

# Report from Makang'wa

P.O. Box 2094, Dodoma, Tanzania

September 29<sup>th</sup> 2006

Dear Friends,

I realize that I have been 'quiet' for some time now. Life has been very full, quite challenging yet most fulfilling. Through the efforts of many people we are witnessing the day by day transformation of the Amani Center at Makang'wa. As the old thornbush hedges are removed and the land cleared it is beginning to take on the appearance of a wonderful farm. The Center is becoming the 'talk of the town' and we now have visitors coming from far and wide to see what is taking place.

We have partially completed the installation of a water reticulation system on the developed section of land. Water is now available across most of the areas presently cultivated. This is an expensive enterprise but also a good investment in the future and towards the basic self-sustainability of the Amani Center. We have prepared areas for maize, millet, an extension of the vineyard, tomatoes, mchicha (spinach – sort of!), cucumbers, melons, onions sweet corn and soy beans, plus the preparation of about 420 holes for fruit trees. The chicken have increased to five – plus one! The 'one' is another rooster donated to us. Well, it is 'warfare' here. In the 'chicken world two or more 'wives' is fine – but not two husbands!

Much of the preparation work has been carried out by people on the Relief Work Program. The 'heavy work' has been done through a special work group of twenty two men, plus another six whose only job is to remove tree stumps. The wonderful thing about all of this is that apart from Amani these people would have no hope of local employment. Therefore as I look upon about eighty people at work each day I have in mind eighty households receiving a benefit. The assistance now touches on the life of about seven villages.

Monday mornings are becoming more stressful as large numbers turn up seeking work and assistance. People are noticeably more stressed and more urgent in their pleas for help. The situation is widespread in this central region. Every 'ministry organization' is doing its best to assist. Through the expatriate staff the Anglican Bible College to the north of Dodoma distributes food in that locality. Children crowd about the Dining Hall seeking food. When in Dodoma it is normal to have street children come begging for help. I normally take them to a fruit barrow and give each one two pieces of fruit.

In the midst of all this need it is a great privilege to be able to pass on the generosity which comes from supporters in the USA and in Australia. We do continually impress upon the people that we are 'messengers and agents' of your generosity and of the grace of God. Presently we are assisting the village of Mvumi Makulu to renovate and restore their well. This was the first well we prepared when activities commenced here in 2001. I recall writing a short article for Fr. Steve Oreskovich in relation to that appeal. The well has now failed due to the breakdown of the pump – and perhaps problems with the pipes. Amani has undertaken to cover the cost of the investigation of the situation – cost of transport, removal of the equipment, cleaning (may include the removal of an earlier pump which fell to the bottom) and testing and recommendation for setting matters in order. The well supplies a community in excess of 12,000 therefore the situation is critical. We have been hiring a

truck on alternate days to collect water containers from the village, take them to the Amani well and return them filled to the village. We are hoping to have the well cleaned, tested and then refitted over the span of several weeks. It does take time here as the needed equipment may very well be 'somewhere else'.

At Makang'wa village we are currently assisting the main primary school to complete a new classroom block. All villages in the region are financially strapped owing to the continuing drought. A gift of \$600.00 from Billings, MT will enable the village to complete the building – windows, doors, ceilings and some outside work. This is all for materials. The work is donated. This is in addition to the 2,000 concrete blocks we have provided for the Maternity Extension to the village Clinic. The Amani ministry is intentionally **a Christ centered, community related ministry.**

I had hoped to make the move from Mvumi Mission to Makang'wa this week however a slight problem prevented that. Last Wednesday we drove to Morogoro, to Sokoine University of Agriculture, to look into the purchase of fruit trees. While in Morogoro we ate lunch at a very nice restaurant. Later that night I began to be ill and ended up with a severe case of food poisoning! Fortunately the house at Mvumi Mission is only a short walk from the large hospital. A doctor made five 'house calls' and all is well. I now have a clear understanding of the seriousness of food poisoning! We should be at living Makang'wa by Monday evening.

