



## **FLAG EXPEDITION REPORT**

**Flag Number 89**

### **The Colorado African Expedition of 2007 A Story of Adventure**

Submitted by  
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Submission Date - September 21, 2007

**Preface:**

I would like to thank The Explorers Club for allowing me the honour to carry Flag # 89. The flag was carried by others, to include Colonel Norman Vaughan. Without the support of Colonel Vaughan and his wife and fellow explorer Carolyn, I would not be a member of the club. I also might not even be an explorer. For long ago when I met them both at the Alaska State Fair in Fairbanks, without their encouragement, I might possibly have walked off the trail and back into everyday life.

**Introduction:**

The Merriam Webster online dictionary defines the term „expedition“ as „a journey or excursion undertaken for a specific purpose“. Indeed, no one should ever doubt that The Colorado African Expedition of 2007, set out across the vast expanse of the African continent as a journey, with a specific purpose. For against all odds that ultimately defines the tenacity and therefore the mission of a team of explorers, The Colorado African Expedition of 2007 set out early on a morning at the beginning of the 21st century to challenge to the fullest of our abilities the art of exploration. As this is our official Explorer’s Club Flag # 89 report, I am very happy to report, we returned alive and in good health.

To begin this essay of a report, despite what many in this profession of exploration might reflect to the world that follows intently our every word and footstep through multi media outlets available instantaneously around the globe, as Expedition Leader of The Colorado African Expedition of 2007, first and foremost I must say, you do not have to have million dollar budgets nor television friendly smiles to adventure larger than life. The reality is that any man or woman that allocates the time to accept the hardships of the trail less ventured towards fulfilling their dreams, can achieve that which they set out to do at trail’s head. In our team’s vision of successful exploration, the key is accepting blindly that which lies in wait in the shadows of the expeditionary adventure. For once you accept that simple though complex truth, well you too can do just as The Colorado African Expedition of 2007 and countless other expedition have accomplished. That being to effectively travel anywhere you wish to in order to explore this planet Earth. As we fool ourselves into thinking as simple human Primates to believe that the only true ‘first’ lie in the depths there at the bottoms of our oceans or the far reaches of outer space, we should remember, if we indeed have explored the surface of mother Earth to the fullest, then why are wars raging? Why then are people starving? Why is diseases wiping out entire generations? Why do the indigenous people and the endangered wildlife on the exploratory ride through infinity find themselves mingling with selfish fools? As T.S. Eliot wrote, “ We must not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we began and to know the place for the first time.” So do we self proclaimed explorers know ourselves well enough by trails end to file reports??

The official expedition website for The Colorado African Expedition of 2007, [www.ColoradoAfricanExpedition](http://www.ColoradoAfricanExpedition)



The official website for the expedition was completely designed by my dear wife and fellow explorer Regina Fisher. She is also the 'Logistics & Communications Officer' for The Colorado African Expedition of 2007. This is a vital role for any expedition, for as we adventure into a world where Internet and media strategies and public relations connect the work we are driven to conduct there in the obscure reaches of the planet to the masses that remain at home in the safety and confinements of a life less challenged, a team of like motivated individuals is key.

It must be noted here in this report that expeditions in this modern era are stuck between the proverbial 'rock and a hard place'. For the dedicated full time 24/7 explorer needs products first, to insure the safety as well as the comfort of the team. Safety and security is paramount. An expedition leader should never blink in face of this reality. The team needs to adventure but they also must return home to effectively report, "the expedition was successful".

Countless adventurers and explorers have failed over and over in achieving this point. The slopes of Mount Everest and the ice shelves of Antarctica represent graveyards attesting to this fact as well as the seas and rivers that lace the globe.

Secondly, in presenting our teams findings we believe that in this age all expeditionary teams on expedition need hard currency. Be it Euros or US dollars or Mexican pesos or UK pounds or Indian Rupees or Russian Rubles. The reality is that travelers checks in the locale of the expedition no longer are the currency to leave home with, for they simply no longer always work less in the capitals of the countries you pass through either at the beginning or at the end of the expedition. In this challenged age of blackberries and solar satellite phones that connect the absolute remoteness of the bush, from Everest base camp to the headwaters of the River of Doubt to the 'Live With Regis' morning show, explorers need hard currency in their hidden pockets in order to buy their way through the backwaters of places, from the Amazon to the Tibetan plateaus, that most can't even find on a map or GPS,.

Another part of the equation that needs addressing, the art of exploration today finds explorers turning more and more to Public Relation firms in order to secure both financial and product support for the expedition. We question this trend that will, in our opinion, hinder new persons without access to grants or financial cavities, to explore uninhibited. We feel explorers will face restraints of what the club's founders warned against.

We fell the underlying message of the founders of the Explorer's Club believed that all exploration should encourage all to venture into unknown lands. And that when so venturing, they should not do so to seek profit. When our exploration is funded for marketing purposes which is the case when a firm provides the products we desperately need, the art of exploration is cheapened.

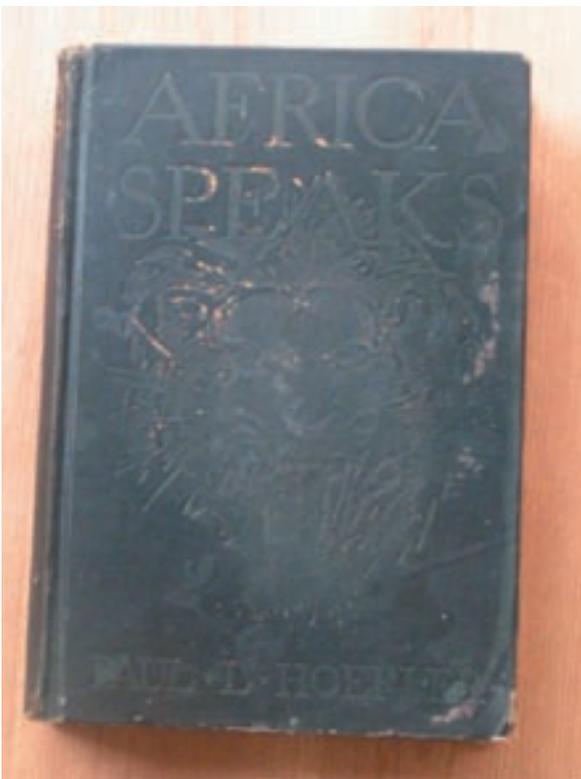


The task of exploring with open eyes requires that the explorer should never be forced to blink, we must be allowed to return from the field experience with a better understanding of our world at large.

