COMMONWEALTH MILITARY TRAINING TEAM UGANDA



EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF WO2 PETER STAMMERS TEAM 1 – MARCH TO SEPTEMBER 1982

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Foreword

This diary, written from the perspective of an Australian Warrant Officer details the establishment of the Commonwealth Military Training Team Uganda (CMTTU). Canada agreed to provide medical support for the first two years, consisting of a Medical Officer (Maj later Col Peter Green) and two NCOs, a Phys Asst 6B and a Med A 6A (WO Wessel and Sgt Ron Holyk), together with medical supply support. Medical supply was handled from CMED and worked well but with a long lead time, supplies were sent to the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi and were then picked up on the monthly resupply truck run from Jinja. However supply was the only thing that worked well, conditions at the unit were austere, no running water, no entertainment other than playing cards, no Xray or Laboratory easily available, infectious disease of the nature only seen in old textbooks, and a steady daily ration of tropical disease. This diary gives a truthful story of the successes and failures, the good and the bad, of the first few months. It also emphasizes some of the ethical challenges of working in a lawless country in a multinational unit.

Nearly 45 years after the first deployment, this diary will serve as a small memento to those who served with the Canadian Medical Services in Jinja, Uganda.

Commonwealth Military Training Team Uganda (CMTTU)
March to September 1982

Background – Raising of CMTTU

After 8 years of tyrannical rule in Uganda, President Idi Amin was overthrown in a coup in 1979 by Ugandans living in exile in Tanzania and supported by the Tanzanian People's Defence Force. A period of chaos and instability immediately followed the coup as new President, Milton Obote, attempted to establish control of a country already in turmoil.

At a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Melbourne in October 1981, Obote requested assistance from the Commonwealth of Nations to provide military instructors to assist in the training and discipline of the newly raised Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA). Malcolm Fraser was the Australian Prime Minister at the time of the CHOGM meeting.

Agreement was reached to raise a Commonwealth Military Training Team Uganda (CMTTU) with 36 military instructors to be provided by seven Commonwealth nations: UK, Australia, Canada, Jamaica, Guyana, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone. CMTTU was to be headed by a British Army officer and based at the Uganda School of Infantry at Gaddafi Barracks in Jinja (on the shores of Lake Victoria), 80 km from the Ugandan capital of Kampala. The initial commitment was for a period of two years with Commonwealth instructors serving 6-month tours of duty.

Australia agreed to provide a MAJ, WO2 and two SGT instructors to each team over the 2-year commitment. This was later increased by the provision of a CAPT. A total of 20 Australians served on CMTTU between 1982 and 1984, and all were detached from Infantry Battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment.

HQ 6th Task Force in Enoggera Barracks was directed to provide the staff for Team 1 from 6 RAR and 8/9 RAR for deployment to Uganda from March to September 1982. MAJ Tony Casey and SGT Peter Orth were selected from 8/9 RAR, and me and SGT Mick Caughey were selected from 6 RAR. Later, during our tour, we were joined by CAPT Peter Pursey from 6 RAR.

It had been decided that the Australian contingent would be responsible for all weapon & field training with some assistance from instructors from other nations.

The Diary & Pre-Deployment

Prior to my detachment to CMTTU, I had never kept a Diary and I've never kept one since. What motivated me to maintain a dairy of my tour of duty in Uganda was the exceptional uniqueness of this deployment. I wondered at the time whether I'd be disciplined enough to maintain it and, in retrospect, I'm so glad I did. Having recently browsed through it at the age of 74, I realise how much gets forgotten in the passage of time.

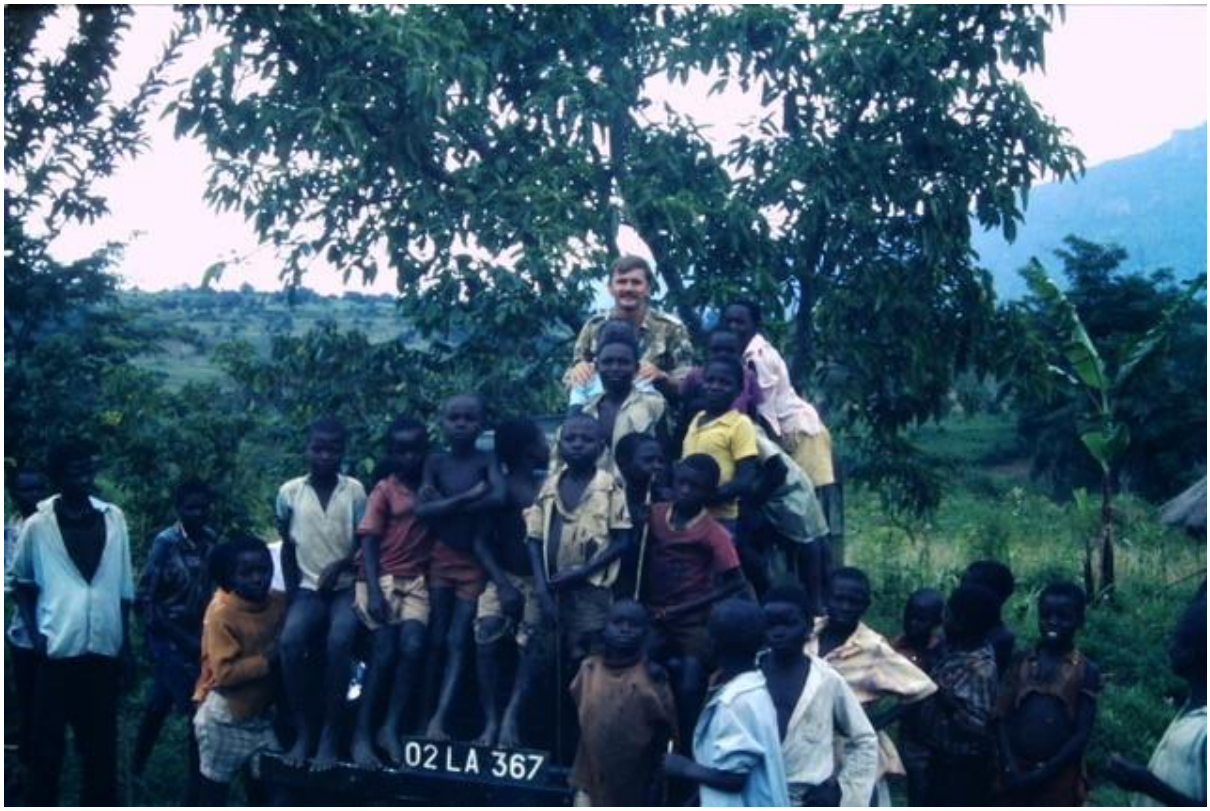
Team 1 was selected in January 1982 and warned to be ready to deploy to Uganda for 6 months in March 1982. We struggled to get any meaningful intelligence or information on the current situation in Uganda and what we would expect to be confronted with on arrival. There was an Australian High Commission in Nairobi that was responsible for Kenya and Uganda, however, there were no Australian 'boots on the ground' in Uganda. We were aware that the UNLA was mainly armed with Eastern Bloc weapons, so we did our best to train & familiarise ourselves with AK 47's and RPGs from unit museums (these weapons had been captured during the Vietnam War). Inoculations for diseases such as Yellow Fever, Cholera, etc and kit checks were part of our pre-deployment preparation.

We were informed that the situation in Uganda was volatile (with no details) and that it was unknown whether we would be issued with weapons for our personal protection. Given that our primary role in Uganda was training and not warfighting, a decision was made to issue Team 1 with 9 mm Browning Pistols and a quantity of ammunition to take to Uganda for personal protection.

I was tasked to deploy early with the team stores consisting of 4 steel trunks, 4 Browning Pistols and a quantity of 9 mm ammunition. I was to meet up with MAJ Tony Casey in Jinja (Tony travelled to Uganda via the UK for pre-deployment briefings) along with the advance parties from other nations. Mick Caughey and Peter Orth were scheduled to depart two weeks later.

My orders were to fly to Nairobi with the team stores/weapons and meet the Australian High Commission staff who would provide me with an Intelligence brief. I was then to meet up with a British Army Senior NCO and travel to Jinja by road in a CMTTU Land Rover.

Travelling on civilian airlines, while carrying weapons, ammunition, and military kit, provided some challenges to Army Movements Staff (not to mention the fact that I was also a little circumspect). It was decided that I would carry a letter of introduction addressed to the Airport Manager of each airport that I was to transit through. The letter stated that I was to be permitted to personally witness the weapons and ammunition being loaded into the Diplomatic Locker of each aircraft that I was travelling on. It was also decided that I would carry the barrels of the pistols on my person; thereby rendering the weapons inoperable. I was told that I would be met by an Embassy/High Commission official at each port of call to assist with any 'red tape'. Given that my itinerary took me from Brisbane to Sydney, then to Singapore, Bombay (Mumbai) and Nairobi with 4 changes of aircraft, what could possibly go wrong ☺.



Enjoying the Company of some Locals

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY

Monday 15th March 1982:

- Flew from Brisbane to Sydney with TAA and transferred to QANTAS for a flight to Singapore. Airport officials in Brisbane & Sydney were excellent. I was able to witness the loading of weapons & ammo. Customs Sydney was intrigued with where I was going and what I was carrying and suggested I may need a carton of cigarettes to get Customs India on side when I reached Bombay! My first experience flying Business Class. Nice!

- Met at Singapore by a RAAF CPL and prepared to transfer to an Air India flight. The Aircraft Captain initially refused to take me despite the paperwork I had (which included a Diplomatic Passport). The flight was delayed, and I was finally allowed on board to a plane full of unhappy passengers and escorted to my seat in Economy (QANTAS Business to Air India Economy!). Flight went via Madras, and I sat next to an agitated/nervous Indian lady who hadn't flown before. No sleep. I just kept talking to my fellow passenger to keep her calm.

Tuesday 16th March 1982:

- Arrived in Bombay in the wee small hours. No High Commission official to meet me! Lots of Indian Army presence. I got to see all baggage, including the weapons and ammo; however, I was refused permission to witness items being loaded into

Diplomatic Locker of the new flight! Rang High Commission (0200 hours)…no answer! An Indian Army Captain's eyes lit up when he saw the pistols and he assured me he would take care of them! To add insult to injury, I was told that I would not be allowed on board with the pistol barrels and was assured they would be placed in the Diplomatic Locker. I had a dummy spit which changed nothing! I was escorted to a VIP lounge to 'calm down' and await flight departure (no one else in the lounge). I thought a hot shower would brighten me up, so I stripped off and turned on the taps. No running water! This ain't a good start!

- Arrived at Jomo Kenyetta Airport, Nairobi, in daylight hours and seriously jet lagged. I was delighted to have a couple of staff from the Australian High Commission meet me. We were immediately escorted onto the tarmac to witness the unloading of the Diplomatic Locker – **NO WEAPONS/AMMO….CAN THIS GET ANY WORSE!!** 4 Steel Trunks arrived okay.

- I was taken to the Australian High Commission where Immediate signals were despatched to Air India/Bombay to try to locate the missing items. I spent a couple of hours with the High Commissioner, Geoff White, (a hell of a nice bloke) who gave me updates on Uganda. I was taken to the 680 International Hotel in Nairobi to a comfortable room to rest up and await details of the missing pistols. Too much spinning around in my head to get any decent sleep.

Wednesday 17th March 1982:

- High Commission staff called to say they were expecting responses re the pistols by late morning and were optimistic (fingers crossed). Geoff White organised for a guide and 4WD vehicle to take me to nearby Nairobi National Park where I saw a variety of African wildlife. What a wonderful intro to Africa!



Nairobi National Park



Nairobi National Park



Nairobi National Park

- On return from my tour, I was advised that the pistols & ammo had been located and would arrive in Nairobi tomorrow (the original plane scheduled for the Bombay/Nairobi flight became unserviceable and everything was loaded onto another Boeing 707 except for the items in the Diplomatic Locker which were overlooked). What a huge relief!

- Met SGT Toze (British Army) and we visited the Uganda High Commission to obtain Border Passes for entry into Uganda. We were told they wouldn't be ready until the following day (I suspect this is what is referred to as 'African time'). On arrival at the Ugandan High Commission there were many serious/unfriendly males on the street taking an interest in us and the military Land Rover. When we returned to the vehicle a note was attached to a wiper blade which read: **"You don't know who we are…but we know who you are, and we are watching your every move"!** I looked around to see if I could identify the possible author, however, there was about fifty sets of unfriendly eyes on us. We were later informed that several Ugandans, loyal to Idi Amin, were living in exile in Kenya and were very unhappy about the CMTTU being deployed in their homeland to assist the Obote government.

- Visited the British High Commission and met the Defence Attaché, Colonel Prestige, who provided a brief on Uganda & CMTTU. Haven't shaken off jetlag yet & still feeling weary.

Thursday 18th March 1982: Took possession of the pistols & ammo. Phew! I may survive this! Had a pleasant lunch with Aussie High Commission staff and picked up my Border Pass from the Ugandan High Commission (angry mob still in attendance).

Friday 19th March 1982:

- We set off at 0600 for the long, long drive to Jinja up through the Great Rift Valley. I was in absolute awe of the scenery & wildlife as we encountered Zebras, Impala and Giraffes grazing along the roadside. At one point we slowed down to allow a colony of baboons to cross the road. There were stunning views of Mount Kenya and Lake Nakuru which was pink (Flamingos). I was also amazed to see copses of Eucalypt trees in central Africa! We pulled up in an isolated area where I placed the barrels in the pistols and test fired them. We stopped at Eldoret for lunch & arrived at the Kenya/Uganda border late afternoon.

- Border staff claimed I was an American and there was much discussion in Swahili accompanied by arm waving and head shaking! Thank goodness MAJ Casey & CAPT Alex Gardner (British Army 22 SAS) were with an armed escort on the Ugandan side of the border. Hassles were sorted out and I was eventually allowed into Uganda.



Border crossings were always chaotic

- We set off for Jinja at high speed with headlights on and driving in the middle of the road with the Machine Gun mounted vehicle leading the way! We arrived in Jinja at last light and were taken to the Crested Crane Hotel (hotel is a very loose term to describe this place!) where I met other members of the team who were part of the Advance Party. I was informed that our accommodation in the Army barracks in Jinja was still being prepared and the 'hotel' would be home for a few days. I questioned why there were several armed soldiers around the outside of the hotel and was told it was for our protection.

- The Team Commander, Colonel John Clavering, MC (Scots Guards), had departed for the UK the day prior to attend his father's funeral.

