

and several are a bit older than usual, at 30 or so. Robert, the P.C. Director, gave a nice reception for them, with lots of yummy food, and afterwards, 16 of us went to Marox for ice cream sundaes! It was quite a zoo, with most not speaking French, and many trying to speak it anyway. Everyone had millions of questions of course, many of which were so basic & naive I was shocked to realize that we asked those very same questions 2 years ago. It's hard to strike a balance between giving advice & info or just lecturing.

Had some moments of frustration when we realized that getting to Nairobi and shipping stuff home, are both going to be much more expensive than we thought.

Getting to Somé from Atakpanié was really easy this time. But we made up for it coming back. Got to the Somé station at

9 AM (I made us late) and just missed a Kara taxi. Ended up

waiting till 2 PM for the taxi to fill up! Then at 8 PM we got to Bafilo mountain and the road was blocked by a gas-oil tanker truck that had jackknifed and spilled gallons of gas-oil all over the road.

We waited almost 5 hours for a tractor to drag the carcass off to one side. It was eerie standing around on a dark mountain road at midnight while cables clanked and voices called back & forth.

The truck moved inch by inch, throwing sparks as the metal dragged along the asphalt, and we kept wondering what it would take to ignite the fuel.

Thank god it wasn't gasoline. The taxi drivers were in heaven, and they siphoned off gallons of free "gas-oil" for their vehicles. The tanker

driver was very lucky - no injuries. So we pulled into Kara at 2 am bleary-

eyed, and slept till 10!

Friday June 26 Bogore

Supposed to attend a funeral tonight. As usual, once home in the evening I am reluctant to go out again. I hoped it would rain, and sure enough it has: a long, hard 2 hour rain, with plenty of lightning & thunders, but not too much wind. ~~With~~ Yet now as the noise drops to a pitter-patter on the tin roof, we hear the low rumble of drums in the night. I guess when these folks make up their minds to party they do it rain or shine. I imagine they're out there slogging in the mud, soaked to the skin, but dancing away.

Yesterday found us once again in Sambimongue, that delightful, picturesque village 30 <sup>kms</sup> ~~miles~~ from here on the Ghana border.

Pang is building a cistern there, and Mike wanted to make a supervisory visit.

The drive out was spectacularly lovely, under overcast skies in diffused ~~the~~ autumnal light that threw the new ~~bright~~ spring greens into dazzling contrast ~~again~~ beside ~~the~~ unplanted plots of chocolate brown ~~soil~~ & laterite-red earth. Once there the skies opened up, and we spent several hours chatting & snoozy in a cozy room while it rained.

The women of the family didn't rest though. They were busy throughout the storm, filling buckets under the roof eaves, and hauling the full ones to fill big clay jars. ~~This~~ <sup>rain</sup> is their only water supply, and what they collected will need to last until the next rain, which could be 2 weeks away. This year's rains have been few & far between.

It was amazing to watch these hardy women, soaked to the skin, working in the downpour. I was ~~wet~~ dry, yet cold - they must have been freezing. The minute the rain dwindled to a sprinkle they were back in the fields. ~~They~~ They had eaten no food for hours.

The concession again impressed me with its beauty. Every wall, incl. the shower interiors, is coated with beautiful colored plasters laboriously applied by hand, and etched with designs created by punching small holes with rocks. The pottery here comes from Ghana, and boasts lovely oval swirl designs. The glazes are rich & shiny ochre & deep brown.

Hopefully Opaong is getting rained on tonight. They have had no rain

for over 2 weeks, and haven't been able to plant yet. Up on

the mountain here, which gets the earliest rains, the 3-month millet already has big seed heads! ~~Here~~ In Bogou the rain has been good, and the millet is about 6" tall. Definitely the loveliest time of year here.

After our return from Sambimongue we hiked onto our cliffs with Lucy McMillan from Barboissi, her boyfriend Matt, a PCV in C.A.R., and Joel Lundstrum, from Nano.

Our first real summer visit up there, as we were on vacation at this time last year. The view is gorgeous: squares of chocolate brown & dazzling green for miles.

Back at the house just as darkness fell (which it does abruptly in the tropics),

Peter Rice showed up on one of his rare excursions away from ~~Mango~~. We had gando.

an impromptu dinner of various leftovers and a great chat till almost ten. Too many 'squitos these days for lounging on the terrace, so we cozied up in the "salon". It's nice & cool out now, though humid during the day.

