

U3AC Africa Forum

Bring an African Picture

17th January 2025

Programme

- <https://www.u3ac-africa-forum.org/content/africa-forum/2024-25/spring-term>
- Sara Pienaar will take one of the sessions towards the end of term, provisional title “Rejoice the Beloved Country? South Africa, 30 years after Liberation” .
- Two sessions to fill, ideas and suggestions please

Upcoming Event – 11th March 2025

- We are excited to announce the 2025 Jennifer Ward Oppenheimer Lecture! Please join us in the McDonald Seminar Room on the 11th of March to hear Dr Amanuel Bevin present on 'Prehistoric Life on Coastal East Africa: Emerging archaeological finds and unfilled gaps'. The talk will take place 17:00-18:00 and be followed by a wine reception. The poster is attached.
- Please register your attendance for the talk -- either by scanning the QR code attached to the poster or following the Eventbrite link below:
- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-jennifer-ward-oppenheimer-lecture-2025-tickets-1152199502729> .

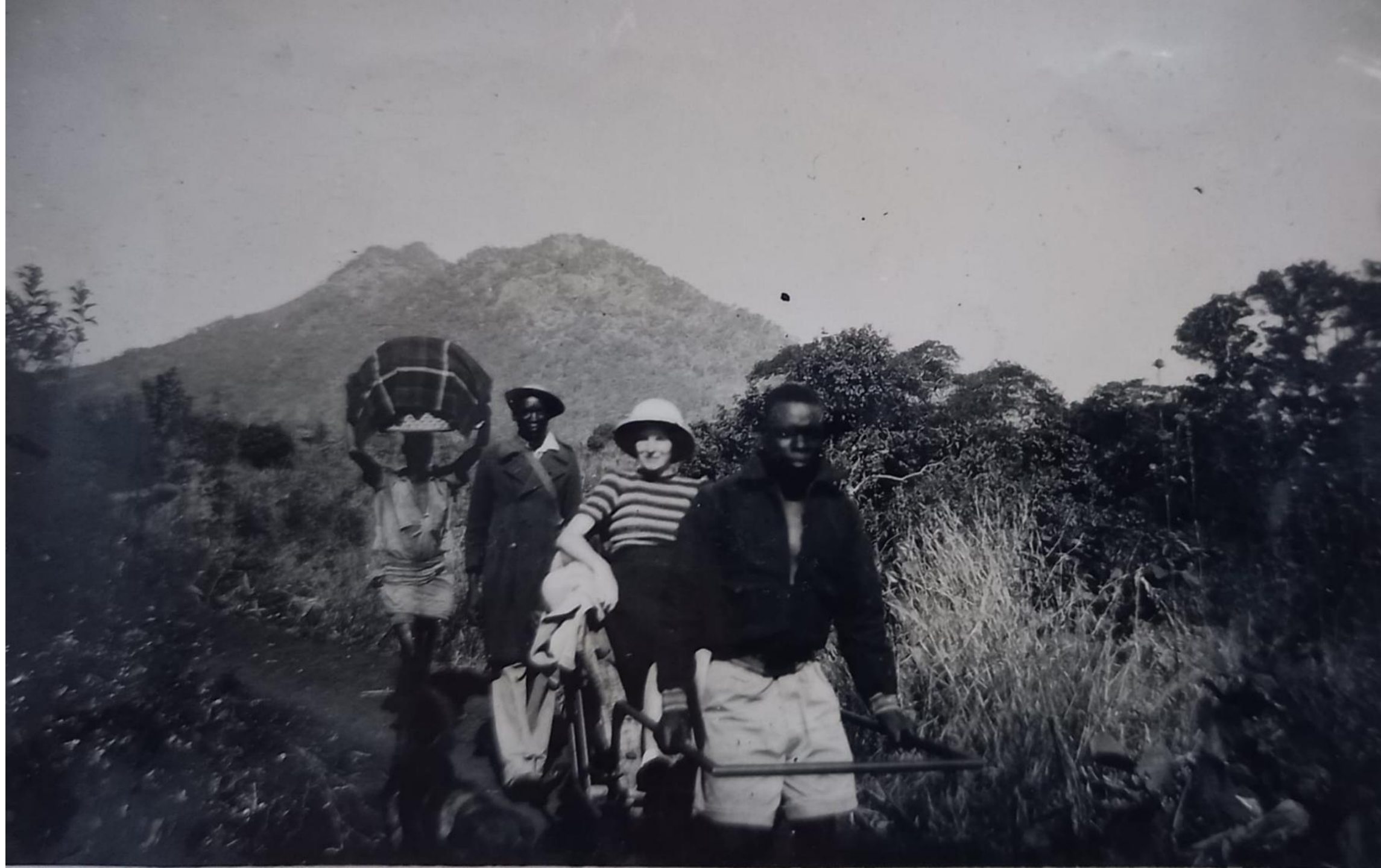
Sheila Brookes - Malawi



Zomba market in the old colonial capital of Malawi was where everyone went for local fruit and vegetables, fresh fish from Lake Malawi and much more. A local artist (George ?) specialised in painting vibrant scenes around the market in the early 1980s - each one unique. It's the only time I've commissioned a painting! When you visited his studio , you could suggest extra characters to add to your unfinished painting.

