

1989

Botswana, 6th Jan. 1989

My dear David,

A very happy New Year to you both. Many thanks for yours of last month. I leave here tomorrow after 2 1/2 weeks and decided to write a few letters as after my return I'll be too busy. I'm so glad that Zindi is facing up to all her difficulties so well, it must be very grim being blind. Your 60 hour+ week sounds a full one tho' that's what I've been doing for most of 1988. I hope your business does well this year and you find a replacement for M.L.

It's too bad you're visiting Kenya in March but not Zambia. I'm planning to have a holiday in Kenya this year, but not until June. You'll have to try and telephone me at Mindolo — the best number in Kitwe 214572. It's even possible to ring in the evening as the security office puts calls through. I hope you have a good break.

We had a pleasant time here — all the family went to Serowe for 4 days over Christmas, — Ruth and I, 3 sons, 1 daughter and 2 grandsons. It's a beautiful village (still) around 60,000. There's been a little rain so it was greener than usual. We had many visitors dropping in, and we were asked out. New Year was back here in Gaborone, where I also have other friends. The shops here are full, it's overwhelming!

I had a letter from friends who'd visited Adele Lieu — I'd not heard from her for 2 years. I was glad she's well — do you still see her?

All the best, hope you can at least chat!

Love to you both

Muriel

6/1/89.



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All the best, hope we can all lead chat!
Love to you both - Thanel

MOMENO WANLTLHA—FIRST FOLD

PELE TSWALA DINLTLHA TSE, LE YE GAPE—SEAL THE TWO SIDE FLAPS FIRST, THEN THIS ONE
PELE GA O BULA BEGA FA

Jan 6th 89

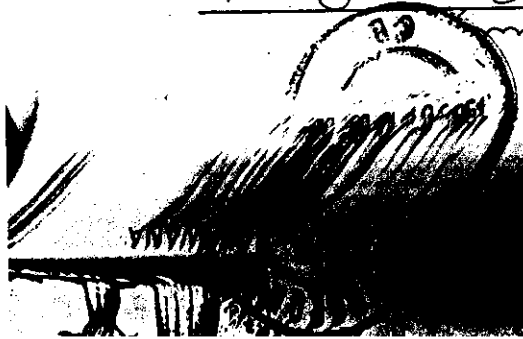
SESENYE SEPE MO-TENG—ENCLOSURES ARE NOT PERMITTED




LEINA LA MOROMEDI LE ATERESE—SENDER'S NAME AND ADDRESS

MOMENO WA BOBEDI—SECOND FOLD

TO
Cm Card Writers
PO Box 175, Rogo Park
New York, 11374
USA





April 4, 1989

Dear Muriel,

Attached is the letter I wrote last Friday to three elderly aunts in Ohio, who have never travelled outside North America but have always given me much moral support. Two of them have big families with many grandchildren and great grandchildren, but as usual they all sent me notes and cards for my 50th. To return the favor, I starting writing them a narrative of my journey. I showed the draft to several people here. They all think liked the chronicle so I decided to make it the "official" version of David's "Return to Africa!" Anyway I hope you enjoy it. I hope you got my card okay.

Zindi and I are now basically okay. Zindi was not too well when I got back and we took her to the doctor four times. It appears as if she has become a little anemic. The doctor thinks the main cause was taking too much Bufferin resulting in some stomach bleeding. (There is not too much she can take for the pains and aches that she has.) The second reason was her attempt to reduce her salt intake and lose weight. But clearly she overdid things. Anyway the situation seems to have improved and she is on the mend.

My work goes well. I was concerned that Merrill Lynch might find close our center early this then and/or find a replacement while I was away. But this was a false worry and all is well. My relationship with them seems as sound as ever. I also continue working 5 to 8 hours a week at the large Columbia/ Presbyterian Medical complex.

We are the midst of remodeling the house. Enoch, Zindi's brother, is moving into his new house this week, after spending the winter with us. (He and his wife parted last fall.) I felt this was a good time to do spring cleaning, in a big way! Thus, by the end of May, we should have a much brighter interior. We will soon have plenty of room if you ever get back this way.

Adele Lieu is as spritely as ever. I don't think she gives a high priority to letter writing, however. She and Zindi keep up a steady conversation every week on the telephone about Riverside. Riverside, incidentally, has picked a new permanent minister, James Forbes. (Bill Coffin left in 1987 to head the largest American disarmament groups in America, SANE/FREEZE.) The new minister was a professor at Union Theological and is possibly America's most powerful Black preacher. Everyone is very happy with his appointment. You will enjoy hearing him sometime.

As you can tell, the Zambian contingent was overwhelmed with Kenya's shops! Although things sound grim, I have promised to visit next January if Zindi's health holds steady and I can find someone to be with her. I think now I am better prepared for gloomy, sad stories. Let us hope!

[Addendum to two page form letter dated 31st July 1989]

Mombasa. I've been here a week or so, and still waiting so feel really hot! This year even the locals are unbelieving. Never-ending rain and a very cool "winter" have lowered those temperatures so much that it's been too cold to swim when the sun isn't shining, on average about 1/2 each day. And Europe is 20°(F) hotter, with the highest temps. for many years.

I've just re-read your long letter about your return trip. I would say some of your claims are exaggerated, but mostly it was a fair comment. I think tourism is going too fast and should be halted. My visit to the coral reef was very disappointing, due to too many books and snorkels; — nothing to see. I loved the Aberdare Mts in spite of the clouds and drizzle, and had some good muddy walks. I also loved lakes Nakuru and Naivasha, where it was sunny and full of birds and animals. I'm glad Zindi is holding her own, what a fighter she is. I hadn't heard from Adele Lieu in 1987, but had a card and note last Christmas. What an active lady she is!

