

## TIGER RIVER TREK

Join me on a Tiger River Trek — the Zoo's special educational tour of Tiger River: Kroc Family Tropical Rain Forest. We begin with a breakfast of products provided by the rain forests of the world as our guide shows slides and explains the precarious position of these fast-vanishing ecosystems. On to the entrance of Tiger River, where we descend and are transported almost instantly into the tropical rain forest.

The temperature on this mild morning drops ten degrees as soon as the mist envelops us. Our guide points out mature Kentia palms and Indian tulipwood trees, among the 5,000 plants of 500 species found in this three-acre exhibit complex. The heavy mist, he explains, filters from 300 nozzles concealed in the foliage. The vapor is so fine that only five gallons of water a day are needed to create this humid atmosphere in San Diego's dry climate.

Winding down the replicated dry riverbed, we see roots and pebbles protruding from the banks. The scent of ginger permeates the air. Then, around the corner, we confront a nine-foot-long false gavia submerged in his favorite corner of a 16,000-gallon pool. This crocodilian is called a false gavia because it only resembles the true gavia, another narrow-nosed fish eater.

Across the way, seven Chinese water dragons rest in the foliage of a temperature-controlled glass enclosure as tropical birds flit among them. Farther down the riverbed, cascading water splashes into a 5,000-gallon pool. Here we spot a pair of the small, web-footed fishing cats — one curled in its den and one moving across the pool on a partially submerged log. The pools and waterfalls in Tiger River appear to be part of one continuous water system. Actually, there are five separate computerized systems, our guide explains, to filter and recirculate the water.

Turning about, we see an ethereal scene. Sunlight hits the mist rising from a tropical marsh. A black-headed ibis is silhouetted on a tree limb. Milky storks pick their way through the reeds. Ducks float serenely on the pond, and smaller birds perch high in the trees. Drawing us back from this beauty to technology, our guide explains that each strand of piano wire through which we view this scene is mounted and tightened separately to maintain equal tension.

Across a small bridge and around the bend, we find a Malayan tapir posing on a knoll with several cattle egrets nearby. The black and white herbivores have a symbiotic relationship with these small white birds that help keep their bodies free of insects. Moving still farther down the slope, we have another view of tapirs. Ignoring the two pools, a mother and her youngster, Spike, rest in a well-worn spot. The adult tapirs, a female aged 24 and a male aged 28, were not expected to breed, so Spike was a welcome surprise.

A graphic panel in this viewing area contains a python's skeleton; only a few feet away in a glass enclosure, two live Burmese pythons blend with dried leaves as they coil together on one of three concealed heat mats. In an adjacent glass-walled enclosure, their natural prey, a small mouse deer, is barely discernible amid the foliage.

Farther along, our group is treated to a view behind the scenes. A sliding gate opens to reveal the operational hub of the Tiger River exhibit complex. On the right are tapir bedrooms, but we move toward the tiger bedrooms on the left. In this area we see the five bedrooms and an adjacent run provided for the tigers' off-exhibit comfort. They have sun and shade, heated floors, fresh air, and platform beds. Through a window in their office, keepers can observe a mother tiger and her cubs in their special maternity room. While Dara, the five-year-old female, and her cubs, Morris and Sekayu, are inside. Bantal, the ten-year-old male, and another female, Usha, are on exhibit. Shower, changing, storage, and food-preparation areas complete the scene behind the scenes.

Moving back to the trail, we find a pair of colorful Indonesian Prevost's squirrels chasing each other about their enclosure. Suddenly, a tiger roars. Across the way, a Sumatran tiger rests in a sandy den. The roar, we discover, was not hers — it came from an interpretive panel along the path. Pushing buttons on the panel, we hear the tiger's roar again, its menacing growl, and a friendly chuff. The final view of this cat, the smallest and among the rarest of the tiger species, is through one-and-a-half-inch-thick laminated glass. Close enough to touch (were it not for the glass), the male lies peacefully staring into the stream that emanates from the cascade at the top of the spacious, hilly enclosure.

Yet another treat awaits in the forest aviary to the left. A clearing in this miniforest provides a dance floor for the male Argus pheasant's breeding display. Searching the greenery, we also identify crested wood partridges, fairy bluebirds, and red-tailed laughing thrushes with the help of exhibit graphics.

