

out of africa

INTERNATIONAL

New country, new direction, new baby - all in a year!

Iceland's wild beauty

SA writer's life in New York . .

Bahrain: Our rude introduction



Journos in a jam put SA on the map in Australia



QUESTION: What do you do when emigrate to a new country and find employers aren't exactly clamouring for your skills? **Answer:** Start up on your own . . .

Journalists Jugen Gregersen and Karen Jackman found exactly that when they lobbed into Perth, Australia - a one daily newspaper town.

So, taking their courage in their teeth and with severely restricted funds, they started their own newspaper - the SA Independent. A

year later, the paper's a growing and going concern.

To add to their new Aussie status, they have produced their first little Aussie - Samuel!

They follow the lead of Karen Collins, of Esperance, also in Western Australia, who met and married an Aussie and had two Aussie children.

Far to the north, southern Africans are living in some chilly climes.

Mark James, tells of life in Iceland - land of ice and volcanoes, while Peter Dielissen gives a rundown of life in the Yukon - far north Canada. His pictures of the Northern Lights and the wild rugged beauty of that part of the world are nothing short of spectacular.

Others in this issue are: Nkosinathi Sibanda, who puts his perspective of life in New York; Chris Hill tells of the lotus-eating life in Thailand, Mervyn Gray of a horror introduction to teaching in Bahrain; Clinton Cain's life on the Queensland Gold Coast while Dennis Crosby relaxes in contented retirement on Vancouver Island.

Once again, we have been amazed by the diversity of countries southern Africans have ended up in.

It proves that they can adapt to almost any situation - versatile people, indeed!

Out Of Africa International celebrates its first birthday with this issue. What started as an experiment has grown to become a "must read" publication for many around the world - and in southern Africa.

It gives those thinking of emigrating a taste of what to expect in other countries, and as such is deeply valued.

We have met some fantastic people in the last year, and hope to continue meeting many more.

The magazine depends on readers like yourselves to tell your stories. They might sound pretty ordinary to you, but you'd be amazed how others would see your new lives.

Please give it some thought. We really DO want you to write a piece for us! - Tom Henshaw



Bill Higham
Associate Editor,
Australia (Eastern states)
highamw@ozemail.com.au



Penny Willis
Associate Editor, UK
penny.willis@diamond.co.uk



Andrew Templeton
Out Of Africa
International
webmaster
andrew@creativewebz.co.uk



**Nkosinathi Sibanda, is a South African writer living in New York.
Page 4**



**Jurgen Gregersen:
We did it our way
Page 8**



**Mark James in Iceland
Page 11**



**Chris Hill tells of his lotus-eating lifestyle in Thailand
Page 16**



**Karen Collins finds contentment in far south Western Australia.
Page 20**



**Mervyn Gray's salutary lesson in Bahrain
Page 23**



**Happy campers: Clinton Cain and family on Australia's Gold Coast
Page 27**



**Life in the Yukon
Page 32**



**Life of retirement on Vancouver Island.
Page 36**



Nkosinathi Sibanda, is a South African writer living in New York. He is the co-author of "Building Bridges: Confronting the Gap between Black Africans and African Americans."

Black inferno: A South African in New York

By Nkosinathi Sibanda

AS I sit in my apartment in Queens and muse over the idea of what New York is and has meant to me I can not help but feel a sense of inconclusiveness.

In Dante Algheri's Inferno the pilgrimage to Hell is divine comedy in which laughter speaks from one canto to the other, in my own matrix New York is neither hell nor heaven.

It is open space to be filled by different human feelings. Like a glass of water, the glass itself will never be water

I arrived in New York in the May of 1998 and attended the summer creative writing workshop at Columbia University.

My perceptions of New York were overwhelming, New York came across as an

industrialised urban city that surprisingly looked a bit like the central business district in Johannesburg, especially the area around the famed Carlton centre.

Now close to two years New York is beginning to feel comfortable for me - the bagels and cream cheese, the underground subway station, the politics and the entertainment. It all adds up to make New York the confluence for culture and invention.

I arrived in New York at the age of 22, fresh from college in South Africa where I had attended the Law school at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Now driven by an extraordinary desire to become a writer I had arrived in the Big

Apple armed with only hope and naivety. To a certain degree New York owed me something, I do not know whether it was fortune, fame or just the mere opportunity. It owed me.

Soon after making New York my second home after South Africa, I got down to serious business, - how do I pay my rent, my bills and get some food.

How do I live day to day like everybody else. So to earn a living I did what most emerging writers do and that is to freelance for publications and establish some credentials as an "expert on something". To this date I have a good rapport with the "New York Amsterdam News" in which I comment on political and social issues affecting African people around the world.

The truth is what ever New York owes you, you must take for yourself, whether it is the weekly paycheque, primary health care or social security - you have to get on your feet and do the ground work. In a society driven by individualism and non-conservatism no one is

watching you as you attempt to get the same things that every one else wants. People only take note of you when the mission has been accomplished.

New York - the city of Frank Sinatra, and the home of the Yankees dwells in its opulence as it both captivates and removes all puritanical inhibitions.

Indeed, in poetic form one would say: New York, the music is mellow and slow, the taxis' are yellow and life is a go.

Socrates, the Greek philosopher once noted that life's' tragedy is to get what the heart desires and also to fight what the heart desires.

Perhaps I may aid to Socrates wise words in the context of New York's wryly impermanence - I love to hate this city and I also hate to love it. Such is New York's great contradiction.

But this article is not about New York's contradictory glitarrati, it is my own perceptions of New York in the new millennium.

The first thing that grabs you on arrival in New York is the plethora of different peoples who have made New York their home.

The born New Yorkers and the immigrants, these different groups intermingle to produce a melting or boiling point of identities and subjective realities.

For those born in New York, it is home, a place to live in and love. For the immigrant New York is a temporary stop over on the journey to hope.

But for me, New York is a place I must live in and understand without it becoming home nor a mecca for fortune.

It is my place for private study, more

like my University of Timbuktu, here, I have chosen to read and study human behaviour at the meeting points of illusion and reality. I guess New York is still an illusory quagmire in which the Nietzschean culture presents itself with problems



Star struck: Nkosi meets US actor Ossie Davis ("Get On the Bus") at Columbia University last November

Picture: Desire Fanudi

of interpretation. How do I communicate with a world of its own if I do not understand the language?

The dialogue I have engaged in with New York - the place and interlocutor - is one in which I find myself powerless in controlling the forces that determine the balance of power in dialogue.

New York instinctively imposes its own monologue much the same way that for mer US President did during the Watergate scandal, its insists take my words as truth or cease to listen.

And as you become increasingly seduced by its reticence it relentlessly persists - live inside and not outside of me.

But I should warn living outside New York while in New York will not allow for effective engagement of the issues that tend to arise in this multicultural society.

And since the most divisive issues of our society are capital punishment, race, wealth and sexuality New York offers the most visible perceptions.

Coming from South Africa you would have expected me to develop inner stamina against racial bigotry.

I mean, South Africa's apartheid is still to date one of the most heinous crimes against humanity.

It was no less different to the treatment of the

Turks by the Armenians or the treatment of Jews at the hands of the Nazis - all these incidents reflected a deeper gorge where evil sits at the centre.

So naturally my South African experience with laws of hate had put me at a higher footing than say someone from Anglo, French or Portuguese colonised Africa. Notwithstanding colonialism was an affront to a peoples integrity but it did not exhibit the more racial laws that Aparthied South Africa became infamous for.

Although colonialism was savagery in some parts of Africa, in the Belgian Congo for example, King Leopold ran the colony as a personal business, to that end he controlled all aspects of the rubber industry.

Anyone found stealing rubber had their limbs cut off. Personally I am opposed to any form of racism whether it is South African or American, whether it is pervasive or outright.

Many friends have asked me to compare South African racism to American racism, and one thing I have always noted is that from my experiences in New York and after studying American history, racism in America is pervasively psychological. It is not legislated, it is reflected in a latently conservative dominantly white society that refuses to fully recognise the extent of the black experience in America as a precondition for race relations.

Last year in February a twenty-three year old Guinean immigrant, Amadou Diallo, was shot at forty-one times in the



Nkosinathi Sibanda and Harvard Professor of Religion and African American studies Cornel West, February 1999, Columbia Law school

Picture: Columbia Law school

vestibule of his home in the South Bronx, some minutes after midnight. What followed was race tension and in the criminal case the four police officers were found not culpable in the shooting. Legally the shooting was not a crime but on the human level many felt it was. No where in the world can four black police officers shoot an unarmed white twenty-three year old in his private quarters and be found not guilty under similar circumstances in which the officers had no probable cause to suspect the victim.

To that end, America is in denial about its racism. So great is the denial that now black people are beginning to use the court room with all its attention to initiate social dialogue on race.

