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BROOKLANDS BARAZA

A newsletter to keep Old Yorkists and Laibon in touch and their friendships alive

Issue Number 2 - March 2021

It is very gratifying that the first edition of the Brooklands Baraza newsletter has been so well received. We have been overwhelmed with messages of thanks and congratulations for which I am most grateful. Just a few are attached in this edition but thanks to all.

As editor, it has been such an unexpected pleasure to receive emails from Old Yorkists and Laibon who I had either forgotten or never actually knew. I am sure that is what David Lichtenstein enjoyed most and inspired him to write his annual siku kuu. It reminds me that we are all part of the same fraternity, whatever generation and wherever we live. It is important and rewarding to stay in touch.

So, thanks for all for your letters and contributions. Thanks for taking the trouble to write in, to share your memories, your adventures and your photographs with us. Please keep them coming. Our newsletter would not exist without you.

This issue contains some great contributions which I know will interest and amuse you. Amongst them, Roger Maudsley describes an extraordinary road trip and Robin Crosher recalls a fund-raising experience that some of you may remember. Both are great raconteurs and I look forward to more from them, and you, in future.

As I write, the future here in the UK looks brighter. Covid-19 is in retreat as a mass vaccination programme extends across the country. I hope the same applies where you are.

In Cornwall, we anticipate a mass return of holidaymakers from up country. It is an annual migration that is welcomed with some trepidation. Empty beaches, pubs and restaurants will soon be crowded. We need them, the local economy thrives on them but we greet them with mixed feelings. I can remember the same in Kenya when our kids wore tee shirts which said 'we are not tourists, we live here' You know what I mean. You have been there too.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(some of the many, gratefully received)

Many thanks for sending that and congratulations on your appointment - very good choice if I may say so. Thanks also for including my boxing article - always good to start a new publication with a really classy piece !!!

All the very best.

Mark Milbank – Lugard 1951-55

You have done a great job as honorary editor of Brooklands Baraza.

Doug Duncan's trip up Kilimanjaro was interesting - health and safety with risk assessment means it couldn't be done in 2021. In 1957 I completed the 14th Outward Bound course with one Luigi Nassimbeni starting at that well-known metropolis called Loitokitok. One of the first nights up the mountain was spent in caves with N.M. responsible for the stew pot but he mistook the salt for potato powder! Because the weather was reasonable, we completed the climb to Kaiser Wilhelm Spitz. - bet it is not called that any longer. Up the mountain the tree line was really evident, Kibo Hut functional but uncomfortable, the scree unforgettably tedious at that altitude. As Doug commented, it was the first time most of us had walked on snow

I well remember "Trial by Jury" Starring Dom Spencer as the judge, and a very good judge too!

So sad to read of Bruce Dall's passing and the tragic death of Dr Stephen Mogusu from Covid-19.

Best wishes, many thanks.

Neil Morison – Kirk 1953-58

A pleasure to read - especially as a foundation member of the DOY I was the first editor all those years ago.

All the best

Alan Frank

BRILLIANT!! Well done and look forward to many more.

Reading about the Killi climb brought back vivid memories - my experience was exactly as described. In fact, I still have my climbing stick which sits proudly in the corner of my study. What saddens me today are the photo's of that dear mountain with so little snow. I also had some of the 'everlasting finder's and they only disintegrated 15 years ago!!!

And then, of course, there were the CCF trips to Buffalo Springs etc. I used to have some photos of us swimming there but seem to be able to find hide nor hair of them.... Can't believe someone out there doesn't have any (Paul T-T?).

Cheers

Tim Clark - Speke '63

Just a note to say thank you for your email (with attached Brookland Baraza). Seeing this title again really brought back memories as in 1953 I was one of those who was roped in to distribute the very first issue, which I think was edited by Mr Travis assisted by T.L. Evans the "Speke" housemaster.

I wonder if a copy of that first issue still exists?

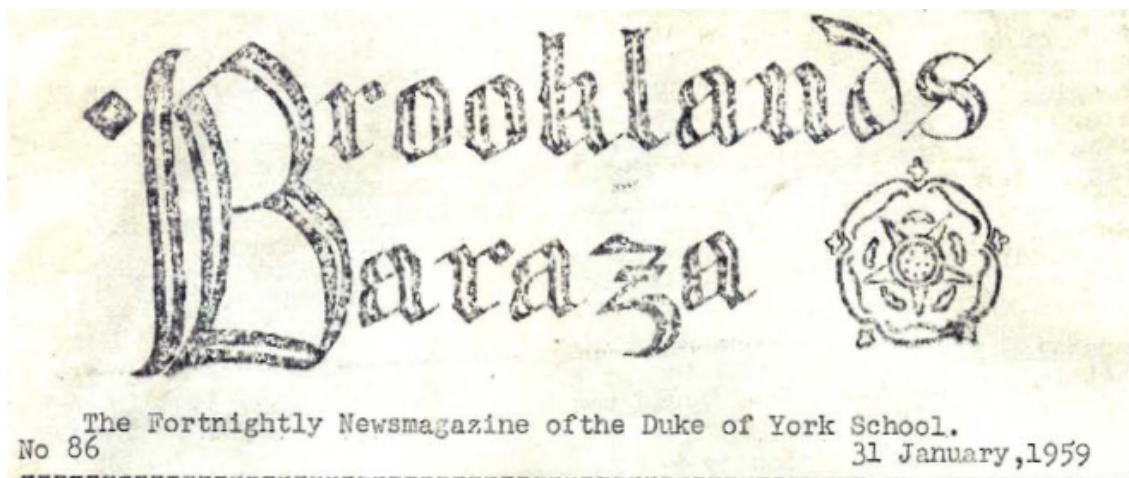
Gareth Oldham – Speke 1953-54

I am currently writing my memoirs of the first 26 years of my life in which the Duko of course was a major part, and an influence on my whole life in many ways. Sad to say, I have not got a good photograph of RH James my Headmaster, nor a good photograph of my housemaster 'Fergy' Ferguson. I was very honoured as Head Boy to speak on behalf of the students at the farewell dinner in the School Hall when we bid 'Pansy' James farewell and best wishes, when he retired. Mr.Ferguson was a great influence and, sad to say, I let him down badly when as Head boy I was rusticated by the new Head a few days before I was to leave school anyway, after a misdemeanour.

