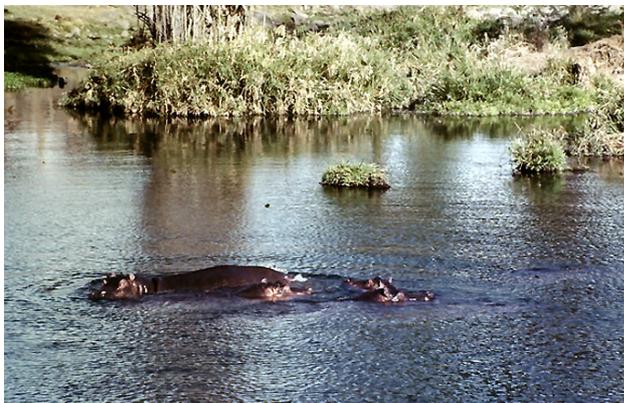


06-1 OUR SECOND YEAR GETS ON IN 1965 AT BAMBURI

We have returned home from our 20-day safari on the late afternoon on Wednesday of September 8, 1965. Our home staff was too happy to see us again except for Mwachiro who was supposed to look after Knocker. Mwachiro explained with misery that he could not hold the dog for not going away as there must be some "lady" in the nearby village he is interested in. Well, we did not mind it at present because all three of us were longing for a good bath and a long sleep. One had brought in the entire luggage first and Ngoa one of servants washed the car outside and inside thoroughly later. This I have noticed the next morning only before going to the factory. The weather was fine but cool for having swim in the sea what all of us were yearning for during the safari.

Of course I was greatly expected at the office as obviously the construction works at Wazo Hill near Dar-es-Salaam were in their final phases. Also the construction works started at Bamburi Works at the new Garage cum Workshop, the new crusher and Cement Mill 3. The 3 houses for members of the Medium staff could be seen behind the bougainvillea bushes planted along the factory approaching road already. Also the contract has been signed with Mowlem International Kenya Ltd. for the construction works on the Bamburi Works extension that included the first rotary kiln here. I knew that there was no escape for me and just plunged into the job at once. The first visit to Wazo has been booked for the next week by my secretary. Tibor Gaal proved to be an efficient deputy during my absence too so we made together the first inspection of local worksites in that morning too. Of course I had some "serious words" with the Garage Superintendent regarding the maintenance of my car. I have threatened him that I would "change" the design of his office in the new Garage if they would not maintained my car perfectly using and use original VW spare parts in future.



The Mzima Springs pool with the home-hippos at ease despite plenty of fishes around d them.

Ljiljana inspected her tomato plants and discovered to her dismay that most of the ripe fruits were picked by birds. Ngoa toured with her through the gardens and told her that he had killed a green mamba (?) snake with his sling. The snake was after the birds on tomato plants but he missed her at first so it returned the next day when it met her final destiny. Ljiljana got used to the killing of snakes after one young black mamba slithered down her hand when pruning a flower in the pot. Of course the gardeners saw often green snakes in tree crowns that were looking after bird's nests. Ngoa was an excellent sling shooter but seldom would he bring the killed snake for inspection. All the natives considered any kind of snakes to be "kali sana" (very dangerous).

To our greatest surprise Ljiljana and Vesna received the copy of their stolen passports after long last. It took almost one year of correspondences and urgings the Yugoslav embassies in Khartoum and Nairobi to get these copies. They did not consider them as responsible so Dr.

Mandl had asked his lawyer Marko Kalodjera in Zagreb to intervene. The ways of God are long but the ones of Yugoslav offices were much longer though! However the extension problem of our time limited (1 year!) Yugoslav visas were still unsolved. Thus we were staying unlawfully abroad for the time being from the Yugoslav point of view at least. We could not tell this to our relatives who lived in Yugoslavia as it would be harassing and make them anxious about our future too. They were confronted there with a rising excessiveness that made my father worrying about his going to retire and closing down his lawyers practice at such uncertain times. The Old Dinar currency had been exchanged to the New Dinar by 100:1 that caused more apprehension to them too.

A week after our return I have started writing the report about our "JOURNEY ACROSS KENYA IN 1965". It became a rather long and detailed report supported by Vesna's record on animals' sightings and personal notes from a diary jointly kept by Ljiljana and me. We sent a total of 12 color slides films and 2 B&W negative films that Vesna shot with my old ZORKII camera (Russian copy of the Leica camera 1940) for development.

Vesna took 2 or 3 photos of each event as one each for her two cousins as she did not know about the possibility to make any number copies from a negative photo. After we got the films back we kept a total of pictures from say 10 color slide films as the less good (?) photos had been sent to our relatives. With Vesna's photos we had have any problem to make the decision what to send home.



