

04. MORE HARD WORK AND PLEASURABLE EXPERIENCES

The news from Yugoslavia came mainly by letters and with a considerable delay mostly of several weeks or even of a month sometimes. Some correspondence had been lost too and often late receipt resulted in misunderstandings caused by impatient discontents. The news about economy and political developments in Yugoslavia were not encouraging at all. For us it became more difficult to keep silence as regards our real goals that we would never return to Yugoslavia. My father decided to retire after 40+ years of hard work under several different regimes some of them being quite death-defying for his family. The problems linked to selling parents' house in Osijek, their moving to a new habitat and getting on with life in a complex Yugoslav economical situation. We could not understand the situation there and a trial to help in some way would be hopeless. We have had our own dilemmas about how to get rid of our immovable properties that could be confiscated by the State in case of our changing nationality. There existed a big disparity between the life of our close relatives in Yugoslavia and our present way of life with all the commodities we had in Mombasa. Not to mention our secret plans for the future after all.



This was our new toy – a rather small dinghy. Its length of just 10 feet resulted from the used plywood planks from boxes used as sea-worthy packaging of machinery parts.

My workload has increased constantly with elapsed time and particularly after Dr. Mandl has announced that I should care for the overall design work of the extension of Bamburi works. There was still some design work to be done completing the Wazo Hill project in our office. In the meantime the first mechanical drawings had arrived for the new Cement Mill #3 (& #4) for Bamburi Works. Immediately I have started the statical calculation parallel to the drafting of preliminary drawings. It was obvious to me that we would not be able to draft all the working drawings so I sought help from friends in Zagreb that is from Otto Werner's group. I became a bit nervous and impatient and often irritated by some abstruse news from home being the result of my old dilemmas and drawbacks requests. I had to get away from some old or odd ideas of my parents like going to make a Ph.D. as to turn out to be a scientist in Yugoslavia within some time.

Sometimes I was depressive plagued by not having a direct scope in view. I would blow up at times for no real reason. The increasing workload forced me to get accustomed to any new situation and to make necessary compromises as well as to apologize in cases when my temperament got through now and then. My main objective became to complete what I have started and to make the decision fast even if it may look wrong at a moment. "It is better to make the decision instantly then to push it into the infinity." I

have learned that the tension and the responsibility, worries and plight of changes would accompany my work in the future. I would be lonely in my endeavors and compromising would be an essential part in achieving best cooperation with my co-workers. There was the difference in characters and life styles between the Continental people and those ones from United Kingdom. I had to add to all these diversities the fact that of my being from Marshal Tito's Yugoslavia. Had it to be a handicap or not – I did not know!

For a moment or so such contemplations about these somber subjects would get me to feel immobilized or worthless. However the daily workload would soon turn my thoughts and actions into another direction. I could be satisfied and happy seeing results and outcomes of my earlier deeds. The construction progress improved considerably at Wazo Hill site despite the delay in completion of some 3 months or so that had been annoying everybody. The new project of Cement Mill #3 was well underway and the contracted surveyor produced the first and extremely important layout drawing of the present Bamburi plant. This drawing had been fairly vital to start the preliminary layout design for the Works extension that included the first rotary kiln with a provision for another one in future. Thus I did not have much time left for thinking about certain odd ideas that plagued me since we left Yugoslavia for good in 1961.



Vesna's classmates came in full number to our house for Vesna's 11th birthday party.

Vesna had made an excellent start in her new school of Loreto Convent in Mombasa. A school year here had 3 trimesters lasting for 10 weeks with about month long holidays in April, September and December. Vesna started here the 6th grade in January 1965 and her tests results were more than satisfying for us. She read quite a lot of Croatian books sent from home as well as any English book she would get hold of. We asked our parents to send school books from Yugoslavia to widen her learning horizon. Ljiljana went regularly to the school to be informed about Vesna's progress and got quite a lot of compliments about her. Her IQ was one of the highest in her class and the general knowledge was often amazing to her teachers too. Vesna's tests in English were the best ones as well as her knowledge of geography data. Lacking some other literature she found Agatha Christie's crime stories as being interesting and she "gulped" them when we finished reading one after the other.

