

Local girl visits 'Black Africa'

by Isabel Oehm

Lana Girodat, chosen Hanover's Queen of the Fair two years ago, has just returned from a three month visit with friends at their 3000 acre farm in Zambia.

The daughter of Clayton Girodat of R.R.2, Walkerton, Lana was raised on her father's farm on the South Line.

She graduated from Walkerton District Secondary School in 1942 and went to Brazil three years ago as a Rotary Exchange Student.

Accustomed as she is to farm work, Lana found life on her friends' large African ranch to be vastly different.

The ranch is located near Chipata in the southern province of Zambia and employs 200 black workers with two white overseers.

Livestock consists mainly of poultry, but sheep, dairy and beef cattle are also raised.

Shortly after her arrival last March, a large shipment of turkey eggs was received from the U.K. The eggs were placed in incubators at a nearby

hatchery. After the turkeys hatched, Lana spent most of her time looking after them. Lana says feed had to be imported from the neighbouring country of Malawi.

Although there was much work to be done on the farm, there was time for sightseeing as well. Soon after her arrival, they drove to Zimbabwe where Lana saw Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, and also visited the town of Livingstone, named for the famous missionary and explorer in Africa, Dr. David Livingstone.

Another trip took her to a protected National Game Park. Lana says the laws against poaching in national game parks are very harsh.

Driving through the park she saw deer, springbok and elephants as well as zebra, giraffes, hippopotomus and water buffalo, all roaming free in their natural habitat.

Although Lana never observed them, lions and panthers were said to roam the back acres of her friends' farm.

Lana says she was in the area known as "Black Africa" where very few white people live.

The natives live in small huts and farm the land around their villages.

Lana says there is a shortage of bread in the country, and no butter at all. Grocery stores lack all luxury items and there is very little pork or beef. "Women's shoes are almost impossible to buy in Zambia," she added. The few that are available are imported.

Europeans in Zambia send their children away to boarding school outside the country. There are a few schools in Malawi but for boys only.

Back home again on her father's farm, Lana has been busy helping with the haying and training her father's race horses.

Lana's brother, Gene, drives at the Hanover race track. Her father formerly drove, but now spends most of his time raising and training horses.

Lana enjoyed her visit to Africa but says she is glad to be back in familiar surroundings.



MEMENTOS OF AFRICA

Returning after a three-month visit with friends in Zambia, Lana Girodat displays some of the

mementos of her trip, including a collection of miniature mahogany elephants. Lana, 20, is the

daughter of Clayton Girodat of RR 2, Walkerton, and the late Mrs. Girodat.