

BCAF REPORT '94

Once again considerable time has passed since arriving back from Kenya, and it is imperative that we do not delay any longer in issuing this report to you.

Bro Dan Jackson, sis Kaye Yuen and I entered Kenya on December 3, 1993 and met up with bro Ron Crocker who had arrived from New Zealand several hours earlier.

Our objective in making this trip was to provide the bre & sis in Kenya with encouragement in the Truth, and to assess the current situation there with respect to living and working conditions, and examine if there are ways to shape and enhance the current program to better serve their needs.

The trip had been postponed three times during the past two years. It is desirable that the frequency of the visits should be spaced not more than three years apart. This was the first visit since 1988 - five years!

The reason for the postponements was safety. Kenya had become embroiled in tribal clashes since early 1992, with much damage to property, many injuries, and some deaths. These

conditions were reported in considerable detail in the 1992 BCAF REPORT. Under such circumstances we felt it wise to wait for better conditions. The "better conditions" we were waiting for finally developed during the spring and summer of 1993 to the point where we felt the trip could be made with no greater risk to ourselves than on the 1988 trip.

Everywhere we went we encountered people from all walks of life wanting to hear and discuss the message of God's Word.

As usual, we began our tour with a day trip to Kitui to visit bro David Njoka, then after a few days in Nairobi we were off to visit the ecclesias in the Webuye, Bungoma, Nasianda, Kimilili and Busia areas. After spending about 8 days there we went back to Nairobi where we spent the remaining time. The days were very full everywhere we went. Activity in Nairobi was a positive high point of our trip - more on that later.

We were given a big Kenya welcome by the brethren and

sisters - so much so that one cannot help but feel like a celebrity! The reason for this is that the bre and sis are so overwhelmingly appreciative of the presence of overseas visitors and it appears to give them such a spiritual lift. Everywhere we went we encountered people from all walks of life wanting to hear and discuss the message of God's Word. There is so much to accomplish. We were busy most of the evenings (sometimes until midnight or later) visiting and receiving visits from "friends" interested in hearing more of the Gospel message.

All in all, we found the brethren and sisters to be faring reasonably well considering the ordeal they had come through over the past couple of years. We did observe the need for a correction to a statement made in the 1992 Report concerning the burning of houses. In the Report I stated that the houses of bre Manuel Wanyama, Joseph Mapesa and Gabriel Kuto had been burnt. That was only partially correct. Only bro Gabriel's house had been burnt. Some in Kenya felt that bro Epa had deliberately

sent misleading information. After we returned home I examined the original communication from bro Epa and found that the mistake was a result of a misinterpretation on my part. I apologize to bro Epa for any trouble that this may have caused for him.

It was encouraging, and most interesting for us to witness on several occasions the great knowledge, skill, and dexterity in the handling of the Word by bro Epaphras in the teaching of others, including, on one occasion, a Pentecostal minister - a particularly intriguing experience! It instills in all of us great confidence to witness the power of God's word in action. We all felt very comfortable that in Bro Epa's presence the Truth actively and powerfully lives and flourishes in Kenya. Yet in spite of that, it seems like

the people put a great deal of weight on hearing it from us - from those who have come from afar. It appears that they want confirmation that the message they are hearing from bro Epa and the other African brethren is the same as is taught by Christadelphians in other parts of the world, and that they can rest assured that they have those in their very midst that really can teach them the **WHOLE TRUTH**. This is not an unusual thing when dealing with human nature - "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country."

While we were visiting in the Bungoma area, we had the pleasure of attending the fall Bible School. This was held at a secondary school for girls which was not in use on account of the school holidays. It was held over the course of three **LONG** days,

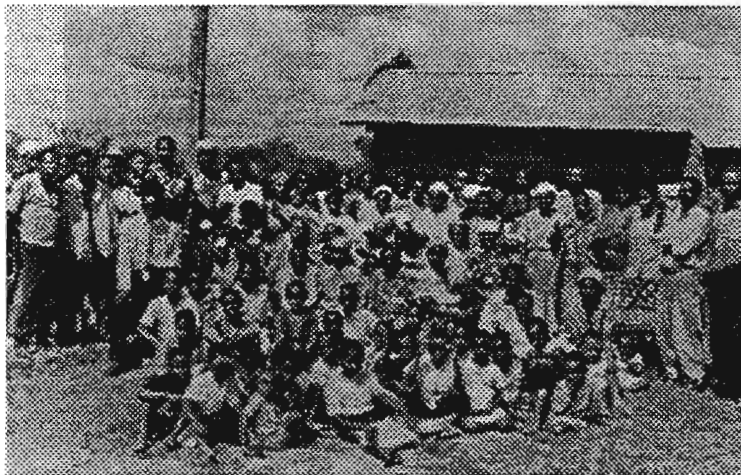
starting early in the morning and going well into the night, with almost solid talks, readings, singing and question and answer periods

