

# Journal of Pacific Adventist History

Vol 1 Number 2 December 2001

ISSN 1445-3096



## Journal of Pacific Adventist History

### Statement of Mission

*Journal of Pacific Adventist History* serves historians, members and others interested in the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific Islands. It focuses on people and events involved in the establishment and development of the church in preparation for the event of the ages—the Second Coming of Christ.

- Editor and Publisher  
David Hay
- Editorial Assistants
 

Kathryn Brady	Lester Devine
Cecily Hay	Ursula Hedges
Laurence Gilmore	David Potter
James Rabe	Arnold Reye
Sherrill Robinson	Yvonne Sutton
Lyndon Schick	John Silver
Kuresa Taga'i	Shirley Tarburton
Gaynor Tarrant	Brian Townend
Raymond Wilkinson	
- Layout and Text  
Cecily Hay
- Advisor  
Barry Oliver
- Volume 1, No 2, December 2001
- Suggestions for topics and titles for future articles are welcome.
- Address all correspondence including change of address to the editor  
1 Ebony Drive Hamlyn Terrace  
NSW 2259 Australia  
Telephone                      Fax  
National            (02) 4392 0000    (02) 4393 5529  
International    61 2 4392 0000    61 2 4393 5529

- Published twice yearly in June & December
- Subscription is FREE.
- Cover Picture: Excited workers, their wives & friends greet the *Andrew Stewart* aeroplane on its arrival at Laiagam Base in the Enga Province PNG.
- The editorial assistants and reviewers contribute much to the success of this Journal and we thank them for the experience and expertise they bring to their work.

## Editorial

### LESSONS & INSPIRATION FROM THE PAST

Israel's birth, expansion, deliverance and their ultimate settlement in the Promised Land make for fascinating reading in scripture. Their history has been preserved for the benefit of the generations that were to follow. Such record serves

1. As a lesson book for those on a similar pilgrimage and
2. To inspire faith and confidence in God's leading and ability to accomplish His plans and purpose.

Israel's prosperity and faithfulness depended on them keeping fresh in their minds and the minds of their children the way God had provided for and led them throughout their journey to the land of Canaan. They were repeatedly admonished, "see that ye forget not".

Similarly, it is important that the story of our pioneers and those who have laboured in the heat of the day in the islands of the Pacific be preserved and told. Succeeding generations should know that the tremendous growth and expansion that we are privileged to witness did not happen without sacrifice and vision. The harvest that we see is the result of the gospel seed that was sown by men and women who went because they were called, who served because they saw it an honour to do so, who did not ask *how much do we get* but rather *how much can we give*.

This Journal fills an important role as through its pages it endeavours to capture the inspiration of God's leading in the growth and development of his work in the Island field. Valuable lessons that have been learned in the school of adversity are recorded to strengthen the faith and confidence of those who take time to read this publication.

*We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us and His teaching in our past history.* (9 Testimonies p 10)

Laurie Evans  
President  
South Pacific Division



The Mission Hostel for departing & returning missionaries—SPD

# Contents

## Articles

- 3 **A DREAM COME TRUE:**  
*Aerial evangelism in Papua New Guinea, 1964-1972* ..... Leonard H Barnard
- 9 **BREAKING NEW GROUND—Part 2:**  
*The Bisiatabu Mission—further attempts at expansion in Papua, PNG*..... Alfred C Chapman
- 13 **FAOLE:**  
*Papuan pioneer in the central area of PNG, 1927-1944*..... Lester N Lock
- 16 **PARENTHESIS AND DETOUR:**  
*The establishment and development of the College du Pic Vert*..... John L P Reynaud
- 20 **ESTABLISHING THE FIRST PERMANENT BASE**  
**OF OPERATIONS IN VANUATU (New Hebrides)—Part 1:**..... Les (C T) Parkinson
- 26 **THE INFLUENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE**  
**ON THE PACIFIC SABBATH**..... David E Hay
- 33 **THE STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE: INDIAN ADVENTIST SCHOOLS**  
**IN FIJI, 1913-1956**..... Ram Brij
- 37 **Letters**
- 38 **Book Review**  
*"Into the Unknown" by Winsome & Ormond Speck*..... Laurence Gilmore  
Robert Possingham
- 39 **Life Sketches**  
*Samuela Daya Ratulevu* ..... 1933—2000  
*Sam Dick* ..... 1915—2001



## A DREAM COME TRUE: Aerial evangelism in Papua New Guinea, 1964-1972

Leonard H Barnard



Although rare, good can sometimes come from the tragedy of war. In 1942, while serving in the Australian Army Medical Corps in Papua New Guinea, I saw first-hand the capabilities of aircraft. During the Japanese drive south toward Australia I learnt to dive into a slit trench to avoid murderous enemy bombs. I also accompanied critically wounded soldiers from the bitter battle of the Kokoda Trail to an evacuation point where they could be flown to Australia for specialist treatment. Thus I saw first-hand the use of the ingenious aeroplane for mass destruc-

tion and for missions of mercy. In the midst of war I discovered and nurtured the dream of becoming a missionary pilot.

Upon discharge from the army in April 1946, I joined the Hawera Aero Club in New Zealand and commenced flying lessons in a trusty Tiger Moth. Within a few weeks I became the proud owner of a pilot's licence. But this was only the first step toward the realisation of my dream. How did one become an Adventist missionary pilot? I began by sharing my dream with church leaders. But, due to tragedies in other lands where unsuitable

*Len Barnard began his long service for the church in 1933. Apart from attending the NZ Missionary College in 1937-38, he spent 7 years working for the Sanitarium Health Food Co in NZ and Australia. From 1942—1946 he served with the Australian Infantry Forces in PNG as a paramedic.*

*He and his wife Mavis commenced mission service in 1949 when he was appointed superintendent of Mt Hagen Hansende Colony in the Western Highlands of PNG. Following six years of service there, Len became director of the Omaura and Homu districts in the Eastern Highlands in 1955. From 1962 till 1972 he was director of the Laiagam District as well as a pilot for the CSUM.*

*His vision & perseverance led to the setting up of the work of aerial evangelism in the South Pacific Division.*

*He spent 12 years in pastoral work in the NNSW Conference and then retired. During that time he initiated the establishment of the Adventist Aviation Association.*

*Mavis assisted him by working in the outpatients clinics and was a midwife for many of the women.*

*The Barnards who have two daughters, Sharyn & Judith, now live at Alton Villas in Cooranbong.*

planes had been used in church work, I was advised that it was against church policy.

I returned to Papua New Guinea as a missionary, but for eighteen frustrating years my pilot's licence burned a hole in my pocket. While planes from other Christian missions flew overhead, I had to wearily trudge muddy mountain trails to carry the three angels messages to the people of inland New Guinea. In my frustration I even became angry with God. But little did I know that the winds of change were stirring.

In 1963 Pastor O.D.F. McCutcheon, a friend of some twenty-five years, was appointed President of the Coral Sea Union Mission (now Papua New Guinea Union Mission). We met later that year and I shared my dream with him. Emboldened by McCutcheon's obvious interest, I promised to raise the money to purchase a plane on condition the union would accept it and I would be assigned to fly it. This proposition appealed to McCutcheon and being a man of action, he immediately called a quorum of his executive committee and gave me opportunity to present the dream and my accompanying proposition. The committee shared McCutcheon's enthusiasm and voted to support the proposal.

Meanwhile, advocacy in another part of the world helped persuade the General Conference to modify its position on the use of aircraft in mission work. Elder James Aitken, President of the South American Division, perceived the advantages of aviation in spreading the gospel in his vast region and had argued his case strongly and persuasively.

With the union mission's support of my dream, I went on leave. One Sabbath I was invited to tell a mission story in a large Sydney church. In my presentation I made no mention of my dream for a mission plane, but as I was leaving the church an elderly gentleman addressed his daughter, "Do you think Pastor Barnard would like a £1000 (\$2000) for his plane?" Would

I indeed!

Following some weeks in Australia, I crossed the Tasman to visit my homeland, New Zealand. As usual, I went to visit my former Longburn College mate, Mel Wordsworth. Before we even sat down to the evening meal, Mel asked: "How much more do you need to buy your mission plane?" I was able to advise that £4000 would make the difference between purchasing a new or a used plane. Mel assured me that between his father, a friend and himself that difference would be met. My heart just leapt with joy.

With little effort on my part the dream became known and shared and the \$16,408.75 required to purchase a new Cessna 180 from the United States rolled in. This first plane was dismantled, crated and shipped across the Pacific, then reassembled in Sydney. Though not thought possible, the registration letters VH-SDA were requested and granted by the Civil Aviation Department. This enabled our plane to be easily recognised wherever it flew.

I learned a valuable lesson from this experience. Never run ahead of the Lord or the brethren. Even inspired dreams cannot be realised until they meet God's timetable. When the time is ripe, then the dream will receive God's richest blessing. This providentially provided plane faithfully flew in the arduous conditions of Papua New Guinea for nearly ten years without one insurance claim. The pilots willingly give the Lord credit for this wonderful record.

Pastor L.C. Naden, then President of the South Pacific Division, dedicated this first mission plane on 27 June 1964. The plane was named *Andrew Stewart* after the veteran pioneer missionary and church administrator. Pastor Stewart, who had trekked the steep New Guinea trails and crossed turbulent Pacific seas by schooner, was delighted to be present for the event.

Two days after the dedication, the precious plane began its three thousand two hundred kilometre journey to Papua New Guinea. The trip required two days and involved some challenging flying. The first day ended with us bat-

ting the elements of tropical Queensland and we struggled wearily into Townsville after dark. The next day we took off for Cairns and then to Thursday Island where we refuelled, cleared customs and began the final leg into the heart of New Guinea.

In my book, *Banish the Night*, I describe the dramatic flight into this forbidding land.

Majestic storms were scattered along the dreary coast of the Papua Gulf as we approached, and the mighty Fly River, which is thirty-five miles wide at its mouth, was emptying the water and soil it had brought down from the shrouded hinterland. We were now only six degrees from the equator... Climbing to nine thousand feet, we managed to keep clear of the cloud near the coast, but as the mountains guarding the highlands reached up to meet us, so did the clouds. Mammoth cumulus cloud buildups challenged our advance, so we climbed higher and higher, but in our small plane we could never hope to top the hats of these giants of the heavens.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, at fourteen thousand feet, we found a gap in the clouds and commenced the downhill run to Goroka where we were heartily greeted by Freeman McCutcheon. Thus began a new era in South Pacific missionary endeavour.

It was an historic event when the new mission plane *Andrew Stewart* touched down at Goroka in the Papua New Guinea Mission on 1 July 1964. On the other side of the world in the Upper Amazon Mission of the South American Division a similar story was unfolding, completely independent of each other. Clyde Peters, a well-qualified pilot, flew another mission plane, the *Fernando Stahl* into the mission station at Yarina Cocha beside the Acayali River, the longest tributary of the mighty Amazon River.

This is how Wellesley Muir tells of his arrival in *The Man Who Jumped Off Clouds*.

"Clyde buzzed the runway, circled, and landed for the very first time on 3 July 1964. The *Fernando Stahl* rolled to a stop near the new hangar."<sup>2</sup> There were just two days between these two events which once again illustrates God's marvellous lead-



Pastor Andrew G Stewart speaking at the official dedication of the aeroplane at Bankstown Sydney in June 1964.

ings.

Colin Winch, then stationed at Maprik near the northwestern coast, had acquired a pilot's licence and we were to share the plane. We both had about three hundred hours flying experience which was little enough for this challenging adventure. Because our flying was in the private category, we were not required to be checked into the air-

strips but we considered it advisable if at all possible. Some of these strips were short with steep grades, others one-way strips with a mountain at one end. All required precise flying. An experienced highlands pilot whom I knew offered to help but, unfortunately, when he completed his own flying for the day he went straight to the local pub.

After several frustrating days of waiting, I made a compact with the Lord. I reminded God that He had marvelously provided the plane and now we needed His help to fly it safely. I told God He would ever be the Master Pilot and prayer would precede each flight. All those who flew Andrew Stewart faithfully followed my compact with God. Colin and I can both testify that the Lord steadfastly kept His part of the agreement and carried us through many a frightening flight. Thus we cautiously commenced flying with and for the Lord in this unforgiving land.

Let me illustrate the hazards of flying in New Guinea. Three weeks after the arrival of the plane, I was asked by one of the missionaries to pick up a national family from Tabibuga, a remote airstrip in the Jimmi Valley. I did not know the airstrip, so the missionary agreed to overfly with me to identify the place. Climbing above the cloud we headed for the valley and when over it found a hole in the cloud cover. As we dropped through the hole, directly below was an airstrip my associate confidently identified as Tabibuga.

Early the next week I set out to collect the national family, located the valley and found the same airstrip. This time, however, I made a thorough appraisal of the strip. I was a little perplexed that there were no markers or windsock and the strip looked very short. I consulted my aerodrome

directory, which advised that there was work in progress at the southern end of the Tabibuga strip. My overpass confirmed that indeed there was. So cautiously I approached and landed. Within minutes a crowd of excited nationals surrounded the plane. I thought that strange. Shortly a white man appeared and excitedly exclaimed, "Fantastic! How did you do it?" Puzzled, I asked what I had done that was so extraordinary. I was told that the airstrip was being built and was not yet open. This one was opened early! The outcome, however, could have been disastrous. It transpired that the real Tabibuga was just around the corner in a nearby valley.

The advent of the mission plane greatly assisted national missionaries. They were no longer required to climb leech-infested mountains carrying all their possessions, and often their infant child perched atop their bundle. Although they never complained, my heart had ached for them. I salute these rugged pioneers who, with hearts burning with the glory of the gospel, pressed forward with the Good News to the very gates of the citadels of Satan. The national and expatriate missionary alike sang with joy over the new plane.

Let me illustrate the advantage of flying. In 1959, five years before the *Andrew Stewart*, I led a medical mission patrol into the notorious Karimui cannibal country. It took forty days of footslogging to reach these remote and appallingly needy people and return. We gave injections and medicine and treated ghastly wounds and ulcers. This was the first medical aid given these people. Leprosy was rife and evidence of their cannibalism was all around. After meeting their physical needs, these people were ready to hear news of a loving Saviour and God who cared for them. Subsequently a government airstrip was built and it is now possible to fly there in twenty-eight minutes, and in comfort. What a contrast!

The plane also enabled Adventists to respond quickly to new situations. The opening of the Lake Kapiago area provides a good example. Beautiful Lake Kapiago is about 1500 metres above the Strickland Gorge. A deadly type of malaria, however, made the region decidedly unhealthy. Soon after the acquisition of our plane, the government constructed an airstrip and declared the region open for mission penetration. Whereas previously it would have required a seven-day tramp from our nearest mission station at Liaigam, on the very day the area opened we were one of several missions to fly in.

Each of the missions was intent on acquiring land close to the airstrip. Thinking to place Ad-

ventists at a disadvantage, one of the competing missionaries fallaciously advised the local people not to give land to the Adventists as they would kill all their pigs. In the quest for suitable land for a mission station Pastor Paul Piari called on a widow who owned a flat section of land near the airstrip. The widow had heard the story that Adventists discouraged keeping pigs, but was not deterred. She declared she was tired of feeding hungry pigs and gladly gave a portion of her land to the mission. Thus a choice site close to the airstrip was obtained. In the providence of God, the words of a troublemaker were used to our advantage.

While the sharing arrangements between Colin Winch and myself gave a tremendous boost to our respective fields, other missionaries wanted to share this great advantage. The need for another plane became obvious. It so happened that Pastor J L Tucker of the Quiet Hour gospel radio in America had visited me in the mid-1950s when I was director of the Mount Hagen Hansende Colony. We had maintained a friendship in the intervening years and when Pastor Tucker learned of our need he harnessed the support of his listeners to raise funds for another mission plane.

A suitable plane was purchased in the United States and two intrepid American pilots, Wayne and Darrel Fowler, volunteered to fly it to New Guinea. They arrived in Lae on 28 April 1966. Their feat in flying the plane across the Pacific was courageous in itself. With extra fuel tanks fitted and navigating solely by sextant these bold pilots island hopped across the ocean sometimes flying over three thousand kilometres non-stop.

The new plane was named *Malcolm Abbott* in memory of a gallant missionary who lost his life as a prisoner during the Pacific war. Fittingly, the new plane was registered VH-SDB. Thus with a plane each Colin and I were able to help other missionaries extend their boundaries to remote areas.

As previously noted, flying in the highlands can be most demanding. For example, the Paiela airstrip is perched about 1830 metres high, is only 370 metres in length, and runs diagonally across a ridge. Each end falls abruptly and drops 600 metres to the bottom of a gorge. Landing must be precise; undershoot and you come to an untimely stop; overshoot and you fall into the gorge. Cross winds and air turbulence adds to the tension. Yes, landing at Paiela can be tricky.

I well remember my first flight to Paiela. Formerly it had taken three days of hard tramping to reach this mission station, but my flight required only eighteen minutes. After circling the mission and waving, I landed and was overwhelmed by the

excitement of the local Adventists. Further, I was surprised that the people were apparently expecting me but I had given no prior notice of my visit. After time spent in spiritual fellowship with the church members I walked back to the plane accompanied by the national pastor. He then told me that the previous night he had seen my arrival in a dream. I had circled, landed and then shaken his hand, just as it had happened. At morning worship he had recounted his dream to the church family and counselled them to wash and dress in their best and wait for the visit. The same God who gave the dream prompted me to fly that day to Paiela. Not only was I reminded that God was keenly interested in the preaching of His gospel, I was also impressed that I could spend the morning with God's people and be back home again to complete office chores.

The third aircraft to join the mission fleet was a new twin Piper Aztec. This plane was also purchased through the generosity of the Quiet Hour and it was appropriately named the *JL Tucker*. It arrived in March 1970 and proved a most suitable aircraft for mission conditions and inter-island flying. Colin Winch was its first pilot and operated from Lae, Rabaul and Honiara in the Solomon Islands. It now rests on a remote Pacific island. But that is another story.

The next addition to the growing Adventist aircraft fleet was a Cessna 207, a single-engined seven seater. I flew it to Papua-New Guinea on 3 August 1971, accompanied by new missionary-pilot Ray Newman. This was a delightful plane to fly being quiet and roomy, but unfortunately it was under-powered for big loads in the highlands. It served the mission well for nearly two years when most regretfully it crashed at Goroka with the death of the pilot and three passengers.

The pathway to progress is invariably lined with crosses, be it on the road or on the sea or in the air. Some pay a steeper price than others do and I was to learn the high cost of a moment's carelessness. This is how it happened.

It was a glorious New Guinea highlands morning in November 1966. As I stepped outside I looked up at the majestic mountains soaring 15,000 feet high and lining both sides of the Wahgi Valley. It was one of those mornings when it felt good to be alive. I was living at Mt. Hagen caring for the Western Highland Mission while its president was on leave. The principal of the Paglum High School was also on leave as was the other pilot. I was therefore extremely busy but enjoying my work immensely. That morning, however, felt like a good day to get out of the office for a couple

of days and to transfer some national workers and others beginning their furlough. After family worship I headed for the airport some ten kilometres away accompanied by three passengers and my wife, Mavis, who had volunteered to help load the aircraft.

Upon arrival at the plane Mavis proceeded to carefully stow the luggage and ensure the passengers were buckled in. Meanwhile I conducted an inspection of the plane, a routine followed prior to take off. I had been taught to test engine compression by turning the propeller. I pulled the propeller blade once, twice, three times when bang! The engine fired and the propeller spun. Unfortunately my left leg was slightly raised and within the orbit of the propeller. The next thing I knew I was lying about five metres away with my back to the plane and with my legs lined in front of me just as if I had been placed there by unseen hands.