Since I left I read that Zambia has suddenly changed all the banknotes. The 10 days allocated are surely not enough. I'm glad I'm here and missing that chaos! The comparison between Kenya and Zambia is so great, it's very sad. The building everywhere here is booming — in Zambia NIL.

Cheerio. Love to you both,

Muriel

July 1989

(4)

My dear

David

Believe it or not, this is my second attempt to write this. The first stencils were too faint, my old bander has obviously given up on me, so I have borrowed another. The quality of our stencils leaves much to be desired.

The Pope in Kitwe ! The Archbishop of Canterbury at Mindolo - that was how I started the first time. Kitwe is on the map. The visit of the Pope came first, and was highly organised, as well as being ecumenical. Two staff members of MEF were on the organising committee, and as a result all our senior staff had marvellous seats for the Mass - held at the old Kitwe airfield, a huge place, and easily accommodated the famous popemobile. We sat just a few yards from the Pddium, and right beside one of the lanes he drove along. The mass lasted over 3 hours, and we were there 2 hours before that, but it was so unusual and even fun, that we survived, with our cashions, drinks and snacks. Both here and in Lusaka the Mass was well attended - the President, KK, was in the capital service, and on the Copperbelt the mining companies went overboard with assistance, both to the Pope and the ABC, with all their help, and masses of beautiful flowers banking the platforms, and specially made carved chairs, and copper decorations, By contrast, Lusaka was quite ordinary. (It was all televised live, so I saw the other one too).

The Archbishop of Canterbury (ABC) came just 6 weeks later, and his visit was much more quiet, very lowkey. He conducted the Eucharist at the local playing fields home of Power Dynamos football club, as his final activity in Kitwe. There was a dinner at our local Edinburgh Hoyel the previous night, which I attended; for us the highlight was his one hour visit to MEF the next morning. After a brief tour of the campus we all converged to the amphitheatre, where he addressed us and then answered questions, selected in advance, on such obvious topics as ordination of women, ecumenical relations, other faiths, and the fate of hostages. He vaired his addresses at each place and is a most accomplished speaker. He had also visited Botswana (where he had dinner with my sister Ruth and family), Malawi and Zimbabwe. Both he and the pope revealed great stamina in their hectic whistle stop tours, and both even managed to speak a few words in 2 local languages.

Another bonus for me, sandwiched inbetween these 2 visists, was the visit to Lusaka of my eldest nephew, Major General Ian Khama. He came for a meeting, so, as he could not get up to Kitwe, at great expense I flew to Lusaka for the evening to have dinner with him, which was also a great expense for him. It was fun, and I caught up on some recent family news.

Christmas saw me in Botswana for 2½ weeks, mostly in Gaborone, but partly in Serowe, where I still know quite a few people - family and friends. All Ruth's family were there, including her 2 grandsons Dale and Marcus, who are both attending boarding school in England. Back in Gaborone, over New Year, 6 of our family were invited to a dinner at the Chinese Embassy, where 6 of them entertained us. The Ambassador either cannot, or will not speak English, so has an interpreter, which slows down conversation. But a visiting lady army Colonel spoke French, so she Ian and I broke the rules, and fooled the interpreter who did not parler franglais. The food of course was marvellous, and I cleaned up all the prawns. Quite

July 29.

(5)

- 2 -

Weather is the favourite subject of conversation in some parts of the world, here it is the Economy. Things were bad enough, but from 1st July we had a 60% devaluation, at the same time as the lifting of all price controls. When the shops opened after the long holiday weekend, everything had doubled or tripled in price. Postage, which went up x 3 times last November, has now doubled, which is why this letter is early. I am having 3 weeks holiday in Kenya and postage there is cheaper. (But I had to pay an extra 60% fare - K2,000.) I shall definitely not be sending any more Christmas cards, unless friends from here take some, as even surface mail is ridiculously high. My holiday was postponed for the second time ever this, as I had to redo the Mindolo budget for an emergency finance meeting, and heaven only knows how we will make it to the end of the year, or even next year. We are living in a black market economy, and it is impossible to buy goods wholesale. The law of the concrete jungle.

I am really looking forward to my 3 week holiday. I have good friends in Kenya, Nairobi, where I shall stay for half the time, popping in and out on trips to the mountains and lakes. Then 10 days at Kombasa on the shores of my favourite ocean, basking in the equatorial sun and swimming to my heart's content.

Some of you know Roy and Jane Onions, who live in Itimpi, 7 miles from town. They are always being burgled, but recently were attacked and injured by thieves. Roy is in the mine hospital and seems to have given up the struggle, even tho his wounds are healing well. His wife Jane is chairbound, with arterial sclerosis and a stroke, and speaks very indistinctly. I have been visiting them both every day for 3 weeks now, and their future is a most depressing outlook. There are no services here to cope with this kind of situation. They will have to move, there is a small masonic flat in town available, but packing them up and the house is an appalling thought. The other most regular visitor is Murray, so we meet at either or both invalid's most days. Life is funny. This whole episode has made me think very seriously about my own future.

Mindolo has lots of visitors and I have met several friends from the 1960's that I never expected to see again. I have had several personal visitors this year - Michael Haworth, ex bursar, Graham Tipple, who changed the face of Kitale, came to run a course on housing for the University, and stayed with me; and others. I wish there were more. But at present entertaining is a hazardous affair. About 3 months ago our main electricity plant at Kefuc blew up and burnt out. So we only have about 60% power (that figure again). So they cut off each night one district of each town, as we cannot discipline ourselves to cut back. It is usually from 6-9pm, which means either a cold meal or a very late one. It would be impractical to warn us in advance, as that would be just perfect for all our thieves. Our cold season right now is very cold, so this increases the demand. It affects so many things, and is not good for our electric machines.

