



## FLEMMER, Eric Ludvig

Eric FLEMMER | 10 Dec 1936 - 24 July 2003

ERIC LUDVIG<sup>8</sup> FLEMMER (LUDVIG 'GEORGE' CHRISTIAN<sup>7</sup>, JOHN DISTIN<sup>6</sup>, CHRISTIAN LUDVIG<sup>5</sup>) was born on 10 December 1936 at Makumu Mission, Kakamega, Kenya and died on 24 July 2003 in Lechlade, Gloucestershire, England. He married ENID MORGAN on 18 January 1964 in St Francis Church, Karen, Kenya. Enid was born on 27 May 1934.

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His sister Beryl Pickford (Flemmer) writes:

The first house I remember us living in was mud and wattle with a thatched roof about 2 miles from where Dad built the home we lived in until adulthood. It was a demolished Hotel; there had been a dozen or more in Kakamega because of the 'Gold Rush' just prior to that time. Eric was about 2 then and Dad had to employ a young native to follow him around because he kept picking up tools and after imitating the builders for a while he would discard them where he was and they got lost. The minder's job was to return them to the rightful owner. Perhaps his love of woodwork and mechanics stemmed from that time, for he certainly was very good at both.

Education - as a small boy of 6 he started his school life, like all the rest of us at boarding school. First at the Convent in Eldoret and after about a year he was moved to Kitale Primary School. After passing his Kenya Preliminary Exams in Std 2 he went on to the Prince of Wales High School in Nairobi where after passing Matric was called up for Military Service but was not accepted because of the effect of a childhood illness. He was then conscripted into the Kenya Police Reserve where he served for a year. This was during the Mau Mau Emergency. Most of the young men of Kenya had to contribute in some way. He had pinned his hopes on joining the Kenya Regiment where most of his friends were, but that was not to be. Eric was a good all round sportsman, good enough to enjoy himself. He loved playing Golf best and achieved a 4 handicap. The people of Kakamega all joined together and gave him a set of clubs and a bag for his 21st birthday. He was as happy as a sandboy.

Eric did all sorts of jobs, most of them to do with the motor trade in one way or another. One, in about 1955 was for a company dealing in Vespa Motor Scooters, working on the spare parts counter. One day a young American lady walked in and made an appointment to have her Scooter serviced, she was on a journey through Africa. She gave her name as Miss Flemmer, Eric remarked that that was also his name and had intended to ask her a bit more of her family history. Unfortunately he was interrupted and when he turned back she had gone. Could she have been one of our relations in America? Maybe someone could shed some light on this.

Eric's wife Enid writes:

Our lives together began on 18th January 1964, when we were married in St Francis Church, Karen, on the outskirts of Nairobi, a very small Church overlooking the Great Rift Valley. What a wonderful setting to start our new life. Our reception was held in the beautiful grounds of our friend's home in Kileleshwa, Nairobi.

Our life was never dull and we traveled extensively throughout the years of our marriage. Eric's working life was very diverse and he could put his hand to anything that came his way. The thing he enjoyed most was working in the motor trade and he spent a number of years with both British Leyland and Mercedes Benz and, although in a managerial capacity with these companies, his grounding in all things mechanical, taught to him by his Father, served him well and he was able to get his own hands dirty, at the same time teaching those working alongside him. Eric was prepared to tackle anything and if he didn't know how to do something he would soon find out - determined never let anything beat him.

He was extremely good at carpentry and as I look around my home now, I look with much affection at the beautiful furniture he has made over the years and which has traveled with us from country to country, luckily, not suffering any damage. It gives me great pleasure and is a constant reminder of the many hours he put into its making and which we both enjoyed to use. I remember the beautiful dolls house that he made while in Kenya for his cousin, Jannett (Croxford)'s daughter' Fiona, complete with all the furniture and bits and pieces that make up a home. This was a Christmas present for her and the joy on that three year old's face was something we never forget - it really was magic.

A large part of our married life was spent in Nairobi where we had very satisfying jobs, met many interesting people and had the greatest of social lives. Very happy years in that stunningly, wonderful country. We also spent a short time in Australia and New Zealand but were unable to find satisfactory jobs and it was inevitable that we returned to Kenya.

At the end of 1990 we came to England, where Eric, although finding it difficult to settle, threw himself in to the task of

making a living working on his own. After a short spell following various pursuits to make a living, we were extremely lucky to be offered the opportunity of becoming General Sales Agent in the UK for Eric's long time friend and business associate, then based in Dar es Salaam and who owned two Safari lodges and a beach resort in Tanzania. This entailed arranging safaris for clients all over the world and, although extremely hard work and demanding, gave Eric enormous satisfaction as it kept him in touch with East Africa and he was able to visit that country each year to keep in touch with anything new that was happening at the lodges, to pass onto the visiting clients. One very important aspect of this adventure was that Eric had such a deep knowledge of everything about East Africa, and apart from the work entailed in getting clients away on their safaris, he was every much an 'advisory service'. No matter how busy he was, they always knew he could be relied upon to give them an answer and, no matter how busy, would find nothing too much trouble; in short, he was always there for them.

Our last years together were busy, but happy ones. We were lucky enough to find a very nice home in the Cotswolds, a stunningly beautiful part of England and very peaceful; although I will hasten to add that Eric also enjoyed the hustle and bustle of London, which surprised me, where he was to work for a very short spell in the mid 1980's.

Although I really don't think that Eric ever came to terms with living in England, at least the work we were doing, kept him in touch with his beloved Africa until the day he died and I shall always be grateful that this opportunity came our way. His untimely death came with enormous suddenness and has left me bereft, but I do feel very grateful that he was absorbed in something that he enjoyed so much and we worked together as a team until the end, never being bored in each other's company.

To close, I can only say that, little did I realize that my decision to spend a couple of years in Africa all those years back, would design my future life and I feel blessed to have found and spent almost 40 years with Eric, a truly great man of enormous integrity, very loving, caring and thoughtful in every way. I miss him desperately and although I feel that we should have enjoyed many more years of happiness, I count my blessings every day and am so grateful for our life together. [2005]