

AGM & Annual Festival 2007

This year's AGM and Annual Festival will be held at Westminster Abbey on Saturday 9th June. The day will start at 11am in the Cheney Gates Room. We will hold a short business AGM and then move into a series of presentations by people from Melanesia who are currently in the UK, and from those who have some recent experiences of Solomons and Vanuatu. We hope there will be time to make new connections and catch up with old friends.

Sister Veronica CSC (pictured opposite) will be telling us of news from the Sisters' Households in Solomons and of her forthcoming studies in Bristol.

A sandwich lunch and drinks will be provided by the Dean and Chapter for which we are very grateful. **Please do let me know if you will be attending so I can let the Abbey know the numbers.**

After the Festival there will be a short meeting of the Companions of the Melanesian Brotherhood for those who are able to stay.

Parking at the Abbey is limited to disabled badge holders. Please let me know beforehand so I can inform the Beadles on the gate. For those coming by train, either Westminster (Jubilee Line) or St James' Park (District/Circle Line) tube stations are the nearest.

The day will finish at around 3.45pm.

Dave Friswell



Sr Veronica CSC (holding flag) and Sr Beglyn CSC at the recent Commonwealth Day Observance at Westminster Abbey

Melanesian Mission - Membership

If you would like to register as a member of the Mission then please complete the slip enclosed with this newsletter and return it to the Executive Officer.

With the retirement of David Dew as Treasurer of MM(UK) all donations and correspondence should now be sent to the Executive Officer at the following address:-

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Please amend your records accordingly. Thank you.

Melanesia News

The Melanesian Mission Issue 60, Spring / Summer 2007

Registered Charity No. 1104551

Looking beyond our own culture

Almost anyone who knows anything about the history of the Melanesian Mission will know the story of the Martyrdom of Bishop Patteson – of how when visiting the Santa Cruz Islands in 1871 he became a victim of a revenge or honour killing in response to a recent raid on one of the islands and five men had been snatched for the plantations in Queensland. These and thousands of others like them were victims of 'blackbirding', a name used to describe what was in effect kidnapping healthy young workers for slave labour hundreds of miles from home.

This year when, as a nation, we commemorate the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade we do well to reflect once again on that well known story and remind ourselves that the history of the involvement of Europeans and their Australasian colonists was not all good and that alongside the devotion and genuine philanthropy of many of the early missionaries and others, there were darker motivations, as well as costly mistakes arising from a misunderstanding or dismissal of local culture, and elements of a less glorious legacy as well.



In Search of the Lost

by Richard Carter. Now available from the Melanesian Mission at a special price of £12.99 **including** postage and packing. See page 3 for review and more details.

One of the reasons why I constantly give thanks for the work of the Melanesian Mission (UK) is that it supports a genuinely two way partnership with the Church in Melanesia. Not least does our regular contact and exchange of personnel help us to see ourselves and our heritage through others eyes, and how important that is for our mutual growth in Christ. One of the hidden but real benefits of our relationship with our Christian brothers and sisters in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands is that we are able to hold up to one another a mirror

New Bishops visit the UK - see page 10

From the Chairman cont'd

in which our culture and the application of the gospel to it may be seen and examined in new ways.

In my own Diocese of Exeter this 200th anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807 we have been forced to examine our own past in a very particular way. Buried in our history is the allegation that a former Bishop both owned slaves and profited from their emancipation. In fact the true story is a little more complex – as it often is. It would seem that in the early 19th century the government was encouraging more people to invest in the West Indies sugar trade. Many did so, including Bishop Philpotts together with three partners. And records show that, 10 years after the passing of the 1833 abolition Act, they were paid the sum of £12,729 5s 2d by the Government in compensation for the 665 slaves they had owned in Jamaica. Was he an evil slave trafficker or an astute investor and believer in free trade?

It is very easy from the perspective of hindsight to be very dismissive and judgemental about decisions taken by other people at other times and in other cultures, but then to be blind to the negative or sinful consequences of actions or decisions taken unthinkingly in the context of our own culture. Again, I rejoice that our partnership in

mission with the Church in Melanesia provides us with, among other things, opportunities to see ourselves as others see us, and so – if we then choose – grow in insight, wisdom and holiness. And hopefully, and prayerfully, we are able the same loving reflection in return. Unless this year's commemorations cause us to ask questions such as those forcefully raised by Wilberforce, Patteson, Selwyn and others before us, the energies expended on them will be very much in vain.

