

European School, Kitale. Designed by Government Architect, P.W.D.

*Photo: H. O. Weller.*



Merry Christmas



**Here's wishing all Kitaleites a wonderful Christmas and an excellent New Year, AND to those going to the Reunion, travel safely and look forward to seeing you all!**

Hello Kitaleites

As 2017 comes to a close, it is a good time to reflect on what has happened during the year and to look forward to what is to come in 2018.

I was very fortunate to travel to Kenya in February with my sister and do a fantastic safari through Gamewatchers Safaris, going to Nairobi National Park, Amboseli, Masai Mara and Ol Pejeta where we saw a lot of game and were treated like royalty.

I received so many contributions during the first half of the year that I decided to do a mid-year edition of the newsletter, it will be up to you as to whether I do a mid-year edition again next year so please keep the contributions coming in. Thank you very much for all those who have contributed.

I arranged a very informal lunch near Cheltenham in September for people in the area, more on that below.

In October Lesley and I went to Copenhagen to meet up with a friend from South Africa, while we were there we met up with **Lisbeth (Jensen) Mandel** who treated us to a fantastic Danish lunch in

her home. Thank you very much Lisbeth.

The arrangements for the Kitale School reunion at the beginning of February 2018 at Vipingo Ridge are well under way, at this stage we are looking at having ±45 attending. There are also plans to go to Kitale but logistics are proving to be quite challenging. **Anyone who may be interested in joining us, please do not hesitate to contact me so that I can add your name to the list.** Thanks very much to **Horace Horsey** for all the assistance that he has given me to get this reunion up and running.

Talking of reunions, what are your thoughts about where and when the next one should, should we do another UK and where would you like it to be?

I am in confirmed e-mail contact with some 350 Kitaleites but there are still many out there who I have not been able to connect with so this is where *I need your help to see if we can track them down or let me know if they are no longer with us:*

SURNAME	Christian / married+ partner	SURNAME	Christian / married+ partner	SURNAME	Christian / married+ partner	SURNAME	Christian / married+ partner
AMIN	Niel	EVANS	Kathleen	LESSER	Jean	ROBERTS	Tessa
BAILEY	Ian & Kate	FARMER	Sue	LESSER	Veronica ENNES	ROBINSON	Pam
BARBERTON	Drusilla	FELL	Mike	LITTLEHALES	Betty	ROFFEY	Sue
BARBERTON	Ian	FLEMING	David	LLOYD	Andy	ROGERS	Karin
BARRETT	Anne	FORRESTER	David	LOW	Alistair	ROSA	John ?
BARTEMAN	Caroline	FORRESTER	Derek	LOW	John	SCROGGIE	Grant
BATTON	Wendy	FORRESTER	Michael	MOORE	C	SCROGGIE	Shirley
BAYLES	Brian	FORRESTER	Raymond	MOORE	Gaye	STEVENSON	R
BLACKMAN	John	GAY-FRENCH	Pat	MORGAN	Janet	STEWART	Elizabeth
BUCHOLZ	Mette	GLADMAN	Gary	NIEMEYER	Hermann	STEYAN	Hendrik
CAMERON	Nicole	GRANDCOURT	S	OWEN	John	SWAN	AM
CHAMBERS	Sarah	HACKER	Roger	PEEL	Elizabeth	SYMONS	Roger
CLARKE	Andrew	HAMPSON	Davina	PELISSIER	Francesca	THATCHER	Clive
COULTHARD	Catherine	HARRISON	Peter	PELISSIER	Julian	VALPY	Evelyn
CROCAMP	Sonnie	HARRISON	Stephen	PLEADEN	Madge	van der WESTHUISEN	Elsie
DAVIES	Juliet	HERBERT	Anne	POHIL	Fred	van RENSBURG	Hilda
DAVISON	John	HILL	Albert	RAYMER	Deirdre	van RENSBURG	Suzannah
DELORIE	R	HUFFORD	Susan	RAYNOR	R	WHITE	Vanessa
DYCE	Sandra	KIDNER	Sandra	RICHTER	Barbara TERNEY	WHITIKER	Rosemary
EDDY	Brian	LANE	Paul	ROBERTS	Judy	WOODLEY	Eddie
						YOUNG	Mark

Any help with these will be greatly appreciated

The mails to the following e-mail addresses have bounced, so if anyone can please let me have the updated addresses so that I can update my records:

SURNAME	Christian / married+ partner	Country	E-Mail Address
BERRIDGE	Sally	AUSTRALIA	<a href="mailto:sallyb@cybermac.com.au">sallyb@cybermac.com.au</a>
BRENDON	Mary	SOUTH AFRICA	<a href="mailto:diana@lourensford.co.za">diana@lourensford.co.za</a>
BUTLER	Judith WHITAKER	SOUTH AFRICA	<a href="mailto:judwhit@mweb.co.za">judwhit@mweb.co.za</a>
DAVEY	Colin	SOUTH AFRICA	<a href="mailto:mariane.VanDerWesthuizen@transnet.net">mariane.VanDerWesthuizen@transnet.net</a>
DRAKES	Doreen (Staff) and David	AUSTRALIA	<a href="mailto:david3@webace.com.au">david3@webace.com.au</a>
GREAVES	Christopher & Gill	CANADA	<a href="mailto:cgreaves@shaw.ca">cgreaves@shaw.ca</a>
HALAHAN	Anthony (Tony)	LUXEMBOURG	<a href="mailto:thalahan@lu.packardbell.org">thalahan@lu.packardbell.org</a>
HENN	Francis & Janet	SWAZILAND	<a href="mailto:TDP@iafrica.sz">TDP@iafrica.sz</a>
KEESE	Kay MACPHERSON	SOUTH AFRICA	<a href="mailto:kay@alanhudson.co.za">kay@alanhudson.co.za</a>
KING	Frank [Staff]	AUSTRALIA	<a href="mailto:frankking@powerup.com.au">frankking@powerup.com.au</a>
MATTHEWS	Richard and Jane	AUSTRALIA	<a href="mailto:rma36547@inet.net.au">rma36547@inet.net.au</a>
O'NEILL	Roseleen MACDONALD	UNITED KINGDOM	<a href="mailto:Anita_Macdonald@btchww.com">Anita_Macdonald@btchww.com</a>
PICKFORD	Beryl FLEMMER and Dale	NEW ZEALAND	<a href="mailto:gartranume@xtra.co.nz">gartranume@xtra.co.nz</a>

I would like to take this opportunity to thank **Bridget** for all the assistance that she has given me over the last couple of years since she passed on the Kitale School alumni to me, her knowledge of the alumni is far greater than mine will ever be but it has certainly kept me very occupied! Thank you very much Bridget.

Finally, please can you let me know whether you are happy with the format that I'm using, the content I'm putting in, what you want me to put in, what you don't want me to put in, your comments will be appreciated.

I copy and paste content as it is sent to me, with just a few bits of tidying up where needed.

Thanks  
Aiden

## **OBITUARY**

### **Tricia (Matthews) Pratt**

Thank you for passing this on to us Aiden. The Matthews were our close neighbours and we were so sad to hear that Pat had passed away. Please give our sincere condolences to family and friends if you are in contact. As youngsters, we spent many happy hours playing tennis or bowls or just having fun at the Matthews' home. It was lovely to see a photo of the house we knew so well and visited so often. Our respective parents (Jake and Alice and Jim and Eve) were great friends.

Alison (Jacobs)McLean

Very sad, thank you for letting us know Aiden. She was always simply just Pat to us, smart; nice; one of those rare ones who never had any strife with the other girls. Never forgotten Pat, everyone we meet along the way in some way makes us who we are. It was lovely having you as a part of my life.

Pat (Reville) Edwards

Thank you for this very sad news. Pat and I were best friends at Kitale school as we lived on the adjacent farm and Uncle Jimmy taught the two of us how to play tennis. I went on to play league for many years until we relocated to South Africa where Jenny Woods visited me and my late husband in Pretoria. Love the picture - what fond memories it brings back of tennis, croquet on the front lawn, breakfasts on the veranda as well as Eve's amazing ice cream.

How sad that we grow up and move away and lose touch with so many dear friends.

Condolences to the family.

Warm regards

Rosemary (Jacobs) Gray

Very sorry to hear this news and I will let Sal know as they were friends.

Love - Bid

Biddy (Lloyd) Hamill

### **Alastair Ulyate**

Alistair died in a Pretoria hospital on 8<sup>th</sup> November after suffering from Lymphatic cancer and we send condolences to his two sisters, Moira in Italy and Liz in Australia.

### **Sylvia Davidson**

Appreciate it if you could advise the alumni that my mother, Sylvia Davidson died last Wednesday 4th October at the Aga Khan hospital. She was hospitalised a week earlier with high blood pressure and acute back pain and steadily deteriorated from there. She was 90 years old and had been living on her own in Muthaiga Gardens, Nairobi.

All my siblings were able to get to Nairobi from various corners of the continent (Oliver from Arusha, Colin from Abuja, Nigeria and Jennifer from Solwezi, Zambia) before she passed on which was great.

I suspect that she was one of the oldest surviving Kitale school alumni.

### UK Kitale School Lunch – Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2017



Grant Daniels, xx, Aiden Doyle, Ralph Nicholson, Don and Polly (Patterson) Brooksbank  
Richard Northmore, xx, xx, Jane Cox Nicholson, Ann (Totty) Attwood, Wendy (Totty) Crewe, Bruce Totty

I organised an informal lunch in September for the Kitaleites who were able to join us near Cheltenham. On the morning Lesley and I left home in Bournemouth at 09h00 to get to the venue on time only to be caught up in an incident on the M3 which meant that we were pretty well stationary for 4 hours and we only arrived for the lunch at 15h00. By this time the kitchen was closed so we didn't even get our meal but a great time was had by all those present. My apologies, I didn't get all the names in the short time I was there!

Thanks very much to **Richard Northmore** for holding the fort for me while I was stuck in the traffic!



## **Margaret Wanyoni – Head Mistress, Kitale School**

Hi. We are doing well.

Will be ending our academic calendar on 29th Nov. We just received our primary national examination results where we produced the best candidate in Trans Nzoia county Trevour Ombaso. The boy is also among the top 100 countrywide.

The following are some of the developments in the school in the year 2017.

- 1) Opened the Administration block that was constructed in December 2016.
- 2) Completed the ground floor of a storeyed dormitory and opened it for use.

## **ACTIVITIES**

The learners participated in various activities where they excelled.

- 1) Elizabeth Swayi was elected the National deputy president of the Children's Government.
- 2) In a writing competition Emmanuel Indiazi participated and was best nationally and the organisers apart from the awards will pay his fees as long as he is in an institution of learning.
- 3) As a school we participated in Music, Gymnastics up to the National level while Drama went up to the regional.
- 4) The scouts will be participating at the National level in December.

In the course of the year the Ministry of Education recommended that the school has grown and needs to be separated for easier management. For this reason, the process has been completed and from January 2018 the primary will run on its own as the secondary too will be on its own. I will be handing over the primary to the Head Teacher Mr Hesbon Ngaira.

As the year comes to an end, may I wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy new year 2018.

Margaret Wanyoni

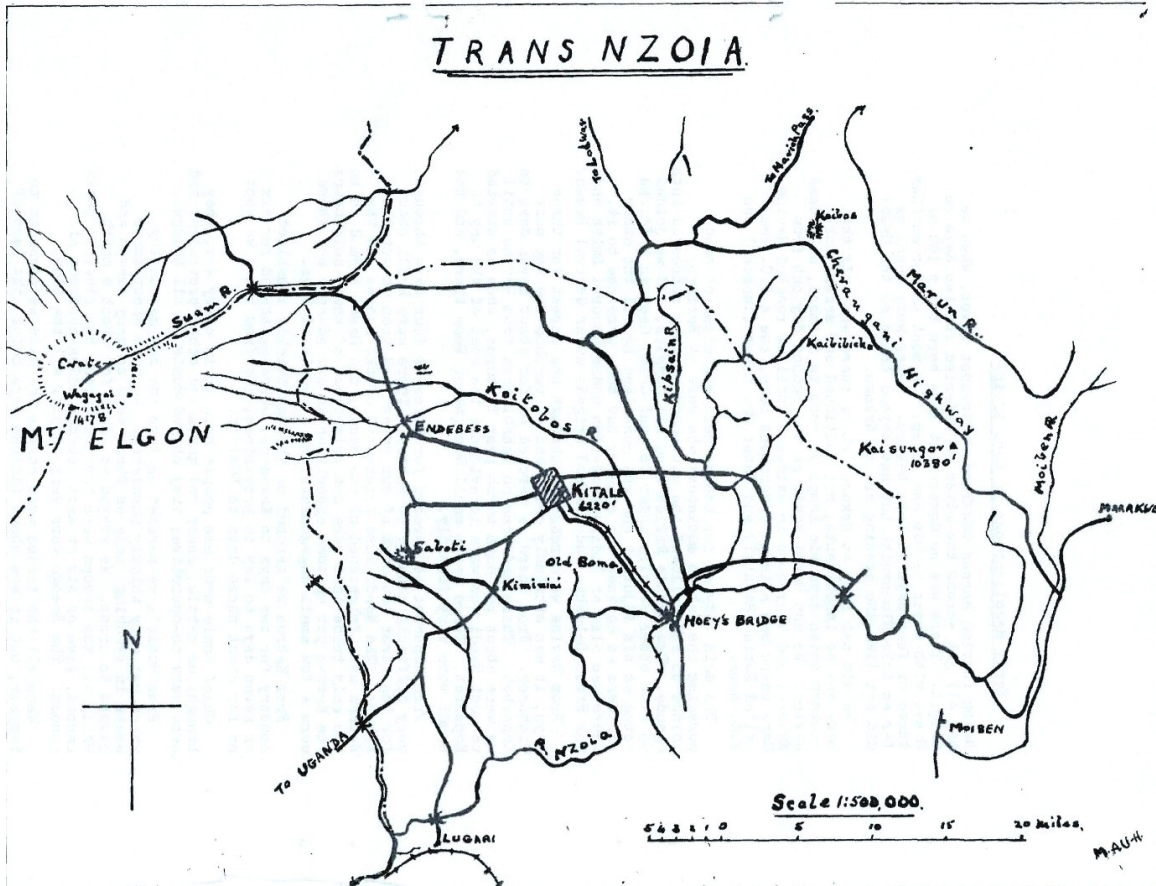
**Tony Sunde**

*Tony has sent through a very interesting document on the early days in Trans Nzoia. I have included the first couple of chapters below.*

*It is a large file (89 page 8 Mb pdf) which I am busy converting to a Word document which will hopefully be smaller. **Please let me know if you would like me to send you the complete pdf document, I know that not everyone's email will manage this large a file.***

*Thanks very much Tony.*

*Aiden*



### INTRODUCTION

The Trans Nzoia, an area of some 1,150 square miles, lies in the North West corner of Kenya. It is dominated in the West by Mount Elgon whose highest peak in Kenya is Wagagai, 14,178 feet. The Uganda border runs along the top of the Mountain and down the Suam gorge. The North side borders West Pokot (the former Suk Reserve) and the Cherengeni Hills with the famous "Flat Top" (Kaisungor, 10,380 ft.) form the Western edge, while the Nzoia River, running roughly South then West, divides it from the Uasin Gishu; the Southern boundary is the Kama Koiwe River. The average annual rainfall is 48 inches and the altitude of agricultural land varies from approximately 6,000 to 8,000 feet.