BIBLE SCHOOL TOPICS:

1. The Hope of Israel
2. One Bible, Many Churches, Why?
3. The Return of Christ
4. Resurrection and Judgement
5. The True Baptism
6. Is the Doctrine of the Trinity Scriptural?
7. Heaven or Hell?
8. Earth the Abode of the Righteous
9. Why Should Sisters Cover Their Heads While Worshipping?
10. Breaking of Bread; Is it Necessary?
11. The Kingdom of God
12. The Nature of Christ
13. The Nature of Man

throughout. Bre and sis and friends (and children!) attending (about 90) sat attentively on crude hard wooden chairs in 90+F heat without complaint. It attests to their sincerity and overwhelming desire to drink in all that they can of the Truth. Truly the Kenya Bible Schools are a vital part of the fabric of ecclesial health and vigor in that part of the world. They are held three times a year and all the members look forward to them with great anticipation.

School premises such as this in which the Bible school was held provide a very secure place for gatherings of this sort. They are, for the most part, exempt from government scrutiny (although the danger of official interference has greatly diminished since the



KIMIKUNGI - "60+ people crammed into a 12' x 16' building"

introduction of the multi-party system), and they are surrounded by security fences with security guards

...for the Sunday memorial service ... 60+ people were crammed into a 12' x 16' "hall"

at each gate to protect from vandals, etc.

It seems that on this trip as we visited the various ecclesias, the method of question and answer sessions was used much more extensively than in the past as a very effective way of teaching. Sometimes this would be held in very small, confined and crowded quarters (such as for the Sunday memorial service where 60+ people were crammed into a 12' x 16' "hall"), and at other times we would all gather around outdoors in a circle under the shade of a tree.

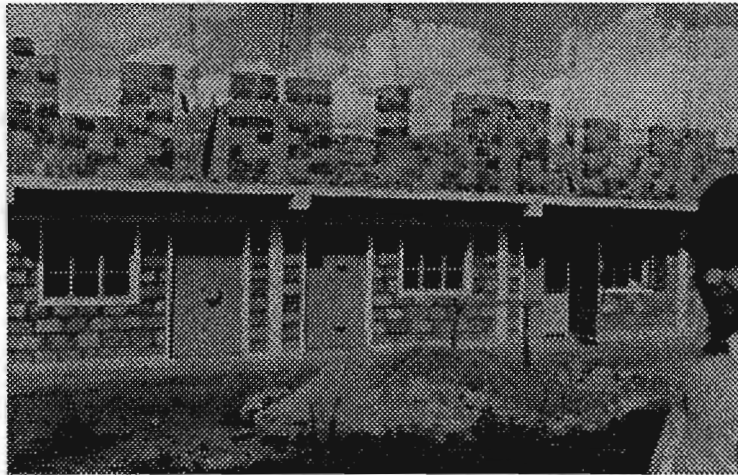
PROJECTS

The subject of "projects" is certainly not new. We have written extensively in the past describing the projected proposals and discussing their feasibility. Currently we are still involved in helping a few (6) students complete their education so that they can obtain better quality and better paying jobs. Some have now graduated and are employed, so it does appear to be worthwhile.

L. Primary School Project:

Truly education is more than ever an important key to many of the problems of day-to-day life in Kenya - albeit a temporary one as we do realize that the things of this life are constantly deteriorating throughout the world, and nothing but the return of the Lord Jesus Christ will put an end to it.

may not seem like much to us, but to put it into context we need to understand that the average salary for a professional secretary in Nairobi is under \$60 U.S. /month, and a teacher is quite happy with \$125 /month - most earn less. To realize the impact of this we need to put ourselves in their shoes and try to work out a



Proposed Primary School Building - Nairobi

But in the meantime it is working, and is perhaps more vital now than ever before in our 12 year experience with Kenya because the government can no longer afford to subsidize the cost of education, so students are left on their own to find a means to pay their way.

