

Arriving back

Three months have come and gone since we've been back in PNG. Things do not happen as quickly as we would like at times. We were expecting to be getting back and immediately going on survey but because of the shortage of leadership here at the moment we were forced to wait. While we were waiting we were able to help out here on the base. I have been involved with making a database of all the languages and people groups here in the Highlands region of PNG. We hope that as more new missionaries come to PNG they will be able to access this information in order to see where the needier parts of PNG are. Did you know that there are over 100 languages in just five provinces in PNG? And there are 19 provinces!!!

Rachel has been involved in a day care programme for the children of the new missionary families here on our base. The new families are learning Pidgin English and spend a lot of their time going to the surrounding villages so it is a real help for them. We have also been working on plans for the kind of house that we will need when we get to the bush. Many missionaries tend to build houses that are different from the tribal people because they use their houses for schooling their children, office work and the like. Nationals on the other hand have separate buildings that include a house for sleeping in, a house for cooking in and a small toilet house. They hardly go into their houses during the day and rarely invite people in as they enjoy sitting down outside to chat and socialize.

Building a house in a tribal location takes a lot of time to prepare for. Andrew and I went to price up some materials at the local hardware stores. What would take about an hour at B&Q takes all day. Nothing has prices marked on it so we had to write down all the part numbers and give them to the assistants who spend hours typing the numbers into the computer to locate the price.



Sleeping quarters on survey



Our new dog Rusty

Another Survey

During August Ryan, Andrew and I went on a survey into North Waghi in Western Highlands Province. We did not have peace about going back to Kamea in Gulf Province that we had surveyed before because there are believers nearby that are able to reach these people. During our trip into North Waghi we visited many villages and shook hands with hundreds of people. These people do not have a Bible in their language although they do have churches that minister in Pidgin. The language is spoken by everyone and will not die out for many years to come. Some of the languages here in PNG will die out in the next 20 years or so as Pidgin English is the only language that children are learning near the big towns. The people in North Waghi were all very friendly and showed a great interest in us coming to work among them. There were people however who are only interested in us coming because it raises the profile of their village and because they want to improve the quality of their lives. It's hard to find anywhere in PNG where people do not have this kind of thinking.

BIG DECISION!!

We are standing at the brink of making a huge decision as a team. There is one village in particular that we have a big interest in moving to. They offered us ground to build our house on and there are a lot of people in the place. We need real wisdom from God to know if this is the right place for us to locate to. One of the doubts in our minds is the fact that Rachel's back is still not good and the villages in North Waghi can only be reached by bad roads. During the last survey it took us five hours to travel back to Goroka along roads that shook us around. It's hard for Rachel at the moment because we don't want to commit to a work with the other two families and then have to pull out in the next months or years because of her back. She is feeling under pressure because she knows that in one sense, the decision lies with her. On the other hand we are reluctant to cross North Waghi off our list and start all over again by going to another place. **So please pray** that the Lord will direct us and help us to walk by faith and not by sight. Everything hinges on this decision because should we decide that working in a village that is accessed by road is not an option, we will have to start looking at fly in locations.

