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Camp Meeting in the Eastern Highlands-Simbu Mission in PNG during August 1989, with more than 30,000 people present when Neil Wilson, GC President was there. On Sabbath 16 August, nearly 4,600 people were baptised by 127 ministers in the Keiya River.

Editorial



ONE CANNOT REFLECT for long on the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific without coming to the conclusion that mission has been the lifeblood of the organisation. The spectacular growth of the Church in the nations of the Pacific during the twentieth century is indicative of the energy and enthusiasm with which the missionary enterprise has been pursued. The 2000 census taken in Papua New Guinea has revealed that over 500,000 persons in that country alone have nominated the Seventh-day Adventist Church as their church.

This magazine gives us a unique opportunity to chronicle events which remind us of the commitment to God and the zeal for the gospel commission of so many who have served God in the South Pacific. It reminds us that we have much to celebrate as we read of their exploits and challenges and rejoice in their accomplishments under the leading and blessing of the Holy Spirit.

As one reflects, however, one cannot help but wonder what the future holds. How will mission be different? Where are the people who are going to follow in the footsteps of these pioneers? Is mission rapidly becoming just a quaint anachronism from the past in the minds of many? Can a strong sense of vision survive the influences of urbanisation and secularisation and relativism and pluralism and post-modernism and...?

The spirit of service and the call to mission must not be allowed to fade from the minds and hearts of Seventh-day Adventists. The church has no future if it is not compelled by the desire to see the hand of the Lord moving on the hearts and lives of individuals and nations. The task for today is to translate the means and methods of the past into the means and methods of the twenty-first century and to see God work.

Dr Barry Oliver
Secretary South Pacific Division



Evangelists and church pastors in the Port Moresby District, from left: Pastor Barry Oliver, District Director; Warburi Leva, Gilbert Egu, Magea Kivali, Harold Richardson, Karl Jack and Manoah Kara [January 7, 1980]

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ADVENTISM'S EXPLOSIVE PRESENCE Factors influencing the growth of the church in Papua New Guinea—from 1960-2000



IN 1908 the Seventh-day Adventist Church arrived in Papua, in the New Guinea Islands in 1924, and probably in 1934 in mainland New Guinea. During the first 62 years (1908-1960), the work of the church progressed very slowly. However, since the 1960s, the average growth rate (AGR) has hovered around 7 per cent. This article looks briefly at the early days of the church in Papua New Guinea (PNG), as well as identifying factors influencing growth in membership between the years 1960 and 2000.

Brief History of Growth 1908-1960

Pastor S W Carr and his wife, with Peni (Bennie) Tavodi, a Fijian teacher,

worked as pioneer missionaries in PNG in 1908.¹ Because of the "Comity Agreement," an arrangement dividing the country into geographical spheres of influence² they had difficulty securing land along the coast. Finally in 1910 a lease of 130 acres was granted 27 miles inland from Port Moresby, at Bisiatabu. This became the first mission station in Papua. It is still in use today. Gordon Smith, his wife and a Rarotongan (Cook Islander) named Solomona and his wife joined the first missionaries later in 1910.

About 13 April 1921, G F Jones and his wife sailed for Papua. They explored territory further inland, later to become known as the "Kokoda Track" of World

Aaron D Lopa DMin, was born on Wuvulu, a small atoll lying west of Manus Province in PNG. His father, a pagan priest died before the arrival of the first Adventist missionary in May 1952. His mother became an Adventist & was among the first to be baptised on the atoll. Aaron attended Nagum Adventist Primary School in the Sepik area & while there was baptised on 2 Nov 1959.

In 1962 he went to Kabiufa High School, then to Sonoma College on the island of New Britain graduating in 1968 with a Diploma of Theology.

He was a pastor/evangelist in Port Moresby—1969 to 1971. He taught at Sonoma College from 1972-75. He married Elizabeth there on 8.12.74.

The family spent 4 years at Philippine Union College where Aaron graduated with BA & MA degrees in Religion. On their return to PNG he served as a chaplain for students at the University of PNG in Port Moresby. He became Head of Theology & Deputy Principal at Sonoma College from 1981-88. He was ordained to the gospel ministry at the union session at Kabiufa in 1985. He served as theology lecturer at PAC for the next 4 years. In June 1993 the Lopa family went to Andrews University in the USA where he was awarded a doctorate in June 1996.

He returned to PAU where he still lectures in the Faculty of Theology. Elizabeth worked in the Library at Sonoma College and now cares for the Pacific Heritage Collection at PAU. The Lopas have three children—Jamie, Jennifer and Nathan.

War 11 fame. Emily Heise (Nurse) and Nafitalai (Fijian) assisted them in their work. Later Jones and his wife returned to the Solomons.

In 1929, G F Jones, accompanied by G Peacock and A G Stewart left the Solomons and sailed to the New Guinea Islands in the Bismarck Archipelago, where they established a mission station at Matupit. This significant development became the first mission outpost in the New Guinea Islands.

From Matupit, the church spread into neighbouring islands and then to mainland New Guinea. In 1930 Captain G McLaren, with Robert Salau, Oti (Solomon Islanders), and Hereman, a native of Matupit, founded the church in the Saint Mathias groups (Mussau, Emira and Tench).

Then Mussau became an important base for the church to move to mainland New Guinea and the rest of the New Guinea Islands. The entire population of the Saint Mathias group became Adventists, providing missionaries to other areas for many years even to this day.

Three years later in 1933, A G Stewart, G McLaren and Robert Salau pioneered mission work in the Admiralty Islands (Manus—the writer's home territory). The missionaries first arrived in Tong and later moved to Lou and Baluan Islands. Then in 1934 McLaren, with ten people from Mussau and Matupit, surveyed Central New Guinea. There they established the first mission outpost at Kainantu, which became an important base, reaching out to other parts of the Highlands of New Guinea and the North Coast, now known as the Momase region.³

Although territorial gains were made conversions were rather slow. Carr and Tavodi worked for nearly six years before they saw their first convert, a boy named Taitu, who was baptised in 1914.⁴

Taitu did not stay long as his father later removed him from the school.

After Carr left, a second convert (Baigan) was baptised in 1920. Four years later William Lock baptised 11 young people at Bisiatu.⁵

Thus the work had quite humble

beginnings in PNG. The pioneers faithfully did their work and today abundant results are to be seen in the harvest field of this nation. By 1940 membership stood at 1,780 in Papua and 4,000 in New Guinea mainland and New Guinea Islands, giving a total membership of 5,780.

Following the initial slow growth of the church the work began to gather momentum after World War II. From 1940 to 1960 the membership grew to 9,902, a net gain of 4,122 members in 20 years.⁶ World War II played a major role in the growth of the church during this period.

Growth from 1960 to 2000

Papua New Guinea has seen a rapidly increasing Adventist presence during these years as can be seen from this table.

Decade	Members	Net Gain
1960-1970	9,902	13,922
1971-1980	23,824	35,105
1981-1990	58,929	69,002
1991-2000	127,931	89,549

At the end of 2000 the membership of the Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM) had reached the 207,480 mark. The average annual growth rate from 1975 to 2000 had been consistently around 7 per cent.

On his month-long itinerary in the South Pacific Division, Myron Widmer (an associate editor of the *Adventist Review*) had this to say about Western Highlands Mission:

The mission has 26,000 members and 112 organised churches, which are responsible for 672 companies (hand churches). As in the rest of Papua New Guinea, the membership growth is skyrocketing – 54 per cent in the past six years. 'Explosive' is the word for it! And the year's gain through October 1993 has already surpassed all of 1992.⁷

"Skyrocketing" and "explosive" were appropriate words used by Widmer to describe the growth of the church since the 1980s. Commenting on this growth in his report for 1990, the Secretary of the South Pacific Division said:

If the present growth rate continues in

Papua New Guinea Union Mission for the next six years, there will be as many members in that Union as are presently in the entire Division. This suggests the need for a careful look at the future of that Union.”⁸

By the year 2000, more than 58 per cent of the Division membership resided in PNGUM.

As an intern minister in Port Moresby in 1969, I remember only three organised churches in the city with dozens of branch Sabbath schools. Five of these are now organised churches. In 2002 we have around 20 churches, of which six have more than 600 members attending every Sabbath. Half of the membership is sitting outside every week.

Apart from the 20 organised churches in the Port Moresby district, we have scores of “hand churches” or “grow one.” Some of the hand churches have 200 to 300 members (for example, Makana). Interestingly, many of the hand churches operate in the same way as organised churches with their own nominating committees. Legally they are operating by default.

So the growing church in PNG is a far cry from the days of the pioneers. This explosive growth has not occurred by accident. The next section deals with factors influencing this growth.

Factors Contributing to Growth in PNG

The apostle Paul often uses the “body of Christ” metaphor to describe the church. It is useful to extend this analogy a little to analyse its health. A healthy body has vital signs that reveal its physical condition. What are the vital signs of a growing church? What factors influence the growth of the church in PNG? I shall discuss the various factors under five main subheadings: institutional, national, cultural, satellite, and the Holy Spirit.

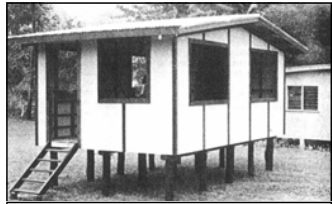
A. Institutional

Institutional factors are internal to the church over which the church has at least some control. They can be divided into national factors—those at the Union level, and the local factors—that are internal to the local congregations. Decisions at each level play their part.

I. Union Level -- Nation- wide

1. *Baptismal goals:* The PNGUM sets a baptismal goal every year. This was especially so in the decades of the eighties and nineties. The practice provides incentives and motivation for the local missions in their evangelistic planning and witnessing activities.

2. *The Bible Speaks Programs:* The Union organised nation-wide Bible Speaks programs where every local church was encouraged to conduct an evangelistic



To care for an increasing number of children a lamb shelter was built at Kokoda

meeting. The Union funded and provided materials such as advertisements and sermons. Union departmental personnel, including the president, were encouraged to conduct an evangelistic program.

3. *Laymen Schools:* The establishment of the so-called Laymen Schools in some of the local missions has influenced and strengthened the outreach programs of local churches during this period.

One Union departmental director claims that 80 per cent of the baptisms in PNG came as the result of the witness of the laity. Following the example of the apostolic church, the PNG church is predominantly a lay movement.

I attended the opening of a local church near Mt Hagen. I learned that there were only three baptised members in that church. I later asked the man who built the church seating more than 100, “Why build a big church when there are only three of you?” He replied: “Build it big, so we can fill it up.” This is the kind of spirit that makes churches grow.

4. *The Grow One.* The “Grow One” concept, a church-planting program, was not fully utilised until 1985-1990, during the “Harvest 90” emphasis. The PNG slogan for Harvest 90 was “Grow One,” meaning every local church was expected to develop one new congregation for the quinquennium.⁹

Bruce Manners, editor of the *Record*, wrote:

The Harvest 90 slogan in Papua New Guinea is not just win one, but to grow one. The members aren’t satisfied with just winning one soul; each church has its goal to grow another new congregation.¹⁰

The Grow One concept caught on like wild-fire and the Union lost count of the number of hand churches. Pastor Yori Hibo, the Union President during the 1985-1990 quinquennium, confessed:

The church is growing more and it’s causing problems. I’ve asked the presidents in the local missions to develop the hand churches into organised churches... Currently we have 500 hand churches in

Eastern Highlands Mission and about 600 in the Western Highlands Mission. Some of these companies have 50, 60 or even 200 members; they need to be organised.¹¹

When the Grow One concept was first introduced, the plan involved each organised church planting one new church for the quinquennium. Thus each mother church would parent one new church (company). In reality, however, some churches planted ten new grow ones. Even more amazing some of the company churches grew their own grow ones.

Thus the Grow One program was one of the main factors contributing to the explosive growth of the church in PNG in the eighties. Churches are active in this work even today. The greatest year in soul-winning in terms of baptisms in PNG came from this period (1989). Baptisms for that year totalled 16,066.

5. *Strong leadership:* When ministers are enthusiastic in the outreach of the church, it gives a moral boost to the lay leaders and members. One of the strong forces behind the growth during the eighties was the leadership of Pastor Chester Stanley, the Ministerial Secretary of the Union. When the church leadership is mission-focused, members are quick to take up the challenge.

6. *Colporteur ministry:* The Union has a very active literature evangelist ministry. Colporteurs go from house to house and from office to office selling truth-filled literature, resulting in many Bible studies and eventually baptisms. In addition to the colporteur ministry, we have ABC branches established in almost all centres of the country in each of the local missions.

II. Local Church

Local factors of course relate to what happens in the local areas or churches. These are the immediate factors given that they are closer to where the real action is taking place. These are:

1. Local churches have their own soul-winning goals. In a special sense the local churches are mission driven. They organise units of outreach such as Branch Sabbath Schools, street witnessing, prison ministry, hospital visitations, letter-writing ministry, Revelation Seminars, Voice of Youth, etc.

2. Local ministers provide strong leadership and are supported by the lay leaders, both men and women.
3. The members understand that soul-winning is the primary mission of the church. This motivates them to become actively involved in witnessing. They are not ashamed to talk about their faith and religion in public places and offices.
4. It is a young church. As Peter Wagner points out:

The highest potential for evangelism through the role of witness comes from the new converts who still have natural bridges to unsaved friends and relatives.¹²



A group of mission workers. National evangelist, Aaron Lopa is the first one in the back row beside Pastor Bill Liversidge.

A good example of this factor came from the story of Magela, Ura, and Ilo. Magela was a United Church lad, a student at Kilakila High School. He was studying the Bible with a minister, and used the materials to give Bible studies to Ura and Ilo, who attended the same school. The good news of the gospel resulted in Ura and Ilo joining Magela in the sacrament of

baptism on his great day.

Thus the young church has a greater potential for growth compared to older churches. So often it seems that the longer a person is assimilated into the church the less contact he has with non-Adventist friends. The church in Papua New Guinea is a young and vibrant church with new members and, therefore, a growing church.

B. National Factors

Matters external to the church often indirectly affect what happens in religious life. They are present in the community and culture surrounding the church. National factors affect the growth of churches regardless of the local setting. Specific conditions in a particular community or locality can be outweighed by these wider influences.¹³

National factors that may affect the church are socio-structural, political, and economic conditions, etc. 1. The Adventist church has a positive image in the community. It has influential members in all levels of government. Many Adventists are elected members of the PNG National Parliament and the Provincial Governments. Many of them have a positive influence in high places.

2. The SDA church has a strong private school system that contributes to the development of national and community leaders, which influences the image of the church nationally. Adventists are numbered among the judges of the National or Supreme Courts (Justices Salika, Sevua, and Kandakasi). They are all active office-holders in their local churches.
3. Vatican II's (1963) decision to allow Roman Catholics to own and read the Bible has had a national impact in relation to growth in PNG. This is because the nation is predominantly Catholic, and as people read the Bible for themselves, it becomes much easier for them to relate to what is truth on the basis of the Bible.
4. Religious instruction in state-run schools (primary, secondary, and national high schools). Pastor Rex Tindall writes:

Here at Kainantu we have an excellent 700-pupil National High School that allocates an hour one morning each week for religious instruction. Imagine my thrill at having 400 students attending my weekly class. The rest of the school is divided among six other denominations. One local state primary school has the whole student body attending our religious instruction classes.¹⁴

C. Cultural Factors

The cultural factors are the local characteristics present in the traditional community which influence the growth of the church.