Kitale itself, 250 miles from Nairobi, is almost in the centre of the district which includes small trading centres such as Endebess and Kiminini and Hoey's Bridge which, although Julius Caesar would have described it as being in the "Cis-Nzoia part" is only 14 miles away and is to all intents and purposes, part of the Trans Nzoia.

Kitale (spelt Quitale in the old maps) was on the route of the early slave-traders as they took their long line of chained captives from Uganda to the Coast. Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen wrote in his book "Kenya Diary" that the land on which Kitale Club now stands was used as a resting-place on the journey, and in the drive where the cars park nowadays there is a circle of stones which he thought had a ring in the centre to which slaves were fastened during the night.

Mount Elgon, so called from the Ol Konye, an off-shoot; of the Masai

who inhabit the higher slopes, the largest base of any single mountain in the world, the diameter at this base is 80 miles, while the crater at its summit is 4 miles across. Though below the line of permanent snow, snow can sometimes be seen lying on the peaks and crater rim until 10 O'clock in the morning. It has plenty to offer in the way of interests: elephant, buffalo and leopard are common, birds, butterflies and flowers abound and it has an unsurpassable natural forest. There are good trout streams and exciting coves, which were used as shelters by the slave-traders. Thanks to the Moorland Roads which has been made up to 10,400 feet, it can be climbed in a day, but it still remains a formidable mountain for a climber who loses his way.

The Cherengeni hills are equally fascinating with even more varied scenery accessible from the road, which runs above the top of the ridge; they are famous too for being the habitat of the rare Bongo, and a nesting place for Lammergeyer.

Between these two mountains lie some of the best agriculture to be found in Kenya. Maize and cattle do excellently and on the slopes of Elgon and the fertile plains at its foot first-class wheat can be grown. Pyrethrum, coffee and tea are also grown at suitable altitudes and fruit is now being flown to overseas markets. All this has been achieved in a little over fifty years, and we feel that the history of the Trans Nzoia could begin in no better way than with the verbatim report of the late Abu Bakr, who first saw it in 1901 and whose descendants are still in business in Kitale. Although the first part of Abu Bakr's statement is not concerned with the Trans Nzoia, we reproduce it in full for the sheer interest of an eye-witness's account of East Africa which begins before the dawn of the twentieth century.

#### EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF EAST AFRICA

By ABU BAKR

(Grandfather of Jama Noor)

I, Abu Bakr, I was born in British Somaliland, but when I was a boy of about 14 I crossed to Aden and there taken into service as the personal boy to Captain Maddicks of the Uganda Rifles, as he was recruiting troops there. I went with him to Mombasa, where we stayed for a month or so he was training the askaris that he had recruited. This was in 1897.

We then embarked on the newly built railway and it took us four days with many derailments for us to reach Voi, where we camped. We then went on for one further day by rail to Tsavo, which was rail-head.

From there we formed a caravan of porters and marched for ten days to Kibwezi in the Ukamba country. There we halted about a fortnight to recuperate and be well fed after our herd safari with heavy loads and meagre rations. The Wakamba were extremely co-operative and brought us all sorts of provisions and neat, there had been few inhabitants between Tsavo and Kibwezi, and those that we had seen had kept their distance.

From Kibwezi it was a safari of 14 days to Machakos: we followed the line of railway construction for as far as Sultan Hamud, This bit of country was uninhabited except for the very large number of Indians that were working on the railway, but at Sultan Hamud we found Masai and Wakamba. From here we struck North, away from the

railway alignment, to Machakos where there was large Government Boma and here we stayed again for about three weeks to recuperate and lay in provisions.

From Machakos it was a five-day safari to the Nairobi River, the country was empty as far as Athi River, but there we met Masai again.

We camped to the West of the Nairobi River about where later the original race-course was made; there were, of course, no Europeans or town there then but there were Masai on the hill where Nairobi Club and Government House now stand. There were no Kikuyu there then, only Masai who brought us many head of cattle which were slaughtered for our Company.

We camped by the Nairobi River for a couple of days and then went on one day further to the boma of Hall at Kabete; it was here that we first met Kikuyu.

Mr. Hall had a large store of provisions and rations and we stayed here for two days to provision the safari. From there a two-day safari brought us to the Escarpment which we descended by track that had been cut for Captain Lugard by Messrs. Dick and Sclater. Mr. Dick later died at the bottom of the Escarpment, in the Kedong Valley.

We had left the Kikuyu behind at Kabete, and from there to the bottom of the escarpment was uninhabited, but there we met Masai again.

We camped for five days just below the Escarpment and we then marched for four or five days to Naivasha; the askaris were very heavily laden as most of the porters that we had engaged had run away.

At Naivasha there was a large boma with Mr. Wilson as D.C. in those days the Lake reached almost to the boma as far as the present railways and the Morendat beyond Naivasha was in flood. We camped here for about three weeks during the latter period of which the troops were being ferried across the flooded Morendat river. When we had all got across the river we safaried for two days to Gilgil. There was no Government Boma here but a lot of Masai with their cattle and sheep. We went on for another three or four days to Lake Nakuru. There were Masai as far as Lake Elmenteita but not beyond there as the Masai did not like the grazing around Nakuru.

We did not stay at Nakuru, where there was only the Lake and no inhabitants, but continued our safari for another seven days via Kampiye Moto to Shimoni, or Eldma Ravine. We met Masai again on the second day out from Nakuru, and they were in evidence until we reached Ravine. Here there was a large Government Boma, the A.D.C. was called Robin (Mertin?) and later Mr. Esset (Isaacs) was D.C. here.

The main body of troops were now close at hand, pursuing the Nubian mutineers who were at Beringo; we joined up and followed the mutineers as they retreated into Uganda. The Uganda Rifles were all Somalis and we joined up with other Somalis under Colonel Cole, Captain Maddicks acted as his Adjutant and was consulted by all the other officers as he knew the country but they were new to it. There was also an Indian formation under General Smith and the First Baluchis and a mixed brigade under General Brown.

From Ravine we marched up through the forest for three days, it was extremely cold, and we reached the top near Timboroa. From there we marched on for about seven days to Kapsabet. There had been no inhabitants from Ravine until we were about two days march past

Timboroa, when we started to meet Nandi who were in evidence the rest of the way to Kapsabet. There was a small Government Boma there, and the Nandi were very friendly.

From Kapsabet we marched for three or four days through very difficult country to Kabras. There were Nandi about for the first two days of our safari and then we met the Kabras, The Nandi were frightened of the Kabras and the Kabras were frightened of the Nandi, the Masai seemed to be the only tribe that were not frightened of their neighbours. The Kabras put up some opposition to our advance and there were a few small engagements for a couple of days.

From Kabras we marched on through thickly inhabited country for two days to Kakamaga, where we stayed for six or seven days to lay in provisions, and from there we went on for about three days to Mumias.

Chief Mumia made his people help us in every way, they brought us cattle, sheep and goats and other provisions and were very cooperative; they obeyed Mumia in all things.

From Mumias we marched on into the country which was very thickly populated. We were about three weeks in reaching Jinja as there were so many swamps and rivers to cross. We stayed at Jinja for about a month while all the troops were ferried across the river in small canoes, five or six on each journey using hundreds of canoes. The Basoge were very helpful all the time.

When all the forces were across the Nile we advanced to Kampala, but it was about fifteen days before the rest of the columns arrived there. The different formations camped in various directions for about a month while they prepared for hostilities.

The Commissioner at Kampala was Bwana Diyeri whose real name was Wilson, and several letters were sent to Biher Effendi in the hopes of ending the fighting. Besides the Nubians under Biher Effendi there were also Baganda under Mwonge and Wenyoro under Keberege against us.

As they refused to give in, but killed any stragglers that they could find, the First Brigade of Somalis including the Uganda Rifles, advanced for five days until they encountered the enemy at Kasolisi. Ibrahim Hosen was the senior Somali Officer.

Attempts were again made to come to terms, but next morning it was seen that the enemy were drawn up with the Nubians on the right, the Baganda in the centre and the Bonyoro on the left, The Nubians opened fire on our troops with rifles and machine guns. Both sides were slightly entrenched, and for the first hour or so, until we began to suffer casualties, we did not return their fire. At about 2 p.m. the Nubians sounded the Cease Fire, and both sides ate their lunches, after which firing was resumed until sunset.

The Baganda and Bonyoro had not opened fire. On the following two days' hostilities with the Nubians took place in similar manner but on the afternoon of the third day the Nubians started to retire.

On the fourth day the Baganda and Bonyoro came out of their entrenchments and started to fire at random on our troops, but their rifles were largely muzzle-loaders and their musketry was very bad, however they kept it up until dark, The Government troops were out of rations though small quantities of local bananas and potatoes were collected.

On the fifth the Baganda and Bonyoro again opened fire, but at about 3 p.m. they started to retire and our troops advanced in pursuit. The war continued for about a year, the last battle was fought at Soroti, where Kabarega was wounded in the arm and he and Mwonge were

taken prisoners and the war was over. The Indian troops were repatriated but the Uganda Rifles were sent to suppress small rising of the Nandi,

This was in 1900 and most of the Officers then left for the South Africa war I went down as far as Naivasha with Captain Maddicks and there we met Sir Harry Johnston, who took me on as his personal boy.

Sir Harry and I then returned through Ravine, Timboroa, Kapsabet, Kakamaga, which was then known as Shelwi one Mumias to Jinja, where we crossed the river by boat and on to Kampala and Entebbe.

We stayed here while Sir Harry was Special Commissioner for the Uganda Protectorate; we were there when Queen Victoria died in 1901.

In April 1901 Sir Frederick Jackson arrived to take over from Sir Harry and when this was completed we started off on a safari with a Mr. Archer, (later of Archer's Post) and relation of Sir Harry's who was also called Harry. Sir Harry had a book to which he frequently referred and was in search of a reported land which was cool and empty of inhabitants.

From Entebbe we safaried to Mbale the country being thickly inhabited by Wakedi and Begishu; from there we went on to Moroto. The populated area faded out near the Greek River and beyond that it was empty country with very few trees but very high elephant grass. We camped at the Moroto and Sir Harry enquired to whom the land there belonged; he was told that it had belonged to the Oromojo but they had all moved to the North some considerable time ago, when fighting the Turkana. He was told that the country ahead was low-lying and hot, so he turned back towards the Western slopes of Mount Elgon and after a safari of about ten days we reached the river at Kocheliba where it was much cooler. From there we continued in a southerly direction and we camped at the bottom of a line of hills that lay across our path. A report came in that some elephant had been seen near the top of the hills so I and Mr. Archer and Sir Harry's relation, who acting as his secretary, and some others, climbed the hill to shoot the elephants. These went on up and over the brow and when we followed we found that the range of hills was on an escarpment leading up to an immense plain which we now know as the Trans Nzoia. There were no trees on the plain but long grass which under the influence of the wind went rippling away into the distance like the sea.

I immediately returned to camp and told Sir Harry what I had seen; he came back with me, and with his book (probably Thomson's book) climbed up with me to see the land that he had been looking for.

This took place on what is now Padre Knight's farm.

On the next day the whole safari climbed the escarpment and proceeded in a South Easterly direction having to cross a stream that was very full of water on which was later Major Keyser's farm. We went on to the site of Kitale and camped near the present site of the Mohammedan School. On the way from Moroto we had not seen a single African, it was all uninhabited country.

We stayed in this camp for about ten days while Sir Harry wrote in his book. There were no trees at all anywhere and we had to use the droppings of elephant, buffalo, zebra, eland etc., as fuel for our fires, as they abounded on those plains.

We then continued towards the South and on the second day we reached the Nzoia River where we encamped. When our porters went down to the river they saw human footprints in the mud; they called out to us, and

we all followed the tracks until we lost them. We hunted around to find their continuation but failed to do so, but Captain Wilson of the K.A.R. looked up into the trees lining the river, the first trees that we had seen on these plains, and reported some large birds in the higher branches, but the porters saw that they were men cowering in the branches high as they could get.

We ordered them to come down, which they eventually did and we took them to Sir Harry Johnston for questioning. There was a woman in our safari who knew both Swahili and Masai and she interpreted.

The men said that they were Wonderobo from the Cherengeni they told him that the river was the Nzoia and that the other stream flowing in at that point was the Moiben. As a result of further questioning they said that although now the land was almost uninhabited, there were only 29 of their clan left, yet formerly it had been fully inhabited by Masai who had died or left the district, some had died of illness, others had been killed in inter-tribal wars with the Suk and the remainder had mostly gone off in the direction of Ravine though some had gone up Elgon; this had all happened before they were born.

We stayed on the Nzoia for five days, while Sir Harry wrote down all that he had been told. The three men then come on with us as our guides; we journeyed for two days and then halted for one day, and after another two days of safari came to a large expanse of water, about two miles across but only a couple of feet deep. It stretched across and away on each side so we waded through it and camped on the side. This was Kerone.

We camped here for six days, and Sir had a survey beacon put up on Sergoit Hill, the lake there is now very much smaller.

Sir Harry Johnston then split up his safari, he sent off Captain Wilson with his askaris of No.5 Company of the K.A.R. in the direction of Kepsabet, and Archer with another portion of the safari was to return to Entebbe, while Sir Harry and the remainder skirted the Elgeyo Hills and at the end of that, turned down to Ravine. Except for the, three men on the Nzoia, we saw no inhabitants in any of the country until we got to Ravine.

We stayed at Ravine for about four days, showing our papers and reports to the D.C., Mr. Essex. Lord Delamere was also staying there and he and Sir Harry had a quarrel as to the number of elephants that Lord Delamere should be allowed to shoot.

From here we went on in the direction of Londiani, but then we turned to the left and up to Mau Summit which was then the end of the Railway. This was August 1900. From there we went down in construction trains as far as Nakuru to which the railway had been opened for general traffic to the Coast.

I accompanied Sir Harry to Mombasa and saw him sail for England on the 26th September 1901, I returned to Entebbe as personal boy to Sir F. Jackson.





Dear Friends, former school chums and even Relations!

I'm sorry that I won't be at the School Reunion, but my thoughts will be with you.

It has been for me a rather miserable year which I will not be sad to farewell. I fought long and hard and cat, but, like in boarding school, I had to give in, accept the strict, rigid ruling and sadly give my d

Retirement Villages do have their benefits, but there are times when I wish I had more freedom to be in my 'Room'! We see many come and go and one has to be careful of whom one inquires about their health.

We had a flu epidemic and it caught up with me too. It put me out of action for about two months, needless to say.

Time does fly by and I have now lived in Melbourne for 40 years.

I did consider making one final trip back to East Africa to reconnect with my cousins and their families where I was raised. However, the thought of the long flights with involved security and other considerations put it off for another day.

After all, as my father, Hans Mels, said "Tempi Passati" - it is all in the past and we lead very different lives now.

