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# NEWSLETTER



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## DIAN FOSSEY

### 1932 - 1985

# THE DEATH OF DIAN FOSSEY

**This issue of the IPPL Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of our member and friend Dian Fossey, who was killed in her mountain cabin in Rwanda during the night of 26-27 December 1985.**

Since Dian's slaying, there has been considerable media coverage of her life and death with the mountain gorillas, much of it sensationalistic, some of it emanating from former students unused to handling the media. Some of these students appear to have been misquoted, some were egged on by muck-raking journalists, and others appear to have been just plain nasty. Much of the criticism is along the lines of "obnoxious white woman who prefers gorillas to people, especially African people." It ignores the fact that gorilla conservation and protection is **not** a battle of black people versus white people. In such a context, the gorillas would lose because they belong to Africa.

The battlefield is much more complex. Looking at gorillas in general, the zoos which have traditionally purchased wild-caught gorillas and thus instigated poaching are in the West and Japan. Their demands have fuelled the slaughter, as have those of Western residents of some African nations who think that gorilla heads make fine trophies and gorilla hands make fine ash-trays. The poachers are mainly African, but the primary exporters and importers (people like the Roys and Demmer) are Westerners. The land-hungry people who are encroaching on gorilla habitat are Africans, but so are the officials who have adopted the policy that such encroach-

ment must be stopped.

The Government of Rwanda, where Dian lived, studied for 18 years, and died, supports the concepts of gorilla conservation and protection. Capture and export of Mountain gorillas are totally prohibited. Rwanda's President is committed to the survival of his nation's wild gorillas. So is the country's Department of National Parks and Tourism. In fact, considerable revenue is coming to Rwanda through a controlled program of "gorilla tourism," a project about which Dian had serious reservations, and which is still too new for its full effects to have been studied.

Dian's work would have been impossible over the years without the help of her African trackers, camp staff, and, in recent years, the courageous and dedicated Africans who undertook the dangerous anti-poaching patrols, destroying thousands of illegally-set traps in the Volcanoes National Park. The prospect of studying wild Mountain gorillas has drawn increasing numbers of students from around the world to Rwanda in recent years, and many of these have become involved in active conservation work.

This **Newsletter** contains tributes to Dian from several nations. However, it is fitting that the first one comes from the Government of Rwanda.

## RWANDAN TRIBUTE TO DIAN FOSSEY

**Laurent Habiaremye, Director of Rwanda's Office of National Parks and Tourism, has written to Shirley McGreal, Chairwoman of the International Primate Protection League, expressing his regret at the murder of Dian Fossey, and has provided IPPL with an official statement representing the feelings of the entire staff of the Department. Mr. Habiaremye stated:**

**Her death was a tragedy and source of grief for us, especially those of us who have known her and worked with her. During the 18 years that she lived in the Volcanoes National Park among the gorillas, she accomplished a monumental output of work, and, believe me, Rwanda is grateful to her. Now our first duty is to safeguard, as she wished, her work for posterity.**

### RWANDAN PARKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENT

The Administrative Council, the Director, and the entire staff of the Rwandan Department of National Parks and Tourism, have learned with grief of the death of Dr. Dian Fossey while she was working in the Volcanoes National Park.

Dr. Fossey was murdered during the night of 26-27 December 1985 at the Karisoke Research Center which she herself established in 1967.

A world-renowned scientist, Dr. Fossey stands out as the person who will have contributed more than anyone else to the preservation of the Mountain gorilla, a rare and endangered species which still survives on our chain of volcanoes.

For 18 years, she managed to defy jealous detractors and discourage wrong-doers, finally making the whole world understand the need to safeguard the Volcanoes National Park, as the special home of Man's relatives, the Mountain gorillas.

Due to her efforts, poaching has been throttled in a remarkable manner, thanks as much to her work on the spot as well as to the international concern she generated. It is due to this that Rwanda owes its renown as a champion of nature conservation.

Dr. Dian Fossey's studies of the behavior of this species have also helped with the development of a selective tourism involving visits by tourists to groups of habituated gorillas.

Scientists and scholars from all over the world know her as a dedicated, unselfish person who was, above all, concerned about man's survival in a world of ecological harmony.

The fact that she specifically stated before her death that she wanted to be buried alongside these primates to whom she had dedicated her life is ample testimony to her love for our country.

The Rwandan Office of National Parks recognizes that what happened on that night was unjust. We want her to know, where she rests now in Eternity, that she is always alive in the hearts of our Department and in the Karisoke Research Center.

Her work accomplished in Rwanda will ensure that she is remembered for ever among present and future generations.

The investigation of this ignoble murder continues and, once captured, the murderer will be punished to the full extent of the law.

Speaking for myself, for the members of the Administrative Council, for the management and staff of the Parks Department, and for conservationists in Rwanda and elsewhere, I render the homage due to her. To members of her family, I state that we offer them our friendship and that we share their grief.

*Callixte Nzabonimana, President, Administrative Council*



# SHE LOVED GORILLAS AND MOUNTAINS

by Colin Groves

*Colin Groves is Professor of Prehistory and Anthropology at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, and a member of the IPPL Advisory Board. He visited Dian Fossey's camp in 1971, when it was newly-established.*

She loved gorillas and mountains; elephants, buffalos, duikers, her dog Cindy and her monkey Kima. She tolerated people if they behaved with sense and thoughtfulness; a few people she even liked. But above all she loved to be alone, walking in the misty mountains of Rwanda and interacting with their gorillas.

Her camp was laid out along just those lines: strung out over 100 meters or so were a few huts, separated by bush paths. Her hut was at one end; the visitors' hut at the other; the kitchen, storehouse and workers' hut in the middle. When I visited the camp in 1971, I would go out with the tracker Nemeye in the morning, and report back to Dian in the late afternoon, sitting in her hut over beer or tea and trying to learn to recognize individual gorillas from the mug-shots on the wall. Then back to my hut; as darkness fell, everyone in the camp was left alone.

Some have said Dian was a racist. Not so: her whole being was concentrated on the good of the gorillas, and as all their potential enemies, especially poachers, were black, then she would habituate them only to whites, who would not be their enemies. But she would eagerly show gorillas to visiting Rwandese government

officials, socialize with the park conservator, and take endless trouble over the comfort of her camp staff. If it was good for the gorillas, she would do it. She would loudly berate anyone, black or white, whom she considered was acting stupidly or lazily; and she much admired anyone, black or white, whom she saw as tough, conscientious, honest and decisive. She was forceful in her admiration of several Rwandese government officials who showed these qualities.

