

IN CASE ANYONE ASKS

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Cover photo - Nico Ferreira

Kruger Park
Zoetvlei

In Case Anyone Asks

Someone might well ask. I wish I'd asked my father many things – and no-one else did either. So we never knew what it was like in the trenches in the 1st World War, or the Battle of the Somme. And what was it like for Nico's grandfather to be part of what is sometimes called the “first guerrilla war” fighting the British in the Anglo Boer War. So many unanswered questions!

In writing the book we find how much we owe to so many people whose paths crossed ours. Too numerous to mention, but you all enriched our lives and without you there would have been no story. We thank you all. Special thanks to Ian Hetherington and Lois Kleyn from whose books I have quoted. If inadvertently I used your words please forgive. It is because you say it so much better.

We dedicate this book to Stella and Nicolaas, two wonderful human beings of whom we are inordinately proud and who, with gentle humour, watch us live our lives. And more recently to Philip and Kim and James who chose to be part of the family.

Explanatory Note from Nico and Loël Ferreira

In the end we found we couldn't actually both author the book and, as the bulk of the work was getting all the info onto the computer, the final author is Loël.

But it is the story of what we did with our lives, separately and together, in case anyone forgot to ask at the time. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed experiencing it.

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Chapter 1

Growing Up In Space



Between the Orange and the Vaal Rivers

Nico grew up on a farm in the Orange Free State and, as I started to put our book together, I asked him what images came to him from his childhood years. Without hesitation he said, "space and a thorn tree." So there you have it – not spaced out, my space, out in space, but simply space. The Free State, the saying goes, is so flat that if you lie on your stomach you can see two weeks into the future. No wonder you remember a shady thorn tree. You would also remember a lonely, isolated mound of stones known as Koppie-alleen. And, as a child growing up, you would also remember rising early before school to help inspan the oxen for ploughing. And you would remember going to school in a horse-drawn trap.

Nico's father first hired the land on which he farmed. Nico was born on September 28, 1929, seven years after the marriage. That same night twin calves and twin lambs arrived to share his birthday. Definitely an omen, said his father, and borrowing £50, he paid the deposit on the farm.

The Free State is a vast maize field, dependent on early rains for ploughing and summer rains for bringing in the harvest. From this rich earth food for the nation is produced and collectively the nation holds its breath waiting for the rain to come.

The first Ferreira was from Portugal and, returning home from the East, was shipwrecked off the coast of Southern African on May 16, 1722. Why did Ignatius Ferreira choose to stay in South Africa and not return to Portugal? Who knows!

He was a Catholic but was assimilated into the Afrikaans culture, marrying a Terblanche, one of the old French Huguenot Protestant families. The Ferreiras first lived near the Gouritz River in the Southern Cape and then gradually some of the family moved up to the then Orange Free State, first to Philippolis and later to Eensgevonden, Odendaalsrus, where Nico's father was one of 12 children. His mother was from French Huguenot tradition and came from Franschoek in the winelands of the Cape. Her father was a tanner and great grandfather a renowned silversmith. In 1918 she accepted a teaching post in the Free State – apparently the pay was better than the Western Cape. After a train journey of some 18 hours she arrived at the small station of Hennenman where she was met by a farmer and taken by horse-drawn cart to the farm where she found she was to share a room with the two daughters. It was quite a tough assignment. She later taught in the little town of Odendaalsrus and here she met Nico's father.

The rugged life on a Free State farm was a far cry from the beautiful sheltered mountainous valley of vineyards. But adapt she did. She became part of the culture and custom of that world and learned to cook "afval" and make boerewors and biltong with the best of them. There was never much money but everything was shared and mostly people lived off the land. There was a strong farming community still painfully aware of the Anglo Boer War and the cruelty of the women's concentration camps in which Nico's grandmother and children, one of whom had died in the camp, had been interned. Generosity and an open house was the norm. Nobody was ever turned away and no-one left without being loaded up with farm produce. The scattered farming community had a wonderful *joie de vivre*, visiting each other over weekends, holding impromptu dances to the tune of a concertina, and much talking and eating.

The family would on occasions go on holiday to Franschoek and Nico's father would insist they leave at 4 a.m. As the sun

came up he would drive to the first farmhouse he saw and join the family for coffee and rusks. Complete strangers were happy to welcome them, as they would have been welcomed in the Ferreira home – and Nico and his sister, Ria, would die of embarrassment.

The Siebrits family home in Franschhoek came up for sale and Nico's mother suggested they buy it. "There's no future in Franschhoek," his father replied, "You can't grow mealies there!" So the lovely old home was lost to the family. In fact the lack of mealies was probably only part of the reason for his reluctance. The old farmer felt claustrophobic among the towering Franschhoek mountains.

From an early age, Ria relates, Nico would organise her and her friends to sit on the ground while he, from the lofty height of an antheap, addressed them on some or other subject. It seemed he was heading for a podium or a pulpit!

From Odendalsrus Nico went to Bloemfontein to the famous Grey College and then to the University of Pretoria. In between he spent a year working on the farm selling the produce to the immigrant miners who poured into the rich, newly discovered Free State Gold Fields.

The years in Pretoria were where he became involved in politics and joined the Nationalist Party Jeugbond (Youth League) of which he became branch chairman. He graduated with a BA (Hons) in Political Science and Public Administration and got his first job with the Department of Native Affairs.

Where the Seekoei River Runs through it

Five hundred kilometres south of Odendaalsrus, across the Orange River, you enter the semi-desert arid Karoo. Here on the farm Zoetvlei, I was born and grew up, one of 6 children.

When I think of the Karoo and of the farm and of that 18 000

acres of untouched, wild and magical world, the first word that comes to me is "space" – limitless veld, blue skies, thunder clouds, distant horizons, flat-topped ironstone koppies, valleys, stars, in fact unadorned, indescribable space. The Karoo had once been a huge inland sea and in spite of the meagre rainfall it is blessed with good underground water surfacing in unexpected fountains and water-divined boreholes. This makes farming possible as does the remarkable Karoo vegetation.

We were unaware of the isolation of our existence and life seemed to be an endless adventure with areas to explore and discoveries to be made in hidden valleys and on mountain tops. Way up in the mountains in a ravine, was a wild and desolate place called Wolvenhoek which, on occasions my father needed to visit. It was a day's outing with some of us on horses and the younger ones on the back of the flatbed truck. The truck could not always manage the hills and we would all have to push. As we approached the derelict farmhouse the baboons that had taken occupation would scamper off and on the hill above were the remains of a wolf trap giving credibility to the name of the farm. We would shiver with the excitement of the moment.

There were always things happening – riding out on horseback to collect the sheep from some distant point; sheep-shearing where we did our bit by jumping up and down in the wool press to compact the wool; the season for cutting the lambs tails and roasting these on the coals (it doesn't bear thinking of now); shooting a springbok for the pot or for biltong for "the boys up North"; and rowing our little tub of a boat on the huge expanse of water that constituted the biggest private dam in the country. The water was alive with water birds - flamingos, spoonbills, avocet, dabchicks, coot, ducks, spur-wing and Egyptian geese. My brother would sit in the back of the boat with his gun to "shoot for the pot" while two of his sisters would manfully row the boat wherever directed. The boat weighed a ton as it was homemade by my ever-inventive

father. What joy when my Uncle Eric Thesen, sent a feather-light beautifully crafted rowboat from the Thesen boat-building company in Knysna. My brother's slaves now competed for the honour of rowing.

We made little boats out of cowpats and paper sails and sailed these down the irrigation furrows. We went with my father wherever he was fencing or counting sheep or dipping or dosing and my mother would paint delicate watercolours catching the atmosphere and ambience of the moment. We would swim in a furrow, in a pool, in a windmill dam; and we would light a fire of an evening and grill a few lamb chops and make coffee by plunging a burning brand into the coffee kettle to settle the grounds.

We had tame dassies, meerkats, buck, hanslammertjies and a nuisance of a hamerkop that stole laundry off the line to incorporate into his nest. A family of cobras lived under the pantry floor and we had this eccentric aunt who used to play her ukulele at the entrance hole, while smoking a cheroot, hoping that the snake would be charmed out. Goodness knows what she would have done if it had been tempted or hypnotised into action! Visiting the farm 60 years later I find that beneath the pantry floor is still "location, location, location" as far as the cobras are concerned.

The old homestead is over 200 years old and at some point President Burgers had lived on the farm. The house is haunted and the ghost has been seen by several reliable people on several occasions!!! My mother would hold our guests enthralled of an evening telling them ghost stories and at the end of the evening we would muster all our courage to go down the long passage to bed with a flickering candle.

Sadly one had to be educated and school was for us a dark cloud. For the first 6 years we were taught on the farm by a governess (believe it or not) and then from the age of 10, we were dispatched to boarding school some 110 k's way on

impossible roads. We would have to rise at 4 a.m. on a freezing winter morning, climb into the back of the truck with the sheep heading for the market and go to school huddled amongst our woolly friends for warmth. Our classmates would sniff audibly as we walked in smelling decidedly of sheep. From this prison we only came home twice a term. Our first governess, Mrs Chambers, was as tough as they come and had arrived from Britain to teach in the concentration camps in the Anglo Boer War. She certainly did not believe in sparing the rod. She boarded on the farm and was an ever-present danger as far as we were concerned. My father seemed to us amazingly unintimidated. I never thought to ask what her life experiences had been – they could only have been unusual and interesting.

The first Rubidges arrived in the Cape in 1817 from Wales. My grandfather was an engineer building the railroad from Cape Town to Touws River and later Town Engineer of East London. My father, Charles, ran away from school at the age of 17 in order to join the army in the First World War. He spent the next 3 years in France, mostly in the trenches and fought in the battle of the Somme.

After the war he wanted to farm and he and his father went by cart and horse the 100 k's to look at the farm Zoetvlei on the water divide between the Indian and Atlantic Oceans - where the Zeekoei River runs through it. He borrowed money for the down payment. He was passionate about conservation and became known in the country for his conservation farming methods and his prevention of soil erosion for which he was awarded the Golden Protea Award.

My mother, Stella Mallett, brought to the family, music and laughter, chess and bridge. She took us for walks in the koppies and with wonderful imagination made up stories of Donald the Dassie, Oswald the Otter, Hansie the Hamerkop and other animals. She wove magic around their escapades. She had been a teacher in the town of Graaff-Reinet where she

met my father. As a child travelling by train from Cape Town through the endless Karoo to Kimberley where her father was Cecil John Rhodes' attorney, she had said to herself that nothing would persuade her to live in that barren world. They married in 1929 and, like Nico's mother, made her home in an alien land and adapted wonderfully.

My mother's brother, Uncle Paul Mallett, a survivor of Delville Wood, came to live with us for the last years of his life. He was a lovely, gentle man. His older brother, Stanley, had been killed in Delville Wood. Sixteen years ago I wrote my mother's younger brother asking him what he remembered about that time. He replied:

Stanley and Paul were in the battle of Delville Wood. Stan was killed by machine gun bullets. He was granted the MC. Paul was shot, also with machine gun bullets. He survived only to be taken prisoner, which changed his whole life, but I must say the German doctors did a wonderful job on him, with a plate in his head, which was silver, I believe. The Germans and the British sent their belongings back to George, where we were living, and as young as I was I remember their belongings arriving by wheel-barrow from the station...

At least I had thought to ask! In my possession is a little leather-bound notebook with a few poems written in Uncle Paul's beautiful script. He fought again in the Western Desert in World War 2, but reading his poems, Delville Wood was forever a clear, tragic, stark, yet in many ways proud memory. He died on the farm and is buried in the little graveyard in the veld he so much loved.

Two poems written by Uncle Paul

The Message

17 July 1916

A message of hope at last lads
For the relief must have broken through
Hold on, my men, Hold on.
Your General is proud of you

18-19 July

Stick to it lads, for the sake of the old Brigade's
name,
Better die in glory, than retreat in shame.
Remember, yesterday's message Relief is
coming through
Hold on my men, Your General is proud of you

21 July 1916

I thank you my men, I thank you,
You did all that soldiers could do,
For you saved the wood – to the last you stood.
Yes, Your General is Proud of You.

Memory's Window

Of an evening as I sit by my window,
With my thoughts in a far distant land,
I imagine that I am back with my comrades,
Marching to the strains of a band.

Gay is the chatter and laughter,
And songs that end with a smile,
As we pass through Hamlet and Village
Marching on mile upon mile.
Now again I picture a battle,
With shells screaming overhead,
Men fighting around and about me,
In front the wounded and dead.

It was once a wood that we were holding,
A wood of beauty it's said,
But now it is shattered and broken,
And its turf is tinged with red

I am marching again with my comrades
As in the days of old,
But I miss the smiles and the laughter
The grasp of a hand now cold

Once more I see a beautiful monument
Which is South Africa's privilege to keep
For it embodies a nations' homage
And marks where her heroes sleep.

(While writing the book I found one night I couldn't sleep. As I lay in the dark I suddenly thought of Uncle Paul - I had to put him in the book. The next morning I wrote the paragraph and then picked up his little book of poems to select one or two. The poem was dated 17th - 21st July, 1916 and I realised it was exactly 90 years ago to the day that Delville Wood was being fought.)

We counted ourselves privileged to have spent our early years exploring the veld, drinking in the sunsets, waiting for the unforgettable smell of rain on parched earth, our roots firmly planted among the Karoo bushes. For years after, at Christmas, we would meet on the farm with children, husbands, wives, and renew our spirit. The cousins grew up as part of a large family and have a special bond with each other all connected through the Karoo Farm. In later years Zoetvlei became the centre of research in the Aeschulian period with endless arrowheads and cutting stones being discovered. Prof. Garth Samson described some areas of the farm as "of the most undisturbed places on earth". Under his guidance we all became amateur archaeologists.

Chapter 2

A World Beyond

Could there really be other places on Planet Earth?



My brother Fred started school on the farm at the age of 6. As we were inseparable, I tagged along behind him and although I don't actually remember being taught, I do remember the joy of finding I could read. And so it happened that the two of us ended up in the same class and wrote matric together. I was then only 16 and had absolutely no idea what I wanted to study. As far as I was concerned I could stay on the farm forever. Fred only ever wanted to farm and this he started to do the day after his final matric paper. I was considered a bit young to go to university and, because my parents were involved with Moral Re-Armament (MRA), they suggested my brother and I attend one of the big international conferences that Moral Re-Armament was arranging in Switzerland. And so we found ourselves in Switzerland in June 1951 attending a conference and being introduced to the wide, wide world.

Fred returned to the farm but I spent the next two years in Europe working with some of the programmes that MRA launched. My first experience was being part of the stage-crew for a play called "The Forgotten Factor" which was touring the strife-torn industrial areas of Britain. Spending the winter in the grey, grimy dock areas of Liverpool and Glasgow and in the factory towns of Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield was an introduction to what I call the "underside" of Britain.

What was it about Moral Re-Armament that attracted the statesmen and leaders of the world to conferences, that made ordinary people and a generation of young people from every conceivable country, faith and background, put aside their own personal plans and ambitions, to work without salary,

often in extremely difficult conditions with no permanent home, in order to participate in the programme? Young people wanted to feel needed and recognised, they wanted to feel they could contribute meaningfully in some way or other and they wanted to feel that they had a part in building a new world order. They appreciated the call to live a quality of life that called on self-discipline and a love of others and above all a searching for a purpose, a God-driven life. Moral Re-Armament gave them this opportunity.

In the early 1950's MRA was actively working in crisis areas all around the world where there were great thrusts of action that were bridging national and racial barriers, class barriers and religious barriers. In particular MRA was accredited with playing a remarkable role in the post-World War II reconciliation between France and Germany, and bringing Japan back into the family of nations,

Over the years MRA had found that plays, films and music were very effective ways of presenting a message - whether of reconciliation, whether it dealt with a specific situation, whether it challenged people to live beyond themselves or to dramatise current world issues. Often these took the form of musical shows with wonderful songs. *The Forgotten Factor*, a play about industrial strife in England was the first. Others followed: *Jotham Valley*, a story set in American cowboy country, *Men of Brazil*, written by Brazilian dockworkers, *The Dragon* produced after a delegation of Chinese visited an MRA conference, *The Tiger* written in 1960 by ringleaders of the Japanese student riots in Japan, *The Vanishing Island*, *Freedom*, *The Next Phase*, *The Crowning Experience*, depicting the life of Mary MacLeod Bethune, the great Afro-American educationalist, *The Dictator's Slippers*, *The Hurricane*, *The Flaming Spear* and many others. Some were short documentaries such as the work of Rajmohan Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, in India. Later on this led to the *Up with People* movement an explosion of young talent that criss-crossed the world giving young people an

opportunity of spending a year of their lives in a world situation dealing with world issues and meeting other young people.

During the summer months in the mid-50's and 60's MRA held international conferences in Switzerland at Caux above Lake Geneva, and on Mackinac Island in the Great Lakes of America. It seemed as if the world passed through the halls of these conference centres. Delegates came from Germany, France, Japan, India, Burma and Africa, Latin America, China, the Middle East, Australia. They included Rajmohan Gandhi, the grandson of the Mahatma, Prime Minister U Nu of Burma, Dr Konrad Adenauer of Germany, Robert Schuman of France, Abdel Khalek Hassouna, the Secretary General of the Arab League, the Prime Minister of Japan, Bishop West of Rangoon, General Ho Ching Min, King Michael and Queen Anne of Romania, people from all over Africa, dockworkers, miners, students, statesmen.

In 1954 one of these plays was invited to Nigeria by Dr Nnamdi Azikiewe, later to become president of Nigeria. The play was to be presented in the major cities of Nigeria and from there would go to "The Gold Coast". The theme dealt with the impact of the press on a nation and with the struggle between East and West, exposing the fallacies of both the capitalist and the communist world. The cast and the stage crew were drawn from all over the world and I was part of the "props" crew.

West Africa was an exotic world. Nigeria was a bustling, vibrant, colourful country on the eve of independence. Lagos, the capital, was awkwardly situated on an island and Carter Bridge was the way to and from the mainland. Traffic was indescribable and crossing the bridge from the airport or the harbour would take up days of your life. I remember one day, stuck in traffic, watching a man pass me on his bicycle whistling cheerfully as he pedalled through the frustrated Mercedes and Peugeot. Perched on the handlebars were three turkeys and on his head a fourth – all facing bravely into the

wind.

There was a tremendous sense of enterprise and the Market Women of Lagos were renowned for their business acumen and their ability to do financial calculations in their heads. Every conceivable thing was sold from the roadside with stacks of fabric, oranges, dried fish, meat, baskets, ivory, silver, gold jewelry, toothbrushes, shoelaces, mirrors and more. The country was vast and stretched from the Sahara in the North to the tropical rain-forests in the South. The road to Enugu in the East was through dense forests and crossing the Niger River by ferry was a test of one's nerve. Dr Nnamde Azikiwe and Kwame Nkrumah were household names.

Staging the play in these unfamiliar and rather primitive surroundings called for much innovation. Those of us in the stage crew would go ahead of the cast and in each town we had to beg, borrow or steal enough furniture, carpets, etc to dress the set. On one occasion we persuaded the Nigerian Railways to put on a special train free of charge – one engine, one carriage and a guards van - in order to take 9 of us the 5 hours to Kano where we had to set up the show.

We stayed in the Government Guest House near Kano airport and listened to the sounds of the camel-riders blowing their horns to clear the runway from cattle as the big planes landed. We rode on the back of trucks, and on bicycles. Kano was a rabbit warren of lovely mud houses, narrow streets, and colourful markets. The Tuaregs, mysterious in their dark indigo robes and turbans, would ride in from the Sahara on their camels to stock up on rice and other provisions in the Kano Market. On the outskirts of the walled city were the ancient indigo dye-pits. The play was put on in a big open-air stadium and thunderclouds and lightning played out their drama on the horizon, fortunately holding off until after the performance.

We travelled down the east side of the country by train, a

three-day trip, and drew crowds in the capital, of Eastern Nigeria, Enugu. This was the home of the Ibos, a bustling, busy, clever, energetic people.

From Nigeria we flew to Accra, the capital of the then "Gold Coast", where once again we rounded up the props and set up the show for a series of performances. Afternoon siesta time we spent swimming in the warm ocean. Then we went up north to Ashante on the invitation of Alhaji Yakubu Tali, the Tolon Na, spiritual leader of the Moslems. Here, on the streets, jewellery manufacturers were boiling little pots of gold to fashion their beautiful wares. I had to get back to Accra for a performance and found myself on a bus from Kumasi to Accra crowded with Moslem families, and the roof piled high with chickens, goats and whatever else.

Moving Sophiatown

During this time Nico started to work for the Department Of Native Affairs. In 1953 he was invited to attend a Moral Re-Armament conference in Lusaka. He had always wanted to learn more about Africa and at this conference he met some of the black leaders of Africa and South Africa – Dr William Nkomo, co-founder of the ANC Youth League, Selope Thema, a Founder Member of the African National Congress, and others. It was the beginning of an insight into Africa and it was here that he made a conscious decision to let God use his life for whatever task. This totally changed his approach and attitude, and in the years that followed he became part of a process where conflict was resolved and development took place.

In 1954 his boss in the Department called him in and announced that, because of his contact with Africans, he was going to be sent to Johannesburg to facilitate the move of Sophiatown. Sophiatown was a large, vibrant, cheerful black community in Johannesburg which was scheduled to be "moved" as part of the government's "apartheid policy". It

was fiercely resisted and tension was high.

In his early twenties, and very junior in the Department, Nico was not quite sure how to handle this. He tells the story:

I arrived in Johannesburg and was ushered into the office of Mr Engelbrecht. My first question to him was, "What do the residents of Sophiatown say?" Mr Engelbrecht looked perplexed, "That is irrelevant," he said. "The Government has decided and this is what is going to happen." I, however, insisted on meeting the people of Sophiatown.

I found out that the leader in Sophiatown was Dr A B Xuma, a distinguished doctor and a former President of the African National Congress. I phoned his surgery and after some hesitation Dr Xuma agreed to meet with me, not at the surgery, but in his home in Sophiatown. Mr Engelbrecht found this plan to be highly unsatisfactory and dangerous. However, he consented to drive me to the outskirts of Sophiatown, but then I would have to walk. As his car sped away I asked directions to the home of Dr Xuma. In a strange way I had absolutely no fear and felt very comfortable talking to the residents.

Dr Xuma took me into his study, the 4 walls lined with books. Expressing his total opposition to the removal and all that it involved, he then talked about the modus operandi of this removal which was to put a note under the door saying that the truck would be there in the morning to move the occupant to Meadowlands. "How," asked Dr Xuma, "can I be expected to move all this to a small house miles from town overnight?"

I also met Mr Ben Mabuza, a Sophiatown businessman, and he invited me to his home the next day to talk about the removal. I asked Mr Engelbrecht to accompany me. We arrived and Mrs Mabuza brought us tea and freshly baked scones. As we left Mr Engelbrecht turned on me in anger, furious that he was made to drink tea in the home of a "K" - and it seemed I was no

longer welcome in Johannesburg and was sent back to Pretoria.

I reported what I had learned in Sophiatown to my boss and as a result Dr Eiselen, the Secretary for Native Affairs, flew up from Cape Town to discuss how this whole process of the removal could be done differently. Although the removals went ahead it was at least done in a more humane way.

Very much in the headlines in those days was a man known as P Q Vundla. Philip Qipu Vundla was born in Tyatyora Village of Healdtown, Eastern Cape. He qualified as a teacher at the Healdtown Institute and worked as a clerk on the mines where he became a powerful organiser and member of the African Mineworkers' Union. He was also a passionate cricketer. He joined the African National Congress and later became one of its executive members. He was married to Kathleen who came from Soekmekaar (Limpopo) and they had 12 children. They lived in a small two-roomed house in Western Native Township, adjacent to Sophiatown. Throughout his life he was intensely interested in civic politics and for years he was Chairman of the Advisory Board of Western Native Township, a member of the Advisory Board of Moroka Township, and finally a forthright member of the Soweto Urban Bantu Council.

By now Nico had built up a determination to meet and get to know black people in the country. He had heard of PQ and tells the story:

I had tried in numerous ways to make an appointment with PQ, but to no avail. Finally I decided that if I arrived at 6 am I was bound to find him at home. So, early in the morning I knocked on his door. It was opened by Kathleen and immediately closed in my face. Then P Q himself came to the door and demanded to know what I wanted.

"I would like to discuss the Sophiatown removals with you", I said. "Who are you to talk to me, I will only talk to Strijdom

(the then Prime Minister), I do not deal with young boys," said PQ. However, he invited me in and I sat down nervously on the sofa behind which stood two massive men. "Don't worry," said PQ, "these are just my bodyguards" – a statement which I didn't find particularly reassuring.

This visit was the beginning of a friendship that was to grow and deepen and which lasted a lifetime. Some weeks later PQ was attacked by militants and landed up with stab wounds in hospital – this because he was perceived to have softened his militant stance – where Nico visited him. In subsequent years, in different parts of the world, the two of them would often stand together on platforms and talk of reconciliation, of how to build a nation not on hatred or revenge nor on superiority and domination, but on finding a common ground and working together towards an answer and a future.

On the 21st of February 1961, PQ was invited to address a group of Members of Parliament in Cape Town. "As I stand here," he said, "the political future of the continent is on my side. It doesn't depend on the generosity of any government The right to go into parliament is made a colour issue while it is actually a moral issue. The Africans can make a big contribution, together with you, to plan for the future of the country.

"I am thinking of violence. I am against violence. What you achieve through violence you need even more violence to maintain. You must go for the minds of men. America, Japan and Europe in this present set-up know that militarily they cannot attack Russia because it will end in complete disaster. Russia, too, for the same reason cannot attack the West. But they exploit particularly men in my position who are frustrated. What weapon do we have? We need a weapon superior to Communism. I know you will say it is Christianity. I have no quarrel with Christianity. It is a dynamic religion if we live it. But we don't. It is not lived in this Parliament. We all know it, and you know it."

A question was posed by one of the MP's "Mr Vundla, I am sticking out my neck. I am afraid you are not the type of leader the people follow. I put it to you that moderate leaders have no influence because it is the fiery leader the people will listen to."

To this PQ responded: "I don't hold such fears. No-one needs a licence to be a leader. It depends on one's courage to say the right thing. Initially the people will vote for the fiery leader, but when it comes to the test of responsibility they will see through them. We tend to underestimate the intelligence of the ordinary man. I am an expert on winning elections. For the last 22 years I have not lost a single election, – and I think, Dr Smit, that in this respect I can maybe be of help to you!"

On December 16, 1969, Philip Vundla died. He had phoned Nico the day before and asked him to come around and to take him to the doctor. Driving back from the doctor he asked him to stop the car. He looked over Soweto and said, "We must never lose contact with people who live in places like this". When they got home, Philip took him around his house asking him to see to some minor maintenance. He said: "Please phone me tomorrow to see if I am still here." When Nico phoned in the morning Philip had died during the night. The funeral service was held in Uncle Tom's Hall, Soweto, on December 21, 1969. Nico was one of the speakers.

Back in the UK, writing about the death of PQ in ***The Greenock Telegraph***, Tom Gillespie told of a meeting with PQ on a train some years before:

Right in the middle of the troubles in Sophiatown, when people were being removed from their homes, a young white nationalist, Nico Ferreira, an Afrikaner with the Department of Native Affairs, went to Vundla and humbly apologised for his attitude of superiority and for his callous disregard for other races in South

Africa.

Vundla was shaken. No white man had ever shown such honesty and humility. At that moment, two new factors came into Vundla's reckoning. First, that white men could change. Second, that he himself could be rid of hate and bitterness. He started to think afresh of what he was fighting for and how he had been doing it. He was clear he was right in his fight for his people, but he saw he had been wrong in the hatreds harboured against individuals that twisted his mind against the entire race.

Speaking to Black Power leaders in London, he talked of his own experience: South Africa, he told them, is being used to divide men all over the world on a basis of colour. But the real issue in the world today is not colour, but character. Violence is not the answer today. What you achieve through violence you will need to maintain by greater violence.

(Gillespie T. *The Most Dangerous Man Had a Change of Heart*, Greenock Telegraph, February 10, 1970)

This experience of meeting people like Dr Xuma and PQ, led Nico to resign his job and for the next 15 years he worked with Moral Re-Armament in Europe, Brazil, the USA, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Moçambique, Malawi, Lesotho and Botswana.

Also at this time we met Judge Claassen and his wife Marie, Adv John Trengove and Izabel, Dr Adriaan Smuts and Sophie, Rev George Daneel and Joey, and Bremer and Agnes Hofmeyr. They and other like them, were the forerunners in bringing a new spirit of non-racialism to South Africa. They remain role-models.

Chapter 3

Working with Moral Re-Armament



At one of the Moral Re-Armament Conferences in Switzerland, the Africans attending, together wrote a play which they felt was relevant for the times. The main authors were Manasseh Moerane, later to become the Editor of *The World*, South Africa, John Ifoghale Amata, former President of the Students' Union of Ibadan University, Nigeria, and the Honourable Abayisa Karbo, MP, from Ghana. The story is of African people fighting for freedom, trying to throw off the yoke of European imperialism. It dealt with the struggle for men's minds as independence fever was sweeping through the continent. Revolution was in the air and rival parties were ready to shed blood at the drop of a hat. Appropriately called *Freedom* this was performed in Europe and many other countries.

Behind the cameras in Nigeria

In 1956, in order to make it more readily available to a wider audience, it was decided that the play *Freedom* should be made into a film which could then be translated into other languages. This would be done in Nigeria.

Making *Freedom* was a unique experience. It was the first full-length feature film written by Africans, acted by Africans and filmed in Africa. Over 2000 people gave sums of money, large and small, to make this possible. The cameramen were two talented men from Finland, one of whom had worked for Walt Disney. The other was contracted to Finland's largest film company, Suomi Filmi. The cast was drawn from different parts of Africa and the crew from 12 different countries. Great sacrifices were made by the members of the cast who worked far into the night on the movie whilst carrying on their regular jobs by day. This is where Nico and I met as we were part of

the film crew.

The scenery and locations for the film were stunning. The lagoons and rolling waves of the Atlantic on the beaches of Lagos, the dry desert area of the North, the ancient walled mud city of Kano, the markets, the hustle and bustle of Enugu, the great Niger River and small villages and towns such as Abeokuta and Ado Ekiti. In Onitsha on the banks of the Niger River we had to arrange a canoe race involving extras of some 10 000 people. Much of the filming had to be done at night because of the heat and noise. The days were long and exhausting, but life was an adventure.

Nico was part of the sound crew and would disappear for days with Aino Jederholm, the Finnish cameraman to do background shooting in far-away places. They filmed incredible walled cities, durbas and other scenes. I worked as an assistant to the director. Film was kept in a cold room in a butcher shop to prevent expansion in the heat and was flown back to London for processing. The rough cuts were then returned to Lagos and screened in the local cinema.

At the end of the filming Nico stayed on in Nigeria and I went to London to work on the final editing at Elstree studios. Neither of us would have dreamed that 8 years later we would be married and would return to Nigeria.

The editing took longer than expected as the whole soundtrack had to be dubbed due to background noise. James W Owen, a well-known African-American composer had flown over to Nigeria and travelled 3000 miles to incorporate authentic West African music into his compositions. He put together an amazing blend that included the Bethune Cookman Choir from the States, the Calabar Choral Party from Nigeria, African drummers and the BBC Concert Orchestra. For weeks on end I would sit in a plush armchair in a small cinema in Elstree Studios taking notes from one of J Arthur Rank's sound experts as the dubbing progressed slowly.

The world premiere of *Freedom* took place on February 14, 1957 in the Egyptian Theater, Hollywood:

It was standing room only when the MRA-produced *Freedom* was given its world premiere yesterday. At both the afternoon and evening performances the jam-packed audiences stood and cheered for several minutes at the end of the breath-taking panoramic unreeling.

This epic movie which features as many as 10 000 Africans in one scene alone, not only is a superb example of artistic integrity and dramatic force, but strikes home as a work of intense conviction. With compelling power it portrays an answer of unity for all people from the heart of Africa.

(Boyd, Len, *Freedom In Smash World Bow*, Valley Times, February 15, 1957)

In the following years the film was shown all over the world, on TV and in theatres. It was dubbed into many languages and was on the official programme of the Ghana Independence Day Celebrations. It played a meaningful role in helping people understand the underlying struggle for a continent.

Taking The Tiger to Brazil

May 1, 1961, Krushchev announced that the Communists were about to launch "a mighty offensive to capture South America in the next two years". Planeloads of Latin American students were flown to Moscow for training. There were student riots in Recife and on June 12 *The Brazil Times* reported that Brazilian warships with combat units on board had sailed for Recife to counter student riots there.

Also on May 1, *The Tiger*, the play written at the MRA

Conference Centre in Switzerland by the militant Japanese students who had rioted against the visit of President Eisenhower to Japan, started its tour of Latin America. This was at the invitation of General Bethlem from Brazil who had seen the show in Miami, Florida. Together with Marshal Tavora, a Brazilian army hero, the General introduced the cast and the international group of 150 people to audiences throughout Brazil playing in theatres and football stadiums to crowds of 45 000 and up. Nico was part of this and writes:

In city after city the presentation of the play would be heralded by a triumphant march through the streets with banners, music and leaflets. In one place a funeral procession got entangled with the marchers. (I'm not quite sure who landed up where in all this!) The story of the Japanese student riots so paralleled the situation in Brazil that the response was overwhelming.

After a week in Recife the police reported that "the Communist masses have been won by the idea of MRA against the orders of their leaders" and the police stopped providing special police protection. From Recife the play moved from port to port up the Amazon and at Manaus 1800 kilometres up-river The Tiger drew a crowd of 90 000. From Brazil the cast and crew were flown by the Brazilian Air Force to Peru, Bolivia and Chile.

On August 25, 1961 President Quadros of Brazil resigned but the expected Communist insurrection did not take place and Marshal Tavora, in an audience with Pope John XXIII, told him that it was due to the work of this MRA group that Brazil had been saved from civil war. This view was confirmed by Eudocio Ravines, one-time South American delegate to the Comintern and founder of the Communist Party of Peru.

With one or two others I decided to stay on in Recife in order to continue meeting with the students and the sugar cane workers who had offered us accommodation. The door of the

home where I stayed was jammed and the only entrance seemed to be through a window. I became very adept at crawling in and out. The film "Men of Brazil" and other relevant films were shown to students and sugar cane workers alike.

Sent by his brother, President John F Kennedy, Senator Edward Kennedy came to Recife to gauge the situation in Brazil. Vince Verkowski, a former FBI agent now working with MRA, and I were asked to arrange a business breakfast where the Senator could meet some of the students and trade union leaders. This was done and Vince and I joined the breakfast group and found the discussions most interesting. At the end of the meal the students' commented: "The aides did all the talking and we had no opportunity to give our view of things."

London to the USA

From 1956 – 1957 I stayed on in London and a parade of Africans passed through the MRA headquarters. Many of these were friends made during the filming of *Freedom*. The Ewi and Eyeshorun of Ado Ekiti and their daughter Yetunde were amongst these. For three months in 1957, I shared a room with Princess Yetunde. She asked me to help arrange her wedding and to be one of her bridesmaids. So the two of us worked out the details and the wedding took place with the reception, a cheerful West African affair, in the stately halls of 45 Berkeley Square, a national monument and formerly the home of Clive of India.

After London I spent the next 2 years in the USA. First at the MRA Conference centre in Mackinac Island in the heart of the Great Lakes and then for 5 months in Atlanta, Georgia, where a follow-up play to *Freedom*, *The Next Phase*, also written by Africans was performed in the Tower Theatre on Peachtree Street. For a year I worked in the MRA offices in New York. I loved the hustle and bustle of New York. I met all kinds of

people such as Sarah, the granddaughter of the Madhi of Sudan. I loved working on 5th Avenue and I loved weekends spent out in the country in beautiful Westchester County.

