Walking onto the Sebring, Florida, campus of SIM’s retirement village feels like coming home. For years I’d heard about it, but didn’t know much about it. Now I have a vested, personal interest in the place. In May 2007, the last of the retirees from the SIM retirement village in Carlsbad, California, moved out when SIM sold the property. Eleven of them (including my parents) opted to join the Sebring community. Florida . . . with its tropical heat and expansive sky with billowing clouds and building storms . . . the fauna and flora . . . a place that transports me back to my African roots.

The campus itself takes me back. A close-knit family group with a common purpose, a replication of missionary dwellings on one of the larger compounds in Nigeria, the signposts that declare we’ve not forgotten another continent. The homes decorated with missionary curios, the singing of old hymns . . . how could one NOT feel at home!

Above all, the people make it home. A lot of my history has settled in at this location . . . a concentration of people I know by name living in one place . . . “Aunties” and “Uncles” from various stations, parents of the “brothers” and “sisters” I grew up with, staff members from boarding school. It’s Bishoftu, ELWA, and Miango Rest Home all rolled into one. They speak and understand my MK language, they’re interested in everything I do, they know my parents, they know me, and I’m connected to them. I can walk into any other group or gathering and not have that same feeling. It’s a thing of the heart and the emotions. It’s like attending a family reunion.

If you’re ever in the area, you’ll want to take the time to experience Sebring for yourself—especially for the annual Christmastime gathering of MKs and their caregivers. But like any family reunion, it might take courage to face your past. I’ve heard from more than one MK who regrets the lost years of connectedness but found healing in the experience of returning home. These elderly saints don’t bite! Each one has a story of God’s grace and provision in their lives, and they’ll encourage your socks off! And while you’re at it, be sure to visit the gravesites where some of SIM’s history is buried. The tombstones read like a hall of fame!

Thank you, SIM, for your vision for caring for our parents in their sunset years. Thank you, residents, for your faithfulness to your Lord and for your love and care for MKs. Thank you, Garth and Marge Winsor (Sebring Manager and Hostess) for providing the history of the SIM village. Thank you, Chuck Forster and Jim and Jean (Price) Cail, for your photo contributions. And thank you, Dan Elyea, for pulling all the facts together for us. Enjoy!

Editor

Beth Shean—House of Rest

By Dan Elyea (KA, HC 59)
fsiyfr@okeechobee.com

In the earliest decades of SIM, the mission family included few, if any, of the elderly or of school-age children. Only the most fit and resilient of adults in their prime could survive the rugged conditions and the prevalent tropical diseases. Of the three young men who pioneered the move into Nigeria, two died within a year of their arrival.

As the Mission—“Sudan Interior Mission” at that time—established a better foothold in southern Nigeria, some hardy women missionaries came to the Field; and before long, children, too, were also part of the Mission family.

By the early 1920s, the Mission administration came to grips with the need to address the issues of MK schooling. At that time—in what was considered to be in the best interests of the children—schooling in the homeland seemed the option of choice (when considering factors such as medical care, availability of school facilities, etcetera). Those concerns resulted in the establishment of Gowans Home in Collingswood, Ontario, Canada in that time frame.
In the mid-1940s, with better medical care available and to minimize the separation of parents and MKs, boarding schools were established in Ethiopia and Nigeria. Other schools followed in other countries where the Mission ministered. In the past few years, we’ve featured over half-a-dozen of these MK schools in Simroots. Additionally, we’ve presented other ways that the Mission has stepped up to the plate to address the particular needs of its MKs. Now we’d like to take a look at the other end of the spectrum—the provision the SIM has made for its elderly members—some of them our parents and teachers; some of them SIM MKs who returned to become SIM members as adults; many others of them not directly connected to us, but people we know and respect. Our focus in this issue will be on the SIM Village in Sebring, Florida.

WWI came along, then WWII. The Mission greatly broadened in scope and membership. With the passage of time, some members grew too old to continue to serve on the Field. After spending a lifetime on the Field, some experienced difficulty in finding a place to affordably spend their sunset years. Around 1960, the Mission explored the possibility of a retirement home as part of the Miango Rest Home in Nigeria. The Nigerian government closed that door—a very good thing, in retrospect. In the mid-60s, Dr. and Mrs. Herbold (supervised the Mission leprosy work in West Africa) were commissioned to search for a suitable location for a retirement facility for the SIM. “As they found places that appeared to be suitable prospects, they wrote detailed descriptions, took pictures and provided
essential information relating to climate, accessibility, suitability and cost. Some twenty prospective sites were available for consideration.” (History of the SIM Village Sebring)

Mission administration examined each of the twenty options, but none of them seemed quite right. Several of the options were in the Sebring, Florida, area; and a realtor assisting with the project suggested a property that wasn’t on the market at that time, but that might serve very well. Long story short, the Mission made an offer on the property proposed by the realtor, and that 40 acres became the site of the retirement center. (In early 1990, SIM purchased an additional 14.5 acres for the Village.)

By the fall of 1966, several houses/duplexes, a fellowship hall, and a laundry were in place. Seven SIM people lived there by the end of 1966. In the early years the facility went by the name of “Beth Shean” (House of Rest), but eventually they changed the name to “SIM Retirement Village.”

Development of the property went on continuously after careful assessment and planning. Some of the property dipped rather low and stood in water all or at least part of the year. A great deal of fill work has been done over the years to make as much of the property as possible available for use. If you get to see the lake near the Village chapel, appreciate that much of the fill dirt came from that source. Without the use of the fill, about a third of the original property would not have been usable. Since the middle 70s, the chapel has been used to host Bible and Missions conferences, both for the villagers and for the general community.

Sebring, a small town in south central Florida, provides a semi-tropical setting for the SIM retirement Village. This is the sort of place where oranges and grapefruit grow, and there are plenty of palm trees, bougainvillea, hibiscus, lizards, and the occasional alligator or snake. Sandy soil, gentle hills, lots of sunshine, some pleasant lakes, few freezes, lots of thunderstorms, and loads of retired people characterize the area.
The Village does indeed resemble a major mission compound in some ways, and includes features such as these: fellowship center, nurses’ office, swimming pool, shuffleboard court, guest rooms, chapel, houses, apartments, multi-plexes, sewage disposal plant, and a museum.

