

Looking Back...

One of the many joys of my role as Executive Officer is receiving photos and news about the Mission from days gone by.

Over the past few months I have been sent some wonderful images of the Southern Cross as well as copies of personal letters from a Royal Navy Officer working in the South Pacific in the early 1900s. Here is just a selection of these archives.



The Southern Cross stuck on the reef at Maravovo in 1962. Captain Gordon Sharp was assigned the task of retrieving the ship from the reef. His wife, Christine Sharp, who sent in these photos, provided the new compass in Gordon's memory for the Southern Cross when it was refitted in the 1990s.



Bishops Dudley Tuti and Leonard Alafiaua at their consecration on 30th November 1963.

the Melanesian Mission where the Bishop of London, the Headmaster of Eton and 'several missionaries' spoke. She tells Claud that the "missionaries seem to be working hard, but want so much more money and men." Along with this collection of letters, Claud's family has given a set of Mission postcards which date from c1904 showcasing the Mission's work in Santa Cruz, Ysabel, Ugi and Florida. One of the cards shows a fine picture of the Southern Cross steaming through the waters. Once catalogued, this collection will be lodged at SOAS with other Mission archives. For access to these please contact Dave Friswell.

The Allsup Collection

Captain Claud Finlinson Allsup was a Royal Navy Captain who started his naval career at the age of 15 in 1896. His travels before the first World War took him to the South Pacific where he encountered Melanesians and the Mission for the first time. In a letter to Claud from his mother, Clara, (dated 9th November 1906) she tells of her visit to Church House (with Aunt Lucy) for the Annual Meeting of

Melanesia News



The Melanesian Mission Issue 64, Summer 2009

Registered Charity No. 1104551

Flood Relief Work Continues

Very early on 1st February 2009 emails started to come through to the office of the Melanesian Mission with news of severe flooding in Solomon Islands. The following reports are extracts from those emails:-

1st February

There has been serious flooding on Guadalcanal, which has claimed several lives. In our area at Kohimarama and Tabalia, all the students, staff, Brothers and Novices are fine, but the roads will be beyond use for many months, the food gardens have been destroyed and water sources destroyed or contaminated. So some big challenges ahead, the first of which is averting starvation and dealing with diseases. Fortunately the Church is already putting a disaster relief plan



Roads washed away by the floods

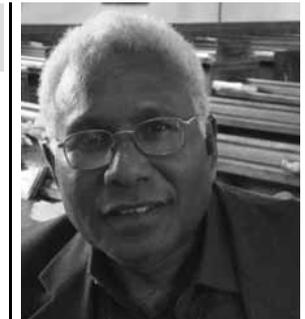
into operation, and hopefully the government will respond shortly.



Food relief being delivered by the Church of Melanesia

2nd February

Between four and eight lives appear to have been lost. Included in the affected area are many villages, including those in the Anglican parishes of Sahulu and Marovovo with a total population of the



The Church of Melanesia elects new Archbishop

He is the Rt Revd David Vunagi who is currently the Bishop of the Diocese of Temotu in Solomon Islands. Bishop David was elected by the Provincial Electoral Board on 4th March at Tetete Ni Kolivuti, headquarters of the Sisters of the Church east of Honiara.

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Flood Relief (cont'd)

area of about 10,000. Also in this area are Selwyn College, the HQ of the Melanesian Brotherhood, the Bishop Patteson Theological College (BPTC), the headquarters of the Sisters of Melanesia, and of the Society of Saint Francis.

Selwyn College was literally inundated; fortunately students had not yet arrived for the start of term and the College has been

temporarily closed. Some of the people from Vatupilei village had a narrow escape when floodwaters swept their houses away. Over ninety-five percent of the food gardens have been destroyed and are beyond use. Food stocks are now exhausted and the gardens will not produce anything for at least two months. They will not be back to full production for at least six months. In our community, we will need to import by sea about ten tonnes of food a week. Rainwater collected in tanks can be drunk, but this will be exhausted soon after the rain stops, and then contaminated water will have to be used for washing, cleaning and drinking. Some villages have been significantly damaged. At present the people who lost their homes in Vatupilei are living in our College's primary school. In the immediate future, the MV *Southern Cross* will take relief food supplies to West Guadalcanal on



The effects of logging as trunks and branches are washed down the hillsides destroying all in their path

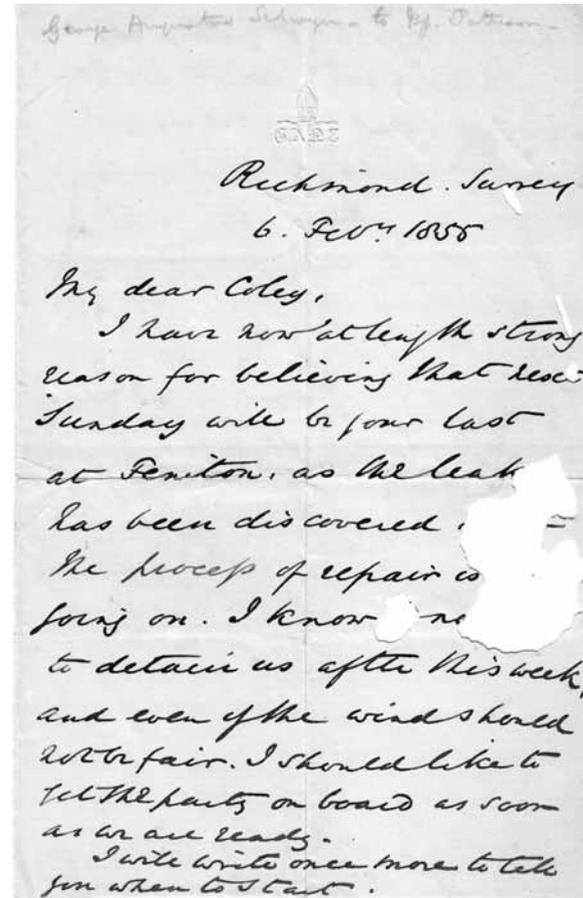
Wednesday and bring back one hundred people (our third year diploma students and their families) who will go to their dioceses on practical a little earlier than anticipated. This will reduce the strain on food at the College. An assessment team will also travel on the *Southern Cross* and we hope to make a fuller report on immediate aid requirements by Friday this week. We will then start to deal with longer-term reconstruction. The Church of Melanesia has allocated over fifty percent of its relief fund for the initial emergency work. There will be further calls on limited budgets, in terms of providing food, medicines and the provision of clean water supplies.

