

# Butterfly Trust

## NEWS

*Taem blo toktok smol lo wok blo yumitu lo vanuatu*

November 2011



The Butterfly Trust has had another busy year in the Maskelyne Islands of Vanuatu. Lying off the southeast corner of Malekula, one of the larger islands in the Vanuatu group, the Maskelynes have all the advantages and disadvantages of remoteness. Our aim, at the request of the islanders, is to assist the 5 villages (and approximately 1500 people) of the Maskelynes to have better access to health and education services.

This newsletter sets out the work we have undertaken this year and our plans for 2012.

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### **MOU between Butterfly Trust and Vanuatu's Ministry of Health**

We arrived in Port Vila Harbour in the early hours of 19 June. Shortly after we were meeting with Viran Tovu, Acting Senior Health Planner from the Ministry of Health ("MOH") to discuss proposed medical assistance to the Maskelynes.

On the Maskelynes, individuals requiring basic medical attention visit the Reverend Fred Paton Centenary Clinic (also known as the Sangalai Clinic) on the main island of Uliveo. This clinic has been managed solely by Charlie Siniu (Registered Nurse) for the past 7 years. There are also aid posts on nearby Avock Island and Akam village. Both aid posts are staffed by individuals who have completed a 6-month certified Nurse Aid course at Norsup Hospital in Northern Malekula.

The MOH acknowledges that Vanuatu suffers from an acute shortage of trained medical personnel across all levels of health facilities throughout this country of 83 islands. Combined with an ageing workforce and poor access to services in remote areas, the provision of primary healthcare is still a paramount priority for the MOH. Mr Tovu advised that Vanuatu is currently short of 400 nurses. For those living in the Maskelynes, the journey to the closest provincial hospital in Lamap involves a 45-55 minute ride on an open motor boat dodging coral reefs and ocean swells to a landing point on a beach. This is followed by a ride on the back of a pickup truck.

As a result of our discussions with Viran Tovu, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, the Butterfly Trust signed a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") with the MOH to facilitate the provision of medical services to health facilities in the Maskelynes beginning in 2012. The Butterfly Trust will assist by providing suitably qualified medical personnel (doctors, dentists, nurses) as well as any necessary medical and dental equipment and medicines. To encourage the sharing of resources and ideas and to foster overall independence from external assistance long term, key emphasis will be placed on training new staff and upskilling existing ni-Vanuatu health workers. Ideally, health and hygiene education programmes and talks will be a regular occurrence at the local primary schools, kindergartens, community centres and brand new Women's Resource Centre. The initial term of the MOU is for 5 years with a clause allowing for an expansion of similar activities to other areas of Vanuatu should resources and expenses allow.

The Butterfly Trust recognises that this work may overlap with a number of longstanding medical projects and volunteers working in these and other outer islands. We believe in a coordinated approach to maximise available resources and to achieve the best possible outreach. We would like to hear from any group or individual currently working in or around the Maskelynes or who is interested in becoming involved. More on the Sangalai Clinic and our involvement can be found [later in this newsletter](#).



**Signing of the MOU with Director General of Health, Mr Mark Bebe at the Ministry of Health in Port Vila**

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## **MOU between Butterfly Trust and Vanuatu's Ministry of Education**

The Vanuatu Ministry of Education has also joined our MOU with the Ministry of Health.

In Port Vila, we spoke to Roy Obed, Director of Education Services from the Ministry of Education ("MOE"). Mr Obed highlighted the need for further training in the areas of English literacy, science, mathematics, librarianship and school management. He cited that a lack of adequately trained teachers continues to be a major problem with schools in the outer islands worst affected. The lack of sufficiently trained teaching staff extends down to pre-school level, a concern shared by Benson Tangou, Head Teacher at Sangalai School in the Maskelynes.

Increasingly, teachers are encountering poor literacy and numeracy skills in children attending their first year of primary school. This then impacts negatively on achievement standards in the ensuing years of school and either leads to high repetition rates or students dropping out of the formal education system altogether. This problem coupled with the cost of fees means that a substantial proportion of children in the Maskelynes and other outlying areas have a disjointed education. Responding positively to the poor survival rate of students at primary level and beyond, this year Mr Tangou established a Year 1 Nursery class to assist young children meet the minimum standards set by the national curriculum board before entering Year 1 primary.



For a number of years, a major focus of Vanuatu's Ministry of Education has centred on achieving universal 'fee free' primary education and improving literacy rates. In 2010, with the help of Vanuatu's development partners, compulsory parental school fee contributions were phased out in a direct response to declining primary school enrolment rates. Parents no longer pay the annual VT6 800 (approximately NZ\$100) per child contribution towards fees for Years 1-6. Second only to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, ensuring every child receives free primary education remains a key Millenium Development Goal for the Vanuatu government. By 2015, it is hoped that boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary education.