The names of the narrow streets convey a distinctly international feel: Africa, Dahomey, Liberia, Upper Volta, Andes, Somalia, etc. Golf carts and shanks’ mare account for much of the traffic on the Village roads, so the “strait way” trails aren’t quite the problem they might be some other places.

The Village provides several levels of care. Those still fully independent can stay in stand-alone homes and in multi-plexes. A nurse is on call 24 hours a day. Those still quite functional, but no longer able to do their own yard work can stay in apartments (living room, bedroom, and kitchenette). The noon meal is provided Monday through Friday for those who need/desire it—as room is available. The Lodge—a licensed facility for those not able to live on their own—provides all meals, cleaning service, laundry, and more personal care. Plans are in progress for an additional four rooms and large activity room (including space

Ian & June Hay
Pauline & John Herr

Gloria & Bill Kornfield

Mary Marbaugh

Anne & John Ockers

Doris, Jean (Price) Cail, John Sr.

Gladys Reimer
for exercise equipment). This will be built in early 2009. Off-campus nursing homes (not managed by SIM) are the choice for those requiring significant amounts of personal care. Temporary guest housing is available to missionaries on Home Assignment and to families and friends of Village residents. The Nurses’ Office makes medical appointments and arranges for rides to doctors’ offices, purchases and dispenses meds, and provides minor nursing care.

The Villagers stay active in ministries such as these: preaching, teaching, prison ministry, Child Evangelism Fellowship, volunteering locally, trips back to the mission field to serve in various capacities, reading to those with failing vision, migrant ministries, assisting in many ways around the Village, and in a continuing working out of SIM’s “By Prayer” motto—a variety of prayer fellowships.

The Village population runs about 150 these days. On a recent count, broken down by ages, the numbers ran thusly: 90s - 25, 80s - 69, 70s - 45, and late 60s - 11. Over the years, 156 of these SIM Village saints have graduated on to their heavenly home. The listing of the departed reads like a missionary honor roll. Particularly for those of us past the half-century mark, as we work through the list, memories wash over us of other times and places; of loyal service rendered overseas; of people whose names and stations of ministry resonate with familiarity and nostalgia.

**Fast Facts**
- First date of residence: 1966
- Number of residents: 166 (150 retirees, 16 missionary staff)
- Number of houses/dwelling units: 129
- Oldest resident: 97
- Number of missionaries who died here: 156

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Janet, Jerry & Edith (Rhine) Piekosz, and John at Irene Rhine’s 90th birthday party

Jeanette Silver

Don & Jean Ter Meer

Bill, Edith (Todd) Hoving, Marge

Miriam (Veenker) Samuels, Lois

Julie & Jim Wayner

Connie & Hal White

Garth & Marg Winsor
FUNNY STUFF

Ambulance

Walk Man

Notice-Public Bar

Submitted by Dean Hall

Water heater

Submitted by Dean Hall

The New Toyota Cowrolla!

Submitted by Dean Hall
The World I Come From
By Caroline Black (BA 08)

“Describe the world you come from and how that world shaped who you are.”

I come from a world where ambassadors are chauffeured along dusty, unpaved roads in shiny black cars while donkeys trot complacently on the pavement. I come from a world where hollow-eyed, open-palmed beggars knock relentlessly on the window of the taxi I’m riding in with my friends. I come from a world where I attempt fragments of the language to get myself around and people on the street yell fragments of my language back at me. I come from a world where school is a United Nations of cultures brought together by a common dislike of French class and where I debate the proper time for dinner with an Italian friend, the correct spelling of Ethiopia, and politics with a group representing at least five different countries. I live in a world where there is color and confusion, prosperity and poverty, dust and development. I come from a world that is far different from my country of birth.

Growing up as a missionary kid in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, has been an exciting, incomprehensible, eye-opening, instructive, and challenging experience. It has revealed the huge world that exists beyond me and the possibilities it holds. It has taught me to see the beauty of the differences amongst people and cultures and to cope well when things don’t go according to plan. It has given me the opportunity to look AIDS and poverty in the eyes and realize that I care—and that I can do something to make a difference. And, of course, it has brought confusion as I realize that I am completely American but, at the same time, so incredibly not. Where I come from can be a struggle, but it has shaped me and taught me, and I would have it no other way, for it is my home.

Caroline wrote this answer to a short essay question for a university application.
Reprinted by permission from Intercom, Issue #189, Jan-Feb 2008

All the Way to India
By Howard Brant (GH, BA 61)
Howard.brant@sim.org

I n 1997, my wife Jo-Ann and I had the great privilege of taking the first team of Ethiopians to India as short-term missionaries. While SIM helped them with their airfares, the Kale Heywet (EKHC) churches in Ethiopia raised all the money for their salaries. The churches in India provided them with housing and a translator. After three exhilarating months in India (and 1,352 professions of faith), we returned to Ethiopia and went with each team member to his or her home to thank their congregations for sending them. [One] picture stands out in my mind.

We were in Southern Ethiopia at a place called Dilla—the area where my parents, Alberta and Evelyn Brant, first took the Gospel back in 1948. It was also the home of Subsibe, an Ethiopian who had gone with us to India. When we got to the little church, people were already in prayer. I remember thinking that my clean pants would get dirty as we knelt down on the dirt floor. I don’t remember what I preached about that Sunday, but I must have told them about how God had used Subsibe and the team in India. At the end of the service, an old man stood up weeping. He could hardly speak, as there was so much emotion in his voice.