But the reality is that although more and more outdoor outfitters are willing to readily provide products, fewer and fewer are willing to provide cold hard cash. And though they might promise this year to finance your expedition two years down the road, in the corporate world when fiscal belts are tightened, most often the weight of squeeze is applied to marketing. Therefore the checks don't always get sent. I have learned a long time ago that I will never let any of the numerous PR firms, who I feel are clouding the deal as they stand between the explorers and the money to finance their dreams, to stand between me and my efforts of dreaming big, and daring to fail.

As for the realities of The Colorado African Expedition of 2007, though not constrained by PR firms nor product providers, we too faced the reality that the modern team must provide a means to communicate.

So during the website design process we took digital photographs from the position of standing upon a chair and peering down over the tattered copy of the late Paul Louis Hoefler's 1931 adventure classic entitled 'Africa Speaks-A Story of Adventure'. Mr. Hoefler was, just as I am, an elected member of The Explorer's Club as well as a Fellow with The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) in London.



I had purchased Mr. Hoefler's book over the Internet for US\$30.00 plus shipping and handling from a book seller in the United States who attempted to jack the price after I first expressed interest in the purchase; again a reminder of what we humans are capable of when we are afforded the opportunities.

Regina and I, though she would not be in the field with me this time around, developed a comprehensive expedition plan as to what we hoped to accomplish by trails end. To continue building the website, a key tool for the modern day explorer, along with the digitized Hoelfer photos, we posted the locations of the actual route that he and his team had followed during their noted expedition in 1928-29. We added a page that offered a line by line budget that would change many times over the course of the two years of preparation.

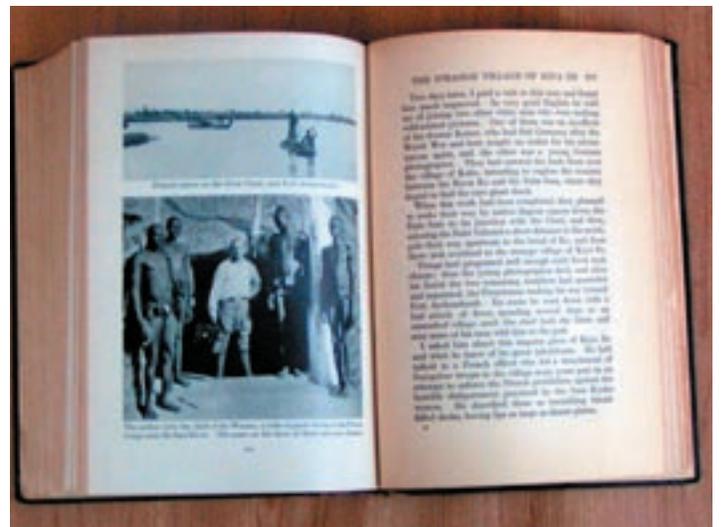
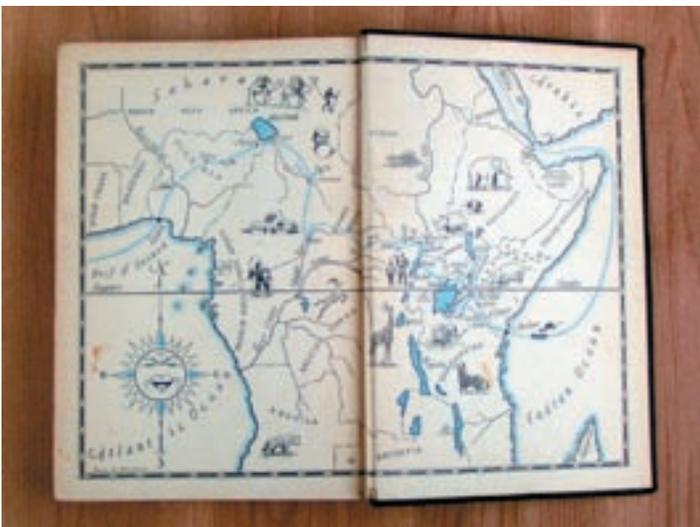


Paul L. Hoefler

With the launch of the website, I then began the arduous process of sending out electronic mails, emails, to literally thousands of outdoor equipment companies and the giants of the corporate world.

From Nike to Mountain Hardware to Sony to Siemens to Microsoft to McDonalds, I equally and relentlessly targeted them all. I even targeted philanthropic institutes and the expeditionary clubs that I hold membership though I must readily admit, we had little luck in getting their attention, due to our lack of nonprofit status with the foundations, the wrong citizenship with some and simply to far off the radar of their vision of exploration for others.

Not to be disenchanted, from the point when the official expedition website presence was online, there was really no turning back. I was ready to accept success or failure, whichever the journey would dictate. The trail would define The Colorado African Expedition of 2007, fate would determine our destiny.





With not one single product to assist the expedition nor one single dedicated dollar of commitment, The Colorado African Expedition of 2007 was born. That's the way these dreams take hold, one day it's an illusive and crazy idea born to a bored explorer on an Internet surfing expedition on the world wide web, the next day it's a sound and realistic project with a life of its own. We too were motivated and inspired not only by the exploits of the late Paul Louis Hoefler but also by so many others that have over the ages tested their limits.

Others like Everest explorer George Mallory who offered his explanation as to why we must explore when he answered after persistently being questioned while on a lecture tour as to why he was going to attempt to climb the highest mountain on the planet, he steadfastly returned, "because it is there". Mallory went on to die pursuing his passion, on the icy slopes of Mount Everest allowing for the mountaineering world to question until this very day, did he summit first only to make a misstep on the way down or did he make a critical error on the way up. And although his body was finally recovered by The 2001 Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition, the mystery still lingers.

