

Message 2- Kakamega and Kaimosi Oct 20-28, 2022

Greetings from western Kenya. Thought you would be interested in two things found in Ebwambwa. This week, Elizabeth found that safari ants, a kind of ant with strong jaws/bite that form long caravans of ants eating and biting anything in its path, entering into her house. She and others traced the trail of ants down into her shamba (garden). They burnt out the underground ant nest. However, the next day, when they went to sit down on the lawn they discovered more ants. These were traced to an enormous nest, that they dug out and destroyed. Nearby there was an indigenous tree with an enormous fern growing on a branch -Giant Staghorn (Platycterium grande). (see photos below)



*Staghorn fern*



*First safari ant nest found*



*Mother nest of safari ants*

On the 20<sup>th</sup>, Agneta and I went to FTC in Kaimosi and spend the night with Margaret Amudavi. We were taken to eat supper with the students. I was impressed that in an effort to become self-sustainable, the college had made a meal from their own shamba. We had cooked greens, posho (a staple food of white cornmeal cooked like mashed potatoes), plus both beef and liver from one of their young bullocks. To eat food you have grown yourself is both cheaper and far more nutritious. Elizabeth made a breakfast all from her own shamba- squash, roasted soy beans, and fresh papaya along with milky tea thanks to the cows.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> was FTC graduation. I had been invited by Evelyn Mukonambi who has travelled with us many times to Uganda. She got her Bachelor's Degree with Second Class honors. This year, Pamela Egesa from FTC was MC. Instead of the traditional hours spent introducing each visiting guest, she just had all Board members stand and be clapped for, all chiefs, all heads of neighboring schools, all faculty, and church leaders. The speaker spoke challenging the graduates. When some relatives tried to run up to put colorful leis around their graduating relative, Pamela told them to let all received their diplomas first, and afterwards decorate them. They also gave out Principals awards for the top student in each division. Many of these were women! Finally, John Muhanji led a commissioning of all the graduates along with any of the leaders of each yearly meeting they came from and had them all promise to make good use of what they have learned and to try to live with integrity, and for the YM leaders to promise to use and help give jobs to the graduates.



Pamela in pink leading the graduates in singing the last song.

Agneta congratulated Evelyn by giving her the lei.

I arrived at Agneta's (near Malava) and found that two of her sons are in the process of building their own houses on the family land, and four new puppies had been born.

On Sunday, I went to Ebwambwa Friends Church and found no one. They may have met early and then gone to a regional gathering? Instead, I spent the day preparing talks about Elizabeth Hooten, Sybil Jones, and Priscilla Makhino, three Quaker women who were amazing travelling ministers. These will be shared at the workshop I am leading at FTC next month. What a rich heritage we have as Quakers where women were treated as equal to men in ability to minister.

Monday was a joy of meeting with my Kenyan support committee. We had a productive meeting filled with joy, prayers and support of each other's ministry, not just my own. Edith Wekesa joined us via Zoom. We revised the travel schedule, and helped choose suitable companions to go with me to Uganda, Tanzania, Samburu, etc.



*Zelika, Linet, Evelyne, Agneta, Marian, Margaret, Getry.*

*Edith joined us via Zoom.*

Tuesday, I went to hot Kisumu, purchased air tickets for two coming from USA for the East African Pastors Conference, and tried to get my local bank account working again. They first said they had to see my original alien id card from 50 years ago! The local bank manager is trying to help me get the pin another way, as the identification numbers were never asked for back in the pre digital ages. This week, I am preparing for the workshop on Women Travelling in Ministry to other cultures.

Thanks for all your messages.

Marian