I wish you all well - Season's Greetings, and may 2018 be a good year for us all.

Let's keep in touch.

Kind regards,

Karin Ganz

**Liz (Troward) Vorster**

Dear Kitaleites,

Our apologies for the silence these past few years, I know .....! Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the newsletters in the interim...avidly read. There hasn't been much to report this end...we are both well and I'm still playing tennis and hiking and enjoy walking in Kirstenbosch botanical gardens.

The highlight of this year was a wonderful 22-day cruise in May from Cape Town to Venice....with 6 shore day trips along the way...all new ports of call for us. Bliss being able to relax and not worry about cooking! The on board entertainment, lectures, quizzes etc. were excellent. Loved the three days we were in Venice .... despite the crowds! We then travelled to Paris by train which was most enjoyable and saved the hassles of getting to and from airports. We enjoyed our short stay in Paris after a gap of over 40 years. More crowds here but she hasn't lost her charm. Jen joined us in Paris as we'd planned on visiting Jackie...93-year-old lady with whom we boarded in Mombasa when at secretarial college.... unfortunately, she passed away whilst we were on the cruise but were able to meet up with two of her daughters. Then on to London on the Eurostar. We spent the remainder of our holiday between Jen in Cornwall and Glos. where Auret's daughter and family live. On the way down to Cornwall Jen arranged to meet up with Anthony and Penelope at a pub in Midhurst for a late lunch. I haven't seen them for many years....in fact I think we last met up when they visited Penelope's dad in Zimbabwe (we left Zim. in 1989!) so had plenty to news to catch up on!

Wishing you all a very festive season and everything of the best for 2018.

We Capetonians pray for an end to the drought as our dams are fast running empty, with the likelihood of us having no water by March and being a winter rainfall area the situation is critical.

Love Liz (Toward) Vorster

### **Brandon Brooksbank**

I visited Kenya from 19<sup>th</sup> September until 8<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Every time I visit Kenya I ask myself 'Why do I do it?' Modern Kenya is a train wreck, an unmitigated disaster, a mere shadow of the thriving country I left 54 years ago. But, strangely, I still love going there and I always get the feeling when I'm there that I have come home. I guess that the country that you are born in and in which you spend the first 19 years of your life shapes who you are for the rest of our life, whether you like it or not.

One of the reasons that I like to go to Kenya is that it is such a contrast to Australia. Australia is everything that Kenya is not. It is a safe, logical, comfortable, predictable, law-abiding, sanitised, over-regulated, politically correct, looney lefty 'nanny state'. Change is slow. It takes forever to get permission to do anything. In fact, in many ways, it is quite boring. Conversations in Kenya are never boring. There is so much going on that borders on the unbelievable that I feel compelled to write down as much as I can. Hence the following, combined with my own observations and experiences. So, this is a personal account only, centred on Kilifi where I stayed.

The rate of change in Kenya is staggering. For example, 2 years ago all the watu rode bicycles. Taxis in Kilifi were bicycles with padded seats for the passenger behind the rider, hanging on tight. Now there isn't a bicycle to be seen anywhere. Everybody seems to own a cheap Chinese or Indian motorbike. There are literally millions of them now in Kenya and they are masterpieces of practical engineering. There is a long single seat which can accommodate up to 5 (very friendly) people and strong rear springs to support them.

Probably the most hazardous and frustrating aspect of life in Kenya today is **travelling on the roads**. Some of the hazards encountered are:

#### **Motorbikes and Matatu Taxis**

The drivers of these vehicles have no regard for anyone else on the road. Not many of them would have a valid driver's licence. Matatus will stop anywhere and hold up the traffic to pick up and drop off passengers, but will not stop for anything else (like traffic jams or lights). They will travel in the ditches, on the wrong side of the road with horns blaring, anywhere, as long as they can keep going. The motor bikes swarm around all over the roads like angry bees and will cluster around whenever a matatu stops in order to pick up people getting off the matatu.

### **Traffic Calming Speed Humps**

These are the scourge of everyone who drives a vehicle on the roads of Kenya (and elsewhere in Africa). There is no control over who puts them in or where they go. Every little village along all roads, including main roads, seems to think that it has the right to install as many humps as it wishes anywhere it wishes. Ostensibly they are put in to protect school children, but, in reality, they are put in mainly near shops in the hope that people will stop to buy something. The typical Kenya way is to install them under the shade of a large tree as it is far too hot to work out in the sun. The result is that the humps cannot be seen when the sun is shining as they are in the shade and drivers' eyes are adjusted to bright sunlight. Sometimes the humps are painted white, but the paint is of inferior quality and soon disappears. The humps then become the same colour as the road and almost impossible to see. To make matters worse they are huge, at least 300mm high, and if hit at anything over 10km/hr your vehicle becomes airborne. It is not uncommon to see a vehicle abandoned next to a hump with its front wheels splayed out. In the 60km between Kilifi and Mombasa there are about 60 humps and, with the substantial number of trucks using the route, the journey now takes up to 2 hours. Trucks have to almost stop at each hump and, as they are invariably overloaded, they take a long time to gather speed again.

The worst accident caused by these so-called safety measures occurred in 2016 when a truck laden with explosives hit an unmarked speed hump on the main Uganda Highway between Naivasha and Rongai. It became airborne, crashed into some oncoming cars and exploded. 28 people died. No one was prosecuted, and life went on as normal. It was, of course, 'Shaurie ya Mungu' (the will of God). Life is very cheap in Kenya and no one seems concerned about the effects on the whole community of the transport inefficiencies, dangers and costs.

### **The Roads**

The Chinese are busy pouring money into new road building projects all over Kenya, but these projects are carried out with no consideration for people currently using the routes. For example, just South of Voi there was a 20km deviation on the main Mombasa to Nairobi Highway. This highway is the only route connecting Kenya's main port to the rest of the country and is a solid line of heavy trucks, both ways. The deviation had no gravel and no maintenance (grading, watering etc.). So, it took us over an hour in blinding dust to negotiate the 20kms of pot holes. At one point we had to drive around a shipping container that had bounced off a truck.



In any civilised country people will not put up with a deviation of more than 1km and the deviation must be gravelled, graded and watered constantly or bitumen sealed as part of the road building contract. This unnecessary cost to the country in delays and broken vehicles must be enormous – apart from being bloody frustrating!

No existing roads seem to get any maintenance (in fact in Swahili there is not even a word for it). The result is potholes everywhere and, on bitumen roads, a drop-off along the edges of the pavement of up to 300mm. This makes driving at night a real 'nightmare' as oncoming trucks invariably do not dim their lights and there is no white line along the edge. The lesson is 'don't drive at night!'.

The next big talking point after the debacle of the Westgate Shopping Mall massacre was the ineptness and just plain cowardice of the **Kenya Army**:

**The Kenya Army** is a disgrace by any standards. They love to be seen riding around on main roads in big green trucks in full uniform, but are not so keen to chase armed terrorists, poachers etc. through the hot African bush. The full truth about their exploits is impossible to find because no credible, independent investigations are ever done, or reports published, so there are many rumours and much innuendo. The latest word on the street about the **Westgate Shopping Mall** massacre in Westlands, Nairobi is that there were only four armed intruders and, as their bodies were never found, it is assumed that that they all escaped in disguise, leaving a trail of dead and injured behind them. The Kenya Army had the outside of the Mall surrounded while 67 innocent men, women and children were killed inside and 157 injured. The soldiers, in full uniform and armed were too frightened to go inside and waited for the GSU special forces to arrive. This took several hours and when the GSU did arrive, the army followed them inside, and then, unbelievably, shot the GSU commander dead and took over. They occupied the Mall for 5 days and, by the time they left, the whole place had been looted. There wasn't a single bottle left in any of the liquor stores.

The **Garissa University** massacre was an even worse fiasco. While 148 Christians were being murdered in cold blood and another 79 injured the Kenya Army soldiers were confined to their barracks nearby, within earshot. A couple of young women managed to escape the killers and fled to the barracks in a state of hysteria. When they got there, seeking protection, they were treated as suspects and brutally interrogated. The GSU was sent for but the 'Caravan' plane used to transport them to remote trouble spots

from their Ruaraka barracks near Nairobi was in Mombasa where the Commander's wife was doing a spot of shopping.

The Kenya Army has also distinguished itself in Somalia. Reportedly, on two separate occasions, Al Shabaab terrorists have driven explosive laden vehicles into their encampments at night and detonated them. As the terrified soldiers ran for cover into the bush they were shot and over 200 were killed on each occasion. However, the Kenya Army is still up in Somalia as the officers are making a lot of money selling UN aid food packages to the poor starving locals. It is acknowledged that the Uganda Army is behaving much better and doing most of the peace keeping in Somalia.

The next major talking point is the issue of the growing influence of the **Chinese**. The most obvious symbol of this is:

**The Madaraka Express** which is the name of the new Chinese-built and operated standard gauge railway from Mombasa to Nairobi. It only caters for passengers at the moment and has been open for about 4 months, but is already operating at the full capacity of the rolling stock so far purchased. There are 2 trains of 3 First Class coaches and 13 Second Class coaches that hold 118 people each, so each train has a capacity of over 1800 passengers. The two trains leave at 9am from Mombasa and Nairobi respectively and cross at the half way point. Seats are very cheap and cost us 700Ksh (\$10Aus) each, although I would recommend paying the 3,000Ksh (\$43Aus) for First Class as the Second-Class seats get a bit hard after 5.5 hours and you are forced to get very close to your fellow passengers. A couple of well-endowed Giriama women can take up the full width of seating meant for 3 people. We were the only wazungu in our coach and found our fellow travellers very friendly and chatty. Africans are never short of conversation and there is constant chatter and laughter for the full 5.5 hours.





The railway stations are definitely not African and would not be out of place in any first world country. They are modern, spotlessly clean and spacious. Lakini.....no coffee or any other shops and this is a problem because you have to arrive at least an hour before the train departs in order to allow for security checks and for traffic delays in getting to the station. Since the Al Shabaab attacks in Kenya the Chinese are paranoid about security and you get the full sniffer dog and X-ray treatment of your bags. They will confiscate anything sharp on your person or in your bags and you don't get them back (as if you are going to hijack a train with a pair of scissors!). I had to open my bags for inspection twice, but they failed to find a penknife I had secreted in my large case. So, in typical African fashion, they are not very thorough. Maybe if my name happened to be Mohammed and I had a black beard they may have been a bit more conscientious. Also, in typical African fashion, the rules are completely illogical. Another rule is that photography in the station is forbidden with a camera but not with a smart phone (explain that one to me!). At the Nairobi end you have to catch a local 'commuter train' from the new station, which is located out near the airport, to the old station, at a cost of 50Ksh. This train runs on the old narrow-gauge track, is not air-conditioned, and takes about an hour. It would be quicker to walk and, as it goes right through the Kibera slum, they close all the windows 'for security reasons' – but the real reason is to keep out the stench. It looks like hell on earth and is a horrible introduction to Nairobi for new

visitors. Again, for a country that relies on tourism, I would like that explained to me. There are 9 brand new, well-built and designed railway stations on the route from Mombasa to Nairobi, but the train currently only stops at Mtito Ndei. All stations are spotless and run with military precision by Chinese, in uniforms modelled on the Chinese Liberation Army, and you can set your watch by the train times. It stops for exactly 3 minutes at Mtito and takes off regardless of anyone trying to board late. Definitely un-African! I was much intrigued by uniformed Chinese station masters standing stiffly to attention at each intermediate station as the train went through without stopping. I was also intrigued by the fact that the stations are substantial multi-storey buildings, much larger, I would have thought, than would be required for just running a railway. I can thoroughly recommend the train as a means of travel. The carriages are clean and modern with electronic information boards telling you the speed (up to 110km/hr), the outside temperature (up to 37°C) and station names etc. You get great views of the countryside and it is cheaper, safer and quicker than road travel. One problem that only an African can understand is the ticketing system. We were not allowed to buy a ticket more than 7 days in advance and, as we were already in Kenya, we ended up going through a local Travel Agent using Mpesa to pay and with a 200Ksh surcharge. We then had to pick up our tickets at the station from an electronic ticket machine using a 6-digit reference number plus the mobile phone number of the phone used to purchase the tickets. Despite making it so hard to buy a ticket and to get to the station there wasn't a spare seat on the trains. So, you must book!

There is a noticeable **Chinese** presence everywhere in Kenya now, especially in the expensive hotels. Almost all the road making machines are Chinese and they are pouring money into road and railway building. The goal appears to be to build means of access from the Congo, with its minerals, to the port at Mombasa. In Kilifi the Chinese have built a huge 4 storey library for the new Pwani University. It would be interesting to see what type of books have been also donated. There is speculation that the increase in elephant poaching is related to the Chinese and the fact that they have built such large railway station buildings which they have total control over. Their problem is that the average mutu doesn't like or trust them as they are too regimented, lack the common touch and, most importantly, a sense of humour.

The perennial talking point about Kenya is, of course, **corruption**. Kenya is now listed by Transparency International at No. 145 out of 176 countries on the corruption scale, just ahead of Uganda and Zimbabwe, and this is also killing the future of the country. But there may be hope. The younger generation are well aware of the problem and talk about it all the time. The real test will come when this younger generation have the opportunity to get their own snouts in the trough. A current example of corruption on a large scale is:

**The Lake Turkana Wind Farm** Kenya has always been short of electrical power so the Government monopoly power utility East Africa Power and Lighting (EAPandL) entered into a 'Take or Pay' contract with a large multinational company to build a huge wind farm near Lake Turkana. This is one of the windiest places on earth and is eminently



suiting to wind generation of electricity. The wind farm was completed over a year ago but still hasn't been connected to the grid. EAPandL are paying the multinational 700million shillings (\$AUS 10million) per month and have been doing so since completion of the facility. It is thought that the reason that there has been no connection is that the diesel generators that currently supply the grid are owned by 'powerful' politicians and business men.

There is also the issue of getting the **freight from Mombasa** off the road and on to the new railway. This is supposed to have happened but is slow to be implemented. The talk is that it is being blocked by important politicians who have vested interests in the trucking industry. So, the modern new railway is used by only two trains a day while the only road from Mombasa is still being knocked to pieces by a continuous line of overloaded trucks.

**Over-population** is probably the biggest of the problems that will affect the future of Kenya. Kenyans still live for today and give no thought for the future of their (many) children. At the Kilifi house I stayed in the cook had 2 wives and 8 children, the handyman had just died aged 40 leaving 7 children and the driver had 4 children. The fact that the lovely, clean, sleepy, uncrowded Kilifi village that existed when they were children is now a horrible, dirty, seething mass of humanity, and is now designated a City, seems completely lost on them. Kilifi now has its own University called 'Pwani' with over 8,000 students. Trouble will come when they graduate and expect to get jobs because they are now 'educated'. Africans appear to be oblivious of the connection between their own actions and the state of the environment they now live in. The Government is doing nothing about it. In fact, it is said that the three main tribal groups are actively encouraging their young to have more children in order to gain more power through the wonders of the democratic system inherited from the British. As elsewhere in Africa, the culture has become 'Power - at any cost'.

