
AUTHOR MEDIA KIT

Author Biography

Passions and Inspirations:

“To nurture a love of creation in the next generation through a true story of wildlife rescue.”



My name is Jane, but you can call me Amai Palmer (Amai is “mother” in Shona) This is what my grandchildren call me. I am originally from Zimbabwe, now living in Australia, a “Zozi” as we term it. My father was heavily involved in Operation Noah; a rescue mission of over 6000 animals back in the late 1950s. It’s an important story that I am concerned will be lost, and I can’t wait to share more about it with you. I am passionate about passing on the stories of animal conservation and Zimbabwean history to the next generation.

I was born to parents Frank and Jean Junor while living in Kyle Game Reserve, Rhodesia, Africa. Orphaned and injured animals were part of the family. At seven I moved with my family to Lake Kariba, situated on the Zambezi River. For Dad (Frank), this was returning to the place where he had been part of an enormous animal rescue operation. My family spent weekends in the bush catching butterflies and collecting rocks. The butterfly collection was eventually displayed in a university and the rocks were turned into jewellery.

Many years later I moved to Queensland. I live with my family, including a growing number of delightful grandchildren. I love to tell stories, especially about animals and Zimbabwe. My home is on the edge of the Great Dividing Range overlooking the Lockyer Valley, surrounded by wallabies, echidnas, and the occasional koala.

Life magazine June 29, 1959

“A HUGE AFRICAN WILDLIFE RESCUE: GALLANT MEN IN NOAH’S JOB”

“What was happening along the Zambezi River in Southern Rhodesia last week could be matched only by going back in biblical antiquity, to the time when the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth” and Noah was herding all the animals into his ark. This time the flood was the work of man, and the Noahs were self-appointed – game rangers trying to rescue thousands of wild animals doomed to drown in a dammed-up lake. In the hot swampy country, thickly populated by all manner of beasts from aardvarks to warthogs, the rescuers toiled, forgetting the comfort, and often risking their lives in their huge humane task.”

The book:



“The Great Animal Rescue: Operation Noah” is about saving wildlife in the Zambezi Valley, Africa when a great concrete dam was built causing extensive flooding. It tells of a team of men, both black and white, who united over a passion to save animals.

Imagine a herd of elephants who find they can no longer travel their ancient path because a huge body of water has appeared blocking their way.

Frank, a scientist, receives an invitation to join an animal rescue operation that will save African wildlife from the rising waters that could drown them.

No animal is excluded from the rescue, from the tiny bush baby to the majestic sable, and rarely seen, aardvark; from Frank’s specialty—the snake—to the angry buffalo.

The team develops different strategies suited to each species and the challenging rescue of rhinos takes the operation to another level. All the hardships fail to deter the team from their quest to preserve wildlife. The example of the team’s courage, grit, and determination for a cause they believed in, cannot help but inspire young people who read it.

Target Audience

- ✚ *9 to 12-year-olds*, particularly those who like facts and are not yet hooked on fiction. Although, as mentioned in an endorsement, it will appeal to a wider audience.
- ✚ *Wildlife lovers* - those who enjoy reading about the conservation of wildlife.
- ✚ *Zimbabwean history followers* – those people who are keen to preserve the stories of Zimbabwe and animal conservation.

Endorsements

Georgia Jonsson (11 years old)

“Very good book! I love all the facts I learned a lot from it. It’s full of character and has lots of great meaning. I like how it gives the elephant’s perspective as it gives more feeling and thought. I enjoyed learning about all the animals when you describe what they do. I like how Crackers comes into the story. It is beautifully written.”

Brenda Rudolf (Teacher and editor)

“This beautiful book is unique. It should make its way onto the shelves of every Rhodesian, Zimbabwean, and wildlife lover who has ever - or never - heard of “Operation Noah”. Though written for older children, I assure you any adult will find it hard to put down!”

“It was an exciting event in history, and a special part of the life of the author and her family, particularly her father who was part of Noah. His journals have enabled the close encounters of the Noah team to come alive for us all these years later, with its fast-moving narrative, fascinating insights into the behaviour of the animals, and interspersed throughout with magnificent illustrations and photos. One of a kind!”

Jean Caulton (International bird tours owner)

“Oh my, Jane. This book is quite delightful and beautifully presented. I couldn't put it down! I salute you. What an amazing legacy you have produced for future generations and how wonderfully you have honoured the memory of your fantastic father and our friend.”

Stacy Nottle (Author)

“Amai Palmer’s beautiful retelling of an event as important as Operation Noah leaves a legacy not only for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren but for all of us no matter where we live. Her deep nostalgia for and connection to the ecosystems and wildlife of the Zambezi are evident on every page of this skilfully crafted and stunning book. It is the best book I’ve read this year and one I will treasure for years to come.”

Book Benefits

- ✚ Young people will become fascinated by our wildlife and consequently become motivated to do their part to conserve it.
- ✚ People will be encouraged to develop grit, perseverance, and self-sacrifice for a cause greater than themselves.
- ✚ An inspiring piece of history will be shared.
- ✚ Families will tell stories of their bush experiences.
- ✚ An awareness of the natural beauty all about us will grow.
- ✚ Becoming more aware of the creator of all this beauty, variety, and astounding interdependence in the natural world.

Book Excerpts

“Mai Guru, the oldest matriarch, had led her herd for many years along the ancient path. She knew, like her ancestors before, how important it was for the herd to keep moving. Elephants eat about 150 kilograms of grass and leaves each day. They followed the ancient route that had been etched like Google Maps, into their minds.”

“What a shock it was to Mai Guru, as she approached the water’s edge. Where there once was a steady river bound within its banks, there was now a vast sheet of water! There were islands where there used to be hilltops, and bushes where there used to be groves of trees!”

I received a telegram:

ATTN: Frank Junor

“Your scientific research skills are needed - stop - Please join the animal rescue team – Operation Noah – stop - Meet in Kariba – stop - Archie Fraser.”

“We lay in ambush. We had no idea what would come at us and whether the nets would hold. We had to pick our spots carefully to avoid the biting red ants. When the first clangs were heard in the distance, we readied ourselves to leap out from our hiding places. The sounds grew louder. Suddenly, they were joined by the snapping of bushes and the thundering of hooves.

The first to spring into the nets were the graceful impala antelope, their white tails flashing as they hit the nets mid-leap. We sprang from our hiding places and pulled the nets over them. Some men held the animals to the ground while others quickly tied their front and back legs together using the stocking ropes. Once the animals’ legs were secured in a way that would prevent them from harming themselves, each one was lifted onto the shoulders of a man. He ensured that he kept the animal’s head up so it could breathe properly.”



Interview Questions

What are you passionate about?

What was the catalyst to write this book?

What inspired you to call it “The Great Animal Rescue: Operation Noah”?

What material did you resource in the writing of the book?

Why do you think it is important for us to connect with our natural world?

What would you want the reader to take away from this book?

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Amai Palmer