



Key Issues in MK Education in the 21st Century

By Dorothy Haile

The most important issue in current MK education, in my opinion, is that we live at a time of enormous change.

As we move into the 21st century, we rejoice in the growth of mission from many countries that formerly were regarded as “receivers.” Today they are sending missionaries out in increasing numbers, and (as usual) most of the missionary families have children. Thus, no longer are the majority of the children of missionaries in the average evangelical missionary society American, though they are probably the largest single group. Increasingly those who are even “Western” in their nationality, culture, and educational expectations will be only a proportion of the children who need access to educational resources.

In addition, there are significant changes in the educational options being used by missionaries. No longer are most of our missionary children spending a fair proportion of their school career in boarding schools. SIM statistics show that on average about 40% of our elementary age children are being home-schooled, and nearly all the rest were enrolled in Christian day schools.

Even in the secondary/high school age group, traditionally those who have most depended on boarding schools, only 20-25% are in boarding. On average, therefore, about one third of our children are in home-based education, but we have had to recognise that not nearly one third of the resources that we as an organisation put into MK education goes into home-based education. If these trends continue, and everything points to their continuing and even accelerating, we face real challenges as we ask what changes are needed so that missionary families have access to the educational resources they need.

These two trends, first towards growing international diversity and second towards a widening range of educational options used and desired, present us with specifically educational challenges. Changes in strategic emphasis also mean that we face new challenges in the location of our missionary families. Increasing numbers are located in cities, where national schools may be seen as a viable alternative in some cases; the international schools in those cities offer another option, but often at prohibitive cost. At the other extreme, families may be located in very remote places where it is hard for them to obtain

resources, and where it is also difficult for resource personnel to reach them.

In the face of these challenges, what should we do?

First of all, we must respond with faith and hope, thankful to God for what He is doing in the world and that we have the privilege of living in such a time. At the same time we must come to God for His miraculous help to meet what often seem like overwhelming needs.

Second, I believe we in mission agencies, supporting churches, and Christian schools must determine to work together to seek solutions for the challenges. MK education is one of those issues where surely there is not excuse for anything other than wholehearted cooperation. We may well disagree on professional issues such as curriculum, educational philosophy, and methods; but I hope we can work together to seek solutions that are for the greatest good of the greatest number.

Third, we must seek personnel from as many sending countries as possible to be part of the workforce that will provide school teachers and other staff for schools, educational consultancy, teachers for one-room and co-op schools, and

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support for home-based education. As we do this, I believe we need to change the profile of these missionaries so that they are no longer seen as “support staff”. Teachers and tutors have a unique and wonderful opportunity to live out their Christian faith each day in front of an observant (and often critical) audience. They are involved in the core activities of mission, namely evangelism and discipleship in cross-cultural situations. What a privilege and opportunity. We need many more of such people!

Dorothy Haile grew up in London, England, and taught for fifteen years at Mukinge Girls' Secondary School in Kasempa, Zambia, which was a boarding school for Zambian girls. Since then she has been involved in mission “personnel” roles, and now works in Fort Mill, South Carolina, as the International Personnel Director for SIM, including responsibility for MK education.

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The Current Face of MK Education

By Liz McGregor

Adapted from an informal discussion time with the
SIM Adult MK Advisory Committee, September 20, 2005

Who is SIM today?

SIM is changing. However, although the organization might look different from the outside, the vision and the core values, the fundamentals, remain the same—sharing the good news, discipling new believers, meeting human needs, enabling others, etc. The church IS planted. The future is not really new—it's simply the next phase, built on the past. SIM is strategically placed to partner with the church world-wide because of work that has been done in the past by faithful missionaries.

When my husband Malcolm became the new International Director, he initiated a major review in SIM called “Seize the Day.” In January of 2005, SIM leaders from around the world met to consider the data and information which had been collected from many of the stakeholders of SIM (missionaries, supporters, church leaders, missiologists). The next phase, implementation of the plan, is being called “Faith Effects”—the theme verses are 2 Peter 1: 3-11.

Two key results of “Seize the Day” highlight some of the changes taking place in SIM—the emerging missions' movement from the majority world church and our commitment to celebrate the diversity of cultures God is bringing in to SIM.

As a global mission, SIM's leadership team in the coming days will reflect the new reality. For example, Andrew Ng, from Singapore, will be the new Deputy International Director for Asia and the Pacific region; Eldon Porter, from the USA, is the Deputy International Director for the Americas; and Joshua Bogunjoko, from Nigeria, will be the Deputy International Director for Europe and West Africa. We also look forward to Dave Bremner, from South Africa, joining the team.

Now as we recruit from non-Western countries where the church is strong, like Taiwan, Philippines, Ecuador, and Ethiopia, we need to be aware of the needs of MKs from these countries. In Pakistan, for example, especially since 9-11, the majority of SIM personnel are non-Western. Look at the team for Southern Sudan—it will be based in Kenya and will be made up of an Indian Director (whose wife is from Taiwan), Ethiopians, Kenyans, and Nigerians; and the team leader is American!

MK issues

(1) In areas of great isolation (e.g. Mongolia) there is often limited or no easy access to resources like home-schooling materials. It's back to the pioneering spirit of our grandfathers' day. This is not easy for Westerners these days.

(2) Boarding school issues are compounded by the added feature of trying to meet the needs of many different nationalities. In the past, often non-US missionaries left the mission because the education on the field did not meet the needs of their children. Now, in some of the MK schools that are multicultural with an international curriculum, Americans are facing the same dilemma! MK schools are struggling to find teachers; few can successfully meet the needs of all nationalities. It is a difficult task, with no easy solutions.

(3) How are people from less affluent sending countries going to be able to afford schooling for their children? These new sending countries are providing the missionaries, but they often don't have the resources for their children's education. In an urban center in China, for example, it is very expensive to send your child to an international school. You might be interested to know that SIM's financial support system is changing. New ways to share on a voluntary basis are being put in place, and a project is being set up to which people can contribute to help missionaries from new sending countries. **One aspect of this project will be to help with MK education costs. This is a very practical way in which adult MKs could get involved in assisting MKs from these new sending countries.**

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DID YOU KNOW?

According to *Intercom*, Issue #177,
Nov/Dec 2005:

There are 888 SIM MKs age 18 and under.
SIM sends missionaries from 22 countries to 57 countries.

Return to Home



Return to Ethiopia and Bingham Academy

By Dick Ackley (BA, HC '71)

It was a week that my daughter Kristen and I will never forget. For me, much of it was a walk down memory lane; for her there was so much new. Similarities between Nigeria (where Kristen grew up) and Ethiopia certainly exist, but new sights, sounds, smells, and experiences were plentiful. The first couple of days were particularly challenging for Kristen, but after that she really got into the swing of things. The first day there we attended a soccer game involving some of the girls in an SIM ministry.

Our time at the Deborah House had a big impact on both of us. Here 32 girls—roughly the same age as Kristen—live, having been rescued from a life on the streets. Either orphaned or otherwise neglected, they had no hope until the love of Christ was shown them by SIM's Urban Ministry team. Two years ago the Deborah House was filled with arguing girls, often breaking into fighting. Now they loudly sing hymns, clapping and dancing their expressions of love and praise to God. On our last night in Ethiopia we spent three hours with these precious girls assuring them of our love, and more importantly our Father's love for them. They need our prayers!

I was able to visit several other ministries and was so impressed with the dedication of our missionaries and Ethiopian believers working in Addis. I would have loved to have gotten out into the country, but time did not allow. We did make time to get out to Bishoftu (Lake Babogaya)—one of the most beautiful spots on earth. The gorgeous lake, along with brightly colored flowers and a wide variety of birds, provides great beauty at a place our missionaries and national Christians come for spiritual, emotional, and physical renewal. It hadn't changed that much since I was there as a kid 40 years ago, but it was even more beautiful than I remembered it. Kristen called it the highlight of our time there. We were able to take a little rowboat out onto the lake and mingle with the pelicans and other birds.

The purpose of the trip was to be part of a delegation to help Bingham Academy with some curriculum and personnel issues. This is an outstanding school, meeting the needs of our missionary family and the interna-

tional community. It is an ideal place to teach . . . let me know if you'd like more information. We felt like the meetings were beneficial. Pray for the Board as they wrestle with some sensitive issues.

Walking on the Bingham campus after 40 years away was an incredible experience. Security is tight. I rode up in a taxi and went through considerable scrutiny after passing through not one, but two security gates. The area surrounding Bingham has changed drastically. The campus itself is remarkably similar—just a few new buildings, or rather renovated buildings. For example, the barn is now the school office; the old "gym" with a roof over a court is now a VERY nice gym, along with a library overlooking the gym, and an art room at the end of the gym.

The main building looks very similar on the outside, but the inside is extremely different. No dorms; just offices, classrooms, and apartments. I was so glad to see the bag swing in great shape! The place where we used to dig caves is still there, but with retaining walls everywhere. Almost every square yard of the campus brought back a memory . . . some I hadn't thought about for decades. I was proud of the changes SIM has made. Although dorms are nonexistent, there is a possibility that as the high school grows, there will be need for boarding students again. I have no doubt that the people SIM assigns to look after these kids will be ones who love the Lord and the kids deeply.

It's a whole new atmosphere on campus. But I was grateful for the 4½ elementary years I had spent there. Although difficult, they shaped my character and gave me a passion to love and serve MKs.

