

AFRICA OVERLAND

London to Capetown

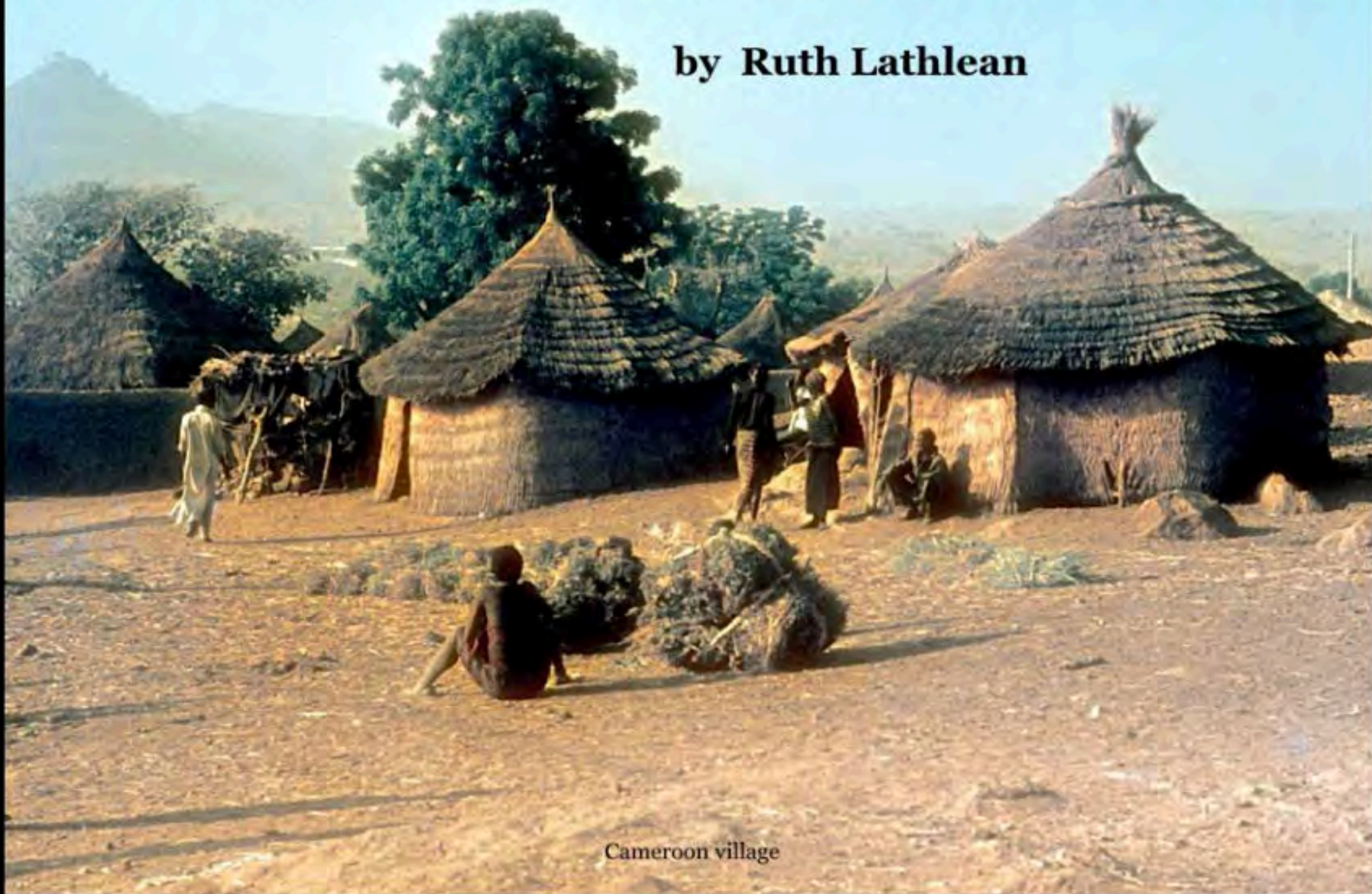
November 1974 - March 1975

by Ruth Lathlean



AFRICA OVERLAND - 4 months by truck & camping from London

by Ruth Lathlean



Cameroon village

FRONT COVER: Sand dunes in central Algeria

BACK COVER: Thomson's Gazelle in rocks in Kenya

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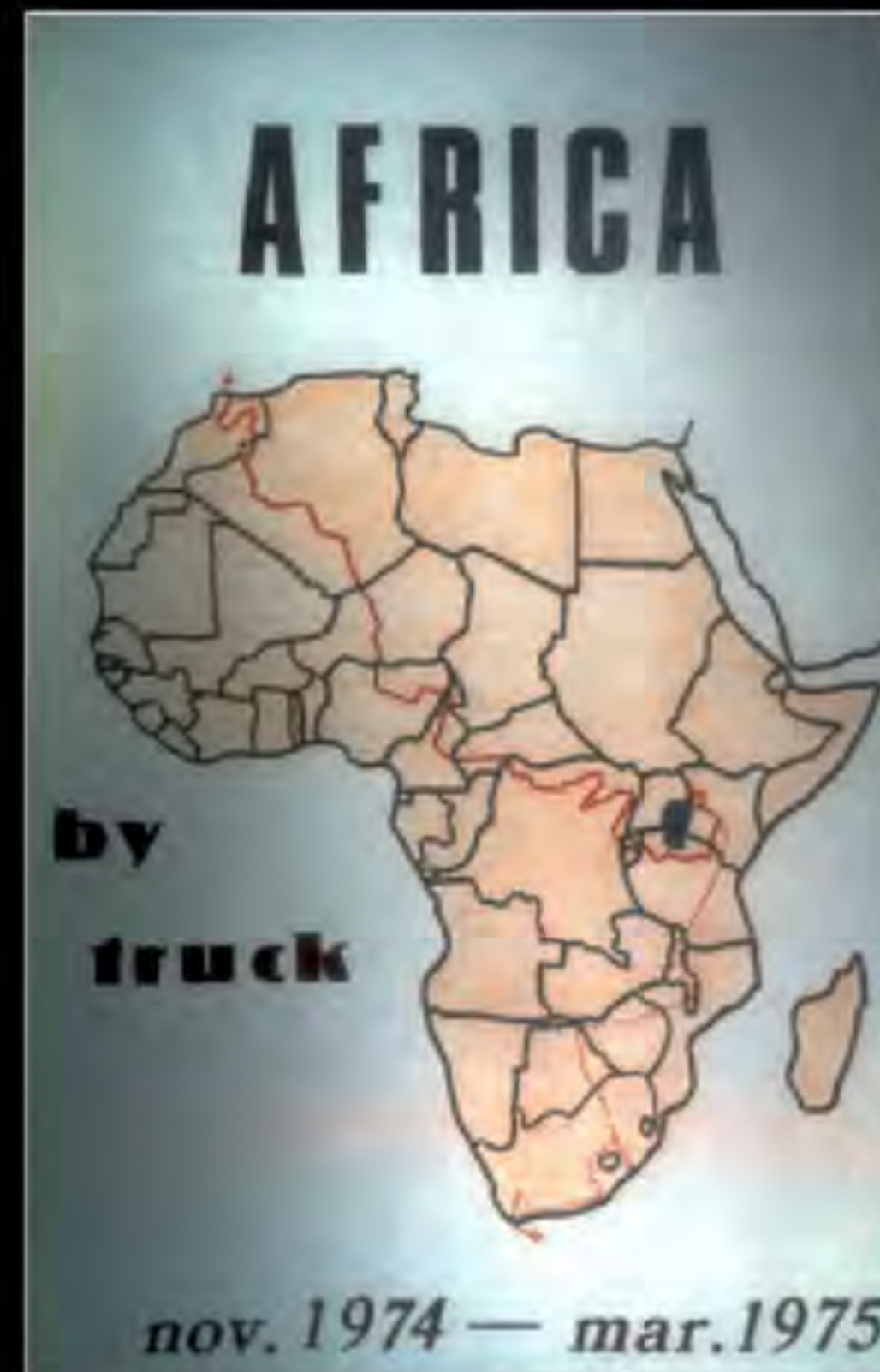
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This journey through Africa was the final leg of my travels overseas which had lasted more than seven years.

After three years teaching high school Geography in Toronto, Canada, I was still keen to see more of the world. My partner, Val Smith and I, together with my friend and traveller, Janice left Canada and spent three months in South America (see my book on South America). Janice then flew back to Australia, while Val and I returned to England. We did office work for a while as I couldn't face the English schools again and there was little difference in the pay. We bought a used De Chevaux and spent another summer camping and hostelling in Europe.

We looked at the various ways to travel across Africa and chose Encounter Overland - a cheaper but not necessarily the best way. Maybe because we were a little older than many, we didn't appreciate the experiences of group travel as much. It was still a great way to see Africa! The route is on the map to the left. We camped all the way. As we were short of money we could not afford to fly home from Capetown, especially as we would have a lot of extra luggage like sleeping bags, mosquito nets. We booked a passage to Sydney on the 'Marconi' a ship on the Italian line of Lloyd Triestino. We arrived home on Easter Sunday 1975.

We ended up leaving Encounter Overland in Nairobi since our two trucks were a month late due to mechanical and other delays. We were in danger of missing our ship in Capetown. Using our final resources we flew and caught trains with a brief car trip in the southern part of Africa.

The next pages show photos taken (I think in Serengeti) of our two trucks, nicknamed Percy and Fanny. Malcolm, who was on my Percy truck, named everybody in the photos from information still preserved after 40 years! He emailed those of us who now had emails, obtained years ago when a reunion was attempted. There were people from Australia, England, Germany, Switzerland, New Zealand, Netherlands and South Africa. I have kept up with a few but there are many though who are lost in time.



"FANNY" TRUCK GROUP

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Bob Paine (to later marry Elisabeth Glutz) | 12. Graham Walker |
| 2. Barbara Collas | 13. Geraldine Bray |
| 3. Mary Egerton | 14. Elisabeth Glutz |
| 4. Charlie Egerton | 15. Geoff Cox |
| 5. Elisabeth Hutton | 16. Jonathon Scott |
| 6. Hertha Hauswaldt | 17. Peter Derbyshire |
| 7. Prue Luxton | 18. Kim Gottlieb |
| 8. Jill Hambling | 19. Bryan Trotman |
| 9. Michelle Hough | 20. ?? missing?? |
| 10. Glennis Marshall | 21. Keith Miller - tour leader |
| 11. Bill Piper | 22. Steve Kelly - Fanny driver |



"PERCY" TRUCK GROUP

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Malcolm Cunnington | 12. Jane Teather |
| 2. Geoff Lester | 13. Robin Silcock |
| 3. Elizabeth Ford | 14. Alison Silcock |
| 4. Margaret Vriend | 15. Peter Lechte |
| 5. Julie Edwards | 16. Alan Barnes |
| 6. Carin Bouman | 17. Ruth Lathlean (me) |
| 7. Richard Haines | 18. Tim Moore |
| 8. Richard Cousins | 19. Dianne Robertson |
| 9. Brian Edwards | 20. John Wilkinson |
| 10. Val Smith | 21. Keith Miller - tour leader |
| 11. Dee Mitchell | 22. Absent - Ken Haslam - Percy driver |



Ten days after leaving Victoria Station, London we finally crossed to the African continent on a ferry from the large Spanish port of Algeciras. We saw the sun rise over the Rock of Gibraltar. We landed in the duty free autonomous Spanish port of Ceuta and from there crossed into Morocco. Our first night camping here was on a beach at Asilah south of Tangier



ASILAH - man dressed in the usual djellabah



Conversation



Streets are often arcaded to give some protection from the fierce summer sun.



VOLUBULIS is a partly excavated Roman city in Morocco situated near Meknes between Fes and Rabat. Built in a fertile agricultural area, it was developed from the 3rd century BC onwards as a Phoenician settlement. Occupied for 500 years.