He looked up and pointed his finger at me. “Your father,” he began, “brought the Gospel to us over 50 years ago. We were in darkness, worshipping idols of trees and stone. He told us about Jesus, and we believed. He also told us that if we believed in Jesus, we should tell others about him. We did. We sent our evangelists all throughout our tribes and now there are over 450 churches among us. We have sent missionaries to other parts of Ethiopia, as we should, but your father also told us that one day we would send our children to the ends of the earth to take the Gospel to the other nations of the world. Today that has happened, and I just want to thank God that my eyes have seen this before my days have ended.

Today Subside and his wife serve as missionaries in South Sudan. He and a teammate have just recently led a leading witchdoctor to the Lord and are discipling him and his family.

Excerpt reprinted by permission from Intercom, Issue #187, Sept-Oct 2007

God Had a Greater Agenda
By Rick Calenberg (HC Staff)

A few months ago we held a dinner fellowship for people in the Portland, Oregon, area who had served in Nigeria, long or short-term, including some retirees and their families. The occasion was prompted by the visit of Dr. and Mrs. Zamani Buki Kafang, Provost of Kagoro Seminary in Kagoro, Nigeria, where Pastor Mike and Marcia Leake, our hosts of the evening, served in July 2005. Because there were several Africans studying in the area at that time, they were invited to join us.

After an authentic and delicious Nigerian meal, we gathered to learn about each of our African guests and their ministries, and had prayer for each one after they shared. As we were about to close the meeting, Timothy Olonade stood up and insisted that he had something to share. He proceeded to give a passionate word of appreciation for the missionaries going to Africa with the Gospel, and those present as representatives of those who had gone long ago and pioneered the work in Africa.

Missionaries were the reason these men and women were believers and their forefathers had not succumbed to the influx of Islam. He insisted that he and his colleagues offer a prayer of thanks to God and blessing on us as missionaries who had served in Africa. This was an overwhelmingly emotional experience for all of us. Tears came to the eyes of most as each of these African men, who were church and emerging mission leaders, prayed passionately, weeping themselves to impart blessing on those who had come to Africa to bring the Gospel.

For one adult MK it was a life-changing experience. She had previously held misgivings about the cost paid by her and her family as her parents served as career missionaries in Africa.
She had been sent to boarding school and had experienced emotional pain and disillusionment as a result. In tears, she testified that hearing the testimonies and prayers of these Africans was like a healing balm to her heart and she understood in a new way how important and significant was the work of her parents.

For most, it was a highlight of our missionary careers. God had a much greater agenda for our evening than we could have ever imagined!

Reprinted by permission from Intercom, Issue #188, Nov-Dec 2007

All in the Family

By Karen (Seger) Keegan
(KA, HC 72)
Simroots@sim.org

E arly Saturday morning, on November 17, I received word that my father was dying. While I made immediate travel arrangements to Florida, it was Kay (Kastner) Breid (KA, HC 69) who was ministering to my father in the nursing home. During his four-month stay there, his face would light up when Kay walked into the room because he knew he’d be treated with dignity and compassion. When I arrived at his bedside, Kay offered to stay with me as long as I wanted her there, brought me dinner, coached me through the dying process, and gave me a ride “home” after he passed away. Funny how the lives of MKs intersect after so many years. Not in the same class, but away. Funny how the lives of MKs intersect and gave me a ride “home” after he passed dinner, coached me through the dying process, arrived at his bedside, Kay offered to stay with treated with dignity and compassion. When I walked into the room because he knew he’d be there, his face would light up when Kay

In His Hands

By Anna Beth Wildman (HC 05)
nannabethwildman@gmail.com

I shouldn’t be outside right now. As I stand in the front yard of my family’s home in Nigeria, I flash back to an evening three months ago when I sat with two high school friends at a long table in our conference center’s spacious dining hall. Miango, the conference center, was a 30-minute drive from Jos, my home city in Nigeria, West Africa. My friends and I were here with our families for our mission’s annual Christmas-time conference. The three of us were playing Dutch Blitz, shouting as we slapped the dog-eared, multicolored cards onto the table. I slammed a green six down a second too late and glared at the stocky, dark-haired guy on my right who had slid his own green six onto the card pile a second before me. “You stink!” I punched him lightly in the shoulder, and then looked up as Laurie, another high school friend, walked through the doorway. Laurie’s family lived and worked at Miango, but Laurie boarded in Jos and attended the missionary kid school there with me. “Hi, Laurie. Come play with us!”

“No thanks.” Laurie bit her lip, pausing awkwardly just inside the room. “Um . . . maybe in a while.” She turned her back to us and walked into the adjoining room where some missionary parents and children sat on blue-cushioned, wooden couches, watching TV. I turned back to the game, but a few minutes later, I glanced up and saw Laurie standing stiffly beside me, watching me solemnly. “I have some bad news. We just got a phone call that armed robbers attacked a missionary compound in Jos.” She ran a hand through her shoulder-length, dark brown hair, and bit her lip. “They shot Elias.”

Cards fluttered to the floor as I stared at Laurie, trying to understand what she had just said. Elias was a missionary kid who had come to Jos with his family two years earlier. He was the president of my 12th grade class at our school. “Shot? Is he OK? What happened?”

Laurie shook her head, and I saw tears standing in her eyes. “We don’t know.” She hugged me tightly and I hugged her back, but I couldn’t feel anything except a desperate hunger for answers. Was Elias dead? Where did they shoot him? Why did they shoot him? I imagined Elias lying unconscious as doctors hovered over him. Laurie pulled away from the hug. “You need to tell your parents we’re having a prayer meeting here in about 15 minutes.”

I shouldn’t be outside right now. Being outside at night puts a tense ache in the pit of my stomach, ever since Elias was shot three months ago. He survived, and the pellets in his shoulder and side will eventually work themselves out of his body, but his family still jumps every time a door slams or a car backfires. Sometimes I catch myself jumping with them at imagined gunshots.