For three months a group of us toured Canada presenting *Freedom* all through Ontario. My brother Fred and Manasseh Moerane (author and one of the main actors) came across to add content and credibility to the message of the film. Fred and Clive Ulyate, a former Springbok rugby player, were invited to play rugby for the London, Ontario, rugby team. It was a rather haphazard affair and Canadian rugby has come a long way since. However, I do believe it started on the Ontario rugby field in 1959!

Chapter 4

Africa in the 60's



So Where To Now? Where else but Soweto

In the early 60's we were both back in South Africa. I had been out of the country for the best part of 7 years. And Nico had been away for a number of years himself. This was a difficult time for South Africa. The Sharpeville massacre had taken place in 1961. It was the height of the Verwoerd era culminating in an attempted assassination and later a successful one. Draconian laws were being passed and a seething anger boiled below the surface.

During this time we started to show the film *Freedom* in Soweto. On Sundays we would go door to door with leaflets inviting people to the next weekend's screening. Meadowlands, the area to which the residents of Sophiatown had moved, was one of our stamping grounds. Here we met a bright young man by the name of Archie. His passion in life was music and he had taken the initiative to train his own brass band. Archie offered to accompany us down the streets adding greatly to our publicity efforts. We met the President of the Coffee Carts Association, Regina Gqiba. The coffee carts were a familiar sight in down-town Johannesburg and sold food and drink to workers. She had been a strong member of the ANC, had been part of the Defiance Campaign and was on the Provincial Executive of the Women's League under Lillian Ngoye. She had taken part in the famous march to Pretoria and, during two months spent in prison with her baby, the child had become ill and later died. Regina, through meeting PQ Vundla had become a positive influence in the life of her community and during our Soweto campaign, Regina kept us going with ginger beer and sandwiches.

We went to weddings, funerals and we knew every street and suburb of Soweto. And we made good friends. The Vundla home was our headquarters.

Dr Xuma died and Nico attended his funeral. Standing outside the Orlando Hall where the service was held, he started talking to a young man. They found they both came from Odendaalsrus in the Free State and that Ragetla had grown up on the neighbouring farm. They became good friends until the family fled the country. Years later we visited them in Ndola, Zambia, and spent a weekend in their home. After this visit, as we were heading back to South Africa, Ragetla asked if we would take gifts to their family. These turned out to be all made in Russia! We prayed our way through the South African customs. Remember, it was the 1960's.

London Wedding

In 1963 we got engaged. Nico phoned me from a call box in Tshipise (Limpopo) 480 kilometres North of Pretoria and asked me to marry him. This was a bit of a surprise and as I hesitated he announced that he was running out of money so I had better make up my mind! I decided to risk it! We visited Rev Beyers Naude who had been Nico's student minister while at the University of Pretoria. Nico later introduced him to Manasseh Moerane, the first black person in a leadership position that he had met. We asked Ds. Bey if he would marry us and this was the plan. But we were invited to a conference being held in London and as our return home was delayed we decided to get married in London. The Dutch Church in Austin Friars, Thread and Needle Street (tucked away neatly behind the Bank of England) was a far cry indeed from the maize fields of the Free State and the veld of the Karoo.

Our friends piled in to help. To make up for not being in South Africa, we had traditional South African food, proteas in the flower arrangements and the bouquets and the bridesmaids wearing voortrekker costumes. My sister Stella and her

husband Bill were in London at the time and Stella was one of my bridesmaids. Muriel Smith, the great African American opera singer, at that time playing *Carmen* in the West End of London, sang in the church and we had a mixture of music which included *The Prayer of Paul Kruger*. Many African friends came and Jomo Kenyatta sent a message from Kenya, as did Jim Fouche, the then Minister of Defence in the SA Cabinet. In fact Jim Fouche was questioned in parliament as to how he and Jomo Kenyatta could send messages to the same wedding. The Honourable Malise Hore-Ruthven, Colonel in the Black Watch Regiment, who had been Aidé-de-Camp to Lord Milner in South Africa, lent us his sword that had been used in the Anglo Boer War, to cut the cake. And the press were quite impressed with all this cross-cultural unity in the sixties. Twenty-five years later the *Eastern Province Herald* in their column, *The Way it Was - 25 years ago*, featured Mandela and others in the Rivonia trial and then wrote: "Sir De Villiers Graaff, Leader of the Opposition, Mr J J Fouche, Minister of Defence, Mr Jomo Kenyatta, Prime Minister of Kenya, and Mahatma Gandhi's grandson, Rajmohan, all sent telegrams of good wishes when two South Africans married in London." (Sutton, K. *This week in 1963 -The Way It Was 25 Years Ago, Mandela, others in Rivonia Trial* Eastern Province Herald, October 5, 1988)

The Marquis of Graham offered us an apartment in his home in Scotland on the shores of Loch Lomond for our honeymoon. Scotland to us has something of the same wild untamed feeling about it as the African veld and we have ever since loved that part of the world.

But Europe was not where we wanted to live. We were Africans and wanted to be on African soil. While in London Nico had written all the African embassies in London saying that we were South Africans, that we were part of Africa and that if there was anything we could do to build relationships, we would really like to do it. He was given appointments with a number of them and by the time we headed South we had

invitations to Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Kenya Interlude – We started off in Kenya and for some months lived with Vere and Madi James in Nairobi. During this time Nico and Vere were invited to show *Freedom* to President Jomo Kenyatta at his home in Gutundu, just outside Nairobi. Here he lived guarded by ex-Mau Mau soldiers. Nico was also invited to address the United Kenya Club in April 1964. His talk was featured on the national news twice that same night and in both daily papers the following day.

Madi and I attended the opening of the big East African Women's seminar, the first East African seminar, attended by 500 women and 200 men. This was my chance to listen to President Kenyatta as he opened the seminar. The President's daughter, Margaret Kenyatta, was the Chairlady and delegates came from Uganda, Tanganyika (Mrs Nyerere), Rwanda, Ethiopia and Southern Rhodesia.

President Kenyatta, in the 60's had played an enormous role in bringing Kenyans together in the same way as President Mandela was to do 30 years later in South Africa.

We then returned to South Africa via Zambia and Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia). On arrival in South Africa Nico paid a courtesy call on General Hendrik van der Bergh whom he had known from Odendaalsrus days. The General was now Head of the Bureau of State Security (BOSS) in the country. Nico usually tried to update him about experiences in Africa and on telling him about our time in Kenya the General took out a folder and informed him that John Vorster, the then Minister of Justice, had instructed him to arrest Nico when he landed in Johannesburg. Apparently the press coverage of Nico's talk to the United Kenya Club in Nairobi had reached South Africa and was not what South Africa wanted to hear. Knowing Nico, the General refused to do this.

So we decided that he should leave, which he did and lived for

a while in Francistown in Botswana. In the meantime we worked towards going to Nigeria and I joined him in Zimbabwe from where we left for Nigeria. We had been invited by Brigadier Ogundipe and Chief Justice Ademola to start a nation-building programme for young people in that country and Nigeria was to be our home for the next two years.

Nigeria revisited – No 4 Lawrence Road, Ikoyi, Lagos, was a large house by any standards. It rose out of the ground like a half-moon antebellum house, had two floors and a roof-top balcony. In the late 50s it had been the headquarters of the making of the film *Freedom*. Now in 1964 we were back at No 4. With us in Lagos were Isaac Amata from Nigeria whose brother John had played a leading role in *Freedom*, Andrew Peppetta, a young South African from the Eastern Cape who was central in the youth training programmes and Gerald Henderson from England. Noemi Brunner, a Swiss doctor also joined us later.

One Christmas the Ghanaian High Commissioner to Nigeria, Alhaji Yakubu Tali, the Tolon Na, whom I had first met in Ashante 8 years earlier, invited us to spend Christmas with him and his daughter Mariama. Mariama had been part of the cast of one of the plays performed in America and we had often done things together. The fact that they were Moslems and would recognise our Christmas was indeed gracious. We met the Ethiopian Ambassador and his wife and five daughters and got to know them well, and Teklamarian, head of Ethiopian Airlines. What a friend he proved to be 18 months later!

Alhaji Aminu Kano, a young Foreign Office official, had met Nico and he asked if his younger brother could spend a couple of months with us in our home to experience the modern world. This was during Rhamadan and Nico decided that he too would fast with the young man - no eating or drinking from sunrise to sunset - for a month. He found it quite hard going in the blazing heat of West Africa. (I found it equally hard going getting up before sunrise to prepare a meal of beans and hot

chilli peppers for their breakfast). Alhaji Aminu Kano then invited us to his home to break the fast at the end of Rhamadan. In true tradition his four wives and I remained humbly in the kitchen while Nico and the men had their meal. Afterwards we were allowed to eat. Later the four wives came to visit. They were gorgeously dressed in shimmering gold. We had tea together and conversed through a friend I had invited who could speak Hausa. Then there was the return invitation to tea where I was served cornflakes and warm milk.

On the invitation of Brigadier Ogundipe, a number of programmes in nation-building were organized for young army officers. The Brigadier believed that the army was a place where Nigerians from all areas of the country could begin to find an allegiance to a nation above all tribal divides. Most of the young officers had been trained in either Sandhurst or Fort Benning. Lt Col Hilary Njoku of the Second Battalion, and his wife Rose became very good friends. When Nico was away I stayed with the Njoku's in the barracks and Rose cooked me Pakistani food (they had been stationed in Pakistan) because she felt the biting hot West African food would be too much for me. While I was away in the East at some point, Nico spent a weekend with them and, during a dance in the Mess, egged on by the young officers, ended up dancing a lively quickstep with Rose. What would the Free State think of this in 1964! Sadly we lost touch with them during the Biafran war.

Down the road from our house was the Thai Embassy. On one of Nico's out-of-town visits, I stayed with the Ambassador and his French wife, M and Mme Bhadravadi. One evening we were invited to dinner to meet Alhaji Koguna, the Nigerian Ambassador to Pakistan who was on home leave. We arrived at the embassy to find a distinguished group of 12 people. Sitting around with our pre-dinner drinks, the doorbell rang and His Excellency, with a puzzled frown, went to greet whoever! On the threshold - a gorgeously dressed, stunning young lady, obviously unexpected. "Oh!" announced Alhaji Kaguna rising to his feet with a swirl of robes, "I was sure you

wouldn't mind, Your Excellency, I have invited Ms Nchuku, the sister of the Foreign Minister to join us. She is just off to Thailand and will benefit from any advice Your Excellency has to give!"

Poor Madame, I think, did actually mind. Place settings do not usually come in thirteens! She hastily disappeared upstairs to find the necessary equipment and to squeeze up all the chairs to accommodate the extra guest. So dinner proceeded. Well after midnight we were still sitting at the table. At that point Alhaji threw his robes over his shoulder and rising dramatically said that he really had to go now as he had another party to attend! (In Nigeria it often seemed that people would accept invitations for a number of events in one evening although after midnight did seem a trifle late!) So the evening broke up and people dispersed. Madame asked us to stay behind a few minutes. "I have just killed Alhaji Kaguna," she announced. Apparently it was her firm belief that the first person that stood up from a table of 13 would die. She was determined that it would be neither herself nor her husband, and, because he had been so rude as to invite an extra guest, she had given the Alhaji the privilege. So we had sat and sat and sat and Alhaji finally rose to what we hoped was not going to be his demise. The Bhadravadi's retired to Potier in France and we had contact with them for many years after.

On one of our trips to the North, we went to Sokoto, the home of the Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, the spiritual head of the Moslems. This was on the North West border with the Sahara. Here we paid a visit to the grave of the Sardauna's father. The entrance to the Sardauna's compound was a large cool thatched rondavel. Gracing the floor was the most beautiful circular Persian carpet, exactly the size of the rondawel, in shades of blue. We bought woven cloth in Sokoto from which I made curtains for the house in Lagos.

In Kano Nico was able to show the Emir (king) of Kano *Freedom* and this started a long friendship. As recently as

March, 1997 Nico had a letter from His Royal Highness:

Dear Mr Ferreira

We recollect with much gratitude your visit to us in 1964. We referred to it at the Jubilee Celebrations of Caux in August 1986. For Allah has moved us to organise a Conference on the theme "Tomorrow's Africa" in Kano from April 19 25, 1997.

As this is a continuation of what you were privileged to have a part in starting, we would like you to participate with us at the Conference.

We are scheduled to celebrate the festival Aid-el-Kabir on April 17 and 18 and would like you to celebrate with us.

Would you and your wife consider joining us (Insha Allah)

Yours faithfully

Alhaji Ado Bayero, Emir of Kano.

Unfortunately we were not able to go.

We called to pay our respects to the Emir of Zaria. The palace was a large walled building with beautiful designs on the outer archways. We were led from one room through to another and one courtyard to another. Ostriches, peacocks, crowned cranes and horses wandered the courtyards. The Emir received us graciously and arranged for us the following day to be shown the historic sights of the city. As we waited outside the palace early the next morning, the court jester came to greet us; the court crier shouted, "The King is rising" "The Elephant will come," "The Lion is here". Cars arrived with robed and turbaned councillors. Each was greeted with a blast

from the trumpet-blower. Leaving their sandals respectfully at the door they disappeared with quiet dignity into the cool recesses of the palace. Then the Emir's secretary arrived and took us to the Sa'i who was to be our guide and our mentor.

The Sa'i had been appointed by the Emir of Zaria to write the history of the city. We were received in the entrance hut to his courtyard, cool and thatch-scented. On the floor on a woven round mat sat the Sa'i himself, his round glasses perched on the end of his nose, his yellow turban twisted around his head. He peered at the pile of papers in front of him – beautiful Arabic script, Roman script and even some typed pages. We were seated on mats and so began our history lesson.

The original city was founded over 900 years ago. The walls of this are still standing in some places and are known as Amina's walls. During the years the Moslem faith filtered in from the Western Sudan. In 1802 came the "Jihad", the holy war when Shehu Usuman Dan Fodio established the Fulani Empire which exists to this day. Since then there had been 17 Fulani kings. The then Emir, Malam Muhammadu Aminu, was the 18th in succession.

And Queen Amina, we asked? "Ah!" said the old man, "that is very old history. We ourselves cannot remember it, only we are told of her doings."

Apparently Queen Amina succeeded her father, King Bakwa. He had no sons and so his daughter became heir to the throne. Traditionally, the people of Bornu Province in North East Nigeria sent a king-maker to Zaria to crown the king. But the king-maker of Bornu refused to crown Amina as she was a woman. She was insulted. She rallied her warriors and started a campaign that continued until she had captured and was ruling a vast kingdom from Idda in the South to Kano and Katsina in the far North. She founded many towns during her campaign and to this day old town walls can be seen in various parts of the provinces that are still known as Amina's walls.

She died in the South and is buried on the banks of the Niger River. The present city was founded 600 years ago and is named after Queen Zaria, Amina's younger sister.

Drawing with his finger on the sand, the Sa'I showed us the layout of the city with the three ancient inner walls and the wider outer defence walls. "We will go now," he said, "to look at the old mosque and the remains of Queen Amina's walls".

We drove through the narrow winding streets with their beautiful mudhouses. A lovely archway was pointed out, now part of a house, but originally the gateway of Queen Amina's wall. Our road took us between a row of houses and the old moat now full of water plants on to a lovely grass-covered mound all that remained of the old Mosque, past a busy market place and back to the Palace.

The Sa'i took us to the new Mosque with the old courthouse or Alkali attached. This must be one of the finest examples of Hausa architecture. We were allowed to enter and shoeless we walked through the great building. Huge amara palm rafters, immune to the ravages of the white ant, stretched from floor to ceiling in dome after dome. We saw the pulpit given to Abdul Karim by Sultan Bello of Sokoto and the humble room where the women pray. Then into the old Alkali, no longer in use, but kept as a monument. Twelve magnificent arches of palm stretching from ground to ceiling and thick mud walls insulated the building from the outside heat.

At the request of the Emir we were taken 3 kilometres outside the city to Tukur to the Emir's rest house where his guests stay. It is situated in rocky outcrops for which Zaria Province is famous. As we arrived the sun was going down in a blaze of colour behind the palm trees and the rocks and the beautiful race horses, each in his own round hut.

A few days later we went back to thank the Sa'i. We gave him a fountain pen and he quoted a Hausa proverb: "The reason

for giving is greater than the gift." On a wooden slate he wrote in graceful Arabic script: "Character exceeds everything". The slate has a place of honour in our home today.

In Kaduna we met Alhaja Dada Sari East. She was a Fulani from Adama Province in Northern Nigeria. She had trained as a nurse in England and was one of the few women of her people to have had an education. She married and lived with her English husband in the UK all the time educating herself further.

Now, widowed, she had returned to Northern Nigeria to help develop her country. "I always wanted to do something for the women and children of my people. You know, our men here get so much more attention. First I had to train myself. I went to many villages spending up to 6 weeks in a place trying to see what was most needed." She took us over the new modern Women's Enlightenment Centre in Zaria. This had been built to her specifications and became the headquarters for training programmes.

In the beginning Alhaja Dada Sari East had gone to the Emirs of each town, told them what she planned to do and suggested they send their wives. And from all over the region the women would come for 6-week courses. If the Emir's wives came, the other women came. They brought their babies and they learned about hygiene and how to prevent disease in their families. Knowing that there was no money to spare, Alhaja taught things that could be done by any family. How to make a wash basin out of a calabash, how to filter water using a simple filtration system made up of three sticks and two clay pots; how to make a simple bed.

Posters were widely used, colourful, simple and designed with the help of the trainees to be quickly and easily understood. After six weeks the women would go back to their villages and train others.

From Kano we started the long journey back to Lagos and found the bridge closed with a truck hanging perilously over the railings. The driver said that his hand had started to shake as he crossed the narrow bridge.

We unloaded our station wagon leaving our luggage with the Chief and took the two most seriously injured to hospital. Then back to pick up our luggage where we were presented with a live chicken as a token of appreciation. The bridge remained blocked and our return journey had to be via Enugu in the East an extra 500 k's. The chicken needed to be taken for occasional walks and we were quite relieved when it escaped and fled into the cane fields!

In Nigeria we found small villages each with its own craft tradition such as leatherwork, silverwork, carving of calabashes and manufacturing of glass beads. The whole village was involved in this specific activity and quality items were for sale.

The United States Information Agency lent us a generator and most evenings films were shown in schools or colleges. Andrew, Nico and Isaac were quite a hit in the Girls' Schools! During the weekend we would have two-day conferences and workshops at the house in Ikoyi.

We arranged a large youth conference in the Eastern part of Nigeria and part of the programme was helping a village build a dam for water storage and planting fields of pineapples. About 200 young people attended this 5-day conference. I remember it being extremely hot as we stood in a conga line passing baskets of earth to build the wall. And I became quite good at planting pineapples.

Andrew, a good Methodist, was invited to preach one Sunday in the Anglican cathedral. He asked Nico to go with him. Half-way through the order of service Andrew got a bit lost between the First Reading and the Second Reading, the First Prayer,

and all that followed. So abruptly he said: "Now I will get my fellow revolutionary from South Africa to say the next prayer." From the body of the church Nico rose and gave a good Dutch Reformed prayer.

John Nchekwube was a bright young student who attended some of the workshops that were being run for young people. He had real leadership qualities and took on much responsibility in our "nation-building" programme. Nico got him a scholarship to an American University and later he sent us a photograph of himself in the USA wearing a cowboy hat and beating the Nigerian drums. We lost contact altogether until, 30 years later while in America, Nico met a man who had been a lecturer at the university which John had attended. Amazingly he remembered John and the next day Nico was given his address. We made contact and found that he had become a neuro-surgeon and now lived in San Francisco and he still remembered our daughter's name.

Apart from the young people there was a lot of interaction with the Trade Unions and meetings would be held with them in The Cool Cats Bar where once again we dragged along the projector and showed the various films.

Often one thing led to another. Bridget Elliott, the wife of the British Agricultural Attache in Eastern Nigeria, and I were invited to tea with Mrs Azikiwe. There we met the Canadian Ambassador's wife, who then had us to tea with the wife of the British High Commissioner, Lady Cumming Bruce. She phoned that evening to invite the three of us to dinner as the High Commissioner wanted to hear more about what we were doing.

Leaving at speed under a cloud.

All this came to an abrupt end. In December 1965, invited to a reception given by the Foreign Minister, we were accosted by a

couple of people asking how come we were still there as they had read in the paper that we had been "deported". We hurriedly left the reception and went in search of the newspaper. Sure enough our names appeared on the front page of the *Daily Sketch* November 17, 1965:

"Two persons, Loël Maureen Ferreira and Johan Nicholas Ferreira, had been declared prohibited immigrants by Alhaji Sheitima Ali Monguno, Federal Minister of Internal Affairs. An extra-ordinary gazette just published in Lagos said the two persons would be deported from Nigeria at the next available opportunity."

(Deportation Order, *Daily Sketch*, November 17, 1965)

This was most odd and rather scary. 1965 was not the best time for South Africans to be in West Africa. Nico immediately contacted the head of security, whom he knew well and was told to report to the military headquarters the next morning at 9 a.m. This he did (I hoped he would return) and was informed that we had to be out of the country by Wednesday and that from Monday we would be under house-arrest. This was Friday. Our passports were confiscated and there we were with a few major problems: We were in the middle of a training conference and No 4 Lawrence Road was filled with 20 young people; we had no money and no return tickets to anywhere. Teklemarian, the head of Ethiopian airlines in Lagos was our one hope. He was doubtful if he could help as South Africans were not allowed on Ethiopian Airlines. But he came up trumps. Not only did he book us on his plane to Nairobi, via Addis, he provided the tickets saying we could pay one day when we were able to, and suggested we spend a day in Addis Ababa, the city synonymous with the Organization of African Unity, The Great Hall of Africa, and Emperor Haile Selassie. We protested that if we couldn't fly on their planes how could we visit the city? "When you land in Addis," he said, "if you are booked on the morning flight to Nairobi, leave. But

if you are on the afternoon flight, spend the day in Addis.”

Before we left we packed up a few of our precious possessions carved heads from Benin, woven cloth from Sokoto. We marked them with a fictitious address in Tanzania and the ship's captain said he would change the address before reaching Cape Town. Some months later, back in South Africa, our goods arrived safely. We were impressed!

At Ikeja Airport our Foreign Office friend, Alhaji Aminu Kano, came to say goodbye. On his head was an embroidered Moslem cap. This had been made by the personal tailor of Alhaji Abubakar Tafewa Balewa, the Prime Minister. He had worn it twice - at his graduation and at his wedding. Now he was giving it to Nico and to this day it hangs in our house. For many years Nico kept contact with Alhaji Aminu who subsequently became Ambassador to Moscow.

Our passports were returned as we went through customs. And so we flew East across Africa in a plane full of departing delegates from the Commonwealth Conference. We arrived in Addis and found we were booked on the afternoon flight and taking our transit passes with us, trustingly boarded the bus into the city, booked in at a hotel, much to the disbelief of the clerk who had never seen a South African passport before, and spent the day wandering through Addis and taking photographs. We returned to the airport and waving our transit visas confidently (or nervously in my case) passed through smoothly and left for Kenya. Nobody in the world knew where we were and I was relieved to touch down in Nairobi. We still have the transit passes.

The day after our arrival we heard of the military coup in Nigeria; that the Biafran army officers were responsible; and that Alhaji Abubakar Tafewa Balewa, the Prime Minister, and his wife had been shot. We were relieved to be out of it all and cannot guess at what might have happened to us if we had been around, knowing as we did, many young army officers

who were deemed responsible for the coup. Maybe somebody had thoughtfully arranged our deportation! The Biafran war decimated the land causing continuing hardship, hunger and suffering. We wondered what had happened to Hillary Njoku of the 3rd Battalion and Rose and the three children. Forty years later we heard from a friend that they were living in their village in Eastern Nigeria, that Rose was involved in women's groups and, said our friend, "Hillary has probably by now been given a knighthood by the Pope!" We were glad they had survived the war. We were able to repay our friend Teklamarian for the air tickets he had provided.

Palm Oil Stew (*If you dare!*)

Palm oil - about 125ml -
available in unusual shops
1 Chicken cut into pieces
4 tomatoes
2 green bell peppers
4 onions
Half or less small chilli pepper

Grind the last four ingredients
to a paste (liquidise if you like)

Fry this liquidy stuff in a hot
palm oil
Add the chicken
Cook slowly until tender, adding
a little more water if needed
Add salt to taste
Serve, traditionally, with Yam
Fufu, but if not available,
mashed potatoes or rice.

Groundnut Stew (*For the less
adventurous*)

Sunflower Oil - about 125ml
1 chicken cut into pieces
125ml peanut butter - or a
little more
4 tomatoes
2 green bell peppers
4 onions
Half or less small chilli pepper

Grind last four ingredients to a
paste
Heat the oil and fry the
vegetable paste briefly
Add the chicken and a little
water and simmer
Take some of the hot liquid,
stir into the peanut butter and
then stir back into the chicken.
It thickens nicely.
Serve with rice.

Chapter 5

Recouping after the Coup



Nigeria had become our second home, our second country. We had made many friends. We had learned how to negotiate the traffic, how to accept 3 invitations for one night and do justice to them all, how to shop in markets, how to survive the sweltering heat, how to wash fruit in gentian violet, how to cook and enjoy yam fufu, groundnut stew, jolloff rice and palmoil chicken for 10 – 100 people at a time. In later years we would visit the West African restaurant in London just to get a smell and a taste of that rich spicy food. In our fridge today we have a bottle of bright orange palmoil and periodically we produce the hot spicy concoction. We are very circumspect as to whom we invite to share this meal.

We left Nigeria with the comment of a senior Nigerian in the Department of Foreign Affairs firmly fixed in our minds: "If the South African Government could make a statement that South Africa is part of Africa, we can begin to talk". And back in South Africa, the response from the then Secretary for the Department of Foreign Affairs when Nico told him this: "We are not Africans, we are Europeans!"

Now we were in Kenya, not sure of our future and not even sure if we were very welcome in Kenya. We travelled up and down the country visiting old friends and making new. Then finally we decided that we should return to South Africa. We boarded a ship at Mombassa and cruised down the coast. In Dar-es-Salaam we spent three extremely hot days on board as South Africans were not allowed to disembark in Tanzania. At low tide our cabin seemed to be under the pier. In Beira we could at least stretch our legs along miles of coast and eat Peri Peri chicken. Then to Durban.

Prof Fanie Olivier, Rector of the University of Westville in Natal, and his wife Rosa, met us at the dock and two days later we were on a train to Pretoria where we lived for the next while with Ds George Daneel and his wife Joey. This was February 1966.

Springbok Stampede let's do something in South Africa

Our years with Moral Re-Armament taught us many things that were to become the foundation on which we built our lives.

- There is enough in the world for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed.
- If everyone cares enough and everyone shares enough, everyone will have enough.
- What colour is God's skin – everyone's the same in the good Lord's sight.
- Live to make the other person great
- Not who's right but what's right.
- Where God guides, He provides.
- God has a plan and a task for each person. Listen and He will tell you.
- When I point my finger at my neighbour, there are three more pointing back at me.
- Do not judge a person before you have walked a mile in his moccasins.

During the previous summer we had spent 6 weeks in the USA on the island of Mackinac. Here we had seen the birth of the *Up With People Movement*. This had gained momentum and young people from all over the world were flocking to sign up for a year of experience in getting to understand issues in the world, meeting diverse and interesting people, and learning to take responsibility for themselves and for others. It answered the need they felt to be involved and to play a part in the world they were living in.

We decided that we could do something similar in South Africa. We gathered a group of young people and using some of the *Up With People* songs, and other home-grown numbers we started a musical show which was known as *Springbok Stampede*. Jane Hopcraft/Stanley, a talented musician from Kenya, joined us to be musical director. And out of nowhere Danie Gerber, later described in the *The Rand Daily Mail* as "one of the most talented composers of light music in the country", arrived. Forty years later Jane wrote: "... No one can doubt that it was a great show with a great message and made us all the best of friends in all our different circumstances. Tell Danie Gerber that I haven't heard a saxophone player to touch him and that I miss him and the music we created together". And Ruth Kerr/Zager added: "One of the most favourite times for me was in rehearsal when the band was getting set up and the guys were tuning their instruments.... Danie would play a few notes and then Hamish, Ian, Brian and the others would take it and turn it into a song....".

We moved to Wag-'n-Bietjie in Witkoppen on 10 acres of ground just outside Johannesburg and within two months we had 40 young people living with us (in garages, rondawels, prefab houses). For the next 3 years this was our life. Everyone pitched in with cooking, dishwashing, etc. Rehearsals were fast and furious and once up and running *Springbok Stampede* started on the road and travelled the length and breadth of South Africa, later to Rhodesia and Mozambique. The young people were responsible for costumes, backstage, setting up the show in the different towns, finding places to sleep and places to eat, raising money, PR work etc. Recalling this time, Sonia Bester said, "As well as learning the numerous important lessons of life such as accepting challenges, living an organised and responsible life and basic human understanding, I still consider our *Springbok Stampede* days had a major positive effect on the audiences, which in turn, hopefully, snowballed. Sadly any hopes of a singing career faded but at least I learnt

how to help conquer hunger pains as I found kitchen duties most rewarding.”

We had our own bus and as I think back I am astounded that we survived all those miles without an accident. The show was performed in town halls, universities, clubs, military barracks, schools, church halls, theatres, on the beach and in the open air from the back of a truck. The cast were between the age of 16 and 26. We had a travelling school with Dr Malie Smuts as Principal, and 10 matric students being tutored. All passed well. Malie later became an esteemed professor at Onderstepoort Veterinary College and remains a good friend. Brian Adams was one of these students. Forty years later he wrote “I joined *Stampede* in January 1968 and was the drummer for two full years as well as matriculating from the traveling school at the end of 1969. In retrospect the wealth of experience that we were really privileged to enjoy made a huge impact on my life. It provided us with an opportunity to take responsibility and to realize the importance of teams and being a team-player i.e. worrying about others and their needs and feelings. The value of traveling, as we did, and meeting new people everyday just can't be under-estimated. I believe that the experience equipped me with a great deal of self-confidence and I really got to know myself during this time. Spiritually I grew enormously and a strong foundation was laid which has remained strong ever since”.

“Was I crazy?” asked Cheryl Manson/Delate. “At the age of 18, I left home and school after being chosen as a prefect and receiving colours for gymnastics, to join a group of singing, laughing, friendly, jumping-around-a-stage, group of people who toured around the country committed to inspiring themselves and others to live honestly and morally through song and movement! As no one earned a cent during that time, one could only have learned huge life skills for the future. Some of the skills we learnt were time management, cooking, housekeeping, child-minding, patience, tolerance and budgeting with very little resources.”

After our visit to Rhodesia we had 40 young Rhodesians travel with us for a month. Many stayed on. We staged a performance in the Joubert Park Theatre, Johannesburg with excellent write-ups in a number of papers including *The Daily Mail* and *Die Vaderland*.

It has an abundance of youthful talent and one of the finest composers of light music in the country, and above all it is one of the finest shows ever presented in Johannesburg. It was a pleasure to watch these dedicated youngsters put everything they had into a stimulating two-hour show. Their conduct, grooming and professional approach puts many alleged entertainers to shame. They enjoy every number and what is most important, they play for the people. The accent of the show is on youth, the hopes, the frustrations and the joy of living.

(English, A. *Bright New Show for the People* The Rand Daily Mail. Feb 17, 1970)

Die Vaderland described the show as a sparkling modern musical...

.... Beneath the upbeat production there is a deeper wrestling with the problems of life and the world situation and in particular with the future facing the youth. The programme is: People and events seen through the prism of music"

(Joan Crafford *Hul Ritme is Deel van Afrika*, Die Vaderland February 17, 1970)

Members of the cast were invited to participate in the Latin American show, *Viva la Gente* and others travelled to the States to join one of the American *Up With People* shows during which visit Nico had the opportunity of meeting General Dwight Eisenhower in February 1967.

But there is a time to come and a time to go. After three years of literally being "on the road", during which time our daughter

Stella Maria was born, we believed that these young people should make their way in life and put into practice what they had learned while working with the cast. In 1970 the show ended and the cast went their different ways. On April 22, 2006, forty years after the first performance one of the old cast members, Jeanette Horn, arranged a reunion in Johannesburg. 120 of the former cast accepted the invitation and came from Canada, the USA, the UK, Australia, Zimbabwe and Namibia to attend.

Having often wondered what those years had meant to the young people who were with us, it was heartening to see what they had done with their lives. Ian Cosh, whom we hadn't heard from for 40 years, wrote: "*Stampede* provided my first real encounter with what it meant to be a leader and to accept real responsibility. Nico was one of the first adults I knew who had high expectations of us as young men and instilled in us a sense of responsibility and confidence. I shall forever be grateful for his influence. As a result of the influence that *Stampede* had on me as a teenager, I have certainly tried to live an active and engaged life - helping others make a positive difference in the world."

And from Australia, Gisella Matthaei/Hansen sent a message: "One of my favourite SS (Springbok Stampede) songs was "Reach for the Stars", and this has surely been my motto! I have aimed high, have dreamed many dreams and have reached out to achieve the impossible. My life has been truly blessed as I have continued with the daily habit of a quiet time first thing in the morning, as was instilled in me during my first encounter with SS at Wag 'n Bietjie. Up to this day it remains a very special time."

Kenya visitors

During this period Nico invited George Githi, formerly private secretary to President Kenyatta and the then editor-in-chief of

The Nation, to visit South Africa. He had met George on a previous visit to Kenya. This was a complicated exercise as George didn't want a South African stamp in his passport, and in any case South Africa was not in the business of giving visas to citizens of other African countries. However, it was arranged through General van der Bergh and George arrived with Vere James and spent the next ten days going around the country, meeting a cross section of people including the Editor of *Die Landstem*, Piet Beukes. Some time later the Editor of the Cape Times heard about this. "It is not possible," he said to Piet Beukes. "If it had happened I would have known about it." Piet pulled out a photograph of himself and George Githi taken together at lunch. A friend flew the party up to the Karoo farm, Zoetvlei, where my father had put some stones to indicate a suitable runway on a lucerne field. He picked up some sand and it blew away in the wind and Bill the pilot then knew in which direction to land.

Some months later, Allister Sparks, then Foreign Editor of the *Rand Daily Mail*, wrote a series of articles on interviews he had had with people in different parts of Africa. The articles were published in the *Rand Daily Mail* between December 13 and 19, 1966 and appeared in three other South African morning newspapers. Because of the interest it was decided to reprint them in a booklet. Among those interviewed was George Githi.

Question: I understand that you visited South Africa recently. How did you come to do that?

Mr Githi: *Yes, I was down there about two months ago. I had always wanted to visit South Africa. For as long as I can remember my father always kept a map of South Africa on our sitting room wall. Lots of people used to go down to South Africa to study and I always intended to do so myself. But when I was ready to go, a ban was imposed.*

As I grew up the human problem posed by the situation in

South Africa became clearer and clearer to me, and I thought that although I had lost the chance of studying there I should still go down just to meet the South Africans, especially the Afrikaners. I wanted to learn as much as I could about them, to find out what made them tick.

So then a couple of months ago some friends, both here in Nairobi and in South Africa, were kind enough to make arrangements for me to pay a visit.

Question: What were your impressions of South Africa?

