

Storytellers In Malawi

News from Ian and
Lindsay Farrimond

September 2016

Settling back into life and in Malawi

Greetings from Malawi where, I am delighted to say, the weather is beginning to turn a little more African-like rather than the British-type of weather we have 'enjoyed' since our return (in other words, chilly).

At the time of writing, Lindsay and I are coming up to a month back in Blantyre. It has been a month of transition and of getting various things sorted out. On the whole it has been enjoyable but there have also been some frustrations and also a feeling of getting back to grips with Malawian life, not least the regular, and often long, power outages.

Frustrations

Some of the frustrations involved trying to get a handle on how the registration of vehicles had changed in time we had been back in the UK. You can read about this on his blog:

<https://readerwritesblog.wordpress.com/2016/09/05/lord-give-me-patience-but-give-it-me-now/>

On a more positive note, it has been good to reconnect with friends and colleagues at SIM Malawi and with our church family at the Africa Evangelical Church (AEC) in Naotcha. Lindsay has already got involved with the ladies group at the church (see the article overleaf).

Cosmetic changes

We have noticed major changes in the way Blantyre looks. There has been a big push to 'Make Malawi Beautiful', led by Gertrude Mutharika, the wife of the Malawian President.

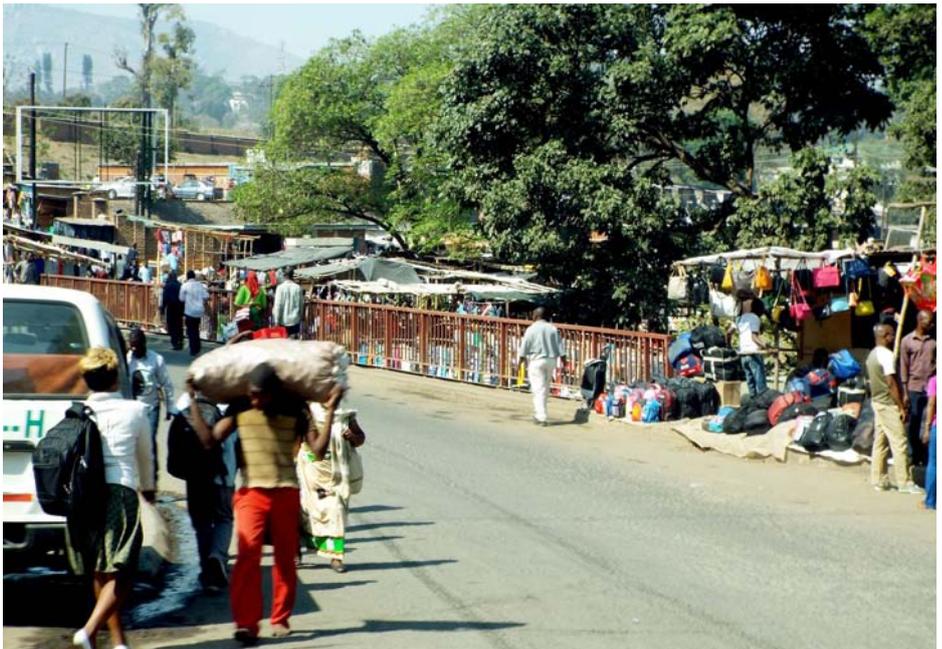
One marked improvement has been the removal of lots of plastic bags which had festooned trees and bushes around the place.

The area around Blantyre market has also been spruced up and long-needed repairs to the bridge over the Mudi River carried out so it is

safer for pedestrians (if they choose to use the new footpath!). But perhaps the biggest change has been on a major road – the only dual carriageway in Blantyre – where the central reserve and roundabouts have been smartened up; many are now sponsored by companies, and this is all adding to a feel-good factor around the city.

Feeling of change

Yes, there are still problems with poverty and hunger, following two bad years of either too much or too little rain, and there are still beggars all around the place. But there is a feeling of change for the better which seems to be filtering down into people's lives.



The area around the market has been cleared of masses of blue plastic bags that used to festoon the trees, and the bridge has been repaired



Contact Details

Email -

ian.farrimond@sim.org
lindsay.farrimond@sim.org

Mail

SIM Malawi,
PO Box 136,
Blantyre,
Malawi

Give Praise Safe Arrival

*That we and all our luggage
arrived in the same place at the
same time!*

Resuming

*For getting back in touch with
colleagues at SIM Malawi and
AEC Naotcha and for getting
back into work*

Please Pray for Relationships

*On-going development of
relationships at AEC Naotcha
as we both get more involved in
the church*

Plans

*We have many plans and ideas
which we would like to see
through over the next few years.
Please pray these will come to
fruition*

Apt for Lindsay!

*Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, praise his
name;
proclaim his salvation day
after day.
Declare his glory among the
nations,
his marvellous deeds among all
peoples. Psalm 96:1-3*



Pursue the Unreached
Build the Church
Reach Children and Youth
Impact the HIV/AIDS Crisis
Advance Mission

Let's take this slowly ... pang'ono pang'ono

OK, so here's the deal.

I will go to my first ladies' meeting, not expecting or anticipating anything, open to whatever happens, taking it slowly (pang'ono pang'ono means 'slow down' in Chichewa and that's one of the few phrases that have stuck, even over 16 months of extended home assignment).

Not quite too plan

So, how did that go? Not quite to plan ... after the first day of joining the ladies in their Saturday meeting, I was a paid-up member, I had become part of their co-operative bank and I was in the ladies' choir. Good thing I pick up music and can make a stab at least at the vowel sounds of their songs. Small problem that first week; we practised three songs and sang none of them the next day (winging it here, you know?).

Anyway: to week two. Turns out nothing was planned for that week and the ladies

spent most of the meeting arguing (entertaining, baffling and deafeningly loud). At the end of this, Amayi Chale (Amayi means Mrs), who had taken me under her wing, tells me and then announces to the others that I will start teaching the ladies sewing next week.

So - sew

So, next week I will teach the ladies how to sew on a button and possibly how to do back-stitch. They are very excited. Me? More like very nervous, but looking forward to it in a slightly weird way ... oh, and by the way, yesterday (11 September) we sang the songs we had practised on Saturday. Score!



Africa Evangelical Church (AEC) Naotcha



\Lindsay making her debut with the AEC Naotcha Ladies' Choir