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For updates on the violence in Ethiopia, check the Web site: www.ethiopia.com.



Steve Wright

Return to Nigeria and KA

By Steve Wright (KA '71)

I arrived at Lagos airport with some trepidation as, in North America, no news about this country of my birth and childhood is good news. Quickly connecting with Nigerian friends (a must for non-indigenes in this hectic city) after a hiatus of close to 40 years, within minutes the sights and sounds, so deeply familiar, resonated within me. Landing at ECWA guesthouse in Mushin, I was surprised to realize next morning that I was sleeping in the very bedroom of the house I lived in as a child. Walking through Oshodi market, taking the crowded buses, eating *amala*, fried plantain, and pounded yam (African-style) with friends (Mageret and Lawrence) and soaking in the heat—I felt joy. A few moments, also, of being thoroughly overwhelmed as a visible minority in this aggressive city. On the bus leaving Lagos I was startled when the driver asked, "Who will pray?" A lady at the back prayed fervently with fervent assent from everyone—an experience one would not encounter (to say the least) in North America. Southern Nigeria is now overwhelmingly a Christian culture—"Thanks be to God" being a common response to questions.

The kindness of Nigerian friends stands out, guiding me and allowing me the privilege of staying in their homes: Timothy and family in Benin City, Patrick who brought tears to my eyes as he spoke of his relationship with my father, Matthew and family in Port Harcourt, Dr. (Mrs.) Adaramola (previously a stranger) in Akure, climbing the Idanre hills with Roasbie, visiting a dear friend in Abuja, experiencing small business firsthand in Jos with my wonderful friend Andrew.

The sheer beauty of the Nigerian landscape—the rich tropical rainforests of the South, the astonishing Idanre hills, the rough rocks and craggy hills of the plateau. Underneath the visible poverty and harshness, fragile infrastructure, and humble dwellings—a deep immense beauty, vibrant culture, the tough African people, full of intrinsic quality and intelligence, whom I admire and respect.

In Jos, what a joy to visit with old friends—Sue and Terry Hammack, Bill and Dorothy Ardill, Linda and James Crouch—experience the unique culture of Hillcrest, and then on to KA.

Four mornings of waking at dawn, up to the top of Mt. Sanderson, gazing across a landscape, so familiar, which resonates with every fiber of my being as the sun rises above the volcanoes. The sound of children's voices slowly escalating in the dorms and then children laughing, running on the playground.

Return to Home



I enter the chapel and sit, rough stone walls, eucalyptus tree through the window, children at the front singing, practising; I walk beside graves and see familiar names—Hodges, Driediger—powerful memories; I sit in the dining room as students eat, four to a table; I watch kids climbing on the monkey bars and playing with blocks on the dorm floor as did I so many years ago; I sit by the dorm entrance, children gather and ask questions of “Uncle Steve”; I play basketball on the courts with young alumni and climb up the rocks behind the tank—off limits in my day, yet not unfamiliar; an ache that has been in me for years subsides, a healing—I’m home.

The events of the 60th anniversary, pleasant as they are—a monster bonfire, a multi-varied treasure hunt, a unique alumni gathering—pale beside the enjoyment of meeting so many alumni. I’m gratified by the bond, the power of connection that the common experience we share brings, by how much we have in common. All of us have approached life with a certain innocence, integrity, desire to do good; a striving for the gospel ideal—put Love into practise. As alumni we resolve to value that common ground, use it as a means to network and assist each other, particularly within Nigeria. Strangers quickly become friends—Lura whose Love shines through; Poyepo, Precious, Gloria so kind to me at Lagos airport; Buchanan, Salome, Emmanuel, Linda, Zakka, Matthew. We talk about business, how Nigeria is changing politically, economically, and technologically, how bright the future can be for this beautiful country.

As a small business owner in Canada for many years, I came to Nigeria hoping to learn about small business. I discovered that virtually every Nigerian is a business person at heart, often stymied only by the relatively small start-up capital required to begin an enterprise. A fund to facilitate such ventures is close to my heart, but first I’ll have to learn if I can do business in Nigeria.

As I board my flight back to Canada, I realize that this is not a “once for all” visit simply to clear up childhood ghosts. What I’ve experienced will take time to assimilate. The enigma which is Nigeria has worked its way deeper into my spirit. My love for this country is strong. (swift@swiftsigns.ca)

Thank you to Buchanan Mshelia for sending photos. If you want to view an on-line slide show of the reunion, write to:
buchanm@mtnnigeria.net



The fireplace room



KA playground



More play area



Sue Hammack, Kirk Memorial Chapel

Return to Home



Return to Liberia and ELWA

By Nancy and Judy for the "Thompson kids"

Our sibling trip back to ELWA in Liberia in January 2006 was awesome. We were a group of fifteen: **Jim and Nancy Molenhouse** with Matt, Crystal, Katie, and John; **Judy Koci**; **Sally Moore** and her 23-year-old son Ryan; **Bill** and two sons Billy and Landon; **Brian** and his wife Cheryl; and **Meanu Kayea** who is like a brother to us. We arrived in the dark on Sunday night, Jan 8, and were overcome by the intense heat and humidity. But, we were HOME! **Debbie Sacra** and four vehicles from ELWA transported us from the airport to ELWA with our 40+ suitcases, 30 of them between 60 and 70 pounds. (We carried numerous things for the orphanages and gifts for ELWA staff and families.) The only casualty was Sally's carry-on with her camera and her contacts that she had to check in Amsterdam. Despite many efforts, she did not get it until she returned home . . . minus her digital camera.

Twelve of us stayed in the "Weber" house—which is the guest house currently under renovation—and Judy, Sally, and Crystal stayed a few houses down in the house by the lagoon with a young SIM nurse, Naomi. When we arrived, we were welcomed at the guesthouse by Dr. Sacra, James Kesselly, and Christine and Lawrence Norman who brought us country chop. What a great welcome! That night we were told of the serious "rogue" problem, so took turns "patrolling" with some large spotlights we had brought with us and finally all got to sleep in the early hours of the morning.

The next morning we woke up to the pepper bird singing and a beautiful dawn. We had

many visitors, old friends and new; we took some strolls along the beach (which our son John describes as the most beautiful beach he has ever seen); and had a tour of ELWA led by James Kesselly. Dr. Sacra's wife, Debbie, brought us a *jollof* rice dinner at noon, and we enjoyed it along with ELWA staff department leaders. Monday afternoon Debbie drove Sally and Nancy to the market to buy greens and rice so that we could cook our own Liberian chop. The sunset that evening was picture perfect and reminded us again of just how much we had missed this place. Monday night after dinner Dr. Sacra came over to give us the "official" SIM welcome talk, and then we spent the rest of the night preparing and sorting the gifts for the orphans.

Tuesday morning was beautiful, and we headed to the beach for some swimming, shell collecting, snorkeling, fishing, and soccer. Many Liberian children swim every day, and they especially enjoyed the snow tubes that Bill brought. After lunch, several of us walked to Camp Lawana, and Meanu saw his old house.

Tuesday, our big event was to take many suitcases full of items to Phebe Grey Orphanage and gift bags full of goodies for each of the 100 kids, and we spent the afternoon touring the orphanage, playing and talking with the kids. Dr. McFadden (a Christian doctor from Mississippi with Living Water NGO, which stands for Non Governmental Organization) and Drs. David and Velma Troko



Bill Thompson and Sally Moore

accompanied us. Meanu was able to give the older boys a special talk on being the Christian men God wants them to be. It was fun to see the delight of the kids receiving soccer shirts, candy, Bibles, toys, and yes, even an algebra book was an exciting gift to the young teacher and student who loves math. "Polynomials!" the boy was overheard saying. When we returned home, we discovered that Christine Norman had dropped off a wonderful Liberian dinner that her sister-in-law had made.

Wednesday morning we woke to booming thunder and a rainy season downpour. By 9:30 it had cleared up so that we could start our painting project of the four concrete walls by the studio building. We had to scrub the walls that were black with thick mold, then white-wash, and then paint with blue paint. A number of obstacles included no scrub brushes (Judy, Nancy, and Katie Molenhouse made a "quick" trip to Monrovia to buy bleach and scrub brushes, plus a case of pop for all of the workers—which ended up including some ex-combatants who needed some work to do), the generator going off for a while taking away our water supply, large cracks in the concrete needing repair before we could paint them, etc. God provided for everything that we needed, and by Thursday morning with the help of some of the ex-combatants the walls were completely painted a bright blue. Wednesday afternoon, all of the siblings went agate collecting, which was our only private time we had together.

Thursday morning Judy and Crystal attended chapel at ELWA hospital, took Bibles to Isaac Paye (the chaplain there), dropped off some drug donations to the pharmacy, and gave the hospital scrub uniforms that we had brought to the employees. Judy spent some time with Mary Ricks in Noji Town, also visiting their new church and meeting their new pastor. She had no Bible, so we gave her a study Bible. Bill, Brian, Cheryl, and Meanu had some excitement Thursday when they ventured out



Judy Koci, Nancy Molenhouse, Sally Moore, Bill Thompson, Brian Thompson, Meanu Kayea

into the ocean in a Fanti fisherman boat along with Dr. McFadden. The boat was overloaded; Cheryl and Brian both were bailing water almost the whole time; no one caught any fish; and Dr. McFadden ended up falling overboard, losing his glasses and ruining his cell phone. It was one unforgettable experience.

