

## Chapter 2

2 September. We even set the alarm to be sure of getting up for breakfast. Our room has an en suite wetroom with shower and toilet, but Njiro district is suffering from water shortages, so we have hot and cold water in buckets and indulge in messy strip washes, just like the olden days. We are, however, honoured to be the first guests in the bungalow.

Assemble bicycles and houseboys test ride them. One brake adjuster has gone missing. Go to town to change money. Tanzanian shilling stands at 2500 to the £1, making for interesting mental arithmetic. Next, try to buy local phone cards. Jacky and Kate have mobiles tied to Vodaphone, so we head for the Vodacom shop. Phones don't accept them. Buy 2 cards anyway; I have an untied phone and Felix finds someone to sell us a basic Nokia for TSh 20,000. Buy brake adjuster (turns out to be wrong size). Find a small grocery and shop for snacks.

After lunch meet with Tuishime teachers. They used to huddle into the headmaster's office, but with the expansion of the school now have taken over a former classroom for a staff room. There is now even a dedicated computer room. Some of the computers from Mugginton School. Then take school bus back into town. Important stop at internet café (Jacky and Kate want to come to Dodoma too, so book more hotel rooms. Kate suffering from Facebook withdrawal) and sit for drink by pool of Impala Hotel. Try for prices of safari. Very expensive.



Sitting room by night

Come home by dala-dala. This is a minibus with (ha-ha) seats for 11 passengers. On ours vehicle we counted up to 23, which is by no means a record. Jacky and Kate didn't think there was room for all of us to board, but agreed the journey was hilarious. Fare for 5 miles Tsh 400, about 16p.



Sitting room by day

Long discussions about safaris in the evening. Felix knows someone (Felix knows everybody) who has a safari vehicle. It still is going to cost 1000's, but Jacky and Kate settle for a day trip to the Lake Manyara Park.



Seminar road



Breakfast table

3



Flower with spiky leaves

September. Doughnuts and boiled eggs for breakfast. Jacky and Kate off to see the animals in Manyara National Park. Rosalind and I went for a walk in the morning along Seminar Road. The picture is of maize harvest on one side with about 50 diesel generators on the other side reinforcing Arusha's precarious flower supply. Back for lunch and snooze, then dala-dala into Arusha to visit internet café again. Stroll into Arusha city centre, pursued by streams of picture sellers, volunteer guides to the Masai Market, and agents for Tanzanite shops. Shake them off with some forceful Swahili.



Jacky and Kate return with pictures of elephants and the classic lions up trees.

4 September. A great day for two reasons. This was the first day of school, so the first chance for Kate to observe the teaching. She was too excited to have breakfast and very apprehensive of the impending classroom visit. The other reason was that it was our wedding anniversary, but more of that later.

Went over with Kate to the Grade I classroom for the 6-7 year olds, to meet teacher Monica. Day starts with very loud singing and dancing. Monica leads dancing with a very fetching little wiggle, and all pupils try to copy the wiggle.



The wiggle



Kate, Monica and headmaster John Bosco



Grade 1 maths revision



First lesson: maths. Addition with carry. Much repetitive recitation of sums. Teacher Monica tells children each to count out 10 Molotovs. I can't hear very well; she actually wants them to count out bottle tops. Blackboard teamwork. Kate and I allowed to mark exercise books. Kate thinks Tuishime pupils way ahead of English counterparts in maths. Next class: English. Revising colours. neither Kate nor I know order of colours in Tanzanian national flag.

After school: first Bicycle Lesson. Lined up the two bicycles on two separate patches of grass, laid out marker cones and waited for the children. We asked for 5 children and got 5 from each class.

Mayhem ensued. Some could ride already, but some could not even grasp the idea of pedalling. One pedalled madly backwards all the time. Running round in circles pushing bikes under blazing sun, suddenly felt very peculiar. Not thirsty, not faint, but my vision was shimmering and whiting out like a seriously overexposed colour slide. It was dehydration, of course, but, though I used to lecture on the subject for many years, that was a symptom that was new to me. Anyway, felt better after 1½ litres of water and some salt and back to work. Children loved it, and had to be prised off the bikes even after bell went for back to classes.



More to follow in Chapter 3.