Saturday 20th March 1982:

- We were driven to Jinja Barracks (once called Gaddafi Barracks during Amin's time) to recon where we would live & work for the next 6 months. Four houses which were once married quarters during the days of the Kings African Rifles (KAR) were allocated to CMTTU for accommodation. They are solid 2-storey structures and are undergoing some renovations prior to us moving in.



One of the Team Houses

- Did a tour of the barracks with MAJ Casey and saw several broken-down/abandoned wheeled APC's that looked like Soviet BTR-60's (they were Czechoslovakian OT-64's)

scattered around the barracks. We drove to the 500-metre rifle range next to the River Nile about 10 km from camp. Range in very poor condition.



Czechoslovakian OT-64's

- Inspected the armoury at the School of Infantry and saw a large variety of Eastern Bloc & European weapons, mines, mortar bombs, ammo, etc. Wow!!

- In addition to the School of Infantry, Jinja Barracks is also home to an Infantry Battalion (23 Bn). One of the roles of 23 Bn will be protection of the Team (Hmmmm).



Guard on Main Gate Jinja Barracks



Troops from 23 Bn

- In the afternoon I managed to escape the hotel cordon and walked to the nearby 'Source of the Nile' (where Lake Victoria empties into the Nile) as claimed by 19th century explorers John Speke & Dr David Livingston in the 1800's. Fascinating!!



Owen Falls Dam & Source of the Nile

- Nile Breweries had a function at the hotel in the evening attended by a government minister with a huge armed escort. Met & struck up a rapport with SSGT Des Deighan (British Army Armoured Corps – 4 RTR) a Scotsman (Glaswegian) who is the team's radio/communication specialist.

Sunday 21st March 1982: We received a report that the Army rounded up some 2,000 males in villages near Kampala and 200 were detained for further questioning. No more details.

Monday 22nd March 1982:

- Took a work party to the 30-metre Range in Jinja Barracks to start repairing it. Heavy Machine Guns had been fired into the Stop Butt Wall and caused significant damage!! Starting to learn some Swahili.





30-Metre Range in Jinja Barracks

- Suffering from a bad case of the runs (not surprising with some of the food eaten at the 'hotel').

Tuesday 23rd March 1982:

- Met up with MAJ Hawkins (Royal Anglian Regt) & CAPT Ronnie Wilkie (Scots Guards) to discuss training programs. Ronnie Wilkie was the Team Commander's RSM when Colonel Clavering was CO of 2nd Battalion, Scots Guards.

- The British are going to look after all drill & ceremonial training (Phew!) and we'll (Aussies) look after weapon/field training. Visited the Armoury again and managed to 'procure' brand new East German AKM's for the Aussies to carry for protection (rather than 9 mm pistols). Can't believe it was that easy!!

Wednesday 24th March 1982:

- Trying to get my head around the organisation, etc of the UNLA. Questioned several troops and came up with a best guess: 17 to 19 Infantry Battalions (broken up into 4 Brigades). There doesn't appear to be any tanks, serviceable APC's, or artillery. A PTE earns 1,260 Uganda Shillings a month & a SGT 2,360 a month.

- One of the members of my work party on the 30-metre Range was a Doctor who had spent seven years training in Leningrad USSR!

- I witnessed the local 23 Bn Regimental Police (RP's) administer discipline to prisoners by beating them with sticks!! Not a good look!



23 Bn Regimental Police

- Nervous looking armed guards remain posted around the Crested Crane Hotel. Would they react effectively if we were attacked?? I seriously doubt it. Most of them look terrified. Running water at the hotel is an issue as it goes off for hours at a time.

Thursday 25th March 1982:

- Furniture, cooking utensils, etc have arrived for the houses we'll be living in. Lots of local gunfire heard, but no one seem to know why.

- Was told that a shoot up occurred today in Kampala between the Army & Police! Good grief!

- The large Living Rooms in two of the houses we'll be living in will serve as Officers & Sergeants Messes. I've claimed a room next to the SGT's Mess for myself, Mick C & Peter O. MAJ Casey will live next door with other Team officers. The Team RSM, WO1 Roy Trower (Royal Green Jackets), claimed a room beside the Aussies (hope we get on with him). My Swahili is improving. Visited the local Nile Breweries to 'procure' stuff for the Team Sergeants' Mess.

- The British Army Supply SGT, SGT Toze, is hiring civilian labour to cook and clean for us. He has been unable to find anyone with experience in cooking for large groups.

- Fresh rations for the Team will be purchased in Kenya (Eldoret) and canteen supplies (booze/cigarettes/etc) will be purchased via the NAAFI account with the British Army Training Team in Kenya.

Friday 26th March 1982:

- Moved from the hotel to our new digs. Still no running water at the houses (we're next to the 2nd largest freshwater lake in the world!). Running water is available down the hill in the barracks area so we'll use jerry cans in the houses until the problem is solved. We have a good supply of sterilizing tablets to treat drinking water.

- The two British Army SAS team members are masquerading as members of their old regiments. That didn't stay a secret for long! Guard protecting our houses appear slack & idle. Found a flagpole at the old Yacht Club and transported it to Jinja Barracks.

Saturday 27th March 1982:

- Tradesmen hired to fix our houses have disappeared! Informed that their boss was arrested in Kampala!

- Visited the training area south of Jinja and test fired my AKM, pistol, and a Browning shotgun. Checked out the soldiers' barracks accommodation which was filthy! There was shit everywhere (including in the showers).



Local Training Area

- Went to the Jinja Markets (appalling hygiene/stench!). A large crowd (non-hostile) started following us around. A white face in Uganda has been a rare occurrence for over a decade as Amin expelled all Asians and non-Ugandans. Some children cried with fear when they saw us. I put my hands out to pick up a little boy, but he wasn't having anything to do with that. His parents seem to appreciate the gesture.



Town of Jinja – 1982

- While playing cards (Sat night) heard many screams from a female. While investigating, I ran into CAPT Wilkie who said one of the guards had beaten up his wife because his tea was cold! I wonder if the rest of Africa is as violent as Uganda.

Sunday 28th March 1982:

- Woke up to the Guards shooting monkeys close to the houses! This is starting to irritate me!

- Met the Team Commander, Colonel Clavering, who has returned from his father's funeral. He's very British! (go figure)! First impressions are good.

- The domestic staff, hired to support the Team, arrived dressed in rags. Their English was limited, and I tried to ascertain their skill sets (including cooking). They had none!! These poor souls are just grateful to have paid employment. Looks like we'll be doing stuff for ourselves. No big deal.

- Helped construct a Volleyball Court out the front of the house I live in.

Monday 29th March 1982:

- Repairs to the 30-Metre Range progressing well.

- Team organisation is now finalised. MAJ Casey will be Chief Instructor WO/NCO Wing, I will be Senior Instructor Field Training & WO2 Steve Toombs (Grenadier Guards) will be Senior Instructor Drill/Ceremonial. My staff includes Mick & Peter, 2 SSGTs from Guyana (Nezam Wazid & Keith McKenzie), and a Jamaican, SGT Donovan (nickname: 'Bully') Codner.

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Field Training Team (left) & Drill/Ceremonial Team (right)

- The Team Commander has tasked the SAS members to analyse the security requirements of the Team in the area where we're billeted (four houses) in Jinja Barracks.

Tuesday 30th March 1982:

- Yesterday, I asked two of the newly hired domestic staff if they owned other clothes (one was dressed in a safari suit with all seams held together by staples and the other in very tattered clothing). They said they did so I suggested, tactfully, that they may wish to change their clothes. I burst out laughing when they appeared this morning. The one wearing the safari suit was now in the other chap's tattered gear and the tattered gear one was wearing the safari suit. They did exactly as I requested….they changed clothes! I clearly need to improve my Swahili or be more specific. ☺

- Received news that Mick Caughey & Peter Orth had arrived in Nairobi; and that their baggage went back to Bombay! (at least they didn't have weapons!).

- Still no running water in the houses!! Have mastered the art of 'showering' by kneeling in the bathtub, plug in, using my mug to pour water over me from the jerry can. When finished, the dirty water gets scooped into the cistern to flush the toilet. Not exactly 'mod cons' but better than bush conditions.

- Have befriended a domestic staff lad named Odoy, who will take care of our dobie (laundry) and act as barman in the Sergeants' Mess. Odoy's English is not good, but he is bright and quick to learn. I got him to repeat after me several times "Good morning Pommy Bastard" and then asked him to knock on the RQMS's door tomorrow morning and say those words to WO2 Lofty Jamieson (Queens Regiment).

Wednesday 31st March 1982:

- A land mine on the Jinja-Kampala destroyed a bus and killed nine. Team Commander & RSM caught in crossfire on the Kampala-Entebbe Road (Police were chasing a bandit). This place is wild!

- Most of the Team members have now arrived. I'm sensing tension already, of a racial/cultural nature, between some Brits and team members from African & West

Indian countries. Mick and Peter are scheduled to fly from Nairobi to Entebbe tomorrow morning.

- Not sure if Odoy did as requested as I haven't caught up with him or Lofty (RQMS) today.

Thursday 1st April 1982:

- Got woken up with an early morning knock on the door. It was Odoy who greeted me with: "Good morning kangaroo fucker"! Lofty was not far behind him making sure it went according to plan. A good chuckle was had by all.

- Went to Entebbe, via Kampala, to meet Mick and Peter. Stopped at the British High Commission on the way back and collected mail.



Entebbe Airport

- Colonel Clavering briefed the Team in the afternoon, including an outline of local security arrangements. He said the team was the first in the history of the Commonwealth and bemoaned the fact that it was receiving bad media from the British press (reports being published of atrocities being committed by the UNLA who we are about to start training).

Friday 2nd April 1982:

- Got my instructors together and we started training on the AKM.



East German AKM

- ABC film crew filmed us doing weapon training and playing volleyball.

- Ugandan soldiers are carrying a variety of weapons including SLR's, G 3's (German origin), AK 47's/AKM's, RPG-7's (Soviet), etc. We have access to plenty of AKM's (manufactured in East Germany), so we've chosen that weapon to issue to students for instructional purposes. The British Guardsmen, who are looking after drill & ceremonial, have opted to use the German G-3 rifle.

- Grenade explosion in barracks. Reports indicated that a soldier threw it after finding a boy playing with it! Becoming less surprised at some of the 'goings on'.

Saturday 3rd April 1982:

- Continued training with the Field Training instructors on methods of instructional techniques (MIT).



Field Training Team (including Ugandan Instructors)

- The WSM of WO/NCO Wing is a very timid WO1 from Guyana. Nice enough bloke, but I'm not sure how much input he'll have here.

Sunday 4th April 1982:

- Water started pumping to the houses for the first time which was a disaster! Leaks apparent in the gravity fed tank and several instances of faulty plumbing. Looks like the jerry cans will continue to be used for some time (it remained that way for our entire tour ☺).

- Met with MAJ Casey to help provide Army Office Canberra with details of our conditions of service. The powers that be have no idea what Allowances to pay us as they don't know the conditions under which we're living/serving here. Here's hoping for a good response because I think we'll earn our money here.

Monday 5th April 1982:

- Commenced weapon lesson rehearsals with instructors using Ugandan Officer Cadets as students. An invaluable exercise!



Peter Orth conducting Weapon Training in Jinja Barracks

- Took all staff to see the 500-metre range and, on return to barracks, we went to the 30-metre range and fired an introductory shoot using the AKM's. Team Commander and 2IC joined us for a shoot.



500-Metre Range



30-Metre Range

- Colonel Clavering told us of his experiences in East Africa as a young officer in the Scots Guards. In particular, his involvement in quelling a mutiny by the Kings African Rifles at Jinja Barracks in 1963. Sounds like he has good local knowledge.



Training Area visit by Team Commander

Tuesday 6th April 1982:

- First night on security duty (with Tanzanian SSGT). Only 4 guard turned up! I was appalled at the dreadful state of their weapons.

- Received advice that the local contractor who was working on our accommodation was arrested and was being held by the State Research Bureau (as time went on, we discovered that this military/state run organisation was conducting torture, imprisonment, and shocking atrocities). The contractor was arrested at the Crested Crane Hotel. A local doctor, present at the time, objected to his arrest and was also arrested. The doctor has since been returned in a coffin and locals are angry. This place is troubled!

- Saw more evidence of the RP's being extremely cruel to prisoners. We're getting fed up with this!

Wednesday 7th April 1982:

- The commencement of our first course has been put back (again) due to student accommodation issues. My group is to start training a cadre from the local 23 Bn next week. Lesson rehearsals are going well, and the standard of instruction continues to improve. I feel that the 6 of us on Field Training Wing are united and making a concerted effort to get on with each other.

- MAJ Casey has insisted that all of us get away for at least one day this Easter weekend. I've planned for my Wing to go to the Entebbe Sailing Club.

- During our afternoon run, a local soldier had a UD with a live round in his weapon. We remonstrated and the soldier was placed into close arrest.

Friday 9th April 1982 (Good Friday):

- The Ugandan CDF visited Jinja Barracks accompanied by a significant armed escort many who were dressed in red. (we used the term 'Goon Squad' to describe these over-the-top armed escorts that every Government minister had surrounding them whenever they travelled away from Kampala). Some weapons being carried by the escort were in a dangerous state (I saw an RPD MG with the barrel clogged and a live round in the breech!).



Jinja Barracks Guard Room



Armed Escort

- Visited the Crested Crane Hotel to organise money exchange in readiness for our visit to Entebbe. Need to go back there tomorrow.

Saturday 10th April 1982:

- While at the Crested Crane changing money, I spoke at length with a university educated lady about current life in Uganda. She says it is worse now than what it was during Idi Amin's regime. Not a good sign.

- Departed with four others for a weekend at Entebbe Sailing Club. One of the vehicles was shot at on the Kampala-Entebbe Road. The Sailing Club (which has no yachts or boats) is a large shed located on a beautiful spot overlooking Lake Victoria. We were told it was the favoured meet-up/party place for all expats living in Uganda.



Entebbe Yacht Club

- Huge party on the Saturday evening. Attendees included some ex-British Army Special Forces blokes who were working for a company called Falcon Star and tasked with training the Presidential Guard (mercenaries?). Met an Aussie Veterinarian (Ian Crothers from Nambour) working in Kampala on an aid project. Nice bloke. The British High Commissioner and his daughter were there as were staff from the Russian & US embassies. The US Embassy was providing President Obote with his personal pilot (CIA?). Met Danes, Germans, and many local Ugandans. A big crowd in attendance. The pig on the spit smelt dodgy so I avoided it. Big night!