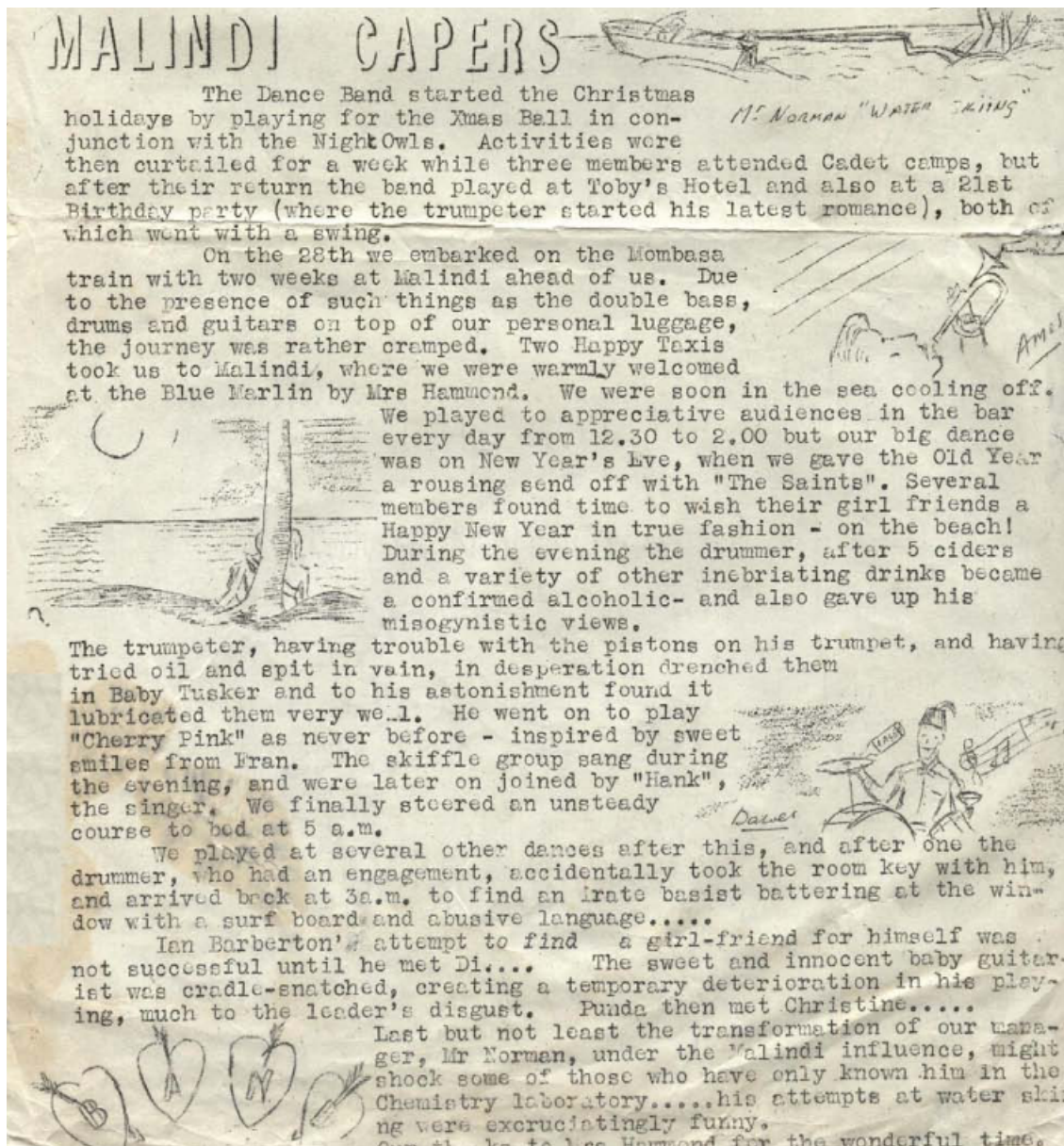
I would be delighted if by any chance you could perhaps help me in obtaining the two photographs.

Yours faithfully,

Colin Brooks – Thomson 1954-60



An excerpt from an original – I hope you can read it.

