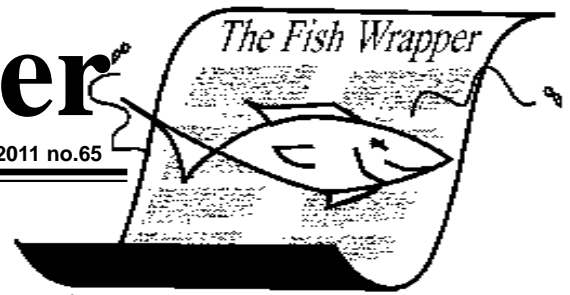


The Fish Wrapper

November 2011 no.65



CCT Headquarters
328 Phayathai Rd., Ratchatevi
Bangkok 10400
THAILAND
Tel. +66860426305 or +66 879189126
Skype: fucella
fishwrapper-mike

email:
jfucella62@gmail.com
mike@fishwrapper.net
12rachelf@nist.ac.th
17aylief@nist.ac.th

Thank you to everyone who has made contact with us concerned about the devastating flooding that has engulfed Thailand in recent months. As I write the crisis is continuing – in fact getting worse. Figures are astounding. One third of the country under water (the size of Kuwait), 8 million people directly affected, nearly a million sick or injured directly due to floods, well over 500 dead (drowned, electrocuted, bitten by snakes, disease from flood waters), thousands of factories closed and so production of key goods effected not to mention the hundreds of thousands put out of work. Many of our friends have been evacuated from their homes because the flood water is chest deep in their communities and houses – and has been for 3-4 weeks already. The government says it could take over a month to drain in some places. The water is

Chiang Mai for a short break. It is strange how stressful the situation has been even for those of us 'still dry'. School is now planning to open on the 9th – for who knows how long. The flood waters are getting closer. The girls and I have therefore decided to stay in Chiang Mai until the 13th at least and will then assess whether or not to return depending on where the water is. Mike will return to Bangkok as he and the child protection team have their first children's workshop planned in an evacuation centre on Thursday. They have, in the last four days, produced some amazing resources and activities to help children process what has happened to them and to keep themselves safe.

We have had several letters from people recently asking why they have been dropped from our Fish Wrapper list. We have not dropped anyone – we just have not written a FW since March. You will be glad to hear I am not going to try to report everything that has happened since March. However there are some key things we would like to tell you about.

We had eight weeks in the UK over the long school summer break. It was fantastic to be back again and we managed, as usual, to fit a lot in. Aylie attended her first Scripture Union camp with Rachel and they both had a wonderful time. One of our key objectives for the visit was to try and get a sense of God's direction for the future. We met lots of people and did a lot of talking and praying and returned to Thailand with a strong sense that we should be moving to Scotland for the long term in June 2012. However for Mike particularly, with his huge workload and responsibility within the CCT, this was a very hard decision. Well, a month after returning here things changed in the Ecumenical Office and as a result Mike is no longer working there. He has plenty to keep him occupied with the child protection work, but it means there is far less pressure than before, and in many ways has helped to 'loosen the ties' and make it easier for him to think about leaving.

In order to be able to return to Scotland and work in a church Mike had to apply to the Ministries Council of the Church of Scotland. He returned to Scotland for three weeks in October and had an interview, as a result of which it has been recommended to the relevant working group that he be given a certificate of eligibility as a Church of Scotland minister. The committee does not meet until December but it seems pretty likely that it will go through. Once we move to Scotland in June Mike will then have to do a 'familiarization' year under the supervision of another minister. One of our partner churches has already shown an interest in having us and so now conversations need to happen about whether he could 'get familiar' in that church. Please pray for the right doors to open and for us to have a clear sense of where we should be. We would prefer to be able to go somewhere and stay there beyond the year so that we do not have to move Aylie from one new school to another after the first year.



Not someone you want to come calling for lunch!

black. Officially 400 crocodiles have escaped from farms and are on the loose – but actually it may be more like 2000. Evacuation centres are full of people and those who are still in their homes have no access to essential food and water. Sanitation is a disaster in flooded areas. I could go on. The international media mentions what is going on here occasionally, but if anyone is interested in keeping up to date you can look at www.bangkokpost.com or follow our facebook posts. Where we live is still dry, as is the girls' school. However the water is still coming and there is the constant tension of 'will it come today?'. The amount left to drain to the sea is still being measured in billions of cubic metres. We have been involved a little with packing relief supplies and encouraging and helping friends and colleagues whose homes are flooded where we can. The school closed on the 20th of October and we were told it would not open until November 15th. The kids have been doing online learning and eventually last weekend (November 5th) we took the opportunity to escape and come to

By the time we leave here it will be 26 years since Mike first came to Thailand, 25 years since we met here and 22 years since we moved here together as a couple. It's a long time! We are all very excited about what God has for us in the future and are enjoying planning things like what breed of dog we will get (the highest priority for some in the family!). However there will obviously be some hard farewells.