**Tourism** in Kenya has slumped, especially at the Coast. I heard that the number of tourist charter planes from Europe to Mombasa has dropped from a high of 80 planes per week a few years ago to about 4, yes 4!!, now. The evidence of this can be seen in empty hotels and abandoned resorts, such as the Seahorse resort on Kilifi Creek (see pics). Millions of dollars of investment in these facilities has been lost and, of course, the associated jobs.



The wonderful **wildlife** which I remember so well as a child is disappearing at an ever-increasing rate – despite the revenue it brings in. Tsavo West is almost devoid of large animals now and Tsavo East is not much better. In half a day's drive from Satao Camp in Tsavo East we came across 2 recently killed elephants with their tusks hacked out and in plain view within 20m of the road. How good is that for tourism!



Tsavo East has no vultures or hyenas now. The carrion eaters have all been poisoned, reputedly by Somali herders who bring their cattle down into the park and poison the carcass of any cow killed by a predator. The silence at night in the park is quite eerie. It is as if all the life has been choked out of the park which was once so full of it. We saw no lion on our trip and very few giraffe or antelope of any description. The only animals in abundance were buffalo. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) have obviously been starved of funds and now can only be seen at the park entrances collecting the \$US55 per person per day it costs to get into the parks. No money is being spent on anti-poaching patrols or on maintaining the roads, which are atrocious. So, where does all that money go? A good question that is unlikely to be answered by anyone in the know! My advice is that if you have limited time and funds the only park worth visiting now is

the Mara which is run by the Maasai and not the KWS.

### **Penny Madvig (Flatt)**

Our days seem to fly by with quite a lot to keep us occupied – rather than have nothing to keep us interested and active!

In 2015 and 2016 we had two trips to Kenya within 6 months to attend family weddings. Both beautiful occasions and great opportunities to catch up with family and friends. We also thoroughly enjoyed safaris to Tsavo East, the Diani area, Kitale and Kakamega.

In Kitale we stayed with the Burnley's and it was wonderful to spend time with Jane and Dick. I so enjoyed a trip around Milimani, where we lived, recognising places and remembering the folk who lived there and seeing our house again! In town we went to the shop that used to be Soy Trading, now run by the son and situated opposite the Town Hall, instead of on the High Street. Much of the town has changed but there are still some places I recognised.

Since then we have been on safari to the Red Centre and the Cape York Peninsula and Peter has been on a safari to the Flinders Ranges and north! He is a "Twitcher", hence these trips, I tag along with my binoculars too! We live in an amazing country and it's good to be able to see some of it!

We really enjoy living in the Southern Highlands of NSW, about 140kms south of Sydney. Peter is involved in the local Bird Club and I am a volunteer at the Community Garden and with a Landcare Group, both of which are very local.

We are both members of the Bowral Uniting Church, within which there are plenty of activities too!

Our older daughter lives and works in Melbourne. We shall see her here for Christmas.

Our younger daughter lives in Copenhagen with her partner – she was home for Christmas last year and he came out in January for 3 weeks.

Thank you, Aiden, for all the work you put in to keep us Kitale-ites in touch with one another. I enjoy reading your newsletters as much as I enjoyed reading Bridget's.

Best wishes to you and your family for Christmas and 2018.

Kind Regards,

Penny Madvig (nee Flatt)

### **Richard Northmore**

Hi Aiden

Not much news really: Life goes on – I continue to watch cricket and rugby – did a few Surrey 4 day games at the Oval which is easy for me to get to and is fun providing it doesn't rain. I watch more rugby especially the internationals at Twickenham (a 15-minute walk) but also London Welsh and occasionally Richmond. I went to Toulouse in mid-October in order to watch Castres v Munster in Castres which is about 50 miles away. A fun trip.

I also went to Henley regatta for the full 5 days – watching rowing is rather passive not many exciting races. Having a zizz on the bank in a deck chair is quite pleasant though.

In August I took my entire family to USA primarily to see the total eclipse of the sun. we toured around a bit ending up in South Carolina to watch the eclipse. On the day we found a good spot and the day seemed clear however two minutes before what the Americans call "Totality" a big cloud came over and we missed it. The darkness was impressive but.....



I am in the process of searching for old pictures/maps of Kenya especially of Kitale and Eldoret. This has taken me to the National Archives in Kew where I have found a couple of folders which hold a whole lot of old photos some from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and some 1950's. I have ordered some. The cost is not too bad £1.10 per copy either electronic or on paper. A copy of one of them is attached. It was taken in 1950. They are fairly easy to find but it takes a few weeks from ordering them to delivery. Parking is easy and free!!

We have lots of my South African relations coming over for Christmas – my niece, Vicky,

was born in Kitale. My brother left Kenya in 1963 when she was still quite small.

That's about it.

Richard

### **Celia (Falck) Moore**

Another extremely busy year has flown by, with writers' circle, art group, choir, and most importantly, School of Philosophy, not to mention family and friends. Oh yes, and increasing involvement with matters environmental (we have to, don't we, each in our own way and at the level we can manage). Since my beloved Boxer, Duke, died on Boxing day (yes he did), when all the family was here I thought I might have a little more time on my hands, but I suppose I generate all this activity.

I'm so lucky to have all my family in South Africa, and we get together when we can: three times this year 🤗 with Judy turning fifty, Catherine turning sixty, wow! and then Christmas this year in Cape Town with Judy. It's great to have Catherine and Barry in Durban, and Simon and family in Pietermaritzburg, not far, and Michael a bit further in Johannesburg. Judy's the furthest, but Cape Town's a great place to visit.

Karin (nee Falck) and Chris Norman have finally moved from Himeville, almost in the foothills of the Drakensberg, and are happily settled in St John's, the retirement village on the hill opposite this one, Amberglen. Wonderful to have my sister two minutes away. Chris has to be careful, with a ticker problem. Their daughter Lorna is in 'Maritzburg with husband Leon, and Caroline and Pete in the UK, and Alex and Melanie and family in Australia.

Karin's and my brother Edward (Falck) and Gisela have now been settled in Czerszegtomaj, Hungary for a few years, Edward commuting from Leipzig, Germany every two months or so until last year when he finally tied up all the loose ends of his business, and settled down to home modifications, and serious gardening. They have an orchard with just about every imaginable deciduous fruit tree, as well as walnut trees. They are able to get house and garden help locally. Hungarian is something else, with no known connection to other languages. But most people speak English at some level, and there are lots of ex-pats. It is very pleasant. Very cold indeed in winter, and very hot in summer. They have a wonderful warm mineral lake nearby, helpful for Gisela. Now we are just waiting for a visit here before too long.

**Paula (Burch) Allen**

Dear Aiden,



Here is our news update and our best wishes for a wonderful Christmas time.

We have thoroughly enjoyed this last year in our new home of 1 1/2 years. We have kept busy with our hobbies and have settled into a fairly busy lifestyle with a bit of caravan travel thrown in; getting to see and to know more of this very beautiful adopted country of ours.

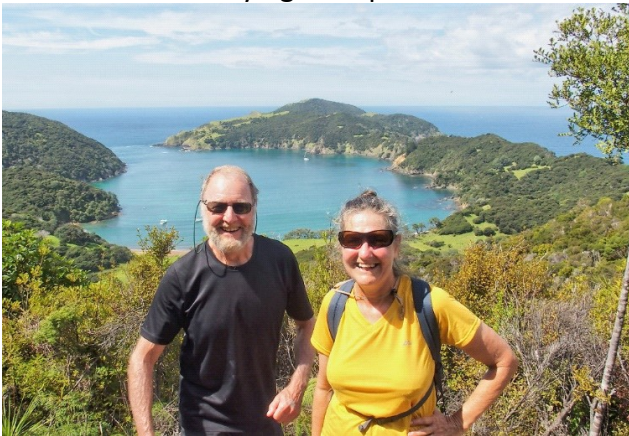
We have seen a lot of family since retiring...Paula's brothers, nieces and family from overseas last Christmas, Ian's sister and family at a niece's wedding celebration, his cousins from Canada, Scotty and Joyce and Carina and Diego and we are expecting Ian's brother, Neal, from South Africa to be here this Christmas.

Last year we were extra lucky to see Ian's cousins in South Africa when they made a special trip from Johannesburg to see us in Cape Town during our visit there.



Son Scotty and Jocelyne moved to live and work in Christchurch at the end of March, which they are loving.

In July, they took Scotty's sons (Ajani 8 and Brayden 12) to Prince Edward Island, Canada to see where Jocelyn grew up.



The coastal road, via Kaikoura to Christchurch is still closed for reconstruction due to the extensive earthquake damage (November a year ago), so we don't see them often as the alternative inland road, narrow and winding over a pass, is about an 8-hour trip. They will however, join us for Christmas.

Daughter Carina and partner Diego, who live in Wellington, will be going to join Diego's family in Chile this Christmas. His parents visited us earlier this year too and this will be Carina's first trip to Diego's country of birth.

We usually get to see Carina and Diego about twice a year.

Seeing 'real' family has been wonderful. I have somehow spent less time than I had expected on the family tree since we sold the BandB.

I'm making square cakes for a wedding on the 1st December, you'll remember that cake orders keep me as busy as I'd like to be. One tier is to be gluten and dairy free. It will be a hazel nut chocolate tier covered with a dark chocolate ganache to match the base tier (decadent chocolate with coffee liqueur). I'll decorate it with fresh dark velvety red roses and a green ribbon.

My red roses are fully open, or in tight bud, so I have been walking the neighbourhood

peeping into gardens so hopefully will find just what I need next week, I only need 5.



Ian has been busy brewing many different types of beer now that he has done up his brewery in the workshop and has three beers 'on tap' in the tap room (as the laundry is now called!) at any given time. He has brewed, amongst others - Pilsner, Pale Ale and Strong British Ale, and he (and friends) has been happy with the results. He finds brewing a challenging and interesting hobby, though he does not drink any more of it just because it is now so freely available at the flick of a tap...at least that is his story and he is sticking tenaciously to it!

Tomorrow he plans to get milk from a delightful farmer half an hour's drive from home, with which to make cheese to be ready for Christmas. The cheese and wine share a cool cellar below the lounge, off the brewery.

So cool is it down there that any cakes that need refrigerating, I store down there while they are waiting to be collected.

It has been gloriously hot (and windy) recently, so watering takes up a chunk of time which gives me 'talking to plants quality time'. We feed the birds daily, and take our meals outside on the deck whenever possible, to better appreciate the wonder of them and their continuous song and chatter. The wooden chimes clink melodiously and the wee waterfall to our little pond is very soothing.

We love our home and garden. It is very colourful now that I have been systematically removing the weed mat, re-conditioning the dead soil with composting, and have planted for fragrance, the bees, birds and beneficial insects.

We had a beautiful gift today - a bloke was cleaning out his swimming pool and we received a bucket of frogs for our little pond!



Ian takes charge of the veggie garden which is producing it's Spring /Summer produce now. Very nice to know it is not sprayed, but completely organically grown. We are able to pick greens (beet leaves, spinach, kale, silver-beet) for our smoothies every day, broccoli, broad beans and lettuce for our plates and now the berries are coming on too.

It has been an ongoing battle fighting with the birds for ownership of the strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, English and Cape gooseberries. I think we've foiled them finally with bird netting. The blackbirds have been very vocal in their frustration as they can see the berries. I feel so sorry for them that I put out half an apple a day, firmly pushed onto a nail, and brown rice on their feeding table. We have a seed feeder swinging in a tree, and nectar dispenser in another. Our latest gift to them is a bird bath. We have huge picture windows and can watch the birds from every one, restful and delightful.

It was wonderful to see a few Kitale School visitors pop in this past year. We have guest space so we'd love to see any of you visiting New Zealand, for an overnight or just a refreshment stops. We are only a few blocks away from the ferry, and walking distance from the Top Ten Caravan Park.

Have a wonderfully Joyful Christmas and our wishes for Good Health and Much Happiness throughout 2018.  
Love and blessings, Paula and Ian.

Ian and Paula (Burch) Allen

[ian.allen@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ian.allen@xtra.co.nz)

### **Marion Hubbard**

Future Schools and Holistic Education as the Practice of Freedom for Growth Through Learning: A Scientific Rationale for Holistic Education in the Sense of Systems Science or Holistic Science

Consider article 26 paragraph 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights... "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and human freedoms". The human personality or 'human nature' is defined by complete moral or 'spiritual' development. Consequently, the aim of education, in the fullest and deepest sense of the word, is to provide those conditions of freedom through learning which empower the learner to develop their humanity. So-called 'holistic education' aims to cultivate naturally meaningful human intelligence or 'creative intelligence' which is a function of the integrated development of the person as a whole. It aims to facilitate the integration of

'intellectual' development of the 'ego-self' or 'mind' with moral or 'spiritual' development, which involves development of moral consciousness or 'conscience'.

Conscience gives meaning to experience and the level of meaning depends on the extent to which conscience is developed. In the holistic paradigm, teaching methodology is based on recognition of children's instinctive sense of responsibility to themselves for their own development to maturity. It is based on respect for their instinctive motives or 'needs' which must be met in order to enable them to grow through learning. These needs include the basic psychological needs for security and self-esteem or 'ego-needs' and also the needs for moral or 'spiritual' development as construction of rational conscience required for the true freedom of self-mastery and intelligent social adaptability. Holistic education is education for freedom, for justice, for peace and for the continued survival and evolution of our species.

([www.HolisticEducator.com](http://www.HolisticEducator.com))

Thank-you.

Marion Hubbard

**Bill Revill**

*The document below is Bill Revill's memoirs, makes for a very good read.*

*Thanks very much Bill.*

*Aiden*



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Jarrahdale

**Janice (Howitt) Van Niekerk, then Milburn**

Left South Africa 24 years ago to come with Aussie Hubby Ray to live in Brisbane. On arrival we travelled all over of Australia and through the years visiting the various cities etc., and I really enjoyed it but the heat gets to me.

Ray has since past away and I have really got back into my art in Water Colour painting mainly of flowers, animals etc and have done very well in exhibitions and shows here, it is a great hobby. also joined a Garden club as love the garden as well.

Joined a Probus group which is very active and we go out to shows, walks, cruises, dinners etc so that fills in a bit of time.

Try going back to Cape Town every two years to see my two sons and three grandchildren but it is hard not having family over here. Still trying to get the families to come here but not so easy these days.

Miss Africa and the years spent there were really good times and have very fond

memories too of Kenya, Uganda and South Africa.  
Janice (Howitt) Milburn

## **Charles Kerfoot**

Western Australia 6124

21 November 2017

Aiden,

Firstly, thank you very much for taking on the task of keeping us all in touch with each other – if not in person certainly in spirit.

Whilst I have lived in Australia now for over 43 years my heart is still there in Africa, Kenya and especially Mt Elgon. Australia has been good to me, married to Vicky (Bell) with three children, who have all settled in WA, and 5 grandchildren.

I recently celebrated my 70 birthday – 3 parties required, one for my Jarrahdale friends at the local tavern (ended in a brawl, but fortunately we had left by then), one for our family including sister Sally and her husband Robin who had come out from UK and then one for my special Kenya friends. These included from Kitale - Brandon Brooksbank, Andrew Hillier, Ian Shields, Angela and Tony Swain, Alan Hitchcox, Bryony Fremlin, Lil O'Toole (Anderson), Pauline Shaw (Crampton) and my sister-in law Antonia Bagshawe.

