DECEMBER, 2023 ISSUE #3

The LEGACY

NEWSLETTER

The 1970s: When Students had the best & worst experiences

The Mak Guild League: Where leadership ties thrive

From humble beginnings to political heights: Rukutana's journey

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Word from the editor

Here we are, with yet another edition for The Legacy Newsletter – our third. We are excited that we have come so far and continue to plough on, bringing you information about what is taking place at Makerere University so you can be up-to-date. Our mandate is to inform you about the events and opportunities at the hill, to inspire you to achieve greater heights as many alumni are doing, and to encourage you to give in whatever way you can to the place that provided you with an opportunity to complete your education.

In this issue, we speak to Dr Susan Nalugwa Kiguli, and Dr Rose Nakasi about the awards and huge grant they have won, respectively, that has brought pride to their departments. We also take a look at the various events that take place at the university, specifically the Kampala Geopolitics Conference and the Julius Nyerere Leadership Centre Symposium. We tell you the importance they hold and how they are contributing to creating leaders in the country and continent.

This issue also contains two interesting profiles, that of Ruth Nakyewe, one of the longest-serving staff members (she worked there from the age of 16 to 61!) and that of the previously infamous Northcote Hall, later renamed Nsibirwa. The Class Notes is a section where we share mini-profiles of alumni, written by them, and so we invite you to take a look and send yours as well.

We hope as you take a break this season, you will find the time to read all these stories, as well as those from previous editions if you haven't yet. The esteemed Chaplains and Imaam, as well as the Vice Chancellor in their messages have sent warm season's greetings and messages encouraging you to rest and recharge your spirits. We at The Legacy urge you to do the same.

We wish you a merry, merry Christmas!

Editor-in-chief
Carol Alyek Beyanga

A time to reflect on our achievements and recharge our spirits

A message from the Vice Chancellor, Makerere University Council

Dear Makerere University Alumni, Staff and Friends, As we approach the end of another eventful year, I am delighted to extend my warmest wishes to each and every one of you for a joyful and restful December holiday season.

As we prepare to close 2023, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our faculty, staff, and students for their unwavering commitment to academic excellence, research, and community engagement. You are the driving force behind our continued success and specifically towards our research-led agenda.

The December holiday season is a time to reflect on our achievements, recharge our spirits, and spend quality time with family and friends. It is also a time to celebrate the diversity that makes Makerere University such a unique and vibrant institution. Whether you observe Christmas, Hanukkah, Eid, or any other holiday tradition, may this season bring you joy, love, and unity.

I encourage all members of our alumni and the wider

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Christmas is about love

A message from the Chaplain, St Augustine

Fr. Josephat Ddungu
Chaplain, St Augustine Chapel

Greetings from St. Augustine Chapel. We thank the Lord for bringing us yet to another beautiful season of the year which usually brings a lot of joy and excitement in our lives. Yes, Christmas is just around the corner! We had our Christmas Carols on 26th November 2023 in our St. Augustine Hall where we also launched our new choir uniform. We thank all those who contributed towards the purchase of the new uniform.

Christmas Carols announce Christmas and Christmas is about Love. As we read in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that whoever believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.” We must reciprocate that love by loving God and our neighbor. Love is the greatest and only message that we need to make this world a better place. It’s only love that can help us overcome the different challenges and evils that we face in our families and communities and indeed the whole world. So