**Left the entrance to Loreto Convent in Mombasa where Vesna went to school.
In right picture showing the School Race Vesna is at far right side.**

Our slides were almost all perfect each reminding us on many exciting moments we have had during the safari. Thus we checked and checked again all slides before we could agree upon which slide we might spare. The later ones we mailed to our relatives knowing that we would not see them again. We wrote a letter per week almost all the time we left Yugoslavia but the post from our relatives did not come so regularly. Vesna often added a few lines in our letters to our families at home but we had to wait for their correspondence for longer periods every so often. The only conspirator of writing in our families was my sister. Vesna had taken an extra photo each during safari for Ninoslav, my sister's only son, every time. Nino was a few years younger of her and just started going to the school. Vesna had a problem with him as would not understand why he could not write to her immediately.

Vesna started the 3rd term in Standard 6 class that counted a total of 17 pupils. In the previous term Vesna was the second of and got a rather good report particularly as the best pupil in English. The report said: "Vesna is a lively, hard worker. She is a keen and enthusiastic in all her work. Vesna's examination results are excellent." It ended with the

following general remark: "A very good report. Vesna is an interested and hard working pupil. Well done!" Of course we were rather proud of her and had to give in at some of her wishes like the permission to spend more time reading. So it happened one day that Vesna got an aquarium for her usage from somebody but rest of work on was a combined experience for my two girls. Vesna did not have any problem to get new books from a dependable source as she was her Class' librarian. The collection of books in Loreto Convent School Library was certainly of a well controlled quality too.

Our dog Knocker turned out to behave like a village devotee (in Croatian "seoska lola") at certain times of the year. He would stay away for 2-3 days to return filthy and smelly as well as famished after. Yet he came back despite rather unpleasant procedures that expected him after such escapades. He had to be washed properly with a lot of soap and water that he did not like at all. Knocker was lucky if there was sea high enough so Ljiljana took him to the beach. There she carried this torturous business partly in the sea followed by thorough washing under the shower near the boat ramp. On the way home Knocker got rid of the water from his fur and wolfed down the food he found in his bowl. After Ljiljana had check the dog for ticks by combing its fur and see if there was any open wound or a new scar.



Ljiljana did not have any problem to be friendly even with an elephant in the orphanage at Voi.

Obviously we had a serious "educational" problem with our dog Knocker. The dog would stay away for several days and the longest I remember was of 7 days. Ljiljana got very angry and would name Knocker the worst names she could remember like: tramp, bastard, hobo, vagrant, lazy-bones etc. She rebuked it of not being a proper watch-dog and chided it because of its obesity. Clearly our dog was liked by bitches and was a welcome guest in nearby villages where it had been known as fearless and a strong fighter too. Thus the villagers fed the dog well and allowed it of staying with a bitch as long as liked. Yet it happened one day during our walk that we found a black chicken about 2-week old roaming on the beach. The moment the chick saw Knocker it became its dedicated fan and followed the dog everywhere. This friendship did not last for too long but we had to recognize a different quality in Knocker's nature too.

It cooled down as per early in October and one expected the rainy season to start soon. Although all of us went through the phase of colds cum running noses before we went on the safari the approaching weather brought the same to most of the people here. For me the loss of a single person in the design office was almost a near disaster. Drawings were badly needed at all corners of the construction sites. The airmailing of parcels with drawings from cooperates in Zagreb had often lagged behind the schedule causing me severe headaches in daily contacts with the contractor. All of us had health some kind of a health problem

typical for this “bad time of the year”. I tried to sweat it out playing tennis that helped a bit until I had to realize that my recurrent asthma could be a source of the trouble too. Certainly this time of the year was not good for swimming in the sea.



Ljiljana feeds sugar cubes to renowned RUFUS that was one of orphans in Voi.

In November the rainy season lasted longer and the rains were rather intensive most of the month. Vesna urged us to go on a safari anywhere but there was no point to get up very early on a Saturday just to view the “hanging” clouds over the sea or a light drizzle brought by the wind instead of bright sunshine. The letters from my parents became a rarity for some time as they were in the process to sell their house in Osijek and move their household to where we did not know yet. However we knew that they would not come to visit us for Christmas for sure now. We expected Captain Mifka on a Yugoslav m/s “Jelsa” to arrive to Mombasa harbor during November. Our idea was that my parents would travel on his ship on that Ljiljana and Vesna were passengers twice coming to the Sudan in 1962. By end of November we received a large number of letters from home including one from Nino for Vesna. Many praised my efforts for writing the report of 28 pages with one line spacing too. Also there were many comments and queries about how we dared to undertake such a trip in a VW car with so many deficiencies. Shauria Mungo! (God’s Business)

Mandls had arrived in November at the usual time so I was the sparing partner for Dr. Mandl often providing the weather permitted. Bwana Mzee was very happy with the tennis court construction as the drainage was functioning perfectly so it was not necessary to dry puddles after a rain at all. Ljiljana was happy with my body weight of about 94kg most probably as the result of rather intensive walking the construction sites and working very hard in the office. At the tennis court Dr. Mandl chased me all around the court too. Yet I had the best time of my life here living through the fourth year in Africa already! I almost forgot about all the miseries and tragic events I had survived twenty years ago.

