

## The Time Was Right – So I did it!

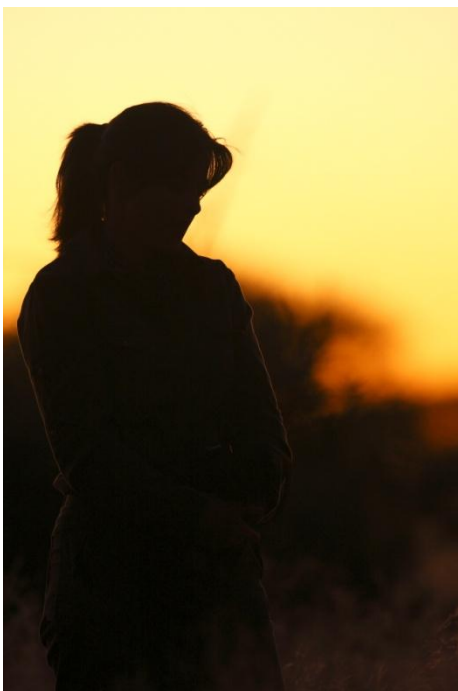
By Marina Lamprecht

*I spent the morning out in the veldt with Jofie. We stalked a herd of Hartebeest – walking briskly, as well as crawling, crouching and barely breathing as we snuck up on them over a distance of about 3km - the only indication that time was passing was the ever-increasing temperature of the wind. The ground was so dry that our feet were kicking up mini dust devils. **Private, intense camaraderie with my son - very little beats that.***



*We had spent time at the shooting range just after sunrise, and Jofie had pointed out some magnificent trophy bulls as well as had me take aim on the shooting sticks a few times during the course of the morning, but I had hesitated. My breathing was erratic and I struggled to steady the scope. I simply was not willing to take a shot that I was not completely comfortable with. Jofie was patient with me.*

*He had urged me to walk in his footsteps and stay closely behind him during the stalks. Luckily our legs are equally long and our level of fitness pretty similar, so I kept up with his huge, confident strides without a problem. Sticking behind him proved to be a bit more of a challenge – I had the urge to step out of line from time to time – Jofie was not happy! I found it impossible to see over or around his broad shoulders, so ended up staring at his Russell boot clad feet!*



*I had taught this young man to walk and talk, as well as played an active and proud role in moulding him into the dignified, charming and successful young gentleman that he has become – and now he was my mentor here on our beautiful lands in the Camel Thorn Kalahari.*

*And so, I reflected on how this specific scenario had come about.*

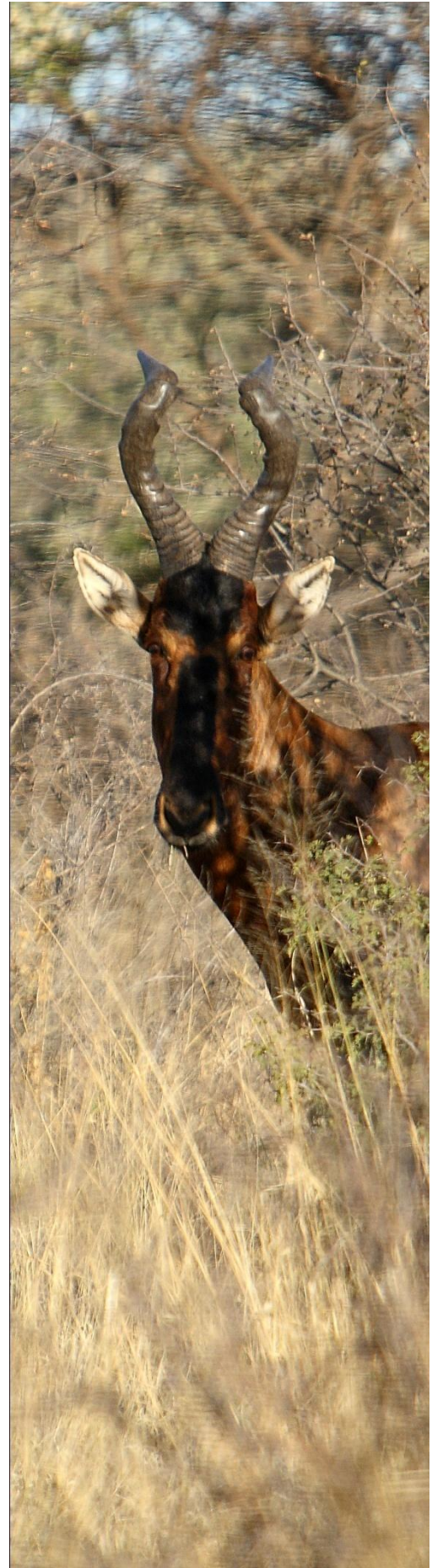
*There are **Professional Hunters**, and then there are **Hunting Professionals** – both play an equally important role in protecting the right to hunt locally, as well as promoting Africa as a hunting*

