



O.B. Extracts: 18 June 2010.

It has been a long time since the last OB Extracts, but I went for a ball of chalk health-wise and it has taken me a month of Sunday's to get back up to speed again. I'm now on 'Duty and Medicine' so here we go. Thanks for all the messages, support and prompts to get started again! Enough of that so lets see if we can get the show back on the road again.

AGM Natal Branch: The 2010 AGM was held at the German Club on Friday 4 June with 24 of the normal suspects attending. I must compliment Chairman the 'Nobel Nodus' on his tactics – he spoke so quietly that the folk at the back of the meeting could not hear a word and were invited to move to the front – silly boyz! They no sooner reached the front when the Nobel Nodus concluded his speech, the Financials were dealt with in double quick time and then it was voting time. Two of the naïve sitting in the front, Dick Isemonger and Trevor Wilson, were ambushed and found themselves being voted onto the committee to replace Chairman Nobel Nodus and the Staff Officer Finance, Malcolm Wiltshire. The unsuspecting Trevor Wilson is now the new Chairman of the Natal Branch. The new look committee is: Chairman - Trevor Wilson, Des Howse - Chief Staff Officer Admin supported by Trevor Dutton (Staff Officer Outpost), Staff Officers Factotum -Ken Wood and Dick Isemonger. The outgoing committee were thanked for a sterling job of work.

Those attending were: 7229 Des Howse; 8068 Dennis Wyatt; 6283 Nobby Clark; 5802 Ken Wood; 5661 Trevor Wilson; 5293 Trevor Dutton; 5268 Malcolm Wiltshire; 4717 Pat Knight; 4254 Smudge Smith; 4726 Dickie Dyer; 8966 Derek Lowe; 8276 Brian Perkins; 8303 Rob Bristow; 5958 Dick Isemonger; 8181 Malcolm Dale; 5842 Derek Starr; 5934 Fred Mason; 5428 Ian Hogg; 7706 Chris Driver; 6872 Dave Lynn; 5087 Robin Johnson; 5939 Vic Sutherland; 8105 Peter Cutting; 6695 Peter Lyes. Apologies were read out but I was taking cover in the back row and failed to take note (sorry chaps!).

It was confirmed that the Annual Dinner (oops Lunch) will be held at the Augusta Club, Hillcrest mid-September. More details to follow latter.

Hillcrest Station Function: A bring and braai was held on Sunday 23 May at the Augusta Club, Hillcrest. Weatherise one could not have picked a better day. With good weather, good company and mighty fine venue what more could the faithful 26 who attended ask for? The attendees were: Des & Trish Howse; Alan & Flick Bennet; Ben Pretorius; John Carroll; Pat Knight; Smudge Smith; Derek & Megan Kerr; Chris & El Driver; Dennis & Marian Wyatt; Brian Perkins; Hillary Squires; Trevor Dutton; Rob Bristow; Nobby Clark; Vic & Reena Sutherland; Trevor & Linda Wilson; Ken Wood; Alan & Gerda Cunningham. Des Howse and his little team must be complimented in organising these events, they are really enjoyable outings and an opportunity to 'chew the fat' with old friends. You need to try it sometime – you may just be pleasantly surprised!

The Lady Brand Station: To me the Free State has always been an area that is flat, uninteresting and somewhere to avoid. Lindsay and I were invited to Lady Brand to visit the Hamiltons, only for me to find out it was anything but what I have just described. This nook of the Free State has spectacular countryside and mountains ... and such very nice people. Apologies to all the Free Staters I have maligned over the years. Whilst visiting Rob and Shelagh Hamilton on their cattle farm outside Lady Brand, Cowboy Rob decided after three years of procrastinating that it was time to launch the Lady Brand Station. We, Lindsay and Fred Mason, enjoyed a delightful Saturday afternoon on the farm in the company of Rob & Shelagh Hamilton; Phil & Geetha Hart, 10688 Lance Lucas and his daughter Tracey. Lance's wife, Jane (ex-WPO Jane Noble), was overseas at the time. With 4 ex-members they have the nucleus of a station and will now scout around the area, including Maseru, for other members (Regular or Reservists). Phil has now retired having spent more years with his ex-employer than he did in the BSAP. Shelagh and Rob will be planning another gathering later this year. Limited accommodation will be available for anyone wishing to come along – more later.

South West England. From Dave Kennedy came news that on 15 May they had their Spring gathering in the S.W with 59 heads attending. They have moved pubs to the Cromwell Arms in the Devonshire village of Bovey Tracey. Ex-Byo. bods attending were: Pete & Ann Fitzgerald, Ron & Margaret Peters, Dave Macdonald, Peter & Angela Brock and yours truly Dave Kennedy. A good time was had by all. We were disappointed that Ted Sheriff, who has recently been repatriated to the U.K. from Harare did not manage to come along with Jim O'Toole - Ted recently underwent some surgery for a hip replacement (or could it have been his knee - not sure which!!) and did not fancy the rather long trip from Barnstable. We hope to see him in October at our next bash. (Thanks Dave for your news FCM.)