On November 11, 1965 Ian Smith declared the Independence of former the Colony of Southern Rhodesia thus opposing the British Empire rules. The political situation in East Africa became precarious when the President of Tanzania Nyerere requested as for OAU (of 1963) that Great Britain takes a military action against the apostate Colony. The British subjects in Tanzania and other East African countries were told to be ready to leave at a short notice of 2-3 days only. The worst state of affairs was in Tanzania where as in Kenya things seemed to calm down after the first shock. There was a lot of subversive political exploitation from the Arab countries and China as their influence increased in the general

public opinion. Ranka became a “victim” of this confusion as she could not visit us during the forthcoming Christmas holidays. She was the daughter of my colleague Ozren Sekulić who worked as Chief Civil Engineer for the Government of Tanzania. However we would meet the Sekulić family during the safari foreseen for the Christmas holidays later.



Ljiljana got in a distress when the young elephant noticed that Rufus gets some tidbits.

With Dr. Mandl's arrival started visits of a few VIPs including two funerals of elderly expatriates who worked for the Company for longer time. The MD of Blue Circle was the most important visitor that I have had learned here. Mr. Milne was interested in the construction works progress in Wazo Hill as well as in Bamburi and I had to show him around. Blue Circle UK Ltd. was the major partner to Cementia Holding in both projects. We have visited Wazo Hill using Company's hired aircraft and Mr. Milne was impressed by the efficiency of our travel operation. The last stages of various construction works at Wazo Hill became somehow chaotic due to political unrest caused by General Smith of Rhodesia. Yet the erection of plant parts was well under way and one could expect to start with trial runs of certain plant sections as early in 1966. One had estimated that the production would start gradually in the second half of 1966.

Back to Bamburi works one bumped into construction works at any corner of the plant. I did not have time to be sick because of the lasting pressure partly in the design office the rest of day I went round the many working sites. Another of my headache was when my coworkers felt unwell or caught a cold what was quite normal at any season change say around end of November. The perfect medicine was for me to play tennis sweating out a “running nose”. Frequently Ljiljana and I cum Knocker walked after dinner on the beach to get rid get off my thoughts before the well deserved rest. Walking on the white sand lit by full moon was an absolute sensation.

By mid December arrived several letters from home including two written by Cvijeta my sister. She explained in many details why my parents would not move to our former flat in Zagreb. There were other uncertainties affecting parents' decision not to visit us in Kenya say for a Christmas. In part the selling of my parent's house in Osijek had been delayed for the next year. This also had been linked to my father to have closing down his lawyer practice then. We have regretted their decision not being able to come for Christmas 1955. It saddened us deeply for not being able to give them a pleasurable life staying with us for any time they liked. We understood the hardness of life they were going through as well as that our former flat was too cold and unlikable for them. Of course we could not tell them anything

about our plans for the future knowing too well the regime's political oppressions and economic difficulties in Yugoslavia.



This was the orphan Rufus head en face waiting for Ljiljana to hand over some more sugar cubes.

Cvijeta wrote about our parents getting elder and it would be the time that I would return to Yugoslavia. We were there on home leave in summer of 1963 when the Authority took our passport away accusing me about unlawful staying in the Sudan. It was then that I decided to put in use my affidavit with the British Embassy in Zagreb. Our intention was to immigrate to Australia so I traveled to Osijek to say farewell to my parents. By mere chance Cvijeta suggested that I travel in her Department's car (she was working in the General Hospital in Osijek) to Beograd to see the International Cooperation Authority there. I travel there as to check regarding visas but have not tell her the real reasons about. The rest is the history now!

After some intervention from Beograd we got our passports with visas lasting for one year only. We have ended our holidays on the Island Hvar first after we left Yugoslavia for good not telling anybody about our firm decision and future plans at all. We could not tell my family at home that our 7 crates weighing some 640kg had been expedited from the Sudan to Vienna (Austria) under a strictly confidential procedure. It has been our good friend Sayed Abdel Halim Shawki in Khartoum who arranged changing of the addressee on all crates at Port Sudan custom's storeroom. This had to be done to deceive Yugoslav Embassy's "watchdogs" who wanted to see whether our crates would go to Yugoslavia as agreed upon.

Unfortunately my sister never wanted to understand the real reasons why I could not continue my professional life in Tito's Yugoslavia. I have tried several times to suggest her that my judgment had been guided by certain reasons (like the Death March 1945) that were an absolute taboo to talk about. She never accepted my decisions regarding going to work abroad and reproached me leaving my homeland Yugoslavia. Now I had a good job and the prospects were too good to put them at any risk by returning to that state. In principle I could get a home leave from Kenya after 3 years of service here in which case the Company would pay the travel costs (about £800 for 3 of us). However it was not likely that I would stay here that long. CEMENTIA HOLDING in Zurich, the Parent company for me now, had the intention to start a design office in Europe soon.

