

Diocese of Ysabel Presents Optical Equipment to Buala

In a touching ceremony on 13th May, Bishop Richard Naramana (Diocese of Ysabel) presented equipment donated by the Diocese of Chester to help protect the sight of the people of Isabel. Dr David Danitofea, Director of Medical in Isabel, was on hand to receive the equipment.

Dr Danitofea has already been actively engaged in touring the Province with a circumnavigation in early May followed by several site visits. He has big plans for improving rural health care in Isabel.

In accepting the machine, Dr Danitofea said that "The donation will greatly assist the hospital.

The Honiara Eye Department will be coming to Buala in September, and this equipment will be a great asset for them as well." Dr Danitofea requested Bishop Richard to convey the Buala Hospital's thanks to the Diocese of Chester, noting the importance of outside assistance to small communities like Buala.

Bishop Richard conveyed his sense of pride in the people of Isabel who are able to do so much with what they have, and especially the people of the Dioceses of Ysabel and Chester who have come together in order to make such a tremendous contribution.

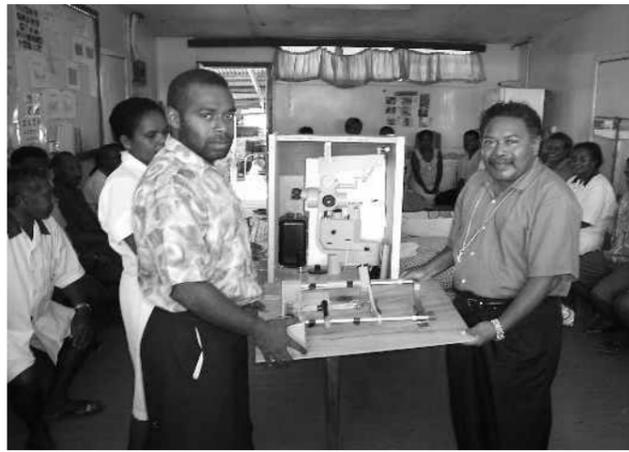
The Diocese has been working on their plans for the next three years. In the discussions with the Chiefs, Church and Provincial Government, the Church has been defining its role as the primary social services body in the villages. To date, the administration of services has not been systematic, but the Church will be reviewing plans and structures at their next Synod. With over 97% of people in Isabel being Anglican, the Diocese of Ysabel has obviously developed a strong foundation through its many decades of service. With this latest donation, the Diocese continues in that tradition of service, making sure that the future will look bright for even more Isabellians.

Date for you Diary

The 2006 AGM and Annual Festival for The Melanesian Mission will be held on 10th June. More details in the next issue of Melanesia News.

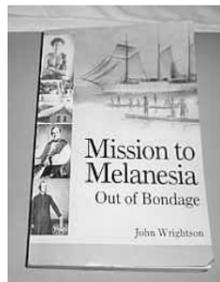
Stop Press

As this edition of Melanesia News goes to print we await the judgement from the murder trail for the seven Brothers. Check out the Solomon Star on www.solomonstarnews.com for the latest news.



John Wrightson's book **Mission to Melanesia**, £11.95, published by Janus Publishing (www.januspublishing.co.uk), is a very good read. The author worked as a Government Officer in the Solomons and Vanuatu, and he clearly became fascinated by the commitment and courage of the early missionaries. He met Dr Charles Fox, the veteran missionary, and this inspired him to write this story.

The history of the Mission from George Augustus Selwyn to Bishop Baddeley is well researched and well written. Sadly the last section of the book was completed in a hurry (so the author tells us), and it shows in several mistakes.



Wantoks blong mi

Just a short e-mail to let you know that our Brothers and Sisters have now returned home to the Solomon Islands. Their plane from Port Moresby landed at 12.50 pm this afternoon. After two hours rest at Chester House there was dinner at the home of Father Sam Sahu before leaving Honiara to go to Tabalia.

This week will be rest, telling of stories, and returning to the less hectic pace of life in these islands. Next Sunday there will be a party at Tabalia after morning Eucharist, and then the Brothers and Sisters will return to their households all over the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. And so the mission comes to an end. Thank you very much for everything you have done for them. They are very tired, but very happy - you have looked after them well. I look forward to seeing you either here in the Solomons, or maybe when the next mission team comes to England!

Keith Joseph



Melanesia News

The Melanesian Mission Issue 57, Winter 05/06

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Drama at the Palace



From the Chairman

It was very good to see so many of you at this year's Annual Meeting and Festival in Chester. This was our first AGM under our new constitution and it was encouraging that it was marked by a record attendance. The whole day had a wonderfully positive and forward looking feel culminating in a deeply moving Eucharist which also marked a transitional stage in a Mission to the UK by the Brothers and Sisters of the four Melanesian Religious Orders (The Melanesian Brotherhood, the Sisters of Melanesia, the Society of St Francis and the Sisters of the Church). Having completed six weeks in the Diocese of Chester thanksgiving was offered for their work there before they were formally handed on with prayer to the Diocese of Exeter for a further six weeks there. In both Dioceses their presence and their witness made a huge impact and I give thanks particularly for their work with young people, especially in schools and colleges; for the impact of their dramatic presentation of the gospel, performed mainly in public places, and with a strong contemporary emphasis; and for their faith and spirituality in public worship which has so clearly led to personal and corporate renewal wherever they

have been. The very powerful drama of the Passion, the humorous but deeply challenging portrayal of the parable of 'The Lost Son' and the quiet but disturbing witness, given at 'Modern Martyrs Lunches', of those who had experienced at first hand the results of recent troubles in the Solomon Islands, touched hearts, minds and spirits in committed Christian and new enquirer alike.