Meanwhile, Thursday afternoon Dr. Sacra and his wife Debbie graciously took the rest of us on a tour of Monrovia—which included ACS, Broad Street, the Dukor (overrun with filth and squatters and even two monkeys), shopping for V rings, and the beautiful new Abijoudi's grocery store. The city has no electricity, so no traffic lights, no running water or sewage, and about 1,000,000 more people. Judy and Sally were stopped on the street and interviewed by a reporter from Sky News about their impressions of Liberia and hopes for a brighter future. The city was a hive of activity, as much painting and repair work was being done to prepare the town for the inauguration in four days. That night the guys made a huge bonfire, and we made s'mores with the MK teenagers.

Friday morning Nancy went to Isaac David School in Paynesville to see Christine Norman and look over the current bookkeeping system that had been set up by her new bookkeeper. The rest of the group spent the morning running the PE classes for about 200 ELWA Academy students on the Electron soccer "field," providing them with new equipment and soccer shirts, and then went back to the ocean by Fanti fishermen to snorkel and try to find Dr. McFadden's glasses. After about 45 minutes of searching and prayer, Matt found them nestled in the reef.

Nancy's husband, Jim, worked pretty much all week on trying to get the larger generator going. We're told that it is now up and running. Friday afternoon we got a tour of our old house. Augustine, who is in charge of the services department, lives there with his family and has done much repair. During the war, rebels stayed there and even built a cooking fire in the living room. Bill rented a small Fanti canoe that we took turns paddling in front of the guest house. That evening we enjoyed going to the Choi's home for dinner at the SIM headquarters in Congotown. Later on that night, Meanu spotted a crocodile down by the dam, so that was pretty exciting as we all used spotlights and saw the crocodile splash back into the lagoon. Matt, Ryan Moore, Jim, Meanu, Bill, Brian, and Katie took turns in the Fanti canoe paddling to the far end of the lagoon looking for crocodiles. David Troko and his wife Velma even joined the fun (they had arrived to attend the inauguration). Velma



ELWA guesthouse

regaled us with stories of her adventures in Monrovia being mistaken for President Johnson-Sirleaf—she looks so much like her!

Saturday morning Bill went with Dr. McFadden to buy supplies (garden tools, etc.) for Phebe Grey Orphanage and the rest of us spent time on the beach. Judy swam out to the big rock in front of our house, slipped, and got some sea urchin spines in the side of her shin, reliving another childhood memory. We also ran into Jack and Nell Chichen while walking on the beach. They are working on getting the Bible school going again and even met with President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf that week.

We continued all week to visit with old friends like Mary, Allison and Sally Ricks, Steven Thompson Gibson and his family, Justin Tokeh Sr., Justin Tokeh Jr., David (Jackson) Goffa, Ben Manuel, Sam Zogah's daughters Sankay and Tina, Edith Ware and her daughter Barbara, and others. Many of our old friends blessed us by bringing country chop almost every day—collards, potato greens, cassava leaf, and palm butter. YUM! There were numerous soccer games on the beach, new friends made, and "Charlies" selling their wares almost every day on our porch. We had clothes, books, crayons, toys, and hard candy that we gave each of our visitors. Each night, the "boys" went fishing until the wee hours, giving most of their catch away.

Judy and Crystal visited the Suzie Guenter Orphanage on Saturday afternoon and took gifts to them. (We didn't have enough transportation for everyone to go). Later, Sally, Judy, Meanu and Crystal strolled down towards the Devil Bush, taking pictures of the houses. Most are now occupied by NGOs like the UN and Samaritan's Purse; some were rocketed in the war; and the rest badly need a lot of repair. Saturday evening Bill "borrowed"

a motorcycle from the Tamba's and gave many of us rides around the station right around sunset. We then enjoyed a smorgasbord of Liberian food that friends had brought us—hot dogs, fried cassava, and fried plantain, and the best paw paw and pineapple in the world, which we shared with Dr. McFadden, the Sacras, Naomi, and the Gomiah kids (their dad is in the States and their mom was sick with malaria the week we were there, so the kids spent a lot of time with us).

Sunday morning early, Matt climbed the new 340' tower and took pictures from almost every angle, and then we attended the International Church of Monrovia that meets in the building next to the gym. The choir and band were amazing, and the pastor (**Eunice Balzer Zemeck** and her husband John led this former Muslim to the Lord) gave a wonderful message, "You cannot hide from God." We took one last swim after a quick sandwich at lunch, then said our goodbyes and headed for the airport around 3 p.m. We were all pretty exhausted and had faced some challenges like fire ants, no fridge or kitchen in the guest house, living in a construction zone, lost luggage, stolen shoes, eight rogues lying in wait in the bush, very limited transportation, and an allergic reaction. We were so grateful that we had an opportunity to return home, to let our Liberian friends know that they are not forgotten, and to be able to serve them in whatever small way we could. The needs are so great, especially for daily necessities and Bibles (they especially want KJV); and we would encourage others to pray about how they can serve their old friends—whether in person, financially, with prayer support, or sending supplies. We are immensely thankful for a week full of so many wonderful experiences that God had given us. We can't wait to return, the Lord willing.

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Return to Home



Changes at ELWA *By Judy (Thompson) Koci*

It was finally happening . . . after 27 years I was returning home—to Liberia, to old friends, to ELWA, to the beach. And I wondered, would it still feel like home? Would we be remembered? What long-dormant memories would be triggered? And what would the country be like after a 14-year-old civil war, some of it fought right on the radio compound?

Arriving late at night, the road from the airport was pitch black, with an occasional dim kerosene light showing through a hut or a shack. No electricity in the whole country—no traffic lights, no air conditioning, no running water, no sewer, except for the few with generators. Remnants of the war were everywhere—bullet holes and bombed-out buildings with squatters living in them.

Daylight revealed more changes. The studio building and several houses were gone, rocketed, and destroyed. Buildings left standing were mildewed and decayed. Fields needed mowing (no tractor) and roads needed grading. The bush was overgrown (providing cover for the many rogues); security wall topped with broken bottles and razor wire surrounding the school, hospital, and studio; bullet holes telling the stories. Military check points and UN presence was everywhere, even at ELWA. Each time a UN helicopter flew over us, I was startled. There were huge termite hills everywhere, and tiny pesky fire ants had moved in everywhere, attracted by the deaths at the station we were told. The graceful palms were all gone, cut down for food. Rogues were a huge and growing problem. “Don’t stay in Monrovia after 5:00 p.m.,” we were repeatedly warned.

And yet, there was a hum of activity and anticipation of better things to come. Road repairs and painting projects were preparing for the Inauguration. Lack of running water created entrepreneurs selling bottled water. No electricity, but everyone seemed to have cell phones! And Internet cafes were all over the place!

Everyone had a harrowing story of loss and survival, and yet they had tremendous joy and faith and trust in God. Most people were barely



Sal and Bill on cycle



ELWA beach



ELWA big rock from lagoon

existing, and yet they generously cooked and brought food for us every day. There were orphans and orphanages everywhere, and I was struck by the love and care of the staff at Phebe

Grey and Susie Guenter orphanages. A Ghanaian houseparent, Edmund, told of four three-year-olds who had just been transferred from another orphanage that had closed, and how they cried all day, everyday, for two weeks. He said that he slept every night with all four wrapped in his arms to comfort them.

Time after time, I was overcome with emotions of loss that I had long buried. I had no idea of just how much I had missed this place and deeply regretted having to leave. There was tremendous grief for what our friends and the country had had to endure.

I sat, trying to understand the emotional rollercoaster, and I found myself looking at the big rock in front of our old house—the rock whose 30-year-old picture is on my screen saver. It was exactly the same; it had not changed a bit. “Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer. From the ends of the earth will I cry unto You. When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” Psalm 61 immediately came to my mind. Yes, God, You haven’t changed!

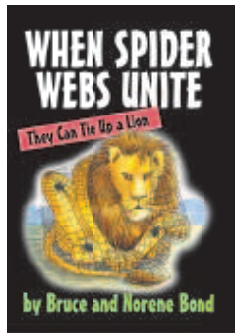
“I wait quietly before God, for my hope is in Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honor come from God alone. He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me. O my people, trust in Him at all times. Pour out your heart to Him, for God is our refuge.” (Psalm 62: 5-8) Encouraged, I looked further. “Do not tremble; do not be afraid. Have I not proclaimed from ages past what my purposes are for you? You are my witnesses—is there any other God? No! There is no other Rock—not one!” (Isa. 44:8)

This was the perspective I needed! This was the truth that sustained the Liberians. Our worlds will always be buffeted by changes, but we must keep our focus on Him! The rest of the visit I was able to look at the changes through a new lens. “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and FOREVER!” (Heb. 13:8) Amen!
(jlkoci@yahoo.com)

Books & Media

When Spider Webs Unite, They Can Tie Up a Lion

Bruce & Norene Bond (parents of BA MKs Stephen, David, Rebecca, and Philip) have written a fascinating book about their experiences in Ethiopia. They have taken an Ethiopian proverb as the title. The idea is that they were both rather like flimsy spider webs, but with the Lord's help they were able to "tie up some lions"! Lyn Reid (now Ross), who worked in Ethiopia for a few years has ably done the artwork for the cover. The book costs \$20 US (+ postage), and can be ordered from the Bonds at bondbn@xtra.co.nz or 26 McLeod Road, RD 1, Helensville, New Zealand. The postage cost is quite high from N.Z., but they will try to send via Charlotte when possible.