Richard Bolt – My Mother travelling in Africa

Nyasaland/Malawi





The talk was based on couple of photos of a ulendo (tour of inspection of a district) at the back of Chiradzulu mountain. It was in the early days of father's posting to Malawi shortly after the end of the 2nd World War. They are on foot except for the extraordinary one wheeled wickerwork rickshaw that Mum is riding on.

Mary Burt – Sierra Leone

Appointment of Albert Margai as Prime Minister of Sierra Leone,
29th April 1964. My then boss, Berthan Macaulay, the Attorney
General, is standing to the right of Margai.



The appointment of Albert Margai as Prime Minister of Sierra Leone, 29th April 1964, following the death of his half brother, Milton Margai, who had led the country since independence. My then boss, Berthan Macaulay, the attorney general, is standing to the right of Margai; he was instrumental in getting Albert Margai appointed, and as his confidential secretary, I was the first to congratulate Albert and typed up his speech to the country. The governor general, Henry Lightfoot-Boston, is the gentleman in the white suit.

Sara Pienaar – South Africa



Clifford Mpai, born 1937, was a migrant labourer from the Northern Transvaal. He worked as a gardener for the Oppenheimer family on their Johannesburg estate. He drew what he saw there and in his home village. The painting of a kraal is typical of his work. I love this painting because it is at once so calm and so strongly individual.

Anna Snowden - Sudan

Gum Arabic Production



Gum arabic is a natural product made from the sap which oozes out of certain trees in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular two species of Acacia. Refined gum arabic has an extraordinarily wide range of uses, encompassing confectionery, soft drinks, pharmaceuticals, paints, inks, adhesives, medicines, cosmetics, ceramics, photography, pyrotechnics and shoe-polish! Sudan used to produce about 70 per cent of the world's supply, until the current conflict disrupted production, affecting many industries worldwide.

Margaret Bray - Uganda

Block printing on Barkcloth, made by her grandmother.