Vesna became some kind of a class leader particularly after her first party in March 1965. Twenty class mates came in various sorts of costumes so Vesna was dressed like a cat made by Ljiljana. This first party was the experience mainly for Ljiljana who had to look after food and drinks for such a large throng of twenty girls and their parents to some extent too. Girls arrived in a few groups by cars driven by one or the other parents some of them stayed to “help” Ljiljana. My only task was to pull and fix cables carrying lampions and other kind of decorative bits. Of course the first guests arrived before we could finish all our tasks but this did not disturb anybody and probably had boosted up the party spirit. The party was a great success and Ljiljana got a lot of compliments as for the best party food ever provided. After the costume party was over Vesna’s mates were enthralled with and it became a chit-chat story in Loreto Convent School.

After the construction work on the runway was over I recalled that Bwana Mzee has asked me whether we could build a tennis court near his house when returns in March. He was quite happy with the runway and the new commodity of using company’s own aircraft now. I understood his “desire” as an instruction and choose a suitable place straight on of the short access path from the main road to our houses. At the junction the right path led to his house and few other company’s houses where as the left one went to our house. The construction of the tennis court had been easy and one constructed it almost in same way as the runway. Though not everything went smooth as intended so one day when I returned home for lunch but I could not see the roller at work. This ogre-machine just disappeared!



The Mombasa Old Harbor seen from the English Point alias Ras Kidomoni.

I stopped to investigate where this monster could be about. To my surprise I found the roller lying down in an adjacent syncline obviously slipping of the tennis court narrow area. I phoned to Jock Reed who ordered one of his heavy Caterpillars to the court yard. Heavy chains had been attached to the roller and slowly and steadily the Caterpillar pulled out the heavy roller undamaged but ruining the court base in its course. The later damage had to be simple to repair but we had to find another driver for the roller first. The old driver was stiffly scared almost to death as the heavy machine slid down the slope him still at roller command. At last a green coloured bitumen mix with fine sand had been applied as for the final court surface that the roller levelled flawlessly.

A high fence of mesh wire had been erected around the court and the court lines drawn in white colour in time for Bwana Mzee's arrival. Of course the first tennis game was played by him as an inauguration and every player was pleased with this court. We got compliments from Mombasa Tennis Club members asking for advice and eventually help improving their courts. Having these heavy road building machines on the spot I asked Dr. Mandl for the permit to grade up of the access path to his house. This lane had few rather narrow curves that one failed to see the oncoming traffic. Dr. Mandl had few smaller accidents here with a "taka-taka" ("rubbish") lorry. With the permission granted to Jock and me got to find an easy solution and ordered the Caterpillar to set out a path with lesser gradient and slightly wider curves to give a better view. Of course one had to clear some thick bushes and greenery to achieve this fast during a morning. On that day at lunch time Ljiljana said that Mrs. Mandl called her to warn about her husband's furiousness regarding the new road layout.



We visited the Diani Beach of the South Coast to Mombasa several times. The left picture shows waves spattering out from holes in the coral reef. Knocker did not like this at all as at right.

In the afternoon I returned to the HO where I was called to MD's office ASAP. Well, at the end of me being "thoroughly wringed" by Bwana Mzee the whole affair turned out to "a great storm in a glass of water". I had to give "the promise" to Mzee that the surrounding would be patched up as it happened to be before. Of course this was not to be possible but Jock Reed cleverly arranged fresh soil to be spread over scared and graded sand slopes. Later one has planted several bushes found somewhere in the virgin bush land out of Bwana Mzee's view. Fortunately the main rainy season started soon after Dr. Mandl left for Europe and within a few days slopes turned green as before. After his return in May Dr. Mandl had accepted the new road layout without any snag and he did not scold me after all on.

