

Martin: Man of many talents

By a Special Correspondent

DAVID MARTIN was a writer and photographer, and later in life, a publisher. He was a rigorous researcher and investigative writer who exposed the calamity and cost of South African economic and military destabilisation in southern Africa in the 1980s.

He marched with Frelimo into the liberated zones of Mozambique, where he met the Zanin Commander, General Josiah Magama Tongogara, during the last phase of Zimbabwe's struggle for independence. And he produced the first book on that part of the story, called *The Struggle for Zimbabwe: The Chimurenga War* (1980).

He was a prolific writer, who spent his life writing books as well as articles, including *The Chitepo Assassination* (1985); *Destructive Engagement: Southern Africa at War* (1986, updated 1989); and *Apartheid Terrorism: The Destabilisation Report* (1989).

He had previously written the first expose of the reality of Idi Amin in Uganda (General Amin, 1974) and the 1997 ICJ report on Uganda that eventually led to the withdrawal of international support for Amin. David was also a fine photographer. His retirement project was dedicated to creating better understanding of people and places through tourism, by writing and photographing area-specific, pocket size into Africa guidebooks.

He leaves a legacy of 24 guidebooks and photographs, including 16 travel guides to Tanzania National Parks, 2 for Namibia, 1 for Mozambique, and five travel guides for specific areas of Zimbabwe: Hwange, Kariba, Victoria Falls, Vumba, and Great Zimbabwe. These are small books, not only about wildlife but also about the places, the people who inhabit them, and their history.

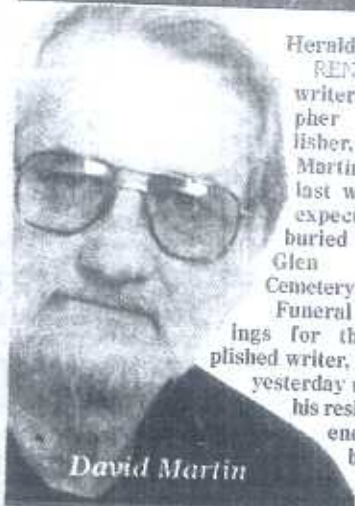
David also leaves a legacy of institutional development. He was a co-founder of Zimbabwe Publishing House, established in 1981; the Zimbabwe International Book Fair, established in 1983; the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre, a regional research centre whose Founding Patron was Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, established in 1985; and the Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa, established in 1992.

He was a trustee of the Josiah Magama Tongogara Legacy Foundation, and he served for 20 years as a Board member of Jongwe Printing and Publishing. David Robert Martin was born in Windsor, UK, on April 14 1936. He started his media career in 1959 at a small weekly newspaper in Devon and later moved to a daily, *The Western Morning News*.

He took up a job as a reporter on the *Tanganyika Standard* in January 1964, just before the Zanzibar revolution, and a few days before the army mutiny in Dar es Salaam. His life has continued at that pace ever since. He rose through the ranks of the newspaper, which was then owned by the London-Rhodesia company, Lonrho, and became Deputy Editor in 1968, after the ownership of the newspaper changed to government. This was the heady time when Dar es Salaam was the liberation headquarters and the centre for the liberation movements. The Organisation of African Unity had been established in 1963, and the OAU Liberation Committee was hosted by Tanzania. Frelimo, MPLA, Swapo, Zanu and others all had offices there.

David always credited his education to this decade that he spent working in the media in

Burial set for today



David Martin

Herald Reporter
RENOWNED
writer, photogra-
pher and pub-
lisher. David
Martin, who died
last weekend, is
expected to be
buried today at
Glen Forest
Cemetery in Harare.
Funeral proceed-
ings for the accom-
plished writer, that began
yesterday morning at
his residence, will
end with his
burial at
Glen

Forest Memorial Park in Borrowdale.

Minister of State for Policy Implementation Cde Webster Shamu, who will be the Master of Ceremony, said Martin would get a State-assisted burial.

According to a programme from the Department of Protocols and State Occasions, the Programme of dedication to the life of David Martin begins at 9 o'clock with a ceremony conducted by Father Fidelis Mukonori.

