



*We are having new t-shirts made.
Order yours today to be among the first people*

wearing one!



My Reflections in Port-au-Prince

by Sara Dessieux

Last week, I visited the HCM secondary school in Port-au-Prince for the first time in almost five years. It brought back many good memories from years ago. I first saw the school in 2001 right after the third floor had been added on. Then I spent much of 2003-2005 teaching there. Those were the glory days of the school. But at the time we didn't even realize it.

In the mornings, the school was filled with high school students, from loud, laughing seventh and eighth grade students downstairs all the way up to the nearly finished students in Philo, the final class in

Haiti, who were serious and studious as they prepared for the rigorous national exam at the end of the year. The lower two floors were older and were a little dark at times and kind of crowded, but the newer rooms upstairs were brighter, breezier and larger. The high school students used them in the morning, and then at 4:00 in the afternoon they housed HCM's Superior Institute of Translation and Interpretation. Students of varying ages and stages of life would come to study English, French, Spanish, translation and interpretation. They were eager and ready to learn and to try out their skills. I found them to be so engaging and inquisitive. They would come to me with questions they had written down and they all



English students in one of the third floor classrooms



English students in the large meeting room on the third floor

wanted to talk as much as they could with me since for many of them I was the only native speaker of English they knew. They were also eager to discuss things with their other teachers and with each other. Even during hours they didn't have class, they lingered in the library and on the balcony growing in knowledge together. The school quickly grew in numbers as its good reputation spread across the city. Pastor Etienne Prophete, the founder of the school, loves to teach and so in that place with those students hungry for knowledge, he was in his element. He inspired many students to work hard and gain success.

Even on the weekends, the place was a hive of activity. Basketball games on the court out front brought in crowds of



HCM's Port-au-Prince high school last week

spectators. Students would come in to work math problems on the chalkboards and to socialize. On Sunday afternoons we met for worship and Bible study in English while other groups met for other purposes. Younger kids came into the courtyard just because it was a safe, fun place to meet up with other kids.

Sadly though, things began turning for the worse in Port-au-Prince. Our school was located in a poor, heavily-populated area, but it had been peaceful. By early 2004 though, it had become quite the opposite. Young men known as Chimeres began terrorizing the people. They kidnapped people, robbed people at gunpoint, threatened people and killed people. We started hearing gunshots firing around us every single day. The area was no longer considered safe and so the students

started staying away. For a while, the school was shut down completely. When we finally opened it again, many of the students and some of the teachers in the translation school and even in the high school didn't return. The school never fully recovered from that. It was sad. We could not have even imagined it would get way worse.



A classroom on the third floor with a mix of old and new construction



HCM's elementary school in Port-au-Prince built by Compassion in 2013

The translation school continued to function and class was in session when the earthquake shook Port-au-Prince on January 12, 2010, but thanks be to God, the floors did not fall and so no one was killed or seriously injured there. The top two floors of the school were too damaged to be used or repaired though so in time they were removed. Our students and teachers had to deal with the horrific devastation of the earthquake and many left the area for good. Some stayed though, and when I returned last week, I saw several familiar faces.

Please Pray

- + For all the teams that will be serving on our campus this summer. Pray for the love of Christ to be on display.
- + For the needed funding to come in so we can begin producing peanut butter in our factory. That peanut butter will nourish our schoolchildren and bring in funds for the mission.
- + For sponsors to be found for many more of our schoolchildren. We want all of our kids to be able to learn and eat every day.

Down the street, Compassion International built us a wonderful primary school to replace our broken one. We have far fewer students than we used to but they do have a good place to meet. The high school though is another story. They now have only the old first story classrooms to work in plus a couple unfinished ones built from partially remaining rooms on the second floor. Where we used to educate 300+ students, we now have only 130. The translation school is still struggling along with its dedicated teachers, but we simply do not have an appropriate place for them to hold class. And so last week when I visited, I mourned that.

I could still picture the crowds of students that might come pouring into the hall at any moment, but then when I stepped outside and looked back up the building, I could not because of the looming empty space against the sky. It all just felt so wrong.

But now before I start sounding too depressed, let me tell you I have hope that while right now our glory days are in the past, I believe the future holds more glory days. At HCM we see huge needs every day. We could list off dozens of buildings we would love to build right now. But in the meantime, our dedicated staff will continue to teach and serve in the spaces they have available to them. Our Father in heaven knows of our need and in his perfect timing, I trust He will provide so we can build.

Our Leaders

By Sara Dessieux



*Edwens Prophete,
Michael Blumenstein, Mike Tvedt,
Char Frank, George Frank,
Guesly Dessieux,
Laura Nott, Jonas Dorlus, Rosicler Maurice,
Sara Dessieux and Cheryl Fogarty*

The other day, I asked our Vice President of Haiti Operations and Director of Evangelism, Jonas Dorlus, if he had ever imagined that he would one day be leading HCM. His brief answer was

just what I had expected. No. Then I asked if he had ever thought that one day one of the Prophete's children would be leading HCM and I got the same answer. No. I too would never have imagined it.

Back when I lived in Pastor Etienne Prophete's home, he would wonder out loud to me about who would lead the mission when his time as director needed to end. We really could see no probable candidates on the horizon. And in my mind, no one else could possibly fill the enormous role that Etienne held. It was just too huge and too difficult of a job. And so we wondered what in the world would happen in HCM's future. All along though of course, God knew the answer. And oh my goodness. God's plan was excellent.

This past week I got to spend a lot of time with Edwens and Dorlus together in Haiti, and it honestly thrilled me to see how both of them lead and minister in their positions and how incredibly well they work as a team. They complement each other so well. God was so good to HCM to bring us these men. HCM is in good hands.

And in addition to these two, we have a host of Haitian pastors, directors, teachers, medical staff and support staff that are dedicated to the work that HCM is doing and are working hard to see that HCM succeeds in fulfilling its mission. If you have visited HCM, you have seen this. If you've never been, then maybe you should start planning a trip.

New Addition to our Staff

In April, we welcomed a new member to the HCM staff, our new administrative assistant, Laura Nott. Laura, who lives in Oregon, will be assisting Edwens and all of our volunteer directors. She will help manage the sponsorship programs,



write letters, correspond with donors and churches, implement several new programs we have in the works, and take care of a variety of other tasks. Earlier this month, she had the opportunity to meet most of our stateside leadership and last week she took her first trip to Haiti to meet our staff there.

Laura recently returned to Oregon after spending two years teaching English in South Korea. She is excited about this new venture working with HCM and we are all grateful to have her on board helping us out. Visit our [website](#) to learn about some of the other people on our team.

Join Our Mailing List!

STAY CONNECTED

