

DUMELA



Newsletter from Botswana Sweden Friendship Association No 1/2011

Dear BOTSFA members!

The Annual General Meeting 2011 is fast approaching. The date has been set for Saturday March 26 – venue, time, program and other relevant documents will be sent to you by e-mail. This year, however, we will not hold the AGM at Etnografiska museet like has been the case in previous years. This is due to the retirement of Anne Murray, who has been not only the link to the museum for many years, but also the »Master« of practical organization. In 2011 the AGM will be held, in conjunction with the AGM of SveZim, at a venue to be announced. Unfortunately time became too short to plan for the »customary« event with the associations of South Africa, Namibia and Zambia. This will, however, be considered for the 2012 AGM.

Four years have passed since I was first elected Chairperson. I have now decided to leave the Chair to someone else. I believe in change of leadership to let new ideas come forward on how to continue to broaden the already existing fruitful relations and contacts between Sweden and Botswana. Thank

you warmly for your support during my four years!

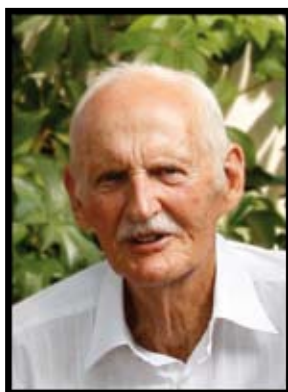


PHOTO Per Järby

A sad event is the passing away on February 12, 2011 of Gösta »Gus« Nilsson (83), a long-standing member of BOTSFA and owner of Sanitas plant nursery in Botswana. Gus will be greatly missed by many who have known him over the years.

Inside this Dumela Newsletter you will read about the graduation at »Bright Faces Day Care Centre«, run by Neo Chitombo; a report on the Handicraft Market in December last year at Etnografiska museet, and an article written by Mats Ögren Wanger who participated in the 150 kilometer long walk on Makgadikgadi pans in July last year. Enjoy reading!

Remember to look at the Notices on page 4: please pay your membership fee as soon as possible; also, take a few minutes to visit www.botsfa.nu and look for the next informal Get-together date and venue, an event that has become popular for meeting Members of BOTSFA and friends of Botswana.

Maybe somebody would take the initiative to start something similar in other places in Sweden!

I look forward to continue working for BOTSFA, however in another position! Hope to meet with you at the AGM! Best regards,

Ulla Odqvist
BOTSFA's
Chairperson



Ulla Odqvist



PHOTO Viera Larsson

Two rondavels from Thamaga pottery in Botswana on a Swedish winter-balcony.

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www.botsfa.nu



Makgadikgadi Pans Walk

– an Beautiful Endurance with Stellan Bengtsson in the lead TEXT & PHOTO Mats Ögren Wanger

Dumela met with Stellan Bengtsson, Coordinator of Y Care, during the 2010 annual Makgadikgadi Pans Walk. Asked what Y Care's objectives are, Stellan is quick to state the organisation's main aim, »raising funds for charities in Botswana for the benefit of vulnerable children, youths and women, including donations to art, sports and culture«.

– Funds are raised through the organisation of sponsored walks in geographical areas of cultural and heritage interest for the walkers, Stellan explains. He is also quick to add that he works together with a logistics support team, backed by a very supportive and hands on Board.

On what challenges he faces as a coordinator, Stellan singles out TIME. – There are too few days in a year! A »minor«, but workable, issue is that all details, big and small are of equal importance. But, even with all the care with the preparations, mistakes do happen. It's the challenges and mistakes that make the coordination interesting. Yes, there has to be something to talk about after the walk! One has no choice but to think out of the box and be innovative, Stellan adds.

Dumela learns that Y Care was founded, as a trust, in 2005. The first organised sponsored walk was in 2004 – the Makgadikgadi Pans Walk. Since then, Y Care has added a new walk each year.

– The seed to what Y Care is today was planted by some friends and families of the founding and existing



board members. Y Care's driving spirit has always been care for others, says Stellan.

On the name of the organisation, Stellan asserts that there were many suggestions. But it always came back to one question, »Why should we care?« This provided the name and foundation of Y Care Charitable Trust, and it makes sense.

