

2005

P. DAVID WILKIN
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8th June 2005

My dear Muriel,

You have been much on mind the last few weeks. All is well here and I hope all is well with you. I do trust that someone posted you this email that Margaret Whitehead sent out in February, plus I'm sure you've got other mailings, but did feel I should sent it just in case you did not.

Have had a good year personally and professionally, so far! Just pray it continues thus. Health good for a 66 year old, my work challenging and interesting, and my time off quite pleasant.

Had a lovely visit to South Africa in February (where I got the email about Denys' passing). Lots of sunshine and rest. Didn't do anything exciting; didn't even go to a game park and see animals! Still it was just what I needed, two weeks more of summer and two weeks less of NYC winter! So sorry that I could not contact, or better yet, see you.

Got back and ended up working 5 or 6 day weeks in place of my 3 day weeks that I am now being paid for as "parttime". We hoped to apply for NIMH (National Institute for Mental Health) grant for work among children suffering psychopathology from watching their parents die of AIDS. Our focus was to have been northern Malawi where the HIV rate is 16%! Unfortunately we were to partner with a program by the Univ. of London and they were not yet ready and we couldn't. Hence my boss felt we should apply for a similar grant in Gujarat (western India) with the local university. My, oh my! Three weeks to research and write and make necessary contacts was a challenge. But to cut a long story off we did it and got the grant proposal on Friday, 27th May. Since then we have also applied for a grant relating to trauma amongst children in Sri Lanka that resulted from the tsunami.

Anyway, I am now able to work two days a week through the summer so maybe my parttime schedule will really happen this time!

It is becoming quite warm here and probably just the opposite in Gaborone!

I now get up at 4:44 AM just before sunrise and then leave for work at 7:15 AM, which I must do as soon as I finish this page. This gives me time to do home office work when I am feeling mentally fresh.

Keep in touch. Much love,

Gaborone, 24th August 2005 (rec. 3rd Sept. '05)

Addendum to three page letter

Dear David,

Many thanks for yours of last Christmas.

I wonder if you went to S.Africa in Feb.? And will you be returning in November? Do you plan to visit Livingstone? I've been vaguely thinking about going. There are travel agents who drive you from Kasane, near Kazungula. I hate Jo'burg airport, and it's twice as expensive going that way. I think it's sensible working 3 days a week. I work 4 mornings.

Congrats on the children's mental health awareness manual. How worthwhile!

More awful news from your country. Rev Pat Robertson urging the assassination of the Venezuela Pres! I'm still waiting to hear George Bush's reaction.

Did you hear that the Chinese have bought one Zambian copper mine, and the copper price is very high. It should help the Z. economy.

Hope to see you in the next few months?

All the best.

Love Muriel

~~P O Box 81571~~

Tel +267 3975800

P O Box 46515

21st August 2005

Gaborone

Dear*Daniel*.....

rec'd
9/3/05

It's amazing how quickly the years roll by, sure sign of old age.

I'll start by telling you something of my life. I just can't sit at home doing nothing, so I find voluntary morning jobs. Since my heart operation 5 years ago, I have to rest every afternoon, sleeping (1-2 hours); listening to my short wave radio, reading.

I worked at Lifeline until recently, but like everyone else, they computerised. I have no desire to learn the recent technology. Gradually my rheumatism is getting worse, so I couldn't sit in an uncomfortable chair at a machine for hours. Also, my fingers are less nimble. So I don't live in the 21st century. And of course, my short term memory is going fast.

In January this year I allowed myself to be persuaded to take over the Methodist Church Circuit accounts. Wow, I had no idea how busy I would be! There are 5 congregations, two rather rural. We come under the Pretoria District, who issue instructions all the time, I thought Botswana won its independence in 1966; but not as far as the church is concerned, so I go to the church most mornings, to work on the books, learning the system. The church is along the road, a mile or so, thus very close. I'm still driving, but I avoid busy roads. We have hundreds of these mini-buses, and the drivers are just horrible.

