

NEWSLETTER PHILIPPINES

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Ship's Log: The Broad Horizon

Glen Knight

"If we had not ever seen what lies on that horizon, then we would have never cared..."



Working on islands in the sea requires plenty of logistics support. The men in the photo are volunteers from the village, helping bring supplies from the ship.

The view of an object from aboard a ship at sea is approximately twenty-seven miles in any direction, given reasonably calm water and weather conditions. The curvature of the earth comes into account at any distance beyond that and reduces visibility. The distance of approaching ships or other floating objects can be thus approximated depending on their size. For example a sailing ship with its tall masts or a cargo vessel with its high superstructure will hove into view at maximum distance. Modern technology has increased the range at which oceangoing objects can be seen and radar can precisely pinpoint their distances. We have the ability on the missionary sailing ship to see electronically, out to forty-eight nautical miles. But as important as sight is, perception may supersede it. There is more to be seen than what one might first imagine...things that must be seen with the heart.

Horizons. We see islands where there are villages and people by the scores who live at or near points of desperation, physically and spiritually. And that is under normal conditions. Add to it the periodic blights and storms that are prominent in this part of the world's oceans, and there are circumstances of overwhelming proportion. At present the El Nino effect has brought drought to the central Philippines. With the scarcity of water the misery of helpless people is compounded. And then we find those who prey upon such misery, offering to sell water which hardly anyone can afford to buy. The cases of malnutrition, disease and hunger break the heart. I wrote last month about Gina who has since died of starvation. She is only one among so very many. But looking at these circumstances through spiritual eyes gives greater insight to the cause and effect of such human dilemmas. The physical aspects are symptomatic of a greater need...that of the heart of man. I am convinced that in this part of the world, those who could make the greatest difference in other's lives will never do it. If they intended to do so, they would have already. But they will not. That leaves no choice but for someone else to try. If we had not ever seen what lies on that horizon, then we would have never cared. And maybe that's the problem...too many have never seen. Horizons.

God has given us an unprecedented opportunity to go where few in the western world are able to go and there, to do what most can only imagine doing. And some may say it is unnecessary and it's too costly. But the necessity is observed in the numbers of souls one will surely find and the cost is not measured by any of the world's currencies. Indeed such is greater in any failure to go since the value of men cannot be calculated but by eternity.

Remote Island Ministries reaches for that broad horizon. Thank you so much for your help as we go. We need your prayers. We appreciate so much, your investment of mission dollars. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter!

—Glen & Summer Knight

The search for water...



The work is difficult in every aspect. One cannot imagine the extent of the effort due to the logistics challenges that are faced, the lack of proper supply of materials and the distance that has to be traveled to reach target areas until all has been undertaken. The photo at the right shows us unloading supplies from the ship.



“The high-tech camera attached to the little flyer allows us to see the green belts from altitude above the islands...”



The effort of locating potential water well sites is easier with the use of Justin’s drone. The high-tech camera attached to the little flyer allows us to see the green belts from altitude above the islands. In a dry season one can spot the underground water by observing these. The children in the photo to the left are amazed!

The well in the photo here is around seventy years old. It is situated near the top of the mountain that forms this part of the island. Although water here doesn’t rise more than two feet inside the well, there is a continual supply that flows. We located the site for the deep well we were digging, below this well about 100 meters near the bottom of the slope. Our hope is that we have found the aquifer inside the mountain. We are sure to be in a water bearing table, having drilled through three layers of clay and into the rock beneath it. It is amazing to me that in all these years no one has come to this island to attempt drilling a deep well.



Working on the well casing while underway, we made the wooden drive point as you can see in the photo above. At the top of the page, all well pipe is bundled and lashed on the portside of the ship.



Some of you may recall seeing this drilling rig set up in our exhibit at the national meeting of our fellowship of churches in Dallas, Texas a few years back. Here the unit is in full operation in the field. Many thanks go once again to Good Shepherd Baptist Church and Pastor Larry Albritton for their donation of this equipment! We will be adding some things to the machine to improve its operation and streamline the process of drilling soon. Justin is a tremendous help in this operation and all other activities of Remote Island Ministries, from operation and maintenance of the ship to work on the ground. I thank the Lord for him and his volunteer work with Remote Island Ministries. Many of you will meet him and Summer soon!

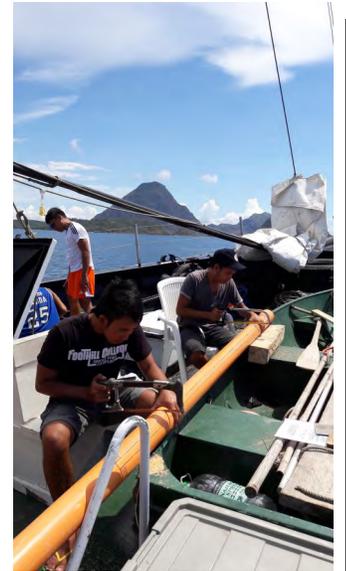
Justin Shaw is a volunteer. He is full time in his work with RIM Nativa. He left a high salary and good position with a mining company in Cape Town, South Africa to join the missionary effort of Remote Island Ministries. For a year and a half, he has faithfully served and plans to continue with us. He is the ship’s First Mate, Safety Officer and tech guru. He is an indispensable member of our ministry team. Please pray for him and get to know him while he is stateside with us this year!

Beyond the Well...Living Water



While drilling for water beneath the island, we found plenty of opportunity to minister to the hearts of the islanders. This little hut is a small chapel where many people gathered to hear the Word of God on Sunday morning. Here we proclaimed the Living Water in Jesus that springs up from within the soul of believers.

