

from our readers

Africa: A personal request from an IABC member

I was very moved by your Africa feature (January–February 2007) as I spent eight and a half years in both Ethiopia and South Africa as a schoolgirl. I've been in corporate communication for 30-plus years, and am a member of the IABC 100 Club.

I've recently written and published a book called *An Ethiopian Odyssey*, about my 25,000-mile journey to find nine former classmates from my days at Nazareth School for Girls in Addis Ababa. The journey was inspired by a dream I had in April 2000, that I was back in the foothills of Addis Ababa, talking to an Ethiopian couple about poverty and drought. Mid-conversation, I bent down to feel the dry topsoil and knew, beyond all doubt, that I was there to help provide permanent clean water for the very poor. With that thought, the dream evaporated. Two years later, I was made redundant from a good job and decided to work part time to make my dream come true.

I've traveled throughout Ethiopia, Europe and the U.S. in search of my former classmates, and had help from many men and women around the world to find them. (It turns out more than half of my class now live in the U.S.—three work for the United Nations. Wasn't that an amazing class!) The book ends at



St. Paul's Chapel in New York, the little chapel of such peace beside Ground Zero. It's been a journey of deep faith and some wonderful miracles and synchronicity.

I was wondering if IABC'ers could help me find my American classmate, Kathy or Kay Miller, who is in the front row of the photo above, second from right (with checked top and glasses). I'm standing beside her. This is for book two, as I hope to re-create the old school photo with us, as we are today, for the front cover!

Half of the royalties from my first book will go toward helping the very poor:

- 30 percent to provide clean water through WaterAid

- 10 percent to AGOHELD, an Ethiopian charity that does great work with the destitute, including families suffering from AIDS
- 10 percent to Christian Aid's Middle East crisis appeal

An Ethiopian Odyssey is available from Amazon.com and from my web site, www.anethiopianodyssey.com. So far, advance publicity has reached 20 million people, especially in the U.S., via web sites and the Voice of America. I hope that one day the book will sell very well.

—Annette Allen
Buckingham, England

The author is looking for her American classmate, Kathy or Kay Miller, front row, second from right.



Communication World welcomes your letters. Send them to us at cwmagazine@iabc.com. Please include your name, organization and contact information. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.