10th February

Flooding has now subsided and the mud is starting to dry. The

It reads:

'My dear Coley,
I have now at length strong reason for believing that next Sunday will be your last at Feniton, as the leak has been discovered and the process of repair is now going on.



I know nothing to detain us after this week, and even if the wind should not be fair. I should like to get the party on board as soon as we are ready.

I will write once more to tell you when to start.'

I sent a copy of this letter to the Librarian at St John's College, Auckland, who is making a collection of all of Bishop Selwyn's letters. Soon it will be available for all to see, while the original remains protected from further

insect and other damage. My hope is to concentrate on this collection this year and then in 2010 move on to the papers at the Provincial Office.

As former Archbishop Ellison told the last General Synod, the ACoM needs a room or building in which to house its own archives.

The SI National Archives were subject to some theft during the ethnic tension period. It would be better if the ACoM had its own facilities.

If you have old Melanesian Mission or Diocese of Melanesia materials, do not hesitate to contact Dave Friswell (contact details on back of magazine). Please consider depositing them for a secure future in the ACoM or Mission's

archives."

Bishop Terry will also be assisting with the Bishop Patteson Theological College B.Th. programme, particularly with the final papers. No rest for the retired!

What do Bishops do when they retire?

Former Bishop of Malaita Diocese the Rt Rev Terry Brown is being engaged to properly reorganise and document the Church of Melanesia's historical materials, some of which span more than 150 years. Bishop Terry writes:- "During my last couple years as Bishop of Malaita, I frequently consulted the Church of Melanesia archives on deposit at the National Archives of the Solomon Islands in Honiara. These cover the period from about 1850 to 1980, though there are many gaps. I frequently found that the National Archives staff could not find the material I requested and some of it was damaged or in the wrong place. I decided that a good retirement project would be to assess and reorganise these archives. At the same time, many important papers have accumulated at the Provincial Office since the inauguration of the province in 1975 and these also need organising.

I put my proposal to the Council of Bishops and they agreed to provide me with housing in Honiara for four years in exchange for my working on these archives.

I believe an archive has two main functions – firstly to preserve old and important papers but also to make them accessible. Sometimes these two aims seem to be in conflict, for if many different people handle old photos and papers they are soon destroyed.

Therefore, I shall be both preserving items and making photocopies or digital copies to make them more accessible. For example, I have scanned over four hundred photos of R W Beattie, the Tasmanian photographer, who visited Melanesia on the Southern Cross in 1906. I hope to put these on an inexpensive CD for sale at the Provincial book store. I have also been transcribing some of the journals and hope to publish them or put them on the internet. Already I have put many early Melanesian Mission published materials on the Anglican church history site, Project Canterbury, (www.anglicanhistory.org), on the Oceania directory.

Just as an example of the kind of material in the archives, here is a picture of a letter from Bishop George Augustus Selwyn, written on 6th February 1855 from the Selwyn family home in Richmond (London) to the young priest, John Coleridge Patteson, "Coley", telling him that the ship for New Zealand will be leaving soon.

It can be seen that the letter is damaged, probably by insects, and that the signature has been torn off, probably by someone who sold it to an autograph dealer.

However, the embossed mitre with GANZ and the handwriting makes the letter clearly recognizable as Selwyn's.

casualty figure now stands at 21, being 10 dead and 11 missing presumed dead. Food and fuel supplies were delivered to our communities last week by the MV *Southern Cross* and RSIPV *Lata*. Selwyn College is yet to reopen but BPTC has now commenced classes.

AusAID have taken over repair of the road on behalf of the local authorities and has commenced repairs at Tamboko Bridge. If the weather is good, temporary repairs at Tamboko Bridge should be



completed by the middle of this week. They will then move onto Sasa Hill Bridge where they intend to put in a temporary road to bypass the damaged area; this will take two weeks. The temporary repairs should reopen the road in a month or so. Permanent repairs will take longer.

Food remains in very short supply, and for the next month will need to

be shipped in. The relief supplies shipped in last Thursday are now almost exhausted. Ongoing shipping demands for food and fuel will be about 40 tonnes a week once Selwyn College is reopened (16 tonnes for BPTC, Tabalia and surrounding villages; 24 tonnes for Selwyn College and surrounding communities), so a weekly

shipping schedule will be needed.

The critical factor remains clean water which it is not practicable to ship in. With recent rain, the rainwater tanks have thankfully refilled,

including a new tank at Vaturanga. Additionally, the dam at Kohimarama is in the process of having temporary repairs made, though the pipes through to BPTC are yet to be tested. Work is also underway at Selwyn to bring the bore hole back on line. The bore hole at Tabalia remains out of action and will need to be rebuilt.

Fr Keith Joseph

Thanks

Our thanks go out to the many supporters who have responded to the relief appeal. The Mission was able to send £3,000 the day after the flooding from our 'emergency' fund which helped to buy food, water and fuel. With your donations we have been able to send out a further £4,000 much of which has gone to the Brothers and Sisters for both their requirements and for their ministry among the flood victims.