VOLUBULIS - floor mosaics in the House of Orpheus (Music)





Loading a truck



Photo from the back of my truck (over the trailer) to the other truck as we headed south towards Fez



Small village



City of Fez

We camped at Fez for 4 nights so there was time to do the washing and organise our cases. Val and I also finished the food inventory we had started in Spain. Food was mainly stored under the seats and we didn't want to run out of items too soon by not knowing what we had. Items were crossed off the list as used. Even so the coffee didn't last long.



Each truck was organised into groups of 4 to cook all meals for one day. The problem was that some didn't have any idea about cooking let alone the quantities needed to feed 21. We were given some of the local currency to go to the markets to buy fresh food to supplement our supplies.

As the trip progressed we seemed to get less and less money and it felt like "the loaves & fishes to feed the 5,000"





FEZ - Royal Palace with guards

FEZ is the third city and most ancient capital of Morocco. It was founded in 789 by Idris and is still the intellectual and religious capital. It is home to the world's oldest university, the Qarawiyyin University. In 1549 it fell under the rule of the Saadians but recovered by the next century.

Fez has the best preserved old city or medina in the Arab world. It has an ancient walled city often compared to that of Jerusalem. It is also the world's largest car-free urban zone with transport by donkeys, mules and handcarts.

In the labyrinth of alleyways in the souks it was best to just wander around and pay a boy to guide one out at the end. Otherwise one would be taken to shops where the guide gets a commission.



FEZ - traditionally costumed water sellers ring their bells and make more money from tourists than from selling water. Water is in camel leather bags and poured into brass or tin cups



FEZ - Royal Palace Gardens which were closed to the public - just a photo grabbed through a doorway



FEZ - The souk of the skin dyer's can be smelt from afar as camel skins, goat skins and others are dyed for those making things such as pouffes. These photos show the lime pits and the dye pits - an awful job!







FEZ - buying Berber carpets and other textiles was high on the agenda for several of us. I bought the carpet on the left in the front with the Berber women's tattoo designs and naturally dyed wool. It took seven months to arrive but my uncle, a carpet buyer in Sydney, said the quality of the knots was high. It has been on my floor and used daily for nearly 40 years and still looks good. For £85 this was a great purchase. And it didn't even attract any duty!



Dutch girl, Carin and Val (in djellabah) on cooking duty one night



We met a nomadic Berber family who were very friendly. Their tents are made of felt and using sign language we were asked inside



A brushed earth floor with straw mats for sleeping, charcoal & semiarid foliage for cooking pots, limited water for washing



The family inside. The lambs were also hobbled here for protection and there were chickens & a cow with a splint on its leg.



LOUDJA - mosque. This is a city close to the Mediterranean



Unloading the trailer to set up camp in the country outside Loudja. We had to stay here 3 nights as Hertha's Algerian visa had expired and it took time to get another. Below -Diane is at the gold shop.





OUJDA - weaving is important with dyed wool drying and being wound in the lower photograph

OUJDA - women wearing the burka covering them entirely although one seems to show the eyes. Most Muslims women here wear a hijab which allow the whole face to show.



OUJDA - it is traditional for bread dough to be made at home and then taken to the bakers for baking. It is collected later by the children.





DESERT CAMPSITE Malcolm, Ken (our driver) and me watching the pots on the fire at night. The djellabahs are made of wool and very warm. The desert had freezing nights so these were essential. Next stop Algeria.



It took 3 hours and a bribe of whisky to cross the border at Figuig from Morocco to Algeria. We had left the foothills of the Atlas Mountains and drove through gravel plains with folded flat-topped mountains south towards Niger.





Collecting firewood became a daily effort when it was available. The large gas cylinders had already run out and there was nowhere to fill them until a large town was reached.



Behind the truck cab was storage for all sorts of stuff including bread we bought daily from bakeries. Ken was having a rest from driving & hiding under his djellabah on the right



Sheep were very precious



Groups of children mobbed us in the desert villages and towns.



The landforms changed and flat topped mesas began to appear.





Oasis with date palms. Water is underground. Some oases had deserted mud houses in them.



After some very cold nights and days of driving across flat gravel plains, it was very exciting to see sand dunes. Some were quite high and the colour of the sand varied from yellow to orange





Val walking back to the truck. There were still some dunes but also a few straggly trees



Looking out the back of our truck with firewood on the top of the trailer. The rope was used to pull ourselves up from the ground into the truck!



Alison amongst palm trees in an oasis



ADRAR - the town where the tarmac ends. We bought 30 loaves of bread for today and tomorrow



ADRAR- market



ADRAR - we washed at the garage as water was short



ADRAR - town with mud walls - the last before the barely marked track across the Sahara



ADRAR - very decorative mud buildings



ADRAR - market. Val is in the pink jumper



ADRAR - town gates made of mud and painted



ADRAR - mud fortifications

Ken and Brian with the bread, which is of course French from colonial influences



Since we were about to hit the dust we all bought two and a half metres of cotton cloth to make turbans. They are essential to keep over ones face when dust storms are bad.





Diane and Val dealing with their turbans



Val and I in our djellabahs. They are made of coarse wool and are heavy but very warm and wind proof. We each had a handmade leather pouch on our belts for security.

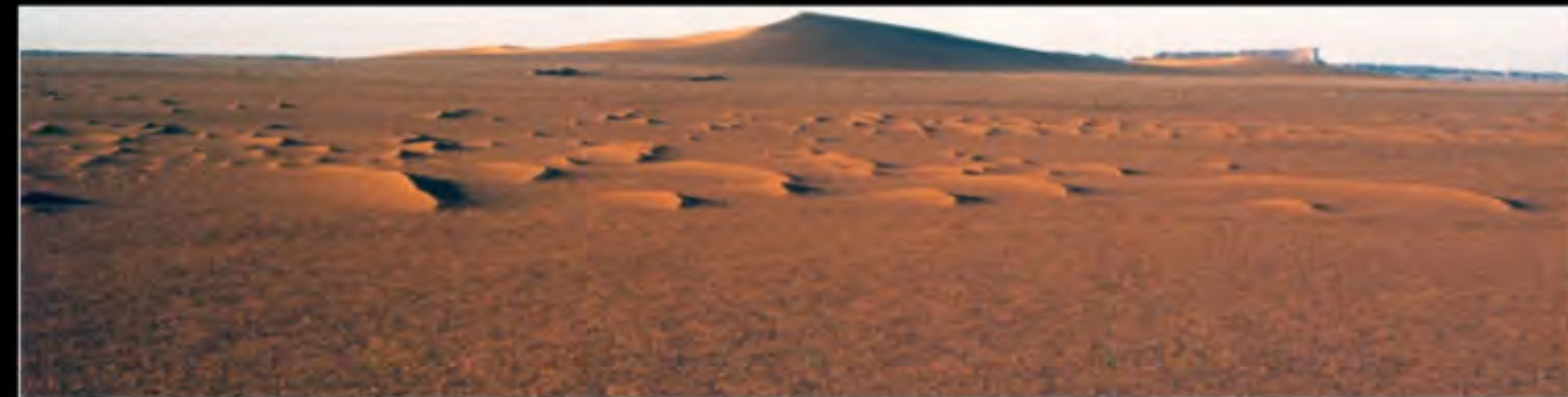


The turbanned ones



Driving along in the old Bedford trucks. It was hard to find a loo stop in this environment! The road across the desert was really just a collection of wheel tracks miles wide.





'Fanny' truck was in front of us on 'Percy'. I climbed a mesa to take the photo looking down on our trucks

IN SALAH - salty pool with reflections like mirage



The truck had collected some bull horns and a goatskin



IN SALAH - desert bus



It was usually dark when we stopped and made camp. Sometimes we put up the tents, other times we just used stretchers out in the open. There was no wood to collect so we used old truck tyres for a fire.



IN SALAH - a camel and rider went by



IN SALAH - a cafe

IN SALAH - entry into the market was impressive. We bought a sweet coffee drink, postcards and chocolate which always seems to be available in these remote places.



IN SALAH - the market was colourful and we were able to get some fresh food and water. There was only one hotel - its courtyard is on the opposite page.

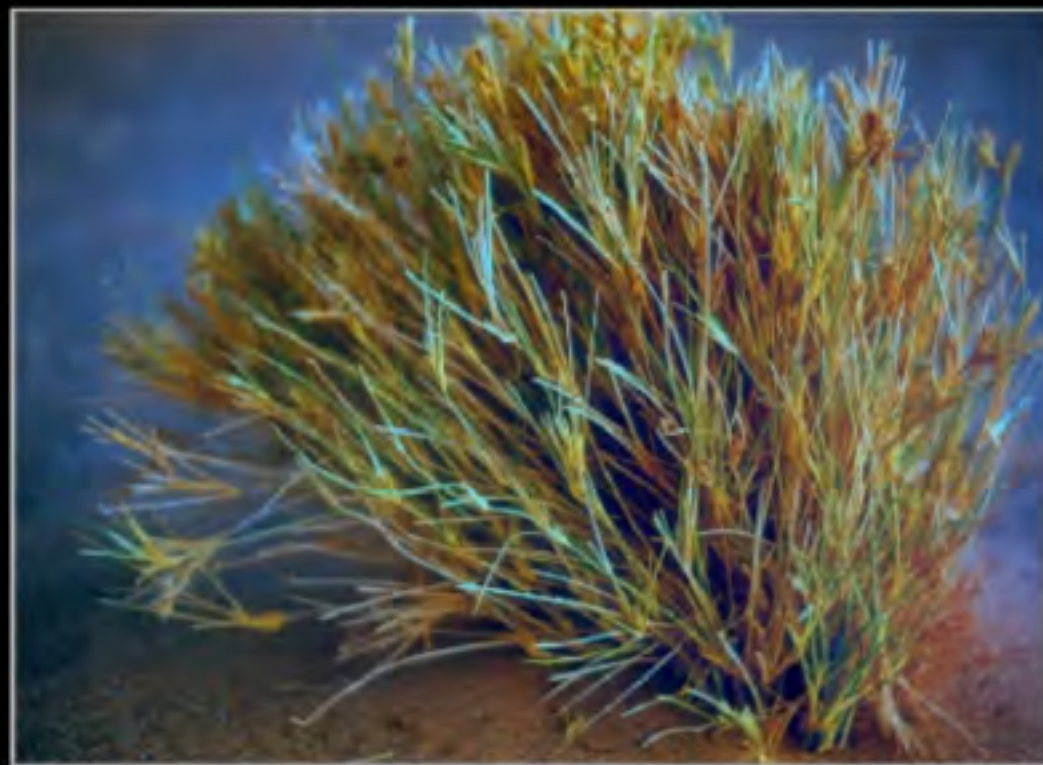
People are now negroid rather than arab.





We camped near the truckie for some protection. The 'road' is only defined by an occasional cairn made of a pile of rocks. Often it was just a maze of tyre tracks crisscrossing everywhere. Ken did an amazing job of finding the way

An escarpment with rocky scree and desert grasses. Most of the time we drove on a piedmont plain with lots of sharp shale. On it I found a lot of jasper and quartz pebbles



Desert plants were very interesting to me as a geographer. All had ways to preserve moisture. The thorny ones ensured that they were not eaten. Many lie dormant until a rare downpour of rain, then quickly come up and flower



Tuareg with indigo turban selling items



Mother and baby



We came to a tiny oasis where some families were living in these grass shelters. They appear to be semi-nomadic with goats and camels



By this time our nerves were on edge with some wanting to stand on the seats and bars with the canvas rolled back even if it was freezing. Others, me included, did not like sitting with legs in one's face all the time. Cooking on big fires with black tyre smoke with no potholders and filthy teatowels did not make anyone happy. And getting on with 40 people !!



This large batholith of wind weathered granite dwarfed the white buildings of a tomb of of one of Mahommed's descendants. We had to drive around it three times to avoid bad luck.



While repairs were done to the truck and a fire lit for lunch we were able to explore.