Such an ability to look beyond our own culture and to begin to not just understand but learn from others is something that is much needed in the Anglican Communion at the present time. As we approach a critical stage in preparing for the next Lambeth Conference a particularly heavy responsibility rests upon the design group, chaired by the Archbishop of Melanesia, the Most Revd Ellison Pogo. Alongside our thanksgivings and commemorations in this bicentenary year how good it would be to hold him and those who work with him in this task particularly in our regular prayers.

+ Michael



Called to Serve?

There are currently a number of opportunities for teachers and theological trainers to work with the Church of Melanesia on short and long term placements. We also get occasional requests for other roles.

Each vacancy and each applicant are looked at on an individual basis. For long term placements (two years plus) the Melanesian Mission and the Church of Melanesia will offer full support. For shorter placements we may still be able to contribute something towards costs. In all cases selection, preparation, medicals and training will be provided as required.

If you feel called to explore a vocation working in the South Pacific then please do get in touch with the Executive Officer.

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Registered Charity Number 1104551

Companions of the Melanesian Brotherhood in Europe

At the time of the Regional Conference of the Solomon Island Region of the Brotherhood in 2006 a list of Households was printed, showing that there were then 398 Brothers and hundreds of Novices. There are large noviciates at Tabalia, the Motherhouse on Guadalcanal in Solomon Islands, at Dobuduru near Popondetta in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and at Tumsisiro on Ambae Island in Vanuatu. There are hundreds of novitiates and aspirants training in these households and in the Section Headquarters in each diocese. There are eight dioceses in the Anglican Church of Melanesia and five in PNG. Four Brothers from Solomon Islands are working on the island of Palawan in the western Philippines.

The Revd Peter Marsden from the UK has just been elected Bishop of Port Moresby, PNG, and he will be the Section Father of the Brothers and Companions in his diocese. Elected representatives of the Brothers, along with Companions from the region and the UK, will attend the Great Conference at the end of October. There will also be a Great Conference of the Companions at the same time.

Brother George Siosi, a former Assistant Head Brother, completed his theological training at a seminary of the Philippine Independent Church (which is in communion with the Anglican churches) and was ordained deacon in Solomon Islands. He is now back in the Philippines. This year the Brothers there are celebrating ten years of work in Palawan where they are seeking to establish a missionary brotherhood for the Independent Church. Some Filipinos are already being trained.

A version of the Companion's Handbook has now been prepared for Companions in the Europe Region and it is hoped that this will be approved for use at the Great Conference of the Companions in October.

Fr Brian Macdonald-Milne

Obituary

The former bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Auki, Bishop Gerry

Loft has died in Auckland, New Zealand. Bishop Loft a member of the Marist Society was a missionary in the Solomons for 46 years most of which he served in Malaita. He was sent here soon after his priesthood ordination in 1958. He faithfully served the Christian community of Malaita for twenty years as bishop until he retired in December 2004. After his retirement he continued to do parish pastoral work in the Diocese of Auckland where he died suddenly of a heart attack on 4th February, 2007.

In Search of the Lost

By Fr Richard Carter
Canterbury Press

Rarely does one come across a book that causes so much positive comment. Richard's account of the events that led up to the death of seven Melanesian Brothers, and how the community have dealt with the tragedy since, has touched the hearts of all who have read the tale. Since the launch of the book in November last year, so many copies have been sold that the publishers are already printing more.

One reader wrote the following after she had read the book:

"The story of the martyrdom of the seven Melanesian Brothers touched me deeply. I have tried over and over again to write a letter which conveyed the impression it left with me, but all my words sound so artificial. Above all, to read of such huge courage and faith made me aware of my own shortcomings."

The poems and prayers that are interspersed throughout the text add the chance to soak up, and reflect on, the feelings of the moment and in some way become a part of the story as the truth unfolds.

If you haven't got your copy yet then there is still time. The normal retail price of book is £12.99. The Melanesian Mission has a limited number of copies available at £12.99 including postage and packing. A donation of £2 for each

book bought through the Mission will be sent to the Brothers to help with their work. To order your copy please send a cheque made payable to 'The Melanesian Mission' and send it to me at the address on the back cover.