To keep myself occupied I am involved in our local community, restoring and revegetating a local park which is slowly becoming a central focus point for Jarrahdale.

My other interest is the 200 – 300 remaining Elgon elephants. Myself and Chris Powles (grandson of Buster Powles) have formed a “Friends of Mt Elgon” to continue and expand on work to protect these unique salt miners. We currently have a monitoring team in the field collecting data on numbers and movements, using cameras in the caves, but hope to have a long term program put in place to preserve Mt Elgon, its forests, fauna and archaeology on a sustainable basis. We are working with the local Africans as well as the Kenya Wildlife Service and other bureaucracies. If anyone would like further information, please contact me.

If anyone is visiting WA here at Jarrahdale we have plenty of room and we welcome visitors.

*Charles Kerfoot  
Balmoral Road  
JARRAHDAL WA 6124  
Mob: 0428 228 849*

### **Jenny Pont**

*I was part of a Kenya delegation to go to London and exhibit at FOCUS, a two-day film event on 5th and 6th December. As we await the outcome of the latest election (result of the petitions to be announced by the Supreme Court by 20th November) nothing is happening in Government - for the past 4 months in fact. And time has run out for most of us to apply for British visas, and so that opportunity to restore the film world's confidence in Kenya has gone out the window.*

*Anyway, I'm not normally a moaner - so let me give you a short rundown of the last year.*

*Whilst we wait for the big one (and there are several waiting in the wings), most of our business is providing licenses and permits for small documentary crews. Coincidentally, many of these have been from Netherlands, but also Germany, Singapore, USA, Britain and South Africa.*

*In February, I accompanied ten Masai's to Cape Town to take part in a Samsung TV commercial - a short but amazing trip and they were so much fun to travel with. At the same time, we were making a music video in Kibera to promote what has come to be known as the Kibera Town Centre which is the brainchild of Connie Neilsen ("Gladiator").*

*In 2010 we shot a kids' adventure story mostly in Kibera slum (I think the PC name is informal settlement). Connie was the star of the movie and was so touched by Kibera that she raised US\$2m and formed a Foundation to build this huge centre which has changed the lives of so many people. It is really worth a visit if anyone is interested in February, I can arrange it. The music video was Connie's directorial debut. More recently, we arranged a quick 2-day shoot in Kimana with another Dutch company for a RABO Bank commercial. Just the kind of job I love - very quick, challenging, happy clients, and the bonus of staying in the amazing Satao Elerai Camp.*

*Like most industries and the economy in general, we have all suffered from the ongoing political nonsense of elections. For four long months nothing has happened in the corridors of power. I couldn't even get my car ownership transferred "till after the elections". By the time you read this we shall hopefully have a President and we can move on and recover Kenya's damaged reputation.*

### **Terry Davidson**

We have had a very busy and also sad year. At the end of last year, we celebrated my mother's 90th birthday at our home in Nairobi and all my siblings (Oliver, Colin and Jenny) and all the grandchildren (except one) made the effort to travel to Kenya for the celebration.

We spent part of March, April and early May in Australia and New Zealand visiting family. Two of our young (Piers and Ingrid) live and work in Sydney and Gayle's mother lives outside Melbourne so we are always busy when we are there.

We also visited my cousin, Clive and his family, in Canberra and we spent two beautiful weeks at a resort in Arrowtown just outside Queenstown in New Zealand. In July we were in the UK and did a two-week cruise along the Danube from the Black sea to Budapest - a region rich in history and perpetual conflict!

I was back in Kenya in August and took the opportunity to spend a week in Ruaha and Selous. Sept was spent in France and when we got back to Kenya my mother passed away.

Thanks to many the Kitaleites who knew Mum and sent condolence messages which were much appreciated.

In October Gayle and I spent two weeks travelling around China - Shanghai, the Yangtze, Terracotta warriors in Xian, a few days in Beijing and a few days in Hong Kong. Met up with Mike Fulton in HK which was a lot of fun. China and HK are an incredible experience for us African's - the size of the cities and infrastructure boggles the mind! We are now off to Mauritius for a week and I come back via Zambia!! A lot of our travels are related to the boards that I am involved with but in most cases I can combine work with pleasure.

We will be in Nairobi in December and part of January before we meet many Kitaleites at the reunion in Vipingo Ridge. Should be a lot of fun and we are both looking forward to it. Poor old Kenya has been struggling through elections - an ongoing process that has heightened tensions and retarded growth - too much democracy without leadership and accountability!

### **Ann (Rowlands-Boorer) Waters**

We are off back to Grenada in the West Indies to do more sailing next week and although we will miss our family and our new grandson I look forward to the heat and living on the water again.

I wish you a very happy Christmas and New Year. (I'm a bit early! Wi fi won't be so easy once we leave the UK as we have to use bars and cafes in the islands).

Kind regards

Ann (nee Rowlands-Boorer)

**Bryan Coleman**

Jambo Aiden.

84 years old, hell of a long time ago since I first went to Kitale School. Woods was the headmaster and I remember on weekends he used to take us swimming to Boukars Dam. He used to own an A 40 Austin If I remember rightfully that had a wind out windscreen and whoever was up front could lean out of the windscreen, he would then wind it down on you and pull your pants down, an embarrassing situation and the laughing stock to all that were in the car. I never did make it to the front seat !!! a lot of fun had by all, I don't think I learnt one hell of a lot, but on the other hand it was one of the best Boarding Schools that I went to.

I also remember traveling on the train from Nairobi to Kitale in the good old days of train travel in Kenya. Gone are the days only to be remembered.

Bryan Coleman.

**Ben Pickford**

Jambo Aiden,

I'm here in central California with my wife Mary and most of our family. We are both enjoying retirement and traveling, mostly driving across the States and into British Columbia and Alberta. My Kitale school rafiki Gys Niemeyer and his lovely wife Shelagh live in BC. we are planning another trip up there sometime next year and across to Alberta to visit Mary's cousins. My brother Nic and his lovely wife Pam live four hours to the south of us and so we get together fairly often. Use as much or as little as you want Aiden. Thanks for keeping us Kitaleites in touch with each other.

Kwaheri from sunny California,  
Ben and Mary Pickford



**Tel: 0733 728 356**

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**Email: [kspcamsa@gmail.com](mailto:kspcamsa@gmail.com)**

October, 2017

Dear Friends,



Meet Ziggy who won the Class for the Shaggiest Dog at the KSPCA Shaggy Dog Show up at Vipingo Ridge Conference Centre, on the 11<sup>th</sup> November. Here she is with her friend Harry. Both Ziggy and Harry were re-homed, from the KSPCA, to the same family, and are the very best of friends. Polly, who is also owned by this family, won the Veteran Class – she will be 20 years old in January! We had a fantastic Shaggy Dog Show with 50 dogs competing in a number of Classes including the Sausage Eating, both dog and handler. The dogs of course woofed theirs down in seconds, but the handlers struggled! There was also an Obstacle Course which caused some confusion and a Young Handlers Class. There were tables there selling all sorts of lovely things and masses of visitors came to enjoy the day. KSPCA made Shs. 197,000/- which was fantastic.

My very sincere thanks go to Pippa, Debbie and Julie for their amazing efforts in organizing such a successful day. We had so many helpers too, Ariuka, Nash, Nicolle, Sue, Eric and so many more. Also, huge thanks to all those that participated and all the visitors who came along to enjoy the day to support us.



Now, would you believe it! This is the same Ziggy after her visit to the Salon where she had a shampoo, cut and set. What a difference and I am sure she is feeling so very much cooler as is her other little Friend. This little Poppet (who is 14 months old) absolutely adores Ziggy and spends most of the day with her. Every child should have a dog that they can cuddle up to, whether fully dressed or not – who cares anyway! A lovely happy forever home for one sweet good natured dog and her beautifully marked ginger companion. Even the baby loves them. What more could they ask for!

We were called out recently to bring in a dog from someone's house in the Nyali area. This dog had suddenly become extremely aggressive and was trying to bite everyone and everything – he had rabies. It turned out that their dogs had not been vaccinated

for rabies. How sad because this could have been avoided. As you probably know, when a rabid dog is brought in, it is immediately put to sleep, the head removed and taken to the Government Veterinary Laboratories in Mariakani. The brain is then tested for rabies and we receive the results the same day, via a text message. We then notify the people in the area from which the dog has been brought in. We also had a call to say that a dog had been hit by a car near Wild Waters on Links Road. We went there immediately, but sadly the dog had died.

We rescued 3 kittens, about 3 months old, that had been thrown down a fifteen foot dry well, near the Kibaki Flats. Very fortunately, they were not injured and were in reasonably good condition. Our little ginger cat that was so badly burnt has almost healed completely now – she is so sweet and loving and is looking for a good home. At the moment we have over 60 dogs and over 90 cats looking for kind and loving homes. So, if you are thinking of getting a dog or cat any time soon, please do call in and have a look here as we do have some lovely dogs and cats. We have managed to re-home our two three legged dogs. The one that came in with a bone sticking out of her leg and another one that was abandoned at one of the vets and brought in to us.

I would like to thank everyone for all the newspapers that we have been receiving. This has made our lives so much easier and we are happy to have as many newspapers as you can find.

I would also like to thank one of our supporters for enabling us to put new mabati on our Recovery Room. This is totally wonderful and soon we shall no longer have to mop out the place every time it rains.

Our table at the Kilifi Garden Festival (Craft Fair) went very well with quite a lot of people attending it. The KSPCA did well and everyone seemed to have a good time. There was also a lecture on insects (It's a Bug's Life by Dino Martins), which was fascinating and we all learnt a lot, especially just how important the insects are for pollination and for the well-being of all.

Our next event is the KSPCA Christmas Craft Fair which is being held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December at the Bahari Beach Hotel. This will be well worth visiting as there are going to be very many tables (55 confirmed so far), with a great variety of things on sale, of every description. We have 5 new Christmas card designs donated again by artist Kim Kay. This could be your chance of finding that elusive Christmas present which is giving you so much grief. The one that was held there last year was fantastic and we are expecting this one to be even better.

Our very sincere thanks to all our many amazing supporters who keep the Mombasa KSPCA functioning.

From Di, her many wonderful helpers, the staff and all the little residents at the KSPCA.





### Chrissie (Luck) Briscoe

#### At last some kind of an update to my life, since I left Kenya

Whenever I got to Michaelhouse, I think of you. A cousin of Peter's was rector there for a while – Rex Pennington. He died recently and we attended his Memorial Service at Michaelhouse. That chapel – the acoustics! Oh wow! Peter, my husband, aged 71, was at Michaelhouse in Founders, as was his brother Timothy and also, his cousins – all Briscoes.

Well, I left Kenya to join the bright lights in the UK and to get teacher and seccy training and work under my belt and to make a life for myself. My life in the UK, based in London, teaching in a tough London school, once I had graduated from the same teacher training college in Chichester, to which Penny Davis, of Kitale, went, was incredibly colourful.

I did a secretarial course and had such interesting jobs, working for McAlpines, detailing their very rare book collection, and working for a financial company near St Pauls, where lots of dramatic takeovers took place, to serving snacks at a Poet's society gathering, where I met lots of famous people +++...I mixed with the gentry in the UK – especially the Aylesford family, who were, we later discovered directly related to Alma Graham, and this caused all sorts of uppity umbrage...most holidays were spent once my parents sold Kituwaba, at Kilifi, where Dad built a glorious mansion....and then, they sold out and relocated to a cottage that they had purchased in Ketton, Rutland, UK and they spent a year doing this up, which Dad loved as building was his abs. passion, but the weather really got to them both so much, that they opted to relocate to Pietermaritzburg, where they lived in suburbia for 20 yrs – imagine them doing such a thing, but they were tough – they managed wherever they were, somehow. Incredibly resilient pragmatic and tenacious people, as most Kenyans were and are, of their generation. Having grandchildren – our three certainly made their lives interesting and when our youngest

son Andrew, got terminal cancer, at the age of 4, there were no better grandparents than my parents, to care for him and to help me out as I was by his bedside in hospital every day for up to 3 years on and off. Praise God, literally, his stage 4 Neuroblastoma around the heart, was resolved and the cancer left him, but it left with it, huge physical and emotional scars. Drew was able to captain a cricket team at Clifton Notties prep school and to swim the Midmar mile with myself, but his brains certainly got him to places and he is now a Banker, working for Merrill Lynch, having got a triple top engineering degree at UCT and then announcing to us, that he did not want to be an engineer. Too bad, said Dad – our little farm cannot cope with more private school fees... you fund yourself through London University, if you want to go into Politics and banking and this he did.....I had got into Cheam, the oldest prep school in the world where my uncle and father went and this set him off getting networks and contacts of enormous value to his new career – he did a year's huge course at London University, paid for, courtesy of great friends of his, and then he was interviewed for a banking job – Equities and Capital Markets.....then the economic crash hit him and he saw his friends and many of his contemporaries being axed from banking jobs as fast as flies fly....it was a very scary thing – he was selected out of 30,000 applicants for his job at Deutsche Bank and was towted to head it up at one stage, but when he got the bank up and going in New York, he began to see huge loopholes in the Bank's management and these came to the fore later on....and before the curtain blew open, he had a choice to going to Credit Suisse or Merrill Lynch. Being married to an American girl, he selected Merrill Lynch, owns 2 properties in Brooklyn, NY and goes between NY and his flat in Wimpole street, travelling excessively in between.

Our oldest son Alan, who detested Michaelhouse, is a much simpler person and he manages the farm with Peter, his father...the farm goes back in the family to the Voortrekker days, of the mid 1800s, when Peter's grandfather came out to Natal, via Australia, bringing along wattle bark in his boats, for use in the leather industry in London – tannin. He stopped at Natal, never returned to Oz or Tasmania – we could put in a land claim there?! - and settled in Natal, buying up vast tracts of land everywhere.

This farm is the 2<sup>nd</sup> last in the family, to be held by the family...and after 12 years of wrangling with the land claimants – a formidable and horrible lot of people, we won it, based on the 10 years of intensive land research I had done, which was helped when I found boxes of 1<sup>st</sup> hand, original title deeds and grant and lease documents, pertaining to all the properties of Peter's great grandfather...how I loved it, when I stood up in court and faced our Claimant chief, a really unpleasant piece of work and gave him what for...and now, we live comparatively safely, with him as one of our neighbours – fortunately, he is terrified of me – long may this emotion last...I keep my distance from him and avoid him at all costs... although farm security in Natal is a real problem, as it has been all over Africa, for white landowners.

