

New Haven Senior Trip . . . continued

and laughter have no language barrier. Her amusement with us soon had her shrieking with laughter, and us with her! Thus the last hours of our journey passed, with hand motions, mutilated Spanish, and gales of laughter.

We were greeted in Naranjo by Earl and Hettie ➔

Staff Departures

Roy and Miriam Biehn have served in Guatemala for the past three years and have been a great blessing to the work here. Roy served as business administrator and was very careful in his office management and the general administration of the business and financial end of the mission work. At this point no one has come to Guatemala to replace him in the role of business administrator. Miriam was also a blessing to the work, helping out with children's classes in the park and with many various jobs that came her way. We greatly appreciate the work you both have done here in Guatemala and although you are greatly missed, we wish you the Lord's blessing as you continue to serve Him and seek His will for your lives in Canada.

Janet Meyers also served in Guatemala for nearly three years, working as a nurse in the clinic in El Naranjo. She returned to the States at the end of June. We appreciate the dedication she put into the work here and thank her for all her efforts and for the blessing she has been to those around her.

Earl and Hettie Barnhart returned home after serving for five months in El Naranjo, working with the people, being houseparents to the clinic staff, and helping out in the Santa Rosita church work. God bless you both for the time you have spent in His service. Thank you for what you have done.

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Barnhart, who hosted most of the group for the next five days. Three boys stayed with Daniel and Dora Eby. Later that day we all traveled upriver by boat to Santa Rosita for supper and an evening service.

Micah Rutt, Danlyn Sensenig, and Austin Weaver got a taste of Guatemalan culture as they helped with the huge project of replacing the thatch on the mission house roof and helped a native brother cut firewood Guatemalan style—with a machete!

The rest of the group was involved in everyday activities of missionary life and local culture. The girls were each placed in separate native homes for part of a day, where they helped with whatever housework the mother could communicate for them to do. They also helped in the clinic. Scrubbing dirty clothing out in the *pila* was truly Guatemalan style! The girls all decided they wanted a *pila* at home too! Cooking, baking, and sewing a comfort top for a neighbor lady were also part of the week's activities.

Cleaning the house where the thatch roof was torn off gave opportunity to observe the process of re-thatching the roof. As Heather energetically wiped out a cabinet, she unknowingly cleaned a scorpion. Not appreciating its bath, the scorpion protested. Heather's quick reflexes kept her from harm, and a can of spray eliminated further encounters with the scorpion.

Earl and David made several concrete sewer lids to replace missing ones. The clinic girls also have a nicely organized storage room thanks to the shelves the men made and installed for them.

What a blessing to worship with believers of another culture! We serve the same God, and with Him, there is no language barrier! God understood the prayers in both Spanish and English in Sunday afternoon's prayer meeting. We had the privilege of attending three services in Santa Rosita, giving each of the boys the experience of having devotions, and David the chance to preach a sermon through an interpreter.

Our visit to Guatemala was very enjoyable, though short, but we got a glimpse of the daily lives of the missionaries and the native people among whom they live and work. One student put it well, "I learned more about Guatemala this past week than if I'd have studied it in school for a month!"

David and Dianne Sensenig

Guatemala, Central America

MENNONITE Air MISSIONS

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" Psalm 126:5.

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San Andrés

The church of San Andrés, planted deep in the mountains of the Quiché department of Guatemala, was one of Mennonite Air Mission's first outreach efforts. While the church in Guatemala City began before this one, the main reason for the work in the City was to provide a centralized location to begin spreading out to various parts of Guatemala.

The San Andrés church, named "Bet-el," began over forty years ago in 1973. Harold Kauffman had spent much time in prayer, poring over maps of Guatemala and seeking the Lord's will for a place to start an outreach. He felt the Lord leading him to San Andrés, so he asked a missionary pilot to fly him to Canillá, the closest place they could land a plane, and from there he took a truck to San Andrés to investigate this new area.

José Luis del Valle (Harold Kauffman's son-in-law) was the first missionary to move into the area and he lived there until 1981. During the first year a young local man in his upper twenties accepted the Lord and in 1974 was baptized and joined the church. This man's name was Ismael Quiñonez. About ten years later he was ordained to the ministry and has served in that capacity ever since. The church had ten members when he was ordained in the mid 1980s.