In addition to undertaking their strenuous mission programme, the Brothers and Sisters were also able to spend time for retreat and reflection on Holy Island, with the Society of St Francis and with the Sisters of the Church, and also with two newer Christian communities - Lee Abbey and the Society of Martha and Mary at Sheldon. They were also invited to stay at Lambeth Palace and spend time with the Archbishop of Canterbury, himself a Companion of the MBH.

Continued on page 2

Mission to Chester and Exeter: stories and reflections. See page 3

from page 1

The Chester meeting also heard from Bishop Derek Rawcliffe, Canon Brian McDonald-Milne and Esther Langrish who were each able to bring us up to date news of Melanesia and the work of the Church there based on recent visits. Together with a powerful presentation by the Brothers and Sisters in the Cathedral these all reminded us of the continuing importance of the work of the Melanesian Mission (UK) and our partnership in the Gospel with the Church in the South Pacific. In a recent speech in Australia, Bishop Terry Brown of Malaita spoke of the success of the RAMSI operation in the Solomon Islands in restoring law and order, but went on to outline the key challenges that need to be tackled now. The primary goal, he said, should be to return the Solomons to viable statehood, in terms of governance, political maturity and improved democracy, some level of economic prosperity, improved levels of health and education, respect for traditional culture and for the churches. This will require serious development work in terms infrastructure, the economy at national and local levels and most of all of human resources, especially civil servants, politicians and the leaders of civil society.

In all of this the Church with its high standing and strength in local communities stands ready to play a part. At the same time it is itself still having to cope with the aftermath of its prominent role in peacemaking during the tensions on Guadalcanal. In particular the appeal of Harold Keke, leader of the rebel forces on the Weather Coast, against his sentence for the murder of the seven Melanesian Brothers has become a protracted affair, with many harrowing details being revealed that are deeply painful for all those involved. There have also been attempts to present the Brothers as government agents and spies, and the former Head Brother, Harry Gereniu, was forced to return to the Solomons early to give evidence in very difficult circumstances. Much prayer is needed for the Brotherhood, the Church and the justice system at this time.

Finally at this year's meeting we had the joy of formally welcoming our new Executive Officer, Dave Friswell, and the sadness of saying farewell to the Revd Richard Carter, who has served in Melanesia in partnership with MM (UK) for the past 17 years. Richard first went to Melanesia as a teacher at Selwyn College. He was subsequently ordained and served as tutor and chaplain to the Melanesian Brotherhood, in due course becoming a Brother himself. His

passion for communicating the gospel in forms that are culturally accessible, together with his great skills with drama and other theatre arts, have had a lasting impact on the Brotherhood in both evangelism and liturgy, and through the Brotherhood on many, many people both in Melanesia and throughout the world where the Brothers have ministered. Earlier this year Richard was released from MBH and now goes to serve as priest in the parish of St John, Canberra in Australia. He takes up this new challenge with our deep gratitude and our prayer.

+Michael Exon:

Mission Moves South

A large group of MU members from across Bristol Diocese hosted a buffet lunch for members of the Melanesian Brotherhood, and a small group of Sisters from several Houses in the Solomon Islands. They were traveling from Chester to Exeter and we were the mid-day point on their journey.

Everyone mixed well and enjoyed an excellent buffet and animated conversations! We then gathered together for an inspiring service of Holy Communion led by Canon Brendan Clover, assisted by members of the Brotherhood and accompanied by Melanesian song.

There followed talks by Brothers and the Sisters, a question and answer session and a short memorable musical concert featuring huge bamboo pipes, used as both pipes and drums.

My particular interest in being there was that I was in the Solomon Islands from 1960-1961 as a school leaver with VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) and lived and worked in a school run by the Melanesian Mission. When I discovered that all but two of the Brothers came from the Solomons I was thrilled. But more was to follow! One of the Brothers, Noel, I recognized as being of the Polynesian race (not Melanesian) and I discovered through our conversation that his Aunt may well be Noella Kakapena who was one of the oldest pupils and one of my closest friends at St. Hilda's School, Bunana. She went on to New Zealand to secondary school when I was at college in London, and as so often happens, eventually we lost touch. Hopefully, when he returns to Melanesia in August that will be rectified!

So, for me it was a marvelous visit; but by the reactions of others the Brotherhood also touched many people that day with their faith and their music.