Peter Woodsford - Uganda

Scenes from the Kintu Myth by Awonie, Busoga College, Mwiri

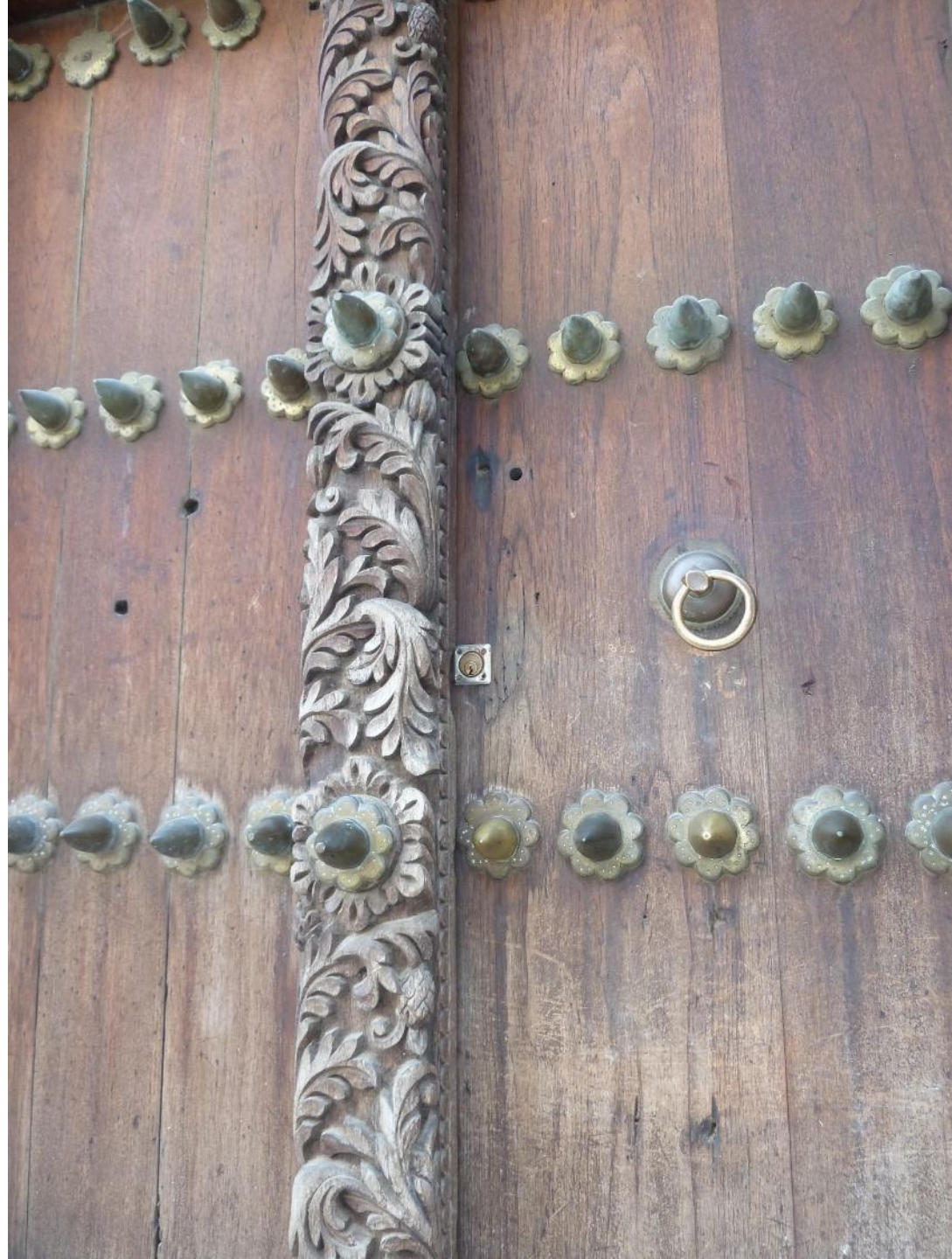


Kintu Creation Myth – click for detailed story

- Awonie won the National Schools Art Competition ~1965
 - He was officially a Pagan, when interviewed on Radio Uganda, he was asked for his Christian name and answered 'No Other' – 'This is Noah Awonie' said the interviewer, so Noah he became. He went to Nairobi to train as an architect, but we have lost touch.
- Characters in the Kintu Creation Myth
 - Kintu – the first man on Earth, lives with his cow (only one)
 - Ggulu – the Sky God
 - Nnambi – Ggulu's daughter , seeks to marry Kintu
 - Ggulu sets trials for Kintu, finally rewards him with plenty of animals and crops
 - Walumbe – Ggulu's son, comes down to earth because Kintu and Nnambi disobey and go back to get corn for the hen
 - offended by Kintu and Nnambi
 - Brings Death into the world

Peter Wiles - Zanzibar





Swahili Doors

When the Arab migrants and traders started moving down the East Africa coast they originated from Oman, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Goa and other regions. They came to trade ivory and slaves, and they brought with them much of their art, language and culture. This became absorbed into the tribal cultures of countries now called Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, and especially Zanzibar. So the language Swahili developed as a composite of Arabic and tribal languages such as Kikuyu. The Islamic art became perfused with vibrant African art. As Muslims, they also brought their religion, Islam.

The slide shows a Swahili door, embellished with carvings of versus from the Quran which blessed the door and all who passed through it. This beautifully designed and handcrafted door, technically called an Andalouisie door, is huge, with my wife showing its scale. It is one of many found in the side streets of Stone Town on Zanzibar, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and is probably 18th Century. The door will have watched as many thousands of slaves taken from inland were ushered past to be boarded on to dhows destined for the Middle East.

The second slide shows an enlargement of the door with brass projections. These are decorative but are designed to deter a war elephant from pushing the door open using its head. There are no elephants on Zanzibar, but there were in Goa where this door probably originated.

The right hand door, the mlango dume, is the male door, and the left hand door, the mlango jike, is the female door.

It is pleasing how well preserved these doors are in Stone Town. In other parts of the Arabic world such as Jeddah and Muscat, relics of the Islamic past are not valued as well, and the ebony wood is rotting as the old buildings surrounding them disintegrate.

Mike Gibbs

The Great Mosque of Djenné which I visited in 2012



The Great Mosque of Djenné in Mali which I visited in 2012 as we travelled up the river to Timbuktu for the Festival of the Desert. The largest mud-built structure in the world, probably originating from around 13th C but had fallen into ruin and was rebuilt in 1907. There is an annual festival to re-plaster the walls with mud which our local guide participated in and considered a vital part of the community spirit. The Saudi's had recently funded a restoration project which mixed cement with the mud to make it more durable, eliminating the need for the annual mud coating, however the locals were dismayed at losing this great cultural event and have restarted the practice.

Terry Allsop

Egypt



Picture of women's literacy class in textile factory in the Nile Delta. One of two sites, the other in Luxor. UK financed, managed by British Council. Delivered, very well, by ex-army staff from Egyptian army. Note the sleeping child on the lap of the woman in the front of the picture. Multi-tasking?

Alan Bird

Assela, Ethiopian Highlands , 1995

A view looking westwards across the African Rift Valley from just north of Assela in Ethiopia taken in 1995 whilst training surveyors in small scale irrigation work. The altitude is around 2500m and the peak in the far distance (about 100km away) is 3719m.



Bir zu Reg, Libyan Sahara, 1974

Bir zu Reg in south east Libya in the deep Sahara taken in 1974 when setting out the Jalo to Kufra road. The water table is just one metre below the surface.



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- The Lesotho Highlands 1983 on a reconnaissance for the initial feasibility studies for dam sites for water transfer and hydro power generation. General altitude is over 2200m with the highest peak to the north being 3285m.



Sunset over the river Nile just north of Luxor 1974.

