

News from Chester Diocese

Since the Pilgrimage by Brothers and Sisters from Melanesia in May and June 2005, things have been relatively quiet on our Melanesian front. So now we are trying to make sure we grow from the 2005 experience rather than let it fade. The two top priorities are:

First - set up Parish Links. Bishop Richard of Ysabel Diocese is particularly keen on this - a Chester Parish with a Parish (area) in Melanesia or with a particular project such as a hospital, school or Rural Training Centre.

St Luke's Goostrey have just set up a link with Garanga Training Centre in Ysabel to help them create a proper, reliable, water system.

The new church in the village of Monago on Savo Island is nearing completion in which Barrow and Alderley Edge Parishes in Chester have been involved. They are planning to have it consecrated in Autumn.

A Parish Link really does bring Melanesia 'home'. It becomes more personal and there is a great potential for sharing ideas, sharing gifts and even visits. Obviously the main financial burdens will fall on the English parish but all their parishes have great needs, many to do with getting equipment, like metal roofing, and water piping. They have low labour costs as they do everything themselves! Often, skills we have been

given through education and training in this country, will be of great help - accounting, project management, school curriculum work. So who knows, a Parish Link may mean a small group going over the Melanesia to share particular gifts. It may all sound a one way financial drain, but the special relationship with the wonderful, appreciative Melanesians, becomes enriching and transforming for all.

These Parish Links need not be limited to Chester Diocese, and if anyone else is interested, please contact me.

Second - find someone with experience in curriculum work in education to work in the Solomons for up to a year helping them create an integrated curriculum for church Rural Training Centres and Secondary High Schools. (I have a copy of a report on plans for secondary and tertiary education in the Solomons - please contact me if interested in reading it.)

We are continuing with our quarterly shipments to Melanesia. This March will see our first despatch to Santo for Vanuatu. As always, we will welcome any clothing, sheets, education books, medical clothing and equipment, garden and other tools. I have a list of parishes and projects in Melanesia with their stated needs.

Tony Sparham. Tel: 01625 523 127
Email: tsparham@fish.co.uk

New Companions



Six new Companions of the Melanesian Brotherhood were admitted recently at a packed service at Ottery St Mary near Exeter. Fr Brian MacDonald-Milne, Europe Section Father of the Companions, presented each new member with their medal as part of the ceremony. Bishop James Mason preached and his family, along with other supporters of those becoming Companions, welcomed the new members into the group.

Companions commit themselves to pray for the Brothers and their work, give financial and other practical support, and take care of the Brothers when they visit or travel through the Companions area.

Ottery St Mary is the ancestral home of the Coleridge family and the church has maintained links with Melanesia for over 100 years.

If you are interested in supporting the work of the Brothers by becoming a Companion then please contact Fr Brain MacDonald-Milne. (Contact details on page 10)

Thanks

We are very grateful for donations towards the work of the Melanesian Mission. If you are able to commit to a regular gift then please get in touch and I will send you a Standing Order form. If you wish to Gift Aid your contributions (and are a UK tax payer) then please let me know. If your church or group are having a special collection for the Mission then please get in touch and I can send you pre-printed Gift Aid envelopes.

Dave Friswell

Melanesia News Back Copies

In the archives of MM(UK) we have copies of the Southern Cross Log and the Melanesia News dating back to 1895 - except for the period between 1995 and 2004 (Numbers 40 to 55). If you have any copies of these issues stored away and would like them to find a good home, then please let me know as I would like to try and complete the set for future generations. Thanks.

Dave Friswell



Melanesia News

The Melanesian Mission

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Just Mission



There are so many things for which to be grateful in the legacy of George Augustus Selwyn and John Coleridge Patteson, and to which we are heirs today. Not least among them is the fact that the organisation set up to support their work and that of the emerging

Melanesia Church was called simply the **Melanesian Mission** - the name that we still use today. No mention here of missionaries, with all the sense of movement in one direction or of 'haves' and 'have nots'; no suggestion of a society, something exclusive and less that the whole church of God - simply Mission. For me that is an important thing to remember and perhaps especially at that stage in our work where we find ourselves today.

It is a reminder that our agenda and our programme is not primarily our own - it is God's. Mission is, first and foremost, the action of God. It is the whole action of God as He continually reaches out to create, to redeem and to fulfil this universe, this world and those people who inhabit it, and of which we, the church, are a part.

Mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an activity of God in which the church, in obedience to his call, is caught up. It is that movement of God which reaches out to redeem men and women, moving them into a new freedom and spaciousness where they can be reconciled to him and also to one another. Mission is that activity of God which enables one human being to recognise the needs of another and respond to them in acts of humble service. It is that activity of God's spirit in the lives of his people that enables men and women to know that they are not alone, that God is in the midst of them and that he is true to his promise to be with them for ever until the end of time.

Mission is that activity that takes place wherever

New Assistant Bishop for Southern Malaita. Turn to page 7



Revd Tevita Banivanua, General Secretary of the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools unveils the monument in thanksgiving for the vision of Bishop Selwyn and Bishop Patteson, founding fathers of theological education in the Anglican Church of Melanesia. **More details on page 11**

a man or a woman, an adult or a child, is helped to discover their value and their worth, and realise their full potential as human beings. It is what happens whenever they are set free from all the things that limit and repress them, the things that constrain their God-given nature.

