

Travelling Together (los)

„To the thirsty I will give freely from the spring of the water of life.“ (Rev 21:6)

The Family Hoprich Newsletter | June 2018

“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.” Hebr 13:2

Where have we experienced hospitality in a particular way? Is it possible that it has been in a foreign country rather than in our own land? How hospitable are we ourselves?

Let's be honest: hospitality requires time and effort. It takes an openness to new and unfamiliar things. Our carefully managed everyday routines easily get in a muddle, and it also means giving something of ourselves. Hospitality never restricts itself only to those that we already know and can rely on to show their appreciation. In ancient times it was a lovely custom to **not to ask guests their names and where they come from until after the meal!** Hospitality serves to establish a **relationship** – not in vain does the Bible refer in many places to the 'Hospitality of God'. God is welcoming, HE invites us in. God turns towards us. God is eager to know us, HE is open and friendly and wishes to start a relationship with us. Sometimes He even sends HIS OWN messengers to us – In the Bible they are called angels – and we are surprised and richly blessed!

We wish you this kind of experience with having guests!

Back safely from our big trip...

On **Sunday 27th May** Annika and Sebastian met us at Vienna Airport: after travelling for 30 hours, 20 of which were in the air, we were very glad and grateful to be 'back home' again! That afternoon there was a special family gathering and a birthday party for our grandsons Timo (11) and Sami (5).

Due to the poor internet connection over many weeks our return to our everyday working life was very sudden, and for many days we had typical **jetlag symptoms**.

On **1st June there was the open air wedding of Stephan & Melanie** in a wonderful place in Lower Austria. It was another special opportunity to invite people to believe in the Lord Jesus...

On the very next day we were off again, this time to Carinthia for the **valedictory service for Tobias & Esther**. Hans-Georg gave the sermon...

We were richly blessed...

...by meeting so many different people during our **exciting visit and time of ministry** in our former place of missionary service **Papua New Guinea (PNG)**.

We are still processing all our impressions and experiences. We were simply overwhelmed by meeting again, after 22 years, all our brothers and sisters, our fellow workers and friends...

Sometimes it felt like it was a vivid dream from which we could wake at any moment...

A big thank you to all of you who have been praying for us!

The highlights... (PHOTOS WILL BE SENT SEPARATELY!)

We've already reported on the Conference of the South Sea Evangelical Church (SSEC), including the election of **their first national superintendent: Rev. Kore Wai**.

Kore came to a living faith in Jesus during our time of missionary service in Bialla. Hans-Georg took him through a discipleship course and after theological training Kore was sent out overseas, together with his family, as the first SSEC missionary. On **1st May** we finally set foot on our beloved island **New Britain** – it felt like **'coming home'**.

After a brief but very warm welcome we taught a 3-day course at the Bible college on 'Marriage and Family Life'. **Just as if we'd never been away**, we then had a number of counselling sessions with the Bible students. It was only the heat of the latter part of the rainy season which was not so easy to cope with...

On the following Sunday in **the provincial capital Kimbe** we both talked about our work in Austria which is coming to an end and our plans for the future. After Hans-Georg had finished his sermon **the whole church surprised us** by spontaneously calling us into the middle and blessing us for our future work.

We were completely **overwhelmed and touched** by their great concern for us!

On **7th May we went on to Bialla** where we worked and lived as a family for 10 years. Never in our wildest dreams could we have expected such a welcome...

Many, many friends had waited patiently till we arrived after our hair-raising journey on a flood-damaged road, full of potholes. We were together till gone midnight, we reminisced, we got to know new faces and, very important, we ate together. It was simply a **huge joyful reunion and celebration!**

Mary, the wife of Rev. Kore Wai, has a gift for organising and had put together a packed timetable to make the most of our 2 weeks there. This included Margret visiting the individual women's groups in the church district while Hans-Georg undertook a bush trip with a team of leaders into the 'Kol' tribal area – **and it all got going the very next day!**

Hans-Georg reports...

"It was a 2-hour journey by car to the crocodile-infested Pandi River, which we crossed by outrigger canoe.

Then there was another journey in an off-road vehicle to the end of the wood cutters' track, then 4 hours on foot through the jungle. **It was the first time this had been done at night...**

We reached the **Kol village, Kapkena**, completely exhausted. Until I'd got enough fluids into my system again I was kept awake by fits of shivering and severe cramps right into the early hours of the morning...

Prayercorner

Praise God for...

- Safekeeping during visit to PNG
- Breakthroughs in the tribes
- All prayer supporters
- New perspectives for our future

Please pray for...

