

# Special Report from Makang'wa – July 2013



The following is a report written by Mrs. Daphne Merritt, sister to Fr. John, on the second last day of her visit to Makang'wa. Here we see her with her two French Musketees, two Uni. students from Paris who spent two days with us.

How thrilled I am to be visiting Amani at this time into its development. Most days I walk the dry, dusty path from the house to the farm. As I walk this path I pass through large dry thorn bushes, weeds and rocks, and I try to visualize that most of this land was in this condition when the journey of Amani commenced. Thorn bushes, huge and prickly, were all removed by hand to begin the farm which now is developing and producing luscious table grapes, wine grapes, sunflower, maize. There is also a sunflower oil press and two grain mills. (Maize growing with drip irrigation.)



I thank God for the many, many people from several countries who have and still do contribute to this project through donations, helping to provide the life giving water and all else needed to bring this center to life. A center which is now extending to become an education and training center for university and college students and graduates.



The people I have met are all beautiful in nature, respectful and hard working. It amazes me when I see the women carrying on their heads buckets of water, fire wood, bags of maize, etc., to fulfill their family's daily needs. They are so thankful for the life Amani is able to encourage – a better quality of life – and are hopeful of better things yet to come. The workers at Amani say they have become one big happy family, and they surely do lots of laughing!

One really has to live here to know what each day brings to this center, and to experience the help and relief it extends to people in real need, medically and financially. One can also sense the pain and sadness of the staff when they are unable to fulfill some of those needs.

Visitors to Amani, myself included, remark on the 'peace' Amani portrays. The house, set against a rocky mountain, with landscaped gardens and a myriad of winding paths, all made by people working for famine relief food and funds when Amani commenced, is a delight.

For me, this has been a life changing experience. To be with people, happy people, who have so little of the things we so frequently consider essential, is an inspiration. I have much more to share on my return to Australia.

Sincerely,

Daphne Merritt

(I could not resist this photo of Daphne collecting sunflower trash for the charcoal making process! Brother John)