Leading us to the end of the Tiger River trail, our guide points out more graphics that explain the value of rain forests. Once destroyed, the rain forest, with its shallow soil and dense canopy, takes hundreds of years to replace. Although our Tiger River Trek has been exciting and fact-filled, it is sad to think that rain forests worldwide are destroyed at a rate of 50 acres every minute, and with them, animals and plants like those we have encountered this morning.

*Douglas G. Myers*

Executive Director

P.S. Reservations for the Tiger River Trek may be made by calling 231-1515, extension 4595 or 4596.



Karl Kenyon



Cora



*It was Cora's demand as a "movie" rhino that provided the impetus to turn the Stanton's collecting station into Bushwhackers, a guest camp on Kenya's beautiful Athi river. The suggestion was made during the 1953 filming of MGM's Mogambo. The next year, on her around-the-world retirement trip, the Zoo's Belle Benchley became the first official guest at Bushwhackers.*

*All photographs taken by Hugh and Jane Stanton unless otherwise credited.*

## ANIMALS IN AND OUT OF AFRICA



*Compiled from the notes, diaries, manuscripts, and letters of Jane Stanton, partner and wife of Hugh Stanton, an early-day trapper in Africa.*

*Edalee Harwell*

**A** friend who was helping us set a trap," wrote Jane Stanton, "went into a Nairobi shop for a reel of No. 10 cotton thread. When given white thread she said 'Oh no, it must be black. It's for catching a rhino.'

"Even with black thread, catching a rhino is no easy matter," Jane continued. "After living with them for a good many years I can tell you that the rhinoceros may be short-sighted and blundering, but he is no fool. It took almost two years for my husband to figure out a safe way to catch them, but he was determined to

prove that the usual method of killing a mother and capturing her calf by force was not necessary."

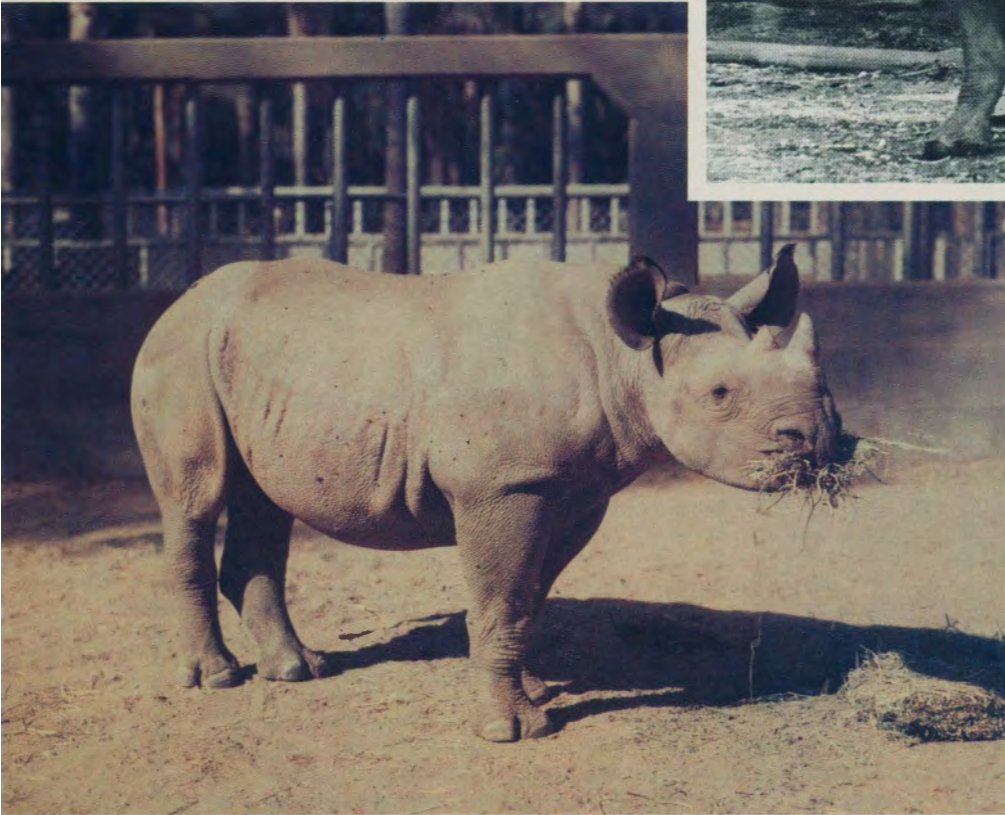
Hugh Stanton was born and raised in Africa and grew up fascinated by the animals. As a boy he once got a job bringing in any birds, reptiles, and small mammals he could catch. Eventually he was so successful that his employer paid him *not* to bring in more. That employer was Teddy Roosevelt, the animal lover and champion of wildlife who became president of the United States.