Mr Githi: *One thing that struck me was that the people I met, whether they were Africans or Afrikaners or English, thought of themselves as South Africans. They belong to South Africa and South Africa to them... White people in general thought of Africa north of the Limpopo as a bloc. They were unable to visualise the fascinating developments going on in the different African countries. It is also obvious that misinformation resulted in a fear of Black Africans, both inside and outside South Africa. Yet when all is said and done, White South Africans will find that their best and natural friends are Africans in South Africa and in other parts of the continent.*

I myself thought of the Afrikaners as a lot of rogues immoral, unchristian and unprincipled people who gave and deserved little sympathy. But when I met some of them my views changed. I realised that they are civilised, deeply religious and sincere in their efforts to find ways and means of self-preservation.

However, they are misguided. Most of them seem to think that the only possible way for the Afrikaner to secure self-preservation lies in, shall we say, holding the African down and ultimately possibly even in controlling the English and the Jews as well. This is not the way to preserve a human society. It is the way to destroy it.

I found South Africa to be one of the most dynamic societies in the world. Everybody is changing, including the Afrikaners, although they cannot accept it or its implications.

Question: You speak of the need for human communication, but is this possible in view of the policy of isolation followed by the African states.

Mr Githi: *This is a two-way problem. First the Afrikaners have got to overcome their prejudices and some of their unfounded fears of the African.*

On the other hand I think that some changes of attitude on the part of many African countries is called for. I would like to see the OAU (The Organisation for African Unity) declare that it is not against the White man; that in the event of desirable political changes taking place in South Africa, the OAU would do its best to ensure the safety and security of the White people who have made their homes in South Africa. But I also think the policy of apartheid has so far made it impossible to make such a declaration because it is an affront to human dignity.

(Sparks, A. Conversations in Kenya. It's Time for Contact - Reprinted from the Rand Daily Mail)

Chapter 6

A Fork In The Road



After 15 years of voluntary work, Nico needed now to find a job himself. His last paid job had been with the Department of Native Affairs in 1955 when he had earned £13 per month. In 1971 Nico joined the Wage and Productivity Association as Assistant Director under Mr E. Raymond Silberbauer.

With help from Nico's father we built a house in Witkoppen on the outskirts of Johannesburg, and moved in with Stella Maria, aged 7 and Nicolaas aged 3. Nico's parents joined us and they lived with us for the next two years and we spent 8 very happy years in our house, Taaibos, in Pine Slopes.

The Wage and Productivity Association and the National Development and Management Foundation

In 1907 the first strike of white workers took place in Johannesburg. They felt threatened by the competition of the black workers. These strikes continued through the years until the serious mine strike of 1922 on the Witwatersrand. At this point machinery was set in motion for the settlement of disputes and strikes became illegal. However, the causes of conflict did not disappear.

Against this background a group of far-sighted men felt the need to open channels of communication between black and white in commerce and industry and to consider foregoing some of their short-term profits in order to ensure long-term continuation of stability and development. The bus boycott in Johannesburg in 1958 prompted these men to act. They met with some of the African leaders and discovered that one of the main reasons for the boycott was that many people could not afford the increased bus-fares.

The first step taken by these employers was to raise money to subsidise the bus companies. Then, through Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the government was requested to introduce a transport levy on employers. A further step was taken by these businessmen to form what later became the Productivity and Wage Association (PWA).

The principal aim of the Association was to urge and assist employers in Commerce, Industry and Public Administration, to take immediate and systematic steps to increase the productivity and earnings of their workers.

Contact was made with a vast number of employers, research programmes were launched and a number of training programmes for both management and labour were undertaken. Through the work of the PWA, Works Committees in factories were established, Consultative Committees introduced, African Supervisors were selected and trained and training was given to management. Employers were encouraged to introduce benefits such as feeding schemes, medical aid plans, pension fund schemes, etc. The PWA made information available on how to go about introducing these schemes.

The first thing that Nico did on joining the company was to propose and then conduct a national survey of wages paid to African workers. The 1971/72 survey covered over 200 000 people and represented 24% of all Africans in industry. The results of the survey were published on July 25, 1972 and became a reference point regarding wages and fringe benefits.

The Press Release stated:

African wages over the last twelve months increased by approximately 10%. It is apparent also that employers are giving increasing attention to fringe benefits, training and job grading. But a great deal

remains to be done... The PWA believes that all employees should, for moral as well as economic reasons, be remunerated at such a level as will enable them to enjoy a decent standard of living.

Reporting on this survey at the AGM of the Productivity and Wage Association on November 30, 1972, the Chairman, Mr Bill Campbell Pitt said "On a shoestring the PWA conducted the first National African Wage Survey during this year. Mr Ferreira was ably assisted by Mr Holtshauzen of Norton Company, Mr Mokhoetle of SA Breweries and Mr O'Grady of SA General Electric.

Collating the massive amount of information was a major task and long hours were spent including two full weekends. IBM South Africa computerised the information at no charge and a remarkably good document was published.

Personally, I know all about the *long hours spent* many of which were in our home and I was definitely co-opted into assisting with this task. But then, Cyril Pearce, Ian Hetherington and Bill Campbell Pitt, all were part of the *long hours* so who was I to complain. They themselves admitted that it was some time since they had handled such detailed work and one of them even worked out the cost to their companies should their hours be added up at the going hourly rate for Captains of Industry, as they all were!

In 1973, to avoid duplication the Productivity and Wage Association and the National Development and Management Foundation (NDMF) merged and together launched what was known as Operation Progress "to promote the NDMF's overall scheme of training and transference of management skills to emergent people", *Johannesburg Star*, January 23, 1973.

Nico was appointed to the staff of the NDMF to head up

Operation Progress and a number of conferences and seminars were arranged which were very successful from the attendance and action that resulted. One such was the one-day conference on "The Poverty Datum Line". The PDL was often quoted as an indicator of minimum wage levels, and this workshop was held to highlight the PDL from all angles so as to clarify its uses and limitations.

Operation Progress conducted the second National Wage Survey and there was much support from organisations such as the Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut and the Chambers of Commerce and Industry as well as the Hotel Industry and the Organisation of Master Builders. A more sophisticated questionnaire resulted in more detailed results. This data was now in the public domain. It did a great deal to expose labour practices and surprisingly it was found that many overseas companies paid their workers less than South African companies.

Productivity became something to strive for in industry and on September 20, 1973, Nico was asked to address the Regional Conference of the Afrikaanse Handelsinstitute on this subject. He emphasized that raising productivity was the responsibility of management and went on to give practical advice as to how management might do this and things that should be attended to such as Job Evaluation, Job Description, Selection, Training, Remuneration, Fringe Benefits, Pensions, Life Insurance, Medical Support, Unemployment Insurance, etc.

Because of problems experienced in operating with the NDMF, in 1974 the PWA terminated agreements with the NDMF and Nico ceased working for them. Arrangements had been made with Urwick-UAL International to conduct the 1974 Wage Survey and both Nico and Bill Campbell Pitt assisted. Over 350 companies and employer organisations took part. The survey was confidential to those employers who contributed. The wealth of information contained in the Urwick-UAL survey was without doubt a most useful publication for all employers.

Small Business Advisory Services - In Nico's words:

At that time I was approached by Ian Hetherington who was then the Managing Director and Chairman of the Norton Group of Companies in South Africa. Norton was then American-owned. We must remember that small business in those days was of no consequence and neither was there any such thing as the Sullivan Code. Ian talked to me about the policy of his company and plans they had to make know-how available to individuals who intended starting businesses of their own. In those days black people were only seen as employees and he believed that they should become employers and that black entrepreneurs should be supported. I was asked to join Norton and start this programme, which I did. But let me place on record the Norton policy statement at that time issued by Ian Hetherington to the company:

Norton's Place in Society - What are we in business for?

The simple answer is "to make profits"; and it is a valid answer as far as it goes. For without profits we cannot do anything else. It is profits that enable us to improve the lot of our employees and our shareholders. It is profits that enable us to finance growth and expansion.

We are, however, interested in profits for the long term, not just next year or even the next five years. We are in South Africa permanently. The country's economic progress and our economic progress as a company, are inextricably tied together.

A large number of our employees are involved in wider areas of society, some are active in sports and social clubs; some in church activities, youth organisations and political parties; some in

professional and employer bodies. Between us, we have extensive contact with leadership in various spheres and of all races. We have always been a company that cares. We have always accepted the responsibility to put something back into the society in which we operate. In this respect, we are following a pattern established by our parent company from the very beginning, nearly 100 years ago

What Can We Do?

One of the things we can do, and in fact always have done, at least in a modest way, is to make donations from profits to various charitable and educational organisations.

I believe we should continue to do this but I also believe that we have the capability of doing very much more than merely handing out a little cash here and there. I believe we have the capability of contributing to society in ways that will have a much deeper, longer-lasting impact than charitable donations.

Some of the things we as a company know how to do are:

Conceiving, planning and implementing expansion projects

Creating jobs and then selecting and training people to fill jobs

Manufacturing, marketing and administering in an efficient manner

Organising a wide diversity of people into a

coherent body to do a job of work in such a way that the job not only gets done but the people find personal satisfaction in participating as playing members of the team.

It is to share our knowledge in these areas that we have formed the *Norton Group Development Trust Fund* with the following objectives:

To assist in the economic and social development of the residents of the Republic of South Africa by

Fostering the creation of job opportunities for those who are unemployed or under-employed

Enhancing the educational and training facilities available to enable all to reach the full potential of their abilities

Encouraging improvements in working and living conditions

Supporting such other bodies as are striving for similar objectives.

Where do we go from here?

It is not intended that our activities through the Trust Fund should be merely a side-interest or hobby of top management. The desire is that the Fund should be a genuine Group effort involving as many of the Group employees as have the desire and interest to be involved.

The first job therefore is to seek out the ideas of all employees as to specific matters and projects where you believe the company can use its expertise effectively. The private sector must share the

responsibility of job-creation and what is required from the private sector is a reduction in talking about the needs and a stepping up of action. We have amongst our employees all the skills necessary to implement action. No doubt, between us, we can come up with a largish number of additional areas where we can do something to help.

Nico Ferreira has been appointed on a permanent basis from the beginning of May 1974 to match the ideas you have with the various skills of our employees and in co-ordinating the two will assure that we achieve concrete results.

In May I started working at Norton. What attracted me was the fact that the Company did not see this service as a social responsibility or an activity to be handled by their personnel department. They saw the increase in numbers of more successful businesses as important to the growth of our economy and therefore to the advantage of the company. I was directly responsible to the Managing Director.

I had to start - How? Where?

I discovered first that manufacturing was illegal in the black townships and also in the industrial areas such as Isando where our offices were. I decided to investigate what was going on in the "homelands" in terms of manufacturing. I found trader after trader and each time I explained that I wanted to meet manufacturers. I then realized that there was very little manufacturing taking place at that time.

Then I met a welder. He in fact had a thriving business selling building materials along with burglar-proofing and other products. Having discovered "my" first Black manufacturer, I was going to make him a roaring success. He was going to be a model. As he had no bookkeeping or record-keeping system, I told him that this was his need and that I was going to introduce such a system.

His workshop was about three hours from Johannesburg and I started travelling there once a week. He agreed to employ a young man who would write up sales and purchases. Soon, however, it was discovered that the records did not agree with the money to be banked. It was not the bookkeeper's fault, but the wife of the manufacturer who was used to operating the till and taking what she needed for housekeeping. She felt most unhappy about the interference. Further, my enthusiastic vision for the future of the business and what the owner had in mind were two different things. When I turned up one day for one of my regular visits, I found that he had sold the business.

This was my first big lesson. The owner of this business did not belong to me. I was not creating an entrepreneur. He was already an entrepreneur with his own business and his own vision.

Gradually I started meeting other entrepreneurs. Some operated from under trees in their backyards and others from their homes. I realised that giving technical and management advice was one thing, but that anyone wanting to be of assistance had to do much more – finding a workplace, getting financial institutions to assist, identifying and developing markets, and in the mammoth task of lobbying for the removal of the countless regulations facing anyone who wants to start and run a business.

In Tafelkop I met Solomon Petla. He wanted to start a brickyard as there was a good market in the area. I asked him if he knew how to make bricks. Yes, he said, I learned to make bricks when I was on Robben Island. We went together to Pietersburg to see the Lebowa Development Corporation with the hope of getting a loan. Unfortunately having Robben Island on his CV was not a recommendation. Goshi (Chief) Ramaphudu gave him land and one way or another we found some basic tools and he was on his way. His wife Elsie came to help him. While he had been on Robben Island she had

worked at a pistol club where white South African housewives were learning to defend themselves.

Another client was an upholsterer in Groblersdal. He was skilled in his business and had won the tender to re-upholster the seats for a bus company. But there was no finance. Together he and I went to the bank and together entered through the Blacks Only door. We sat down with the Manager who, during the entire interview addressed Amos via me. I would then turn to Amos and repeat the question. It was a bit of a circus, but we got through it and Amos was given a small loan. The bus company agreed to put money up front for the material and he was in business. Years later, passing through Groblersdal, I asked to see the Bank Manager. How was Amos doing? Apparently well and with a substantial savings account.

In August 1974 Professor Philip Fourie of the University of the Orange Free State wrote to Nico. He had read one of Nico's reports on the work of the Norton Foundation and Ian Hetherington's Norton Policy Statement. I have translated extracts from his letter:

In all my activities I have never come across two documents that have given me so much hope. Reading Mr Hetherington's document, I could not believe that there was at least one leader who, through deed and word, was actually doing something for the sake of his fellow citizen and in the interest of the future of our country.

As I see it Norton's business approach and policy is of immense value and the number of business leaders who begin to think like this must be multiplied. If this happens business will find a depth and content that will bring satisfaction both in terms of profits and in terms of the people who work in the industries and South Africa will become a safe and prosperous nation.

During the next years Nico was to meet and interact with the most amazing people.

Is Anybody at Nobody? – Nobody is a small village in Limpopo and of course there is Somebody at Nobody! The Somebody is Nelson Segooa. Nelson was born in 1920. His father had fought in World War I and when he died Nelson left the rural areas and got a job as a gardener in Johannesburg. He could not speak a word of English. The brother of the chief of his area came to town and because he had had 10 years of schooling Nelson said he could share his room provided he taught him to speak English.

One day Nelson passed a tailor's shop and through the window he saw a white man and a black man working together and he decided that he too would one day be a tailor. While working as a gardener he equipped himself by reading books on tailoring and on business; he bought a sewing machine and made clothes in his small room at night which he sold; he saved money and when he had enough he took a tailoring course every Tuesday for four years. His employer became so interested in what Nelson was doing that he took him to the Union Clothing Factory to learn the business and Nelson got a job there – this after they had asked him to make a suit to test his ability. In 1961 he returned to Nobody and started his factory which is now a thriving business tendering successfully for Government business such as nurse's uniforms, overalls, etc. He has been an inspiration to so many of his people and never rests on his laurels.

In his book *Heroes of the Struggle*, Ian Hetherington writes of Nelson's conviction to help people:

“Let us build some workshops here, up at the main road at Nobody where there is electricity and water, so that our own people can have a proper place to run their business and create jobs for others,” said Nelson. At first the elders thought he was crazy and

asked where the money was going to come from. 'Ideas first, money later,' was Nelson's response. He went on to point out that the government had plenty of their money by way of taxes: all they had to do was get some of it back again. 'Where are the businessmen?' was the next question. 'Right here in the tents and under the trees,' was the answer. But the elders were still not convinced and wanted to know what would happen if the idea failed. Nelson explained, 'We will try first. If we fail we will see why and then we will start again.'

In 1986 the Nobody factory flats, fully occupied, were open for business. In Ian's words "Mr Segooa and others like him throughout South Africa, are waging this country's only serious, permanent war on poverty."

About 5 years ago, over 80 years old, Nelson phoned us in Stutterheim. "I'm off to Geneva tomorrow," he said. He was apparently attending some conference. "And," he added, "I'm working on my business friends, they must become computer literate."

Welding a Fence - Aaron Makena. Aaron started his own business when he was 34. He lived in Mamelodi and had worked for a number of years for Pepsi. During this time he developed an interest in welding and needed a place where he could establish his business. He had met Nico at a National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC) meeting and Nico arranged a meeting for him with Dr Anton Rupert's organization that had set up a fund to finance small businesses. The Rupert Organisation gave a loan of R10 000 to Aaron and he was their first Black client.

December 2, 1982, Aaron wrote to Nico:

How does one say thank you and really mean it.
To your company I want to say without you I would be

lost. My fellow black backyard manufacturers and those who have associated themselves with NAFOC and those business people in my community wish to thank you with all our hearts for the tremendous effort, assistance, advice and practical knowledge you are rendering.

I personally assure you that Norton and Barlow's Small Business Advisory Services will always be a symbol to the black people: A symbol of sincere, development and encouragement to our business. Enclosed herein my token of gratitude - R100. I say: Let the wheel of development here in our country keep on rolling and the unemployed rate be reduced."

A D C Makena, Papillon H/W Welding and Fencing

Today Aaron is a wealthy man and the owner of many enterprises. His passion is to help and advise others all over the country who are starting out in business because he said that was the only way to leave something behind.

Growing Gravestones -Joe Magodi's father died at the age of 107 sitting under a tree on his own farm surrounded by the cattle he loved. Joe's father had been a farmer and an entrepreneur all his life. There is a story of him being given a small piglet. He looked after it well and it grew in size to become a magnificent porker. One day a white farmer came and asked if he could take the pig in exchange for a cow. And that is how things happened – hard work and opportunity. Joe was one of 11 children, and the only one to go to school. His father expected him to help educate the other children and Joe's own perseverance to get a Matric is a story in itself.

Joe got work near Benoni and eventually had a job in the Datsun Nissan Factory. He was sent for a 9-month quality-training programme to Nissan in Japan. While there he

noticed some large blocks of granite that had been imported from South Africa. He wondered what they were used for and, through a Japanese technician who befriended him, he learned how inexpensive tombstones could be made from granite or marble chips mixed with cement and set in moulds and the lettering pressed into the damp mixture. He was also shown how to make inexpensive machinery to do this. He was excited.

Back home he started a gravestone manufacturing business in his backyard. This was illegal and, he was still under contract to Nissan. Joe did not want to upset the company by resigning so he deliberately started to drink heavily on the job and eventually he was fired. He immediately stopped drinking and started his business having to go through much trial and tribulation. But he made a success of it, became President of the National Industrial Chamber (NIC) and diversified into a number of other businesses and into farming. He also in the end explained to his former employers at Nissan what was behind this charade.

Joe, as President of NIC, came down to Stutterheim in the early 90's when we were living there, and presented the certificates at a Business Skills for South Africa graduation ceremony. He stood on the hill where Mlungisi Township is situated and looked out over the graveyard with its simple wooden crosses. "There must be R4 million lying there", said Joe.

The Dynamo Duo - Matome and Grace Maponya. In 1988 Matome and Grace invited us to the opening of their new Toyota Agency up near the University of the North (Turfloop) and we drove the 1500 k's to be present. Matome was President of the National African Farmers Union and he and Grace had together been involved in a great variety of business enterprises. Matome was the PR side of the duo. Business was in his genes. His cousin Richard was an extremely successful businessman in Soweto. Matome had

this impressive Nigerian outfit pale green flowing robes - which he wore with great aplomb, a big smile and a love of life. Grace was the doer. They had a successful butchery and Grace would be the one who would go off to all the cattle sales. She would know at a glance the quality of the meat and the weight of the animal in question. She became much respected among the tough Afrikaner butchers of the area.

The Maponya's acquired the Toyota Agency. The opening was a wonderful occasion. 500 people had been invited, 1000 were expected and 1500 came. There was food for all, organised of course by Grace, who sub-contracted the catering out to unemployed women in the area. The business had started on a high note with Grace selling 15 cars in her first week. We spent a happy weekend in their home. Later on they would visit us in Stutterheim with their four children. They brought down from Limpopo on the plane with them an extremely heavy stone carving of an old man sitting on the ground throwing the bones. Today he sits peacefully in our garden welcoming our guests.

And Then There was Zed - Zed Sobhuza grew up in Idutywa in the Transkei. He completed Standard Six in 1946 and at the age of 16 left for the gold mines where his first job was at East Dagafontein mine on the Gold Reef. After only ten days underground he was offered a job as a gang office clerk and then to the time office to record all the hours and overtime and calculate wages due. Arithmetic is something Zed really liked. After his nine-month contract with the mines had ended he found a job with Haggie Ropes and he also enrolled in Lyceum College for Standard 7 which he completed and then turned his studies to commercial subjects. The idea of starting his own business came into his mind but the Free State gold fields were beckoning and Zed got a job driving Albion Trucks. He was 18 years old. An entrepreneur to the marrow, he started on the sideline buying rolls of black braid from a supplier in Johannesburg and selling it to the women in Welkom who used it in the making of traditional clothing. He set up a part-time

sales force and soon had £500, enough money to buy a Pontiac, which he later sold as it was too expensive to run. But everything he was doing was "illegal" and he was being harassed. Zed then moved to Port Elizabeth, got a job first with Aberdare cables and was then head-hunted by EP Engineers. This was 1951 and job reservation was on the rise. "Government inspectors found me at my desk doing work that blacks were not supposed to do and warned both me and the firm. I knew there was no future for me there".

He saw a gap in the market place and started transporting produce to small township shopkeepers. He bought 2 mules and a wagon and began to make good money. He exchanged the mules for two pairs of horses and was now able to marry. His wife became an expert groom and wagon driver. With great difficulty he started his own shop but once again was harassed. "You cannot believe the difficulties that influx control gave us. I had to get permission to visit my own family back in the Transkei. Despite everything, I was still trading well and bought a second shop from a Chinaman. It was a Coloured and Indian area and I was not supposed to run a business there, nor was I supposed to have two business sites".

He returned to the Transkei and built a house and a supermarket and eventually a hardware store. Seeing the need for crushed stone, he asked Bill Campbell Pitt of the Small Business Advisory Services, for help and was put in touch with people who knew the technology. Zed opened his own quarry and surmounting every red tape obstacle put in his way he got a blasting licence. Orders poured in and his crushed stone is in dams, bridges, and buildings throughout Transkei. The Transkei Development Corporation, seeing Zed's success decided to expand their own stone-crushing business to Idutywa so Zed sold up at a good profit and left them to it.

Zed visited Israel on one of the study tours that Nico had

arranged and this was to him a wake-up call. "If the Israelis can do this in a desert," he said to Nico, looking at the well-managed efficient Kibbutz that they visited, "then we live in paradise and I have got to do something." And do something he did. Nico got advice for him from a well-known dairy farmer in Natal and also arranged for my brother to spend a day with him. In Transkei privately owned land was not possible and Zed rented ground from the Municipality and built a beautiful modern dairy. In 1981 we were invited to a Farmer's Day to celebrate the opening of his dairy outside Idutywa with 25 Guernsey cows, his chosen breed. "Friesland milk," he joked, "is useful for cleaning the milking equipment."

The Farmers' Day was a great success attended by officials, by school children and by the Extension Officers whom Zed felt it was his duty to educate. At the peak of production he had 200 cows and was producing up to 2000 litres of milk per day.

In 1980 he was asked to become Mayor of Idutywa and remained Mayor until 1993. But in the early 90's, in Zed's own words "everything became politicised and started to crumble. Squatters invaded my farm, killed the cows, stole the fencing, damaged the pumps and piping and made off with a whole field of cabbages. Four of the bakery delivery vans were hijacked. It was a disaster that I still cannot explain. The hatred and jealousy were unbelievable and anybody who had achieved anything, outside of politics and the trade unions, was attacked."

In 1994 Zed bought a 554 hectare farm near East London for R394 000. It had been a pineapple farm but the owners had allowed it to run down and Zed spent as much again on fixing the place up. He cleaned out the dams and built new ones, cleared much of the bush, repaired the fences, planted pastures and put in pumps and irrigation systems. He restarted his dairy herd. His neighbouring white farmers, impressed with what had happened, started selling their milk to him to supply the ever-growing market in the Transkei.

"Every business owner, including me, is trying to find ways of employing fewer people. The young people seem to have their minds darkened by politics and are not told to concentrate on developing themselves. I would like to tell them to start a business but even those who are interested see the unions as a stumbling block. Maybe the best thing is to buy a small holding or a farm like mine where you can be your own president," said Zed.

(Heroes of the Struggle, Ian Hetherington)

He died in 2003. His life was an example of triumph over adversity and he was one of Nico's closest friends.

Ian and Helen Hetherington. They adopted a country and the country adopted them.

Ian was an exceptionally far-thinking businessman. His contribution to Small and Medium Enterprise development in South Africa is immeasurable. He was born in England and studied to be a chartered accountant. He went to the Harvard Business School and met Helen bright, outgoing, of Irish ancestry, a graduate from Smith College making her way in New York. After their wedding, the same day and year that we were married, they went to Nigeria and we must have been there around the same time. Ian then worked for Norton Abrasives in America and in Canada and was sent to South Africa where he was Managing Director of the Norton Group of Companies.

In the years that Nico was working with the Norton Trust, Ian's support and participation added enormously to the effectiveness of the programme. He has written a number of books on Black business people, their courage and perseverance. He has fought tirelessly to alleviate the laws that were stifling small business and his vision and commitment led him to resign as Chairman of Norton and to work with the National Industrial Chamber. Helen was my partner in crime in the handspun, hand-knitted jersey episode

referred to later. She graciously entertained so many people in their home. I remember once, the Managing Director of Norton, USA, paid a visit to South Africa. The plan was to take him to visit Tafelkop and meet the brickmaker and others. Helen packed a wonderful picnic lunch for the party. Much to her surprise, the chicken breasts, salad and whatever else came back uneaten. Ian had decided that the delegation should not get special treatment and that they needed to experience things as we experienced them. He had them sit on empty crates in the dusty brickyard eating buns and drinking warm coke!

We still, when we can, celebrate our anniversaries together and count ourselves honoured to be their friends

Chapter 7

NAFCOC, NIC and NAFU

Acronyms Anonymous



Does one reveal one's ignorance by asking what these might stand for or does one pretend that of course you know what this is all about? Acronyms should definitely be clarified otherwise the reader is "lost in translation". But, be patient. All **will** be revealed, and in any case you **should** know what these particular acronyms stand for.

The three N's were so much part of what Nico did in the 70's, 80, and 90's, that I must devote a chapter to these pioneering organizations.

NAFCOC (The National African Federated Chamber of Commerce) is a strong and effective organisation. Its history goes back to 1955 when the Orlando Traders Association took the initiative and formed the Johannesburg African Chamber of Commerce by consolidating the different existing organisations. However, over the years small Traders Organisations continued to spring up around the country and in 1964 at a conference in Orlando all these bodies formed the National African Chamber of Commerce. In 1968 this was reorganised into regions under the umbrella of a National Executive, each region being represented directly on the National Executive. The organisation then became known as the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC).

In the early 1970's NAFSOC had a membership of 4000 (by the end of the 80's the membership was 20,000). In the 70's and 80's under the Chairmanship of Sam Motsuenyane, the organisation experienced steady growth. In 1974, Nico

attended the NAFCOC Annual Conference which was held in Umtata. The Umtata Town Hall, it seemed, was not available for black people so this conference was held in the township. On the agenda was the launch of the African Bank. Nico was fascinated to witness the fund-raising process during this conference. A lady at the back of the hall, holding a large cardboard box started down the aisle singing softly and getting louder and louder. She was exhorting the delegates to dig deep and build a future. Gradually they were caught up in the spirit of the occasion and money flowed generously into the box. With this united action and other inputs, the African Bank of South Africa Limited with a share capital of R1 million came into being in October 1975.

NAFCOC had become the spokesman for Black Business and it became the body to which entrepreneurs and manufacturers turned for solutions to their problems. NAFCOC needed to develop from a voluntary organization and the executive turned to the Norton Small Business Advisory Services for advice and help. Firstly it was decided to assist with drawing up a five-year development plan. This was done and at the annual NAFCOC Conference the resolution was adopted to implement the plan. Members decided to pay a higher membership fee to finance the establishment of a permanent secretariat and various services. The white private sector was approached to assist with technical matters, etc. and a number of large companies joined as Corporate Members.

Sam Motsuenyane, the President of NAFCOC, wrote Nico in July 1975

On behalf of the Executive and members of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce, I wish hereby to express our profound and heartfelt appreciation for the moral and practical support that you have given our organization during the past year.

We are also immensely thankful for the part you have played towards making our recent Eleventh Conference at Witsieshoek, the roaring success it

was. We look forward to your continued cooperation and interest in the work of NAFCOG in the years ahead.

The Annual Conferences were wonderful occasions and the social event of the year. I enjoyed the many times I was able to attend with Nico. The highlight, apart from the stunning outfits worn by both the ladies and the men, was always the announcement of the Business Person of the Year Award. These Conferences took place at different venues in Witsieshoek, Umtata, Johannesburg. Pietersburg, Cape Town, Durban, the Wild Coast Sun, and later on Sun City the only place big enough to accommodate the growing membership.

In 1981 at the Seventeenth Annual NAFCOG Conference held at the Elizabeth Hotel, Port Elizabeth, Sam Motsuenyane said: "Last year, our Sixteenth Annual Conference was held at Sun City which, as you will admit, is a venue of glittering attraction and rare scenic beauty. That we managed to hold an orderly and extremely successful conference there, speaks very highly of and is indeed a great compliment to those of our delegates and visitors who were in attendance!"

Talking at length about growth, problems and opportunities, Sam then said: "I would like at this stage on behalf of NAFCOG to thank the Norton Company and particularly the Company's management team, for the enormous guidance and assistance that they have given to our members in this area for many years. I must say with honesty, that their practical involvement in the work of our organisation has indeed been a source of considerable encouragement and strength. The sterling example of the Norton Group illustrates clearly how much progress could be achieved if all the large industries in South Africa were to begin to utilise part of their enormous resources towards accelerating the promotion of Black industrial and agricultural advancement."

One feels that today this is still a challenge facing the business

world.

NIC - The National Industrial Chamber - NAFCOC started as a Traders' Organization and Nico felt very strongly that NAFCOC should cater for manufactures and industrialists and lobbied for this. At the NAFCOC Conference held at the University of the North, Turfloop as it was then called, in 1977, a resolution was passed that a committee be set up to investigate the role NAFCOC could play in assisting the Black Manufacturer. This was known as the NAFCOC Industrial Committee. Nico was the first chairman and he immediately included the farmers in this programme.

In 1978, at the request of Black Manufacturers, the Industrial Committee arranged the Manufacturers' Conference. During this two-day event which took place at the Airport Holiday Inn, Johannesburg, specialists introduced discussions on subjects such as *How to Manage a Factory, Marketing and Exporting* and visits were arranged to industries in the Isando area to give delegates the opportunity of seeing how other factories were managed.

Coffins were and are big business. Making coffins is quite a skilled job as one doesn't want the bottom to fall out and the coffin maker in Garankua asked for help to test his product. One of the people assisting Nico at that time offered to take the coffin home and do some quality testing. On second thoughts however, because his wife had recently suffered a heart-attack, he decided that it would not be in the best of taste to arrive home with a coffin on his roof-rack!

In 1980 at the 2nd Conference on Industry and Agriculture, Mr B O Sibeko, now Chairman of the Industrial Committee, said, "I am happy to quote the names of Messrs H Mabogoane, C Kotze, J N Ferreira and the writer, who through their dedicated efforts and wisdom succeeded in establishing a workshop and giving birth to a National Chamber of Industry and Agriculture, which NAFCOC and the public sector is happy about."

Philip Machaba, in *The History of the NAFCOC Industrial Committee 1989* writes:

From the outset, the committee was faced with a mammoth task of assisting manufacturers to locate appropriate premises. Black entrepreneurs were not supposed to enter the manufacturing sphere at all, except in the homelands. In spite of this damper on industrialisation, hundreds and thousands of Black industrialists operated in hiding in the backyards of their homes. Instead of being encouraged to become proud producers and job creators in the open they were constantly faced with the indignity and the inconvenience of being treated as law-breakers.

Many risked their profits by continuing to do manufacturing regardless. They paid fine after fine while many were closed down by harassment. It was this stifling effect of Government policy that spurred the committee to work hard at bringing redress through lobbying efforts.

In 1978, the Government changed this policy and it became possible for Blacks to manufacture in the townships. Gerhard Koornhof was at that time working with Nico. He was assisting a businessman to register his business and phoned the Manager of the Bantu Administration Board in the East Rand in this connection and was told that this would not be possible. Gerhard had the Hansard with him and read over the phone that the law had been changed. "Well", replied the Manager, "That may be what the Minister (Dr Piet Koornhof) says, but it is not the policy of the Government."

In 1980, the Southern Transvaal Chamber of Commerce Industrial Committee, arranged an Industrial Exhibition in Milner Park. The Chairman, B O Sibeko, stated: "The purpose of this exhibition has been to create a market for backyard manufacturers. A NAFCOC survey has revealed that there are over 1000 Black manufacturers in the Southern Transvaal

alone who want to promote, sell and improve their products. Forty manufacturers displayed a variety of quality products. Side-by-side with them eleven big companies exhibited components, consumables and service items they purchase and which they believe the small black manufacturer could make for them."

The following year the second Small Industries Exhibition was held. In an article on the exhibition, in *INFORMA*, September 1981, John Deacon wrote:

They were genial and expansive, the men in immaculate suits, the women wearing colourful Afro-style dresses. They were chiefs, not of African tribes, but of industry, who had excelled themselves as entrepreneurs in small businesses.

Several big companies were also represented... Norton Abrasives invited tenders for R17 000 worth of overalls; Ford Africa's exhibit requested Black firms to manufacture some of its simpler motor components. The company would donate the cutting tools and hire out the presses. Thus can the small industrialist complement, rather than compete with, the large firms.

Martin Manala, Nico Ferreira's assistant, was informed that there was not a single industrialist in the large town of Tembisa near Johannesburg. Martin tells this story: 'Subsequent investigations revealed a window-frame maker, Mr Nkomo, who was suspicious of my suit and tie,' said Mr Manala. 'The breakthrough came when a Mr Hawkins was looking for an industrialist to polish golf clubs. Mr Nkomo won the contract and within a week I was addressing 18 small industrialists. (Deacon, J. *Chiefs of Industry* *INFORMA*, September 1981)

Every two years, from 1978 until 1988, Industrial conferences were held in different parts of the country. Keynote addresses

were given by such diverse speakers as the Hon PTC du Plessis, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Dr Simon Brand of the Development Bank of Southern Africa, Prof Ben Vosloo of the Small Business Development Corporation, Mr Michael O'Dowd, Chairman of the Anglo American Chairman's Fund, Mr M C O Nd'andwe, the Executive Director of the Zambian Small Industrial Development Organization, and Prof Jan Lombard, Deputy Governor of the South African Reserve Bank.

During the 1980 NAFCO Industrial Chamber Conference on Industry and Agriculture, Ian Hetherington addressed the conference on *Does Big Business Need Small Manufacturers?* Ian is fairly scathing in his attack on what he calls "the idiotic licensing procedures for small manufacturers". Speaking of the need for job-creation he says: "I don't see how big business itself can deliver. Big business is notoriously poor at job creation. I am told that a new sophisticated gold mine, a capital investment of R1 million creates no more than 10 jobs. In a modern steel mill, an even greater investment is needed to create these jobs.

"It is beyond the direct powers of big business or of governments. But it is not beyond the powers of small business if governments and big business created the atmosphere in which small businesses could thrive." Ian illustrates this by telling a story of a man in a backyard of a small village. "But for the friendly protection of an enlightened magistrate this man would have been closed down long ago. For he breaks almost every rule in the book but fortunately he's never heard of the book or the rules. He is a leather-worker and employs 17 people. Leather-working was his spare time hobby in Soweto and two years back he decided to make the attempt to turn the hobby into a living. I asked him how much initial capital he had and he smiled, 'R5 plus the tools of my hobby'. R5 for 17 jobs and no loans other than the outstanding hire purchase on the latest of his several sewing machines, all bought out of his profits!"

