



2018

RWENJERU COMMUNITY CAMPSITE

Rwenjeru is a name believed from the word “**Enjeru**” meaning the white secret cow, goat, sheep and hen mostly used by freeing kings in 1400AD. It was used to cleanse bad evil spirits as they ran off wars and bad omen

The community runs an Eco-friendly campsite which offers self-camping in a spacious and lovely setting. The natural camp site also has 3 rooms in a furnished country house. There is also an option of hiring you a tent in case your desire is to have a night in a well suited tent. The meals served at the camp site are organically produced fresh from the gardens.

There is more to do other than camping, at this beautiful place perched on top of a hill. The land is owned by a retired teacher born in 1910 now over one hundred years of age, and has amazing stories to share. He has planted medicinal plants he gathered all over Uganda, food and fruit, medicinal chlorophyll juices for health are on offer. This project also offers, guided hill walks, goat roasts at the campfire, bike rentals for village cycling, traditional cattle watering experience (okweshera) this is where you find a traditional herdsman dressed in the Bachwezi attire. He welcomes you with a smile and a POW lets go mining, you are given equipment to turn you into herdsman and women, then you are ready to go and participate in the exercise.

On your way down to the dam you dig an ant hill soil, to smear the traditional clay made trough the purpose of the soil, to enrich and flavor the water. The soil contains mineral salts dug deep from the ground, by the ants and appetites the Bachwezi long horned cattle that lived in 1500AD, the only species in the world. After filling the trough using a traditional wooden bucket (Eicuba), the herdsman sounds a signal to call animals. After the fire is made to produce smoke that scares off biting while, animals are resting after drinking taste mineral water.

Others are; bird watching on about 43 bird species, Local beer brewing and tasting, BBQ fish roasting at Rubare fishing village on Lake Mburo, most of the food is grown on the site, and you can choose to participate in the cooking, or just put in your order. Self-camping, camping in one of our tents or staying in our country home or our traditional Banda's are all options.



2018

Founders-background:

Who is Mzee E .Begumisa

Mzee Eriya Begumisa was born in Rweikiniro Sub County, in Rwampala County then Ankole District in the year 1910.

His mother was Butirigiri & father was Babigumira. The family shifted from Rwikiniro to Ntungamo Sub County where he grew up.

In the year 1926, he escaped from his home & went to another village called Karagwe in search of school, because that is where there was a church & teaching, writing and reading were available. He was baptized on 1st JAN 1928 by Rev. Yoeri Zzake. He was confirmed in the Christian church in April 1929 by Rt. Rev. Wills then Bishop of Uganda. He studied in Elementary Vernacular School (EVS) in 1930. He then went to a tertiary college where he qualified in the year 1934; he started a school Bugamba, which is now known as Bugamba Senior Secondary School in Rwampala County. In 1966, he retired from teaching and joined politics. In 1969, he retired from active politics and migrated from Bugamba to Rwenjeru on 16th April 1970.

The Birth of his Community Camp site Vision.

In 1969, Mzee Begumisa retired from active politics and migrated to Rwenjeru. Initially this community was part of Lake Mburo Natural Park but was later encroached on by the traditional pastoralists who settled in the surrounding communities. As Mzee Begumisa started to settle in his new acquired home, he realized that the future of wildlife in this game park was at a big risk of extinction due to the constant hunting of animals that was carried out by the people who used to kill the animals for meat and other traditional purposes. He later developed a big Vision of conserving nature, wildlife and environment after realizing the effects of poaching and environmental degradation. He started by reserving his 21 hectares of land to be transformed into a community camp site where conservation programs could be conducted in the future.

In 1995 together with his beloved wife late Kangyeya Agnes born 1913, he fulfilled his dream and started Rwenjeru Community Campsite (RCC) which was later



2018

registered in 2005. It was unfortunate he lost his beloved one in July 2016 with whom they had lived together in marriage for 79 years and they had started the campsite. Before the demise of his wife the president of Republic of Uganda hosted the Ugandan long lived couple in marriage, in April-May 2015 for having been faithful to each other for 79 years till death did them part.