During Mandls' absence we had more free weekends but the weather worsened with several scattered rains at the Coast. Therefore we decided to make few safaris and on a Sunday in February started from home at 05:30 shortly before sunrise. We were at Buchuma Gate of Tsavo East (about 120km) at 07:15 and proceeded straight to Aruba Lodge seeing many gazelles and elephants on the way. We did not stopped and continued to far Sala place at the park most north-eastern corner and next to Galana River. Here we turned westwards and followed the right bank of Galana looking for rhinos and buffalos. Vesna was almost starving and she found hard-boiled eggs to peel of to eat with a sandwich. Suddenly smell of spoiled egg wafted over to us in front and Ljiljana started scolding Vesna about this unpleasantness. Vesna's reply was shockingly open: "It is not me but some fluid oozes out below my bank-seat." I stopped the car instantly!



Galana River flowing amidst Tsavo East with Lava Hills in backdrop left. There was always a lot of drift-wood deposited between rocks as seen at right.

A brief inspection proved Vesna's innocence but the liquid was acid from the car battery. By Jove, must something like this happen in middle of NOTHING? I lifted the rear bank seat and saw that the battery overturned as its holding strap snapped because of rust. We lifted and provisionally fixed the battery in its holding pan hoping that some liquid has been left inside that would enable to start the engine. Ljiljana wiped up the trickle and washed the corroded area with water that stopped that awkward smell of rotten eggs. However this incident would cause some unpleasant consequences a few months later.

After a while the engine would ignite and we drove on along a deserted road at right bank of Galana River. The obviously rarely used earthen road had many ups and downs so I hoped that there would not be any obstacle on an ascend forcing me to stop the engine. We passed the swampy Sabaki area and saw a rhino too far away to take pictures. Suddenly we noticed an elephant standing in middle of an ascending path – no chance to pass it with still running engine so I had to stop at the dip point. I did not dare to stop the car engine waiting and all the inmates sent "prayers" to the mighty animal to clear the way for us to pass. The elephant lifted his trunk and waved its mighty ear lobes looking in our direction and ... finally decided to move away. It all happened close to Lugards Falls on Galana so we got out of the car to have a look of this interesting and wild sight.

Of course we did not switch of the car engine to continue onwards to Voi and the Petrol station that was close to Voi Gate. Here one filled some distilled water and added a few drops of acid into the battery that should allow a save return to Bamburi at least. We lost our appetites and quenched our hunger and thirst with the safety "iron ration" we have learned to carry with us going on longer safaris since. We arrived safely to Bamburi well before sunset but the air had been rather hot on the way back so the best of all was to rush down to the sea to get a good swim after all the excitements. Knocker was happy and hopped in waves of incoming tide with greatest enjoyment like us too.



Ljiljana and Zvonko sit on a rock amid Galana River strong flow due to recent rains.

Our gardeners started clearing of areas in the virgin bush and put on fire to tidy up some soil patches for planting maize. The fire send some small animals to run away for safety where as birds got a slap-up meal of insects and other creeping animals. Monkeys became a real pest looking for water and green sprouts on papaya trees that made Knocker tired and hot after often chasing. Ngoa, the gardener showed Ljiljana a large hole next to the house that he thought to be of a long legged rat. They put a water hose in and after a while stopped the water flow believing that the rat had drowned. Suddenly the head of the male lizard “Miško” at the entrance protruded out of the opening so Ljiljana granted him the tenancy and gave some bits of meat as an excuse for her drenching attempt.