As for The Colorado African Expedition of 2007, the road ahead until we would be able to actually depart would have many ups as well as an equal amount of downs, twist and turns and disappoints and moments of elation too many to share. And though our journey was not a so called 'first' which seems to be what the arm chair explorers and marketing partnerships demand these days, it would for our humble expeditionary team be our first. For in the true sense of the word, this trail into the unknown represented the first time our team decided to head down a path that at the beginning had no known outcome as to what truly lay in wait. We accepted our fate, walking supported blindly into the abyss of what is and always will be Central African exploration.

The expedition in the end ultimately reflected, the research was the easy part, for I was able to find many contacts via search engines on the Internet. I was able to discover the final resting place of not only Mr. Hoefler but also his priceless archives that his daughter had donated to two museums following his death. I was also granted access to the files of The Explorer's Club in New York City as well as the files of The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) in London

Sadly I was never able to locate a single living relative of Mr. Hoefler, though I still harbor the hope that someday I will. But I felt confident that having located the family of Mr. Hoefler's guide for the east African portion of the 1928-29 trek coupled with their seemingly sincere wish to be directly involved was a sign of great things ahead. However, that initial excitement would later be shattered no less than six weeks before I was to depart Austria for the rendezvous point in Mombasa when a member of the team backed out saying he did not see it making money.



In a simple email the second wife of the heir apparent to the glory days of the families 20th century guiding business brought into question whether we would be successful. She also brought into the equation at that eleventh hour the need for their lawyers to review all aspects of what had been agreed upon over the previous year and a half the old fashion way, an agreement reached by two men giving each their greatest asset, that of course being their honest word. Although I was highly motivated by Paul Louis Hoefler, I can readily admit that I was equally greatly disillusioned by arguably the oldest licensed safari outfitter on the African continent. (I explained that one does not go on expedition to turn a profit, indeed it's a gamble to make financial ends meet.)

Due to the challenges of our times as they relate to the African continent, our options for safely traversing the 1928-29 route faced monumental challenges from the onset. Problems such as raging civil wars and open banditry in the Central African Republic proved insurmountable. Then there were the ongoing western influences supporting opposition factions vying for total control of the vast wealth of natural resources within the Democratic Republic of the Congo at any cost. The situations that as I write have now spilled over into northwestern Uganda, southern and western Sudan, the countries of Chad and Nigeria. The on the ground situation limited our choices for effectively reaching our set goal of overland passage from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean.

With inherent obstacles that even Mr. Hoefler could not have envisioned in the late 1920's, alongside the perforation of endless supplies of weapons, children being kidnapped for soldiering and sexual slavery, as expedition team leader I thought long and hard as to what would be in the best interest of insuring our team members safety as well as the success of our stated goals.





Though we could have opted for a military escort or hired local rebels or militias, that is not always a smart option. For it leads to a stated policy of condoning bribery and corruption, a fault that has plagued African expeditions from the days of Sir Henry Morton Stanley and beyond.

I therefore laid out a map of the African continent before me and my logistics officer. Together we plotted three choices that the team would ultimately decide would be in the expeditions best interest based upon on the ground intelligence at the time when we reached the Ugandan-DRC Congo borderline.

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**Option A:** We would follow the original historical route of the Hoefler expedition.

**Option B:** Once we hit the Uganda-DRC border, we would drop back to the Ugandan capital of Kampala, then overland north into Sudan to it's capital Khartoum, then overland through Chad to the Nigerian capital of Lagos.

**Option C:** Once we hit the Uganda-DRC border, we would turn south along the Rwenzori mountain range referred to by the Greek geographer Ptlomey as the Mountains of the Moon, then overland through Rwanda and Burundi, back into Tanzania to the Lake Tanganikya for a passage down the waters to Mpulunga, Zambia, and continue across Zambia to Namibia, through the Caprivi Strip and across the bushman lands to the Atlantic coastal town of Swapokmund.

As I coordinated with product suppliers over the next year, I finally had all goods in hand less last minute shipments from our cooking equipment provider and our rubber boot company. The cooking equipment supplier had a legitimate excuse, they had only signed on weeks before we departed. As for the rubber boots provider, he simply procrastinated until the passing of the eleventh hour.

All told, we shipped the supplies that had been gathered in Gars Am Kamp, Austria, to the expedition staging area at the Whitesands Beach Resort on the outskirts of Mombasa. As the team at the time was to include myself, two Kenyans and one Canadian that I was to interview upon my arrival to Mombasa, I departed alone on January 19, 2007, on an all night charter flight crammed full of Germans, Austrians and Czechs nonstop from Vienna. The plane landed at just past six in the morning on a Saturday, January 20, 2007.

The two Kenyans, one a black African, the other what the locals population refers to as a 'Kenyan cowboy', a term referring to white Kenyans that were born with silver spoons in their mouths to expat families from the US or England that had relocated to the African continent, that considered themselves well above the



rest of their fellow Africans due to the color of their skin and their vast disproportionate land holdings. The Kenyan cowboy dropped out literally while I was packing my final bag for the expedition, it was apart of that larger issue I mentioned previously about lawyers and royalties and putting the cart before the donkey in measuring the future success of the project.

As for my scheduled interview with the Canadian Keith Hellyer, well he arrived on time for our meeting in the front lobby of the Whitesands. He was a lad of eighteen years with red shaved hair, wearing Teva style river sandals exhibiting tattoos on both his legs and right arm. The leg tattoos were scribbling in Arabic from the Koran, a potentially delicate issue in light of the fact that our route would no doubt be taking us through Muslim lands. As for the one on his arm, it was a rather large tattoo that Keith had begun while in Kenya during the previous six months during his conservation internship for the Kenyan cowboy. Admittedly he would later tell me, "it's still a work in progress, I will finish it when I return to Nairobi". All said, in my discussion with Keith we agreed that despite our age and cultural differences, our determination to travel overland from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic was equal.