It was as a result of these discussions with Roy Obed and other education officials that the MOE also decided to become a party to our MOU with the Ministry of Health.

Last year, the Butterfly Trust began its association with the Maskelynes Sangalai Centre School, a school serving approximately 250 students from Years 1-6 and the first 2 years of junior secondary school, Years 7 and 8. Currently the cost of fees for attending Years 7 and 8 are VT6 800 (NZ\$100) per child and there are, as yet, no plans in place by the government to offer financial assistance to students wishing to receive further secondary schooling on mainland Malekula (Years 9-12). Last year, the cost of a year's secondary schooling at one of the 3 main schools on the mainland was approximately NZ\$600 per child. Costs have since risen to NZ\$1 000 per child. With fluctuating copra prices, the harvesting of which is still a major source of income in rural Vanuatu, funding children's school fees looks to remain a huge challenge for families every year.

With the guidance and oversight from representatives of both the MOE and MOH, the Butterfly Trust plans to maintain its financial assistance to Year 8 Sangalai School students in a bid to increase, gradually, the numbers of students attending and remaining at secondary school. We also hope to provide assistance with sourcing and facilitating teacher and literacy training workshops in the Maskelynes, building on existing programmes and improving access of teachers to such programmes on the mainland where these are available.

The overarching objective is quite simply to enable every boy and girl to receive an education. Secondly, to assist with improving the standards and quality of existing courses and programmes taught in line with the national curriculum.



**The Butterfly Trust also signed a joint MOU with Vanuatu's Ministry of Education in July 2011, represented by Director General of Education, Mr Jessie Dick.**

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## Headstart for Year 8 Sangalai School Students

From carpentry to nursing, teaching to shopkeeping, gardening to doctoring, the Year 8 students at Sangalai also aspire to be airline pilots, mechanics and tour guides. Many voice their desire to be influential in guiding Vanuatu into the future.

On 4 August, we were once again in a privileged position to be able to address the Year 8 class at Sangalai School. As usual, there was plenty of laughter and cheek as we coaxed them into a beautiful rendition of Michael Jackson's *"We are the world...we are the children.. we are the ones who make a brighter day...."* Afterwards it was time for class photographs and distribution of a small gift pack of stationery to each student.

This class of 18 boys and 10 girls come from the 5 villages around the Maskelyne Islands. The majority are 14 year olds with 5 students aged 15. Only 2 in the class are in the right age group of 13 years for their level.

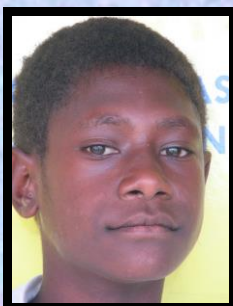
With the tremendous support of Butterfly Trust sponsors over the last 2 years, we are very pleased to report that every child and his or her family have benefitted from your generosity. Each student will receive a VT25 000 (approximately NZ\$360) subsidy towards his or her school fees or the equivalent of 1 full term's study at one of 3 secondary schools on mainland Malekula. Although families will still have to fund the remaining two-thirds of next year's fees (plus accommodation costs in the case of students without extended families in the vicinity), both students and parents alike express their gratitude to all sponsors for their gifts. We thank you all for making it possible!

A committee consisting of the trustees of the Butterfly Trust, the Head Teacher of Sangalai Centre School for the time being, the Chairman of the School Committee Board and its Treasurer will administer the funds from a trust account with the National Bank of Vanuatu. The funds will be paid directly to each secondary school at the beginning of each school term in 2012. We have asked for written reports for each student and will keep you up to date on their progress and achievements in the coming years.

Meanwhile we wish the following Year 8 students the very best in their upcoming final examinations!



**Jemima Christie**



**Award Marksule**



**Awell Roger**



**David Esau**



**Kambol Roy**

### Vanuatu's literacy rate a cause for concern

Standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy are carried out nationally every 2 years at the end of Years 4 and 6. The latest figures indicate that only 17% of Year 4 (9 year old) boys and 33% of girls could read and write satisfactorily.\* The figures for Year 6 girls was 46% and 29% in English and French schools respectively.\*

In another recent survey conducted by a local NGO in 20 villages and 30 households in Shefa province (where Port Vila is located), findings showed that even the completion of secondary school did not guarantee the achievement of a satisfactory level of literacy, with only 55% classified as literate.\*\* Although further research in the other 5 provinces is required to develop a fuller picture, the likelihood of a similar trend is implicated.