Y Care has traditionally focused on two walks – the Makgadikgadi Pans Walk and Tsodilo Hills Walk (not part of the 2011 walks). Both are beautiful walks and about the mind. Stellan explains that it doesn't matter if you walk on a plain (sometimes muddy) pan surface 40–50 kilometres per day for 3 days (http://botsfa.nu/magazine/PanWalk2010/pan_walk.html) OR are walking on a very sandy bush road on your way to Tsodilo Hills. – It's all about one's mind. The reward of the journey to Tsodilo lies in reaching the beautiful and mystical Tsodilo Hills. On the Pans you have the stunning 360 degrees NOTHINGNESS around you! Whether you do the Makgadikgadi Pans or the Tsodilo Hills walk, which can both leave you

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SCHEDULE OF WALKS FOR 2011

MONTH	DATE	WALK	AREA
May	19–23	The Tuli Block Walk	Tuli Block
June	3–5	Tachila/ Dom-boshaba	Francis-town area
June	17–20	The Kgalakgadi Dunes Walk	Tsabong/ Bokspits
July	15–19	The Pans Walk	Makgadikgadi Pans
August	12–15	The Mid-night Walk	Makgadikgadi Pans

*** Y Care Charitable Trust has given P 2 000 000 to charities since 2004**



Coordinator of Y Care Charitable Trust

BORN in Falkenberg, Sweden

MARRIED to Mavis

TWO CHILDREN: Hazel/11 and Anders/3

LIVE in Gaborone (North), Botswana



Bright Faces Daycare Centre 2010 Graduation-Kids get wings

TEXT **Julia Majaha-Järtby** PHOTO **Per Järtby**

– Today is both a sad and happy day for me. Sad that 18 of my kids will be leaving me to start school but happy that they are continuing to find their wings, says Neo Chitombo, pointing at different corners of the tent that will serve as the shield from the hot sun.

It's November 27, a Saturday filled with joy and broad smiles on many faces. Neo invited BOTSFA to the graduation a month or so in advance of the day. My husband, Per and I, who were in Botswana at the time, decided to attend on behalf of BOTSFA and Dumela captured the moment.

We arrive at 8:45 for a 9 am start. We are greeted by Neo's beautiful smile but the rest of what I see shows no signs of a function that can start in 15 minutes. There are a few helping hands to decorate the tent, lay the tables and set up the jumping castle. We join in to prepare for the party and, before long, there is a loud blast of music.

At 9:45, a few more people start trickling in. Neo asks if we would like something to drink. We ask for water. Clothes are clinging on us from the scorching hot sun. I ask Neo where the graduates are.

– They are in the classroom. They will come out once most of the parents and invited guests arrive. I wish Botswana time could start early, Neo laughs.

On the tables lie a beautifully designed program with a picture, and name, of each graduate dressed in a graduation gown. The program has a well-thought-through blend of speakers and entertainers. – I wonder where Neo finds time to do all this, I mumble to myself. Everything has a touch of selflessness, diligence and care!

At 10:15 the MC, Segopotso, steps on the stage, takes the microphone and asks everyone to be seated. Five minutes later there is a line of kids coming from the classroom, all dressed in white T-shirts with bright green and red text. Neo and two other teachers assemble them on the stage. Suddenly the tent is filled with sweet toddler voices singing the national anthem.

The DJ fills the air with Shakira's

2010 World Cup song, Waka Waka (This Time for Africa). Bright Faces and Kumakwane come to life with the marching of proud little graduates receiving certificates and presents followed by song and dance and small bodies bouncing up and down the jumping castle.

I leave Kumakwane feeling privileged that I was part of a beautiful occasion, Botswana time or not!

Bright Faces Daycare, Kumakwane, Botswana

ESTABLISHED **July 2007**

DISTANCE FROM GABORONE **20 km and visibly located along the Gaborone-Kanye road**

NO. OF KIDS **30**

NO. OF TEACHERS **2**

FEE **BWP 300/month (appr. SEK 300)**

Depends entirely on the fees: does not receive any subsidy from government, local authority, or private donations



with blisters and sore thighs, your mind will say to you: well done and see you next year!

