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Pacific Adventist History

Statement of Mission

Journal of Pacific Adventist History serves Historians, researchers and others interested in the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific Islands. The *journal* focuses on people and events involved in the establishment and development of the church in preparation for the second coming of Christ.

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Kindly Notice

This issue has been compiled and prepared by Dr Jillian Thiele. Her extensive South Pacific missionary service in Christian education in Papua New Guinea has well prepared her for the task. (Senior Editor and Publisher.)

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Editorial

In returning to Cooranbong at the end of 2016, after spending 39 years in Papua New Guinea, I was lost. I had left my home country of Papua New Guinea, my many friends, students and 'children', and given up a very satisfying career. In my grief, Pastor David Hay asked me to help him with the Journal of Pacific Adventist History. As all my life I have heard missionary stories, adventures and missionary's reflections, so this offer seemed to be very therapeutic.



The missionary focus for my family started generations ago. My maternal great grandfather, John Henry Stockton, was one of the first Adventist converts in Australia. He left his job as the Victorian Premier's coachbuilder in 1886 to support the missionary ventures of his new church. His



Royce Dickins with Don and Lynnette around 1951

descendants continued his commitment down three generations to my mother Royce Myrtle Dickins (Stockton).

My paternal grandmother, Charlotte Dickins, a strong Adventist, wished her children to become missionaries for her beloved church. Her oldest son, my father, Hugh Dickins was determined to fulfil his mother's wish. A couple of days after my parents wedding on 12 January, 1944, they left for Fiji. My parents, Royce and Hugh Dickins, served at Fulton College in Fiji, at Vailoa Training School in Samoa, then moved to Rabaul, Lae, and Goroka in New Guinea and then finally served in Honiara in the Solomon Islands. Here they completed 27 years of missionary service for the Seventh-day Adventist

church in the South Pacific islands. It was not surprising that two of their four children, would become missionaries. My brother Donald Dickins and his wife, Glenys nee Townend, served at Betikama SDA High School in the Solomon Islands, at Navesau Junior Secondary School in Fiji and at Mt Diamond in Papua New Guinea, a total of 9 years. I, Jillian, and my husband David Thiele, served at Sonoma

Adventist College, East New Britain, and at Pacific Adventist University; 24 years altogether serving as expatriate Pacific Adventist missionaries.

Since returning to Australia at the end of 2016, editing missionary stories, for the readers of *The Journal of Pacific Adventist* History, has been my way of keeping my links to the Pacific. I hope you enjoy reading the stories shared at the Pacific Adventist History conferences held at Fulton College in 2016 and 2017.



Senior Dickins family: Starting from the back row: Keith, May, Roy, Grandpa (Alfred), Grandma (Charlotte), cousin Valarie, Louisa (Norms's wife), Norm: Photos from the Thiele's private collection.

An Adventure in Malekula, New Hebrides, now known as Vanuatu

By Bert and Norma

Cozens, who spent a total of 21 years in the Pacific during which time Bert served as the principal of five schools and Colleges: Vatuvonu (Fiji), Aore (Vanuatu), Kabiufa (PNG), Sonoma (PNG) and Fulton (Fiji).

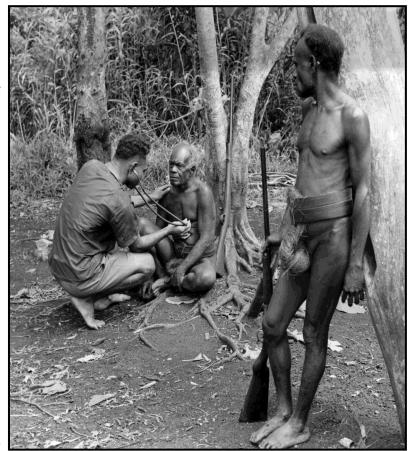
On a Tuesday, in 1954, in Vanuatu, Pastor McCutcheon travelled on the boat *Nakalagi* to the island of Aoba. He was expected back on Wednesday. Les Parkinson was away on the *Ka Seli* visiting the west coast of Malekula expecting to be back Tuesday but in a letter to his wife, Fay, Les stated that he had to stay at Tonmaru because the

people were afraid of Carlies, the Big Nambas chief of Amok. Because of imaginary grievances, the chief was demanding that a women be sent from the Adventist village of Tonmaru. A similar request had been made a few years earlier. The women would become an additional wife and slave of one of the big heathen chiefs.

In an effort to solve the problem. Les asked Bert Cozens, to travel to Aore to fetch Mr Bristoe, the British District agent and John Bill, the local chief of Tonmaru from Santo and the group of them travel to Tonmaru. But there was a problem; not everyone was available, Bert travelled to Santo and quickly found John Bill but Bristoe was 15 miles away. To complicate the issue,

Bert had a medical appointment at the local hospital to remove a finger nail he'd damaged while on furlough. With his surgery completed, and still feeing unwell, he had to find Bristoe.

Arriving at Venue, and waiting for Bristoe, the team, including six policemen, then had to wait for a boat to take them to Malekula. The boat eventually departed early afternoon. Bristoe was very nervous as the last time he visited the island in 1953, to was sent to arrest the man who shot a man, but he was forced back on his boat for safety reasons.



Dr Joeli Taoi treating the local Big Nambus people:

Photo courtesy of the Heritage Room at Avondale

were having a late meal, they were relieved to see the *Nakalagi* coming into the harbour. On board were Pastor Freeman McCutcheon, Ted Jones, and Fay Parkinson.

The team arrived at Tonmaru on the island of Malekula at 9 o'clock in the evening. Les was glad to see them even though he was busy entertaining a French delegation, including a French medical officer from Vila, an engineer and changed. The mission boat Ka Seli was over a priest from Boston. The group was worried about Carlies and what strife he may be causing.

The group travelled to the top of the mountain to see the chief. The trip was unsuccessful. Carlie refused to listen to the government representatives and threatened to burn all the villages if a 'compensation' woman

While Bristoe, Les, Bert and the Frenchmen was not sent. Instead of aggravating the chief any further, it was decided that all the people in the nearby villages should leave until peace was restored.

> Since the Adventist group was no longer needed, they waited for the church vessel to take them home. The problem was that many of the displaced people wished also to leave Aoba island and return when the situation had crowded. Due to the low tide, these people had to scramble onto the smaller Eran as the only means to get to shore. The people were safe until the next crisis!

Pr Andrew & Mrs Emily Jean Stewart & Fijian girl, Naomi; Pr Ross & Mrs Mabel James, Mr Norman & Mrs Alma Wiles, Fijian Ratu Jope & Mrs Laweloa and son Photo courtesy of the Adventist Heritage Centre



Early missionaries to the New Hebrides. Pictured left to right: amd Mrs. A.G. Stewart and Naomi; Pastor and Mrs. Ross James; Norman Wiles; Pastor and Mrs. Jope and son.



Louisa Brandstater and William Douglas Smith

By Nerellie Highland who is the daughter of Milton and Betty Smith, and Granddaughter of Pr. William and Louisa Smith, pioneer missionaries to New Hebrides. Nerellie grew up in Melbourne with her 4 brothers, then studied the Primary Teachers Course at Avon-

dale College. She was sent to Tasmania to teach and married Philip Hyland. Nerellie has happily been a Homemaker, as she brought up her three sons. For the last 7 years her husband, Philip, has been the Victorian Conference Youth Director. Photos curtesy of the author

Louisa was born in Bismarck, Tasmania on the 21st of April, 1890, the third child of Emanuel

William and Louisa Smith



Brandstater the Second, and Wilhemine Darko. Her grandparents were Emanuel and Caroline Brandstater who arrived in Tasmania in 1872 from East Prussia in Europe. August and Henriette Darko, Louisa's other Grandparents, also came from East Prussia, arriving in Tasmania in 1870 on the ship *Victoria*.

In 1889, the Seventh-day Adventist message was brought to the little town of Bismarck, not far from Hobart. Thirty-one people were baptised by Pr. M.C. Israel and a church was formed. The members built the first Adventist church building in Australia. Many of the youth from Collinsvale,

the new name for Bismarck, became Seventh-day Adventist missionaries.

One such person was Louisa. When Louisa's uncle Arthur (Gustav Adolph) Brandstater sent a message to Collinsvale asking for people to assist him at the Christchurch Sanitarium Hospital, New Zealand. Louisa and her sister Annie and brother Ernest, responded to the call. They became the first missionaries from their church.

William Douglas Smith, born 22 July 1889, came from a staunchly Roman Catholic family. His mother had planned for him to become a priest but when his mother died when he was only 12, he worked for his grandfather, John Smith, caring for the horses and driving coaches. William was a quiet, gentle, studious young man with poor health.

One day he purchased a book about health from an Adventist colporteur called *Man, the Masterpiece*. As a result of reading this book, William visited the Christchurch Sanitarium where he met the lovely young lady, Louisa Brandstater. Then they travelled to Longburn Adventist College where they enrolled in the Bible Workers Course.

There William gladly accepted the Bible doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist church



William's mother, Mary Smith nee Tobin

of the church and was baptised at Longburn. He and Louisa were married in Christchurch in 1918 and for the next few years they ministered around Palmerston North, a town near Longburn in North New Zealand. Their son Ivan was born on February

27, 1919.

Pr C. H Parker: Photo courtesy of **Adventist Heritage Centre**

At this time, they were called to go to des, now Vanu-Pacific to be missionaries. Pr. Calvin and Mrs. Myr-

tle Parker had

commenced a mission in 1912 and has settled on the island of Atchin. Norman and Alma Wiles were located nearby on the larger island of Malekula to work with the Big Nambus tribes. Unfortunately Norman died of Blackwater Fever at the age of 27. William and Louisa agreed to take their place. They left Sydney on 4. April 1923 on the S S Pacifique with their little four year old boy Ivan. They worked at Atchin, and then moved on to Tonmiel and Malua Bay on Malekula, where they worked with the Big Nambus tribes. The local people of Malekula were known to be savage, heathen, and cannibalistic, steeped in devil worship. The tribes were constantly at war, killing and eating each other.