Pauline Palmer. Frenchay MU

healing and wholeness

We were privileged to be the guests of the COM earlier this year. As a priest/counsellor and consultant child psychiatrist team we hoped to explore the ministry of healing and wholeness as practised in the vibrant COM of which we had heard so much.

Our visit, kindly co-ordinated by Fr Sam Sahu, covered ground which will be familiar to regular readers of Melanesia News but which, of course, was new to us.

We were invited to teach on counselling and mental health issues and were available for individual counselling sessions (or "talk talk"). We spent some thirty to forty hours engaged in this rewarding work. We were able to offer the laying on of hands for healing following the Eucharist and were delighted that many received.

Rather than give a straightforward travelogue we thought we would pick out some of the highlights of our time and give our impressions, other than of the heat and the mosquitoes!

The whole culture of welcomes and farewells impressed us deeply. We were garlanded with *leis*, sung to, speechified over and feasted with the best food on all our arrivals. To say goodbye there was more of the same, then gifts and a general festivity of singing and dancing.

The whole community would turn out to wave us on our way next morning. It really makes you feel who you are and what you do are truly appreciated. We are too functional in the UK. It's not that we don't mean these things, not that we aren't appreciative and loving inside, but we are poor in our expressing them. No such problems in the COM.

The sheer numbers and youth of the COM impressed. Hundreds and hundreds at services. Waiting lists for consideration as novices in the religious orders. Everywhere young people prepared to take their faith seriously and at cost. And coupled with this comes the effectiveness of the religious orders in the church. We stood by the graves of the martyred Melanesian Brothers. We heard other stories of their acts of bravery during the 'ethnic tensions'. We saw the way the Sisters of the Church and the Franciscan Brothers accept all comers at their houses at the centre of Honiara, which is not always a place for faint hearts. We saw the Christian Care Centre, run by

'To worship collectively and wholly liturgically several times a day brought a rhythm and a sense of worshipping in union with the wider church'

the Sisters of the Church and how it will fulfil a vital role for victims of domestic violence. A third thing to impress us was the constant struggle with bad roads, bad mental health provision (just three psychiatric nurses, no psychiatrist, and two wards for the whole country), a slowly recovering economy, low wages, poor employment prospects and expensive education. Yet there was an indomitable spirit amongst those we met, a deep-lying basic gentleness and courtesy connected to an infectious and quick sense of fun, which looked on life's positive side.

A surprise to us was the efficiency of our visit. We had heard plenty about "Solomon Time" before arriving but let us put on record how all our transport went to time, meetings ran to time, arrangements were arranged and kept. Everything ran smoothly. We were a bit shocked! Rev Richard Carter, Chaplain of the Melanesian Brotherhood, told us he thought the famed inefficiency of the Solomon people was a myth. He said he could ask the Elder Brother to cater for a thousand people at forty-eight hours' notice and it would be done - on open fires in the *kastam* kitchens. No trouble.

As Anglicans of an evangelical background we found the anglo-catholic tradition of the life of worship was profoundly refreshing especially in the religious houses. To worship collectively and wholly liturgically several times a day brought a rhythm and effortlessness which our earnest Bible study and extempore prayer can too easily lack. It also gives a sense of worshipping in union with the wider church instead of being so individualistic.

Overall, we felt deeply affected by the natural courtesy, generosity, courage, and vulnerability of these lovely Island people. They had a kind of godly ingenuousness which was bathing to the soul. We recall being asked to address the chapel full of Brothers and Novices of the Melanesian Brotherhood. As we looked at the sea of upturned faces, we seemed to feel a collective strength of faith. These were committed brave men who had already known death in their midst and might well do so again. It was a privilege to be with them.

We went to Melanesia because we wanted to see the southern hemisphere, and my brother who lives in Sydney. Also we wanted to experience a situation where the Christian church is not beleaguered and on the back foot, but is vibrant and attracting young people, especially to the religious orders. We were not disappointed, it was a fantastic experience that lives with us still. Andrew & Elizabeth Procter.

Opening of the Christian Care Centre. Red Beach, Guadalcanal

On March 6th this year I was privileged to attend the opening of the long awaited Christian Care Centre (CCC) at its beautiful location right on the sea shore. The day was the culmination of years of working, praying, planning, searching for a suitable location, and fundraising to get this much needed service up and running. The vision for the CCC came from Sister Lilian and the Sisters of the Church, but it is now a joint project of the four religious communities working in Melanesia, with the Sisters of the Church and the Melanesian Sisters working with volunteers, including several from the Mothers' Union, on a day to day basis.

The CCC is the result of a truly international effort. The land for the Centre was provided by a local chief, the money for the new buildings was given by the New Zealand government, many of the furnishings were given by Australians, the contractors included Japanese, and Melanesians did much of the hard grind of finding funders and the clearing of the site etc. Bishop Terry of Malaita originally from Canada, chairs the CCC Board.