In the past 5 years Gaborone has grown. We now have 5 new shopping malls, of which 2 are huge. The owners insist on the shops opening 7 days a week, 9am - 9pm, so of course many small shops are constantly closing down. Our economy is not good; no it's very short-sighted of the owners, most of whom are Asian or South African.

As usual, the whole Khama family was in Serowe for Christmas. I fly up there (400Km) with Ian as pilot in a helicopter, landing outside the front gate. I had nearly 2 days with Ian before the others arrived. He is not very talkative, but I managed to find out something of his busy life. We always visit the Khama graveyard - on top of a steep hill, with good views of Serowe. Also the local rhino sanctuary, where the animals were moved to a few years ago, to save them from the poachers on the borders - Zambian, Zimbabwean and Namibian.

24th Aug 9'06

Two weeks after Christmas 2 of the Williams cousins came out for a holiday, so once again the family went away with them, this time to the north-west corner, where the Okavango River enters Botswana from Angola, via Namibia. My 3 nephews rent an island and have put prefab chalets there. We spent 4 days, visiting lodges along the river, and nearby places of interest. Then we flew to a lovely lodge further into the delta, for 2 days. George and Pam stayed another 2 weeks, visiting lodges in Botswana.

Two weeks later, in the middle of January I went to the Cape Coast to stay with friends from Gaborone. Derek and Hazel were South African citizens until 30 or so years ago. Derek was born in Capetown, and his family rented a house in the Christmas holidays some 3 hours drive away in a little village not far from Plattenburg Bay.

Apart from Derek and Hazel there were their two sons from Capetown and England, their wives, one mother-in-law, a baby, and some friends. They rented 2 houses, and I stayed at Bed-and-Breakfast nearby. At this spot the mountains come down to the sea, and it is beautiful. Unfortunately I fell down a step I didn't see on the first day, bruising one leg from ankle to thigh, which hindered my movements, and I couldn't swim, nor walk. In spite of this, I had a lovely time. The company was very interesting. Unfortunately my good friends Derek and Hazel are moving to England at the end of July, and I shall miss them terribly. It's not often that I've been equally friendly with husband and wife. I first met Derek on the finance committee of local charity, and then I met Hazel when I joined my book club.

When I think about it, I'm surprised at how active my social life continues to be. I stopped entertaining for dinner, but I take friends out to local restaurants sometimes. I occasionally prepare cold lunches. I get invited out most weeks, and it so happens that this week I'll be out to lunch and dinner on the same day twice! The second lunch is to the birthday party of the second President, Quett Masire, who will be 80, he only looks 70, and he retired about 7 years ago, but still remains an active member of A.U. affairs, and is currently a visiting professor for African affairs at Boston University. I first met him as a new Vice President at Jackie's wedding in 1973 I think.

24th Aug 09 8:50

Also, we have a drama/music society, which arranges concerts and plays 2/3 times a month. I go to about a quarter of the productions with friends who drive me, as I don't drive at night.

I heard the most appalling rumour this weekend. Since December we have had an official drought, and I've cut back my water consumption by half. I don't throw away my bath water - I carry it in a bucket to the toilet, and Patricia my helper, carries some down stairs in a bucket on her head to water my pot plants. She also re-uses the washing water in the garden.

We should have been doing this for at least a year, as the drought was forecast long ago. All the time I've been coming to Botswana - since 1960 - there have been droughts, and as I've been here 9½ years that is a long spell without. These droughts last for years! I'll have to adjust: At least we don't have typhoon, hurricanes, earthquakes or tsunamis!

