

Brief Biography of Pioneer Mission

Geoffrey Waugh

I landed in the 3-5,000 feet mountains of Papua New Guinea (PNG) among the Enga tribes as a raw, enthusiastic, inexperienced teacher. I had begun teaching with a class of 48 eight-year-old boys in Sydney at age 19 in 1957.

From 1965 I taught Basic English in PNG, first in mission station schools and then in village schools, less than a decade before PNG became independent in 1973. The Australian government poured money into PNG to raise educational and health levels to prepare them for independence.

Engas then wore nothing above the waist, and wore nets made from Pandanus fibres hung from belts made of vines or bamboo. Acquired old leather belts became popular. Now they have access to trade store clothing. More modest than many Europeans, no man would touch a woman in public including any of his wives. Big men like tribal leaders had many wives. Bride prices, given to the bride's clan, included many pigs, maybe cows, and special shells.

The culture, wildly different from my Australian background, valued communal loyalty above individual choices. Payback, eye for eye and life for life, was not just an option but a responsibility. If someone stole from your food garden or house, you or your clan should payback the insult. That often escalated into tribal war with bows and arrows and spears.

A school I started in a remote village when I was single, the only European in that village, grew grade by grade for each of six years, adding a new grade and an indigenous teacher each year. I moved on after the first year. Someone from that village stole food from a nearby clan's gardens, so that clan raided the village and pillaged more food. The village responded with reciprocal raids. It escalated until the nearby clan burnt down the whole school with its classrooms made of bamboo walls and thick grass roofs. The village had to rebuild the whole school.

A student I later taught in my Bible School, got involved in a fight over a tribal land border. The son of a chief, he went to prison (calaboose) for a month, building roads, along with his father and the tribal warriors. Upon release his tribal leaders re-enrolled him immediately back into Bible School, proud of his loyalty, courage, and skill.

I accompanied two native female village teachers to an education conference via the town of Madang, using the regular Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) Cessna planes. I showed the young ladies around the town. Unknown to me, local young men followed us, angry with me for taking two of their brown skinned ladies to where we stayed in a mission boarding house. They assumed I wanted sex. Fortunately the night watchman found those men creeping toward my room with knives ready to stab me. The watchman explained that we had separate rooms and I was a good man.

Another tribal group wanted to kill me because I had taken my school students swimming in a big pool in the river gorge nearby. But one student was washed downstream, almost drowning. His worry was not his cuts or bruises but that he had lost his school uniform sarong. He stopped his clan from coming to attack me in payback! Tribal elders insisted that I never take students swimming again there.

I enjoyed teaching Basic English in many schools, and then teaching leaders in Bible Schools where I used both the national Pidgin language and the local Enga dialect. Those young leaders became village teachers and pastors. Most of them became leaders in revivals among the Engas which transformed hundreds of lives in each area.

They no longer cut a joint off a finger at the death of a close relative to show that relative's spirit their sorrow. They no longer sacrificed to the spirits for protection but trusted God. They learned to forgive and agree on settlements instead of insisting on an eye for an eye. The first corpse I saw was a man cut in his neck with a tomahawk, lying on a hollow log bridge, because he had committed adultery. Someone in the woman's clan killed him.

Government law in PNG made it being illegal to stop after a vehicle accident in case of immediate payback by offended locals. By law you must not stop but report immediately to the nearest police station. Gradually life changed. Peace increased.

Of course, like us, they were not perfect nor always Christ-like. But they learned and grew in compassion and care.

I was the only single male teacher, based in four mission stations and many villages. Twenty or so single European female teachers and nurses also lived and worked there. After three years single there (and invited to many meals with single women) I married Meg, one of the teachers. I would run from my school the three hours (usually a 5 hour trek) across high ridges to visit Meg at her school at weekends. But we did not hold hands in public. Even at night that was risky. We did that one night in the dark down a ridge track. Then I saw a low glow of a straw bundle small fire approaching in the dark (a local torch) along the track. Meg and I quickly separated.

"I see you are coming," I said politely in the Enga dialect. "

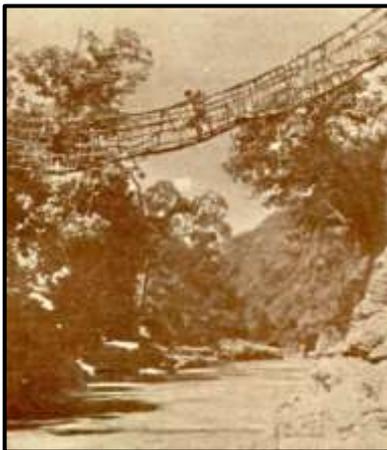
"I see you are there," replied the school student politely, and passed us by. Next day stories circulated around the school and villages that we were caught being naughty.