We own 2 huge bullterriers and we keep on reasonable terms with our staff – never familiar, but always firm and fair...as the Afrikaner farmers in Kenya taught Dad to be, as

a farmer and hence he always had a pretty good relationship with the Africans generally – a much pleasanter lot than the Zulus, to be honest – this lot are violent, lazy and incredibly arrogant – my instinctual father saw that at a glance, when he arrived here 40 years ago, to see me marrying Peter...so we have to watch our backs and get on with living, behind heavy security, but at the same time, picking up on the vibes that prevail everywhere – Africans are not good at dissembling, once one knows how they operate – they usually give themselves away, via their body language etc....Alan, our oldest, maintains quite good relationships with the staff – never lets their problems become his, keeps his distance, but is fair and firm...and the ANC rates him hugely, which is very encouraging indeed...we are the reasonable whites in the district, although this could be misconstrued as being soft targets, but I don't think so...the BBC did an interview of Alan working as mentor to neighbouring black farmers as Robin Horsefall and Daddy did, with Rastus, who was always on the scrounge if you recall...got to keep on good terms with your neighbours. Alan is brilliant with cattle, rides a great deal and only recently gave up polo, but still cycles and runs a lot. Not married. He is 38 yrs old.

Our only daughter is married to a lawyer in Jhb, being a lawyer herself. Relationships are very tense there for all sorts of rather tragic reasons, so the less said, the better. They have 2 little children, who we have hardly met before.

Peter and I bumble along here on our farm. The house is cluttered full of the Luck and Drake-Briscoe antiques and overflows with them...nobody wants to inherit such things these days.

I am 68 and Peter is 71. I am a tiny little pip squeak of a woman now – gone are the days when I was a buxom wench!

I still teach at St Johns school, enabling singing lessons privately, which is fun and not too onerous – been doing this for 14 yrs. Enables me to fulfil my social side. I have become a world class cheesemaker and go judging in the UK every year to Cheshire...and love it – used to fetch truckles and heads of cheese from Njoro cheesery en route back from Nairobi and the Duke of York school where brother Guy went, and Michael Wisdom was the cheesemaker – I never forgot his cheese and I vowed one day that I would make it. I got him a top job in Sussex with ex Kitaleites – the Hardys, where Michael made their world class cheese for at least 20 yrs...Sure enough, once Drew's cancer was over, I started to make a 5 litre pail of cheese, until I was making hundreds of litres of cheese each day and I have been doing this for over 30 years, winning international and national prizes ever since – I always vowed I would make cheese. I sell at a top farmer's market once a week, near Durban, used to have 2 cheese shops, but managing them long distance no longer was much fun and I lost big money...so now, I make enough to fill my pocket and to keep me in pocket money and I love what I do – I can control my business, instead of it controlling myself.

Peter runs this family farm – a very difficult piece of ground to service...very sandy soils, 2000 acres of it – our main crop is sugar cane, but we do beef in quite a big way as well.

And we have considered trying to grow Macadamia nuts and avos, but one needs good soils and loads of water and we have neither, so we are still thinking how we can make up for the loss of fortune on sugar, compared with the world sugar prices and the increased yields elsewhere and the cheaper sugar pouring in via imports, which are illegal – but with Zuma, anything corrupt goes...and with the sugar tax coming in as well. I wish we were out of sugar altogether, knowing what we put into and onto it. Really toxic stuff and many farmers are amongst the most unwell people we know. My Peter has prostrate CA, which is very common around here...I am sure it is because we pour hormones or sugar ripeners onto our cane hormones don't biodegrade – they go into the lands, water and into every packet, bottle, tin, jar, in the supermarket and we are killing people, I say...but despite winning our land claim, Peter won't give up his land – he will live here for as long as he possibly can he says, so we have no plans for retirement at all. And on we go.

Guy left Geology and went in for Creative wrought iron work, starting in my uncle's forge (Dad's brother) in Jhb and then branching out and building his own forge and making the most incredibly wonderful and marvellous things as a living – mostly exotic gates and grills for Cape Dutch houses etc. – he lived at Plettenberg Bay. He spent a year in Toledo, Spain, learning the craft of wrought iron, before he settled at Plett. He also made model trains, clocks and all sort of other things that would defeat most engineers...he met and married Elizabeth Murray, 10 years ago, who is a breast cancer specialist and they now live in Constantia, Cape Town and are very happy. No children.

My father died a good 15+ years ago – had a major stroke, which basically made him bed bound as he could not walk again, but his mind was sharp and active right until his very last day.... we spent it around his bed, having a mug of tea, Peter, myself and his grandchildren and son John, from his former marriage. The next day, he just opted out, and having a very strong Christian Faith, we know where he is.

Mummy, lived on for another 15 years...and as soon as Daddy died, she just gave up and I did not realise what the signs of depression and dementia were...eventually, having had a colonoscopy put in several years earlier, it was much easier for her to be in a Home, but I always felt so sad for her being in such, because she had always vowed that she would never entertain living in such.... but none of us can determine our future...and I had to relocate her to a less posh place, where she was happier... but even then, she got very lonely...her mind went into back pedal for many years and she just as I say, gave up...her death was a merciful release – she had a stroke and within a day was gone...I MISS MY PARENTS so much. I always recall yours, dying as drastically and tragically as they did. You had to take over your siblings and dogs and belongings and start a life without them...how you managed to do this, I have no idea – we often spoke of it. It seems as if you have done very well for yourself...do give me a rundown of your life...I would love to hear about it. When one gets to our age, suddenly the situations of our youth, tend to become of far greater importance than the more immediate memories.

I miss my parents so much...Dad and his amazing memory and his amazing stories. A raconteur of note as you said...his warmth and love and kindness and Mummy for her intrepid ability to survive...I had fantastic parents. Yours were great and lively people - Peter, with his typically Irish guts, shown in the Navy during World War 2 – I have been all over Ireland, as Peter is ¼ Irish...incredible military men they have produced and your Mum, with her red hair – the life and soul of the party. I recall attending one of your birthday parties and each kid was given a hockey stick, which I still have – I used it thru most of my school life, despite abs. detesting sports of all sorts, apart from swimming!

And yes, I miss Kenya the way it was...I would hate to go back now, even to lovely Kilifi – I just sense that all has changed and that in the rural areas, there are shambas everywhere and the old system has gone – Daddy always said colonialism could not survive, esp. after the Mau Mau and he was right. But the Motts stuck it out and Jeremy is still a force to be reckoned with or was, working in Nairobi and at Athi river, his parents living on the shores of Lake Naivasha, where both died...Andrew, our son, often goes to Diani Beach and stays with the Kennaways there...he knows them. He met George Barbour once. I recall the Kennaways via an airline business? Pharazyns the same...? Am I right? I am not too good at keeping up with Kenyans I am afraid...although there are plenty in the Pietermaritzburg area I am told.....I did attend a gathering more recently and did not know half the people there, but we all spoke the same kind of when we lingo...and I did recognise 80-year-old Bridget Doenhoff that was – now Bridget Walton – she said I spoke exactly the same as I did when I was 6, which I find very hard to believe. She looked the same – I was half the size that I was and she was twice the size that she used to be...very odd encounter.

And there we are.

Please update me on your life.

I well recall you living in the cottage that Dad built and taking orders from him and Mum countering them all the time – as our farm manager at Kituwaba! The old Land Rover, which you really enjoyed driving around...those halcyon days...but at the time, I just wanted to get to the highlights of London...Kituwaba with that fantastic garden, the view of the Cherengani hills and Saboti hill in the distance – Arap Tipu tip was supposed to have hidden ivory in Saboti hill...of Endebess Bluff, Elgon, and so many people of huge interest- Crawfords, Longs, Haslucks, Breckenridges, Motts, Llewellens, Somervilles, Roberts, Attys, Horsefalls, Hildas, Hardys, Barbetons, Stathams, Partridges, Bartons, Wreford-Smiths, Hitches, Sinclairs, Collins, Roberstons, John Kerr, Archers, Boyes, Longs, WintersFalks, Seymour Jones, St Johns, and lots of Afrikaans families of renown – Steenkamps amongst them. Kellys, Bowkers, Grieves, Jensens, Duke of Manchester, Lord Portsmouth, Pinky Jackson, Andersons of apples and avos, and the other Andersons near Kituwaba, and so many many more...funny how as one gets older, one's memories come back...Duir, Doyles, Hills, Sarres, Old Uncle Bill Elmer, GK Podd – old pensioner who lived at Kitale Club – no at the Hotel poor old man, the Camerons, Margaret Le riche, Tweedies, Sinclair Andersons, Normans, Barnleys, Mullachy-Morgans, Barbara Morgan, Pickering, Kidners, Fitzherberts, Monkhouses, lots of Danish farm mangers, Jacobsen of

Maboonde owned by Mrs Elmer, Cramptons, Humphris, Moores of the agricultural farm, Hindles of the same, Perry Morgans, Hisseys, Mundles, Bunny Ray and family, Meyers, Randles, Lussos and on and on and on Manor House school, Kitale School and so MUCH MORE...the list goes on and on.

It would be great to meet up one day... but I am not a great traveller and frankly, the thought of even going back to my beloved Kilifi and Kitale, would actually break my heart. Morgan Grenvilles of Ol Kalou – who settled at Watamu, where Steve Dalton's wife Tilly lived – an amazing marriage and results. Steve was said to be the illegitimate son of an Oppenheimer and was paid off...very sad – he was forced to marry Tilly, who he had lived with before Uhuru, but when Uhuru came along, she had to marry him – she was the shamba girl...she made him a good wife and we liked her a lot. I wonder if they are all still around...the names are now churning out of my head. Liechtes, Frippes, Boyes, Aurets, Nielsens, Macleods, John Kerr, Neilds...Knight families, Totties – missionaries, and so many many more. And all of those who owned garages and businesses in town – Ginger Barret etc...oh wow! What a life.

Keep in touch.

God richly Bless

Chrissie Briscoe (nee Luck)

**Rosalind (Williams) Graham-Smith**

## **A Week in Havana**

**Monday, 27th January 2014**

**VS 063 LGW-HAV STD 1230**

Nine and a half hours flying from gale swept and flooded Britain in winter, at 5.10 on a sunny afternoon our Virgin Atlantic 747 flies up the island to the north and banks steeply for a final southerly approach to Havana. We have recently over flown the Bahamas and Key West but the pang for that other 'favourite' (Floridian) island, less than 100 miles off, passes as, following the coast line edging a very blue sea and we descend, the coconut palms come into sight, the single runway ahead and a perfect soft touch down as our jumbo aircraft makes contact with Cuba. Surprisingly smooth tarmac as I watch the wing flaps come up and we slow and taxi to the newly refurbished international building. Surprising also a jetty leading us on to Arrivals. Not the walk I had expected, across burning tarmac to a single storey island building as Key West. My very first impression of the Cuba that is fast on the up and, for the first of many times, I was so glad to have made it here just in time.

A long held dream to see a once very beautiful and elegant colonial city, peeling and worn out, but with all the character and life of the largest Caribbean island held in a time warp. Just holding on to its communist status with a frail Fidel Castro still in the background, his mind reportedly intact. We saw his brother Raul shake hands with

President Barak Obama at the memorial service of Nelson Mandela, which was the biggest outward signal that the trade embargo with America is not for much longer. I had had an urgency to see Havana before America was back in. Much as I love visiting the US, I did not want to see a Starbucks on every corner or the old and rusty ceiling fans, cooling those lofty and palatial old rooms, all replaced with air conditioning. A wish come true with a week in old Havana. A city made romantic and famous for many of us by one its best known inhabitants, the novelist and a winner of the Nobel Prize for literature, Ernest Hemingway.

Mary and I, having sat in the Exit row, by the main door, were the first off. With no other obvious aircraft arrival there wasn't the usual urgency by many to leave first but with more than 460 of us on board, it still seemed a good idea to be at the front of the line at Immigration.

Every airport seems to have one. Usually, I have found, a middle-aged woman with a bit of power who marshals the new, mostly weary, foreign tourists to her country with a don't mess with me look. No one wants to have problems with Immigration and, doing as we are told, we stand behind the line, passports and visas in hand. And we stand ... and stand ... and stand. And stand. It doesn't seem obvious why. A row of boxes are lined before us, each with a seated beige- uniformed officer. They also wait silently and look at us. We are all waiting for a signal from don't mess with me. 460 something of us and a row of Immigration Officers waiting for the pleasure of one middle-aged woman it seemed.

It took me back to a sweeter immigration moment when, arriving from the US one early morning at Heathrow, we were greeted at the bottom of the ramp by an old turbaned Sikh sitting on a three-legged stool. In his accented English he, with great Sikh courtesy and a little wobble of the head, gestured passengers to their right area. I wondered at the time if people entering Britain for the first time might have wondered if they had landed in the right country. For me, having grown up amongst Asians in Kenya, it felt like coming home.

Back to Cuba, all in lines except one. A young man, I had noticed on board because of his highlighted and long, matted curls, was kneeling on the floor, rummaging through the contents of his large and multi-pocketed rucksack. A curious distraction for us but he was more than distracted. He was becoming increasingly distraught. We asked if we could help. His face was by now pink and shiny with stress and sweat as he told us that he had lost his visa. To enter a visitor has to have a paper visa purchased from the Cuban Embassy. His little slip of paper had gone missing between check-in at London's Gatwick and landing in Cuba.

On the last trip back it was my panicked son, Nick. He was also turning out the contents of his rucksack. He didn't of course need a visa but it was worse. His passport had disappeared. Trying to keep both young men calm, I had wondered what happens

in either situation. Would they land you in Cuba or send you straight back? Would Nick have become like the hapless Mr Victor Navorsky in "The Terminal", an airside resident? Thankfully both found their missing documents and were happily landed.

The baggage carousel was already running, with its bends looping like a formula one track as it disappeared out through the vertical rubber slats, back in and around again. There were a few odd bags and two sets of car tyres travelling round and round. We waited ... and waited ... and waited some more, until the whole full passenger load had joined us. And we all waited. Then, after at least 45 minutes, there was an exodus. Someone observant had realised there was another carousel running. And this one had our baggage on it. It suddenly dawned on 460 something of us that we had been in the wrong place watching a few unclaimed odd bags and two sets of car tyres from some previous arrival. Those of us who had been in pole position, now found ourselves at the back, four passengers deep and without a hope of being able to see our bags. Oh well. This is Cuba.

Fioretta, our guide from Cuba Select Travel, a beaming black Cuban, was relaxed and unperturbed at our delay. And greeted us like a long lost friend. She had a taxi waiting at the kerb, the driver also relaxed and unperturbed as he smoked and leaned on his flimsy yellow Russian Lada cab. Luggage loaded in the small boot and some of it packed around us, we were speeding rather hairily into Havana. With all the windows down and the roar of dilapidated machinery, it was impossible to pick up a word of Fioretta's commentary delivered in hard to understand English. Mary and I smiled politely at her and thought who cares. We've made it! We're in Cuba!

A uniformed hotel concierge with the distinguished good looks of Barak Obama, held the door open into an elegant and beautiful oasis of cool air-conditioned luxury. A white ascending central staircase, looking like the sculpture on a wedding cake and banks of coloured tropical plants decorated its huge, starry lit lobby and bar. Calm notes coming from the grand piano.

It would not have seemed surprising if Rhett Butler in *Gone with the Wind* had stood on the mezzanine balcony looking over. Checked in, Mary and I had only one thought ... And, looking like wild women from our wind-swept ride in the yellow Lada cab and the almost ten hours of flying, we sank into cushioned wicker chairs, and through straws drank from tall refreshing Mojitos. And all was well with the world and Havana.

