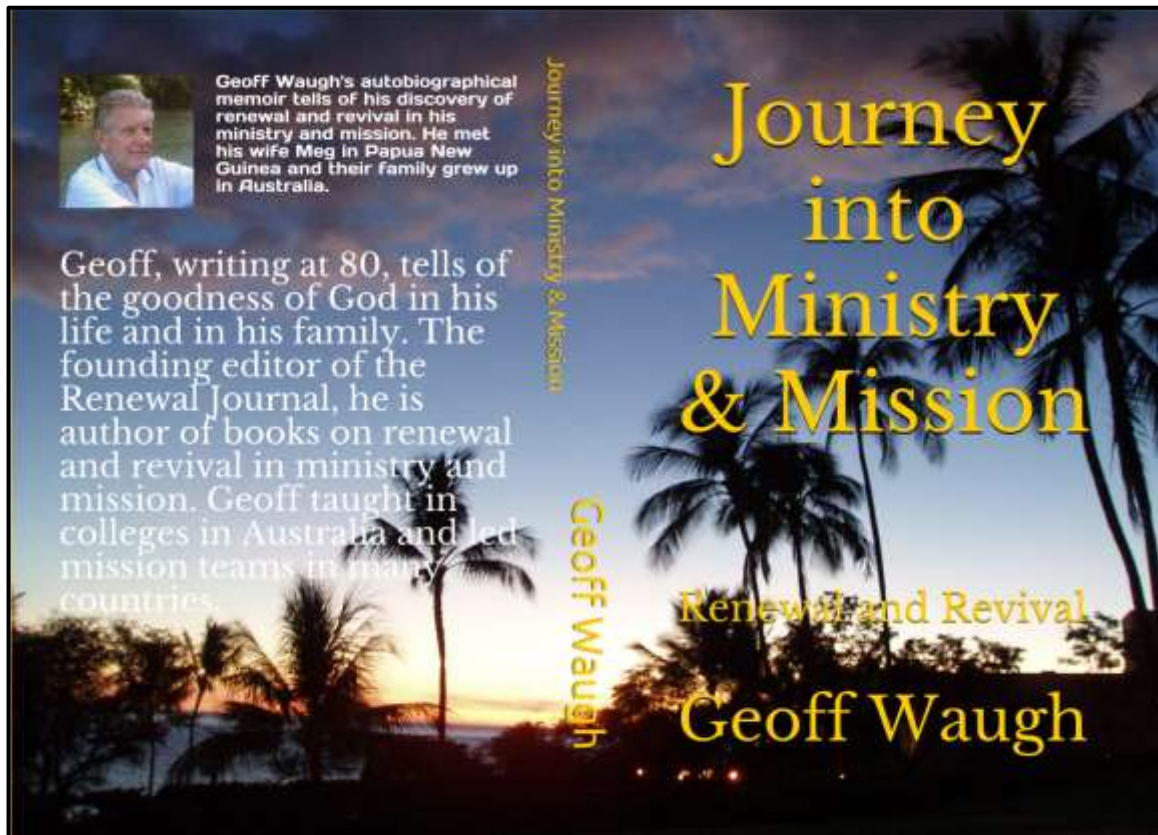


# ***Journey into Ministry & Mission***



*Condensed from my biographical books*  
*Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*  
and  
*Journey into Mission*

**Geoff Waugh**

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*With love and thanks to our family and mission teams  
We journey together*

Some names have been withheld by request or to protect identities

**Amazon Review on Book 1: Journey into Renewal and Revival**

Geoff Waugh's life and ministry has influenced people all around the world. The story of his life and ministry will be of interest not only to those who know him - you will find yourself reflecting on your own journey with Jesus. Beginning in Australia, then Papua New Guinea, his invited ministry in renewal and revival has involved every continent. Here is a personal journey with reflections that will enrich the lives of all readers. As he 'looked to Jesus' along the way he was opened up to many exciting new ventures in Australia and into countries where revival and renewal is vibrant, changing many lives. Although a biography, many others are involved. Geoff's journey is like a rose bush with strong roots and branches. He is one bud of many, opening into a beautiful bloom as he opened himself to God's leading into an exciting journey. His reflections fit naturally, showing how his personal journey has relevance for others. (John Olley)

**Amazon Review on Book 2: Journey into Mission**

I have read many similar stories, but this one exceeds them all.

I read the on-line edition and was blown away by the response of the Solomon Islanders to the power of the Holy Spirit. It was amazing, or should I say God-planned. Geoff and Don have done well to not only be in so many places and seeing God at work, but also writing a book about it all. It's as if it has all happened in a world apart, but the events in Brisbane show that it could happen in Australia also. (Barbara Vickridge)

**Basic Edition ISBN: 978-1727193619 (Print)**

**Gift Edition ISBN: 978-1727193756 (Colour)**

**Renewal Journal Publications**

**[www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)**



Logo: basin & towel,  
lamp & parchment,  
in the light of the cross

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## **Prologue: God's Surprises**

Here are snapshots of God's surprises during our short-term mission trips.

### **Africa**

"Can I take some bread home?" asked a young man at our communion service in the slums of Nairobi in Kenya, East Africa. We shared real drink and two loaves of bread together among 30 people in their corrugated iron shed where I was the guest preacher.

"It's your bread," I answered. "You decide." He quickly shoved a handful of bread into his pocket. Then most of the others did the same. Two weeks later, Frank, the young pastor, emailed me: "I've visited the slum homes of those people and they are still eating that bread. It's still fresh." Apparently God multiplied it.

Frank and his wife Linda then offered free bread and drink each Saturday for hungry, skinny slum people, usually catering for about 50 people. Sometimes many more turned up and they all had plenty, every time. Apparently God kept multiplying it as needed.

A young pastor in Ghana in West Africa, invited me to hold meetings there. So I arrived with three others from Brisbane during our college break in July, forgetting it was monsoon time in Ghana. We flew into a deluge of rain on the Monday. Our hosts planned night meetings in the market from Tuesday, with morning teaching in a local church.

"Can we hold the night rallies in the church?" I suggested.

"Oh, no," they said. "Only church people go there. Meetings in the market attract the crowds."

"What about the rain?" I asked.

"God sent you, so he'll do something," they responded, full of faith.

We drove for over an hour in pouring rain from Accra, the capital, to the town of Suhum in the hills for our first meeting on Tuesday night. The heavy rain had flooded the power station there so the whole town was in darkness. We prayed earnestly, asking God to take over.

Within 15 minutes the rain stopped, the town lit up with power, and we began. Those excited Africans sang and danced for over two hours, attracting hundreds to the service. All that week we had clear skies and large crowds. Church teams prayed for hundreds of people. Many were saved. Many were healed. Heavy monsoon rains began again the day after our meetings ended.

## Nepal

A friend of mine worked with the United Nations in Nepal. He loved to help and support pastors and leaders there. We visited him many times and I spoke at pastors and leaders meetings in Kathmandu, in West Nepal and in East Nepal. Some of those pastors walked for two or three days across the high ranges just to attend.

Their churches are saturated in prayer. I prayed in the upstairs prayer rooms of their church in Kathmandu. Those small rooms are open 24 hours a day and many people went there to fast and pray, sometimes for many days.

We saw God's Spirit move beautifully and powerfully in those meetings. Many were filled with the Spirit and healed. I heard a young man from one of their church bands praying eloquently in beautiful English – but he cannot speak English. They pray for one another with strong faith, expecting God to save, heal, deliver and anoint them.

The dedication of those Christians impressed me. Most of them had been imprisoned for their faith many times. One young pastor conducted a Christian wedding which infuriated relatives so they complained to the police and he spent a month in prison for disturbing the peace. Our host had been severely beaten while in prison. Two young evangelists were shot to death when we were there. They had returned from Bible College in India and were accused of spying. God gives those Christians amazing peace and joy amid the persecution, just as in the Book of The Acts.

## India

Our team visited Grace Bible College in New Delhi founded by Dr Paul Pilai. Paul had stayed in our home in Brisbane when visiting Australia. He was converted after a young Christian girl prayed for his healing while he was very ill in hospital and he recovered miraculously.

He told us how his students and teams started new churches in villages and towns. They often faced angry opposition. One fanatical group burned their tent meeting and attacked them, hitting them with clubs trying to kill them. They broke Paul's arm and burned the tent. But suddenly Paul's team was surrounded by handsome Indian men who miraculously moved them away to a safe place nearby. The team could see their burning tent in the distance. Those angels told Paul that God would send him back there. A few years later they were invited back and started a church there in a home.

Grace Bible College, the largest in India with around 600 students, trains people to evangelize and plant churches, especially among unreached peoples. Their graduates often face persecution and some have been martyrs. What a humbling privilege it was to pray with the staff there and speak to the crowded hall full of such committed students.

## **The Philippines**

I taught on revival at a seminary in Manila in the sweltering heat of the Philippines. An assignment I gave my M.Th. students was to report on revival and miracles. One pastor, who was also a police inspector, reported that a church he visited sent groups of young people to sing and speak at hospitals and nursing homes.

One of those teams held monthly meetings in a mental hospital. The staff said that their patients may not understand much, but those patients did enjoy the singing. More than 40 came to the first meeting. The team offered to pray for anyone who would like prayer. They prayed personally for 26 people. The next month when the team returned, all those 26 had been discharged and sent home.

## **China**

I visited China with a student at college. His parents worked there. The woman pastor evangelist of a house church invited us to her church in a high-rise unit. The young man who met us at the gate feared that the security guard might ask awkward questions, but as we walked in around 7pm, the guard had his back to us, talking to someone else. When we left after midnight, the guard was gone, probably sleeping.

Around 30 people sat on the floor and sang softly in worship. We spoke and then found that no one would leave until we had prayed for them personally. That took a while! They were happy to slip away one-by-one, just as they had come. Most were new Christians who believed because a Christian prayed for their healing. They believed in prayer and miracles just as in the Book of The Acts. Their simple, strong faith and humility moved and challenged me deeply.

## **Australia**

We visited Elcho Island in the north where revival broke out and spread through Aboriginal communities all across northern Australia. We invited a team from Elcho Island for a Pentecost weekend in Brisbane. Two dozen came! They told us about the revival and prayed for people after each meeting that weekend, just sitting on the carpeted platform floor, aboriginal style.

That revival began after aborigines on Elcho Island prayed desperately for revival amid increasing crime, drink and drugs. The night their pastor returned from a holiday they met of Bible Study and prayer. God's Spirit fell on them as they united for the closing prayer. That prayer and ministry went all night. People were filled with the Spirit, discovered many spiritual gifts, and saw healings and reconciliations. Everywhere their teams went they saw God moving on the people.



## South Pacific Islands

Many revival movements swept the South Pacific islands. I was blessed to see some.

God's Spirit fell on the Law School of the University of the South Pacific just after Easter 2002. The Law School is in Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu. Many were dramatically saved and transformed. Those committed students also went on mission to other South Pacific nations and to Australia. Now they are lawyers and leaders, and a president of their Christian Fellowship became a Member of Parliament in Fiji.

Some of those teams came with me to Pentecost Island in Vanuatu. God has been moving there in unusual ways for a hundred years. Vanuatu people first evangelized the island, one becoming a martyr, A wife of the highest ranking chief returned to life after she died and told them that she had seen God and they should leave their heathen ways and become Christians. Many revival teams have served God there.

God poured out his Spirit on children and youth in the Western Solomon Islands from Easter 2003. They loved to sing and pray daily in the church after school. God gave them visions, revelations, words of knowledge about hidden sins and bad relationships and many other spiritual gifts such as healings and speaking and singing what God revealed. A mother asked me what it meant when her young boy had a vision of Jesus with one foot in heaven and one foot on the earth. I immediately remembered Matthew 28:18 – *All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

We saw God touch around 1,000 youths at a National Christian Youth Convention in 2006. One night at the convention they responded, running to the front of the open-air meeting. For half-an-hour their worship team sang "He is Lord" while we prayed for them. They fell like dominoes. Many testified to healings, visions and revelations. One young man returned to his village that night and found his mother ill, so laid hands on her and prayed for her. She was healed. His brother then asked for prayer and he too was healed. The young man had never done that before. A whole group from the Kariki Islands, further west, saw revival in their islands on their return. God moved powerfully in every meeting they held and in personal prayers.

I could tell you more, so I've done that in this condensed book, [\*Journey into Ministry and Mission\*](#), and also in more detail in my longer book, [\*Journey into Mission\*](#), with a summary of the highlights in [\*God's Surprises\*](#).

## Key Passages from Book 2: Journey into Mission

Key passages and exciting developments can get lost in the details of this book so I not only highlight many of them in **bold print** but I bring some of those key revival passages together in these key revival passages.

### *From Chapter 5 - Australia: Elcho Island (1994)*

In that same evening the word just spread like the flames of fire and reached the whole community in Galiwin'ku. Gelung and I couldn't sleep at all that night because people were just coming for the ministry, bringing the sick to be prayed for, for healing. Others came to bring their problems. Even a husband and wife came to bring their marriage problem, so the Lord touched them and healed their marriage. ... Many unplanned and unexpected things happened every time we went from camp to camp to meet with the people. The fellowship was held every night and more and more people gave their lives to Christ, and it went on and on until sometimes the fellowship meeting would end around about midnight. There was more singing, testimony, and ministry going on. People did not feel tired in the morning, but still went to work.

### *From Chapter 8 - Philippines (1995)*

During the class seminars, my students reported on various signs and wonders that they had experienced in their churches. Many of them expected God to do the same things now as he did in the New Testament, but not all! "We don't seem to have miracles in our church," said one student, a part-time Baptist pastor and police inspector. "You could interview a pastor from a church that does," I suggested. So he interviewed a Pentecostal pastor about miraculous answers to prayer in their church. That student reported to the class how the Pentecostal church sent a team of young people to the local mental hospital for monthly meetings where they sang and witnessed and prayed for people. Over 40 patients attended their first meeting there, and they prayed for 26 personally, laying hands on them. A month later, when they returned for their next meeting, all those 26 patients had been discharged and sent home.

### *From Chapter 9 - Ghana (1995)*

When we arrived in the mountain town of Suhum, it was dark. The torrential rain had cut off the electricity supply. The rain eased off a bit, so we gathered in the market square and prayed to God to guide us and to take over. Soon the rain ceased. The electricity came on. The host team began excitedly shouting that it was a miracle. "We will talk about this for years" they exclaimed with gleaming eyes. ...

People reported various touches of God in their lives. Some were healed. Later in the

week an elderly man excitedly told how he had come to the meeting almost blind but now he could see. Each day we held morning worship and teaching sessions for Christians in a church, hot under an iron roof on those clear, tropical sunny days. During the second morning I vividly 'saw' golden light fill the church and swallow up or remove blackness. At that point the African Christians became very noisy, vigorously celebrating and shouting praises to God. A fresh anointing seemed to fall on them just then.

### **From Chapter 9 – Toronto, Canada (1995)**

Both of us appreciated the gracious, caring way people prayed for us, and others. No rush. No hype. No pressure. Whether we stood, or sat in a chair, or rested on the carpeted floor, those praying for us did so quietly with prayers prompted by the Holy Spirit. Those praying laid a hand on us gently, as led, and trusted the Lord to touch us. He did. Warmth and love permeated us. We returned to our hotel after the meetings aware of increased peace and deeper assurance of the Lord's love and grace. ... After returning to Brisbane I noticed that people I prayed for received strong touches from the Lord, most resting in the Spirit on the floor. We needed people to be ready to catch those who fell, to avoid them getting hurt (then needing extra healing prayer!). Some of them had visions of the Lord blessing them and others.

### **From Chapter 13 – Nepal (2000)**

**By Raju:** Out of about 200 participants in the conference by the grace of God 100 of them were baptized in the Holy Spirit praising the Lord, singing, falling, crying, and many other actions as the Holy Spirit would prompt them to act. About ten of them testified that they had never experienced such a presence of the power and love of God. Some others testified being lifted to heavenly realms by the power of the Holy Spirit, being surrounded by the angels of the Lord in a great peace, joy, and love toward each other and being melted in the power of his presence. Many re-committed their lives to the Lord for ministry by any means through his revelation. ...

Some 60 evangelists from Gorkha, Dhanding, Chitwan, Butwal declared that they were renewed in their spirits by the refreshing of the Holy Spirit and they are now going to serve the Lord in the field wherever the Holy Spirit will lead them to be fully fledged in His service. In the last day of the conference while praying together with the congregation and committing them in his hands, many prophesied that the Lord was assuring them of great changes in their ministry, life and the area. While the power of God was at work in our midst three children of 6-7 years old fell down weeping, screaming and testifying about a huge hand coming on them and touching their stomachs and healing them instantly. After the prayer all the participants got into the joy of the Holy Spirit and started dancing to the Lord, singing and praising Him for His goodness.

On 25 April we held another conference in Nazarene Church pastored by Rinzi Lama in

Kathmandu. Ten churches unitedly participated in the two days gathering where about 100 people participated. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit continued in this conference refreshing many in their spirits and bringing much re-commitment. Some cases of healing were testified.

#### **From Chapter 14 – USA: Pensacola**

I liked the spontaneous bits best. Before Friday night's revival service some people in the singing group of over 50 people on stage began singing free harmonies without music while they waited for the sound system to work, and we all joined in. It sounded like angels harmonising in continual worship. Wonderful. No need for words!

A visitor preached, calling for faith and action. Their prayer team prayed for many hundreds at the 'altar call' – short and sharp, but relevant and challenging. The man who prayed briefly for me spoke about national and international ministries the Lord would open for me.

#### **From Chapter 15 – Vanuatu (2002)**

**By Romulo:** “The speaker was the Upper Room Church pastor, Jotham Napat who is also the Director of Meteorology in Vanuatu. The night was filled with the awesome power of the Lord and we had the Upper Room church ministry who provided music with their instruments. With our typical Pacific Island setting of bush and nature all around us, we had dances, drama, testified in an open environment, letting the wind carry the message of salvation to the bushes and the darkened areas. That worked because most of those that came to the altar call were people hiding or listening in those areas. The Lord was on the road of destiny with many people that night.”

Unusual lightning hovered around the sky and as soon as the prayer teams had finished praying with those who rushed forward at the altar call, the tropical rain pelted down on that open field.

God poured out his Spirit on many lives that night, including Jerry Waqainabete and Simon Kofe. Both of them played rugby in the popular university teams and enjoyed drinking and the nightclub scene. Both changed dramatically. Many of their friends said it would not last. It did last and led them into ministry and mission.

#### **From Chapter 16 – Vanuatu (2003)**

Significant events associated with the coming of the Gospel to South Pentecost included a martyr killed and a paramount chief's wife returning from death.

Thomas Tumtum had been an indentured worker on cane farms in Queensland, Australia. Converted there, he returned around 1901 to his village on South Pentecost with a new young disciple from a neighbouring island. They arrived when the village was tabu (taboo) because a baby had died a few days earlier, so no one was allowed into the village. Ancient tradition dictated that anyone breaking tabu must be killed, so they were going to kill Thomas, but his friend Lulkon asked Thomas to tell them to kill him instead so that Thomas could evangelise his own people. Just before he was clubbed to death at a sacred Mele palm tree, he read John 3:16, then closed his eyes and prayed for them. Thomas became a pioneer of the church in South Pentecost, establishing Churches of Christ there.

Paramount Chief Morris Bule died at 111 on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2016, the son of the highest rank paramount chief on Pentecost Island. After a wife of Chief Morris's father died and was prepared for burial, the calico cloths around her began to move. She had returned from death and they took the grave cloths of her. She sat up and told them all to leave their pagan ways and follow the Christian way. Then she lay down and died.

### *From Chapter 16 – Solomon Islands (2003)*

Revival began with the Spirit moving on youth and children in village churches. They had extended worship in revival songs, many visions and revelations and lives being changed with strong love for the Lord. Children and youth began meeting daily from 5pm for hours of praise, worship and testimonies. A police officer reported reduced crimes, and said former rebels were attending daily worship and prayer meetings.

Revival continued to spread throughout the region. Revival movements brought moral change and built stronger communities in villages in the Solomon Islands including these lasting developments:

- 1 Higher moral standards. People involved in the revival quit crime and drunkenness, and promoted good behaviour and co-operation.
- 2 Christians who once kept their Christianity inside churches and meetings talked more freely about their lifestyle in the community and amongst friends.
- 3 Revival groups, especially youth, enjoyed working together in unity and community, including a stronger emphasis on helping others in the community.
- 4 Families were strengthened in the revival. Parents spent more time with their youth and children to encourage and help them, often leading them in Bible reading and family prayers.
- 5 Many new gifts and ministries were used by more people than before, including revelations and healing. Even children received revelations or words of knowledge about hidden magic artefacts or ginger plants related to spirit power and removed them.
- 6 Churches grew. Many church buildings in the Marovo Lagoon were pulled down and replaced with much large buildings to fit in the crowds. Offerings and community support increased.
- 7 Unity. Increasingly Christians united in reconciliation for revival meetings, prayer and

service to the community. ...

Children received revelations about their parent's secret sins or the location of hidden magic artefacts or stolen property. Many children had visions of Jesus during the revival meetings. Often he would be smiling when they were worshipping and loving him, or he would show sadness when they were naughty or unkind. ... A policeman from Seghe told me that since the revival began crime has dropped. Many former young criminals were converted and joined the youth worshipping God each afternoon. Revival continued to spread throughout the region.

### **From Chapter 19 – Vanuatu Pentecost (2004)**

**By Don:** The night's worship led by the law students started off as usual with singing, then spontaneously turned into a joyful party. Then Joanna Kenilorea gave a testimony about a very sad event in her family that brought the Keniloreas back to God. She was especially eloquent in her address and when finished, Geoff found that it had been so powerful that he had no more to add that night and made an immediate altar call for prayer. Almost as one, 300 high school students, teachers and others present rose from their seats and moved out into the aisle to the front of the hall. There were a couple of slow starters, but when it became apparent that Geoff could not possibly pray for each individually, even these moved up to the back of the crowd until everybody in that room had come forward. Geoff in all his years of ministry and association with renewal ministries and revival (and that was the subject of his doctorate) had never experienced anything like it. The most remarkable thing for Helen and me was we were there and part of it in such a remote and previously unknown part of our world! It was surely a night to remember.

### **From Chapter 21 – Vanuatu: Pentecost (2005)**

Many of the older people attending these intensive teaching sessions had been involved in local revivals through many years. They understood the principles involved such as repentance, reconciliation, unity, personal and group prayer that was earnest and full of faith, and using various gifts of the Spirit. They were most familiar with words of wisdom and knowledge, discerning spirits (especially from local witchcraft), revelations, healings and deliverance.

I learned much from them, especially about the spirit world and humbly seeking God for revelation and direction. We westerners tend to jump in and organize things without really waiting patiently on God for his revelation and direction. Many westerners, including missionaries, find waiting frustrating or annoying, but local people find it normal and natural. Wait on God and move when he shows you the way. For example, you can seek the Lord about who will speak, what to say, and how to respond. We westerners often use schedules and programs instead.

### **From Chapter 22 – Kenya (2005)**

Before the Kibera slum church moved into their corrugated iron shed they met in a community hall. I taught leaders there, and spoke at their Sunday service with about 30 people. We gave them real bread for communion, not just symbolic cubes. The Spirit led me to give them all the bread we had. ... “Can I take some home to my family?” asked one young man. That’s a hard question to answer in front of 30 hungry people. “It’s yours. You can take some of your own communion bread home if you want to,” I answered. Everyone then took a large handful of communion bread, and most put some in their pockets to take home later. We shared real glasses of grape juice in plastic glasses, thanking the Lord for his body and blood given for us. After my return to Australia I heard that the bread apparently multiplied, as those who took some home had enough for their families to eat. Some of them were still eating it two weeks later. Francis added: "Actually the miracle continued months after we began NBM and were feeding members each Saturday afternoon with tea and bread. God continued multiplying the food and there was always enough."

### **From Chapter 22 – Fiji (2005)**

**By Jerry:** While we were praying and worshipping, the Lord told me for the first ever time to take the salt water and the land and give it back to God. And I told this brother that when we offered it to God the rain is going to fall just to confirm that God hears and accepts it according to His leading. I told him in advance while the Lord was putting it in my heart to do it... this is the first ever time and I always heard about it when people are being led... now it has happened to me... I could not even believe it. As soon as he brought the water and I brought the soil to signify the sacrifice, I felt the mighty presence of God with us and was like numb... and the sun was really shining up in the sky with very little clouds. This rain fell slowly upon us.... I still could not believe... my cousin was astonished and could not believe it... it happened according to the way the Lord told me and I told him. It was like a made up story.

### **From Chapter 23 – Fiji (2006) re Tanna Island**

The Lord moved strongly on young people, especially in worship and prayer. Children and youth were anointed to write and sing new songs in the local dialects. Some children asked the pastors to ordain them as missionaries – which was new for everyone. After prayer about it, they did. Those children are strong evangelists already, telling Bible stories in pagan villages. One 9 year old boy did that, and people began giving their lives to God in his pagan village, so he became their ‘pastor’, assisted by older Christians from other villages.



### *From Chapter 24 – Vanuatu (2006)*

**Raised from the dead:** At sharing time in the Upper Room service, a nurse, Leah Waqa, told how she had been recently on duty when parents brought in their young daughter who had been badly hit in a car accident, and showed no signs of life - the heart monitor registered zero. Leah was in the dispensary giving out medicines when she heard about the girl and she suddenly felt unusual boldness, so went to the girl and prayed for her, commanding her to live, in Jesus' name. She prayed for almost an hour, mostly in tongues, and after an hour the monitor started beeping and the girl recovered. ...

The revival team, including the two of us from Australia, trekked for a week into mountain villages. We literally obeyed Luke 10 – most going with no extra shirt, no sandals, and no money. The trek began with a five hour climb across the island to the village of Ranwas on ridges by the sea on the eastern side. Mathias led worship, and strong moves of the Spirit touched everyone. We prayed for people many times in each meeting. At one point I spat on the dirt floor, making mud to show what Jesus did once. Marilyn Wari, wife of the President of the Churches of Christ, then jumped up asking for prayer for her eyes, using the mud. Later she testified that the Lord told her to do that, and then she found she could read her small pocket Bible without glasses. So she read to us all. Meetings continued like that each night. ...

Revival meetings erupted at Ponra. The Spirit just took over. Visions. Revelations. Reconciliations. Healings. People drunk in the Spirit. Many resting on the floor getting blessed in various ways. When they heard about healing through 'mud in the eye' at Ranwas some wanted mud packs also at Ponra! ...

The sound of angels singing filled the air about 3am. It sounded as though the village church was packed. The harmonies in high descant declared "For You are great and You do wondrous things. You are God alone" and then harmonies, without words until words again for "I will praise You O Lord my God with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name forevermore" with long, long harmonies on "forevermore". Just worship. Pure, awesome and majestic.

### *From Chapter 24 - Solomon Islands (2006)*

**By Grant:** "Most of a thousand youth came forward. Some ran to the altar, some crying! There was an amazing outpouring of the Spirit and because there were so many people Geoff and I split up and started laying hands on as many people as we could. People were falling under the power everywhere (some testified later to having visions). There were bodies all over the field (some people landing on top of each other). Then I did a general healing prayer and asked them to put their hand on the place where they had pain. After we prayed people began to come forward sharing testimonies of how the pain had left their bodies and they were completely healed! The meeting stretched on late into the night with more healing and many more people getting deep touches. It was one of the most amazing nights. I was deeply touched and feel like I have left a part of myself in



Choiseul. God did an amazing thing that night with the young people and I really believe that he is raising up some of them to be mighty leaders in revival.”

A young man who was healed that night returned to his nearby village and prayed for his sick mother and brother. Both were healed immediately. He told the whole convention about that the next morning at the meeting, adding that he had never done that before. The delegation from Kariki islands further west, returned home the following Monday. The next night they led a meeting where the Spirit of God moved in revival. Many were filled with the Spirit, had visions, were healed, and discovered many spiritual gifts including discerning spirits and tongues. That revival has continued, and spread.

### *From Chapter 25 – Solomon Islands (2007)*

The week at **Taro** was the fullest of the whole trip, the most tiring, and also the most powerful so far. Worship was amazing. They brought all the United Church ministers together for the week from all surrounding islands where revival is spreading and was accelerated after the youth convention near here in Choiseul the previous December, where the tsunami hit in April. Many lay people also filled the church each morning - about 200. ...

It’s fascinating that we so often see powerful moves of God’s Spirit when all the churches and Christians unite together in worship and ministry. God blesses unity of heart and action, especially among God’s people. It always involves repentance and reconciliation.

In all these places people made strong commitments to the Lord, and healings were quick and deep. Both in Vanuatu and in the Solomon Islands the people said that they could all understand my English, even those who did not speak English, so they did not need an interpreter. Another miracle. ...

**Marovo Lagoon:** This is where the revival started with children of the lagoon at Easter 2003. Geoff had previously visited this church in September 2003. The old church building has been pulled down and the foundations were being pegged out on an open ridge high above the lagoon for the new one, which will probably hold up to 1000 as the revival swells the numbers.

Again students led the worship. Most of the adults were traditional, but there were forty or so in revival ministry teams who pray for the sick, cast out spirits and evangelise. We joined the meeting by 8pm and finished at 1.30am!

Very lively stuff. Only tiny kids went to sleep - 50 of them on pandanus leaf mats at the front. Then we prayed for people - and prayed, and prayed, and prayed and prayed, on and on and on and on! I involved the ministers (after praying for them and leaders first), and the students - and still people came for prayer - by the hundreds.

We prayed for leaders who wanted prayer first, then for their ministry teams, then for youth leaders and the youth, and then for anyone else who wanted prayer, and at about

midnight Mark called all the children for prayer, so the parents woke them up and carried the babies. I guess I prayed for 30 sleeping kids in mother's arms and for their mothers and fathers as well.

Then after midnight when the meeting "finished" about 200 remained for personal prayer, one by one. So I involved four students with me, and that was great on-the-job training as well as praying. We prayed about everything imaginable, including many barren wives, men whose wives were un-cooperative, women whose husbands weren't interested, and healings galore - certainly many more than 100 healings. In every case, those with whom we prayed said that the pain was totally gone.

I doubt if I've ever seen so many healings, happening so quickly. At 1.30am there were still 30 people waiting for prayer, so I got desperate, and prayed for them all at once. I told them just to put their hands on the parts of their body needing healings, and I prayed for them all at once, while the students and some ministers still there laid hands on them, and I also moved quickly around to lay hands on each one.

They were all happy, and again reported healings. I wish I'd thought of that at midnight! But at least a few hundred had a chance to talk with us and be specific about their needs.

### *From Chapter 27 – China (2007)*

I had the great honour of speaking at a house church. People arrived in ones or twos over an hour or so, and stayed for many hours. Then they left quietly in ones or twos again, just personal visitors to that host family. Food on the small kitchen table welcomed everyone, some of it brought by the visitors. About 30 of us crowded into a simple room with very few chairs. Most sat on the thin mat coverings. They sang their own heartfelt worship songs in their own language and style, pouring out love to the Lord, sometimes with tears. The leader played a very basic guitar in a very basic way.

Everyone listened intently to the message, and gladly asked questions, all of it interpreted. There was no need for an altar call or invitation to receive prayer. Everyone wanted personal prayer. Our prayer team of three or four people prayed with each person for specific needs such as healing and with personal prophecies. That flowed strongly. I knew none of that group, but received 'pictures' or words of encouragement for each one, as did the others.

While prayer continued, some began slipping quietly away. Others had supper. Others stayed to worship quietly. It was a quiet night because they did not want to disturb neighbours or attract attention. Most people in that group were new believers with no Christian background at all. They identified easily with the house churches of the New Testament, the persecution, and the miracles, because they experienced all that as well. Many unbelievers become Christians because someone prayed for their healing and the Lord healed them.

### *From Chapter 28 – Fiji (2008, 2009)*

**By Romulo (2008):** “Inter-tertiary went very well at Suva Grammar School that was hosted by Fiji School of Medicine Christian Fellowship (CF). It was an awesome two nights of fellowship with God and with one another. The Pacific Students for Christ combined worship was a huge blessings for those that attended the two nights of worship. Pastor Geoff spoke on Obedience to the Holy Spirit - this being a spark to revival and power. Students came in droves for prayers and the worship lit up the Grammar School skies with tears, repentance, anointing and empowerment. The worship by Fiji School of Medicine students brought us closer to intimate worship with the King. It was a Pacific gathering and each and every person there was truly blessed as young people sought a closer intimate relationship with the King. We were blessed beyond words.”

Roneil, a Fijian Indian, added, “It was all so amazing, so amazing that words can’t describe it. For me, it was obvious that the glory of God just descended upon the people during the Inter-tertiary CF. I’ve never seen an altar call that lasted for way more than an hour. I myself just couldn’t get enough of it. It was and still is so amazing. God’s anointing is just so powerful. Hallelujah to Him Who Was, Who Is and Who is to Come.”

**By Romulo (2009):** Two of the memorable highlights were the washing of leaders’ feet at RCCG Samabula and the worship service on Wednesday at RCCG Kiuva village. In fact I remember picking up the pastors on Sunday morning, and seeing Pastor Geoff carrying towels. I said to myself, ‘This is going to be fun.’ And fun it was. God was teaching the church the principles of servanthood, demonstrated not just by words but by actions. It was a moving experience as Pastor Geoff on his knees started washing feet, drying them with a towel and speaking into the lives of leaders. Powerful also was the fact that Pastor Geoff’s leading was to wash the feet of leaders. That Sunday former PM Rabuka, who heard of the Pastor’s visit, came to church for prayer. Of course the leading for Pastor Geoff to pray for leaders meant Rabuka would get his feet washed too. One of the acts that will be embedded forever in my mind was seeing Rabuka sit on the floor, remove his coat and wash the feet of Pastor Geoff and KY Tan. He then dried their feet with his ‘favourite’ Fiji rugby coat (he played in their national rugby team). I was blown away by this act of humility, as demonstrated by Christ on his final night with the disciples before his arrest and execution. On Wednesday night, (their last night in Suva), we were at Kiuva village in Tailevu. The powerful and angelic worship of young people and kids in Tailevu made the atmosphere one of power with a tangible presence of the Lord in the place. I was blessed to witness for myself the prevalent hunger in the body as lives connected with God. In all, it is purely refreshing being in the presence of God and being touched and filled by the Holy Spirit.

### *From Chapter 34 – Vanuatu: Pentecost (2010-2018)*

One Sunday there we shared in a combined churches service in the packed village church. Before the service Andrew had words of knowledge about pain in a man’s shoulders and the right side of a woman’s face. Both came for prayer while people were gathering in the

church. We then discovered that the man was the leader of the service and the woman preached that day! Many times, the words of knowledge Andrew received were for pastors and leaders first, and then later we prayed for others. At that Sunday service I was strongly led to call people out for prayer during communion. That was a first for them. It never happened in communion. A large number came for prayer and the healings were fast and strong.

One night Andrew felt led to wash everyone's feet. That took the whole service! We put a bucket of water near the door (regularly refilled) and Andrew washed everyone's feet as they arrived while we worshipped, prayed, spoke and called people out for healing and empowering prayer. I was led to wash the leaders feet that night also. ...

People were even more welcoming this time at Bunlap custom village. We prayed for dozens of people, and their pain left. We talked about the kingdom of God and how Jesus saves and heals. Some of the people told us they believed that, and when the chief allowed it they would be part of a church there. The paramount chief once burned a Bible given to him by a revival team from the Christian villages. Now he is willing for a church to be built on the ground where he burned the Bible. Hallelujah – what a testimony to God's grace and glory. For the first time ever that paramount chief asked for prayer. He wanted healing from head pain. Andrew placed his hands on the sides of the chief's head and we prayed for him in Jesus' name. The pain left.

### ***2017-2018 Update***

I returned with my grandson Dante and others in June-July, 2017. Stan came with his wife Daphne (my sister) and Emily from Riverlife Baptist joined us. The Riverlife church people sent a keyboard, a guitar, and a large box of reading glasses with us. We often take used and discarded spectacles with us on these trips, and also pray for healing!

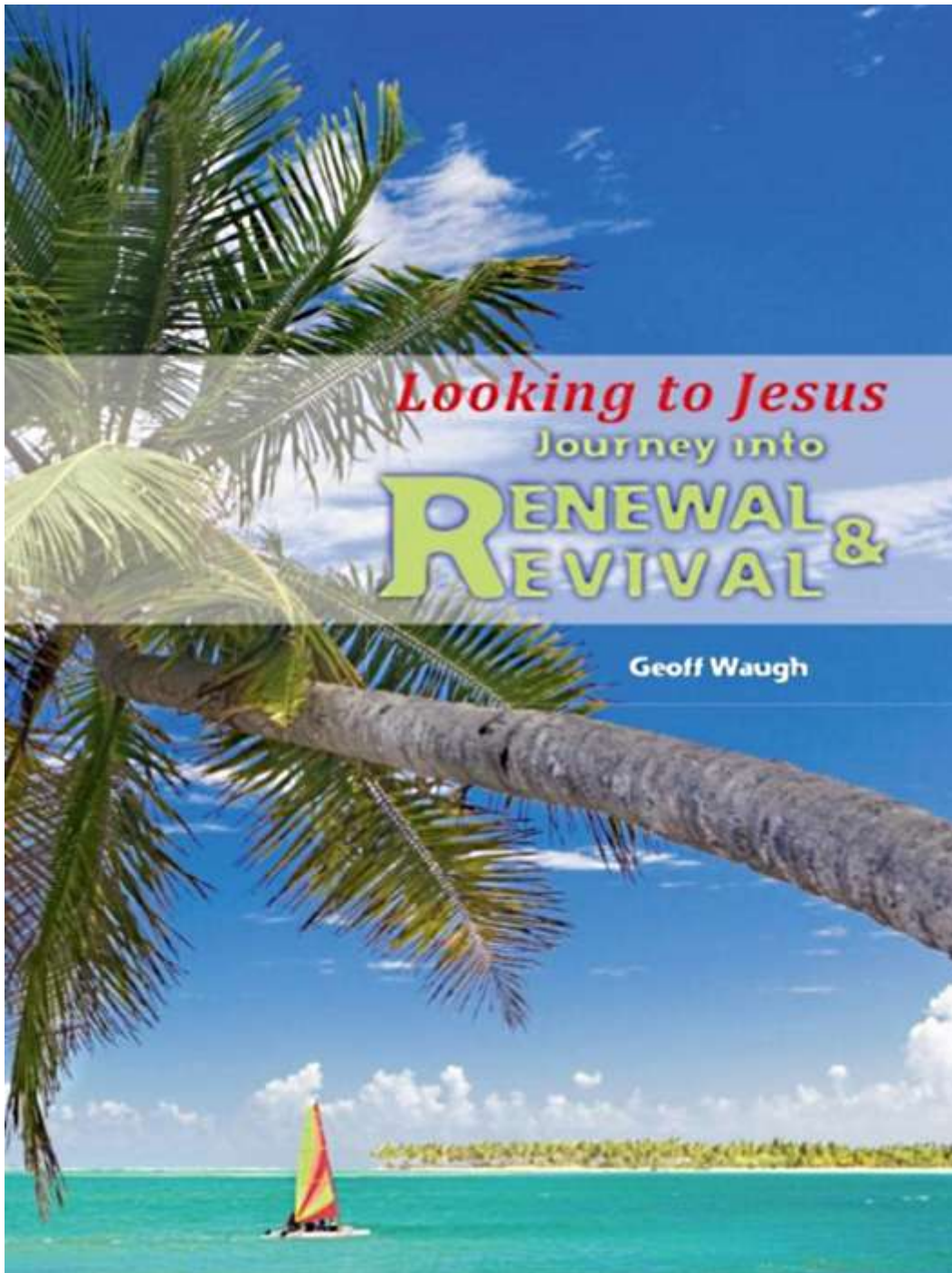
This time we had meetings at Ranwadi High School again and once again prayed with large numbers there. Then we returned to Pangi and Panlimsi villages for more meetings and visitation with Pastor Rolanson. At a Sunday service, Elder Jackson gave his testimony that his blood readings were normal at the clinic following prayer for diabetes.

We continue to encourage Christians to pray for one another in faith and obedience. I also participated when their new MP Silas Bule, formerly principal at Ranwadi, distributed Gideon's New Testaments to the local school.

Then in 2018 I had a team of seven of us. The six young men with me included Dante and Ben again with Ben's friends Scott (Andrew Chee's brother), Blake, Sergie, and Dylan. We stayed in Rolanson and Doneth's village at Panlimsi, up the ridge from Pangi on the coast.

Again we prayed with large numbers at their village meetings and during the day. Again we prayed for healing and anointing during communion. That was powerful. Pain left immediately with healing prayers, people were filled with the Spirit, using spiritual gifts, and we saw rising faith and obedience among them. They regularly pray for one another.

**Highlights from Book 1**  
*Looking to Jesus:*  
*Journey into Renewal and Revival*



## **Preface: thanks**

Many people impacted my life and I thank God for them and for God's faithfulness.

My parents, Jim and Hilda, gave me strong and loving foundations, showed me the right path to follow, and set wonderful examples of a Christian dad and mum, committed to God, to our family, and to others. Our second mum, Eileen Maude, added her selfless strength and love, supporting us all in our large, diverse family.

Constant companions on my journey from childhood have been my sisters and brothers, a growing, close knit family circle, even when that circle widened across Australia from far east, north and south to far west, as well overseas. All of us married Christians, and the Waugh tribe expanded from nine to ninety, including close relatives. We inherited the blessing of godly grandparents, so Christian uncles and aunts and their families have touched all our lives, confirming and guiding us in our journey through life. Many times they have been there for us with personal and practical support.

Our church communities provided firm and steady friendships, many lasting our whole lives. Some of our closest friendships came from those congregations. Our churches provided not only a strong and lasting support community but also the opportunity to grow in service and ministry.

I'm grateful, now, for my teachers, especially the good ones. That includes some inspiring people who lit fires or fanned the flame in me and pointed the way to greater possibilities. That includes many at Fuller Theological Seminary as well as others at theological college and teachers college as well as some at university.

The dedicated people I worked with in Papua New Guinea, expatriate and indigenous, touched my life in so many significant ways. I am grateful for the compassionate support of mission staff. Those years powerfully influenced my life and changed my worldview.

My quarter century working with the Methodist and Uniting Church expanded my vision, thrusting me into ecumenical and creative ministries in God's great big wonderful family. We had so many opportunities to touch thousands of lives in churches, camps, conventions and conferences. People I worked with there impacted my own life, deeply. Similarly, I am grateful for so many dedicated people I worked with and served in Christian Outreach Centre and Christian Heritage College. They inspired and challenged me with their commitment to God and to excellence. We also worked with wonderful, humble leaders and servants of God in many diverse cultures. I'm sure I received far more than I gave.

A great many shared my journey into renewal and revival ministries. We worshipped together, prayed together, dreamed together, and served the Lord together. Many of you journeyed with me through decades of pioneering service and ministry. That included prayer groups, church services, meetings, conferences, camps and community living, as well as serving God in many overseas mission trips. I am truly grateful.

Through many decades of our own growing family we have been warmly welcomed by my wife's family, caring grandparents for our children, and widely scattered relatives getting together for special events and family visits through the years.

I am especially thankful for the immeasurable support and love of my wife, Meg, who continually gave herself wholeheartedly in serving God and others. Everywhere we went, her life impacted people for God and his kingdom. Our children inherited her strengths and compassionate commitment, and they and their families continue to love and support me. I am grateful beyond words. Thanks.



## Introduction: Waugh Stories

My journey into renewal and revival saw amazing changes in the world, in the church, and in my own life.

The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible that I grew up with sounds ancient to me now. A four-hymn-sandwich is no longer my Sunday diet though it was for nearly half my life. Suits, ties, hats and gloves of my boyhood have disappeared from church services I now attend. Bible study groups, common in my youth, became ministry home groups applying Scripture to our lives. The typewriter I used for half my life belongs in the museum. Now it is often cheaper to fly interstate than to drive.

Change changed. Cultural change once took hundreds or thousands of years. Now it takes decades, or less. Medical advances inoculate us against disease which crippled or killed people when I was young. Women not only vote now but share parliament and pulpit and podium with men.

My lifetime saw cars and planes become commonplace. Life changed with automatic cars, super-jumbo jets, the atomic bomb, nuclear missiles, astronauts, supermarkets, endless varieties of bread and milk, synthetic clothing, line phones then mobile phones, reel-to-reel tapes then cassettes then CDs and DVDs, black and white TV then colour, analogue TV then digital, black and white photos then digital cameras, personal computers and memory sticks, laptops, the internet, email, Walkman, iPod, pews and organs then flexible seating and bands, hymn books then OHPs then data projection.

Most of those innovations did not exist in my youth. Half a century ago people usually stayed in the same home, community, job and church. Now families scatter far and wide and people change jobs often. So have I.

I rode on planes to visit Israel and Europe, to attend conferences in Canada, America, and Brazil, as well as to teach church leaders in Africa, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Philippines, China, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and every state in Australia.

So 70 (going on 35, with extra naps) seems a good age to recall life's adventures, now that I've attained my three score years and ten. At 70, some memories fade. Some bleach out completely. This book revives memories, of my life's journey. That journey into renewal and revival often surprised me. I changed. So did the church and the world.

Jump into these Waugh stories wherever you like. I'd probably start at Chapters 7 or 8, on renewal and revival. Then I'd work backwards to trace the journey there. These stories recount my journey in the '40s (school), '50s (teaching), '60s (ministry and mission), '70s and '80s (renewal) and from the '90s into the 21<sup>st</sup> century (revival). Those years hold many memories of God's grace and goodness.

I remember serving Jesus cups of cold, brown, muddy tea with my sisters' plastic tea set in our cubby house when I was about five. I remember eating a whole sweet potato for dinner, straight from the ashes in the ground, and really appreciating it after a long day's trek through two mountain gorges in New Guinea. I remember weekly communion or love feasts in a renewal group in Brisbane with real home-made bread and large glasses of sparkling grape juice. And I remember serving loaves of bread (not just symbolic cubes) for communion in a slum church in Africa, where many of them took some of the bread back to their hungry families and it apparently multiplied.

My sister, Elaine Olley, captured some of our family's early memories in her account of

dad's pioneering Waugh-fare as an innovative church minister in his biography, *By All Means*. I drew gratefully on that information as well. It sparked more memories. Dad's large family of nine adult children helped me also, many of us now grandparents. I've woven some of their memories into this story.

My Waugh stories survey my life's journey. Its unfolding theatres provide sequential chapters in this book. This Introduction gives an overview from which the other stories spring.

My story flows from 'the old, old story of Jesus and his love'. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). He has been central to my life. I don't know when I 'converted' to Christ and Christianity. As far as I know I always loved Jesus, and wanted to live for him even as a very young boy.

I learned about Jesus from my mother's knee, and my father's pulpit. Jesus was my hero. His story gripped me, especially the stories of his love for everyone, his execution and his surprising reappearances. The story of Jesus remains the centre of the Bible, and the centre of our lives. So my story flows from his story. My parents taught and lived that, and gave me that strong foundation.

Jesus remains our rock solid foundation in a changing world. He is timeless, eternal.

## **1. Beginnings: state of origin**

The popular State of Origin football teams in Australia field players representing the state where they began their club careers. Mine was New South Wales, not for football but for the game of life. Dad, a Baptist minister in New South Wales (NSW), practised what he preached. As a son of the manse, I found church life normal and enjoyed it. My parents lived authentic, caring, and often innovative lives. That made life interesting for me.

Dad combined tradition with openness to new ideas. He used the King James Version of the Bible (KJV). Inside the front of his big, black-covered KJV he stuck the words, "If the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense." Dad loved the plain sense: "God says it. I believe it. That settles it."

For example, his Bible said, "Be fruitful and multiply." He obeyed. I became the eldest of nine children. So I enjoyed various privileges and opportunities first, but also helped with the constantly growing tribe. Our expanding family fulfilled a living litany in each of dad's five-year pastorates:

Three children lived at Arncliffe in Sydney, NSW.

Two more children arrived at Griffith in western NSW.

One more child was born at Tamworth in northern NSW.

Our mother Hilda died in Tamworth before reaching 40. Never strong, her heart gave out. I guess we all contributed to that, along with the people she sacrificially loved and served. Dad remarried in the next pastorate at Gloucester. Eileen Maude, one of the youth leaders in the church, became our second mother, a courageous, caring, capable woman. So the litany continued, slightly reduced in volume:

Two more children at Gloucester in mid-northern NSW.

One more child at Orange in western NSW.

Dad died in the next pastorate at Toronto in Newcastle, NSW, almost with his boots on. He preached at a Sunday morning service, had a stroke that afternoon, and died soon after. I suspect he would prefer to go out like that, full steam ahead while serving the Lord. So we kids all grew up in NSW country towns in our family of origin.



## **2. School: green-board jungle**

I enjoyed school, found it reasonably easy, and preferred to fit in and not make waves. In fact I felt happy when left to my own devices, and uncomfortable when singled out for attention. I liked to blend into the jungle of life, unobtrusively but purposefully – a leopard rather than a lion.

My strong home base guided me through school as well. I wrote compositions in primary school about what we wanted to be when we grew up. Each year my goals remained the same. I wanted to be a minister and a missionary. I knew about that and admired it, even as a boy. That was my calling, I believe. So I had no desire to drive fire trucks or fly planes. They were for other heroes, not for me.

My heroes included pioneer missionaries and leaders such as David Livingstone, Mary Slessor, C T Studd, Sadhu Sundah Singh, Hudson Taylor, Florence Nightingale and others. I enjoyed reading *The Eagle Omnibus* books, a series of Christian biographies. Of course, I read Biggles too. Most post-war boys in those days grew up with the fictional wartime adventures of that flying ace. So home, church and school blended together into learning about life and God's kingdom. It all made sense to me.

That pattern continued into high school. There I enjoyed the challenges of drama and debating. Those interests and skills transferred easily into church life, especially in youth groups. My sport was church related as well. Our youth group played tennis on Saturdays through winter and we went swimming in summer. So those became my favourite sports with my main group of friends. I found life comfortable, safe and predictable. Surprises came later.

As the eldest in a growing family I had plenty of experience in teaching life skills to younger siblings. So, for me, teaching came naturally both at home with my co-operative sisters and brothers and also at church as a teenager teaching kindergarten kids in Sunday School and leading primary school children in Junior Christian Endeavour.

Similarly, at school I enjoyed Inter School Christian Fellowship (ISCF) and became its president in my final year, very traditionally. Then in my later teens at Teachers College I enjoyed the interdenominational Christian Fellowship (CF) where I met keen young Christian leaders, and became its president in my final year, more adventurously than in high school.

I began primary school teaching as a teenager, and loved it. But my eyes saw full time Christian ministry on the horizon. Teaching blended with that goal both as preparation and then later as my main ministry. That developed into a lifetime of teaching.

## **3. Ministry: to lead is to serve**

I guess it runs in our family – this business of ministry. Dad inspired us all, even though we chaffed a bit at the PK label. Preacher's Kid: "You can't do that, you're the preacher's kid." How often we heard that, or something like it. Nevertheless, we survived, and probably grew stronger because of it. So, like my unknown 'conversion', I don't remember how my 'ministry' started. It seemed to be part of life for me, even as a boy.

We grew up always helping someone. People have needs, so you help if you can. For example, most people phone the minister a few times a month. Well, they did in those days. So by primary school age I knew how to answer the phone politely and give basic information such as the times of the next meetings. We always had meetings. Our meetings included 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. every Sunday for church services, 7.30 p.m. every Wednesday for Prayer

Meeting, and 7.30 p.m. on Fridays for the youth group.

Our meetings were traditional, like most churches then. The four-hymn-sandwich provided the normal diet. Sunday School and Youth Group explored the new choruses, but we only brought them into church services at special events like anniversaries. We were ‘defenders of the faith’ and pretty conservative. I was a little wary of other denominations, and felt (as they probably did about their own beliefs) that we had the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so God would help us. I believed that then. Absolutely. Obviously. Unerringly.

I don’t believe that now. God helps us all, fortunately, irrespective of our doctrinal distortions, which we all have. I’m glad my open-hearted parents graciously acknowledged other people’s points of view, while holding very firmly to their own. Dad often instigated minister’s fraternal innovations, such as giving meal docket to tramps and drunks to be exchanged for a good meal at a local café, instead of giving money to be spent on booze. The tear in dad’s eye, or the compassion in mum’s heart impacted us all.

School with ISCF, and Teachers College with CF helped broaden my vision and relationships. I met good friends from different churches, generally evangelical, but not only that. Committed liberal students would challenge our dogmatism and help us grow beyond our narrow bias.

Following teaching I applied for ‘the ministry’. I’m grateful for my five years of theological college. Many of our lecturers had a big view of God and his people. Many students also had wider perspectives than I did at that time. That helped me see a bigger picture. I began applying those insights in pastorates at North Epping and Narrabeen in Sydney and Arian Park in country NSW. Ministry in NSW led to further ministry in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

#### **4. Mission: trails and trials**

Time in PNG as a missionary teacher widened my horizons even more, from the very first Sunday in a village church. Dirt floor and no seats. Grass roof and bamboo walls. Hens and piglets hanging in grass-fibre string nets (bilums) from the bamboo walls. Unwashed, hot bodies. Native dress. Preacher in nothing but a dirty lap-lap (sarong). No four-hymn sandwich there! Best of all, only one church in a village, in the early days. Western denominations had not divided the community along historic, doctrinal lines. We were one body in Christ. In reality, of course, we are one body in Christ anyway, and will be one forever. Imagine that!

I felt like a liberated kid, let out of school. New vistas tumbled into view among those towering highland ranges. Church was the community worshipping and working together, every day. No Sunday best in dress or manners – just life as normal. I evolved from using ancient English in scripture and prayer to the common language, theirs and mine. Casual dress always. Classes sitting under the bamboos telling stories, village style. That changed me. My perspectives changed for good: that is, they both changed forever, and they changed for the better.

I’m grateful to the mission staff. They knew their anthropology and missiology. Senior staff curbed my tendencies to export Western Aussie church traditions into that culture. I learned to ask questions more than give answers. Usually the best answers came from the pastors in the villages. They knew their people and their culture better than we ever would. They followed the biblical patterns of communal life better than we did. They understood the spirit-world and revival more than we had experienced it ourselves.

We enjoyed interaction with missionaries from other areas and denominations. I

participated in many conferences and training courses with them, and worked closely with some of the Methodists in Christian Education. I needed PNG more than PNG needed me. Life there helped me to understand more fully the culture of the Bible, the truths of Scripture, and the limitless possibilities of Christian living. I'm grateful.

## **5. Family: Waughs and rumours of Waughs**

I met Meg in PNG. We both taught in schools there. We taught youths and adults as well as children. I started new schools as a single man living out in the village. At weekends I visited the mission school where Meg was teaching. I would "climb ev'ry mountain, ford ev'ry stream, follow ev'ry rainbow" till I found my dream." That included Meg, a wonderful, faithful, perceptive, caring, loving partner. We married on furlough in Sydney, and returned to teach in Bible Schools in the isolated highlands of PNG.

There our first daughter Lucinda arrived vigorously in the one room European ward of the mission hospital. The first Sunday back at a village church all the women wanted to nurse her. We found it hard to get her back from them. Now Luci and David have their own family of three wonderful children, enriching my life with every visit together.

Back in Australia on furlough we welcomed our son, Jonathan, born in Sydney. Within months he joined our perpetually travelling family in the drive north to Brisbane. Jonathan and Phyllis are parents to three charming children, the eldest married in December 2018, and Jonathan designed our current home.

In Brisbane our third child, Melinda, arrived to complete the trio often mistaken as triplets when they were young. She and Reuben have two gorgeous girls and their family also live in the house that Jonathan and Reuben built. So I enjoy living with family at this time of writing, living in the granny flat.

Our children grew up in community. While they progressed successfully through primary and high school we lived in community with others. Our friends who sold us a weatherboard Queenslander home had raised it to accommodate people in extra rooms. So for many years we helped or worked with others, living together. At one crowded time more than a dozen of us lived in our home. We had no lack of adventures then, including long discussions on how to handle the garbage – literal and personal.

My formal teaching evolved through primary school classes, to children's and adult education in PNG, to Bible and Theological Colleges in Brisbane, across many denominations. I saw the spectrum of body of Christ in many theological colours, and liked it. It added richness and vitality to my own life. Maybe it's God's humour, for I worked in many denominations as a Baptist minister in a wide range of non-Baptist jobs.

Meg shared that journey. A brilliant teacher, she could subdue an unruly class or student or child or husband with one look. Like her family, her students loved and respected her. She trained in high school Maths and English but usually taught Maths in girls' schools, then taught basic primary education in PNG, and then taught Maths again followed by School Counselling in Queensland.

Meg died in 2002 leaving a gaping hole in our lives. God, and time, heal the pain of loss. Meg's unique blend of creativity and compassion, wit and wisdom, gentleness and goodness, continue to shine in our children, and in our children's children. Our adult children and their children will no doubt tell their own stories in their own way, so I just touch a little on that in my story. It could be a whole book on its own – fascinating, lively, unexpected, adventurous.

## **6. Search and Research: begin with A B C**

“When you read you begin with A B C” and then you write it and use it. All my life that process developed from early beginnings into further study and publications. Meg and I shared that journey as teachers, missionaries, and leaders in church life. Search and you will find, but not always what you expect! That quest included our whole family visiting Israel, a mind-blowing adventure of biblical proportions.

After teaching in schools and Bible Schools in PNG, I taught Christian Education with the Methodist Church in Queensland in parishes and in their Bible College. Then the Methodists merged with Presbyterians and Congregationalists to form the Uniting Church. Their lay training college united with their theological college, so I found myself on the faculty of the Uniting Church Theological College for a decade. More of God’s humour, I guess.

I worked ecumenically from a Uniting Church base. We explored the cutting edge of educational developments, including many adventurous innovations. For example, I found myself teaching about renewal and revival to students from the Catholic, Anglican, Uniting, and Pentecostal colleges.

The Christian Outreach Centre invited me to write their government submission for a Bachelor of Ministry degree in Christian Heritage College. I joined the visionary staff there to teach subjects including courses on revival and the Holy Spirit. That became creative and revolutionary, a bold step forward. Pentecostals, for a century, looked on higher education with suspicion, or opposition. Many warned that seminaries became cemeteries. So there I was in the thick of it, helping to raise the dead. Seminaries can be seminal, powerfully influential, as under God they should be.

My work included duplicating, photocopying and publishing through 50 years. That involved me in academic study applied in ministry. So while working full time, I worked my way through education and ministry degrees, and sometimes wondered if I was killing myself by degrees. I chose study routes that enriched my ministry. Most of my study also became ministry, producing research, publications and resources on renewal and revival.

My research churned out innumerable papers, articles and submissions – often controversial. We graduated from manual typewriters to electronic typewriters, to computer keyboards, and from DOS and floppy disks to Windows and CDs and DVDs. Our ABCs developed into WWWs such as in the **www.renewaljournal.com** - my Renewal Journal website on renewal and revival.

## **7. Renewal: begin with doh rey me**

Renewal is God pouring out his Spirit, personally and in churches. He renews us.

Renewal and revival flow from the story of Jesus and his love. God’s love, revealed in Jesus transforms our lives by his Spirit. Like good theology, it produces doxology, that is, worship. You may begin with a song like ‘Jesus loves me’ but soon you add many variations and harmonies. “When you sing you begin with doh, rey, me”, and you move on into more glorious harmonies and even glimpses of heaven’s eternal worship.

Renewal is more than singing, of course, but in worship we see its impact clearly. Renewal helped change worship from traditional hymns to contemporary, creative styles. That worship invaded our personal lives. It produced a new wave of cassettes, CDs and DVDs, many new

kinds of home groups and small groups, as well as transforming congregational worship. It liberated worship from pre-packaged concerts (inspiring as they can be) to Spirit-led creativity (even with thousands involved).

Renewal was not a common term in my youth, unless it meant helping dad renew the worn out lino floor coverings that sat on top of old newspapers telling the history of its last laying. The renewing power of God's Spirit did become a common focus from the seventies. I had returned from PNG, and began to explore current trends in the church and community including discoveries of life in the Spirit.

Renewal challenged my thinking and my understanding of the Bible. Gifts of the Spirit. Power for mission. Healings. Signs and wonders. New Testament Christianity. Early church life rediscovered today. These came alive in new ways.

Renewal was ecumenical and charismatic. We rediscovered that God's Spirit cannot be tied to our denominational boxes no matter how impressive the wrapping. As Jesus said, new wine bursts old wineskins.

Renewal involved working with leaders from many denominations. Like salvation, it is available to everyone in every denomination. We produced resources and led ecumenical renewal meetings. I even led weekly charismatic services in Wesley Central Mission in Brisbane, the cathedral of Methodism in Queensland. We invited speakers from all streams, Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostal.

Renewal saw people of all churches being filled with the Spirit, discovering spiritual gifts, and doing what they may not have done before. For example, we began to pray more expectantly for healings of all kinds – physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, relational and social.

Renewal changed me, and others. It often changes churches as God's Spirit floods us and spills over into rivers of revival in the community. "Streams of living water," said Jesus, describing the Holy Spirit in us and flowing from us.

## **8. Revival: begin with 1 2 3**

Revival is God pouring out his Spirit abundantly. That cannot remain within one church, or even within a group of churches. It changes lives, homes, churches and societies. It floods into unlimited personal and church growth. When you count you begin with 1, 2, 3 (as in conversions), but in revival you are counting 1,000 or 2,000 or 3,000 (as in one day at Pentecost, and now in some local churches) or on to 1 million or 2 million or 3 million, as in national revival movements.

I read about revivals all my life. I found it in those missionary biographies I absorbed as a boy. Reports from missionaries sometimes included revival stories. It was certainly normal in the book of Acts and the New Testament.

So I lived with a puzzle or paradox. We believed in revival but rarely experienced it. It happened somewhere else such as in Africa or China, on in some other age as in the early church or the eighteenth century. Why not now?

Gradually my study unearthed surprising revelations. I discovered that in the last 50 years we have lived through the greatest revivals in human history, far greater in numbers and impact than local revivals in the history books.

I began to write about that. Revival included church growth in Africa from 10% of the population in 1900 to over 50% now, in spite of and perhaps because of persecution and

genocide. Underground revival in China in the last 50 years grew from one million Christians to over 100 million Christians estimated now.

Another conundrum! Traditional churches in the West declined while independent, charismatic and Pentecostal churches exploded all over the globe. What are we missing? Revival.

After I retired at 65, and continued teaching part time, I began exploring revivals more consistently. Previously I had seen strong moves of God during short-term missions in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Now I have time to see more, and I received invitations to teach pastors and leaders about revival.

It surprised me. Revival seemed unexpected and problematical. In most places it began among youth or even with the children. I saw that in Africa, Nepal, China and in the Pacific. Revival leaders were young! Youth and children had visions of Jesus, angels, heaven, hell and the spiritual state of their families. They prayed for the sick and saw many healed. They evangelised in their villages and schools with joyful zeal. Sometimes in their new enthusiasm for righteousness, like Gideon they destroyed their parents' idols, artefacts or magic items and stirred up hornets' nests. Whole communities changed. Revival transformation has become a major development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **Conclusion: begin with you and me**

So where is all this going? I don't know, but I love discovering what God is doing in all the earth – and we only know a tiny bit of that. We usually learn about it years after it happens.

Each chapter of my journey into renewal and revival begins with my discoveries about Jesus. Then the chapter explores how that impacted my life and my journey into further dimensions of God's purposes.

So this book's title is both a description and invitation. The story describes my journey into renewal and revival, and also invites you to journey into renewal and revival.

Your story is different, very different. But the eternal truths are the same. So I encourage you to avoid the following traps as you read my story.

1. Follow Jesus, not me. Follow Jesus' example, not mine. You are unique, and so are your calling and gifting. Many people I work with are not called to preach or teach, but they serve God powerfully, anointed by his Spirit. Ask him to fill you, even while you read this book. That's a prayer he loves to answer.

2. You don't need a strong Christian background to serve the Lord. It does help, but it can hinder as well. Many of us who grew up in the church follow church traditions and beliefs more than we follow Jesus and his Spirit. We have much to unlearn! Many people I know discovered renewal and revival without a church background and moved boldly in New Testament lifestyles more quickly than I did.

3. Remember that God forgives all our sin, not just some of it. We all fail. I do not focus on my failures in my journey, although I mention some. For example, I found it easy to be bound by my traditions, I did not always live up to my beliefs, and I did not relate easily to unbelievers, unlike Jesus. Fortunately, his blood makes us clean from all our sin. Many powerful leaders have failed, repented, and discovered much more of God's grace. Sometimes, those forgiven the most, love God the most. They are so grateful. We can all be grateful. Trusting in Jesus, you too are forgiven and set free. Live in that freedom.

4. Let Scripture be your guide. We have different theologies, but one Bible. The Holy

Spirit inspired it, and reveals it to us. Your theology will throw some light on the Bible, but our theologies are limited, distorted and usually Western. Influenced by Western world views, we may be suspicious or unbelieving about supernatural healings and miracles, revelations and visions, the spirit world and casting out spirits, or living as Jesus did in intimate relationship with his Father, constantly led by the Spirit. He calls us to follow him, not just our traditions. Where those traditions help us to love and follow him, that's wonderful.

I believe that *the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea* (Habakkuk 2:14). Dive in! Great currents can carry you beyond the shallows into the depths of the ocean of God's love and his mighty purposes.

## Highlights

This book gives you highlights selected from my two autobiographical books which I published 10 years apart.

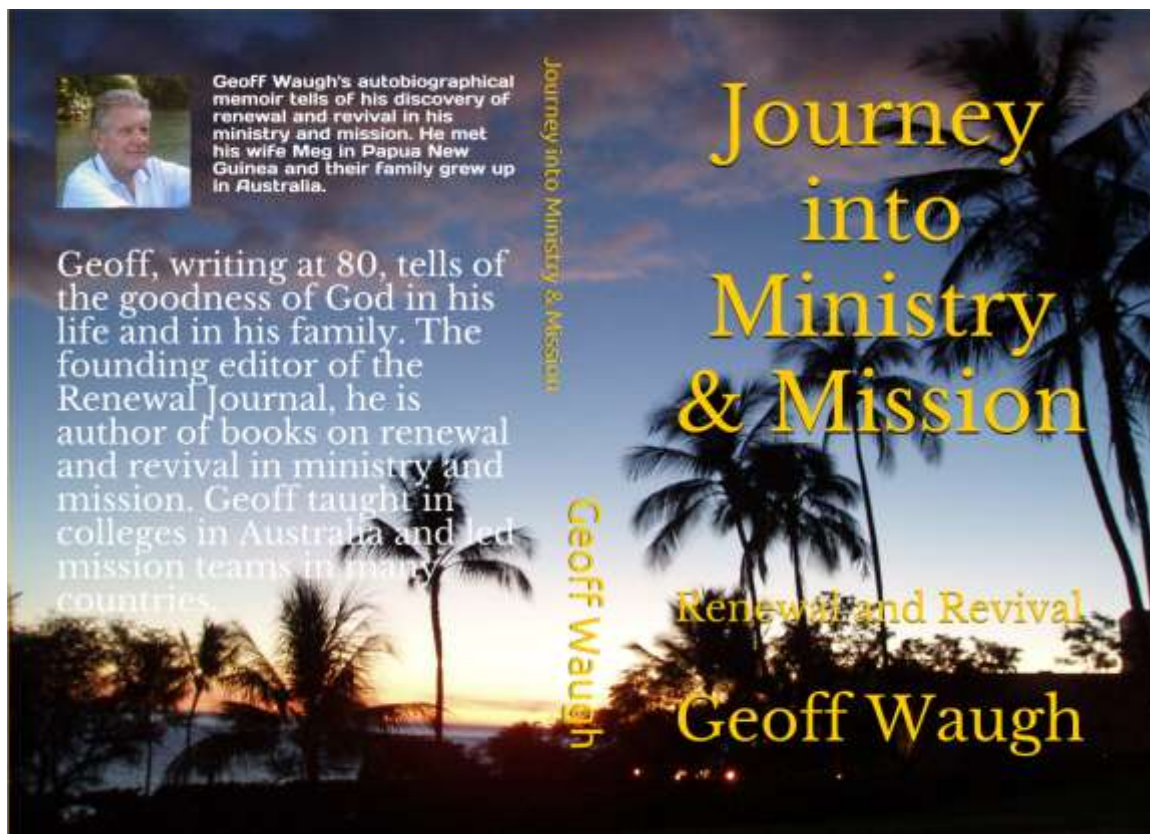
*Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*, written when I was 70, is my basic autobiography. Ten years later at 80 I expanded its last chapter, Chapter 8 on Revival, into a second autobiographical book, *Journey into Mission*, co-authored with Don Hill who wrote about our mission trips in his book *Travelling with Geoff*.

So this book *Journey into Ministry and Mission*, gives you highlights selected for this condensed book. These highlights miss a lot of information about my life and my family's life including our mission adventures. However, I have selected the bits that highlight for me the way God led and blessed us all.

Mission and ministry are terms with global relevance is in these Oxford definitions:

**MISSION:** An important assignment given to a person or group of people, typically involving travel abroad, eg. '*a fact-finding mission*'. The vocation or calling of a religious organization, especially a Christian one, to go out into the world and spread its faith, eg. '*the Christian mission*'. A strongly felt aim, ambition, or calling, eg. '*his main mission in life*'.

**MINISTRY:** The work or vocation of a minister of religion, eg. '*training for the ministry*'. The spiritual work or service of a Christian or a group of Christians, especially evangelism, eg. '*a ministry of Christian healing*'. The action of ministering to someone, eg. '*the soldiers were no less in need of his ministry*'.



***Journey into Ministry and Mission***

**Condensed from**

***Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal & Revival*** - autobiography

***Journey into Mission*** – Geoff's mission trips



## Chapter 1

### Beginnings: state of origin



*Geoff's family of origin*

After early childhood in busy Sydney, I grew up in country towns, with fresh air and wide open spaces around us. Our state of origin for my family-of-origin of nine children is New South Wales (NSW) where Dad ministered. All our family have strong Christian foundations, and I'm grateful.

Songs and hymns such as "Jesus loves me, this I know for the Bible tells me so" and "Tell me the old, old story of Jesus and his love," shaped my childhood and my life. The old, old story is also the new, new story, more up to date than tomorrow's newspapers. That story changes lives every day.

Picture books and stories of Jesus captivated me. Now I realise that his Spirit called me, touched me, even then. As a kid, I just thought the stories of Jesus were my favourite stories.

I knew him and loved him. He was there in all the picture story books – white European, tall, long brown hair and blue eyes (or maybe brown), dazzling white garments (in dusty Palestine with mobs touching him every day!), peaceful, and loving. My favourite poster picture showed him sitting on a rock in a brilliant white robe with children of the nations gathered around him, sitting on his knee, resting at his feet and standing nearby. That robe must have been miraculous to stay so white! Most films still show him like that, serene and clean.

What a man! He was a kind of superman or super hero to me. He could do anything – feed 5,000 with a boy's lunch, raise a girl from death, stop a storm, walk on water and rescue Peter from drowning.

Yet, he was so meek! He let them capture him, like Aslan on the stone table, being taunted and shaved of his glory and majesty. He died a shameful, agonising death spiked to a cross. Yet, he reappeared mysteriously – only to his friends. Still rather meek (hidden) and mild (comforting) but with great authority.

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," we children sang. As I grew older the picture changed. Jesus confronting me from the Bible seemed more like **Granite Jesus, wondrous and wild**. The lion of Judah roars! Aslan is no tame lion.

"Every year you grow you will find me bigger," said Aslan to Lucy in *Prince Caspian*. I found that too.

Jesus in the gospels is more passionate, more moved emotionally and more spontaneous than everyone else. He loved more that we can, forgave more than we do, and he was more righteous, more authoritative, and more dynamic than we are.

He also had human needs. He became weary, even worn out as when he slept in the storm, exhausted after a busy day. He needed to time out, especially to pray. So many came for help he often had no time to eat. His friends let him down, often. Yet, he kept on doing his Father's will.

No single picture or version of him can fully capture the vastness of his inexpressible glory. Who can express the inexpressible or describe the indescribable? We glimpse facets, and each facet is dazzling. Each facet reflects brilliant colours of the eternal, blazing Light.

The more I knew him, and I know him so little still, the more fascinated I became. He's really worth living for and even worth dying for, although I don't choose martyrdom as one of my spiritual gifts or goals!

I learned more about Jesus everywhere we went.

## Arncliffe, 1941-1947

Born in 1937, before World War II, my earliest memories include war-time events at Arncliffe in Sydney.

We lived close enough to Sydney airport to hear the planes. One crashed there during the war bursting into a ball of flame. We children hid under the table for protection if those 'bombers' flew low over us.

We blacked out our homes, with blinds drawn showing no outside lights. I remember our ration coupons, and eating lots of bread and dripping. Occasionally mum flavoured it with roast meat juices. We ate plenty of sausage rolls, mince and more mince (best in Shepherds' Pie – lucky shepherds!) and dampers with Golden Syrup, called Cockey's Joy. Its container shone with a bright picture of some cockatoos. I never understood why cockatoos would like Golden Syrup, but it sweetened and softened my dampers.

World War II of 1939-1945 ended with wild celebrations and newspapers filled with photos of returning service personnel (servicemen in those days). I remember the holiday we had from school to celebrate the end of the war, a day full of sirens and whistles and fog horns ceaselessly blaring all over the city and harbour. I was seven.

Home felt safe and secure. Dad had migrated from Scotland as a small boy. His mother sailed to Australia after her husband died, seeking a new life for her young family of six surviving children. The seventh, a baby girl, died at sea leaving my dad, Jim, the youngest. Grandmother died when I was one. Both of dad's parents had strong faith, rooted in Presbyterian teaching and Salvation Army zeal.

My mum also grew up in a Christian family. They attended the evangelical Baptist Church in Carlton, Sydney, where she met dad, a strong-minded, red head carpenter. During the depression of the thirties he found various jobs including owning a small-goods shop near the railway station. Mum, then Hilda Willis, helped in the shop. They married on Boxing Day, 1936. Dad joked that they had been boxing ever since. Although strong minded Waughs, they lived in peace and gave us a home filled with harmony and music. I arrived a year later, and my first sister Elaine a year after that.

My parents refused to trade on Sundays, so eventually they sold the shop and dad found other jobs including taking us to Wagga Wagga in western NSW. He worked as a debt collector, and also founded the Baptist Church there, starting with meetings in our home. Then the Arncliffe Church in Sydney called him to be their pastor. We lived there during and after the war.

As in some other pastorates, we lived in two different manses (the minister's home) at Arncliffe. First we had a rented house until we moved into one on the expanded church property. I would ride my tricycle to the front gate in our first manse to watch the big boys from school ride their billy-carts down the middle of the road on the hilly street outside our house. Billy-carts were fascinating, home-made contraptions built from a butter-box nailed to a plank with pram or toy wheels, the front ones on a swivelling cross piece guided by a rope tied to each side. Very few cars appeared in our side street in those days, but if they did you could hear them chugging a block away.

My next sister Hazel arrived then. I was happy, and proud to be big brother. We children felt secure and we remember our mum keeping us clean and well fed and dad tightly tucking us into bed, making a canoe shape of the mattress to keep us snug every night.

Later we moved into the brick house next door to the stone church building. We had the

run of the churchyard (no cemetery) as well as our own yard. Dad made a cubby house for us and in our imaginary games we served Jesus cups of tea (muddy water with sand sugar – so I suppose he turned it into tea, not wine). We were the hosts, David and Judy, using our play names. I knew that Jesus was always there, like an invisible man. It seemed natural to interact with him, even then.

The open-air rock and stone pulpit in the church yard gave me all the props I needed to conduct church services for my sisters, baptising them in the dust. No sprinkling of dust for us, as we Baptists buried candidates. Fortunately for my sisters I could not use dad's shovels and tools.

As a pre-school minister's kid, I discovered that if I went to the church kitchen after the service on communion Sundays, the nice ladies washing up the glasses would kindly give me some of the left-over grape juice to drink. Children, in those days, did not share in communion as mine did a generation later, enjoying the renewing freedom we found. Dad felt we would not understand. But I understood that I could get a drink of it anyway, afterwards.

When I returned to that church building in my twenties it seemed to have shrunk to a dolls' house size, in comparison with my memories of its vastness! I then discovered that the fancy gothic-style designs painted beautifully on the front wall above the pulpit actually said, 'Reverence my Sanctuary'.

I enjoyed dad's children's stories in the morning church service. I could understand them. During the sermons I looked at Bible picture books, or made shapes with my ironed white handkerchief, or discovered old chewing gum stuck under the wooden pews.

Dad's preaching, I discovered later, was forthright and uncompromising, as he was. He taught exegetically, explaining Bible passages, applied to life. He did nothing half-heartedly. He often helped people in need, and roped people in to help him.

Dad, the carpenter, built everywhere we lived. At Arncliffe he erected a church hall, built from a dismantled army hut. We often saw him wielding hammer and saw and working with a team of church volunteers. How he fitted in four years of college study with all he did beats me. Mum helped, including typing notes for the students.

Mum led the Kindergarten Sunday School and one of her teachers drew and made cardboard models to illustrate the story each week. I played with the dough in a cardboard basket we received for the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000, and multiplied those dough buns and fishes into many, many pieces until the dough crumbled.

My earliest memories of school include my mother coming to take our denominational Scripture classes using cardboard models, or a sand tray Bible scene, or a model in coloured plasticine to illustrate the story. We sang choruses with actions such as "Wide, wide as the ocean, high as the heaven above, deep, deep as the deepest sea, is my Saviour's love."

Mum studied the piano since she was little, and played like an angel. She played hymns and choruses in church and Sunday School and with the youth groups in all our churches. I especially loved relaxing in our lounge chairs to listen to her play hymns with variations that rippled up and down the keyboard, such as 'Nearer my God to Thee' and 'In the sweet bye and bye'. As the family grew bigger she had less time and energy for those wonderful after-dinner family recitals. Mum told us that the polished wooden legs at the front of her piano bore the teeth marks of her little children feeling the vibes of her music.

After the war and following dad's graduation from theological college we moved to his next church appointment in a big, adventurous train journey to Griffith in western NSW

## Griffith, 1947-1951

We moved into a rented house in the dusty red-brown plains of the Murrumbidge River irrigation area at Griffith in far western NSW, and saw many dust storms. If you were brave or mad enough you could stand out in the massive clouds of dust but you had to hold your breath and jam your eyes shut – then run for the door to get inside to breathe. I did that occasionally, mixing adventure with caution.

Soon dad was building again. Another army hut became the manse next door to the church and we moved in, after first living a few blocks from the church. Later again dad and his team added other church halls to the buildings on the lot. That large corner block provided plenty of playing space for us children, including the church tennis court and parking area. We had plenty of room to play and ride our bikes.

“You were being big brother,” remembered my sister Elaine, “teaching me to ride a *boys’* bike without teaching me how to dismount.” Ouch!

Two more children, Graeme and Heather, arrived to add excitement to our family life. I could push them around in their prams or in my billy-cart that I also used to collect horse manure off the roads for our veggie garden!

We lived mostly in country towns, so church people regularly augmented dad’s small income with fruit and veggies. Every weekend the larder filled and we could eat as much of the fruit and pumpkin as we liked. We preferred our pumpkin mixed with ‘smashed’ potatoes or in home-made soup.

Many things were home-made, including ginger beer, as the mottled ceiling testified until cleaned again. At school in craft I learned to make some useful items such as woven bags. They made handy presents for the steadily increasing numbers of our family birthdays, or for Christmas presents.

Dad taught me to use a .22 calibre rifle to shoot the abundant rabbits in the nearby countryside, a source of cheap meat. I felt like a champion because I could hit those targets among the plentiful burrows. We also set traps in the dusty entrances to the burrows, but I didn’t like using them as they seemed cruel, and I certainly didn’t want my hand to get caught in one. I was glad to leave the skinning and cleaning to dad and the cooking to mum, but enjoyed the meat.

I joined the Junior Farmers club at primary school in that farming district and qualified because I grew vegetables for the family in our backyard - a tiny contrast to other boys from huge fruit or wheat and sheep farms. Dad kept fowls to breed chickens for eggs and meat. So we kids fed the chooks and collected the eggs that we could find.

My hair grew thick, fast and curly, hence my schoolboy nickname Curly. No amount of Brylcreem would slick it down like other boys’ tidy hair. It just sprang back up. We tried parting it on the left, then the right, then the middle, but the parts never stayed in, so we went for the brush-back style. That worked, and still does.

We kids rode our bikes for miles. Yes, we had miles then, as well as pints, quarts and gallons of milk. The milkman led his draft horse and cart from house to house very early in the morning. We put out our milk billycan to get our gallon of milk, ladled from his huge thick aluminium milk cans. We left out the money overnight in the billycan, maybe a pound note (about two dollars) or the correct shillings and pence.

I had a favourite penny bank, a large penny-shaped bronze plastic ‘penny’, with the king’s head on one side and a kangaroo on the other. Our parents taught us to save any pocket

money, and give a tenth to God. That provided excellent early training in maths, accounting and stewardship. At Sunday School, during the offering we sang, “Hear the pennies dropping, listen while they fall. Every one for Jesus, He shall have them all.”

Although I wasn’t sure how Jesus got them to Africa, I did know the church treasurer organised that because he counted the money in dad’s church office. I didn’t realise some of it went to my dad, or maybe I’d have doubled my efforts! In fact, when I began teaching I was earning more as a single man than my dad did with his large family, and it was easy then to give a tenth to the local church, more to missions, and some to dad as well. But that started with pennies from my pocket money.

I learned to see life from a biblical perspective. So I was glad to invest in God’s kingdom any way that I could. Even as a boy I knew that contributing to God’s kingdom made good investments, with eternal dividends – although I couldn’t explain it that way. I just knew that giving to God had eternal results somehow.

We never bought birthday cards or Christmas cards. We made them. So I graduated from a page torn from an old exercise book folded in half with *Happy Birthday* on the front and *I love you mum* inside to many creative versions. In fact, producing creative cards provided much of the fun. I began experimenting with different shapes such as Christmas trees and birthday cakes, and included some original verse, or worse.

I collected autographs in my small autograph book with coloured pages. We had many visitors, and their comments often encouraged or inspired me. Mum wrote, “*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). She lived that way with a strong, uncomplicated faith.

Dad added some original verse to my autograph book, based on Luke 5:4, “Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.” He concluded it with typical ancient English: “God’s promise is faithful, He provideth for you, Leave distant shallows, the deep beckons you.”

I was nine then! I didn’t grasp it all, but glimpsed the significance of my parents’ words, because they lived them. So I kept those fountain pen inscriptions, and have them still.

Another hobby for me was the piano. I enjoyed it, particularly because our mother could play so well. I actually enjoyed playing my scales, and learned to play the school songs from the back of the monthly school magazine.

One of dad’s big enterprises was our first car, a square ’36 Dodge with running boards and a back rack that carried his hand-made tool box, occasionally emptied of tools to carry picnic goods. Originally it was dark blue, but that showed up the red-brown dust too much, so dad painted it yellow. I travelled with him to mission meetings and sang solos as a young soprano.

We sang at home around the piano learning new songs and choruses or singing favourites. But we spent most of our time at home in the kitchen. Our large kitchen with the big wood-burning fuel stove and the sink and benches became the hub of our home life. We children rarely used the lounge room. The adults used that for conversations with church people. The kitchen stayed warm with the smell of cooking on the fuel stove and warm-hearted with our parents and friends milling around constantly. We sometimes joined those adults gathered in the warm kitchen.

“I remember one time at Griffith,” Elaine recalls, “we had some visitors staying and I was allowed to stay up and sit around the fuel stove with them and drink hot water (and pretend I liked it).”

After meals at the large kitchen table Dad read stories from the gospels in his big KJV Bible following breakfast, and read more stories from Theodora Wilson Wilson's *Through the Bible* after dinner at night. I enjoyed both, although I did wonder about the double Wilson name, but loved the many full-page paintings in the book.

Dad prayed after the reading, always in ancient English. It was our prayer language then. Later on, as we grew, we children took turns in praying after the reading. I found those prayers a little more interesting as we children fumbled around trying to master the ancient English! I learned that language well. It was my Bible, prayer and hymn language for 30 years. I grew out of it in PNG where current, clear English made more sense.

Bible teaching and daily life all mixed together for me. Words painted on the front inside wall of the Griffith church said "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). Not encouraging for a restless boy! But challenging.

I vividly remember the 'second coming' movies dad used on Sunday nights, and I can still see the white robed multitudes silently gliding upwards to the sound of a faraway last trumpet. I may have imagined that too vividly from my boy's perspective. After hearing so many of my dad's fiery 'second coming' messages on Sunday nights (before I dropped off to sleep on a blanket and pillow on the pew), I once said, "I'll just hang on to mum's dress when she starts going up."

Then one awful day I arrived home from school first and no one was anywhere to be found. That never happened. Mum was always there, even if dad couldn't be, although he usually was too. For an agonising half-hour I truly believed I had been left behind after all. Then others started arriving home too, to my enormous relief. Dad and mum and the babies had been out visiting, as they often did, but had been unexpectedly delayed.

I loved Sunday School and Junior Christian Endeavour. We kept learning interesting information from the Bible. And I enjoyed Life Boys, the junior version of Boys' Brigade, with its uniforms and drills – similar to Boy Scouts and quite popular in the post war years. I liked the camps best, sleeping in tents, playing boisterous games, making damper and stew (we called spew), and cooking marshmallows around the nightly campfire while leaders told us stories of biblical or contemporary heroes, as well as scary tales.

