



KENYA MUSEUM SOCIETY

Tracker

DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

**Wishing everyone
a merry Christmas
and a prosperous
New Year in 2012**

FROM THE SOCIETY STAFF
AND COUNCIL MEMBERS



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A Tale of Sarakasi

Marion van Dijck, managing director, Sarakasi Trust

Sarakasi Trust plays an important role demonstrating and developing the entrepreneurial possibilities of the arts to contribute to development and livelihood.

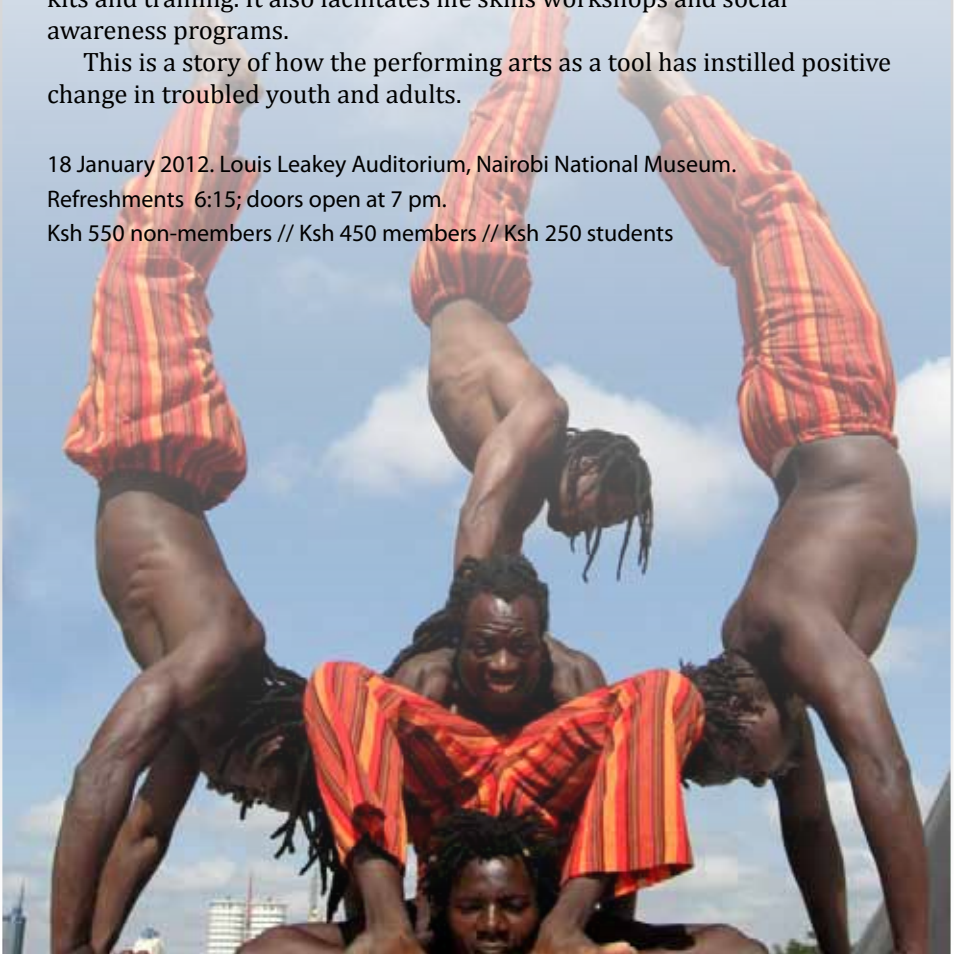
Sarakasi gives artists access to professional equipment, performance kits and training. It also facilitates life skills workshops and social awareness programs.

This is a story of how the performing arts as a tool has instilled positive change in troubled youth and adults.

18 January 2012. Louis Leakey Auditorium, Nairobi National Museum.

Refreshments 6:15; doors open at 7 pm.

Ksh 550 non-members // Ksh 450 members // Ksh 250 students



UPCOMING EVENTS



25 JANUARY 2012

“KNOW KENYA MORE THROUGH FILMS” SERIES



“A Small Act”

Directed by Jennifer Arnold, in collaboration with Hilde Back Education Fund

When Hilde Back sponsored a young, rural Kenyan student, she thought nothing of it. Now a Harvard graduate and a human rights Lawyer for the United Nations, Chris Mburu decides to find the stranger that changed his life. Using a strong narrative, the film interweaves seemingly separate lives into a cohesive whole. *A Small Act* bears witness to the ripple effect a single action can create.

