



16th Dec 2011

Special points of interest:

- Chairperson's report
- Breaking news!
- Pics from functions held during the year
- Announcements



Gregory in Alotau going to school

"Don't waste a minute not being happy. If one window closes, run to the next window – or break down a door."



Chairperson's End of Year Report

It has been a busy year for the PNG Wantoks Group . We officially got the Wantoks Group up and running early this year and have held a number of fundraisers. Our big function of the year was the PNG Independence Celebrations.

The Committee decided early on in the year to do something different, so when we heard that the Niigana Band from PNG was interested in coming to Melbourne and performing at our Independence Dinner Dance, we were excited. After initial consultation with John Wennal and some of the band members we sent them an official invitation to come to Melbourne and play at the our function. The Wantoks Group provided hospitality with the support from other students & residents.

The Band played at our Independence Dinner Dance at the Aboriginal Advancement League Hall in Thornbury on the 17th September, 2011. The event was successful and everyone had a wonderful time and danced the night away till around 1.30am.

Thanks to all the band members, namely: *Francisco Palin , Benjamin Palin , Freddy Maneo, Nigel Golu, John Yass Jr , Jimmy Piriri , Bruce Aisa, Alfred Tukai , Clelland Tukana.* for making our night a

memorable one.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and participation in the independence celebrations. Special thanks to our guest speakers on the night:

Governor David Anderson, Rotary District 9790, Julie Kep, student at RMIT and David Barnes of Rotary District of 9800.

Also big thank you goes to the Chisholm Tafe Students Dance Group that performed on the night and a special mention of our MC on the night, our wantok, Geline.

This has been a full year for us as a group so to recap; here's some updates on families we were able to provide some assistance to:

Gregory Jack, the young boy from Parneati island near Misima in the Milne Bay province of PNG, came down last year to start a series of operations, as he had Cruzon's Syndrome which meant that his skull had stopped growing but his brain continued to grow resulting in a slow death for him if left untreated. Rotary International (ROMAC) brought Gregory and his uncle Paison to Melbourne for the operations at the Royal Children's Hospital.

Gregory looks so much better now than he did when he first arrived, and the first thing he did when he went back to Alotau, was to go back to School. Gregory is not finished with his operations and ROMAC will bring him back in 2012 for the second part of his operation. Gregory and Paison will be staying with members of the Wantoks Group and both are looking forward to coming back and catching up with all the friends they made during their stay here.

Vai Maina, was another young man ROMAC brought down in July/August of 2011. The Wantoks were happy to meet and provide some moral support and assistance to Vai and his dad. Prof Rosenfeld removed Vai's tumour which was growing behind his eye in an epic 6 hour operation at the Alfred Hospital. After recovering from the operation, he and his dad were able to return home to Boera village just outside Port Moresby.

Betty Isikel; was another lovely Wantok we provided assistance to. At that time she was a Student at Swinburne University at the Lillydale Campus. Betty developed bleeding behind her eyes due to complications arising from diabetes. Due to some technicalities, the insurance company would not
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BREAKING NEWS! - PNG Government in Turmoil and an Earthquake

It all started when the Supreme Court decided Somare was still the Prime Minister.

"Crowds are descending on Papua New Guinea's

Parliament House as the country's leadership impasse worsens, with Peter O'Neill demanding the Governor-General swear him in as the prime minister.

Early today, Governor-General Michael Ogio reinstated Sir Michael Somare as prime minister and swore in his new 19-member cabinet, as directed by the Supreme Court.

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Vai after his operation



Betty

Never regret. If it's good, it's wonderful. If it's bad, it's experience.
- Victoria Holt

Chairperson's report cont..

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pay for the operation that she needed to stop the bleeding and Betty had to pay for it herself. This is hard enough when you are working, but when you are here on a Student Visa and studying, it is even harder. We were able to assist Betty during her operation and after her operation. The operation went well, but as Betty's sight hadn't improved, she decided to postpone her studies and returned home to PNG. Betty is doing well and still hopes to return to continue her studies in the future.

Another **Student family** (name withheld) that we provided some support and assistance to earlier in the year was again due to a medical condition that

the insurance company declined to pay for, as in this case, they deemed it to be a pre-existing condition. Unfortunately the family were not aware of this before they came to Australia, but in the end all went well. The child underwent a number of operations and treatments and so far so good. The child will continue to need monitoring for a number of years but is doing very well.

Wantoks Group continues to keep an eye out for visitors from PNG and make them feel welcome.

To those students who have graduated this year and will now be going back to PNG, we wish them well and

congratulate them on their achievements.

Two of our Committee Members, Bessie Maruia and Gelinde Narekine are amongst those who have graduated and are heading back to PNG. We thank them for their assistance to the Wantoks Group throughout the year and look forward to working with them in PNG.

So after quite a busy year we will take a break over Christmas and New Year.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year 2012.

Linda Koerner, Chairperson of Wantoks Group VIC

Pics from the Independence Dinner Dance featuring the Niigana Band from PNG



Niigana—take it away!



Madline and her boys .. Cute!

Airlines PNG Dash 8 Plane Crash Testimony

This year a catastrophic event happened in the history of PNG—a **major** plane crash. We watched in horror and fascination as the deadly event unfolded—the crash of the Dash 8 Plane that was full of par-

ents en-route to beautiful Madang. It could have been any of us. What a tearful and sorrowful moment it was to all PNGians and everyone alike.