I proposed to Meg there, and we married on furlough in Sydney. Then we returned to teach local leaders in Bible Schools. Our first child, born in the one-room European ward of the mission hospital, never crawled because the woven bamboo floor hurt her knees. So she held onto chairs and boxes, walking by nine months. Our homes, made from bamboo walls and floor with a thick grass roof, kept us cool in the daytime tropical heat. Village ladies passed our popular white baby from woman to woman with their unwashed breasts. Our baby caught a mild eye infection from that encounter, soon fixed with eye drops.

Here are some photos of those early pioneering days.



Typical village, Baptisms in a dammed creek. Pastor giving communion in bamboo



Bamboo and vine bridge over a gorge river. School student



Beard like locals. Geoff and Meg



Highland village

Enga pastors evangelized their own people. They led baptisms and teaching. We supported them and I learned to watch and appreciate how well they grew a strong and rapidly growing indigenous church.

The first pioneer missionaries among the Enga tribes arrived in 1949. The first baptisms in 1956 marked the official birth of the Enga churches. By 1965, when I arrived, four mission stations provided bases for reaching the whole region.

Evangelism happened naturally and constantly. There was no need for an altar call or invitation at a meeting. They all talked about faith in Jesus and what that meant. Typical of village communal societies, they preferred to talk it through until they all agreed. So the Engas saw many people movements and revival – whole tribes deciding they wanted to follow Jesus.

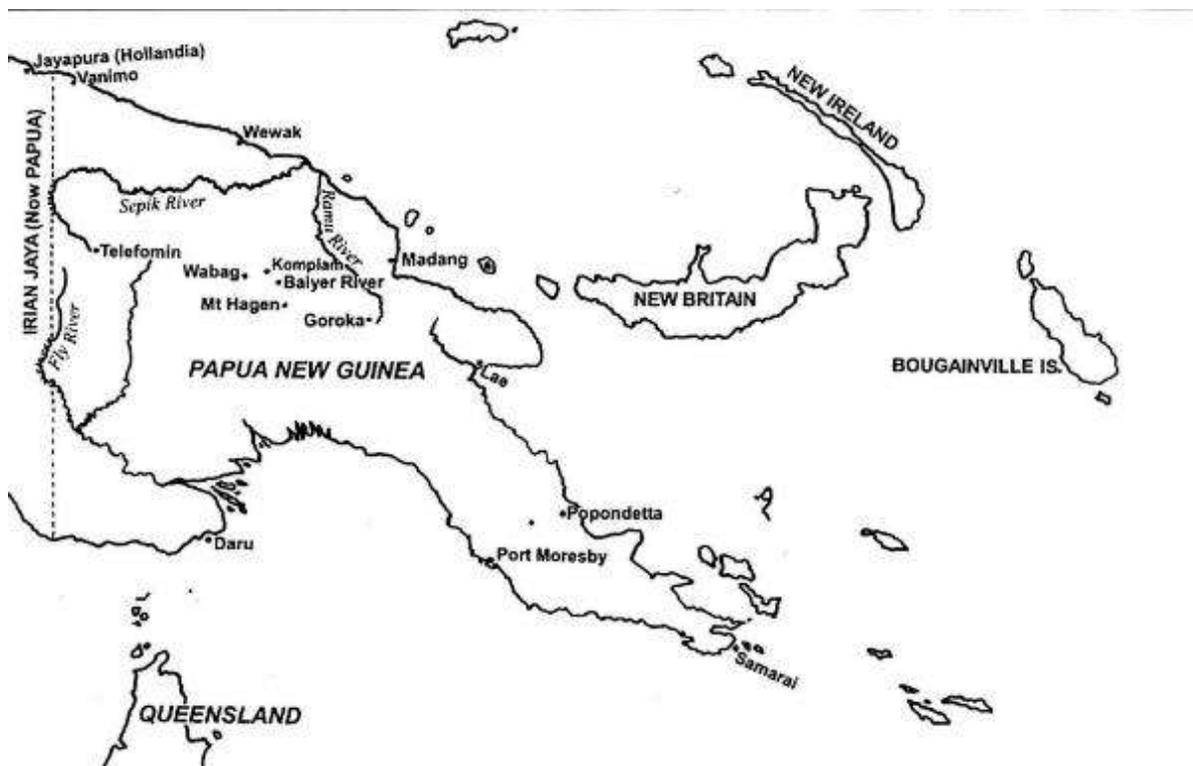
I enjoyed life in New Guinea and, like most of the locals, I had bare feet most of the time, so they hardened. No one at school had shoes, including indigenous teachers. Most men grew beards. It was far easier to trim a beard than to shave, so very few shaved. So I grew a beard also, for a while. We trekked a lot, mostly to local villages at weekends. My longest trek took a week with some pastors over the 8,000 foot ranges further to the north in a remote area, a mission and evangelistic outreach of the Enga church. We lived around Baiyer River and Kompiam north of the town of Mt Hagen.