It appears that the current cost to attend elementary and high school is about \$20.00 U.S. per month including books, supplies, etc. This

family budget based on those figures! Sister Mary Agnes told me that in the country even those who have land

... the government can no longer afford to subsidize the cost of education ...

holdings are forced to sell off small parcels each year just to pay for their children to go to school. This of course diminishes their ability to produce the necessities of

life, and it begins a vicious circle that all too frequently ends in poverty before the children are well enough educated to begin earning a wage that will help to support the family.

Probably on account of this intense weight of financial pressure and burden being experienced by parents just to send their children to school, we were not in Kenya for one day when we were approached with a request to organize a school in Nairobi.

At first this seemed like a project beyond contemplation, but we sat and listened to the proposal anyway. Over the next few days we discussed among ourselves the pros and cons of the proposal, and as we did so, it began to make sense for several reasons:

1. A project such as this would require registration of the group, something we have been trying to do for years in Kenya with no success. In discussing the matter with a government official, it was made very clear to us that the Kenya Government would be very desirous to register a group that would sponsor a school. Almost all schools in Kenya are now owned or sponsored by Church organizations. The government has no money to do it themselves, and are therefore encouraging other groups and organizations to



Sisters' Project at Busia

do it. Actually any group involved in a worthwhile project of any kind now have little trouble getting registered. A case in point is The Berean Christadelphian Sisters Group at Busia who have already become registered on account of an ongoing worthwhile project they have embarked upon. I understand that they even used the name "Berean Christadelphian" on the registration!

2. Such a school would be set up in new areas which would be lacking in school facilities, and therefore we would not be in competition with other schools - something which might cause problems with registration.

3. An ecclesial hall has become very necessary in Nairobi (the largest city in Kenya) on account of the numerous amount of

interested friends. The promotion of the Truth in Nairobi would take on much greater momentum if there were a meeting place where people could gather on weeknights for reading and study, and the children on Sunday for Sunday School, and, of course, the brethren and sisters for memorial service. The homes are too small to accomplish all of this effectively for the numbers of interested friends that we have observed. A school building would fill this need wonderfully, and on account of its use as a school there would be no drain on the BCAF to cover the cost.

4. There is a vital need to establish the presence of bro Epaphras in Nairobi. He needs to be in a place where it is easier for us to communicate with him effectively and quickly, making use of the telephone

and fax machine. As of last year, on account of the unrest at Cheptais, he was moved to another school for awhile, then was asked to return to Cheptais. He refused to accept the position on account of the extreme danger, and has since been without a teaching position. We feel it is time to turn this unfortunate situation to the advantage of the Truth and station Bro Epa in Nairobi, organizing and perhaps teaching at a school sponsored either by the BCAF or by private individuals among ourselves. The projected equipment at the school would of course include a telephone and fax machine!

5. It appears that the school would easily support itself even while providing a lower cost alternative for parents to educate their children. The numbers look something like this:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Initial Startup Costs (In U.S. currency): | |
| One year's rent in advance - | \$1200.00 |
| Equipment and misc material - | \$570.00 |
| Telephone installation - | \$85.00 |
| Total - | \$1855.00 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Projected Income (monthly): | |
| 30 students @ \$11.50 / month - | \$345.00 |

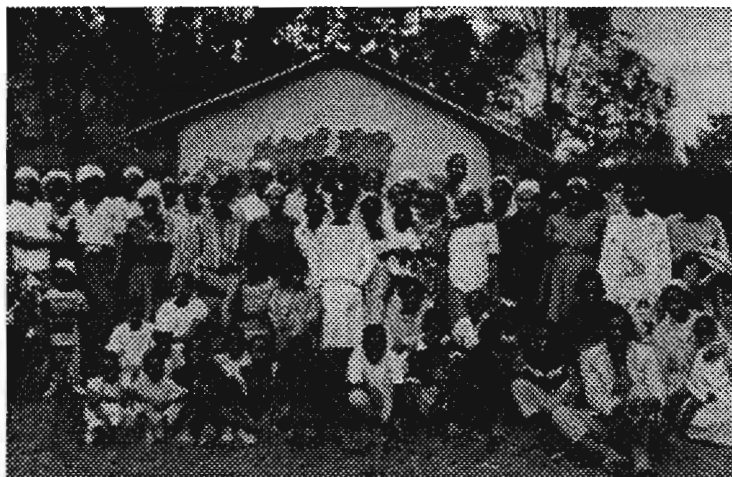
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| Projected Expenses (monthly): | |
| Teacher's salary - | \$100.00 |
| Rental fund (for next year's rent) - | \$100.00 |
| Electrical - | \$7.00 |
| Phone - | \$22.00 |
| Total monthly Expenses - | \$230.00 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Net monthly surplus - | \$115.00 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|