NAFU - The National African Farmer's Union. Originally part of the Industrial Committee the National African Farmers' Union (NAFU) later became a vibrant organisation of its own under the umbrella of NAFCOC. Sam Skosana was the first Chairman. In the 70's and 80's there was not too much public knowledge of successful black farmers. But they were there. I remember Nico coming back from an agricultural trip with the NAFU Executive which included Matome Maponya (he of the dynamo duo) and others to Venda. The committee had spent the night with a family in the township and had been royally treated. Next morning a sumptuous breakfast was awaiting them including, on the table, a bottle of wine! Nico was then told that black people thought that white people always had wine with their breakfast! Near Giyani they visited a successful tomato farmer. One of his employees told of his dream to have his own farm. Nico got the two of them together, the farmer was helpful and the result was a very successful new tomato-growing enterprise.

The Norton Company in-house newsletter "**The Norton Spirit**" put out a special issue in July 1981 on the Small Business Advisory Services. Several pages were devoted to farming enterprises – Chief Maseloane's maize farm in Modimosana; Prince Mahlangu of Kwandebele's sunflower farm; Mr Mvulani's cattle farm at Kayakulu and of course, Zed.

Twelve years later in 1993, NAFU asked for an appointment with Mr Mandela. Nico was asked to fly to Johannesburg to join two other members of the NAFU executive for this. As fortune would have it, the plane was late and when Nico arrived at Shell House the delegation had already gone into the meeting. Nico was shown into this rather large office and Mr Mandela stood up and walked across the room to shake his hand and to welcome him. At the end of the meeting Mr Mandela said that what he wanted to see was that all the farmers in South Africa would work together in one organisation.

Symond Fiske, writing for the *Farmers' Weekly* in 1980 reported on the job creation *Work for the Future* conference in Durban.

In typical Symond Fiske fashion, he wrote:

We listened to papers and reports from people involved in agriculture, mining, construction, commerce, manufacturing and the Government, as well as academics and politicians. And between sessions we were shunted off into small discussion groups so that the lesser fry could voice their parboiled opinions. These were subsequently filtered by group chairmen, and synthesised by five rapporteurs, whose job it was to relay our disjointed thoughts back to the massed audience.

By and large, I would say that most of them, speakers and rapporteurs, made a poor or biased job of it. But there were exceptions. And that, coupled with the lunch and tea-breaks (when people stopped posturing and started thinking), made the whole exercise worthwhile.

When seen alongside the representatives of big business, politics and academia, the agriculturists and small businessmen shone out like beacons of reason, intelligence competence and decency.

The four best papers came from Mr Tony Ardington, a sugar farmer and chairman of the Cane Growers' Association who wrote in conjunction with Mr Anthony Evans, Mr Gilfillan and Mr Leisegang of the Sukumani Development Company, Mr Nico Ferreira, and Mr J N Reddy, an Indian businessman.

I came back from the conference proud of the farmers and more acutely aware than ever of the

enormous contributions being made by small entrepreneurs Black, White, Coloured and Indian.”
(Fiske, S. Unemployment, How Bad is it? Farmers' Weekly, Nov 26. 1980)

During this period Nico arranged a number of study tours with black business people to Europe, Israel, the USA, Japan. He writes:

Jacob Mohlala, an old friend, had gone into the travel business and arranged group tours to different parts of the world. I suggested that some of these business people who went on these tours might enjoy going to look at businesses in other parts of the world. Jacob thought this was a great idea and asked if I could organise such a tour and I was invited to be part of the group.

The first tour took place in 1976 to Europe. During the trip, Solly Lesolang, Treasurer of NAFSOC and a successful businessman in Garankuwa, would call us all together every evening to establish what had been learnt during the day and what could be applied back home. He was a tough taskmaster but what happy occasions these discussions were with much merriment. It was at these evening sessions that the idea of the Black Chain Supermarket was conceptualised and a year later this dream had become a reality.

In 1977 the second study tour went to the USA and Ivory Coast. In 1979 twenty participants spent thirteen days in Israel and three in London. In 1981 twenty-one prominent businessmen from Venda, Bophuthatswana, Transkei and all parts of the Republic visited the Far East to experience the vibrancy of the informal sector in these areas, Other tours were to Holland, the UK and the United States. In November 1984 a group of 16 NAFSOC executives spent eighteen days familiarising themselves with commercial, agricultural and industrial development north of the Limpopo - Zambia, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Kenya.

At the start of the Israel tour (Zed was in this party), I asked one of the group, Boy Zuma, to be in charge of getting everyone together on time. The first morning only Boy, myself and one or two others were aboard the bus that was to take us to our meeting. On the appointed hour Boy instructed the bus to leave. "You can't do that, Boy," I said, "most people aren't here yet." Boy turned to me and said, "Nico, you gave me a job. Are you now taking this job back?" I returned, suitably chastened, to my seat. The bus took off and we had hardly reached our destination when the rest of the party started arriving breathlessly by taxi or whatever means they could. They were never late again.

During the study tour to the USA, in Worcester, Massachusetts, Head Office of Norton Company, it was decided that a special African meal would be prepared and one of the directors and his wife offered their house for the occasion. Mrs Tshabalala and I were delegated to buy the food. At the supermarket the mealie meal, wrapped in cellophane and packed in a cylindrical box, was not quite to Mrs T's liking but she decided it would have to do. She put the groceries on her head and together we walked down Worcester High Street causing a number of heads to turn. The evening was a great success although the Africans found the beautifully laid table with silverware and cut glass a bit overwhelming. In their opinion soul food such as pap and meat should be eaten with the hand.

These visits exposed South African business people to a wide variety of enterprises, they were able to observe the effect of socialism in some countries in Africa and the trips also developed linkages between Black business and the rest of Africa.

In 1977 Nico received NAFCOOC's *Award of Merit* for his contribution to the advance and development of NAFCOOC and in 1996 the NIC *Award of Merit* was presented for his "long-term commitment to the development of SMME's in South

Africa”.

In 1981, because of the growth and increasing demand for service the Norton Business Advisory Services' name was changed to Small Business Advisory Services (Pty) Limited with Barlow Rand and Norton each holding 50% of the share capital. Mr Keith Comins, retired Deputy Chairman of Barlow Rand was Chairman, with Ian Hetherington, Nico Ferreira and M N Henderson (Norton Head office Worcester Mass) as directors.

Chapter 8

On the Home Front

Life in Witkoppen



Nico was often away. He would leave on a Monday and come back on a Friday. His work took him to the 4 corners of the country and to what were then known as "the homelands".

While he was travelling the country finding and working with small business people, I started an export business of African handcraft to my sister in the USA, and with Helen Hetherington, began adding value to raw wool from the Karoo home farm by spinning this lovely natural fibre and then knitting it into unusual and beautiful garments. The Waldorf Organic Craft Market, the first craft market of its kind in the country, was just about to open. The committee had very strict selection criteria and only organic goods could be sold. Handspun handknits were a bit of a novelty at that time and we were excitedly welcomed to the ranks of marketeers. For two years we spent every Thursday morning selling our wares knitted by a number of ladies in the area. It was a peaceful rural atmosphere with stall-holders visiting each other, drinking coffee and a far cry from the rather frenetic competition of today's markets. In addition other small businesses such as the manufacturing of sheepskin slippers were started.

Ever the farmer, Nico decided that our 5-acre Witkoppen plot should be utilised. Before we knew it we had three cows (Charlotte, Louise and some other Victorian name) requiring milking, making butter and cheese - 2 horses, ducks, turkeys galore that we sold for Christmas and a wonderful vegetable garden. Ducks, I was told, have an excellent conversion rate. As we enjoy eating duck we decided to go in for them. The

duck produced 15 eggs which she diligently sat on while we calculated the growth in our investment. Of the 15 eggs, ten hatched, the mother duck trampled 7 ducklings to death and when the remaining three had sufficiently "converted", the dogs ate them the day before slaughter date. Financially – a dead duck! Actually, conversion rate or not, don't do ducks! They are totally impossible to pluck and I believe you need to have pots of hot paraffin wax into which you plunge the carcass in order to remove the down.

Nico's great ambition was to breed a turkey too big for my mother's Aga stove in the Karoo where we always spent Christmas. If I remember correctly, he actually succeeded but I can't remember how I ever managed to roast it. Maybe that year it was casseroled.

We had inherited from somewhere an old, definitely antique, Gibson tractor imported from America. It didn't actually go, but I discussed the situation with Johnny, our mechanic at the garage. He seemed game to give it a try. Finally it was running, but not yet up as it only had one rear tyre. Months of searching resulted in discovering that that particular size tyre just did not exist. So two slightly larger tyres had to be purchased. Nico in his best suit, on the way home from work, proudly drove the Gibson back to Taaibos. What a disappointment to discover that it did not have the power to plough and its only use was as a toy for the man and the boy! I tried to sell it for the price of the tyres but there were no takers. Years later when we left Witkoppen we gave it back to Johnny as a gift I hope he appreciated it.

We did then acquire a rather smart little green tractor that was more than up to the task of ploughing. We planted barley, ryegrass and cowpeas to feed the animals, and vegetables to add to our self-sufficiency. In fact we even went so far as to have Farmers' Days on our peri-urban patch.

Hell's Angels

We were asked if Taaibos could be used as the set for making a film. We would be paid the satisfactory sum of R1000 for the two weeks of filming. R1000 was a great temptation. In any case, Nico was going to be in Japan so we wouldn't disrupt him. Gary Lockwood and Camilla Sparv were flying out from Hollywood for the leading roles. It sometimes happens that there are unexpected variables – the director was hospitalised for a week and shooting was delayed; Nico came back from Japan and my sister, Rita, and husband Gert and the boys arrived back from a visit to the States to find that their house had burned down. They moved in with us. Cables snaked the passage ways and every half hour or so there would be shouts of "Quiet" and no-one dared breathe. One day we all had to leave the property for the day as there was to be a scene filming the Hell's Angels (the real McCoys) "You don't want to mess with them," said Percival, the director. "They're really quick on the draw." Thank goodness the scene was completed in one day. I can think of less stressful ways of making R1000.

At that time Witkoppen was regarded as "the mink and manure" belt. Lone Hill was totally undeveloped and was where horse riding took place. Nicolaas and his friends tried to delay development by pulling out the survey pegs but this caused only a momentary pause in the march of progress. Lone Hill is now wall-to-wall housing. The little fruit and vegetable shop, chemist and hardware shop have been replaced by the enormous 4-Ways Mall. Our house has been demolished and a smart apartment complex is being planned. But the trees lovingly planted on our property have grown wonderfully and are being preserved

Chapter 9

Eastern Cape Discovered -1982



Nico:

One of the places frequently visited in the course of my work was the Eastern Cape. Through NAFCOC I had met a number of business people both in the then Transkei and in the Ciskei. At that time the Transkei Development Corporation (TDC) was assisting established companies in South Africa to decentralise to places in the Transkei, especially Butterworth. The question was what could the TDC do to help Transkeian industries? I invited Minister Madikisele to go with me to Swaziland where SEDCO, a Swedish NGO, funded by the ILO (International Labour Organisation), had built a business hive, the type of intervention which I believed could be of value in Transkei. We flew off in a small plane and the visit was most successful in spite of the fact that the Minister had great problems getting through immigration with his Transkei passport! From this visit the Transkei Government created the Transkei Small Industries Development Organisation (TRANSIDO) and I was a member of the Board of Directors. We started to build business hives throughout Transkei. These were immediately fully subscribed with small entrepreneurs manufacturing a variety of products.

In 1981 Loël and I were invited to the Independence Day celebrations of the Ciskei and as I drove through the Eastern Cape I had the conviction that these new entrepreneurs, both in Transkei and Ciskei, needed support and that I could serve them far more effectively if I lived in the area. At our next Business Advice Centre meeting in December 1981, I proposed that I should relocate to the Eastern Cape. Keith Comins, the Chairman said that this was the Barlows' Spirit and the meeting supported the proposal.

Six weeks later, our house was on the market and we were in Stutterheim. We had looked long and hard in East London for a suitable house coming as we did from the dry Highveld of the Transvaal, we had these visions of a house on the sea, watersports, boats, etc. It did not quite turn out like this and in the end we settled for the little village of Stutterheim which was situated conveniently between the Transkei and the Ciskei where Nico would be working and an hour's drive from East London.

We bought a home at the foot of the Amatola Mountains with the Kologha River running through and bordering on the edge of the Amatola forest, one of three areas in the country that still has large tracts of indigenous forest with 300 year-old giant yellowwoods and other trees. We owned several acres of this indigenous forest and we called our home *Yellowwood Creek*. And there was grazing for cattle and space to farm!

So began our 20 years in the Eastern Cape.

President Lennox Sebe, years before had visited us in Witkoppen and Nico had taken him to see a local pig farm and also the trout farm in the Magaliesburg. The President now asked him to establish the Ciskei Small Business Corporation and this was constituted as a legal entity on September 17, 1982. The overall objective was "to find, encourage and assist the development of economically viable small industries throughout Ciskei in order to stimulate economic development on as wide a scale as possible." Nico was Chairman, and a number of Small Industry Factory Complexes were built, the first one being built by Norton Company. A 5-year development plan was drawn up and within 6 months 121 small enterprises were in operation manufacturing goods such as clothing, knitwear, medical wear for Johnson & Johnson, sheepskin slippers and hide mats, welding, carpentry, roof trusses, general engineering, water tanks, sheet metal work and numerous other industries.

In August 1982, Nico was asked by President Sebe to become a member of the Ciskei Rural Development Council, and a year later a Member of the Board of Directors of the Ciskeian National Development Corporation and a member of the Ciskei Tourism Board.

In February 1983, Nico wrote President Sebe proposing that a selected committee be appointed with several experienced well-seasoned business people to look into the whole question of economic development in the Ciskei and bring out a report and recommendations within a limited period of say 6 – 8 weeks. This committee would look into all aspects that could affect the economy of the Ciskei.

On July 1, 1983, by Proclamation of the President, a Commission of Inquiry into the Economic Development of the Republic of Ciskei was established. In a letter dated May 7, 1983, the President wrote to Nico :

Since my Government and I consider it of prime importance that economic development in Ciskei, based on free enterprise, should be accelerated, we are desirous of securing advice, suggestions and recommendations as to what steps should be taken to realise this objective. We firmly believe that your knowledge, experience and expertise will be of inestimable value to us in the attainment of our goal and I should therefore be grateful if you would kindly consent to accepting appointment to a Presidential Commission of enquiry with the terms of reference listed in the annexure.

I am confident that your reply will be in the affirmative.

Yours sincerely
LLW Sebe

Nico accepted and put together a team drawn from the Private Sector, who could assist in this, consisting of:

Professor Nicolaas Jacob Swart (Chairman) - Vice Chancellor of the University of Potchefstroom

Mr Gert Hendrik Claassen - Engineer, Partner Auret & Claassen, Consulting Engineers

Mr Anthony Rhys Evans - farmer from the Free State

Mr Johan Nicolaas Ferreira - Chairman of the Ciskei Small Business Corporation

Mr Ian James Hetherington - Managing Director of the Johannesburg Small Business Services of South Africa

Mr Denys Anthony Hobson - Chairman of the S A Mohair Board

Mr Leon Marais Louw - Director of the Free Market Foundation

Mr Gordon Charles MacLeod - Senior member of the Barlow Rand group

Professor Daniel Page - Director of the Institute of Planning and Research of the University of Stellenbosch

The Terms of Reference were "to submit a comprehensive economic development plan to the Ciskeian Government in terms of

Development potential

Development objectives and priorities

Development policies and strategies taking into account the needs and constraints of the Republic of Ciskei"

Over the next 6 months this team worked closely together

The question of land ownership is a sensitive issue and much discussed. The Transkei and the Ciskei are situated in a high rainfall area of South Africa. A great many people live off the

land. This land is tribally owned and administered. A member of the tribe, on application to the Chief is entitled to a site in the village for a house and also some acreage of land for cultivation. Some people, if they are inclined, use the land productively and others do not. There is no ownership of land, which results in it not being able to be used as collateral. This was one of the issues that the commission believed should be addressed.

A meeting was arranged attended by chiefs where Leon Louw outlined a proposal whereby a person should be granted title to the land and, should he so wish, he could sell his piece to someone who wanted to farm and could himself use the money for other purposes such as to start a small business in the village. After the meeting several Chiefs immediately asked that such a system be introduced in their areas. Because of political issues which developed, this was never implemented.

The Swart Commission Report was officially presented to President Sebe on February 11, 1984. Responding, the President said:

In accepting this report, the Ciskei Government is acknowledging that it intends to rely on private enterprise to develop the country. It is a proven fact that the Government of a country cannot itself develop that country. All that a government can hope to accomplish, is to create the right climate for growth and development from among the members of that nation of a dynamic private sector which is able to use the resources of a nation to develop a strong and vibrant economy and thereby create the goods, services and job opportunities needed by the people.

In conclusion I wish once again to convey to Professor Swart and his team the very sincere gratitude of the

government and people of Ciskei for having produced it in record time. It is monumental achievement. The recommendations in this report were conceived by brilliant men, and we in Ciskei are fortunate indeed in having at our disposal a masterful blue print with which to plan the future of our country and its people.

April 1984, acting on the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, the Ciskei Government asked the Advisory Council to continue and to implement its own proposals.

Chapter 10

Absorbed into Ciskei

Swimming in murky waters



In February 1984 Nico had an early Sunday morning phone-call from President Sebe: "Nico, will you do something for me?" "Certainly, Mr President". "I want you to come and fire the Chancellor." (*Chancellor* was the title given to the Director General in the President's office). Nico was totally baffled by this request, but the President insisted and suggested, Mr Des Boucher, a senior government official, be asked to accompany Nico to do this.

Mission accomplished, the following morning, another early call: "Nico, will you do something for me?" This time Nico was more cautious. "What would you like me to do, Sir?" "I want you to take over as Chancellor", said the President.

Believing as he always has, that if there is a way of bringing development and economic growth, and if he can be of help, he should, Nico agreed and was seconded from Norton Company to do this for a year and a very unusual year it turned out to be.

Having no idea what a Chancellor was supposed to do, I started by redecorating the Cabinet Room which the President had termed the "black hole of Calcutta". Also, I now found myself in the middle of officialdom and not all the senior civil servants were excited about this 'outsider' in their midst.

Another matter which was much on the President's mind was agreements/ promises made between the South African Government and the Ciskei Government. Puzzled, I decided to find out what this was all about. Apparently, before

independence certain agreements had been made between Ciskei and the South African Government which now 3 years later were still unresolved.

I went to the President and asked him to please explain this to me. He told me to contact the South African Ambassador to the Ciskei and ask him to arrange an appointment with Pik Botha, the SA Foreign Minister. Arrangements were made and I found myself flying to Cape Town with several senior Ciskei Ministers. I still had no idea what we were supposed to be discussing.

I heard that Minister Botha never went home for lunch so I phoned his secretary and asked if I could come and see him. I told him that my only interest was to clear up the misunderstanding of which I had become aware between Ciskei and South Africa. Pik Botha responded and then said to me: "If you are still working there a year from now I will know there is something wrong with you!"

At 2 p.m. I walked into the conference room with the Ciskei delegation. Present also were Louis Nel, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and several other Ministers whose departments were involved in the issues under discussion. They confirmed that in fact there were outstanding agreements not yet acted upon. As a result the Ferreira/Nel Commission was constituted on June 29, 1984 and during subsequent meetings all outstanding issues were resolved.

From the outset Ciskei was desperate to be recognised by overseas countries. There was not much response to this and in the end it was only people from Israel, Switzerland and Taiwan who interacted with the Ciskei Government. As early as 1983 Ruth Dyan, wife of former Israeli Minister of Defence, Moshe Dyan (famous for the black eye patch), made several visits to Ciskei with a view to the development of the handcraft industry. This is something Ruth had involved herself in during the formation of the State of Israel where she searched

out and located returning Jews from all over the world, identified their skills and helped set up a series of outlets in Israel and overseas for some of their beautiful craft – jewelry, woven goods, etc. She also found designers of international repute to adapt the articles for a world market.

During one visit we invited Ruth to spend the weekend with us. Apparently staying in a private home was a very unusual event in the eyes of an Israeli. We loved having her. She was always knitting and she and I found we had a great deal in common with our interest in craft. She wrote from Herzelia after her visit, "A week ago I was treated like a queen – breakfast in bed, peace around, within and without, in a setting fit for Paradise a very rare treat.....No words can express my thanks to you who made this interlude possible in a mission so complicated and hectic as I have had to cope with in the last month. I can just humbly say thank you and that I hope to be allowed to reciprocate in some way in the near future in my own home and country."

In late 1985, we were asked to accompany the President and Mrs Sebe to Israel and Switzerland. We took off in great luxury flying Blue Diamond Class and arrived in Tel Aviv where we were resident in the Sheraton Towers. An official visit is really not too much fun (I think). You move from one planned event to another in long sleek black cars and never have much time to get a feel of the country. Nico would go off to Presidential meetings which were mainly to do with establishing an unofficial Ciskei office in Tel Aviv, and I would accompany Mrs Sebe to a fashion show, a Revlon demonstration of make-up, a visit with Ruth Dayan to her craft outlets, and finally a trip to the Dead Sea where we wallowed in the black mud and washed off in the salty water – difficult as Mrs Sebe was terrified that she might drown and would go in no further than her knees. I had to pour handfuls of water over her to de-mud her.

It was during this visit that certain Israelis who saw in the

Ciskei a way to fortune and control, began to enter into President Sebe's life. They were welcomed with open arms; but they also saw in Nico someone who would not give them a free hand. So possibly this was the beginning of the Israeli "coup d'état" which eventually led to Nico resigning his position as Chancellor.

From Israel we flew to Switzerland. Here again negotiations were underway to establish a Ciskei office and this visit was arranged by the unofficial Swiss representative. On the programme was a tour of the Zurich water works and the Swiss proudly took the Ciskei delegation down to the depth of the earth underneath the Alps to show how, in the event of an atomic war, Zurich would still have clean water. A masterpiece of engineering! The light was switched on to reveal all – only to find the bulb had blown! (It happens in the best of families!) Once again I accompanied Mrs Sebe. Ruth, a young Swiss girl and Lawrence, our bodyguard made up the party. We swanned around Switzerland in a silver Mercedes sportscar visiting a chocolate factory, the fabric museum in St Gallen and the Rhein Falle. We stayed luxuriously in the Dolder Grand Hotel, one of the top hotels in the world. Evening meals were around a big circular table with lovely models showing the latest designs swirling around us. (They repeatedly swirled around the table where the Presidents handsome young bodyguards sat) The President ordered pheasant. This was not to his taste and sent it back. We waited another hour for his second choice.

The Presidential couple were also in Switzerland for medical check-ups Nico spoke to Mrs S about the drugs that the President was prescribed by the Minister of Health who was also the President's personal physician. There was general belief that the President was being over prescribed in terms of these drugs. The doctor was also regarded as the President's closest advisor. Later the same doctor was found guilty of corruption

The former Ciskei Minister of Health, Dr Hendrik Beukes, has been found guilty of corruption, bribery and perjury by a commission of enquiry investigating allegations of irregularities or malpractices by him and officials in the Ciskei government service.

(Vanqa O. *Beukes: Bribery and corruption findings*
Daily Dispatch, October 10, 1985)

Dr Beukes certainly became very wealthy in a very short time.

Back in Bisho, it was evident that the Israelis had a firm foot in the doorway. Lucrative contracts were at stake and Nico would now only be in the way of this "progress". On a certain day, Nico put an ultimatum to the Cabinet. Either things needed to be corrected in terms of lines of responsibility and authority, or he would leave his office. There was much handwashing and assurances but when nothing had happened by the next morning, Nico handed in his resignation – 11 months after his appointment. What a relief! (Pik would have been proud!)

Chapter 11

Picking up the Threads



Farming, enterprise, events and other matters 1985 - 1989

Now back with Barlows and Norton, Nico picked up where he had left off and once again started working with small and medium enterprises. In August, 1985 he was re-appointed to the Board of Transido Pty Ltd and the Transkei Development Corporation, was on the Controlling Committee of the Transkei Small Scale Enterprises Commission and on the Board of the Transkei Development Corporation. (Transkei and Ciskei did not sit around the same fire, so while part of the government set-up in Ciskei, Nico had not been involved in Transkei). In 1987 he was asked to serve as Director of the KaNgwane Economic Development Corporation with its head office in White River.

Transkei Business people were in a league of their own. They were giants such as Archie Nkonyeni, Amos Gadi, Hudson Matabese, Barny Titus and others, all friends from NAFCOC times. In Transkei he met Starr Jameson Memke of the Agricultural Development Corporation, who later was to work at Dohne Agricultural Research Station near Stutterheim. and rented the cottage on our property. Many a weekend Starr would join us for a braai and we would spend long evenings chatting. He meticulously paid his rent on the 1st of the month, kept the cottage spotless and lovingly washed his car. We miss him.

A huge complex of buildings in Stutterheim, formerly manufacturing timber products, came onto the market and was threatened with demolition. To avoid this Nico arranged a loan from the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) to buy the buildings and the Stutterheim Small

Industries Park was established. Ben Vosloo, the Chairman of the SBDC, flew down from Pretoria to officially open the complex. Other buildings were rented out. Later the complex was taken over by 4 local business people and a number of small factories started operating from this Industrial Park – a saw mill, a furniture factory, other timber-related industries, a couple of engineering works, a pole treatment plant. Peter Tshoba and I started a small handcrafted indigenous wood business known as Kologha Kraft. We supplied shops all over the country and at times could not keep up with orders. Over 100 people were employed in this complex and in the 1990's the office bloc became the headquarters of the Stutterheim Development Foundation.

Ever on the look out for people who were entrepreneurial at heart, Nico met up with Niconori. The similarity of their name was an immediate bond. He writes:

Niconori had worked in the brickyards in Stutterheim and when the government's decentralisation policy made it lucrative for people to move to the Transkei or Ciskei, the brickyards had closed down. When I met him, Niconori had recently come out of prison, for whatever reason I do not know, and was keen to start his own brickyard. The municipality gave land and I arranged that he could purchase basic tools at the hardware store for up to a certain amount on my account and could repay me at a later date. In the years to come Niconori grew his business, was able to purchase a truck and was delivering bricks locally and to East London and as far afield as the Transkei – and repaid his loan.

A small enterprise loan system was started for farmers and others in the rural areas who needed capital for planting maize, for starting a chicken business or for some other enterprise. Wartburg, a village 20 k's from town, with the help of Barlow Rand Foundation, purchased a mill and for years ground the maize for all the surrounding farmers. In Wartburg too, an enterprising lady, Daisy, started her poultry business.

Unfortunately this did not succeed as, jealous of her success and considering that it was not right for one person to own so much, the poultry house was burned down. Daisy did not have the heart to start again. This behaviour was known as PHD Pull him/her down!

Potatoes Feast or Famine

Once again finding ourselves on 5 acres of "agricultural land", and at the suggestion of our neighbour, John Kleyn, it was decided to go into the potato business. We had the land and John had the tractor. The farmer in Nico rose willingly to the challenge. So with John and Lois we entered into what was known as "the potato period".

But first an introduction to the Kleyns. John was a Consulting Engineer with his own business in East London and Lois a UCT graduate with a Diploma in Library Science, busy studying through UNISA to get her Teaching Diploma and a BA honours (English). They too lived on a small holding 5 k's from Stutterheim and were near neighbours. John played the guitar and sang beautifully. Lois loved the theatre and was for many years chairperson of the Stutterheim Amateur Dramatic Society. She produced numerous plays and organised three Stutterheim Arts Festivals. Later Lois was to run the Stutterheim Education Trust. John and Lois became friends and partners in all the events that followed. And John had a tractor!

Both John and Nico were working, but they found the time to plant 5 acres of potatoes. The previous season had seen a severe potato shortage and this, the four of us believed, was the way to make a good profit. The potatoes grew beautifully. They survived the hazard of a hailstorm, of too much drought and too much rain, and the moment came for the lifting. The good earth of Stutterheim is dark and clayey and the summers wet. The lifted potatoes were surrounded by their blanket of black, sticky soil. We would have to wash them. To avoid

endless municipal water bills the bags were taken to the Kleyns farm as they had an artesian well. And so we packed and sorted potatoes. Day 1 showed the princely amount of 70 bags ready for marketing. We seemed to have a vast labour force and working out the finances on this, we realised that we were heading for financial disaster.

So began our time and motion development programme. John invented a potato-sorter and Lois and I got an assembly-line going. We eventually were sorting and packing between 600 and 700 pockets a day. For three months we slaved away. In the mornings John and Nico would go off dressed for work and we would once again put on our jeans, which by this time stood up by themselves, and sort and pack. To give them credit the men did take bakkie-loads of potatoes to wherever they were going and did spend Saturdays lifting potatoes for us to deal with the following week. It certainly kept us off the streets. Our production line began to dress very smartly and as they were given all under-sized potatoes as a bonus at the end of the day, they began to look well-fed - as did the whole of Mlungisi.

You probably can guess the end of the story: everyone in the country had decided it was the year for potatoes and there was a huge glut on the market. We would look with consternation at the truckloads of potatoes heading to East London from the Free State. One of our neighbours, a former farmer, consoled us: "Try again next year and you will find yourself in the money." Lois and I could not be persuaded. We ended up with a loss of R500 each. On the last day of collecting the sacks to be sorted, the bakkie itself stuck in the black mud. I climbed out and left the vehicle languishing in the field for Nico and John and the tractor to drag out.

To complete the farming picture, Nico now started breeding Black Angus beef. He loved these beautiful animals and was happy to spend his Saturdays dipping, dosing and admiring them. Not to be outdone, I bought a small flock of Romney

Marsh sheep from my brother in the Karoo for spinning wool for my hand-knit, hand-spun garments. Having Romney Marsh sheep was either stupid or courageous as Stutterheim was the home of the Dohne Merino and the two developers of that famous breed lived within shouting distance of us. I think they were mildly amused. We had the usual hens and cows (Blommetjie, Blaartjie, Lettuce and Black Lily) and a horse, Amber Dust. Once again I made endless cheeses of endless types with marginal success.

Our neighbours on the other side were Hamish and Monica Scott and their 4 children. Hamish had been our lead singer and guitarist in "Springbok Stampede" and had also spent some time in Latin America. He graduated as an engineer and now 20 years later we found ourselves in the same town. Hamish had been sent by his company, Ove Arup Inc, to open an office in the Eastern Cape. He was later elected to the Town Council and gave freely of his expertise to the development programmes that took place in the 90's.

Festivals, Functions and other Happenings.

The German Festival was organised to celebrate 125 years of German settlement in the area. It was a five-day festival, included a prize for the best shop window, various events run by different organisations and the 22 floats that swept through the town were show-stopping. One float was a Volkswagen car dressed up as a Dohne Merino completely covered in skins. The skins were really not properly cured and the day was about the hottest ever experienced in Stutterheim. The driver almost died from smell and heat exhaustion. He had to frequently dash into a passing café for a coke. Afterwards, all of us exhausted, wondered whose crazy idea this was anyway? I knew!

There is an old German Lutheran Church on the road to Mlungisi. It was part of the Bethel Mission complex which

consisted of the church, cemetery, school and the rectory.

The Mission Station was founded on 2 January 1837 by Pastor Jacob Ludwig Döhne who had been sent out by the Berlin Missionary Society. The land was granted by Chief Gazela and the first church was built in the form of a rondawel. He completed a house and his bride came out from Germany to join him. He was a gifted linguist, wrote Xhosa readers for school children, a *History of the Bible in Xhosa* and also compiled a Xhosa/English dictionary. He is regarded as chief translator of the Bible into Xhosa. Tragically his young wife died in childbirth and the small son lived only six months. In 1846, during one of the Frontier wars known as the Battle of the Axe, everything he had built was destroyed and, saddened by all the tragedy that had come his way, he left the area. He was followed by Rev J H Albert Kropf who arrived in 1846, rebuilt the Rondavel Church which was again destroyed in 1851, and later built the Mission Church which was consecrated in 1865. Outside are two belfries, one without a bell and the other with a most distinctive bronze bell – cast in Germany and inscribed in Xhosa, Dutch and German. Inside, a large and impressive Picture Bible.

(Information: *Historical Stutterheim*, compiled by the Stutterheim Historical Society, 1984)

This was the Church that we found when we arrived. The Church was in a sad state of disrepair with grass growing through the roof. We started an Historical Society and through this managed to get the Church declared a national monument and found the money to repair it. Much interest in distant ancestors and their doings was generated by all this activity and the Historical Society flourishes to this day.

Once, passing through the Eastern Transvaal town of Sabie, we found ourselves in the midst of their Forest Festival. This seemed a brilliant idea to replicate in Stutterheim and from 1987 to 1991 the Forest Festival became an annual event. The stalls were many and varied, and there was great participation

from the surrounding saw mills. There were log-sawing competitions, the longest plank in the world (1 kilometre long) was carried into town from one of the outlying sawmills and the following year the Boardman's factory manufactured the biggest nail in the world. There were craft stalls, coffee shops, potjie-kos competitions. Our coffee shop was the only stall with a shade cloth. Being the hottest day ever, people streamed into our shade. We were very busy. We were also very tough, banned all cokes and takeaways and only allowed people to drink **our** coffee. In order to stay in the shade, drink coffee they did! Our guest speaker at the official opening was Desmond Fitzpatrick Niven, the grandson of Sir Percy Fitzpatrick.

One festival year Lois and I ran a Cheese and Wine stall. A special train was run from East London to swell the number of visitors. This time the day was cold and gloomy with threatening showers. Lois persuaded John to ride on bales and bales of lucerne in his bakkie with which we constructed a cosy "nest" for wine-lovers. Nobody would leave our stall and the wine had now turned to gluwein. The East London bunch could barely get back to their train. This was financially far more successful and less stressful than potatoes.

The East-West Seminar in Luxembourg took place in September 1988. Nico and I were invited to participate and we joined Masahide Shibusawa, Counsellor to the Government of Japan and Member of the Trilateral Commission, Jorgen Thygesen, Director of Publishing, the European Parliament and Assistant to the Prime Minister of Denmark and his wife Elsa, Bob Fleming, Consultant for the Federal Parliament of Canada, Toyo Sohma, Educator in Bangkok, Professor Vaitheswaran from India, Professor of Economics, Coe College, Iowa. These were all people who had in earlier years worked with Moral Re-Armament and still retained their conviction that ordinary people could play a part in bringing solutions to world problems. For us being rather isolated in South Africa and very much involved with our own concerns, it

was good to meet them all again.

We showed them Clem Sunter's video "The High Road" based on his book "The World and South Africa in the Nineties" written in 1986. Clem is a scenario planner (helping people to 'think the unthinkable before it happens to you') and over a period of 2 years from 1988 – 1989 he and two other members of the Anglo American Scenario team, criss-crossed South Africa talking to every conceivable audience including politicians, cabinet members, farmers, doctors, academics and teachers, 30 000 in all, challenging the country to answer this question: Will we walk the "High Road" of negotiation and a political settlement, or will we choose the "Low Road" of isolation and impoverishment?

This video evoked much discussion in our Seminar and just over two years later, against all expectations, on February 2nd 1990, South Africa took the "High Road" starting on the path to become, as Clem Sunter expresses it "the first country to negotiate themselves out of power on their own turf."