Sex education fell to the church in those days. Parents avoided it, including mine. But dad had a way around that. He and the ministers' fraternal arranged for interdenominational 'father and son' and 'mother and daughter' nights at a local church, led by specialist Christians from Sydney. They showed us films about birds and bees, and sperm and eggs. I went with dad when I was in primary school, perhaps a little too early. I remember it was like a biology lesson about frog's eggs and tadpoles, so I got it a bit mixed up at first. When I went again in high school it made more sense.

At about 10, I asked dad to baptise me. Believer's baptism by immersion is part of our beliefs and discipleship. Even our church architecture reflects it. We always had a baptistery in the church, usually under the floor, uncovered for baptismal services. Those services always impacted me.

Dad said I was too young to fully understand what I was doing, so advised me to wait till I was a teenager. I think he got that one wrong! I read the popular little book *Seven Reasons for Believer's Baptism* and thought I understood them all. However I was too young to convince dad, so waited. As soon as I turned 13 I asked again, and it was okay. I guess I did understand more then. You can learn a lot in three years!

Everyone in our tradition remembers his or her baptism. In those days we dressed in

white, including socks! It represented holiness or purity, like a bride's white dress. We publicly acknowledged that we belonged to God. Before we were 'buried' under the water, symbolically dying to the old life and rising to the new, we affirmed that we believed in Jesus as our personal Lord and Saviour.

It's powerful. I remember taking a deep breath (with an audible gasp), holding it as dad plunged me into the swirling water, and coming up feeling fresh, clean and wet. Someone always had a large towel ready to wrap around the emerging disciple. The towel hid the transparent white from the congregation!

Most people being baptised gave their testimony before their baptism. They told how they got converted or why they chose to get baptised. Testimonies could be a little like the evangelical version of an X-rated movie. Once I was bad, now I'm not! Once I was blind, but now I can see. An exaggerated example would be something like, "I used to lie and cheat and even steal, and I sank to the depths of depravity, but I repented at the age of seven and now I want to be baptised."

Testimonies enlivened not only baptisms, but other services as well, and our youth groups. However, we had guidelines. It was not a place to air your dirty laundry, but to give thanks and glory to God for his grace, mercy and love.

We enjoyed many interesting services, as well as special events such as anniversaries. At Sunday School anniversaries all the children sat on the specially erected stadium-like grand stand. We sang, gave items, and heard special speakers who used many kinds of visual aids.

I remember attending a 'Happy Hour' concert on a Sunday afternoon at the Methodist Church. At the concert in his church a little girl danced a lovely tap dance. I sat next to a lady from our church who commented, "I know it's wrong, but isn't it nice!"

I did not think tap-dancing was really a sin. Although my parents were very creative and innovative, dad seemed to me to be rather 'old school' in some of his beliefs, such as the prohibition of all dancing, movies, strong drink, and smoking – all lumped together as sin, a common belief for many evangelicals. I suspect he would have endorsed the advice, "Don't drink, don't smoke, don't chew, And don't run with girls who do."

Dad gave me a note to take to my high school physical education teacher excusing me from dancing lessons on religious grounds. So I never did learn to dance, much to my wife's disappointment. We did manage "The grand old duke of York" at church socials! My daughter, on the other hand, has taught dance in a Christian college. How times change!

We enjoyed family holidays each January after the busy church Christmas season. At first we went to our mum's parents' holiday house at Blackheath in the Blue Mountains near Sydney. For two years running my boyhood energy got me into strife there. One year I fell down a waterfall in 'Mermaid's Cave' a mile or two down the valley from the house. Bloodied and with a broken knuckle I returned to the house and sent my obliging but alarmed sister inside to inform my parents because we had visitors and I wanted to avoid them seeing me half dead. Another year I sliced my wrist when smashing a window that I tried to close while chasing my uncle Frank, mum's young brother. Both escapades landed me in hospital for repairs.

We never returned to that holiday home! From then on we holidayed by the sea. I managed to nearly drown only once in heavy surf, but emerged gasping and spluttering from the alarming, tumbling, churning foam and sand. I guess we kept some angels busy!



## Tamworth, 1951-1955

I spent most of my high school years in the progressive 'country and western' town of Tamworth in the hills of northern NSW. The church there invited dad to be the minister, so we moved once again. Dad felt that his work at Griffith was done, and someone else could take over. At Tamworth we lived in the small manse half a block from the church building.

Once again dad started building. He renovated the manse to fit in his big family, and later on he led a team of workers in building the church hall attached to the tabernacle church building. He built units at the edge of town to provide cheap housing for poor people. I remember helping to lay the floors and serving an unofficial apprenticeship in painting. My sister Elaine recounts,

At home I was conscious of my father feeding 'out of work' men and his care for those struggling financially or in other ways, to the extent of acquiring a loan and building a set of small houses from army huts a little out of town where the land must have been less costly, as well as supporting others with various needs. These houses were to be paid back interest free. This concern for the welfare of people had quite an impact on me to such an extent that as a mature age student with three growing children I studied and became a Social Worker gaining a BSW and MSW. This was the culmination of a long held dream.

At Tamworth, I continued to enjoy entertaining my younger siblings. They eventually included another lovely girl when Daphne was born. I entertained them while 'baby-sitting' by telling stories.

"Dad and mum were at a wedding," Elaine recalls, "and you were looking after us and had us sitting around the dining room table telling us ghost stories. You had us petrified and then the blind went up with a bang and we all just sat there until you made us all go outside in the dark to show us nothing was there."

Everyone did household jobs. I helped to prepare breakfast for the tribe. Dad and mum liked their cup of tea in bed first, and then they were ready for us. So I made it and took it to them while cooking the porridge that had been soaking overnight. No one liked lumpy porridge, especially dad. Later on the others graduated into those jobs.

I graduated from boyhood chores to teenage privileges, and even handed over the washing and wiping of the dishes after meals to my younger sisters, the next in line. I kept the job of washing the lino floors each Saturday. When I had been in charge at the sink, I discovered ways to keep us all happy, often by making up imaginary versions of Bible stories and stringing them out till the pots were scrubbed and done.

Sometimes we would try to sing our way through the alphabet using choruses and hymns from 'All to Jesus I surrender' or 'Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go' or 'Away in a manger' and so on through to 'Zacchaeus was a very little man'. Mostly the chores were done before we got to Zacchaeus. I think only Q and X stumped us.

We sang a Sunday School chorus at home, to motivate and explain: "In the house and out of doors, Washing dishes, scrubbing floors, Washing, ironing, darning too, Always finding things to do. I'll do it all for Jesus (x3), He's done so much for me." It neatly correlated jobs and beliefs – saved to serve!

School was close so we rode our bikes home for lunch. That meant we could follow dad's favourite wireless program, Blue Hills. We had a big old wireless in a cabinet with dials that

seemed to regularly pull off and disappear, so we used dad's pliers to change stations. We never 'wasted money' on newspapers, but heard the news on the wireless – another time when rowdy children had to be quiet. As teenagers we older children began reading bits of the Woman's Weekly, which arrived weekly then, not monthly. So we loyally followed the regular news of King George VI and then the enchanting young Queen Elizabeth II. My sisters helped mum with cooking and sewing ideas from the Weekly. I mowed the grass with our push mower, my gym workout.

We played black vinyl records on a portable record player, the size of a small suitcase. It had metal needles a half inch long and we screwed new ones into the arm piece for a clearer sound. Gradually we collected dozens of long-playing records especially classical orchestras, Handel's Messiah or Billy Graham choirs. The first single I bought had the 'Hallelujah Chorus' on one side and 'Worthy is the Lamb' on the other. I loved it!

Mum liked a clean, tidy home, so we kept our bedrooms neat. Visitors often dropped in, knowing they were welcome at any time. They always found the place tidy. We learned to help keep it that way, and usually appreciated it.

We boys had natural air conditioning on those verandas, hot in summer and freezing in winter. In summer under the corrugated iron roof, curving to the gutters at the outside of the verandas, we sweltered on hot days, so I used dad's office to study. Shared privileges! In winter I slept with thick blankets and a kapok mattress on top of me. The glass louvers let in the light, and also the cold air, especially when the icy winter winds blew. My prayers in winter broke all records for brevity.

Our parents taught us to pray on our knees by our beds before climbing in. We usually prayed pretty comprehensive prayers, certainly for little children. We learned to thank God first, confess anything drastic like poking out our tongue, then ask for what we wanted, maybe then throw in the Lord's Prayer (that was always safe and obviously a winner), then ask God to bless the family, nightly. My childhood bedtime prayers always finished with 'God bless mummy and daddy, Elaine, Hazel (from Arncliffe days), Graeme, Heather (added from Griffith days), and Daphne (added in Tamworth), as well as sundry other relatives such as Uncle Frank.

But on those icy winter nights in Tamworth, when the water sometimes froze in the outside pipes, this teenager worked out a telegram version for my evening prayers. It was something like, "Thanks God. Sorry for any sins. Bless everyone. Amen."

Then I discovered I could pray a lot better in a warm bed than on my knees in the freezing cold. It's better to drift off to sleep talking to God in a leisurely way, than shooting off telegrams to him, useful as they are in emergencies. It's also better to go to sleep praying than worrying about the problems of the world, like acne. I still like to pray in bed, and the acne prayers got answered long ago.

I enjoyed driving dad's car. He taught me to drive in his well-worn Ford, with its column gear stick, when I was 16. I applied for my Learner plates as early as possible. But I had to drive to the police station in a better car for my driving test at 17. It had a stick gear-stick on the floor. I managed it all right until stopping at a pedestrian crossing to let people walk past. Then I accelerated slowly and carefully, with the car shuddering violently.

"These old cars don't start too well in third gear, do they!" the policeman quipped. At least I didn't stall it, and passed the test. Those days, preceding indicators, you put your right hand out as far as you could before turning right, and held it upright from your elbow to indicate if you were stopping.

Helping dad was a normal part of life for me. So although I'm not naturally a handyman, I had plenty of experience in hammering thousands of two-inch nails into the tongue-and-groove timber floors, then using the punch to embed them below the surface ready for sanding. We had plenty of painting to do, both in new buildings and in renovated ones. By Tamworth days, dad was installing the new fluorescent lights, said to be more economical. The connections for those tubes seemed dodgy, often needing careful adjustment to stay on, a skill usually performed by standing on a chair on top of a table to reach it.

As I grew older I often answered the ever-ringing phone, a large, heavy black Bakelite block sitting on a shelf with the hand-piece cradled above the circular dial, so different from today's white slim-line press button versions. However, in those days we never battled recorded messages, and could easily contact the operator if in need. Church people seemed to know that they would catch dad at home at meal times so we children, in turn, learned to screen calls during many meals interspersed with phone calls. We could answer the regular enquiries about routine events.

During those teen years the furniture shrank rapidly. One year I had to stand on something to see the top of the cupboards. The next year I didn't. My parents used to tower above me; now I was getting taller than my mum. I enjoyed reaching the age when, if my mum tried to smack me with the ever-present wooden school ruler, I could grab her hand and waltz her down the hall. Dad kept that ruler handy at meals, but hardly had to use it. The threat of it was enough to keep us in line, based on past experiences.

We liked Bible quizzes and games both at home and in the youth group. Indeed, we accumulated a lot of Bible trivia – if anything biblical can be trivia! Some examples:

*What is the shortest chapter in the Bible?* Psalm 117. 'O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD' (Yes, that's the whole chapter, KJV of course).

*What is the middle chapter in the Bible?* (sometimes disputed, but who's counting?) Psalm 118. Beginning and ending with: 'O give thanks unto the LORD for he is good; because his mercy endureth forever' (KJV, obviously).

*What is the longest chapter in the Bible?* Psalm 119. The stanzas of 8 verses follow the Hebrew alphabet, and all the 176 verses refer to the word of the Lord in some way.

*Who was the shortest man in the Bible?* Peter, because he slept on his watch. He beats Nehemiah (knee high).

*Who was the richest man in the Bible?* Noah, because he floated a limited company while the rest of the world was in liquidation.

Or this. *How is it that the oldest man in the Bible died before his father?* Methuselah lived 969 years. But he died before his father, because his father Enoch never died. See Genesis 5:21-27.

I became fully involved in church life and leadership especially with children and youth. Most of my friends came from the youth group and we spent time together each weekend. On Saturday afternoons, we played tennis in winter, with our wooden Frank Segman (or similar) racquets, or went swimming and diving together in summer at the council pool or at a picnic near a river. Then we shared a meal at our place followed by youth group at the church hall (again built by dad with his team of volunteers). Our youth group leaders usually made it interesting.

Leadership in that context came naturally for me, even though I am no extravert. I knew how to initiate activities and lead discussions. We all mixed together pretty well, and I enjoyed

being a friend with the girls without having to pair off romantically, although people tried to match us up with one another. Some friendships lasted well beyond youth group days. Many of those lasting friendships involved full time Christian work for some of us in different countries.

We enjoyed social events including Christmas parties, and Empire Day celebrations with bonfires and crackers on my brother's birthday, 24 May, also Queen Victoria's birthday. The British Empire, and later the Commonwealth, celebrated his birthday with him! Often those celebrations went late with us lighting scores of our firecrackers, sparklers, Catherine wheels, Roman Candles, and skyrockets filling our backyard and the night sky with colour and light. We usually cooked and ate marshmallows around a huge bonfire, and sang choruses and hymns with our youth leader playing his piano accordion.

We presented an impressive drama called 'Quo Vadis' – the story of a Roman soldier converted through falling in love with a Christian. I had the lead role as Roman commander Marcus, with many pages to memorise, and Joy Newcombe as Lygia my love interest. We practiced our roles and rehearsed endlessly – often dissolving in laughter. Church ladies made costumes and we hired some. Why we presented that huge spectacle only once, after all that work, still amazes me. We could have gone on tour, at least to other churches, for we were very committed to its message. That was our version of the 1951 film by that name, which of course we did not get to see then, even with its Christian theme. Joy later served as a nursing missionary in Somalia, and I went to Papua New Guinea.

I taught Kindergarten children in Sunday School at 10 a.m. before the morning service at 11 a.m. At morning service we used the stately green covered denominational hymn book (a metaphor for Christian growth). Many of the youth from outlying farms or boarding schools stayed over with friends in town or at our place and joined us for lunch. We had Sunday School teachers' training with mum in our lounge room and Christian Endeavour in the afternoon followed by dinner, usually with some of the youth at our place as well. Then came the 7.30 p.m. gospel service using lively songs from the red covered Sankey's hymn book (a metaphor for blood-red salvation). Sunday kept us busy; never a day of rest at our place! .

Mum, like many ministers' wives then, was superintendent of the Kindergarten Sunday School and president of the Ladies Guild. Mum met with the young voluntary teachers on Sunday afternoons in our lounge room to prepare for the next Sunday. She used the cardboard models, drawn by one of her Sunday School teachers back in Arncliffe. Soon I joined them in making those models to use with my little class of 3 or 4 year olds. Then I was cutting out those square coloured cardboard baskets with a handle to give the kids with dough to make 5 buns and 2 fish to take home in their basket, to illustrate feeding the 5,000.

Mum tutored me so that I could play the piano for her in the Kindergarten Sunday School, even though she could do that far better than I ever would. I loved to play 'How great Thou art' which became my signature tune. When my sisters Elaine and Hazel sang the duet 'Whispering Hope' at a church function, I played for them and felt nervous, for I could spoil the whole thing if I fumbled.

Alas, with senior high school demands I gave up piano lessons, but occasionally would practice the harmonies of my favourite Burgmuller pianoforte pieces. Mostly I played hymns or choruses. Years later, I found that those hymns lasted the longest in my automatic motor memory.

I found Sundays full, and meaningful. My friends joined me in learning heaps about the Bible and Christian living. Dad preached his way through various books of the New

Testament in the mornings, and focused on the first and second comings of Jesus at night. He involved us youth in the monthly evening youth service, so we were soon giving testimonies or mini-sermons. At 17, I led my first whole service including the preaching.

I still remember that sermon! Strangely enough it came from Leviticus, of all books. It grew out of my Scripture Union daily readings. It's the only time in my life, I think, when I preached from Leviticus, that book full of Israel's laws. But in my daily reading notes the concepts had grabbed me, from Leviticus 22:

31 Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I am the LORD.

32 Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I am the LORD which hallow you,

33 That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD (KJV, naturally).

I switched the verse order around to come up with my alliterated, evangelical outline:

33 Salvation – delivered from bondage;

32 Sanctification – made holy;

31 Service – obeying God.

If I used that passage now (or if you do!) I'd go for the original order, which in preaching language may be:

31 Service – obey God, flowing out of

32 Sanctification – being set apart and made holy by God, flowing out of

33 Salvation – delivered by God.

That was my teenage world, like a Jewish boy in the synagogue! But I saw it from a New Testament perspective. Our parents encouraged us to study the Bible using daily Bible reading guides. I liked Scripture Union notes best. They covered key passages daily, with a brief commentary, short enough to hold interest and quick to read. Often I needed to be quick as my daily pattern involved reading my Bible passages before breakfast. For me it was not quite 'no Bible, no breakfast'. But it came close to that.

I began exploring different translations for more leisurely Bible study. Often they were birthday or Christmas gifts, which I valued more highly than the perennial socks or underwear. *Philips' New Testament* brought a breath of fresh air to familiar passages, especially the surprises like, 'To hell with you and your money' (Acts 8:20). I could not get away with that language at home – unless I was quoting the Bible! Now **www.BibleGateway.com** provides an excellent tool for comparing translations.

My Bible study explored dozens of translations, and I added many of them to my growing library. I loved the *Good News Bible*, a dynamic translation enlivened with line drawings and handy section headings with cross-references. I first received it as a Christmas gift, the New Testament then exclusively titled, *Good News for Modern Man*. I read it through before the end of January. It made great holiday reading, so easy to understand, yet so sharp. I took it along to church services to compare it with the readings from the KJV.

The Tamworth Baptist Tabernacle church building had tabernacle architecture, rectangular, tall, with columns at the front, based on the tabernacle and temple dimensions in the Old Testament. Inside, the large open baptistery perched high in the front wall behind and above the high-set pulpit, with the communion table lower at the front. I remember one of my friends turning up for his baptism with his Speedo swimming costume. He'd never seen a baptism. So I loaned him my tennis whites. Nowadays we have baptised dozens of people in their swimmers in the ocean.

The pedal organ provided music for our hymns, played vigorously by a buxom lady who

wore big hats. This teenager found her hats waving in time with her pumping the pedals quite fascinating. Women then all wore hats, as well as stockings and gloves. I think the stockings and gloves helped a lot in the cold winters. No respectable woman would wear make up or jeans to our church in those days!

We men and boys had our traditions too, including suits with ties and polished leather shoes. My jobs at home included using Kiwi or Nugget black and tan shoe polish to shine the family's shoes each Saturday on the back veranda steps. Lined up all shiny they looked like something from a caterpillar's wardrobe.

Mum, never really strong, faced an operation at the end of January 1955. So dad decided to build an aluminium caravan with a timber frame on a car trailer chassis. I helped him screw in a thousand screws to fasten the aluminium to his frame. Our holiday included a visit to Gloucester near the east coast where dad met with Harold Yates, the church secretary, to finalise details about moving there. Dad had accepted an invitation to the church at Gloucester, beginning that February after mum's hysterectomy, in time for the new school year.

Dad drove us along the picturesque NSW coast, and we stopped often, joining hundreds of other families with caravans in crowded caravan parks, then moving on to another. If we liked a place we stayed longer there. These were wonderful days for us because we had our parents to ourselves for a change. Usually we shared our parents with everyone in the church, especially the young people. Now we enjoyed being together. Just us.

Mum made people feel wanted and loved, including us. Elaine wrote:

I think my best memory of mum is how she used to make me feel so special; I guess she did this with all her kids. We went on holidays one time and I was in the front seat with her and one of the babies lay across both of us, sleeping. I was aching from sitting still for such a long while, but she knew and said I had done such a wonderful job. One time she said I could do Daphne's hair better than she could (probably not true), but I think she was already very weak and having those iron injections Joy gave her. Oh I could go on, but I think that was the essence of her – making us all stand tall - probably the young people as well, and dad.

Then mum died. Unexpectedly. She died at the end of January, 1955, before she reached 40. Her heart failed with a post-operative haemorrhage. We were gob smacked. None of us expected that.

The night she died, dad had gone to the Tamworth Base Hospital knowing she had survived the hysterectomy, and he was expecting to see her improving. At home I curled up in a lounge chair reading Campbell Morgan's *The Triumphs of Faith*, a series of sermons from Hebrews chapter 11, a Christmas present from my parents. That night I read about Enoch, who "walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" (Genesis 5:24; Hebrews 11:5-6).

Awesome timing! God's Spirit seemed to be speaking to me, comforting, explaining. Morgan referred to Longfellow's poetic lines that the body becomes "A worn-out fether, that the soul had broken and flung away."

Morgan finished his sermon referring to a little girl who told her mother about the story of Enoch she had heard in Sunday School, and how he used to go for long walks with God. Her mother asked how it ended.

“Oh, Mother, one day they walked on and on, and got so far, God said to Enoch, ‘You are a long way from home. You had better come in and stay with Me!’” she explained.

“God has been saying that to our loved ones again and again,” Morgan concluded. “They have gone in to stay with Him, with Whom they had walked their earthly pilgrimage.”

I read no more. Later I realised I had not only read something from God’s perspective, but I could tell my little sisters and brother that too. It didn’t wipe away the tears, but did take away the sting. Eventually.

Relatives and friends packed the church for the funeral, led by one of dad’s friends. Grandpa turned up again, with uncle Frank. Dad sat with us, rare in that church because he was usually in the pulpit himself. We sang, “I’ll praise my Maker while I’ve breath, And when my voice is lost in death, Praise shall employ my nobler powers; My days of praise shall ne’er be past, While life, and thought, and being last, Or immortality endures.”

Those words test your faith, or optimism, when it’s your mother’s body in the coffin, leaving behind six children, the youngest barely one year old. Yet, I found strange comfort in knowing that my mother, who loved music so much, could now worship the Lord she loves, unfettered by weakness. The other hymn we sang, with tears streaming, had George Matheson’s haunting yet comforting lyrics:

O Love that wilt not let me go ...

O light that followest all my way ...

O Joy that seekest me through pain ...

O Cross that liftest up my head ...

Then we stood around the fresh grave at the cemetery as her body was lowered, now marked by an attractively simple headstone declaring, *She lived for those she loved, and those she loved remember*. Indeed we do. For me, writing this on Mother’s Day more than 50 years later, those warm, wonderful memories of her sacrificial loving service still inspire and challenge me.

So we left Tamworth, a bereaved and hugely diminished family, comforting one another and keeping the little children happy. Dad needed to leave Graeme and Heather with the Jarvis family, our friends on a farm in Griffith, while we relocated to Gloucester, another separation that sharpened our sense of loss. So, for the first time ever, our depleted, motherless family had to live with those losses, both permanent and temporary.

## Gloucester, 1955-1959

Doctor Foster went to Gloucester  
In a shower of rain,  
He stepped in a puddle,  
Right up to his middle,  
And never went there again.

We recited that nursery rhyme (originally about King Edward I’s fall off his horse into a mud hole), on our long drive to Gloucester near the mid-north coast of NSW. The rhyme seemed appropriate because muddy floods along the Hunter River held us up for a week on the way, and we waded through our own emotional mud hole. We lived in our new caravan on that trip, another reminder of our recent loss, because our whole family had holidayed in it together a few weeks earlier.

Not only did I go to Gloucester, but I went there again and again. I attended Teachers College in Newcastle, 100 kilometres south. For two years I returned home most weekends to help out with the family and in the church during 1955-1956. I rode the bus from 5.30 a.m. for two and a half hours each Monday morning to Newcastle, and returned home on Friday nights.

Initially the family lived in a spare house on one of the church family's dairy farms, while dad arranged for the church to buy land in town where he could build yet another manse for his family. Like the manse at Griffith, it was a long hall-like building. We enjoyed fantastic views of the Gloucester Buckets, the mountain ridge opposite the town, mountains I liked climbing. Elaine became surrogate mother for the young children, and I helped out at weekends.

Harold Yates, the secretary, seemed to be related to every member of the church in that close-knit community. His sister Eileen Maude was one of the leaders of the youth and very active in the church. We liked her, and valued her wisdom and grace. Her friendship with dad deepened into love, and they married early in 1956.

So I had left home, but I hadn't left home. I had my Newcastle world at college, and I boarded there with a single minister, Cliff Weston, at Charlestown. Then I had my family and church world at Gloucester, perhaps a useful mix of 'home and away'.

Although just 17, I helped dad in the church by starting a Sunday School and leading it as the first superintendent. We began with six children – four from our family and two from another. Gradually the Sunday School grew into two departments, Kindergarten and Seniors. I used my vast knowledge to train the teachers! Actually, I just used my teaching method notes, straight from college, and applied them to Sunday School. That's one reason I did well at method subjects at college.

Lesson plans have become more comprehensive since those days, but ours were versatile and creative, based on something as basic as:

Introduction – point of interest, link with prior learning, or attention grabbing.

Development – the main body of the lesson or story, and illustrations.

Conclusion – application to life, and response in faith.

I helped regularly with the Sunday School bus run using my dad's Kombi van. It was fine so long as we had no mechanical problems. If we did, I had to find the nearest telephone, usually on a farm, and call for help. We organised Sunday School anniversaries each year and an annual picnic, where one of my jobs was to run around wearing a Hessian sack covered with peanuts or lollies tied to it while the children chased me to grab what they could. One trick was to circle round and then run near the slower kids.

Lynette and Dianne were born at Gloucester, bringing our family to eight, and we continued to grow together in our blended family. By then Elaine had begun nursing work, and I would soon be off teaching in Sydney.

Later on I returned to Gloucester again for two years in 1958-1959 to teach in the primary school. So I continued my involvement in the senior Sunday School, the youth group, and as a deacon. I had more opportunities to preach, and applied for 'the ministry', was accepted, and left from Gloucester to attend theological college.

Eventually, dad accepted a call to the Orange church, where Philip was born, completing our diverse family of nine children, all Christians, and eventually all married to Christians. Someone's prayers were being answered.



## Chapter 2

### Schools: green-board jungle



*School life, learning and teaching*

As student and teacher I explored the fascinating jungle of school life. The scenery changed like sailing along a long river. The blackboards with white chalk we copied from at school gave way to green-boards with yellow chalk when I was teaching, both in Australia and PNG, and then progressed to white-boards with coloured markers, along with the appearance of electronic white boards and data-projectors. These modern aids, still used with exercise books, for mental exercises, replaced the dust, slates, and parchments of ancient history back near the river's source, as in Jesus' times.

Jesus at twelve, in the temple, challenged me as a boy also. He knew his Bible, the Old Testament, and knew his God and Father. That example strongly influenced my own education.

Jesus learned primarily from the Torah, the books of Moses, and the rest of the Old Testament in local rabbinical schools. Not only did he learn to read and write, but like others he learned the Scriptures by memory, quoting them fluently. Fully immersed in his biblical culture he both lived by the law and the prophets and also fulfilled them in himself. He did not need to carry a Bible, or a bunch of scrolls. He knew his Bible.

Like other Jewish boys, Jesus learned much of the Scriptures in his own home, as I did in mine. At rabbinical school Jesus not only recited the ten commandments in the original Hebrew, but also great slabs of the law and the prophets, and their hymn book the Psalms. You probably know Psalm 23, 100, or 118. Jesus probably knew Psalms 1 to 150. He died quoting from Psalm 22: "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" – "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46).

I sensed, but could not explain, that education must relate to God, not just as information about him but also knowing him personally, socially, and globally. I remember thinking that if you repeatedly asked "Why?" (as some children love to do) about anything, starting anywhere, you must eventually reach the first cause of everything, God himself.

My education at twelve and beyond, lacked some of the integrated grounding that Jesus had at that age, but that grounding influenced all my thinking. My education at school integrated with my education at home and church. That gave me foundations on which to build.

So with that orientation, I enjoyed school. Mostly I coasted along the varied and interesting stream of school life, making new discoveries with every bend in the river. I learned about the wild creatures out in life's jungle, including war-time enemies, but felt protected and adventurous. We had no known predators or drugs threatening us then.

At school in the war and post-war years we sang the first verse of our national anthem and saluted our flag on assembly at the start of every school day. Our Australian national anthem then was the world's first national anthem sung in England from the 1780s. At school, amid the trauma and triumphs of post-war patriotism, I sang that prayer, "God save our gracious King."

Since 1984, Australia's former national anthem became the royal anthem, and in our present anthem we rejoice in our youth and freedom. The two verses that became the official anthem begin:

'Australians all let us rejoice, For we are young and free' and  
'Beneath our radiant Southern Cross We'll toil with hearts and hands'.

The Southern Cross (Crux) gets its name from the ancient form of public humiliation and torture to death, made eternally famous, and infamous, because Jesus died on a cross, the enduring symbol and only source of all true freedom, by which alone we can map our path into eternal life.

I explored some of that freedom in my fertile jungle of school life.

## School Life

My formal schooling began in Arncliffe in Sydney, just one long block (for a 5 year old) from our home next to our church. I could walk to school safely. In Grade 1, I walked with my sister to her Kindergarten class at the school, and then joined my own class there.

We had war-time drills at school, lining up and filing into the bomb shelter in the playground. The bomb shelter looked like a long dirt hill from the outside. I found walking down underground into it quite an adventure, including sitting quietly in the dimly lit windowless interior. That was much better than standing still on parade. The only time I got the cuts on my fingers from the headmaster's cane was because I was talking in lines on parade – but that was a bit later. Among us boy us, it was a kind of tough guy badge!

Mum taught us in Scripture class for half an hour a week. Our teachers also read well-known Bible stories to us. The Education Department provided a colourful Bible storybook for teachers to read in class. I loved that book. We all had a copy so we could read from it as well. As a proudly Christian country, aware of our heritage, we prayed or said the Lord's Prayer together in class. I guess that was an option left up to the teacher, but apparently I scored teachers with those values.

We lived in Griffith for most of my primary school days. There we could ride bikes everywhere on the wide, brown plains, including the two kilometres to school. Generally I liked school. Learning was fun. So I found it easy to coast along. We had little or no homework in primary school, especially as many of the country kids were busy with farm chores after school as well as before school in the mornings.

I started high school at Griffith and liked the greater choice in subjects. I also sang in a first year high school boys soprano group there, before my voice broke. I went off to Tamworth in my second year at high school.

Changing schools is a real pain. Subject choices did not match exactly, and even in a class with the same name, such as French, the teacher often had an entirely different way of teaching and had covered different ground. Now I had to work hard to try and catch up. We had to start all over again with friendships, although the church youth group provided a new set of friends quickly.

If they had offered Scripture, or Religious Education as it became later, I would have jumped at it. Unfortunately then, unlike now, RE was not a board subject, and it never bored me. We studied it as a weekly denominational class, taken by my dad. I liked the Christian Education materials produced by our denominational headquarters.

One year, we explored the book of Acts in Scripture class. It fascinated me. Still does. I kept my project book from that study for decades, and later used its activities in my own teaching. I suspected that the church was supposed to be just like the book of Acts still, and sometimes wondered why it was not.

Drama and debating at high school appealed to me and I participated in inter-school competitions in both. Each year, every grade would perform a drama from a text book, so I even had a go at Shakespeare. We studied *Twelfth Night*, and I landed the role of Malvolio! I managed to be highly recommended for my lead role in a more lively school play, 'The Highwayman' acting and revelling in the part of a mischievous, outrageous Robin-hood style robber, a breath of fresh air for this conservative teenager.

I found debating even more fun, especially as the third speaker or whip. That allowed plenty of creativity in demolishing opponents' arguments. One debate we won easily in our

inter-school contests was when we agreed with our opponents' arguments, and used their own arguments against them to prove that they did not go nearly far enough in their position. Later on I began to suspect that about church life! We preached New Testament life, but did not go far enough in living it.

The weekly lunchtime meetings of the Inter-School Christian Fellowship (ISCF) appealed to me. By my fifth and final year at high school I was its president and led the committee in helping our teacher-supervisor organise the program and invite various speakers. ISCF helped broaden my understanding of God working among all his people, and I found we had so much in common that our doctrinal differences seemed small and petty.

Many of my friends from youth group also participated actively in ISCF. Having friends involved there, as well as in our denominational Scripture classes, made it easy for me to integrate church and school life, and be involved in leadership in both.

I gained a government teachers college scholarship and applied to attend the college in Newcastle, the nearest to our new home in Gloucester.

## **Teachers College**

I found Teachers College liberating, especially the teaching method classes, the 'practice teaching' supervised by a class teacher, the debating, and the interdenominational Christian Fellowship. My ultimate goals included 'ministry' and 'mission' so I was happy to train for primary school teaching as further preparation. Besides, my own family provided me with plenty of experience with young children.

After a few weeks settling into Teachers College in Newcastle, I returned each weekend the 100 kilometres to Gloucester by bus to help with the family and in the church. I applied my new insights and skills from college in Sunday School teaching at home in Gloucester. So I started the Sunday School in the weatherboard church building with six children, four of them being my own sisters and brother.

I enjoyed it, so I expect that they did too. My preparation included my experience with my mum and her models (cardboard, not human – although she did have attractive female teachers too). Now I added my new perspectives from college, including writing lesson plans. As the Sunday School grew we needed to add staff, so then I was doing what my mum had done, training them on Sunday afternoons. I then had my own models to work with, both human and cardboard.

Eileen Maude, became our second mum after her friendship with dad ripened into romance. We enjoyed her company, and she bravely tackled the mammoth task of marrying into a family of six children.

At the beginning of my second year at college I needed to stay and help look after the other children until dad and our new mum returned from their honeymoon. Then once again I took the bus to college, arriving a few days late. The Vice Principal chided me for my lateness.

"I had to stay at home with the family while my dad went on his honeymoon," I explained. With raised eyebrows, he accepted that reason without further comment.

My sister Dianne, born at Gloucester, remembers, "When you first came to Gloucester, church was new. Dad started a Sunday School and you were superintendent at 17. Teachers all came to the manse for a baked dinner and meeting. Mum was amazed that there was always enough food to go around. They stayed the afternoon and you took them through teacher training and told them how to present next week's lesson. Most lived out of town so stayed for

tea then went to evening service and then their parents took them home.”

I faced new, unexpected challenges at college. One English assignment required us to critique a movie! Fortunately I recalled seeing Cecil B de Mille’s early black and white version of the Ten Commandments in a church hall. Our lecturer took us to see Laurence Olivier in a Shakespeare film, then showing at the cinema. After overcoming my reservations about that ‘place of sin’, I found the vivid, classic presentation of Shakespeare riveting! Some of those visual images remain with me still – a reminder of their power, for good or ill.

I was learning to make learning fun, and creative. We learn far more if we enjoy what we do. I found you can even do that with maths games, or fun poems, or history’s adventures.

Each week we walked to the nearby demonstration school, where excellent teachers demonstrated how to teach in the classroom. So the kids in that area had the extra benefit of really good teachers. We sat at the back of the classroom and observed. There I saw teachers interacting with their pupils and lighting them up. It’s called motivation, and it motivated me.

I found ‘prac teaching’ fascinating, especially as the teachers I worked with in ‘practice teaching’ seemed glad to hand over lessons to me and have a break to do marking or preparation. Of course they had to supervise me, but after the first day when they discovered the class did not erupt into wild jungle chaos with me, they left me to it.

“You can handle the class on your own,” they observed. “It’s good experience for you!”

So I did. Of course, the class knew that if they got out of line I could call their teacher in at anytime, so that made it easy to manage them. College lecturers inspected us, and wrote reports for us, which I appreciated as they usually affirmed me, with some suggestions for improvements.

“You prepare well, handle the class well, and interact well with individuals, so there is no need to preach. They’ll make up their own minds,” a lecturer observed. So I had some things to unlearn too!

We did get into some preaching at college, though, through the Christian Fellowship (CF). I enjoyed it and took to it like a duck to water (not the heavy doorstep version). CF, in fact, helped me understand different approaches to Christian living. Students at college usually led CF meetings and often spoke. We focused on the gospel and Christian discipleship and avoided divisive issues such as baptism, confirmation and clerical dress. In my second and final year I was president of the CF, leading devotional and social programs.

I joined the college debating teams and represented our college with two other debaters in our inter-college visit to Wagga Wagga in our second year, along with the sporting and drama club teams. We lost our debate there, thanks to a brilliant whip on the opposing side who also happened to be the president of their CF. I didn’t mind losing to him! In fact I was so impressed with his persuasive speaking that I was thinking, “There’s a born evangelist. I’d love to hear him preach.”

All too soon those comfortable student years passed. So at 19, idealistic and keen, I began school teaching and really enjoyed it.

## **Teaching in Sydney**

Appointed to Panania in eastern Sydney, I taught a large class of 43 boys, around eight years old. That involved a lot of marking with maths each day and regular compositions to correct!

My dad’s sister Isobel and her husband Les Foote lived at Bexley North on the same train line as the school. They kindly boarded me in their spare room for the year of 1957. That year

we gazed in awe at the world's first satellite, the Russian's Sputnik, gliding through the night sky like a tiny star. That's the year I got launched into my vocational orbit also.

I taught Grade 3A, the boys' first year in primary school. Their Infants School teachers had taught them well, which made me look good at inspections because I built on their thorough grounding in the basics. My principal had to send in regular reports on his probationary teacher, and we also had a full school inspection that year with an outside inspector, who just happened to be my former history teacher in senior classes at Tamworth High School. The education department issued our teachers certificate on our completion of three years of satisfactory probationary teaching.

The principal placed me in the school music room near his office, no doubt intending to come to my rescue if this kid just out of college lost control. I didn't. Besides, I'd already had years teaching or guiding children in my home. One day my principal walked into my class (unannounced as usual) to find everyone very subdued.

"It looks like Mr Waugh has been using the cane," he commented.

"No, he doesn't use the cane. He has just been rousing!" I firmly responded. Not that I needed to rouse much. They were a good bunch, and I really enjoyed teaching them. Many of them, especially the significant number of new Australians, worked hard, often to my surprise. I could give them some homework and find it done well by most of the class.

Many of the pupils were bright and creative. We had a piano on the low stage at the back of the classroom, so not only could I show off my limited piano skills in music lessons, but I could use theirs also. A few of them were learning piano, and could usually play treble clef tunes for us.

Before the days when school excursions became common, I asked my boss if I could organise a class excursion to historical sites in Sydney cove. He felt that I was biting off more than I could chew, so did not give me permission for that. So I asked him if he had any objections to me taking the pupils in groups of about 10 at a time into the city on Saturdays over a few weeks, for those interested, on my own time. He did not object to that, so long as I received written parental consent. So we did it, and I had fun relating to them outside of the classroom.

Each Saturday for a month I took a group of boys by train into the city, and we explored Sydney Cove, the Tank Stream sites (buried under the streets), monuments to Captain Cook and Governor Philip, and models of the Sirius and Supply ships from the First Fleet in a museum. It not only lifted the morale and friendships in the class, but added lively discussions to our lessons.

The education department provided Scripture books of Bible stories, and teachers had the option of teaching from them for half an hour a week. So I did. Then I discovered that if I started each day with half an hour like that, including reading from novels or lively history books, or singing, the class seemed more settled and ready for the challenges of maths and spelling and creative writing. We normally used the afternoons for more relaxed lessons including music, poetry, art and craft, and physical education.

During summer months all the teachers took their class by bus to a council swimming pool for the class to have an hour's lesson with a physical education teacher. We all enjoyed that outing. A few years later I had fun teaching swimming in summer vacation schools run by the education department. Those vacation jobs helped pay for my theological college courses.

At one of my first vacation swimming schools I stumbled onto a great idea, perhaps divinely guided. I duplicated a list of about 30 skills that the pupils could tick off as they

achieved them. They began with simple tasks such as: *I can blow bubbles. I can hold my head under the water. I can kick my legs while hanging onto the side of the pool.* Then they graduated to harder skills near the end of the list, such as: *I can swim across the shallow end. I can swim across the deep end. I can swim the length of the pool.*

The list worked well. It proved highly motivational. Some pupils even brought their list with their parents to the pool between sessions so that they could tick off more achievements, so I found I had also given the parents something to use with their children. They learned fast, most being able to swim in two days. My supervisor liked the idea and took it to the education department physical education staff. They produced a more specialised printed card with about 10 achievement steps on it, used across the state. Later on, I preferred to use my longer version along with theirs, as even the slowest learners could then tick off something each day from my long version.

The Ten Commandments movie, with Charlton Heston as Moses, came to theatres that year. So I went to see it, breaking the taboos of my upbringing. I found it so overwhelming that I immediately bought another ticket and saw it again in the next session! Knowing the story well, I easily distinguished between fact and fiction. As with all movie interpretations, it gave me fresh insights to consider. Now I have it, and other versions, in my DVD collection, as well as about 20 DVD versions of the life of Christ! I've used many such DVDs or videos in recent mission trips.

Church life still gave me further opportunities to teach. I attended nearby Kingsgrove Baptist Church with my Aunt and Uncle, and soon found myself teaching the Sunday morning high school aged group in Sunday School. What a contrast to eight year olds! Those teenagers liked to explore tough questions of the Bible and science, or the Bible and history. I was still a teenager myself, but fortunately I had quite a few bright young people in the class who could prepare and contribute creatively and convincingly.

Some denominational leaders, including the Director of the Young People's Department (YPD), knew me from their visits to our churches and home. So that year I began leading children's camps, not knowing then that I would later lead thousands of children and youth that way in my Christian Education work later on. Fortunately the church YPD supplied all needed resources, including project books, so it was easy to plan the program and guide the team of keen youth leaders who all had a small group to care for and disciple for a week together. ***Many hundreds of children and youth made commitments to Christ in those camps over the years.***

## Teaching in Gloucester

Dad suggested I apply for a transfer to Gloucester school so that I could return home and help with his growing family and the growing church. So I did, perhaps a bit reluctantly, as I was enjoying spreading my wings. However, I also appreciated being at home again.

So for the next two years I taught a combined third and fourth grade class at Gloucester, stretching my skills a bit further. Now I was not only integrating lessons around one theme, but often two. Now I was combining some subjects for both grades, but also working with two grade levels in Maths and English, and with wider skill levels in some subjects.

I remember learning, for example, how to move round the class marking work (such as compositions and sums) at different levels as the class worked. Marking with the student there provided far more opportunities for effective marking, feedback and teaching than marking the work at home with no interaction with the pupil.

Dad owned a Kombi van in those days. I had the use of it at weekends for some extra-curricular activities. I would take class groups on Saturday excursions related to our studies, as well as enjoying time together. So again, as in Sydney, class became enriched by some touches of community life shared together. That included tennis. I found that many students played competition tennis, and I played with interested students, usually after school. I remember one grateful dad telling me he had been trying to get his sons to play competition tennis for some years, but they wouldn't, until they started playing with me. I think those boys found it easy to beat me, and then became interested in more challenging games.

One December I organised a group of school pupils to attend a camp at the church camp property called Elim, at Forster on the coast. Dad had, once again, supervised building the camp huts and done most of the work with volunteer teams. My young sister Dianne had this memory:

"When you were teaching school at Gloucester you had a lot of welfare kids in your classes so the week before Christmas you took them to Elim. The parents didn't have much money so only had to pay for one kid from each family. You bought food with your money and mum's house keeping money. They ate like locusts and by the end of the week no one in our family had any money left. Mum said the kids in our family had a meagre Christmas after the camp.

"Dad came over after the service at Gloucester on Christmas morning when there was not much food at camp. Mum was there with younger kids from our family, and the camp kids had gone home by then. God had supplied some vegetables and apricots that someone gave Dad, so the family dined sumptuously for Christmas dinner."

My school principal liked to maximise the teaching skills of his staff, and encouraged some teachers to specialise in a subject, as well as teach their own class. He knew that I loved teaching the half hour of Scripture, so that became my speciality. I taught Scripture, using the education department's Scripture book, across most grades, and swapped with the class teacher who would take my class for their speciality. It was also a smart way for that Christian principal to get the optional half hour of Scripture taught in some other classes. I appreciated other teachers taking my class as well. So there I was at school teaching Bible and Christian stories to many grades. Having a Christian 'specialist' has become more common recently with the appointment of school chaplains, but for the fifties it was surprisingly innovative.

Once again, I tackled a range of church roles including leading the senior section of the growing Sunday School, helping to train the Sunday School teachers in our home on Sunday afternoons (where our new mum was constantly amazed that everyone had ample food to eat for lunch, and many for dinner as well), leading Junior Christian Endeavour, doing some preaching, and becoming a junior deacon. We had a lot of fun with the youth group, with Saturday and Sunday activities, and with Sunday School picnics. Heather recalls, "I remember chasing you, the Peanut Man, at Sunday School picnics."

At that time dad gave me a reconditioned Remington portable typewriter, housed in a nicely covered wooden case. So I took typing lessons, and pounded away on that sturdy machine for hours. I recommend it to anyone – not the old, reconditioned machine (reliable as it was) but the skill of typing. I still use that skill, now on my computer keyboard.

The denominational leaders asked Dad to lead a team in Papua New Guinea to build the first Baptist Church building in Port Moresby, at Boroko. He was away for six weeks, and I helped our new mum run the home and also helped with the church, such as preaching occasionally. Heather, then in primary school, remembers:

When dad was in New Guinea building the church and you took on 'head of the family' you



used to tell Graeme, Daphne and myself a story after dinner if we got our dinner eaten in the time given. All three of us had to finish everything on our plate and then we got to hear the story - a new version made up on the spot every night. It was called Biggles, Higgles and Giggles! I cannot remember the story now and just remember some of the nights being very scary, especially one night when the light was turned off and we heard a chapter in the dark with a loud bang at the end!

Those spontaneous stories grew out of ideas generated from my boyhood reading of the adventures of Biggles, the war time flying ace.

Dianne remembered another event: "While dad was in PNG you were asked to preach at Stroud so you took our Kombi van. During the afternoon you went for drive on Silo hill and mum is not sure what you did but somehow the wheels went over the road embankment and you couldn't get them back up. Mum thinks a farmer had to go and pull you out."

A farmer did pull me out! I took the opportunity to go sight seeing between the morning and evening services, after lunch at a church member's home. The side of the road was wet after rain, and I was enjoying the view, so I bogged the Kombi. I had to get the nearest farmer to pull me out with his tractor. I hope I was smart enough to weave that into the night sermon as an illustration (help one another, or keep your eyes on the goal), for in that farming district everyone freely shared such amusing details – the down-to-earth farmer rescues the head-in-the-clouds preacher.

At home, school, Sunday School and preaching I enjoyed using interesting ways to teach or entertain. For example, I found this smart mnemonic in the *Reader's Digest*. Link numbers to a picture to help you remember: 1 bun, 2 shoe, 3 tree, 4 door, 5 hive, 6 sticks, 7 heaven, 8 gate, 9 vine, 10 hen. Easy to remember. Then link those mental pictures with anything you want to remember easily. Here are two simple examples I often used.

Remembering the ten commandments:

- 1 – bun shaped like a god face – no other gods before Me
- 2 – shoe hanging on idol's feet – no graven images; no idols
- 3 – tree crashes on axeman's foot who swears – no swearing
- 4 – door of church with peak – remember Sabbath to keep it holy
- 5 – hive with busy bee family – honour your parents
- 6 – sticks used to club someone to death – no murder
- 7 – heaven, all one and pure in God's family – no adultery
- 8 – gate, thieves creep through to steal – no stealing
- 9 – vine grower exaggerates number of grapes – no lying
- 10 – hen, not yours, wanted for dinner – no coveting

Remembering the 'I am' claims of Jesus:

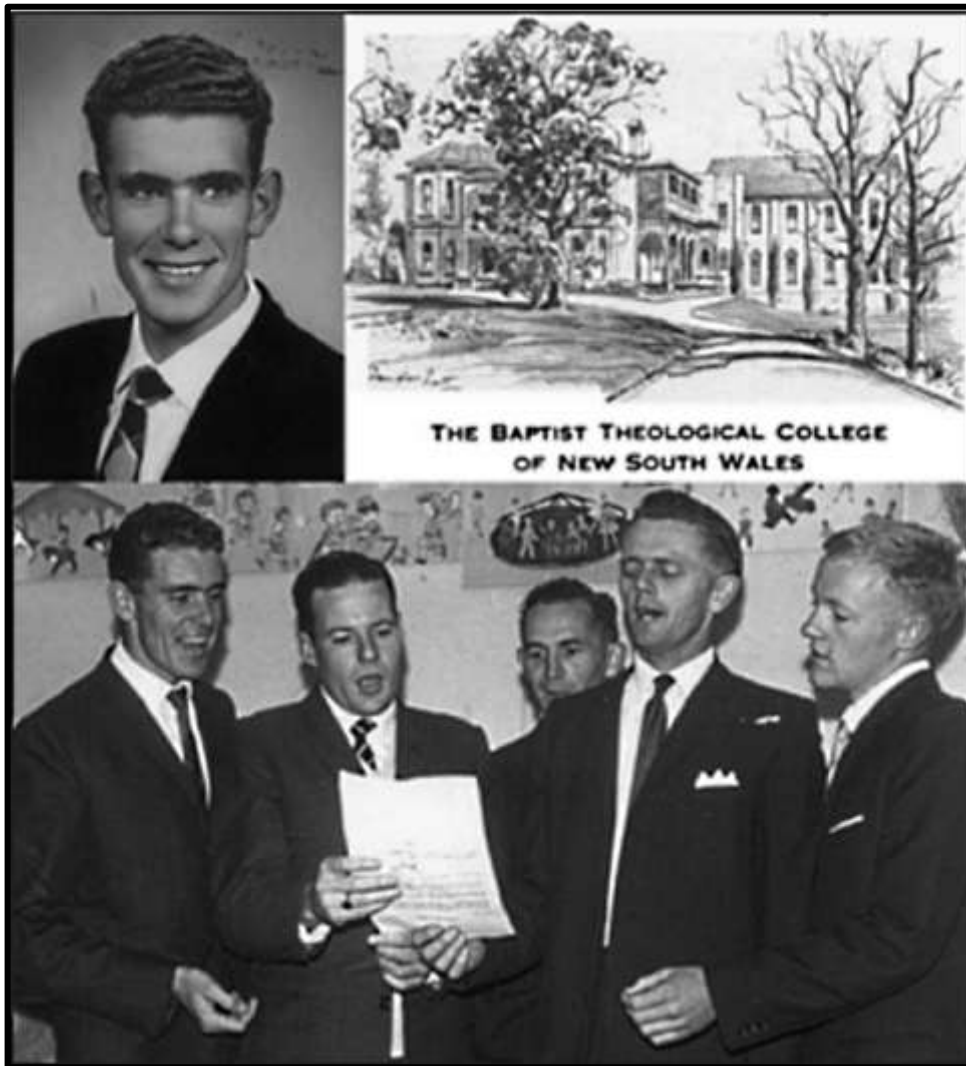
- 1 – bun, the bread of life
- 2 – shoe, the way, the truth, the life – walking that way
- 3 – tree, the good shepherd, resting in shade
- 4 – door, the door
- 5 – hive, the resurrection and the life – if you sit on it!
- 6 – sticks, the light of the world – a stick alight, Olympic torch
- 7 – heaven, alpha and omega, the beginning and the end – eternal
- 8 – gate, the first and the last – going through narrow gate
- 9 – vine, the true vine
- 10 – hen, before Abraham was, I am – chicken or egg first?

One trap! Don't muddle your mental pictures! Use one list first, to get the pictures and links straight. Then at another time, add another list. Now, some of you readers will try to master both lists straight away, to see if you can do it! If you've done that, you can test yourself by saying the fifth commandment or the fifth 'I am' without looking at the list!

I found ways to make teaching and preaching interesting. It certainly interested me. That helped to prepare me for entry into theological college and for a lifetime serving God in teaching and preaching.

## Chapter 3

### Ministry: to lead is to serve



*Theological College, learning and serving*

Sir Peter Kenilorea, the first prime minister in the Solomon Islands, a strong Christian, contributed this motto to his nation's crest: *To lead is to serve*. He captured something of Jesus' radical example.

Ministry is a tricky word! Its root meaning is to serve, to minister to others. Its narrow, specialist use as applied to 'Christian ministry' is a vocation, especially as a pastor. However, I was a minister as a full-time pastor for only one year of my life. I have been an ordained minister since 1964. But I have been involved in ministry most of my life. So I'm using the term here in its narrow sense of vocation, but wanting to keep it grounded in its wider and truer sense of service. We all minister. We all serve.

A fascinating paradox deepened as I became involved in full-time vocational 'ministry'. I knew the local church scene in Australia pretty well from the inside, and knew evangelical fellowships from school and college, including leadership in it all. Yet it seemed to contrast vastly with what Jesus did and taught. Certainly his culture and time are two millennia away from ours, but the principles he taught and demonstrated are universal.

Take leadership. Can there be a greater leader than Jesus? Surely not! However, his example and requirements turn everything inside out and upside down. He lived and revealed the kingdom of God in all he did. He led with servant leadership – another paradox, even an oxymoron. Often *leader* and *servant* seem to be opposites.

Jesus taught it, and demonstrated it, constantly. Yet most people around him seemed to miss it, especially religious leaders (ouch!). So did the disciples (ouch again!).

The more I got to know the Bible, the more startling, it was. Take Jesus' disciples, for example. They were so much like us, missing the point constantly.

Jesus told them to be humble and to serve, and every day he demonstrated how to do it. Yet, they debated about who was the greatest. They argued about that as they trekked with Jesus, and then were ashamed of themselves (Mark 9:35-37). They did it again at the last supper when Jesus needed their love and support the most (Luke 22:24). So Jesus had to punch home his lesson once more, lay aside his garments, grab a bowl and towel and wash their dusty feet, dressed as the lowliest slave. Any of them could have been humble and done that, but none did. He reminded them that they had to be servants just as he was (Luke 22:23-27; John 13:12-17).

Jesus continually demonstrated faith, and looked for faith in his followers. However, he rebuked his followers constantly for their lack of faith. What about us? I think the same applies.

Then, consider bold, brave Peter, the leader, another of my heroes. But he couldn't keep his promises, especially when facing opposition. Later, filled with the Spirit, he changed. He spoke boldly, healed the sick and even raised the dead. We too may back off under pressure, and we certainly need the Spirit's empowering as Peter did.

Or take Jesus' brothers, James, Joseph (Joses), Simon and Jude. They grew up with him, but they did not believe in him (John 7:5). They changed, as we can. The risen Jesus appeared to his brother James (1 Corinthians 15:7) who later became the leader of the church in Jerusalem and author of the very practical letter of James, most likely. Similarly with Jude and the extremely practical letter from that other brother of Jesus, most likely.

So my quest for biblical ministry kept challenging and changing me as well. Too slowly, I think.

## Apprenticeship

Being a Preacher's Kid (PK) gave me a long apprenticeship in vocational ministry. Many PK's rebel against that, especially if they have no interest in or calling to full-time pastoral ministry. The constant expectations of church people, as well as parents, may chafe. But I found it okay, mostly. I tend to see the glass half full, not half empty. So I'm usually grateful for what's there, and I usually expect the glass to be filled, even to overflowing! Maybe that's a gift of faith!

My family, church, school and community environment may not have been as integrated as it was for Jesus, but it made sense to me, built on Christian values. My main regret, looking back now, is that I too easily became like the religious leaders of Jesus' day – keen, committed, ardent students of the Scriptures, but not always living as Jesus did and as the disciples learned to live. I found it easy to think of 'us and them', religious and the irreligious, the saved and the unsaved. I sometimes forgot, in my zeal, that Jesus often pointed out that the sinners would get into his kingdom ahead of the religious leaders, unless those leaders also truly repented in humility and gratitude, as many sinners did.

Fortunately our tradition emphasised repentance! Not just for conversion, but for daily living as well. So I regularly found myself repenting after a moving sermon or service! I repented, yet again, at one memorable evangelistic service in Sydney when I was at Theological College. When I came to the front, the college student organising the counselling team immediately paired me off with someone who had come forward to make a commitment to Christ. So I found myself leading him to the Lord and praying with him – a great way to repent or turn, combining personal repentance with helping others repent also!

Home and church life, did give me wonderful access to learning about and living in God's kingdom in the paradox of its *now* and *not yet* dimensions. God's kingdom is here now, fulfilled in Jesus, but not yet here in its fullness. We can, however, use the *not yet* as an excuse for not being all that Jesus has called us to be here and now as well.

That still challenges me. It's so easy to sing and preach and even pray about God's kingdom, rather than demonstrate it!

My parents, of course, provided strong and clear examples. Dad practiced what he preached. Mum lived her love. So we automatically absorbed their values and beliefs. I appreciate the priorities they demonstrated, the example they set, and their firm commitment to Scripture.

I did, however, have a long apprenticeship in serving and helping others. We were servants, and leaders. As I grew I became more aware of the myriad ways in which my parents served and helped people. A huge part of pastoral ministry is just being there with people, especially in times of need. That was the era of the one pastor one church model of a local congregation. So the minister's capacity to meet people's needs strongly influences the size of the church. The one minister church model, which I knew well, usually peaks with a congregation of 100 or so. If, as is more common now, team ministry develops, and lay leaders multiply, then more people can be won, discipled and led into leadership as well.

Sunday School, Christian Endeavour, Life Boys, school Scripture lessons, and church meetings all added to my understanding of God's kingdom and to my development. I remember actually enjoying the annual denominational state Scripture Exam. We children had our large, personal certificate, framed and hanging in the bedroom. Each year a new seal would fill the oval shapes at the bottom of the certificate, the reward for passing. I knew that if I gained over

80% my seal would have Honours on it in red. That also motivated me to do well.

The Sunday School anniversary ‘prizes’ we received each year also motivated and challenged me. They were usually books, in recognition of regular attendance. I could not miss that ‘prize’ even if I tried, which I didn’t. I was there, living next door most of the time. Those books became prize possessions of mine. So I read, and valued, countless missionary biographies and stories of Christian heroes like Florence Nightingale or David Livingstone. Those prize possessions, augmented by many similar birthday and Christmas gifts, stirred a missionary passion in this young boy. It grew with the years.

Further, we keenly followed the reports of our own ‘real live missionaries’ in India, Borneo or Africa. They included Dulcie, Evelyn and Joy who had all been part of our church youth groups, and part of our extended family as well. We had charts with maps and photos of their regions and work.

So my boyhood goal of becoming a minister and missionary was no sudden Damascus Road conversion. I already lived in that world which I enjoyed, and valued. Of course, my personal calling and gifting shaped my vocation as well. I still don’t know if they were the chicken or the egg. My environment laid foundations for my calling and gifting; my calling and gifting flourished in that environment. My calling and gifting grew naturally out of my nurture. Nature or nurture? Both.

When I chose teaching it was more like teaching chose me – the door just opened and I waltzed in. My ministry vocation automatically involved teaching, rather like a seamless transition.

So teaching, including Teachers College, although ‘secular’ became ‘sacred’ for me – a normal progression into further ministry. Teaching was ministry, the way I served God. I began formal teaching as a teenager, and enjoyed it. My formal teaching also spilled over into informal teaching in church and home life.

We all teach. Our example and abilities influence and teach others. Parents teach children. A huge army of volunteers in churches and the community teach children and youth and peers in a vast array of groups as well as personally. You do too.

## **Theological College**

Dad studied at the NSW Baptist Theological College when I was young. Now it was my turn. When I started, aged 22, my Uncle Frank was two years ahead of me there, in the four-year course. He too had been strongly influenced by my parents’ example. Frank still played tricks on me, even there. If I was out too late at night with my girlfriend I might return to find all my room furniture neatly arranged accurately on the front lawn and my room completely empty of its meagre contents: bed, wardrobe, bookshelf, table and chair.

My sister Elaine met John Olley at Kingsgrove Baptist, as I had, and she married him. John also applied for ‘the ministry’ and went through the college two years after me. He had completed his Ph.D. studies in science. So we all basked in his reflected glory.

Further to that saga, my young brother Philip also attended the same theological college. However, he enrolled much later, being born after I started study there. My other brother, Graeme, inherited a different set of genes from my dad and became a capable builder, and he also moved into teaching, at technical college.

I was a country lad who did not automatically adapt to city life. It seemed so crowded, busy, and unrelentingly noisy. I would often climb onto the roof of the old two storey mansion

at Ashfield in Sydney just to look out over the horizon, and rise above the claustrophobia. But even there, the undulating hills had turned from varied forest greens to varied red tiles as far as the eye could see. Hardly inspiring! But I was closer to the pigeons, and did a kind of city version of St Francis communing with nature, somewhat limited in scope – well, communing with God there also, and that is never limited.

I completed my first two years of study in the grand old mansion at Ashfield, and then the denomination relocated the college to new buildings on the five-hectare property at Macquarie Park, now adjacent to Macquarie University where I completed two more years. The college later became Morling College in honour of the principal I had at Ashfield, affectionately known as Principal Morling.

Principal Morling set a wonderful tone for the college. We single students living there ate our evening meal with him at the long dining table. The senior students like Frank sat closer to him for animated discussions, and the junior students like me at the far end of the table listened in awe. Fortunately Principal Morling liked a joke, especially his own, so we always had laughter at the table. We ate in proper English style, with suits or our gold trimmed, black college blazers, ties and polished shoes. Starched napkins adorned our laps, and no one sat or started till the principal did.

I found some lectures boring, so tried to enliven them by asking questions, like, “What is a necromancer?” (Deut 18:10-12) – emphasizing neck-romancer! At least it was a change from me doing the teaching. Principal Morling captivated me most, with his rich devotional approach to theology. With him it could never be merely academic theologising. Always we were encountering our awesome God, not just learning theories about the divine nature. Our principal spoke from a deep, personal relationship with God, and we caught some of that devotion.

We studied Greek for four years, never my favourite as I am no linguist. However, I did love capturing some of the great Greek concepts such as *agape*, *koinonia*, and *ecclesia*, exploring the riches of love, fellowship, and church. By the end of our first year we could translate slabs of 1 John from Greek into English. The passage was familiar and I easily learned the KJV from memory. Translating English to Greek, though, was tough and I struggled through it! I still appreciate using my Inter-linear Greek and English New Testament, and have used it to check some references in this book.

I was not keen on exams, but passed them. However, I was keen on essays, and enjoyed them so much I often handed them in late. Well, enjoyment was only a part of the problem. Procrastination contributed. Nevertheless, the only year I completed all my essays on time, I won the essay prize.

We studied the usual theological college subjects, such as exegesis of major books of the Bible (Isaiah, not Leviticus; John, not James). We studied Church History, and I grew more convinced that the political and institutional church was not really the church, and often persecuted the real church, as Luther discovered. We studied Pastoral Care, and I floundered with the new concepts of active listening and non-directive counselling, in which preachers are not generally experts. We studied preaching (homiletics) and I loved that, carrying off the preaching prize in my final year. That was like a home run, after all those years of apprenticeship.

College life had its social dimensions as well. The two elected senior students took turns a week about to wake us at 6 a.m. for personal devotions. In my final year I supported Tony Cupit in those roles, and remember finding most students in bed most mornings except our

mission students from overseas such as Joshua Damoi from PNG and Sulen Bosemitari from India. They were already dressed and on their knees every morning. I glimpsed why revival may happen more often overseas than with us. They pray more, and may obey more.

We had inter-collegiate sports competitions with the other theological colleges in Sydney, and I found my niche in athletics, usually winning more than the middle distance races. There, momentarily I could beat most at high jumping and long jumping as well. The competition was not even high school standard!

We also debated. So I was part of the inter-college debating team for four years. This was familiar territory. We reached the finals of the debating competition many times, but didn't bring home the trophy. However, we did appreciate the experience and grow through it.

So I enjoyed college, but I think I coasted, rather than applying myself to a serious academic career. That came later. Girl friends were more interesting, and needed time! Church life was also more interesting.

Single students, like Frank and myself, had preaching appointments in our first year and then were also student pastors for three years. So I became the student pastor for two years at North Epping and then for a year at Narabeen, both suburban churches in Sydney.

Word got around that I'd been a teacher, so I had more children's camps to lead, and spoke at various Sunday School anniversaries. I also preached at a church north of Sydney for a few months in my first year as their interim preacher. All that appealed to me much more than memorising Greek.

I recall a few impressive moments. On one of those Sunday trips I went with another student in his car. He was a fairly new convert, not at all skilled in the 'thees' and 'thous' which thou shalt say in prayer. He suggested we pray as we drove, so of course I bowed my head, closed my eyes, and immediately prayed earnestly in ancient English. Then to my horror I heard him praying also, while I still had my eyes closed reverently. I immediately looked up, startled. How could he pray while driving? You have to wait till you stop, and then you can pray! But he was merrily praying away as he drove, eyes wide open, using irreverent language like, "God you're great, and we ask you to do great things in church today." Traditional Geoff was learning from a recently converted 'sinner'!

I remember my favourite Sunday School anniversary talk. I used two cardboard altars for the story of Elijah on Mt Carmel. I smashed one as I told about the frenzy of the ineffective priests of Baal. Inside Elijah's altar I hid some Condy's crystals. Then as I told of the barrels of water being poured over the altar, I actually poured some glycerine over mine. Then I deliberately walked far away from it to begin telling my version of Elijah's evening prayer. Soon the altar burst into flame! Always impressive. The combined chemical elements generate heat and fire. However, it has dangers too. I usually did it on the communion table. Pray that there's no cloth on the communion table also! Well, I got around that by using a strong wooden base. But in one large church where I did this in the middle of winter, all the windows were shut, and the acrid smoke filled the place causing everyone in the front pews to cough violently, and deacons were racing around to open the windows to let the offending smoke out and the cold, bracing air in. I never did get invited back to that church.

## **North Epping, Sydney**

I had my first experience of being a student pastor, and also the founding pastor of a new church at North Epping during my second and third years in 1961-1962. The innovative, adventurous



people there pioneered a new church plant from Epping.

We had a brand new building which later became the church hall. Each Sunday the leaders arranged the chairs for Sunday School classes, and then for the service. Some of my friends from that church kept in touch with me over the years since, praying for our mission work. We had about 100 keen people, full of vision for their new church, so I rode on that wave of enthusiasm.

There I led the two services on Sunday, following our traditions with the four-hymn sandwich, the KJV Bible, and ancient English in my prayers. I knew the traditions, and enjoyed them. Although I no longer use those traditions, God's Spirit graciously moved among us then, and now also.

Preaching twice on Sundays challenged me, and in retrospect I wonder why I did not use their local preachers much more fully. The congregation had many professional people including the treasurer of the Baptist Union and a high school principal. That challenged me, and occasionally they gave me appropriate feedback such as a need for more preparation.

I led the Wednesday night Bible Study at the church with a much smaller group. They were the older ones, and faithful prayers – the real core of the church. Thankfully, I did not have to chair the church business meetings. They were already experts at that, and had brought that church into being through their meetings. Occasionally I visited people in their home, but that was not expected of 'busy' college students. I rode my 125 cc motor bike all over the city, and enjoyed the freedom and adventure. Those were two good years, and I was more interested in that pioneering church life than getting all my essays in on time. A valid interest, but not a valid excuse!

## **Narrabeen, Sydney**

During my fourth and final year at college I really enjoyed being the student pastor of the new little church at Narrabeen on the north shore of Sydney. They too were building a beautiful new building, but that was not opened till the middle of the year. So for the first half of my time there we met in a school hall and had to bring in all our equipment and put out the chairs every Sunday morning and pack up everything afterwards. Fortunately, perhaps, we had no night service there until we moved into the new church building.

Again, I found a keen bunch of pioneers, looking forward to establishing the church in their area. When I have met some of them since then, they remember the way I often had to dodge school decorations, such as pupils' paintings strung across the room like clothes on a line. I was grateful to be working with another fresh young congregation, and we had many young families in that church, so usually had plenty of noise as well.

That was also the toughest year of my life, apart from my mother's death. Many people in that church prayed with me, and others, about vital decisions we had to make. Those decisions were deeply personal.

I had fallen in love. I met a fine, committed, gracious Christian, when I was teaching at Gloucester. Our friendship had ripened over the years into love and an engagement. I had my eyes firmly set on mission work, and we shared many of my student pastorate experiences together. So we applied for mission service with the Baptist mission in PNG. The mission committee rejected our application, throwing us into a tailspin. Had we settled for ministry in NSW, we could have gone ahead with the denomination's blessing. But I felt strongly led to mission. We worked though some painful counselling that year at Narrabeen, including helpful

assessment with a Christian psychiatrist, who was also a PK, deeply empathetic and insightfully helpful.

We chose to part, an enormously difficult choice. I did reapply for PNG, and eventually went. We chose to leave the outcome in God's hands. It was beyond us. I still believe that God works in all things for good. We had to trust him for that too. Since then, of course, we have both been blessed with even more fulfilling relationships in marriage and in our families.

Then, for a year after college I had a year in the country as a full-time pastor before leaving for PNG.

## **Ariah Park, NSW**

Where's Ariah Park? That was my immediate question when appointed there in 1964, my first year out of college. *That was the only year in my life when I have been a full-time minister of a church.*

Ariah Park is a small town in the sheep and wheat belt of the western plains of NSW, east of Griffith. I had graduated from a motor bike to a VW Beetle, and covered the ground fast, travelling via Orange where my dad was then minister. Road signs in those days included an unrestricted sign for the open road, so it was legal to drive safely at any speed in the country. Eventually I heard from some parents of the youth in our country church that I drove too fast, so I had to slow down a little.

This was the thesis year of college, so I wrote my thesis on the Beginnings of the Baptist Mission in PNG. Eventually the Baptist Historical Society of NSW published it. That year I reapplied to the mission, as they previously recommended, and was accepted to go to PNG to teach from the next year, 1965.

Our denomination ordained the members of our class from college at the annual assembly in October that year, in Sydney. In my brief ordination statement I wondered aloud about the non-conformist Baptist position on titles such as Reverend, passed on to us from Rome via Canterbury! Even more, I now wonder about Jesus' position on all such titles, including Teacher and Father (Matthew 23:8-11). He insisted on us being servants, as he emphasised in that passage.

My new farming friends in the church knew that I was an interim pastor, headed for mission work. So that gave a strong mission flavour to my year there, followed by years of faithful prayer and personal support from the congregation there.

At last I could enjoy the work of ministry without the constant extra demands of lectures, essays and exams. What a relief! Now I could buzz around in my VW Beetle visiting everyone, taking RE in schools, and running a typical range of church programs. I soon adapted to the leisurely, laconic ways of my country friends. Why rush? I enjoyed being a country boy once again.

There were new experiences, such as conducting my first and only funeral. The only church member who died that year had owned the main store in the small town, so everyone, yes everyone, came to his funeral. We needed loud speakers for the crowd outside the packed church building. We had about a thousand attending. I've never seen so many cars in one place in a country town. Imagine the funeral procession! We had to wait at the grave for over half an hour until the last of the people in the endless line of cars arrived for the burial.

I really enjoyed the routine of country church life: preparing and leading church services and the mid-week prayer meeting and Bible study, R E in the schools once more, youth group

and clubs for children after school, and visiting the people in their homes. The seasons guided our discussions, springtime and harvest, or ploughing, sowing, praying for rain, and long lines of trucks taking the harvest to the railway silos. Occasionally a haystack would over heat and burst into flames, destroying all that hard work.

Ariah Park also made an impression on my youngest siblings. I had them with me during one of the school holidays there. They remember how I kept them walking at night after my car ran out of petrol. Those VW Beetles had no gauge then, only a reserve tank lever on the floor, which I had already used.

Heather wrote, "I remember a holiday in Ariah Park and you took us one school holidays down there and we went to some barbecue, I guess on someone's place, and ran out of petrol on the way home and we had to walk in the dark - it seemed like forever."

"I too remember the Aria Park break-down and scary night walk," Lyn recalled. "I think it lasted *all* night; we walked for hours. You also did the cooking as mum and dad had left us with you while they went on a rare time alone on holiday. I remember lumpy custard that you tried to make taste and look better by adding Coco powder in it - *terrible!*"

"I remember the incident at Ariah Park too," Dianne added. "It was in a hay shed, some youth thing that Geoff was doing stuff at. He told us ghost stories as we walked home."

My glass-half-full memories are of a lively youth afternoon with hay rides, farm barbecue, and a social evening with devotions thrown in, then singing songs and telling stories as I walked home with my young sisters and brothers. A night to remember! Apparently they did.

Soon I was packing for my shift north to a totally different world of food and fashion and family in the highlands of New Guinea. Before leaving I had some holiday time with the family in the only family home dad ever owned himself.

## **Gwandalan, Lake Macquarie**

Dad bought lakeside land at Gwandlan, on Lake Macquarie, south of Newcastle. It became a family holiday base after he moved an ex-army hut there and remodelled it into a basic holiday home for our large family. We had many happy family vacations there, including reunions after many of us had left home.

We all pitched in to help with some building and painting, but also found plenty of time to swim and take out our aluminium rowboat. I would sometimes row across that arm of the lake to the shops on the opposite side, and occasionally I rowed to some nearby small islands to explore.

The virgin land had many trees and bushes, with more nearby around the lake – great for exploring as well. Heather remembers our family times of Sunday School under the trees, telling Bible stories there, singing songs and enjoying family life together.

While I was at Ariah Park, dad was pastor at Orange church so I would call in there occasionally, and then join the family for holiday visits to Gwandalan as well. After dad left Orange he lived with the family at Gwandalan for a year or so while also working as a supervisor at the nearby power station until he accepted a call to the church at Toronto, also on Lake Macquarie. Toronto became his final pastorate.

That lakeside property increased in value over the years, and after dad's death in 1973 its sale provided a suitable home in Toronto for mum Eileen Maude, where various members of our widely scattered family called in over the years.

So for a year or so, dad's 'ministry' found expression once again in business and the work

force. That too is ministry, vital ministry. There too, “To lead is to serve”.

Christian ministry can sometimes be regarded too narrowly as only pastoral ministry. Jesus never taught that, and never demonstrated it! My own ministry was not primarily pastoral ministry although I did that for a year. The two student pastorates were ‘part-time’ pastoral ministry while a full time student. Since then my ministry has been teaching in a wide range of settings.

We can fall into unbiblical traps if we consider ministry as primarily or only full-time pastoral ministry. Everyone ministers. A holistic view of ministry where everyone ministers is biblical. Jesus and the disciples ministered everywhere, without running a local church. Later the leaders in the early church were usually unpaid elders called to equip all God’s people for their ministries.

That overcomes a false division between the sacred and the secular. It was all one to Jesus. Our limited, unbiblical thinking can exalt the spiritual over the natural and the clergy over the laity.

Holistic thinking helps us to avoid spiritualising some ministries and not others. Market place ministry is normal and vital, wherever we earn our income and serve the Lord. Social transformation, as in revival, spreads God’s kingdom everywhere among all people.

My ministry happened to be teaching. It also happened to be as an ‘ordained minister’ in a range of Christian appointments as a missionary and college teacher.

Now, as I look back across half a century of ‘ministry’ I suspect that my early ministry was very culture bound, restricted and limited. It was ‘normal’ then, but I would find it abnormal now, too ancient, too comfortable, even too predictable, tied too closely to religious, middle-class Western tradition!

We used the gifts and graces we knew, not realising perhaps that there is so much more available to us all. We explored some of the manifold gifts of God’s grace, but backed off some as well.

Our heritage acknowledged the importance of the Isaiah 11:2 list of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of God. We valued the Romans 5:1-5 list of peace, faith, hope, glory in tribulation, patience, experience and love, and we encouraged people to grow in the Romans 12:4-8 list of prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling and showing mercy. We appreciated the need for the 2 Timothy 1:7 list of power, love and a sound mind or self-discipline, and we recognised the importance of leadership gifts in the Ephesians 4:11 list of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, although being cautious about the first two and rather institutional about the last three.

We tended to steer clear of the controversial gifts in the 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 list of word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discerning spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues, as well as the prioritised list in 1 Corinthians 12:28 of apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, healings, helping, guiding, and different kinds of tongues. I think I regarded most of those as relevant for the early church but not so relevant today.

Then, within a decade I discovered their relevance today, not only personally, but in the church and in the community. Charismatic renewal kept renewing us, personally and communally. The rediscovery of the Spirit’s infilling and empowering then clarified and gave new life and meaning to those biblical passages.

## Chapter 4

### Mission: trails and trials



*Papua New Guinea highlands*

My earliest memories include stories of Jesus coming to this world on mission. As a boy I memorised John 3:16 and Matthew 28:18-20 (the Great Commission) all about mission and God's love for us. My parents lived in mission, evangelising 'the lost' and discipling believers, including their children. Many close friends were overseas missionaries, especially Dulcie Cheney in India, who had been like a big sister to us. I read many books about missionaries who gave their lives in mission. Mission was a natural and normal part of life for me.

As I grew older Jesus' incarnational mission impacted me. The Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). He lived his mission. Literally. He demonstrated what he taught, even to laying down his life in his sacrificial death, powerful resurrection and triumphant ascension. Jesus lived mission. I began to see mission not so much as a message but as a life style.

"Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary, use words," St Francis said. The medium really is the message. Actions speak far louder than words.

Later as I encountered renewal and revival, I found new meaning in Jesus' own descriptions of his mission, such as his message from Isaiah 61:1-3 in Luke 4:18-19 at his home village: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me ..." For what? For mission. To live it out. To demonstrate the Kingdom of God. To declare and demonstrate good news to the poor. To proclaim and bring liberty to the captives. To heal the blind. To set free the oppressed. To announce and authenticate the time of God's favour, his amazing grace. He lived it. He was and is the living Word.

He taught his followers to do the same. They must not just preach faith but demonstrate faith. They must not just have Bible studies on love, but love one another as he loved us. Jesus constantly rebuked religious people who did not practice what they preached. Ouch!

My home environment helped me live out my mission. So did my church environment, perhaps limited but always pointing to greater possibilities. Mission meant living out the good news not only in the local home, church, school and community context, but in the whole world. We glimpsed that through what we called overseas missions.

Stories and photos of pioneering missionaries in the highlands of New Guinea (called Papua New Guinea from 1975 after independence) filled our weekly denominational paper, *The Australian Baptist*, and the monthly mission magazine, *Vision*, from 1948 when I was a boy. They captivated me. They were my own *Boys' Own* adventure stories, following pioneers into "the land that time forgot."

Our family had close ties with our mission work in India through Dulcie Cheney, but the New Guinea accounts grabbed me most. I followed the stories of those first post-war missionaries into the unreached Enga tribal areas in the highland ranges north of Mt Hagen with intense interest. Eventually that interest ripened into research when I wrote a thesis on 'The Beginnings of the New Guinea Mission'. The same year that I wrote that thesis, 1964, I was ordained to the Baptist ministry, and accepted to go to New Guinea as a missionary teacher. Full of zeal, I wanted to go blazing trails and facing trials.

## Engas

The pioneers, of course, had blazed trails among the Engas before I arrived. The first pioneers among the Enga tribes began a mission station at Baiyer River (specifically Kumbwareta) on the northern ridge of the wide Baiyer River valley in 1949. The first baptisms in 1956 marked the official birth of the Enga churches.

By 1965, when I arrived, four mission stations provided bases for reaching the whole area.

We had my farewell function in Sydney. Rev Gilbert Wright, the Vice-Principal of our theological college, preached at my farewell service in the Epping Baptist Church, using Isaiah 35 for his message. He applied the whole chapter to mission, and I appreciated that, especially the soaring anthem:

4. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.

5. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

6. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Concluding with:

10. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Our large family and many friends gathered at Sydney airport to say their final farewells, and then I headed off to “mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, and walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

My young brothers and sisters recall some of that parting adventure:

Philip (3): I remember being more than a little scared by a big brother who showed me his luggage for New Guinea and threatened to put me inside it and take me with him. I wasn’t sure he was serious but grabbed mum’s hand just in case.

Dianne (6): The night you left the airport to go to PNG the first time, we were all on the observation deck to see the plane go and to wave to you. Lyn (9) was so excited that she vomited, but she was clever enough to do it into a pot plant. Later that night The Beatles arrived and there was a crowd of young people waiting there to welcome them and they got so excited that they smashed and trampled everything in site. Mum wonders what happened to the plant.

I had packed my meagre belongings into tin trunks (useful for trekking into yet another mission station or village, carried on long poles), and in fact I took far more than I needed. In hindsight, I could have left most of it behind! All my college notes, essays and many books did not really fit New Guinea, although the mission anthropology ones certainly did. We lived what those mission books explored, including these classics:

Brilliant books by Eugene Nida such as *Customs and Cultures*, examining cultural differences with lively examples and humour;

*The Indigenous Church* by Melvin Hodges, an AOG missionary, explaining self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating churches;

Books by Roland Allen, a Spirit-filled Anglican missionary, especially *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*;

*Bridges of God* by Donald McGavran, missionary in India and later a guru of early church growth literature.

I devoured those books, and my bound volumes of *Practical Anthropology* journals. They were my study diet along with the *Good News Bible*, and of course *Nupela Testamen* (New-fella Testament), followed much later by *Buk Baibel*, the Pidgin Bible. Books, however, did not survive well in the tropics. The enormous, hungry cockroaches loved the glue binding, so most books disintegrated, aided by the tropical moisture from afternoon downpours in the highlands when the equatorial heat cooled and dumped 'bikpela ren' (big fella rain) on us about 4 p.m. daily.

After flying first to Port Moresby for a few days adjustment at a mission transit home, I then flew in the Dakota DC3 workhorse from Port Moresby to Madang and then up into Mt Hagen in the highlands, and on to the government agricultural station grassy airstrip in the wide, breathtaking Baiyer Valley north of Mt Hagen. We sat side-saddle on fold down canvass seats along the sides of the plane with the piles of cargo netted down in the middle.

Then on a hot afternoon at the end of January 1965, I stepped into the 3D living version of all those mission photos and films I had seen, but now with the added sunny glare, heat, smells and people's chatter in Enga and Pidgin. Max Knight and others met us, loaded my trunks and the other supplies onto the mission truck, and we drove the exhilarating 10 kilometres to the large mission station at the end of the Baiyer River valley, up a ridge from the wide valley floor.

Max and Pat Knight hosted me, and I lived for a few months in their 'donga' - a woven bamboo cabin at the back of their place. Most missionary homes had dongas for housing the regular visitors and guests coming to Baiyer River, the largest and most accessible of all our mission stations. About 20 missionaries lived there, running the boys and girls primary schools, the Tinsley hospital, the carpentry and trades training schools, the pastors' schools (in-service training for a few days each month), and the hostel for visiting missionaries and international visitors. Max trained village pastors and village teachers.

Some first impressions remain vivid memories. In those initial months I photographed almost everything, so produced hundreds of coloured slides. They trailed me around for over 40 years, in a large biscuit tin with a tight fitting circular lid! I inflicted the best of them on the ever patient congregations during deputation in Australian churches.

I quickly adapted to village church life after the first few weeks, and usually walked to a village church every Sunday, exploring the villages and scenery as well. Those first village visits plunged me into new dimensions of church life in their indigenous culture.

Max and Pat took some of us to my first village church service. We travelled 15 kilometres back into the wide Baiyer Valley on the mission truck, most of us standing up in the back or hanging onto the sides. I stood to enjoy the ever unfolding, fantastic view of high kunai grasslands in the valley surrounded by majestic, towering mountain ranges. Most villages had been built on the tops of the ridges because of tribal fighting and killings. A village in a valley was easy plunder, and soon wiped out. So most villages sat high on mountain ridges.

We parked the truck by the road near Kwinkia at the foot of one of those towering ranges, and then followed the dirt tracks up, and up, and up, usually along ridges leading to higher ridges. We climbed about 1,000 feet in the hot sun of the morning. In those days no village had tanks on top of the ridge, as they do now, so any water had to be carried there from a stream part way down the ridge. Any stream we crossed became our wash room, cool, refreshing, and good to drink, if it did not come through bush where scores of pigs roamed, dug and made a mess.

After about an hour of steady climbing, we arrived at Kendapena village on the ridge top around 9 a.m. People sat about in clusters sharing news. They all came to greet us, shake hands



and chatter away in Enga. I listened with admiration as Max and Pat interacted with them fluently. We were dressed in our Sunday best, of course, a light dress for the women and a light short sleeve shirt or T-shirt for us men, with shorts and either boots or thongs (flip flops). I tried boots for a while, but found them too hot and heavy especially when trekking through mud, although I needed them for the long treks across the mountains. Soon I settled for thongs, and later for bare feet like all the locals around the stations or villages where I lived. My feet hardened quickly, but never became as tough as theirs. My students could easily play 'kik bal' (kick ball - soccer) in bare feet, but when I tried I broke a small toe so reverted to sandals for those games.

Sunday clothes for the villagers were the same as for every other day and night. In the sixties that was a small pandanus leaf string cord for women, with narrow pandanus fibre netting in the front and back. Nothing else. The men wore a thick netted long fibre apron in front and soft leaves at the back, both strung from a belt of bamboo or vines, or a well-worn old leather belt obtained as a gift or payment. Compared with our hosts, we were overdressed. They gladly accepted our differences, especially as we were seen as rich westerners.

Some of them had washed. Most had not. Dirt remained encrusted on many bodies. After all, a layer of dirt helps to keep one a bit warmer on those mountain ridges at night and in the mornings at 3-5,000 feet high. Soap? The hospital and aid-post staff taught its value, and gave some away, but it seemed a rare commodity in the mountain top villages, though well used by everyone on the mission station.

No one had watches of course, unless it was a missionary or teacher or 'doctor boi' medical orderly. The church service started when everyone was there. So on bright sunny mornings such as we had that day, it may begin around 9 a.m., but on cold, cloudy mornings it could be noon or later. Few knew or cared what the time was. They cared about who was there and who was still to come.

We gladly ate the food they gave us while we waited for more people to arrive. I had sugar cane, raw, chewing on the juicy fibres. Everything grew there lavishly, in fertile ground, drenched daily in the afternoon rains. Paw-paw, pineapple, and bananas grew luscious and big. Like a tourist, stunned with the novelty, I took photos, including one of a beautiful young lady eating a pineapple.

