

Bunda, Tanzania, 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015

To all my friends and supporters,

**“We accidentally had a fight. It was an accident. We are sorry. Now we are friends. We are worried that the discipline meeting on Friday will decide to send us home. But we promise we won’t fight again. It was an accident”** . My chaplain’s office is always open for girls at Bunda Girls Secondary School. (BGSS) This was one of the more unusual pastoral issues presented to me. I was a little puzzled about how a fight could be an “accident”, but they assured me it was the case!

I don’t think the two girls really need to worry about being sent home. They are both in Form 2 and bright students. **All teachers and students are very focused on preparing Form 2 for our first external government exams at the end of the year.** We have the “Mock” exams at the end of August with the final exams in November.

**Building has begun again at BGSS** in preparation for an increase in enrolments next year with a new Form 1 of 100 girls. The dormitory foundations are looking good, but work is considerably hampered by not enough water on the site. We need the dormitory to be completed by January, and also the roof on the Dining Hall.



A supply of clean drinking water for the girls has been an ongoing challenge at the school but thanks to the amazing generosity of the team of young people from UK, a rain water tank is under construction.

**I mentioned in my last email that a team of 12 young people was coming to live next door to me in the Archer’s house for 3 weeks. They are from an organization called GoMAD (Go Make A Difference) based in UK.** Their primary projects were building a toilet block at the Bible College and financing the building of a Posho Mill at the Boys Brigade Centre. But they were also enthusiastic Christians wanting to have a ministry with young people as well. **So we have been delighted and blessed by their contribution at the BGSS** (games, health teaching, English reading and more), **GB Centre** (health teaching, net ball matches, meals together, and just hanging out and getting to know them), and the **Shalom Kindergarten** (every day for 3 weeks they helped with some wonderful creative teaching and fun with the children). It was such a wonderful surprise at the end of their visit when they announced their intention to **build a water tank at BGSS** and on their last day the building materials arrived, the GoMAD team began the work and then handed it over to a team of builders to complete. I’ve also enjoyed getting to know the team – mostly university students looking to Jesus as he guides them in their lives as they serve him.



**Would you rather have 3 months with no water, or 3 weeks with no ATM?** I think I would probably choose to forego the ATM but actually I didn't have a choice as we have had neither functioning in Bunda and are still waiting to see which will return first. With the water crisis coinciding with the dry season, the dwindling supplies of rain water are much too precious to use for washing clothes or flushing toilets. The well in my courtyard has helped a bit in the crisis, but we have also had to buy water which is brought up to us on a trolley pushed by enterprising young men, each trolley holding ten 20 litre containers. It's some time since I have been up to Musoma, but with the only ATM in Bunda not functioning and this certainly not being a cashless society, it looks like a visit to Musoma will become a necessity this week. (Actually we also have no electricity today but hopefully that is very temporary).



**In June and July, GB camps** were held at various locations including Shinyanga, Bunda and Mugumu. As Chaplain of GB Tanzania I was invited to open the camp at Migungani. It was very encouraging to find 125 girls and Officers from 5 different villages gathered together for a weekend of fun and fellowship in Jesus. Many had walked up to 20 km to attend the camp. At the end of the camp I gave the Kunzugu contingent a lift home - as 26 of them crowded into my car they were very grateful to be spared the 20 km walk home.



As we begin the month of August I can now say that **next month I will be coming to Australia**. Another 8 weeks here to be ready for that. I have a long list of tasks to complete for BGSS, GB Centre and Shalom Kindergarten so please pray that I will get all that done in good time and without feeling too much pressure.

I will depart here on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, arriving in Sydney on September 25<sup>th</sup>. This will be my **final Home Assignment as a full time CMS missionary** and I look forward to visiting all my link churches to thank them for their support over the last 34 years. It will also be opportunity to share in some other meetings and of course to attend CMS Missionaries' Conference and CMS Summer School in Katoomba in January. That will be my final "appearance" as I "retire".

I'm looking forward to the next stage of my life in "retirement". **I will return to Bunda on January 14<sup>th</sup>** to be here for the beginning of term at BGSS, GB Centre and Shalom Kindergarten where I will continue my ministries. I also look forward to moving into my new house which is nearing completion. (the next step is plastering the walls inside and out – this has also been held up because of the Bunda water crisis). **I will continue to be in partnership with CMS as a missionary "Serving In Retirement"**. This will mean I will continue to have prayer support and pastoral care but without financial support. I am thankful that I am in a position to do this and hope for many more years serving God here in Mara.

**What is happening in the Mara Diocese?** Many of us would like an answer to this question. We are still waiting for the Delegation from the Provincial Office of the Anglican church here, to come and investigate the challenges made concerning the outcome of the recent Bishop Election Synod. Meantime the Diocese continues to function under the leadership of the Vicar General, Rev Canon Stephen Bwire. The longer this interim continues the more time there is for murmuring and unrest but most people are focusing on continuing with ministry and praying for peace and unity to prevail.

Thank you for your support and encouragement in so many ways

Love and prayers from Helen