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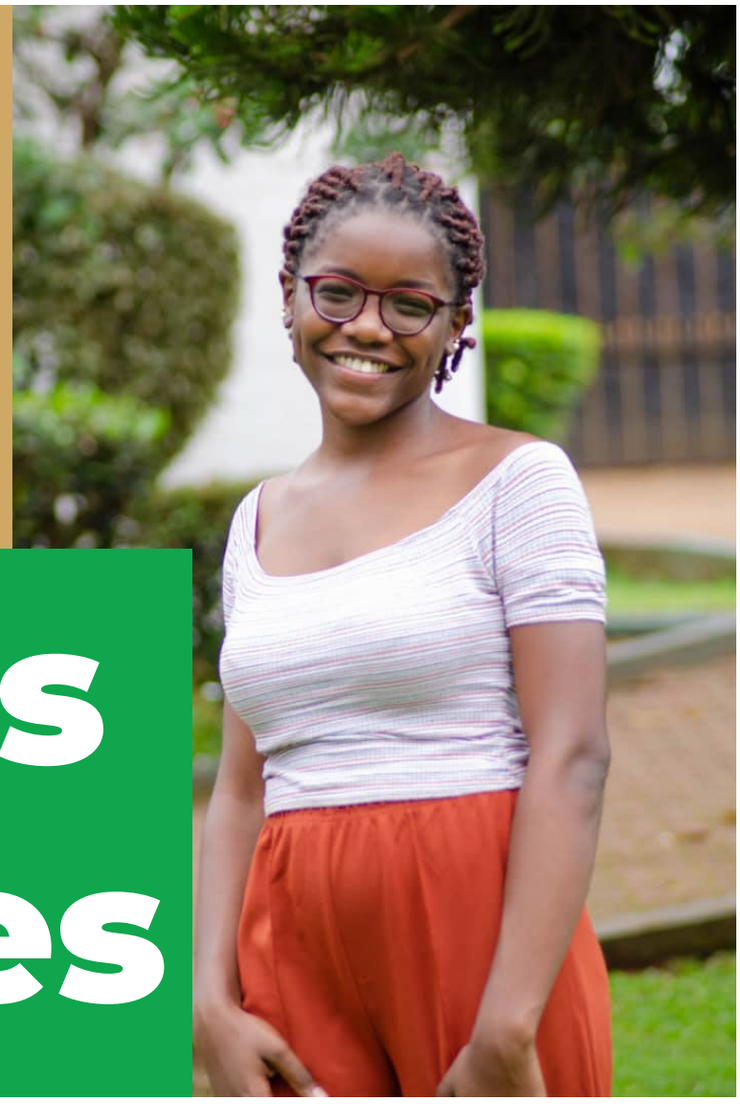

Class Notes

At the Makerere University Endowment Fund, we value you, the alumni and would like to know where you are today. We want to feature you in The Legacy, so we invite you to send in your "class notes" to be published in our next issue.

Sasha Nannyange

A passion for storytelling

My name is Sasha Nannyange, a 2022 graduate of the BSc. in Business Statistics attached to Complex Hall. My programme provided a foundation that surprisingly fueled my current career in communications. I have, from an early age, always had a deep passion for storytelling as a means

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Degrees of Success:

Finding your unique path after leaving Makerere University

Sometimes the plan after finishing university does not work out the way you hope, but the beauty about trying various options allows you to discover different possibilities and find out the variety of things you can do.

By Agatha Christie Akello

In a conversation with Trevor Noah about his memoir A Promised Land, former US president Barack Obama said, “Not everybody will be president, but if you decide that you want to have an impact, you will have extraordinary experiences.”

It’s not that I wanted to have an impact after leaving Makerere University, but my journey had multiple unforeseen plot twists that left me no choice but to learn the required courage, resilience and humility for success. Walk with

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Julius Nyerere Leadership Center: Empowering Youth, one symposium at a time

The symposium held by the Julius Nyerere Leadership centre is testament to the university’s belief in encouraging debate and exchange of ideas among African leaders.

By Immaculate Bazira

The annual Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Symposium that took place on Saturday 14th October 2023 succeeded in creating space for the youth and African leaders to exchange ideas.
The symposium was organized by The Julius Nyerere Leadership Centre (JNLC) as a tribute to Nyerere’s role in freeing Africa.
JNLC was conceived when President Yoweri Museveni emphasized the need for a platform “ekyoto” to draw from African leaders’ experiences in various fields and contexts during The Nelson Mandela Commemorative lecture in August 2017.
The University leadership wasted no time in bringing the president’s directive into fruition and

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The Kampala Geopolitics Conference (KGC): Promoting African perspectives in global discourse

The conference engages a diverse audience, strategically targeting students, academia, civil society representatives, media professionals, political actors, and the diplomatic community, in a bid to bridge the gap between research and policy.

By Ayub Kiranda

Since 2018, Makerere University has served as the host for the annual Kampala Geopolitics Conference (KGC), a collaborative effort with partners such as the Embassy of France to Uganda, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), UN Women, Alliance Française Kampala, and the Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques (IRIS). The Kampala Geopolitics Conference has evolved into a high-level event, transcending geographical boundaries to delve into contemporary geopolitical questions and

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Peter Kayonde
- the quiet, dependable executor

Peter Kayonde, a senior administrative assistant in the Department of the Academic Registrar was known for his humility, hard work and could be trusted. In his death he was eulogised and praised for being an exemplary worker.