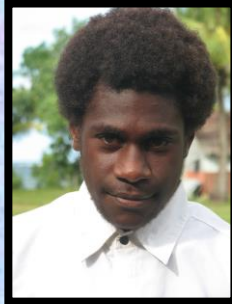
*\*Source: Vanuatu Annual Development Report 2010*

*\*\*Source: Vanuatu Education Policy Advocacy Coalition (VEPAC) research findings.*





**Jenna Sofren**



**Jallington Kalosin**



**Jimmy Markpi**



**Kalpen Peter**



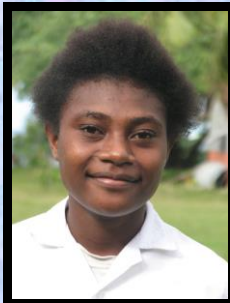
**Keven Nathaniel**



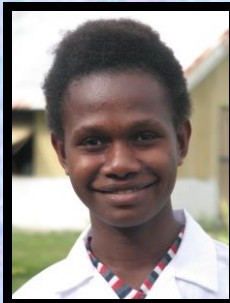
**Rames Kaltuka**



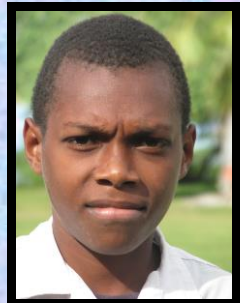
**Kibson Kalven**



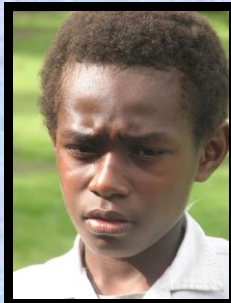
**Neslyn Khondu**



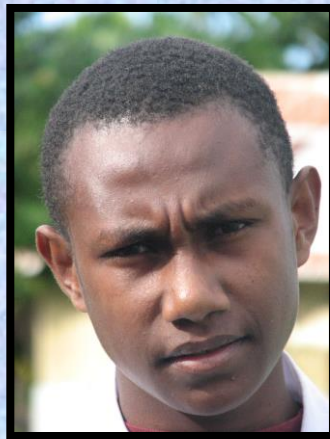
**Nipin Simeon**



**Peter Kamsel**



**Redhe Bongnaus**

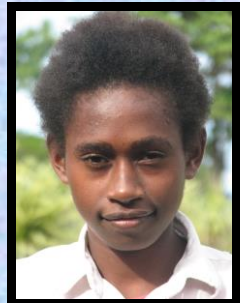


"My name is **Jack Kallan**. I am 14 years old. I want to go to secondary school because to learn.

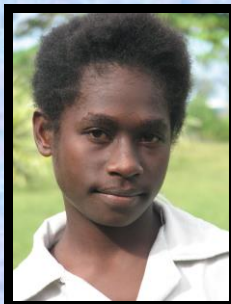
When I finish school I want to become a doctor because now many population are increase and many are sick and dead."



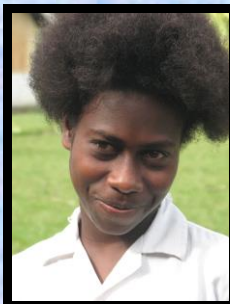
**Rolina Nagof**



**Roslyn Edward**



**Ruthy Wakon**

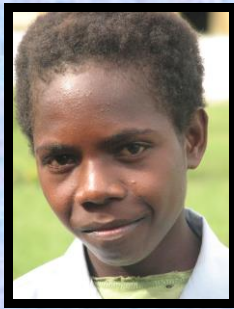


**Salume Seule**



**Samuel Grem**





**Taso David**



**Vicky Jimmy**



**Watick Nangof**



"My name is **Mellina Ken**. I am 14 years old. My favourite subjects are English and Math.

I like English because it help me how to speak. When I finish school I want to become a teacher."



"My name is **Jeloty Kalosin**. I am 15 years old. When I finish school I want to become a nurse.

I would like to thank Butterfly Trust sponsors to give me money to contribute for my school fees for secondary school."

"My name is **Allan Watshal**. I am 15 years old. I want to go to school because I want to help my family to have changes in our homes and I want to develop my brains in my skills.

My favourite subjects is Mathematics and English. Because Mathematics can lead to more jobs and English also can lead to many jobs too."



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### ***Saying something personal to the community.....***

*We are putting together a message board for the school, starting with messages to the group of students pictured above, and would like to have your contributions. If you are interested, please contact Lynn or David with a mailing address and we will send you a card for you to write your message to the Year 8 Class of 2011. Add a photograph or two if you wish.*

*Also, this year we have started compiling photographs and film footage shot in the Maskelynes. Over time, we hope to build an archive collection for the Maskelynes people.*

*We know that people in the Maskelynes would love to hear from you. So we thought we would gather some informal film footage whenever we are back in New Zealand and show them on DVD in the Maskelynes. For that we need your participation. We encourage anybody to take part. You can be part of a group or be an individual and come from any age group. Singing and dancing are both acceptable.*

*Contact Lynn or David to arrange, or we may even approach you directly!*



## Looking ahead to the fees for the following year



The Butterfly Trust is now looking for support for this year's class of Year 7 students who will be in Year 8 in the upcoming year. As per last year, there will be a school fees fund and gift cards available for anyone who would like to purchase a gift of school fees for friends and family. These cards are available all year and will feature a collage of photographs of children taken this year. The fees for a year's secondary education at Rensari College, Akam Secondary or Lakatoro, now average approximately VT70 000 (NZ\$1 000) per child.