Mission is happening when men and women are allowed to be creative, where they are allowed to take responsibility for the things that affect their lives and communities, where they begin to do so with a care for one another and the environment, and with a concern for the quality of life that we all share.

Mission is happening wherever barriers are broken down and understanding is increased, where fears are overcome and listening and conversation begins. It is happening where people discover that they are not just cogs in a machine, commodities for sales, or pawns in another's game of power - but as human beings, princes and princesses, the children of God.

cont'd on page 2

New Companions admitted in Exeter Diocese. See back page

Mission occurs when human beings hear, in terms that they understand, the good news as found in Jesus Christ, and then find their lives and that of their communities being reshaped as a result.

So the Melanesian Mission is concerned with whatever enables these to happen in Melanesia, including sharing and receiving from Melanesia, for the work of God's mission here.

And so the work of Mission that we support is, and must be multi-faceted. It will find expression in the sending and exchange of personnel, sometimes long term but perhaps more frequently for time limited tasks. It will manifest itself in meeting the need for resources where these are lacking or inadequate. It will be seen in the growth of companionship links, and mutual support in communication and prayer. Most of it will itself, in all that it does, be an expression of the Good News of God's grace and truth in Jesus Christ.

Some thirty five years ago an Anglican Communion report called **"The Time is Now"** spoke of mission and evangelism like this: *"The work of bringing men and women into personal commitment to Christ proceeds in two ways. Firstly the way in which the church grows by steady influence and attraction of its presence upon the members of the human community in which it is set. And secondly the deliberate 'going beyond' to those who are not, or cannot be, touched by the Church as it is, and who can only be touched by those who are willing to risk losing themselves in another and alien community. These two ways of expansion are symbolised by Christ's metaphors of the spreading tree and the shepherd seeking the sheep"*.

It went on to observe that mission is a proper part of the full life of every church. *"Without this, a church does not truly grasp the universality of her Lord. 'Mutual responsibility and interdependence within the Body of Christ' cannot mean simply that the Churches help one another to maintain their life and their natural growth in the first sense. It must also mean that the Churches help and support one another in that 'going beyond' which is the essence of the mission task."*

Selwyn, Patteson and many others who served with them, and after them, were among those who understood and responded to this call to 'go beyond'. The Melanesian Brotherhood, together with the other religious orders of the Church of Melanesia are among those who have discovered afresh what this might mean for today. One of the challenges for all of us who are supporters of MM(UK) is to reflect on what this means for us, and for our commitment to support and work

with the Church of Melanesia today. It is precisely because of what we value from the Mission's past, that we need to be open to fresh possibilities and new ways of 'going beyond' today.

+Michael Exon, Chair of Trustees MM(UK)

Mothers Union

The Mothers' Union (MU) in the Solomon Islands has a new Provincial President - she is 46 year old Ethel Suri.



Ethel Suri, (left), and Nellie Siba, Diocesan MU President of the Diocese of Vanuatu, (right).

Mrs Suri, who is a radio programme officer, was elected during the Mothers' Union Conference held in Gela, Central Islands Province.

The Mothers' Union Conference is held every three years where all MU leaders from the dioceses in the Church of Melanesia gather together to reflect and discuss issues faced by the organisation as well as to elect office bearers. Other office bearers elected during the conference are Vice President, Edith Koete; Link Secretary, Catherine Lamani and Literacy Officer, Anne Saenemua.

The Bristol Diocese Mothers' Union, are linked with Banks and Torres Diocese Mothers' Union as part of the Mothers' Union Worldwide Wave of Prayer. We would be most interested to hear from anyone in the UK who has been to and met with the people of 'Banks and Torres' in recent years.

If you are regularly in touch with the MU in the Islands of Banks and Torres then we would love to hear from you and get more news. Please contact Mrs Julia Lettey from Bristol Diocese Mothers' Union on julia_lettey@hotmail.com

MM(UK) Membership

If this copy of Melanesia News came directly to you in the post then you will have seen the Membership Renewal Form enclosed. If you have collected your copy of the newsletter from your church and would like to register as a member of the Melanesian Mission please get in touch with the Executive Officer. Contact details on page 10.

Bachelor of Theology unveiled at Kohimarama

BISHOP Patterson Theological College (BPTC) at Kohimarama unveiled its first ever Bachelor of Theology degree programme recently rendering it the first institution in the country to offer such a programme.

Governor General Sir Nathaniel Waena, members of the diplomatic corps, other religious guests, chiefs, staff, students and other members of the church witnessed the event.

Speaking on the occasion Archbishop Sir Ellison Pogo said the more sophisticated and better educated our people become, the better educated our clergy need to be.

"I believe that upgrading the academic standards is always necessary. This degree programme will stretch our candidates even further in terms of academic studies".

However, Archbishop Pogo said academic learning is only one aspect of the training of a priest. We cannot afford to lose sight of the other, most important requirements. These include spirituality, pastoral care, leadership and a sense of mission.

