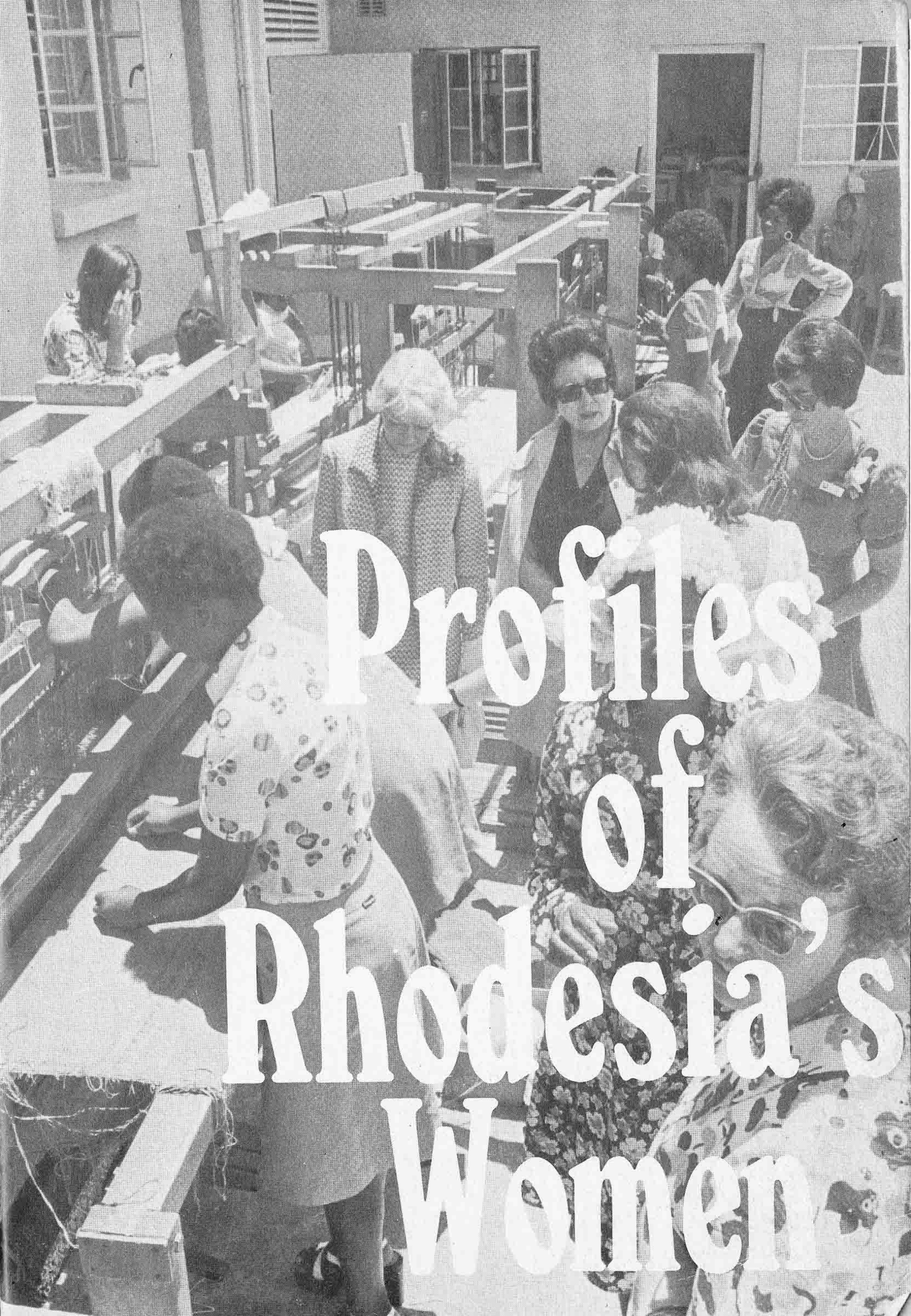


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National Federation of Business and Professional Women of Rhodesia

Profiles of Rhodesia's Women



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The grateful thanks of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women of Rhodesia are extended to our sponsors without whose assistance this book would not have seen the light of day.

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Published by The National Federation of Business and Professional Women of Rhodesia to commemorate International Woman's Year 1975 in association with Sarum Imprint (Pvt) Ltd, P.O. Box 374, Salisbury.