When I tried to sit up I was horrified to see the mangled mess that had been my left leg. It was severed at an angle above the knee. The bone was completely cut through and my femoral artery was spurting blood. Mavis rushed over in disbelief and yelled for help. A dusty ambulance appeared and the medics arrested the bleeding then sped me off to the Mt. Hagen hospital seven miles away. Never a trip seemed longer. I prayed and then implored Mavis not to let the doctors cut off my leg.

At the hospital four doctors surveyed my massive injury and immediately opted for amputation. I had, however, an overwhelming belief that if my leg were sewn together the Lord would heal me. I therefore pleaded with the doctors: "You sew it together and the Lord will heal it." My request did not impress the doctors who shook their heads and declared it would not heal. This was, of course, before the days of micro-surgery. Noting their hesitancy, I persisted and urged, "This is my leg. Please do as I ask."

Against their clinical judgment the doctors sewed the severed parts together and were later amazed at how quickly the wound healed. The shattered bone, however, took somewhat longer. I knew that many prayers were being offered for my healing and recovery. The local people rushed to their churches and interceded with God and fervent prayers went heavenward from Australia, New Zealand and from other parts of the world. Prayer is power and I knew that I would fly again for God. Few shared my optimism, but eight months later I was back in Papua New Guinea and flying. Those who had seen the extent of my injuries shook their heads again, this time in amazement. Thirty-five years on I am still flying and still

delight to say, "Thank you, thank you Lord."

The development of the aviation program gave a tremendous boost to Adventist missions in Papua New Guinea. The way it cut distance and time was phenomenal. Rather sacrilegiously I was known to boast that I was omnipresent for I could visit several remote outposts in the one day. As a result of aircraft we were able to take the Good News right to the border with Irian Jaya. Thousands now rejoice in the blessed hope because of ministry made possible by Adventist mission aircraft. Who can doubt the significance of these inspired words:

God instructs men with talents and inventive genius, in order that His great work in our world may be accomplished. The inventions of human minds are supposed to spring from humanity but God is behind all. He has caused the means of rapid travelling shall have been invented for the great day of His preparation.<sup>3</sup>

Today, nearly forty years later, the South Pacific Adventist Mission Aviation program is still very active and is comprised of three Cessna 206 air-

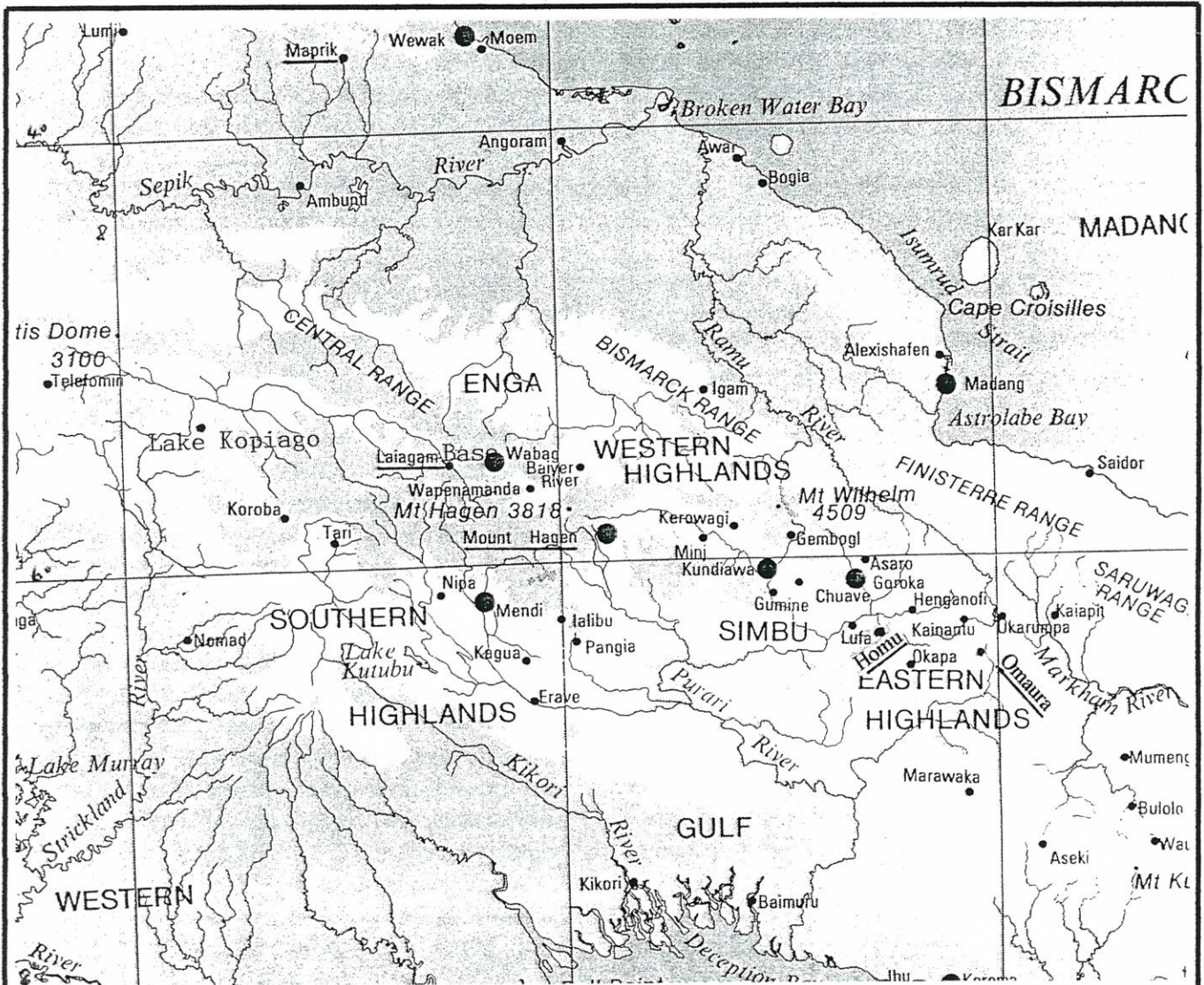
craft aptly registered P-SDA, P-SDB and P-SDC. These aircraft ply the airways of Papua New Guinea and play a significant part in making this great land the most fruitful soul-winning land in the South Pacific Division.

For those of us who participated in this program it is a source of great inspiration to visit secluded pockets of habitation in the highlands and hear the mountains resonate with paeans of praise to the Creator and Redeemer. Likewise, in palm-fringed coastal villages the waves echo with songs of adoration to their wonderful Saviour.

If men's eyes were opened, maybe we would see mission planes flying in formation with the Three Angels of the apocalypse and together proclaiming the gospel to the 'utmost' parts of planet earth.

#### References

- 1 Leonard Bamard, *Banish the Night*, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1967), p 84.
- 2 Wellesley Muir, *The Man Who Jumped Off Clouds*, Hagerstown MD, USA (not known) p 38.
- 3 Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p 409.



*The Aeroplane in Papua New Guinea*, vol 1 p 286,7. From Ballus. Used by permission, Robert & RC Brown, Publishers.





## **BREAKING NEW GROUND—Part 2**

### **The Bisiatabu Mission—further attempts at expansion in Papua New Guinea.**

**Alfred J Chapman**



See CV In Vol 1 No 1

**The Purpose**  
**T**he Seventh-day Adventist Mission was now established in its own right in Papua. Just what did it want? Just what did it have? It wanted a Mission station from which it could carry forward an evangelistic outreach, preaching the Gospel and inviting peo-

ple to become Christians, to learn God's Word, and to prepare to meet Christ when He should come. It wanted a place where it could establish a school at which it could teach young men and women to read God's word, where they could obtain an education which would make them able to study and understand for themselves God's way and which would make them ready and willing to carry forward mission work themselves. What the Seventh-day Adventists had in 1914 was not quite the same as they wished for. They had a lease over 150 acres of land on which they had a small rubber and fruit plantation, which they worked with indentured and casual labour. Even in the matter of payment to their workers the regulations enjoined them to provide a certain quantity of tobacco to each employee so that it was necessary to arrange specifically for a substitute for this. They did have a small group of people, their employees, to whom they could give a limited amount of instruction. The limits were imposed by the need to maintain a work programme which consumed energies that could have gone into school work, and by the lack of interest on the part of those who came to Bisiatabu, not for school, but for work. They had a small number of youth who were living on the mission specifically for educational purposes. They had a base from which they could penetrate the surrounding area to carry on what they conceived to be their real work.

#### **The Daily Program**

Referring to the period when the plantation was held in the name of Pastor Carr the situation is

described thus:

They [native labourers] sign a contract to work for a year, and during this time they are surrounded by the atmosphere of a Christian household. They are taught some elemental truths of Christianity in the hour of worship when Bennie, the Fijian teacher, meets with them daily. Brother Carr also has classes with them.<sup>1</sup>

The desire to have a full time school and attempts to begin one began to bear fruit by 1913 for in that year we read of the disappointment that came with the departure after only a few weeks of six boys who had agreed to come to Bisiatabu as students. So "four full time students were then on the site, the other lads on the mission receiving wages and having a short school session daily."<sup>2</sup>

Associated with Pastor and Mrs Carr since their time in Fiji was Bennie Tavodi, a young Fijian who came with them to Papua in 1908 and who continued there until his death from snakebite. He summarised the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission at Bisiatabu.<sup>3</sup> He speaks of the morning and evening study of God's word conducted by Pastor Carr or Mr Lawson and his own activities teaching school in the middle of the day. The aim to extend beyond Bisiatabu itself found fulfilment in visits to neighbouring villages on Sabbaths to preach there. A further extension of the influence of the mission was made by expeditions, sometimes lasting for several weeks, into the mountains.

#### **The Extension of Mission Influence**

One of these expeditions is outlined by Pastor Carr. This was a journey from Bisiatabu to Kokoda in which contact was made with fourteen tribes of which for seven, it was the first missionary contact.<sup>4</sup> With an eye to the future an effort was made to compile a dictionary. With the help of two mission boys a list of several hundred words was made. Four boys joined them for the return to Bisiatabu. The influence of the Bisiatabu mission extended not only as a result of these visits but the workers, returning to their villages after their contract was over had quite an influence on those who had stayed at home. Even in this period, before

Bisiatabu had become a mission leasehold, there was an influence emanating back into the hills as far as Efogi and Kagi. An interesting sidelight on social conditions of the time is given by the following short extract:

One old man especially encouraged us. He was one of the Boura tribe whose village had recently been burnt, and pigs shot by the police because of a case of sorcery resulting in the death of a man.<sup>5</sup>

So on the fringes of a government controlled area was a place where the educating forces of the mission could reinforce and give meaning to a government edict and hopefully provide for the people involved in change a substitute for those of their customs they must give up.

### The Missionaries S W Carr

In following through the efforts to obtain the lease of the land we have passed over other items of interest. The personnel of the mission in New Guinea have been mentioned only incidentally. When called to Papua, S W Carr and his wife returned to Australia from Fiji where he had been in charge of the Buresala Training School and so left to open the Seventh-day Adventist mission work in Papua. They continued to work there for six years, after which they returned to Australia and then to other mission appointments. Their contribution so far had been to breach the 'Comity Agreement' to an extent sufficient to give the Seventh-day Adventist Mission a secure base from which to work. They had made the name of the mission known from Port Moresby up to Kokoda among the Koiari, Efogi, Kagi and other hill people. They had modified the rather standard approach which had been made in other areas in such a way that they had been able to establish a mission in the face of the particular difficulties of the 'Comity Agreement', yet they had not made such great modifications that they were unable to carry out, though to a limited extent, their major purpose. They had a small school. They could travel and preach the gospel. They had a contact with Efogi which was to blossom in the 1920's when W N Lock went in there. All this was not perhaps without some cost. The difficulties and the modifications of their early contact may be thought by some to have set a restrictive pattern on their thinking so that they were not quite ready to see and utilise the changed opportunities of later years. However, they made a solid beginning and maintained a continuing programme during their

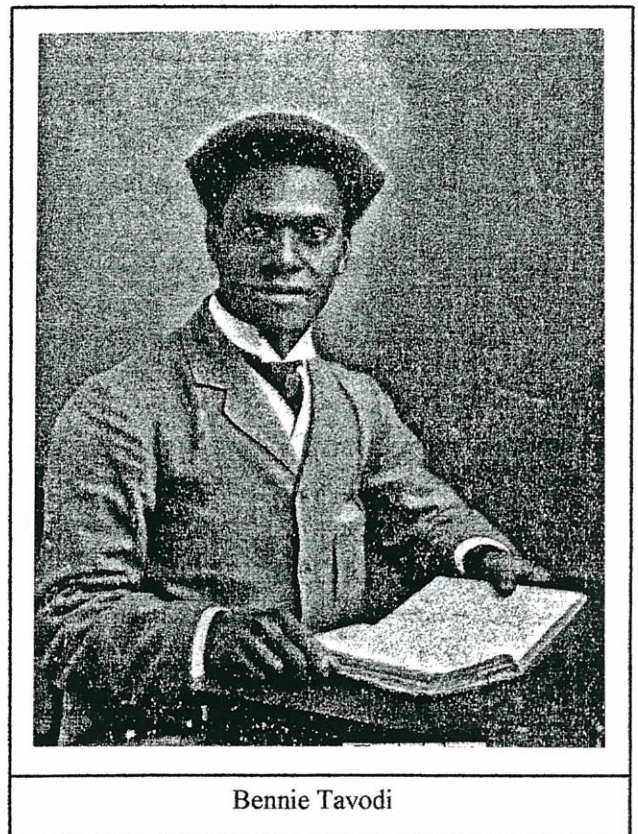
Papuan years.

### Bennie Tavodi

Mention has been made of Bennie Tavodi, a young Fijian selected from the students of Buresala to accompany Pastor Carr. He spent six months in Australia receiving training and then gave his life for Christ in Papua. Bennie worked strongly with Pastor Carr, at times being in charge of the Mission while Pastor Carr was absent in Australia. He expressed very fittingly the quiet growth of mission influence in the mountains inland from Bisiatabu when he wrote:

Three years ago when I first went inland to the mountains, many would not gather together in meeting but ran away. Now, however, they all attend when we call a meeting, and listen well to the words spoken.<sup>6</sup>

Bennie went first to Papua while still single, but during a visit to Fiji he married Aliti, who went with him on his return to Papua. While continuing his work at Bisiatabu, Bennie was bitten by a snake. Though he cauterized the wound, and applied a ligature, he released this too soon and died three hours later in 1918. He was another who



Bennie Tavodi

over a period of ten years laid foundations without seeing the superstructure built on them. His widow returned to Fiji, remarried and then with her husband, Semiti, returned to Papua to work for several years.

### Gordon Smith

At the ceremony on February 28, 1910, at which the land at Bisiatabu was dedicated to God for mission purposes, Gordon Smith and his wife were present, having arrived a short time previously.<sup>7</sup> Their stay lasted for only about a year when it was found necessary to recall them.<sup>8</sup> With them had come another native worker, Solomona and his wife. They were from Rarotonga.<sup>9</sup> Solomona died in Papua after some years of mission service.

### E H Gates

After the application by S W Carr for a lease of land at Sogeri was granted at the beginning of October, 1910, the Australasian Union Conference Session took action on October 30, 1910, to erect a permanent building.<sup>10</sup> Further action in relation to this was taken by the Australasian Union Conference Executive Committee allocating the donations of the Sabbath Schools for the second quarter of 1911 towards financing this house, requesting the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists to contribute \$300 towards the house.<sup>11</sup> At this meeting plans were discussed for the house but on November 16, 1910, it was decided to ask Pastor E H Gates, who was in Australia at that time, to visit New Guinea and advise on the house.<sup>12</sup> Pastor Gates had been associated with Seventh-day Adventist mission work in the Pacific Ocean since he sailed on the *Pitcairn* on her maiden voyage on October 20, 1890. He had visited most of the island groups of the Pacific and several of the Asiatic countries on its border. He had visited parts of German New Guinea in 1901 on a voyage from Australia to Singapore calling at Herbertshöhe on New Britain and at several ports including Berlinhafen on the northern coast of mainland New Guinea.<sup>13</sup> It was thus felt that he had good practical knowledge of conditions in the tropics and would be able to give sound advice. He was connected with the General Conference, rather than with the Australasian Division and would serve to link the two units.

### F L Chaney

In order to push on quickly with the building of the house, F L Chaney who was preceptor and woodwork instructor at Avondale College was requested to go with his wife to Papua for a short term.<sup>14</sup> He constructed a house for the mission at Bisiatabu and another at Port Moresby. He evidently built up good relations with business associates during his short stay for Pastor S W Carr commented on the "interest awakened among several

Europeans with whom he became acquainted while at work."<sup>15</sup>

### Arthur N Lawson

At the same meeting of the Australasian Union Conference Executive Committee, at which action was taken for Gordon Smith and his wife to return to Australia, action was taken for Arthur Lawson to go to Papua. Six months later a further action was taken in which this call was reiterated and a certain sense of urgency given by the words "as soon as convenient."<sup>16</sup> Arthur Lawson went out single, but was married in the Bisiatabu school house on December 10, 1912 to Miss E Gordon. It is noted in the report of the wedding that there were present, "two visitors, the mission family and the twenty students and work boys."<sup>17</sup> Although his work was at first concerned mainly with the plantation aspects of the station, particularly transport to and from Port Moresby, it was not long before we find Arthur Lawson contributing to the educational and evangelistic work of the mission. He was particularly responsible for the evening study session, he went on occasion with the other staff to visit through the mountains.<sup>18</sup> When Pastor Carr and his wife left Papua after six years of service, Mr and Mrs Lawson remained on, he to carry the responsibility for the mission. From his arrival in 1911 until his return to Australia late in 1922,<sup>19</sup> he sought to further the interests of the mission in a very difficult situation, limited by the industrial work that had to be carried forward yet never relinquishing wholly the vision of a mission station active in evangelistic and educational lines. At a gathering of the mission staff and plantation workers to mark the occasion when the rubber trees came into bearing, the opportunity was taken to direct the minds of all to the purpose for which Bisiatabu was established.

The boys were reminded that Bisiatabu is not an ordinary plantation for the making of money, and that although so many boys have been here with but little else in mind than the pay received for the service rendered, yet the workers were looking to the time when boys would come here for schooling, and to learn the love of God and the way of salvation.

The yielding rubber trees were set in contrast to the unresponding boys. Though it was an occasion of rejoicing, after long years of waiting since the beginning of this industry, yet there was a deep yearning over the souls of these boys who were employed on the mission, that they too, would yield themselves as the fruit of the long years of sowing of the seed of the Word.<sup>20</sup>

### The First Baptism

Only twice in the period so far had it appeared that the real fruit of the mission was to appear. In 1914, Pastor Carr reported the baptism of a Papuan who had during his stay on the mission, appeared responsive to the Gospel as he heard it during the worship and school sessions.<sup>21</sup> He appeared to understand what was involved and to desire to join the mission, leaving the unchristian aspects of his previous life but when he came in close contact with his village society and his family, he participated again in activities not consistent with his new profession so that the missionaries' hopes and joys were dashed. It is well for us to set this experience in perspective, as it must have exerted a strong influence on the thinking of both the missionaries, and the Papuans amongst whom they worked. Baptism is administered in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to one who has belief in Christ as his Lord and Saviour. This belief finds expression in a life lived in conformity to Christ's will, which will is expressed in the teachings of the Bible. Thus it is unusual for Seventh-day Adventists to baptise anyone before he is about twelve years old and has studied the Bible and teachings of the church sufficiently to answer with understanding questions concerning Bible doctrines, especially those relating to Christ as Creator and Redeemer. During this period of instruction the candidate would give evidence by his life of a desire to live in harmony with the standards of the church. These include purity of life, and healthful living, and would represent in some aspects a major break with the traditional Papuan culture no less than with other cultures. The lad who was baptised amid rejoicing as the first fruits of the Papuan Mission was described as a "little boy".<sup>22</sup> While this would not be unusual where the church was an established concern, with a fairly full sub-culture into which the new member could fit and in which he could find a sense of community, hindsight, at least, assures us that it would place a very great strain on the person, who at a tender age was to make such a complete break as was involved in the present case. The effect of this unfortunate experience on the missionaries must surely have been to make them extremely cautious as they considered other similar candidates for baptism. The Papuans who saw the incident also must have been left with a sense of some wonder and bewilderment. They would certainly see that there was a very deep difference between the life they were used to and the life they would expect to live should they become Seventh-day Adventists. The failure of one of them and he the first to attempt

it, to gain acceptance in the new society, must have dwelt in their minds as an inhibition to try it. Here, I feel, is a major reason for the slow acceptance of the mission by the Papuans. On the other hand, we should not hasten to condemn those responsible for the decision to baptise this lad. He doubtless expressed his acceptance of all that was presented to him and may have strongly requested baptism, or at least have answered with a strong affirmative to the question as to whether he desired baptism.