1. Less materialism: The church grows fastest in areas where people are less exposed to materialism and Western influences. In fact the two highland missions combined have more than half of the total Union membership.
2. Traditional culture is accustomed to worshipping something. The people are religious and are naturally attracted to anything of an overtly religious nature.¹⁵
3. The kinship network (oikos): When a person is converted he/she goes back to share the gospel with his/her relatives. I think of Atu, a girl from Kepamo in the Eastern Highlands. After she accepted Jesus and was baptised, she returned home and brought her father, a devout Lutheran who was a village Court Magistrate. Today we have a church at Kepamo village, a monument to Atu who takes the gospel to her kinsfolk. Atu's story can be repeated throughout PNG. In a community-oriented society the kinship factor is very effective.
4. As people move into urban centres away from the culturally controlled rural village life, they become receptive to changes and new ideas and easily receive the gospel. This is true as well in most "spheres of influence." Some of those who are converted in the cities and towns go back to establish churches in their vil-

lages where there had been no Adventist presence before.

Gibson is a good example of such people. He came from Wanigela in Tufi and served as a Warden in Bomana. He accepted Christ and became a Seventh-day Adventist Christian in 1992. He retired from active service, went back to his village and started a company church. At the time of writing (5/2/02) he visited me to get a Picture Roll to use in his outreach work.

D. Satellite Factor

In the nineties (1990-2000) one of the new factors that greatly influenced church growth was the use of television evangelism in the form of Net 95, 96, 97, 98, 99 and Acts 2000. The last-named program attracted more than 100,000 in Port Moresby and thousands in other centres. Baptisms for 2000 as reported in the Division midyear report in 2001 were more than 15,000.

Acts 2000 was also aired through FM radio stations. It reached more people than the TV program itself, even though the Em TV (National TV Station) broadcast Acts 2000 at lunchtime free of charge. Baptisms resulting from Nets and Acts 2000 programs cannot be accurately assessed, as we don't really know those who are influenced and converted through the satellite programs.

Many lay people are screening the Dwight Nelson, the Doug Batchelor and Mark Finley tapes all over the country, and are leading many people to Christ. So satellite evangelism is a plus for PNG even though it is expensive.

E. The Holy Spirit Factor

Without the Holy Spirit there can be no conversion (John 3:3-5). While the Holy Spirit can operate outside the boundaries of the visible church as seen in the story of the Magi (Matthew 2), God has organised His plans so that the Holy Spirit works through the visible church as well as being present with individuals to reach those around them. (Revelation 22:17)

From history we know that the Holy Spirit was active where the church was active. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit came on a busy church not an idle one.

So where the church is active the Spirit is active as well. He uses the witness of the church and turns it into a rich harvest of souls for the kingdom of God in PNG.

Church growth is an extremely complex process. The factors explained in this article have combined with the power and work of the Holy Spirit to deliver extraordinary results. Obviously the Spirit is not limited to the foregoing activities and we shall yet see even

more explosive growth of the church as the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Since the 1960s the Adventist Church in Papua New Guinea has given a wonderful demonstration of the Spirit's leading and the work of dedicated soul-winners. Praise God for a church that can grow so dramatically under such leadership.

References and Notes

¹ The SDA Encyclopaedia, vol. 10, p 1073.

² The "Comity Agreement" was negotiated between Sir McGregor, the Governor of the Colony, and representatives from the London Missionary Society (LMS), the Methodists and the Anglicans in 1880. The agreement carved the country into "geographical spheres of influence" for each of the denominations. The agreement prohibits each denomination from proselytising in each other's territory. This is why the coastal areas are dominated by various denominations (e.g. Central Papua-LMS, Milne Bay and Oro-Anglican, Morobe and Madang-Lutheran, Sepik-RC, and Gulf and Western-LMS). See D A Lea and P G Irwin, *New Guinea: The Territory and Its People*, Melbourne, Australia, Brown, 1967, pp 8, 9.

³ Momase is a coined word made up of the first two letters from the names of the three north coast provinces (MOrobe, MAadang, and SEpik). It refers to the North Coast region of mainland New Guinea, as well as to the people who live there.

⁴ Bruce Manners, "We Can Be PNG Proud," *Record*, 15 January 1994, p 3.

⁵ id, p 2.

⁶ Membership figures for the early period are difficult to get. There may be errors of up to 10 per cent either way in the figures cited. However, they do illustrate the trend and direction.

⁷ Myron Widmer, "Papua New Guinea," *Adventist Review*, 20 January 1994, p14.

⁸ "SPD Secretary Reports Progress," *Record*, 23 June 1990, p 7.

⁹ Chester Stanley, "PNG Growing New Churches," *Record*, 29 August 1987, p 12.

¹⁰ Bruce Manners, "Snippets From the Midyear Meeting," *Record*, 28 June 1985, p 5.

¹¹ Bruce Manners, "Meet the President," *Record*, 15 Jan 1994, p 6.

¹² C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow*, Ventura, CA: Regal, 1984, p 93.

¹³ Dean R Hoge and David A Roozen, ed., *Understanding Growth and Decline*, New York: Pilgrim, 1979, pp 38-40.

¹⁴ Rex Tindall, "Re-tired Missionary Returns to Service in PNG After 20 Years," *Record*, 11 July 1987, p 12.

¹⁵ Myron Widmer, "Papua New Guinea," *Adventist Review*, 20



A DREAM AND AN INNER VOICE

How the Seventh-day Adventist Mission came to Inland Wewak in the Sepik area of Papua New Guinea

by *Robert Jonathan as told to Shirley Tarburton



Shirley is senior lecturer in History at PAU where she & her husband Dr Mike Tarburton have been for the past 5 years. She graduated from Avondale College in 1968 & has completed a BA in History & English Literature, & an MA in History. She has spent 33 years teaching in SDA schools in the Solomon Is, Tasmania, Western Australia, Fiji, NZ, Victoria, Samoa &

WHEN IT SEEMS impossible for dedicated men of God to penetrate areas held in the grasp of the devil, God not only has His miraculous ways of using humble men who are His faithful servants to be His witnesses, but on occasions He sends specific dreams to alert heathen men to prepare for his messengers and pave the way for their acceptance of his message of salvation. This was certainly how it worked when God's time was right for the light of truth to shine in Wewak and inland on the Sepik and Karawari Rivers.

The first Seventh-day Adventist presence on the north-eastern coast of New Guinea was initiated in 1942¹ when four teachers from Mussau Island went to Madang to teach reading and writing to the children there and to begin evangelistic outreach.² They had been sent from the Seventh-day Adventist Mission station at Kainantu, in the Highlands, by Pr S H Gander and were successful from the outset despite

the fact that the country was in the grip of World War II. The Third Angel's Message spread quickly along the coast to the Rai Coast in the south-east and north-west to the Sepik area.³

After the war, due to the earlier successes, the Mission Committee decided it was time to extend the work further west into the Wewak area. At a meeting in 1949, S H Gander was requested to survey the region. Details were finalized during a second meeting and at this time Gander was temporarily assigned the mission vessel *M.V. Lelaman* for his work. He was to be based at Wewak, so he could concentrate on the north coast between Wewak and Bogia. He also understood that for the present, he was not to engage in any building work.⁴ So in November 1949, Pastor Gander and his team sailed out of Madang Harbour and headed in a north-west direction for the Sepik River and beyond, about a hundred miles away⁵

PNG. Shirley spent 5 years in the Southern Asia Division with her missionary parents & travelled widely in India & Sri Lanka. She has authored 3 books of history & co-authored one which was a finalist in the prestigious Alexander Henderson awards for Australian historical writing. She has also presented seminars on various historical topics, the two most recent being in Adelaide, SA and Andrews University, Michigan.

This story arises from an assignment by Robert Jonathon, a student in her class in Pacific Church history.

Shirley & Mike have a daughter & son, both married and living in Melbourne.

ROBERT
JONATHON



Robert is 36 years old. A graduate of the ministerial course at Sonoma in 1989, he served as a church minister for 9 years before attending PAU. He graduated in 2002. He was ordained to the ministry in 1997.

He is married to Julian & they have 3 children, Dexter, Devlyn & Derrick. His mother was instrumental in establishing an SDA church in his home village of Tangara. Robert now teaches Bible at Mount Diamond Adventist High School.

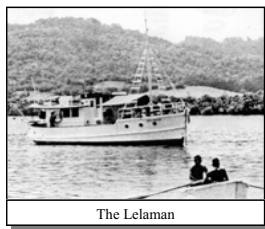
Their first stop was at Kadovar, one of the twelve islands in the Schouten group just off the mainland coast. The people there were very friendly and treated them kindly inviting them to stay, but the missionaries explained that they must continue their trip. However, they did promise that they would return later and establish mission work on their island. As they were leaving the people shouted, "don't forget us and fail to return".⁶

On arrival at Wewak they spent a day investigating the possibilities of beginning work in the town, but were disappointed to be told that the Roman Catholic Mission was well entrenched and there was no way they would be allowed to work there. In fact this Mission's dominance extended along the coast in both directions. Gander and friends were surprised to learn that theirs was the first Protestant Mission boat to come to the area.⁷

The *Lelaman* returned to the mouth of the Sepik where Pr Gander and his group spent the weekend at Kopar before sailing up the mighty Sepik, surveying the villages along the river. They were given friendly welcomes at Kambaramba, Biwat, Moim, Angoram, Keram River, Bobtai, and Kam-bot and then sailed down the Karawari River and visited Mindibit, Yimas and Kundimai. Everywhere they went the people requested that the SDA mission send someone to their village.⁸

After five weeks, the group arrived back in Madang and made their report. Then over the next two years (1950-1952) New Guinean missionaries were gradually sent in reply to many of the requests made to Pastor Gander. A teacher was sent to Kadova Island, which became the first Adventist mission station in the Sepik area. This was followed by an area to be evangelised along the Sepik river, first as far as Angoram and later to Ambunti.⁹

In 1952 the CSUM¹⁰ appointed S H Gander to return to the Sepik district to open up more territory with particular emphasis on Wewak. The intention was to establish a headquarters in Wewak and to



The Lelaman

further explore ways of extending the reach of the Adventist message along the coast westwards and inland into the mountain area.¹¹ As on his previous trip, his first stop-over was at the Schouten Islands where he was pleased to find that the missionaries there had had moderate success and that the work was progressing, albeit slowly, throughout the islands of the group.¹² However, he was troubled about how to enable the SDA Mission to commence work in his target area as the Roman Catholic Church was still very dominant in the region and no Protestant representatives had been permitted to evangelise there.

After much prayer and pleading with God for guidance, Gander had the distinct impression of a voice speaking in his mind. It said, "In the morning take four helpers and go to the Wewak coast. There you will meet a man who will be waiting to see you."¹³ So early the next morning, Pr Gander left the Schouten Islands accompanied by Taoha, Kohoi, Peter Pondek and Iwa, and set out for Wewak.

The Dream

Ours was a chiefly family with a great deal of power and influence in this area. About this time, in Musuhagen, a heathen mountain village some two days walk inland from Wewak, my uncle, Porei, also received a message. The people there knew nothing about Jesus or the plan of salvation so they worshipped the spirits, and obtained magical power from the devil to do many evil things—even kill people. Everyone lived in fear and life there was going from bad to

worse. Not long before this, a number of people had died. My other uncle, Porei's brother, who was a devil priest and also a great warrior could do anything he wished with his high status and satanic power. He even used his supernatural power to influence battles between tribes, making sure our tribe won. This was natural to him and he enjoyed using the evil power to accomplish his wishes.¹⁴

Porei's message came to him in the form of a dream in which he was standing watching a small white ship heading towards the shore. The captain was a white man, and on board were a number of New Guinea men with clean clothes and shiny white teeth. The white man called out to him in his dream and said, "We will be coming to your village in three weeks. Tell the people in all the villages to come and meet with us because we have a very special message to bring to you all."

In the morning he told everyone about his dream and the news quickly spread throughout the village. His brother was also impressed and joined him in going to other villages up in the hills to announce the coming of the white man. Many had never seen a white man. Some of them thought they were the spirits of our ancestors who were visiting to give us comfort and peace in the times of trouble and fear that they were facing.

After spreading the news of the coming visitors, my uncle hurried up the steep trails and across the mountain ridges to meet the expected group. He spent two nights on the way and was anxious in case he would arrive too late and miss them. However, as he was nearing the end of the bush trail approaching the shore, he saw a man coming towards him. How pleasantly surprised he was to see that it was the very man he had seen in his dream and was so happy to have his dream come true.

He learned that the visitor's name was Pastor Gander and with him were the other four missionaries he had seen so together they started back up to the village. When they arrived my people were very happy to welcome these special visitors and were also thrilled to hear the wonderful story of salvation.

So many people from other villages were interested too that the missionaries separated so that they could minister to more people. Pastor Gander and Peter Pondek remained in my village and stayed with my uncle in his home, while the other missionaries went out to the other villages to work and continue spreading the gospel. My people were amazed to see that the gospel had a greater power than the power of Satan. This was a tremendous challenge for the gospel to face and as could be expected there was great opposition from the

evil forces. However, soon great changes began taking place in the people's lives. As the evil forces were forsaken by the people and started to disappear from our village under the power of the presence of the Holy Spirit, everyone saw that God's power was much stronger than the devil's power. The people gave up their spirit worship and gradually all of them began to worship the true God of heaven and built a simple bush church and there they worshipped their new Friend.

My uncle, Porei, said, "Our lives were completely changed and we no longer lived in fear of devils. Now we were healthier, cleaner, and happier. We began to see the real purpose of life - that we have a special reason for living on this earth."¹⁵

The Gospel Spreads

After the church in Musuhagen was established and the people were firm in the faith, the missionaries moved on to other villages and towns along the Sepik River and along the coastal areas of Wewak. Now they were allowed to stay. The *Spheres of Influence* agreement was no longer being upheld by the government and the main opposition was from the other missions themselves. When the people welcomed new missionaries into their villages, there was not too much that the opposing groups could do about it.

The Adventist church spread from Musuhagen to Nimbohu, Harigen, Baimuru and other villages. After Pastor Gander went to Wewak to set up the mission headquarters there, Pastor Peter Pondek from Manus Island remained in Musuhagen and soon a big church was needed to accommodate all of my people who were learning about the love of Jesus and the hope of salvation.

It was almost three years before the first Seventh-day Adventist baptism was conducted in our village in 1956, when my mother and six other candidates demonstrated their faith in and love for Jesus, and for the greatest truth that they had ever discovered, by going through the waters of baptism. After witnessing this baptism, ten other people also gave their lives to Jesus and asked to be baptised. They were enrolled in the Pastor's class for special studies to prepare them for baptism.¹⁶

Since then the Adventist message has continued to grow and progress with ever increasing momentum. Schools have been established, and although two have had to close due to lack of funds, two are still operating. Today there are almost 4,000 church members

worshipping in fifteen organised churches and thirty branch churches in my district. The Roman Catholic dominated areas are penetrated. The gospel is still spreading very fast. We can see the providential working of God reaching out with great power to save those who are yet to hear His message for these last days.¹⁷

All this has happened in just over fifty years. Those who were in the village before Pastors Gander and Pondek came, can hardly believe it is the same place. The old days seem like a bad dream, and we are all glad God gave my uncle his dream and that he acted on it.