At weekends I continued to visit different village churches. Usually my school pupils walked with me to their village. That gave them a chance to practise their English, and gave me an opportunity to practise my Enga. So we had strange conversations where they used poor English and I used poor Enga as we talked together! I slept in many of their homes, smoke-filled from the cooking fire in the middle of the hut. They grew and ate over 30 varieties of sweet potato along with abundant plants like bananas, sugarcane and berries.

After 2-3 years teaching in schools I conducted short-term Bible Schools for 3 months each and then began the permanent Bible School for the Engas. As we studied about Jesus and the early church we were, unknowingly, preparing our students to be leaders in revival among the Engas.

Many of those students became leaders in the revival that swept the area from 1973. Solomon Island pastors had experienced strong revival from 1970, as told in my book *South Pacific Revivals*. Those pastors taught about revival in many places including to Engas in September 1973. The Solomon Islanders prayed for the Enga leaders and pastors to be filled with the Spirit and anointed for powerful ministry. The next Sunday in every village where those Enga pastors spoke and prayed for their people, revival broke out. God poured out his Spirit. Hundreds of people were filled with the Spirit and began using spiritual gifts including tongues and praying for healing and deliverance from evil spirits, with widespread conviction, repentance, forgiveness and reconciliations.

We heard of similar revival movements, so I collected some of those reports in my book *South Pacific Revivals* (free on www.renewaljournal.com).



Map of Papua New Guinea. We lived around Baiyer River and Kompiam in the rugged highlands north of Mt Hagen. We had two roads but four airstrips with weekly visits by the Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) Cessna planes.

Back in Australia I taught on renewal and revival at Trinity Theological College and Christian Heritage College in Brisbane and led many short term mission teams to around 20 countries to encourage revival.

For 20 years we have lived in an extended family in our home designed and built by my son where by 2025 we have four generations living together, and still involved in ministry and mission.

Australia

Back in Australia I worked as a Baptist minister with the Methodist and then Uniting Church in Christian Education in Brisbane and Queensland, leading conferences, camps, conventions, and church services. That included united renewal conventions in the Anglican, Catholic, and Uniting Church cathedrals. I also worked part-time for two years as the inaugural Lifeline telephone counselling director in Toowoomba and a lecturer in Religious Education at the university there.

Later I taught about renewal and revival to Uniting Church (Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational), Anglican and Catholic students at Trinity Theological College, part of the Brisbane College of Theology. Then I lectured at and became a Fellow of Christian Heritage College in Brisbane with its schools of Education, Social Sciences, Counselling, Business and Ministry.

Revival spread among Indigenous Australians from an outpouring of God's Spirit among Elcho Island aborigines near Darwin from February 1978. That spread across northern Australia. We invited them to Pentecost weekend meetings in Brisbane and they invited us to their annual celebrations in February. God moved powerfully among them in repentance, reconciliation, conversions, baptisms, and deliverance from domestic violence and alcoholism in large numbers.



I was the founding editor of the *Renewal Journal* (now www.renewaljournal.com). That led to invitations to overseas short-term revival mission trips in around 20 countries including in Africa, Europe, Asia, and the South Pacific, as described in my book *God's Surprises* (free on www.renewaljournal.com).

Here are highlights from a few of those revival mission trips.