Hugh was to meet many other famous people during the years he spent conducting safaris as a white hunter. His name is included among the credits for the movie *Trader Horn*, one of the first films ever shot on location in Africa. Made in 1929, it became a classic which, after almost 60 years, still appears occasionally on late, late shows. Twenty-six years after it was released it gained attention of another sort when it was banned in Uganda, on what grounds it is hard to say.

**Right:** Cora's daughter, Sally, while still at Bushwhackers, where she was born. After she arrived in San Diego, in 1952, this pose of Sally, below, was used for a postcard. The Stanton's received one of these postcards in 1953, bearing the message:

Sally is doing fine and has grown nearly a foot in height this year. Still very tame and friendly. We are crazy about her and hoping for a mate sometime.

B. Benchley



San Diego Zoo



he gave up hunting. The rest of Hugh's life in partnership with Jane was spent humanely trapping animals and studying them in the wild to find ways to help them adapt to captivity.

In 1928, Jane had been invited on a trip to Africa as traveling companion to a friend. At the last minute the friend decided to get married and stay in England, so Jane used the money from a timely inheritance and made the trip alone. Her enthusiasm for Africa and her skill with a pen soon had all of her English nieces, nephews, and neighbor children saving their pennies to go to Africa. A job in the Nairobi office of the Kenya Railway enabled Jane to stay on for awhile. When Hugh came on the scene the stay became permanent. The Stantons were married on June 28, 1930. The formal wedding took place at the Highlands Cathedral in Nairobi.

As animal trappers, Hugh and Jane became part of a growing export trade in Kenya. Zebras, giraffes, monkeys, elephants, the various kinds of antelope, big cats, wild dogs and pigs, the many reptiles and birds unique to Africa — all found welcome homes in zoos and animal collections throughout the world. But the rhino challenge continued.

"Hugh designed traps set in the earth, traps that came down from the sky, and all manner of triggered traps. He considered a bag to slip over the animal's head with a pouch of chloroform which would burst, or an outsized hypodermic needle filled with a sleep-inducing drug which could be poised to spear the rhino as he passed by. In the process, he caught quite a herd of buffalo, half a dozen of the shy and seldom-seen forest eland, and no less than three of that reputedly most sagacious animal — the elephant. But at least six rhinos at one time or another came up to the trap trip, a piece of that black No. 10 cotton thread placed across a rhino track, and upon reach-

*Born and raised in Africa, Hugh Stanton spent his entire life among the animals for which he had such affinity.*



Five white hunters were hired to run the enormous camp and to protect the film crews and actors. One scene required that all five stand by with guns ready while the starving hero and heroine drove a pride of lions from their kill. Though actors and film crew knew the kill had been provided, the lions didn't know that it was all make believe for the cameras, and there were no stuntmen or expendable extras to fill in for the stars. The finished product was proof that all went well.

In another incident it was given to Hugh, as the junior white hunter, to jump from the moving train some five miles along on the trip to the filming location in Jinja, Uganda, and make his way back to Nairobi to retrieve the mountain of personal luggage which somehow had been left behind on the station platform.

Safari life in those days was full of hardship and real danger, but to Hugh it was all part of the game. He began to dislike the endless killing, though, and when he met and married Jane, a city girl raised in England,

A family photo shows Hugh Stanton's mother on safari in 1907.



ing it they turned and went back the way they had come. How did they spot it? Even we managed, more than once, to walk into the wretched thing and shut the door on ourselves. We began to appreciate the intelligence that lies in the enormous thick heads of these two-ton beasts and to wonder if we had any chance of tricking them."

In the end it was not Robinson Crusoe-type improvising or Rube Goldberg contraptions that resulted in their first rhino capture. It was food. The No. 10 cotton thread was woven through the strands of a succulent creeper, a plant that a rhino cannot resist. He finally came, bit through it, and the trap slammed shut.