Ismael has served for many years as the sole pastor of this congregation. Many times he has felt lonely in the work, but he has kept on. Throughout the years, various men from within the congregation have helped him as lay leaders, but were not ordained. The overseeing bishop and ministers from other congregations would also come over to help on occasion. Currently Rosalío Cabrera, a local member, is contributing to the ministry.

San Andrés was home to the first mission-owned airstrip, which was used until around the year 2000. Today it is no longer in use.

Nearly twelve families belonged to the church before the civil war. More than half of those families left during that time, but Ismael continued to live there, guarding their houses and traveling on foot to



Ismael Quiñonez (center rear)
and the church at San Andrés.

other churches, such as Mixcolajá, to give spiritual support during this time. In his own words he says, "If I suffer, it will be together with my brethren. God protected us then, and has to this day."

Today there are fifteen members in the church. Many have left because of the lack of employment in the community. Others have chosen to join other evangelical churches that sprang up in town. There are only a few youth here, but Ismael hopes to start instruction class with two of them shortly.

Pray that this church would continue faithfully in the path of the Lord. Pray for God's help, that in the future others would want to be a part of the church. Pray that those who remain would be faithful, though they be few.



The San Andrés chapel sits along the main street in town.

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EDITORIAL

Anonymous

Is It Safe?

Beside a street in Canada's capital, a Muslim youth assured me that while he respects Jesus as a historical figure and prophet, Jesus definitely was not God. Years later in a Walmart, a Muslim employee said, "In our home the name of Jesus is always held in honor. He was a sacred prophet and we revere Him as such."

Both of these young men did something that is very easy for us to do in our daily lives. They respected Jesus—even recognized that He was great. But Son of God? That was too much for their thinking. It would knock Allah and Mohammad off their pedestal. No way. Too dangerous.

Is Jesus too dangerous for you? Is the Sermon on the Mount too tough? Have you tried it and it does not work? Does it knock your existence uncomfortably close to the edge of your safety zone? After all, Jesus was not an apparent success. He didn't drive a sleek, late model chariot from Egypt. He didn't even own a donkey, much less anything that wanted to pull a chariot. No house. No bed. The chickens and sparrows at least had roosts when the sun set. Jesus? Just more people to heal, or a cold, lonely mountain in which to pray, or the damp grass under a tree on which to sleep. Perhaps he lodged in a friend's house once in a while. A dangerous example? Absolutely. A balanced, safe life? No.

But He was the One Job was longing to see! He was David's Song. Isaiah's prophetic Light. Abraham's perfect Lamb. The Messiah! Emanuel. The Old Testament's Dream-Come-True!

And He is the STAR of the New Testament. Who else did Paul and Peter preach, imitate, live, eat, and sleep but the person and work of Jesus? Who did George Muller, J. Hudson Taylor, and D. L. Moody follow? Jesus! Of whom did A. W. Tozer preach and Amy Carmichael write? Jesus, the crucified life, and the continual gaze of faith upon . . . JESUS. Don't make heroes out of any of these men or women. Give yourself and your future to Jesus like they did. Do not be content to nibble at the snack bar of some human writer; step up yourself and ask for your meat, milk, and manna. Drink deep from the Living Water. Focus yourself on the Focus of Heaven—Jesus.

Are we open to accepting Jesus' wisdom for our own lives, or do we want the rewards of a

faith-filled life without the sacrifices? Do we sweetly sing, *O Beautiful Star of Bethlehem, Shine On* as long as the Star doesn't penetrate too deeply into our self-life? Do I want to continue my smug, protected life as long as I have enough warmth and light to "get by" while Jesus' cross so clearly speaks of a painful, violent end for *my self*?

Is Jesus to be trusted with my future? With my relationships? My wallet?

Muslims are hard to reach because of their refusal to accept Christ as God. In their minds that would automatically dethrone Mohammad as God's ultimate prophet. But do we accept Him and His uncompromising terms of discipleship? Are we protecting ourselves from the implications of Jesus as LORD?

After preaching the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus began to live three years of perfect obedience to His own message. THAT is wisdom—*skill for living*—not filler for the head. We accept the book of Proverbs as divinely inspired, but the difference between Solomon's life and Jesus' life is night and day. Do we accept Jesus' financial advice or do we like the looks of Solomon's financial legacy better? Do we agree with Jesus' teaching on love in His famous sermon? Do we see unconditional love as necessary wisdom when brother-in-law is a pain in the neck, or when the lazy neighbour can't get done pointing out things that need improvement on our property? Is unconditional love necessary for the brother in the church that is flexible as granite—opposing our vision and advice at every turn? Is Jesus' love our wisdom—our *skill for living*?