The celebrations began with a Eucharist, with Archbishop Ellison presiding and Bishop Terry preaching. Bishop Terry pointed out that we all have the potential within us to be violent, and we all have a responsibility to look at ourselves and face up to the reality of how we can act and react. After the service we all processed across to the new CCC building for its blessing.

In due course a feast followed, and then speeches, and then entertainment; singing and dancing from the All Saints Honiara renewal group, and the four religious communities

The whole day was both inspiring and challenging.

The following week I led an intensive course of training. This was in two parts: pastoral listening skills for the Sisters and other volunteers, and working at management systems for the key personnel. During the week, we identified many unsatisfactory safety issues, and in conjunction with the Police, the NZ High Commission and the building contractors. The decision was taken to close the Centre to enable alterations to be made to make it a much safer environment!!! More building and other work has since taken place which should enable the re-opened centre to operate more safely as a haven for women escaping violence.

Sister Doreen has been a driving force in getting the practical work at the CCC going. It is good that she and everyone else are hugely committed to providing the best service possible, both to women and their children seeking refuge from violent relationships, and also in the future trying to help the violent partners to address some of their problems and change their behaviour.

It is a service which needs and deserves our support and prayers.

Esther Langrish

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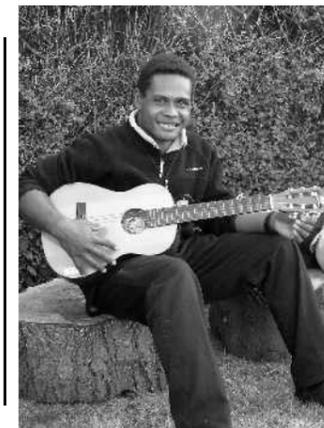
On a Mission

From April to July, twenty five Brothers and Sisters worked tirelessly throughout Chester and Exeter dioceses. They visited literally hundreds of places - churches, schools and prisons, and encountered thousands of people. Here are just a few comments from those that met them.

"The tide of mission turned full circle and it was our turn to learn from our guests, led by their Chaplain, Richard Carter. The Brothers prayed, and played their bamboo instruments with unforgettable sincerity and joy. The evening was themed on a 'Melanesian Feast' with the Brothers helping to extract the pig from the pit where it had been cooked along with yams and sweet potatoes. Their enthusiasm for our game of croquet was apparent and a most pleasant evening was enjoyed by all. We had met as strangers but parted as friends."

"I am sure you will not be surprised to hear that our Parish has been deeply moved by their visit. To experience such a deep faith and witness to our Lord has been so inspiring. The memories they left behind will remain with us for a very long time. We who have so much materially have so much to learn from those who by comparison have less. In their trusting way they reached out to everyone they met in a way so refreshing it is almost beyond belief."

"I was hugely impressed by all they did. I knew nothing about this diocesan link apart from what goes in the parish magazine, but I feel very warmly disposed as a result of their visit and presentations."



We were thrilled by their presence - they gave us a feast of music, dance and singing. The children responded so well to them and enjoyed hearing all about Solomon Islands - particularly the sharks!

"150 years ago missionaries from England took the Gospel to Melanesia. Now the Melanesian evangelists are bringing the Gospel message to England. That is what it is about. Sharing the faith that enlivens us."



"What a great time we had in Chester. It was a long drag back to Norfolk but I am so glad we were able to be with you. It really was a tremendous event and you are going to get more of it. Lucky you! I am going to spread the word amongst family and friends down in Devon."

"I think the trip can be judged a great success - they do restore one's faith in the Anglican Communion!"



"I had no idea what to expect when they came to visit Lambeth Palace, so their singing during the Eucharist came as a fantastic surprise - especially the volume! I sat listening with goose bumps. But the highlight of the day was definitely the performance of the Prodigal Son - it was vibrant and funny but also quite uncomfortable to watch in places. The audience was moved to tears and we talked about it for days afterwards. Three cheers for the Melanesian Brothers and Sisters!"

"May I ask you to pass on to the Brothers and Sisters who came to Swanwick our thanks for their contribution. We were impressed at the way they mingled, in spite of the newness of it all. We were impressed as they attended and contributed in the workshops. We were impressed with the special meeting, so movingly and lovingly presented. We were impressed with the drama and the Gospel. So thanks to the whole team of Brothers and Sisters, and not least, to the drivers."

"We loved having them here and I think they managed to get some refreshments during their busy schedule! Their presentation of the 'Prodigal Son' was just stunning and had quite an impact upon many local people."

Panpipes in Chester

On a cold evening on 26th April 2005, Chester Companions of the Melanesian Brotherhood, two Melanesian Brothers and friends gathered to welcome the visitors to Chester Diocese. They were weary after a long flight followed by a drive from Heathrow but still managed to smile and brought that special warmth with them which lasted throughout the whole time they were in England.

