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PNG/KLS/SPLC - July 2025 Newsletter

1 message

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

- **LAST REMINDER TO REGISTER** for the 2025 Reunion. Except for those wantoks who are registered to attend, this is your last newsletter prior to the October reunion
- **Meet two members of our planning team**

- **Wokabaut Wantaim Wantoks** - a guided tour in PNG with Professor George Weiblen

Links to our website:

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



LAST CALL FOR 2025 REUNION REGISTRATIONS!

Reservation Information

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

There are 49 people registered for the reunion so far.

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

*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.

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

Click on the blue tab immediately below to register.

Click Here to REGISTER

THE REUNION IS ALMOST HERE!

Thursday October 2 to Sunday October 5, 2025

at Mt Olivet Conference and Retreat Center, Farmington, Minnesota

<https://mtolivetretreat.org/>

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

Our Theme this year is

THEN AND NOW - MOVING FORWARD

Welcoming, interesting, and informative sessions are being planned!

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

Friday: Morning (10:00) - *MK Nexus - A Conversation With Friends* (see below *)

2 pm Jared Diamond (via Zoom)

4 pm George Weiblen (in person) with Jonathan Frerichs - highlights from their Wokabout

7 pm Barbara (Goldhardt) Carlyon (via Zoom)

Saturday: Morning (9:30) - *MK Nexus - A Conversation With Friends* * continued

1:30 pm - 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

7 pm Evening Remembrance Service

Sunday: morning - Closing worship

1 pm - final sharing, PowerPoint, and "God Be With You"

*** *MK Nexus - A Conversation With Friends***

THEN AND NOW – 50 years later.

We want to know you better.

What is your life story from Grade 1 to NOW?

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)

Wantoks Registered for the 2025 Reunion

Paula (Erickson) Bergs	Dawn (Daechsel) McLean
Fred Brandt	Jennifer (Brandt) Merklings
Mark Brandt	Christy (Mesplay) Moyer
Merrily Brandt	Keith Moyer
Sam Brandt	Grace (Senff) Payne
Miriam (Senff) Bunn	Elinor Radke
Mary (Brandt) Croft	Ruth Radke
Jon Davis	Else (Helbig) Schardt
Loretta Davis	Ron Schardt
Phil Davis	Darlene (Daechsel) Schnuelle
Renate (Flierl) Epplein	Cynthia (Mansur) Schoonover
Jonathan Frerichs	Gary Schoonover
Marian Frerichs	Daryl Schubert
Kay (Edwards) Horntvedt	Jane (Sandager) Schubert
Wayne Horntvedt	Mark Singh-Hueter
David Hueter	Donna (Daechsel) Smallwood
Ulrike (Flierl) Ixmeier	Lois (Brandt) Tan
Paul Johnson	Dianne Tuff
Tim Johnson	Murdoch Johnson
Gil Kirchhoff	Maggie Tuff
Wendy (Kirchhoff) Handsaker	Lisa (Mesplay) Turvey
Lynette (Kirchhoff) Voorhees	James McGrath
Barb Mansur	Les Walck
Chris Mansur	Barbara (Mansur) Zadow
Tanya (Senff) Mayer	

STORIES FROM TWO OF OUR REUNION PLANNING TEAM

MEMBERS

GRACE (SENFF) PAYNE

1. Where do you live? I live in Lakeway Texas which is about 20 miles west of Austin.

2. What kind of work did you do? Currently, I am the bookkeeper/accountant for our rental property business in Salt Lake City and am executor for my uncle's estate. In the past, I worked for the IRS as an internal auditor, and prior to that as a pricing analyst for a defense contractor called Tracor Aerospace. I met my husband Jay at Tracor and we have three children. After our second child was born, I held various volunteer positions - I was auditor and later treasurer for our neighborhood association, and treasurer for our middle school and high school PTOs (parent teacher organizations).

3. What did your parents do? My father served as the circuit missionary in Raipinka and Kainantu from 1964 until 1993 and then taught at Ogelbeng Seminary near Mt Hagen until their retirement in 1997. He was also head of Continuing Education for the Lutheran church for many years. My mom was the bookkeeper, typist, women's work leader, first aid person, support person and host to many travelers up and down the highland's highway. She washed and ironed a lot of sheets. After they retired in 1997, they went back to Ogelbeng a couple times as volunteers. In retirement, they settled back in the Stonewall Texas area where Mom grew up and were able to reconnect with family again after 33 years. They were very active in their church as well as in their community, conducting a Bible Study among neighbors, etc.

4. What schools did you attend? First through 3rd grade, I went to a primary school in Kainantu. 4th through 6th grade I attended KLS at Wau. 7th through 12th grades I attended Ukarumpa High School, which was close to our home at Raipinka, allowing me to go home on weekends. For college, I got my BA in Marketing from Texas Lutheran College in Seguin, Texas and later took accounting classes and passed the CPA exam. I attended one semester of college in Heidelberg, Germany in 1983. I was able to reconnect with several German missionary families and KLS friends while in Germany.