At this point the Urban Foundation commissioned us to do a Craft Survey throughout the country to see what assistance could be given to crafters to expand and develop their businesses. We criss-crossed the country meeting intrepid, creative and determined crafters and dedicated people in rural areas. One of the major problems facing these people was access to markets and the idea was to investigate the possibility of warehousing craft and then marketing it from there. This was an involved process as it would mean ensuring production quotas, something which artists are not always able to meet, quality, design etc. In a small way, Gail Sink in Port St. Johns on the Pondo Coast, was doing just that. An artist herself, she had a network of contacts throughout the country and she encouraged the Pondo ladies to use their skill to produce beautiful beaded waistcoats and other items. She bought and personally paid for baskets from local weavers and warehoused for them and she discovered Julius the talented



Beach Beraad Stutterheim team, 1993



Stella and Nick, Yellowstone Creek 1983



With Stella and Philip rafting in Thailand



Luke and James



Nick, Kim, Loël, Stella and Philip (Hermanus 2004)



Stutterheim Accord, 1992



Typical Northern Nigerian architecture



Cast of Springbok Stampedo



Ian Hetherington and Nico



Loël and Nosimo Balindlela



Anglo Boer War- Nico's grandfather (far left)



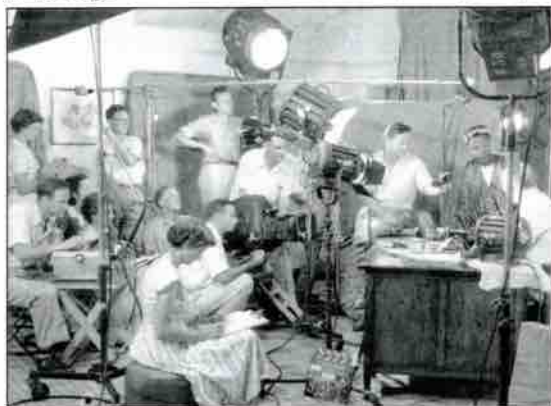
Nico's Parent's Grandfather and Sister, Ria



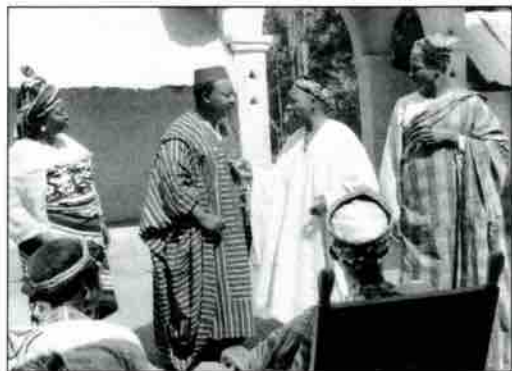
Charles and Stella Rubidge



Loël's mother, brother and sisters (clockwise from top left) Beryl Hesketh, Fred, Loël, Rita Claassen, Audrey Beal, Stella Schutz



Filming "Freedom" in Nigeria



*Freedom cast: Kezia Fashina (leader Market Women),
Dr William Nkomo (South Africa)
Manassh Moerane (South Africa)
Ifoghale Amata (Nigeria)*



*Nigeria with the wife and daughter
of the Ethiopian Ambassador*



Yetunde's wedding party, London



*Nico and Loël's wedding, London 1963.
Bill and Stella Schutz looking on*



Nico and P Q Vundla



*John Nchekube, Izaac Amata, Andrew Peppetta,
Nico*

carver who later won the Standard Bank Artist's Award. Visiting her warehouse was an experience. Gail never made much money but it was her life and her passion and she was greatly loved.

We had dinner with her in 2005 and found that she had run up against *bureaucracy* and had been accused of exploiting the people. She was told not to purchase any more craft and her clients would now have to sell directly to some department in the municipality. Laden with their wares the women had to walking the 3 kilometre road to the Municipal Offices where they found that there was absolutely nothing in place to purchase what they had made. And so collapsed what was a wonderful job-creator.

After our survey we invited all these people we had met and many other small business owners to a seminar for Independent Small Business People to address subjects such as marketing, deregulation and financing. The processing of agricultural products for the local and export markets was also up for discussion. Over 120 came and for 2 days we met, exchanged ideas, heard from different people and began to build linkages and networks. Organisations like the Wool Board began arranging exhibitions of hand-knitted goods and it was generally recognised that small business people made a valuable contribution to job creation in the country.

Chapter 12

Coming to Grips with the Crisis

Guns for Stutterheimers



It is 1986 and Stutterheim was in serious crisis. Articles in the East London *Daily Dispatch* during the late 80's had highlighted the polarisation and conflict in the town. Stutt Co-op Attacked, January 16, 1986 Factory in Stutt Burnt, 17 January 1986; 10 Stutterheim businesses close, January 1989; New Threat to Stutt Priest: call to Vlok, 30 September 1989; 10 000 gather at Stutterheim peace service, 7 October 1989; and there were advertisements in the papers offering guns to Stutterheimers for self-protection.

The Stutterheim Coordinating Committee (SCC) had launched a consumer boycott. This type of mass resistance was currently taking place throughout the country. A perception existed that business had the clout to bring about change. The businesses in Stutterheim were mostly small and depended largely on the black consumers and during this 7 months' boycott, 14 businesses closed down. Also, in the word of Chris Magwangqana, the leader of the boycott, it was a "double edged sword" both consumers and businesses suffered. The boycott was very well organised. Absolutely no-one bought locally. In fact, if anyone was seen carrying parcels from Stutterheim home to the townships, they would be forced to, for example, drink the oil they had bought, or the shoes or clothing would be burnt. Black tyres smoked on the roads to the township entrance, and generally there was an air of fear and anger. The town was dying. It was not easy living in the middle of it all.

In the 1988 Local Government elections, 6 people decided to stand together as a group - not for any party, but for

Stutterheim. In their words: "We believe that party politics should be kept out of municipal affairs and that we should work together as a community for the development of the area." There was strong opposition from the registered political parties, but the six independents won the election and Nico was elected Mayor. At their first council meeting they decided not to accept payment for being on the council but that it should be their contribution to the town. With the crisis on hand the new council needed to do something and fast.

Walking a tightrope

Nico:

In May 1989 I had a meeting with the black land-owners in Isidenge area (near Stutterheim) to arrange a meeting between them and representatives from central government. They agreed and the meeting took place on July 20 under the Chairmanship of the government representative, Mr D J. Retief, whom I introduced and then left. At this meeting Mr Retief asked whether they would be prepared to accept land elsewhere in the area in exchange for the land they presently resided on. The reason for this was that the land on which some of them lived was too small to farm and they would receive more suitable land. Also they would have title to the land. This they said they would consider. This move was, of course not entirely altruistic as it was part of the government's programme of consolidating land owned by Blacks.

I immediately received a letter from Bishop David Russell in Grahamstown accusing me of "after having gained the trust of the people then organising a meeting with authorities directly relating to their relocation and removal." I phoned Bishop Russell and explained to him that the information he had was not the full picture and offered to come to Grahamstown so that we could talk. He was not available, he said. In fact we only met to talk about this in January 1990.

Things came to a head in 1989 when, on National Election Day a group of Ministers from the Border Council of Churches walking through town protesting peacefully against elections, were fallen upon by police and beaten. I was phoned at home to tell me what was happening. As Mayor I immediately phoned the police and was told that they didn't have time to talk to "people off the street". I reported this whole incident to the District Commissioner in Port Elizabeth who subsequently apologised for the behavior of the police.

I proposed that the Council write a letter of apology to the ministers involved and the Council invited Rev Finca and those who had been with him to a special council meeting where an apology was made and the letter presented.

8 December 1889

Dear Rev Finca

I and my Council regard the assault on yourself and other ministers on September 6, 1989, in Stutterheim, as a dark day in our history.

As we approach the end of this year, we decided to ask you, and others who were with you on September 6, to please forgive the town, and those who were involved in the incident. We sincerely regret that it ever happened.

(signed) Nico Ferreira (Mayor)

Rev Finca and others appreciated the gesture saying that this had never happened to them before (an apology) and if they could be of help in resolving the boycott in Stutterheim they would gladly do so.

Shortly after the incident with the Border Council of Churches, I met with Rev Lulama Ntshingwa, the Anglican Minister of

Stutterheim. This was an attempt on my part to find ways of working together but after half an hour I knew I just wasn't getting through. Lulama was planning a Peace Service in town and I had hoped that the service could be postponed for a week so that all the churches might take part. But this was not in the plan as busloads of people were already organised to come in from outlying districts to participate. However, as I got up to leave, Rev Ntshingwa suggested we pray together, which I felt was at least a step in the right direction.

The Peace Service took place and The King William's Town **Mercury** had the following to say:

Under the headline: Stutt Mayor At Peace Service, The Mercury wrote:

"The presence of the Stutterheim Mayor, Mr Nico Ferreira, at the town's open air peace service last Friday was an indication of a genuine move towards reconciling black and white residents," the Anglican Minister of Stutterhiem, Reverend Lulama Ntshingwa said at the service.

During the service Mr Ferreira was called to take the platform alongside prominent clergy including the Archbishop of Grahamstown, Bishop David Russell, the Chairman of the Border Council of Churches and the Moderator of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of South Africa, the Reverend Bongani Finca.

Mr Finca called on the Mayor to inform the white people of Stutterheim that the black people were stretching out the hands of friendship and love. Mr Ferreira told the Mercury that he had attended the service because he believed in reconciliation.

(Middleton J. Stutt Mayor at peace service The Mercury, October 19, 1989)

For the next two years Nico and others of us worked tirelessly toward finding a common goal for the town and seeking out and meeting people of other communities. In the beginning it was very difficult. It was a stop and start process. There were no obvious leaders. We were told afterward that "we would never know who the leaders are because if you know you will put them in jail" and time and again meetings were called and discussions were held only to find that at the next meeting there would be a completely different set of people. Organisations such as the Kubusi Residents' Committee, the Mlungisi Residents' Committee, Cenyu/Cenyu Lands, Mgwali, Heckle, Wartburg Residents' Committees, the Youth Congress, the Women's organisations, were all affiliated to the Stutterheim Co-ordinating Committee (SCC) which was definitely calling the shots.

Early in 1990 a flurry of articles again appeared in the press and it seemed as if dialogue was destined to continue through the media. On January 16 under the headline Stutt boycotters see little progress *The Daily Dispatch* wrote of the demands of the boycotters that had not been met by business or the council. Nico phoned the *Dispatch* expressing surprise that the Council had not been contacted to discuss this and requested space to reply. Two days later the headline was Stutt Mayor seeks black-white talks. The article quoted Nico as saying that "the demands discussed in the article are an expression of need for reform and the desire for improvement in the standard of living of the local black people. But by no means can these demands be directed at Stutterheim in isolation. At no time in the last 6 months has the SCC made any attempt to approach the Stutterheim Town Council. The problems of Stutterheim can be solved. It simply needs Stutterheimers from the different communities to get around the table and address the issues affecting our people. We would welcome discussions with the SCC."

The day the article appeared, both Yongama Gxowa who had been delegated to lead talks some months earlier, and Bishop

Russell phoned. Bishop Russell came to our house and spent two hours talking to Nico and both felt it was very productive. The Bishop said he was grateful because he now understood the situation and that he had been misinformed on certain issues. Rev Martin Glover, the Anglican priest from Stutterheim, accompanied the Bishop. Obviously the Bishop was running late and Martin kept rushing out to make a phone call. Between the two of them, a whole plateful of my rather special pecan biscuits was consumed – for ever after known as “The Bishop’s Biscuits”. I’m glad I could play a small part in all this!

Yongama asked Nico to bring a delegation to the Mlungisi Community Hall to meet with the SCC Executive. This took place on January 26, 1990. During this meeting a group of some 500 youth started toy toying around the hall. They were apparently upset about their leaders meeting with the whites and had demonstrations outside the halls where discussions were under way. A representative group of these young people was invited to observe. It seems as if the ball was now again starting to roll.

One evening Nico was asked to come and meet with a group in Kubusi, one of the adjacent black townships. He invited the Deputy Mayor, Mr Mundell to accompany him. This was totally unsanctioned by the police. They crossed the bridge leading to Kubusi and parked the car alongside the smouldering tyres. They were met by several *comrades* and walked in darkness amongst the small homes. In a rondavel lit by a smoking lamp a group awaited them. The atmosphere could be cut with a knife. Nico thanked them for the invitation and then introduced the Deputy Mayor, Mr Mundell. “Ah,” came a shout from the back, “Mr Mandela!” Everyone laughed, the ice was broken and on such small things a total change of atmosphere can take place.

It was a time of great tension in the town. The white community were too afraid to attend the Peace Service. Lois

Kleyn and I and one other person were the only white people who were part of the crowd of around 10 000 people. Following on that we attended the Women's World Day of Prayer - once again only a handful of white people. In March 1990 we issued an invitation through the Churches

To all the women of Stutterheim and district to get together to say what we feel for the future of our area.

As women we want to have a part in making our town an example of how people can live together in harmony.

There are so many needs and opportunities education, housing, health care, etc. Let us explore ways and means of finding solutions and in so doing get to know one another.

We will meet in the Town Hall at 3 o'clock, Tuesday, April 3, 1990. All welcome.

Signed, Women for Stutterheim.

350 women, of whom about 50 were white people, turned up at our first meeting in the Town Hall.

Later I met Nosimo Balindlela, the then Chairperson of the Border ANC Women's League. Resulting from this we started to have regular meetings with the Women's League in the Council Chamber. "What were their concerns?" "How could we work together for a solution?" We attended funerals which at that time were very politicised and one didn't always feel very safe, we visited in homes, we invited people to our homes, we raised money for projects and we used every possible opportunity to reach out and build bridges. Through all these meetings, discussions, phone calls, flea markets, etc, confidence and trust gradually began to grow.

Seven months after the boycott began and many meetings later, a gathering was held in the Town Hall – this must be one of the coldest and most poorly lit halls in the country. Here, for the first time, Chris Magwangqana was in the chair. He was, we discovered, the Chairman of the Mlungisi Civics Association. And for two years we had not known this.

At this meeting he tabled the demands of the residents which included:

Releasing detained people and lifting restrictions on released detainees

Removing troops from the townships

Stopping security force harassment of residents

Recognising the trade union movements

Scrapping grazing fees

Stopping forced removals

Upgrading residential areas

Providing a living wage for domestic workers

Providing proper health and educational services, which should also be desegregated

Lowering rents

Stopping unfair labour practices

Consolidating local government structures one council, one tax base

Although many of these demands were national issues about which the Stutterheim Town Council could do nothing, Nico's immediate response was to accept the demands. He then went on to explain that there were issues over which the council had no authority and could do nothing. But, "if these are your concerns, they are also our concerns and let us see how we can solve them."

Interviewed by *Succeed Magazine* 10 years later, Chris said:

"I knew that there had been many attempts to communicate with us, but I was suspicious. The people who were perceived as being the cause of all the suffering wanted to talk at a time that can best be described as the height of the suffering. But I realised Nico was prepared to listen to us, really listen. To show that we were prepared to take a step forward I announced that the consumer boycott that had been running for 7 months and had closed down 14 white businesses, was cancelled from 07.00 the next morning."

(Ebersohn T. *The Story of an African Town* Succeed - March/April 2003)

Within a week another meeting was held between the Town Council and the Civic leaders where it was agreed that:

There would be regular meetings and we would work together on the basis that all people living within the boundaries of the municipality would be regarded as one community

That jointly we would immediately go to the different communities and hear what the problems were

That we would get an outside facilitator to help in this programme.

The venues for meetings were alternated between the different communities and gradually the tone of discussions changed from demand to development.

It was decided to meet every two weeks to raise issues and find solutions and generally begin to work together as a community. All decision-making was shared and in Chris' words "together we built a bridge and together walked across it". In a very real way democracy had arrived in Stutterheim four years before it had reached the nation.

The Press dubbed these bi-monthly meetings *The Stutterheim Forum* and this was the first of what were to become *Forums*

all over the country. The Development Bank of Southern Africa facilitated a weekend of meetings with all communities where needs were identified and prioritised and out of this a number of working committees were formed to deal with the urgent issues raised. High on the list of priorities were jobs, housing and education. The Development Bank gave a grant to enable the community to come up with a working development plan, Professor Dave Dewar of the University of Cape Town was appointed to assist in the planning - and Nosimo, Lois and I and cooked masses of boboti!

So began, what was for all of us involved, an amazing 14 years and as an introduction to this period, I can do no better than to quote from our foreword to the manual "*Achieving Prosperity The Stutterheim Experience*" edited by Alex Hetherington in 2001.

Twelve years ago the Stutterheim community embarked on a journey. There was no map to follow, few road signs and many potholes. But we set our compass in the direction of building a future we could share. We wanted people in our town to have work, our children to have good education and our community to have peace.

Each one of us experienced the journey differently, but as we look back down the road we have travelled, we are grateful that we could be part of a process which not only brought a new spirit to our town and a better quality of life, but which enriched all our lives. We realised that we were the new South Africa and that we had played a part in creating it.

Sharing our experiences has been at the core of what we believe and, because of this, we have welcomed other communities to visit us. We have been humbled by the hundreds of people who have

walked through our doors to learn from what we have done. They too have brought new dimensions to our own understanding of the issues facing small, rural town development.

To help others who themselves wish to walk this road, we have put together this manual documenting what we have done and giving guidelines to others to follow. The manual is open-ended and our collective experiences can, in the future, continue to define the most effective route to growth and development.

The road that lies ahead is not yet travelled and we will continue to walk it with all the integrity we have.

Of course during the early 90's not everyone was in favour of what some of us were trying to do. Both black and white were often faced with difficult, if not dangerous situations. While up in Johannesburg we were phoned by the police saying that there was a plan to bomb our house. When we returned we found a friendly policeman sitting under our tree. Years later in a report on a court case surrounding the alleged arson by the owner of his own butcher shop, *The Daily Dispatch* of March 14, 1995 wrote "The Conservative Party's Mr Johannes Marthinus Bezuidenhout denied threatening the accused, Mr Saint Michael Schutte, 30, that if he did not follow his orders to attack the person or property of Mr Nico Ferreira of Stutterheim, it would cost him dearly".

I had often wondered whether Nico would return from his clandestine meetings in smoky venues. He wondered sometimes after parking his car at night and walking from the garage to the house, whether this might be the night that he would be shot.

Chris, Nosimo and her husband Miniyake, Tom Mzimasi

Dyanti, Max Mekisane July, and other leaders put themselves at risk and steadfastly stood for what they now believed to be the way to find a solution. They at times faced strong opposition and threats. In fact Max's house was petrol-bombed one night. This only highlighted the integrity, courage, innovation and dedication of an amazing group of people. People who became friends and for whom nothing was impossible.

Chris, who chaired the definitive meeting in the Town Hall when the boycott was called off, is a gifted leader. He had been a translator in the Magistrate's Court and when he himself was arrested for political activities, found himself in prison with some of those who had appeared before the magistrate during his employment. In their minds Chris was responsible for putting them in jail and Chris must have had a bit of a problem sorting that situation out.

While in detention Chris started studying for his B Juris through UNISA. Later he was awarded a Helen Suzman scholarship to study Local Government at Birmingham University and this stood him in good stead when he was elected Mayor, first of Stutterheim, then of Amahlati and subsequently Municipal Manager. He is now the Deputy Director of the South African Local Government Association, (SALGA), Eastern Cape Branch.

From the regular *Forum* meetings a number of Works Committees were formed and Chris and Nico were on the Constitutional Committee. Other committees were Works and Infrastructure, Education, Housing, Economic Development, Health.

Chris and Nico started working on a new multiracial Town Council for Stutterheim. They flew down to Cape Town to discuss the matter with the Administrator, Mr Kobus Mering. An advertisement was placed in the paper giving notice that the municipality of Stutterheim intended to enter into an

agreement with the Cumakala Council. They also approached a constitutional lawyer who drew up a draft agreement for the unification of the Local Authorities. In a letter to the Administrator, Mr J Meiring, August 19, 1991, Nico wrote: (Translated).

I am writing to give further information in connection with the possible *One Council* for Stutterheim.

The Civic Associations of the four black communities have met and have reported back to The Forum that they are all united in the desire for a *One Council* for Stutterheim.

We have also had a visit from Mr Thozamile Botha who is on the Executive of the ANC with the Portfolio of Local Government. He was present at the report-back Forum meeting where the Civics announced their decision. Mr Botha agreed that although the Interim Law regarding Local Government is something which the ANC does not subscribe to, should the people request this it will be accepted.

Both the Coloured community and the Town Council are in agreement.

An official letter will be sent to Mr Albert Louw to get his help on this.

Signed (Nico Ferreira)

The Administrator replied on August 26, 1991, congratulating Stutterheim on their commitment to this end. He believed it was just a question of time before it happened and offered any necessary assistance in this connection.

Again, in the words of Chris in the *Journal of the Barlow Rand Group*:

Obviously Stutterheim does not exist in a vacuum but we have proved that while other towns around us have been folding their arms and watching national issues, we have had the courage to say that we cannot wait for the existing government or any other new government to say now is the time for development. We are saying: 'Development is with the people and by the people. We are what the development is all about and therefore, we must play our role.' We are quite aware of the fact that various municipal by-laws impose constraints as to how far we can go. However, we are leaving no stone unturned whilst working toward the formation of a single municipality. We have gone so far that I am sure there could never be a return to the old order. Long before the National Peace Accord was signed, we had signed our own mini Peace Accord.
(Palframan B. *Stutterheim's Accord*, BARLOWS '92)

Parallel with all this, events were moving in the national arena. CODESA was underway and the ANC were not happy that a small town like Stutterheim was moving ahead of national negotiations. So the plan was put on hold. But in fact Stutterheim was now operating and would continue to operate as one council.

A number of articles appeared in newspapers around the country and The Weekend Post of July 13, 1991, devoted 4 columns to events in Stutterheim:

STUTTERHEIM SETS EXAMPLE TO SA
Town shows big cities how to co-operate

The little Border town of Stutterheim is setting an example to the big cities of how races can work together at local government level.

While in other centres the ANC has opted out of one-city negotiations, albeit temporarily, the Stutterheim Forum, the Border's oldest negotiation body, has retained ANC participation. Also represented on the problem-solving forum are other political and community groups as well as the Town Council.

The Forum is forging ahead with inter-group initiatives, despite the concerns thrown up by the interim Measures for Local Government Bill.

Stutterheim ANC chairman, Chris Magwangqana felt the Bill was unlikely to affect the Forum's work 'There is no problem so big it cannot be overcome, provided you have the right channels,' he said.

The Stutterheim Forum is addressing problem areas like housing, work opportunities and education. The Forum had started quietly with an open meeting and the Forum's structure had developed from there. 'Now its just a part of normal life,' said Mr Ferreira, the Deputy Mayor. (*Monk B. Stutterheim Sets example to SA, Weekend Post 12 July 1991*)

Nosimo Balindlela was another charismatic leader. As Border Chairperson of the ANC Women's League, she had advised her members to have nothing to do with those of us white people who were trying to make contact "They have never been interested in us before," she said. "Why should we work with them now?" But as the months went by we met and began to get to know one another. Nosimo had spent two years in New York where she obtained a Masters Degree in Early Childhood Education. One Christmas she phoned and asked if she could bring some of her friends around to bake Christmas cakes. She wanted them to learn how to do this and needed help with an oven. So we spent a morning together. The 6 of us all

brought our ingredients, we mixed these in a large basin, we washed 10 cent pieces, put them in the mixture and we all made a wish. Nosimo's wish was to find a way to improve English in the black schools. I looked a bit puzzled, I think, and asked Nosimo to explain how we could do this.

"We must get hold of Professor Walters at Rhodes University's Institute for the Study of English in Africa," she said. "He has done research on the Molteno Project as an effective way of teaching English to Xhosa-speaking children. We will need to start in Grade 1 and incrementally go up to Grade 4."

With the cakes baking in the oven, we made plans. Contact was made with Rhodes University and on a cold, gloomy June evening Professor Walters arrived from Grahamstown, his car loaded with projectors and film. We drove the almost impassable road to Mlungisi and met in Nosimo's house. From there we went to the meeting in Nomatamba School. It was getting dark. The school was a series of wattle and daub classrooms in a state of disrepair. One of the classrooms was packed with teachers, parents, SADTU (The South African Democratic Teachers' Union) members and others. The only absentee was electricity!! In the gloom, lit by a few smoky lanterns, Professor Walters without the assistance of his projectors, explained the principles and implementation of the programme. Nosimo and I had a hurried discussion. We needed light and power and food. She ordered a couple of taxis and I went ahead with the Professor to our house. Food had not been part of the agenda but somehow the one chicken I had prepared for the Professor stretched to the twenty people present. (Plenty of rice, if I remember correctly). The necessary films were shown and the Molteno Project was on its way with Lois in charge – and more about that later.

Nosimo also pioneered the concept of "Home-based Educare Centres" whereby residents offered their homes for small crèches for pre-school children. Within months 12 of these small pre-schools were up and running and by 1995 there

were 39 in the district. In the years that followed we managed to build little wooden houses, to find money for food for these centres and were able to give the "volunteer" mothers effective educare training at a wonderful training centre in Queenstown, the Khululeka Community Development Centre. These little "Amakhayas" are still functioning. For a few years the Department of Health provided funding for food and once a month an enormous truck would arrive at our offices, collect the enormous cheque, and then start its run to the 39 distant rural schools to deliver food for Africa! In later years a local farmer's wife took on helping with further training and in particular helping teach the little ones, and their teachers, English.

Nico and I were in England in July 1992. At the same time Nosimo was in London for three months on a Distance Education study course. As we had planned before we all left Stutterheim, we phoned her from Oxford and invited her to meet us for a night. She came by train, we met her at the station and drove through the lovely English countryside. At a small 13th century pub (made of wattle and daub!) in a village called Heydon, we stopped for the night. After a delicious meal we creaked up the stairs to our rooms. A few minutes later, a knock on the door and Nosimo bounced in, perched on our bed, and we talked the night away. The next morning we put her on a train back to London – both she and I in tears. She and her husband Mini were on the first Board of Directors of the Stutterheim Development Foundation.

In 1994 when she was elected to the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature, and again in 1999 when she became MEC, she wrote Nico:

"I'm sitting here wondering what and where we would be in Stutterheim without you. The developments that have taken place here are incredible. What a gift you are to us. What a wonderful feeling it gives me to be a Stutterheimer.and now dear friends, as I

have done before, I enclose my first cheque (as a new MEC) for you to pray for me that I use the money I earn wisely. Nico, in the absence of my father you are the one to perform that duty. Take the Cheque (Payslip) and think on these things.

Thank you Nico and Loël for your wonderful support to us as a family. Please continue advising us. Love to you all, Nosimo.

They became and still are our very dear friends and Nosimo is currently the Premier of the Eastern Cape Province.

Its all about "Delivery"

Hand in hand with a new working relationship had to come the development that was so desperately needed in the town. Stutterheim is made up of a number of communities. Because of the policy of "removal" these communities were scheduled to be moved and become part of the Ciskei and absolutely no development had taken place since the early 60's. Up to 5 families were crowded into small two-room houses. There was no electricity, very few taps for water and many of the schools were in a serious state of disrepair. But to move elsewhere was not an option. Education itself was not going well. The South African Democratic Teachers' Union was in a "dispute" with the Department of Education. Unemployment was reckoned at 60%.

Raising money to finance meeting these needs now became urgent. With the help of one of the Councillors, Hamish Scott, a civil engineer, an application was put to the Independent Development Trust (IDT) for the financing of 896 new serviced sites in Mlungisi and our first R6.5 million was sourced.

The whole episode of delivering this project was a first for the country. In order to create as much work as possible it was decided not to import big earth-moving equipment but to use local people, to train them as contractors and by so doing keep

the jobs, and where possible the money, within Stutterheim. The 896 sites were serviced, were quickly allocated and people then built their own houses – some of wattle and daub, some of brick, and some of iron; but build they did and the town did not end up with one of those numerous “toilet towns” that were springing up around the country. The people were convinced about the whole process because they had been part of the discussions and the planning, and talk had been followed closely by delivery of basic needs.

The IDT later paid a visit to find out how it had happened that people took the initiative and built themselves.

In the IDT Annual Report, the Executive Chairman, Judge Jan Steyn, after his visit to Stutterheim, said: “The injection of the capital subsidy of R7500 per site for the poor, giving access to land in full and defensible title, has had a remarkable catalytic impact. Because of the leadership's commitment to co-operation and shared decision-making and sharing resources (including competent and visionary local government) the process of consolidation on the sites has proceeded with both speed and purpose. ...there is a hustle and bustle about the place that augurs well for the future of the whole integrated community.”

For the management and design of this Site and Service Project, Hamish Scott of the Border Office of Ove Arup Inc, in 1993 won the Southern African Association of Consulting Engineers' *Design Award*.

In the following years all infrastructure projects undertaken used the same principle – involve local people in the planning, use local people, train local people, buy locally and as far as possible spend money locally.

Other deliverables - The building of the 24-classroom Kubusie School, the Zamukhanyo Farm School, Mlungisi Primary School, the Woolwash School and Isidenge School;

clinics, pre-schools, electricity, water, and a start was made on the housing backlog. In addition the Business Advice Centre was established and training in Business Skills was given. Training in technical skills such as carpentry, bricklaying, plumbing, tiling, electrical work, shoemaking, sewing, weaving, shuttering, building of wooden houses was delivered. A number of education programmes were introduced; the Mgwali Cultural Museum, the Periodic Markets, the Eyethu Farm project, the Vukani Youth Enterprise Centre were all things that happened in the years that followed. 143 towns and communities contacted Stutterheim and many came to attend the three-day community training courses.

Chapter 13

SDF, SBAC and SET

"The Town That Saved Itself" (Sunday Times Business Times)



The SDF Stutterheim Development Foundation - The first funding grant for the servicing of sites in Mlungisi Township was handled by the Municipality. However, for further development a business approach was needed because the cumbersome Local Government procedure with laws and ordinances made delivery slow and inefficient. It was therefore decided, in 1992, to register a Section 21 Company, the *Stutterheim Development Foundation*, which would in future be able to disburse the funds in a less complicated manner. And because delivery was seen to be happening, the community supported the process.

This was the year that the ANC Women's League established the Malibongwe Women's Development Centre in Stutterheim. Malibongwe was the venue for training of all kinds for women from different parts of the country. It had been a retirement home for Dominican nuns and the ANC Women's League had purchased the property. It could house up to 70 people. While the women were getting their Trust established they asked if their financial transactions could be run through the Stutterheim Development Foundation's account. Our Board of Directors agreed to this. It did, however, slightly complicate our bookkeeping system!! The present National Minister for Land Affairs, was in charge of proceedings.

The SBAC – The Stutterheim Business Advice Centre – All the development programmes came as a result of discussions and consultation in the Forum. Job Creation being

high on the list of priorities, it was decided to open the Stutterheim Business Advice Centre – dear to Nico's heart, as economic growth and the essentiality of small business development was and still remains his passion and conviction. The Centre opened for business in August 1992 with Nicky Callaghan as Director. Once again we had the support of Ian Hetherington who was our guest speaker at the opening ceremony in August:

Ian Hetherington:

The week before last, I watched on television the official opening of the Olympic Games in Barcelona. I saw that thrilling moment when the stadium lights went out and a single Spanish archer loosed a blazing arrow of hope into the darkness of the night sky. The Olympic torch shone forth; the stadium filled with thousands of points of light; and there was joy.

Against the darkness of South Africa, the Stutterheim Forum has let loose its own blazing arrow of hope. You came from the past and reached for the future. It was not easy. It took the courage, determination and faith of many people, ordinary people from all walks of life. Despite all the difficulties which still confront us, you are showing South Africa that there is a way forward, that there is hope, that there can be joy. So the first thing I want to do this morning is to say a simple 'thank you' to all the good citizens of the whole Sutterheim district for showing us the way.

The rural areas are extremely important to a future South Africa and they have immense potential. They must be allowed to create their own futures just as you are struggling to do in Stutterheim. ...You decided that a Business Advice Centre was needed to help your entrepreneurs to develop their talent, to provide them with information, advice and personal counselling, to

assist them to achieve their own individual business aspirations. Already, in just three months, this Business Information Centre has assisted dozens of your entrepreneurs. I wish there were 100 Business Advice Centres scattered throughout the country.

Perhaps there will be, as the country begins to notice the blazing arrows of hope which you keep shooting up from Stutterheim, against the dark background of the times we are living through. It is now my privilege and my very great pleasure to declare officially open the Stutterheim Business Information Centre. And to all who enter through its doors, may I wish you every personal success in your own businesses.

The lights are coming on again in Stutterheim.

In the years that followed tremendous effort was put into the development of entrepreneurship not only in Stutterheim but in the surrounding areas. The office offered a variety of services and included some excellent business skills training courses. It was one of the first Government supported LBSC's (Local Business Service Centres) to be accredited by the Department of Trade and Industry under their NTSIKA Programme and has just recently been granted status as a Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA for short!).

In December 2000, Nico received the NTSIKA Enterprise Promotion Agency Local Business Service Centre Leadership Award. The citation reads as follows:

The Local Business Service Centre Leadership Award seeks to recognise and honour individuals who have made a sterling contribution to the development of the small enterprise sector in the country through their selfless and inspiring leadership of programmes that empower SMME's. The inaugural award is bestowed on Mr Nico Ferreira

of the Stutterheim Business Advice Centre for his immense contribution to the SMME sector in South Africa. Mr Ferreira has dedicated more than 20 years of his life implementing and managing numerous SMME support programmes. Over the years he has sat on a number of bodies in an advisory capacity. Mr Ferreira has also been instrumental in numerous initiatives aimed at building the capacity of service providers in the region.

The candle in the artifact is inspired by the following quotation by Buddha: "Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of a candle will not be shortened. Knowledge is never decreased by being shared." December 8, 2000, East London

SET - Stutterheim Education Trust - Education was also high on the list of key issues and needs. Originally it was one of the Working Committees of the Forum and Max July was the first Chairperson of the Education Committee. He was a key person in all the discussions and negotiations and was working at PEP Stores when the Forum came into being. In his late 30's Max was a very special person with a rare understanding of what made his community tick. He brought a down-to-earth approach and common sense and much of the education infrastructure that we were able to achieve was due to his wisdom. As the SDF grew, so did Max grow in wisdom, initiative, responsibility. He was the Independent Development Trust's Consolidation Co-ordinator for the infrastructural programmes, and was responsible in later years for our whole training programme for other towns.

In 1997 the Stutterheim Education Trust was registered as a separate trust. Education played a major part in the development programmes in the nineties, and continues today. More on this later.

All these happenings, and the growing unity in the town were reported on a regular basis in the media.

Daily Dispatch July 1991; *Stutterheim: Shaping a Model for all of South Africa's Communities - A Commitment Built on Trust - "Leaders get Together to Talk over Town's Troubles; The Mill that Makes Work at Wartburg;*

Daily Dispatch July 19, 1991, *Stutt Model to be used as Case Study; A new SA is Built on Inner Freedom* (interview with Chris Magwangqana);

Small Talk: August 1992 South African Association for Early Childhood Education newsletter" *Stutterheim Project Why home-based Educare?;*

The Sunday Times, Business Times, August 29, 1993, *The Town That Saved Itself.*

- and many more.

In 1992 Gert Claassen then Chief Executive, Operations, of the SABC sent a TV crew to Stutterheim to document the events. This was broadcast on January 15, 1992 on *Agenda*, and in 1993 was updated and made into a video which has been widely used around the country. It would be of great value in the years to come when other towns came knocking at our door asking for help in starting their own *forums* and development programmes. Immediately after the broadcast our first phone call was from Pietermaritzburg – someone asking if there were houses for sale in Stutterheim!

