

Following Fred's solo visit(s) in 1996 (see **“Tanzania- My second trip when I climb Mt Meru”**) and in 2000, (**Tanzania - on the loose again.**) four friends asked if I could set up a trip for the six of us. We had all been to Africa several times but this was Hilary and Chris's first visit to Tanzania. As this is one of Fred's favourite Countries, he needed little encouragement.

This first paragraph is what was originally written for the private consumption of the guests and if you don't get the 'in' jokes it is because you were not there. One of the guests had a habit of leaving with the room keys and a. n. other insisted on videoing inside a barber's shop “George's” as I had a short back and sides.

This Bespoke trip was part sponsored on behalf of Help the Aged and possibly Mencap for some select clients in England and others from the British West Midlands. The main objectives were all achieved despite troublesome weather conditions and even more troubled clients. Not that anyone complained direct of course but Head Office has received several strange enquiries from BBC Watchdog and the Tanzanian Tourist Board. As a result most Hotels now have a full set of Room keys once more. However we were unable to help Swissair with their problem but understand that the keys to the DC10 were eventually found in the pocket of Seat 23E/F along with a Tyre lever and a scribbled out list of birds. The barber in Mto wa Mbu has enlarged his premises with the cash from Lynne for the film rights and the video is showing in most cinemas between Karatu and Makuyuni. Naturally the Hazapi were disappointed to have missed our visit as they had gone to a lot of trouble and roasted a whole Baboon with Termite stuffing, Termite Bhaji and Termite Sauce etc., just for us. There was lots of Termite and Tamarind wine as well. No Garlic bread though. Pity that. However they have promised a larger BBQ for us next time we are passing so we must make the effort. “Ed.To understand this last comment see **‘on the loose again!’** but here is a clue.”



Fred made the flight arrangements using Swissair from London to Dar es Salaam and Coastal Aviation in Tanzania. Accommodation was booked direct from the Isle of Man using Hippo Tours in Dar and Hoopoe in Arusha. This worked very well with no snags.

The flight out was comfortable and punctual, with an outstanding view of Kilimanjaro as we entered



Tanzania. For the next flight the scheduled one was not until 14.30 and as we would arrive in DAR at 7.30 I worked out that the six of us could charter a flight for about \$30 pp more than it would cost scheduled. So, after landing in Dar es Salaam we were met by our next pilot and taken to the Piper Twin into which they were loading crates and thought that was a cheek on our charter. Then we saw it was crates of beer so all was well. After loading was complete we took off for the Rufiji River Camp in the Selous Game Reserve where we stayed for one week. It was nice to be met by



Evariste who had driven for me last time. The routine was the usual two drives per day and sleeping or birding in the lunch time gap. **We camped in the 'wild'** for three nights and stayed in the

Tented Lodge overlooking the river with Elephant and Hippo for neighbours. We all had a good time and were comfortable despite the unseasonal rainstorms.

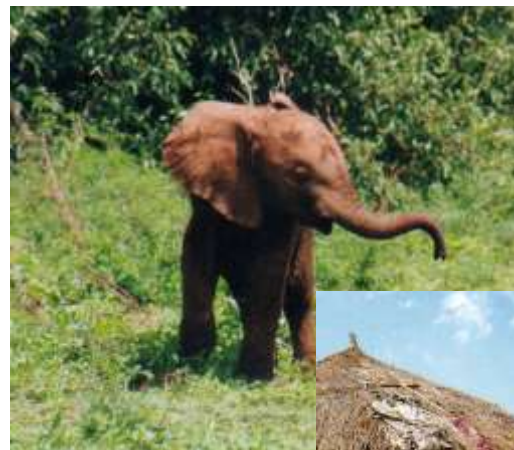
During our walks we were 'protected' by a Ranger/Scout called Peter who knew all the answers to our questions. Animals were scarcer due to the amount of water about and the thick bush. However we enjoyed seeing and photographing the sub species of **Cookson's Wildebeest** seen here with **Impala**. We also had several trips on the river itself to visit some of the many lagoons etc, where we had fun with **Hippos** and saw some lovely **Wire-tailed Swallows**.



After a very active and enjoyable week in the Selous it was time to leave for the north so we caught a small Cessna to Zanzibar on Saturday and stayed the night in the Tembo Hotel in the Old town. Very comfortable and spacious. We would like to stay longer next time. After breakfast next morning we flew up to Arusha in the north and "somebody" discovered he had still got his room key for the Tembo Hotel. We handed this to Hoopoe to return with his apologies. We then drove to the Lake Manyara area staying at Kirurumu Lodge on the Cliff top where Fred had stayed before. We made several trips into the National Park, famous for the Elephants, as well as walks



in the area to see the many birds and animals. One afternoon Fred took us to meet Milau in his village where he had spent some time on the last visit. We were made very welcome by the Maasai people and shown around the Boma and mixed freely with Milau's family. Here Elizabeth is seen trying to sell Fred for whatever she can get for him but there were no takers.



We then drove to the world famous Ngorongoro Crater to spend the night at the Sopa Lodge on the crater rim. On the way 'somebody' discovered he had not left his tent key behind at Kirurumu but by co-incidence we saw Peter

Lindstrom driving towards us so flagged him down and handed him the key. We had a whole day down in the crater itself. Home to many animals including some of Tanzania's last Rhino. They are well protected and are increasing again.



Then back to Kirurumu and on to Tarangire Park for a day in this rarely visited area. We stayed in a Tented Lodge overlooking the permanent river and watched animals from Elephant to Bushbuck coming down to drink. Several actually wandered through the Campsite itself. Again a very comfortable place to be surrounded by animals.

It was here that we saw a lioness moving her cubs and these must have been the youngest wild lions I have ever seen.

Our last full day was spent

driving back to Arusha in time for the plane to Dar es Salaam where we arrived just after 2 pm.

As Fred had spoken highly of the Sea Cliff from his last visit we were all booked in there, with Sea View rooms of course. It was as good as he had said. Perched on a Coral cliff about ten miles north of the City overlooking the Indian Ocean. Warm nights under the stars in the open dining area. Excellent food and friendly staff. Just the sort of place to spend our last nights in Africa.



Sunday morning had us back at the Airport for our 10 o'clock flight to Zurich and London which again was exceedingly comfortable although a little late due to Head winds. The crew made up for this by pointing out various sights as we passed such as Kilimanjaro, Lake Nakuru and Mount Etna covered in snow in Sicily. After changing planes once more in Zurich we landed back in London City airport at 8.30 (GMT) and were in bed in our nearby Hotel by Nine. No need for dinner as we had eaten reasonably well with Swissair who had gone bust some weeks before our trip but had risen again Phoenix like to become just "Swiss!"

We do have some exciting trips.

Here is a small map showing our travels in Tanzania.



(c) Whiteknuckles Safaris