5. What is your role on the team? I am the back-up for Tim Johnson on the Communications committee and sometimes help lead Zoom discussions, as well as provide feedback at committee meetings.

6. Share something that had a big impact on your life: I think boarding school at KLS had the biggest impact on my life. It was a mixed bag of great experiences, yet there was homesickness in the early years. The adventures were spectacular - crashed bomber, gold

mine, gold dredges, hot springs, Mt Kainai, Bulolo swimming pool. I loved sewing on Saturday morning - making hats, dolls, - so many fun things. I became independent (I think we all did because we had to fend for ourselves in that environment) and I think that helped me later in life with making my own decisions. I also learned to speak German at KLS and that has been useful throughout life. I've discovered in life that the toughest or worst things that happen to me end up being helpful in molding me into a better person and growing me in my faith.



1. 1971 - Tanya, Grace, Marie, Miriam and Paul Senff at the Kainantu airport, returning from furlough.
2. The Payne family: Matthew, Grace, Jay, Bailey, and Ryan

Kay (Edwards) Horntvedt

My experience in PNG began in 1966 at the age of 11. We moved to PNG from North Dakota where my dad, Byron (known as Mike) Edwards was a pastor of three rural churches and my siblings and I attended school at White Shield on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation. I struggled to adjust to the many changes. In the 6 years that we lived in PNG I changed schools 7 times. From White Shield to Primary A in Madang, to KLS, to St Peters, to Ukarumpa, to St Peters and back to the US at age 17 in 1972. In 2003, I did some counseling, read the book "If You Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat" and took up flying lessons as my husband Wayne was getting back into it and I wanted to be able to land the plane if something happened. Life interfered and I have not kept up with it but it was an exciting adventure. My husband and I returned to PNG in 2003 and visited Madang, Yagaum, Baitabug, Amron, and Nagada. He wanted to see where I grew up. We are currently planning a trip back to PNG in October to visit with an exchange

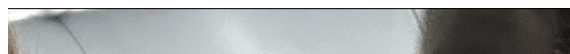
student who stayed with us in 1999 in our home and we have supported him and his family of 3 children.

I went to UND at Grand Forks and graduated with a BSN in Nursing. I worked in surgery for 35 years but left nursing early in 2012 due to health issues, grandkids and aging parents. My husband, Wayne, and I moved from Greenfield to Alexandria in 2014 to help with my parents but we have worn a path to the cities and back helping with grandkids and attending their events. We are blessed with 8 grandchildren ranging in age from 3 to 17. We recently bought a second place in Monticello to avoid living out of a suitcase - not sure if that really helped? I am the seamstress for the family and do lots of sewing projects as well as taking care of a large garden, biking, swimming, tennis, and cross-country skiing on the lake in the winter.

My mom, Lucile, was a piano teacher, led circle and other groups at the church in support of my father Byron (Mike) Edwards as a Lutheran pastor in the US before they moved to PNG. In PNG, dad taught classes at Baitabug for the first few years and then became the main pastor at Memorial Lutheran in Madang where mom played organ for church plus many other duties.

I am on the Program Committee for the PNG reunion. I have been working on setting up one of the speakers for the reunion, Jared Diamond. I am also planning the ice breaker game for the first evening of the reunion and may help with piano accompaniment for the services.

My husband and I will both attend the reunion this year so I am looking forward to the fun, memories and camaraderie of meeting with many of you at the reunion.





1. Kay at Ukarumpa in 1970
2. Kay in a recent photo

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. He has finalized 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. He plans to introduce participants to the work of the Binatang Center in Madang and its outposts in rural communities. Travelers will take a boat and walk to the communities where they will engage with current efforts in search of sustainable livelihoods and healthy forests.

George plans that our wantoks will share their experiences during his session at our October reunion. Also, George is planning on testing a new satellite internet option that should allow their Wokabaut team to deliver a live and recorded daily update from the field. Wantoks could either join on Zoom to interact with them, or watch it later. Details are pending, so if you want to

receive information about how to access the Zoom email Dianne Tuff at dianneupfront@gmail.com.

Upon returning from a PNG 'bush trip' early this year, George 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. If you are not attending the reunion but would like to support the Binatang Center's work, please send an email to Dianne Tuff at dianneupfront@gmail.com and she will let you know how to do that.

George has created a form for folks to indicate level of interest in this opportunity, and to ask questions. [Click here to access the form](#)
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

[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 May, we've been notified about the passing of these wantoks:

- Jimmy Wan - 24 Nov. 1935 - 24 June 2025. Jimmy supported the renovations of numerous Lutheran churches in PNG. His story is told in the book "A Caffeinated Faith".
- Ken Grosch - 87, of Arden Hills Minnesota, died June 6th, 2025 after a brief illness. His many interesting careers included space shuttle engineer on the Apollo, director of Global Health Ministries, and serving with his wife Rosalie as missionaries in

Lae, 1981 - 1986, living there with their daughters Heidi and Greta.

- Leon Philippi - 1927 - 2025. Funeral was July 14, 2025. Photo and service announcement are on our website. Their child Peter attended school at KLS; other children were Ester (attended SPLC) and Timothy.

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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