

The Sound of Music - PNG connection

By Veronica Hatutasi

WHO would have thought "The Last Unknown & The Land of the Unexpected" would be a niche chosen by one of the world's famous in the music and entertainment industry?

Well it actually has, and many would be surprised to know that PNG has been the home and even, a work place for one of the famous Von Trapp singers whose name is synonymous in the much loved and famous musical which first came out in the late 1950's, "The Sound of Music".

Maria Franziska von Trapp came to PNG and worked in a couple of locations as a Catholic lay missionary in the 1960's.



Maria Franziska von Trapp. Photo: The Internet

Continue to page 4



Morobeans in their regalia, a very unique style indeed to host the 2014 BSP PNG Games. Photo: Issac Liri

The Morobeans Cowboys

The flag bearers of the 2014 BSP PNG Games....

By Isaac Liri

RIDING on horseback during the 2014 Morobe Show in Lae, they displayed some spectacular riding that gave them the opportunity to become the flag bearers of the 2014 PNG Games.

Proudly sponsored by Ramu Sugar, they were invited by the Host Organising Committee (HOC) of the 2014 PNG Games to show Papua New Guinea their talents on horseback as they carried each provincial flag, the national flag and the Ramu Sugar flag. The PNG Games opening ceremony

witnessed a stunning performance as the Morobeans Cowboys came out carrying the flags riding wild, fast and slow as the crowded St Ignatius Kilage Stadium applauded their magnificent performance.

Team leader John Mok told *Wantok Today* that it was a once in a lifetime opportunity to perform in such a national event, and he thanked Ramu Sugar and the HOC for giving him and his boys the opportunity to participate. The cowboys will be back again this weekend to close the 2014 PNG Games as they carry the flags out of the stadium for the last time.



Cowboys with one of the horses.

Other stories inside...



Empower The Youth in the 21st century...

- P2



The Sound of Music - PNG connection - P4



YOUTH SAY... Empowering youths in the 21st Century

with **Issac Liri**



Greetings readers! The *Wantok Today* Youth Say has been going on for more than 5 months now. This month we caught up with some more interesting youths who had the time to share their thoughts with us. Now let us hear what they have to say.....



Name: Cashmir Waken
Age: 22
Origin: East Sepik
Dream Job: Public Relations Consultant
Current Employment: Kundu 2 Programs Trainee
My challenges as a youth today:

Peer pressure is one major challenge I encounter as a youth of today. With peer pressure, I tend to become a victim of alcohol abuse and smoking, resulting in frequent ignorance and disobedience from elders. From my own personal experience, alcohol abuse and heavy smoking of cigarettes have been a major disturbance in my upbringing as a youth.

ing as a youth.

As an educated youth I have learnt to overcome my challenges with help from family members and other good friends.

It has been 8 months and I have seen improvement in terms of personal development. I am still learning to control the negative habits that make me depressed.

The road to become a better citizen:

I think the youth should learn from elders who have already experienced challenges in life. Listening and learning can help them to overcome challenges and become better people in the country.

The youth must listen to their parents and elders because the advice given to them might as well save their lives one day.

Some advice from elders might not come in a positive way therefore, the youth must be open minded and take in the good advice that will help them in the long run.



Name: Sinivar Kasimani
Age: 25
Origin: Milne Bay and Gulf
Dream Job: Producer
Current Employment: Trainee Producer at Kundu 2
My challenges as a youth today:

Employment; It is hard to secure a good job to help take care of yourself as employment opportunities are scare today in the country. Many youth tend to do other activities that are illegal and put themselves in danger when getting involved in

criminal activities.

The road to become a better citizen:

Do community service and start up little business. These are some ways to help keep the youth busy and out of trouble. This will also help them to earn some money to help take care of their needs.



Name: Mathew Som
Age: 24
Origin: Morobe
Dream Job: Professional Journalist
Current Employment: Still looking for one

My challenges as a youth today:

After completing studies at the Pacific Adventist University (PAU), I am still looking for employment. Being unemployed and living on the streets is challenging for me as a young man because I have nothing to do and I feel meaningless living at home and doing nothing. I sometimes think of getting into trouble with peers however, since I am educated, I have to be strong and struggle to look for opportunities that will help me become a better person in my community in Lae.

The road to become a better citizen:

For me I would say it is all in the mind of each individual youth. All youth in Papua New Guinea come from different cultures and society, and these differences determine each of our upbringing. Learning to adapt into the various situations or experiences, either good or bad, helps

the youth become stronger as they proceed on with life.