Are we following Jesus' wisdom for fasting? He said *when* we fast, not *if*. Ouch.

How about His wisdom in relation to giving? Are we giving in secret? Do we gain any recognition at the benefit auction? Are we giving anonymously?

Are our prayers fervent and simple in public? Long and fervent in private?

Is our speech straightforward, honest, and sincere?

Dare we modify or ignore the wisdom of the Son who holds almost every worthwhile title in the universe except "Father"? May we fall on Him and be broken!

Safe? No. And yet, what safer place is there?

WATER Reports

Hello to all from the WATER Team! On July 1, 2014 we arrived in Guatemala City and were warmly welcomed by houseparents Dave and Linda, affectionately called Grandpa and Grandma! The weather there was surprisingly cooler than we expected.

From July 2 through 5 we spent our time in language study. After those few short days our brains were wearied from all the words and phrases we had crammed in. At times we felt that learning Spanish was impossible, but those few days helped break down language barriers between us and the Guatemalans. The next few days we spent at headquarters doing cleaning projects, cooking with native ladies, and general work where needed.

On July 8, we girls packed up and drove eight hours with Douglas and Kristina to El Chal. After a night's stay, we had the great privilege of taking a *microbus* into El Naranjo. The *microbus* was a good experience and forced us to trust the driver to drop us off in the right place. Earl and Hettie welcomed us into their home for a few days to see how they live and operate there. Our first surprise was the big change in temperature! El Naranjo is a very hot part of the country and the electricity only worked when the generator was on. While there we went to El Mango with the clinic girls to hand out tracts, visited the Mayan ruins, helped Chad and Amalia put cement on the inside walls of the church, and helped Hettie pack up their belongings.

Early on July 14 we girls packed up again and bused back to El Chal to spend a few days helping there. We had the opportunity to shadow some missionaries and help in their day-to-day routines. This included cooking, cleaning houses, teaching English class, Bible clubs, grocery shopping, clinic work, spending the morning in native homes, and prayer meetings. We also had the chance to go to Tikal to see the Mayan ruins and climb on some of the temples there.

On July 22 we packed up and said good-bye to our newfound friends and took a big bus back into the city. The big bus was an interesting ride. The music was definitely not upbuilding and made the day seem lots longer; thankfully, we were able to give the bus driver a Christian CD, and he played it for an hour! It was a great reprieve to hear Christian music and it helped to make the bus ride enjoyable!

In Guatemala City we participated in work projects like painting a roof, cleaning at headquarters, washing dishes, making doughnuts, and much more. We also got to do some fun things such as hiking the Pacaya Volcano, going to the ocean, and shopping in the tourist market.



WATER students, left to right:
Marita Schrock, Lydia Landis, Jolene Zimmerman,
Ruth Bucher, Juanita Landis, Erwin Hostetler

We had a good time staying and helping in Guatemala! Our time seemed short, thanks to all the things the staff had for us to do. We want to thank all the MAM staff for your welcoming attitudes, flexibility, and willingness to stop everything and answer questions! God's blessing on all of you!

New Haven Senior Trip

Taking a group of seven high school seniors from New Haven Mennonite School to Guatemala, having never been there and knowing no Spanish, was a bit stretching!

We arrived in Guatemala on April 29, and had the remainder of the day for orientation, exploring MAM headquarters, and refreshing ourselves. After receiving good instructions about bus travel, we were taken to the bus station to begin our overnight twelve-hour commute to El Naranjo. Tickets purchased and good-byes said, we were left to fend for ourselves. We suddenly felt helpless and alone in the small station crowded with strange people. Then we realized that WE were the strange people, speaking a "funny" language! The guard with his big gun was a bit unnerving in the darkness of our first night in Guatemala, but we soon learned that this is not an uncommon sight.

We successfully switched buses in Santa Elena and boarded a minibus headed for El Naranjo. The last four hours of our journey seemed shortened by the bus driver's little daughter. Giving her a pack of gummies helped her overcome her shyness. We couldn't communicate with many words, but smiles

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