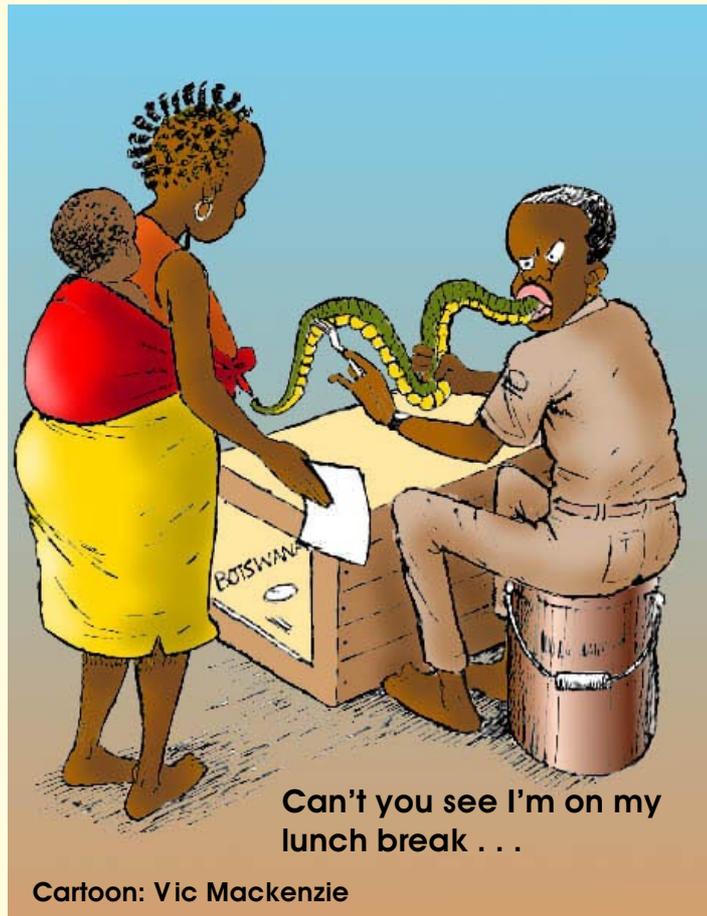
Whether it is the O.J Simpson trial or the Diallo trial the public is electrified and ignited by the wholeness of black humanity.

I must admit, even given the racism in America opportunities are still in abundance. In the movie, "The Hurricane" starring Denzel Washington Rubin Carter reminds his young student Lazarus: "Don't forget, small doors can open big rooms."

From New York, my name is Mr Sibanda, and I have a dream!

Nkosinathi Sibanda, is a South African writer living in New York. He is the co-author of "Building Bridges: Confronting the Gap between Black Africans and African Americans."

That's Africa!



Cartoon: Vic Mackenzie

Man bites snake . . .

A BOTSWANA civil servant took to eating snakes to survive after his wages were withheld on disciplinary grounds. State radio said Edwin Lesele, a farm extension worker in Kweneng district, has accepted that he now enjoyed eating snakes, a taboo in Botswana.

Lesele was quoted as saying that the reptiles, especially deadly puff adders, were more delicious than beef and chicken.

He said he first ate snakes secretly while still at school in 1971 and now the reptiles had become his main food because he hadn't been paid for 14 months.

Mr Lesele said he did not know why his pay had been frozen.

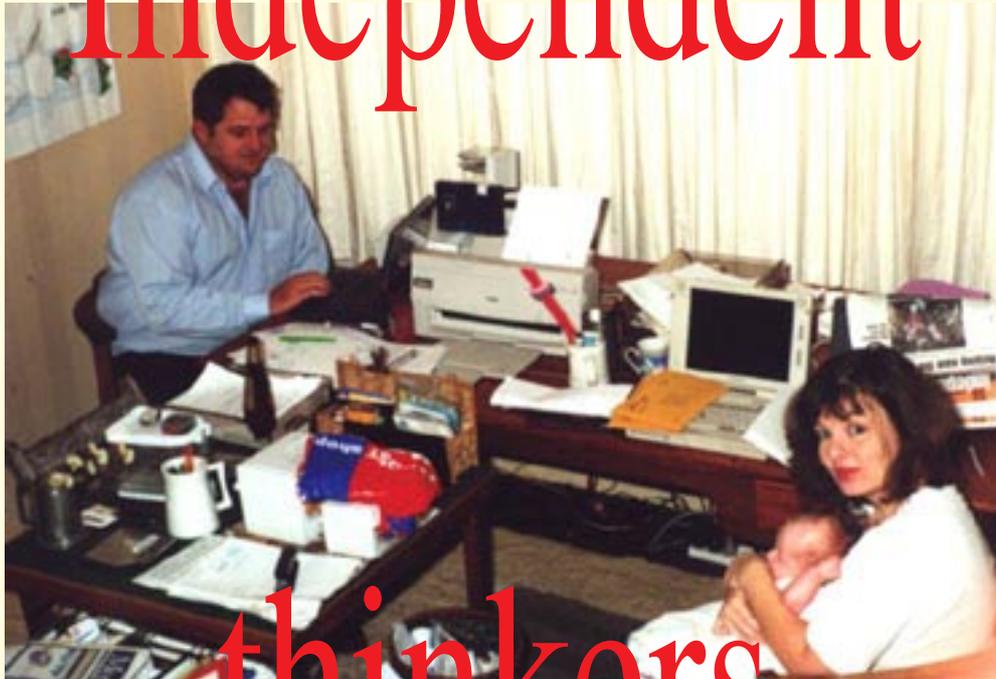
His supervisors said he had become negligent at work.

He had failed to attend meetings and write reports on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis as required.

The authorities said they were now making efforts to transfer Mr Lesele to the sub-district headquarters where he could be supervised better.

Snakes around Kweneng are said to be mighty relieved . . .

Independent



thinkers

What do a couple of journalists do when they land in a one-newspaper town and find it overpopulated by qualified journalists and their talents almost unsaleable? Start their own paper - that's what! Jurgen Gregersen and Karen Jackman now have people calling them from around the world.

THE SA Independent, a monthly newspaper aimed at Southern Africans living in Australia is going great guns, much to the relief of two former Durban journalists.

From August 1 it will be available in 2000 newsagents across Australia.

Jurgen Gregersen and Karen Jackman emigrated to Perth in early 1999 – and pretty soon found themselves doing it tough.

“Basically the only jobs we could find were casual, entry grade positions, and people weren't exactly falling over themselves to offer us even that,” said Jurgen.

“We weren't exactly down to our last tin of beans, but money was tight. Emigration, at R4 to the dollar, cost a lot more than we expected, and we faced a life of genteel drudgery – if we could get it.

A year later there's still plenty of genteel drudgery – but the couple have a

booming, bouncy baby, and a newspaper with a climbing circulation that seems to have struck a genuine chord with many former southern Africans.

“There we were a year ago, lolling on Cottesloe Beach, desperately trying to figure out how to make a few extra bob,” said Karen. “We came to the conclusion that we knew two things – newspapers and South Africans.”

“Jurgen knocked up a dummy on my laptop computer, and we went around trying to flog adverts. I don't know if people just felt sorry for us, but we sold quite a few, and, frankly, it's been ever-so-slightly uphill from there.”

“I was chief sub of a paper in Durban for a couple of years, so I knew a bit about the laying out of the paper and production,” said Jurgen. “We both worked as reporters, so the story side wasn't a problem. But we were both babes in the woods when it came to

All a yawn: Baby Samuel reckons mum and dad's other new baby's no competition at all.



the business aspects. Karen said she would only do the books if she could be the editor.

"Thankfully from the first edition the response had been very positive. We've had excellent feedback, excellent support. Obviously we filled a niche in the market.

"We try not to be too much of a whenwe publication," said Karen. "our newspaper is about Southern Africans on Australia, and the news deals with them and how they are getting along. We also carry a fair bit of news from SA, as well as a quite a few columnists.

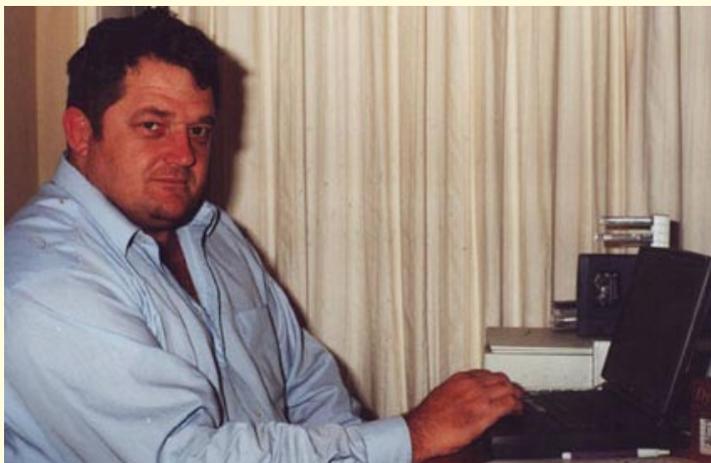
In fact so good has the support been, that The SA Independent is poised to go national – although it is still laid out on the couples' dining room table, using the same laptop.

"We started getting subscribers from all over Australia, and in South Africa, and even a subscriber in France and another in Los Angeles," said Karen. "Obviously there were people out there enjoying the paper."

Actually the next few months will be a bit nerve-racking, " said Jurgen. "we've doubled our print run, we've got a whole lot of extra costs, and the paper will double in size so there's a lot more input required on that side as well.

"Also we will just have to invest in new equipment, it's becoming way way too big a job to do on a little Applemac laptop. Hopefully, though Australia will enjoy reading the paper.

"I can't express what a joy, and a headache, the paper has been," said Jurgen. "It's twice the work I thought it would be, and three times the worry. But it's fantastic to have your own publication, to be your own boss instead of a wage slave. It's a great feeling to work when you want to, do what you want to – although you learn a new appreciation of seeing a wage cheque at the end of each week. "To some extent I think Karen and I have been enormously lucky. We came to Australia to start a new life and we've done just that. How much better than say, some bloke who was an accountant in SA who is now in Sydney, still crunching numbers but just in a smaller office than the one he once enjoyed.



Laptop legend: Jurgen Gregersen with the tiny computer he uses to produce the SA Independent.

"And every journalist dreams of having his own paper - it's a great feeling being able to do just what you like with a publication.

Anybody interested in seeing a copy of the paper should contact the saindependent@iexpress.net.au and Karen will post out a copy. She can also be contacted on (08)92436648.

That's Africa!

Thirst-crazed monkeys battle villagers for water

THIRSTY monkeys and starving villagers clashed over drinking water at a trading centre on Kenya's northern border recently according to reports.

The pitched two-hour battle left eight apes dead and 10 people wounded, the Kenyan newspaper, the Daily Nation reported.

The trading centre, 600km north of Nairobi in the Somali desert, is home to nomadic tribes that have been scavenging for food and water since drought struck there nine months ago.