Due to the slow progress and publicity of the camp site, the number of guests, volunteers and travelers visiting this beautiful community has been very low until 2016 when family heads of Rwenjeru community established a collaboration with Great Trekkers Safaris a community based travel agency which is now supporting the camp site through promotion of sustainable and fair tourism projects within the communities of Rwenjeru.

About us

Rwenjeru campsite is a 5 hour drive from Entebbe international Airport and its located along the Kampala – Mbarara along the highway through Lake Mburo Corridors proceeding to Queen Elizabeth - Bwindi – Mugahinga national parks.

In partnership with Great Trekkers Safaris, it is easy to locate Rwenjeru community close to nature camping site. It is 4-5 hrs drive 270kms away from Entebbe-Kampala-Mbarara highway turn on the left at Kihangire in Bihar we Trading centre, 3km along Katengyeto road towards the Lake Mburo Katengyeto entrance gate. It is in the Rwenjeru community, adjacent to the west of Lake Mburo Protected Area in Rwenjeru parish, Biharwe division, Mbarara Municipality, Uganda. The main aim of our collaboration between Rwenjeru community campsite and Great Trekkers Safaris is to promote sustainable and fair tourism by ensuring that all benefits of tourism remain in the community for effective sustainable growth and development.

The campsite offers one of the most well suited camp ground adjacent to Lake Mburo National Park, has a country home guesthouse with three self contained basic rooms for those who wish to stay inside. The activities at the campsite are based on traditional Ankole culture, inherited from Bacweezi around 1520 AD. Bird melodies will wake you up early in the morning viewing sunrise having viewed astronomers cross a natural compass with cardinal points North, South, East, West, last night campus. Rwenjeru hill is named after the white traditional cow of the Bachwezi, “enjeru” meaning white in Runyankole language. This white cow was treasured for special milk used on traditional duties in the families. Your visit to



2018

Rwenjeru hill will expose you to the traditional culture that rotates around the Banyankole long horned cattle inherited from the Bachwezi of in 1520 AD. Rwenjeru village is on great location in fertile farmland that is next to the park on the grazing land made up of gentle hills with the valleys for farming and drinking places for their treasured long horned cattle.

For the cow watering “Okweshera” in the local language means giving water to the animals, a routine done several times a day of the cattle keeper. Follow your guide, dressed in the true Bachwezi grazing attire carrying the walking stick, “Enkoni ” and wooden bucket, “Eicuba” in the local language, with hoe and other tools for mining the anthill soil that has the salts for mixing in the animal drinking water. You will proceed to the water place and participate in the construction or maintenance of the existing clay trough that is used to serve the water to the animals. You will participate in the setting of the side fire by the drinking place, fill the trough with water until you will hear one of the herdsmen call the animals to come and drink. It is a very rich experience. Everything on this trip has a purpose for the culture the cattle keepers and the welfare or safety of the well treasured animals as you will hear from your guide.

Besides, Rwenjeru camp site has a camping ground, organic gardens, a beekeeping project, bike hire, women tailoring projects and a youth carpentry project. The village is strategically located on the road heading to Katengyeto gate of Lake Mbuho national park. Also, it is located opposite Igongo cultural museum for a perfect lunch and museum tour after the cow watering experience.

Other Tour Products (Activities)

- Camping
- Hill hiking
- Bird watching
- Village bicycle cycling
- Beer brewing and tasting
- Fish roasting at Lake Mbuho Rubaare Fishing Community
- Traditional Dancing/ Campfire/Story telling



The Great Trekkers Safaris

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The Great Trekkers Safaris is a fully registered tour company under Reg. No 220298. We are most focused on Community and Domestic Tourism Promotion. Like our Mission, we are very passionate at discovering, identifying and promoting special attractions, unknown destinations and other sites within the Pearl of Africa Uganda for sustainable development that benefits the community.

Great Trekkers Safaris is a community – conscious tour company that operates in East Africa. With offices in Mbarara, Uganda, we offer tour excursions, safari packages and a variety of other activities to give both local and foreign tourists an adventurous, enjoyable and a fulfilling real life time experience while touring the pearl of Africa. Although we are a private company, we partner with numerous communities striving for community tourism development, community empowerment and transformation across Uganda and East Africa at large



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