In memory of that fateful crash, here is a moving piece

written by someone who lost a mother:

“Often times we don’t know how much a person is worth until they are gone.

Read this poem that was written by a DWU student for the parents that perished.

MAMA

By Jimmy Drekore

Dedicated to the DWU students who lost their parents in the plane crash

"You told me
you were coming
I didn't eat
I didn't sleep
I arrived
before the rest
looking into the skies
waiting in my best
with joy in my eyes
I waited, waited and waited
My heart became empty
Like the skies ahead
My eyes became blurry
With no signs ahead
Tears slowly descended
When I heard you went down
In a ball of flame
I wanted to drown
Just the same
I refused
To hear
It must not be you
My biggest fear
Came true
You told me
You were coming
Yes mummy
You did
But I didn't know
You would come in the wind"

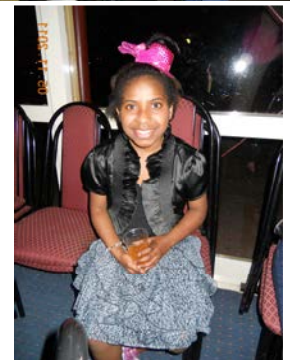


Seen anything like it? A river on a river. Amazing!
The Incredible Magdeburg Water Bridge in Germany

Christmas Giving

If you are stuck for ideas, consider a mosquito net for a child in PNG.. Check out the Kokoda Trek Foundation website:

<http://www.kokodatrackfoundation.org/krismasgiving/default.aspx>



Wasu—one of our best dressed kid winner at our end of year function.

BREAKING NEWS! - PNG Government in Turmoil and an Earthquake Cont..

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But this morning, supporters of Mr O'Neill passed a motion on the floor of Parliament, the second day they attended Parliament as the government, that Mr Ogio arrive by 2pm (3pm AEDT) to swear Mr O'Neill in as prime minister.

The build-up to this political showdown has meant two days of political wrangling that PNG pundits predict could

drag on for days as neither side is willing to abide. “

Source: <http://www.smh.com.au/world/crowds-gather-as-png-crisis-worsens-20111214-1ou35.html>

Dec 14—Whilst all that was going on, a serious earthquake shook Port Moresby.

“7.3 earthquake, eastern New Guinea Reg, Papua New Guinea. Dec 14 3:04pm at

epicenter 8m ago, 87km SS “

We have to wonder where our country is headed.

All Wantoks—please put your heads together and pray for a peaceful resolution to this problem.

Announcements!

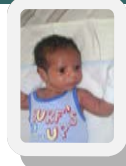
17.11.2011—Congratulations to the Sagata family who welcomed to the world their cute little boy, Wanneli.

Congratulations also to John and Balbina Jambert and family who welcomed baby **Percy** into this world a few weeks ago. Percy could not wait to enter this world and actually arrived a few weeks earlier than planned and Mum and Baby are doing well.

Psst .. A little birdie told me that Linda celebrated a milestone .. **Her 50th birthday 4.11.2011. Happy 50th Linda.**

17.12.2011—Happy Birthday Paul. Another year wiser! :)

24.12.2011—Happy Birthday Thomas! Double pressies.. Woohoo!



Wanneli



A toast to Linda

Up and coming Events!

Christmas Koorie Night Market, Dec 17 Northcote TownHall 4pm-7pm

Jan 2012—Members BBQ - TBA

9/2/2012—FREE public forum—Whose country is it anyway? 6:30pm Sydney Myer Asia Centre, Melb Uni.

Farewell but we'll see you again soon!

Farewell to all the students who have finished their studies and are heading back home to PNG. We wish you all the best in all your endeavours.

Special mention to our esteemed Wantoks: **Bessie Maruia** and **Gelinde Narekine**. It was a pleasure to have met you wonderful people and will be sad to see you leave Melbourne for sunny PNG, but we will surely keep in touch. Or, there is always Facebook. :)

Titbit: Languages of PNG

Papua New Guinea. 6,070,000. Papuan 78%, Melanesian 20%. National or official languages: Hiri Motu, Tok Pisin, English. 600 islands. Literacy rate: 32%–43%. Also includes Chinese, and languages of the Philippines and India.

Information mainly from J. Anceaux 1961; L. Carrington 1996;

K. Franklin 1968; A. Healey 1964; B. Hooley 1971; B. Hooley and K. McElhanon 1970; K. McElhanon 1970, 1978; M. Ross 1988; G. Sankoff 1968; R. Shaw 1973, 1981; SIL 1971-2008; S. Wurm and S. Hattori 1981; J. Z'Graggen 1969, 1971, 1975.

Blind population: 12,500. **The number of individual languages**

listed for Papua New Guinea is 841. Of those, 830 are living languages and 11 have no known speakers.

Source: http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=PG



Any new students looking for furniture, consider checking out Ebay www.ebay.com.au.

If you need help collecting your furniture after wining your bid, contact the Wantoks Group and we'll find someone to assist.

Merry Christmas

We wish everyone and a wonderful Christmas and a bright, safe and a prosperous new Year, 2012!

We hope to see you all in the new year for another fun and exciting new year!



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The Wantoks Group of Victoria is a community volunteer group, made up of students and residents who have a similar vision of helping our fellow countrymen whether they be students, residents or visitors to Melbourne by providing moral support and guidance as well as referrals to other groups and services to those in need.