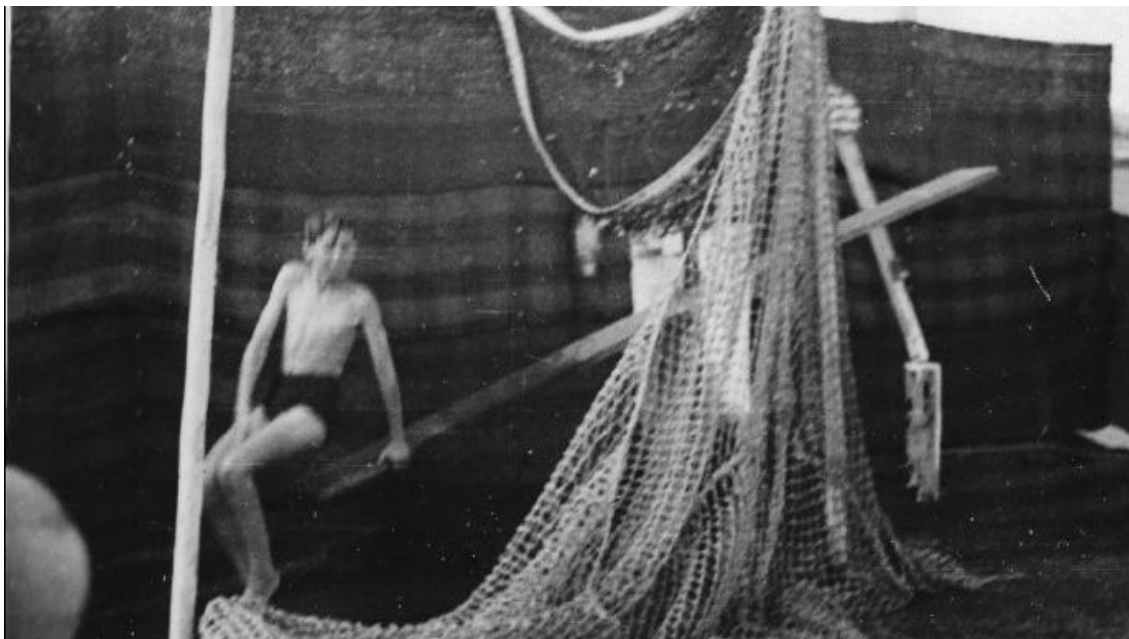


THE SCHOOL FETE

A contribution from **Robin Crosher** - Kirk 1952-58

Robin writes: These 2 photos were taken during the School Fete in 1952. I think that this was one of the first events to raise money to build the school chapel. It was eventually built during the year after I left school 7 years later.

The first photo is of me being ducked in a pit of very cold water in the 'Ducking the Rabble' stall. For a small donation a visitor would be given 3 balls to throw at a target holding one end of a see-saw with a rabble on the other end. If the target was hit hard enough the see-saw was released and the rabble fell into the water. It was popular with the senior boys at the time but some decided not to throw their balls at the target but at the rabble!! Consequently, a net had to be found in a hurry to protect the poor rabble from serious injury! The net has been lowered for the photo. There were 3 rabbles, of which I was one, designated to wear swimming trunks and be prepared to get wet. We each did a 30 min stint with a 1 hour break to get warm again on that very cold day.



The second photo is of Mr Travis holding an auction at the Fete.

Research by Robin Crosher reveals that Lieut. J. F. Travis OBE came to the school in 1952 to coach Rugby and to teach English subjects, Scripture and woodwork. His involvement with the CCF was also welcomed. He was no stranger to Kenya and had helped to run the Preparatory School at Turi, having previously served for a short time on the staff of the Nairobi Primary School.

Ed adds: Robin scanned these photos from his well-thumbed old photo album. There is a more comprehensive article on the fete in the 1953 edition of The Yorkist magazine, see photos page 35 and

OF LIONS AND SENHORITAS

A contribution from **Roger Maudsley** – Kirk 1956-62

It must have been Dan Dare of the Eagle comic that gave Elon Musk the idea of going to Mars - remember the spaceships that landed vertically? Or it might have been Westerns viewed in a Nairobi cinema on Saturday mornings, with their dashing Mexican cowboys and romantic senhoritas, that opened up the possibilities of Latin America for me!

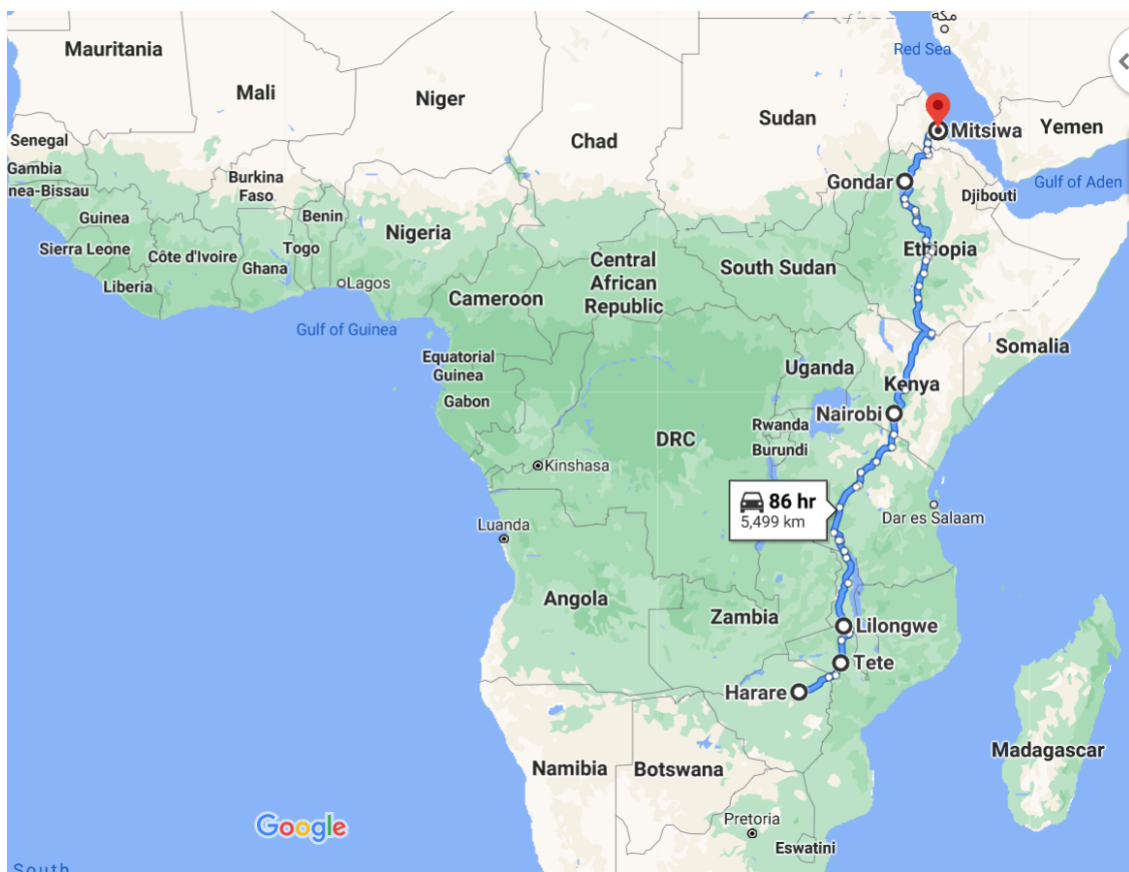
A return to Kenya, post-university, found me managing earthworks operations for Mowlem. First, on the new Kajiado-Namanga road from a base next to Amboseli Game Park. Later, on improvements to the Uganda road from an abandoned barracks near Broderick Falls. Plus, lions, lots of lions; overturning one night on an unused road on the Athi Plains, and a badly timed visit to Kampala after Idi Amin's coup, all provided drama. But, on the whole, except for weekend trips to visit friends, it was a life of dusty, semi-isolation.