"You won't be able to show that one at home," Max whispered to me. It had not dawned on me that what was so natural and modest there in the village, including bare essentials in clothing styles, could not be thrown up on a church wall in Australia.

The village church at the edge of a cleared space (the village green!) blended in perfectly with all the other village houses, circular, dirt floor, platted bamboo walks rising to four or five feet, and a thick kunai grass roof shaped like a circular tent around a central pole. So we bowed low to get through the door, and we all sat packed tightly together on the dirt or dry grass, cross-legged in the dimly lit church. Soon our eyes adjusted, but I must admit my nose did not adjust that day. After a few months I realised I no longer noticed the unwashed body odours.

We sang. Well, they sang. Their Enga chants follow a pentatonic scale of five notes, not an octave of eight. Most of their songs were indigenous, created themselves. However, they did include some English hymns, adapted to their own style and translated into their own language. I enjoyed the singing as it rose and fell, expressing their joy and new life in Christ Jesus. Of course I did not understand any of it.

Then we had announcements and sharing. Max whispered brief translations to me. If someone's piglets made too much noise people would tell the woman caring for it to keep it

quiet. If a baby began to cry the men on the opposite side of the crowded dirt floor would call out “Give it the breast.” I was surprised to hear that most of the announcements were about normal community life (not church life) including arrangements for road building. At that stage of Australia’s administration in the highlands the villagers paid no taxes, but the tribes all helped build roads one day a week as community service. They used the provided picks and shovels, which regularly disappeared. When revival swept through that area in the seventies, hundreds of ‘stolen’ shovels and axes and other tools reappeared at the mission station as people were convicted by the Holy Spirit to return ‘borrowed’ items! Missionaries then had to ask people to stop returning these borrowed tools, and gave them as permanent gifts.

Max introduced me and invited me to say something, which he interpreted. I gave my first Enga message, in English! After saying how pleased and impressed I was to be at my first Enga service, I noted how we all had to bow low to come through the door into their church building, and compared that with responding to Jesus’ invitation and declaration, “I am the door.” Those who enter his house or kingdom do so through him, by humbly believing in him.

The village pastor could not read (few adults could then) so one of the school boys read a Bible passage in Enga from a duplicated translation. The pastor gave his message, studied some days before at the mission station’s pastors’ school. I really admired the way our culturally sensitive missionaries worked with the village leaders and pastors.

Although it was impossible to avoid importing some western Christian traditions, the mission staff tried to avoid doing that. Church life, however, did reflect many western traditions. For example, it struck me as odd that communion followed western styles using symbolic cubes of sweet potato (no bread in the village) and berry juice passed around in little bamboo cups (like thimbles). Their way of ‘breaking bread’ together in the village usually meant sharing some of the many varieties of sweet potato whole, or broken in half, as they sat around in their houses. That’s so much closer to what Jesus did!

The service closed with more singing and we filed out to sit or stand around together for a while. We had time for sharing more information, disseminating news from the schools or hospital, and planning any future events, as well as eating together again. Then we made our way carefully back down the mountain track into the wide valley below, and I rejoiced all the way back in the truck thinking, so that’s church in New Guinea. Even ‘going to church’ there was rather western, having a specific church building and a meeting in it. New Testament churches looked more like the Chinese house churches.

At least the village churches looked like a large house, useful as a general meeting place for any gathering. Later on, as cash increased in the villages from selling coffee, many tribes built a church with an iron roof. That had the great advantage of providing a village water tank, usually full from the regular rains. However it also had the great disadvantage of the unlined roof becoming an oven on those hot days, or an amplified drum when it rained, drowning out the speaking and even the singing. I suspect prestige and modernisation over-ruled comfort.

The following Sunday I was ready to participate even more fully in a village church service. Fired with more zeal than sense and sensitivity, I headed off walking to a nearby village church service carrying my portable rolled up flannel-graph with pictures of the good shepherd going out after the lost sheep. I knew that was the message for the villages that Sunday. Fortunately Peter Burchett, the experienced mission doctor, caught up with me as I ambled along toward the village with some school pupils showing me the way. He asked me what I was carrying.

“That’s my portable flannel-graph,” I informed him.

“Did the pastor invite you to speak?” Peter asked.

“No,” I observed. “I just have it in case it’s useful.”

“Who will interpret, if you are invited to speak?” Peter added.

“One of my school pupils could do that,” I responded.

Peter, smiling at my enthusiasm, suggested it would be a good idea to do nothing in the service as I was a visitor to the village church, didn’t know the language, and was very new to the culture. He added that if the pastor wanted me to speak or show the pictures, he would ask me. Besides, I realised that if the pastor asked anyone to speak, it would be Peter, not me. His advice saved me from stumbling into a paternalistic, condescending white man’s well intentioned but culturally insensitive blunder. I never did get to use my flannel-graph in a village church. It was not culturally appropriate. But it was useful and appropriate for children’s Bible stories in school, and as aids when training village school teachers.

Enga pastors evangelised and disciplined their people. They conducted all the baptisms and village teaching. We were support staff, and I learned to watch and appreciate how well they led a strong and rapidly growing indigenous church.

My mission experience wonderfully mixed work and relaxation. Was trekking work or a holiday hike? Was exploring those rugged ranges work or pleasure? Was visiting New Guinea’s coastal towns for inter-mission conferences and seminars work or a vacation? Was flying around constantly in yellow MAF Cessnas work or adventure? Was relaxing with a great missionary classic book or another translation of the Bible work or relaxation? Was our annual vacation in the mission’s holiday home at Wewak on the coast work as well as holiday? It all merged. The usual boundaries or barriers seemed to melt away. Work was pleasure. The secular became the sacred. All of life was mission, and mission was a whole lifestyle. I lived out that mission vocation teaching in schools and Bible Schools.

Eventually I had the adventure of being the pioneer missionary at both Pinyapaisa among Kyaka Engas in the south of those ranges and then at Sauanda among Sau Engas in the northern district. I also had the great privilege of commencing short term Bible Schools in each area and the full time Bible School for the Engas.

During my first term there I was the only single male missionary amid over 20 single female missionaries! And yes, I did court and marry one of them and we returned to the Engas after our marriage while on furlough (now called home assignment). Our first child was born in the one room ward of the mission hospital at Baiyer River.

## **Journey into Mission**

I think my journey into mission, especially cross-cultural mission, taught me far more than what I taught. In fact, I had to learn to see life and church and ministry from new and challenging perspectives. I was a Westerner now living in a tribal, communal culture with vastly different perspectives from mine.

Mission anthropology had taught me to listen and learn. Tribal people thought and acted differently from me in innumerable ways affecting dress, relationships, loyalties, awareness of spirits, fear and faith. They were much more open to the supernatural than I was originally. They could embrace revival, healings, deliverance, and communal commitments more fully and freely than I ever saw in Australia.

Our mission leaders were sensitive to these cultural differences, and usually left church decision-making to the local pastors and leaders. We were not there to tell them what to do

and how to do it. We could introduce them to the Bible and especially to Jesus as revealed in Scripture. There he looked more like a Middle-Eastern tribal and communal person of the tribe of Judah in Israel's covenant community and in many ways closer in culture than my own western, materialistic, individualistic culture in Australia.

So I had a lot of learning to do. Some of my Bible College students pointed out to me that they lived more like the New Testament Christians in the Book of Acts than we western missionaries did!

During those first few months I began habits which became a pattern in my missionary life through two terms covering six years in New Guinea. Some of the most significant habits, I believe, were these:

**1. Reading different translations of the Bible**, especially the New Testament. In those years I read through many different versions.

**2. Keeping a diary.** Each day I liked to note a phrase or words from one of the verses in my morning Bible reading.

**3. Writing letters.** I typed hundreds of letters. I typed more quickly than I could write. I soon learned to duplicate interesting circulars, at least I found them interesting!

**4. Staying healthy.** Those were the fittest years of my life. We lived by the adage, early to bed and early to rise. We bought very healthy food from the village people on market days.

**5. Listening.** Of course we had to listen, over and over again, to learn the languages - Enga dialects and Pidgin. More importantly, we needed to listen to learn about the culture, and what the church may be like in that culture. Although my job always involved teaching, I needed to listen and learn more than I taught, and then teach out of that learning. I was being baptised into another culture, another way of life, another expression of the church, another view of the Bible such as from a communal, tribal, non-materialistic perspective, and one much closer to the culture of Bible times.

First I taught English in local mission and village schools and later taught village pastors and teachers in short-term Bible Schools of three months each until I became the founding principal of the full time, Bible School, later called the Baptist Bible College.

I tell that story in much more detail in my autobiographies, *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*, and also in *Journey into Mission*.

Here, in this condensed version of highlights, I give an overview of those overseas mission adventures in the first three chapters of Highlight from Book 2: Journey into Mission.

**When revival swept through that whole Enga area in the seventies, the pastors and village teachers had already explored what it could mean, and they seemed to understand it more than many missionaries, and moved in the Holy Spirit's authority, just as in the New Testament. They knew about spirits, deliverance and healing, visions and revelations, and spiritual gifts.**

**Revival began in every village in September 1973 the Sunday after pastors from the Solomon Islands 1970 revival spoke and prayed for the Enga pastors. People were filled with the Spirit, healed, and began using many spiritual gifts more powerfully.**

## Chapter 5

### Family: Waughs and Rumours of Waughs



*Geoff & Meg in PNG*



*Geoff & Meg 1968*

Family life enriched me through three generations as son, husband-father, and grandfather.

Family is our core community. This applies to nuclear families (as in my childhood and parenting), single parent families (as when my mother died), blended families (as in my youth), and in extended families (as in my communal lifestyle).

My family ties me with cords of love. They give me joy and fulfilment. God ordained and blesses it. Growing up in a caring, stable family provided me with a strong foundation to see our marriage, our children, and our grandchildren similarly blessed.

I often wondered what it would be like growing up in the family where Jesus was the older brother. We get glimpses as with Jesus' strong sense of mission and divine destiny even at the age of twelve. What would it have been like for his younger brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Jude as well as for the girls in the family? It would challenge everyone and be extremely practical. Maybe that is why the two New Testament books attributed to his brothers James and Jude are so practical, sharp and uncompromising.

Jesus' family, saturated with the Old Testament, followed Jewish traditions. Yet Jesus also fulfilled the law and the prophets in himself, the living Word of God. He challenges our tendency to live by the letter rather than the spirit of the law, and he frees us from bondage to legalism. He still confronts and challenges us by his Spirit in us. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Imagine living with that in your family.

I'm grateful that he is closer and more involved in all our lives than we realise, including our families. Our family constantly experienced his grace together first in Papua New Guinea and then in Queensland.

## **Papua New Guinea**

I went to PNG as a single missionary teacher, and for three fascinating years taught in schools and Bible Schools there, sometimes the only white person in a village such as when I started a school or ran a short-term Bible School in a village away from mission stations. Mostly, however, I lived on mission stations, two of those three years at Lapalama, in the majestic mountains by the Sau River.

Meg came to teach as part of the temporary teacher scheme, one year after I arrived. In the sixties, before independence, the Australian Government paid the salaries of school teachers in PNG to help aid the country's development in education. This enabled missions to develop many more schools. Our temporary teachers came for two years and were not required to learn the local language as was required of all permanent staff. Many teachers, nevertheless, picked up basic Enga phrases.

Our friendship ripened, so in the last six months of 1967, I would finish my Grade 1 class early Friday afternoon, ride my motor bike to Kompam, and then run the mountain track from Kompam to Lapalama, normally 5-6 hours hard walking over high ridges and across the Sau River gorge on the swinging vine bridge. I covered that trek in a record 3 hours, a record that still stands. I usually met some young men on the track so would challenge them to a race to their village further along the track. They could leap down the ridges with their sure footed skill and hard bare feet faster than I could, but I often beat them striding up the steep ridges with my long legs. They sang songs around their hut fires about the white man who leaped across the mountains to see his girl at Lapalama.

Village culture, and the mission's indigenous policies, disapproved of a man holding hands with a woman. Married men did not hold their wives hands either, and certainly never hugged

in public. In the village culture of bare skins and minimal covering, such action was regarded as promiscuous. So when Meg and I went walking, such as to a village church on Sundays, we did not touch. Friendly, observant villagers, often our curious school pupils, usually accompanied us.

I did manage to go Western occasionally with hand holding, and even an occasional kiss, but always at night and on those rare occasions when we were alone together. However, even that had its dangers. One time we went for a quiet walk at night along the top of the ridge near the mission station. As it was dark, away from the lights of the houses, I boldly held her hand and enjoyed it. After all, I couldn't have her stumbling in the dark! We paused to embrace. Fortunately I opened my eyes to see smouldering red embers moving toward us low down on the track, and realised it was someone coming along the track with a bundle of dry grass lit to make a light, village style. Some people owned torches, but not many. They used their own bush torches. It was one of my former students. He coughed politely, as you do when you are approaching people in the night so you don't scare them. Meg and I rapidly separated and made room for him to pass as we shared the usual greeting, "I see you are coming!"

Eventually I proposed to Meg, in broad daylight, by the Sau River, down the ridge from Lapalama, before Meg and I flew back to Sydney for furlough. We returned to Australia on 9 December, 1967. I was 30 that day. I met Meg's family and received her parents' blessing on our marriage.

"You are adults and do not need my permission," George, her dad, pointed out.

"Yes," I agreed, adding, "But I would appreciate your approval and blessing." Meg's parents gave that graciously to this unknown missionary wanting to take their daughter back to the wilds of a stone-age culture.

I returned to Australia with Meg, as well as various artefacts – an unusual combination! Young sister Lyn commented, "I remember Geoff coming through customs at the airport with a *giant spear* in his hands - imagine how far you'd get these days."

We had a fulfilling furlough before returning to PNG after we married in May 1968. Mission policy gave staff six months of furlough, now called home assignment, after three years of mission service. Half of that furlough involved speaking at deputation meetings in churches for three months, usually one month each in three different states. Early in 1968 Meg returned to Maths teaching at a girls high school for three months, which added nicely to our limited mission allowance. I visited Queensland for a month of meetings, had meetings in NSW for a month and then a month in Tasmania.

Both of us were 30 when we married at Pennant Hills in Sydney on furlough in 1968. Clergy abounded, including mission representatives, Meg's pastor Col Campbell, and my minister relatives Uncle Frank and brother-in-law John as well as dad and myself. My brother Philip, then seven, joined those ranks later. No lack of ministers there to say grace or lead in prayer!

During our wedding reception we hid our shiny VW bug to protect it from our relatives' pranks. We drove north in that splendid afternoon light to begin a rather extended honeymoon. Eventually we reached Townsville and Magnetic Island in the north where a friend of the mission had given us free use of her holiday home on the island.

We loaded our wedding gifts in crates onto the cargo ship MV Bulolo in which we continued our honeymoon, sailing to Brisbane, Port Moresby and Madang. The ship had only half a dozen passengers, so we dined with the captain on that voyage. Then we flew in a

Dakota DC3 from Madang to Mt Hagen in the highlands and loaded our crates onto a mission truck for the scenic drive back into the breath-taking Baiyer Valley. Soon after that we flew again by MAF Cessna back to Lapalama to live together in one of the first mission homes built there, with its thick grass roof, platted bamboo walls, a milled timber floor, and a separate cook house with its fuel stove out the back. Both our family homes in PNG were made from bush materials, the second one with a platted bamboo floor as well.

Meg taught in the school again, and I taught in another short-term Bible School there in our first year back. Then we established the full time Bible School at Kwinkia in the wide Baiyer Valley with food gardens, workers houses, and a missionaries' home already available. Rob and Win Thompson, brilliant pioneering missionaries, had established the agricultural training centre there, and had built a large bush home which became our second and final home in PNG. It had the usual thick grass roof and woven bamboo walls, and woven bamboo floors in all rooms.

We commenced the Enga Baptist Bible School there in 1969, which later became the Bible College. We had eight students from each of the four districts plus three from the Enga church's remote pioneering mission at Wapi over an eight thousand feet high range north of Lapalama. Those 35 became the founding student body of the full time Bible School, chosen by their own leaders.

Our first child was born there at the Tinsley Hospital at Baiyer River. So I rode my motor bike daily the 10 kilometres from our bush home at the Bible College in the valley to the mission station on the northern slopes of that valley where the hospital, schools and training centres had been established.

As a young family we continued to pioneer at the Bible School. I regularly visited the villages of our students at weekends, and they were pleased to get a ride on our motor-bike back to their village for the weekend. Meg hosted the students in groups for a meal each week, prepared by our house helper who had come with us from Lapalama to Kwinkia.

Later, in 1970, we returned to Sydney for medical clearance and six months of furlough again, including three months of deputation meetings. Meg stayed with her family while I spoke at meetings. Meg was pregnant then with our second child, Jonathan, born in Sydney that November. He added more joy to our lives, and his big sister delighted in helping to look after him from the beginning.

In PNG I had begun studying externally from the University of Queensland for my Bachelor of Educational Studies degree, which required some subjects to be completed internally on campus in Brisbane. So I drove there to see if I could find work, preferably as a pastor, and complete my degree internally. Unfortunately, but perhaps providentially, no Baptist Church there needed a pastor at that time.

While in PNG I participated in inter-denominational conferences, seminars and training groups including Group Life laboratories led by Rev. John Mavor, a Methodist missionary educator in PNG. He suggested I apply to the Methodists in Brisbane, his home base, for Christian Education work. I did. Dr Lewis Born, Director of the Methodist Department of Christian Education (DCE), replied to my letter informing me that he had no openings at that stage, but his letter arrived in Sydney while I drove to Brisbane. So when I phoned him in Brisbane to arrange an appointment, Lew Born asked if I had received his letter, which I had not. He suggested I come in to see him anyway since I was in Brisbane then. The appointment was for the afternoon of the next day in his office.

"Someone up there is looking after you," observed Lew. John Mavor happened to be in



Brisbane then and met with Lew Born the morning of my visit. John strongly recommended me to Lew, who adjusted the DCE budget to include me, so I started work there the next day. That day happened to be a DCE staff meeting and training day held at the Methodist Training College and Bible School. That became a 25-year working relationship as a Baptist minister working with the Methodists and then Uniting Church, and the vocational setting for my family's growth and development.

## **Brisbane**

God unexpectedly open employment for me with the Methodists (surprising me and my relatives), and the DCE bought a fully furnished house for us next door to the their Methodist Training College and Bible School in Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, just a hop across the Brisbane River from the city. The church had wanted to add that house to their lay training college and Bible School many years before, but the owner wanted to live there and did not sell. However, he had died a short while before we arrived and his children were then not only willing to sell the house, but happy to sell it fully furnished to the church at the price the church had originally offered years before. So our young family moved into the expanded college property in our fully furnished, well-kept weatherboard Queenslander home, including having our first TV, washing machine, and complete kitchen.

At that time I did not realize that later on I would be teaching at that college which would then amalgamate with the Theological College with this Baptist minister on staff!

So we moved in with our two children, enjoying our first home not made with bamboo and grass! I soon learned about the amazing array of activities conducted by the DCE. That included running the Bible College (where we lived), regular Christian Education deputation in the churches, camps for children, for youth, for families and for special interest groups, such as for the disabled, held in their half a dozen camp properties scattered along the coast from Cairns to the Gold Coast as well as in the mountains, and safari camps and cruises, multiple ministries for disabled people, and the training of Sunday School teachers and elders both in the city and in regional centres. I plunged into a creative, innovative world of Christian Education that included conferences and staff training run by the national Joint Board of Christian Education based in Melbourne. Before long I added my own creativity to these ministries, including publishing study books on renewal and revival.

Our third child, Melinda, arrived in 1972, strong and happy, a peaceful baby and a delight for us all. While Meg was in hospital for a couple of weeks, I enjoyed caring for our other two lively and helpful children. Then Meg had three children under three to manage, with some help from me when I was around.

By the time I completed my university studies, I was fully involved in DCE ministry, and leading innovations in renewal and revival, which both captured my interest and provided an ever-expanding inter-denominational ministry. Boldly, and perhaps blindly, I led an ecumenical renewal meeting in the Wesley Church right in the heart of the city on Tuesday nights of our second year there. I invited renewal speakers from every denomination including Catholics, Protestants and Pentecostals.

PNG had freed me from many of my Western traditions, and now the DCE freed me even more. I found myself exploring new dimensions of interdenominational ministry in renewal and revival which have shaped my life and ministry ever since

Our small children regularly attended camps and conferences with us, finding friends

among the children of our friends. We had moved from working with a brown skinned community in PNG to an active white skinned community in this land of cars, telephones and perpetual electricity. Much of my work was similar, still teaching and training leaders and interacting with some families, but our environment and lifestyle had changed dramatically from PNG days.

We enjoyed visits from our relatives, all living interstate, and we visited them at Christmas and for special occasions, especially weddings. My youngest sister Daphne came to stay with us for a while and then worked in the domestic staff at the college on the same property. Eventually she married one of the young men living there, and like many in my family they are now delighted parents and grandparents. The tribe multiplies!

## **Toowoomba**

After our two years in Brisbane, we moved to Toowoomba, 200 kilometres west in the mountain ranges. The DCE adopted a decentralised policy of locating Christian Education staff in various regions of the vast state, usually based in regional towns. At first they called us District Field Officers (DFOs), sometimes nicknamed UFOs because we drove so far and so fast covering the whole state. Later they renamed our work as Regional Education Officers (REOs). So we developed our own shorthand jargon, such as the DFOs became REOs of the DCE including the MTC&BS (Methodist Training College and Bible School).

We lived in Toowoomba for four years, 1973-1976, again renting a house bought by the DCE, this time a lovely brick home. Our two eldest children attended preschool and started school there. We lived just two blocks from an innovative Open Area primary school, and I knew the principal. He involved me in teaching Religious Education there, in joining the Australian College of Education for professional development, and in teaching Religious Education courses at the College of Advanced Education (now the University of Southern Queensland).

## **Life Line and Renewal**

Christian Education ministries kept us on the cutting edge of church life. My work included the usual range of Christian Education teaching and training and also for a year being the inaugural director of Life Line in Toowoomba until it could sustain a full time director.

Life Line challenged us all. Begun by Dr Alan Walker in Sydney, it enables anyone, anywhere to phone in for immediate telephone help or counselling.

I led a weekly renewal service on Tuesday nights at Raff Street Methodist Church for a few years. Being the only denominational renewal meeting in Toowoomba at that time, it was always inter-denominational, catering for people from many churches who appreciated its open, spontaneous style, seeking to be Spirit-led in worship, teaching and personal prayers for people. I also led a leaders' group in our home each Thursday night, another significant innovation for us. Home groups are common now, but not then. Many churches still had a traditional mid-week Bible Study meeting in the church. Some of our friends brought their children to our house where they read and then slept while we met together. Others arranged for baby sitters. Those children, including ours, now have their own children, and so the wheel goes round.

## **Corinda, Brisbane**

In 1977 my work took me back to Brisbane to teach at the Methodist lay training college, then called Alcorn College, named after Methodist pioneers there in Christian Education. Our friends, Don and Kay Fox, like all the DCE staff, pioneered innovations. They had bought a grand old Queenslander home in Corinda, raised it higher to add rooms and a garage underneath, and closed in some of the verandas to make extra rooms. The seventies saw a global spread of renewal communities, and they invited other young people to live with them in a Christian community and discipling environment as part of their extended family.

We inherited that just at the time at Don and Kay and their three young children moved to America to work first with Teen Challenge and then with other youth programs. At first Meg was not sure that she wanted to live in such an extended family. Having three young children, and teaching part time was challenge enough. But some months before, as Meg drove between Brisbane and Toowoomba after attending a meeting in Brisbane where Arthur Blessit spoke (another radical innovator), she found herself asking God about it, with eyes wide open as she drove, and also eyes wide open to the big challenges of community living.

Unlike our logical and down-to-earth Meg, she asked God for a confirming sign, such as a falling star. She had hardly finished suggesting that to God, when a large falling star flashed across the night sky. Then Meg's logic kicked in and she thought that could have just been a coincidence. So she suggested to God that a second falling star would be more convincing. Sure enough, there was another one a little later. Rather like Abraham bargaining with God, she kind of prayed that she would be really convinced if she saw a third one! She did. As far as I know, that was the only time in her life she ever bargained with God that way.

## **Communal lifestyle**

We moved to Corinda back in Brisbane in 1977. Two others already lived in the home. They had been there with Don and Kay. It was a little like the upstairs-downstairs of England! Our family lived upstairs, and Diane and Neil had rooms downstairs (the first of two Dianes and two Neils who lived with us). We all ate together for dinner each night, unless someone was working late. Breakfast, even with our children, became staggered as people rose and left at different times.

Our new home stood conveniently between the nearby train station with shops and the primary school over the road. Our children just walked across the road to attend school. Like their parents before them, the older two had to adjust to starting in a new school, finding new friends, and even in primary school having to adapt to new ways of teaching, shifting from an open classroom school in Toowoomba to traditional classes in rows of desks in Corinda. They found that hard, and we had a few tearful days at the beginning. Eventually they found friends, many of their friends being in the same class with them right through primary and high school in Corinda.

Don and Kay kindly suggested that our rent be the mortgage payments. They thought and lived Kingdom, not commerce. That helped us enormously. Our boarders contributed to household costs as well. Eventually we saved enough to obtain a bank loan to buy that house at the market rate. And our little community grew, not with more of our own children, but with more boarders. At its peak when we had a dozen living there, seven adults in addition

to our family of five, Paul and Lyndall brought home their first baby, Nathan. That was a crowded time. We had offered to help some people who needed accommodation, so the numbers had grown without us planning on it.

Living in community has many challenges! All the adults in our household met together one night each week to discuss our community household affairs, and pray together. We needed a lot of grace and tolerance!

Our household community remained diverse. For example, we attended different churches, mostly Uniting, but also Anglican and others. Some of us attended Inala Uniting Church on Sunday mornings where the minister, Evan Jones, challenged us with his sharp, short and insightful messages. Many of us attended the Wesley Church at Kangaroo Point where I helped lead along with Wal Gregory, their part-time minister, and Col Warren, the principal of Alcorn College where I taught.

Both Inala and Kangaroo Point churches expressed the dynamic of renewal in different ways. Inala incorporated renewal teaching and ministry into traditional services, enlivened with the Spirit's presence. Wesley's morning services remained traditional with the pipe organ and hymnbook, whereas the evening services were charismatic with about an hour of renewal worship involving many instruments followed by preaching and personal prayers for the steadily growing congregation.

Many young people from Wesley church chose to live in a steadily growing number of community houses associated with that congregation. Each week I met with the leaders of those community houses. Those leaders also hosted Wednesday night cell groups. Our leaders' group usually met at 6 a.m. on Wednesdays for breakfast, discussion and prayer. That followed their community household gatherings on Tuesday nights and preceded the Wednesday cell group. So we all kept well informed about developments. These proved to be useful discipling innovations.

We also led a cell group in our home, mainly for older people, most from Wesley's evening congregation. We came from many different denominational backgrounds but we all had found renewed life in the Spirit. The 80-100 youth gathering in cell groups from Wesley sang with guitars, whereas our group sang with our piano, played by Hilary Mackerras. Like all the other renewal cell groups we shared our thoughts and discoveries together and usually prayed for one another in smaller clusters.

### **Alcorn College and Trinity Theological College**

Eventually our cell group commenced the Renewal Fellowship meeting on Friday nights at Trinity Theological College where I was teaching after Alcorn College merged with Trinity Theological College, and I found myself on the staff of the Uniting Church theological college! Sounds like God's humour, especially with my differing views on baptism, ordination, and even renewal. However, I'm grateful for those visionaries in the Uniting Church who encouraged uniting beyond doctrinal differences.

During one interesting year, when the Bible College at the Garden City Christian Church, an AOG church, began teaching government accredited courses, I was able to help their students also. Academic rules prevented me from teaching accredited courses off campus, so the Garden City students had to come over by bus for my classes! We had an interesting mix of Uniting, Anglican, Catholic and Pentecostal students all studying and ministering in class together!

As part of my continuing education I worked my way through post-graduate studies with Fuller Theological Seminary in Los Angeles, America, mostly by distance education until I completed their Doctor of Missiology degree. Our family had fun on a few trips to America while I was involved in that study.

Eventually in the late eighties with our teenagers doing very well in high school and going on to university, we sold our aging Queenslander and moved into a low maintenance brick home, also in Corinda. Andrew, our son's friend from university, joined us for two years there, returning to his parents' home and church in the country on weekends. Later Andrew lived in Yangon, Myanmar/Burma to help care for orphans and all my adult children and their families have visited him there.

### **Christian Outreach Centre and Christian Heritage College**

Eventually, after 25 years working with the Methodist and Uniting church, my final contract there expired in 1994. Then the principal of the Bible College at Christian Outreach Centre offered me a job as a consultant to prepare their Bachelor of Ministry submission for the Queensland government. So I found myself working in a lively Pentecostal environment. The following year I began teaching at their Bible College. It is also part of Christian Heritage College, which confers degrees and diplomas in Education, Social Sciences, Business and Ministry, rather unique for Pentecostals who for a century usually regarded academic study suspiciously. We aimed to show it can be, and should be, powerful. I also continued leading the weekly ecumenical Renewal Fellowship at the Trinity College chapel in the Uniting Church centre, but moved to my new job, still teaching.

Those years were a surprising mix of renewal and revival ministries and mission in Brisbane, in visiting many churches in Australia, and in many invitations teams on short-term missions internationally as described later in this book.

While teaching at the School of Ministries at Christian Heritage College I continued to lead the ecumenical Renewal Fellowship in the chapel at Trinity Theological College in the Uniting Church headquarters in Brisbane. People from most denominations gathered there to worship and pray together. Many of them travelled with me on renewal and revival mission trips to many different countries.

Students and friends from Christian Heritage College also joined me on various short-term missions, so we were not only studying about ministry and mission but doing it. Some of the overseas students in both Trinity College and Christian Heritage College invited me to come to their home countries to teach and lead revival meetings.

Meg and I also moved. During and after their university studies our teenagers began experimenting with living away from home. They became actively involved in Christian groups at university, including holding leadership positions. Later on they completed masters degrees in their chosen fields of teaching, information technology and community nursing and public health. Meg completed further studies in school counselling while teaching and then changed from classroom teaching at St Aidan's Girls High School to becoming the school counsellor there.

All three children married and we now enjoy seeing our eight grandchildren growing into wonderful young people. We all admire their achievements at school and university and in regional and national sporting teams.

Jemimah, our eldest grandchild, studying medicine and marrying a keen Christian leader

Joshua, is involved with him in youth groups, campus ministries and mission, as are other grandchildren.

Meg died from ovarian cancer in 2002, in spite of our prayers. I can't describe the aching loss and huge gap her passing away left in us. We met on mission in Papua New Guinea and Meg's vision, wisdom, discernment, guidance, support, compassion and grounded faith inspired and enriched us all. Her love and example impacted people everywhere she went including in our community home in Brisbane, service in churches, colleges and schools, and our short-term missions together in Africa, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, and Australia. Through her life and faith Meg still speaks (Hebrews 11:4) and I see her wonderful qualities living on in our children and our grandchildren, especially her uncompromising practical faith, affirming enabling hope, and generous unconditional love (1 Corinthians 13:13).

We pooled resources with Jonathan and Melinda's families and live together in our home designed and mostly built by Jonathan with Melinda's husband Reuben's help and the women busy with planning and buying. I appreciated living in the granny flat, being well cared for in retirement, watching grandchildren grow, and being able to continue occasional short-term mission ventures.

My retirement hobby seems to have developed into editing and writing books like this, and maintaining the digitally challenging Renewal Journal blogs and publications as on my website, [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) .

## Chapter 6

### Search and Research: begin with A B C



*Israel and publications*

My reading began with A B C books and story books of Jesus. I continue to read and write about him. Have you noticed the sheer volume of books about Jesus and his mission? I have hundreds of them, so my children inherit a huge library!

I've read hundreds, and skimmed thousands of books about Jesus and his mission. These include many versions of the Bible, especially the New Testament, and a life time of reading devotional and study books, children's and youth materials, Christian Education resources, biographies and mission accounts and volumes on missiology. Missiology is not the study of what you *miss* in life. It's the study of mission, and yes, we do *miss* a lot of what Jesus did and wants!

Jesus is our mission. He gave his life for us, and gives his life to us. He himself is our mission: to know him and to make him known – not merely to know *about* him or just help others know *about* him.

The apostle John recorded Jesus' amazing claims about himself. These declarations use the emphatic "I myself am" or "I alone am" (*ego eimi*). The Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) uses that emphatic form for God's declarations about himself, such as "I am who I am" which Jesus echoes in many claims including "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58 and 4:26; 8:24; 13:19). Similarly, Jesus used that same emphatic form in these astounding claims:

"I am the bread of life" (John 6:35)

"I am the living bread" (John 6:51)

"I am the light of the world" (John 8:12)

"I am the door" (John 10:9)

"I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11)

"I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)

"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6)

"I am the true vine" (John 15:1)

"I am the first and the last" (Revelation 1:17)

"I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end" (Revelation 1:8; 21:6)

C S Lewis sharply reminds us that Jesus was not just a great teacher. He did not leave that option open for us. He is either Lord, or liar, or lunatic. "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 5:11) became the first and shortest creed of Christians.

Knowing him, and making him known, became my lifelong search and research. I continued that search through constant research about Jesus and his mission. Then I began publishing a few of my findings.

A visit to Israel helped. It exploded that search into living research.

## Israel

My living research included our family's visit to Israel in December-January, 1981-82. We saved enough to cover our fares when our children travelled half-fare at 12, 11 and 9, so we organised our own economical visit, staying in church hospices (hostels) with a few friends from Brisbane.

We explored the Holy Land from the Golan heights in the north to the Sinai desert in the south, and visited Egypt as well. This adventure brought the Bible alive for me in new ways. We discovered so many sights, sounds and smells as well as touching and tasting its unique variety.



This is the land of Jesus. He laboured in the hills around Nazareth. He often walked the 100 kilometres from Galilee to Jerusalem. Devout Jews attended the three main feasts in Jerusalem each year: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. He later ministered with his followers in and beyond the towns and villages of the hills around Galilee. He traversed the land proclaiming and demonstrating the good news of God's Kingdom.

Some people from Wesley Church joined us, including Diane and Paul from our community house. We stayed in the convenient Anglican hospice in the old city of Jerusalem as well as in the impressive Church of Scotland hospice at Tiberius on Lake Galilee. What an adventure! Together we explored Jerusalem, Bethlehem (on Christmas eve for carols and Christmas day to explore), Masada, the Dead Sea, Eilat on the Red Sea, the Sinai desert, the wide Jordan valley, Tiberius and Galilee including Capernaum. We saw the locations of so many Bible events we knew about.

While Meg and Diane visited England for a week that January, I toured with the children and some of our group by bus to Egypt. We climbed into the Great Pyramid visiting the hot, stuffy burial chamber inside, had camel rides at the Sphinx, visited the Cairo museum and zoo, and took a ride on the Nile in an ancient style of boat. We crossed the Suez Canal twice in our journey across the desert, but I think the children slept through most of that from exhaustion!

## **Impressions**

**First view** from the plane: the long straight coastline. Tel Aviv sprawling around Jaffa (old Joppa), so many stone and cream brick houses, flat roofs, sealed roads spreading out across fertile coastal plains; and landing over cultivated fields and orange groves.

**Israeli soldiers** in battle green - gun strung from shoulder strap, mostly young. National service is compulsory for all at 18 for three years. Alert. Few signs of active war; just a sense of immediate readiness to act - quickly. Peaceful atmosphere. Friendly. Quick action if needed. On guard.

**Bargaining** began on stepping outside the terminal; cab drivers competing for a fare to Jerusalem or anywhere. We arrived late Saturday afternoon and all of us, five Waughs plus three friends piled into one 7-seater sherut (taxi) for the breath-taking 50 kilometre drive south east to Jerusalem.

**Road signs** leapt from the Bible onto huge notice boards; we followed those on the four lane main highway to the hills, to Jerusalem. Evening came. A big city set on hills, lit by a thousand lights, like any city, yet unique. Very hilly. Weaving through crowded modern streets in West Jerusalem to our hospice (hostel) inside the walls of the Old City just near the Jaffa Gate. Those walls! History in stone.

**Jerusalem.** Now tumbling impressions, so fast, old and new together, scores of languages, tourists, people milling about in the Old City, arriving Saturday evening at the end of the Sabbath, Christians sharing travel talk at the hospice, our family in a 16-bed dormitory used as a family room in winter. Cool and crisp. Woollens needed each night and many days in the hills.

**First night in Israel**, in Jerusalem. Travel weary but too wide awake to sleep yet. So with the family bedded down I walked-ran-sauntered around the Old City walls; about 2 kilometres, none flat. All our impressions are personal, different, vivid. As I circled flood-lit city walls at night I was swamped by history I'd read, studied, taught, preached, heard all

my life. The impact of that still remains, but is also too big. Just one circuit of the walls and you have encircled events like Abraham on Mt Moriah (probably), David, Solomon - that Temple Mount still there, still walled, still standing high over David's Zion on the ridge to the south of it, the deep Kidron Valley and sentinel Mount of Olives immediately east, and Calvary and a silent tomb somewhere close by to the west - the kings, prophets and priests of Judah, Rehoboam's stupidity, Josiah's reforms, Zedekiah's surrender to yet another army, Isaiah, Jeremiah, then Ezra and Nehemiah (those walls again), on past Greek and Roman invasion to the central drama of the universe – Jesus. You can't absorb it all. It's too big.

And 2,000 years of history is written there since then. That's more obvious. Turk, Muslim, Crusader, Arab, Jew. Israel today. So small. 70 kilometres wide; 200 kilometres long (i.e. Dan to Beersheba).

## Sunday

Here are a few impressions from our first full day there.

7.30, breakfast - bacon and eggs (pork in Jerusalem!).

8.00, Anglican service and communion inside the Old City just beside our Anglican hospice (English service, English Prayer Book, English hymns – home away from home).

9.30, a quick walk to the Garden Tomb for an evangelical service there - they were singing "Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings" as we came in. The organist played *He is Lord* and *How Great Thou Art* at the end of the service and we wandered in that beautiful place, the favourite spot in Jerusalem for most of our group and our family; quiet, beautiful, easy to reflect or meditate or just think or pray. Holding the tiny black speck of a mustard seed from a bush there.

10.30, sauntering into the Old City again; bazaars; Arab urgings to buy souvenirs wares, post cards, gifts; bargaining; people milling everywhere in narrow streets; Old city streets so narrow no vehicle can come in so donkeys still carry loads there; on to the Temple Mount, spacious, dominated by the Dome of the Rock mosque, clear views of the Mount of Olives directly opposite; on by an underground path beneath old, old arches beside the Temple Mount (once bridges between the temple area and the western part of the old city) to the Western Wall (once called the Wailing Wall) of the Temple - the only remains of the buildings there from Jesus' day - the Jews' most holy site, now with a huge cleared and paved area beside it, their substitute for their temple; eating pomegranate - sweet but messy; one main English language paper *The Jerusalem Post* follows Israel's tradition by not printing the name of God, prints G-d instead. All that before lunch!

Back to the hospice for lunch, then we walked again exploring the southern side of the Old City including the continuing excavations at the Southern Wall of the temple where buildings long buried since Bible days are partially uncovered and restored; then in late afternoon some of us returned for sunset at the Western Wall and the first day of the Festival of Lights (see John 10:22 - It was winter, and the Festival of the Dedication of the Temple was being celebrated in Jerusalem). Still is. Every day, beginning at sunset, the Jews light an oil lamp for 8 days commemorating their deliverance from the Syrian Greeks in the days of the Maccabean revolt against Greek rule. Their story is that a tiny amount of olive oil lasted miraculously for 8 days when they reclaimed and restored the desecrated temple and lit the 7-branch candle-stick (menorah). By the end of the 8 days they had been able to produce more oil from olive trees. Our first week was in Jerusalem, so we saw the lamps

being lit and were there when all 8 were alight on the 8th day - the following Sunday evening.

After supper (English name for dinner) we piled into Christ Church for the Anglican and interdenominational carol service, for Christmas came that week too.

I was able to fit in a visit to the Jerusalem Baptist evening service after that (arriving late but glad I found it). As we prayed there at their charismatic service, a strong aroma of burning filled the room, noticed by everyone. [Years later, I noticed that same fire smell in other prayer times in other countries.] On my walk back to the hospice I made another circuit of those Old City's ancient walls, now flood lit.

That was just one day! So many were like that. It was Hannukah, just before Christmas. I was able to walk the 2.5 miles around the flood-lit Old City walls each night as the family slept early, starting from each of the ancient gates in the city walls. What history. What amazing events. Greatest of all, of course, was Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Circling that each evening provided intense meditation and blessing, on site!

I give those details in my autobiography *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*, and in my book *Exploring Israel*.

My searching and researching about Jesus led me to some interesting and often surprising study. The study stretched me, usually more than I wanted to be stretched, often required for teaching or ministry. My years of formal study covered three main areas: **education, ministry and mission**.

## Education

I passed everything in High School except French (that was all Greek to me), but not brilliantly. Most of it didn't grab me, except Religious Education, then not a formal subject. I gained a government Teachers College scholarship so enjoyed two years of practical study for my Teachers College Certificate.

Four years at Theological College and a fifth thesis year followed my school teaching. Then came PNG and external study with the University of Queensland.

Studying for the B.Ed.St. at UQ eventually took me to Brisbane to complete the degree internally, and that brought me into ecumenical renewal. Did mission lead me to education studies, or did education studies lead me to unexpected mission. Both, I think.

A lot of education study applies to all of life, not just teaching. For example, I found that studying the aims or objectives of education helped me in ministry and mission as well. Education aims to help us grow in these many ways (adapted here from my research – taxonomies by Krathwohl, Waugh and Bloom!):

Affective ways (attitudes, emotions, feelings, values, commitments),

Behavioural ways (skills, abilities, achievements, psycho-motor actions) and

Cognitive ways (knowledge, thinking, understanding).

I like the ABC terminology (Affective, Behavioural, Cognitive) because it's easy to remember. Previously, I thought mainly about the cognitive goals, e.g. our doctrines. However, our best teaching and learning often comes through involvement and example, as in apprenticeship, or learning to talk, use languages, make a cake, drive a car, or live a Christian lifestyle by loving and serving one another.

We learn in all these ways, in knowledge, as well as attitudes and skills, progressing through ascending levels. Our commitments show up in the highest levels of these areas of development:

**Affective (attitudes):** progression of learning through

Receiving – you hear, or pay attention, perhaps passively.

Responding – you participate, react, or get involved.

Valuing – you give significance or meaning to it.

Organising – you incorporate it into your thinking or living.

Characterising – you integrate it into your life, your character.

**Behavioural (skills):** progression of learning through

Awareness – you know it can be done, or learned.

Attempting – you try it with varying ability, gradually improving

Achieving – you master it, with increasing skill.

Applying – you use it in a range of situations.

Adapting – you relate it effectively to other possibilities.

**Cognitive (knowledge):** progression of learning through

Knowledge – you remember or recall it.

Comprehension – you understand it.

Application – you use it in various ways.

Analysis – you identify elements and principles of it.

Synthesis – you compile it by combining elements in patterns.

Evaluation – you assess it and make judgments about it.

Creativity – you use it to develop something new.

Notice how Jesus powerfully taught, demonstrated and required change or growth in attitudes and behaviour, not just knowledge. His powerful teaching demonstrated Kingdom attitudes and action: loving the outcasts, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, freeing the oppressed, confronting the proud, washing the feet of arguing disciples!

I applied those educational principles to my classes. Together we learned to minister to one another more effectively. The mature insights, prayers and prophetic words of my Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Church students at Trinity Theological College impressed me, and the zeal of my students at Christian Heritage College stretched me.

One student we prayed for at Christian Heritage College one morning in class went to her doctor that same day for a final check before having a growth removed from her womb. Her doctor could find no trace of the growth, checking with three ultrasound machines, so cancelled the scheduled operation.

“My class at college laid hands on me and prayed for me,” she explained to her doctor. “I believe God healed me, and that’s why you can’t find the growth any more.”

“I don’t know if God healed you,” he responded. “But I do know that you don’t need an operation.”

## **Ministry and Mission**

My cross-cultural mission experience in PNG opened the way for me to study in the School of World Mission (now School of Intercultural Studies) at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Los Angeles.

I began bending their rules immediately! My supervisors took my requests for more external study to various committee meetings for unusual approval. No other student had done that much external study at Fuller. I managed to complete their masters and doctoral programs while working full time, on full pay, much to my family’s benefit, at least

financially.

I especially enjoyed John Wimber's Signs and Wonders and Church Growth (MC510) subject, studied internally. It was a controversial subject at Fuller, and its name kept changing to titles such as The Miraculous and Church Growth, or Healing and Miracles. John, a visiting professor with his team of Vineyard bright sparks, came each Monday night for 12 weeks. He involved other professors such as Peter Wagner and Charles Kraft. Following the required hours of teaching input we had a voluntary hour of ministry application or laboratory practice! I loved it. Everyone stayed for these practical times of praying for people each week, learning to pray in faith and with authority, led by the Spirit.

I prepared distance courses at Alcorn College using seminar cassettes (common in the seventies and eighties). That work continued at Trinity College, adapted to degree subjects. It continued further at Christian Heritage College, now using on-line resources. My subjects there included Revival History, Signs and Wonders, and the Charismatic Movement.

## **Publications**

Study and teaching require writing. A lot of writing. Thank God for computers! I used to pound out most of my writing on my portable typewriter, through theological college, through mission teaching in PNG, through study with the University of Queensland and also for Fuller Seminary. I typed my doctoral dissertation of nearly 300 pages a total of three times! How much quicker, easier and more versatile are computers!

Gradually I published some of my work. At first we used stencils to duplicate everything, and later progressed to photocopied materials. Then, usually with a bit more work, some of it was published.

I saw a need for an Australian national renewal journal so began editing the *Renewal Journal* in the nineties. We published it twice a year for a decade. I compiled and edited 20 issues, and it found its way into university and college libraries internationally as well as into hundreds of homes. It gained enough visibility to be mentioned in *The International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (2002, p. 513). Now it is available on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) along with various other articles.

Here is a summary of those issues, published from 1993. 1: Revival, 2: Church Growth, 3: Community, 4: Healing, 5: Signs and Wonders, 6: Worship, 7: Blessing, 8: Awakening, 9: Mission, 10: Evangelism, 11: Discipleship, 12: Harvest, 13: Ministry, 14: Anointing, 15: Wineskins, 16: Vision, 17: Unity, 18: Servant Leadership, 19: Church, 20: Life.

The *Renewal Journal* commented on renewal and revival developments in Toronto, London, Sunderland and Pensacola, as well as many revival movements globally and in Australia, especially among aboriginal tribes. I contributed some articles reflecting my own journey. These included:

1993, # 1: Revival, "Revival Fire."

1993, # 2: Church Growth, "Astounding Church Growth."

1995, # 6: Worship, "Revival Worship."

1996, # 7: Blessing, "Renewal Ministry."

1999, #13: Ministry, "Spirit Impacts in Revival."

1999, #14: Anointing, "Revivals into 2000."

2000, #15: Wineskins, "New Wineskins to Develop Ministry."

2000, #16: Vision, "Vision for Ministry."

2002, #20: Life, “Community Transformation.”

Gradually I published some books, also reflecting my journey. Working within the Uniting Church helped me explore renewal across many denominations, and also publish various renewal resources. Most of those books provided study resources for small groups and renewal conferences or meetings.

So here’s a quick summary:

*Charisma* (ed.), 1971, articles from most denominations.

*The Jesus Revolution* (ed.), 1972, articles about the Jesus People.

*Living in the Spirit*, 1987, group studies on the Holy Spirit.

*The Leader’s Goldmine*, 1989, group studies and activities.

*Kingdom Life in Matthew*, 1992, Common Lectionary studies, Year A.

*Kingdom Life in Mark*, 1990, Common Lectionary studies, Year B.

*Kingdom Life in Luke*, 1991, Common Lectionary studies, Year C.

*Church on Fire* (ed.), 1991, articles from ministers.

*Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit*, 1992, group studies.

*Anointed for Revival* (ed.), 1995, articles about revival leaders.

*Fire Fell*, 1996, a summary history of revivals.

*Flashpoints of Revival*, 1998, an expanded summary history.

*Flashpoints of Revival*, 2003, Korean, translated by. Stephen Lim.

*Revivals Awaken Generations*, 2007, Korean, translated by David Kim

*Flashpoints of Revival*, 2009, second edition, updated.

*Living in the Spirit*, 2009, second edition, revised.

*Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*, 2009, autobiography.

*Light on the Mountains: Pioneer Mission in Papua New Guinea*, 2009, compiled research.

*South Pacific Revivals*, 2010, additional research.

*The Body of Christ: Parts 1 and 2*, 2009, thesis research.

*Revival Fires*, 2011, published by Randy Clark.

*Your Spiritual Gifts*, 2011, to serve in love

*Discovering Aslan*, 2016, series on The Chronicles of Narnia

*The Queen’s Christmas Message*, 2018, excerpts from annual broadcasts

Those publications document my research into renewal and revival. There are many more, listed with Blogs on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com).

After Meg died and I retired from full time teaching in 2002, I began exploring revival movements more fully ‘on the field’ mainly in the South Pacific but also in such places as Africa, Nepal, and China.

“Those who can, do. Those who can’t, teach,” some say (adapted from George Bernard Shaw). I combined the doing with the teaching. I’m grateful for the opportunities I’ve had to minister in mission to many pastors and leaders, encouraging them to do what Jesus wants. That involved me in renewal ministries and seeing glimpses of revival.

## Chapter 7

### Renewal: begin with doh, rey, me



### *Renewal ministries*

“When you sing, you begin with doh, rey, me (do re me),” sang Maria. The Von Trapp family singers sang together in Austria, America and internationally on tour. Maria, filled with the Spirit, sang new songs glorifying the Lord she loved. So have millions of others.

The sound of music in renewal is one obvious expression of renewal. Glorious hymns from former revivals now give way to current renewal and revival songs. New wineskins carry the new wine.

Renewal music is not renewal, but springs from it and expresses it, just as love songs are not love, but spring from love and express love. God’s great love can flood us with new love for him. God’s powerful Spirit can transform us in many ways including how we worship as well as how we live.

We pray differently. Previously, prayers seemed more like leaving a telephone message on a distant friend's answering machine rather than an intimate phone conversation with a close friend. Prayers for and with other people also changed, and became more expectant, more specific, more bold, including laying hands on people to meet needs.

## **Supernaturally natural**

Renewal springs from God pouring out his Spirit on us, personally and in churches. We are renewed, changed. Jesus changed also, not in nature, but in ministry. The power of the Holy Spirit radically changed Jesus’ life at about age 30. Always obedient, Jesus lived naturally as a man, yet his ministry became supernaturally natural after the Spirit of God anointed him. He was filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit (see Luke 4:1, 18).

Jesus said that we can live as he did, empowered by the Spirit as he was. Somehow I missed that. It’s probably because I knew from boyhood that Jesus was God’s Son, the Messiah. I would expect God’s Son to do creative miracles - turn water into wine, feed multitudes, still the storm, walk on water. God’s Son would heal the sick and cast out demons. As God’s Son, Jesus had divine power, obviously.

I missed the bit that says his divine power is just what he left behind. He emptied himself of it. Although being God’s Son, he became fully human – not Superbaby, nor Superboy, nor Superman. Fully man. His title for himself was the Son of Man, the Messianic title for the Anointed One who came among us fully human.

He emptied himself of his divine rights and powers so that he would indeed be fully human. He remained fully divine, but relinquished those divine powers (see Philippians 2:7).

So how did he do what he did? Jesus explained it clearly. Back home in Nazareth after the Spirit of God came upon him at his baptism, he explained it from Isaiah (see Luke 4:18-19):

*The Spirit of the LORD is upon me,  
Because he has anointed me  
To preach the gospel to the poor;  
He has sent me to heal the broken hearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.*

Then, anointed by God’s Spirit, he healed the sick, threw out evil spirits, and commanded nature. He said we would do the same things he did, and even greater things, and that we



would do them the same way he did, by the power of his Spirit in us. He was going back to his Father who would send his Spirit upon us too.

“Very truly I tell you,” said Jesus, “all who have faith in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father” (John 14:12). Faith for life in the Spirit is just like faith for salvation – you ask, and believe!

I feel like I’m in Grade 1 in that! But you’ve got to start somewhere. The beginning for me is still Jesus, crucified and risen, conquering in death and reigning in life. Certainly, Jesus did it all without sin. We don’t. But again the cross is the answer to our dilemma. Jesus’ blood cleanses us from all our sin as we confess and repent.

Slowly I began to put the two together, the power of Jesus’ death and resurrection both for salvation and for living in the power of his Spirit. That includes sanctification, being made holy and set apart for God. And it includes much more. This good news was revolutionary for me, not just theory nor theology, but bread and butter – the basic diet for living in the power of the Spirit. It’s all based on the power of the cross and Jesus’ ultimate victory over everything.

The risen Lord told his followers to wait in Jerusalem where, in a few days, they would be baptised in the Holy Spirit.

“This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; for John baptised in water, but you will be baptised in the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1:4-5). They were.

Every example of people filled and empowered with the Spirit in the New Testament tells how it happened to believers *after* they believed (Luke 3:16-23; Acts 1-2, 8-11, 19).

- ❖ The Spirit of God anointed Jesus when he was about 30.
- ❖ The followers of Jesus were filled with the Spirit at Pentecost.
- ❖ Peter instructed new believers to be baptised and they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The Spirit came upon the believers in Samaria when Peter and John laid hands on them.
- ❖ Saul of Tarsus was healed and filled with the Spirit when Ananias prayed for him three days after his conversion on the Damascus road.
- ❖ The Spirit fell on God-fearing Gentile believers in Cornelius’ home in Caesarea as Peter preached.
- ❖ Believers in Ephesus were filled with the Spirit when Paul laid hands on them prayed for them.

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you,” said Jesus in his final promise (Acts 1:8). It still happens. We need that empowering.

Jesus needed it for his ministry. So did Paul. So do we.

Notice how after his conversion, Paul was filled with the Spirit and healed, then led and empowered by the Spirit (see Acts 9:17-22; 13:2; 16:6-7). Increasingly that is happening now also.

I discovered this infilling or empowering in a Baptist manse in Hobart, Tasmania, on deputation for the mission. That home provided a safe setting, but I also found it surprising.

Meg and I travelled to Tasmania where I spoke at an Easter camp in 1968. Then we visited my friends Doug and Grace Griffiths in Hobart. I met Doug at theological college and they were part of the ministry team in Hobart. Grace told us how she had been healed from severe arthritis, delivered from a critical spirit, filled with the Spirit and she spoke in tongues when people prayed for her in their previous church manse, their home. I found it a powerful testimony.

“Well, if there’s more, I want more,” I said in my heart. There’s always more!

That night I sat cross-legged on their lounge room floor, PNG style. The carpet felt luxurious compared to my bamboo floor in New Guinea. So in the casual comfort of that lounge room I found myself flooded with the Holy Spirit when they prayed for me. An amazing surge of divine love flooded every part of me. I think I hoped for a sudden gift of an Enga dialect to use fluently in PNG, but no such luck! I still had to work on those Enga dialects when I returned to start the central Bible School, and teach village pastors and leaders. Yet, I sensed it was all related, a filling, a flooding, an empowering for mission.

During our next furlough I returned for a month in Tasmania to speak at churches, including in Hobart, so again visited Doug and Grace who then lived in a renewal community. There I discovered more, once more. One night, after we shared our experiences, including our strengths and weaknesses, Doug and I prayed together and for each other. As Doug placed his hand on my head to pray for me, I felt power like liquid electricity run down my neck from my head into my back. I didn't understand it, but was curiously content and expectant.

The next day I discovered my skin had become well oiled, not dry, and some weeks later I realised that a skin fungal disease I caught in PNG had disappeared. Previously I could get rid of the fungus with pills or cream, but in hot weather it would annoyingly return. Never again! After that prayer it stopped. We did not pray for healing, nor was I aware that healing had happened. Healing through prayer is often surprising, and much cheaper than using pills and cream. Less bother too.

"Confess your faults to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed," practical James reminds us, adding, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

We like the last half of that verse, not the first! Many times I had preached on the last part of that verse, but never on the first part. I discovered that they belong together, literally. Our Catholic friends leave us for dead on that one! They're used to confessing sins to someone. We are a kingdom of priests, and can certainly pray for one another and bless one another. Alas, we often seem too proud to do that!

I returned to Sydney and shared my adventures with Meg as we sat together in bed. Our daughter slept peacefully in her cot and Meg lay 'great with child' just before our son Jonathan's birth.

Meg asked me to pray for her to be filled with the Spirit. Maybe that was the right timing for us. It enveloped us in the warmth of divine love as we sat together in bed and I prayed for my wife with my arm around her. We felt the warmth of divine love, far greater than our human love. Next morning Meg commented how everything was sharper, cleaner, and brighter.

Soon after Jonathan's birth we moved to Brisbane in 1971 where I worked with the Methodist church. There we encountered the wave of renewal that touched thousands of churches around the world in the seventies.

Gifts of the Spirit seemed to be activated more fully in our lives. I had been aware of the Lord's guiding or the Spirit's leading and help most of my life. Now I found his gifts strengthened and sharpened. More gifts emerged, including the controversial ones summarised in 1 Corinthians 12:6-8. As I responded or tuned in to the Lord and his Spirit, more happened. It had been like that all my life, but now it seemed stronger and more specific.

Churches in which we served the Lord believed in and encouraged the use of spiritual

gifts. That's one reason we became involved with those churches. They provided a committed community in which gifts could be used and developed. These giftings and ministries gradually strengthened in our lives in the context of community, both in our church life, including renewal teams visiting many churches, and in our home life. Linked with that wider community, we lived out those biblical instructions in our home and family communal life style. Led by the Spirit, we lived in community as well as in helping to develop supportive communities in churches through home groups and community houses.

## **Renewal in Christian Education**

I worked in the progressive Department of Christian Education (DCE) in the Methodist Church from 1971. Our offices in Wesley House adjoined the majestic gothic cathedral of Wesley Central Mission. I rode the ferry across the Brisbane River from our home attached to the then Methodist Training College and Bible School at Kangaroo Point.

Like all DCE staff, I conducted training courses for Sunday School teachers, youth group leaders, and elders, as well as leading children's and youth camps in the school holidays. Also I explored renewal developments then spreading through the churches, often disturbing them. We wanted to help people understand renewal, not run away from it.

Those early days of renewal sweeping Australian churches created change, and confusion. My job involved helping people understand and adapt to those changes. Meg and I often visited the rapidly growing Windsor Full Gospel Church in Brisbane where Trevor Chandler and Clark Taylor led hundreds of people in dynamic worship, preaching and prayer ministry. Visitors of all denominations came to see and be touched by God. The Christian Life Centres and Christian Outreach Centres later grew out of their ministries.

I began praying quietly in tongues in those days, after praying with a friend, confessing blockages to yielding to the Spirit. No Papua New Guinea dialect for me! Just an edifying sense of worship and wonder.

My work expanded into renewal ministries across all denominations. It included teaching on renewal in leadership seminars, and I taught renewal electives in conventions. Youth leaders often welcomed these innovations, as youth tend to do! I began leading renewal camps or conferences, roping in ministers from many denominations to speak, including Pentecostals. That was new for the Methodists, although I enjoyed reminding them of their fiery beginnings in the Wesley revivals of the eighteenth century evangelical awakening in England.

I duplicated and published renewal resource materials including editing two books *The Jesus Revolution* and *Charisma*. These carried articles and testimonies about God pouring out his Spirit in the early seventies.

Spiritual gifts, both personal and communal, grabbed our attention. We explored how the best use of spiritual gifts is proper use, not misuse nor disuse. I began teaching and publishing about various streams of God's gifting, including these three:

1. Personal callings and gifting are given by the grace of God our Father. Often seen in our personalities and preferences, these motivating gifts include prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading, and showing mercy in compassion (Romans 12:6-8). They blossom in us as we offer ourselves to God, not being conformed to this world but being transformed by the *renewing* of our minds (Romans 12:1-2).

2. Churches began to develop team leadership including the gifts of apostles, prophets,

evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11). These gifts from Christ, the head of his church, are the people – not just their ministries. They may be full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid. Most are unpaid, as with Jesus and the apostles. Think, for example, of the huge army of voluntary home group leaders giving pastoral care to millions of people, and reaching out to others in evangelism.

3. Manifestations of the Spirit in our lives are given to each of us for the common good. They include a word or revelation of wisdom, a word or revelation of prophecy, faith, various gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy or speaking from God, discerning spirits, various kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Notice how our Western theologies often have problems with many of those spiritual gifts! But for Jesus they were *supernaturally natural*.

Paul even ranks God's gifts in order of ministry importance in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guiding or administering, and of different kinds of tongues (1 Corinthians 12: 28). We often mix up the order and emphasise the least the most!

I love the way Paul emphasises the variety and necessity of all God's gifts in a Trinitarian summary (1 Corinthians 12:4-5):

- ❖ There are varieties of gifts (*charismaton*, charismata), but the same Spirit distributes them.
- ❖ There are varieties of services (*diakonion*, diaconate), but the same Lord directs them.
- ❖ There are varieties of activities (*energon*, energy) but the same God disperses them.

Then Paul soars into the hymn of love in 1 Corinthians 13, beginning with the reminder that all those gifts without love amount to nothing.

"Make love your aim," he urges, "and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, especially speaking a word from God."

## **Wesley Central Mission, Brisbane**

Perhaps rushing in where angels fear to tread, I offered to lead weekly ecumenical renewal meetings in the cathedral of Methodism. The former Wesley Central Mission (now Albert Street Uniting Church) stands in gothic splendour with its majestic spire in the heart of Brisbane city, near the City Hall. Dwarfed by surrounding sky scrapers, it still points skyward to higher realms.

Why there? I still don't know if I had divine guidance, or diving giddiness. We could have held the meetings anywhere, but I dived in to holding them there in the heart of the city and the heart of the church. It made a bold and significant declaration back in 1972.

The ages of those attending varied from our youngest daughter sleeping in her basket (with our other two at home in Auntie Daphne's care) to many grey haired supporters. The meetings attracted committed youth and adult leaders from many different churches.

We met on Tuesday nights. The Rev George Nash, then minister of the church, preached at our first weekly renewal meeting. He told about a minister who stood at the open casket of a deceased friend.

"He looks alive, doesn't he? He looks like he is sleeping," observed his minister friend.

"The church can be like that," George Nash added. "We can look like we are alive. But we may be just sleeping, or worse, we may be dead. We need reviving."

He gave us his blessing, especially as our ecumenical meetings included speakers from all denominations. I found charismatic ministers and Pentecostal pastors from near and far to come and speak each week.

What variety! Vigorous Pentecostal pastors, gentle Catholic priests, and enthusiastic denominational ministers all told of the mighty works of God in their own lives and in their churches. They reported on lives transformed, people healed or set free, and natural, spontaneous evangelism. Whenever itinerant healing evangelists and renewal leaders visited Brisbane, such as Revs John Blacker and Dan Armstrong, I gladly involved them.

I smiled one night while leading worship when a drunken man from the nearby park, filled with alcoholic spirits, wandered in attracted by our singing. He happily staggered his way to the front of the church to dance with our guest speaker, a Catholic priest. Some of our young fellows gently guided him out to the church steps and sat with him for the rest of the meeting, talking about Jesus.

No one available could play the awesome pipe organ there, so Tom and Helen Spencer faithfully loaded their electronic organ onto a friend's utility and brought it in each week, where Helen played whatever I threw at her. We did not want to stick to a pre-arranged list of songs, but wanted to be led by the Spirit, as much as we could be with all our human and cultural limitations.

My friend David Chisholm, a Presbyterian, worked in the Methodist DCE staff with me. One grand night David played 'Amazing Grace' on his bagpipes, filling the huge church with its stirring strains. David chose to play from up in the back balcony, unseen by the congregation below. Not quite the last trumpet sounding, but close! His friend Alison Reid attended regularly and became a wonderful family friend also.

Those were the days of Scripture in Song, compiled by David and Dale Garrett in New Zealand. They published the first of their three Scripture in Song books in 1971. Their fresh collection gathered renewal songs from around the world. We used their overhead transparencies, with occasional use of great hymns from the Methodist hymn book. Many songs were specific scriptures, KJV of course! Some of the language sounds strange and exclusive nearly 40 years later. We sang these and others:

*Many Psalms:*

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord (37:23)

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord (100)

This is the day, this is the day, that the Lord hath made (118:24)

O give thanks to the Lord for he is good (136:1)

Praise ye the Lord (Psalm 150 in full)

*Solomon's Song (2:4, 16):*

My beloved is mine and I am his ...

He brought me to his banqueting table ...

And his banner over me is love.

*From the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:33; 4:4; 7:7):*

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God ...

Man shall not live by bread alone ...

Ask and it shall be given unto you ...

*Practical Christian living:*

A new commandment I give unto you (John 13:34)

It's no longer I that liveth (Galatians 2:20)

Not by might, nor by power (Zechariah 4:6)

Rejoice in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4)

*Songs of devotion:*

Be still and know that I am God (Pslam 46:10)  
I am the Lord that healeth thee (Exodus 15:36)  
In thee O Lord do I put my trust (Psalm 31:1; 71:1)

*Great expressions of worship:*

For thou art great and doest wondrous things (Psalm 86:10-12)  
For unto us a child is born (Isaiah 9:6)  
He is Lord (Philippians 2:11)  
Thou art worthy (Revelation 4:11)  
Hallelujah (Revelation 19:6)

We usually concluded with Jude's benediction (verses 24-25): "Now unto him who is able to keep, able to keep you from falling and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever, Amen."

Most of the congregation came from denominational churches, so we included some of the great worship and revival hymns including these by Charles Wesley:

Christ the Lord is risen today  
O for a thousand tongues to sing  
And can it be that I should gain

Sometimes our worship flowed naturally into spontaneous harmonies. I vividly remember one time when the free, harmonious singing led to a beautiful solo, in tongues. Knowing Paul's instruction that messages in tongues need an interpretation, I looked forward to the sung interpretation. The soloist sang beautifully, like an opera love song, and then sat down. No interpretation. Then I hoped someone else would have an inspired interruption, preferably an interpretation!

Suddenly I had an interpretation. Had I been bold enough I could have sung it, but I chickened out. So I found myself speaking free verse, instead of singing it, while also 'seeing' an amazing garden with its soft path winding among enormous flowering bushes, vivid with colour. The song expressed the Lord's love for us and his original intention to walk with us in intimate perfection – perfection in relationship was well as in creation. He is restoring that intimacy by his Spirit as he renews us all, and even renews creation where whole communities repent.

## **Toowoomba**

My Christian Education work took me to the garden city of Toowoomba, in the scenic ranges west of Brisbane, for four years from 1973 to 1976. I returned to Wesley Central Mission in Brisbane to lead the renewal meetings on Tuesday nights for many months, but as work increased in my new location we finished the Wesley meetings. By then, other churches were establishing week night renewal meetings or home groups. Pentecostal churches also grew rapidly.

I worked half time as the inaugural director of Life Line in Toowoomba and half time in Christian Education, including leading another weekly renewal meeting. This time we met in Raff Street Methodist Church hall in Toowoomba, and once more the congregation came from many denominations. Again people helped with music, especially Keith and Myrtle Davies, using their keyboard and guitar along with others.

Ian Shelton actively helped with these meetings often leading or speaking. Eventually

Ian and his wife Betty established Toowoomba City Church, a thriving independent church with its school and city-wide ministries, expanding into national and international ministries. They worked hard to encourage combined churches activities in the city as well as supporting community transformation developments overseas and in Australia.

Some of our initial Life Line telephone counsellors came from churches or groups also involved in renewal. We explored the lively interaction of personal and community care, helping people in need and growing personally ourselves. Jesus' ministry helped people in the power of the Spirit. We wanted to do likewise.

Meg and I invited anyone interested to a weekly group in our home. That became a dynamic leaders group of highly committed friends, active in their various churches. We explored Spirit-led personal and communal growth and service.

Many of that group became effective lay pastors and preachers as well as leaders in various churches. These included our friends of 30 years, Bob and Ruth Bramley, Jean Sizer, Pauline Antrobus, and Brian and Jenny Henman. They all helped people in many ways including Life Line counselling, home group leadership and caring for people in need. Later, nursing sister Jean and bee keeper Brian became lay pastors in many Uniting Church country parishes and engineer Bob served as Administrator at Gateway Baptist.

My publications *The Leader's Goldmine* and similar study books, such as *Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit*, and *Living in the Spirit* grew out of those group activities. We opened our hearts to one another and to God – risky but rewarding. We discussed everything to do with our life in Christ and our growth in his Spirit.

I remember a whole evening discussing fasting. We discovered everyone had fasted, with enormous variety in the lengths and styles, fasting from food, TV or with other forms of self-denial. I guess it was Lent then! Some followed an occasional Wesleyan fast, two days a week till evening, which Wesley required from all his leaders. Others fasted for the rest of the day after a good breakfast. Some fasted at lunch times.

I fasted occasionally, as led. That seemed to happen on days when I led a night meeting, such as the weekly renewal service. Then, after the meeting, I would come home and eat heartily. However, I had a longer fast in our final year there, following Christmas. My diary for January had no entries, typical for the holiday season. We had been away on holiday in December, so I found myself with a month to fast and pray. Sounded biblical!

Being a zealous, radical leader I planned on a real he-man fast of only water. Meg, practical as ever, insisted I check with our Christian doctor, about the effects of such fasting. At first he had no answer – no one had ever asked him about that. After consulting his books he phoned to say it would be fine for a month or so, so long as I did not engage in heavy physical work. An excuse to dodge manual jobs around the house!

To my surprise, after a short while cleansing my system with water, I was strongly led to beef up the intake to orange juice and then skimmed milk. I discovered Toowoomba had a skimmed milk factory, so I bought bags of the powder. That solved the problem of working out how to get skimmed milk from our daily supply of homogenised milk! Our kitchen became coated with the misty powder each time I mixed up a new batch. My young children did not realise I was fasting, because I always drank with them at meal times, progressing from water to the harder stuff.

"When will you eat?" asked my eldest daughter once.

"Later," I replied truthfully, not knowing how much later! She was happy, and I was wondering, *when?* I didn't really know. I did know that I felt energised, and discovered later

from health professionals that such a fast is called a cleansing fast. I guess I needed cleansing physically as well as spiritually. I remember that hearing from God seemed easier and clearer then.

Those 40 days concluded in a unique way at a Christian Education staff gathering at Alcorn College in Brisbane. We had an unusual meal. After the main course we shared bread together in communion. After dessert we drank wine in communion. Being a Methodist college it was the 'non-al' variety. Each time, with the bread and wine, we paused for appropriate prayer. We finished with tea or coffee. Splendid! Perhaps I never enjoyed a meal as much as that one. I also discovered that my abundant orange juice and skimmed milk diet freed me completely from any constipation!

Then in 1977 I began teaching at Alcorn College, formerly the Methodist Training College and Bible School. So we moved back to Brisbane, and also started living in community in Corinda.

## **Wesley Church, Kangaroo Point**

Wesley Church at Kangaroo Point is obviously Methodist, and obviously Australian! This beautiful old brick church (though much smaller than Wesley Central Mission) hosted another renewal congregation from 1977.

"Why am I doing this?" I wondered, as we started charismatic renewal meetings there on Sunday nights in the cold, mid-year winter. We began with a small handful of keen people. We had no music. None of us could even play a guitar!

Rev Wal Gregory supervised the congregation there, along with his work as Director of Social Welfare for Queensland Methodists, caring for the disabled and prisoners. I taught at Alcorn College nearby. Rev Col Warren, principal at the college, joined in. We three musketeers met for prayer each week and shared together in leading and speaking at the charismatic service we started in the church on Sunday nights, all for one, and one for all.

The One above all led us all where we had never been led before, in that shared Spirit-led leadership. We asked God for musicians. Then young people who were studying music at the Conservatorium of Music in Brisbane and in the University of Queensland began coming, and brought their friends. Bill Clarke played the piano, and also the pipe organ for the traditional morning service. Others accompanied him around the piano on Sunday nights. Their music blended into a beautiful band, flowing together in harmony as the Spirit led them. Of course, that required hours together during the week in prayer and jam sessions where they learned to create powerful harmonies.

We used our ever growing collection of overhead transparencies arranged alphabetically for ready access. Our worship singing for over an hour included hymns and choruses, especially those that honoured the Lord, such as:

Majesty, worship his majesty.

He is exalted.

Exalt the Lord our God.

All hail King Jesus.

Reign King Jesus, reign.

There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Songs and choruses flowed freely into one another and often into spontaneous free



singing including ‘singing in the Spirit’ in harmonies, unknown tongues and known languages. That spontaneity often led us into sung or spoken messages of encouragement in prophecies or sometimes in tongues and interpretation. We encouraged people to ‘have a go’ and many did, learning as we went along.

Wal, Col and I shared the leading and preaching, each in our own style. We probably let the roster dictate too much, but in our weekly prayer meeting we could also be led or prompted about who would do what. At that time Col and I both pursued doctoral studies in renewal as well as applying that in our teaching and preaching.

After the message, during closing worship, we prayed with anyone who wanted prayer – for anything. Most coming for prayer wanted more of God, more of Jesus, and more of his Spirit meeting needs, healing, setting free and anointing for service. With so many university students attending, the numbers seeking prayer swelled every June and November at exam times! We encouraged students to study and not depend too much on ‘words of knowledge’ in exams – and prayed for clarity and peace.

Friends brought friends. Interested students from Alcorn College joined us, some of them from Pacific nations. That added to our variety of known tongues as well. We needed to disciple those interested, and to grow together in life in the Spirit.

So I began a Friday night renewal prayer group at the college. We included informal communion or a ‘love feast’ every week. Diane Reynoldson (later Smeal), who also lived with us in our extended family, made a marvellous loaf of bread in our kitchen each week and others brought bottles of sparkling grape juice. Many of us fasted on those Fridays, so we really appreciated large chunks of fresh bread and full glasses of grape juice or non-al wine.

We combined those times of communion with worship accompanied by a guitar. We prayed for one another, and we shared many ‘words’ or impressions including descriptive pictures or parables as we sat around together on the carpeted floor.

Tom Markotanyos, then a student at the college (later a pastor, married to Glenys, a student he met there), often saw prophetic pictures such as these:

- ❖ As we pass through the cross our wheelbarrow of old junk is transformed into a barrow full of sparkling gems.
- ❖ Too often we camp around the signposts (such as renewal or revival) rather than following them.
- ❖ Jesus stands in an elevator with us, but as it goes deeper (or higher) people get out at each level, but Jesus says, “Will no one go all the way with me?”
- ❖ The living water flows into many different kinds of cups, so don’t argue over the cups, just drink.
- ❖ Corked bottles filled with blessing need more than one person to open them, as in unity, and then the blessings can flow.
- ❖ Each of us stands on a platform supported by many pillars, many of them crumbling or collapsing or being knocked down, till eventually there is only the central one remaining, the Lord himself.

Others had similar ‘words’ to encourage or challenge us. Paul Varendorf, a landscape gardener living in our community, saw us as a child helping the father in the garden, but actually messing it up. The father did not mind, as he desired and enjoyed the time together, and he can bless the mess. He makes something good out of it all as we ‘help’ him.

The core prayer group grew, and became a leaders’ discipleship group. Gradually people

in that group began to establish other home groups. Some of those groups grew out of community houses which developed to support and nurture youth, especially students.

Many young people appreciated the opportunity to live in a Christian community. The communities linked to the church sought our supervision. So I met with the leaders of the community houses and the prayer groups for breakfast one morning each week in Arthur and Cathy Hartwig's home. Those leaders could raise any concerns, and we prayed for many needs. Doug McDonald established one of the first community houses linked to the church. He helped lead the initial core group, and had a strong voluntary pastoral role among the community houses and prayer groups, later shared with his wife Eileen. Doug and his supportive friend John Patton also became elders in the church.

We provided basic guidelines for people living in a community house. They would meet together as a community at least one night each week to share and pray. They would all be part of the home group that met in that house on another night each week, to which other friends would come to worship, share and pray. They would worship with us at the church on Sunday nights, and some came to the more traditional service in the morning as well. They would stay out of the bedrooms of the opposite sex. Married couples, usually household leaders, had their privacy in their own bedroom.

It worked well. We saw specific prayers answered, often. People without work found work suitable to their abilities. Many personal and family needs were met. Evangelism became a natural sharing of lifestyle. One of our young men picked up a drunken, angry hitch hiker and took him to a community house prayer group. That visitor was amazed to find young people enjoying sitting around on the floor singing and talking naturally to one another and to God. He asked to stay there for a while, livening up the household with his colourful language, and soon became a Christian.

Some of those young people became leaders in the growing Sunday School at the church, very creatively. Our family's primary school aged children enjoyed it, sometimes exploring the surrounding area on trek with 'Moses' or with 'Jesus' – finding manna and quail or Zacchaeus up in a tree.

Being human, we had problems and disappointments. Sometimes people made unwise decisions, or strayed. Generally, however, the believers supported one another through their trials and struggles. We strove for an accepting, non-judgemental fellowship, sometimes failing but often fulfilling that goal.

Our team from the church also led many ecumenical or combined churches meetings, both at Wesley Church and also in locations such as Mayne Hall at the University of Queensland.

That congregation provided a wonderful team for the many renewal and family camps I led as part of my Christian Education work. The regular Easter youth camps at Cunningham's Gap in the mountains developed over many years into a powerful renewal camp for all ages. Some of our young people became involved in missions such as with Youth with a Mission (YWAM). That included Neil Ennis (later the helpful voluntary technician for [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)), Daryl Krause (later Missions Director with YWAM in Norway), Margaret Young a doctor in Cambodia and Sue Higgins teaching in China.

My work at Alcorn College blended well with Wesley Church, with our community houses, and with ecumenical involvement. I had great freedom to explore and initiate classes on renewal and revival at college, especially as I had been applying that in ministry across many denominations.

During the late seventies I met monthly for prayer with Bishop Ralph Wicks, then appointed to St John's Anglican Cathedral, and Father Vincent Hobbs, leader of the Catholic charismatic meetings at the Bardon parish church. Those small prayer meetings in the bishop's office led to us holding ecumenical renewal meetings in the Anglican and Catholic cathedrals in Brisbane, as well as Albert Street Uniting Church, formerly Wesley Central Mission where I had led renewal services in the early seventies.

Juan Carlos Ortiz, radical Pentecostal pastor from Argentina, spoke at our first ecumenical renewal service in the vast St John's cathedral. He was visiting Brisbane, so I suggested he speak. What a day! We worshipped with that huge organ swelling for great hymns and choruses. Teresa Bonasia from Bardon Catholics sang opera style with her anointed solos, including the Lord's Prayer. Johnny Ortiz spoke – on baptism, of all things! Yes, water baptism. He lifted the topic way beyond how much water, what method, and what age, to the powerful reality of being baptised into Christ, part of his body, living in resurrection life.

Bishop Ralph Wicks wrote about those quarterly services in his autobiography, *One Rung from the Top*. His article, reproduced from his book in *Renewal Journal* No. 2 ([www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)), reports:

Ecumenical Renewal services at St John's Cathedral drew packed houses. The Rev. Geoff Waugh, from a Baptist-Uniting Church background, and a Roman Catholic priest, Father Vincent Hobbs, were co-convenors of these rallies, some of which were also held at St Stephen's Roman Catholic Cathedral and the Albert Street Uniting Church. These were exciting times as lives were changed, Holy Spirit power was in evidence and healings took place. A small number of diocesan priests were blessed and their ministries enriched.

However, it was not all plain sailing. Some clergy regarded me as a "weirdo" but one thing they could not deny: The proclamation of Jesus and God's gifts of salvation by grace through faith became key features of my preaching. I was reminded by Scripture that the work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus.

The pipe organs in those majestic churches accompanied the moving worship of the 'packed houses' with wonderful hymns including 'How Great Thou Art' and 'Holy, Holy, Holy' and well known worship choruses such as 'Majesty' and 'He is Lord'. Leading churchmen preached and prayer teams from the churches prayed with hundreds at the end of each service. I felt that God loved to bless us as we honoured and worshipped him together. Those gatherings ceased after Bishop Ralph retired to Caloundra. Since then others have continued that vision and gathered combined churches together in Brisbane for prayer and worship.

Eventually Wesley Church grew in numbers and income, sufficient to call full time ministers, and Wal, Col and I became involved in other churches or ministries.

It seems to me that there are seasons in the Spirit, and I've been blessed to be involved in many of those seasons in different settings. But in them all we pray – personally and together. We use spiritual gifts – in prayer with one another and in corporate worship. We believe in healing and deliverance, and seek to respond to our sovereign Lord as he leads us, anoints us, and draws people to himself.

## Gateway Baptist Church

At that time from 1984, the Holland Park Baptist Church in Brisbane invited Brian and Moira Andrew to lead the church. They had been on the pastoral team at Spreydon Baptist Church in New Zealand, a leading charismatic church there. Working with Jim Miller, the voluntary full-time elder, and other leaders, Brian led the church in renewal and growth. Our family joined the church and appreciated its many ministries. Eventually it became Gateway Baptist Church.

In 1993 Gateway Church moved from the Holland Park suburban church and eight years of services in Mansfield High School hall to the Gateway Centre, Mackenzie, on 27 acres of natural parkland. Gateway's worship centre is the reconstructed Queensland pavilion from Brisbane's Expo '88, the year long celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement in Australia.

"We are middle-of-the-road charismatic, open to all the gifts of the Spirit," declared Brian. The church grew from a typical suburban congregation of 120 to over 1200 five years later. In the seven years to 1991 they recorded 1,000 conversions, 450 baptisms, and the weekly offerings increased from \$1,000 to over \$13,000.

By the nineties a pastoral team of eight took care of the steadily expanding ministries including 40 home and ministry groups, over a dozen full time voluntary interns in leadership training, congregational training courses for a variety of ministries, church planting in Queensland and inter-state, and overseas missionary support including church members working in the slums of Asia.

All ages attended all services but families with prams and story books abounded in the mornings, and young people bound in at night. Our own teenage children participated. Church services became a celebration, the mood relaxed, informal and expectant.

New to the weekly bulletin in those days was the tear-off section where you could indicate your interest, note needs, and record changes to names, addresses, phone numbers or a home group. That helped keep the computer's directory up to date each week and gave valuable information to the pastoral and visitation teams.

Another innovation back then was the greeting time during the service. Visitors were welcomed and invited to fill in a visitors' card or the tear-off slip. Everyone had a few minutes to greet people around them and perhaps get to know new people.

The services had a creative blend of the new and the old: choruses and hymns; announcements combined with comments by others; prayer and singing woven together as planned yet at times adapted or changed according to need; creative ministries in drama or dance; people worshipping freely without manipulation, some sitting, some standing. The pastoral team often prayed for people at the front, with new members, new home group pastors, couples to be married, dedication of babies, and commissioning people for special ministries or mission.

Preachers sometimes used overhead projected summaries or illustrations. I enjoyed preaching there in an atmosphere of faith and expectancy. Following the message anyone could respond for prayer at the front. Pastors and ministry teams prayed with anyone about any need: conversion, repentance, being filled with the Spirit, release of spiritual gifts, healings, quiet counselling, and sometimes referral to a pastor for follow-on care or ministry.

Occasionally the congregation would pray together in clusters. Some people might balk at that, but no one was compelled to pray aloud. Most jumped into this ministry time with

enthusiasm, expecting the Lord to touch people with his Spirit in healing, or release, or renewal. He did, often.

Office staff responded on Mondays with letters of welcome to newcomers, or giving follow-up teams the relevant phone numbers, such as for inviting people to attend a home group or to be interviewed for membership. If you wanted to talk further, your phone caller may suggest you get together sometime, perhaps for morning or afternoon tea. Many did.

People in home groups prayed together and discussed church business issues. So at the quarterly business meetings the elders' recommendations usually passed with a huge majority or unanimously. They had already been worked through in the groups. That gave more time for worship and prayer at business meetings. A young man was converted at one of the Annual General Meetings through the worship and testimonies!

Most discipling happened through home groups or interest groups. If you wanted to belong to the group you just kept coming. By the third week you would receive an information sheet to fill in for the computer records in the church office. Your name was recorded as part of that home group. That group then had responsibility for your pastoral care. Those would be the people in the church you came to know best and looked forward to seeing again on Sundays.

Home groups became the primary nurture, training and outreach groups in the church. Group members supported and challenged one another. Emerging cell group leaders learned on the job, some of them becoming home group leaders later on when the group multiplied.

They didn't all function perfectly. Few do! Abilities, gifting and time available for preparation and pastoral care vary considerably among group leaders. Area pastors, on the full-time pastoral team, supervised the groups in their area, especially supporting the group leaders.

Some people joined interest groups or age groups. One young adults' group organised relief for the poor. At Christmas, 1990, they helped distribute two tonnes of donated mutton and a few thousand dollars of other provisions to poor or unemployed Brisbane people. That care ministry continued and developed through the years.

Training courses, offered on many nights, covered topics such as Foundations (for new Christians or members), Personal Ministry Development, Bethel Bible studies, Home Group Leadership, Personal Counselling, Prayer Ministries, Creative Ministries, Urban Mission, Lifestyle Evangelism, Family Ministries, Missionary Interest, and Church Planting.

Specialist ministries included doctors and counsellors offering their skills with faith and prayer, prayer for inner healing or prayer counselling, half-way houses, and some experiments in community houses for discipleship or support of some people.

Gateway interns, involved in full time voluntary service, studied at the Gateway College. Many of these graduates moved into pioneering ministries among the poor overseas, in various cross-cultural missions, and in renewal churches in Australia.