All the camp staff knew what they had to do, and did it without any reminding. Nemeye, a truly marvellous tracker, would come to collect me to find gorillas every morning. Kanyaragana would make breakfast, heat water for the early morning wash, and generally run the camp. I simply did not understand the principles of the paraffin stove, and several times nearly burned the visitors' hut down; patiently, Kanyaragana would come and show me yet again how to operate the thing. Dian had chosen her staff supremely well, and for love of her they kept the camp going.

She had many sadnesses. The constant threats to the Volcanoes National Park, from poachers, smugglers, herders, and ill-in-



Early morning at Dian's camp: Nemeye, Kanyaragana, and Dian. Photo: Groves

formed economic advisers to the government who kept urging that more land be cleared to grow pyrethrum. The gradual elimination of buffalo and elephants from the mountains. The killing of Digit and of other gorillas. Little known even to her admirers was the restriction of activity placed on her by her health: her heavy smoking had affected her lungs, and she was short of breath after walking any distance. Mt. Visoke towered above her camp; she had never been able to climb it.

Perhaps she was murdered by one of the many enemies she had made; by a relative of a poacher whom she had fingered, and caused to be imprisoned; by someone she had shouted at for greed or stupidity; maybe even for bravado, for just as the existence of lions is an inducement to Masai warriors to exercise their bravado, so Dian Fossey's presence, the lion of the mountains, filled many

people with awe and fascination.

The Mountain Gorilla Project, centred at the Karisoke Research Centre, as it is now called, does things differently from Dian. For her, the idea of making a gorilla group a tourist attraction was appalling. The directors of the Project think it advisable, as part of the economic rationale of the Volcanoes National Park, and they are surely correct. But though they are changing her ways of doing things, they too hold her in love and respect: she started it all, she has told the world more about gorillas and their lives than anyone else before her, she was the Woman in the Mountains, she had helped to make Rwanda known to the outside world.

It is devastating that she has gone. But what she did will not die.

## DEDICATION, COURAGE, AND LOVE

by Jane Goodall

It was fascination for gorillas, desire to find out about them, that first lured Dian Fossey to the Virunga volcanoes of Rwanda. It was a growing preoccupation with them that kept her there for twenty years, battling with not only many physical discomforts – the months of rain, pervasive damp, cold, and virulent stinging nettles, – but also with the very real dangers – buffalos, elephants and poachers – of the mist-swirled forests. And it was concern for the well-being of the gorillas that led to her horrifying murder in her small, isolated cabin.

I, along with thousands of others, will always remember Dian best sitting, half-hidden in lush green vegetation, dwarfed by the proximity of a huge silver-back male gorilla. He accepts her totally: and her face is radiant with love for him and joy in his nearness. No wonder that Dian, having finally won the trust of these magnificent animals, was shocked, grief stricken – and enraged – when “her” gorillas were killed by poachers. Sometimes these killings were unintentional, as when a gorilla was accidentally caught in a snare set for other game. Sometimes it was deliberate, as when a gorilla was slaughtered so that various parts of his anatomy could be used for magical rites, or (worst of all) for sale to tourists, as souvenirs. But the end result, the suffering inflicted on the victim, was the same. And so Dian, for better or for worse, tackled the poaching problem in a variety of often – unorthodox ways. But the methods she used initially, as when she leapt out at poachers with Halloween horror masks, gave place, over the years, to the careful training of dedicated game guards. Often I have been asked if I approved of some of Dian's original anti-poacher techniques. All I can say is that, had poachers been after “my” chimps, I, too, would have been desperate to stop them. But I doubt I would have had the courage to tackle the problem in that way.

During the last months of her life, Dian's health was shattered. She simply never gave her body a chance. Once, for example, she stayed on the job, limping around on a broken leg – because she “simply couldn't leave just then.” She developed emphysema, but continued to smoke. She drove herself mercilessly, and drove others too, because “the gorillas deserve so much, oh so much more”.

And so, when her book became a success and, with the money it brought in she was able to support herself back at “camp”, she was not strong enough to be with the gorillas unless they moved close to her cabin. Instead, as she wrote me, she concentrated on training anti-poaching teams and sending out patrols, the thing she was “really good at” and which provided her with much satisfaction.

Dian's persistence, her determination to stay in the field whatever the cost, led to her greatest scientific contribution: the carefully documented case-histories of individual gorillas that, in some instances, cover nearly twenty years. Each animal has his or her own unique personality and idiosyncracies of behavior, and so these records are invaluable for the understanding of many of the complex interactions between them. Her perseverance enabled her to document a series of rarely occurring events – such as conflicts between adults, interactions between neighboring groups, brutal infanticides – which can have profound influence on the subsequent behavior of the individuals or groups concerned.

Was this contribution to our scientific knowledge of gorillas her most important legacy? The fact that, through her work, our understanding of these apes has increased a hundred-fold? Or was her contribution towards the survival of the gorillas themselves even more important? History will be the ultimate judge of this, I suppose. But it is probably true to say that, had Dian never gone to Rwanda, there would be far fewer mountain gorillas in the Virungas than there are today. It is possible, even, that the last would have gone.

Louis Leakey, who enabled her to live out her dream, would have been proud of her. And her grave, dug amidst the remains of many of her beloved gorillas, high in the mountains, will serve as a symbol of dedication, courage, and love. It is up to us now to see that her work is continued – to try to find the right people to observe the gorillas and pick up their life histories where Dian and her assistants left off, and to help the Rwanda government to protect the last of these truly magnificent creatures.

## STOP PRESS

The International Primate Protection League has received a report that 2 young gorillas, tentatively identified as mountain gorillas, have appeared at an animal holding compound outside Madrid, Spain. The animals reportedly belong to a West German animal dealer. West Germany is a member of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species; Spain is not, so dealers now frequently transport their illegally-acquired wildlife to Spain for onward transportation. IPPL and other organizations are investigating this report.



# MEMORIES OF DIAN

by Stacey Coil

*Stacey Coil, a Secretary in the Department of Biology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, worked with Dian Fossey on the preparation of the manuscript of **Gorillas in the Mist**. She and Dian became close friends and Ms. Coil now works for the Digit Fund, the charity founded by Dr. Fossey to raise funds for the protection of Mountain gorillas. Stacey shares with us some of her fondest memories of life in the United States with Dian, who had returned to "civilization" after 12 years in the mountains of Rwanda, accompanied by Cindy, a dog she had confiscated from poachers.*

There are just so many memories. Her old Datsun – she bought it from an Ithaca dealer back in 1980 when she first came to Ithaca for \$2000.00. It's a 1972 and that was an outrageous price but she was forever praising the thing. It was really quite funny to see her, a giant of a lady, pile herself into and then pour herself out of the car. Every time she came back into Ithaca we would pile all her stuff into this tiny little car (one time even a few memento spears!) and follow her to the hotel and repeat the procedure taking her back to the airport. The car kept getting rustier and rustier from Ithaca salt and seasons and this famous author and scientist would act as if it were a Cadillac – she was like that with everything. She never cared for the material things that would suit her status and never treated me any differently from her colleagues.

