

# NYLSTROOM SCRAPBOOK

February 2010

Dear friends

It is so wonderful to be able to communicate with you again – and wonderful to have computer, printer, land-line, and cell phone all working for the first time since we arrived back from the USA last August! These are my tools for being in touch with our FAMILY and doing our WORK, so they are REALLY important to me. My second new computer and old printer finally started talking to each other yesterday (after a month of trying) and I am holding my breath that we will have some respite from nagging various people to do what they are paid to do but don't know how to do. Things do tend to move slowly in Africa (I literally spoke to over 20 different people over the space of 3 months before the cell phone got fixed), and, as much as I enjoy living here, I've never come to terms with the poor work ethic. Maybe if I truly learned patience, I wouldn't need so many lessons in it! (I can remember praying for patience from about age 10.) I read in the latest South African version of Reader's Digest that a man got so upset with the internet service provided by Telkom (SA's one-and-only telephone provider), that he got a carrier pigeon to fly a 4 GB memory card to an office 50 miles away faster than Telkom could send 16 MB to the same office in the same amount of time. The article doesn't say, but I bet it was cheaper too! I used 1 GB in the past month going on-line to try to solve my computer problems and it cost me \$137! So that's why I'm always begging you guys not to send me those "cute" forwards with 5MB photos and 15MB videos. Of course, if you want to send me a 15MB video of one of the grandchildren, that's different! :-)

But what am I complaining about? All I have to do is cross the border into Zimbabwe and meet hundreds of my Christian brothers and sisters who don't have a cell phone, or land line, or computer, or printer – or FOOD! The amazing thing to me is how much patience THEY have. There have been a lot of challenges with the drought relief lately – money arriving late, trucks breaking down, supplies being unreliable – much direr consequences than a telephone or computer breakdown! The incredible thing is that these brethren are so patient and understanding about it. When we see them again, they will smile whole-heartedly and express their gratitude. From past experience I can confidently say that there will be some few who complain, but most will tell us things like, "We were so thankful to see the food – we were afraid we were going to starve, but God is so good!" We have already received this email from Bigboy, telling us about the new maize meal supplier Les arranged for him. (Words in parentheses are mine.) "We have started to collect maize meal from National Foods. There is big work there because when the truck comes from Bulawayo, all the job of offloading (over 20 TONS!) is done by us (BY HAND). (The old supplier had a store in Gwanda, so there was no off-loading.) After offloading we reload again (into Bigboy's small truck). As we are doing the work of the Lord there is no problem as the brethren will get the maize meal in time. National Foods is faster than Mapfumo (old supplier). I am glad of National Foods." And WE are glad for Bigboy's untiring efforts and for you brethren who have, despite economic difficulties, opened your hearts to those who are suffering.

Yet, although I know I am so blessed, there are still times I want to cry – like when the phone line is so bad our children have to hang up without talking to us. Or when it takes to the second-last day of our brief stay before my granddaughter will let me hold her. Or when my grandson can't figure out who I am. (Joy was trying to explain that I am Grandma, so he points to a picture of his other Grandma and says, "Oh, so that's my regular Grandma!" Hmm. Does that mean I am the irregular Grandma, or the super grade grandma? Ha ha!) But what am I sad about? I have watched so many of my sisters in Africa grieve as their children and grandchildren die of AIDS. Having children far away is a small price to pay for the wonderful mates they were able to meet and marry. Besides, we have lots of children and grandchildren right here in Africa! Some of the children in Namibia literally run and jump into our arms every time they see us. We received this email a couple of days ago from one of the fathers: "Good morning! Your presence always draw us more closer to God because of your willingness of studying with us. As for us we appreciate you a lot Mrs Maydell for spending time with our little ones who are mostly zealous to know God well. Because of time I can't tell much but we love you brethren as Mom and Dad!"

Despite our many blessings, I do at times get impatient and frustrated and discouraged and sorry-for-myself over relatively small things, especially when those small things are viewed with spiritual eyes. So what is it that enables me to subdue the negative? It is God's help, working through your prayers and your words of motivation. It is God's mercy in enabling us to be with brethren who love us and encourage us by living out His word in their lives. For example, with short notice, one of the Namibian families opened their 4-roomed house to the congregation to have a pot luck. When I went to wash dishes (by the way there is no sink/water in the kitchen) there was no dish soap, no bar of soap, no washing powder, no soap – period. There was no food in the house except two pieces of chicken, a sack of potatoes, and a few onions. Yet, from my private studies with the ladies, I had discovered that from this family recently one struggling mother in the congregation had received a large can of baby formula, one girl in the congregation had been helped to attend a course to help her get a job, another had been helped with taxi fare to come to worship, and I know this family also supports an extended family member who is not a Christian. So I spoke to the woman-of-the-house-that-had-no-soap, "I hear from others that you are really helping them, but who helps you?" She replied, "Don't worry, I would have got money and bought soap (Les had already gone to buy some). But if I have N\$100 (US\$14) on hand, I would just buy myself a chocolate and a magazine and some air time (for the cell phone) – and it would be finished just like that. But this way my money counts for something.... and our new sister in Christ has seen how we all help each other and she is so impressed." Then she proceeded to tell me that someone in the congregation got an unexpected gift, and instead of spending it on herself, she gave it to them to help them with expenses for the extended family member. She also told me how her children gave up their bed and she nursed her aunt with AIDS at their house until she died – and how God helped her: the people at her work took up a collection to help her bury the aunt. By allowing my life to intertwine with this sister's (and others in Namibia like her), God, in His mercy, has humbled me and opened my spiritual eyes a little wider. And it's those kind of things, over and over in my life, that cause me to rejoice in where we are and what we do.

Besides this I have many other wonderful blessings (in pictures below.) For all our many blessings I give thanks to God .... and to those of you who bless us with support, encouragement and prayer.

With love, Linda Maydell



**Namibian grandchildren**



**Nathan & Abigail**



**Marakele Natl Park**



**View from our roof**