Asia

Sri Lanka

We taught many overseas students in Trinity Theological College, mainly from the South Pacific but also from Asia. I conducted the impressive and totally free wedding in Brisbane of two students from Sri Lanka. Philip worked as a part-time cleaner of St Stephen's Presbyterian (then Uniting) cathedral, so we held the wedding there for free. Church ladies freely provided flowers for the service and for the following day's Sunday Service. The mother of a student friend at college owned a boutique clothing shop which also hired wedding clothes so she gave them free choice of impressive wedding outfits. Those students lived in a Salvation Army hostel so the hostel provided a smorgasbord wedding breakfast for them as their gift.

Philip and Dhamika's relatives led village churches and a Bible School in the hills around Kandi in Sri Lanka. They invited us to visit and encourage them and lead revival meetings. They inherited land with fresh spring water so they built a small factory to bottle and sell the water to support their church and mission work. Our time there included dedicating their new factory for God's kingdom purposes.

India

One of our teams visited Grace Bible College and school in New Delhi. It was the largest Bible College in India with 600 students. Graduates worked in many hostile regions and faced a lot of opposition and persecution. Two of their students returned to Nepal during the time of one of our visits to Nepal. Those students were shot by Maoists. They were accused of being spies.

Nepal

A retired friend in Brisbane worked with the government in Nepal to help with international marketing. He befriended and supported many local pastors and a young evangelist. The evangelist arranged revival meetings for us in West Nepal, East Nepal, and Kathmandu where he had started a church. That Hosanna Church grew into one of the biggest congregations in Nepal and planted many new churches, established schools, trade colleges, and Bible Schools. We saw the Lord pour out his Spirit on pastors and leaders there many times. Most pastors had been imprisoned often, and some bore scars from beatings there. If, for example, a pastor conducted a Christian wedding and relatives complained about that, the pastor could be imprisoned for a month or more for disturbing the peace.

Philippines

I taught on revival at a seminary in Manilla in the sweltering heat of the Philippines. My M.Th. students reported on revival and miracles. One Baptist pastor, who was also a police inspector, reported that a church he visited sent groups of young people to sing and speak at hospitals and nursing homes.

One of those teams held monthly meetings in a mental hospital. The staff said that their patients may not understand much, but those patients did enjoy the singing. More than 40 came to the first meeting. The team offered to pray for anyone who would like prayer. They prayed personally for 26 people. The next month when the team returned, all those 26 had been discharged and sent home.

Africa

Kenya

Francis, a Christian Heritage College graduate from Kenya began Nairobi Believers Mission (NBM) in the slums of Kibera, Nairobi, where a million people live, jammed together in small mud brick homes with rusty iron roofs. Our mission teams visited Francis to serve leaders and speak at meetings there. In spite of poverty and political unrest, their churches continue to grow steadily.

"Can I take some bread home?" asked a young man at our communion service in the slums of Nairobi in Kenya, East Africa. We shared real drink and some loaves of bread together among 30 people in their corrugated iron shed where I was the guest preacher.

"It's your bread," I answered. "You decide." He quickly shoved a handful of bread into his pocket. Then most of the others did the same. Two weeks later, Francis, the young pastor, emailed me: "I've visited the slum homes of those people and they are still eating that bread. It's still fresh." Apparently God multiplied it.

Francis added: "Actually the miracle continued months after we began NBM and were feeding members each Saturday afternoon with tea and bread. God continued multiplying the food and there was always enough."

Ghana



A young pastor in Ghana in West Africa, invited me to hold meetings there. So I arrived with three others from Brisbane during our college break in July, forgetting it was monsoon time in Ghana. We flew into a deluge of rain on the Monday. Our hosts planned night meetings in the market from Tuesday, with morning teaching in a local church.

We drove for over an hour in pouring rain from Accra, the capital, to the town of Suhum in the hills for our first meeting on Tuesday night. The heavy rain had flooded the power station there so the whole town was in darkness. We prayed earnestly, asking God to take over. Within 15 minutes the rain stopped, the town lit up with power, and we began. The host team began excitedly shouting that it was a miracle.

Soon the musicians from one of the local churches had plugged in their instruments to the sound system. The loudspeakers did not face the faithful Christians gathered in the fluorescent-lit open area, but pointed at the surrounding houses, the stores, and the hotel. Those excited Africans sang and danced for over two hours, attracting hundreds to the meeting.

When we invited people to respond and give their lives to Christ, they came from the surrounding darkness into the light. Some wandered over from the pub, smelling of beer. They kept the ministry team busy praying and arranging follow-up with their churches.

