



Wycliffe Assist

MAD Vanuatu

by Paul Huglin

Have you been asked this question? 'What was the highlight of your trip?' As the co-planner and leader of a 14 person contingent to Vanuatu in July, my highlight was that everything we planned to do, and hoped to achieve was realised and blessed by God—beyond our expectations.

MAD stands for Ministry, Adventure and Discovery, and follows a model that Dave Wake has been doing for 28 years. Its aim is to enable people to experience the work of Scripture translation by visiting language projects in remote locations. The travel, the camaraderie and cross-cultural experience enables God to bring personal discovery and growth to each participant.

This was the first MAD trip to Vanuatu. Our 15 day adventure involved using the translation centre in Port Vila as a base. From there the group made a five day trip out to Eluai Village in North Tanna, hosted by local Ni-Vanuatu Pastors Joshua Jimmy, Daniel and Rebecca. The group then spent another week visiting Espiritu Santo and staying with Adam and Hester Pike and Fr. Norman Candy in Angoru Village.

Hiking between villages, conversations with people, sharing worship times and community meals created just the right environment



Dave Wake entertaining the school children



L-R back: Adam Pike, Paul Huglin, Apryl Huglin, Bradley Kuipers, Doug Heckathorn, Hester Pike, Courtney Mitchell, Suzanne Richards, Tom MacDonald, Bethany Canavan Front: Julie MacDonald, Sue Heckathorn, David Besford, Dave Wake, Gary Peterson, Jared Killey

for God to speak into the lives of many of the MAD adventurers. 'God reminded me that differences can be a great learning opportunity,' said one adventurer. Another said, 'The greatest thing you can do to transform your life is engage with the opportunities that God puts before you.'

'Visiting schools and medical clinics, praying for the sick, the discouraged and the hopeful taught me that there is more to life than present circumstances, and that God hasn't given up on me, it gave me renewed hope and encouragement,' said another.

Sharing of personal testimonies and caring in personal struggles opened many to God's leading. 'God just inspired me to keep plugging on and be available for his plans every day, no matter where I am or what I am doing.' For others it was listening and being open to new and ongoing relationships and being open to God's leading.

The beauty and wonder of God's creation was displayed with awesome power as we stood on the rim of an active volcano, heard the roar, and splashes of lava; then the calm of swimming down rivers and on beautiful beaches. Add

to all this some crazy truck rides, pitching tents, hearing stories about Bibles and Mega Voices; coconut trees, taro, bananas, and laplap made for an unforgettable trip. We even had a class on Scripture translation and engagement. 'I think God has made me a lot more thankful and appreciative for the things he has given me and He taught me not to worry so much.'

Some came seeking God's call to Scripture translation, others were seeking a long term connection between their church and one in Vanuatu, while others came for the experience of just being there. 'God taught me more about his presence in every situation,' said one and another said, 'the love of Jesus helps draw us together, and share what we have.' No matter the reason, everyone agreed it was a great MAD trip.

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Using our Retirement for God by Jill Innes



Editorial

by Peter Gillespie

When we joined Wycliffe we were asked for a verse that best captures our vision for the work we were to do. We chose Ephesians 2:10, 'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God has prepared for us to do.'

This has been our testimony over the last 11 years. God prepared work for us in Australia, East and West Timor, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. More than that, God gave us the privilege of meeting many translators, Scripture engagement and support people who have inspired us with their commitment and dedication to the work of Bible translation.

The blessing did not stop there. We have had great fellowship with so many volunteers who have joined us in the work as well as the people of the countries we visited.

We have new friends from across Australia and the Pacific and great memories of working together, talking, laughing and enjoying the sites of the location where we were working.

There isn't space to list everyone who has worked with Wycliffe Assist, but to all of you we say a very big THANK YOU!

Garry and I have been retired from full-time employment for a few years now. Our lives are busy, with many commitments to family, church, community and friends. So when an invitation came to consider going to Vanuatu to fill the property and finance managers' roles, the logical answer was 'no'. However, we have learnt that there are rich rewards in accepting opportunities that come our way, so we did some investigating.

Our working lives in administration positions and our recent experience with house renovations seemed to give us the right skill set in the eyes of the SIL Vanuatu Director, Greg Carlson. So we negotiated a five month term and set off. Our role was supporting members in remote locations and secondly, maintaining the facilities and operational logistics in Port Vila.

Vanuatu is made up of over 83 islands with over 110 languages spoken. There are 12 teams working in language projects spread from Mota Lava in the North to Tanna in the South. Some families focus on Bible translation while others on Scripture engagement. For all, they are living in village environments without access to many of the services that we take for granted. It is essential to provide them with support for their daily living, enabling them to be effective in their roles on a long term basis.

We did shopping for teams—food, medication, building supplies, gas etc. which we packed and despatched by ship or plane and hoped by God's grace it would all arrive safely. We helped organise their travel and accommodation for inter-island visits, as well as travel to home and facilitated funds from their donors to support them in the field.