Earlier, the hopes of the missionaries had risen with the interest shown in their message by a European member of the Port Moresby community.<sup>23</sup> He was reported to have accepted the Sabbath, to have been paying tithe for some time, to have expressed belief in and acceptance of the position of Mrs E G White as a special messenger of God to the Seventh-day Adventist church and to have begun arrangements to send his children to Avondale College to prepare to work in the church. However, disappointment was in store and the prospects which seemed so bright, failed to eventuate.

"It is a tribute to the missionaries of old that despite there being no apparent success they continued on with their work. Only in the kingdom will they see the results. We can see some of the results of the faithful work in the past by reading our next article"<sup>24</sup>

#### References

- 1 Chaney, Bertha S. *Australasian Record*, 21 Aug 1911, p.4.
- 2 Carr, S. W. and E. M., *Ibid.* 24 Feb 1913, p.2.
- 3 Tavodi, Bennie, *Ibid.* 8 Sep 1913, p.2.
- 4 Carr, S. W. *Australasian Record*, 9 Sep 1913, p. 2.
- 5 *Id.*
- 6 Tavodi, Bennie, *AR*, 8 Sep 1913, p.2.
- 7 *Missionary Leader*, Jul 1932, p.6.
- 8 *Australasian Union Conference Executive Committee Minutes* 23 Jan 1911 p.63.
- 9 *ML*, Jul 1932, p.6.
- 10 *Australasian Union Conference Session Minutes*, 30 Oct 1910, p.124.
- 11 *AUCEC Minutes*, 3 Nov 1910, p. 54.
- 12 *AUCEC Minutes* 16 Nov 1910, p.55.
- 13 Gates, E. H., *Review and Herald*, 1923, p.207-213.
- 14 *AUCEC Minutes*, 23 Jan 1911, p. 63.
- 15 Carr, S. W., *AR*, 19 Feb 1912, p.3.
- 16 *AUCEC Minutes*, 16 Jul 1911, p.79.
- 17 Carr, S. W. and E. M. *AR*, 24 Feb 1913, p.2.
- 18 Tavodi, B. *Ibid.* 8 Sep 1913, p.2, and Carr, S. W., *Ibid.* 15 Sep 1913.
- 19 *AUCEC Minutes* 9 Oct 1922, p. 22.
- 20 LAWSON, E. *Australasian Record*, Feb 9, 1917, p.3.
- 21 *AUCEC Minutes*, 16 Sep 1914, p.148.
- 22 Lawson, A., *AR*, 6 Sep 1920, p.3.
- 23 *Union Conference Record Specials*, 1910, p. 25, 26.
- 24 Comment by C Hay.



## FAOLE

### Papuan pioneer in the central area of PNG before and during World War 2 1927-1944

**Lester N Lock**



*Lester Lock was a boy of 8 when he went to PNG with his parents. He taught at Miregeda in Papua in 1932-3 while still studying his correspondence school lessons.*

*A little more than a year after graduating from the ministerial course at Avondale in 1938, he, with his wife Edna, began his long mission service, as a district director in Central Papua for 2 years. Because of the advance of the Japanese firstly Edna and then Lester went back to Australia. Two years later he returned & continued his service at Korela as a teacher and district director. After the war, re-united with his family, he served from 1946-1950 firstly as a district director at Kopiu and then as a departmental director at Honiara, Solomon Islands. He was principal at the CSUM College at Kambubu for 7 years; President of the Bougainville Mission in 1958-9; 3 years a departmental director for the CSUM at Lae; from 1963 president of the Eastern Highlands Mission; president of Central Papua from 1967-70; a departmental director of PNGUM until 1975.*

*The Lock's children are Darryl, Linette & Glynn.*

*He and his wife June live in retirement at Port Macquarie, NSW.*

Faole of Bageanumu village, was a married man with four children when he recognized the movings of the Lord's Sprit upon his life. Though physically a man of small stature, he was certainly not regarded so in the eyes of the people who knew him. For years he had been admired and feared because of his fighting prowess: he had served a term in jail because he had taken life. His close associates even testified to the fact that he was responsible for the lives of seven people. Even as a prisoner, Faole was respected for his straightforwardness by his fellow inmates and also by those in authority. When he was awaiting trial, he noticed a key on the floor of the Court-house. He assumed it to be the key for the handcuffs, which shackled him. He put his foot on it to hide it from view. Later he sat on it and when opportunity afforded he picked up the key and wrapped it in a fold of his loin cloth (his pocket) intending, when the time was ripe, to set himself free. During the night, however, he had a dream which changed his mind. Next morning he handed over the key to his commanding officer and accepted, without question, the sentence imposed upon him.

Faole's first contact with the Seventh-day Adventist church was probably after his release from jail. He went to the newly established mission station at Bisiatabu where he helped in the planting of the rubber trees. These trees were being planted to justify the agriculture lease taken on the property. Because of the 'spheres of influence' agreement, this was the only way the organization could get a lease on land. Just how long he was there is not known, but from Bisiatabu he returned to his village.

Pastor William Lock had pioneered work along the Kokoda trail in 1924 setting up a station at Efogi. A little over two years later he and his family returned to Bisiatabu. It was a more suitable place for him to continue his work as superintendent of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Papua. Charles and Evelyn Mitchell took over the leadership of the work at Efogi. Faole was noticed by the Mitchells as they made their way along the trail to Efogi. His smiling face and general helpfulness impressed Evelyn. A few months after their arrival at Efogi, Faole came to the mission with the request that he be allowed to stay on the mission station and learn about the gospel. Because of his reputation it was with some reservations that Charles indicated that he could stay and a site was pointed out where he could build a house for him and his family. His two older children Kaola, a boy, and Abi, a girl, had already started school and had made more than ordinary progress in their conquest of the 3 R's. His wife, Somili, however, did not share this enthusiasm for the move to the mission. There was an obstacle; her baby pig for which she seemed to have a great attachment. The first few times Somili came to the mission, her pig came too and, although she helped in preparing the grass, with which to thatch the roof of the house, her pig was always with her. The day came when Somili arrived with her two smaller girls, Tobo and Beghoi and settled into the house - without the pig.

Some time later Lock discovered that it was possible to purchase some freehold land at Korela, in the Marshall Lagoon about 138 kilometres along the coast east from Port Moresby. He visited the area on a coastal ship, had a look at the land and de-

cided it would be a good spot on which to build a mission station. There were, in fact, four large villages bordering on the lagoon. Because of the 'spheres of influence' at that time, the mission could not get lease-hold land along the coast but it was possible to purchase any of the few blocks of freehold land available. The Australasian Union Conference was advised about the matter and funds were made available to purchase the land. The question then arose as to who should go and do the pioneering work in that area. There were alternatives: a new man from Australia, Pastor Mitchell or the Fijian, Nafitalai Navara, both of whom worked at Efogi. After consultation the decision was made that the Mitchells should go so arrangements were made for them to transfer there and Nafitalai was to lead out in the work at Efogi.

A house of local materials was built in which the Mitchells could live while the house purchased at Hombrom was dismantled, trucked to Port Moresby and shipped to Korela. From these materials a house of imported materials could be built. The Mitchells discovered that the way was open to start work in the large village of Wanigela farther up the lagoon. When workers were sought to help in this work. Pastor Mitchell suggested that he would be glad of the help of Faole and his family. Incidentally, prior to this time no work had been started in a village, only on the two stations, Bisiatabu and Efogi. So this plan to start work in a village was something new. Faole indicated that he was willing to go, but his departure would be delayed until Somili had delivered her fifth child, her fourth girl who was given the name of Aliti. Sea travel was a new experience for the family and the accompanying seasickness was not a pleasant one for them.

Faole and family settled into the village of Wanigela, with a lifestyle so different from his home village. He found it very different paddling a canoe around the lagoon, compared with walking over mountains. Another helper was recruited to help in the work in the village. A man from the Papuan Gulf, by the name of Harupokure, who had come to school at Bisiatabu was appointed to start a school in the village. Neither of these workers had had any special training for his work. Kaola, who had learned to read, also helped to teach in the school. The village of Wanigela was built on a mud bank in the lagoon so the only way to go and come from the village was by canoe and Faole found that rather difficult. He was a gardener and going to and fro from his garden by canoe was burdensome. You see the Wanigela people's diet was different. It consisted mainly of beans from a special mangrove, which grew around shores of the lagoon. Quite a process was needed before the kavela beans were edible. The

women of the village did the work of gathering and processing the kavela beans, while the men did the fishing from their canoes in the lagoon.

After some months of energetic work, telling the Good News to the Wanigela people, Faole was attracted to villages on the mainland, so made patrols to the villages of Bukuku and Obaha. It was only a matter of time before a request was made from the leader of Bukuku village to Pastor Mitchell to have a worker stationed in his village. Faole was naturally happy to respond, so he and his family, except for Koala, who was involved in the school at Wanigela, went and settled in Bukuku and led the people to know the Lord. Beghoi was happy to go with her father and became his picture roll carrier. Yes, Sabbath School picture rolls were a very effective agency in helping to get the gospel story over to village people.

On one occasion Pastor Mitchell received word that Faole had been killed at Ganalokua village by people of Eaura village, so he decided that he had better go and investigate. After two days walk to Ganalokua village he found Faole as large as life. Investigations discovered that a group of men had gone across to Ganalokua village a couple of times with the intention of killing Faole, but found him surrounded by some men in white. When Faole heard the story he thanked God for the protection of His angels. Through Faole's efforts work was begun in Bukuku, Obaha, Maibiko and Ganalokua villages, so additional help was needed. A Koiari by the name of Wati was sent to help the work in these inland villages.

As time went on a call came for Nafitalai to go and help in the new work, which was developing on Mussau Island. The work at Efogi lagged somewhat so Faole was sent back to try to help revive the work in that area. In 1940 my wife, Edna, and I were appointed to be the district director at Bisiatabu, which included the Efogi area and on to some villages beyond Kokoda. I well remember making a patrol up into that area not long before we were evacuated, because of the war, and finding Faole zealously proclaiming the message of the Lord in Manari village, the first village from Efogi on the road to Bisiatabu. Response was still rather slow at that time.

Great sadness came to Faole on August 16, 1941 when his wife succumbed to a sickness and died. After laying her to rest Faole went down to Bisiatabu for a little break. Some compensating joy came to him while there because of the birth of his daughter Abi's first child, a girl who was named Ruth. Abi had married a man from Wanigela village by the name of Kwarapune, who for years was one of the crew on the mission ship Diari.

In developing the work in Enivilogo village

Faole had taken the corrugated iron, which my father had had carried to Efogi for a water catchment, to build a church. When the Japanese started their push along the Kokoda trail to Port Moresby a Japanese fighter plane spied the iron-roofed church. No doubt he thought that it probably belonged to some Australian, so he dived and strafed the building. Faole happened to be in the village at the time. When he saw the plane approaching he moved behind a tree on the far side of the church so he was safe from the bullets. The plane circled and made an approach from the other side so Faole went around the other side of the tree and again was safe from the bullets, but the pilot was accurate enough to leave quite a number of holes in the roof of the church.

Faole patrolled around the villages trying to encourage the folk in the Lord. He advised the people in the villages on the Kokoda trail to go and live at their gardens until activities in that area changed. Enivilogo village was not on the trail so Faole remained based there. As he was working in his garden one day five Australian soldiers, who had been cut off by the Japanese happened along. One of them had been wounded and another was rather distressed by his age and the local conditions. Faole took them to his house and cared for them. Beghoi, who had achieved some skills from her association with missionaries' wives applied herself to help the men. Despite all her attention the elderly man died. Faole conducted his burial service. Faole's next activity was to get the men fit enough so that he could try to get them out to safety. When the men considered themselves well enough Faole realised they could not go down along the regular trail because of the Japanese activity there; so he decided to lead them along another unfrequented one with which he was not very familiar. Along the way he would sometimes become lost. He would ask the men to wait until he asked for directions from the Lord. Then he would set out again, pick up the trail and go on. Along the way Beghoi continued to treat the wounded man with hot and cold fomentations and the medicines they had with them. Imagine their joy when some days later they emerged at the Brown River Camp and Faole was able to deliver the men to the authorities. The authorities showed their appreciation for what Faole had done by giving him some food rations.

On returning to Bisiatabu Faole found that the army had occupied the station. So his little party found safety in a spot out in the bush where they put up a shelter sufficient for their immediate needs. They made gardens for food to eat when their rations ran out and the amazing thing was that the sweet potatoes they planted instead of tak-

ing months to bear, produced their first edible potatoes in a little over a month. Since wartime activities started along the trail Faole had been praying that the Japanese would not be able to get beyond Iuribaiva. From Ower's Corner, where army trucks were able to go from Port Moresby, through to Kokoda the trail was covered with bush, except the southern side of Iuribaiva Mountain, which is covered by kunai (bladey) grass. The Australian soldiers had been able to haul mountain guns up to Imita ridge, on the next range toward Port Moresby and were able to pound the Japanese as they appeared among the grass on their descent of Iuribaiva mountain. The difficulties of getting supplies across the mountains from Kokoda made the Japanese realise their attack on Port Moresby could not be successful so their retreat began. Faole thanked the Lord for answering his prayer.

When Faole heard that the area around Efogi was clear of fighting, he returned, with his party, to Enivilogo and patrolled around the area encouraging his people. The intrusion of the war into their area did something for the thinking of the people so Faole received a ready response and the work of the Gospel grew rapidly. Several men who had received some education responded and went to other villages, so the work grew rapidly. At a camp meeting at Bisiatabu a large number of the folk from the Efogi area were baptized and this became a stimulus to accessions around Bisiatabu. If you were to walk the trail today you would find that from Ower's Corner to Kokoda every village along the trail is an Adventist village except the last one near Kokoda.

In his later years with his new wife Faole spent much of his time at Bisiatabu where he continued to give counsel, guidance and inspiration to his people. His energies finally ran out and Faole died at Bisiatabu in 1957. His body was laid to rest in the place where he had first come to know something of his Lord. Faole will have many stars in His crown when the Lord returns to gather His people.

Note:

Pastor O L Speck gives this brief biography: "A link with the early days of missions in Papua was broken on May 16, with the passing of our veteran national worker, Faole. Throughout the years he was a courageous standard-bearer among his own people, and a source of strength and cheer to the European missionaries with whom he associated. During his declining years he lived in semi-retirement and was paid a small sustentation allowance. But so keen was his desire to see the advancement of the gospel that he would invariably return the greater amount of it—generally about 80%—as extra tithe and offerings. Known respectfully by his people as 'Tau Buruka' (old man), his inspiration will be greatly missed. As we laid him to rest in the small Bisiatabu cemetery it was with the sure knowledge that he will respond to the call of the Life-giver on the resurrection morning."

AR, 10 Jun 1957, p 16.

## PARENTHESIS & DETOUR

### The establishment & development of the College Du Pic Vert—our secondary school in French Polynesia.

**John L P Reynaud**



*Dr John Reynaud, was born, brought up and had his early education in Vietnam. It became unsafe to live there so he and his wife and family went to France but later in 1958 emigrated to Australia.*

*In January 1966 he met Dr MacDowell and was asked to teach French at Avondale High School and develop a course in French at the College. He gained further degrees at The Universities of New England and Newcastle. (PhD) When the French department at Avondale was closed he was invited to open a Junior High School in Tahiti. He was the headmaster, the mission education director and a member of the mission committee.*

*From 1986-8 he was principal at Aore Junior High School.*

*He retired at Coorabong & became an adjunct professor at the college. (He still is.)*

*He and his wife Paulette were married at Grenoble in 1952. They had five children, Gabriel—tragically killed—Francine, Catherine, Daniel & Marilyn.*

Romantic travel-book images of Tahiti, a magical gem of the Pacific, breathtaking views, tropical splendour, volcanic peaks, clear blue skies and seas and all the trappings, tell scarcely half the story.

The reality of the major half confronting a Christian educator includes such factors as the highest cost of living in the Pacific. Indeed the United Nations rates it as only marginally behind Tokyo as the highest in the world. Add to this the difficulty of recruiting teachers fully conversant with the French language. Throw in the sometimes prickly relationships and international incidents that can occur and you begin to see glimmerings of the problems.

In the nineteenth century some events occurred that coloured relationships at the time and continue to foster mistrust until this day. In 1842 Pritchard, an English missionary, antagonised the local population with his anti-colonialist views, appealing to Queen Victoria to oppose French expansion in Polynesia. Pastor Heggie, the last Australian President of French Polynesia Mission, felt the ongoing effects of this suspicion in subtle and even in obvious ways. Frequent delaying tactics in response to his requests often tested his patience. Hostile feelings engendered in Australia and New Zealand following the *Rainbow Warrior* affair served only to heighten the tensions.

The Australasian Division, as it was then known, also experienced difficulty in conducting the affairs of the church. Not being fully aware of the advanced building requirements for the erection of educational institutions, church leaders were somewhat perplexed about the rejection of their school plans by the French authorities. They were similar in design to those used in other parts of the Pacific, but

they were not of European standard—a requirement that would make the project even more costly!

Difficulties in interviewing and assessing prospective workers seemed to be overcome by the French Union. Early workers found acceptance and recognition. They established the primary school, *Tiarama*, meaning torch, at mission headquarters in the eastern suburbs of Papeete, on Tahiti Island. With official recognition, ultimately government funding came to support the school.

Gradually the concept of setting the mission under direct French leadership took hold. Eugene Landa, who spoke six or seven languages, and had served in Palestine under the General Conference, was called as the second French Mission President (1953-1959). He had much more freedom of action, with consequent advantages, even though he and his successors often had to justify their actions because it was perceived by some that they were serving a foreign organisation. Jobs had to be reserved first for Tahitians, and if they were not available, for French nationals, and later, for citizens of the EEC, before any foreigner could be recruited.

At that time Adventist church property was transferred to the French Union. Also all monetary transactions with the outside, except those with France, were subject to currency control. Even monies allocated by the Division along with tithes and offerings from Tahiti destined for the CPUM in Suva and the head office in Sydney had to take a roundabout way, hampering day-to-day operations.

These delays often prevented the CPUM or the Division leaders from committing themselves before they



were sure they could deliver, and the Tahitians began to wonder whether the church would ever establish post primary education there. All other missions in the Division had long had their own secondary schools, staffed with Australians, and increasingly with their own nationals. Tahiti's difficulties arose because division training could be had only in Fiji, New Zealand, or Australia, and in English. The French Polynesia Education Department found this unacceptable. Costly recruiting in France required that personnel be accepted on faith, sight unseen. Obviously they would not have been trained in Adventist education and once arrived, could not obtain guidance from an experienced staff.

In the meantime, the Tahitian church members kept asking to be treated like the other missions and have their own school.