Dave Friswell

Lambeth Conference 2008

The next Lambeth Conference will be held in July 2008 in Canterbury. This might seem a little way away, but plans are already being made by dioceses and churches in Britain to make the most of this amazing opportunity. Bishops, representing their churches, from around the world will be coming to the UK in their hundreds and that includes all nine bishops from the Church of Melanesia.

Official events in link and companion dioceses are likely to happen over the weekend of 12th and 13th July 2008, but the Melanesian Mission is hoping that the Melanesian bishops will come across to the UK a few weeks before then and spend time with churches around Britain.

If your church would be interested in hosting one of the bishops for a few days then please do get in touch with me. At this stage it is too early to make any firm 'bookings' but it would be a great help to get a feel of who might be able to get more involved.

My contact details are on the back page of this newsletter.

Dave Friswell

News from the Dioceses



Diocese of Banks and Torres

The Diocese of Banks and Torres in Vanuatu is now linked with new digital communication facilities on four of its main islands. Bishop Nathan Tome said the installation of four tele-radios was part of the physical development of the diocese under its Communication Project. The aim of this project is to ease one of the major problems facing the diocese whose islands are so scattered. The equipment which includes radios, batteries and cabling were installed on Gaua, Merelava, Vanua Lava and at Mering Island. On Mering people were completely taken by surprise by the radios as

they can now make radio contact beyond their island for the first time since they settled there. Bishop Nathan said this is a significant step to not only enhancing communication in the diocese but will certainly improve lives as they can utilise it for other development purposes. He urged the communities to look after the equipment properly so that it can last and serve the purpose for which it has been given. The equipment was presented by Bishop Nathan during his Episcopal tour around the diocese and was paid for by the Church of Melanesia.

Diocese of Ysabel

The Diocesan Bishop made his first tour of his Diocese between 12th and 18th February. He travelled by canoe and an out board motor engine. The weather was fine and the whole tour was a blessing. Bishop Richard was aiming to make pastoral visits to small villages and meet people in their homes. For some of the small villages this is the first time the Diocesan Bishop has visited them and they expressed in tears how glad they were. The Bishop was deeply moved and told them that small communities are very important and that is why he

has to make time to visit them. The Bishop confirmed about two hundred candidates during the tour. The group with the Bishop spent a night in each village and in the evening held meetings and explained to people the plans for the Diocese. There were questions asked about church and its future, about mission, self-reliance, education and training, health services and partnership in mission. The Bishop gave answers to all their questions. The people pledged their support for the church and especially the Diocese.

We had heard about 'Solomon time' before we left – there's even a novel by that name, but it cannot prepare you for this experience. It's four weeks into the first term and it's certainly been a challenging start. We are still waiting for teachers to turn up and resources here are extremely limited. Amongst other things the school doesn't have essentials like toilets or a photocopier. In fact the conditions that the students live in are quite desperate - the dormitories are in a terrible state of repair and the Dining Hall is a serious health hazard. We have been quite shocked by the absence of things that we have always taken for granted like a reliable water supply or constant electricity. There are talks about improvement but we have yet to see any action.



Despite all this, spirits are high and the adversity really creates a great sense of community and shared faith. Throughout all the hardships and injustices endured, the love and hope shines through daily and we feel so honoured to be able to share in the formative years of the new generation of students here.



Whilst we are both teaching other years, with classes of up to 40 students, the senior Form 6 is our main focus and we are working hard to try and get as many of our 2 classes of 33 Form 6 students through (Asim Economics and Kate English). In addition we have been working on the school library but delays after delays with materials mean again

that we must make the most of what we have, at the moment that's books in cardboard boxes!

The combination of heat and humidity was initially very hard, but the cool sea breeze helps us out and sometimes we take our class onto the beach if the classrooms get too stuffy! The surrounding rainforests are truly stunning and the villagers are very friendly, helping us out with coconuts, pineapples, vegetables and local foods – and in planting our 'soup-soup' garden to grow our vegetables.

It's definitely going to be hard to leave at the end of the year, we don't like to think about it. In particular we can't imagine going without the daily sound of an incredible and dedicated choir, this seems to be a constant feature of the CoM schools here and the sound of their angelic voices is something we cannot really put into words.

Kate & Asim

Time Out at Pamua

When Dave asked us to write something for this newsletter we really didn't know where to start. So much has happened and continues to happen every day. Kate then wrote this poem and we think it sums some things up quite well, especially the change from the fast pace of life in London we have left behind.

Solomon Time

It's as if we have entered into a time...