It was on a bright and crystal blue sky sunny morning when the team said our farewells to our local hosts and new found friends that included a handful of Kenyans. We posed for some photographic opportunities for the local media who kept questioning us as to "where is the truck?". To a bannered backdrop of local dignitaries including the late arriving honorable Mayor of Mombassa, His Worship, Ali Shekue, that pushed the departure event back two hours, we were eager to get on our way. Mayor Shekue arrived in a one



From left to right:  
the honorable Mayor of Mombassa,  
His Worship, Ali Shekue; Julian Monroe Fisher, Keith Hellyer



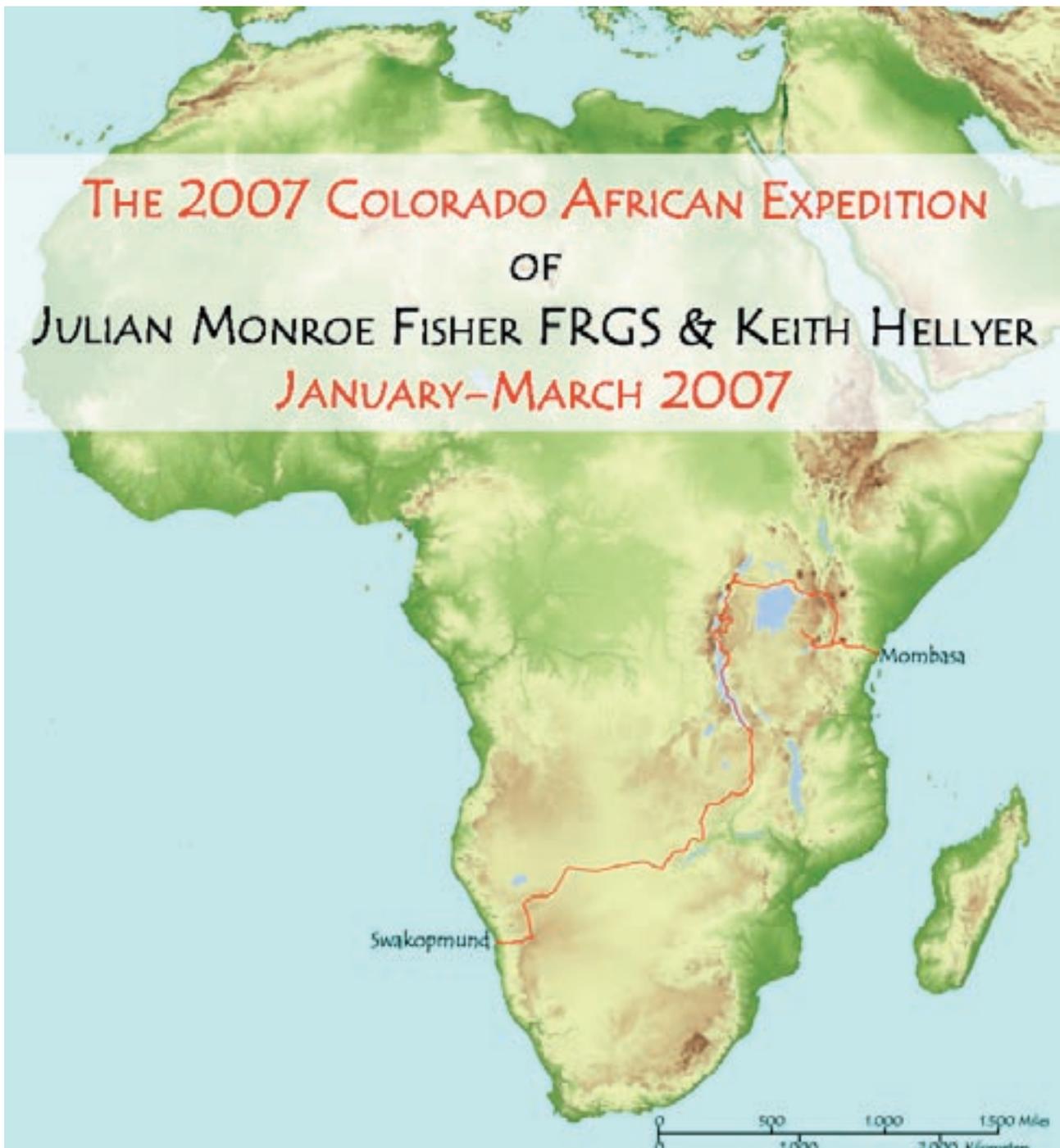
vehicle convoy with bright lights and a blaring horn. As the Mayor offered his support from his verbatim brief scribbled remarks read from a tattered piece of paper, I stood there next to his personal uniformed military guard. That's when the Sarova Whitesands Beach Resorts General Manager to my left whispered, "where is the truck??" After the Mayor finished his comments and as he shook my hand as the cameras flickered capturing the excitement of the moment, with a big smile he asked, "where is the truck??".