The Smith family faced dreadful dangers constantly from the local people and from sickness. Malaria was a constant problem. As Australian food was scarce they ate fish, pumpkin leaves, yams and coconuts. Water was collected from holes in the sand on the beach.

It was not just the white men who were in danger of their lives. Anyone who became a Christian was in danger of losing his or her life. This fear, however, did not stop the local converts from becoming pioneer volunteer missionaries to other parts of Vanuatu. Many new Christians came into conflict with witch doctors, heathen leaders or priests. These witch doctors often resorted to poisoning those who opposed them. Many times faithful missionaries had rifles levelled at them the New Hebri- which thankfully failed to fire!

There were times when white men's ships atu in the South frequented the islands attempting to get labourers for their plantations. However the Malekulans hated them because often they would not see their loved ones for years, and sometimes never. Fighting would often break out when a ship came into harbour.

> The local people obtained rifles from passing white traders. Sadly, on one occasion two Adventist islanders travelling to another part of the island to share the gospel had guns pointed at them. The chief gave the command to shoot, but the guns did not fire! William Smith asked the two men if they were afraid. "No, no, we were not afraid," they replied, and their faces expressed they had Special help to stand the ordeal.



Smith family with young Milton and other missionaries

One night warriors came to the mission intending to kill the missionaries. In the morning, when the local people could no longer see the shining men around them they approached the missionary and asked where the shining men had gone. When William realised what had happened he told them the men were still there, even though they could not see them. The Smith family knew they were protected, along with the whole mission compound.

One day, a little baby was brought to the mission. His father had killed the baby's mother soon after giving birth because she did not look after the pigs. The other ladies of the village refused to feed the baby. In desperation, the man brought the baby to Louisa. She took the baby and raised him as her own son. His name was Sam Dick and when the Smiths left New Hebrides in 1930, they left Sam at the Aore School. Sam eventually became a valued minister and spent



Sam Dick and family - our cousins in Vanuatu

time as a missionary in Papua New Guinea before returning to Vanuatu as a faithful minister. Sam had a large family and a number of his children have also worked for the Adventist church.

William and Louisa's second son, Milton was born on February 23, 1925. He came into this world at the Presbyterian hospital on a little island called Iririki, lying just off Port Vila. It was really a

> miracle that Milton survived his first five years, as he was often very sickly. When he was four years old, their boat stopped at Lord Howe Island, and while there, his pet dog excitedly jumped overboard, and quickly Milton jumped into the ocean in an attempt to rescue his pet. As his parents were poor swimmers they could not jump in after him. However, a local man appeared in a canoe and dived in and grabbed the sinking Milton. About 70 years later, Milton visited Malekula and thanked this man! Some old people remembered him and his family. During a special ceremony, Milton was made an honorary chief.



Family of Emanuel Brandstater I

Back Row: Charlie Margaret (Albert's wife) Herman Minnie (Herman's wife)

Lenna (Caroline) Arthur Fritz Wilhemine (Emanuel II's wife)

Front Row: Albert (Charles) Caroline (wife of Emanuel 1st)

Emanuel I, Emanuel II, August is absent from the photo

The greatest sacrifice William and Louisa made, was leaving both their sons in Australia and New Zealand for many years for they believed their sons were in danger. Ivan stayed at Lord Howe Island when he was 8 years old and lived with the A. H. Ferris family. Milton stayed with his parents until he started school. Ivan and Milton grew up hardly knowing each other.

William and Louisa believed that Jesus was coming soon, and that the whole world, even the Big Nambus wild people, needed to hear the Gospel. Slowly, their efforts were rewarded as in 1928, there were about 150 people connected with the mission.

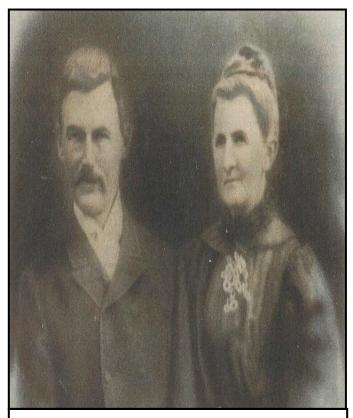
In 1928, while the Smiths were living at Malua Bay, a small launch was sent to them to use, paid for by a special offering taken up around Australia by the young people of the church. This vessel made it possible for the family to escape if their lives were threatened, to obtain medical help and to travel along the coast to reach other tribes with the gospel.

One day, at the beginning of 1930, William set out in his launch to take students home from Aore Mission School. Along the way, the boat's engine failed and fortunately William ended up catching a ride on a trader's cutter to collect a new engine. During the night the weather was calm so William was grateful for the prospect of a good night's sleep after a rather strenuous week. He decided to sleep on the deck, on top of the cabin. However, sometime during the early morning, William fell off the cabin and found himself in the ocean. He watched the boat travel on, leaving him

behind. He shouted and shouted, but of course noone heard him above the sound of the engine and
the waves. He prayed and fought to stay afloat.
Fortunately one of the crew had seen him fall overboard and he roused the sleeping captain. William
saw the boat turn and head straight for him. On
arriving right beside him, they stopped the engine,
quickly lowered a dingy and strong arms pulled
him on board to safety. Unfortunately, he was immediately seized by malaria and later wondered if
malaria was the reason why he fell overboard.

This miracle made a lasting impression on the crew from Big Nambus. It gave William an opportunity to tell them of the God who hears the prayers of His children.

Back in Australia, administrators heard that William was gravely ill with malaria and blackwater fever.

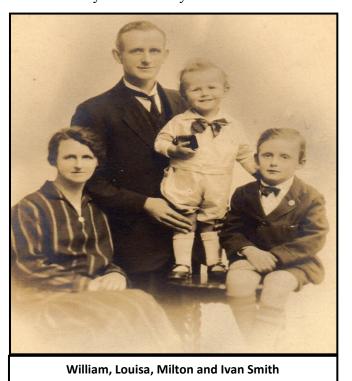


Louisa's parents Emanuel II and Wilhemine

With news that William was ill, many earnest prayers were offered across Australia. Fortunately Pr. and Mrs. Parker had just returned from Australia and being experts at water treatments, were able to help Louisa nurse him on the road to better health. Pr. Parker's message to Australia said, "We nearly lost Brother Smith . . . it seemed impossible to keep him alive, as he has no vitality. But God has shown His marvellous, loving kindness, and Brother Smith is now improving, for which we thank Him."

As soon as William regained some strength, he, Louisa and Milton joined a ship bound for Sydney. On board was a Dr. DeMarquette from France and he cared for him. Kind men met them at the wharf and took William straight to the Sydney Sanitarium. On reaching the doorstep of the hospital, William said, "Thank God I am here at last." Eventually, the blackwater fever left William's body but he was too weak to return to the New Hebrides. The Smith family spent the next three years ministering in Tasmania where the extended family was united. William worked first in Hobart and then in Burnie.

William and Louisa were called to Pitcairn Island. They left their boys in New Zealand. Milton



was 7 and Ivan, 13. From then on, the boys never lived together.

One day, while they lived on Pitcairn Island, a fisherman's fishing line caught something and on diving down to investigate found the line caught on an old ship's rudder. It turned out to be the rudder of the *Bounty*. The *Bounty* had been set alight in the bay and destroyed, but the rudder must have sunk without being damaged. When William and Louisa left Pitcairn, they took a young man named Richard Christian with them to study at Longburn College. William sold the rudder to the New Zealand museum as a means of raising money to pay for Richard's school fees.

The Smiths then spent eight years on Norfolk Island. Milton lived with them for the first four years, but Ivan went to Avondale College. On their furlough in Sydney, William became ill again and spent months in the Sydney Sanitarium. During a very serious operation, he stopped breathing a number of times. Louisa's brother, Pastor Gordon Brandstater, lead out in a special time of prayer for William who was anointed with oil. His strength returned and he and Louisa returned to Norfolk Island for another term of service for four years.

William and Louisa then spent time in Murwillumbah, NSW, Lord Howe Island, Tasmania again, and then to Swansea, NSW. In 1960, Louisa and William moved into a unit at Cooranbong. There they spent their last few years, still together in the Charles Harrison Nursing home. Unfortunately Louisa suffered with arthritis, and she was blind from cataracts in her old age. William passed away on September 17, 1967 at the age of 78. Louisa died on August 9, 1969 at 79. They are buried side by side in the Avondale Cemetery. They both went to sleep knowing that the Lord whom they had loved and served would wake them at the second coming.

Betty and Milton Smith

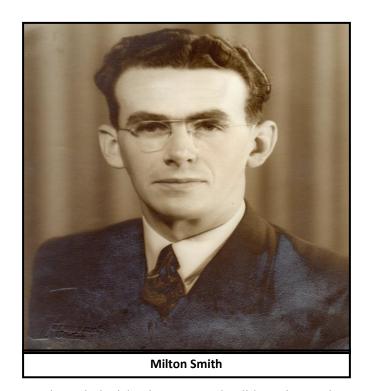
By Nerellie Highland: Photos courtesy of the Author

Milton Royal Smith was born on February 23, 1925 in the New Hebrides (now called Vanuatu). His parents were Pr. William Douglas Smith and Louisa Brandstater,

Louisa was from the little town of Collinsvale in Tasmania. Her ancestors had come from Prussia. William and Louisa were pioneer missionaries to New Hebrides and worked on the island of Malekula with the Big Nambus tribes – perhaps among the most savage and heathen people on earth. They were cannibals steeped in devil worship. This is where Milton spent the first 5 years of his life. He was born in a Presbyterian Hospital on the little island of Iririki just off Port Vila. His brother Ivan was 6 years older . Ivan lived on Lord Howe Island, in New Zealand and Australia for most of his life, which meant that the boys grew up not really knowing each other.

