



The Australian Light Infantry Regimental Association of Australasia



Special Air Services

The first Rhodesian special force was raised in response to a recruiting campaign for the Malayan Emergency and was to become 'C' Squadron of the Malayan Scouts and subsequently the reconstituted SAS. When that task ended the squadron of 250, all ranks, was based at Ndola in Northern Rhodesia as part of the armed forces of Rhodesia and Nyasaland but when the federation collapsed was reduced to a cadre. However, it later grew again in response to the threat posed by the guerrilla wars in Angola and Mozambique. Joint operations with the Portuguese took men of the unit into combat and the Squadron saw continuous action from 1967 until Rhodesia became Zimbabwe in 1980. In 1978 C Squadron was redesignated the Rhodesian SAS and its all-white troops became the cadres for squadrons.

Uniform was optional when the unit was on operations and the distinguishing features of the SAS were not worn. Men carried AK-47 automatic rifles or the SVD Dragunov plus the 12.7mm Soviet heavy machine gun, or the usual Western weaponry.

Editorial Opinion:

The Rhodesian SAS was and remains an enigmatic unit that shunned the flamboyant exposure seemingly enjoyed by other specialist enterprises during the Rhodesian Bush War. This is borne out by the ongoing lack of information on this formidable fighting machine, outside of commercial publications; some informative web links are attached.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Air_Service

<http://www.rhodesianforces.org/TheOriginsoftheRhodesianSASTitle.htm>

<http://www.memoriesofrhodesia.com/pages/war/sas.html>



Selous Scouts

The Selous Scouts were undoubtedly the most effective of the many Special Forces, which have been used in Africa. Raised by Reid-Daly, an ex-Rhodesian SAS officer, the ideals of that regiment were the basis upon which he developed a unit specially tailored for the terrain and type of action it encountered and endowed it with special skills such as tracking. It was multi-racial so its members were able to pose as ZIPLA or ZANLA guerrillas on both sides of its borders and thus identify the guerrilla's structure, composition and supply systems. Guerrilla squads were then maneuvered into contact with conventional troops. Because of the entangled nature of their operations with, at times, each side posing as the other, there were cases of atrocities being perpetrated by both sides, although the Scouts certainly did not deserve the infamous reputation they got as a result of enemy propaganda.

The 17-day selection of the Scouts was similar to that of the SAS with recruits being watched for 'the real individual' who would emerge after starvation, hardship and exhaustion, the latter being ensured by speed-marches of 32 km (20 miles), of which the last 12 km (7.5 miles) had to be done in two and a half hours while carrying a sand bag. The dedicated few that passed this test were then examined for a blend of gregariousness and self-sufficiency. Their emblem was a silver-winged Osprey badge worn on a brown beret.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selous_Scouts

<http://www.theselousscouts.com/index2.php>

http://selousscouts.tripod.com/home_page.htm



RAR, Rhodesian African Rifles:

The Rhodesian African Rifles (RAR) have a long and illustrious record, dating back to 1916, when the 1st Rhodesian Native Regiment was formed. This was then followed by the Matabeleland Native Regiment, and the 2nd Rhodesian Native Regiment, formed in 1917.

During 1918, the Rhodesia Native Regiment was formed by an amalgamation of the 1st and 2nd Regiments.

In 1919, this Regiment was disbanded, with some of the personnel forming the Askari Unit of the British South Africa Police (BSAP).

In 1940, during the early part of the second world war, the Askari Unit of the BSAP were formed into the new Rhodesian African Rifles. This was considered as the direct successor of the Rhodesia Native Regiment, which was confirmed in 1962, and the RAR inherited all that Regiments battle honours.

The first RAR Depot was opened during the summer of 1941 at Borrowdale Camp, Salisbury. This was closed in 1946, but re-opened again in 1954 when it moved to Llewelin Barracks in Bulawayo. In 1976, the Depot moved once again to Shaw Barracks in Balla Balla.

The RAR fought with distinction during the Rhodesian bush war and were a formidable force in repelling the incursions of the terrorists under the control of Mugabe and Nkomo.

The RAR was finally disbanded on the 31st December 1981, when its soldiers were integrated into the Zimbabwe National Army.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhodesian_African_Rifles

www.rhodesian.server101.com/rhodesian_african_rifles.htm



Rhodesia Regiment:

The Territorial or conscript units of the Rhodesian Army have their origins in the First World War and some may argue as far back as the Boer War in a vaguely representative form.

Compulsory conscription was introduced in the early 60's and initially required a four and a half month service period, this was later increased to nine months, eighteen months and then two years as the security situation deteriorated and more manpower was required.

A basic training period of 18 weeks was followed by deployments to 1 and 2 Independent Rifle companies or selection to regular units such as the Artillery and Signals.

As hostilities wore on Territorial conscripts were eventually deployed to Regular combat units such as the RLI to complete their commitments.

After initial service period Territorials were committed to an ongoing obligatory service to one of the 10 Territorial Battalions formed. Initially this may have required a period of service of six weeks every two years. In the final stages of the conflict commitment periods of six and eight weeks every six or eight weeks were required.