I remember back to the previous year when Doug, a missionary kid, told my class that armed robbers had attacked his family the previous night. Doug lives in a hostel in Jos, while his parents and brother live 30 minutes away in Miango, the conference center. The armed robbers held Doug’s family at gunpoint, took as much money as they could, and hurt a woman in the middle of Doug’s living room floor. When the robbers left, they took Doug’s dad with them. His family was sure he would be shot. “The armed robbers let my dad go on the side of the road a long distance away, and he had to walk home. My family called the hostel this morning and told me the whole thing.” Doug cleared his throat. “I hate those guys.”

I shouldn’t be outside right now. It’s ten o’clock at night, and the March air drapes a warm, humid blanket around me. I glance at the rough, gray, cement block wall that runs around my house, theoretically keeping out armed robbers. The wall casts a shadow across my front yard. Electricity is off tonight in my neighborhood, making each shadow three-dimensional. The darkness makes it easier to see the stars, which seem closer together than usual. The full moon casts a pale dome of light over my front yard where I kneel on prickly green carpet grass, petting my comfortably large, black and tan German shepherd dog Rikkachee. Rikkachee prances in place, almost letting me get my arms around him, then bounding away while I chase him around the yard.

Suddenly Rikkachee’s back stiffens. He growls and starts barking wildly. Leaving me sprawled panting on the grass, Rikkachee races around the side of the house. I shouldn’t be outside right now. Something rustles around the corner—footsteps. I glance at the pale crack of 12-volt battery light shining under the metal blue front door, but I’m paralyzed. When I take the first step toward that door, will armed robbers burst around the side of my house? Crouching in the middle of the yard, I am exposed. Where can I hide? I strain my ears toward the footsteps; I’m trying to think of all the normal, safe things that make night sounds, but any second now, men with guns could crash around the corner of my house and snatch control from my clenched hands. As I crouch trembling, I glance up at the moon that manages to cast so much light around my yard. I realize that the God Who holds the whole world in His hands might let armed robbers attack me. I
know He has never been more present or powerful, but in two seconds He could use evil to rip my world apart. Why should I trust a God Who might let anything happen? As Rikkachee continues barking around the side of the house, I realize I’m humming the song, “You are my Hiding Place.” As I recognize the song, the words suddenly sink into my mind: “You are my hiding place. You always fill my heart with songs of deliverance. Whenever I am afraid I will trust in You.” I remember that although God can allow something as wild and unpredictable as an armed robbery, He is my hiding place—I don’t trust God for what He does, but for Who He is: good, loving, and completely in control. No matter what hurts me, God’s goodness, love, and strength are unchanged.

A tall, lean silhouette walks around the side of the house and passes by, not seeming to notice me. Rikkachee follows at his heels, still barking ferociously. This is the guard, the man who stands at our rusty, black metal gate and lets our Nigerian friends and coworkers in and out. The guard’s light coat and thin, gray shirt are familiar security to me, as I see them at least every week. I stand up and greet him in Hausa, the local trade language. “Sannu, Baba!” He turns and waves, calling in a nasal, raspy voice, “Eh heh, yauwa, sannu.” Rikkachee lopes across the yard and flops down beside me, looking sheepish. “Silly dog—you know the guard. He walks past every evening.” I pat his side, feeling sheepish myself. Slowly, I stand up and walk toward my metal blue front door. No armed robbers yet tonight.

Anna’s story won third place in a competition at Moody Bible Institute.

Thorn carvings. Note figures at computers. Photo by Bill Evenhouse

BULLETIN BOARD

DONATIONS

Simroots will be receiving a check in the amount of $1000 from Neva Poole’s estate. She always enjoyed reading Simroots when it showed up in her mailbox. I know that she would have liked the idea of sharing some of a blessing she learned was coming her way, just before going to be with the Lord. How mysterious God’s ways sometimes can be, in how He pours out His blessings on us! Mom didn’t have funds. She learned just weeks before she died that she was receiving 1/3 of an inheritance from her older sister who had died about 5 months earlier, and we were blessed with a window of clarity of mind, before the “blessings” of hospice, to learn how she generally wanted the funds distributed. Jim Poole

Phoebe Millis donated $25 to Simroots in honor of G. L. Seger (KA parent).

YOUTUBE

Yes, it’s hard to copy these links, so why not go to this issue on Simroots’ website where you can simply click on the link! This video produced by an MK about being a TCK is well worth the visit. www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmBXhMaO23Y

WEBSITES


NIGERIA PHOTOS

www.Flickr.com/thefolksinger
Photos that Bill Evenhouse took in August of his trip to Nigeria. (Hillcrest, Yankari, etc.)

SAHEL ACADEMY

New website: www.Sahelacademy.com

Facebook: Sahel Academy has a group on facebook, and so far we have 111 members, past and present! For anyone interested, just search “Sahel Academy” under Facebook groups. Rebecca Evans

Accreditation: Sahel is working towards accreditation with ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International). This is a lot of work, on top of an already busy teaching schedule for many. Pray for patience, faithfulness, perseverance and delight in this aspect of our ministry. Nancy Carriger
MK Reunions—A Spouse’s Perspective

By Boni Frazee, wife of David (Fuzz) Frazee (EL 78)

In July of 2006, I had the privilege of attending an MK reunion with my husband in Dallas. It was a time of getting to know some of the friends he grew up with, and some that he did not get to meet until that weekend. I have to say that I left that weekend feeling as though I was introduced to long-lost family members. I had the privilege of meeting people that I am sure if we ever had a need, they would be there for us.

If you have never been to a reunion since you have come home from the mission field, you need to go!

Let me try to explain. At the Dallas reunion there were many missions represented, but the common ground was the school each person attended. There were people there in their 60s all the way to people in their 20s. One thing I can say is that they all had a good time.

One night those who wanted to, dressed in traditional clothing. Most were from Africa, so they dressed in African clothing. It was beautiful. That night it was also decided to hold an auction as a fund-raising effort for a gym that is being built in honor of Steve Beacham, an MK/missionary who died. I have to say that this night was my favorite!

Let me try to paint a word picture for you. Most “students” typically have white skin, but there they were dressed in African garb feeling quite comfortable. Why? Because this was the culture they grew up in. The best way to describe it is in a term I learned from another MK: these “students” are American Africans!