On Friday 29th April a coach took all the Brothers, Sisters, Companions and friends - 49 in all - to Holy Island, Lindisfarne, a drive of six hours for a day trip which all will remember. Brother Damien SSF, the Vicar of Holy Island promised to 'pull out all the stops' and this he did. He led us all across the Pilgrims' Way, provided food, a tour and a wonderful



celebration of the Eucharist. He gave an inspirational address and it seemed ideal to start the Mission on this island steeped in Christian history. The Team had taken their panpipes and played and sang in the April gale on the village green and before long a crowd had gathered, mainly the Islanders, as not many tourists brave the elements in April!

Sunday 1st May was the official welcome in Chester Cathedral, another day to remember, the service being followed by singing and panpipes and dancing in the Bishop of Chester's garden. The next six weeks were spent travelling around the deaneries, visiting schools, churches, a prison and bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to all whom they met. This Mission has had a profound effect on many, particularly on those who attended 'The Passion of Our Lord' drama, held at five venues throughout the Diocese. In Birkenhead the drama was on the same evening as the European Cup Final starring Liverpool FC! Nevertheless, 400 came to see the drama and it was a special night for them too. In the senior schools, the drama of 'The Lost Son' was performed with time for questions and answers. In addition some chose the power point presentation on peace and reconciliation, both giving much food for thought.

In the junior schools, three teams spoke of life in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, about their love of God and soon the children were learning new songs and dances. Head teachers had warned of strict timetables but ended up asking them to stay longer!

A highlight on the Wirral was the Annual Coastal Walk, when thousands walk 15 miles for their favourite charity - no bush, no hills, just the sea on one side, a strong wind in our faces and hard concrete under foot!. The Brothers, Sisters and Companions were sponsored by churches and raised £1,300, which has gone back to their Communities with them. This proved to be an opportunity for many non Christians to meet with the Brothers and Sisters.

There are many happy stories circulating around Chester Diocese of happy times spent with the Brothers and Sisters. Old and young have learned much from this superb Mission. We are all particularly grateful to Revd Richard Carter and Assistant Head Brother Edmond for their leadership and to every member of the Team. The question being asked is "When are they coming again?" Soon, we pray and we thank God for Bishop Peter, for Tony and Alison Sparham and for all who worked to welcome our Link friends and partners from the Church of Melanesia. Canon Mike Lowe made the point at a recent meeting that all the events may have helped to move people one step forward and with the help of the Holy Spirit we will all move on, on our journey.

A positive result of the Mission is that 21 new Companions of the Melanesian Brotherhood were admitted in the final Service at Chester Cathedral, bringing the numbers of Chester Companions to around 50, most encouraging for the growth of this special link.

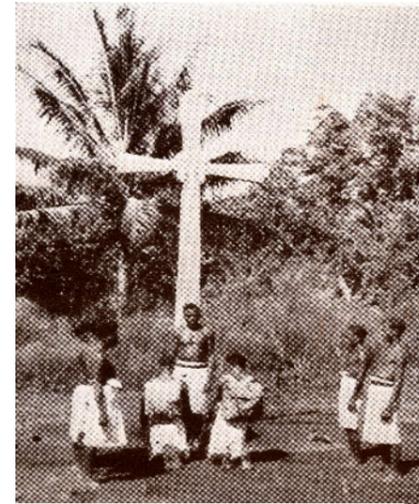
The Team paid a visit to Radio Merseyside and were interviewed for the Sunday religious programme. There is a CD available. It is 16 minutes long and has singing, panpipes and interviews with Revd Richard Carter, the Assistant Head Brother MBH and Novice Kevin MBH - obtainable from Barbara Molyneux.

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From Hull to Honiara

If anyone has items to send to the Church of Melanesia then there is a ship that leaves Hull on the first Friday of each month. Please get in touch with Tony Sparham (address on page 10) for more details.



Brothers being Commissioned and sent out from Tabalia

'Dauburi'

You would like small Dauburi who is at the Leper colony here. She's about four years old with a round body and hair the colour of straw (and about as tidy). She knows several English words and is not nearly as bashful as she makes out. All her skirts nearly reach to her ankles so she's either tripping over or hanging on with one hand so they won't disappear altogether.

We seemed to have cured one habit of hers - that of holding all her medicine pills in one small hot hand, then at a convenient moment slipping away and throwing them in the garden!

When she comes into church she's such a solemn little figure. She picks up her book which is hidden amongst the kneeling mats somewhere, marches on, gives a pert little bow to the Altar (as though she is saying "Morning Lord" in her familiar way), says her prayers through peeping fingers, sits down firmly and then has a good look round to make sure everyone has turned up. After which she bestows a magnificent smile on whoever happens to be her conquest at the moment!

Media: the avenue to proclaim the gospel - taken from 'The Solomon Star', September 2005

Using the media to proclaim the message of God should be the way forward today. This was the comment of a participant, Chris Evo, in a Media Education Seminar held in Western Province recently.