Eventually voluntary conscription was extended to the indigenous population with spectacularly disastrous results. Rhodesia began to flounder under the weight of the conflict. Desperate and dubious internal political associations designed to gain international recognition were formed.

Reportedly the then US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger eventually met with South African politicians. By threatening to artificially lower the Gold price and disrupt the South African economy, managed to convince the South Africans to close their borders to the flow of goods and materiele, thus forcing the Rhodesians to the negotiating table.

Territorials countrywide were summoned to the Battalion HQ's and informed that the country had Fuel and Ammunition for 90 days and the Kissinger proposals had to be accepted. The country was then committed to the inevitability of Black majority rule.

Civilian men and women of all races and persuasions, from all walks of life, on a regular and ongoing basis had been able to make the transition from civilian pastimes to combat environments, invariably with a transition period of only a few days. To them largely went the more mundane tasks. Although with the worsening situation great things were expected from these partime units, often undermanned, equipped and supported in comparison to their regular counterparts.

It is unlikely that the Territorial contribution to the Rhodesian bush war will ever be satisfactorily chronicled or acknowledged. The considerable role of honour bears testimony to the ultimate sacrifice made by many. To have been part of this valiant collective effort is indeed the only claim that can be made by most members of long forgotten Regiments, but is in itself an accolade to commitment and sacrifice of the highest order in the finest traditions of soldiering.

<http://www.rhodesianforces.org/RhodesiaRegiment.htm>

<http://rhodesianservices.org/Unit%20Pages.htm>

<http://rhodesianservices.org/4th%20Battalion%20Rhodesia%20Regiment.htm>

<http://rhodesianservices.org/intake-155.htm>

<http://www.alangroberts.com/myarmyphotos01.htm>



Rhodesian Airforce:

Rhodesian Air Force (1970-1980)

Flag of the Rhodesian Air Force During the "Emergency" the air force consisted of no more than 2,300 personnel and of those only 150 were pilots. These pilots were qualified to fly all the aircraft within the air force so were often involved in combat missions. In addition, they were rotated through the various units so as to give rest to the airmen who would otherwise be constantly on active service.

In March 1970, when Rhodesia declared itself a republic, the prefix "Royal" was dropped and the Service's name became the Rhodesian Air Force (RhAF). A new roundel was adopted in the new Rhodesian colours of green and white containing a lion (in gold) and tusk in the centre of the white. The new air force ensign was taken into use on 5 April 1970. The new flag contained the Rhodesian flag in the canton with the roundel in the fly on a light blue field. This marking was displayed in the usual six positions, together with a green/white/green fin flash with a narrow white stripe as in RAF type C.

During the 1970s bush war, Rhodesia managed to obtain Rheims-Cessna 337 (known in Rhodesia as the Lynx), and SIAI Machetti SF260 (known in Rhodesia as the Genet or Warrior - two versions, trainer and ground-attack) piston engined aircraft, Bell 204 Iroquois (from Israel), and additional Aérospatiale Alouette III helicopters via covert means, but proved unsuccessful in obtaining jet aircraft (except for some Vampires FB9 and T11 aircraft from South Africa). An order for CT/4 trainers was embargoed by the New Zealand government

Drawing upon counter-insurgency experience gained in the Second World War, the Malayan Emergency and the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya, and adapting more recent Israeli, South African and Portuguese tactics, Rhodesian combined operations (police Special Branch, army, air force) developed 'pseudo-guerrillas', such as the Mozambican National Resistance, (RENAMO) that wreaked havoc across the border, where Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) guerrilla camps were razed by 'Fireforce' cross-border raids. Fireforce comprised units of Selous Scouts, an undercover tracker battalion of 1,500 troops on double pay, 80 percent black, (many recruited by Special Branch from captured guerrillas facing trial and execution) probing ahead of a parachute infantry battalion and up to 200 Special Air Service commandos. These forces were supported, in turn, by armoured transport columns, mobile field artillery, equestrian pursuit dragoons, (Grey's Scouts) air force helicopter gunships and bomber squadrons, one newly-equipped with 20 French-made Cessna Lynx low-altitude surveillance aircraft modified for precision ground attacks. Fireforce gathered intelligence, disrupted guerrilla forces, seized equipment and is identified frequently as a precursor of new forms of counterinsurgency warfare. The United Nations condemned the Fireforce raids, especially the use of napalm, but evidence confirming or disproving the utilisation of Rhodesian biological weapons remains inconclusive.[8]

Order of battle

- No. 1 Squadron - Thornhill (12 x Hawker Hunter FGA.9)**
- No. 2 Squadron - Thornhill (8 x Vampire FB.9; 8 x Vampire T.55; plus 13 x Vampire FB.52 on loan from South Africa)**
- No. 3 Squadron - New Sarum (13 x Douglas C-47; 1 x Cessna 402; 6 x BN-2A Islander; 1 x DC-7C; 1 x Baron)**
- No. 4 Squadron - Thornhill (11 x AL-60F5 Trojan; 21 x Reims-Cessna FTB.337G; 14 x SF.260W)**
- No. 5 Squadron - New Sarum (8 x EE Canberra B.2; 2 x EE Canberra T.4)**
- No. 6 Squadron - Thornhill (13 x Percival Provost T.52; 17 x SF.260C)**
- No. 7 Squadron - New Sarum (6 x Alouette II; 34 x Alouette III)**
- No. 8 Squadron - New Sarum (11 x AB.205)**

www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Royal_Rhodesian_Air_Force

www.rhodesia.nl/Aviation/index.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhodesian_Air_Force