When God leads the way, and His faithful servants follow His instructions, He works miracles so that lives are changed from despair and hopelessness to hope and joy in our precious Saviour. The words written in Isaiah have indeed been fulfilled in the Sepik District of Papua New Guinea. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." (Isaiah 52:7 RSV)

God's Spirit spoke to pastors Gander and Pondek to move into a dark area just as he spoke through dreams to accomplish the salvation of Robert Jonathon's family and many, many others. May this movement of God continue in this area of Papua New Guinea until Jesus comes to take His faithful home.

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- ⁶ *ibid.*
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- ⁸ *ibid.*
- ⁹ Pr Philip Wani, interviewed by Robert Jonathon, 6 May 2001.
- ¹⁰ Coral Sea Union Mission.
- ¹¹ *Australasian Record*, 11 August 1952, p.4
- ¹² *ibid.*
- ¹³ Told to Robert Jonathon by Porei in 1980
- ¹⁴ *ibid.*
- ¹⁵ *ibid.*
- ¹⁶ L. Jonathan, in an interview with her son, Robert, in 1998.
- ¹⁷ Pr John Hamura, President of the Sepik Mission, interviewed by Robert Jonathon, 2001

The location of places mainly in the East Sepik Province of Papua New Guinea mentioned in the article



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BREAKING NEW GROUND—Part 5

the Kolari School, Bisiatabu, Papua New Guinea



Alfred G Chapman MA, was a graduate of Avondale College & the universities of Western Australia & Queensland. He taught in Lederville, Bickley & Victoria Park schools in Western Australia before going to PNG for 20 years.

He was the principal of Bautama in Papua, 1950-55, CSUM College (Kabiufa) in the Eastern Highlands 1956-57, Balepa Central School in the Papuan Gulf 1958-61. He was a teacher at Kabiufa from 1961-69.

Alfred's wife Betty did medical work at Balepa & then taught Dressmaking and Home Economics at Kabiufa.

The Chapmans have three children, Kenneth, Margaret & Delys.

Alfred passed to his rest on 18 April 1983. This article is an excerpt from his MA thesis entitled: *Seventh-day Adventist Mission Education in Papua New Guinea, 1908-1914.*

His wife Betty lives in Cooranbong, NSW.

Synopsis: After being largely instrumental in establishing and developing Adventist work in the Solomon Islands, G F Jones came to Papua. There he visited 30 villages and began a more aggressive work among the Koari people by encouraging youth to attend the Bisiatabu School.

Enrolling Students

THE SUCCESS G F Jones had in opening up a school for the Koari people was cause of favourable comment on the part of some officials so that an approach by Jones for medicines for his work in the Koari area was met with an agreement by the government to pay half the cost.¹ This school at Bisiatabu began to find favour with the people. Jones notes how the Koari people were now beginning to show signs of a desire to have their children come to the mission school.

It was a touching scene to see the boys, not all small ones either, clinging to their mothers that they might not go. Some were braver and came, but with tears. Broad shouldered, naked men, with their faces painted and savage looking would have great tears running down their cheeks as for the first time they felt they must part with their boys.²

What was it that formed this pressure on the Koari men to send their children to school? It seems that the influence of the mission had been good on the nearby people. Especially had the personal influence of Jones been something they could put confidence in. The constant program of visiting the people carried out by Jones and by the earlier missionaries had created a favourable climate. Speaking of one tour, Jones says:

"With Miticli, our Fijian worker, and three school boys, I...called at twenty-seven villages."³ Jones was careful not to cut the school children off from contact with their people. He describes two aspects of this. Firstly, he took occasion to visit the homes of the people taking with him school boys who could present in their attractive ap-

pearance and behaviour an object lesson of what a Christian school could do. Secondly, he took notice of village events. From one village three boys had come to school. When sickness struck the village the schoolboys were sent home crying bitterly. When they returned their mothers came with them. One mother said, "I thank you for sending my little boy home, he prayed to Jesus for me and I am healed." Commenting, Jones says, "This is the first fruits of the mission school's work." This is what a mission school should do. First it should exert an influence on the students attending it and then it should through them offer to the people in the villages a new and improved way of life.

The close sympathy existing between Jones and the Koari people is brought to view in his description of an effort made in 1922 to obtain students for the school. He let the people know that he would like them and their children to come to a feast "which is the usual thing in these places". So the people came "and they brought their children." He says gleefully, "We got over twenty children at that feast to stay on our mission, and the people gave them willingly."⁴ A year later, Jones wrote again of the "twenty young people and children" still attending school so that a rather more encouraging picture emerges.⁵ Not only are young people willing to forgo the excitements and pleasures, with the independence of their village life for the discipline and routine of a school program, but they are beginning to see themselves as having a responsibility to be mission teachers.

Education-How Much and What For?

Here we discern the dilemma which faced and still faces, the mission educators as they began to get their program functioning. On the one hand was the possibility of fostering in the pupils a desire to

educate themselves to the highest possible standard, spending years of effort on comparatively few people. On the other hand was the possibility of fostering in the pupils a sense of urgency which would press them to pass on to others as soon as possible, as much as they could of what they could learn in a much more limited time. It seems that the latter has generally been the line chosen, so that an observer tends to see mission education as largely an unfortunate system in which untrained or poorly trained people try to teach something that they do not themselves understand. By 1923, this situation was beginning to arise in Papua in connection with Seventh-day Adventist education. The pupils were beginning to look forward to being mission teachers. The mission leaders were mindful of the places where people were beginning to desire teachers. The people back in the villages were beginning to be conscious that schools had something for them. So we find Jones reporting, "It looks as if it will not be long before we can place some of them [the twenty-one schoolboys] in villages as primary teachers".⁶ He reports the bigger boys as saying, "We want more school that we may be mission teachers before Jesus comes."⁷ The desire of the people for a school and teacher is thus expressed "These people accepted what I told them as they wanted a school. They selected the land and are now at work on the school building".⁸ This was reinforced a year later by the further report, "The people four days in the mountain interior from here, to whom we promised a missionary, and who in anticipation built a school house one year ago, are still waiting."⁹ It is easy to see from this that the education of the first Papuan Seventh-day Adventist Mission teachers was not to be a long drawn out affair. When the alternative is considered—village people in disappointment turning their backs on the opportunities they were once ready to welcome; students isolated so long from the society they should be ready to help that they are foreigners among their own people; and the mission stagnating because it gives no work and responsibility to its converts for many years—there is little question that it is right to allow the unready teachers to do what they can for their people. This may be the time to suggest that there could, perhaps, have been an attempt to catch the best of both sides by more actively encouraging certain of the more capable students to gain a fuller education than was generally offered, so that there would have been a group of workers capable of providing leadership at an earlier date. However, it would have required a very keen eye to detect this need in 1922 in the conditions then prevailing.

The School and its Effects on the Pupils

When we wish to know just what subject matter

was taught in the school, it is difficult to establish any very specific idea. Writing of the pupils after they had been in attendance at school for seven months Jones mentions three aspects of formal education—some arithmetic, reading in the Koiri tongue, and Bible stories.¹⁰ The arithmetic doubtless was heavily weighted with rote learning for the pupils are said to have been able to "count in hundreds, do additions, subtractions, some multiplication tables and also simple divisions." Reading was taught phonetically after the missionary had established an alphabet to suit the Koiri language. Sentences were put on the black board so that these might be something to read and in reporting on conditions at the end of the seven months, it is said that, "they are now beginning to read." The third aspect of the curriculum was Bible stories, which were taught every day and which were said to be greatly enjoyed by the pupils. The missionary was looking primarily for a change in attitudes and behaviour rather than in scholastic or academic achievements. The work of education is seen by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be essentially a matter of character development and with this is associated the mental development that is more generally looked upon as the role of education. So a good deal of the comment made by Jones on the work of the school bears on this, point. The youth of the Koiri people are described as "a wild lot. They have full charge over their parents...They have never been corrected...These people are from the Koiri tribe, a wild people who are the terror of the peoples around them...Some of the young men gave us a lot of trouble."¹¹ "They were unruly and almost unmanageable, sometimes, running away in gangs for merely nothing but more often from downright home-sickness and for the freedom of their old life."¹² A picture emerges of the Koiri young man, undisciplined, self-willed, ready for violence, steeped in ideas of sorcery, yet with attractive qualities also evident for he was subject to homesickness and felt quite strong ties of family affection. Jones was not unaware of this aspect in the lives of his scholars for he wrote, "I had supposed they were a thoughtless, unloving people, but am now convinced to the contrary."¹³ He saw signs of family affection on the part of both children and parents as he moved among them to enrol pupils for his school. He was at pains to foster this family feeling, sending pupils home at times when their parents were sick and taking pupils from the school with him when he went to visit in their villages so that parents might not lose touch with their children.

The close link between the school and the religious or spiritual aspects of the mission program is pointed out by Jones when, after relating some of the trouble he had had with the Koiri students he said,

"When they first came to school we began to teach them to work. Then we taught them to pray and the worst of it was over."¹⁴

Again he notes the change beginning to develop by saying, "the Bible stories which are taught every day are much enjoyed by them and they are not as unruly and unmanageable as they were at first"¹⁵

Looking Out from Bisiatabu

Having succeeded in invigorating the school program at Bisiatabu, having won the confidence of the Koiari people so that they were willing to send their young people along to the school and having begun to develop a group of young people into prospective teachers or missionaries, Jones next began to look more definitely for further locations where he might establish schools. As early as October 1922, Jones reported on contacts he made with the more inland people. He said, "These people accepted what I told them as they wanted a school. They selected the land and

now are at work on the school building. They are waiting for a missionary to go right up into the mountains."¹⁶ Later he wrote, "The people four days in the mountain interior from here to whom we promised a missionary and who in anticipation built a school house a year ago are still waiting."¹⁷

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- ¹⁷ *ibid*, 22 Oct 1923, p 3.

LETTERS & WHAT READERS ARE SAYING

Corrections

List of missionaries in Fiji

On the back page of the December 2002 issue, please note that the correct order of names in the front row of the picture is: Stratford, Wilkinson, Dyason, & Gray. My apologies. Thanks to the observant readers who drew my attention to the mistake. Editor

A Formidable Task

"Pastor Gominus' wife worked with me for five years in Rabaul...Her name is rightly Lyn, not Lydia. She was a very bright woman indeed." Pr Lester Hawkes.

"Have enjoyed every line in every article and have appreciated the efforts of all the contributors...Arnold Reye, an outstanding historian...all the research on war time evacuations...a most comprehensive coverage." R F—USA

"We are eager to delve into all its pages." M M—USA

"It is most valuable resource material for the people of the Pacific, especially students." P P—Am. Samoa

"I do not want to miss my copy." A L—Fiji

"Keep up the good work." W M also C M—NSW

"Enjoyed the article about the Currow family written by Steve Currow...I understand the other side of the story now." C D (LLU)—USA

"The missionary advance in Malaita, and the evacuation during the war, particularly interested me." L M—NSW

"We greatly enjoy the Journal." M M—Vic

"We have enjoyed reading them all" R S—Qld

"Congratulations on a great effort." D S—NSW

The Keeper of Our Heritage



Rose Lee Power

The South Pacific Division Avondale College Heritage Collection has received some interesting items which I must tell you about:

- * Some wood and nails from the HMS 'Bounty'. (The 'Bounty' was in the sea for 143 years from 1790 until the rudder was discovered and raised in 1933.)
- * Two CDs which include details and photographs of Pastor Len Barnard's early days at Mt Hagen Hansenide Colony and work in PNG.
- * A Fijian hymnal (Nai Vola ne Sere) and a Samoan hymnal (I Viiga Le Atua).
- * 'Advent Radio' and 'Voice of Prophecy' radio scripts (1943-1950).

Over the end of the year we have been very busy housing over five and a half thousand 35mm slides and numerous film strip sets. By the time you read this we will have housed most of the 35mm negatives. The next step will be to identify each item. This may take some time!

To everyone who has sent us documents, photographs and other items a very big "Thank you". Please keep sending us material because the heart of an organisation's memory is in its Heritage Collection. If you would like to contact me please write to:

SPD Avondale College Heritage Collection, PO Box 19, Cooranbong, NSW 2265, Australia
E-mail: rose.power@avondale.edu.au Phone: 61 2 49 802 133 Fax 61 2 49 802 137



“CLEANSE THE LEPERS”

Mt Hagen Hansenide Colony — Western Highlands, PNG 1949-1955



The Threads of Providence

HINDSIGHT provides excellent perspective. From its vantage point we see how the Master Designer takes the tangled strands of life, picks some of them up and weaves them into a tapestry that is to His glory. This has been the experience of my life as a missionary. My interest in medical affairs was sparked through a book by doctor and philosopher, Alexis Carel, entitled *Man the Unknown*. Carel described the wonders of the human body and its many mysteries. He told of the inter-relationship between the functioning of the body, mind and soul. This intrigued me and I wanted to know more.

Heeding the wise counsel of the church in 1939, when the war in Europe had started, I attended classes and obtained my St. Johns First Aid Medallion while working in Brisbane. This was a start. Two years later I was transferred as a shop assistant in the Sanitarium Health Food Company to Hobart in Tasmania. There I was called up for three month's army service and was granted my request to train in the operating theatres of the Royal Hobart Public Hospital. This was an eye-opening experience for me and I learned much that later I was able to put to good use.

Being a fit twenty-two-year-old the army had its eye on me and early 1941 I was called up for full time service. I requested to join the Army Medical Corp. For a few months I worked in a hospital ward learning to take temperatures, blood pressures, and urine tests, make beds, empty pans and many other things. I enjoyed the work until a colonel paraded the unit and asked for volunteers to go overseas for active service. I quickly responded with my Adventist friend, Laurence Gilmore, whom I knew from my Christchurch days in New Zealand.

In less than two weeks we were on the hospital ship *Wanganella* sailing to Papua New Guinea. The Japanese submarines entered Sydney Harbour three days after we left. Had we passed them on our way? We were members of the Fifth Casualty Clearing Station unit that was

stationed behind Port Moresby to treat the casualties from the bitter battle of the Kokoda Trail. It was heart-rending treating those brave young men cut down in the prime of life, often suffering from horrendous wounds or debilitating tropical diseases. About a year later, Laurence and I transferred to the medical section of ANGAU (Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit).

This transfer necessitated an intensive tropical medicine course that qualified us as Medical Assistants. We were then placed in charge of field hospitals near army units to treat the many sick nationals. When the war ended I was in charge of Madang Native Hospital with several hundred patients and was continually learning to diagnose and treat tropical diseases. For two years after the war I was in charge of a hospital at Bogia on the coast eighty miles north west of Madang. There I treated leper patients for the first time and learned much from orderly Yobik who had treated lepers before the war. This was all part of God's providence, although I did not know it at the time. While on this assignment, Pastor Robert R Frame invited me to join the then Coral Sea Union Mission to establish a leper colony in the Western Highlands of New Guinea. This I readily accepted as it was the fulfillment of my fondest dream to be a missionary.

The Establishment of Mt Hagen Hansenide Colony

It was on 10 June 1949 that a small twin 'rag and stick' Dragon aircraft took off from Madang with my



Mount Hagen Hansenide Colony 1953

wife Mavis, three-year-old daughter Sharyn! and myself, plus cargo of a few belongings, tools, food and a mattress. It was a cold afternoon when we arrived at Mt Hagen and then walked eight miserable miles over muddy ridges and in the process crossing ten streams with no bridges.