We have also received news from one parish in the UK who have pledged to fund the reconstruction of the bore hole and pump for the Brothers' headquarters at Tabalia.

New Archbishop (cont'd)

The election to this important post follows the retirement of former Archbishop, Sir Ellison Pogo. Bishop Vunagi who has served in the Episcopal ministry for the last eight years in the Diocese of Temotu will be enthroned as the fifth Archbishop of Melanesia on 31st May 2009 in Honiara.

Prior to serving in the Church as a clergyman he was a teacher at the government school, King George VI, and the Church of Melanesia school, Selwyn College.

Bishop Vunagi from Samasodu in Ysabel Province was educated at KG VI Secondary School from 1968 to 1973. He obtained a Diploma of Education in Science from the University of the South Pacific in Fiji in 1976, and later a Bachelor of Education in Biology from the University of Papua New Guinea. In his theological training, the Archbishop-elect obtained Bachelor of Theology from St John's College

in Auckland in 1990.

After teaching at the Bishop Patteson Theological College at Kohimarama Bishop David served as Assistant Priest at St Anselm's Parish in the Diocese of New Westminster, British Columbia in Canada. He obtained a Master of Theology from the Vancouver School of Theology in 1998 then on his return to Solomon Islands he served in the Diocese of Ysabel as Senior Priest and Parish Priest at Lawe region.

In 1999 he returned to Selwyn College as Principal before he became the Mission Secretary at the Provincial headquarters of the Church in 2000. Later that year he was elected as Bishop of the Diocese of Temotu.

Bishop Vunagi is married to Mary, daughter of late Bishop Dudley Tuti of Ysabel. They have three children, Dudley, Rusila and Douglas.

Looking Forward in Prayer

I have just returned from a Trustees meeting which was very different from our normal gatherings. We had set aside a day to reflect together on the future work of the Melanesian Mission (UK) in the light of changing circumstances both in Melanesia and here. And we engaged in this process largely through a time of facilitated prayer. At one point we were asked, individually, to find a quiet space and in the context of prayer to jot down what we believed God was saying to us about our work, in order then to share this with others as we sought to discern a common vision and direction.



Recently a small boat full of "climate refugees" including two Pacific islanders in traditional attire floated on the River Spree in front of the German parliament, giving visibility to the issue during a Stop Coal Campaign supported by the agencies Bread for the World and EED of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

The discussions at the event in New York underscored the injustice that the populations who will be hardest hit by the atmospheric changes are the ones who have hardly contributed to them. While for example European countries have only few low-lying, densely populated areas, the resources they have available for the construction of seawalls exceed by far the possibilities of the islands of the South Pacific.

Objectives of Church advocacy

Revd Jorge Domingues, a Brazilian from the United Methodist Church, called on Christians in the financial markets to adopt a shareholder advocacy policy and press companies on climate change agenda. He added that churches also need to consider the carbon footprint of their own work. One action is the promotion of renewable energy, as opposed to non-permanent solutions like carbon capture or nuclear power of which the Pacific islanders have "bad memories". Fe'iloakitau Kaho Tevi, general secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches, also called for research into the cultural, legal and economic implications of a nation's sovereign territory disappearing.

With a mixture of realism and optimism, Revd Baranite Kirata explained that "it is now too late to do something for Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands; but together, we are the world, and it is not too late to do something for us all."

Cruising the Pacific

Solomon Islands is gaining strength in its tourism industry with a boost in tourist arrivals. The Destination Solomons Travel & Tours Limited said that the company has received confirmation that eight cruise liners will travel to Solomon Islands this year. The visits started with the 'Spirit of Oceanus' going to Arnavon Island, Isabel Province and then to Honiara for a five hour stopover.

'Spirit of Oceanus' was in the Solomons waters for four days, making its last stopover in Tikopia before leaving the country. It is hoped that these visits will be a good boost to the decline in the country's tourism sector due to tensions and social problems over the past few years.



Its too late to save our island

At the United Nations Advocacy Week of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in November last year, Christians from the Pacific islands have appealed for worldwide solidarity with regard to climate change, a question of life and death in their communities.

Revd Asora Amosa, a Samoan-born pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, spoke of the region's feeling of threat: "If icebergs break off and float past the south coast of New Zealand we wonder what is coming next."

Addressing a diverse group of more than 100 representatives from churches and organisations defending people and nature around the world, Amosa underscored that it is time to take action together: "We have criticised the industrialised nations for failing to take courageous action, but we realise also that the time for according blame has gone." Revd Baranite Kirata from Kiribati, one of the three Pacific island states which will lose their territory to the rising sea level in the foreseeable future, explained what it means to know that not only will his people become refugees but that the place they call home will disappear under the rising waters.

"Myself, when I am travelling my heart always longs for home, for where I can cry and rejoice with my people," Kirata said.

People in Kiribati already lose their homes and livelihoods as floods have become more frequent and intense while fish become fewer. Their health is threatened by diseases and extreme heat, or as an elderly lady on one of the outer islands once told the pastor: "The sun burns as if it was just above my head." The rising sea level leads to salt water killing the roots of trees and polluting wells; at the same time, rainfall, the second source of drinking water for the islanders, becomes scarce.

Eaten by the waves

For the Pacific churches, the issue is not only political and economic, but deeply theological, ethical and spiritual. They feel that their place in God's creation is at stake. "The storms and waves eat away our beaches and as they continue they will some day eat us," said Kirata. Those whose houses on the coast have been destroyed, move further inland. It is clear, however, that this is not a lasting solution. "If we don't end up in the lagoon, we will end up fighting each other over land, food, water." Churches in the Pacific have developed action plans and conservation activities. Pacific islanders also cooperate with partners in the North in raising awareness.