The precious child in the photo to the right was one among scores of kids who came to hear the lesson about the Lord Jesus. She clutches a stuffed animal toy that was given her on Sunday morning. Clothing and flip-flops, medicines and most importantly, Bibles, were distributed to these poor people...acts of love that will be long remembered. We will return to this island often on our circuit of ministry to carry on drilling more wells. Another aspect of ministry which we feel is important to begin soon is a mobile training seminar for indigent pastors on these remote islands. Most of them cannot access any sort of Bible school and have inferior educations but they are trying to lead their people. We can help them through our circuits of ministry by teaching simple Bible basics.



Crewmen Chris and Renz are cutting the slots in the well casing screen. We take advantage of our days traveling at sea to get work like this done. When we arrive, we're ready!



Pastor Jun Abay has been a great assistant for so many years of my personal work here in the Philippines. We have been together working in the seminary and the church in Davao and in many places around these islands, preaching God's Word. He serves as pastor of Smile City Baptist Church in Bacolod City and on our RIM staff as Ship's Chaplain and evangelist. We were pleased to have his son, Charles on board with us for this voyage as well. It was his first exposure to life at sea and work among remote islands!

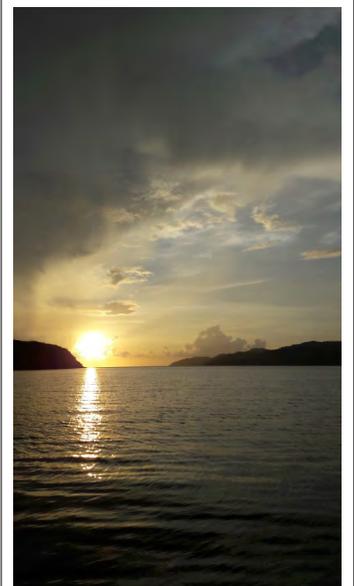
The pastor in the photograph to the right is an example of the sort of men who would benefit from our mobile training seminars. His name is Bernie and he tries to lead his small congregation here adjacent to our well drilling site. We brought his people Bibles in their dialect, Hiligaynon. Pastor Jun also bought and distributed a whole box of reading glasses for the adults. We would not advise American sponsorship of such an indigenous work either here on this island or on any others, anywhere in the Philippines. They don't need that sort of help. They do need help, however in good training of their pastors and laymen to better lead the people in sound Biblical belief and practice. Please pray for us as we prepare to move into this expanded work of RIM.



“Another aspect of ministry we feel is important to begin soon is a mobile training seminar for indigent pastors on these remote islands...”

“They lined up quickly at the prospect of receiving a pair of new glasses, smiles and excitement and anticipation of what was surely a thing that would make a great difference in their lives. Here, a pair for this man and another pair for that woman, each taking a turn at reading the Bible through suddenly improved vision. And one came...an elderly woman whose eyes had obviously seen much in her time, a new pair of glasses tried for fitting, given and she smiled. One asked, ‘Mommy, can you read this now?’ to which she replied, ‘No, I see, but I don’t know how to read.’ And in a moment, all felt her pain. But then she smiled...and everyone laughed.”

—Memoirs of a Missionary, Glen Knight



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Louie and Pastor Jun working on the well casing drive point.

...Reaching people on the edge!

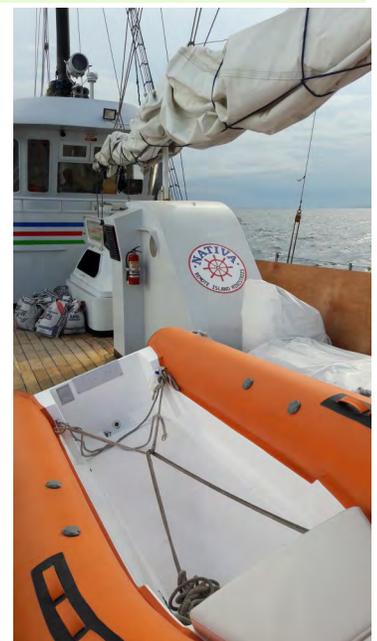


The photo above shows some of our volunteers on Sunday afternoon, May 23. We had set the well casing down in the borehole. Other of the volunteers had gone with Justin, taking our equipment back to the ship while we worked here on the casing. This was truly a great effort on the part of the local islanders!

Closing thoughts...

Glen Knight

Admittedly, twenty-two years ago I could never have imagined where I would be today. I could not have thought about how life would change during that time...who would come and go and who else would have entered in the course of things. It would have been impossible to have known that such an effort as what is presently underway, would have placed me aboard a ship at sea and not for a short time but for a lifetime. I might have raised my eyebrows at the thought of managing a crew on a ship, able to navigate the seas surrounding these islands and even the oceans of the world. And while having served as a pastor of churches, trained as an artist and apprenticed under my father as a welder, in the last years of life now to command such a vessel in the western Pacific, it would have seemed almost absurd. The one thing that I wanted more than anything else was to just be a missionary. And after all these years what is really amazing is the adventure. I will say to all whose desire like mine, is to be a missionary...go ahead. Never doubt what God will do in giving you the desires of your heart. And never doubt His faithful leadership...ever!



"The volunteers worked without complaint. They put their backs into the job with broad grins and hearty talk...sweat beading and rolling down naked backs. Barefooted and dirty, without pausing for a break, they carried on through the hottest hours of the day to help with the project that had mustered their effort. It speaks well of their character...proud and yet humble, skilled but still willing to learn. These are fathers and sons and brothers of families who live in desperation, who know this is their opportunity to change things."

—Memoirs of a missionary, Glen Knight