

Second Saturday Net

August 2005

Zimbabwe



Interview with Edward Chikwana

Last month I traveled to Portland, Oregon to visit Miriam Gondo who celebrated her 21st birthday on July 27th. I wasn't able to be there for the actual day, but we did spend an enjoyable time together the following weekend, and I was able to meet some of her friends and fellow students at Portland State University. Edward Chikwana is actually one of her Zimbabwean friends that I met when I was up there around the same time last year, and, when he joined us for dinner at Miriam's university apartment that Sunday, he was just back from attending one of the local Portland area churches:

Nubra: *Well Edward, we were up late talking last night and slept in this morning, but Miriam told me she sometimes goes to church with you, and I'm wondering which one it is that you attend...*

Edward: It's called, City Bible Church...I like it because it's inter-denominational, and they are very welcoming to international students...Actually it's Pentacostal, but they don't emphasize any particular doctrine, and there are students from all over the world attending there, lots of Asians, lots of Russians, and there are Africans from every country going there--and everyone is made to feel like they are part of the church community ...You don't always get that feeling everywhere you might happen to go, so it is very good to be able to get it when you go to church...

Nubra: *What made you decide to come to the United States to study...and why Portland State?*

Edward: I came to this country to work with a Zimbabwean professor named, Reuben Simoyi, and he is currently my research advisor here at Portland State...We first met during the time he was teaching at University of Zimbabwe, and I was studying at Bindura University of Science Education...Then it was still part of UZ, but it has since become a campus in its own right...

Nubra: *Yes!--When I was visiting Gwen Fischer in Harare during February of 2002, I met a young woman named Rachel Dunwell who I think maybe was teaching math at that campus ...She was also doing data analysis for Gwen's KIDScale project, and since then she has taken a teaching position at Rhodes College, which is here in the United States...*

Edward: I remember her...And yes--she was teaching mathematics...I believe she had just come from the UK when I was finishing my studies at the Bindura campus...I was doing a double major in Chemistry and Mathematics, and that's why I knew her...When Professor Simoyi came to teach in the United States, he offered me the opportunity to pursue a PhD in chemistry, so that's what I decided to do...It was in January 2002 that we left Zimbabwe and came to this country...

Nubra: *What a small world we live in!--So now please tell us the actual title of your doctoral thesis?*

Edward: It's called, "Reaction kinetics and mechanisms of the oxidation of physiologically and environmentally important organosulfur compounds"...It's research that I've really found very interesting, and it has important health implications...But what I might like to do before returning to Zimbabwe is take a post at some small college for a couple of years where I would probably just focus on teaching science or math and could spend more time getting to know my students...

Nubra: *Well, perhaps we'll find someone in our network who can be helpful to you in some way--How close are you to having your dissertation finished and completing your other degree work?*

Edward: I plan to defend my thesis soon and should be done by the end of this school year. ***

From : chipo murahwa <phythipo@yahoo.com>
Sent : Saturday, May 28, 2005 3:15 AM
To : secondnet@hotmail.com
Subject : Hie Mrs Nubra

**Oooh-- its been long not hearing from you. How is life and work? Here is my e-mail address. If you want to reply use this one. Have you heard anything from Miriam?
I'll check my emails every Sunday. Hope to hear from you soon.**

Phyllis

From : Nubra Floyd <secondnet@hotmail.com>
Sent : Monday, July 11, 2005 3:17 PM
To : phythipo@yahoo.com
Subject : in reply to your last two messages

*dear phyllis:
thanks for doing your best to stay in touch via email and for letting us know that you have received our most recent mailings...a while ago you asked about miriam so maybe you'd like to know what she reported back in January of this year and that things continue to go well for her at portland state university: **Hello Nubra--how are you doing and how is everything going? Well I am doing great and just got back to school today. It has been quite a busy day registering for classes and figuring out what classes I need to take. How was your Christmas and New Years holiday? Did you do any traveling on New Years? Well mine was just fine, a little laid back, I spent it with some friends, we prepared a meal and watched movies for Christmas and just enjoyed each others company. We had a road trip to Seattle for New Years, some friends from Zimbabwe and Kenya were having a party. It was fun, I really enjoyed my first Christmas in America. I thought it would snow right after. Anyway I am glad to be back in school, I am taking 13 credits this term and the classes are Economics, Business Administration and University Studies. I moved into my apartment this last weekend so I am now settled which feels really great, it is a year lease so I will be settled for quite a while. [1-21-05]***



Phyllis with sister Judith and mother Mavis pose at College Flats with small ones and Nubra.. *photo by g.b.f.* Feb 2002

Endless Songs of Sorrow

In my heart is a voice
A voice that forever sings

In my soul is a fear
A cry of pain it brings

For in a heart which has
Been struck by cupid's arrow
There is a part that sings eternal sorrow

My emotion is to despair
The serenity of loneliness

So hurtful in a heart
Deprived of any happiness

For a tear that is not shed
In pain today brings pain tomorrow
So I sing the infinite song of sorrow

For in an atmosphere of sadness...
There is a part that sings the sorrow
The endless songs of sorrow

-By Phyllis Muhrawa



Miriam Gondo enjoying herself at last Summer's Portland State Multicultural Music Festival. *photo by nef* Aug 2004

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