

April 2011

MissionPost

„Where Word and action meet“

New House Leader Willemijn

A parent's view on Mission House

Daily life



MISSION
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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

Welcome to our third edition of MissionPost. Please keep giving us feedback on MissionPost, so we can constantly improve it.

Since our last issue a lot has happened. The Mission House Council and Iain were kept busy selecting a new house leader finally picking the very talented, Willemijn. We are thrilled and look forward for her arrival in the summer and wish her every blessing in her work.

The winter passed with another missed chance for a "elfstedentocht" (Buchanan thinks because the first three letters spell "elf" and it's at winter that Santa must be involved) and the air

tells us that spring is well and truly here. So the sun begins to shine and we have nothing better to do than collecting and writing articles Unless you are Toby in which you have sailing, netball, studying, exams, socialising...actually we do, but somethings need to get done.

We choose the theme, "daily life", because of 'the community' but also we as redaction have a routine, things are going the way they're supposed to go and we need to realise this to constantly challenge ourselves to keep on learning, developing and improving our personalities and skills. Have fun reading

Yours

Toby and Buck

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MissionPost

„Where Word and action meet“

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ROUTINES AND CHANGES

I write about change. I know that some people hate change. Better said, they are afraid of change, because I think that hate comes from fear. I'm the other extreme. I am afraid of routines. I even did a psychological test once with



this outcome. How weird is that? Or is it not?

I want to say that routines are important. But slight changes even more. Want to know why? I will give you life

in the Mission House as an example. The Mission House year is like a rollercoaster. Nothing is the same, every day is different from another day and it dazzles you around until you back at home... That's not completely true, because in the Mission House we create a routine. We have the same working schedules almost every week (although this is interrupted lots of times because of Christmas, seminars, language course, holidays and anything else unexpected), we have the same people living in the house for the whole year (finger's crossed!), they make the same meals every week, the same jokes and undertake the same activities. Before you realise

you know everybody so well that your housemates can't surprise you anymore.

And that's where change comes around the corner, because change brings surprises. The weekend of 8th, 9th and 10th of April the house had the chance to go away for a weekend. The Mission House Council had decided that we 'deserved it' and probably also really 'need it', as in, we could use some rest.

We decided to head off to Texel, one of the beautiful islands that we have in the Netherlands and spent the weekend in a small villa-like bungalow in the middle of an American suburban-like holiday park. A 20 minute walk from the beach, 15 minute walk from the village and 5 minute walk from the swimming pool (with slide!) we ate patat, watched movies, rode horses, swam in the sea, drank beer, made walks, lay in the bath and created a tan in the garden. A weekend spent with the same people but in a different environment; the same people but with a different atmosphere. I'm not arguing that any routine in the house has now changed, neither am I arguing that those routines are bad.

However, I do think that we've seen new sides of each other, heard new stories, got new information and made new experiences. And that, together with the much appreciated rest, gives a really good basis for the last 3 months in the Mission House. Therefore my conclusion; a bit of change gives a healthy basis to routines.

Erjo



TO HIRE OR NOT TO HIRE THAT IS THE QUESTION?

Not the most inspiring title to have to have to write about at first glance is it? What is there that can be said about hiring? I could give the normal facts about looking for a leader, for somebody with potential and a heart for the job but we have all heard that before haven't we? We all know why we go for jobs and what they are looking for but why is that I pick those who come to the house? Why is it that Willemijn is house leader for the next year? For both of these questions I could give you a hundred reasons and each one would be different but what I look for is the 18th camel.

The story is told of a Middle Eastern traveler making his way on a long journey across the desert.

As he plodded on his camel steadily through the dry heat, he came upon an oasis. Approaching the desert spring, the traveler was surprised to find three brothers weeping profusely.

Through conversation with the mourning brothers, the traveler discovered their father had recently passed away. The source of the tears was the brother's inability to satisfy their fathers' last wish.

The father had given strict instructions that the inheritance of his estate be divided in such a way that the oldest received one half, the second received one third, and the youngest received one ninth of the father's estate.

The brothers had successfully divided the rest

of their father's property, but were unable to do so with the camels. The father had left them 17 camels, and, try as they may, the brothers could not distribute the camels according to father's wishes.

The traveler considered the dilemma and then offered the brothers a solution. He insisted they receive his camel as a gift. After much conversation and many attempts at refusal, the brothers relented to the travelers' demands and received the kindness of his gift.

With 18 camels, the brothers were able to properly divide the inheritance and satisfy their father's wishes. The older brother received one half of the herd and took his 9 camels. The second brother received one third of the herd and took his 6 camels. The youngest brother received one ninth of the herd and took his 2 camels.