Sunday 11th April 1982 (Easter Sunday):

- Some grim tales told at the Sailing Club by those living in Kampala. Ian (Aussie Vet) said he came across a body with the throat cut outside his place of employment on Friday. The body was not moved until 11:00 am! Another spoke of an Army truck full of mutilated bodies. Soldiers are said to be creating havoc in Kampala. British High Commissioner's cook's husband taken away and killed. Houses in the capital are being taken over by Ugandan Army officers.

- Spoke with a mate of Bob Astels (Robert Astels, BEM, was a British soldier and colonial officer who lived in Uganda and became an associate of Presidents Obote and Amin) who said that Bob had saved his daughter's life during Amin's regime.

- During the afternoon, one of the Sailing Club members (a Brit) arrived and said that his car was hijacked from him at gunpoint that morning. Who would want to live here as an unarmed civilian!

- On return to Jinja, we were told of shots fired near the Team houses last night.

- We decided that for future visits to Kampala we'd take what we called a Kampala Survival Kit with us consisting of a Claymore Bag (minus Claymore Mine) containing a 9 mm Browning Pistol, magazines with ammo, a small medical kit, a grenade, a hand-held radio, and some Ugandan & Kenyan cash.

Monday 12th April 1982: Rifle shot followed by an explosion (grenade?) on the road to the east of the houses around 2200 hours.

Tuesday 13th April 1982:

- Troops from 23 Bn brought a civilian car, loaded with soap, in the barracks under gunpoint. Soap was unloaded at the Bn Quartermasters Store and the car allowed to go. Bizarre! (later discovered that soap is a rare & luxury item.)

- Started training the Demonstration (Demo) Platoon. All going well except for lack of food.

- We received the OK to open bank accounts in London.

Wednesday 14th April 1982:

- Contractor working on our houses, who was arrested by the State Research Bureau on 5th April, returned to Jinja. His back was badly welted from beatings. He told of a Doctor (an old man) being beaten to death while he was in custody! Some insane goings on in this place!

- Training of Demo Platoon going well but the troops are only receiving one meal a day, and this is having an adverse effect on them.

- Canadian Medical Team arrived today (Doctor & two NCO Med Assistants). Seem like good folk.

- Received word that the Australian High Commissioner (Geoff White) is arriving for a visit on Sunday. We're planning to construct a BBQ in readiness for his visit.

Thursday 15th April 1982:

- Informed that the AADJT 23 Bn ordered Officers Mess staff (at gunpoint) to take furniture to his home. The staff were threatened with whippings if they spoke. He allegedly pistol whipped one of them.

- With continuing reports of 'unruly' behaviour by UNLA troops, team members are starting to question whether we'll be here for 6 months!

- Built a BBQ with Mick, Peter, Gerry (Pom) and the boss (Tony Casey). Cultural differences arose on what constitutes a BBQ. The Poms want an open grill and we (Aussies) want a hot plate. Compromise was reached by having both. We found a grill but finding a suitable hotplate was difficult. Some Aussie innovation resulted in the rear door of an abandoned OT-64 APC being removed and installed as the BBQ hotplate. Good work!

- Volleyball has become a popular pastime for many Team members.



A popular pastime for Team Members

Friday 16th April 1982:

- Witnessed a prisoner escaping from custody at the Bn Guard Room.

- I'm rather intrigued with the Team RSM. Roy Trower (Royal Green Jackets) has a small, wiry build and is covered in tattoos. He is a non-drinker and has a foul temper. Having said that, none of the Aussies have yet fallen foul of him and he seems to enjoy our company. He told me that, as a youth, he attempted to assault his father & brother with an axe and the Magistrate gave him a choice of voluntary enlistment in the military or jail!! He said he used to drink heavily as a young soldier but got into too much trouble when he lost his temper. He's a tough little bugger and I think he'll be a good man to have around if the shit hits the fan. The cook has been instructed by the RSM to give him nothing else but eggs & chips for the evening meal every night (which continued for the entire 6 months)!

Saturday 17th April 1982:

- We conducted weapon and live fire training for all CMTTU members (this was voluntary, but it should have been obligatory). Got to fire an Israeli Uzi SMG on the 30-metre range.

- While on an afternoon run through a local housing area, I was beckoned to join a house party/gathering. Locals were gathered around a large pot drinking 'something' from bamboo straws. I was invited to join them and discovered it was

'home brew' (beer) made from Millet. I think I'll stick with Tusker Beer (produced in Kenya).



Enjoying Home Brew using individual Bamboo Straws

Sunday 18th April 1982:

- The Aussies organised a very successful BBQ for all members of the Team for the visit of Australian High Commissioner, Geoff White, and Di Johnson. Geoff was genuinely interested in what we'd encountered so far and wanted to see our living/eating conditions. I'm confident he'll have our backs if/when things turn bad here.



From the left: Colonel Clavering, Peter Orth, Geoff White, Self, Mick Caughey

- Geoff told us of the ABC film crew's coverage of their recent visit much to our disgust. It is felt they 'overplayed' the danger faced by the team here in Uganda and now there is concern that our families will see the report and worry unnecessarily.

- The High Commissioner has kindly invited the 4 Aussies on the Team to spend ANZAC Day in Nairobi with the Australian staff.

- On duty Sunday night. 2 gunshots fired from the Police Barracks at 2200 hours. Was told next morning that a UNLA soldier was wounded.

Monday 19th April 1982:

- Our first course (WO's/SNCO's) finally commences in heavy rain and cool conditions. MAJ Casey delivered the opening address and introduced all instructors. We started with 45 students, however, they continued to arrive throughout the day! By 1700 hours we had 60 students. The ages of the students varied from 18 to an old bloke with grey hair who had gunshot wounds from WW2 service with the Kings African Rifles and was unaware of his age. Some were in uniform and some were in rags.

- A priority message was received from Canberra (via the Australian High Commission) requesting that MAJ Casey respond within 48 hours. The powers that be are concerned about the poor communication and our level of security (ABC report?).

Tuesday 20th April 1982:

- Adherence to timings is an issue with the students (lack of watches or maybe maintaining 'African' time?).

- I get looks of pity from the students when the see me constantly looking at my watch and raising my voice at them for being late. Maybe it's me that doesn't get it.

- All instructors did a PT test with the students. Most students are good runners. A couple are suffering from wounds (shrapnel & gunshot) from a skirmish in Kampala a few weeks ago.

- Many trucks are banked up outside the barracks. Rumour has it (there is no shortage of rumours in this place!) that a truck load of weapons has been smuggled in from Kenya.

Wednesday 21st April 1982:

- I was interviewed by BBC Africa Correspondent, Mike Woolridge. He chose a time when there was no one else about to conduct the interview (a radio interview using a cassette tape) which I immediately became wary of. I ended up demanding the interview be stopped when I was asked about atrocities being carried out by the UNLA. He inferred that the training we were providing (weapons/fieldcraft) would only make the Army more effective at causing mayhem and human rights abuses against civilians who did not support the Obote regime. I told him (with the cassette turned off) that it was an unfair question to be posing to me and that he should speak to the Team Commander. I informed COL Clavering and MAJ Casey of this. Woolridge (who is very experienced in African affairs), to his credit, agreed that it was unfair to be questioning me along those lines.

- To demonstrate my displeasure at the lack of student punctuality, I foolishly decided in the afternoon that we'd take the whole course for a long run as a means of instilling discipline. As soon as we started running, the students' faces lit up happily and they all started singing patriotic songs. As we started raising a sweat after

jogging some distance, I looked about, and the students never looked close to a sweat. What was I thinking! This is Africa and running is in their DNA.

- Trucks have finally been allowed to depart Jinja.

Thursday 22nd April 1982:

- Visited the impact area of the 500-metre range with COL Clavering & MAJ Casey. We will need to physically clear this each time we use the range as there are lots of civilians wandering about in the danger area.

- I'm in awe of the beautiful terrain surrounding Lake Victoria, the Nile, and the town of Jinja. Whilst Jinja isn't far from the Equator, Lake Victoria is over 1,100 metres above sea level so the weather/climate here is quite pleasant. The red soil looks like anything would grow here (and there's lots of evidence of that); yet there is a food shortage!



Local Village

- A British couple with a Sudanese pilot made an emergency landing at Jinja Airstrip (didn't know there was one) last night. They were seen by Des Deighan and the Team RSM at the Crested Crane Hotel where they are being held under close arrest. The Team Commander is supposed to be assisting in their release. Nothing seems to shock me anymore.

Friday 23rd April 1982:

- Spent the morning at the 500-metre range where we worked out how to zero an AKM. Civilians wandering about in the danger area prior to live firing!

- Spent the evening preparing for the long drive to Nairobi where the 4 Aussies will attend an ANZAC Day ceremony.

Saturday 24th April 1982:

- After a long, tiring & hairy trip taking over 8 hours (and crossing the Equator), we arrived at the Australian High Commissioner's residence at 1530 hours. Geoff White handed out cold cans of Carlton Draught and welcomed us to Nairobi. We all split up and went to homes of Aussie High Commission staff. The support and friendship

from Geoff and his team has been quite overwhelming and very much appreciated. I very much doubt that any of the other nations on the Team are getting this level of support.



Crossing the Equator

- Went to a private party on the Sat night attended by Embassy & High Commission folk where I met a US Army Helicopter pilot (Harry Stevenson) who was training Kenyan Army Pilots. What a character! He said he flew Cobras in Vietnam and told some hilarious tales of training the Kenyans.

Sunday 25th April 1982 – ANZAC Day:

- A very memorable day that started at 0800 with an ANZAC ceremony conducted by Geoff White at the Nairobi War Cemetery. We went to Geoff's residence afterwards for some eats, Fosters & Coffee Royale.


Nairobi War Cemetery


Nairobi War Cemetery

- Spoke to Trudie & the kids from Geoff's place. It feels like I've been away longer than 6 weeks. The unreliable mail system in Uganda and the inability to call home from there makes life difficult for our loved ones….and us.

- Spent the afternoon with High Commission staff playing 2-up, and we all went to the New Florida Night Club on Sunday night. Talk about an eye-opener!

Tuesday 27th April 1982:

- We returned to Uganda (Jinja) arriving back at 1830 hours. Crossing the border between Kenya & Uganda can be problematic! Sometimes one must be bold, or you could be sat there for several hours!

- Many events happened during our absence: (1) 4 soldiers in Jinja Barracks were involved in a shoot-up on Saturday night. (2) One of the Ugandan Warrant Officers on the course the Team was conducting has been charged with rape. (3) 3 Police were killed in Kampala on Saturday night (Team members are starting to refer to Kampala as 'Dodge City').

- There is a lot of unrest in the north of Uganda on the border with Sudan. Students on our course are asking to go home to protect their families. One WO student on course claims his father was to be murdered and he needed to return home to protect him.

Wednesday 28th April 1982:

- Back to work. We're in full swing preparing for the field training phase of our first course while the Brits (and 1 Jamaican WO2) conduct the drill & ceremonial phase.

- Concern over the behaviour of 23 Bn Regimental Police here in Jinja Barracks intensifies. They were witnessed today punching one of the local contractors. Military prisoners are made to crawl along the ground with hands tied behind their backs! These blokes are sadists; or is this the norm here in Uganda?

- 23 Bn is using the range today. A soldier had a UD which went over the roof of our house! The standard of weapon handling is abysmal and an accident waiting to happen.

Thursday 29th April 1982:

- There is much sickness in the Camp. The Canadian Medical Officer, MAJ Peter Green, treated over 100 patients today; some quite serious; including a baby near

death. There is also a lot of sickness among the course students because of a lack of nutrition, Venereal Disease, Malaria, etc.

- There have been a couple of medical incidents among Team members who had boils lanced and live maggots popped out!! The MO informed us that the domestic staff doing our washing lay the clothe**s** on the grass to dry. Some insects (can't recall name) lay eggs in the material/clothing which can penetrate the skin! He said that the only way to avoid this was to iron clothes after washing. What a fascinating place!

Friday 30th April 1982: Intelligence advice was received from the British High Commissions in Nairobi and Kampala that the Team was under threat from anti-Obote guerrillas, and that we could expect an 'incident' over the weekend. The Team Commander cancelled all movement outside of Jinja Barracks and the local 23 Bn was placed on alert (God help us if we must rely on them for protection!). All 4 houses are heavily armed.

Saturday 1st May 1982:

- We received news that a local mass prison break-out had occurred. Escapees consisted of ex Amin guerrillas & other criminals.

- On Saturday evening, the township of Jinja sounded like the gunfight from the OK Corral! A company of 23 Bn is in town searching for escaped prisoners. Judging by the gunfire they must have found some. The remainder of our 'protectors', 23 Bn, are very nervous and jittery as we await to see if any attempt is made to have a go at the Team.

- I've already made up my mind who from the Team will stand up and be counted if the shit hits the fan.

Sunday 2nd May 1982:

- I walked past the Guard Room in the morning, and it sounded like some poor soul was being 'interrogated'. Not sure how much longer we can ignore the behaviour of the RP's.

- The 'mercenaries' from Falcon Star (mainly ex British Army Special Forces chaps) arrived from Kampala in the morning to join us for a BBQ lunch. They had heard about the threat made against the Team on the grapevine and wanted to follow it up firsthand (always looking for a fight! ☺). A couple of characters among them. Most of them have skeletons-in-the-cupboard and are running away from broken marriages/debt/etc. I found them very helpful in gaining local knowledge. Falcon Star (British registered Security company) is under contract to the Ugandan government to train the Presidential Guard who are responsible for protecting President Obote. They are based in Kampala which we now refer to as 'Dodge City' where nervous soldiers shoot at anything that moves. What a rock show!

- At 2100 hours as we were settling down for the night, all hell broke loose! Everything from Heavy Machine Guns to grenades were being fired in the vicinity of our barracks. The Team was immediately placed on alert with lights out and communications established between the 4 houses. The sky was full of tracer and there was plenty of 'crack/thump' coming our direction; but mostly going over the roofs of the Team houses. It was difficult to establish if we were under direct attack or if the significant amount of shooting was coming from 23 Bn. After the shooting commenced, the Team Commander asked for a roll call from each house and, sure enough, two Team members were missing (both Jamaicans). One of them works for me (Bully Codner) and I concluded that he and the other Jamaican were on a 'romantic liaison' in Jinja! The local ladies were very attracted to the West Indian members of the Team.

- It was interesting to watch the reaction of some fellow Team members during the intense firing. We were heavily armed in all the houses with a variety of weapons, all of which we offered training on to other Team members some weeks prior. A Grenadier Guards Colour SGT who lives in one of the other houses rushed into our house, grabbed an MG3 from our 'armoury' under the stairs and bellowed out "how do you operate this thing". The RSM (Roy Trower) screamed abuse at him for not having attended training and told him to 'fuck off back to his house"; which he promptly did. I rather like the RSM!

