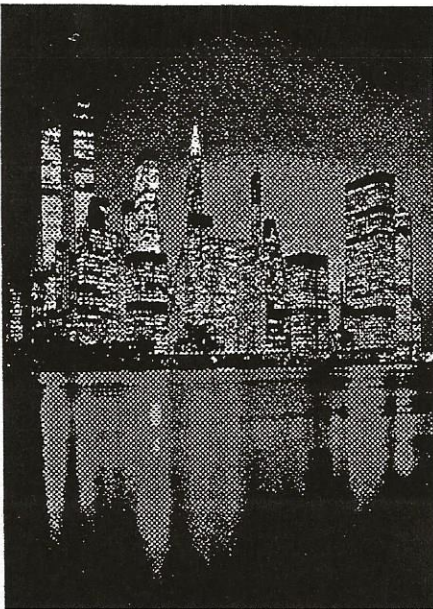


Revised 12/14/92

1992 in David's Big Apple



This nightly view of Manhattan makes small town Christmas lights seem as nothing!!

1992 in David's Big Apple has been created by David Wilkin for all his wonderful friends and relatives and attempts to have something of interest in it, all of you around the world from Canada to Europe to Africa and even South East Asia. Most of it is not about New York, but it is all about David Wilkin and his life within the Big Apple and travels outside the Big Apple.

David takes full responsibility for all errors, omissions, irresponsible observations, and cranky opinions. He invites you to respond with letters, notes and cards if you are not inclined to desktop publishing and creating newsletters. To friends in Zambia, please acknowledge receiving this newsletter in the next few months since far too much of everything is still going astray in the mail.

This newsletter was started during a Merrill Lynch Pagemaker 4.0 class. For the technically inclined the leadings are Lucida Calligraphy and the text is New Century Schoolbook of some form or other.

"The tired parts of the mind can be rested and strengthened, not merely by rest, but by using other parts."

Happy Holidays to all!

Happy Holidays 1992 and Happy New Year 1993 to all of you, my relatives and friends. I hope that 1992 has been a good year for you, with health and happiness yours in abundance. (I would also say "wealth" but this eludes most of us, and certainly 1992 has not been a banner year for the world economy in general.)

Work and Health

For me, 1992 has been a year of much activity. Regarding my work, I have remained busy in my new professional life as a computer software applications person. The big new word in 1992 is "Windows," a new "environment" for IBM type PCs that makes them look and act more like Macintosh computers. My main work is still at Merrill Lynch. But I still conduct training at Chase Manhattan headquarters for Speer Computer Software Enterprises and help research psychiatrists at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital and several other small businesses.

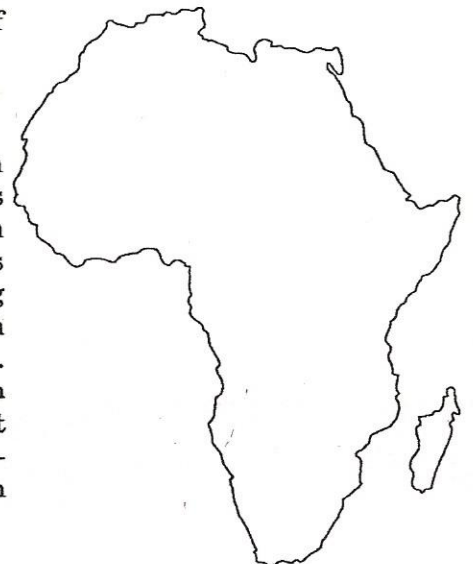
This year I discovered that aging is such tiresome business! Despite my virtual hyperactivity in 1992, I truly knew I was mid-aged. My old ulcer teamed up with the start of rheumatism and/or carpal syndrome in my hands/arms. On a positive note, I have used these symptoms to remind me to swim more often and keep my weight down. So for those of you who are older, I now have a more personal feeling for your problems, and for those of you who are younger, God be with you!

Travel in Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa

Travel to Zambia and then south through Zimbabwe and South Africa was a homecoming for me and the year's high point as you can clearly tell from the focus of this newsletter! The trip planning started after an early morning meditation service at Riverside Church in May 1991. Planning continued more concretely in July 1991 on a long weekend in Maine at the home of one of the four chief conspirators. Finally we began the trip on March 11th and returned on April 5th.

The "AAD Family," the "HERD"

When four "classy" people planned a trip to Africa, we took an official name, the "AAD Family" (African Adventure). Our group consisted of Heidi Campbell, Elise Goldman, Ruth Joseph and me. Since the initials of the three female conspirators spelled HER, the newcomers to Africa became the HER contingent and since all of our initials spell HERD, we collectively became the HERD! Had Zenobia Gray joined us - she cancelled when her mother became ill - we could have been "Z HERD!"



14th Dec 1992



Butterflies in Africa during the rains are incredible:

Reflections: Living in southern Africa, 1963 to 1968

A lifestyle developed in my childhood in my home-town Newark, Ohio, and post-adolescent city experiences in Cleveland served me well as I adjusted to rural, small town and urban Africa. Politeness and hospitality to strangers; acceptance of and respect for other's customs, traditions and general differences; and a love of working with diverse peoples on common projects were learned from my relatives, church and communities. I tried never to forget these but to apply them in different cultures.