Finally we caught a glimpse of the 340 hectare (840 acres) site at

Togoba previously chosen for the colony by the Union Medical Secretary, Pastor Ward Nolan. The site was between two rivers with a high mountain ridge running along the western side. The land was covered with scrub and I could see three grass huts. To build and operate a colony there was a daunting challenge for a young man of thirty-one years. But I knew the Lord would help me and I was thrilled with the prospect.

About a hundred local tribes people were employed to clear the ground and plant gardens for future staff and patients. After two months, the Union President, Pastor Herbert A White, with four other missionaries, visited us on a survey of the highlands. For family worship the following morning the designated Morning Watch text was Matthew 10:8 where we are commissioned to heal the sick and *cleanse the lepers*. Our Lord surely manifested His knowledge, as today there is still no cure for leprosy. I accepted this providential selection of the text for this particular morning as affirmation of the call of God to me for this special work.

That night our grass hut burnt down just after midnight. In ninety seconds it was a blazing inferno. We all thanked God for waking our visitors and us in time to vacate the hut and save ourselves. The site of our hut was later chosen for a church. During its building a young man from the local village was killed by a falling timber. To our dismay, we discovered this site had previously been used for devil worship. While Satan lost the battle, he extracted a heavy price in the process.

A month later Frank Aveling arrived with his wife Ida and their family of girls. Frank was a mighty asset as he was an experienced saw-miller and very innovative. He was disgusted that originally he was given only pit saws to cut timber. His expertise, however, was a boon to the station. And Ida played an important part in the social life of the colony that was so necessary as



Happy patients and staff on discharge day. Seated Sis Essie Petherbridge, Len Barnard, Sis Olive Pearce and Sis Gwen Long

there was no outlet for such in the area.

The Mission signed a contract with the Government wherein the Mission constructed, staffed and then operated the colony. Under the contract the Government provided most of the operating funds. As can be imagined, this was

sometimes awkward to administer but on the whole it worked out well for both parties. It would be appropriate to mention here that because of the fear attached to the word *leprosy*, the World Health Organization changed the name of the affliction to *Hansen's Disease*. Unfortunately the change in name did not change the devastating nature of the dread disease!

Temporary grass huts were built, while Frank accumulated cut timber, and in March the following year we admitted the first patients. Two months later, it was an eventful day when the first two nursing sisters arrived from New Zealand, Olive and Elsie Pearce. Previously Olive had worked in a laboratory and this experience was so fortunate at this stage. The sisters threw themselves into organizing the treatment, setting up the laboratory, training staff and learning Pidgin English. Their dedication to the task was inspirational.

Hansen's Disease is the oldest specific disease mentioned in ancient documents. But little is known about it even today and it still defies a cure. The causative organism was originally named *Mycobacterium leprae* but today more commonly called *Hansen's bacillus*. It is an illusive bacillus that cannot be found in certain types of the disease. To hunt it down, smears are taken usually from the mucous membrane of the nose or the ear lobe. A special stain called *Ziehl-Neelsen* is used and the bacilli stand out in bright red. Morphologically it is similar to the tuberculosis bacillus but in severe cases of Hansen's disease, the bacilli may clump together in a globule form surrounded by a fatty substance which is distinctive to this disease.

In those days its treatment was by a tablet called *Diamino-diphenyl-sulphone* or DDS for short. Though slow in acting in many cases, especially if treated early, it brought about marked improvement. The criterion for discharge was twelve consecutive monthly negative smears or distinct clinical improvement. But sadly for

the patients the road to discharge usually took many months and even years. Even after cautious discharge many cases relapsed. Nevertheless it gave hope to the pitiful sufferers as without treatment the trend was mercilessly downward. I can add that these were the happiest patients I ever treated. They could now see light at the end of the tunnel and were ever grateful for their treatment.

Life at the Colony

In the pioneering days of the colony conditions were primitive. Our nearest shops were on the coast where I visited twice a year for committee meetings. They were limited in their items for sale and our groceries were ordered by mail from Brisbane and would take three months to arrive often riddled with weevils. It was two years before a narrow road was built to connect Togoba with Mt Hagen. I had no vehicle but a tractor was supplied to help in the large food garden. It had a small scoop and would sometimes be used to transport visitors. After three years, I purchased a motorbike with a large sprocket for mountain work. It did marvels even though all riders, including my wife and sisters, had scars on the calves of their legs from the hot exhaust as mementos to their many spills.

The number of Hansende patients quickly built up and by early 1952, 376 had been admitted and 164 discharged. Besides these, we treated 400 non-Hansende patients monthly which we could not avoid doing. Some of these patients required surgery. We had a separate ward for patients requiring treatment for such conditions as malaria, pneumonia, ulcers and wounds. It was a busy program for all.

A serious complication occurred this same year when my wife contracted typhus. This infection had a 30% mortality rate if not treated. Fortunately, I was able to diagnose it successfully as I had treated such cases in the army. Thankfully, a specific medication had been developed called *Chloromycetin* and the Government thoughtfully sent in a special plane from the coast with this wonder-working therapy. Unfortunately, a side effect of typhus fever is the formation of gallstones. Mavis developed a painful gallbladder attack, which then enlarged dangerously. She was most reluctant to go to Sydney on her own and leave our two young daughters behind. But Daphne Aitken came to our aid and cared for the girls and we shall ever be grateful to her.

This event put forward my furlough as I followed a month or so later and Doctor Hal McMahon most graciously took my

place for three months. He quickly adapted to the challenge and was loved by the patients.

Meanwhile Frank had been steadily accumulating the required timber. It was a herculean task, as the logs had to be manhandled to the sawmill. Then the timber was carried by hand down the mountain, across a swift river then to the several miles to the colony. A lesser man would have said it was impossible, but not Frank. Furthermore, due credit should be given to the stalwart nationals who did the hard work so willingly. Our new staff member, Jack Aitken with his wife Daphne arrived and Jack quickly swung into action, as he was a builder. It was amazing how quickly the permanent buildings took shape, thanks to these two men.

The following year our two pioneer sisters Olive and Elsie returned home. They certainly deserved a rest after their marathon effort in organizing this colony's busy program under its early primitive conditions. Before they left, two replacement nursing sisters, Essie Petherbridge and Gwen Long, arrived. They came to us from the Solomon Islands Mission hospital and we were grateful for their experience. Later Essie was to carry the nursing burden of the colony for a number of weeks on her own. She never complained and worked tirelessly to her eternal credit.

About this time a young lady, Eleanor Scarfe, was added to the staff. She adapted to the trying work commendably, but after five months she awoke one morning to find she could not stand up. The tragic reality was that she had contracted poliomyelitis and would never walk again. She was flown to Sydney where she was given extensive treatment without noticeable improvement. But her indomitable spirit would not allow

her to accept defeat. She attended college again, worked in Sydney in an office and was a highly respected Nurse Educator at the Kurri Kurri hospital for several years. I doff my hat to her. Even today, 49 years later, she still cares for herself and drives her own car.

Because we believe in the wholistic treatment of man, a strong spiritual emphasis was given at the hospital. Worship was conducted morning and evening with a service on Sabbath. Attendance was voluntary. On Sabbath two hundred or more would attend from the staff, patients and villages nearby. Our principal interpreter was a patient named Kai. He had several toes and fingers missing, large patches of the disease on his body and ulcers under his feet. But he loved the Bible stories and was thoroughly converted.

One day Kai came to the office and asked



Kai

to go home to tell his relatives the story of Jesus. I tried in vain to convince him he needed more treatment and finally in exasperation he said: *Leg, belong me no good, hand belong me no good, skin belong me no good, tasol neck belong me good fella*. Spoken in Pidgin English this means that his body was a mess but he could still talk. We gave him moccasins for his feet, medicine and bandages and off he went. Home was fourteen miles away but he departed in high spirits. He raised up a church and many of his relatives at his village were converted. In fact this cripple became a fearless preacher and led hundreds to the Lord.

Another interesting patient was a thirty-year-old lady named Korara who arrived at the colony by stretcher looking very dejected and emaciated. Her left foot was literally rotting with bones protruding and her lower leg was badly affected. I tried in vain to persuade her to go to the Regional Hospital, but she refused. She pleaded with me to amputate her leg and with the aid of the nursing staff we successfully accomplished this. She was excited when it was over as she had suffered intense pain for many years. The staff decided to buy her an artificial leg that eventually arrived from Sydney. But she had put on so much weight it would not fit the stump. She was undaunted and became very adept with her crutches and eventually was discharged and sent back to her village. We missed her, as she was always happy.

By September 1954 the number of Hanseniide patients admitted had risen to 644 and of these 407 had been discharged. The previous year, 85 had been discharged on one day bringing great rejoicing and hope to many and much satisfaction to the whole staff. But oh for the power to cure all and send each one home with a clean bill of health as did our Lord. Some of the sufferers were beyond human aid and would suffer as long as they lived. All we could do for them was to point them to a future better land.

This same year Frank and Ida left to start their private sawmill. We missed them, but they had made a noble contribution in the most difficult pioneering days and their supreme efforts will never be forgotten. Frank remained a strong friend and helper to all missionaries in the area and later used his skills and experience in supervising the building of the Sopas Mission Hospital. Les Bartlett came to fill the vacancy as maintenance worker and kept the colony operating successfully which was no mean task. His wife June was a qualified nurse so we were able to utilize her skills in the hospital to help the other nurses. They were a welcome couple who served the colony commendably.

With the influx of patients more staff was needed and nursing sisters June Rogers and Florence Burdett arrived toward the end of 1954 followed by Sister Mary

Neill. These ladies joined the line of noble nurses who were the backbone of the operating program of such an institution. The daily witness to so much suffering was a continual drag on the emotions, which was hard to bear. But God gave them the strength and grace to do it well. A tribute should also be paid to the wives of the men. They shared the burdens with their husbands while caring for the children in a difficult environment.

A Reflection

I would like to pay a tribute to my wife. When our first grass hut was burnt and we were left without even clothes to put on, she was five months pregnant. Missionary wives at Lac graciously helped her by sewing and giving clothing as there were none available in the shops. But Mavis never uttered one word of dissent when we returned to Togoba to take up our arduous task again. When Kaye was born we did not have nappies for her as they were still coming from Sydney. During our long term at the colony her main complaint was that I did not spend enough time with the children. She was right. But they have long since forgiven me and we are a very close and happy family.

Winds of change, however, were in the air. By March 1955, a total of 850 Hanseniide patients had been admitted to the colony and 400 had been discharged. It was with a degree of sadness when I handed over the colony to Doctor Roy Yeatts, but I knew the patients and staff would be in good hands. Roy and his wife Helen served these dear patients well and was greatly loved by all. Later Dr Yeatts pioneered our Sopas Mission Hospital that became a haven of refuge for thousands of sick from far and near.

Thus closed a chapter in my life and I moved on to other fields. But my heart was happy that I had been privileged to help so many sufferers of this dread disease. I keenly look forward to meeting Korara and Kai in the Kingdom with a host of others whom I had the privilege of pointing to the fairer land above. Hasten the day when it will become a reality.

Footnote.

¹ Nineteen years later, in 1968, Sharyn Bamard, now a registered nurse herself, served on the staff of the colony.

Mount Hagen Hanseniide Colony staff 1949-1955.

Len H Bamard, Superintendent—Jun 1949 to Mar 1955
 Frank L. Aveling, Sawmiller/Maintenance—Sep 1949 to Mar 1954
 Olive Pearce, Registered Nurse—May 1950 to Oct 1953
 Elsie Pearce, Registered Nurse—May 1950 to Feb 1953
 Jack Aitken, Carpenter—Jun 1951 to Nov 1952
 Dr H E McMahon, Relief Superintendent—Sep 1952 to Dec 1952
 Gwen Long, Registered Nurse—May 1953 to Jun 1954
 Essie Petherbridge, Registered Nurse, May 1953...
 Eleanor Scarfe, Registered Nurse—Sep 1953 to Feb 1954
 Les Bartlett, Maintenance Engineer Feb 1954...
 June Bartlett, Registered Nurse—Feb 1954...
 June Rogers, Registered Nurse—Sep 1954 to 1961
 Florence Burdett, Registered Nurse—Sep 1954 to 1957
 Mary Neill, Registered Nurse—Oct 1954...



THE FINGER FONE STORY IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA



SYDNEY STOCKEN

After graduating from the ministerial course at Avondale Missionary College in 1943, Sydney Stocken served as an evangelist in South Australia.

He began a long period of mission service in 1946 when he was appointed to PNG. He went to the Solomon Islands in 1950 and returned to PNG in 1952 where he had the satisfaction of developing the Fingerfone work. (He was in Sth NSW from 1963-65) He once again served in PNG from 1966-1970. He 'retired' in 1977 after serving for 7 years in NNSW but continued to care for churches for another 22 years. He and his wife Beryl (Johanson) live in Forster, New South Wales. They have 4 children—Len, Alwyn, Warina and Delmae.

PASTOR ALEXANDER J CAMPBELL served 33 years in the mission fields of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Like many missionaries of his time and since, communicating the gospel to the 3,500,000 people in Papua New Guinea who speak more than 800 languages and dialects was and still is a formidable challenge. However Pastor Campbell and Pastor Syd Stocken met this challenge in a very economical and effective way with the "Finger Fone Ministry." In Pastor Stocken's files there are numerous letters and press releases describing how the ministry began and rapidly grew in Papua New Guinea—and indeed around the world. This then, is the remarkable story of how a simple technology and the "Good News" came together to meet a real need in the hearts and minds of the people of Papua New Guinea nearly 50 years ago.

In a 1966 newsletter¹ Pastor Campbell related how in 1954 he was attending the 47th Session of the General Conference in San Francisco and there the Voice of Prophecy radio program speaker, Elder H M S Richards Snr, put him in touch with John E Ford, the Director of International Educational Recordings in California. He soon saw how the low cost gramophones used by that organisation would solve the problem Pastor Stocken was struggling with in his experiments to record evangelistic messages in different languages for the peoples of Papua New Guinea. Initial experiments by Pastor Stocken with metal-type "cake-tin" gramophones at Kainantu in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea were encouraging and he realised that a very powerful evangelistic tool was within reach. Even better, the world's largest electrical company, RCA, under the leadership of General Sarnoff its Chairman, developed a finger driven plastic player. The required set of 45 rpm records weighed only two pounds compared with the nine pound earlier metal-type machine. Not only would the plastic machines be extremely cheap to manufacture, they could be easily transported in great numbers on foot across the

rugged terrain of PNG and were soon called "finger-fones." John Ford obtained permission



Pastor A J Campbell & his wife Emily

from RCA to use the plastic machines on a non-profit basis and in time he made some necessary improvements to the little devices. Fourteen (later 16) scripts outlining basic Biblical principles were prepared by John Ford and Spanish was the first language used for the program. In time, Pastor Stocken and others had the basic script translated into 40 PNG languages.

