

NEWSLETTER PHILIPPINES

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Notes from a voyage: March 2012

Glen Knight

“Going below to check on my wife and child laying in the forward berth asleep, I couldn’t bear to awaken them...”



Paula stepping from Nativia to the pier across the mid-section of an old boat being scrapped out in SAFI Shipyard following our adventurous week on Balut Island.

The sound the engine made at first was head-turning...the kind of thing that one only hopes is not chronic but perhaps somehow, just quirky for the moment. Passing minutes were spent checking and rechecking oil levels and pressure, water levels, transmission fluid levels...anything that could be an indicator of the source of the unusual sound in the big Cummins’ otherwise hypnotic rhythm. It was 12:30 AM a little over half-way along a fifteen hour reach to Balut Island, Monday, March 5, 2012.

I have often wondered what we would do should our engine fail at sea. We have prepared ourselves for that eventuality with good communication equipment and a strong sea anchor, but to be faced with the probability on a dark, rainy night and windy sea, too far along to turn back and too far still to reach a safe haven, the reality of what can happen sets in, leaving a sick feeling in the pit of the stomach. The time was now 1:15 AM.

Going below to check on my wife and child laying in the forward berth asleep, I couldn’t bear to awaken them with the alarm that was beginning to develop among the Captain, the crew, some of the team members and myself. While below near the engine room, once again the strange noise...klak, klak, klak in rapid succession and much more loudly than before, reverberated through the wooden hull of Nativia like an odd drum beat. This time the noise signaled real problems developing inside the Cummins and with that she was quickly slowed to idle and the gear pushed to neutral. With a strong southerly wind on our nose and current running opposite, the swells and chop off Point Lawa reduced our forward momentum to a sloppy pitch and yaw. As rain pelted the vessel in steady sheets the decision was made to engage the gear at idle speed to regain control and keep Nativia on her heading...then we prayed.

Looking back through the years, there are times when God has demonstrated His power to answer prayer in such profound ways that it almost surprises us. But then, why should we be surprised? He promised to hear us and to answer the prayer of faith. His answer came this time through dramatically shifting the wind...suddenly and strongly astern of Nativia at seventeen knots. The crew swung the cargo boom abaft the vessel to put all surface possible in the wind and with following seas, our forward speed at engine idle for steering control, developed 6.2 knots. Thank God for answered prayer! Nativia’s head was brought about as we reached the narrow channel that runs into Port Maveas, Balut Island some five hours after the engine failure and we moored her safely to the pier having reached our intended harbor. With work to be done, a hearty breakfast was prepared and consumed by all aboard and a high spirit of anticipation of what the Lord would do among us emerged as we stepped ashore.

The days following found us working to accomplish our goals for the week. (See photos and articles on the following pages.) The difficulties of the first leg of the voyage helped to strengthen our faith and resolve in serving the Lord through aiding the people of Balut Island. The assistance of our brethren from Barangay Lipol on the western shore of the island was welcomed as we completed the roofing of the new church house in Maveas, distributed many Bibles and conducted as much evangelism as possible. What remained for us was to make a plan for our departure at the end of the week with a hobbled engine and a long reach to the nearest port, General Santos City, seven hours to the north at the head of Sarangani Bay. —To be continued.

Strength for the Laborers Conference 2012



Pastor Bob Spears of Mission Home Baptist Church, Wewoka, Oklahoma.

The 16th Annual Strength for the Laborers Conference was conducted at Faith Baptist Church, Davao City during the week of February 27-March 2. There were 140 churches represented from throughout the Philippines. Our conference theme this year was, "Our God is a Mountain Mover." The highlight of the meeting once again was the Wednesday evening concert of the PMBS-AIT Choir under the direction of the seminary choir conductor, Paula Knight with the assistance of Pastor Lony Babilonio.



Paula and Pastor Nelmar Sumatra, two of the musicians for the Bible conference.



Our guest speakers this year included Pastor Michael Reese and his wife Karen of Promise Land Baptist Church, Hamburg, Arkansas and Pastor Bob Spears of Mission Home Baptist Church, Wewoka, Oklahoma, pictured to the left together with Dan Houser also of Wewoka. Not in the photograph are Pastor Roger Babilonio from Iloilo, Philippines and Pastor Abner Tuazon from Luzon, Philippines. More information and photos from the conference will be included in our next *Newsletter Philippines*.

Progress Update: Balut Island Building Project

The months of February and March have seen great strides forward in our building project at Port Maveas, Balut Island. Two Remote Island Ministries voyages have been completed to this island in the northern Celebes Sea with work crews aboard to erect the church building. The first voyage was to transport the iron framework of the building to the site and complete its erection on foundation piers. The second voyage, (photo at the right) was to transport and install the roofing. Much dedicated labor by volunteers has paid off!



Pastor Michael Reese of Promise Land Baptist Church, Hamburg, Arkansas.



At present the building stands on its 800 square meters of land...a testimony of the grace of God among the people in that village. The photo at the left is of the very first worship, praise and thanksgiving activity conducted on Wednesday afternoon, March 7, 2012 where 178 people gathered to receive Bibles, hear the Word of God proclaimed by Pastor Michael Reese and to be given clothing and shoes sent by many friends of Remote Island Ministries in the United States. More updates coming...