Gift cards for any amount you specify or general donations into the school fees fund will be very gratefully accepted. As a guide, here is the costs breakdown.

**1 week's schooling for \$25**  
**A fortnight's contribution \$50**  
**1 month's schooling for \$100**  
**Fund a term at school \$330**  
**Send a child to school for one year \$1 000**

We will apply all donations received and divide them such that each child receives an equal amount from the total amount available. Also, apart from assisting the fresh intake of Year 8 students, the Butterfly Trust would like to contribute further subsidies towards previous students (current Year 9) in their subsequent years of secondary school. However we will only do so where there is a sufficient amount available as our priority are the Year 8 students.

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## Helping schools improve their facilities

Part of our commitment to the Maskelyne community's educational needs comes in the form of support for the attainment of basic building infrastructure and capital items to help them provide a better service to their community. As with any major project undertaken, relevant community members are involved in the decision making process at the very outset. Key individuals can include the paramount and minor chiefs of each village, the head of the institution directly affected and a committee where appropriate. Our decisions on whether to support each request takes into account any additional support required to maintain infrastructure and machinery once the project is established. They also take into account whether there is sufficient local knowledge and expertise in the community to run each service independent of ongoing, external involvement long term.

This year we highlight the following 3 projects, all of which involve local schools in the Maskelynes. 2 of the 3 are proposed projects only at this stage pending confirmation of funding via New Zealand Aid's branch in Port Vila.

### Accommodation upgrade for Sangalai teachers



When we arrived in the Maskelynes, construction had already begun on a new teachers' accommodation block to house new and existing teaching staff from Sangalai School. There are currently a total of 10 teachers living around the school compound with their families.

Head teacher Benson Tangou approached the Butterfly Trust earlier in the year requesting financial assistance for roofing material for the new shared living quarters. A number of the old houses were rusting, too cramped and leaked in the rainy season. Not a very restful environment in which to recuperate after a long school day. In the

absence of a properly designated staffroom, some of the teachers use their homes to research and prepare lessons and to complete other administrative duties.

As part of our educational objective is to help promote consistency and quality of education, the Butterfly Trust believes that a contribution towards a healthy living and working environment for school teachers will also impact positively on students. As such, the Butterfly Trust has made a contribution of VT70 000 (NZ\$1 000) towards the cost of purchasing iron roofing for the new teachers' accommodation block.

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### Proposed upgrade to School & Community Library at Sangalai

Some of you may recall in our October 2010 report, we mentioned Mrs Florah's (then the Year 5 teacher) request for reference material on various topics including science, human biology and geography to help improve her own general knowledge. She was mortified to learn that the account of the sport of sumo wrestling she had imparted to her students was not quite as accurate as she would have liked.

To put it simply, books are a valuable resource and donations of suitable reading material are always appreciated in Vanuatu's schools and other learning institutions.





**Reading room – dark, cramped and mosquito ridden**

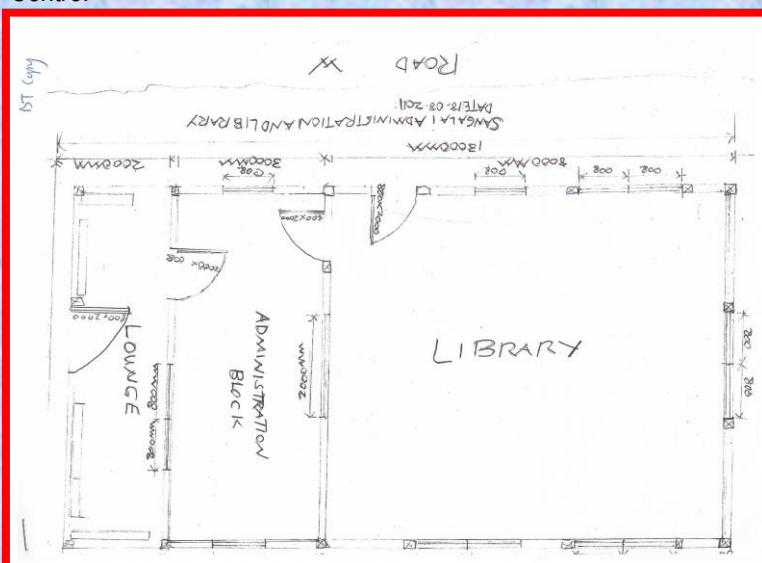
Although Sangalai School has a basic collection of books and reference material mostly donated by visitors and volunteers in the past including Butterfly Trust donors, present facilities are inadequate and not geared towards cultivating good reading habits in the young. Teachers are aware of their need for training in basic librarianship skills. Many of them already utilise their own creativity in class as evidenced by wall-to-wall posters and charts on various topics as well as colourful handmade items of indigenous art gracing the ceilings of most classrooms. However, teachers are also very keen to learn other techniques that can be used to increase their students' access to the knowledge within the resources they have at hand.

