

DUMELA



Newsletter from Botswana Sweden Friendship Association No 2/2012

Dear BOTSFA members!

May is here ready to fill the air with sweet smells of bird cherries (hägg) and lilacs (syren). But with the beauty that surrounds us during the flower blooming month, comes the stress. Families have to balance between work, preparing for their children's end of school activities, getting their summer houses ready for the short vacation stint, and more.

In this issue of Dumela, you will read an article on an interview with John »Blackie« Selolwane, lead guitarist in South Africa's top trumpet player Hugh Masekela's band »Kalahari« and Paul Simon's »Graceland« tour. In »Annual General Meeting and Beyond«, Viera Larsson summarises the events of the joint-southern African AGM held at Etnografiska museet, in Stockholm, on March 24, 2012.

Dumela wishes you a warm and happy summer!

Julia Majaha-Järtby
BOTSFA Chairperson



Opening doors for stronger interrelations and friendship

TEXT **Viera Larsson** PHOTO **Per Järtby, Ulla Odqvist**

On March 24, 2012, BOTSFA held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at Etnografiska museet in Stockholm. Anne Murray made it possible for BOTSFA and four other southern African friendship associations (Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa and Namibia) to hold their AGM:s simultaneously, followed by a joint social program. The joint activities gave members of all five southern Africa associations the opportunity to meet, exchange experiences and establish new links. Thirty-one people attended

BOTSFA's AGM. At the end of the formal deliberations, the participants were updated of BOTSFA's activities and informed of upcoming events.

Bright Faces Daycare Centre: Julia Majaha-Järtby reported that Neo Chitombo, who BOTSFA sponsored for studies during 2011, had performed extremely well, obtaining a Certificate (with merit) in Early Childhood Development. Neo is founder, director and teacher at »Bright Faces Daycare Centre« in Kumakwane in Botswana. BOTSFA has, since 2009, also provided funds for the daycare's annual graduation ceremony.

visit www.botsfa.nu



►► **BOTSFA YOUNG:** Rebecca Bengtsson informed participants that she and fellow student Douglas Ahlstrand had formed an affiliate association to BOTSFA. They had visited Botswana on holiday and developed an interest in staying in touch with the country and its people. BOTSFA expressed appreciation for the initiative which will, hopefully, help rejuvenate the association and boost student interest in its activities. Rebecca expressed appreciation for the decision by the AGM to introduce a »student membership fee« of SEK 100/year.

Sponsored Walk: Seboleleng Bertilsson shared information about plans by BOTSFA Board to hold a sponsored walk on May 12, 2012 in Sigtuna. The walk is a fund-raising event for Bright Faces Day Care Centre and other needy causes in Botswana. She encouraged those present to register for the walk, sponsor a walker, or give a donation.

Informal Get-togethers: Per Järtby reported that the Get-togethers will continue at the restaurant »GRAPPA« in Stockholm throughout 2012. The »meetings« were continuing to attract interest among BOTSFA members and Friends of Botswana.



Photo Competition 2011: Per Järtby reported the winners, 1st prize AnneMarie Bergström, 2nd Mats Ögren-Wanger and 3rd Ebba Forsberg. He presented them with certificates and small prizes. The theme for 2012 is »Partnership between Botswana and Sweden« (visit www.botsfa.nu). Photos submitted may also be used in a coffee table book which will be produced to commemorate Botswana's 50th Independence Anniversary in 2016. The project, initiated by Mats Ögren-Wanger, is at the initial stage of development. The coordinators will contact members of BOTSFA on information needed to complete the project.

Visit by Shanti Lo: Ulla Odqvist informed participants of the revisit to Sweden by Motswana jazz singer Shanti Lo and world renowned guitarist John »Blackie« Selolwane in May. Information about the visit including dates and venues will be sent to members and Botswana friends, and will also be posted on www.botsfa.nu.

Retirement of Treasurer Ulla Beckman: Ulla Beckman voluntarily stepped down from the post of treasurer after serving the association for 17 consecutive years. Anders Hjerstrand was elected to replace her.

The Chairperson thanked Ulla for an outstanding service to the association, both as treasurer and membership officer.

Address by Lasse Berg: The associations concluded the meetings by jointly attending an address by Lasse Berg, a well-known writer, journalist and researcher. Berg presented an engaging and entertaining address he called »Are we all from southern Africa?« Over a hundred members listened to Berg speaking about the fact that all human beings have a common heritage – southern Africa. Many times during the presentation about evolution, as Berg sees it, the audience practised what he called a common »African smile«. The audience later expressed great appreciation for the time spent with author Berg.

Dinner: After mingle and drinks in the entrance hall, over 100 members sat down to enjoy a joint dinner. The food had an African touch and had been cooked by five members from the associations the previous evening. Everyone enjoyed the delicious food in a relaxed atmosphere. The »AGM working team« was given warm applause for all arrangements and food preparations. A nice mix of members then did a very good job washing up and putting the place in order.