## Sunday June 28

Yesterday Barano came over to tell us that he passed his school exam! He now has his BEPC license, the equivalent of a high school diploma. He would like to go to accounting school, but there isn't one here in Dapaong, so I'm not sure what he'll do. To my surprise, he kept records of all the money I gave him this year, and told me it was 60,000 francs! We'd like to help him through school next year, but aren't able to commit ourselves for 2 years. Most vocational curriculums

take 2 years.

Friday July 24

Almost a full month since I've written in my journal! I've been very busy - so that means of course there's been lots to write about. To backtrack...

Been busy organizing the building of a small cement "shed" for displaying stoves & such at <sup>affaires sociales</sup> ~~social~~ <sup>Depot</sup>. Barry got the money from UNICEF. It's a bit like building a stove, but on a larger scale. More materials, more logistics, and more days of construction.

Surprisingly, though it's rainy season now, I've been building lots of stoves. My Moba has gotten pretty good, which makes the formations even more enjoyable. My technique has really evolved over these 2 years, and I now feel especially comfortable - just as I'm getting ready to leave!

July 14<sup>th</sup> was my 28<sup>th</sup> birthday. Went to Gary & Renee's for a pork roast dinner,



and Mike made outrageous chocolate fudge brownies. Right after dinner the whole volunteer crowd showed up to surprise me & wish me happy b-day. I was really touched - but I wished they hadn't eaten all the brownies! Turns out they'd been planning a surprise cinnamon roll breakfast, but I blew it by scheduling work that day!

Laura & Peter came up to visit and stayed with us Wed. & Thurs. We had a great hike up on the cliffs.

Then Amy & Larry came up on Friday night. We spent Saturday in Capaong going to the market & the weaving center, then drove to Bogor. On the way we saw lots of elephants - up close. It was pretty exciting for them since it was their first sighting. We also hiked up on the cliffs.

The next week I did 3 stove formations - in the middle of rainy season!

Tues. July 28

Woke up Sunday morning sick. Bad diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea. We were invited to the sons - Prefets' for lunch, so I willed myself to go up there. I'm afraid I looked pretty green, though, and couldn't eat much. I felt bad, as he had really gone out of his way to prepare us a nice meal. Poor Assibi couldn't eat either, with seeing how bad I felt.

Saturday afternoon I helped Martine make boisson, so I could learn how. It's more complicated than I realized. I had thought to try making it back home, but I highly doubt it would work out. Sunday morning I was to go back for part 2, but was feeling too crummy to even get out of bed. I'm still feeling crummy, but mostly real run down.

I'm taking Tsigyne (again) so the diarrhea's gone.

Wed. Aug. 5

Today is the Muslim fête of Tabaski, celebrating the prophet's post-Ramadan visit to Mecca at which he killed a sheep to celebrate. So today is a holiday, and the sheep of Togo will suffer.

I've written in my journal so rarely, and yet have had so much to write about. But if I wait it's too late, and the events & thoughts are forgotten. It's only about 3 weeks until we leave Dapaong, and there is a lot on my mind. I'd like to record some of my thoughts & feelings as a major adventure in my life draws to a close. We've been very busy, which is a blessing, as otherwise we'd go nuts counting the days.

There is of course an element of sadness & loss as I think of leaving a place that's been home for 2 years. There are a few people I'll really miss. We've also gotten very involved with our projects, and feel they're really having an important

impact. It's hard to leave them in mid-air, not knowing how well they'll continue. There's also the anxiety of saying goodbye, giving gifts, etc.

Then there's the element of suspense: our plans for travel & homecoming are still up in the air, so who knows where 6 weeks from now will find us. It looks like Jan & Larry may have to leave Paris in early ~~the~~ October, and if so, we'll fly directly to Paris so as not to miss them. We'd fly Aeroflot, Russia's airline, which is quite cheap. That means a possible few days in Moscow - that would be very interesting!

Mostly though I feel excited - like writing for Christmas. Actually it's ~~a~~ similar to how I felt preparing to come here.

A new adventure is looming. The fun of packing up, clearing out, and moving on!

There's butterflies in the belly, and an underlying hint of mild panic; so much to do!

Got to sell our stuff, write reports, pack up, and say "appropriate" goodbyes to dozens of people.

It's raining almost every day now. It's hot, muggy, and flies abound. Most uncomfortable.

Having 2 herds of cows living to either side, and within 50 feet of us, didn't help. Luckily, the chief recently took his cows back to the farm. But the Fulani man who's been our neighbor now for almost a year, went as well.

He came the other day to say goodbye. It was sad. He's a young man, very tall & thin, gentle & polite & softspoken.