So they increased the pressure. Union and Division leaders were in complete agreement with them, agonizing only on how it could be done. The complex problem of finding the funds was probably the most achievable one. Staffing the organisation with people, who could understand and co-operate with Australian church policies and also be acceptable to the French administration, was much more difficult.

Language teaching was no longer a requirement in Australian schools so some of our secondary schools closed those sections to ease their financial burdens. Subsequently, the Avondale College Board decided there was no need to train teachers in French. At the end of 1978 the French Department was closed. As the lecturer available, I was asked to go to Tahiti to create the wanted school. I considered a call from the church as a call of God and accepted without hesitation.

At my request the division allowed me to complete my PhD. Since the school year in Tahiti was attached to the Northern Hemisphere, I was granted until June to finish. I was to find it a real asset. More than once I heard church members boasting that they had one of the best-qualified graduates in the country. On the downside some Tahitian people who felt challenged by my presence had little hesitation in dismissing Australian universities and claiming their degrees were hardly worth the paper they were written on. However, the French education authorities recognised my degrees and never questioned my qualifications for the job.

During interviews before leaving Sydney, I was informed that the French Polynesia Mission was rich enough to afford its own school, but the division had shown its support by making an initial grant of \$50,000 to get the ball rolling.

I was also told that Tahitian builders were as good as any in Australia. The school curriculum,

they said, was set by the French authorities, and was so full that I may not be able to introduce Bible classes. From the start I introduced Bible classes (three hours a week). Not only did the parents appreciate this; they would have been surprised and disappointed if it had not been in the program.

My wife Paulette, my twelve-year-old daughter Marilyn and I arrived in Papeete in July 1979. Classes were to start in a room borrowed from the primary school, until I could find a piece of land to build a new campus. This went with the warning that land in Tahiti was as highly priced as one would find in the heart of a major city in Europe. This was quickly verified.

I began my quest immediately for a piece of land to build the school. Anything large enough and affordable had to be way out of town. The only parents prepared to accept that situation were those who happened to live near the considered site. Everybody wanted the school across the road from their place. In one section under consideration, the land lay directly under a steep cliff and the architect advised that security reasons would block permission to build. I visited another place just after rain. We splashed and floundered in ankle-deep mud over the whole surface, and it was more remote than any site I visited. These two locations that were actually examined were Punaauia and Papeari on Tahiti.

School opened at the end of September 1979. The books had arrived, the desks had been delivered, all in good time. We seemed to be off to a good start. I found myself face to face with a group of some twenty-five children in Form One. Staff recruitment, including a local maths and science teacher, had been well done. Ranold Doom, a nephew of the Mission President, was a young man who had been prevailed upon to take advantage of the French law permitting men to replace military service by another service such as teaching or aide work. Ranold proved a faithful and capable teacher.

The student body constituted quite a mixture. Some were there because their parents believed in church education, others because the recruiters had insisted that after all the fuss about having a secondary school, it would be bad form not to enrol children there. A few more were there because they were doing poorly where they were and the parents hoped to give them another chance. Some people felt France had spoiled the Tahitians, with high salaries, free education and free medical care. Compared with other Pacific Islanders, the Tahitians appeared exceedingly demanding.

Often I was asked to apply for government funding. But the simple contract granted the primary school did not apply. If the government paid,

they wanted to select the staff, including the headmaster. I pulled back from going down that path until a better time! After I was gone the mission tried again, and succeeded—at a price.

In the following years, the pattern of recruitment was to be confirmed. Among the new students an increasing number were children who had failed in their former school. So the community soon came to think of us as a remedial school. In a way this turned out to our advantage although it affected our enrolment of the better students. Aware of our mode of recruitment, the church and the general public were surprised by the quality of our results. Although we started with losers we ranked well at the exams. But we received more recognition from the teaching community than from the church membership. In 1984 we had three staff members: Olivier Matton, Carol Parag and myself.

As the school grew by one class every year (Form 1, 1979-80), (Form 2, 1980-81), (Form 3, 1981-82), (Form 4, 1982-83), we reached an enrolment of some 75 students. School operated from September to June each year. Most teachers recruited from France were just out of university, with no teaching experience. But they did their work faithfully and we had good results. I gave them a running course on Adventist teaching methods and classroom practices and they did the rest. From the fourth year we sat the government exam, generally scoring well. The whole community knew it because the results were published in the newspapers. Soon we attracted students, Adventist or not, who had failed elsewhere. To the dismay of my colleagues I accepted them. One school counsellor for the government even sent me a student who had scored failure right from year one. Because school attendance was compulsory until sixteen, he had been shunted to a technical school. He was now reaching the end of junior high with no prospect other than an aid mechanic in a garage somewhere. I told him we would help him but the solution was in his hands. My colleagues were furious. "Now we already have the unwanted reputation of a remedial school, and you accept complete failures!" Of course they were right. But I enlisted their cooperation and that of his classmates. Everybody helped and by the end of the year, the boy passed the state exam honourably. All Papeete knew it. He paid me a visit a year or two later to tell me he planned to be a doctor! We also rescued another worse-than-indifferent boy from a prominent Adventist family, and I received profuse thanks and a jar of local honey, no mean gift! All valuable publicity.

### **The Pic Vert Campus**

In 1981 a fellow minister looking for a site for

his church invited me to go with him to inspect a place up the mountain behind Papeete. An enterprising man, Germain Levy, had taken up a large section of the hills and levelled out a whole series of terraces. But he found it difficult to sell the plots as he intended. Our visit to the site was inconclusive. The church people did not think it was suitable. But as we were leaving, the pastor turned to me and said; "What about your school?" I was told the price of one terrace.

Next day Levy phoned with a bargain price: Seven terraces, spreading over 20 hectares, for the total sum of twenty million Pacific francs (the equivalent of \$A250,000); hardly more than double what he had asked for one terrace, but he was desperate. The bank had him in their clutches. The terraces had been made several years ago and seemed settled enough against erosion.

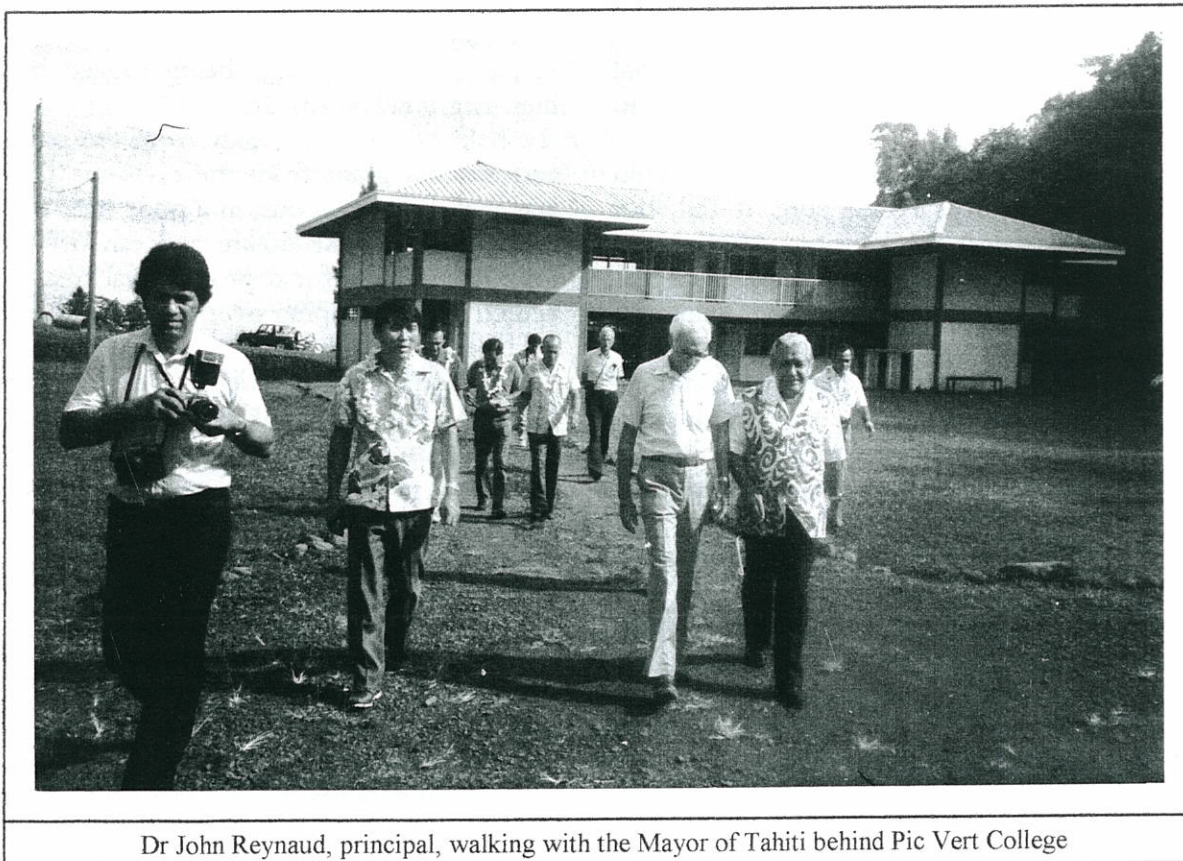
I passed it to the appropriate committee, who listened to me in blank silence. A little later Allen Sonter, Director of Education for the CPUM, flew in and we viewed, visualised, measured, climbed and paced the whole area. We projected one classroom-cum-administration building, three staff houses for expatriates, and playgrounds. And in case of expansion, there was enough room for several more buildings, even for a dormitory, kitchen and dining hall, in addition to more staff houses. Allen took it to the committee, and persuaded them to vote for the project, with very strict reservations. We would pay only when the man had built an all-weather access road, and touched up some areas.

Levy took us to his bank because he needed their permission to do anything about the land. He told me the bank charges amounted to one million a month. The bank accepted our conditions, perhaps because they saw a chance of recovering their money. Following a number of major mishaps Levy finished the work he had agreed to do and received his money, though I am afraid the bank swallowed most of it.

We now owned 20 hectares of steep hills, arranged into seven terraces. It had a magnificent view over the reef and Moorea to the west, while Papeete and its harbour, just below, were hidden by another ridge carrying eleven private houses.

Our architect drew up the plans for the school building and three houses, making sure they had wide and strong foundations. I then had to pay a visit to the secretary-general to get our plans passed.

As soon as the plans were drawn. Allen Sonter made a large model, which was displayed at the primary school to advertise the project to the church members. He had needed every bit of his diplomacy and influence to transport the model to Tahiti via Air New Zealand. His contribution did



Dr John Reynaud, principal, walking with the Mayor of Tahiti behind Pic Vert College

not stop there; he also persuaded a Fly'n Build team to come and build a large steel-frame shed, which would prove useful for the equipment, or as an area for manual activities in the event of rain.

The houses were finished first, around the Christmas period of 1984 and the staff moved in early. Erection of the classroom block was completed prior to Easter 1985, when the students transferred from Tiarama to Pic Vert College. I had carefully interviewed several candidates for a bus service, because the steep road could be dangerous. The government agreed to subsidise transport of the children. The Mission van delivered midday meals from the primary school canteen.

Because of the high cost of Manual Arts classes and because Tahiti depended almost entirely on imports to feed itself I thought that agriculture would fulfil a dual purpose. Nobody believed anything would grow in that tough soil on the mountain terrace. During a session of the mission committee, a member confronted me, stating forcefully that nothing would grow in that mamu (laterite). "I know this," he said. "I was born here."

Olivier Matton, a graduate from an agricultural school, had just arrived from France with the specific task of teaching the subject. The local people discouraged him to the point where he became reluctant to carry out my bidding. He was afraid to look a fool.

As soon as we moved to Pic Vert we started a garden, digging, removing stones, mulching and fertilising. Olivier kept busy with other things and

waited until I changed my mind.

One day, the new Mission President, Marcel Doom, and I visited the President of the Government, Gaston Flosse, and asked him to finance a sealed road to the school site. (From the tone of the conversation I gathered that Marcel and Flosse were long-time friends.) He agreed. The electricity was connected, the spring tapped with a submerged electric pump and three tanks built to filter and deliver the water to the school and houses.

In due course the mission session was on and I suggested that we take advantage of the presence of so many delegates from the distant islands to show them their school. Although the school building was unfinished, we would inaugurate it. Later the president visited us, along with a retinue of the press (newspapers, television, radio). Because of his grant of a tractor, he had brought his agriculture minister. Both men were impressed with the quality of tomatoes and lettuce in our garden. Photographs were taken and published. Olivier took note. He started working, creating a superb plot. He produced tomatoes and lettuces that were sold through the Mission Health Shop. The project was on its way.

In 1985 the Union Session in Fiji voted that French Polynesia should have the benefit of the Thirteenth Sabbath offering in its totality, for which we were very grateful, considering the costs we were facing in labour and materials, and aware of the sacrifice it was for the other missions. I donated two new computers, and a young man volunteered to teach computing to the students. Dur-

ing 1986, my last year at Pic Vert, the subjects taught were Scripture, French and English, Social Sciences, Mathematics, Science, Agriculture and computer experience.

One would think that all this activity would please the constituency. To be sure, it did, but some protested against the location, accusing me of wanting to play millionaires, because of the grand view I had from my windows. Tahitians, however, just don't like the mountain, partly because of unacknowledged ancient superstitions created by witch doctors, and the very real insecurity of the steep terrain, always apt to crumble after a lot of rain. But above all it was the old instinct to stay in the coastal area where they had their gardens and near the sea from which they drew all of their food.

At the end of 1986 I received a call to Aore, in Vanuatu. I left the school with four classes operating with an enrolment of seventy-five students. But what the people had not quite dared to do with me—withdraw their young people from the school for various reasons, such as the road being too dangerous—they achieved with my successor. At the commencement of his second year the enrolment had dropped significantly. When I visited Tahiti in 1994, some years later, I noticed there were only thirty-five students in attendance. Also quite a number of the staff were not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As Adventist teachers were difficult to obtain, the mission had requested the government to provide teachers

when the ones I left were gone.

The school is now being moved back to a high-rise building on the primary school site with the help of a hefty subsidy from the government and another grant from the division. The trigger was that the school bus, in a poor state of maintenance, had a brake failure and ran off the road. Had it not been for a providential tree that prevented it from tipping over the edge, there would have been a tragedy.

Options are now open for the conversion or disposal of the grounds and buildings of the Pic Vert site. But the abandonment of the Pic Vert school is a fact. Playground space will be restricted, and future expansion is problematic. But the wise use or disposal of this very valuable piece of real estate may recoup any additional costs incurred by the project.

Could we call the Pic Vert project a parenthesis or a detour or perhaps both in the educational work of the Mission of French Polynesia? Both metaphors carry the implication of bypaths, asides, unexpected experiences and lessons to be learned. However, there have been some encouraging results.

My hope is that this venture of faith will continue, grow stronger, and provide a Christian education that will not only fit students for service in this world but also for wider service in the Kingdom of God, where language barriers will no longer separate and divide, and true education will continue throughout eternity.

## **ESTABLISHING THE FIRST PERMANENT BASE OF OPERATIONS IN VANUATU (New Hebrides )- Part I Success in Spite of Tragedy**

**Les Parkinson**



### **Early Sabbath Keepers**

The first known ni-Vanuatu Sabbath (Saturday) keepers were two men from the island of Ambrym. These two men, unknown to each other, had been indentured labourers recruited to work in the cotton and cane-fields of Queensland in Australia.

Donald Nicholson relates the story of an Ambrymese man from the village of Fanlau on the northeast coast of Ambrym who, when he returned from the Sugar Plantations of Queensland,

was a faithful Bible student and strictly observed the Sabbath. He was noted for his honesty and good, faithful life and even today he is upheld and his name respected, but until recently everyone thought he was mad because he persisted until the day of his death in observing the Sabbath.<sup>1</sup>

The second man was Caleb from the Baiap area who when he returned from Australia brought with him his aboriginal wife, Lily. They had in their possession a book called *Coming King*. Pastor J E Fulton, President of the Australian Union Conference, wrote:

[Caleb] learned to read a little Eng-

*Les Parkinson, an Avondale College ministerial graduate of 1950, served the Pacific Islands mission fields in Vanuatu, & in Papua New Guinea. After pastoring churches in the Nth NZ Conference, he and his wife Fay were located at Port Stanley on Malekula Island, Central District. Here he served as district director for three years from 1954.*

*On transferring to PNG they served at a number of locations—Paglum, Ambunti, Maprick and Wewak.*

*From 1965-1968 he was president of the Madang Mission for one year then of the Sepik Mission for three years. He was president of the Vanuatu Mission from 1976-1978 during a later period of service.*

*Fay, a trained nurse, attended to the medical needs in the various villages. She, with Dulcie McCutcheon visited Amok Village on Malekula and helped to break down the barrier between the Big Nambus and the coastal people.*

*The Parkinsons have two children, Susan and Bronwyn.*

*They are now in retirement in Hornsby Heights, Sydney, New South Wales.*

lish, and received from some unknown source a copy of the book *Coming King* before being deported to his own island again. From this book he learned of God, and of a new world to come, and of the second coming of Jesus... He talked to some of the people [in Baiap] where they met under a great spreading tree which was often used by the people to congregate and to talk about matters affecting the village. On one occasion they prayed for light to come and truth to change their terrible dark surroundings. God answered those prayers. It was not long after that they heard of our mission on Atchin.<sup>2</sup>

Nicholson makes further relevant comments in his article:

Among the first company of Christians who established themselves on Baiap were a number of men fully acquainted with the Sabbath... The man who established the first company of Christians had purchased the book *Coming King*. His brother now has the book and a perusal of its pages reveals that it has been carefully read and studied.<sup>3</sup>

Nicholson stated that during the years that followed and with the death of many of the returnees others drifted back to heathenism but during the early part of 1923 what they learned before had re-entered their hearts with the old time zeal of their first love.

It is interesting to note that about 1904 or 1905 a Seventh-day Adventist Church was erected in Bundaberg.

Whilst it cannot be ascertained where Caleb obtained the book, *Coming King* colporteurs were working in the Bundaberg district when he and others were working in the canefields in that area. It is also not known exactly when both men returned to Ambrym.

The people of Champion Bay and in particular Baiap village were thus given a knowledge of the seventh-day Sabbath and for a period of time some kept Saturday as their day of worship.

In the latter part of 1911 Stanley McCoy, a Seventh-day Adventist from Norfolk Island, was employed by Burns Philp & Co. Ltd to operate a trading store on the island of Paama. His wife and son accompanied him.<sup>4</sup> Also living on the south coast of Ambrym, opposite the island of Paama were Mr. Stephens, his wife and family, who had been Seventh-day Adventists in Tonga. In March 1913

Pastor Edwin Butz visited Vanuatu to ascertain if Atchin was a suitable place for the mission headquarters. He called on the Stephen family as he had had very close contact with them when working as a missionary on Tonga.<sup>5</sup>

Thus on the northeast, southwest and south of Ambrym and on the island of Paama there was a knowledge of the Seventh-day Sabbath before the arrival of Calvin Parker and Harold Carr in Vila on 12 June 1912.

### Pioneer Missionaries

On 13 September 1911 the Australasian Union Conference Council, chaired by J E Fulton, decided to send Pastor Calvin Parker and his wife Myrtle to pioneer mission work in Vanuatu (the New Hebrides). They had worked for nine years in the Fiji Islands and at that time Parker was president of the church's Victorian Conference in Australia. It was also voted that Brother H E Carr connect with the New Hebrides Mission.<sup>6</sup>

Who were these people? Parker, born in St Charles, Illinois USA in 1869 was orphaned when he was six years old. He and his two older sisters eventually went to live with relatives in Minnesota. They were strict Methodists and Parker refused to go to church with them after a time. However, some time later he decided to read the Bible for himself. He was convicted of the Sabbath truth, thinking, to begin with, that he must be the only one who worshipped on Saturday. When he found that there was a Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sauk Centre he attended church the next Sabbath and later was baptised. He attended Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska and after graduating worked in Minnesota. He married Myrtle Griffis on 12 October 1894. They had one child, Ramona.