There were some amazing big rock formations nearby clearly sculptured by the wind



Some more tough desert plants



The Tropic of Cancer sign was not too impressive



TAMANRASSET at last. On the edge of the Hoggar Massif, this is the major town for all overland trips and the main street was lined with vehicles of all sorts



Wood was scarce and woodpiles had armed guards. Here some dead branches were being taken from a tree



All buildings were of mud. This one is having a new layer applied



There were many tuaregs here with their indigo turbans and brighter blue clothing

The trucks were serviced here so most of us were searching for a shower as it was 10 days since we'd had one. Taps were only on 2 hours a day due to water shortages so we had no luck at hotels nor public baths. We were lucky to get a shower courtesy of the Deputy Director of Tourism who met Hertha and Glenys. Since he liked Germans he had a key to a dark concrete place with water. Two at a time we entered and finally felt clean.

We met 2 American guys driving a Deux Chevaux across Africa - an amazing feat with a 2 stroke engine. We owned one in Europe for a while.



ANNEXE DU HOGGAR			
430 K ^m	ALGER	2060 K ^m	IN GUEZZAM 410 K ^m
710 K ^m	SILET	150 K ^m	IN AZAOUA
1110 K ^m	TESSALIT	660 K ^m	IN ABANGARIT 690 K ^m
1440 K ^m	TIN ZADUATEN	530 K ^m	AGADÉS 980 K ^m
1430 K ^m	GAO	1180 K ^m	ZINDER 1540 K ^m

Interesting to see where we had been and where we were going - south to Niger and Agadez. "Little" Richard (6'4") but only 18 rejoined us here. He had lost his money, passport in Morocco and had to get buses to Rabat to get a new passport & visas.



Our day trip to the Hoggar Massif was fantastic with masses of volcanic plugs, remains of earlier volcanoes. Perfect columnar basalt weathering on some of these mountains. But the road became worse with steep grades & broken surface



In the Hoggar we met this old man with two camels - all he wanted was bread which we gave him. He had his bedroll, goatskin for water, and copper dish all strapped on one camel.



The Hoggar region had high mountains as well as gravel plains - one of the best days from my point of view.





More views of the Hoggar Massif mountains which reached heights of 10,000 ft (3,000 m)





Reeds were used for houses.
There was a herd of goats so the
houses are no doubt transitory
as feed has to be found.



Tamanrasset was the last town before the Niger border. We got some more gas for cooking but it probably won't last long. We came upon this lake in the mountains and in spite of Bilharzia bugs in it many were skinny dipping. Washing drying on rocks made it colourful. We walked with Di and Hertha for over an hour up the valley & found irrigated gardens & a small hamlet.



Pancakes for breakfast were
great - cooked by Brian (in blue)
who was a Melbourne chef.

As we continued south there were areas of sand amongst the rocks and the road became more difficult. Fanny truck was stuck several times but Ken our driver got us through.



Opposite: desert flowers are rare unless it has recently rained. A gecko on Di's sleeve was the only living thing we saw. IN GUEZZAN and our road at the Niger border.





Everybody out! The metal sandtracks carried on the sides of our trucks were in use here where the sand was deep and soft. At other times they were used on fires for cooking pots and barbecues. Val was allowed to stay on the truck as she hurt her shins badly last night by tripping over an artesian bore trough in the dark. We had a few nurses on board who looked after our minor medical issues.



ARLIT - was a slum town of refugees from drought. There was also a uranium mine nearby. People mainly lived in shacks of sacking, straw and iron. They set up stalls to sell things to each other. Headloads of meat with flies was awful to see. Mud bricks were being made and men and women were grinding millet with a mortar and pestle. Women were winnowing the grain. Lots of food aid (sacks of millet donated by USA) were being sold at inflated prices in stores.

Women wore brightly coloured wraps and turbans. Some were selling silver Tuareg crosses, bangles, knives and leather pouches. I bought a double sided Tuareg knife in a leather holster which remains on my wall today.

We had to buy water from the town well before continuing south. People stripped, oiled themselves, rolled the canvas roof up and in came the sun and the dust. Soon the semi-desert began with acacias and grasses between the steep wadis or desert watercourses we had to cross.





Plenty of soft sand still but at least there were bushes for loo stops ! We had visitors at night from the Fulani herders who were camped nearby with their camels and cattle



The Fulani were grinding millet and ensured there were thorn fences built to keep their cattle safe. Their houses were beehive shaped and made of plaited mats



AGADEZ - is the largest city in northern Niger, with a population of 88,569. It lies in the Sahara and is the capital of Air, one of the traditional Tuareg-Berber federations. This photo shows the town well and the mosque tower with timber sticks in the mud bricks



Many Tuareg were in this town



The meat area in the market (below) consisted mainly of entrails - lucky we didn't need to buy meat. Kebabs were being cooked over charcoal. The day was very hot - over 40C. Val got an Agadez cross & I got a red goatskin pouffe which I still use.



We had 2 nights at a camp outside Agadez and run by a European. It was great to have shade and be able to do washing and shower with a bucket on a chain. And real loos. Water is pumped up from underground.



Val & I walked to the nearby irrigated gardens where there was an Egyptian styled shaduf for drawing water from a well. The bucket is made of skin.



There were several Land Rovers at the camp and a Yamaha sponsored truck making a movie of bikies across the Sahara.



This well is somewhat more sophisticated with a concrete base. A brahmin cow walks up and down a 6 metre slope and hauls out buckets of water to be tipped into irrigation channels for animals as well as plants.

Operating the shaduf at the well



Donkeys are used as beasts of burden, and also to haul water.



Brahmin cows are more suited to desert conditions



A camel saddle with a sword.



Back to the sandy track south towards Nigeria. We camped in a bed of prickles tonight and I dreaded packing up in the dark in the morning. Bindies were on everything.



Local bus had broken down - Little Richard was on it going to get his Nigerian visa. The brakes had jammed. Ken looked at it & was horrified at the amount of welding on the chassis, & missing one brake cylinder.

ZINDER - It was Christmas Eve and the women were all out dancing. Colourful cotton clothes were so attractive that later I bought some fabric lengths to make up when home.



The drums were playing too. There was a festival on celebrating Abraham offering Isaac as a sacrifice and a sheep was substituted at the last minute. This is in Moslem as well as Christian records.

We had hoped to buy a sheep and vegetables for Christmas dinner but the market was shut



Beauty scars were on the faces of the women who carried most things by headload. This kept their posture perfect. Children had their hair tightly plaited in many styles (see over page)



We continued on and camped close to the Nigerian border but the tents were still full of prickles and hard to erect. Many were not feeling very well. We gathered around a fire and tried singing Christmas carols but few knew any





We entered Nigeria on Christmas Day 1974 but spent most of the day at the border with crackers & cheese for lunch. The Kano campsite was really only a rubbish dump on the edge of town. We set up our tents in a circle and organised our own 24hour security roster to supplement the paid security in a city of thieves. There were 2 of us sitting in the centre near a fire at night making us very tired.

We met another Encounter Overland trip heading north and they were already 5 weeks late, mainly due to visa problems.

The saving grace of this camp was the Kano Club nearby where we all got temporary membership so we could use their cold showers, bar and swimming pool. Val and I put on our long skirts to celebrate such luxury (see photo to right). On Boxing Day we had an excellent meal of steak and salads that night coordinated by Brian (chef from Melbourne). He even made fruit salad, plum pudding, brandy sauce and custard to make up for missing Christmas dinner. Hidden supplies of beer and sherry also appeared.





Several days here while the trucks were repaired meant we could organise all our stuff and do washing with someone on guard too



A local man came with treadle his sewing machine to fix the broken zippers on many tents



A very long walk to the market but also saw these dye pits which were 3 m deep



Indigo dye kept the hands blue too



A piece of tie dyeing (shibori). At the top is an undyed but stitched piece. This gives the pattern when dyed



KANO - main street - 30 minute walk to the market where we had to buy food. The market was filthy but we found a good cauliflower, squashy tomatoes, carrots, potatoes, cucumbers



KANO - mosque in a dust storm



Eating sugar cane. Leather bags hanging up but quality not as good as in Morocco



Seller of mats (above);
Market alleyways, bead shop and
sewing hats (right)





KANO - market with German donated salt for sale illegally, headloads and rather revolting coloured bottles - unsure of their use.



KANO - more market scenes. The pile of dishes to the right waiting to be washed in the gutter reminded me to never eat out of dishes in these countries. In spite of trying to sterilise our water it was no wonder so many of us had gastric upsets regularly - especially difficult as there were no toilets.

The next couple of days were spent largely at the Kano club, doing guard duty, reading, writing postcards, walking or getting taxis to places. I bought a great length of cotton to make into a long dress or use as a table cloth.

KANO - NEW YEAR'S EVE - we had bought three tiny goats which were tethered behind our tent for a day. They were then killed for our New Year's Eve dinner. It was pretty awful for us animal lovers but it was expertly done with a knife. then a reed was used in an incision in the leg and abdomen to cause the animal to bloat. The skin then came off very easily. They hung all day.

Dinner was very good with tender goat meat (tastes like lamb), salads and coleslaw. Then fruit salad and custard. Several then went to the Kano Club to "get pissed" while others of us sat around the fire and saw in the new year with hot chocolate.

We couldn't leave the next day as Barb and Pete had been to Lagos and were late returning. But Brian cooked banana fritters for dessert - yum! We went to the Central Hotel and I bought a few wooden objects, bangle & raffia mat. We were better able to bargain here than at the market since there were hotel tourists who never bargained so they made lots of profit.



KANO - all buildings were made of mud with walls around to limit the dust storms.



We left Kano and travelled east towards Cameroon where our visas were about to expire. There were baobab trees, mud villages with conical houses and thorn bush fences to keep their goats and brahmin cross cattle



Children were watching us at lunch. Many tend to stand on one leg.



Peanut piles at Potiskum and buying food from local sellers who besieged us at every stop. Ken had to instal a new fuel pump last night and luckily it fixed the problem of one cylinder not firing in our truck. Crops of cotton, peanuts & chilies



MAIDUGURI - capital of the NE region. Here there is an Esso and a Mobil petrol station. The market was as usual colourful with smiling girls happy to be photographed





Hair styles on a board near the hairdresser







Hilltop with beehive shaped houses - at dusk



MOKOLO - town in the north - school



MOKOLO - market



MOKOLO - dried fish brought overland from Lake Chad was stinking



Village with big storage baskets



Ken was liked by the village women



Acacia tree with pods



Village







Baobab trees were huge. We stopped at the large town of Ngaoundere and at least the lettuce in the market was nice and fresh.

Several saw a doctor here because of chronic diarrhoea - pills were given but tests are really needed as it could be bilharzia.

A local who spoke English took some of us by car to the port on the Benue River. But the docks were closed as the river has practically dried up. The high bridge confirms this. When up 50 feet this is the main port on the river giving access to the Atlantic Ocean.