It was a miracle that Milton survived, not just because of the dangers from the islanders but because he was constantly sick, and people worried for his life. He contracted malaria often, as well as every disease that





swept through the island. However he did survive, and has lived into his nineties!

Moving from New Hebrides, the family spent 3 years together in Tasmania, ministering in Hobart and Burnie. Then they were called to Pitcairn Island, and arranged for the boys to stay in New Zealand. Milton stayed with the Sherar family.

Their next appointment was to Norfolk Island. Milton went with his parents for four years, but Ivan attended Avondale College in Australia.

When they returned for a second missionary term, his parents left Milton in Wahroonga, Sydney with the Halliday family. He remembers that Mrs. Halliday was a very kind lady who treated him as her own son, even though she already had a big family to care for. Milton has a dreadful memory of standing on the Sydney wharf waving to his parents, as the ship went out taking his mother further and further away from him! He was 12 years old then. He completed 3 years at the church school. It seems cruel that these boys were left behind, but their parents worried for their safety in the islands, and wanted them to get a good education as Louisa did not think she was capable of teaching them. His parents felt with all their hearts that Jesus was coming soon, and the story of Jesus needed to go to all the world, even to the Big Nambus tribes.

At the age of 15, Milton attended Avondale College in 1941. There he completed the Business Course and graduated at the ripe age of 17. While at college he also worked in the Sanitarium Health Food Company factory packing Weet-Bix to pay for his fees.

After College, Milton was due to be called up
into the army but instead he headed up to
the first world war and fought in France with the
Murwillumbah, north New South Wales and
worked on a banana plantation. As banana growing
was deemed an essential service, he did not have to
join the army.

Kilmarnock in Scotland. He had been a soldier in
the first world war and fought in France with the
Australians. Betty's mother was Ethel Stabler from
Leeds in England. Betty grew up in Newcastle, NS
with her two brothers, Gordon and Robert Craig.
Her family became Adventists after attending a te

At the end of the war in 1945, when he was just 20, he was called into the North NSW Seventhday Adventist Conference office in Newcastle as the Book and Bible House Manager. He was warned by the conference secretary not to look at the girls in the office! However, one beautiful girl, Betty Craig,

caught his attention. Apart from being beautiful in appearance, she was a fine Christian with a beautiful character and disposition.

In 1948, Milton and Betty married, after three months engagement. Betty Hazel Craig was the daughter of Matthew Morton Craig from Kilmarnock in Scotland. He had been a soldier in the first world war and fought in France with the Australians. Betty's mother was Ethel Stabler from Leeds in England. Betty grew up in Newcastle, NSW with her two brothers, Gordon and Robert Craig. Her family became Adventists after attending a tent mission in Newcastle. The family attended the Hamilton Church, in Newcastle , and were active church members. Betty attended Avondale College in 1942 undertaking the Secretarial Course.



Milton and Betty's Wedding Day at **Hamilton Church, NSW:**

Flower girl -Cheryl Basham, Pageboy -Warren Kent Matthew Craig, Gordon Craig, Milton & Betty Smith, Marjorie Branster, Marjorie Swan, Ian James



Betty possessed many talents. She played the piano and was church organist, gave recitations, sang solos and duets. She was a talented artist and an amazing seamstress. She was also known as an excellent secretary.

Milton worked in Newcastle for two years, then one year in the Sydney Conference office in Strathfield. When Milton sold his plantations, he bought a car, which not many people could afford at that time. He sold it just before he left for New Guinea, but unfortunately the buyer never actually paid for it!

heading for Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea, to be missionaries for the next seven years. Betty was expecting a baby in about six weeks time. She was

a real home girl and so it must have been very difficult for her to say goodbye to her parents. The next time she saw them, she was about to have her third baby!

In Port Moresby, Milton served as the Secretary Treasurer of the Papua Mission. Milton's job was responsible for looking after the expatriate and local missionaries and teachers on the out stations and those on mission stations.

Spreading the gospel was difficult amongst these wild islanders. As in the New Hebrides where Milton was born, the people were warlike and devil worshippers. Witch Doctors ruled the tribes along with their chiefs. At first, about 11 houseboys met on Pr Mitchell's veranda for church. It's unbelievable to think that now there are approximately 100 SDA churches just in Port

Moresby alone.





Milton visited the mission stations and In 1949, Milton and Betty boarded the Bulolo. attended numerous camp meetings. He would often travel on the 53 foot mission boat Leoheni. Even though this was a good boat it used to roll like a drunken man!



Del Lemke and Barbara Wiseman with a mission jeep

In 1949, their son Colville was born, soon after they arrived. Their second son, Gordon was born in 1951

There was one very sad memory for Betty during 1952. Betty had gone ahead of Milton with the boys, back to Newcastle for furlough. During this time, there was a big explosion on the mis-

sion boat. Someone from New Guinea rang Betty to tell her that Milton had been on the boat. For several hours she thought that Milton was dead! A few hours later though, she heard that he had not been on board. However her best friend Del Lemke was on board, and she died along with 2 of her sons, 7 year old David Wayne and 4 year old Adrian Blair. After the explosion, most people dived into the river to escape. One old man offered help to Pr. Ern Lemke by carrying little Lester as they both swam safely to shore

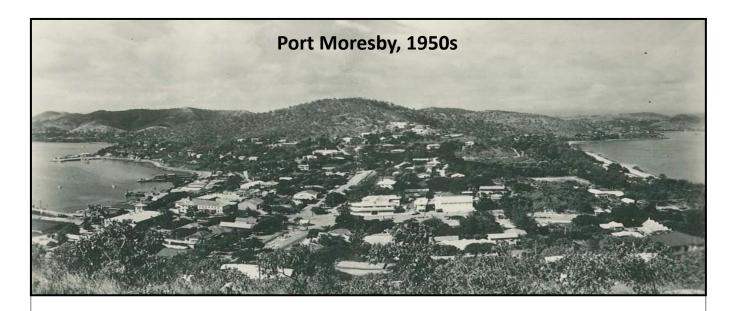
When travelling to Australia on the *Bulolo*, Betty had not known she was pregnant and their third son Warren was born in Newcastle in 1953.

After furlough, during which Milton completed his Certified Public Accountancy
Degree by correspondence, the family headed to Rabaul in Papua New Guinea where Milton served as the Accountant for the "Bismarck, Solomons, Union Mission." They lived on a mission compound with other families who remained life-long friends: Eric and Grace Boehm, Hugh and Royce Dickins, John and Doris Devers, Roy and Lorna Harrisons, and Percy and Deidre Holmes.

At the end of 1956, after 7 years in the mission field, Milton asked to return home to be near his parents who were getting old and feeble. They were living at Swansea, near Avondale College on the east coast of Australia. So..... where did they send him? To Perth on the other side of the country! Betty was pregnant, so stopped off at Newcastle to be with her parents



SS Bulolo: transport back to Australia



who could care for the boys. Nerellie was born

A girl at last!

in Sydney
Adventist
Hospital in
1957. A girl
at last! Poor
Milton had
already
gone to
Perth so

missed all the excitement and had to find out by telegram. Betty wrote 3 beautiful letters from her hospital bed, to Milton that week telling him about the beautiful new baby girl.

The Smiths spent 6 and a half years in Perth, where Milton operated the Book and Bible House. In 1959, the last son, Adrian, was born.

In 1963, the family were on the move again. This time to Melbourne, where Milton served as the Conference Accountant. Here, they bought their first house on Springvale Road. Forest Hill, near Nunawading.

Milton loved his family and always hated to be away from them - probably as a result of being without his parents for so long.



The Smith Family with the two youngest children, Nerellie and Adrian

In 1974, Milton was asked to go to Tasmania to serve as Secretary Treasurer of the Conference. He had to work very hard including most nights and most Sundays. Even with their tight schedule, Betty and Milton made many friends. Adrian completed school and then studied medicine at the Hobart University.

The time in Tasmania was special: Milton met and became acquainted with many relatives from the Collinsvale church; cousins from the Fehlbergs, Rabes and Darkos clans.

Milton and Betty left Tasmania in 1981, heading for Melbourne and then to Auckland in New Zealand. Finally, it was retirement time. They bought a lovely home at Yarrawonga Park overlooking Lake Macquarie, not far from Avondale. There, Milton was able to make good use of the yacht and provide a lovely holiday place for his large family and now many grandchildren who would visit. They were wonderful grandparents, and loved to have the children pile into their bed in the mornings.

Milton served as caretaker of "Sunnyside",



The three sons, Colville, Gordon and Warren with houseboy Lamus in Rabaul, Papua New Guinea

Ellen G. White's home while she lived at Avondale, for a few years. There was also a South Pacific Museum on the property, so he was able to use

his missionary knowledge to share with the numerous visitors.

Milton made many trips around NSW and to various Pacific missions to help the accountants with their church bookwork. He made trips to Va-



Sunnyside: Photo courtesy of the Adventist Heritage Centre

nuatu, especially visiting Vila and Aore. On one trip he visited Malekula where he had spent the first 5 years of his life, and enjoyed a heart-warming visit. Many older ones remembered him, and his parents of course. The locals held a big celebration and made him an honorary chief!