So, this letter could arrive at any old time, but I shall continue writing as I get so much pleasure out of hearing from you all. It is a bit early to say 'Happy Christmas', but I shall think of you all then, and who knows, you may hear again.

Sorry, this stencil was no better -

July 1989


Tombara I've been here a week or so, and still waiting to feel really hot! This year even the locals are unbelieving. Never-ending rain and a very cool "winter" have lowered these temperatures so much that it's been too cold to swim when the sun isn't shining, on average about 1/2 each day. And Europe is 20° (F) hotter, with the highest temps. for many years.

I've just re-read your long letter about your return trip. I would say some of your claims are exaggerated, but mostly it was a fair comment. I think tourism is growing too fast & should be halted. My visit to the coral reef was very disappointing, due to too many boats and snorklers, - nothing to see. I loved the Abedare Rts in spite of the clouds & drizzle, & had some good muddy walks. I also loved Lakes Nakuru & Naivasha, where it was sunny and full of birds & animals.

I'm glad Zindi is holding her own, what a fighter she is. I hadn't heard from Adelle Lier in 1987, but had a card and note last Christmas. What an active lady she is.

Since I left I read that Zamba has suddenly changed all the banknotes. The 10 days allocated are surely not enough. I'm glad I'm here and missing that class! The comparison here and missing that class! Zamba has The 10 days, I'm glad I'm here and missing that class! The comparison here and missing that class! Zamba has The 10 days, I'm glad I'm here and missing that class! The comparison here and missing that class!

Copy for Mike it needs January. Cheerio. Love to you both, Thaniel



October 2, 1989

Dear Muriel,

Zindi and I thoroughly enjoyed your long Christmas(?) chronicle. Glad you had a good break in Kenya as I am sure you are very busy now that you are back in Zambia, especially in light of the financial and economic crises in the country that must be engulfing Mindolo in the process.

We have wonderful news to share with you. Zindi can now see again out of both eyes! While still very handicapped, God has definitely granted her the wish of her life, to fully see once again. The operation of 11th September looked very dicey as she is so fragile and then had severe breathing problems in the fortnight preceding the surgery, but she went through very well. It is now three weeks and the operation clearly succeeded. In fact late in the afternoon after the operation they briefly took off the bandages and she could see. Needless to say we are ecstatic! Within a month they will test her eyes and probably give her reading glasses. For long distance she will need nothing, as she sees as well as she did several years ago! Her big desire now is to start sewing and knitting again. She must wait a fortnight while the eye fully heals.

We went to the pulmonary specialist today and Zindi seems reasonably good; fragile but able to take care of herself. As before, she can do her own cooking and supervises a housekeeper who comes three days a week. We can only hope for a good winter. But whether she has a year or many years to live, she should have her sight until the end of her days.

Riverside Church was very supportive during Zindi's surgery. They have a special service at 9:00 AM in the morning. It is a special eucharist service and our favorite minister, Fanny Erickson, leads it. There is a special laying on of hands part of the service. It has been most inspiring. The night before Zindi's surgery, Fanny came over to St. Luke's, only a few blocks from Riverside, and laid hands on her. Zindi was very worried about coughing in light of her recent troubled breathing. Fanny said, "Think of Jesus there with his hand on your throat, saying 'be calm.'" It did seem to help her so much.

Adele Lieu is incredibly active. We see her so much. What a wonderful thing you did by bringing us together. She is so inspiring. She feels she cannot think as clearly as before but I think it is just fear of all of the talk of Alzheimer's disease. Nothing slows her down!

On the more temporal side, my work goes as usual, busy but interesting. I worked 56 hours last week for Merrill Lynch and also 15 hours for others, so you can tell I didn't have much spare time! Hopefully I will take most of one week off later this month and have a little time at home with Zindi. I had hoped to visit the U.K. for several weeks but that will have to wait until 1990! Besides having some time with Zindi, I'll try to get my debts paid off!

Oct. 9th 1990



I fear my dream of visiting Zambia in January has gone the way of my dream of visiting the U.K. this fall! In that case I don't want to be away from Zindi so long and equally important, have decided I still can't stand to see Zambia again in its present sad state. Rather I have decided to send my best friend, James Kanga, a round trip ticket to spend 6 weeks with us in the spring. Even though he has a good civil service job (head of Training in Home Affairs), as you well know he could not buy a ticket with Zambian money.

All letters from Zambia make me so sad at present. I guess there is just nothing one can say. Saddest of all to me seems to be the effect of the state stores and their effect on the morale by using forex. So many old friends have written with ridiculous demands (one for \$5,000) for American dollars! I cannot believe that the situation has turned fairly senior citizens, in a social sense, into beggars! My heart bleeds.

Anyway my love. If I can send you any personal item you can't get, but want from America, don't hesitate to ask.

Much love,

David

Gaborone, Botswana, 31st Oct. 1989

My dear David,

I'm as surprised to be here as you are! It has all happened very suddenly. Over one year ago, Ruth wrote to tell me that a young ITV film director had somehow found the story of their marriage, and wanted to film it, so I should expect to hear from him. He later wrote and asked me many questions which of course took some pondering over, relating to 40 years ago. So I decided to wait until I was here last Christmas. Ruth and I jogged each other's memories and we made a tape to send off. Well, I forgot all about it. About one month ago this director, Michael Dutfield telephoned me from here and said he would like me to come down to be filmed as part of his film. It's partly documentary, partly a filmed story. The earliest I could come was Sat. 28th, the day they were leaving, as we had MEF Board of Governors' meetings last week. My plane was an hour late; Quett Masire, President of Botswana was on the plane returning from the Commonwealth Conference, so there was a welcoming parade (headed by Ian who is now the Army Commander) and we were delayed on the plane. So I was dashed to the hotel, made up, then interviewed for an hour or so (no questions in advance); then the crew had to dash off to get their equipment and themselves on the flight. What an exciting day! Ruth is not here — she's in Europe at meetings, so I'm staying with my friends Derek and Joan Jones. My niece and nephews have been fantastic. They all met me, then collected me from the film-makers and took me out on Sunday; today Jackie had us all for my birthday lunch.