Seeking a remedy, and inspired by Doug Duncan, after a serious bout of hepatitis, I set out on the 3,000 km drive to Rhodesia in my Volvo 122S accompanied by an Irish girl called Meta as a passenger. After time on Doug's farm and a camping trip around Rhodesia and Mozambique with Rob McGuinness, who I met on the steps of Meikles Hotel, I spent 6 months finishing a township sewerage works in ultra-quiet Umtali.

Not interested in staying in Rhodesia or returning to Kenya, and not wanting to live under apartheid in SA, I remember considering a move to Luanda, then touted as "the playground of Africa", as a possible departure point for a boat to Brazil, but there weren't any! Now where did that idea come from?

Instead, I decided to drive overland to the UK in my increasingly beat-up Volvo, with girlfriend Pene as my travelling companion.





What was I thinking of to travel through Mozambique's unsettled Tete province, shifta-ridden southern Ethiopia, and rebellious Eritrea? At dusk, in shifta country, we'd head off into the bush to camp after making sure no one was watching. There was also a famine and at one point we were stopped by starving children blocking the road.

On reaching Gondar our luck ran out and we broke down! We spent 6 weeks touring Ethiopia in local buses while waiting for a spare part being sent from Nairobi by Peter Neep. I remember appalling hotels; feeding wild hyenas under the walls of Harrar and an armed guard, on the seat behind us opening fire through the bus window. Finally, after sampling Asmara's magnificent Italian food and suffering the appalling coastal humidity of Masawa (also known as Mitsiwa), we boarded a ship to Jeddah with the car.

From Jeddah, with a side trip to Petra, it was asphalt all the way: Jordan, Syria and Turkey whisked by but then it all becomes a blur as we hit the home straight! The adventure was Africa. After getting off the Channel ferry, as we drove north from Dover, I remember thinking, after all the tension and drama: "that was fantastic, I could turn round now and do the trip all over again"!

Having split up with Pene – I'm not a good travelling companion when facing months of risk and uncertainty - I found myself in London, desperate to escape an oncoming winter. The US wanted proof of a return fare and an Australian visa took 6 months. The thought of Brazil surfaced again: right away, as a tourist.

So, after selling the Volvo for 50 pounds and reserving cash for a last-ditch flight to South Africa, I shipped out with university friend Andrew Blake, via Lisbon, to Rio de Janeiro. Andrew, met his future wife on the boat and now lives in New Zealand. I, for better or worse, found a new life in "the land of the future"

Ed writes: many thanks to Roger for this interesting saga. There is more to come in the next edition about his life in Brazil.

DISCONNECTED JOTTING

An edited section of a letter to Doug Duncan from Bryan Tichborne – Thomson/Elliot 1957-60

I'd heard somewhere that Ricky Turner had disappeared into the cauldron that was the Congo at that time. When I was a buck private in the Rhodesian Light Infantry we were hounded by mercenary recruiters in the pubs of Bulawayo. Quite a few guys were tempted by the big money offered and I've heard some of them didn't get to spend much of it!

But I guess a brain haemorrhage is a more likely scenario - very sad. As was the fate of Billy Bayles, an earlier DOY climbing companion of mine. I was halfway through my recruit training in the RLI when I heard he'd died during a simple operation to reset his nose. Medical misadventure or reaction to anaesthesia I suppose. Far too young to go.

You had an interesting working life but unfortunate that Mugabe put paid to your farming career. Cotignac sounds a good place in which to live. Certainly, much better than Zim! Another old Duko contact, Lance Abel was badly beaten up by Mugabe's thugs & forced off his farm. He ended up in the North Island of NZ. We had plans to catch up but sadly he got Alzheimer's and died before that could happen. A direct result of his injuries apparently.

I am in touch with a few other Old Yorkists in NZ; Russ & Roger Ballard and Ron Peet. Plus, Francis Keast and Danny Ravn in W Australia and Robert Atkins in UK. I'm also a member of the Kenya Regt Association (NZ branch) - on the strength of our DOYS cadet force badge! Have been to a few excellent curry lunches but as these are mainly held in Auckland, I don't get to many.

We also have an electrician called Andrew in Akaroa (population 600) who was at Lenana School. He is a nice guy, born in Nairobi like me. We amuse other locals by greeting each other & chatting in Swahili.



Ed adds: maybe we will get Andrew to contribute in future. How he ended up in Akaroa would be an interesting story which he might like to share.

In the meantime, I attach a painting by Bryan's wife Nancy, who is an accomplished watercolour artist. Here is an example of her work.

More can be seen on her website: www.watercolours.co.nz

AVOIDING THE MAN-EATING LIONS OF NAIROBI

By Len Potts and **Mike Harrington** - Kirk 1956 - 1960

Why did I agree to this — anything to oblige I suppose.

What persuaded us to ride our bikes down the road to Mombasa — I think it might have been the challenge of Peter White having done it a couple of terms previously.

Len and I thought that, following a few fitness runs on our bikes out to Nairobi West on a Sunday, we would manage Nairobi to Mombasa in four days. As we needed to cover about 100 miles to Sultan Hamud on the first day, we had to set off before dawn.

We were happily cruising side by side on the tarmac road outside Nairobi when we heard a noisy disturbance and loud roaring coming from the bush on our left, which was Len's side. He looked round and screamed – 'A LION' I reacted with 'RIDE LIKE HELL' and we shot away as though out of a gun.....



I don't know about the guy in this picture but I reckon we would have qualified for the Olympics the following year!