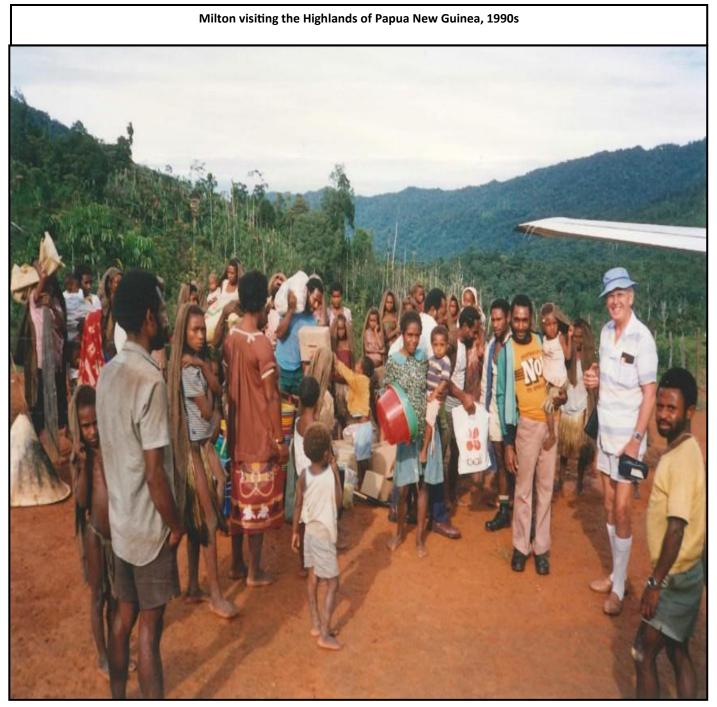
The next move was to the Avondale Retirement Village at Cooranbong. They spent 17 wonderful years there, surrounded by many friends from yesteryear! Some of their friends included: Rex and Winnie Cobbin, Jim Beamish and his wife, Ron and Veronica Baird, Dave and Joy Caldwell, Percy and Deidre Holmes, Claude and Yvonne Judd, David Judd, Hugh and Royce Dickins, Roy and Lorna Harrison, Lucy French, and many more! Betty's brother, Gordon, and wife Thelma lived in the village too, so it was great for them to do things together.

In 2007 Milton suffered a severe stroke which changed his life. He worked hard at his recovery though and was able to continue driving, and caring for Betty. As his health began to fade, they moved into the nursing home in 2015, where they are receiving wonderful loving care. They enjoy visits from, and hearing from their 5 children, 10 grandchildren, and now 3 great grandchildren.

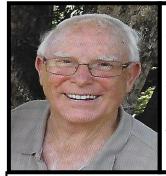
POSTSCRIPT

W. D. Smith's grandson, Dr Adrian Smith, from Port Macquarie has made numerous visits to Vanuatu over recent years, with a team of nurses, conducting medical clinics in remote villages throughout Vanuatu. On one of his trips he decided to visit Malua Bay on Malekula Island to see where his grandparents had worked and to see if anyone had heard of the missionaries some ninety years earlier. To his surprise, not only had they heard of them, the people were building the Smith Memorial church in memory of his grand-

parents. Within five minutes of arriving, he was presented with a folder that his father, Milton had left twenty years earlier full of old photos of the Smith family and their history. They had started building the Smith Memorial Church about seven years earlier but had no money to complete it. Adrian organised the present day Smith family to provide funds to complete the church and fill the church with pews. Dr Adrian Smith was continuing the work his grandparents had started.



Models of Adventist Theological Education in the South Pacific 1876 – 1980



by Dr Alex S Currie who has had a long association with the Pacific Islands having served at both Sonoma College, PNG and Fulton College, Fiji where he served as Principal between 1977-9. He has also continued his involvement as a volunteer coordinating projects in the Solomon Islands and also conducting meetings in Rotuma., Fiji.

Unless indicated all photos are provided by the author.

The late Charles W. Forman, Professor of Mission at Yale Divinity School 1953 - 1987 and chairman of the Theological Education Fund (TEF) for the World Council of Churches 1965 - 1971, described Theological Education in the South Pacific in the following terms:

'During the course of my TEF travels, I was brought in a surprising, perhaps providential way to the seminaries of the South Pacific Islands.' In replicated in other areas of the Pacific or the 1959 'I discovered...an array of island churches and seminaries that were all but unknown in most of the world. I was immediately fascinated by 'the training of persons to know God so they them. Here the national movements into Christianity that had characterized medieval Europe had been repeated in modern times. Here the ideal Recognising that, Foreman notes 'the theological preached by Bruno Gutmann in Africa of a unity between the church and the primal community as the work of God had been realized to an extent Pacific Islands' and that these schools were a unknown in Africa.' From then on the study of South Pacific Island Churches became his 'main area of research.'

Forman continued,

'As I pen these lines, I am in the midst of a third term of teaching in Pacific seminaries, this Pacific desperately needed island disciples who time in Western Samoa. Many foreign teachers and researchers, myself included, have found their own religious sensitivities deepened by the vigor- South Seas. What better way than to educate ous religious confidence of the island people, whose instinctive closeness to community, nature, and God has not been destroyed by modern indi- how to live the Christian life.³ vidualism and intellectualism. So it may be that

the pilgrimage in mission can come full circle, the missionary becoming the missionized and the teacher becoming the student. 1

Writing in 1969, Forman observed,

'It is a paradox that though the theological school was the first kind of school established in the Pacific Islands, only very recently have the islands seen any true theological schools.' These early Pacific theological schools, he says, were a 'general school with a theological emphasis rather than a true theological school.²

MODELS OF **ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC**

The word 'models', could be defined as an example, a pattern of a training which could be world. The definition of 'theological education' is become disciples of Jesus Christ and serve Him.' school was the first kind of school establish in the general school with a theological emphasis' I have no hesitation in calling the models, Models of Adventist Theological Education.'

The fledgling Adventist Church in the South would teach and preach to the nations in the local people in Bible basics, English, Health and

The Pitcairn Model

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Education commenced in a very basic way on Pitcairn Island, when James White and John Loughborough dispatched a letter and box of Adventist literature in 1876.4 More books were sent to Pitcairn which resulted in Mary Ann McCoy, Edward Young and Sarah Grace Young keeping the Sabbath from early 1886. These distant contacts were followed by a visit from John I. Tay, an Adventist layman, who arrived at the island on October 18, 1886. For five weeks Tay visited homes and taught the island population the scriptural beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. Mary Ann McCoy, recorded in her diary for October 30, 1886. "The Church of Pitcairn Island kept the Sabbath unanimously as the day of the Lord" When Brother John I Tay departed from the island everyone was worshipping on Saturday, Sabbath.

On returning to the States, Tay created enough Adventist interest in Pitcairn and the South Pacific that the General Conference commissioned the schooner *Pitcairn* to be built and it was launched in 1890. It arrived at Pitcairn on

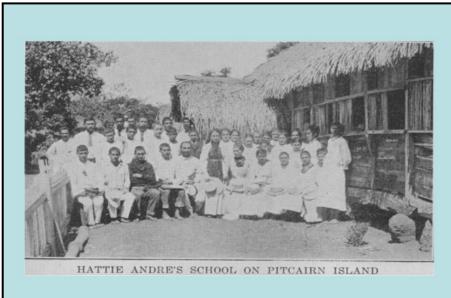
November 25 and after teaching and educating the entire adult population, eighty-two persons were baptized.⁵

When the mission ship sailed from Pitcairn on 17 December, 1890, the first three Pacific Islands missionaries, J. R. McCoy, his sister Mary and Heywood Christian became the first Pacific Island

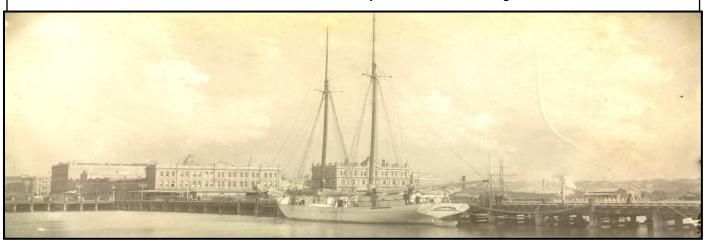
missionaries in the South Seas. They received basic theological and a general education. This experience gave the Pitcairners a sense of purpose, direction and leadership.⁶

On the return of the *Pitcairn* to the Pacific in 1892, after commencing mission activities in Tahiti, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Norfolk Island and New Zealand, it was obvious there was a need for a training school on Pitcairn. "[Graduating students] can go as missionaries to other islands."

In 1892, Elder Edward Gates commenced a school on Pitcairn where he taught English, Bible, and history, while his wife Ida taught stenography. The next year, Miss Hattie Andre continued the training school where 42 students, aged between fourteen and thirty-nine were taught. Her school provided a greater theological emphasis and practical skills in areas such as health, hygiene and home duties. In 1896, two of the Pitcairners trained in this school, Sarah and Maria Young. These two talented ladies left Pitcairn as missionaries on the fifth voyage of the *Pitcairn*. People's lives were transformed by these early 'Island' missionaries.



Pitcairn at San Francisco: Photo courtesy of the Adventist Heritage Room

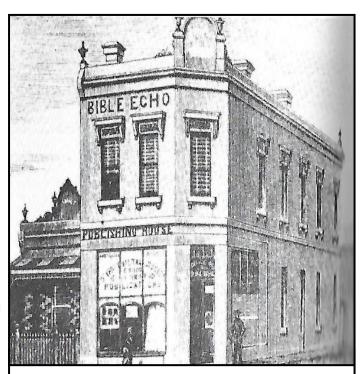


Sarah lived with the Hilliard family on Togopu Island while Maria resided with the Butz family. Maria eventually married Charles ('Ned') Edwards who assisted Dr Merritt Kellogg in medical ministry. Maria became mid-wife to the Tongan community, as well as to the royal family. Iki Tolu Taimi, Pastor sands. My grandmother, who was almost blind, of Gardena Genesis Community Adventist Church in California, is a descendent of Maria and Charles. The combination of practical skills and theological education in Andre's school proved effective. This type of education was repeated across the Pacific Islands by Seventh-day Adventists.