- Marriages and family life in PNG
- Churches and world missions
- Clear guidance
- The future of TAM

**What are you occupied with?
What would you like us to pray for?**

Contact



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The joy of meeting up again was almost enough to let me forget all the struggles in getting there! I was **deeply moved** at how the older Kol tribespeople came up to me to express their deep gratitude for the difference the Gospel had made in their personal lives, in their relationships with one another and with the neighbouring tribes. **They were free at last!**

Even the church services during these three days were marked with **exuberant joy!**

Unfortunately the return journey didn't go according to plan: the car which was supposed to pick us up didn't arrive and so the team had to walk back for 4 hours in the swampy jungle in the rain and then undertake a 'forced march' of more than 22 miles (35 km) into the night to reach a camp. It was just before midnight when the car found us to bring us back to the Pandi River.

There were no boat crossings during the hours of darkness, so we spent a sleepless night there. Early the next morning we met up again at last in Bialla." This threw Mary's plans into disarray as in the meantime the **Mamusi tribespeople** had killed a pig and were expecting us to join them that afternoon in **Uasilau**, which is in the opposite direction. We were received there with bush drums (called "kundu") and **a song which they'd composed specially for us** and they held a service with moving testimonies going back to the early days of the churches in that tribal region (Remember Hans-Georg's story: **"Three times they wanted to kill him..!"**)

The efforts of the travelling and the visits took their toll...

After preaching at the Sunday service in the Bialla Town Church, Hans-Georg was no longer able to get to his feet – he was completely exhausted – perhaps it was even malaria...

The following days were filled up with more visits, many conversations **and even more preaching engagements on the subject of "World Mission"**. How wonderful it was to experience **spiritual breakthroughs** with people making a first-time commitment to follow Jesus, or a re-commitment.

Visiting the church district fellowships of Tiauru, Wilelo, Soi-Kabaya and Navo...

During this time we learned that the first breakthroughs had happened in the Mengen tribe and the new church in Sovula was in the process of being established. This is incredibly encouraging. **Twelve Kol churches** have now been planted, forming an entire **new church district ("Inland Pomio")**, and through them the neighbouring tribes of the **Mengen, Tomoib and Malkolkol** are being reached.

In fact from modest and strongly opposed beginnings numerous large churches have come into being which are being led by theologically trained PNG nationals. **All the efforts of those previous times were more than worth it to experience all this with them!**

On Pentecost Sunday (20th May) we had another big church service with all the district churches together – it lasted five hours with many exciting testimonies. Even a much respected and very influential **"Chief", Michael Sua**, came along specially and gave a speech.

On the Monday the church leaders came together for a **farewell meal** and at the end we were with the people in positions of responsibility as they **reached out their hands in reconciliation as they prayed together** – after the most recent general election they had become divided into various factions.

And something completely new...

Regarding the high consumption of sugar and the rapid rise in **the number of diabetics in PNG** we were able to give the senior church leaders a sort of **"public health lecture"** and show some of those at risk the next steps which they could take.

Farewell to PNG

After a very emotional departure from Bialla we spent our final days in PNG in the national capital Port Moresby as we didn't have enough time to discover the sights of this city earlier. There we found the opposite extreme of this amazing country and its contradictory society which is still trying to combine Stone Age culture and 'high tech' lifestyles.

Our return journey to Eisenstadt was via Singapore and Helsinki.

Prayer requests for PNG

Following the overwhelming amount of impressions that we've had **we would like to pray with you**, firstly that the **Gospel would continue to keep going** and for the last unreached tribes in New Britain to hear about Jesus!

Secondly we are asking for prayer for **spiritual growth**, to be worked out on a small scale in **marriages and family life**, and on a larger scale that the churches in PNG will increasingly get involved in the many different tasks of world mission.

Once again we thank you all wholeheartedly for making this visit possible and supporting us in prayer throughout!

Coming up in June...

- **The Pingist family – Roland & Brittany** and their two children Noah and Chiara are being sent back out to where they are working among indigenous people in Brazil. The BEG church in Villach (Carinthia) is holding a valedictory service for them on 17th June.
- We have arranged a visit to **"DMG interpersonal"** at Buchenauerhof, Sinsheim (S. Germany) 24th–27th June. We will be there together with **Michael Vuturo** (BEG Association leadership), **Manuel Vuturo** (leadership of "Help which arrives" (Hda)) and **Timna** (Hda / TAM).
- We wish to get an insight into the extensive experience of the DMG, e.g. with regard to their technical financial procedures and the preparation and support of long- and short-term missionaries. etc.
- May all of this contribute to the establishment of a good basis here in Austria for the sending out of future missionaries.

The next weeks and months will be taken up with the active **finishing off and handing over of our work in the Foreign Missions Team (TAM)** and **'putting out feelers' and fact-finding for our next steps** with regard to where we will be working in our coming years of service.

It has been a privilege to stand alongside you in serving the Lord Jesus.

THANK YOU for your support in prayer, in giving and in keeping in touch through your encouraging e-mails...

Together we are strong; without you we would not be here.

We hope that through all that God is doing you are just as encouraged as we are. May God bless you!

Yours in His service,

Hans-Georg, Margret & Annika Hoprich