One of the most difficult farewells will be with Noi, Kiwi and baby Dave who was born on April 29th. Jane was there for the birth and we have seen them almost every week since. Dave is a very adorable 6 month old surrogate grand child/nephew for us. They have started saving so they can come and visit us in Scotland. Another baby who we have been talking to a lot – but on skype, is Sophie born 5th October to Ta and Jonathan. For long time FW readers you may remember that Ta and her mum Ngo came to live with Jane's family in 1989 when Ta was six years old. We went to their wedding a couple of years ago and Rachel was a bridesmaid. Ta is now a doctor in London – but enjoying maternity leave. Sophie is, of course, gorgeous.

Leaving behind the ministries we have been so involved with will also be difficult. Mike's child protection team will also be losing Al Muir (along with Chrissy, Rhian, Kirsty and Isla) who will return to Scotland at the same time as us. Yuki and the team do an amazing job but there are changes ahead for the project, Please pray for them as they prepare to lose Mike and Al – but also hope to gain Dan and Rachel – a great couple from Australia planning to come and join the team sent by Interserve.

It will be particularly hard for Jane to leave Dodo and the AIDS project on the border. Dodo does such an amazing job but relies a lot on Jane for emotional support, not to mention looking for funding. Not only does Dodo run the AIDS project which currently supports close to 90 people with AIDS and their families, but she also runs the 'family home' caring for several children who see her as Mum. Sadly just as we were returning to Thailand in the summer one of these dear children died. Pupa was 14 and had been with Dodo for six years. She had cerebral palsy and died of pneumonia. Her picture was on the last Fish Wrapper. It has really hit Dodo, May (her husband) and the other five children (Beng, Tat, Nat, Bob and Chanapai) very hard. On a practical note next year we will lose one of our major donors for the AIDS project (an NGO that had a time limited commitment), which means we will lose half our annual income. Whilst we hate asking for money, if anyone who has been supporting us personally financially and would like to support the AIDS project after we no longer need your gifts then please get in touch with Jane.

In early October we had the privilege of being invited to the 50th anniversary celebration of the arrival in Thailand as missionaries of Joan and Allan Eubank. We have known the Eubank's almost the whole time we have been here. They established the Christian Communications Institute at Payap University and in the early 90's brought a team to Sivilai to perform traditional lige (I think its like a combination of opera and pantomime and the Thai love it). They performed stories that included both a Gospel message and also teaching about HIV and AIDS. The church hosted it in conjunction with the local hospital and public health department. It was the beginning of the community based AIDS project which we started in Sivilai and is still going on today. Since then we have got to know and love the extended Eubank family well. David and Karen founded and lead Free Burma Rangers – an organization very close to our hearts. (www.prayforburma.org) So it was

wonderful to be at this party and meet up with friends from over our time here, many of whom have been great mentors to us.

On our return to Bangkok from the UK in August we rushed straight to the bedside of our good friend Harold. He had become very ill whilst we were away and we didn't really expect to see him again. It was wonderful that he waited for us and that first evening back we spent about three hours with him as he outlined his plans for his funeral and his will. He was really animated and we left, as usual, feeling blessed. However, after that he went downhill quite quickly. Jane stayed with him in his hospital room for the last 3 or 4 days and he died at 9pm on the 18th of August with Jane and two other close friends beside him. Harold was 85 years old and the 17th of August, the day before he died, was the 40th anniversary of his arrival in Thailand as a missionary. Mike was closely involved with arranging services on two separate evenings at the CCT, as well as a committal service and cremation. The services were attended by well over 100 people, some of whom had been students of Harold's 38 years ago. A month later Harold's ashes were placed behind a stone in the memorial garden at Christ Church, and we held the memorial service that he had planned in detail with Peter, the vicar. Mike preached and the words from his text are engraved on the stone – "Well done, good and faithful servant."

For the last 38 years Harold has produced a monthly publication called Echoes which was sent to all missionaries, past and present. It kept people in touch with the CCT, with Thailand and with each other. His last issue was number 376. It has only been since Mike has worked with Harold that Echoes has been stored electronically. We felt for a long time that somehow they needed to be digitalized but no-one ever has time for this laborious job. Well 38 years ago exactly (just as the first Echoes was being written) another Harold – Jane's Sunday school teacher at St. Ebbes in Oxford, led Jane to Christ. He has always been a very special person in our lives and has had a passion for missions. Several months ago this Harold also died. In his will he left a sum of money for the St. Ebbes missions committee to use to enable someone to go overseas and do something to support the work of a St. Ebbes missionary. In April we were asked if Debbie could be of use to us in August. We said yes, but with no idea of what she would do. Debbie arrived a week after Harold died. She came with experience in archiving and publishing! She was with us for seven weeks and worked solidly scanning, proof reading and formatting 38 years worth of Echoes. The plan is to get them online as soon as possible and maybe, if the CCT decides to go ahead, to produce a book. They are an incredible historical resource for the church in Thailand. Thank you Debbie, Harold and St. Ebbes!

Once again we apologize for the long gap between Fish Wrappers. Thank you to those who noticed and were concerned about us! Please continue to pray about the terrible situation here in Thailand. It is difficult to imagine how long it is going to take for life to return to any semblance of normal for the many affected by the floods.

We will endeavor to be better about keeping in touch, particularly in relation to our plans for the future. In the meantime we want to be the first to wish you all a very Happy Christmas! Christmas here starts for the Karen on November 30th with 'Sweet December' so we are not too outrageously early with our greetings!!

With love

*Mike Jane
Rachel + Yuki*