The life went on and we should enjoy any moment of living in Kenya – became our premise. So one day the Chief carpenter in the Building Department kept his word by producing a dinghy made of marine plywood just in good time for when rainy season stops. The boat was 1.4m wide and 2.5m long in that there was enough room for 3 persons. I had bought a 2.5HP

SEAGULL motor and the official boat launching was not to be successful at first. A big wave hit the rather light boat sideways filling it up to the brim so we sunk onto the sand in shallow waters. Thus water got over the outboard motor as well so that first jaunt was a real disaster. Well, the Seagull is rather sturdy machine and after proper washing it worked fine in dry condition though. On our next attempt we might have more luck – we hopped at least. What we have to learn was the launching of the dinghy into waves.



Zvonko got into trouble wanting to take a picture from the front of Rufus. The young rhino probably took the camera as a tidbit. Without any chance to retreat back Zvonko took this picture lying on his back on an earth dam.

We started our second trial to launch our dinghy on a Saturday at time of an outgoing tide. At a low tide there were hardly any waves that caused all the trouble on the first launch. I started the outboard motor easily and three of us sat a bit cramped in the small boat. Suddenly Knocker appeared and jumped into the water starting to swim after us. Of course I had to slow down to take him into the boat almost capsizing again. Luckily we reached the riff shallows soon so I switched of the engine and we got out of the boat. We wanted to inspect the riff we have dressed properly to protect us of the scorching sun as it was almost midday. We had on shirts and hats then sunglasses and rubber shoes as a guard of sharp riff rock or sea-urchins needles. Ljiljana and Vesna went to search for shells and snails in the grass. They looked under stones lifting by them by a steel hook or by gloved hand. I had to pull the boat after them as the water retreated with low tide.

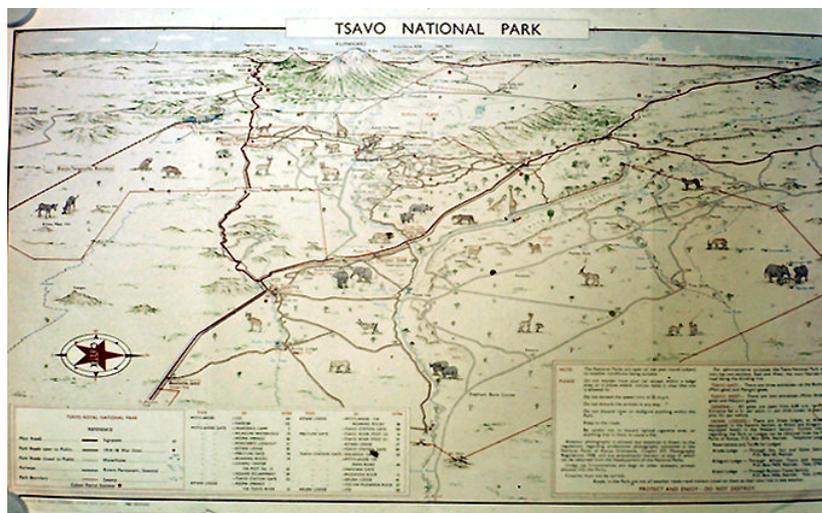
There was at deep channel between the riff barrier and the coast shallows at Bamburi beach. The channel was a few meters deep and of little varying width of some 30m or so. We went often goggling into this channel as there were many coral heads of various kinds and sizes around which swarmed a great variety of smaller and bigger fishes. The life teamed up around each coral head so one could spend hours viewing this liveliness by not getting enough of it. Mrs. Sheila White, Works Manager's wife, introduced us to the beauties of riff as she initiated "conchology" here. She has started studying of mollusks and their shells at the East African Coast a few years ago. This became her hobby and with time she has build up quite an interesting collection of shells. Sheila gladly told Ljiljana about the important procedures how to get rid of live meat and how to preserve the shells. One had to observe

certain rules not destroying the natural habitat of mollusks. One should keep a small number of any particular species for one's own collection only.



The low tide was withdrawing fast so we easily reached the reef of Bamburi beach. Ljiljana and Vesna started looking for shells and mollusks to add to our collection.

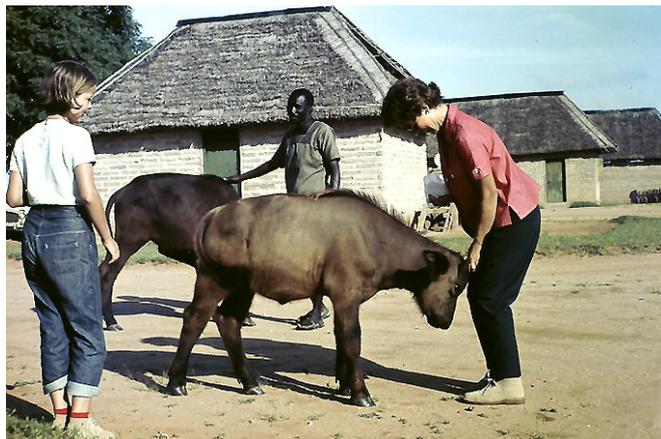
The low tide was at 13:30 and as it was spring tide day so water receded to the channel only. There was no shade on the wide barren riff so when my girls got tired we had to look for some protection of intense sunshine until one could use the boat again to get home. We emptied the boat and set it upright at the channel rim where we got a perfect shelter for part of our bodies at least. Imagine three of us cum Knocker stretched out close together as far as possible keeping to the shade of an upright boat and holding the legs in water. We shared the drinking water and munched on some dry cakes that we would carry anywhere like on a safari or a similar outing.