SIL has a number of properties in Vila, providing space for offices, a resource centre, printing facilities and accommodation. We oversaw the administration and maintenance of these properties. We took bookings and invoiced guests, and with the help of local staff, ensured all facilities were clean and well maintained. We paid the bills and kept all financial records.



Jill and Garry (front right) with Serah - secretary of VBT (centre) and members of the Mother Union at Freshwota

We were the *responders*—airport pickups and transfers, unblocking toilets, assisting new arrivals and generally just helping out. We were busy! In all of it we knew we were a vital support to the 'real' work of translation in Vanuatu.

The highlight for us was the people—particularly the local people with their loving, gentle, accommodating ways. We were welcomed into the family of SIL and VBT in Vanuatu. We met each of the teams and gained a small insight into the amazing service to which they are committed. We were humbled and amazed.

Our encouragement is to be open to opportunities that God lays before us and be willing to say 'yes'. God has given each of us a set of life skills and experiences and he will find the perfect fit for those skills in his work.

POSTSCRIPT: Our suntans had barely faded when the Director in Vanuatu, Greg, invited us to return for a short trip. He wanted us to help with some finance training for a new person in the role. We were excited to go back and see everyone and slipped easily into life in Port Vila. We were amazed at how comfortable we felt there.

Unfortunately Greg and Bethann were suddenly called back to USA for a family bereavement. We were able to stay a bit longer to cover the operational responsibilities in their absence. This made it easy for them to leave and we were grateful we were in a place to assist. God's perfect timing at work.



Garry and Jill (far right) with the happy teams in Port Vila for Christmas

Photos on cover page:

l-r: Danny Valja, Courtney Mitchell, Betsy from Honiara, Bradley Kuipers

Maranatha Sanctuary *by James Ziersch*

Who cares for our cross-cultural workers' physical and mental needs when they come home? Our vision is for Maranatha Sanctuary to supplement and extend the work of Wycliffe's member care through a retreat centre. It has been a dream of our family for many years to provide for longer-term respite, restoration and renewal of vision for Wycliffe members and others.

We have been working for Wycliffe Australia in Victoria and we recently purchased a five acre property at Tarrington, just outside of Hamilton in western Victoria. By God's prompting, we formed a vision to have two or three cottages where cross-cultural and pastoral ministry workers can receive support and refreshment in their ministry.

However, the family house for this property very much needed a number of important repair jobs. Wycliffe Assist to the rescue! A Wycliffe work team of six headed up by Dave Wake arrived mid-April. In just three days, they totally transformed many areas of the 80-year-old house to make it so much more liveable and suitable for guests and visitors.

A key item was the fitting together and installation of a second-hand kitchen. The previous one was small and unworkable with dry rot and poor functioning cupboards. Danny Velja and Tim Stokes ploughed into this task and completed this in three very intensive days. (Anyone putting a second-hand complex

kitchen of many parts together in such time is doing a fantastic job!) Dave Wake added to this by re-plumbing various pipes and taps. Lydia is now thrilled to have a working kitchen in which to cook. Dave also managed to fit a stud-wall enclosing the dining area.

Other needs were the office and guest bathroom. These were old and weathered, previously built as add-ons to the original house. To each a plastered wall was added. The office where Lydia and I perform our half time communications with the Wycliffe Centre at Kangaroo Ground is now in working order. Meanwhile Laurie Maskell expertly set about fitting panels to two dining room walls.

Due to the age of the house and a wet, windy climate, painting was very much needed. Gert Schaffer and Cedric Wyndham painted the weathered wooden window frames and over half of the weather boards, a tedious job! Finally



Cedric and Gert working on the windows

as old houses typically lack good electrical set ups, Peter Dunstan tackled this issue by adding numerous power points, lights and fixtures. Our 80+ year old house was very much transformed by this work crew. Our family and guests can now enjoy the great views of the Grampians and sweeping Western District plains. We are immensely thankful for work crews like this, so effectively ministering to Wycliffe personnel. Thank you guys!



L-r Danny Velja, Peter Dunstan, Cedric Wyndham, Gert Schaffer, Laurie Maskell, Tim Stokes, Dave Wake

The Thursday Crew

by Peter Dunstan

**The Thursday Crew: L to R
Gert Schaffer, Dennis Weeks, Peter Dunstan,
Ian Wilson, Cedric Wyndham**



Warren and Jessie Glover are 'pioneer' translators who have been working for Wycliffe for over 50 years. At present, they are only able to go in and out of their country of service to help their national translators ten weeks at a time. They are currently based at their 'older' home in Ringwood, Melbourne that they have owned for many years. Our job was to 'stop the rot' in the west-facing windowsill and weatherboards. Philip Coombe, a competent builder and son of a translator who worked in the Solomon Islands, did the specialist carpentry remaking the sills and window profiles (no longer purchasable). 'I like a challenge,' said Philip and saved them thousands of dollars because they didn't have to buy new windows.