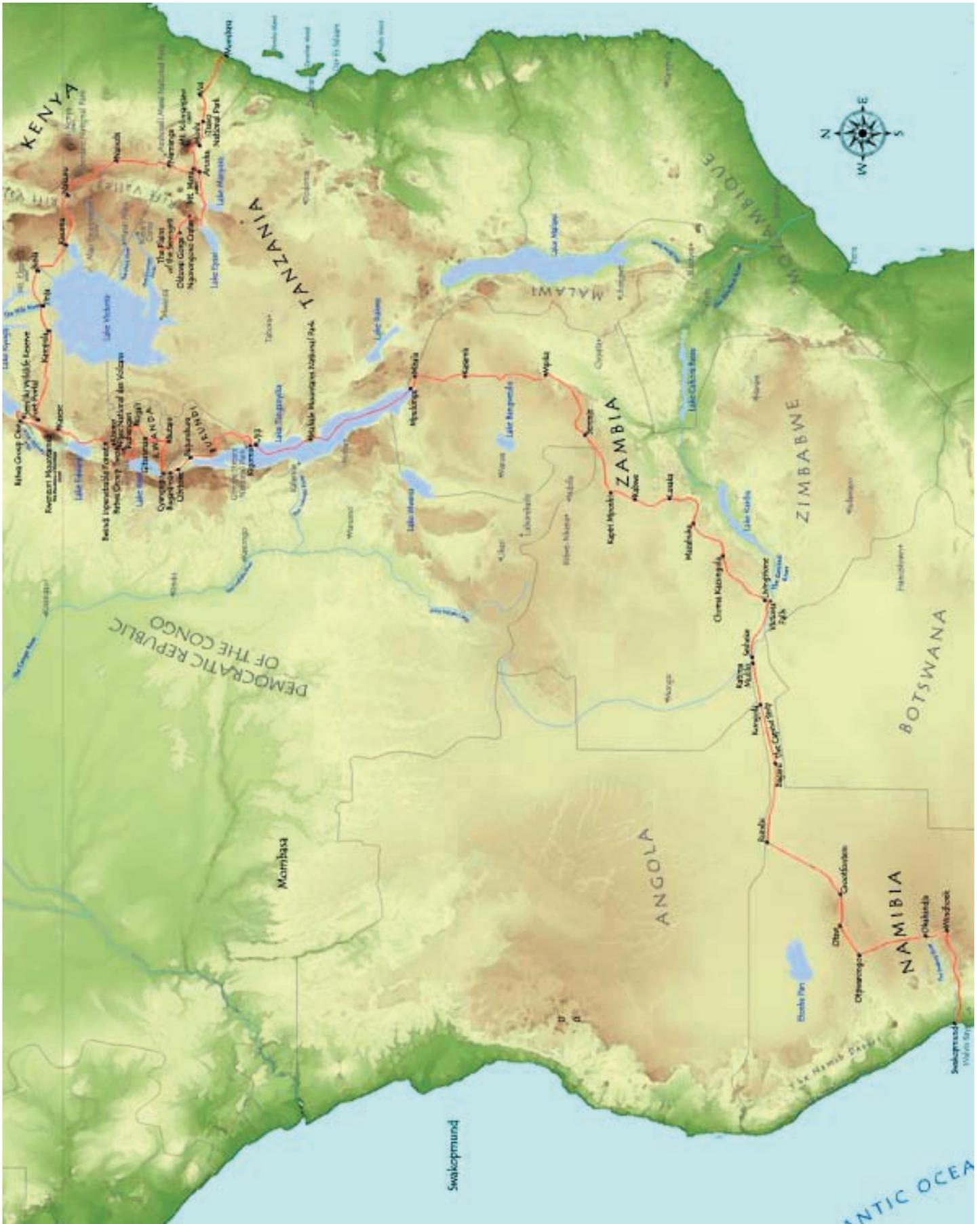
As for the issue of the truck, I should explain here and now that I had thought long and hard over the two years planning the expedition regarding the required mode of transport. The primary question, should I buy a truck and position it in Mombasa, or should I make arrangements in each country for transport? After lengthy discussions with my legal advisors for the expedition, the Singer Law Firm in Vienna, Austria, security and overall cost emerged as the central factors in forming my decision. Based upon the security situation as it pertained to instances of organized car jacking targeting westerners as well as locals in Nairobi, Kenya, I decided that we would stick out like a sore thumb in the more remote locations in Western Uganda, Rwanda and especially along the Burundi-Tanzania border region that was and still is know to be a crime ridden locale. As for maintaining the cost effectiveness of the expedition since I was attempting to show that 21st century exploration into off the beaten path locations can still be afforded by the masses. My stated position is and has been since I got into this business of exploring, in order for the art of exploration to continue to excite us all and especially the young, we must as explorers allow the art form to be available to any and all that take it upon themselves to either climb a mountain or venture down a trail less traveled.

Therefore when the time came to determine how The Colorado African Expedition of 2007 would traverse the continent from the shores of the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. Security and cost played heavy in my decision making. Though a Land Rover covered with sponsor stickers and dust from the road would make for a great photographic opportunity, those that would be interested in target our team for profit would not need to look to hard. As for maintaining cost, have you priced a new Land Rover Defender these days? For less than half the cost of the vehicle not to mention the projected costs for fuel and potential repairs and the Carnet D'Passage document to cross the numerous borderlines, I opted to establish marketing partnerships with individual transport companies in each country along the determined route. Upon departing Mombassa, the route was well covered, less the countries of Zambia and Namibia. Though I was concerned that as the expedition team leader these long distances were not in place at the onset, my confidence and determination allowed me, in the best interest of the team, to move forward.

**The Route of Expedition:**

The expedition travelled overland from the Indian Ocean port city of Mombasa, Kenya, ( $0^{\circ} 4' S$ ,  $0^{\circ} 39' E$ ) across Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, down Lake Tanganyika, across Zambia and Namibia, ending in the Atlantic Ocean town of Swakopmund, Namibia ( $22^{\circ} 40' S$ ,  $14^{\circ} 31' E$ ).





**Dates of Expedition:**

The expedition departed the village of Gars Am Kamp in the Niederösterreich (Lower Austria) region of Austria on January 19, 2007 for the African continent and returned on March 9, 2007. This was the first leg of the expedition. The research following the journey through Africa continued through June 2007, when we had the honour of meeting with the Primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall at the British Ambassador's residency in Vienna, Austria. The interview with Dr. Goodall offered answers to many of the questions that arose during The Colorado African Expedition of 2007. The expeditionary research project officially ended on June 22, 2007.

**Expedition Participants** (Biographies see Attachment II):

Expedition Leader: Julian Monroe Fisher FRGS  
Co-Expedition Leader: Keith Hellyer  
Logistics & Communications: Regina Fisher

**Expedition Sponsors and Funding:**

The expedition was financially self funded with additional support from private benefactors. Equipment and transportation for the expedition was provided through marketing partnerships. Marketing partners received logo positioning on the expedition's official website. They will also receive honourable mentioning within the credits of the documentary film and the book as well as photographs from the field.