Cotton is a major crop with headloads as well as oxen to carry it. Country became less interesting as mountains were far away. More interesting food was grown such as bananas, avocados, pineapples, paw paws and coconuts



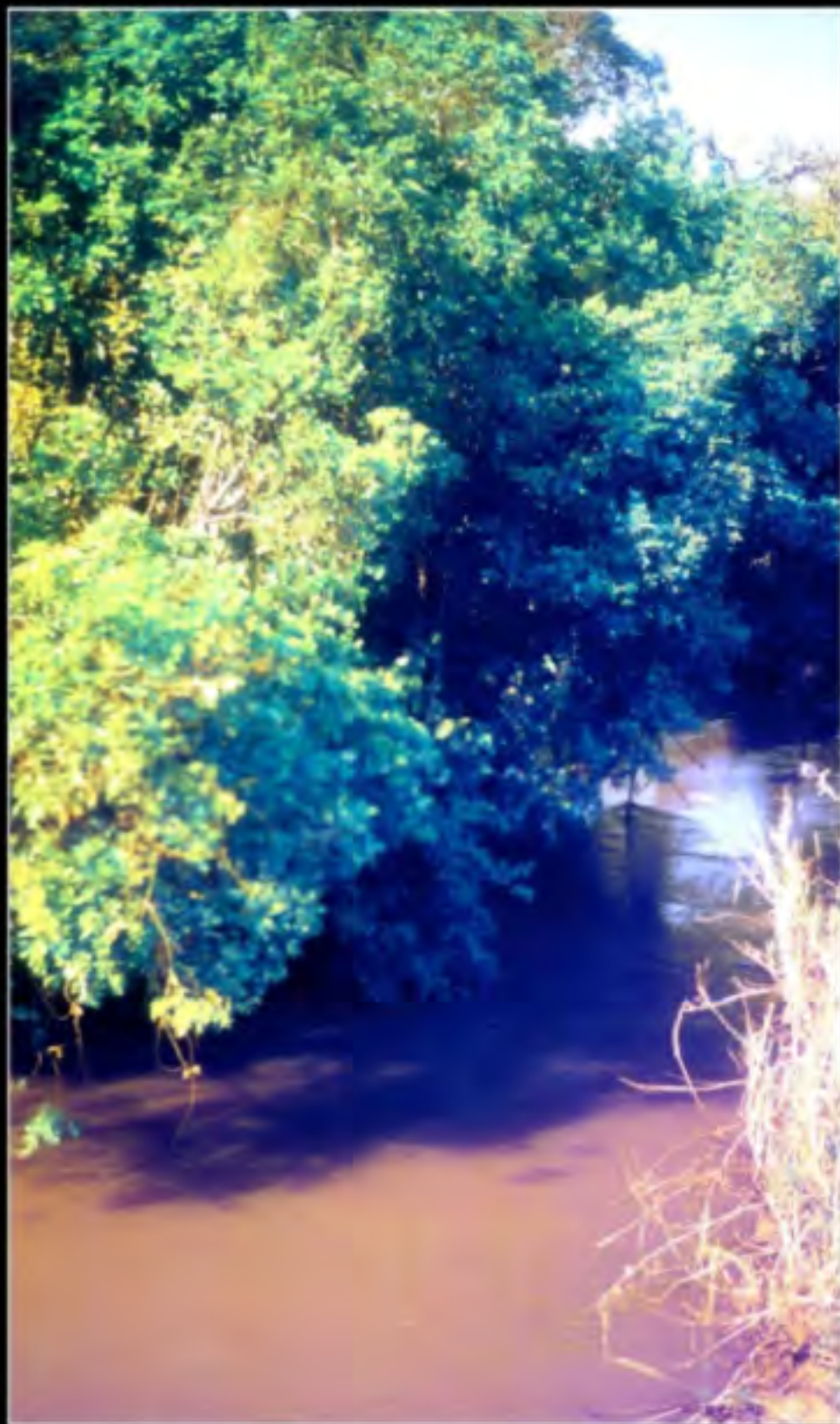
Thatch was made from all the dry grasses and a small sign for a school. French is still the main language. Some houses were whitewashed, others had wide decorative painted shapes on them





Beehive shelters begin with a frame. A woman transporting grass for thatch in the burning off season can hardly be seen. We all had to walk over the bridge as it was quite unsafe





Dense jungle started to appear near watercourses but further away from water were the tall savanna grasses.



We found a deep spring down a narrow walking track and everyone was happy to wash. Washing hair was especially important. Locals carried water in basins on their heads.



This is the way we travelled. Rickety bridges meant we often walked across them. Most of the tall savanna grasses had been burnt off with some fires still burning. This was in preparation for cotton planting. In the gullies it was jungle like





Masses of cotton in baskets was on platforms awaiting truck transport



This woman is peeling potatoes.



Manioc has been pounded with water and then dried in the sun to make flour.



Chopping meat with an axe



Using local materials children make models of trucks they see. BOALI FALLS - 50m x 250m is not so impressive in the dry season but in the wet season there are hydroelectric dams further up supplying power to Bangui the capital



Left: These were butterfly wing collages. I bought one for under \$2 and it is now framed and still hanging on my wall. It is so realistic. There were masses of butterflies in this area and I didn't feel bad about using them for art since I was told they didn't have a nervous system.

Above: Pineapple in a plantation



Fishermen at sunset at the capital, BANGUI - on the Ubangui River, tributary of the Zaire River (formerly the Congo)



BANGUI, in spite of its tranquil sunsets on the river, was pretty awful ex-colonial town with poverty everywhere. But it did have a doctor and seven went and were diagnosed with Amoebic Dysentery and given Flagyl to take. I bought some too as insurance for my own problems. We apparently need a filter as well as sterilizing tablets for our water supply but so many don't care and won't use it.



BANGUI - The steep slope at the river port made loading and unloading difficult. Pens for animals were on the barge.



Loading Fanny truck onto a barge which was then towed to a big ferry for the 2 day trip down the river. Some of the girls had their hair plaited African style while on the ferry. Our truck continued by road

Z A I R E



Formerly the Belgian Congo





Palm trees and pawpaws (papaya) as we are in the rainforest where it rains every afternoon. The equator is nor far away



A deserted house - built of local materials



Hummocks in the grasses are probably ant hills



Mosquito nets had to be set up as the danger of malaria increases now we're in the wet rainforest and the black flies were bad too.



"Fanny" is stuck in the mud as she pulled over to let another truck pass and has to be towed out. Then we found our trailer bracket had almost come away with metal fatigue so welding took 3 hours in the next town - Gemena.





Canoes are lashed together to form a punt to cross the river. It is then poled across by several men



Coffee plantation and close up of the coffee plant and beans



A church in the jungle - the Belgians brought Catholicism to the Congo. It was not surprising that when a couple of our girls stood topless in the truck, we were stoned





Several tiny streams like this were our water supply - no wonder so many were sick!



Butterflies were plentiful



Rubber plantation trees were being tapped for their latex



A woman washing - seen through dense trees



Some were in the water again in spite of the danger of getting bilharzia, a parasitic disease from worms in snails in fresh water in the tropics. It takes from days to months to develop and is slow & hard to treat with long term effects like infertility.



Zaire (formerly Congo) River



Houses and bananas



Filling the jerry cans
Opposite Page: The state of the road - glad it was not wet





Me near a large anthill



It was hard to find a clearing big enough to camp in



Drying off the washing at lunch time



The OKAPI is a very rare animal protected in a reserve. It is an ancient form of ungulate - bit like a giraffe, zebra and horse. Only twenty are left in the world so they will likely become extinct



Pygmy bow and arrows - tips are from trashed tin cans



Glenys and Dianne with African hairstyles they had done by local women on the boat



Pygmy hut behind the regular Bantu one

Pygmy camps and people. These photos were bought as slides since photographing people in Zaire is forbidden. A German bus group had recently had their cameras destroyed for photographing pygmies.

Seeing the pygmies was amazing - even visiting their camp at night where they danced. We bartered clothes for bows & arrows which I still have on my wall.





Out of the jungle at last - rising up to the Ruwenzori Mountains. The campsite was much more pleasant in this environment too

Ruwenzori Mountains - more cultivation without the jungle. Valleys here near Kale Kivu are also bilharzia free. There were even some eucalyptus trees in the mountains. "Fanny" was seen on a bend in the road





Village in the mountains. Elevation was up to 7,000ft (2,100m) so at times it was quite cold



VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK - view from the mountains.



Hippopotami in stream



Hippopotami in stream



Val and I in the truck, feeling better after 7 of us had a night in a hotel in Kisangani where we could wash, even though the water was cold and limited. And the air con. worked!



Left to Right: Brian, Julie, Liz, Dianne



Alison and Malcolm

We snaked down from the high mountains to an escarpment which showed an enormous flat plateau (looked like a plain) where we saw our first game animals - elephants, water buffalo, warthogs, kudu (gazelle), eland and hippos.

It had been raining a lot and our sleeping bags in the trailer were wet so we tried drying them out at lunch. We arrived at the Guides for Nyiragongo camp where half the group made preparations to climb the crater (3470 m (11382 ft) in the morning. The volcano is active so there was a red glow in the sky. While some were climbing we drove into Goma, not far away and changed money and bought more lengths of cloth.

We then went to set up camp in the grounds of a Belgian teacher Adrian, who had lived here a long time, but he was in the servant's quarters since the government requisitioned his nice house.



"Little" Richard (over 6 ft and youngest at 18) has had to travel a lot on his own to capitals to replace his visas when he lost his passport



Our camp at Lake Kivu. It felt luxurious to have grass and a great view. The pumice stone was hard on the feet but the water divine (no bilharzia)



Me patting the teacher's dog. I really miss my Australian Terrier, Lucky who I left with my parents in Australia



Roasting 2 sheep on spits made for a great dinner but Tim had hash which he passed to others, plus beer so it got quite rowdy



Washing clothes in Lake Kivu was great. Jane, a hairdresser cut our hair



Garden plants were beautiful after wild jungle



Val getting onto a sailing boat with Geoff. Fantastic day we had here with water skiing and snorkelling also on offer for the adventurous





Rwanda is a very small country but has plenty of mountains. People are at a well (top left) and walking along a road under gum trees (top right). Intensively cultivated land with bananas (below). The land is intensively cultivated on rich black soil from volcanoes. Main crops seem to be corn, beans, potatoes and bananas. Quite a lot of gum trees here too. We found Kigali, the capital, rather awful place with gangs of thieves targeting us



People waiting on the road with a beehive high up in the tree nearby



Headloads are common



Mountain valleys



Patterns of cultivation



Masai



People on the road



Resumo Gorge and bridge at the Tanzanian border



Patchwork of cultivation



Border crossing was slow with the usual bribe needed. The wet season seems to have started here too so photos were limited to fine weather. The view of legs was all we could see while the canvas was down. Several people were sick, including our driver Ken with an infected knee which was looking bad





We camped in the fairground at MWANZA. The town was not too bad and at last English rather than French was the language.



Dugout canoes were painted brightly and were the local transport on Lake Victoria



Waiting..... 2 days in Mwanza while Ken was flown to Nairobi accompanied by Keith.



Lunch on the shore of Lake Victoria



Village with cornfields on Lake Victoria



This was the ferry crossing to Mwanza



One of our trucks on the ferry



'Little' Richard wearing sox for the first time



Below: large fish were caught in Lake Victoria - of course big birds were around too