Poor literacy standards are clearly a concern across all levels. Head teacher Mr Tangou cited an urgent need for more literacy training for his teaching staff as well as an improved facility with a trained librarian where students can have access to a quiet reading space and to carry out research activities. He stressed the need for reading programmes as a way of teaching students the value of reading for pleasure.

This year, the Butterfly Trust has decided to go ahead with facilitating the establishment of a new library in the Maskelynes, an idea we floated last year. Apart from having to find a source of funding, the proposed project also requires careful consideration of the different aspects of human resources skills necessary to ensure the facility, once built, will serve its desired purpose in the long term. This entailed visits to school libraries in urban Port Vila and the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education for guidance from ni-Van staff.

Although the planned site of the new library building will be on school land, the school committee board, paramount Chief Kalmet Dick and the Butterfly Trust have jointly agreed that the proposed new library will also function as a resource centre for the entire Maskelynes community.

The estimated total cost of this project is approximately VT1.7 million (NZ\$24,500). The Butterfly Trust has submitted an application to New Zealand Aid for the bulk of this funding with some labour and materials to be donated by the Maskelynes community as their 'in-kind' contribution. Construction will be carried out by a team of experienced builders from the Maskelynes and overseen by William Ennis, a tutor at the Uliveo Rural Training Centre.



Also required are the services of an experienced librarian both for the initial set up and also to provide training to a designated library administrator. Butterfly Trust will also facilitate any follow-up support as required from time to time.

For now, we wait.....and hope for good news!

**Plan of proposed library**

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## **Proposed project at second primary school in the Maskelynes**



### **Namaru Primary School**

**Description:** Attached to Avock Island but can be reached by foot only at low tide. To get to school, children walk in between coral and mudflats, cleaning themselves before attending class. At other times, they arrive by 'kanu', local dugout canoes. The journey can be difficult during the rainy season or when the seas are rough. None of the 6 classrooms or administrative office has any lighting. A request for a water tank took 5 years to be granted although the school managed to carry out minor repairs to classrooms from the annual school budget recently.

**Number of Students:** 87 in 2011, Years 1-6

**Staff:** Head Teacher, Mr Warren Christie (above) and 5-6 teachers for each of Years 1-6. Not all teachers are certified.

**More immediate needs:** Lighting (and power source) for classrooms and school office, some form of transport or infrastructure to ease access for students and staff at high tide and during adverse weather (eg. motor boat, bridge), printer, photocopier

**Our visit:** As with all our encounters with the Maskelynes people, we were overwhelmed by the warmth and hospitality of students and staff during our brief visit to Namaru Primary School in the early morning of 2 August 2011. We were greeted by a surprise school assembly and flag raising ceremony. After a welcome address by Head Teacher Mr Christie, the children sang. We gave a short address in turn and then handed out a small gift pack of stationery to each student.

It was time for classes to begin. Year 3 teacher Miss Jennifer invited us to attend her English lesson. The little ones recited a poem at the top of their lungs. Classroom facilities may be basic but with so much colour and vibrancy in the children's presence, the atmosphere (if not the classroom itself) lit up at once. Very humbling.

Afterwards we stopped at Mr Christie's office to continue our discussion. We had met briefly last year whereby the issue of help with providing a source of power to run school facilities was raised. We were there to have a follow-up discussion on the same topic.

**Proposed assistance:** To facilitate the provision of solar powered lighting and related components to 4 of the 6 classrooms. Cost of project calculated to be approximately VT700 000 (NZ\$10 000).

**Possible funding source:** We are waiting to hear back from New Zealand Aid on the outcome of our application for funding. We will keep you posted.



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## Trade & Vocational News

It has been a very busy year and an equally challenging one in the trade skills and education arena. We provide the following update on recent activities and upcoming plans.

### **BRIAN HAS THE FLARE WHEN IT COMES TO SOLAR**

Despite having spent consecutive 12-hour days repairing generators from all over the Maskelynes, American sailor Brian Bazura and his wife Claudia Richardson from SY "Skylight" did not hesitate when the Butterfly Trust approached them out of the blue with a request to run a course on generators and solar power.

On 26 and 27 July, up to 15 men (and the occasional woman) from all over the Maskelynes showed up at the Ulveo Workshop in Peskarus village to attend an intensive workshop on the theory and practical skills involved in maintaining diesel generators and solar power equipment.

Brian deftly and succinctly explained the rudimentaries via blackboard diagrams as the men listened attentively and took notes. According to Brian, he was combining concepts usually taught at primary, secondary and tertiary level physics and engineering at various points during the course. "The men did very well and asked pertinent questions, which demonstrated a basic level of understanding."