The duel started after three water tankers arrived.

The thirst-crazed monkeys saw villagers drinking and attacked, clawing and biting until the villagers fled for help.

Round One to the apes - they got stuck in and quenched their thirst . . .

The villagers later regrouped and armed themselves with axes and machetes and counter-attacked. The monkeys fought back but eventually conceded the tankers.

People injured in the fight were treated at the local dispensary.

Locals said the acute shortage of water had forced wild animals to look for it in villages.

It was not unusual to see animals such as buck, hares and monkeys searching for.

Their biggest fears though, are that lions, elephants and leopards could soon follow the monkeys' lead.

Bite-sized warning to witch sniffers

A TRADITIONAL witch sniffing ceremony at this year's mass Easter celebration in Swaziland was tempered when the kingdom's monarch, King Mswati III, warned that the sniffers could contract HIV.

Traditional healers call on the Holy Spirit to help them sniff out witches.

Some healers then bite the witches until they bleed in order to exorcise demons.

The king warned that the demon-possessed could well be carrying HIV or AIDS.

He urged churches to become involved in the battle against the spread of the disease.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church agreed to allow followers to bring condoms to church rallies, but stressed this did not mean the church encouraged promiscuity.

Fire



Spectacular terror: A volcano nearly engulfed the fishing port of Vestmannaeyjar, in 1972.

My name is Mark Leroy James and I live in Reykjavik, Iceland - a land of ice and fire.

How I got there is a long story.

I WAS born in Salisbury, Rhodesia during the winter of 1963. My father was originally from Cape Town, South Africa and my mother from London, England, they had met whilst my father was on holiday in the UK during 1961.

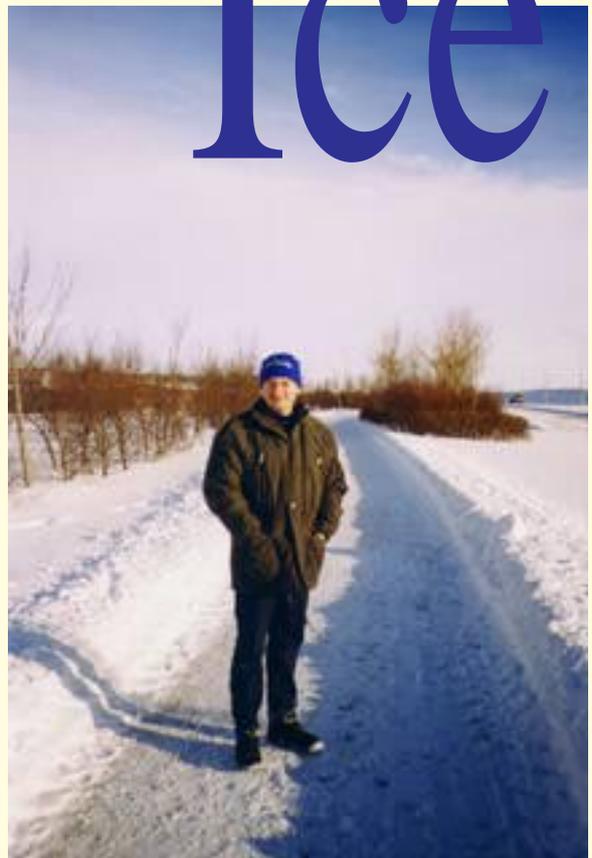
My parents were married in 1962 in Rhodesia where my father had been living since opening an Import/Export business in Salisbury.

Unfortunately my mother being very young at the time, could not settle in the new country far away from her family in England and in 1966 returned to London with me, my father remained in Rhodesia. My parents were legally divorced some years later and lost contact.

My mother entered upon another

and

Ice



Snow good complaining: Mark rugged up against the Icelandic chill.



Since I have been in Iceland I have grown to love the wild beauty of the place, the unpopulated and unspoilt mountainous interior,

relationship in the UK and I have a half brother and sister from that relationship.

There was always a distance between myself and my step-father, we never got on well, although it wasn't until the age of 14 that I was actually told that he wasn't my real father!

It came as quite a shock at the time to discover a past which I had never believed existed, but it did explain much and certainly explained why I was very different in personality from my brother and sister.

I had, so I was told, inherited my personality from my father and bore a striking resemblance to him. Finding out about my past filled me with a deep and strong desire to trace that side of my family.

In 1990 I accepted a job with a company working in the city of Leningrad in the Soviet Union, and I was there during the dramatic coup of that year.

In fact, I married a Russian girl just three weeks before those dramatic events after meeting her almost a year earlier.

I saw the fall of Communism in the Soviet Union, the emergence of the newly independent states from the old Soviet Empire, and the restoration of Leningrad's old name, St. Petersburg.

These events filled me with hope that just maybe the bankrupt and corrupt Marxist states of Africa would also fall and I could at last return to my country of birth.

I returned to the UK at the end of 1992 with my wife.

Regretfully the culture shock and

separation from her family was too much for her and we divorced in 1995.

It was an extremely painful experience for me but life is about learning lessons and some are indeed difficult and painful.

Fortunately there were no children involved and we had a clean break with no bitterness on either side, just a deep regret for what might have been.

The Russian economy was collapsing rapidly at that time and returning there was not an option, I may have done so under different circumstances.

Fed up with life in the UK I decided that I needed a change of environment.

I had met a wonderful girl from Iceland and I thought, 'well what the hell, why not give it a go and move there'.

I came to Iceland during April 1998 and arranged a job interview.

As sometimes happens fate was rolling the dice in my favour and I secured a job at a company in the sheet metal trade, which had a sub-division in the air cargo business.

I spent most of 1998 learning the practical side of the sheet metal trade before moving over to the administrative side of the air cargo division.

This division became a fully independent company in 1999 and I took up the position of Commercial Director.

We are now moving the whole operation to France and so I may be on the move again soon, although I will retain my Icelandic home and residency.



This is a young country of active volcanoes and occasional minor earthquakes. Raw nature at its very best, untamed and invigorating.

Since I have been in Iceland I have grown to love the wild beauty of the place, the unpopulated and unspoilt mountainous interior, which contains the largest glacier in Europe, the rugged coastline and the vibrant little capital city of Reykjavik where I have my home.

Reykjavik is one of the European Cities of Culture for 2000 and has a thriving cultural scene, there is definitely more to Icelandic culture than Bjork!

Icelandic people can seem a little shy, most are bi-lingual and speak English extremely well, they are very friendly and welcoming to overseas visitors.

Iceland has the cleanest air and purest water in Europe, after returning to Iceland from trips to London, where you almost need a knife and fork to cut through the dirty and polluted air, this is something which I greatly appreciate.

As a destination for a really exciting and different holiday it is unbeatable.

Iceland may not be sun and Sangria but it has far greater attractions to offer.

This is a young country of active volcanoes and occasional earthquakes - we had two in June measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale. Raw nature at its very best, untamed and invigorating.

It is a treat to drive on the empty roads

outside of Reykjavik, something seldom found in the UK, although breaking down is not recommended, as there is no real roadside rescue service here and settlements are few and far between in the countryside.

Most of the country roads are gravel and are murder on ordinary saloon cars.

It is an interesting fact that 40 per cent of private vehicles registered in Iceland are 4X4 Jeep type off-roaders.

They are a practical necessity here and used as intended, not just to pose on the high street and to pop down to the local supermarket as in the UK.

Iceland is a country which has a land area equivalent to that of England and Wales combined, yet has a population of only 270,000.

There is an increasing drift of people to the Reykjavik area from the countryside and at the present time, 153,000 people live in that conurbation.

The government is trying to stem this flow into the capital but is fighting a losing battle. Young people want the opportunities that exist in Reykjavik, the rural areas can only really offer farming or fishing as career options and small settlements with no real facilities, especially for teenagers.

Youngsters wishing to attend university need to be in Reykjavik as there is only one in

Iceland.

It is an interesting fact that in the past 20 years, the economy of Iceland has grown enormously, Icelanders have a solid work ethic and a will to succeed, born out of living and surviving in a harsh environment.

Icelanders today have one of the highest standards of living in the world, 70 per cent of the population is connected to the Internet, and as a percentage of population, more home computers are owned in Iceland than any other country in the world.

Icelanders are highly educated, with most school leavers going on to higher education, the present-day economy is high technology and computer driven.

Iceland has greatly diversified its economic base from its past reliance on the fishing industry, although that still plays a vital role in the economic base.

Icelandic companies are open to the world and are expanding out into it.

There is a large community of Icelanders long established in Luxembourg and that is forming a hub from which European expansion is taking place.

So, are there any downsides to living

in Iceland? Yes, the cost of living is very high, beer is US\$8 a pint for example and bread is US\$3 a loaf.

New cars are expensive due to high taxes and income tax is 42 per cent.

Travel is expensive from Iceland as the national carrier, Icelandair, has a near monopoly on air travel and so charges through the nose.

I guess the most obvious downside to Iceland is the weather. This is no sun kissed tropical island!

The winters in Iceland are mild when the latitude is taken into consideration, the influence of the gulfstream keeps temperatures sensible.

An average winter day will be around -5°C, although it can drop to around -12°C.

However it does tend to snow a lot and this can cause all sorts of problems in getting to work.

An average summer's day will see temperatures of around 16°C, and it can even reach the dizzy heights of 19°C when there is a heatwave!

I am very happy living in Iceland and with what I have been able to achieve here, but I still harbour a burning ambition to return to Zimbabwe.

They battled nature - and won!

ICELANDERS are nothing if not inventive. Faced in January 1973, with the destruction of their main fishing port, Vestmannaeyjar, they banded together in a desperate battle to stop the town being engulfed by an encroaching lava flow.