The Book Model

The Adventist Church has always published books as a means to provide a basic theological understanding of Scripture. This approach was successful on Pitcairn and on Tahiti where Paul Deane, a pastor for the Paris Evangelical Society, kept the Sabbath after reading five Adventist books sold by visiting missionaries from the *Pitcairn*. On the next Pitcairn visit, Albert and Hattie Read, who remained in Tahiti, to support Paul Deane, opened a training school in their home to teach and train disciples. Les Webster, a SAN graduate became an Adventist 'Chiefly' by reading, particularly the Signs of the

Times. Print was largely responsible for the Reformation, the Renaissance, the Scientific revolution and the Information age. In Adventist circles, publishing houses have been important and its printed pages have changed the lives of countless thouwas largely converted by her son reading *Great* Controversy and the Signs of the Times aloud to her. The Book Model evolved in waves across the Pacific.



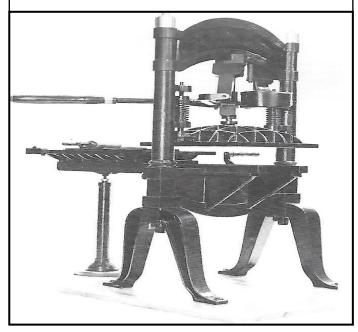
Bible Echo, first printing press in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia: Photo courtesy of Photo courtesy of Seventh-day Adventists in the South Pacific 1885-1985. Ed. Noel Clapman. Warburton, Signs, p. 64.

The Home Bible Study Model

Missionary homes were used as training centres by missionaries. In 1892, Albert and Hattie Read of Papeete, Tahiti, used their home as a training centre. Benjamin J. Cody and his wife Ida disembarked from the *Pitcairn* in June 1893 in

Early printing press: Photo courtesy of Seventh-day Adventists in the South Pacific 1885-1985. Ed. Noel Clapman.

Warburton, Signs, p.64.



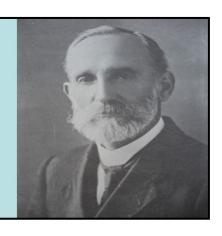
Raiatea and taught students in their home until the government closed this form of education down four months after launching. In 1895, Mrs E.

Hilliard trained Tongan students in her home. In 1898, John E Fulton taught men like Pauliasi Mbunoa in his home. These home training sessions were eventually replaced by dedicated schools.

The Jones/Hellestrand Model

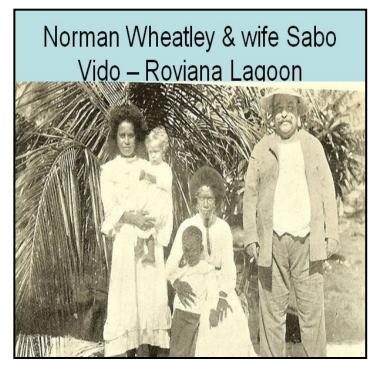
It appears that, at the invitation of a plantation owner and trader, Norman Wheatley, living in the Western Solomon Islands, the Seventhday Adventist Church Annual Council conducted in Wahroonga, September 23 - October 3, decided to

G F Jones



build a schooner, the *Advent Herald* and send Welsh Master Mariner, Captain Griffiths Francis Jones, also a Chaplain and Bible worker graduate from Keen Academy in Texas in 1900, and wife Marion to pioneer Adventist Mission in the Solomon Islands.¹³

Pastor Griffith and Marion Jones spearheaded Adventist Mission in the Solomon Islands after being ordained in Tahiti in 1903 during a missionary conference. ¹⁴ They selected Ilemi at Viru Harbour as a base, and thirty-three days after landing they commenced a training school with thirty-four pupils. The next Sabbath, Jones conducted worship in the local language for about fifty Solomon Islanders. ¹⁵



Oscar Vincent & Ella Louise Hellestrands Wedding

On recognising the medical needs of Solomon Islanders, Jones requested a recent nursing graduate Oscar Hellestrand, and his fiancé Ella Sharp to become the second Adventist missionaries to the Solomons. They were married on December 7, 1914 and sailed out of Sydney Harbour on January 6, 1915. On board their boat was their 12'x12' prefabricated two-bedroom home. This home would be reassembled at Ilemi, Viru Harbour, ¹⁶ their destination in the Solomon Islands.

Besides undertaking a great deal of medical work, Hellestrands conducted a training school for about fifty students. ¹⁷ Jones and Hellestrand developed a surprising educational technique that impacted much of Melanesia. They taught students in their teens, twenties and older. At every opportunity, they sent students to nearby villages and other islands to testify, sing, and teach what they had learned in the previous three months. ¹⁸ Hellestrand wrote about his visit to Nono: 'We sang them several of the sweet songs of Zion, after which I told them of God's love for all mankind, and how He had given His Son, Jesus,

to a lost world.'¹⁹ An interview with Jones revealed:

'I take our students with me everywhere. The young people do a wonderful work. They know very little at first, but develop steadily. They start singing, 'Jesus Loves Me'. Then we pray, and I give the villagers a little talk...The village is cleaned up, and then of course it affiliates with the mission.'²⁰

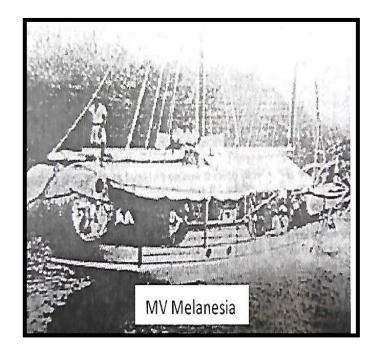
This is how Solomon Islanders trained to be ministers and teachers in the Solomons and other Pacific Islands. Initially only young men were taught, but Hellestrands soon encouraged females to attend classes. Their school was the first school in the Solomon's to accept women.²¹



Model of Advent Herald and G. F. Jones:
Photo courtesy Seventh-day Adventists in the
South Pacific 1885-1985. Ed. Noel Clapham.
Warburton, VIC: Signs. 1985. p. 206.

Jones reminisced in 1918 on how God led

'In the very early stages of the work it was these young people who, on the *Advent Herald*, pioneered the cause in the Marovo Lagoon by their simple testimonies and the singing of our hymns. This captivated each district we visited; first the Marovo Island, and the Loloho and Nono districts, then the Gatukai people, and then all the people...along the coasts of the Marovo Lagoon. Our best young people and chiefs today in the lagoon had their first love for our mission created by the words and songs of our Viru people.'²²



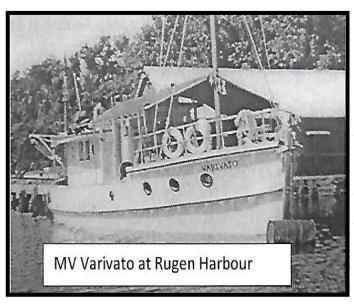
In the same letter Jones wrote:

'It is not easy to get these young people to stay away long from their mission schools, as they are more eager to learn than to teach, and it is quite a cross to them to have to stay and live among a people not of their own clan. So we send them away for three months, and return them again to school for another three months, for none of them are sufficiently instructed to do this work, but as we have no one else to send we are obliged to do something of this kind.'²³

Jones and Hellestrand multiplied their teachings by utilizing students to teach others, so cementing what had been taught.

Jones continued:

'To possess a whole Bible and also a Christ in Song hymnbook, is the great desire of our young people in our missions in the Solomons...We hear them singing our hymns day and night – about seventy of which they know. It is music indeed to the missionary to hear this as the result of his labours...' Of the older people he wrote, 'Their aims are now to buy calico to dress themselves for church and school, to possess a Bible and read it, and also a hymnbook and sing its hymns, with the hope of eternal life in their hearts and a home at last in heaven.'²⁴



Hellestrands learned the local language, Ulusagi,²⁵ quickly through a chief called Pana, in exchange for treatment of a leg ulcer.²⁶ Hellestrands taught students English, Bible and Bible stories, music through four part hymn singing, how to testify, simple nursing skills, health principles, cleanliness and home remedies and treatments.²⁷

School was heralded every day with the sound of a conch shell. The unique teaching technique Jones and Hellestrand utilised, developed a team of gospel workers that not only served the Solomon Islands but in also other Pacific Island countries. Pastor Jones wrote of the Viru training school, 'I fully believe the Lord has sent us to neglected Viru, and it is not difficult for us to see our first national missionaries among these dear people.'²⁸

In subsequent years, almost one thousand Solomon Island pastors, teachers, accountants, office workers, nurses and doctors served the Church in many Pacific Island countries, including Papua New Guinea. Wherever Solomon Island missionaries worked, they taught people to love Jesus, sing gospel songs in English, pray and learn to speak in English.

In an interview in 1933, Jones commented:

'I get a boy that I have had with me for a week or two, and put him in the village to tell the people just the little that he has learned. Perhaps he has learned a hymn, or perhaps the "bd, ba, bl, bo, boo" phonetic system. That is enough to get them interested. And when he has learned to pray, that makes a fully-fledge missionary of him.'

In writing about the Bible as 'God's word talking to them' he said 'your own boys will teach you to read it.'²⁹ These untrained expatriate teachers taught students to read English by teaching hymns, and then asked them to go to the villages to teach others how to sing and read the Bible.

In the same article Jones said:

'We try to reach the young people, and to teach them the truth. We teach them who the devils are to whom they listen, what power it is that does their miracles for them. We teach them about the overthrow in heaven. They get hold of things substantially, and they believe us. We tell them of the good angels and the Holy Spirit and the work of Jesus Christ for them. Then they teach their own people. They go around to their village homes and teach these things. They tell the message fairly well. We judge by the fruit, and the result is good.'³⁰

What an intriguing model of theological education which has strong educational research and backing. Many learn best by doing.

In another article Jones wrote:

'In our work for the uncivilized races of the South Seas, whole villages and tribes were often won by the first visit. Kind acts, simple treatments, a manifestation of a spirit of genuine Christian love, and sympathy with them from their viewpoint, have turned them from heathenism to loyal, working converts, who have gone about practicing the same graces.'³¹
Jones baptised ten school students on

January 1, 1918 and Hilliard wrote that these became 'the first evangelists in the different villages in the lagoon.' 32



Early baptism on an unidentified Western Solomons Island:
Photo from Adventist Heritage Centre

Without teacher training backgrounds or a modern theological education, the Jones and Hellestrand model helped create a people movement in the Western Solomon Islands that transformed the whole population. In 2016, McDougall reports that 28% of the Western Solomon Islands population are Adventists; one in four persons belongs to the church that was bought to the country initially by Jones and Hellestrand.