By Mark Wamai

Peter Kayonde's youthful appearance complete with a lean frame often had many confusing him for a student. One could easily bypass him in the corridors of the Senate Building, Makerere University as he weaved from one office to another through groups of students as he went about his work. It was only when one got up close and interacted with him that his expertise and maturity shone through. Born on 23rd June 1973, Peter was slightly over 50 years old when he was crashed into by a speeding boda boda

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The Mak Guild League: Where leadership ties thrive

Although it was created as a sports initiative, the MAK Guild league goes beyond sports and provides a platforms for alumni to bond and foster networks across different sectors.

By Tuhirirwe Karane

The MAK Guild League, a sports initiative by former leaders of Makerere University, kicked off in June 2022 as a platform to socialize, play games, and foster networks that transcend both the public and private sectors. Now in its second season, the league showcases teams from both past and present guild houses, serving as a cohesive force that brings together alumni who have shaped the university's leadership landscape across different eras.

The league is largely characterized by football but equally has a variety of board games such as chess, draft, ludo and many more. According to

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Meet Dr Rose Nakasi,

the lead behind an innovative way to screen for malaria

Doing a lot of research, leading an interdisciplinary team and fundraising were some of the challenges Dr. Nakasi faced as she worked on the Mak Ocular project. The project has now received $1.5 million from Google to advance its work..

By Aaron Oguttu

Artificial intelligence is one of the aspects of technology that has fascinated the world in the 21st century and keeps bringing up surprises. Meet Dr. Rose Nakasi, a computer scientist with a specialty in Artificial intelligence (AI) in the Makerere AI Lab. The doctor won a grant worth $1.5 million (about Shs5.6 billion) from Google to improve the Mak Ocular project she put out. Dr. Nakasi is a lecturer in the Department of Information Technology at Makerere University. She previously lectured at Busitema University. She is currently a lead driver under the global initiative on Artificial Intelligence. She is currently spearheading

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Makerere University Endowment Fund works to support needs of the university

Mr. Owiny Martin is the Executive Director at JOMO Investments and Trustee Services and a member of the Makerere University Endowment Fund Board of Trustees. He sat down with Karane Tuhirirwe to share insights on the workings of the Fund.

Q: Please share a brief introduction on your relationship with Makerere University and the history of its Endowment Fund.

A: Thank you Karane. Having grown up in and around Makerere, and eventually studying my degree from the same university, I am delighted to be giving back to an institution that raised me. The highlights from being in Makerere are still fresh, like bull roasting while I was at Livingstone Hall. I was heavily involved in the Games Union where I served as a returning officer for the union election in my first year and subsequently, I was nominated the sports minister of the year in my

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The Christmas spirit to spread

A message from the Chaplain, St. Francis Chapel Makerere University

A message from the Chaplain, St. Francis Chapel Makerere University

Christian greetings from St. Francis Chapel Makerere University in the name of our God, the source of all blessings! As Chaplain, it gives me great delight to share this Christmas message with the broader community through this digital platform, The Legacy. Historically, Makerere University has undeniably shaped the spiritual lives of both alumni and members of the community. Indeed, as the leading institution of holistic transformation in the country, Makerere University places a premium on the spiritual formation of its community. I therefore, invite you to join with me in this reflection on the significance of Christmas, and to understand the spirit that we all ought to embrace and share with all, both near and far.

The Christmas spirit is rooted in the scripture written by prophet Isaiah: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of peace (Isaiah 9:6).” Isaiah wrote this prophecy about 800 years before Christ

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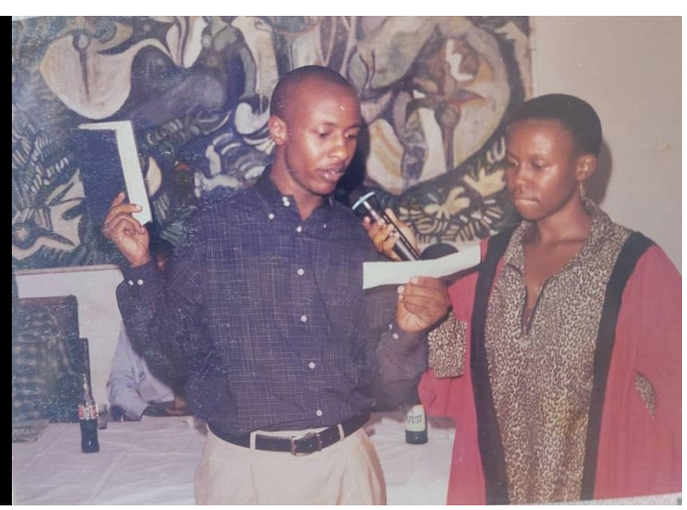
A memory walk through the campus with my daughters



More than 20 after he has left the university, a walk through the campus reminds one of its alumni of the wonderful experiences he had there, including campaigning for a role in his hall and meeting his wife.