The battle began after Eldfell ("fire mountain" in Icelandic) erupted. A 2km fissure opened not far from the centre of the town and extended across the entire island, producing a spectacular curtain of fire. Nearly all of the island's 5300 residents were evacuated to the mainland. Strong winds blew volcanic ash from the eruption and buried homes in the town. Massive block lava flows threatened the town and the fishing port. About 70 homes and farms were buried under ash and 300 buildings were burnt by fires or buried under lava. To save their prized port they

sprayed millions of litres of seawater on to the lava.

Eventually they succeeded in diverting the lava flow and saving the town.

It was the biggest human effort ever exerted to control volcanic activity.

Not only did the tremendous efforts save the port, they actually improved it.

The residents returned to rebuild their town and even used the heat from the cooling lava to construct a district heating system.



That's Africa!

Nandos puts bite on cybersquatter - and wins!

SOUTH African fast food company Nando's is crowing with delight after licking a cybersquatter who had registered nandos.com. as an internet address. The company won its case when the World Intellectual Property Organisation (Wipo) ordered the hijacker to hand over the names nandos.com and nandoschicken.com, according to Business Day.

The organisation ruled that the cybersquatter was clearly attempting to profit at Nando's expense and had no right to the web addresses.

When Nando's tried to register its name as a website, it found that a pair of cybersquatters had beaten them to it. They offered to hand over the name for R25,000, which Nando's refused to pay.

Nando's director Mark Radomsky said the cybersquatters told Nando's that the money they were demanding was "chicken feed" compared with the exorbitant ransom figures demanded by other domain name hijackers.

The name was then sold to Fared Farukhi of California, who also registered nandoschicken.com.

When Nando's contacted Farukhi, he said: "I will consider a licence arrangement for the use of the names with an option to buy." Nando's complained to Swiss-based Wipo on March 29.

When the organisation asked Farukhi to respond, he claimed he had never heard of a company called Nando's. He also said that in his native language Kannada from south India nandos meant "ours", and he planned to create a site selling ethnic food and art to the Indian community.

The Wipo panel dismissed this, particularly as Farukhi had gone on to register nandoschicken.com. In his ruling, Wipo arbitrator Justice Austin Amisah said: "The adoption of these names was a carefully calculated step to take unfair advantage of the international reputation and goodwill of the complainant's trademarks." Wipo's order to relinquish ownership of the domain names is legally binding.

Radomsky said the verdict was just the beginning of a series of cyberbattles for Nando's. "We have about seven of these cases and we will be going after these boys in each region we are targeting. It's really important to get our domain names back because everything you are in your brand name." There is nandoschickenland.com, held by a US cybersquatter.

Nando's plans to open in the US within 18 months, and will trade as Nando's Chickenland. Then there is nandos.kl, an Asian web address.

In January shipping firm Safmarine became the first SA organisation to benefit from Wipo's arbitration. Cybersquatters who had registered safmarine.com were demanding R20,000 until Wipo ordered them to hand the address over.

Disillusioned with southern Africa, businessman Chris Hill left in March 1993 to re-establish himself abroad. – first to England and from there to Thailand, where today, he revels in his new surroundings. This is an edited version of Chris’s article. Anyone who would like to see the complete version is welcome to email us and we will forward it.

Thai high!

Businessman Chris Hill and family love living in Thailand’s famed Pattaya Beach

WE TOOK our decision to leave in March 1993. We washed all South African-made components from our product and looked to manufacture in Europe.

My daughter was then 9 years old. We lived with guns. From our home, high on the hill in Claremont, we could see the plumes of black smoke from burning tyre barricades in not so distant Kayelithsha.

Going to the airport - one rode shotgun, with a loaded and cocked gun. Safety on. At Herschel School my daughter did “grenade drill.”

England. It was with a heavy heart and a dread of the future in Europe that we left for England. Cold, clammy, cloudy, dreary, expensively poor value - England.

As it happened most of our customers (I design, manufacture and sell a range of ultrasonic measuring instruments) were in S.E. Asia and Australia.

So from England I began to commute to work in my far away markets. It was expensive and

disruptive. As the product’s popularity grew, so too did the frequency of the trips shorten. Twice a year grew to once a month. I saw my family one year for only 82 days. We were all lonely and missing each other.

Most of my exposure to Thailand was in and around Bangkok. Dawn to dusk business meetings, treacle thick traffic, hot sweaty humidity, every centimetre of pavement covered in people.

One day, I went down the coast to the Thai Navy base at Sattahip. It was a four day trip. The air was crystal clear, the temperature was very nice, the landscape was lovely and the sea was dreamy. There was less traffic than Cape Town on a Sunday morning. People were kind and nice.

Fed up with the commuting, of missing my family, of planes, and hotels, and with sincere apologies to England, of England’s dull drear. We held a family conference.

America. Well, on first sight, on a tour of duty which lasted 14 months, I experienced a sort of



Chris Hill photographed at Grand Palace, Bangkok, after being appointed honorary Commander in the Thai Navy.



Chris, wife Anne-Laure and daughter Sally all set for for Loy Kathong Festival.

news free (read absence of) dangerous kindergarten. However, it at least had weather and a huge English speaking market for our products.

Then the thought: "What about moving right into our existing markets, in Asia?"

So on the next trip, we checked out schools, real costs, like apartments, houses, cars, maids, and it was AMAZING. We would double our profit on sales, by halving the expenses. Air fares alone had grown to £26,000 a year! So, in August 1998, we moved to Thailand.

We chose to live in Pattaya. It is only two hours on the freeway to Bangkok. It is 20 - 40 minutes from the main ports. (business see!). It is half the cost of Bangkok. The air is fresh and clean. It has a proliferation of international schools, and hospitals.

The Family Deal was this. We would make no decision for six months to put down permanent roots. That period would be the test time. After 6 months we had learned a lot. All of us. I now spoke Thai and was getting better all the time. We all liked Thailand. Now it was time to consider buying a house, not renting.

In November 1999, we decided that we would go the long route of applying for permanent residence, for my wife, Anne-Laure and I, this was going to be our home.

With permission granted by the Thai Government.

So, what is special about this new country of ours, this Thailand? Well, I think the very best of Thailand is the Thai people.

They are immensely proud that they have never been colonised by anyone.

Oh, they have been occupied by the Khmers, the Burmese and in World War II, the Japanese forced them into an alliance.

None of these stayed for long. By and large they are very easy going, fun loving folk. But beneath that smiling exterior lies a fierce heart. Thais are tough.

The word Thai means FREE. And they like to keep it that way. There are no worn out cliches, "We have these problems due to the colonial era..." unlike say, Malaysia their southern neighbours, or Burma to the West, Laos and Kampuchea to the East. Neither have they been interested in acquiring other people's territories.

They truly love their country. So, they should. Thailand has always been an exporter of food so there is no real history of poverty here. The Thai is close to and fiercely protective of his family. Thailand is a matriachal society, Granny Rules OK!

Oh, yes, men strut around and puff themselves up, but it is a society controlled discreetly by women.

Women are the CEOs of the majority

of listed corporations. Children know that elders look after juniors until juniors can look after elders.

Age is rank. Even twins have a rank suffix. Pi means elder, it means more senior. Nong means younger and also subordinate.

When you enter Thai life, even a cabbie, will ask, "How old are you?" How much salary do you make?"

This is not so much nosiness, as establishing your RANK status. As a "farang", a Western person, you have automatic "ranking status".

Until you disprove this by unseemly speech or behaviour or dress.... then you lose it, and may never know you have or why.

It is difficult to get permanent residence in Thailand. True.

It is very difficult to get work permits in Thailand? Well, depends on what skills you are offering. If it is work which can be done by Thais, then no, you will not get a work permit.

I have received more than 100 requests for "Can you find me work in Thailand...?"

I must point out at this juncture that I have no special pull of

any kind, am not at all in the Employment Agency business, but will pass on inquiries to either an employment agency or to generic businesses, Hotels & Catering, Oil & Petrochem, Advertising, DTP, I.T. etc. So, no, I cannot find work for anyone in Thailand. I work full time myself.

To Retire in Thailand: Yes, this is one of the routes. If you are over 55 years old, without dread diseases, (TB, Aids etc), can prove an income / pension of \$1600 per month and are Not looking for work, then you are in.

Thai Weather. We are in the tropics. Winter (November to February) temperatures range from a cool 18C (night time) to 26C daytime.

Dry Season is December to April. March to May is hot and I mean HOT.

Wet season is July to November. In these months it is not like Vietnam, or the

Philippines which experience almost constant rain. Here rain is massively heavy for perhaps a couple of hours a day. Then the sun shines. It is humid. Sauna like for most of the year. (except December and January).

Thai Food. Not even in Mexico do they have such high explosive chili drenched food. But there are so many regions in Thailand. Food varies from bland, to sweet, sour, and of course, spicy hot. I think only Turkey vies with Thailand in the immense choice of foods.

Cost of living. This is a question I am asked frequently. How long is a piece of string?

Accommodation: How de luxe do you want? Where? In which city? In which part of which city? In Pattaya, we currently rent a house. We have three floors. 5 huge bedrooms, all en suite, and then a couple

of guest bedrooms. An enormous sitting room with a covered stoep. A dining room to hold 40 guests. It is all airconditioned. It is on about quarter of an acre of mostly fruit and flower tree garden. It is in a protected estate.

Around us we have virgin jungle. Security

guards open the barrier to traffic to come in. Not that it is dangerous here, absolutely not, but having a "Yam" a security officer at the gate is "status" - face. Included is satellite TV, with 60 channels. All the main European and American channels, then heaps of movie channels and of course Asian and Thai channels.

I work three days a week in the Pattaya area, often with the Thai navy. Due to an interesting series of events I was invited to accept the honour of a commission in the Navy, so am now a full Commander. I spend Wednesday and Thursday working in Bangkok.