We feel that a cap should be put on the amount of surplus that would be

allowed to accumulate, the excess being used to support other needs in Kenya, to subsidize situations where

funds would only be needed to get the project STARTED; afterwards, it would either support itself, or it would



Busia Group (at time of photo, only 2 in Busia were members; now 5)

parents are not able to afford to send their children to school, and/or to help sponsor similar school

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projects in other areas.

What we need at this point is some input from you brethren and sisters as to whether you would like to see a project such as this go ahead, and if so, how you would like it to be funded initially - whether from the fund, or by private donations. Keep in mind that

have to be terminated.

II. Other Projects:

The school was not the only project discussed. There is a growing trend in Kenya toward the development of women's groups, or "Co-ops". They each develop a plan to take on a project and organize themselves around it - like the women's group at Busia who have an ongoing agricultural project, and they have already seen to the matter of registering themselves. As I recall, they even used the name "Berean Christadelphian" on the registration!

Sister Kaye did a commendable job of designing a method and procedure for groups such as this to submit

their project proposals to the BCACK and from thence to the BCAF committee. We feel it will be well accepted and used. We did try to make it clear that even a well organized plan would not mean automatic sponsorship of the project, but, if the proposals were submitted properly, we would try to respond quickly with a reply - yes, no, or maybe. We were very impressed with the Busia project (see photo on p. 4). Projects such as that warrant support.

SISTER FAITH WEKATI

Probably most of you have heard by this time that brother Epaphras is married and has two children (both boys). His wife is sister Faith (formerly Wepukuru) who we had the pleasure of interviewing for baptism in 1988. She is a wonderful, warm, caring, well educated and capable sister who has

the Truth at heart and is a great help-mate for brother Epa. This wonderful news was a surprise to us to say the least; the reasons for the silence was personal, being, as I understand it, related to problems with sister Faith's family; problems which are now apparently cleared up. This union is one which we feel will have great benefit for the Truth in Kenya. Sister Faith has taken on the task of being Sister Kaye's counterpart in Western Kenya - coordinating the Sisters Groups project proposals. She will also have the unenviable task of helping to organize bro Epa with the heavy accounting and correspondence workload!

BRO PHILIP WEKATI

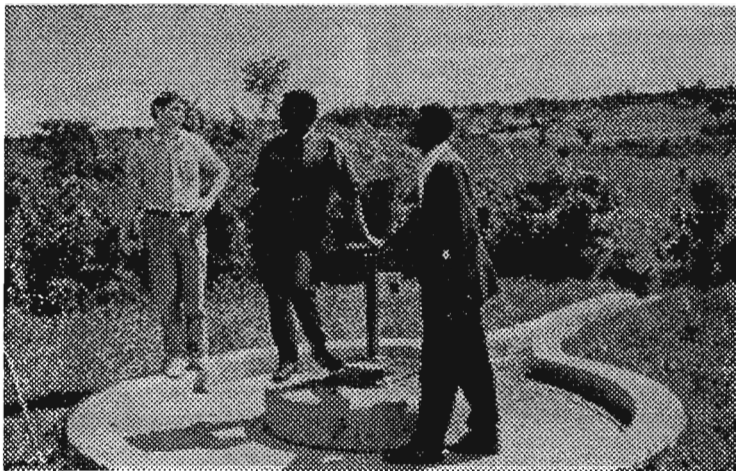
Being no longer involved in politics, he applied for refellowship. Bro Epa delayed the interview with

him until we arrived. In attendance was bro Philip, Epa, Dan, and myself. The interview was very simple and straight-forward. Without prompting, bro Philip emphatically acknowledged that his participation in politics was against the commandments of Christ, and that he was wrong to have done so. He openly expressed repentance and asked for readmission to fellowship. We indicated to him that we felt we could not, under such circumstances, withhold our fellowship from him, but at the same time acknowledged that the final verdict of forgiveness must be left up to our Righteous Judge at the Day of Judgement. Only he knows the hearts!