Since 1914, Sydney Adventist Hospital (SAN) has provided dozens of trained nursing graduates to serve overseas and in particular, the people of the Solomon Islands, three of whom sacrificed their lives, Muriel Parker in 1930, Brian Dunn in 1965 and Lens Larwood in 1979. Outside the Kellogg Museum at the SAN, a Memorial Fountain lists these three graduates who gave their lives in medical missionary service.

The SAN Model

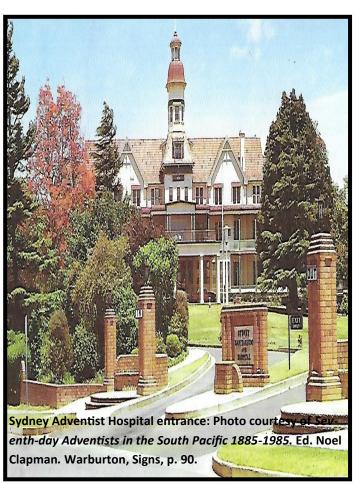
When the Sydney Sanitarium (affectionately known as SAN, now Sydney Adventist Hospital) opened on January 1, 1903, at least 47 nurses had been trained at Summer Hill and at Avondale School for Christian Workers in Cooranbong.

Although nurse training at the SAN was not recognised by the NSW Government until 1927 and male nurses were not recognised by the State until years later, the SAN trained male 'missionary' nurses from its first year.³⁴

'Entry into schools of nursing was dependent on gaining the approval of the matron and it would appear that in metropolitan Sydney, at least, this was difficult to obtain. For example, at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in 1950, despite a shortage of nursing tutors, the application of two qualified tutor sisters, a married couple from England was rejected because the board was not prepared to employ a man. The first male nurse was not employed there until 1966, when Lance Waddington (SAN graduate 1949), was appointed. It was a further three years before a man was accepted for general training at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and it was not until the 1970's that men were accepted for training at St Vincent's Hospital (1972) and Manly Hospitals (1975).'

Although Pastor E. B. Rudge trained and graduated from the Australasian Missionary

College 1898 – 1901 and worked as a literature evangelist for the next two years, he enrolled in the Medical Missionary Course at the SAN in 1904, graduating in 1907. He possibly believed that he would be a more effective minister if he was also a nurse. It appears to have been an advantage to many ministers to have a SAN education.





Early converts: Photo provided by the author

A. W. Knight was chaplain and Bible Teacher at the SAN from 1925 – 1927 and again from 1935 till 1951. He took a special interest in his male students, preparing them for ministerial and missionary appointments. Knight believed in



Claude Judd

practical hands-on education and practice in preaching.

Nineteen of the 40 SAN graduates were trained and inspired by Knight. For example, Claude Judd caught the vision and inspiration to

become involved in preaching to the public through Knight's local evangelistic campaigns.³⁷ In Pastor Knight's life-sketch, written by Ron Taylor, a former student of Knight's, wrote:

'Pastor Knight not only inspired many young people to devote their lives to the work of preaching the gospel, but he did his utmost to train them for this task. Male and female nurses who sat in his classes, have served in many parts of the world. Some have become doctors and ministers. Today, some are serving in positions of responsibility in the mission field, local Conference, Union Conference and the Australasian Division. Here indeed, was a man who not only held the lamp of truth, but inspired others also to

take up a torch that the world might be lightened with the Word.'38

Knight's encouragement and modelling influence, fortifies the concept that the medium is the message.

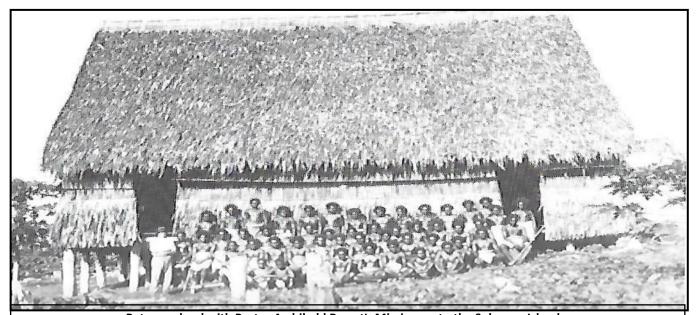
The Island Teaching Model

Before the mid 1950s, Theological education in New Guinea was often provided by expatriate missionaries who selected promising school students with higher grades to accompany them when visiting villages, so as:

'....to understand their attitudes, and their degree of willingness to serve and help in any capacity.... (the missionaries) tried to inculcate into them the value of time and to a people who had no value on time, of making every minute count. We walked by night to give ourselves time by day. We paddled our canoes thousands of miles in rough weather and fine, The lazy and indifferent soon got weeded out. Our experience with the people was invaluable. We dealt with devil worship, and devil possession in all its forms. We treated their sick (no medicines so we used hot fomentations - blankets, towels and rice bags when nothing else was available We taught men to see what men could be into through transformation. We lived our work in the midst of them knowing full well that everything we did would teach them.'39



Carter Ragoso Photo courtesy of Seventh-day Adventists in the South Pacific 1885-1985. Ed. Noel Clapman. Warburton, Signs, p. 220.



Batuna school with Pastor Archibald Barrett, Missionary to the Solomon Islands.

Photo courtesy of Seventh-day Adventists in the South Pacific 1885-1985. Ed. Noel Clapman. Warburton, Signs, p. 220.

Cyril Pascoe wrote that persons with potential were trained in Sabbath School, Young People's Meetings, and singing was used to teach English just as it was done in the Solomon Islands. Often prospective ministers 'worked in the home of the missionary, for here they learned willingness.'

Pascoe wrote that ministerial training was not considered important in those days, for teaching was the 'avenue to advancement.' The most reliable teachers were placed in charge of district schools. They were given ministerial responsibilities at district meetings, and were often taken on patrol with the missionary to learn what a minister did. Many of those selected were appointed as ministers over Districts. Such men developed their talents and gifts by 'in service training' until ordained to the gospel ministry. The government stopped 'dual training' of ministers with teachers, when it introduced registration of teachers in the mid-1950s.

The Jones Missionary College Model (JMC)

One year theological education courses were offered on two campuses: at Jones Missionary College on the island of New Britain, New Guinea and at Kabiufa College near Goroka, in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. In 1966, both courses were lengthened to two years. The curriculum included a variety of appropriate subjects.

Students spent six months engaged in Health Evangelism at Sopas Hospital taught by Dr. Salem Farag. 41

In 1966, I was called to oversee and direct
Theological Education for the Bismarck Solomon
Union Mission. Reflecting on my lack of practical
experience from Avondale College, my students
were engaged in practical ministry every year. As
a result of a request from Pr Roy Harrison, my
student entered villages on the island of New
Ireland where students offered to build a school or
church, a missionary's house or a medical clinic.

Students and village people worked together by day felling trees, pit-sawing the logs and building what local people requested. Evenings were spent presenting the scriptural truths. In this way, the Adventist mission established a church with a strong presence in places like Namatanai, Cape Sena, Damon and many other villages on the Island of New Ireland, in Papua New Guinea. Duna wrote, 'I thank Kambubu, Sonoma and Sopas for my field work. I can build schools, clinics and churches'. 42

My ministerial students assist in opening the Adventist work on the island New Ireland, a long, slender island with a backbone of mountains and population of possibly 90,000. In 1966, 90% of the people lived in small villages. To encourage my students, I had to walk through rivers and streams and along a four wheel drive track, before reaching the village of Cape Sena late in the afternoon. My students and two volunteer missionaries were pleased to me. All I wanted to do was to sit down, drink and rest but after a short break, my students begged me to walk with them to the local pig pen. The pen was a bamboo fence but there were no pigs inside. The local chief of the village, Sianuk, had possessed about twenty pigs. The students had spoken on Biblical health principles, one of which was that pigs were unclean. Sianuk, said that because he could not read he did not know about that principle. So the students prayed with Sianuk that God would give him a sign that pigs were unclean. Within a week all his pigs had died. The students also told the chief about the negative issues with chewing betel nut. Again the students prayed that God would give Sianuk a sign

that the habit of chewing betel nut was unhealthy. Within a couple of weeks the betel nuts had shrivelled on each palm. As a result of these miracles Sianuk and his people embraced the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

On a similar trip in 1967, the students and I walked along a four wheel drive track to the village of Namatanai where I asked a Chinese store keeper if it was possible to hire a vehicle with a trailer to transport gear from church boat, the MV Daydawn, to villages where students would be stationed. This Chinese businessman not only provided transportation for the student evangelistic teams, but he also supplied food from his store, nails for our buildings, all without charge. Why? Because a Solomon Islander, by the name of Deni Mark, stayed during the war to look after Jones Missionary College, fed him and other Chinese as they fled from the Japanese invasion of Rabaul. This Chinese businessman said he was repaying a debt of gratitude, an offering of thanks. 43

In 1967, the Seventh-day Adventist Church decided to centralize theological and teacher education and in July 1967 purchased Sonoma cocoa plantation on the Gazelle Peninsula of New Britain to establish a new tertiary training institution, Sonoma College.

Married student accommodation at Sonoma Adventist College: Photo from the Thiele's private collection





Typical churches in the Pacific: Photo from the Adventist Heritage Centre Room

Duna, one of my students, appreciated the extra-curricular activities offered, such as furniture making and music and choral activities as well as new agricultural techniques introduced by an American, Dr Jacob Mittledier offered at both Kambubu and Sonoma. These skills enabled Duna to design and build furniture for churches and schools where he served. Knowledge of agriculture assisted his work in the Solomon Islands. Duna also said that the months of health education taught at Sopas Hospital enabled him to be a health educator.