"Spirituality must always be in the forefront. We know God best through our prayer life and we cannot begin to teach others to pray unless we ourselves are regularly and devoutly linked to God in prayer. Along with spirituality goes pastoral care - the loving, encouraging, supportive care which God calls us to have towards every one of our people. The need to seek out, bring back and care for the 'lost sheep'" he said.

The Archbishop said other important area for the training of clergy is leadership training because they will become leaders in the village communities to which they are appointed. But most important of all is a sense of mission.

'Mission' is at the very heart of the Church. A Church which has lost its way in mission is a dying Church.

College Principal Revd Philemon Akao said the inauguration of the degree programme opens a new and historic chapter in tertiary education in the Church of Melanesia and Solomon Islands.

"The glamour of this day is a testimony to the strong spirit of solidarity and co-operation between the faculty and students.

"Kohimarama is a Christian community with a very strong spirit of mutual coexistence amongst its members from the different ethnic background.

"It is those differences that enable us to celebrate this occasion," Revd Akao said.

Sir Nathaniel Waena, who was guest of honour, congratulated the College for such an achievement.

"May I sincerely congratulate the Anglican Church of Melanesia for embracing the wisdom and farsightedness in facilitating this new and prominent initiative.

"Such fine academic achievement as this speaks volumes to the church youths of CoM in the provision of opportunity for higher learning to those individuals who would feel the call to the sacred Ministry of the Church," Sir Nathaniel said.



Governor General of Solomon Islands, Sir Nathaniel Waena (right), with the first students of the new Degree Programme

Pacific Cultural Events

Pasifika Styes from 5th May

An exhibition celebrating Maori and Pacific Islands art and culture. University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge. Contact: Amiria Henare - sistar.pacific@virgin.net

Pacific Arts Association (Europe) Annual Meeting 11th to 13th May

Conference at the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Contact: Pacific Arts Association website www.pacificarts.org/PAAE.html

Pacific Encounters : Art and Divinity in Polynesia 1760-1860 21st May to 13th August
An exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, Norwich

Solomon Islands Art, Culture and History 4th to 6th October

Conference at the British Museum contact: Liz Bonshek, Melanesia Project lbonshek@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

157th Annual Festival of the Melanesian Mission and the 2006 AGM

The 2006 AGM and the 157th anniversary Annual Festival of The Melanesian Mission will be held on **Saturday 10th June**

10.45am to 4pm.

The meeting will be held at **Wycombe Abbey School**

who have supported the Mission for many years through their Chapel collections. Past students from Wycombe Abbey have gone to work in Melanesia and it is hoped that this will continue in the future.

Guest Speakers for the day will be

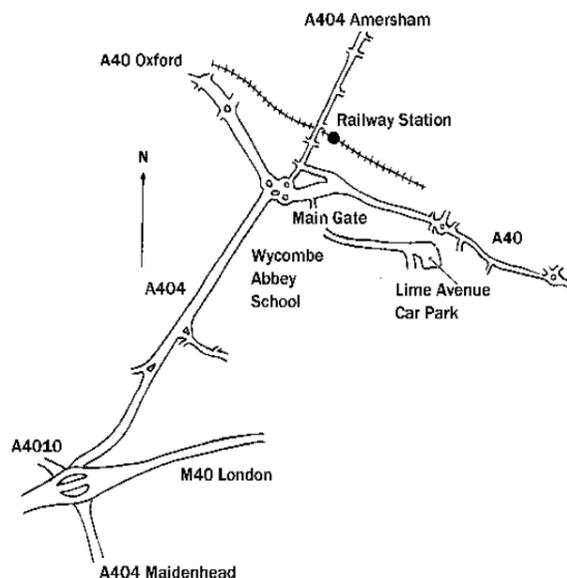
Sister Dorah CSC and Sister Daisy CSC from the Church of Melanesia, currently staying at Ham Common. They will tell us about their work, the role of the new Christian Care Centre in the community and their future work on their return to Solomon Islands.

Please bring a picnic lunch which we hope to be able to enjoy in the beautiful grounds of the school - weather permitting! Drinks will be provided throughout the day.

The day will finish with a celebration of the Eucharist in the School Chapel.

Come and meet new friends and renew old acquaintances.

Wycombe Abbey school is just a few minutes from the railway station that is served by half-hourly trains from London and hourly trains from Birmingham and Aylesbury.



All attendees, whether arriving on foot (from the station) or by car should report to the Custodian at the main gate. They will direct cars to Lime Avenue Car Park and let you know how to get to the area of the school we are using. If you are a blue badge holder or have a passenger with mobility difficulties then please inform the custodians and follow their instructions.