I also look after the company's regional markets and so visit Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Australia. Just now, I am working on a project to find distributors for



Pattaya has 1700 bars. Some of these are just quiet "speakeasies", others are bars A Go Go . . .

our products in India and the Gulf states.

Leisure: Well, there is just so much to do. Any kind of sport not associated with the need for snow. The golf is the best in the World. Beautiful courses and beautiful caddies. (and beautifully inexpensive).

As there are no excesses of climate (typhoons etc) sailing is wonderful. Divers find Thailand a haven for their dips. In Pattaya there are over 2000 restaurants.

In Bangkok, I read that they have more than 10,000. These range from the informal street stalls (delicious, scrupulously clean and cheap cheap!) to Argentinian, Texan, and even Scottish steak houses, just about every nation has a choice of restaurants - except - extraordinarily enough - the Greeks. Some of the best food in the world awaits an entrepreneur.

Clubs. Jazz, Rock, Techno, Disco - ranging from cocktail bars with silken sheathed, silken tressed, hostesses armed with iced towels to soothe the fevered brows and massage those work laden shoulders, where the music is soft, and the food delicious - to the foot stompin, raucous dawn treading discos.

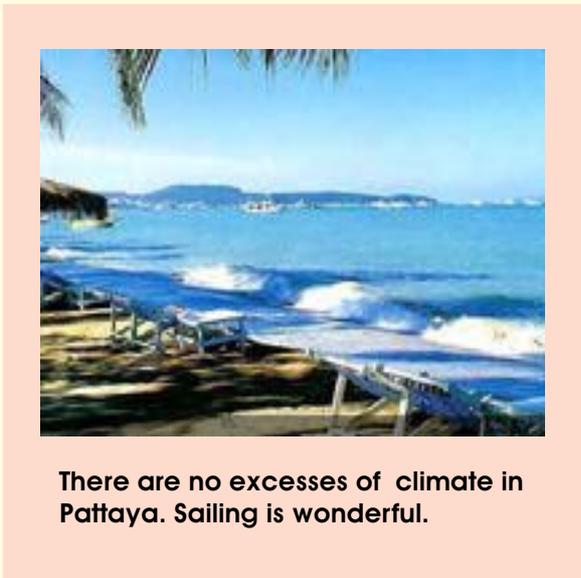
There are British Clubs, a la Kelvin or the Carlton, German, Swiss, French, Italian - you name it...

Bars. Pattaya has 1700 bars. Some of these are just quiet "speak easys", others are bars A Go Go, where bikini (or without) clad (or not) young lasses gyrate on poles reminiscent of a Subway train to all kinds of din. In this I think Pattaya probably outdoes Bangkok for sheer numbers of a Go Go bars. Makes Patpong pale into insignificance. Beer Bars. Feel like just beer and a chat with one of the locals. Want to sing a song or watch a boxing match, have a snack? The beer bars are cheap 'n lovely.

Shopping. I always tell our visitors "Bring empty suitcases". the shopping is fabulous. In the USA or Europe, I have not seen such lovely Malls as they have in Bangkok.

Then there are the markets for just about anything. Clothes. Need a Ferragamo, Balenciaga, Muir, Cartier, Vuitton, Hermes, Lanvin, Lapidus, Gucci or Chanel copy? Suit, dress, shoes, handbag? The Bangkok tailors attend all the main Fashion shows in Paris, London, Milan, New York, so you can always be up to the minute in fashion from the great houses, at a tiny fraction of the price - and of course, made to measure.

Software: Panthip Plaza in Bangkok offers two city blocks, five storeys high of Computer kit. Have your software tested on line by Microsoft, etc etc, before you buy it at a 'nth of the price.



Thailand is a shoppers paradise. We welcome many "strangers" to Thailand.

We arrange hotels and transport, usually at a much better price than they can get.

We do NOT charge for this, nor do we receive any form of commission or kick backs of any kind.

We don't want such, it would spoil it. We love how all our visitors LOVE our Thailand, that is reward enough.

For those in trouble, we offer a South Africans Help line. We will contact your folks, your insurance company, your lawyers, your GP. We will visit you in hospital or in prison.

It is now six years since we left our beautiful home in the Cape. We miss our friends terribly. At first we felt sad and missed South Africa terribly. Now, we are just so thankful to live in this wonderful country.

We have found Paradise indeed.

We wish South Africa well. We pray for the safety and prosperity of all her people. Especially we pray for those who are unable to leave - helpless due to age or funds or health, that in staying, they remain positive for as long as they can.

If you would like to contact me, to comment, to ask about Thailand, please do so to sentinel@ine.inet.co.th.

- Chris Hill

Esperance experience



All in the family: Karen and Alex Collins with Karen's son, Gavin and their two little Aussies, Nicole and Mikey.

Karen Collins couldn't have known that a holiday in Australia would change her life . . .

IN 1993, I decided on the spur of the moment, it would be wonderful to have a holiday in Australia.

Being a single mum and having recently purchased my first home, I really could not afford it and the spontaneity of the trip was uncharacteristic of me.

Gavin, my son, who was nine at the time, thought it was a great idea, and so began an amazing turn in our lives.

We arrived in Perth at the beginning of December and spent the next seven weeks basking in the peaceful Perth lifestyle.

It took a while for us to relax completely - having come from the crime-ridden and violent atmosphere of Johannesburg.

Although ever-cautious, we did stop looking over our shoulders expecting the worst every time we ventured out.

On one of our sojourns out of Perth we headed down to the small town of Esperance, on the south coast of Western Australia.

Friends of family were eager to return the hospitality we had shown them when

they had been out to Africa in '92 and they made us very welcome.

Joining in their year-end activities, we attended the local Rifle Club Trophy and Fun Day in the week before Christmas.

I was touched by the friendly and generous nature of the club members and when my randomly picked partner for a fun activity, Alex, asked for my postal address I didn't think anything of it.

Returning to South Africa brought us back to earth with a bump as we realised how 'normal' life was on the 'outside'.

But, "life goes on" and as I did not qualify to apply for immigration to Australia we continued with our lives in Africa, albeit with a yearning to return.

Over the following months Alex and I began to exchange letters regularly and in March 1995 he arrived to visit us.

It didn't take long for us to realise how much we meant to each other and very quickly the relationship escalated and the next thing we were being married in the Randburg Internal Affairs office and taking trips to the Australian High Commission in



Mikey, January, 2000



Nicole, January 2000



Gavin playing cricket on the beach

Perth arranging immigration papers. Family and friends were shocked, with feelings of sadness about our impending departure, but also delighted at our obvious happiness.

The remainder of Alex's trip became our honeymoon and just to seal our happy union, I fell pregnant.

Alex had to return to Australia and the next three months were very hard for me - the process of selling the house, packing up, worrying about our precious pets and handing over my job was hard enough without the daily wrestle with morning sickness.

Leaving our loved ones was so hard and the vast distance between us made the passing of my Dad in January of this year very hard to bear.

My Mum has been out for a holiday and hopes to come back again next year, however I hope to get over to visit them this year and to reassure my nephew's whose

biggest concern was that we would fall off the world - living upside-down in Australia!

Life in Australia has been very good to us. Esperance is a peaceful little farming and fishing town, and although a bit too far from Perth, offers an idyllic setting to raise children and has the most beautiful white sandy beaches and clear turquoise waters.

We have brought two new little Aussies into the world, Nicole who is four and Mikey who is 2 and a half.

My eldest, Gavin, unbeknown to me had suffered somewhat from the stressful life we led in Johannesburg - a ten year old should not have to spend their time in class worrying about whether his mother has got to work safely without being hi-jacked or caught up in a gun battle in the streets of the city

However, he settled well into a new way of life and two new siblings.

My husband Alex, a bachelor of thirty-seven years, doesn't know what hit him!

That's Africa!

Here is the news - I've just stuffed up . . .

VETERAN broadcaster Tony Gaynor, 63, fell back into a 20-year-old habit when he began to introduce the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation's lunchtime news bulletin last week, and announced: "This is the Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation. The time is one o'clock."

He told the independent Daily News that he had been immediately ordered to leave the studio and not to come back until contacted.

"It's true, I did make a slip of the tongue. It just happened," said Gaynor, who joined what was then the RBC in 1974 and has continued to work for the station since it became ZBC in 1980.

"I was not even conscious that I said it, but I accept that I said it, and I apologised."

Information Minister Chen Chimutengwende was enraged.

"It was right that he was fired, because that is completely unbelievable and unacceptable.

How could he say this 20 years after independence? It means his heart is still in Rhodesia. "

Gaynor said he had not yet had a response to his written apology.

Funeral host was the guest of honour . . .

AN elderly woman in eastern Zimbabwe stunned her neighbours when she held her own funeral. Dozens of mourners turned up at Mbuya Jani's house, but were surprised and angry to find Mbuya alive and kicking.

She said she had staged the funeral, complete with all the trimmings, so she could "witness and experience my own death".

"People are dying in large numbers these days and you never know when it's going to be your turn.

"I shall hold these ceremonies every year of my life," said Mbuya.



Mervyn and Sue Gray at a function to say goodbye to the Ambassador to Bahrain and Saudi Arabia - Mr Sam Motsuenyane.

Rude start to life in Bahrain

Mervyn and Sue Gray, of Cape Town, decided to spend some time teaching in the Middle East. It wasn't quite what they expected . . .

AFTER some years of headmastering in Cape Town and in the Eastern Cape, my wife and I decided that the time had come for us to travel again. I have already taught in England and Canada.

Our decision took us to an organisation called SEARCH, run by a man, called Harry Deelman, whose occupation it is to place teachers in International Schools around the world.

After the initial paperwork, this involves attending what they call a Recruitment Fair and is often held in Oxford over a weekend.

Once there, you are faced with Heads of International Schools from Moscow to Chile all looking for staff for the next academic year.

You listen, quite patiently, for some of them, like many heads, are rather longwinded and in the course of things, you discover what they are looking for and roughly what their schools are like.