The Company had a contract with Mr. Baihji, an Indian, for the transport of bulk cement from the plant to the Silo station at English Point. Recently his bulk carriers took off the gate steel wings and destroyed a number of small bollards within the plant and at the entrance. These vehicles came from Kariba Dam construction site and consisted of pulling engine fitted on with two pots for 20t cement and a trailer with one pot for 40t of cement. One named the vehicle as “Octopus” looking rather clumsy and it was not easy to steer it around curves with small radius. The newly produced plant general layout drawing enabled the design office to set areas for the coming plant extension as well as for certain new service buildings like garage cum workshop etc. Roads width and curves radiuses had been controlled and where necessary certain adjustments had to be ordered and/or repairs undertaken. Thus the Gate house and the entrance roads had to be widened that included certain amendment of the massive fence between the Head Office and the Reimbursement Office at opposite of.

At first the Building Department (BD) set a number of bollards fitted Ø6” (15cm) steel pipes with concrete in dug out holes. These steel bollards were not a “match” for a heavy Octopus and within few days most of the pipes were uprooted or bent. I got really upset at the waste of work and got on a new design for the bollards. The new type consisted of a Ø1’ (30cm) concrete pipe with 8 reinforcement bars cast in that protruded out from the lower end to be cast into the foundation hole. The top got tinted on strips of glowing yellow and black paint (with glass splinters) and when the foundation holes were ready we choose a weekend to cast in the dozen of these new bollards.

On Monday morning stood an immobile “Octopus” engine with broken front wheels axis in the entrance. The right wheel caught a new bollard that withstood the impact slightly slanted only. I have expected this to happen but the drivers did not know the new bollards resistance strength though! Dick alias General Manager was not pleased with Mr. Baihji’s blaming for the loss of one of his vehicle. After a hearty conversation and few cups of tea one agreed on a mutual help to repair the damaged vehicle but the bollards would remain where they had been fixed. In future there were no more accidents of this kind even with bollards that had the same appearance but were cast with less reinforcement or were made less strong.



Zvonko sits on a border stone at the south approach ramp for the Kilifi ferry-boat shown at right.

In the wake of our exploration of the North Coast we choose to visit Whispering Palms Hotel short of Kikambala village. Mandl bought some land here and started cultivating pineapples of excellent quality. Bwana Mzee had studied agriculture and got his Ph.D. in this subject too. During the ripening season we could buy pineapples enjoying their taste and size as they were bigger than the ones offered on the market in Mombasa. Ljiljana tried to plant some of in her garden by cutting flat the green top of a plant and left to dry a bit before planting it in prepared sandy soil. Unfortunately we did not stay long enough to earn her fruits so we had continued buying those from Kikambala when available.

Whispering Palms were about 15km north from our place and one had to cross the Mtwapa Creek on the way there either on toll-bridge (a former military suspension bridge) or to use a pontoon-ferry linked from shore to shore by a chain. Two chanting men pulled on the chain making a rhythmical cranking noise. The toll was one Shilling only worth for chanting and fun with these ferry men so we gave some extra money about the same we would have to pay on the bridge. Whispering Palms Hotel was located in a thick palm trees grove and the huts stood next to the white sandy beach. The reef is here closer to the natural bank so the access with simple even when there was some water in the lagoon. It was here where we started collecting shells and Ljiljana became an erudite conchologist with time. *{Today the Paradise Hotel stands on the same place of the Whispering Palms Hotel that completely burned down after a terrorist attack on November 28, 2002. Nearly 100 people were killed or wounded in this attack.}*

The owner of Whispering Palms was Hungarian who married an English woman and they had a small son. We have had a friendly contact particularly Ljiljana who talked Hungarian thus pleasing the owner greatly. The later was representative of OLIVETTI and offered me to buy a portable typing machine at a reduce price what I did of course. From now on we would type our letters on this machine instead of handwriting making

our correspondence easier. It seemed that the word spread around regarding my professional practice and activities at the factory fast. Thus the Hungarian asked me to advise him on prospective construction of swimming pools at his hotel and his house at Nyali respectively. Of course my interest and professional drive could not decline such an offer despite of lot of work I had about my head. This acquaintance lasted throughout our stay in Kenya so we often visited Whispering Palms to lunch or dine there.