For more information: <http://asmallact.com/index.php>

Doors open 6:45; screenings at 7 pm.

Ksh 500 Non members // Ksh 400 members // Ksh 200 students



HILDE BACK EDUCATION FUND
A Kenyan charity supporting the education of talented children

Know Kenya More through Film

On the last Wednesday of each month, January through May, 2012.

Louis Leakey Auditorium, Nairobi National Museum.

Doors open 6:45; screenings at 7 pm.

Ksh 500 non-members // Ksh 400 members // Ksh 200 students

29 FEBRUARY 2012

Soul Boy

2010. Director: Hawa Essuman.

Abila, a 14 year old boy in Kibera, sets out on a journey to save his father's soul.

28 MARCH 2012: DOUBLE FEATURE

Kimya (Quiet)

2010. Director: Willie Owusu.

The story, revolving around two people in a room, delves into the dark history of Kenya dealing with the issue of torture.

The Roadside

2009. Director: Willie Owusu.

About an odd couple trying to find each other. They decide to go for a picnic to mend their relationship when the story unfolds ...

25 APRIL 2012

The Captain of Nakara*

2011. Director: Bob Nyanja.

Afraid of losing the woman of his dreams, a young man with a criminal record pretends to own a profitable market stall. Wearing a stolen military uniform, he succeeds in defending his rights and his happiness.

30 MAY 2012

Monica Wangu Wamwere—

The Unbroken Spirit

2010. Director: Jane Murago Munene.

Indefatigable efforts of Mama Koigi, mother of human rights activist and politician Koigi wa Wamwere, who was detained as a political prisoner.

22 DECEMBER – JANUARY 2, 2012

Lake Turkana and Koobi Fora



<http://www.kfrp.com>

This expedition to Lake Turkana and the museum site at Koobi Fora will be a 12-day trip with a mix of vehicles. There will be a truck from Gametrackers which can seat 20 persons comfortably. It will also carry tents, mattresses, stools, tables and all the food, the cook, and the armed security guards.

Those who wish to take their own vehicles can do so. These must be sturdy four-wheel-drive cars with high clearance. But these cars must carry their own fuel from Marsabit to Koobi Fora and back to Loyangelani, as well as

their own drinking water.

Route – Nairobi – Isiolo – Archers Post – Laisamis – Marsabit – Kalacha - North Horr - Koobi Fora

Koobi Fora – Loiyangelani - Baragoi – South Horr – Ngurunit – Laisamis – Shaba – Nairobi

Tentative cost – Basic cost about 58,000pp. Those in their own vehicles will pay less. Included are three meals a day, all camping equipment and transport.

Camping fees or bandas are paid by the participants as they go along.

Koobi Fora is in Sibiloi National Park. Residents pay 500ksh per day and citizens pay 200sh.

On top of this, you will pay a non-refundable fee of Ksh6,000 to KMS. A further Ksh4,500 per person is your contribution towards the armed security guards, a tip for the driver (who is also the expert road guide) and a tip for the cook.

The non-refundable fee will be paid on signing the participants list (before 15th November). The trip cost will be paid by Monday 21st November.

In early December there will be a meeting of fully paid participants to discuss details. Venue to be announced later.

HOW TO USE YOUR KMS MEMBERSHIP CARD

Please note that when using your KMS membership to gain entry to NMK Museums and archeological sites, you must also provide other identification. Corporate members using membership cards should provide their organization job identification. KMS membership is not transferable.

UPCOMING SAFARIS

27-29 JANUARY 2012

Chyulu Hills



The fly camp from the 2010 KMS trip to the Chyulus.

Hopefully there will be no rain. We'll camp for one night in the lowland area below the Chyulus. It is a beautiful, remote area. Tents will be set up for us. We shall be there by noon on Friday.

After our picnic lunch we have the whole afternoon for a long walk. Dinner at camp. The next day we will again explore

the area after breakfast. We depart for Loitokitok by noon on Saturday arriving at our hotel in time for lunch. Late afternoon drive to the Tanzanian border for lovely views of Mawenzi peak.

On Sunday morning we walk to a waterfall. Early lunch at the hotel. Depart for Nairobi by 1pm.

Throughout the weekend we should have lovely views of Mt Kilimanjaro.

Cost: Approximately 10,700 ksh.

Included: HB at camp, FB in Loitokitok and lunch on Sunday.

Not Included: Conservancy fee, transport & tips.