\* \* \* \* \*

One time she came for lunch and I had fixed this beautiful buffet and she made herself at home and went and raided the refrigerator for boiled hot dogs – which of course, she made herself.

\* \* \* \* \*

Each time I sit down to really think about one special thing, more and more come to mind. Dian has been such an important part of my last 5½ years. She might not have told you but we were in a car accident in 1981 and I was injured. Dian was right there. Each procedure. To keep my mind off everything she worked harder on the book to give me something to do (i.e. typing and retyping). At the beginning my eye was covered so she even dictated a lot of it on a recorder from which I transcribed. How can I tell you how much it all meant?

One time, when Dian had just returned from Africa, my mom and step-father were up from Florida, and had rented a cottage on Cayuga Lake that was big enough for 15 people. Well, after going out to dinner the next night, I somehow invited her to stay with them. When my husband and I arrived with Dian from the airport my poor mom had heard so much about her and read everything I had given her to be able to talk with her about and both she and Dian were keyed up to the hilt with nervousness. When we finally got to the cottage it was late and dark. My mom was waiting by the door (she knew by then that Dian was my own personal hero and best friend). You would have convulsed with laughter if you could have seen my mom's face when my husband unloaded an empty very large cage from the back of the car. Of course Dian was very much in charge and made herself at home and started bringing in everything while we got this surprise out of the other side of the car (my mom could only see this very large dark moving animal being taken for a walk). We all went inside with all of Dian's luggage and had coffee to get acquainted. Then Dian went to the door and hollered in her big booming voice for Cindy (my mom by this time is a little hysterical and I thought it was just from having this famous person staying with her) – in comes big old slobbering Cindy. Well my mom almost cried, she laughed so hard. She had thought Dian brought a gorilla with her. We all just assumed that she knew who Cindy was. Well it was just great. It was the start of a lasting friendship.



Throughout her years studying gorillas in Rwanda, Dian Fossey battled poachers who threatened the survival of the animals she loved. In 1981, the National Geographic published this photograph, taken by Miss Fossey, of the burial of a gorilla called Lee in a graveyard for poaching victims. A snare set by poachers for small antelope gripped Lee's leg so tightly that the animal could not pry it off. Gangrene set in, and she died.

By Dian Fossey,  
copyright National Geographic Society

## A TRIBUTE FROM MELISSA PANGER

*Melissa Panger is 18 years old. She is an IPPL member and has visited us at Headquarters. Melissa first contacted Dian Fossey in 1981, and subsequently, she and Dian became "pen-pals." Dian's friendship with Melissa surely belies the press accounts of a "Dian-who-hated-people." Of course, Dian, living alone at her remote camp, did not have a telephone and couldn't phone her pals when she felt like it. But she maintained a remarkable output of correspondence with friends all over the world.*

*Melissa's comments follow.*

My name is Melissa Panger and I have an identical twin sister named Michelle. We turned 18 the day Dr. Fossey was murdered. My dad is in the Navy, so I have moved around a lot and have always enjoyed it. I am a senior at Harrison Central High School in Gulfport, Mississippi, and am currently the valedictorian in a class of 372 students. I have always been involved in many school and civic organizations. Next fall I plan to attend the University of Florida in Gainesville. I will pursue a B.S. degree in zoology and then work towards a doctorate.

I have always been interested in primates for as long as I can remember. When I was eleven years old, I started getting serious about pursuing a career in a field pertaining to primates. I started reading all the material I could find and the more I learned the more my interests became more specific.

Then in April 1981, I read an article that Dr. Fossey had written in the **National Geographic**. As soon as I read it I knew that the mountain gorilla was the primate that I would one day study. I was fascinated by their complex group structure and their inspiring beauty.

I also couldn't help but to be intrigued by the bold lady who studied them. That is when I decided to write Dr. Fossey. I didn't have her address, so I sent her letter to the National Geographic

Society and asked them to forward the letter to her. Then I waited and waited and waited for a reply, but it never came. Nine months later I decided to try it again. In December, 1982, I received my first letter from her and was so excited that I cried. She wrote that she had never received my first letter. I had reached the first part of my dream of one day studying the mountain gorilla.

Since then we corresponded regularly and I enjoyably watched the headings of her letters change from a typed "Dear Miss Panger" to a hand-written "Dear Melissa". In all I received 13 letters. I looked forward to each letter from her, they were very special to me. Unfortunately I was never able to meet Dr. Fossey. I am really going to miss the information she always supplied me with on the different gorilla groups and I will especially miss her.

Now as I look towards the future, I can only hope that there will be mountain gorillas left for the world to cherish. That is why I hope that, along with IPPL, the Digit Fund will still continue to help the depleting numbers of these magnificent creatures. I am almost devastated by the fact that I am not finished with college and have not yet acquired any degrees, because, if it were up to me, I would be at the Karisoke Research Centre tomorrow to study and preserve the mountain gorilla.

## A TRIBUTE FROM JAPAN

Dr. Juichi Yamagiwa of the Institute and Museum of Primatology, Japan Monkey Center, Inuyama, Japan, studied the mountain gorillas with Dr. Fossey, and was one of the students whose work Dian most admired: in a letter to IPPL dated 19 January 1986, Dr. Yamagiwa states:

I am deeply grieved at the sad news of Dr. Fossey's death. It is unbelievable that Dian is on this earth no longer. During my stay at Karisoke, she encouraged me to study her beloved gorillas and stressed the active conservation of the whole Virungas. I was lucky and happy to be there and learned much from her. We in Japan now

realize the crisis facing the Mountain gorillas and support her work. Her brilliant book "Gorillas in the Mist" will be translated and published in Japan this spring. It is sad that this book will be her last manuscript. We needed more of her knowledge. We must preserve and continue her work at Karisoke.

I cannot adequately express my feelings. I hope that Dian's innocent soul will rest peacefully for ever among her gorillas. She died as she lived: the great mother of the mountain gorillas.

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY MOURNS FOSSEY'S DEATH

The National Geographic Society of Washington, D.C., U.S.A. helped support Dian Fossey's studies of the mountain gorillas since their inception in 1967. Many readers will have seen Dian's articles in the **National Geographic** magazine and viewed the television "specials". Some may have had the privilege of hearing her inspiring lectures.