You are also given a lengthy document as you start with all the details, salary, accommodation, medical aid coverage, etc.

At this point you book in for an interview in the course of the next day or two.

Sue and I were looking for an English

teacher/ librarian, husband and wife combination.

As luck would have it, soon after this we found ourselves stepping out of a plane on to the melted tar mac of Bahrain International Airport in something like 45C.

We had been appointed to an International School at a salary level we found difficult to ignore - about twice as much as I had ever earned as Headmaster of a reputable (biased opinion) private school in SA.

However, there the comparison ended.

We were shuffled into a dingy one-bedroomed flat, when we had been offered a three-roomed apartment, and welcomed into a very modern, clinical looking school building (I thought, resembling a mosque) as if we carried all the signs of a contagious disease.

It was not a happy introduction and I feel sure we would have been on the next flight home if I hadn't quickly drawn some large dollar signs and posted them around the bare walls of our ungenerous bedroom to remind us that for the first time in our careers we were being driven through severe discomfort by the desire for considerable financial gain!



Manama at night

What a mighty fall from the grand aspirations of innocent teachers !

I have to say that the next few weeks were amongst the worst we have ever experienced anywhere (and we've been around a while); the school was managed by a private owner who disliked expat teachers intensely and made it known when she had the chance.

However, she recognised that if she was to persist with her desire to retain the "international", image, she would have to put up with us.

Within a few months some of the expat staff decided to take what we called the "night-flight".

It was a sudden departure without trace or notice.

I couldn't quite go along with it myself, although we were sometimes tempted, but for some it was the only way out of hell, especially those who had been bullied mercilessly by this disagreeable figure and her henchmen.

This ignoble owner found it easier to endure the expats if she was able to bully them on a reasonably regular basis.

Sue and I were not exempt from this sort of intimidation, but, I guess we had each other to comfort when it happened, and in time we were so unified by her unpredictable and irrational attacks that it all became rather easier to survive.

So we endured, tucking our savings away regularly and neatly in some offshore investments which grew at a pace sufficient to soften the blows of the working conditions to which we were being subjected.

In fact, I have to say I thoroughly

enjoyed being back in the classroom again.

Most Heads are frustrated teachers anyway and often long to shed their greater responsibilities for some really interesting teaching.

I badly wanted to teach again.

The children were something else.

I don't think I have ever experienced less disciplined children anywhere.

They were real challenge.

To a large extent in my classroom, it was like World War 2 all over again for a while and happily I think I had the edge in experience.

In time I was able to establish the ground rules and things went reasonably smoothly.

I can honestly say that some of the children (15-year-olds) were amongst the worst I have ever experienced . . . arrogant, overindulged, disrespectful and thoroughly spoilt.

On the other hand I had one class of 16-year-old girls who were certainly as a class the nicest I can ever remember teaching.

Sue's job as head-librarian was even more difficult, given the rather freer ethos of that part of the school, but she too in time managed to establish a discipline they were able to respect.

I think it is true of most children that once they understand that there have to be some boundaries and these are made clear to them, they will for the most part go along with it.

They kick hardest when the boundaries are uncertain.

Outside the classroom, we fought

hard with the irrational management, plainly and blatantly dishonest at times, especially when it came to recognising our contracts - Oh, that we had clarified some of it before we signed.

How often we sign in eager anticipation of what we are looking forward to and then find it lets us down when we need it most.

I fear that my previous experience of administration caused me to stick my neck out too much at times. Survival here requires a slightly lower profile.

Anyway, when I was approached to take over the headship of the British Section of another international school on the island, I think the previous regime were only too happy to allow me to go. It is very uncommon

for a teacher from one school to be allowed to move to another, but for reasons already expressed, and, I think, what they imagined would be good publicity (vitally important here), they allowed me to go. So having completed

one year of my two-year contract, and with a little cash incentive between the schools, I was freed to start my second year in Bahrain as Headteacher (gender appropriately) of the British Section of Al Noor International School, and have now completed my first year in that capacity.

It is a large school (1900 students) and the control, with very little in the way of a management team, is not easy.

There is so much to learn about working with these people, and much of it relates to a very delicate balance in the whole ethos of the island community.

The longer one stays, the more one comes to understand this vital and tenuous link between the expats and the natives, who are outnumbered by about two to one. For my wife, Sue, there was no such release in sight, and, having reached the

end of her two year contract, she has had little alternative but to stay on for another year.

She is still under this incredible regime, but seems to be handling it better as she increases her control in the Library.

Needless to say the circumstances, both financial and otherwise have improved enormously since I changed schools. We have been given a comfortable furnished villa in a very pleasant compound.

It is the sort of house one would happily live in back home.

We now run two cars, a new Corolla and a 1986 BMW two-door convertible, which we were lucky enough to get for a song and which gives me great pleasure.

We are members of the Yacht Club, and share a single-cabined yacht with a good friend. Weekends are spent on the warm, flat waters of the Gulf and watching DSTV which we are fortunately able to get here ^ it's far better than anything else



It's a good life . . . we are beginning to understand why we meet many here who have stayed for 15 or 20 years

up there.

It's a good life and far from wishing to return on the next flight, we are beginning to understand why we meet many here who have stayed for 15 or 20 years, to say nothing of what their savings accounts must look like.

I hope I have given anyone thinking about this part of the world, especially in the teaching department, some idea of what to expect.

Anyone, who would like further information, I would be happy to respond to questions that might be emailed to mersue@batelco.com.bh.

I should mention that we will be going home for the summer/winter holiday (i.e. July/August)



BOOKSHELF

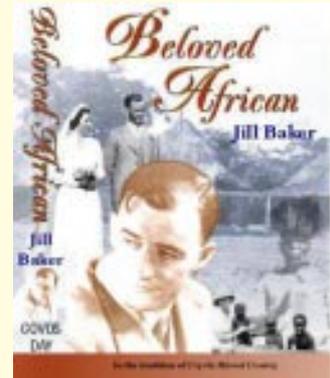
Chaos prophesy comes tragically true

BELOVED AFRICAN

Jill Baker

Covos Day

<http://www.mazoe.com/covos.html>



YOU forget things after so many years away from Africa. The smell of woodsmoke in the evening air, the stillness of mid-afternoon on a hot summer's after noon when nothing, but nothing, moves . . . and the sizzling crack of a thunderbolt as it strikes so close you can smell the buning ozone.

Jill Baker's description of such a storm brought the memories flooding back.

Beloved African describes Rhodesia seen through the eyes of her mother, Nancy, the genteel daughter of an English country vet who followed the love of her life - John Hammond - to Rhodesia in the 1930s.

It was a rude and rustic introduction to life in Africa. Hammond not only educated Africans, he built the schools with their help and home was more often than not a mud-brick and thatch af fair. In one, a 1.5 metre boomslang came visiting - up the drainpipe and into the kitchen sink!

Beloved African is more than a tribute to her father , a pioneer in African education - it is a trip down memory lane for anyone growing up in that country during the mid-to-late 1900s. Familiar place names - Plumtree, Domboshawa, Bulawayo, Nyamadhlovu are sprinkled throughout the book along with names of people ingrained in the memories of anyone who knew that part of the world.

Joshua Nkomo, former pupil, who helped in the woodwork class, head boy Ushewounze at Goromonzi, church minister, Garfield Todd and Ian Smith among many.

Hammond's desire to educate was temper ed with the desire maintain tribal tradition and custom. He could see the damage traditional Eur opean-style education was doing to tribal disciplines.

Prophetically, Hammond wrote in 1944: "We have to insist upon teaching the whole person . . . so that he understands that he can certainly expect more as a result of his education, but that with those privileges come big r esponsibilities to those who have not been so unfortunate. If we just create a sausage machine and churn them out, literate, numerate and precious little else, I'm afraid there could be absolute anarchy in 50 years or so, as everyone jostles for power" Zimbabwe, today, lies on the brink of ruin.

The enormous respect Africans had for Hammond manifested itself as he lay deathly ill after a heart attack during an Indaba at Domboshawa, called in 1962 by Ian Smith to discuss the country's future. Unable to get to hospital, Nancy sat thr ough the night by his side. Seeing the glow of a cigarette in the dark she asked: "Who's ther e?"

"It is only me inkosikaas." It was one of his old boys and leading Ama'Ndebele chief Kayisa Ndiweni. "How is Mr Hammond? Is he very sick?"

When she nodded he looked at her and said: "I will wait here til he is better." In the morning Hammond awoke, and Nancy went to the chief and told him: "He speaks, Chief, and wants a cup ,of tea."

"Inkosikaas - my heart is glad. He will get well again. Please, inkosikaas, please remember that to us Africans, Mr Hammond can do no wr ong." - T.H.



Camping with family 'Shumba' our Staf fie.

Happy campers!

Clinton and Tania Cain moved to Queensland, Australia, with their children Garreth and Courtney, in January, 1996 and have never looked back.

WE have two major periods in our lives; 'BA' which is before we moved to Australia and as you may have guessed 'AA'; which is after we moved over to Australia.

The BA portion of our lives is not what we are writing about, but I will brief on it.

Both Tania and I grew up in Johannesburg. At the age of 16 I went to Rhodesia and joined the BSAP – The Rhodesian Police Force. Which I may add; was the proudest and I believe the very best Police force, that the world has ever known.

I went back to South Africa, after the Police to study and plan out my future.

I would like to copy a part of Brian Gibbs' editorial which, was in the BSAP newsletter from the U.K;

"Despite the inaccuracies and unkindnesses that history may well visit upon

us, let us remember that we were honourable men and women and move into the New Millennium secure in the knowledge that we did make a difference and that the world is a better place because of the existence of that stalwart band, known as the BSAP!"

Variations of the above could be said about the people of all the Southern African countries.