The list of those languages follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Pidgin | 2. Agarabe |
| 3. Auiana | 4. Bena Bena |
| 5. Moge | 6. Kamano |
| 7. Porci | 8. Lufa |
| 9. Orumpa | 10. Kumul |
| 11. Chimbu | 12. Efogi—Moresby |
| 13. Markham | 14. Enga |
| 15. Gadsup | 16. Krankat-Madang |
| 17. Panam | 18. Motu—Moresby |
| 19. Cacefa | 20. Yani |
| 21. Taiora—Papua | 22. Tari |
| 23. Youie | |
| 24. Kanaka—Yani district | |
| 25. Gimmi | 26. Delta |
| 27. Kemanimoe | 28. Vailala |
| 29. Iagaria | 30. Maprik—Sepik |
| 31. Yangoru—Wewak | 32. Bomieta-Wewak |
| 33. Hagen | |
| 34. Wokeo—Schouten Isles | |
| 35. Ipi—Porgera | 36. Avatip—Sepik |
| 37. Bunguis—Sepik | |
| 38. Bosman—Nubia—Madang | |
| 39. Mugumat—Madang | |
| 40. Yaga—Lake Kopiago | |

Later a health record was added which warned of the dangers of smoking and betel-nut chewing and encouraged personal hygiene. Pastor Stocken recalls the challenge of converting the original English

script into the vernacular via Tok Pisin — an unwieldy and time consuming process. Then the recordings he made were sent to America for production into 45 rpm records. Missionaries such as Pastor Len Barnard soon saw the almost unlimited possibilities of the finger phones stating in a taped message, “Two weeks ago I visited Mt.Hagen. Pastor Stocken lent me one of the gramophones with a set of records in Pidgin English. They made a great impression on the locals up there. We are looking forward to the time when we too shall have the privilege of receiving them from you people. These gramophones are going to mean a great thing for the nationals in the work here in New Guinea. The work we can see can go ahead in leaps and bounds because God can bless the work of these boys with these gramophone records.”² Visiting from Australia Wally Wilson reported, “I have seen these gramophones in action in Port Moresby and Lae and now see the wonderful work they are doing here in Pastor Stocken's area. They seem to be quite the answer. They will be a great asset in finishing the work in a hurry.”³ Pastor J. B. Keith, then the President of the Coral Sea Union Mission was of a similar opinion, writing, “I am firmly convinced that God is richly blessing the gramophone work. I have had ample evidence of this and I believe it is one of the simplest methods that God has ordained in reaching the multitudes of people back in the mountains and valleys.”⁴

Pastor Stocken's files contain an account of the struggle to get the little machines through customs and how demonstrations of assembling the devices in seconds and playing them for agents rapidly allayed all concerns.⁵ One of the real benefits of the program was that International Educational Recordings provided the machines and records without charge as John E. Ford had set up the program as a non-profit donation



Kai, the leper, with Pastor Syd Stocken

funded ministry — a wonderful service, and one which still continues under the leadership of Herbert P Ford.

The story of this program would not be complete unless it also told of the impact of the program on the local people in Papua New Guinea generally and the faithful local Adventists specifically. They were excited that they had an evangelistic tool which they

could easily take everywhere—including unentered and restricted territories.⁶ In Papua New Guinea, the little machines were known as the “Fingerfone” and seemed to appeal particularly to Adventist women and girls who took a strong lead in this ministry—unconventional though that was in the culture of the time. In looking through the files Pastor Stocken has kept over the years, three names seem to stand out. The first of these is Kai, a leper. He helped Pastor Stocken with the early recording. Also notable was Irake, the Leper missionary who witnessed among his fellow sufferers at the local hospital in Kainantu, PNG. With only stumps for fingers, Irake found a way to get his message from the recordings at 45 rpm. He said he was now a missionary, instead of a hospital patient. Also significant was Tunako, an ardent young laywoman in the fingerfone ministry in the Kaman language area of Papua New Guinea. While still very young, her people in time came to accept that as a woman she could do this work.

In 1956 Pastor Stocken wrote, “When the record begins to play there is dead silence among the people. The children and all listen intently. Gospel teaching by gramophone records is a success.”⁷ Later Pastor Campbell was to write, “We send this urgent request for 100 more gramophones and sets of records in the Wabag language. The machines you sent us are all in use and the call is for MORE. We are far short of meeting the needs. What we have are achieving their purpose in a very fine way. A strong call has come for a new worker down in the eastern end of my field because of the use of a gramophone down in that area.”⁸

The program was not without its challenges. The records were easily scratched and when roughly handled had a relatively short life. The documents of the time suggest keeping up the supply of needles was also a challenge. A new development in this ministry came with the advent of cassette tape technology and Lae based Pastor Ray Coombe,⁹ with the assistance of his visiting father, Les Coombe in 1981, was able to obtain the return of Pastor Stocken's master reel-to-reel tapes from International Educational Recordings in Califor-



Irake, the 'missionary' not the patient.

timber left to build a doll's house. It was a sorry sight—houses, church school, garage, and everything else gone.”⁶⁵ Under these circumstances there wasn't much the nationals could do.

Not only were mission stations in peril from the enemy, they were also subject to occupation by the allied forces. While this sometimes made it difficult for the nationals to exercise care over church property, there were places where the military cooperated in the good maintenance of the missions. Robert Frame reported that at one mission in Papua the commanding officer forbade his troops to enter the church. Furthermore, he ensured fences were repaired, horses and cattle cared for, and gardens maintained. His final act of good will toward the mission was to ensure the rubber trees were regularly tapped and the funds obtained from the sale of the latex credited to the mission.⁶⁶

Protection of Expatriate Property

Not only was mission property maintained, but missionary homes were cared for. In most cases missionaries had left all personal possessions behind and carried only essential items in their evacuation. Upon his return to the mission compound at Kainantu, Alec Campbell discovered that although six Japanese bombs had fallen close to his home, little damage had occurred and that under the watchful eye of the national leader, Guibau, his personal belongings were largely intact.⁶⁷

Mrs C E Mitchell received a letter from a military officer who had occupied their home in Papua. This officer, apart from returning her wedding ring and Bible, assured her that her home was being well looked after by an old lady whose main concern was: “When are the Mitchells coming back again.” Upon his return to his mission station, Mitchell found the campus neatly kept and his house “spotlessly clean, even though it did carry a few scars of bygone days.” It should be added that the nationals had no prior warning of the imminence of Mitchell's return and his arrival took them by surprise. Laurie Howell found on his return to Vailala that his house was “in fair order considering it had been unoccupied for nearly two years.” He did note that the Army had impressed some of his furniture and supplies.⁶⁸

A Methodist missionary on his way out of the Solomons spent some time at Amyes Memorial Hospital. Upon his arrival in Sydney he was able to report that the nationals were taking great care of the belongings of the European missionaries. He noted that apart from necessities such as tools and food supplies, homes were just as they were when left by our missionaries.⁶⁹

Some nationals took their care of missionary homes very seriously. When Charles Mitchell visited Aroma Mission, the former location for the Tom Judd

family and the veteran missionary, Mrs Alma Wiles, he found the mission compound and missionary home clean and neat and cared for by two older couples. He was somewhat amused by a sign affixed to the enclosure under the house where Alma Wiles kept her possessions. It read: “Keep out from here otherwise you getting trouble.” Mitchell saw this notice as representing the zeal with which the nationals cared for the property of those forced by circumstance to leave their posts of duty for a time.⁷⁰

Norman and Ruby Ferris were located on the Morovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands, prior to their evacuation. Their experience was slightly different. Ruby recalled that they lost all their personal belongings. Evidently, anxious to preserve their missionary's goods and effects, the nationals decided to hide them from the Japanese and spirited them away into the bush. The intention was honourable, but the goods did not survive the harshness of the tropical jungle.⁷¹

Letters from Nationals

Some national leaders and teachers engaged in correspondence with leaders at Wairoonga or with their missionary friends. These letters gave no hint of feelings of resentment or as perceiving themselves as abandoned. In one letter however, published in the *Australasian Record*, Kabi, the Papuan writer, did express concern for the mission and wondered whether the mission program would be resumed after the war. This was a reasonable doubt. That same writer, however, concluded his letter thus: “Wartime this is, but we do not lose heart. We believe in God and He will bless us, because in the Bible He said, ‘Let not your hearts be troubled.’ John 14:1. He says He will remember and God will keep our lives all the days.” Despite his wartime experiences and his doubts, Kabi's strength was in the God he had learned to love.⁷²

One who sincerely looked for the return of his European friends was Kata Rangoso. In a letter to Norman Ferris he declared: “We are still anxiously awaiting the time when the way will be open for the missionaries to return to the Solomon Islands. Our great desire is for some of you to come quickly.”⁷³ But not only nationals carrying mission responsibility looked for the return of their missionary friends. Beg-hoi Faole had been the cook girl for the Ken Gray family. In 1943 she wrote to the Grays giving them some news of how their Papuan friends were surviving the war. The letter concluded with these words: “Many times I think of you, and when we pray to God we do not forget you. We want very much that you return to Papua.” And then she gave this pastoral advice: “Be strong and live for Jesus' sake.”⁷⁴ How could the Grays do otherwise?

With the tide of war turning against the Japanese,

after a silence of almost two and a half years, Cyril Pascoe received letters from five of the national workers—Garimasi, Asotau, Seki, Thomas, and Matepa—he left on Bougainville. Apart from giving information about their own well-being and the welfare of mutual friends, the letters gave assurances as to the fidelity of the nationals, particularly in the matter of prayer and daily devotions.⁷⁵

These letters are also of interest because of the sentiments expressed toward the Pascoes. Garimasi requested: "Now please, Mr Pascoe, I do want to hear from you, of how you both are, and all about you, of where you are living, and of what you are doing." Asotau declared, "Now I have a great desire to write to you to ask how you are." Seki's concern was that through the Pascoes' church members in Australia would be made aware of their plight. He pleaded, "ask them that they will pray most earnestly to God to sustain us here, for we have much need of His keeping power." He added, "We are sorry that both you and Mrs. Pascoe cannot be with us." This was not to suggest that he wanted the Pascoes to share in their suffering, but rather the comfort their presence would provide.

Unfortunately, the letters also reported that due to Japanese success in burning schools and churches and destroying gardens the work of the mission had temporarily ceased in that area. It was with regret that they reported the martyrdom of three teachers at the hands of the Japanese. Thomas, in particular, conveyed the atmosphere of the time when he wrote: "We had to run to the mountains because the Japanese were exceedingly mad against not only us but all our people...The Japanese do not, however, seem to trouble those who are not Christians."⁷⁶

David and Mrs Brennan received a letter from Guibau who had been left in-charge of the mission at Kainantu, Ramu Valley. Apart from reporting that they were in the midst of a successful Week of Prayer and that he was engaged in refurbishing the church and making new seats, Guibau's main concern was to encourage the missionary's early return. Using a delightful mix of English and Pidgin, he declared: "I hope you feller can come quick time. We like God to open the road quick now, and we can meet one time again and make work belong Jesus...All the monkeys in Kainanti say they waiting for Master and Marama to come back and then they can come to school."⁷⁷

While the writers of these letters represented only a small fraction of the total national membership in the three missions, it is reasonable to assume that their positive sentiments

towards the expatriate missionaries was reflective of the prevailing attitudes among national Adventists. Furthermore, it is reasonable to assume that men such as Rangoso and Guibau were sufficiently informed of local opinion that they would have been aware of any strong anti-missionary feeling. Likewise, it is reasonable to assume that had they been aware of significant and vocal resentment at the missionaries' retreat that they would have dropped some hints to their friends.

While some of the nationals took opportunity to write to their missionaries back in Australia, it should also be noted that most of the missionaries kept up a correspondence with their national friends. These letters and reading material such as the *Australasian Record* and the *Lesson Quarterly* were greatly valued by literate nationals starved of news about the church.

Support for Allied Military Personnel

Evidence suggests the nationals did their best to assist Australian and United States military personnel. For example, an Australian officer wrote to W N Lock telling how in the Kokoda campaign his patrol was cut off. Fortunately, the patrol fell in with mission nationals and at considerable inconvenience to themselves these nationals had guided the patrol back to the Australian lines. The officer concluded: "I felt sure that you would be interested to hear of the good work of your people, who apparently have by your example and teachings reached a stage where they can teach us something of true Christian ideals." Geda, who had been cook boy for Eric Boehm, performed a similar service for a party of Australian soldiers cut off by the Japanese during the Kokoda campaign and was highly commended for his resourcefulness and bravery.⁷⁸

It would appear that because of their integrity, Adventist national young men were in demand by the allied forces as carriers. Many were given positions of responsibility such as 'boss boys', storekeepers, and batmen. One Adventist young man was appointed second mate on a large invasion barge used to transport supplies along the Papuan coast and up some of the rivers.⁷⁹

The *Record* carried the story of Bill Coffeen, a US Marine Flier, who was forced to ditch in the ocean in the Northern Solomons. After 32 days paddling his raft from one uninhabited island to the next and barely alive he was rescued by



Pastor Eric Boehm



Pastor David & Dulcie Brennan with Frances

an Adventist national. Coffeen's ulcers were treated, an infection lanced, and he was given quinine for his malarial fever. After nursing him back to health the national arranged for Coffeen's return to the American base on Guadalcanal.⁸⁰

In the Solomon Islands in particular, Rangoso was instrumental in establishing a network within the Adventist villages to rescue downed American airmen. The network was so effective that usually within two hours of being shot down the airman would be located by nationals with some basic first aid training and conveyed to a collection point. By early 1943 twenty-seven airmen had been rescued and cared for. Needless to say, Rangoso's work was greatly appreciated by the military authorities. Rangoso's contribution to the war effort is all the more remarkable for in May 1943 he was badly beaten and threatened with death at the hands of a British government official. He had every reason to feel resentment for the attack was unprovoked, but motivated by the gospel Rangoso put the event behind him and continued to help allied personnel whenever possible.⁸¹

Some of the heaviest fighting of the war took place in the area around Henderson Field on Guadalcanal. The lives of villagers in the area were greatly disrupted. Ferris reported that military officers had spoken to him specifically of the role played by Adventist teachers who directed villagers to safe places and helped maintain confidence in the outcome of the war. Help was not confined to military personnel. As previously noted, a Methodist missionary contacted Adventists in Sydney early 1943. He had just arrived back in Australia from the Solomon Islands. Adventist nationals had helped him escape and he was effusive in his praise. He made the observation: "You have every reason to be proud of your noble men."⁸²

Response to Returning Missionaries

Had the nationals, church members and leaders, resented the manner in which they had been left to face the Japanese and carry responsibility, it would have shown in their response to the return of the European missionaries. Charles Mitchell reported that when he returned unannounced to the mission station at Viliurupu, Papua, the national staff at first thought he was just another European passing by. Once recognised, there was a rush to the wharf to shake hands and offer a warm welcome. Mitchell noted:

As I walked up the path [from the wharf to the mission] I felt that I was really at home among friends...they chatted cheerfully and freely of their experiences and told of how they watched the entrance to the lagoon for our return...Friends, it was a joyous home-coming, my regret being that it was not possible for my wife and two girls to be with me.⁸³

This experience was replicated when Mitchell and Alec Campbell called at Aroma Mission. Again, taking the nationals by surprise, the Europeans were overwhelmed by the scale and warmth of their welcome. As they approached the mission compound they were surrounded by a crowd of over two hundred people "dancing, singing, skipping, playing, and laughing." One naked little boy ran up and asked: "Master, have you come to stay?" Those about the missionaries quieted as they listened expectantly for the reply. When the response was in the affirmative there was shouting and clapping of hands.⁸⁴

It is interesting to note that Kata Rangoso, who of all men knew the feelings of the Solomon Islanders, in a letter to Norman Ferris requested that when it was time for Ferris or someone else to return to the Solomons he be notified promptly "for the people will all want to be here when you come." For the nationals the return of the missionary would be a day for joyous celebration.⁸⁵