The Ulveo Workshop was a flurry of chatter and activity as tools and engine parts were scrutinised and passed round. There were field trips to diagnose the state of solar panels and batteries at the community hall at Lutes village.

Attendee Tom Nombong said at the conclusion of the workshop that he hoped there would be more courses such as this in the future, and added "...but they must be longer."

We were very pleased to learn that in the weeks immediately following this workshop, a number of the men were busy fixing generators in the villages including one belonging to the Sangalai School.

The Butterfly Trust is very grateful to both Brian and Claudia for coming on board at such short notice. We would love to have you back for Part 2!



Brian sketches and explains the components of a typical solar powered installation (above) and out with the boys on a field trip (below)



Tasili checks for current flow with a voltmeter (above left). Testing a solar panel at Lutes – and it works! (above right)



Taking a generator apart

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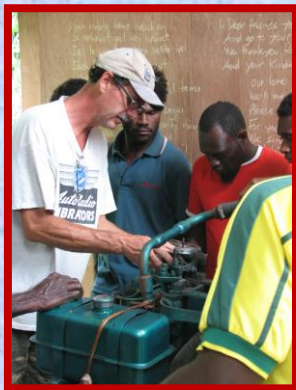


### **RTC STUDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM GIFT OF COCONUT OIL GENERATOR**

The Butterfly Trust has now made the decision to donate the Listeroid generator, purchased in 2009 to run a coconut oil mill, to the Rural Training Centre ("RTC") in the village of Pellongk. It came to the point where the logistical difficulties involved with setting up a coconut oil factory became quite major in the current state of play. Over the past 2 years, the Butterfly Trust has had numerous discussions with village chiefs and organisations in Vanuatu including World Vision and Volcanic Earth, in an effort to reach a workable solution. We have come to the understanding that, while there is still a potential for the industry to be developed in the Maskelynes, the chances of a functioning mill coming to fruition in the immediate future are rather slim.

Meanwhile, the Listeroid has been put to good use by the community and after undergoing minor repairs, has now been donated to the RTC for training purposes. The RTC, an accredited training institution, runs courses in carpentry, building construction and hospitality. RTC Director Alick Masing agreed that having the use of an additional source of power to run electrical tools for class demonstrations and practice would be of immense practical help to tutors and students. In addition, as the RTC is situated in Pellongk, the wider village community will benefit when extra lighting is required for community events and functions.

It was a matter of finding an interim solution that would provide the greatest benefit to all. The concept of the coconut oil mill has not been abandoned, just placed on hold as these matters can take time.



During the 2-day workshop run by Brian Bazura at the Uliveo Workshop in Peskarus, the team, under Brian's tutelage successfully tuned up the Listeroid coconut oil burning generator (above left & centre), now donated to the Uliveo Rural Training Centre (above right) for training purposes.

### **COLLABORATION WITH THE VANUATU INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

With its main campus in the capital, Port Vila and 2 smaller provincial training centres, the Vanuatu Institute of Technology ("VIT") is Vanuatu's largest provider of formal technical and vocational training. It runs a variety of programmes in various trades, business, tourism, hospitality and computing. The Butterfly Trust was particularly interested in VIT's rural training scheme whereby qualified instructors run intensive courses in a village environment. Designed especially for men and women with none or little formal qualifications, short courses can be customised to suit the technical level of the group taking part. As a VNTC (Vanuatu National Training Council) accredited organisation, where minimum standards are attained following course completion, individuals receive certificates recognised within the local industry.



The Butterfly Trust hopes to keep facilitating the acquisition of trade and vocational skills as an alternative form of continuing education for adults with little formal qualifications, to promote self reliance and to help generate income opportunities for individuals in the Maskelynes.

Before micro industries such as a coconut oil mill can be set up and run independently by the community, we believe that more groundwork is necessary to assist in the procurement of certain basic skills and knowledge. This is to ensure eventual success and sustainability of any project undertaken.

In September this year, the Butterfly Trust discussed future partnership with VIT Principal Kalbeo Kalpat, Deputy Academic Jack Graham and Course Co-ordinator Charley Manai. While there is plenty of organisation yet to be accomplished in co-ordinating the first course, likely to be a Vocational Foundation Certificate in electrical principles and workshop practices, the seed has nevertheless been planted.

Also on the agenda was the issue of providing assistance and further training to VIT's instructors in the Port Vila campus. For this, the Butterfly Trust will be seeking the assistance of technical training institutes or experienced builders, woodworkers and electrical engineers from New Zealand interested in 'Training the Trainers.



Despite some disagreement and misunderstanding between some members of the community and the managers of the Uliveo Workshop in Peskarus village this year, the venue remains active with carvers, furniture makers and builders booking in time and space to use the tools and facilities. Tools donated by Butterfly Trust supporters in 2010 have been well looked after and are in good operating condition. Caretaker of the workshop, Brosio Balais, ensures that they are well secured in a chest and the tool room locked when not in use.

