

Sara performing to a high school in Geelong, Victoria.

Giving Hope to Thousands

When we set out from Townsville almost two months ago, our director, Ken Mulligan, asked us if we believed we could encourage over 100,000 young people in Australia. To be honest, that was hard to believe at the time. How would we be able to reach them all? Would they listen to what we had to say? More importantly, would they care? I was skeptical, to say the least.

Now, eight weeks later, we have no doubt in our hearts that not only is it possible, but it's happening. A typical day for us as a band looks the same, though the results always vary. We set up our show, play the songs we've written and then share about the needs in Papua New Guinea, a nearby country in a desperate situation. We tell the teens that there are people without proper health care, no hygiene services and some who don't even know what a doctor is. We tell them that we don't think that's very fair and there might be something they can do.

At first, kids giggle and their insecurities tell them to mask their interest and to look as cool as possible. Halfway through the program, we show a DVD that explains the staggering statistics in PNG (like 1 in 7 women are dying in childbirth) and shows photos of children who are mal-

nourished and neglected. There is a part of the DVD where the music swells and these words flash across the screen: the opportunity is here. At this point, most eyes are glued to the screen and not a muscle moves. They are hooked.

At one particular school, a girl came up to me and asked me how old she had to be in order to help the people of PNG. I told her it didn't matter and she could help at whatever age she was. She stood on the sidewalk for a moment, looking at the ground as if she was mustering the courage to say what she was really thinking.

"So...that card that I filled out," she started. "You'll send stuff to me about how I can help, right?"

I assured her that we would definitely get in touch.

"And I'm not too young?"

"No way," I said. "You can make a huge difference."

The more kids we meet, the more their reactions surprise us. Some come to our table at the end of the program with tears in their eyes. Some come with their pocket change in hand; ready to be emptied in our donation box.

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So can we share this message of hope with 100,000 youth in the nation of Australia? We believe we can and are right on the way. To learn more about the YWAM Ship Tour, check out our blog updates (www.nickandsarajane.com) or go to www.ywamships.org.



The Pacific Link received some new anchor chain which meant the old chain needed to go in the engine room to act as ballast. A few hours and 4 tonne of chain later we got the last of it in.



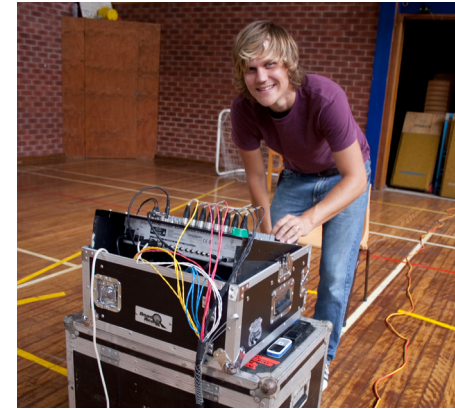
Sara and Jess (Saving Sparrow) playing at a school in Geelong sharing about the ship through their music.



Saving Sparrow performing at a skate park in Geelong.



Some Aussie youth trying on the spectacles that will be sent over to Papua New Guinea later this year.



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Donations

nickandsarajane.com/donate

Seals, Sting Rays and Tourists – Oh My!

Being on the road has its perks. We've seen an enormous amount of the country and Australian wildlife. It just so happens, though, that Portland Victoria has the most amount of amusing creatures we've seen. Portland is located just up the road from some fantastic scenery, known as the Great Ocean Road. Along this road are the infamous Twelve Apostles, London Bridge (not the real one, of course) and the Bay of Islands. Perhaps the most fascinating spectacle is the busloads of Chinese tourists that congregate around the Twelve Apostles.

On our day on this road, we stopped at a beach not far from Portland. As Nick and I were gazing at the crashing surf, I noticed a small black spec in the waves. I continued to observe the spec until it came closer to shore, looking more and more like an animal. Then, I saw little whiskers and the spray of water from its head. It was a penguin! I jumped for joy and tried to yell to the others until a woman in a bright green vest ushered me away from the shore, telling me our distance from the penguin was his only chance of survival. I hesitated

to point out to her that her neon vest wasn't exactly camouflaging her with the sand, possibly adding to the little guys' desperation to swim away.

Not long after, we went to observe the local fishermen in the port and a family of four enormous seals greeted us instead. They sit daily on the slimy rocks, waiting for scraps from the fishermen. They are not the only ones that wait. As we glanced at the water, a sting ray the size of our kitchen table glided over the sandy bottom. Apparently, there is a family of three rays that are always keen for a free meal. The seals and rays frequently get into skirmishes over the chum, eliciting loud barks from the seals and yelps from the children watching a little too closely.

We've also spotted a few wild koalas, huge black plastic-looking spiders and cows that will stare you to the death. This country is full of surprises and will keep you on your guard. More from us soon!

Thanks for all your emails and comments! Love always, Nick and Sara V.