So there they were dressed to the nines. As they came into the room, they were served traditional African food from Nigeria and Liberia. My husband is from Liberia, so we got into the Liberian food line. As we were getting closer and closer to the front of the line, I got a look at what was being served. Wait . . . you will not believe what I was looking at . . . this couldn’t be the food people were actually craving to eat?! No Way! To this born-and-raised-in-America girl it looked like . . . well, let’s just say it looked like the dog got sick and . . . enough said. So, we got up to the front of the line, and I’m thinking, “Oh joy! Yum yum, NOT!” My husband, on the other hand, is piling his plate full of this stuff! His mouth is salivating! He can’t wait to eat it! Thankfully, for my sake, they had some good ol’ American fare to eat too. They must have known some of us could not eat that stuff!

Oh, in case you are wondering what it was they were serving, it is called Palm Butter. They were also serving some green stuff. It didn’t look so bad, but it still was not going to go past these lips—not when I had a choice anyways.

After dinner, some of the students did skits. Let me tell you, my stomach hurt from laughing so hard. The skit about Nigerian Airlines was the best. This skit is not one that I can do justice to, so you’ll just have to come to the next reunion to see it for yourself.

I do need to tell you about the auction though. As I mentioned, this was a fundraiser, so someone brought a soccer ball and an African shirt to be auctioned off. The auctioneer was Mama Tataba. Anyway, Mama put on her best African accent, and trust me she was good. She proceeded to describe each item. When the bidding started on the first item, the room became enraptured. As the bidding became more and more intense, the room became more and more animated. Well, someone finally won the soccer ball for quite a bit of money. The room exploded! All of the African traditions in the room let loose. As the spouse, all I could think of was what if one of the hotel workers walked in on this? What would they be thinking, seeing all these people doing the African jig, and the African chant/singing thing. I was once again laughing. It was something to behold.

Another funny time was when all the students decided they were going to play soccer. I guess it didn’t matter that most of the people playing hadn’t played in years! They all joyfully went out there on the field. Oh my goodness, it was great! They were having a wonderful time playing and bantering with each other as if they were . . . well, young again. And even though only one person scored, and one person got hurt, a wonderful time was still had by all. Maybe you would like to know, it was my husband that got hurt, and it was my husband that scored the goal.

So, what did I do during the soccer game? I got to talk to all the people watching the game. I am not normally one to talk to people I don’t know; however, I never felt that way during the weekend. The students at the reunion were warm and welcoming.

One more thing I observed during my time at the reunion is that often during the reminiscing time someone’s name who was not there was brought up. That person had been missed. So, I have to ask . . . is that person you? Every person who was not able to attend was missed! You are the missing piece of the puzzle in someone else’s life. The memories that you have, good or bad, are much needed by these students, so please, please make an effort to be at the next reunion that comes your way. Start saving your pennies, nickels, and dimes now because someone out there needs you.

ELWA Reunion

When: July 3-6, 2008
Where: Embassy Suites Hotel (Airport), Atlanta, GA
Contacts:
Karen Ackley (elwakid@yahoo.com)
Jan Reed (janzee@bellsouth.net)
770-343-8382
Robin (Miller) Zook (robinzook@gmail.com)

ICA

When: July 3-6, 2008
Where: Embassy Suites Hotel (Airport), Atlanta, GA
Details: www.ica-ed.org

KA/HILLCREST

When: July 3-5, 2009
Where: Chicago area
Details: www.hillcrest.myevent.com
(Out of date at the moment, but this is where current information will live.)
Contact: Steve Ackley (steve@ackleys.us) 214-536-5458

SAHEL

Details:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SahelAcademyReunion
Contact: Lisa Germaine (dkgmkrus@preferred.com)
From Monkey Meat to Mini-Vans

By Janice (Reed) Ziegenbein (EL 74) janzee@bellsouth.net

It's funny how our lives have such different chapters. I want to tell you how the chapter in my life now has pointed me back to my first chapters.

Back in the early 50s, my parents, Dick and Jane Reed, were a part of the pioneering group that God sent to Liberia to set up a radio ministry that became ELWA. They went out as almost newlyweds and came back after four years with two little boys. My brother, Jim was the first American baby delivered in the Monrovian hospital. Needless to say, my folks had a very interesting life full of hard work and adventure in a new culture.

As time went on, Dick and Jane had four kids: Jim, John, Jan, and Jary. The work was long, but the family/community times were good. It seemed like every night we ate dinner on our back porch that spanned longer than the house and watched the beautiful sunsets over our beloved beach. We had many nights of hide and seek with all ages of kids and many nights of playing the very loud game “Pit.” We were never without fresh fruit and fish and wonderful African food to eat and, of course, good friends. I never ate monkey meat like I am holding in the picture, but my husband likes to tease me that I did and that I serve it when guests eat at our home. This was my “monkey meat” chapter of life.

Dad and Mom had to make a hard decision and chose to take a leave-of-absence from SIM and relocate to America for our high school years. It didn’t take long before I became a comfort-loving American. In college, I met my husband, Mike, and always thought that we would go over to Africa and use our professional skills in some way. The war changed any of the plans that I had in the back of my head. I settled in to being a suburbia housewife/mother. After some somersaults in my heart, the Lord told me to relax in my “easy” station of Atlanta life and that my ministry was to the people around me and that He was not sending me to another country. The adventure is simpler; the life is softer: a new chapter. My “mini-van” life was in full swing.

A few years ago my parents were coming through Atlanta to travel to the 50th-year celebration of ELWA in Charlotte. I asked if I could join them and had a blast. Little did I know I would not be the only “kid” there! What fun to see Danny and Steve Snyder and Sam Kayea—all rascally little guys running in bare feet the last time I had seen them. To see Karen (Ackley) Kern and Steve Ackley—who were more my brother’s peers and to realize they could be my friends now too. Seeing Tim Geysbeck who was in my class, now all grown up and realizing I grew up too. I could go on about whom I reconnected with. I came away from that weekend knowing that I had this extended family—family I had not been with for years but knew me as a kid and loved me and gathered me back in the fold.