With the inheritance properly distributed, the traveler was able to take his camel and continue on his journey.

I am looking for the person who is riding on that 18th camel, who steps back from the problem and offers another viewpoint and who uses their wisdom and talents for others not just for themselves. Somebody who is not daunted by the problem at hand but rather embraces it. Everyone's '18th camel' is different, I wonder though what's yours?

Iain



JUDIT, CURRENT MISSION HOUSE VOLUNTEER

The beginning of the year I had to choose my projects, where I wanted to do my voluntary work. I chose a project called Amsta. Amsta is a hospice for handicapped people. At first, I was a little bit worried about how I would handle the situation in the hospice. I have never had contact with mentally and physically handicapped people before yet I really wanted to try it to understand them better.

What is my work there? I work in a house, where 6 handicapped children live together, in which nurses always take care of them. I go there every Monday to help. I usually cook for them, feed them, go for a walk or just spend time with them.

After a few months working with them, I can say: this is hard, but very nice work. Hard, because sometimes you don't receive any reaction;

you can't see the result of your work. Sometimes, they get sick or have epileptic seizures.

Sadly one of the children died a few months ago. It's just sad to see and know that you can't change the situation. But the other side of the work is very nice,

because they can give you a lot of love and joy. When it happens you feel that your work is useful. That is also a very cool feeling, when after a



while, you can keep in contact with them, communicate with them, and understand them a little bit without talking.

I can only offer you this: if you have the possibility in your life to work or give help to handicapped people, try it!

Judit





Dutcharticle

DE NIEUWE HUISLEIDER, WILLEMIJN

Hallo! Mag ik me even voorstellen? Ik word de nieuwe huisleider van het Mission House Amsterdam. Mijn naam is Willemijn Heikoop, 25 jaar, woon nu nog in het kleine, schattige stadje Kampen en studeer theologie in Utrecht.

Wat moet ik nog meer over mezelf vertellen? Ik houd van reizen, mooie plekken bekijken en andere culturen leren kennen. Ik heb een nieuwsgierigheid naar alles aan de andere kant van de grens. Zes jaar geleden heb ik een diaconaal jaar gedaan in Oekraïne, waar ik o.a. gewerkt heb met Roma. Dit heeft zoveel indruk op mij gemaakt dat ik Oost-Europa voor altijd in mijn hart heb gesloten. Het lijkt soms wel alsof ik me in het buitenland beter thuis voel als in Nederland. Ik hoop dat Amsterdam en het leven met jongeren overal vandaan, zo als buitland voelt, dat ik me er helemaal thuis voel.

Ik heb een gekke hobby: het uitzoeken en versturen van kaarten. Ik kan geen rekje met kaarten overslaan, zonder even te kijken of er nog grappige en vooral lelijke kaarten tussen zit. Vaak moet ik erg lachen sommige kaarten en denken aan een bepaald per-

soon. Dan kan ik het niet laten om het te kopen en te versturen. Mijn laatste aanwinst is een kaart van het mannentoilet waar zakenmannen met een laptop op schoot hun behoefte doen. Heb nog niet bedacht naar wie ik deze zal sturen. Het leuke is dat mijn kaarten soms mensen zo inspireert, dat ze me iets terug sturen, maar dat is nooit de reden voor het versturen van een kaart.



Mijn liefde voor lelijke dingen gaat nog verder. Met veel plezier stap ik een winkel als de Xenos binnen op zoek naar het meest grappige lelijke ding. Het is ontzettend leuk om te ontdekken wat een gekke, geniale, lelijke dingen er te koop zijn. Ik kan het dan weer niet laten om wat aan te schaffen en weer iemand als cadeau te geven. (waarna het zeer waarschijnlijk in de prullenbak belandt, maar daar gaat het niet om)

Hiernaast hou ik ook echt van het lezen, lekker eten, taarten bakken en heb ik net het leuke van films kijken ontdekt. Ik ben altijd in voor iets nieuws; ik hou van spontane, onverwachte dingen. Gelijkaardigheid is voor mij een belangrijk begrip en waarde van het



Dutcharticle

leven. Onrechtvaardigheid en ongelijkheid kunnen mij erg boos maken en ik probeer me dan ook in te zetten voor meer gelijkheid in de wereld.