Tania and I got married in January 1979 in Johannesburg. Sadly our best man to be was killed 5 days prior in Rhodesia on the 1st January – the first killing of the year

Our son Garreth is now 20 years already and I still can't believe how the time has flown by. But it has been an exciting time by any standards. Our daughter, Courtney was born in 1987 – another great blessing in our lives.



Typical landscape scene out west, similar to parts of Africa.



Courtney our daughter with a Kookaburra.

At this time we decided to spend more time together as a family and I sold our business and bought a farm in the Eastern Transvaal.

Yes! We went banana farming and loved it. But, the schooling was not up to scratch and we opted to move to Port Shepstone, Natal.

We went sugar farming this time. All in all we farmed for about 10 years and survived the awful drought before coming over to Australia on the 9th January 1996.

Once the land gets into one's blood as it has ours, you can never leave it, and today we live on acreage and enjoy the space and privacy that comes with it.

Something that I miss about farming, is talking to my Induna (farm manager) about the simple things that we spoke about in my weak Zulu.

I first came over to Australia in 1994 and knew immediately that this was now the place for us.

I travelled to a few of the major spots and we settled for the Gold Coast/Brisbane area. And this is where we still live more than 4 and a half years later.

Australia has been very kind to us, as it is to all her people. Business, here is not harder or even easier, I find it different.

We have been involved in a few businesses since we arrived, and at present own 5 camping stores together with my brother in law.

We import some camping gear from South Africa and these have done well for the stores. This has been an exciting venture even though I have never done retail before.

Australians are great to learn retail from, as they must be of the best retailers around.

This region (South East Queensland) is good for camping as we can camp all year round.

One thing that I can say without any doubt is; that 'the land of opportunity' is the one that you live in and make the most of everything in. Use your strengths, and build on your weaknesses once you have identified them.

Don't grumble about what we left behind. Anthony Robbins has a great saying and it goes something like this: "the past does not equal the future". Meaning that the future is what we make of it.

The schooling here in Australia has been very good for both of our children, Garreth went to 'The Southport School' which is very well known, and Courtney goes to 'St. Hilda's, which is the sister school.

Both have been good students. Garreth now does Website design



One of our stores

and programming, and works for himself.

What the Gold Coast offered us was close proximity to Brisbane and the South-East Queensland region – the 3rd largest City in Australia.

Brisbane is on just about the same latitude as Durban and even shares the same postal code. The climate is a bit less humid and great. This is the fastest growing region in Australia.

Crime here is low and although every country has its share of problems we love our new country and haven't looked back.

We never refer to South Africa as 'back home'. It just sounds like a loser statement to us and we decided on our first day that we would never use that line.

It has worked well for us and we have never missed South Africa. Although I must hasten to say, that I do miss the bush and wildlife of Africa especially Zimbabwe and Botswana. Next year I plan to go back.

We have travelled to a few places around Australia but as yet we have not had too much time off as we are still rebuilding our lives.

They say that the Gold Coast has more waterways than Venice in Italy. We are not very fond of motor boating or fishing, however we do a bit of canoeing as we live on the river.

Courtney has a staffordshire bull terrier and obviously we call her SHUMBA (Shona for lion).

We have not dumped our few links with South Africa, and have memento's all over our home from South Africa and Zimbabwe.

At a recent trade show in Sydney I met some more South Africans (one of them being from Namibia),

it is always good to meet and chat with fellow countrymen. Perhaps in the same vein as a lonely Livingstone felt, when he met Stanley in Africa!

Australia is quite pollution free and the mountain streams and waterfalls in this region are a testimony to this. Within a few minutes of where we live we can get to rain forest, mountains and all types of bush or lakes and rivers.

There is always something to do here and not at great expense. We have a few big theme parks as well as all the other types of entertainment.

We even had Willie Nelson doing a concert a short while back. As everyone knows by now; 'real men drive diesel's and listen to country music' - so I went to that concert. His concert was great, as you would expect from this incredible man.



Hiking in the Springbrook rainforest in the Queensland hinterland.



Courtney & friends in the garden.



Courtney gets a saltwater croc's-eye view of the world . . .

There are a few really good Four-Wheel drive clubs around as well as anything else that could be asked for.

I heard someone say that more Australians per capita, drive four-wheel drives than any other nation – I haven't checked it out myself.

Courtney commented to me once that; "Australia is so flat, why would anyone need a 4X4?" – Just wait till you drive around the place!

She's a rough old gem of a country. Our population in Australia is at around 19 million now and growing. The land size is similar to the USA.

Seldom would a day go by that I don't meet a South African in one of our stores. I am proud of my background as a South African.

Most South Africans who come over here and 'give it a good go' - do well, and are good people.

South Africans have become well-respected businessmen and they make good Australians.

We come across here with the sincere intention of rebuilding our lives and don't sit around on the welfare system, or complain about the lot that we have been handed.

South Africans are hard working people and I hope will remain that way. We carved our various countries from a hard land and did very well indeed.

When I talk about South Africans I would like to point out that I talk about all of us from Rhodesia/ Zimbabwe, Zambia and all the Southern African countries as South Africans.

The more correct term here would have been southern Africans, I know -- please bear with me.

Australians are very much like South Africans or vica versa. They love the outdoors,

sport and their Barbeques. I think that is why we fit in and enjoy each others company so easily.

Politics here is very different to what we had in South Africa in the old days – I have hardly any idea of what it is like now. I have not been back to South Africa since arriving in Australia except for a short visit to Zimbabwe.

Like South Africa and its neighbours, Australia doesn't have one singular accent but many. The expressions that they use and the combination of their accent and slang can leave me scratching my head sometimes. Some people use cockney expressions and 'pommie' sayings.

Once we learnt their dialect of English in this region and got to find our way around we knew that we were settled.

I think that the hardest part for me in the beginning was not knowing anyone, and being lost all the time. Also when I needed something I didn't know where or which stores to use. But this settling in didn't take long either.

We have made very good South African and Australian friends as well as friends from other parts of the world. Even, dare I say it; America.

In conclusion I would like to add that although I have given my opinion I am no expert on Australia or its people, just an interested new comer and observer.

As a family we would love to meet or be able to help any families that come to our part of the world. My contact details are supplied.

That's Africa!

Namibia - where the signs



aren't good



for those who



just have to go!



Mountain high: The Yukon sports some spectacular scenery

THE YUKON



Peter and wife Josee

Peter Dielissen has been around a bit in his life - Europe, Africa and the like. He never figured on ending up living above the Arctic Circle in the Yukon, far north Canada . . .

OUR family emigrated from Holland to Salisbury in 1954. My Dad flew from Amsterdam on one of those Superconstellations via Rome and Kano to Johannesburg and then on CAA to Salisbury.

My Mom, two brothers and I sailed to Cape Town via Tenerife and Walvis Bay. For the first six months or so we lived in Cranborne Hostel. I remember we had a ball as kids playing near and climbing Cranborne Rocks.

We then moved to Mabelaign and lived in one of those asbestos houses. I

remember there were termites galore.

My youngest brother once fell against the wall in his bedroom and landed in my parents' bedroom.

In 1958 we moved to Bulawayo where my dad, who was a carpenter, started his own parquet flooring business. We lived in a huge house on the edge of Waterford. I remember there being a small dam nearby where we would play for hours building and sailing rafts.

In 1960 the business went bankrupt and we moved to Broken Hill in Northern



Wilderness: One of the Yukon's biggest assets.

Rhodesia. I finished School in 1963 and landed a job with Anglo American Corporation in Kitwe.

They had started a multi racial program (10 blacks and 10 whites) for future mine employees.

For the first three weeks we all went down to Outward Bound in Melsert on the Mozambique border.

When we returned we worked in each department on the mine for two weeks. After six months we were allowed to choose where we wanted to work. I landed a job in the accounting department at Rhokana in Nkana.

In 1964 a bunch of us decided to bum around Europe for a year after we had received our Copper Bonus which I think was a huge 107 per cent that year.

When I went to hand in my notice, I told my boss I wanted to learn about computers. He laughed and said I was too stupid, but he did get IBM to do an aptitude test on me.

I passed with flying colours which resulted in my being offered a trainee programmer job with Anglo American for £160 per month - a fortune in those days.

An IBM teacher came out from New York and taught three of us Autocoder Programming. We each received two programming certificates issued by IBM, New York, which later on proved to be worth their weight in gold.

I was a keen punter in those days and roomed with jockey friends Bruce King and Rodney Darwell.

They sort of moved in because I was

the only one on the block with a TV (rented for 17/6 a month).

Bruce was later killed in a car accident in South Africa while hitch-hiking to Durban.

I worked with a Welshman, by the name of Taffy naturally, who pencilled for Jack Price the bookie.

When he went on holiday I took over his job on a temporary basis with the pay of £10 for the weekend.

Our first Sunday at the Kitwe racetrack was so successful that when Taffy returned from holiday he didn't get his job back....

The best benefit though was all the free drinks Rodney and I got because everyone thought we had all the insider information!

Eventually, in January 1966 I decided it was time to take that trip to Europe.

Bummed around and had a great time. Some new-made friends and I decided to go to Canada.

As a Programmer with a certificate issued by IBM in NY I was in hot demand. The Canadian Government even paid for my airfare to Toronto.

I arrived in Toronto in April 1966 and within two days I found a job near the airport.

I was living uptown and it would take me over an hour to get to work.

About a month or two later, while emerging from the subway near my home, I noticed General Foods had an office in the building.

On enquiring I was told to go up to the Data Processing Manager on the 13th floor. I

Itching for summer: Trouble is, the bugs are so big they carry off babies!



waited outside his closed office door and after five minutes someone came out and I was called in.

I told the manager I was looking for a job as a programmer. He was completely floored as the person who walked out had just resigned as a programmer!

This was my lucky day! I ended up working for them for the next 20 years.