The youth must learn to accept the good and bad experiences. They must see these experiences as stepping stones to reach their ultimate destination.

Churches play a vital role in helping the youth. Both young men and women must develop the interest to attend church activities.

Sports and music also help the youth in terms of keeping them busy. More sporting and musical activities must prevail in communities to help the youth in their development of becoming tomorrow's leaders.

Say NO to Drugs and Homebrew!



Music is my best friend...

Young Neil shares his music experience

By **Isaac Liri**

HE told me that music is something he loves doing to pass time and keep him busy when there's nothing important to do.

When he is feeling depressed or mad about something, music brings peace to his heart, mind and soul, referring to the art as medication for total satisfaction.

He could be in the kitchen cooking or on the streets walking, but he is never alone as music is always there, his constant companion when there's no one beside him.

21 year old Neil Alemae from a mix parentage of Milne Bay, Autonomous Region of Bougainville and Solomon Islands knows that he has the voice capable of attracting anybodies ears. Discovering his talent when he was in primary school, he exposed it years later when he was attending Della Sale Secondary School during a live music concert.

"It was my first time to get on stage and sing in front of a large audience and I was a bit nervous."

"When I realised that I was getting positive feedback from the audience whilst singing, I told myself that I was going to go all the way. I sang with my heart and at the same time, I entertained a crowd that stood below, hungry for enter-

tainment, eyes fixed on me with some cameras glued to their hands," recalled Neil.

After being exposed, Neil began to view music differently. He saw it to be an avenue if he had no chance of getting into university and continuing with his studies.

Unfortunately music could not steer the young blood away when he got accepted to study journalism at the Divine Word University (DWU) in 2012. He knew of the poor conditions of the music industry in Papua New Guinea, and he knew that putting his studies before music was the right thing to do.

"I knew that music would always be around even though I was busy studying in the Library. I knew that it would sleep with me when I was dreaming at night," laughed Neil.

With only a year left before graduating with a degree in journalism, Neil has plans to do a solo album or even get involved with a any band he wishes to.

Having connections with members of Logic Crew and Ricky Kali, he finds his pathway into the music industry quite easy, however, he admits that he needs to try it out first before making further comments.

He is aware of competitions such Vocal Fusion and the Digicel Stars. He had the passion to test himself



Relaxing at 5 mile NBC office Port Moresby .

once however due to his busy schedule with his studies he decided to let it go.

"I was interested when I heard about the Vocal Fusion competition. I knew it was going to be tough if I entered but at the back of my mind, I knew it was something different compared to what I normally do and that is singing live on

stage."

"Such competitions have a different level of exposure. You get to sing in front of cameras with the whole nation watching you on TV. I guess I was quite nervous because I felt that I still lacked confidence and I needed to learn a little more before I decided to carry out such an act" said Neil.

Neil is currently doing his job training at the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). He has been doing job training there ever since he started his four year degree program at DWU.

Neil's father was the singer of the Crew 5 band of Bougainville that released some great hits back in the 1990's.

The Sound of Music - PNG connection

From page 1...



Srs Imelda, Stella and Catherine outside the Waigani Convent.
Photo: Veronica Hatutasi

The last of the famous Von Trapp singers, Maria passed away on February 8 this year at the ripe old age of 99 in Waitsfield, Vermont, United States, after spending her life as a performer alongside her six siblings, and later as a lay-missionary with her step-mother in Papua New Guinea.

Maria von Trapp was the third child and second oldest daughter of Austrian Naval Captain Georg von Trapp and his first wife Agathe Whitehead von Trapp.

She was the last surviving member of the original seven children in the Trapp Family Singers whose life has been portrayed in the movie, "The Sound of Music," with actress Julie Andrews, the star in the musical which is loved by people the world over, though it first came out more than 50 years ago.

The group became famous in the 1959 Broadway musical and 1965 film which recounts their story, and in which Maria was portrayed as the character Louisa.

Loosely based on a book written by Georg's second wife, Maria Augusta von Trapp, the movie details the story of an Austrian woman who was going to be a nun, but married the widower after being a nanny to his seven children and teaching the family music.

After fleeing Nazi-Germany in 1938 for fear of reprisals after declining to sing at Hitler's birthday party as well as Georg von Trapp's refusal to accept a commission in the German Navy, the family eventually settled down in Vermont in the early 1940s and opened a ski lodge in Stowe which is still in operation today.

Wantok Today brings to its readers out there The Sound of Music- PNG connection, after tracking down some of the people who have lived with, educated by and worked with Maria Franziska von Trapp during her PNG stint where beautiful and peaceful Milne Bay and Port Moresby were the two places this world famous music star chose to impart her knowledge, skills and care as a volunteer and a missionary in this part of the world.