- At 2230 hours we heard bugles being sounded and by 2300 hours the firing had tapered off. With a lull in the firing, the Team Commander directed that a search be conducted in Jinja for the two missing team members. He nominated six team members to take two Landrovers into town and try to locate the Jamaicans. The lead vehicle was to be manned by the two SAS members and the 2nd vehicle was to be manned by the RSM, me, Steve Toombs and Des Deighan. After speaking to one of my Guyanese Instructors (Keith), I had a fair idea where to find the 2 over-sexed Jamaicans.

- We took off (at speed) around midnight, past the Guardroom (a hive of activity!) and into Jinja township. Understandably, there wasn't a soul to be seen on the streets as the firing and chaos resulted in everyone hunkering down. We found the address and two very sheepish Jamaicans emerged (and their concubines). I told Bully that I hoped his experience was worth it because he was in 'deep shit'. By the time we returned to the barracks the firing had stopped and all was quiet. No anti-Obote guerrillas made it to our houses (if indeed they were even in the barracks) and no one from the team was injured. I guess we'll find out in the morning.

Monday 3rd May 1982:

- To say I'm unimpressed would be a huge understatement. Last night was the result of 23 Bn soldiers (our protectors!) either shooting at each other or into the air. They were very nervous when placed on alert over the weekend and were fearful of any incursion into the barracks from anti-Obote guerrillas. By night-time last night, many

were drunk and wandering about with loaded weapons. A platoon of the unit was outside the barracks (near the airstrip) harassing civilians around 2100 hours when they started firing. This caused a rapid chain reaction that quickly reached our barracks area where every gun-toting soldier fired off magazine after magazine; with many of the rounds, fortunately, going over the roofs of our houses. Unbelievable! Some of us would like to get our hands on the 23 Bn hierarchy.

- It gets better! During the height of last night's firing, the Adjutant of 23 Bn (taking advantage of the diversion) took a looting party with him into Jinja. When the CO 23 Bn got word of this, he took an armed group into Jinja to arrest the Adjutant and his looting party. A gunfight broke out between the two groups resulting in one of the CO's men being killed and the Adjutant now being behind bars in the Guard Room. I've just re-read what I've written and am grateful that there are others present who could verify this. You just couldn't make this stuff up!

- Our Canadian Team Doctor has advised that a woman was pack raped in the Guard Room over the weekend. After treating her this morning, he informed the Team Commander that he would recommend the withdrawal of the 3-man Canadian medical team if a stop was not put to the Guard Room 'activities'.

Tuesday 4th May 1982:

- We've been informed that official protests have been lodged to the Ugandan government and UNLA hierarchy re the brutality and non-existence of human rights being exercised by the 23 Bn Regimental Police and Intelligence Section interrogators. Included in the protest were the actions of 23 Bn on Sunday night. All the High Commissions of the seven Commonwealth countries represented on CMTTU have also been informed of this.

- Last night I was called to the room of one of the Ugandan cooks by a kitchen hand who claimed he had "wadudus in his head" ("wadudu" is Swahili for insect). He was diagnosed with Cerebral Malaria and was not in good shape.

- The soldiers were not fed again today; and have not been paid for some time. This is a recipe for disaster. You give a soldier a weapon but fail to feed or pay him, he'll use his weapon to feed himself and family! It's becoming very apparent that the major issue in this country is a tribal one. President Obote comes from Northern Uganda and his ethnic group (Lango) is affiliated with the Acholi tribe. The northerners are ethnically quite different from the Baganda and other tribes in the south around Lake Victoria. The Baganda are talented and most of the doctors/lawyers/etc come from the Baganda tribe. The UNLA is stacked with Acholis (who are clearly not as talented as the Baganda) who have a grudge against the southerners and their main intent appears to be keeping Obote in power.



Meal time in the Field

Wednesday 5th May 1982:

- A German film crew doing a documentary arrived. They were informed by the Ugandan Ministry of Information that a Team member had been wounded on Sunday night (where do they get this from)!

- The RSM looked under our bathtub for rats today and found a loaded AK47 and a shotgun! I'm convinced that the rats that move about in the ceiling at nights are wearing steel capped boots!

Thursday 6th May 1982: I was Team Duty Officer tonight and had two WO students from our course (both Acholi) on duty with me. I spoke at length with them about what was happening in Uganda. One was very biased against the Baganda tribe. Both had lengthy Army service which went back to pre-Amin days. Both were Muslim and one had 2 wives and 2 children and the other had 3 wives and 24 children.

Friday 7th May 1982:

- I was approached by a student in my office today. He was carrying an item wrapped in newspaper. He said that his wife had a still-birth and he required leave to take the body back to their home village to' allow the soul to rest'. I then became aware that the item he was carrying was the still-born child!

- I had an enjoyable conversation with Odoy today (one of our original domestic staff). His English continues to improve and he's a bright & likeable young man. He's 18 years old and is married to a 15-year-old who he paid a dowry of 5 cows & 3,000 Uganda Schillings to his bride's father.

Saturday 8th May 1982: Went out in the evening with Mick, Tom, Peter, Des and a couple of others to the Crested Crane Hotel and Tilapia Club. We returned early Sunday morning to the sound of a woman screaming somewhere in the barracks. It went on for about 15 minutes.

Sunday 9th May 1982:

- Visited the Missionary & Orphanage next to the barracks and met an Englishman named Ted and a Dutch Catholic Priest. Had a long and interesting talk to them.

Ted has been here 12 years and is adamant that Amin's Army was much better behaved than the current one.

- Adjutant 23 Bn is now being charged with murder.

- WO from our course turned up for duty intoxicated. Disciplinary action is to be taken.

Monday 10th May 1982:

- Commenced the Field Training phase of the course with pleasing results.



Lessons in the Close Training Area

- The Drill Team commenced a Regimental Police training course today and the first thing they did was to remove the canes they used to beat up prisoners (about the size of Pace Sticks). An inspection of the Guard Room cells was sickening to those who inspected them. Filthy conditions with messages on walls written in blood and faeces.

- Snakes are being seen often in our training area.

Tuesday 11th May 1982:

- Students are responding well to our Field Training instruction.

- I managed see the state of the Guard Room cells prior to the RP's being ordered to clean them up. A very grim sight!

- Conducted our first night training which went well.

- The only means we have to transport students to the Training Area is by Tata trucks with trainees standing. Not the safest method.



Tata Truck

Wednesday 12th May 1982:

- Spoke to a young LCPL this morning from 23 Bn who said he was 14 years old and had been serving for 2 years!



This young NCO shaking Tony Casey's hand doesn't look a day over 14!

- I was involved in my very first 'industrial dispute' ever this afternoon. The Team 2IC from Sierra Leone, Major Wille Kanu, (in the absence of Colonel Clavering) ordered all training to stop and for Team members to immediately return to the houses. A civilian was tortured this morning at 23 Bn Intelligence Section, and he was dumped on the Guard Room steps. The MO said that his wrists were fractured, he had puncture wounds in his scalp and elsewhere, nails had been inserted behind his fingernails and he had blisters from boiling water being poured on him. I suspect that the 2IC was pressured by the MO to 'withdraw our services' as he is fed up with treating patients who have been tortured/brutalised. A warning was issued to 23 Bn after the recent pack-rape in the Guard Room. It is uncertain if we'll resume training tomorrow.

- It's been interesting to see the attitudes of our students who are quite perplexed by the decision to stop training. I guess violence is part of everyday life here.

Thursday 13th May 1982:

- All back to normal with training resuming this morning.

- We've been told that a Ugandan General is visiting on Sunday to supervise the 'sacking' of around 200 members of 23 Bn (including all the officers). We've been told to be on alert again this weekend from a security perspective.

- Sadly, I think the attempt to change the culture of some elements of the UNLA is becoming an exercise in futility. Our Team RSM walked past the Guard Room where he stopped an incident which involved a prisoner with a steel bucket on his head being struck by an NCO.

- The Commandant of the School of Infantry, Major Fred Okecho, reduced the RSM to the rank of CPL this afternoon! We do a lot of head shaking!

Friday 14th May 1982:

- Ugandan students started teaching weapon lessons today (much 'covert' chuckling).

- British Army Pay Clerk (WO2), Dusty, lost the plot at 0300 hours. He hasn't coped well since arriving here and has been 'on edge' for some time. I expect he'll be sent back to the UK and replaced.

Saturday 15th May 1982:

- Did a recon of our Field Training Area with Major Casey and the WSM. Access roads are very slippery and, in some cases, dangerous. We may need to route-march in and out of the training area.

- Spent Saturday night at the Crested Crane Hotel & Tilapia Club with Mick, Des, Tom, Graham, RSM and Dave & Dick (Falcon Star contractors).

Sunday 16th May 1982:

- In the morning a number of 'expats' from the Entebbe Sailing Club arrived for a Volleyball competition and Bar-B-Que.

- Have been here 2 months now and I seem to have an almost permanent case of 'the runs'. Thank goodness our medical kit contains plenty of Lomitol tablets. It's probably caused by untrained/unhygienic domestic staff involved in our food preparation.

- During the afternoon, the UNLA Commander arrived with an escort from Kampala along with a large contingent of Military Police. 23 Battalion was assembled on the parade ground and the Commander announced that 200 soldiers would be 'removed' and relocated to Moroto (in the north) because of the recent misbehaviour and incidents at Jinja Barracks. He said that names would be announced tomorrow morning. 6 buses arrived ready to move troops and families. We're still uncertain if this is just a show for our benefit after the recent protests or whether the UNLA hierarchy is seriously addressing the ill-discipline displayed by 23 Bn since our arrival. The cynic in me believes it's the former.



Convoy ready to 'evict' the troublemakers

Monday 17th May 1982:

- 6 buses full of troops (200) and families departed for Moroto prior to lunch time. 7 officers of 23 Bn were sent to other parts of the country. A very subdued mood within Jinja Barracks.

- A UNLA cook with Cerebral Malaria escaped from Jinja Hospital. He was picked up by the Police who broke his arm! The locals describe people with Cerebral Malaria as having "wadudus in the head" (Wadudu is Swahili for Insect). This poor chap was delirious when he took off from the hospital and got a broken arm added to his ailments.

- We (the Aussie contingent) are on weekly doses of Maloprim to deter Malaria. It's incredible how much 'illness' is about. There are locals dying of Cholera, Malaria, etc and it's only a matter of time before a team member contracts something serious.

Tuesday 18th May 1982:

- Report received from the British High Commission that guerrillas plan to attack the Team during a march-out parade scheduled for 2 June.

- BBC World Service News often report on activities by anti-Obote guerrillas and include quotes from Yoweri Museveni, the guerrilla leader. According to today's BBC report, Museveni was in Jinja!

- Mick Caughey is ill (fever) and so is Bully Codner.

Wednesday 19th May 1982:

- Mick is still bed-ridden, very sick (food poisoning?) and appears to be losing a lot of weight. Major Green (the Canadian Doctor) is becoming concerned (and so are we). Bully is on the mend.

- 2 UNLA soldiers were killed and 1 wounded during a Special Forces passing-out parade in Kampala. Details of this incident are sketchy (like most 'reports'). A later report indicated that 45 UNLA soldiers were killed by a command-detonated land mine 4 km north of Kampala. They were travelling in a Tata truck at the time.

Thursday 20th May 1982: Spent the day with the students live-firing on the 30-Metre Range and preparing for our first trip to the field for an overnight stay. We've decided that the staff will carry a magazine of live ammunition (AKM) when in the field to deal with attacks from wild animals (or guerrillas). Obviously, the students will only carry blank ammunition.



30-Metre Range

Friday 21st May 1982:

- Mick's condition starting to improve.

- Departed for the Field Training Area after breakfast. We had to walk the last 6 km due to roads being too slippery for the Tata trucks.

- We learned something new about our students. They are terrified of the night and don't cope well with inclement weather! At 0130 hours I had to contend with 10 soldiers from our Demo Platoon all trying to crawl under my hootchie during a heavy storm! They were unsuccessful!

- We managed to get our hands on a couple of Flare Guns & flares to use in night training. I sat at the back of one of the night ambushes with a flare gun and, after the ambush was initiated, I fired a couple of flares over the killing-ground and what followed was hilarious. Many of the students screamed, got up, and ran away when the flares ignited. It terrified them! It took some time to round everyone up again.

- I regretted losing my temper and becoming physical with a student who discharged his weapon without authorisation when standing next to me.

Saturday 22nd May 1982:

- We route-marched out of the exercise area with troops singing all the way. Morale is good.

- On arrival back at Jinja Barracks, WO2 Steve Tombs (Grenadier Guards) greeted us with several bottles of chilled white wine.

- 2 Team members from Sierra Leone and 1 from Tanzania were placed under house arrest for leaving the barracks without authority.

Sunday 23rd May 1982: Spent a few relaxing hours with Mick & Gerry on the banks on the Nile at the Bunjagali Falls (downstream from the Owen Falls Dam). The picturesque Falls have some spiritual significance to the locals. We came across the remains of a human skeleton. Elements of the UNLA have been reported dumping bodies into the Nile from Owen Falls Dam. The area has numerous crocodiles which are probably feeding on the bodies.



Human Remains

Monday 26th May 1982: I received a letter from Trudie who was down in the dumps. At 2200 hours I decided I would try to call home and speak to her. I made my way to the Signal Centre where I bribed a couple of the Signallers with cigarettes to allow me to make a call to the International Operator in Kampala. This took over an hour! The operator got me through to home within a few minutes. It was the wee small hours in Brisbane when Trudie answered. We spoke for about an hour and our collective morale was boosted.

NOTES:

- Discovering a method of calling home made a huge difference to the morale of myself and fellow team members. Mail being sent via the UK and Uganda Post was unreliable and many letters were weeks old when we received them. Local Signals Centre staff were easily coaxed to assist by providing them with light bulbs (a scarce commodity), cigarettes, booze and/or money.

- All the International Operator in Kampala required for payment of calls to Australia was a name and a Post Office Box Number. None of us ever received bills for these calls! Rumour has it that some used the name 'Ned Kelly' or 'Sydney Harbour' followed by a fictitious post office box number. My lips are sealed! ☺

Thursday 27th May 1982:

- RSM Opoka returned to Jinja Barracks. We were informed that the Commandant of the School of Infantry, MAJ Fred Okecho, was to reduce him to CPL. He was then to

be taken to Kampala to front the Chief of Staff, BRIG Ojok, who would dismiss him from the Army.

- Returned to the local training area for a final 2-day activity.

