul used during the Assegai Competition was still available and it was a good spot.

Mark and Norm arrived just in time for the opening parade where we were told what to do. The competition ahead of us seemed impossible seeing that there was only one other competing troop who had almost no equipment at all. We started developing our campsite straight away and got down to some STA's (spare time activities) Soon our camp site was looking up to standard. We had two tents, one for equipment and the other one for us.

After developing our site we headed off to the bases. At the first base we were required to build an odd looking object which was a tripod with a long pole hanging across the top. The main intention of this was I suppose to maneuver some one around on one end of the pole on a seat. We managed to complete this in the given time. Next we had to erect and complete a deadmans crawl. This is a large rope tied between two trees and secured by a pulley system which was attached to a 3-2-1 anchorage system. After we had assembled it ,Paul and I went across it (This was not pleasant). We completed it just out of the given time limit.

Later on we had to make a diagonal trestle which we thought was a scout trestle but after completing it and, running round the field, we found we had done the wrong thing and so we got no points. (*Ed. There is no such thing as a diagonal trestle, what the Scouts constructed was correct. Further, a particular knot they were asked to tie was correct but they were told it was wrong. Obviously the examiners need to go on a training course.*)

We then went back to our camps and started to get ready for supper. Supper was precooked for us, so all we had to do was eat our dinner. Dinner was a pot of noodles and sauce with a sort of noodle mix with vegetables and fish? - Well it was good anyway. After this we had to make a fire in a tree and cook an egg on it and make a cup of tea. We made a roaring fire which we were afraid was going to burn down the tree. Just before we had made the fire Jonathan had, joined us as he had a sports commitment earlier in the day. When we had presented the tea and egg we got ready for the walk to Mark's house to have a shower.

The next day we woke up and had Cornflakes for breakfast. Then we had a few more bases which were, stone stepping, tying knots and making a transporter for an unconscious person to a helicopter. All of which were pretty pathetic. Then our STA's were to be inspected. These were not up to standard but were OK. .After inspection we took down the camp and made it seem as though no one had been there. Then we went off for closing parade. The Mhlahlandlela Trophy was awarded to the Bulawayo West District then it came to the Bulawayo East which was us, the trophy The Colin Turner Memorial Trophy) unbelievably came to us because we were the only people in our District who were trying. After the parade we all went to Mark's house where we had photos taken of all our previously won trophies during the course of the year.



Mark, Jonathan, Paul and Joe with the Colin Turner Shield

We all enjoyed the competition seeing as it was quite relaxed and laid back.

Joseph Rose.

SAUSAGE SIZZLE

On a clear summers night we arrived at Mabukuwene, the stars were shining bright. We were all relieved that we had finished "0" levels and our long holiday had set in. We had two months ahead of us, for pure fun. With this thought hanging in our minds we were all cheerful and happy.

The de Jongs did lift club that night, with Jonathan and his learner's licence driving us to scouts. There was wood already waiting for us, we built a big fire which flickered in the evening breeze. While watching the fire we were all talking and catching up on the events of the past week. All the chattering was giving us a ravenous appetite.

As soon as the fire was ready to cook on we eagerly put our meat on the fire, Norm brought sausages, Gumbee brought boerwors, Joe and I brought steak and Mark forgot his meat at home.

We all shared our meat with Mark. Our mouths watered as we watched our dinner sizzle away. When the time came to eat, we all dug in. Joe brought a bottle of wine so we had wine with our dinner. Gumbee, being the good boy abstained from having wine. After having a wonderful evening the time came for us to go home. We all had a great evening.

Paul Carlsson

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE GREAT SAUSAGE SIZZLE

Mmmm... the air hung heavily with the rich aroma of sausages sizzling noisily on the braai. Crack, whoosh, ssss... as the skins of the sausages, now brown from the heat of the pulsating red hot coals beneath them, cracked and sent fountains of hot sticky juices squirting from the sausages in all directions.

Just another Troop sausage sizzle at our headquarters in Mabukuwene Nature Reserve? ... Wrong, not just another sausage sizzle - for there was lots to talk about for our "0" level exams were behind us and we were comparing answers to the myriad of questions, oh such silly questions the examiners had asked us.

"You put what for your answer to how many molecules there are in that formula?" and "My answers to the geography paper will no doubt earn me an A+" "Hey guys why are we talking about school, it's now holiday time, party time and wow the "chicks", they'll be in their sexy clobber and not those drab school uniforms".