Sr Imelda Dobero Lemeki AD or the Handmaids of the Lord Catholic Congregation from Ferguson Island, Milne Bay Province is one person who knows the late Maria von Trapp as she lived at the Budoya Catholic Mission station, Ferguson Island where Maria was based in the early 1960's, and was also taught by her.

Sister Imelda now in her 60's lives at the Mary Queen of the Pacific Waigani Catholic Parish in Port Moresby.

We will also hear from two other nuns of the same congregation on what they have to say about the late celebrity.

At the start of the interview with this reporter, Sr Imelda was emotional as she recounted her story of Maria whom she fondly remembers as a very friendly, fun loving and musical person.

"It was in the late 1950's, around 1957/58 that Maria von Trapp, along with her sister Rosemary and her brother Johannes came as a lay missionary to Budoya. She worked with Fr Martin Atchion MSC from Australia.

"Maria worked as a teacher and for 6 years, I was one of her students until I left in 1960 to come to Port Moresby to join the Handmaids of the Lord Congregation based at the Nazareth convent, outside of the city. I was about 16 years of age.

"Maria taught us children singing and especially to sing in parts which is the Austrian way of singing and dancing. She also taught us to play the Maori dance known as "poi". She also taught us English, Maths and of course music and singing.

"She was a beautiful, cheerful, musical, very kind, gentle, loving and friendly young woman who always had a gentle smile. She was very much a part of the village people's lives, friendly and caring and people dearly loved her.

"She was still on Budoya when the "Sound of Music" movie first came out. The boat went all the way to Ferguson Island and brought her back to Budoya and we all watched the movie on the big white projector or screen as was the norm in those days.

"Music was her life and she imparted the love of the art to us. She played the flute beautifully and sang gently. We never knew about the music celebrity side of her life as she never made any mention about it," Sr Imelda recalls.

Sr Imelda says that Maria composed hymns about Mary, the Mother of God, in the Dobo language.

According to Sr Imelda, Maria left Budoya and came to

Port Moresby in the early 1970's where she lived and worked, first at Nazareth and then with the Catholic Charismatic group.

"I really admire her as a woman and I count myself lucky to have lived with her and be taught by her during her time in this part of the world.

"I grew up around her and without her, I wouldn't be who I am and where I am and for this, I will always be grateful.

"The house where Maria lived in is still standing at the Budoya Catholic Parish, and being used by nuns there.

"I thank Word Publishing, especially Wantok Niuspepa for relaying the message of her passing to me at the beginning of this year, and with great sorrow and fond memories, I passed it on to the other nuns and people who knew her in Milne Bay.

"I cried when I received the news since she was like a mother to me. She was like a Jack of all trades, a teacher, a nurse and a missionary in the absence of nuns at that time on Ferguson and Sideia," Sr Imelda concluded.

Sr Catherine is another nun residing and working at the Waigani Catholic Parish convent who says she is fortunate to have met Maria in the 1960's at the Nazareth convent and also saw the Sound of Music movie.

"Something about her which caught me at first sight was her gentleness and beauty. I was based at Kubuna, Yule Island in Bereina then, but in 1964, I met Maria again at Sideia, Milne Bay.

"I am grateful to such missionaries as Maria and also the French (missionaries) who came to this part of the world to help us", Sr Catherine says.

Sr Stella Kambis from Misima Island in Milne Bay is the Mother Superior of the Handmaids of the Lord congregation at Waigani Parish expressed the same sentiments as Sr Imelda and Catherine.

She recalls Maria assisting the parish priest at Budoya with pastoral and church ministry work and as well, teaching music to the youth and young people.



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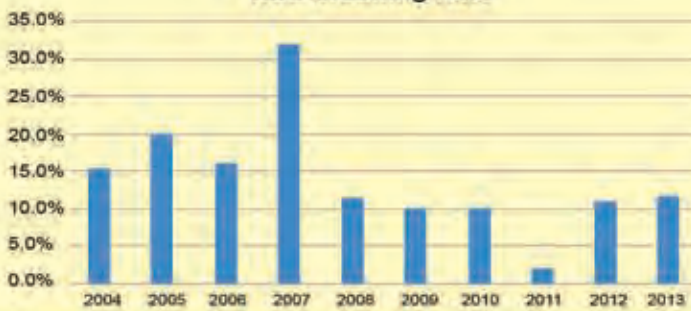
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