Renewal in the church and in the nation saw hundreds of churches ministering effectively in these ways. It can happen in any denomination, in any church. Gateway church became a pioneer among Australian denominational charismatic churches. Our family participated in that local revival and I appreciated being a non-staff elder some of that time. We kept discovering ways to pray creatively together and respond to the Spirit together, in church services, in pre-service prayer meetings, in training sessions, in home groups and age and interest groups. Later, Tim Hannah and then Jason Elsmore led the church as senior pastors with strong pastoral team support. You can find current details on their web site ([www.gatewaybap.com](http://www.gatewaybap.com)).

## Renewal Fellowship

Our family still lived in our community house at Corinda, linked mostly with the Wesley Uniting Church at Kangaroo Point, and then later with Gateway Baptist. We started a home group there, catering mainly for older people. Many of them attended the Wesley night services, and some were part of Gateway Baptist or other churches.

Hilary Mackerras played the piano for us, and together we all learned to worship as led by the Spirit. We shared needs or concerns each week and prayed for one another, learning to trust God for appropriate words and his gentle, powerful touch in our lives.

Eventually Hilary's husband David joined her in coming each week although at that time he did not have a personal faith in Christ. He taught electrical engineering at the University of Queensland and invented a lightning counter to measure lightning strikes. So we had many lively discussions about faith and science in our group! Eventually David also believed in Christ and became a strong supporter of our home group and the Renewal Fellowship which grew out of it. Lightening struck! Eternal Light shone in the darkness.

During the mid-eighties Alcorn College, where I taught, merged into Trinity Theological College in the Uniting Church, so I found myself on the staff of the theological college. That was unique for this Baptist minister, with the gracious support of my Uniting Church friends. I taught practical ministry subjects and supervised courses in distance education.

At that time I felt led to start a Friday night renewal meeting at the theological college, a rather unusual development for a theological college. Our Friday night home group agreed, so we relocated from our home to begin the interdenominational Renewal Fellowship at the college, located first at St Lucia near the University of Queensland and then at the church headquarters at Auchenflower in Brisbane.

Numbers attending grew from a dozen to 30 in a few weeks. Later, in the early nineties that grew again to over 100 meeting on Friday and also Sunday nights. We did not form a church but remained a renewal group offering that kind of worship and ministry to people from many churches. Most came from denominational churches which did not offer renewal ministry.

We tried to be led by the Spirit in everything, *including the choice of worship songs with no pre-arranged or pre-rehearsed lists*. That's not easy. Our own habits and interests easily intrude. Worship became the main feature each night. That included about two hours of music and singing combined with Scripture reading, prophetic words or songs, and many times of praying with people for a range of different needs. During those prayer ministry times we usually continued with worship. The music or songs beautifully harmonised with the prayer ministry at the front, often prophetically, confirming what we were praying.

We used the well known renewal songs, but focused strongly on worship, honouring God, adoring Jesus, and celebrating the Spirit's power and the great glory of God. Our choruses blended seamlessly with great revival worship hymns such as:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty.

To God be the glory, great things he has done.

Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son.

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne.

O worship the King, all glorious above.

All hail the power of Jesus' name.

At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.

We loved to sing worship songs directly to the Lord, including:

Father/Jesus/Spirit we love you, we praise you, we adore you.

Father/Jesus/Spirit I adore you.

Father in heaven, how we love you.

Exalted, you will ever be exalted.

Jesus, name above all names.

I give you all the honour.

O Lord you're beautiful, your face is all I seek.

Reign King Jesus, reign over all the nations

Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me.

You are beautiful beyond description.

You are the King of Glory, you are the Prince of Peace.

We found ourselves naturally expressing third person songs about God in second person prayers to our Lord, such as these:

All hail King Jesus... throughout eternity I'll sing your praises.

You are Lord, you are risen from the dead and you are Lord.

You are exalted, our King you're exalted on high.

Your name is higher than any other.

Your name is as ointment poured forth.

Your name is wonderful ... Jesus my Lord.

We give thanks to you Lord for you are good.

Hosanna ... Lord we lift up your name.

Praise the name of Jesus, you're my rock.

Our pianist, Hilary, preferred to use published music books, so arranged them for quick access, and memorised the songs' location and number, as well as using some scores in transparent plastic folder books. The worship, however, would often lead into spontaneous, Spirit-led music. Both the published and spontaneous music flowed in anointed creativity. *At times unrehearsed, spontaneous music accompanied Bible readings, enriching and illustrating the spoken word.* I appreciated the times that other instruments such as a violin, cello or flute accompanied the piano, harmonising together.

*"Sometimes the whole body of people present would flow, for quite a length of time, from chorus to free worship in tongues, to solos, to combined singing that rose and fell and moved and changed, glorifying the Lord,"* noted our chief musician.

I would usually give a 'word' based on a Bible passage, trying to stay prophetically with the specific leading of the Spirit. I found, for example, that my messages on Sunday nights related to the gospel reading about Jesus in the lectionary readings for that Sunday. That linked naturally to the morning readings and messages in various congregations of those attending, especially those from Uniting, Lutheran, Anglican, and Catholic churches.

Each Sunday night we shared informal communion, using large buns and plastic glasses for grape juice. Our communion flowed naturally with the worship each night, rather unpredictably. Sometimes people came to the front to receive the bread and juice and personal prayer as well. At other times we passed it around and continued in worship together, often with prophetic words or songs encouraging or challenging us. Most often we shared bread and 'wine' together in clusters after the message and closing worship, praying personally for one another. When I was away on ministry or mission trips, Bill Daicos (Greek Orthodox) usually led worship and Don Singer (Baptist) led communion, sharing the word.

We provided a library of a few hundred books on renewal. It cost us nothing. Many of us loaned our personal books to the Fellowship's library, and lost a few in the process! We asked borrowers to note their name, phone number, book borrowed, date borrowed and date returned in our register. Some faithful volunteers then chased up the ones with no return date. Usually that worked, with people repenting on the phone. A decade of library use registered over 2,500 borrowings.

Finances stayed low key, as we had no salaries to pay, ever. We all ministered voluntarily. Our offering box near the door, tabernacle or temple style, provided one means of giving. Don Singer carefully handled the finances through the Uniting Church account. Don, with his wife June, faithfully attended both our home group and then the Renewal Fellowship. We gave most of the offerings to mission, amounting to many thousands of dollars each year. The Fellowship supported some of my travel expenses in our mission trips.

A core group of us met on Wednesday nights for prayer. Strong worship led into anointed personal prayer and ministry to one another. We prayed especially for the Friday and Sunday night meetings, but also for our teams travelling to minister in others churches and overseas in mission trips.

During the 15 years of our meetings we saw many changes, including a steadily growing number of churches introducing renewal services on Sunday nights or starting renewal prayer groups mid-week. I received invitations to speak at such churches or groups, and had a ready-made team from the Fellowship to assist, including leading worship in some churches. We took a team to visit the aboriginal revival celebrations on Elcho Island in northern Australia.

John Wimber and his Vineyard teams led conferences in Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth in the eighties and nineties, hosted by Dan Armstrong. They had a strong impact in Australia, encouraging people to minister to one another in faith. I attended them all, and organised the regional conferences in Brisbane following each national conference. So we had many Vineyard speakers and teams helping us to become more supernaturally natural.

During 1997-1998 I appreciated leading monthly Saturday night renewal rallies at Gateway Baptist Church, supported by Tim Hannah, the new senior pastor. Those inter-church meetings combined our usual Renewal Fellowship style worship, with some Gateway musicians joining in. There we had an open baptistery, filled and ready for use! We provided spare clothes for those wanting to be baptised. Most nights we baptised a few people, some coming prepared for that, and some choosing to do so on the night.

I received invitations to take teams overseas, especially to teach church leaders about renewal and revival. So from the nineties I travelled on ministry and mission trips with Meg and others to Ghana, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea as well as to renewal centres in England, Canada and America. I also taught leaders in the Philippines, Kenya, and the South Pacific. There we often saw local revival movements. The leaders and pastors wanted to learn about the Holy Spirit and revival.

The Renewal Fellowship hosted various mission teams visiting Brisbane. This included two dozen Aborigines from Elcho Island, 11 law students from the South Pacific, and six villagers from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu.

I invited a team of Aborigines from Elcho Island, because one of Australia's largest revival movements started there. Over two dozen of them paid their own fares to come to Brisbane for Pentecost weekend in 1993. We accommodated them at Trinity Theological College and held the meetings at Christian Outreach Centre.



I met an on-fire team of Pacific Island law students in Port Vila in 2002, and we hosted them in Brisbane for a month. Philip and Dhamkia George, keen supporters of the Renewal Fellowship, provided their accommodation.

In 2002 Philip and Dhamika bought a 'miracle house' with no money! They used it for the Kingdom. A lady they befriended bought two rental properties in Brisbane at that time as house prices were rising rapidly, and she sold them a couple of years later to reap huge profits. She advised them to do the same, but they had no money for that.

"You've been kind to me," she observed. "So I will lend you the \$10,000 deposit needed for a housing loan. Buy a rental property, and the rent will cover the loan repayments. Then when you sell it, return my money to me, without interest."

They bought that house just in time to offer it to the mission team of Pacific islanders to stay freely for a month. When they sold it a couple of years later, they gained almost \$90,000, wiping out their debts and making more available for mission.

The team of eleven law students from their Christian Fellowship (CF) visited Australia for a month in November-December 2002 involved in outreach and revival meetings in many denominations and as well as in visiting home prayer groups. I drove them 6,000 kilometres in a 12-seater van, including a trip from Brisbane to Sydney and back to visit Hillsong. The team stayed in the 'miracle house' provided freely by Philip and Dhamika George, available for them just when needed. They also met and visited many of my family, in Brisbane as well as in Tamworth, Manila, Orange and Sydney – an easy way to combine meetings, touring and accommodation!

The team prayed for hundreds of people in over a dozen churches and home groups, and led worship at the daily 6 a.m. prayer group at Kenmore Baptist Church (following their own 5 a.m. daily prayer meeting in the house provided for them).

Our family also hosted a team of six from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu for a week in November 2006, on their way to join others for three weeks of mission with me in the Solomon Islands. They too led us in worship at the 6 a.m. daily prayer group at Kenmore Baptist, and participated in home groups and Sunday services.

By the early nineties I drew together renewal and revival reports from most denominations for my book *Church on Fire*. It includes articles from Aboriginal, Anglican, Baptist, Brethren, Catholic, Churches of Christ, Lutheran, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian ministers in Australia at that time (see Appendix). Those articles provided a kaleidoscope of renewal developments in Australia in the late twentieth century.

Then from 1993 I edited the *Renewal Journal*, supported by the Renewal Fellowship, published twice a year, now available on its web site.

During the late nineties, when I taught at the Christian Outreach Centre School of Ministries (Bible College), I invited pastors and leaders to meet together monthly for a prayer breakfast. Pastor Geoff and Ann Holdway initially hosted these at Garden City Christian Church and they continued for a couple of years. We also hosted them at the Christian Outreach Centre (now Citipointe) coffee shop. Various combined churches events grew from that relationship. We held some united rallies at Mansfield COC, including one on September 14, 2001, five days after the 9/11 attack in New York – so global needs became a strong focus for united prayer then. Later on these churches united in BrizNet for city-wide events including combined prayer gatherings in the City Hall and central locations.

## **Kenmore Baptist Church (now Riverlife)**

Our family moved from Corinda to the Kenmore area in 2001 after we bought land at Pullenvale nearby, so we began attending Kenmore Baptist Church (KBC). Strongly evangelical and open to the Spirit's leading, the church had already outgrown its crowded premises under Ric Benson's wise leadership and the capable ministry team.

The congregations often fill the 800 seat auditorium in the multiple services on Sundays. Teams lead worship accompanied by a well prepared band, with attractive digital projection used for singing, DVD presentations, Scripture readings, and sermon notes.

The large pastoral team and enormous numbers of voluntary workers provide a huge range of ministries and services. A weekly bulletin, including sermon outlines, and a monthly magazine, keep everyone informed. The church's comprehensive web site ([www.kbc.org.au](http://www.kbc.org.au)), included these comments:

KBC could at present, best be described as contemporary, evangelical and biblically charismatic. The total congregation of the church is over 2000 and comes from some 75 different suburbs with about 750 of those in the Youth and Young Adult area. The attendance at services is upwards of 1400 each week. Some 800 people meet in small groups each week and the church ministers through over 35 different ministries. There are over 25 different nationalities present in the church as well as people from almost every denomination.

The church strongly emphasises contemporary worship and has a 100 member strong musical company called Directions, which specialises in contemporary singing, dance and drama. KBC is very strong in counselling and training (with over 60 quality courses offered to its people and other churches), and in sport with over 300 people in Netball Club and 120 people in the Soccer Club. KBC also provides significant consultancy to many churches each year in all areas of ministry. We continually praise God for our growing and effective ministry."

As at Gateway Baptist, our family participated in voluntary ministries. Our grandchildren enjoyed the children's programs. Meg especially appreciated the love and care of the women's group she attended as her health declined. We held the memorial thanksgiving funeral service for Meg there in February 2002, with abundant flowers, wonderful musicians from the Kenmore and former Wesley congregations, and singers from college at Christian Outreach Centre.

In the midst of life we still face death. The Kingdom of God has come partially, not fully yet. So we continue to pray for the sick, and bury the dead. One day, every tear will be dried, but not yet.

KBC integrates renewal ministries into the general life of the church. Some home groups, especially among youth, actively use spiritual gifts including controversial ones like prophecy, healings, and revelatory gifts. The pastoral team has preached and taught about charismatic renewal, spiritual gifts, and empowering. Their training programs encourage people to grow in grace, such as through the Pathways courses.

They also participate actively in BrizNet, the combined churches organisation which leads Prayer Concerts and the annual city-wide 'Yes We Care' neighbourhood blitz of practical

help for needy people. A huge range of ministries involve hundreds of people in local, national and overseas mission.

During the December-January vacation period of 2002-3, I led local inter-church renewal meetings at KBC on Saturday nights, the only night the facilities were free. We involved people from the Renewal Fellowship, including Hilary at the piano, and saw gentle touches of the Spirit in worship and prayer ministry, including healings. However, we soon realised that Saturday night posed problems. Most attending were actively involved in their churches on Sunday, leading, preaching, and teaching children or youth. Some had to be on deck for early morning services such as 8 a.m. at Kenmore Baptist and 8.30 a.m. at Chapel Hill Uniting.

For many years Jesse Padayachee, has preached and prayed for people at monthly evening services at KBC. An Indian, originally from South Africa, Jesse is a strong healing evangelist based in Brisbane. He travels widely on mission, especially among indigenous communities. His services at KBC have often gone late as he and others pray for healing, deliverance, and other needs.

Ric and Ann Benson, with Jesse and Cookie Padayachee, led mission teams from KBC in Fiji and elsewhere, with strong evangelism and healing ministries. I've been blessed to be part of some of those teams, and have also involved Jesse in mission in the Solomon Islands.

The pastoral team actively encourages people to seek more of the Spirit's empowering in their lives, and they see many released in various gifts of the Spirit. All of this is strongly grounded in ministry to others in and beyond the church. Office staff regularly informs a very active email prayer group list of intercessors concerning any needs, also informing them of answered prayers and needs met.

Ray and Nan Peck head up the prayer counselling and inner healing ministries, training a steadily growing team to pray effectively for emotional and personal wholeness, including deliverance from oppression. They have taught this to leaders overseas as well, particularly in mission trips to Fiji. In 2002 they started a daily 6 a.m. prayer group for an hour in the church, Mondays to Fridays. I admired their dedication.

"If the Lord wakes me, I'll come," I joked with them. "I'm an owl, not a rooster."

Apparently the Lord appreciates sincere jokes. I began waking up around 5.30 a.m., and that was in mid-winter, dark and cold. So for around seven years I attended fairly regularly, never setting an alarm clock. I had to adjust my retiring time. Less TV!

Regular participants in that prayer group from its beginning included other foundation members of the church, Athol Alcorn and Gordon and Barbara Scorgie (in whose 'elastic-sided' home the church began), all retired. Others joined them, not only retirees. Some called in on their way to work. David and Ros Beduhn often attended, between their many mission trips to Papua New Guinea and India. The group prays faithfully for them, and for others also.

Twice during those years a revival ministry team from the South Pacific joined us in that early morning prayer group. I especially enjoyed that, as did others. Numbers attending swelled at those times. The first was the group of 11 law students here for a month on mission, now all lawyers and strong Christian leaders in South Pacific islands. The second was a team of six from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu, here for a week on their way to the Solomon Islands on revival mission. Both teams led us in worship and prayer, island style. Those sessions went for well over an hour, but it seemed like a few minutes.

Occasionally overseas leaders visit that prayer group, challenging our faith. That has

included people I worked with such as Frank Nyameche from Kenya and Raju and Samita Sundras from Nepal. The prayer group prayed faithfully for them and me, especially when I have been away on mission trips, usually in the college vacations. So have others, especially from the Renewal Fellowship, and I am truly grateful. I believe those prayers have been a significant part of the revival ministries I have seen in many nations.

## Chapter 8

### Revival: begin with 1 2 3



*Revival ministries*

Revival is God pouring out his Spirit, abundantly. It may start small, with 1, 2 or 3 converts, but escalates to 100, 200 or 300 and more. It may explode with 1,000, 2,000 or 3,000 as on the Day of Pentecost, or with millions as in national revivals. Revival impacts vast numbers of people, changes communities, and stirs up opposition, such as Jesus faced.

Significantly, Jesus explained that the Holy Spirit coming upon him powerfully equipped him for his mission. He then faced tough opposition, after he fasted and prayed. The devil tried to stop him. Jesus totally resisted that opposition. Personal appetites, vainglory, short cuts or presumption did not divert him.

“He is out of his mind,” his family said. They tried to stop him. Pharisees and Herodians, the religious and state leaders, plotted to kill him. The Gospels describe these strong reactions to Jesus as early as Mark 3:6, 21-22, 32.

He survived many assassination attempts. Two kings wanted to kill him (Matthew 2:13; Luke 13:31). His relatives attempted to push him over a cliff (Luke 4:29). People in Jerusalem tried to stone him more than once (John 8:59, 10:31). Leaders plotted to kill him many times (Matthew 12:14, 26:4; Mark 11:18; Luke 19:47).

Eventually they did kill him. But Jesus chose the time, the place and the method (John 10:17-18). I knew that the message of the cross is the power of God for everyone being saved (1 Corinthians 1:18). I just didn’t realise how powerful it is for life here, as well as for life hereafter.

The cross is the heart of revival. In revival God pours out his Spirit powerfully with salvation, healing, deliverance and community transformation. As I travelled I saw many examples of local revivals. Invitations came to teach leaders about revival, although I felt more like a learner than a teacher. Pastors and leaders appreciated receiving resources such as the Transformation videos and DVDs and my book *Flashpoints of Revival* (1998, second edition 2009).

I had the great privilege of travelling with various teams, especially from the Renewal Fellowship, to visit many countries to encourage pastors and leaders. Many of those people overseas face difficulties and persecution we do not. Travelling in mission teams with some of them, as in Africa, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and China, gave us small glimpses of the challenges they face and their simple, strong faith. It reminded me of Luke and others travelling with Paul, as Luke describes in the ‘we’ passages of Acts 16, 20-21, and 27-28.

We Westerners believe in Jesus and live for him, but I found overseas Christians and leaders generally more responsive to the Lord and his Spirit, more aware of the spirit realm, and more convinced that Jesus’ ministry and New Testament life still happen now just as it did then. They are more likely to pray as the early church did, “In the name of Jesus, be healed.” They bind and cast out spirits more than we do!

They expect signs and wonders more than we do, and pray for God’s supernatural intervention amid opposition like the early church Christians: “*Now Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus*” (Acts 4:29-30).

Christians in other cultures also seem far less distracted than we are by media such as TV and DVDs. However, there’s hope for us too, if we, like them, will humble ourselves and pray, and seek God’s face and turn from our wicked way. God promises to hear from heaven his dwelling place, forgive our sin, and heal the land.

## Australia

We invited a team of Aborigines from Elcho Island near Darwin to come to Brisbane for Pentecost weekend in 1993. The Uniting Church on Elcho Island experienced strong revival from March 1979, led by their pastor Rev Djiniyini Gondarra. It sparked revival in aboriginal communities and churches across the north and west of Australia, so I wanted them to share with us. Two dozen came and we housed them at Trinity Theological College in the students' dormitories. They found the beds too soft but enjoyed sleeping on the carpeted floor!

We held the meetings at Christian Outreach Centre, in their large auditorium offered freely to us. Although we began in the seats, we soon found ourselves sitting on the floor on and around the large platform and its steps, talking and praying together aboriginal style. They sang, gave testimonies and spoke, in simple, clear ways. They surprised me when they told me that it was the first time they had been invited to lead meetings in a white congregation!

"We don't know how to pray for white people," they said. "We haven't done that before." I had asked them to pray for people at the end of each meeting.

"Just pray for us the same way you do for your own people," I suggested. They did. We sat with them on the floor, talked together and then prayed for one another.

They invited us to join them on Elcho Island the following March, 1994, for their anniversary celebrations of the beginning of the revival. A small team of us flew there as guests, attending and enjoying the meetings and friendship. Although the initial intensity of the revival had died down, the meetings and community still carried the warmth, vitality and improved social conditions brought by the revival. You can read about that revival on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) in the first issue of the Renewal Journal: Revival.

Aboriginal pastors and leaders spoke at the meetings, celebrating what God had done among them. I had the honour to speak one night, gladly thanking them for their God given national leadership in revival, so needed by the rest of us in Australia.

Some of us visited a small community, driving 50 kilometres on 4WD dirt tracks to the north end of the long narrow island. That community had one trade store, a single room school and a church. The whole community of about 30 people prayed together every morning and night, especially for revival in Australia. They had seen their prayers being answered among their own people, but continued to pray together daily for the whole nation. I found it a holy, humbling time to pray with them.

## China

One of my most humbling and stirring experiences of revival happened in China where Christians have been severely persecuted for over half a century, and it is still illegal to hold unregistered meetings, free of government control and restrictions.

I loved it there among such humble, hungry, receptive, grateful, gentle and faith filled believers. I was often in tears just being there, appreciating their heartfelt zeal in everything. I have rarely been so impressed anywhere. No concerts. No acting. No hype. Just bare essentials. What a big and wonderful family we belong to, and our Father is so proud of his family there, I'm sure.

I had the great honour of speaking at a house church. People arrived in ones or twos over an hour or so, and stayed for many hours. Then they left quietly in ones or twos again, just personal visitors to that host family. Food on the small kitchen table welcomed everyone,

some of it brought by the visitors.

About 30 of us crowded into a simple room with very few chairs. Most sat on the thin mat coverings. They sang their own heartfelt worship songs in their own language and style, pouring out love to the Lord, sometimes with tears. The leader played a very basic guitar in a very basic way.

Everyone listened intently to the message, and gladly asked questions, all of it interpreted. There was no need for an altar call or invitation to receive prayer. Everyone wanted personal prayer. Our prayer team of three or four people prayed over each person for specific needs such as healing and with personal prophecies. That flowed strongly. I knew none of that group, but received 'pictures' or words of encouragement for each one, as did the others.

While prayer continued, some began slipping quietly away. Others had supper. Others stayed to worship quietly. It was a quiet night because they did not want to disturb neighbours or attract attention.

Most people in that group were new believers with no Christian background at all. They identified easily with the house churches of the New Testament, the persecution, and the miracles, because they experienced all that as well. Many unbelievers become Christians because someone prayed for their healing and the Lord healed them.

Afterwards, some of us drove to a local park just to pray with an elderly gentleman, unable to go to the meetings. He thanked us so eloquently for coming to his country to support and encourage his people. I was deeply moved. So much personal support, encouragement and evangelism happen that way, so simply.

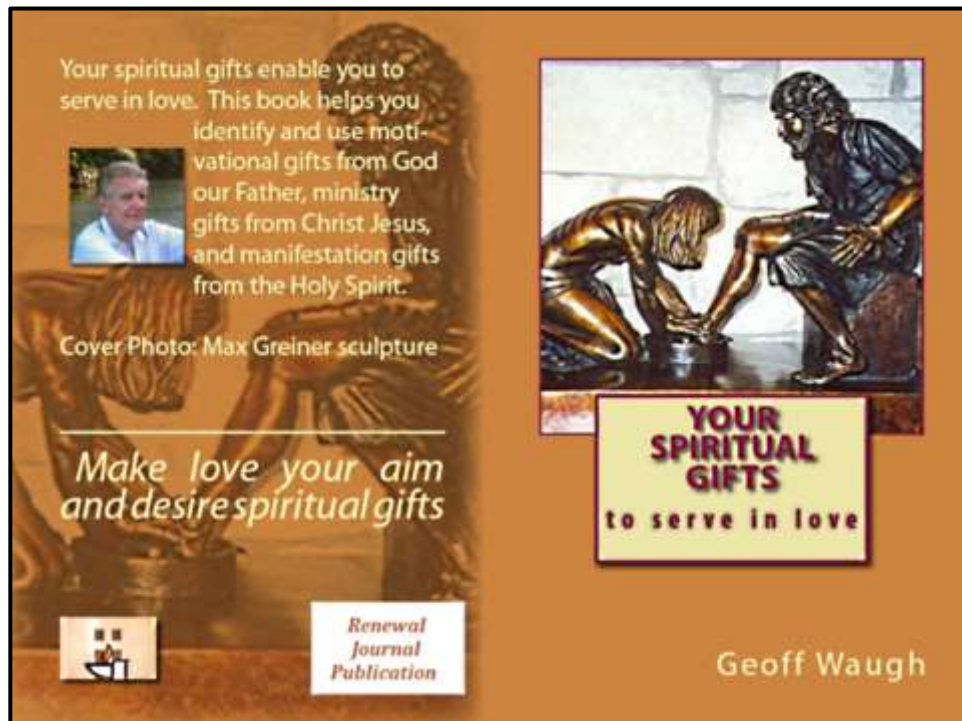
It neither looked nor sounded like a Western revival! It wasn't. Yet it was part of one of the greatest revivals of the last half century, bringing over 100 million into the Kingdom of God.

## **Journey into Mission**

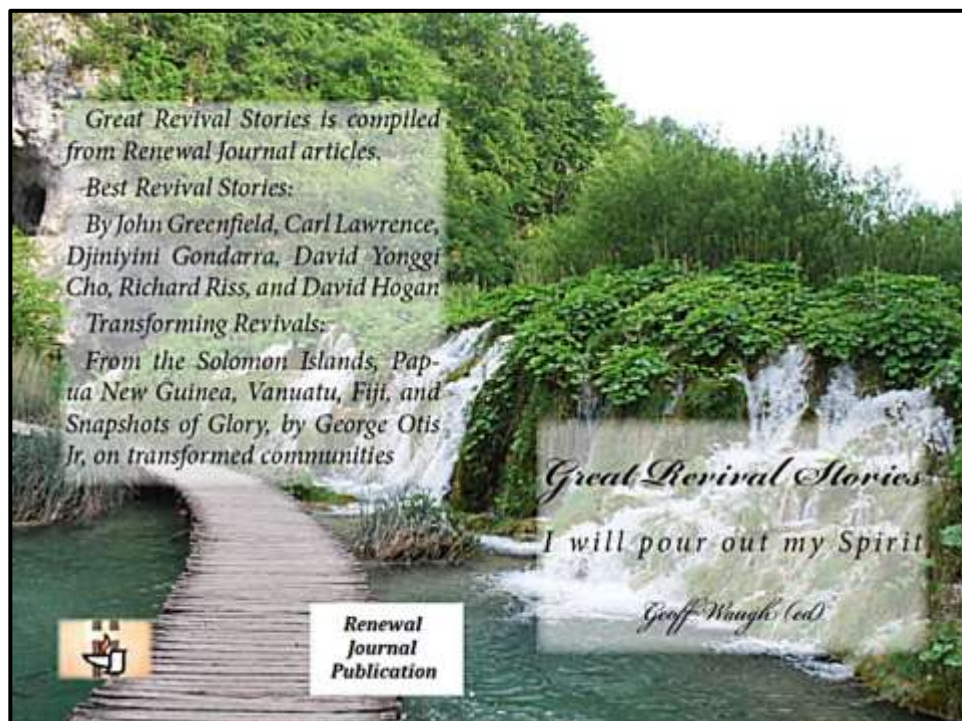
My Journey into ministry and mission has also been a journey into renewal and revival. Chapter 8 of *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival* summarises some of that journey. I then expanded that chapter in my sequel book *Journey into Mission*. Highlights of that book are given here in Book 2 – a selection of the highlights from that book.



## Conclusion of Book 1: begin with you and me



*Your Spiritual Gifts: to serve in love*



*Great Revival Stories: I will pour out my Spirit*

My journey into renewal and revival is one among millions. All of us can discover more of God's Spirit in our lives.

As we journey through life, our lives touch others and their lives touch us. We usually discover salvation because someone tells us, and we *believe*, by God's grace. We often discover effective ways to serve God because someone shows us, and we *achieve*, by God's grace. We normally discover the empowering of God's Spirit because someone informs us, and we *receive*, by God's grace. So it multiplies, to you and me, and through you and me.

We can all believe in Jesus, our Saviour and Lord, who suffered and died for us. We can all achieve God's purposes, secure in our Father's love and care. We can all receive the Spirit's empowering, as Jesus declared in his final promise on earth (Acts 1:8).

Ultimately it all begins and ends with God. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. We live it out and pass it on as we respond to God. My parents, my teachers, and my peers, passed on to me what they had found, and I thank God for that.

I am grateful for my evangelical heritage in the Baptist tradition, and for my more liberal heritage in the Uniting tradition, and for my more charismatic heritage in the Pentecostal tradition. These flow together for me in rivers of living water. Jesus said that streams of living water would flow from within us. He was describing the Holy Spirit in our lives (John 7:37-39).

"The wind blows where it will," explained Jesus another way. "You hear the sound of it, but you cannot tell where it comes from, or where it is going. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). These powerful currents in the river or in the wind carry us into God's great purposes. The Spirit's streams of living water may flow through all our traditions and can renew and transform them, and renew and transform us also.

I discovered the Holy Spirit's conviction for salvation, sanctification and service in the evangelical tradition. Then I discovered the Spirit of God's compassion for societal transformation in the liberal tradition. And I discovered the gifts of the Spirit's baptism for anointing and empowering in the charismatic tradition. All are vital. Jesus had it all.

My evangelical heritage emphasised the truth of God's Word and the need for a response in faith, trusting in Jesus' death and resurrection for personal salvation. My liberal heritage emphasised the love of God's Grace and the need for a response in compassionate action, trusting in the covenant of Jesus' death and resurrection. My charismatic heritage emphasised the power of God's Spirit and the need for a response in transformed living, trusting in Jesus' death and resurrection for empowered ministry and mission.

All are necessary. Each tradition has strengths and weaknesses, well described by Brian Hathaway in his article "Words, Signs and Deeds" in *Renewal Journal*, No. 4: Signs and Wonders ([www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)). I adapt his comments here.

The Conservative/Evangelical Position: Words announce the truth of God.

The Liberal/Social Justice Position: Deeds express the love of God.

The Pentecostal/Charismatic Position: Signs demonstrate the power of God.

Our response can be in  
Words, living by the truth of God;  
Deeds, living out the love of God;  
Signs, living in the power of God.

Jesus lived in all those dimensions, fully. My journey into renewal and revival plunged me into these currents more fully, and more gratefully. It is all by God's grace. These streams, of course, merge and mingle. They are not separate in God's mighty river, but can

be seen as currents within the river of God's truth, love and power, displaying his righteousness, justice and mercy.

At times God's grace (*charis*) is poured out abundantly, as in renewal and revival. I believe the gifts of his grace (*charismata*) abound now. This has been true in all revivals. Widespread revivals have been called awakenings to these truths and realities.

Revival historian Edwin Orr described the awakenings following the Evangelical Revivals or Great Awakening of 1727-1745 as the Second Awakening of 1792-1810 (*The Eager Feet*, fired with missionary commitment), the Third Awakening of 1858-60 (*The Fervent Prayer*, spread through countless prayer groups) and the Worldwide Awakening from 1900 (*The Flaming Tongue*, spreading the word around the globe).

The twentieth century saw further widespread revivals or awakenings. Following the dark days of two world wars, evangelists and revivalists such as Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Kathryn Kuhlman, T. L. and Daisy Osborn, and others, gained global exposure from 1947-1948. Renewal and revival surged through the seventies with revivals in Canada, the Jesus People movement in America, charismatic renewal in the churches, and evangelism in developing nations with Reinhard Bonnke in Africa, Yonggi Cho in Korea, and many more. The nineties saw renewal and revival accelerate from countries such as Argentina and Brazil and from local communities such as Toronto and Pensacola.

I report in detail on these revivals in my books, such as in *Flashpoints of Revival*, *Revival Fires*, and *Great Revival Stories*, as well as in the *Renewal Journals* I edited which are all now available on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com).

So I want to conclude here as I do in *Flashpoints of Revival*. Accounts such as my journey into renewal and revival raise various questions. What is of God, and what is not?

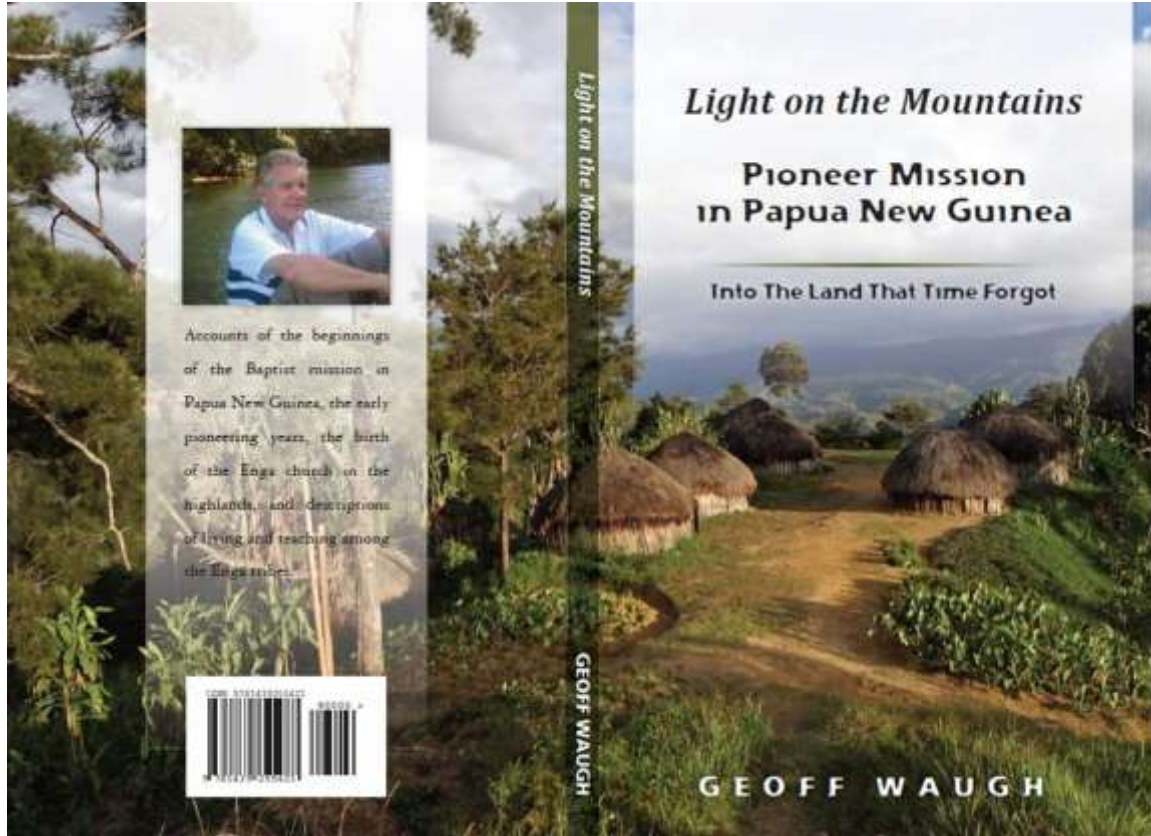
The answers to such questions can fall into two opposite extremes. On one hand we may think it is all of God alone, when in fact there are always human reactions and even demonic attacks mixed in with powerful revivals. On the other hand we may dismiss it all as emotional hype, psychological reactions or sociological developments, when in fact God has brought people from death to life and from darkness to light in huge numbers, permanently affecting their eternal destiny.

When the religious and political leaders in Jerusalem faced similar dilemmas, especially the boldness of uneducated and ordinary people with a flaming zeal for the Jesus those leaders had killed, they were not happy (Acts 4:13-21). In fact, they wanted to kill those revivalists as they had killed Jesus. However, one of their insightful leaders reminded them that they may end up fighting against God - an unequal match (Acts 5:33-39).

May God grant us the *faith* to believe in our great God who is able and willing to do far more than anything we could ever ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20-21), the *hope* that shines in a dark world where we desperately need God's grace to abound (Romans 5:20-21), and the *love* to serve and bless one another as Jesus demands and demonstrates (John 13:34-35).

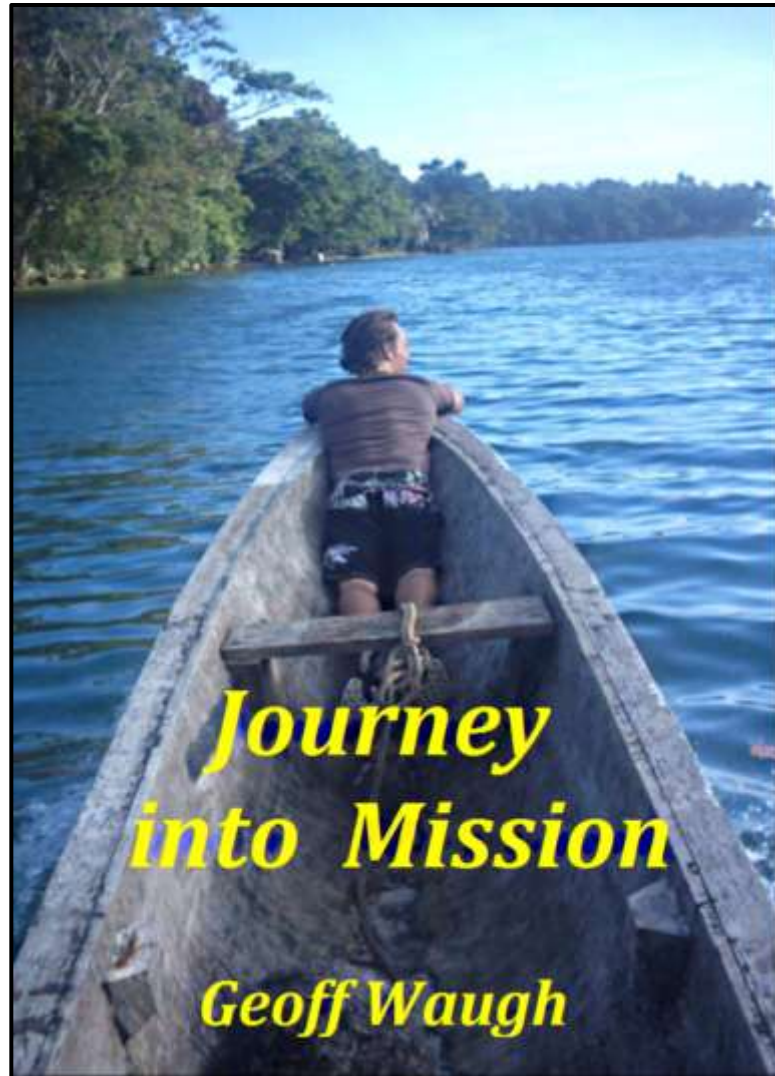
Revival ignited the early church and they turned their world upside down (Acts 17:6). Fire fell again and again in revivals, and still does. We need followers of Jesus, full of faith, vision, wisdom, love and the fire of the Holy Spirit as we live for God our Father in our moment in history.

That is my prayer for you, and for my children and my children's children.





**Highlights from Book 2**  
*Journey into Mission*



## ***Foreword***

As we prayed for people we often saw healings and deliverance. It usually looked ordinary – just doing what we always did. But in revival settings, faith and unity are stronger than usual and more happens. More respond. More are changed.

**This book describes significant revival events in bold** including: a martyr for Jesus; dead return; supernatural fire; light rain from clear sky; angels sing; communion bread multiplied to feed slum families; youths swim nine hours to get help; whole school responds; whole village responds; children and youth lead in revivals; English understood by non-English speakers; non-English speakers pray in beautiful English; first PM of Solomon Islands hosts team; first PM of Fiji washes feet; powerful unity; healing the land; many healings, and more, like locals going out on mission to other islands and other nations.

Life is mission, wherever we are – with friends, with family, and with people we meet. A lot of my mission happened to be cross-cultural. ***So what did I learn?*** Here's a handful of lessons I learned on mission.

**1 Listen to God.** He guides. He'll often lead you into new ventures and surprising adventures. He sustains you.

**2 Listen to God's Word.** Absorb it. Jesus' life and ministry and his disciples' example often guided and inspired me.

**3 Listen to others** – especially local leaders. They know their people and their culture far better than you ever will.

**4 Listen to your heart.** Where is your heart in all this? Why are you doing it? Be led by the Spirit. He knows the desires of your heart so well.

**5 Step out in faith.** Don't wait till you are perfect – you'll be in heaven then. Pray and obey. Use the gifts God has given you, humbly and boldly. Serve together in humble unity, responding to God together, and give God all the glory. He does so much in and through us, exceedingly abundantly above all we are asking or even thinking (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Don Hill wrote his book ***Travelling with Geoff*** with many details of our short-term mission trips together. His wife Helen recorded many of my teaching sessions in many countries, often using an interpreter. Much more of Don's comments are included in my longer book ***Journey into Mission***, but some are included here as well.

## ***Introduction***

When I was 70 I wrote my autobiography, *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*. See [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) for details.

A decade later at 80, I expanded that story in this book to tell what I had seen God do in so many places among so many friends in our mission trips. Miraculously, and with a lot of family help, I was able to travel to every continent (except Antarctica) on mission, usually in a team, including teams of local people. So here is that expanded story.

I've highlighted significant events in ***bold print***, so you can skim to those. This is a reduced condensed version of the longer book, which may be more interesting for readers who want more detail. This condensed version is mainly drawn from the passages in ***bold print*** in the longer book.

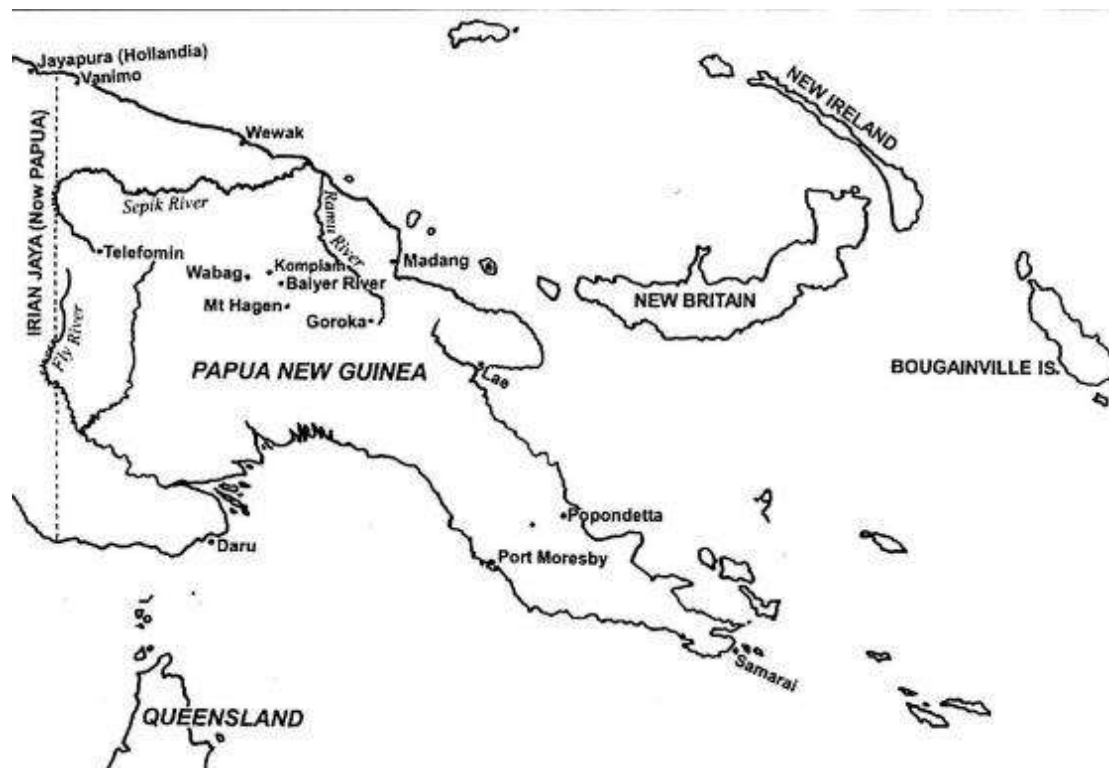
Both books are available in a Basic Edition (normal print) and a Gift Edition (colour print, so more expensive). All editions are also available as eBooks. Just look in Amazon for Geoff Waugh *Journey into Mission*, and see the Blogs on my Renewal Journal website – [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)

I have been to the South Pacific islands, and particularly to Pentecost Island in Vanuatu, more than anywhere else. It became my escape from Australia's winter in June-July! I saw many moves of God there and had the honour of teaching at their beautiful Bible College on Pentecost Island.

Similarly our teams saw surprising moves of God in many other countries including outpourings of the Spirit in Nepal, clear skies and miracles at meetings during heavy monsoon rains in Ghana, communion bread multiplied to feed slum families in Kenya, and people believing, filled with the Spirit, healed and set free in every place. I was especially blessed to see leaders and youths anointed and equipped to bless others as they preached and prayed.

I was so blessed to travel on mission with my wife Meg before her death in 2002. We met on mission in Papua New Guinea and our first child was born in the mission hospital there. Later our whole family was involved in many mission and ministry opportunities together including at children's, youth and family camps. More recently our family has been deeply involved and committed in mission especially helping orphanages and schools in Myanmar, and with church and groups in Australia.

I am especially grateful to my three adult children and our eight grandchildren for our journey together, loving, supporting and encouraging one another, including shared life together in mission at home and overseas.





## ***Chapter 1 – Papua New Guinea (1965-1970)***

My time in PNG as a missionary teacher from 1966 widened my horizons with the very first Sunday in a village church. Dirt floor and no seats. Grass roof and bamboo walls. Hens and piglets hanging in grass-fibre string nets (bilums) from the bamboo walls. Unwashed, hot bodies. Native dress. Preacher in nothing but a dirty lap-lap (sarong). No four-hymn sandwich there! Best of all, only one church in a village, in the early days. Western denominations had not divided the community along historic, doctrinal lines. We were one body in Christ. In reality, of course, we are one body in Christ anyway, and will be one forever. Imagine that!

I felt like a liberated kid, let out of school. New vistas tumbled into view among those towering highland ranges. Church was the community worshipping and working together, every day. No Sunday best in dress or manners – just life as normal. I evolved from using ancient English in scripture and prayer to the common language, theirs and mine. Casual dress always. Classes sitting under the bamboos telling stories, village style. That changed me. My perspectives changed for good: that is, they both changed forever, and they changed for the better.

I'm grateful to the mission staff. They knew their anthropology and missiology. Senior staff curbed my tendencies to export Western Aussie church traditions into that culture. I learned to ask questions more than give answers. Usually the best answers came from the pastors in the villages. They knew their people and their culture better than we ever would. They followed the biblical patterns of communal life better than we did. They understood the spirit-world and revival more than we had experienced it ourselves.

We enjoyed interaction with missionaries from other areas and denominations. I participated in many conferences and training courses with them, and worked closely with some of the Methodists in Christian Education. I needed PNG more than PNG needed me. Life there helped me to understand more fully the culture of the Bible, the truths of Scripture, and the limitless possibilities of Christian living. I'm grateful.

My earliest memories include stories of Jesus coming to this world on mission. As a boy I memorised John 3:16 and Matthew 28:18-20 (the Great Commission) all about mission and God's love for us. My parents lived in mission, evangelising 'the lost' and discipling believers, including their own children. Many close friends were overseas missionaries. I read many books about missionaries who gave their lives in mission. Mission was a natural and normal part of life for me.

Stories and photos of pioneering missionaries in the highlands of New Guinea (called Papua New Guinea from 1975 after independence) filled our weekly denominational paper, *The Australian Baptist*, and the monthly mission magazine, *Vision*, from 1948 when I was a boy. I followed the stories of those first post-war missionaries into the unreached Enga tribal areas in the highland ranges north of Mt Hagen with intense interest. Eventually that interest ripened into research when I wrote a thesis on 'The Beginnings of the New Guinea Mission'. That thesis, edited, is now the first chapter of my book ***Light on the Mountains*** (2009). The same year that I wrote that thesis, 1964, I was ordained to the Baptist ministry, and accepted to go to New Guinea as a missionary teacher.

## Engas

The first pioneers among the Enga tribes began in 1949. The first baptisms in 1956 marked the official birth of the Enga churches.



By 1965, when I arrived, four mission stations provided bases for reaching the whole area. Baiyer River and Lumusa among the Kyaka Engas in the south the Sau Engas to the north had two mission stations, Kompiam and Lapalama, with a stoned road access to Wabag along the deep Sau Valley gorge.

During my two terms of three years each I was blessed to work in all these areas and to be the pioneering, first missionary to live in the isolated villages of Pinyapaisa in the Kyaka Enga area and Sauanda in the Sau Enga area. In both places I had a bush house, Enga style and a classroom, also a bush building of thick grass roof and platted bamboo walls and floor.



Church life was led by the local pastors and leaders. Mostly it was like traditional village life – sitting around outside the church, which looked the same as other village houses, but perhaps a bit bigger. Inside the church it looked like any other village meeting. People sat cross-legged on the dry grass in their normal village clothes with net aprons made from pandanus string and leaves tucked into their belts at the back for the men, and pandanus string for the women. Village people rarely washed in those days and had little or no access to soap. So a congregation could look dirty to our eyes but normal for them. This photo of a village pastor serving communion berry juice in bamboo cups is typical. They shared sweet potato together in communion also, a strong symbol of their daily food.

We did encourage washing at schools and Bible Schools, mainly for health benefits. However even that was done in the nearest creek, usually without soap. Later on more people had access to trade stores with luxuries like shirts and shorts, soap and shampoo and best of all food like rice.

**Evangelism happened naturally and constantly. There was no need for an altar call or invitation at a meeting. They all talked about faith in Jesus and what that meant and, typical of village communal societies, they preferred to talk it through until they all agreed.**

**So the Engas saw many people movements and revival- whole tribes deciding they wanted to follow Jesus**

**Enga pastors evangelised and disciplined their people. They conducted all the baptisms and teaching in the villages. We were support staff, and I learned to watch and appreciate how well they led a strong and rapidly growing indigenous church.**



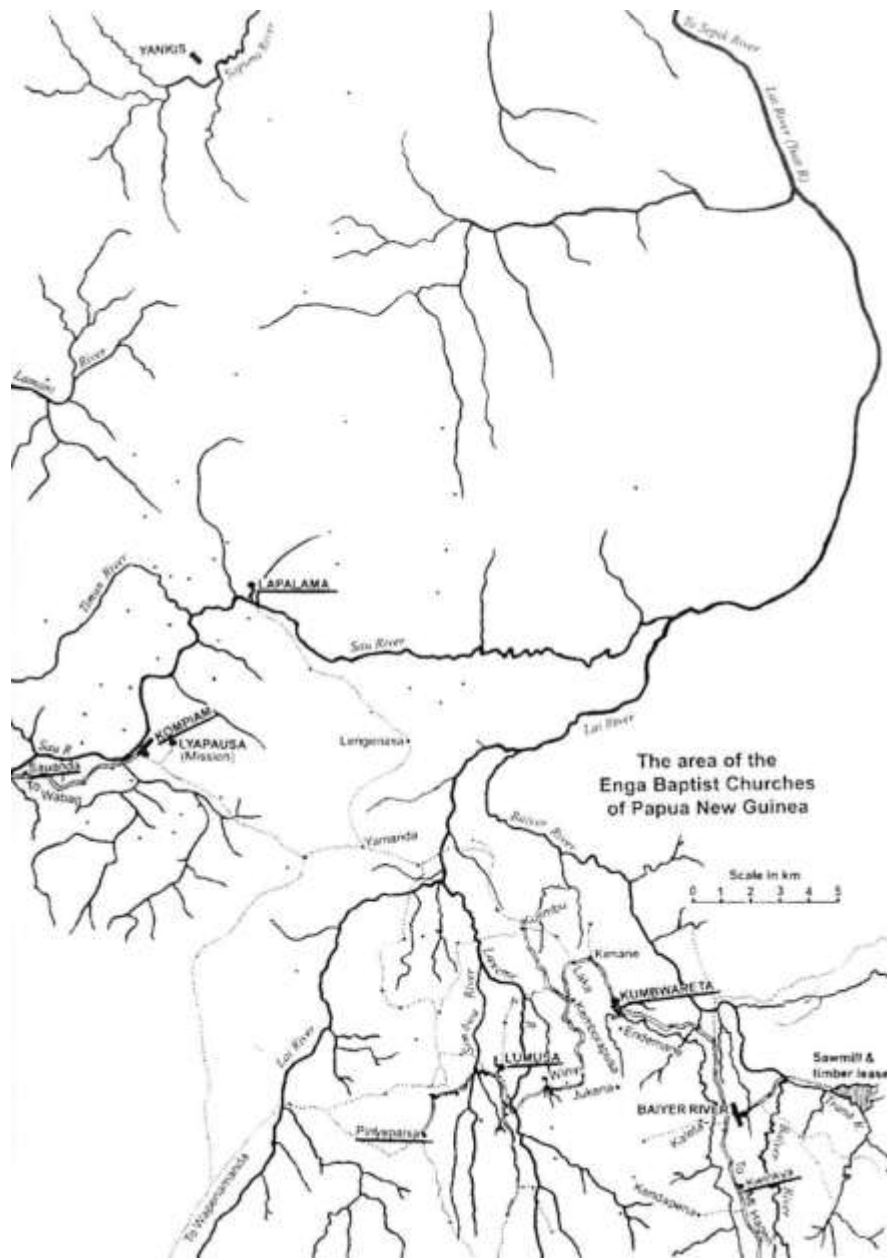
My mission experience mixed work and relaxing. A trek was work and fun. Exploring those rugged ranges was work and pleasure. Flying in MAF Cessnas was work and adventure.

Reading missionary books or another translation of the Bible was work and relaxing. It all merged. The usual boundaries or barriers seemed to melt away. Work was pleasure. The secular became the sacred. All of life was mission, and mission was a whole lifestyle. I lived out that mission vocation teaching in schools and Bible Schools. I include more details in my book ***Light on the Mountains.***



*Typical highland village on ridge top*

## ***Chapter 2 – Papua New Guinea Schools (1965-1967)***



I arrived in New Guinea at the beginning of the school year in 1965 so immediately began teaching in English using the Australian government's Jacaranda Press materials especially produced for New Guinea. Following World War II, Australia administered New Guinea as one of its territories until independence in 1975.

Students wanted to learn English because English speakers found many vocational opportunities. Teaching in English slowed down my learning Enga, although I began using Enga as much as I could. I later studied elementary Enga to get started on the basics of Enga grammar and idioms.

School life echoed schools at home but with brown bodies and chatter in tongues unknown to me. I enjoyed school life in New Guinea. The mission established primary schools using English on all the mission stations, and village schools in the villages where indigenous teachers taught in Enga and Pidgin. Most children and many young adults began to learn literacy and numeracy in their small bush village school, and the brightest or most ambitious quickly moved to the mission school to learn English. The brightest or most ambitious of those moved on to high school in Mt Hagen, and some to university or teachers college in Port Moresby. As the years passed beyond the sixties more educational opportunities opened up locally including trade schools and Bible Schools.

## **(1) Baiyer River**

As a new, single missionary teacher I had my baptism into New Guinea school life at the large primary school at the main mission station at Baiyer River where most of the school teachers were missionaries, assisted by indigenous aides in those days. Later, especially after independence in 1975, most teachers were trained indigenous teachers. Fitting in with Enga culture, men taught in the boys' school and women taught in the girls' school. School buildings, like many on the station, often had milled timber floors with the typical woven bamboo walls and a thick, cool, kunai grass roof. School structure followed the Australian pattern, starting by 8 or 9am and finishing by 2 or 3 p.m. in the hot afternoon. School text books provided relevant materials for New Guinea, clear, cute and comprehensive. Even Grade 1 books could be adapted to adult learning. Coloured pictures, drawings and photos depicted typical village or town scenes in New Guinea.

The Baiyer River mission station had been established 15 years before I arrived, so the school, and hospital, functioned well, and the pupils were young, typical primary school age. No one really knew their birthday or birth year, but if a child could touch their left ear with their right arm reaching over their head, they were about 5 or 6 and eligible to start! The same applied for left-handers touching their right ear.

However, in the more recently established mission stations, such as at Lapalama in the more remote Sau Valley district, where I taught after a few months at Baiyer River, the Grade 1 students were often teenagers. Chiefs wanted their young men and women to learn English. I had one Grade 1 female student who left school later that year to be married! So sometimes our text books and teaching methods were adapted to suit adult education, even at primary school level.

**Schools were a natural means of evangelism and discipling. We constantly talked and sang about Jesus and his importance in all of life. School involved learning in the context of Christian living and serving.**

After a few months at Baiyer River I was needed at Lapalama.



## (2) Lapalama



Our mission worked in four districts of the Enga people. The southern two at Baiyer River and Lumusa (across a gorge from Baiyer) were the first and most established. The northern two at Kompiam and Lapalama in the Sau Valley area, a full day's trek north, were smaller. The Engas spoke two main dialects of the Enga language, Kyaka-Enga in the south and Sau-Enga in the north. Warren and Mavis Brown, with their young family, organised station life at Lapalama, the newest and smallest mission station then, where I ran the two teacher school. My assistant Keyane Tangaipi, an indigenous teacher, taught Grades 1 and 2, and I had the rest. Lapalama had two milled timber homes, and the two room school was also made from milled timber – a modern school [photo]!

I remember one emergency when I was in charge of the mission station. Village aid post orderlies and an attending crowd of relatives and stretcher-bearers carried in a woman with a retained placenta after giving birth. So I had to get onto the two way radio and organise an emergency MAF flight to take her to the Baiyer River hospital. Imagine my non-medical explanations of her condition and its severity! That entertained the whole mission staff listening in. All I could do was put the local 'dokta boi' (doctor boy, medical orderly) on air and let him try to explain.



I enjoyed life at Lapalama, and like most people there had bare feet most of the time, so they hardened. No one at school had shoes, including the other teacher, Keyane. He often wore native attire, the string net in front and leaves behind. Most people did that there then. Most men grew beards. It was far easier to trim a beard than to shave, so very few shaved. I grew a beard also.

We trekked a lot, mostly to local villages at weekends. My longest trek took a week with Warren Brown and some pastors from Lapalama over the 8,000 feet ranges further to the north to Yangis in the remote Wapi area, a mission and evangelistic outreach of the Enga church. The Engas sent pastors there to pioneer a new church in that area. I remember returning from some of the longer treks, so tired, and forcing myself to just keep taking one step after another, until at long last the mission station ridge came into view. Home never looked so good.



At weekends I continued to visit different village churches. Usually my school pupils walked with me to their village. That gave them a chance to practise their English, and gave me an opportunity to practise my Enga. So we had strange conversations where they used poor English and I used poor Enga as we talked together!

One of my brightest pupils, the son of the most respected pastor in the district, lived in a village about three hours walk up into the ranges. I liked going to that village church as the pastor was such a godly, compassionate and intelligent man. However, the first time I went there the pastor amazed me. There was the highly regarded pastor, sitting with the men, unwashed, with a dirty laplap, smoking the home grown local tobacco rolled leaf, as many men did, and he had a runny nose as well – and of course

no handkerchief, not even an old cloth. Further to my conservative astonishment, when we all went into the grass hut church for the meeting, the pastor just put out his unfinished rolled tobacco leaf and stuck it between his curly, dirty hair and his unwashed ear.

At school we had other expectations. Pupils had to wash. Every Monday when they returned from the village the indigenous staff would inspect the heads of students to find any lice. Where lice lived, that student received a very close haircut and an extra shampoo. School on Monday mornings sometimes looked like a barber shop. Actually most students seemed to like getting a hair cut and shampoo.

Early in my second year at Lapalama, I walked with a group of about a dozen young men from Baiyer River to Lapalama. The Baiyer school did not have enough staff to teach them just then, so I taught them at Lapalama. That walk took us two days. We slept in a village in the ranges on the way there, dining on the usual sweet potato in the mountain village. We had to cross two huge gorges, each with a swinging vine bridge at the bottom of the gorge, strung across raging waters. A great adventure!



The vine bridge over the Sau River led to the track up the ridge to Lapalama. We could walk to that river and bridge in about half an hour from the mission station, and I sometimes took the school there for swimming lessons. Many of the older boys liked to swing off the vine bridge and drop into the water, so they taught me to do that too! The last time we swam there was in the wet season, and I had not realised how swiftly the river flowed then. One of our biggest, strongest lads swam too close to the rocks where the river narrowed, and it swept him away downstream, with him thrashing and yelling but unable to get out.

I had a whole school crying, lamenting and howling as it dawned on them that he had been swept downstream.

Older boys leapt through the bush along the sides of the river heading down the river looking for their mate or a drowned body. I had to stay with the school pupils, and I would not have been nearly as fast as those boys were, sprinting over rocks and through bushes till they were out of sight around the bend in the river.

The young man who had been swept away was named Kyaka, and he was a Kyaka Enga who had walked with his friends and me from Baiyer River to Lapalama. I was already imagining and dreading the repercussions. In their vendetta culture I would immediately become the prime target for a pay-back killing. However, their culture also accepted that anyone from the offender's tribe could be killed instead, so I had put the whole Lapalama community in peril. Christians, of course, usually did not follow those tribal customs, but not everyone was Christian.

Our prayers are really earnest, sincere and desperate in such emergencies. We had to wait nearly half an hour for the boys to return, shouting as they came. They were shouting in fast Enga but some students explained to me in Pidgin that "Em I dai" (Him, he die). Now the language was really confusing. I wanted to know if he did die. So I tried to clarify it, "Em i dai finis?" Plain English words had other meanings in Pidgin, so it took a while to clarify that "Em i no dai finis. Em i dai liklik tasol." (Him, he no die finish. Him he die a little bit, that's all).



My student Kyaka staggered back very battered and bleeding, but alive. We were all thanking God as we celebrated together. The students who found him said that the only thing that worried Kyaka when he eventually climbed onto a rock was that in all the tumbling he had lost his laplap. I was thankful he had not lost his life. I learned from Kyaka, years later when I returned for a holiday visit in the nineties when he was then a senior church leader among the Engas, that some people in his tribe did want to kill me, but he had talked them out of it.

That was not the only time I had been in danger in New Guinea. As teachers, and later as Bible School teachers, we sometimes flew to inter-mission conferences for in-service training. I accompanied two young Enga ladies to Madang and then on to Rabaul for a Christian Education conference. In Madang I walked with them around the town and then back to our mission guest house. The next morning the night watchman at the guest house told me he had found a group of angry young men with knives creeping toward my room intending to kill me. They thought I was another white man who had taken two of their girls into my room. Fortunately the night watchman explained that the girls had their own room, and I was their missionary friend and guardian. This guardian was asleep and unaware of the danger.

### **(3) Tekin**

The mission had established stations among the Min tribal people in the highland ranges to the west, close to the West Irian (then West Papua) border. The largest was at Telefomin, also a government administration station for the whole area. A long day's trek from Telefomin brought you to Tekin, a small mission station with a pastors' school, a primary school and Aid Post. Normally two missionary families lived there. The senior missionary would care for all the village churches, helping to train village pastors, and teaching staff ran the small school.

After I had been teaching at Lapalama school for a year the mission leadership appointed me to Tekin as their relief teacher and school supervisor for part of the time that the teacher and his family were away on furlough. As Tekin was a remote and recent outpost station, facilities were minimal but adequate. We had the usual generator to provide electric power from dusk to 9 or 10 p.m., kerosene fridges, and strong bush material buildings. It was higher and cooler in the ranges than the Enga area, so we wore jumpers in the cool evenings.

Again I gained new experiences among the Tekin people, teaching basic English, and trekking to some villages with mission staff at weekends to attend village services. I enjoyed wide ranging talks with missionaries and their assistants on the trek and saw one of their baptismal services as a group of new believers, mostly young, publicly declared their commitment to Christ. As with the Engas, they held their very public service in a damned creek forming a baptismal pool.

Being fit and healthy I took the opportunity to make the long trek from Tekin to Telefomin, and enjoyed a weekend with the staff there, learning about their approach to mission, evangelism and discipleship. Then I returned on the weekly MAF flight to Tekin, famous for its unusual and alarming airstrip in a narrow valley, with a slight curve in it! Fortunately the plane always slowed enough to negotiate the sloping curve on landing, and took off down the slope with sufficient speed after the curve to take off.

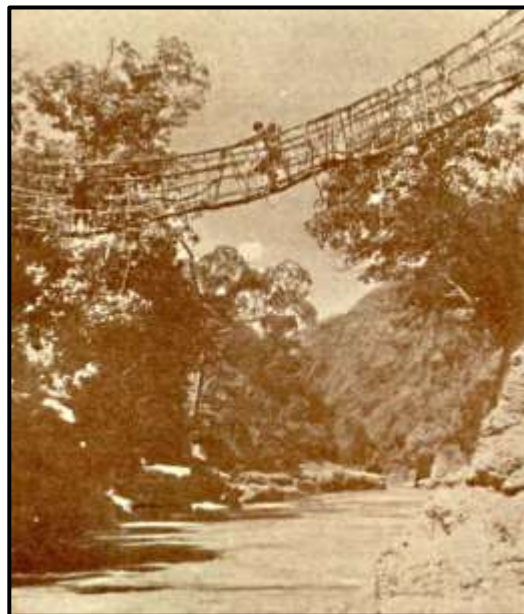
#### (4) Sauanda



During my third year I commenced some short-term Bible Schools among the Engas, and was then asked to start a new school in a village called Sauanda about 5 kilometres up the Sau Valley from Kompam. So for the last six months of my first term, while still single, I lived in that village by the river on land set aside for the school. We had basic bush buildings, one school room, my house and cook house, and my assistant's house for the 'haus boi'. All were made of woven bamboo with thick grass roofs. One night my assistant stoked his house fire too much and sparks flew into the dry grass roof, so it soon caught fire and burned down completely. He quickly rescued his few belongings, mainly some clothes. Within a day, the villagers built him a new one room house.

Years later, after the school had grown to its full size with seven or eight classes and teachers, a pay-back war erupted between that village and a neighbouring one because someone stole food from a garden, and in the fighting the whole school was burned down. They had to build all over again higher up the ridge.

There I also learned a bit more about the local spirit culture. One night a man arrived, as many did, wanting to talk. He was really scared. He had seen a local spirit, the spirit of a man gliding along toward him just above the track. They believed it was the spirit of someone who had been murdered. I knew about spirits from the Bible. So we talked about Jesus' victory over everything including the spirit world, and I encouraged him to trust in Jesus not only for his own protection, but also for local leaders to also trust in Jesus to free their people, fully.



## ***Chapter 3 – PNG Bible Schools (1967-1970)***

At that time in the sixties we had no Bible Schools in our area. I discussed this with many missionaries, and I was keen to teach in Bible School once I had passed my language exams and could at least speak and preach in basic Enga. Senior missionaries led courses for regular pastor schools and occasional Bible Schools for keen leaders, but no full-time Bible School existed there then.

The mission staff discussed this, on and off, for a year, including discussing some papers presented at the annual staff conference at Baiyer River. Eventually, after a lot of consultation with the pastors, we all decided to hold a three-month short-term Bible School in Enga and Pidgin in each of the four districts, based in Baiyer River and Lumusa in the south, and Kompam and Lapalama in the north. I organised and led them, and the pastors and mission staff approved and adjusted the proposed curriculum.

We all used Gestetner duplicators in those days, and like everyone else, I was soon churning out endless stencils with my typewriter and with drawing implements, and even inserting a marvellous range of stencilled pictures, photos and cut outs. We all produced translations, notes, teaching aids, and many kinds of booklets. These included Bible passages, stories, health manuals, agricultural and building guidelines, and weekly devotionals.

The mission gave me the great opportunity to visit other Bible Schools in New Guinea so that I could see what others did. That was informative and reassuring. We had been blessed as a mission. We worked among a very receptive people who showed a lot of leadership in church growth and mission themselves. Our Bible Schools could contribute to that.

### **(1) Pinyapaisa (Lumusa area)**

I started in the Lumusa area at a mountain village called Pinyapaisa, about four hour's walk beyond the Lumusa plateau. Being single I found it easy to move there, although later on Seaton and Barbara Arndell lived there as well. Strong young men earned carriers' wages by carrying my tin trunks on long poles, and they even carried a kerosene fridge tied to long poles as well. Although I lived in a village setting, I still had 'mod cons' such as a fridge, a typewriter and a portable Gestetner duplicator.

I had to create most of my teaching materials. We did, however, have some booklets in Enga including translations of some books of the New Testament. We also had *Nupela Testamen* (New-fellow Testament) in Pidgin, and a Pidgin Bible Story book. The rest I created. Later on Tony Cupit, with Mapusiya Kolo and others, completed the Kyaka-Enga translation of the New Testament, printed in the seventies just in time to help the people understand the revival that swept through the whole area from 1973.

I taught basic Bible information, but also practical training for village teachers and young pastors-in-training. Many of my students were, or would be, village teachers or village pastors. So I found myself running a short-term teachers college and a short-term ministry training college, called a Bible School. I taught these young village leaders literacy and numeracy in Enga and Pidgin as well as the more usual Bible School subjects such as the life of Christ, Bible overview, the early church, and teaching and ministry skills. And they were teaching me a lot about their own culture as well.

I was teaching them how to use Pidgin resources, and they were teaching me Enga, but now I was mixing up their Kyaka-Enga in the south with my Sau-Enga from the north. Alas I never fully sorted it all out! Some words were the same or similar in the two dialects, but many were different. They often laughed at my muddled Enga.

It was adult education with stimulating cross-cultural exploration of Jesus' life and teaching and life in the early church, applied to their village life and culture. They were teaching me as I was teaching them. We often started with a Bible passage and then I wanted them to tell me what that meant in their own culture. They pointed out that they were much closer to the Bible culture than I was. They shared everything, or had everything in common, as in the New Testament church. They knew a lot about spirits, and Jesus certainly took authority over a lot of unclean spirits. They knew a lot about the power of demons, curses and magic. That was a lively part of the Book of Acts and the early church as well.

When revival swept through that whole Enga area in the seventies, the pastors and village teachers had already explored what it could mean, and they seemed to understand it more than many missionaries, and moved in the Holy Spirit's authority, just as in the New Testament.

## **(2) Kompiam**

After three months at Pinyapaissa in the Lumusa district, I moved to Kompiam in the Sau Valley, again carting all my worldly goods in my tin trunks. Carriers walked them back to Lumusa and then an MAF Cessna flew them and me to Kompiam. Again for three months I taught village teachers and pastors in a basic Bible School, this time working with the more familiar Sau-Enga dialect of that area.

There I produced an interesting 8mm film of the Good Samaritan story, depicted in the Enga culture. The students loved it and became overnight movie stars in that area. I mailed my 8mm films to Australia for developing, then spliced and edited them into a movie. So I was director, editor, and producer, but my students were the stars. When we showed the film in the villages (using a portable generator) it was the first time those people had seen a movie. They thought we had filmed real life, and were really upset about the poor village man attacked and robbed and left to die, but they were relieved that he did not 'die finish.' Although the uncaring local pastor and village teacher both ignored the victim, at least a stranger from a foreign tribe helped him and took him to the aid post.



While I was at Kompiam I began a stimulating correspondence with Meg Bowman, then teaching in the school at Lapalama where I had been previously.

Later that year I started the new school up the Sau Valley at Sauanda and would sometimes head back to Kompiam on my motor bike on Friday afternoon, and then trek/run for 3 hours (usually a 5 hour hike) across to Lapalama to visit Meg. We both returned to Australia in December, 1967, became engaged, and married in May, 1968, near the end of six months furlough.

### **(3) Lapalama**

Married, we returned to Lapalama in 1968 where Meg taught in the school again, and I ran their short-term Bible School. As at Kompam, I was back in the Sau Enga area, using that Sau-Enga dialect and Pidgin with my students. Again I was teaching young men who would be village teachers or pastors.

Now Meg's involvement with the students enriched my teaching. We often had them in the house for discussions or eating together. Both of us kept very busy preparing materials for Bible School and for school, and I had begun external studies in education with the University of Queensland.

Those months back in Lapalama seemed to race by very quickly. Again we accompanied our students to village churches at weekends, and now I was seeing more of my students involved in preaching or Sunday School teaching.

I loved to see them applying what they were learning. Of course, they had been doing plenty of that before we started the Bible School, but that just made our classes all the more relevant and interesting because I was teaching many of them on-the-job with in-service continuing education.

### **(4) Kwinkia (Baiyer area)**

Early the next year we moved with all our goods, including our wedding gifts, back to the Baiyer River area. The mission's agricultural training land at Kwinkia in the wide Baiyer valley had become available to establish a Bible School, so we moved there into the large bush house on that land previously the home for Rob and Win Thompson. They had trained agricultural workers there, but more recently they had moved to the Baiyer River station to work full time with pastors, as well as supervising agricultural developments in the villages including growing coffee for income and running cattle. The Baiyer River staff had run a short term Bible School for that area at their pastors' school.

The local people at Kwinkia built a new large classroom for the Bible School and I established the Bible School there, once again mixing my Sau-Enga with their Kyaka-Enga. So at the beginning of 1969, we commenced the full time Bible School there. That had been a long range plan of the mission and the pastors. The pastors from each of the four districts chose eight men to be the first full time students, committed to two or three years of Bible School. Pastors from Lapalama also urged the mission to take three extra students from the even more remote Wapi area around Yangis, a missionary outreach of the Enga church. So we did. Those three men from Wapi had less education than the others, and needed more help with literacy, but they showed great commitment and strong faith. These students later became leaders in the Enga revival from 1973.



In our first year there at the new Enga Baptist Bible School, I was the inaugural principal and teacher. Our students were very committed, and really keen. The photo is Pastor Sai speaking at the opening of the first classroom.

Teaching them was not like work, but a privilege and pleasure. Some were married and had children, so our hostel area included many small homes for young families. Meg taught the wives literacy as well as practical skills for home and church life.

Our first child was born that year at the Tinsley Hospital at Baiyer River, and quickly became a special attraction in the nearby village as well as with the students and their families.

Every morning we had Enga style classes, often more like discussions and story-telling, the way Engas would do that, sitting around the village in the shade of the tall bamboo clumps. During the afternoons the students worked in their food gardens and at night had prayer groups or studies by the light of kerosene lamps.

We regularly ate with groups of them in our home, the eight from a district at a time, and the 11 from Lapalama, introducing them to our cutlery and some of our food, as well as sitting together on the floor Enga style, sharing their food. At least to some degree we became part of their communal living.

I prepared teaching materials in both Enga and Pidgin. That included opportunities to produce some Pidgin materials for wider national use. For example, Scripture Union in New Guinea published daily reading notes on different books of the Bible, and asked me to write their notes for the book of James. I enjoyed writing devotional comments on each section of James' small practical letter, applied to the South Pacific communal culture.

Kongoe Sipwanji joined me at Kwinkia to teach in the second year. One of the strong leaders from the Lumusa area, he had just graduated from the Christian Leaders Training College in Banz in the highlands where the teaching was in English. So now I had welcome help in preparing materials we needed for our very practical subjects, exploring the Bible, the church, ministry, teaching, and discipleship. We also included practical teaching on agriculture and community life, usually taken by visiting specialists from the mission.

I am grateful to the mission and the Enga church for the privilege and experience of inaugural teaching in their Bible Schools. I'm sure I grew at least as much as the students in discovering biblical and ministry truths relevant to their culture and to me. Cross-cultural experience like that took me through a paradigm shift in my understanding of the Bible and the church. I thank God for that. I think I needed New Guinea more than New Guinea needed me!

Later in that second year there, Meg and I returned to Australia for furlough and deputation, medical clearance, the birth of our second child, and I also studied at the University of Queensland to complete my Bachelor of Educational Studies degree which I had commenced externally in New Guinea. Meanwhile at Kwinkia, Seaton and Barbara Arndell joined Kongoe to teach at the Bible School and develop it into the Enga's church's Bible College which eventually had a fully indigenous staff, with Maku Lunga and then Kongoe as principals.

## ***Chapter 4 – Australia (From 1970)***

We have been involved in renewal and revival for almost half a century since 1970. Meg and I moved to Brisbane where my work with many churches began. Very briefly, here are some highlights of our ‘mission’ in Australia.

I worked with the Methodist and then Uniting Church, 1971-1994, first in Christian Education and then teaching at Alcorn College (their lay training college), and Trinity Theological College, focusing on mission and renewal.

Our family with three children lived at Kangaroo Point in Brisbane, then Toowoomba, then Corinda in Brisbane. I travelled a lot, teaching and preaching in the Darling Downs region of southern Queensland. I led renewal meetings and seminars in national conferences, at Wesley church in the heart of the city, in Toowoomba, and then at Wesley Church in Kangaroo Point back in Brisbane. I enjoyed working with Col Warren (Principal of Alcorn College) and Wal Gregory (part-time minister of Kangaroo Point Uniting Church) as we saw the church grow in renewal and we took many teams to meetings in many other churches to encourage them.

For many years our family lived in community with others who were involved in renewal, mostly with home groups linked to Wesley Church at Kangaroo Point. The interdenominational Renewal Fellowship began in our home group, and then moved to Trinity Theological College when I taught there.

The Renewal Fellowship met on Friday and Sunday nights for almost two decades from the mid-eighties with Hilary Mackerras at the piano. We shared informal communion on Sunday nights, constantly praying together in groups. We took teams to many churches and on mission, as described in this book, and supported many people. Our offerings, with no salaries or building costs, were placed in an offering box near the door and mainly supported missions.

Our library of loaned renewal and revival books was well used constantly.

We led renewal worship and prayer at Gateway Baptist Church in monthly rallies for a couple of years with a filled baptistery and clothes available for those wanting baptism. A Ph.D. student from Malaysia saw a humbling vision of Jesus there during our worship, surrendered to Jesus and was immediately baptised that night.

I taught elective courses at college on ministry and mission including renewal. Students came from Uniting, Anglican, Catholic and Pentecostal churches. Then from 1995 I taught degree and diploma courses in the Bible College of Christian Outreach Centre, the School of Ministries of Christian Heritage College. We developed and taught a lot of courses on renewal and revival.

As part of my teaching, and leading the Renewal Fellowship, I was the founding editor of the *Renewal Journal*, initially published twice a year for a decade. It became a digital web journal at [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com). The *Renewal Journal* spread widely including internationally, and



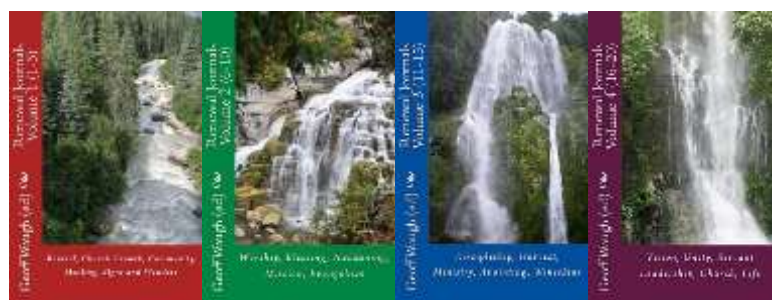
found its way into many university and college libraries in England and America as well as Australia. I began receiving invitations to teach and lead renewal meetings and conferences in many countries. That is the story told partly in this book.

**I am grateful for the constant prayers of friends and the Renewal Fellowship and also the 6-7am prayer group at Kenmore Baptist Church five mornings each week. For 7 years the Lord woke me before 6am Monday-Friday with no alarm set, even in the cold, dark winter!**

I tell the story of those years in Australia in more detail in my autobiography, *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*.



*Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*



*Renewal Journals in 4 bound volumes – 20 issues*



## ***Chapter 5 – Australia: Elcho Island (1994)***

### ***Australian Aborigines, 1979***

The Lord poured out his Spirit on Elcho Island in northern Australia on Thursday, March 14, 1979. Rev Djiniyini Gondarra was then the Uniting Church (formerly Methodist) minister in the small community of Galiwin'ku at the south end of the long narrow island. He had been away on holidays in Sydney and Brisbane, returning on the late afternoon Missionary Aviation Fellowship flight.

He was travel weary and just wanted to unpack and go to bed early. Many of his people, however, had been praying for months, and some of them had prayed together every day while he had been away. They wanted to have prayer and Bible study with him in his home. This is his account of that Pentecost among Aborigines in the Arnhem Land churches across the north of Australia:

After the evening dinner, we called our friends to come and join us in the Bible Class meeting. We just sang some hymns and choruses translated into Gupapuynu and into Djambarrpuynu. There were only seven or eight people who were involved or came to the Bible Class meeting, and many of our friends didn't turn up. We didn't get worried about it.

I began to talk to them that this was God's will for us to get together this evening because God had planned this meeting through them so that we will see something of his great love which will be poured out on each one of them. I said a word of thanks to those few faithful Christians who had been praying for renewal in our church, and I shared with them that I too had been praying for the revival or the renewal for this church and for the whole of Arnhem Land churches, because to our heavenly Father everything is possible. He can do mighty things in our churches throughout our great land.

These were some of the words of challenge I gave to those of my beloved brothers and sisters. Gelung, my wife, also shared something of her experience of the power and miracles that she felt deep down in her heart when she was about to die in Darwin Hospital delivering our fourth child. It was God's power that brought the healing and the wholeness in her body.

I then asked the group to hold each other's hands and I began to pray for the people and for the church that God would pour out his Holy Spirit to bring healing and renewal to the hearts of men and women, and to the children.

**Suddenly we began to feel God's Spirit moving in our hearts and the whole form of our prayer suddenly changed and everybody began to pray in the Spirit and in harmony. And there was a great noise going on in the room and we began to ask one another what was going on.**

**Some of us said that God had now visited us and once again established his kingdom among his people who have been bound for so long by the power of evil. Now the Lord is setting his church free and bringing us into the freedom of happiness and into reconciliation and to restoration.**

**In that same evening the word just spread like the flames of fire and reached the whole community in Galiwin'ku. Gelung and I couldn't sleep at all that night because people were just coming for the ministry, bringing the sick to be prayed for, for healing. Others came to bring their problems. Even a husband and wife came to bring their marriage problem, so the Lord touched them and healed their marriage.**

**Next morning the Galiwin'ku Community once again became the new community. The love of Jesus was being shared and many expressions of forgiveness were taking place in the families and in the tribes. Wherever I went I could hear people singing and humming Christian choruses and hymns! Before then I would have expected to hear only fighting and swearing and many other troublesome things that would hurt your feelings and make you feel sad.**

**Many unplanned and unexpected things happened every time we went from camp to camp to meet with the people. The fellowship was held every night and more and more people gave their lives to Christ, and it went on and on until sometimes the fellowship meeting would end around about midnight. There was more singing, testimony, and ministry going on. People did not feel tired in the morning, but still went to work.**

Many Christians were beginning to discover what their ministry was, and a few others had a strong sense of call to be trained to become Ministers of the Word. Now today these ministers who have done their training through Nungilinya College have been ordained. These are some of the results of the revival in Arnhem Land. Many others have been trained to take up a special ministry in the parish.

The spirit of revival has not only affected the Uniting Church communities and the parishes, but Anglican churches in Arnhem Land as well, such as in Angurugu, Umbakumba, Roper River, Numbulwar and Oenpelli. These all have experienced the revival, and have been touched by the joy and the happiness and the love of Christ.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Arnhem Land has swept further to the Centre in Pitjantjatjara and across the west into many Aboriginal settlements and communities. I remember when Rev. Rronang Garrawurra, Gelung and I were invited by the Warburton Ranges people and how we saw God's Spirit move in the lives of many people. Five hundred people came to the Lord and were baptised in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

There was a great revival that swept further west. I would describe these experiences like a wild bush fire burning from one side of Australia to the other side of our great land. The experience of revival in Arnhem Land is still active in many of our Aboriginal parishes and the churches.

We would like to share these experiences in many white churches where doors are closed to the power of the Holy Spirit. It has always been my humble prayer that the whole of Australian Christians, both black and white, will one day be touched by this great and mighty power of the living God.

[Djiniyini Gondarra, [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) – Issue 1.]



*Aborigines baptised at Elcho Island (2010)*

### **Aboriginal revival team**

We invited a team of Aborigines from Elcho Island near Darwin to come to Brisbane for Pentecost weekend in 1993. The Uniting Church on Elcho Island experienced strong revival from March 1979, led by their pastor Rev Djiniyini Gondarra. It sparked revival in aboriginal communities and churches across the north and west of Australia, so I wanted them to share with us. Two dozen came and we housed them at Trinity Theological College in the students' dormitories. They found the beds too soft but enjoyed sleeping on the carpeted floor!

**We held the meetings at Christian Outreach Centre in Brisbane, in their large auditorium offered freely to us. Although we began in the seats, we soon found ourselves sitting on the floor on and around the large platform and its steps, talking and praying together aboriginal style. They sang, gave testimonies and spoke, in simple, clear ways. They surprised me when they told me that it was the first time they had been invited to lead meetings in a white congregation!**

I asked them to pray for people at the end of each meeting. “We don’t know how to pray for white people,” they said. “We haven’t done that before.”