Refreshed from a quiet (thanks to double glazing) and sound night in one of two king size beds and a soak in a bath the size of a Jacuzzi, in the downstairs lobby restaurant was an endless breakfast buffet, catering for the breakfast customs of many nationalities. Another surprise. Even roast pork with pureed potatoes and gravy. I gave that amiss ... but not the tropical fruit, yoghurts, natural and bright pink; Cuban bread from the extensive variety of breads and pastries; salad bar with selection of cured cold meats and cheeses. I also gave the full English and omelette made to order a miss. The



waiters smart in black uniform and long apron, unobtrusively filling and refilling with fresh coffee. This was no longer the beans and rice of rationing but Habana that is upping its game for travelled guests who are used to world class hotels.

Leaving the air conditioning behind for now, we set out into the already hot humid air. Thrown into the noisy world of car and bicycle horns. Dodging between the rows of classic American cars, decrepit Ladas, bicycle cabs, tuktuks and buses, we crossed Square Cenrale and reached the safety of the edge of Old Habana. A driver had raised his fist and shouted through his open window. We gathered that we had not used the pedestrian crossing. The white paint, so faded we had not seen it.

Against a backdrop of decaying elegance from the 'society days', behind the faded paint, jaded facades; crumbling mosaic, the beauty of the Spanish arches and carved columns fronting wide shaded walkways was evident. And these grand buildings still cast their shadows on the frenetic streets below.

On the first corner, behind a gaggle of waiting bicycle cabs, was a long flamingo pink building. El Floridita. Below the flapping sheets of the first floor's washing line, green writing on the pink pain read, EL FAVORITO DE HEMINGWAY and, further along, THE CRADLE OF THE DAQUIRI. Inside its dim interior is a life-size bronze statue of Hemingway, leaning on his elbow at the bar. This now tourist attraction was his favourite haunt. And is famous for its daquiri. The story is that he could knock back ten in a quick succession. Finding a small table in this overcrowded little bar, we sampled his favourite daiquiri and wonder how anyone could do ten of these punchy rum- based cocktails. Even with the oily banana chips they were so encouraging for us to eat.

A narrow cobbled street, the main drag of old Habana, was bustling. Mostly people like us exploring, intermingling with local Cubans who seemed to be using it going from somewhere to somewhere, because the shops were mainly souvenir ones. With not a lot to buy. But an invitation to each and every one ... by the owner of the shop, which is quite literally front of house. People are now permitted to use the room on the front as a little shop ... and a room upstairs or on the roof as a restaurant. A family member will be out on the street stopping passersby with a menu ... a lot of competition. As the shops, the cafes bars and restaurants, in the warmth, are wide open to the street. Just step in to the live music. A pianist playing piano bar music and bands playing salsa .... progress down the street is slow ... a thick Cuban coffee here and a mojito there to listen with. Or local beer, which is the nearest I have found to my favourite sweet Kenyan Tusker!

And we pause again in a less famous cafe. Everyone seems to know everyone and there is much hugging and hand slapping as friends drop in en route and make conversation with the musicians. In this laid back atmosphere no-one seems to mind and we all pick up where we left off when the band plays again its salsa sound with an African twist. The players step in unison to the rhythm they make as they sing in harmony. No mic. No

need ... they have it all in the raw talent.

The metallic sound of acoustic guitars; washboard percussion from a hollow and scored gourd and stick; the African rhythm of bongos played by strong square hands, the background low twang of the double bass. Melody and soul from the sax. With purple morning glory flowers delicately dropping down the peeling and marked walls and from the ceiling trellice, and the sunlight dappling the concrete floor; a mojito, fresh prawns and lobster on the old wrought iron table and with flip flops off, feet up, I didn't think it could get much better than this.

We had shifted into Cuba timing .... Hemingway knew. Havana and Key West.

From the pavement onlookers joined in. Tapping and swaying. Street sellers also had their wares. A plump African Cuban mammy in blue and white national costume sang hers ... neatly wrapped brilliant white paper cones containing fresh peanuts. She had the rich and powerful voice that came from the genes of her slave roots. We paid for the nuts and I also had to contribute for the photo I took of her.

A little further down the cobbles a queue at a window had people waiting to buy pizza, fresh from the oven and dripping with cheese. A barrow walla with fresh oranges ... the sweet green thin-skinned ones of my African childhood. He saw me looking and called me over and, peeling one with a hand machine; cut it in two and handed it to me with a gappy smile. A refreshing and rather messy variation on fresh orange juice. Bought from another window, children, with fast melting chocolate ice cream from their cones running down their chin and clothes, and adults with a rectangle of ice cream between two wafers. I haven't seen that for a long time. And all of this sandwiched in the narrow street between the bars and cafes with their live music, the shops with music blaring from cd players and boom boxes ... and a mammy singing her wares.

Small dogs, especially daschunds, weaved amongst the throng. There were short-haired little Ruperts everywhere. In one shop their little Rupert ran out to greet me. And we became the best of friends while I chose from carved Cuban gifts to take back to England. When he ran under the floral curtain at the back of the shop, I asked the pretty owner where he had gone to. She told me he had run back into her home. She was friendly and hospitable and I dared to ask if I could have a look in her home. It was the right thing as she proudly held back the curtain to show the perfect bijou little sitting room. Two lacquered dark wooden rockers and an armchair (with of course lace covers) and a modern TV. The walls, lilac. Through an archway I could see the lime green walls of the passage and white wicker furniture. Vases of brightly coloured artificial flowers. It was spotless and immaculate. She was delighted with what she had.

Waiting in the lobby after another lazy start, I watched a smooth dude saunter across the marble floor. Is this Mary's lucky day? Mary who always notices a 'young man' (and the reason I gave her the nickname Joanie, after Joan Collins). Actually, quite shy, I think

Joanie would actually run a mile from anyone .. unless Big John (Wayne) came back, that is. This dude was dressed cool... a white, short sleeved shirt worn softly over dark jeans, unbuttoned at the neck with a loosely tied old boy school tie in yellow and black diagonal stripes. His blue/ black and shining hair curled on his shoulders and was topped with a Habana (my name for the smaller straw version of a Panama that is worn in Cuba). Similar to the style of a modern rock star. His ensemble was complete with black loafers... and a pair of orange framed sunshades. Very California.

But it wasn't us he was heading towards. Rats. And I watched him go over to someone else and enquire if they were waiting for a taxi. They weren't and he ambled back to the entrance. Soon after Fioretta found us. She had our taxi driver with her. And, yes, it was cool Cuban dude! He gave a small bow of the head and, as he smiled, I noticed a gold tooth flash. Perhaps flash dude should be the description. Whatever.

He led us out to the hotel kerbside and held open the passenger door of our limo. The long chrome trimmed lines of an open-topped classic American Ford, straight from the 50's days of Hemingway's Havana. How they keep them all running is a marvel and, like Kenya, there must be hundreds of yards with car mechanics kept fully occupied. Paint shops too. These wonderful old machines, (drawing rooms on wheels as mum with her quick humour described them. ) Buicks, Lincolns, Plymouths and Fords are now repainted in any colour that takes their fancy. Something like choosing anything from a Dulux paint card. And from the look of them layer upon layer of Dulux paint has been used ... bubble-gum pink, hot pink, flamenco pink, EasyJet orange, lime green, Caribbean turquoise, royal blue, banana yellow, tomato red, white, black ... any combination ... and anything else I have forgotten. No kidding, I saw them all on the streets of Havana.

Ours was a pinky lilac on the front half and purple at the back. I thought Barbie would have suited this one. Across the back were the words DEO ES AMOR. It occurred to me we might need a bit of God's love on the ride ahead, especially if he drove anything like our taxi driver from the airport. I wondered what the brakes were like and how many there were. (A taxi in Mombasa went sideways each time we came up to a roundabout. When David asked the reason, the unphased East African driver told us only two brakes were working). Our American Ford didn't have whitewall tyres. I guess those must have gone years ago, but the worn leather upholstery did have a whitewall look about it, except that it was red and white. Perhaps, in its original livery, this old gem was red.

The back of the front seat lurched forward at an unusual angle to allow access to the back and Mary and I clambered in. No seat belts of course, but we are used to that now. Front seat back in place, Fioretta climbed in and then our dude driver in the left hand seat of course. I noticed that he had to open and close his door from the outside. No need to check the wing mirrors ... the glass is white- cloudy with age. And the rear view mirror hung at a jaunty angle. It's only use was to act as a hook for a rosary and silver crucifix catching the sunlight. Swopping his cigarette for a mobile which he held to his ear, he, one-handed, pulled out into the morning's traffic. And Fioretta again began

the commentary we couldn't hear or understand on account of the wind and poor English. Feeling like 50's film stars, Mary and I smiled politely again, and settled back in the sagging comfort of the leather.

The sky blue and the sun high, I wished I had taken my sunscreen out of my pool bag. Oh well. At least people in England will know I've been to the sun. I also wished I had a gorgeous Hermes scarf to tie around my hair. Grace Kelly.

I don't know where we went, but we went. Fioretta's enthusiastic and well-rehearsed commentary of Cuba's heroes and architecture was lost in the wind. One arm on the window, the driver talked to his mates on his mobile, which rang several times. I don't suppose they have yet got to prosecuting for this. Through the old streets of dilapidated buildings festooned with their washing lines, and some with scaffolding, with the wind flapping my hair in my eyes, we sped up along the sea front and looked out on a mill pond ocean. A few fishing boats that bring in some of the wonderfully fresh king prawns and lobster that we have sampled. Through the well-lit tunnel across to the other side of the bay, I noticed that the rumble of the old engine became a roar before the road began to rise, and realised this old American gal needed lots of right foot on the pedal and a good run in to get up the other side. Out in the sunshine again we were greeted by a marvellous sight as we saw Fioretta's "surprise".

**Christ of Havana.** Representing Jesus of Nazareth on a hilltop, overlooking the bay and Havana, the work of a Cuban sculptor. 66' high and weighing around 320 tons, it was carved from 67 blocks of Italian marble, which had been personally blessed by Pope Pius X11. The eyes were left empty so that he was looking anywhere and everywhere with his hands in an attitude of blessing.

Whatever one's faith or none, it would be hard to not be touched by this towering image of gentleness and greatness. And reminds one that, despite its turbulent and communist years, Cuba is a predominately Roman Catholic country with its citizens, as our driver with his dangling car rosary and Fioretta with her gold neck cross, church-going Christians. Perhaps, as Cuba looks to a new future of prosperity and growth for its economy and people, it would be good to close on this part of my fabulous and memorable Havana journey and a dream that came even better than true. And wish that her people seek a good dream as they look up to the man that watches over them ...

The Jesus Christ who came for Faith Hope and Love.

So ... God bless you all!

And my love,

Roz

## **MOUNT ELGON**

*I found this on the internet somewhere so I thought I'd add it to the newsletter.*

*Aiden*

By Lowie Potgieter

Mount Elgon, over 14,000 feet high, is practically on the equator yet it gets perishingly cold up there on this mountain which apparently has the largest base of any one single mountain in the world.

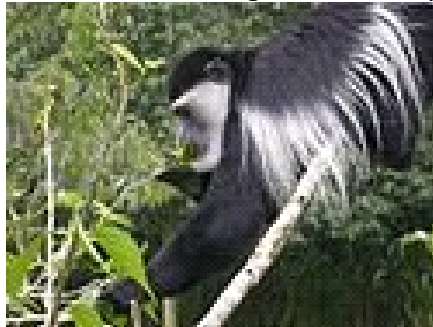


Endebess Bluff on Mount Elgon.

Though Mount Elgon lies very close to Kitale, many of us had the privilege of viewing it from our verandahs in the Eldoret area. Having been a keen mountaineer for most of my life, the mountain has intrigued me since my school days in Kenya. **Ule Sunde, Dan Shaw** and I, together with other school friends, climbed it just about every single school holiday. Subsequently, my wife Marion and I climbed it together with the late Jim Little who was also a teacher at the Hill School, Eldoret. The last time Marion and I went up Mount Elgon was with two young American missionaries. This time we used a small 4- wheel drive Suzuki and managed to drive all the way up through the forest to the moorlands.

It was 5.30 am and the land was shrouded in mist when we headed for the mountain. Elgon has a rain forest which extends to an altitude of about 10,000 feet with thousands of magnificent trees, vines and exotic shrubs. As we neared the upper limits of the forest, we came to dense bamboo jungles penetrated only by buffalo and elephant trails. They are the only animals that possess the strength to cross these otherwise impenetrable barriers.

For anyone who loves nature and animals it is a paradise as it contains a multitude of animal species and also a large variety of insects and butterflies, some being unique to this forest. Then there are the mountain exhibitionists – the Colobus monkeys, a rare species famous for their aerobatics. They literally fly 50 feet through the air, land on a flimsy branch which bends near to breaking point and then recoils, launching them like skydivers in their black and white suits into



space. If you are not mindful of the time they will keep you amused for hours on end and you won't get to the caves before the sun has set in the west. Endeleva haraka kidogo!

These caves are not that far from the summit but, as we are on the subject of caves, it is worth mentioning the caves that are at the base of the mountain. These are massive caves which travel deep into the mountainside. Being full of natural salts and chemicals, the animals continually dig away at the roof and the sides with their horns and lick up the nutrients that are so vital to them. In other parts the roof was too high for their reach and as you shine your torch upwards thousands of eyes reflect back from bats hanging above. If disturbed they drop several feet to gain air speed; then there is a loud 'woosh' as they fly, followed by their shrill sonic beeps, a built in radar system for blind flying. Not only has the Almighty provided a transponder system, but also given these creatures the capability of inverted landing on an upside down perch. The natives have many stories about these caves and they are prominent in their folk lore with a lot of superstition being attached to them.

Some of the rocks in this area are highly radio-active and my friends, the Hansen brothers who farmed near Kitale, also had many stories to tell about these caves. As we bumped up the final approach to the edge of the forest the mist cleared and we could see forever across the green valleys to the purple ranges of the Cherangani Hills. The Cheranganis are over 8,000ft in altitude and in many countries would be classified as mountains. We finally abandoned our vehicle and then climbed the rest of the way to the caves which are about 1,500ft from the summit. There we slept the night. At about one o'clock in the morning there was a thunder storm and the rain pelted down. We had a lovely stream of ice-cold water flowing through the cave. It was nice for our early morning tea but was not appreciated at that time of night as we got quite soaked.

There was a magnificent sunrise next morning with the cloud bank lying far below us and the Cheranganis peeping out like islands in the sea. We lay our sleeping bags out in the sunshine to dry and made a breakfast of porridge, the pot was unfortunately tainted by sardines – the dinner from the previous night - which did not deter us in the least.

When you have climbed a mountain, it invariably leaves you hungry and the Sunde sawmill on the way down was a favourite stop when we were school boys. Ole's mother was a good and generous cook and had the uncanny aptitude of being able to over-feed our receptive tumbus. Ole's dad was Mount Elgon forest Image source: [thetresureblog.wordpress.com](http://thetresureblog.wordpress.com) clever with his hands and we admired the lorry that he converted into a motor home. As a family they drove this vehicle called 'The Grey Goose' from the Kenya equator the length of Africa and right up to Norway. I last saw Ole in Rhodesia. Sadly, we learned later that he was murdered on his farm in Zimbabwe.

