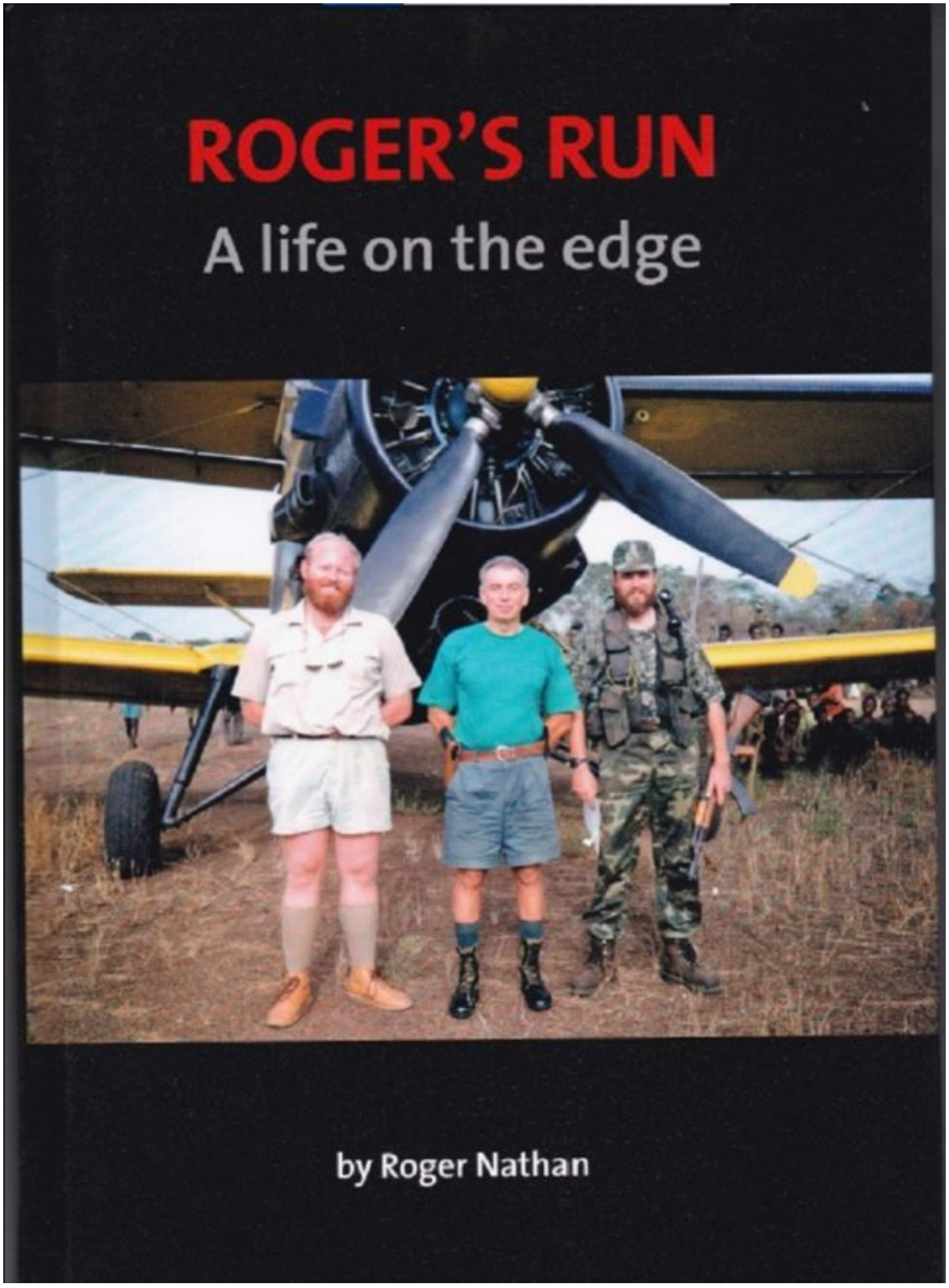
For Your Bookshelf – Roger’s Run – a life on the edge

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ROGER'S RUN
A life on the edge
by Roger Nathan

“Roger’s Run – a life on the edge”

Reviewed by Kieron Fennelly

Author: Roger Nathan

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Nathan was a national standard racing driver and racing car builder, a well-known figure in the 1960s who left the sport before he was even 30. Driven by a thirst for adventure and making full use of his pilot’s licence, by 1976 he found himself rescuing people from war-torn Beirut where landing successfully on the damaged, short runway at Jounieh airport was little short of virtuosity.

A later venture into diamonds led him to ownership of a diamond mine in Sierra Leone, a country where he lived for several years. After the implosion of that enterprise, he returned to the UK, but felt restless and missed Sierra Leone. In another pure boys’ own adventure, he describes how he seized the opportunity to run an airline inside the former British colony where internal transport was hampered by poor roads. Then civil war broke out and in scenes that could have come straight from *The Wild Geese*, Nathan found himself flying mercenaries.

It is a tremendous yarn, at times quite fascinating as the author describes from example how after the fall of the Soviet Union, he went to purchase second hand Antonov AN2s in Russia and Belarus and how in Sierra Leone he faced an armed confrontation when a bunch of criminals tried to purloin his aircraft.

Nathan writes engagingly and unselfconsciously. Not afraid to be self-critical either, he acknowledges that his irrepressible spirit of adventure cost him not only large amounts of money when for instance his diamond business collapsed, but also his first marriage and to some extent his second.

Verdict

In 2006, the author’s first book about his decade-long motor sport career was widely praised, but his second effort, a life on the Edge is even better, as compelling a piece of non-fiction as I have read in a long time.