"By the way Paul, my Dad agreed to take us to Mtchabezi dam for a few days fishing";

"Pity you have to go to Harare Gumbe, I am told by my muckers that the fish are literally committing suicide, a strike every few minutes...."

"Hey, turn my sausage Mark it's caught fire" "By the way, whose coke have I just downed, I hope there weren't any floaters in it?" "Ha! Ha! Joe, your fillet looks like a bit of shoe leather, why on earth don't you bring sausages like the rest of us?"

"What CD have you got on? It's not Pink Floyd again - I remember Maurice going bananas over Pink Floyd. I wonder how he's doing in New Zealand? Has anybody heard from him lately?"

Well, the chatter and laughter went on the whole meeting and only slowed down as we ate our sausages which were nicely ensconced in bread rolls that oozed tomato sauce at every munch.

All too soon Gumbee's Dad arrived to take us home, so it was a quick clean up followed by the usual closing parade and a reminder that we had ushering duties at the pantomime for the two weeks leading up to Christmas. A last minute plea to Norm asking if we could wear our cool clobber to the panto but I guess he is getting hard of hearing for he stressed that as we would be in the public eye, our uniforms were to be immaculate and that as a special treat we could wear our uniform longs.

Cheers ... Just another sausage sizzle hardly !!!

Crack, whoosh, ssss....

SHUMBA SHABA TRIP

We were scheduled to leave at 9 o'clock on Friday night, so I got prepared and after getting ready I waited patiently. 9. o'clock came and a kombi pulled up at the gate. A bit confused, I headed to the gate to see what was happening and was shocked to see Norm and Joe waiting for me. I hurriedly grabbed my kit and joined them.

I was soon to learn that we were heading to the airport to pick up some clients before going to Shumba Shaba Lodge, We arrived at the airport and settled down on the balcony, expecting to see the plane arrive at any moment. What had been scheduled as a 10 minute wait turned into a 2 hour wait as the plane coming from Harare was delayed, So, after all was done, we ended up arriving at Shumba Shaba very late and hitting the sack at 1 o'clock on Saturday morning.

We woke up early the next day and I saw Shumba Shaba lodge for the first time in day light. It was magnificent. We headed off for breakfast in the kitchen, and feeling bloated - thanks to a brilliant cook, we headed off to get the two inflatable dingies pumped up. After overcoming some technical difficulties we got everything sorted and Joe and I left for the dam with the Landie and the dingies in the trailer. We ended up staying at the dam until lunch. The weather was perfect and so we had a great time chasing each other around the dam. We attempted to fish but it never got interesting. After some more fooling around we packed up and took the dingies back so we could grab lunch. Who ever thought we had a large breakfast?

We had a wonderful lunch, thanks to Joe's Mum, Mrs. Rose, who had packed a tremendous picnic basket for us. After that we had a short rest, then headed out with Norm to collect some hay from a neighboring farm for the horses. When we dropped the hay off at the stables we went to see a baby donkey that had been born a few weeks earlier. Very cute and fluffy. We headed back to the lodge for a quick snack and then came back into town, very sunburnt, and very relaxed.



Fanuel and Michael - chefs at Shumbashabe lodge

Thanks Norm for a great day.

Ed: I think you must have put on a few kg's

Gumbee.
(Jonathan de Jong)

A kindergarten pupil told his teacher he'd found a cat, but it was dead.

"How do you know that the cat was dead?" she asked her pupil.

"Because I pissed in its ear and it didn't move" answered the child innocently.

"YOU DID WHAT?!?" the teacher exclaimed in surprise.

"You know," explained the boy, "I leaned over and went 'Pssst!' and it didn't move."

PANTOMIME DUTIES - DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT.

Every year for the past, I don't know how many years, the Bulawayo Theatre Club produces a pantomime at Christmas time. Light hearted fun, lots of music and dance routines - this is time for make believe and is always a big hit with Bulawayo audiences. For the past three years we Scouts have been asked to help with ushering, tea making and the running of the "Chocolate Box" on behalf of the people who put on the shows. It is always great fun and naturally we get to see the show, once, twice, three times and even more. It has been said that if any of the cast cannot make the last show then the producer will commandeer one of the Scouts to fill in and act the part, as they have seen the show so often. Just imagine Gumbee (Jonathan de Jong) standing in his socks at 6 foot 3 inches, taking the part of the good fairy? - Or better still, Paul, with his hairy legs, standing in as the Dame!! *Ed: The mind boggles*

It was raining when we arrived making the air feel crisp and cold. Joe and I were giving out programmes at the entrance while Gumbee was doing the Chocolate Box. Not many people came on the first night. At the interval Gumbee and I did the Choc. Box and Joe helped with the teas. Each night we generally watched the show.