The CALTEX Travel Map for TSAVO NATIONAL PARK issued in 1965.

The four captives of the low tide would certainly be the picture of the year but there was nobody on the riff at that time of the day though. Lastly tide set in gradually and with time we could put the boat back into the water and to drift with the tidal stream slowly towards the anchorage. It was well after 16 o'clock when we were back home all of us being "dog" tired. We stored the boat at Smolniker's as it was close to the seashore. After that each of us took turn under the shower at the spillway that Knocker did not mind either. I picked up the motor and we walked up home very thirsty for a long drink and very hungry after some reasonable food. This was the first successful outing with the dinghy but it would not be the last one.

The political confusion regarding Rhodesia lost a bit of its impetus so we could finish the preparation for a Christmas safari. We would travel to Marangu in Tanzania where our friends from Dar-es-Salaam should wait for us in Marangu Hotel. Martin Froehlich, Works Manager of Wazo Hill Works and Ozren Sekulić, both with their families arrived to Marangu on December 23, 1965 already whereas we started a day later at 11:40 to stop at Voi after an uneventful drive. A young Englishman asked politely if he could travel with us up to Taveta. After taking petrol we drove along the road below Taita Hills that passed returning from the safari across Kenya some 3 months ago. Our passenger was an excellent source of information about Taita County working here as manager on maize and sisal plantations. Now he works at a plant producing pyrethrum a kind of insecticide near the abandoned castle of Mac Rogan. Clearly we accepted his invitation to tour around that castle as Mac Rogan was almost a legend here.



There was another orphanage at Aruba Lodge where one kept young buffalos. The left picture proves that Ljiljana could withstand the pressure of a young buffalo's head.

As a young man Mac Rogan felt in love with a noble English lady but her family did not allow the liaison that poor chap. The stubborn Scotsman walked all the way from Cairo to Cape town and became quite famous. Trading unscrupulously with the sisal fiber he became very rich and bought many land plots in Nairobi. Some of plots were needed for the hospital and in exchange Mac Rogan got some land at Kilindini harbor. With the harbor development these plots turned into pure gold making him building a castle in Italian style by Italian 1st World War prisoners. Unfortunately one used the sisal poles to make the roof structure to be covered with heavy Italian roof tiles. Now the roof had sagged in and collapsed in part so the rain and the climate steadily devastate a former castle. We said goodbye to our informer and wishing him pleasant holidays passed over the border turned right at Himo. We arrived at Marangu Hotel at 16:30 where our friends were waiting already. The crisp air at +1.800m ASL and a clear view of the Kibo peak was the marvelous introduction to a Christmas Eve party. Martin brought a small tree and decorated it in the German traditional manner for as the present for his 7-year old son.

Marangu Hotel was the starting point for most of the climbers going up to the Kibo peak (+5.899mASL). The owner was an English lady whose rose garden attracted Ljiljana's attention. The rose bushes were in full bloom in December by the way. The morning of Christmas Day opened in full splendor of the rising sun illuminating the two peaks of Kilimanjaro first. Once you have seen this mighty mountain bottom is still in darkness and its Kibo peak glowing by white snow glitter – you will it remember forever.



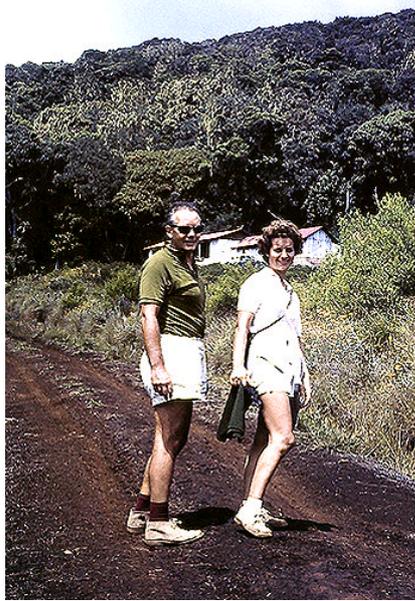
Early morning pictures at Marangu Hotel – North Tanzania with all Springers at left. Left in background is Kilimanjaro seen from the south. Kibo peak is at left and Mawenzi one at right. Vesna and Ljiljana stand in Marangu roses' garden with Mawenzi peak in backdrop.

After the breakfast we started a trip aiming to reach the Bismarck's Hut (at approx. +2.795m) that is the lower one of the two used by most mountain climbers to the Kibo peak. We drove using my VW and Martin's Peugeot 404 who followed me on a wide earthen track that climbed steadily from the very start. However this track was by far too steep for our 2-wheel driven cars. Thus inevitably it must happen sooner or latter so at sharp curve my car just could not make it. I made several attempt but with every trial front wheels were slipping more and more sideways until the car front sat firm in a ditch.