Danny invited me to join the ELWA kids’ Yahoo chat site, and a new chapter for me began. After the ELWA kids reunion in Dallas, they decided to meet in Atlanta two years later. Danny came to Atlanta, and we had African chop with Sara (Buck) Graham and her sister, Becca Holcomb and family who were home from their work in Africa. We chose to be on the committee to put together the 2008 reunion. We spent the next day scoping out places to meet and chose the Atlanta airport Embassy Suites. The committee now has people from all over the world made up of people I have never met but are my dear friends already. We grew up in Liberia at different times and have varied experiences but all centered around ELWA, the beach and good friends. We want to revisit these times together this summer, and we want you to join us in our sentimental journey.

As we plan this reunion, we have your needs in mind. We want you to come July 4th weekend and enjoy plenty of memories with pictures, food, conversation and prayer. Our parents’ generation we affectionately call “the Saints” will be next door having their time together. Saturday afternoon we plan a yummy African feast lovingly prepared by the Kayea family and their friends in Atlanta. That evening, we will blend the reunions for feasting and singing and praying together. Please join us. If you have felt disconnected over the years from your “family” let me assure you that feeling won’t last long. Please register with us and reserve your room.

Can anyone identify these MKs?
REMEMBER WHEN

Aunt Linda and the Partridge

By Tim Draper (KA 66) drapers@reachone.com

In the eighth grade I was walking down past the new tennis courts and noticed two partridges on the court up close to the tall fence. I thought that if I snuck around and ran at them I might be able to catch one up against the fence since they probably wouldn’t try to fly straight up. Sure enough, one flew away, but I was able to trap and grab the other one. I took it to the back of the kitchen thinking that one of the Africans might want it, but Aunt Linda laughed and told me if I would pluck and clean it, she would cook it for me. Two-hundred-plus kids at that time, but she was still able to minister to an individual. I think to varying degrees we appreciated what we had as kids, but it is only now as we look back that we realize how loved and cared for we really were.

You Know You Are a TCK When . . .

Submitted by Paul Trigg (HC) greeneaglz@googlemail.com

- You have your hair cut at a barbershop for the first time at the age of 21, when the rest of the time your Mom used to cut it.
- You don’t care half the time what you wear or if it matches as long as it is clean.
- You or your parents don’t throw anything away and cannot get the car in the garage because of everything that’s stored in it.
- You can recommend an international airline to a friend.
- You have more than one passport, either because of dual nationality or because they get filled up.
- You know all the rude words and curses, in several languages, that your Mom would rather not hear.
- You have a very wide taste in music and like to clap or tap your feet using a variety of rhythms to the music.
- You know the names of a wide variety of confectionary from various countries.
- Your accent changes depending on which nationality you are speaking to.
- You are familiar with a variety of strange diseases.
- You can get through customs without paying a bribe.

KA ARCHIVES

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Over 3500 photographs, countless memories, personal diaries, KA School Board Minutes, book excerpts and more. KA movies on DVD. Will send to you when you send a donation to Simroots, c/o Deb Turner, PO Box 273, Greenbank, WA 98253.

Send YOUR photos and stories to Grace Swanson, 1565 Gascony Road, Encinitas CA 92024. (swanson121@cox.net)

Just a brief note of thanks for all that you’ve done over the years to keep us in touch with our heritage. For Christmas, my brother Tim secured a copy of the KA History DVD which I finally had time to peruse, and many foundational memories flooded back. For better or worse, those photos represent the formative years.

Tom Kraakevik

KA ARCHIVES

How many times do you remember this scene at KA?
Snakes Alive!
*By Paul Trigg (HC)*

greeneaglz@googlemail.com

O k, I think I will add some of my snake stories. While I was at Hillcrest, I used to go hunting snakes. I would lift rocks from the far side so that any snakes would not slither or bite in my direction. I once found some eggs under a rock, which I presumed to be lizard eggs as they were a similar shape and size. However, they hatched in the bottle I had put them in, and they turned out to be baby spitting cobras. They met their Maker under a large boulder. Bear in mind this was when I was aged 10 to 14!

During my work trips to Zambia a few years back there were numerous snakes, many black and green mambas. Just clearing the bush for a few buildings meant about 10 of them being killed, so not all snakes are in Nigeria—must depend on the habitat.

When I was at our house at Vom, my mother heard a small puppy barking. She went out to see what it was barking at, and there was a spitting cobra. It spat venom at my mother, but fortunately she was wearing glasses. Our cook killed it and hung it up on the washing line. My father used to go and skin it. Black mamba!

A Snake Story from Igbaja
*By Nancy (Hall) De Valve (KA 77)*

john.devalve@sim.org

W e were on summer holidays from KA. It had been ages since we had spent time together as a family. We had just eaten one of Mom’s delicious home-cooked meals and were still sitting around the table, talking and enjoying each other.

Outside the dining room window we heard a noise in the bushes. My dad told my brother, Dean, “Go out and chase that stink rat out of the bushes.”

My brother refused, saying he could tell by the sound it made that it wasn’t a rat. He adamantly refused to go out, saying it was a snake. By then my dad was getting a little annoyed with him since he refused to do what he had been told. Finally my dad said, “Fine! I’ll go out and do it myself.” Meanwhile, the rustling in the bushes continued.

Grabbing a flashlight, my dad went out the living room door and down the screened-in breezeway to bravely chase away the rat. It wasn’t long until he came back in. His face was drained of all color, and he couldn’t say a word. He was pointing towards the door and making guttural sounds. Until then I had never seen my dad scared of anything, but he was definitely terrified. That scared all of us. I’m sure my mom was scared, too, but she was more scared about my dad than about whatever he had seen in the bushes. She shook him and told him if he didn’t snap out of it, she would slap him. That was the only time I ever heard either of my parents threaten physical force on the other one!

