

News from Bwasa and Milne Bay

Please forgive my long overdue report on how things are working out here in Milne Bay.

Our report begins with my trip to England for my mother's 90th birthday. Colleen came with me on the flight to England, my parents graciously bought the tickets and we flew in September. Colly was a great help with all the work we had to do with regard to the purchases for Kwato and Bwasa.

Our journey began with a visit to my great friends and supporters the Manoka family. We called in on the family home at Barakau Village near Port Moresby before flying to Cairns and then on to Maroochydore which is about 80 miles North of Brisbane. Here I was able to touch base with Howard who was cheerfully ensconced with Elise' lovely family pending the wedding and of course a place to practice his trade, plumbing. The Australian government will not allow you to practice your trade if you come from overseas unless you first work for a plumbing company in Australia for a year, plus; it is a procedural position designed to ensure trade familiarity with the Aus way of plumbing. Anyway with a near recession in Aus the building trade has gone flat and Howard cannot find a place, although he has plenty of opportunity to work.



This was Colleen's first time to leave PNG and she was taking it all in with surprisingly little culture shock. We arrived at Heathrow and bussed to Gatwick where my brother collected us. The re-union was good and mum the centre of attention which one might expect. The BBC came to give an interview over her



wartime activities in the Dutch resistance at Arnhem. We had been due to drive my parents (M&D) to Spain but the EU had moved the goalposts on the Schengen visa with makes it virtually impossible for PNG's to get into Europe. They must now get a visa from within their own country or the nearest (in our case Spanish Embassy) and as Spain does not have an embassy in PNG getting a Schengen would necessitate a flight to Canberra 1500 miles away. As all the Schengen countries to grant visas now from the UK she was effectively banned from the EU. As it turned out it was a blessing in disguise because after M&D left at the end of October we had a lot to do in organising our container and getting everything stowed in it.

With Cameron and Abi our faithful Home Office in Oban

Thank you for your help!

God has certainly favoured us in all the help we received primarily from three organisations and more so from my friend **Chris Abel** of Masurina Lodge, who has faithfully stood by me in friendship, advice and hospitality often in the face of criticism.

The other organisations are
Computers of Charities,
Tools for Self-Reliance,
and of course **AusAID ECF.**

I had to depend on an inheritance from my uncle to buy the power tools and pay for the container and as this inheritance was rather less than I expected I needed to be prudent until refunding came from AusAID. Despite this I was able to get all the power tools and machinery organised. A Christian company in Suffolk called Hamiltons supplied us with good medium-duty machinery and B&Q did likewise with the equipment they supplied us with. I then got in touch with an old friend Simon Rooksby from Computers for Charities, and discovered that he had expanded wonderfully and was highly organised in a unit on the outside of Hailsham. The main focus of there operation is Africa and Eastern Europe but they were very happy to help us.

Simon gave us six computers, a lot of medical equipment, clothing and Christmas boxes, plus some tools and a couple of Singer sewing machines.

We were also thrilled by a similar response from Tools for Self Reliance who at very short notice supplied us with a number of hand tools which I have split between Kwato and us at Bwasa. I am hopeful of making fresh contact with them for our two workshops in which we will be building two English sailing workboats; 44' Scilly Isles pilot cutters to enable villagers to trade with Australia.



Colly with Simon at Computers for Charities

We are all so delighted with the generosity of the people who donated the tools. Here in Milne Bay hand tools appear to be made of 'unobtainium'. Maybe we now have an opportunity of setting up an apprentice scheme in which apprentices will receive their own tools for productive participation in the boatbuilding. This will be a great boost for us.



Jessie Ben Moide starting out on a CFC desktop

The first couple of months were mostly taken up in AusAID admin at the Masurina office. AusAID are our main benefactors for whom we thank God. The grant was made on a competitive basis in that our proposition had to be demonstrated to be both practical and achievable against other bidders proposals. I was asked to present our plan over a three year period revealing where we needed the money and what we were aiming to achieve with it. The grant is a matching grant in that we had to find a little over a half of it ourselves. Thankfully they evaluated our individual purchases and the efforts of others here as 'in kind' contributions.

However, Government grants are complicated because they, quiet rightly, like to feed back to their superiors that taxpayers funds are properly used. After much re-phrasing and shaping with the regular help of David Conn of the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce (ECF agents) and Amanda Jupp as representative of AusAID; we finally were able to make our final presentation and were accepted, a new learning curve for us. The first payments came through in January which re-imbursed my outlays in the Autumn. In their acceptance letter they declared much faith in what we are doing especially in building the two cutters.

The grant was made on the basis the Masurina Ltd is the 'mother' vehicle with both the limbs of Bwasa and Kwato operating under that umbrella. The reason being that there is so much corruption in PNG that AusAID believe that a well run tax-paying company will have a good accountability record and therefore be a suitable vehicle for this kind of operation as long as such a company also have a charitable ethos. Heather has been such a great support for us and it is so very good to know she is here with all the understanding of what missionaries need. Although she has entered PNG under Kwato Church, her being here is so very much part of God's plan. It is truly a great testimony that she is here after all the turmoil of 2008.

Our container arrived mid-February and, we unloaded and repacked it in the stifling heat of the Papuan summer. Distribution was made to Daroa for the Trobriand Islands and to Bwasa. The last place to deliver to is Misima which we shall be doing soon. The folk here in Bwasa were so grateful for the clothes and Christmas boxes and came *en-masse* to tell me so, although the woollies may have been intended for cooler climes and chocolate melts in the tropics they were deeply grateful and I want to pass that on to you.