Friday 28th May 1982:

- We trained and rehearsed the students in section and platoon drills with a view of spending the night in a platoon harbour in some nearby close country. An agitated delegation from the students confronted me in the field and pleaded not to be taken into the forest because of the presence of a known (and huge) python! They were NOT happy when this request was turned down and then requested to be issued with live ammunition for their protection. This was also turned down!

- Nervous and disgruntled students were put through several activities with no interference from a python. ☺



Having a 'cuppa' with the Team Commander in the Field

Saturday 29th May 1982: Returned from the field after a successful final exercise and enjoyed a good Saturday night session in the Mess.



Having a Rest

Monday 31st May 1982:

- MAJ Casey advised that visits to UNLA units in Kabamba, Gulu and Mbale would commence mid-June. The aim of the visits is to establish whether past students are putting into practice what we're teaching them here in Jinja. The Australian High Commission in Nairobi is expressing some disquiet about the proposed visits due to security issues throughout Uganda.

- The Team RSM returned from a visit to Nairobi and met 2 Australian hitchhikers at the Kenyan border who said they would call in to see us. We were amazed that unarmed civilians would attempt to hitchhike through a country as troubled, and as dangerous, as Uganda.

Tuesday 1st June 1982:

- MAJ Casey rang LTCOL Roger Wainwright (Directorate of Infantry, Canberra) and obtained clearance for the visits. He was advised that CAPT Pursey, who was due to join the Team soon, was bringing a television and VCR with him; both items provided by Army Amenities. Some recent rugby league and VFL matches had been recorded on tapes which CAPT Pursey would bring with him.

- SGT 'Bully' Codner informed me that he'd received a telegram stating: "Wife dying. Come quick."! A call was made to Kingston, Jamaica to confirm. It later turned out to be an over-dramatization of his wife's condition.

Wednesday 2nd June 1982:

- I'm on security duties this Saturday for the course March-Out Parade.

- The Reviewing Officer is Ugandan Vice President Muwanga (who I'm told once owned a Fish 'n Chip shop in South London).

- On duty tonight with CAPT Alex Gardner (22 SAS). A competent officer and interesting bloke. We spoke at length about suspected guerrilla activities in Gulu and other parts of Uganda.

- Tony informed me that MAJ Pat Cullinan (currently OC D Coy 6 RAR) would be replacing him at the end of Team 1's tour of duty.



Enjoying a chin wag and Tusker Beer with Tony Casey

Thursday 3rd June 1982:

- Attended a security brief for Saturday's parade. I'm in a vehicle with 4 Ugandan soldiers controlling the southern part of Jinja Barracks.

- Mick Caughey 'administered discipline' to a UNLA SGT who defied him.

- American aid projects in Uganda are being cancelled in protest against treatment given to two US Journalists who were locked up in the Guard Room at Bombo.

Friday 4th June 1982:

- Field Training Wing conducted a demonstration for UNLA Commanding Officers on the types of training being conducted by CMTTU.

- I was most unimpressed with the CO's who were overweight slobs and disinterested in the welfare of their troops.

- I'm sensing an increase in tension among Team members. Instructors from 7 countries of diverse cultures living in a close and confined environment is taking its toll. I know I'm biased; however, the Aussies are making every effort to get on with everyone. Some of the Brits are racist and intolerant of others. Words have already been exchanged. The Canadians make a concerted effort to get on with everyone (including locals).

- Rang home at noon to wish Trudie a happy birthday. She was out with Robyn Bourke, so I had a long chat to the kids.

Saturday 5th June 1982:

- The course March-Out Parade was a success. In addition to Vice President Muwunga, BRIG Ojok, the UNLA Chief of Staff was in attendance. Ojok is a very influential and powerful individual. He reportedly has the ear of President Obote, and he's feared by many; particularly the tribes that are non-aligned to the Acholi.

- The security duties went smoothly. I thought the whole security screen was 'over the top'. I sense that the UNLA like to put on a powerful front to keep the citizens of Uganda subservient and fearful.



WO Course March Out Parade



WO Course March Out Parade



WO Course March Out Parade



Wo Course March Out Parade

- A party was put on for the students after the parade with the Uganda Prisons Jazz Band (I'm serious!) in attendance. It was quite a sight after a couple of hours with numerous drunken Ugandans and food all over the floors.

- Les Luck from the Australian High Commission flew in to represent High Commissioner, Geoff White, at the parade. Both he and his pilot appeared nervous and were glad to get back to Nairobi.

- The town of Jinja was tense today which we put down to the visit by the Vice President and Chief of Staff.

Sunday 6th June 1982:

- A bodyguard (Royal Military Police) from the British High Commission in Kampala stated that many bodies were found in Lake Victoria near the Entebbe Sailing Club. It is suspected that the UNLA is carrying out atrocities against tribes not aligned with President Obote's tribe (not exactly new tidings!).

- Staff from the British High Commission visited us in Jinja for a Bar-B-Que.

- Received a welcome signal from 6 RAR informing us of sporting results and mess farewells.

Monday 7th June 1982:

- Our domestic staff have still not been paid!

- They received written advice today that their monthly salary would be 950 Uganda Shillings (for 12-hour day/7 days a week job)! Some are surviving through the generosity of Team members.

- This afternoon we conducted G3 familiarisation training at the 500-Metre Range.

- Worked with MAJ Tony Casey until late on a mid-tour report.

- CO of 11 Battalion stated that he has over 5,000 men in his battalion and doesn't know what to do with them. Good grief!!

- A shot was fired in the barracks at approximately 2245 hours followed by many people shouting and screaming for about 15 minutes. This was yet another incident that we never got to the bottom of.

Tuesday 8th June 1982:

- Warrant Officer Course number 2 commenced with 73 students.

- One of the students collected 58,000 Uganda Shillings in back pay as he had not been paid for 3 years! He was taken to Barclays Bank in Jinja to deposit the money.

- Three of the students were from the Militia in Soroti. All three were Private soldiers who had been promoted to attend the course. The jobs they were returning to perform in their units were Operations Officer, Adjutant and RSM! I've been here about 3 months and am still shaking my head!

Wednesday 9th June 1982:

- Our domestic staff have finally been paid.

- The US Ambassador visited the Team today.

- Much excitement among staff for our up-and-coming R&R in Kenya.

- Received lots of mail today which included letters from Trudie, son Damien, sisters Hilda & Kay and a supply of Vegemite from my dear Mum.

- Saw a very large Nile Monitor Lizard near the Team's accommodation (ambling across the road). It's been seen by a few Team members and doesn't seen too bothered by human presence.

Thursday 10th June 1982:

- Departed Jinja at 0630 hours and, after a stop for a drink at Kisumu, we arrived at the charming Tea Hotel in Kericho (in the Kenyan Highlands) at 1330 hours.

- We're becoming adept at the art of crossing the border between Uganda & Kenya. The secret is to be dressed in military uniform, armed and bold. The Border Guards are always wary of CMTTU members and allowed us to pass through while many others waited for several hours followed by interrogation and searching. The Border Posts between the 2 countries had long lines of trucks/vehicles and many unhappy drivers/passengers.



Des Deighan about to add to the Chaos of the Border Crossing!

- We were joined at the Tea Hotel by some of staff from the Australian, British and Canadian High Commissions in Nairobi.



Relaxing at Kericho in the Highlands of Kenya

Monday 14th June 1982:

- A most relaxing and unwinding period of R&R was shattered by a dreadful incident on the Saturday night. A lady from the British High Commission was raped in her room by a local Kenyan. The poor soul was too frightened to leave her room to report it and was found in a highly distressed state on Sunday morning.

- We departed Kericho at 0930 hours and arrived back in Jinja at 1530 hours.

- Amongst the mail waiting for me was Les Patterson's Australia sent to me by sister Colleen. Time to spread our culture among other Team Members. ☺

Tuesday 15th June 1982: We're getting fed up with weapon incidents due to negligence. This morning we placed a student into close arrest after he discharged his weapon without authority during Physical Training.

Wednesday 16th June 1982:

- Departed for the Kabamba Military Barracks at 0800 hours and travelled via the British High Commission in Kampala. Kabamba is approximately 300 km west of Jinja and is the location of a classic Ugandan military incident last year. In Feb 1981, the Popular Resistance Army (PRA) headed by Yoweri Musevini, attempted to capture the large armoury at Kabamba which was being defended by the UNLA and the Tanzanian Peoples Defence Force. The raid was delayed and, because of poor communications and planning, only about 30 PRA members managed to assemble for the raid. The result was the Armoury was successfully defended by a lone Tanzanian soldier! Only in Uganda!

- West of Kampala (on the Kampala-Mubende Road), there were villages that were totally deserted.

- We met up with a party of soldiers from 33 Bn (Mubende) who declared that the road was clear and safe to travel on.

- We stopped at the Mubende Rest House for lunch.

- We arrived at the very-run-down Kabamba Military Barracks in the afternoon. There were 200 soldiers at Kabamba who had just returned from 6 months training in North Korea! It was claimed that they were only taught Taekwondo!



Kabamba Barracks



Kabamba Barracks

Thursday 17th June 1982:

- We returned to Mubende Rest House last night and spent a very cold night there. The rest house owners appeared agitated with our presence and said that they were expecting a visit from Vice President Muwanga.

- We met with the CO of 33 Bn who stated that he had one platoon in barracks and the remainder of the battalion were on operations along the Kampala-Mubende Road where there had been many guerrilla incidents.

- Returned to Kabamba Military Barracks and did a recon of the training area (while hunting for wildlife).

- Returned to Jinja late afternoon and had a tyre blow-out with no one hurt.

Friday 18th June 1982:

- Reports from Kampala advised that the British chap who had his car hijacked over Easter at Entebbe was murdered on Wednesday in Kampala.

- A big shoot up occurred in Kampala (AKA 'Dodge City') around 1400 hours that involved recoilless rifles and small arms. The incident was sparked by soldiers after they were thrown out of a Grog House. While this was happening, a truck load of UNLA soldiers driving past thought they were being ambushed; so they also opened fire. The hearing of gunfire resulted in soldiers in other parts of Kampala opening fire in sympathy. Only in Uganda! Roadblocks were immediately set up all over the city resulting in chaos.

Saturday 19th June 1982:

- Went to Kampala for the weekend (with Kampala Survival Kit).

- Encountering Ugandan government ministers, or senior UNLA officers, when travelling by road is something to behold. Despite the poverty and 3rd World conditions, government ministers always travel in the latest model Mercedes Benz and are accompanied/escorted by 'Goon' Squads. The Goon Squads (all with red berets) travel in weapon-mounted land rovers, at speed, travelling in the middle of

the road. Other road users must pull over rapidly or be prepared for a burst of MG fire to come their way!

- Was rather bemused watching a video of the movie 'Raid at Entebbe' at British expats Malcolm & Irene's place.

- Kampala is a tense & edgy city after dark with a curfew imposed and roadblocks established. These are manned by nervous, and sometimes drunken, UNLA soldiers. However, it doesn't seem to deter expats, mercenaries (Falcon Star) and others (including CMTTU) from moving about in vehicles from one party to another!

- Went to the Apollo Hotel with Alex Gardner and stayed the night at one of the Falcon Star units.

- Falcon Star staff were told about the Nile Monitor Lizard (which grew larger each time the story was told) near our accommodation in Jinja. Dave Milenward, an ex-Royal Marine, and funny bugger, was sceptical and offered to demonstrate his bravery by visiting Jinja and 'taking on' the monitor lizard barehanded! (More to follow on this).

Sunday 20th June 1982:

- Went to the Entebbe Sailing Club for a BBQ lunch.

- Spoke to the chap who found the bodies floating in the lake a few weeks ago.

- Met up again with Ian the Aussie Vet from Nambour who spoke of Egyptian planes arriving at Entebbe during the week carrying weapons and ammunition. Another puzzling event that I'm sure we'll never get to the bottom of!

Monday 21st June 1982:

- Started training 23 Bn members in weapons & fieldcraft using UNLA instructors. Mixed success.

- Rang Trudie and had a good catch up.

Tuesday 22nd June 1982:

- We've been told that the boys from Falcon Star are visiting us in Jinja on Sunday and were expecting the Nile Monitor Lizard to be produced so that Dave can demonstrate his bravery.

- A few of the Team, including 'Tom' Bowler (22 SAS) and Des Deighan (4 RTR), got together to discuss the feasibility of setting up a Boxing Ring out the front of our

house and producing a Nile Crocodile from a local Crocodile Farm rather than the monitor lizard!

- 'Tom' Bowler visited the local Crocodile Farm to plan to 'borrow' a croc for the afternoon on Sunday. They agreed and he was given the choice of a 4.5-foot, 6-foot or 8-foot croc!

Wednesday 23rd June 1982:

- Departed for Mbale in the eastern Uganda region at 0830 hours and arrived at 1030 hours to visit 20 Brigade. Mbale is in the foothills of Mt Elgon (an extinct volcano).

- Brigade Commander and CO 21 Bn were away investigating the death of a local chief.

- Taken on a tour of Mbale by the Brigade Supply Officer.

- Toured 21 Bn and watched training being conducted which was not bad. The battalion appears to be run by the Doctor who is a dynamic personality. We were told that the militia shot & killed a lion some 12 miles down the road.

- Went to the Officers' Mess and were treated to many beers.

- We were wined and dined at the Presidential Lodge at night. We ate goat, guinea fowl, metoke, rice, etc. It was quite tasty. The Doctor kept wanting to hold my hand (a normal show of friendship in Uganda between adults of both sexes).

- Brigade Commander gave a speech to which Tony Casey gave a good response.

- We ended up at a local bar and returned to the Mt Elgon Hotel around midnight.

Thursday 24th June 1982:

- Met up with CO 21 Bn and other officers at 0900 and were taken up a feature overlooking Mbale. The views were breathtaking, and you could see for miles! There was a waterfall nearby to round off the spectacular vista.



In the Foothills of Mt Elgon Uganda

- Called in to HQ 20 Brigade to bid farewell. On arrival, LTCOL Kesimbo was talking by phone to the Eastern District Police Chief about 80 Ugandans who had been exiled from Kenya.

- Proceeded about 50 km south to Tororo to visit 24 Bn. We were impressed with what training we saw. We were shown captured weapons taken from the Karamojong (the Karamojong are a tribe from north eastern Uganda who are professional cattle rustlers. Nowadays, spears have been replaced with AK 47's which are used to great effect. The Karamojong are tall, lean, mean, fearless and aggressive! They're related the Masai (Kenya) and are feared by most other tribes in Uganda).



Guard of Honour to Welcome us

- The RSM of 24 Bn gave me a ceremonial sword.

- On arrival back in Jinja we met up with CAPT Peter Pursey who had arrived yesterday. MAJ Nick Galbraith (2nd Bn Parachute Regiment) arrived to replace MAJ Willy Hawkins (Royal Anglian Regiment).