"When the door shut behind him, he showed that his intelligence had not deserted him even then. He snorted, he screamed, he drummed his feet, and charged the stout rails, but he never hit them. For a few days he kept up this attempted terrorism, but finding that no one took very much notice he appeared to reconsider the matter and finally called a truce. At the end of only two weeks this large, dangerous animal, which normally travels alone even from its own kind, was taking tidbits from our hands and having his nose stroked."

Like every Stanton export, the rhino, Kamata, was given all the time and training necessary to help him adjust to his new life in captivity. This practice kept Jane and Hugh from becoming wealthy animal trappers but was much appreciated by the animals' new owners.

"Food, not unnaturally, was the operative word when it came to training. The rhino soon learned that a traveling crate was a dining room, and he showed no fear during his short daily rides in it. The crate was pulled by a dozen men, while a truck was driven alongside to accustom the animal to engine noise; he also had lessons with chickens, creaky wheelbarrows, lowing cattle, distant trains, radio music — all sounds he might have to get used to.

"Just six months after capture we took Kamata on a 200-mile truck journey from our trapping camp in

*Cora had a penchant for tilting at tea tables, so a motion picture company hired her to tilt at tents for an African adventure film. Soon, the Stanton occupation changed from animal trappers to guest camp proprietors. Sometime later, Jane Stanton recollected, "All we feel is gratitude to Cora for pushing us into the life we live at Bushwhackers."*



Kenneth W. Scott, Jr.

*Another rhino, Matilda, shown here soon after capture, attests to the Stanton talent for habituating wildlife.*



**Below:** Giraffes in training at the Stanton camp in preparation for the rigors of transport. Climbing ramps into boxcars and lowering their heads upon request are not behaviors that come naturally to giraffes or, indeed, to other wild animals. Stanton animals, however, were well prepared ahead of time. The San Diego Zoo's first reticulated giraffe, Daisy Mae (right), was received in 1940 from the Stantons.



Nairobi, and a fortnight later he sailed for South America. During the stay in Nairobi a good many visitors came to see him, and he quickly learned to come to the bars of his paddock and make little pitiful noises that usually earned him that last carrot or lump of sugar which had been intended for the less diplomatic elephant in the next pen."

Another Stanton-captured black rhino, Sally (who died in 1985 after 33 years at the San Diego Zoo), was an example of such conditioning. To the end of her days she greeted her special human friends by rummaging around her paddock for small pebbles which she picked up in her mouth and arranged along the top of her paddock wall. What she meant by the procedure is unclear, but it earned her a lot of attention.

Jane admits that the animals they captured were not always reasonable. She remembers, for example, an en-

try in their hippo book: *Adult bull — unnamed — escaped.* "And I would like to have added *May he never come back!* He endangered several lives, including mine. Once he had regained the safety of the river he spent the rest of the day there, hurling insults at us at intervals. That night he finally moved off and was seen no more. Wardens in Africa will tell you that they report more deaths as a result of hippo attack than attack by any other animal. Leopard, buffalo, elephant, or rhino may attack more often, but if a hippo does attack, chances are you've had it . . . Really I think that to be bitten in half, as a hippo has been known to do, must be more unpleasant than, say, having your neck broken by a lion, although perhaps not so bad as being knelt on by an elephant."

This reputation may have been one reason why few hippos had been exported from Kenya before the

Stantons went into business. They developed a successful method by offering the new captives plenty of food, delivered by an endless pulley contraption so that animals had isolation for the first few days of adjustment. They were also provided a private bathing pool for soaking — a must for hippos.

"So now we are anxious to know of anyone who can beat our record of capturing 34 hippos of all sizes in two years. Many of them were wonderful characters, and there is no doubt that in spite of ferocity when aroused, hippos are lazy, contented animals who take to captivity extremely well."

With no precedents to follow much of the time, the Stantons had to rely on capture methods of trial and error, and there were inevitably mistakes and tragedies. Once, a herd of gentle-eyed giraffes (which can swing their heads like wrecking balls

Jane at tea with Alphonse and Lala, part of the Stanton menagerie.



**Below:** When, in 1928, Jane Riches made a vacation trip to Africa, she could not have foreseen her destiny. Two years later she was married to Hugh Stanton, and, as a trapper's wife, spent much of her time in the bush. Here she is shown with a pet serval named Pippin.

and can kick out in all directions with deadly swiftness, seemingly with all four legs at once) was captured by running the entire herd into a giant boma. This seemed more humane than the usual method of roping a youngster from a speeding, stripped-down chase car, then choking it into submission. The mistake was in then releasing all of the larger animals. In the morning several of the captured youngsters were dead. With no adult giraffes to deter them, lions had entered the boma and eaten their fill.