If you require any other information regarding the AGM then please do contact me. Dave Friswell (details below)

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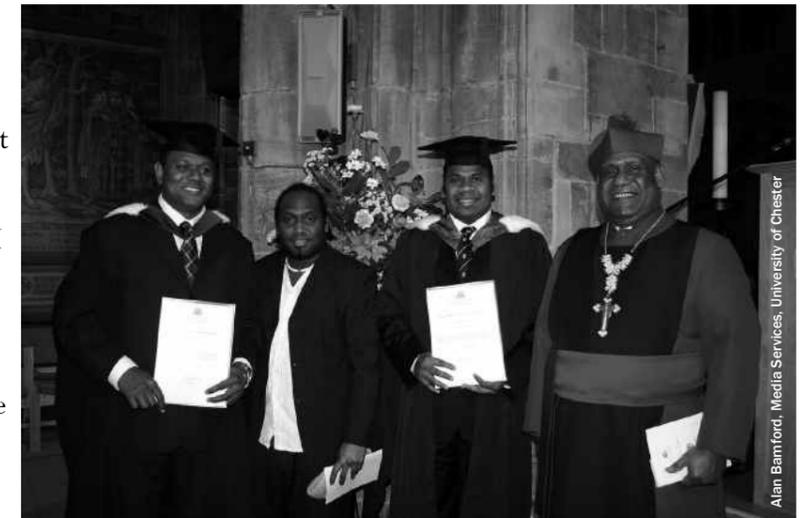


Congratulations to Br Leonard MBH and Br Jonathan MBH

In 2002, Chester Diocese, University College of Chester and the Chester MBH Companions invited MBH to select two Brothers to come to study at Chester.

November 9th, 2005 was Graduation Day for Brother Leonard Dawea MBH and Brother Jonathan SioTiario MBH, with the Ceremony taking place at Chester Cathedral when our Brothers received their degrees of Bachelor of Theology with Honours. Bishop Willie Pwaisiho, William Pwaisiho (representing his mother, Kate), Companions Ruth Chesworth and Barbara Molyneux were delighted to accept the Brothers' invitations to attend. The Ceremony was excellent with the Principal making a memorable speech and the Chancellor, Lord Owen shaking the hand of every graduate. At the close, all graduates processed after dignitaries and lecturers out of the main doors of the Cathedral to the applause of everyone present. Bishop Peter of Chester Diocese was there to offer his congratulations. Companions and friends gathered together in the evening to celebrate the two Brothers' achievements. Head of Theology, Revd Dr Ruth Ackroyd spoke of the Brothers' commitment and their achievement of jointly winning the Theology prize. All those gathered congratulated the Brothers and wished them well in the future, with both Brothers replying that it was certainly a day to remember.

In October 2002, Br Leonard and Br Jonathan had arrived in Chester and found themselves in a different culture and a different climate! The manner in which they settled into their studies and living accommodation was admirable. They made many friends, becoming regular worshippers in the College Chapel and in Chester Cathedral on Sundays. Holidays were spent with Bishop Willie and with Companions in Devon and the Wirral. As part of their practical course they worked in two parishes in Chester Diocese and wherever they went they were true to the Melanesian Brotherhood's values and traditions. They brought with them the Brotherhood warmth of Christian love and joy, which surely has taken seed here. Much has been learned from this special venture and thanks are due to Bishop Peter, Chester University, the Head Brother, the Melanesian



Brotherhood and the Church of Melanesia for allowing it to take place. It was a team effort and we pray that more Brothers will follow in their footsteps.

Br Leonard and Br Jonathan completed their studies in June and joined the mission of Brothers and Sisters to Exeter Diocese. Returning to the Solomon Islands shortly after their graduation, they are now part of the team of Tutors at Tabalia, the Brotherhood HQ. Our prayers are with them, their fellow tutors and all the Melanesian Brotherhood. They have requested that their thanks be passed to the Diocese of Chester, the University, all those Companions who generously supported them and indeed everyone with whom they came in contact, for the love, support and prayers that enabled them to complete their studies.

Brother Leonard Dawea was born in the tiny Reef Islands and had to leave his home as a small boy to attend the nearest school - Lata in Temotu Province.

At 19, he found his way to Honiara and joined the Melanesian Brotherhood and in October 2005, he celebrated his 10th year as a Brother.

In 2001 Br George Elo, who had been studying at Mirfield was invited to work as a curate in Exeter diocese, and Leonard went to work there with him. In 2002, Leonard was selected to study at Chester University College.

Br Jonathan Sio Tiario was born on the east coast of Guadalcanal. After primary schooling, he also made his way to Honiara and became an electrician. He helped the Brotherhood with electrical work, and eventually felt called by God to become a Brother. He was based at the HQ at Tabalia and served as an Elder Brother.

Obituaries

Sir Dudley Tuti. 19.9.19 - 30.1.06

The Rt Revd Sir Dudley Tuti, the first Bishop of Ysabel Diocese and Paramount Chief of Isabel, passed away at Buala Hospital on 30th January at the age of eighty four.

Born at Kia Village, Santa Isabel, Dudley Tuti attended Maravovo Junior School, Pawa School and Te Aute College, New Zealand.

In 1946 Dudley was ordained Deacon at Pawa School and continued his theological training in New Zealand. Ordained to the Priesthood by the Bishop of Auckland he went on to become Headmaster St Patrick's College, Vureas.

After six years as Rural Dean of Ysabel Region he was consecrated as Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Melanesia.

In 1975 Bishop Tuti became Diocesan Bishop of Ysabel Diocese when the Church of Melanesia was inaugurated.