We are out to the reef at retreating tide. Here Vesna and Ljiljana are “dressed” for shell collecting.

Sheila White, Chief Chemist wife, was the first to start systematic collection of shells on near Mombasa coastlines and reef. She showed Ljiljana where to look for shells protecting hands by leather gloves and using a steel rod with a hook to upturn small rocks etc. They left most of the animals where they found them taking one or two best of samples for their collection. The shells had to be cleaned from meat and there were several methods some of them rather stinking if the shell was left to rot in open. In the later case flies put their eggs in the meat and the larvae cleared the soft part after that one had just to wash properly the shell. Still the odour was often rather bad and it was better by far to let the ants do the same job under soil cover. In seldom cases one would washout the shell meat in lye taking appropriate care. With time the collection grew gradually representing most of the shell that could be found in this region. It was Sheila who was the spirit of new conchologists on the Coast guided by S. Peter Dance's book on “Shells and shell collection”.

Shortly before we left Khartoum our friends working for UNESCO got me a complete set of brand new EOS CANON camera including few special lenses. The normal lens had $\text{Ø}70\text{mm}$ and $f=0.97$ that was extremely light sensitive but weighted 700g though. In the Sudan I used AGFA Colour film material giving a bluish tint to the slides that was acceptable with the shrill sunshine and yellowish desert as background. In Kenya this did work fine so I switched to KODAK products and it took me so awhile until my pictures (mostly as slides) got the wanted quality particularly in connection with the new camera gear. It was an advantage for KODAK film material as there was a laboratory in Nairobi where films had been developed and risking the loss in the post was greatly reduced. Many hundreds of pictures had been taken during our sojourn in Kenya with the EOS CANON equipment some of them we sent to our families in Yugoslavia mostly like duplicates or of lesser quality.



Ljiljana was gone for shell collecting on the reef. There she turned up rock by rock looking for shells or mollusks.

The news from Yugoslavia was not encouraging at all. My parents still did not sell their house in Osijek and would not move to our flat in Zagreb after all. Our flat has been used by few of our relatives so my sister stayed in for several months. She found the flat rather cold and she would not recommend it to our parents thus. Ljiljana and I decided that the time came that my mother-in-law Mara starts to look after a prospective buyer after all. She was the only who knew well that we do not intend to return to Yugoslavia and we sent her our powers of attorney authorizing her to deal according our instructions.

My working permit in Kenya was extended until the end of 1966 and the Yugoslav embassy extended our visas for two years by issuing new passports for Ljiljana and Vesna that were stolen soon after our arrival to Kenya in August 1965. We got the tripartite pass allowing us to unrestricted travel in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda during our stay in Kenya. With renewed driving licences we could drive in all of the three countries of East African Union (EAU). Thus we assumed that we would stay in Kenya until end of 1966 at least and I had to inform the British Embassy asking to extend our affidavits for immigration to Australia until further notice. Of course nobody had knowledge about our odds of taking this decision.

With Easter 1965 started the main rainy season with locally restricted downpours lasting for a short time only. One never knew where the water cascade would open in mostly overcast sky and this experience was known to us being accustomed in Khartoum to sandstorms preceding rains that lasted about a week or so only. Rains at Kenya's coast were cloudburst almost without any wind but with nearly 100% humidity. Daily temperatures dropped to 22°C what made it pleasant when the sun broke out here or there the cloudy bulk. One focused more on the inside chores say writing letters or sorting out slides etc. We had to get a replacement for the broken down tape recorder that was still under guarantee and it took some time until it came from Nairobi.



Our three musketeers: Ngoa, the gardener and Karissa and Mwachiro, house servants.