In those days before air transport, tranquilizers, and good roads, the capture of wild animals was often the easiest part. The real headaches came with the traveling. Giraffes could be walked to a railway, but there they had to be persuaded to climb a ramp into a boxcar, and to lower their heads as needed, to avoid decapitation from low limbs and bridges.

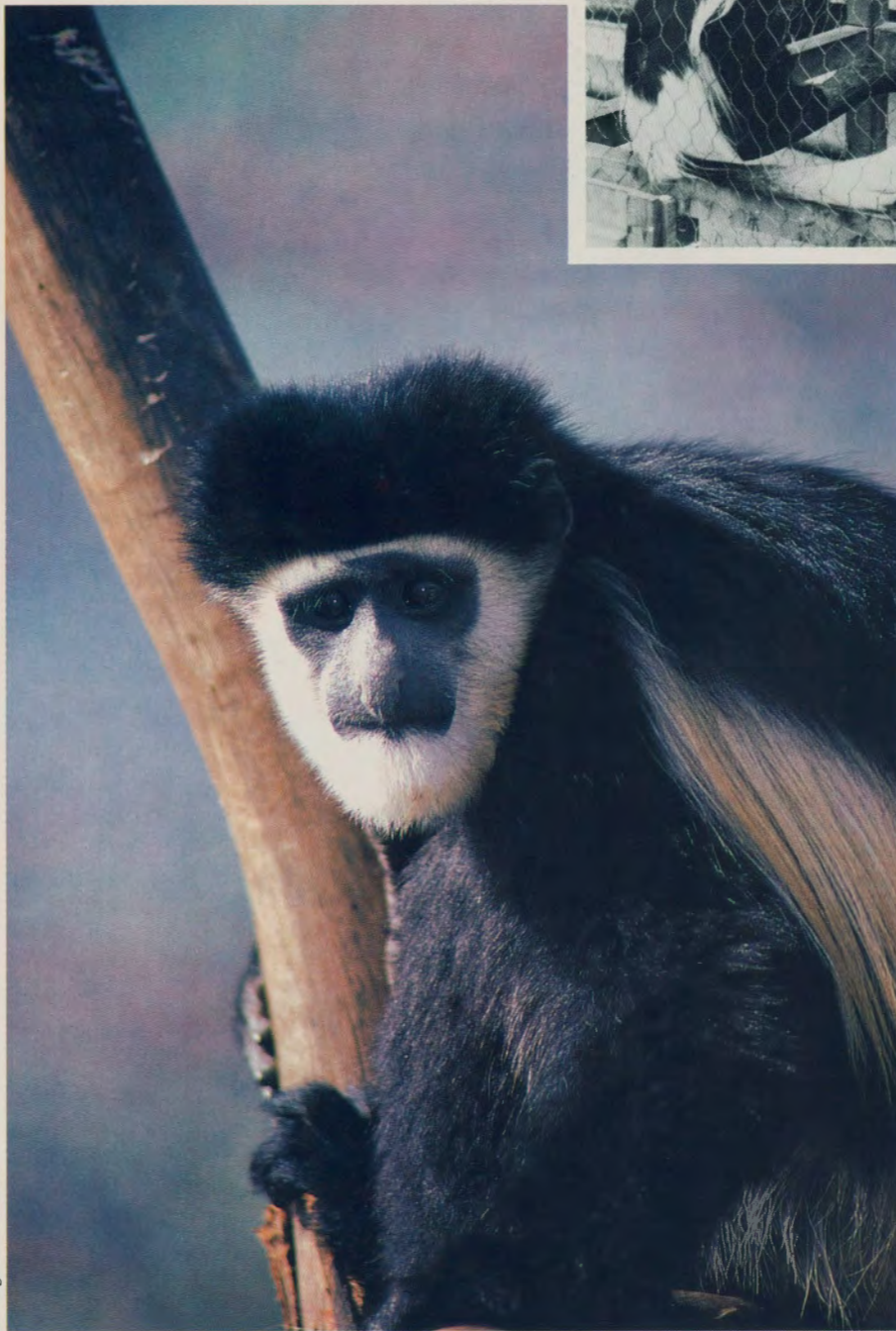
Crates, lashed to the deck of a ship, would go adrift during a storm so that rhinos had to be recaptured under decidedly adverse conditions. Cotton thread has its limitations. Cats — big, wild cats — have been known to escape, taking refuge among piles of cargo in the hold of the ship. Heart-in-mouth measures are then required to entice them back into their cages.

