

DUMELA



Newsletter from Botswana Sweden Friendship Association No 3/2012

Dear BOTSFA members!



The arrival of autumn or fall takes away the flowers that

decorate our forests and woods and the berries that bring sweet tastes on our plates. But let's not forget that nature has a way of maintaining its beautiful decoration of the earth. In Sweden, trees are being clad with beautiful nuances of leave colours and delicatessens such as mushrooms have become part of our dinner tables.

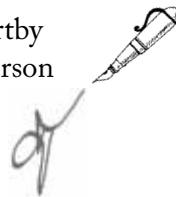
It is at this time of the year that the heart longs for Botswana where nature is decorating jacarandas, syringas, flamboyant trees and bougainvilleas with beautiful varieties of flower colours. Yes, life gives and takes...

In this issue of Dumela, you will read an article on an interview with Kent Nilsson about his appointment as Swedish Consul in Botswana and a glimpse into the presentations made at the most recent BOTSFA informal get-together.

Dumela welcomes any article you may wish to share with its readers. There are many stories to tell and many tellers. Your story will uniquely find a place in Dumela.

Don't forget to enter the 2012 Photo Competition!

Julia Majaha-Järtby
BOTSFA Chairperson



New Swedish Honorary Consul in Botswana – Kent Nilsson

Dumela held a long distance interview = an »e-interview« with Kent Nilsson, recently appointed Swedish Honorary Consul in Botswana. Dumela wishes Kent all the best for the future as Consul.

visit www.botsfa.nu



New Swedish Honorary Consul in Botswana – Kent Nilsson

Consulate Coat of Arms at Sanitas

Here I keep quite some information material on Sweden, received from the Embassy in Pretoria. There are small Swedish flags placed on the table and I have just had a map of Sweden framed which will soon be hanging on the wall next to a photograph of the King and Queen given to me when I was visiting the Embassy in Pretoria. I will, of course, give prime space for Dumela displays.

TEXT **Ulla Odqvist** PHOTO **Katja Nilsson**

►► How did it all start?

–I had lunch at Sanitas Tea Garden with Kaj Persson, Minister and Deputy Head at the Embassy in Pretoria last February. He asked me if I would be interested in being the Swedish Honorary Consul. The question completely took me by surprise as I was not aware that the Swedish Foreign Ministry was looking for a new Consul. I know some people who are Consuls for their countries, so I already had a fairly good idea of what the work entailed. I, of course, felt honoured to be offered the position. But it felt quite funny to be asked, sitting there in my shorts and flip-flops, not looking at all like a Consul.

What does it mean to be a Consul?

–I will be the link between Botswana and the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria. In case of emergencies, I'm expected to help out by using my local knowledge of Botswana.

Within his area of responsibilities, the Consul is also responsible for communicating general information that might

be of interest to the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria. Visa applications are handled by the German Embassy, the mission responsible for Sweden in Botswana for the Schengen cooperation – as there is no Swedish Embassy in Botswana. Regarding passports, Swedish citizens must visit the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria to personally apply for renewals or replacements.

How will you balance between your work with Sanitas and your new responsibilities?

–I don't think that being Consul will affect my work at Sanitas very much – it won't take too much of my time. The Consulate has started with official business hours a few times a week, but I also expect people to reach me via my mobile phone to make appointments, or inform me of a visit, before coming to the office. I'm using Sanitas' boardroom as the official premises and this was actually my father's old office. I'm sure he would have been very pleased of my appointment as Swedish Honorary Consul.

Are you being paid for the job?

–Swedish Honorary Consuls don't get paid; it is an honourable and voluntary commitment.

Have you had time to prepare yourself for the tasks given?

–I think I'm fairly well prepared. I was given a handbook and quite a bit of reading material. If I don't know the answer to a question, I will find out in one way or another. At this moment I feel a renewed and great interest in reading and learning more about Sweden and Swedish history. Sweden is a very special country – I'm very proud to be Swedish. I think that I see progress and improvements in Sweden every time I visit my country of origin.

Have you had time to think/learn about »consular cases«, specifically emergency cases?

