**Patricia’s Report on her recent trip to Zambia June-July 2016**

This year I chose to visit Twitti School in June and July – the coldest time of the year! Mornings and evenings found me bundled up in the warmest clothes I had brought with me, and wishing that I had brought more.

Despite the cold I spent a wonderful 3 weeks in Lilayi. Lydia Maonde generously hosted my visit at her home where I joined 2 young interns from Renaissance College at the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, Canada. Hannah and Kristen spent the 3 months of their summer vacation working at Twitti – teaching, doing lesson reparation, typing exams, volunteering for all sorts of tasks, and hanging out with the children at the school. It was great to experience their energy during my stay.

I was busy as well. I spent time in each classroom from the Baby Class to Grade 9, trying to get a good sense of what the pupils were learning: Reading, Math, Religious Education, Agriculture, Social Studies, Information Technology, Business Studies, Integrated Science, and more. I saw the children respond to teachers’ questions, suggestions, routines, good humour and commands. They worked as a class, individually, in groups, with a partner. Notes were copied, stories were read aloud, group discussions were held, problems were solved. They Dropped Everything And Read when it was time for DEAR. Then when classes were over they played and talked and laughed; they ran and jumped and strolled, enjoying being together with their friends at Twitti School. School life as it is, or should be, around the world.

It was my first visit to Twitti since our dear Papa, Simon Maonde, passed away in 2014, and I truly missed his presence. However I enjoyed many conversations with Lydia (Granny). We talked about what had happened at the school since I was there last and we reminisced about our days as teachers at Namwala Secondary School in southern Province. I was happy to see Lydia’s 3 sons and her daughter, 4 of her grandchildren, and all her daughters- and sons–in-law.

There were meetings too – with Professor Chinene, Chairman of the Lilayi Board of Trustees; with Headmaster Christopher Hapaku; with Mrs. Phiri, District Education Board Secretary; with Biseck Banda, Librarian; with members of the Chilanga Rotary Club, our partners in acquiring the school computers; with teachers and former teachers; with pupils past and present; and with families who entrust their children to the care of Twitti School. All agreed that Twitti School is doing very important work and that its future role in the community is vital.

This year donors in my city of Fredericton had sent me with gifts for the sponsored children. It was a pleasure to talk with each of these children, 32 in total in 2016, and to pass on a small token of our love for them. A treat this time was to share donated costume jewelry with the women on staff. Our mini Bling Fling was a popular event. The men will have to be the recipients next time.

Important discussion took place with the Administration about the future path of Twitti School. A Board Meeting was planned but due to a death in the extended Maonde family this was impossible to organize during my short stay.

A group of us travelled to Namwala Secondary School to celebrate its Golden Jubilee, 50 years since it opened in 1966. It was amazing to see the changes that have been made there to our old school, and to see again former students and colleagues. For me 47 years had passed since my husband Richard Brown and I arrived at Namwala as CUSO volunteers in August 1969.

Yes, it was a wonderful stay in Zambia - for so many reasons!