So I'm most impressed.

Back to the film. It will be called "A Marriage of Inconvenience", and will be shown on British television within 21 days of March 15, 1990! Michael has also written a book with the same title, to be released next March. When he invited me down here, I decided to take a week's holiday, as I was so tired. The Director was away for 6 weeks fund- -raising, and I was acting Director for half that time, so by his return I was ready to hand back! Then I had to prepare financial statements for the Board. My packing was done in bits during the week as we had special lunches and dinners; the students from the 4 pan African programmes all graduated on Saturday so Friday evening was their farewell dinner. I missed the graduation on Saturday, as I left at 5 am. It seems strange being here without Ruth, but I have other friends and the week is racing by.

Botswana's economy is still booming and this town is growing rapidly. I've been round the shops and can't believe how much is available. The prices are still reasonable. Everyone is wondering how things will work out in Namibia, right next door. For the time being, S. Africa is not harassing; naturally the change in the situation there is being watched closely.

I shall be coming back here for Christmas, and also at Easter as Tony, the younger twin is getting married. So our usual holiday in Chobe at Easter will be off next year, as the wedding will be in 2 parts, one in Gaborone, then up to Serowe. As they have lived together for 6 years and have been dating for 13, it's overdue!

Many thanks for yours of a month ago. The news of Zindi's returned eyesight really is marvellous. She really has grit and courage — and so do you. I'm so happy that Riverside Church has helped you, and that Adele has become a good friend. Isn't life strange?

Like you, I am sad at the way Zambians have become beggars. Every time I go anywhere abroad, all sorts of people, some not even friends, ask me to bring things back for them. I know life is very difficult, but the scrounging mentality is not necessary. In the YWCA, members fight to go abroad to a conference, just to get dollars. Very sad.

How can you work 71 hours a week? I thought I was doing a lot, and I don't reach 60. I find being on call all the time living on the campus can be a big disadvantage as well as being an advantage in other ways. On balance, I come out positively!

I do hope Zindi continues to enjoy life and think positively. What an example to all of us, do give her my love. Thanks for offering to send me anything I might need — but I can get all I need here.

Cheerio, love Muriel

Gaborone, Botswana. 31st Oct 1989

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31st Oct. 1989.

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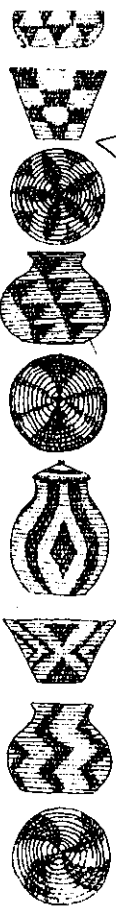
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31st Oct 1890

(2)



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31st Oct 1989

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I do hope Zindi continues to enjoy life and think positively. What an example to all of us, do give her my love. Thanks for offering to send me anything I need - but I can get all I need here. Cheers, love & hug

Kitwe, Zambia 27th November 1989

My dear David,

I collected your sad letter from my post-box last night — and what do I say? As you commented, Zindi appeared to be improving, at least temporarily, so I can imagine what a shock it was to you that she didn't stay around longer. I am sure you're missing her terribly, having done so much for her. From all you've told me about her, she was a marvelous person. The obituary — written by you, I suppose — was so descriptive that I felt I knew Zindi well — and I only met her 2 or 3 times.

I think you were marvelous the way you altered your whole life to adapt to her illness. I'm sure it wasn't easy. I wonder how you'll cope living with her 2 brothers — don't you need time on your own to sort yourself out and gradually see what you'll do now?

I've tried to find out what is S.L.E., but nobody here seems to know. I remember you trying to explain when I was last over in '82, but I've forgotten.

I know this illness must have cost you a lot of money, but I think you ought to plan a holiday, in the New Year — a relaxing one, preferably with a friend.

I have been trying to recall how often I met Zindi here at MEF in the 60's. I did meet her in '82 at your home.

After reading your obituary I wish I had known her more.

How is your business going? From odd remarks I gather it's a struggle. You certainly seem to have to work extremely long hours. I imagine you must be feeling very tired. Do you work from your flat?

Last week in our National Budget our postage went up 88%! So I imagine your begging letters from here will be reduced!

Well, David, you are in my prayers. Do look after yourself now. You did all you could to help Zindi, and I think you should now look after yourself.

All the best, love to Adele if you see her.

God bless, Love Muriel

My dear David,

27th Nov. 1989



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23rd Nov 1989

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All the best, love to Adele
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God bless, Love Muriel

TO OPEN SLIT HERE

SENDER'S NAME AND ADDRESS

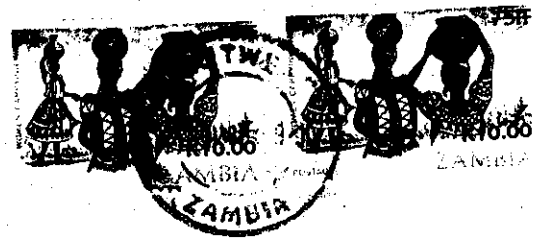
M. Saunders
PO Box 21607
KITWE
Zambia

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Mr David Wilkin
P.O. Box 175,
REGO PARK
New York 11374
U-S-A.