For my name's day in February I got a nice present that of a stereo gramophone with two detachable loudspeakers. We have agreed to purchase per month one LP record of classic music and one with entertainment music. On one occasion a Kenyan customer offered us to buy a record he had chosen for himself with popular folks' music from our country. We had to control our new passion otherwise there would not be any limit for of collecting LP records always bearing in mind that we would have to move from Kenya again. Some LP records had been sent from home as to be a present for my birthday in June. Ljiljana was rather unhappy seeing them to be deformed probably due to heat during the transport. Ljiljana got somebody's advice and devised the method to make them plain again.

The LP was inserted between two glass panes and weighted on the top one when placing the whole setup in the full sun. After a while in the heat the LP disc became flattened without distorting the grooves after all. Our cluster of LPs swelled up too fast and often we listened to the recorded music sitting on the balcony turning the tune on to the maximum. Smolniker would sometimes call to put a certain piece he liked to listen provided the wind direction had been suitable for the tune "traveling open air" for some 50m. The dining cum dayroom worked like an echo-shell and the new type of gramophone with sapphire needle produced marvelous sounds.

Our passion to collect various items as we used it in Khartoum got hold of us again as we knew that we would stay in Kenya for longer period now. In background of our mind was the fact of moving somewhere else after but the ardor was stronger. Our crates sent from Khartoum to Vienna arrived there sound and safe and transport charges were paid by the Sudanese Government recently. In a good mood of this news Ljiljana got some fun painting eggs for the Easter. First she tried to get in Mombasa shops some special colors for this one gets in Europe. Unfortunately one sold her "food colors" that did not keep fast to an egg shell when put in water. So she had to revert to the "classic" method of using onion to get the reddish color with various ornaments of leaves etc. that was greatly cherished by Vesna's school mates. Our home staff liked these decorated eggs too as they never have seen something like it. Ljiljana took the chance to find out how old they are but this was almost an impossible task.



At left picture is Ngoa with his second wife and three children. Ngoa's daughter Machose was Ljiljana's best friend seen at right.

The eldest of the three of them was Ngoa say 29-year old who had 2 wives one of whom came to visit with a shaven head and carrying a small daughter. The naked child had a skirt of calico held by a tie with several coins with a hole strung on. Karissa came by exchange through Mgandi and stayed with us until the end. He was Christian and stayed some days with his wife when she lost her first baby. Karissa was a good worker and reliable in house works. The youngest of them was Mwachiro Bongo (= Brain) about 20+ and who was the most faithful of all. He would look after the dog during the period when we were away later. Ljiljana found Mwachiro looking like a "soaked mouse" when he broke the thermometer and tried to collect the spilled quicksilver with his barren hands. Ljiljana had tried hard to show Mwachiro how to sign his name but he pleaded for mercy and that he would preferred pounding stone than hold a pencil.

Mandls returned early May and Bwana Mzee and I have started our contests in table tennis and tennis (on the new perfect court!) and sometimes playing chess too. It became the standard ritual that the elderly couple came to us for dinner on Thursdays that turned into good occasions to talk about personal or soar points of our lives then. At one of these meetings I took my chance and asked Dr. Mandl for leave that we would like to spend in Kenya. Bwana Mzee approved a 3-week leave in August as Vesna term holidays started on August 1 lasting to September 15, 1965. Thus I could start planning the itinerary and making reservation in various lodges or hotels along the route. There were several consecutive days of strong rains in May and it was not pleasant to go swimming due to low temperature of the sea as well as of the air around 23°C. On dry days blew a northerly cold wind that picked up the fine sand and the walking on beach was not pleasant because of the sand abrasive feeling on the barren skin. Thus it was more agreeable to play table tennis or tennis that enabled me keeping my weight at about 97kg.