–In such cases I will use my discretion and act quickly when necessary. It is really about being in close contact with the Embassy, but also helping people to



At dad Gus Nilsson's experimental farm in Hukuntsi



With Ambassador Peter Tejler at Sanitas

help themselves. I am familiarizing myself with possible action to be taken when/if such situations occur. One of my first questions at the Embassy in Pretoria was what I should do if people lose their passports. The reply I got was that each case will have to be assessed individually by the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria. In an extreme emergency, the German Embassy in Gaborone might help out with a temporary passport to enable the person to travel to Pretoria. A Swedish Consul has no mandate to issue temporary passports.

Have there been any articles in the Botswana press about your appointment?

–The Swedish Embassy sent a Note Verbale to all Diplomatic Missions in Botswana and relevant ministries and departments in Botswana about the appointment, on July 14th. However, there has been no article in the papers regarding the appointment. But, I have noticed that people have started to approach me when they see the Consul Coat of Arms (sign) at the entrance of Sanitas Tea Garden. I think this will be the nicest

part of my being Consul, meeting new people from all walks of life. I have always taken joy in encountering new people.

Do you expect an increase in the number of people visiting Sanitas for information on Sweden?

–My contacts with authorities in Botswana will be fairly limited as most of the communication probably goes directly to and from the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria. Botswana is still a small country where one fairly easily gets to know people in all kinds of positions and places. I think people are more accessible here in Botswana compared to other countries. I have generally never had any problems in getting to know people whoever and wherever they are. Yes, there may be growth in the number of people visiting the Consulate. Time will tell.

How is Sanitas as an official location for the consulate?

–I think Sanitas is a great location for the Swedish Consulate. Tourists and business people often come to Sanitas when visiting Gaborone and, as I said, I enjoy meeting new people –

it is a good way for staying in touch with what is happening in Sweden and elsewhere. I feel very privileged that I can incorporate this into my daily work. Being the Swedish Consul will definitely strengthen my connection with Sweden.

How is your family viewing the appointment?

–My children, aged eleven and seven, have travelled to Sweden on numerous occasions, which is, I feel, very important for them to stay in touch with Sweden and its culture – as they were born and live in Botswana. My wife, Katja, is Dutch and moved to southern Africa as a young child. Botswana has been her home since she was a teenager.

–Amazingly, Katja has been recently approached by the Dutch Honorary Consul asking if she would be interested in becoming the next Dutch Honorary Consul in a year's time. She also met with the Dutch Ambassador who was visiting Gaborone from Pretoria. Katja has not yet decided. We all thought it was quite funny... two Consuls in one family!

NOTICE BOARD

At least 30 BOTSFA members and friends of Botswana attended the informal get-together at GRAPPA on August 27, featuring a talk by Mike Main, a freelance writer, living in Botswana. Mike presented an engaging a light-hearted fantasy-filled search for glory entitled, »The Lost City of the Kalahari«. He left the audience to judge for itself which of the stories he was telling was true about who had found the lost city in the Kalahari and exactly where. Mike, a good storyteller, concluded the presentation by challenging the audience to join in the search for the lost city.



BOTSFA Photo Competition



REMINDER!

**submissions to the annual
BOTSFA Photo Competition**

**NEW DEADLINE
30 November 2012**

- Submit 1–3 photos.
- Theme »**Botswana – Sweden 50 years of partnership**« as reflected in the various development fields there has been cooperation between Sweden and Botswana. The winning pictures may feature in a coffee table book to commemorate 50 years of Botswana's independence in 2016.

Rules

- The picture(s) should have been taken by the member
- Prints, slides, scanned or digital images
- All entries may be printed in Dumela or shown on BOTSFA's website

Images may be sent electronically to **per@jartby.com** or by post to **Per Järtby**
Olof Skötkonungs väg 25
193 32 Sigtuna
Sweden

The pictures will be anonymously judged by a jury to be constituted.

BOTSFA member Marlén Lock informed the get-together participants about her photo exhibition which was being held at Fotostudio Jini Sofia in Stockholm during August 25–28.

Anna Gunterberg from Afrika-grupperna talked briefly about a campaign, Fair Trade Promotion, in relation to choosing wines produced under worker-supportive conditions. For more information of the campaign, please visit www.mittvinval.se.

PHOTO Lillie Marlén Lock

Membership fee reminder

In case you have inadvertently forgotten to pay your membership fee for 2012, please do. BOTSFA greatly appreciates your ongoing support.

Plusgiro: 85 10 39-8

Bankgiro: 428-6472

FEES

Individual: 175 SEK

Family: 300 SEK

Student: 100 SEK

Institution/company: 500 SEK



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