A time when people come around to your house

If they want

To see you

We're in a time when you grow your own vegetables

If that is what you want

To eat

We are in a time when you bake a cake

If that's what you fancy

We're in a time when you scrub your clothes

With a brush

If they are grubby

We are in a time when we collect water

From the sky

To drink

And in a time when we use our legs to go

From place to place

And back again

We're in a time where we talk to our neighbours

And Children

Are everybody's responsibility

We're in a time when people make their own entertainment

By singing, dancing,

Telling stories or by joking about

We are in a time when people stop.

Pause,

And T a k e T i m e

We are in a time when things take a verrrrrrry

loooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooonnggg

timeee

to happen

We are in a time where we have

Plenty of time to live.

Maybe it's as if we've gone back in time...

Maybe it's the future?

What we know is that it's our time

And we like this time



very much.

Diocese of Malaita



Bishop Terry has asked for assistance to purchase bicycles for his five priests who live and serve in parishes along the North Malaita road. The total cost of five good bicycles in Solomon Islands is £500.

If you or your church would like to take on a challenge and raise some extra money for the Church of Melanesia then this might be just the thing for you! Maybe a sponsored cycle ride round your parish would set the ball rolling. Any

money raised should be sent to Dave Friswell with cheques payable to 'The Melanesian Mission'. Please make sure you mention the money is for 'Bikes for Malaita' so that I can be sure it reaches the right place! (If more than £500 is raised, the extra money will be transferred across to the Church of Melanesia to assist other priests in fulfilling their ministry.)

Diocese of Vanuatu

Head of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Vanuatu,

Bishop James Ligo, said his diocese will embark on putting together a comprehensive training programme for both diocesan clergy and laity.

The new Bishop said his diocese currently does not have a human resource development plan. He said they are far behind their sister dioceses in Solomon Islands in terms of qualified clergy and lay church employees. The

Diocese of Vanuatu now has a new Diocesan Secretary and Treasurer. Within this plan there is a programme where young potential clergy and lay workers will be encouraged to take up studies for higher qualification for which scholarships are being offered.

Bishop Ligo said as part of this programme one of his lay workers will be starting university studies this year while two teachers have been admitted at the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education where they will undergo full time teacher training.

He adds, his diocese will reaffirm its interest to work side by side with the provincial and national government in addressing issues relating to education, health and social problems especially with young people.

Bishop James is planning to visit New Caledonia in late April. The purpose of this visit is to seek possible grounds for the establishment of a parish in the French territory. Much prayer is needed for this Mission.

A team from Waikanae Diocese, New Zealand will be conducting a retreat for clergy, lay leaders and wives from 13th to 23rd August 2007.



Bishop Richard Ellena, the new Bishop of Nelson Diocese, will be leading the retreat. Ambae / Maewo Region has a new Senior Priest. He is Fr Simeon Tari who replaces Fr George Vina who has been appointed to New Caledonia.

The New Cathedral at Sarakata is still waiting to be completed. The new Parish Council has plans to start fundraising to enable the work to continue. It will probably be another year before the building is

completed.

The Bishop's car keeps breaking down and it is hoped that a trade in agreement can be reached with a local car dealer so they may have a new vehicle by 2008.

The United Church of Solomon Islands has expressed its interest in becoming a partner with the Church of Melanesia in sending its students to Talua Ministry Training College. Negotiations are underway and we hope to see this happen this year if not in 2008.

Diocese of Exeter

We are pleased to announce the licensing of Bishop James Mason as Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Exeter. His licensing will take place at 12.30pm on Tuesday 17th April in Exeter Cathedral. James has spent two years at Plympton St Maurice and will continue his ministry there after his furlough in Solomons.

Companions of the Melanesian Brotherhood - Northern Section

In November, Head Brother Caulton Weris made a visit to Chester Diocese. He travelled from London and had a meeting with Dr Ruth Ackroyd, Head of the Department of Religious Studies at Chester University. This gave the Head Brother an opportunity to discuss at first hand the arrangements necessary to be made for Brothers to study at Chester and to hear how the university has benefited from the presence of Brother Leonard Dawea and Brother Jonathan SioTiaro who graduated in 2005. The Head Brother shared the value of this from the point of view of the Melanesian Brotherhood.

Bishop Peter (Chester) invited the Head Brother and a Companion to tea followed by a short tour of Chester Cathedral before meeting with a small group of Companions later in the day.