God's Hand on Me!

This autobiography of **Ted Veer** (BA Staff) was published in 2005. His kids (Philip, Gary, Ken, Mark, and Terry) all attended BA. Ted says, "As a testimony to the grace of God in my life I have written my life's story, primarily for my grandchildren but for anyone who will glorify the Lord with me for all He has done for me."

Cost is: \$18 plus \$1.84 US for postage. It can be ordered from Ted Veer at 635 Michael Rd, Newton KS 67114. Ph: (316) 283-5452
E-mail: tedveer@sbcglobal.net

God's Pathways in Africa: Adventures of a Pioneering Family

By *Gottfried Schalm*

Here's another exciting book by one of our SIM missionaries. **Gottfried & Christa Schalm** are parents of MKs Markus, Michael, Dorothea, Annegret, and Christina. In *God's Pathways*, Schalm recalls his life as a Polish man who served in Hitler's army, who found Christ during his 3½ years in a POW camp, and how in 1955 he became a missionary in Northern Nigeria. You'll read fascinating accounts of the early years establishing a

church in the remote village of Adunu and find first-hand testimony of God's redemption story over the years.

Having grown up in "the bush" in Nigeria, I connected strongly with Mr. Schalm's vivid descriptions of village life and native worship experiences. I was delighted to ready many Hausa words sprinkled liberally throughout. I remember attending school with several of his six children; I knew his references to KA, furlough, and Miango Rest Home. You can take the MK or missionary out of Africa, but you can't take Africa out of the heart. You'll want your own copy of this book if Africa is in your heart!

Reviewed by Karen Keegan

Cost: \$10-\$13 depending on shipping. You may order the book through the Schalms at 210-223 Tuscany Springs Blvd NW, Calgary, AB T3L 2M2, Canada.

E-mail: gschalm@telusplanet.net

Too Small to Ignore

By *Dr. Wess Stafford, President and CEO of Compassion International*
Co-authored with *Dean Merrill*

"The leader of Compassion International shares his inspiring boyhood adventures growing up in an African village and challenges us to change the world—one child at a time." So says the promo on the back cover of this powerful story. Unashamedly, this author tells his story of abuse at the hands of cruel staff members at the mission boarding school he attended. But it's not a story of defeat; it's a story of God's grace in the life of one man who chose to face his pain and use his position to champion the cause of children and poverty around the world. Our MK readers will identify strongly with Wess's world view. Stafford has a gift for story-telling, and I enjoyed his childhood memories of life in a rural village and especially his reentry story when he returned to the USA.

Reviewed by Karen Keegan

Go to <http://www.toosmalltoignore.com/> to order your copy today. Or read excerpts and listen to audio versions of the book online.

Just One SIMAIR Story

By *Richard Schaffer*

Chapter 34, "Lassa Fever!" is now available by e-mail.
randm@open.org

FROM THE ARCHIVES



1968, John Hagen and Esther Bonk

KA Fire and Robbery

Jim & Linda (Glerum) Crouch
(KA, HC '63, '69, Staff)

Sunday morning, Oct. 13, 2005, KA suffered a fire and the total loss of a staff home (formerly Mrs. Hodge's house). It was the Crouch's home for the first 9 years of their marriage and more recently home to Celina & Sampson Agomoh, 2 KA staff members. We praise God no one was hurt.

Armed robbers entered the Miango compound at 1:45 a.m. Sat., Nov. 19, 2005. Gun shots fired into the guard's house woke the compound to the problem but did no harm. The guard's clever excuses directed the 7 thieves away from staff homes. The KA office and safe were forced open and several items were taken. Mobile phones helped confirm the safety of KA staff, kids, and missionaries and alerted the community for needed help. The Guest House manager, Jamie Newson, was unhurt but forced to give money, a laptop computer, and phone. Thieves escaped on foot despite the compound being surrounded by 300+ Miango community men. Several staff men and the police spent the morning following villagers' leads and searching for the thieves. By noon the 18-23-year-old thieves, exhausted from running, were finally caught. We praise God for His merciful protection and peace during yet another storm. (crouch.jim@gmail.com)

BULLETIN BOARD

Joseph House Ministries

Providing a transition home for young adult MKs

JHM has had a very warm and close association with SIM since its inception. The late Carol Lee Blaschke, Ruth Gibbs, and I founded JHM in 1998; and, over the years, several of our board of directors have been SIM AMKs. We have also had SIM MKs with us in the past, and we have one with us now—Russell Moore from Niger.

Check out our Web site at www.mkstay.org. From this page, you can access a short PowerPoint explanation of our purpose and ministry. Our brochure is also available online. You can also access our reader-friendly prayer letters to see up-to-date photos of our MKs and get a better idea of our ministry approach.

Dedria Davis-Tidwell (SA, EL Staff)
655 Smythe Road
Fort Mill, SC 29715
803-548-3528
onthehouse@juno.com

Dakar Academy

Dakar Academy is looking for a director and many teachers for next year. If you are interested in ministering to TCKs (missionary kids, embassy kids, business kids, etc), an overseas adventure, and offering your gifts and skills as a teacher, please contact the school.

www.dakar-academy.org

Camp Youth Alive

Claudia Long (HC staff), ECWA Camp Youth Alive. The ministry is growing. We are building a campsite just outside of Jos in Shere Hills, and it is 45% developed. I'm recruiting for "camping missionary leadership." The field is wide open in Nigeria for youth ministry! We also need help for the project of scholarship campers for 2006, and campsite development needs such as bunk beds (\$350/bunk). Perhaps you'd like to come out as a team and help develop the site. Contact me! (campclaudia608@gmail.com)

IN MEMORY OF ...

David Munting sent \$100.00 to *Simroots* in memory of **Ralph Olson (KA, HC '67)**, MK classmate and full-time Christian worker before his untimely death.

Paul VanderSchie, Hope Leyen, and Joy Miller sent a donation of \$200 in honor of their mother, **Phyllis VanderSchie**, who will be 96 years old this spring.

Bingham Academy

Bingham is in urgent need of teachers and administrators for next year—a director, secondary principal, elementary principal, recruitment officer, athletics director, home school coordinator, special needs teacher, and teachers for all grades in PE, art, music, and computers. They need high school teachers for business, English, French, Bible, math, economics, psychology, science (chemistry, physics), and social studies; and they need 4 elementary teachers. Anyone interested may contact Bingham Academy for information on the school and how to apply to SIM.

Write to: principal@binghamacademy.net
or SIMPersonnel@yimesgin.org

ON THE WEB

Bingham Academy LAC Theme Song
Want to hear the music?

<http://opc.org/books/TH/old/Blue695.html>

RVA's Updated Web Site
Check it out!

www.riftvalleyacademy.com

Hillcrest's New Web Site

Write to: Joynel Luster at:

Joynel.Luster@ecolab.com or

AlumniRelations@hillcrestalum.org

Moving?

This site has plenty of resources for promoting the welfare of relocating families everywhere.

www.branchor.com/index.htm

Reentry Seminars

SIM encourages high school graduates to attend one of the MK re-entry seminars. If you'd like to help an MK with expenses, write to Helen.Inman@sim.org.

Missionary Resources Connection
PO Box 11171, Columbia, SC 29211
www.mresourcesconnection.org

Narramore/Barnabas MK/TCK Re-entry Retreat

August 7-15, 2006

Total cost = \$350

www.barnabas.org

MK Reentry Training Seminar
Biola University, CA

June 27-July 8 and July 11-22

\$275 non-refundable registration

Interaction International TCK Transition Seminars

Niagra Bible Conference, NY

July 22-28, 2006

Golden Bell, Colorado Springs, CO

August 5-11, 2006

Total cost = \$350

www.tckinteract.net

Need a Home Away from Home?

For missionaries and MKs

I recently bought my first home—a wonderful, old, redesigned schoolhouse in Zeeland, MI (south of Grand Rapids). I have 3 extra bedrooms, a pastoral setting, and the time to BE and listen to any lost and lonely MKs—even missionaries. I have 2 that come visit already.

Clara (Grant) Brower (GH, KA, HC '58)
7895 Adams Street
Zeeland, MI 49464-9363
616-688-7356

Open Dialogue

My Christian Experience

By Laci Beacham (HC '05)

I am a fourth generation Beacham in West Africa. My parents* are teachers at the international school, Hillcrest. I was born in Evangel Hospital, Jos, Nigeria, in 1986. Being raised in a foreign country has had an immense impact on me, especially spiritually. It has been a privilege to witness the God of Africa, and even more so to see that He is big enough to be the God of America, too, and surround the home I have made of both countries. My mission is nondenominational, and having never really belonged to any one church, my faith has been shaped mostly by experience and the Bible. My parents always encouraged me to examine and read the Bible for myself, to “make my faith my own” (to use the Christian cliché). This has happened through my experiences and, I must say, mostly my losses. However, if I were to point to one experience that really pictures my maturing faith, it would have to be rappelling with my dad.

There is a rock just outside of Miango village, to the left of Indian Rock, that stretches up 150 feet in a slight up-side-down “L” shape. It is about a quarter of a mile hike to the foot of the rock from the road. The trail winds ruggedly through dried, dusty corn rows. Once at the foot you must begin the steep climb up the side of the rock. The scratchy, brown bushes that had been pushing in from every side fall away as you are forced to crawl up the rough granite. The last task you must accomplish to get on top of the rock is to jump a 3-foot crevice that drops the 150 feet you just climbed. The experienced and first timers are now separated.