Food had to be found in every port — food of suitable quality and quantity, and of a variety that sometimes stretched the ingenuity, to say nothing of the pocketbook. Cages had to be cleaned twice daily. Passengers and crew members had to be dissuaded from playing with the "cute little animals."

Arriving at a destination, it was sometimes found that customs men would refuse to acknowledge the permits. Plans for transshipment came apart. At other times, people



*It fell to Jane to accompany many of the animals to their final destination. Here she is shown with colobus monkeys on arrival in New York. Kikuyu colobus monkeys received from the Stantons established longevity records at the San Diego Zoo and bred prolifically.*



San Diego Zoo: R. Garrison

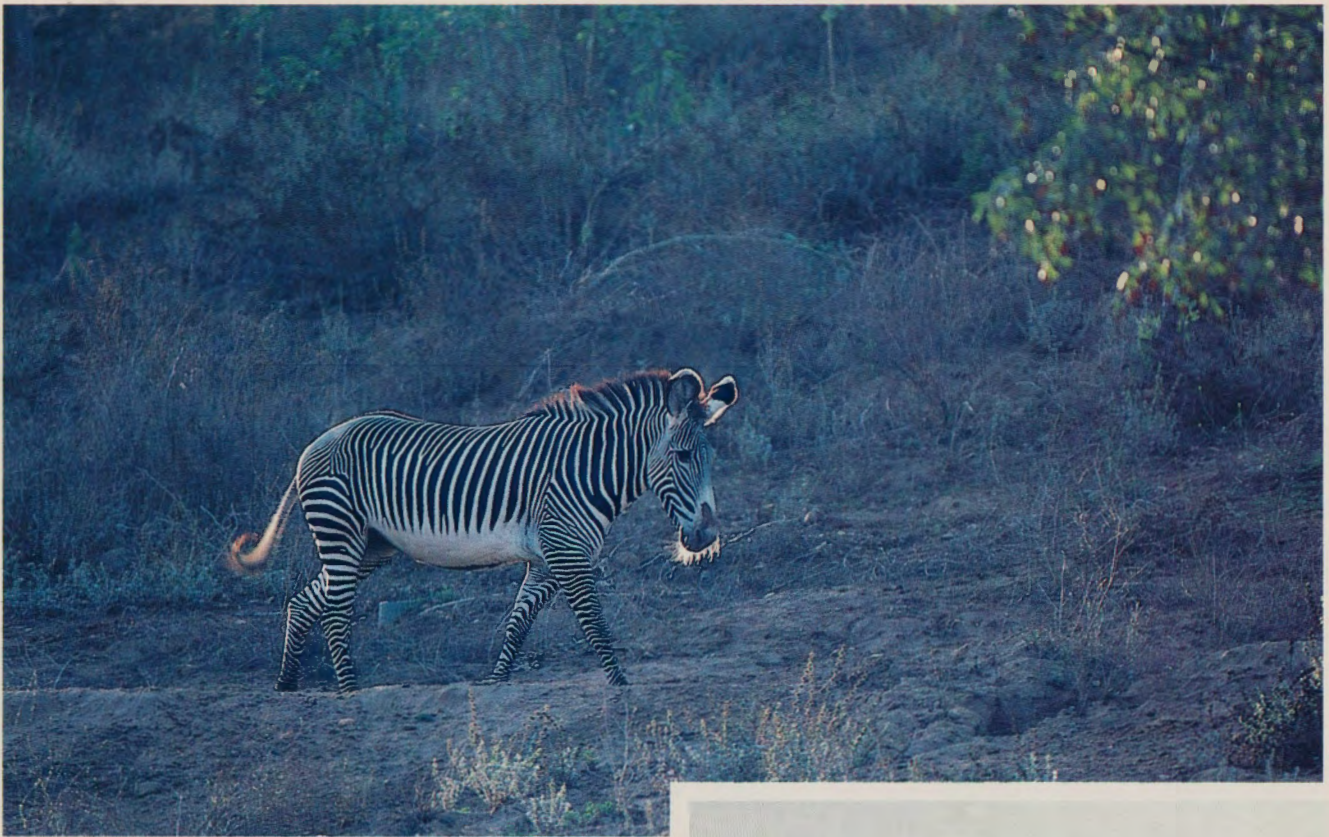
who had promised to be on hand to receive their animals failed to show up.