**Product Sponsors:**

- Home Hardware of Canada
- Selke Leathercraft of South Africa
- Eureka of the United States
- Silva Tech40 of the United States
- Costa Del Mar of the United States
- BF Goodrich of France
- John Murden's Unbeatentracks of the United Kingdom
- African Safari Club of Austria
- GSI Outdoors of the United States
- Hunter of Scotland
- Scarpa of Italy
- Teko of the United States



**Additional Logistical Support:**

- Belize Seaview Properties of Belize
- Jane Goodall Institute of Austria
- Earthwatch Institute of Europe
- Robin Hurt Conservation

**The Goals & Objectives of the Expedition:**

- To travel overland from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean
- To compare early 20<sup>th</sup> century wildlife and cultural conservation efforts to those the team encountered in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- To prove that in this day and age that expeditions can be affordable which in turn will allow more people to enter the field of exploration. For if the art of exploration is to expand it must not continue to be an elitist opportunity, it must be available to the masses.
- To expedition as a team
- To return to our homeland healthy and alive

**Conclusions:**

As we were motivated by Paul Louis Hoefler's account of The Colorado African Expedition of 1928-29 in the book entitled 'Africa Speaks-A Story of Adventure' and his film entitled 'Africa Speaks', we attempted to follow the original route as much as possible. Once we hit the regions of rebel conflicts in the Eastern border sections of The Democratic Republic of Congo, we were forced to turn south through Rwanda and Burundi. As we travelled in the countries of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, we focused our research specifically upon the Batwa pygmies who have lost access to their ancestral lands where they have been hunters and gatherers for the last 5,000 years. They have now been marginalized to allow the great ape population of Mountain Gorillas to be protected for tourism.

**What knowledge gaps did we set out to address?**

Understanding the plight of the Central Africans following post colonization.

**Why did we select the particular location and activities?**

We were motivated by former Explorer's Club member and Royal Geographical Society Fellow Paul Louis Hoefler's account of The Colorado African Expedition of 1928-29.



**What were our expectations?**

To experience a great adventure as an expeditionary team and to learn along the way new aspects regarding current wildlife and cultural conservation efforts on the African continent.

**What did we hope would occur?**

Exactly what did occur, that being to return home alive, under budget, on schedule and enlightened by the sheer magnitude of our endeavour.

**Noted Primates We Encountered Along The Route:**

- Jonathan Howell, General Manager of Robin Hurt Safaris, Tanzania
- David Erickson, Executive Director of Cullman & Hurt Conservation, Tanzania
- Natasha Illum Berg, Author & only licensed female big game hunter in Africa, Tanzania
- Jonathan Wright, Owner of Wild Places Africa, Uganda
- Batwa Pygmy Tribe One, Uganda
- Batwa Pygmy Tribe Two, Uganda
- Francois Bizimungu, the senior conservation officer with the Parc National des Volcans, Rwanda
- The Great Apes, Rwanda
- Dr. Jane Goodall, Austria
- Road bandits, Burundi
- The African people of Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia and Namibia

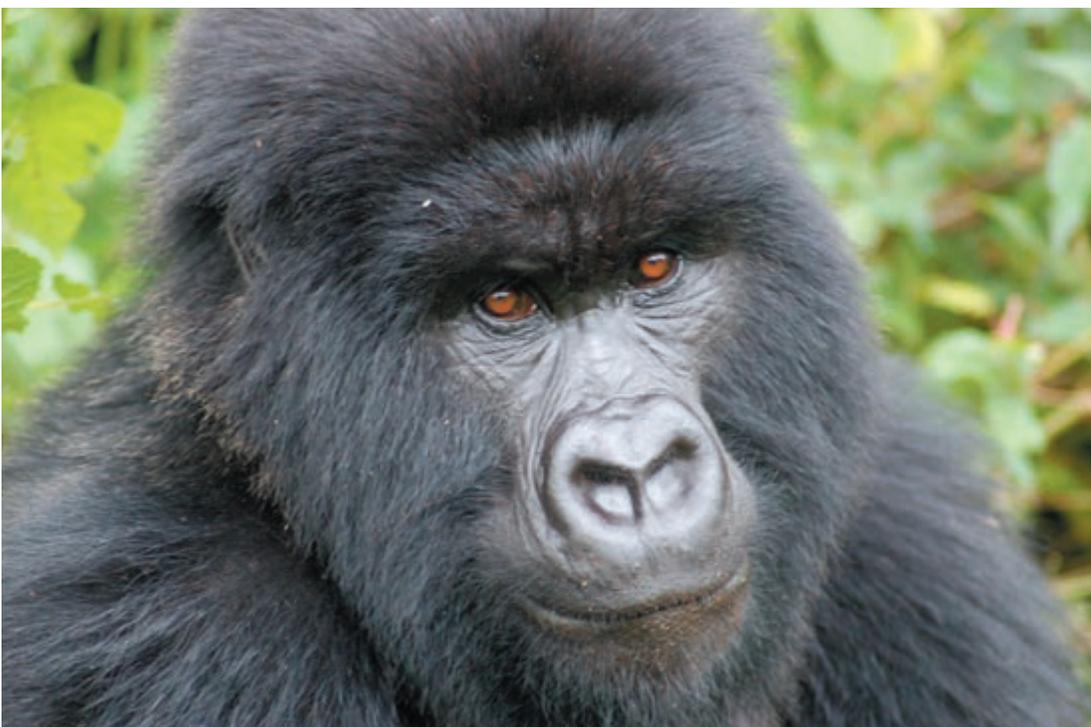


Dr. Jane Goodall  
and Julian Monroe  
Fisher



**Noted Geographical Locations We Encountered Along The Route:**

- The Old Town of Mombasa
- Tsavo National Park West
- The Ngorogoro Crater
- Olduvai Gorge
- The Plains of the Serengeti
- The slopes of Mount Meru
- Lake Victoria
- The Nile River
- Lake Albert
- Lake Edward
- The Rwenzori Mountains
- The Semliki Wildlife Reserve
- Queen Elizabeth National Park
- Parc National des Volcans
- The Interhawe Genocide Memorial
- Lake Kivu
- Lake Tanganyika
- Victoria Falls
- The Zambezi River
- The Skeleton Coast of Namibia