Bishop Tuti was a noble and humble figure who won the respect of not only the Church but the nation as well. He was awarded the OBE by the Queen, appointed as 7th paramount Chief of Isabel, became the chairman of the Solomon Island Credit Union League, bestowed Knighthood of British Empire in 1988, was a member of the Law Reform in Solomon Islands between 1995 - 1998 and appointed Chairman of the Isabel Council of Chiefs in 1999.

Bishop Tuti has been the architect of the Tripod System of Unity comprising of Government, Church and Traditional Elders responsible for the governance of peoples affairs. The only one of its kind in the country.

He is survived by his children, grand children and great grand children.

Richard Toke

Peter Thompson. 17.7.32 - 26.12.05

When we shared a calling to work overseas Peter Thompson reminded us that Jesus had sent his helpers out in pairs. Bishop Hill suggested that we be made deacons by Walter Baddeley, spend a year at St Michael's House, be priested in Adelaide and then go on.

So to Pawa Peter went. Then to Malaita as supervisor. In fact he was another Barnabas, a great encourager of local clergy. As Archdeacon, he was theoretically based at Fiu, but every two months he did a six week walkabout round the whole island. He then spent most of the intervening fortnight at Faumbu, caring for staff and patients there and at the leper colony. When he first did this he said he could tell what

denomination the village was as he walked in. If it was spic and span, SDA; comparatively messy SSEM or RC; if the people smiled a lot, Anglican! When self government came the Kwarae people asked him to stand as their member. He did and became Minister for Trade. In 1976 he left the Solomons to work at Normanton in Carpentaria, then to Port Hedland in NW Australia. Then to Perth to be Director of Community Outreach - job he did remarkably well building up several parishes including Melville, of which he became rector in 1985.

He spent the last years of his active ministry in Queensland, first as Rector of Childers where he contracted Ross River Fever (which in fact screened some of the symptoms of the prostate and bone cancer which took his earthly life) and later at Bundaberg. Joanna nursed him at home for the last three years of his life, supported most significantly by her sister, Hilda, and by her six daughters.

Alan Dutton

Ellison Suri. 13.9.47 - 28.1.06

A man of simplicity, a theological educator and a musician are some of the many descriptions attributed to the late Revd Canon Ellison Suri during his funeral.

Revd Suri died in Honiara at the age of 58 after a long illness and was laid to rest at the St Barnabas Cathedral grounds.

Ellison was born in Sulufou, North Malaita. He attended his primary education at Lilifia Primary School, Maravovo and Alangaula before going on to secondary education at Pawa in Makira.

In 1969 he left school and worked for the government but after only a year he left to study at the Bishop Patteson Theological College (BPTC).

He graduated with a Diploma in Theology at the end of 1972 and then studied for his Bachelor in Theology at the Pacific Theological College (PTC) and his Masters in Theology at Otago, New Zealand.

Following his studies he spent 13 years teaching at the BPTC at Kohimarama and four additional years at Selwyn College. He also taught at PTC, Fiji from 1987 to 1989.

He retired from being a theological educator in 2002. Revd Suri's passion was writing hymns and composing music - some of which are in the Church of Melanesia's Hymn Book.

Richard Toke



I am hoping that it will be published soon.

I have been appointed as Assistant Priest at St Martin-in-the-Fields in London and move in at the beginning of May. The Melanesian Mission (UK) have been a great support during this time of transition. I very much carry all that I have experienced during the last eighteen years working for the Melanesian Mission with me and ask for your continued prayers as I begin this new stage in my ministry. Brother Roger of Taize's last words to be written down before his tragic death were a hope that "the human family may widen..." This I believe is what the Melanesian Mission and the Church of Melanesia has done in my life and the lives of many others, and I pray will continue to do - widen the human family. And what a wonderfully exciting and varied family it is.

Richard Carter

Richard is now available for deputation work. Please contact Dave Friswell if you would like Richard to come and talk to your church about his work and the Mission.

Selwyn College

Selwyn College is an Anglican co-educational institution in Solomon Islands. The present campus in West Guadalcanal was opened in 1991 after the first site 17km east of Honiara, was destroyed by Cyclone Namu in 1986.

The aim of Selwyn College is to give students a good education based on strong Christian principles and Anglican ethos and traditions that should mould young men and women for leadership and good citizenship in adult life.

Selwyn College is boarding school with a roll of 400 students and a staff of twenty-four teachers. It offers secondary education to Scholarship level. Most of the teachers are nationals who have gained their qualifications in Solomon Islands or in one of the regional universities in Fiji or Papua New Guinea.

Though the college is administered by the Anglican Church, students and teachers are not all Anglicans. The college has over the years played a very important role as a unifying force in a country with great diversity in languages, culture and religious persuasions, and has produced leaders in many different walks of life both within the church and secular professions.

Dear All,

I am writing this letter to you and other overseas mission partners to let you know of our desperate need for teachers in two of our senior secondary schools in Solomon Islands, Selwyn College (West Guadalcanal) and St Stephen's Community College, Pamua (Diocese of Hanofo'o, Makira Province). Both schools still have some key teaching positions unfilled even though the present school year has now begun. The situation has been caused by teachers preferring to teach in the more improved conditions of urban schools and by the need for more specialized teachers in the two schools to teach Forms 6 and 7. There is a general shortage of teachers in the schools as more community high schools are being established to allow more children to progress their education to Form 3.