Commenting on Dr. Fossey's death, Melvin Payne, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Geographic Society, commented:

Dian Fossey was a dedicated scientist who devoted her entire adult life to the study of mountain gorillas,

whom she considered to be affectionate, friendly animals, nothing like the savage beasts known from the theatrical portrayal of their behavior. Because of her years of dedicated work, undertaken in difficult conditions and often with little regard for her personal safety, we now know far more about the marvellous, dignified animals. We especially know that their's is a species in danger of being wiped out by cruelty on the part of poachers who threatened them daily. Miss Fossey will be missed: her work must be carried on.



# THE BOOT STORY

by Dian Fossey

*Dian's sense of humor and concern for the well-being of her African staff are illustrated by the story of the boots. One of her staff members, Mutarutkwa, a member of the tall Tutsi tribe, had huge feet. It was impossible to locate boots for him – until Heather McGiffin finally located a pair. The story is told in two letters from Dian to Heather dated 29 August 1979 and 25 January 1980.*

## Letter of 29 August 1979

As mentioned in my monthly patrol reports, I have a very fine pure blooded Tutsi working consistently on patrols. He badly wants boots "like the other men." The only hang-up is that he has a size 14 foot, nearly as broad as it is long. For a number of weeks he went out in several pairs of my heaviest socks, lacing them around his feet. Then I tried to make him a pair of shoes out of beaverboard bound with leather, but they weren't a great success. Finally I sent an outline of his unbelievable hooves down to the Ruhengeri market begging for a solution. A talented, old craftsman made a very stout pair of sandals out of rubber tires and inner tubes – practically one tire per foot – and the Tutsi, Mutarutkwa, went bouncing along on patrols thereafter, seemingly content.

Last week (August 22nd '79) two boxes containing 10 pairs of boots arrived from the U.S. Humane Society, donated by Nippenose Equipment Co. of Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Yesterday, Aug. 28th, the patrol came up for their usual weekly 3 days of work along with a new trainee who also has very large feet. Last night I took the two largest pairs of boots (11 and 11½) down to the Africans' cabin for "a fitting." Mutarutkwa nearly swooned dead away when he saw them. He swore that the 11½ pair would fit him, minus laces, as they are made of very soft leather and had a stretching potential. With as much effort as a size 18 derrière seeking its way into a size 12 pair of jeans, he managed to get the boots on. From his height of 6'7" he looked down, way down, at these miraculous appendages and announced them perfect.

I couldn't help but notice that his face appeared slightly pained and suggested that we all have a little dancing session; the Africans in this area could put a disco out of business because their dancing is so superlative in its freedom and naturalness. All of the other men were keen on the idea so, within seconds, a cupboard was resounding like a drum and we were stomping the dust out of the floorboards. All, that is, except Mutarutkwa. He stood, zombie-like, able to snake his arms about in nearly the proper manner, but barely able to lift his feet off the floor more than a few inches to only resettle them tenderly with an almost inaudible groan.

After a few minutes of wild dancing and whooping on the part of the other men, his condition was noticed, particularly his facial

grimace of pure agony though he tried desperately to disguise it. Everyone collapsed on the floor in gales of laughter which he didn't mind as he just plain collapsed in relief as well as determination that these boots would somehow "fit." He decided that, rather than give them up, he would sleep in them overnight so that his feet would become accustomed to them, and vice versa. He absolutely refused to allow us to cut the boot tops open which, to my way of thinking, was an act of sheer martyrdom.

End of story: This morning it took all of us a good 5 minutes to pry the boots off his swollen feet and another 15 minutes for him to reduce their size by soaking them in Camp Creek (drinking water supply). With that same great smile, he returned to his inner tubes to limp out on another patrol.

## Letter of 25 January 1980

Well, Mutarutkwa received his Size 14s on January 21st! I've written about it to Mr. Knight in deepest gratitude. Mutarutkwa couldn't believe the sight of those gun-boots. I had him go outside the cabin where, surrounded by all the men of the patrol and my house-man, he sat on a bench and, gently, with bated breath, began putting his right foot into his left boot! All the men started laughing and had to help put them on and lace them up. THEY FIT!!!

Mutarutkwa just sat with a dazed expression on his face, then slowly stood up and took a few steps, lengthened his stride, and then began to walk ever faster before breaking into a run. He stopped to gaze at his feet, turned around, and began bounding through the big meadow in front of my cabin just like an antelope. He fell into a deep drainage ditch about 20 feet beyond the cabin and hauled himself out with a chagrined expression but, fortunately, with no broken bones. He went out on patrol several minutes later and with his eyes riveted to his feet. If he'd run into an elephant within the next hour, I don't believe he would have noticed it! I've never seen anyone so thrilled. It marked the end of the rubber-tire sandals made in Ruhengiri! Thank you, [Heather] for making it possible for him to have them . . . I just wish you could have had the joy of watching him put them on.

## A TRIBUTE FROM INDIA

Colonel Fatehsingh Rao Gaekwad, Maharaja of Baroda, a patron of the International Primate Protection League and a personal friend of Shirley McGreal, has expressed to IPPL his sorrow at the death of Dian Fossey. Writing on behalf of World Wildlife Fund (India) of which he is President, the Maharaja comments:

Like you and many others, I was shattered to read about the fate of Dian Fossey. I still have not fully accepted the news. We have lost one of the world's most dedicated conservationists. Her contribution will never be forgotten and it will always be a source of inspiration to young conservationists. . .

## PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE

Let IPPL know if you move or plan to move. If you don't let us know, you will be inconvenienced by not receiving your IPPL Newsletter and we will be inconvenienced by having to try to track you down! All the time and effort could be better spent on helping primates.

DON'T YOU AGREE?

# IPPL OFFICER REFUTES ATTACK ON DIAN FOSSEY

Among the most vicious of the press attacks on Dian Fossey following her violent death was an article by Nina Stoyan in the **Philadelphia Daily News** (17 January 1986). In case you haven't heard of Nina Stoyan, she is described in the **News** as "a research assistant on the Discovering Dinosaurs exhibit at the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences," who had studied in East Africa (**not** Rwanda) for seven months. The article was entitled "Dian Fossey Asked For It" and sub-titled "Arrogance Gets Conservationists Nowhere." Ms. Stoyan accused Dian Fossey of alienating Africans by her dedication to the survival of Mountain gorillas and claimed that she showed a "contempt for their existence," and "was known to prefer gorillas to people." In a letter to the Editor of the **News** dated 24 February 1986, IPPL officer Heather McGiffin challenged Ms. Stoyan's comments:

The (January 17, 1986) OPINION piece by Nina Stoyan "Dian Fossey Asked For It: Arrogance Get Conservationists Nowhere", achieved a rare low in sensationalism and distortion. That the PDN ran this piece with an accompanying cartoon portraying Fossey holding a smiling gorilla while an African lay dead at her feet outstretched as a rug, irresponsibly mocks a woman who gave her life protecting mountain gorillas.

