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News From PNG Our FIRST News Update – Monday 16th April 2018

We have finally arrived...

Dear Friends,

After a further six–hour night flight from Singapore to Port Moresby (the PNG capital), then on to Mount Hagan in the PNG Highlands, we are now the guests of our friends Gerhard and Brigitte Stamm at the Liebenzell Mission!

Once again we can feel the hot sun on our faces, there are familiar smells, we can hear exotic birds twittering and we are woken up in the middle of the night by a cockerel crowing... And once again we are talking lots of Pidgin (local trade language and common speech) Hurray! We can still do it! And we're surprised at how well we can manage it!

We've already had two opportunities to share: in the church service yesterday and in the daily morning worship time at the Bible College! We're already feeling very much at home!

Still very tired from jetlag... (we're 9 hrs ahead of Austrian time), but we're just glad to be here! Great joy at being with many PNG people again, especially a young man called John Mulel from the new church district in the Kol and Mengen tribal area on our former island of New Britain – he's studying here! This evening: a ladies' night – Margret will have the chance to speak... Tomorrow we are visiting the Christian Leaders' Training College (CLTC), 30 mins by road from here (meeting students and teachers). Thursday 19th we're travelling to Wewak in the even hotter Sepik area. Time and again we come across PNG brothers and sisters who can still remember details from H.–G.'s sermons from when we were here 22 years ago! Amazing!

Thank you for your support in prayer; thank you that this visit has only been possible through your support!
Greetings from the tropical heat of this far–flung corner of the world!

Here is our SECOND update – Saturday 21st April...

It's even hotter now...

Dear friends,

Being in the PNG Highlands was just the start, with hot days, cool nights and refreshing rain... Now we are on the northwest coast in Wewak in the East Sepik region... and it's indescribably hot! The guest house where we're staying is very, very basic and we're the only non–PNG nationals here... good for our 'Tok Pisin'... The dear Waelde family, German missionaries from the Liebenzell Mission in Wewak, have been taking us back with them for meals on numerous occasions!

We've forgotten to mention something very important: Rose! We took our leave of her 22 years ago! She was our friend from the area, a sister in prayer, a home help, our babysitter – without her we could never have managed to do our work! Someone told her we'd arrived, so she caught the bus and travelled for 3 hours to come and see us! The joy of this unexpected meeting was something very special! She'd brought a present for us: several 'Bilums' (string bags made by local people). We showed her photos of our children that she'd looked after, now grown up... there were lots of tears...

There were a lot more yesterday when we met the church leaders from West and East New Britain again after 22 years! It was a dream come true! Our joy at being together was totally overwhelming! What they told us was so moving that we could hardly sleep afterwards! The story of the development and spread of the church in recent years has amazed us! What has developed from modest beginnings, and with much effort, is indescribably encouraging! The church district has spread rapidly into formerly unreached areas! We are really rejoicing! We will be able to tell you more when we see our friends again at the Conference in Brugam in the bush.

A big prayer request: there has been an attack on the road to Brugam, in the course of which the driver of a minibus was shot dead.

On hearing this, his family have sought revenge, ('Payback'), and they have blocked the road to Brugam and destroyed bridges... For this reason it is uncertain whether the Conference can take place at all...

Please pray for an unhindered journey to Brugam on Monday (23rd April); it takes 5 hours by public transport, minibus or lorry with benches in the back. Although there are obstacles to our plans, we are convinced that it is definitely God's plan and that makes everything very exciting!

Thank you, thank you for carrying us in prayer and for your enduring interest!

We will be in touch again soon, when we can – the internet is only available intermittently...

P.S.: we are happy for our short reports to be passed on!

News from PNG – Monday 30th April 2018

Back from Brugam

Dear friends,

We're still in one piece and we have survived our trip into the deepest jungle!

It was an adventurous journey by P.M.V. ('Public Motor Vehicle), taking about 4 hours from Wewak to Brugam to the former mission station of the **South Sea Evangelical Mission (SSEM)**.

Because of the heavy rain and severe thunder storms (the rainy season has arrived late) everywhere was flooded, bridges had been half washed away and the only road (Sepik Highway) was blocked by landslides and huge potholes...

But in **Brugam** we were welcomed with a lot of love, we were provided with food and a bed and we had a lot of fellowship with the PNG nationals.

We were accommodated in a former missionary house together with Australian colleagues from our partner mission 'Pioneers' and René Bredow from the Liebenzell Mission.

There was even running water, and electricity on and off from a small generator – what a luxury!

The National Leaders' Conference was also the celebration of the **70th anniversary of the SSEC** ('South Sea Evangelical Church').

On the very first morning after we'd arrived Hans–Georg was already contributing to the preaching.

The greetings which the DMG and our Austrian friends asked us to pass on brought back memories for the older participants of the selfless and often dangerous work of the first missionaries.

How we rejoiced when the ballot was held for the **national superintendent** and our good friend **Kore Wai** was elected unanimously for this office.

We supported him and **his wife Mary** right from the early days of their life with the Lord Jesus...

On the day after his election Kore gave his testimony and shared with the conference participants his almost unbelievable and very unique story.

We were surprised at how much we were involved in it. Much of it we'd long forgotten!

In between the various conference sessions and in the evenings – and sometimes even before the morning meetings – there were many, many individual conversations and opportunities to meet the participants from all over PNG...

We were overwhelmed and puzzled at the same time at how much confidence was placed in us and how many of them could still remember details of earlier times when we'd met.

At times the rain was so heavy that we just waded around barefoot in the mud...

We also had 'Saksak' (sago) to eat and many other PNG specialities!

There were snakes and spiders in the loo at night... and rats... but in spite of that we slept well under a mosquito net... after joyful church services with lots of singing and dancing...

At the end of the Conference we were presented with more wonderful string bags (Bilums) made of bush materials and the school uniforms of the local Christian Secondary School... and malaria tablets just in case...

The journey back was again a challenge... because of the damaged roads...

During a break in the journey some of our fellow travellers had their bags stolen from the car... together with all their documents... we were spared however, thank God!!

Now we are in very comfortable accommodation in Wewak, complete with electricity, running water and air conditioning and with many dear missionaries nearby to look after us.

We went snorkelling with them in the sea and on a picnic, until the rain caught up with us again...

And what a Sunday service in a very simple SSEC church in Wewak!

On Tues 1st May we've planned to fly to 'our' island New Britain... At the Bible College there we are going to teach a week-long course for married couples...

From 7th May we hope to be at our final destination of our 'South Seas dream trip': Bialla... our former 'home'...

Hans–Georg is already planning a trek into the bush to visit the area of the Kol and Mengen tribes...

To date we have been spared serious problems and illnesses. Many, many thanks for your prayers for our protection and safekeeping! We feel we have been richly blessed!

Yours in His service

Hans–Georg & Margret Hoprich.

P.S. We would love to send attach a selection of our many photos – sadly the internet connection isn't good enough for us to send large files...

On request we are happy to send you our Updates via WhatsApp, in which case it would be possible to include a single photo! Please let us know!



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