The next day a visit was made to the Sisters of Jesus Way, based on the Wirral, and then a visit to Liverpool Cathedral. This was followed by a magnificent feast at Bishop Willie and Kate Pwaisiho's home, where he received a true Solomon Island welcome. The next day, he was driven to Plymouth to meet with Bishop James Mason and Companions.

A consignment of goods has just been despatched by ship to Solomon Islands, organised by Tony Sparham. Included were some items required by the Brotherhood. A Birkenhead Church gave us a very generous

Finance Update From the Honorary Treasurer

Further to my message in Issue No 59 of 'Melanesia News' the accounts for the new Charity (No 1104551) for 2005/2006 have been approved by the Trustees, audited, and lodged with The Charity Commission and Companies House. We now have new auditors who are Whiting & Partners of Garland Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 1EZ. The final accounts for the 'old' charity, for the year ended 31st March 2005 have also been audited and similarly deposited. There are still some residual matters concerning

the transfer of some of the Endowment and Restricted Funds of the old charity but we really hope to clear these up very soon, and certainly by the time of the Annual Meeting in June this year. Dave Friswell is pursuing these matters and thanks are due to him for depositing our earlier accounts.

Accounts

The 2006 accounts are now available. Please ask Dave for copies by post or email. Draft 2006/07 accounts should be ready for the Annual Festival in June.

How you can help the Melanesian Mission?

It is not always possible to help the Mission during one's lifetime, particularly if you are faced with many demands from other charities you like to support. One way of helping though is to consider amending your Will to include a gift to The Melanesian Mission. Legacies can prove very useful for the Mission and in the past the charity has benefitted considerably from gifts left by those who have passed on. Some people choose to leave specific gifts of money, some a percentage of their estate whilst others choose to leave the residue of their estate once family and friends have been looked after. When you are giving thought to this important subject please remember that the business of making a Will or amending an existing one need not be time-consuming. If you would like to talk or write to the Executive Officer or myself please do not hesitate to do so. My details, including the registered charity number, are published on page 19 in this magazine.

Alan Waters, Hon. Treasurer

Thanks for Stamps

Some of you reading this newsletter may have received it 'first class'. The Melanesian Mission normally tries to keep costs to a minimum by sending mail second class whenever possible. But thanks to a very generous gift from one supporter, who donated over 500 first class stamps and envelopes, we have been able to save over £150 in postage costs!

co-worker and Doctor Leonardo. The restaurant is run by the community and staffed by many with mental disabilities. Monica told us that the secret of any Christian community was their love for the poor. "They are God's gift to us." Brother Caulton and I could not have felt more at home both with the company and with their Gospel lifestyle.



On 22nd November in the beautiful Basilica of St Bartholomew in Rome a service of prayer and thanksgiving took place in memory and thanksgiving for the lives of the seven Brothers who lost their lives working for peace in the Solomon Islands in 2003. The Archbishop of Canterbury preached to the many people who had gathered: he paid tribute to

the Seven Melanesian Brothers and the cost of their discipleship which he saw as an example to us all. I was invited to tell the story and give a testimony to the lives of the Brothers. Head Brother Caulton led the prayers and presented the memories of the departed Brothers: one of their medals, a sash and a walking sticks. These will be a perpetual memory kept in this Basilica of Modern Martyrs to their lives and witness.

It was an incredibly moving service in which the Archbishop of Canterbury spoke with great love of his visit to Melanesia and how much it meant to him, and how much he felt was demanded of him, by becoming a Companion of the Melanesian Brotherhood. The Church was packed with people. Later I asked Monica why the whole community had gone to such lengths to honour and remember the story of these Melanesian Brothers from a different denomination living on the other side of the world. She said that too often we concentrate on our divisions rather than celebrating our unity and faith in Christ. She said that their community believed that the martyrdom of the Melanesian Brothers was a sign which cut across divisions of culture and church and united us all in faith. Their martyrdom was a sign of Christian witness, love for God and neighbour which is an example which will inspire Christians around the world. It was an amazing thing to realise that the message and action of these Brothers in death has inspired so many.

Fr Richard Carter

donation to buy files and exercise books and other stationery items for the Novices at Tabalia. A request had come for some Bibles for the Novices, and churches, Companions and friends made it possible to send out twenty one new Bibles and some second hand ones. Brother Jonathan who runs the Sunday School at Tabalia, with Novices, had requested polo shirts with a logo, designed by himself. With the help of a member of a Birkenhead Church and we have sent out twenty polo shirts complete with logo.