Myrtle was born in Wisconsin, USA on June 16, 1867. She was a public school teacher when she attended evangelistic meetings conducted by Pastor A O Olson. After her baptism she worked in the church school system for two years and then as a Bible worker. She was miraculously healed from consumption of the bowels. In March 1897 she and her husband were

given the option of working as missionaries in China, India, Honolulu or the Fiji Islands. They chose Fiji.<sup>7</sup>

Harold E Carr was born in Parkside, Adelaide in South Australia on 5 November 1882. When his father died in 1886 his mother took the family to live in Melbourne, Victoria. The first American evangelists held meetings there and the Carr family walked five miles each way to attend them. Harold was only six years old. He attended Avondale College for one year as an industrial student when he was seventeen and a half. The next year he worked on the construction of the Sanitarium Health Food Company complex at Warburton where he attended the local Adventist church. He showed ability when given the opportunity to preach and was soon employed as a ministerial intern by the Victorian Conference.

In January 1908 he enrolled at the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital and graduated as a registered nurse in 1911. He said:

It was a decision I have had on many occasions to be glad that I made, and whenever I hear of young people having a leaning towards that line of work I do all I can to encourage them.<sup>8</sup>

After graduating Pastor Fulton married him to fellow graduand, Clara Alberta Patterson at *Mizpah*, Wairoonga on January 12.

Clara was born in Wagga Wagga, New South Wales on 4 August 1881. At the age of twenty-four she enrolled at the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital and also graduated as a registered nurse in 1911. She and Harold were to be the first Australian Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to Vanuatu.

The Parkers left Sydney on December 30, 1911 on the *SS Makambo* and disembarked four days later at Norfolk Island. Here they were to await the arrival of the Carrs who would accompany them to Vanuatu, and, at the same time to conduct, for two months, Biblical and Health Lectures for the small Adventist group and the community. The stay-over was also to give time for the material for a pre-fabricated house to be prepared and shipped to Vila.

The Carrs left Sydney on February 1, 1912 on the *Malaita* and joined the Parkers five days later, on Norfolk Island.

Calvin Parker and Harold Carr were not to leave Norfolk Island as was planned. The interest created by the lectures brought a request for their departure to be delayed for an extra two months and when the men were due to depart heavy seas made it impossible to load or unload goods and



Calvin & Myrtle Parker  
Donald & Lillian Nicholson

personnel and the ship sailed on to Vila. In the hold of the vessel was the material for their proposed home. One month later, on June 12, 1912, they eventually arrived in Vanuatu.<sup>9</sup>

### Settling In

The first priority of the newly arrived missionaries was to find accommodation and it was not long before they were directed to a Club that had originally been a school operated by the Catholic Order of Marist Brothers.

After settling in, Parker and Carr sought out the British Administrator for the Condominium Government relative to the leasing of land for the erection of the duplex home and to seek his advice as to where to commence their pioneering work. He suggested the northern part of the group of islands that make up the Republic of Vanuatu.

The missionaries were able to obtain land near the waterfront at Vila. Within a couple of weeks Parker and Carr started to assemble the prefabricated duplex house.

Parker wrote:

We had one room for each couple, 14 feet by 12 feet, and our kitchen [communal] was 8 feet by 10 feet. It was hard to turn around without jostling one another's elbows. There was also a verandah.<sup>10</sup>

Two months later, Myrtle Parker and Clara Carr arrived from Norfolk Island to join them.

Prior to their arrival the pioneers worshipped on some Sundays with the Presbyterians in their church in Vila and were frequent visitors to the Presbyterian hospital on Iririki Island, a small island inside Vila Harbour, where they had a good rapport with the Administrator, Dr Crombie. He also had oversight of the large Presbyterian Church in Vila.

Parker had needed treatment for the build up of fluid on his knees caused by his constant kneeling on the rafter battens while constructing the duplex, and Carr treated Dr Robinson, the Presbyterian Missionary who was stationed on the island of Erromanga. He had slipped on the deck of a ship and fractured his leg near the neck of the femur and needed physiotherapy on it.

Harold Carr wrote about the first ordinances celebrated in Vanuatu. He said:

Sabbath, October 12, was a memorial day in the history of our work in the New Hebrides, for it was the first time that we as a people had celebrated the ordinances of the Lord's House in these islands. We delayed our service one week to allow Brother Stanley McCoy and his wife and

child to be with us, as they were passing through on their way to their old home on Norfolk Island.<sup>11</sup>

The letters and articles of Parker written to the *Australasian Record* reveal him as being a very devout man of prayer, a keen Bible student and a well-organised person. He thought, he prayed and he planned before he acted. He must have been a frequent visitor to the local library. From the material he read and the answers to his questions from public servants, private employers, the Presbyterian clergy and government officials he was able to build up an accurate picture of the topography and inhabitants throughout the group.

In early October 1912 he wrote:

This coming week we expect to take an extended trip to all parts of this group. We trust to have the pillar of cloud to go with us by day, and the pillar of fire by night; and that it will rest over the place which the Lord has chosen for our permanent mission station for these islands. To this end we pray this as we go forth.<sup>12</sup>

### Searching for a Property

Parker joined the *Makambo* on 17 November 1912 for a three-week visit through the northern islands of Vanuatu. During the trip he did not isolate himself from the other passengers.

Several Presbyterian Ministers were on board.

They were very kind and courteous and we had many good, spiritual talks. I visited almost all of the stations of the Presbyterian Mission and was received in a very kind and Christian manner.<sup>13</sup>

At the same time he kept his ears and eyes open and heard of a property for sale on the small island of Atchin which was approximately one point five kilometres from Malekula. Parker was not able to visit the island as it was not a port of call for the *Makambo* so when he returned to Vila, he talked the matter over with his wife and the Carrs.

On Monday, 19 January 1913 the two men left Vila on a chartered seven-ton auxiliary schooner. The engine wasn't in good working order and the sail was full of holes. On the way to Atchin they encountered squally weather and a small cyclone. The first night they anchored at Epi and slept in a copra shed and the following day they sailed for Malekula anchoring in Port Sandwich where they slept in an empty shed belonging to a trader.

Christensen in her book quotes Parker as saying:

Mr. Carr had unintentionally left his hammock and mosquito net at Epi in the place where we had stayed the night before, so I shared my net with him and we both slept on a plank that had no soft sides. Between their (mosquitos) blood-thirsty melodies and the hard plank we had little rest.<sup>14</sup>

The schooner travelled further north the next morning but had to put into a small bay for three

days because of a small cyclone. On Friday, 23 January 1913 they sailed along the coast until late in the afternoon then, at the request of Parker, they dropped anchor at a small island off the east coast of Malekula. On Sunday morning they left for Atchin and six hours later dropped anchor. It was 25 January 1913.

On the island of Atchin were two ni-Vanuatu Presbyterian teachers who were under the direction of the Presbyterian mission on Wala, and a British trader, Mr. Farrell, his wife and their two children. Parker was told that there were occasional visits from the Catholic priest from the island of Wala. On the piece of land that Parker and Carr had come to see were some very unkempt and dilapidated, white-ant ridden buildings. They recognised that a great deal of repairing and renovating would be needed as nothing had been done to the buildings since the trading station had been plundered by the Atchinese on 19 November 1904 a little over nine years before. At that time Dr Crombie the Presbyterian doctor on the nearby island of Wala heard of the plundering and killing which took place. He took two Christians and the French priest on Wala and travelled on his boat to Atchin.

We saw a boat...and found the murderers were in it...armed and exulting. God's hand kept them from firing at us...The house was deserted...a scene of desolation. We found the body. It was naked and had three musket wounds... We saw the murderers advancing, five in number... They had boasted they would kill us. Before they reached us, the men from the other side of the island, among whom I have a teacher, came by another route and ranged themselves beside us. The murderers commenced to excuse themselves...<sup>15</sup>

Crombie and the priest dressed the body in calico and then each went to their respective mission stations. The priest found that the Roman Catholic Mission house and school had been plundered and the vestments and communion vessels were taken and the glass windows were broken. Books were lying torn on the floor and everything was in disorder. The French trader, [Mr. Germain] who had been on the island for ten years and was absent at the time of looting lost everything

No one had been in residence since. After looking over the property and its buildings Carr, because of his experience in building, was able to take measurements and to estimate what would be needed to meet the immediate needs of the pioneers should the property, be approved by the Australian Union Conference and become the launching place for the outreach of the Church in Vanuatu.

Parker wrote in the *Australasian Record*:  
It impressed us as being the property for which

we have long been praying... now that we have seen it, and examined it, and have asked direction from Him who never errs in counsel, it seems as though we have been led forth by the right way.<sup>16</sup>

At the time of their visit to Atchin there were seven villages on the island, Melmaru, Melep, Onma, Melbarar, Tchinamgartin, Tchinamare and Rowar. Each village had its own chief and own dancing and sacrificial grounds.

Carr also attended to the medical needs of a number of Atchinese and Parker preached his first sermon on the island. They then returned to the schooner and were greeted with the news that the engine no longer worked.

Parker wrote:

...we attempted to sail back against strong head winds, seas, and currents. We travelled only sixteen kilometres in nine days. The decks of the boat leaked badly, so we had to find what shelter we could on shore, and sleep upon the ground, which was quite damp from the rain.<sup>17</sup>

In answer to their prayers the steamer *Makambo* saw their plight and picked them up and took them to Vila.

There was a great deal of rejoicing and thanksgiving in the complex for their safe return and also extra rejoicing and thanksgiving in the Carr household for, in Harold's absence, Clara had given birth to a boy. They named him Harold Patterson Carr.

Parker notified the Union Conference about the land and with their approval Pastor Edwin Butz was sent from Lord Howe Island to look at the property and counsel with Parker and Carr about its purchase. He arrived in Vila on 8 March 1913 and, after four days, travelled through the southern portion of Vanuatu. When the *Makambo* returned to Vila Parker joined Butz for the trip through the northern portion of Vanuatu.

Butz reported:

We looked over the property and found it to be suitable for our purpose in every particular. The natives are very anxious for us to locate there. The Catholics carried on work here for some years with no results. The Presbyterians have had a native teacher there for four years (should be nine years). The Presbyterian missionary [Doctor Sandilands] on the island [Wala] three miles away, said to us, 'There is plenty of room to do here for us all. There are outbuildings which could be utilised for a small school and treatment room, with a little expense and effort, until the growth of the work warrants better.

In all my mission experience I have not seen such clear nor so many indications of Divine preparation as in this field. May He whose work it is and whose we are, give the wisdom and grace necessary to plant and develop the third angel's message in this new field.<sup>18</sup>

About four months later Parker wrote in the *Aus-*

*traliasian Record*:

The site which has been chosen for our mission-station is Atchin, a small island of about one hundred and fifty acres, one fourth of a mile off the coast of Malekula. It has a population of between three and four hundred...We have been able to obtain fifteen acres of land on Atchin, and one and a half on Malekula.

The outbuildings and dwelling house will need considerable repairing, as they have been empty for a number of years. The former owner [was absent from Atchin at the time, his Aoban wife was killed] was rushed by the natives, and most of his belongings burned by fire.

The floor of the house will have to be completely renewed and a number of posts. The copra house was almost broken down, and the posts were all ant-eaten. The storehouse was completely riddled by ants, had no roof and the walls had collapsed inwards. There were no water storage tanks on the property.<sup>19</sup>

### Approval granted to Purchase Property

When the Australian Union Conference Committee granted permission to purchase the land Parker decided that he should not waste time in making an offer for the property to the owner who was living on the island of Epi. Parker's reason for doing this was that he had picked up talk in Vila that another mission body had offered to buy the property. The other mission body thought that the trader's price was exorbitant. In her book Christensen quotes Parker as saying:

When I told him my object in coming to see him he was ready to talk business, and offered me the place at one half the amount he asked from the other mission. This, however, was more than we could afford to pay. After further conversation he told me that he could not go below a certain figure. Then I told him that I was bound to a certain price and I could not go over that amount. That was one third of what he had offered it for. By the expressions on his face I saw that a struggle was going on in his mind. Suddenly turning to me, he said, 'You can have it for that figure'.

This was the sign we had asked of the Lord. Now I knew for a certainty that the Lord had chosen Atchin as our mission site. I drew up a form in which he transferred all his property on Atchin and Malekula to our mission, and he signed it. I paid him the amount we had fixed on, and he passed the deeds over to me. This was all done within an hour.

The place was offered to us for two hundred pounds, but the Lord worked upon the heart of the man to reduce it to one hundred and fifty pounds. Registration of the land and, a Lawyer's services cost £35.9.0

The total cost amounted to One hundred and eighty-five pounds nine shillings. [£370.90c]<sup>20</sup>

After completing the deal with the trader Parker



made his way back from Epi to Efate hoping to be put ashore at Vila but to his dismay he was put ashore at a village on the east coast which meant he had a long walk before him to Vila. He endeavoured to hire a horse but as none were available he finally paid one of the men in the village to carry his bag. Christensen further quotes Parker:

At five o'clock in the evening we left on foot for Vila over a path the native knew nothing about. The first half of the way was mud, but the last half way firm. At three o'clock in the morning my journey was over. My feet were a mass of blisters and I could hardly stand up because of the contraction of my leg muscles.<sup>21</sup>

When the news of the purchase of the property came to the ears of the Vila community, two Atchinese, who were working at the Government residence, visited the Vila house regularly and did much to help Parker and Carr in grasping a limited knowledge of the Atchinese language and Bislama.

The talk among the Europeans was that if Adventists were able to do anything for the Atchinese and the Malekulans they would be wonders and marvels. Whilst there is no record of either Parker or Carr talking with Dr. Crombie about Atchin and North Malekula one can assume that Parker, being the man he was, would have made approaches to this outstanding Presbyterian missionary to find

out about the inhabitants, the topography and outreach of the Presbyterian Church in Northern Malekula. Dr. Crombie had walked from the east to the west coast of Malekula; visited many of the bush tribes and sailed along the coast of north-east and west Malekula visiting the coastal villages.

At last a small and permanent beginning had been made.

#### References

- 1 Nicholson, D, *Missionary Leader*, 15 Aug 1925.
- 2 Fulton, J E, *Australasian Record*, 7 Sep 1925.
- 3 Nicholson, D, *ML*, 7 May 1923.
- 4 Carr, H E, *AR*, 15 Jul 1912.
- 5 Butz, Edwin S, *AR*, 7 Jul 1913
- 6 Minutes Australasian Union Council, 13 Sep 1911.
- 7 Christensen, Alta H, *In Strange Peril*, Chap One, Review & Herald Pub Assn, 1958
- 8 Carr, H E, *Life Sketch*, No date.
- 9 Parker, C H, *AR*, 15 Jul 1912.
- 10 Parker C H, quoted in *In Strange Peril*, Chap 3 p 123
- 11 Carr, *AR*, 11 Nov 1912
- 12 Parker, *AR*, 13 Jan 1913
- 13 *ibid*, 10 Mar 1913
- 14 Christensen, op cit, pp 124, 125
- 15 Miller, J G, *Live Book*, 6, *A history of Church Planting in the Republic of Vanuatu., The Northern Islands*, Mission Publication of Australia, 1989, p 37
- 16 Parker, op cit.
- 17 Parker, op cit
- 18 Butz, Edwin S, *AR*, 7 Jul 1913
- 19 Parker, *AR*, 18 Aug 1913
- 20 /21 Christensen, op cit, Chap 8, pp 128-130

### *The Value of History*

*The old joke is that the only thing we learn from history is that we don't learn anything from history. Of course, what makes it funny is that it isn't true.*

*History shows us where we have come from. It gives us a sense of who we are. It helps us decide where we should go from here.*

*Imagine the Seventh-day Adventist Church stripped of history. It would cease to exist. Our current mission and our future plans find purpose and meaning only when we know our past. Imagine the Christian church stripped of history. It's impossible, for Christianity is a faith grounded in history. Creation, the Fall, the Incarnation and Resurrection—all of these are events in history on which our faith is built. As Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:14—If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.*

*Remembering our own history helps us appreciate where we have been, and plan to avoid the mistakes of yesterday. Only those who forget their history are condemned to repeating it. Daniel Reynaud, Senior Lecturer at Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW Australia.*

Rose-lee Power



### *The Keeper of Our Heritage*

*Let me introduce myself. I began working in the Avondale College library in 1979 and continue to enjoy working there. Over those years I have worked in the areas of Reader Services, Acquisitions and projects; and I have gained qualifications in Librarianship and Instructional Technology. One of my more recent responsibilities has been the supervision of the South Pacific Division Avondale College Heritage Room collection. Although I was not initially enthused about history of any kind, working in this area has changed all that. The SDA Church in the South Pacific area has a most wonderful and exciting history. I now have the opportunity to assist people researching the activity of the church within this area. The collection is relatively small but growing. It holds a wealth of information. If we do not collect our history now, future generations will find it even more difficult to put the historical jigsaw puzzle together. Over the coming issues I hope to tell you more about this wonderful collection, what it holds and how you can access it. Rose-lee Power, Supervisor, Heritage Room, Avondale College.*

## **THE INFLUENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE ON THE PACIFIC SABBATH**

### **How Adventists came to observe the biblical Seventh day in lands near the 180th meridian**

**David E Hay**



See CV in Vol 1 No 1

**T**here is a line out there in the Pacific. You cannot see it: but it is real. Coursing mostly in a straight direction from pole to pole it determines day change in our world. It's the International Date Line, herein referred to as the IDL. Defined by the British Admiralty List of Lights, it is "a modifica-

tion of the line of the 180th meridian, and is drawn so as to include islands of any one group, etc, on the same side of the line. When crossing this line on a westerly course the date must be advanced one day; and when crossing it on an easterly course the date must be put back one day."<sup>1</sup>

The need for a date line first arose when European navigators began to reach the Pacific by different routes. The Spaniards sailed westward and the others eastward. The colonies which they established observed dates according to their reckoning, which meant, for example, that the local date of Celebes was one day ahead of Luzon, even though they were both in the same longitude, 119°—122°E. These different dates became 'Asiatic date' and 'American date'—later 'eastern' and 'western' date. With the Philippines adopting eastern date in 1845, the date line's new position included Australia, New Zealand, Samoa and Alaska in eastern date as it ran along parts of the 180th meridian. The sale of Alaska to America in October, 1867 re-directed the line around the Aleutian Islands and on through the Bering Strait.<sup>1</sup> In 1879 Fiji extended the line around its eastern islands so all islands in the Fijian Group would observe the same day.<sup>2</sup>

Inconvenience and confusion were caused by different prime meridians being promoted so the United States Congress in 1882 recommended that the president convene an international congress in Washington to decide on a prime meridian.<sup>3</sup> The next year the International Geodetic Association meeting in Rome recommended the meridian of Greenwich be adopted as the prime meridian of

longitude. On 22 October 1884, the Washington Meridian Conference, attended by representatives of twenty-five nations, approved Greenwich, near London as the centre from which longitude should be counted in both directions up to 180°.<sup>4</sup>

Those attending had no authority to commit their governments to official support, and some countries were slow to adopt the recommendation; but gradually, partly through enactment and partly through custom, the Greenwich prime meridian of 0 degree came into universal use. However there was no international agreement authorizing the 180° meridian as the IDL, nor has there been from 1884 to the present. The date line is merely a method of expressing graphically, and in a convenient form—after consultations with Pacific and major trading nations—the difference of date that exists among some of the island nations. These nations do have the right to alter its course in the vicinity of their own territories if they decide it is in their best interests to do so.