I should like to be taking short holidays, but all of Southern Africa is in the same boat, except Mozambique. What can I say about the London bombings? It raises so many questions that are difficult to answer about the Iraqi war, immigration, religion and politics, etc. I heard John Simpson, a senior BBC editor, say that the G8 meeting in Scotland achieved more than any other G 7/8 meeting had ever accomplished. When Zambia first borrowed from the IMF/World Bank the Kwacha was 12 = £1, it's now around 6 500. So they could never repay their loan. I'm sorry the markets are still closed to the 3rd world, but I feel that some progress has been made, of course I realize how inefficient most of those countries are - but so was Europe when it was evolving in the 15 - 19 centuries, and they weren't pestered by T.V etc I expect some lively answers from some of my friends. And look at Turkey and Italy - today.

It's our winter right now. Mid-day it can be 24°, but at night it goes down to zero. All our houses are made to keep cool in the hot weather (9 months of the year) and my apartment is really cold.

I guess that's enough for now, oh yes - most of the letters I sent surface mail in September went by air, with a few going surface, so I'll continue to save postage money to my European friends.

24th Aug 95

Many thanks for your 2nd Christmas card.

I wonder if you want to S Africa in Feb? And will you be returning in November? Do you plan to visit

Singapore? I've been vaguely thinking about going. There are travel agents who drive you from Kasane, near

Kazungula. I hate Joburg airport, & it's twice as expensive going that way. I think it's a miserable working 3 days a week. I work 4 mornings.

Contracts on the children's mental health awareness manual. How worthwhile!

Note awful news from your country. Ruzar Robakan urging the assassination of the Venezuela Pres! I'm still waiting for local George Bush's reaction.

Did you hear that the Chinese have bought one Zambian copper mine, & the copper price is very high. It should help the Z. economy.

Hope to see you in the next few months? All the best,

Love
David

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10th September 2005

My dear Muriel,

Thanks for your lovely informative letter with a personal note added that was received several days ago. You do not, however, indicate that you received my letter sent in June. Hence I am printing it out on the back of this letter and will continue my response from there. Read it first if you did not get it.

Since June I am thankful to say that I am still doing very well with good health. My so-called part-time status at work really become part-time and I've worked 2 to 2 ½ days a week since June and enjoyed the lighter work load.

At work, we unfortunately did not get any of the grants we applied for and we are re-submitting several in the next several months. My boss also greatly needed a office manager / records manager and I agreed to give up my research duties to younger people and handle this much needed role. So far it is working well. Probably perfect for a part-time position that heads me towards full retirement.

Next Tuesday I will take my first true vacation since South Africa in February and fly out to Las Vegas for sheer rest and fun. Am looking forward to it. Getting there is a non-stop 6 hour flight that is good for catching up on one's reading.

Would like to visit Africa in November but still unlikely. Would like to get to Livingstone but that is even more unlikely. If such a trip is possible, will probably go to Malawi via Nairobi.

I know you are seeing on TV the images of the collapse of New Orleans, a city of over half a million. Quite shocking that such a thing can happen anywhere, especially in the USA as it was (past tense) one of our premier cities! Bush's response was pathetic beyond words. Chaos and bodies floating for 8 days!

Your lovely letter indicates you are doing well. Keep it up! (smile)

Lots of love,

David

Gaborone, 28th November 2005

Note: Two page manuscript form letter and two page addendum — both typed below

I have run out of friends to type my letter, so I will try to discipline myself to write legibly.

It is not so long since I wrote, so not much news.

Last time I forgot to mention my book club. We aim at 8 women, but recently 3 have left, and we have only found 2 so far, to replace.

There are 3 Africans, and 4 whites. I am the only one with no university degree! The 3 locals are (1) a University professor in English; (2) a dentist, and (3) a school teacher. The others are (1) a retired librarian, (2) a music teacher, (3) a self-employed environmental expert, and (4) me. I enjoy this group very much, but not always the choice of books.

