Popkin, John Michael

- Born 05 May 1920¹; died 05 January 2006²
- Won a Choral Exhibition³ to St Catharine’s College (Cambridge University) from St Edmund’s School, Canterbury, and read Modern Languages.⁴
- Served in the Royal Artillery in East Africa⁵ during the war.
- Returned to St Catharine’s in 1945 to read Anthropology, followed by a Diploma in Education at the London Institute⁶.
- 1946: Overseas Civil Service in Kenya.⁷
  Taught the Music in Schools class for the primary teacher refresher course at Kagumo TTC.⁸
- March 1949: Left Kapsabet after just two months.¹⁰
- June 1950: Assistant Principal (under C.W. Jackman), Kapsabet GAS.
  ...In June 1950, Mr. J. M. Popkin ... began the publication of a vernacular news-sheet “Logoiywew”, which simply means “news”. It was intended as a means of preserving and extending Nandi literacy, and of fostering an interest among Nandi in the development of their own district. It was, at first, a free monthly news-sheet printed on the school Gestetner machine, with a limited circulation which rose under Mr. Popkin’s perseverance and good editorship from about one hundred to nearly three hundred, as it began to be appreciated by the Nandi...¹¹
- September 1950: Resumes as Principal of Kapsabet GAS.¹²
  Enters students in music competitions in Kampala Uganda, including a tour of King’s College Budo (central Uganda).¹³
  Transitioned the school into a Secondary school.¹⁴
  Adopted the new school motto: riib kechirekyuk (feed my sheep; John 21:16). This motto lay below a shield with two heraldic lions facing each other. This was worn as a badge on student uniforms.¹⁵
- 27 August 1952: married Barbara Helen Brown, St Cuthbert’s Church, Nyeri.¹⁶
- 1952: Kapsabet formally elevated into a Secondary School.¹⁷
  Popkin expanded school population to over two hundred.¹⁸
- March 1956: Took long leave in England.¹⁹
  Also authored Geography, History, Civics: Lessons for Standard Four.
- August 1964: Retired to England.²²
- 1964-1979: Principal Lecturer at Oxford Polytechnic until his retirement.²³
- Secretary of the Oxford Organists’ Association for 20 years and was an indexer for the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS).²⁴
- The Oxford Music Festival awards the Michael Popkin Memorial Award (just £60!), for organ players under the age of 25.²⁵
3. Choral Exhibition: a bursary awarded to a talented student singer who passes a singing trial, to encourage membership in the school choir. Usually it is comprised of a small cash award and a stipend to subsidize the cost of singing lessons and living expenses. Example: Cambridge University Choral Awards.
5. Perhaps not a coincidence he returned there to teach.
9. A Brief History of the Kapsabet Boys High School; Godfrey K. Sang, and Julius K. Barno; Page 13; The Alumni-KHS at 90 Edition (issuu.com); Published on Aug 27, 2015; This captures the History of Kapsabet Boys High School through its 90 year journey.
10. Ibid.
13. A Brief History of the Kapsabet Boys High School.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
17. A Brief History of the Kapsabet Boys High School.
18. Ibid.
20. Worldcat.org search, Book cover.
22. Ibid page 139, and St Catharine’s College Society Magazine 2006.
24. Ibid.