



Marcus Brandt <pngmark@gmail.com>

May 2025 Newsletter

1 message

PNG/KLS/SPLC Reunion Committee
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Thu, May 29, 2025 at 10:40
PM

**PNG/KLS/SPLC 2025 Reunion Newsletter*****The journey to the Reunion starts here!*****May 2025 Newsletter****GREETINGS WANTOKS****Look for these things in this newsletter:**

- **Wokabout Wantaim Wantoks** - a guided tour in PNG with Professor George Weiblen
- Our next **PNG/KLS/SPLC Reunion** October 2 - 5, 2025
- **Two book reviews**

Links to our website:

- **Mark Singh-Hueter reunion and Zoom videos**
- **Recent Obituaries**

Wokabaut Wantaim Wantoks



Photo shared by Prof Weiblen in 2019 - A rainforest canopy research crane at Baitabag near Good Shepard Lutheran High School. You can see Amron Mission from the tower.

"Wokabaut Wantaim Wantoks"

Tentatively dated for 7-21 September, 2025.

Prof Weiblen is a plant and microbial biologist, studying the binatang (insects) of PNG, and training local students and professionals in research skills.

George travels to PNG multiple times each year, is finalizing plans for his proposed guided Wokabaut with members of our group interested in joining him in a "two-week excursion to Port Moresby, Madang, Nagada, Amele, Baitabag, and Middle Ramu, to introduce participants to the work of Binatang Center in

rural communities. We will engage with current efforts in search of sustainable livelihoods and healthy forests."

Participants will visit the Binatang Research Center in Madang along with Lutheran Mission sites, then walk and travel by boat to the Center's research outposts. George hopes these wantoks will share their experiences during his session at our October reunion.

George held one exploratory zoom meeting earlier this year, with another being scheduled for June. He has created a form for folks to indicate level of interest in this opportunity, and to ask questions. [Click here to access the form](#)

Upon returning from the PNG 'bush trip' early this year, he learned that his USAID proposal was paused by the current US administration. Support from wantoks could be critical in sustaining his humanitarian and environmental work in PNG. We have decided our reunion donation from the Sunday service collection and other possible fund-raising will be given to George for the Binatang Center's work.

George's recent photos, video and more information about the Wokabaut can be viewed [here](#).

You can contact Professor Weiblen at his email: gweiblen@umn.edu



Our Next PNG/KLS/SPLC Reunion

Note: the reunion coincides with the 50th Anniversary of PNG Independence

Thursday October 2 to Sunday October 5, 2025

at Mt Olivet Conference and Retreat Center, Farmington, Minnesota

<https://mtolivetretreat.org/>

Welcoming, interesting, and informative sessions are being planned!

Thursday: Arrival (after 3 pm), settle in, dinner at 6 pm
followed by an evening of getting reacquainted

Friday: Morning - *MK Nexus - A Conversation With Friends* (see below *)

Jared Diamond (via Zoom)

George Weiblen (in person)

Barbara Carlyon (via Zoom)

Saturday: Morning - *MK Nexus - A Conversation With Friends* * continued

Afternoon - hilarious Looney Lutherans comedy hour led by Greta Grosch, sharing good-natured fun about "growing up Lutheran". Greta was an MK in Lae where her parents were missionaries

Evening Remembrance Service

Sunday: Closing worship, lunch, PowerPoint, final sharing and "God Be With You"

* *MK Nexus - A Conversation With Friends*

THEN AND NOW – 50 years later.

We want to know you better.

Have you ever spent time thinking about your world views? What are they? Why do you hold those views? What about your childhood or youth influenced those views? How have your world views influenced who you are today?

Your friends at the reunion would love to hear about your journey. We are offering 3 minute opportunities for you to read or speak to this question, to share how you have evolved from that little kid (MK or other) to who you are 50 years later.

Are you willing to give it a try? Eight of the planning committee have already done a trial run and found it to be very enjoyable, both in sharing and in listening to stories and insights of others. One person shared insights on how the beauty of PNG influenced their decision to set aside some of their land as a preserve; others related experiences with health issues, hobbies, and spiritual growth; another shared experiences on homesickness and personal social issues.

This opportunity has been developed by Fred Brandt and Dawn (Daechsel) McLean, and is based on, and grows out of, some of the insights Ruth van Reken shared with us during the last couple of retreats.

For more insight and information on how to prepare for and be involved with this opportunity, please follow this link: [MK Nexus A Conversation with Friends](#)

Please contact either Fred clrkog1950@gmail.com or Dawn d.daechsel@telus.net with any questions you may have and plan to be a part of “conversations from the heart among trusted friends!”

Remembrance Service

Once again, a Saturday evening of

Remembering Those We Love

Please be thinking about who you would like to include. Gather information on their years of life, brief highlights of their service in PNG and a picture or two of your loved one.

A family picture would also be helpful for the PowerPoint presentation. Please submit your information to Les Walck lwalck748@gmail.com by September 15th.