He gave me a very favorable impression of Fulani people. They rarely drink or smoke, and are very proud & noble people. Nomadic & self-sufficient. A cut above the average Moba.

Sun. Aug. 30      Iomé

Where to begin this time, as the space between entries grows to over 3 weeks. And these have been a very eventful and busy few weeks. After 26

months in Logo, we are now preparing to leave. The month of August was an increasing whirlwind of activity,

with each day busier and flying by faster. The ~~20<sup>th</sup>~~ ~~9<sup>th</sup>~~ ~~20<sup>th</sup>~~ we hosted 6 of the 7 new stove volunteers along with Eric, Steve, Barry & Kathy. We built 2 bioisson stoves, did a cistern tour of Bogou, and had spaghetti lunch for 15 at our house. Then Saturday was packing day. Spent the morning taking things off the walls and sorting through piles of stuff; until noon, when our landlord showed up with his wife and daughter and announced they were staying for 5 days! At first we were dismayed, but it actually worked out well. They stayed in Adia's room and "camped out" on our front porch. They provided a sort of buffer for visitors. People came to see them, but would also say hi to us, without our having to receive them, offer them drinks, etc. Sunday we had a big garage sale & going away party. About 20 people came, and we got rid of almost everything. Monday we spent at Assibis and

at the market. Pang provided a pintard to barbeque, and we made kalma + sauce for a small going

away lunch. It was Pang's idea, and he invited Adia as well.

Tuesday we did a run to Dapaong to take care of last minute odds + ends. Then Wednesday was the big last day. We saved our goodbyes and cadeaux for then.

Assibi came over and I gave her a lot of little things, plus my 3 red enamel pots. She was very pleased - pots + pans are considered a source of wealth here, and women stockpile them. They serve also as a form of insurance against a rainy day. They can be sold at near their purchase price, while pagnes, the other form of wealth women stockpile, wear out more quickly and are difficult to resell. We drove back to Assibi's (she + I, Yendubram between us, and a large carton on the back) laden with gifts for her + mom. Mom got a 20 litre metal jerry can and a basket full of odds + ends. We said goodbye reluctantly with the promise

that we'd see each other tomorrow.

Thursday was tough. The landlord left early in the morning and

we began our final packing.

As boxes & bags piled up on the porch a trickle of people came over to say goodbye. We were grateful to be busy right up until the truck came. When Victor arrived it decided to rain (a fitting, if depressing last gesture for a goodbye). Luckily it didn't last long, and we soon had the truck loaded. Then Victor drove off and there we were, us & our motos, ready to say goodbye.

O'wog was sleeping, the cat & dog had disappeared, Mom was at the market. Adema said a cheerful but very sad goodbye, and Adia looked downright stricken. We all kept it short & sweet, knowing that dragging it out would only mean lots of tears. Driving out of the compound I was crying. A crowd of kids stood & watched silently, and we stopped to say goodbye to Barano. Mike then drove to Pang's while I drove to Assibis. Mike said Pang broke



down in tears, which I knew he would, and is one reason I didn't go over there. At Assibi's everyone was cheerful. Assibi decided to come into Dapaong with us, thus avoiding (or delaying) one goodbye. Yendubram & the kids were gone, but dad came over. At last it was time to say goodbye. Mom & I hugged & kissed and I climbed on my bike quickly before I started crying. Then as we started to pull away Mom grabbed my arm and clutched at me. It was such a touching gesture I could hardly bear it.

For over a year I was like a daughter to her. She will miss me painfully - and I her.

Thursday evening we were invited to Affaires Sociales for a goodbye drink with the Director.

To our surprise they prepared a meal for us. About 30 people came. They had all contributed money, and Therese and the other women cooked the meal. We sat in a rectangle, Mike & I and Rick Park to either side of the Director. The Director gave a really nice

speech thanking us for our work and energy. We were really touched. Then Mike gave a really nice speech too. I was really proud of him.

I was too tongue-tied, but eventually gave a short, choppy thankyou speech, which nevertheless seemed to make everyone happy.

In the course of the evening I managed to spill red wine over my (luckily red-wine-colored) dress.

After that we buzzed up to the Campement for drinks with the P.C. crowd. Assiri & Silene, who were also at the A.S. dinner, came too.

(At A.S. I said goodbye to Thérèse, the regional stores coordinatrice. I gave her a few little trinkets. She said she'd see me the following morning, which we both knew she probably wouldn't, but it made it easier to part).

