

## News from the Brices

Tuesday 8th

January 2013

*But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.*

Ps. 86:15



29/10/12 "We counted all our furniture out.."

8/11/12 "...and we counted it all in again."

As we look back at the events surrounding our move we are amazed how, with all the potential for complications, everything went with great serenity. Even down to the detail of the weather on the day we travelled. With our limited experience of travelling on coaches in Argentina we, mistakenly, assumed that there would be a supply of water for the passengers and so took nothing with us for the 12 hr. journey. But we had an overcast cool day all the way to Ing. Juárez and suffered no ill effects.

Everybody has been amazingly welcoming even the Swedish missionary who was living in the house next to the one we are renting welcomed us in to her house until our furniture arrived. Both houses are owned by a Trust set up by the Swedish Assemblies of God mission.

The houses are very attractive each being the mirror image of the other and were shipped out prefabricated from Sweden twenty years ago.



Our first guests were colleagues, David and Shelly Stokes who, unfortunately, were unable to use the electric fan we provided because the socket in their room didn't work. The electrician who came to solve the problem, confirmed that the socket had been disconnected but while going into raptures of admiration about the quality of the electrical installations seemed at a loss to solve the problem.

The plumber too seems to be loath to change any of the connections even when they don't work.

### Not quite like Paraguay

We love mangos so were delighted to discover that we have four mango trees in the garden, of at least, three different varieties. None of which we have come across in Paraguay. Fortunately the fruit don't all ripen at the same time. Marie has even been able to make green mango chutney.

There are quite a lot of things which are similar, but not the same as Paraguay. This is only to be expected but it is what makes adapting a slow and often painful process. The weather for example is very similar, in fact, in some ways, easier to cope with than Asunción being dryer.

But the water supply is variable, the hotter it gets the less pressure there is. For the last month the pressure has been insufficient to fill the water tank. On some days, before Christmas, we could only get water out of the stand pipe in the garden and, even then, only a trickle. A lot of the place names, like Paraguay, are from the Guarani language, but not pronounced in the same way. Spanish too is spoken with a different intonation and different vocabulary so we don't always catch what people say or have to repeat ourselves, or explain, to be understood. Then there are some things one simply doesn't want to adapt to. For example, in Paraguay we got used to getting up quite early in the morning and going to bed fairly early in the evening with a siesta from mid-day till two or three in afternoon. In Tartagal businesses seem to open at 9 am and close at 1 pm. There then follows a long siesta till 6pm! Then shops remain open till 9 or 10 at night. People don't appear to go to bed before midnight. Meetings in the evening never start before 8:30 pm so, with the relaxed pace of life, even if you want to go to bed before midnight, as we do, you can't. If we do manage to go to bed early we have to be prepared to cope with the noise of the rest of the town which continues as normal till the early hours; whether it be a heavily amplified evangelistic campaign or band practice for carnival. Even Argentine born Marie openly confesses to being in culture shock.



**Zacarias** (above right) and **Viviana** have been a tremendous help orientating us, listening to our complaints and patiently explaining where to find things, how to get things done, or, just helping us do them. Zacarias is, among other things, driver for the members of the Asociana team based in Tartagal. Asociana is a trust set up by the Anglican church to help the Indian people in Salta province in the areas of education, health and land claims. The other two members of the team based in Tartagal are **Ana** (left) and **Claudia** (next to Ana in the photo). (Other team members are **Jose**, next to Claudia, **Chris** and **Susana**, all based on the river Pilcomayo, and **Christina** based in Salta.) Ed's role is to learn all he can about their work and the challenges they face.

**The Good Shepherd** church in the Villa Güemes district of Tartagal.

After a number of years without a pastor; Claudia and Ana, Zacarias, Viviana and their children, are nearly all that remain of this once thriving congregation. Ed is beginning to work with Zacarias who wants to receive pastoral training so that he can better serve in the congregation. In the morning, Viviana and Claudia, with Zacarias' support, run a lively Sunday school for local children. A special Christmas event in which Marie helped with the puppets has enabled us to contact some of the parents. Please pray for **Carmen, Nancy and Flavio, Jorge and Rocío, Dario and Estella, Sergio and Sarita** as we start visiting them regularly.

Thank you all so much for your faithful support during 2012, may you know more of the Lord's rich blessings during this new year.

With all our love

Ed and Marie