For additional information about safaris, contact the KMS office at 374 3808; 233 9158; 374 2131/2/3/4 ext 2311; 0724 255 299; or info@kenyamuseumociety.org

KMS OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

The Kenya Museum Society Office will be closed from 23rd Dec 2011 and reopen on 3rd January 2012

KMS shop will be closed on 25th & 26th December 2011, and 1st January 2012. The shop will remain open for the rest of the days in December.

You can renew or join Kenya Museum Society membership at our KMS shop during the time the office will be closed.(except the mentioned closing dates).

We wish all our members, their families, sponsors and all our supporters a merry Christmas and successful year 2012.



Vote of thanks

Kenya Museum Society would like to thank all our volunteers, KMS and National Museums of Kenya staff who worked tirelessly to make this year's Know Kenya More course a great success.

Special thanks to our major sponsor Safaricom Ltd, as well as all our donors, without whom it would not have been possible to advance and fulfill our mission of fundraising for projects at NMK. We also wish to acknowledge the outstanding work of this year's coordinating KKM committee for their performance during this year's course. KMS is fortunate to have you as members.



Benga performance from Ketebul Music.



Visting behind the scenes at one of the museum's laboratories.



Happy shopping!

KMS would also like to thank the Mammalogy and Entomology departments of National Museums of Kenya for giving our participants an opportunity to visit their valued collections, which are normally not open to the public. On behalf of all our participants, thank you.

Finally, we thank the participants, especially the students from universities and colleges who got an opportunity to be part of the course. We look forward to seeing you again next year.

Happy Holidays and best wishes in the new year 2012.



Pamela Cunneyworth presenting for the Colobus Trust.



Saturday's field trip to the Railway Museum.

KNOW KENYA MORE! 2011

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

KKM attendance averaged 102 participants daily.

There were 282 students who came during the six days of the course, some every day, others on specific days.

Schools that attended:

George Excellent High School

Hupendo School Kangemi

New Dawn Secondary School

Girls Center

Nature Kenya Volunteers

Ornithology Interns

Nairobi University

Mount Kenya University

Zetech College

Kenya College of Commerce

Moi University



Students at the course.

INTERESTED IN HELPING OUT WITH KKM 2012?

Contact the KMS office if you wish to assist.



At the raffle Saturday, Shaleen won two nights in Maasai Mara, donated by Fly 540.

RAFFLE WINNERS

| DONOR | PRIZE | WINNER | TICKET |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Swiss Int'l Airlines | Ticket to Europe | Sarah Moller | 219 |
| Fly 540 | 2 tickets to Mara | Shaleen Joss | 0 95 |
| Wilderness Lodges | 2 nights at Samburu Game Lodge | Beryl Bentey-Anderson | 107 |
| Voi Wildlife Lodges | 2 nights at Voi Wildlife Lodge | Trudi Mugo Hall | 697 |
| Sarova Stanley | 2 nights at Sarova Shaba Lodge | Omar Yakub | 0 81 |
| Tsavo Safari Camp | 2 nights at Tsavo Safari Camp | Julia Fulcher | 323 |

LECTURE: THE SOCIAL LIFE OF ELEPHANTS

Allo-moms and boys clubs in Amboseli

by *Kathy Bogan, Tracker editor*

Cynthia Moss chose Amboseli for her elephant research in 1972 because of its unrestricted range, lack of poaching and culling, and unfettered migration routes. The Amboseli elephants were habituated to people—the Maasai who herded in the area were tolerant of elephants, since they did not plant the gardens that elephants are fond of sampling. And the creatures were used to tourist vehicles traversing the park, so Moss could drive, park and observe without interfering with the animals.



She has logged more than 30 years of study of elephants. According to the website of the Amboseli Trust for Elephants, Moss and her team’s research is the longest running African elephant research project in the world.

Moss spoke on the social structures of elephants during the Know Kenya More course.

Elephant families are group of females and their offspring, the oldest serving as matriarch. The family tunes into the matriarch, watching her and following along as her behavior directs. All are closely bonded, their ties enhanced by their constant touching, leaning on one another, rubbing and vocalizing.

A healthy female can bear 14 or 15 calves in her lifetime, which can be as long as 60 years or more. A full-term pregnancy last 22 months. Most calves are born at night, so photographs of newborns are unusual. The family raises the calves collectively, each offspring having one or more “allo-mothers” who act as surrogate caregivers in addition to its biological parent. The allos are typically 4- to 10-year-old females. They play with the calves, much like a teenage babysitter, even allowing the small ones to climb on top of them, offering the constant physical contact which helps the babies thrive, while the mother can rest and feed.