Dr. Dian Fossey, a primatologist, devoted herself to furthering our understanding of the mountain gorilla. The realization that such knowledge would have little value if the species were simultaneously exterminated by people encroaching illegally upon a national park forced her to take direct conservation measures. Scientists and conservationists generally agree that, without Fossey's presence on that mountain, the gorillas would have by now succumbed to human population pressures. That she was murdered in the course of her work is a tragedy.

Having known Fossey for many years, I can refute Ms. Stoyan's contention that she was obsessed and arrogant, caring only for gorillas and not for human beings. Fossey worked diligently to incorporate the local people into her program. She outfitted, fed, and paid salaries for many Africans for nearly 20 years, often on such a meager budget that she had to make shoes by hand for her staff until a company in Pennsylvania donated boots.

Ms. Stoyan falsely blames Fossey for not having offered the Africans something in return for protecting the gorillas and their habitat. It was the Rwandan Government, not Fossey, who designated the area a national park, prohibiting human encroachment – though unsuccessfully. Because the local people wanted to farm the land does not negate the fact that they did not have a right to it. The Rwandan Government wants and needs foreign currency generated by tourism, and their promotional campaign proclaims "Come See the Last of the Mt. Gorillas!" With approximately 2000-3000 tourists per month, according to the Rwandan Embassy, Fossey made a substantial contribution to their economy, far more than would accrue from the remainder of the mountain being felled for a few years of farming.

I find it curious that Ms. Stoyan, a Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences' employee and one who has worked briefly in Africa, can negate the achievements of Fossey's lifetime efforts and claim she asked to be murdered supposedly for not having a "concern and respect for all people who live on the earth." Fossey went beyond that, she had a respect for all life on earth and when push came to shove she believed in – lived by and died for – her commitment that humans don't own it all; that there's room on this planet for a few gentle gorillas on one small, remote mountain top. Let's hope that despite attitudes such as Stoyan's, others will continue in Fossey's footsteps with equal dedication.



Accepted without question by young members of a mountain gorilla group, Dian Fossey coaxes a gorilla named Tuck to turn around for a photograph. Miss Fossey spent most of her adult life studying gorillas in the wild, primarily near the Karisoke Research Center, which she established in Rwanda, where this primate family lived on lush Mount Visoke.

By Peter G. Veit,  
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## FROM DIAN WITH LOVE

Dian Fossey's last letter to Shirley McGreal, Chairwoman of IPPL, was dated 17 October 1985. In this letter, Dian addressed the problems of continued poaching and trafficking of lowland gorillas, and called for the establishment of a Gorilla Survival Center in West Africa where confiscated young animals could be sent in preference to exportation. She felt that exportation would bring about the production of "assembly-line orphans."

She noted the success of the Karisoke-based anti-poaching patrols, reporting that, "As of the end of September [1985], the patrols spent 5½ percent more time in the field yet cut down 75 percent fewer traps than as of the end of September last year." She noted the recent arrest of four poachers, of whom three were imprisoned.

Dian reported the deaths of two silverbacks (Nunkie and Beethoven) from natural causes. She ended with the comment:

There is no way I can be optimistic about the species' survival, albeit the poachers don't roam like buffalo any more, nor are traps easy to find now. It is the human pressure that is certainly intervening with their privacy and preservation.

The last words of the letter to Ms. McGreal were, "Whatever would the primates of the world do without you? Love, Dian."



Shirley McGreal talking strategy with Dian. Photo: Animal Protection Institute, Sacramento, California

**EXTRA COPIES OF THIS DIAN FOSSEY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE  
OF THE IPPL NEWSLETTER ARE AVAILABLE FOR \$1.50 POSTPAID  
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## HIS NAME WAS DIGIT

*Dian Fossey prepared this special report for the International Primate Protection League in 1979, following the tragic killing of the gorilla Digit by poachers. Many other deaths were to follow, including those of Uncle Bert, Macho, and Kweli. Dian's body was laid to rest alongside that of Digit in the gorilla graveyard at Karisoke.*

Digit was 2½ years old when I first met him in September 1967 on the slopes of Mount Visoke within the Parc des Volcans of Rwanda. He was then a playful little ball of disorganized black fluff from which protruded two button-like velvet brown eyes full of mischief and curiosity.

I had come here to continue my study of the behavior of free-ranging mountain gorillas which had started seven months previously on Mt. Mikeno within the Parc des Virungas of Zaire where George Schaller had conducted his memorable gorilla study in 1958-60. Digit was one of 14 individuals in Group 4, a typical gorilla group, though one about to undergo dramatic changes during the first year of observations. Group 4 was Digit's home group, the group into which he was born. His father, most likely the aged dominant silverback of the group, Whinney, was to die of pneumonia in May 1968: his mother, also aged, disappeared and was assumed to be dead in October 1967. These losses left Digit orphaned, but because of the manner in which gorillas organize their familial group structures over prolonged periods of time, Digit remained within his group surrounded by half-sisters, uncles, aunts, and cousins. The cohesiveness of the gorilla group structure has no other parallel in nonhuman primate societies.

Following his mother's loss, Digit shared the night nests of his father, Whinney, until the latter became too old to keep up with the group in March 1968. Then Digit sought proximity with a second silverback within the group. Amok, but he too left the

group a year later. With the exception of the eldest sons of dominant silverbacks, maturing gorilla males outside of the main bloodlines of the central hierarchy of a group, have this far always left their home groups in order to form their own groups by obtaining females from other sources. In time, this would have been Digit's role. There was yet a third silverback in Group 4, Uncle Bert, who took over group leadership following Whinney's death. Although Uncle Bert was, several years later, observed stringently protecting and "mothering" a young female orphan, neither he nor Digit shared much proximity and, it seemed obvious, even at a young age, that Digit would, upon maturity, become a peripheral male to Group 4.

During the first two years, observations of gorilla groups on Mount Visoke were greatly hampered by the animals' fear of humans; a fear they had justifiably gained throughout the years of encroachment by cattle grazers and poachers, though gorillas were at that time usually poached only for reasons of "sumu." The tradition of "sumu" (poison) is deeply entrenched in the cultures of both Rwanda and Zaire.

Certain parts of the silverback's body, the ears, tongue, distal phalanges of the small fingers and testicles, are cut off and used in a potion which the Africans say will either kill or induce virility depending upon the amount used. It was only in later years, when Europeans and tourists began flocking into the country, that gorillas began to be killed for their skulls and hands which were





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sold as trophies or souvenirs. This intolerable practice concentrated more on silverbacks whose massively crested skulls appealed to the warped individuals who purchased them.

