

As my five year term as Bishop of the Pleasant View First Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints was approaching, Ida-Rose and I started planning to go on a mission.

It so happened that Richard L. Evans and his sister who was in the General Relief Society Presidency toured Zimbabwe to see what conditions were like there as the war between the blacks and whites had now ended.

One thing they noted was that there had been no market for the black ladies who did beautiful crochet work. Many whites were leaving to get away from Zimbabwe and it's terrible dictator. Some considered imigrating to such countries as South Africa, Canada, England, Austrailia, or the United States. The latter would be the hardest one to emigrate to. Then there many others who only one option and that was to stay put.

Arnold and Helen Lucas wanted someone to "Baby Sit" their home for one full year while they could consider their options. Our only obligstions were to pay a modest rent and take care of collecting the rent on two apartments that he owned. and were to take care of the home and fix things that needed to be fixed. Additionally, the Lucas family had a "boy" who kept up the yard and did other chores. We were to pay him twenty five Zimbabwe dollars once per month. Well, here we were living in a lovely home. How fortunate we were..to teach the black ladies in the ward to quilt. Over time, I built nine sets of quilting frames.

Many of the other missionaries did not have "good digs".

~~A major assignment for us in Zimbabwe was the making of quilts. Over time, I built nine sets of quilting frames.~~ To start things off we paid for everything to get started. Batts, needed to place between the top and bottom ppieces of cloth. Batts were not available in south Africa or Zimbabwe so the General Relief Society in salt Lake city sent one batt to help us get going

Good cloth was availble in Zimbabwe, so that was no problem. They made baby quilts to begin with and later made some full size quilts.

Meanwhile, we continued to work with the blacks in the church to teach them how to run the church organization principles.

Also, we carried the the gospel message from door to door. We were not supposed to stray, for safety's sake, to travel any farther than 35 kilometers away from curch head quarters, but that went down the drain. I can remember, on one occasion that we were out in the sticks on a pitch black night and we said to ourselves that we are only two white people standing here while their are 20 million blacks out there We loved Zimbabwe and it's pople and cried when it was time to leave. Some made money on their quilts.

Missionaries were only allowed to spend one year in Zimbabwe, so we were sent to South Africa for the final six months of our mission

There was apartheid in Africa at the time that we were there

There were whites, Colords, Blacks, Indians, and each of them were supposed to keep to their territory.

We did not have any troubles in this respect.

We being white could go anywhere but that could be risky at times.

Our Mission President moved ua around a lot just to get a feeling for the ar-eas. We had only one convert.

Many whites still regaurd Blacks as an inferior person.

one time in Africa, there happened to be some members in the church. having found that out one of the church members connected us up with the deBeers Organization.

They treated us like royalty, gave us an apartment with a maid and a parking place.

They spent more than two days showing us the sights.

One interesting thing that occured was the fact that tMr. Openheimer Knew that I was the first man to make diamonds some years ago at Generalthe- General Electric Company.

the

JOHN M. MURPHY, CURATOR
20th & 21st Century Western and Mormon Americana
L. Tom Perry Special Collections
Harold B. Lee Library

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
1130 HBL
PROVO, UTAH 84602-6877
(801) 422-6370 / FAX: (801) 422-0461
E-MAIL: john_m_murphy@byu.edu