My last turn to lead the group was 3 months ago, and I presented "Dear Me", an autobiography of Peter Ustinov. Another good book was "The Shipping News" By Anne Praulx

I had my 4 monthly check-up with my heart specialist recently, and everything is O.K. 4 monthly intervals seem rather too many. The arthritis in my knees is a nuisance, but swimming helps. As our temperature this week is around 35°, I enjoy the cool water. Quite a few trees are dying through lack of water.

Ian hosted my usual birthday lunch, with all the family, and 3 friends of mine, at Ruth's farm, 25 km out of the town. He takes being head of the family very seriously.

Cheerio and all the best. Early greetings for a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Love Muriel

Personal addendum to above m/s form letter:

Many thanks for yours of September. I'm so sorry I forgot to mention the June letter. I had mislaid it, and then found it later.

Somehow I cannot imagine Las Vegas being fun! Is there anything else to do there apart from gambling?

I have friends who were missionaries here and in Zambia — at Mindolo — who now live in Birmingham, Alabama. So they have kept me and my friend Derek by E-mail news over quite a lot of details about New Orleans and the Gulf. Their son lives in N.O. Unfortunately, the Pakistan earthquake has pushed it out of the news, so I've not heard anything for at least a month.

I'm glad you're enjoying semi-retirement. How will you spend your free time? I assume you haven't made it to Africa this month. If you do plan to visit Livingstone, let me know. I may meet you there! Where do you stay — with Margaret? There are 2 very expensive hotels at the Falls one of which could tempt me. Recent Zambian news spoke of draught again.

Bush seems under pressure.--Keep it up!

Cheerio,

Love Muriel

DEAR FRIENDS, David

Box 46515 Gaborone
28 Nov 2005
Tel 3975800

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28th Nov 95
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✓ Furel

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I have friends who
were missionaries here & in
Zambia - at Windale -
who now live in Birmingham
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me and my ^{new} friend Derek
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28th Nov 09 '05

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 spoke of drought again!

Bush seems under pressure.
Keep it up!

Cheerio, love
Chris

Muriel and David's manuscript letters retyped: 1979 — 2008

Rego Park, 3rd Dec. 2005

My dear Muriel,

Enclosed is my holiday postcard. also wanted to all these few words.

Hope you got my letter of 10th Sept. Do hope you are well and will once again send out your ever-interesting notes.

Our gov't continues to do horrible and shocking things. God help us all. Iraq torture and now fake news stories greatly saddens me.

Have a wonderful 2006

Love David

3rd Dec '05

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Our gov't continues to do horrible & shocking things. God help us all. Iraq torture & now fake news stories greatly saddens me.

*'Tis' the Season
Have a wonderful '2006.*

Love

David

3rd Dec 09

A very personal update from David Wilkin

My hope and prayer is that 2005 is but the first of many "golden years". If being happy is a crime, then I'm a criminal! I thank God that I have been in good health. I exercise daily and swim often. I continue living in Rego Park (NYC) and have now received Social Security for 20 months. Since 9/11, I have worked (now part-time) in a job affiliated with the Columbia University School of Public Health. (I left Merrill Lynch after 9/11). Haven't traveled overseas since February, but have done so within the USA and enjoyed seeing many friends and family.

**Happy
Holidays**

I hope the year has also been happy for you and that 2006 will be even better.

In our prayers and deeds during this season of celebration, let us remember the extreme suffering in the horrific, new Malawi famine. Also, please check out the website for the children's orphanage

in Livingstone, Zambia: www.lubasi.org.

Much love,

P. DAVID WILKIN
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Dec 2005

My dear Muriel,

Thanks for your card, circular letter and personal note. I am glad that you are "holding in there" and struggling to keeping aging at bay! (smile) I am trying to do the same thing by my vigorous exercises, dieting and keeping my weight down, etc. Also doing things to keep my mind active and alert.

Thought I'd send you a quick note while you are on my mind and the weather outside "is frightful"! Like most people, I can't wait for spring.