Selwyn College needs teachers for physics, maths and English language and literature. Hopefully the physics teacher could also teach maths. All positions require teachers who

could teach up to Form 7. St Stephen's Community College, Pamua requires an English teacher urgently too. This is a major need in this school along with a social science teacher. If the English teacher could also teach any of the social science subjects (history, geography or economics), we could manage with just one person.

Accommodation and utilities are provided by the school. Salaries of teachers are paid by government but one of the drawbacks with local salaries is that they are not attractive to overseas teachers.

I know, with low salaries and developing countries living standards, our offers will not be very attractive to teachers in their prime career. However, there might be retired Christian teachers or young graduates who wish to work in another culture and at the same time offer a most needed service to Solomon Islands children as the country starts to move ahead again after the social unrest.

As far as security in Solomon Islands is concerned, peace has been restored and Solomon Islands continues to be the Happy Isles.

I would be grateful if you could use your network to publicize this appeal. Many thanks.

Yours in Christ,
Moffat Wasuka

Education Department CoM

If you are interested in any of the posts mentioned above, please contact Dave Friswell for further details. The Melanesian Mission (UK) may be able to offer further support, preparation and training for these roles.



I just wanted to fill you in on a little of my news and to thank

everyone in the Melanesian Mission for their prayers and support. I returned to UK at the beginning of December 2005. In October I had attended the Feast Day of St Simon and Jude at Tabalia on Guadalcanal and the Laying of the Headstones of our seven martyred Melanesian Brothers. In Melanesian custom this is the last part of the grieving process which usually takes place several years after a person has died. Family and friends gather together to give thanks for a person's life, and to bless the permanent grave and headstone. This rite of passage marks the end of the time of grieving. For the Melanesian Brotherhood it offered the chance to bring together all the families of the Brothers who had died, in a thanksgiving for their lives. More than 10,000 people attended and so it became a sign of the peace and reconciliation which these Brothers have helped bring to the Solomon Islands. It also coincided with the verdict of the Solomon Island Courts that, after a long and painful court case, three men had been found guilty of the murder of the Brothers and have been sentenced to life in prison. Justice we believe has been done and there is a real sense of closure and hope for continued reconciliation and unity.

I had the privilege of leading the retreat on the top of the mountain for the forty four novices who were admitted as Brothers and to preach at the feast day celebration. The following is an extract from what I said to all those who had

The Long Journey Home

assembled but especially to the Melanesian Brotherhood from whom I have learnt and experienced so much: "This then is our blessing: we have been called to be sons and daughters of the New Testament. It is not the old theology of personal gain and selfish power. It is not a religion of cargo cult waiting for material wealth to fall from the sky. It is not self seeking: it is God seeking and yet in finding God we also find ourselves. This is the miracle of our faith that in seeming vulnerability and powerlessness we too can enter in the mystery of salvation. At the bottom of the fall God takes over. In offering and in service we find the only power great enough to transform the world. Jesus Christ did not change the world with the weapons of political power, with war or atrocity, missile, suicide bomb or bullet, torture or brutality. He transformed the world with a self-offering love and forgiveness and we who walk in his footsteps enter into the same paschal mystery. We become one with the heroes of our Church, fishermen, tax collectors and sinners whose lives were transformed and who, by offering those lives, transformed the lives of others. We become one with Bishop Patterson, whose life was taken by those for whom he would gladly have given it and in so doing ended the Pacific slave trade. And we become one with a group of humble Brothers who journeyed defenceless to the Weather Coast in search of their lost Brother, who were

tortured and humiliated and who gave up their lives in the 'horror' of darkness and yet who live on. Their offering has become the seed whose harvest must be the peace of this nation. Their graves are not a place of darkness but of light, not the symbols of death but the celebration of resurrection and hope. The hope is that goodness wins and death shall have no dominion. In offering themselves it is their goodness that is ultimately victorious and not the horrific violence of the misguided."



The blessing of the graves of the Seven Martyrs of the Melanesian Brotherhood

I had intended working in Australia, as many of you had heard but during the mission to Chester, Exeter and London last year with the Brotherhood I decided that it was time for me to return to the UK after so many years away. It has been the right decision. Since December I have had the wonderful chance to live with the Society of St Francis on Holy Island in Northumberland. During this time I have completed a book about my experiences with the Melanesian Brotherhood during the last five years as I did not want this story to be forgotten. It is called *In Search of the Lost: A personal Testament to the Death and Life of Seven Peacemakers*.

Our visit to the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu was in response to Bishop Nigel's question of "can we strengthen the links between the Church of Melanesia and the Diocese of Chester, to make them more tangible and meaningful?"