Flying Botswana's music flag from Kalahari to Graceland – John »Blackie« Selolwane



World renowned Botswana guitarist John “Blackie” Selolwane will revisit Sweden for the third time in May 2012 for a concert tour with Shanti Lo and Swedish jazz musicians. TEXT & PHOTO Mats Ögren-Wanger

JOHN IS BORN IN FRANCISTOWN 1946 and has been all over the world carrying the Botswana flag. He left Botswana 28 years back with South African top trumpet player Hugh Masekela and his band KALAHARI. They toured America and Europe during his stay overseas, and toured with Paul Simon (Graceland tour) as his lead guitarist. He only returned back home in 2010 to stay. Since his return he has assisted almost all Botswana jazz artists with their recordings. During his May visit, John will, once again, share his music talents with Swedish musicians backing. In this interview with Dumela Newsletter, John talks about his long career and some of his big musical influences.

Why did you start to play the guitar?

I came from a music family, and I suppose the guitar was my favourite, but my first instrument was a pennywhistle.

Where did your musical inspiration come from?

My father, Dorothy Masuku, Champion Banda and the Golden Rhythm Crooners from Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

How come you became so good at playing guitar?

Practice and more practice.

Where were you trained?

At the Royal Academy of Music in London, 1965.

What did your family think of your choice to become a professional musician?

They loved it and supported it.

What challenges did you have to overcome to break through as musician?

Hard work and discipline.

Did you have any role models as a young guitar player?

My father, Cannonball Adderley, Oscar Peterson, Kenny Burrell, Phill Upchurch, Barney Carsell, Chet-Atkins, to mention a few.

What are your most important career milestones?

Working with a lot of different musicians, such as Baba Gasto, Franco, Buddy Guy, Horace Silver, Hull Singer, Peter Gabriel, Dudu

Pukwane, Paul Simon, Hugh Masekela, Tooth Silmon, Laurie Anderson, and Julian Bahula.

What is the difference between Southern African music and West African music?

The rhythm is what makes them different. West Africa is more percussive and in minor keys. Southern African is more based on major keys and it's more rhythmic.

Tell me about Graceland. How did it all start?

Paul Simon started it with the South African artists like Black Mambazo and Ray Phiri, among others. I came in later when Paul saw me performing with Hugh Masekela in New York.

What was it like to work with world famous Paul Simon?

It was great – he was a very nice human being.

Graceland became music history with this crossover between mix of Western and Southern African music. How would you describe the impact of that album?

The impact is huge, that's why it's been celebrated for over 25 years. >>

►► **When you went on tour with Paul Simon – how was that – any special memories?**

Memories are there. For example, getting into Russia and performing in Leningrad and Moscow was a very exciting tour.

Last year you did a documentary with Paul Simon about Graceland – tell us about that project and your role in it and if you know the status of the project?

It was a get together for the 25th anniversary, which is coming in June this year. I played my guitar in the project. It was a great get together.

Did you notice any increased interest in Southern African music after the Graceland album?

Yes, it opened a lot of doors for African music and musicians.

You are one of the few who broke through and became an established musician – what does it take to live on your music in Botswana?

It's very hard and tough to break-through in Botswana, that's why I did it outside the country.

You have played on world famous arenas – can you mention some of them and why they are special to you?

Madison Square Garden in New York, Royal Albert Hall in London and Wembley Stadium with Mariam Makeba.

What is new for you playing with jazz singer Shanti Lo?

Nothing is new, its music as usual and Shanti Lo is one of the young talented musicians to come out of Botswana.

What is your relation to Sweden and the Swedish audience? You will be coming here for the third time. How does it feel?

The Swedish audience is great, sweet and very warm. If I had a way I would adopt a million Swedes to stay in Botswana!

You will play together with several Swedish musicians. Are you looking forward to meeting them again?

Big time.



BOTSFA Sponsored Walk in Sigtuna – a Great Success!

TEXT **Ulla Odqvist** PHOTO **Per Järtby**

Thirty (30) BOTSFA Members and Friends gathered in beautiful historic Sigtuna on Saturday May 12 to walk or support walkers facing the challenge of completing well-marked routes of 5 or 10 kilometres.

A BOTSFA logo-printed T-shirt brightened the event which was partially clouded by sunshine-

mixed-rain showers. Overall, good spirit and smiles took the walkers around the distances. Back at Per and Julia Järtby's home, the grills were ready for a braai of meat, chicken clubs and sausages, accompanied by a homemade chakalaka sauce. A nice mingle started at the beginning of the longer walk and went on until late afternoon. All walkers received a Certificate of Completion of the walk. At the end of the walk, Ulla Beckman, who coordinated the receipt of the sponsors' contributions, reported that about 20 000 kronor had been collected and that a little more was expected.

It was a great day! PULA!



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Information, articles etc. to be included in DUMELA should be sent to the publisher's address.
Membership fees: Individual: SEK 175, Family SEK: 300, Student: SEK 100, Institution: SEK 500
Plusgiro Account: 851039-8 Bankgiro Account: 428-6472