

Nyali Beach Hotel was Mombasa's first beach hotel on the mainland and had the pick of location. Founded by John and Eva Noon it opened in December 1946. It soon gained a reputation for first class hospitality and excellence which endures to this day. Set amid 20 acres of flamboyant tropical gardens, the hotel has been extensively refurbished and modernized while still retaining its period charm. Your first impression is of cool, whitewashed walls and tiled floors. There are ceiling fans, potted palms, stately marble and wicker furniture. The atmosphere is laid back and comfortable and the ambiance very Casablanca.



Frank Rodwell
Asst. F.O. M



BLOCK HOTELS
KENYA

NYALI BEACH HOTEL THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

by
Jan Hemming

With the help of
EDWARD RODWELL,
MOLLIE NOON
AND
NONA COLPOYS

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Front entrance.

EARLY DAYS
DECEMBER 1946



All rooms facing the sea.



The garden pergola.

Eva Noon's Nyali Beach Hotel opened in December 1946. One of the first thirty visitors to register there was Gabriel Bahari, then of VARIG Brazilian Airlines. Still in Kenya he recalls that full board cost about £20 (KShs 400/-) per month.

Nor was her first Salisbury Hotel the first hotel in the country to be burned down. Mayence Bent's first Stanley Hotel was burnt down in the Great Fire of Victoria Street in 1904. Both the wood-and-iron first Salisbury Hotel, and the wood-and-iron first Stanley Hotel made way for structures built more permanently of stone. And of course the introduction of East Africa's first swimming pool at the Salisbury Hotel was an added fire-fighting installation in a township always short of water.

"I remember seeing Harry Noon standing by the foundation excavations of Nyali Beach Hotel, alone, his hands in his pockets, looking out to sea," says Edward Rodwell, himself later a director of Nyali Ltd. "He never saw the hotel finished. He died before it opened." But although Harry Noon didn't live to see the day, the future was not only assured for the Noon's hotel project, but for the whole area of Nyali.

The building period was one of continuous acute anxiety for Harry Noon and was, in the end, the death of him. In the first instance, the architect, Mr Rand Overly, lost all the hotel plans on the train between Nairobi and Mombasa and had to return and re-draw them. Then, due to ill-health, he was forced to retire from the project and hand over to the Mombasa architect Mr

Noon proceeded to develop her first boarding house into a place of comfort, and never faltered until she had established a fine hotel situated in a beautiful garden, where her hospitality became famous. At the same time she built a lovely house, where she lived with her family. In the 'thirties she acquired land at Karen and built the hotel and gardens of what became Westwood Park Hotel.

"When the Salisbury Hotel was sold, she bought land on the sea-shore at Nyali and built what is still one of Kenya's most beautiful hotels. Her love of gardening is displayed there and in several other charming houses she had built in the environs of Nairobi.

"Her passing at the age of 78 is deeply regretted by a wide circle of friends and relations. She leaves three children, a son and two daughters, and six grandchildren.

"Nothing but the best was good enough for Eva Noon, and her great success can be attributed to her high ideals and personal charm.

JRG."

The wording at the opening of the third paragraph was unfortunate but the writer's real intentions were clear to all but the least intelligent and the fact remains that the death of Eva Noon was a loss to the whole country. She had an indomitable spirit. As a result of it, whole fields were opened up for the

hoteliers and investors who came after her. Through people like Eva Noon, Mayence Bent (of the New Stanley) and Major Ringer (of the Norfolk) rough ground had been made smooth and profitable by these, the country's early hotel pioneers.

The Board of Directors of Nyali Beach Hotel Ltd., of which, until her death, Eva Noon had been chairman, consisted of her son Alec, her daughter Nona Colpoys, her sister's son Eric Jessop, and Hugh Greenwood of Nyali Ltd. As a director of Nyali Beach Hotel Ltd., Nona Colpoys was elected chairman on her mother's death.

Nona and her husband Vernon Colpoys were farming on the Kingangop in 1959 but, after her mother's death, Nona found that her visits to Nyali took longer and longer while she continued to 'live' at the farm some 640 kilometres (400 miles) away. In the end, when she was spending longer at Nyali each month than she was at the farm, the Colpoys decided that the time had come to move. They sold the farm and returned to Mombasa permanently. Everything was made easier for all concerned when she appointed Dieter Kuypers as manager, who remained with the hotel until 1972.

Into the business too came Nona and Vernon's daughter Elizabeth, who qualified at the Hotel School at Lausanne and married a hotelier. Elizabeth Nicholas and her husband still live and work in Kenya.



ONE OF THE COTTAGES, NYALI BEACH HOTEL, MOMBASA.



VIEW FROM THE TERRACE, NYALI BEACH HOTEL, MOMBASA.



NYALI BEACH HOTEL

AND LIDO

R.E.A.A. Recommended Hotel

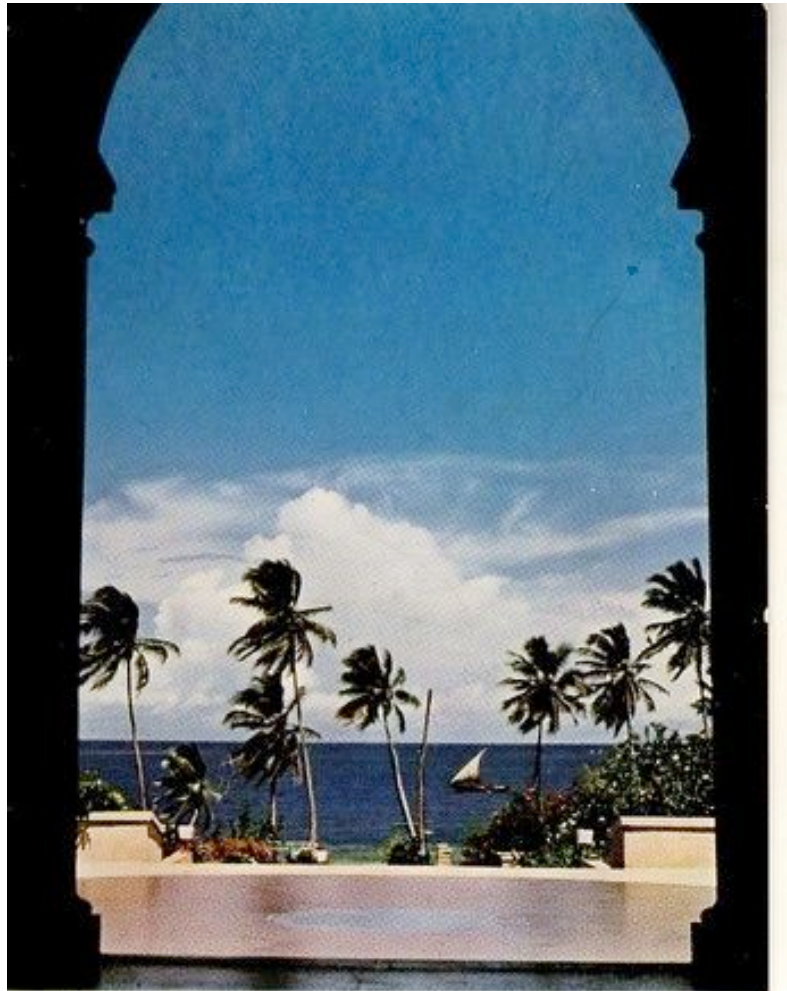
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*Nyali Beach Hotel
View showing the gardens*