1990

Serowe, Botswana, 2nd January 1990

My dear David,

Your letter arrived the day before I left, and I thought I'd brought it with me, but can't find it. Anyway — I sincerely hope and pray that 1990 will be a good year for you, as you begin to plan for a different life.

I hope you have a good time with your friend from Zambia when he visits you. The timing is very apt, as by then you should feel more like relaxing with friends. I was delighted you plan to come to Zambia next January, and look forward to meeting you again.

My 3 year contract with MEF ends this December, but I wouldn't leave at that time, as I'd at least finish the annual accounts and see the audit through. We all agreed that I would extend year by year, depending on me. Tragically, as AIDS is killing off so many middle and upper management, I can see we'll need more experts, (and white Zambians) not less. The latest forecast is 25% of 35-45 year olds will die in the next 4 years. I personally know so many with it or who have died of it, that I wonder how conservative these figures are.

I hope you had a reasonable Christmas, considering the circumstances. I was also relieved to hear your 2 brothers-in-law had moved out! I mean this very sincerely, I think it's much better for you.

I hope you can build up your business, so that you can also live a full life outside. Your working hours sound horrendous. Even if you're not busy, it's pretty awful just sitting around waiting for work. Can you concentrate on other matters? I sound just like an "Aunty Peggy" in a women's magazine!!

We had a lovely Christmas in Serowe, very small this year, just Ruth, the 3 sons and me. The 2 grandsons were in England with their father, and were much missed. Jackie never joins the family if she can help it. And Tony's fiancée Margaret was in S. Africa with her father. Jackie and Margaret were here for New Year, back in Gaborone. Needless to say it's very hot, and little rain. So far this year there's been more rain than usual and it's fairly green. But compared to Kitwe ----

So I'll be back again at Easter for the wedding of Tony and Margaret. The 2 grandsons will be here for that. First a smallish reception given by Margaret's family on Ruth's farm. Then a day to all drive up to Serowe (200 miles) for a big tribal celebration — speeches, receptions, church blessing, feasting and drinking. Until we know which date the 2 boys will leave England, as the younger one is going to a new school. All very complicated. The last person to have a say in all this is the bride! I feel rather sorry for her. She's a white S African, who has been Tony's only girl-friend for years and they have lived together for 5. Part of her family is supportive, part is very anti. It doesn't seem to bother her at all.

I'm enjoying my stay here. Ruth and her family are not always easy to understand or cope with, but I am a survivor. It is strange how different we are, yet only 2 of us brought up together.

Well, David, all the very best, and good wishes for your next few months.

Love Muriel

2nd Jan 1990
Rec 1/16/90

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Jan 27 1900

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Well David, all the very best, and good wishes for your next few months.
Love
Daniel

Jan. 2nd 1990

2nd Jan. 1990

April 5, 1990

My dear Muriel,

Your have been on my mind lately, especially when I visit Riverside since your visit was the cause of my discovering it! The services have been so delightful lately. Our new permanent minister to replace Bill Coffin is Jim Forbes. He is a widely known African American (no more Black Americans!) who was professor of Homiletics (preaching) at Union Theological. He is simply amazing. His sermon two weeks ago was "Would your God want to be called Mother?" When it is printed I will send you a copy. It was possibly the most brilliant sermon I have ever heard in my life. (Rev. Kavanaugh said clapping could be a form of worship right afterwards and the full church did so for 5 minutes!)

Anyway, all is more-or-less as well here as I could expect. My emotions go up and down like a lightning storm. My short term memory is really bad as a friend who lost were husband a few years ago after a long spell of cancer warned me to expect. And so forth. But still all is well. My health is good and I swim a lot. (Just did a half mile today.)

I am still at Merrill Lynch but as you may have read the financial world is limping seriously. Many outsiders have gone not to mention several thousand employees. So I am a bit worried. I think I have a chance of hanging on but am trying to get a new client or so. "The old gray mare ain't what she used to be!"

My work could well jeopardize my visiting Zambia next year but I hope not. The money has been good. I thank God it lasted while I was helping Zindi through her last years. At least now I don't have the same pressure on me. And the remaining debts can slowly come down, especially if I miss my vacation next year!

Talking of vacations, part I. I trust your trip south for the wedding at Easter is still on. Probably if the post is as slow as usual, you may well read this on your return! Anyway, pre- or post- this letter, I hope it is a real break for you. By-the-way has the film come out yet on Seretse and Ruth?

Now, talking of vacations, part 2. James Kanga should arrive here on the 21st of this month, after Easter. I think this may help me a lot as I really regard him as possibly my best friend anywhere. He and also his family have always meant a lot to me and have always kept in close touch. He comes in direct from Zambia and I am planning on us flying down to Orlando in early May to see Mickey Mouse for a week! I really need the break. I hoped I could visit the U.K. on his way back but that now seems to be beyond my budget!

April, 5th 1990.

16

Your comment on AIDS was very sad. Sounds like you'll have work that requires your skill as long as you want it! I just envision the orphans that will need care! Sounds like the country is heading into a nightmare on that score alone.

Your comment on visiting Botswana rather reminded me of my visits to Ohio with my brother, his wife and youngest son (his eldest son is now married and lives in Washington D.C.). We are quite different and extremely different lifestyles. But as you said you are a "survivor" and I guess I am as well. With no children and no wife, and my elderly father now remarried and far away in Northern Canada and no interest in NYC, my life turns increasingly to them and the rest of my aunts and cousins still living there. My nephew is an adorable 10 year old and their home something out of Beautiful Homes and Gardens and thus comfortable +.