Although Len would have made a more substantial meal than this skinny wretch, I guess we must have disturbed the beast's dinner. Fortunately, not enough to persuade it to leave that behind and chase us instead.

Frightened out of our wits we took a detour and sought refuge at Embakasi Airport where there were only a couple of security guys on duty at such an early hour. The boss man exclaimed that we must be mad – saying he would not dare to drive along that road at night. What a wimp!

He sat us down in an office and offered us some coffee. I wanted to visit the loo but found that we had been locked in. We subsequently discovered that he had phoned the school thinking we had run away. The Headmaster was not best pleased but confirmed we had not.

Thereafter, somewhat later than planned, we were allowed to go on our way. Arriving at Mac's Inn, at Mtito Andei, a day and a half later we learnt that we were in the news and my Mum was frantic. Having reassured her that we were fine, we continued on our journey and arrived in Mombasa 3 days later.

Ed writes: Many thanks Guys for being persuaded to contribute this classic story.

MEMORIES OF MARTIN ATTWOOD

A contribution by **Chris Durrant** – Delamere 1958-1962

One of my most remarkable fellows during my years in Delamere House was Martin Attwood. He was a very talented sportsman, being an excellent middle-distance runner, and goal-keeper for both the soccer and hockey first XIs. It should be remembered that hockey goalkeepers were quite esteemed by us at that time because the only non-Asian in the Kenya hockey team was the goal-keeper, the Armenian Jack Simonian, also a celebrated rally-driver. This was in the days when the Kenya hockey team was among the best in the world, almost all the players being called either 'Singh' or 'Fernandes'! As a little aside, I taught at Guildford Grammar School several decades later with one Len Fernandes, himself a pretty decent hockey player, whose Dad, Hilary, had been a member of that great Kenya team!

Marty was a chap of tremendous drive and determination who never did anything with less than 100% enthusiasm. He was a wonderfully talented artist who drew superb cartoons and also a great musician who played trumpet in the school dance-band (and in those days trumpeters were also to the forefront – think Eddie Calvert, 'The Man with the Golden Trumpet').

Marty had a very fine tenor voice which he used to exercise in the bath in the Delamere bathrooms. On one

occasion we thought it would be good to record him. What would nowadays be very easily achieved by the use of anybody's mobile phone, in the early 1960s required an elaborate set-up with a cassette tape recorder, a power lead from the dorm, and somebody surreptitiously craning over the bathroom partition with a microphone to try and capture the song. Needless to say, we were spotted and a furious Marty put an end to the recording session!

The last time I met Marty was a very strange encounter. After the Duko I went back to university in England. Towards the end of my time there, probably in about 1965, I had gone up to London to see my then girlfriend who lived in Earls Court. Having dropped her off at her lodging I was walking down Gloucester Road at about 3.00 a.m. The place was completely deserted; I was the only one there, until I saw another figure walking along the pavement towards me. As it got closer, it started to look familiar and I eventually realized that it was indeed Marty Attwood! We stopped, shook hands, exchanged news and then went our separate ways. I never saw him again. I believe he spent much of his life in Italy and heard that he died just a few years ago.

In the 1962 DOYS production of 'The Pirates of Penzance' Marty is in the General's costume in the middle. Apart from me (Pirate King on the left), the other males are, I think, Rob Bradshaw and, to his left, Nigel Gaymer. Extreme right of the picture is, I think, one of the few genuine females in the cast, a woman called Rosemary Gardner. I suspect the girl between Rob and Marty is also a real girl, recruited probably from the Boma, but I cannot remember her name. The others are all boys, though I can't remember their names either. Perhaps some of your readers might recognise themselves?



Ed asks: if you are in this photo, please write in and identify yourself ?

LIVING THE DREAM

A contribution from **John Henchy** in Western Australia – Kirk – 1955/59

One advantage of getting older is that you can reflect on the past and, if your memory is still in good shape, it can give you a lot of pleasure.

I have had, and continue to have, a wonderful life. My nature is such that I mostly see positives and do not dwell on the negatives of the past or with things which we are surrounded by daily.

From my perspective, those of us brought up in Kenya, had a wonderful start to life. It was a beautiful country and although basic, in many forms, certainly in the country, it established, for me, a simple outlook and a 'can do' approach. Of course, having the advantage of being at the 'Duko' was a big plus and the

guidance we had in our formative years has certainly contributed to my persona and my ability to appreciate and enjoy life.

I was sent to the UK by my parents in 1959 with plans to be there for 12 months, to get a different perspective on life. Soon after I arrived that changed with the suggestion, from my parents, that I look at other options as the future in Kenya at that time was somewhat uncertain. I didn't have the money to go back so, as they say, the rest is history.

I was offered a 'special apprenticeship' by Ransomes Simms & Jefferies, makers of farm equipment, in Suffolk. I did that for a year but then had an opportunity of going to Writtle Agricultural College to do a short Graduate course in Agricultural Engineering. After that I went back to Ransomes and worked in their Marketing Department.

Late in 1962 I moved to Australia to join my parents, whom I hadn't seen for three years, in Horsham, Victoria. That's where my lifetime career in the farm machinery industry started.

I moved from Victoria to Queensland, then to New South Wales and since the early 70's have lived in Western Australia. Australia has been incredibly good to me. Being in the farming scene one works closely with the 'real Australians', in the country, and it has been a wonderful experience. Unlike the UK where your school tie would often determine your acceptance, here they 'give you a go' and if you succeed that is all that matters. Because of that attitude I've been fortunate never to have had to look for a job, my contacts along the way have opened doors. So, in my twilight years things are still good. I am still working, part time, in the farm machinery industry and loving it.

I live one day at a time and enjoy what nature gives us. There is so much negative 'stuff' being thrown at us daily, but the big benefit is that we have an 'off button' so we can better appreciate that simple life I spoke of earlier.

So, life is great. Claire and I have been fortunate in having good health and we are grateful for that. Life has been good, very good. Long may it last!