Farm and cattle near Serengeti. I am standing near the sign





Large birds, possibly marabou storks



Typical umbrella trees in the savanna of Serengeti



Zebra and wildebeest in the background



Giraffe



Giraffe with zebras



Hyenas



Zebra



Giraffe



Female lions



Female lions



Male lion



Male lions



Giraffe



Eland



Buffalo



Baboons



Lion



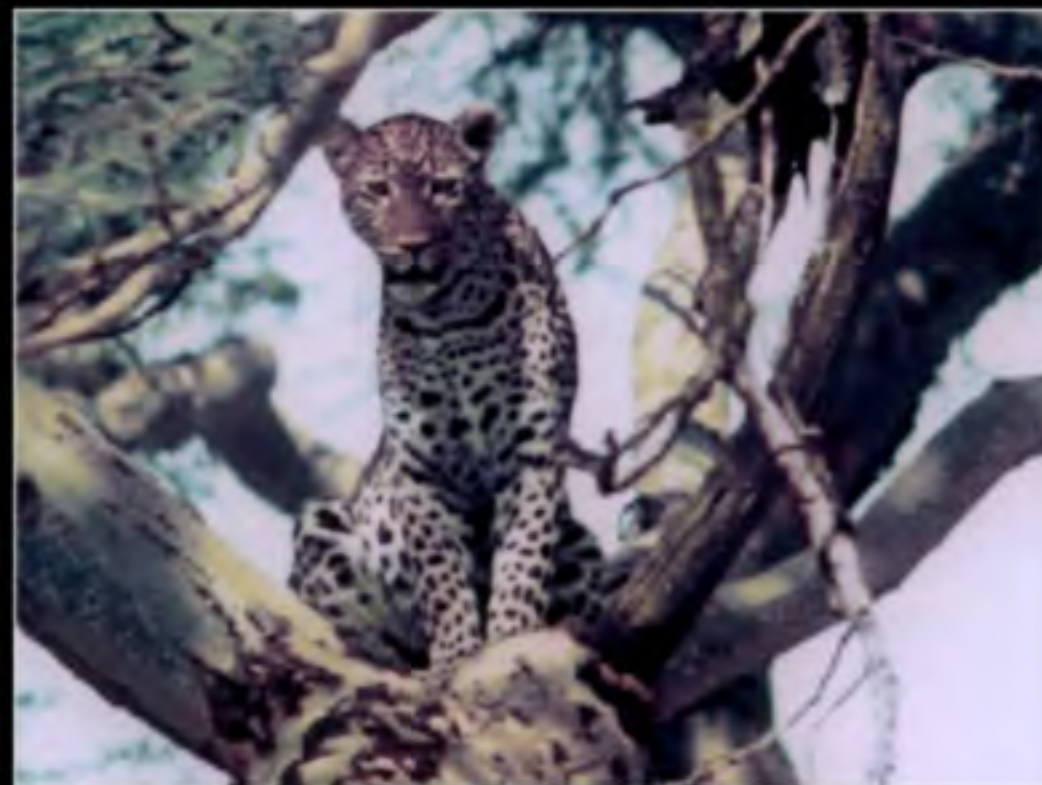
Lion



Cheetah



Topi



Leopard



Leopard



Grant's Gazelle



Thomson's Gazelle



Thomson's Gazelle



Superb starlings



Suddenly came upon Ngorongoro Crater



Masai cattle and kraals began to appear



Baobab tree



Pods on the baobab tree



There were several steep tracks into the crater but the cost per head was high and we had limited time



It is bigger than Crater Lake, Oregon but formed in the same way. The herds of animals were like specks near the lake



This Masai man stood here all day collecting money for his photograph



Masai cattle are hard to see but they are there



Crater Lodge was right on the rim of the Ngorongoro Crater



LAKE MANYARA NATIONAL PARK - camping



Looking into the park from the escarpment



Val checking the tent pegs. Sometimes they bent with hard ground.



Baobab tree



A small museum is at the entrance to Manyara National Park. The Park is set in a flat area in the rift valley where we descended



Elephant



Elephants



Buffaloes



Elephant



Zebras



Zebras and flamingoes near the shallow lake in the Park



Apes

Gazelle



Warthogs



Elephant



Elephants





It was February 13th and Val and I had already decided to leave the trip here as we were a month late and we couldn't afford to miss the ship to Sydney from Capetown. We decided we had just enough money to get a plane via Victoria Falls and then to South Africa.

Also living here was a family friend Colin Johnston who was with the Church Missionary Society from Sydney. So this was our first contact and proved to be excellent for us.

Our last night with Encounter Overland, and our first in Nairobi, was a disaster. We arrived at 10.30pm at the Westwood Park Country Club 8 miles out. We were all too tired to erect tents. At 12.30 it poured with rain and we were drenched as the fly we were using as a cover was a hopeless failure. Many of us fled to the truck with wet bedding, boots and bags and were awake the rest of the night. No one was keen on cooking breakfast so Val & I packed up and went into town to call Colin's secretary, who was expecting us.



NAIROBI, the capital was much more modern than expected. Set at a high altitude, the weather was also milder than usual in the tropics. Bottom right: is the Kenyatta Conference Centre



Nairobi City Hall



Kenyatta Convention Centre



Nairobi mosque

Colin's secretary, Beryl, drove us to Colin's flat where we had a night alone as he was away. His wife, Anne had returned to Australia a week ago as her father was dying. Our Aussie friends Helen and Gwen had stayed here recently too. That night we had dinner with a couple on the floor below. Beryl went out and bought us strawberries and cream as a treat and then took us to the bank and travel agent to get our plane tickets organised for 10 days later. We met Malcolm and Geoff from the truck for a chinese lunch which was really good. That night we listened to tapes and played with the little dachshund, Heidi.

Colin returned home, and was very happy for us to give all our washing to the girl Anne employed as he didn't have much for her to do. We, of course, were delighted. We put all our slide films in to Agfa but I now think this was a mistake as so many of the pictures scanned for this book have poor colour even though I have worked on them.

We met some of the Encounter Overland group and it seems they are now climbing Mt Kenya rather than Kilimanjaro. We are packing again to go with Colin by car on safari to Nakuru and Maseno on Lake Victoria, where he has work to do.



University buildings



Convention Centre





University



Detail of the sculpture in the university grounds



Colin Johnston with dog Heidi



Deborah, the washing girl did a fantastic job with all our clothes which hadn't been washed properly with clean water for months



Poorer part of Nairobi



Second hand clothes market



Men carving wooden figures for tourists



Making batik material starting with the design, then the wax and lastly the dye. I still have one on my wall





Views of farmland northwest of Nairobi - rift valley



Rift valley - we're at 7,600' (2,316m) here so are feeling tired



Children - one is upset!



Tea plantation near Kericho. Most are still owned by Europeans but Africans have taken over most other farms



Village at Egerton College



Egerton Agricultural College at Njoro, northeast of Nakuru



Workers' houses at the tea plantation



The workers' village at the tea plantation



Tea pruning



Tea pruning



Much poorer houses Kraal of manyara grass to protect the village



Equator sign at Maseno



Tea picking



Came into Luer country as we descended from the highlands to Lake Victoria at 3,500'(1,000m)



MASENO. Archdeacon's house where we stayed for several days. It dates from 1910 with all rooms opening off verandah.



Polytechnic college at Maseno offered practical subjects for boys and girls



Archdeacon and family- Jean, John, David Wheately-Price with their dog



Gardener



Boys building furniture for the school



Girls in a sewing class



Making and using mud bricks



Val at swimming pool at the Kisumu Club where we went one afternoon. We relaxed while Colin was working



Sugar cane fields



Colin and Val with Heidi who travelled with us in the car



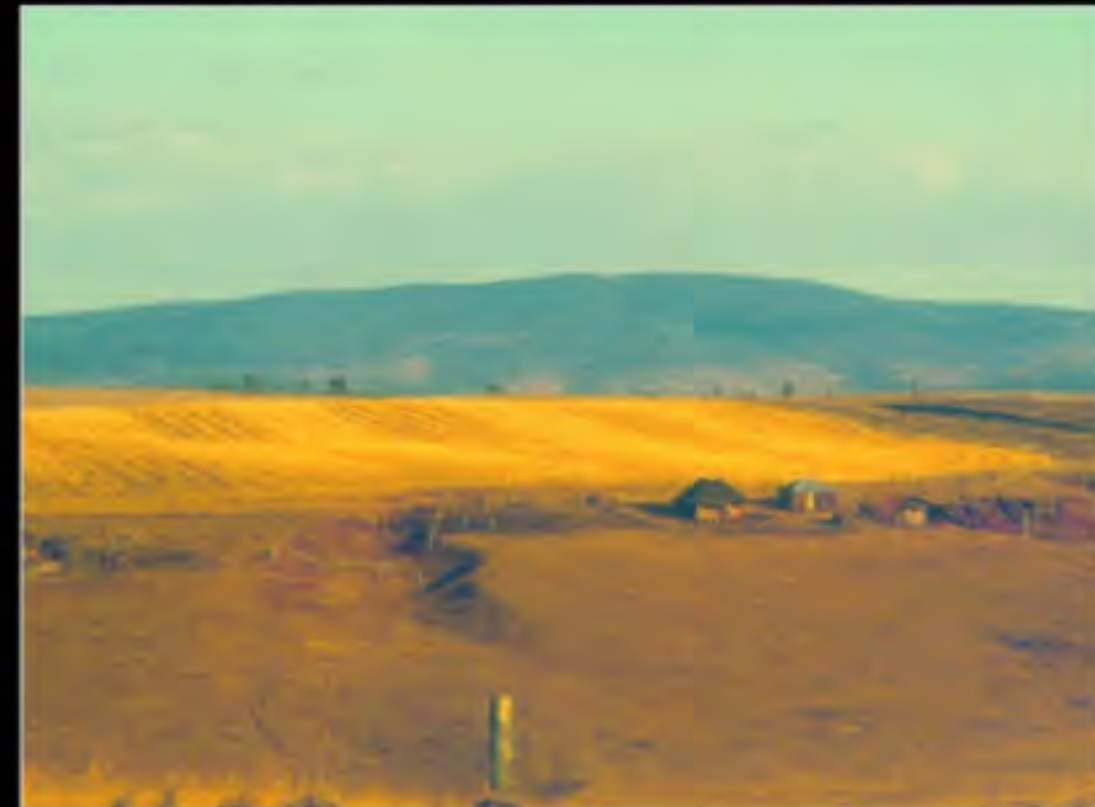
Houses for sugar cane workers



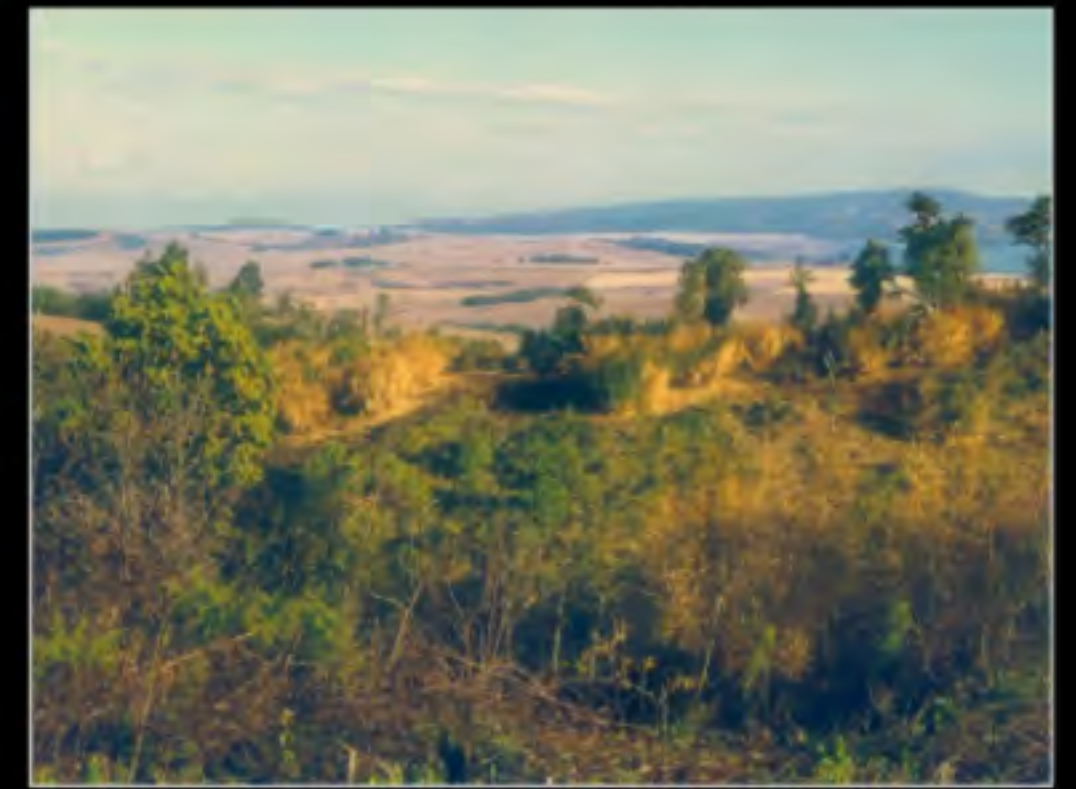
View back down the rift valley from Eldoret Road