The nights to come were very busy and working in the Choc. Box required quick calculations which strained our brains. The Choc. Box stocks were finished very quickly during the busy nights. Not many people bought teas due to the hot weather. During interval we took teas backstage to the actors, who were eagerly awaiting refreshment.

Not many people wanted to be ushered to their seats, so we decided not to usher. If anyone wanted help we were happy to be of service. On the last night we watched the show from inside the roof so we had a really good view.

After interval we all had ice cream ending off our pantomime duties in grand style.

Paul Carlsson.

Ed: To anyone who thinks that my Scouts are as good as chocolate, well I must let one pantomime secret be told. High up in the roof above the ceiling of the auditorium is a cat walk leading to the front of the stage and located here is a battery of spot lights. Now, during one show some time ago, the Scouts sneaked up onto this catwalk and sat among the lights. It just so happened that one of the songs of the panto was "Rain drops keep falling on my head ". Well, you can guess what happened. Out came the water pistols and the cast received a few good squirts of "Rain". Nobody in the cast knew what was going on for these rain drops were not in the script, nor did they find out where the rain was coming from for they were blinded by the spot lights and could not see the Scouts. The audience thought it was all part of the show and applauded loudly. The Scouts could barely control their laughter and had to retreat hastily. Well, I think my Scouts are as good as chocolate and certainly are a great bunch of lively youngsters to have around.

This year's show lived up to expectations for it was really great and drew packed houses most nights. My thanks to the producer for asking us to help out at this, Bulawayo's social event of the year. Also to the parents of all the Scouts, for coming along to assist. Last but not least a big thank you to my Scouts, for I know it is not really very cool to be seen out in your Scout uniform by your pals. But then your pals are the ones who should feel shy at not being Scouts and enjoying the fun that you have the privilege of experiencing. We also get great publicity and the old timers always comment on how great it is to see that Scouting is still alive and doing well.



Jonathan, Mark, Paul and Joe with the year's haul of trophies: JOTA shield, Cookout Trophy, The Assegai, The Colin Turner Pioneering Trophy and the Swimming Trophy.

1ST BULAWAYO (PIONEER) SCOUT TROOP

TROOP PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

JANUARY to APRIL 2004

January

3-31 Tanzanian Expedition

February

1-10 Tanzanian Expedition
13 Troop meeting: Mabukuwene
15 Gordon Park Service : 12.00 noon
20-22 B-P Camp: Gordon Park
22 Baden - Powell Day Service
 Gordon Park : 12.00 noon
27 Troop meeting : Mabukuwene

March

5-6 Troop hike
12 Troop meeting : Mabukuwene
14 Gordon Park Service : 12.00 noon
19 Troop meeting : Mabukuwene
26 Troop meeting : Mabukuwene
27 Parents' Camp

April

2-3 Troop hike
9-12 Easter
11 Gordon Park Service : 12:00 noon
16 Troop meeting : Mabukuwene
23 Troop meeting : Mabukuwene
24 St. George's Day and Fun day
29-30 Troop Camp (to 2nd May)

Additional activities may be added.

THE MANGWE PASS

The May - August 2003 'PIONEER TRAIL' contained an article on The Mangwe Pass which took me back with much nostalgia, nearly 50 years.

I had the luck and honour to have attended the unveiling of The Mangwe Pass Memorial on the 18th July 1954. A small party of the Gordon Park Crew attended. This party consisted of Richard Morley, Bob Talbot and family and myself.

Bob Talbot's mother, "Chubby", was part of our group. "Chubby" Talbot came to this country by ox wagon through the Mangwe Pass in 1895 when she was 11 years old. She was a member of the Bain family and she died in 1979 at the grand age of 95.

We camped overnight in the vicinity of the memorial in true scout fashion and I can still see the looks of amazement that we got from other campers who had brought marquee - like tents, beds and mattresses and servants with them - plus of course various meats and foods for a wonderful and hospitable braai.