Unexpectedly one day mid May appeared in my office a young Hungarian Mr. Tibor Gaal who graduated architecture on Vienna University. Tibor escaped from Hungary during the revolution days there and was on his way to South Africa to look for a job

there. After a brief talk with Dr. Mandl it was agreed to offer Tibor a job in Company's Design office. However Tibor would not accept this chance and left Mombasa for SA where he had expected to find more opportunities. We liked Tibor's determination and delightful way of chatting but we had to accept his decision still. I believed that Tibor could fit well in our team as I needed a trustful colleague in my job. I was receiving more recognition of my work recently and my competence as the engineer was getting good results too. The Contractor's Site Engineer at Wazo Hill construction site at Dar-es-Salaam had been discharged after all but the completion delay of some 3 months could not be reversed anymore now.

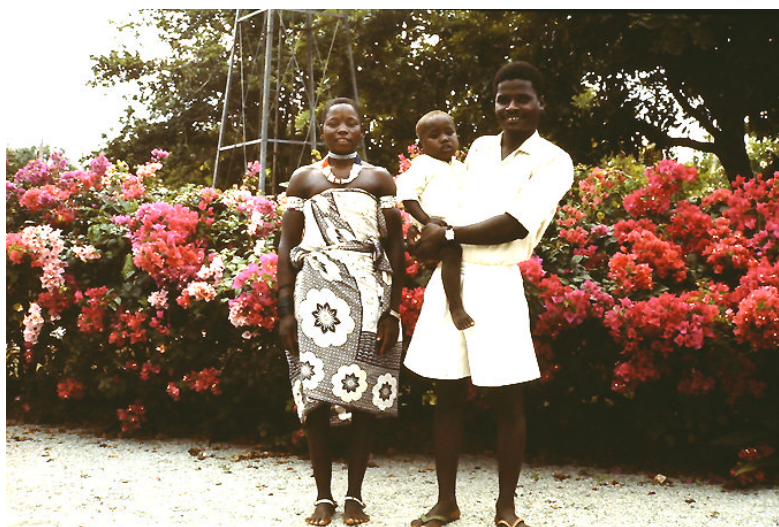


At left one of Ngoa's wife carrying one of her two children who are shown in a close up at right.

The berthing of a Russian ship in Kilindini Harbor stirred up the political atmosphere in Kenya. According to the newspapers reports this ship carried a lot of heavy arms like heavy artillery, armored vehicles and tanks obviously 2nd World War vintage weapons obviously refurbished and freshly painted. At first nobody knew anything about who has ordered these items and the ship was put under police quarantine. Then the Russian ship sailed to Dar-es-Salaam where some weapons had been unloaded. After this the ship returned to Kilindini for a day or so but had left without discharging anything to an uncertain destination. In Kenya the rumor made rounds about Mr. Odingo Odinga of Luo tribe (Western Kenya) needed some arms to overthrow the Kenya's Government. Mr. Odinga was in strong opposition to Jomo Kenyatta who was the President of Kenya and led its government since its Independence in 1964. Was it just "a storm in the glass of water" or a warning for the future of an unrest? Nobody knew the truth after all!

At begin of June we got some excitement in the factory. The workers went on an illegal strike aiming to stop the production. Nobody knew the reason behind the general labor strike in Kenya but the plant did not stop working although the output had been slightly reduced. The expatriate staff members as well as the clerical staff run the plant quite well and the export of bulk cement functioned well throughout the 3 days that was as long the strike lasted. Ladies of the expatriates organized the ordering and supply of the food and other necessities and delivered it to their homes. The school-bus driver drove the kids to Mombasa and back explaining that his duty has nothing to do with the strike

off Workers' Union. The whole spook stopped as unexpectedly as it had started and the production went up to its maximum within several hours after the strike stopped.



Mwachiro, our house servant, poses with his family in front of bougainvilleas in full bloom.

