

**Arrived at last!** We have finally left our “nest” in Goroka and arrived in the Western Highlands Province in our village. It was thrilling to drive along the roads towards our village and see all the people waving and shouting to us welcoming us. When we arrived at our houses we got out of the car and a large crowd came to shake our hands and welcome us. We hired two trucks to carry our household possessions and thank the Lord all the stuff arrived in one piece except for a broken mirror!! The road condition has gradually worsened and we were wondering how the journey would affect Rachel’s back. But we’re glad to say that she didn’t suffer any ill effects and has been able to travel around in the car without causing her too much discomfort for which we are also very grateful.

Another praise to God is that the kids have settled in very well. Before we left the NTM base in Goroka Ben was really enjoying himself with some of the other missionary children and we thought that the move here would be hard for him. However he hasn’t been talking about his time at the base a whole lot and has been getting to know the local children. It’s amusing to hear him yelling out to everyone who passes by the house trying to speak their new language.

For the first two weeks in the village we spent most of our time finishing off the bigger building projects and getting the houses sorted out. We now have solar panels powering our houses, a solar hot water heater and we collect rainwater from off the roof so I guess you could say that we are pretty eco friendly!



**One of our local bridges**

**← Our Removal Lorry**

**The BIG mumu!** Nothing in PNG is free! During house building many people helped us out in various ways. Some of them brought food while others helped us with the construction work. It’s very cultural to have what is called a ‘mumu’ when house building is finished to say thank you to the people that helped. A traditional mumu involves killing some pigs and cooking them along with lots of vegetables in a hole in the ground. Andrew and I bought four pigs and 20 chickens and our neighbours brought loads of sweet potato, tapioca, and some other types of veggies. Firstly firewood is found and stones are heated on the fire. The women prepared all the veggies while the men did this and also killed the pigs with a swift blow to the head. If the pig has a really thick layer of fat then they recognise what a good job the women who looked after it has done. The fat is indeed the best part to them but believe us they eat every part and we mean every part! (You can email us for more gory details!) The very hot stones are placed in the hole and the veggies and meat laid on top of them followed by banana leaves and then some water poured in. About 2 hours later and it is ready. We had been around the area inviting the people who had helped us to come to the mumu. Basically in this culture if someone does something for you, you are indebted to them until you can pay it back in some way. So everyone who helped us in any way had a share in the mumu. All the local head men were invited too so that they too would be happy with us working in their community and it gave us a great chance to explain again why we are here. The food was shared out to the head men first after different speeches and thanks given. They also got a can of coke each which is definitely not traditional but popular now! We families were then presented with a large lump of fat from the pig which we ate to show that we were now belonging to this family clan. The women then started to whoop and holler and came and hugged us all

**Preparing the Mumu**

**Sharing the Food**



# Election time!

It's election time at the moment and the whole of the Highlands seems to be in a political frenzy. Many of the men in our village spend their time doing little else but following their political candidate around from place to place. Cars with speakers attached to them drive around all the villages blaring out their messages trying to get people's votes. Unlike the UK all the people in a community vote for one candidate. If someone in the community doesn't vote for the chosen man his life is under threat and his house and possessions will be destroyed by the angry villagers. Voting day is just a few days away so we have been told to lie low in our village for the next few weeks until the winners are declared. Please be praying for our safety as we have to travel from time to time and there is a risk of fighting between opposing political parties. Because of the danger of travel during these days, we have decided to try and buy six weeks worth of shopping from Mt Hagen town (about an hours drive away). Hopefully by the end of July it will be safe for us to travel again. Just a few weeks ago a big fight broke out in Mt Hagen and a couple of people were killed. We were due to go shopping that day but we delayed the trip because someone came to visit us. So we give thanks to the Lord that He is in control and is our protection.

## Ben's Box



A Typical Political Rally

## Just Georgia



Haa! I am now walking around but resort back to speed crawling when Mama finds me pulling out things that I am not allowed! I also love to be outside on the porch waving to the people which they love and watching the local dogs and the pig next door too, which I call 'pi-pi.' I understand the words for 'shake hands' in the local language and am happy to do so. My newest trick is blowing kisses to Mama and Dada. Sometimes Ben and I go in the swing together but I prefer to skateboard across the porch on my knees. I love to paddle in the river too, but hate being dipped in at the end to be washed down! Brrrr!

I love our new house – I have my own jungle bedroom now and a swing on the back porch too! I love to stand on the porch and shout greetings to the people; I'm even trying in their language which the people think is great. After a couple of days here, I taught the local children 'tag' and 'hide and seek.' I sat outside on a pile of stones the other day and sang out loud 'Jesus loves the little children' and also told one of the mums that we had been praying for her little boy who had been sick. I wonder if anyone had ever told her that before?

We have a school room now too. I have learned the alphabet names and sounds and capitals too and Mammy says my writing is coming on well. But my favourite lesson is science; I especially love experiments. We live near a river which I love to visit on the weekends. I have also started climbing some of the mountains too and am so happy when we get to the top so I can have a snack!

- **Praise** that God has opened the door for us to work in North Wahgi.
- **Praise** that Rachel's back has not worsened during the journey to North Wahgi.
- **Praise** and continue to **Pray** for safety on the roads, especially during election time.
- **Praise** and continue to **Pray** for time settling in, especially the children.
- **Pray** for good relationships with village folk and that we will reflect the Lord in all that we do so that the Gospel may not be hindered.



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