By Eddie Balaba Mugarura

As I walked through the hallowed gates of Makerere University, 26 long years after I had joined to pursue a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, a torrent of memories engulfed me. It was a place where I had forged friendships, pursued knowledge, and did a lot of extra-curricular activities beyond building for my future. With my two daughters, Megan and Valerie, by my side, I was about to embark on a journey through time, one that would reveal a piece of my history to them.

We began our nostalgic adventure by visiting the familiar ancient palm trees near the closed Lumumba Hall. It was here that I recalled countless evenings of

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Committed to the job: 45 years of working at the university

When Ruth Nakyewe started working with Makerere University at the age of 16, she would not have envisioned staying there for the next four decades. But through her commitment and resilience she was able to perform her duties and cater for her family.

By Aaron Oguttu

Young, and filled with some optimism, Ruth Nakyewe joined Makerere University in 1978 not to study but to seek a job. At the age of 16, she already lost hope of having an education since her father had a mental illness and was unable to take care of their family. Once she started working at the university, Nakyewe did not leave until 45 years later.. She retired recently at 61 in October 2023.

Her work started at Makerere Law School where she met a one Professor Abraham Kiyapi, who asked about her

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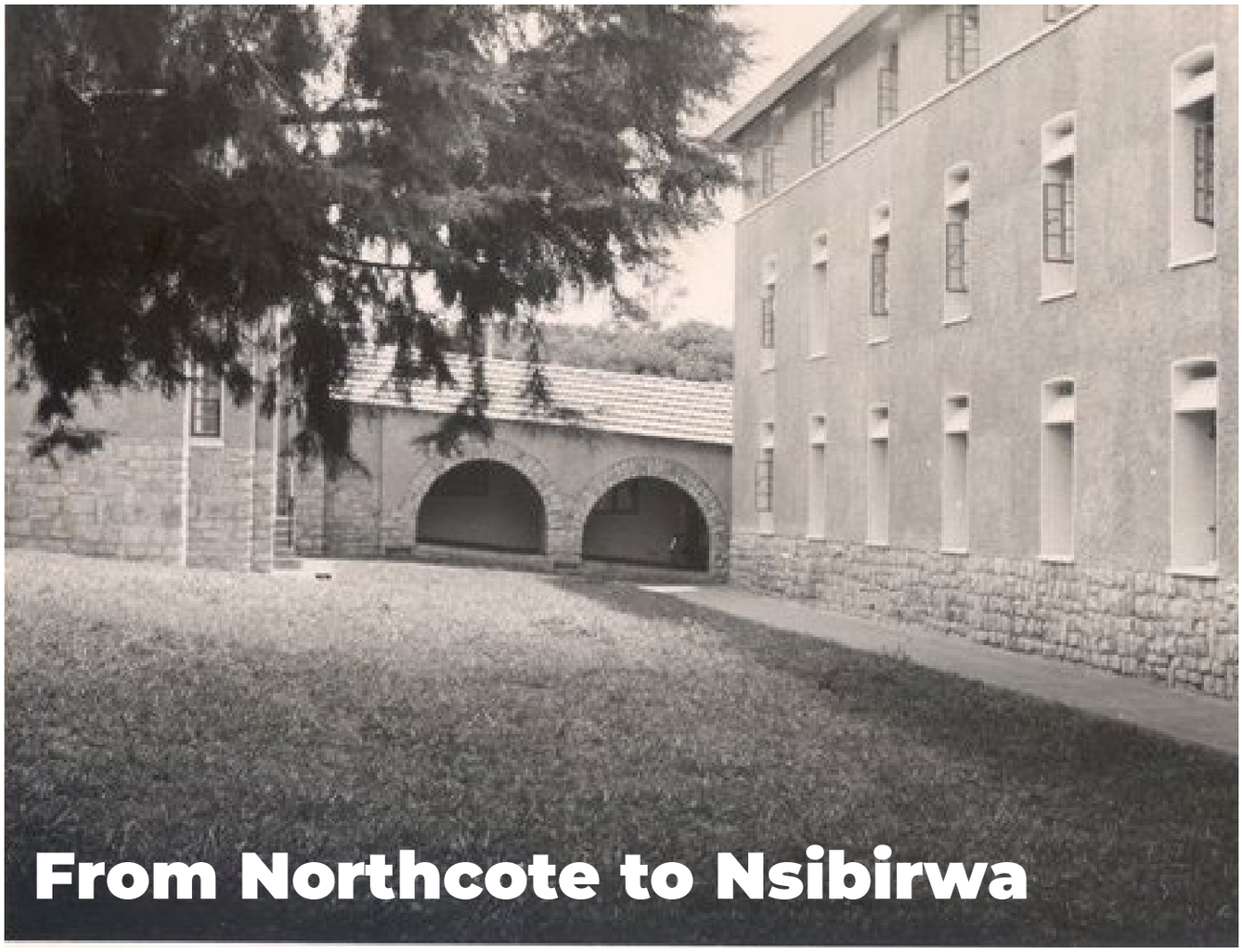