The experienced know how easy that three-foot jump is if you just get yourself to take the first step, so without pausing they cover the distance in one long stride. The first timers, however, stop in their tracks and teeter forebodingly over the precipice. They get distracted by the bottomless drop and fail to realize that the other side is reachable with just one step. While rooted to my spot, I remember my first time, watching my six-foot-six father walk across the chasm. My dad held out his hand, told me to look him in the eyes, and said he would pull me across. For a split second I hesitated. It was, after all, a long way down; but then I finally looked up at my dad and jumped into his outstretched arms. This is my first point about my Christian experience—that moment of jumping into Jesus’ arms and deciding that where we were was not as good as it can get. After it is all

said and done, it is not as scary as we thought, though it can take a lot of pain of self-sacrifice to get there. We must abandon everything. Once on the other side, I could see for miles into the haze of the Nigerian harmattan out across the farms and villages nestled in spectacular granite rock formations. How could I have been satisfied on the other side? But the adventure wasn’t over yet.

While I had been enjoying the view of that dry, crisp day, my father had been securing the ropes to a boulder that sat lumpily at the top of the rock. Now it was time for the descent. We attached the two ropes to our respective eight rings that, in turn, were attached to the D rings. My hands shook as I slid them into the stiff, old gloves. My dad could tell I was scared, and he put his hand on my back to comfort me. “Now lean back,” he instructed calmly. I looked up at him with an expression that clearly read, “Are you on crack? You think I am going to lean back over a 150-foot vertical drop?”

“Lace, trust me. These ropes will hold you; and if you get tired, I will hold your rope to give you a break.” Slowly following his example, I leaned back. The rope held so tightly I had to push hard against the rock just to move. The feeling was very reassuring. Dad and I made our way down the rock like a herd of turtles. I begged for a break every five steps, but I had to admit I was beginning to enjoy the experience the more time passed and I didn’t fall to a gruesome death. I was amazed how weak I had made the ropes out to be in my mind, but how once I had put my trust in them they proved to be stronger than I could have imagined. The experience humbled me and the flimsy faith that I put in the God of this universe, who is far beyond my imagination. Things were starting to go really well; then halfway down, my rope began to sway.

I looked down to see that my dad, maybe four feet below me, had taken hold of my rope and was shaking it vigorously with absolutely no warning. Terrified, I screamed at him to stop—that I was scared—but he didn’t. I was gripping my rope so hard that my hands hurt; I felt on the verge of tears. At that point Dad told me calmly, and with a slight smile on his face, that he was holding me. When he had finished shaking my rope, we continued down the rock and reached the bottom. My relief to be alive was abated by my anger at my dad for scaring

me so badly, without any reason. It wasn’t until one of the watchers at the bottom told me that my rope had been tangled—and had my dad not fixed it when he did, it could have caused some serious problems—that I realized what had really happened. I was shocked at myself, at how quickly I had blamed my father and hadn’t taken the time to look at the big picture. I do this a lot with God. There are many things in my life that scare me so bad sometimes all I can do is hold on to my rope for dear life and cry, but in those times God whispers to us ever so quietly that He is holding us. That day on the rock with my dad reminds me that on those days I feel God is playing with me, allowing me to hurt and be scared, that even if I don’t know it now, God has a plan. He may never tell me, and in some ways I might not even want to know, but I do know that He is in control, and I did reach the bottom safely.

(jostowngirl@hotmail.com)

*Laci’s father, Steve, went home to be with the Lord on March 17, 2005.

Hillcrest School Gymnasium

Hillcrest would like to build a 4,635-square-foot athletic facility that would be attached to the side of the current gymnasium. It would be completely covered by a roof but only partially enclosed on the sides and ends. It would include two multipurpose courts (basketball, volleyball, tennis), two locker rooms, two restrooms, bleachers for seating, and various storage areas.

The current physical education facility is too small for the PE classes and other athletic events and programs. Also, the roof leaks, so during the rainy season it is impossible to conduct classes and programs in this building. This new facility would provide the opportunity to reach out to the community through evangelistic sporting events and other school social events.

In loving memory, the new gym will be named after **Steve Beacham**, beloved Hillcrest coach/teacher.

If you would like to contribute to this need, send your contributions to SIM, PO Box 7900, Charlotte, NC 28241. Project #NG 96510 Contact: Ramel.Dixon@sim.org

REMEMBER WHEN



Fourth of July

By Tabitha (Payne) Plueddemann (KA, HC '92)

My most vivid memory of celebrating the Fourth of July in Nigeria is this freeze-frame image of being about six years old and standing opposite the glamorous wife of the U.S. Ambassador, a toilet between us. We are staring into it together. “The Star-Spangled Banner” ricochets off the walls with chest-swelling sweetness and strength. Between us is a distance measured by the span of the porcelain throne which I have just used. Or, the distance is so far that I won’t be able to map it out for several years. How I came to be staring into the loo with the Ambassador’s wife on Independence Day goes something like this:

I live in Kano, which is a teeming metropolis dangling like a cracked, brown bead from the hem of the Sahara Desert. The city waterworks, installed by the British decades ago, has become horribly inadequate; and water is as precious as, literally, suitcases of banknotes. My family collects city water in a tank outside our kitchen when there is pressure during the middle of the night. My mother is a formidable water recycler: she squirts enough chlorine into filtered tap water to make our eyes sting. Then she scrubs the vegetables. Next the water is used to wash some pots and pans. Once the liquid is quite murky, it’s perfect for washing something terribly filthy, for example the bicycle. Last and definitively least: flush the loo.

Because we cannot enjoy regular flushings, we use this fabulous British product called “Water Boy” which comes in an aerosol can and which you spray into the toilet bowl. It foams up like shaving cream and floats over the mess, masking the stench and covering a day’s worth of the family’s various digestive activities. Only it never quite masks the scent, which is why my mother also keeps lilac Glade on hand (*Created by Nature; Captured by Glade!*).

Well, it is Fourth of July, and the American Ambassador from Lagos has come to town to throw an all-American, hot-dogs-with-real-French-mustard-on-them sort of event. Every local Yankee is invited. The SIM Kano compound takes enthusiastic bucket baths at the end of the workday and packs into their convoy of Peugeot 504s, honking their way through the late afternoon heat that shimmers off the roads.

At the place which the Ambassador has rented for this event, I discover punch: mouth-puckeringly tart, sweet, fizzy, fruity,

pulp-riddled punch. It’s fabulous. I drink lots and lots of it, kneeling at the Ethan Allen coffee table all by myself and letting this fizzy carnival detonate in my mouth. “God Bless America” swells around me with very un-Kano-like images of “oceans white with foam.” I note that the punch also has foam. A deep feeling comes to me that patriotism might be just the sort of warm and satisfying thing I could handle more often.

In this way I finish one clear plastic glass after another, ending with the equally absorbing ritual of crunching these square, paper-thin ice cubes which I have never seen before. Eventually the inundation of punch must find an exit and I look for a bathroom. A Nigerian steward dressed in a smashing white uniform points me in the direction of the facilities, which I soon use, staring with a look of relief at the ceiling. Shortly thereafter, I am trotting back down the hallway towards the big room where the punch bowl lives. “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory” marches fittingly out of some hidden speakers. This is when Mrs. American Ambassador appears.

I have been stealing glances at her all evening from an awed distance. Her brunette bob bounces like the hair in American shampoo commercials—in slow motion and silky, full of sparkles and rippling with molasses-like luxury. Dangly earrings shimmer inside her hair like strings of mini ice-cubes. Her nails are un-Christianly long and downright paganly red. Her heels make clickity-clip noises on the floor.

She says, “Sweetheart, were you able to flush? That handle is just a *leeette* tricky.”

I say jocularly, “Oh my, no! I sure *didn’t* flush.” I smile expansively while a look which I cannot interpret shadows her face. Her eyes shrink; she peers into the middle distance. I sense intuitively that a little more explanation may be in order.

I *tinkled*,” I add helpfully.

“Let’s just have us a little look.” She says this as if we are pals. But I feel unbelievably. Why would I lie about *that*?

I trot beside her back down the hallway. Clickity-clip go her heels.

We enter the bathroom, and that is how I arrive at the image I told you—the two of us staring into the loo. It’s yellow: I am vindicated. The Star-Spangled Banner thunders in proud crescendos; and I, too, am proud that the

beautiful lady knows that *this* girl is not up to any tricks around here. (*what so proudly we hailed, at the twilight’s . . .*)

“I didn’t even use loo paper!” I point out cheerfully, pleased that I had been unable to locate any Water Boy to cover what is now useful evidence. (*O’er the ramparts we watched . . .*)

“Look, Sweetie, just jiggle it like this.” She reaches for the handle with her pagan-lady fingers. (. . . *the bombs bursting in air!*) Just as all that precious water swirls into the bowl, I exclaim, “I say we let at least five or six *more* missionaries use the toilet before you flush it!”
(Tabitha.Plueddemann@sim.org)

KA Memories

By Burness (Kampen) Goertz
(KA staff)

Ann Driesbach was not eating her lunch one day, so I asked her if she did not feel well. She replied, “I am allergic.” I asked her what that meant. She replied, “It means I do not like it!”

One time the children were lined up to go into the classroom. We had the **Van Lierop** family with three children. They had a daughter (**Muriel** is now a doctor working in Canada) and two sons. The youngest was **John**. As they were waiting, John said, “Last night I promised the Lord I would never drink liquids.” Immediately one of the girls said, “You do not mean liquids; you mean liquor.” He replied, “Whatever I said, I meant liquor!”