Some Pacific territories located on the eastern side corrected their day sequence to western hemisphere practice. On 4 July 1892, Samoa adopted western;<sup>5</sup> the Cook Islands made a similar change on 25 December 1899.<sup>6</sup> New Zealand's annexation of both the Kermadec and Chatham Islands confirmed their already eastern date observance.<sup>7</sup>

Seventh-day Adventists have accepted the 180th meridian with its modifications (except in one situation) as the line where the day changes. From pioneer days they established Sabbath keeping on the designated seventh day occurring in both eastern and western hemisphere day sequences on Pacific islands—with one exception where it was established on the first day. This practice means the seventh day Sabbath is observed in Pacific countries affected by the lines of modification as is shown on the next page.<sup>8</sup>

All the Aleutian Islands are part of the Alaskan Conference and Adventists living on some of the islands observe the same day Sabbath as the rest of Alaska.<sup>9</sup> The west Aleutians represent the most extensive modification to the IDL.

In the South Pacific the Chatham Islands, 768 kilometres south east of Wellington, NZ, observe

Country	Longitude from Greenwich	Kms (approx) away from 180	When the day is	Sabbath is on the
Wrangel Is (Siberian Russia)	E177°-W177°	none	Saturday	same day
W Aleutian Is (Aleut-Alaska)	180°-E170°	600	Friday	a day later
Kiribati Is	E170°-W150°			
Gilbert Is	E170°- 180°			
Phoenix Is	W178°-W170°			
Line Is	W164°-W150°			
Fiji Is	E175°-W177°			
Wallis Is (New C-France)	W177°-W175°	—200	Saturday	same day
Futuna (New C-France)	180°-W175°	—400	Saturday	Same day
Kermadec Is (NZ)	180°-W175°	—200	Saturday	Same day
Chatham Is (NZ)	W177°-W173°	—350	Saturday	Same day
Exception: Tokelau Is (NZ)	W176°-W170°	—250	Friday	a day later

Amount of deviation in kilometres from the 180° meridian by Pacific nations, and the day on which the seventh day Sabbath is observed on each.

the same day Sabbath as New Zealand of which they are part. From time to time Adventists have lived there and on advice from the South NZ Conference have observed the same day Sabbath as New Zealand.<sup>10</sup> An American Adventist Doctor, George H Gibson who had served in the church's sanitariums at Apia and Christchurch, served there as both government officer and magistrate for almost fourteen years from 1908. The islands of Wallis (Uvea) and Futuna (Horne) are French outposts administered from New Caledonia. Even though they are located on the eastern side of the 180th meridian, they observe the same day as their administering territory.

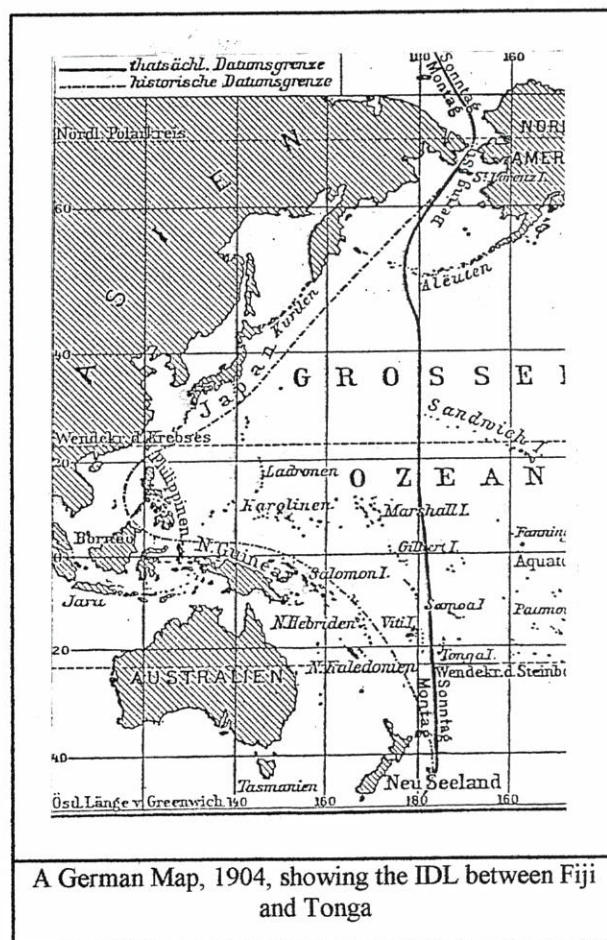
Of interest is the effect of date change in two other Pacific territories. Missionaries on the maiden voyage of the *Pitcairn* in 1891 observed Sabbath on the same day as Sunday worshippers in the Cook, Samoan and Tongan Islands. Samoa's change to western date on 4 July 1892 was of no consequence as there were no Adventists living there at the time.<sup>11</sup> In the Cook Islands when date change occurred there on 25 December 1899, forty LMS people at the village of Titikaveka on Rarotonga, refused to observe the new Sunday Sabbath. They had observed the seventh day for many years and wished to continue the practice. They sent for Dr Joseph Caldwell, the Adventist missionary living in Avarua, to explain the biblical Sabbath further as well as other Adventist teachings. He was well received and continued to meet with the group on various occasions during 1900. Eventually eighteen of the group decided to become Seventh-day Adventists and in September were baptised by Edward Gates. In the days ahead, however, they were ridiculed, humiliated and fined for working on Sundays.<sup>12</sup>

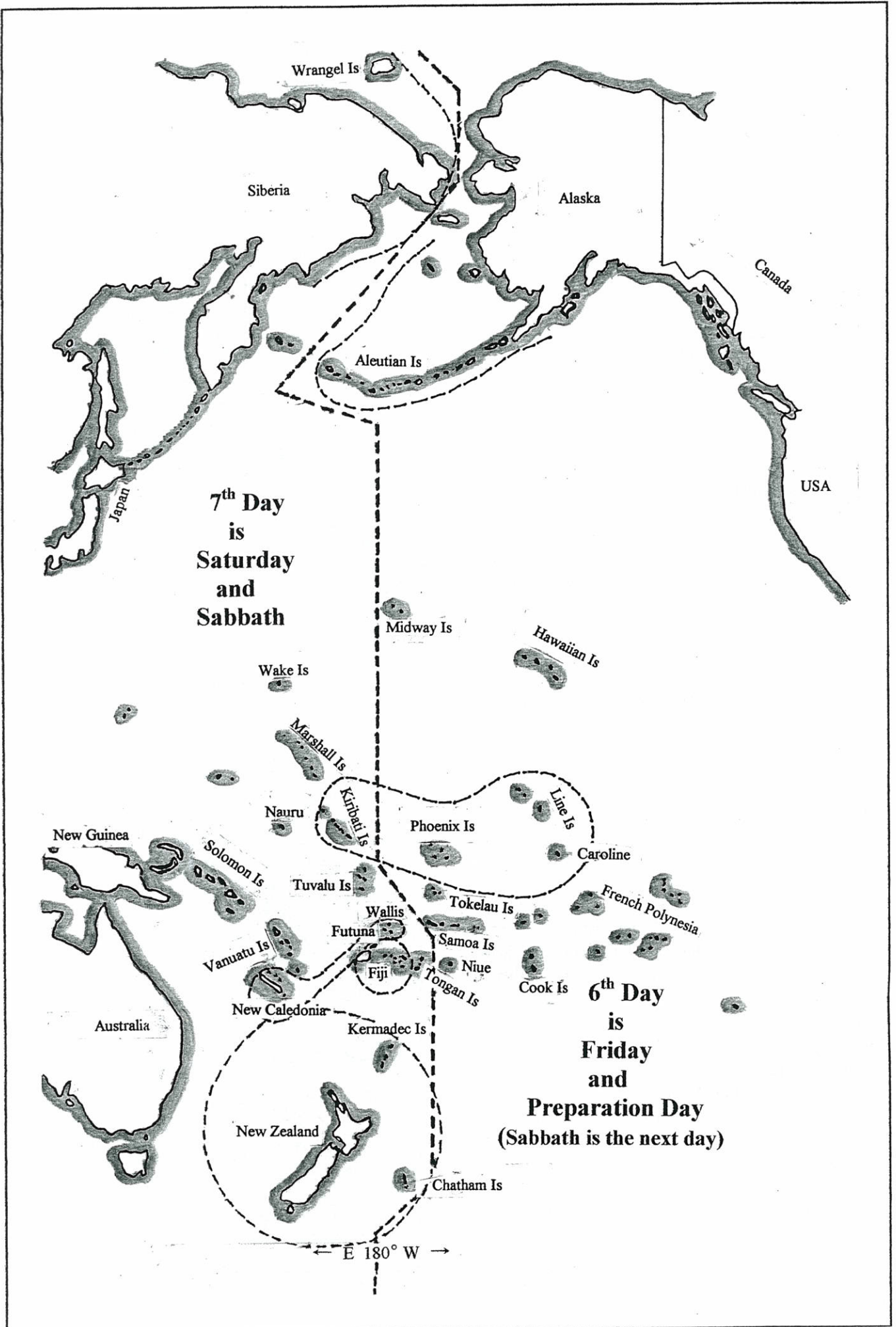
There was an exception to the change to western date. Lying completely to the east of the

180th meridian and observing eastern date, the Kingdom of Tonga, did not change. In the decade surrounding the turn of the century, mapmakers were uncertain as to whether the line lay to the west or east of this island group.<sup>13</sup> It seems that the principal trading nations operating in the south Pacific, as well as the Methodist Church in both Australia and Fiji felt communications and contacts would be better

served if no change were made. Mapmakers from 1917 onwards began to uniformly place the IDL on the eastern side of the Tongan Islands. There it has remained until this day.

When an independent Pacific nation located completely on either side of the 180th meridian chooses not to align itself with the date of the hemisphere in which it is located, Seventh-day Adventists observe the seventh day according to the country's position in relation to the 180th meridian. As the Kingdom of Tonga observes eastern date in a western date area the first day is really the





seventh day. So the day named Sunday in the Tongan islands is really Saturday, the Sabbath for Seventh-day Adventists.<sup>15</sup>

Sir Thomas Henley in his book *A Pacific Cruise* written in the 1920s, succinctly states the Adventist position: "...the establishment of Sunday observance in Tonga upon the same day of the week as in Australia was incorrect, as, strictly speaking the day is Saturday, west longitude. When the Seventh-day Adventists subsequently went to Tonga from America they did not need to change the day already observed, which is really Saturday, the seventh day of the week."<sup>16</sup>

On arriving on the fourth voyage of the *Pitcairn* on August 30, 1895, Edward and Ida Hilliard, Tonga's first resident missionaries, established Sabbath observance on Sundays believing the day-line lay well to the west.<sup>17</sup> However, John N Andrews' tract advocating a date line well to the east along the 168°36' meridian proved unsettling for a time. But Ellen White's 1901 reply to Merritt Kellogg who raised the issue with her when he was serving in Tonga, effectively laid the matter to rest, for she knew from personal experience as well as from the attitude of the nations that the date line lay along the 180th meridian.<sup>18</sup> While stationed in the Hapai Group, Hubert L Tolhurst supported the pioneer practice of observing the Sabbath on Sunday. He remarked, in 1915, that it was known that the date line passed between Tonga and Fiji although such recognition was ignored there.<sup>19</sup> When Luis Marden of the *National Geographic* was visiting the kingdom in 1967 he noticed that Adventists observed Sabbath on Sundays. A local Adventist pastor expressed his point of view by saying: "When God made the world, He made the day go from east to west. On the map, the so-called Date Line actually makes a jog to the east here. We maintain what is called Sunday in Tonga is actually Saturday, since we are really on the eastern side of the Date Line."<sup>20</sup> In more recent years Adventists have printed their own date calendar which begins with Mondays and ends with Sundays.<sup>21</sup>

If the Adventist Church in Tonga changed to observing Saturday as the Sabbath, what would be the consequences?

1. The Adventist church would be seen as turning away from the principles establishing the IDL without a convincing basis. A stronger reason than just being different from Sunday keeping Christians would be needed.
2. The possibility would always exist of the government of Tonga changing to western date. Such a change could be made to mark an important event, such as the installation of a new monarch, or the special commemoration of an

important historical event, or even the forging of profitable commercial links with countries lying to the east. Then the Adventist church would need to decide whether it would stay on eastern date or change again to western. The church could be seen as uncertain as to the day of worship.

3. Questions would certainly arise as to why the Adventist church was ignoring western date. It would be difficult to convince people the church wasn't following names of days rather than the specific seventh day for the area.
4. The believers in Tonga would find their task quite embarrassing, endeavouring to explain after more than 100 years, apart from calling Saturday the Sabbath, why there was a need to embrace eastern date.

Changing to Saturday Sabbath worship is clearly not the best plan. Adventist Sabbath worship on Sundays has stood the test of time. By worshipping on the seventh day of western date according to the 180th meridian, Adventists are giving recognition to the Bible Sabbath.

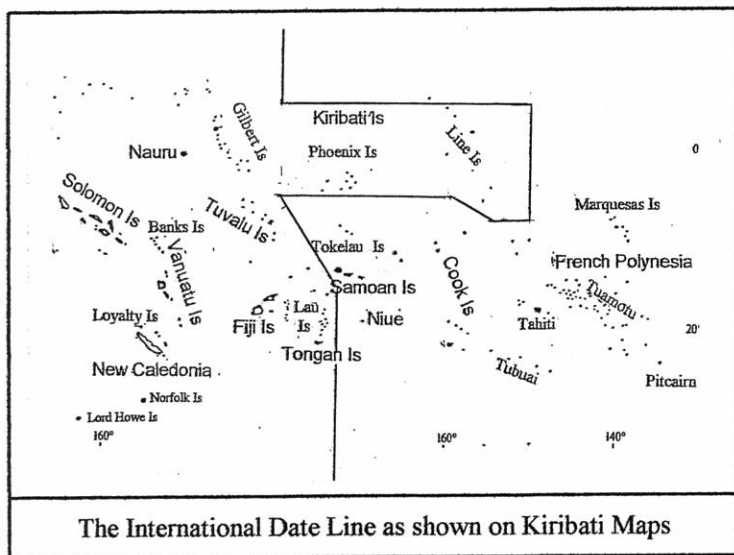
Right in the centre of the Pacific Ocean an interesting situation has developed. From 4 January 1995, the Phoenix and Line Islands of the Republic of Kiribati, have, on the decision of the cabinet of the government, observed eastern date in place of western so their days will be the same as those in the Gilbert Group located further west.<sup>22</sup> A maximum time change of two hours from east to west was unaffected. The change that now meant that the entire country observed the same day was made to improve communication and facilitate commercial arrangements between eastern and western sections of the country.

Although critics of the new move suspected the decision was motivated more by a desire to be the first nation in the world to welcome the new millennium—on Caroline Island,<sup>23</sup> the fact remains that all of the islands of Kiribati still observe the same day well after the event had passed.

This change now meant that there would be a 10° eastern modification of the IDL reaching eastward to the 150° W meridian. Aware of the Line's history, both the United Nations Organisation and the Royal Observatory at Greenwich stated in 1998, that "the Kiribati government seems to have the right to move the date line."<sup>24</sup> Commenting in 2001 on Kiribati's move, Dr Robin M Catchpole of the Observatory said: "This means that new maps that don't show a large bulge simply fail to reflect the reality of the situation."<sup>25</sup> Already Collins-Longman through their publisher, Harper and Collins in Scotland, as well as John Wiley &

Sons of Queensland who publish the *Jacaranda Atlas*, show the modified path of the IDL skirting around the eastern islands of Kiribati. On the other hand David B Miller of National Geographic Maps sees the situation differently. "...the current IDL favoured by Kiribati," he says, "encloses large areas that are not part of Kiribati or its territorial waters and so not subject to its time zone decisions...we enclose the Line and Phoenix Islands in separate time zone polygons that are essentially exclaves of Kiribati and the IDL."<sup>26</sup>

Adventists live on three of the Line Islands. The largest group meets regularly in London on Kiritmati (Christmas) Island and is cared for by a district director stationed there. Others gather together on Tabuaeran (Fanning) and Teraina (Washington). Since day change in 1995 they have continued to observe the Sabbath according to western date.<sup>27</sup> This means they are now keeping Sabbath on Sundays as Adventists do in the Kingdom of Tonga. Support for their stand would be seen in the position taken by *National Geographic* regarding the path of the IDL as unchanged and



the Line Islands as a separate time zone forming one of its 'related enclaves'. However, the present situation in Kiribati reveals Adventists in Kiribati observing Sabbath on two different days—on Saturday in the western islands, and on Sunday in the eastern islands. With vast stretches of water lying between the three small island groupings, the difference in the day of worship virtually goes unnoticed.

Niue, an island lying to the east of the Vavau Group of Tongan Islands, attained self-government in free association with New Zealand in 1974. Citing the need for improved communication and commercial contacts with New Zealand, the island made plans to revert to eastern date observance in 1996. Once the day change

was made the IDL would then include Niue in eastern date.<sup>28</sup> However, a few days prior to the anticipated change on 18 October, the plan was withdrawn. Possibly there was a reluctance to alter time-honoured religious traditions. If the change had gone ahead, Adventists, like those in the Kingdom of Tonga, would have continued to observe the Sabbath in harmony with western date.

In the future additional territories could become independent. Their date sequence would then need to be clarified in relation to the IDL. The French territories of Wallis and Futuna could fall into this category, and if they did, would find themselves in a similar situation to that of the Kingdom of Tonga—independent and located well to the east of the 180th meridian. Because these islands would no longer be administered from Noumea on New Caledonia, they would need to decide whether they would continue on observing eastern date, or because of their location, change to western. Although no Adventists are resident on these islands at this time, the situation could change in the years ahead and new members would need to observe Sabbath on the correct seventh day for their location.<sup>29</sup>

Even the Kingdom of Tonga could decide to change to western date. If it did so, the IDL would then move westward and pass between Tonga and Fiji. Adventists would be unaffected by the change. They would continue observing Sabbath on the seventh day of western date, which would then be known as Saturday.

In considering the influence of the IDL on the Pacific Sabbath there is an important issue needing careful thought. It is not an issue which can be decided lightly, for its determination can have far-reaching effects.

Where self-governing nations such as Australia, New Zealand and Niue etc., are located completely on one side or the other of the 180th meridian. Sabbath observance clearly occurs on the seventh day of either eastern or western date.

However, there are islands belonging to a nation located mainly on one side of the 180th meridian, which lie across or extend over to the other side of the meridian. These islands, irrespective of distance from the 180th meridian, are included in the same date as the islands or landmass on the other side. Recognition of this situation is made by a deviation in the path of the IDL. For example the Line is deflected around the following island/s: the western Aleutians of Alaska, the Wallis and Futuna Groups of New Caledonia (France), the eastern Lau Group of Fiji, and the Kermadec and Chatham clusters of New Zealand. Recently a bid

has been made for the IDL to deflect around the eastern islands of Phoenix and Line Groups.

At this time, except for the Republic of Kiribati, Adventists observe the seventh day Sabbath on the same day right throughout their country, no matter where they are living within its borders. Because some islands are located a considerable distance from the 180th meridian, some observers of the situation have thought that Adventists on those islands should keep Sabbath on a different date, ie on a day earlier in the western Aleutians, and on a day later in the Phoenix and Line Islands, as well as in the Chatham Islands.

Keeping in mind the need for reasonable same day Sabbath observance as other island nations located in similar longitudes (Samoa and the Kingdom of Tonga observe the seventh day at the same time even though it is Saturday in the former and Sunday in the latter) the issue needing careful thought is this:

*How far from the 180th meridian is 'too far' for Sabbath keepers not to worship on the same day in their own country?*

Perhaps the time is opportune for the Church to prepare guidelines for the establishing of seventh day Sabbath observance on the correct day in countries where assistance is needed in making a determination.