Head Brother visits Sisters of Jesus Way

A team of six, Companions and friends, from different churches in Chester Diocese have been sewing curtains for Chester Resthouse and with these, material for sashes has been sent in the consignment. A Chester Companion has generously purchased one hundred copies of the Revd Richard Carter's wonderful book 'In Search of the Lost' which have been sent to the Brotherhood. We are very grateful to Father Richard for sharing those heartbreaking events, which teach us so much about Christian love and faith.

Brother Leonard is now heading the team of tutors at Tabalia and Brother Jonathan is a member of the team as well as being in charge of Mission. At present they are arranging third year Novices' placements.

At the end of February, Brother George Siosi was ordained as priest and he will soon be returning to serve in the Philippines. Over 1,500 attended his Ordination. Brother Leonard and Brother Jonathan hope to be ordained as priests at the end of June and we are asked to pray for these Brothers and for all the Brotherhood as preparations are being made for the Great Conference.

On Sunday 20th May 2007, the Wirral Coastal Walk takes place. It is a distance of fifteen miles, commencing at the River Mersey and ending at the River Dee. Companions and friends of the Melanesian Brotherhood are invited to join this walk, or to sponsor those who are taking part. Please contact Barbara Molyneux (phone 01513 426 327 or email: bmolyneux@freeuk.com). It is a pleasant coastal walk and a good way to support the Brothers, who took part in it, with the Sisters and Franciscan Brothers, whilst on Mission here in 2005.

It has been good to see Bishop Willie's wife Kate is now home from her long stay in hospital and it was a great pleasure to meet their grandson who visited his family with his mum for Christmas. Kate Pwaisiho, Willie and Kate's youngest daughter, is spending a year working as a Careforce Worker at a church on the Wirral. It is a blessing to have this family in our midst.

Barbara Molyneux

Keeping up with the Jones'

It is early morning in Auckland as I write this article and the sun is streaming through the windows of St John's College library. It is now late summer here and a far cry from the cold dark days of England's winter. Just over a month ago we were all in the UK on my biannual furlough, which we all very much enjoyed, and it was suggested I write something for the newsletter (much to Dave Friswell's delight!) so this is the result.



For those who don't know me, from 1999-2003 I taught Theology, Christian Ethics and occasionally English at Bishop Patteson Theological College in Solomon Islands, which I enjoyed very much. It was also a time when not only did I meet my future wife Anna, a Solomon Islander who is part Gela and part Choiseul, and marry her at BPTC in 2003, but also when I committed myself long term to the future development of the college. As a part of that staff development I have been pursuing doctoral studies at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. We have been here since 2004 and I hope to submit either at the end of this year or the beginning of the next. I say we because since our time here baby David has also appeared on the scene and who is now a healthy 15 month old boy, a real blessing to us, and who is growing, it seems, bigger and bolder everyday.

The topic of my research is a complex and very relevant one to the current situation in Solomon Islands. My time at BPTC was spent at the height of the recent conflict and although in very limited ways, I did see firsthand some of what was going on around me. It was also at this time that I was able to see and appreciate the work of the Melanesian Brotherhood acting as peacemakers and who played a critical role in the restoration of peace, a role sometimes greatly overlooked by some of the recent books and commentaries written on the conflict. It was also of course in 2003 that the Brotherhood was shaken to its foundations by the murder of seven of their number, a terrible situation most movingly attested to in Richard Carter's recent book. My research concerns the work and role of the brotherhood as peacemakers and the theological impact of the murder of the seven brothers. In effect I argue that there is