“Just pray for us the same way you do for your own people,” I suggested. They did. We sat with them on the floor, talked together and then prayed for one another.

They prayed with the faith and gracious insights typical for them. Asked why white churches did not invite Aborigines to minister to them, and why the revival did not touch white churches they replied softly, “You are too proud.”

They invited us to join them on Elcho Island the following March, 1994, for their anniversary celebrations of the beginning of the revival. A small team of 10 of us flew there as guests, attending and enjoying the meetings and friendship. Although the initial intensity of the revival had died down, the meetings and community still carried the warmth, vitality and improved social conditions brought by the revival. You can read about that revival on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) in the first issue of the **Renewal Journal**.

Aboriginal pastors and leaders spoke at the meetings, celebrating what God had done among them. I had the honour to speak one night, gladly thanking them for their God-given national leadership in revival, much needed by the rest of us in Australia.

**Some of us visited a small community, driving 50 kilometres on 4WD dirt tracks to the north end of the long narrow island. That community had one trade store, a single room school and a church. The whole community of about 30 people prayed together every morning and night, especially for revival in Australia. They had seen their prayers being answered among their own people, but continued to pray together daily for the whole nation. I found it a holy, humbling time to pray with them.**

Features of this revival continue to occur in many aboriginal communities in Australia, particularly in North Queensland from July 1999. Christians repent and pray. God’s Spirit brings widespread confession. People find freedom from addiction to social vices including drunkenness, immorality and gambling. Family life becomes harmonious and happy. Increasing civil order produces widespread peace and joy.



Our team and the local people use the light aircraft serving the aboriginal communities and the missions throughout northern Australia.

We’re grateful for the skill and service of the dedicated Christian pilots who serve God and the people with their regular daily flights.

## ***Chapter 6 – Papua New Guinea (1994)***

Many revival movements changed village life and culture in Papua New Guinea (PNG), especially from the early 1970s. I give details of those revivals in my book ***South Pacific Revivals***. You can ‘read inside’ on Amazon, and see the Blog on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com). That book is available as an eBook and in paperback.

I first went to PNG in 1965 as a single man in my twenties to teach in schools and in Bible Schools (See Chapters 1-3). There I met Meg, who also went to PNG to teach in schools, and we married in Sydney on furlough (now called home assignment) in 1968. Then we returned to PNG for a further term, teaching in Bible Schools.

Meg and I returned to the Enga area in the highlands of PNG on a three week holiday visit in June-July, 1994, accompanied by our youngest daughter Melinda, then a trainee nurse. A former student at Trinity Theological College, Rev Gideon Tuke, had invited me to speak at a United Church conference in the Solomon Islands, so we combined that with our return visit to Papua New Guinea.

We stayed with mission staff at Mt Hagen, Kompam and Baiyer River, and renewed friendships with many people we had known and taught almost 30 years previously. Pioneer church leaders Sai and Pii still lived, respected and honoured. Sai laughed sympathetically when I tried to revive my Enga and remembered some Sau-Enga phrases. Pidgin, though, was still easy and commonly used.

Revival had swept the area in the seventies, followed by an upsurge of crime in the eighties. Mission stations now needed high protective wire fences and employed night watchmen – a huge contrast to the safety and freedom we had known there. My daughter, a nurse, could not visit village clinics in the hospital jeep, heavily protected with thick mesh wire, in case of rape or robbery. The women had to stay on the mission station for protection.

I did take a wild, fast ride by jeep from Baiyer River back to Kwinkia where we had lived, and spoke at some meetings there, prayed with many, and met former students who now, like me, had their own families and held many positions of leadership in the church and community. We celebrated God’s grace and goodness, even in the midst of opposition and danger.

I especially remember a moving night at Kompam where Leneya Bulae from Yangis found me. He had been one of the first students at the Bible School at Kwinkia, one of the three from the remote Yangis area north of Lapalama. His education had been limited, and he was one of the quieter students. Now he served the Lord as a pastor at Yangis and also for six months a year as a roving evangelist, Spirit-led and empowered. Like many others in the revival, he found new anointing and gifting in his life and ministry. He saw many saved, healed and delivered as he prayed for them. He received unusual revelations for people. A Bible reference would come to his mind, even though he did not know what it said. When they read it, they would find it particularly relevant. Leneya only had a Pidgin Bible, with no commentaries or concordances.

As we prayed for each other, he felt that Luke 17:5 was for me, “Lord, increase our faith.” Now the student taught the teacher! Interestingly, I felt that Judges 6 applied to Leneya, another Gideon destroying local idols and defeating invading forces with small resources under God’s direction.

I love to see people living the Scriptures today. That happened with many I have taught who serve the Lord powerfully in Papua New Guinea, other Pacific islands, the Philippines, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, and Africa. That too became my search as I researched renewal and revival, with a growing family.

Meg, Melinda and I flew from Mt Hagen in the highlands to Port Moresby for our connecting flight to Honiara in the Solomon Islands, and then we flew on to Munda in the Western Solomon Islands.



*PNG highlanders celebrate sing-sing*

## **Chapter 7 – Solomon Islands: Tabaka (1994)**

**By Don, with my comments in italics**

*Meg, Melinda and I flew west from Honiara early, 6.30-7.50am on Monday morning July 4, above the vivid greens and blues of the islands and lagoons. We joined the team from Australia already in Munda. We clambered into tightly packed outboard canoes to sail on stormy seas about an hour to the island camp at Tabaka for the week long men's conference with Gideon. There I taught on the Holy Spirit and revival using my book **Living in the Spirit**, recently published by the Uniting Church in Australia.*

*Helen Hill with Meryl Hirsche and Ada Koy, all from the Renewal Fellowship, had already reached Munda, staying at a local guest house, Agnes Lodge on the sea shore. Due to the stormy weather and crowded camp, Meryl and Ada stayed at the Lodge in Munda, supporting the conference in prayer and fasting. Helen helped with administration and videoing sessions, and Meg and Melinda also helped the women and cared for the sick as well as praying for people, although in that culture and at a men's camp, it was very much a supporting role.*

*These pastors and church and community leaders have a strong evangelical mission and church history and had seen touches of revival, so many of them were keen to learn more about the Holy Spirit and revival. I left copies of my book with them and in later visits to the Solomon Islands often saw worn out copies of those books still carried and used by pastors and leaders.*

In June-July, Helen and four or five women from the Renewal Fellowship accompanied Geoff to a men's camp in the Solomon Islands at the invitation of Rev. Gideon Tuke. We knew Gideon from the time he was in Brisbane studying for the ministry at the Uniting Church Theological College at Bayliss Street, Auchenflower in the mid-1980s. He was now an ordained minister of the United Church of the Solomon Islands.

This was a **girls own adventure** and it started from the moment the girls fronted at the check in counter at the old Brisbane International Airport where some, including Helen were told they would not be going as the plane was over booked. Time and again this sort of thing was to happen on Renewal Fellowship adventures as the Devil stepped<sup>1</sup> in to either stop the venture or to at least thwart it. The girls dug their heels in and said they were going, and that was that, so there was a bit of a confrontation at the counter.

That was just the start. They did reach Honiara early afternoon after a three hour flight and did make the connection for the hour long flight in a smaller aircraft to Munda on the extreme western tip of New Georgia, just before dark. Next day there was the hair raising trip in an overloaded tinny through rough seas and reefs to the camp site at Tabaka.

There were two hundred (200) men already encamped in tents in a jungle clearing when the girls arrived. Local wives fed the multitudes by boiling huge quantities of rice and fish, baking bread in camp ovens and so on. Then there was the scrubbing of the pots with no more than

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<sup>1</sup> In 1999, three of us waited four hours at Delhi International Airport in India late at night to get our party on our booked flight to Colombo that was allegedly full. When we did get on, the changed plane had in excess of 100 spare seats!

elbow grease and sand.

All that was just part of the adventure, but I want to focus on the impact this group of women had on the Renewal Fellowship and its future missions. Although Elcho Island earlier in the year had been the first outreach where a group had accompanied Geoff, this was the first overseas, and paved the way for many further missions to many other countries.

Having travelling companions on these trips freed Geoff from a lot of administration work and allowed him to concentrate on his evangelism tasks. Inevitably the travelling companions mixed with the locals and provided valuable feedback to Geoff. Geoff's wife Meg and trainee nurse daughter Melinda treated many medical needs such as cuts, infections and malaria.

Helen had been using her video camera now for several years and had an idea that it was worthwhile to video these events. Initially perhaps just for the record and to encourage those back home, but the idea developed and on future trips Helen videos of Geoff's teaching and tapes were left behind for local use. Later this work would develop further with better cameras to the stage where comprehensive sets of DVDs were made to multiply the word. A fifteen minute interview with Gideon Tuke at the Tabaka Camp, was perhaps the forerunner of a long and continuing association with him.

On Helen's return the Renewal Fellowship rallied with all sorts of stuff for Tabaka and Simbo Island, Gideon's home island. At one time there were six tea chests being tightly packed in the lounge of our Brisbane home. Lids were then nailed down and addresses painted on them before being taken down to the wharves in our VW Kombi van for shipment. This was the first of many such shipments, which would eventually include such things as Helen's mother's sewing machine, another sewing machine from the *under the house collection* of a good friend, a new portable generator, a TV set and a video machine.



## ***Chapter 8 – Philippines (1994, 1995)***

Dr Charles Ringma invited me to teach graduate subjects at the Asian Theological Seminary in Manila in the Philippines where he taught. Charles and his wife Rita also worked with Servants Mission, managing their guest house and headquarters. I had known them in Brisbane when they were the inaugural directors of Teen Challenge in Australia.

So I stayed with Servants Mission and found my way to the seminary on hot, crowded Jeepneys, adapted from the popular army jeeps with passengers sitting side-saddle, or standing and crouching. Most Jeepneys sported brightly coloured religious texts and slogans – *Jesus is Lord, God is love, Hallelujah, Blessed Virgin*, and hundreds more.

**I taught M.Th. subjects during the June vacations in 1994 on Revival History and in 1995 on Signs and Wonders, and visited huge churches in Manila. My assistant lecturer invited me to a church he had established. People there responded quickly, loved praying for one another, and expected healing and miracles.**

**A student in our class invited me to her home to pray for her sick daughter. The little girl slept on her mattress on the floor, so I just rested my hand on her and prayed. She slept on. Next day her mum brought her to enjoy our air conditioned classroom, happy and healthy.**

**During the class seminars, my students reported on various signs and wonders that they had experienced in their churches. Many of them expected God to do the same things now as he did in the New Testament, but not all!**

**“We don’t seem to have miracles in our church,” said one student, a part-time Baptist pastor and police inspector.**

**“You could interview a pastor from a church that does,” I suggested.**

**So he interviewed a Pentecostal pastor about miraculous answers to prayer in their church. That student reported to the class how the Pentecostal church sent a team of young people to the local mental hospital for monthly meetings where they sang and witnessed and prayed for people. Over 40 patients attended their first meeting there, and they prayed for 26 personally, laying hands on them. A month later, when they returned for their next meeting, all those 26 patients had been discharged and sent home.**

In Manila I joined the team of Servants Mission in their guesthouse base. They worked with the poor in the slums and most lived in the slums with the people they served. They lived simply, identifying with the people, trusting God for his supernatural intervention in personal and social needs.

I found it moving and challenging to visit the tiny slum homes where Dr Dorothy Mathieson and Judy Marsh from Gateway Baptist lived and worked then. Conditions there in the slums made the rest of Manila look luxurious, even with the city’s regular electrical brown-outs, jammed telephones, cracked and gritty streets, and badly broken road drainage awash with sewerage in heavy rains.

Following my return from Manila in 1995, Meg and I travelled on round-the-world tickets to Ghana, England and Canada. That was the cheapest way to visit Ghana on mission.



*Jeepney*

## ***Chapter 9 – Ghana, Canada: Toronto (1995)***

***By Don, with my comments in italics***

*..Come over to us in Macedonia, you will cry when you see how poor we are...*

The physical and spiritual blackness of darkest Africa has to be experienced to be even partially understood. Physically, for the full week we were in Ghana, we saw no white faces apart from our own, and on arrival at 7pm at the stony, muddy, market place in the town of Suhum for the first night of a three night crusade with the rain pouring down and in the middle of a blackout, darkness took on a completely new meaning. Spiritually, we were told by the locals that Satan lived in the blackness down beyond the glimmer of light when the six lonely fluorescent tubes placed on temporary poles to light the crusade area finally came on. The only movement down there came from the occasional goat that moved in and out of the shadows. People avoided the area.

We were in Ghana in response to a call from Pastor Nana Korankye of Wintel (win and tell about Jesus) Ministries International, one of the numerous small Christian groups in Ghana. Pastor Nana had read one of Geoff's articles on renewal and wrote to him earlier in the year with a plea *to come over to us in Macedonia, you will cry when you see how poor we are.*

***Monday 19 June 1995.*** As we disembarked through a surprisingly new and well-ordered terminal the moment of truth arrived. Both pastors were there waiting for us in the baggage collection area. Pastor Acquah had never heard of Pastor Nana. Thus we had to make the embarrassing decision as to whose guests we really were. Obviously we had to stick with Geoff and Meg so we had to go with Pastor Nana, but we did arrange to call and see the Acquah's later in the week, which we did at the end of the mission program.



We were taken to the Prince Charles Hotel, somewhere in Accra, in one of the worst taxis we had ever seen. The doors rattled, the suspension was rough, and there was only one window winding handle for all windows that we passed around to wind windows up or down. No speedo or odometer, so how far we travelled or how fast was anybody's guess. The windscreen wipers were erratic and mostly did not work.



So we finally had Pastor Nana in the flesh. Here was the man who was head of the Wintel (win and tell) Ministries of Ghana. Wintel consisted of perhaps a dozen faithful souls dedicated to changing the world for God, just one of thousands of such groups found throughout Ghana, which was at least an outwardly switched on Christian country in contrast to the mainly Muslim communities through northern and central Africa.

Christianity was in evidence everywhere, particularly on the highways and byways, where every vehicle, be it a car or a truck was painted in bright colours and carried a Christian slogan.

Very little was actually revealed at our first meeting. I think that although they fully expected us to come, they didn't have money or resources and now we were there in the flesh they had to get on with it. Vaguely, the situation began to unfold, but we had some language problems and Ghana runs on rubber time.

The plan was for us to participate as a team from Australia in a three night open air crusade and three day time seminars at Suhum, which was *not far*, but turned out to be some 60 kilometres and an hour and a half drive from Accra. Several thousand posters had been printed billing the Australian team as the star attraction and literally plastered all over Accra and the surrounding area.

We found as they said in their invitation letter that they were indeed poor, in fact so poor that Pastor Nana did not even have a bicycle because his had been stolen the previous week. And yet their faith was strong enough to write that letter, and God provided their every need. We cried as they said we would, not so much because of how poor they were but rather for our own lack of faith compared with their faith. So we were exhorted to pray and vaguely told that perhaps the rain might stop tomorrow.

**Tuesday 20 June 1995.** People came to see us on and off throughout the day, so there must have been a flurry of arrangements being made somewhere. I found it difficult to understand why we were not just taken to Suhum if it was *not far* where we could have a look over the place and get on with it.

The day dragged on until around 4.30pm, when we were told all was ready and a taxi would call for us soon. It was raining. We squeezed into the taxi – four big Australians and a small Ghanaian driver - for what I still naively thought was just a short trip around the corner, or perhaps at worst just across Accra. But no, we headed out of the city and into the blackness of the night and continuing heavy rain. We drove on and on for nearly two hours having by now lost all sense of direction with absolutely no idea where we were. We seemed to be following a main road as we did pass the occasional car coming towards us, and sometimes perhaps a village in darkness, as it appeared the rain and storm had taken out any street or house lights there might have been.

The possibility of a kidnap or worse passed my mind, but I thought best not to mention it. We were completely at the mercy of these people and of course God, on whose prompting we were here. There were a few lessons in faith in store for us that night.

Finally with bodies complaining of cramp and minds totally confused we pulled up just after 7pm, just on two hours after we had started out. Through the rain we could vaguely make out that we were in some kind of a town, and probably at the local market place. Pastor Nana hopped out of his taxi behind us so at least we were with him again, but to get out in that rain was just not on.

What happened next is probably best taken from Geoff's book ***Flashpoints of Revival*** written and published shortly after this adventure, in which he documents records of revivals throughout the world over the past two hundred years. Several pages have been devoted to what happened in Ghana. Geoff has recently revised this book and added a comprehensive Appendix, and reading this again has been a prompt to continue writing these memoirs.

*We drove for over an hour in torrential rain for our first evening open-air crusade meeting in Ghana, West Africa. As the guest speaker, on my first visit to Africa, I wondered why the meetings had not been switched from the market area to a church building with a roof. Our hosts from a small independent church that was cooperating with other local churches for these meetings explained that they always held crusade meetings outside in the market where the people were. But what about the rain, I wondered.*

*Immediately before this visit to Ghana I taught a course on "signs and wonders" at the Asian Theological Seminary in Manila in the Philippines. (It was during my mid-year vacation from the Brisbane Christian Outreach Centre School of Ministries where I teach). While teaching the class I never dreamed that I and several other Australians would be holding outdoor meetings in the middle of the tropical rains in equatorial Africa. But there we were. Now we really needed some kind of a "sign", and I was certainly "wondering."*

***When we arrived in the mountain town of Suhum, it was dark. The torrential rain had cut off the electricity supply. The rain eased off a bit, so we gathered in the market square and prayed to God to guide us and to take over. Soon the rain ceased. The electricity came on. The host team began excitedly shouting that it was a miracle. "We will talk about this for years" they exclaimed with gleaming eyes.***

***I asked them again why they had planned outdoor meetings in the rainy season. They told me that if I could only come at that time, then they trusted God to work it all out.***

***Soon the musicians from one of the local churches had plugged their instruments into the sound system. I noticed the loud speakers were not facing the faithful Christians gathered in the fluorescent lit<sup>2</sup> area, but were pointing at the surrounding houses, the stores and a***

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<sup>2</sup> There were just six 40w fluorescent lamps to light the outdoor market meeting.

*hotel.*

*My interpreter that night didn't know a lot of English. I think he preached his own sermon based on some phrases of mine he understood or guessed, and apparently he did well. When we invited people to respond and give their lives to Christ, they came from the surrounding darkness into the light. Some wandered over from the pub, smelling of beer. They kept the ministry team busy praying and arranging follow up with the local churches.*

*At that point I left the work to the locals who understood one another. I just moved around laying hands on people's heads and praying for them, as did many others. People reported various touches of God in their lives. Some were healed. Later in the week an elderly man excitedly told how he had come to the meeting almost blind but now he could see.*

*Each day we held morning worship and teaching sessions for Christians in a church, hot under an iron roof on those clear, tropical sunny days. During the second morning I vividly 'saw' golden light fill the church and swallow up or remove blackness. At that point the African Christians became very noisy, vigorously celebrating and shouting praises to God. A fresh anointing seemed to fall on them just then.*

*Although it did not rain again for the whole time we were holding meetings, the day after the meetings finished the rains began again. The following week saw floods in Ghana that were reported on international television. Later on we received letters telling us how the church where we held our meetings had grown, expanded their building and sent out teams of committed young people in evangelism. Through that experience God showed us a glimpse of what He is doing in a big way on earth right now.*

We talk about the darkness. Helen and I stayed at the back of the crowd as we felt it was important for Geoff to get feedback from the gathering. Africans are spiritual people and if they said Satan lived down there in the darkness then we believed them. It was certainly a black hole and nobody ventured down there. When we saw it next day in daylight it was still a dark and ominous looking area.

Meanwhile in the light, conga dancing broke out as only Africans can dance, with the line weaving through the market place. Conga dancing is said to have originated in this part of Africa, and went over to America with the slaves.

Finally just before midnight we broke away to get into the taxis for the drive back to Accra. It didn't take quite as long for the return journey as the rain had ceased, but it was still over the hour. This was just the first of four round trips.

**Wednesday/ Thursday/ Friday 21/22/23 June 1995.** Needless to say we were hardly asleep when it was time to get up again for breakfast.

There were morning seminars today and the following two days at Suhum followed by two more night meetings. We rejected Pastor Nana's suggestion that we come back to the hotel for a rest after each seminar and travel out again for the night meeting. That would have been just too much travel and no rest at all, so we opted to stay at Suhum each afternoon but return to Accra each night. I doubt there was anywhere to stay at Suhum!



On the drive out we saw in daylight what we had missed at night. We were actually on the main road to Kumasi, Ghana's second traffic hub and capital of the ancient kingdom of Ashanti, and Suhum was only 60km from Accra.



The seminars were held indoors at the Christ Apostolic Church. We could not drive to the church as the laneway from the street had been washed out by the runoff from recent rain, and was no longer suited to anything but walking and then with difficulty.

However, after we crossed the creek at the bottom we found the church set in a pleasant enough, but untidy grassed area surrounded by a few houses and gardens.



We met Rev. Meenu, the minister of this church and spent the afternoons after the seminars sitting on the veranda of his small house with his wife and some of his many children watching the world go by, particularly the traffic to and from the nearby well.

The toilets were another problem and we were not shown to one until we reached bursting point and had to ask. Not so simple. Seems Meenu's was not for us and we were directed to a new one a neighbour had just built. It might have been new but that's all that could be said for it. It consisted of a grid of small logs straddling a pit and the art was to squat and aim between the logs, not an easy task. Then having squatted one had to get up and pull on the pants without losing one's footing and slipping between the logs. No need to mention the stench!!

We found as the meetings progressed more and more people were coming and the joy continued to flow. As we talked to more and more people we learned that very few of the pastors knew

each other and the meetings were a great opportunity for unity and strengthening the local churches. During the last session many testimonies were given and many blessings and healings were reported. Interestingly most had occurred at the market place at the night meetings.

*Pastors Nana and Meenu*



*Wintel Ministries Group*

The dancing and singing remains one of the lasting memories, particularly the way everybody waltzed up with their offering money and in so doing created a conga line that wove its way in and out and around the church. Also seemed the conga went on and on until there was enough money in the plate!

**Saturday 24 June 1995.** Today was appreciation time when, with the crusade behind us, Pastor Nana and his group were determined to take us out and show us something of Ghana. We think the plan was to take us down to the Cape Coast to see a slave castle, which they did, but unfortunately we doubt any one of them had ever been there before, and had no idea of time or distance. The result was that by the time the taxis had been organized and filled with fuel, it was already noon and there was a long way to go. The result was we reached the Cape Coast at Elmina Castle (my best guess) with just a half hour of daylight remaining. We would have liked at least an afternoon, but that was not to be.

We talk about the miracles in Ghana. The fact that we did get back to the hotel in Accra by midnight, safe and sound, but shaken and anxious, was another one of them. The chances of going off the road and drowning in a ditch that black rainy night were very real. This was the start of the rain that produced the floods reported later on international television, the rain that held off for the duration of the mission.

**Sunday 25 June 1989.** This was our final day in Ghana and having only returned to the hotel in the early hours of the morning after a very stressful night out, we were reluctant to rise early. The rain eased for a while and we attended the last of the three morning services at the Lighthouse Church in Accra. 2000 people regularly worship at each of the three morning and one evening services. Geoff had the opportunity of speaking at the evening service.





Helen and I flew out to London that night, (Geoff and Meg flew out a day later).

London and Accra are on the same meridian of longitude and hence the flight was direct and due north, straight up the Greenwich meridian. It took just six hours. Landing just after dawn at Gatwick rather than Heathrow took the hassle out of the arrival.

***By Geoff:***

*Yes, we flew to London, hired a car, enjoyed visiting Meg's sister Robyn and her husband Ferry, and drove to green and hilly Wales under sunny skies where we drove through or past key revival towns from the Welsh Revivals. Then we relaxed in a motel at Pembroke by the sea and heard congregations singing old revival hymns in their moving Welsh harmonies.*

*I had college assignments to mark!*

## ***Toronto, Canada***

*After driving back to London, appreciating country pub meals along the way, we flew direct to Toronto Canada, passing over the sunlit ice landscape of the arctic.*

*Since the mid-nineties Toronto and Pensacola became famous in revival literature. The Lord poured out his Spirit in amazing ways in both these cities. Hundreds of thousands have visited both places, discovering fresh touches from God. Meg and I spent a memorable week at the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship (TACF). Over 100,000 a year flocked there from all over the world for well over a decade.*

*The wide diversity of people from different denominations and countries there impressed me. Love and respect for others filled the atmosphere and testimonies. We joined the crowds of over 1500 each morning and night, enjoyed the low-key sensitive worship (knowing very few of their songs), appreciated the balanced teaching, and received personal prayer.*

*Both of us appreciated the gracious, caring way people prayed for us, and others. No rush. No hype. No pressure. Whether we stood, or sat in a chair, or rested on the carpeted floor, those praying for us did so quietly with prayers prompted by the Holy Spirit. Those praying laid a hand on us gently, as led, and trusted the Lord to touch us. He did. Warmth and love permeated us. We returned to our hotel after the meetings aware of increased peace and deeper assurance of the Lord's love and grace.*

*Our visit included a day's bus trip to Niagara Falls. It seemed like a parable of God pouring out his Spirit in abundance. We stood in the tunnel lookout under the roaring wall of water, and sailed through the spray below the falls in the Maid of the Mist ferry. Niagara Falls reminded us of our awesome creator and provided a time of refreshing in another way.*

*After returning to Brisbane I noticed that people I prayed for received strong touches from the Lord, most resting in the Spirit on the floor. We needed people to be ready to catch those who fell, to avoid them getting hurt (then needing extra healing prayer!). Some of them had visions of the Lord blessing them and others.*

## ***Chapter 10 – Solomon Islands: Simbo (1996)***

***By Don, with my comments in italics***

The Renewal Fellowship in Brisbane had been supporting the Rev Gideon Tuke for some two years now since the group of women had attended the men's camp in 1994. *Several container loads of stuff* had been sent across to Simbo Island where Gideon lived. This trip was an opportunity that came our way for a short packaged visit to the Solomon's including air fares and five night's accommodation. We took up the opportunity to visit Gideon at home on Simbo Island and focus on what he had done with the *stuff* and to see the church he had built using labour paid for by showing videos to the workers at night using the generator, TV set and video player sent over as part of the *stuff*.

I came home from a Sydney trip on one Friday night and we were off to the Solomon's the following Thursday night. It is interesting how the trip slotted in so well between work commitments away from home made well before the travel deal came up. You have to believe God has a hand in these arrangements when you are about His work.

We departed Brisbane on a Solomon Airlines flight (run by Qantas) at 11pm (well over an hour and a half late), and arrived in Honiara at 2.30am on Friday morning 16 August. Gideon's sister Salome and husband Arelo met us on our arrival and took us into town for a two hour nap at King Solomon Hotel<sup>3</sup> before returning to the airport for the 6.30am flight by Twin Otter aircraft to Gizo via Seghi.

Seghi was an hour up from Honiara and just a strip of grass cleared out of the jungle on a steep slope on a peninsular on New Georgia. It was built by the USA marines in WW2 in ten days. It has a crushed coral base and the grass is mowed so it was not too bad for light aircraft operation. Back in WW2, coach watchers were located near Seghi and they were never found by the Japanese.

We did not see anybody around as we landed but as we taxied back a few people appeared out of the bush. Some passengers left and disappeared into the bush, some boarded, and we flew onto Gizo<sup>4</sup> at 1500 feet over flying Munda and Banga Island where Helen attended the men's fellowship camp some two years before.

The air strip for Gizo occupies most of the small island of Nusatope some 2 km off Ghizo Island.

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<sup>3</sup> *That was part of the accommodation deal. If the flight had been early, and customs and immigration faster we might have had a couple of additional hours.*

<sup>4</sup> *If you are confused "Ghizo" is the island and "Gizo" the town.*

Gideon and his brother Philip arrived in from Simbo as we were walking out onto the jetty to take the launch to Gizo. We went with him and booked into our second hotel for the day and it was only 9am. Another freshen up and a cup of coffee while Gideon did some shopping and then it was off on the two hour open sea crossing to Simbo Island in what I like to refer to as *a plastic canoe*. It did not look much, had very little freeboard, no bucket, bailing or safety equipment whatsoever and was not exactly the thing sane people would willingly use for a 40km open sea crossing. But then the locals used them all the time so who were we to object? We set out in faith and with more prayer than normal.



*Gideon (front) and his brother Philip at sea*

We were very thankful when Simbo Island finally appeared out of the mist and rain that had hovered over us for the entire crossing and we were even more thankful for the calm water in the lee of the island for the run to Lengana. It was now 1.30pm.

Gideon lived in the village of Lengana at the time in the minister's house with his wife Vasily and their twins Judith and John, who would be five on 22 August 1996, three year old daughter Serema, and their older adopted daughter Fiona. Fiona has finished primary school and helped with the other children. She would attend secondary school when the family moved to Munda on the island of New Georgia later this year.

After meeting Gideon's family and being shown our accommodation and how to use the *facilities*, we rested before departing back to the village of Tapurai for an evening service. We had called at Tapurai<sup>5</sup> on the way to Lengana from Gizo so Gideon could check on arrangements for the monthly youth service, which was to be held that night.

We returned from Lengana at around 5.30pm to attend the service and stay over for the night, as it was not safe to try to return to Lengana over the reef strewn waters at night. On this trip over we were drenched both from the sea and from the rain. However, as in Ghana the rain stopped on our arrival and apart from a short sharp shower one night later it did not rain again during our visit. We eventually dried out.

The church was built on a low hill just above the village. Getting up to it in the dark that night was quite slippery and hazardous from the rain, and we needed helping hands. Interestingly, being built on the hill, it was the only building in Tapurai that survived the 2007 tsunami that destroyed the rest of the village. (see later Chapter)



The young people had formed a choir and conducted most of the service that night. The girls in the group wore very attractive red dresses they had

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<sup>5</sup> Tapurai as well as Righuru on the east coast were totally destroyed with loss of life when a tsunami struck on the Monday before Easter 2007. Geoff and Don returned to Simbo in September 2007 to inspect the damage.

made for themselves, and some of the boys wore red shirts. Their presentation was very impressive considering this group of young people were considered drop-outs in the islands. They leave high school at form three as limited spaces for higher education are available, and return home where there is little to do.

***Helen had an opportunity to talk and pray with them and to encourage them in what they planned to do. We were told that our visit was very much appreciated as it was the first time visitors had prayed with them. Normally white visitors only told stories.***



We slept that night in one of the class rooms of the school after the desks had been removed and pandanus mats placed on the floor. A thin piece of foam was provided for us to give some cushion between us and the wooden floor, but the locals sleep directly on the mats. Toilets were not in evidence at Tapurai, or anywhere else on Simbo for that matter. The locals just seemed to melt away into the bush. For us it was necessary to either venture out into the pre dawn darkness or to find a secluded spot off the rather small

beach and be quick about it.

Back at Lengana around 8am on Saturday the main events of the day were being arranged; a plastic canoe trip to the volcano in the morning and an afternoon walk across the island to the eastern shore to Nggagho.

On Sunday we attended the 11am service in the new church. The young people's choir sang again and six children were baptised. Around 4.30pm we walked over to Masuru for the evening service. Sunday night we set up the TV screen outdoors to view the videos Helen had taken of the service. The word quickly spread and before we knew it there must have been at least 150 pairs of white eyes in a sea of blackness to see themselves on the screen.



*The New Church that Gideon Built*

Monday we were taken on a trip around the island to the village of Nusa Simbo.

Tuesday was time to grit our teeth and leave, hoping the sea would not be too rough. It could have been worse but we still took quite a pounding on our ageing bottoms. Helen thought again this might really be *our last great adventure*. However it was a clear day and we could see Simbo disappearing behind us, Ranongga glistening in the early morning sun, and most importantly, Ghizo ahead of us and getting larger every minute.

We left at 7.30am and after two hours at sea in the little boat we arrived safely back at Gizo where we booked back into the hotel for a shower, coffee and a change into more suitable travel clothes (remember we had paid for five nights but only used two hours). A walk up the street and back (that's the extent of Gizo) and we went off to the airport island of Nusatope for flight to Honiara.

This time it only required a small Norman Britten Islander<sup>6</sup> for the four passengers. It was a good trip although the old aircraft was quite noisy. The door I was seated against did not seal very well and water came in when we flew through rain. There was a half hour refuelling stop at Munda on the way to Honiara.



Gideon's sister Salome and husband Arelo met us again on our return from Simbo and took us to their home for an evening meal and out to the airport for the trip home departing at 9.30pm.

There was a deep open concrete drain running across the tarmac about a meter out in front of the departure lounge, and a couple of metal plates formed a bridge over it opposite the lounge exit door. I walked out of the door, and seeing the aircraft parked to the right and with my eyes on it and not on the ground in front of me, walked into the drain, skinning my knee and drawing blood.

As we were boarding there was no point walking back into the lounge, so we boarded the aircraft. Incredibly, although it was a Qantas aircraft, there was no first aid on board by way of a band aid or bandage. All I was offered was a plastic bag of ice!

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<sup>6</sup> An interesting aircraft. This particular one was the first to be imported into Australia by Hervey Bay based Island Airways founded by locals Don Adams and Sir Reginald Barnwell for use ferrying passengers across to their Orchid Beach Resort on Fraser Island. It was still in service in the Solomon's in 2007.

*By Geoff: The interdenominational Renewal Fellowship, meeting each week at Trinity Theological College in Brisbane, gave a lot of support to Gideon and others we met on our mission trips. Don and Helen, Bob and Jill Densley (who had worked in Nepal) and Philip and Dhamika (students at the college, from Sri Lanka), were all active in supporting overseas friends.*

*I did not accompany Don and Helen to Simbo in 1996, but made many visits there to work with Gideon. The following photos of Simbo are from my visits.*





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*Village teaching activity at Tapurai, Simbo*



*Bamboo band at Tapurai village, Simbo*



## *Chapter 11 – Nepal, India: New Delhi, Sri Lanka (1996)*

Our friends Bob and Jill Densley, from the Renewal Fellowship, worked with the United Nations in Nepal for a few years. They encouraged many pastors there, most with small house churches, facing hostile opposition. Holding church meetings in Nepal was illegal until the 1990's. Most pastors have been imprisoned, many of them severely beaten.

During several visits to Nepal from 1996, usually with a team from the Renewal Fellowship visiting and working with Bob and Jill, we had meetings in Kathmandu the capital, in East Nepal with Bhutan refugees and churches, and in Maoist dominated West Nepal.



The map shows part of Nepal in the Himalaya mountains with China north, India south, Mt Everest east, Pokhara and Gorkha west, and Kathmandu the capital centre.

In 1996 our team of eight joined Bob and Jill Densley for meetings with many pastors and some of their churches in Kathmandu, and then by bus to Pokhara in West Nepal on narrow roads cut precariously into the sides of the steep mountain ranges.

In Kathmandu, on that same visit, we stayed in a Buddhist retreat house, because that was a safer location than hotels we had used previously. Some hotels had been bombed. Even there, in that Buddhist 'safe house' we had a night watchman on duty all night. He walked around tapping his stick loudly so that nearby soldiers would not mistake him for a terrorist!



Pastor Raju Sundras organized most of our visits. We first met him as a young evangelist who had already been imprisoned and beaten severely many times. Raju, with his wife Samita, began Hosanna Church in Kathmandu which grew to over 800 by 2009, and around 2,000 by 2014, one of the largest churches in the nation. Each time we visited them we found they had expanded their premises. They planted other churches, mostly house churches, in Nepal, Tibet, India, and in refugee communities from Bhutan and networked with over 300 churches by 2014.

Ten years ago it took a decade to add 100 people to a church. That now happens in six months or less.

Their church prays. A lot. They have a 24 hour prayer room where many of their people go to fast and pray. They believe in miracles, and see many. I was deeply moved to visit their “upper room” prayer centre, open for prayer all the time, and usually people there praying and fasting.

Their outreaches include feeding hundreds of street children in their ‘Jesus Kitchen’.

We saw many leaders filled with the Spirit, many people healed, and many gifts of the Spirit poured out, including revelations and visions.

In West Nepal, especially, we saw deeply committed pastors and leaders touched powerfully by the Spirit as we talked with them and prayed for them. Many there had visions of an open heaven and God’s Spirit anointing and empowering them.

Some people there saw in the Spirit a dove or God’s hand touching people who were then immediately healed or filled with the Spirit. They all faced fierce opposition in their house churches and villages, but were fully committed to loving and serving God.

We were blessed indeed to be with them and encourage them. They inspired me with their dedication and willingness to lay down their lives for their Lord and the gospel.

## New Delhi



Our team from the Renewal Fellowship visited Grace Bible College and orphanage near New Delhi, India’s capital. Dr Paul Pilai and his family pioneered India Inland Mission, sending out thousands of evangelists and pastors across India. Their Bible College, the largest in India, had 600 students studying under-graduate and post-graduate courses, with 200 evangelists sent out each year.



I had the humbling honour to speak to their students, and also pray with the staff at the Bible College. Most of their graduates face hostile communities as they plant churches in Hindu villages and towns. We heard about two of their graduates who were shot dead in West Nepal when we held our meetings in West Nepal in 1998.

I first met Paul Pilai when he stayed in our community home while he spoke at churches in Brisbane. Paul had been a young Hindu lawyer, converted when healed through prayer in Jesus’ name. He told us how he and his evangelism team had once been severely beaten by radical Hindus who broke his arm and tried to kill them all. God intervened. By the firelight of their burning tent, the team saw themselves surrounded by handsome men who moved them to a safe place, miraculously. Those angels said, “God will send you back here again.”

He did. Later on a man from that area invited them back to hold meetings in his home. That became the beginning of a church there.

Paul gave this report of challenges facing their graduates:

Manoharpur, where Australian missionary Robert Stains and his two sons were killed by burning them alive in their vehicle, is seeing a mighty revival. Thousands of tribal people are coming to Christ.

Several of our teams are using the 'Jesus' movie all over that area where Bajrang Dal killers are brought in from outside that area to attack Christians. Killing of Christians may continue in that area, but the prayer of saints all over the world is making a change. Many Bajrang Dal killers also are coming to know Christ in miraculous ways.

Our churches in Kashmir are suffering much as the war is raging there between India and Bin Laden's high tech Islamic 'Mujahideen' (holy warriors) with Pakistan as their base.

With Chinese technology, and enormous amounts of Arab money, Pakistan and Afghan terrorists believe that there should be a nuclear war in South Asia for the conquest by Islamic terrorists as an 'historic Jihad' as a final holy war to wipe out Christianity. This big blow to Christian work in Kashmir will affect us for a long time to come.

Two of our Grace Bible College graduates working in Rukum district in Nepal were shot dead by the Hindu police for baptising Hindus in Nepal. Secret attacks are still going on while thousands are coming to Christ all over Nepal. More than 42 leading evangelistic organisations organised and directed by Grace Bible College graduates are working all over Nepal today.

Today there are more than 2,000 believers worshipping in different house churches in Bhutan secretly. Having an open border with India, Indian Christians are the only missionaries there. No church buildings are allowed in Bhutan. Many students graduated from our Bible College are working in Bhutan. This Himalayan foothill kingdom needs the Gospel desperately, and we need your continuous prayer and support for this strategic ministry.



While at New Delhi, our team of 8 took a tourist day trip by bus to the famous Taj Mahal, glimmering in marble. There's a strange gap between the very rich and the very poor in India. We westerners are among the rich, but at least many, like Mother Teresa, pour out their lives to serve and help the poor, living with them as Jesus did, living among the poor and despised.

## **Sri Lanka**

I taught Philip and Dhamika George, at Trinity Theological College. They came from Sri Lanka where Philip's brothers and sister are pastors, prayerfully supported by their godly parents. Philip and Dhamika, based in Brisbane, have raised many thousands of dollars for mission, especially in Sri Lanka. They invest in God's Kingdom, and see miracles continually.

I conducted their miracle wedding in Brisbane. It cost them nothing. Not only did they have no minister's fees, but also the church, the flowers, the bridal party's clothes, the banquet, and the wedding video all came free, without them asking for any of it! Philip earned money while a

student by cleaning St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, a beautiful, gothic church in the heart of Brisbane city. So they offered him the church for the wedding. The people arranging flowers for the Sunday service the next day made it special for the wedding also. A student friend's mother owned a clothing boutique, and donated all the bridal party's outfits, normally rented or bought. Philip boarded at the Salvation Army hostel near the college, so they gladly provided the smorgasbord wedding breakfast for 100 people. Another friend offered to video their wedding. Imagine the family's surprise when they saw that video in Sri Lanka.

They also provided their 'miracle' rental house freely to a mission team from the South Pacific for a month. They bought that house with no money, just a generous loan from a lady they befriended, and sold it two years later for a large profit, which wiped out all their debts and contributed more to missions. Philip had inherited land near Kandy and his brothers, and brother-in-law Suresh, had established churches in the area. So our mission trip took us from Nepal to India to Sri Lanka.

**We were involved with church meetings most days, a pastors' conference and also in dedicating Philip's land for God's purposes. A beautiful fresh water spring on his land gave them the opportunity to build a water-bottling plant there and to support family ministries and missions by selling the water in Sri Lanka and internationally.** We returned with a small team two years later in 1998 to dedicate the new water-bottling plant on their land.



*Fish markets near Colombo*



*View from Philip & Dhamika's land near Kandy*

## Chapter 12 - Nepal, India: Darjeeling, Sri Lanka (1998)

*By Don, with my comments in italics*

*Following a return visit to Nepal, Meg and I, with a team from the Renewal Fellowship, visited majestic Darjeeling in the Himalayas and we flew on to Sri Lanka's luscious green mountains. In every place we saw people touched by God in many ways, especially being filled with the Spirit and healed. They had strong, simple faith.*

### **Nepal**

*Don gives a lot of detail about this visit, so I just comment briefly. We returned to Nepal to work with Bob and Jill Densley, and especially help Raju, now the pastor of the new and thriving Hosanna Church in Kathmandu. Raju also worked tirelessly in planting house churches across the ranges of Nepal and nearby countries.*

*Raju organized our visit to Butwal in West Nepal and Damak in East Nepal, where again we saw the Spirit of God move powerfully on very dedicated pastors and leaders gathered from towns and villages for our conference. Raju did most of the translating for us, so he had a very busy time, and saw abundant fruit for his service. **I was especially moved to hear English spoken so beautifully in tongues by a young man in Damak, and met a man in Hosanna Church who also prayed in English, though neither of those people could speak English.***

### **Darjeeling**

*Dr David Mangratee hosted our visits to Darjeeling. A gracious, pioneering Apostle in the Himalaya mountains, David said our visits opened new doors for him to work among all the churches. People from many churches joined together for our meetings on renewal and revival. His own congregation at Mt Hermon had experienced revival, rapid growth, and had launched missions to remote regions. David translated my book **Flashpoints of Revival** into Nepalese, adding his reports of his involvement in revival, as part of his doctoral studies. Here is part of his reports about previous revivals:*

***Revival broke out in Darjeeling in 1960. The person God used in this great revival was Rev. David Mangratee. Born into a Hindu family, I had a wonderful birth. I asked the Lord, when I had a vision of the Lord, whether my father had died before he was born and had lived again, for I was told by my parents that my father died in the year 1933. He was to be taken for burial. People had made everything ready. He was kept inside the coffin ready for taking him the burial place. But before they could take him he woke up and lived again. After this my father lived for another 20 years and died again in 1953 never to rise again. During my vision I asked the Lord whether this was true. The Lord answered, "Yes, because I wanted a man with a miracle birth."***

*On Pentecost Sunday in the month of May, 1960, one of our church members got filled with the Spirit of God. She spoke in tongues and prophesied. Then in the month of June that same year*



*the Holy Spirit came upon the believers mightily. They were filled with the Spirit of God and God blessed them with gifts of the Spirit, especially the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. By this, lost money was found, lost souls traced, sick healed and sin uncovered. Many miracles took place in the ministry, even raising the dead. The work faced a lot of opposition in the beginning but the changed lives of the first Christians made their mouths shut.*

## **Sri Lanka**

*Teams from the Renewal Fellowship visited Sri Lanka with Philip and Dhamika, staying with their family and relatives, speaking in their relatives' churches and local Bible Schools, and praying with their people.*

***We had the privilege of dedicating a spring water bottling factory built on their land there, supplied by a fresh mountain spring on their property. That provided income for their relatives' ministries in their churches and Bible Schools. In spite of ethnic war with the Tamils and many Buddhist threats against churches and pastors, God moves strongly in the nation. Some of Philip's relatives have been taken to court, imprisoned, and had bomb threats, but they continue to trust God and serve him.***

### **Don gives more details**

In November 1998 we embarked on another overseas mission with Geoff, this time to Nepal, India and Sri Lanka. organised by on-the-spot Renewal Fellowship members Bob and Jill Densley, who were working for the United Nations in Kathmandu.

### ***The Logistics of Getting There***

There were five of us going from Brisbane including Geoff and Meg Waugh, Don and Helen Hill and Dhammika George. Bob and Jill Densley were living in Nepal and would join us there. Philip George, Dhammika's husband, would join the group later in Sri Lanka.

***Tuesday 17 November 1998.*** We met at the Brisbane International Airport and boarded the 2.15pm Singapore Airlines Flight to Singapore. With the two hour time difference we were in the Albert Court Hotel in Singapore by 9pm for a reasonable night's rest before returning to the airport early next morning for the flight from Singapore to Kathmandu.

***Wednesday 18 November 1998.*** We had a 9am flight to Kathmandu and being a daylight flight it had great prospects for stunning views of the Himalayas. As expected it took quite some time to get through immigration and customs, but the Densley's were there to meet us. We settled into the Summit Hotel, which appeared to be a popular place for those setting out on trekking expeditions. Around dusk we gathered at the Densley's unit just around the corner for a briefing on what had been planned.

***Thursday 19 November 1998.*** Today we learned about travel by road in Nepal as we travelled

the *highway* between Kathmandu and Butwal, 250km in something like nine hours with only very brief stops.

On the outskirts of Butwal we noticed a motor bike travelling along with us. Then we noticed the name on the motor bike. It was called *Praise the Lord*. It was Raju Sundas, the man who had arranged the Butwal meetings, now with us to escort us in. This was our first sighting of a man who was to have a huge impact on our spiritual life from here on and become a very precious friend. He still calls us Mum and Dad rather than Don and Helen.

It was 3pm and we had been on the bus for nine hours and very glad to be escorted to the United Nepal Mission Hostel where we would stay for the next two nights. We were mistakenly looking forward to an afternoon sleep, but no sooner had we been shown to our room than we were ushered back on the bus for the short trip back to the meeting hall. The assembled crowd had been waiting all day for Geoff Waugh to appear and if Geoff Waugh was in town, they wanted him there.

Inside the building was a gathering of Christian leaders and lay people from the surrounding districts, many of whom had walked for up to three days just to be there. They were full on fire Christians, the like of which we had never seen before, except perhaps in Ghana. The hall was absolutely packed. I have never seen a room crowded to the same extent either before or since. Geoff said what had to be said that day and the worship flowed.

**Friday 20 November 1998.** This was a full day of meetings supposedly from early morning until late afternoon, and we were at the hall early to set up the camera. The crowd poured in and it was not long before it was as packed as it had been yesterday. Geoff took the stage and started the day with Raju interpreting.

Now Geoff has a very quiet ministry and rarely raises his voice or shouts, but the same cannot be said of others, and Raju in his enthusiasm was no exception. It was amazing how he could use his voice to emphasise what Geoff had said and so the sound level began to rise. The photograph shows Raju in action.



Geoff did not talk all the time of course and there were sessions of worship, singing and prayer. I went outside to assess the situation and perhaps take a few photographs of the hall or even the town. There were people in the street but they seemed to be going about their business and not taking any notice of the noise coming from the hall.



However, all was not well in the community as we heard that a couple of young Christian men who had been away at Bible School in India for a couple of years were promptly arrested as spies and shot in a nearby village just a week after the Butwal meeting.

At mid-day we had a break and it was here we observed the Nepalese national dish called *dal bhat*, (lentils and rice) being prepared for lunch. Sometimes just a little meat is added.

The afternoon sessions carried on much the same as in the morning with more teaching and worship. Geoff was of course very tired at the end of the day but again had difficulty getting away. Our evening meal was served when we returned to the hostel and we made sure Geoff and Meg retired early.

Meanwhile we continued to talk about the events of the day and were about to retire ourselves about 8pm when a group from the meeting burst in and wanted Geoff. We argued that he was very tired and asleep, but to no avail. They were on fire and had decided to set off for their villages at dawn next day and wanted more time with Geoff. We reluctantly had to wake him.

*Geoff adds: Although tired, I too was inspired and invigorated in that dynamic atmosphere of strong faith and anointing for powerful and effective prayer, evangelism, and 'equipping of the saints for the work of ministry'.*

**Saturday 21 November, 1998.** Today we returned to Kathmandu on our bus. No doubt about these people, they do not have much, but what they have they share, so if there was a bus going back to Kathmandu, and there was room, jump on board. Raju's wife Samita with their two very young children travelled back with us and Raju followed on his motor cycle. We were away at around 8am on a fine clear day, but it was still a nine hour trip, which put us back into Kathmandu around 5pm just as the sun was about to set.

**Sunday 22 November, 1998.** We had to get a TV set and a video recorder set up in our room so that we could transfer the contents of the mini tapes to a standard VHS. It was editing of a sort, but only to the extent that parts not wanted could be omitted. It was still analogue video and home editing on computers was not yet available. That would come with digital video. I had to fiddle around with leads and a power supply, but everything was working before lunch time and Helen was downloading what she had recorded.

Mid-afternoon we went to the **Nazarene Church** for today's meeting. This was located in an unfinished building somewhere in Kathmandu not far from the Greenwich Village Hotel. The church itself was a relatively small room on the ground floor, which, like Butwal was absolutely packed. Although we didn't have to move outside, we found it more convenient to video Geoff through a window conveniently located just off the stage.

It was here we met Pastor Rinzi Lama and his wife Nani Beti. Geoff and others from the first



Nepal mission had already formed an association with the Nazarene Church. Unlike Raju who was just setting out on his evangelical mission, Rinzi was the established pastor at this church where he still ministers today, particularly to many orphans and street kids in the area. There seems to be no end to Rinzi and Nani Beti's own and adopted children<sup>7</sup>.

It was a great meeting again, perhaps more controlled and less noisy being in a church environment. Afterwards, we were invited for an evening meal with Rinzi and Nani Beti who lived upstairs in the unfinished top floor of the building. Up top on the flat roof, there were rows of small pens around the edge housing chooks and rabbits.

Videos were discussed of course. Around 7.30pm somebody suggested where we might get video tapes. Bob Densley knew the shop. We reached it just as it was closing and bought the entire stock of three VHS blank tapes! This meant we could continue to copy well into the night and next morning to leave a video record of Geoff's teaching. The timing was perfect.

**Monday 23 November, 1998.** Today we were up early to finish off copying and found time by mid-morning to have a look around. We were booked to fly to Biratnagar in East Nepal at 2.40pm this afternoon, on the way to Damak. It is on the Indian plains about 40km from the eastern border of India and Nepal on the main east west highway to the border with India.



From Biratnagar, the nearest airport with a regular airline service, it was another 70km by road to Damak. We were flying today with Buddha Air. We were at the airport a good two hours before the flight, but that time was easily consumed waiting in queues progressing from one check-in station to the next, all for a 35 minute domestic flight. The aircraft was late and it was more like 4pm when we finally boarded and were in the air. While we waited we found an English newspaper and read about a growing concern within Nepal about the 100,000 refugees from Bhutan who had been forced out of their country as part of an ethnic cleansing many years previously. These refugees were now living in camps in East Nepal, right where we were going, supported by the United Nations.

We had never heard of the problem in Australia, so it was interesting that we should pick up a paper left lying on an airport departure lounge seat and be made aware of a situation that was going to loom big in our lives over the next few days and extend out over the next ten years. There were now eight of us as the Densley's and Raju had joined the party. Rinzi and others from Kathmandu did turn up at Damak, but they travelled by bus.

It was a good flight on this fast turbo prop and we were in Biratnagar in just over half an hour, fortunately with plenty of daylight left to sort out local transport and get to Damak before dark.

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<sup>7</sup>Rinzi and Nani-Beti visited Brisbane in April/ May 2013. They now look after 32 street kids and orphans in their home. Rinzi looks after 51 churches

The country was flat and the roads reasonably straight. Once we had negotiated Biratnagar itself, speed increased and we made Damak just before dark. No problem finding the hotel as there was only one, surprisingly quite a large non-descript building.



It was dark by now and Raju, that ball of energy, and Bob, not far behind, ushered us out onto the footpath where they summoned four trishaws to go for a night meeting! The trishaws were just modified bicycles with three wheels. The driver sat on a conventional bicycle seat and there were two side by side seats behind him over the back wheels. A flimsy canopy covered the passengers. It was probably only four or five kilometres to our destination, and after two return trips a day for the next three days we sort of became used to it, but that night travelling into the unknown was a terrifying test of faith.

We eventually turned off the main road and bumped our way along what turned out in daylight to be a narrow country lane. We arrived at the “Little Church of Hope” somewhere in the wilds of Eastern Nepal where we received a very warm welcome and three days of the most amazing experiences. It was a little church in all respects, except its faith, which surpassed that of many, many other churches we had experienced. Small it might have been but it was nevertheless an important icon sitting (as we found out in daylight) on a very small block of land surrounded by farms. The building was small, but that did not matter as the congregation either stood or sat on the bare concrete floor so it could accommodate quite a lot of people. After the introduction, Geoff spoke and conducted a worship service and we remounted our trishaws for the return trip to the hotel.

***Tuesday 24 to Friday 27 November, 1998.*** We had meetings at the Little Church of Hope for the next three days and many things happened during this time. Raju and his wife Samita had two small children and believed God was telling them to adopt ten more. That’s a tall order, but Raju had a big vision for ministry in Nepal, most of which has come to pass and continues expanding.



*The team assembled outside the hotel for the ride to the Little Church of Hope.*

We pedalled (or rather were pedalled) out to the Little Church of Hope immediately after breakfast each morning and settled down to a cup of tea with the leaders in the pleasant surroundings of the church grounds before the first session started. Then we pedalled back for lunch and a quick nap before pedalling out again mid-afternoon for an evening and night session and a ride back to the hotel in the dark. Although there were stars we were in the northern hemisphere now and the Southern Cross was no longer there to guide us.



Geoff was not the only speaker at these meetings billed as The East Nepal Christian Leadership Seminar. There were several other pastors and church leaders for at least part of the time. In particular there was Raju and Rinzi whom we had already met, Bashu, a very well presented young man with a big heart in the right place, and a couple of other higher up church leaders, whose names I have forgotten.

The remainder of those gathered were mainly church leaders from villages both near and far. Some had walked several days to get there. They were a colourful lot and quite different both in appearance and dress to those gathered at Butwal.

They were probably more Tibetan in origin. They had no problem with the lack of chairs and were quite content to sit cross legged on the floor. Most of them slept on the floor of the church at night.



The church was surrounded with farms on all sides, with just a narrow laneway to give access.

Trishaws or bicycles were the only mechanised means of access. It seemed to be a very fertile area with small crops, and on one side a tea plantation.

The camera was set up on the tripod at the rear of the church, we found ourselves a couple of chairs and started to film Geoff's teaching. This was the pattern for the next three days with Helen moving around from time to time to get shots of the audience from different angles.

A youth choir from the refugee camp had been well prepared for their presentations to get things going each morning. They had managed to get a uniform of sorts from their meagre means.





Geoff's teaching and preaching was interspersed with worship and items from others to become a most enjoyable spiritual experience, even though we found communications in another language difficult.



*Colourful People in National Dress*

This brings me to a rather special occurrence during the seminar. At different times throughout each day there would be times set aside for prayer where the participants were invited to pray for each other either in a group or individually. Many had the gift of tongues, a heavenly prayer language.

**On this particular occasion people were praying in tongues and as Geoff moved around among them he was attracted to one man who was praying aloud in English. What caught Geoff's attention was that the English was some of the most beautiful expression he had ever heard. He remarked on this later and discovered that the man had absolutely no knowledge of English. He neither spoke English nor did he understand English but nevertheless he was praying in this beautiful and coherent English!**

It was during another prayer session that an attachment was formed with Chandra, one of the refugee choir girls. She was about 12, 13 or maybe even 14, but she was very distraught. She had lost her mother some time previously.

A quite strong bond developed between Chandra and Helen, so much so that before the end of the seminar, Raju had agreed to take her into his family, as the first of the ten he believed he had to adopt. He would take her out of the camp and back to Kathmandu where he would provide a home and an education for her. His idea was that with a Christian education she would hopefully one day be able to return as a missionary to her own people in Bhutan. We agreed to support Chandra, which we did for the next ten years. However, so that she would not feel alone, Raju also adopted her good friend Sanu, whom we also supported.



**Friday 27 November, 1998.** Today we made our way to the India/Nepal land border crossing point and then on and up to Darjeeling. The border was about 35/40km from Damak.

By the grace of God, and we really mean that, we did arrive safely at Alice Villa Hotel in Darjeeling by midday. Not a bad effort, just four hours from Damak.

At 2,200m in altitude, the air was fresh and clear, but during our stay there were periods where even the mountains were contaminated with exhaust fumes. The general area of the Alice Villa Hotel looked clean if not exactly tidy. It was one of the better areas with several public schools close by. The whole of Darjeeling was built on mountainous slopes, and in most cases buildings just seemed to be built on top of each other. A challenge for any architect.

We went to the dining room for lunch and met our host, Rev. David Mangratee who briefed us on what had been arranged over the next few days.

Although it was a Friday afternoon and there was never any guarantee as to when we would arrive, an initial kick off meeting was hastily arranged. The venue for this and all meetings in Darjeeling, except for Sunday when we went to the Mt. Herman Church, was an abandoned and somewhat derelict picture theatre on the other side of downtown Darjeeling, which, like most buildings, clung precariously to the side of the mountain.

We were all appalled when we saw what a dark, dismal and foreboding place it was. Now, one does not expect to have windows in a picture theatre and we were not disappointed in that, but it had been locked up for goodness knows how long and was dark and musty inside. Outside was even worse as the alley way access was used as an open air urinal, and underneath as a toilet. The stench was something awful, penetrating into the building even when the doors were closed and we were under lights.

There was nowhere near as many at this meeting as there had been at Butwal. Perhaps there were as many as at Damak, but spread out in the much larger building the assembly looked a lot smaller. Still they were very enthusiastic and a great time was had by all. Helen set up and videoed most of the action and teaching.



*Mt Everest*

**Saturday 28 November, 1998.** Last night we were each presented with a woven woollen shawl, which was a very thoughtful gift as we had not realised just how cold Darjeeling at 2,200m could get. We had woollen jumpers of course as we knew Nepal was cold, but nothing much else. We noticed a fire place in our room, but took little notice when we booked in little realising we would need a coal fire in our room all night. This explained the men in the street with large baskets of coal on their backs.



Today I ventured out before breakfast to explore our surroundings. As I mentioned Alice Villa Hotel was set in a pleasant enough area with a lot of greenery. Maybe the greenery was in response to a Kodak advertisement sign in the street which said ***Clean Darjeeling, Green Darjeeling.***



But I was totally unprepared for the view that greeted me as I rounded a corner not 200m from the hotel and confronted the full face of Mt. Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world in all its glory, in the bright morning sunlight. At 8586m it completely dominated the view even though it was at least 60km away across the deep valley of Sikkim (Darjeeling was at the end of the mountain spur we had ascended and the terrain dropped away steeply from here)



Needless to say there was a scurry back to the hotel to get Helen and cameras to record this great scene, and we continued to *pop around the corner* every spare moment we had during the next few days to enjoy this magnificent spectacle.

Today was a full day of meetings in the old picture theatre. The smell was still there. We just had to put up with it. Rev David Mangratee arranged with the local very Scottish Presbyterian minister to act as an interpreter. Helen continued to record Geoff's teaching, but all enquiries to borrow a video machine proved fruitless. We made our request known through prayer.

**Sunday 29 November, 1998.** Today being Sunday the meetings were focused on public worship at the Mt. Herman Church, which although supposedly on a mountain, was really in a valley as we descended quite a way to reach it. A couple of local church members provided transport in *jeeps* which seemed to be the most popular vehicles on the mountain.

The day went well with morning and afternoon sessions and lunch provided in between. The afternoon session went on for quite a while and it was dark before we were ready to be taken back to Alice Villa Hotel.

**Geoff adds:** *At all meetings, as usual, the team prayed with and for people. Meg had been praying for the Mt Hermon Mission and school since the 1960s as part of her regular mission prayers. Here she noted that when she and the other ladies prayed for the women there, they seemed to float gently to the floor, resting in the Spirit, being renewed and revived.*

**Monday 30 November, 1998.** This was the last day of organised meetings. Tomorrow would be a free day when we could get out and see a little more of Darjeeling. It was an interesting day, and a day when I think we could legitimately claim at least a couple of miracles. During a break in the morning session, we met a young man, David from the Toto tribe in India, the smallest tribe in the world with just 1050 members. He was then homeless, having been forced to leave home and country because he chose to become a Christian. His English was good and we had an interesting conversation with him about his situation.

In the afternoon Geoff's voice and the power to the picture theatre failed more or less at the same time. It seemed Satan thought he would have a final go at wrecking the meetings, seeing the smell and darkness of the venue had failed. Very quickly one of the locals had a bank of car batteries on stage to power up the amplifier and although Geoff's voice was weak, that did not matter particularly as most of what he had to say was spoken through the interpreter.

We were sitting in the dark in the front row of the old picture theatre and there was a spare seat next to Helen. Somebody came and sat there during the session. When the session was over, and some lights had been restored, Helen struck up a conversation with the man in that seat. This was the first meeting he had attended. ***"And what is your ministry?" Helen asked. "Oh, I have a video ministry. I take the Jesus Film to the tea plantations....."*** Let your request be made known!

The man was N K Rai. He was a retired Ghurkha, living with his wife in Darjeeling on a military pension. He had become a Christian after retirement from the Ghurkhas and now spent his time and the little he could afford from his pension taking his video machine to the tea plantations and showing the then very popular *Jesus Film* to the plantation workers. He was around at Alice Villa Hotel next morning to work with us copying what we had to leave in the country. He was of course also very keen to get copies of whatever video he could to supplement what he had. N K Rai specialised in this kind of work and hence they were probably shown to a much wider audience.

**Tuesday 1 December, 1998.** After breakfast N K Rai arrived with his machine and we set up in our room. Difficulties ranged from setup connection problems to intermittent and unexplained power disruptions to the hotel. Nevertheless we did achieve our objective, the job was done and N. K. Rai went away with a lot of new material.

**Wednesday 2 December, 1998.** Today we had a 2.30pm flight booked from Bagdogara to Delhi followed by a stopover of about eight hours before a 1.45am flight next morning to Colombo in Sri Lanka

We were eventually away on the two hour flight to Delhi an hour late and landed before sunset

at the domestic terminal. From here it was a bus ride to the other side to the International Terminal where we settled down for a long night. The crowd started to build up around 9pm so we thought perhaps it would be a good idea to get into the queue at the check in, even though there was still four hours to departure time. We were quickly at the counter only to find we were not on the Colombo flight and there were no spare seats, this despite having checked as required from Darjeeling and told we had confirmed seats. We stood our ground at the counter for a long time.

**Thursday 3 December, 1998.** In fact we stood our ground until 1am, almost four hours on our feet whilst others came and went even though we were an obstruction to the free flow of traffic. The ladies retired to seats, but Bob, Geoff and I just stood there and waited. Finally, we were told we were on the flight after all. That was just the start of another mad scramble, as by now the flight had been called and we had a long way to go through customs and immigration if we were going to actually get on that aircraft.

Eventually, stage by stage, we reached a boarding gate and started down the aero bridge. By now departure time had come and gone. Halfway down there was another blockage. This time it was an Air Lanka security check by a crew that had been flown in and would return on our flight, so that at least gave some comfort they would do a thorough job. It did not occur to us until much later when we saw the security at Colombo there was a shooting civil war<sup>8</sup> in Sri Lanka between the government and the Tamil Tigers.

Then the miracle of the day occurred. Dhammika we knew had worked in security of some sort before migrating to Australia. It now turned out she worked in airport security in Colombo and one of the Air Lanka staff recognised her. We were through. No fuss!

Instead of the normally scheduled Boeing 737 for this service with seating for perhaps 150, tonight **a new Airbus A340 was on the job with seating for around 400.** Although we were seated behind all other passengers, we were not at the back of the aeroplane, there being at least 100 empty seats behind us, as well as a lot in front of us. We arrived in the grey light of dawn, very tired after the frustrations of the night and lack of sleep. Needless to say we were not very happy when we found *all our baggage damaged to some degree.* Fortunately nothing had been spilled and nothing seemed to be missing.

The flight was already late and no doubt Philip George, Dhammika's husband who had recently arrived from Australia to join the group in Sri Lanka, had been waiting a long time for us to appear out of the arrivals door. He now had to wait even longer as we filled in forms describing the damage in detail and tried to find out just what Air Lanka was going to do about it. I do remember Philip taking some items to *someone he knew* for repairs, which in Sri Lanka did not cost much.

For years the Renewal Fellowship had helped Philip and his family finance a bottling plant for spring water found on a block of land near Kandy which Dhammika had inherited. Philip had several brothers and at least one sister and together with the parents they were all Christian pastors or missionaries and always in need of support. Philip and Dhammika sent considerable

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<sup>8</sup> In 2001 two Air Lanka 330 Air Lanka aircraft were blown up on the tarmac at Colombo Airport.



amounts of their Australian earnings back to Sri Lanka to support them and the Renewal Fellowship made significant contributions toward the project. The plant<sup>9</sup> was now finished and our group had diverted on the way home from Nepal to represent the Renewal Fellowship at the dedication service.

**Friday 4 December, 1998.** Today we went up into the hills to Kandy. Philip organised a mini bus of sorts with a driver for the trip up and back. It has seen better days and the tyres were bald (one blew out on a country road the next day) but otherwise it did the job.

But firstly, it was a beautiful and we detoured to the fish at the shore line were the still emptying the nets. It was could have been a re-of Ruth gleanings in Boaz fields, poor woman picking out the fishermen had missed (or putting them carefully into her



sunny day at Negombo market. Further down boats and fishermen here we saw what enactment of the story only this time it was the small fish the purposely left) and basket.

The trip to Kandy was by a wide but winding sealed road and we were comfortably at the top before lunch. In Kandy we were staying at the home of Suresh Ramachandran, husband of one of Philip's sisters. We met him at the Renewal Fellowship one night when he turned up with Philip and Dhammika. He was on his way home to Sri Lanka from the United States but had only been able to make it to Australia. He needed his fare to Sri Lanka and he had it that night before he left from the pockets of those present; ***his fare was donated from the pockets of those present.*** It was an amazing fact that there was always at least \$1000 available on any Friday or Sunday night meeting of the Renewal Fellowship. Giving took on a new meaning within that group, and great rewards flowed from it.

Suresh had been an accomplished entertainer and high flyer on the world entertainment stage for many years. He had then *seen the light*, renounced his past wild life and became a Christian. He was now a high power evangelist and pastor<sup>10</sup> back in his home town of Kandy. He had rented a large house, which easily accommodated the group for the night, and we certainly appreciated his hospitality.

**Saturday 5 December, 1998.** Today was the dedication and opening of Philip's bottled water project. It was located in hilly country some 20km out from Kandy. The water bottling plant was quite simple, and with one tap from which bottles would be hand filled could hardly be called a *plant*. The open rooms were required to hold empty bottles waiting to be filled and filled bottles waiting to be transported to Colombo. The spring was of course at a higher point and the water just gravitated down to the tap. Simple enough for us perhaps, but something quite new for the

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<sup>9</sup> Although it was a small operation with each bottle filled by hand from a single tap, the operation was a success and provided a cash flow as expected. Last we heard an export trade had been established shipping bottled water to Israel. Philip is a man of incredible faith. If he believes it is in God's will, then it is in God's will and it will be honoured. He has proved that time and time again. Now I know the Israelites need water to drink, but shipping it in a container from Sri Lanka and making a profit, well, it defies logic.

<sup>10</sup> It is not easy to be an outspoken Christian in a country like Sri Lanka, where religious tolerance is low. Suresh went through a particularly hard time a few years ago to the extent of spending time in jail.

locals, and more importantly, they had done it themselves and had a marketable product.



One store room was set up that day as a chapel and the dedication service was held within. Philip, Dhammika and members of the George family said what they had to say and Geoff blessed the project before turning on the solitary tap and filling the first bottle.

Just remember every journey starts with one small step.

After lunch, our time with the group was complete. Helen and I had an 11.45pm flight to Singapore, but

the remainder would stay in Kandy with Suresh for Sunday services. Late in the afternoon, we were taken back to Negombo, picked up our baggage at Dhammika's father's place and taken to the airport.

The shooting war was still on it seemed and army personnel searched the mini bus before we were allowed into the airport. Other than that it was a Sunday night late flight and the airport was deserted. We were back with Singapore Airlines for a no hassle and on time departure for once.

***Sunday 6 December, 1998.*** We arrived at Singapore Airport at 6am with a fifteen hour stop over on our hands. The flight sectors of this trip as you will appreciate did not co-ordinate very well, but it was the best that could be done with connections to unusual destinations from Australia. We booked into one of the short term rooms for the first six hours to catch up on lost sleep, and spent the remainder of the time in the Diners Club Lounge, except for a short tour of Singapore in the afternoon where special visas were available just for that purpose.

***Monday 7 December, 1998.*** Early arrival at Brisbane. Mission accomplished.

## ***The Sequel***

We met a lot of people and made several sincere and lasting friendships.

**Raju:** For the record Raju has gone on to become the leader of a very big church organisation in Nepal. Shortly after we left he obtained a scholarship to study divinity in the Philippines, and thought he could support his wife Samita and their two children on his allowance for the three years they would be away, if they accompanied him. They did it tough, particularly when Samita fell pregnant with their third child. Nevertheless they stayed faithful to God and with some monetary and prayerful support from the Renewal Fellowship, Raju came through topping his class in the final examinations, even though he had been advised to give up at the end of the first year. Not bad for somebody with a limited primary school education.

Then before he returned to Nepal he was diagnosed with a thyroid problem. He underwent a twelve hour operation, which has been completely successful. The Christian surgeon tells how he felt he had to be particularly careful with this man as he needed a *good voice box*. On his return to Nepal, now with formal educational qualifications, he could move, preach, and pastor in wider circles, planting and nurturing many new churches. He was able to move in business and government circles. He was involved in drafting a new constitution for Nepal.

He visited Australia on several occasions lecturing and raising support for his work. We were able to have him stay with us at our home at Rainbow Beach on two occasions, the last being in 2009 with Samita. When addressing a group at Tin Can Bay, he told how he had been granted an audience with the Prime Minister of Nepal. ***During their talk, the prime minister said he liked Christians because they were clean and honest. He was also able to persuade the Prime Minister to grant a public holiday for Christmas Day – the first time that had happened for 250 years.***

Raju and Samita went on to adopt a large family. Chandra and Sanu were amongst them. We continued to support these two and they received a good education. Raju and Samita had a fourth child of their own born early with complications for both mother and child while he was with us on his first visit to Australia. Both the baby and Samita's lives were in danger. There were telephone calls from Australia to Nepal, as well as a lot of prayer. The outcome was Samita did not lose a leg as was feared and the baby survived. Helen had naming rights and suggested Alison. We are now supporting Alison through school.

One of the strengths of Raju's ministry is prayer. He set up what he called his ***Power House*** at his church in Kathmandu where prayer is offered continuously twenty four hours a day. Somebody or a group is always there on roster.

We had need for all the prayer support we could get following our daughter Christine's death recently (23 October 2010). An email to Raju cranked up the Kathmandu power house, adding significantly to the prayer support we were getting from other sources. We are sure it made a big difference to smoothing out some sticky patches.

**Rinzi:** We have maintained a close friendship with Rinzi Lama who has a different kind of ministry, but again the focus has been work amongst the street kids, many of whom he and his wife Nani Beti have taken in. We get regular updates of their work and have been able to provide some support over the years.

**Bashu:** He has kept in touch from time to time. His first priority when we first met him was to find a wife and asked we pray for him in this regard. His and our prayers seem to have been satisfactorily answered as he did marry soon after and went to the United States to study. We get emails asking for prayer support every so often as he returns to run seminars in Nepal.

**My Consulting Business.** Just days after our return there was not one, but two approaches to buy the company. We had also committed that to prayer, and here was a timely answer. Within three months the consultancy had been sold and we started out on the next phase of life's journey. More doors opened.



*Fish markets at Negombo beach*



*Helen filming at the dedication of the new water-bottling plant*

## ***Chapter 13 –India: Darjeeling, Nepal (2000)***

I had the further privilege of returning to Nepal and Darjeeling in the Easter holiday of 2000 with a small team from Brisbane. We flew into Kathmandu on Friday, April 14, and then on to Bhadrapur at the Indian border on Saturday 15, and, once through customs, again took the breath-taking four hour road trip up to Darjeeling in the Himalayas.

### ***Darjeeling***

Again, our group stayed at the convenient Alice Villa hotel, and visited churches each day with Dr David Mangratee (who did his doctoral research on revivals in India and Nepal). Our first service was at the Mt Hermon church and we shared in a house baptism in a cement tank in the afternoon. We had meetings every day until we left. Our team prayed for people at every meeting. Meg observed that at Mt Hermon church the ladies they prayed for seemed to just gently float down to the floor as they rested in the Spirit – a new ministry experience for Meg and the others.

During this trip it seemed that our work in Darjeeling was complete. David, his leaders and pastors, and co-operating pastors in other churches had caught a fresh vision for revival and renewal. They would continue this ministry among their people and take teams into other areas.

### ***Nepal***

We drove back to the border on Thursday, April 20, and once again filled out forms at customs to cross into Bhadrapur and connect with our flight back to Kathmandu where we stayed at Aloha Inn.

We hired a mini bus to drive down the ranges to Gochadda in West Nepal on Good Friday, April 21 returning on Easter Monday for more meetings in Kathmandu until we returned to Brisbane via Bangkok on April 28-29.

During meetings at Gochadda in West Nepal near the Indian border, we walked the 20 minutes from our accommodation cabins to the church, past unfriendly or suspicious villagers. Two pastors came to collect us in a jeep but took another route and missed us. They panicked, thinking we had been abducted. After that they insisted that we wait to be collected each time! God's Spirit moved powerfully in the meetings, as Raju reports about our team visit at Easter 2000:

**Greetings in the name of our Almighty God Jesus Christ from the land of Himalayas!  
The Lord continues to do great things in this land, we have not much to do but to praise Him and thank Him for every good gift raining on us from Him and only Him.**

**It was a great blessing from the Lord to send us a team from Australia mid-April. The fellowship, the Word from God, the mighty touch of the Holy Spirit, the love of Christ flourishing from our Australian brothers and sisters, the awesome presence of the Lord throughout the rushing schedule of conferences, trips, and visits, overwhelmingly expressed the great love of our Lord Jesus Christ towards this nation. During the short stay of about two weeks with the team of eight people we had the privilege to see the ministry of the Holy Spirit through them in several occasions.**

Some of the group along with me had a short trip to the Tibetan border. We started early morning and arrived there about noon time. The towns of Liping on the Nepali side and Khawsa on the Tibetan side are connected through a bridge on Bhotekoshi river and right in the midst of the bridge is the border white line showing the boundary of each country. At the end of the bridge on the Tibetan side is the entry gate which is controlled by Chinese guards and immigration officials.

After praying on the bridge we approached the Chinese officials to get a permission to enter Tibet. The first official refused but the second one nodded approvingly, taking the four Australian passports from my hand as security, and let us go free of charge! This could happen only by the supernatural intervention of our Almighty God, Hallelujah! We had good prayer inside Tibet, especially on those individual shopkeepers whom I would grab and pray on without any resistance from them!

On 21 April all the eight of Australians and I had a trip to Gochadda in west Nepal and held a three days conference over there at Easter. While driving toward the destination I shared the Word with the driver of the private bus and during the inauguration of the conference he approached the altar and accepted Christ as his personal Saviour. On the same day a Christian brother whose hand was partially crippled for six years was touched by the Holy Spirit and healed absolutely. He was shaking in his whole body and raising his hands, even the crippled one already healed, praising the Lord with all his strength, he glorified the Lord for his greatness, Hallelujah!

Out of about 200 participants in the conference by the grace of God 100 of them were baptized in the Holy Spirit praising the Lord, singing, falling, crying, and many other actions as the Holy Spirit would prompt them to act. About ten of them testified that they had never experienced such a presence of the power and love of God. Some others testified being lifted to heavenly realms by the power of the Holy Spirit, being surrounded by the angels of the Lord in a great peace, joy, and love toward each other and being melted in the power of his presence. Many re-committed their lives to the Lord for ministry by any means through his revelation.

On the second day of the conference the trend continued as the people seemingly would fall down, repent, minister to each other in the love of Christ, enjoy the mighty touch of the Holy Spirit, singing, prophesying, weeping, laughing, hugging, and all the beauty of the Holy Spirit was manifested throughout the congregation by his grace and love. One woman of age 65 testified that she never had danced in her life in any occasion even in secret, but the Lord had told her that she should now dance to him and she was dancing praising him with all her strength. For hours this outpouring continued and the pastors of the churches were one by one testifying that they had never experienced such a presence and power of God in their whole Christian life and ministry.

Some 60 evangelists from Gorkha, Dhading, Chitwan, Butwal declared that they were renewed in their spirits by the refreshing of the Holy Spirit and they are now going to serve the Lord in the field wherever the Holy Spirit will lead them to be fully fledged in His service. In the last day of the conference while praying together with the congregation and committing them in his hands, many prophesied that the Lord was assuring them of great changes in their ministry, life and the area. While the power of

God was at work in our midst three children of 6-7 years old fell down weeping, screaming and testifying about a huge hand coming on them and touching their stomachs and healing them instantly. After the prayer all the participants got into the joy of the Holy Spirit and started dancing to the Lord, singing and praising Him for His goodness.

Before leaving Gochadda while we were having snacks in the pastor's house a woman of high Brahmin caste came by the direction of the Lord to the place, claiming that she was prompted by a voice in her ear to go to the Christians and ask for prayer for healing of her chronic stomach pain and problems, and that is why she was there. We prayed for her and she was instantly healed and we shared the Gospel, but she stopped us saying, "I need to accept Christ as my Saviour so don't waste time!" She accepted Jesus as her personal Saviour being lifted in spirit, and even the body as she said she didn't feel anymore burden in her body, and spirit, Hallelujah!

On 25 April we held another conference in Nazarene Church pastored by Rinzi Lama in Kathmandu. Ten churches unitedly participated in the two days gathering where about 100 people participated. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit continued in this conference refreshing many in their spirits and bringing much re-commitment. Some cases of healing were testified. In one case the brother testified that he had received healing from the Lord and his swollen feet and the high Uric Acid had disappeared from his body, confirmed by the Holy Spirit.

We showed the Transformation video brought from Australia. All committed themselves for constant prayer to bring transformation to their cities too by God's power.

On 27 April we held a one day conference in Hosanna Church where the touch of the Holy Spirit was tremendous and people blessed by the Holy Spirit and his might were manifesting his power and presence in the place. While people were worshipping and praising the Lord, a prophecy came and the Lord said, "What happened to the vision given to you six years ago? You have forgotten to pray about it but I have not forgotten what I have promised to you through the vision!"

I was reminded by the Holy Spirit that I had seen a vision where I was taken over the highest mountains in this country with a few of my foreign friends and some of our evangelists and as we put our step on the top of the mountain it started shaking and melting and my friends and the evangelists started disappearing, then I cried out, "Lord where are my friends?" And He said open your eyes and see, and I saw all my friends and the evangelists were scattered all over the mountains and they were coming towards me with multitudes of people behind them. I started weeping and with a feeling which words cannot explain I was thanking the Lord for His goodness, I was laughing in the Spirit for the repetition of the vision which I could see again. Hallelujah!

I have to thank the Lord for His great outpouring of the Holy Spirit and I have to thank the Lord also for my Australian brothers and sisters who took up the burden to come over to this place and minister to our people.



Raju also reported on further developments the next year:

**During the past two months in 2001 we have experienced a new wave of outpouring of the Spirit on the congregation. Many instant healings of people suffering from fever, flu, unconsciousness, blood discharge, boils and tumours, stomach problems, chronic headaches. The fame of the healings in the Church has reached many unbelievers through the congregation and numbers of unbelievers are coming to seek the healing, most of them ending up saved!**

**The Church is growing rapidly in the Spirit, many standing in faith are experiencing prosperity, good health, spiritual satisfaction, close intimacy with the Lord and moreover a hunger and thirst along with zeal of God to know Jesus intimately and to do his will whatever it may cost. This new wave of revival in the Church is another assurance from the Lord that in the days ahead he has got great and marvellous plans to be revealed and carried out by the people he has called to fulfil his purposes.**

**This revival is quite a new movement of God in the Church and the leadership of the Church is waiting on the Lord to receive revelation if there is anything to be done or just let it grow to maturity as it is growing by the Holy Spirit. Since the start of the year 2001 the leadership of the Church is busy to pray on almost every individual of the Church for receiving the gifts of the Spirit as well as counselling them in the Word and praying with them at the time of need.**

In December 2007 the Prime Minister invited Raju to speak at a nationally televised Christmas Day service in their International Stadium. Hosanna Church musicians led the 2,500 people there in singing their Nepalese version of Carols by Candlelight, as they held their candles: *Happy Birthday to You, Happy Birthday to You, Happy Birthday to Jesus, Happy Birthday to You.*

The following year, in 2008, for the first time in Nepal's history, the government proclaimed December 25-26 a national public holiday for Christmas.



*Regional pastors and leaders at Gochadda*



*Praying for regional pastors and leaders*



## *Chapter 14 – USA: Pensacola (2002)*

My life changed in 2002. I had met my wife Meg in PNG where we both taught in mission schools and Bible Schools from 1965-66. We married in Australia on furlough and returned to live in two bush houses, one in Lapalama and one in Kwinkia. Later, we continued in mission together when Meg was able to join me on short-term mission trips to five countries.

Then in 2000 Meg was diagnosed with ovarian cancer which spread. This was a really tough time for her and all the family including our children and grandchildren. We followed the usual medical procedures and of course we prayed. And hoped. But Meg died at home with us on 26 February 2002. The medical people called it a “good death”, peaceful and mostly without pain. I did not think death was “good” but we continued to trust God in life and in death.

Now I faced new challenges. Would I continue in mission? I didn’t have to, and it always cost money. Would I continue to pray for the sick in faith and hope? Would I continue to teach others, especially pastors, to pray in faith? That year I retired from full time college teaching and just taught one or two days a week. At 65 that year I was eligible for the aged pension in retirement.

Yet, doors kept opening. Invitations to lead and teach in mission continued to come. I appreciated having family around me, and living with some of them in their granny flat. That became my base for further mission trips and ministry.

### **USA: Pensacola**

A round-the-world ticket, in the June-July college vacation, took me to England, visiting relatives, and then on to Pensacola in Florida in the south east of the United States in 2002. Security was exceptionally tight after the 9/11 attacks in America the previous September, 2001. We had to remove shoes, belts, and empty our pockets as we progressed slowly through two or three x-ray checks in each boarding queue.

I flew to New Orleans from Miami, drove a rental Ford Escort over 200 miles to Brownsville in Pensacola on the southern coast, found the church and a nearby motel.

Revival burst out there in June 1995 with evangelist Steve Hill speaking, invited by the pastor John Kilpatrick. It became famous worldwide and attracted thousands. Worship leader Lindel Cooley was leading the powerfully anointed worship when I visited and they had a guest speaker.

Lightning hit the main church auditorium building on July 4, 2002 (their national holiday!) the previous week, knocking out their electrical system. So we met in their new octagonal Family Worship Centre seating 2000, built for revival overflow crowds. I attended their Wednesday to Friday night meetings. They sounded much the same as any Assemblies of God service at home, but with a wonderful presence of God, hard to describe, but easy to soak in.

**I liked the spontaneous bits best. Before Friday night’s revival service some people in the singing group of over 50 people on stage began singing free harmonies without music while they waited for the sound system to work, and we all joined in. It sounded like angels harmonising in continual worship. Wonderful. No need for words!**

**Later, during the service Lindel Cooley, their worship leader, led spontaneously from the keyboard without other instruments, singing the chorus of an old hymn from his youth (and mine) – ‘Love lifted me’. All the oldies joined in, and then it went on to a verse sung from memory. It moved me deeply, from my own boyhood memories, especially as I had just then been asking the Lord for a personal touch from him.**

**A visitor preached, calling for faith and action. Their prayer team prayed for many hundreds at the ‘altar call’ – short and sharp, but relevant and challenging. The man who prayed briefly for me spoke about national and international ministries the Lord would open for me.**

The Pensacola style of revival felt more strongly Pentecostal than the Vineyard renewal style at Toronto,

but both were saturated in the powerful presence of the Lord. That wonderful presence touched me most.



*Brownsville, Pensacola  
John Kilpatrick & Lindel Cooley*

## ***Chapter 15 – Vanuatu, Australia (2002)***

Vanuatu, formerly called the New Hebrides, is a nation of over 80 islands between the Solomon Islands and Fiji. It has seen many revival movements.

### ***Port Vila***

I flew to Port Vila in Vanuatu in the South Pacific for a holiday in September 2002. I planned to travel in the school and college mid-semester break at the end of September but the planes were full, so I booked flights for a weekend before the vacation. That year I was teaching from 9am to noon, about the Holy Spirit on Wednesdays and about Revival History on Thursdays. So I booked flights with Air Vanuatu for Friday morning, arriving at 11.30am and returning Monday afternoon, with 2½ hour flights.

Such a short trip was unusual for me, but those were the flights available to Port Vila, the capital, so I took them just to visit this “Paradise” of the Pacific. It became a divine appointment.