In the same letter Duna, recalls the music of JMC, the choir, the singing, extra-curricular

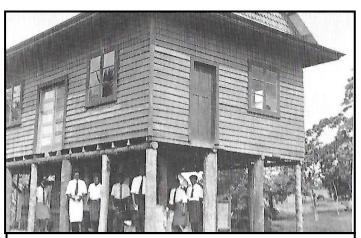


Faculty House at Sonoma Adventist College Photo from Thiele's private collection

greatly enriched his ministry.

Students from JMC well accepted by the people wherever evangelistic teams were appointed because of the choir music pioneered by Pastor Doug Martin. Often villages where the students served purchased a recording of the JMC choir when it toured Eastern Australia. Recordings were also made at the annual Choral Festival in Rabaul. This annual event attracted more than 100 choirs and many of the choirs were broadcast through the radio stations.

Knowledge to begin village a choir was a wonderful opening wedge into so many villages.



Typical house in New Britain:
Photo from Adventist Heritage Centre

At JMC all ministerial students were required to be involved in Pathfinders, under the direction of Kevin Silva. Skills learned enabled graduates to commence Pathfinders wherever they ministered. Bev Fiegert, the nurse at JMC, engaged ministerial students on day expeditions to help treat the elderly, sick, poor and needy. Theological education at JMC was contextualised and practical, yet rigorous in the classroom.



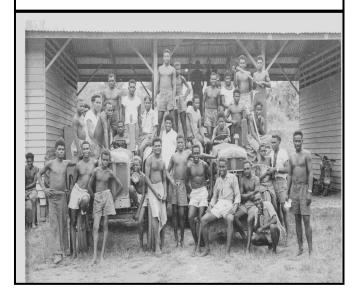
Ken Boehm building married student accommodation
Photo courtesy of Ken Boehm

The Sonoma College Model

Sonoma College, in February 1968, became a new tertiary training centre for the Bismarck
Solomon Union Mission and Papua New Guinea
Union Mission, on the Gazelle Peninsula on New
Britain. New Ministerial students arrived from
Kabiufa College in the highlands and from Jones
Missionary College, down the coast. Twenty-two
Theology students lived in corrugated iron
plantation sheds for the first two years, while

Kabiufa during the 1970s

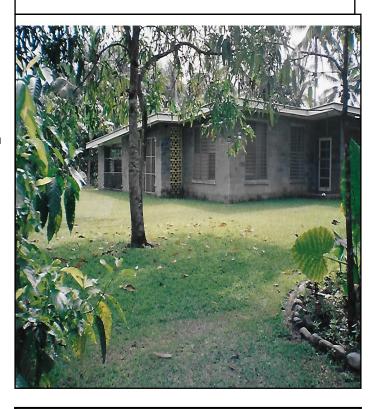
Photo courtesy of the Adventist Heritage Centre



classrooms and dormitories were being built.

Students were taught in corrugated iron
classrooms on an adjoining property, Winalin Plantation. The students spent the first three days of the College year making classroom desks under the guidance of the plantation manager, Bob Hall, who possessed a background in carpentry and building.

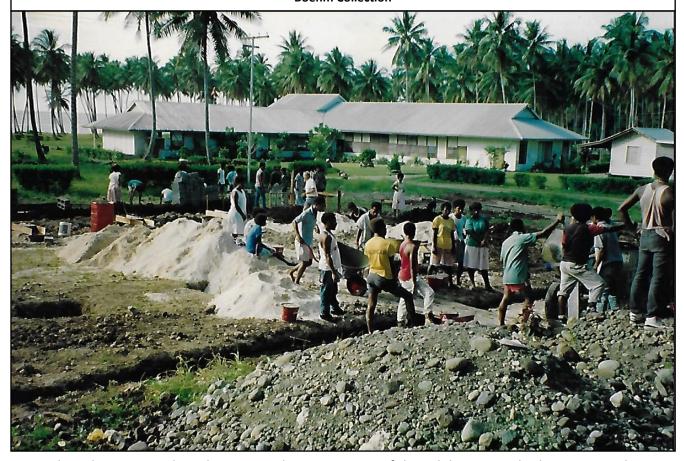
Faculty House at Sonoma Adventist College
Photo courtesy of the Thiele Collection



Sonoma Adventist College in 1993. Photo from Thiele's private collection.



Students enrolled in the Building Course during a practicum supervised by Ken Boehm: Photo courtesy of the Ken Boehm Collection



An early task was to analyse the surrounding community into which the College was established. In 1968, Sonoma College was surrounded by Cocoa Plantations such as Vimy, Tobera, and Winalin, where hundreds of unskilled, indentured labourers were employed who could not read or write. Within the first week it was decided that one goal would be to teach these 'kassons', as they were called, to read and write Pidgin English. The Nupela Testamen had been printed and the whole Bible was soon to be released. So each student made a folding blackboard that could be used in a variety of ways. Theology students carried these blackboards and taught plantation labourers the basics of reading and writing Pidgin English, under cocoa trees. Often these illiterate workers would visit the students' classrooms at night to learn more. At the end of 1968, nine-

teen of these labourers, who learnt to read
Pidgin English, were baptised. Three of them
returned to their villages in the Sepik and in 18
months saw approximately 250 persons from
three Catholic villages baptised into the
Adventist faith. Seeing the need, meeting that
need with prayer, innovation and creativity,
inspired and encouraged young students. This
was not something written into theological
curriculum but needs were recognised and met.

The same folding blackboard could be turned into a flannel graph board. Each student made an oblong box containing files of flannel graph to illustrate biblical stories and concepts. Children and adults were intrigued with these visuals and stories.

Folding blackboards were used as preaching/ teaching aids. They were innovative and new to the listeners. Students developed bible studies and sermons, illustrated with the use of blackboard chalk drawings. Duna wrote that the elements taught in the ministerial education program helped him most to use his portable folding blackboard for Bible marking classes and as Pictorial Aid. Skills in painting evangelistic charts, learning music and singing and agriculture'44 skills provided a great education. Whereas the average Westerner learns 55% of knowledge derstand.' Research demonstrates that after three through visuals, South Sea Islanders learn at least 65-68% of their knowledge via the eye and some researchers report the percentage is greater. 45 To confirm this observation, Gordon Stafford, Principal of Mamarapha College especially for aborigines, situated in Karragullen, Western Australia, writes "The visual aspect of learning seems to be crucial – symbols, diagrams, charts, models, and so on."46 A Chinese proverb says 'What I hear, I forget; What I see, I



Sonoma Adventist College Library in 1993 Photo from Thiele's private collection.

days students retain between 45% and 55% more through visual education than simply listening to a lecture or reading lecture material. 47 Jensen says, '90% of all information that comes to our brain is visual.'48

Recognising visual learning was the dominant learning style of Papua New Guineans, Sonoma College included an Art room where students painted thirty evangelistic charts to help explain remember; What I do I un- scripture and rivet the attention of listeners.

> Further, because Frank Breadon's Pictorial Aid was too expensive for students to purchase, they painted their own with extremely good results. Because Islanders learn so much more visually than Westerners the average student tends to paint and draw more easily than Caucasians.



Principal's house at Sonoma Adventist College in 1993. Photo from Thiele's private collection.



Entrance to Sonoma Adventist College in 1993: Photo from the Thiele's private collection.

On the Gazelle Peninsula on the island of New Britain were institutions of learning such as Vudal Agricultural College and Keravat High School. As both of these institutions were visited by Sonoma students who would board the College truck late on a Sunday afternoon to teach and preach to students at both institutions. This was a valuable experience for the students, matching minds with bright academically minded students. Learning by doing was an important method for helping students retain information and develop teaching and preaching skills. One Form 6 girl from Keravat High School, Kutan Oli of Manus, as a result of this method of evangelism was baptised at Sonoma College in 1972. she later becoming the librarian at Pacific Adventist University and Fulton College, but more than that, all in her village are Seventh-day Adventists as a result of her witnessing.

Relationship bonds between teacher and student tend to be long lasting in Melanesia. This is evidence in Duna's letter. Graduating students

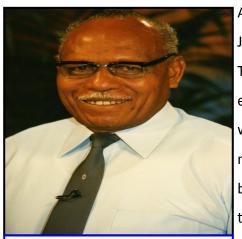
became like extended family. Over the years, I have enjoyed communication and occasional contact with students such as Peter Duna, Jim Manele, Aaron Lopa, Tony Kemo, Allan Paul, Alfred Maetia, Wilfred Liligeto and a host of others. When students graduated they tend to do what they had experienced and were taught. Within a year or so, new students enrolling at Sonoma came directly from high schools who were contacted by graduates. For example, Leo Jamby, a non-Adventist from Irian Jaya, was contacted while a patient in Nonga Base

Hospital by Allan Paul in 1969. Leo became art teacher, trained as a pastor and was appointed a Mission President.



Sharona Thiele being baptised by her father David Thiele at Sonoma Adventist College in 1995. Photo from the Thiele's private collection. Many baptism have been held at Sonoma Adventist College.

This model over time proved an enormous success for Papua New Guinea. The first graduates from this to Fulton College in the 1940s. By the late 1960s era were chosen to upgrade to degree status by studying overseas. Allan Paul and Aaron Lopa, both graduates of 1968, helped lift the status of theological education for the Church. A balance between practice and theory, faith and action, and study and work was achieved. This course covered all of scrip-voted study be given to upgrading Fulton to degree ture, contained less Western academic curricula and was contextually relevant. The strong influence of teachers like Wilfred Billi, Nelson Palmer,



Wilfred Bili: **Photo sourced from the Adventist Heritage Centre**

Jamby and Rex Tindall, who all engaged closely with students but in work acnot be underes- load. timated. Enrol-

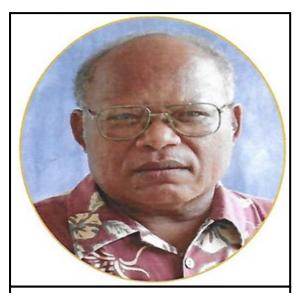
ments during this period rose to the mid 70s by 1972. Graduates not only achieved a great degree of success as pastoral evangelists, but in academic pursuits overseas and at Pacific Adventist University and in administration in Missions and the Union.