But the key words in my new life were "change" and "adaptation." I loved the seasonal pattern: hot and dry from mid-September to mid-November, warm and wet to April and then cool and dry. I loved swimming outdoors on Christmas and New Year's. But with no heating I was less fond of the temperature hovering in the 40s in my bedroom at night in July and of my having to move outside to get warm in the daytime.

I found it challenging to be a part of a racial minority (albeit privileged) in place of being part of a white majority. Being a bigger frog in a small lake was a distinct change from being a small frog in a huge lake. I enjoyed helping Zambia form from the colonial territory of Northern Rhodesia against a backdrop of international intrigue in the cold war, apartheid at its peak in South Africa and then civil war in what was Southern Rhodesia. (Unfortunately, while Zambia now shines politically with its new democratic government, the long-term stresses and strains have ruined its economy.)

Certainly I learned to try new ways and innovate far more than ever before. Although I was to return to Kenya in 1970 and Zambia again in 1971 and remain until 1979 as a University of Zambia lecturer, probably this initial period became the most challenging if not liberating time of my life.

African Arrival, March 13th

The memories of the trip are too many to fit in these pages. The following is but a summary of the highlights. For me the trip was a journey down memory lane, while for Heidi, Elise and Ruth (HER) the trip was a totally new experience.

Thus members of the AAD Family responded differently with their different backgrounds. I barely slept four hours a night for the first ten days, the least in my life. Ruth kissed the soil of Zambia the moment she left the aircraft. Elise and Ruth avoided drinking any untreated water for the first ten days no matter where they were, while Heidi could barely be constrained even where the danger was considerable. But all this became our collective arrival song. (Blessings aplenty, we had no ill health or accidents.)

Wonderful old and new friends of my past surrounded us and graciously adopted HER as my family. Joe/Ann Sikazwe, Patrick/Ann Sapallo, and James Kanga and children all enveloped us. Geoffrey and Grace Kanga, whom I remembered as children, now handsome young people 19 and 21, acted as guides. (Grace's husband and adorable baby were delightful additions to the large Kanga family.) The hours flew by in Lusaka.

Similar welcomes also awaited us in Kitwe. Muriel Sanderson and her staff graciously housed and fed us at Mindolo Ecumenical Center in Kitwe.

From Kitwe we headed to Solwezi by bus. Peter Njovu took time from work to accompany us as interpreter. Danny and Lennah McCallum hosted us in Solwezi. The staff at St. Francis Mission fed and entertained us with gracious charm and verve. We deeply appreciated an afternoon of traditional dance performances in our honor.

The 300 km. bus journey was impressively on time. On our return, HER chose to sit in front. Peter and I joined them. We hesitated saying why most passengers preferred the back. They soon found out! The driver drove very fast to keep on schedule while engaging in an unending conversation! I thought they would collapse. Still we arrived safely. A special adventure.

Solwezi was our northerly point. From here we moved ever south. A short flight via Lusaka brought us to Livingstone and Victoria Falls.

Victoria Falls and Hwange

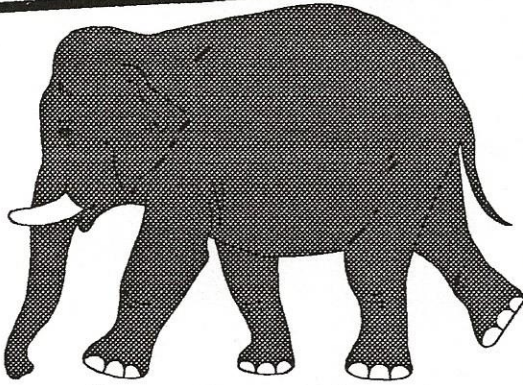
In 1963, while driving a tiny Morris Mini, I had the pleasure of spending my first school holiday in Livingstone looking at the falls and then visiting Wankie (now Hwange) Game Park. Spending two hours "trapped" in my mini with a herd of 15-20 elephants around me at a water hole is a lifelong memory of wonder and enjoyment.

From 1964 to 1967, I repeated my visits to Vic. Falls and also drove twice through South Africa and Zimbabwe to Cape Town. But apartheid tightened its noose and then civil war in Southern Rhodesia started. Thus this return with Heidi, Elise and Ruth brought back old memories that at times made me pensive and inward-looking, desirous of being alone, an impossibility with our fixed plans!

The Zambia/Zimbabwe border crossing is still awkward but not unpleasant. So we walked across and saw both sides. The heat was bothersome but one of my first students in at what was then Balovale (now Zambezi) Secondary School, David Musesa, kindly drove us over when we moved our "camp" (i.e., our hotel) to Victoria Falls from Livingstone.

We drove to the Hwange Game Park. As expected, elephants were dispersed into the bush since since it was the rainy season. But buffalo, zebra, hippo, giraffe, lion and endless springbok, eland and other members of the "deer" family put on an appropriate show for the AAD Family!