*destination internationally. My husband and son are the former, and I the latter.*

*Having been involved in the Namibian trophy hunting industry since 1980, I have been immersed in every level of our business – setting up camps, marketing, attending shows, administration, running of lodges, training of staff, serving on a number of committees of our hunting association, NAPHA, researching and writing articles about various aspects of hunting in Namibia as well as presenting seminars both locally and internationally on the subject – I have even accompanied Joof on hunts on 3 continents, BUT – I had never actually hunted myself..*

*In 1985 Joof had bought me a magnificent 6,5 x 54 all original full stock Mannlicher Schoenauer with double set triggers, fitted with EAW scope claw mounts and a Swarovski 4 x 32 scope. A sweet shooting, perfectly balance little work of art. It even has a steel butt plate with a hidden lid which, when opened, reveals a small brass canister of cleaning oil and a ramrod neatly concealed in the stock. Joof had visions of me becoming a huntress of note. I, on the other hand, was so involved in raising our three children as well as establishing our trophy hunting business, assisting at our weapon dealership in Windhoek – The Gun Shop - and developing our beautiful Kalahari lands that there was little time for anything else. Finding time to nurture a sport such as trophy hunting, which tends to become an all- encompassing passion, was simply not possible.*

*Joof had recently introduced our new son-in-law, Chris, to the magic of ethical, fair-chase trophy hunting, and the enthusiasm with which he returned to camp awoke a curiosity in me. I became a woman on a mission! Joof was not to keen to take me to the range and then out into*



the field, admitting that he thought that the situation might well become rather 'volatile'... Jofie did not hesitate, and so we set out on our mother and son adventure.

That first morning of stalking did not turn out too well. Apart from reveling in the thrill of the chase as well as one another's company, we returned home empty handed. The Hartebeest which we had tracked were spooked when I had (very stupidly) switched on my camera. That electronic 'zing' seemed as loud as a gun shot out there on the savannah. Jofie was not amused.



To lighten the mood I had to remind him of one of his favourite sayings: **'everyday is a hunting day, but not every day is a shooting day.'**

We left camp again at sunrise the following morning. After one relatively long stalk, during which Jofie pointed out herds of Blue Wildebeest, Oryx, Hartebeest as well as a few Warthog, we returned to the truck as he had not spotted anything of suitable age and trophy quality. A few kilometres further down the bush road Johnny, Joof's tracker aka 'Zeiss Eyes', spotted a herd of Hartebeest in the distance. Jofie and I set off on foot. After a brisk walk of about 1 km, Jofie motioned me to stop and stay behind him while he glassed the plain ahead of us. He put up the shooting sticks and handed me my rifle. 'Do you see the Hartebeest bull standing broadside?' he asked. 'Aim, hold your breath, and fire!' It felt right, so I did!



What a magnificent old bull! I felt calmly elated – a contradiction. My (almost) perfectly placed shot had dropped him in his tracks. I stroked the back of this beautiful creature and spent a quiet moment in gratitude. **During special alone times Joof had often told me that the savannahs of Africa were his place of worship. Now I understood.**

The time was right for me to begin hunting - I enjoyed everything about the adventure – the anticipation, the thrill of the stalks, the beauty of the surroundings as well as the success of the hunt. I am proud of my beautiful Hartebeest trophy, and he shall have pride of place in our hunting lodge – a reminder of a very special time spent in the veldt with my son.