Mr Evo said encouraging people to use the media to preach the Good News and proclaim the Kingdom of God is one of the fundamental keys to spreading that message. However, he said it is up to

50 Years Ago

Extracts from 'The Southern Cross Log'
November 1955

Melanesian Missionaries

At the Annual Meeting the Bishop announced that the Bishop of New Guinea had gratefully accepted the offer of a Household of Brothers to go to the Diocese on New Guinea to help the work there. The eight Brothers who have been selected have left Tabalia and are now in Taroniara for a special three month course under the Revd Dr Fox. The Companions throughout the Solomons are collecting money to help pay for them whilst they are in New Guinea.

Gospel Recording

A recent visitor to Solomon Islands has been Mr Richter who belongs to a world-wide missionary organisation who have dedicated their whole time to the making and sending out of the Gospel by means of phonograph recordings in all languages. Since this system was begun recordings have been made in over one thousand languages and dialects. When asked why records are necessary, Mr Richter replied, "The world is still not evangelised. Nearly two thousand languages are without a translation of the Bible. Millions upon millions cannot read. Groups refuse what they call 'white man's religion', the records can go where the missionaries cannot." Staff recordists travel from country to country searching for languages. They, with the help of missionaries, find those of different tribal tongues who will speak or sing for recordings. Battery operated tape recorders are used for field recordings and the tape is sent back to HQ where it is handled by technicians who transfer the recordings to master discs. Records are sent free of charge to those who will be responsible for using them for the purpose for which they are intended. Mr Richter met the Bishop of Melanesia at Honiara who gave him permission to visit some of our mission stations to make recordings. At Siota recordings in twelve different languages were made and a further twenty were made at Pawa School. (see article below)

News from the Islands

St Patrick's, Vureas, October 10th, 1905.

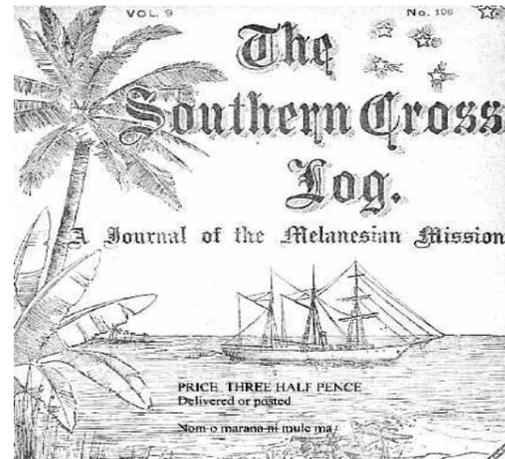
I've just got home after a week's trip in my boat. My wife came with me to the next school village, Vatrak, and returned on foot the next day with two women to guide her. It was her first experience of sleeping in a *native* house and on a bamboo bed (healthy, but rather hard to one's bones). I called at all the schools except Tes, whither I could not get, because of contrary winds and surf; but the people and teacher met me at the next station. At each place one examines scholars, preaches, and where possible holds a Celebration. The weather was on the whole lovely, nice breezes which carried the boat along without the fag of rowing. But on our last day we had a long stiff row in the teeth of the Trade, and had a nasty time in a Tide Rip. These Rips are dangerous things with a small boat like mine and we were thankful to get out of it. You row and row and row, and seem to make no progress, and all the while the waves jump about in a most unnatural and disconcerting fashion. At Lesa we found an Ureparapara

100 Years Ago

Extract from 'The Southern Cross Log' 1905

canoe, which brought us news of an epidemic at that island - fifty deaths they said; John Qie, wife and child among the number. At and near Pek there has been no rain for nearly five months and the bush is dying: cocoanut trees, breadfruit, dead in numbers and the streams dried up. The Pek folk asked permission to leave their Vanua for a time, and to make a temporary home where water may be obtained. We've all been down with a cough and colds, and I've been bothered with boils for some weeks. One's blood seems to get out of order very easily in these parts. Will you try if you can get some kindly disposed persons to give us a few wall maps - world, Australia, Great Britain - second hand ones very acceptable. If anyone has a globe it would be very useful.

Revd W C O'Ferrall



Obituary

Just after the last edition of The Melanesia News went off to the printers we heard of the death of Selwyn Herbert Arter. He died on 19th March 2005 aged 84 years and a thanksgiving service was held in Cheshire at the end of March. This summarises his son's tribute to his father. 'Selwyn Arter was a very unassuming man who would have been touched that so many are here today. He was born in Poole in 1920 and by prophetic coincidence was indirectly named after a former bishop of Lichfield. After schooling in Bedford he joined Goodyear as a management trainee in 1939, but soon moved to the Royal Air Force and served in Italy and North Africa. After being invalided out with cerebral malaria he earned a BA from Cambridge and then returned to serve

as a Commissioned Officer in the Royal Army Education Corps. On the troopship to the Far East he met a young nurse whom he later married in Singapore Cathedral. In 1953 he began his administration work with the Colonial Service in Honiara followed by the Headship of the government school on Malaita. After the birth of his daughter in England he returned to Solomon Islands as the second Principal of the Teacher Training College and introduced a local variation to the curriculum of the student teachers - both men and the first women. He recognised that these educated teachers were likely to become the politicians of the future and therefore needed to study current affairs to broaden their horizons beyond their own community and language group. Independence came and many of Selwyn's teachers did become politicians keeping peace in the islands for the next twenty years. Selwyn Arter returned to the UK in 1966 to teach geography, and to enable his wife's nursing career. He saw his daughter marry and have his two grandsons. Selwyn believed that life was one, and like all the best teachers he sought to enable people to deepen their understanding of life.'