So when Tony Sparham was granted a sabbatical from Wilmslow Parish and decided to combine it with a re-visit to Melanesia to try and answer Bishop Nigel's question, Brian and I were delighted to accompany them. I have been in the nursing profession for over forty years and was allocated the task of observing and advising on the four Melanesian hospitals we were to visit:- Vureas on Ambae, Vanuatu; Buala, Ysabel; Kira Kira, Makira, and the old mission hospital at Fuabu on Malaita.

All the head nurses expressed concern that many of the essential pieces of equipment required for patient care were broken. These included X-ray machines, ultra sound scanners, operating theatre lights, drip stands and beds. There was also a lack of basic cleaning materials, mops and buckets. In some hospitals, there was limited electricity and Kira Kira had no running water at all. In their hospital laundry there were two new washing machines standing idle because of the lack of water. The laundry worker had to wash everything by hand under the rain-water tank.

Generally the nurses have only four different drugs (Paracetamol, Meflaquine, Septrin and Pembritin) to administer to inpatients and outpatients.

The Head Nurse at Fuabu Hospital, Betty, was sterilising the hospital's instruments in a pan over a wood fire. The gas cylinder and tubing to run the autoclave had been ordered weeks before but it had not arrived. Betty, a nurse with great enthusiasm and foresight, had managed to get some local villagers to dig her two pits in which to put hospital waste of soiled dressings, placentas, needles and syringes. At other hospitals, waste is thrown out into the sea or bush - no clinical waste disposal companies with yellow bags or incineration plants!

Staff delivering babies have no protective clothing, gloves or aprons and in some cases no uniforms. They carry out deliveries by storm lantern or torch at night, which is difficult when the patient has to have stitches or a labour is complicated.

The hospitals can only afford to feed the patients one meal a day. Families have to provide the rest and stay at the hospital, sleeping under the beds or outside the ward. This was upsetting the

Melanesia and its Health Service

Helen M Barnett

nurses because they are unable to keep the ward clean and tidy.

The nurses have responsibility for the whole hospital while the doctors are out in the bush visiting area clinics or village aid posts. They see up to 100 outpatients a day, administering drugs, suturing, ordering supplies and training junior nurses. There is no more money for professional development through courses, although the nurses all indicated that this is important to them.

At Auki, Malaita, we met with Barbara (Bishop Willie's daughter), a nurse working in Health Promotion. She is travelling many miles into the bush to meet with villagers to explain about a healthy diet, birth control (families are advised to have no more than four children), hygiene and basic first aid. She has no teaching aids, materials or equipment, but is working hard to improve the health of the children by talks and immunisation. There is an increase in tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria, although a charity is supplying mosquito nets, at a nominal charge, to families that can afford them.

Biochemistry tests on blood and urine cannot be carried out in these hospitals, so patients have to be sent by sea or plane to Honiara Hospital where the tests are available.

On the maternity wards mother and baby stay together in one bed - except triplets who have their own bed next to their mother. One mother had just been delivered of her eleventh child and both she and the child were very weak. The nurse explained to us that some of the mother's older children were always left in the village while she was out working at her garden to grow food for the family and her husband was away fishing. The children were getting in trouble with the other villagers for stealing food because they were always hungry. Father and mother were being encouraged to consider birth control!

What stood out was the sheer energy, caring and professionalism of the hospital staff and especially the Head Nurses who had such a great responsibility caring for adults, young children, mothers and babies. We had great admiration for them and hope very much that we will be able to assist and support them in some way in the future.

Introducing Gordon Leua Nanau

I am from the Tathimboko region of Guadalcanal province in Solomon Islands. My undergraduate and postgraduate studies were undertaken at the University of the South Pacific, Fiji and the College of Charleston, South Carolina from 1989 – 1995. My recent job before coming over to the UK was with the Directorate at our national tertiary institution, the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). That position enabled me to be involved in academic thinking as well as engaging with government, non-government organisations and local communities.

The civil uprisings in the country from 1998 to 2003 (and the crises that followed) were a critical experience and opportunity to contribute time and efforts to peace building related efforts. The civil instability gave me an impetus to assess similar situations in other regions internationally and put Solomon Islands and Melanesia (labelled 'the arc of instability') in a global perspective. This opportunity of pursuing this came with the offer of the UK Commonwealth Fellowship and Scholarship Programme for doctoral studies. Here I am at the University of East Anglia pursuing a sincere interest through PhD research under the School of Development Studies. I should say that I am privileged to work under the guidance of two friendly and distinguished supervisors.

My interest is to investigate the central issue of insecure globalisation and its presence or otherwise in people's livelihoods and national development with general reference to the

Melanesian sub region. I am interested in contemplating a development model that better explains globalising and local forces impacting on people's livelihoods and sustainability in Melanesia. The work entails the observation of certain concepts and indicators in the field to explain casual relationships between them. I am currently developing this focus to be better prepared for field work later this year.

Effectively I am an employee of SICHE and will return to serve after studies. Moreover, I am determined to use the acquired skills and knowledge from this undertaking and the general UK experience to further the course of developing human capabilities and sustainable livelihoods in Melanesia. I'd like to see myself as living a professional life between academia and a 'hands-on' person directly engaging with development problems. I hope to enrich both theoretical as well as empirical approaches to people's concerns and daily encounters through this study. My dream is to contribute my share of influencing policies that drives Solomon Islands and Melanesia to a stage where people have opportunities and choices in life that they can make use of.