I hope for those of us who are left, this will stir up your own recollections of that wonderful mountain and your own climbing experiences ... kwaheri wa Rafiki!

### **Joanna Pickford**

In June 2017 I took my Family on a 3-week trip to Kenya to see where I grew up and to have a lovely safari holiday. There are 5 of us including my 2 grandchildren. We planned the trip with James from Travel 'n' style in Nairobi.

We arrived very jet lagged in Nairobi and I was amazed at how busy it was and how innovative the people were using every spare space to try and make a living. Whilst in Nairobi we visited the Elephant orphanage, the giraffe centre and Karen Blixen house.

The orphanage has changed a lot since I first visited it many moons ago. I loved the way those baby elephants love their carer and how they cavort just like children in excitement at getting their milk.

Kitale is so changed it is quite amazing that I recognised anything at all but I knew the road into town immediately with the big gum trees and the show grounds. Kitale club where we stayed thanks to **Cherry Dale** an old Kitale family, who arranged for us to be temporary members is now gated with police at the gate and an inspection of the car. The club made me laugh out loud it has hardly changed at all in fact I think the lamp shades are just the same as always and the old buffalo head in the front foyer. But so small. My memory is of things being so much bigger! I immediately recognised the area where we danced when there were dances and I could see the dance taking place where **Forstina Sovic** and her partner won the hold the cushion dance. You had to pass the cushion from couple to couple without dropping it and if you dropped it you were out. Tina held it to her partners shoulder with her boufon hairdo and when the dance was over and she could let the cushion go her hair just popped right back into shape! The Sovic's owned the local Hair salon I think and Tina had amazing beehive hair do's in the early 60's. That's a fashion that hasn't come back yet or if it did I missed it!

Out on the veranda I sat on the edge wall and had another memory of a young guy trying to chat me up but he was so drunk he just fell backwards off the wall into the garden below and he didn't have a scratch! I can't remember who it was!

We had lunch of fried chicken and yummy spinach all buttery as well as fried potatoes! Then we were shown our cottage. We had a cottage to ourselves, two double rooms with a 3rd bed and a bathroom in each room with an intersecting door. It was roomy, clean and comfortable and the mosquito nets quite fancy. We had lunch in the club and a relaxing afternoon getting over jet lag before going out with Dexter to look at the town.

Dexter was very careful not to let us out of the car because Kitale is not a tourist town and you can get mobbed by people begging for food or money or trying to sell something and as there are a lot of people they can also pickpocket. But I wish I had got out because I could have taken much nicer photos if I had. It was so full of life and colour and vitality it was just wonderful. The Bongo where dad used to drink with Daniel Arap Moi, now former president of Kenya, with lots of places named after him! is still there. As is Soy Trading tho in a different place.





The Kitale Hotel we knew, burnt down has been replaced with other buildings, but the banks are still there. The park by the roundabout now has many market stalls and I don't know if there is a park any more I couldn't see one. There are high rises and a shopping mall, which like all malls in Kenya has security checks at the boom gate and security checks for people and bags at the entrance. We just drove around a bit taking pictures out of the window. Then I wanted to see the post office and take a picture of the letterbox 677 which was ours by the time we got one. The post office is pretty much the same and I went directly to the spot, but the letter boxes are blue now and a 3 has been added in front 3677 wasn't where our box used to be but the post boxes were still there.

I guess when you grow up in a country you are comfortable with its idiosyncrasies and Kenyans were always ones to try and pull your "hear" strings to get something they want even though it's a bit more in your face now. I remember a song people used to sing, "Mimi na take ruhusa bwana kuenda Giligili, bibi yangu mgonjwa sana mimi vilivili" which is a bit derogatory this day and age but was used to illustrate the pulling the heart strings. It's basically says "I need leave because my wife is sick and so am I. Speaking Swahili, which I did just out of nowhere it flooded back and I was chattering away, helps too because that means you know the country and the ways of people!

I just loved Kitale and the names of the shops. I tried hard to get photos of favourites for you all but it's hard from a car and we had to learn to ask Dexter to stop or slow down! It must seem quite mad to local people to see us wanting to take photos of for instance a shop called "Blessings hair salon and butchery" Being a designer, Abra loved the hand written signs with colour and pattern. You just don't see sign writing done by hand any more except perhaps a chalk board in a restaurant. So I'll attach as many as I think fit and hope I don't clog your email boxes.

When we came in to Kitale from the airstrip I recognised the main road straight away with the gum trees and the show ground. But all along the roadside are market stalls

and plant nurseries. Kitale was totally different I hardly recognised it gone is the sedate little town and in its place is a vibrant, colourful, town with a gated shopping centre and multi-story buildings. The Bongo is still there and Soy Trading though he has moved. The hotel apparently burnt down and is replaced by many shops and the park by the hotel roundabout has market stalls.

We drove out to find Karamoja Farm and went on the Endebess Road. There were shops and houses and churches all along the way out of town until the gum trees. Endebess is a small town but we didn't stop because I was keen to find Karamoja but I wish I had. We saw the familiar Nyories in the fields that had been ploughed just the same as always. We turned down the road towards the Kassawi river and drove for what seemed an age with nothing looking familiar the farms have been divided and there are lots of small holdings with decent looking sorts of houses. We reached the Kassawai river and so I knew we had passed the farm. Luckily some local people came and I asked if they knew the farm. They went and got a Mezee who hugged me and was so pleased he remembered dad and that he had two farms in the Cheranganies. He told us how to get to the farm. It has a church at the entrance now which is in a different place and goes to the back of the house past the coffee. I could hardly recognise a thing. Part of the house was burnt down and it had a smaller extension. It was hard to get bearings and things seemed so small. Someone has planted a row of very tall gum trees across the view of Mt Elgon! The coffee factory and dairy and dad's office are still there and the water tanks dad built on with "Built by?? For AJ Pickford 1949". In the concrete base. The next day we tried to find the two farms in the Cheranganis but no luck, there is a village built where the entrance to Carleon was called Sibaga and plenty of locked promising gates which could have been Lapuet.

We went to the old Stoneham's museum and it is a bit sad but they are trying hard. All Stoneham's best items have been taken to Nairobi for "Safe Keeping" We also went to Saiwa which is now Kenya's smallest national park. It is quite lovely but I doubt it gets many visitors. I feel it should be linked to Elgon Elephants and the museum to make a three-way vision for visitors. Kitale is very Christian there are many, many churches, some probably just a method of earning a living. It is also not on the tourist trail which it should be but it needs the visitors to support a decent hotel.

From Kitale we went to Njoro via Eldoret where I visited the convent and discovered it is also very small. It is now a catholic university and has more sentimental and fires of hell statuary that you can poke a stick at!

Eldoret its self has grown and I could not recognise it at all. At Njoro we stayed the night in the most beautiful serene out of the way place Ziwa Bush lodge. It was just delightful as were the staff and hosts who are Australian. They run an orphanage as well and many of the staff have graduated from the orphanage school. Again the boys just loved the space to run and run and the pool and the fishing in the dam by the restaurant/lounge. You fish over the railing with a hook on a stick! We let everything go of course they were small. The bird life was amazing. I had forgotten how colourful are the Kenya birds.

From the Bush Lodge to Nakuru National Park which we loved we saw everything and I

took the best most handsome lion picture ever! There are Black and white Rhinos too. The park is being encroached on all sides. You can see the town all around one side and the lodge entrance has had to be moved because a shift in the tectonic plates. This has seen the lake increase in size and the old entrance is flooded. The increase in the lake has also diluted the soda content making the algae which the flamingos love not so prolific; so fewer flamingos. From Nakuru we drove to Mount Kenya Safari club via the climb out of the rift valley and Thompson's falls. Looking down into the valley from the lookout is different with the valley full of small holdings. I couldn't see if there were tea rooms at Thompsons Falls anymore because we were shepherded into the area by the falls but keen stall holders. The falls are just the same, plenty of flow, but the area close by has many market stalls and when you are looking at the falls you get collared by some stall holders who try and get you to go to their shop. On the hill above the falls are some blocks of flats, well that's what they look like.



Mount Kenya Safari club is Maradadi and Safi Sana and Sawa! Very beautiful with extensive gardens and land and a maze and everything! The children ran and ran and ran. There were Marabu storks and Egyptian geese, Nyories and colobus monkeys roaming the roof and jumping through the trees and they have an orphanage with Bongo, leopards and cheetah and all kinds of rescued animals and birds. Some of the things I wanted to see which you can see in the parks now cos you can't get out of the cars were there so we saw rock Hyrax, and pigmy hippos. Tony Mills came up to the club from his home in Nanyuki area to have tea with us and it was lovely to see him again and

chat about back when time began! From Mt Kenya to Ol Pejeta which is an amazing conservancy. We saw the last 3 northern white rhinos in the world. The keepers know every rhino by name. They have a Rhino Grave yard. We saw a baby rhino suckling its mother in amongst a herd of cattle and it was running in circles just for the joy of living it was a beautiful thing to watch. We saw eland, water buck, bush buck, jackals, Grevys zebra and more. From there we went to Amboseli via Nairobi and We must talk roads and driving! I think the drivers in Kenya must be the most skilled in the world because there we saw only 2 accidents in 20 days and we should have seen dozens! The old maxim of driving on the best side of the road still holds! Basically you just drive wherever, however, to get where you are going as painlessly as possible!

Amboselli is just beautiful and amazing we stayed in Ol Toukai which is next to the old Amboselli lodge which flooded, not quite sure why but it has been abandoned and is a ghost lodge with Impala sitting in the shade under the hotel bedroom windows. The swamp area is full of wildlife elephants, hippo, buffalo, zebra, every animal we were even lucky enough to see a cheetah. We have Mt Kilimanjaro pictures with Elephants,



Lions, Zebra and us of course but not giraffe which are in decline like the cheetah. We were very lucky to see a baby elephant suckling. Really we were blessed. Baraka! We also saw very few ostriches and one secretary bird. From Amboselli to Tsavo west and Aruba Lodge here we saw some of the rare treats I was longing for. Every animal was reddish from the dust. We saw dik dik, lesser kudu, gerenuk, those vulture guinea fowl with such beautiful blue wings and Lions on a kill. Oh it was a wonderful holiday.

We ended up at the coast for a couple of days at Diani beach then white sands beach where we rested by the pool drinking and eating too much. Mombasa is the busies place with just one 2 lane road in and out! We caught the Kilandini ferry. Everything is built up and there are people everywhere. Bright colourful and vibrant. All the art and craft work is amazing and so reasonably priced. The beaches were deserted probably because of the hawkers but it didn't stop us from wandering the beach and repeating "we just want

to walk please.” At Diani we gate crashed a very large and colourful Indian wedding which took place over the 3 days we were there. The groom rode up the beach on a camel and the grooms’ men tried to jump like the Masai.



Finally, we flew to Zanzibar where we did a Stonetown and spice tour and a tour to see the red colobus. Zanzibar is amazing. I recommend it to everyone BUT if you go, go for more time than we did and spend a couple of days at least in stone town itself before heading off to a resort or around the island because it has so much to see and is just amazing. Don't go during Ramadan its 90% a Muslim country. At least if you do go in Ramadan be prepared to not eat or drink in public. There is an amazing little Italian restaurant on a rock called “the Rock” Let me tell you Peeps Kenya is as beautiful and as safe as it ever was. It desperately needs tourism as does Zanzibar since the collapse of the clove trade. I am still euphoric about the very best holiday anywhere ever. And so reasonably priced.

You can't go to Kenya and be bemoaning “how it used to be” everything changes but the good things are still there in spades full.

## **Tony Sunde**

Hi Aiden....

Sorry for the delay in responding.

Neils is my cousin – his Dad and my Dad were brothers originally sons of a sawmilling pioneering family on Mount Elgin. My Dad (Haakon Sunde) married the eldest daughter of Albert and Jessie Boy who were farming on the foothills of Mt. Elgin at Endebess.

We moved to Donyo Sabuk and I went to St Mary's School in Nairobi.

The Boy family had 2 sons David (Ending up as the Director of Public Prosecutions in Hong Kong) and Ronnie Boy who farmed on Elgin and is still residing with his wife (Berbera) near Mt. Kenya.

After 'Uhuru' my family moved to Tanganyika where we were on various sisal estates and following further Uhuru's we moved to Johannesburg but found life there somewhat alien to what the family knew so after 2 years, we uprooted again to Fort Victoria in Rhodesia to work on a sugar estate. From there we moved to Livingstone where my Dad operated a barge system that brought teak sleepers down the Zambezi from Katima Mulilo to Livingstone before finally they returned to Rhodesia.

In the meantime, in 1965 I came to UK to join the RAF and after an electronic servicing spell that took me to Singapore for 2 years, I returned to fly Shackleton and Nimrod submarine hunters.

After leaving the RAF, I worked in the financial market of a bank for some 12 years before I contracted Mumps which crucified me and I was forced to retire. We sold our house and moved back to the Highlands where we bought an old school and converted it and ran it as an Outdoor Centre for the next 20 years or so.

For the next 10 years we ran 2 Ceramic Painting Studios before so called 'retiring' 4 years ago!! near Grantown on Spey. We have 3 professional children and 4 grandchildren who all live within 4/5 miles of us and my wife (Gill) looks after her mother (97) Who has bungalow in our grounds.

I hope this has not been too much of an epistle for you (!) but it may tie in a few loose ends in the relationship geography of Kitale School.

Kind regards,

Tony.

P.S. I was also at Kitale School for a period with Niels and fell madly in love with Sven Robin's sister – Christine Jensen!!

**Mike McFarnell**

Aiden,

Thank you for the newsletter.

<https://youtu.be/Uw3r32FyrZM>



<http://www.kenya63.org.uk/listing/mrs-e-m-thompson-1886-1974>

The farm at Kitale was purchased in 1925 by Major J B & Mrs E M Thomson. The Major had fought in East Africa in World War I and when the Colonial Office set up a lottery for land in Kenya, he applied. His wife, Elisa was not keen to go to East Africa but was prepared to go to South Africa. He and his young family, his mother and a Mr and Mrs Harmer emigrated from England to South Africa. In Grahams Town, he let on that he had won this land in Kenya. It was decided that he should go ahead and look at the land but he only got as far as Durban when he was rushed to hospital with appendicitis. Elisa joined him in Durban leaving their children Pat, Gill and Stella in Grahams Town with the Major's mother. When the Major eventually arrived in Kenya the lottery land had been reallocated. At this point he decided to buy 400 acres from Mr Kirk in Kitale. Stella, her sisters and grandmother left Grahams Town by boat for Mombasa. They travelled from Mombasa by train as far as Nakuru. The last section was made in a model T Ford. It took a life time to convert the 400-acre highland grassland into a mixed farm with maize, sheep, pigs and later cattle, once the farm had been cleared of ticks.

The film was taken by my aunt Gill Thompson on her farm in Kitale.

Kind regards

Mike



Mrs E M Thomson 1942 serving tea to army officers on the farm