We had a full weekend of events - visits to Mangwe Fort, John Lee's House and the pre-pioneer cemetery. Mr. York also had his ox wagon there complete with a full span of oxen - or it may have been Mr. Rosenfels.

Mr Justice Tredgold's address as reported in the August "Pioneer Trail" was of great interest and inspiration. (Perhaps you should read it again.)

Thanks to 1st Bulawayo Scouts for bringing back the memory and in closing, I would like to mention that both Richard Morley and myself were members of the 1st Bulawayo Scout Troop prior to joining the Gordon Park Crew.

My thanks to Mrs. Beryl Oosthuizen, "Chubby" Talbot's grand daughter for the details on "Chubby".

Mike George.

FROM THE PAST.

I recently came across this delightful story - reproduced below - and thought that it fitted in with our Scouting; well, perhaps a rethink on that comment for our Scouting. It is not quite as rugged, daring or original. Never-the-less it is a true story, one which I am sure you will enjoy. I know the more senior generation of our readers will no doubt have some equally riveting stories they could tell, so please feel free to write to me. To have it appear in Pioneer Trail to share with others all makes for an interesting magazine.

Norm.

R S Fairbridge - Father of Kingsley Fairbridge

In 1923 I left my work as an assistant land surveyor in the Northern Transvaal in reply to an advertisement by Mr. R. S. Fairbridge of Umtali, who required an assistant for his work as a land surveyor. My letter of appointment with him, for the job at Umtali, was written on a brochure of Umtali dated 1923. The appointment, without any salary or any details of the work required was written round the edge of this brochure, which is now in the National Archives.

Fairbridge lived on a farm called "Kingsley", named after his son and near Old Umtali. No public transport was available, so I set off on foot with my two suitcases, making my way over Christmas Pass to the farm which lay beyond Old Umtali.

My first impression of Fairbridge was one of surprise that such an apparently old man could run a practice as a land surveyor. Suffering from T.B. in South Africa, for health reasons he had made his way to Beira and had walked from there to Umtali. In appearance he was a short, spare man with a long, very bushy beard. On his head was a tam-o'-shanter.

The farm-house consisted of a peculiar square building, the four walls of which were made of enormous rocks, without mortar or plaster. The interior was windowless and roofless except for the fact that various poles supported several large tarpaulins strung tightly across the room; beneath the tarpaulins were strings, ropes and wires on which various garments were hung up to dry, interspersed with onions, biltong and even dried fish on occasion!

We used to get much amusement from watching enormous rats start off from one side of the building to investigate some titbit hanging on those wires. As a rat drew nearer the middle of the room, the string on the wire would start wobbling from side to side - the rat would then hesitate, finally deciding to turn round, but in that moment of indecision old Fairbridge would pick up a boot or anything else that was handy, and hurl it at the rat. If he was successful, that was supper for that night - he maintained that stewed rat was very tasty, but actually I never tried it!

There was no fireplace in the building, but we had enormous fires outside as the farm was very well wooded. Just beside

the door of the building there was a sand-pit which I thought must have been provided for children in the earlier days. I discovered its use next morning at dawn when I saw old Fairbridge strip and sit in the sand-pit, splashing the sand up over his body as a fowl would! He assured me that sand was more efficacious for cleansing the body than water which, in his opinion, was more useful for drinking and cooking. I soon found that he made extraordinary statements like that on the spur of the moment. Nevertheless, that was his daily bath, and one which he enjoyed when we arrived back, rather hot, from a survey.

He had only one chair in the place and a tiny table, 18 in. square, off which we ate our meals. I sat on an upturned petrol-box opposite to Fairbridge, and at that close I could not fail to notice several small inmates in his bushy beard!

One of Fairbridge's favourite meals when out surveying in the veld was an "ant-cookie". He made these with mealie-meal and water: when only partially cooked he would flatten out the cookie and smear on it, from an old bully-beef tin, the fat rendered from some animal that had been killed (or had died). He would cut the cookie in half with a knife carried in his belt, and place the oiled half on a nearby ant-heap for half an hour or so. By that time, the cookie would be covered with fat, juicy ants. Taking the other half of the cookie, he would slap it on top, to make an "ant sandwich". This he ate with great relish, the ant-legs sticking out and wriggling as he ate. I took his word for it that the sandwich was delicious and full of protein!