(samg@mni.net)

Food Memory

Lynn (Pomeroy) Mullins (AEF '85)

Iremember when I was around 6 or 7, trying to force myself to choke down rice balls and Marmite, just so I could have rice balls and ketchup! I absolutely hated Marmite, and each time we were served that meal, I could hardly stand it. But this one time, I was determined to eat it all, just for some ketchup!

(lynn_mullins@yahoo.com)

RECONNECTING

Gowans Home Reunion 2005

By Peggy Jensen Pieper

The Gowans Home reunion was held at Blue Mountain, Collingwood, Ontario, at the end of September. We were pleased to reunite with our former “family” members at this beautiful and special place. **Harold Whitehead** led us in our introductions and catching-up time. Sometimes it seemed like just yesterday that we were children and young people here. A highlight of our reunion was revisiting 200 Oak Street which is now the National Ski Academy. What memories this brought back! We remembered sliding down the banister, Christmas morning with all its wonder, **Miss Kaercher** presiding over our meals and devotions, the hockey rink. At the banquet we were regaled by messages given by **Gowan Thamer, Jim Whitehead, Grant Millar** and **Gerald Hunt**. Touching and funny memories were brought also by “almost Gowans Homers” and spouses Alex McCombie, Vern Thompson, Bill Carey. A real treat was hearing “Remembering Tornaveen” (which was the lovely old mansion that became the Gowans Home) written and presented by **Ruth (Jensen) Whitehead**. We concluded our reunion with a Sunday morning service with **Mike Harling** leading us in singing many of our beloved hymns, accompanied by **Ruth (Collins) McCombie**. **Bob Foster** brought us a stirring message that was both inspirational and insightful. How true that the Lord has been good to us. We were pleased to be joined by staff member **Mrs. Helen Thompson**, as well as Collingwood resident and “Mother to us all” **Martha (McDonald) Baird**. Our scattered Gowans Home family came from British Columbia, California, North Carolina, Ontario, Michigan, and Illinois. This was a heart-warming time for us with much reminiscing and recalling our days when we were a family together. We’ll never forget our final hymn “God Be with You Till We Meet Again.”

(budpeg@cox.net)



Gerald Hunt and
Martha (McDonald) Baird



Esther Collins
McGibbon



Doug & Carolyn (Saul) Carter

By Kathrine & Gerald Hunt
(1936-'39)

The ever-enlarging facilities of the Blue Mountain Resort where we met stand in contrast to the venerable old mansion in nearby Collingwood, Ontario, where dozens of kids found a childhood family in Christ. Quite a few have gone home to heaven, the latest



Ruth (Jensen)
Whitehead



Betty (Dancy) Thompson

being **Paul Garrett**—a great loss to all of us. Very few remember when **Frank and Walter Rice** strapped on barrel staves and pioneered skiing in this ski center. Gowans Home is now the National Ski Academy offices. The family, gathered at reunions about five years apart, gets smaller each time; but this one was especially warm, loving, and great fun. With a real grasp



On the steps of Gowans Home

Top left: Ray Harling, Don Rough, David Helser, Sylvia Helser,
Esther (Collins) McGibbon

Next row: Gerald Hunt, Vern Thompson, Grant Millar, Gowan Thamer,
Jean Thamer, Betty (Dancy) Thompson

Next row: Betty (Chenault) Harling, Carolyn (Thamer) Repko, Denny Repko,
Gladys (Dancy) Carey

Next row: Ruth (Jensen) Whitehead, Harold Whitehead, Peggy (Jensen) Pieper
Bottom row: Ruth (Collins) McCombie, Lois (Harris) Gilliland



Bob & Belva Foster, Kathy & Gerald Hunt



Alex & Ruth (Collins) McCombie, Lois (Harris) & Dean Gilliland



Betty (Chenault) Harling, Bob Morris



Vern Thompson, Peggy (Jensen) Pieper



Jim & Eva Whitehead

of the magic (oops, divine guidance and hard work) involved in a reunion, the Jensen sisters (**Ruth Whitehead** and **Peggy Pieper**) and their husbands triggered the event by remote from California. **Gowan** and **Jean Thamer** welcomed us. **Vern Thompson** exuded cordiality and **Mike Harling** followed us with his camera. **Ruth (Collins)** and **Dr. Alex McCombie**, **Harold Whitehead**, **Gerald Hunt** (who led us impromptu in “Jesu fe mi”) and others shared testimonials. On Sunday **Dr. Bob Foster** reached into his rich experience as he spoke at morning worship.

We had sibling power. Along with Jensen sisters and Whitehead brothers there were **Gladys** and **Betty Dancy**, **Bob** and **Wally Morris**, the **Harris** and **Harlings** and everybody’s big sister, **Martha (McDonald) Baird**, who has always lived in Collingwood. With each era of GH reporting and updates of our lives to the present, we were hearing about 70 years of mission family history woven into the life of Collingwood and the work of our Lord. Funny how you can pick up where you left off with any of the GH crowd. Traditionally, we have used Saturday to roam through the old home at 200 Oak Street where a meal awaited us, prepared and graciously served by **Becky Vogel** of the Ski Academy. In the autumn afternoon the sun danced on the leaves of the old walnut, oak, and chestnut trees. Some things don’t change, like God’s watch care through the years. (g.khunt@sympatico.ca)

To view some photos:

<http://community.webshots.com/user/rvssimgh2005>

To view private photos online, write to Russ at russel_schmidt@hotmail.com

Sebring MK Reunion

Submitted by *Jeanette Silver*
(KA staff)

The annual MK reception was small but meaningful—57 adults and 6 children. The 6 were all from one Indian family. Their mother **Sairah Alexander** (and a brother and sister) was at KA for many years. When the mike was passed around for each one to introduce him/herself, Sairah mentioned how her years at KA had helped her. She said she is trying to raise her children by the principles she learned there—i.e. you are 6 years old, you can make your own bed and keep your room tidy, etc. There were a few MKs there that had never been before—two **Custers**, **John Dubisz**, and **Cynthia (Rutt) Jenkins**. Two teachers from Ethiopia represented that side of the continent. No one was from ELWA. McQuaid represented South America. Most everyone was from West Africa.

John Price was MC. Anne Ockers read a funny poem. Andy McQuaid read about a Noel program in Irian Jaya, and **Beth Ockers** and **Carole Rutt** did a skit. Both turned out to be good actresses. Cynthia Jenkins’ husband and daughter played a lovely guitar duet.

In the ’70s and ’80s KA gave t-shirts to those who had memorized the Bible verses and could quote them all correctly at the end of the year. The blue logo on the white t-shirt said “Happiness is KA.” I had cut that from a shirt and framed it. We decided to let it go in a silent auction and send the money to *Simroots*. Guess who won? Sairah! She had won t-shirts during her stay at KA, but had worn them out. She was delighted to see the framed logo, so bid high in order to be sure to get it. (jsilver@tmi.net)

RECONNECTING

Stocking Night 2005

Submitted by Cherry (Long) Sabathne (KA, HC '69)

What a good idea! Why hadn't anyone thought of this before? As **Laura Hershelman** told me her idea, a smile crossed my face. Laura had been planning for several years to have a Stocking Night in the old KA tradition, only this time it would be for KA alum from her general era living in the Charlotte, NC, area. It was a gathering to remember!

She stitched a stocking for each person with his/her name on it and stuffed it with various trinkets, including Trebor mints fresh out of Nigeria. Her father built a wooden "fireplace," and they hung the stockings to make a festive setting.

Approximately 100 people from "the day," including several staff members, arrived in anticipation of a pleasurable Christmas celebration. After a time of discovering old friends and greeting each other, we gathered to sing Christmas carols. Then **Mrs. Phillips** read us a story—quite unlike the ones she used to tell! We laughed hysterically at Max Lucado's description of a woman skier in a white ski suit who "couldn't wait" to go to the bathroom and ended up in the emergency room! **Mr. Phillips** led a short time of worship, and the staff helped pass out the stockings. Finally, we adjourned to a delicious Nigerian meal.

With some help from a few friends, Laura made three savory Nigerian rice and sauce meals and *kosai*—delicious! The next hours flew by with visiting old friends, catching up on their whereabouts, and reminiscing. Stories floated around the room that could fill a book!

Mr. Phillips' rendition of the baboon encounter during the room contest outing was every bit as riveting as my brother **Rollie's**! But Mr. Phillips remembered Rollie's comment when they returned to campus—"We had an adventure!" Mr. Phillips pointedly declared that was not the word he would have used!

All in all, we had a wonderful time of revisiting, celebrating, and facing closure. Laura, it was brilliant! Thank you for providing a Stocking Night to remember!

(sabathne@bellsouth.net)



Jack & Dorothy Phillips



Christmas at KA c. 1962. Herr photo)



Staff: Edna Robfogel, Esther & Bill O'Donovan, Ruth Gibbs, Jeff Gibbs, Joy Beacham, Jack & Dorothy Phillips, and Jim Knowlton in the back.