Ed writes: John, who now lives in Darling Scarp, just 35kms East of Perth. If, like me, you can't recognise him amongst this fit old bunch of mountain bikers, he is the guy without a helmet on the right.

FROM KITALE SCHOOL TO LENANA AND BEYOND

I have twice read the autobiography by Nelson Mandela, the “Long Walk to Freedom”. I will not dare to claim any such fame or reverence.

I started my primary school in Nyeri Primary School in 1970 in Standard 1 as a day scholar. My father was then working in Nyeri as an engineer in government. I still remember cold mornings and the snow peaks on Mt Kenya, with Lenana and Batian peaks always snow white. Global warming is real! I then joined Lavington Primary School in Nairobi for two years. I think I preferred the rural life to the hustle and bustle of traffic in the cities.

I joined Kitale Primary School in 1973 as a boarder in Standard 4. What immediately struck me was the similarity with Nyeri Primary. The buildings were remarkably similar including the colour code. I later learnt that the 5 high-cost public primary schools, which were Nyeri, Nairobi, Hill School and Molo Primary, all used the same architects. My mum was a bit taken aback to see in the uniform list shamba hats, gum boots, takis and 12 handkerchiefs! I later came to learn that the takis had multiple uses; other than for use in sports, they were a useful disciplinary tool on our backsides! What I loved most in Kitale School was the food. The bacon, sausages, fish and chips, jam tarts, trifle pudding, semolina were extremely delicious. I had no time for oats and chocolate pudding. We also had a wide range of sports facilities like cricket, rugby, football, hockey, lawn tennis, table tennis and golf. And a sport which I have never played since, croquet! Our arch enemies in sports and academics were Hill School and Manor House (just as Lenana had Nairobi School and Rift Valley Academy). I did manage to represent the school in Lawn Tennis, Table Tennis, Football, Rugby and Cricket and was awarded some colours. I suspect it was more due to the incompetence of the other boys than my own sporting abilities! I was called up to the Kenya Junior teams in both tennis and table tennis under 16 in 1976 and may have shown some reasonable talent.

I joined Lenana School in 1977 in Kirk House. Having been in a boarding school, the transition was fairly easy especially having quite a large number of Kitale School alumni. However, the rabble calls and early morning sports practice, especially cross country at 5am from Norman’s Folly and swimming was not entertaining at all! The sports facilities were excellent and I continued to play tennis and other sports to higher levels. I was also a member of the debating club. This brings fond memories of Brooklands as we would wait for the girls from Kenya High (Boma) or Limuru Girls (Chox) and take them on a lap of honour on Brooklands to present your case as to why she should allow you a dance later on after the debate! I acquitted myself reasonably well by not getting floating colours! In my six years in Kirk House we performed very well winning both the merit shield award for academics and many sporting trophies especially in Rugby, Football and Swimming.

After my A levels in 1982, I had a two week break before joining Price Waterhouse as an Audit Assistant. It was encouraging to find that we had a good squad of Old Yorkists with two partners, Gayling May and Graham Silcock.

I had to take a break from accounting in 1984 to join the National Youth Service which was a pre-University requisite. After completing my course at the University of Nairobi, I re-joined Price Waterhouse. I later worked at companies in banking and manufacturing. Standard Chartered Bank and other companies as Chief Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer. I am now in semi-retirement on a few company Boards.

I am also currently the Chairman of the Kitale School Alumni Society. We would be most grateful to get more Old Yorkists and Laibons, who are also Kitale School alumni, to join as they are all over the world. We would like to assist Kitale School reclaim some land that was excised by a private developer and also to assist with the establishment of a digital learning centre. My contact email is peterkebati@gmail.com



Kirk House Junior Football Team 1979 with Trophy. Peter, mid-field maestro, is front row on the left.

MEMORIES OF KENYA

A contribution by **Pat Taylor** - Housemaster of Mitchell and Teacher of Geography & Geology 1968 – 76

I arrived in Kenya in late August 1968, being met at the airport by Peter Doenhoff and taken to Kirk House, where I was to be his assistant.

Within a few days, the Headmaster, Tom Brown, asked me to drive a group of Sixth Formers into the Rift Valley, across Lake Magadi to the Oloibortoto river at the foot of the Nguruman escarpment. As my father had been a chemist at Magadi in the early 1920s, which was the main reason I had wanted to go to Kenya in the first place, the request was seized upon, despite the fact that I had been in the country less than a month.

The journey down the Magadi Road was uneventful, we signed in at the Police Post and carried on across the soda lake. All went well until, when nearing the base of the escarpment, we were stopped by a Masai game warden. It seems that TWB had omitted to obtain a permit for that area, and we were about to be slung inside (not sure where) for our own safety, as there were supposed to be lots of rhinos in that area! Luckily, one of the students (Stephen Heath, I think) spoke fluent Masai and managed to talk our way out of the problem.

That was my first experience of camping in Kenya but certainly not the last.

Many years later, in about 2006 I returned to camp beside the Euaso Nyiro upstream from what was left of the Oloibortoto, which, by then, was being used for irrigation of vegetable shambas.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Some clever philosopher once said “there are those that think and there are those that do” or something like that. That is absolutely true. How many of us have thought we could write a book but how many have actually done it? Here's one who has.

Under the Same Moon – by Chris Durrant - Delamere 1959-62

Under the Same Moon is the second book by Chris Durrant. His first book, Bwana Kidogo is a narrative of his childhood growing up in Kenya and will be of interest to those who went to Pembroke House or the Duke of York schools.



Chris, who now lives in Western Australia, is a natural story teller with a great descriptive ability. Under the Same Moon has been described as 'a tale told with humour and humanity from the differing perspectives of its central characters. The book follows two lovers, and their family as they navigate the emotional and physical challenges of surviving The Great War. A tale that crosses the waters from England to Southern Africa, it is a perfect combination of romance and drama underscored with detailed observations of the wartime era'.

Mine is a more simplistic review - I read this book in the cold of winter and the gloom of Coronavirus lock-down.