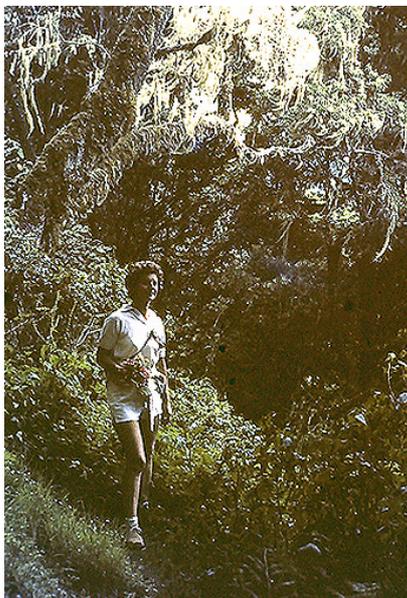
Zvonko's car an old VW is in trouble again. Martin pulled the VW out but we left it alongside the path.

Martin stopped well behind and after some consultation it was decided that we should continue on foot to the hut. Martin turned his car and returned in reverse gear with the thought to pull my car out of the ditch. Suddenly a Landrover emerged driven by an Italian doctor who was on his way up to the Bismarck Hut. For a 4-wheel driven car was an easy task to pull my VW out of the ditch. The polite Italian offered to take the three children and the ladies up to the hut but Ljiljana choose to stay with us. With Martin's help I drove my car in reverse gear and turned it at a safe place where both cars stayed parked for the return later. We proceeded on foot and arrived at the hut after less of a 50 minutes walk.



At left Zvonko and Ljiljana walk up to the Bismarck Hut in backdrop. Later we walked through the rain forest to reach a small shelter on the saddle between Kilimanjaro two peaks seen at right.

Although the weather worsened clouds encompassing both peaks already Ljiljana and I went on to view the attractive nearby forest at least. The mountaineering track leads through this forest belt up to the Saddle and onwards to the next Peters Hut. It was not easy to climb over roots and ruts through this thick grown forest that trees impressed us by the long overgrown moss. It took us about 45 minutes to pass through the forest belt to arrive heavily breathing to the Saddle barren plane of grey ash with rare high altitude tundra. The Saddle (above +3.000m ASL) is long plane between two peaks Mawenzi (5.149m) at east and Kibo (5,892m) at west. Both peaks were invisible due to the thick low clouds but the view well down to the plain was still undisturbed.



Ljiljana walked up the steep footpath through rain forest to reach the saddle between two peaks at right.

The threatening rain forced Ljiljana and me to hurry back through the forest. It was a more difficult walk downhill stepping over all those tree roots and deep ruts than climbing up before. When we came to the Bismarck Hut we found out that our groups had left already probably scared by heavy clouds that encompassed the forest already. Hurriedly we strode downwards to find our car standing alone as Martin had left the parking place well before we

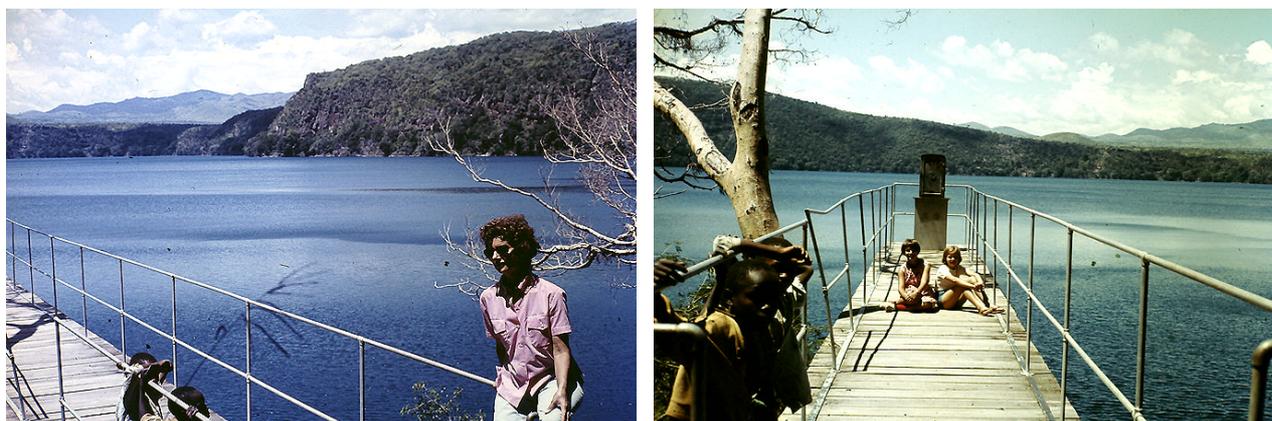
arrived. Evidently Martin had squeezed successfully the four persons and three kids into his car. We got into my car and drove down slowly towards the hotel. We passed by a rather tired mountaineer walking with some difficulty so I stopped the car and Ljiljana asked him whether we could take him to Marangu. But the man politely thanked in the most proper sportsman manner pointing to his trekker who would help him if needed. Continuing we worried about the lunch being rather hungry as it was past 14h now. Our friends greeted us with enthusiasm comforting us that they “saved” the lunch for us. Our group enjoyed the rest of day resting, chatting and playing with our children ball games etc. Vesna did try to dip in the swimming pool but was out before soon as water was too cold for a swim at this altitude and crisp air.