I was posted to Vancouver for two different one-year stints, to Banbury in the UK for six months and to White Plains, NY just outside New York City for 18 months.

I also travelled extensively to many other places and just had fantastic time working there.

In 1986 the company was bought out and a great package was offered to those who wanted it.

It was a golden opportunity to take a year or so off. I took it and my wife and I moved to Niagara Falls the honeymoon capital of the world!

Well, it did us no good as we separated about four months after arriving there. I spent the next three years travelling. I went to Germany, Holland and France, lived in Vancouver and Victoria, wintered in Nassau one year and Fort Lauderdale another and went sailing for eight months.

In October 1989 I decided to return to work and applied for and was offered a job in the Yukon, which starts just below Arctic Circle and goes right up to the Arctic Ocean in the far north. About as far from Africa as one can get!

I arrived in Whitehorse on December 5, 1989, not realising that this was where I'd be spending the next ten years! The Yukon is about 500,000 square km and has a population of just 30,000 with 24,000 of them living in Whitehorse.



Frozen in time: A winter scene

About 60 per cent of the territory is mountains. The highest 25 mountains in Canada are all in the Yukon with the highest being Mount Logan at 5997 meters.

Sooo, what is it like living in the Yukon???

Let's do the summer first. Starting the beginning of May until the end of July there is 24 hours of daylight.

In the first year I had blackout curtains in the bedroom but still had trouble sleeping because I knew it was daylight outside.

However from year two



Chill factor: Winter in the Yukon

on I never even bothered to close the drapes. The whole Yukon goes into party mode in the summer. There are numerous "Midnight" events ranging from golf tournaments, BBQs, dances, fairs, fishing derbies and music festivals.

There are many mining roads in the Yukon and it seems everyone has a camper. With the area being so large you can really go out in the bush and never see anyone for a whole week.

It seems there is a cycle in the Yukon of no bugs for two years followed by a year of mega bugs. The mosquitoes in the third year can be so big they carry away babies and small dogs!

Well, they are miles bigger than any I ever saw in Africa!

Another popular summer pastime is to canoe down the rivers. My wife Josee and I once did a 7-day trip down the Big Salmon River.

We saw moose, bear, eagles, mountain goats, caribou and the salmon spawning grounds

We had found this fantastic guide who possessed many varied talents from being a bush bunny - tracking moose, building shelters out of nothing, knowing everything about wildlife to being a gourmet cook.

He and his wife prepared the most wonderful meals including chilled champagne on the last night.

His secret was to have a separate cooler for every day. He would use dry ice and duct tape them shut until the day they were needed.



Peak place: Stark beauty in black



Light fantastic: The Northern Lights swirl above the frozen landscape.

We would often stop to fish or to go wild game viewing. We always caught fish and always saw game. He would often recite the poem "The cremation of Sam McGee" while sitting around the campfire.

Because there is there is so little air pollution, the skies in the north are unbelievably bright.

All the constellations are clearly visible and from fall to spring you can see beautiful northern lights.

Visitors and residents never tire of staring heavenwards at the natural fireworks display of reds, blues and greens shimmering and swirling 70 miles or so above the earth.

Once a summer the guys would go fishing for a week. Six of us would charter a helicopter to take us into some remote lake in Alaska.

Well, fishing is a misnomer here - it was six days of poker playing and one day of fishing.

The fishing in the Yukon and Alaska is amazing. Lake trout grow up to 45lb, with 25 - 30lb being very common. In the late summer salmon fishing is very popular. After years of living in big cities the space and quiet of the Yukon is wonderfully refreshing.

While we have all modern

technologies it is quite possible to not see anyone, nor any sign of civilisation, for as long as one chooses.

In fact, for an area where most inhabitants prize their extreme physical isolation, the people of the Yukon have enthusiastically embraced the Internet.

The Canadian government has begun a programme to install a state-of-the art fibre-optic network to give Yukon faster and more reliable Internet access.

Now we have the best of both worlds with good connectivity with the outside world as well as the privilege of living in an unspoilt paradise where man's mark on the earth is minimal.

As I swapped New Years' Eve stories with internet contacts around the world hearing how people had seen in the new millennium in big cities amid the cacophony of crushing crowds and pyrotechnics I felt I'd done the occasion the most justice.

I welcomed the new millennium in the Yukon, sitting under the Northern Lights in an outdoor Jacuzzi, temperature minus 30C. No crowds, no subways, no cell phones, no Y2K bugs and the most spectacular natural fireworks . . . Wouldn't have traded places with anyone anywhere!



Above and below: A heavenly fireworks display dazzles locals and tourists alike.



Links:

Yukon Government tourist site:

<http://www.touryukon.com/>

Yukon Facts:

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/facts.html>

Cedar and Canvas adventures

<http://www.cedarcanvas.com/>

Poem: The Cremation of Sam McGee

http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/~rplume/poetry/sam_mcgee.html



Dennis and Grita Crosby



Family affair: Lunch in the back yard

Quiet reward after a life on the move

Dennis and Grita Crosby live a quiet retirement in Qualicum Beach on the sheltered eastern shores of Vancouver Island on Canada's west coast(<http://www.qualicumbeach.com/>). Within sight of snow-capped mountains and the sea their vista is a far cry from that in Bulawayo, Rhodesia or Luanshya on the Zambian Copperbelt where they once lived. Denis, 72, who joined the British Merchant Navy in May, 1944 tells of this part of his life on a website at <http://members.tripod.com/~merchantships/vinditales1.html>.

WE MOVED to Trail, British Columbia in September 1970, having previously lived in Bulawayo for a year and Ndola, Luanshya for 10 years.

At our time of moving to Trail, we had three sons, aged 13, 8 and 7 years.

I found work with the main company in Trail, COMINCO, working in their construction dept as a Rigger.

Unfortunately, four months later there was a big "lay-off" and me being one of the last people to be employed, I was the first to be laid off.

Some time later, I saw an ad for an Ironworker (Steel Erector) for a company in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

I phoned the company and they requested that I travel to Grande Prairie to be interviewed.

The journey took 24 hours on the Greyhound bus. I arrived there at 7:30am and was met by the owner of the company.

He took me around the town showing to me various contracts that they had fulfilled and after being interviewed, he offered me a job.

I told him that I would go back and discuss this with my family and let him know within 48 hours.

We all decided that our future in Trail was rather limited and so we moved to Grande Prairie.

I worked for that company for eight months, and then the owner decided to retire and close down the company !

Sooo ! once again out of work. I found work then at a big pulp mill that was being built as an Ironworker, working through the Union, however, on permit.

After working for over a year, I applied to be admitted as a member into the Ironworkers Union. They were not too keen to admit me as a member. They told me that I was too old at 45!



Flight of fancy: Dennis with his Cessna.

After a lot of hassling I finally demanded admittance and was accepted.

I worked at various sites, living in camps and driving home to Grande Prairie each Friday evening, sometimes as far as 615 miles, more often than not collecting a speeding ticket from the RCMP and then driving 615 miles back to the jobsite after Sunday lunch.

In 1975 I worked at the SYNCRUDE site in Fort MacMurray. This was a plant being built to extract oil from the Athabasca Tar Sands. The plant was officially opened towards the end of 1979.

I worked continually there for six years and from time to time until 1985.

In 1979 I bought a Cessna 150 M (I had obtained my pilot's licence in 1962 while living in Luanshya) and a Canadian licence in 1974.

Thereafter, providing that the weather was conducive I would fly there and back to my work in Ft MacMurray.

Instead of a 10 hour drive home to Grande Prairie each weekend I was now home within 2hrs 45 min: and no speeding tickets !!!

Later, in 1981 we bought a house in Edmonton I sold my aircraft in 1984 .

Our eldest son Chris obtained a BSc in Engineering, went off to Saudi Arabia for two years, then returned and obtained a Masters Degree in Bus:Admin. He is now president of a development company.

Our second son, Kim, obtained a B.Com: however, has now been operating his own kayak adventure company (Wildheart) here upon Vancouver Island for nine years and is very successful.

Our youngest son Denann lives also in Vancouver and contracts as an electrician.

In 1988 we decided to retire, sold our home in Edmonton and bought our present home here in Qualicum beach It is a wonderful small place, with many retirees such as ourselves.

We have the ocean, beautiful views, snowcapped mountains, mild weather, although sometimes we feel perhaps a little less rain would be acceptable.

However, we have nothing really to complain about.

My wife Grita and I both enjoy birds, and so we encourage lots of different varieties into our garden.

Here, too, in our area, there are many wild deer which one sees often at various times of the year. We saw three this morning whilst driving to the village.

Although we enjoy living in Canada a part of us was left behind in Africa.

It was a wonderful place to live and also people were friendlier, both the black and the white.

It was an experience which we will treasure all our lives.

I am approaching my 73rd year and find myself so often quietly sitting with my eyes closed, reliving many happy moments from those far-off days.

I would not have missed a minute of our lives there, for anything at all.

food out of africa

Bobotie



1kg minced lamb or beef
1 thick slice white bread
250ml milk
2 onions, chopped
30ml butter
30ml mild curry powder
10ml salt
pinch of pepper
Juice of one lemon or 30ml vinegar
5ml brown sugar or 15ml apricot jam
12 crushed almonds (optional)
2 eggs
6 orange, lemon or bay leaves

Method

Soak the bread in 125ml milk until very soft, then mash with a fork. Sauté the onion in heated butter until transparent. Add the curry powder and seasonings and fry for two minutes, then add the lemon juice or vinegar, soaked bread, brown sugar or apricot jam, almonds and minced meat. Cook until the meat begins to colour. Stir with a fork to remove all lumps. Transfer to a greased pie dish and smooth the top. Beat the eggs and the remaining milk and pour over the meat. Arrange the orange, lemon or bay leaves on top and bake at 160degC for 30 minutes. Serve with rice, chutney, sliced bananas and chopped tomato flavoured with onion..