Because of their deep-seated fear, it took about 2 years to habituate the gorillas on Mt. Visoke, to earn their trust and confidence, and to finally become completely accepted by them. During that time, and even now, I have purposely not habituated gorillas to the Africans who so loyally work at camp and without whose help the study could never have succeeded. The reasons for this policy should be apparent: that split second that it takes a gorilla to try and identify and recognize the African who approaches him as observer or poacher is just the time needed to cost the gorilla his life from a bow or spear. Gorillas within this area of the Virungas know Africans only as poachers. This practice should continue only until the very last poacher is driven out of the area so as not to further endanger the animals. Digit's group, like the other three main study groups, consisting of a total of 48 animals, usually ranged only on the steep slopes of Mt. Visoke between 10-12,000 feet elevation, (3000 to 3650 meters) during the initial years of the study. Although some 30 square kilometers of ideal gorilla habitat lay in the saddle terrain adjacent to the mountain and unquestionably had been utilized by the predecessors of these groups, none of the animals would risk leaving the relative security provided by the steep slopes to go off and range within the saddle domain of poachers, their traps, and dogs, countless hundreds of cattle herds and their grazers, honey gatherers and wood-cutters. As a result, the ranges of the four main study groups overlapped considerably within a heavily

overused slope area of 19 square kilometers. Therefore, because of spatial restrictions, interactions between groups occurred frequently. Group 4, under the new leadership of young, inexperienced Uncle Bert, was constantly harassed by two other groups who sought to "kidnap" four young females maturing within Group 4. The four females were Digit's closest peers and ranged in age from 2 years 8 months older to 3 years younger than he. Following the death of Whinney, and the departure of Amok, Digit was constantly in their company in playing, grooming, feeding, and nesting activities. The other group members were either too old or too young to provide the types of social interactions required by the maturing young male, but the four females accepted him completely.

As habituation progressed and Uncle Bert felt that his group was no longer threatened by the observer, the fear of the young adults gave way to intense curiosity and playful antics directed towards the observer. This type of response behavior consisted of showoff chestbeats, exaggerated struts, branch breaking, and foliage whacking. The young females gave every evidence of enjoying these activities and seemed almost to be trying to outdo one another in obtaining attention. Digit, not one to be left behind, mimicked their actions and soon became equally bold and playful.

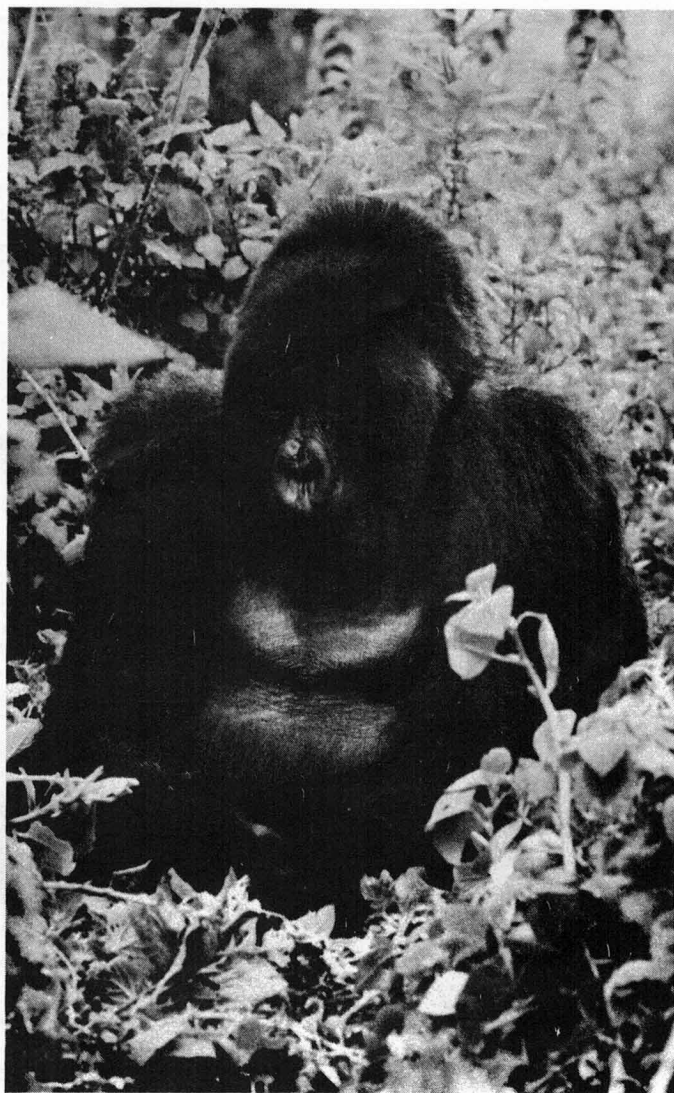
In late 1969, because of the close proximity provided in observations, it was noted that the third finger of Digit's right hand was swollen, pink, and held in an extended position. It was then that he obtained the permanent name of Digit after 2 years of a various assortment of names, none of which seemed to fit. The injury

probably resulted from his hand having been caught in a trap. We had greatly increased our poacher patrols and continually herded cattle out of the saddle, thus the gorillas were able to extend their ranges away from the overcrowded mountain slopes into the gently rolling saddle terrain filled with an abundant variety of lush food sources. The range expansion minimized interactions between the groups, though it did subject them to some poacher dangers which I and my limited camp staff could not immediately eradicate within such a large area.

In January 1971, Bravado, one of Digit's closest peers, was taken from Group 4 into another group (Group 5): in June 1971, the other two females closest to him in age were taken into yet another group (Group 8). The two interactions involving the losses of the three females occurred on the slopes of Mt. Visoke. There had apparently been a lack of female births between 1960 and 1970, thus other groups with silverback leaders more experienced and mature than Uncle Bert sought the three females, adults when they left their group, for breeding purposes. During the interactions, Digit, still a young adult, did not participate by backing up Uncle Bert in defense of the females. Frequently juvenile and adult males who share close blood links with the dominant silverback of the group, do assist him by contributing supportive charges and similar threatening actions against the males of the infringing group. Digit, not in the same position as the above males, had spent his formative years occupied with the maintenance and strengthening of his affiliations with his peers rather than being shaped for a leadership role, thus his lack of assertiveness at a young age was not surprising.