There I met leaders of the Christian Fellowship (CF) at the Law School. As I wandered along the main street of Vila from my nearby economical resort, I heard Christian songs played loudly, amplified from a CD. A team from the CF had a stall outside the supermarket advertising a Christian concert they were having on Saturday night and selling tickets. What a bonus! I just “happened” to be in Port Vila that weekend of their concert. Seini Puamau, the CF Vice-President, and her friends enthusiastically invited this visiting stranger to their concert, and we shared our common faith in Jesus together in a brief talk. I had no idea that we would share in many missions together and I would stay in Seini’s family home in Fiji many times.

I turned up promptly on time at 7pm for the concert in the Vanuatu Club hall in town, and learned about ‘Pacific time’. Only Romulo Nayacalevu, the CF President, and one or two others were there setting up the hall for about 100 people expected that night. So I met Romulo and sat and watched people wander in over the next hour and get ready, including preparing for supper. Eventually, the concert began. It had about 20 items by the students.

The CF presented their long, lively concert that Saturday night, 14 September. Items from these bright, lively students included singing, dances and clever skits. I loved the segment when Sala spoke for five minutes, first asking all who believed personally in Jesus to raise their hands. Most did. Then she emphasised that she was speaking to all who did not raise their hands and challenged them to prepare for eternity as well as for our much briefer time here on earth.

I discovered that the CF planned to take a mission team to Australia. They organised the concert to help raise money for that mission trip. I offered to host them in Brisbane, if they wanted to visit Brisbane, and I felt a strong leading to give them all the Australian dollars I had in my wallet as back-up money. That was one of the best investments in mission I ever made!

### ***The Law Students***

The University of the South Pacific, based in Suva, Fiji, has its School of Law in Vanuatu because of the unique combination of French, English and local laws in Vanuatu) previously called New Hebrides) and ruled jointly by France and Britain. Students come from many nations of the South Pacific to study law at Vanuatu, many being the children of chiefs and government leaders.

The very active Christian Fellowship regularly organised outreaches in the town and at the university. About one third of the 120 students in the four year law course attended the weekly meeting on Friday nights. A core group prayed together regularly including daily prayer at 6am, and organised evangelism events. Many were filled with the Spirit and began to experience spiritual gifts in their lives in new ways.

Those law students saw an unusual move of God's Spirit in 2002. The Lord moved in a surprising way at the Christian Fellowship (CF) in the School of Law at Port Vila, Vanuatu on Saturday night, 6 April, 2002, the weekend after Easter.

The University's Christian Fellowship held an outreach meeting on the lawns and steps of the grassy university square near the main lecture buildings, school administration and library. God moved strongly that night.

Romulo Nayacalevu, President of the Law School CF, reported:

The speaker was the Upper Room Church pastor, Jotham Napat who is also the Director of Meteorology in Vanuatu. The night was filled with the awesome power of the Lord and we had the Upper Room church ministry who provided music with their instruments. With our typical Pacific Island setting of bush and nature all around us, we had dances, drama, testified in an open environment, letting the wind carry the message of salvation to the bushes and the darkened areas. That worked because most of those that came to the altar call were people hiding or listening in those areas. The Lord was on the road of destiny with many people that night. [Details are given in my book *South Pacific Revivals*.]

Unusual lightning hovered around the sky and as soon as the prayer teams had finished praying with those who rushed forward at the altar call, the tropical rain pelted down on that open field.

God poured out his Spirit on many lives that night, including Jerry Waqainabete and Simon Kofe. Both of them played rugby in the popular university teams and enjoyed drinking and the nightclub scene. Both changed dramatically. Many of their friends said it would not last. It did last and led them into ministry and mission.

We often stayed at the Simon's home in Port Vila, Vanuatu, thanks to the kind hospitality of his parents Silinga and Aonga Kofe. Later, Simon also led prayer groups and youth teams on Tuvalu, his home country, and became the next president of the law school Christian Fellowship. Jerry became their prayer convener, and Seini, the Vice-President, also led a team of law students on mission on Pentecost Island.

I met them during a 6 day holiday in Vanuatu, the first of many trips there. I planned to go in my college's September break but planes were full so I went earlier. That weekend the Christian Fellowship of the Law School of the University of the South Pacific held a concert to raise money for a mission team planning to come to Australia – another divine appointment.

Romulo Nayacalevu, the president of the Christian Fellowship, wrote about that encounter in his book, *Dream On: Connecting the heart of dreamers and visionaries* (Holy Fire Publishing, 2018, Chapter 2):

*I remember the day a dreamer walked into my life. I am sure God heard the yearning within for mentoring. He saw that as a young Christian leader who would influence others around me, I needed to be mentored first. One day as our University Christian fellowship group in Vanuatu stood outside a supermarket in downtown Port-Vila, selling tickets for a Christian concert we had organised, this dreamer walked up and bought a ticket to the concert.*

*As the concert rolled on that night and in response to a tugging within my spirit, I shared with the participants the reason we were holding this concert. Pastor Geoff then walked up and introduced himself. He was a Bible lecturer from Australia and was in Vanuatu for a holiday.*

*I discovered that this was a God-orchestrated meeting because he had previously attempted to come for a holiday, but was unsuccessful until the very weekend when we were holding our concert. Even Pastor Geoff Waugh shared that he felt the timing of his visit was a divine one.*

*However, that was not all. You see, when God orchestrates the opportunity for dreamers and visionaries to connect, there is an immediate kindling of spirits. A spiritual connection that recognises the potential of both the dreamer and the visionary to operate within their spheres of calling. We were strangers on a road of destiny, but through a divine appointment, we were standing on the promises of God, that He has already gone before us.*

*Pastor Geoff then told me that as I shared the purpose of the concert and our plans to go for a mission trip to Australia, he felt a conviction in his spirit to do two things: firstly, to give our team all the money in his wallet as a seed into our mission trip and secondly to offer to host our mission team if we are to visit his city of Brisbane. This first experience was the beginning of my witnessing practical Christianity where faith was complemented by works.*

*The concert organised was in obedience to a prompting for me to take a University mission team to Australia. The idea of being missionaries in Australia was certainly an exciting one. We planned to go to Sydney for our mission opportunity, or so we thought. In God-ordained fashion, we ended up going to Brisbane and the encounter and mentoring I received during that month felt like a lifetime of teaching and depositing of the practical Word.*

*My limited Pentecostal background boxed my understanding of where I could operate spiritually. I was taught, by observing that the altar was only for the ministering of the pastor or elders with the special occasions where the altar was opened for others such as children's Sunday.*

*Do not get me wrong. I get the reasoning and the sacredness of the altar, but I also accept that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10: 34) and He will use willing and obedient vessels to advance His Kingdom. Moreover, by practical application of the Word of God, we discovered that God was more than willing to use us in ministering to those that came to the services throughout our mission trip.*

*The best part was, we did not need to have theology degrees nor titles for God to use us in*

*ministry. We simply had to be available.*

*Through our availability, we saw lives being surrendered to Christ in brokenness as healing, deliverance and restoration followed. I learnt to trust and rely on the Holy Spirit to lead me into His purpose whether it be in the laying of hands, ministering through prayer or in releasing a word of wisdom and knowledge.*

*Pastor Geoff guided us through these firsts of spiritual encounters and experiences and we were empowered to step into ministry. These were intimidating moments for us, but as Pastor Geoff mentored and encouraged us into ministry, we felt empowered and supported to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit as we ministered. There was a spiritual hunger in our team, and yearning to learn, be discipled, and attuned to the convictions and leading of the Holy Spirit.*

*It brings into perspective the reasons the Apostle Paul spent so much time inspiring the young Timothy and reminding him not to let anyone look down on him because he was young, but to be an example in speech, conduct, love, faith and in purity (1 Timothy 4: 12). Pastor Geoff was like Paul to us for this mission experience as he mentored and provided us the opportunity to grow our faith.*

*In one of our ministry times, we were invited to lead an afternoon service in a suburb within the city. The word had gone out that a group of Pacific student missionaries were ministering that day. As the ministry took place, I looked up and saw a packed altar as people drawn by the power of the Holy Spirit kept making their way to the front of the church.*

*There was a tangible presence of the Lord as tears flowed and people were making themselves right with God. I was praying for the senior pastor and his wife and the power of the Holy Spirit came upon them causing them to be slain. I was taken back by this experience. Little me, a student missionary praying for a senior pastor and his wife and seeing them get slain by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*I was bemused, but Pastor Geoff reminded us that it was all about the Holy Spirit and we were the vessels that He is using. He also reminded us to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and flow in the anointing.*

*Again, at the time, these seemed like strange teachings to me. Nevertheless, the more one learns about the Holy Spirit, the more one sees that in His Sovereignty, God will use any person that is available to be a vessel for Him.*

*At this stage of spiritual discoveries, I was blessed to have a dreamer walk alongside me and teach me through the Word the principles of growing in knowledge and intimacy with God. Pastor Geoff brought into my life his many years of experience with God from being a young missionary in the highlands of Papua New Guinea to his years of teaching about revivals and the Holy Spirit at colleges in Brisbane. At over 70 years old, he is still travelling to the mission fields of the Pacific and Asia catching glimpses of revival and inspiring many more.*

## ***Mission in Australia***

After I met this on-fire team of Pacific Island law students in Port Vila in 2002, we hosted them in Brisbane for a month that November. Philip and Dhamika George from Sri Lanka, keen supporters of our Renewal Fellowship that I was then leading in Brisbane, provided their accommodation. In 2002 Philip and Dhamika bought a 'miracle house' with no money! They used it for the Kingdom.

A lady they befriended bought two rental properties in Brisbane at that time and advised them to do the same but they had no money for that. So she gave them an interest-free loan of \$1000 for a deposit on a rental house. They bought that house just in time to offer it to the mission team of Pacific islanders to stay freely for a month. When they sold it two years later, they gained almost \$90,000, wiped out their debts, and were able to give more to mission, especially supporting family mission in Sri Lanka.



*Some of the Pacific Islands law students outside the house in Brisbane*

**The team of eleven law students from their Christian Fellowship (CF) visited Australia for a month in November-December 2002, involved in outreach and revival meetings in many denominations and as**

**well as in visiting home prayer groups. I drove them 6,000 kilometres in a 12-seater van, including a trip from Brisbane to Sydney and back to visit Hillsong.**

**The team stayed in the 'miracle house' provided freely by Philip and Dhamika George, available for them just when they needed it. They also met and visited many of my family, in Brisbane as well as in Tamworth, Manila, Orange and Sydney – an easy way to combine meetings, touring and accommodation with my brothers and sisters!**

**Again and again we saw the hand of God quietly meeting every need and giving ministry and serving opportunities for this on-fire group of young leaders from the Pacific islands.**





I especially enjoyed their harmonious Pacific Islander singing in the limestone caves at Wellington (on the way to Orange), in the rotunda on the Katoomba scenic walk which then filled with tourists who stayed to listen, and in the scores of meetings and prayer group times.

[Photo: team at the Three Sisters scenic view at Katoomba]

They wanted to visit Hillsong church in Sydney. We “happened” to arrive there at Carlingford Baptist (where my brother Philip was the pastor then) on Wednesday afternoon. That night the Hillsong musicians and singers had their weekly Bible Study group and practised for Sunday. We were invited to join them. So our little group of 12 enjoyed being the only congregation listening to them rehearse in their huge tiered auditorium.

These keen young students (now all leading lawyers in many South Pacific countries) spent most of Thursday, and much of their money, at Koorong book store in Sydney, and on Friday I drove them back to Brisbane in a 6am to 8pm road trip along the eastern coast of Australia. During their month with us, the team prayed for hundreds of people in over a dozen churches and home groups, and led worship at the daily 6am prayer group at Kenmore Baptist Church (following their own 5am daily prayer meeting in the house provided for them). You can see photos of this mission team in Australia in links on my Images Blog on the Renewal Journal website – [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com).



*Team with kangaroo and joey. Team leader Romulo with hat*



## Chapter 16 – Vanuatu, Solomon Islands (2003)

*By Don, with my comments in italics*

### ***Pentecost Island***

***Significant events associated with the coming of the Gospel to South Pentecost included a martyr killed and a paramount chief's wife returning from death.***

***Thomas Tumtum had been an indentured worker on cane farms in Queensland, Australia. Converted there, he returned around 1901 to his village on South Pentecost with a new young disciple from a neighbouring island. They arrived when the village was tabu (taboo) because a baby had died a few days earlier, so no one was allowed into the village. Ancient tradition dictated that anyone breaking tabu must be killed, so they were going to kill Thomas, but his friend Lulkon asked Thomas to tell them to kill him instead so that Thomas could evangelise his own people. Just before he was clubbed to death at a sacred Mele palm tree, he read John 3:16, then closed his eyes and prayed for them. Thomas became a pioneer of the church in South Pentecost, establishing Churches of Christ there.***

***Paramount Chief Morris Bule died at 111 on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2016, the son of the highest ranked paramount chief on Pentecost Island. After a wife of Chief Morris's father died and was prepared for burial, the calico cloths around her began to move. She had returned from death and they took the grave cloths of her. She sat up and told them all to leave their pagan ways and follow the Christian way. Then she lay down and died.***

***Chief Morris's son, Paramount Chief Peter, had an uncle who returned from Queensland as a Christian in the early 1900s. When he was old, after many years telling them about the Gospel, one day he called all his relatives to him, shook hands in farewell with everyone, and lay down and died immediately.***

***These stories are reproduced in this book in bold print, and also included in my book **Pentecost on Pentecost and in the South Pacific.*****

***I met another chief, Chief Willie Bebe, when I stayed at his tourist bungalows on a quick one week visit to Pentecost Island, initially to see the famous land diving. Men, and even boys, would jump at different levels from the 30 metre high bamboo towers with vines tied to their ankles. This spectacle originated on Pentecost Island, the only place in the world where it's done.***

***The first time I went there, in 2003, my host Chief Willie asked me to throw out an afflicting spirit giving him a headache, literally. He said that 'enemies' had cursed him. So we prayed together, bound and cast out attacking spirits, and he felt fine.***

***At other times, on later visits, people asked me to help them get rid of strong invading spirits such as one that haunted a house by 'jumping' onto the stones on the floor at night. We prayed and it was gone after that. However, that impudent one 'jumped' on the stones in my bungalow that night,***

*so I had to cast it out in Jesus' name, and it never returned. It's rather weird to hear something 'jump' into your dark room at night!*

*In May 2003 I took a team from the University of the South Pacific, Vanuatu campus Christian Fellowship (CF), to Pentecost Island for a weekend of outreach meetings on South Pentecost. The national Vanuatu Churches of Christ Bible College, at Banmatmat, stands near the site of the first Christian martyrdom there on South Pentecost, an hour's flight north of Port Vila, the capital.*

*Hosted by Chief Willie Bebe, the CF team of six led meetings in Salap village, near Pangi, each night Friday to Sunday and Sunday morning - in Bislama, the local Pidgin and in basic English. It was a kind of miracle. That village church sang revival choruses, but the surrounding villages still used hymns from mission days! The weekend brought new unity among the competing village churches. The Sunday night service went from 6-11pm, although we 'closed' it three times after 10 pm, with a closing prayer, then later on a closing song, and then later on a closing announcement. People just kept singing and coming for prayer.*

*God opened a wide door on Pentecost Island (1 Cor 16:8-9). Another team of four students from the law school CF returned to South Pentecost in June 2003 for 12 days of meetings in villages. Again, the Spirit of God moved strongly. Leaders repented publicly of divisions and criticisms. Then youth began repenting of backsliding or unbelief. A great-grand-daughter of the pioneer Thomas Tumtum gave her life to God in the village near his grave at the Bible College.*

*We held rallies in four villages of South Pentecost each evening from 6pm for 12 days, with teaching sessions on the Holy Spirit held in the main village church of Salap each morning for a week. The team experienced a strong leading of the Spirit in the worship, drama, action songs with Pacific dance movements, and preaching and praying for people.*



***Mathias, a young man who repented deeply with over 15 minutes of tearful sobbing, became the main worship leader in revival meetings. He led worship in many village meetings and also in overseas mission trips.***

***In 2005, we experienced light rain from a clear sky on our prayer group where Lulkon was killed, and in 2006 during our revival meeting a huge supernatural fire blazed in the hills directly behind the Bible College chapel, but no bush was burned.***

*Later in 2003 a team of law students in Vanuatu joined me in a revival mission in the Solomon Islands. There we saw evidence of revival among children and youth which had begun there at Easter that year.*

## ***Western Solomon Islands***

Don continues:

We had not travelled overseas with Geoff since the trip to Nepal in 1998, but that was about to change. This Solomon Islands trip was the start of a series of missions into the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu over the next four years.

### ***Geoff and the Law Students***

Geoff's wife Meg died of cancer on 26 February 2002. Geoff took a cruise to Vanuatu later in the year and made **two unplanned (but might I suggest God planned) contacts that were to change the direction of his ministry from then on.** His first was the contact with the law students, and the second was with Chief Willie Bebe on Pentecost Island. We will come back to the second later, when we accompany Geoff to Pentecost Island in Vanuatu. For now let's continue with the law students.

A team of eleven law students from the University of the South Pacific, School of Law in Vanuatu visited Australia in November/December 2002, hosted and accommodated by Geoff and members of the Renewal Fellowship. Geoff really went the extra mile hiring a twelve seat bus and driving them to Sydney and back for a few days at Hillsong, as well as to other places.

Jerry from Fiji returned home at Christmas after the visit to Australia and prayed for 70 sick people in his village, seeing many miraculous healings. His transformed life challenged the village because he had been converted at the Christian Fellowship after his wild times at the village.<sup>11</sup>

Simon returned to his island of Tuvalu also transformed at the university through the Christian Fellowship. He witnessed to his relatives and friends all through the vacation bringing many of them to the Lord. He led a team of youth involved in Youth Alive meetings and prayed with the leaders each morning from 4am. Simon became president of the Christian Fellowship at the Law School from October 2003 for a year.

Geoff made several mission and teaching visits to Pentecost Island during 2003 accompanied by some of the law students. At the conclusion of the visit in late November/ early December, Geoff and the group flew on to the Solomon Islands. This is where we met the group and this story begins.

### ***Solomon Islands 2002-2003***

Now let's have a look at what was happening in the Solomon Islands in 2002 and 2003.

Basically the country was out of control and in the grip of ethnic tensions, which translates to civil war. I will mention some of the atrocities as told to us later. The Solomon Islands government invited Australia to intervene with the *Helpim Fren* deployment of the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands (RAMSI) of Australian soldiers and police to help curb the lawlessness. By the time of our trip in December 2003, their job was almost complete, peace and

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<sup>11</sup> You need to read Geoff's books for the full stories, but for the record here Jerry became a practising lawyer and pastor of a church he had planted in Suva as well as a new church in his village.

order had been restored, and they were about to pull out.

This is how Geoff saw revival, recorded in his book *Flashpoints of Revival* (2009 revision)

*The Lord poured out his Spirit in fresh and surprising ways in New Georgia in the Western District of the Solomon Islands in 2003, and touched many churches in the capital Honiara with strong moves of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit moved powerfully especially on the youth and children. This included many conversions, many filled with the Spirit, and many having visions and revelations.*

*Ethnic tension (another name for civil war) raged for two years with rebels armed with guns causing widespread problems and the economy failing with the wages of many police, teachers, and administrators unpaid. In spite of this, and perhaps because of it, the Holy Spirit moved strongly in the Solomon Islands.*

*An anointed pastor from PNG spoke at an Easter camp in 2003 attended by many youth leaders from the Western Solomon's. These leaders returned on fire. The weekend following Easter, from the end of April 2003, youth and children of the huge scenic Marovo Lagoon area were filled with the Spirit with many lives transformed.*

*Revival began with the Spirit moving on youth and children in village churches. They had extended worship in revival songs, many visions and revelations and lives being changed with strong love for the Lord. Children and youth began meeting daily from 5pm for hours of praise, worship and testimonies. A police officer reported reduced crimes, and said former rebels were attending daily worship and prayer meetings.*

*Revival continued to spread throughout the region. Revival movements brought moral change and built stronger communities in villages in the Solomon Islands including these lasting developments:*

- 1. Higher moral standards. People involved in the revival quit crime and drunkenness, and promoted good behaviour and co-operation.*
- 2. Christians who once kept their Christianity inside churches and meetings talked more freely about their lifestyle in the community and amongst friends.*
- 3. Revival groups, especially youth, enjoyed working together in unity and community, including a stronger emphasis on helping others in the community.*
- 4. Families were strengthened in the revival. Parents spent more time with their youth and children to encourage and help them, often leading them in Bible reading and family prayers.*
- 5. Many new gifts and ministries were used by more people than before, including revelations and healing. Even children received revelations or words of knowledge about hidden magic artefacts or ginger plants related to spirit power and removed them.*
- 6. Churches grew. Many church buildings in the Marovo Lagoon were pulled down and replaced with much large buildings to fit in the crowds. Offerings and community support increased.*
- 7. Unity. Increasingly Christians united in reconciliation for revival meetings, prayer and service to the community.*

Don continues:

In July 2003 Dr. Ron Ziru (a dentist) then administrator of the United Church of the Solomon Islands hospital at Munda on New Georgia, invited Geoff to visit the Western Regions to teach about revival and the Holy Spirit. Geoff witnessed the revival already mentioned in the Marovo Lagoon area around Seghe, which had now spread to the Roviana Lagoon area around Munda.

Methodist missionaries established strong churches in New Georgia a hundred years ago. These were now part of the United Church of the Solomon Islands.

Rev. John Francis Goldie with Rev. S. Rabon Rooney left Sydney on Friday 3 May 1902 on the SS Titus. The party dropped anchor and went ashore on Nusa Zonga Island on 23 May, 1902 at 4.30pm. After initial contact with the local people a permanent head station was built at Kokeqolo for the Methodist Mission.<sup>12</sup>

Munda on the northwest corner of New Georgia has the church's headquarters with its administration, hospital and schools. It lies 80km from Seghe, which is close to the Marovo Lagoon. Seghe Theological Seminary is the National Bible College for the United Church.

### **Western District, 2003**

Geoff continues:

*Some leaders in the Solomon Islands invited me to come and teach about revival. Ethnic tensions, fighting and vandalism had flared up in the Solomon Islands during 2002-2003. Their government invited Australia to intervene with the 'Helpim Fren' (to help a friend) deployment of the Regional Assistance Mission, Solomon Islands (RAMSI). Australian soldiers and police helped to curb lawlessness and assisted local police to apprehend criminals.*

*Dr Ron Ziru, then administrator of the hospital at Munda, invited me to visit the western region to teach about revival and the Holy Spirit. Cultural tensions were still high, so the Hon. Augustine Taneko, the government Minister for Police and National Security, met me at the airport at 1am off the late night flight from Vanuatu. Augustine drove in an old taxi and someone hit it with a stone as we drove from the airport into town. No limo for the honourable Member! We got to bed around 2.30am that Friday morning July 4! In Honiara, the capital, I stayed with Augustine Taneko, the Member for the Shortland Islands. During the ethnic tensions (civil war) police had relocated his family to Honiara in the large United Church guest house.*

*On Saturday night we had a prayer meeting there with his relatives including the Assistant Commissioner for Police, Johnson Siapu. I spoke at their meeting and washed the feet of them and their wives and children, led by the Lord to honour and serve them. Both men are strong Christians, Catholic and Anglican, and Augustine had been a key government minister negotiating Australia's intervention. He rose early every morning praying for an hour or two with his relatives.*

*Revival was spreading in spite of, and perhaps as one result of, the ethnic tension for two years. Rebels armed with guns had caused widespread problems. The economy failed with wages of many*

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<sup>12</sup> Kokeqolo is the area of Munda where the Headquarters of the United Church is located, and where we would stay.

police, teachers and administrators unpaid. But the Holy Spirit moved strongly in the Solomon Islands.

**The weekend following Easter, from the end of April, 2003, youth and children in the huge, scenic Marovo Lagoon area, filled with the Spirit, had seen many lives transformed. Revival spread with the Spirit moving on youth and children in village churches. They had extended worship with revival songs, many visions and revelations and lives being changed with strong love for the Lord. Children and youth began meeting daily from 5 or 6 pm for hours of praise, worship and testimonies.**

Methodist missions had established strong churches in New Georgia a hundred years ago. These are now part of the United Church of the Solomon Islands. Munda, on the south-west of New Georgia where the pioneers began, has the church's headquarters with its administration, hospital and schools. It lies 80 kilometres from Seghe on the south-east coast in the Marovo Lagoon, with its 70 kilometres of lagoon with 1,000 islands. Seghe Theological Seminary is the national Bible College for the United Church. James Mitchener in *Tales of the South Pacific* said, "I think Segi Point, at the southern end of New Georgia, is my favourite spot in the South Pacific. Behind the point, hills rise, laden with jungle. The bay is clear and blue. The sands of Segi are white. Fish abound in the nearby channel." Seghe (formerly spelt Segi) in the south east of the island and Munda in its south west both have airstrips.

My first experience of this revival was near Munda, on a nearby island. I visited the area from Monday July 7, 2003, and first saw this revival on Nusa Roviana Island near Munda on Wednesday July 9. We rode an outboard motor canoe with Rev Fred Alizeru the pastor at Munda. Fred had previously been in my classes at Trinity College in Brisbane.

Two weeks previously, early in July, revival started there with the Spirit poured out on children and youth, so they just wanted to worship and pray for hours. They met every night from around 5.30pm and wanted to go late every night. I had to encourage them to see school as a mission field, to pray with their friends there, and learn well so they could serve God better. So they needed to get to bed early enough to do that!

We had revival meetings there and in Munda, with many revival songs, teaching about revival and praying for people at the end of the meetings. In the mornings we had teaching sessions for adults to help them understand these strange revival events. They had many questions, typical for traditional church people.

**Children received revelations about their parent's secret sins or the location of hidden magic artefacts or stolen property. Many children had visions of Jesus during the revival meetings. Often he would be smiling when they were worshipping and loving him, or he would show sadness when they were naughty or unkind.**

I visited Seghe and Patutiva in the Marovo Lagoon where the revival had been spreading since Easter. Some adults became involved, also repenting and seeking more of the Holy Spirit.

On Friday, July 11, we travelled in outboard canoes the 80 kilometres from Munda in the west of New Georgia to Seghe in the east, partly on the open sea and partly through rivers and channels, arriving late in the afternoon. Strong young men even carried these fibreglass or tin canoes in one stretch of a shallow channel where we just walked in the water. No, I never did get to walk on the water!

*At Seghe the children and youth loved to meet every afternoon in the church near the Bible College there. The man leading these meetings had been a rascal involved in the ethnic tensions but was converted in the revival.*

*A policeman from Seghe told me that since the revival began crime has dropped. Many former young criminals were converted and joined the youth worshipping God each afternoon. Revival continued to spread throughout the region.*

*We took another canoe the half hour across the lagoon from Seghe to Patutiva on Saturday, July 12, and stayed with Pastor Zakia (Zacchaeus). We had a revival meeting that night in the church, and again after the Sunday morning service and in the afternoon. The pastors seemed happy to leave me to do most of the praying for the people at the end of the meetings, even though I urged them to join me! When visitors are not there then they would do that also.*

*The morning service was still a traditional Methodist service with the old hymns, but the revival meetings were filled with revival songs in their own language.*

*The revival included these effects:*

**Transformed lives** - Many youths that police used to check on because of alcohol and drug abuse became sober and on fire for God, attending daily worship and prayer meetings. A man who rarely went to church was leading the youth singing group at Seghe. Adults publicly confessed hatreds and many were reconciled after years of longstanding divisions and strife.

**Long worship** – The worship often included prophetic words or actions and visions. I visited Sunday services in July in Patutiva village in the lagoon. About 200 youth and children led worship at both services with 1,000 attending. They sang revival songs and choruses accompanied by their youth band. I prayed individually for over 200 people from 9.30 to 11.30pm. They just kept coming - mostly adults. On the Monday night at Seghe the congregation there worshipped from before 6pm to after 9pm. After that, I taught and then prayed with each of the family groups there.

**Visions** - Children see visions of Jesus (smiling at worship, weeping at hard hearts), angels, and hell (with relatives sitting close to a lake of fire, so the children warned them). Some children saw Jesus reigning over heaven and earth. One boy preached (prophesied) calmly and softly for 1½ hours, Spirit-led.

**Revelations** – especially words of knowledge about hidden things, including magic artefacts and good luck charms. Jesus will have no rivals! Children showed parents where the parents hid these things. If other adults did that there would be anger and feuds, but they accepted it from their children. One boy told his pastor that a man accused of stealing a chain saw was innocent as he claimed, and the boy gave them the name of the culprit, by a ‘word of knowledge’.

**Spiritual Gifts** – Adults asked many questions at teaching sessions. We discussed traditional and revival worship, deliverance, discernment of spirits, gifts of the Spirit, understanding and interpreting visions, tongues, healing, Spirit-led worship and preaching, and leadership in revival. Many young people became leaders moving strongly in many spiritual gifts.

**Confusion** - Adults asked many questions at teaching sessions. My study in renewal and revival for over 30 years helped me understand aspects of the revival that confused them, such as traditional and revival worship, deliverance, discerning spirits, gifts of the Spirit, understanding and interpreting visions, tongues, healing, Spirit-led worship and preaching, and leadership in revival.

One of the young leaders from the village in the Marovo Lagoon where the revival began among the children summarised its effects this way:

1. Moral behaviour improved, especially among children and youth.
2. Christian activities increased, especially witnessing and praying.
3. Community participation in Christian activities increased.
4. Household fellowship and prayer increased.
5. Liberty and freedom of expression in meetings increased.
6. Churches grew in numbers and zeal.

These effects continued to spread throughout the Solomon Islands. Revival movements brought moral change and built stronger communities in villages in the Solomon Islands.

Confusion and suspicion continue however, as seems typical of all revivals. Genuine manifestations of the Holy Spirit are sometimes mixed with excessive human reactions or demonic intrusions. So we have been involved in helping people to understand and participate in these powerful outpourings of God's Spirit.

As we keep praying for people to be filled with the Spirit, and as they learn to step out in faith and pray for others, revival spreads. We don't make it happen. God does. We co-operate with him.

Our revival mission teams constantly saw God touching people, and us, in powerful ways. Many are filled with the Spirit. Many discover new gifts of the Spirit in their lives.

### **Revival Mission Team 2003**



*South Pacific revival mission team at the home of*





*Hosts Sir Peter and Lady Margaret Kenilorea  
First Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands*

***A team of law students from the University of the South Pacific Christian Fellowship in Port Vila, Vanuatu, joined me with some others in Honiara and the Western Solomon Islands in December 2003. Sir Peter and Lady Margaret Kenilorea hosted the team in Honiara. Sir Peter was the first Prime Minister of the independent Solomon Islands, and was then the Speaker in the Parliament.***

***Dr Ronald Zirur, then administrator of the United Church Hospital in Munda in the western islands hosted the team there, which included his son Calvin. The team had to literally follow Jesus' instructions about taking nothing extra on mission because the airline left our luggage in Port Vila! We found our bags at Honiara two weeks later after our return from the western islands.***

***The team experienced the strong revival on Nusa Roviana Island across the lagoon from Munda. We took the outboard motor canoe with Rev Fred Alizeru from Munda. Children and youth lead the worship in a packed church. Then many of them slept on the floor during the speaking and while the team prayed for the people.***

***We held meetings in the main church at Munda as well as in surrounding villages and churches. There the children and youth always wanted prayer, because they often had revelations and visions when prayed for. They loved to lead the worship with revival songs in their own language.***

***Don and Helen joined us at Munda where Helen again recorded teaching and worship on video, now on DVD.***

Don continues with more details:

### ***Our Trip, 4-12 December 2003***

Geoff went to Vanuatu on a mission in late November supported by the law students. They would then fly together across to Honiara from Port Vila on Thursday night, 4 December, and carry onto Seghe or Munda next day to check out the revival both there and in the Marovo Lagoon. We would meet up with them, which we did *by a set of curious chances* that only God could organise, as when we left Brisbane we didn't really know whether we would end up in Seghe or Munda. Once again having said we would go, everything worked out well as it had on every previous occasion. In fact it usually works out better than expected, in unexpected ways.

We arrived in Honiara around mid-afternoon on Thursday 4 December with an onward ticket to Seghe next morning and a return ticket from Munda the following Thursday. Seghe is a one hour flight from Honiara, and Munda is about twenty minutes further on.

Dr. (medical) Rooney Jaquilly, a relative of our good friend Rev. Gideon Tuke, stepped forward to claim us as his friends. This was greatly appreciated and we were soon loaded into Rooney's car and on our way to the Anglican Melanesian Brotherhood Chester Rest House for an overnight stay pending Geoff and the team's arrival from Vanuatu later that night.

We would not see Gideon this trip as he was on a three year scholarship in St. Louis in the USA. Nevertheless he made sure Rooney would look after us. We would meet Gideon's wife Vasily later at Munda.

We went to bed that night without any word from Geoff. When we woke in the morning we had a ticket for a flight to Seghe later that morning where we thought the action would be, but had not heard from Geoff. About 8am phone contact was established. He and the team had not long arrived, the flight from Vanuatu being very, very late, and their baggage was left behind in Vanuatu. All they had was what they were wearing. The team and Geoff were then at the home of Sir Peter and Lady Margaret Kenilorea, the first Prime Minister and now Speaker in the Parliament. Their daughter Pamela was a law student at Port Vila. They were well looked after.

We had to get tickets to Munda. Fortunately the airline office was just down the street and it was not much of a problem as the flight we were on landed at Seghe and carried on to Munda. Provided nobody boarded at Seghe, our seats would still be available for the last leg. We went out to the airport and met Geoff who was also booked on the morning flight to Munda. The team would follow on an afternoon flight.

There were two flights to Munda that morning, but nobody seemed to know which one we were on, or when it would leave. It's all very laid back in the islands so we just took shelter from the sun under an awning facing the tarmac and looked out at a lone Twin Otter on the tarmac.

While we were waiting with others, Geoff spotted Ron Ziru, who as it turned out was also booked on the flight to Munda. Calvin Ziru, Ron's son, was a law student in Port Vila and was coming to Munda with the law students team, so I guess it was also reasonable to assume Ron would look after the team's accommodation.

Also as we waited for our flight we watched an Australian Army Caribou aircraft land, taxi and park close into the terminal. The rear loading door dropped to the ground and a group of ragged handcuffed men were marched out onto the tarmac. We were now observing the *ethnic tensions* first hand.

Geoff, Ron and ourselves were all on the same flight and the first to leave Honiara. We arrived at Munda around lunch time. There was a brand new truck belonging to the hospital to meet Ron. Geoff, Helen and I climbed onto the back and we set off for Ron's home driving straight down the rather long and very potholed airstrip runway for the first part of the trip of a couple of kilometres.

## ***Mission in Munda***

We were accepted and made very welcome by both Ron and his wife Nancy at the Zirur home. It was not a large house, probably three bed rooms, lounge, kitchen out the back and a closed in front veranda. There was one bathroom/ WC toilet with water pumped up to it from a rather noisy electric pump. It was on high stumps and not unlike a lot of Queensland houses. There were some rooms underneath and an area for laundry of sorts in the back yard.

Out of all this we were given a good bed in our own room, still unaware that when the eleven strong team arrived later that afternoon there would be fourteen guests in that house as well as Ron and Nancy. After the arrival of the team the kitchen was a food production line – always busy with many hands preparing, cooking and cleaning up, and of course there was always a queue for the bathroom, but nevertheless it worked very well.

There is not much at Munda. Just a couple of shops, a bank, a post office, and telecom centre, the airstrip and a small port, as well as the United Church headquarters. The United Church hospital, known as the Helena Goldie Hospital, is a small hospital originally set up by the Rev. Goldie and named after his wife. Ron Zirur, a doctor of dentistry, was the present administrator.

Late afternoon the team arrived – all eleven of them in what they stood up in as their baggage was still back in Port Vila. They would beg, borrow, and swap these clothes for the next fortnight. We could now put faces to the very familiar names, although picking Jerry from Simon from Romulo did not come easily to a couple of now elderly Australians. They were as switched on a group of youth as could be imagined, all on fire for Christ. They were all from the families of chiefs or leaders in the communities of their home lands, and when they had law degrees it augured well for the future<sup>13</sup> of the Pacific Island Nations.

There was one white face amongst them belonging to Jamie Crossen, son of Dale Crossen with whom I had worked in the Queensland power industry. Jamie had met up with the group at the Kenmore Baptist Church during their visit to Australia and was now, like us, tagging along.

Ron, we found, was very fortunate to be alive. He came home one night during the civil war to be confronted in his lounge room by an assailant who put a gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger. Ron heard the click, but the gun did not go off. The assailant then pointed the gun at the ceiling and it did go off. The assailant took fright and ran off no doubt wondering just what was going on. We were living among people who had been through a lot of trauma during the past couple of years.

## ***Why Were We Here?***

Helen had a video ministry. She now had a digital video camera and an editing program and could produce high quality DVDs. DVD players and TV monitors were becoming available even in isolated communities, so here was another grand opportunity to multiply the word especially with the opportunity to witness and record special events in a real revival situation. It was a

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<sup>13</sup> *There is a lot to tell about what actually happened after graduation, but without exception they all took on responsible positions back in their own countries. I can't recall all the details. Jerry and Simon have already had a mention. Seine a Fijian girl became a crown prosecutor. Calvin Zirur became lawyer to the Solomon Island's Parliament. And so it went on. We would meet up with many of them again when on missions with Geoff to Pentecost Island, Vanuatu.*

unique opportunity not to be missed.

Then there was Geoff himself. In the past he was often accompanied by his wife Meg, but now without her, we felt we could, if nothing else, provide some measure of support by just being there as travelling companions. He had enough to do just teaching and preaching. We also enjoyed the experience of just being present at meetings, and being down the back, could provide feedback as to what was happening amongst those too shy to sit closer to the front.

### ***The Munda Meetings***

Being December, school was over for the year and Rev. Fred Aleziru,<sup>14</sup> the local minister had organised a camp for Sunday School students, all 400 of them, at the Kokeqolo complex. This was an interesting collection of three large buildings, all of which had served as a church at some time.

On entering the grounds the first building was the original church, now just a structure with open sides and a sago palm thatched roof. It was huge and would have held, at a guess, 500 or more people.

Just past this was the second church now used as a hall. It was about the same size but of a more conventional timber construction. In this building 400 Sunday School students slept on the hard concrete floor and were fed their daily ration of rice.

Further in again was the newest building, now used as the church. All meetings were held here. We had a walk of about 800m from the Ziru residence to the complex.

***Friday Night 5 December, 2003.*** No doubt most people would have known of Geoff, but nothing was known of Don and Helen Hill – they just turned up.

Just on dark the group set off down the track in the direction of the church buildings for an evening meeting.



As we approached the first building, the first church with the thatched roof, we were aware of a large gathering of people. Now, with the open sides there was no need to go in through a doorway, so we (Helen and I) just walked up to a position along the side where we could see the stage and see what was going on. We had just walked into one of the greatest shows of our life. It was the “thank you” celebration and farewell from the local people for the RAMSI contingent about to leave for home (the Regional Assistance Mission, Solomon Islands).

We set up the tripod, turned on the camera to record the night, and remained there for the whole show. This was a sincere and as genuine a “thank you” as possible from people who had been through hell during the past two years and we felt very proud to be Australians as group by group from the schools and the community presented their *skits* and delivered an address and a thank you message. There were some very polished and practiced performances. What a

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<sup>14</sup> Fred had been a student of Geoff's at the Uniting Church of Queensland's Trinity Theological College, Auchenflower

Further on in the church building Geoff and the team held their meeting, which also went well into the night. Late night meetings become understandable when it is realised how much cooler it is at night. From here on there were meetings most mornings and afternoons and always at night. Here is what Geoff had to say in his book *South Pacific Revivals*.

*We taught in morning sessions about revival and answered questions. One mother, for example, asked about the meaning of her young son's vision of Jesus standing with one foot in heaven and one foot on the earth. What a beautiful, powerful picture of Jesus' claim that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him (Matthew 28:18), seen in a child's vision.*

A group of young students, mostly girls in blue and white uniforms, are standing in front of a school building. Some are holding small objects, possibly instruments or props, and appear to be in a line or group formation. The building has large windows and a dark entrance.

On another night we gathered in the second building for a Christmas party including the evening meal. This was

### ***Other Daytime Activities***

**NAMES OF THE PIONEER MISSIONARIES 1902**  
 The first mission was to the people of the  
 (Missionaries: Veronice, Emil, Lou, and 12 others)

**JULIAN VERONICA EMIL LUDWIG LOU GUILLIUME**  
*Sociedad Misionera*

**FLA. METHODIST CHURCH**  
 (Missionaries: 1902-1903, 1904-1905, 1906-1907, 1908-1909, 1910-1911, 1912-1913, 1914-1915, 1916-1917, 1918-1919, 1920-1921, 1922-1923, 1924-1925, 1926-1927, 1928-1929, 1930-1931, 1932-1933, 1934-1935, 1936-1937, 1938-1939, 1940-1941, 1942-1943, 1944-1945, 1946-1947, 1948-1949, 1950-1951, 1952-1953, 1954-1955, 1956-1957, 1958-1959, 1960-1961, 1962-1963, 1964-1965, 1966-1967, 1968-1969, 1970-1971, 1972-1973, 1974-1975, 1976-1977, 1978-1979, 1980-1981, 1982-1983, 1984-1985, 1986-1987, 1988-1989, 1990-1991, 1992-1993, 1994-1995, 1996-1997, 1998-1999, 2000-2001, 2002-2003, 2004-2005, 2006-2007, 2008-2009, 2010-2011, 2012-2013, 2014-2015, 2016-2017, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2022-2023, 2024-2025, 2026-2027, 2028-2029, 2030-2031, 2032-2033, 2034-2035, 2036-2037, 2038-2039, 2040-2041, 2042-2043, 2044-2045, 2046-2047, 2048-2049, 2050-2051, 2052-2053, 2054-2055, 2056-2057, 2058-2059, 2060-2061, 2062-2063, 2064-2065, 2066-2067, 2068-2069, 2070-2071, 2072-2073, 2074-2075, 2076-2077, 2078-2079, 2080-2081, 2082-2083, 2084-2085, 2086-2087, 2088-2089, 2090-2091, 2092-2093, 2094-2095, 2096-2097, 2098-2099, 2100-2101, 2102-2103, 2104-2105, 2106-2107, 2108-2109, 2110-2111, 2112-2113, 2114-2115, 2116-2117, 2118-2119, 2120-2121, 2122-2123, 2124-2125, 2126-2127, 2128-2129, 2130-2131, 2132-2133, 2134-2135, 2136-2137, 2138-2139, 2140-2141, 2142-2143, 2144-2145, 2146-2147, 2148-2149, 2150-2151, 2152-2153, 2154-2155, 2156-2157, 2158-2159, 2160-2161, 2162-2163, 2164-2165, 2166-2167, 2168-2169, 2170-2171, 2172-2173, 2174-2175, 2176-2177, 2178-2179, 2180-2181, 2182-2183, 2184-2185, 2186-2187, 2188-2189, 2190-2191, 2192-2193, 2194-2195, 2196-2197, 2198-2199, 2200-2201, 2202-2203, 2204-2205, 2206-2207, 2208-2209, 2210-2211, 2212-2213, 2214-2215, 2216-2217, 2218-2219, 2220-2221, 2222-2223, 2224-2225, 2226-2227, 2228-2229, 2230-2231, 2232-2233, 2234-2235, 2236-2237, 2238-2239, 2240-2241, 2242-2243, 2244-2245, 2246-2247, 2248-2249, 2250-2251, 2252-2253, 2254-2255, 2256-2257, 2258-2259, 2260-2261, 2262-2263, 2264-2265, 2266-2267, 2268-2269, 2270-2271, 2272-2273, 2274-2275, 2276-2277, 2278-2279, 2280-2281, 2282-2283, 2284-2285, 2286-2287, 2288-2289, 2290-2291, 2292-2293, 2294-2295, 2296-2297, 2298-2299, 2300-2301, 2302-2303, 2304-2305, 2306-2307, 2308-2309, 2310-2311, 2312-2313, 2314-2315, 2316-2317, 2318-2319, 2320-2321, 2322-2323, 2324-2325, 2326-2327, 2328-2329, 2330-2331, 2332-2333, 2334-2335, 2336-2337, 2338-2339, 2340-2341, 2342-2343, 2344-2345, 2346-2347, 2348-2349, 2350-2351, 2352-2353, 2354-2355, 2356-2357, 2358-2359, 2360-2361, 2362-2363, 2364-2365, 2366-2367, 2368-2369, 2370-2371, 2372-2373, 2374-2375, 2376-2377, 2378-2379, 2380-2381, 2382-2383, 2384-2385, 2386-2387, 2388-2389, 2390-2391, 2392-2393, 2394-2395, 2396-2397, 2398-2399, 2400-2401, 2402-2403, 2404-2405, 2406-2407, 2408-2409, 2410-2411, 2412-2413, 2414-2415, 2416-2417, 2418-2419, 2420-2421, 2422-2423, 2424-2425, 2426-2427, 2428-2429, 2430-2431, 2432-2433, 2434-2435, 2436-2437, 2438-2439, 2440-2441, 2442-2443, 2444-2445, 2446-2447, 2448-2449, 2450-2451, 2452-2453, 2454-2455, 2456-2457, 2458-2459, 2460-2461, 2462-2463, 2464-2465, 2466-2467, 2468-2469, 2470-2471, 2472-2473, 2474-2475, 2476-2477, 2478-2479, 2480-2481, 2482-2483, 2484-2485, 2486-2487, 2488-2489, 2490-2491, 2492-2493, 2494-2495, 2496-2497, 2498-2499, 2500-2501, 2502-2503, 2504-2505, 2506-2507, 2508-2509, 2510-2511, 2512-2513, 2514-2515, 2516-2517, 2518-2519, 2520-2521, 2522-2523, 2524-2525, 2526-2527, 2528-2529, 2530-2531, 2532-2533, 2534-2535, 2536-2537, 2538-2539, 2540-2541, 2542-2543, 2544-2545, 2546-2547, 2548-2549, 2550-2551, 2552-2553, 2554-2555, 2556-2557, 2558-2559, 2560-2561, 2562-2563, 2564-2565, 2566-2567, 2568-2569, 2570-2571, 2572-2573, 2574-2575, 2576-2577, 2578-2579, 2580-258

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but even more interesting was the procession of the hierarchy of officials<sup>15</sup> from the United Church, including the bishop, who came out to talk to Helen and me one by one while we were waiting for Vasily to arrive.

The church was somewhat confused about what was going on and with good reason. They were not only trying to come to grips with a revival fired up by the children and youth, but now they had Geoff and a team of law students in the area, Gideon's wife was about to arrive, and as if that was not enough, Don and Helen Hill were around with a video camera and sitting on their upturned canoe!

### ***Our Departure***

On Thursday morning 11 December we flew off to Honiara on the way home. As always flying in these remote areas is interesting with a landing on Seghe and another on the island of Yandina between New Georgia and Guadalcanal. From here on to Honiara, we flew over the sea at just 500 feet. I don't know why, but the pilot announced his intention before the take off so we skimmed the waves over Iron Bottom Sound and had great views of Guadalcanal and Honiara straight out of our window.

Rooney was at the airport in Honiara to meet us and took us back to the Melanesian Brotherhood Chester Rest House. We would not stay overnight, but with a flight out around midnight we needed somewhere to rest.

Our flight was supposed to depart at midnight so Rooney dropped us at the airport after our meal. The airport was crowded and disorganised. We stood around and queued for four hours before finally departing at 2am for a dawn arrival at Brisbane.



*The team relaxes back in Honiara after the mission*

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<sup>15</sup> We had met several of them before either on previous trips or in Brisbane.



## *Chapter 17 – Vanuatu: Tanna & Pentecost (2004)*

When Simon was a law student, his parents, Silinga and Aonga Kofe, kindly hosted me and others on many mission trips to, and through, Port Vila, on our visits to Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. Often, I met with the law students in their home to eat, pray and plan.

The Easter vacation in April 2004 (for the students and for me) gave us an opportunity for an Easter convention meeting at the Law School and for a mission trip to Tanna Island.

Although rain shortened the outdoors meeting at the Law School on Saturday, April 10, once again we prayed with and for many students. The Christian Fellowship at the Law School was unusually committed to daily prayer each morning, and evangelism among the students, seeing many of them changed. Their leaders were keen to involve students in weekly meetings, friendship evangelism and in mission.

I had time to visit Pentecost Island again the weekend after Easter and, along with the usual village evangelism meetings, I was able to pray and plan with them for revival teaching at their Bible College at Banmatmat, standing vacant and overgrown at that time.

Then I flew back to Port Vila and joined a team of the law students for our mission trip to Tanna for the next weekend.



The host church at White Sands had invited the team. It was linked with the Upper Room church in Port Vila, which many of the law students attended. We flew south for an hour to the small international airport on the western side of the island and then rode in a truck across the hills on a rough dirt road to White Sands on the eastern side. It is close to Mount Yasur volcano, which gives a red glow to the area at night. We also enjoyed the hot springs on the nearby beach.

The church arranged for teaching meetings in their building in the mornings and crusade meetings for the village on the grounds near the chief's meeting house (nakamal) at night. People attended from other villages as well, some even walking across the island from Green Point on the south west, for Wednesday to Sunday, April 21-25.

The students have a strong impact and were a great help with prayer and preparation, testimonies, items and praying with and for people, especially the young people.

We flew back to Port Vila on Monday morning and I connected with the flight to Brisbane that same afternoon, retuning in time for teaching at Christian Heritage College that week. My students always appreciated hearing about mission and revival.



*Mission team at Mount Yassur volcano*



## ***Pentecost Island***

By 2004, the Churches of Christ national Bible College at Banmatmat on Pentecost Island increasingly became a centre for revival teaching. Pastor Lewis Wari and his wife Marilyn hosted these gatherings at the Bible College, and later on Lewis spoke at many island churches as the President of the Churches of Christ. Lewis had been a leader in strong revival movements on South Pentecost as a young pastor from 1988.

Our leaders' seminars and youth conventions at the Bible College focused on revival. The college hosted regular courses and seminars on revival for a month at a time, each day beginning with prayer together from 6am, and even earlier from 4.30am in the youth convention in December, 2004, as God's Spirit moved on the youth leaders in that area.

Morning sessions continued from 8am to noon, with teaching and ministry. As the Spirit moved on the group, they continued to repent and seek God for further anointing and impartation of the Spirit in their lives. Afternoon sessions featured sharing and testimonies of what God is doing. Each evening became a revival meeting at the Bible College with worship, sharing, preaching, and powerful times of ministry to everyone seeking prayer.

Teams from the Bible College led revival meetings in village churches each weekend. Many of these went late as the Spirit moved on the people with deep repentance, reconciliation, forgiveness, and prayer for healing and empowering.

The church arranged for more revival teaching at their national Bible College for two weeks to over two dozen church leaders. On the weekend in the middle of that course, teams from the college held mission meetings simultaneously in seven different villages. Every village saw strong responses, including a team that held their meeting in the chief's meeting house of their village, and the first to respond was a fellow from the 'custom' traditional heathen village called Bunlap.

Through 2004-2005 we held many revival leadership meetings at the Bible College, usually in my vacations from college in Brisbane. Don and Helen Hill from the Renewal Fellowship in Brisbane joined me there for some visits. They provided needed portable generators and lawn mowers and Don repaired the electrical wiring and installations at the Bible College. Helen recorded my teaching sessions, now available on DVD. Friends around the world, such as in Kenya, Nepal and the Pacific, have used those DVDs for their leadership training.

Chief Willie asked for a team to come to pray over his home and tourist bungalows. Witchcraft magic concerned him. So a prophetic and deliverance team of leaders at the Bible College of about six people prayed there. Mathias reported that they located witchcraft items in the ground, removed them and claimed the power of Jesus' blood to cleanse and heal the land. He wrote:

**The deliverance ministry group left the college by boat and when they arrived at the Bungalows they prayed together. After they prayed together they divided into two groups.**

**There is one person in each of these two groups that has a gift from the Lord that the Holy Spirit reveals where the witchcraft powers are, such as bones from dead babies or stones. These witchcraft powers are always found in the ground outside the houses or**

**sometimes in the houses. So when the Holy Spirit reveals to that person the right spot where the witchcraft power is, then they have to dig it up with a spade.**

**When they dug it out from the soil they prayed over it and bound the power of that witchcraft in the name of Jesus. Then they claimed the blood of Jesus in that place.**

**Something very important when joining the deliverance group is that everyone in the group must be fully committed to the Lord and must be strong in their faith because sometimes the witchcraft power can affect the ones that are not really committed and do not have faith.**

**After they finished the deliverance ministry they came together again and just gave praise to the Lord in singing and prayer. Then they closed with a Benediction.**

Those Bible College sessions seemed like preparation for revival. Every session led into ministry. Repentance went deep. Prayer began early in the mornings, and went late into the nights. I taught revival courses at Banmatmat in my Brisbane college breaks during these visits:

April 14-19 (planning), October 18-31, and December 12-18 (camp), in 2004.

March 28-April 22, June 13-July 5, and September 21-October 8, in 2005.

Don and Helen joined me in October 2004 and April and September-October in 2005.

Village evangelism teams from South Pentecost continue to witness in the villages, and visit other islands. Six people from these teams came to Brisbane and were then part of 15 from Pentecost Island on mission in the Solomon Islands in 2006.

### ***Law students return to Pentecost***

A law student team from Port Vila, led by Seini Puamau, Vice President of the CF, had a strong impact at the High School on South Pentecost Island with responses at all meetings. Most of the whole residential school of 300 responded for prayer at the final service on Sunday night, 17 October, 2004, after a powerful testimony from Joanna Kenilorea (daughter of the first Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands, Sir Peter Kenilorea). The High School principal, Silas Buli, had prayed for years from 4am each morning for the school and the nation, alone or with some of his staff. He became a Member of Parliament in 2016.



*Ranwadi High School Chapel and Principal Silas*

### ***Jerry Waqanabete***

Jerry, one of the USP law students, spoke at a Youth Conference at the Bible College, Pentecost Island, Vanuatu, in December 2004, where about 100 youth met at 4.30am during the last few days of the conference for two hours of worship and prayer and ministry to around 6.30-7am, with God touching them strongly. We showed them the video of Transformations 3 - *"Let the Seas Resound"* - about Fiji and Vanuatu. In that, every time a village leader publicly returns the land to God in repentance and commitment, showers have fallen (even from a clear sky) as a sign of God's blessing, and then the land has been blessed. See Jerry's comment on this in his report on page 111.

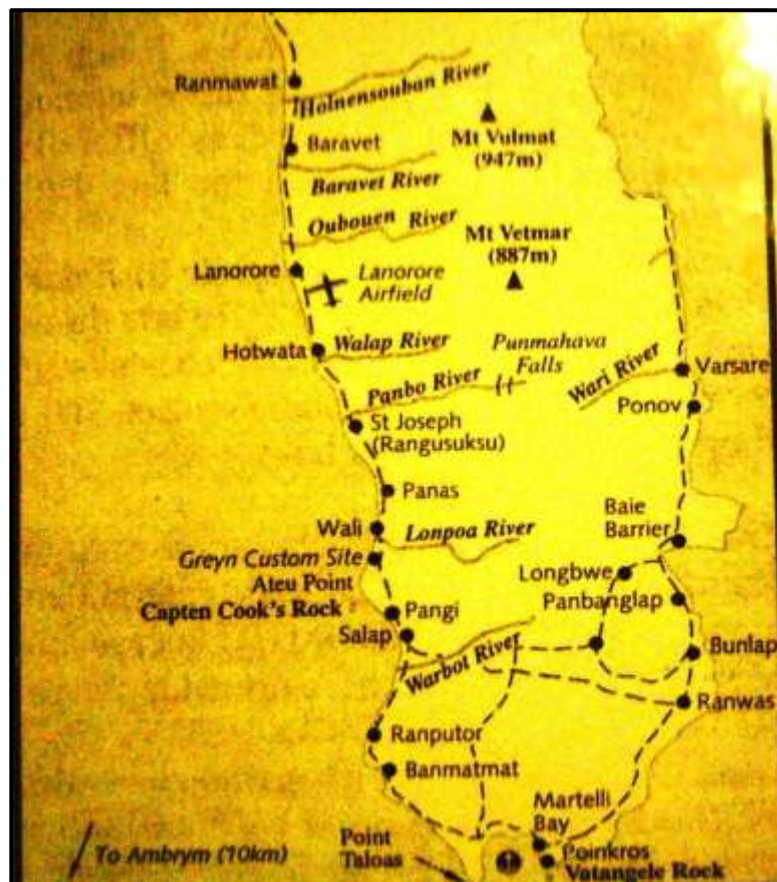
**That also happened to the Pentecost leaders the first time we went to the sacred 'Mele' palm tree site near the Bible College where Lulkon, the martyr was killed and eaten (though everyone who ate him soon died from dysentery). He gave his life so that his Pentecost friend Thomas (converted in Bundaberg, Queensland as a 'kanaka' working on sugar cane plantations) could live and bring the gospel to his people. As we prayed, standing under the Mele palm, a warm, light shower fell on us all from a clear sky - a sign of God's anointing, and blessing.**

Jerry married Pam (another law student who was with my teams in Pentecost Island) in December 2004 after his graduation. Jerry is the grandson of the village chief, and Pam is the daughter of the first Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands - both of them are anointed by God for leadership. They attended Redeemer Christian Church, an independent church in Suva founded by a Nigerian missionary, where Romulo (former CF President in the law school in Vanuatu, and mission team leader in Australia) and many of the law graduates attended.

**Following the youth camp on Pentecost Island, Jerry returned to his home village to stir up prayer and revival again. As a grandson of the chief, and with his cousin, he dedicated the sea and land in his village to God, and again light rain fell on them from a clear sky.**



*Student Jerry at the sacred Mele palm tree*



*Map of South Pentecost*

## ***Chapter 18 – Nepal (2004, 2014)***

During the September mid-semester break at college I was able to return to Nepal with our friends Bob and Jill Densley. They had first invited me when Bob was working there with the United Nations and also helping local pastors.

So again I we flew into Kathmandu after an overnight rest at Bangkok airport, arriving at Kathmandu soon after mid-day on Thursday, September 9. Raju's friends found their way to the airport amid tight security due to Maoist threats. At that time some western based hotels had been bombed so our hosts, Hosanna Church, arranged for we three westerners to stay at the safer Buddhist owned Grand Norling Resort on the edge of the city. This was upmarket for us, with a beautiful wide winding central staircase leading to beautifully tiled spacious rooms upstairs with their own bathroom attached. It was, in fact, so impressive that on many days we had to wait for a local film crew to finish filming scenes there! So we had a glimpse of the stunning film stars, surrounded by large groups of technicians.

Every night there were full time night watchmen walking around the buildings banging their stick loudly on the ground so that nearby soldiers on the road would not mistake them as terrorists. Before coming here I recently read how Chinese pastors learned to jump out windows to escape capture, and so I checked my window exit route. It was rather high on the upstairs floor, but possible to manage a window escape via some nearby ledges!

We had visits from our friend Pastor Rinzi there also, as well as from Pastor Raju, our main host. Each day we went to Hosanna Church for leadership teaching sessions and for revival rallies, always praying in faith with large numbers after each meeting, and getting them to pray for each other – so easy for them, not needing an interpreter nearby as we did.

We then travelled in mini buses from 6am to 3pm from Kathmandu down the ranges to the Indian border plains at Gochadda once again, and again a full church of pastors and leaders crammed into each session till Monday night. Again many of them had walked for days from remote mountain villages to join us. Such hunger and faith makes a wonderful atmosphere for the Spirit to move in power, healing, freeing, and filling people.

After a day's rest back at the Grand Norling Resort we flew with Buddha Airlines west to Baratanagar airstrip and then drove in local taxis to Damak again. We held teaching revival sessions there from Thursday to Saturday, September 16-18. I was especially impressed with the three generations of the Thurling pastors and evangelists, the grandfather having survived severe beatings in prison just for his faith.

We flew back to Kathmandu, with clear views of Mt Everest, for more meetings there from Sunday 19 to Saturday 25. The church had been growing steadily, saturated in prayer. Their building complex now included a 24 hour prayer room with prayer cubicles. People came and went constantly, many fasting and praying for extended periods. So the church was full of faith, healings, miracles and constant evangelism. Raju, ever the visionary. Continued to find ways to develop training programs including for employment ventures such as hairdressing and tradesmen. They developed highly regarded Christian schools which continued to grow in size and quality, often gaining government awards.

So we flew back to Brisbane in time for my teaching again from Monday, September 27, tired

physically but renewed in spirit, with great mission stories to entertain my students.

I'm so grateful that college staff and students, as well as Renewal Fellowship people and many friends supported us in prayer in all these mission trips. They too are a vital part of this story.



*Roadside discipleship with Raju and team*



*3 generations of Thurling family, pastors & evangelists*



## ***Chapter 19 – Vanuatu: Pentecost (2004)***

***By Don, with my comments in italics***

*We had experienced strong moves of God's Spirit in Vanuatu and especially on Pentecost Island. I talked with Chief Willie and Pastor Rolanson about the possibility of returning to teach leaders and pastors about revival and the Holy Spirit. They encouraged me to do that.*

*We talked with Pastor Lewis Wari and his wife Marilyn about their long experience of revivals. Lewis held a responsible position in the Vanuatu Churches of Christ and later was their President and then Mission Director. He offered to co-ordinate the 2 to 4 week teaching sessions at the Bible College at Banmatmat.*

*So we arranged for revival teaching sessions at the then unused Bible College in 2004 and 2005. I was able to lead those 'intensive courses' during my vacations from my part time teaching at the School of Ministries of Christian Heritage College in Brisbane.*

*Many of us felt strongly that God was doing something new and powerful at the Bible College, and many believed that more revival lay ahead.*

### **Don continues:**

In October 2004 the opportunity arose to accompany Geoff on a mission trip to Pentecost Island in Vanuatu. I have already explained how Geoff became involved with the law students and Vanuatu. This association developed further in 2004 with Geoff making more visits to Vanuatu and in particular to the Vanuatu Churches of Christ Bible College at Banmatmat on Pentecost Island.

Geoff was (in retirement) teaching part time at the Christian Heritage College School of Ministries in Brisbane, and volunteered to conduct regular teaching seminars at Banmatmat. The first course of two weeks duration was to be held in October 2004, and the first of four courses planned for 2005 would be held from Easter 2005. These fitted in with his term vacations.

Leaders from the nation and various churches would study these courses in a revival context, as a college community, praying, learning and ministering together. Teams would then visit villages on mission throughout Pentecost Island each weekend putting theory into practice. We went to record the teaching sessions on video, which Helen would subsequently turn into teaching DVDs for distribution back to Vanuatu and other parts of the world.

We were also able to turn our hand to many other necessary tasks to assist with the rehabilitation of the college at Banmatmat including refurbishing of the power system, very necessary to charge the camera batteries as well as to provide a little light. If God was taking Geoff to Vanuatu and we felt we could be of use, there was an exciting adventure ahead.

Banmatmat Bible College was damaged in a 1999 earthquake and landslides restricted the already limited access. Ranwadi School suffered structural damage. We saw evidence of damage at both Banmatmat and Ranwadi.

## ***Pentecost Island***

We spent most of our time on Pentecost Island. A lot of new place names are going to appear from time to time in this narrative. Some you might have heard of before, but most will probably be new, so before I go further into our story let's have a look at some of them for background information.

Pentecost was first sighted on the day of Pentecost, 22 May 1768, by Louis Antoine de Bougainville. It was also sighted by Captain James Cook during his voyage through the area in 1774. It has been influenced by successive Christian missionaries but traditional customs remain strong.

Pentecost is one of the 83 islands that make up Vanuatu. It lies 190km due north of the capital Port Vila on the large main island of Efaté. It is a lush, mountainous island rising high straight out of the depths of the sea and stretches north to south some 60km. It supports a population of 12,000. The mountain range, of which the highest peak is 947m, marks the dividing line between the humid, rainy eastern coast and the more temperate western coast. Because of the way it rises out of the depths of the sea there are no significant beaches or fringing reefs, neither are there any safe anchorages or ports, and although surrounded by the sea, the people are not sea farers or fishermen.

The population centres are concentrated along the west coast, although some live inland. Most places have village telephones and one or two inhabitants own 4WD trucks, which the villagers use for transport. A couple of these villages also have a small bank and a post office. The east coast is wild and inaccessible, with relatively few inhabitants.

*Note: Banmatmat is too small to be marked on this map. It lies between Ranputor and Wanur on the south west corner.*

Pentecost Island is notable as the spiritual birthplace of the extreme sport of Bungee jumping, originating in an age old ritual called *The Gol* or land diving. Between April and June every year, men in the southern part of the island jump from tall towers around 20m to 30m in height with vines tied to their feet, in a ritual believed to ensure a good yam harvest.

Rugged country and lack of communications had seen the development of five distinct languages, but most people speak Bislama, the form of Pidgin English that is Vanuatu's national language. Educated islanders also know English or French, which are taught in schools.





## ***Ranwadi***

Geoff had an association with two main places on Pentecost Island, viz., Ranwadi and Banmatmat, both through the Churches of Christ.

***Ranwadi School*** (officially known since 2003 as Ranwadi Churches of Christ College) is a co-educational boarding school. There are just over 300 students, who come from all over Pentecost Island and from other parts of Vanuatu.



The unusual thing about this school was to find such a place of such importance to the country in such an isolated place on an isolated island. Australian aid has been poured into infrastructure. Anybody who is anybody sends their children to Ranwadi, and as with the Law Faculty of the University of the South Pacific in Port Vila, many of the future leaders of the region will receive their basic education at this school. The school is run on strong religious lines. The motto is Luke 2:52 - *and Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men.*

## ***Banmatmat***

This is the location of the Vanuatu Churches of Christ Bible College. It is located in a secluded valley on the western shore of Pentecost Island near the southern tip about 15km south of the airstrip at Lonorore. It is completely surrounded by steep jungle covered mountains running right down to the sea. The only access is by foot, or by boat.

Many villages on Pentecost Island have churches founded by pioneer “kanakas” who were sent to work on Queensland sugar plantations from the 1880s, and converted to Christianity through a Churches of Christ *Queensland Kanaka Mission* at Bundaberg. On their return they brought the gospel to their villages.

**One of these, Thomas Tumtum, returned to his village of Banmatmat on South Pentecost around 1901 with a new young disciple, Lulkon, from the neighbouring island of Ambrym. Unfortunately and unbeknown to them, the village was *tabu* (taboo) because a baby had died a few days earlier.**

**Tradition dictated that anyone breaking tabu must be killed, so they planned to kill Thomas. However, Lulkon signalled to kill him instead so that Thomas, who knew the local language, could evangelise his people. Just before Lulkon was clubbed to death as a martyr at a sacred Mele palm tree in the mountains behind Banmatmat, he read John 3:16 from his pocket *New Testament*, then closed his eyes and prayed for them. Those who ate his body died of dysentery. Thomas became the pioneer missionary. Thomas lies buried in the jungle within a 100 metres of the Banmatmat College. We visited his grave.**

From the information I have been able to gather, Banmatmat College was established by USA missionaries in the 1960s and must have been quite a place. Buildings were substantially constructed of masonry blocks with lecture rooms, dormitories, houses for the staff and visitors, and a boat shed and boat for transportation. Electricity supply was provided from a generator located in the bush where the noise would be muted, and underground power was reticulated to all buildings.

The place was apparently abandoned a couple of years before we arrived, and quickly became overgrown as the jungle reclaimed the land. However by 2004 Banmatmat had increasingly become a place for revival. Pastor Lewis Wari and his wife Merilyn took up residence in the old Principal's House and hosted revival meetings. When we arrived it was being slowly reclaimed from the jungle, but more about that later as our stories evolve.

### ***Our Trip - 12 October to 1 November 2004***

Geoff's windows of opportunity to conduct courses on Pentecost Island were dictated by his teaching commitments in Brisbane. He would finish mid-term commitments on Friday 19 October, fly to Port Vila that afternoon and then on to Pentecost Island first thing Saturday morning for a weekend mission at Ranwadi High School before moving down south to Banmatmat for teaching sessions over the following two weeks.

We had never been to Vanuatu, so opted to go over a few days earlier to have a look around Port Vila and Efate Island, and found ourselves on the afternoon Virgin Pacific Blue flight on Tuesday 12 October. Virgin were consolidating their position as Australia's second domestic carrier after the Ansett collapse and were branching out overseas with *Pacific Blue*. This was one of their first overseas flights on a brand new bright red Boeing 737 800.

Seine, Simon, Loretta and Jay, four of the law student's organised accommodation for us in Port Vila at the Hibiscus Motel, a small place close into the Port Vila township, which I see from the few notes I made on this trip, *surpassed our expectations*. They met us at the airport, took us to the motel and made sure we were comfortable.

***Wednesday 13 October, 2004.*** Today was overcast with a slight drizzle and a couple of muted sunny breaks. Seine had booked our airline tickets to Lonoore on Pentecost Island and we had to pay for and collect these. Simon picked us up after lunch and took us into town to the Air Vanuatu Office. After that Simon took us out for a look around the campus at the University.

***Thursday 14 October, 2004.*** Today we went on an all-day mini bus tour around Efate Island, which was about an 80km drive. Again it was a day of high cloud and some heavy rain.

***Friday 15 October 2004.*** A team of four or five law students flew out to Pentecost Island this morning to prepare for the weekend activities at Ranwadi High School. Geoff would fly in tonight and stay with Simon's family. We would meet Geoff at the airport tomorrow morning.

**Saturday 16 October 2004 - Pentecost Island.** We met Geoff at the airport as planned and were on our way to Lonorore on Pentecost Island on time at 8am. It was a very easy flight in an Air Vanuatu Twin Otter.

Although over the sea for most of the flight with good views of other islands, the flight path crossed over Epi Island and then on the descent over Ambryn Island where two volcanoes were active and the desolation of the ash plains clearly visible.



*Arrival at Lonorore - Bislama sign: EMI - them he, TABU - taboo, BLONG ENI MAN - belong (for) any man, IKO LONG AIRFIELD - he go along/on airfield, TAEM - time, PLEN IE LAN - plane he land. This translates as "It is forbidden for anyone to go on the airfield when the plane lands."*

Lonorore was just a grassed clearing in the jungle parallel to the coast. There was just one small structure more of the nature of a shelter than a building for waiting passengers and an airline office to check tickets. There was a radio of sorts inside and occasionally the voice of a pilot would shatter the silence of the jungle. Up in the bush there was a toilet (a proper one) and one small house where the airport family lived. There was also a row of post office boxes at the house where local mail was placed to be picked up later.

We were met on arrival by a 4WD truck from Ranwadi. We set off on the 10km trip north to Ranwadi, which would take about an hour. The track was not all that bad, it was just the time taken to ford several fast flowing streams, as well as a stop at a local farm to pick up a couple of chooks with their legs tied, which were thrown in the back with Geoff, me and the luggage.

On arrival at Ranwadi, we and the chooks were unloaded with our baggage and made welcome. We were taken to a house and shown to a bedroom we could occupy for the weekend, and surprise, surprise, there was a bathroom with a flush toilet inside the house. Geoff was taken to the residence of the principal, Silas Buli, and his wife where he would be their guest. *In 2017 Silas was elected to parliament representing South Pentecost.*

After lunch the law students staged a mock trial in the Assembly Hall where poor Geoff was arraigned before the court on a charge of being drunk and disorderly in a public place. This was a great opportunity for the law students to interact with the school students and to show by demonstration just how the court process in Vanuatu worked. Seine was the Crown Prosecutor and Joanna Kenilorea, daughter of Sir Peter and Lady Margaret, the first Prime Minister and now Speaker in the Parliament of the Solomon Islands, was the judge. Interestingly, Seine became a crown prosecutor in Fiji after graduation. The boys also had parts to play in the court process.

At some time during the day I was introduced to Ezekiel Buli, the school mechanical and general maintenance man. He showed me around his world at the school including his workshop and the electrical generator and power system, and we discussed his problems. He had been told to accompany us to Banmatmat on Monday where we would see what could be done to get the power supply system working again there.

Tonight after dinner there was a rally in the Assembly Hall which the whole school attended. Custom dictated we had to sit up on the stage with the official party and Helen had to video from that vantage point. It was another great night run mainly by the law students, who by now had established a great rapport with the school. As public speaking was part of their chosen profession their performance and delivery of their message was something to be enjoyed and appreciated. Geoff took over at the end, but there was not a lot more for him to say. He had a great team of apprentices.

**Sunday 17 October 2004.** Lights out last night was a real cut off point. The generator stopped and that was that for the night. Today being Sunday everybody attended the morning church service, which went on for a couple of hours. Geoff was guest speaker. I had learned many years ago *to throw my watch away* and forget about time as it becomes irrelevant when worship becomes intense.

The service was memorable in several respects. Firstly the hall was full and that makes a big difference especially with the singing. Without TV and radio, singing becomes a cultural thing and outlet and those kids put everything they had into it. Then there was the dress, especially the girls who adorned themselves in their very best and colourful Sunday finery. Helen did very well with the video camera as we were now *allowed* to sit up the back.

We had lunch (a large plate of rice) with the school after the service. On the way in we passed the store rooms where bags of rice labelled *Gift from the Peoples Republic of China* were very much in evidence.

Helen's video camera was well known around the school by now and after lunch while the law students were practicing for the night meeting senior students asked Helen to video some dance segments they had practised. So successful was this session that the generator was started up, music and a TV set found, and the students saw themselves for the first time on TV. They wanted more and more, and this interaction filled the whole afternoon. We left a DVD player behind, edited this segment and mailed it back. It was probably played continuously when the generator was on, and was taken by these same students *on mission* to other schools or churches in the islands. Sometimes God's agenda overrules.

**There was another meeting in the Assembly Hall tonight which must go down as one of our greatest *God experiences of all time*. Geoff included the event in his book *South Pacific Revivals* (page 126) where he records the highlights of revival history throughout New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. Helen, from a vantage point at the back of the hall, recorded this unique event on video.**

The night's worship led by the law students started off as usual with singing, then spontaneously turned into a joyful party. Then Joanna Kenilorea gave a testimony about a very sad event in her family that brought the Keniloreas back to God. She was especially eloquent in her address and when finished, Geoff found that it had been so powerful that he had no more to add that night and made an immediate altar call<sup>16</sup> for prayer. Almost as one, 300 high school students, teachers and others present rose from their seats and moved out into the aisle to the front of the hall. There were a couple of slow starters, but when it became apparent that Geoff could not possibly pray for each individually, even these moved up to the back of the crowd until everybody in that room had come forward. Geoff in all his years of ministry and association with renewal ministries and revival (and that was the subject of his doctorate) had never experienced anything like it. The most remarkable thing for Helen and me was we were there and part of it in such a remote and previously unknown part of our world! It was surely a night to remember.

Silas, the principal was over-awed. He had risen from his bed every morning at 4am for many years to pray for the school and here was an answer.

**Monday 18 October 2004.** We were moving on to Banmatmat today, but you do not just get up and leave after a weekend like the one we had experienced. We were therefore led up on stage again at the 8am Assembly of the entire school, thanked, blessed and farewelled. The entire assembled school of 300 then rose and sang all verses of the Vanuatu National Anthem, before Geoff, Helen and I, and the law students were lined up just outside of the door to shake the hand of every student and teacher at the school.

The law students left for the airport at Lonorore, and we followed later in the morning for Banmatmat with a driver and Ezekiel. The distance to Banmatmat was only about 25km but it took all day<sup>17</sup>. The track south from Lonorore was much slower, in parts not a track, detouring onto the stony beach to get around steep headlands. Pentecost Island was a wild place.

We stopped at the village of Pangi where there were a couple of stores, a bake house, post office, bank and telephone. The arrival of a vehicle in the village brought a few people out, mainly people who knew Geoff from previous visits.

"Good-days" exchanged, we continued on for perhaps another half kilometre to Salap and Chief Willie's Bungalows, definitely the end of the road. From here on if you were serious about Banmatmat it was boat or walk.

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<sup>16</sup> A call to the front for prayer is not in the Bible, it is just a "way" to respond.

<sup>17</sup>The drive plus a later boat plus waiting for the boat



We met Chief Willie and his wife and had an afternoon tea and conversation with them while a boat was arranged to take us to Banmatmat. First lesson; nothing is prepared in advance. It was probably Chief Willie's *plastic canoe* moored out in front, the only thing visible in the immediate area that floated. Soon however, a dugout canoe appeared and was paddled out to bring the *plastic canoe* to shore. We would spend a lot of time with Chief Willie and his family over the next year, but today we were in transit and left as soon as we could as the sun was sinking and we did not want a night arrival at Banmatmat. It was probably no more than a five kilometres trip from Chief Willie's. Photo is of Chief Willie with Geoff.

We had a couple of extras on the boat. These would have been from nearby villages to attend Geoff's lectures. There were also some taro roots and a bunch of bananas for food, but this time no live chooks.

Our arrival was soon noted and we met Lewis and Marilyn on the beach. They helped carry our stuff up to the visitor's quarters about fifty paces inland. Another surprise, the visitors quarters, at least in the half dark, looked like a five star hotel given we (or at least I) expected a grass hut with a toilet somewhere in the bush. No, this was a concrete masonry building consisting of a central kitchen/ dining room area with a bedroom each side, a veranda and a store room. Out the back by a few paces but still under the cover of the roof, was a flush toilet, a wash room and a shower. Maybe the shower was cold, but there was a hot spring on the beach, which provided for a warm swim. There was a gas stove in the kitchen, which worked when we bought the gas in the next village.

However, having moved in with our stuff, we were taken straight to the chapel where the pastors and elders who would participate in the course were already assembled to hear Geoff. They had come to hear Geoff Waugh and that was exactly what they intended to do! Let the conference begin with uninhibited singing and dancing as it seems only the islanders know how. It was a great welcome and a great night, even under the light of just two kerosene hurricane lanterns.

Geoff planned eight teaching sessions, Tuesday to Friday of each week. The first Monday was obviously out as we were travelling to Banmatmat, and the second Monday was out as that was the one day of the week set aside to tend the gardens. I tried to attend each teaching session as although I had attended regular Renewal Fellowship meetings with Geoff for at least fifteen years, these were oriented towards worship and I had never sat through his serious and specific teaching sessions. The program was something like this, adapted as led by the Spirit:

What is evangelism?

Evangelism in the NT Church

Principles of evangelism

Spiritual gifts for evangelism

Revival evangelism in the Pacific

Revival evangelism in the OT

Revival evangelism resources

Revival evangelism visions

***Revival teaching began with worship and prayer using spiritual gifts including prophecy, words of knowledge and wisdom, and healing. Sessions concluded with prayer ministry for people responding.***

***Tuesday 26 October 2004.*** Today the lectures resumed and life went on much the same as for the first week. However, as we were leaving on Sunday, Geoff would not take a team out this coming weekend. Instead, we made a pilgrimage into the mountains on Thursday afternoon to the site of Lulkon's martyrdom.

This was a very special experience and I felt privileged to be part of it. Helen unfortunately had to stay at Banmatmat as the location was in the jungle high in the hills behind Banmatmat, over an hour's trek away. There were only one or two in the group who had ever made the journey.

The group assembled in the chapel immediately after lunch for prayer before setting out in single file, machetes at the ready, along the well-marked but overgrown track up to the gardens, where small areas of the jungle had been cleared to expose rich soils for the gardens. Taro, manioc, bananas, paw paws and other fruits were cultivated. From here on it was a matter of forcing a way through the dense undergrowth by dead reckoning with the leader cutting a path with his machete. It was a bit scary being in this thick jungle, and although a snake ended up on the end of the leader's machete, they were not to be feared as there were no poisonous snakes on Pentecost Island.

Finally the elders called a halt, held a conference and agreed we had arrived at the spot, and there before us stood a lone Mele palm. It was not the palm Lulkon had stood under as after a 100 years that one had gone, but it was thought to be from a seed of the original. We gathered around the palm for a service led by Geoff and Lewis. Lewis had brought his guitar to accompany the singing. It was a special place and a very special thought provoking service.

Digressing a little, this was the time when a series of videos were produced known as the *Transformation videos*. These focused on extraordinary events, particularly healing in various forms that followed periods of prayer by dedicated groups. The one relevant to the South Pacific called *Let the Seas Resound* showed how an area of Fiji had experienced a remarkable recovery after many years when the river was fouled, the land turned infertile and the fish disappeared from the sea. The land was restored and the fish returned.

**In many cases where God healed the land following intense prayer, it was initially accompanied by a light misting rain that came out of a clear sky and lasted for perhaps ten minutes - a sign that God was pleased.**





**This happened while we were at Lulkon's tree. Although we were in thick jungle, there was a sliver of a clearing in the trees that allowed a glimpse of an intense blue sky. Out of this sky for about ten minutes when the worship was perhaps most intense, there was this period of light rain. Whatever the reason it made the hair on the back of the neck stand on end and reinforced the *God moment* of what we were doing.**

**One night, Helen saw light, which looked like a fire in the hills near where Lulkon's tree would have been. Several locals went back up the mountain in the morning but could not find any evidence of a fire.**

***Sunday 31 October 2004.*** Sunday was the day for us to (reluctantly) depart from this isolated island paradise. Saturday had ended with a huge farewell feast in our honour when chook was served and we were all presented with woven baskets and strings of beads. Geoff would return many more times, and we would come back on two more occasions in 2005.

Sunday morning a boat was found to take us and our stuff as far as Chief Willie's bungalows where we spent time with him and his family. After lunch a 4WD truck appeared to take us to the Lonorore Airfield for the flight back to Port Vila.

At the airfield we were surprised to find a group of eight or nine Australians, half a plane load. They, as a group wanted to stay that way and conversation with them was difficult. But we knew the language this time and quickly realised they were a group from AusAID in Canberra who had been told to spend the weekend at Ranwadi to check on the aid program. They were not impressed with the hard beds or three meals of rice a day and could not get off the island fast enough.

Fortunately the plane was on time that afternoon and with the noise of the engines that was the end of any further contact with our fellow countrymen and women in a foreign land. Pity the money spent on that week end was not used to provide an additional class room or two, but that unfortunately was just the way it was.

We went to the Upper Room Church service in Port Vila that night where we met up with the law students again and experienced the place where the Pacific Islands adventures and ministry had started for Geoff in what at the time looked like the end of the road for him and the beginning of retirement. Instead it opened new doors in ways that we humans could never have planned or brought about, and those doors are still open.

It will never make news headlines but just think of the impact of what looked like a chance meeting between Geoff and the law students has had and will have on the life and well-being of the South Pacific Islands both now and in the future. Eleven committed Christian lawyers let loose in that society is a force to be reckoned with.

What we had experienced all started with two men, Thomas Tumtum and Lulkon.



## Chapter 20 – Vanuatu: Pentecost (2005)

*By Don, with my comments in italics*

During last year's (2004) trip to Vanuatu Geoff offered to return on four occasions this year (2005) to run courses for pastors and leaders and to help get the closed Banmatmat College up and running again and we accompanied Geoff on two. This is the record of our second trip to Pentecost, at Easter 2005.

We had not set out to rehabilitate a rundown mission college - *it just so happened.....* Without tools and a lot of bits and pieces there was little I could do on the first trip, but I did examine what was there and made plans. I could do something to improve the *creature comforts* at Banmatmat. ...

We spent Easter Saturday and Sunday at Ranwadi High School and after a quiet Saturday afternoon started the Easter Day celebrations at 4am with the women's dawn service. Then it was straight on down to the beach for a baptism service for about 40 students as the sun rose over the mountains behind us and the moon<sup>18</sup> set into the western sea. This was a very special place and a very special event in the life of the students and the school.

The school assembled around a small semi-circular bay where the water was chest deep on the children. The bay was decorated with palm leaves and tropical flowers. Church women and pastors made a semi-circle in the water as the entire school sang hymns quietly and unaccompanied at the sea shore.



### *Baptisms in the ocean*

The women then quietly and reverently escorted each girl and boy into the water and passed them on until they came to the three pastors who prayed and immersed them before passing them on around the circle to the shore. We walked up the steep road to the school for a quick breakfast before a four

hour worship service. At night Geoff spoke at another powerful worship service.

**Day 7 - Monday, 28 March.** Today we travelled by 4WD truck from Ranwadi to Pangl, and by boat on to Banmatmat. This was a re-run of the trip last year with a stop at the village of Pangl

<sup>18</sup> The dates for Easter are set by the phases of the moon. Hence the full moon setting while the sun was rising.

to greet those we knew from last year, and then another kilometre on to Salup, where Chief Willie was waiting for us. As usual there was a delay until a boat was produced to take us, our luggage, a few bunches of bananas, and anybody else who wanted a lift on to Banmatmat, where we arrived just on dark. We quickly unpacked, refreshed and we were off to the welcome meeting in the Chapel

Every day from here on started either at or before 6am. As before we were woken by the *cock-a-doodle-doing* of the chooks that foraged around the place, or by the early risers singing hymns and choruses in the Chapel in preparation for early morning worship. We were mostly with them but sometimes we did sleep in. After breakfast we would walk over to the No.1 Lecture Room where I would set up the tripod and Helen's camera at the back ready for an 8am start. Geoff adhered to the established pattern teaching through until noon with a mid-morning break, after which there would be something to eat in the Kitchen/ Dining Room, before an afternoon sleep.

Geoff usually returned to the Lecture Room between 2pm and 4pm for a time of sharing or teaching followed by a rest and dinner before the night worship. It was a *full on* day and night. *Photo: the lecture rooms – one being used as a storeroom and for a generator.*



During the afternoon I made a start on the refurbishment of the wiring in the Chapel. Two reasons for starting at the chapel:

1. The need was most urgent as the night services were conducted using the light from just two kerosene hurricane lamps.
  2. It was probably in better condition than anywhere else as it was the most used building.
- [Photo: the Chapel]



**Day 9 - Wednesday, 30 March 2005.** This was a very interesting day. Lewis and I had to make our way up (north) to Pangl, about 5 or 6km from Banmatmat. We set out in light rain over the very slippery and steep track over the headland to Ranputor and then through the abandoned coconut groves before we could

get onto the beach for the final stretch into Pangl.