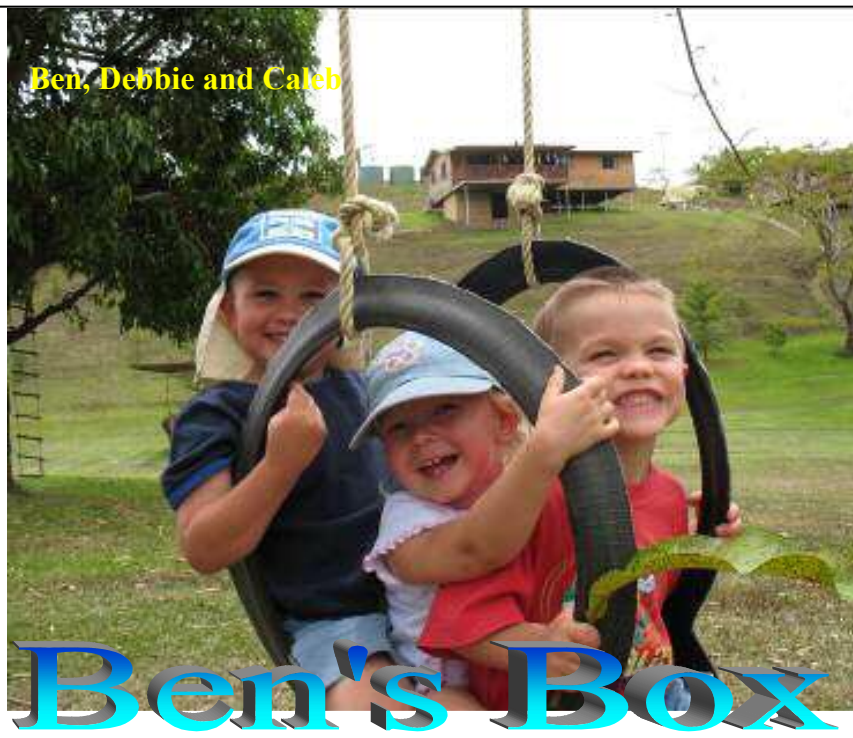
However, should we decide to locate to North Waghi, we will plan to go as a team back to this particular village and take our wives and children with us so that the people can see all of us at one time. We also want to take a further look at the ground that was offered so that we can finish our house building plans. One of the needs that we have as a team if we locate in North Waghi is a vehicle. It is unfortunate that vehicles do not depreciate in price very much and people sell cars over 10 years old for over half the price of buying a new one. **We would appreciate prayer** regarding the Lord's provision for a vehicle as we have to wisely manage our finances as a team so that we can buy the house building materials that we need and get them shipped into the tribe.

PNG Culture

We saw a really interesting event in one of the villages recently. A woman married to the village councillor had committed suicide. She was from another tribe and was his third wife. Usually, the dead person is wrapped and placed in a coffin in their house. All the local village people came to pay their respects and they sat down outside in large groups wailing and crying. During the day about 50 people arrived in small groups from the dead woman's tribe. It was interesting to see that whenever a new group arrived from the other tribe, all the village people started up the wailing and crying again. They have to show respect for the dead or the family of the dead person will sue them for compensation.

After a while the other tribal village leader got up and accused the villagers of not taking care of the dead woman so she killed herself. In PNG if someone from another tribe is hurt or dies among the people of another tribe, the whole village is held responsible and will be asked to pay compensation. Often these problems are sorted out by the payment of money and pigs. However, if the matter is not resolved, tribal fights can break out and many people can be hurt or even killed. Thankfully, this village court did not end up in a fight but a price was settled upon.

Ben, Debbie and Caleb



Ben's Box

Hi guys, this is Ben speaking. I love it back here in PNG! I am so outdoor boy. I especially like to take my new puppy for a walk but I often trip over his lead and he runs off with my Mam chasing after him which I think is very funny! I like to search for all kinds of bugs of which there are many here and I sometimes find out the hard way which ones you shouldn't pick up! I put 2 beetles together so that they can hiss and fight each other. I like to throw leaves in the banana spider's web to see if I can get him to move. The other day, Debbie and I were poking sticks at one of their webs and we knocked the spider down and he sure got us to move! I like to chalk pictures of my family on the porch outside and I like painting too. I still love my Mam to read to me all the time but I am learning my letters so that I can learn to read by myself too. I love listening to Bible stories and know all the right answers but find it hard to make all the right choices myself in life. I am learning different verses about being kind and being patient but it's easier to say them than to do it! I thank God every night that He loves us even though we do wrong and ask Him to help me make good choices.

Just Georgia!

Hi there everybody! I've now spent more of my life here in PNG than in the UK having arrived here when I was just 9 weeks old. I'm now 5 months old and am a happy baby as long as I'm fed. I smile a lot and laugh at my big brother too. I like to roll over and lie on the bed or outside on the grass and watch the clouds go by. I am just starting to reach out for things and especially like to try and grab my brother's face when he comes near to hug me!

- **Praise** the Lord that the other two families are so supportive and we have become good friends.
- **Praise** for safety in travel for Dan, Andrew and Ryan during the recent surveys.
- **Pray** for Rachel's continued back trouble and for the pressure that she's feeling regarding plans to locate to North Waghi or not.
- **Pray** for God's provision for a team vehicle
- **Pray** for wisdom in bringing our children up in the way of the Lord



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