

PLANE TOURS BENEFIT INACCESSIBLE AREAS IN AFRICA

By ELLIE BARTON

To Africans in the isolated villages of Zaire, the sound of an Air Service Freedom plane means relief from hunger, frustration and pain.

Kingston residents are being asked to help that sound — and those effects — continue.

Guy Gervais, a pilot for Air

Service Freedom, will be at Norman Rogers Airport tomorrow and Sunday to offer aerial sight-seeing tours for \$12 a person.

The money raised will help support two six-passenger Cessna planes and three pilots in Zaire, where Air Service Freedom provides transportation services for development projects in education, agriculture, health and evangelism.

Grants from the Canadian International Development Organization will treble the funds raised, Gervais said in a recent interview from the Montreal headquarters of the non-profit



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organization.

The planes are needed to transport supplies and services into areas that are inaccessible by road, Gervais explained.

"Zaire is a central African country with a population of 33 million.

"But communications outside the two largest cities (Kinshasa and Kinsangani) are virtually nil.

"There is no road system. A three-day walk to the hospital with a sick person on a stretcher is not unusual."

Airstrips carved out of the jungle by native volunteers facilitate access by plane in many villages, Gervais said.

In areas where landing is impossible, supplies such as food, medicine and school materials are dropped from the air.

A major goal of Air Service Freedom, Gervais said, is to encourage villagers to become self-sufficient.

One recent project involved the planting of 15,000 palm trees with seedlings flown in by Air Service Freedom. The oil from the nuts is used in cooking and in the production of laundry soap.

Air Service Freedom, which was founded in March 1984, is modelled on a 14-year-old American organization called Wings of Hope.

Both organizations work closely with government, religious communities, aviation companies, service clubs and volunteers to promote development in Central America and Africa.

FILM SERIES AIMS TO HELP CHURCH WORKERS CUT STRESS

It is common for churchworkers to become so busy keeping up with external demands that they neglect their inner spiritual life, says Captain Robert Knighton of the Salvation Army.

In response to the high level of stress experienced by church workers and individuals generally, the Salvation Army Kingston Citadel is screening a six-part film series called *Ordering Your Private World*, Sundays at 7:45 p.m. until Nov. 23.

Based on a book by Gordon MacDonald, president of Inter-University Christian Fellowship in the United States, the series addresses the priority of private or spiritual organization as a daily and life-long choice.

MacDonald's emphasis on the need for discipline and prayerful tranquility at the centre of Christian life is not new. The strength of the book and film series is in the style of presentation. He speaks with candid simplicity to an inter-denominational Christian audience.

"Everyone is talking about the frenzied quality of life, and the church is one of the prime offenders," says Knighton, who organized the series.

"I think a lot of people back off from joining the church because of the activity level. There's an incredible drop-out and burn-out rate in the church."

The thrust of the film, Knighton adds, is to regenerate the spiritual life of individuals by freeing them to tend to their inner spiritual needs.

CHRISTIAN MEMBERSHIP DROPS IN U.K.

The Christian church in Britain lost 500,000 members in the first five years of the 1980s, according to figures just published by The British Christian Handbook for 1987/88.

The number of Muslims rose by more than a third, the handbook says.

The handbook — which says the change is due to immigration patterns — predicts that Christian churches will lose another 500,000 members by the end of this decade.

The handbook, published by MARC Europe, part of the charity and Christian research organization World Vision, puts the number of Christians in Britain at just over seven million, compared with more than 7½ million in 1980 and 8½ million in 1970.

The number of Muslims in Britain has grown from 600,000 to 852,000 in the last five years.

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