

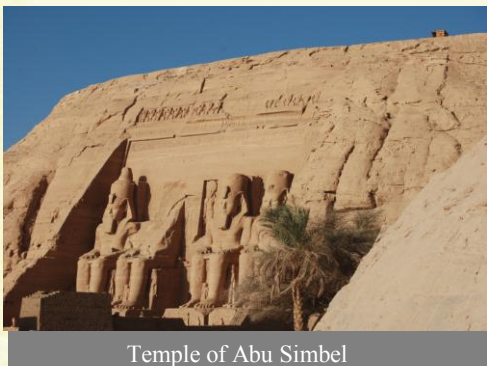
James and Stephanie Van Straten

Serving in Menouf, Egypt

September 2010



Camel Transport



Temple of Abu Simbel



On July 12th, we found out that surgery was needed and made the fast decision to have this surgery done in Canada. Two and half weeks later I was in surgery two weeks after that I received the good news that everything was healing properly and spent the rest of the week saying good bye to family, friends and Canada. After five weeks of living out of bags and a whirlwind of doctor's visits and surgery recovery, we were looking forward to unpacking, sleeping in our own beds and starting work again.

Our trip to Canada was very uplifting. Although the situation the necessitated the trip was not ideal, it was wonderful to see friends and family, and to get out of the hot, dry climate of Egypt for a few weeks. It is amazing how much rain and greenery can be so replenishing.

We were also so encouraged by the people we met and those that we were in touch with through email. We were going through a bit of a rougher patch in Menouf, and being able to see and hear from a lot of you who support us and pray for us was very needed. Now that we've returned to Egypt, our departure time of summer 2012 no longer seems so far away and we feel much better equipped to continue with our service work.

To all of those we were able to see, thank you for driving the long distances, the hugs and encouragement. To those of you we were not able to connect with, thank you for your emails and prayers not only about the surgery, but also about our time in Egypt. We are so blessed to have you lifting us up in prayer. Hopefully we will be able to connect when we return in 2012 when we can better know our schedule and actually set up times that will work.

You can read more about our adventures on our blog:

www.jsvanstraten@blogspot.com
username: vanstratenblog@hotmail.com
password: bakery123

Some things we have come to enjoy about Egypt

- Hitting traffic jams at 11PM
- Hitting traffic jams that contain bicycles, motorcycles, motorcycle trucks, huge vans, taxis, donkey carts, horse and buggies, and people. All in one place. All trying to go in completely different directions.
- How everyone greets with shaking hands, from the shopkeepers to the little toddlers on the streets.
- Being offered more food than I would ever need nearly every time I enter someone's home
- Call to Prayer. Now that we've been gone, I appreciate it again. It's now Ramadan and I think it's pretty amazing that millions of people fast together during this month. There is definitely a spirit of solidarity, generosity and partying (throughout the night).
- Looking down as walking to see chicken feet embedded in the dirt.
- Goats and sheep tied up outside people's doors
- Buying fruits and vegetables from the street sellers... annoying at times, but still definitely an experience!
- Ohhhhhh, the dust...
- The sheer amount of people roaming the streets at night. Since most people live in apartment buildings, our "small" town is incredibly dense, population wise.
- The green farmer's fields as we drive home from Cairo through the delta.
- The amazing faith and vision of many of our Christian friends.
- Eating eggplant four days in a row because it seems like that and tomatoes, potatoes and onions are the only vegetables in season right now.
- How utterly amazed Egyptians are when we, as foreigners, show up in unexpected places.
- How completely non shy Egyptian children are when they perform. We had 30 kids in church singing and reciting verses in church for the conclusion of their church school... they are such good showmen.

God is truly a wonderful God and we are continually amazed with how He has brought us here and how He continues to show us more ways to serve Him.

Once again, thank you so much for all your prayers and support. We feel so loved and blessed by having you in our lives.



Children's Conversation Course



Staff and Friends of the Community Service Center.



*At the base of Mt. Sinai/
In the Emergency Room at Harper Memorial Hospital*

**We always love to hear from you. Please write us at: tepvvd@hotmail.com or
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