From Northcote to Nsibirwa

During the 1980s, residents of the then Northcote hall say there were indeed spirited shows of loyalty and discipline. And while the culture was akin to that of an army, a lot of it was mostly fun and camaraderie. But things got worse in the mid 90s.

By Claire Zerida Balungi & Immaculate Bazira

History has its own language, and telling it in no particular style allows us to ruminate over our own journeys and stories. This is the tale of a once-mighty Makerere hall of residence which gave its former residents the days of their lives, but for others, sent chills down their spines. Adjacent to the Lions Leisure Park, Nsibirwa Hall stands in old wonder, as if in hard-learned mindfulness and constant surrender to the fight for might. A mix of men's natural scents and of stuffy beddings accompany you through the dimly-lit green and white-ish corridor of Nsibirwa Hall, which

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Prime Time at the pool - A place where students are spiritually nourished

Started in the late 90s, Prime Time has seen changes in students, activities, and entertainers, but not in the purpose it was started for, which is to help students navigate their days at the university in a holistic and wholesome manner and grow their faith.

By Claire Zerida Balungi

As if to blur the function of all other facilities, the University Swimming Pool comes into focus at the tune of a rainless Saturday night event - Prime Time! The contagious HIV/AIDS edutainment program has gone on for as long as we can remember… students masking the fence and stairs around the swimming pool with hungry eyes and ears. Many, over the years, have not survived the churchy delight of the entertainment and education provided.

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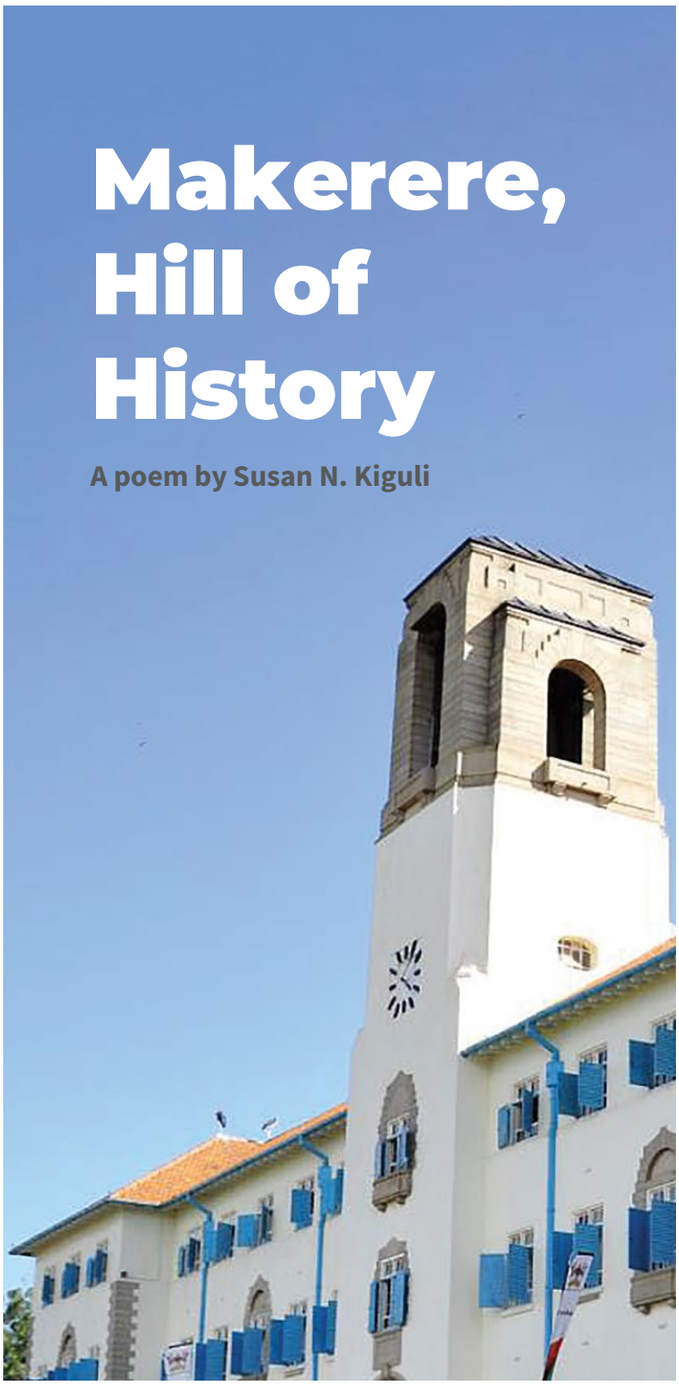