Vacations Part III. And so I plan to drive to Ohio from New York the week after James and I return from Orlando. The drive over the mountains is so beautiful at that time. And I plan to adjust. I will talk, live and act the way they like. My brother has little interest in hearing of the world so except when they bring up topics we will talk of Central Ohio. I have learned not to thrust them into a world they understand not. Still they are my main family and that is it! So I really do understand your parallel situation!

Fortunately my brother, aunts and relatives love to see all my different visitors from Africa. Being hospitable small town people, I think it gives them an interesting variation to the type of people they usually meet. James will have a most enjoyable visit as Siphon and Mteto had in January; and Zindi always had.

Siphon from South Africa and Mteto (Zindi's brothers) and I drove to Ohio in January for a long weekend. Everyone (both visitors and hosts) had a wonderful time. Siphon was so 'sweet anyway and he said later "If I had been a little boy, I would have stamped my foot and refused to leave!" (Siphon flew back home about one month ago.)

As usual, I am writing on Merrill Lynch's time, between jobs. It is a perfect job for letter writing!

All the best. Can't believe you are ending your 3rd year at Mindolo; may the rest of the year be professionally interesting, challenging and successful. Also, best of health.

Much love,

Addendum to four page form letter of 28th November 1990

Long time since I heard from you — how are you coping with life? How did your holiday at Easter with James plan out? Fine I hope.

At present Mindolo, almost empty of students, is full of a big R. Catholic conference of a children's association, from all over — Peru, Chile, Venezuela, Brazil, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Malaysia, Madagascar, Mauritius, and several African countries — but none from the USA, or Britain! I've not seen so many white faces here since the 1960's.

I'm delighted Thatcher is down and out, heaven knows how John Mayor will make out. Badly, I hope, so Labour can win next time.

What does your brother-in-law think of Mandela? I think he's wonderful, but I query his long trips overseas, I think he's badly needed at home.

Russia/USSR sound like poor 3rd world countries, with food problems What are you doing to stop Bush rushing into war? Plenty, I hope.

Cheerio, and all the best, Love Muriel

John

November, 1990

My dear friends, David

It is quite ridiculous that I seem to have less and less time for letter writing, but that is the scene. This is the month I usually write to friends, but the accountant is away on study leave for 5 weeks, and among his jobs I had to do was the salaries, a whole week's concentration, which I did not have. The head of Admin is in Botswana shopping for MEF, things like machines for our water supply, stationery, uniforms, cutlery, paint, etc etc. So I have the 5 drivers and their daily schedule added to my list, plus dining room, hostels, and everything else. But our biggest problem is WATER. In the 30 years since the dam was built it has never emptied. But this year it did. We had very poor rains last year, and this year when it was going down so low, we discovered it is leaking, and needs a small fortune to repair. Some bright spark planted trees on the dam wall, and their roots have gone through to the water. Along these roots the termites have followed, making nice little tunnels for the water to seep through. So, 3 weeks ago the dam was too low for the pump and pipes to function, as they filled with mud. For 3 days we had nothing in our taps, and had to collect in buckets from the little springs along the edge of the dam. Since then we have had one hour each morning and evening. The rains have usually started before this, but this week they have only just come, so next week we hope to have 4 hours per day.

O the joys of living in the Third World. But in fact many towns have run out of water and at least we have some nearby to tap. The whole country is slowly grinding to a halt. I keep wondering how much longer the economy can continue to run down, it's a miracle that anything works.

Then of course there is the political situation. Now we are to return to Multi party rule, things are hotting up, as the current UNIP hierarchy do not like it one bit and are resisting it all they can. However most of their tricks end up by rebounding on them, and I can't see how UNIP can win another election. But life is full of surprises. At the present moment a commission is touring the country and anybody can go and give their ideas for the future, and they are amazingly frank, and all being published in the press.

The best thing that happened to me this year was when a group of us here decided to re open the swimming pool. We bought paint and did our weekend stint, cleared the grass and bush around, and it looks lovely. It is a big pool, and although we are only about a dozen daily stalwarts, we have kept it up. I swim now at least once a day, and often twice. The good result of this is that my back is much better. It was so bad that I went for X rays and saw a surgeon with them. He told me the disc between 2 vertebrae has disintegrated, and also one in my neck, and nothing can be done. He said the pain would last 2 - 10 years, then would gradually fade away. Keep up the Indocid was the only relief. Well, was I happy! Anyway. But just then I started the swimming, which he had said was good, and the results are miraculous.

We continue to have our ration of visitors on campus, and in October, at the time of the Board, there were 3 from the World Council of Churches, who came to do an evaluation of the courses they send students for, and to have a general chinwag. That week, with Finance, Executive, Board and 3 long meetings with these WCC visitors, I reckon I worked a 60 hour week, and this included a so-called holiday - Independence. But I did not miss my swims!

Our postage is so ridiculously high that we all look around for someone travelling to Britain to post our letters, we all keep UK stamps. So I just don't know how or when this will go. I am off to Botswana again for Christmas, hopefully for 3 weeks. MEF closes down for 10 days, it is our slackest period with no students, and I feel I can do with a break. Air fares are now so high that when I travel anywhere I feel I have to have my moneys worth.

Cheerio and all the best,

HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

28th Nov. 1960

(18)

Whenever I write, it is usually in a hurry, so I thought I would drop a line while I have the use of a typewriter in the office. We are in the middle of the food riots, and my only surprise is why they did not happen earlier.

I felt I would like to write a descriptive piece about Mindolo. It is such a beautiful campus, and so different from my previous life living in town.