Have also decided to go to South Africa, the usual place near Brits, for a fortnight next month to get away from the cold. Though I'd love to see you, don't feel up to making the drive to Botswana this year. Next year, however, I'll have a double reason as Fred and Sue Morton are retiring this year and moving back to their new home in Gaborone where he hopes to keep doing some academic writing on Botswana and southern Africa. So with you and the Mortons all in Gaborone, and my continued good health permitting, I must come in 2007 (or November 2006). If not up to driving, I'll have to take the express bus or fly.

Have not been to Zambia for three years. I am afraid to go as I fear I will be too depressed over the horrible economy and the continued suffering therefrom.

Our government continues to be appalling, and I thought Ronald (McDonald) Reagan was bad 20 years ago! Cheney, as VP, boggles my mind! Fortunately with John Murtha (a former Democratic hawk) strongly advocating immediate pull out from Iran, people becoming more tired of their policies and the war, Katrina mess up, and now the new mess (starting January) of Medicare/Medicaid and medicines with millions of seniors being left out, the administration is on the defensive. What this will meet in the next 10 months leading up to congressional elections in November will be most interesting. These elections are the first hope for change.

I do have a lot more time to do things that I want to do which is lovely. I am currently cleaning out lots of our papers from my files. Carted out five big boxes at the beginning of the year. Most painful was destroying old academic papers that younger scholars cannot use and on topics that I will never continue to write on.

Do keep in touch. Let's hope we can really meet in the next year.

Best wishes for 2006,

David Wilkin

2006

Gaborone, 23rd August 2006

Small addendums to several paragraphs

[After a paragraph on a concert] We have since had a Mozart concert; Russian ballet; and an operatic evening.

[After a paragraph on Mozambique.] Friends of mine here lease a beach on an island off Madagascar. They have invited me but, I've always refused — it involved 3 air flights, lastly a 7 hour sea journey by small boat. There is now a road thru' the island so I'm going in October and will stay at a small French hotel.

[At end of letter] Hope you are well — haven't heard for ages. You haven't got rid of Bush yet?

Love Muriel

P O Box 46515

Gaborone

Botswana

23 August 2006

Tel. +267 3975800

My dear David

I have been composing this letter in my head for weeks. But then I am so lazy about actually writing it. Nothing remarkable has happened since I last wrote; life goes on, quite pleasantly most of the time.

I work at the Methodist Church as a treasurer, still. I go there four mornings a week, and go for massage on the 5th, plus other odd jobs. I find the set up frustrating, but it gets me out of the flat and meeting people. And it keeps my brain working. For most the year, I swim at lunch time, but not this year. Since mid-April it has been very cold, frost at night, cool afternoons. Every year so far I have swum until the end of May, but this year I stopped mid-April. It is the coldest winter people can remember, and it has lasted three months so far, and is likely to go on for another month or two. Our houses are built to keep cool in the summer – up to 35°. So we suffer when it's cold. I have had arthritis in my knees for months, and eagerly await the heat, and hopefully, less of pain.

Since my heart operation six years ago, I tire easily, so I spend my afternoon in bed, sleeping, or listening to short wave radio (BBC) and reading. Then I'm eager to get going in the evenings!

I am part of a lunch club - rather informal. It started when three bridge playing friends decided to have lunch either at the golf club (where they play on Thursday mornings) or at a lovely garden centre. Meals out are horribly expensive here, but these two places are very reasonable, and in lovely surroundings. The group meets monthly and is very elastic - anything from four to eight attending. The Swedish wife Siglinda of the garden centre's owner often joins us, as well as Fiona wife of Rev. Dr Howard Moffat, great grandson of the Rev. Robert Moffat of South Africa, father-in-law of David Livingstone.

This Howard Moffat was born and educated in South Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. He was at school with Alexander McCall Smith, author of the "1st Ladies Detective Agency" series about Gaborone.