In deciding where day change occurs, the IDL serves an essential purpose, and at the same time influences the choice of day on which the seventh day Sabbath is observed. Being aware of the Line's modifications as well as the need for observing the biblical Sabbath will assist in ensuring the most appropriate seventh day is observed in the islands of the Pacific.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Notes on the History of the Date or Calendar Line, Dominion Observatory, Wellington, NZ, Bulletin No 78, 1930, from the Hydrographic Department, British Admiralty, London, November 1921.

\* The IDL is drawn through the following positions:

Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
60°00'S	180°00'	to	51°30'S	180°00'
51°30'S	180°00'		45°30'S	172°30'W
45°30'S	172°30'W	to	15°30'S	172°30'W
15°30'S	172°30'W	to	05°00'S	180°00'
05°00'S	180°00'	to	48°00'N	180°00'
48°00'N	180°00'	to	52°30'N	168°00'E
52°30'N	168°00'E	to	66°00'N	169°00'W
66°00'N	169°00'W	to	74°00'N	169°00'W
74°00'N	169°00'W	to	76°00'N	180°00'

<sup>2</sup> *Fiji, the Uniform Date Ordinance*, No XIV, 5 Jun 1879.

Item 1 states: "Time in this Colony shall be noted as if the whole Colony were situate to the west of the meridian of 180° from Greenwich. On the Island of Ovalau the 5th day of June and on the island of Vanua Balavu the 4th day

of June it would by this Ordinance be deemed as the 5th day of June 1879 in the whole Colony." Three of the five places where the 180th meridian crosses the land are in Fiji - the islands of Vanua Levu (Vudu Point), Rabi and Taveuni. (Chukotskiy - Siberia, and Wrangel Island are the other two places.)

<sup>3</sup> *The New International Encyclopedia*, 1926 edition, vol 22, p 284, article Time Standard.

<sup>4</sup> International Conference Held at Washington for the Purpose of Fixing a Prime Meridian and a Universal Day (Oct, 1884) Ex Doc No 14, 48th Congress, 2nd Session, House of Representatives, pp 111-113.

<sup>5</sup> F S Leigh-Browne, *Geographical Magazine*, vol 14, no 6, 1942, p 301-6. The text of King Malietoa Laupapa's statement said:

"Whereas, through an error in reckoning the people of these islands have hitherto been using the wrong day and date as judged by our true position in longitude. Now, therefore, to rectify this error, and in accordance with the expressed desire of the Municipal Council of Apia and my Government, it is hereby proclaimed and ordered that Tuesday, the 5th of July next by present reckoning, shall be called Monday, the 4th of July." Malietoa, King of Samoa. Mulinuu, June 16th, 1892. J H W, *Time Lost, When and How*, Evening News, Sydney, Australia, 20 Jul 1892.

<sup>6</sup> Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of NZ (1900), vol 1, p 20, No 10, 1899 - "Christmas Day Act." Item 2 of this Act states:

"The twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth of December of the New Zealand Calendar shall be observed as the Christmas Day within the Islands of the Cook Group, and shall be treated as one day, and be called the twenty-fifth day of December, 1899. It shall further be held that the day following the twenty-fifth shall be Tuesday, the twenty-sixth of December."

<sup>7</sup> The Kermadec Islands Act, 1887, no 1, p 3956.

Item 2 says: "The Kermadec Group shall become part of the Colony of New Zealand, and subject to the laws in force therein."

<sup>8</sup> a) Day change at the 180th meridian was recognised by the schooner *Pitcairn* on its south Pacific voyages. While sailing between Tonga and Fiji in 1891, Pastor Edward Gates wrote in the log book on Sabbath, 1 August: "At midnight we crossed the day line, the 180th meridian, and were ushered into Monday"

Edward H Gates, *The Log of the Pitcairn*. Saturday, August 1, 1891. "At the 180th meridian Sunday disappeared, and Monday August 3 immediately followed."

b) While travelling from San Francisco to Auckland on the *SS Alameda* during the same year, Ellen White recorded a similar experience. "Between Samoa and Auckland we crossed the day-line,... Tuesday December 1 was dropped from our reckoning, and we passed from Monday to Wednesday." Ellen G White, *On the Way to Australia*, Review and Herald, vol 69, no 7, 16 Feb 1892, p 543.

<sup>9</sup> John L Stevens, President, Alaska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists; letter to David E Hay, 4 Sep 1996.

<sup>10</sup> Averill Lewis, lived for 5 years in the Chatham Islands, and was advised by church administration in the early 1990s to observe the same day Sabbath as New Zealand.

<sup>11</sup> Commenting on the day of worship of these three Pacific countries, Edward H Gates, missionary, stated:

a) "All the people of this island [Mangaia], as well as those of the other islands of the group [Cook Is], keep the seventh day Sabbath, though they call it Sunday." R & H, 23 Jun 1891, p 394.

b) "All on the island are observers of the true Sabbath,

thinking it is Sunday." R & H, 22 Sept 1891, p 586.

c) "The [7th day] Sabbath is kept here [Tonga], through a mistake of the early missionaries when crossing the day line from the west [side]." UCR, 1 Jun 1900, p 2-13. Adventists first became established in Samoa and Tonga in 1895.

<sup>12</sup> Section 3 of the 'Christmas Day Act, 1899', forbade common secular work on the new Sabbath Sunday. Today there is still a stone bridge in the village of Ngatangia on the island of Rarotonga, which was built by people working out their fines on the roads.

<sup>13</sup> Between 1898 and 1917 map makers printed two date lines relating to the Tongan Islands:

- a) Some placed the line between Fiji and Tonga —  
 \* 1898 The Matthews-Northrup Co of Buffalo, NY, USA.  
 \* 1903 The JN Matthews Co of Buffalo, NY, USA.  
 \* 1904 A German map  
 \* 1914 The International Time Record Co of NY, USA.

b) Others drew the line on the other side of Tonga -

- \* 1899 Professor Davidson's map promoted by the US Hydrographic Office  
 \* 1906 Meyers Grosses Kouversationslekikou, 6 - German  
 \* 1908 Brjckhaus 14, Bd 16, made Seite 698 - German  
 \* 1910 Andree's Allgemeiner Handatlas of 1911  
 \* 1911 The US Smithsonian Report  
 \* 1917 A French Map of the Hydrographique Service

<sup>14</sup> Dr T G Hawley, one-time principal of Fiji School of Medicine, and previously Chief Medical Officer, Tonga, gives his opinion as to why Tonga didn't change its day date: "The Tongan Government decided, on the recommendation of its prime minister, to keep the same day as Fiji, because of close religious and communication ties with the then Colony." *Pacific Island Monthly*, June, 1975. Dr Hawley also stated in a personal letter that "Methodist missionaries persuaded King George of Tonga to follow suit" - that is to follow Fiji's example. Letter to D E Hay, 15 May 1975.

<sup>15</sup> Edward Hilliard, *Tonga*, R & H, vol 73, no 5, 4 Feb 1896.

<sup>16</sup> Sir Thomas Henley, KBE, MP, *A Pacific Cruise*, 1930, p 68.

<sup>17</sup> Merritt J Kellogg, Letter to S N Haskell, Cooranbong, NSW, Sept 5, 1898.

Writing in later years Kenneth Bain, secretary to government stated that Adventists didn't choose Saturday because this would have meant they couldn't weed or plant the next day, as work on Sunday was forbidden by law. *The Friendly Islands*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1967, p 115,116. (Bain doesn't acknowledge the possibility of adherents weeding and planting during the week, or even before and after regular times of employment, if Saturday were the Sabbath) However, Sunday was chosen as the 7th day of western date for Sabbath observance.

In 1910, Thomas and Edith House called at Tonga on their way to Samoa. "...On Sunday evening," they wrote, "we reached Nukualofa, Tonga... We found they [the SDA's] had just closed [the 7th day] Sabbath, which seemed rather odd, as we were already at the end of the first day of the week" [according to Australian time count] Thomas and Edith House, *From Auckland to Samoa*, No 1, UC Record, 1910, 14 Mar, p 3,4.

<sup>18</sup> Mrs Ellen G White, Letter 11 to Kellogg, 21 Jan 1901.

For an account of the date-line issue as advocated by J N Andrews in his tract entitled *The Definitive 7th Day*, see David E Hay article, *Merritt Kellogg and the Pacific Dilemma*, in the *Record*, 27 Jan 1990, p 4,5.

<sup>19</sup> Hubert L & P Tolhurst, *To the Tongan Field*, Australasian Record, 19 Apr 1915, p 4.

Beulah College Calendar, 1993. Interestingly, Saturday in Tongan is *Tokenaki* which means *preparation*, Sunday is *Sa-*

*pati* meaning *Sabbath*.

<sup>20</sup> Luis Marden, *National Geographic*, Mar 1968, p 358.

<sup>21</sup> The Beulah College Calendar for the first week in Mar 1993, reads as follows (Tongan names have been added):

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Monite	Tusite	Pulelulu	Tu'apulelulu	Foloite	Tokonaki	Sapate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<sup>22</sup> Cabinet Memo No 36/94 MHARD 5/16, 1994 entitled *Kiribati Standard Day and Time*.

The actual Public Notice issued by the Ministry of Line and Phoenix Development stated: Change of Date, Wednesday, 4 January 1995, to Thursday, 5 January 1995. "In Accordance with the Kiribati Government decision to change the date of the Line and Phoenix Groups to be the same with the rest of Kiribati,..."

<sup>23</sup> Caroline (Millennium) Island, is the most easterly of the Line Islands and was the first island to welcome the new millennium.

<sup>24</sup> David B Miller, Snr Edit Cartographer, *National Geographic*, Washington DC, USA. Letter to Hay, 1 Oct 1998.

Miller also states that National Geographic Maps would show the modified IDL once they had received maps from the Kiribati Government but in his communication of 24 Jul 2001, Miller said "...we cannot at this time recognise the shift of the Date Line...it doesn't seem to make sense cartographically...The Date Line favoured by Kiribati seems too far east to make sense." One week later he said "...it encloses large areas that are not part of Kiribati or its territorial waters and so is not subject to its time zone decisions." Finally, the IDL "...is not based on an international treaty or authority so we feel we have the freedom to interpret any suggested date line changes." 31 Jul 2001.

<sup>25</sup> Dr Robin M Catchpole, fax to Hay, 19 Apr 2001.

<sup>26</sup> Miller, fax to Hay 31 Jul 2001.

<sup>27</sup> \*The three Line Islands where Adventists reside are 2 hours ahead in time of the Gilbert Islands.

\*The US has a military installation on Kwajalein Island (in the Marshall Islands) and, until 1995, observed western date. On reverting to eastern date in the area, base workers have a Tuesday through Saturday workweek, which is Monday - Friday in the US. Adventists on the nearby atoll of Ebeye are unaffected.

<sup>28</sup> The Niue Act 1966 Amendment Bill of 1996, contained a Proposal to repeal Section 717 of the Calendar of Niue and substitute the following words -

"The calendar in Niue shall be the same day as the calendar in New Zealand..." South Pacific Division Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Director, Pastor R L Coombe forwarded a submission to the Niuean government stating that Adventists would then be worshipping on Sunday, the seventh day of Western date.

<sup>29</sup> There are some Adventists from Wallis Island living in the USA.

**S**oon the old year will have passed into eternity and the new year will have begun. Let us gather up the treasures of the past year, and carry with us into the new year the remembrance of God's goodness and mercy.

White, E G, *This Day With God*, R & H, 1979, p 358.



## THE STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE: INDIAN ADVENTIST SCHOOLS IN FIJI- Their establishment, operation and accomplishments, 1913 - 1956.

**Ram Brij**



*Ram Brij obtained his education at the Samabula SDA School and Dilkusha Boys School.*

*He gained Teachers C and D certificates at Nasimu Secondary Teachers College and a Diploma in TESL and School Administration from Leeds University in the UK.*

*He taught at Samabula SDA School and Fulton College for three years and thereafter was a teacher and Head teacher for 34 years in many government schools in Fiji. For five years he worked as a Visiting Teacher and Education Officer for the Fiji Education Department.*

*Ram married Sunaina Venus and they have two daughters, Rashmi and Brinda.*

*He & his wife live in retirement at Laucala Bay in Suva, Fiji.*

Sir Arthur Gordon, the first Governor, who arrived in Fiji, on 1 September 1895 introduced Indian labourers to work on sugarcane plantations, coconut plantations or in the cotton industry. So between 1879 and 1916 over 60,000 Indians arrived in Fiji as indentured labourers under the British Government. Some came of their own deliberate choice; some were tricked by the agents in India, who told them they would earn plenty of money in this new country.

On their arrival they had to sign a five-year agreement, which they mispronounced as "Girmit". If they remained another five years they were entitled to a return passage to India.<sup>1</sup>

The pay of the indentured labourer was one shilling a day for a man and nine pence for a woman. The contract proved to be "hell". There were illnesses, murder and suicide, over-tasking, bullying and beating of labourers. Personal privacy and normal family life were denied. Daily work began at dawn and ended at dark. Living conditions were pathetic. Despite widespread degradation, most survived the accompanying physical and mental torment. Sixty percent of Indian labourers remained permanently in Fiji. Many who went back to India after ten years did not stay there but returned to Fiji.

Of the 60,000 or more Indians who came to Fiji, more than 99% were non-Christian. They were Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs. They brought with them their culture, art and religion which they maintained in this foreign country.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs Ellen Meyers accompanied by her youngest son Harold arrived in Fiji on 17 October 1912. They were appointed by the Australasian Union Conference, and stationed in Suva to commence work among the 45,000 Indians living in the country at that time.

Mrs Meyers' knowledge of the Indian languages, culture and manners of the people acquired through a long experience in her work in India gave her a ready access to the people. Because the Indians in Fiji spoke many dialects, had an avowed belief in their heathen religions, and were apathetic towards Christianity the work of giving them the gospel message was a difficult problem that would take much of the spirit of God to solve.<sup>3</sup>

The indentured labourers were of the lower class and uneducated. Whatever their surroundings may have been in India, their present circumstances were, to say the least, not very uplifting. There was no effort made either by the government or by the employers to improve their situation. It was only after a stubborn fight that the Christian missionary was allowed to instruct either children or adults.

Ellen Meyers met the people and studied their conditions. The one great cry of the people was "Teach us English", and she came to the conclusion that God was impressing her that this could be the entering wedge. She was afraid of the danger of putting the secular before the teaching of God's Word. The Indian people truly had so little knowledge of it. She thanked the Lord for the open door, laid aside her preconceived ideas and opened a small night school—her first students, being three nominal Christians, one Hindu, and one Mohammedan.

From February 1913 to May 1914, she conducted this night school four nights a week from 7pm to 9.30 pm. From time to time the number of young people in attendance rose to twenty-two. It was dif-

difficult to maintain regular attendance for so many other things attracted the students' attention but those who did attend regularly certainly progressed. *English Reader 1* was used as a textbook. Simple Bible subjects were also taught. The day school for girls opened a few months later. The same subjects were taught at both times.<sup>4</sup>

The accommodation at her Toorak home was limited. She taught on a verandah twelve feet square so she could not take any more pupils. She thought she would begin in a small way and do faithful work, expecting great results in the future. God truly blessed her feeble efforts. Her students were impressed with the Bible stories in the *Gospel Primer*. She believed God's promise that his word would not return unto Him void. She also ran a Bible Study class on Sundays for the boys.<sup>5</sup>

When Pastors A G Stewart and E S Butz visited Meyers in Toorak Suva, she made a request for a mission home and a school, and a couple to assist her. These brethren had seen a property situated at Samabula three miles from Suva. The next day they arranged to lease a principal portion of land for an Indian Mission. The work of building the house was begun by brethren from Buresala and completed by the missionaries in Suva. The house contained four living rooms and a double bathroom and had a ten-foot verandah on all sides with two corners of the verandah enclosed. Each room was fourteen feet by twelve feet. A five-foot passage divided the main building thus making it a suitable dwelling for two families. It was well located on a breezy hill, with a good view of the Indian settlement and the sea.

The school in Toorak, Suva closed on 22 June 1914 and the new Samabula SDA School commenced on 10 August 1914 on the verandah of the mission house with three boys, that increased to sixteen by the end of the week. The Indians used were not eager to give education to the girls. Brother T. Driver joined Mrs Meyers in this new work.

In 1915 Mrs Meyers had Alfred and Lillian Chesson from Australia to assist her but they left that year in August to work in India.<sup>6</sup>

After working hard for over three years Ellen Meyers saw that there was no sign of anyone being converted among the Indians.

The Methodists, Catholic and Arya Samaj (Hindu Organisations) had schools in the vicinity as well as the Muslims. There was a request from the Indian community to teach Hindustani

as well in school but unfortunately the mission did not have Hindi teachers so some of the children went to schools which taught the language.<sup>7</sup>

It was not until 1917 that some results of the work could be seen. The school enrolment was forty-one, night school had four young men and there were twenty-five to thirty young people in Sabbath School.<sup>8</sup>

Mrs. Meyer's son Pastor Dudley Meyers arrived in 1918 as teacher/evangelist. The combined effort of the mother son team saw the first-fruit of their labour. Pastor Dudley Meyers described it thus: "It was indeed a joyful day for us to see that the first fruit of our labours presented to the Lord when brothers Suchit, Ram Khelawan and Abdul Rahim were baptized."<sup>9</sup>

In 1920 there was another landmark in the history of Indian work when the first Indian church was organized in Toorak, Suva where Mrs. Meyers had began a school. There were twelve members who worshiped there every Sabbath with their friends and relatives.<sup>10</sup>

Mr. & Mrs. Palmer came as a teacher and nurse in 1920 and began a school again in Toorak, in a rented house. Mr and Mrs Harold Meyers also arrived.<sup>11</sup> In 1922 Mrs Grace Neibuhr was put in charge of the girls school to allow Mrs Meyers to have a long overdue furlough and Mr G M Masters replaced Mr C S Palmer.

After 10 years of work there were fourteen baptized members—seven through educational work and seven through evangelistic efforts. There were three Indian workers, one teacher/evangelist and two teachers.<sup>12</sup>

In 1926 the Mission bought a bigger property (100 acres) at Samabula three miles away from Suva to have a school for both boys and girls on the same location and the headquarters for the Indian Mission. At the end of 1926 the report showed that after fourteen years of the combined efforts of teachers, evangelists and a nurse there were twenty-one members, one organized church and twenty unbaptized people attending church.<sup>13</sup>

In the following year Mr G M Masters returned from India after learning the Hindi and Urdu languages. He commenced the new school at Samabula. There were seventy-five students—sixty-day students, nine boys and five girls as boarders. There were shortages of trained SDA teachers so the school began a primary teacher-training course.<sup>14</sup>

Mr. Narain Singh, who was trained at Avondale College,



Mrs Myers passed away on 28 Feb 1958 at the age of 93.



The former Indian School at Samabula as it was in 1995—still used as a school

joined the teaching staff of the school in 1929. Other Indian teachers were Jacob Budhu, Govind and Paul Ramswarup. The school operated very successfully with good academic results. Many of the graduates from this school held senior positions in the Government.

In 1932 the Church commenced a school for the Indian community at Bua on Vanua Levu. Mr J B Ramswarup was the teacher with ninety students. After two years of operation the mission sold the school property to the Indian Community because of the financial difficulties and few converts.<sup>15</sup>

For a long time the mission wanted to establish work for the thousands of Indians on the west coast of Viti Levu, the main island of the Fiji Islands. Fortunately Pastor G M Masters was able to procure, for a very low price a piece of land at Rambulu about twelve miles from the famous Tavua goldmines.

