

Dear Friends,

August 2018

A couple weeks ago Pastor Muyeka stepped on to our porch with a request I couldn't refuse. "I just returned from the retreat at Nselo. It was a tremendous blessing to everyone, except the road is awful, I got home covered in dust. Next week I'm going to Minkelo. I was wondering if you might contribute to my trip expenses as I have a very limited budget."

The mention of Nselo and Minkelo brought back all kinds of memories, some pleasant, others not so pleasant. I asked Pastor Muyeka what he was going to be doing at Minkelo. "Preach, show movies" he responded.

"What are you using for a projector?"

"I have a video projector the young adults of the Bumbu II church bought me."

"What movies do you have?"

"The Jesus film, a film about Moses, another about David, quite a few actually."

"What will you use for electricity?"

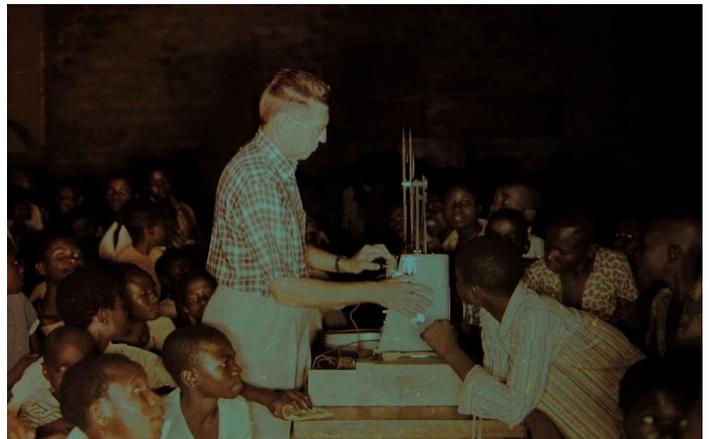
"Folks from the Matadi church are bringing a generator."

I blessed him and gave a modest contribution asking only for a few pictures in return.

Minkelo was a household name growing up in Congo. It is a favorite Baptist retreat center. It often came up in discussions about Dad being away from home for most of July during the brief months I was home from school.

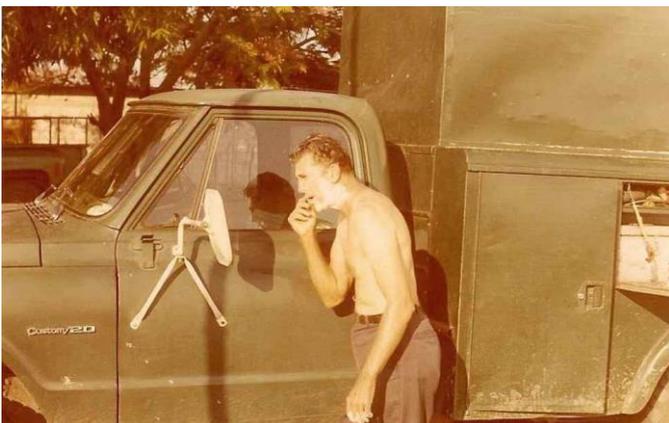


The Minkelo retreat center has a prominent hill behind it where, by tradition, they hold at least one special service.

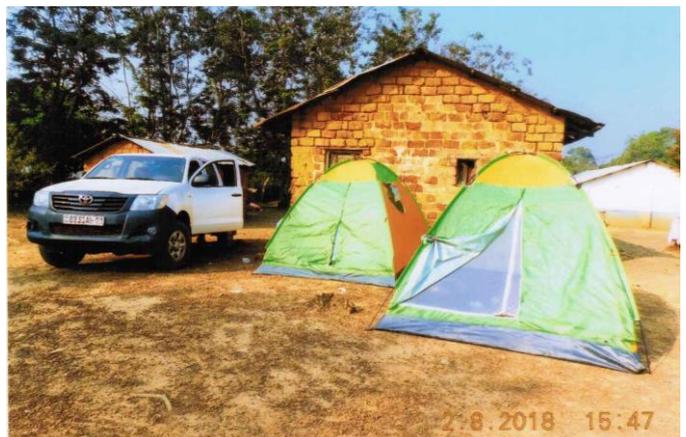


Evangelising with movies is powerful. Illiterate villagers can truly understand the gospel and believe.

Dad was missionary evangelist, rather unusual in the 1960s. In the seven preceding decades Baptist missionaries had largely replaced themselves as preachers and evangelists with local men and women. Dad's ministry was 'hi-tech' because he showed movies. Back then his work required a large generator and a bulky reel to reel projector (plus a spare) which he transported in a 4 wheel drive truck.



Dad slept in a tent on the back of his truck. He kept video and sound equipment in the cabinets. Even in USA going to 'camp' involves certain deprivations such as no phone or internet. Here it is no sink for a morning shave.



Pastor Muyeka similarly brought his own tent as space at retreats is always limited.



Climbing the Minkelo hill for worship was an important tradition, this picture Dad took 50 years ago.



Pastor Muyeka also included a picture of this year's procession. Comparing pictures suggests attendance continues to grow.



At the top of the hill is a cross (and beautiful view) that gives a sense of retreat from daily life. This taken in the 1960s.



Pastor Muyeka, shown preaching at the same spot this year.

Growing up I used to resent the weeks Dad was away on the 'retreat circuit' during my brief summer vacation. But I also thoroughly enjoyed him coming back full of enthusiasm and stories of how folks experienced renewal and inspiration at the retreats. It is so gratifying to see that his 'high tech' ministry is being carried on and that summer retreats continue to bless and strengthen the church. I will certainly be supporting Pastor Muyeka's ministry 'on the retreat circuit' in the summers ahead.

Wayne Niles

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