"From the decks of the little missionary vessel we watched the full moon of March, 2012 rise and set and remembered it was on that same full moon exactly six years past that we launched Nativa from the beach on Samal Island. Her course has been steady and her personnel, faithful but none so steady and faithful as our God." —GK

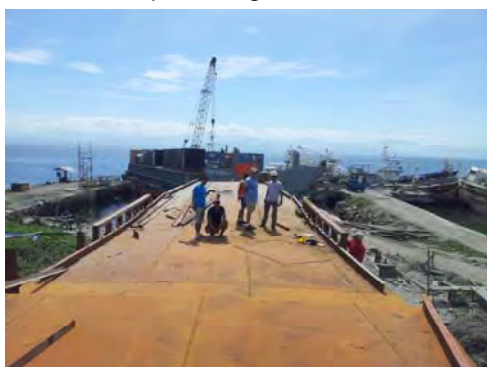
The Ship's Progress: March 2012

Glen Knight

Seven weeks into the construction of the missionary sailing ship, *MSV/RIM Nativa II* shows good progress with the full length of the ship now set up. Framing is nearing completion as of this date with mid-section hull plating of the vessel scheduled to begin within one week. The Caterpillar Marine diesel has been delivered to the yard and is ready for setting in place at any time. The engine bed has been completed and the fuel oil tanks are sectioned off within the hull. She will ship 1,000 gallons of diesel in the tanks.



As construction continues on the vessel, the main and secondary decks are being laid. The photo at the left shows the main deck from the forecandle looking astern of the ship. Approximately twenty feet remain to be decked when framing in the bow and stern are completed in a few days. Now we can get a sense of the size of this ship! The superstructure will rise from about the position where the men are standing. The mid-ship bulwark framing can also be seen here to the left and right of the men.



The mid-ship section of the vessel is seen in this photograph. With its framing nearly done it is not difficult to imagine the strength of this hull and the beauty of its completed form. This picture was shot before the bulwark framing was put in place. Hull plating is set to begin during week eight, March 12-18. The section in view forward of the bulkhead seen in the photo is the engine room. Here the ship's main engine will be set as well as the Cummins-Onan Marine diesel generator for the ship's electrical supply.



Our mission team from Balut Island visited the shipyard on March 8th. The photo at the left shows some of the team members milling around the bow section of the sailing ship. The full form of the vessel can be seen in this picture shot from the starboard bow. Once the hull and upper deck are completed, a nice bowsprit will be set extending her length by approximately twenty-five feet. The photo shows the forecandle and forepeak of the ship. The forward mast will rise through the after portion of the forecandle.



Perhaps you can get a sense of the excitement we feel as this project develops. Having just completed two of our most productive mission voyages in six years, we can only imagine what God has in store for Remote Island Ministries once the new ship is commissioned during the first week of March, 2013 in Port Davao. Mark your calendars!

"The greatness of God is seldom seen but by those who recognize it. It cannot be passed off as simple phenomenon or a matter of circumstance or good fortune in a moment of need. His greatness is deliberate, forceful and profound. It is such that defies human logic and at the same time, creates within us the inspiration that truly admits to all things being possible."
 —Glen Knight, *Memoirs of a Missionary*



Continued work on the new missionary sailing ship shows workmen setting one of the rib frames in the aft section of the vessel.

"...we can only imagine what God has in store for Remote Island Ministries once the new ship is commissioned the first week of March, 2013."



Many cartons of Sunday School and Vacation Bible School literature fill the dining hall of PMBS-AIT in advance of the Bible Conference conclusion. Delegates took all this home with them for the churches for 2012.

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Our lovely daughter Juli celebrated her 12th birthday on March 1, 2012. An outing with friends followed by the mission voyage created many memories! Happy, happy b-day, Juli!

...Reaching people on the edge!



Concert night during our Sixteenth Annual Strength for the Laborers Conference at PMBS-AIT and Faith Baptist Church, Davao City, March 29, 2012. Featured are members of the seminary choir, 90 voices strong under direction of Paula Knight, Choral Conductor. The theme of the conference was, "Our God is a Mountain Mover."

A Final word...

Glen Knight

How do we assess the merit of a work done for the Lord? Is it by money saved or spent? Or is it by some other human criteria? I sometimes wonder how God sees it. After all, it isn't *our* accomplishment, but His. Ours is but the commitment to give the time. Following what is unquestionably the most productive month of labor so far on Balut Island, our gospel ship *RIM Nativa* lies crippled in a port 200 miles from her home. The cost of repair is beyond what we can manage for now but God will



provide. We are humbled at what has been done and when the boat is repaired, are ready to carry on. Word from the Cummins mechanic is that a general overhaul is necessary for *Nativa's* engine. Please join us in prayer for this. Within three months I plan to sell the vessel to make way for the sailing ship, *MSV/RIM Nativa II*. The thing is that she will be sold with a newly rebuilt engine and that's good...PTL!

Discouragement? For what reasons should the people of God ever be discouraged? Because things didn't go the way we thought they should? Or things did and the outcome wasn't what we expected? Could it be the push-back we felt in trying to accomplish a task for the Lord or the indifference of others toward what we were doing? Discouragement is the devil's contrivance...a wall of resistance to be scaled, tunneled under, broken down or otherwise decorated with faith in our God. —Glen Knight