The Fulton College Model

Theological Education in Fiji commenced with John E. Fulton teaching Pauliasi Mbunoa and others in his Suva home. Pauliasi became the first ordained indigenous Adventist in the South Pacific Islands, in October, 1906. Over the years, Theological Education in Fiji evolved from Buresala

Training School, which opened on Ovalau in 1905, and early 1970s, the Central Pacific Union Committee voted that greater emphasis be given 'to practical preaching' and that a three-year Diploma course be introduced with a pre-requisite of NZ School Certificate standard. Then in 1975, it was level.49

In 1972, I transferred from Sonoma College to Fulton College in Fiji to try to duplicate the success Aaron Lopa, Leo experienced in PNG in Fiji and Polynesia. One of the elements stressed by Division leadership was to engage students in the practical aspects of evangelism and preaching in the churches. Pastor Kevin Moore directed Theological Education at not only in class Fulton in the late 1960s and until December 1972. Pastor Moore was an extremely good evangelist tivities and field who conducted big campaigns using Fulton College excursions, can-students to greet and visit people and share in the



Dr Aaron Lopa: Photo courtesy of Thiele's private photo collection.

In 1973, theology students were grouped into small teams and asked to conduct their own campaigns. A special outreach was conducted for the Indian population in Suva, under a large marquee erected at Samambula. Other groups erected corrugated iron shelters in villages to preach to the people. Afaese Manoa, in reflecting on the difference between the 1972 and 1973 practicals, said in his report to the class:

'In 1972 we shined our shoes, boarded the plane to Samoa, dressed well for meetings, shook hands with people attending the meetings and came back to Fulton. This year we planned each outreach, preached the meetings, visited the people and conducted bible studies and saw people won to Christ. We are now confident we can work as pastors and evangelists for we have been successful.'50

Some students worked with evangelist Pastor Aisake Kabu for experience. In 1978, Pastors David and Alex Currie and Lyell Heise modelled a Health/Evangelistic outreach in Nukualofa, Tonga, where more than 70 persons were baptised. Students were fully involved. One woman baptised was a 26-year-old Loisi Latu, a police woman. She had been beaten by her father and who could not walk for several days. She enrolled at Fulton, trained as a teacher, returned to Beulah to teach and today lives with her family in Los Angeles. Students however did all the preparation, visitation and engaged with all who attended the meetings. A five-day plan was conducted in Korovou Hospital with the help of Dr Fatiaki and Pr Ray Eaton, modelling to students what could be done. The schools of RKS and QVS

at Londoni were regularly visited by ministerial students. Fulton was host to many South Pacific University students during this period.

Fulton students were rostered to preach in Adventist Churches from Suva to the Wainimbuka regularly. When the J. L. Tucker bus was donated by the Quiet Hour, students were transported to various churches on Sabbath morning for preaching assignments. Dr. Currie and Pr Paul Cavanagh helped to reopen inland Fiji to Adventism with the enthusiastic help of students. Baptismal records show that in the decade 1970 to 1980 baptisms rose to 1050. Whereas the yearly average for baptisms was in the 200's it now consistently had risen to 500 and more. ⁵¹

The balance between professional and practical studies in the curriculum was achieved and made a difference in the lives of graduates. Most of the graduates from this era have served the church as Pastor – evangelists. Some became Mission departmental leaders, including Mission Presidents, others served as departmental leaders in the Union while two, Lawrence Tanabose and Waisea Vuniwa were appointed Union Presidents. Erika Puni was appointed a church pastor in North New Zealand, was accepted as a student into La Sierra University, California, United States of America, where he obtained both Bachelors and Masters degrees. Incidentally, after his first quarter results Erika was credited all theology subjects studied at Fulton College. Later he earned a doctorate from Fuller Theological Seminary in California.

On his return to the South Pacific Division, he pastored in New Zealand, then was called to Avondale College where he taught in the Theology Department. He was then appointed to the South Pacific Division as a departmental director before moving to General Conference as Stewardship Director where he served for ten years. La Sierra University considered Fulton College's lecturer's



Dr Erika Puni, currently
Practical Theologian at
Avondale College of
Higher Education:
Photo courtesy of the
Adventist Heritage
Centre

from the late 1970s and 1980s, first under Dr. Alex Currie and then under Dr. Lyell Heise, as equivalent to their own lecturers.

Conclusion

In recent years much has been written concerning the lack of creativity, innovation and freshness of approach in current

theological education. One of the reasons cited for this is that accrediting agencies do not want to dilute the 'quality of education' in centres of theological education. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Education in more than one hundred years (1876 – 1980) in the South Pacific has certainly not been stagnant, but rather dynamic! The models reviewed in this paper, which are all related to the South Pacific Islands demonstrate creativity, growth and development, contextualisation, innovation, and adaptability. With a changing society in the Pacific as well as in New Zealand and Australia, and with new approaches to education, let us keep theological education in the Pacific on the cutting edge.

In his book Future Shock, Alvin Toffler, 1970

quoted Psychologist Herbert Gerjuoy of the Human Resources Research Organization as saying 'The illiterates of the future are not those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.' Both Adventist theological education and Adventist evangelism must understand lessons from the past. Theological educators must be endowed with the responsibility to help rescue denominations from such stagnancy, lack of freshness and a paucity of creativity by modelling, experimenting and creating fresh approaches to reach people for Jesus.

Questions that need addressing robustly include: Are theological and ministerial students required to learn too much without significant exposure to the field? How can theological institutions break the professional paradigm which accrediting agencies can develop? In the USA, two thirds of theology students are male and one third female.⁵³ What is the ratio of male to female students in the South Pacific Islands? Are the Pacific nations ready for a changing ratio? How often does a denomination rigorously discuss the aims and purposes of theological education? How often do graduate employees ask whether the most appropriate curriculum is being taught? How often is the question asked on how well an institution is integrating theory and practice and relating the curriculum to major contemporary issues?⁵⁴

In his introduction, Foreman was quoted as saying that it is only in recent times that the Pacific Islands have 'seen any true theological schools.' As Pacific Adventist University, Fulton College and Sonoma possibly enter this category, the plea of this paper is they do not loose the creativity,

the contextualisation and uniqueness of earlier models.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church needs to ask regularly whether ministerial training Institutions are providing graduates with the best balance between academic knowledge and professional practice, to fulfil ministry expectations and responsibilities. Stackhouse says a goal of theological education is to prepare 'church leaders who are aware of the multiple and global contexts in which they serve.' ⁵⁵ Gerjuoy says

'The new education must teach the individual how to classify and reclassify information, how to evaluate its veracity, how to change categories when necessary, how to move from the concrete to the abstract and back, how to look at problems

from a new direction – how to teach himself. Tomorrow's illiterate will not be the man who can't read; he will be the man who has not learned how to learn.'56

Although there has been no one successful way to train the Adventist ministry team in the South Pacific, there are commonalities that have made the training of ministers a real success. That history and those elements must not be lost as institutions in the South Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists plan, forge and design theological education curricula for the twenty-first century.

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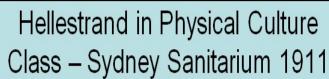
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Citation for Claude Douglass Judd by Dr Alex Currie



Claude
Douglass Judd
was born 24
June 1920
and spent his
childhood in
the farming

communities of Gippsland, Victoria. learned farming practical skills and became creative in adapting and channelling this experience into individual enterprises. At seventeen he commenced planning a future beyond farming. His mother, a committed Seventhday Adventist, inculcated strong Christian values into her family and Claude's interest in Ministry was aroused. There were two avenues in which this dream could be achieved one by studying at Avondale College, the other by training at Sydney Sanitarium as a nurse. Claude chose the latter and commenced training at the SAN in January 1938, five months before his eighteenth birthday.

Pastor A. W. Knight, Chaplain of the SAN, took a keen interest in male trainees by coaching them in homiletics and ministerial activities besides their nursing studies. So Claude regularly preached in local churches while training and when he graduated in 1941 was appointed to South New South Wales Conference as a literature evangelist. Soon after, Claude was appointed to assist a well-known evangelist. He served on several evangelistic teams and eventually conducted his own series. In 1943 he married Yvonne Brown of Tasmania and four children, Warren, Bruce, Raymond and Geoff made their gifted

family complete. Ordination followed.

Claude was appointed Youth Director for the Victorian Conference in 1952 where his leadership talents were readily noticed and in 1955 was appointed President of the Tasmanian Conference. At 34 years of age he was the youngest pastor to be appointed to such a leadership position. This posting launched him into 32 years as President of four Conferences and two Union Conferences.

As an administrative leader he was appointed to many boards and committees, not the least of which was Sydney Adventist Hospital Board, Auckland Adventist Hospital Board, the Sanitarium Health Food Company Board and a host of other boards and committees.

In 1986 Claude joined the staff of Sydney Adventist Hospital as Development Officer, specialising in fund raising activities and he assisted in establishing the Hospital Foundation.

In retirement, Claude assisted in fund raising ventures that benefitted Christian Education and helped Pacific leaders prepare for Church administration in the South Pacific Islands.

Claude will always be remembered as a gracious, gentle and caring person, whose innovative gifts as a committed Adventist Christian enabled fellow leaders to achieve their potential. His sense of humour and winning smile enabled him to connect with so many people on different levels. He possessed an empathy and understanding of people that enabled him to identify and connect with people in all walks of life. Thanks Claude for being an ambassador for Jesus.



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