

21st Anniversary of the LAST POST SHELLHOLE, MUFULIRA, ZAMBIA.

Shellhole Executive:-

- OLD BILL - BILL HEDGES
- WEE BILL - ALAN KYLE
- SCRIBE - INGRAM McLAREN
- PAY BILL - ROGER NEATE
- SERGEANT MAJOR - ERNIE WOODCOCK
- PLAY BILL - FREDDIE GOOD

A message from PAST OLD BILL 'LES' SHAW.

Dear M.O.T.H's,

I will try to convey to you, as briefly as possible, the history of the LAST POST SHELLHOLE and a few of the 'blokes' who have helped to make it the fine SHELLHOLE we have today. Before starting however, I would like to make it clear that this is all from memory and if a few important items and 'blokes' are omitted, please forgive me.

Early in 1947, a Meeting was called in the old Mine Bioscope Hall. This Meeting was for Ex-Servicemen interested in forming a SHELLHOLE. Present at this first Meeting, were ALEX WINTER, RON WHITTU, LES SHAW and about 14 others. All service papers were scrutinised and checked.

A SHELLHOLE was formed, with BILL LUCAS as the first OLD BILL, and Meetings were held, at the start, in the old MASONIC TIN TEMPLE in the Mine Plant Works Area. From there, the SHELLHOLE moved to the old GYMNASIUM, and the Meetings were held beside the Boxing Ring (which seemed to discourage arguments !!!). M.O.T.H's at that time, who played poker with OLD BILL, were NORMAN BARNES and CHARLIE LUCAS.

We then moved to the Recreation Club Reading Room. For two years, ALEX WINTER, JOHN KELLY and the late ERNIE CROWDEN, worked hard to raise funds to build our own MUD HUT on the Mokambo Road. ALEX supervised the building, whilst the late 'POP' RANMIE looked after the Central Dressing Station. Water was laid on, by the courtesy of Mufulira Copper Mines Limited, by BERT HOWE, JOHN KELLY and Company. Free water laid on to Van Vuurens Piccart, across the road, made sure of our free suppers on Meeting nights. This SHELLHOLE was opened by PAST OLD BILL ALEX WINTER in the presence of approximately 500 M.O.T.H's from all over NORTHERN RHODESIA, many of them from ROC and RICOCHET at KITWE (now amalgamated into the THREE DICE SHELLHOLE). The evening finished off with an impromptu Concert and one of the popular turns was ALEX's rendering of 'Poor Little Angelene'. Our caretaker at that time was SERGEANT MAJOR ASKARI ex K.R. RIFLES.

A well remembered feature of the SHELLHOLE in those days, was a unique lighting system. An Acetylene bottle with rubber tubes feeding parts of Miners lamps, designed, installed and operated by the late ERNIE CROWDEN. S. W. JAMES was WEE BILL at this time.

The Mokambo Road SHELLHOLE was eventually bulldozed to the ground to make way for the new Mokambo Road and for a while, we were homeless. We held our Meetings in the Bush, round a camp fire and every man had to do his Party Piece at the conclusion of the Meeting, which was always followed by a Sing Song with DES WILD playing a very 'beery' piano.

After a few temporary homes, we rented the Flying Club 'Club House'. The first OLD BILL was LES OUZMAN and he and DINA will always be remembered for their hard work through the years, in supervising the Raffles and introducing Quizzes as part of the Social Evenings.

About this time, a War Memorial was erected by the BRITISH EX-SERVICEMANS LEAGUE,. Serving on this very hardworking Committee in those days, was STEVE VAN KERKEN. The original Plaque was removed and was erected in the SHELLHOLE by your present OLD BILL, BILL HEDGES. Liasing on the B.E.S.L. Committees at that time,were JIMMY FAIRWEATHER and LES SHAW.

Three sites for the new SHELLHOLE were negotiated for by LES SHAW. These were where the Harp Room is now and where the Masonic Lodge is now. Our present site comprises an original piece of the old Aerodrome, plus two stands allocated to other societies. This was done by BILL YOUNGER of the STANLEY ROBERTS SHELLHOLE (Ndola) and was registered by our Solicitors, under The Lands Perpetual & Succession Act.

'Blokes' who worked hard in the early days were the FUNK Brothers (Basil and Theo), DARREL TILLBROOK, the late CLAUDE HIERONS, PETER GIRDLESTONE, JACK ACRES, ERROL TROLLOPE, HARRY DEW, 'RUSTY' WILSON, 'POLY' LANCASTER, PETER GREYLING and many others.

We brought up PROVINCIAL OLD BILL PALMER from MATABELAND DUGOUT and became affiliated. Later we brought up the PROVINCIAL LADY BILLIE and SCRIBE and a M.O.T.H.W.A. Branch was formed in the SHELLHOLE, soon spreading to nearby SHELLHOLE's. The first LADY BILLIE was VEA MUIR and the only other lady left of her original Committee, is DOREEN LONGMORE.

Realising the CLUB HOUSE was too small, Xmas Tree functions had to be held under tarpaulins lent by the Station Master, efforts were made to enlarge the premises. To start with, Storerooms were built, the present bar backdrop was built by GEORGE LAIRD, and the 'escape hatch' at the back, was bricked up. Gardens were started by WALLY WALFORD and LES SHAW, these were later taken over by STEVE VAN KERKEN and are now looked after by ALAN KYLE.

Great strides were made, NORMAN BARNES built the Bowling Green, alterations were made to the Club Buildings, car parks, fences etc... LIONEL BESTER battled with his colleagues to raise funds for these alterations and extensions. A recent back fence was erected by BRIAN LACEY. BRIAN and Mrs. LACEY taught the M.O.T.H's to play Bowls when the Green was first opened.

Two achievements of the SHELLHOLE, were the buying of an Ambulance, which was presented to the Mufulira Municipal Council. The building of the Bungalow by a private Contractor. Credit for this belongs to FRED HOITMAN and his very active Committee and 'blokes'.

Further extensions were made to the SHELLHOLE, Sarge McNIELAGE getting these under way with the aid of many of the 'Blokes'. CHARLIE HOBSON, although not a M.O.T.H, was one of our greatest friends, the Bowling Green Pavillion is named after him. ROGER NEATE and LOUIS PRIEN, whose generosity will always be remembered, worked hard to set the SHELLHOLE on its feet. Among many volunteer barman, BERT HOWE played his part.

The social side of the SHELLHOLE has always been important, Xmas Trees, Sports Days for the children, Dances, at one time a monthly affair, challenges in all sports, raids and visits to other SHELLHOLE's, M.O.T.H. Rallies, Hospital visiting at Xmas and throughout the year. Children have always been welcome in the SHELLHOLE. Young GARRY HOPKINS and many many more have played in the SHELLHOLE and watched television.

In conclusion, a tribute to M.O.T.H. ALF COLEMAN and PAT, our Club Manager, barman and friend, who has looked after us so well, for many years. My thanks also to M.O.T.H. ROGER SMITH for editing this message for me.

Y.U.T.H.

Les Shaw
PAST OLD BILL

MUFULIRA,
ZAMBIA.

June, 1968.