Mindolo campus is 155 acres, and when I take myself for a walk (not often enough) I can stroll around for nearly an hour, stopping to admire trees, shrubs and other diversions en route. In the centre is a stream which was widened into a lake the year I arrived - 1960. It was possible to walk around the lake but the path has not been kept clear. I love to walk over the spillway at sunset and watch the sun setting over the water. This lake also gives us our domestic water, as we have a water treatment plant. We are amongst the luckiest in the country, as most town supplies are now inadequate.

Staff houses are dotted all round the campus, about 80 in all. About 50 for Mindolo Ecumenical staff, and 30 for those working for other organisations on our campus - the Literature Centre; YWCA; United Church Theological college; Copperbelt Moderator of the United Church; and 2 Or 3 other small projects. So we are a real village, and there must be around 500 staff living here, the average family being rather large. Then we have 7 dormitories for about 200 students, whose courses range from 2 weeks to 11 months.

We have the most beautiful flowering trees and shrubs, such as jacaranda, cassia, flame tree, gardenia, bougainvillea, hibiscus, pointsettia, frangipani, copperbush, and many others. Fruit trees such as avocado, mango, guava grow wild, and I am kept in free avocados for half the year from a huge tree of 30 years, with massive sized fruits. At least 6 times bigger than the paltry ones I see in London! Tennis, volleyball and netball courts, a football field and a swimming pool are also here. But we cannot use the latter as chlorine is far too expensive - shame. There is a large area for growing vegetables for our kitchen, and staff to buy, and there are also chickens, and recently we have started pig farming.

The standard of housing is very high, but now after 30+ years some of the buildings are in urgent need of repair, and we are finding it too expensive to carry out these works. The Dag Hammarskjold Library, built in the early 1960's by the Swedish churches as a commemoration, is a magnificent building, and it is the best library in the country as we are the only library which has the foreign exchange to import books. The new Kitwe University uses our library all the time. Finally, there are 2 rather under utilised buildings, the Conference Hall, which divides into 4 committee rooms with sliding doors, and the Chapel. I don't have to mention offices and classrooms. We employ 140 staff, from the Director to the gardeners, with all kinds inbetween, teachers, cooks, security guards, cleaners, accountants, clerks, programme leaders, and top management.

As you have gathered in earlier letters, there is quite a hectic social life here. Being a Pan African centre, we receive many visitors from all over the world, and we always entertain them. The students arrange cultural evenings, when we eat food from all over the continent, (subject to availability) and they entertain us with their songs, dances and plays. And of course we all join in.

My house is 3 bed-roomed, and is adjoining the clinic. It should be used for the resident clinic sister, but there was nobody in that job when I moved in. I have a nice garden, most of which is tended by Francis, my house servant, who has now worked for me for the past 14 years. I have a bougainvillea hedge all round, patchy but colourful. It is useful for keeping out all my neighbour's free range chickens, and their dogs, and their children, who like my fruit trees.

So you see, I am very lucky. Of course there are disadvantages, like being on call 24 hours a day, but these are greatly outweighed for the friendly atmosphere. I can drop in to any friends when I feel like it, and vice versa. We are building a high wall all round, which is ridiculously expensive, but is all paid for by donors. As we don't always get enough money for programmes, I wonder about their priorities. The wall is about half way round, and hopefully will be nearly finished this year.

I wonder if you can get a picture of my life, at least partly. It all sounds idyllic, which is nice, when you think of the perpetual crises we seem to live under. It is so relaxing to take a walk round my estate, and appreciate how fortunate I am to have such an interesting job, in such lovely surroundings, and to have so many varied friends, colleagues, and visiting partners.

After being postponed from April, August was chosen as the suitable time. BUT even that was difficult. The bride was the last person to name the day - on each Saturday one of the family had an engagement, including the last weekend when SADCC had its tenth anniversary and they were all caught up. So it was finally fixed for 1st September in Gaborone, and the 8th in Serowe.

Traditionally in Botswana, there are 2 receptions, one given by each family. Tony and Margaret, the bride and groom, wanted a quiet wedding, in Gaborone only. They asked Ruth if they could hold it on her farm, where there is an attractive summer house, which could easily double as a chapel. In Botswana the law only requires the priest to be licensed, not the building. So this was decided, and the Archbishop agreed to perform the ceremony.

I must tell you about this Archbishop, Walter Makhullu. He had been a priest in Botswana in the 1960's, and became a family friend. He then went to Britain to work, and married an Anglican deaconess, Rosemary. After that he went to work as Africa Secretary of the World Council of Churches, and when he visited Mindolo in the 1970's I met him here, and then later on visits to Geneva. So we also became friends. He was later invited to Botswana as their Bishop, and within two years he had rapid promotion as he was elected to be Archbishop of Central Africa, covering Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. Some with good memories may remember that when I was in Gaborone for the twins 21st birthday, Walter was consecrated Bishop the next day. He is a marvellous person, good fun, excellent linguist, speaking Afrikans, English French and several African languages; and can imitate almost anyone.

Back to the wedding. Tony and Margaret were not allowed by the tribe to have just a quiet wedding in Gaborone, they wanted all the works in Serowe too. So one week after the legal marriage there was a big "do" in Serowe, with a church blessing (they insisted on the white dress) a tribal gathering in the Kgotla (as seen in the famous film "Marriage of Inconvenience") and a lunch for one and all to follow; and a luncheon for 300 specially invited guests in the TTC hall.

If anyone would like advice on how to conduct a wedding, there is a good team of experts available - Ruth Ian, Jackie, the twins, and me. I arrived one week before wedding number one, and although Margaret was responsible for the reception at the farm, on behalf of her family, naturally we were involved. Margaret chose yellow and white as her colour scheme, and every thing was done in those colours - plants, flowers, marquee, tablecloths, etc. We decorated all the tables with flowers, and everywhere else possible.