As a trapper's wife, all of this came under the heading "routine" for Jane who, with Hugh, usually accompanied the animals to their destinations. In fact, this kind of duty often fell to her lot entirely when, at the last minute before sailing, Hugh would receive a huge new order, making it necessary for him to stay home and proceed with the trapping.

Seeing the world is fine, but such cruise conditions tended to be less than ideal, and Jane must have been somewhat relieved when a rhinoceros changed their lives.

The rhino was Sally's mother, Cora, and she was captured at the Stanton's favorite camp, which lay in a bend of the Athi River southeast of Nairobi. Poacher's Hill, looming just across the river, marked a boundary of Tsavo National Park, and animals roamed everywhere.

Cora, a clown pretending to be a very fierce rhino, soon became part of the family. She loved to charge things and demolish them — things like tea tables, which the Stanton's delighted in providing once they caught on to Cora's true nature. People began coming to watch, and to take pictures. Cora hid in the bushes of her boma until all was set, then came trotting out with tail high, spotted the table, and charged. When the table was thoroughly "killed" she would race



San Diego Zoo: R. Garrison

off triumphantly, often with an upside-down chair on her head and the tablecloth fluttering about her shoulders.

Her fame spread, and MGM sent a film company from the United States to make a movie called *Mogambo*, with a scene for Cora. It was hard work for everybody, trying to make all the "city folks from across the sea" comfortable under camp conditions. But Jane felt totally rewarded when the film crew, having earned a rest in Nairobi, unanimously said they would rather have spent their break right there in camp. As a result, new bandas were ultimately built, a large open-air veranda became a dining hall, and the natural swimming pool which swirled in from the river was improved to hold its water level and to discourage competition from crocodiles.

The simple capture camp became Bushwhackers. It was soon in demand as a haven for vacationers from Nairobi, and scientists from all over the world came to stay there while they studied the wildlife. Ken Stott, Jr., now retired from the San Diego Zoo, for which he was its first general curator, began spending part of every year there, which set a trend for other zoo people.

Unforgettable were early mornings at Bushwhackers, usually spent on a banda porch, straining to catch a first glimpse of the animals coming down the hill across the river to drink. Al-

ways there were waterbuck, with maybe an elephant, or a crowned crane that suddenly flew overhead. Breakfast papaya came from trees just outside the open-air dining hall and could be shared with exotic-looking birds arriving at the feeding tray.

Company meals provided by Jane might include an English roast complete with Yorkshire pudding, vegetables from the kitchen garden, and a "pud" for dessert. In the evenings, Jane knew when it was time for the bushbabies to arrive and passed out the bananas. These tiny nocturnal primates usually came on schedule and were not fussy about who held their bits of banana for them. They couldn't be seen in the dark, but when they started to eat, one often could feel a tiny hand grasping a thumb to hold the fruit steady.

Hugh would take visitors on game-viewing runs in the Bushwhackers van. With the patience that made him so good with animals, he would position the viewers, then wait with a straight face until they saw — "Oh look, hyrax!" "Why so they are," and he would grin with shared pleasure at their delight of discovery. His sense of humor included loud recordings of lions roaring just outside banda windows, but the "rhino trees" (for hiding behind) that were left at intervals on the wide, cleared paths around camp were for real.

These were maintained even as



Karl Kenyon

rhinos and all other large animals gradually became scarce and finally disappeared. The brave Cora herself became the victim of a poacher's greed. She was found dead in her boma with only a stump where her horn had been hacked off to supply some superstitious person with an aphrodisiac or with a horn cup that was supposed to protect him from poison.

Hugh is gone now, too, and Jane has had to give up Bushwhackers and move to Nairobi. But like another famous Jane from England, who met her Tarzan, and like America's Osa Johnson, who "married adventure," Jane Stanton went to see Africa, and stayed to love it. **ZNZ**

*In autumn of 1963, Margaret and Charles Schroeder, director emeritus of the Zoo, joined several friends and naturalists, including Ken Stott, Jack Selsor, Karl Kenyon, and Dale Rice, for a Bushwhackers safari with Hugh and Jane Stanton.*