Return to the Pacific

From 1968 to 1973 I was Chaplain and Tutor of the Melanesian Brotherhood, based at its Mother House in Tabalia on Guadalcanal. I am now Co-ordinator of the Companions in Europe and on Saturday 11th June I admitted 21 new Companions in Chester Cathedral during the Melanesian Mission Festival.

I had just returned from two months in the Pacific, as I had been asked by Sir Ellison Pogo, Father of the Brotherhood, to visit the Melanesian Brothers and the Companions in the Philippines, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. I also visited the Noviciates (training households) of the four religious orders where I chaired meetings, preached, gave talks, and shared the Eucharist and fellowship with them. All had been affected by the ethnic tension in Solomon Islands, which had erupted on Guadalcanal, starting in 1998 and only finishing in 2003. It had included a coup d'etat, numerous deaths, culminating in the martyrdom of seven Melanesian Brothers working for peace, forced movements of people, and much corruption. The main houses of all four religious orders were in the area of conflict and their members acted as peace-makers and peace-keepers wherever they could. However, their lives were often traumatised by the horrifying events which they witnessed as their stations were places of refuge for many fleeing from the violence.

The Archbishop had also invited me to preach (in Pidgin) at the consecration of Jonnie Kuper, new Bishop of Hanuato'o. What we were not told until afterwards was that it was being broadcast live to the nation!

As a representative of Franciscan Aid, the charity of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis, I had been asked to investigate what projects should be supported by this charity throughout the Pacific. I was also able to tell universities and colleges about the new Visiting Fellowship for Pacific Islands scholars which has been set up by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and about a new travel bursary in memory of my parents. For these last two reasons, I also visited Fiji Islands and Hawaii before returning to the UK on 28th May. It was all very rewarding, very hot, very exhausting and very blessed. Praise the Lord!

I found that many people knew about or had read my history of the Melanesian Brotherhood, 'The True Way of Service' which included a chapter on the ethnic tension and the role of the religious communities. The Brotherhood is now the largest religious order for men in the Anglican

Communion and is dedicated to evangelism and revival work in the South Pacific and other parts of the world, using drama and other ways of reaching people with the message of the Gospel, especially its emphasis on peace, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Brian Macdonald Milne

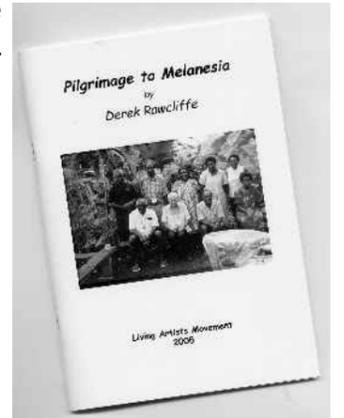
Pilgrimage to Melanesia

by Derek Rawcliffe

Derek's first encounter with Solomon Islands was at the end of 1947 as a teacher at All Hallows School, Pawa. Over the following thirty three years his work as teacher, priest and bishop took him right across the region.

Having only briefly returned to Vanuatu in 1985, Derek's new book tells the story of his return last year, his first re-encounter with people and places he knew so well, for twenty five years. In the style of a diary he recalls his experiences, and contrasts and compares these with his memories from time past. Derek's attention to detail enables the reader to travel with him on his pilgrimage back to Melanesia.

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Thanks

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Richard Carter – ‘a gift to the Church of Melanesia’

That is how Richard has been described by Archbishop Sir Ellison Pogo and it sums up simply and powerfully the impact Richard has made on Melanesia since his arrival in 1986. In that year Richard was appointed head of English at Selwyn College. He brought with him valuable experience of teaching English overseas from several years that he spent in Indonesia. One of his great gifts in the early years was his enthusiasm for drama. Melanesians are natural actors and joined in his productions with enthusiasm.

I remember being present for the celebrations when Archbishop Amos was enthroned in 1988. I quote from my diary: ‘Then came Richard Carter’s masterpiece, the Selwyn College production of the Lost Sheep. All the students took part. It was a deceptively simple but powerful dramatic sermon, portraying what the students hoped for in their new archbishop. Bishop Ellison said later that we should have had it instead of the sermon at the enthronement service and I had to agree.’

Richard has always had a restless energy, rather like the famous 19th century Pacific missionary, John Williams, who once said ‘I could never confine my activities within a single reef.’ After a brief spell in Australia, testing his vocation to the religious life, Richard returned to Selwyn College, but his sense of vocation would not go away.

