



# The Detective Kubu Newsletter

## Crimefest 2010

Each May Bristol hosts CrimeFest, a convention where crime writers, reviewers, publishers and fans get together to talk, eat and drink crime fiction. On the official front, we talked about collaboration, as well as writing about a setting in which we don't live.

More fun, of course, were the extra-curricular activities! A highlight was getting together with our fellow Murder Is Everywhere bloggers, Dan Wadell, Yrsa Sigurdardottir, and Cara Black. As a group we went to dinner on the Friday evening and enjoyed sharing successes, moaning about the book industry, and general banter.

After dinner Yrsa shared an Icelandic delicacy, *hákarl*, which is fermented shark. When we opened the container, which Yrsa had brought wrapped in a plastic bag, which was wrapped in a plastic bag, which was wrapped in a plastic bag, a strong smell wafted to all corners of the outdoor patio. People several tables away moved to distance themselves, and even drinkers at the inside bar tried to find refuge by closing the windows and sitting further away.



Brave tasters: Emily Bronstein, Mike Stotter, and Stan

Nevertheless there was a surprising number of intrepid souls who lined up to try the delicacy. At first it tasted like smoked fish. "Not too bad," people said. "Quite tasty, in fact." Then the mouth was filled with the taste of ammonia, which rapidly changed the tone of the comments.

Fortunately Yrsa had also brought an antidote – an Icelandic jet-fuel substitute called Brennivin. A gulp cauterized one's taste buds in the nick of time.



Michael, Cara Black, Stan, Dan Waddell, and Yrsa Sigurdardottir

We had a delightful time in Bristol because the whole event was welcoming and friendly, and extremely well organized by Myles Allfrey and Adrian Muller. We would recommend a visit next year if you are in the UK from May 19 to 22, 2011. For more details go to <http://www.crimefest.com/>.

Michael and Stanley will be at the Bouchercon conference in San Francisco from October 13 – 17. Visit <http://www.bcon2010.com/>

## *Death of the Mantis*

The manuscript of the third Detective Kubu book has been with our editor at HarperCollins in New York for several months. The working title is *Death of the Mantis* and has as its back story the situation of the Bushman peoples of Botswana. The US publication date is likely to be in August or September 2011.

The good news is that the rights to the book have already also been bought by Headline in the UK and Eichborn in Germany. May many others follow!

## *Kubu goes to Frankfurt*

After Crimefest we headed to Frankfurt for a meeting with our German publisher – Eichborn AG.

After meeting the staff of Eichborn and doing a video interview, a much more serious event was in store. Karsten and his charming wife, Harriet, a successful novelist, are gourmet cooks. They had us to a stunning dinner, washed down with lashings of German Riesling, and South African reds and dessert wine. And what delightful company! We staggered back to the hotel at 1 am.



Michael at the Eichborn event

The first Kubu event in Germany turned out to be one of the most enjoyable of all the ones we've done. With great relief, Michael discovered that there was a professional to read passages from the book in German – Michael's last serious attempt at the language was in high school—a few years ago, shall we say. There was an enthusiastic book group, representatives from the press, and almost the entire Eichborn family turned up as well. Best of all, the group

understood English well so that Karsten and Michael could chat without needing translation.

It was wonderful to meet our charming translator, Stefanie Schäfer, who – we are reliably informed by German friends – did a great job with *A Carrion Death*.

Stefanie has a young family and loves to spend time with them. But when she needs to work, she says she is “going to Botswana now”, and they have to look after themselves. She is well into the second book.

Visit [www.detectivekubu.com](http://www.detectivekubu.com).

## *Trouble in Kasane*

At the beginning of June, Michael and Stan were delighted to take a German correspondent, Peter Munder, on a flying tour of Botswana sites that appear in our books. He was writing a literary travelogue for the largest German daily subscription newspaper, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

We first spent a few delightful days in Kasane and the Chobe National Park. On the morning of June 8, Stan had preflighted and refueled his Mooney 201 for a flight over the Savuti Marsh to see water flowing in the Savuti channel for the first time in 30 years. Then we were going to fly over the Okavango Delta to Maun, then to Gaborone for dinner with the Commissioner of Police.

The Mooney was parked on the ramp, and we were getting ready to go. A Cessna 206 had also just refueled, boarded its passengers, and started to taxi for take-off. Stan was next to it as it started moving and expected it to turn left towards the end of the runway. But no! It kept moving straight ahead. Right at the Mooney!

Stan shouted. Michael and Peter shouted. The fuel attendant shouted. But the pilot was oblivious, obviously thinking of something else. To our horror, the Cessna taxied straight into our plane.

Its propeller smashed into the spinner of the Mooney's propeller, sending a shower of shrapnel in all directions. Fortunately none hit anyone. It is hard to describe the despair we felt.



Stan's Mooney is on the right.

To cut a long story short, the authorities in Botswana were excellent and efficient. But, while the others took commercial flights to Gaborone, Stan had to spend the rest of the day filling out forms and waiting for investigators from Civil Aviation to do their thing.

The Mooney will only be ready to fly in mid-September! Sigh!



The "crime" scene under military guard

### Upcoming Events

October 10: Stanley is Master of Ceremonies at the *Opus and Olives* fundraiser in St. Paul Minnesota.

Visit <http://www.thefriends.org/opus.htm>

October 13 – 17: Michael and Stanley at Bouchercon in San Francisco.

October 19: Michael and Stanley at Poisoned Pen in Scottsdale, Arizona.

### Italian translation

The Italian translation of *The Second Death of Goodluck Tinubu (A Deadly Trade)* was released in June with the title *Morte apparente* – An Apparent Death. We like the ominous cover a lot.



### Short story published in prestigious magazine

The well-known Strand Magazine published a short story of ours in its Summer 2010 edition. Entitled *The Haunting*, the story tells the tale of a Zulu sangoma who is approached by a used-car salesman to help find out who is stealing his money. The sangoma discovers powers he didn't know he had, and the salesman gets a most unexpected result.

You can reach Strand Magazine's website by going to <http://www.strandmag.com>.

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