I found myself immediately drawn to one verse of scripture on which to dwell: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2). As I pondered those words this was the vision, as it appeared to me, that should inform all the work of the Mission:

- For the Church in the UK to share in the burden of providing education, training and resources for the Church in Melanesia as it faithfully witnesses to the Kingdom of God in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands;
- For the Church in Melanesia and in the UK to share in the burden of praying in an informed way for one another's life, and the different contexts in which that life is lived in Christ;
- For the Church in Melanesia and the UK to act together as advocates for all the peoples of Melanesia in a world where they are often overlooked – in no one's sphere of influence, but vulnerable to exploitation by powerful neighbours;
- For the Church in Melanesia to be so strengthened by the relationship between them that local church communities are strengthened in both parts of the world, and all of our Dioceses better equipped to contribute positively to the life of the world wide Church.

I share these very personal reflections with you with an invitation to engage in such prayerful meditation yourself, and perhaps write in with your own contributions at a time when we welcome a new Archbishop in Melanesia and will shortly be selecting a new Chair for MM(UK).

✠ Michael

Getting Greener

As part of the Mission's strategic commitment to cutting its environmental impact we will be looking at all aspects of the Mission's operations and seeing how these may be improved with the environment in mind. Already the Trustees have been considering the frequency of air travel and it is hoped that ways will be found of maintaining the relationship element of Mission's work with slightly less frequent face to face contact. All visits made to Melanesia by Trustees or the Executive Officer already have clear aims and objectives which enable visits to be fully considered before they are undertaken. Similar evaluations will be undertaken for future missions to the UK by groups of the Brothers and Sisters.

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Money, Money, Money

Greetings From your new Honorary Treasurer, Helen Miller.

It will probably come as no surprise to you that I need to write about money. Keeping an eye on the Mission's finances and being a good steward of our resources is part of my role as Hon. Treasurer and whilst, as an accountant, I often get a bit fed up talking and writing about money, I make no apology for this. Money, and the need for it is a reality, and we are no different at the Melanesian Mission.



Firstly, thank you to all of you who already support financially our work in Melanesia and to everyone who has supported our recent appeal to send money to support those affected by the recent floods.

Secondly, I would like to make you aware of our financial position and I hope and pray that you won't be offended by this article. Everyone reading this is affected in some way by the so called "credit crunch", security of pensions, the fall in interest rates and the threat of unemployment. We are all concerned for financial security personally and corporately. The quick onset of this latest world wide financial crisis has surprised us all. Who would have thought that the bank base would fall to 0.5%? A year ago we all thought 5% was low.

This sudden reduction is affecting us all and particularly charities who often rely significantly on interest earned to fund its work. At the Melanesian Mission we are no different. Last year we received £72,000 of interest which helped to fund our work, this year we expect to receive about £60,000.

Our real problem is 2009/10. Up until November 2008 we were receiving an interest rate of around 5%. In December this dropped to 4%, in January to 2.94%, in February to 2.13% and we have just heard that the rate has dropped to 1.50%. This is disastrous for the Mission. Without an increase in rate we can expect our interest to be around £20,000 next year, a £40,000 reduction. Our Block Grant to the Church of Melanesia is £36,000 per annum. So we have a real issue.

The purpose of this article is to make you aware of this. Please don't think that we are planning to withdraw our support in Melanesia. We remain committed to this and we have some reserves to draw on. But we

because the Mala people said that they were not to kill Government workers, but GRAs only.

Things continued to happen among Mala and Guale while I was still in town. Some Mala people were not of a mind for anybody belonging to Guale, either Government worker or non-Government worker, they attacked any Guale people. So I was about to be murdered by two men in a street going up to Lengakiki near Honiara, but I managed to knock them down and run away. The next morning the office arranged for a helicopter to take me home to the Weathercoast.

While I was at home Harold Keke was friendly to the people and worked close to all communities until the Townville Peace Agreement signature. After the agreement was signed things changed and Keke started turning on us and demanding people to give him money, food, etc. As things went on it gradually became worse and at one time I also became a victim of his ruling. I was a hostage a full night, tied up against a post with both hands and legs like a pig is tied up, but stood against a post until day break from 9 o'clock. But I was released at 11am, because of my good answers to all his questions, and he turned against his armies because they told lies to him about me.

As he continued doing things wrong, the Joint Operations Group came and he ran away and hid himself and other people in the bush, but while he was in the bush he made many ambushes to kill the Joint Operation forces. Some of the time he managed to kill some of the Joint Operation forces but most of the time he'd always run away to the jungle. But if I am going to tell the detailed story about Harold Keke, it would contain a full book to write about his inhumane treatment of us.

How I became a student at BPTC was a long process, starting when I was in primary school. When I left school in Form 3 I sat the first examination to come over to Kohi, but they said in reply you are too young to come to Kohi. We only accept 25 years old people and above. At the age of 25 years old I sat the examination again and they told me they only had limited space for young people to be accommodated. Then after I married I sat the exam once again, but I did not manage to pass, but I wasn't giving up and kept on trying. So I sat the exam again in June 2006 when I was laid off from the Government. I also was accepted at the end of 2006 for study at the College of Higher Education, but in November 2006 I received an unexpected letter to take up theology study at BPTC. I've faced many challenges in the College but have managed to overcome them. Now I am in Year 3 and looking forward to going out on my practical mission in June and returning back next year to finish my Diploma study. I thank everybody who prayed for me and that God responded to our prayers. Once again thank you one and all. God bless!

Life in the Islands *by Joseph Bakachikai*

This article has been written by Joseph Bakachikai, a third year ordinand at Bishop Patteson Theological College. It recounts some of his life story, including the period of the Ethnic Tension involving the peoples of Malaita and Guadalcanal, which are the two biggest islands in Solomon Islands. Honiara, the capital, is on the north coast of Guadalcanal but the city and some surrounding areas had come to be dominated by people from Malaita. A militant group, the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA) commenced hostilities in 1998. Joseph's village of Kolina is very near the place where the seven brothers were martyred in 2003.