The loss of three of his four closest relationships within the group altered Digit's behavior considerably. Amongst the remaining group members, then reduced to only eight others, Digit found little companionship with the silverback and even less with the three remaining older adult females who were fully occupied with their own young infants. So he spent the majority of his time with the fourth remaining female, young Papoose, who, like him, had also been orphaned at an early age. Simultaneously, he increased his observer-oriented behavior to an amazing degree, although this was in no way encouraged. He began soliciting play with observers just as he had previously done with his gorilla companions, by rolling on his back, kicking his feet up in the air, beating lightly on his chest and grinning at the observer. If the first invitation to play met with no response, he would move closer and repeat the entire repertoire until tickled, groomed, or lightly cuffed. His curiosity, one of the most remarkable aspects of the gorilla's personality, compelled him toward complete and prolonged proximity with human observers, even strangers providing they were accompanied by someone from camp known to Digit. He approached to examine both familiar and strange individuals alike, gently pulling hair, beards, ears, clothing and to handle thermos flasks, cameras, binoculars, gloves. One received the subjective impression that he was "relieving the tedium of an otherwise boring day" now that he had only one close companion to play with within the group. The National Geographic Special television film captured several such poignant scenes, the most memorable being Digit examining first my pen and then my notebook before carefully returning each to me and rolling over to go to sleep by my side. That was the nature of Digit-gentle, inquisitive, and trusting.

In October 1971, Digit was observed for the first time attempting to back up the still inexperienced Uncle Bert during an interaction with Group 5, Bravado's new group. The combined displays of the two males of Group 4 appeared more bothersome than worrying to Beethoven, the leader of Group 5, who only occasionally took the trouble to deliberately charge them in annoyance. The interaction, however, provided Bravado with an opportunity to briefly rejoin the members of her home group, all



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of whom, especially Digit, showed unrestrained delight at seeing her again. Their exuberant play behavior lasted for nearly two days and occasionally some of the young animals of Group 5 crossed the intervening 150 feet separating the two groups and joined in the chasing and wrestling play. The interaction was terminated on the second day when Beethoven, possibly somewhat apprehensive about Bravado's reuniting with her home group, forcefully strutted over to Group 4 and, with no small commotion, herded an obedient Bravado back to his own group. To my knowledge, that was the last time the two companions were ever to see one another.

In January 1972, at the age of 6 years, 8 months, Digit was first seen in somewhat unpractised attempts at copulation behavior with the young female, Papoose, of whom he had become quite possessive, and the same type of behavior was again seen several months later with the even younger female, Simba. Neither of these two females, both juveniles at the time, were old enough to be sexually interesting to Uncle Bert, thus Digit had full access to them.

In February 1972, during an interaction, Digit was critically wounded under his right eye and near the center of his neck under the jaw. The eye wound healed slowly, its scar visible for many months afterwards. The neck wound, typical of most severe canine puncture injuries, was still draining a foul-smelling exudate 5 years later. It was last clearly observed as a deep, circular



indentation surrounded by a lattice work of scar tissue in March 1976. The draining infection was considered to have become systemic when Digit's general physique and behavior deteriorated markedly, and he began to maintain increasingly distant travel and nesting positions from the group. At such times, he could usually be located by a chronic cough which had also developed. However, when interactions with other groups were imminent or when females within his own group came into estrus, Digit resumed his proximity to the group and reacted much as he always had before his injury. So, although Digit was still capable of participating in the more outstanding social interactions of his group, his body developed a permanent "hunched" appearance with his back abruptly rounding off to his rump as though he were always on the immediate verge of sitting down. This development, plus a frequently-worn "morose" facial expression, were infinitely remindful that Digit was no longer the healthy youngster I once knew.

As he matured, his interest in the observer naturally decreased as he became more aware of his own social status within the group and the dynamics governing his relationships with others. He still was extraordinarily tolerant of the proximity of observers he knew well and spent long hours every day resting very closely to us when he was otherwise alone on the periphery of his group. His behavior began to alter somewhat towards new male observers whom he sometimes singled out for small bluff displays but this was never done toward females.

In June 1974, the fourth and last of the close companions of his youth, Papoose, left Group 4 to take part in the formation of a new group of a lone silverback male with whom she was later to bear her first offspring. Though still an integral member of Group 4, this loss possibly left Digit more "alone" than ever, but he soon developed a close and somewhat possessive relationship with the youngest female adult, Simba, and actively remained between her and other males once she began to attract sexual attention.

In January 1976 an unusual event occurred when Uncle Bert went to considerable effort to obtain a young blackback male, estimated to be approximately 2 years 10 months younger than Digit. The new male named Beetsme, had been previously traveling with just one silverback: his immigration into Group 4 marked the first, and only, thus far, time a male has been known to transfer into an established gorilla group. It was a puzzle as to why Uncle Bert had sought an additional male in his group which already contained six males giving it a male to female ratio of 1.8 to 1.

Digit's interactions with Beetsme were minimal, and, in particular, when Simba was in estrus, antagonistic. At 11 years of age, Digit himself entered the silverback stage and the time and distance spent up to 150 meters from the group lengthened. To the human observer, it was especially sad to find the once frolicsome, lively, socially inclined individual that Digit had once been now making the solo transition into a permanently peripheral animal in preparation for what should eventually have led to the beginning of his own life as the leader of a new group.

I realise the word "sad" may sound maudlin perhaps even presumptuous for me to conclude when I would encounter him sitting quietly and alone about a hundred or so feet (30 meters) from his group, many of whom were engaged in play or grooming activities in which I vividly recalled Digit so enthusiastically participating in the past. Still, Digit's spatial position apart from the group did serve a special function. In November 1976 my tracker and I were searching for Group 4 when we suddenly saw them some 40 meters away off to our left, day-nesting in a heavy drizzle. I was debating as to whether or not to bother them when out of the brush to our right ran Digit to inadvertently meet the tracker at a distance of 8 meters. Digit immediately stood upright and gave two prolonged screams exposing his upper gums and all

canines. At that moment, he seemed undecided as to whether to charge or to flee until I stepped up into his view and pushed the tracker down behind me. At once he dropped to all fours and fled towards his group who had already taken off and had rapidly run over 100 feet with Uncle Bert bringing up the rear. Digit caught up with them instantly, leaving a strong, pungent, fear odor that remained in the air for over 15 minutes. Here again was graphic reconfirmation of the value of the peripheral silverback and other maturing males who have the responsibility to serve as "watch dogs" in assisting the dominant male in the protection of the more defenseless members of their group.

It was in this service that Digit was killed by poachers on December 31, 1977. On that day, Digit took 5 mortal spear wounds into his own body, held off six poachers and their dogs, allowing the entire family group to flee 4 kms away to safety. Digit's last lonely battle was a valiant and courageous one in which he managed to kill one of the poachers' dogs before dying. I cannot allow myself to think of his anguish, his pain, and the total comprehension he suffered of knowing what humans were doing to him.