In 1923 and for some years after that we walked on our survey treks. Eight to ten carriers were loaded with our possessions, including a bucksail to be used as a tent, and provisions for the whole party. We used to cut down wood in the veld, have two forked upright sticks and one horizontal to fit into the forks, and then sling the bucksail over it for shelter for the night's lodging. The carriers always carried their 50-lb. loads on their heads, often requiring the assistance of their brothers to get them up there.

Fairbridge and I did several small surveys together. I soon found out that he was not a good surveyor and that it was fortunate for me (as I was not yet a qualified surveyor) that I had had a very good training from two meticulous surveyors in South Africa. Not that Mr. Fairbridge was dishonest. He would, however, often skimp the work and probably do the survey very cheaply for his clients, because he firmly believed that the checks demanded by the survey regulations were unnecessary at that stage of development of the country. Consequently, the tariff of fees was, in his opinion, far too high. On this account he earned a very bad name with the Surveyor-General, who seldom issued him with instructions to carry out a survey.

One day amongst the mail, brought by hand from Umtali, was a large O.H.M.S. letter from the Surveyor-General in Salisbury. Fairbridge opened it, read it, and roared with laughter as he handed it over to me. The contents, couched in official language ran, roughly, as follows: "Sir, as you are aware, you have had no survey instructions from this Department for a long time. You know the reason why. There is, however, an urgent small job to be done on the Vumba - the survey of a five-acre plot, and I am issuing these instructions on one condition, and that is - the field work is to be done by your unqualified assistant, Mr. L. M. McBean." Well! Anyone else would have shot himself or Mr. L. M. McBean, but Fairbridge merely thought it a very amusing joke and laughed heartily.

In this connection I remember on one occasion Fairbridge again gave me a shock, and himself much amusement. We were to fix a beacon in a river-bed - one of those wide vlei rivers with a small amount of water meandering down from side to side of the river-bed. We had already had one good sight to the point that had to be fixed. Fairbridge wished to get his intersection from a kopje some two miles away - so he told the boys to build a large bonfire over the point and to light it at 5 p.m. I was to go to this other point and orient my instrument, observing the smoke from the fire at the appointed time. Unknown to either of us, a gentle breeze had come up and was drifting down the river-bed, taking the smoke from the fire with it. The smoke emerged several hundreds of yards downstream and I observed a nice column of smoke rising vertically. As there was no check on this point, the result was some hundreds of yards out, as I discovered when I insisted on having a third shot from a distant station. Fairbridge thought the episode was a great joke!

After some months, I told Fairbridge that I wanted to go to Umtali, chiefly to buy some cigarettes. In order to do this, I asked if he could pay me some of the money he owed me in accordance with our original arrangement. He laughed loud and long and told me that when I had been in this country a little longer, I would realise that we did not deal with money, but worked on the barter system.

I had already noticed that he had a large number of squatters on the farm, who paid their rent in kind. In a huge ledger he would enter, for instance, that a certain Mrs. Martha had paid "one bushel of peas". Nevertheless he said if I must have money, he would give me a paper to take to the bank manager in Umtali. So, armed with his I.O.U., I set off for Umtali and called on Mr. Rutherford, the bank manager. When he saw the I.O.U. he laughed and assured me that it was not worth the paper it was written on! Mr. Rutherford had heard about my going to assist Fairbridge and fully expected me eventually to call on him in his official capacity. He and a few friends gave me some simple jobs - running lines on farms, etc., so that eventually I collected enough money to go to Salisbury where, as I shall recall later on, I was employed by Messrs. Maasdorp and Piers.

Mrs. Fairbridge and her daughter lived in Umtali in a house named "Utopia". It was quite a pleasant property situated at

the high end of the town. On the occasion when I tried to obtain some money, I paid them a visit. They kindly directed me to the bank, and invited me to call again on my return. I stayed the night and joined the family party the next morning on the lawn. We admired the garden and then played with a tennis-ball until about 10,30, when the daughter's fiance arrived from Umtali. I remember taking him on one side and enquiring at what time the family breakfasted. He replied that probably there was no food in the house, but that as he himself worked at Meikle's Store in Umtali and had the store key, we might go down and get some food. We returned about an hour later with bacon and eggs, etc., which we cooked and enjoyed with Mrs. Fairbridge and her daughter.

All the same, these two women appeared to live quite comfortably. They were both on the stout side - just the opposite to the old man himself. A littledog-cart, drawn by two mules, was their conveyance, though when Mrs. Fairbridge was in it, there was hardly room for anyone else.