I was born 13th March 1964 in a firewood storage house, early morning about 3 o'clock. My name is Joseph Bakachikai. I come from Kolina Village, Weathercoast, the south part of Guadalcanal Island. Up to the age of 8 my father and mother and my grannies took care of me. At the age of eight I was sent to a mission village school about 10 miles from home. I also went to school at Mbambanakira and then at Tangarare School until the end of 1981. I sat the examination to continue my study, but lacked the school fees so did not go on for further study.



In 1982 I was employed by the Solomon Islands Government in the Ministry of Finance working as a rural statistics enumerator collecting raw data. While working as an enumerator I toured many parts of the Solomon Islands, visited many people in many provinces and experienced many cultures and traditions. Apart from some time during the Tension, I worked as an enumerator until I was made redundant in 2006. I married Diana and six years later in we had our first born son, Paul Charles Fox Taba. One week later Harold Keke and other boys came along and asked me to join them to start the war. When they came along and asked me, my wife said "No, Joe is not going to join the war, as he is a married man and we have a baby that needs money to support him, he is not going." The boys left and we managed to travel home and I returned to work in Honiara.

In the same year (I can't think of the date) I was in my office. I heard people start shouting outside my office. They shouted and said, "Now the war between Guale and Mala begins, we must try to reach back home before it comes to the worst." That was the first day of the war when it happened in town. The next day I came to the office, the Mala people started looking for Guale people to kill us, but I was not affected

do need to increase our income otherwise we may need to alter the scope of our work and our plans for the future. So I am writing to ask:

- Can you give personally, a small or large amount, monthly, annually or as a one off gift?
- If you already give, can you afford an increase?
- Do you pay tax and can we Gift Aid your donation?
- Can you organise a fundraising event in your church to support our work in Melanesia?

Please pray about how you can respond and share this issue with your church and friends. If you can commit to giving regularly a standing order form can be found on page 14. Please complete and return this to our Executive Officer, Dave Friswell. Our contact details are on page 5 and please do contact me or Dave with any suggestions you may have.

Thanks for reading this and for supporting the work of the Melanesian Mission.

Helen Miller

Report from MBH Companions in Chester Diocese

The last meeting of the Chester companions was held at Gawsworth to celebrate the feast of St Simon and St Jude. Bishop Willie presided at the Eucharist and Bros Jeffrey and Nelson read the lessons from the recently published Pijin Bible. It was noted that these were almost twice the length of the same text in English! The service was followed by feasting and as usual Kate and her daughter, Lorraine added to the bring and share supper with a prodigious quantity of Solomon Island fare featuring cassava, baked bananas, chicken wings and sticky rice.

In January the parishioners of St Mary's Eastham extended an invitation to all Companions to share in their fund raising concert. This highly successful event raised £1500 which was donated to the Brotherhood, along with an additional donation of £500. The event had been organized before the floods but this catastrophe galvanized even greater support and the money will go to help the necessary rebuilding and repairs and the feeding of the Brothers as their gardens have been badly affected. An e-mail to all Chester Companions resulted in donations totaling £600 and the Companions continue to finance a daily meal for the novices.

The Brothers at Chester University have settled in well and are getting good results. It is hoped that the positive reports from the Theology faculty will result in the diocese approving the financing of their studies for a further 2 years. This is to be discussed at a Diocesan budget meeting in March. I have met with the Brothers and they wished to reiterate their grateful thanks to the Mission and Companions for their generous support.

Jocelyn Squires

Looking Back - Ottery St Mary 2008



What a year 2008 was! It was a great joy and privilege to have Bishop Terry, Bishop David and his wife Mary and Bishop Nathan and his wife Selina in our parish before the Lambeth Conference albeit only for a short while. Also we had the Brothers and Sisters here after Lambeth, again not for long, but we were able to take them to Lee Abbey

in North Devon to meet up with Benjamin Kunu, a former Brother and volunteer working there.

Then we took them to Exeter Cathedral where there was some wonderful outreach as they stopped all the visitors in their tracks with their impromptu singing and panpipes.

We were also able to visit the Church in Alfington where John Coleridge Patteson was Curate and the house which was his home in Feniton and of course we also visited Patteson's Cross.

It was a real pleasure to have Brother Caulton Weris with us for two months whilst he did an intensive English course at Sidmouth International School.

What a blessing his presence turned out to be as our priest Revd Simon Franklin had to go into hospital for an operation and Brother Caulton was able to take some of our services. He celebrated twice at Alfington including Harvest Festival. This was a real joy for the parishioners and for Brother Caulton. He also preached at Evensong and celebrated on his last Sunday with us here in Ottery St Mary Parish Church.

We had hoped to have a mission to the diocese this year but that was not to be, perhaps all for the good in view of the recent flooding. We sincerely hope that the Brothers and Sisters will come again very soon.

Jo Holloway



We Remember...

On 13th November 2008 the Church of Melanesia announced the death of Archbishop Emeritus Norman Kitchner Palmer, described as one of the great pioneer and spiritual leaders of the Anglican Church of Melanesia. He died at his residential home in Honiara in the presence his wife Elizabeth Lucy Palmer and other family members.

Archbishop Norman was Dean of St Barnabas Provincial Cathedral in Honiara when he became the first Melanesian to be consecrated and enthroned as Archbishop when the Province of Melanesia became independent from New Zealand in 1975.

The Archbishop came from Munda in New Georgia, Western Province, where he attended Kokengolo Primary School before going to Pawa School on Makira. In 1952 he attended Teate College, New Zealand, where he graduated with a School Certificate and in 1957 graduated with Teaching Certificate at Ardmere Teachers' College, Auckland.

