

Grand President's Visit to Africa

May 2009

After celebrating with Bulawayo Circle, Grand President David and Kathleen Taylor, accompanied by Mike and Gilly Withers from Wokingham Circle, flew from Bulawayo to Harare, early on Saturday 9th May. They were met at the airport by Columbus Guyo, President of Harare Circle and Malcolm Hollingworth - an old school colleague of Mike from St George's College.

Columbus transported David and Kathleen to Meikles Hotel and briefed them on the weekend's coming events. Later Mike collected David and Kathleen for a short tour of Harare, including the Cathedral (closed to the public unfortunately!) and Dominican Convent; President Mugabe's heavily guarded official residence; the Royal Harare Golf Club and the National Botanical Gardens. The Headmaster of St George's College, Brendan Tiernan (a 'retired' Catenian) and his wife entertained them to tea and a tour of the main college buildings. This Jesuit College (sister school to Stonyhurst) has produced many Catenians over the years, including several now resident in the UK.

That evening they met in unseasonably wet conditions for the coach trip to African Distillers premises on the outskirts of Harare for the formal meeting and dinner with the ladies. The 50th Anniversary meeting went well and Grand President presented congratulations to Harare Circle on achieving this milestone - the second circle outside of the UK to do so. During the meeting, David presented the 'History

of the Catenian Association' book to the Circle. He also presented a certificate commemorating 50 years of membership to Arthur Douie, who is the only surviving founder member of Harare Circle. Mike Withers presented the Wokingham Circle Centenary visiting memento to Harare Circle - a pen to be used by the Circle Registrar for signing in brothers and visitors. Several Brothers from Harare North Circle 289 attended the meeting as well.



Harare Circle Vice President Wisdom and Tendai Choto

During a magnificent meal, guests were entertained to a 'guided wine-tasting' of fine South African wines.

The weather cleared overnight and on Sunday 10th May, brothers and ladies assembled in glorious autumnal sunshine



Harare 188 Circle President Columbus Guyo is flanked by GP David Taylor and Arthur Douie, with the brothers of the Circle

for the 8am Family Mass at Mt Pleasant parish church. This was a joyous multi-cultural affair which lasted for 90 minutes, including much traditional singing and drumming.

The weekend's events concluded with a lunchtime 'braaivleis' (barbecue) at the home of Malcolm and Dawn Hollingworth, with 'bring your own' food and drink. Guests were regaled with a 'Catenian song' composed by Des Lawler of Harare North Circle, in the style of Gilbert and Sullivan.



GP David presents Frank Douie with his 50 year scroll

Said Mike Withers, "On behalf of all the UK visitors, I would like to thank President Columbus and his wife Barbara, and Malcolm Hollingworth and his wife Dawn, for the care and attention given to us during our brief stay in Harare. We know how difficult things have been in

Zimbabwe, yet the celebrations showed how resilient the people of Zimbabwe have been and how true Catenianism works. God bless you all!"

David and Kathleen flew out of Harare to Lusaka, Zambia on Monday 11th May. There he met and was entertained by various brothers from Lusaka Circle (201) and thanks are extended to them for putting on the hospitality at short notice. They returned to the UK on Tuesday 12th May.