

# REPORT FROM MAKANG'WA



September 2013

Dear Friends,

Greetings from this place of hopefulness. I am constantly impressed by the hopeful attitude of the local village people. They live in the midst of so much necessity which could so easily lead to despair. However, their 'wants' are very limited, even as the true 'needs' may be acute. There is a constant lesson for me in this as I share life with them. (Photo: Preschool, Prince of Peace). Effective education is one of the true needs.

I returned from Brisbane on September 1<sup>st</sup>. The time spent in south east Queensland was wonderful in so many ways. I had expected colder weather, with those famous westerly winds, but it seemed more like Spring! It is always a joy to meet old friends and family members once again, and to develop new friends. I am sure that everyone who attended the Recital presented by Jayson Gillam was blessed beyond all anticipation of the evening. Jason, together with the students from St. Margaret's School, provided an evening of spectacular entertainment. "Thank you" to all who arranged and conducted the evening. "Thank you" to all who welcomed me, and the Amani story, and through whose generosity this work is enabled, and continues to be a blessing.

Now I am back at Makang'wa, immersed in the reality of this life. I do love it and yet, at times, I surely struggle with it. This is not a pastime! It is not simply 'something to do' for a few years after retirement. It is much more meaningful and profound than that. When I first told my mother, in 1960, of my certainty of a call to ordained ministry, she said to me, "Do you think you can spend the rest of your life bearing other people's burdens?" Did I truly understand those words at the time? Of course not! But now I surely do. This is not romantic stuff, this matter of serving the needs and aspirations of people in rural Tanzania. I am sure the same applies to all true service, anywhere. No, it is not at all romantic, but truly substantial involvement; life supporting and life changing involvement. Faith is stretched;



patience is stretched; the ability to endure is stretched; sincerity in love and care is stretched; obedience to a call is stretched! (Photo: stress treatment, Amani style).

But I have discovered this: the true value of this work is essentially related to these times of stretching. I am sure most parents understand this in relation to the care and guidance of their families. I ask all who are friends of the Amani work to understand this reality of the involvement here, and in some special way, to relate to this personally – to 'feel' something of the great worth and enormity of it all.

When I was a young priest one theme seemed to be constantly in my mind. I must be kind to others! It was inescapably there, but not always evident I suspect. This quality seems to be especially important here in the Amani work, particularly in relation to the many people who

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come seeking some relief in life, and also in relation to the older teenagers and young adults who come, seeking sponsorship assistance for continued education. When there seems to be little hope of finance for sponsorship it is relatively easy to respond to a letter, but quite a different matter when a young person, full of hope, is sitting before you. Educationally, they have reached the place of opportunity, but poverty presents a seemingly impossible barrier. Then kindness must shine through personal frustration.

Why have I shared these thoughts? Frequently, after I have given a presentation on the Amani work in Australia or the USA, I feel as if I have shared only a 'shallow' understanding of the work and involvement here. I have often asked myself, "Do people want to hear this 'other side' of the story." Actually, it is not the other side! It is all intertwined. The achievement aspect of the story is actually held together and sustained by the 'stretchings; by those times of deep involvement, and of being drawn into the profound realities of life here. In so many ways I am pleased that I do not live in Dodoma, secure behind the high fence, with a guard on patrol, and in many ways isolated from the life about me. I guess that seems to be necessary there. But here at Makang'wa we must 'walk in the village', with all that such a 'walk' may mean.

Presently, we have two pressing sponsorship needs. Shabani is part of our 'family'. Leonard is a local young man I have known for the past two years.

Shabani, a former street child, has gained entry to University! This is a remarkable achievement. He will receive a Government loan to assist with the degree course. However, the Government is ALWAYS late with contributions, therefore the student is expected to appear with one half of the first year's fee. This is refunded later along the way. Shabani needs \$650.00 urgently. He has done so well. If this seems like late notification it is because the Gov. is again always late in notifying the students. If you can assist with a contribution towards this need please send it through the Foundations, but also email me if possible so that I am readily aware of the situation.

Another young man in need is Leonard, a final year student at the Mvumi Hospital Clinical Officer Training College. This gentle young man has been to see me a number of times. Final exams are approaching, but he will not be permitted to sit unless he can fully cover, or at least significantly reduce, fees owing. His mother has used up all of her resources to assist him. His father is deceased. The need is for \$600.00, however all contributions will be much appreciated.

Photo: Peter Mayunga, now POP School Bus driver and myself, taken on the driveway of my old home in Billings, 2003.

May God bless you through all of your service.

John F. Naumann

Managing Director, ADO.