Perhaps one of the best indicators as to the commitment of the nationals and their positive attitudes toward the missionaries is to be drawn from choices they made as their respective countries moved toward post-war recovery. In Papua and New Guinea young men, including Adventist teachers, were impressed by ANGAU [Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit] as carriers and labourers. While the work was hard, the conditions and rewards were good. Many of those who had formerly worked for the church were, however, anxious to receive exemptions from this labour so they could be on hand to resume school teaching and other mission responsibilities.⁸⁶

Union Conference Purposes

While the local scene was cared for by national leaders, the Australasian Union Conference sought to exercise overall leadership, albeit, under difficult circumstances and from a distance. In addition to keeping the church-at-large informed of what was happening in the mission fields, the Union Conference administrators endeavoured to communicate with and encourage the nationals. Using military administration and other means, the Union was from time-to-time able to transfer sums of money for use by the national leaders.⁸⁷

When the expatriate missionaries returned to Australia they were dispersed to the various local conferences and other church organisations. This augmented the worker force in the home field, enabled some gaps caused by the war to be filled, and kept the missionaries ready for a return to the mission fields as the army and governments permitted. Late 1943 the Australian government advised the Union that it would permit some missionaries to return to Papua. Early 1944 a party consisting of experienced missionaries Alec Campbell, Laurie Howell, and David Brennan travelled to Port

Moresby by ship and became the vanguard of the return of Adventist missionaries to the Western Pacific. In 1944 Norman Ferris returned to Bougainville at the request of the Australian government to act as a liaison officer between the Australian forces and the local population.⁸⁸

While the church had been able to save a good part of its fleet of mission vessels, it had also lost several key boats. In particular, the *Malalangi*, *Veilomani*, and *Fidelis* were destroyed by the Japanese. Recognising the need to replace these boats, in 1943 the Union Conference invited Adventist churches in Australia and New Zealand to subscribe to the Mission Vessels Replacement Fund. By way of encouragement to church members, they could 'purchase' shares in the proposed boats and would be issued with non-redeemable share certificates. The veteran missionary and church administrator, Andrew G Stewart, was used to launch the campaign in a number of conferences and the scheme appears to have been enthusiastically embraced by church members. The target set was £6,500 and Union Conference leaders wanted a quick response for they were anxious for the new boats to be built as soon as shipbuilding facilities became available. Through the *Record* they urged Adventists to support the project so that the boats would "be ready for the use of our workers when the time comes for them to return to their mission fields."⁸⁹

Not only did the Union Conference plan for the replacement of key mission vessels, it also made provision for the financial demands it expected in the immediate post-war years. Robert Frame, who upon his evacuation from Papua was appointed Assistant Treasurer at the Union Conference, recalled that the appropriations that would normally have been forwarded to the three missions each year were approved annually but preserved for the rehabilitation process.⁹⁰

Rehabilitation was also on the mind of the Australian Government. The repair of war damage, improvement in the health of the indigenous people, and the development of basic infrastructure were high priorities. To this end the government established the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit to effect the necessary rehabilitation. People with prior experience in Papua and New Guinea were essential to the success of ANGAU. Robert Frame recalls that the Union Conference was instrumental in getting Ward Nolan and Charles Mitchell, both qualified nurses, appointed to ANGAU and thus hastened the return of its missionaries into the war area. Besides their responsibilities to

ANGAU, these men and others were able to begin the rehabilitation of the Church's missions.⁹¹

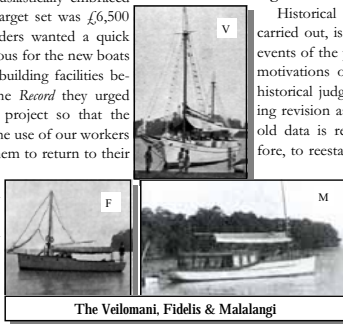
Support for the Church's mission programs also came from an unexpected source. Concerned at the need to rehabilitate the island territories affected by the war, the Australian and New Zealand governments entered into a Pact to provide social, political, and religious assistance. Section 35 (c) stated: "There should be co-operation in encouraging missionary work and all other activities directed toward the improvement of the welfare of the people in the islands and territories of the Pacific." In reporting this development the *Record* stated, "as a church we must stand ready to do our utmost in meeting this opportunity."⁹² It might be argued that the outstanding performance of mission-trained nationals during the war helped convince the two governments of the benefits of investing in the spiritual and economic development of their near neighbours.

Concluding Comment

Historical research, however methodically carried out, is never able to recreate fully the events of the past or to capture accurately the motivations of those involved. This is why historical judgments are continually undergoing revision as further data comes to light or old data is reinterpreted. This effort, therefore, to reestablish the events of 1942 associated with Adventist missions in the Western Pacific and to paint a picture with regard to the attitudes and feelings of both national and expatriate Adventists must be seen as preliminary. Hopefully the future discovery of additional data from a wider variety of sources will enable the telling of a more accurate story.

The writer acknowledges an over reliance on data derived from the official church journal, the *Australasian Record*. There is, therefore, a natural bias inherent in this data. This must be kept in mind in evaluating the reliability of the information presented. Furthermore, the writer himself, while seeking to be objective, is not able to approach the task with the disinterested perspective of the secular historian. Membership within the Adventist faith community conditions both conscious and sub-conscious presuppositions.

With the foregoing provisos in mind, what might we conclude? There is no question that a decision was taken by the Union Conference to repatriate its European missionaries in the face of the advancing Japanese. In the case of missionary wives the decision was made by the government. Implementation of the Union decision was left to each mission superintendent





Pastor Robert Frame

and with each individual missionary. With the exception of Mac Abbott, all Adventist missionaries chose to leave. This choice appears to have been based on reports of Japanese treatment of missionaries in other places, on feelings of impotence in the face of a powerful war machine, and in the belief that it was in the best

interests of the nationals for them not to have the additional pressure of attempting to preserve the welfare of their missionary friends. There appears to have been an unquestioned faith that the United States and Australian military would ultimately prevail and the belief that the evacuations were but a temporary measure.

It must be asked, however, whether the manner of the missionary withdrawal gave national Adventist members the strong impression that they were being abandoned. First, it must be noted that the Union Conference and mission leaderships were not caught unprepared. During 1941 they had appointed national leaders who would assume responsibility in the event expatriates were forced to leave. Thus, it was anticipated that there be both change and continuity. What did take all by surprise, however, was the rapidity of the Japanese advance. This did cause the hurried departure of missionaries and the quick implementation of the contingency plan.

Did this forced transition to national leadership cause Adventist church members in the Western Pacific to feel betrayed and resentful? It is not possible to categorically deny that some nationals may have felt the missionaries had let them down. What evidence we have to hand, however, points to sadness on the departure of the missionaries, understanding of the reasons for it, general fidelity to the beliefs and practices of the Adventist church, and overt cooperation with the Allied military forces.

Most importantly, where circumstances made it possible, under national leadership Adventist missions continued to function, the Adventist presence was established in new areas, and people were prepared for baptism. This suggests that whatever feelings may have prevailed when the missionaries first left, they were soon replaced with the determination to continue the Adventist commission. To the credit of the national leadership and workforce, they did this under trying circumstances and with minimal resources.

Furthermore, those nationals who communicated with their former colleagues during the war years appeared to have done so in a spirit of amity and brotherly love. Not surprisingly therefore, missionaries reported being joyfully welcomed when they returned. It

must also be kept in mind that the nationals were mindful of the impact of war upon village and church life. While the attitudes toward the nationals by the Japanese tended to vary from region to region based on the personalities of the commanding officers, the nationals soon discovered that the Japanese were suspicious of anything European, including Pidgin English, and were determined to eliminate Christian influence. It was probably something of a relief, therefore, for the nationals not to have the added responsibility of trying to care for or maintain contact with European missionaries either in captivity or in hiding in the bush.

In hindsight, it would appear that the decision to evacuate in the early months of 1942 proved a most prudent course. It preserved the Church's missionary force, and it provided national workers with the opportunity to assume leadership roles and develop leadership skills. In his history of the Methodist Church in the New Guinea Islands region, Neville Threlfall lamented that "The Methodist Church, and New Guinea, lost a splendid missionary team, who combined youth, experience, many talents and practical abilities, and high spiritual qualities."⁹³ The Adventist missionary team shared those qualities, but those attributes were not needlessly squandered. Men of experience and with knowledge of the local peoples were able to return as soon as permitted. This enabled Adventist missions in the region to take advantage of the positive legacy of the war and so began the 'golden years' of gospel expansion in the Western Pacific.

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LETTERS

SDA Responses to the War in the Pacific.

Did I miss something when reading the account of our Ex-Pats evacuation from PNG and Solomon Islands during WWII? I did not see Ken Gray mentioned in the article, yet I believe he was aboard one of the boats and had much to do with 'maintaining' its 'sick' motor so that they made it to Australia safely. The profiles of our early pioneer missionaries and their stories are showpieces of Divine leading even in the difficult circumstances they encountered. It has been great reading.

Sergio Amprimo, Hornsby Heights, NSW

The author of *Seventh-day Adventist Responses to War in the Pacific* states that Pastor Arthur Atkins was placed in the Rabaul Hospital. It was actually St Marys, the Roman Catholic Hospital located at Vanuape on the other side of Rabaul Harbour. As a lad, when my father was president of the Bismarck Solomons Union Mission, I was given the task of searching out Pastor Atkins' grave site. I visited Vanuape and located a national brother who testified that he had buried Pastor Atkins, along with two Adventist nationals, in the side of a bomb crater. Dad had me concrete a slab and place a plaque on it in the Reformed Catholic Church cemetery. I also note that the author states that Abbott, Atkins and Collett were the only Adventist missionaries to lose their lives as a direct result of the war. This is incorrect. The Solomon Island missionary, Denni Mark, also died as a result of mistreatment while a prisoner of the Japanese.

Ken A Boehm, Gosford, NSW

Arnold Rey's response to the above letters.

My sincere thanks to the writers of the above letters to the Editor. Sergio Amprimo is justified in taking me to task for omitting to mention that the late Ken Gray was a valued member of the *Diari* team. I had intended to include reference to Goldie Down's biography of Ken Gray, *When Father Disappeared* (1994), in a footnote. At the time of writing the article, however, I had not been able to locate a copy and refrained from citing a source I had not personally read. Unfortunately, in the press to complete the article I overlooked my original intention. I have since read the Ken Gray biography and commend it as inspirational reading. Without doubt, Ken Gray played an important role in keeping the *Diari*'s tired Gardiner semi-diesel engine operative.

Goldie Down identifies the following as those who travelled back to Australia on the *Diari*: George Engelbrecht, Robert Frame, Ken Gray, Thomas Judd, Lester Lock, Charles Mitchell, Ward Nolan, Cyril Pascoe, Stanley and Mabel (Aboriginal missionaries from North Queensland), and Fred Burke, a coconut planter, who was a friend to Adventist missions. In an e-mail to the Editor, Robert Frame confirms the above list of evacuees although he identifies the Aboriginal missionaries as Willie and Minnie Shepherd who hailed from Monamona. Stanley and Mabel Shepherd had either returned to Monamona or were on furlough. Frame's recall is supported by Pastor Cyril Pascoe.

Arthur Atkins' obituary in the Australasian *Record* (9 June 1942) states that he died on 13 March "in an enemy-controlled hospital in Rabaul." In a letter to me dated 23 January 2002, Pastor Robert R Frame commented on Arthur Atkins' struggle with asthma and noted that Catholic nuns cared for him. This observation should have alerted me to the fact that the obituary notice was talking in general geographical terms. I thank Ken Boehm for clarifying this point. Douglas Aplin in *Rabaul 1942* (1980) refers to the Roman Catholic Hospital at Vanuape after Japanese occupation, in particular the intrusive behaviour of the Japanese and the fear experienced by the nurses. Aplin notes that, until removed by the Japanese, a Seventh-day Adventist missionary tried to give some protection to the nurses by sleeping outside their room. Atkins was probably too sick for this act of gallantry and it was most likely Trevor Collett who tried to protect the privacy and person of the nurses. I also thank Ken Boehm for correcting my statement with regard to the three missionaries who lost their lives as a direct result of World War 11. I was aware that some national church members lost their lives, but in my research I did not encounter the name of Denni Mark and therefore had no knowledge of his untimely death. The Solomon Islanders who served in Papua and New Guinea were no less missionaries than were the European expatriates and the Adventist church in that region owes much to their commitment and leadership skills displayed during the war years. Denni Mark's name deserves to be remembered in an article and not just a footnote. Is there someone out there willing to write the article? If so, let the Editor know. As a final comment, I am open to and indeed welcome corrections to as well as amplifications of the content of the article. Correction of even the smallest detail helps paint a more complete picture of past events.

WITH H R MARTIN IN FIJI—1915-1932



Martin John Ward, MA, G Dip Librarianship, a grandson of H R Martin, graduated from Avondale College, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Andrews & La Sierra Universities. He commenced his service for the SDA church at Hawthorn High School in Victoria in 1960. Subsequent teaching, library & administrative appointments took him to Western Australia, PNG, Solomon Islands and back to Australia before taking him to Uganda, Kenya, back to Australia & again to PNG. He retired from teaching at the end of June 2000. In Pacific countries he was a presenter for worker in-service training, a member of govt. examination panels, & a consultant on various educational matters. A number of his poems have appeared in the Record. He is married to Olga (Hill). They have 4 children & 6 grandchildren. Olga is an educator in her own right, having obtained an MA in Education from La Sierra University. Her last position was Education lecturer at PAU.

HARRY ROWLAND MARTIN first arrived in Suva in mid-February 1915 with his wife Prudence, and children Edward, Edith and Grace, after an uneventful voyage on the steamship *Levuka* from Sydney. He had travelled to Suva, at the call of the Australasian Union Conference, to begin his many years of work in Fiji.¹ Although this was the beginning of his mission service, he had already served the Seventh-day Adventist Church for some time in Australia.

As a young farmer in the York district of Western Australia, Martin had dedicated himself to the service of God. He had gone to the Avondale School for Christian Workers (now Avondale College) with his young wife, of just a few weeks, to prepare himself for God's work—whatever and wherever that would be. He graduated from the Missionary Course at the end of 1906 and was appointed to evangelistic work back in his home state of Western Australia.² However the Conference President, Pr. L. V. Finster, changed these plans in November of that year and asked Martin to begin building a training school in the Darling Range to the east of Perth where land had been given to the church for that purpose. He was given one pound (£ 1) to buy an axe, a grindstone and a digging fork to construct buildings and begin an orchard and farm.³ As well as this he was also asked to conduct classes for the students in the evenings after a day's work. He spent four years establishing this school, acting as principal, teacher and builder, before spending two years in tent evangelism. Unfortunately he had given so much of his time and energy to his work during the previous six years that his health failed⁴ and he had to spend the next two years recuperating on his father's property in Morningson, Victoria. Then when the call came late in 1914 to return to full-time service for God, this time to go on mission service to Fiji, he was ready to respond, and travelled there with

his family in February 1915.