We were in the coconut grove, when the lightning flashed and the thunder roared and we were well and truly caught out in the open in a violent storm. We went for the only shelter in sight - and old and long abandoned copra drying shed. It was a bit tumbled down, but the iron roof was still sort of waterproof. We left when the rain reduced to a heavy drizzle. This storm was the start of a very wet spell and the rain continued unabated for the next three weeks. At Pangi there was a General Store

with a Post Office cum Bank around the back. Here we transferred the money for the generator. We were of course soaking wet. We returned to Banmatmat where I resumed work on the Chapel.

**Thursday, 31 March 2005.** I completed refurbishing the wiring in the Chapel today but, for the time being, it was never going to be more than a *patch up* job. [Geoff adds: *That night Helen saw the mountains at Banmatmat on fire with a supernatural fire, and I saw the end of it at the end of the meeting, in this week following Easter Sunday.*]

**Friday, 15 April 2005.** We were leaving tomorrow so a big farewell feast was prepared for us in the Dining Room tonight - under lights! Some of the free range chooks came to grief today and ended up cooked, gift wrapped in large green leaves (heads and all) and placed before us on the table.



Speeches were made and woven bags and beads presented. No trouble getting the bags through quarantine in Brisbane, provided they were fumigated, but the strings of beads were another matter if they included seeds.

Note the photograph where I am holding a presentation cooked chook in my hand and both Helen and I have woven bags, leis, and several strings of beads around our necks.

**Day 26 - Saturday, 16 April 2005.** It looked as if the sun might come through this morning, but by the time a boat came to get us the weather was turning foul again and we were caught in a storm at sea on the short run across to Chief Willie's bungalows where we would stay the night before flying out on Sunday afternoon. It was a rough trip and we were drenched again.

Staying with Chief Willie at his bungalows was not a bad option. He had built four of them for tourists who came to witness the land diving. Geoff had provided some of the money. They were built in native style with sago palm roofs and bamboo matting sides, and were weather proof.





The floor was gravel off the beach covered for the most part with woven mats, and the raised bed had a rubber mattress and a mosquito net and was comfortable enough. They were wired for electric lights for when Chief Willie ran his portable generator. The toilets and bathrooms were down in the bush, and although basic and small were kept clean.

So we stayed here as guests of Chief Willie until Friday when we managed seats on the first plane in after Lonorore dried<sup>19</sup> out.

That night, Chief Willie, Geoff and I walked into Pangi by torch light and then inland to Panlimsi to Pastor Rolanson's Church where there was a night meeting. It was drizzling rain again, but the greatest hazards of the night were the numerous fresh cow pats all over the path. The locals in this area raised beef cattle for export.

It was a good and lively meeting after which we walked home. I tried to sneak into bed without waking Helen and I think I was successful. However, Helen did wake shortly after as she thought I was rocking the bed. I was sound asleep. An earth tremor had been responsible for the movement.



**Sunday, 17 April 2005.** Geoff conducted a church service at Chief Willie's, and apart from that we just enjoyed the beach and the antics of Chief Willie's grandchildren and friends. We were greatly amused with them and took lots of photographs, particularly of some of the young boys as they imitated their elders and went through the motions of land diving from logs on the beach.

**Sunday, 24 April 2005.** It seemed a quick flight home to Brisbane on Sunday morning with good clear daylight views of the rugged mountains of New Caledonia.

**Geoff adds:**

***That Easter visit stays strong in my memory, because of the revival teaching sessions and outreaches, and the amazing supernatural fire in the mountains behind the Bible College.***

*Our plans had to be flexible, depending on local activities and programs, the preferences of the local people who wanted Bible teaching, and the usual changes over time. Eventually we had three intensive courses during 2005 with revival meetings in different villages each weekend.*

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<sup>19</sup> Lonorore was a grass strip on a hill side. Although well drained, the problem was a spring near the top after heavy rain. Geoff reported after his visit in 2012 that the strip is now sealed.

## ***Chapter 21 – Vanuatu: Pentecost (2005)***

***By Don, with my comments in italics***

When we left Pentecost Island we were not sure when we would return, if at all. We would not be available to accompany Geoff on his next visit (June-July). The next opportunity for us would be late September/ early October.

We loved the place and there was still a lot we could do. I picked up a range of bits and pieces of electrical fittings again and with a supply of tinned butter, vegemite, coffee, etc, we packed our bags to 20kg and set off on yet another adventure.

***Day 1, Monday 26 September 2005.*** For some reason, which we cannot recall, we could not travel over with Geoff, but left a few days later on the now regular 10am Pacific Blue flight to Port Vila. On arrival at 2pm local time we booked into the Hibiscus Motel, went into Goodies to convert another AUD1,000 over the counter and on to Air Vanuatu to pick up our tickets for the flight out to Lonorore. However, this time we could not get a direct flight and had to deviate via Luganville on Santo Island, which included three landings on other islands.

***Day 2, Tuesday 27 September - Bali Hai and Pentecost.*** It was an early flight today and we ordered a taxi for 5.45am for a 6.45am flight, *just to be sure*. The trip to the airport is no more than 10 minutes and with only one flight with a maximum of 18 people, check in is quick - when the staff finally turns up.

First stop was at Norsup on the Island of Malekula. Never heard of it before, but that was part of the adventures for the day. Seems it was a popular tourist destination just a half hour flight from Port Vila with a narrow sealed strip not much wider than a country road. Norsup was large enough to support a hospital. Five minutes on the ground to drop off a couple of tourists and we were on our way to Luganville on the Island of Santo, just ten minutes away.

We had a couple of hours to wait for the next flight and, knowing this would be the case Geoff had arranged through a contact he had that Dominic, a baggage handler at the airport would meet us and take us for a tour. Dominic was there and we took a taxi into town on a brand new highway recently provided by the Chinese. The Chinese were spending a lot of money in Vanuatu, and it was visible.

We had an early morning look around a deserted but very clean and tidy town. It was smaller than Port Vila, but still quite an important town in Vanuatu with an international airport. Pacific Blue later extended some of their flights from Brisbane through to Luganville.

There was not a lot to do after driving up and down the main street, but the local market was in progress and we had a look around. We bought a few onions, as onions were not on the menu on Pentecost Island.

The next leg of our flight turned out to be on a little Norman Britten Islander, an ugly looking

aircraft which I did not particularly like due to the cramped seating and noise from the two Lycoming engines just outside of the windows. I had flown on them in the Solomon's, Australia and Africa and every time hoped it would be the last time, but here we were again in the South Pacific with a couple of locals about to fly across to Ambae Island - in an Islander!

Ambae was the legendary ***Bali Hai*** invented by James Michener and later popularized by the Broadway musical South Pacific. During WW2 James Michener was stationed on Santo Island and the sight of Ambae looming on the horizon inspired one of his best stories.

The call at Ambae was quite unexpected. In fact we made two landings, one at Langana and the other at Walaha, both very primitive and rough fields in jungle clearings. One has to wonder how the wheels and undercarriage cope with these conditions. There were only half a dozen on the aircraft (It can carry 9) and we disembarked the other passengers on Ambae. We then flew across the sea to Lonorore, where we were literally *dropped off* as if at the end of a taxi ride, and left completely alone with our baggage on the side of the strip.

We were told our schedule had changed when we picked up the tickets, but by then it was too late to contact Chief Willie or Geoff with the new arrival time, so we could do nothing about it. It never crossed our minds that the airstrip, small as it was, could be deserted, or that on hearing an aeroplane somebody would not be alerted to investigate. But deserted it was at 11am in the morning.

Fortunately following on from our experience last trip I had bought not one, but two phone cards in Port Vila, so I was able to ring the General Store in Pangl, and spoke to John who arranged for us to be picked up. Harry turned up at 1.30pm, 2½ hours later.

Chief Willie was pleased to see us and had a boat waiting so that was something. The second generator and the lawn mower had been delivered and we took them with us in the boat to Banmatmat. This time we arrived before dark, after quite an adventurous day to previously unknown places.

***Day 3, Wednesday 28 September.*** First job was to unpack the new generator and get it working. I could then connect Lewis Wari's house to the central system and take the little Power-Mate down to our Guest House so we could have some extra light at night and top up Helen's batteries. Helen, in the mean time, continued to record Geoff's lectures.

***Day 4, Thursday 29 September.*** I tackled the Guest House and fitted new lights on the veranda and out the back to illuminate the toilet area (that was, of course only possible when the generator was running and of little use in the dead of night!). I also fitted a separate switch on the light in Geoff's room so he could stay up later if he wanted to do some reading or writing. We were getting quite comfortable.

***Day 5, Friday 30 September.*** Today it was time to unpack the new mower. It started easily and by nightfall Michael had mown half the main field.

**Day 6, Saturday 1 October.** Today was open day with a clothing market in the Dining Room. This was quite important for the local women as it was not easy for them to get to the outside world for even basic clothing. Even Chief Willie paid a visit, and after lunch he, Geoff and I took a walk to the village of Wanur.

**Day 7 Sunday 2 October 2005**

This was a special day of worship when the churches in the area combined for worship at Banmatmat for probably the longest service we have ever attended - 4 hours and 10 minutes, but as I have often said throw away your watches and enjoy the experience.



**Day 8, Monday 3 October.** This was garden day and a day to get over Sunday.

**Day 8, Tuesday 4 October, to Day 11 Friday 7 October.** Helen continued to record Geoff's lectures each morning and I attended in the morning for the remainder of this week. As Friday was our final day again there was another big dinner that night when more chooks met their end and we were presented with more bags and strings of beads.

**Day 12, Saturday 8 October.** We were all ready on the beach by 10am. Unfortunately something went wrong and the boat did not arrive. It was 4.30pm before we managed to arrange another boat.

**Day 13 Sunday 9 October.** The flight was 2½ hours late today and it was 5.30pm before we were back at the Hibiscus Motel.

**Day 14 Monday 10 October.** We returned to Brisbane on the Pacific Blue afternoon flight.

Helen set about editing Geoff's teachings and produced a lot of teaching DVDs, which were widely distributed to places where we had been with Geoff including Nepal and Darjeeling, as well as back to Pentecost Island. We left a DVD player behind with Chief Willie on this trip.

**Geoff adds:**

*Thanks to Don and Helen's work and generous support we had basic comforts with lights in the main buildings. So although Banmatmat was still mostly reclaimed by the jungle and most buildings were in poor condition, we could function as a college and as a regional revival centre, at least temporarily.*



*Many of the older people attending these intensive teaching sessions had been involved in local revivals through many years. They understood the principles involved such as repentance, reconciliation, unity, personal and group prayer that was earnest and full of faith, and using various gifts of the Spirit. They were most familiar with words of wisdom and knowledge, discerning spirits (especially from local witchcraft), revelations, healings and deliverance.*

*I learned much from them, especially about the spirit world and humbly seeking God for revelation and direction. We westerners tend to jump in and organize things without really waiting patiently on God for his revelation and direction. Many westerners, including missionaries, find waiting frustrating or annoying, but local people find it normal and natural. Wait on God and move when he shows you the way. For example, you can seek the Lord about who will speak, what to say, and how to respond. We westerners often use schedules and programs instead.*

*“Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!” (Psalm 27:14)*

## ***Chapter 22 – Kenya, Fiji (2005)***

I met Francis Nyameche, a youth evangelist from Kenya, when he studied for his Bachelor of Ministry degree in Brisbane, graduating in 2000. Since then I've visited him in Kenya a few times.

His father, Pastor Samson Nyameche, founded the Believers Fellowship Church in Kisumu, Kenya, with 2000 attending, and established over 30 churches. He runs an orphanage for 50 children on his family farm.

Frank had a vision of Jesus when he was five, and was powerfully filled with the Spirit as a teenager. He became the youth pastor in his father's church and spoke at local markets where thousands were saved and filled with the Spirit. Frank evangelised in many places in Africa.

Supported by his wife Linda, Frank began Nairobi Believers Mission church in the slums of Kibera where a million people live, jammed together in small mud brick homes with rusty iron roofs. I've had the privilege of teaching leaders and speaking at meetings there. In spite of poverty and political unrest, their churches grow steadily in this slum, the largest in Africa.

**Before the Kibera slum church moved into their corrugated iron shed they met in a community hall. I taught leaders there, and spoke at their Sunday service with about 30 people. We gave them real bread for communion, not just symbolic cubes. The Spirit led me to give them all the bread we had, just two loaves (not five barley buns as the boy had in Scripture).**

**"Can I take some home to my family?" asked one young man. That's a hard question to answer in front of 30 hungry people. "It's yours. You can take some of your own communion bread home if you want to," I answered.**

**Everyone then took a large handful of communion bread, and most put some in their pockets to take home later. We shared real glasses of grape juice in plastic glasses, thanking the Lord for his body and blood given for us. After my return to Australia I heard that the bread apparently multiplied, as those who took some home had enough for their families to eat. Some of them were still eating it two weeks later.**

My glimpses of revival in Kenya with Francis in the slums, with his parents in the orphanage and teaching pastors and leaders from over 30 of their churches, reminded me that God uses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. People with limited or no resources still see the Kingdom of God come powerfully among them.

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*Evangelism at Kibera slum*

## ***Fiji***

George Otis wrote:

In September 2004, 10,000 people gathered to worship together in Suva, Fiji, drawn by reconciliation initiatives of both government and church leaders. Only four years previously such unity among government and church leaders was unimaginable. Ethnic tensions flared in the attempted coup of May 2000, when the government was held hostage for 56 days, and violence erupted in the streets of Suva.

The President of Fiji, Ratu Josefa Iloilo, called the churches to unite in repentance and prayer for the nation. At a united rally in 2001,

Laisenia Qarase, later elected as Prime Minister, confessed: "Our efforts in building the country will come to nothing if they are not rooted firmly in the love and fear of God. I ask Him to forgive me for the times I have been neglectful and cold in my relationship with Him. With Your guidance Lord, this sinner will renew himself; will find new purpose in the pursuit of Your will. Lord, I entreat You, again, to forgive me, to save me, to capture my heart and hold my hand. I honour You as the King of Kings."

The Association of Christian Churches in Fiji (ACCF) emerged as one structural response to this desire for reconciliation and unity among Christians and in the community. As people of Fiji unite in commitment to reconciliation and repentance in various locations, many testify to miraculous changes in their community and in the land.

**Three days after the people of Nuku made a united covenant with God, the water in the local stream, which for the previous 42 years had been known as the cause of barrenness and illness, mysteriously became clean and life giving. Then food grew plentifully in the area.**

**Fish are now caught in abundance around the village of Nataleria, where previously they could catch only a few fish. This change followed united repentance and reconciliation.**

Many people of Fiji acknowledge that these changes in reconciliation, unity, and in the eco-systems confirm God's promise in 2 Chronicles 7:14 – "If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, I will forgive their sin, and I will heal their land" (Report by George Otis, Jr., The Sentinel Group).

More details about Healing the Land are given in my book ***Pentecost on Pentecost and in the South Pacific***.

### ***Redeemer Christian Church with Jerry***

Romulo Nayacalevu and Jerry Waqanabete became leaders and then voluntary pastors at the Redeemer Christian Church in Suva, founded by a Nigerian missionary. Jerry gives some of the background leading up to his involvement as a pastor there as well as pastor with his brother in their village church. Jerry is the grandson of the local chief.

Jerry had been leading revival teams in his village in his university vacations from 2002. In 2004-2005 he reported:

**December 2004:** As soon as I arrived home from university, after the camp on Pentecost Island, I went right down to the village and I saw that many of the committed youth or all them who were in the revival team from 2003 had backsliden. I was crying out to God in my first Sunday asking Him when He will be going to revive us again. I felt the mighty presence of God hit me as usual just to confirm that He heard my cry.

I came out after the service and called one of the team members (he is a backslider too) and told him about the urgency of doing something... the heartbeat of God I felt which is to save His people.

I spoke to him and asked him if it is possible for the two of us to go down to the beach to pray and seek the Lord after lunch... He was willing. We went down and I told him that there would be no program but we need to be lead by the Holy Spirit. I was leading and I felt that we should both examine ourselves and testify about it before the Lord's presence.

**While we were praying and worshipping, the Lord told me for the first ever time to take the salt water and the land and give it back to God. And I told this brother that when we offered it to God the rain is going to fall just to confirm that God hears and accepts it according to His leading.**

**I told him in advance while the Lord was putting it in my heart to do it... this is the first ever time and I always heard about it when people are being led... now it has happened to me... I could not even believe it.**

**As soon as he brought the water and I brought the soil to signify the sacrifice, I felt the mighty presence of God with us and was like numb... and the sun was really shining up in the sky with very little clouds. This rain fell slowly upon us.... I still could not believe... my cousin was astonished and could not believe it... it happened according to the way the Lord told me and I told him. It was like a made up story.**

**It was the blessings of God and I told the Lord that I am waiting for His own time to rebuild the walls of my village... but the Lord already told me that He wants and has chosen me to rebuild the wall of my village like Nehemiah.**

Back to Suva, my first Sunday at Redeemer Christian Church (where Romulo was a leader) I asked the Lord as usual: "What is my mission in the place where we are staying at now...?" Really I was thinking of other places like my village to go and have mission. But the Lord spoke to me very clearly that He placed us there in Suva for the boys (my cousins who are staying in that house). I thanked the Lord. They were drinking alcohol, smoking, one was almost gone to jail, involved in stealing and all sorts of illegal and ungodly activities you may know. I was not

surprised. We were talking one afternoon and I slowly asked them if it is a right time for us to change and give our lives to the Lord. They went quite quiet.

That evening, I invited them in to the house and we started the fellowship. I preached and called for the altar call right after that. They are all Methodists - conservative... Not surprisingly, they all gave their lives... (3 of them). One did not attend and was running away from it. Pam was crying. I bought four big Bibles for each of them. The one who ran away gave his life later. He came to me and wanted to give His life to the Lord. I was crying in my heart and even my cousins were all emotional including my aunties and uncle... they could not believe it. I was fasting for the last one's life... God honoured it and brought him to His altar....ALL GLORY TO JESUS.



*Park evangelism with Pastor Jerry*

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*Youth worship in Jerry's village, Kiuva, Fiji*



## ***Chapter 23 – Fiji: KBC & COC Teams (2006-2007)***

I enjoyed being part of the combined Kenmore Baptist Church (KBC)<sup>20</sup> and Christian Outreach Centre (COC) teams in Fiji in 2006-7. The teams, led by senior pastor Ric and Anne Benson and pastor Jesse and Cookie Padayachee, worked with the COC churches in Lautoka in the west and Navua on the Coral Coast in the east. We saw many saved and healed in morning visits to villages, as well as at the night meetings.

Ric Benson, senior pastor of Kenmore Baptist Church, wrote:

**Warm country, warm people. Like the warmth of their weather, and the bright, colourful vegetation blanketed in vivid green, our brothers and sisters in Fiji are always welcoming, hospitable, thoughtful and appreciative.**

**In July 2006, a mission team from Brisbane lived at a Christian camp and motel on the Coral Coast, near the COC centre there, shuttled around in hired buses and cars. The team prayed with hundreds of people. This included visits to many villages along the coast, a primary and high school there, and evening meetings at COC (Christian Outreach Centre).**

**Jesse Padayache (evangelist and main speaker) led people to the Lord daily, and prayed for the sick and oppressed daily, assisted by the team. A ‘magic man’ in one village came for prayer after seeing healings in his village. Three women and a man who had done fire walking from another village made commitments to Christ, renounced their spirit involvement and were healed from constantly itchy skin irritations on their legs. Jesse prayed for 11 people in the Suva hospital who were then sent home soon afterwards. Many Hindus forsook their gods to follow Christ, as Jesse and his wife had done many years ago in South Africa.**

**I was involved with two groups of people.**

**(1) COC (Christian Outreach Centres) hosted our team of 26 from Brisbane, which included Jesse & Cookie Padayache (Indian evangelist with a strong healing and deliverance ministry), Ric & Ann Benson (senior pastor of Kenmore Baptist Church), KBC older members, talented youth from COC high school with their teachers, and me. The team had a very full two weeks based on the Coral Coast, 50k east of Suva the capital. The youth visited schools, sang in the worship teams at night meetings, and delivered the contents of two container loads of goods including 50 computers for a high school there, 1600 blankets, bags of clothes, boxes of books, food and more. Jesse and the KBC team ministered daily in various villages, speaking and praying with people as daily many believed and were healed and set free. Ric and I spoke at a pastors and leaders conference in the COC church on the Coral Coast, a large centre called the Garden of Joy. Each Sunday Jesse, Ric and I preached in various COC churches including ones in Suva in the east and Lautoka in the west.**

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<sup>20</sup> Now Riverlife Baptist Church in Brisbane.

**(2) Young Christian lawyers hosted Mathias from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu and me, as we linked up with them again after previous mission trips with many of them when they were USP (Uni of the South Pacific) students at the law school in Port Vila, Vanuatu. We have had mission teams with them in Pentecost and Tanna islands and in Port Vila in Vanuatu, and in Australia and in the Solomon Islands as well as in Fiji previously. I had a week in Lautoka in the west at the beginning of the month, then two weeks with the team from Brisbane on the Coral Coast, then another week with our lawyer friends in Suva in the east at the end of the month. Mathias joined me on the coast and in Suva. We joined some of them for some meetings, but mainly in their homes with food and fellowship, and powerful times of prayer and prophetic ministry including washing and anointing feet with oil.**

**The Director of the Department of Meteorology in Vanuatu was in Fiji for a conference and I met him there again. He is also a pastor (Pastor Jotham) at Upper Room church in Port Vila where many of the law students attended. In May 2006 he had been on mission in Tanna Island where the Lord moved strongly on young people, especially in worship and prayer. Children and youth were anointed to write and sing new songs in the local dialects. Some children asked the pastors to ordain them as missionaries - which was new for everyone. After prayer about it, they did. Those children are strong evangelists already, telling Bible stories in pagan villages. One 9 year old boy did that, and people began giving their lives to God in his pagan village, so he became their 'pastor', assisted by older Christians from other villages.**

Here is a report from Fiji, June-July 2007. Ric Benson reports in the first part, and I add my report in the second part.

**Ric Benson, Senior Pastor, Kenmore Baptist Church, gave this summary by email and in a handout for the church:**

What an incredible God we serve, and what a mighty Lord and Saviour is Jesus.

The team has just returned from Fiji following an amazing two weeks of full-on mission. The team of 15 people were involved in:

- \* village and settlement visitation involving prayer for needs, evangelism, and inviting people to come to the evening evangelistic rallies;
- \* building projects associated with both the Coral Coast Christian Camp and the Garden of Joy COC Bible College;
- \* Pastors and leaders training;
- \* distribution of food, clothing, computers, office equipment, and furniture to very needy schools, settlements and villages; and
- \* 11 evening evangelistic rallies.

The ministry took place around Lautoka near Nadi and Navua on the Coral Coast, near Suva. We worked alongside Lautoka COC and Garden of Joy COC churches, through contacts established through our links with COC College Mansfield where several team members teach. The outcomes are as follows:

- \* 11 evangelistic night rallies held with 37 first time commitments in the three rallies at Lautoka

(all held in a cane field in makeshift buildings), and 200 first time commitments in the 8 rallies at Garden of Joy COC at Navua. Several Muslims came to faith, many Hindus and many Fijian Islanders. Of the 237 commitments about a third were young people.

\* Many homes were visited especially those of the Indian community, prayer was offered, the Gospel shared, and people prayed for. This began a great process of building relationships between the churches and the community.

\* The Bible College lecture rooms had a ceiling installed, floor resurfaced, and finishing carpentry nearly completed. The camp site had a tank installed and water pressure system installed.

\* Throughout the rallies many miracles of healing occurred, including removal of blindness, deafness, muteness, lameness, ulcerations on limbs, foot-mouth-hand disease, back and body pains, demonic presences, and much inner healing in the area of forgiveness, depression, relationships and marriage also occurred.

\* Networks were formed with churches, the national health system, government, the legal system, para-church organizations, all of whom are willing to work with our mission team to assist the country, particularly the very poor in the two areas in which we were working.

\* Pastor Jesse Padayachee was used mightily in preaching, deliverance and healing throughout the mission, well supported by the team, and was able to share the Gospel, pray for many people and for the nation on a Hindi radio station talk back program for 45 minutes. The response was overwhelming. Also a women's prayer meeting for Indian women ended up to be a major healing meeting with women arriving from everywhere to be prayed for. God again did a miraculous work.

\* The team worked powerfully and lovingly together, each carrying out without complaint their assigned tasks, whether it was preaching in various churches each Sunday, serving, caring, praying, demonstrating compassion to the many hurting and needy people, washing dishes and cleaning up after meals, or ministering at the rallies.

All praise to God for a mighty outpouring of His Spirit both in and through the team, and throughout every aspect of the mission. Thank you Kathy and Ian for all your valuable work as team leaders, to the team for their contribution, and to you the church for your generous and prayerful partnership.

### **My personal report:**

#### **First two weeks – spent with the KBC/COC team:**

**A ‘magic man’ in one village came for prayer after seeing healings in his village. Three women and a man who had done fire walking from another village made commitments to Christ, renounced their spirit involvement and were healed from constantly itchy skin irritations on their legs. Jesse prayed for 11 people in the Suva hospital who were then sent home soon afterwards.**

I worked with the combined KBC/COC team, and the COC churches in Lautoka in the west and Navua in the east. I helped lead the morning teams visiting villages and settlements, as arranged by COC, to speak, pray, and minister with people. We saw many saved and healed in those visits, as well as at the night meetings.

I enjoyed leading a small group each day as we visited homes, and spoke in many village gatherings, and then prayed for the sick. I was especially touched watching Dr Andrew from KBC, a paediatrician, pray for the sick, often with tears, especially for children. Many reported immediate improvement. I also taught the pastors and leaders one morning on revival now stirring in the South Pacific.

One morning in Navua our group had a home meeting in the home of an Indo-Fijian pastor Nevian, and his wife Esther. He had just begun there this year, having finished Bible College in Suva last year. Everyone we prayed for there was touched strongly. The first lady prayed for was delivered from some Hindu god spirit. Nevian then became our interpreter as we visited some other Hindu homes nearby, and he helped us lead one old man with cancer to faith in Jesus. Nevian and his family then attended all the rest of the night meetings, received healings and saw his Hindu sister saved as well.

Night meetings in both centres were powerful. Jesse preached and gave his testimony, and prayed for everyone who came forward, assisted by the team. We prayed first for salvation and repentance, and the team gave follow-up materials to first time believers. Then followed the lengthy times of prayers for healing and deliverance. Jesse had been free to wait on the Lord each day, so was able to move strongly in words of knowledge and authority. Many meetings went late! In both centres the crowds grew as the meetings progressed, and reports of healings and deliverance spread.

On the first Sunday there I was with Jesse and some of the team at Emmanuel Worship Centre in Nadi in the morning. It was powerful. That church of over 100 prays, and it shows. Leaders pray together at 4am before work (and I thought the 6am prayer group at KBC was a challenge!). That church has very anointed worship, wise pastors, and strong ministry times. It will be a leader in revival in Fiji. At night we were at Nadi COC for another alive and lively ministry time. They too are strong in being led by the Spirit.

On the second Sunday there I spoke at the Assembly of the Lord Jesus Christ church in Suva, an independent Spirit-filled congregation of around 100, half of them youth. Romulo (leader of the 2002 law student team in Brisbane) joined me with Jimmy a uni student from Vanuatu. The Spirit moved strongly. Romulo called youth out for prayer during the worship, and I involved him in the preaching as well and he called people out again for ministry at the end. That went for some time. After the service we shared food together including a lovo, food cooked in the earth oven.

**Then that night I spoke at Sigatoka COC, an hour's drive back toward Nadi, with 100 attending, sitting on the ground outside a makeshift iron roof temporary cover for the musical instruments and 'platform' area on the ground. We prayed for almost everyone there, and saw beautiful healings and some delivered and saved. I was especially touched by a couple of young children with hearing problems who told their mothers that after the man prayed for them they could hear well. We thanked Jesus together.**

## **Second two weeks – spent with our lawyer friends:**

After the team finished, I stayed on to visit the young lawyers I had hosted for a month in Brisbane in November 2002 when they were students in the law school in Vanuatu. In 2002 I drove them around and took them to meetings, and now they drove me around and took me to meetings.

I stayed with Seini Puamau's family again. She was vice-president of the Christian Fellowship in law school and a strong leader, now a prosecuting lawyer. Her father Sowane and mother Dr Priscilla held very significant and influential positions in Fiji. Her brother Lai was with us on a mission to the Solomons, and kept fit as a member of the national basketball team. Her sister Eileen and brother Manoah continued to tackle their studies. I really appreciate their warm and generous hospitality, including Dr Priscilla's careful attention to every need, especially food. Seini's lively nana Eileen was also with them and joined us often for meals and outings, and Seini's cousin Priscilla (part of the 2002 team, now also a prosecuting lawyer) took leave to join us as well. Then many others joined us for special events, including meals.

On my third weekend in Fiji I joined with many of the lawyers. We had an early-morning prayer group and then breakfast with the Graduates Christian Fellowship, another group of movers and shakers in the nation, led by Romulo. I got to pray personally for each of the 20 there.

Then that afternoon on Saturday, 7-7-07, I was part of the memorial service for the Nigerian founding pastor of the Redeemer Church in Fiji. Jerry (another of the 2002 team in Australia) and his wife Pam are now the honorary pastors there as well as working as lawyers, a common arrangement in the Pacific for smaller churches with honorary pastors. It was a privilege to be part of Jerry's Commissioning service on the Sunday.

Then on the Sunday Jerry led the service and I preached, and we had two ministry times in that service, including a commissioning for Jerry and Pam led by the Nigerian regional co-ordinator for the Redeemer Church, based in his church in Melbourne.

On my last Sunday in Fiji I preached again at Redeemer Church, supporting Jerry. We had three ministry times, as the Spirit moved in the worship and the message. As that church grows in faith it will certainly be a mighty spark for revival in the nation, and will impact leaders, youth groups, and churches all over the nation, as it has begun to do in the past. Romulo, another leader in that church, and a lawyer with the United Nations in Fiji, continues to impact many churches and youth groups through his networks of key young leaders in Fiji and other nations.

Jerry took a week's leave from his lawyer work, so we had some very significant times praying together, and each time God spoke strongly to us, especially about being more available to him for his mighty purposes in the Pacific.

I had not planned to be at Redeemer Church at this pivotal time in its history, but I was, by God's grace. I'm sure the wind of the Spirit blows across the South Pacific now, and we've seen that in the Solomons, and strong touches in Vanuatu and Fiji.

Yet there is more, much more. I believe that anyone who is willing to really seek the Lord can unfurl their sail of faith and catch those winds right now.



*Seini and Jerry with Mathias (from Vanuatu)]*

## Chapter 24 – Vanuatu, Solomon Islands (2006)

Revival movements continue to spread in the South Pacific. Here are some background reports from Vanuatu, selected from *South Pacific Revivals*.

### ***Healing the Land, 2006-2007***



Pastors Walo Ani and Harry Tura<sup>21</sup> tell how revival transformed whole communities in Vanuatu, including healing of the land.

#### ***Hog Harbour, Espiritu Santo***

*The island was named Espiritu Santo because that is the island where over 400 years ago in May 1606 Ferdinand de Quiros named the lands from there to the South Pole the Great Southland of the Holy Spirit.*

After hearing about the Healing the Land stories of Fiji, Pastor Tali from Hog Harbour Presbyterian Church invited the Luganville Ministers Fraternal to run a week of HTL meetings in Hog Harbour village.

In April 2006 the Fraternal, under the leadership of Pastor Raynold Bori, conducted protocol discussions with the Hog Harbour community leaders and explained to them what the Process involves. In May 2006 six pastors from Luganville did the HTL Process and God's presence came on the people that week.

Here are some of the stories of Healing the Land in a village of 800 people:

- \* Married couples were reconciled.
- \* Schools of big fish came to the shores during the reconciliation.
- \* A three year old conflict, bloodshed and tribal fighting that could not be stopped by the police, ended with reconciliation.
- \* The presence of the Lord came down on the village.

In June of 2006, 12 pastors from the Luganville Fraternal were invited by the Litzlitz village on Malekula Island to do the HTL Process there. These pastors spent three weeks teaching and doing the Process during which many instances of reconciliation and corporate repentance were witnessed. Village chiefs and the people committed their community to God.

One year later the President of Vanuatu re-covenanted the Nation to God on the island of Espiritu Santo.

*Pastor Harry Tura, then pastor of Bombua Apostolic Church in the main town of Luganville Espiritu Santo Island, adds these stories of transforming revival in Vanuatu.*

I wish to indicate to you what God is doing now in Vanuatu these days as answers to your prayers, and ask that you continue to pray for us.

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<sup>21</sup> Nakauyaca & Ani, 2009, *A Manual for Healing the Land*, Toowoomba City Church, pp. 82-83, and personal prayer letters by Harry Tura.



### ***Litzlitz Village, Malekula Island***

I went to Litzlitz village community on the island of Malekula on Sunday, June 4, 2006, and the Transformation activities started on the same day. The study activities and the process of healing the land closed on the following Sunday, June 11. The presence of the Lord was so real and manifested and many miracles were seen such a people healed, dried brooks turned to running streams of water, fish and other sea creatures came back to the sea shores in great number and even the garden crops came alive again and produced great harvests.

Miracles happened three days after the HTL Process:

- \* The poison fish that usually killed or made people sick became edible and tasty again.
- \* The snails that were destroying gardens all died suddenly and didn't return.
- \* As a sign of God's transforming work a coconut tree in the village which naturally bore orange or red coconuts started bearing bunches of green coconuts side by side with the red ones.
- \* A spring gushed out from a dried river bed and the river started flowing again after the anointing oil was poured on it when people prayed and repented of all the sins of defilement over the area.
- \* A kindergarten was established in the village one week after the HTL Process took place.
- \* Crops are now blessed and growing well in their gardens.

### ***Vilakalak Village, West Ambae Island***

On Tuesday June 20, 2006, I flew to Ambae Island to join the important celebration of the Apostolic Church Inauguration Day, June 22. After the celebration I held a one-week Transformation studies and activities of healing the land at Vilakalak village community. It began on Sunday June 25 and closed on Saturday July 1, 2006. A lot of things had been transformed such as people's lives had been changed as they accepted Christ and were filled with the Holy Spirit for effective ministries of the Gospel of Christ.

The Shekinah glory came down to the very spot where we did the process of healing the land during the night of July 1. That great light (Shekinah glory) came down. People described it as a living person with tremendous and powerful light shining over the whole of the village community, confirming the Lord's presence at that specific village community area. On the following day people started to testify that a lot of fish and shell fish were beginning to occupy the reefs and they felt a different touch of a changed atmosphere in the village community. I flew back to Santo on Tuesday, July 4.

The lands and garden crops then started to produce for great harvests, and coconut crabs and island crabs came back in great abundance for people's daily meals these days. The people were very surprised at the look of the big sizes of coconut crabs harvested in that area. I went there a month later to see it. You can't believe it that the two big claws or arms were like my wrist when I compared them with my left wrist. That proved that the God we serve is so real and he is the owner of all the creatures.

We started the Transformation studies and activities at my church beginning on Monday, July 17, and closed on Sunday, July 23, 2006. After the Transformation studies and activities had been completed, we did the final process of healing the land on Sunday, July 23. As usual the Shekinah glory of the Lord's presence appeared the following night of Monday, July 24. The people were amazed at the scene. That confirmed that God is at work at that specific area. A lot of changes are taking place at our church base and its environment - the land, the sea, and the

atmosphere above us. People experience the same blessings as the others had been through.

On Sunday, August 13, 2006, I took a flight to West Ambae again because the Walaha village community had requested me to carry out the Transformation studies and activities and healing of the lands in their area. The Transformation studies started on Monday, August 14. Again the presence of the Lord came down (Shekinah glory) on the whole village community early on Wednesday night and they all witnessed the scene the following day. They were very excited and began praising God all over the place. I took a flight back to Santo on Tuesday, August 22.

The revival is now taking place at that particular community and lives are totally changed and people turned out to be experiencing a mighty difference of atmosphere and have been transformed to people of praise and worship. All sorts of fish are coming back to the reef and garden crops came green and are now beginning to produce a great abundance of harvest at the end of this year by the look of it now. This is all the hand of the Lord who does the work which is based on the transformation key verse in 2 Chronicles 7:14, which reads: "If my people who are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land."

### ***Lovanualikoutu Village, West Ambae***

In 2004 Walo was invited by a pastor in West Ambae to do the HTL Process there. It wasn't until May 2007 that a small team consisting of Pastor Walo Ani, Deryck and Nancy Thomas of Toowoomba Queensland and Tom Hakwa from Lovanualikoutu village (who then worked for Telekom Vanuatu in Port Vila) flew to West Ambae to do the HTL Process. The protocol was done by Tom some months before the team's arrival and a prayer team was already praying and fasting a month before the actual event took place. Deryck and Nancy coordinated the home visitation teams and saw many miracles of people restored to the Lord and witchcraft destroyed. The Chief said the sinner's prayer on behalf of the community one night and they all surrendered their lives to the Lord as he invited Jesus into the village.

In the morning of the last day one of the teams was trying to pray down a stronghold in the bush when a bone fell through a hollow tree, taking them by surprise. They all jumped back but then stepped forward and dealt with it once and for all. Many taboo (sacred) places were demolished and items of witchcraft and idolatry were burnt in a bonfire as reconciliations flowed till after midnight.

Also on that morning a team of people swam out to sea with the anointing oil to worship there and dedicate the sea and reef back to God. The day after the team's departure from the village a pastor who went out spear fishing saw a large migration of fish. He in fact reportedly speared two fish together at one stage. When he reported this to the Chief there was dancing and rejoicing under the cocoa trees where the Chief and some young people had been working.

**During the reconciliation when the Chief began to speak, a light shower fell from the sky. There were no clouds but only a sky full of millions of stars. Surely God was in this Process! The prayer team continues to see visions and witness miracles of more reconciliation and repentance. Harvests from sea and land have begun to be more abundant than ever before witnessed.**

## ***Port Vila***

Grant Shaw joined me on Pentecost Island in Vanuatu in September-October 2006. Grant grew up with vocational missionary parents, saw many persecutions and miracles, and had his dad recounting miraculous answers to prayer as a daily routine. They often needed to pray for miracles, and miracles happened often. From 14 years of age Grant participated in mission teams travelling internationally in Asia. Then he attended a youth camp at Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship which has seen revival since 1994. He then worked there as an associate youth pastor for 18 months before studying at Bible College in Brisbane and then being a youth pastor in a large Brisbane church. So he is used to revival - all his life! In Vanuatu he had clear words of knowledge, and saw people healed daily in meetings and in the villages. That inspired and challenged everyone.

This trip was amazing. So many things just 'happened'. Grant and I just 'happened' to get row 3 on the plane from Brisbane - first behind business class with extra leg room. We 'happened' to sit beside an American student studying in Townsville who came for a week's holiday, was converted a few months previously and attends a Vineyard church in America (Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship was part of Vineyard originally). I just 'happened' to have the Nicky Cruz DVD "Run Baby Run" in my cabin bag, and it was exactly what she wanted as she has come out of the night club, drinking, and drugs scene, so I gave it to her (I had grabbed those DVDs at the last minute).

On Sunday in Port Vila, the capital, we joined a Holiness Church in the morning – a good message on holiness, but even better was a worship time with my favourite worship choruses, and a beautiful strong anointing on us.

We also heard another congregation singing at the back of that hall, so after the service went there to see what it was, and it was an Apostolic Church, where the preacher was still going. A problem was that the entrance was beside the preacher! So we hung around but did not go in, but the pastor Zebedee came out (someone else was preaching) and took us in. I told him I knew Paul Grant (who taught part time at the Brisbane college where I taught). Paul had been an early Apostolic missionary in Vanuatu. Pastor Zebedee knew him well - and so Grant and I got to speak after the message.

We both took off with anointed speaking. I reminded them of the revival with Paul Grant in Vanuatu in 1962 and Grant told them about revival in China in the underground church where his parents and grandparents have been missionaries for years. He also described the revival at Toronto where he was on staff and was in the weekly core group of 12 with John and Carol Arnott (senior pastors).

Then I invited people to respond, especially youth, and the whole church came out for prayer.

In Port Vila we attended the 4pm service with the Upper Room - the church I've worked with in Vila where the law students attended that I had on many missions in Australian and the South Pacific. When the Upper Room leaders arrived we found out the senior pastors were in Tanna Island on mission and the remaining leaders were so glad God had sent us to preach that night! It was fantastic. Worship was strong.

## ***Raised from the dead***



*Grant Shaw and Leah Waqa*

**At sharing time in the Upper Room service, a nurse, Leah Waqa, told how she had been recently on duty when parents brought in their young daughter who had been badly hit in a car accident, and showed no signs of life - the heart monitor registered zero.**

**Leah was in the dispensary giving out medicines when she heard about the girl and she suddenly felt unusual boldness, so went to the girl and prayed for her, commanding her to live, in Jesus' name. She prayed for almost an hour, mostly in tongues, and after an hour the monitor started beeping and the girl recovered. What a great start to preaching and ministering!**

I spoke on the opening verses of Luke 8, 9, 10 - where Jesus, the 12 and the 70 all did the same things, with no money, preached the same message on the Kingdom of God, and had the same ministry of healing. Grant then spoke, and started with words of knowledge about healings needed and prayed for those people, then gave some of his testimony.

Grant saw Jesus in a vision after a visiting speaker prayed for him when he was eight years old, and Jesus was so bright that Grant could not see his face. Grant prayed for all the kids, many of them 'resting' in the Spirit. Then he continued with more of his testimony - the Toronto bit. Then I gave the invitation, and again most people came out for prayer, most of them falling like skittles when we prayed for them.

On Tuesday, the day we flew to Pentecost Island I woke again at 3am, as I had often done in the previous few weeks, but this was different. I had just had the quickest and most vivid moving vision (while asleep) that I've ever had.

I saw accusations against me (from "the accuser of the brethren") on a large wall something like the former huge Berlin wall. Then it kind of tore apart, like paper, starting with a golden tear

from the top, and in the widening gap (at first like a brilliant bookmark picture) I saw the most marvellous long cascade waterfall full of living colours much more brilliant than earthly colours, widening till it covered all the "wall".

Then it merged into a brilliant hillside scene with Jesus the Good Shepherd (shawl and staff and all) standing there gathering his flock to him. At first I thought they were sheep but the forms became children and people, rather like the old Sunday School large poster of Jesus and the children - with kids from many nations gathered around him - a boy from the Pacific, black curly hair, brown back looking at Jesus; an Asian; a European girl standing by him, and so on - but much, much more brilliant than that old painting.

I didn't really see Jesus' face but felt his huge love for everyone - wanting them all to come to him and gathering them to himself. I woke up crying with joy.

That was significant timing, because we began on Pentecost Island that night.

### ***Pentecost Island***

Our revival mission trip on South Pentecost Island was based in the village of Panlimsi, just a half hour walk inland from Pangi on the western coast. Mathias was then the young pastor, working with Pastor Rolanson the evangelist at Panlimsi. The Spirit moved strongly in all the meetings. Repentance. Reconciliations. Confessions. Anointing. Healings every day. The healings included Pastor Rolanson's young son able to hear clearly after being partially deaf from birth. Rolanson leads evangelism teams, and helped to lead this mission.

South Pentecost attracts tourists with its land diving – men jumping from high bamboo towers with vines attached to their ankles. Grant prayed for a jumper who had hurt his neck, and the neck crackled back into place. An elderly man no longer needed his walking stick to come up the hill to the meetings. Grant prayed for a son of the paramount chief of South Pentecost from Bunlap, a 'custom' village. He was healed from a painful leg and later he invited the team to come to his village to pray for the sick. No white people had been invited there to minister previously.

**The revival team, including the two of us from Australia, trekked for a week into mountain villages. We literally obeyed Luke 10 – most going with no extra shirt, no sandals, and no money. The trek began with a five hour climb across the island to the village of Ranwas on ridges by the sea on the eastern side. Mathias led worship, and strong moves of the Spirit touched everyone. We prayed for people many times in each meeting. At one point I spat on the dirt floor, making mud to show what Jesus did once. Marilyn Wari, wife of the President of the Churches of Christ, then jumped up asking for prayer for her eyes, using the mud. Later she testified that the Lord told her to do that, and then she found she could read her small pocket Bible without glasses. So she read to us all. Meetings continued like that each night.**

We then trekked through the 'custom' heathen village where the paramount chief lived, and prayed for more sick people. Some had pain leave immediately, and people there became more open to the gospel. Then the team trekked for seven hours to Ponra, a remote village further north.

### ***Glory in a remote village***

**Revival meetings erupted at Ponra. The Spirit just took over. Visions. Revelations. Reconciliations. Healings. People drunk in the Spirit. Many resting on the floor getting blessed in various ways. When they heard about healing through 'mud in the eye' at Ranwas some wanted mud packs also at Ponra!**

**One of the girls in the team had a vision of the village children there paddling in a pure sea, crystal clear. They were like that - so pure. Not polluted at all by TV, DVDs, videos, movies, magazines, and worldliness. Their lives were so clean and holy. Just pure love for the Lord, especially among the young. Youth often lead in revival.**

**The sound of angels singing filled the air about 3am. It sounded as though the village church was packed. The harmonies in high descant declared "For You are great and You do wondrous things. You are God alone" and then harmonies, without words until words again for "I will praise You O Lord my God with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name for evermore" with long, long harmonies on "forever more". Just worship. Pure, awesome and majestic.**

**The team stayed two extra days there - everyone received prayer, and many people surrendered to the Lord both morning and night. Everyone repented, including us, as the Spirit moved on us all.**

Grant's legs, cut and sore from the long trek, saved the team from another long trek back across the island. The villagers arranged a boat ride back around the island from the east to the west for the team's return. Revival meetings continued back at the host village, Panlimsi, led mainly in worship by Mathias, with Pastor Rolanson organising things. Also at two other villages the Spirit moved powerfully as the team ministered, with much reconciliation and dancing in worship.

**Pastor Rolanson in the host village heard angels singing there also. At first he too thought it was the church full of people but the harmonies were more wonderful than we can sing.**

We two Australians returned full of joy on the one hour afternoon flight to Port Vila after a strong final worship service at Panlimsi, the host village, on the last Sunday morning there. We reported to the Upper Room church in Port Vila on Sunday evening. Again the Spirit moved so strongly the pastor didn't need to use his message. More words of knowledge. More healings. More anointing in the Spirit, and many resting in the Spirit, soaking in grace.

**One result of those impacts of the Spirit was national teams going on mission. A team from Pentecost Island visited the Solomon Islands on mission later that year in November-December 2006. Other teams visited villages on Pentecost Island and nearby islands in Vanuatu to lead revival meetings and pray for people. The youth from Ponra village had a strong impact on other youth and village churches and communities in South Pentecost. Some of them were part of the mission to the Solomon Islands, and some also participated in meetings in Brisbane, Australia, on their way to the Solomon Islands in November 2006.**



*Mission Team at Parliament House, Solomon Islands*

### ***Solomon Islands: November-December 2006***

Six of the Vanuatu team that went to the Solomon Islands, came via Brisbane from Friday, November 10, and stayed at our place, experiencing the wonders of electricity, hot and cold tap water, travel in the van, and exploring a huge city. They were Pastors Rolanson and Mathias, Deaconess Daisy, and youths Catherine, Beverlyn and Joshua, all from the south of Pentecost Island.

They led worship powerfully at the Kenmore Baptist Church (KBC) 6am daily prayer group, and spoke at some meetings including Pomona Living Hope church north of Brisbane with Joy Starr-Cross and Alan, as well as visiting Australia Zoo and the coast. Some of the people they met were able to bless them with guitars to take to the Solomon Islands and back to Vanuatu.

Five others I met as students at the college where I taught in Brisbane flew with us to Honiara on Thursday, November 16. They included Arjen and Marry Van Leeuwen with their young son Christopher. They were sailing the world from the Netherlands (Holland) and had been converted on a beach on the Sunshine Coast north of Brisbane through the testimony of Christian Outreach Centre (COC) people there. So they decided to study at the COC Bible College.

Other international students who joined us were Sunim Jeong from Korea and Toria Withams from England. Jesse Padayachee, an Indian healing evangelist originally from South Africa, now in Brisbane, joined the team for the last week. Jerry Waqainabete and his wife Pam (nee Kenilorea), participated in Honiara.

The first week in the Solomons saw us in Honiara the capital, with meetings in many churches. We had a morning visit to the prison and an encouraging time with the prisoners (some in for life), with many responding for prayer and very real commitments, we believe. We had large numbers to pray for in the meetings, so having a team to pray with people helped a lot.



## ***Simbo Island***

During our second week Grant Shaw and I accompanied Rev Gideon Tuke, the organizer of our whole visit, to Simbo in the West (Gideon's island). It involved an hour's flight to Gizo (with its unique small island airstrip nearby), and a two hour open sea canoe ride to Simbo, south east of Gizo Island. The rest of the team had more meetings in Honiara. Grant has a powerful prophetic and healing ministry, so we were praying for a lot of sick people at each meeting and in the villages.

Simbo is the nicest island we have seen, picture postcard everywhere. We had great meetings each morning and at night in three villages, so slept in one at Tapurai, and at Gideon's place at the main village for the others - all in close walking distance to the meetings. We prayed for many sick people, and lots of pain disappeared.

We took a canoe to Tapurai village on the north west of Simbo for that first night, Tuesday, November 21, and had a large outdoor meeting on the wide flat grassy fields beside the low lying seashore village. Their village has strong faith and regularly pray for sick people with hands laid on them and often commanding evil spirit to leave. Long lines of people came for healing prayer, and then later for anointing in the Spirit.

**The whole village was destroyed in the huge tsunami of April 2007 with one minister drowned there. The villagers ran to the nearby hills and later rebuilt their village at the top of those hills. We learned on a later trip to their mountain village (still being built with many living in temporary shacks), that 30 people in their prayer teams constantly prayed for the sick, and theirs was the only village on Simbo with no names from their village recorded in the island's medical clinics for the previous three years, except for babies being weighed.**

**A few days later a sick chief asked us to come to his village - a fantastic scenic lagoon trip - and after we prayed for him we prayed for most of the adults in the village, breaking off many curses there. They all felt much better, and pain went. We saw views of scenic grandeur in the one hour dugout canoe (outboard motor) trip up the absolutely marvellous lagoon between the two islands.**

**At each meeting on Simbo we prayed for many people, because they are so open, hungry and receptive. Of course we prayed for their revival teams of about 60 people who also pray for the sick and have seen many healings and many delivered from spirit afflictions.**

**We had teaching sessions on revival each morning. Every day we were praying for the sick in the villages and again at the night meetings. Having Grant there lifted that to a new, powerful dimension.**

## ***Guadalcanal Mountains***

I led the revival mission team of 22 visiting the Solomon Islands for a month in November-December 2006. Most of them came from Pentecost Island, Vanuatu, on their first international mission. Seven of us came from Brisbane.

In the Solomon Islands the revival team of 15 from Vanuatu and 6 of us from Brisbane visited villages in the Guadalcanal Mountains, three hours drive and seven hours trekking into the

mountains south east of Honiara. We held revival meetings in November 2006 to encourage revival leaders. The team trekked up mountain tracks to where revival was spreading, especially among youth. Those young people went in teams to the villages to sing, testify, and pray for people. Many gifts of the Spirit were new to them. The team prayed for the sick and for anointing and filling with the Spirit. They prayed both in the meetings and in the villages.

Our revival team of 15 from Vanuatu and 6 from Brisbane stayed in Chokare and Arabia (Kela Kela) villages from 28 November to 6 December, 2006, and held revival meetings in each village. I taught on revival and the Holy Spirit. Grant Shaw had many words of knowledge and led in prayers for the sick who constantly reported that the pain went. The team prayed for the sick and for anointing and filling with the Spirit. We prayed both in the meetings and in the villages.

On Sunday night, 3 December, Grant and Mathias (the team worship leader) shared on how they learned to move in the power of the Spirit. Then I was led to send them both out from the meeting (as Jesus sent people out in pairs) and they prayed for a lady in the village with back and leg pains and she was healed. They returned to the meeting rejoicing and reporting on this miracle.

That Sunday, December 3, at Kela Kela (now Arabia) village was a very full day - 6am worship with prayer and ministry, the morning service from around 10am and more ministry, and afternoon teaching sessions on gifts of the Spirit from Romans 12, Eph 4, and 1 Cor 12 - which they are all experiencing in revival now.

Then at the night service, where I was so tired, I just involved the team in giving reports from Pentecost Island - and it took off with anointed sharing and the 10 minute drama/live action of going out to pray for the sick and reporting back.

Mathias, the worship leader from Pentecost Island, was amazingly anointed (as he was at the KBC 6am prayer meetings, but more so), involving the youth touched by revival with singing groups, keyboards, guitars, and spontaneous items. I've never had so much fun on mission before!

A team of over 20 makes a huge difference, especially when we are praying for most of the congregation with personal prayer and prophecies, and running out of room for bodies to rest on the floor!

Then on Monday, December 4, Grant and I trekked with guides the seven hours back down the mountains and along a wide flowing river (great for a swim) to Hobura village on the main dirt road, a three hour van drive east of Honiara. The driver we hired was rather drunk and drove far too fast, but once again we were protected and arrived back at Ron Ziru's Honiara guest house that evening tired but rejoicing. We left for a convention in Choisel in the western islands the next day.

Our team stayed on for more days of revival meetings that week in the Guadalcanal mountains, and then returned to Honiara. Ron's guest house was also a miracle provision for the team. It had been fully booked out before our arrival, but at the last minute two sporting teams cancelled their booking and we had ample room for our team of 22.

Jerry and Pam arrived from Fiji at Sir Peter Kenilora's place (Pam's dad) early in December, and

Jerry joined us - still on fire. He and Romulo became ordained honorary pastors in the Redeemer Christian Church in Fiji where they have been leading Saturday youth revival meetings for a couple of years. They see even more healings and renewal than ever before.



*Mathias and Grant with leaders on Prayer Mountain*

The people from that region met together for their revival convention from Tuesday 5 December, and continued to worship powerfully, and pray for one another, and for their villages.

**Revival in the Guadalcanal Mountains had begun at the Bubunuhu Christian Community High School on Monday, July 10, 2006, on their first night back from holidays. They were filled with the Spirit and began using many spiritual gifts they had not had before. Then they took teams of students to the villages to sing, testify, and pray for people, especially youth. Many gifts of the Spirit were new to them - prophecies, healings, tongues, and revelations (such as knowing where adults hid magic artefacts).**

South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC) pastors Joab Anea (chaplain at the high school) and Jonny Chuicu (chaplain at the Taylor Rural and Vocational Training Centre) led the revival teams. Joab reported on this revival:

“We held our prayer in the evening. The Spirit of the Lord came upon all of us like a mighty wind on us. Students fell on the ground. I prayed over them and we were all praying for each other. The students had many gifts and saw visions. The students who received spiritual gifts found that the Lord showed them the hidden magic. So we prayed about them and also destroyed them with the power of God the Holy Spirit. The students who joined in that night were speaking and crying in the presence of God and repenting.

“We also heard God calling us to bring revival to the nearby local churches. The Lord rescued and released many people in this time of revival. This was the first time the Lord moved mightily in us.

“Pastor Jonny Chuicu teaches Biblical Studies and discipleship at the Taylor Rural and Vocational Training Centre. He teaches about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and is using the book

*Understanding Our Need of Revival*, by Ian Malins.

“Some of the people (who are all students) have gifts of praying and intercession, worship, healing, preaching, and teaching.”

Our international mission team visiting the villages in the Guadalcanal Mountains saw the zeal and commitment of these young people. We were blessed to be able to teach and encourage them.

### ***Choiseul Island, 2006***

The National Christian Youth Convention (NCYC) in the north-west of the Solomon Islands at Choiseul Island, two hours flight from Honiara, brought over 1,000 youth together from all over the Solomon Islands. Most of them arrived by outboard motor canoes. The group coming from Simbo Island in two canoes ran into trouble when their outboard motors failed. Two of their young men swam from noon for nine hours in rough seas to reach land and get help for their stranded friends.

That national youth convention (NCYC) drew youth from right across the nation. Two outboard motor canoes came from Simbo - Gideon's island. Both the girls' fibreglass canoe and the boys' wooden dugout canoe had motor trouble in the rough seas in the 2-3 hour trip north from Gizo Island to Choiseul (the convention island). They had to dump all their sweet potatoes and rice as the loaded canoe was being swamped, as it drifted without power. Two lads lightened the load by swimming for 9 hours back to Gizo to get help - noon to 9 pm. The younger one became so exhausted swimming he told his friend to go on and get help while the younger youth just gave up and drowned, but the older one told him to hang onto his shoulders till he recovered some strength, so he did. They staggered onto a beach that night too exhausted even to talk. Some people from a nearby village found them and gave them water and food. Eventually they got a message to the Australian soldiers there, who then sent a launch to tow the canoes back to Gizo to get one of the motors repaired. They arrived the next day - with two heroes, later written up in the national paper.

I participated for five days with Gideon and Grant. The Friday night convention meeting saw a huge response as Grant challenged them to be fully committed to God. Most of the youth came out immediately so there were hundreds to pray for. The anointed worship team led the crowd in “He touched me” for nearly half an hour as we prayed for them, including many wanting healing.

Here is Grant's description of that youth crusade night:

***“We were invited to speak for their huge night rally. Geoff began and God moved on the young people in a special way. Then he handed it over to me at about half way and I gave some words of knowledge for healing. They came forward and we prayed for them. Most of them fell under the Spirit's power and they testified that all the pain left their body. After that I continued to speak for a bit and then gave an altar call for any youth who choose to give their lives fully to Jesus, no turning back!*”**

***“Most of a thousand youth came forward. Some ran to the altar, some crying! There was an amazing outpouring of the Spirit and because there were so many people Geoff and I split up and started laying hands on as many people as we could. People were falling under the*”**

*power everywhere (some testified later to having visions). There were bodies all over the field (some people landing on top of each other). Then I did a general healing prayer and asked them to put their hand on the place where they had pain. After we prayed people began to come forward sharing testimonies of how the pain had left their bodies and they were completely healed! The meeting stretched on late into the night with more healing and many more people getting deep touches.*

*"It was one of the most amazing nights. I was deeply touched and feel like I have left a part of myself in Choiseul. God did an amazing thing that night with the young people and I really believe that he is raising up some of them to be mighty leaders in revival."*

A young man who was healed that night returned to his nearby village and prayed for his sick mother and brother. Both were healed immediately. He told the whole convention about that the next morning at the meeting, adding that he had never done that before.

The delegation from Kariki islands further west, returned home the following Monday.

The next night they led a meeting where the Spirit of God moved in revival. Many were filled with the Spirit, had visions, were healed, and discovered many spiritual gifts including discerning spirits and tongues. That revival has continued, and spread.



*A study group at the National Christian Youth Convention  
At Choiseul Island in the western Solomon Islands*



*Youth from the Kariki at the national convention  
saw revival begin in their islands straight after the convention*

The following April (2007) a huge tsunami destroyed these low lying coastal villages at Choiseul where we had been, as well as part of Gizo and Simbo.

During our last week in the Solomon Islands there we had meetings in Honiara with Jesse Padayache speaking and praying for the sick, with many healings.

God provided Kapoe Lodge for the team to stay in for most of that month, to the surprise of its owner, Dr Ron Ziru. He is Calvin's dad. Calvin lead worship with the law student team in Australia in 2002. Those students in 2002 are now all lawyers, on fire for God.

Ron had to sell Kapoe Lodge when he administered the Methodist/United Church hospital in Munda in the west, where I took teams previously. The owners then sold it back to him, and he used it as a mission team base. He offered mission teams free accommodation, and that was ideal for us, and a great blessing. It is also a budget guest house and hostel in Honiara.

### **Choiseul Island: Article for the *Solomon Star***

Here is my article published in the national daily paper, *The Solomon Star*.

#### ***HEROES SWIM FOR 9 HOURS TO SAVE FRIENDS***

***Dio Pabulu and Willington Zepa his friend from Simbo swam for nine hours in rough seas to get help for their group of 35 youths stranded with motor problems between Gizo and Choiseul. They were on their way to the National Christian Youth Convention of the United Church held last week and this week at Choiseul.***

*The 1200 youth and leaders from the convention return to their home islands this weekend.*



*The Simbo delegation, ran into trouble when the motors of their two canoes failed in the rough seas on Tuesday last week.*

*They dumped all their potatoes and rice. The men's dugout canoe was still being swamped, so Dio and Wellington swam for help. From noon to 9pm they battled the strong currents and rough waves as they swam back toward Gizo.*

*Dio, the strongest swimmer helped his exhausted friend who had to hold onto his shoulders part of the time. Totally worn out they staggered onto the beach near Gizo unable even to talk. People from the nearby village helped them recover. Then a RAMSI team drove by and radioed for a RAMSI launch to find the two stranded canoes and tow them back to Gizo.*

*On Wednesday last week, with one motor repaired, the whole group of 35 left again for Choiseul, arriving Wednesday afternoon for the convention.*

*The brave and sacrificial act of the swimmers illustrated the convention theme: "Making a difference for Christ". Convention speakers emphasised that we make a difference as we help others, serve others, and love others, as Christ did.*

*Church and community leaders spoke at the conference. They included the Rev Tabe Wagina, Regional Secretary of the United Church, representing the bishop. Two visiting speakers, Rev Dr Geoff Waugh from Brisbane and youth leader Grant Shaw, who grew up in China with missionary parents, taught about the revival now moving through the Solomon Islands. They were part of an international team visiting the Solomon Islands.*

*That mission team included 15 from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu, and Bible College students studying in Brisbane from many nations. Team members came from England, the Netherlands, Korea, and Grant from China.*



*Dio Pabulu*



I also wrote:

*The revival team visited Parliament House in Honiara as guests of the Speaker of the House, Sir Peter Kenilorea. They prayed together there for the whole nation, emphasising the Christian teaching in Jesus' command: love one another as I have loved you.*

*The team also visited the prison, to encourage and share friendship with the inmates. They sang and spoke in many churches in Honiara including SSEC churches, Kingdom Harvest, the Full Gospel Church and Christian Outreach Centre.*

*They trekked for a week in the Guadalcanal mountains, sharing in village life and leading meetings in the villages. They helped churches and villagers there understand the powerful revival movement now moving through that area.*

*Many people were healed through prayer in every area visited. That is happening in the revival movements as people pray for each other and support one another. It helps to strengthen and transform village and community life.*

*The 1200 youths and leaders from across the nation returned from the National Christian Youth Convention to their island communities with that revival vision and purpose. They aim to make a difference for Christ as they live out their Christian values in their communities and churches.*



*International mission team at Honiara airport*

*Gideon (Solomons), Jerry (Fiji), Jesse, Grant (Australia), Sunim (Korea), Christopher, Marry, Arjen (Netherlands)*

## **Chapter 25 – Solomon Islands (2007)**

**By Don, with my comments in italics**

*The tsunami of April 2007 hit Simbo, Gizo and Choiseul where we had been in 2006. It wiped out the village of Tapurai on Simbo where we had meetings and slept in September 2006, and destroyed many others. Many died including their Bishop, and most had to relocate to high ground since then.*

*In September 2007 we held reconciliation and revival meetings in Gizo and Simbo United Churches. The first meetings were on Simbo with the Tapurai village people whose village was completely destroyed by the tsunami in April. Revival has been strong there. Community leaders reported that for the last three years the clinic statistics on Simbo show that Tapurai people did not need medical treatment at the clinic because their prayers for healing were being answered in the village.*

*Community leaders on Simbo also had a reconciliation meeting chaired by Gideon, the first of that kind in 40 years, where long standing problems were discussed and resolved. The community is discovering more reconciliation, unity and harmony.*

### **Revival Movements, 2007**

*Many revival movements continue to spread in the Solomon Islands. Visiting teams have participated and encouraged leaders.*

***Honiara**, the capital has seen many touches of revival. I stayed there from Sunday September 2 to Sunday September 9, 2007, with Calvin and Kata Ziru and Calvin's parents Ron and Nancy Ziru at their Kapoe guest house complex again. **A week of evening revival meetings spontaneously erupted in Wesley United Church that week in Honiara. It was the first time they had had such a week of revival meetings, including joining with youth of other churches.** Calvin, their youth leader, had been worship leader in the law student team we hosted in Brisbane in 2002. He was then legal advisor to the parliament in the Solomon Islands, ideally placed to lead combined churches youth revival meetings and also help in the parliamentary Christian fellowship.*

***Seghe** lies at the south east point of New Georgia in stunning scenery. I joined Gideon and Varsity Tuke there from Sunday, September 9 to Sunday, September 16. Don Hill also joined us there and then at Simbo and Gizo. **We held revival meetings at the Theological Seminary at Seghe in the fantastic Marovo Lagoon – 70 kilometres with hundreds of tropical bush laden islands north and west of New Georgia Island. Morning teaching sessions, personal prayers in the afternoons and night revival meetings, with worship led by the students, filled an eventful week in September 2007. That was the first time the seminary held such a week, and again we prayed for so many at each meeting, students and village people. Meetings included two village revival services in the lagoon. At the first, an afternoon meeting in the framework of a large new church building, everyone came for prayer, all 100, and 30 reported on pain leaving as we prayed for healings. Then we had a long evening meeting at Patutiva village, where revival started in Easter 2003 across the Lagoon from Seghe. That meeting went from 7pm to 1.30am with about 1,000 people! We prayed personally for hundreds after the meeting 'closed' at 11pm. Students told me they could hear the worship and preaching on the PA across the lagoon 1k away in the still night air, so those in bed listened that way!***

**Simbo.** A tsunami ravaged Gizo and Simbo islands in April 2007. It smashed all the Simbo canoes, except Gideon's and his brother's which were then on the ocean on the two hour trip from Simbo to Gizo. Strong moves of the Spirit continue on Simbo. Tapurai village on Simbo has hosted many revival meetings. It was wiped out by the tsunami, so the villagers relocated to higher ground. **Those villagers have a revival prayer team of 30, and no one from that village needed medical help from the clinic in three years since they started regularly praying for the sick, laying on hands and casting out spirits.** We travelled there by boat from Seghe to Gizo, and then by an overloaded canoe from Gizo to Simbo, and had revival meetings on Simbo from Monday, September 17 till our return to Gizo on Friday, September 21.

**Gizo**, the provincial capital of the Western Region, is the Solomon Islands' second largest town. Its unique airstrip fills a small island near the town, with its pressed coral runway covering the whole length of the island. Travellers ride in a canoe or a launch across to the town. The central United Church hosted revival meetings in September 2007.

**The Premier of the region asked penetrating questions in the open discussion time and joined those who came out for prayer. He testified that he was immediately healed from stress-related head pain and tension.**

Healings and testimonies have been a normal part of revival movements in the Solomon Islands and in the South Pacific. People see these as usual and to be expected when the Spirit of God is moving among them as in revival meetings or in personal prayers for one another.



*Gizo's small island airstrip*

**Taro.** The regional centre for Choiseul province in the west Solomon Islands hosted an amazing week of unprecedented unity among all the churches, the United Church, SDAs, Catholics and Anglicans when I was there with Mathias from Sunday, September 23 to Sunday, September 30.

Leaders from Western Solomons gathered for a week of revival meetings on the small island of Taro, 500 square metres with the airstrip amid lagoons, the provincial headquarters for that region. **The meetings included 30 leaders from Kariki in the Shortland Islands region, further west. Revival started in Kariki the day after leaders returned from the National Christian Youth Convention in Choiseul Island the previous December.**

*Pastor Mathias from Pentecost Island literally dropped out of the sky at Gizo on an early flight from Honiara. He boarded the plane with no ticket and no money! Dr Ron Ziru in Honiara took him to the plane, an extra one with spare seats, so he walked on leaving his international ticket at the office till we paid the fare! I paid for his flight to Gizo/Taro and the church at Taro paid for his return to Honiara.*

***The week at Taro was the fullest of the whole trip, the most tiring, and also the most powerful so far. Worship was amazing. They brought all the United Church ministers together for the week from all surrounding islands where revival is spreading and was accelerated after the youth convention near here in Choiseul the previous December, where the tsunami hit in April this year. Many lay people also filled the church each morning - about 200.***

***Crowds grew at Taro all week. The first Sunday night the United Church was packed, and worship was powerful - indication of a strong move of the Spirit here. .***

*We had teaching every morning after the 6 am prayer time led by Mathias. I taught 8-12 with a morning tea break, again to a full church of ministers and leaders from the region. Mathias led worship at the beginnings and endings of sessions. I prayed for people each afternoon, and some of the ministers did that around the village and at the small hospital.*

*I also spoke one afternoon to the regional officials, including the regional premier, police officers, and government department heads at the regional parliament house. The director for medical services and his staff arranged a meeting at the hospital. Another afternoon I spoke at the Catholic Church and then prayed for them personally afterwards also. By the end of the week our meetings were ecumenical - all together including the SDA youth leading worship on two nights.*

***Night rallies at the soccer field included the amplifiers reaching people in their houses as well. Each night I spoke and Mathias also spoke, especially challenging the youth. We prayed for hundreds, while the youth lead worship at the end of each meeting. The ministers helped but they preferred to just assist us, and people seemed to want us to pray for them. I involved the ministers in praying for people also. There was a lot of conviction and reconciliation going on.***

***It's fascinating that we so often see powerful moves of God's Spirit when all the churches and Christians unite together in worship and ministry. God blesses unity of heart and action, especially among God's people. It always involves repentance and reconciliation.***

***In all these places people made strong commitments to the Lord, and healings were quick and deep. Both in Vanuatu and in the Solomon Islands the people said that they could all understand my English, even those who did not speak English, so they did not need an interpreter. Another miracle.***

**Don continues with more details:**

Geoff was spending six weeks in the Solomon's during September and October 2007. As he would be visiting Simbo Island, the home of our long standing friend Rev. Gideon Tuke and family, and two villages on Simbo had been destroyed in the 2 April (2007) Tsunami, it was an

opportunity not to be missed in spite of the need to once again expose myself to the two hour open ocean canoe ride across from Gizo to Simbo.

I picked up with Geoff at the United Church Theological Seminary at Seghi prior to traveling on to Simbo with him. Helen was still recovering from a knee operation in early July and would not be able to cope with the rigors of travel in this part of the world where a lot of the travel is on foot. Geoff reported daily by email to his support group and students whenever there was an email café available. I have drawn on a lot of Geoff's email material as background in compiling this diary.

**Day 1 - Thursday 13 September, 2007 - Getting to Seghe.** First step nowadays is to look up a timetable on the net and plan around that. I wanted to fly from Brisbane to Honiara and onto Seghe on the same day to avoid a Honiara stop over, and on the way back, fly from Gizo to Honiara to Brisbane on the same day for the same reason.

The first turn-around miracle of the day [after an aircraft change]: The aircraft was one of the fully refurbished all business class OZJET fleet. With only 76 passengers booked to share the 102 plush leather seats on the old Boeing, I had row 5 to myself and one of the best flights ever. In spite of a two hour departure delay, time was made up with a Honiara arrival just 1½ hours late – at exactly the time my flight to Seghe was supposed to leave!

From here on the second miracle of the day. I was one of the first off and third in the immigration queue. Bags off quickly, no customs problem and I was out of the door in ten minutes flat. Taxi to the domestic terminal (about half a kilometre away) – deserted except for three or four women sitting near the entrance. Then I spotted a pilot coming to the toilet in the reception area - “Has the Seghe/ Gizo flight left yet?”

“No but it's fully booked - you won't get on!”

“Is there anybody inside I can talk to?”

“See what I can do” - and he disappeared back through the door from which he had emerged.

Eventually somebody did appear. I explained I wanted to get on the Seghe flight if it had not departed and I had a confirmed ticket. Next problem was to find the aeroplane and other passengers, which I eventually did through an unlabelled door. The passengers were walking out to the Twin Otter loading up baggage on the tarmac. It then occurred to me that I could not see my bags. I suggested to the man loading the bags that mine did not seem to be there. He ran inside the terminal and shortly emerged with them - *he had forgotten*. The bags were put on board, and having seen to that I was the last to get on as the engines started and we were off. It had been just 36 minutes since the jet from Brisbane had arrived and I was going to Seghe after all, in spite of the delays. It was a one-hour flight to Seghe and we made a rough landing in the jungle clearing as the sun sank low in the west.

Rev. Gideon Tuke was there to meet me. There are no cars at Seghe so we walked and carried my baggage for the kilometre to Gideon's house near the Seminary where Gideon's wife Vasily and 10 year old Helen had tea ready as the sun set and the hurricane lights came on. No electricity at Seghe these days.

Geoff had been working hard in Seghe with a four hour teaching schedule each morning of the week, followed by a revival meeting every night, which could go on for several hours. That night was no different and the meeting started soon after the evening meal. Gideon had organised conventional beds for Geoff and me in the spare room with a thin rubber mattress and a mosquito net, but tired as I was I was not to get into it until much later that night after the meeting.



*The Seghi, Uepi, Marovo Lagoon Area*

**Day 2 - Friday 14 September, 2007 – Seghe and Marovo Lagoon Trip.** I slept well when I eventually made bed but was rudely awoken at 4.45am in the pitch dark by the Seminary bell that summoned the students to morning worship. Worship, prayer and speaking went on for an hour and with the first elements of dawn just breaking and a brilliant morning star in the eastern sky. I returned to bed for another hour's sleep – or so I thought as Seghe must have the most vocal chooks on earth.

Gideon was appointed as a lecturer at the Seminary earlier this year and brought Vasily and Helen from Simbo to look after the domestic chores and meals during the busy week with Geoff in residence. The Seminary is the only United Church training institution in the Solomons and it has had its ups and downs over the years. It looks very tired and shows the signs of neglect. On occasions it has been closed. However, there were 15 students who attend lectures for two years followed by two years field training and another year full time before graduation.





Things appear to be changing as revival spreads. It started with the children and young people and was initially opposed by the hierarchy of the United Church, but there is now a co-operative acceptance and things are on the move again. This has been considerably enhanced through Gideon's appointment as a lecturer, and the bishop elect for the Gizo Region, Rev Jebede Padokama, a present lecturer at the seminary who approved Geoff's visit and attended all reconciliation and revival seminars and night meetings.



The radio schedule is necessary as there is no working telephone (or email) to Seghe. Maybe there was one, but it needed to be repaired. The government apparently will do the repairs free of charge when they get around to it.

There has been no electricity for at least four years since the generator stopped working. Unfortunately the generator was old and parts were no longer available.



There is a small hospital within the Seminary complex (but not apparently a part of it), where minor ailments and illness can be treated, but no doctor. Very serious cases would need to be transported to the hospital at Munda at the other end of the island. That would be a three hour trip by the *fast boat* every Sunday afternoon or a one day trip by canoe, the only means of transport, except by air one

or two days a week.

I had landed at Seghe airstrip several times. It had been bulldozed out of the jungle in just 10 days by the US in WW2 and nothing has been done since. There is a large concrete wharf 100m east of the airstrip. This is located on the deep channel between New Georgia and Vangunu Islands and is where the newly introduced *fast boat* service from Honiara to Seghe, Noro and Gizo calls on the way to Gizo on Sundays and on the way back on Mondays.

After sitting in on the latter part of Geoff's morning teaching session I opted to go with Gideon on an afternoon canoe trip on the Marovo Lagoon to pick up Gideon's 15 year old daughter Judith from the isolated United Church boarding school at Patukae. Geoff was going with one of the students to Nga Ngari to pray with a sick woman.

Marovo Lagoon is world heritage listed and is the largest lagoon in the world. It contains 1000 islands, which is probably a conservative estimate. It is located on the north eastern shore of New Georgia extending to the east and south of Vangunu Island. A fringing reef dropping off steeply to the open ocean protects it. A narrow channel perhaps 100-200m wide separates New Georgia and Vangunu, which to all intents and purposes would otherwise be one island. Seghe is on the New Georgia side of the Channel and Patuvita, is on the Vangunu side.

The trip took just over an hour on a fast canoe – never far from a shore or an island with the sea colour changing from vivid greens to vivid blues as the sun reflected off water of different depths.



Judith was waiting at the water edge for the boat, anxious to get home for a two-week break. Reluctantly she went back to give me a very quick look at the school, a scatted collection of class rooms, dormitories and teacher's residences. It was the only thing on the island and must have been one of the most isolated and basic boarding schools in the world.  
*Photo: Gideon's daughter Judith on right*



More canoes were arriving to pick up children as we headed off towards the large red roof across the water, which turned out to be the church and we were given a grand tour.



**This is when the impact of revival in Marovo Lagoon really comes home. Here at a place called Chubikopi was a church almost complete to seat probably 500-700 people on an isolated**



**island in a remote part of the world in a village with a population of no more than 100. Thus the congregation would all virtually have to travel across by canoe. We were told it was already full for Sunday services. What a vision these people had to take on to finance and build this place.** The trip back was just as enjoyable as the trip over and we were in Seghe again about 4.30pm.

**Geoff had just returned with the exciting tale of his adventure to Nga Ngari. His visit to the village to pray for the sick woman turned into a two-hour revival meeting with the whole village in attendance. Then when he made a call for anyone requiring prayer to come forward all 100 responded. He reported they had also pulled down their old church and the steel frame for a much larger building – probably about the size of the Chubikope church, had been erected.**

Time for a short sleep and evening meal before another full on night meeting in the Seminary Church. Tomorrow was Saturday and was to be a day of rest and relaxation. It was, sort of.

***Day 3 - Saturday 15 September, 2007 – Uepi Resort, Patuvita Night Meeting.*** Saturday today, and a day at leisure. Geoff could certainly do with a day off as he had been doing two and sometimes three teaching/mission meetings a day for almost two weeks. No 4.45am gong at the Seminary on Saturdays, but the Seghe chooks crowed all night.

Gideon, Geoff and I with Helen and Judith hired a fast canoe for the hour long trip across the Marovo Lagoon to Uepi Resort. This time it was more or less a straight line trip, but we still passed a lot of small islands all of which were covered in thick green jungle down to the water. The thought crossed my mind as to how this could be so when the little bit of land that was above water level was surrounded by salty ocean water. Must get lots of rain!

**Uepi** is a barrier reef island, covered in rainforest, defined by fringing reef and sandy beach and flanked by the warm waters of the lagoon on one side, and the oceanic depths to 2000m of *The Slot*, a deep marine abyss, on the other. We arrived too late to order lunch, but could use the dining room and lounge.

We all went for a swim. Virtually no beach, just straight into beautiful clear deep water with myriads of fish. This was great and we soaked it up. Afterwards I went for a walk to a little jetty about 100m away and found to my amazement that this jetty overlooked a very deep pool of clear water on the edge of the channel, so deep that the bottom was not visible directly below.

Again myriads of multi-coloured fish swam by and I was able to photograph them as if I had been diving with them. Then came a dozen or so large sharks, but they never once attacked a fish. Geoff was intrigued and had a strong desire to swim with them. That's OK Geoff, but count me out. *I just want exclusive photographic rights!*



*Geoff swimming with the Sharks  
An audience watching Geoff*

was safe to swim with them. I guess divers do this all the time, but as far as I am concerned that's different. So Geoff swam around for half an hour while I kept the camera ready. Believe it or not the sharks gave Geoff a wide berth and I was not able to get any close up action but I did get one shot including Geoff and a couple of sharks.

Geoff had inadvertently spent a few minutes at the resort on the previous Sunday when his flight from Honiara to Seghe could not land at Seghe as the strip was too wet and boggy. So instead he was dropped off at Ramada in the north east of the Marovo Lagoon in the company of eight tourists going to the resort. They trekked with their big bags through a little jungle track to the boat pick-up spot where he hitched a ride on the 150hp resort canoe travelling at about 60kph for over an hour across the lagoon to the resort. He thought he might have to spend a night at the resort. However, God seemed to have other plans and like me he was going to be at Seghe before nightfall that day.

Gideon had travelled up from Honiara on the fast boat arriving at Seghe about 4pm. The first person Gideon saw was the airport manager who reported the airport closed and of course no Geoff. Gideon made the correct assumption that Geoff would have been carried on to Ramata so quickly arranged for a canoe to go over from Seghe. The resort boat and the Seghe canoe arrived at the same time so Geoff only had to step from one to the other and he was on his way to Seghe where he arrived just on dark.

Saturday night was billed as a big meeting at Patuvita across the channel. This is where the revival started with children of the lagoon at Easter 2003. Geoff had previously visited this church in September 2003. The old church building has been pulled down and the foundations were being

pegged out on an open ridge high above the lagoon for the new one, which will probably hold up to 1000 as the revival swells the numbers.

Mark, the superintendent minister came across in a canoe to pick up Gideon, Geoff and myself, just on dark, and we had a private meeting with him more or less by way of a rest stop after climbing up the hill to the old hall.

Mark as superintendent looked after seven other ministers in the lagoon area and twenty-one congregations and tonight a big crowd was expected. I estimated about 400 in the hall and a lot more standing outside.

Again students led the worship. Most of the adults were traditional, but there were forty or so in revival ministry teams who pray for the sick, cast out spirits and evangelise. We joined the meeting by 8pm and finished at 1.30am! Worship went for an hour. Geoff then preached for nearly an hour. In his words –

***Very lively stuff. Only tiny kids went to sleep - 50 of them on pandanus leaf mats at the front. Then we prayed for people - and prayed, and prayed, and prayed and prayed, on and on and on and on! I involved the ministers (after praying for them and leaders first), and the students - and still people came for prayer - by the hundreds.***

***We prayed for leaders who wanted prayer first, then for their ministry teams, then for youth leaders and the youth, and then for anyone else who wanted prayer, and at about midnight Mark called all the children for prayer, so the parents woke them up and carried the babies. I guess I prayed for 30 sleeping kids in mother's arms and for their mothers and fathers as well.***

***Then after midnight when the meeting "finished" about 200 remained for personal prayer, one by one. So I involved 4 students with me, and that was great on-the-job training as well as praying. We prayed about everything imaginable, including many barren wives, men whose wives were un-cooperative, women whose husbands weren't interested, and healings galore - certainly many more than 100 healings. In every case, those with whom we prayed said that the pain was totally gone. I doubt if I've ever seen so many healings, happening so quickly. At 1.30am there were still 30 people waiting for prayer, so I got desperate, and prayed for them all at once. I told them just to put their hands on the parts of their body needing healings, and I prayed for them all at once, while the students and some ministers still there laid hands on them, and I also moved quickly around to lay hands on each one. They were all happy, and again reported healings. I wish I'd thought of that at midnight! But at least a few hundred had a chance to talk and be specific about their needs.***

It was too late at night (or early in the morning) to go looking for a canoe back to Seghe, so we accepted a bed at Super Mark's house (as he was now being called). It was a reasonable house for the area and solidly built. Super Mark's wife had anticipated this when I had watched her drive nails into a bedroom wall with the back of an axe earlier that night to rig up mosquito nets.

***Day 4 - Sunday 16 September, 2007 – Seghe to Gizo.*** We were woken up by a gong at 6am and

went down to the church where a very small group had gathered for an early morning prayer meeting. After a breakfast of dry biscuits, jam and tea/coffee we made our way back down to the channel for a canoe trip to Seghe.

It was then that I noticed the rather large concrete wharf and the road bulldozed back up the hill just to the side of our track down. My original thought was snagging logs out of the jungle. No way – these facilities were in place to bring in the building materials for the new church. What a vision these people have!

Back at Seghe Geoff and I went straight to bed and slept until mid-day while the local church service was in progress. It was then time to pack up and walk around to the wharf to catch the *fast boat* to Gizo. It ran every Sunday and was due probably sometime around 2pm but without communications a large group gathered under the shelter of the nearby market building and just waited. It came in at 4pm.

It was indeed a *fast boat* and top heavy and unstable particularly at the wharf when everybody crowded to one side. There must have been 200-300 on board in three inside cabins and a rear deck. As Gideon said, "It was just like an aeroplane."



**Day 5- Monday 17 September, 2007 – Gizo to Simbo.** An early proper breakfast at the Gizo Hotel (buffet and cooked – eggs, toast sausages, etc, at Australian prices) and then Geoff was into the internet café on the ground floor of the hotel to catch up on his Seghe reports. He stayed there on and off until around 1.30pm with a storm approaching and at least two hours at sea ahead of us. *On and off* were the operative words as that's the way the internet system worked at Gizo that day.





Meanwhile Vasily and the girls (Judith and Helen) went shopping for provisions such as bags of rice and other food items. Gideon's 15-year-old son John (Judith's twin) arrived with the driver and the canoe from Simbo and the loading and stowing process began. It was the same canoe Gideon had when we visited Simbo eleven years ago and one of only three Simbo canoes remaining after the tsunami. All three just 'happened' to be at sea or at Gizo when the

tsunami hit. Canoes still at Simbo were destroyed.

We finally set off just after 1.30pm loaded down to the gunnels with very little freeboard. Everything was either packed up under the forward canopy or as a heap under a huge black plastic sheet amidships. The seats were barely visible. I could not see exactly what was on board under cover – the surprises came when we unloaded. Gideon readily admitted it was overloaded, but that's just the way it is here with these people who have been making these trips for hundreds of years - dugout canoes and paddles before the advent of fiberglass and outboard motors.

John sat astride the bows and when he had pulled up the anchor lay out there on his stomach for the rest of the trip. All we saw of John from then on was his bottom up profile over the top of the low canopy. Geoff, Judith and I occupied the front seat and, as the heap in the middle was higher than the seats, we could lie back and were reasonably comfortable, but could not turn around to see behind. Gideon and Vasily shared the rear seat facing backwards as the heap in the middle took up any foot room there might have been. I think their daughter Helen might have slept on the floor at their feet. The driver stood at the back. That's eight people accounted for.