The group decided to make an extensive safari on the second Christmas Day. All three cars got off from the hotel at 08:30 returning to Himo first and then drove to Taveta at the border between Tanzania and Kenya. The Kenyan police officer told us how to get to Lake Chala, “Get to the small bridge there and turn left before it onto a bush track. It’s only 6 miles!” I lead the group and duly turned off the main road onto an earthen track leading westwards. First we bypassed a low and barren hill at left and following that track came to a small village. Ljiljana asked people we met where “Maji kuba” (Big water) is. All asked persons were pointing westwards so I drove on that open earthen track that turned into grass overgrown one getting narrower and almost untraceable after a while. I drove very slowly worrying about hitting a large stone or rock but then this track widened again as we came closer to a hamlet. Again we asked people and all pointed westwards but making a sign of circling around. I did not like to proceed by that uncertain info and told Martin that I would turn back despite his protests.



Martin took pictures of the three families before leaving the Bismarck Hut. Tired Ozren sits in front.

Unfortunately I lost the track and stopped suddenly in front of some boulders that were invisible in that high grass. Ljiljana got out a waved to a young man and with their help I could retraced my way back on the footpath leading to the hamlet. Now I determined to go back to the small village named Chala told by our helper. There I stopped in front of what looked like a shop where Ljiljana picked up a boy who offered to show us Lake Chala for a small baksheesh. By Jove, we had to return to that long barren hill and got up a narrow track to the rim of the Lake Chala. The lake diameter is some 3km that side is about 50m thus one cannot see it from below at all. The two countries border passes amiss the lake and there two footpaths cut into the steep wall of volcanic tuff. The lake is about 30m deep and timing with fishes and a few crocodiles – we were told. The best of all is the lake’s color that hue changes constantly from deep blue to dark green. It all depends upon positions of the viewer and the sunrays reflecting from the almost mirror like lake water surface.



Views of the Lake Chala calm waters in two different directions. At picture with Ljljana one looks eastwards. Right Ranka and Vesna sit on same bridge for the water level control viewing westwards.

We could not stay longer to enjoy the sight of lake water only as the internal walls were as barren as seen from outside. Soon we were back to main road and stopped at the Kenyan Police station where the officer enquired whether we had visited Chala Lake. I told him that lost some time searching but got to the lake at last. "I told you that it is so close and easy to find, isn't?" so each of us had to admit this and confirm that we were at the lake. Only then the officer pulled on the rope fixed to a wide board with protruding long nails placed across the road making the passage free for us. On the Tanzanian side there was nobody to check on us so we drove fast as possible getting to the hotel to have lunch. Ozren was always more slowly than Martin and I as his wife Nevenka would allow him to drive faster.

After a short rest we got off at 15:15 from the Marangu hotel with the idea to visit the Momella Game Reserve - our favorite since the summer safari. We had to hurry so Martin and I drove at the maximum allowed speed of 100km/h on the main road. We passed through Moshi and were at the junction to Momella 15 minutes before Ozren arrived. We thought to be a good idea to get Ozren driving in front but soon it became clear that it was not a good idea at all. Alas at the first opportunity I took the lead and stopped at the Reserve entrance to give Martin and Ozren exact instruction how to get to the Ngurdoto Crater Lake fast. I told them to watch some sharp pin curves and to hurry as it was 17h already. In the hurry I missed the right turn and proceeded straight arriving to the other outlook a bit lower than the one we visited last. The lake dried out a bit but Vesna counted 32 elephants, unknown number of buffalos and one rhino closer to us under crater wall. One could not see mountains from here so I had bad conscious and I retraced my car to the junction where I missed the right turn.

Soon after we came to the right viewpoint finding there both Martin's and Ozren's families enjoying the view. They were worrying about us but I tried to explain that I wanted to check another place before coming here. I would not admit my "mistake" and the cleared sky came to my help too. When both mountains Kilimanjaro and Meru came out of clouds splendidly lit by setting sun our friends announced how happy they were to come here. Vesna fulfilling her duty counted the 32 elephants, a rhino mother cum toto and another six rhinos not seen before. The buffalo heard was large estimating some 200 or more besides other animals like antelopes etc. I had to rush our friends to leave this beautiful place if we wanted to see El Kekotoiko Lake before having to leave the park.

It was past 18h and I had to drive rather slowly with 20km/h at dusk on that narrow and winding track getting to El Kekotoiko. An elephant would not move from the track for a few minutes that delayed the arrival to the lake. It was the disappointment as most of animals had left already and the water level had dropped significantly so there were no hippos either. Martin got off first with the aim to reach Marangu Hotel and reserve the dinner for us and put

his 7-year old son to sleep soon. I followed Marin at slower speed to keep touch with Ozren who felt somehow unwell driving in the wilderness. We left the park in full darkness and passed the Lodge soon after and I drove on slowly along that known track to me that lead through a gully for a while. I stopped at every curve until I saw Ozren's car lights coming where as Vesna and Ranka helped by Ljiljana set out to doze at the rear bench.