In the spirit of friendly yet competitive camaraderie, I say to Joof and Jofie: 'boys, you have awoken the beast, and – the game is on...'

## 6.5×54mm Mannlicher-Schönauer

Researched by Jofie Lamprecht

Walter “Karamojo” Bell (1881-1951) has become a legend among elephant hunters due to his great success in the ivory trade during the golden age of hunting in East Africa. He is known as “Karamojo” Bell because of his safaris through this remote wilderness area in North Eastern Uganda. He is famous for perfecting the brain shot on elephants, dissecting their skulls and making a careful study of the anatomy of the skull so he could predict paths of bullet travel from a shot at any angle in order to reach the brain. Using mostly 6.5mm and 7 mm caliber rifles, he was an advocate of shot placement over big bore power for killing efficiently. He wrote about being able to drop an elephant with a light caliber rifle if he shot it in the same place that he would have shot it with a heavy rifle. Bell perfected his shot to the degree that he mastered it from all positions, including diagonally from the back – which has since been since referred as “BELL SHOT”.



Bell recorded all of his kills and shots fired. It was a business to him, not pleasure, and he needed to record expenditures...

Bell, who shot more than 1,500 elephants in the period 1895-1930, had a very high regard for the 6.5 mm Mannlicher-Schönauer, using it for approximately 300 of these kills with the long 159 grain FMJ bullets. He only set it aside when he was unable to acquire dependable ammunition for it, and turned to a .275 Rigby Mauser magazine rifle instead. Bell's legendary name has remained closely linked with the 7 mm Mauser, but the 6.5 Mannlicher-Schönauer was his first preference.

The Mannlicher-Schönauer (sometimes Anglicized as "Mannlicher Schoenauer") is a type of rotary magazine bolt action rifle produced by Steyr-Mannlicher.

The 6.5×54mm Mannlicher-Schönauer was manufactured in Austria and has a bullet diameter of .264 in (6.7 mm). Only 350 of these beautiful rifles were ever built, with Monte Carlo style stock, double set triggers, “butter knife” bolt handle, rotary magazine, and full length stock and muzzle band. A 159 grain Norma bullet travels at 2170 ft/s. 6.5 mm bullets are typically known for their high ballistic

*coefficients and sectional density, which gives them great stability in flight, resistance to wind deflection, and excellent penetration.*

*The 6.5 × 54 mm was referred to by the writer Ernest Hemingway as the .256 Mannlicher. Though it never replaced his favorite 30-06 Springfield, he did speak highly of it as a lion cartridge, and it was the favorite of his African guide and professional hunter Phillip Percival.*

*A civilian version of the rifle was introduced in 1903, proved very popular with deer and big game hunters worldwide. In the UK, along with the 7×57mm Mauser, the 6.5×54 Mannlicher-Schönauer probably accounted for more red deer during the 20th century than all other rifle cartridges put together. British sportsmen generally preferred a single-trigger mechanism, rather than the double set triggers popular in Europe. The 6.5×54 cartridge fell into disfavor with British deer-stalkers after the passage of the 1963 Deer Act because the bullet's muzzle velocity failed to reach the legally required minimum when fired from typically short, carbine-type MS barrels. Although no longer in production, the rifle remains popular due to its aesthetic qualities, compactness, the smoothness of its action and its precision and quality of manufacture. The rifle is also known for its low recoil when chambered for the original 6.5×54 cartridge.*

*Ironically, Steyr-Mannlicher currently manufactures a rifle known as the "Classic Mannlicher", which it bills on its website as "a direct descendant of the world famous Mannlicher-Schönauer ". In fact, this rifle is available in almost every modern caliber except the original 6.5 × 54mm cartridge. Although the modern "Classic" Steyr-Mannlicher rifles still incorporate some original features, like the butter-knife bolt handle, the distinctive actions and rotary magazines of the original Mannlicher-Schönauer rifles are no longer used.*

*High production costs and the difficulty of fitting telescopic sights to the rifle's split receivers eventually resulted in a decision to terminate production in 1972.*