In 1990, Richard was accepted at Patteson Theological College to train for ordination and in 1994 he was appointed chaplain to the Melanesian Brothers. Later he was professed as a brother, I think, only the third expatriate to have that honour. Richard was able to build on the long tradition of the Brothers of evangelism through drama and he was involved in several very successful overseas missions, the latest having taken place this year in the dioceses of Chester and Exeter.

Throughout 1999, inter island tensions were escalating and large scale fighting broke out in June 2000. At Tabalia on Guadalcanal, Richard and the Brothers were in the thick of the fighting, more than once being caught in cross fire. Most of the brothers were involved in peace keeping missions that year, but in addition, a group of Brothers, including Richard, visited the UK and Richard was able to give very moving accounts of all that had taken place and the reasons behind the fighting.

Richard spent the following year at Mirfield, doing post graduate studies and the Mirfield



Fathers were greatly influenced by what Richard and his companions had to share with them.

Richard returned to the Solomons at the end of 2001, and was to be with the Brothers during the saddest and most glorious time in their history. In 2003 Brother Nathaniel Sado and six other Brothers were brutally murdered. These acts of violence and the worsening situation in the Solomons, led to the intervention of the Australian-led ‘Regional Assistance Mission’. The bodies of the Brothers were recovered and interred at Tabalia in the presence of thousands of people including many from overseas. It was a very testing time for the brothers who were already exhausted from the demands made on them as peace keepers and weapons collectors. During all this time, Richard’s wisdom and strength helped to keep the Brothers united as they sought God’s guidance for their future work.

During this summer, Richard has again co-ordinated a very successful mission in this country, visiting many parishes in the Chester and Exeter dioceses and ending with a visit to Lambeth Palace. One of the strengths of these missions is that the Brothers come in some numbers and so they are able to offer powerful and moving evangelistic dramas, at the same time bringing a large slice of Pacific culture.

People do not take life vows in the Melanesian Brotherhood. It is one of the strengths of the Community; it is always being renewed and retains its youthful energy and vigour. So it is that Richard feels he is now called to be released from the Brotherhood and is to join the staff of St. John’s, Canberra. He will not find it easy to leave the Brothers and the Solomons and I am sure a large part of him will always remain there. He will certainly be remembered there for many years to come. Thank you Richard, for all you have given to Melanesia and we pray God will support and guide you in your new ministry.

John Pinder

...and from Richard

As for myself for some time it has become clear to me that the time is coming when I too should move on. I have worked with the community since 1990. I have been there Chaplain for more than nine years and coordinated their missions and training and written many of their mission resources. It has been the most wonderfully exciting privilege to serve God and this wonderful community in this way. I believe that together through God’s grace we have faced and lived the Gospel at a time of great difficulty and struggle and in many ways got to the other side. We have witnessed both death and pain but also resurrection and the hope of Christ. In many ways the Brothers have bridged the gap between the old theology: the desire to win the manna, power or miracles of God and ones ancestors for ones own purposes and benefit, and a Christian theology of self emptying sacrificial love. For better or worse while respecting Melanesian culture I have always tried to preach the latter while of course many people demand miracles as they have always done. The Brotherhood at its best is I believe the latter. A group of Brothers who love God and their neighbours and who are prepared to become the servants of all. Within their culture and yet through God’s grace and through humility rather than pride: above it they are able to make that culture answerable to the love of Christ.

It has been the most wonderfully exciting privilege to serve God and this wonderful community in this way

I feel in the last ten years we have come a long way but perhaps there is now a need for the community to catch up with itself, take stock of all that has happened and make its own choices. Of course there is a need for discipline and the traditional values of the community, where they are Christ centred, to be reasserted. There is also the need for the acknowledgement of how far things have moved on and how there is now greater demand and temptation than ever before. The community must continue to reach out with courage and mission and the wonderful gifts that they have from God. In my prayers I believe that this is a balance the community must discover for itself. I discern God is saying to me that it is time for me to let go and trust a community that have occupied so many brilliant years of my life and which I love so much, and more than that trust God.

In terms of my own life I feel I have given the best I have to offer. The work as Chaplain has fulfilled my gifts and faith in a way I never thought possible. I am so thankful for that and for being a Brother and Chaplain to this community. We have done and shared much and been through the most painful experiences and still lived our faith. I will miss most of all praying with them all. I feel that through my experiences the Melanesian Brotherhood have made my faith so rich and alive, I pray to have something to share with the western world too. I have learnt the Gospel is true. It is as simple as that. At the same time I feel challenged to put my trust in God and try to tackle a new ministry before I am too old. I must be brave enough to let go of what I love so much in faith and in trust that the faith I have shared I will be able to take with me. I know it will not be easy and of course my loss will be much greater than the community’s.

Richard Carter



Richard with Br Joseph & Br Stephen as they arrive at Heathrow for the recent mission

New Appointment

I had an interview with the Archbishop recently, and I am to be ordained as a Deacon at St Barnabas Cathedral, Honiara, on 16th October 2005.



Please pray for me as I prepare for this next step in my journey.
Regards,
Keith Joseph