



AMBOSELI TRUST  
FOR ELEPHANTS

**Amboseli Trust for Elephants**  
**October- December 2021**



**A Message from the ATE team**

For so many of us, this year has been difficult, and the ATE team has had our fair share of personal troubles. We're lucky to have the elephants of course: they ground us, make us laugh, and bring us into contact with our supporters. Hearing from you, reading your responses to our social media and knowing you are out there rooting for us always lifts our spirits, even when times are hard. We want to thank you for caring for the elephants and our project,

Betsy, Celestine, Cynthia, Hezron, Katito, Kavata, Jackson,  
Josephat, Moses, Mwonga, Norah, Phyllis, Sylvi, Tal & Vicki





*Craig being greeted by a youngster from his original family, the CBs, which he left to become independent 37 years ago*



*Cerise on right cuddling with her daughter Chyulu*



*Eudora with her calf born this year; a member of the EB family, she is the oldest but lets Enid lead*



*Libby, matriarch of her family, the LCs, and gorgeous at 50*

## Our 50th Anniversary

Way back on September 1, 1972, Cynthia Moss and Harvey Croze travelled to Amboseli National Park to check it out as a possible study site for a new elephant project. It was immediately obvious that it was the perfect place and they started taking photos of the elephants for identification.

Now it's coming up to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that inspired choice. So much has happened over the past 50 years, but in some ways the elephants stay the same. The females and calves live in their families, a few led by matriarchs who were alive in 1972; they move in and out of the Park on ancient trails that their grandmothers and great grandmothers showed them; they give birth and they die and they are mourned. The males roam far and wide; at times they pursue females and at other times they hang out with their buddies.

There are four females and one male who were born in 1972. We celebrate them: Craig, Cerise, Eudora, Libby and Puff will reach 50 years





old in our anniversary year.

*Puff with her six-year-old son; she is a matriarch and the grandmother to twins*

## The Rebirth of KXC

By Cynthia Moss

I have a request that means a lot to me. I'm hoping you will help.

When I started the Amboseli project, I lived and worked in Nairobi and drove to Amboseli whenever I could get the time. In those days I drove a Renault4, known in Kenya as a Roho, meaning heart or spirit. They were great, tough little cars and the name suited them. Eventually, I set up a camp and obtained the use of a second-hand SeriesII Land Rover. It had its up and downs as any old Land Rover does, but it was a work horse. I was in Nairobi when I got a phone call to tell me that a tree fell on my Land Rover, destroying it. I almost never cry, but I cried that day.

That was in 1984, 12 years into the Amboseli project. The following year after a fund-raising blitz, I got a brand new Land Rover 90 Defender. It was the new model of Land Rover with coil springs and a diesel engine. I instantly fell in love and to this day, I and my whole team love that vehicle. It is very fondly called "KXC" which are the letters in its license plate.

KXC has been through so much with me. It was there through the making of all the four of the Echo films. In fact, it features prominently in the films and is almost like a character itself. We almost lost KXC in 1990 during the Echo filming when the cameraman, Martyn Colbeck, drove it into a deep water-filled natural pit. The engine was destroyed, but it was my beloved Land Rover, and instead of giving it up we replaced the engine.

KXC went on to do good, important work for the next 20 years. During that time, it had two restorations. Nevertheless, by the time it was 25 years old in 2010, we semi-retired it



*KXC in 1990 during the filming of Echo of the Elephants*



*KXC valiantly crossing the lake to get to camp*



*KXC completely stripped down in Nairobi*



*The new KXC in progress*

to simple duties such as hauling the water trailer and collecting firewood. It continued to run well but the body was so old and rattled so badly that you couldn't think when you drove it.

KXC will be 37 years old in our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. Maybe we're crazy, maybe we're too nostalgic, but we have decided to give KXC yet another lease of life. It is being completely renovated from the chassis on up. However, we're not doing this just because we're fond of the old car. Land Rover stopped making the kind of Defenders we have and now only make fancy, computer-based vehicles that are not appropriate for our work. And in any case, a new one costs, with import duty and sales tax about \$100,000. To completely restore KXC will cost about \$20,000. It's a bargain at the price.

Please help us put KXC back in the field doing the important work we all love. Think of it as a Christmas present to ATE. Any donation would be appreciated.

[Donate to KXC](#)

## New Internship Program

We've always loved sharing our knowledge of elephants and we were extremely proud of our training program which had been running for 30 years. We had to stop welcoming groups of trainees as a result of Covid19, but we couldn't stop capacity building completely; it's too important to us and too ingrained to our team - basically we are miserable if we're unable to share our love for elephants! So in September we welcomed our first intern, John Naini. John lives locally and works for Porini Camps in Selengei. We took him on a two month placement to see all the ins and outs of a research project. John saw how the project operates day to day, and also saw elephant collaring and helped with the rescue of a young calf who was evacuated to the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. Now returned to his day job, John is the first of what we hope will be many interns, who have a greater understanding of our project and the elephants and who can advocate for them in Amboseli and beyond.



*John Naini learning the ways of elephants from Katito and Norah*

## Ways to support us



We have a special holiday price

Cynthia recently published a book with artist Sophie Walbeoffe. *Impressions of Amboseli* is a gorgeous, small-format book full of fascinating information about Amboseli and its elephants and other wildlife. It would make a perfect Christmas gift. All proceeds go to ATE. To order one please write to [eswart@elephanttrust.org](mailto:eswart@elephanttrust.org)

for naming an elephant calf in Amboseli. The price is good until the 10th of January. Unlike adoption programs, when you name a calf it is yours alone. It's an excellent present for a important person in your life: son, daughter, grandchild, parent, or friend. To find out more write to: [info@elephanttrust.org](mailto:info@elephanttrust.org)



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