It was an evening wedding, 5pm was the scheduled time. So the marquee was for dinner for 50 guests. Ruth's farm is 7,000 acres, and she has about 2 acres fenced off round the homestead. The tent was just outside the fence, and Tony hired a machine to level the ground. As it hadn't rained for 6 months, we were overwhelmed with dust. That week we were arranging for both affairs, as the Serowe people could not get cutlery, crockery, in paper and plastic as well as china and steel. The President and his wife were invited, but he was at a meeting in Lusaka, so he came to the Serowe affair. Margaret's father (a widower), brother wife and son, and an uncle and aunt, all came up the day before, and Ruth had them to dinner that evening. Margaret and her one bridesmaid stayed overnight at the farm.

Saturday turned out to be cool and dull, not at all what was ordered. So around 11am we had one of many family conferences, and decided to have the service on the verandah, which covers 2 sides of the house, which made an L shape. We seated 50 quite easily, with Walter at his table where the 2 sides met, family on one side, President's group on the other. Margaret's family had never mixed socially before with Africans, and her father spoke almost no English, so they had quite an experience.

The wedding was delayed by the groom and Archbishop! The bride was bang on time. Tony was delayed at the house by visitors, and Walter had gone to Zimbabwe and got bumped off the plane. He was told another plane would come one hour later, but he could not contact Rosemary, who after going to meet him and not finding him, went

back to look for another priest. Having just found one, Walter rang from the airport so she had to dash out, take him home to collect his clothes, register, licence, etc. This was 3.30 when he arrived, and he got to the farm at 5.15.

Margaret wore a cream brocade dress, decorated with pearls, she has beautiful thick dark long hair, so looked simply terrific. Her bridesmaid, in yellow, was tall and slim, just as well with the 6foot 4 twins elegantly dressed in white jackets and shirts, black trousers and bow ties. Fortunately Margaret married the right twin.

After the ceremony we had toasts and cake cutting in the house, then moved to the marquee for dinner. I was lucky and sat with Walter and Rosemary, Pres. Masire's wife Gladys and her daughter, and the Minister of Defence and his wife. Walter kept us all entertained, and Ruth kept sending covetous glances in our direction as she sat next to M's father and they could not converse much. But he came into his own later, as he dances old fashioned proper dances beautifully. Ruth and I took it in turns with him, while Walter danced with the white women relatives from S. Africa. He created quite an impression on everyone.

During the next week, we had our usual social round, dining with the British High Commissioner, and other friends. Ruth and Ian went to 2 State House dinners for the King of Swaziland and the President of Namibia, both visiting. The latter decided to visit Seretse's grave, so Ruth and Ian had to fly up with him one afternoon to Serowe. And inbetween we shopped.

Ruth Ian and I drove to Serowe on the Thursday, the others came the next day. We had 3 vehicles in order to carry all the plates, cutlery, flowers, food, wedding dress, wedding cake, drinks for the luncheon, and the rest. Once there, we checked on arrangements, did more shopping,, and then all day Friday helped the local friends and relatives who were decorating the church (yes, also seen in the film) and the college hall. The local ladies had made over 500 paper yellow flowers, and along with the greenery we decorated the church, including pillars, and the hall. I did 2 pillars and was quite proud, but at the end of the day I surely knew that I badly need a new spine.

The church blessing was due at 11am, but this time it was the President who was late. He flew up for the day, and brought Samora Machel's (Mozambique president who was killed in a plane crash) two daughters. (Sorry about the awful grammar). He insisted in coming to the house, even the 1/2 hour late, and driving past the church to get to us, so it started at 11.30. The choir also seen in the film were just as good. The church was packed, and it was a fairly short service. At the end Pres. Quett Masire escorted me up the aisle, he is so relaxed and laid back, completely different to the normal African President. Outside the S. African press were in full force, this time the twins wore light grey morning dress. There were beautiful pictures in the papers next day.

We all drove to the kgotla ground, where tents were erected to keep us cool, as that day was very hot, and Ruth and I were delighted as our clothers were suitable for that weather. I even wore a hat. After 2 hours of speeches, singing and dances, then gift giving, we drove up the hill as far as pos. then climbed the rest to lay the bouquets on Seretse's grave. (Also seen in THE film). Then off to the TTC for lunch, which was fun. This lasted most of the afternoon, and we only had brief speeches. It was nice meeting old friends again. After that we went back to the house where another party kind of happened and lasted until well after midnight.

Not exactly a holiday, but I would not have missed it at all. Roll on the next one! I forgot to mention that Jackie's 2 sons came out for the event, and enjoyed themselves. Dale is doing levels at Sevenoaks, Marcus is with his father in Brussels. Margaret's nephew is a little younger than Marcus and they enjoyed themselves during the ceremonies.

190s
Q) Long time since I heard from you - how
are you coping with life? How did
your holiday at Easter with James
plan out? Fine I hope.

At present Ovindale, almost empty
of students, is full of a big R.Catholic
conference of a children's association,
from all over - Peru, Chile, Venezuela,
Brazil, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal,
Malaysia, Indonesia, Mauritius, & several
African countries - but none from
USA, or Britain! I've not seen so
many white faces here since the 1960's.

I'm delighted Thatcher is down
and out, heaven knows how John
Major will make out. Badly I
hope, so Labour can win next time.
What does your brother-in-law
think of Mandela? I think he's
wonderful, but I query his long
trips overseas, I think he's badly
needed at home.

Russia/USSR sound like poor 3rd
world countries, with food problems.
What are you doing to stop Bush
rushing into war? Plenty, I hope.
Cheers, & all the best,
Love Muriel