

Message 11. Safe arrival home Jan 22-25, 2020

Mary Crauderreuff and I arrived in Kaimosi at FTC and were welcomed by many. While Mary settled into the Guesthouse, I visited with several students from Kenya and Uganda.

The next morning we attended the early morning devotions at the octagonal meetinghouse where Mary was officially introduced and welcomed. When Mary and I met with Robert Wafula, we all discovered we were all Earlham College graduates and both Robert and Mary had gotten interested in working on archives due to their times working as students under Tom Hamm, the archivist at the Friends Archives in Richmond, Indiana.

We all went to the room at the library that had been cleaned out as a beginning room for the archives. We enjoyed deciding with the library staff how to fit all the basic furniture in the small room, ready for when the two big metal cabinets would arrive. Mary worked on a speech she was to give the college during a convocation of all students and faculty, while I got my clothes washed, dried in the windy sunny morning, and packed. As I was finishing packing right after lunch, a phone call came that the cabinets arrived and I rushed down the hill to see they had arrived safe, were installed in the right places, and the receipts were received.

We held the convocation and I explained how the archives project had been started by some younger Kenyans who attended the first QREC (Quaker Religious Education Collaborative) held in the same room at FTC exactly one year ago (not started by either older leaders of Africa or by overseas Friends). Mary then shared how she was led to come and her enthusiasm was felt by all. Robert then helped us all see how momentous an occasion this was to get the archives started, a way to learn from our predecessors, and a way to help the college be more important to all Friends in Africa. Students then asked questions eagerly.



Fitting cabinets into the small archive room



Robert welcoming us



Elizabeth sharing enthusiastically

In order to get back to Kakamega before dark, I had to leave FTC and travel to Elizabeth's home. There I packed up my bags ready to fly back to USA. Everyone there was eagerly getting ready for the big 100th birthday celebration that was happening in two days for their father/grandfather, Enock Irungu.

The next morning I took a piki to Amalemba Friends Church and meet with all my Kenyan support committee in the dining hall of the Kakamega Care Center (orphanage). Each of the women shared their joys and challenges they have been facing and we all prayed and encouraged each other. It has become a support committee not just for my ministry, but for the ministry of all these active women leaders who travel to Turkana, Uganda, and Tanzania as well as work at FTC, FUM offices, USFWK, etc.



Linnet, Zelikah, Margaret, and Eileen come early



Zelikah, Elizabeth, Eileen, Katrina, Margaret, and I

Katrina McConaughey then drove me down to Kisumu with all my luggage. I got to see Eden Grace and Kelly Kellum who had arrived at her house. Shawn and Kelly then escorted me to the airport. (Since Kelly's family have been living in East Africa at different times in their lives, he knew the African tradition of escorting friends to the airport who are leaving the country, praying for safe journeys.

I flew to Nairobi and met there Judith Nandikove who had just flown in the same hour from an AYP training in Indonesia. We ate a meal together and talked for two hours catching up on the start of the archives. She is the dynamic leader of the younger Friends who started the project and we joyfully shared the successful start.

I then caught the flight to Europe. Going through Paris is complicated, as all signs are only in French and directional signs are few and far between. Because the flight was late arriving, I had to run at full speed to get to the gate in time to board. The airlines then scheduled me to fly to JFK (New York) where I had to reconnect with bags and then dash across a series of roads

To another terminal to get the flight to Boston. There I was able to get the bus and was met by my neighbor and driven to my house. I got the fires started to heat the house, ate some hot soup and tea plus some fresh bread given my by my other neighbor, and slept soundly for around 12 hours.

Yesterday I awoke and drove down to our village to buy basic foods and met with my oldest sister, Louise for lunch. Then went home to unpack and sort through piles of mail. I tried to send this message out yesterday, but my internet was not working.

Thanks to all of you for all your support and prayers over these last couple months. I especially want to thank all those in East Africa who hosted and who worked with me.

Now I will be busy writing up all the financial reports, and adjusting to all my responsibilities back in my hometown. The ground has some snow cover, but mostly there has been rain and a lot of ice- not the usual winter we expect in this northern forested, mountainous area.

With grateful greetings to all and prayers for more peace in the world, Marian

Cold snowy woods
outside my house.
Kenya weather is
so much more
joyful!