Mountain gorilla in the Parc Nacional des Volcan in Rwanda, Central Africa



### Detailed Locations along the route:

- Mombasa, Kenya
- Voi, Kenya
- Tsavo National Park, Kenya
- Moshi, Tanzania
- Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania
- Mount Meru, Tanzania
- Arusha, Tanzania
- Lake Manyara, Tanzania
- Lake Eyasi, Tanzania
- Ngorogoro Crater, Tanzania
- Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania
- The Plains of the Serengeti, Tanzania
- Namanga, Kenya
- Nairobi, Kenya
- Nakuru, Kenya
- Kisumu, Kenya
- Lake Victoria
- Busia, Uganda
- Jinja, Uganda
- Nile River, Uganda
- Kampala, Uganda
- Fort Portal, Uganda
- Rwenzori Mountains, Uganda
- Lake Albert, Uganda
- Semliki Wildlife Reserve, Uganda
- Lake Edward, Uganda
- Kasese, Uganda
- Kisoro, Uganda
- Parc National Des Volcans, Rwanda
- Ruhengeri, Rwanda
- Lake Kivu, Rwanda
- Kigali, Rwanda
- Gitarama, Rwanda
- Butare, Rwanda
- Cyangugu, Rwanda
- Bugarama, Rwanda
- Cibitoke, Burundi
- Bujumbura, Burundi
- Kigoma, Tanzania
- Ujiji, Tanzania
- Down the center of Lake Tanganyika
- Mahale Mountains National Park, Tanzania
- Mpulunga, Zambia
- Kasama, Zambia
- Mpika, Zambia
- Serenje, Zambia
- Kabwe, Zambia
- Lusaka, Zambia
- Livingstone, Zambia
- Victoria Falls, Zambia
- Zambezi River, Zambia
- Sesheke, Zambia
- Katima, Namibia
- The Caprivi Strip, Namibia
- Windhoek, Namibia
- Swakopmund, Namibia

**The Environmental conditions:**

The African continent is clear proof that global warming is taking its toll on our mother Earth. During the time our team crossed the vastness, the country of Kenya was flooding during what is usually considered the dry season. The snow-capped mountains of Mount Kilimanjaro, Mount Kenya and the Rwenzori Mountain Range that once alone in their glaciers contained over 80% of the ice on the continent are melting. As water is already a precious commodity for the peoples of Africa, without the glaciers feeding the Semliki, Nile and Congo basin as well as the great lakes of Edward, Albert and Victoria, the African peoples' fight for survival will become all that much harder. Wars are now waged over oil from Iraq to Nigeria, but as the conflict in Sudan's Darfur region reflects, in the future wars of true magnitude will be fought over access to drinking water.

**The Cultural Conditions:** With the convergence of tourist in a world made smaller by way of air travel, affluence and the Internet, as quick as the ice on the African continent is melting, so is the culture of her people.

**The Political Conditions:** The political situation on the continent continues to concern me. Relief organizations continue to pour funding into the hands of politicians but there is still very little trickle down effect to the African people. In the remote areas that we travelled, lawlessness is never far off the beaten path.



Twa-Batwa pygmies in Western Uganda.



### What Happened When We Took The Time To Go Looking?

No team member got sick during the expedition, not even a stomach virus. After five expeditions on the African continent, the fitness of our team proved to be an attribute this time around. However, one member developed a virus prior to departure from his time spent in Kenya before the expedition arrived and departed. It did not affect him until he returned to Canada. He was successfully treated and has now as of this report, recovered fully.

### The Best Moments:

- Departing the city of Mombasa knowing that after two years of planning we were on our way.
- Encountering the Twa-Batwa pygmies.
- Encountering the mountain gorillas.
- Surviving the overland crossing of Burundi.
- Walking onto the beach in Swakopmund, Namibia, having crossed from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic.
- An one on one interview with Dr. Jane Goodall after the expedition's return to Austria at the British Ambassador's residence in Vienna.



A woman in the Burundi capital of Bujumbura is trying to beg for coins in blistering

heat with two babies in her lap as convoys of United Nations vehicles passed by in succession



### **The Worst Moments of The Colorado African Expedition of 2007:**

- The loneliness being away from my dear wife and our two small children.
- Having a police chief in Rwanda attempting to arrest us for taking photos at a village genocide trial.
- Watching a woman in the Burundi capital of Bujumbura trying to beg for coins in blistering heat with two babies in her lap as convoys of United Nations vehicles passed by in succession
- Having a gun put at my head at a roadblock in Burundi by someone demanding a bribe which I still did not pay.
- Boarding the airplane in Namibia realizing the expedition was completed.
- Viewing photographs as I was filling out this flag report that showed the aftermath of four mountain gorillas being murdered by Congolese rebels within a handful of kilometres from where we gathered footage for our project.

## **Expedition Techniques**

### **When did you begin planning the expedition?**

March of 2005

### **Were any special permits required?**

- Film permits for Kenya and Tanzania.
- Gorilla tracking permits for Rwanda.
- International health card giving proof of valid vaccinations for Yellow Fever,.
- All travel visa were acquired at the land borders. Though research suggested having passport photos in hand, never once were we required to present additional photos.

### **How was the day-to-day work organized?**

The day to day organization of the expedition was based upon where we needed to be for four key dates. Those dates were defined by the specific dates of the Kenyan film permit, the Gorilla tracking permit in Rwanda, the date of departure for a boat down Lake Tanganyika and a departure date from Namibia. Restricted to a degree by these issues we travelled between shoot locations and prearranged interviews with specific individuals across the African continent. The key was that the team worked closely together throughout the duration of the in-country trek.

### **To what extent did you have helpers?**

We were assisted only by transport drivers within the designated countries we crossed.

**Were there techniques that worked exceptionally well?**

Transport needs were arranged for each country we would traverse before we departed. By using only in-country transport we travelled from border to border by vehicle, then simply walked through the customs and immigration process to be met on the other side by that next country's transport partner. This approach saved on the expense of purchasing trucks and paying for insurance. Additionally, we did not have to hassle with the formalities of crossing borders with vehicles.

