

OBITUARY.

John Brooks Whaley (21/11/1939 -- 13/1/2011)

John died on 13th January, 2011 of Hepatitis, initially thought to be Malaria, contracted on a fishing trip in Mocambique. He was a very fit 71, and it all happened very suddenly. – A great shock for his family and friends.

Before going to College in 1953, he attended R.E.P.S. near Bulawayo, where he was headboy.

John was in Upper where he fagged for the late Brian Bostock, who was Chairman of the Harare O.A. Branch. He was a prefect and won colours for Cricket and Boxing and was captain of Boxing. One of his peers claims that he would have had Rugby colours were it not for the fact that he broke his leg.

After College, John attended the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester, where he obtained a Diploma in Agriculture. Before returning to Zimbabwe he worked briefly for Massey Ferguson and then went to work on the family farm in the Macheke/Virginia area.

John and his wife, Pammy, nee Rose, had been married for 44 years when he died. Pammy recalls their meeting and their courtship in the beautiful eulogy that she wrote:

We met and married very quickly for when John made up his mind, his course was straight and he never faltered. A whirlwind courtship and we started our lives together .

John was a successful farmer and at the end had acquired sufficient land for both his sons, Douglas and Phillip and his son-in-law, Simon, married to Leigh, their daughter, to farm on, though Simon elected not to farm.

In conclusion, a few lines from Pammy's eulogy:

To me he was the epitome of a good Christian – he never spoke ill of anyone, in his eyes there was good in all. ... He was a Giver, not a Taker.

Eulogy by Pam Whaley:

To the world he was John Whaley, superb farmer, great sportsman, a good conservationist, excellent father & provider. But to me he was the “love of my life” - we loved, we laughed, we fought, we walked the earthly path, always together, always united hand in hand.

We had 44 years together & not one day did pass without communication in some form and another. He gave me the best... the best love, so unconditional, the best children (who have all have his wonderful qualities) and I know that they will miss him so terribly – for he was always there for all of us.

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We met and married very quickly for when John made up his mind, his course was straight and he never faltered. A whirlwind courtship and we started our lives together....Now God saw fit 44 years later to take him from his loving family to his heavenly home. I still ask God why but he does not have an answer for me. Our family's need for him was greater than god's need and that question goes unanswered.

We spoke recently that 2011 was going to be our year of going fishing, which we loved, and doing all that we loved best, visiting children & grandchildren, before we get too dodderly. .. Sadly not to be. He has gone fishing elsewhere without me...and believe me, that is a first in our lives.

A wonderful farmer, he acquired more farms so that he could give to his sons and son-in-law the soil and life that he was so passionate about. Everything he did was for us or his community and he got enormous pride out of his children and grandchildren. Whatever any of us did, sell a property, grow a crop, buy a business, excel at sport or anything... especially reaping more grandchildren! His love, support and praise was so generous

He was such a warrior, always overcame adversity. During the war when our home, farms and livelihood were destroyed, the only clothes he stood up in was his camouflage but his faith in the land and his family saw him build a new Empire, bigger and better, always with an eye on the future for his children, who inherited this love of the land. His joy when Doug & Phillip wanted to farm, fulfilled all his dreams and hopes for the future of new generations. And when Leigh married Simon there was room for his "city son" to farm as well. And when that was not to be, he still took great pride in whatever Simon achieved and he got such joy out of his third son ... especially on the golf course!

Today we, the family and friends, say goodbye to an incredible Zimbabwean gentleman, sportsman, farmer, father and husband.

For 44 years we travelled hand in hand down the road of love, human life and sadness, but always together. On Thursday 13th January, we came to a fork in the road and we stopped and rested awhile whilst he caught his breath and spoke of his great love for me and his children and his grandchildren.... He squeezed my hand and whilst his beautiful daughter sang to him a childhood song "On Elkeccmoorbatat", he hummed with her. And he took the left road and I had to take the right. His journey is one I don't know but departed family and old friends will walk with him the rest of the way to God's Kingdom.

I travel without my heart, as I gave him that on his final journey. Each morning and evening his enormous spirit will be with me in our quiet times, This is my tribute to the most precious person I had the privilege of loving and sharing my life with. Our love will continue into eternity and till we are united once more.

As he lay dying he talked of our wedding day, our children and opened his big green eyes and said "Bo you have been the love of my life, I will always, always love you, into eternity"

When the Eagle soars above this land
He carries the heart of a gentle man

John Whaley was the Eagle who dared to fly
No challenge ignored, but taken high!

He flew with the wind, rain and sun,
Listening to the beat of life's challenging drum

His wing span wide and encompassing all
Every day, my beloved children, we will heed his call

We will see him in every morning light
And in the evening his star will shine so bright

He fought to the end to be with us all
But my beautiful Eagle from the sky did fall

And closed his eyes one last time
Remember forever he will be yours and mine,

Our love for him will follow on
Until our days on earth are done