Friday 25th June 1982:

- We set up the VCR & TV brought by CAPT Pursey. Much excitement! We watched North Sydney v Manly in Rugby League, the Sydney News, a World Heavyweight Fight and Hey Hey it's Saturday. Talk about luxury! ☺

- We live adjacent to the 2nd largest freshwater lake in the world (Lake Victoria) and, after being here for over 3 months, we still don't have any running water. Having said that, we cope well with jerrycans and use sterilising tablets for drinking water.

Saturday 26th June 1982:

- BBC World Service News on the radio (our main source of news) reported that an attack had occurred on one of the High Commissions in Kampala. This was later retracted, and a new report stated that car bombs had exploded outside two petrol stations followed by a gunfight between two unknown groups (clear as mud!). There was mention of white mercenaries seen (possibly the lads from Falcon Star?).

- A makeshift Boxing Ring was set up outside our house in readiness for the fight tomorrow between Dave (Falcon Star mercenary) and, supposedly, our local Nile Monitor Lizard. The substitution of a Nile Crocodile for the monitor lizard has been kept under wraps so it will be interesting to see the faces when the croc is brought into the ring tomorrow.

Sunday 27th June 1982:

- Possibly the funniest day spent in Uganda – the day of the Big Lizard Fight in Jinja! Our 2 British SAS lads, together with RSM, Roy Trower, and CAPT Ronnie Wilkie visited the local crocodile farm in the morning and brought a croc back to our accommodation in the back of a land rover (with the croc secured to a stretcher). I always suspected Roy Trower was fearless (or crazy) and this was confirmed when the SAS boys told us he jumped into the tank to help get the croc out! The crocodile was transported discretely to our room (Mick, Peter & I had eyes like saucers!) out of sight before the arrival of many guests from Kampala, including Dave from Falcon Star who later confided to me that he thought he would face up a Gecko Lizard that was produced from a matchbox!

- The crowd arriving from Kampala was much larger than we expected. It included many Ugandan civilians, and they were quite impressed when they saw the Boxing Ring set up.

- The scene was set. Des Deighan (with cut-out cardboard black bow tie) was the referee and announcer (a good choice). Dave was introduced as Uganda's Champion Lizard Fighter and it was now time to introduce his competitor. That was the cue for the stretcher, with an unhappy croc secured to it, to be carried downstairs and into the ring. The reaction was hysterical. Women screamed when they saw the croc and, above the din, Dave's voice could be heard taking the Lord's name in vain when he laid eyes on the croc. The RSM climbed into the ring, armed with a bucket of water and sponge, as the croc's second! It was hilarious!







The Great East African Croc Fight – Jinja Barracks

- There is insufficient room in the diary to describe all occurrences that day. Suffice to say that it was a hell of a lot of fun. Lots of beer was consumed and, what was initially the Big Lizard Fight became known as The Great East African Croc Fight!

- Mick Caughey had the unfortunate job of Duty Officer that day and had his hands full with some of the shenanigans that happened, particularly in the Officers' Mess!

- From a team harmony perspective, today's event was a huge 'Pressure Release Valve'. Tension has been prevalent, with the occasional clash between team members, and today allowed everyone to have a bloody good laugh. There is no better tonic than laughter.

Monday 28th June 1982: Soldiers from 9 Bn (Kampala) threw a car bomb suspect, who had both legs in plaster, out of a 3rd floor window at Mulago Hospital. Vice President Muwanga later visited the hospital and apologised publicly for the soldiers' behaviour! I often wonder just how much impact we're going to have here.

Tuesday 29th June 1982:

- A student on the WO's course approached me this morning. His sister arrived yesterday from Lira to bring him some money and has died from Cholera.

- She is currently in the Jinja mortuary and the student has asked me to provide leave and transport to take the deceased back to Lira for burial.

- Several local cases of Cholera reported.

Wednesday 30th June 1982:

- The Team Doctor (MAJ Peter Green - Canadian Army) visited Mahdvani's Estate to investigate deaths of locals. Reports indicate 4 a day are dying. On return he reported that it appeared they had the same as Mick Caughey, but never had the strength or resistance to combat it!. Close call Mick!

- One of the students on leave was ambushed in the forest between Tororo & Jinja on his return. The same chap had a bullet removed from a wound sustained 2 months ago by Karamojong cattle rustlers.

- Some jealousy being displayed against our Demo Platoon soldiers by 23 Bn troops.

Thursday 1st July 1982:

- A lot of sickness among the students.

- Tony Casey returned from Kampala where a car bomb exploded outside the Imperial Hotel 5 minutes prior to him driving past. Guerrillas are starting to show more sophistication in their raids/attacks.

- Spoke at night with several students and discovered that there are 24 North Koreans working with 15 Bn at Masindi in addition to 10 at 7 Bn Nagasongola (north of Luwero).

Friday 2nd July 1982: Student requested leave to return to North Mbale as Karamojong tribesmen had killed his 14-year-old sister.

Saturday 3rd July 1982:

- Went to Kampala for the weekend with Tony Casey, Peter Pursey and Nick Galbraith to stay at Aussie, Ian Crothers, place.

- Had a pleasant lunch at a Chinese Restaurant at a cost of 2,000 Uganda Shillings.

- During a party at Ian's place some shooting occurred just down the road at 2330 hours.

Sunday 4th July 1982:

- Went to Entebbe Yacht Club for lunch (BYO picnic).

- Tony & Nick went to a function at the US Embassy to celebrate American Independence Day.

- On return to Jinja from the Entebbe Yacht Club, Peter Pursey and I went via the Kampala GPO to post letters. On getting back into our land rover, we were approached by two well-dressed men who asked for our help to rescue their wives from an Army CPL and his armed patrol who had taken them, for their own comfort no doubt…..mongrels!!! We quickly decided that we should take some action. My Kampala Survival Kit (with Browning Pistol) was ready to use if needed. We went up and asked the CPL (armed with an AKM), who smelt of alcohol, if there was any reason why we could not have the women come with us. He remonstrated and we persisted. He very reluctantly agreed and we kept him in conversation while we signalled to the women (who were in a state of distress) to move to our vehicle. We then briskly walked back to the vehicle, loaded them in, and drove off at speed with the expectation of rounds being fired into the vehicle (which never happened thank goodness). We drove around the block to where the husbands were, and the very relieved and grateful foursome hastily departed. Life is brutal in this country!

- Being bold paid dividends in dealing with this incident. Apart from the evil murderers (most of whom are officers), the majority of UNLA members encountered are very wary of CMTTU instructors and prefer to keep us at arm's length during any confrontation.

Monday 5th July 1982:

- Report received that an Australian (tourist?) was arrested by 7 Bn Nagasongola yesterday and transported to the dreaded Nile Mansions for interrogation. A further report stated that the Australian was released after intervention by the British High Commission.

- While doing maintenance work on the 500-Metre Range, I witnessed a tribal circumcision at a local village. Eye watering!

Tuesday 6th July 1982:

- Team Doctor, MAJ Green, witnessed UNLA troops herding approximately 50 civilians onto the back of a truck at Kampala.

- Guerrilla leader, Dr Yoweri Museveni, has warned that they are extending their operations from Kampala & the outskirts to the nearby Owen Falls Dam (border of Buganda).

Wednesday 7th July 1982:

- SSGT John Tuwangye approached me to ask for leave. He had received word that his brother (a soldier from Magamaga) was arrested a week ago and was being held in prison in Jinja.

- A lot of shooting last night coming from Jinja and a local Police roadblock (most of which I slept through). It appears that the soldiers of 23 Bn & Magamaga are up to their old tricks of looting again. The Police are launching an operation against them!! What a mess!!

- It's been confirmed that John's brother was arrested for looting and will not be tried for at least a year. In the meantime, he is to remain imprisoned.

Friday 9th July 1982:

- Went to the training area with the WO's course to spend the night in the field.

- Witnessed another gathering of locals on their way to a tribal circumcision.



Chap in the Centre about to Undergo Circumcision

Saturday 10th July 1982:

- Returned from the training area at 1400 hours.
- Had a session with Des Deighan and, at 2230 hours, ended up at the Tilapia Club in Jinja.

Sunday 11th July 1982:

- Had a great catch up on the phone with Trudie.
- Alex Gardner & Tom Bowler returned from a trip in the north of Uganda. Many North Koreans were seen along with Korean Artillery pieces! This is crazy! Having both the Commonwealth and North Korea train the military using very different methods is a recipe for disaster.
- They reported the presence of many wounded soldiers in hospital in Gulu, an indication of the increase in guerrilla activity in that area.

Monday 12th July 1982:

- Spent all day at the 500-Metre Range.



500-Metre Range

- Received a letter from MAJ Gary Stone (now OC A Coy) informing me that I'd be going to D Coy on return from Uganda. I managed to get parachute qualified before deploying to Uganda so I'm over the moon.

- MAJ Green still unable to obtain Cholera vaccine for team members.

Tuesday 13th July 1982:

- Des Deighan suffering from suspected malaria.

- I'm currently writing a weapon training pamphlet for the AKM, in lesson-plan format, to assist students (and staff) in giving weapon lessons. The Team Chief Clerk can produce it in a small cardboard-covered format but is hoping to get it produced professionally by the government printers. The plan is to give a copy of the manual to all students to retain and use back in their units.

- Peter Orth was Duty Officer last night. He was woken up in the Guard Room at 0300 hours by a woman claiming to have been raped by soldiers!

Wednesday 14th July 1982:

- Team Duty Officer.

- One of the Warrant Officers on duty is the RQMS of 22 Bn Moroto who is absolutely terrified of the Karamojong. He told me he has a platoon escort him when he's picking up supplies from Mbale and has had 7 soldiers killed in the last 2 months by the Karamojong.

Thursday 15th July 1982: Went to the training area for the final exercise of our 2nd WO Course.

Friday 16th July 1982:

- I'm sensing frustration and impatience among some of my team. Despite that, I'm very proud of their efforts under difficult circumstances.

- Cattle are starting to mysteriously appear in Army trucks in Jinja Barracks.

Saturday 17th July 1982:

- We route-marched from the exercise area with the troops singing. Morale is good.

- Arrived back in Jinja at 0930 hours and met the Ugandan Minister of State for Defence who is a staunch supporter of the Team.

Sunday 18th July 1982:

- Last night at approximately 2340 hours there was an explosion (grenade?) followed by about 5 rounds fired in the vicinity of the airstrip.

- The Team officers treated the Team WO's and Senior NCO's to a BBQ lunch at the Oasis, home of multi-millionaire, Madhvani.



The Oasis – Madhvani's Estate

- One of the British Senior NCO's is becoming a real problem with the booze.

Monday 19th July 1982:

- Team Commander gave a briefing to the Team prior to his departure on leave.

- The writing of the AKM training pamphlet is progressing well.

- A Mess function was held for WO1 students and fellow UNLA Instructors.

- Had a fascinating conversation with RSM Otom (current RSM of School of Infantry) who claims to have been involved in an attempted assassination of Idi Amin in 1977!



RSM Otom & RSM Omiji

- Tom Bowler and Alex Gardner left for Makindi Barracks (Kampala) to set up a training cell.

Tuesday 20th July 1982:

- There was a lot of shooting in Jinja last night.

- One of our Demo Platoon soldiers was shot by one of the shop guards (looting?). I visited him with our Team Doctor in Jinja Hospital and was appalled at the filthy and primitive conditions. Our wounded soldier was laying on a filthy foam mattress on the floor and was still wearing his blood-stained clothing. The bullet wounds in his buttock and thigh were exposed and gaping. He's doomed, as infection will have already set in!

Wednesday 21st July 1982:

- I received a written invitation to the public circumcision of one of our Domestic Staff (named Peter) which is being held on 28th August near his home village in the east of the country.

- BBC World Service News reported on 20 Democratic Party (DP) supporters being killed south of Kampala by UNLA soldiers (the DP is in opposition to President Obote's Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC) party). The report stated that President Obote had ordered an investigation!

- Successful march-out parade for our 2nd Warrant Officer course. I drank too much Uganda Waragi which tastes like a strong Gin and smells like Methylated Spirits.

Thursday 22nd July 1982:

- Received news that 2 of the Falcon Star lads were ambushed at the Clock Tower in Kampala by Police Special Forces (the term 'Special Forces' gets used a lot in Uganda! A tyre was shot out and their car received several bullet holes, but both escaped unharmed. The Clock Tower is where Idi Amin conducted public executions by firing squad.



Clock Tower & downtown Kampala

- Tom Bowler & Alex Gardner reported that brutal interrogations were being conducted at Makindi Barracks.

Friday 23rd July 1982:

- Departed for Kampala at 1530 hours with Tony Casey & Des Deighan.

- Went to a Happy Hour at the British High Commission then on to Ian Crothers place where we stayed for the weekend.

- There was a lot of shooting from Makindi Hill on our way to Ian's place.

- Speaking to folk at the British High Commission (who live in Kampala), many expressed concerns with the behaviour of UNLA soldiers in and around Kampala during the past week.

- There are now 6 roadblocks between Kampala & Entebbe after a woman shot & killed a soldier at the original one roadblock.

- Soldiers at Mpigi (SW of Kampala) have rounded up the cattle, slaughtered them and then forced civilians to purchase the meat.

Saturday 24th July 1982:

- Went to the Kampala abattoir with Ian to purchase some steak. What a sight! Ian cast his veterinarian eyes over a beast which he said was healthy and we followed it through the process to ensure that our steak came from the same beast. The butchering consists of knives, meat cleavers and axes! Folk were lined up to purchase every piece of every beast, including the head & tail!
-



Butchering a Cow

- We then went to the markets where we met a Belgian friend of Ian who works for Euro Accord (aid project). He's been ordered to get out of Uganda by noon tomorrow! He has no idea why, however, it could possibly be associated with the fact that his wife (a Baganda) is Vice President Muwanga's niece.

- In the evening I went to a farewell party for expat Jane Sorrenson. Met a Brit who had lived in Uganda for many years and had clearly gone feral. He had 2 Ugandan wives!

Sunday 25th July 1982:

- Went to a curry lunch on the shores of Lake Victoria and watched a yachting race.



Lake Victoria

- We returned to Jinja at 1800 hours and were informed that 2 civilians had been murdered in Jinja last night.

- Peter Pursey's missing baggage arrived.

- Received a welcome letter from CO 6 RAR (LTCOL Peter Langford).