From Suva, Martin travelled ahead of his family with H C White to the Buresala Training School on the island of Ovalau. Here he was given a warm welcome at the boat landing, by Brother Butler and Miss Clarke, along with their Fijian students. Buresala had been established in 1904 by S W Carr as a training school for Fijian workers. Following Carr's transfer to New Guinea, A G Stewart became principal. He was later followed by G E Marriott, and then H C White who was handing over to Martin.⁵ Soon after his arrival, Martin commented that everything was strange and new to his family. They had already been introduced to the different Fijian and Indian people at Lautoka and Suva, seen the tropical vegetation and felt the clammy heat. At Buresala they also experienced the frustration of not knowing the Fijian language to be able to talk to their workers and students, and now they had to get used to living in this strange environment, and learning this new language.⁶

The school was on a property of two hundred and sixty acres which looked westward across the bay, and although the soil was poor, it was able to grow the food needed for the staff and students. The missionary's house and classrooms were in the



Harry R Martin & his wife Prudence

middle of the compound, the boys' houses were on the south side of the missionary's home, and the girls were living on the northern side with the preceptress Miss Clarke. Martin soon found his building skills to be as valuable as his teaching and administrative skills. He lost no time in repairing the old houses and building new ones on the school compound, such as the new bure (house) for the boys to replace the one that had blown down in the cyclone. He later reported fixing up a small sawmill so that he would have useful timber for his building work.⁷

Pastor C H Parker, after visiting Buresala early in 1917, reported that the school was a model of neatness and a credit to the Seventh-day Adventist mission work. He also commented on the older class of students who were being encouraged to attend, so that the mission could get trained workers more quickly into the schools and villages.⁸ Not only was Buresala a model of neatness, but Martin was also operating it as a successful training school. Its 35 students studied regular school subjects such as reading, writing, arithmetic, English, geography and physiology alongside the basic Bible subjects, such as the life of Christ and the prophecies. These subjects helped prepare them for going out into the villages as ministers and teachers. Martin and the other teachers were doing this teaching in the Fijian language which added to the difficulties of their work, although they believed that God helped them out in their times of need.⁹ Teaching and building work were only part of Martin's responsibilities as Principal of Buresala. During May 1917, he left Buresala in the mission launch with Parker, to visit some of the companies in the villages on the main island of Viti Levu. They spent a week there, walking from village to village, visiting government officials and encouraging the church members and gaining permission to build a mission rest house at Navai, some twenty miles by bullock waggon and horseback from the north coast.¹⁰ On a later journey Martin and Parker visited the many places where there were believers in Colo (the mountainous regions) and the Ra Coast of Viti Levu.¹¹

There were other visits, too, in later years. Some of these were in the mission launch, others were made on foot along the local village paths, and one even included a twenty-mile ride on the trucks of the sugar company's railroad. Sometimes these visits were made with other missionaries, and on other occasions Martin took his wife and three

children with him. On one trip he took in 1919 with D G Meyers and A P Ward, Martin reported travelling three hundred and sixty miles, walking two hundred of them, and visiting sixty-eight villages. He further told of visiting five European homes where they were able to speak of Christ's soon coming, and of having many interesting talks with the Indian people they met on their trip. In fact the Indian community of Tavua was urgent in its request for a school taught by Seventh-day Adventist teachers.¹² Another responsibility given to Martin was that of mission printer. The press had previously been located at the mission headquarters in Suva Vou, but in 1918 it was transferred to Buresala giving Martin a great deal of extra work.¹³

In early 1920 he was called from his position at Buresala to establish a mission station on the island of Vanua Levu. After searching for a suitable property, he finally leased a block of land on Savusavu Bay where he built his house among the mango trees. This land had been offered to him by one of the white settlers and was an answer to his prayers as he had seen the land during his search for a property, but had been told that there wasn't a chance of him getting it!¹⁴ One of his first projects was to have a boat built for him to use so that he could travel around his mission district, visit his workers and isolated church members, and conduct evangelistic meetings in different places. This project was realised when he took delivery of a well-built seven-ton cutter, which he named the *Na Talai* (The Messenger). Martin described it as being "seven tons, with a counter stern, cutter rigged, about thirty-two feet long, and not less than ten feet beam."¹⁵ He was very glad to have his new boat, not only because it facilitated his travels around his district, but also because it meant he no longer had to travel in the trading cutters with their smell of decomposing copra, and tobacco smoke; and with their cockroaches. On an earlier trip in one of these cutters, Martin had woken up in the cabin to find cockroaches all over and around him, and in the lantern light had seen thousands more of them moving towards him!¹⁶

With the *Na Talai* Martin was able to visit such places as Taveuni, Qamea and the Lau Group of islands to the east. He had many interesting experiences amid the storms of the Pacific, and these gave him evidence that God's protecting hand was constantly over him. One night he had anchored the *Na Talai* at Qamea before sailing to Lau the next day. During the night he



The first Martin home at Buresala 1915

was warned in a dream to check on the anchor chains, and when he did he found that the wind was blowing with cyclonic force. They let out a second anchor, but the wind blew the boat towards land, dragging both anchors. Martin started the engine and they slowly pushed out towards the sheltering reef, where the anchors caught and held them till morning when



Houses at mission headquarters at Suva Vou 1926. Ratu Sailosi in the foreground, Mr Litster, Pervis & Martin at the back.

help came from shore.¹⁷ On another of these trips around Vanua Levu he stopped at Natewa Bay. Martin held the Sabbath services for a group of about a dozen in all, which included the Buli, or local headman, and Ratu Pita from a nearby town. This small group gave him nearly £12 in tithe and over £3 for the Week of Prayer offering.¹⁸

Martin not only worked with the Fijian villagers and those of mixed race, but also with the white settlers who owned many of the coconut plantations around the coastal areas. He even took his family with him on occasional social visits to these white settlers, and invariably such visits turned into witnessing opportunities.¹⁹ On one occasion he even sold a copy of *Bible Readings* to the minister of another denomination and was able to have some Bible studies with him. A few months later the engine of the *Na Talai* stopped just out from this minister's mission station enabling Martin to study more Bible topics with him. Interestingly the engine started next morning without any trouble, after they had prayed asking God for His help!²⁰ In addition to his work as district director on Vanua Levu, he was appointed as the Religious Liberty and Educational Secretary for the Central Polynesian Conference in 1921. This church organisation covered Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Niue, and had its headquarters in Fiji.²¹

Even though his mission work as district director on Vanua Levu kept him more than busy, Martin was often called on for his building skills. Early in 1922 he helped Pastor Gordon Branster build the Navuso School on the Wainibuka River,²² where later he was transferred to work as the district director. In addition to his ministerial responsibilities there, he also had to supervise the work of five teachers.²³ However it was not only in Fiji that his building skills were appreciated. In 1923, after leaving Fiji for furlough in Australia, he was asked by the church leaders to go to the Solomon Islands to assist in the building work there while his

family remained at Bickley in Western Australia!²⁴ After eight months of building missionaries' houses at Batuna and Dovel in the Western Solomons, Martin returned to Australia on the *Marsina* to complete his furlough. While on board he was able to conduct a Bible school every day with the captain, officers,

crew and all passengers attending.²⁵ But the completion of his furlough was almost forgotten when he arrived back in Western Australia, as he was asked to build extensions to the West Australian Missionary School—the Darling Range School that he had commenced so many years before.²⁶ This work kept him busy until the end of 1925 when he was called back to Fiji.

On 29 January 1926, before he left Australia, Martin was ordained to the gospel ministry.²⁷ A few weeks later he arrived in Suva to begin his work as Superintendent of the Fiji Mission—another missionary was at that time in charge of the Fiji-Indian Mission.²⁸ Within weeks he was on board his old boat, the *Na Talai*, visiting around the various mission stations, including Buresala and Savusavu Bay, and Lakeba in the Lau group, to check on the progress of the mission outreach, and to encourage his pastors and teachers in their work. He also visited a number of Fijian villages on the coastal areas of Vanua Levu, and Qamea. Although other island boats had remained safely in their harbours during this cyclone season, and even though it meant sailing in the worst seas he had ever been through, Martin had felt constrained to make the trip, as there were a number of Fijian and European workers waiting in Suva for transport to their various mission stations. One of the reasons for this urgency was that there were no gardens at the mission headquarters at Suva Vou, nor were there sufficient funds in the mission budget to purchase supplies for the Fijian workers.²⁹ In August of that year he returned to Australia for the Quadrennial Session meetings where he reported on the advancement of the Fiji Mission. His report mentioned among other items that at the close of 1925 there were 579 church members, and for the quadrennial period ending in December 1925, there had been 105 baptisms.³⁰ He concluded his report with enthusiastic plans for the future of the work in Fiji.

While he was at the Session, Martin was also able to

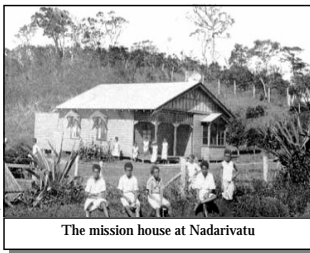
tell of the Christian influence our mission had. Once, when visiting with Ratu Madraiwiwi in his home on the island of Bau, talk turned to the Wainibuka people. The chief commented that there had been a wonderful change among the people since the mission had begun teaching them, and he wished that all Fijian people were Seventh-day Adventists. Martin also told the story of Isimeli who lived on Taveuni. For twenty years Isimeli had lived by himself, keeping the Sabbath alone. Prior to this he had, as occasion allowed, attended evangelistic meetings and had read the mission paper, the *Rarama*. He had since given up tobacco, native grog and unclean foods, and with God's help had tried to clean up his life. He was well known in the district and was even spoken of as a Seventh-day Adventist missionary because he spoke of the second coming of Christ. When Martin found him they had Sabbath worship together, giving Isimeli pleasure and fellowship that he had missed over the years.³¹

As Fiji Mission superintendent Martin led a busy life. His activities included conducting a two-week Bible School for the Fijian teachers at the Wainibuka School with Pastor Branster and Brethren Steed and Lane assisting. The men spoke on a variety of topics, but the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation were given a major portion of the time. The teachers expressed themselves as being encouraged and strengthened as they went back to their fields.³² A month later Martin was out travelling around his field again, this time visiting the Wainibuka and Buresala Schools. He expressed his conviction that school work was more important than any other line of work for the Fijian people. He also spoke of the need for better facilities at both schools, including a new launch for Buresala to make travelling safer for staff and students, and expressed appreciation for budget money already provided. Martin foreshadowed more work for himself though, as he commented that he expected to be back at the Wainibuka School within a short time to help erect new school-rooms, as the budget provided for materials but not labour for building their new classrooms.³³

A short time later Martin made a special visit to Namarai to baptise Adi Mere, the wife of Mosese who was the leading local government official and an ardent church member. Mere had been antagonistic to the Seventh-day Adventist mission for years, but over time had softened and was now ready to join her husband's

church. It was a time of great rejoicing for both her and her husband, as well as for Martin who had looked forward to this for some years.³⁴ Martin also found time to help Pastor Edmund Rudge (the Superintendent of the Fiji-Indian Mission) with the planning, supervision, and erection of buildings for the new Samabula School for Indian students just three miles eastward out of Suva. As with the Wainibuka School, money on hand had been sufficient for purchasing materials for the new buildings, but not for labour for their completion.³⁵

In mid-1927 the work for Fijians and Indians was once again combined under a single superintendent, and Pastor Rudge was chosen. This left Martin free to return to district work and he willingly took up his duties as the Director of the Viti Levu West District.³⁶ His first task there was to build the mission house at Nadarivatu which was to be his family's home. But this was the rainy season and vehicles were not able to



The mission house at Nadarivatu

make the climb to the township, so for a month he and his family lived in a rented house in the valley. Every morning he climbed five miles to the mission property where he worked on the construction of his house, and then walked down those five miles every evening. In addition to building his house Martin held workers' meetings, went on visitation trips around his district, and established a school at Nadrau. This school had a new building with an iron roof and wooden walls and was divided into two rooms. When the school was completed at the end of 1928 there were almost fifty students in attendance, and these young people had assisted in carrying the timber and iron roofing over fifteen miles of bad road to the school building site.³⁷ Martin even found time to construct a pulpit for the church in Nasogo when the members requested a memorial to their new start in the Christian life. He built it in sections, then the men from Nasogo carried it twenty miles across the hills to their church. Martin followed them there and put the pulpit together in the church.³⁸ Mission President Rudge reported in 1929 that the work was going well in the difficult hill country and that there had been 25 baptisms that year in the Viti Levu West District.³⁹

Unfortunately Martin's health was not good, and although he continued to direct work in his district, even holding meetings for his teachers and workers,⁴⁰ he was becoming increasingly crippled by rheumatoid arthritis. He went to Australia in March 1930, to re-

ceive medical help, and was considered well enough after two months to return to Fiji, although he had spent most of that time confined to his bed.⁴¹ On his return Martin went back to his home in Nadarivatu where he was forced to direct his district activities from his bed—so bad was his arthritis. His district assistant, Pastor Timothy



A baptism at Lewa after 1926

Nawara, would come into his bedroom each day to discuss the plans and progress of their work. He would then go out to carry Martin's instructions to the pastors and teachers in their various stations around the mission district and to conduct baptisms as various candidates were ready. His daughter Grace, who was taking the year off from studies at the Australasian Missionary College to assist her parents, helped her father with his office work.⁴²

Although not able to walk around his district, he still kept up a very strong interest in the progress of the work, and could travel in his car to places where there were roads. He wanted to help the people of Koro Vou on the north coast get their school built, so he made three trips from Nadarivatu down to their village. Once there, because he could not walk, he had the church members carry him out on a chair to the school site where he was able to direct the building operations. When the school was completed it had a teacher's home, a school building with two classrooms, and a detached kitchen—all built with good timber and iron roofs—as well as a fourth building made from bush materials. Martin expected that there would be an attendance of forty or fifty students at the school.⁴³

All during this time of illness Martin kept hoping and praying for recovery from his arthritis but there was little, if any, improvement in his health. At one stage in 1931 the Union Conference leaders even voted his retirement,⁴⁴ but Martin was not yet ready to leave his beloved Fiji and the work that he had been doing for so long. Mission leaders transferred him to Levuka on Ovalau, considered the most healthful spot in Fiji, hoping that a change in climate as well as a change away from the mountainous terrain of Nadarivatu might restore his health.⁴⁵ However he continued to suffer with his arthritis, and he finally returned to Aus-

tralia on the *Mariposa* in November 1932,⁴⁶ and retired in an outer suburb of Perth in Western Australia.

Some five years later he went to the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital to undergo surgery on his arthritic knees so that he could walk again. The operations were apparently successful, and he was looking forward to returning to his home in Western Australia. However this was not to be for on 22 November 1937, he died suddenly from complications which had developed during his recuperation.⁴⁷ He was just two weeks short of his sixty-third birthday. Martin was a man who had spent himself in his Master's service—partly at home in Australia, but particularly in his pioneering mission work in Fiji. His was truly an inspirational life.

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ESTABLISHING THE FIRST PERMANENT BASE OF OPERATIONS IN VANUATU—Part 4

The bush tribes of Malekula—Rel & Lalip villages



Synopsis: On the island of Atchin Andrew Stewart solved the problem of non-attendance at the Sabbath worship meeting. He discovered that the people were tired after participating in plays in the village on Friday because they continued right on to sunrise. He visited the homes and encouraged the people to come along. By mid-week many were showing an interest in attending. Next Sabbath the church was full and good attendances were maintained. Ross James arrived on the island in 1918, and nearly 3 years later Don Nicholson. The Stewarts returned to Australia in December 1921.

Adventures on Malekula

CALVIN H PARKER was stationed on the island of Atchin in Vanuatu. By 1915 he had become discouraged over the lack of progress made in opening up work on the large nearby island of Malekula. It was impossible for the workers to find time to go there. Furthermore the Atchinese people were very much opposed to his visit with Alfred Wright, a fellow missionary, to the inland villages. They were firmly of the opinion that both would be killed and eaten.