For my time here in the United Kingdom, I am gratefully indebted to the moral and financial support from the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Programme (CSFP), the collegial support from Solomon Islands College of Higher Education collegial and my wife and daughter who are with me on this journey! The University of East Anglia is awesome and would recommend others from the 'Sea of Islands'



Gordon and his Commonwealth Scholarship Executive at UEA

to consider it if they plan to further their studies in the United Kingdom!

Gordon and his family hope to be able to join us at the AGM at High Wycombe in June. (Ed)

Gift to 'Bringers of the Word'

Theresa Moorin, 'ecclesiastical tailor' and Sacristan at All Saints, Babbacombe met up with the 25 strong Mission of Brothers and Sisters on their visit last summer. Delighted at the work they were doing in Devon bringing the gift of the Word to those around Torquay, Theresa wanted to respond with a gift of her own.

Using her needlework skills Theresa has made a set of vestments that will soon be sent out to the Church of Melanesia thanks to the Melanesian Mission and the Chester link. Theresa has plans to make more vestments for Melanesia and is holding a series of fundraising events to fund her work.



Theresa Moorin with one of the vestments for Melanesia

In the midst of a year with many

highlights for the Diocese of Malaita, I think the biggest in 2005 was the election of Fr Alfred Hou as Assistant Bishop at Diocesan Synod in May and his consecration at Christ the King Cathedral, Fiu, on Advent Sunday.

The Archbishop of Melanesia presided at the consecration and installation, assisted by all the Church of Melanesia Diocesan Bishops as well as Archbishop Emeritus Norman Palmer and retired Bishop Lazarus Munamua. Bishop David Vunagi of Temotu preached. It was a beautiful and exciting service, with the Auki Parish Youth Group dancing and Fiu Cathedral and Auki choirs participated with a variety of hymns in Sa'a, Kwara'ae and English.

Alfred was born in 1965 and is from Aulupeine village in Small Malaita. He and his wife Rose have three children, Eunice, Malachi and Andrew. He attended secondary school at Su'u National Secondary School and then worked for Taiyo for some years, during which time he trained in Japan.

He returned to Kohimarama in 1992, graduating with a Diploma in Theology in 1995. He was ordained priest in December 1996.

In the diocese, he worked as Acting Diocesan Secretary, then priest of Fokanakafo Parish in North Malaita before going to study in the degree programme at St John's Theological College, Auckland. He graduated with a BD at the end of 2005 and returned to the diocese as priest of Fiu Parish and rector of Fiu Cathedral.

Rose has been very active in the Diocesan Mothers' Union and was heavily involved in the planning of hospitality for the consecration.

Bishop Alfred, Rose and Andrew have moved to Sa'a, Small Malaita, waiting for the Assistant Bishop's House at Afio to be finished in a few months time. Diocesan Synod agreed that the Assistant Bishop would have special responsibility for Small Malaita and Arekwa Regions, comprising of thirteen parishes in Small Malaita, Sikaiana, Are Are and Kwaio.

This year he will concentrate on touring his two regions. Already he has conducted three ordinations and numerous confirmations. He is also Chair of the C.E. Fox Secondary School, Sa'a, the Diocese's only CoM secondary school.

Assistant Bishop for Southern Malaita

The Assistant Bishop's new house is located on the hill overlooking Afio on the west end of the Maroumasike Passage. The house is being built from the bequest of a former New Zealand missionary in Malaita in the late forties, Miss Muriel Scrimgeour, and the Church of Melanesia. Afio is not very well developed and it is hoped that the Assistant Bishop's presence there will speed the arrival of telecommunications, banking and an air service.

The decision to have an Assistant Bishop for the Diocese came because of its ever-increasing size and difficult geography. There are presently about 35,000 Anglicans (according to the 1999 census).

The 43 parishes comprise 410 congregations.

Like all the diocesan bishops, I have done much of my touring by outboard canoe and the ten hour canoe trip from Auki to Walande or East Are Are is both very uncomfortable and occasionally dangerous.

While Bishop Alfred has special responsibility for Arekwa and Small Malaita

Regions, he is still Assistant Bishop of the whole Diocese of Malaita, so there will be times when he visits the rest of the diocese. Small Malaita Region will host the 2008 Diocesan Synod, so Bishop Alfred will be very much involved with that planning.

After three months, I have felt rather relieved of some burdens. I have only seen Bishop Alfred once since Christmas but we are able to communicate by radio and email. We hope to meet together with the five senior priests of the five regions at least twice a year and, of course, we all come together for the annual Diocesan Council meeting.

One hope is that this pattern of an assistant bishop will prevent the formation of many more new dioceses in the Church of Melanesia, as that process is extremely expensive and not always for the best of the Church.

Please remember Bishop Alfred, Rose and their family in your prayers, his new responsibilities in the diocese and our working relationship. After almost ten years as Diocesan Bishop, I am beginning to look forward to my retirement in August 2008. Please keep us in your prayers.

The Rt Revd Terry Brown, Bishop of Malaita