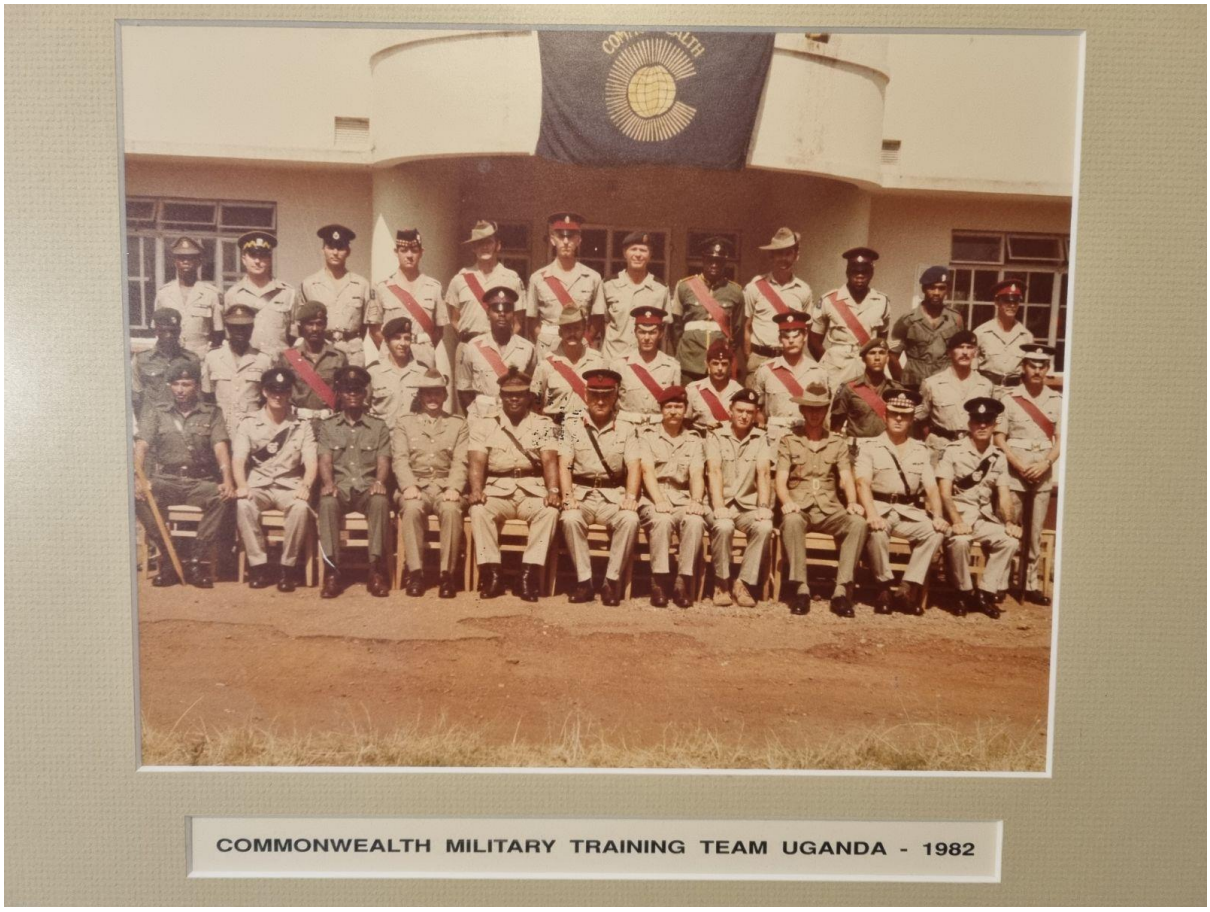
Monday 26th July 1982:

- Instructors Peter Orth, Keith McArthur and John Tuwangye left for Makindi Barracks Kampala.

- Local policeman is being held in the Jinja Barracks Guardroom for attempting to murder the Adjutant 23 Bn!! Nothing surprises me anymore!

Tuesday 27th July 1982:

- Team photograph taken.



COMMONWEALTH MILITARY TRAINING TEAM UGANDA - 1982



- I've been warned out to replace the Team RSM on a planned visit to Karamoja province tomorrow (home of the notorious Karamojong tribe).

Wednesday 28th July 1982:

- Departed Jinja at 0700 hours and arrived at Soroti at 1030 hours where we visited the militia headquarters. We visited a militia training camp in the middle of the bush en route to Moroto and witnessed a march-out parade rehearsal (complete with a bush band!).



March Out Parade & 'Bush Band'



March Out Parade

- Arrived at Moroto, incident free, late afternoon and stayed in a compound with 3 Australians and a Danish couple all working on aid projects for the Lutheran Church.



Moroto

- Heard gunshots at about 1900 hours near the compound (just like being back in Jinja).

- Watched a video "The Wild Geese".

- We were informed that the UNLA was conducting a large-scale operation (whatever that means in Uganda) on the Ugandan/Kenyan border to rid the area of bandits and cattle rustlers.

Thursday 29th July 1982:

- Visited 22 Bn (the CO is a slimy bastard!). Spoke with RSM Omiji who informed me that the unit is experiencing a lot of problems; mainly a lack of food (currently on one meal a day) and the dreaded Karamojong.



Chatting to RSM Omiji (a former CMTTU trainee)

- We noted that one of our WO students from our first course was under close arrest in the Guardroom awaiting a hearing for allegedly murdering a soldier last week. There were also 2 officers in jail.

- Departed Moroto and visited a village approximately 25 miles away which had allegedly been raided by 22 Bn. Local Italian priest said that 15 innocent civilians had been killed and 100 houses burnt down. He also said that a half a million Uganda Shillings had been stolen by the CO 22 Bn.

- On the way back we visited a militia training camp which had been attacked by Karamojong warriors the previous night. One soldier had been killed.



Cattle are a prized possession of the Karamojong

- Spent the night at Mbale (looked after by 21 Bn).

Friday 30th July 1982:

- Arrived back in Jinja at lunchtime.

- RSM Roy Trower's farewell dinner was a great success (went to bed at 0430 hours!). Roy was good for the Team and will be missed. We've exchanged addresses and have promised to stay in touch.

Sunday 1st August 1982:

- Witnessed 23 Bn soldiers in Jinja Barracks carrying a coffin (the one we used as a prop for the Great East African Croc Fight) with a body inside. They informed me that one of their soldiers stepped off a bus yesterday while drunk (the bus was still moving!).

- We're preparing to go on a few days R&R tomorrow in Nairobi.

- BBC World Service News reported that a coup was currently being staged in Nairobi by the Kenyan Air Force!

- 23 Bn was placed on full alert and warned out to move to the Uganda/Kenya border.

- Tried repeatedly to ring folk in Nairobi but lines were out.

- The question is: will our R&R be cancelled?

- We're all concerned about the Australian High Commission staff in Nairobi and our Team Commander, COL Clavering, who is in Nairobi waiting for his wife and daughters to fly in from the UK (taking leave in Mombasa).

- News came through tonight that the attempted coup was unsuccessful and Kenyan President Moi was back in power.

Monday 2nd August 1982:

- MAJ Casey managed to get through to Nairobi by phone and established that all Australians are safe. He also rang the Foreign Office in Australia to advise that everyone here was safe.

- Latest news from Nairobi was that about 100 had been killed during the attempted coup, including 71 Air Force personnel.

- There is still sporadic shooting in the streets, and looters were active.

- Uganda is being accused of training the personnel involved in the attempted coup.

- The border between Uganda & Kenya is closed!


STANDARD

COUP DAMAGE
Shs 1.2 BILLION

Guns found at university

Kenyan Newspaper

Tuesday 3rd August 1982:

- Our R&R has been postponed (not unexpected).
- MAJ Casey spoke with Les Luck from the Australian High Commission in Nairobi. There is still shooting in the streets.
- We made bookings for the Sunset Hotel in Kisumu, Kenya (on the shores of Lake Victoria) for next Tuesday.
- The Kenyan/Ugandan border is open again.
- A curfew in Nairobi has been extended until noon today.
- There is no fuel in Jinja due to the troubles in Kenya.

Thursday 5th August 1982: COL Clavering rang from Mombasa and advised that the Kenyan papers had reported that 2 members of our Team were releasing prisoners from Makindi Barracks who were enemies of Kenya (Tom & Alex?).

Friday 6th August 1982:

- We (Tony, Mick, Peter & self) have been given approval from Canberra to fly home via Johannesburg next month.
- WO2 Steve Tombs (Grenadier Guards) and I were invited to RSM Otom's married quarter for the evening.
- On arrival, he presented each of us with a monkey skin. Fortunately, I had a 6 RAR Plaque with me to present to him.

- Otom is a Muslim and had 4 wives who waited on us hand and foot.

- He asked me if my wives take care of me. I told him my culture allows 1 wife only and he felt sorry for me! ☺

- There is one TV Channel in Uganda that goes to air; occasionally. Otom had a small B&W TV which was screening pop music from Germany that was recorded in 1965!

- Otom (which means elephant) spoke at length about his childhood, his father, his village, and his escape from Amin's soldiers. Quite a fascinating character.

- He commenced his schooling at 12 years of age when he was strong enough to walk the 10 miles to the nearest school.

- He said that his father was dismissed from the Kings African Rifles in 1969 for poaching.

Saturday 7th August 1982:

- We've discovered a new place in Jinja for entertainment. It bears the exotic name of Owen Falls Nightclub & Restaurant, but its appearance doesn't match the flash name! ☺

- We spent Saturday afternoon & evening there. Des Deighan did his hilarious 'Mule Train' performance to the delight of the big crowd. Part of the act was banging a metal drinks tray on the heads of drinkers to keep the beat. Folk were in hysterics and were lining up to get whacked over the head by Des. Much laughter!

Tuesday 10th August 1982:

- Peter, Mick, Ron Holyk (Canadian Medic) and I departed for the Sunset Hotel in Kisumu for 5 days R&R. Tony flew to Nairobi.

- No problems crossing the border; however, we were eyed with suspicion by a couple of officials.

- There were 3 Police Roadblocks between the Busia border and Kisumu.

- After settling in at the hotel, Mick and I visited the Casino to get rid of a few shillings.

Wednesday 11th August 1982: Went shopping in Kisumu and bought T Shirts, etc for the kids. Saw a couple of lepers while walking about. Mick and I bought some toys for Odoy and Mary's son (named 'Peter' ☺). I don't think we've seen any commercially manufactured children's' toys in Uganda. What we've seen are innovative toys made from plain wire (usually ex coat hangers).

Thursday 12th August 1982: After a pleasant Chinese meal at the Casino, we went to the Octopus Nightclub. We were confronted by a couple of angry Kenyans who accused us of being involved in the attempted coup!! We decided that discretion was the better part of valour and decided to leave the nightclub. As we were departing, one of the angry Kenyans yelled: "The shadow of the white man will no longer be cast on our land"! I don't think we'll be returning here for a drink.

Saturday 14th August 1982: We were invited to dinner by an elderly Canadian couple (Don & Joan McCool) who lived near the Sunset Hotel. A most enjoyable evening.

Sunday 15th August 1982:

- Departed for Jinja at 1100 hours and arrived at 1400 hours.

- We gave Odoy the toys we'd purchased for his son and he was overcome with emotion (had tears in his eyes).

Monday 16th August 1982:

- 6 weeks to go before we go home!

- We commenced weapon training with the Platoon Sergeants Course. Most students belong to the generation who missed schooling during Amin's regime. Their ability to comprehend is very limited.

- Report received that a North Korean Colonel & Major were ambushed and killed on the Kampala/Bombo Road on Saturday night.

- As usual, CMTTU was suspected of conducting the ambush.

Wednesday 18th August 1982: Signal arrived from Canberra clarifying our use of Maloprim as a deterrent to Malaria. We currently take Maloprim once a week. We get the impression that the system is concerned about Maloprim.

Thursday 19th August 1982:

- CMTTU Guard apprehended 2 civilians outside House 4 of our accommodation. They were armed with pistols and carrying a variety of ID Cards. A shot was fired during their arrest at about 2330 hours.

- Went to the Owen Falls Nightclub and gave them 2 new drinks trays to replace the buckled ones that Des damaged on Saturday night.

Friday 20th August 1982:

- Got fed up with canned spaghetti for lunch and went with Mick to the Crested Crane Hotel to eat.

- 25 cases of Aussie beer arrived from Nairobi. We had a few VB's.

- Des arrived back from a road trip to Nairobi. He had an Aussie lass with him who was hitchhiking across Africa!!! A white woman travelling alone in this part of the world is unfortunately asking for serious trouble. I'm not convinced that our words of advice to her resonated.

Saturday 21st August 1982:

- Had a fun day having some beers with Dave Milenward (Falcon Star & famous croc fighter), Tom, Mick & Des. We started at the Rippon Falls Hotel in the afternoon and went on to the Owen Falls Nightclub where Des & Dave performed a cabaret duet much to the delight of the locals who were standing 4 deep outside the building peering in through the windows trying to get a glimpse of our 2 crazy mates.

- One of our domestic staff, Richard, gave me a clay bowl and a lovely letter from his father who did his teacher training in Wollongong.

Monday 23rd August 1982: A lot of gunfire heard early this morning.

Tuesday 24th August 1982:

- MAJ Casey rang Canberra and was told that that TV & radio news had reported yesterday that another death threat had been made against the Team. The source of the report is most likely Trent O'Keefe in Nairobi.

- The wife of one of our Demo Platoon soldiers died last night after drinking a bottle of Waragi.

Wednesday 25th August 1982: More gunfire coming from Jinja township last night. It's been happening every night this week.

Thursday 26th August 1982:

- Had a couple of farewell drinks with Team RQMS, Lofty Jamieson (Queens Regiment).

- Went to bed at 2300 hours to the sound of much gunfire coming from the vicinity of the Police Roadblock.

Friday 27th August 1982: More local shooting heard which commenced at 2000 hours.

Saturday 28th August 1982:

- Drove to a village in the bush near Mbale with 4 other Team members who had been invited as ‘Guests of Honour’ for the circumcision of Peter, one of our domestic staff.

- On arrival at Peter’s home village, we were met by his parents and given lunch in their mud hut (which was spotless) with a cow dung floor. Lunch was goat.



Peter’s Village

- While we were eating lunch, Peter was away with a group of drummers and supporters following him about as he ‘danced’ from village to village collecting gifts, etc in recognition of his up-and-coming circumcision.



Enjoying some ‘Home Brew’ with the villagers

- After lunch, Peter and his entourage arrived back at the home village and the final preparations for his circumcision began. I managed to have a few private words to Peter, and he was clearly quite nervous.



A very nervous young man awaiting his Circumcision

- A large crowd gathered at the village in readiness to accompany Peter as he took the 6-mile journey by foot to the place where the circumcision was to be carried out.