When she said that, he returned to reality. He managed to stutter out that there was a huge snake slithering across the stoop on to which the door opened. He had no idea how long it was, but he had not been able to see either the head or the tail of the snake. Judging by what he could see, and knowing the size of snakes that we had seen in Igbaja at other times, we knew it was an extremely large and poisonous one.

My brother then ran out the kitchen door, hopped on the motorcycle and raced up to the students’ dorms to get help. They came running armed with axes, shovels, sticks, stones, machetes . . . anything they could use to hunt down the snake . . . everybody’s enemy and their next meal. By the time they arrived, he was off the stoop. With flashlights and lanterns they searched all around the house but could never find it. Our house was the last one on the compound, and we had to assume he had slithered off into the bush. I don’t think any of us slept well that night, thinking he could still be lurking nearby.

Even though only my dad had seen the snake, the whole incident made a huge impression on me because I’d never seen my parents show fear until that night. They were not diminished in my eyes because of it, but the fear of snakes was definitely enforced!

A “Punny” One

Ethelyn Abernethy (mother of Audrey, Jennifer, and Pearl), now 101, has written her memoirs in recent years. She includes a story that her husband, Harry, used to tell.

A honeymoon couple was visiting Miango and climbed the hill behind the station. Suddenly they saw a snake, so the young man said, “Hold my watch while I get a stone.” In the excitement she threw the watch at the snake—and killed it! Bishop Smith, a godly missionary of the Anglican Church who liked to make puns said, “And do you know what the snake said? It said, ‘My time has come!’”
SIM MK Education Consultation  
Chiang Mai, Thailand, November 2007

By Dorothy Haile, International Personnel Director, with “MK Education Coordinator” as part of my responsibilities

SIM has held MK Education Consultations for over ten years now. At first the participants came only from the schools, but in April 1998 Sending Office MK Coordinators, and home schooling representatives, came for the first time. That Consultation, which took place just before the AEF/SIM merger, was also my first opportunity to come.

In November 2007, we met in the Lotus Hotel in Chiang Mai, Thailand. School leaders came a few days earlier than the larger group and worked on some big school issues including teacher recruitment, curriculum, information flow (school to new teacher, new family to school, and so on). They prepared materials to present to the main Consultation, which started on Sunday evening November 4 and ended the next Friday. For this week about 35 people were present, and we spent a considerable amount of time on reports, always followed by prayer. We had some special times of prayer, too, including special prayer for Jennifer Clark who teaches at Murree School in Pakistan (there was political turmoil at the time), and for Ann Christian who had just made the major transition from being Director of Carachipampa Christian School (Bolivia) to be a Regional Mobiliser (and the MK Coordinator) for SIM UK. One special innovation was the presence of representatives from both Latin America and Ethiopia (the latter from the Kale Heywet Church). We really wanted to learn of their concerns in MK education and to give them the opportunity to be involved in our discussions. I believe they, too, went away with much to think about and some helpful resources, and in fact that it was a stimulating and encouraging time for everyone.

We visited two schools in Chiang Mai (Chiang Mai International School and Grace International School), and it was interesting to see them. However, the visits were not simply enjoyable occasions away from the seminar room: I wanted us to think about these very different schools and how we could learn from our visits in order to provide better information about our own schools for both applicant families and for teachers. Pressure of time actually meant that we did not have as much time to discuss these visits as I had hoped, and so we may not have got as much value from them as we could have done. We spent an afternoon on mother tongue issues, which are of increasing importance as SIM becomes more and more diverse, and a new subject this time was “Caring for College-age MKs.” Another main discussion topic was the principles and practicalities of establishing a small educational facility such as a one-room school. I think we need the flexibility of such facilities in more and more places these days and hoped we would end up with some practical resources that could be used.

Responses to this Consultation were very positive. There was a constant buzz of discussion, and I believe many valuable friendships were made or strengthened. We were certainly aware of the prayers and interest of many people around the world as we met together. Please do pray for good follow-up and practical application of what we all learned. Pray also for teachers for schools, and for small educational facilities, and in-home school support.

Mrs. Hodges with some of her former students on staff in the 80’s—Conni Syring, Jean Hodges, Linda Crouch, Sue Hammack, Bonnie Husband
Submitted by Conni Townsend

SIM MK Education Statistics

The figures represent the MKs on the Field on October 1, 2007. Dorothy chose that date because it falls in the school year for both the northern and southern hemispheres.

MKs on the field total 753:
41 attend boarding schools
176 are home schooled
137 go to local/state/national school
256 attend MK/Christian schools
57 attend secular international schools
101 are not yet in school
26 fall outside any of these categories.

MK schools with the most SIM MKs are:
- Bingham Academy in Ethiopia (39)
- Sahel Academy in Niger (38)
- Hillcrest School in Nigeria (36)
- Carachipampa Christian School in Bolivia (25)
- Rift Valley Academy in Kenya (22)
- Dakar Academy in Senegal (21)
- Hebron School in India (11)

I do believe there is a relationship between the provision of good MK educational facilities and the capacity of a Field to attract and sustain missionary families. This does not mean that I think there should be a school on every Field, but I do believe that thinking ahead in this area of member care is vital to the strategic planning process.
As you can see, Frances is expecting, so this is toward the end of school term, which in those days was about mid-July. Mid term lasted about twelve days between grades because of rainy season. Frances hardly missed a beat, for by the time the new term began she was looking after two full dorms of girls, grades one to eight, caring for two pre-schoolers, and a new baby whom she nursed. Carol would start Grade One at the beginning of the new term shortly after Frank was born, and then Frances became her first piano teacher. But Peter would be one full year longing to do just that.

Andy left early, and Dennis stayed on for a few weeks into the grade nine correspondence, until he had to leave because of family illness. His folks were with the American [Baptist] Mission. Dennis had some schooling in Egypt, if I recall correctly.

All the rest in the picture were SIM folk. Dennis [Dennie] has only recently retired from MAF U.S., At one time he flew in Ethiopia, even giving Miss Macdonald a flighty experience. He became an MAF instructor and flight engineer.