Sugar mill



Grain fields in the highlands



Near Lake Nakuru



NAKURU NATIONAL PARK entrance



Flamingoes were a long way out on the lake



Velvet monkeys playing around car in car park



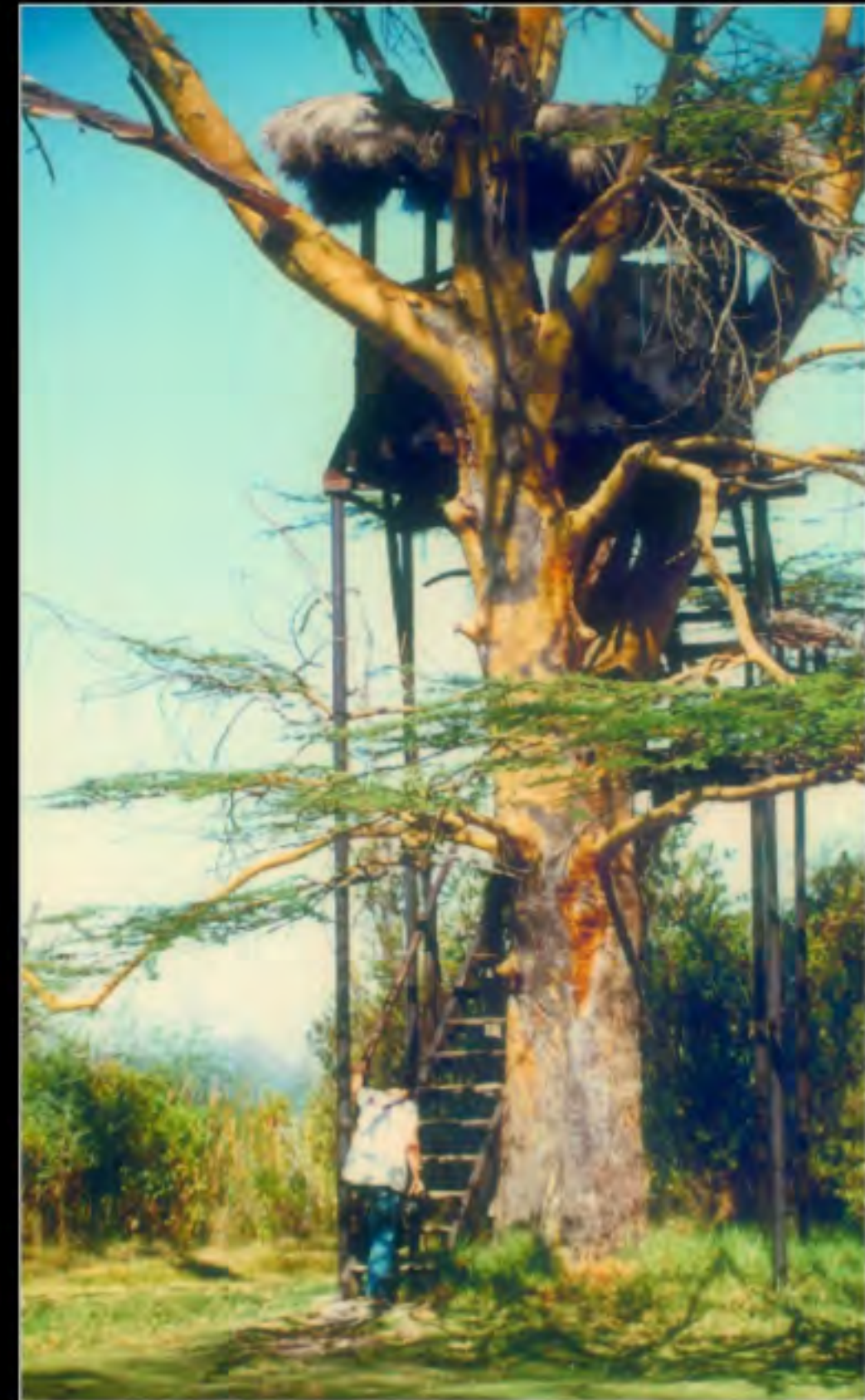
Pelicans from a hide



Herons in a tree



Eland



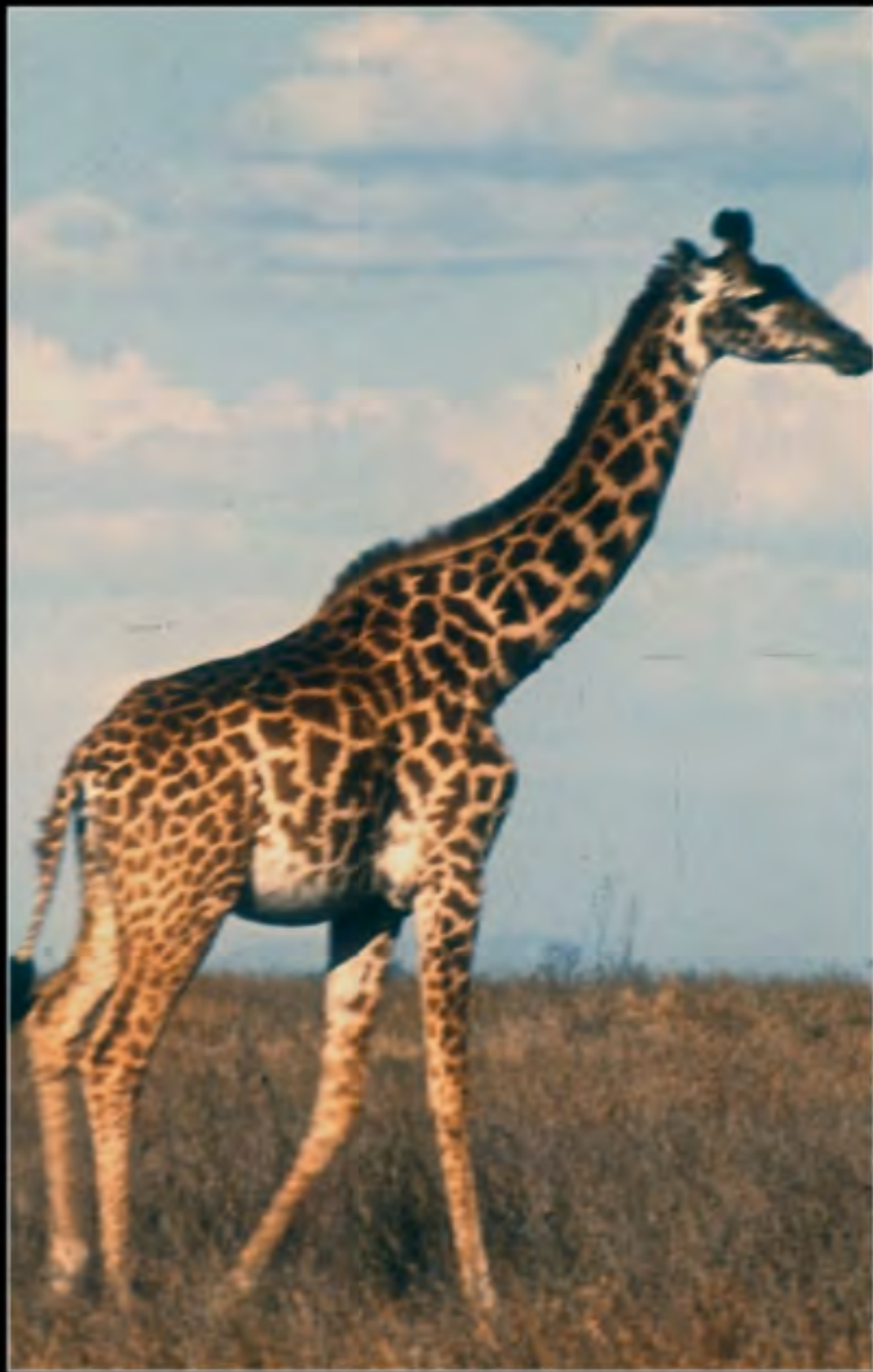
Hide in a tree



Pelicans and Flamingoes on the edge of salty Lake Nakuru



We were visiting Nairobi Game Park when I suddenly saw the Concorde in the sky taking off from the airport. This image has been used several times in books when I had a small photo library business in the 80s



Giraffe



Ostriches



Gazelles



Grants Gazelle



Eland



Zebra



Lioness



Buck and gazelle



Our last day in Nairobi was spent packing and weighing our luggage. As we hadn't planned to fly anywhere in Africa this was a problem as we had sleeping bags and mosquito nets as well as all the slides we had processed. I ended up with 44lb (20kg) hand luggage which I could hardly carry. Luckily our hand luggage was not checked.

We were both carrying pygmy bows and were asked by the Air Malawi "Where are the arrows"? Luckily in our suitcases. Our Tuareg knives were held in the cabin with the pilot. We were clearly a hijacking concern! We spent overnight in Salisbury and got a pre breakfast flight to Victoria Falls. There were only three hotels there and they were all very expensive. It was though a feeling of luxury to be in a good hotel after all the camping we had done. It was the 1st March, 1975.



Victoria Falls Hotel



I am standing near the vehicle which was to take us to the Falls. It rained however and we later walked 20 minutes to the Falls.



Bridge at Victoria Falls



Victoria Falls Hotel



Music played for guests having drinks outside at the hotel



Part of the Falls



David Livingstone's statue



VICTORIA FALLS - situated on the Zambezi River on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe. The height of the Falls is 108 m from an elevation of 885m. They were great waterfalls but too much spray to take the photos I wanted. Iguassu are still the best.