MKs: 1 Mark Sheppard, 2 Todd Sheppard, 3 Cherry (Long) Sabathne, 4 Beth (Lochstampfor) Patteson, 5 Steve Gibbs, 6 George Cail, (hidden) Debb Forster, 7 Paul Forster 8 Greg Gibbs 9 Rick Custer 10 Jeff Gibbs 11 Bob Blaschke, Jr. 12 Joy Beacham 13 Stephen Blaschke 14 Carolyn (Cail) Estep 15 Nancy (Beacham) Stilwell 16 Kent Botheras 17 Susan (Lochstampfor) Smith 18 Jim Knowlton 19 Tabitha (Payne) Plueddemann 20 Eleanor Callister 21 Heidi (Zobrist) Guzman 22 Kathy (Custer) Hocking 23 Charlene (Hide) Blaschke 24 Heather (Gibbs) Haase 25 Dave Harling 26 Laura Hershelman 27 Brenda (Adams) Sheppard 28 Scott Sheppard 29 Lisa Crouch, 30 Dan Crouch, 31 Esther O'Donovan, 32 Dave Crouch, 33 Lance Long


 RECONNECTING

Reunion at Kent Academy, March 2-5, 2006

By Linda Crouch

In 1946 Paul Craig built housing for Nigerian staff, a kitchen and laundry, a dining room, and two small classrooms. Five children arrived on July 30, 1946, for a 3-month trial run. Miango Rest Home provided two cottages. Olive Thrones was the first teacher. On October 29, 1946, Paul married Gerry Yost. Zeb and Irene Zabriskie joined the staff in January 1947. Kent Academy officially opened on January 15, 1947, with fourteen students. Irene managed the kitchen and laundry. Gerry and Zeb taught the children while Paul managed the KA compound and building projects. By May of 1947 everyone was moved into the first dorm, and KA was truly well underway!

We praise God for KA's 60th Anniversary celebrations that were held at Miango last weekend. Despite the fact that the planning committee had many details that were last-minute, we believe God was truly honored through our time together.

Maybe due to the many date changes along the way from the planning committee, together with bird-flu scares, travel difficulties, visa problems, religious tension . . . there were just a few who came from out of the country. However, the ones who came had a great time with the over 150 who came from within Nigeria. The **Rendel** clan, who were all hoping to come, decided time was too short to make it down to Miango and ended up just traveling to their station in Northern Nigeria, Andari, before returning to Niamey for more time with Jim and Sandy and Scott. **Steve Wright** had arrived in Lagos earlier and visited Nigerian friends in various places his family had lived and worked. He enjoyed his time immensely! Coming to Jos and connecting with **Sue and Terry Hammack** and then on to Miango with us and staying at MRH offered him the freedom to explore the countryside and Kent Academy again and build some special relationships too. He enjoyed the contacts and visits with Nigerians on KA staff and among the alumni who were small businessmen like him. **Lillian (Power) Raymer** and her husband and grandson were able to attend part of the celebrations too. They had come earlier to work on projects at the widows' training school in Samaru where former KA staff, **Donna and Cheryl Pridham** work. A special highlight was the coming of **Lura Bodwell** from the SIM retirement village in Florida. She had taught 1st grade at KA for 16

years and found her way back into the classroom the day after she arrived! She's thrived these weeks helping kids in the classrooms and visiting friends and alumni.

The planning committee wanted the alumni to interact with present KA students, so it made for a very full weekend caring for the needs of KA kids as well as organizing the program for alumni. The times together with kids and alumni were special! The schedule included a huge bonfire on Friday night with singing, dancing from some of the present 5th/6th grade girls and pep talks from David Musa and Jim Crouch. Seeing Jim silhouetted against the huge fire talking freely and lovingly with both present and former kids brought a huge lump to my throat . . . sweet fruit that some missionaries never have the privilege of seeing. After the bonfire, some of the older alumni: **David and Gloria Musa, Zakka and Emmanuel Kadiya, Grace Angbazo, Precious and Linda Abba, Modupe Onamusi, Kuceli Sawa**, stood around singing snatches of songs learned in music classes and recalling poignant memories of years gone by. We laughed till we ached. Some had left families in Lagos, Kaduna, and Abuja for the weekend.

Saturday was games together, a treasure hunt together with KA kids, a tour around the campus, and a special picnic outside for alumni and kids. We enjoyed several groups of former students coming by our home to greet, look at photo albums and just talk. Learning how God was helping and teaching them was an encouragement to us. Later in the chapel there was a program of chorus singing, video clips from KA's history, milestone stories which Jim relayed from the interview **Norman Kapp** had with **Paul and Gerry Craig** and then part of that interview with the Craig's greetings and well-wishes for the celebration. Jim had lots of KA-today pictures to share, too, which brought history and the present together.

Sunday was a very full day with many KA parents from past and present joining us for the morning service. We certainly needed the many canopies and chairs which were set up outside the church for the overflow crowd. A huge banner proclaiming, "CELEBRATE THE FRUIT OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS" hung above the stage in the chapel with colored handprints of KA kids decorating it. Wreaths of flowers and blue/white ribbons and balloons added to the festive atmosphere. Groups of KA kids presented special musical numbers, some with new

words added to share KA history and fit the occasion. Rev. Silas Yako and his band helped us really celebrate! Our KA dietician and another staff member made a huge cake with a 4-inch high "60" on the top. Part way through the service, when the governor of Plateau State had arrived, he, along with other dignitaries, missionaries, and a first grade student, cut the cake in typical ceremonial fashion before clicking cameras and a full church audience. We chuckled at Jim's welcome to the Governor, putting in a plug for KA's needs: bore hole, cold room, laundry machines, re-surfacing the playground and the much-needed re-surfacing of the Miango road! **Bill Ardill** was our speaker for the service and gave a strong challenge comparing the success of KA's 60 years to the training of Samuel by Hannah and Eli. In showing that KA's training was biblically-based, he held up compiled notes from his 9th grade Bible class in 1966 with Bill O'Donovan!

After the service, meat pies, donuts and "minerals" were served to everyone before they headed home. Some stayed around to accompany the kids on a Sunday afternoon hike while the rest of us looked forward to a good rest. Souvenir tables sold KA calendars with pen and ink sketches of KA life, flasks, mugs, and t-shirts.

We praise God for the time together—for bringing people from near and far, for His grace in preparations and sharing together and for all that He is doing in the lives of our KA alumni around the world. We're proud to have a continuing part of God's kingdom work here, but we need fresh prayer and personnel fuel from other KA alumni to pick up the baton and keep the fire going. A quote from Archbishop Oscar Romero states: ". . . *We cannot do everything, but there is a sense of liberation in realizing that . . .*" (This frees us to ask God for wisdom to make the contribution He has for us in His purposes.) ". . . *we are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.*"

As we plant and water seeds here at KA and lay foundations and build on foundations already laid, we ask for grace and wisdom, together with you, of the Master Builder and Messiah, to serve His people and help build His Kingdom here in Nigeria.

(crouch.jim@gmail.com)

Future Reunions

KA/Hillcrest/ELWA

- WHO:** YOU – any MK or associate – we will be focusing primarily on **KA/HILLCREST** alumni and **ELWA** – but all are welcome!
- WHEN:** July 1, 1:00 p.m. to July 4, 9:00 a.m.
- WHERE:** The Resort Marriott Solana in Westlake, Texas (Dallas)
<http://marriott.com/property/propertypage/DALWL>
- HELP NEEDED:** Reunion Staff (work the weekend only). Please contact Steve Ackley.

Check out the reunion Web site www.hillcrest.myevent.com for up-to-date information and to request a registration form.

Other information:

- Childcare provided for a nominal fee during scheduled sessions. May arrange for other childcare by contacting Nancy Ruth. We'll do our best to provide some high-quality options at reasonable prices.
- Vending machines, video games, fitness room on-site
- In-room coffee, hair dryer, iron, high-speed Internet access
- Large, luscious grounds for roaming or playing Frisbee or other lawn activities
- Covered, complimentary parking
- Complimentary airport shuttle
- Golfing, spa, shopping nearby

Some planned activities:

(You don't HAVE to attend any, but they are options).
 We have some of the old favorites but have also added some new, surprise ones for this reunion. Come and check them out!

- Some surprise new fun options – come and see!
- Skit & Talent Show (don't miss the traditional favorite Nigerian Airways skit!)
- Nigerian/Liberian dinner
- Soccer game
- Lots of time to just hang out and visit

For more details, please e-mail:
 Steve Ackley • sackley@dnsdallas.com
 Holly (Strauss) Plank • dudebub@comcast.net
 Nancy (Ackley) Ruth • nancyjaruth2003@yahoo.com

Plan to attend. You will treasure the memories forever!!

Sahel Academy Reunion

We need people to join in on the discussion to plan all the details of when and where.

See our Web site at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SahelAcademyReunion/>

To join the group, write to:
SahelAcademyReunion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
 When applying, please state the years you were at Sahel or your association to the school.

Lisa Germaine (dkgmkrus@preferred.com)

Good Shepherd Reunion

YMCA of the Rockies
 Estes Park, Colorado

August 9 (3 p.m.) thru August 12 (thru breakfast), 2006

Registrations are being taken NOW.
 Contact **Judy Peterson** for registration, price quotes, or a list of attendees.

japeterson@apu.edu
 626-815-5027 (W)
 818-957-5198 (H)

Registration Form

KA • HC • ELWA • MK REUNION 2006 • Dallas, Texas

10% late fee if registered after May 1, 2006 • All fees are NON-REFUNDABLE

Last Name _____
 Maiden _____
 First Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State/Prov _____ Country _____ Postal Code _____
 Phone Home _____
 Phone Work _____
 Cell _____
 e-mail _____
 High School Graduation Year: _____

School(s) attended KA Hillcrest ELWA Bingham

Affiliation with School Student Parent
 Staff (which school?) _____ Other

Spouse (if attending) _____

Spouse's grad year and school (if a TCK) _____

Children & Ages:

1) _____ Age _____
 2) _____ Age _____
 3) _____ Age _____

I would like childcare for _____ children.