The Thursday crew were on hand painting the main bedroom as well as the western side of the house where the old paint was flaking off. This was all achieved in the window of time while Glovers visited their country of service. In addition, a large pergola was sanded back and undercoated before the cold and damp weather set in.

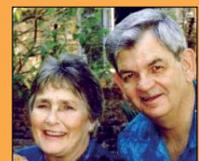
While the Christian 'house sitters' were there, we went back on a glorious sunny day, fixing up a failing fence, and finished the painting of the western wall and put another coat of paint on the pergola. With the Glovers overseas, we fellowshipped with Chuck and Rhonda - US house sitters. The next Thursday it was back to finish everything off, even having time for the mandatory 'smoko'.

The Thursday volunteer crew includes Gert Schaffer, Dennis Weeks, Ian Wilson and Cedric Wyndham. These faithful four have been working with me over the past 18 months helping with maintenance on

Wycliffe members' houses as it fitted in with their other commitments. They are a very dedicated group of men who enjoy working together along with the fellowship and social times, like coffee, meals, smokos and occasional museum visits.

Some other projects have been: to help Graham and Irene Haywood with garden maintenance; Kirk and Christine Franklin removing an internal brick wall and remodelling; Roy and Janet Gwyther-Jones rebuilding a collapsed green house; working on a steep landscaping site at Kangaroo Ground and helping renovate our retirement cottage.

We were delighted to return to a freshly painted interior (bedroom) and repaired exterior of the freshened up house. Great that the team enjoyed fellowship with our delightful American house-sitters Chuck and Rhonda who were so keen to help in many practical ways while we were away. We are so grateful to Peter, Philip, and the Thursday crew! **Warren and Jessie Glover**



HELP NEEDED

There is a constant need for people to volunteer in the role of Business Managers in the Pacific area. The work of Bible Translation cannot progress without those who do the supporting work of financial processing and maintenance of buildings and equipment. If you can use your time and skill to help in this work contact Wycliffe Australia or talk to Peter and Yvonne for more details.

(see below)

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Return to Honiara by Dianne Whitby

It was lovely to return to Honiara, Solomon Islands. We were last here in 2012 with a work team doing maintenance with Wycliffe Assist. This time we are here for three months as Operations Managers at SITAG (Solomon Islands Translation and Advisory Group) filling in until the new permanent managers arrive. We are assisting translators, Scripture Use workers and video/recording groups. Our duties are varied. Finding the right boat at the wharf to send parcels to a translator, dealing with the right Government Department, and everything from registering a car to paying taxes etc. is an exercise in patience.



Dianne and Illyn in the office

The best part of returning was catching up with our national co-workers and our South Seas Evangelical Church family. We are so thankful for the employees here at SITAG. They have been such a wonderful help to us. Illyn in the office is very efficient. She manages all of the accounting and all I have to do is check her input at the end of each month. What a blessing! Betsy and Rosina look after the cleaning of each of the houses. They make sure they are all ready for people as they turn up, sometimes going that bit extra.

When Peter and I arrived, we were welcomed with some lovely fruits and some bush lime drink. Just this morning Betsy turned up with a bunch of lovely orchids for us. Max is working very hard around the grounds, keeping them looking lovely. Patson as the maintenance supervisor is always helping Peter with plumbing, digging holes, repairing roofs etc. Peter's most common words are 'Where can I buy', so off they go to purchase the needed articles, often leaving Patson there to return with the truck for sand/gravel etc. Patson is our *Navman*. No street names here. Patson's wife Judy looks after the Training Centre.

Each morning, Monday to Friday, at 10 am we all have morning tea together. Usually the men are at one table and ladies at the other, but we have mixed it up on occasion. Lots of lively banter. They have milk coffee and milk tea in sachets. I thought I would try



Betsy and Rosina

the milk tea. Not a wise choice - 98% sugar, 1% tea and 1% milk powder. I have black tea and a cracker now!

I am continuing to go to Florence Young School two mornings each week to help in the library. There is always plenty of work for me there. They have a new lady in the library, Olivia, who is very keen to encourage better use of the library by the children. Olivia ends each library session with a prayer for the children and the teacher.

Our church here is an encouragement to us. Yes - the music is loud, the seats are hard, services often going for up to three hours, but their commitment to prayer is wonderful—praying always for their Prime Minister, government leaders, business leaders, even praying for our new Australian Prime Minister.

It will be nice to go home and sleep in our own bed, with no barking dogs or loud music, and be able to enjoy our grandchildren again, but we are always ready and willing for when God leads us out again.

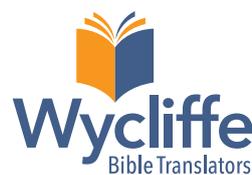
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