Then about an hour out – and a long hour at that – the motor coughed and stopped. It's one thing to be travelling along roughly parallel with the ocean swell with a lot of forward motion and just a gentle up and down across the long swells, but with a stalled motor the overloaded canoe just sat very low in the water and wallowed in lazy circles until the motor fired again after much pulling of the starter rope. There was a great feeling of relief to hear that motor fire – and keep on firing. The motor stopped on two more occasions. There

was a problem with the fuel tank so those in the know were not unduly concerned. ***I think we all thought about the incident late last year (2006) when 35 youth set out in two canoes to travel from Gizo to Choiseul to the National Christian Youth Convention (about 80km). Both canoes had engine trouble and two young men, Dio Pabulu and Willington Zepa from Simbo, swam for 9 hours from noon to 9pm against the current to get help.***

They staggered exhausted onto a village beach and later a RAMSI vehicle picked them up and radioed for a RAMSI launch to rescue the 33 youth in the two canoes. Towed ashore late that night, they repaired one engine and the 35 then boarded one canoe and set out again!

Just on the two hours we rounded the end of Simbo and passed close inshore off the white coral beach to observe from the sea what was left of Tapurai village. The only building was the church on a low hill behind the narrow piece of flat land, which had been the village. The flat land was deeply eroded and becoming overgrown with weeds.

As it was high tide we were able to continue close inshore to Gideon's village of Mengge a kilometer or two further on (at low tide it is necessary to make a wide detour out to sea around the reefs). Along the shore line, which Gideon said had been moved back 20-30m, there were many clumps of dead trees. Looking up we could see where jungle was being cleared to make new gardens. The Tapurai people were resettling there and we would visit later.

Giving thanks for a safe arrival after what was in reality a good trip, if only the mind would forget all the *'what ifs'*, we pulled into the shore below Gideon's house, removed the covers and passed the cargo ashore. It was just amazing what came out of that canoe -- bags of rice, lots of groceries, fuel, bedding used at Seghe, baggage for six people (if we assume the driver and John travelled light), a gas bottle, etc., etc.,

An inspection of Gideon's new house, an open air shower, a good dinner and that was the end of the day. No night meeting.

Note – the tsunami did not reach as far as Gideon's house but it was well shaken by the earthquake and shifted a little on its stumps. The damage had been virtually repaired, but there was a *looseness* about it and the floor creaked more than it should when walking through the house.

**Day 6 - Tuesday 18 September 2007. – Simbo, Tapurai New Village, Lengana.** Today dawned bright and clear, but it takes a while for the sun to actually get through the mist that seems to hang around in the tropics.

Gideon organized a mid-morning trip to the new Tapurai settlement and then a late afternoon meeting for Geoff at Lengana in lieu of a night meeting to save a lot of people walking about in the dark getting to and from the meeting. The student minister Hapara Sotutu joined us and travelled to most places with us over the next few days, as Gideon often had other things to do.

The new Tapurai village was situated within a couple of kilometers of the old village, but about a hundred feet above the sea on a now cleared shelf of land. World Vision had provided some tents and as there was no church building or hall, a very large temporary bush timber frame covered with a green tarpaulin served the purpose.



We met Gideon's eldest brother Daniel on arrival and had a brief talk before moving over to the 'hall' where the whole village, men women and children had gathered to hear Geoff. Half were inside and half outside.

The meeting took the usual format of praise singing followed by an address by Geoff. I wondered what he would say to these displaced people, but the appropriate revival message seemed to come through - where there are disasters, expect revival miracles, and he has plenty of materials to call on.



The meeting went for two hours and the time passed quickly. It was 1pm when we left for a lunch in one of the houses in an adjacent long established village with Daniel, Amos (an elder), Martin Luther (Western Province Council) and others.

This was probably the first time the question of what was happening with aid was asked, but we did not have any positive answers. Many people had donated to relief work and it was all being channeled through the Solomon Islands Government, who seemed to be concentrating on infrastructure.

That means the villagers get little or nothing personally. The United Church had SID4,000 to give to the relocated villagers on Simbo. When that was shared around each family received SID15 (that's AUD5 per family).

They've been rebuilding with bush materials and making dugout canoes. New dugout canoes dot the shores. They are vital for fishing and transport.



Back to Gideon's for a shower and quick sleep before a short walk through the low-lying jungle area to Lengana where the major schools and a clinic are located.

I had walked this track before but now the vegetation had been knocked around in the tsunami and there were quite a few bare and washed out sections.

The waves came ashore at Lengana and although they came a few hundred meters inland they did little damage to the substantial buildings – all well back from the shore. One school building was washed away and had been replaced.



The waters stopped about 20m in front of the Church Gideon built with the generator, TV set, and video machine sent over 12/13 years ago. (Gideon paid wages by showing videos to the workers at night). The wrecks of a couple of canoes were evident where they came to rest – never shift anything! These included the front section of the United Church canoe – the rear section was never found. I guess they will just stay and rot under the trees where they were left.



Simbo seems to be sinking. The small concrete wharf at Lengana used to be above water at all tides. It is now only visible above water at low tide and submerged at high. Notice the slight tilt in the photograph below.

The meeting started with a small crowd around 5pm and finished around 6.30pm. John came over and took us back by canoe – a pleasant ride as the sun disappeared below the horizon.

***Day 7 - Wednesday 19 September, 2007 – Simbo, Lengana Again.*** Today Geoff had a teaching session in the morning and a big meeting tonight in the Lengana Church. We walked over the same tracks as we did late yesterday afternoon and to our surprise there was a small steel ship at the jetty.



It was low tide and it could be easily unloaded. It belonged to the Christian Fellowship Church and travelled around the islands dropping off and picking up supplies. Looking at it, I was not at all sure it would have been any better at sea than the canoe.

The teaching session was well attended and went off well and we had a small lunch afterwards provided by the local Superintendent Minister's wife, under a clump of shady bamboo.

***At the mid-morning meeting Elder Amos told me the elders pray for sick Tapurai people and nobody from the village has gone to the clinic to be treated for illness since 2003. "You can check the book – the only entries will be for mothers to get their babies weighed."***

A great moonlight canoe trip back to Gideon's after the meeting.

**Day 8 - Thursday 20 September, 2007 - Rigumu, Tapurai Old Villages.** Today was free of meetings and the day we would land and look around at the devastated sites of Rigumu and Tapurai.

To do this we travelled by canoe, firstly half way around the island to the eastern side to Rigumu and then back to Tapurai. Gideon could not come as he had called a meeting of the elders of the Tuke family to resolve a few issues, but we had John, Hapara Sotutu and Dio Pabulu, **the young man who had swum for nine hours on the Choiseul trip**, to show us around.



The motor behaved badly and stopped on several occasions, but the fuel line was finally cleaned and Dio was not required to swim for the shore this time. However, he had to *pole* the canoe through the shallows at times (Photo: Dio with pole).

I had not previously been to Rigumu. It was now an eroded and deserted brown water swamp of uprooted trees.

There was little to be recognized – a shattered concrete shower base here, a few short house stumps there and looking through the swamp in one direction I noted several mosquito nets hooked up in trees.



There were two deaths and six injuries at Rigumu. A relative of Gideon told me later the dead were his grandchildren who were found caught up in trees. He was away on the other side of the island at the time. This information turns statistics into heart-rending reality.

Helen and I had been to Tapurai before in 1996 and had slept (intermittently) on the floor of the school after attending a meeting in the church up on the hill. Gideon had produced thin foam mattresses from somewhere, but they were really thin!

We vividly recall the difficulty we had getting up to the church in the rain that night, due to the slippery mud on the tracks. It was also our first attendance at a church in the Solomon's and we were somewhat amazed at the way babies and young children were laid out on the bare concrete floor and actually went to sleep!

I walked up to the church again – in daylight this time but again with great difficulty as the tracks were eroded and overgrown through the neglect of six months, and strewn with uprooted trees and rubbish.



It was half way up one of these tracks that Bishop Rollingson Zapo died from head injuries received from debris in the wave as it washed him there from 100m away. His companion escaped unharmed.

Day 9 - Friday 21 September 2007 - Back to Gizo. We had early breakfast and made a 7.30am start back to Gizo to give Geoff as much time as possible at the internet café. The sea on the lee of the island was like glass and augured well for a good trip over, which it was.

Maybe it was going home, or maybe I was getting used to it, but with a much lighter canoe, it was quite pleasant rolling up and down across the long ocean swell just watching the flying fish. Gideon came with us on his way back to Seghe and Vasily came to say goodbye.



I spent the day walking around and observing the activity especially around the market, watching canoes come and go with their produce and human cargoes. Gizo on a Friday was a busy place. It's all over by around 3pm as the canoes need daylight to return home.

There was a meeting arranged for Geoff that night in the United Church, but although it was well attended the going was much harder in the town than it was in the village environment. Geoff flew on to Taro Island to continue his mission next day.

**Day 10 Saturday 22 September, 2007 – Back to Brisbane.** That was it for me. A short trip by launch across the lagoon at 9am to the small off-shore island where the airstrip is located and then a one and a half hour Twin Otter flight direct back to Honiara. These trips on good days are a delight especially flying over the Roviana and Marovo Lagoons. I looked into the rear baggage compartment and there was a prominent sign which said that ***fish had to be well wrapped to avoid the salt corroding the control cables*** (that passed through the compartment). Then home. Another OZJET 737-200 operated the service with plenty of room for everybody - rare nowadays.



## ***Chapter 26 – Kenya (2007)***

I met Francis Nyameche, a youth evangelist from Kenya, when he studied for his Bachelor of Ministry degree in Brisbane, graduating in 2000. Since then I've visited him in Kenya a few times.

His father, Pastor Samson Nyameche, founded the Believers Fellowship Church in Kisumu, Kenya, with 2000 attending, and established over 30 churches. He runs an orphanage for 50 children on his family farm.

Frank had a vision of Jesus when he was five, and was powerfully filled with the Spirit as a teenager. He became the youth pastor in his father's church and spoke at local markets where thousands were saved and filled with the Spirit. Frank evangelised in many places in Africa.

Supported by his wife Linda, Frank began Nairobi Believers Mission church in the slums of Kibera where a million people live, jammed together in small mud brick homes with rusty iron roofs. I've had the privilege of teaching leaders and speaking at meetings there. In spite of poverty and political unrest, their churches grow steadily in this slum, the largest in Africa.

**Before the Kibera slum church moved into their corrugated iron shed they met in a community hall. I taught leaders there, and spoke at their Sunday service with about 30 people. We gave them real bread for communion, not just symbolic cubes. The Spirit led me to give them all the bread we had, just two loaves (not five barley buns as the boy had in Scripture).**

**"Can I take some home to my family?" asked one young man. That's a hard question to answer in front of 30 hungry people. "It's yours. You can take some of your own communion bread home if you want to," I answered.**

**Everyone then took a large handful of communion bread, and most put some in their pockets to take home later. We shared real glasses of grape juice in plastic glasses, thanking the Lord for his body and blood given for us. After my return to Australia I heard that the bread apparently multiplied, as those who took some home had enough for their families to eat. Some of them were still eating it two weeks later.**

**Francis added: "Actually the miracle continued months after we began NBM and were feeding members each Saturday afternoon with tea and bread. God continued multiplying the food and there was always enough."**

My glimpses of revival in Kenya with Francis in the slums, with his parents in the orphanage and teaching pastors and leaders from over 30 of their churches, reminded me that God uses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. People with limited or no resources still see the Kingdom of God come powerfully among them.

Bishop Samson's son Frank Nyameche, Frank's wife Linda and family, founded Nairobi Believers Mission (part of his father's mission group) in the Kibera slum in Nairobi, where one million people live jammed together in mud-brick houses with old iron roofs. Their church met in an iron shed, also used for school classes. It grew steadily.



Following the political elections of December 2007, Kenya erupted in tribal conflict with looting and killing. This engulfed both Kibera slum and Kisumu town. Pastor Frank reported in January, 2008:

Kibera kids interpret the last seven days of constant gun fires as countless balloons bursting. That's how Kenya started 2008.

Thanks for your continual prayers things could have gotten worse. There has been fighting's in the country ever since our 2007 presidential elections (27th Dec). A majority of the Kenyan people were grieved by the outcome of these results.

December 2007 was a great month, with over 24 visitors in our church, lots of enthusiasm among leaders, the finishing of our office & strong room and with Christmas in Kibera and at the orphanage. At the orphanage, kids had lots of fun, gifts and plenty of good food.



*Praying for and with people at every meeting*

## ***Chapter 27 – China, USA, Brazil (2007, 2008)***

### **China**

One of my most humbling and stirring experiences of revival happened in China in 2007 where Christians have been severely persecuted for over half a century, and it is still illegal to hold unregistered meetings, free of government control and restrictions. I loved it there among such humble, hungry, receptive, grateful, gentle, and faith filled believers. I was often in tears just being there, appreciating their heartfelt zeal in everything. I have rarely been so impressed anywhere. No concerts. No acting. No hype. Just bare essentials. What a big and wonderful family we belong to, and our Father is so proud of his family there, I'm sure. One memorable night I had the privilege of speaking to a roomful of about 30 house church leaders, a meeting alive with faith and expectation. We all prayed for one another there.

I had the great honour of speaking at a house church. People arrived in ones or twos over an hour or so, and stayed for many hours. Then they left quietly in ones or twos again, just personal visitors to that host family. Food on the small kitchen table welcomed everyone, some of it brought by the visitors.

**About 30 of us crowded into a simple room with very few chairs. Most sat on the thin mat coverings. They sang their own heartfelt worship songs in their own language and style, pouring out love to the Lord, sometimes with tears. The leader played a very basic guitar in a very basic way.**

**Everyone listened intently to the message, and gladly asked questions, all of it interpreted. There was no need for an altar call or invitation to receive prayer. Everyone wanted personal prayer. Our prayer team of three or four people prayed with each person for specific needs such as healing and with personal prophecies. That flowed strongly. I knew none of that group, but received 'pictures' or words of encouragement for each one, as did the others.**

While prayer continued, some began slipping quietly away. Others had supper. Others stayed to worship quietly. It was a quiet night because they did not want to disturb neighbours or attract attention.

Most people in that group were new believers with no Christian background at all. They identified easily with the house churches of the New Testament, the persecution, and the miracles, because they experienced all that as well. Many unbelievers become Christians because someone prayed for their healing and the Lord healed them.

Afterwards, some of us drove to a local park just to pray with an elderly gentleman, unable to go to the meetings. He had been wounded in the 1989 student uprising in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. He thanked us so eloquently for coming to his country to support and encourage his people. I was deeply moved. So much personal support, encouragement and evangelism happen that way, so simply.

It neither looked nor sounded like a Western revival! It wasn't. Yet it was part of one of the greatest revivals of the last half century, bringing over 100 million into the Kingdom of God.

## USA – Atlanta, and Caribbean

Travelling on mission with keen, faith-filled and faithful young people and students inspires and encourages me. I flew with Grant Shaw to join a discounted group booking with Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship's Caribbean cruise in January 2008. John Arnott and Heidi Baker spoke at the morning electives and evening rallies on board, and we enjoyed care free days exploring the islands. I take every opportunity to receive prayer and fresh anointing in these meetings. There's always more.

Grant and I visited his aunt Pam and her family in Atlanta, Georgia in America for a week during our long flights from Brisbane to Los Angeles to Atlanta and on to Fort Lauderdale to join the cruise.

There I met Pam's teenage son, Grant's cousin Andrew Chee and his brother Scott. We prayed for them and with them and I sensed a strong anointing in those prayer times. Like meeting Romulo and the law students in Vanuatu, I later enjoyed many mission trips with Andrew and for a while he stayed in our home with his brother Scott. I was led to take Andrew with me on mission to Nepal and Thailand as well as many times to Vanuatu. He connected so well with other young people, inspiring them to move in anointing and faith.

Grant and I enjoyed prayer groups in their family home in Atlanta most nights, and spoke at youth groups and the Sunday services at their Vineyard church in Atlanta. Again, we appreciated sharing and praying with so many in their faith-filled groups and church. Where there is faith – expecting God to act – more can happen, and it does.

## Brazil

In June 2008, I saw something of God's mighty work in Brazil. George and Lisa Otis and the Sentinel Group hosted a conference in Belo Horizonte and a group of us visited communities that have been transformed in Brazil.

**We worshipped on Sunday** in the huge Baptist Church of Lagoinha in the city of Belo Horizonte. This church of about 35,000 holds four services every Sunday. The sanctuary is round with two high galleries. Before the worship service began they baptised about a dozen people in the baptistery high above the platform. Their worship leader, Ana Paula Valadao, is well known in Brazil. She led worship at the conference and has led national worship gatherings with over one million attending.

The worship service ended, as always, with an invitation for people to give their lives to God. As people streamed forward, counsellors joined to pray with them. People in the sanctuary let down banners saying, "Welcome to the family of God".

We visited the city of Teresopolis, just north of Rio, where a whole community that once existed on the city's garbage dump, now lives in a beautiful new valley nearby. We met youths from former gangs, now transformed into prayer and evangelism warriors, and we prayed with them on the prayer mountain there.

Then we flew north to see the transformation of Algodao de Jandaira, a rural town which suffered from 24 years of drought, until God answered prayer. My story draws on information from the Sentinel Group report.



The Valentina Baptist church in Joao Pessoa hosted us. Many of them had cried out for a fresh move of God. A quiet choir member began to have vivid dreams about a town called Algodao de Jandaira. Later they discovered such a place existed in a desert area with no proper roads.

A prayer team drove there, as we did. When the team arrived at the outskirts of the community, they were shocked by the poverty of its 2,200 inhabitants. The community well stayed dry. The team approached one home and discovered it was the only evangelical home in the community!

The church sent a team once a month with needed supplies. These follow-up trips continued through 2003. At the end of each visit, after they had delivered their meager supplies of food, salt and clothing, the team would walk up to a rock outcropping above the village to pray. We prayed there also.

That year the congregation decided to help the people of Algodao de Jandaira at Christmas. They took their supplies and continued to pray earnestly for God to intervene.

On January 24, 2004, the team returned to Algodao de Jandaira. About five miles from the community they approached a riverbed they had crossed dozens of times before. This time raging waters coursed down the channel. Parking their vehicle, the ecstatic believers hoisted supply sacks onto their shoulders and waded across the river.

As they walked the final stretch to town, a spirit of worship overcame them. Reaching the edge of the village, the team stood in astonishment. From the rock outcropping that served as their prayer station, a waterfall was pouring forth life-giving water upon the community below. Children ran in the river, splashing and laughing all around. Men watered their horses, while goats drank their fill.

Shortly after their previous visit the heavens over Algodao de Jandaira had unleashed a deluge. Water exploded out of previously dry wells with such force that huge boulders were tossed into the air like pebbles. After the "Flood of Blessings" – the 24 year old mayor's term for the recent miracle – they drilled 45 wells to tap what hydrologists now say is a substantial water table under Algodao de Jandaira. We met the young mayor and prayed with him.

The land now produces fava beans, papaya, guava, and other crops. Bees generate high quality honey, goats yield record amounts of milk, and the river is filled with fish and shrimp. For the first time ever they can sell their overflow produce to public schools and outside distributors.

Algodao de Jandaira's population rose to 3,000. The Valentina congregation has planted a church and social center in the community, and holds joint services there with a local Assembly of God congregation. Today, a substantial majority of Algodao de Jandaira's citizens follow Christ as their Lord and Savior. When glory is to be given, it is given to God rather than their former patron saint, Padre Cicero.

The mayor's leadership has landed multiple federal grants worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. Recently, when he presented his case for a further grant, Algodao de Jandaira was the only community in the state of Paraiba to win a grant.

We worshipped in the Valentina Baptist Church, now powerfully Spirit-filled, and also in the Christian pioneers' home in Algodao de Jandaira, and out on the street in front of that home. That family hosted us. We worshipped and praised God on the rocky outcrop near the town, where

their prayer teams had prayed each month. And I swam in the cool fresh water, now flowing through the low dam beside the town.

God answers prayer! Not always as soon as we want, and not always the way we want, but he does. I left Brazil filled with awe once again. Revival has made Brazil the country with the third largest number of Christians, after America and China.



Baptist Church of Lagoinha in Belo Horizonte  
2 galleries



Baptisms in the once dry Algodao de Jandaira

## ***Chapter 28 – Fiji (2008, 2009)***

Fijians have seen many powerful moves of God's Spirit such as when churches joined in unity and repentance in 2001 following the coup and rioting in 2000. See the Sentinel Group's DVD, "Let the Seas Resound."

My book, *South Pacific Revivals*, gives many examples of healings of the land following prayer, reconciliations, and destroying idols. That transformed communities and the ecology. Here are a few more local examples of touches of revival.

Law students from the Christian Fellowship (CF) of the University of the South Pacific experienced strong touches of revival at their Christian Fellowship (CF) in 2002 at their Law School in Vanuatu. The leaders were mostly from Fiji. They grew strong in faith. I appreciated opportunities to lead revival mission teams with them in Australia, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and Fiji.

### ***2008***

I spoke at the combined inter-tertiary Christian Fellowships prayer rally weekend in October 2008. The Fiji School of Medicine Christian Fellowship organised and led it. Over 500 tertiary students met for two nights of worship and prayer.

The Fiji School of Medicine Christian Fellowship has about 200 doctors in training with some trainee dentists. They impressed me. Their leaders seek God, and respond strongly to him. Their worship team led the combined campuses rally on the Friday and Saturday nights. Buses brought in groups from the various universities and colleges. Different Christian Fellowship (CF) groups presented powerful Pacific dances to strong Christian songs. The prayer team prayed personally for over an hour at the end of each meeting for the hundreds of tertiary students who responded, while the School of Medicine CF continued to lead appropriate and anointed worship.

Romulo reported:

**Inter-tertiary went very well at Suva Grammar School that was hosted by Fiji School of Medicine CF. It was an awesome two nights of fellowship with God and with one another. The Pacific Students for Christ combined worship was a huge blessings for those that attended the two nights of worship. Pastor Geoff spoke on Obedience to the Holy Spirit - this being a spark to revival and power.**

**Students came in droves for prayers and the worship lit up the Grammar School skies with tears, repentance, anointing and empowerment. The worship by Fiji School of Medicine students brought us closer to intimate worship with the King. It was a Pacific gathering and each and every person there was truly blessed as young people sought a closer intimate relationship with the King. We were blessed beyond words. Thank you all for the prayers, the thoughts and the giving.**

**Roneil, a Fijian Indian, added, "It was all so amazing, so amazing that words can't describe it. For me, it was obvious that the glory of God just descended upon the people during the Inter-tertiary CF. I've never seen an altar call that lasted for way more than an hour. I**

**myself just couldn't get enough of it. It was and still is so amazing. God's anointing is just so powerful. Hallelujah to Him Who Was, Who Is and Who is to Come."**

Similar scenes have been repeated in the following years as well. University and college students responded in huge numbers. We prayed for hundreds of them. Their leaders do that constantly also.

## **2009**

I was deeply moved in July 2009 to see God's Spirit powerfully present at two congregations of the Redeemer Christian Church of God. Pastor Jerry is senior pastor of their churches in Samabula, Suva, and in his seaside home village of Kiuva north of Suva. Romulo described part of our visit in 2009 this way:

Two of the memorable highlights were the washing of leaders' feet at RCCG Samabula and the worship service on Wednesday at RCCG Kiuva village. In fact I remember picking up the pastors on Sunday morning, and seeing Pastor Geoff carrying towels. I said to myself, 'This is going to be fun.' And fun it was.

God was teaching the church the principles of servanthood, demonstrated not just by words but by actions. It was a moving experience as Pastor Geoff on his knees started washing feet, drying them with a towel and speaking into the lives of leaders. Powerful also was the fact that Pastor Geoff's leading was to wash the feet of leaders.

**That Sunday former PM Rabuka, who heard of the Pastor's visit, came to church for prayer. Of course the leading for Pastor Geoff to pray for leaders meant Rabuka would get his feet washed too. One of the acts that will be embedded forever in my mind was seeing Rabuka sit on the floor, remove his coat and wash the feet of Pastor Geoff and KY Tan. He then dried their feet with his 'favourite' Fiji rugby coat (he played in their national rugby team). I was blown away by this act of humility, as demonstrated by Christ on his final night with the disciples before his arrest and execution.**

**On Wednesday night, (their last night in Suva), we were at Kiuva village in Tailevu. The powerful and angelic worship of young people and kids in Tailevu made the atmosphere one of power with a tangible presence of the Lord in the place. We saw a glimpse of revival and the power of God at work in such a simple setting. I was blessed to witness for myself the prevalent hunger in the body as lives connected with God. In all, it is purely refreshing being in the presence of God and being touched and filled by the Holy Spirit.**

Mighty moves of God continue to amaze us when we seek after him. The visit by Pastor Geoff and KY Tan was for many of us an opportunity to move in our gifting. It reminded me of the divine encounter we had in Vanuatu many years ago where, as student leaders in the university's CF group, we were in need of direction and to hear God. Many years later today we continue to witness the greatness of God and his willingness to use our lives as we remain available and yielded to him. Indeed miracles and wonders have followed us and the best part of it all is just seeing the power of the Word of God bring life to them that believe.

I was privileged to be hosted by Seini and to share in Romulo's marriage to Vivienne in October 2013 – a significant and fitting celebration after more than a decade of mission together, beginning with that divine appointment with the law students in 2002.



*Romulo and Vivienne with pastors at wedding*

The commitment and dedication of so many of the law students from 2002 impresses me. Now they are strong Christian lawyers and leaders in many nations. We served God together on short term revival missions in Australia, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji. I tell those stories in *South Pacific Revivals*, expanded from stories in *Flashpoints of Revival* and *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival*.



*Pastor Jerry speaking at his village home church*

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*Tailevu youth worship in Jerry's home church*

## ***Chapter 29 – Myanmar (2009-11-12-18)***

In January 2009, I visited Myanmar (Burma) for the first time, also on mission. This time I enjoyed being part of three generations of our family on mission together, with my son Jonathan and my eldest grand-daughter Jemimah, as well as my sister Hazel all involved. Jonathan's friend Andrew Rogers organised team visits there for many years. Andrew had lived with us for a couple of years when he studied at university.

It's tough for Christians in that Buddhist country, and pastors and Christian groups, including many of our friends there, do a wonderful job in caring for victims of ethnic and religious conflict such as in their homes and orphanages. We worked with leaders in the Apostolic Church there. They run orphanages in Yangon, a Bible College out in the country, and they bring their pastors together for an annual national conference. So we stayed in an economical hotel in Yangon and the team served in two groups, one helping at the orphanages and one team travelling daily to the pastors and leaders conference at the Bible College out of town.,

The Bible College is small, but students are very committed and extremely grateful. So were the pastors, some of them coming from very hard, remote areas. They were all so appreciative, and of course want return visits. Those return visits developed into annual short-term mission trips, usually in January.



*Praying together*

Jonathan and Jemimah did a lot with the children and youth in the two orphanages, and Jonathan helped with practical work. My sister Hazel visited the orphanages and attended some of the pastors' conference.

Hazel provided help for the Bethel Baptists and their orphanage as well. We both spoke at their church, and prayed for people there. She and her husband Kerry returned there, and people in their home church at Orange support that ministry in prayer and practical ways. After Hazel died in July 2011, Kerry continued to support their work and now they have a beautiful two storey accommodation building dedicated to Hazel.



Some of us travelled daily to the Bible College for the conference, 1½ hours away by side-saddle covered truck. Jonathan helped with building their pig sty, so their pigs could be an income producing project. I helped teach the pastors about revival and taught the students at the Bible College. We prayed together in faith for God's mighty purposes in their land.

As in all the countries I have been privileged to visit on mission, not only do we see God blessing the people abundantly, but we too are abundantly blessed.

Jonathan reported, "On our last day a number of local people came to me and expressed their deep gratitude that we came over. There is a level of joy and encouragement that they receive from our simple presence, from white people coming to a tough environment to try and help practically and spiritually. It is so humbling to be told over and over that they are praying for us. May it go back to them a hundred fold."

Jonathan, and members of his family, then returned every year in December-January to help with the orphanages and to help expand orphanages and schools. These trips also included teams from Bellbowrie Community Church in Brisbane with Scott Farrell actively involved in raising funds and helping.

I returned in January 2011 with my sister Lynette, and again taught at their Bible School for the annual pastors and leaders conference. Then Lyn and I visited Don and Kay Fox in northern Thailand, spoke in some churches and taught pastors and leaders for a day in their Bible School, which at that time it was just a roof with open sides.

The following year, 2012, I returned to Yangon with Jonathan's family and taught again at the annual pastors and leaders conference with Graeme and Val Rogers, Andrew's pastor parents. After the conferences I flew north to Tachileik on the Thailand border with Pastor Lian, Andrew, Jonathan, and Scott. We spoke at their church and Bible School there, including at the Graduation Service for Bible School students. Then we flew south to Tayngyi and visited Inle Lake and the village on the lake, with home meetings in pastors' houses, including a home meeting in a home above the lake. Then we flew back to Yangon and the next day flew on to Singapore and Brisbane.

Jonathan and his family returned each year with his children gaining valuable experience in leading, speaking and praying with people, including Dante with his guitar and Jemimah with her flute. In January 2017 my daughter Melinda and her daughter Joelle joined them and then in December-January 2017-18 I joined them all again along with Melinda and her daughters Joelle and Dana. So we had three generations of our family there again, including my grandchildren. How I love to see them all growing in serving and helping and praying with so many, especially with young people.

These trips included team visits to the coast, the delta and north to Thayet, helping and praying with people in churches, schools, orphanages and hospitals, as well as raising funds for orphanages and giving supplies such as over 700 blankets last time. The team raised support for orphanages and schools in this tragically war-torn land. Contact me for information if you would like to help, on email [geoffwaugh2@gmail.com](mailto:geoffwaugh2@gmail.com).

*Myanmar scenes*





## ***Chapter 30 – Malaysia (2010)***

KY Tan from Malaysia, husband of a keen and capable college student I taught, came with me on mission in Fiji in 2009. Following that he arranged for us to visit his home city of Melaka, capital of the coastal state of Malacca in south-west Malaysia, for a week in April, 2010.

We flew to Singapore and then drove by bus from Singapore island across the bridge into the Malaysian peninsula, south of Thailand and Myanmar/Burma. The customs officer was interested in my box of books and resources, mostly on revival.

My very gracious and helpful hosts, Julian and June Ma, met us at the Melaka bus stop beside a large, modern shopping mall, and then, after sharing a marvelous meal together, drove me to their beautiful home. We drove to meetings in their impressive Mercedes cars, busy businesspeople also active in their church, the City Christian Church. They kindly drove me back to Singapore after the mission.

Most of our meetings were at their church, but we also participated in the city's Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI).

At all the meetings I was led to tell about current revivals and moves of God's Spirit, especially as their church is part of that revival movement. Their pastor, James, had led the church into revival ministries with powerful worship, faith and responses in all meetings.

I was not only impressed with their worship team, but also with their technical team. They matched songs with appropriate backgrounds and even during messages were able to quickly put up Bible references (obviously doing so constantly) and could show internet references and locations as I talked about them.

We prayed for people at every meeting and encouraged them to pray for one another in their seats and at the end of each meeting. That was familiar territory for them – so different from most churches.

When you step out in faith and pray for someone specifically, and stay responsive to the Spirit, you receive insights and 'words' just for them. Many are renewed, their faith strengthened, and they receive impartation and anointing from God's Spirit as you pray in united faith and humility. "Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective." (James 5:16-17).



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*City Christian Church, Melaka, Malaysia*



## ***Chapter 31 – Thailand (2011)***

We have an open invitation to visit our friends Don and Kay Fox in northern Thailand. We knew them when we worked together in Christian Education in Brisbane and eventually we bought their house there after they moved to America to work with Teen Challenge and others in helping youth.



They fell in love with the Karen refugees from Burma during a YWAM mission trip to northern Thailand. So they eventually returned to live and work there, built a simple two-storey shack, and raised support for the children through “Handclasp”, the mission agency they founded. Their wall has over 500 photos of sponsored children who were helped through school and college.

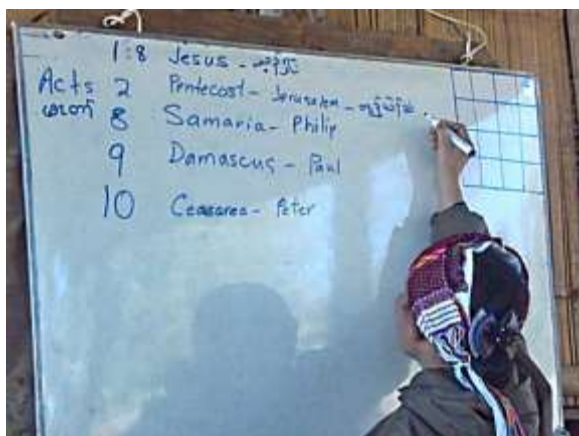
After visiting Myanmar with my sister Lyn, we both flew the scenic trip across the peninsular to Bangkok and then one hour north to Chang Mai in northern Thailand and met Don and Kay there around 2pm on Monday, January 10, 2011. We all drove five hours south-west to Mai Sot on the Myanmar/Burma border, slept in a local hotel, and on Tuesday morning drove on to the crowded Burmese refugee camp on the mountainous border with Myanmar/Burma.



Over 60,000 Burmese live in bamboo and thatch huts there, and thousands more along the border, mostly Karen people escaping genocide. Thousands of children became orphans, cared for by aid and mission organizations. I had the honour of teaching at the Bible School there for 30 refugee youth who want to serve and evangelize their own Burmese people.

On Tuesday afternoon we all drove back to Chang Mai for an overnight rest and then on Wednesday drove north for four hours up into the mountains to Don and Kay’s base in the village of Musekee. There they work with the dynamo lady Siami who organizes an orphanage, school, and local projects.

That evening we joined the regular evening devotions of the children living there. Like Yangon orphans, they are beautiful, obedient, friendly and earnest.



On Friday we had a lively session at the Bible School. Siami gave a vocal and written translation. This photo summarizes teaching on the Holy Spirit, with a puzzle. If the squares were all square, how many squares do you see? Some see 16, others see up to 30. It depends on your perspective, as also for life in the Spirit.

Their temporary rural Bible School building for the district was an iron roof, one front wall, and planks to sit on. We had many standing outside as well.



At the weekend we had meetings in the main village church as well as at the orphanage, and as always, we prayed with and for many people. Then on Monday Lyn and I flew to Phuket, combining a holiday with visiting Christians there and speaking at some of their meetings and again praying together.



*Musekee village church and Lyn praying with friends at a church in Phuket*



## ***Chapter 32 – Germany, Israel (2013)***

### **Germany**

A big blessing in teaching at Bible Colleges and Theological Colleges in Australia is meeting and teaching committed students from many countries. Many of my mission trips came from visiting former students who are now pastors and leaders in their own countries. Mostly that has been mission in developing countries.

David Metzner, however, came from Germany. He turned up at Christian Heritage College looking like a hippie with long braided hair – rather different from other students. He did not need to conform! Soon we discovered that he would step out in faith at every opportunity, and create many opportunities.

He led a team of Bible College students who would pray for others at the end of the weekly chapel service for students from all the CHC schools – Education, Counselling, Business, Arts and Ministry. We had to encourage the prayer team to be quick, as lectures continued straight after chapel.

Students like David (and Francis from Kenya, and Grant an Australian from China) helped make classes lively and powerful. They moved in faith, expecting things to happen, especially when we pray. The tutorials they led were always interesting, often involving everyone in stepping out in faith.

Just before David returned to Germany with his Bachelor of Ministry degree, he invited me to join him there to encourage revival among renewal groups and churches. Soon the way opened for me to go. David and his charming parents Leo and Andrea hosted me in their compact two storey home in Roth, north of Munich in southern Germany. I really enjoyed the forest walk from their home to the town centre and castle in Roth.

David and I spoke at three different churches and many home, youth and prayer groups, with David interpreting for me in German as well as speaking himself. What fun! We constantly prayed for people, again with David hovering to interpret my English. Flowing together in unity in prayer is so effective and creative.

One day we explored Nuremburg with David's friend Jonas, and prayed prophetically at the parade ground where Hitler had stirred the masses. Later David and Jonas were involved in planning for massive European Christian youth conferences there with international speakers, especially from Bethel Church in California.



*David and Jonas at Nuremberg and at the parade ground there*

David's pastor, Peter, drove us around key missionary places in Bavaria, southern Germany, where the gospel first arrived in Germany.

Later David drove me to Herrnhut in north-east where Count Nicholas Zinzendorf led the powerful Moravian revival movement which touched the world. Moravian missionaries in London led John and Charles Wesley to saving faith.



*Looking south from Berthelsdorf to Herrnhut*

I loved the tree lined one kilometre long walk between the two villages of Herrnhut and Berthelsdorf. Zinzendorf originally lived in his castle at Berthelsdorf but later moved to the Moravian refugees' settlement at Herrnhut on the land he gave to them there.

The Moravians regularly walked to the Lutheran Church at Berthelsdorf for church services but also held daily worship and prayer at Herrnhut.



The Holy Spirit fell upon that revival movement in 1726 at a communion service in the Berthelsdorf Church. The Moravian refugees had suffered severe persecution and found refuge on the land that Count Zinzendorf gave to them.

So it was a moving experience to stay at Herrnhut, join prayer groups there, and walk to Berthelsdorf, and pray together at the church there (photo).

The Moravian Revival is the first revival story I recount in my book ***Flashpoints of Revival***. We used that as a text book in my college classes on revival.

## ***Israel***

At Roth in Germany I discovered cheap return fares to Israel, returning via Rome with a train trip back from Rome to Munich and Roth. So I took the opportunity to visit Jerusalem again, 33 years after we had taken our family there in 1980. Again I stayed in the Christ Church hospice near that Anglican Church inside the Old City of Jerusalem, close to its Jaffa Gate. See my books, ***Exploring Israel*** and ***Mysterious Month***.

Again I walked the 2.5 miles around the Old City walls, past its seven gates in the 1000 year old walls rebuilt by Crusaders. Those walls encompass the Temple Mount at the east of the city facing the Mount of Olives, a short walk across the Kidron Valley.

My five days in the Old City of Jerusalem gave me opportunity to visit key biblical sites there once again and walk where Jesus walked, even along that final walk to the cross from the Roman army's barracks in the Antonia Fortress beside the temple along the route now called the Via Dolorosa – the way of sorrows. Again I could walk and meditate in the beautiful, serene Garden Tomb site just outside the old city walls. Again I could climb the Mount of Olives, past the ancient olive trees in the site of Gethsemane, and look over the city from the top of the mountain near where Jesus ascended.

It's always a moving experience for me to visit Israel, the land of the Bible, with its long, crucial history. Here Jesus lived and died and rose again.

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*The Old City of Jerusalem from the south with the Temple Mount central, and Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives to the east (right)*



## ***Chapter 33 – Nepal, Thailand (2014)***

### ***Nepal***

Andrew Chee was with me on Pentecost Island in July, and was free in August, so after a few quick email inquiries we were off to Kathmandu and northern Thailand (following up on earlier invitations).

We 'happened' to arrive on the first Sunday that Raju Sundas had his first afternoon service, with a full church of a thousand or so, on August 17, 2014. Previously they only had a morning service, but now they have two with a full church each time. I got to share briefly and challenged them to give their lives to God, be baptised, and filled with the Spirit in a 5 minute word. The day before we left, Raju's two children were baptised and we shared an extended family meal together.

Raju's Hosanna Church now has a Christian school with dormitories on nearby properties and we 'happened' to be there for their first cultural dance program, as a witness to the surrounding community.

We had a powerful week at their Bible School. They take in about 40 (from all over Nepal) twice a year for three months full time and we 'happened' to be there for the first week of the new group. The translators told us that it was the most powerful start they had seen. Of course we prayed for them often, and got them praying for each other, with many healings and deliverances. Many of them were Andrew's age and were inspired by his faith and obedience.

Raju has 55 satellite churches now, and we both preached at different ones on our second Sunday there, again with large numbers responding for prayer and healing. Then on Monday we flew to Thailand.





## ***Thailand***

I returned to visit our friends Don and Kay in northern Thailand with Andrew on our return trip from Nepal in August 2014. We arrived at Chang Mai, via Bangkok, on Monday night, August 25, and again stayed with Don and Kay at their rooms there. On Wednesday we all drove on the now improved roads up into the northern mountains to Musekee, and joined the children at the orphanage for their evening devotions, once again enjoying their singing and speaking.

We talked and prayed with various groups during the week and on Saturday we had a full church for a pastors and leaders seminar. They came from ten churches in the area and asked many questions about faith and healing prayers. We had teaching and ministry sessions with 50-60 of their pastors and leaders, and again a lot of prayer for empowering, anointing and healings.

Then on the Sunday we both preached at different churches and again prayed with many people. I had an email from one of our interpreters telling me how those prayed for have been testifying to answered prayers, and one woman is back at work even though the doctors said she would need 3 months off work to recover.

At all meetings we prayed with people including for healings and deliverance. We're always encouraged when people report that their pain has gone, as happened often. I am constantly aware that it is God who does it all, and together we all are a part of what he is doing, especially in prayer.

We drove back to Chang Mai on Tuesday, September 2, and flew to Bangkok and on to Brisbane on the long overnight flight, arriving home on Thursday morning, ready to rest and recover.



*Pastors and leaders from 10 churches in northern Thailand*

## ***Chapter 34 – Vanuatu: Pentecost (2010-2019)***

### ***Pentecost Island – July 2010***

I returned to Pentecost Island in July with two students from college, Ben Butler and Heidi North, for two to three weeks of ministry. Ben and Heidi made a big hit with the children and youth in the school and the village, including the football teams. They gave testimonies and spoke at most of the meetings also.

Previously I have visited South Pentecost with many teams including Pacific law students from Port Vila and Grant Shaw from college in Brisbane. During my visit with Grant in 2006 we saw strong moves of God in many villages, especially the remote village of Ponra. Our village ministry team in 2006 trekked 5 hours across the island and then after some meetings there we hiked a further 7 hours north to Ponra. There God's Spirit touched everyone.

This time I saw some results of that. Youth from Ponra are having a strong influence on other youth and leaders in South Pentecost. The meetings where they were involved were the most powerful ones, with great worship and large numbers responding for prayer.



**We made history this time by trekking three to four hours to the Anglican village of Point Cross on the southern tip of Pentecost Island, at their special invitation. This was the first combined churches meetings ever held there.**

I taught on the Holy Spirit and transformation in their beautiful cement church, painted white with a majestic spire, visible for kilometres all around. It contains dramatic paintings of Jesus painted on the walls by a Pentecost Island man (see photo). We also met in the chief's meeting house. At all meetings there we prayed with large numbers of people, including prayer for healings and to be filled with the Spirit. The helpful Member of Parliament there provided us with a free boat trip in his outboard canoe, back to our base village at Pangi.

Church life has changed in the years I have been visiting Pentecost Island. Now all the churches we work with, including the Anglican youth, have revival style meetings with revival choruses and personal prayer for those responding.



## ***Return to Pentecost, 2012***

21 year old Andrew Chee (Grant Shaw's cousin) came with me on a three week mission to Vanuatu in June-July 2012. We saw God's blessing and many miracles.

Andrew sensed God telling him to go on this trip, and he booked his flights only one week before we left when flights were full so he was wait-listed but the next day seats became available.



Andrew and Grant (photo) love praying for the sick because they see God constantly taking away pain and healing people. They have strong faith in God's Word, such as Mark 16:17-18. Jesus said, "these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; ... they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." We saw all that in Vanuatu, literally. Daily.

Andrew, from Hawaii, once lived to surf. Now he lives to serve – for God.

We flew into Port Vila, the capital, late on a Friday night and stayed at the Churches of Christ transit house above the church there. Next morning at 6am we heard young people worshipping in their beautiful island harmonies, so we joined them. They welcomed us and invited us to speak briefly and pray for anyone sick. Andrew had words of knowledge about people with pain who then came out for prayer immediately. Our praying continued for everyone wanting prayer after the closing prayer. Nice fast start to our mission!

That morning we flew for an hour in a very small plane on a windy trip to Pentecost Island – the bumpiest I have had on my many visits there. So now I was returning again, with another keen young firebrand for God.

This long, narrow island was sighted and named on the Day of Pentecost, 1764, by explorer Bougainville, and also seen by Captain Cook in 1774.

Pastor Rolanson met us at the airstrip and we walked 300 metres to the beach to ride for half an hour in the outboard canoe 10k south to Pangi village with captain Elder Jackson.

There Rolanson's boys met us to carry our bags along the muddy track a kilometre inland to their village, Panlimsi.



I stayed there many times, including with Grant in the bush house behind Andrew and Rolanson in this photo.

Rolanson, pastor and evangelist, keeps asking us to return to encourage revival, pray for people, and help him train leaders and village evangelism teams.

We had our first meeting there in the village church, partially lit by a couple of old fluorescent lights when the generator was started, usually after everyone has arrived – to save fuel! So most meetings begin in the dark with torch light or candles.

Early in the worship Andrew again had words of knowledge about people's pain so worship included praying for the sick. Their pain left. After we both spoke that night, we prayed for many more.

So began three weeks of such night meetings. During the day every time we went out into the villages people asked for healing prayer. So like Jesus sending out the 12 and 70 (Mark 6:7; Luke 10:1) in pairs, we too went through the towns and villages proclaiming the kingdom of God, healing the sick and casting out spirits. Many illnesses there result from curses or witchcraft. Often we had to break curses, bind afflicting spirits and cast them out in Jesus' name.

This time we experienced strong witchcraft. On our last day there, when Andrew and I were weary, Andrew was hit by severe aches and headache. That night I saw a strange dull light, like a reddish torch light, moving horizontally just outside our village hut. We began praying against powerful spirits. God's Spirit reminded Andrew to bless those who curse you and pray for your enemies. He did. The strange spiritual connection was immediately broken, and pain started easing off. It took a day to recover from that one. "All hail the power of Jesus' name ..."

**One Sunday there we shared in a combined churches service in the packed village church. Before the service Andrew had words of knowledge about pain in a man's shoulders and the right side of a woman's face. Both came for prayer while people were gathering in the church. We then discovered that the man was the leader of the service and the woman preached that day! Many times, the words of knowledge Andrew received were for pastors and leaders first, and then later we prayed for others.**

**At that Sunday service I was strongly led to call people out for prayer during communion. That was a first for them. It never happened in communion. A large number came for prayer and the healings were fast and strong.**



**One night Andrew felt led to wash everyone's feet. That took the whole service! We put a bucket of water near the door (regularly refilled) and Andrew washed everyone's feet as they arrived while we worshipped, prayed, spoke and called people out for healing and empowering prayer. I was led to wash the leaders feet that night also [Photo: Andrew washes the chief's feet].**

**Our adventures included another outboard motor canoe trip an hour north for a combined churches youth rally on the beach with a large campfire at the end of the meeting. We joined forces with another Australian mission team from Gladstone staying there. That night we also prayed for many people after the service. Healings were the fastest and strongest we had seen till then. We realized that people's faith was rising and God was especially blessing unity.**

### ***Bunlap***

The heathen village of Bunlap on the east coast is famous as the spiritual centre for pagan witchcraft and curses. I went there with Grant in 2006 on a five hour trek across to Ranwas village and then via Bunlap on a seven hour trek to Ponra village where we saw the power of God at every meeting and I heard angels singing in the night, like the church was full, although no people were there. Grant had prayed for the paramount chief's son whose groin was healed at Pangi village on the west coast,

so we offered to go to Bunlap and pray for the sick. A couple of days later we heard that the chief had invited us to come and pray – the first white people to ever be invited to pray for people there.

This time Andrew and I were swimming off the jetty near Pangi when one of chief's sons from Bunlap and his friends wandered onto the jetty. Two of those young men had pain so Andrew prayed for them and the pain left. The chief's son told us they would be there when we came to Bunlap the following Saturday to pray for sick people again.

This year we enjoyed the luxury of a four wheel truck trip across the island through the dense green mountains. We had three nights of meetings at Ranwas village, Friday to Sunday, including the Sunday morning service there. On Saturday we trekked half an hour through the jungle to Bunlap.

**People were even more welcoming this time at Bunlap. We prayed for dozens of people, and their pain left. We talked about the kingdom of God and how Jesus saves and heals. Some of the people told us they believed that, and when the chief allowed it they would be part of a church there.**

**The paramount chief once burned a Bible given to him by a revival team from the Christian villages. Now he is willing for a church to be built on the ground where he burned the Bible. Hallelujah – what a testimony to God's grace and glory. For the first time ever that paramount chief asked for prayer. He wanted healing from head pain. Andrew placed his hands on the sides of the chief's head and we prayed for him in Jesus' name. The pain left.**



**Then another chief there prepared lunch for us so the pastors in the team and Andrew and I ate in his house – again the first time ever for white people on mission there.**

**Like Jesus' disciples, we returned to Ranwas village church rejoicing that afflicting spirits were cast out, people were healed in Jesus' name, some believed in Jesus, and they now plan to have a church there. Our Bunlap host chief told Pastor Rolanson he can bring his guitar and have meetings in the chief's house anytime.**

Some Christians at Ranwas were amazed to hear the reports. They have endured witchcraft and curses from Bunlap for a century. Again, during communion on Sunday large numbers came for prayer for healing, and healings were fast and strong. They had never done that in communion before. At all the meetings Andrew had specific words of knowledge about healings, and pain left quickly. In the beginning we had to pray for some people two or three times before the pain left, but as the weeks passed and faith rose, healings were much quicker and stronger. By the end of the mission trip people in the congregation were praying for each other in faith and seeing God touch their friends.

Andrew encouraged leaders to pray with him for people's healings, just as he had learned from leaders in his church. Soon those village leaders and others were praying more strongly in faith. Many of them do that constantly anyway, so we were just encouraging them to believe and take authority in Jesus' name even more fully.

### ***Santo***

The largest island in Vanuatu is Espiritu Santo (usually just called Santo) with Luganville the second largest town in Vanuatu, after Port Vila the capital. That's the island where Pedro Fernandes de Queiros in 1606 named the island group La Australia del Espiritu Santo – the great south lands of the Holy Spirit, from which Australia gets its name. We flew from Pentecost Island to Santo Island. There I met again two of their leading pastors who had worked with me in previous visits to Vanuatu, and they invited us to the youth meeting at the church on our last night in Vanuatu.

What a beautiful end to the mission trip. About 30 youth practiced a new song to sing on Sunday, and the leader invited us to speak briefly and pray for them. Again, Andrew's words of knowledge proved to be for their leaders first who were immediately healed. Then we prayed for other needs and finally asked all who wanted to be filled with Spirit and empowered by God to come out. Everyone came! What a wonderful atmosphere of faith and expectation.

### ***2014 Update***

We returned to Ranwas village, and Bunlap village in 2014, with similar results. The sick were healed. Hearts were opened to faith in Jesus.

In 2014 we also spoke and prayed with many people at the Independence Celebrations held every 24th July for a week. Many responded, and many youth came for prayer during our time there.

We slept one night with a local football team and woke up to them singing:

*For I was made in His likeness  
Created in His image  
For I was born to serve the Lord  
And I can't deny Him  
And I will always walk beside Him  
For I was born to serve the Lord.*

I challenged them all to live fully this way and the whole team responded for prayer.



## ***2015 Update***

It was great to be accompanied by three young fellows full of energy and zeal, Andrew Chee (3rd time there, and he was with me in Nepal and Thailand last year), his friend Ben Gray, and my nephew-in-law Noel Missingham.

Pastor Rolanson has been the main organizer of my visits to Pentecost Island and I often stay in his village. This time Rolanson came to Vila the first week we were there so we stayed in Vila for a week with contacts given to Noel. We joined with a new church group there and had free accommodation as well. The boys loved praying for people in the streets and seeing immediate healings, and we were taken out by church people on three days to pray for many, including the Paramount Chief of Port Vila, and for many of his people in his island village.

We had a good week on Pentecost staying with Elder Jackson and wife Annette (who worked in a bank branch there) in their house near the beach at Pangl, as Rolanson stayed on in Vila with government stuff. The team prayed for healings every day and in all the night meetings. Night meetings in four different villages: Panlimsi, Hotwater, Wali and Pangl, were all strong with personal prayers for healings, anointing, empowering and mission. See South Pentecost map.

It was a time of building them up again. Everyone who was prayed for about their healing reported that the pain had gone – quickly. I left some of the treks into the mountains to the young men this time, and Andrew and Noel returned and prayed for the ‘custom’ paramount chief not only for healings in the village but for his salvation.

We had prayed for his healing and healing for his people, and now he indicated that he wanted to give his life to God and open all the ‘custom’ villages to evangelism. Two other ‘custom’ chiefs opened their villages for healing prayers and evangelism.



*Noel and Andrew pray with the ‘custom’ paramount chief*

We had a few days at Santo Island on our return. Pastor Lewis (who hosted my time teaching at the Bible College in 2004-5) was there in the main office as Director of Mission. We had a few days to relax on sunny Santo.

## 2016 Update

Noel Missingham returned to Pentecost Island many times in 2015-16 including two visits with his family of four young children, hosted by Jackson and Annette at Pangi village. Their young white children were quite a hit! Here is their report in June 2016.



*Noel, Judith and family*

Email from Noel & Judith:

*Greetings to our friends and partners,*

*It has been an exciting time for us over the last few months. Looking back, our word from the Lord was simply 'come and follow Me,' so we found ourselves stepping into the mission field on Pentecost Island in Vanuatu.*

*In being obedient to this word we have seen the Lord do amazing things and it feels like we have just been along for the ride. We have seen the Lord open deaf ears, make the blind see, heal backs, knees, ankles, broken bones and headaches.*

*The Lord has brought us before people great and small. He has created divine connections with leaders in Vanuatu and has given us 'standing before kings'. In the small time we have been spending there, we have seen impossible situations made possible, broken relationships restored and enormous favour for the Lord's work. We have seen people baptised in water and be completely overwhelmed after being touched by the Holy Spirit. We never anticipated the Lord would use us in such a way.*

*Out of everything we have witnessed so far, we've found that nothing quite compares to the miracle of salvation; seeing a repentant heart weeping in the Father's love. A story that comes to mind is when a man approached us after a service. It had been some time since he last stepped into a church building, but something told him he should go this morning. As he listened from outside, the Lord touched him and he came forward and shared how he had been involved in adultery. Wow, what a scene as he completely broke down and gave the Lord everything and when we are willing to give everything to Jesus, He is willing to take EVERYTHING from us. He makes us clean, puts a robe and ring on us and calls us 'faithful and beloved'... When the time for church announcements came, this man took the microphone and with tears in his eyes he apologized to the church and individual leaders and people he hurt. The leaders in turn forgave him, and restored him to the place he was formally serving, on the worship team. A son restored!*

*One of the 'impossible made possible' situations has been the restoration of the Banmatmat Bible College. As Noel hiked around the island to take the gospel to distant villages, one of the things he felt was that it could be more effective. While we are seeing divine favour, signs and wonders, healing and salvations and clear open doors, to do it by ourselves or with a small group of people is not as effective as it could be.*

*We feel the need for multiple teams of people, and strategic planning so that we can really take Pentecost Island, and all the islands of Vanuatu for the Lord, and then go beyond there to other nations. Of course the Lord had a solution already in the pipeline: The Banmatmat Bible College.*

*The Lord brought Banmatmat to our attention on one of our previous trips. It lies in the south of the island, a remote part only accessible by hiking or boat. It now lies in ruins and disrepair, however in times gone past it was regarded by locals as a paradise, and a valuable source of training and equipping for many pastors serving there and in surrounding islands.*



*Bible College and beach at Banmatmat, South Pentecost*

*We learned that the people dedicated the land where the college is located to God, a few generations after one of the first Christians was martyred (and eaten) near the site. The Church of Christ college was built on that location in 1964. It lasted up until 2005 when the college closed for various reasons. ...*

*[From Geoff: I was able to teach there many times in 2004-2005, hosted by Pastor Lewis Wari, a revival pioneer, who later became President of the Churches of Christ in Vanuatu. God may have other purposes for this place in the future. Many people have had amazing prophecies about revival in South Pentecost.]*

*The other thing that the Lord opened up on the last trip was different connections with church leaders around the island (from Anglican, Catholic, Seven Day Adventists and Churches of Christ). These are divine connections with brothers and sisters who know Him and love Him and just want to see the King glorified regardless of denominational boundaries.*

*In closing out this update letter, we want to personally thank each of you for partnering with us in the work the Lord has us doing in Vanuatu. We pray that our Lord continues to richly bless you as we labour together in his work. Remember we are partnering together!*





*Bible College chapel 2005*

### ***Team Visit, June-July 2016***

We had the privilege of sharing in meetings every night during our visit covering three weekends in 2016. The team, for part or all of the time, included Noel, Andrew, Stan and Dante (my grandson, in photos).



Again, most meetings and outreach were around Pangi village on the coast (where we slept) and up the ridge at Panlimsi village, in Pastor Rolanson's church. Again we participated with local people and encouraged them to continue boldly in faith in praying for one another and for mission teams to go out to the villages. At every meeting we had many responding for commitment to God, anointing and healing. This included evangelism meetings in a few different

villages along that west coast of South Pentecost.

During the day we mixed with the people in their daily activities, including fishing with outrigger canoes and with nets. So we enjoyed fish cooked on the fire on the beach a few times, just like the resurrected Jesus with his friends on the shore of Galilee.



*Andrew, Noel & Dante with local guides at the martyr site*

Again we visited the martyr site where Lulkon offered his life so that Thomas could live and evangelize his people. We prayed there and then also down the ridge at Banmatmat. Later, Noel and Stan accompanied Rolanson and other leaders to Banmatmat to assess future possibilities. No one seems to know what will happen there, or when, but it remains in our prayers along with the possibilities of having a Revival Training Centre on South Pentecost as the Lord opens the way.

### ***Pioneer chief dies at 111***

Paramount Chief Morris lived to 111. He died in Panlimsi village on 1st July 2016 when we were there, so we had the honour of being involved at the graveside and in the combined churches memorial service on Sunday, 3 July. **Morris was a young man when a wife of his father, the highest ranking chief on the island, died. After they had wrapped her body for burial the cloths began moving. They unwrapped her and she told them to leave their heathen ways and follow the Christian way. So most of them did.**

**Pastor Rolanson's father, a Christian chief, gave them land where they relocated among Christian villages. Chief Morris helped to pioneer the Gospel in other villages in south Pentecost Island.**

I had the privilege of speaking at the graveside and in the memorial service on the Sunday in July 2016. I sensed the Lord give me a word of comfort and a word of challenge – “Come and Go”:

**Come** to Me ... I will give you rest ... My yoke is easy and my burden is light ... (Matthew 11:28-20).

**Go** and make disciples of all nations ... I am with you always even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20).

\*



*Chief Morris at 111 with his grandson Presley & the burial*



*The memorial service at Panlimsi with the overflow crowd*

## **2017-2019 Update**

I returned with Dante and others in June-July, 2017. Stan came with his wife Daphne (my sister) and Emily from Riverlife Baptist joined us. The Riverlife church people sent a keyboard, a guitar, and a large box of reading glasses with us. We often take used and discarded spectacles with us on these trips to help older people read.

This time we had meetings at Ranwadi High School again and once again prayed with large numbers there. Then we returned to Pangi and Panlimsi villages for more meetings and visitation with Pastor Rolanson. At a Sunday service, Elder Jackson gave his testimony that his blood readings were normal at the clinic following prayer for diabetes.

We continue to encourage Christians to pray for one another in faith and obedience. I also participated when their new MP Silas Bule, formerly principal at Ranwadi, distributed Gideon's New Testaments to the local school.

Then in 2018 I had a team of seven of us. The six young men with me included Dante and Ben again with Ben's friends Scott (Andrew's brother), Blake, Sergie, and Dylan. We stayed in Rolanson and Doneth's village at Panlimsi, up the ridge from Pangi on the coast.

Again we prayed with large numbers at their village meetings and during the day. Again we prayed for healing and anointing during communion. That was powerful. Pain left immediately with healing prayers, people were filled with the Spirit, using spiritual gifts, and we saw rising faith and obedience among them.

Another team joined me in October, 2019, with Dante again and two of his friends, Daniel and Nahil. Robert and Christine from Kenmore Church in Brisbane came and will continue to develop a partnership between Kenmore Church and the church on Pentecost Island – with new possibilities supporting them as they also go on mission by invitation to other islands.

Pastor Rolanson, our host for these visits, is now a well-known evangelist and has been invited to take local teams with him on mission to other areas including other islands. We are praying for powerful moves of God's Spirit and for revival as they do that.

*We encourage and support revival leaders on Pentecost Island regularly. That includes providing revival books and resources, Bibles, and helping pastors with high school fees for their children. I usually take donated spectacles to give away to help people read their Bibles. We have invested into establishing a Revival Training Centre as a revival base to help equip local team ministries.*

*If you would like to help financially, including for orphanages in Myanmar, contact me at [geoffwaugh2@gmail.com](mailto:geoffwaugh2@gmail.com).*

## ***About the Author***

I met my wife Meg during our mission teaching in Papua New Guinea. Later I was involved in short-term teaching and evangelism missions in Australia, in Ghana and Kenya in Africa, in Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, China, and in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji in the South Pacific. Don and Helen Hill joined in many of those mission trips and Don's memoirs give more information in this book.

Teaching Ministry and Mission subjects in Bible Schools in Papua New Guinea led to teaching at Trinity Theological College (also part of the School of Theology at Griffith University) and Christian Heritage College in Brisbane, Australia, as well as on many short-term missions. My Doctor of Missiology degree is from Fuller Theological Seminary and I am the founding editor of the *Renewal Journal* and author of books on mission and revival including *Flashpoints of Revival* and *South Pacific Revivals*.

Blessed with three adult children and eight grandchildren, our family lived and grew through creative times together including living in community with others for a decade, and later in extended families. Our families excelled in study and in their chosen activities including teaching, nursing, sport, dance, information technology and helping people.

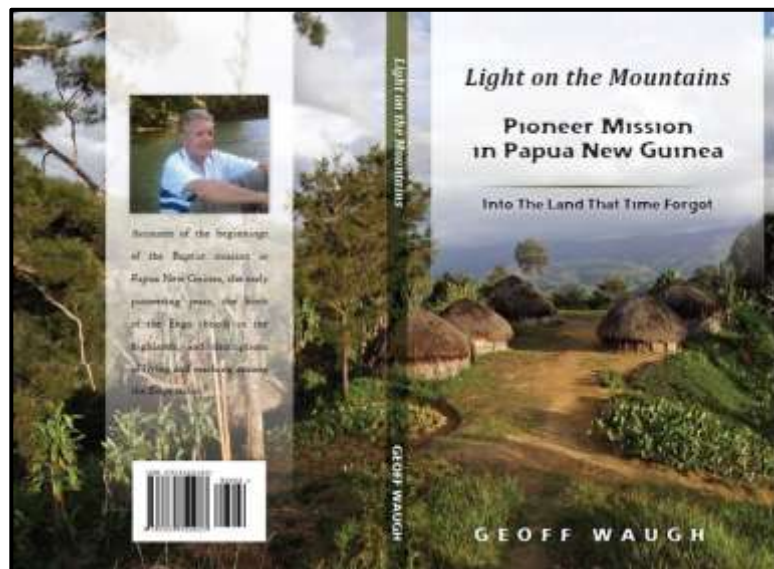


## ***Appendix: Renewal Journal Publications***

### ***Biographical Books***

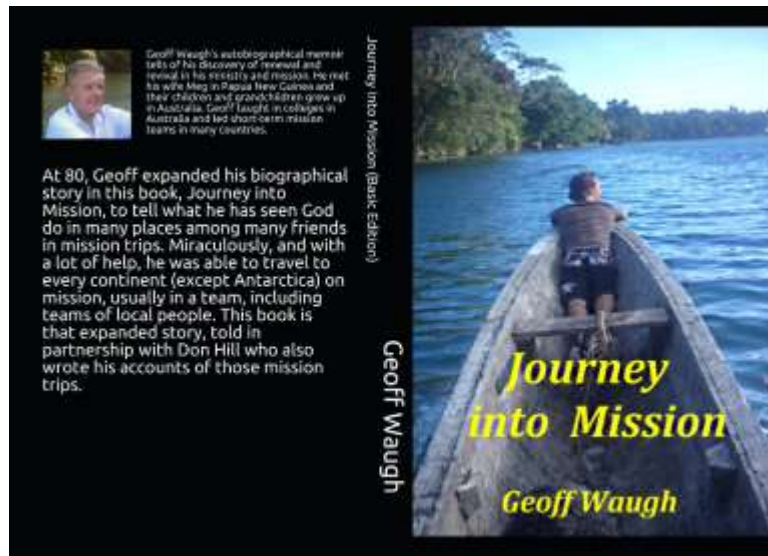


### ***Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal & Revival***

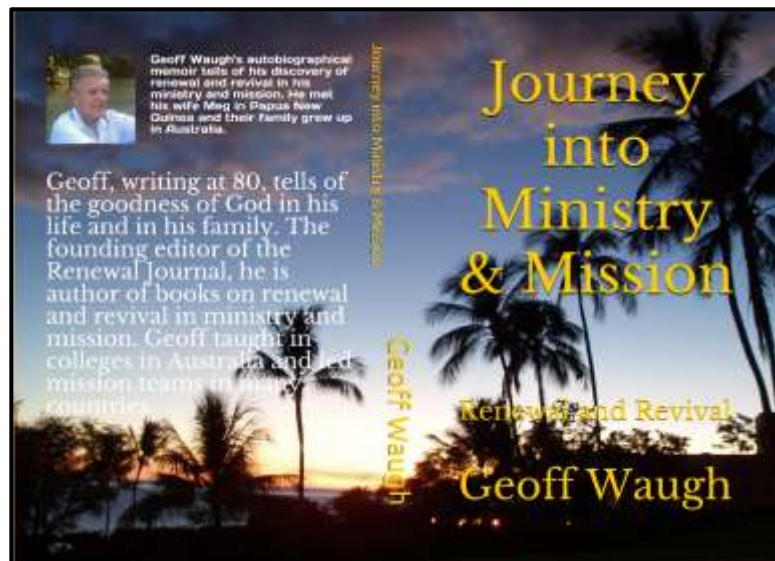


### ***Light on the Mountains* *Pioneer Mission in Papua New Guinea***

## *Biographical Books*



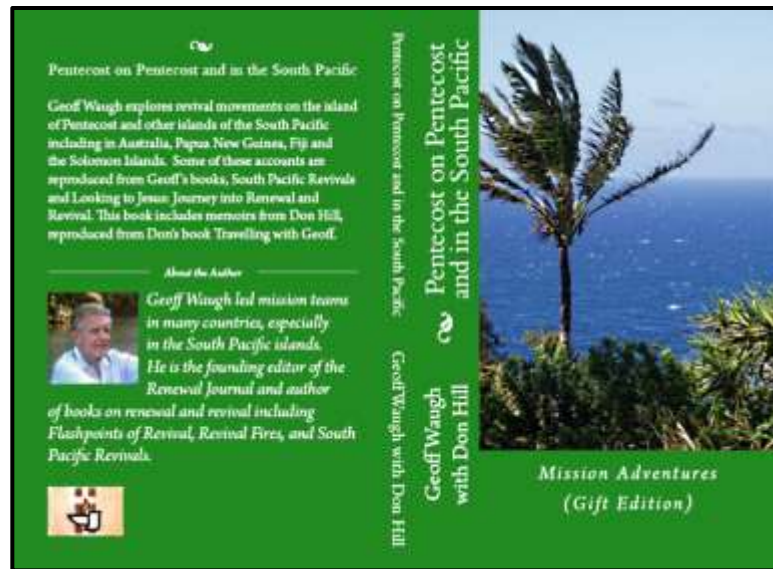
### *Journey into Mission*



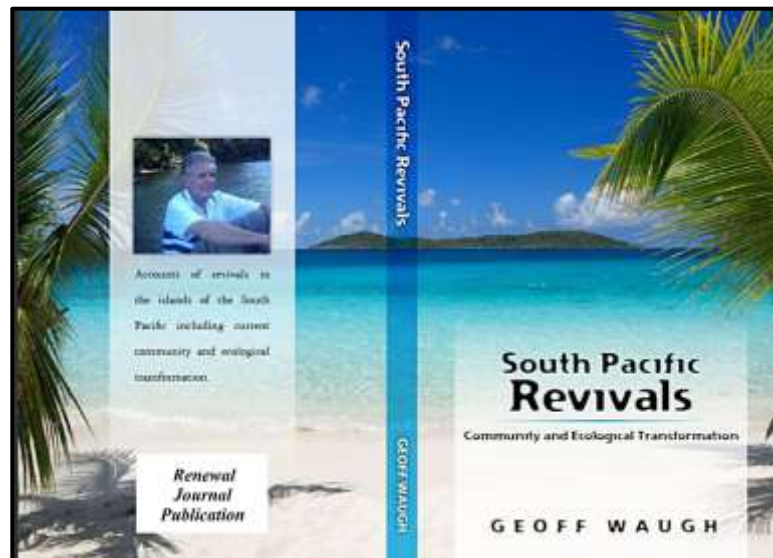
### *Journey into Ministry and Mission*



## *Biographical Books*

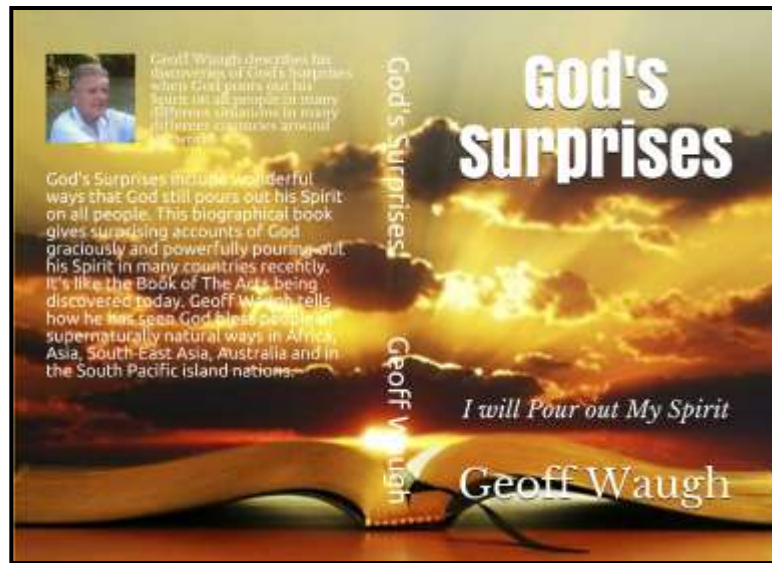


### *Pentecost on Pentecost & in the South Pacific*

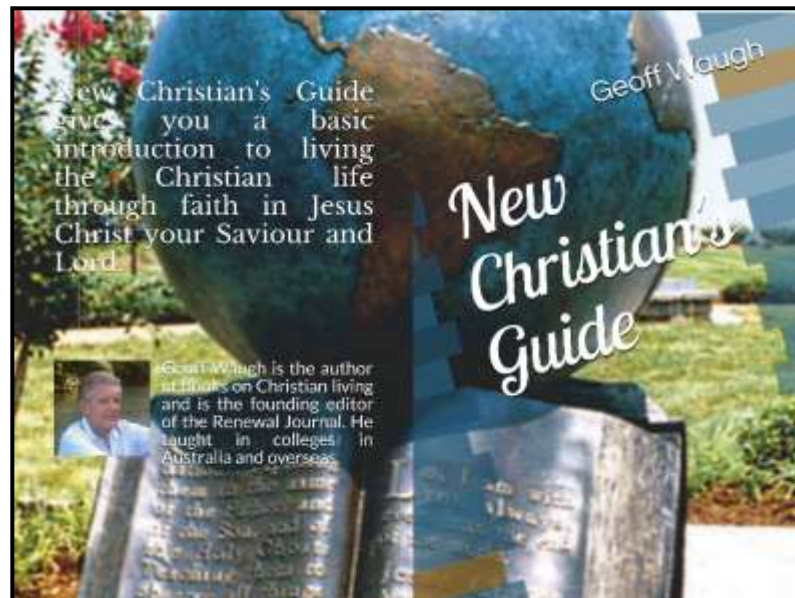


### *South Pacific Revivals*

## Popular Books



### [God's Surprises](#)



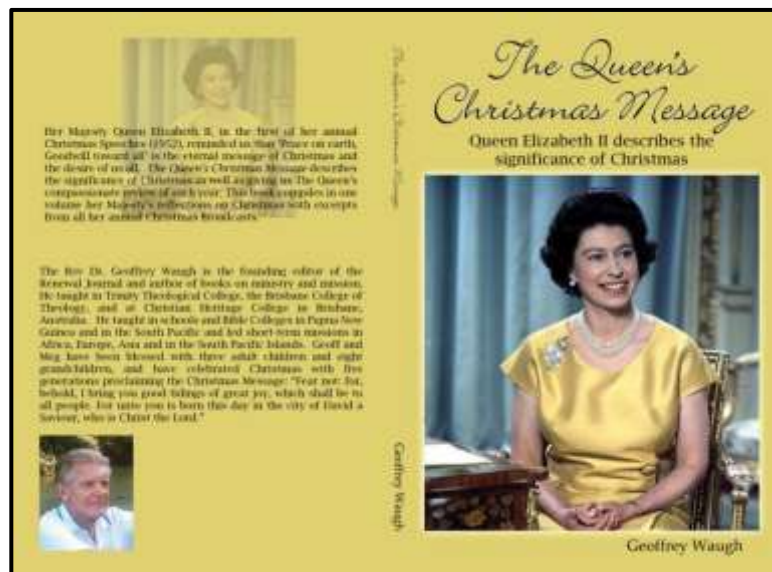
### [New Christian's Guide](#)

## Popular Books



### **The Christmas Message**

Available in print and in colour

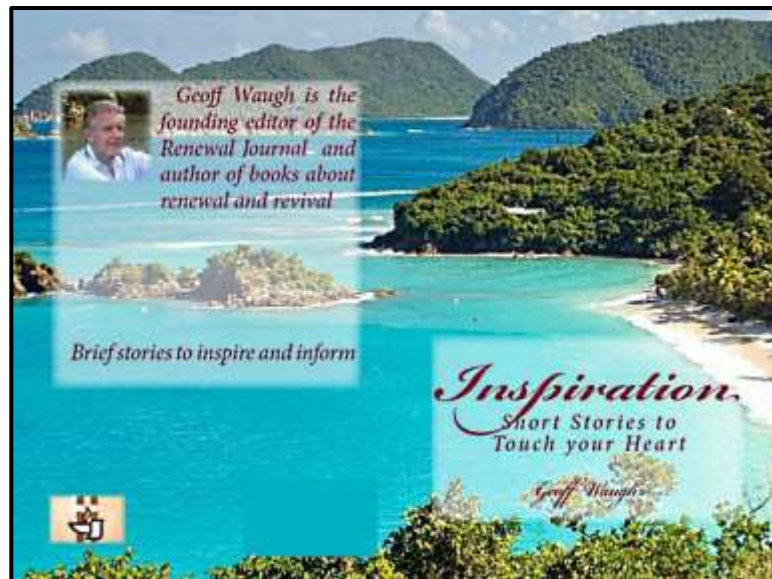


### **The Queen's Christmas Message**

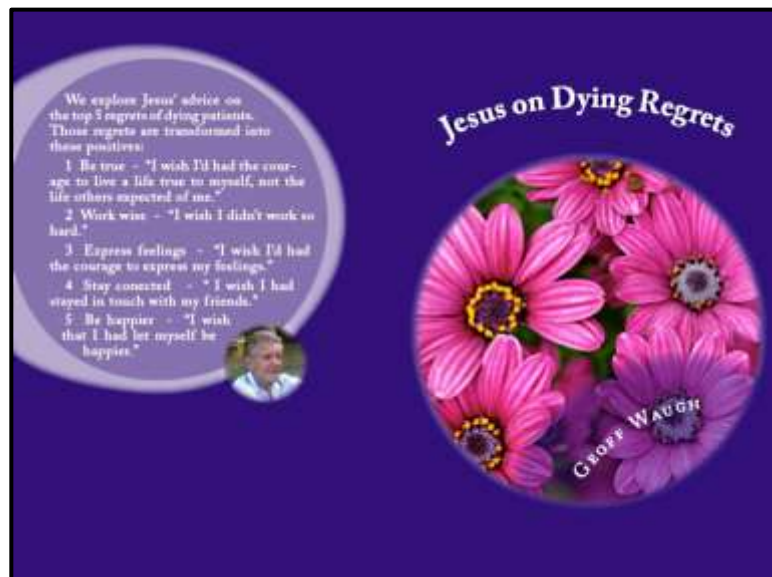
Same content in both books, updated annually



## Popular Books



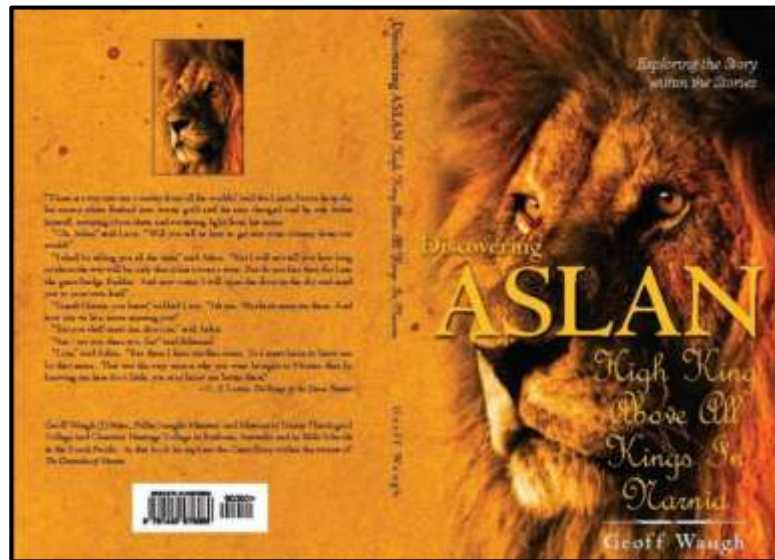
### *Inspiration*



### *Jesus on Dying Regrets*

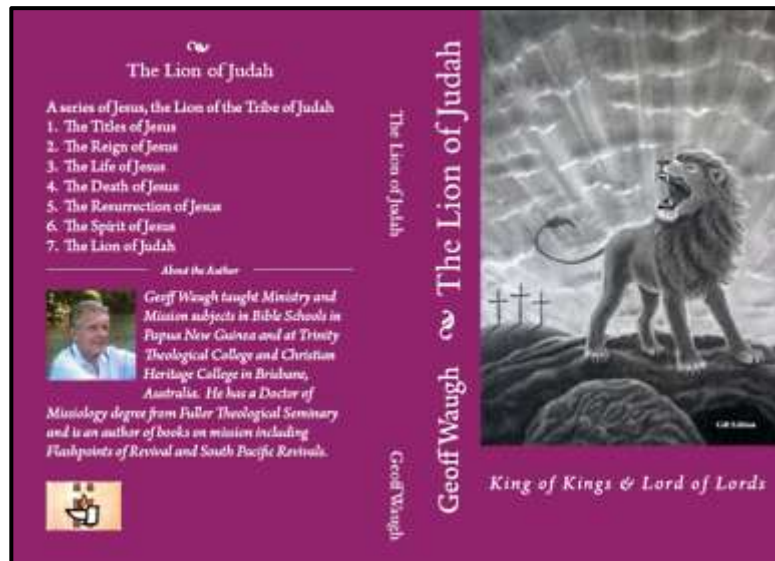
**Jesus' advice on the regrets of the dying**

## Popular Books



***Discovering ASLAN: High King above all Kings in Narnia***

### ***Discovering Aslan***



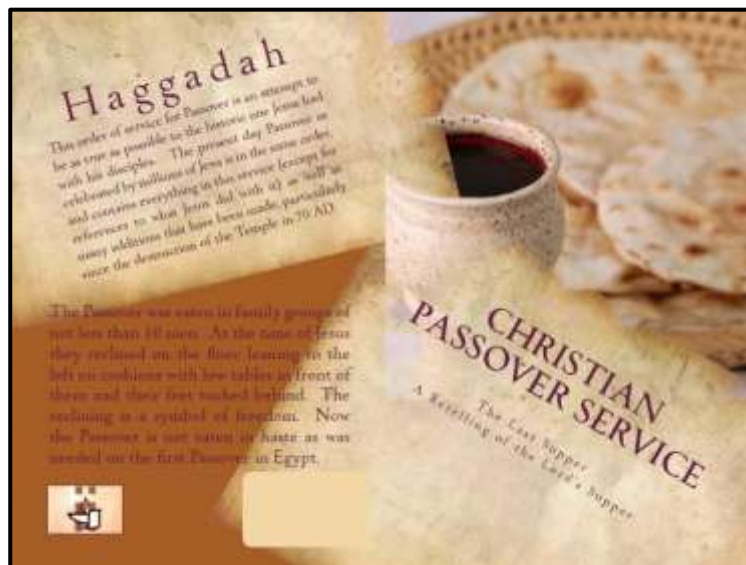
***The Lion of Judah: King of Kings and Lord of Lords***

### ***The Lion of Judah***

## Popular Books

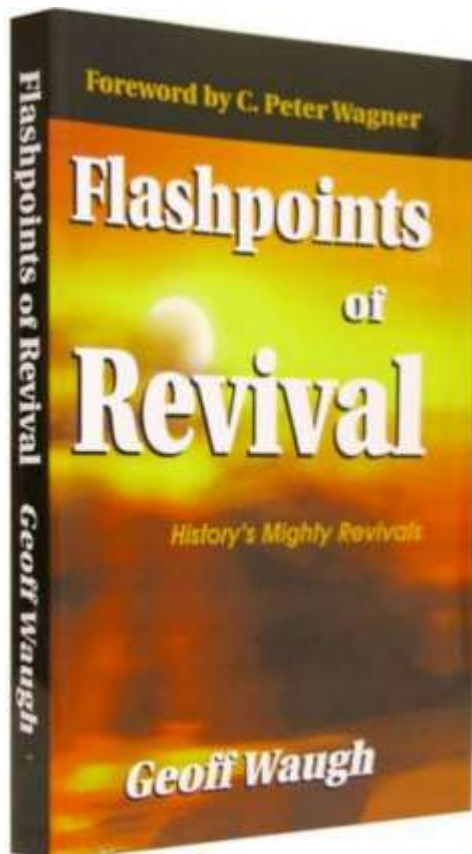


### Great Revival Stories

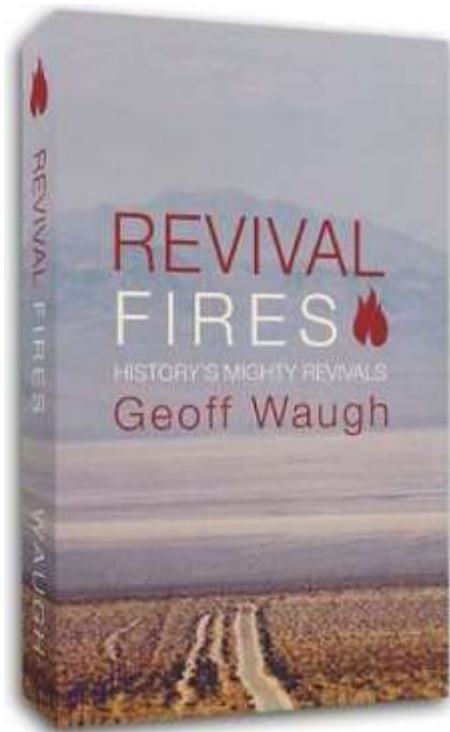


### Christian Passover Service

*A Retelling of the Lord's Supper*



*Flashpoints of Revival*



*Revival Fires*



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**1993-2002, Editor of *Renewal Journal*, Issues 1-20**

**2009, *Flashpoints of Revival*, reprinted**

**2009, *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival***

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**2011, *Revival Fires*, Apostolic Network of Global Awakening**

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**2011, *Renewal and Revival*, Compiled from *Renewal Journal* articles**

**2011, *Body Ministry*, adapted from D.Miss. Dissertation**

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**2011, *Best Revival Stories*, and**

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**2011, *Great Revival Stories*, compiled from the 2 books**

2013, *Christian Passover Service*  
 2014, *You Can Publish for Free*  
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 2015, *Learning Together in Ministry*  
 2015, *The Lion of Judah*. Compiled from 6 books  
 2015, *Signs and Wonders: Study Guide*, with Cecilia E Oliver  
 2015, *Jesus the Model for Supernatural Mission*, and  
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 2016, *Kingdom Life in the Gospels*. 4 *Kingdom Life* books  
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 2016, *Risen: 12 Resurrection Appearances*. 2 editions  
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 2016, *Discovering Aslan in the Last Battle*  
 2017, *Discovering Aslan*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition  
 2017, *Annual Journal and Planner*  
 2017, *Pentecost on Pentecost and in the South Pacific*  
 2017, *The Christmas Message*, 2 editions, updated annually  
 2017, *The Queen's Christmas Message* (Holy Fire Publications)  
 2018, *The Holy Spirit in Ministry: Study Guide*, with Peter Earle  
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 2018, *Renewal Theology 1: Study Guide*, with Paul Grant  
 2018, *Renewal Theology 2: Study Guide*, with Paul Grant  
 2018, *Revival History: Study Guide*  
 2018, *Ministry Practicum: Study Guide*  
 2018, *Journey into Mission*  
 2018, *Journey into Ministry and Mission*

Also:

2006, *By All Means*, biography of James Waugh, by Elaine Olley  
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