(The PowerPoint from 2023 can be viewed on Mark Singh-Hueter's *Wantok Reunion* videos link below)

Reunion Reservation Information

Full payment for all reservations will be due on August 1st, 2025

There are 34 people registered for the reunion so far. On **June 1st**, we will open reservations for “day scholars” and for those planning to stay off-site.

You will receive an email in a few days with more details, and with a link to the reservation form.

Day Guest rates include your selected meals and snacks, plus use of all retreat facilities.

Choices are:

Full day rate with 3 meals - \$105 per day

Part-day rate including 2 meals (e.g. lunch and dinner) - \$85 per day

Part-day rate including 1 meal - \$60 per day

*Off-site rooms are set aside at The Baymont by Wyndham, for \$80 per night. It is located just 15 minutes from our Reunion at Mt Olivet.

Motel rooms at Mt Olivet are filled. We have started a waiting list, and hope you will sign up for a dorm room or day rates.

Rate for a dorm stay covers all program and facilities costs for the 3-day Reunion stay with all amenities, Reunion activities, meals and breaks.

Dorm room capacity 4-6 men or women - \$418 for 3 nights

You can look forward to re-connecting with old friends, maybe some you haven't seen in decades! Enjoy stimulating conversations, excellent presentations, special music, displays, and good food.

Mark your calendar - October 2-5, 2025!



Reunion Fun

Ping Pong challenge in 2023: from left - Tim Imbrock, Grace (Senff) Payne with back to the camera, Connie (Mansur) Hassan, Cynthia (Mansur) Schoonover

Jerusalema Dance in 2021: from left - Dawn (Daechsel) McLean, Tim Johnson, Darlene (Daechsel) Schnuelle, Jonathan Frerichs, Marian Frerichs, Mark Singh-Hueter, Dianne Tuff, Cynthia (Mansur) Schoonover

2025 Reunion Attendees

Fred Brandt
Jennifer (Brandt) Merkling
Mark Brandt
Merrily Brandt
Miriam (Senff) Bunn
Jon Davis
Phil Davis
Loretta Davis
Renate (Flierl) Eppelein
Jonathan Frerichs
Marian Frerichs
David Hueter
Ulrike (Flierl) Ixmeier
Tim Johnson
Barb Mansur
Tanya (Senff) Mayer
Dawn (Daechsel) McLean

Grace (Senff) Payne
Elinor Radke
Ruth Radke
Else (Helbig) Schardt
Ron Schardt
Darlene (Daechsel) Schnuelle
Cynthia (Mansur) Schoonover
Gary Schoonover
Daryl Schubert
Jane (Sandager) Schubert
Mark Singh-Hueter
Donna (Daechsel) Smallwood
Dianne Tuff
Maggie Tuff
Murdoch Johnson
Les Walck
Barbara (Mansur) Zadow

Two Book Reviews

1. Lauren Wells is the Founder and Director of TCK Training. She has written several books. One that I find most helpful for people of all age groups is called ***"The Grief Tower: A Practical Guide to Processing Grief with Third Culture Kids"***. It was published in 2021. This book is short (88 pages) and full of clear, practical examples to help us identify our own grief blocks over a timeline and to affirm one another in processing the effects of these blocks on our lives.

Else (Helbig) Schardt

2. ***"Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed"*** by Jared Diamond

This book explores the factors that contributed to the downfall of modern and ancient societies, including environmental damage, climate change, and political decisions. The book uses historical examples and case studies to illustrate how these factors can lead to societal collapse and explores how some societies have successfully avoided or adapted to these challenges. The book was written in 2005.

It is a long read with many details. The comparisons between different societies gives one pause to consider our own countries and the world as it is today. Diamond's perspective on the reasons why a society might choose not to act even though they are aware of the dangers to their society, provides the reader with food for thought. The book contains relevant issues to most of us and is a good read.

Dawn (Daechsel) McLean

Links to our Website

Wantok Playlist - put together by Mark Singh-Hueter

- Zoom Gatherings - [click here](#)
- Wantok Reunion videos - [click here](#)

Rest In Peace - Since February, we've been notified about the passing of these wantoks:

- Karl Bergman - teacher at SPLC
- his older sister, Irmgard Bergman - widely travelled nurse
- Rev. Hartley Hage - served at Heldsbach, Amron, Bumayong and Hagen
- Donald Ruthenberg - Ampo, Lae and long time servant of ELCPNG
- Lola Auricht - Kitip, KLS, guest house server

Click [here](#) to read any information we've received.

Please note our new email address
png.kls.splc.reunion@gmail.com

The 2025 PNG Reunion Planning Committee
Mark Brandt, Kay (Edwards) Horntvedt, Tim Johnson, Dawn (Daechsel) McLean,
Paula (Schulz) Mitchell, Grace (Senff) Payne, Else (Helbig) Schardt, Cynthia
(Mansur) Schoonover, Gary Schoonover, Mark Singh-Hueter, Dianne Tuff, Les

Walck.

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