The Seven Martyrs Remembered in Rome

I waited for Brother Caulton Weris at Heathrow on a very cold and wet November morning. For those of you who do not know him he is the Head Brother of the Melanesian Brotherhood. I waited and waited at the welcome point searching among passengers arriving from around the world for any sign of this familiar smiling face from Melanesia. Brother Caulton is originally from Vanuatu but he has served the Brotherhood for more than 25 years in Papua New Guinea and also Solomon Islands. He is the longest serving Brother and the one always called upon when the Brotherhood is in need of steady and wise leadership. He is a simple and humble man but a man of balance and discernment who has always led the community in a fair and Godly way. After two and a half hours of waiting I was beginning to fear our Head Brother had somehow disappeared in transit! I searched the whole terminal, had public announcements put out, checked on the emergency phone with both customs and immigration but there was absolutely no sign of him. Then, when I was giving up hope, I received a call on my mobile asking if I was Richard Carter because a man from Solomon Islands was looking for me. Brother Caulton had been waiting outside the airport on the main road in his shirt sleeves as one would have done in tropical Honiara. Losing him made the reunion even more special. What a joy it was to see our Solomon Island Brother in UK for the first time. In the evening we celebrated with plates of beef rice and Chinese cabbage, and after a weekend with Fr Brian Macdonald-Milne he set off with me for Rome.



Both Brother Caulton and myself had been invited by the Community of Sant' Egidio to a ceremony of thanksgiving for the lives of the seven martyred Brothers. We were met at the airport by Monica Attias who had been coordinating this event and researching the story of the Melanesian Brotherhood with such dedication. She had always had the belief that this story needed to be heard beyond the Anglican Church and that this was a story which could inspire and unite all Christians. When we arrived she asked us whether we would be interested in seeing something of the work of the Community of Sant' Egidio and of course we agreed. On our first evening we went to the most delicious restaurant together where we talked and shared so many ideas in common. Monica introduced us to a

Melanesian Brothers and the Brothers of the Society of Saint Francis, and I also work with the Melanesian Brothers in other areas. Last December I had the good fortune during Advent and Christmas to accompany the Tasiu on their annual mission, and worked as Mission Chaplain as we crossed northern Guadalcanal performing dramas and teaching. The main focus of the annual mission is the training of final year novices, but it is also an important outreach of the Brothers. The 2006 mission included forty-five novices, five Tasiu, a sister and a novice from the Community of the Sisters of Melanesia, and one fairly bemused priest!



Cheka (Novice Duddley) on top of a "tall building" – from where he can see the home ground of Manchester United!

The dramas included the Nativity Drama and "the Lost Son", which is based on the parable of the prodigal son. Teaching was carried out on issues including married life, HIV & AIDS, and drug abuse. We spent most of our time on the Guadalcanal Plains east of Honiara, but also visited the base for the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, the Ariliugo and Maravovo Districts in West Guadalcanal, and the prisoners at Rove Prison.

Please continue to pray for our students at Kohimarama as they continue to study – may God grant them wisdom and knowledge and enrich their future ministry. And please pray for the Third Year Novices as they prepare, God willing, for their admission as Brothers in October.

The Revd Dr Keith Joseph

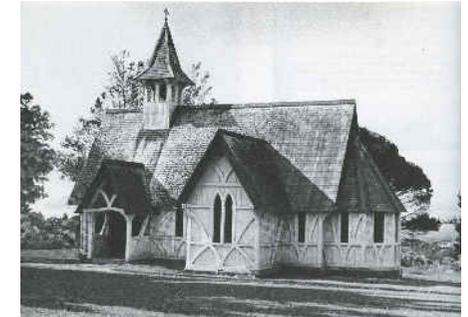
Received with Thanks

For some time we have been trying to get a photo of items being unloaded from one of the shipments that have been sent out to the Church of Melanesia. As this has not yet been possible, we thought we should include this picture of some computer equipment and some college books being received 'in transit' between Bury St Edmunds and Wilmslow by Bishop James and Bishop Alfred whilst they were in the UK. We hope to have news that Bishop Alfred has the computer up and running once the next shipment has been sent!



a tension apparent in Melanesian theology between a theology of power, protection or blessing and that of powerlessness and vulnerability. The death of the brothers has in some ways acted as a catalyst to reveal this explicitly and all of this has a connection to Melanesian notions of mana and spiritual power. My research does not seek to 'solve' the perceived theological problem but rather through a dialogue between Melanesian theology and non-Melanesian theologies of relational power I suggest a way forward by the redefining of mana in a Melanesian Christian context.

The research is in full swing, with a first draft now completed (with probably many more to come!) and I'm sure as the year progresses I will get even more stressed as I grapple with the theological issues explored. The work is difficult but also enjoyable as it feels like I am writing something that is worthwhile simply because it is relevant to the situation in Solomon Islands and not just some dry academic exercise. So the research remains ongoing, and I am greatly supported in this task by Anna who is a great help and support, and of course also by David, although his support consists at the moment of throwing my files and folders all over the floor!