He return and taught at King George IV school at Alegege in Auki from 1958 to 1960 before he answered a call to study theology at St John's College in New Zealand in 1962. There he graduated with a Licentiate of Theology in 1965. In 1966 he went back to Pawa for a year and later became Head Master of Alangaula School on Ugi from 1967 to 1969. He took up the role of Head Master at St Nicholas Mission School in Honiara.

He retired as Archbishop in 1987 and continued to faithfully serve the Church of Melanesia right up until his death. The 80 year old teacher, preacher, educator and a devoted father has left an indelible legacy of his work in Melanesia which will long be remembered by the Church.

Archbishop Emeritus Norman Kitchner Palmer is survived by his wife Elizabeth Lucy and his four children Loretta, Trevor, Michael and John Palmer.



Education Review

Recently I have been tasked by General Synod to carry out a review of Theological Education in the Church of Melanesia – from Sunday School supervisors and

Catechists through to Ordinand, Non-Stipendiary Ministry and post-graduate training. If anyone would like more details please let Dave Friswell know as I have lots of information I can send you.

Fr Keith Joseph

Church Planting in New Caledonia

The Diocese of Vanuatu has recently launched the first Anglican parish in the French Territory of New Caledonia.

Rt Revd James Ligo launched the new Noumea Parish and installed Fr George Vina as its Rector at St Pierre Chapel; a Catholic Church in the Noumea suburb of Tina, as the Diocese is yet to build its own parish church. The use of St Pierre's was part of an agreement reached by Bishop Michael Calvet of the Catholic Church and former Bishop Harry Tevi who began the work of establishing a parish in New Caledonia.

Already land and property on the Ducos suburban prime site in Noumea Harbour has been secured for the new parish development. This will include a church, accommodation and office spaces. It is hoped that construction of the

new buildings and renovation to existing properties will take place very soon.

Due to stringent immigration policies by the New Caledonian government, Fr George Vina can only spend up to 15 days at a time to carry out his mission work in Noumea until the government grants him long term residency. The Diocese of Vanuatu is hoping to secure his residency permit soon by working closely with both governments of Vanuatu and New Caledonia.

Fr Vina was trained and designated as a missionary worker for the French speaking Territory of New Caledonia by Bishop Harry Tevi . New Caledonia has long been part of the Province of Melanesia and some of the first Melanesian missionaries were from the islands of Lifu and Mare.

No Free Education for COM Schools

Schools under the Anglican Church of Melanesia Education Board will continue to charge normal school fees despite the national government's announcement to introduce free education.

School principals in consultation with the Church Education Office have agreed to continue with parents paying school fees for their children's education next year. They say there are a lot of unanswered questions and uncertainties about the proposed free education plan by the government following an explanation given by a spokesman from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development invited to their meeting recently.

The principals say that the proposed allocation to be paid to the schools based on each student would be far less than the required amount currently imposed through school fees. They say the amounts will be inadequate to keep the schools operational for a full academic year.

Mothers' Union



Revd Canon Patrick Elkins and the Revd Helen Griffiss with their new chalices and paten presented by Poro Mothers' Union.

Gifts from the Solomons

The gifts of chalices and a paten have recently been presented to All Saint's Church, Mundeford in Winchester Diocese from members of the MU in Poro village in the Diocese of Ysabel.

The Poro village members were both surprised and delighted by the facts that the Diocesan Chaplain, Helen, was a woman priest and that a man, Canon Elkins, was a MU member! In the Anglican Church of Melanesia there are no women priests and only two male members of the MU – one from Isabel and one from Vanuatu. The ladies were especially "interested and excited that women in the UK are able to reach that previously male-only organisation, the Priesthood".

The vessels shown here are made by hand from local hardwoods with clear waterproofing, showing the fine graining. The craftsman's skill is superbly balanced, smooth and flawless. The maker is a polio victim who since fashioning these vessels has suffered further distress from his condition. He was held in our prayers at the dedication.

In a short talk at the dedication service Helen recalled the murder of the seven Melanesian Mission Brothers and focused on forgiveness for the perpetrators, love for the bereaved, thanksgiving for the Brotherhood's work and courageous witness to Christ's love. Canon Patrick Elkins

Greetings from Solomon Islands!



Much has happened since my last letter. First, we have a new addition to our family. Edward Vunagi Jones was born on 19th December and is a very happy and healthy baby boy. When Anna went into labour (Edward was in breech position) there were no doctors available at the hospital. We had to wait around five hours for a student doctor with very little experience but we pushed for her to go in for surgery and the baby was delivered by caesarean relatively easily.

Secondly, life at the college remains a challenge, particularly for students who are almost continually running out of food. The recent floods destroyed all food gardens and made a good job of destroying the road and most bridges as well. Today the road has been temporarily repaired but any heavy rain makes it impassable once again. Those of us with wages are lucky that we can buy food but most students rely on wantoks and other means to feed themselves. Most students are now replanting gardens, but for the meantime they are relying on rice, tinned meats or any fish they catch. Vegetables are in short supply.

One thing which has come out of this flooding is the impact of logging on the area. The water runs down from the bush and floods because the trees which would normally hold the water have been logged; in addition most of the road bridges were destroyed by floating logs coming down the river. This point still seems lost on many of the local landowners who continue to sign contracts with logging companies and invite them in to destroy the land. I fear the situation can only get worse, with severe flooding becoming the norm each year.

Having said that, the college is open and we are running classes normally. Things are busy as usual and my desk is full up of tasks that I need to do. We continue to battle against lack of infrastructure at the college. We have been trying to get internet installed here for a long time but are continually frustrated by the lack of response/interest from the only internet provider in the country. We can only hope that a rival company can challenge the telecom monopoly which is quite frankly detrimental to communications in Solomon Islands as a whole.