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Book design by Di Deudney.

*ISBN 0 7974 0167 9 hardback
ISBN 0 7974 0169 5 paperback*

Printed by Art Printopac



FOREWORD

Our population may be small but we have always had an exceptionally large number of outstanding women. This book provides a fascinating account of some of the contemporary greats among Rhodesian women. That the list is by no means complete will be obvious to many, but this does not detract from our pleasure, our pride, our awe in the achievements of those who have been included here.

Rhodesia is surely remarkable for the very large number of charitable organisations so ably run, in the main, by women. No doubt this will continue, but, we hope, with greater recognition by Rhodesians as a whole.

One of the most significant features of this publication is the large number of African women who are now able and willing to play their part in the social, economic, spiritual and cultural development of the community. This can only lead to greater happiness for all Rhodesians.

The National Federation of Business and Professional Women is to be congratulated for bringing these women and organisations to the attention of the general public. The happiness and wellbeing of all Rhodesians have been largely dependent upon the energy, devotion and dedication of women. With so much talent, sung and unsung and perhaps, as yet, untapped, Rhodesia can only look forward to the brightest of futures.

Janet Smith

INTRODUCTION

Women in Rhodesia have played a significant part in the development of the country from the very beginning when the intrepid wives of pioneers suffered immeasurable hardships in order to make homes for their menfolk and their children in a wild, and often hostile, land. Mrs. Joy McLean whose book "The Guardians" has only recently been published, told the Umtali BPW Club that the early Commissioners' wives all had spirit, almost missionary zeal, and set a high standard of living even if it were in primitive surroundings, and they were, in fact, representative of most women of that era.

That heritage, and the inspiration of the early nurses and teachers, still spurs many women of today to devote countless hours in the service of others and to strive equally with their male counterparts to make our beloved Rhodesia the finest country in the world for all its inhabitants.

But because the work of women is often unspectacular, it goes unhonoured and unsung. So when the National Federation of Business and Professional Women of Rhodesia was considering how best to commemorate INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR 1975, it was decided to compile a book featuring women's efforts and achievements towards the social and economic development of Rhodesia.

Many books have been written about the more outstanding pioneer women and in 1953 to celebrate the Rhodes Centenary, the National Council of Women published "Women of Central Africa" which featured some of the women who had made their mark in the first half of the 20th Century as well as describing the aims and activities of many of the women's organisations in Rhodesia.

This present volume is intended to bring up to date the narratives of organisations within which women work, and to highlight some of the prominent women in all walks of life of the last three decades.

It would be impossible to include every woman who deserves mention and readers are asked to take it as read that the women who have been named are but typical of many others. There are also the women who have willingly sunk their own identity to more fully support their husbands in their contributions to national progress and prosperity. Such women equally deserve our praise and gratitude.

It may be appropriate here to mention another aspect in which Rhodesian women can take pride. During a visit to this country when she met a wide cross-section of Rhodesian women, Mrs. Elsie de Rivero Haedo, an Argentinian writer, historian, playwright and lecturer, commented "Rhodesian women would appear not only to

have preserved their femininity but also to have managed to preserve the chivalry of their menfolk”.

It would have been impossible to have embarked upon this publication without the support of other organisations and deep gratitude is expressed to all those associations which have contributed articles about their history and functions and about the prominent women in their midst. Once again these are but a handful of the many worthy societies operating in our vibrant country.

I am also grateful to the many individuals who have given us moral support and have supplied us with information. In our own Federation I would like to mention the names of Mrs. Pat Cooper, Mrs. Marjorie Nupen and Miss Christine Jackson. And, of course, I thank all our clubs, particularly those who held fund-raising projects.

Last, but by no means least, I want to thank our generous sponsors. Without their support and the valuable assistance of Barclays Bank International Limited, this book could never have been published.

In INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR 1975 the theme of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women was — “Looking towards the 21st Century — the full recognition of women as people”. May this publication bring recognition of what our Rhodesian women have done, are doing, and what is more important, what they are capable of doing in addition to their traditional roles of mothers and homemakers. May the younger women of today also be inspired by their example and come forward in greater numbers to accept responsibility in the running of Rhodesia both at local and national level.

*JONAH WOODS,
NATIONAL PRESIDENT,
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF BUSINESS
AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN OF RHODESIA.
31st OCTOBER, 1975.*