I will drive fly (and not be renting a car)
 fly (and be renting a car)

Hotel has complimentary shuttle

I would like to help with a reunion event: _____
(i.e. Skit Night, Nigerian meal, Registration / Welcome, Kids' Activities, Video Taping, Photography)

I plan to arrive:

Evening of Friday, June 30 (add \$70 for extra night's lodging)
 Noon, Saturday, July 1
 Late afternoon, Saturday, July 1
 Evening, Saturday, July 1
 Other, please specify _____

I plan to leave: _____

REUNION RATES: Includes **3 nights** lodging - July 1, 2, & 3, **6 meals** (3 continental breakfasts, 3 dinners, including Nigerian/Liberian meal) and registration fees

Hotel charges are per room, rather than per person, so you have the option of finding a roommate with whom to share the expense of the room. Below are summaries of some possible options (max 5 per room).

If sharing a room, please indicate name(s) so we can adjust expenses accordingly.

Rooming with: 1) _____
 2) _____
 3) _____
 4) _____

Package selection includes lodging, meals and registration:

- Single Occupancy** **Total: \$258**
- Double (2 adults \$180 / person, must register together)** . . . **Total: \$360**
- Double (2 adults, 1 child 12 or under)** **Total: \$405**
- Double (2 adults, 2 children 12 or under)** **Total: \$450**
- Triple (3 adults \$145 / person, must register together)** **Total: \$435**
- Quad (4 adults \$128 / person, must register together)** **Total: \$512**
- No Meals Option: deduct \$60 per adult, \$40 per child.**
- Registration ONLY \$25 per adult \$10 per child**

Package Subtotal	\$ _____
Deduct meal options (or other)	\$ _____
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	\$ _____

Make checks payable to: Hillcrest Alumni Association

Mail to:
 Steve Ackley
 1526 Mayfield Ave.
 Garland, Texas 75041
 972-840-8565

E-mail:
 Steve Ackley (sackley@dnsdallas.com)
 Holly Strauss Plank (dudebub@comcast.net)
 Nancy Ackley Ruth (nancyjaruth2003@yahoo.com)

Reunion WebSite:
www.hillcrest.myevent.com

- Yes** publish my name and graduation year on the website.
- No** Do not publish my name on the list of those registered.

Letters to the Editor

PHOTO ID CORRECTIONS

Vol. 22 #1, 2005

Back page, Girls playing “tea” with their dolls

I am the girl facing forward with an outstretched hand as if receiving or giving something. My doll is to my side.

Priscilla Dreisbach
(pdreisbach@montreat.edu)

Vol. 22, #2, 2005

Page 4, Staff

Please correct that we were not Hillcrest Hostel parents, but KA dorm parents. We were there for 20 years—16 full years in the dorms and then part time in the dorms and administration for the last 4 years. Wilf was in charge of the dorms after Dick Fuller left. He was also in charge of the Nigerian staff for many years. When the Winsors left, I moved from working in the dorms to the office and really enjoyed the office work for 4 years. Great years and great memories. We would do it over again if we were younger.

Wilf and Esther Husband
(wehusban@telus.net)

Rose Ratzlaff should be listed as being on staff at Hillcrest.

Harvey Ratzlaff (harveyrose2@juno.com)

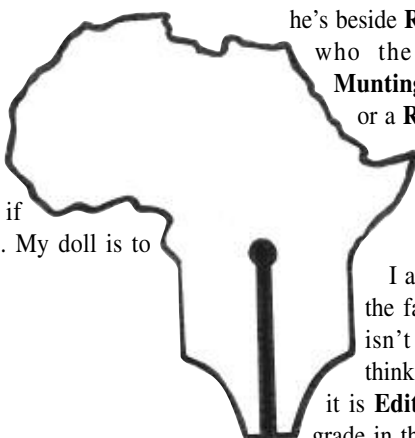
Page 14, Bingham Band

Front row: **Fred Ely** second from left, not Jonathan Healy

Back row: Yes that is Frank second from the top left; and furthest right is **David Atkins**, (not Keith F or Seppo).

Page 15, Grade 1

This picture sure stirred up some memories. That was the very first class I taught at KA. We were brought up from language school at Minna because **Fran Wilson** (the Grade 1 teacher) had fallen through the dorm ceiling and was incapacitated. I taught them till the end of January and then finished off language learning—in Kano where the language school had relocated. It's been 50 years but I recognize many of the kids. **John Dreisbach** is the boy in the middle in the back row. The girl in the front row labeled **Esther Tobert** I would have said was **Marilyn Dick**. The girl beside **Phyllis Jacobson** is **Judy Swank**. I think there was a **Bruce Campbell** in the class, and I wonder if



he's beside **Ralph Olson**. I'm not sure who the girl is beside **Dick Munting**—possibly a **Dreisbach** or a **Ratzlaff** or ?? Sorry, guess it's just too long ago.

Dorothy Phillips
(jackphillips@eol.ca)

I am identified as the girl to the far left in the front row. It isn't me! I've been trying to think who it is and I wonder if it is **Edith Todd**. I spent my first grade in the States so couldn't have

been in the picture. Time is such a strange thing. When I read Simroots, it can be disorienting to have all those memories seem so real, and yet it is all so very gone.

Esther (Tobert) Waddilove
(gewad2@yahoo.com)

Back page, Costumed kids

Thank you to all the readers who responded to help us identify this photo.

Program, Mozart & Hiawatha, May '56
Back: ?, Rachel Swartz (?) in Paul Wilson's striped housecoat, Ruth Glerum, Janet Soderberg
Middle: ?, ?, Tim Draper (or Alister McElheran?)
Front: we still don't know



1967. Bill Ardill (Gilbert) with Karen (Seger) Keegan (Anne)

Anne of Green Gables

By Karen (Seger) Keegan
(KA, HC '72)

One of my fondest memories at KA was my 7th grade year when Miss Pat directed the play *Anne of Green Gables*, creating the script directly from the book. Since Anne was a redhead, and since there was no such thing as Clairrol in Nigeria, Miss Pat dyed my hair with red/orange tempura paint. It made my braids stiff as a board, and rinsing out the paint after the performance that night was a messy job!

One of the funniest things that happened in the play was when I was supposed to break a slate over Gilbert Blythe's (Bill Ardill's) head. I didn't want to hurt him, and in practices I always did it too softly. So that night he instructed me to go ahead and hit him as hard as I could, and he'd be okay with it. I took him up on it. To my astonishment, the slate cracked in half and one piece went flying off into the audience! I nearly lost my composure!

Twenty-eight years later, my youngest daughter, Katie, was cast for the part of Anne in our Murfreesboro Community Little Theatre! And I ended up playing the part of Mrs. Barry (mother of Anne's best friend Diana). This time I got to wear a wig. On the last night of the eight performances, I took my photo album with me to show the cast and crew the pictures of me when I'd played Anne. They couldn't believe how much Katie and I looked alike. The director was so excited she placed the album on stage as one of the props!
(Simroots@sim.org)



2005. Katie Keegan (Anne) with (Gilbert)

KA History CD/DVD

I (Grace Swanson) hope those of you who have donated to *Simroots* (thank you—it has really started to count up) and received the History of KA CD and the Craigs' DVD have enjoyed viewing them as much as I have enjoyed putting them together. If you still have not received your copy and would like to have one, please send a donation to *Simroots* via Deb Turner. Make your donation check out to SIM USA, marked for *Simroots* and send it to **Deb Turner, PO Box 273, Greenbank, WA 98253.**



African Challenge Photo # 57-65-22
5th grade boys, John Bishop, Rack Rendel, Allister McElheran, Vernon Geisbrecht

WANTED for the KA History CD

African Challenge photos from Kent Academy. These photos were taken in **1957**. They are black and white and measure 5 inches high by 6 and a half inches wide. They will have a stamp on the back of the photo which will have a file number written in and have a box with the words:

FILE NO.....

PLEASE CREDIT

AFRICAN CHALLENGE PHOTO

Private mail Bag Lagos, Nigeria.

I already have file numbers:

57-65-5, 8, 11, 13, 14, 22, 28, 29, and 53.

Send to Grace Anne (Sege) Swanson
1565 Gascony Road, Encinitas, CA 92024
swanson121@cox.net

Note: these are different from the **Niger Challenge** photos which were taken in **1965**. I have many of those. The ones that I already have are: # **C68-1-1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 21, 22, 24, 28, 29,30, 32, 36, 40, 41, 52, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 65, 67, 68, 74, 77, 79, 80, 81, 83, 85, 91, 92, 94, 95, 98, 99, 100, 103, 104, 106, 113, 120, 122, 125, 129, 136, 137, 138, 140, 141, 145, 149, 152, 153, 156, 157, 158 and 160.**



Niger Challenge Publications File #C68-1-6
Star takes us for many happy rides at KA. Jim Cail, David Pullen, Gordon Pullen and Les Thompson, taking pictures from oval roller skating rink outside boys' dorm.

Visit our Web site at <http://simroots.sim.org>

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