The Chapel, St John's, Auckland

We all very much appreciate the opportunity and privilege of coming to live and study in New Zealand and are grateful for the continuing support we receive from the Church of Melanesia and from the English committee of the Melanesian Mission. During our recent visit to the UK, I really appreciated the opportunity to meet the committee in what was a constructive and very worthwhile meeting and we all value your continuing prayers and support. The Church of Melanesia also continues to give us great support and encouragement, which we also appreciate very much. It is because of that support that Anna is also able to study here at a local college, and has completed various courses in English and craftwork. She has also recently begun a computer studies course which she is enjoying and which will be helpful when we return to BPTC.

As the year progresses I hope that I will be able to give you more updates on the research, of life living in Auckland and on the growth and development of David who is very much larger than life, but for now I will sign off and immerse myself back into the thesis.

Thank You.

Matthew, Anna and David Jones

New Bishops Learn the Ropes

It was a cold January Friday morning when I checked my emails and found one from Australia saying "The Bishops have left Brisbane - can you take some warm clothes when you collect them from the airport?" Communication is great when it works. It was a shame I hadn't got any messages prior to that one to tell me who was coming to the UK, when, why and for how long! Half a dozen phone calls later, the jigsaw had been pieced together. Bishop James Ligo (Diocese of Vanuatu) and Bishop Alfred Hou (Assistant Bishop of Malaita) were coming to take part in the 'New Bishops' course held at Canterbury. They were just two of twenty four new bishops from around the world who met to learn, worship and share fellowship together. The week included a visit to the Anglican Consultative Council headquarters and a chance to meet the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace.



As the course drew to a close it was time for the Melanesian Mission to step in and take up the role of tour guide!

First stop was to Bury St Edmunds and the office of the Melanesian Mission. A tour of the Cathedral and Abbey ruins followed by dinner with the family took us through to Sunday evening. A short journey over to Fr Brian's in Waterbeach for the night meant that Cambridge was near at hand for the following morning.

Jesus College was the first port of call for a meeting with some of the Trustees of the Mission. The Bishops told us of their new visions and gave a glimpse of their dreams for the future work in their dioceses. After a short tour of Jesus College and Westcott House it was time for lunch where we were joined by Bishop Willie and Dr John Sweet.

A trip to Cambridge wouldn't be complete without a 'pilgrimage' to Selwyn College and the chance to see the Bishop's cross set into the altar of the chapel. Prayers were said in the upper room of the chapel and we were soon on our way down to London to meet Bishop Michael Langrish, Chair of Trustees, in the House of Lords. Searching questions from Bishop Michael helped James and Alfred explain their views on various issues in the Province of Melanesia.

As anyone who has visited Melanesia knows, food plays an important part of any visitors itinerary. Being in London, where better else to find good food and great hospitality than Richard and Daniel Carter's home. After a wonderful time of relaxation and talking it was off to Mary Sumner House for the night.

The following day Bishops James and Alfred had to depart, but before setting off to Heathrow we just had time to fit in a specialist guided tour of Westminster Abbey and lunch with Canon Jane.

The wait at the airport was made longer as check-in wanted to see the credit card that had booked Bishop James' ticket. As this had been done by a travel agents in the United States this was quite a



Canon Jane Hedges with Bishops James & Alfred

difficult item to produce! Three supervisors and one manager later the boarding card was issued and the Bishops slowly disappeared through immigration. They both made it safely back to their homes and we are looking forward to seeing them (and all the other Bishops) here for the Lambeth Conference next year.

Dave Friswell

Report from On Top

Many of you will be familiar with Tabalia, the Headquarters of the Melanesian Brotherhood, about 30km by road from Honiara in Western Guadalcanal. A few hundred metres up the hill on top is Kohimarama, the home of the Bishop Patteson Theological College (BPTC). Following my ordination as a Priest last year I have taken up a full-time ministry at



Sister Suzie teaching Sunday School whilst at Vutu village

BPTC as a lecturer. I teach in the Diploma programme, but my main focus is on the new Degree course which started last year. It is very different from university teaching in Australia. There are few computers, as yet no internet access, and for most students English is their second or third language. However, the students are motivated and enthusiastic, and class sizes by western standards are small. My home is a neat cottage, from which I can look down the road to the dining hall at Tabalia. At BPTC I am responsible as Staff Advisor for the