This was the best moment of our trip to the Ngurdoto Crater Lake when Kibo peak appeared in rear.

Now I drove through the narrow gorge with slopes at both road sides at slow speed of 20km/h only. I moved on into the next curve when I noticed Ozren's light behind me coming alright. At sudden in the beams of light I saw a dark shadow slipping down the right slope. Instinctively I acted by hitting the brake and the clutch to change the gear in the reverse simultaneously. At the same time the fully lit dark shadow filled the front window almost complete. I shouted "Hold on!" as I expected the collision with that black mass at any moment to come. As sudden as it appeared the shadow disappeared as Vesna shrieked "It's ... a buffalo!" Ljiljana did not say anything still holding to the front panel but Ranka dozed on as if nothing had happened. I drove on for some 200m to wait for Ozren's lights to appear again. My adrenalin level was still at very high level when we reached the main tarmac road. There I had to wait for Ozren to join us and I told him that I would not wait for him anymore. From here I drove with the permitted speed of 100km/h so I arrived to Marangu Hotel around 21 o'clock.

Martin came out and happily announced that he reserved dinner for us what was certainly the best news for that night. Ozren got here some 15 minutes later obviously driving faster than his wife would allow. Later Martin told me that he had slipped of the road slid against the slope in that gorge. He had good experience driving in unstable sand during his long stay in Egypt. Thus we went out to check our cars yet we could not find any scratch on his car mudguards as the slope was of soft volcanic tuff. Fortunately for me I did not find any buffalo hair on my car either! We have had as one would say in Croatian "More luck than sense" but decided not to make a great story out of it. Only three of us were aware of that we had let pass a near collision with a buffalo that could be fatal. The shock of this near to collision kept in subconscious for many hours after.

The third day all of us got up later yet still in time to see Kibo and Mawenzi in their full splendor in light of morning sun. It was the day when we break up in different directions and after breakfast we said goodbyes and see you again Shauria Mungo (So God's Will). Martin decided to make a brief visit to Amboseli risking a ride on rather bad roads via Loitokitok and returning to Marangu for another night. After adventurous rides they toured Amboseli Park successfully but were back at Marangu at 20 o'clock. Ozren had decided to drive straight

home to Dar-es-Salaam but could start at 11h only as he had difficulty to open the booth bent God knows when. Ozren had to drive in rain at some road sections and the engine “coughed” inhaling some water but had arrived home 21 o'clock after all.

Ranka stayed with us in Bamburi until January 11 to fly home at Dar then. We visited the interesting Museum of African Arts put up in the Kibo Hotel in Himo. After that I drove at leisure arriving to Voi at 13h where we ate our sandwiches and ordered a lot of teas to collect as much as possible of sugar little bags. Then we visited the orphanage in the Park HQ to feed young animals kept there like “Rufus” the rhino and orphaned elephants. Approaching Rufus Ranka kept in one hand a paper sack with small sugar bags. As Rufus came closer opening wide his lips she got so scared and handed over the full paper sack at once. Of course Rufus did not hesitate and took the whole lot leaving stunned Ranka standing there stiffed.

On the other side Ljiljana had tried hard to “convince” a young tembo (= elephant) that one has to peel a banana first before swallowing it. Tembo did not listen to her “lecture” and seized the full paper sack with bananas with its trunk and put it into his gaping mouth the next moment. As the matters had been achieved rather fast there was time to go home sooner than anticipated. We arrived to Bamburi around 17h and there we had good time for a swim before the well earned dinner. In the meantime our servants unpacked the car so we all could turn in our bedroom for the deserved rest. Thus Christmas Safari 1965 ended happily and soon the New Year would hopefully give some more of.

René and Christa Haller invited twelve couples for costumed party on Silvestre night. Eleven couples arrived dressed in Roman style costumes to Hallers' garden near the beach except for Mrs. Mandl who came alone in a travel costume. She explained that her husband got an urgent call to Nairobi and she got him to the airport just before. Well the company was in full swing enjoying the food (an excellent barbecue!) and drinks when a dark skinned sheik emerged dressed in a really splendid cloth and a rich turban on his head. The sheik asked permission to join the party that was gladly given yet he refused any alcoholic drink and pork meat.

He sat down next to Ljiljana on cushions spread on floor and she welcomed him in Sudanese Arabic asking him politely for his title. The “sheik” was somehow puzzled about Ljiljana's enquiry in a language he did not understand and asked under voice not to disclose his “identity”. Well, everybody burst in laughter as it was obvious that it was Dr. Mandl so we congratulated him for his exceptional costume. Later Ljiljana was reprimanded by Mrs. Mandl why she did address Felix in that strange language. Soon the sheik took off his turban perspiring heavily underneath thus disclosing his bald head. Even so the party had continued in a superb spirit so we acclaimed the arrival of the New Year 1966 with a lot of champagne at midnight local time.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~