

UK Report by Hugh Wyllie



Smiles as usual from Hugh Wyllie

It was a delightful surprise to see Hugh Wyllie at DWR Distribution once again. He has been living in the United Kingdom for the past two years and visited South Africa over the festive season.

We sat him down with a toasted cheese, ham and tomato sandwich, and as he *shared a Coke with Wandj*, we listened with keen interest about his new adventures.

“I have been living in the village called Godstone in Surrey, 20 miles South of Loding in the Surrey Hills,” Hugh explained. It’s called the quintessential English Village! I can look out of my bedroom window and see the village green as they play cricket or football. There are four pubs within five minutes walking distance.”

Hugh has made friends in the village, and while the weather is of course terrible, it’s not as bad as he expected it to be. “Even in November you get nice sunny days and get to look at blue skies,” he said.

As was inevitable, Hugh, lighting designer from South Africa, has found himself at The Barn Theatre in Oxted, a community theatre home a number of local groups including the Oxted Operatic Society and the Oxted Players, who have presented hundreds of shows at The Barn since the 1940s. The theatre is very well equipped and organised, and even though the equipment is old it has been well cared for over the years.

“I go along to their monthly meetings and was even the followspotter for a Variety Show a few weeks ago,” said Hugh. “It was fun and, it has been suggested that I might be assigned to light the *Pirates of Penzance* in April.” He laughs, “The guy who was going to do it can’t do it now!”

Hugh had an enjoyable visit back in South Africa. He has mostly spent time visiting with friends and family. “I have been amazed by my wife,” he says. “When I left the country our house was at the foundation stage. She has supervised, arranged contractors and so on all by herself.” Oh Hugh, what would you expect!

It was lovely to catch up with Hugh and we hope to see photos of his show in April!