Tammy Spitler, pianist extraordinaire.

Mildred Hay [later Ladd], now deceased, piano teacher and wife of station head, Graham Hay, mother of two daughters, Ginny and Betty Chenault, whose Daddy was tragically killed, and also of Jimmy and Helen Hay.

Frances Wallace, [See her bio The Shaping of a Saint, written by her family following her demise in 1999.]

Murray Hodges, who would become a teacher as well as a piano tuner . . . now grampa.

Bob Ratzlaff [later Ratzliff] father of Brian, who like his Dad and Grandfather Ed, became SIM Ethiopia missionaries. Bob was also head of Missions at Briarcrest about the same time Bingham grads Dr. John Kayser, was head of Missions at Prairie, and Dr. Jon Bonk was head of Missions at Providence. Bob has only just retired from a full preaching career.

UAE. His widow Ruth continues to commute to UAE.

Dan Perkins, scholar and philatelist, who has completely dropped off my radar. [Sad face]

Mary [Wollman] Hofer, yet living in Sioux City, IA, as a widow. Was teacher of Grade 3-4 at Bingham. She organized many of the BA photo albums along with helping with year book, field days, and study hall.

Mary Macdonald, affectionately known as “Mary Mac” whose height and stature were measured longingly as one, then another and another, of her students overtook her.

Most who started in Grade One were shorter than she, but . . .

Upon retirement in Toronto, Canada, Mary worked with the Mrs. G Ministries—Bible stories on tape and CD, with accompanying books. (Now the first ones are being translated into Amharic, the official language of Ethiopia.)

Faith Rutherford, whose life was prematurely cut short as she predeceased her brother.
Dear Readers,

Occasionally the Simroots team has to make some tough decisions regarding what to print, what to omit, and what to edit.

In our News Updates section, we have to decide whether or not our readers care to hear about our grandchildren (do we?) the latest details regarding our health issues (a sensitive topic for some), and how often one person or family should be featured. Do we include news about our parents in a magazine for MKs and their caregivers? (Generally, we don’t have space, though in this issue, we felt it appropriate to include some photos of the Sebring residents to accompany our front-page article.) And do we print information about us sent in from family members? (Yes, because we assume our parents and sibs will filter what is appropriate and acceptable.) It is assumed that if you are on our mailing list, you won’t mind if we print your news! And it’s also assumed that if you do mind, you will inform the editor.

We also have to decide whether or not what is submitted actually qualifies as “news.” Many news updates submissions have to be edited. For example, some just send in their prayer letters in their entirety. We have to filter out what we consider most useful to our readership, else one prayer letter could take up several pages just by itself. Most often we filter out pleas for money and prayer, simply because we assume we all need both!

After we’ve collected all the news, we have to choose articles from a large stack of submissions, attempting to provide a variety of topics, interests, and schools represented. Speaking of space, we often tighten up pieces that need it—both to fit on a page and for improved readability. We strive to fully maintain the intent of the piece and to use the original words as submitted, but sometimes we encounter errors, contradictions or unclear meaning. It is an author’s right to request that a piece be run by him/her for approval before going to print. Our assumption, however, is that without this expressed request, the editors have the right to edit without the author’s permission. Mostly it’s a time issue for us.

We also must edit for consistency in mechanics: punctuation, grammar, spelling, and formatting standards we’ve set for this magazine. We accept both American and British standards, depending on the source. (Incidentally, I note that MKs are quite inconsistent. If you attended an American school in a country that was formerly ruled by Britain, it’s no wonder you’re confused as to whether you “practice” or “practise”!) Some grammar rules change over the years, and as we become aware of the changes, we try to keep current. Just for the record, we have different standards of abbreviation for different sections of Simroots—mostly for the sake of space.

We’re not perfect. We make mistakes. Just know that each article and each issue is prayed over both during and after publication. Above all, we view this magazine as a ministry. We trust our efforts bless you mightily; it certainly blesses us to produce it! We welcome your corrections, comments, and suggestions.

Sai an jima (until a little while),
Karen Keegan, Editor
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PHOTO IDs from Vol. 24 #2

Page 3
1959. The 2 ladies are Cindy Cummins and Helen Lucks. She was taking Cindy home as she (Helen) was going on furlough.
Anne Ockers

Jeanette Silver
Page 8, More KA Choruses
In God's Green Pastures
Feeding

Karen,
Keep up the good work. Even though I never went to boarding school, and that seems to be the organizational template for the “zine,” I still enjoy reading every issue. Any chance of creating a small column about non-boarding school MKs? Or were my sisters and I and one Australian MK I knew the only SIM ones? Our mission field experience may have been different (atypical), but our post-field experience is similar.
David

Editor Reply: Yes! I am very interested in doing this, but I need your help. Anyone care to write articles for us?

My brother-in-law, Emmanuel Isch, is one of the vice presidents for World Vision Canada. He was representing WVC and a shipment they were sending with Samaritan’s Purse from Charlotte on a chartered 747 to North Korea—perhaps the first flight to go directly to Korea from the U.S. without stopping since the Korean War. I just happened to drop by after work that morning to spend time with Emmanuel while they started to load the plane. Maybe Franklin thought I was the pilot, I don’t know. Because Franklin is a pilot, and we had a mutual friend, we did talk a little bit while we waited and hence the photo taken by Stacia Vong Hogeterp, Emmanuel’s WVC colleague.
Jon Stilwell

Trumpet players 1972

KA Home Ec Class c. 1965
Back: Linda Glerum, Kay Kastner, Nancy Rendel
Middle: Sharon Lorenz (?), Carol Pullen, Lynn Hovey, Kathy Brabant, Nancy Kay Jacobson, Ruth Hodges
Front: Sharon Truax, Judy Ratzlaf, Miriam Veenker, Judy Lees
Submitted by Erika Kretschmer

KA Room Contest Outing
Linda Glerum (?) and Miriam Veenker
Submitted by Erika Kretschmer

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