Colly & I loading the Christmas boxes so popular among the islanders

Now we see our people dressed in clothes without tears and rips. I will not be at the Trobs to see the distribution but I will be absolutely sure the response is the same. Thank you and God bless you to each who gave of your time, your money and your good wishes. I do not have pictures yet and we still have to take some to Misima when we get a boat again and will get some then.

In the Field

After having a lot of trouble with our speedboat we took off with the problem unsolved. Nobody seems to know what is the problem but to me it is in the timing; in that it seems to go on to a long 'retard' and only fire on 2 cylinders and if the throttle is opened carefully then I can get it up to about 85% power. Of course it is a computer controlled engine which is a manufacturer's device to ensure that only licensed dealers carry out any repair work as only they have the soft/hardware while charging the sort of rates exclusive title offers while overlooking the needs of people in highly remote locations. In hindsight I should have bought a carburettor fed motor instead of an efi one (electronic fuel injection) The motor is a Johnson 40 four-stroke (really a Suzuki 40 f/s with Johnson livery on it) Once it is sorted I am sure it will give good service.



My brother Bob assures me that it is a good motor but the latest computer controlled repair system makes it totally unsuitable for use in remote locations like ours because there are no facilities anywhere to repair it when it goes wrong. Computer controlled vehicles and engines actually often carry out repairs and adjustments from a special dealers program; without which we are stymied. So we still need a 40hp fourstroke outboard with a standard carburettor and not computer-controlled.

Work has been going a-pace here with the concrete slab under the workshop but it has been hard going. The stones to make up the aggregate has to be picked up by hand and put into bags. A whole day operation by 10 people plus the cook who go in the speedboat (on tickover) couple of miles down the coast and carry three loads of about a ton a go through the surf in the blistering heat. It is the same with the timber (rosewood) hich is felled in the swamp area and rafted down to the sea where the speedboat pulls it back to Bwasa. However there is a road that runs along the coast left over from colonial times and partially used by miners. We too could use this road if we had a tractor and trailer (this trailer we would need to be in bits that we could assemble) It can readily be seen what a tremendous asset a small tractor would be to us.

Right now I am overcoming malaria again and a couple of tropical ulcers to boot but I expect to be up and running again to cross the mountain to get to Alotau soon. Everyone here is concerned about me but they work steadfastly on the concrete slab. Joyce, a lady from a neighbouring village, heard that I was not well and brought round some kingfish, pumpkin and beans.

The next job will be my house which together with the office, is on the AusAID program for this year. If we get them built quickly they say they will advance us the monies for the rest of the year, but that does depend on Kwato fulfilling the same plan. The buildings are not big but will be a tremendous improvement on a grass-roofed house at present where there is little protection from insects (apart from the mosquito net) also the mice here feast

Under this raft are the 6 fitches of rosewood



also the mice here feast

on the soles of your feet. The new house will be a huge improvement to our quality of life and the office for the storage of tools and things as well as a place to work.



The mission hall which Alan started, also needs to be completed so for the present we still use the workshop for meetings. Most of the Sigialus belong to the United Church and they have many meetings and discussions which sometimes go over a whole week. Also they have a thing called a *boubou* (thanksgiving) but which is the church's way of raising money. Targets amounts are set and communities must work towards achieving these. Also witchcraft is something westerners tend to ignore because they either do not believe it or don't know how to behave when confronted with it. Here it is used and believed – it works and the communities suffer as a result.

Concreting is a family affair!

I feel lately that the Lord has been guiding me to explain what the Bible teaches on the subject of the supernatural realm and how we Christians need to discern spiritual issues scripturally and depending on the guidance of the Holy Spirit if we are to make any real penetration against the pervading darkness of the region. This also means teaching what faith is and how it enables people to reach into God's blessings and presence. I am hopeful that they will then share the message with their churches and so see deliverance from this accursed thing.

Supernatural power is so clearly something God intends the church to use in line with His will and word. For these people, like anyone else, it will be key to them being able to hear God's guidance in the Word and to develop a sweet conscience toward God and man.



Me levelling the hardcore on the last section

We returned to Alotau on the 18th March and Heather had arranged our accoms again at Masurina and collected us from the wharf..

Misima



Beautiful Misima – small bay at Bwagabwaga

I took Colleen back to her native Misima and spent some time with Pastor Ronnie Toumoulesi. We brought a computer, photocopier, overhead projector from CFC with which Ronnie and the church are absolutely delighted. Ronnie and 16 others left Bwagoia including Colly's sister Molly for a training outreach on an island some twenty miles away in an outrigger sailing canoe which is a highly unstable vessel. Colly and I then went over the hills on a PMV (public motor vehicle) on our way to Bagilina, which is Colly's village. This ministry at Misima is called UCM and God is drawing us together, so watch this space. Misima has experience Christian revival in the '90s and apart from being a beautiful island the people are keen to work together in the things of God.

Even if the gold mine operating here in the 80's and 90's affected them badly, they are keen to leave all that behind them and press on into the future.

Prayer and Needs

Invariably we need real breakthrough in prayer for the things I have mentioned regarding the people and if you are praying then please pray in the spirit and let God inspire you.

Practical needs are:

A financial breakthrough for the Sigialus in timber production.

Increased financial support for Heather.

A good second-hand tractor and trailer (trailer in bits) to fit into 20' container in England.

Continued supply of hand tools

Micro-hydro power supply at Imwauna falls. (as much as 200Kw to supply a new primary school nearby)

Our financial provision.

17 Misimas from UCM set out on a 20mile voyage



Of course we believe that the Lord will supply these things for us but they need prayer too.

Forgive me those of you who have tried to contact me on Facebook but apart from being mostly 'off world', Facebook needs a lot of megabyte and this is very expensive in PNG.

Contact me with emails instead.

Blessings from Milne Bay until the next newsletter

Guy