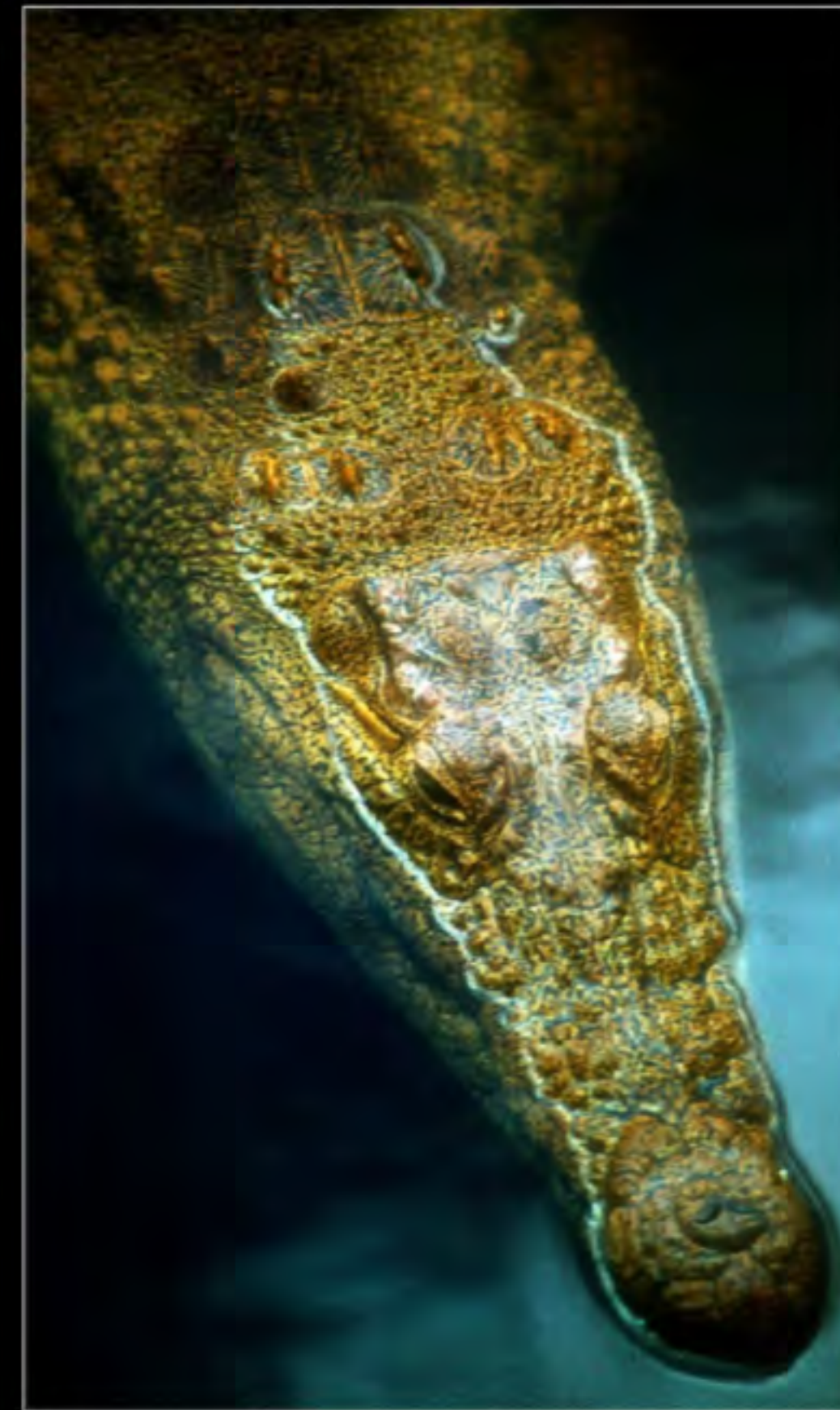
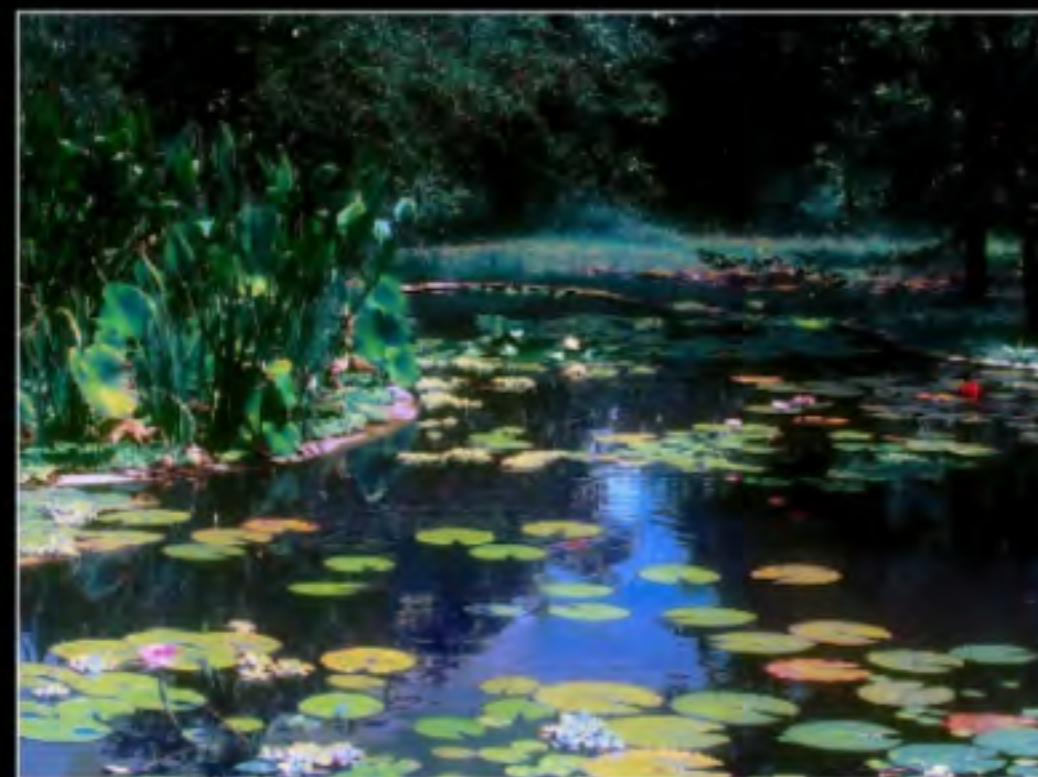
Baboon on the road to Victoria Falls



Small crocodiles at the Crocodile Farm at Victoria Falls



Larger crocodiles at the farm - below a tranquil pool at the crocodile farm. Crocs live to over 70 and all are dangerous.





We flew Air Rhodesia to Johannesburg, and from there caught a bus to Pretoria where we had arranged to stay with the Brownes, parents of a young woman we met in London. Our mail was also going there. Since we were not looking forward to a long trip at sea we also sent wool, knitting needles and patterns to knit a jacket on the ship.

We were welcomed and it was nice to be in a large apartment and talk into the night. But in the morning locks were put on the fridge and cupboards as the maid was not trusted. The apartheid system was evident everywhere. We had a good trip to the zoo but sat down on the 'wrong' bench when we were tired and had to move on. We got seat reservations for the train to Durban and Port Elizabeth. We then intended to hire a car to Capetown. Prices were very high in South Africa and we were short of money.



PRETORIA - city views from gardens



PRETORIA - city views from gardens



Parliament buildings - Pretoria is administrative capital but Capetown has the legislature. All the government moves to Capetown for 6 months of the year



Parliament buildings & gardens. Administration sits here for 6 months, then in Capetown for 6 months



Mr & Mrs Browne, with whom we stayed in Pretoria



Val and I in hard hats ready to tour the Premier Diamond Mine



Premier Diamond Mine - largest ever diamond 9 was found and is now in the Crown Jewels



Flotation room - diamonds get stuck in the grease. Black workers and white supervisors



Premier Diamond Mine at Cullinan - est. 1903. Shaft has replaced the earlier open cut mine



Macaw at the Pretoria Zoo



Lion at zoo



Rhinoceroses at the Pretoria Zoo



Gazelles at zoo



Zebras at zoo



Flamingoes at the Pretoria Zoo

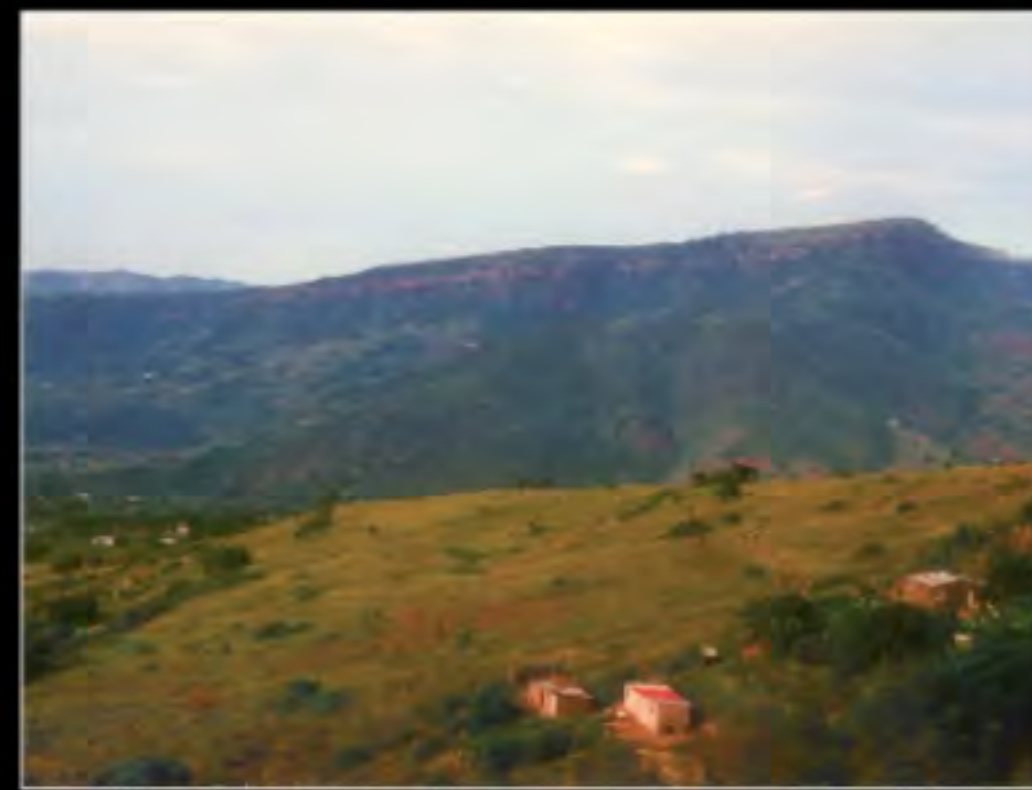




We left Pretoria at 5.45pm and arrived at Durban at 9am the next morning. Some local women insisted with have a vodka mix with them on the train as a nightcap.



Kraal from the train to Durban



The scenery between Pretoria, which is inland, and coast was quite beautiful and reminded us of Australia. Arriving was easy as much more English is spoken in Durban. The Apartheid signs were also not as dominant, although there were some.



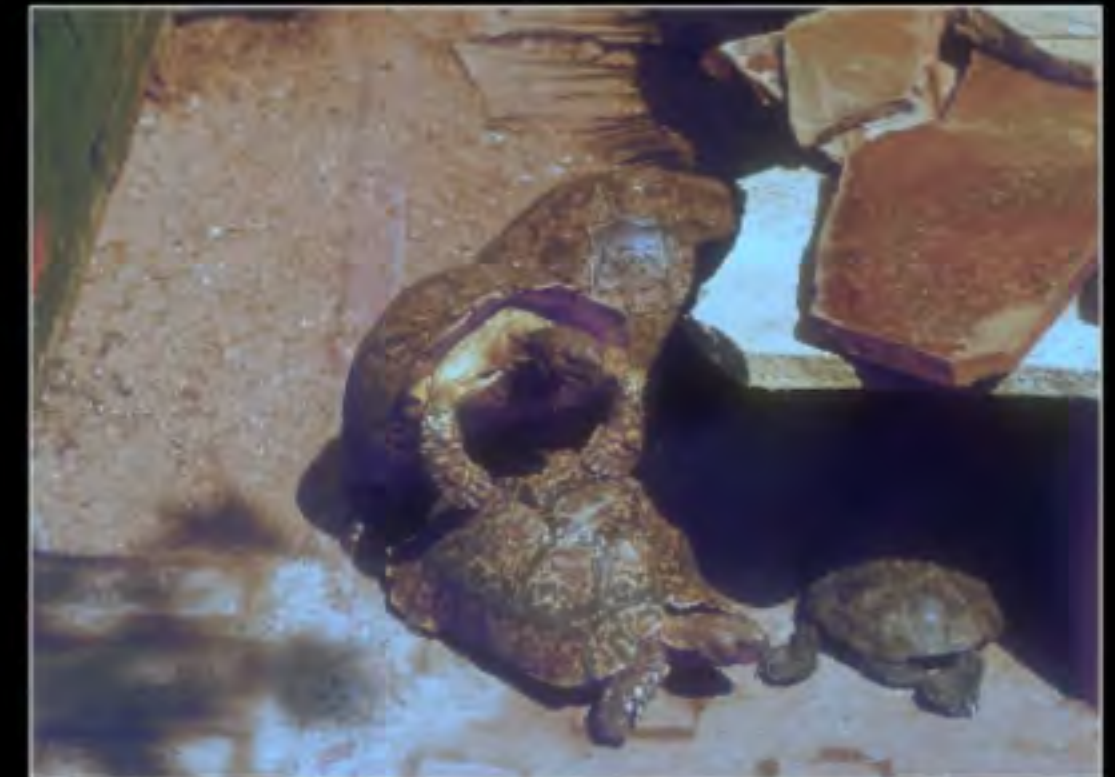
'Whites only' waiting room on a railway station



Homes of 'blacks' from the train



DURBAN - Val in the park by the sea. We had a full day here before our train left for Port Elizabeth at 7.30pm



DURBAN - Snake Park but here were tortoises



From the train between Durban and Port Elizabeth. We misread the arrival time and ended up with 2 nights and a day on the train. We were the only ones in our compartment & the dining car was good. It was awful seeing the old 3rd class carriages on 'black' trains leaving in the dark every morning for work in the cities and were packed. The scenery was though quite beautiful with flat-topped mountains and fields of corn