Hill of history and hill of the future
Age rises upon you
A crown on your head
Which the radiance of experience
Has enthroned over years
Speaking of struggle and triumph
As you build for the future.

Age rises upon you
Revealing capacity
To shape visions
With independent thinkers
And perceptive philosophers
As you build for the future.

Age rises upon you
Publishing youthful dreams
Which have walked through
A century of raising you as
a lighthouse of growing nations
Building for the future.

Hill of ideas; hill of action
Wrestling with questions
Probing answers
Pursuing a foresighted future
Seeking to become a place
In harmony with yourself
With your people
As you build for the future.

Powerhouse of brains
That has offered a space to sit
A host of innovations among them:
Makerere Institute of Social Research

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Susan Kiguli: Makerere lit in me a fire to excel and serve humanity

An Associate Professor, poet and former Head of the Department of Literature, Dr. Susan Kiguli's lean frame says very little of the fat accolades to her name. She talked to *The Legacy* about her life and work

By Mark Wamai

Q. What inspired you to embark on an academic journey in Literature and at what point did Makerere become part of the picture?
A. In our time, the name Makerere was ubiquitous. It was in my family, synonymous with

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From humble beginnings to political heights: Rukutana's journey

From dealing in timber, charcoal, and produce, to rising in the ranks in the government, Hon

Mwesigwa Rukutana shares about how the journey of a lawyer, businessman and politician began from his university days.

By Tuhirirwe Karane

In the tumultuous year of 1980, as Uganda held its collective breath in anticipation of the country's first presidential election in 18 years, a determined young man named Mwesigwa Rukutana, embarked on a journey that would shape his destiny and leave an indelible mark on the nation.

Read more

Striving to support the community

A message from the University Imaam's office

Greetings from the University Imaam's Office.

Makerere University Mosque is proud to associate with current and past students of Makerere University. With a rich history dating back to as early as 1948 when the Sultan of Zanzibar visited the Ivory Tower leading to the construction of the First Mosque (now used as the Library), the Mosque has nurtured and developed a body of Muslim graduates and professionals. Starting with a small number of about five Muslims in the late 1940s, the Mosque has gone on to nurture thousands of professionals that have contributed to the transformation of communities locally, regionally and globally. Notable among these are academics like the Late Prof. Ali Mazrui, Prof. Mahmood Mamdani, Prof. Umar Kakumba, Prof. Abasi Kiyimba, and Prof. Mouhamad Mpezamihigo among others.

The Muslim Community at Makerere comprises of students, Academic Staff and Non-Academic staff that include administrative and support staff. The University Mosque strives to organize a host of different activities, services, and events to engage and bring together the Muslim community in Makerere. Activities of the Mosque that benefit Muslim students are planned and implemented by the

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The 1970s:

When Students had the best & worst experiences

By Alibhai-Brown Yasmin (1969-72 Arts: Literature)

Next stop Makerere, to the women's hall of residence, Mary Stuart Hall, a ghastly sixties tower block, for me very heaven. It was the end of 1969 just as the country was getting calamitously close to fragmentation. The campus swept up a hill lush with grass, green as the colour of life itself. Nandi flame trees, and others high and wide and ancient, provided shade for students reading books and debating ideas. The main building stood at the top, white and imposing with a bell tower. Shoots of new possibilities were all round us. We would retell the story of our country. Africa was neither intellectually barren nor uncivilized before the white man came. We were determined- black, brown, and white Makerereans - to make Uganda proud and

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