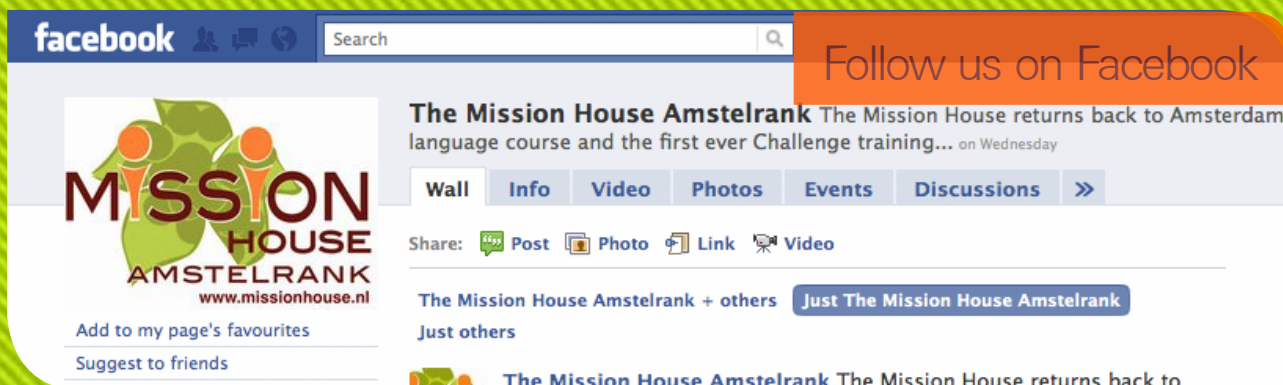
Het afgelopen jaar is erg bijzonder geweest voor me. Ik heb namelijk deel mogen nemen aan het Training in Mission programma van de Council for World Mission. Samen met 10 andere jongeren van over de hele wereld heb ik 5 maanden in Zuid-Afrika en 5 maanden in India doorgebracht om bezig te zijn met kerk, maatschappij en zending. Vooral van het leven in een internationale groep heb ik veel geleerd en genoten. Weer in Nederland wilde ik graag iets doen met deze mooie ervaringen. Toen ik hoorde dat het Mission House op zoek was naar een nieuwe huisleider, was ik erg enthousiast. Precies waar ik naar op zoek was, samenleven en werken met jongeren uit verschillende landen en culturen. Al een paar jaar ben ik bekend met het Mission House en erg onder de indruk van wat er allemaal gebeurt. Vooral de projecten waar de jongeren zich voor inzetten maken grote indruk op mij. Het werken met mensen aan de onderkant van de samenleving interesseert me enorm.

Mijn leven in Kampen is klein en beschermt en ik weet dat er ook een andere kant is. In Zuid-Afrika heb ik een vrijwilligers project gedaan met jongens in conflict met de wet (in een jeugdinstelling) en met meisjes in de prostitutie. Dit heeft mijn ogen geopend naar een andere kant van de samenleving, maar realiseerde me ook dat ik in Nederland daar helemaal niets van weet. Ik hoop door de jongeren meer te leren over hun werk en in contact te komen met de mensen waarmee ze werken, zodat mijn horizon ook verbreed word.

Daarnaast hoop ik een fijn thuis voor de jongeren te creëren waar iedereen zijn of haar eigen plekje heeft en waar ook vele gasten zich welkom voelen.

Het kan niet snel genoeg september worden. Ik kan niet wachten om veel nieuwe mensen te leren kennen, te leren en geïnspireerd te worden door alles wat er gebeurt. Ik hoop dat ik mijn plekje er snel zal vinden, zodat ik mee kan werken en leven met alles en iedereen.

Willemijn



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BEING THE FOREIGNER

It's beginning of April 2011, the flowers starting to bloom, the days are getting longer, temperature rises and all you wanna do is go outside. It's finally spring in Delft, the Netherlands. Since my voluntary year at the Mission House 2009-2010, I've stayed in the country and decided to start a study called maritime engineering at the Delft University of Technology. But why would I go to university in the Netherlands, while I was already accepted at well-known Universities in Germany?

I think if you go to the Vondelpark in Amsterdam on a sunny day, you will feel what I felt. Hundreds of people from all different backgrounds, skin colours, languages, countries laying on the grass and enjoying the summer weather. You see old people that can hardly walk, young kids playing football, friends that go jogging and couples that enjoy the warm weather. I felt in love with this different and relaxed attitude. Besides Dutch, I was also looking for a great challenge in my study. I knew I wanted to do maritime engineering, but not where. Delft, a small place with around 100,000 inhabitants, situated between The Hague and Rotterdam, is for me, small Amsterdam. Delft is full of history, has a lot of little canals, a lot of bridges, houses at the canals, which haven't changed for years and it has a world renown university. So I moved to Delft and started studying in September.