*Otel Nagof gets creative in time for visiting tourists (above) as John searches for the 'right fit' (above inset)*

### **Purchase a TRADE & VOCATIONAL SKILLS giftcard and help the Maskelynes people upskill**

**Approximate cost of training up to 15 students on a 10-day electrical principles workshop**

- ✓ **Trainer's per diem**  
**\$100/day**
- ✓ **Teaching resources & tools**  
**\$50 per student**
- ✓ **Trainer's transport & accommodation**  
**\$50/day**

**Gift cards or donations for any amount will be catered for and very gratefully accepted**

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# S A N G A L A I



Nelson anaesthetist Graham Evans and his wife, Anne, a radiographer, teamed up to give dresser\*, Charlie Siniu and his assistant at Sangalai Clinic a helping hand.

## C L I N I C

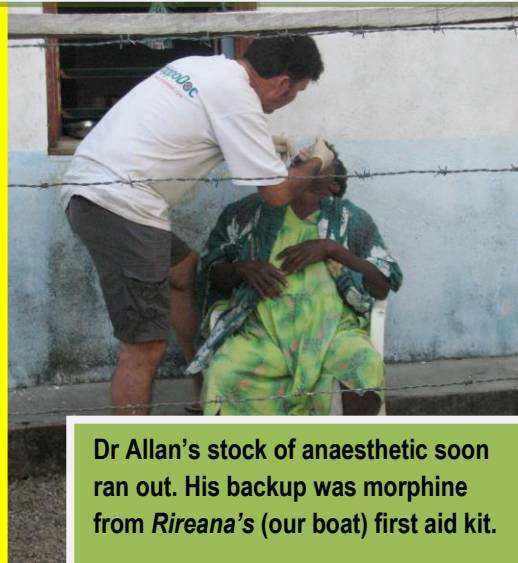


Charlie Siniu (above) has sole charge of the clinic in the absence of visiting health volunteers. Dr Evans attends to a patient (left).



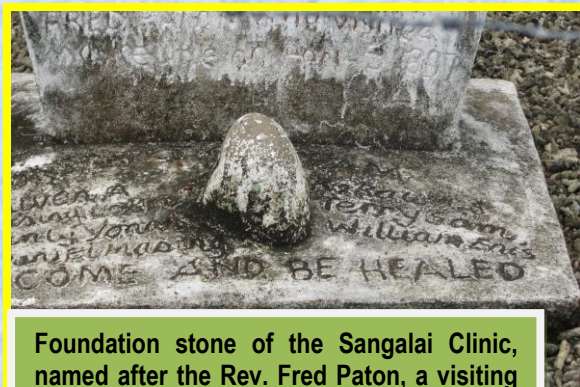
\*'Dresser' or male nurse, a term widely used in the days of the condominium between England and France

Volunteer "Troppo Doc", Derek Allan extracting teeth under local anaesthetic. Dental services are a pressing need.



Dr Allan's stock of anaesthetic soon ran out. His backup was morphine from Rireana's (our boat) first aid kit.

## "COME & BE HEALED"



Foundation stone of the Sangalai Clinic, named after the Rev. Fred Paton, a visiting missionary in 1897. Mainstream western medicine appears to feature prominently in a sweeping landscape of traditional *kastom* practices. Or is it? Scratch the surface to uncover a very strong belief that black magic, for instance, is instrumental in causing illness and debilitation.

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### **Priority areas for the Maskelynes**

- establishment of a basic dental service including dental hygiene education in community centres & schools
- more practical training including good clinic management for local nurses and nurse aids at Sangalai Clinic and village aid posts
- health and hygiene education community wide especially good sanitation practices
- promotion of healthy nutrition with emphasis on local foods to curb growth of non-communicable diseases (diabetes & hypertension)
- reproductive and sexual health education community wide including knowledge of STIs
- maternal health

If you happen to be a doctor or dentist visiting the Maskelynes, chances are that word will soon get around and your services sought out. The majority of Vanuatu's doctors (32 in 2010) are permanently based at 2 regional referral hospitals and 3 provincial hospitals. This combined with a shortage of nurses, dentists and eyecare specialists suggests that a substantial portion of primary health care delivery to remote areas is still being catered for by overseas medical personnel working as volunteers. Some groups return on a regular basis, either focusing on a single catchment area or rostering different locations on subsequent visits. Others provide financial support in the form of overseas courses and placement programmes in a bid to help selected ni-Van health workers improve their skills. With a broad range of health aid currently being driven by the government's development partners, local and overseas NGOs and churches

as well as individual volunteers, we want to ensure that our involvement at grassroots level will build on what has already been established.