British South Africa Police:

The British South Africa Police (BSAP) was the police force of the British South Africa Company established by Cecil Rhodes through the amalgamation of the Central Search Association and the Exploring Company Ltd after receiving a Royal Charter in 1889. The BSAC of Cecil Rhodes became the national police force of Southern Rhodesia, the British colony situated north of the Limpopo River and the Union of South Africa. Its successor after the declaration of UDI in 1965 became Rhodesia and is known today as Zimbabwe.

The BSAP was the quintessential Colonial Police Force with an extremely high standard of acceptance, presence and dress, operating largely unarmed until the advent of hostilities in the early sixties.

A protracted Guerrilla war saw the BSAP morph into a number of Regular and part time Para military units.

Perhaps unwisely and with the wisdom of hindsight the Guerilla War in Rhodesia, initially and for the most part was designated a Police action. This was probably due to concerns that a more appropriate description may have had a detrimental effect on the all important tourist industry. Not until the later and more desperate stages of the conflict were the highly efficient and effective Regular Military units able to operate autonomously of traditionally restrictive colonial structures and inflict devastating losses upon the enemy.

Plagiarised facts and Editorial opinion

www.bsap.org

www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/British_South_Africa_Police

www.rhodesia.nl

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_South_Africa_Police

www.rhodesianforces.org/BSAPHistory.htm



Internal Affairs

An informative Internal Affairs site with a good old Camo scanned background, well worth a look and congratulations to the Author.

<http://www.freewebs.com/dudleywall/>



Grey Scouts:

Grey's Scouts were a Rhodesian mounted infantry unit raised in July 1975 and named for George Grey, a prominent soldier in the Second Matabele War. Based in Salisbury (now Harare), they were known for their participation in the Rhodesian Bush War. The unit was disbanded in November 1980.

Use in the Rhodesian Bush War

The creation of the unit was probably inspired by the Dragoons of Angola, a Portuguese Army mounted unit, raised in 1966, during the Portuguese Colonial War, to combat the guerrillas in Eastern Angola. Like the Dragoons of Angola, Grey's Scouts were used for tracking, reconnaissance, pursuit, and, most prominently, patrol in the Rhodesian Bush War.[2] With measured variations in horse speed for training purposes, they would cover an area of over 65 km (40 miles) on the average day. Their routes often took them through active minefields, which they were to inspect.[3] In addition to this, the small stature and manoeuvrability of the crossbreeds they rode on was of repeated benefit to the Rhodesian forces in the construction of border defences; the Scouts could transport materials and supplies over terrains impassable to vehicles. The horses themselves were mostly given in charity by sympathisers of the Rhodesian effort from South Africa and elsewhere.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grey%27s_Scouts

www.rhodesianforces.org/GreysScoutsRideAgain.htm



Armoured Cars:

The Rhodesian Armoured Corps was the last incarnation of various armoured military units in Rhodesia. Its initial incarnation was raised in 1941 for service in World War II. This was disbanded in 1956 before being re-established in 1973 to fight in Rhodesia's insurgency.

The various names of the regiment are as follows:

Southern Rhodesian Armoured Car Regiment - 1941

Southern Rhodesian Reconnaissance Car Regiment - 1941-1947

Southern Rhodesian Armoured Car Regiment - 1948-1956

Disbanded - 1956-1973

Rhodesian Armoured Car Regiment (RhACR) - 1973-1979

Rhodesian Armoured Corps (RhAC) - 1980

The regiment consisted of five armoured squadrons, each of four troops, with a supporting Signals Troop, Army Service Corps detachment, Training Troop and an HQ element. In 1979 a supporting Infantry Troop was added. A, B and C Squadrons were territorial units, while D and E Squadrons were staffed by regulars and national servicemen. The armoured troops used the South African manufactured Eland 90 armoured car, the British made Ferret armoured scout car and a variety of Rhodesian armoured personnel carriers constructed on the short wheelbase '25' and long wheelbase '45' Mercedes truck chassis, or the Nissan truck chassis. The unit acquired 8 Soviet block T-55 tanks in October 1979, that were seized by South Africa from a Libyan freighter in Durban[2]. The regiment's primary roles were in static defence of key border crossing points, in high density operations in no-go areas heavily infiltrated by guerillas, in external operations against enemy bases and mainly in the provision of an armoured force in the event of a classical war invasion of the country. This latter scenario only materialised in 1980 after the end of the Bush War, whereas the regiment carried out most of its operations in a counter-insurgency role prior to 1980.

The regiment had the reputation of high standards, with all members being infantry trained prior to application. Applicants were then trained to an armoured specialisation at the regiment's own training centre.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhodesian_Armoured_Corps

http://selousscouts.tripod.com/rhodesian_armoured_corps_.htm