**What would you do differently the next time?**

Allocate even more time. Although we met our goals we were always pushed by two dates. First, we had to be in the town of Kigoma, Tanzania, to rendezvous with the only cargo ship that plies the waters of Lake Tanganyika at a certain day. The second was the departure flight from Namibia which we booked in Uganda when we faced the reality that the route through DRC was not an option as that the insurgents in eastern DRC-Congo and north western Uganda were relentless in their attempts to kill anyone that crossed their paths.

We did allocate far more time than the average flag expeditions posted on the club's website average, but still more time would be allowed for more research. The African continent offers so much to the explorer, and after five expeditions I am still thirsty to learn more.

**Do you have any tips for others doing similar work?**

- Allocate more time.
- Keep the team small and cohesive.
- Take time to listen to everyone you encounter along the trail, for there are so many voices that need to be heard, one journey can never hear them all.

**Expedition Results****Please summarize your expedition.**

The expedition was successful in that we met the goals that we set out to achieve, that being safe and successful overland crossing of the African continent from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. We completed the expedition under budget and on time. We gathered the required content to produce a documentary film and a book detailing what we found along the way.

**What are the most interesting things you learned?**

- The plight of the Twa-Batwa pygmies
- The Great Apes
- The lack of transparency of Rwandan genocide trials
- How the people of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi disagree as to the actual source of the Nile River.
- The post civil war situation in Burundi
- Life along the shores of Lake Tanganyika
- The devastation of HIVAids upon the lives of the African people

**How do our activities fit within the context of other scientific, environmental, or cultural initiatives being carried out in this part of the world?**

There are numerous conservation groups focusing on the survival of the gorillas, some of which already understand the importance of involving the local population in their efforts. There are also few groups that support the cause of the Twa-Batwa. Unfortunately, it is not yet common understanding, that it is not cultures like the Batwa, that have lived in the same area as the gorillas for thousands of years, that do impose a threat to the survival of the apes. The saving of one species, must not require the sacrifice of a culture.

**What will you do with the information you learned or with the discoveries made?**

We gathered over 7,000 high resolution digital photographs and 42 hours of film footage. We are writing a book detailing the expedition entitled "The 2007 Colorado African Expedition - A Story of Adventure". We are also producing a documentary film entitled "Primate Questions of Conservation" that focuses upon the conservation efforts in Central Africa to protect the mountain gorillas at the expense of the culture of the Twa-Batwa pygmies. We are also producing various photographic exhibits for universities and museums.

**What are the next steps?**

To finish editing the 42 hours of footage for the documentary film, to study the 7,000 plus photographs and to finish writing the book. It was our intention to offer the film first for consideration at The Explorer's Club film festival. However, we have just learned that the festival for 2008 will be postponed to June or even cancelled. If that is the case, we would like to have the film shown during a public lecture at the club. We will also pursue finding a publisher for the book.



## Conclusion

Based on my experience, the advice I would like to extend to young and old explorers alike, as my mentor, fellow explorer and friend the late Colonel Norman Vaughan taught me, "dream big and dare to fail". I would add to that, do it as often as possible.



Julian Monroe Fisher at the Atlantic Ocean, on the coast of Namibia near Swakopmund, after traversing the African continent from the Indian Ocean.

## Biographies

Name: **Julian Monroe Fisher III**  
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**Profession:**

- Explorer
- Anthropologist
- Author

**Memberships:**

- The Royal Geographical Society in London: Fellow, nominated by RGS Deputy Director Nigel Winser in 2000
- The Explorer's Club in New York City: elected member, nominated by Norman Vaughan, the last remaining member of Admiral Byrd's 1928-29 solo flight expedition over Antarctica.

### Biographical Information:

I graduated from Appalachian State University in 1978 with a degree in Anthropology. I was in hotel management and marketing for fifteen years working for private management companies that operated properties under the umbrella of such brands as Hilton and Marriott as well as ski resorts in the Eastern United States. In 1996 following the death of my father, I turned to adventuring full-time as a freelance radio broadcaster reporting in weekly from a different location around the globe. I continued this until the winter of 2004. Since then I have been living in the jungles of Belize researching the Maya people and the purity of their culture, writing travel articles, publishing an online magazine, co-managing an Internet network of Belizean content websites, and along with my dear wife, raising our two children. I am a self employed explorer and adventurer. I am also a graduated Anthropologist, a 'Fellow' with The Royal Geographical Society in London, an elected member of The Explorer's Club in New York City, a published author of two books and a proud husband and father of two. My source of income is writing articles and books and lecturing about my adventures. I also gain income from an Internet Technologies company I co-manage with my wife. To date I have travelled to over eighty-five countries around the globe, to include fourteen countries on the African continent.

**Expedition Position:**

- Initiator
- Expedition Leader
- Narrator
- Logbook
- Cameraman

## Biographies



**Name:** Regina Fisher  
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**Profession:**

- Computer Engineer
- IT-Manager

### Biographical Information:

I was born, raised and educated in Austria and have a 'Magister' university degree in Social- and Economic Science. I had already started to travel the world after working for IBM for a couple of years when I eventually acquainted my future husband. Traveling with him for many years throughout the globe taught me a lot about the world, about humans and about myself. I am a mother of two and have work experience as a quality assurance engineer, webdesigner, project assistant and in IT management.

**Expedition Position:**

- Logistics
- Website Content, Design, Hosting
- Communications

## Biographies

Name: **Keith Hellyer**  
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**Profession:**

- Outdoor Instructor and Guide

**Memberships:**

- C.R.C.A-Paddle Canada

### Biographical Information:

Born and raised on Vancouver island British Columbia. At the age of 15 I volunteered at the Pt. Dufiance Zoo in Washington state. Then at 16 Volunteered for Earth Watch in northern Kenya. My senior year of school I was an assistant instructor for the Outdoor education program after receiving certification in canoeing and kayaking. During which time I was a trail head on both the Sayword lakes and West Coast trail. This experience aloud me to become an employee of Northern Wave Kayak, guiding, teaching and marketing. In August 2006 I returned to Kenya as a gap year volunteer for Cottars 1920's. I am pursuing a career in wildlife conservation.

**Expedition Position:**

- Cameraman
- Co Expedition Leader
- Wildlife Conservationist



