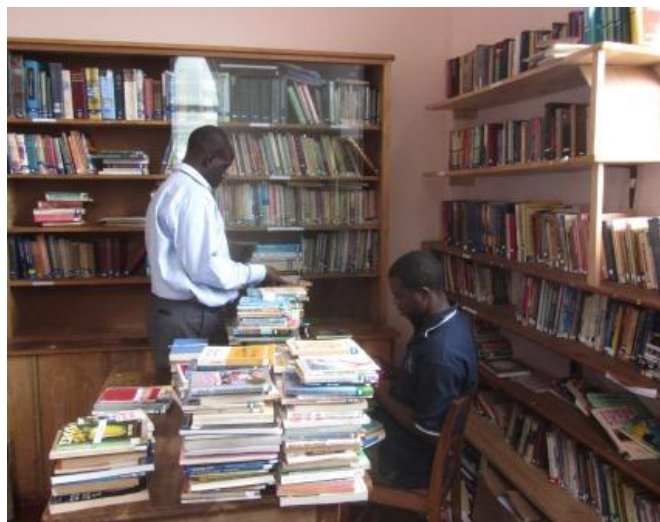


News from Loxley and Mavis In Harare - January 2014

First let us wish you a happy New Year and God's blessings in 2014. Thank you very much to those who sent us cards, newsletters and other greetings – we do appreciate it, especially when we are somewhat cut off from family and our “old” friends overseas.

I am struggling a little to write this on a new (to me) computer [Windows 7 instead of XP]. Loxley has done a change around, and my old one is now in the LifeLine office and I have inherited Loxley's old laptop. He is away for a couple of days so I'm on my own, trying to understand it!

In our last letter we wrote about the library project, and Loxley is now on his second visit to Gweru in Midlands where the first library is set up and running. It's a massive job, and we still need to find suitable people and places to run libraries in other parts of the country, as there are lots more books waiting to be delivered here.



Ishumairi is travelling with Loxley on this occasion, and will be slowly taking up some of the responsibilities, particularly of the travelling over the next year. There are other folk also that are keen to come on board, but it is not easy to find suitably gifted people who could cope with the all the complicated finances and administration, let alone the practicalities of running the Base here. We are looking at a team solution instead of a one-man band, but it needs a lot of wisdom so the work can be left in safe hands after we “retire”.

We still keep pretty well except for a bit of slowing down due to old age and the aches and pains that afflict us all. I have had no real problems since my operation apart from discomfort, and am due to see the surgeon for a full check-up next month. Loxley is having some dental treatment to replace several teeth, involving about 8 separate long appointments finishing in late February. We have been very happy with the medical facilities in SA, and although there is no National Health Service – that we would trust ourselves to - and we don't have health insurance for anything other than emergencies, we find the private facilities are excellent, and fairly affordable compared with Zimbabwe, where they are a complete rip-off!.

Our second 50th celebration took place at the Meikles Hotel here, and we shared the occasion on September 7th – the real date - with Alan and Dorothy Graham who had recently celebrated their 40th. It was a lovely time of food, fun and fellowship along with 30 others, but we only managed to get one picture from the event as Hilary's camera let her down. But we made up for that on our special holiday in November, when Loxley took more than 400 pictures and videos.



As for life here, things have not improved at all since the new government came in, and there is again a severe shortage of food due, they say, to a very poor harvest. Imports of food are already underway again, and lots more will be needed before the next harvest. There have also been severe shortages of cash in the banks, and many, many workers haven't been paid for months. In our own small way we and Lifeline are able to help a few folk, but some of the larger NGO's have been banned which leaves a very big gap in some regions of the country.

Over Christmas we had 2 nice weeks without our resident staff, and I was happy to take on the housework while Loxley dealt with some of the gardening. On Boxing Day the really heavy rains set in, and stayed for 2 weeks – and have now started again - so we couldn't even take our regular walks in the local Botanical Gardens (jungle!). Now the staff are back at work and I've handed over the housework to Mabel while Albert is tackling the weeds. Jonathan is almost five, and has just gone back to school in his spanking new smart uniform. He absolutely loves it. We are grateful for your friendship, support and prayers. Mavis & Loxley