– As I mentioned earlier, the pans walks are about the mind,

says Stellan who also explains that the daily walks are structured such that the walkers have a break every 6 kilometres. – One doesn't need to be super-fit to do the walk. But, of course, it helps to have done some longer stretches each month leading up to the walk, he adds. Stellan further explains that, in case of anyone needing help, the walk provides quad bikes and support vehicles for moving to the next point.

– The Makgadikgadi Pans Walk is for everyone who thinks he/she can manage a 3-day walk and is not ready to easily give up. We walk approximately 45 kilometres per day and it doesn't matter how old you are, says Stellan. According to his recount, the walk attracted fairly young walkers at inception, including age groups 18–25 years. – They tended to be too confident about their capacity to finish the walk. Some would give up after the first 6 kilometres on the first day! Stellan points out.

Dumela asks if there is an ideal age range for the walks. Stellan gives Nicky Bousfield (80) as a shining example of age being a matter of the mind. – Nicky has done several pan-walks with Y Care and did her last 3-day pan walk when she was 78! It all boils down to where you put your mind and how far you want to work with your inner self, no matter the age.

– On my first ever Y Care walk to the Tsodilo Hills, I had to say goodbye to my jogging shoes. This was after 10 years' of the shoes' loyal service! Unfortunately, the "minor" holes in the shoes made them fill up with sand every 10 minutes. I had »lovely« big blisters! A happy, or should I say the happiest, moment was in 2009 when, after I had done 11 Y Care walks, I finished WITHOUT a blister! It felt like I had a second honeymoon with my feet, Stellan muses.

PLEASE, PAY THE MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR 2011.

BOTSFA has both Bankgiro and Plusgiro accounts. You will find account nos. on the last page of Dumela or on our website: www.botsfa.nu. Also, when paying, remember to state your name/s.

STATE VISIT TO BOTSWANA – King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will pay a State Visit to Botswana on March 22–25, 2011 on the invitation of H.E. the President of the Republic of Botswana, Seretse Khama Ian Khama. Representatives from the Swedish Government, as well as a Delegation from Swedish Trade and Industry, will accompany the King and Queen.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2011 has been set for March 26. Invitation, program, venue and other relevant documents will be sent to Members by e-mail.

Handicraft Market at Etnografiska museet/Museum of Ethnography TEXT Anne Murray PHOTO Ulla Odqvist

On December 5 through 19, the Museum of Ethnography in cooperation with the Embassy of Botswana, the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture in Botswana, and BOTSFA exhibited a handicraft Christmas market.

The opening, with representatives from the four organisers, welcomed many visitors. The Embassy was represented by Ishmael Dabutha and Pretty Phologolo, the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture by Dimpho Tumisang, the Museum by Anne Murray, and BOTSFA by its Chairperson, Ulla Odqvist. Other members of BOTSFA took turns in selling the artefacts and were always accompanied by Dimpho. Baskets of different shapes were the most popular among the artefacts, as well as necklaces, bracelets, and earrings made of ostrich eggshells. A woman's dress, in typical Botswana pattern (English cotton), was sold on the first day to a Botswana admirer and fan. The visitors also appreciated the display of other handicrafts in fur and leather, mats and cushions. The museum bought some of the artefacts for its workshop, and a tapestry from Odi Weavers to hang in the library.

The Market was a success – well in time for Christmas shopping – and few things remained at the time of closure. Information material about Botswana was also distributed and the market inspired discussions and release of more information about Botswana.



PUBLISHER: Ulla Odqvist
Sundkarlsbacken 5c, 645 30 Strängnäs
Tel +46 (0)70 920 89 87
e-mail: ullaO@botsfa.nu

PUBLISHING AGENT: Viera Larsson
Visual Communication AB

EDITORS: Julia Majaha-Järtby & Mats Ögren Wanger

MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES: Ulla Beckman
Gumshornsgatan 6, 11460 Stockholm
Tel 08-6670328 (res.)
e-mail: ullaBn@botsfa.nu

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