The people of the village of Rambulu showed keenness to educate their children in a Christian school. So under the leadership of Pastor G M Masters, assisted by the Indians of Rambulu, a new village school was established. The people undertook to meet most of the cost of erecting the school building and to contribute yearly to the salary of a teacher. About thirty boys and girls attended this school in the first year and numbers increased as the years went by. The people were very happy with the Christian education because the moral and spiritual training received at the Seventh-day Adventist School enabled the pupils to use the secular knowledge to greater advantage. A church company was formed where children and some of the parents took part every Sabbath. When Pastor Masters left for Australia Pastor Karl

Brooks took charge of the Mission Station. The school closed in 1948 because the mission found it too expensive to operate and there were few converts. The school building was sold to the local community and the teachers quarters were pulled down and taken to Samabula SDA School. Pastor Karl Brooks was transferred to

Samabula Station.

In 1941 the School at Samabula had over 140 students. Mr. Butter was the head teacher with four SDA Indian teachers to assist him. The academic standard had risen to a very high level. The Fiji Mission felt that it was quite expensive to operate the school. There was also some dissatisfaction from the Fiji Mission because there were not many conversions.

When arrangements were made for the establishment of Fulton Missionary School, it was decided by the Fiji Mission to move the boarding section and its teacher training to Fulton. The leaders were in the midst of selling a portion of the land when the military authority of Fiji stepped in and bought the whole mission property to set up their military base for the defense of Fiji during World War II. The property with some buildings was sold to the government at a very satisfactory price.

The Indian communities at Samabula were favourably impressed with the Christian education given by the SDA Mission. So they appealed to a rich Indian landlord named Sukhu Mahajan who donated a valuable portion of freehold land, half a kilometre away from the old school. The Fiji Mission built a new school building and a day school began the same year with Narain Singh as the Head Teacher and four SDA Indian teachers. By 1946 the enrolment was over 200 but not all the teachers were SDAs. Although the missionary at the school conducted several evangelistic meetings there were few conversions. Compared with the Fijians the conversion rate was very slow.

The leaders in the Fiji Mission felt that the investment in the Indian work was not paying off. So in 1954 the Samabula SDA School was sold to

the Fiji Gujarat Education Society.

From 1941 Fulton Missionary School operated Primary, Intermediate, Teacher Training and Ministerial Training departments for Indian and Fijian students. The Indian students had separate dormitories for boys and girls and food services. The enrolment was good in both Primary and Intermediate sections. When Fulton Missionary School became the College for the Central Pacific Union in 1949, the Indian section was closed and the students amalgamated with the Fijian and the rest of the Central Pacific Union students.

The education standard at Fulton College was very high. Many students passed external examinations—School leaving, Qualifying, Cambridge and Teachers Certificates. Six of the teachers who graduated from Teachers' Certificate Course taught in SDA Indian Primary Schools.

The reasons for closing the Indian Schools were:

1. It was too costly to operate the schools.
2. There were not many converts.
3. The mission could not fully staff the schools with SDA teachers.

It is true that it costs a lot to operate schools but the leaders wanted immediate results and did not see the long-term possibilities. Because of the religious background of the Indians it is very difficult, well nigh impossible, to win them over a short term. Most of the Indians were simple folk, not versed in philosophy but wedded to their age long customs. The excitement of the periodical festivals and the family worship of their gods had by far the strongest hold on most Indians. The devotees of Islam were not only dogmatic in their assertions of the truth of Mohammed's teaching but militant and confident that their religion would win converts.<sup>16</sup>

The partnership of Government and the religious organisations in Fiji marked a new era in education in Fiji. The Methodist, Catholics, Hindus and Muslim organisations took the government grants to run their schools.

The Methodist Mission established Primary and Secondary Schools in all the towns and cities of Fiji for the Indian children. Their policy of direct evangelism to some extent was supplanted by the education policy. Teaching in their schools was supplemented by afternoon visitation to homes and evening Bible Classes and cottage prayer meeting.

L M Thompson, who became the far sighted Secretary for Education in the Indian Mission (1922-30) for the Methodists, envisaged a system for schools at all levels that would transform the Indian community morally and religiously.

He wrote: "Our first crystallizing of the vision is to plan for a Christian system of education—with the primary schools staffed by Christian men and women who will permeate all their work with

Christian influence—with its institutions for the training of Indian teachers who shall be men of character and integrity, and possible of spirituality. Our faith is that through these and other means, in our day and after, there will arise an India in Fiji that shall not be unworthy to take its part in the CITY OF GOD".<sup>17</sup>

Their work amongst the Indian people progressed steadily. They also built churches at the schools and have good membership.

The SDA Mission did not accept government grants to finance their schools according to Mission policy. Therefore due to financial difficulties, the easy option was to close all the Indian schools.

The future teachers were to come from our schools and it was not overnight work. If the schools had remained in operation there would have been enough SDA Indian teachers coming out of Fulton College to staff our schools.

The Indian work was not carried out consistently. When there were no conversions at a particular school or centre, the work was completely closed and moved to other areas. Hardly in any school was the work really consolidated.

For example, the schools at Rambulu, Bua and Samabula had good attendances and had church companies. There were organised Indian churches at Toorak and Samabula. After the schools closed and the European missionaries were recalled to Australia, the Indian work came to a standstill. The interests were neglected and between eighty to one hundred young people who had accepted the message through school evangelism were left without shepherds. Some of the faithful attended the English Speaking Church in Suva and at Fulton but the rest eventually drifted away back to their old religion. Those young people who remained faithful to the Lord kept the Gospel light burning among the Indian people.

The administrators of the time faced real difficulties in deciding whether to keep the schools going or to invest their meager funds in other forms of evangelism. Today there is the hope of a new day dawning for the Indian work in Fiji for there are more local Indian ministers than ever before sharing the Adventist message with their people.

#### References

- 1 Dr Ahmed Ali, *Pacific Islands*, p 32.
- 2 Methodist Booklet, *Fiji Indians*, pp 2, 9.
- 3 *Australasian Record*, 16 Dec 1912, p 16.
- 4 *AR*, 14 Sep 1914, pp 2, 7, 17, 19.
- 5 *AR*, 2 Jun 1913, p 12.
- 6 *AR*, 1 Feb 1915, p 1.
- 7 *AR*, 31 Jan 1916
- 8 *AR*, 12 Feb 1917, pp 2, 3.
- 9 *AR*, 29 Jul 1918, p 18.
- 10 *AR*, 12 Jan 1920, p 1.
- 11 *AR*, 12 Jan 1920, p 7.
- 12 *AR*, 7 Jun 1926, p 11.
- 13 *AR*, 18 Oct 1926, p 17.
- 14 *AR*, 7 Mar 1927, p 9.
- 15 *AR*, 8 Aug 1932, p 12.
- 16 Pastor Narayan Gounder, *Term Paper*, PAC.
- 17 Methodist Booklet, *Fiji Indians*, pp 46, 47.

# LETTERS

Readers from many places, including people from our Pacific Islands were generous in their support of the *Journal*.

Queensland: "Excellent." "Congratulations. There is much important history being lost as missionaries disappear from the scene."

North NSW: "It was good to be reminded of the many difficulties our pioneer missionaries faced." "Thank you so much for the *JPAH*."

Central Coast NSW: "Looks good." "...a most interesting and informative edition."

Sydney: "I thoroughly enjoyed Vol. I." "This is an important initiative which will help to ensure the denomination's wonderful heritage and exciting history is not lost forever."

"I was so impressed with the publication that I took it to the recent meeting of the Executive of our Association and showed it to them." Association of Business & Professional Members Ltd.

Victoria: "The *Journal* is full of interest."

West Australia: "The *Journal* stirred up a lot of memories."

PNG: "We certainly appreciate the vision."

Solomon Is: "We really enjoyed the first issue." "I've read the first one and I liked it very much."

Fiji: "I sincerely believe it is the most valuable resource material for the people of the Pacific."

USA: "Be assured that we have read every article, and much appreciated each one."

Germany: "Congratulations on this first issue of this very interesting *Journal*."

Oh dear! "You omitted Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands in your masthead!" noted a keen map observer. The omissions have been rectified.

## Establishing Pacific Adventist College

In his letter commenting on the providing of a kina coin as a deposit for holding the Tanuabada land, David Sutcliffe (Cooranbong, NSW) the then Education Director of the PNGUM who was present at the meeting, stated that he, in reply to the manager's statement that one kina would be satisfactory, provided the kina coin for him.

Other names mentioned in connection with the event were contacted for clarification but no further conclusive light was shed on the matter. Possibly with the passing of years details may have dimmed a little. However, taken in context, the main issue is not so much about who provided the coin, but the fact that the coin was actually provided and a receipt obtained. This meant that the Australasian Division had first option on the property—an option it exercised after further investigation. The valuable land passed into the hands of the church and PAC was built. Looking back we can see that God had His hand over affairs. —editor.

Ken Boehm (Ourimbah, NSW) writes that he feels engineer John Lauder deserves a mention for he was the first worker on the new PAC site. "He did surveying, took levels...PAC as it stands is his layout except the change of the single lake to two."

Ken also elucidates on the name of the estate, "Tanuabada." He and Pastor Wilf Pascoe feel that the name should be *Taorabada* for in the Hiri Motu language it means a large, flat plain and accurately describes the estate. However Pastor Lester Lock is more cautious saying that the land originally belonged to the Koiari people and not the Motu people and he knows of no Motu equivalent for "Tanua". Maybe further research is needed on this one!—editor.

## A National Expatriate of Note

Ron Taylor writes from Victoria Point in Queensland, and shares an interesting story about the influence of Adventist literature in Tuvalu;

"In the late 1940s. Pastor Neru, editor of the Samoan journal *O Le Tala Moni* (The true story) received a request from the Ellice Islands, for copies of the journal to be sent to an address in Funafuti. He later discovered the background to the request and this is what he told me.

"On one of the outer islands of the Ellice group (now Tuvalu) an elderly man named Papa was resting in his house in the cool of the late afternoon, when, he is not sure if he fell asleep or was 'day dreaming', but he clearly saw a newspaper called *O Le Tala Moni* with the title of the front page article clearly visible. It read 'O le Afio Toe Fa'alua Mai o Iesu.' (The Second Coming of Jesus) As he began to read, his interest was awakened and just as he was about to turn the page (in his dream) he was disturbed and awoke. Feeling frustrated at not being able to continue reading, he began to ask around the village, if anyone had seen a paper called *Tala Moni*, but no one had heard of such a paper. As he recounted his story to others in the village, people began to suspect that Papa was being overtaken by senility.

"Several weeks later, when just about everyone had forgotten the incident, a copra boat called at the island, and one of the crew began to hand out copies of *O Le Tala Moni*. One of the island men assisting with load-

ing copra, accepted the paper and seeing the title, said, "Isn't this the paper that Papa was asking about?" It was agreed that it seemed like it and some one took the paper to Papa's house, asking "Hey Papa, is this the paper you saw in your dream?" Excitedly Papa took the paper, and said, "There! Look at the front page, 'O le Afio Toe Fa'aluia Mai o Iesu'. Papa confirmed that this *was* indeed what he had seen in his dream, and as he turned the page to finish reading what he had read in his dream, this time he was wide awake, and devoured with spiritual hunger the word which told of Jesus return. Papa and his fellow islanders were greatly impressed with the message the *Tala Moni* brought to them, and also the way God had prepared them to receive it. Consequently a letter was sent to The editor in Apia of *O Le Tala Moni*."

Alec Thomson of Manjimup in Western Australia sheds further light on the repeal of the Closed Districts Ordinance in Tuvalu (Ellice)

"The High Commissioner's decree declaring the Ellice Is no longer closed in August, 1954, was in response to Pastor A W Martin's and my visit to Mr Beruacci, the Resident Commissioner of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony."

### Years of Practical Christianity—Fiji

Alec Thomson also comments on the influence of the welfare ladies:

"At the time there were floods in the north of Viti Levu in the early 1960's, we were having trouble renewing the Fulton land lease. However, the ladies in their welfare uniforms attracted the Governor's attention during his visit to the stricken areas. On being told they were Adventists he told the landowners of the Fulton property that it was the Adventists who were really helping Fiji." Obviously the Governor's remarks encouraged the landowners to renew the lease.

## Book Review

### *Into the Unknown*

Winsome and Ormond Speck.

42/571 Redland Bay Rd, Victoria Point, Queensland, 4165 Australia. 190 p, Pictures, pub 1999.

Cost A\$15 includes postage. May be obtained from the above address.

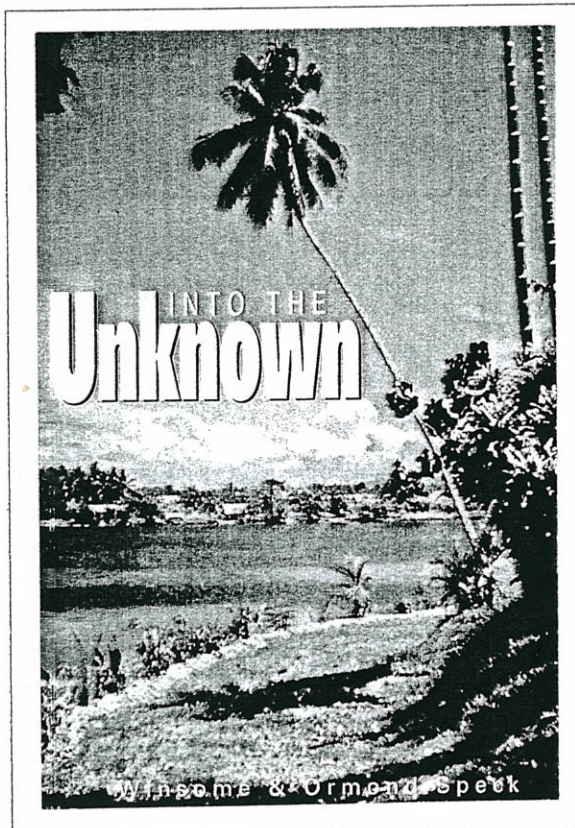
1. It is difficult to make comments on a well-prepared book authored by contemporary good friends who pioneered mission life at about the same time as the reviewer. Personal sentiments - 'Please move away.'

The latter three-quarters of *Into the Unknown* holds the reader intrigued with the incredible hardships endured

by the missionary's wife. From loneliness to short reunions; fear of the unknown to joy in family security in the motherland; the ever present danger of tropical sickness and/or accidents to the relaxed calm of modern medicine and southern hospital care.

A brave dedicated Christian couple has left their footprints on "The Land That Time Forgot." — New Guinea.

The book reveals a gripping story of raw courage in a land not made for 'white skins'. Any family which can successfully endure the daily hardships of



life on or near the mighty Sepik River with its billions of mosquitoes; hungry crocodiles; inadequate southern foods; a 24-hour 'sauna bath' temperature; and minimum communication 'out there', deserves to have their names shining in large bold letters from some monument wall.

The pictures are good and the type face is easy to read. The reviewer would have valued more paragraphs from the pen of the minister-teacher.

Once the reader opens the book, he/she is captivated until the last line:

'But we **do** know Who holds the future.'

2. You won't want to put this book down. Full of humour, drama, suspense and

the unexpected. Laugh with the Specks, cry with them and watch the hand of God at work on their behalf. This book tells the story of the opening of the work in PNG, especially among the feared Kukukuku people. Inspiring reading for teens, youth and adults.

Reviewers:

1. Laurence Gilmore of Alton Villas Retirement Village in Cooranbong, is well acquainted with the Specks for they served together in northeast New Guinea in 1948 & 1949.

2. Robert Possingham, retired Youth Leader.

## Life Sketches

### Samuela Daya Ratulevu (1933-2000)



Samuela Ratulevu was born in Suva, Fiji on 12 December 1933. He gained his primary school education at the Suvavou Adventist School (1941-44), and his secondary education (1945-51)

and training as a primary school teacher (1952-53), from Fulton Missionary College. Later on he obtained a Secondary School Teaching Diploma from Fulton College (1970-72), and a Bachelor's Degree at USP (1973-75).

He commenced a long and fruitful period of service for the church in education in 1954 when appointed to the Nanoko School inland from Nadi and Sigatoka. For the next six years he served as head teacher of the following primary schools: Naqarawai, Fulton and Suvavou. From 1960 till 1965 he was an expatriate teacher on the staff of the Parker Missionary School in Vanuatu.

On returning to Fiji in 1966 Samuela taught at Vatuvonu Central School for two years, then at Suvavou from 1968-69, and again at Vatuvonu in 1972. After completing further study in 1976 he commenced a six year period of secondary school teaching at Fulton College. A second period of expatriate service followed, this time for three years at the Mirriwini Gardens Aboriginal School in NSW, Australia. While there he also pursued further studies in education at the New England University at Armidale. From 1985 he served as the Fiji Mission Education Director for three years, and in addition, as Mission Secretary for the last two years. Appointed Mission President he served in this position for a five year term from 1988 till 1992, at which time he retired.

Samuela married Salanieta Vagewa on the 28th of January, 1958. To this union were born three children: Apimeleki, Losalini and Iliana.

He passed away in the South Brisbane Hospital on 12 May 2000. A competent teacher, Samuela strove to motivate his pupils to reach high standards of learning. He was known for his spirit of reconciliation in dealing with problems among the people, and his love for the Adventist message led him to conduct many successful evangelistic meetings. During his retirement years he initiated, on behalf of his village people in Suvavou, a successful plan to build a 10 story building in Suva city, and saw the project through to fruition. He sleeps awaiting his Master's call.

### Sam Dick

1915-2001



Sam Dick was born on the Island of Malekula in Vanuatu.

Sadly his mother was murdered by his Big Nambus father. After accepting the Adventist message he served as a teacher in Mis-

sion schools in Vanuatu for 19 years, from 1932-1950. Then for the next 7 years, from 1951-1957, he pastored several churches. Missionary service overseas followed in 1957. For three years Sam served in the CSUM as a field worker in the Wabag area in the Province of Enga in PNG. On returning to Vanuatu he commenced work as a district director from 1960. In 1967 he returned to pastoring churches until his retirement in 1972.

In 1941 he married Noorah. They had three children; 2 sons, Laurence (1954) and Nathan (1958), and a daughter, Lottie (1963). Sam was ordained to the gospel ministry on 13 May 1950. In 1980 he attended the General Conference Session in Dallas, Texas USA as a WPUM delegate.

When he retired Sam continued to be active in church work. This servant of God, a humble and warm-hearted man, who came from the Big Nambus cannibal tribe, believed the promises of God in His Word, and shared his convictions with all who would listen. He passed to his rest on 6 January 2001.

**Photo Credits:** Cover & p 5 Andrew Stewart & aeroplane—L Barnard

p 2 SPD Mission Hostel—D Hay

p 19 School—J Reynaud

p 27 Map—Meyers Grosses Konversationslekiou, Bd 4

p 34 Mrs Meyers—Australasian Record

p 39 Samuela Ratulevu—W Talemitoga; Sam Dick—Eric Were

p 10 Bennie Tavodi—Kelvyn Carr

p 22 Parker & Nicholson—Australasian Record

p 28 IDL map—D Hay

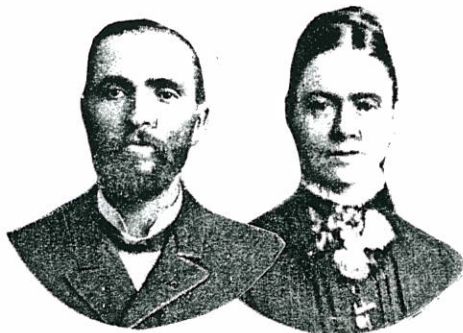
p 35 Samabula School—D Hay

# On the first voyage of the *Pitcairn* from San Francisco USA—

John & Hannah Tay  
stayed in Fiji  
Aug 1891/Jan 1892

Edward & Ida Gates  
stayed on Pitcairn Is  
Jul 1892/feb 1894

Albert & Hattie Reid  
stayed in French Polynesia  
Aug 1892/1895



These pioneer families made their homes in the countries of the South Pacific and spread the Good News of the Gospel and the fulfilling prophecies.

