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Dear Friends,

While in high school Anne Thomas felt the Lord's nudge to be involved with people overseas. She and her parents trusted the counsel of her principal Al Green that Pacific Island Ministries would be a good fit for her (Orneal Kooyers had taught under him in Bellevue Christian School for the 1966 school year), so in 1977 she volunteered for a year before going on to college. During her time in Ambunti she turned 17, helped Martha in the school, learned Pidgin and fell in love with Papua New Guinea.

The PNG Education Department has recently upgraded its education standards and subsidies program, meaning a massive workload for David Kasen, who is our Education supervisor. Anne's trip was a welcome support for him, and an excellent way to build up PIM's teachers.

Anne kept in touch with Neal and Martha, visiting them in California from time to time, telling them her dreams of returning to PNG for a visit. Five years ago in Laos a thief grabbed her bag attached to her bicycle, knocked her over, breaking her leg, and dragged her along the street under her bike. Pain and arthritis in that knee make it difficult to walk and stand, but she can sit and get around slowly. A bout with cancer and chemo also laid her low for a while. But this year she carved time from her schedule with literacy teams working in the remote hill country of Laos and Cambodia, and came for our in-service. Everyone was thrilled.

One teacher said, "The course helped me a lot. Now I know the difference between "Language" and "English" (both required subjects in PNG) and how to teach them. Now I'll be able to teach the students really well." Another teacher who came from the government said to one of the senior teachers, "I see my failings. I understand phonics now and will be able to teach it to the children."



Anne drew new songs for the children to learn English out of the teachers that had us all laughing as we practiced. For example: Hands in arm pits, flapping our wings, crouching as little ducks, feet out-turned, marching around the room in a train, all chanting together, "I am a little duck; I love my yellow feet. . . ." It was hilarious.

Anne has a long history in adult literacy and she was able to assess the needs of our staff and make suggestions for what is needed in materials and training. Anne drew heavily on Mathilda's gift to make teaching manuals plain to the teachers. Mathilda is one of the key teachers in our Kooyers Primary School (3rd through 5th) in Ambunti.

There were 52 teachers who attended, some from the government and all associated closely with PIM. Eight new graduates from teacher colleges also came, three of them children of PIM staff and two others closely associated with PIM growing up.

We praise God for his faithfulness,
Penny Schering