After drinks at the Campement it was time to say goodbye to Assiri. She also said she'd see me in the morning. But I gave her a kiss and a handshake, and sure enough we didn't see each other in the morning.

We spent the night at Hugo & Leslie's. They gave us their room for our last night

in Dapaong, and we had hot chocolate till 11 PM. We fell into bed so exhausted we hurt.

A long & emotional day.

Friday morning Leslie made us whole wheat pancakes, then Hugo drove us to Affaires Sociales. Rob Deutsch was going to Kara and offered us a ride - with one hitch. We'd accompany him to Gando for a latrine inauguration!

After a few speeches we were given a tour of the latrines and a token lunch: a drink and 2 pieces of meat. Needless to say we arrived in Kara at 3 PM ravenous.

Spent the night after attending an all-American goodbye party for Samara. The table was piled with platters of food, everything from deviled eggs to home-made donuts - I'd forgotten Americans eat like that!

With another stroke of luck we got a ride to Atakpané with Art, a PCA employe. He fed us lunch - Campbell's cream of brocolli soup! - and drove us to the taxi. There we ran into Mr. Atoukon, the old Affaires

Sociales agent from Bogou! We got a taxi very quickly and were in Lomé by late afternoon. As it

was Mike's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday we thought we'd splurge and stay at the Hotel California, but it was full. Then we ran into Laura Nell and Peter. Peter was flying out that night so Laura invited us to share her room. We had hoped to have dinner at the Phoenicien, but Laura & Peter were pressed for time, so we ate at Lakshmi, yet another new Lomé restaurant.

It doesn't really feel like we're leaving though. This feels like just another trip to Lomé, with the usual bureaucratic hassles.

COS'ing is not a joy shared by others. The staff treats you like they can't wait to get rid of you, and the Togolese lay on quiet trips about not staying longer.

All in all I feel we left on a good note, and tied up all our loose ends.

Thurs. Sept. 3 Pagala

Arrived here this evening after a long but fairly smooth series of taxi rides from Lomé. We've decided to take Fansidar once a week in addition to Chloroquin as a malaria suppressant. It's a potent drug, but malaria is a big problem at Pagala these days. And with the 10-14 day incubation period we'd be in France when the illness hit, ex-PCU's with theoretical workmen's comp. coverage. We're also - once again - on Fansidar Fasigyne for amoebas, and the combination makes me nervous. Yesterday I felt carsick for 5 hours in the taxi, and today I feel headachy & a tightness in the chest when I breathe deeply.

Mike is building cisterns with the 6 stoves people. We have a very nice room with a double bed & a desk, near to enough to the creek

to hear it rushing by soothingly day & night. So far the mosquitoes haven't been too bad, and the food has been quite good. I have a lot of paperwork to do and loose ends to tie up here, and although a week seems like a long time, it may not be enough. There's talk of going to Bassar tomorrow for the weekend's annual ignam harvest festival.

As we tied up our lives before leaving the states, so we are doing here, but with a very slim chance of ever returning here, to live especially. I realize I enjoy "wrapping up the show", that feeling of organized finality, putting aside another neat, tidy portion of life, well-wrapped, very presentable, but quite behind glass. I like taking a breather, free of all worries, then getting to work on a fresh, clean slate.

Finally had dinner at the Phoenicien in Lomé, a Lebanese restaurant. We went with a Dutch and a Belgian woman from Dapaong, belatedly celebrating Mike's birthday. The food was superb.

The grand marché area of Lomé is extremely crowded, with many times too many vendors for the space available. Certain areas are off limits, and there are restrictions on vendors to reduce traffic blockage. As we headed to our hotel on foot several evenings ago, we entered a wide street completely filled with vendors and their little low tables of goods. They'd been creeping slowly forward all day, as new women came looking for places to sell, and now there remained a space barely wide enough for one car at a time to pass. So a jam had resulted, with several cars

honking madly & vying for passage. We were just ready to make for another, clearer street when a series of shrieks & yells erupted.

Like the red sea parting before us suddenly the road was clear. The women had seen policeman running to come clear them away, and had grabbed their little tables in a flash, to avoid having them tipped over by the law. In their wake lay fish, piment, salt & other casualties, like a gourmet shipwreck strewn in the sand. But everyone was laughing & giggling, and the policeman helped pick up the slimy, sandy fish!

Monday Sept. 7 Pagala

Got a ride to Bassar Sat. PM in a P.C. car. Went to see the annual igname fête, and to see Bassar for the first time. Nestled in rolling green hills, very beautiful.