We celebrated my 40th birthday quietly as possible but the “word” spread fast around. Ljiljana happily produced the “flattened” LP records sent from my parents that included some with our folks’ music and “kolo” dances. She performed some of she remembered from her times with LADO the Croatian national ensemble. Vesna with giggling much at her performed so she stopped with the explanation not having the proper stamina for it anymore. Both Mandls came to us for a festive dinner created by Ljiljana’s magic that always pleased the elderly couple. I took the chance asking Dr. Mandl about how long I would stay in Bamburi but his answer was rather vague about starting a design office somewhere in Europe. For my office birthday party Ljiljana produced a fancy tart and a cake “medley” that she considered to be a flop. However all her products were greatly appreciated at my office party but the “medley” won the top rating of all. Who could understand people’s taste for goodies?

Steadily I was getting replies from various lodges and hotels to my booking letters in link to our first great safari in Kenya scheduled from August 20 to September 10 in summer of 1965. Vesna helped me in controlling the travel route because she was the best in geography and history in her class. She became a prize-money for each best of note in any subject that she used to buy her favorite books. Vesna was her class’s librarian so she had an unlimited access to the school library too. It seemed that the Kenyan climate caused Vesna grow faster getting to a height of 148cm at 59,5kg of weight. Her growing became a problem because she had outgrown all of her warmer cloths that we brought to Kenya. Ljiljana was getting some new warmer clothes that she might need during the forthcoming safari. Ljiljana had some “hard time” to explain certain woman’s matters to Vesna when confronted with her class mate’s questioning because the nuns did not teach about in the Loreto Convent School of Mombasa.

The rainy season did not fulfill everybody’s expectations causing drought in several parts of Kenya. Thus it was necessary to import some quantity of maize and a large shipment from USA arrived to Kilindini harbor mid July of 1965. Yet this shipment set off some confusion because the American maize corn was yellow but the Kenyans were used to the white one. After some protracted time of elucidation and official revelations the market accepted the yellow maize corn to be sold in famine stricken areas.

Ljiljana's garden was just beautiful and her endeavor got praise from everyone who knew this place from before. René Haller as Company's Chief Gardener commended her efforts too. He got to like Ljiljana a lot when she sympathized with him regarding the killing of 6,6m long python near Bamburi village. René knew about that this great snake exists but could not get hold of it in time before a villager killed it with a spear because it devoured one cattle of his. It was a first-rate darker marked skin but bigger than those Ljiljana got in Khartoum to make a long coat of. Swallows built several nests at corners of balconies of the house and we were waked up by twitter and chirping of various birds every morning. The birds perceptibly returned to this garden where they found nesting places and feed for their new born totos (toto = child). Ngoa got Ljiljana's permission to pursue crows that were a real pest here. She would give him KSh5 for each one of he brought her as dead one. I do not remember that there were many hit by Ngoa's sling shots as crows are rather clever birds noticing the danger instantly.



At left is a brown snake that appeared out of sandy ground in our garden. Our monitor lizard aka varan that caught a rat in the coral rockery on day.

The afternoons walk on the beach became pleasing with everyday in July so we spent more time there to Knocker's delight too. The beach walks and lagoon sojourns stayed deep in our memories as the most romantic hours of a day. At those times there were no tourists around and one had the beach alone for oneself. Our dog would be absent for a day or two when he was in romantic mood that is "in love" with an unknown she-dog around. Knocker kept going after "love affairs" despite rather hard washing procedures he had to endure afterwards.

Unpredictably one day July Tibor Gaal appeared in my office and asked me whether he could get the job that had been offered to him. Tibor got robbed of all his belongings at Johannesburg so his South African dream just disintegrated. With a help of few people at the Hungarian Embassy and his brother living in Finland Tibor got enough recourses to the passage getting him back to Bamburi. Of course he got the work immediately and I found him to become a good co-worker during the rest of my time being in charge of the Company's design office. The construction progress at the Wazo Hill plant improved significantly and one could look forward to see the end of it after all. With the presence of Tibor in the office I could spare more time to work on the design and take added care about the construction to begin on the extension of Bamburi Works.



Ljiljana and Vesna work hard upturning rock by rock looking for shells or mollusks along the Bamburi Beach and Diani Beach at low tides.

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