Chapter 14

The Many Facets of Development

Diarising Development



With Professor Dewar's help we had been pointed in the direction in which we were to go. But much depended on what specific needs arose, what funding we were able to access, whether we had the right "driver" for a project, what the political atmosphere was and what capacity we had to make things happen. The Forum meetings continued on a monthly basis and gradually the town began to mesh and a new atmosphere pervaded the streets.

Doug Beal, our nephew, joined us from America for two years. He was totally absorbed into what was going on and made a great contribution. We teasingly called him "Duck" as that was the way his name came out in Xhosa phonics. He produced a monthly newsletter, *The Development Diary*, which was circulated widely and reading through these I am still amazed at the things we initiated, were able to achieve, the lessons we learned, the people who visited us, and the organisations that wanted to be associated with us. Speaking recently to our present Eastern Cape Premier, Nosimo Balindlela about this she said; "We believed that we could do anything" – which was the way it was.

The aim of *The Development Diary* was to publicise real development, not just in Stutterheim but in other areas as well. It has jogged our memories of the years between 1992 and 2000 and we quote from and refer to *The Diary* in cataloguing the many things we tried – some worked, some failed and all were part of the road we were building.

Diary February 1993 - Communities Light up with power - Speaking at Eskom's "Switch on" of electricity in Mlungisi, Stutterheim, Ray Willows Senior Electrification Advisor for the Eastern Cape said: "Electricity can provide a powerful stimulus and boost for development..... Eskom has restructured our whole system to bring power to those who don't have it.". Mlungisi was their first "switch on" in the Eastern Cape and by the end of 1993, 1720 Mlungisi houses would have electricity.

Diary April 1993 - Small Town Development through Entrepreneurship: a Conference. sponsored by the Development Bank of Southern Africa. Papers titles and highlights were:

Reconstructing the South African Countryside: the case of small towns - Professor Dave Dewar

The Needs and Support of the Entrepreneur - Peter Morrison, Director of Richards Bay Minerals Business Advice Centre

The Role of the Public and Private Sectors in Development - Prof Louise Tager

Community Construction Methods - Hamish Scott, Director, Ove Arup Inc. , East London

Community Involvement in Education - Nosimo Balindlela, Loël Ferreira and Lois Kleyn

Participative Reconstruction of Education in a Rural Environment - Prof Willie Rautenbach, Executive Director, Career Education Foundation of South Africa
"Learners need to learn and understand what they are taught"

Community Interaction in Planning for Development - Pumla Kubukeli of the Development Bank of Southern Africa. Pumla emphasized the essentiality of "the human side of development":

"This is about giving origin to a healthy development

process capable of creating the foundation for a social order within which economic growth, solidarity and growth of all men and women as whole persons can be reconciled.

This, in a nutshell, is what we have learned in Stutterheim. It is a process that can not be transferred as – is to other areas. Communities differ and other communities may take what suits them from Stutterheim and initiate their own development processes as well as share their own experiences for the sake of realistic development."

We owe a great deal to Pumla who had regularly visited Stutterheim in the early days helping with identifying needs, planning workshops, etc.

Diary June 1993 NECC Finishing School gives Stutt students second chance to matriculate - The National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC), Stutterheim Branch, proposed the formation of a finishing school. NECC members approached the Department of Education who agreed to pay salaries and supply materials and asked the Stutterheim Education Committee to help find venues – what a nightmare! Monica Scott (Hamish's wife) was one of the first teachers in this school. I can see her to this day frantically moving desks from one venue to the other as we tried to accommodate the huge influx of learners. Together we visited churches, military barracks, any possible empty building to find space. Today the school is a fully functioning High School in Stutterheim situated in what used to be the military barracks and Monica is Deputy Principal.

Diary, August 1993 - Off the drawing boards – Community planning attracts new school for Kubusie children. And so we found the money from the Independent Development Trust (IDT) to build a 24-classroom school in Kubusi. Later I tried to sell the school to the Department of Education – but there

were no takers – so, in theory, the Stutterheim Development Foundation still owns the Sesethu Comprehensive School and we are still happy to sell it!

Diary, February 1994 - (This was a busy agricultural month, it seems).

Agricultural Credit Board lends to black farmers

Farmers learn to grow vegetables for market

BOSKOP growth through training (vegetable growing)

Stutterheim is surrounded by small villages with good agricultural land. In August 1993, the Foundation initiated an agricultural support programme with the objective of helping the farmers in these villages to move from subsistence to commercial farming, to give training in market gardening, in pig and poultry farming and to help find access to credit.

The Agricultural Credit Board was not at this time in the business of loaning money to black farmers. Nico helped the farmers to form farmers' associations and to become affiliated to the Progressive Farmers Union of South Africa (PROFUSA), later affiliated to the National African Farmers Union. Because of this they were able to apply to the Agricultural Credit Bank and 27 of these applications were approved. That year the maize stood high in the fields.

Diary April 1994 - *Alice mothers come to Stutterheim for hands-on experience in child development* Four women from Alice came to spend a week visiting the crèches in Mlungisi, Stutterheim. The Alice women had heard about the crèches from Nosimo Balindlela. Alice has no crèche for the small children. The mothers found two rooms and the parents of 46 children agreed to pay R2 per child per month. As they did not have money to attend Early Learning Centre courses, they decided to visit Stutterheim. They left with manuals showing how to make toys from cardboard, cans and paint, how to make chairs and tables out of boxes and how to run a crèche on a day-to-day basis, – “I am making notes,” said Nofinish

Xiyo, pointing to her notebook. "Time is very important". They called their visit to Stutterheim a "one-week crèche course."

Diary, June 1994 – *A Big Day for the Mgwali Villagers* – The official opening of the Mgwali Market, the second market in a series of six periodic markets in and around Stutterheim, took place.

Mgwali is a settlement comprising 6 different villages that had grown up around the Presbyterian Mission station founded by John Brownlee in 1820 some 25 kilometres from Stutterheim on the road to the Great Kei River. The Soga family were, at that time, living close to the mission station. The youngest son Tiyo was sent to Scotland to be trained as a minister. He married a Scottish girl, Janet Burnside, and on their return 7 years later in 1856, they built a church on land given by Chief Sandile. Mgwali was a well-known education centre in the late 19th century and the ruins of the Girls' School founded by the Sogas are still there. Three Scottish teachers had come out to run this education institution and their rondavels stand on the horizon as memorials to intrepid ladies. The institution was known for the quality of education that the girls received.

Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, then Chief Executive of the Independent Development Trust and Chairman of the Development Bank of Southern Africa, was our guest of honour. On his arrival in Stutterheim he asked Nico to take him to the old school as his mother had been educated there.

In his address, Professor Nkhulu said: "Stutterheim started with a reconstruction and development programme three years ago and other towns will come here to learn by your example.

We need a vision to mobilise people and we need to have clear goals

We must have a strategy to achieve these goals
We must have the right structures to implement the goals which must be tied to a time frame
There must be access to economic resources, services and education and training
Above all there needs to be a value system and principles.

"We in the IDT come to see what has happened in rural areas such as Mgwali. But we also come to learn from you. Local initiative drives the process and organisations such as the IDT and the DBSA must assist."

Diary September 1994 – *A sense of ownership of projects* (Opening of the Kubusi School) – "Hundreds of people attended the opening of the Kubusi School where the Speaker of the Eastern Cape Legislature, Mr Gugile Nkwinti, was the guest of honour. Unveiling the commemoration stone, he said, "We are here because of the way in which the school has been built. Many schools have been built but few are as important as this one. This is a community school in the true sense of the word and we feel extremely honoured to be here and this will remain part of me for life."

He was presented with a pair of handmade Stutterheim shoes.

Diary, January 1995 – *Taking Technology to the People*. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), as part of their 50th anniversary celebration held its first exhibition to introduce the role of science and technology in community development in Stutterheim. The main question motivating their decision was: "What can we do to make people economically active in the rural areas?"

The CSIR is the largest technology based organisation on the African continent. At that time it comprised twelve business units addressing areas such as water, forestry, food, transport,

building and information technology.

Bhavini Kalan of the CSIR worked with Max July on this event. The exhibition offered ideas around small business and job creation as well as ideal methods of empowering entrepreneurs. Because of the areas of interest in Stutterheim, workshops were held on textiles, forestry, food technology, materials science, water and developmental planning.

Diary February 1995 – Pedalling towards a brighter future
– These headlines appeared on the pages of the CSIR newsletter after Richard and Mandisa Ntame from Mgwali were trained by Textek (a branch of the CSIR) in Port Elizabeth in the use of the pedal-powered weaving loom.

This was a pilot project whereby the CSIR decided to put in Mgwali for three months to see if it was financially viable. Subsequently a more sophisticated loom run on electricity was developed and Richard and Mandisa's business thrived for many years.

Diary May 1995 – Opera in a rural village and Cultural programme taking off -The markets in Stutterheim were part of the National Market Society – dream of Dr Norman Reynolds – and the concept included the development of art and music. *The Diary* wrote: "With the help of Nicholas Ellenborgsen and director/composer Michael Williams, the hills of the Eastern Cape were alive with the sounds of opera recently performed with gusto by black and white choristers of the Stutterheim High School. Mgwali market place was the unlikely venue for an opera which was devised and choreographed by the students in just under three days under the guidance of Cape Town-based director/composer Michael Williams." Mgwali and Stutterheim also thrilled to Nicholas' production of "Bird".

Our two cultural officers, Pid McLarty and Ciaan McLelland,

with their long hair, wrap-arounds and sandals brought colour and pizzaz to our offices and their wonderful talent for drama to the wider community. "Rural markets provide a platform for cultural performances that unite people and tell them about their own history," said Pid. Other events arranged by the cultural office were workshops, festivals and competitions, functions in traditional dance, modern dance, oral tradition, visual arts, garment design, traditional cooking, instrumental music, drum majorettes, a beauty contest, a Sarafino competition and a Christmas festival. Their small son Joshua aged 2 was part of the package and one day I found him sitting on a parked tractor watching the passing parade. I wondered what went through his little mind. We missed them all when their contract came to an end.

On one occasion a big cultural day was arranged in Mgwali. The market place was bustling with villagers wearing traditional costumes, the sangomas were present, craft and other goods being sold. We waited patiently for the guest speaker. Fortunately, Smuts Ngonyama was driving by and the long black government car turned in to find out what was on the go. As a replacement guest speaker, he did excellently! Mgwali Village during those years developed into a unique tourist destination. A small museum was established, small industries grew up around the market, visitors came to enjoy the food, to visit the Sangoma, to hear the story-teller and even to spend a night amongst the villagers. The road was the great inhibitor and some bus drivers refused to take their luxury buses on the tortuous roads. On these occasions the local taxis were called in for help. Bishop Russell and his wife, on retiring from Grahamstown, phoned to ask if we could arrange for the two of them to spend a night in the village, which we did. He wrote appreciative letters to us and very firm letters to the Departments of Tourism and of Works in the Eastern Cape Government on the state of the road. 10 years down the line, in 2005, Mgwali Village was featured in *GOOD travel* as one of the places to go to when visiting Stutterheim, *The Village Less Travelled*. (I fear that the road to Mgwali

makes it still rather “less travelled”!)

Diary, November 1995 – *From Stutterheim to Ghana and back – Tools for Self-Reliance* – Tom Dyantyi, one of the Directors of the Stutterheim Development Foundation, represented the SDF at the African Tool-Making Conference, Exhibition and Competition in Accra, Ghana.

From the early days Tom was part of the Stutterheim negotiations and workshops. He is a diesel mechanic and an exceptional community person. His love for and knowledge of cars and vehicles knows no bounds. One day he chastised me for not cleaning my car and when I replied that it was going in for a service and would be cleaned, he said: “Loël, clean your car before you have it serviced. The mechanic who works on it will know that you care and he will care!” He later on resigned his job and became fully involved with the SDF and the Business Advice Centre. NTSIKA selected him to be part of a month-long small business training course in Brazil.

The Ghana event was rather unexpected and quite a learning curve for Tom. When the invitation came the only person we felt would justify being sent as a delegate was Tom. Extremely conservative in his eating habits, we arranged a dinner in our home to prepare him for what we knew would surely be a “cultural shock” as far as food was concerned. I made red hot palm oil stew, ground nut chicken and yam fufu. We invited family and friends around and watched admiringly as Tom bravely tried to do justice to this West African feast. He came back from Ghana considerably thinner than when he had left.

What more could be happening?

The Afrika Kafe: As we drove through Mlungisi in those days, from a distance we could see a double storey building rising. This was a novelty and we went to see what Anna Marie Mayekiso was up to. I just love Anna Marie. She is a cheerful lady, a councillor and a talented seamstress and crafts woman.

So what is this double storey building about?. "Well," said Anna Marie. "I was going to make a garage (the garage door was in place) but now I am going to make a B & B and a restaurant." The building rose and on a certain day we were taken upstairs to see the result. The bed was beautifully made with a shiny blue satin cover, and there was an en suite shower/bathroom. Quaintly the door to the shower opened over the stairwell. With great creativity the builder had corrected the design by making a trapdoor that, once you were upstairs (no banisters), could be lowered down to cover the stairwell and you could then enter the shower. It seemed extraordinarily hazardous. Supposing one got up in the night and had forgotten to lower the trap door! Serious and prolonged discussions with the builder took place, and the door was moved to open onto the landing. A banister was also added. Voila!

The Afrika Kafe became a place for reconciliation, for getting to know one another and on an occasion where we took 40+ business people from Johannesburg who had come down by luxury bus to experience Stutterheim, for their first ever meal in an African home. Anna Marie, of course, was dressed in style, had cooked with panache with everything served in black pots and gave a lively description of the meaning of the food and of her lovely beadwork. Children came in and danced and a young man with a beautiful voice rendered a solo. A time to remember, indeed!

Vukani (Rise Up) Youth Enterprise Centre – The Forum meetings had evolved into monthly community meetings open to everyone. During one of these meetings a group of young people asked for an appointment with Nico.

These young people came wanting jobs. Of course we had no jobs for them. I asked them what they would like to do which we could support and they went away to give it some thought. A week or so later they returned with the idea of starting a Youth Enterprise Centre. We began to put flesh to this idea

and amazingly, that same week Anna Marie of the Afrika Kafe came into the SDF office. As a councillor she served on the National Municipal Pensions Fund and once a month would go down to Cape Town. Here she was always passionately selling her town. Now she came with the news that a funder was looking at the possibility of funding a project in Stutterheim. What did we suggest? We were ready and waiting! So was born the 'Vukani Youth Enterprise Centre.'

Together with the group we developed a business plan working out details such as how much to charge for the use of the library, the video machine, sandwiches, training, etc. Also it was decided that they would make the building blocks and build themselves. The proposal went off and the funder agreed. The Municipality donated a piece of land and the Agricultural Research Station sent in their bulldozer to level the ground. A local builder with a B.Tech degree in Building Science started basic building training and before long the first cement blocks were being made. So the Centre evolved. It was opened with a great flourish with the donor sending a representative from Cape Town. It has gone through many changes and is now being used for a variety of programmes: The Micro-MBA Business Training Programme; Food Gardens Training; HIV/Aids Awareness Workshops; a nursery for selling plants has been established; there is a machine for bottling cold drink which is delivered to the schools; and the group won the contract to supply the local housing scheme with cement blocks. They now have a 4-ton truck for delivering the bricks and have bought a second block-making machine. They were also finalists in the National Radio Youth Enterprise Competition.

Farming at Eyethu – In the early 90's Nico was still on the Executive of the National African Farmers' Union (NAFU). The Executive was invited to visit the Ubuntu Centre for Bio-Dynamic Agricultural Training, and Management outside Pretoria to discuss scholarships which had been secured for a three-year agricultural training course. Stutterheim was

offered twelve scholarships. Nico asked the communities surrounding Stutterheim – Wartburg, Hekel, Mgwali, Kubusi, Cenyu Lands - to select twelve young men.

Three years later, Nico attended the graduation and talked to these young men. What did they want to do? They wanted to farm and be role models for their people. Four returned to Stutterheim eager to farm. Others had found jobs elsewhere and some had dropped out. Assistance from the Dutch Embassy enabled them to rent a farm 11 K's from Stutterheim and they started growing vegetables. From the beginning there were problems. Firstly it can be argued that the right people were not selected and too much responsibility was left to the "communities" to do this job. Secondly, on their return there was tremendous pressure from their families for financial support. After all, they had had three years training and money was needed. Farming requires long hours and lots of sweat. The profit is slow in coming and then not vast. There did not seem to be a great deal of hard work and energy expended on the vegetable-growing and weeds flourished. Eventually they all left.

In the meantime Eyethu Farm had been purchased from funds from the 1913 Foundation in the Netherlands and a parade of managers took on the running of the farm. At one point it seemed as if things were going well. Eyethu started to develop into a training farm for small commercial farmers and appropriate training facilities were built. Farming modules presented on the farm included: Vegetable growing, no-tillage maize production, broilers, egg-layers, dairy, nursery, berries. The growing of proteas was being investigated. Plans were being made for roll-on grass sales and the sale of bullie (used for cricket pitches) of which there was plenty.

The size of the farm and the hands-on attitude of the manager/trainer was something with which small farmers could identify. A number of training courses were held for people from Bizana, Mount Ayliff, Komga and Stutterheim and

some of these trainees started their own farming enterprise.

Once again, somehow things did not work out. The training programmes from which some financing would have come, were not organised by the farmer/manager, and when new egg-layers had to be bought with money from the sale of the old layers, it had all been used for family matters. Far too close was a village and theft was a problem. Maybe we expected too much. A farmer is born not made and we hadn't found a "born" farmer!!

Chapter 15

Education Curriculum 2005

From vision to reality in Stutterheim



It was 1995. Nosimo Balindlela was now MEC for Education in the East Cape Government. As always supportive of the education programmes, she encouraged us to have a video made on what had happened around education over the years. Johan Barnard, a Stutterheimer now working with the SABC, and Tim Chevallier came down to make the film. Lois Kleyn, Executive Director of the Education Trust, put the script together and "Curriculum 2005", came into being. On the cover is written "The Stutterheim Education Trust brings you this video in the belief that it is possible for communities to make a difference. It is our contribution to the Masakhane (lets work together) Campaign. The video shows the variety of education projects that are being undertaken in a rural area and which are bringing quality education to isolated communities. This is what we have done. We share our vision with you and what you do can be shared with others." It was much used in training programmes.

Lois was the best thing that ever happened to the education programme. She is an English teacher with numerous other attributes such as a Diploma in Library Science, Diploma in Marriage Counselling, and more than any person I know she makes every minute of the day count. She also always says "yes" to any request. She has written a book about her 12 years of experience in rural education and *Not for Sissies* is a must for anyone who has a theory on education in our country. It is written with humour and with a depth of feeling for what teachers at the coalface have to deliver, often do, and sometimes don't!

So what did we do about education? The small Amakhayas have been mentioned and also the start of the Molteno Project in schools in 1992. By 2001, 61 schools in the Amahlathi District, the new cluster of towns that were formerly small independent municipalities but now formed one municipality with Stutterheim as the seat of Local Government, had adopted the "Breakthrough to Literacy/Bridge to English" Molteno programme. Further needs were identified such as computer training and teacher technology training. With help from a number of sources the Computer Centre with 36 computers was opened. Here teachers from outlying schools would come in for basic training after which they brought their classes in weekly for 6 weeks. It was heart-warming to see these little ones, sometimes three to a computer, clutching the mouse so that it wouldn't escape and their eyes glued to the screen. I sometimes wondered what they learned but I was assured that, "it is like a visit to Disneyland. It opens doors and windows and they will never, never forget it."

Cathy who runs the computer centre, was asked to summarise her experience of teaching computer skills to rural learners. I take the following section directly from Lois' book "*Not for Sissies*".

"There were many special moments for those who worked with rural learners at the centre.

- The day a 9 year old discovered that he could find his own way into a programme and jumped up and did a victory dance in the aisle.
- Watching kids totally new to computers take only a week or two to discover where the games are hidden.
- Teaching kids to use the calculator in Microsoft and having them clap and cheer when the computer

gets the correct answer.

- Sharing the children's excitement at seeing their work in print and giving them a copy to take home to show to parents and friends.
- Hearing about the excitement and wonder of illiterate parents and grandparents who are so proud of the children's achievements.
- Introducing a hesitant young student from the township to teaching rural learners to use computers and seeing him grow in confidence and enjoyment... then losing the same young man to a full-time job teaching computers at a local high school."

From time to time learners were asked to write letters of thanks to funders. Here, in his own words, is an example from a Grade 7 learner:

The story about A Computer *The Computer is very good because I love it. It help learn lots of things. Every day I think about a computer. Every Tuesday when I go to the Computer I've seen my heart begin to be happy. The computers is next to the Stutterheim High School. Last week we were writing our names on the keyboard. In that other week we were using the mouse to write our name. If you want to go to the Computer you must pay 5 rand only (towards transport costs). That money is not expensive you can afford it. You cannot put the mouse on the table. You must put the mouse on its mat. Don't drink or eat near the Computer. The Computer have a brain. In the computer there is a brain, keyboard, mouse and screen.*

*God Help me I want to have a computer
Sandile Dolosi, Grade 7*

A further 14 computers were bought and the Stutterheim College opened offering tertiary training in Pitman's Software Applications. Year after year the 14 students graduated extremely well.

The teaching of mathematics was in crisis. San Barnard, a former teacher at the Stutterheim High School, now retired, in conjunction with Rhodes University, started visiting schools at their invitation to try and find out where the problem areas in maths existed. Over the next 6 years she was to work tirelessly all over the Amahlati area helping teachers unravel mathematics and become more proficient. The roads on which she drove were horrendous and the distances vast. She is still at it, much loved by all her teachers, and feeling, in her words, that "for the first time I am really teaching."

The Technology Centre, one of the first of its kind, opened in 1996. Technology is one of the learning areas in the new curriculum. Few, if any, teachers in the rural areas have any idea what this involves and there was very little direction from Heads of Department. The word *Technology* seemed to dredge up images of computers or changing a tyre! In reality it was something else. We did a lot of research and with the help of Professor Willie Rautenbach of the Careers College, the Ort Step Institute in Johannesburg and Rhodes University, a 300 contact-hour course, the Advanced Certificate in Education, (Maths, Science and Technology), was designed. The theory behind this course was *Design, Make and Evaluate*. We operated as a satellite campus of Rhodes University in this programme.

Neil Theron, the woodwork teacher at the local High School undertook to be trained himself and then, for the next 6 years, every 18 months, he ran classes for between 20 and 25 teachers. The teachers paid half the training fees and the training was done over weekends. The final class graduated in May 2005. Two hundred and twenty-five teachers had, with great sacrifice, committed themselves over weekends to

complete this intensive training and had received their Advanced Certificate in Education (Maths, Science and Technology).

Murray and Roberts, at the conclusion of the annual Technology Olympiad of 2003, put out the following press release: September 21, 2003:

Stutterheim takes the honours at the 2003 Technology Olympiad

Stutterheim High School, a school situated 80 kilometers from East London took the honours on Saturday, when two of its students, Jeanna Keightley and David Scott, won the 2003 Technology Olympiad held at Sturrock Park, Wits University.

The Technology Olympiad tests the engineering skills of scholars, where they are required to build a working model that solves a problem posed in the challenge. This year's challenge was: "To design, build and test an adjustable device that can project a tennis ball as far and accurately as possible."

The competition serves as an important stepping-stone for budding engineers to test out their skills and aptitude in engineering. In responding to the challenge, learners had to follow the design or problem solving process. They needed to research their ideas, generate possible solutions, choose the best solution, develop the design, build the solution and test the solution.

Stutterheim High School with team members David Scott, 15, and Jeanna Keightley, 16, and assisted by the technology co-ordinator, Mr. Neil Theron came up tops. 'The project named *CAZZLE* was designed in such a way to use the hammer effect enabling balls to be shot through a pipe. The pipe was used to make it

possible to shoot more than one ball,' said David Scott one of the winning team members.

"The Technology Olympiad is an important project for Murray & Roberts as we want to support S A I Mech E's efforts to develop South Africa's engineering capability. We also want to take the joy of seeing technology in operation to schools that previously did not have those opportunities," said Mercia Maserumule, Corporate Social Investment Manager at Murray & Roberts, principal sponsors of the Technology Olympiad.

Stutterheim High School won an overseas trip to the United Kingdom, received Engineering bursaries from Murray & Roberts and educational LEGO classroom packs.

Buy-in by the community: Geoff Untiedt, the principal of the Stutterheim High School came to us with an idea. Geoff, himself a science teacher had never been able to take long leave because of the national shortage of science teachers. His proposal was that the Stutterheim High School take on 6 *apprentice teachers* from the rural schools. These needed to be matriculants with maths or science, needed to be prepared to enrol with the University of South Africa Distance Education degree programme, and be prepared at the end of their two-year apprenticeship to commit themselves to teaching at one of the rural schools.

This was quite a revolutionary idea and supported by us but we really didn't know how to find the money for it. Learnerships at this stage were only being looked at. But the D G Murray Trust believed that it was something worth undertaking and 6 students enrolled. Then Nkosinathi found us and begged to be allowed to be part of the programme. He turned out to be an absolute star. His mother was a domestic worker and he had never known his father. He had one shirt which he would wash every night. A few days into the school term he came to us saying that he needed some stationery and

that he had no money for this. We had arranged with the funders that each student would get a small stipend each month. We gave Nkosinathi his stipend in advance and he started to cry. Never in his life, or in his mother's, had he seen so much money – R800.

All the apprentices registered for distance education, and also for the Technology course. In their first year they wrote, along with the classes they were working in, all tests and examinations. They worked under trained teachers and during the second year were marking papers and giving lessons. At the end of the second year they themselves wrote Matric maths/science again, this time on the Higher Grade, all passing well. Now with a two-year apprenticeship under the belt they started their teaching careers.

Nkosinathi was given a science teaching post at Sinethemba High School where he was extremely competent, simultaneously studying through UNISA. Learnerships were finally in place and money to pay these interns was given to the schools but never got passed on to the student teachers! At this point Nkosinathi felt he would like to complete his degree at the University of Fort Hare. He negotiated with the school that he would come home every weekend to teach the Matric Science Class, which he did. He, along with 40 others from Fort Hare, applied for the 20 scholarships offered countrywide from the American/British Tobacco Company. Nkosinathi was one of the 20 successful candidates and now had a scholarship which would take him through to the end of his degree. What an amazing human being!

In closing this chapter I quote from Joseph K Hart, *Vital Speeches, 1970*:

No child can escape his community. He may not like his parents, or the neighbours or the ways of the world. He may groan under the processes of living and wish he were dead. But he goes on living, and he

goes on living in the community. The life of the community flows about him, foul or pure; he swims in it, drinks it, goes to sleep in it and wakes to the next day to find it still about him. He belongs to it: it nourishes him, or starves him, or poisons him: it gives him the substance of his life. And in the long run it takes its toll of him, and all he is.

The democratic problem in education is not primarily a problem of training children: it is a problem of making a community within which children cannot help growing up to be democratic, intelligent, disciplined to freedom, reverent of the goods of life, and eager to share in the tasks of the age. A school cannot produce this result; nothing but a community can do so.

Which is why we salute Nkosinathi and others like him and why we believe so whole-heartedly in the development of the whole community.

As a postscript: I must mention Zamukhanyo Farm School. We lived on the edge of the forest in an area of small-holdings. The children on the farms had to walk the 9 k's to school every morning and then had to walk back. Hard work when it is raining, or icy cold and you are only 6 years old. In the late 80's I did some research and found that there would be about 30 Grade 1– 4 children in the area who would benefit from a small farm school. We approached the Department of Education and were told that this certainly couldn't happen before the following year.

Two days later Mable turned up on my doorstep. She was the new principal, she said, for the Kologha School. The school where she had been teaching had been closed as it was about to be submerged under the newly completed Wriggleswade Dam. Talk about action stations! This was Friday afternoon. We found a derelict barn nearby and the landowner said we

could use it; found an abandoned hut which Mable said she could use for herself; the nearby hotel owner personally dug a toilet with 5 little seats over it; we found a few planks for desks; I went off with Mable and her small son into the sunset to collect her furniture. The gate to the farm was locked and Mable sent Sandiswe, her son, running off to collect the key. We waited in the gathering gloom for about half an hour before he returned. And then the door of the hut was so narrow that we had to break the wall to get the furniture out. The school opened on the Monday with 125 children. I have no idea where they came from.

Doris joined the school as there was no way one teacher alone could cope. In the following years the school became a beacon of hope for education in rural South Africa. Building a new school with 4 classrooms and three flats for the teachers was one of the early projects undertaken by the Stutterheim Development Foundation. Doris, Mabel and Peliswa learned to use computers, introduced most successfully the Molteno project, and an old cement reservoir was converted into a *Technology Centre*. The ladies coached rugby, cricket, netball and athletics. Every visitor to the Stutterheim Development Foundation paid a visit to the school to see technology in action and to be inspired by Zamukhanyo – the place where teachers taught, and learners learned.

Chapter 16

Where Did Our Support Come From?

Finding the Funding



In the early 90's there were not that many Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) up and running. Also it suddenly became fashionable and the "in" thing for corporate companies, trusts and foreign donors to put money into the promising new South Africa. They were looking for suitable projects and we found it possible to raise money from a wide variety of organisations for our very wide variety of projects. Subsequently it became more difficult as much of the donor funding began to go through government structures.

For 15 years I worked at raising money to finance the many programmes that we had identified in Stutterheim. I believe you can now do a degree in fund-raising through UNISA but in the early 90's it was rather an unknown field and I had to learn on the job, and quickly. Our very first funder was Desmond Fitzpatrick Niven. He had opened our Forest Festival and the next morning I took him up to see the Zamukanyo Farm School just up the road from us. If you need some money, he said, just send me a short motivation – and the Robert Niven Trust gave us R10 000 that year and almost every year for the next 15 years put money into whatever we were doing. The Independent Development Trust was our first major funder and allocated R6.5 million for serviced stands as well as giving R2.5 million for the building of a new school. Kagiso gave substantially for training programmes and the EC Micro Projects gave money for bricks and mortar towards, crèches, clinics and schools. The first pre-schools were funded by Liberty Life, and the Open Society put money into the Business Advice Centre, into the College of Technology and the

Computer Training Centre, as did the D G Murray Trust. At different times Nestle, Nedbank, First Rand, Anglo American and Coronation gave donations. A wonderful organisation called the 1913 Foundation in the Netherlands funded a number of our education projects for 7 years and we always enjoyed the visits of Hans Kemeling our Dutch project manager over the 7 years. The International Republican Institute supported the programme for training other towns for a period of 2 years.

I was very determined to access money from Government. European Community Micro Projects had given money for the bricks and mortar to build the Woolwash School. They believed the community should themselves put in the effort to provide the labour, and would only provide *bricks and mortar*. In theory this was great but the community in this instance consisted of children and women and very few of them were earning anything. I could not see how this community was going to be able to build without any remuneration. This was in 1993 so I phoned the Department of Education and Training in Port Elizabeth and asked that if I found the money for the bricks and mortar to build an 8-classroom school, would they buy it from the Stutterheim Development Foundation. We would use their contribution to pay for the labour. Amazingly it worked!

Some years later we got R100 000 from the Premier's Office in the East Cape. I was phoned at 4 pm on the last day of the financial year saying I must hurry down to pick up the cheque. What cheque? I had applied 6 months earlier, but this was the first I had heard from them. Hurry, I did. I spent an hour reading through the contract and signing and then left with the cheque in my hand. I passed through the first door, which closed behind me and then found that the outside door required a card, something I certainly did not have. There was now no way back to the offices I had just left and it was nearly 6 pm. Panic started to set in. Would I have to spend the night? Nobody knew where I was. Fortunately someone

came with the necessary card and we both exited the building.

We were also given a grant by the Department of Education of R100 000 for the Technology building. After months of waiting for the promised cheque I phoned and suggested I come down and collect it. This was welcomed and I subsequently spent an afternoon going from office to office to locate the cheque – also I am glad to say, successfully. I had a phone call from my benefactor in the Department the next day saying: Thank you, Mrs Ferreira for rescuing the cheque! I was happy to have been helpful.

I wish I could tell you about Isidenge School. Well, maybe I will. Isidenge School was about as derelict a school as you can imagine. At one point there were two teachers teaching two grades in one classroom at the same time. The classroom was dark and gloomy and the "rain drops kept falling on our heads".

The children who came to the school were from a scattered community of tenant farmers. When it rained they couldn't cross the streams. So a new village was built to consolidate all these outlying tenant settlers. Now the Isidenge School was even more inaccessible. Surely, I thought, with my good relationships with the funders, I can find enough money to build a school in the new area. The Department of Education seemed rather moribund. So I ventured forth and sent out enthusiastic letters. Finally, Ireland Aid came up trumps with R500 000 which would cover 6 classrooms. I might add that this was the biggest, thickest funding application I had ever sent in.

But progress was slow. It wasn't as easy as I had thought. It seemed that most funders "did not do bricks and mortar". As always we were building ahead of the money. A contact in America organised her Church to hold "an hour of prayer and thanksgiving in honour of Isidenge", and on this wing and a prayer, a classroom was constructed. My long-suffering

American sister Audrey, and her husband Dave, held a benefit dinner for the school. We were a classroom richer, and their friends Whitney and Betty MacMillan gave generously towards the school and other programmes. And became our friends.

Then Nick, our son who was doing the civil engineering for the Isidenge Township, came to me and announced that there was R45 000 available from an organisation called Ifeish. Excitement and another half classroom on the way. Ifeish then suddenly disappeared off the radar screen. Now I really am sleepless! ("Haven't you learnt, Mom, not to spend money you don't yet have," said Nick). But I do have a terrier nature and 10 months later I had found Ifeish and the money.

The 12 classroom school was built. Shortly after there was a tornado/hurricane (the only one in centuries in that area) and much of the roof was lifted. Here I give credit to the Department. They at least paid for the damage.

One fine morning the Principal phoned me to say that the people who had paid for the building of the school were coming for a visit and that the Department of Education had instructed him to have a gala celebration. "What people?" I asked. Well he didn't really know so between us we did some research. We discovered that the group coming were connected with Ifeish. Apparently Ifeish was an organisation which distributed money raised by an African American Sorority for school buildings. These ladies were now coming out to look at the schools they had built and Mr Vokwana was instructed to do the honours.

I must admit I was rather annoyed. There had been absolutely no input from the Department, no acknowledgement, no thanks, and here they were asking the school to have this gala celebration for a group who had paid for half a classroom. I hasten to add that I **was** grateful for the half a classroom.

Churlishly I said to Mr V. "I'm not coming". "Please," he said.

"I want you to come and I want you to speak because how else will people know where the money came from." So I attended and as graciously and as diplomatically as I could I thanked them (I was grateful) and the hundreds of other organisations and people whose contributions had built the school.

We had a special lunch in the Ifeish half a classroom and the crowning glory of the meal was the baked sheep's head! The ladies looked a little pale and only made eye-contact with the sheep's head through the lens of their cameras. The Department representative had the grace to come over and thank me and promised to complete the floor for the quadrangle, the tiles for the classrooms, the fencing around the school and an administration block. "We do not like incomplete schools, Mrs Ferreira," he said. Regretfully I must inform the reader that the school is still waiting for this largesse.