It was like sitting in front of a log fire wrapped in a warm blanket. It is a comfortable book, sensitively written and left me with a smile of quiet enjoyment. Thanks, Chris for providing that simple pleasure.

I enjoyed the book immensely and couldn't help but admire the Author's best use of the English language which, at times, had me reaching for my dictionary. Who else would use the word **prolixity** to perfectly describe the long, drawn out sermons of a dour, North Yorkshire parson!

A PROCESS OF SELECTION BY RONNIE ANDREWS - MSAADA TRUSTEE

This article describes the process and diverse factors considered when selecting which Lenana School students are worthy bursary recipients.

In the course of last week Charlie Fraser, Arnie Mitchell and I made ourselves available to meet potential bursary candidates and chat to them about their lives, expectations and aspirations and to finally come up with a selection of the five students that Msaada Trust, the local arm of Optimum Kenya Trust, will choose to support this year.

Lorraine Kirigia, who helps with the admin of the Trust's activities, was also in on the process and had arranged the meeting through the teacher in charge of counselling, Catherine Kasambeli. In addition to the five candidates, who we would add to 15 students whom we already support, we were mindful that there are three Old Yorkists who each wish to support a scholar through their studies, plus the recently bereaved widow of a Laibon, Oscar Kang'oro, has committed to funding up to five further scholars and has arranged to hold a golf event to raise money for the purpose. Then, on the day the photos went out to the Laibon and Old Yorkists, I received a call from Cliff Mkulu, a friend, adversary and team-mate from my rugby playing days, asking us to assist in identifying a scholar for his group of supporters to fund.

That meant that potentially we were looking for 14 candidates which implies that the credibility of our selection process and the implementation thereof, is obviously attracting attention.

On the day, we were due to meet twelve pupils but only ten arrived so we called for more to be sent from a

list of 29 provided by the school. From my notes I see that we finally met with just ten boys. From them we have identified five for OKT/Msaada to support. In addition, we will need to identify a further 9 students to receive bursaries from the other sponsors listed above, which we will do in due course.

Without going into detail about each boy, a sample of the hardships they have had to endure include:

- Families of eight to ten in number.
- Manual work in the holidays, as well as course work, in order to meet some of the costs of the school and to maintain academic standards.
- Bereavement and loss of siblings and at least one parent. Sometimes life with a relative who has their own family to support.
- Physical and mental abuse of self, siblings and parents from guardians and partners all of whom are involved in the most menial of jobs: hawkers, farmers, fishermen, motor cycle riders, cleaners and washer women.
- Uncertainty every year as to whether the fees can be paid. The stress shows itself clearly in some of their faces. They are summarily ejected from school in term time, missing up to three weeks of lessons as they attempt to gather school fees from family, well-wishers, relatives, etc.

Amazingly, from the depths of these rural nightmares, these boys have managed to enter a National School with primary school results that would make any parent proud. They are bright! Their primary school results put them in the top 5% in the Nation, if not higher. The Top result in 2019 was 440 points and our chosen five are likely to have attained at least around 410. They have overcome adversity such as we, the interviewers, will never know.

These bursaries are the route out of that life and the gateway to a sustainable and hope-filled future. Optimum Kenya Trust and Msaada Trust can be proud of their efforts and we can be well pleased that these bursaries are seen as a sign of hope, not only for the boys but also for the benefactors who wish to have a credible, unbiased and fair mechanism for the disbursement of the funds to such needy scholars.

The picture shows Charlie, Arnie and Ronnie (in mask) with some of those interviewed.



If you would like to contribute to funds which Optimum Kenya Trust provide for bursaries such as these, or as an individual sponsor, please donate directly to the following:

Account name: Optimum Kenya Trust
Bank sort code: 40-44-37

Account number: 92114542
IBAN number: GB17HBUK40443792114542
BIC number/SWIFT: HBUKGB4160J

Or visit our website <https://www.optimumkenyatrust.org/take-action>

CONDOLENCES IN PASSING

Sadly, it is with great regret and huge respect that we are unable to provide complete obituaries for all those who have recently passed on from our fraternity. However, we extend our most sincere condolences to the families and friends of the following:

Laibon Oscar Kang'oro

Carey Francis House 1987-1990

Died suddenly at home on 8th January 2021

Old Yorkist Peter Low

Thomson House 1963 - 1967

Died whilst in UK for medical treatment on 15th March 2021

We can only include the names of those whom we know have passed away. Of course, there are Old Yorkists and Laibon around the world where we would be unaware of their deaths. Could we please ask you, our readers, to pass on information of any that you know of where you live who should be included in this section of our Newsletter. Many thanks.

'THE YORKIST' ATTRIBUTION AND NOTES

Robin Crosher has put scanned reproductions of The Yorkist, the annual magazine of the Duke of York School, for the years 1949- 1969, onto the following web page <https://icedrive.net/1/bcsezBeggR>

They had originally been laboriously scanned and put on a CD by Mike Goble-Garratt (Eliot/Grogan 1958-61) for the occasion of the 1999 Golden Jubilee celebrating the Founding of The School. It also includes extracts from the 1948 and 1949 issues of 'Impala' (the equivalent magazine of the Prince of Wales School) during the founding years of the Duke of York School. Also included are some 'Brooklands Baraza' facsimiles.

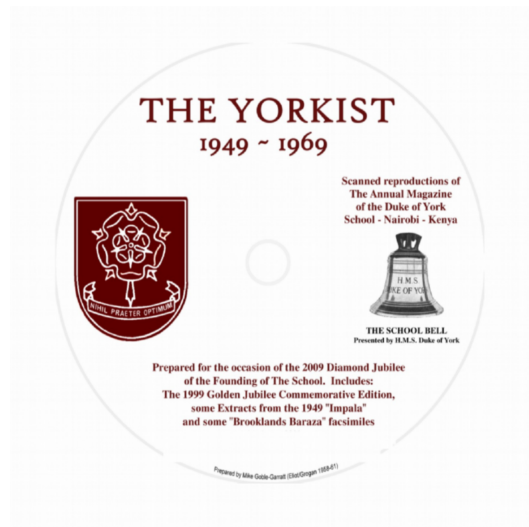
Additional material in the form of 'The Yorkist' by John Tucker, and notes from David Lichtenstein, were subsequently added to original material, in advance of the 2009 Diamond Jubilee.