This will be followed by messages from Tanzania, Mozambique and Namibia, then messages from Sarda, the Josiah Magama Legacy Foundation, Lieutenant General Constantine Chiwenga, Cde Emmerson Mnangagwa, Dr Nathan Shamuyarira and family representatives. The programme winds up with a message from a representative of President Mugabe, and a vote of thanks by Martin's widow, Phyllis.

Tanzania in the 1960s, influenced by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, his close friend Benjamin Mkapa, who was then editor of the party newspaper, *Uhuru*, and others; and with the liberation leaders and movements based there, whom he became close to, including Eduardo Mondlane, Samora Machel, Sam Nujoma, and others.

It was David Martin who travelled to the Rovuma River, the border between Tanzania and Mozambique, with his notepad and camera, to talk to the people there and reveal to the world the start of the liberation war in Mozambique.

From 1971 until March 1974, he ran his own news agency in Dar es Salaam, reporting on the decisive phases of the liberation of Mozambique and Angola. And it was also during this period that he wrote the first articles exposing the atrocities of Idi Amin in Uganda, and the first book on this subject, titled *General Amin*, published in 1974 and credited by many Ugandans and Tanzanians as the first public acknowledgement of their plight, contributing to the momentum that led to Amin's removal in 1979.

David Martin was a former Africa correspondent of *The Observer*. During the late 1970s, based in Lusaka, Zambia as Africa correspondent of *The Observer*, he was often quoted in other media, including BBC. He was an indefatigable investigative researcher, always getting to the bottom of the story.

He was following the liberation south, and was spending a lot of his time in Mozambique and Angola in the months following their independence from Portugal in 1975. He reported from the Mozambique border with Rhodesia soon after it was closed by President Samora Machel in early 1976.

David's articles appeared as the front page lead stories in *The Observer*, for 16 weeks during 1976, often through briefings from Nyerere, Machel and others, who knew that he would accurately present their views and context, reporting honestly and without distortion. This was the year of the Anglo-American talks on Zimbabwe and Namibia, and the year that students poured out of South Africa following the Soweto uprising, and David interviewed many of them in Dar es Salaam.

In Lusaka, he was in close contact with President Namroth Kaunda and with the libera-

tion movements at the Liberation Centre there, including Joshua Nkomo and comrades from Zanu, Swapo and the ANC of South Africa.

He covered Namibia's lengthy struggle for independence, and took a leading role in exposing South African destabilisation in southern Africa in the 1980s. He played a unique and long-term role in presenting the African perspective internationally, and was well respected as a fair and balanced reporter.

Under the apartheid administration, David's books were banned from possession in South Africa, reinforcing his belief that knowledge plays an essential role in empowering people.

Through his writing, he presented to the international community a deeper understanding of the just causes of the liberation struggle. He played a unique and long-term role in presenting the African perspective internationally, and was respected as a fair and balanced reporter.

David was banned in Southern Rhodesia, but he came to Zimbabwe at the start of the transition following Lancaster House and stayed here, establishing his home in Harare with his partner and fellow writer, Phyllis Johnson. At the time of his death, he had completed two new books and was working on a biography of Tongogara.

Always active, he had two major operations for cancer in 2004 and 2007, as well as operations in 2006 to repair broken bones in his shoulders, after being airlifted out of Serengeti in northern Tanzania, but he never stopped writing.

The physical challenges of the past three years failed to deter him and he continued writing up until June this year, when collapsed vertebrates in his back made sitting uncomfortable and affected his respiration, together with the effects of the previous surgery.

He passed away on Saturday morning, August 18, at home in Harare, aged 71. David Martin is survived by Phyllis Johnson, his partner for more than 30 years; his son, Tony Martin, and sister, Pam Worsley; as well as friends' children who have spent formative periods of their lives with David and whom he loved dearly.

These include Ozi and Dick, the sons of the late Fernando Honwana of Mozambique; Linda Tio Zane, the daughter of Peter Zane of Zambia; and the Mudenge family of Zimbabwe: Tandi, Ndassani and Rumbi.