NAIROBI

Nairobi was a major focus for activity on this trip - greater perhaps, than the 1984 trip in terms of new interested "friends" who seemed to be popping up to see us at almost every turn. Also somewhat different on this trip was the amount of time spent visiting these "friends" in their respective homes. I have lost track of the number of individuals we met and spoke to on the subject of God's Truth; I would estimate about 15 - 20.

We anticipate that at least a few of these may soon form a very welcome addition to Sis



Water Well Project at Kimikungi (L-R, bro Dan, Bro Epa, & "Rogers")

Mary Agnes' lone presence as representing the light of the Truth in Nairobi. So far she

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has continued in the Truth in a situation of isolation. Certainly our driver James Njau and his wife Lucy are very interested and are both deeply involved in learning the Truth. It would appear that Nairobi may well be the site of the next major ecclesial growth in Kenya. One cannot be in Kenya for long without having an overwhelming feeling of inadequacy in the face of the enormity of the task of teaching the Truth to so many people who want to hear more.

BIBLES AND BIKES

Right now, other than the support for the basic necessities of life (food clothing & shelter), these two items are perhaps - in the order stated - the two things most asked of us to obtain. When we returned to Nairobi from the Bungoma area, we thought we would have no problem to find Bibles. But we were wrong. We had to look in many places before we finally found a Bible store that could give us what we needed - inexpensive KJV Bibles in Swahili. We had

even more difficulty finding KJVs in English!

We also purchased two bicycles in Nairobi - one for brother David Njoka, and one for use by the BCACK to assist them in visiting the ecclesias more effectively. We were looking for used bikes, but found a place that sold good quality new bikes for less than what we were quoted for used.

There are perhaps many other things that I could comment upon, but I think this has covered the main features of the 1993 trip. We hope things will continue to progress as well as they seemed to progress while we were there. We definitely had the feeling that we had perhaps started some new initiatives and enthusiasm

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and momentum that would hopefully keep rolling even in our absence. Whether this is so remains to be seen. James was especially excited and enthusiastic about our efforts in bringing the message of the Truth to Nairobi, and I am sure that he would have desperately liked for us never to leave. We hope that he will soon become a brother. He is a

great organizer. Kenya needs more like him and bro Epa. Together, working as a team, they would make a tremendous impact in bringing people to the Truth. But hope and pray as we might, we must realize that all is in God's hands, and only according to His purpose it will - or will not - happen.

We are thankful to all the ecclesias and individual brethren and sisters who so generously supported our trip to Kenya. We know that you have been awaiting the result of our visit, and trust that this report will help to answer some of your questions and concerns.

We cannot emphasize enough that the need is always present to assist with the day by day needs of food, clothing, shelter, education, etc., and we appreciate every single contribution that is made, large or small. We are aware that in that more and more people are facing times of financial crisis and it is becoming increasingly difficult to find extra funds to put toward projects such as this. For that reason we feel a great weight of responsibility to monitor and control where this money goes and how it is spent.

For those who may be concerned or who may be questioning the expediency of supporting the Kenya

brethren and sisters in this manner, we suggest that the extreme alternative (cutting off totally the sending of funds to Kenya), in view of the conditions over there, is unthinkable as long as we live in such comparative luxury and comfort and affluence. Truly the difference between their standard of living and ours (even the poorest of us) is nothing less than shocking. To give a portion of that which we possess in excess of food, clothing and shelter is a freewill offering well-pleasing to our Creator. However, we are always

searching for ways to make the program more effective, efficient and self-sustaining, as we realize that the time may come when the fund may not be able to support the current level of assistance. The projects presently being considered and implemented are a step in that direction.

This report is by no means a detailed account of our activities while in Kenya. Sis Kaye, bro Dan and bro Ron have each documented their own thoughts and observations which I personally found to be of great interest. For those who would like to

follow up and learn more about this latest Kenya tour, I suggest that you contact these individuals as I am sure they would be quite happy to share their observations with you.

We welcome your questions, suggestions, and input in any way. In the meantime we will endeavour to do our best to keep you informed and up-to-date on the progress of the Truth in Kenya.

On behalf of the Committee,

Your brother in Grace,

Ed Truelove