From the train between Durban and Port Elizabeth



Yellow VW we rented in Port Elizabeth to take us to Capetown by the coast road. Me outside our rondavel in a tourist park - for whites only in the town of Humansdorp



Val knitting on the train between Durban and Port Elizabeth



Near Port Elizabeth



Famous single span bridge over gorge



Limestone gorge



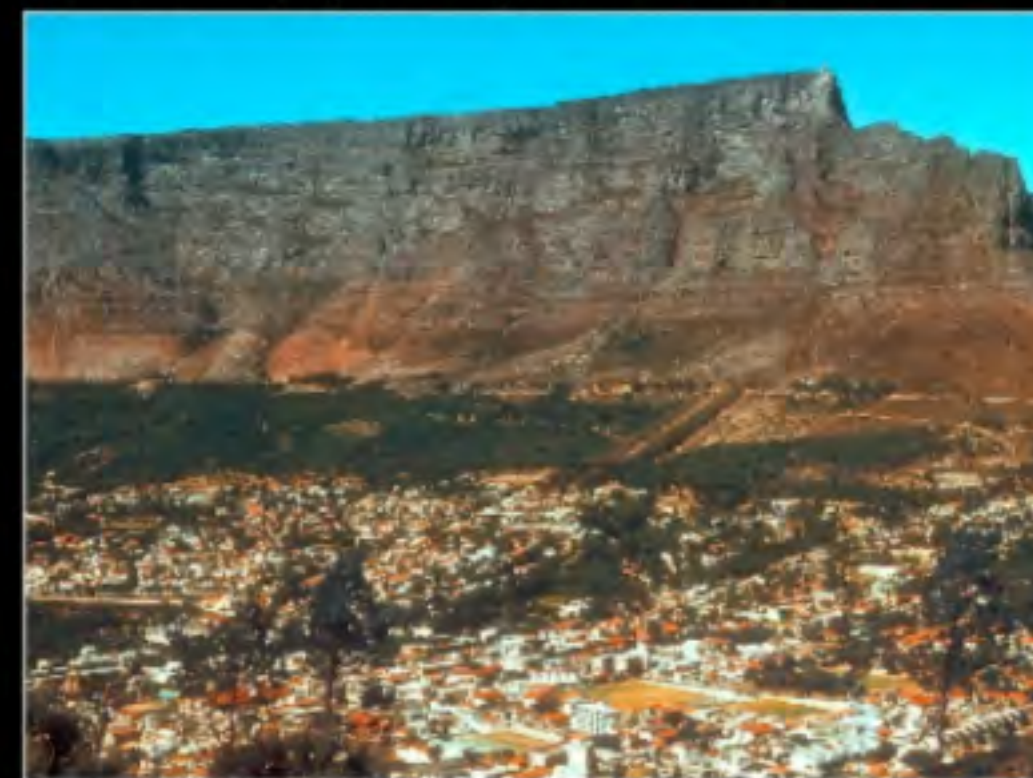
Nature's Bay Beach, one of many 'whites only' ones



Toilets for Whites sign at the beach. Apartheid was always there. We experienced it the next night when every cheap hotel we found was for 'coloureds only'. We had hardly any money & ended up sleeping in the town park in our VW & the ground.



New hotel at Mossel Bay. We spent our remaining days in Capetown in a campsite but trying to sleep in the VW car was not fun but sleeping out on a groundsheet wasn't either!



CAPETOWN - Table Mountain



CAPETOWN - Table Mountain from on top



CAPETOWN - Table Mountain from on top



Coastal views in the Cape Peninsula. This area was a lot nicer than the so called Garden Route from Port Elizabeth



Groot Constantia State House - 1778



Groot Constantia - kitchen - first vineyards in the area



Groot Constantia - main house



Groot Constantia - wine cellars - with me



Cape Peninsula Beach



Simonstown - British naval base



STELLENBOSCH - now a museum



Grapes growing in the region



STELLENBOSCH - old Dutch town with whitewashed houses



STELLENBOSCH - old wine press in the Wine Museum



PAARL - centre of the wine industry





PAARL - Big Bill Vat - 21,000 litres (a larger one has 210,000 litres)



PAARL - decorated vat



Wine tasting in progress - the South African wines were very good indeed and rival the Australian ones.



CAPETOWN - main street



Farewell Capetown - sunny but windy - a nice city



CAPETOWN - from the Italian Lloyd Triestino liner 'Marconi' on our way back to Sydney, Australia. 500 passengers.

We sailed out of Capetown on 13th March, 1975 - my 34th birthday. The journey was 17 days.

We made friends with a young South African couple who were migrating to Australia. But most on the ship were Italians (with children running riot) and coloured South Africans who had been given 2,000Rand (about \$A2,000) by the government to leave and never return. Most were going to Australia and some to New Zealand.

We spent most of our time knitting our jackets when we were not out on deck in the fresh air and wind. We were not interested in bingo.

We docked in Sydney on 30th March - Easter Sunday, both wearing our newly knitted jackets.

SOUTH AFRICA

25 years later

In late 2000 I again visited South Africa, albeit briefly on my way to Botswana and Namibia with my friend Janice Redpath. I had not really seen anything of Johannesburg in 1975 as we went straight to Pretoria after landing.

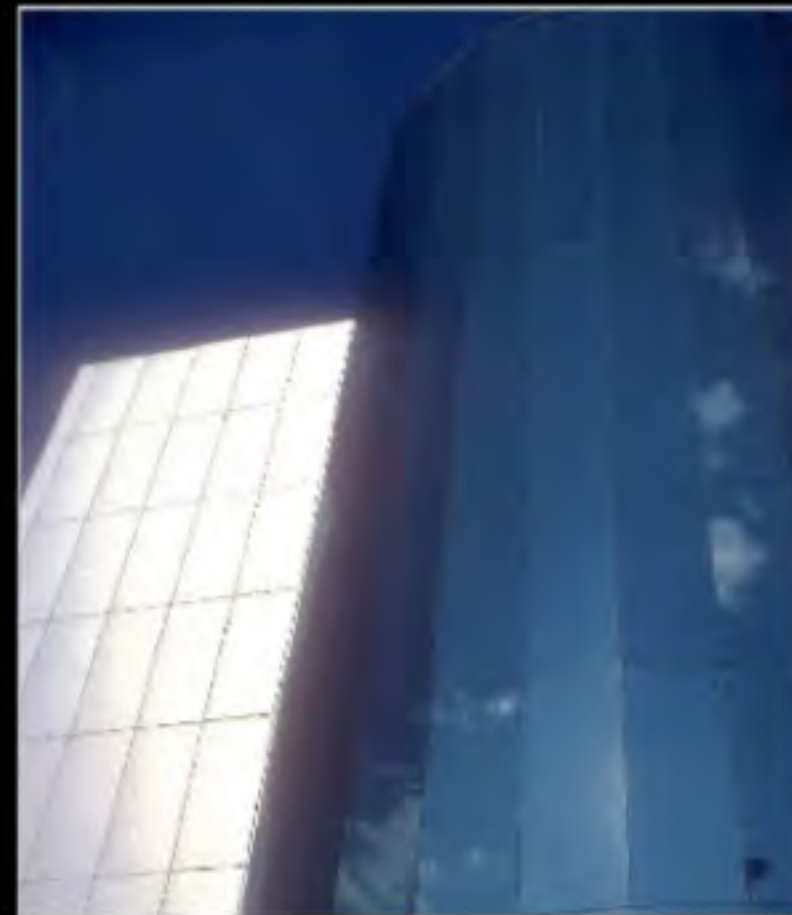
Now the city had become dangerous. We decided on a day trip to the city and Soweto. It was unsafe to be in the centre of Johannesburg in the dark, or even the day. There was an amazing amount of security for our minibus to even get into the carpark of the shopping centre.



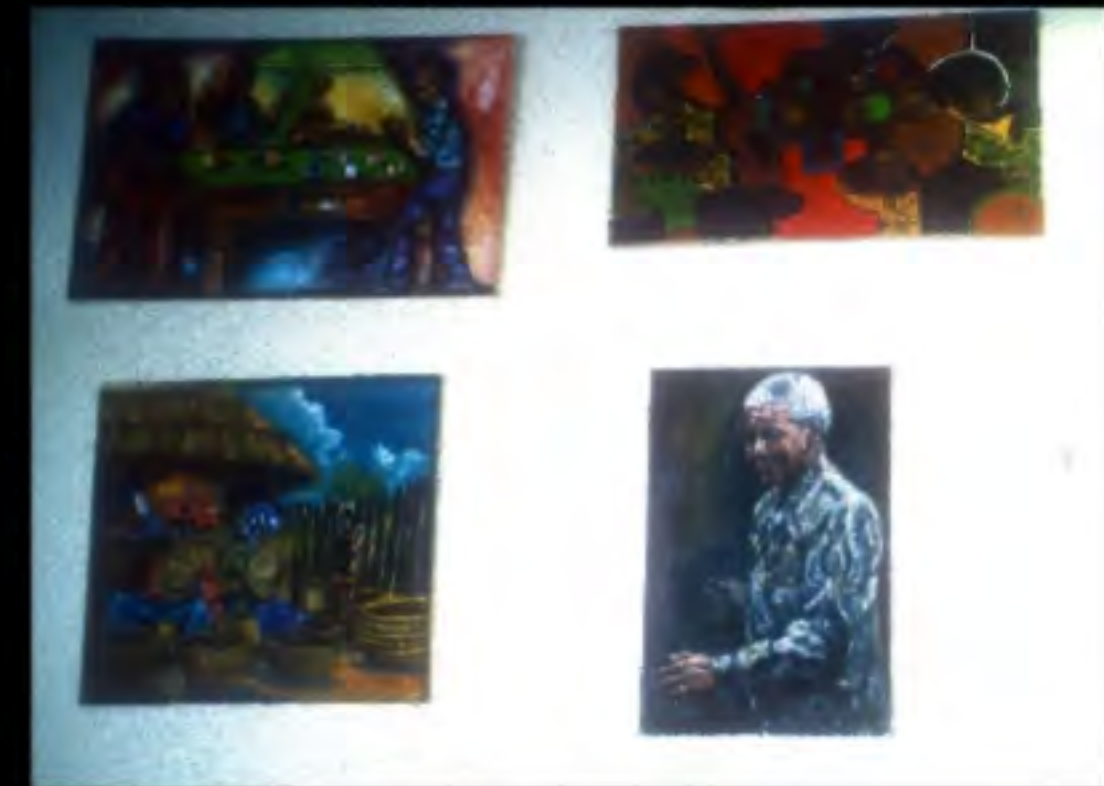
JOHANNESBURG - Holiday Inn near the airport where Janice and I stayed for 2 nights



JOHANNESBURG - Carlton Centre Shopping Centre in the centre of the city



JOHANNESBURG - Views of the city from The Top of Africa at 220m at top of Carlton Centre. Built in 1973. The tallest buildings are standing empty - hotels which closed down 2 years ago as it was too unsafe for tourists. Whites all now live in the outer suburbs.



JOHANNESBURG - local art on the wall at The Top of Africa



SOWETO - 4 million live here even though they can theoretically live anywhere now. The Chris Hani hospital is huge - 1 km long with 605 doctors, 7000 nurses and 5000 beds. Many foreign workers get experience in emergency with fights etc. .There are 65 high schools, 143 primary schools in Soweto. There are still squatter camps with no water or electricity, porta loos.



SOWETO - Nelson Mandela's house is now Winnie and Family Museum. The painting of Nelson is inside



SOWETO - Bishop Tutu's house - 2 Nobel prize winners live in the same street



SOWETO - many of the middle class blacks live here in small houses



SOWETO - we had lunch here at Wandie's Shabeen. This was an illegal alcohol place years ago



SOWETO - many wealthy also live here - these are millionaires' houses