Europeans had actually been there earlier. Dr Crombie, the Presbyterian missionary stationed on Wala Island, had first visited Lalip in May of 1903 when he made a trek to the village with two Atchinese guides. As a result of that visit he placed two ni-Vanuatu teachers there, in 1908. Because of unrest among the bush tribes he withdrew them in 1909. In 1910 he once again placed a teacher in Lalip. The teacher was constantly in danger of losing his life. In a report from Wala Island dated 20 October 1911 Dr. Mackenzie stated that although the teacher had worked among the people in the village of Lalip for over three years he ran the risk of being shot. He had to barricade his house for fear of a night attack.¹

By November 1913, Dik, a ni-Vanuatu Presbyterian teacher from the island of Santo was the only teacher in the area. In February of 1914 he led a group of eight other ni-Vanuatu teachers in an endeavour to uplift Christ among the many bush villages of North-east Malekula. Unfortunately Dik and six other teachers were killed and eaten by the bush tribes. The Presbyterian Church did not evangelise in the area again. Parker took it upon himself to enter the area in an en-

deavour to revitalise an interest in Christianity. He was determined to advance into new territory and he set apart 3 April 1915 on the calendar as the day for visiting the villages. He made plans for him and Wright to go on that day but when the actual morning arrived his guide did not want to go as the Atchin people were very apprehensive. They were afraid that the men would be killed. Parker felt that it was not God's will for them to go at this time.²

Parker gave up. He went into the school and gave the Bible study to the young men. It was then that the guide came into the classroom and after the study was finished he told Parker he would guide the two missionaries to Rel and Lalip villages after all.

Parker and Wright were taken from Atchin to Malekula by canoe and then at a fast pace they walked the five kilometres to the village of Rel. After talking with the people three men from Rel accompanied the party. The group had not gone very far when the Atchin guide made the excuse that he wanted to light his pipe and dropped behind and remained at a safe distance until about half way to their destination. At this point some men from the village of Lalip met them.

About midday they reached the Lalip village and after talking with the people Parker and Wright were taken to a place where they could look at the village where the Presbyterian ni-Vanuatu teachers had been killed and eaten. The missionaries were also shown the place where one of the Lalip men had been killed by the soldiers and another taken prisoner.

When they returned to the village they sat with all the people of the village around a fire and were invited to eat roasted yam. Parker asked if they would mind if he asked Tahara (God) to bless the food. Their reply was 'Good'. Afterwards Parker unrolled the picture roll and spoke with them. He and Wright then tended to the needs of the sick.

The safe return of Parker and Wright to Atchin was a time for rejoicing for the people there. They told Parker that the missionaries were not to go visiting on Malekula again. Delegation after delegation, each protesting against their visit and any future visit, presented themselves to Parker.

It was not until the next day that he knew the reason for their concern. They told him that a tribe over on the west coast of Malekula had killed a member of a

boat crew and they had apportioned parts of the body to some of the tribes on the eastern side. These were accepted. Now the tribes on the east were under obligation to pay back flesh for flesh, and as white flesh was at a premium they would do everything they could to waylay Parker and Wright and pay white flesh back for black.

When Parker gave no indication as to whether he would or would not go again, the Atchinese decided that on the next visit of the British Resident Commissioner, they would approach him with the request that he would use his powers to stop Parker from going again as they did not want their missionary to be killed. Parker was able to report later that Sabbath services were being conducted at Lalip village about thirteen kilometres inland on Malekula and that most of the people were resting on the Sabbath.

He also spoke of two other villages on Malekula which were showing a great deal of interest, however he did not give the names of the villages.

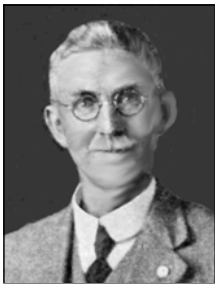
In 1915, not long after his arrival in Vanuatu, Norman Wiles visited Rel and Lalip and he apparently travelled alone.

Describing his first visit he wrote:

The road (track) to these towns (villages) is a very crooked trail through the bush, and unless it is well known is not easy to follow. Last Sabbath it was my turn to visit these towns. I found the people of Rel ready and waiting for the service. Their number is not large, but they are interested in the school and we are encouraged with them.

The road to the next town has been considered too dangerous, as the bushmen are on the warpath. We have found a new road over a mountain that enables us to avoid the bushmen, but makes travel very difficult in wet weather. After a hard struggle, I got on top and came to where the people said they would be, but to my disappointment, no one was there. I did not know the road any further but managed to find the chief's house. I learned that he and all the people had gone over the next hill. After following a trail, which I supposed would take me there, I found myself looking into a house where there was a fire burning and near by three skulls in a row, but no man was in sight. Failing to find anyone I returned home desirous of obtaining more information as to where to go.³

Before being transferred to Fiji in 1916 Parker wrote that at Rel, five miles inland on Malekula, all the people attended the services there each Sabbath and seemed to



Pastor Calvin H Parker

give promise for the work of the third angel's message. The work had again been interrupted at Lalip because of inter tribal fighting.⁴

In the afternoon of 29 April 1916, Parker went to the mainland of Malekula for his last visit to Lalip to worship with the people and to say goodbye. Four of the five villages in the area requested that the mission be established in their villages. Once again Parker failed to name the villages.

Harold Blunden related the story of Andrew Stewart's visit to the village of Lalip.

Because of inter-tribal fighting between Lalip and other bush tribes the Atchinese protested to Jean Stewart when they heard that Andrew Stewart planned a visit to Lalip. Unknown to him the people of Lalip decided to defend themselves by placing bamboo across the pathways and digging holes in the pathways leading to their village. The holes were just large enough to admit a man's foot. These were then covered so that they could not be detected. In the bottom of the holes, pointing upward, they planted sharp hardwood poisoned spikes.

Stewart ... stepped over a bamboo and put his foot almost into a hole. He had sand shoes on, and just missed the opening. He called out a greeting, and they [the people] came running out of the houses crying out 'Something no good, he stop along ground'. Stewart discovered the trap.⁵

On another occasion when visiting the village of Lalip the missionaries found the people quite perturbed. The bush people farther inland were making raids on the coastal villages, including theirs. There had been fighting in the past and some old scores were still unsettled. On the occasion of Stewart's next visit he missed a certain man from the group who had been meeting with him and some Atchinese in worship and study of the Sabbath School lessons. Stewart remembered that he had a deformed face and after the meeting he made further inquiries concerning him.

An older man who was a recognised leader in the village told Stewart that the bush people had demanded that a man be given to them and because they feared for their safety they had bound this man and carried him to the vicinity of the enemy village, tied him to a tree, and called out to the people in the opposing village that they had left a man for them⁶

There is no doubt that Europeans faced serious danger in these places. H M Blunden wrote in the *Record* of the problems of this tribal fighting:



Pastor Norman & Alma Wiles

A little down the coast from the island of Atchin lived a trader [Bridges] with a native wife and several half-caste children who lived on very friendly terms with the natives and had no trouble whatever with them...They [bush people] murdered the trader at his own dining table, and also massacred the whole family, carrying away one boy for a cannibal feast.⁷

The sortie by the British and French brought, for a short period, comparative quietness to the region. In the *Missionary Leader* Stewart wrote:

... we learned from the natives an account of the expedition. Fifteen of the bushmen had been killed and some others had been wounded but escaped. One of their villages had been destroyed.⁸

Representatives from five of the six villages came to the coast and declared their allegiance to the Government and friendliness to missionaries and the coastal

people. Stewart took their names and the villages they came from and the people of Atchin presented them with a 'stone' from the foreshore for each village represented. The stones were a pledge of friendship.

There does not appear to be any records kept of the names of the five or six villages mentioned.

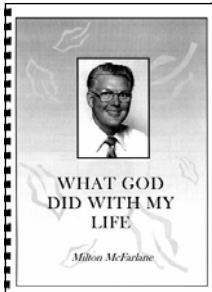
Ross James mentions one visit that he and his wife Mabel made and because of war in the area they were told to hide in the bush at the side of the track. There were also native women hiding and they took delight in feeling Mabel's hair.⁹

In all probability Norman Wiles also visited the villages as he was on Atchin for a long period before being allowed to return to Matanavat.

In spite of difficulties the Adventist message entered the island of Malekula. God took care of dangerous situations, protected his servants and changed lives. A humble beginning had been made and greater things were ahead.

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BOOK REVIEW

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publisher

Milton has written the story of his life in a simple style. Written in first person singular, this book is full of meticulous detail for which he must have either used a diary or had a prodigious memory. This does not take away the enjoyment. (He records the details of his caravan tours in the same way.)

What will interest most of us ex missionaries are the seventeen years he and Betty spent as a mission teacher in PNG and the Solomon Islands. Mission service during the latter half of the twentieth century had a flavour of its own and Milton has captured this. Because mission service of this nature has disappeared, his story will strike nostalgia in us veterans and be quite a revelation to the younger generation of volunteer missionaries of today.

Milton and God are closely linked as he relates many of his experiences. Never does he miss the opportunity of drawing some spiritual lesson from such.

Betty and Milton had no family of their own but they made their students their family, particularly in the mission field.

Milton's life story bears a striking resemblance to my own and because places and people in his story are very familiar to me, I thoroughly enjoyed reading it a second time. I experienced much de ja vous.

DAVID CALDWELL

LIFE SKETCHES

FEAVEA'I AH HIM was born at Vaigaga, Upolu, in Western Samoa on 25 February 1941. She obtained her primary school education at Vaiusu Primary School (primers 1 - standard 2), and at Samoa College up to standard 5. For her lower secondary education she attended the Adventist Central School at Lalovaea, Apia, in forms 1-3, where she was taught in 1958, by the editor of the Journal.

Later, from 1963 to 1965 she trained as a primary teacher at the Government Teachers' College in Apia. On graduation she taught in government primary schools until 1979. From 1980 until 1994 she taught for the church at the Adventist School at Lalovaea. She then retired on account of failing

health.

She went to New Zealand for medical treatment but she did not regain her health. Sadly, she passed to her rest on 22 March 1995, aged 54.

Feavea'i married Lafaele Ah Him on 20 October 1969, and a son, Eseta, was born to this union on 20 August 1981. Lafaele passed away 26 March 2003.

She is remembered as a warm-hearted Christian with a cheery smile and winning ways. Patient with her pupils, she served well as a Christian teacher, for she ever sought to live her Master's life. This promise is for her: --"If we have died with him," said the Apostle Paul, "we will also live with him." 2 Timothy 2: 11 (ESV).

ABI AUASI was born in Paghui Village in the North Solomons Province of Papua New Guinea in 1915. He was baptised on 6 December 1926 at Paghui. He married Nevesinu Kakiri on 5 June 1942.

Abi's service for the church commenced in June 1933, and concluded in June 1952. All of these years were spent in his home island of Bougainville. Dur-

ing this time he was located at Paghui, Inus, Pipipae, Marerau, Kagabisao and Pavaere.

Full of years, Abi passed to his rest on 12 December 2001, aged 86. He was a faithful worker who loved his Lord, and who sought to please Him in his missionary service. Of him it may be said: --"Blessed are you who sow beside all waters." Isa 32:20 (NKJV)

LAURENCE ANNISON GILMORE was born on 19 January 1921 in Christchurch NZ. He came to Avondale College in 1939, graduating in 1940. He then joined the Sanitarium Health Food Company.



After the Japanese entered the war, he was called up for military service in December 1941. He requested posting to the Australian Army Medical Services where he could serve as a non-combatant. He was given specialised training for field casualties, advanced surgical bases and large army hospital work. There he met his old school friend, Len Barnard. They joined the 5th Casualty Clearing Station to go overseas on active service.

He arrived in PNG in June 1942 at the beginning of the Kokoda Trail battle, where he survived two close encounters with Japanese bombing raids. He was transferred to a unit in ANGAU where he completed an advanced course in tropical medicine. He then was put in charge of several hospitals which treated Papuans and New Guineans attached to the

Army. He served nearly 5 years in the Army.

In 1946 he married June Gilmore. They were posted to PNG in 1948 where he pioneered the SDA Mission work at Yani in the rugged Chimbu Province. There his medical experience proved invaluable. After 6 years they returned to NZ where he pastored several churches. He came back to Australia in 1968 to become the public relations officer and fundraiser for the rebuilding of the Sydney Adventist Hospital. While there he commenced the "Carols By Candlelight" program, the "Five Day Plan" to stop smoking and published "San News". In his retirement (1980) he organised several impressive ANZAC Church services. He passed away on 9 February 2003. He is survived by his wife June, and their four children, Ross, Yvonne, Ngaire and Clive.

Our special appreciation for the work Pastor Laurence Gilmore contributed to the Journal as author and editorial assistant. Keen to see Pacific Adventist history recorded and shared, he enthusiastically gave of his time and experience. "We will see you in the morning, Laurence."

Photo Credits

Front page *Australasian Record* 7 Oct 1989; p 2 AR, 7 Jan 1980; p 56 AR, 17 Aug 1970; p 15,16 Len Barnard; p 17 *Better Life for Pacific People*; p 19 SDA's in the South Pacific, 1885-1985, p 224; p 20,21 Syd Stocken; p 22 *Better Life for Pacific People*; p 23 AR, 14 & 28 Jan 1943; p 24 AR, 22 Feb 1943; p 26 17 Nov 1941, 10 Jan 1944; p 27 AR, 12 Jul 1943; p 28 AR, 12 July 1943; p 29 *Under the Southern Skies*, Arthur Maxwell; pp 31-35 Martin Ward; p 37 *Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists*, (R & H Pub Assn, 1932) p 453; p 38 *ibid*, p 458; Back Page J T Howse

POLYNESIA, MELANESIA
and MICRONESIA

Earliest attempts in the Pacific Islands to operate Adventist Schools
with a degree of formal education, in homes or other buildings.

Solomon Islands 1914
(a) New Georgia, Viru Harbour
(b) Vangunu, Sasanghana
Mrs Marion Jones
Oscar Hellestrand

Fiji Is 1900
Suva Vou, Suva
Ethel Guillard, 7p
Mrs Myrtle Parker
Mrs Susie Fulton

Cook Islands
Aorangi, Rarotonga 1901
Mrs Hattie Piper a few
(a) Aorangi & (b) Titikaveka 1902
Evelyn Gooding
Aor. am- 15p; Titik. pm-a few

Vanuatu 1914
(New Hebrides)
Atchin
Mrs Myrtle Parker

Tonga 1895 Nov-
Nuku alofa
Mrs Ida Hilliard
1 grew to 8

French Polynesia 1892
Tahiti Papeete
Albert Read
Mrs Hattie Read

Kiribati, (Gilbert) 1949
Abemama, Tekabaru
Mrs Merle Howse
& Joan Howse
6 upper level
13 lower level

Tuvalu 1948
Funafuti Is
Tavita Niu, Litia Luteru, 5p F1 & 2
Fetu Tavita, Tepora Alefaio, 15p

Pitcairn 1893
Hattie Andre, 22p
A Pitcairn woman, 20p
Mrs Ida Gates, 14p
Ages 14-39; 7-13:
kindergarten

Papua New Guinea, 1915
Bisiatabu, Papua
Bennie Tavodi 10p

Samoa, 1901-03
Letogo, Apia
Delos Lake, 66p



Tuvaluan **Samuclu Vailopa** teaches the children at Abemama School on the departure of the Howse family in 1950

KEY p = pupils