We were fortunate to have input and advice from various quarters – Sally Peet who spent 8 weeks in the Maskelynes last year and is planning a return. Graham and Anne Evans from SY 'Kakadu' (pictured above) whom we first met in Port Vila and again at a safe anchorage in Awei having been driven out of Sangalai Harbour by 30 knot southwesterlies. Graham and Anne gave their time and expertise, seeing patients, helping out with general clinical duties, organising current and future supply of medicines as well as attempts at fixing the clinic's radio communications. Derek Allan, Director and Trustee of a NZ based medical charity, Troppodoc, arrived a little while later with his team consisting of Nurse Margaret Thorpe and GP Claire Thurlow. They were kept very busy attending to the island's health needs which included a long queue for basic dental procedures (pictured above). We are grateful to them also for helping us identify the major health issues confronting the communities they attended. We also look to the Ministry of Health for general oversight and guidance and for their administrative assistance with bringing in medical supplies and equipment when this is necessary.

In our view, one way to improve on the ad hoc approach towards health assistance is firstly, to schedule fixed visits by experienced health professionals at regular intervals. Secondly and to have any lasting impact, the skills of existing health workers need to be much improved to cope with more complicated issues that can arise when no outside help is immediately available.

The Butterfly Trust proposes to have up to 6 doctors visit over a 12-month period. Training will form a major component and may involve the participation of

**Meeting between Butterfly Trust and members of the Sangalai Clinic Health Committee to discuss how we can help them improve health services to the Maskelynes people.**





health workers from villages nearby from time to time, as directed by the Ministry of Health. Work is currently underway and there is a lot of organisation to be done.

If you are a doctor, dentist or nurse with a current practising certificate and minimum 10 years' experience interested in offering your time and services to help strengthen the delivery of primary health in a remote island community of a developing country, please contact us in the first instance to discuss. We have found that the health issues more likely to be encountered tend to suit practitioners experienced in a general practice environment but want to hear from all who are interested at this stage. We would also like to hear from experienced dentists prepared to help set up a clinic with a minimum of facilities.

**Tropical skin infections and ulcers are a common occurrence in the Maskelynes. This one on the foot of a 5-year old boy worsened over a period of 8 months despite penicillin injections and 1 course of augmentin. Insufficient stocks of appropriate medications, lack of diagnostic tools and ability to diagnose as well as poor hygiene are some of the reasons that exacerbate many medical conditions presented.**



**There has been much progress made towards the reduction of malaria in each of the 6 provinces but at this stage, it is still a major concern in the Maskelynes with anaemia a common side-effect. There was 1 known case of its more serious form, cerebral malaria, in a 2 year old child this year. Respiratory infections, asthma, gastrointestinal, urinary tract, skin and eye infections are also common. Also on the rise are diabetes, hypertension and more recently, cancer. There are no diagnostic facilities at the clinic and aid posts other than malaria test kits.**

Just another thing.....



### **The problem of transport and access**

**Transporting items to the Maskelynes continues to be a challenge with no direct access by road or air. We are very grateful to the captain and crew of the magnificent sailing boat, "*Soren Larsen*" (left) for helping with the transport from New Zealand of donated items of medicines, books and clothing.**

**Once again, the Butterfly Trust will need help with transport in 2012. If anyone can help or know of anyone who can, please contact us.**

Or two.....

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## ***CHRISTMAS GIFT CARDS***

Once again, the Butterfly Trust is offering 2 options if you would like to buy a gift of [School Fees](#) or [Trade & Vocational Skills](#) for family and friends this Christmas.

Email Lynn or Dave at [david.lynn@butterflytrust.org](mailto:david.lynn@butterflytrust.org)

**LAST MINUTE ORDERS ACCEPTED!**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

To all supporters of the Butterfly Trust in New Zealand and overseas, your contribution in each and every way has been and continues to be invaluable. Thank you for making this work possible in the first place. We are humbled. Tankyu tumas, thank you, merci beaucoup.



To all the warm and friendly ni-Van staff at the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Curriculum Development Unit, Vanuatu Institute of Teachers' Education and In-Service Training Unit, Vanuatu Institute of Technology, Malapoa College & Vila Central School – Mitufala i klad tumas blong mitim yufala ia yia. Mitufala i gat fulap samting nao long wokem long Maskelyne. Mitufala i hop blong lukim yufala bageken nekis yia. Tankyu tumas.



To staff at the TVET (Technical & Vocational Education and Training) Office in Port Vila for your advice in vocational training matters. We will be in touch.



To Volcanic Earth and Vanuatu Credit Services, both of Port Vila, thank you for your advice, warm hospitality and for sharing your local knowledge.



To Australian Customs & Border Protection Service, in particular staff at Bundaberg, Brisbane Airport and Brisbane Seaport – thank you for an excellent service in bonding and facilitating the transport of our stocks of donated medicines, some of which were in the restricted category, en route to the Maskelynes.

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