- Peter's father started to apply white 'stuff' all over Peter's body and I noticed how terrified he looked. Peter's older brother, Vincent, who is one of our cooks, was standing to one side with a club in his hand. When asked what the club was for, Vincent replied: "If Peter shows fear or tries to run away, I will strike him with this club". I said: "what if you kill him?". Peter just shrugged his shoulders! I was beginning to wonder what I was going to witness today!


Final Preparations for Circumcision


Vincent on the left holding a Club

- My offer to drive Peter's family, and the Circumciser (armed with a small vegetable knife that he was constantly sharpening on a stone), to the place of circumcision was accepted.

- On arrival, we saw a small bamboo enclosure in which Peter was to stand while the Circumciser did his things. We parked our land rover in front of the enclosure and climbed up on the roof to give ourselves the best view.


All Ready for the Circumcision

- We could hear the drums beating and chanting crowd getting closer. It was quite surreal!

- When the Circumcision Party arrived with Peter at the front, the crowd had swelled to hundreds. I noticed that Peter had eyes like saucers and was willing him deep down to stay the course as I didn't relish the thought of watching Vincent lay into him with a club!

- Peter immediately took up his position in the bamboo enclosure and was handed what looked like a broom handle to place across his shoulders and loop his arms over it. He stared immediately to his front and waited for the Circumciser.



The Circumcision Ceremony

- The Circumciser pulled down Peter's shorts and started doing his thing. However, he slowed the whole process down to allow us time to take plenty of photographs!! My eyes were watering trying to focus my camera on Peter's nether region.



Circumcision Complete

- Immediately the Circumciser stood up to indicate that he'd completed his job, the large crowd went crazy! All the drums were beaten, and women ululated exuberantly. All females (from old granny to some as young as about 8) danced 'suggestively' (the ceremony is all about the transition from boy to man). I wished I'd had a video camera to capture this incredible scene.

- While all this was happening, Peter bled like a stuck pig. We were aware that these ceremonies sometimes ended in death from loss of blood because a Circumciser had nicked a vein in the penis.

- Ron, the Canadian Medic, approached Peter's father and requested that he be allowed to try to stop the bleeding from Peter's penis. At first there was reluctance to agree to this, however, as blood gushed from Peter's nether region, concern was being felt by the family. Ron was finally allowed to dress the wound.



Ron, the Canadian Medic, talking to one of the Village Elders

- Peter was supposed to dance the 6 miles back to his home village, but after the loss of blood, he was looking quite weak. I was given permission to lay him down on the floor of our land rover and transport him back home.

- We got him home to his village and, despite Ron's dressing, there was blood all over the floor of our land rover.

- We stayed the night at the Mt Elgon Hotel (Mbale). What an amazing day!

Sunday 29th August 1982:

- We returned to Jinja, via Peter's home village, to check on his condition. He was okay and Ron had done a good job at arresting the bleeding. For a black man, Peter looked pale! He was still weak from the loss of blood and was staying with his parents until he was well enough to return to duty at Jinja.

- We arrived back in Jinja in the afternoon, and I mounted duty as Team Duty Officer.

Monday 30th August 1982: There was looting in Jinja last night and 3 civilians were murdered; supposedly by soldiers. Are we making any difference to this place?

Wednesday 1st September 1982: We received a visitor from Australia today. It was none other than our Director of Infantry, COL Hori Howard, who was there as the CGS's representative. He was in fine form and we had some drinks with him in the Sergeants' Mess.

Thursday 2nd September 1982:

- COL Howard watched our lads supervising student-conducted weapon lessons.

- 'Bully' Codner's squad (Bully is a Jamaican SGT) was having a 5-minute break and I noticed he was chuckling. When asked why, he said that the students wanted to know which tribe he belonged to, so he told them he was just a nigger! He said they went into a deep discussion about where this particular tribe may be found!

- We did a 15 km run with the students and completed it in 1 hour 50 minutes.

Friday 3rd September 1982:

- Rang Trudie and spoke with all the kids.

- CAPT Alex Gardner and MAJ Peter Green returned home. Both, who are good officers, will be missed.

Saturday 4th September 1982:

- 3 WEEKS TO GO!

- We (the Australians) are taking weekly doses of Maloprim as a deterrent to Malaria. I offered one to Colonel Hori who responded: "Only young soldiers need those things". ☺ (he may have been taking some other medication). NOTE: Poor Hori contracted Malaria on return to Australia which, I'm told, knocked him around somewhat.

Sunday 5th September 1982: I spoke at length with COL Clavering about his recent experience in Nairobi during the attempted coup by the Kenyan Air Force. He was caught at a roadblock en route to Jomo Kenyetta Airport to pick up his wife and daughters.
He and his Orderly (a Ugandan) were immediately arrested while his vehicle was searched and a pistol located.
During the vehicle search, a car full of Asians attempted to do a U-turn and speed away from the roadblock. The Air Force troops opened fire and killed 3 of the car's occupants.
The Colonel said that there was a family of German tourists in the car directly in front of him who were becoming hysterical after witnessing the escape attempt by the Asians.
While prostate, along with his Orderly, as his land rover was being searched, he said he looked for someone in authority to speak to. He beckoned an Air Force CPL and asked him if the new government being formed as a result of the coup would be remaining in the Commonwealth of Nations. An uncertain CPL paused and then replied in the affirmative.
COL Clavering said that if any harm came to him, his Orderly or his friends in the vehicle in front (the German tourists who he had not met), Kenya would have to contend with the wrath of the Commonwealth.
The boss must have had quite the 'silver tongue' as this message seem to resonate with the CPL who not only allowed him, his Orderly and the car full of Germans to drive away, he also returned the Colonel's pistol to him! Obviously, his time in Africa as a young officer gave him a solid understanding of the African mind.
The official death toll from the attempted coup was 158, however, COL Clavering put the figure at over 1,000. He said he saw at least 100 bodies along the Mombasa Road.

Monday 6th September 1982:

- The QM of 23 Bn had a House Boy who was murdered last night by 2 officers who had arrived in Jinja for the CMTTU Junior Officers Course. We heard shots fired near the house at about 2230 hours. Both officers are currently in Jinja jail.

- COL Howard visited the Sergeants' Mess for drinks and met many of the Team members. Unfortunately, I had an altercation with the Paymaster (a Brit) and said some things I probably shouldn't have said in company. When later apologising to him I said I never regretted a word I said, I just regretted where I said it.

Wednesday 8th September 1982: COL Howard departed for Australia.

Friday 10th September 1982: Went to Kampala with Peter & Mick and we attended the British High Commission Happy Hour. We stayed overnight with Ian Crothers who continues to be a wonderful host.

Saturday 11th September 1982:

- Went to Entebbe Airport with Tony Casey to meet Pat Cullinan and Gary Hunter. Morale was boosted considerably after meeting our replacements. Tony's greeting to Pat was: "Welcome to Disneyland". ☺

- Went to lunch in Kampala at Will Cherret's place (US CIA).

- Stayed overnight in Kampala at Ian's place.

- Pat and Gary handed us our plane tickets home. YOU BLOODY BEAUTY!

Sunday 12th September 1982:

- Arrived back at Jinja and helped Gary to settle in.



Gary Hunter – 8/9 RAR

- Spoke with MAJ Cullinan (over a Swan beer) about future events in D Coy and 6 RAR. I need to be ready to parachute again by 5 Nov for a planned exercise.

- More shooting during the night coming from Jinja township.

Monday 13th September 1982:

- Went to the field with the course for the final exercise.

- We noticed additional roadblocks had been set up by 23 Bn and there was an abnormal low number of civilians out & about. All roadblocks are being manned by UNLA troops.

- Found out later that a Regimental Policeman from 23 Bn was killed last night by 'bandits' while on patrol (the words 'bandit' and 'guerrilla' are often used by the UNLA to describe those in opposing tribes!). One bandit was killed, and one was captured.

- Returned to the barracks late morning (to collect stores left behind) as the body of the RP was being brought in.

- New Team RSM, Jim Carpenter (Royal Anglian), arrived.

Tuesday 14th September 1982:

- Returned to Jinja Barracks from the training area to continue the handover to Gary.

- Took Gary & Pat to see the live-fire ranges and to meet the Bishop of Busoga.

- Rang our bank in London to arrange for traveller's cheques.

Wednesday 15th September 1982: Received letters from kids that were written in March!

Thursday 16th September 1982: Feeling the effects of a chest infection.

Friday 17th September 1982:

- Returned from the training area at 0800 hours.

- Farewelled Des Deighan to the tune of "I Still Call Australia Home".



Farewelling one of the true Characters of the Team

- Had a social function in the afternoon for WO & NCO Wing which included all our UNLA Instructors.

- Steve Tombs (Grenadier Guards), Jock McLeod (Kings Own Scottish Borderers) and I took Gary to see the 'bright lights' of Jinja. This included visits to the Rippon Falls Hotel, the Owen Falls Nightclub & Restaurant, and the Crested Crane Hotel.

- Signal received from Chief of Staff, BRIG Ojok, stating that all training on the AKM was to cease immediately and that Team members were NOT to use them! I have no idea what's behind this.

Saturday 18th September 1982:

- ONE WEEK TO GO!

- Had a lengthy chat with 2 of the newly arrived British SAS lads (Ray & Tom) who had replaced Alex Gardner & Tom Bowler. It may be my bias; however, they don't seem as professional as Alex & Tom. In addition to gathering info on the North Korean presence, they are tasked to covertly 'acquire' Soviet Bloc weapons and ship them back to 22 SAS in Hereford.

Sunday 19th September 1982: Visited George Wacha's (local Ugandan) brother, Michael, in Jinja. Michael has just returned from 2 years at WA University studying for a degree in Electrical Engineering.
He is married to an Australian lady who is still in Perth and asked me to call her on my return to Australia. Michael plans to return to Perth next year for a further 2 years of study.

Monday 20th September 1982:

- COL Clavering visited Kampala to speak to Ojok re the AKM issue. Ojok refused to see him! This issue, the on-going presence of North Korean military in Uganda for training purposes and the lack of support for the officers' courses conducted by the Team may be a strong indication that this is the beginning of the end for CMTTU.

- Had an interesting chat to the new RSM, Jim Carpenter, who is an ex-Suffolk Regiment soldier (my Dad served with the Suffolk Regt for 20 + years). He was thrilled to hear of my Dad's service and will ensure I'm included on the mailing list for a Newsletter regularly published by The Suffolk Regiment Museum in Bury St Edmunds.

- COL Clavering travelled to Entebbe to farewell us. I vividly recall his words to me as we shook hands: "Sar Major, this team would not have got off the ground without the input from the Australians". I regretted that the others weren't present to hear that, but I conveyed it to them.

- I am very proud of the achievements of the Aussies who all tried to get on with everyone, regardless of race and colour, and conducted themselves in a professional manner.

- We never ended up travelling home via Johannesburg. Our journey back to Australia consisted of flights from Entebbe to Nairobi (Kenyan Airways), Nairobi to Singapore (Air India) and, after a couple of days of R&R in Singapore, we flew to Brisbane with QANTAS.

- The day after we got home and commenced leave, we were summoned to a meeting with the Commander 1st Division (MAJGEN David Drabsch) who was interested to hear about our tour.

I'm so glad I maintained this diary for most of my time with CMTTU. After 34 years of Army service, the tour in Uganda remains one of the highlights of my time in uniform.

ADDENDUM TO DIARY

- Monday 20th September 1982 was the last entry in the Diary.

- I am fairly certain that we (Tony, Peter, Mick and me) departed Uganda on or about the 25th September.

Attachment: Biographical Details – Peter George Ernest STAMMERS

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS
Peter George Ernest STAMMERS

Peter was born on the 29th July 1949 in Cleveland, Queensland, and is the youngest of 5 children. His family migrated to Australia from India in 1948, where Peter's father was serving in the British Army.

Peter enlisted in the Australian Army on 6th June 1967 and served for 34 years as a soldier, Non-Commissioned Officer, Warrant Officer, and officer in the Royal Australian Infantry Corps. He served in a variety of regimental, administrative, training, staff, and command postings/appointments during his service. A summary of his postings is attached.

Peter reached the pinnacle rank of Warrant Officer Class 1 before being commissioned to the rank of Captain in December 1990, at the completion of his posting as the Regimental Sergeant Major of 6th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. He retired from the Army as a Major in 2001 and his final posting was Staff Officer Grade 2 Weapon Policy at the Combat Arms Training Centre.

Peter's overseas service includes a tour of Vietnam with 9 RAR (1968-69), a 6-month detachment from 6 RAR to the Commonwealth Military Training Team Uganda in 1982, and a 2-year exchange posting with the British Army as an instructor on Small Arms Wing of the UK School of Infantry in Warminster, Wiltshire, England. In addition, he took training teams to Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, and PNG; and provided support to Operation Pollard in Kuwait in 1997.

Peter was awarded a Conspicuous Service Medal for his services to small arms training & development in the 1999 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Peter completed his working life in defence industry working for Firearms Training Systems Inc (FATS) in Atlanta, Georgia from 2001-2007 and Meggitt Training Systems in Atlanta and Australia from 2007-2010.

Peter is married to Trudie and they have 6 children.

Summary of Postings & Appointments
Peter G. Stammers

Dates	**Unit**	**Location/Rank**
June-Aug 1967	1 RTB	Kapooka (Recruit Training)
Aug-Dec 1967	Infantry Centre	Ingleburn (Corps Training)
Dec 1967 - Jan 1970	9 RAR	Woodside/South Vietnam PTE/CPL
Jan 70-July 1972	Infantry Cell CARO	Melbourne - CPL/SGT
July 1972 - Nov 1973	9 RAR	Enoggera - SGT
Nov 1973- Dec 1974	6 RAR	Enoggera - SGT
Dec 1974 - Aug 1976	MUR	Melbourne - SSGT
Aug 1976 - Jan 1980	6 RAR	Enoggera – SSGT/WO2
Jan 1980 – July 1981	9 RQR	Kelvin Grove – WO2
July 1981 – Dec 1983	6 RAR	Enoggera – WO2
March 1982 – Sept 1982	CMTTU	Uganda – WO2
Dec 1983 – Nov 1984	OCS	Portsea – WO2
Nov 1984 – Dec 1986	UK School of Infantry	Warminster, Wiltshire UK – WO2
Dec 1986 – Nov 1988	Infantry Centre	Singleton – WO1
Nov 1988 – Nov 1990	6 RAR	Enoggera – WO1
Nov 1990 – Dec 1992	9 RQR	Kelvin Grove – CAPT
Dec 1992 – Dec 1998	DINF	Singleton – CAPT/MAJ
Dec 1998 – Aug 2001	CATC	Singleton/Puckapunyal - MAJ