

# Zimbabwe Pensioner Support Fund

## August 2009 Trip report    *By Past Attie Botha*

This trip was once again completed using our three trucks with the Toyota Dyna driven by **Bob Daniels** following the Nissan UD80 Driven by me around the longer Harare route and the Nissan UD90 manned by **Daniel Koekemoer and his wife Elza** doing the shorter Bulawayo route. This was **Elza's** 1<sup>st</sup> trip back to Zimbabwe for many years especially to places of her childhood that were only a vague memory to her. Daniel's report will no doubt shed more light on her experiences.

The convoy left Malelane "on schedule" on the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> and we progressed well to arrive in Musina early evening storing the trucks away without any disruption to those who give us a safe place to keep them, **the NG Church, and our hosts, the Cameron's, Henry and Elizabeth** once again spoilt us with a super supper and "comfy" bed. What will we do without these good folks!

Our paperwork was done by early afternoon and one of the trucks again had to be inspected, and the huge delay on the Zim side, taking us into the night resulted in the Dyna being impounded and Bob and I sleeping in confinement for the night, in the trucks. Daniel was able to continue on his journey to Bulawayo. The next morning, early, our trucks were inspected and released and on the road by 09.30. That was an 18hr crossing, the worst in a long time and hopefully for a long time to come.

We pressed on to **Masvingo** where we managed to drop most of our consignment for the Homes there and retired to **Gerhard and Trudy's** home where we were again spoilt beyond words. Up early the next **morning, 12<sup>th</sup>**, we completed the drop and collected as many of the new generation empty boxes as possible and headed for **Mutare** arriving there at 14.00.

Our hosts, **Des and Sally Becker** made their staff available to us to help with the off loading and by 17.30 we were done and in house with our hosts at 18.00. What a blessing to have these good people helping us in any and every way possible wherever we stop. We were greeted with the bad news that in Mutare in the preceding few weeks seven of our pensioners had passed on and the next day two funerals were held. This added to the ones mentioned in the previous trip report really enforces the truth of the need for medicines in that country. Completing our drop offs and collecting of empties we left early on **Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup>** on our journey to **Harare via Rest Haven in Rusape**.

Here we met with **Mr Tom Coffee** who handed me an oil painting done by himself and asked me to sell it here and use some of the proceeds for the ZPSF. **How utterly selfless these people are.** Included in this report is a photo of the canvas, he is an artist of note, and I hope someone out there will buy it. Needless to say, **all funds raised will go back to him.** The dimension of the canvas are 65mm x 85mm and it is signed and dated by the man himself. This is your opportunity to do something great for your fellow man. **All offers over R2000:00 will be considered.** After a welcome cuppa tea and handing over the boxes and collecting the empties we said our goodbyes and left for Harare. We dropped the Harare consignment with **Mike and Marion Futter** where we met up with **Hannes** who was also in Zimbabwe doing promo work for the Fund. We then went on to park the trucks at **the Masonic Lodge** and proceed to **Phillip and Claire Gilbert-Green's** home where we sat and watched as the Springboks took care of the Wallabies. What a pleasure.

The next morning on the 16<sup>th</sup> we set off to do the **Bindura and Mvurwe** run dropping and servicing the homes **Mazoe Valley Trust and Malvern Trust**. Here we once again saw the need of the folk as they eagerly took their boxes to their respective little "**safe havens**" returning the empties **with gratitude and tearful smiles**. When we experience these scenes we **realise the depth of the need these folk have**. You drive away with a huge lump in your throat and a tear in your eyes. We spent as much time as we could encouraging the oldies before heading back to Harare where we needed to do some running repairs to the Dyna.

We slept over with our host again and left early the next day, **Monday 17<sup>th</sup>** to do **Sunningdale at Chinhoyi and Westview in Kadoma** where we were the guests of **Clive and Estelle O'Reiley** who also laid it all on for us. It was real good to see the O'Reiley's in high spirits, as on the previous trip they were rather doleful. There is a **glimmer of light in the tunnel** was Clive's response when I commented on his changed outlook. He is gearing up for the upturn so many of the people are anticipating. That was one of the highlights of the trip for me.

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>** we collected all empties and left for **Lynbrook in Kwekwe and Herbert Lee in Redcliff**. At Lynbrook we heard the sad news that one of the oldies, **Neville Hudson**, who had a long fight with his illness had passed away. Over the months you get to know some of the folk well and it hurts to get this news. We went on to **Gweru** where we collected some empties at **Boggies and Huisvergesig** before going on to **Bulawayo** to try to do some research re warehousing and a fuel donor or two. We also did some PR work and after spending two nights with "**Tannie Koekie**" we set off at 4.30 on the morning of the **20<sup>th</sup> for the border** and had a good two-hour crossing.

On this trip we encountered many of the new "cash points" as they are known by the locals. These are "toll stations" where the motorists are being "fleeced" by the government, in that all local and foreign vehicles have to pay a toll of between US\$.1:00 and US\$. 5:00 depending on the size of your vehicle. There are said to be 86 of these around the country covering all routes. SA trucks that pay for road transit coupons are to date exempted, that includes us so we hope it stays that way. These funds will go towards road repairs so we will wait and see. There are some improvements evident where potholes are being filled. The best news is that the dreaded detour on the Byo / Beitbridge road has been repaired and work is being done on the stretch of the road served by the detour.

At this point I again want to thank all our donors, suppliers and supporters for the great work you are doing in enabling us to transport the goods you directly as well as indirectly give us to hand over to the needy in Zimbabwe. Without you we cannot do it, in fact we are totally reliant on your continued generosity. Thankyou to **P.G. Bison and management in Nelspruit** for the gift of two beautiful kitchen "post form tops" for the kitchen in Huisvergesig in Gweru. Another bouquet goes to **the management and staff of Vixtrix Signs in Tzaneen** for the new signage they put onto the UD80 at no charge. Thanks also to **the management and staff of HK Houers of Letsitele** for the fantastic new boxes they donated us. We looked so professional with all the boxes matching and the little extras we could put in because of the larger size thrilled the pensioners. We are also looking into fitting TAG axles to the two Nissan trucks and have received an anonymous donation towards doing the UD90, which has gone in this week to be done. You people really do not know how great your blessings to us are. **YOU ARE STARS!!** We however pray our **Lord's richest BLESSINGS** for you and your businesses for the **goodness** you put out there. It is indeed seed for a bountiful harvest.

We are now looking for a donor or donors to help us fit the same to the UD80 and some sponsors for truck rims and tyres for the modifications. **The tyre sizes are 10.00xR20 or 11.00xR20** either **tubeless or tube type** as we use both types. **Please contact us if you can help**, as we want to do the modifications before our next trip in October. This modification will free us of our weakest link, the trailer!!!

We will be going **all out during September on a drive to raise funds** for the cause so if you can arrange a presentation amongst some friends, business colleagues, cell groups, churches, clubs or any other groups please let us know.

We pray our Lord's Blessings for you all as you continue doing the work of sowing into this ministry.

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