I spent my 53rd birthday at a lodge within the game park: a memorable way to spend a birthday that I most recommend! The night before, we stayed at the Baobab Tree Hotel, a charming old colonial-age hotel overlooking the coal mining town of Hwange. We received early tea, shoe shining service, etc., at a most modest price. After leaving the Hwange area, we drove back to Vic. Falls for one night before heading south.



Hwange Elephant? No, tucks too small! Probably Southeast Asia.

A Family Visit to Ohio in June

Dad, Margaret (my stepmother) and I made a 10 days' jaunt south and north from North Bay in northern Ontario to Newark, Ohio. (I flew to North Bay from New York.)

The drive itself, as always, is the best and worst of the open road. There is little to say about modern air travel and express highways except that you go wherever you are going, fast.

Conversely, the traditional overnight stop north and south is a true joy. Lillian Wiseman, an old friend of Margaret in Fort Erie (Niagara Falls), is truly a wonderful hostess who within minutes makes the boredom of the highway vanish.

And when we got to Ohio the home cooking of Aunts Dorothy and Doris, and other relatives, was as always unbeatable. New York may have great world gourmet cooking but I'd give it up any day for the down-home cuisine of my aunts! I came back fat but not rested. (See the article on American Customs.)

In short, Paris in the springtime may be unbeatable and New York can be delightful, but central Ohio's countryside offers hard-to-beat rural charm that is gorgeous.

The Future: A Personal Perspective

My hope for 1993: to work quietly in New York and really get to know the city and to pay off old debts. If I travel it will be to see old friends in Scotland and England or within North America. In late 1994, I'd love to go back to Zambia to survey the possibility of a longer-term business return for part of each year; they need help reconstructing.

In the process of exploring the Big Apple, I have started socializing much more lately. While not looking to remarry or even having a live-in relationship (I enjoy my own space), I look forward to some sort of long-term, intimate relationship(s) involving a good dose of creative energy! (Whatever that means!) Time will tell what will evolve!

Port Elizabeth (PE); the Gqomos

After a night stopover in Harare at the old and elegant Jameson Hotel, noted for nonracial hospitality in days of yore, we flew to PE (a seaport on the Indian Ocean) to spend four nights with Zindi's family. (We cleared South African customs in Johannesburg but did not leave the airport.)

Sipho--an elder brother of Zindi, who had visited NYC after her death--served as our host, assisted by her two other brothers, Samson (eldest) and Rodgers (youngest). The family collectively wined and dined us until we would have burst had we eaten more! To say the treatment was "royal" was not an overstatement. Mother Gqomo, now quite elderly, was quite nervous about meeting her white son-in-law for the first time after 25 years. But by the time we left all shyness had faded and we were indeed one family! Zindi, the cause for our meeting, was much in our minds. (It seems impossible that three years have passed since her death.)

To Cape Town and Home

We drove south with Sipho to Cape Town. On the way our highpoint was Oudtshoorn, truly the "ostrich capital of the world." A hot, dry valley that ostriches do well in. All farmers raise ostriches! Genadendal was a quick second highlight: a "coloured" community that I had spent New Year's 1964 in. As in Livingstone and Hwange, a lot of wonderful memories flooded my mind.

Cape Town ended the trip. Simons-town, an old port, and the point where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet made a fun outing. Meeting John/Nommso Stubbs and Frank Molteno was a pleasure. Finally, the last night we dined on Table Mountain overlooking the city with its indescribable view, an appropriate finale.

Leaving Africa meant a tedious all-night trip from Cape Town to London via Jo'burg and Lusaka. But one last delight awaited us in London: meeting Robert and Marion Molteno, old comrades from my UNZA days. Leaving the HER contingent resting at our Heathrow hotel, I took the Underground to their house. They then joined us for a final, relaxed meal. The next morning on April 15th, we reached the Big Apple ending the ADD Family's trip and a walk down memory lane!

American Customs and Me!

My negative experience of the year.

Many have a negative fear of Africa, but fear not after you have faced the negative side of American customs. Never in my 25 plus years in/out of Africa did I face anything as daunting as American customs in August.

I was to drive back from North Bay to New York City. Dad gave me his car to drive and then keep. We had it repaired and approved by NY State and Ontario. But had neglected to contact US Customs.

Seemingly Canada had different EPA regulations the year the car was manufactured. After a very unpleasant time at the border, I was denied entry until I got rid of the car. Canadian customs and immigration welcomed me back to Canada. I won't bore you with more details, but despite Lillian's extreme kindness and hospitality at Fort Erie, the !@# experience is hard to forget. Nothing in Africa ever compared for unpleasantness! Consequently, I decided to give up owning a car in NYC, a difficult experience anyway.



Philosophy

"Anyone I have loved, I will always love.' My friends and my lovers know that I never part from them."

Jeanne Moreau quoting F. Scott Fitzgerald, Newsweek, 4/19/1976.

This quote became my favorite many years ago. Love (in whatever form) is a wonderful concept that we need more of in a world plagued by ageless person-to-person cruelties and social cruelties such as racism and the horrendous hate concept of "ethnic cleansing."

Let's take time to reflect more often on what we can do as individuals to bring some positive form of love into the world of 1993.