

# BLACKIEONAMMISSION

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## It's been a year!

Yes, last week it was twelve months since I left the shores of Sydney. In some respects that has gone very fast, amazing things have happened that I never thought imaginable, and already I am thinking about this time next year for my return visit to 'home'.

## Counting the sleeps...

Well its been a year since I have lived in Rwanda and well over a year since I have had any relaxing holiday. So from the 4th - 11th September I will be relaxing on the beaches of Mauritius with some friends. Flora will stay with her Nanny Lea during the days and will sleep at a friends house each night. Can't wait!

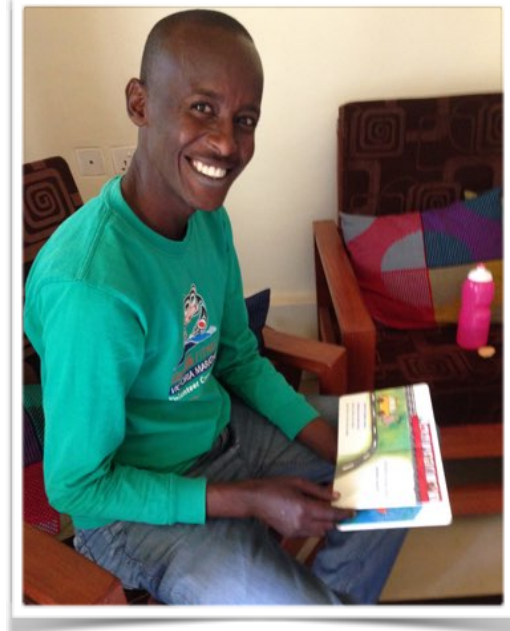
## Kid's Club

The boys on the right were the leaders at a holiday kids club that they ran during the July school holidays / first week of August. They met at my house the week before and planned a curriculum, and then these men carried out one of the best kids clubs I have seen, it was a privilege to be involved and to help lead these kids.

## Language Lessons 101...

This is my taxi driver and now friend, Charles. Charles has very little english but we manage to get by everyday as I ask him where I want to go and most of the time we successfully make our destination. Last week I used one of Flora's story books, 'Where is

the Green Sheep?" to interpret into Kinyarwanda for some language practise for me. I also typed each sentence on the 'dymo' machine and stuck them onto the page under the english. Now we always read the story twice, once in English and once



in Kinya - and she loves it both times. This one day I showed Charles, because I always tell him he must teach me Kinyarwanda and I will teach him English - he was very excited to see my Kinya in written form and he sat on my lounge and practised his english on each page, laughing and saying "Oh very good, very good!" This was just about one of my 'funnest' language lessons so far!





*Our August visitors, right out the front of our house, you can see the community in the background and the school to the right!*



### Perspective...

And just when I want to complain that the shower is a drizzle and not actually a shower, or the hot water is freezing cold, then I drive with Charles across town to work and spot these guys doing their washing and having a wash themselves in the storm water drains. My cold shower or my drizzle of a shower is a blessing and not something I take for granted!



### Making friends with the locals...

This ladies name is Adele, and she is one of the ladies who works at the cafe where I work with iteams every friday. When you make a connection with just one, it is all worth it. Adele, like lots of Rwandans has a story that most of us westerners cannot ever really comprehend. Because of her health, somedays she feels well and other days not so, when she is feeling well, we often dance and sing in the kitchen together and now others are starting to join in too. Adele speaks no english, so we communicate only through gestures and my very limited Kinyarwanda. So last week when she asked to take a 'selfie' photo with me and then invited me to her home was a special time. Adele wasn't at the cafe last week, one week after this photo was taken because she fell over at home and broke her wrist.



### Teacher Training...

This term I have been training the teachers in the new curriculum and yesterday, we had a practical lesson involving small group

work and science experiments. Child centred learning is a focus in the new curriculum as is child self assessment, there were lots of laughs and discussions about this new style of teaching yesterday and I think it was all very positive.

## Some teeth arrived in August!

Yes the 2nd of August was a big day in our house when two little pearly whites popped through the gums of my baby girl. She is 9 months now and is mobile - pulling herself up onto furniture and in her cot, no longer can I leave her to sit and still be there when I return! She is the joy of my life and three men who live in Rwanda and



whom I respect have all told me individually, "Michele if the only purpose for you to be in Rwanda at this time was to save the life of a little girl - then that is ok!" Two of these men were Rwandan and culturally don't show emotion but both teared up when they told me Flora may be the only reason I am here, like Esther for 'such a time as this'!

I searched for this photo because I wanted to share with you a little of my day to day routine. Yes, apart from training teachers and caring for Flora, I do find myself watching Peppa Pig most days and as you can see, also sitting on my bed is a tennis racquet. No I haven't taken up tennis, but this is an electrical one that zaps the mosquitos! Every night before heading into bed one must inspect the mosquito net and zap those rotten little mosquitos. Once you hear the satisfaction of the 'zap' and ultimately the 'death' then you watch the body fall to its final destination - often my pillow or quilt cover. If they haven't fallen onto your bed, they may still be stuck in the racquet which could also mean next time you 'zap' another mosquito, the body of the last one will continue to 'fry' and sizzle up - just enough to let off a 'dead body' aroma before you lay down to sleep! Oh yes the joys of living with mosquitos - thy shall not kill - unless it is a rotten mosquito!