Bribery or maybe it was extortion – Rather spasmodically I kept a diary and one entry said: "Wonder where Nico is? He is probably eating raw liver somewhere?" Now 15 years later I am wracking my brains about this. And then we remembered. Nico and some of the staff of the Development Bank of Southern Africa were attending a meeting/ceremony in Wartburg Village. The sheep had been slaughtered and the *special internal bits* of the sheep were presented to the honoured guests. The DBSA man turned a paler shade of green. Nico leaned over and said, "If I eat your portion, what will the Stutterheim Development Foundation get in exchange?" There are more ways than one of skinning a cat! This was a successful way, indeed.

The World of Barlowworld – which we will never forget:

Since 1980 Barlow Rand, later Barlowworld, has supported the work that Nico was doing both as the Small Business Advice Centre and then the many years working in the Eastern Cape. It is a tribute to their insight that they continued to pay Nico's

salary during the tumultuous "Stutterheim Forum" years even though small business development was not the main item on Nico's agenda. Charles Lipp of the Barlows Foundation to whom Nico reported, was a source of great support and encouragement through the most difficult of times although strictly speaking, he was not pursuing small business development. Stutterheim, and we personally, owe him a great deal.

In 1996 Barlows sponsored a *Rural Economic Development Conference* in Stutterheim. Kevin Kane, a consultant from the States who has spent most of his working life in Africa, helped us structure the conference. Professor Robert J Tosterud of the Freeman Initiative of Rural Enterprise, University of South Dakota, along with Professor Anne Vaughan of the University of Westville, Natal and Professor J M Erskine of the Institute of Natural Resources at the University of Natal, all gave input and the result was "The Stutterheim Communiqué" which highlighted the "daunting" challenge facing South Africa based on the findings of Data Research Africa that "South Africa needed almost three million new jobs just to generate sufficient earnings to attain a subsistence level of income". The Communiqué challenged key partners who would have to work together (summarised below)

Government: capacity-building and the creation of employment opportunities in the rural area

The Private Sector: development of untapped tourist potential and skills training

NGO's: multiply your contribution by sharing problems and successful methods with others

Financial Institutions: Invest - social and economic gains of a stable rural South Africa compensates for any short term risks

Educational Institutions: Rural citizens are deserving of quality education. Innovation, entrepreneurial training is needed

Farmers: Successful farmers are a resource. Encourage and support one another and share with fellow farmers

Rural residents: Enhance your employment skills through training, be persistent in your exploration for employment and new business opportunities, and become valued members of your community

Traditional leader: Select and support traditions that will benefit your communities and cast off those traditions that impede citizens from their participation in the New South African economy and society.

And to the people of South Africa: The economic division and separation of rural and urban South Africa represents the new *Apartheid* of South Africa. Only by making rural areas and small communities more viable places in which to live, work and raise a family, can the massive migration of rural people to the great and shining cities be slowed down.

This communiqué was sent out widely to leaders and the press throughout the country.

In 1996 Barlows, recognizing the importance of capturing the valuable lessons that Stutterheim had to share, commissioned Barbara Nussbaum to document the story.

In the foreword to the book, *Making a Difference Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Development in Stutterheim*", André Lamprecht, Executive Director, Barlows, wrote:

Barbara Nussbaum's study starts by describing the problems confronting the town and goes on to examine the layers comprising progress towards solutions. It tells the story of a process that has taken a small rural town from the brink of self-destruction to the start of an era of preparation for prosperity. It highlights the major challenge for the community to stay locked in

their process and to keep their progress on a sustainable basis. The result is a fine and sensitive study of the dynamics of reconciliation and development. It is addressed to all who seek the inspiration to face South Africa's development challenge: community leaders, government officials as well as business leaders.

On December 11, 1997, Barlows launched the book in Johannesburg and two days later in Stutterheim. Speaking of her involvement with the project, Barbara, at the Stutterheim launch, said "In retrieving and valuing their own humanity, the people of Stutterheim remind us about our own humanity, and hereby affirm our belief in the ability of people to have the courage and the vision to help themselves and each other."

May 1997, Barloworld co-sponsored the 'Local Economic Development Conference in Stutterheim. The theme was "How can I bring economic growth to my town and my region." The conference was attended by 168 people, including 26 mayors. Prof Bob Tosterud, University of South Dakota, USA and Mr Peter Kenyon from Western Australia, were the keynote speakers.

Chapter 17

The Globalisation of Development



While this tapestry of events was being woven in Stutterheim, other events and other organisations in other parts of the country and of the world, beckoned:

1996, India – Nico, Chris and Max, under the auspices of the Commonwealth Secretariat, went on a 2-week visit to India. This had been arranged by Barbara Nussbaum, author of the book *The Stutterheim Experience*. Charles Lipp of Barlows joined them as they wanted him to be part of the experience. Nico writes:

The first week was spent in Rajasthan at the Tilonia Social Work and Research Centre, a voluntary agency which serves the needs of 100 000 people spread over 500 square miles, living in 110 villages. Bunker Roy, the Founder and Executive Director has amazing insight into how to address rural development and we were shown programmes such as rural marketing, women's development, solar energy, education for high school drop-outs, the use and application of traditional knowledge and skills, alternative low cost community based strategies which reduce the dependency of the community on government. Bunker started what he called "The BareFoot University" where, among other things, women were trained to install and service water pumps. Bunker also has this belief that no development officer should receive more money than the people in the community the officer serves.

It was quite an experience for us all to walk outside and wash under a hand pump in cold water, to live in people's homes and to sit cross-legged on the floor eating with our hands.

From Rajasthan we went on to Ahmedabad to the Indian Institute of Management, the International Centre for Career Development and the Development Institute of India. Sitting at one of the tables nearby, Max noticed a familiar face it was George Addai from Ghana, the Director of the Pan African Institute whom we had met when he came to Stutterheim to run courses for women at the Malibongwe Women's Development Centre some 4 years earlier! Small world indeed!

*On the plane back to Mumbai, who should be sitting a few rows away but Mother Theresa. I asked the air hostess if Mother Theresa would sign her name for me. She returned saying Mother Theresa would like to know my name. Having furnished this, the signature came back, **God Bless you, Mother Theresa**, now pasted reverently into Malcolm Muggeridge's book, *Something Beautiful for God*. Very special indeed. As the plane came to a halt I found myself able to assist Mother Theresa down the steps No-one else jostling their way out of the plane, seemed much concerned with helping her"*

1997-1999 American Mid-West – Together with Simpiwe Somdyala, in 1997 and with Gerry Delany of the NBI in 1999, Nico took part in these two Small Town and Rural Development Study Tours to the American Midwest arranged by Peter Kenyon. The purpose was to investigate a range of projects demonstrating "best practice" in rural economic and small-town development. They visited towns in Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, and Oklahoma. Highlights were:

Our first day was a meeting arranged by Professor Ron Shaffer of the Centre for Community Economic Development, University of Wisconsin. This was an excellent introduction and overview of the role universities play in rural and small town development. We travelled some 2500 kilometres through what is generally identified as the "Breadbasket of

America". Agricultural crops include maize, soya beans, wheat, potatoes, etc. Livestock such as cattle, buffalo/bison and pork are also raised.

As in other countries small farms are no longer viable and many had to be sold; the farming community dwindled and larger farms became the order of the day. There are still small towns scattered throughout the Midwest, some with populations of about 200 people. In Nebraska alone there are 500 such towns. It was impressive to see what these communities themselves do to address economic difficulties.

From the wealth of discussion and deliberation many aspects of the visit can be applied to rural South Africa such as:

Co-operative factories – farmers producing a variety of products add value to their products. There are in Nebraska 380 food-processing plants. In North Dakota there is a pasta manufacturing plant and a potato processing plant; and there are factories for cheese and dairy products.

Town Development Corporations – for these initiatives capital is needed. Money is deposited into the Corporation from sources such as the Business Community, the community voting to add 1% to Rates and Taxes for development, etc

Mainstreet Development and Downtown Revitalization programmes – there is much support for upgrading town centres and for Business Retention and Expansion plans, and people are encouraged to participate in a Community Builders process

Tourism – is recognised as a growing source of income in rural areas

In the rural communities in the Mid-West of America, where the economy is to a large extent based on agriculture, a variety of programmes are taking place which make it possible

for people to stay in these rural areas. The study tour experienced a variety of such initiatives that included schools demonstrating distance education; teachers who combine farming with teaching; development organizations with a board consisting of half farmers and half townsfolk; a family-owned bank which drives the economic development of the town; an outdoor clothing shop, now the biggest in the world and employing 1300 people; and the Wall Drug Store which opened in 1931 in Wall, South Dakota. Wall was quoted as being as god-forsaken as a town could be. After five years of struggle, the owners of the drug store hit upon the idea of serving Free Iced Water to the passing trade. Now, three generations later the Wall Drug Store and Entertainment Centre is the biggest drug store complex in the world. On a bad day they have 10 000 customers and they still serve free iced water.

Another interesting experience was the Youth Bank in Denver where it is possible for young people to begin to understand how money works and how a town is organised. The bank only accepts young people under the age of 22. On the 1st floor the area is divided into small businesses, the Office of the Mayor, a Post Office and a Bank. To this facility come groups of young people/children. They have already thought out what business they will start and go through the process of finding out how to borrow money, how to set up a business and how the town works. Groups of school children come every day and the facility is booked up for the next two years.

The tour culminated in a conference on Small Town and Rural Development in Norfolk organized by the Nebraska Rural Institute. Discussions were held on tourism, the impact of youth on the community, how to get a community decision, secrets of community marketing success, building local communities, keeping the dollar local, creative ways of working within the agricultural system, competing globally, rural health, local initiative in development.

It was clearly demonstrated that the economies of otherwise dying small towns could be turned around by entrepreneurs with unusual aspirations or plans.

May 1999, The 5th Working for Common Wealth International Commonwealth Conference COMMACT – co-hosted by the Stutterheim Development Foundation and the National Business Initiative took place over 6 days in Stutterheim. This organization had been formed 10 years previously and brought together development practitioners from largely commonwealth countries. 128 delegates from 24 different countries filled every available bed in Stutterheim. Delegates came from Malasia, Sri Lanka, India, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, Australia, Barbadas, Moçambique, Uganda, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, England, Scotland and Ireland. Stutterheim, for the moment, was the centre of the world. The conference resulted in worthwhile linkages with a number of countries.

The last evening was a riotous party and I can't get this picture out of my mind: Chris and Nico, each sporting a Scottish Kilt, attempting the Highland Fling or some such dance with the Scottish delegates. Personally I rated the Otago Club Rugby scarf as a far more sensible gift!

2000 Leipzig, Germany - As a result of the COMMACT Conference held in Stutterheim the previous year, Nico and Max were invited through the European Network for Economic Self-Help and Local Development, to address the *Euregia 2000 Specialist Exhibition and Congress on Regional Development in Leipzig, Germany* in October 2000. The conference focused on regional development where people in small towns and regions are beginning to take charge of their own economic development. A new concept of village, urban and regional development is sweeping the world. Stutterheim featured as a shining example of grassroot development in South Africa. The conference was attended by over 2000 people.

June 2001 – Connecting Communities for Reconciliation and Justice – Conference in Washington DC.

The conference goals were to

Gather and highlight best practices which demonstrate effective institutional change

Encourage the building of unexpected community partnerships between otherwise disconnected or even opposing groups

Frame the national conversation on restoration for historic wrongs as a benefit to all Americans

Strengthen national and international collaboration with others in the field

Nico and Chris were asked to run the workshop on *Reconstruction and Reconciliation: A Case Study from South Africa*.

2001, -Visit to Europe - After an interval of 40 years we revisited the Moral Re-Armament Conference Centre in Switzerland and were asked to talk about the Stutterheim Experience. We met Amina Dada from Nigeria and I will never forget her saying: "All over Africa it is cheaper to buy a gun than a loaf of bread and that is what I want to change". And we met Madame Brassiola, Chairperson for Italy of Transparency International, referred to later.

2004, Down Under Peter Kenyon had visited us so many times in Stutterheim and we were delighted to have an invitation from him to visit Australia, meet some people, do some talking and learn about an unknown part of the world. In 2002 we were to be part of a study tour to Australia, but a head-on collision with a car whose driver thought South Africa was a right-hand drive country, dealt this arrangement a blow and it was only two years later that we could accept an invitation. By this time we had moved to the Western Cape and it was good to link up with Max July from our Stutterheim days and do this trip together. My sister, Beryl and her

husband Tim live in Sydney so could combine this with a long-awaited family visit. We spent three weeks in Australia in May 2004 and, thanks to Peter, having rather unusual experiences.

Perth/Freemantle The Kenyon family live just outside Perth in the little town of Kalamandou high in the hills. We had a full programme which started with the Notre Dame University Behavioural Sciences students. Their coordinator, Katie Thomas wrote: "What a wonderful day I had yesterday I was so inspired to hear your story and so encouraged by our time together. I have had three students contact me already this morning to tell me how excited they were about the presentation and the possibilities of working in community development.... Good changes are happening and your story, having come through such struggle and conflict helps us all."

That night in Perth we were guest speakers at a dinner arranged by Tony McRae, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Western Australia. This was in restaurant called "The Elephant Hut" (Indian as opposed to African) and we were served a wonderful 5 course Indian meal. At our table sat Mr. Wilson Wu, Chairman of the Western Australia Chinese Chamber of Commerce. The Chambers' mission is to link up Chinese in Australia who want to do business with China. There is a tremendous lot of contact between Australia and China in particular, but Asia in general.

Max and Nico also spoke at a breakfast that was part of the Australian "Innovations Festival". Here they met someone who knew John Rance of Rance Timbers, Stutterheim. He phoned John to find out whether this scheduled breakfast talk would be worth going to and was told by John that "these people saved Stutterheim".

At breakfast Nico and Max met Koodah Cornwall who works for the Government on Aboriginal Affairs. He and Tania Donovan, also working in his office, offered to take us through King's Park – a huge wilderness area in the middle of Perth – and in

particular to take us along the Aboriginal Walk that has just been completed. This was our first introduction to the world of the Aborigines.

Koodah and Tania had brought tanned Kangaroo skins, drumming sticks and at strategic moments, the three of us were draped in the skins. We were also taught to dance with Koodah beating the sticks and a group of Japanese tourists madly photographing the spectacle. Max was given the honour of carrying the lighted banksia pod, Olympic-style, back to the car. We learned much from them, in particular what Aborigines feel about the land - "We look after the land and the land looks after us".

Initially Tania assured me that her father was Jamaican, but later on it turned out that he was Aboriginal. This stems back to the times of the "Stolen Generation" when young children were taken forcibly from their families and put in institutions to "Europeanise" them. From early childhood parents would instruct their children to never, never admit to having an Aboriginal parent. The *Stolen Generation* is a major problem for every Aboriginal in their efforts to discover themselves, and an event of great shame to the white people. Tania was organising a Rabbit Proof Fence walk to symbolise the walk by three young Aboriginal girls who escaped after having been "stolen" and had walked the 1400 k's back home. I was invited to go on this walk but having seen the film, I felt it was beyond me.

Darwin - Early the next morning we flew the three hours North to Darwin. Darwin is tropical with an average temperature of 30 degrees through the year. This is the Northern Territories under the direct control of the Central Government and with an Aboriginal population of 30%. (Nationally the Aboriginal population is 2%).

Our first meeting was arranged by the Department of Family and Environmental affairs co-ordinated by Gail de la Cruz,

Director, Economic and Social Participation and Families, Indigenous Policy and North Australia Office. After the meeting she arranged for a special plane to take us the next morning to Wadeye, some 400 k's South West to see one of the bigger Aboriginal villages.

This was another unique experience. It is the largest concentrated indigenous settlement in the Northern Territories. During the rainy season the road to Wadeye is closed and access is by boat or plane. There are three ceremonial groups, encompassing at least 16 clan groups and seven language groups. The most common language is Murrin Patha, although this may be the second or third language of many residents. There is now an agreement between the Thamarrurr Council and the Government where matters such as education, health, economic development, youth and housing is addressed. Thamarrurr is the name of the local governing body. It comprises men and women from each of the 16 clan groups who hold traditional authority to make decisions about community affairs.

A recent survey shows that, among other things, the average lifespan in the region is 46; only half of the region's school age population is enrolled at school and only half attend classes regularly. A sign outside the school swimming pool says "no school, no pool". Drugs and alcohol are prevalent. There is a great shortage of houses, and of jobs.

The Central Government is putting a lot of money into solving the "problem". Leon Melpi, one of the leaders in Wadeye, in an article in *The Age* May 8, 2004, says: "Our identity, self-esteem and confidence that we can actually do something to help ourselves, has returned. Instead of white people telling us what they want, we are telling them what we want. We are starting to deal with our own problems." Leon and some of the other elders Felix, Robert, Geoffrey and Matthew, explained what they were trying to do. Wadeye was originally a mission station where Aboriginals gathered, largely because of

available food, and where, in the 30's the boys had been put into dormitories and educated. In the village, population 2000, there is a shortage of 280 houses (This did not seem a massive problem to us, but the type of houses that are allowed to be built in Australia is very costly).

Leon asked if he could take us to his "section". This was about 6 k's outside the village. Max got really excited as he was imagining a little rural village but what we found was a settlement of 6 extremely nice houses where Leon and his family now live. Some of them work in Wadeye. "Giving me this section gave me back my worth," said Leon. In holiday time he and his family hitch a ride on a truck and spend a month or two in the bush where he teaches his children/grandchildren, Aboriginal lore and how to survive on the land. He pointed out the site for a supermarket to service the 6 houses.

Back to the plane for a meeting in Darwin with ERA/Rio Tinto. We just made it in time. Rio Tinto and another mine are situated in the World Heritage Site of Kakadu. Here is the world's biggest uranium processing plant. The one mine is now closing and the second mine can only start with the consent of the Aboriginals who own the land and live in a village called Jabaroo. People attending the meeting were dealing with Community Relations, External Relations, Mining, Youth, and the General Manager, Minerals, in the Department of Business, Industry and Resources Development - a fairly complex negotiation.

Later that night at 12.30 we caught the red eye to Melbourne arriving at 5.30 am. We picked up our rental car, managed in the dark in a strange city to find Highway North and headed for Beechworth, three hours away where we had been invited to stay with Tom and Christine O'Toole.

Beechworth - is one of the many declared Historic Towns in the area. Previously a mining town, it had finally succumbed

to the lack of gold and more recently its only economy has been the Mental Asylum, the Old Age Home and the Prison. When the Asylum and the Old Age Home closed down, the village seemed to close down too. When Tom O'Toole bought his bakery, most of the shops were shuttered. We had heard much from Tom and Peter about the bakery and were looking forward to seeing it all in action. We can only say that it is better than imagined. Tom now runs the biggest cash bakery in the Southern Hemisphere and because of the bakery many new shops have opened up and Beechworth is alive.

We were there for the weekend of the Harvest Festival. You could scarcely get into the bakery. The tables were full, the products great, and the staff loads of fun. One of the bakers was a convict (Melbourne Mafia we were told) serving 40 years in jail for some major crime. Now nearing parole he would come down on a Monday and work in the bakery. When he comes out he hopes for a job there – and the staff are looking forward to his arrival.

In the town itself stalls were set up exhibiting wine, cheese, soap, olive oil, and craft. It was Autumn and the leaves were turning. Adjacent was the old historic courthouse where Ned Kelly took the stand. (Ned Kelly is an Australian folk hero). I was pleased that I had at least read the Booker Prize book *The True Story of the Kelly Gang*, but was firmly put in my place by the curator who told me that "you can't believe everything you read". (Believe me, you can believe what you are reading now).

Tom took us around his 18 acres and we saw kangaroos and a wallaby and a dead possum. Australian birds are dramatically beautiful. Each morning we breakfasted on the Best from the Bakery from the day before as Tom only sells goods baked the same day.

We bade farewell to the O'Tooles and started our drive to Canberra.

Shepparton – Here we met Adrian Appo who runs a programme called “Ladders to Success” among the Aboriginal youth. There are 6000 Aboriginals in Shepparton and the town has an historic legacy of welfare. Adrian's programme facilitates the transition of indigenous people into the workforce. The concept is about being able to assist everyone to move one step up the Ladder of Success.

Bendigo – From Shepparton we drove to Bendigo, and contacted Prof Dave Ensor, Director of Business Development, La Trobe University.

Bendigo, one of Victoria's leading regional cities, is where the second biggest gold mine in Australia (7th biggest in the world) is situated. Bendigo is named after a shepherd who became a famous bare-knuckled boxer, William Abednigo Thompson. The functioning of the Bendigo community is impressive. Civil society and public sector initiatives such as Regional Partnerships, Area Consultative Committees, Regional Business Plan for Action, a Credit Union, Remplan a regional economic modelling and planning system and the Bendigo Bank, are examples. The Bendigo business community has some 4000 enterprises and employs in excess of 30 000 people

Dave took us to lunch at a the historic Gold Mines Wine Bar, Café and Restaurant and ordered grilled Salmon from the Southern Seas. Then off to La Trobe University where we met with a diverse group of people – the Manager of the Department of Human Science, The Manager of the Department Community Housing and Social Development, Executive Manager, City of Greater Bendigo and various other Bendigo officials and, I really liked this one, the Managing Director, Uncommon Solutions

We had a chance to talk to the people from the Bendigo Bank. This started in 1885 as a building society financing humble miners' cottages in Bendigo. In 1995 it converted to a bank

and by 2003 it had 260 branches and was owned by more than 44000 primary small shareholders serving 880000 customers. It is a niche market bank serving primarily households and small to medium businesses. The Bank started Community Bank Branches, which engage and involve communities in securing access to branch banking services. Essentially a local publicly owned company invests in the right to operate a Bendigo Bank franchise.

We found this very interesting and stimulating.

Then on to Sydney – From Bendigo we drove North-East across the Murray River to Canberra where my sister and brother-in-law met us. We drove around Canberra, saw the “Aboriginal Embassy”, a shack established outside the new Parliament Buildings many years ago and still making a statement and then the lovely drive to Sydney from where Max would fly back to South Africa.

Beryl and Tim's world is very much that of education and we learned much from them. We were shown around beautiful Sydney University (46 000 students) and the University of New South Wales (42 000 students). We were impressed with the pride that Australians have in their country and the pursuit of excellence. We learned about the close contact with China, the many Chinese students that come to Australia; and we learned that Education is Australia's 4th largest export. Tim, Dean of the Faculty of Electronic Engineering, University of New South Wales, was busy opening a campus of the University of New South Wales in Singapore and Beryl, Pro Vice Chancellor, Science and Technology, Sydney University, was responsible for contact with Indian Universities.

We spent a wonderful weekend in the Blue Mountains and as we arrived at the cottage the beautiful birds swooped down to welcome us. Beryl and Tim brought food for the birds including some meat for the kukaburra (not a vegetarian). We had two days in the wine world of Hunter Valley. A treat

indeed to taste Australia's amazing wines. It took a while to get used to vineyards surrounded by gum trees, of which there are over 800 species, rather than the mountains of the Western Cape.

We walked the streets and sailed the waterways of that beautiful city. We experienced the incredible variety of food and each night we seemed to feast off the best of another country. Beryl and Tim took us to the fish market, which has to be seen to be believed, and we dined that night on seafood including a lobster-like crustacean named, appealingly, the Balmain Bug. And we had an encounter with Jeremy the "Digeredoo Boy", as he calls himself.

Jeremy grew up in Sydney with his mother and ended up in a reformatory. The police located Jeremy's grandfather who was a full-blooded Aborigine, and brought him down to Sydney to meet Jeremy who did not even know he had Aboriginal blood. His grandfather took him back "home" to Queensland and for the next 8 years Jeremy lived with his grandparents, learned Aboriginal lore, language and how to play the digeredoo. This he now does at the Outback Centre in Sydney. I asked what it had been like for him when he discovered at the age of 15 that he was not quite what he had thought he was. He said: "When I arrived at my grandfather's place, I felt I had come home."

And so we too left for home having experienced a side of Australia that maybe not everyone is privileged to have done.

Chapter 18

The Building of the New South Africa



"We have achieved our political freedom, now we need to achieve economic freedom". In the second half of the 90's this became a general mantra. Out of this emerged the idea and programme of Local Economic Development (LED), of Small Enterprise Development with programmes such as NTSIKA and the RED Door, of rural development programmes and the revitalisation of Small Towns.

In particular, LED became the buzzword and the panacea for economic growth in small towns and villages throughout the country. Now, ten years later, the mass of LED reports/surveys/research documents/workshop material/handouts/manuals/books/web pages etc., would, if used as building blocks, be enough to build hundreds of houses. Too often it is a top-down programme not taking into consideration the needs and the strengths and capabilities of the people involved. From our experience, the heart of LED is "the well-being and development of the community." In March 1993, the South African National Civic Organisations wrote:

The formation of the Development Forum in Stutterheim in 1990, heralded the establishment of what is probably South Africa's most successful example of Local Economic Development to date. Following years of conflict and economic decline, it is to the credit of the talented community and municipal leaders in the town that entrenched, destructive disputes could be resolved and a development forum established.

And we didn't even know we were busy with LED!! In fact, LED had not yet become policy. What we did know was that people

needed homes, jobs and education, and that the town needed growth. What we did was about building trust and creating the climate for people to have the freedom to try out new things, to be self-reliant, to work together and to explore new ways.

So many people contributed to what was going on in Stutterheim.

Our I.D.E.A.S Man

I'll never forget the day Peter Kenyon walked into our lives. He was the man who would later invite us to Australia, but we were to walk many miles with him prior to that. Peter is an Independent Consultant and Founder and Director of the Bank of I.D.E.A.S (Initiatives for the Development of Enterprising Action and Strategies) in Australia. Peter has undertaken assignments relating to youth, employment and economic development in every Australian State, including presentations and workshop facilitation in over 600 Australian towns and cities and projects in 30 overseas countries.

Meeting Peter Kenyon was for us indeed an enriching experience. He is a bustling, charismatic, sometimes exhausting person with immense practical experience in rural situations and in small towns. He has stories of communities that will keep you spellbound and an inexhaustible supply of pithy, apt and illustrative quotes. Looking through his website these days one can only be amazed at the innovation he brings to wherever he is. He is also an avid collector of what seems to me every possible thing – old postcards, cameras, lead soldiers, war medals, books. Should he ever visit you, set aside at least a day; introduce Peter to antique shops, bric-a-brac-shops, old bookshops; hire a bakkie because when you meet up again with Peter he will have found more than your car can handle; he will be grinning from ear to ear and so pleased with the bargains he has found. Drop him off at the airport and wish him "Good Luck" as he still has to get

past the weigh-in counter. (He does have his ways of doing this.) Visit his home, if you ever have that privilege, and the walls will keep you occupied for days. His stories and anecdotes entertain you through the night. We just love Peter.

But more than that Peter is your LED Godfather.

Speaking at the "Making a Difference Conference in Stutterheim" in 2000, he said:

What a pleasure for me to hop on any plane and head for South Africa. It is one of the great feelings. Once you are touched by South Africa, by Africa, you are never the same you never get it out of your soul. I have been coming in and out for 10 years and this is my 7th visit to Stutterheim.

The Stutt story is one of the great stories of SA a community that got its act together; a story that has affected many people around the world. It is the story of a community that stopped waiting for the cavalry to arrive from Pretoria but decided to do things for themselves. It is one of the best examples of the fact that you cannot build a community from the top down or from the outside in. The only way to build a community is from the inside out. Local people come together, hold hands and look in one direction and start to invest themselves and their resources in creating a better future. That is what positive community development is about. And certainly to me the Stutt story is one of the best that I know

Peter is passionate about young people and the role they have to play.

Over the last several years I have been struggling with the need in rural areas to start to involve young people

more. How do we stop the trend of young people going away from rural areas and not returning? In Nebraska I learned about Rural Community Economic Development through the mobilisation of young people. I love spending time in small towns and seeing the type of projects that have been created to grow the vibrancy and economy. In the little town of Arthur, South Dakota, population 127, the only store in town has closed down. The nearest store is 72 k's away and the young people in that school have re-opened that general store and are running it as a business – run, planned, organised and managed by young people.

I went to another town where young people audited the local community and realised their biggest problem was a lack of housing. If they were going to build the population they needed more houses. Young people in that school are now building houses and selling them and the profit goes into a special scholarship for their young people to develop special trade skills and whatever.

I looked at it and said "Wow!" That is the kind of project we need in Australia.

He has a gift for thinking laterally and developing innovative and creative ideas such as Main Street Development, Town Entrances, Business Retention and Expansion, Social Capital, Youth at the Centre, C.R.E.A.T.E (Creating Rural Enterprising Attitudes Through Education), R u MAD (Are you Making A Difference?)

Learning about what works

In December, 2000, Susan Golding, like a shooting star, came into our lives in Stutterheim. A former Mayor of San Diego, California's second largest city, she had built up a reputation as an expert on LED. The city experienced economic

difficulties during the early 90's and when Susan Golding took up her post, 100 000 jobs had already been lost. Crime was on the move and news headlines stated that the "Californian Dream" was over. Something drastic needed to happen. People were leaving and had to be convinced that the economy could be turned around.

By 2000 San Diego was among the top 10 cities to do business in, was called the City of Entrepreneurs and had the highest growth rate in the country: 5%

Susan was definitely worth listening to and learning from. She made Public Safety, Economic Development and Neighbourhood Revitalization her priorities. Meetings between the police and the community took place on a regular basis. A Neighbourhood Pride and Protection Plan were put in place. Strict new laws were passed, not popular, but implemented – juveniles were kept off the streets after 22h00; parents became involved in the effort and became involved with the education of their children and juvenile crime dropped by 45% during the first three months. Overall, crime was reduced by 55%.

The municipality sent a letter to every business in the city and asked what Local Government should do that would help their business. The responses were taken seriously and Local Government acted. Business tax was cut and a one-stop office was established to promote the process. All 14 departments could be accessed together and this could also be done through the internet. There were constant surveys with business people in the city to establish their needs. Over a quarter of regulations regarding businesses were changed as they were getting in the way of economic development and an Officer of Common Sense was appointed to help streamline all red tape and assess complaints.

Technology became accessible to everybody. Computers installed in every library and a local high school was

transformed into a High Tech High School.

Apprenticeships and internships were seen as important and Susan accommodated about 20 interns in her office learning about Local Government. In City Hall a strong emphasis was placed on customer care and service.

We were greatly inspired by Susan Golding. She seemed to have created an atmosphere in which business thrived and there was so much that could be applied to South Africa.

Listen to the poor and understand the language of poverty - So says Rev Dr. Maluleka, Moderator of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa – Northern Transvaal Synod – and the Director of Church Aid in Need (CAN). He spoke at one of the conferences in Stutterheim and we listened.

The poor know lifestyles which we are never exposed to. We can restore their human dignity by supporting development programmes based on what the poor have, and build upon what they possess. If human dignity is not restored, development projects will fail.

Doug Hindsen, with 30 years of experience in development research and policy, affirms Bishop Maluleka's belief in the community and that there needs to be an approach that "seeks to build upon what is there rather than to create new institutions and organisations from scratch. It is based upon recognition of the 'wealth of the poor, their adaptive strategies, including their resourcefulness, knowledge, skills, assets, local economic organisations, networks and practices'.

This dialogue greatly added to our understanding of the dynamics of the time in which we were living.

The International Republican Institute (IRI), the development arm of the Republican Party in the USA, had been

in South Africa since 1994. Now they were withdrawing having completed their 5-year contract. They had participated in workshops and conferences in Stutterheim and they proposed that some of their surplus budget be put into training programmes for other towns which would be run by the Stutterheim Development Foundation. We put our heads together and devised a three-day training schedule for communities who wanted help in starting their own forums, development projects and finding common goals. In 1999, the IRI committed themselves to a two-year funding programme. By 2002, 143 towns had become involved in one way or another. These training programmes were not a once-off but involved follow-up and commitment

One doesn't always realise what it takes in terms of time and energy to follow up the training programmes. I felt the need to put a human face to this effort and in the 1999/2000 Annual report of the Stutterheim Development Foundation wrote:

It is dawn at the Kei River. Max July (the leader of the programme) is on his way to Port St Johns. You must leave early if you want to cross the Great Kei River before the road-blasting begins. But you must in any case leave early to get to Port St John's on time. This lovely little seaside village is 4 hours drive from Stutterheim and Max is on his way to facilitate the launching of the Port St John's Development Foundation. His car knows the way. It has been this road many, many times before.

In fact, Max has been in many places criss-crossing the country answering requests from towns, villages and communities. He searches for the "champions" in each community. He selects a representative group and gives them the opportunity of visiting Stutterheim for the 3-day workshops. Their coming is because of the need they feel to make a difference in their community. They enjoy traditional food at Anna

Marie's Africa Kafe; they visit Mgwali Village and are inspired by the tourist-friendly community; they are amazed at what rural children are learning about computers, and visit a farm school where technology is in action. They listen, they absorb; and they wrestle together to find a common vision and to put together a plan for their areas. We are all there to guide and encourage and Stutterheim is enriched by the presence of so many people from other towns.

Once a programme has started, Max never lets go. He visits and revisits. He takes colleagues with him to assist. He understands the dynamics of small communities and can help them ride the rocky road. He is on the end of a phone ready at a moment's notice to go where needed.

Development is never an event, it is a process and Max and others will be busy for many years to come.

At the end of the two-year period, the International Republican Institute contracted a private research company to do an evaluation of the training workshops.

The researches made the following conclusions: "This evaluation has suggested that the SDF programmes have an unusual capacity to stimulate focused and goal-directed development activity.The responses to the training and the exposure in general are also very positive and this exposure is deemed substantially responsible for the positive follow-up. The most convincing proof of this is the fact that there were relatively few ongoing projects before the exposure to the SDF."

Reasons for failures were listed as: "Political tensions, lack of resources to mount projects, lack of strategic approach and capacity among councillors and officials, slow response by government and provincial departments and lack of

communication between local council and community. It became clear that not all public authorities involved were as co-operative as they could have been."

A recommendation was that the SDF try to mobilise additional resources to allow for more systematic follow-up training. "In the light of the formidable problems that face LED in local communities, we would re-emphasise finally that an organisation with skills and a tried and tested approach like the SDF be assisted to deepen its work in local areas."

In order to make these experiences more easily available, and to be able to give a professional service to those seeking assistance, a Stutterheim Local Economic Development Manual has been developed. Sponsored by the Open Society Foundation for South Africa, and compiled by Alex Hetherington, the manual ***ACHIEVING PROSPERITY - Local Economic Development in Small and Rural Towns*** captures in 10 modules the experience of the Stutterheim Development Process.

In his address to the 5th Annual Local Government Symposium, March 2001, *Partnership between Local Government and the Stutterheim Development Foundation*, Nico sums up our experience of LED:

Wealth is generated by entrepreneurs. The more businesses in town, the more people are employed who then pay rates, pay for services and pay for water and electricity. They also buy locally which in turn promotes more business growth. They bring visitors to town who spend money and could even become investors. Whether businesses are small one-man operations such as hawkers, or large businesses employing many people, they need a supportive environment and Local Government needs to make it attractive for businesses to operate.

Attending to the following matters can support the growth of

the economy.