23rd Aug '06

And Sandy was at the University of Botswana in charge of the Medical law faculty in the 1970s. So, Sandy visits Gaborone every year, staying with his friends Howard and Fiona. Last month he was here for nearly two weeks, and during that time he raised quite a lot of money for local charities. He launched his latest book about Mma Ramotswa, "Blue shoes and Happiness". He is so amazing. At this lunch he told us how he had originally written short stories for a Scottish Sunday paper, then he was asked to write a book. Originally there were to be four, then it went to six, then nine and it's now eleven! This latest one features the Mokolodi Game Reserve where I worked for seven years. He also launched a book of sermons "Dancing Sermons" written by my Zambian friend Bishop Trevor Mwamba. They had met several years ago and became friends.

Sandy's publishing company has produced it. Finally he gave away the prizes at a British Council Ceremony. For the best essay from secondary school kids. The original lunch entry fees went to support an AIDS hostel run by the Anglicans, where the Moffats belong. Oh yes, he also helped to initiate a music fund for promising local talent, of which there is plenty.

So there was a concert, where he spoke and started the fund. But, when someone returns from South Africa, well trained, there is certainly nothing for him/her here. South Africa has plenty of its own talent, so there's no opening there. We have since had a Mozart concert; Russian ballet; and an operatic evening. Since I came here I haven't made many friends, one doesn't in the 70-80 age range. However, in the past year I have made three! One is an American, Lois, No. 2 at the Embassy, who belongs to the Methodist Church (even though she's Presbyterian) and is training to be a pastor when she retires. I have really enjoyed her company, but unfortunately she went back to the USA this past week. The other two are New Zealanders, who are retired missionaries. They volunteered for a year, here starting this January. They were originally on the copperbelt for five years in the 1970s, and remember meeting me at Mindolo!

Then they went to Malawi for five years, and then to Zimbabwe for ten years. So they know this part of Africa. They came to Trinity Congregational Church, where I went for five years. Small world

23rd Aug 2006

And also to a college to train ministers by distance learning. However, Don got prostate trouble and possible cancer so they returned to New Zealand two weeks ago for an operation, and may not come back. Along with my missionary friend Derek Jones we four were good friends, and met quite often. They are such fun, and we have a lot in common. I am so grateful for these three friends, and very sorry they have left within such a short period of time.

I don't visit the cinema often partly because the sound is so awful. Mostly, though, because modern films change scenes so suddenly that I get left behind. I saw "Constant Gardener" but found it difficult to follow, so I have bought the book, and then hope to see it again later. I tried to read the "The Da Vinci Code" but gave up after 80 pages, I was bored and couldn't follow it. A friend persuaded me to go to the film. Well, I lasted forty minutes, I then walked out. There are four cinemas in a row, so I went to one of the others to see "Diaries of a Geisha", which I enjoyed.

I last went on holiday in January 2005 - 18 months ago. I decided I'd like to go to Mozambique. Well! my travel agency went broke last year, along with my hairdresser and my grocery store. Someone recommended another travel agency - a disaster! I went nearly for six weeks, the two girls were fairly ignorant, I discovered that they did not have an IATA licence, and finally they wouldn't take my credit card. So I just exploded and cancelled everything. I kept asking myself why I didn't quit earlier. I should have gone this weekend, (July 15). So now I am trying to decide where to go. It will most probably be on the wild coast, (90 minutes south of Durban) to a hotel I once had lunch in with friends from further north. I can fly via Johannesburg to a little place called Margate where they will collect me. Once a day flights! I really do love the sea. I'm waiting for the weather to warm up.

Friends of mine have lease a beach on an island off Madagascar. They have

invited me but I've always refused - it involved 3 air flights, lastly a long sea journey by small boat. This is now a road thru the island so Jim & I will stay at a small beach hotel. My great nephew Marcus is getting married in Surrey next April. I left England in February 1960 for Zambia and in forty six years I have only visited England once outside summer. So I am not equipped for the cold. Provided that I am still alive and fit I hope to go, and stay for a month or so.