We moved about laying hands on people and praying for them. People reported various touches of God in their lives. Church teams prayed for hundreds of people. Many were saved. Many were healed. One man testified, "I came to this meeting blind, but while you were singing I found I could see."



Each day we held morning worship and teaching sessions for Christians in the Apostolic Church, hot under an iron roof on those clear, tropical sunny days. During the second morning I vividly ‘saw’ golden light fill the church and swallow up or remove blackness. At that point the African Christians became very noisy, vigorously celebrating and shouting praises to God. A fresh anointing seemed to fall on them just then.

Although it didn’t rain the whole time we were holding meetings there, the day after our meetings finished, the torrential rains began again. The following week we saw floods in Ghana reported on international television. Later on we received letters telling us how the church where we held our morning meetings, and the other churches, had grown, expanded their building, and had sent out teams of committed young people in evangelism. Through that experience, God showed us a glimpse of what he is doing in a big way in the earth right now.

South Pacific

We often visited the South Pacific nations close to Australia, including Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji. I describe many revival movements in my book *South Pacific Revivals* (free on www.renewaljournal.com).

Many revival movements swept the South Pacific islands. I was blessed to see some.

God’s Spirit fell on the Law School of the University of the South Pacific just after Easter 2002. The Law School is in Port Vila, the capital of **Vanuatu**. Many were dramatically saved and transformed. Those committed students also went on mission to other South Pacific nations and to Australia. Now they are lawyers and leaders, and a president of their Christian Fellowship became a Member of Parliament in **Tuvalu**.

Some of those teams came with me to Pentecost Island in **Vanuatu**. God has been moving there in unusual ways for a hundred years. Vanuatu people first evangelized the island, one becoming a martyr, A wife of the highest ranking chief returned to life after she died and told them that she had seen God and they should leave their heathen ways and become Christians. Many revival teams have served God there.

God poured out his Spirit on children and youth in the **Western Solomon Islands** from Easter 2003. They loved to sing and pray daily in the church after school. God gave them visions, revelations, words of knowledge about hidden sins and bad relationships and many other spiritual gifts such as healings and speaking and singing what God revealed.

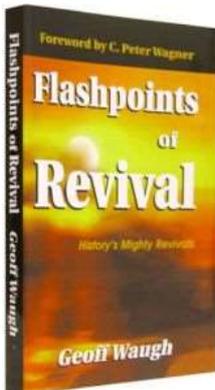
A mother asked me what it meant when her young boy had a vision of Jesus with one foot in heaven and one foot on the earth. I immediately remembered Matthew 28:18 – *All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me*. Many youths had visions of Jesus.

We saw God touch around 1,000 youths at a **Solomon Islands** National Christian Youth Convention in 2006. One night at the convention they responded, running to the front of the open-air meeting. For half-an-hour their worship team sang “He is Lord” while we prayed for them. They fell like dominoes. Many testified to healings, visions and revelations. One young man returned to his village that night and found his mother ill, so laid hands on her and prayed for her. She was healed. His brother then asked for prayer and he too was healed. The young man had never done that before. A whole group from the Kariki Islands, further west, saw revival in their islands on their return. God moved powerfully in every meeting they held and in their personal prayers.

Resources

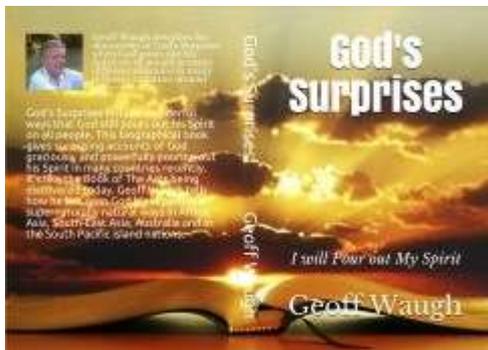
A large part of my work involved publishing resources. We printed 20 issues of the Renewal Journal, now a free resource on www.renewaljournal.com. I gradually produced books and resources on renewal and revival, now also free on www.renewaljournal.com.

Those resources include these free eBooks on revival:



[Flashpoints of Revival – Blog](#)
[Revival Fires – Blog](#)

“I know of no other book like this one that provides rapid-fire, easy-to-read, factual literary snapshots of virtually every well-known revival since Pentecost. ... I felt like I had grasped the overall picture of revival for the first time” C Peter Wagner



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“I’m reading your book ‘God’s Surprises’ and I can feel the power of God and a tremendous desire for a Revival in Italy, where I live.” Francesco Trentinella.

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