- (a) Potential investors search for towns where land and services are available at competitive prices. Some towns attract investors by allowing new businesses special rates for a restricted period. The Local Authority should attempt to bring new types of businesses to town, such as manufacturing a product which will help create new markets.*
- (b) Infrastructure: Roads, electricity and water must be seen as being properly managed.*
- (c) Bye-laws affecting business, such as regulatory zoning, licenses, levies, etc., should be business-friendly. There is no reason why a business should not operate from home provided zoning prevents noise and pollution in what is a residential area.*
- (d) Local Government should buy commodities and services locally wherever possible (a) through a preference system with local manufacturers being given a 10% preference and (b) the simplification of Tender Documents.*
- (e) Support of new businesses through –*
 - o Building workshops which could be let at reasonable rates*
 - o Demarcating sites for hawkers allocating each with a number for which the hawker pays a minimal monthly rate. Out-of-town hawkers to pay higher rates. There should also be an agreement that the hawker will be responsible for tidying up and keeping the site clean*

- o *Establishment of a One-Stop-Shop where all information regarding the opening of a business is under one roof; where people are not sent from pillar to post; and where decisions can actually be made*
 - o *Reviewing extreme health regulations*
- (f) *Building capacity in Local Government staff so ensuring that they buy into the common vision of the town. If properly motivated, the staff will provide efficient services to the residents.*
- (g) *Local Government should identify its core function (as with other organizations) and sub-contract other services out to professional people.*

A healthy partnership between Local Government, the business community, cultural organizations, the churches, schools, etc., must exist. Where communities begin interacting, share a common vision and goal and embrace a holistic view of their development, things begin to happen.

LED is particularly relevant to small towns, and small town renewal comes in many guises. In 1993 Clem Sunter, well known scenario-planner and author, wrote Nico:

".....I am so inspired by what you are doing in Stutterheim. It is absolutely at the heart of the High Road concept since the problem of unemployment anywhere in the world now can only be resolved through re-establishing village-like economies.

"Midhurst, which is my mother's village in Sussex, England is a classic example. It has proved to be virtually recession-proof during the recent downturn of the English economy. The reason is that the Midhurst economy is made up of people who perform

essential services for each other that carry on irrespective of conditions in the national economy. The butcher, the baker, the pub owner, the dry cleaner, the waterer of cottage flower boxes, all have their job to do. In addition, Midhurst earns sufficient money from its 'exports' to the rest of the country primarily tourism, but also one or two small manufacturing establishments, such that it can pay for the kind of consumer products which cannot be produced locally (like cars, VCR's and so forth).

"Miraculously, Midhurst has come through the hard times relatively unscathed, compared to Haslemere which is nearby in Surrey. Being on the main railway line to Portsmouth, it is a dormitory town inhabited by commuters who work in the City of London. Its economy is in dreadful shape and full of unemployed city gents, looking for 'consultancy' work (or they open antique shops of the kind 'we buy junk and sell antiques')!"

MS Maria Brassiolo, whom we had met in Switzerland, Chairperson for Italy of Transparency International, wrote to us after attending the Transparency International Conference in Durban in October 1999. She gave an illustration of how she believes people in small towns can contribute to the sustainability of the town by describing a small mountain area in Switerland, (not more than 1000 people) that is perfectly organised and full of happy, young and healthy families.

They breed cows, sheep, pigs, chickens, hens and rabbits, not intensively, but in the open air

They deliver their milk to the dairy which pasteurises the milk and produces by-products such as cream, butter, cheese of different qualities

They deliver animals to the butcher who provides for the slaughtering and the sale of the meat

They have no ski resorts but keep the mountain tidy to a height of 2000 metres all year round providing an area for quiet and nature-sensitive tourists

A weekly market gives the opportunity of selling their other products such as potatoes, eggs, apples, berries to inhabitants and tourists

A mechanic repairs vehicles and machines

The baker uses local products except for flour and sugar

There are two caves in the mountains where granite is cut, shaped and sculptured

Wood is a further resource

Life is not that expensive and prices are reasonable. People mainly trade on the quality of their environmentally friendly products.

And for small towns to succeed we need Champions. Who are the Champions? Dr Robert Manley writes: It isn't enough for a town to have good leadership. Communities also must have people, Community Builders who generously encourage and support a wide range of activities that benefit the community. These builders aren't self-serving. They are interested in improving and perpetuating their communities. Find a community with both leaders and builders and you'll find a community that works."

In 2003, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) asked Nico to work with them on establishing a Small Town Network which would support the role of the champions and enable small towns to feel supported and to network together. A great deal of work was done and Nico organised a workshop to launch the programme. A certain amount of funding was needed for this and this was hard to come by, particularly after the HSRC decided to discontinue their involvement. It remains a need and remains on the agenda.

After all is said and done, it is often the unexpected thing that happens which turns a town or village around. Someone moves into a small town for the simple reason that they have had enough of city life – and suddenly that town/village becomes the place to go to; someone opens a business and gives it a catchy name, and people are intrigued and stop; a beer brewery opens or Gariép pursades a German company to build a glider factory on the shores of the Gariép Dam; or, as in the case of Philippolis which we visited, relocate a family/clan of Southern Chinese Tigers to the Southern Free State. This serves a two-fold purpose: it attracts tourists who are keen to view tigers from a boat in the Orange River and it ensures the future existence of the tigers which are currently under threat! As Indira Gandhi said: “There are two types of people in the world – those who take the credit and those who do the work. Join the second group – there is less competition there!” These are the champions.

Over the years we learnt a few basic things:

- You do not need to ask permission to become involved in serving the community
- Together identify the needs in a community
- Search for a common vision and a common strategy
- Everyone's ideas and concerns have value and must be treated seriously
- Build on the strengths that are there
- Most importantly, there must be no hidden agendas
- Honesty leads to trust without which nothing will work
- Make sure the instrument (or organisation) does not become the goal
- As you work together within the community, capacity and leadership will develop
- Action seldom happens in meetings something said in a meeting is too often deemed to have been done
- Work with Local Government but remain independent
- Wealth is created by successful businesses and for an economy to grow you need entrepreneurship

Chapter 19

India Revisited

A breakaway to another country, another ethos, another way of doing things



It is now 2005 and we are in India. Nico's second visit and my first. There must be a million ways to experience India a country of a billion people, of different faiths, customs, cultures, climates, topography – 74% of which is rural – and the unemployment is at 24%. One day, maybe, we will return and see the marvels, both man-made and God-created, and experience the Taj Mahal, the Himalayas, Kashmir, etc. But for now we can only write about our ten day experience of what we will call "Civil Society in India".

We flew into Mumbai arriving at the popular airport hour of 2 a.m. (two weeks later we left at 2.30 am). The first 5 days consisted of participating in the COMMACT 6th *Working for Common Wealth* conference. The 5th had been held in 1999 in Stutterheim. COMMACT is a Commonwealth organization of NGO's and other civil society groupings working in the field of development. It receives some support from the Commonwealth Foundation. The Mumbai Conference was a working conference to plan the future direction of the organisation and we were representing South Africa. There were 14 countries and 40 delegates. Some were old friends as they had been to Stutterheim. Good to see them again. An overall impression as we met and talked to people was the wealth of commitment and experience, and the quality of the training that we found among the NGO sector. Amazing people who have devoted their lives to helping generally 'the poorest of the poor'; who have found innovative ways of job-creation and training; who take on enormous multi-faceted projects always with a 'people-centred' development

approach.

We had arrived a day early and had some hours to get a feel of Mumbai, a city of 18 million people built on a peninsular on the West Coast of the sub-continent. Our hotel was in a good residential area but the streets and the surroundings were quite a shock— potholes, bullock carts, holy cows, traffic, bustling stalls and markets, small garage-size shops with roll up doors jamming the sidewalks, people everywhere. Small black and yellow three-wheeler two-stroke rickshaws weave and hoot their way around, through, almost under, the surging mass of vehicles. We spent a morning around the Gateway to India, an impressive *Arc de Triomp* that was built at the turn of the previous century to welcome King George V and Queen Mary when they visited India.

One afternoon during the conference we were taken by bus to visit some projects in the Bombay slums. This is an hour's drive, most of which is through slum areas. According to the government, there are no slums in Bombay only "Worker's Colonies". Our guide informs us that 60% of Bombay is a slum. Hundreds of people flock daily into Mumbai from the rural areas in search of work. We park, and venture forth to the first of the four projects.

In 1984, Sister Isabel Martin, a Spanish missionary, came to Bombay. She wanted to work for the poor and settled in the Mahakali Caves Road slum area. For the next 10 years she lived where the people lived, washed where they washed and used the communal toilet facilities. She found many women were divorced, deserted or widowed. Economic self-sufficiency and freedom was the need of the hour. She trained 2 women to make garments and taught them to make soft toys and other handicrafts. Out of this has grown a number of self-help women's groups. We visited 4 of these, each about ten minutes walk from the other deeper into the slum area. One programme was a take-away food outlet, shinningly clean. Our guide, an early trainee and now a

supervisor, wearing a pink sari, flitted in front of us, an exotic butterfly. For us walking the slums was quite an experience. We were delighted to meet Sister Isabel and to find her still there.

We visited Father Tony Fonesca's home for street children. In the 40 years of existence, over 20 000 street children have been given homes, education and the hope of a future through his work. His organisation now has 16 homes, 2 contact centres, a crisis centre for women and children and an AIDS hospice for kids on the streets.

On the way back to our hotel we drove through 'workers colonies' and found in these colonies streets and streets of small enterprises. We were amazed at the entrepreneurial activity that constitutes India. Every conceivable item and service can be obtained in these 'garages' and this is where people go for their shopping, services and medical needs. There is no evidence of the equivalent of a Pick'n Pay or a Spar. I listed some of the more appealing shopsigns and could have gone on forever: International Parcel Service, Language school (French, German, Arabic, Russian), Dreamz Luggage Palace, Diplomat Wine Shop, Omar Estate Agency, Lazer Surgery, Carpenters/ Welders/ Fruit & Veg shops/ Interior Decorating, Take-aways, Garden Design (In a slum! Surely not?) etc.

And so to Kerala

Lukose Jacob of the Hilda Development Trust in Salthan Bathery, Northwest Kerala, had been in Stutterheim 3 years ago. He was at the COMMACT Conference and we flew with him to Bangalore from where we would drive the 5-hour journey to Kerala. Bangalore is the Silicone Valley of India and one of the reasons why India's growth rate is 7.5%. Lukose's driver met us and within minutes we were on our way. It took an hour to get out of the confusion that is Bangalore where new roads are being built and many diversions, not to mention

roaming buffalo who have been let out of their sheds to find food on the streets of Bangalore, for heaven's sake! They will apparently find their way back once satisfied.

Finally we strike the Bangalore/Trivandrum highway. For a short while it is almost a double highway. Then it is back to holes, reconstruction etc. We stop for what Lukose calls 'tea' - a large cross between an omelet and a crisp pancake served on a banana leaf and filled with marsala potato and onion and a spicy (everything is spicy) tomato sauce for dipping. Please use only the right hand.

We have yet to figure out what, if any, are driving rules. Suddenly we see a large sign "OBEY TRAFFIC RULES" and underneath *No passing on the left*. Well, this is one rule we can relate to; but nobody else seems to. All that you need for driving is a hooter, brakes and sound judgement. Suddenly Lukose stops. The brakes have now failed. This jeep is new and very high tech and talks to you all the time and the only problem is the shortage of hi-tech mechanics. Lukose phones and the nearest mechanic is 2 hours drive beyond our destination which is still 2 hours away. We discuss the alternatives spending the night, hiring a taxi and decide that as we had so far managed to survive we would continue.

The driver takes over and we crawl down the road/highway driving on gears and handbrake. We climb the mountains through a game park to Wayanad District in Kerala. We are stopped by a row of trucks. A car has shot off the road into the forest to avoid an elephant and the truck drivers are helping it back on track. We keep an eye out for elephants and sniff the night air. We arrive at the Hotel Resort at precisely midnight 9 hours after leaving the airport .

And so we begin our introduction to Lukose's amazing development programme The Highland Development Agency (HILDA). Lukose picked us up and we drove to HILDA headquarters, saw around the offices and met the staff all

young professional social workers with masters degrees in disciplines such as Development, Women and Child Care, Health Management, Research, Drinking Water and Sanitation, Water Conservation, Organic Farming, Engineering, Accounting and Computer, etc.

We visited The Community Based Restaurant, The Industrial Works, The Bakery, an Animal Husbandry project with the forest people, Auto Rickshaw and Agriculture group (ginger, yam and pepper) Solar Panels installation, Bamboo products and the Silkworm farm.

By now it was almost dark and starting to rain so we hurried down the forest track to keep our appointment with the silkworm farmeress. This intrepid lady was waiting for us in the storm with a candle. She gets silkworm eggs from a silk manufacturing firm, raises the worms, talks to them nicely and they spin. Then she sells the silk back to the firm. She has planted numerous mulberry trees.

An unscheduled stop to visit Gineesh's home (our guide) to meet his wife, a teacher. They are Hindus and his wife invited me into their bedroom to see the photos of their wedding at which there were 500 people.

The following day we meet and talk to the staff and were then taken on a sight-seeing tour. Our driver is now safely back with the talking jeep. We drive through manicured tea plantations, stunning scenery, and a visit to a small Catholic-owned tea processing plant. Wooden tea boxes are still the packaging of choice. An obliging working elephant made a brief appearance.

Back to Lukose's home where his wife Agnes has prepared some intriguing snacks. Lukose also has a small farm and he shows us how cardamom grows. Cardamom is king in Kerala. This is the day for harvesting the cardamom seeds. Lukose presented us with the riches of his farm cardamom, cloves,

coffee, cocoa and a wooden elephant.

Life's a journey, enjoy the ride We leave for Kottayam. We snake down a steep incredible hairpin-bend pass and marvel at our driver doing this brakeless the previous day. We pass 6 elephants (trained) walking along the road as part of the traffic; a cattle sale is taking place on the verge.

En route we will visit two water projects being implemented by HILDA on behalf of government. These projects are 75% financed by World Bank, 15% by the people who benefit and 10% by local government. Of the total project HILDA gets 10%. The World Bank insists that the management of the projects is undertaken by an NGO, more efficient and cost-effective.

Edarikode has a population of 22 800. The project started in May and we were impressed with the young team leader, A V Varkey. His monthly schedule is on the wall. There are 29 projects to be covered. The project begins by collecting the people, resource planning, forming groups. 40 groups with acute water shortage were selected involving 1800 families. The project is explained including the community responsibility of 15% of the funding. A final 30 groups are selected, 1400 families. The money is collected, the engineers appointed and 5 places are identified where the wells are dug and the pipes are laid. There are 6 qualified engineers and 8 social workers.

Apart from the water, skills are taught: lifeskills, hygiene and two-pit latrines as opposed to single pit deep latrines which pollute the water, tailoring, embroidery, pipe-laying, drainage, personal accounting, capacity building, problem solving conflict resolution, crisis management etc. The project will be complete in December 2006 and by then the people will have the capacity and the linkages with each other to take over and will know how to organise and address the social, economic and development needs. Recipients pay a small fee for the

water and the money is used for the upkeep of the system.

We are taken on a site visit down a hill, through paddy fields to where the reservoir has been constructed. We are followed by a flock of children. India is in the middle of an important cricket match. I tried to engage them in a discussion about the new Indian captain and praised Tendulkar; but Hansie Cronje seems to be more on the minds of these kids.

We leave them and stop for refreshments at a roadside coconut vender. He expertly pangs away the shell, somehow missing his hand, places a straw through a hole; we all drink from our own personal coconut. He slices off the tip (which is now a spoon), cracks open the nut and we eat the flesh.

Father Michael Vettickaet head of the Kottayam Social Services Society (KSSS), welcomes us in Kottayam. This is a large training centre run by the Catholic Church. We are taken upstairs for refreshments. Sam Chelladurai, Executive Director of READ, Bangalore, (a conference member who had been in Stutterheim in 1999) and Lukose's son who has just finished his two-year internship as a doctor after a 6-year scholarship in Bulgaria are also there. Sam was down from Bangalore to make a video for Father Michael on what KSSS does. We eat substantial snacks such as quail's eggs, cashew nuts, stuffed dates and chips and then down we go for a 5 course welcome dinner prepared by the Sister who had spent 6 years in Germany.

Tomorrow is another day We retire to bed and will meet again at breakfast. Father Michael will be up at 4.30 a.m. for meditation, Bible reading, exercises, getting his day sorted out and Mass. There is a difference between Religion and Faith, says Father M. Religion is the structure, the organisation, the control. Faith is what is inside yourself, your connection with God who is all around you.

Kerala has a large and effective Catholic community. There

are more Catholics in Kerala than in the United States – 18 million. Kerala also sends priests to Europe where there is apparently a shortage. His Grace, Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, the Bishop of Kottayam Diocese is a man of great vision, and empathy for the poor. KSSS was his vision and was started in 1964.

The operational areas include 76 villages where KSSS organizes and empowers the poor for their Integral Sustainable Development Programme. Interventions include:

Housing and Sanitation, Disaster Management, Eco-friendly Agricultural Development, Programmes against Social Evils, Documentation and publications, Educational Scholarships, Village Libraries, Child and Youth Development, Community Health Programmes, Non formal Technical Training, Human Resource Development, Women Empowerment, Savings, Micro Credit and Revolving Fund

We were taken around the nursery where edible and herbal plants for agriculture are grown, ornamental plants for sale, compost is made, algae cultivated on water for cattle food, breeding of poultry, guineafowl, pigs, (the manure for gas which is used in the kitchen), rabbits, parakeets and guineapigs (for sale as pets), and two pythons, (for what I'm not sure) but with them in their cage were two rather terrified rats with no options.

We met the staff 12 men and 12 women social workers, again all highly qualified. The women absolutely stunning, as always, in their beautiful saris. They work in 8 regions and with 1000 Self Help Groups. We visited a number of projects. Back at the centre we find Father Michael addressing a hall full of parents of children who have been selected for scholarships. Criteria for selection which is done by the villagers: the most deserving of the poorest of the poor. 180 scholarships are being given out (this for tertiary education). After studying the

students repay the loan and the money goes back to their villages where it is used for further education for others.

Next visit, the Ayurvedic Hospital, also founded by the Bishop in 1999 and set up with a view to giving holistic treatment for ailing mankind comprising body, mind and soul. The purpose is to popularise the Ayurvedic system of medicine and encourage the cultivation of herbal plants. Eminent doctors, both Ayurvedic and Modern, serve on the Board. We see the massage room and steam baths etc. The massage table is of a special type of wood and is shaped to fit the body. A herbal manufacturing facility is being completed. We are given a small glass of a rejuvenating mixture made from the roots of ten different plants. (We needed it by now!)

From there, Father Michael takes us to his ancestral home where we meet his mother and his niece who serve us a variety of snacks. We felt privileged to be with them.

Tuesday was our first chance for a bit of shopping. But we had to be back by 11.30 to meet the Bishop who had come down to see us and to honour 22 women who, after training in civic affairs by KSSS, had been elected to Local Government. Again the hall was packed with their families and supporters. The Bishop addressed them and the 22 all received a small plaque with their photos on. Moslem, Hindu and Christian, as they came up, all kissed the Bishop's ring. The women spoke of the training they had received which they they said gave them self-confidence, taught them to be articulate and to think analytically.

We had a memorable lunch with the Bishop many courses - pasta, rabbit, fish, chicken and a desert made of mashed banana, curd and a sweet syrup which is tapped from the coconut palm. The whole crowd from the award ceremony were also given lunch.

Time for a break. Sam, Father Michael and his friend Joman, are taking us to the Backwaters of Kerala. This is one of

Kerala's premier holiday resorts. We arrive at the Backwater (where the sea pushes back up the river), climb onto our boat and motor down through water-lilies towards the lake. We pass lovely bamboo-covered long-boats set up for accommodation (air conditioned) in the front half and in the back section bamboo chairs hanging under the palm-fronds. Joman has been commissioned by Fr Michael to organise this event. He produces palm wine (this is a very potent drink), fried shrimps, and then small packets of dory fish steamed in banana leaves with onions, tomatoes and spices, served with a tapioca and yam mixture. Delicious.

The atmosphere was relaxed and fun. Scenery beautiful and we chugged past the famous bird sanctuary. We swap stories of how we all got married – arranged, traditional or ordinary. (It was decided that Nico had married for money because his father had told him he would be disinherited if he didn't marry by the end of the year). Sam, a wonderful human being, told how he had got engaged while working as a photographer and film-maker with numerous cameras strung around his neck. He had no free hands to eat so his assistant fed him. Now they are married. Joman's marriage was entirely arranged. And, laughs Sam, Father Michael is of course married to the Church.

We drop Sam off to catch his bus back to Bangalore. The cell phone rings KSSS has just been given the State Award for the Women's Rickshaw Programme. This programme has trained some poor village women to drive rickshaws and has helped them obtain a bank loan to buy their own vehicles.

One last quick visit. We hear drumming behind the Centre. We are taken around to find a lesson in progress. 6 of the young men social workers are being taught how to beat traditional drums. Shirtless and cross-legged they sit on the ground facing the Master who leads the beat. They practice with sticks on granite slabs. At the end of the week, many sticks later, they will be given wooden drums. This is to

welcome people to the planned festival that will take place at the end of November. 40 000 people are expected over 4 days 10 000 per day. Who is Fr Michael's event's manager, one wonders?

Dear Sister is waiting for us and cheerfully accepts the fact that we will not need another meal. But then out come the refreshment with attendant snacks, such as rabbit, quail eggs, small finger-size bananas, etc. We meet her kitchen staff. These are all young girls from extremely poor homes. They are being trained by Sister, have little education and their destiny is marriage. In a marriage the girl has to provide the dowry and money is being saved for them for this purpose by Sister. We meet them all and contribute towards their dowry fund.

Fr. Michael works the cellphone and gets family and friends from all over the world on the line so that they can chat to us. He phones Lukose, his mother, Sam, who has since returned to Bangalore, a niece, a sister in the States. They are all included in the event.

And now we leave to drive the 2 hours to Cochin to catch our train to Mumbai. I must impart my indepth research on traffic in India. It could be useful for any traveller to that country.

On Traffic in India Traffic rules are buried in the Indian psyche. But now I am an expert and I THINK, but I'm not sure, everyone in front has the right of way. A thick yellow line on a blind curve, I conclude, means no overtaking. Wrong. It merely means - hoot. In the grand scheme of traffic, motorbikes are inconsequential. They either squeeze through or give way. Its like playing video games but, as Sam says, there comes at some point "the meeting of the Indian Mind". I gather that's when the two opposing drivers follow the rule, whatever it might be. Sometimes this meeting is left a little late. We had a close call and we are informed that had we not been in the car our three hosts would have beaten up the other driver, then shaken hands. I can't quite believe this as I have never seen anyone lose their cool and only once did we see an accident.

For the 35 hour journey to Mumbai we are booked Second Class Air Con because, says Father Michael, if you are in first class you are lonely. It's a carriage with 80 people made up of sort-of open plan compartments with the corridor running between the 6 bunks on the right and the 2 on the left. Our seats/bunks are on the left. All day vendors walk up and down the aisle selling marsala tea, coffee and trays of snacks various. Nico bought a bag of cashew nuts and 2 litres of water and with additional cups of hot sweet coffee, we munched our way through India, through rice paddies, mountains and views.

People come and go. We transform our seats into bunks and settle down for the night. An Israeli girl arrives at 4 am. She is on holiday on her own. Apparently Israelis love India as there is no stress. The train is behind schedule due to the monsoon the previous month that had damaged the tracks. 35 hours later we arrive in Mumbai. We decide to share a taxi with our Israeli friend. Our nice helpful neighbour (in the six berth opposite) shepherds us to the taxi rank, threatens the driver with all manner of things if he cheats us, and waves us goodbye. (When we arrived back in South Africa there was an e-mail from him asking us to let him know if we had a good journey and sending us photos of the monsoon in Kerala).

How we got to the airport through what seems like totally snarled-up traffic is a mystery. But this is an Indian driver. He knows how it is done. Life roars and hoots around us. But we get there. We only have a 4-hour wait for our plane. We meet a young American ex-diplomat who is now working in Belgium. He has just revisited Madras. His comment is that nothing can disrupt or destroy the rhythm of life, tradition, customs, religion, faith that is India. The Government may rule, but India goes on.

And so it does. We leave with a sense of strong civil society, a proud democracy, and glorious, glorious chaos!

Chapter 20

What Means Most to Us?



Our family and our friends -Stella Maria was born in 1967 in Graaff-Reinet when we were in the middle of *Springbok Stampede*. She grew up amongst a mixture of people. At an early age she started talking and when she was two she thought that I could not understand English so she would translate for me. She inherited her father's quiet confidence and self-sufficiency. She never bothered to please anybody. She was always just herself. When she left school and was asked by Nico what she wanted to do, she had no idea and told him that she thought she would stay at home. (Does sound a bit like her mother, doesn't it?) "Fine" said Nico, "but after three months you must start paying rent." He gave her a week to think about it and asked her again. Still nothing. She was dispatched to the Technikon to do secretarial training. This she did and her first job was with Department of Foreign Affairs.

In the following years she went to Zimbabwe and Mexico and worked in Holland, Austria and the USA. We would visit her and enjoy experiencing the countries she was in and when she could break away we went with her to France, to Spain, the Czech Republic and Morocco. During this time she trained in the UNIX computer system and after ten years she resigned from the Department. She worked with a variety of computer companies and in between qualified herself as a computer programmer. In 2003 she married Philip du Toit. They are based in Cape Town where Stella is working and Philip, as a commercial diver works on oil rigs and is offshore Angola, Nigeria, Russia and other places. Philip spends very little time in South Africa and when he does come back to the Cape it is often only for a few days at a time. Like today, he phoned:

What size is your chimney, he asks? He knows we need to revamp our chimney to prevent the smoke from heading into the sitting room and, unasked, he is going to do this for us. Can you think of a more perfect son-in-law! With Philip away so much, Stella is a regular Vermont visitor.

Nicolaas took his first breath in Hillbrow in Johannesburg and I'm glad to report that it didn't have a detrimental effect on his psyche!! He qualified at the technikon as an engineer and his first job was with Ove Arup where he worked under Hamish Scott. Nick still talks about the amazing training he got from Hamish. It was during this period that Nick helped me fundraise for Isidenge School. Two years of working in rural township development in the Eastern Cape convinced him that the politics surrounding this was not for him. He and his two cousins bought a back-packer business in Knysna which they ran for 5 years. Now he is back in engineering and is Project Manager for the Thesen Island Dry Mill Development, in Knyna.

We went to visit him and he said he wanted us to meet his new girlfriend. Now I have been told by wise friends that "your son's girlfriend could be your daughter-in-law." I have therefore always been extremely nice to Nick's girl-friends. Kim walked into the restaurant - tall, beautiful green eyes and long blonde hair - and before the evening was out we knew that she was something special. (*What did you think, said Nico, Ferreira men always choose exceptional wives!*) She had spent close to 9 years in Europe and the West Indies in the hospitality business and had recently returned to Knysna where her parents were living. For some years she managed the restaurant and deli section of the well-known food emporium, MacIntoshes. More recently she started working at the Tile House and is now part owner of this business. Nick and Kim have been married for just over two years. James arrived six months ago and we are very proud grandparents. He has started e-mailing his Oupa.

Throughout the book you will have met some of the people we got to know and who became our friends. A year or so ago Nico announced that he had to be in Johannesburg for a meeting and that he was combining this with a get together with his pals, Martin Manala, Philip Machaba and Philip Thobela. The scheduled time was 4.30 the afternoon at the Airport City Lodge. For the next 6 hours they caught up on news and were so engrossed that they forgot to have dinner.

Our sisters and brothers and their wives, husbands and their children are our family but they are also are our best friends.

Nico and Dave Beal, have done quite a lot together in their lives. Way back they travelled through Lesotho, got stuck in a snowstorm and had to spend the night with a friendly Lesotho family who piled endless blankets on them. Dave was part of our inroads into Soweto, and then, very recently, he and Nico spent 5 days together exploring the Little Karoo. I had a wonderful three weeks with Dave and Audrey in their home in Minnesota.

We went on many holidays with Gert and Rita, to France, Switerland, Germany and to Tuscany, and Gert had, over the years spent endless hours in the Ciskei and Transkei with Nico doing whatever needed doing.

Bill and Stella were at our wedding, visited us in Nigeria, entertained us in Namibia and have been there for us forever.

And our unforgettable visit to Australia with Beryl and Tim.

We look forward to the Kruger National Park holidays with Nico's sister Ria and her husband, Stan. The bushveld, the smell of a hardekool wood fire, waiting for the kudu steaks, and listening to the elephants slurping water from a nearby dam, create an atmosphere which can only be found in that corner of Africa.

The family on the farm Zoetvlei, welcome us whenever we want to come. We are blessed indeed.

Getting away from it all!

Sometimes you just have to do something else! At least I have to! Our first memorable family holiday was a trip to Namibia (then South West Africa) with Stella, aged 3. We drove down to the Augrabies Falls on the Orange River and then up to Windhoek where my sister Stella and her engineer husband, Bill and their three children lived. They took us down to Swakopmund to experience the wild West Coast and to eat Black Forest Cake. We travelled up by car to the Etosha Game Park camping on the way and just enjoyed Africa.

When Stella was 8 and Nicolaas 4 we undertook an historic trip to the Eastern Cape to follow the Rubidge family roots. The children were not particularly interested in visiting the old Church at Salem and studying the names of the deceased—more Nico's type of thing! In fact he took a photo of the two of them crying from frustration between the gravestones. They definitely wanted to be somewhere else and somewhere else was Kidds Beach. This was much better. Other places we visited were Dwesa, Coffee Bay, Port St John's and Seagulls on the Wild Coast - beautiful patches of unspoilt Eastern Cape coast. We often went to Morgan Bay and still have a time-share at Chintsa East 25 k's North of East London. You will find us all there around Christmas.

We tried out various hot-water springs such as Tshipise, Die Eiland, Die Bron and The Baths. We camped at Sabie with my sister Rita and Gert and their boys only to find ourselves pitching our tent on the coldest night Sabie had experienced in years. We all almost froze to death. But walking in the forests and up Mount Anderson with our friendly forester, Dr. Chris Schutz, was a great experience. One year we camped down at Betty's Bay. We rented a cottage in Simonstown and we even managed a trip to Europe as a family.

At various times we visited friends in Europe and family in the USA and in Australia. Nico went several times to Israel, mostly for work, and I went on a tour to that fascinating country with Nico's sister, Ria, and his mother, aged 86. We had a great time. More recently Nico and I went to Thailand where we met up with Stella and Philip. We snorkled, rode elephants and rafted down rivers. We visited the Bridge on the River Kwai - and loved it all. We did the back-packing route, found it marvellously inexpensive, travelled on buses, trains, bakkies and boats and talked to the back-packing youth of the world. I will never forget sitting next to a young man from Honduras. He had led a rather unusual life, I thought. At the age of 16 he had spent a year on his own on the Amazon River, had travelled the world with his father who was studying animals, insects, birds, etc., was attending the University of Florida and had just done China and India. And still only 21. What was he going to do, I asked. Oh, he said, I want to become President of Honduras. It can't be too difficult, there are only 6 million people there and not that many of them are educated.

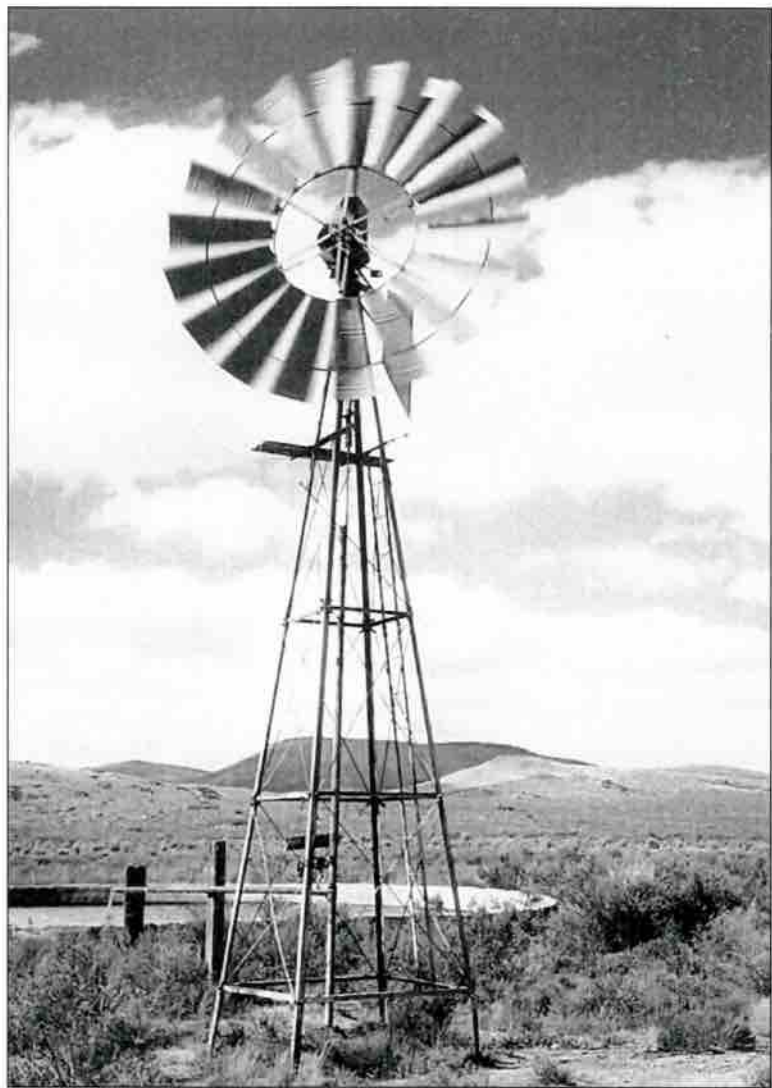
And then there were the Christmases at Zoetvlei. For 30 years all the sisters and husbands and children would drive down to the farm. My parents and later on my brother and his wife, Jennie, were ever welcoming and we would be up to 24 people and the two houses were filled to capacity. The turkey bred for the occasion came along. Father Christmas visited until the youngest cousin no longer believed. We would swim in the dam, sail the one-man yacht, walk, climb the koppies and play plenty of tennis. Rita would organise the horses and one by one all the children learned to ride. Some kind friend one Christmas left a motorboat for our use and some of us managed to water-ski. Of an evening the bakkie would load up with the young to go springhare hunting. Sometimes a springbok hunt was arranged. All the girls took turns to produce meals so that everyone had a chance to relax. My parents were amazing as were my brother and his wife. Audrey and Dave and their three came as often as they could

from the USA and Beryl and Tim from Australia managed a few Christmases with us.

One of the delights was being taken around the farm by my father or my brother and being shown the rehabilitation of the veld, or the garlic and onions growing in the lands, or the new pig enterprise. Always something happening. Christmas dinner would be out under the grapevine and my sister Stella would produce a play or some other Christmas entertainment. It was definitely a must on the calendar. We parents loved it as the children went wild and no-one bothered too much about them. They in turn loved being left to themselves. To this day Stella and Nicolaas and the others head back to the farm just to once again "feel" the Karoo air, smell the veld and live another life.

The beloved country Why do we love South Africa? It is our home, it is where we feel at home and where we belong. We were born here, our ancestors are buried here – 300 years and 180 years ago respectively - and as Nosimo often says, where your umbilical cord rests, that is your home. We have deep friendships with so many people and, above all, we are proud of what our country has achieved. There are big challenges as we work together to do things differently. We want to continue to build a better future for all and each day that is our agenda. We are, after all, still here.

Postscript: *In 2002 we moved to Hermanus in the Southern Cape. Revisiting Stutterheim some years later, it was heartening to find that the town had retained and built on the unique spirit that had developed over the years of working together. Here we want to pay tribute to Magriet Peter who joined the Stutterheim Development Foundation in 1998. She has been both an anchor and an engine (if you can be both) in the business development and education programmes that continue to flourish in Stutterheim. She grew up in Tulbach and married John Peter when they were both working with the Department of Foreign Affairs. They returned to Stutterheim to the family farm in 1995. We salute them both.*



Water for a thirsty land

