

The Military History Society of NSW presents

# GUERRILLA WAR: RHODESIA 1972-1980



Public Lecture by Fabian Cohnen

10:30AM Sat 5 August 2023, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Sydney CBD

This talk will present a general history of the Rhodesian Bush War focusing on its military aspects, covering strategy, tactics, equipment and weaponry during the war's final phase starting around 1972 to 1980. The conflict was a civil war in the unrecognised country of Rhodesia which pitted three forces against one another: the Rhodesian government under Ian Smith, and guerilla forces of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army led by Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army under Joshua Nkomo. In 1980 Zimbabwe was granted independence and majority black rule under Mugabe, which brought the war to a close.

Fabian Cohnen was born in Rhodesia and was called up for National Service in 1979 like most other school leavers. He underwent basic infantry training in Bulawayo and transferred to the Rhodesian Light Infantry Training Troop in Salisbury, following which he went to officer selection in Gwelo. Fabian graduated in the last Regular Rhodesian Infantry Officers Course in 1980 (Inf 25/23) and was posted as 2nd Lieutenant to the Rhodesian African Rifles (RAR). The Bush War was in transition at that point and the retraining and amalgamation of the Rhodesian and guerilla forces was starting (mostly) under regular army supervision with light assistance from the British Army. Before leaving Zimbabwe for South Africa in 1981, Fabian was Officer Commanding C Company 3RAR as a Lieutenant. 3RAR was then rebadged as 33 Infantry Battalion under the Zimbabwe National Army. Growing up in Rhodesia, being surrounded and having personal experience of the Bush War and becoming part of the military left Fabian with a lifelong interest in all aspects of military history. Fabian is a member of the Military History Society of NSW.

**LECTURE TIME AND VENUE: 10:30AM Saturday 5 August 2023 at The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Hyde Park South, corner Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Admission is free of charge but a donation would be appreciated. For information call 0419 698 783 or email: [president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au](mailto:president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au)**