

Peel Board MT 5-11-76 Ross, George

Ex-Peel principal teaches in Zambia

By NANCY ENRIGHT

George Ross, retired Peel school principal, has been named head of Instruction in Practical Skills at Malcolm Moffat Teacher College in Serenje, northern Zambia.

Ross, who retired from the Peel Board of Education on Dec. 31, 1974, travelled to Africa on Dec. 31, 1975 with his wife, Dorothy, under the auspices of the United Church of Canada.

Ross joined the staff of Malcolm Moffat Teacher College in Serenje, northern Zambia, where he thought he would teach educational psychology and visual aids.

Instead, Ross discovered a change of philosophy of Zambian education placing increased emphasis on practical skills.

Only 20 per cent of Zambians can be accommodated in secondary schools, therefore skills most needed in adult life must be learned before school-leaving at about age 15.

About 80 percent of the population live in rural areas, so that academic education has limited application. For these reasons, the Zambian Ministry of Education decided every primary school student must learn agricultural and other practical skills.

Primary teachers are the key in the Zambian educational system, offered free for all children.

In the fall of 1975, the Finnish government donated carpentry tools to the primary schools in the Kabwe Region to assist in implementing this new program.

During the Christmas break, 41 primary teachers spent two weeks at a workshop for practical skills, where Ross was one of the instructors.

The practical skills instruction is now being offered on the curriculum of Malcolm Moffat Teacher College under Ross. The two-year program at Serenje will train about 300 teachers yearly.

Serenje is 250 miles from the nearest shopping centre in Kabwe, where the office of the education officials is located.

Ross was a Peel school principal for 30 years before his retirement, while his wife, Dorothy, worked for Peel Community Services until her retirement in November of 1974.

Ross' work with the Malcolm Moffat Teacher College will keep them in Zambia for another three years.



George Ross, retired Peel school principal, instructs a Zambian teacher in carpentry at the Malcolm Moffat Teacher College in Serenje, northern Zambia. Ross and his wife, Dorothy,

went to Zambia in December, 1975, a year after Ross retired after 30 years with the Peel Board of Education.

Times photo