Three or four families form bond groups, which are likely collections of breakaway female groups that branch out once the original family becomes large enough to be unwieldy. Families also group together in clans, sharing range in the dry season.

The young bulls leave their families at 13 or 14 years of age, wandering and



joining with other males in “boys’ clubs” for 8 or 9 months each year until the rains. Unlike females, the males continue to grow throughout their lives, reaching as much as 12 or 13 feet in height and weighing six or seven tons.

During the rains, clans merge. At these huge gatherings, the males rejoin the females, seeking mates.

A breeding male (one in “musth”) advertises his condition by aggressiveness and streaming fluid from a temporal gland, which bulges. The message is “I’m a raging bull.” His testosterone levels surge to as much as ten times normal levels. He holds his head high and swaggers. Waving his ears helps waft the scent of his temporal gland. He tests the females he finds for their readiness to breed by breathing in their urine; an organ in the top of his mouth registers the condition of the female. During musth, a mature bull will mate as much as possible.

Females are selective: the bigger the bull the better. The young males don’t typically reach size to be appealing until they are about 30 years old.

Drought in Amboseli in 2009 devastated the wildlife. Carcasses littered the landscape. There has been talk of closing the park. Moss’ message however was one of recovery. The savannah is resilient. The deaths of so many animals slashed competition for forage, and as the rains come, the grass returns and the survivors have the opportunity to thrive.

For more information, log onto www.elephanttrust.org

LECTURE: SAMBURU

Search for the secret of timing

by Kathy Bogan, *Tracker* editor



Since 1972 Rhodia Mann has lived with and studied the ways of the Samburu people of north central Kenya.

She spoke about some of her experiences at the Know Kenya More course, including Samburu circumcision, the most important ritual in a Samburu man or woman's life. The ceremonies occur every seven to fifteen years.

For boys, the day of the cutting begins at dawn with the sound of a kudu horn. The boys gather in their *iorara*, a special settlement for the ritual, sing a prayer and kneel for special blessings from the elders. Then they walk a distance to a holy water site, where the current warriors speak of the responsibilities the boys will undertake during this next stage in their lives. The day of learning and the walk back tires them for the 60-second surgery. To cry would bring shame on them and their families so they must remain emotionless.

Recovery takes three or four weeks, during which time the young men kill as many small birds as possible. Their mothers stitch the bird carcasses to their headgear.

Cultural law dictates that everyone in the community attend the ceremony of arrows, the feast at the end of the recovery period. Many rituals take place over the course of the day, capped by the young man bringing his mother a choice piece of meat to thank her for her care. He tells her that he is now an adult and no longer her responsibility. His adulthood has begun. Then the new warriors shoot off arrows, gathered from the bush by their younger counterparts, who in turn begin learning about the next phase in their lives.

Dancing fills the night through to the next morning when the warriors receive their weapons, tailor-made to each individual's height and weight.

All the Samburu communities perform their circumcisions at the same time, leaving Mann wondering how they decided when to go ahead with the ritual. She learned that there was a holy man living at the foot of Nyero, the people's holy mountain, who told them when to hold the rituals. And how, she asked, did HE know? >>>>



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She went to find the man, journeying deep into the bush north of Maralal, eventually encountering his son, who led her to his father's house. The holy man was deathly ill, yet willing to speak with Mann, telling her they had been waiting for her. They spoke despite the man's condition and she found her answer: He talks to the stars.

The heavens hold great significance for the Samburu, especially the constellation Orion. In many Samburu rituals, the positions of the participants reflect the arrangement of stars in the constellation Orion. When a girl marries, she wears a forehead ornament that symbolizes a star, which in turn reflects the Samburu creation legend. They say the people came to earth from Venus, the morning star. Samburu words for star and planet are the same.

The most recent circumcision ceremonies were in 2005. The holy man told Mann that the current generation will follow the old customs but after that, the community must wait for the stars to speak.

LECTURE: PRIMATES

Don't feed the monkeys

By Dan Whipple, Tracker editor

Anyone who's traveled in Kenya has seen the signs: "Monkey Menace!" and "Don't feed the monkeys!" and such.

At the Know Kenya More course, Pamela Cunneyworth of the Colobus Trust finally gave me a good explanation about why you don't feed the monkeys.

Like medieval Europe or the Catholic Church, monkey society is rigidly hierarchical. If a lower-ranking monkey has food, the higher ranking monkey can take it from him, no questions asked.