I continue to preach every Sunday and baptize and celebrate Holy Communion most Sundays. Last Sunday there were two engagements. I preached at the School Chapel at Mvumi Mission Secondary School at 8.00am and then at St. Peter's Parish Church at 10.00am. Both buildings were packed. The pastors were absent, attending an Ordination Service at St. James', Mvumi Makulu. Bishop Mhogolo ordained fourteen men and women that morning. The Saturday before there had been confirmation at Mvumi Mission. I attended the Dinner following the Service (I had been involved in a wedding earlier in the day) and also the Open Forum the Bishop conducted following the meal. This was a time for people to share thoughts and cares with the Bishop. It was very open and pastoral. I had an interpreter beside me. I would think that everyone left the building feeling most encouraged in their 'life in Christ'.

My sister and brother in law return to Australia on October 7<sup>th</sup>. It will be strange not to have them with me. They have endeared themselves to the people through their clear faith and many acts of compassion. Presently Alison Jackson from Brisbane, Aust. is here for four weeks. Alison is an expert at landscaping and interior design. I have allotted to her a group of twelve men. They are busy arranging the landscaping around the buildings. Now landscaping is not high on the graph of important things here! At first the men wondered what on earth they were being asked to do. Now they seem to have come to a happy understanding of it all as they see transformation taking place. It will all be most attractive. I am amazed at all that Alison has achieved in just a few days. She is a hard worker and the men have responded with enthusiasm.

October 17<sup>th</sup>. Life has been busy and I have finally managed to get back to this Report. I am now living at Makang'wa and am greatly enjoying the peacefulness of this place. Alison Jackson returned to Australia last Friday. It was on **this** day last year when I flew from Billings airport to commence a new season of life in Tanzania. Yes, there surely have been days when I have looked back upon the wonderful life I enjoyed in Billings and at 2808 Louise Lane. However I have learned to 'look back' with thanksgiving and not with a foolish 'longing'. I am also deeply thankful for the progress here – even though there have been many frustrations and some 'betrayals'. There are some incredibly beautiful people involved in the work here. They are 'beautiful in spirit and

character'. There is one young married man, Kenneth Sausi. When I first met Kenneth he was a sick and sad man, weighed down with the problems caused by drought and the responsibility of caring for elderly parents and the children of two brothers who had died from AIDS. I offered him a small part time job at Amani. Kenneth has 'blossomed'. He is a highly intelligent man and is now the assistant well operator. He related very well with my brother in law who taught him about the care of a diesel engine and he shows great promise in other areas of the development of the Amani Center. Kenneth is just one example of the people who are involved here on a daily basis.

We are continuing to develop the vineyard. This is being done in close cooperation with the Makutupola Grape Research Center, to the north of Dodoma. The Management there is keen to work with us with a view towards developing at the Amani Center a replica of the Research Center. This will require a lot of work and planning but it will be a wonderful thing for Makang'wa and the surrounding districts. There is a good market for grapes. I was surprised when a buyer come to us here with an offer to buy the grapes from our rather neglected vines. These are the old vines. We had given them some water about six weeks ago, directly after the well began operating. The vines responded and the bunches filled out. Presently we are working on expanding the grape area. This will, in the future, provide good support for the work here and for the school project at Mvumi Makulu.

I continue to enjoy the quiet evenings and the opportunity to read commentaries and some treasured 'devotional' material.

May God bless you as you work in his 'vineyard'.

John Naumann

It is now Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>. The delay! My flash disc picked up a virus at an internet café in Dodoma. It has taken time to purchase a new one and get this under way again. Meantime....

For three days we have had the Makang'wa Militia working at Amani! The village is conducting National Service Training. To demonstrate their thankfulness to Amani for assistance given since April of this year the Commandant assigned the 'troops' to work here. That meant that on those days there were 230 people on site! It also means that much work was accomplished. My 'dream' of seeing the Vineyard extended has become reality. Now we need many truckloads of manure as we backfill the trenches in preparation for planting. It also not 'seems' that Dedication will be on Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>.! However this has changed in the past so – we shall see what the president does.

Spiritual matters: This Saturday I am to preach at the local Roman Catholic Church as they celebrate the Procession of the Cross around the Diocese. On the Sunday I preach, baptize and celebrate Holy Communion at 7.00am and 10.00am at St. Mark's, Makang'wa. I believe that there will be eighteen infants, children and adults to be baptized. It IS a good life.