Lack of resources is a continual source of frustration particularly when teaching at degree level but we have talented lecturers here who work miracles to keep the programme running. We do have students here with the potential and ability to go on to further studies and it is satisfying to see them grow and develop as academics and theologians who will, one hopes, become the new generation of Melanesian theologians who have something to say not only in Melanesia but on the world theological stage as a whole. We are working hard to improve the college environment to make it even more conducive to good study. The computer lab that has been extended and soon we will taking delivery of the new laptop computers ordered under the college academic budget.

The rest of the family are also keeping busy. Anna is balancing looking after baby Edward with her craft work among the staff wives. Her sewing machine is often whirring at high speed and she has spent the last few weeks sewing uniforms for a number of the Novices. David is also thriving and growing up fast. He attends Kindy here and enjoys playing and interacting with the other children.

In November we should be returning to the UK on leave for two months and are already looking forward to that, particularly in meeting my family again who cannot wait to see and hold baby Edward as well as spoil David rotten!

In closing I would like to thank the Trustees and all supporters of both the Melanesian Mission UK and the Anglican Church of Melanesia for your continuing prayers and support, and to wish you all a blessed and happy Easter celebration.

Mathew, Anna, David and Edward Jones

Church of Melanesia - Provincial News

Awards for Archbishop Ellison

Former Archbishop of the Church of Melanesia the Most Revd Sir Ellison Pogo has been awarded not only the Cross of St Augustine by Archbishop Rowan but also the Republic of Vanuatu's highest and most distinguished award; the Badge of Honour.

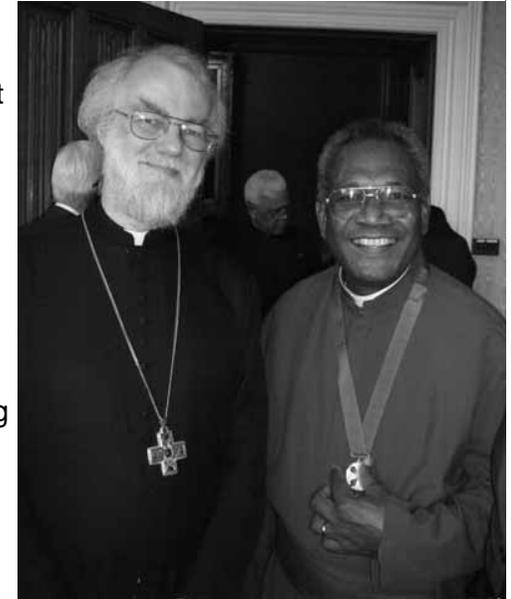
President of the Republic of Vanuatu His Excellency Sir Kalkot Matas Kelekele performed the investiture at a ceremony coinciding with the official farewell ceremony for the Archbishop at Tagabe Resurrection Church, Port Vila.

In presenting the award His Excellency Matas Kelekele congratulated Sir Ellison for his worthy achievement and especially for the important role he played in uniting the three Melanesian countries; Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and New Caledonia through his Episcopal and pastoral role as head of the Church over the last fourteen years. He thanked the Church of Melanesia for contributing to the spiritual growth and social development of the Republic of Vanuatu that is enjoyed not only by Anglicans but also by other churches in the Republic.

Archbishop Pogo thanked the government and people of Vanuatu for the honour saying he was receiving it on behalf of the people of the three countries who ably and faithfully served and supported the work of the Church both spiritually and physically.

He said the Melanesian countries must continue to work together to uphold the unity of the government, the church and the traditional norms in order to build a strong, powerful, faithful and united nations of Solomon Islands, New Caledonia and Vanuatu.

Archbishop Ellison has also been awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity in recognition for his role as Chairman of the Pacific Theological College Board of Governors for the last fourteen years.



Archbishop Ellison receiving the Cross of St Augustine from

Getting to Selwyn College, Cambridge

Train:- Cambridge has good rail connections with London (Liverpool Street and Kings Cross) and with Peterborough. The railway station is on the edge of Cambridge. Either get a taxi or take the short walk up Station Road, turn left into Hills Road and then right into Brooklands Avenue. The U4 bus stop is about half way along the street. See website below. Selwyn College is about one and a half miles from the Station.

Car:- Parking at Selwyn College is very limited and can only be offered to Blue Badge holders if required. Cambridge has a very good Park and Ride system from whichever direction one approaches. Buses are every few minutes on a Saturday and drop off at the bus station in the centre of the city. Selwyn College is approximately a one mile walk along Emmanuel Street, Downing Street, Silver Street, Pembroke Street and Sidgwick Avenue.



Bus:- Local Cambridge buses C4 and U4 stop not far from Selwyn in Grange Road (correct at the time of going to print).

Check out:- www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/around/buses/ for more details.

Praying with the Church of Melanesia

Week One

Sunday: Please pray for:-
The Anglican Church of Melanesia in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia.

The New Archbishop of Melanesia, the Most Revd David Vunagi, his wife, Mary, his Diocese of Central Melanesia and parishes in Honiara. The Provincial Cathedral of St Barnabas, the Dean, Very Revd Sam Ata and all the congregation.

Monday: Please pray for:-
The Diocese of Central Solomons. The church in Gela and Savo. The establishment of the Diocese of Guadalcanal. Bishop Charles and Edith Mary Koete. The Bishop Patteson Theological College and Matthew Jones, Deputy Principal, from the UK and his family Anna, David and Edward. The Bungana Training Centre, Gela and Selwyn College, Guadalcanal, recently damaged by flooding where gardens and water supplies were destroyed.

Tuesday: Please pray for:-
The Diocese of Malaita, Solomon Islands. The church in Malaita island, and Lord Howe and Sikaiana atolls. Bishop Sam and Rose Sahu and Assistant Bishop Alfred and Rose Hou. Airahu Training Centre and Fauabu Hospital. Guidance and support as the Diocese plans for a new cathedral and considers the needs of the eastern and northern region.