If the lower ranking monkey refuses to concede the food, the higher status monkey takes steps to enforce the hierarchy. Monkey A, bites monkey B, much like the viscount would bite the baron and only think he was doing his feudal duty.

So if a tourist gives a monkey food from his traditional breakfast, he is signaling to the monkey that he, the tourist, is the lower ranking monkey. When the tourist returns to his bangers and mash, refusing to offer further generosity, the monkey feels that his alpha monkey status is being challenged. Then the monkey does the feudal thing and bites the tourist. This causes hard feeling on both sides.

Colobus Trust is trying to keep open the lines of communication among us fellow primates by protecting and preserving primates and their habitat along the Kenyan coast. Colobus monkeys are leaf eaters. The infants are born white, then turn gray at about a month-and-a-half, then they get their trademark black-and-white at about three months.

Colobus live in multi-female groups, with five or six females and one breeding male. "When the young males start to reach sexual maturity," Cunneyworth said, "they start coming into conflict with the breeding males, so he is forced out of the group." He may then wander by himself or join a small bachelor group until he becomes socially mature, learning the environment, learning territories and all the other skills that colobus needs.

They can be quite aggressive, because there is only one breeding male in a multi-female group. So there are a lot of non-breeding males. If a new ale takes over a group, he kills all the infants to bring the female into estrus.

The Colobus Trust also works with vervet and Sykes monkeys, and with baboons. Their efforts include protecting the habitat, attempting to avoid human-caused death and injury, and generally avoiding human-primate conflict.

So, help them out ... don't feed the monkeys.



Cherangani Hills

The KMS November safari visited the The Cherangani Hills, rising to 3,500 metres, northwest of Lake Baringo. They are a spectacular range, parts of which are still covered with ancient forest. It is a system of old-fold mountain (the only one in Kenya) that became surrounded by vast lava flows from

mt Elgon, which are now the rich agricultural soils of Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu plains. The range is inhabited by the Keiyo, the Maraqet and in the very north by the Pokot peoples. The drive through the mid Cheranganis, inhabited by the Maraqet, leads one through their tidy and well-kept villages.

This is the area from which Kenya's famous runners emerge. We stayed at the Kerio View Hotel in Iten. It is a small, quiet, charming hotel, rather like a Swiss chalet (altitude 2,360 metres). It overlooks Kerio Valley, the most famous place in Kenya for paragliding. The grounds have many indigenous trees, and the dining area has a large fireplace for the cool evenings. Often one sees some famous runners staying at the hotel.

Thanks to Salil Shah for sharing photos with the Tracker.

ACTIVITIES



MORNING BIRD WALKS

Every Wednesday morning at 8:45. These three- to 3.5-hour walks are organized by Nature Kenya. Participants meet at the upper Museum carpark off Kipande Road. Members who have books or binoculars they no longer use are urged to donate them to Nature Kenya.

Cost: Ksh 200 per person; free to KMS members

Email: office@naturekenya.org

SUNDAY BIRD WATCH OUTING

Every third Sunday of each month. Meet in the upper staff carpark off Kipande Road at 9:00 a.m. Bring binoculars, water and a picnic lunch.

Email: office@naturekenya.org

MORNING TREE WALK

Every last Monday and every second Saturday of each month. The walks, which start at 9:30 a.m., focus on trees and shrubs. They are offered by Friends of the Nairobi Arboretum (FONA). Participants meet at the FONA tree centre. A hat, drink and tree books are recommended equipment.

Cost: Ksh 100 per person; free for Nature Kenya and FONA members.

Email: fona@naturekenya.org

Contact Nature Kenya for more information:

020-353-7568 // 0739-200-216 // 0750-149-200 // 0751-624-312

NGONG ROAD FOREST WALKS

The Ngong Road Forest Sanctuary Trust nature walks are held on the first and third Saturday of each month at 9:00 a.m. Meet at the stairs leading to the restaurant at the race course.

For more information contact Simon Ng'ang'a at tel: 0729840715

Email: office@ngongforestsanctuary.com

KMS Membership Registration Form

Please use BLOCK letters

Mr./Ms/Mrs/Dr/ Family Name _____

First Name _____ Spouse _____

Names of children (under 18) _____

P.O. Box _____ Code _____ City _____

Tel: Home _____ Office _____

Mobile _____ Email _____

I am a NEW/RENEWING member (please circle one)

I prefer to receive the *Tracker* by EMAIL/POST (please circle one)

Membership Rates

(Please circle one)

| | | |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
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