Even though the study is entirely in Dutch, until the Bachelor, I thought there would be a lot of foreigners studying maritime engineering. As I found out quite fast, I'm the only student whose mother tongue is not Dutch. This basically comes down to everything 'Tobias can do all!', though this doesn't apply for all Germans. So the rumour that the German school system is excellent, or at least way better than the Dutch still exists, only because I already had some topics of our courses in my high school. Apart from this it's a special situation that I really like. My Dutch skills have improved a lot because I'm using them all day long, all my friends are Dutch, so I experience a lot of Dutch culture. I've even got another 'Kijk op Nederland' within the families of my friends, and so on.

Basically i really enjoy living here, I don't regret anything and I'm happy with what I do. I have a lot of support from friends from the University, but I'm also able to still keep in touch with the Mission House and my year in Amsterdam. I think to study abroad widens the horizon a lot. You get in contact with a lot of new people, discover new sites in yourself, explore different cultures and walk through your life. I think it is important to keep on moving, to keep on challenging yourself, there is a reason why the bible talks about people that are on their ways.

Toby



A PARENT'S VIEW

Owain left for the Mission House straight after finishing university, so he already had a bit of experience of living on his own, however I was quite worried about him living in a foreign country, but excited for him too, having this wonderful opportunity to meet new people, learn a new language and to do something worthwhile. I was especially pleased he was going with the church to do volunteer work and explore his faith as he would grow more as a person and it would benefit others at the same time. I also hoped he would learn faith in God as this has been an anchor to me in my own life. At the time his younger brother had just come out of hospital with the all clear from leukaemia so this made me more anxious about all my children than I

normally would be, but felt confident he would be well looked after by the Church.

As it was the first Mission House year they didn't have internet for the first few months so we kept in contact through letters and phone calls. I was a little concerned about him living with all girls, not for the reasons

you might imagine(!) but because he seemed lonely for male company(at home he had 3 brothers and a sister), and when I spoke to him on the phone he sometimes felt a bit down. He persevered though, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience and certainly benefited from it.

Rev. Llunos Gordon, father of Owain Gordon

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MISSION HOUSE AMSTELRANK

Home
Welcome to our homepage. The Mission House is a Christian community in the heart of Amsterdam, situated next to world known Hermitage museum, volunteers from Europe live together, work in social projects and share their beliefs during a year full of adventure, experiences and fun. [Where Word and action meet!](#)

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Welcome to the Mission House
"Where Word and action meet"

Welcome to the Mission House Website, we hope that you will enjoy looking through our website.

5 NATIONALITIES



BUCHANAN'S FUMBLE WITH A THOUGHT.

I've recently had the privilege to shadow the Outreach team for a homeless charity in which I am a volunteer. The Outreach team spend their time engaging with the homeless and those at risk of homelessness. The support they offer differs depending on the needs of the service user but it can range from simply being a figure in someone's life so that they can go to sleep at night knowing someone has their back, all the way to helping to structure a person's life on a daily basis (keeping appointments, making sense of finances, dealing with letters/phone calls, keeping up hygiene levels etc).

One issue we have is evidencing the impact the Outreach team makes. Those who have volunteered in an organisation with service users/clients/customers will immediately know the difference your input makes to people's life, yet evidencing this; being able to highlight what you've done and the effect it has had is another kettle of fish.

My local church has adopted a five year plan. It has 5 strategic aims, intended outcomes for years 1-5, the activities necessary to accomplish the intended outcomes and finally the resources needed to support the activities. On paper it reads perfectly well but when it comes to monitoring and evaluation...how does one truly measure impact?

The impact of Mission House on me was positive, huge and for some time to come, unknown. It will affect each and every person in a unique way. Think about the impact of Jesus on his disciples, how unique their journeys were

with Christ.

I live life measuring, evidencing and quantifying too much in the hope of better understanding and gaining objective knowledge. One of the service users I met while shadowing the Outreach team died a week after my visit, much to the shock of the staff. I can't evidence the impact the Outreach team had on her quality of life but I know without a shadow of a doubt she led a happier and more dignified life because of the work Outreach did. I feel (immeasurable?) respect for those who work day in and day out caring and supporting others, never fully knowing whether or not they make a difference. The vast majority of experiences in life can't be categorised and labelled, neatly squared away with no rough edges. Life is a vast grey area full of unexpected turns and rough edges. No doubt creating structure creates support and a means to better understand life but this thirst to make perfect sense of events only hides the perfect chaos to life. Imagine if God had given Jesus 5 strategic aims and monthly support and review sessions? Instead of the gospels there were do-it-yourself evangelism action plans...how dry and absent of life that would be!

So the next time you get someone like me, maybe a boss, a colleague or a misguided friend, who demands a reason for all your actions or logic to all your decisions tell them to try volunteering with the homeless community or better yet apply to become a Mission House volunteer, It shook it up for me big time!

Buck