Police Wedding: On Sat 15 May, 7026 Stretch Hughes and WPO96 Val Oldham tied the knot at a family wedding at our home in Hillcrest. Family from both sides had flown in from overseas. Guest of Honour status was shared equally by the mothers of both the bride and groom. After a week of blissfully warm, sunny weather, the day dawned bleak and the light drizzle developed into a steady rain as the afternoon wore on. Nothing however blighted the warm, family atmosphere and obvious enjoyment of all. Val was indeed the 'blushing bride' and looked lovely, while Stretch cut quite a good figure despite the walking stick! We wish the couple much happiness.

Station Transfer: After many, many years in Durban North, Dick and Jenny Isemonger have at long last come to their senses and have accepted a transfer and now moved from muggy Durban North to the idyllic Hillcrest - phew you District bods were and still are such slow learners!! Welcome to a suburb of heaven!

Squad 11/1958 and Mounted Troop 1959 Re-Union: We had a very successful gathering of the 11 Squad and the 1959 Mounted Troop late last year. At the time we were unfortunately unable to make contact with a few of the lads and some others couldn't make the do. Our ambassador at large, Alan Cunningham and his wife, Gerda, are now visiting Quin Lamb and Ian Beattie in the UK to persuade them to join us all for a last fling to celebrate jointly, tongue in cheek, the squad members 70th birthdays!

Promotion: Barry Woan has now been promoted to Member in Charge Margate and writes as follows:

One of my first "Official" duties as Member In Charge Margate was to acquaint myself with an area on my northern border and took the opportunity to visit Brick and Jenny Bryson in Ballito. Brick is in remarkably good health when you consider he has been bedridden for more than six years! We all had a wonderful couple of hours talking about the BSAP, our time in Fidelity Guards together and the football. He stays on a farm which has been turned into a care centre which is extremely well run set in very tranquil surrounds. Jenny is holding up well and has to be admired for her continued love and devotion to her man under very difficult circumstances.

I then headed into town and had lunch with Joe and Pam Reeler. Joe has let his BSAP Association membership lapse and is now in my sights. I can already sense the R80 on its way via me to Durban Association Finance Department!!!! Joe is well and is still employed as the Estate Manager on a local residential Estate in Ballito.

Sick Parade: I am pleased to report that Ted Painting continues to make steady progress following his stroke. He is now able to talk freely on the phone and goes from strength to strength due to his determination and loving support from Sue and the family. Well done, Ted – see you at the lunch soon!

Alan Brent continues to battle along, refusing to give in to the emphysema. He has the odd speed wobble, but otherwise he is holding his own.

The Welsh Dragon and Matabeleland centre, Brian Thomas, has been battling cancer for some time and now plans to retire to the Cape later this year. We look forward to a brief visit from the ole 'bath-bun' and Myra in September en route to the Cape.

This and That:

Vic Sutherland had a brief LSD (look-see-decide) to NZ earlier this year and, whilst he thought the place was lovely, there were some issues that made it impractical for Vic and Reena to move – phew, I nearly lost my cadet squad mate to the All Blacks!

Unsubstantiated rumours suggest that Peter Cutting may well be moving to Kent in the UK later this year.

After all these years, Alan Cunningham and Garth Hatton have sold up their fishing rod company, Purglas, and are now flirting with this new thing called retirement. Good luck to you both.

From the pen of Don Rowland comes this message from Silvia Freemantle “..... On the home front it isn't great, Bert is developing dementia and it makes life very hard at times as I never know where I will find something he has washed up, also he is VERY bent from OP. and his eyesight is very poor. He still goes out for a walk on his own I don't go with him as it is so painfully slow, when we first came here we used to stride out down by the river and walk a brisk 5\6k's We were at the Dr's last week and asked for a mental test which he didn't pass.

Sorry if I sound like a grumpy old woman [which I am at times] also if anyone gives a sign of sympathy I choke up, even writing this little bit I am in tears.

Take care and God Bless. Love Sylvia.”

We have had a bad run of deaths of members – to name a few – Jimmy Collins, Norman Nimmo and Dave Callow. The list goes on. We have such a tremendous Association and when we get together you can visibly see the strong bond between the men. There is always good intention to maintain contact, but the stresses of life today somehow thwart this. A couple of years ago I included this message and thought it appropriate now to repeat:

Did I Take The Time To See My Friends

*Around the corner I have a friend,
In this great city that has no end,
Yet the days go by and weeks rush on,
And before I know it, a year is gone.
And I never see my old friends face,
For life is a swift and terrible race.*

*He knows I like him just as well,
As in the days when I rang his bell.
And he rang mine but we were younger then,
And now we are busy, tired men.
Tired of playing a foolish game,
Tired of trying to make a name.
"Tomorrow" I say! "I will call on Jim
Just to show that I'm thinking of him."*

*But tomorrow comes and tomorrow goes,
And distance between us grows and grows.
Around the corner, yet miles away,
"Here's an e-mail sir," "Jim died today."
And that's what we get and deserve in the end.
Around the corner, a vanished friend.*

Be back with the next OB Extracts soon.
Fred