Mike has distributed many copies of his CD shown opposite. They are still available for those that might want one, or he can make them available in, easier and cheaper to post, memory card format. I will be happy to pass on any enquires to him.

Unfortunately, Mike, who lives in Australia, has not been too well recently. I am sure you would want to join me in passing on best wishes to him

and to his Old Yorkist pal, Richard Tredget, also in Oz, who is another who has health problems right now.

Get well soon you guys, it has been great to hear from you. Stay in touch.



IRREPRESSIBLE HUMOUR

A contribution from the editor: Kirk 1956 – 1961

When I was cornered into taking this job, it was on condition that I was not to include any jokes!! And I thought they were my friends – it just goes to show how wrong one can be.

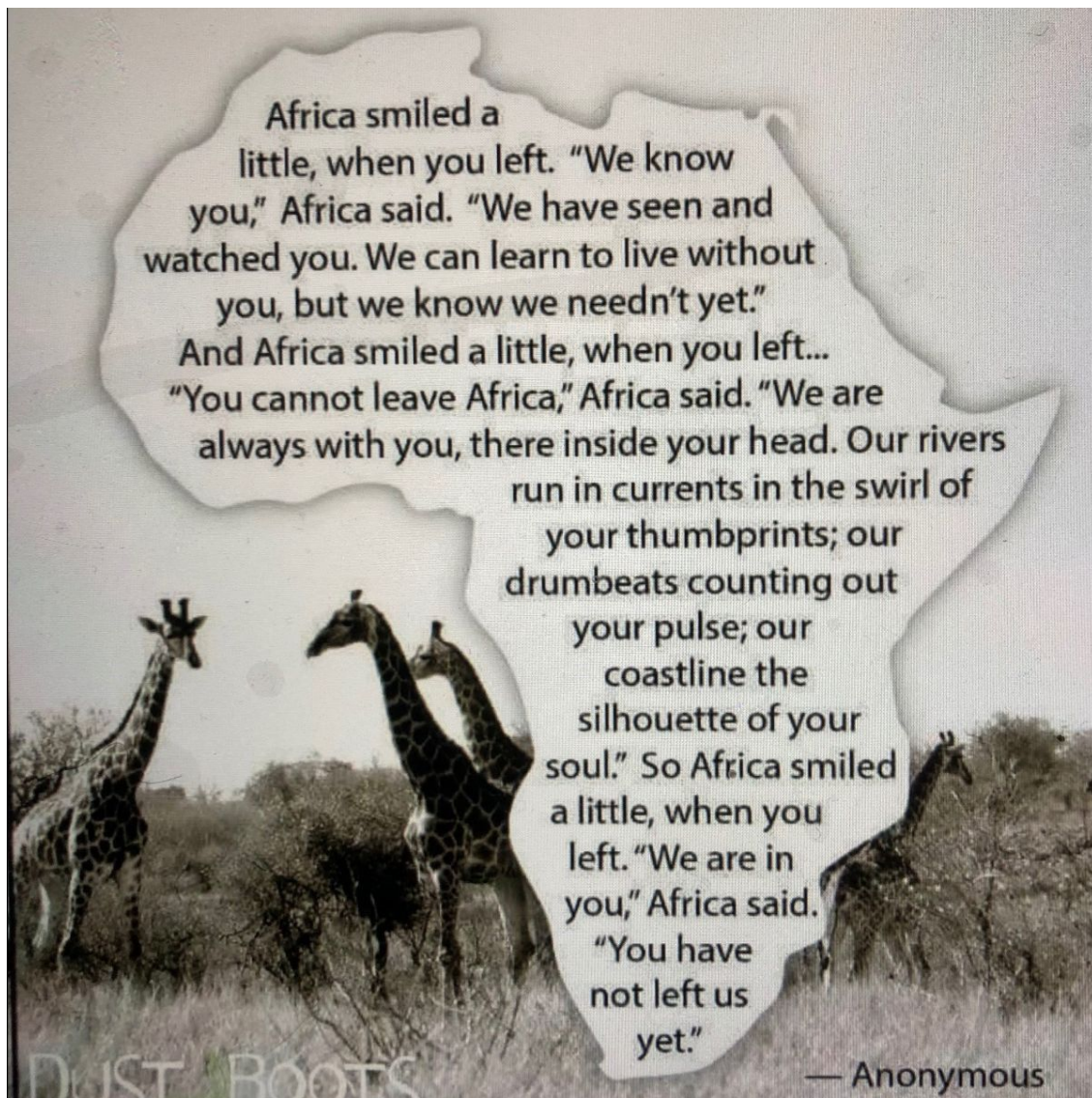
But jokes are only part of what we know as humour. Humour transcends jokes. Humour is an essential emotion, which provides pleasure, comfort and well-being to us all. It makes us chuckle, laugh sometimes even cry. It crosses the boundaries of race, language and culture. And, it is not only confined to humans. Animals have a sense of humour too.

If you don't believe me, check this out: <https://youtu.be/FlxYCDbRGJc> if it doesn't work, copy and paste it into your internet search engine. (I apologise to those who have seen this clip before.)

I hope that you have enjoyed this edition of the Brooklands Baraza newsletter. Many thanks for all your contributions. I hope that you have found them as interesting and amusing, as I have. Please keep them coming together with your letters and anecdotes to me at mail@alanmay.co.uk

Before going, I must include many thanks to Alexander O'Grady who someone converts what I send him into the final version of this newsletter.

Finally, someone posted the poem below on Facebook. Sorry about the print quality but the sentiments were meaningful to me and I thought that they might resonate with some of you too.



You can contribute images and connect with other Old Yorkists and Laibon on the [Brooklands Baraza Revisited Facebook Group](#).
