

MONTHLY MAIL REPORT

February 2021

In the past, some of our readers have appreciated a diarized account, so here goes for the start of 2021 ...

FRIDAY'S DIARY (22 January 2021)

8:00 ... No pressure today — suits my new semi-retired status, having celebrated my 70th birthday on the 13th. Alison collects Kondwani and Lusungu to help with their online lessons from Amano, and I spend time at my desk, mostly preparing returns for a National Pension Scheme Authority audit sprung on us yesterday. We have been asked to provide commencement dates for around 40 people on our payroll over the past year.

10:00 ... A leisurely coffee break with Alison and the girls, then off to Limapela Cedric's to touch bases with our staff there. It was a let-down when, at the last minute, due to COVID alarm, the Government postponed the opening of the school year until 1 Feb. But at least it has given us more time to complete a few maintenance projects. Thanks to a generous American donor, we have now completed ceramic tiling of all the floors in our older buildings, and we are all very pleased with the result.

11:30 ... Off to town in the pouring rain. I stop at an Airtel Money booth in Luangwa to send money to Peggy and Filbert in Lusaka for their food and expenses. Getting in and out of the vehicle in heavy rain and mud is great fun — no point wearing clean jeans at this time of the year! Filbert's eye surgery took place at Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospital on the 13th, and he is making a good recovery. After a four-month delay (apparently caused by the pandemic) we had begun to wonder if it was ever going to happen. I will need to go back to Lusaka to collect Filbert and Peggy when the surgeon gives him the all-clear.



12:00 ... To the bank to get cash. Our general running expenses are typically NZ\$ 15,000 plus per month. Happily the transfers from NZ come through within 24 hours these days. We are always thankful to our



Would you sponsor Josephat Mwaba? He is 10 years of age and will be in Grade 2 this year. Contact us for more details.

Heavenly Father, who, through all our supporters, ensures that salaries and running expenses are covered on time every month.

12:30 ... A leisurely lunch at a Chinese restaurant with my friend Dennis Delic of Lifesong for Orphans (Canada). Dennis won't let me pay for lunch ... ever! For various reasons, we have mutually agreed not to proceed with a Limapela-Lifesong partnership at this stage. But Dennis and I want to be open to ways in which we can help and encourage one another in our separate organisations. Lifesong has very similar aims to ours, and they are doing a sterling work in their school for orphans in Kitwe.

14:00 ... To Mukuba Mall for a few groceries, then the 45-minute drive back home to Limapela Lodge. Feet up and relax with coffee again. After a day in town I usually feel quite worn out. Unorthodox driving on the part of other drivers certainly keeps us vigilant. Maybe this uses up energy — ours, that is. Anyway It has nothing to do with age!

17:15 ... A 15-minute walk with Alison — always a good time to chat, even after 47 years of marriage — then my run. Yes, I still manage around 3 km nearly every day of the week, thanks to our old friend Cassie Bauson of Indiana, who got me running again about 7 years ago, and thanks to Mary Tucker, retired doctor from Auckland, who advises us to keep active in our senior years.

We are booked to fly out to New Zealand on 19 February for a minimum of 6 months, but increasing uncertainties around the world this month make us wonder if the flights will actually go ahead. And will we test negative for COVID, as is required 72 hours prior to takeoff? Our thanks to you all once again for your interest, prayers and support.

—Matthew and Alison Raymond