Life in the bush, close to Umtali, was not hard, but later, when I left Fairbridge and was employed by Maasdorp and Piers, I saw rough country in the Mtoko district and did many surveys there. I was out for six months by myself with a small gang of "boys". One or two of them were more intelligent than the others and knew how to hold the measuring tape or chain on a peg in the ground, when measuring a base on other comparatively short distances. The other boys were used for cutting the bush and trees in order to sight on to distant points. They were also sent, from time to time, to the very scattered stores where one could purchase meat and groceries. I remember on one occasion, when passing one of these stores, that I called in to see the lonely European who sold the goods to surrounding farmers, prospectors and occasional surveyors. I had been using his store for some time, but this was the first time that I was able to have a chat with him. I am reminded on this occasion he pulled my leg for my continual messages, in the past, for mealie-meal, beans, etc., for the boys and "a pound or two of underdone steak" for me!

Fairbridge's claim to fame lies in the fact that he was the father of Kingsley, the founder of the scheme for training British boys to be farmers in Australia. Fairbridge spoke very little of Kingsley although I gathered from him that Kingsley had tried to work his scheme with the Southern Rhodesian Government; but in the nineteen-twenties there was no money for such schemes. This was the reason why the scheme was eventually carried out in Australia. At the time I was with Fairbridge, Kingsley was at Oxford University. There, the idea of the scheme gradually took shape. He would go down to the West End of London where he made friends with wealthy dowagers. To them he unfolded his plan and with their help amassed the funds he required. Then, changing his clothes, he visited the East End of London in search of suitable boys who might benefit from his scheme. He must have been a very good judge of character because Fairbridge said he used to walk around in the slums of East London, watching the little urchins playing football with a tennis-ball and kicking tins about in the street. After studying them, he would pick on one to accompany him to his home to speak to his parents. As these children often came from large families there was no unwillingness to trust Kingsley, and so he was allowed to put his scheme into practice on a likely member of the family. As is well known, these chosen youngsters were trained to be successful farmers in Australia.

This operation continued as the West End dowagers supplied the necessary finance. A scheme was started in Bulawayo during the Second World War, and the school was named the Kingsley Fairbridge School to commemorate Kingsley's pioneer achievement, and to honour a Rhodesian Rhodes Scholar.

Later, when I was in the Surveyor-General's office, Fairbridge published a sort of scrap-book, consisting of newspaper-cuttings and notes of his survey experiences. I managed to acquire one of these for a pound, but unfortunately my copy was destroyed when my house in Montagu Avenue was burnt down in 1947. This particular copy had a small piece of leopard-skin attached to the top right-hand corner and was known as the "Leopard Skin Edition". I understand there is a similar copy in the Surveyor-General's Museum. To peruse it would be an opportunity to enlarge on this brief sketch of the inimitable Fairbridge.

L M McBean, Article in *Rhodesiana*, The Rhodesiana Society , Salisbury, Rhodesia 1972

Ed: The Fairbridge's house "Utopia" was used for many years by the 3rd Umtali Scout Troop as it's headquarters I remember going to a meeting there in the 1970's before the current "Snorker" Riley Hall was built.



Wouldn't this world be a different place
If we began each day
With the thought of helping someone
That we meet along the way

If we set out with a little prayer
That through the day we'd find
A chance to leave some sunshine
And some happiness behind

MONDAY

Is there someone you know who is lonely
And you haven't seen for a while?
Let them know that they're thought about
With a call, a word, or a smile

TUESDAY

Don't neglect the chance today
To do some kindly act
Or pay a little compliment
With thoughtfulness and tact

WEDNESDAY

This is a day for forgetting
Yesterday's cares and its strife
This is a day for remembering
The joys and the blessings of life

THURSDAY

Think of a friend who's in trouble -
Is there some little thing you can do?
If there's nothing else, then offer a prayer
From a heart that's sincere and true

FRIDAY

Today should be just for your loved ones -
Find some little way of expressing
The thought that their love will always be
Life's greatest and sweetest blessing

SATURDAY

You may have cares and duties
There are dozens of things to be done
But don't let the day come to an end
Without some laughter and fun

SUNDAY

This is a day for rejoicing
For thinking of God above
Arise and give thanks for the blessings
Of His deep and abiding love