The harmless, beloved Digit was killed for the sole purpose of his head and hands which had been hastily hacked off and taken away leaving his mutilated corpse lying on its side in the corner of a flattened, blood-soaked area roughly 50 feet in diameter. We brought his body back to camp and later buried him in front of my cabin where he will remain permanently.

The following days were spent trying desperately to remember that nothing I could ever do would bring Digit back to life, but that I must not have allowed him to die in vain. Correspondence was initiated with responsible officials within this country and abroad as well as with many others who had known Digit over the years and also those known to be deeply concerned with the fate of the few remaining mountain gorillas, estimated as probably no more than 230 within the Virungas.





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A young doctor came up with an assistant and kindly performed an autopsy which indicated that all of Digit's organs were apparently overtly healthy except for a 3 cm. cyst in the spleen. It appeared that Digit had overcome the effects of the neck wound he suffered in 1972 which was of little consolation now.

On the same day as the autopsy, I was in my cabin when the woodman, working some 50 feet from the cabin, began yelling "Poacher, poacher." This brought the houseman running to say that a poacher with bow and arrows had been spotted directly behind my camp attempting to kill an antelope. I told all four of the camp staff to chase him and ran after them myself. Just above camp, there is a large meadow which lies between the steep slopes of Mt. Visoke and the vast saddle terrain leading to two other volcanoes. I kept to the middle of the meadow so that the poacher would not be able to cross over and disappear into the saddle, and my men rapidly gained on him against the Visoke slopes and finally caught him. So rarely is a poacher caught in the park that this event truly seemed miraculous. When they brought him out of the forest on to the meadow, I could see that he was one of the Twa from what is basically a poacher village near the park boundary. I saw something else as well which froze my blood and nearly caused me to lose all sense of reason. Both the front and the back of his tattered yellow shirt were sprayed with fountains of dried blood, far more than could result from an antelope killing.

Within a minute he admitted to having been one of Digit's killers. During the following 24 hours, when he remained our captive, tied up in my cabin, I could not permit myself to be left alone with him and concentrated solely on the cause of Digit.

Not long after we had returned to the cabin, the woodman again began yelling "Poacher" and we ran out to find that one of the Twa's hunting accomplices had sneaked up to camp to check on his friend. Another chase started, but it proved fruitless as the poacher disappeared into dense forest where he was lost in a maze of footprints made that day by three other poachers. This is the first time the poachers had been in this area for over three years. The reason for their presence now is that they have killed and poached virtually unchecked in the distant areas of the park, and have nearly decimated the antelope population elsewhere. Simultaneously the duiker and bushbuck population around my camp and immediate working area has increased enormously because of the protection we fought so hard to win for them. The poachers of this area, most with shambas (farms) of their own, kill the antelopes essentially to sell to Europeans and wealthy Africans living in and around Ruhengiri and use the money to purchase pombe (native beer). It is not a matter of being "meat-starved."

My men and I began a long examination period with the Twa



we had captured and gleaned the names of all six of Digit's killers, many of whom I had endeavored to have imprisoned previously: 1) KANYARUGANO (the one we caught); 2) MUNYARUKIKO (the leading poacher of the Virungas known to have been responsible for multiple elephant and gorilla killings over at least a 10-year period); 3) GASHABIZI (works constantly with Munyarukiko); 4) NTANYUNGU (has since been caught and imprisoned); 5) RUBANDA (has since been caught and imprisoned); 6) RUNYAGU. In addition, we also obtained the names of the three antelope hunters out around camp that day who escaped us but have since returned to hunt.

What stuns me almost beyond the actuality of Digit's death is the reason he was killed. An African by the name of SEBUNYANA-ZIRIMWABAGABO, who also lives in the small village near the base of the mountain, offered to pay MUNYARUKIKO the equivalent of \$20 for a silverback's head and hands though he had, as yet, no ready customer for them. This is not the first time he has instigated such a crime. To think that the life of Digit could be snuffed out for the sum of \$20: a life that was beyond value. It is an irreconcilable thought.

Here again we have a parallel to the antelope situation in that it seems likely that the majority of gorillas outside the camp's working area have already been slaughtered for their heads and hands, and that the only relatively "abundant" gorilla population remaining consists of the study groups worked with over the years thus protected by the frequency of observations and regular patrols against the poachers. That the poachers had the nerve to attack one of our study groups could mean the beginning of the end for the remaining mountain gorillas. Only if I can elicit enough interest and support will their total decimation be prevented.

I allowed the prisoner to go down to Ruhengiri the following day under the maximum security of the Chef de Brigade of Ruhengiri and three armed commandoes. The Twa had told all of us he knew where the head and hands were buried underneath a

bamboo clump outside of MUNYARUKIKO's house: however, when the Chief went to that spot, accompanied by the Twa, the hole in which they had been buried was found empty. They have yet to be recovered.

My last contact with Digit took place in December 1977 after I had returned from a stay in America. As usual, he was sitting by himself some distance from the group but showed instant recognition as I crawled down to him. We sat together for nearly half an hour exchanging vocalizations, gorilla-style. I do not know what motivated me to take out my camera and snap some six pictures of him, but these were the last ever to be taken of him in life. Since his death, it is now the transferred male, Beetsme, and an even younger male, Tiger, who maintain the "watchdog" roles in protection of their group though I find myself looking still toward the periphery of the group for Digit. I am, of course, still allowed to share their proximity, enter the group bulk, and be one with them, but it is an honor and a gift that I feel I no longer deserve.

I can only very half-heartedly conclude that Digit did not die totally in vain because he gave his life for his group so that they might survive-what? A month? Six months? A year? To sit back to grieve and ignore the actual wanton inhumane reason for his death is to do Digit a grave injustice. One cannot state that he suffered more or less than the countless other nameless gorillas killed in the same manner as victims of man's greed. Perhaps, though, if the public has further knowledge of his life and personality, he can serve to protect those animals remaining, if the entire story is published factually and without bias. For this reason, I am anxious to establish a "Digit Fund" to attempt to raise money to maintain students, to train Rwandans in the patrol of the park, and for additional census work on the Rwandan side of the Virungas to locate the whereabouts and ranges of the surviving population so that stronger efforts may be made to protect them and to actively secure their survival.

Here, at camp, we wake up each morning wondering who will be next.

## A CIRCLE OF STONES

Dian Fossey b. 1932 d. 1985

A circle of stones  
On a misty mountain  
Marks the grave  
Of a difficult woman;  
And before its next great adventure  
A spirit lingers, for awhile,  
Mingling with the  
Mist, close as breath  
To the great gentle  
Ones she loved and refrained  
From embracing in life.

by Paulette Callen (c)1986

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