Wednesday: Please pray for:-
The Sisters of Melanesia and the Melanesian Brotherhood. The Sisters of the Church and the Society of St Francis, First and Third Orders. The Companions and Associates of the Communities, the Christian Care Centre, Guadalcanal, the Mothers' Union and the Mission to Seafarers.

Thursday: Please pray for:-
The Solomon Islands Christian Association. The medical, health, HIV/AIDS, educational and agricultural work of the Governments and churches. The safety and well-being of those who travel between islands. The problems created by excessive drinking of cava affecting all areas of society.

Friday: Please pray for:-
The Diocese of Banks and Torres, Vanuatu. Bishop Nathan and Selina Tome. Fisher Young Rural Training Centre at Patteson Bay and strong co-operation between village communities. The strength of the church in Sola and the mission of the church in Mota Lava. The Vanuatu Christian Council. The work among seafarers. Blessings on the President of Vanuatu.

Saturday: Please pray for:-
The Trustees and staff of the Melanesian Mission in the UK. The Companion and Partnership Link Dioceses in England and the Mothers' Union links. The Melanesian Trust Board in New Zealand.

Standing Order Form

To the Manager Bank plc
Address
..... Post Code

Please pay to: **The Melanesian Mission at Barclays Bank plc, Hart Street, Henley-on-Thames RG9 2AX.** Sort Code **20-39-53.** Account No. **50442216**
the sum of (figures): £ (words):
commencing on the day of 20.....
and on the same day in each month / quarter / year* until further notice.

Signature
Address
..... Post Code

My Bank Account Name:
My Bank Account Number

Week Two

Sunday: Please pray for:-

All priests, deacons, catechists and church workers in Melanesia.

The retired Archbishops, Bishops and Clergy of the Province.

The breakdown in family life due to urban pressures, the overstay of wantoks and the strain on family resources.

Blessings on the Governor General of Solomon Islands.

Monday: Please pray for:-

The Diocese of Ysabel, Solomon Islands.

The church in Isabel island, the Russell Islands and the Western Solomons.

Bishop Richard and Hilda Naramana.

The Training Centres in Isabel and the Garanga Agriculture Development Project.

The Tasia Lay Ministry Training Centre and for Jejevo Hospital.

The plans for a new conference centre and for improvements to the Diocesan Headquarters.

Tuesday: Please pray for:-

The Diocese of Hanuato'o, Eastern Solomon Islands.

The church in Makira, Ugi and Ulawa areas.

Bishop Alfred and Esther Karibongi.

Kerepei Hospital, Ugi and St Stephen's College and Training Centre, Pamua, Makira.

Wednesday: Please pray for:-

The Diocese of Temotu, Outer Eastern Solomon Islands.

The church in the Santa Cruz, Reef Islands, Duff Islands, Utupua, Anuta Vanikoro and Tikopia.

The election of a new bishop and for the Vicar General during the interregnum.

Luesalo Training Centre, Santa Cruz and Lata Hospital.

The need for a new secondary school to meet the increasing demand for education.

Thursday: Please pray for:-

The Provincial and Diocesan Secretaries and staff.

The Melanesian Board of Mission, literacy programmes and the Women's Desk.

The Provincial Printing Press and Bookshop.

The marine workshops at Taroaniara, Gela, and the Provincial ship, the Southern Cross.

Friday: Please pray for:-

The Diocese of Vanuatu and New Caledonia.

The church in Pentecost, Macao, Ambae and Espiritu Santo islands.

The newly established parish in New Caledonia.

Bishop James and Patricia Ligo

The urban areas of Port Vila, Luganville and Noumea (New Caledonia).

St Patrick's College, Vureas, Ambae.

Torgil Training Centre and Lolowai Hospital, Ambae and Talua

Theological College (Presbyterian / Anglican), Santo.

Saturday: Please pray for:-

The parishes, institutions, schools and people who support the Church of Melanesia through prayer, giving and service.

The Brothers and Sisters overseas missions in Australia, Britain and the Philippines.

The Companions of the Melanesian Brotherhood in Europe.

160th Anniversary Festival & AGM

This year's Annual Festival and AGM of the Melanesian Mission will take place at **Selwyn College, Cambridge on 19th September 2009**. (Travel details overleaf.) The day will begin at 10.30am with drinks and a chance to chat with friends old and new, followed by a short business AGM.

The Festival Eucharist will take place in the Chapel followed by a picnic lunch (please bring your own - drinks supplied). The afternoon programme will finish by 4pm. Although this year's festival is likely to be a little quieter than last year it will hopefully still be an interesting and informative day. Please let me know if you are hoping to attend.

As part of the AGM we will be holding the elections for Trustees. There are four current Trustees who will be coming to the end of their term of office and although a number of them are willing to stand for re-election, this is your chance to become involved. If you, or someone you know, would like to consider becoming a Trustee of the Melanesian Mission then please do get in touch with me for more details and to find out the current skills and experiences required by the Trustee body.

Do also remember that to vote for Trustees at the AGM you must have registered as a Member of the Mission (see below). **Dave Friswell**

Membership

Membership of The Melanesian Mission is open to any individual, church or organisation interested in promoting the work of the charity. Only registered Members can vote at the Mission's AGM and elect the charity's Trustees. There is no subscription for membership, though it is hoped that members will support the work with prayer and giving. The Mission is required to keep an up to date register of all its members. If you would like to become a member, or renew your existing membership, then please complete your name and address below and return to me at the address below. Thanks. Dave Friswell

I/we, wish to register as a member of the
Melanesian Mission for 2009/10

Address

..... Postcode

Email:-

Mr D Friswell, The Melanesian Mission, 15 Covell Close,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 2HU