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23²¹/₀₉ Aug-98

Our economy is really bad. It's crazy, because the diamond mines are doing well, but are mechanised and don't employ many people. So we have thousands of graduates without jobs. There are only 1.7 million people, and of course South Africa is huge and monopolises the region. There are no manufacturing businesses, no work, 90% of our imports come from South Africa. There is a similar situation in Zambia. Copper prices are the highest ever, their IMF - World Bank loans were written off last December, the Kwacha has improved from \$1 = K4.500 to 3.500, but somehow it hasn't helped local people. Copper mines are also mechanised and don't employ many, here in Botswana the Pula was devalued and goods are getting more and more expensive. How on earth these small new countries in Europe and Asia will survive, I don't know.

I won't comment on world affairs, I'm glad I don't have too much longer to live, to experience, what with North Korea and Iran's nuclear activities, up coming world domination by China, Middle East and Iraq wars, and Zimbabwe now, I don't want to be around.

I get more and more frustrated with our feeble government. Ian calls me the "leader of the opposition" because I question him on so many things, but the opposition here is useless.

Talking of Ian reminds me of the family. Ian didn't know anything about politics when he left the army, yet he's been learning fast. The twins have suffered through economic slow-down and are struggling. I recently went to a birthday tea for Tony's 1st son Anthony who was fifteen. Jackie is still working at the university.

Which leads me to the latest book about Ruth and Seretse. It is called "colour Bar" and was written by a university professor Susan William - no relation. She researched for three years, in Pretoria, London, and here. It is very scholarly, far better than another recent one written by two Zimbabwean journalists, which was rubbish!

I am keeping fairly fit and enjoy life, still making myself useful.

Cheerio and all the best,

Got rid of

Hope you are well - haven't heard for ages. You haven't Bush yet?

Love David

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REGO PARK, NY 11374
TELEPHONE: 718-271-0084
Current Email: pdwilkin@rcn.com

19th September 2006

Mid-September update

My Dear Muriel,

Thanks for your recent letter. If I don't reply now, it will be Christmas I fear. It reminded me that I don't think I've written you this year. Very sorry.

Do trust the weather is now making you warm and cozy to help with the arthritis. Can you give me more details of the book on Ruth and Seretse. I can't find it listed on the Internet with the search words of "Colour Bar" plus Susan William. Maybe the full title or publisher will help. I am sure as an honest relative, Ian needs someone like you as the loyal family opposition!

I did have a good visit in South Africa in February. There was no time to drive on to see you, which I regretted. Just stayed in the Jo'burg and Pretoria areas. I am becoming somewhat phobic of driving at the present time. Since I don't drive in NYC that makes things worse.

I probably won't come to Africa this winter but when I do I must come to Botswana. Fred and Sue Morton have now retired and have just resettled in Ruruthi/ (is my spelling correct?) in a lovely new home. With you in town, I must eventually see you all.

My year has been a mixed bag. Have definitely been semi-retired as our research grant has more-or-less run out of money. Now down to one paid day a week unless I volunteer. Still I don't want to fully retire or only accept the one day so am starting a job search back in Midtown Manhattan. We'll see how that goes. If I fail then retirement (except for one day) will be the story.

Actually having a lot of time over the past few months has allowed me to get my old records and personal effects in reasonably good order. I had promised to send my quite valuable interviews in the NWP province to Zambia and last month got the main portion off to UNZA's Special Collections. I later hope to get duplicates of the key parts off to the National Archives.

And the joys of aging. Getting a lot more "body groans" but have lost weight and hope to keep them under control for a few more years!

The USA government is most distressing. We seem to be taking the wrong stance on everything! I am working hard for the next elections this November. Can only hope we get better government representatives to offset Bush! What more can one say?!

Again thanks for your newsy letter. Hope you get your holiday soon!

Best,

David Wilkin