

## WORLD FEDERATION SOUTH PACIFIC AREA ASSEMBLY 2008 – TONGA –

The following information has been received from South Pacific Area President, Meleána Puloka. The Weaving Together Programme will be held 29/30 August – followed by the Seminar from 31 August until 6 September – closing ceremony 5 September. Although full details are not available at this stage it would be good to have some indication of those who are planning to attend. Please contact Lynne if you are planning to go to Tonga.

**MWF NATIONAL COUNCIL 2007** Friday 14 September (late afternoon) through to Sunday 16 September (lunchtime) – at Aldred Church. We are greatly looking forward to District representatives joining us in Christchurch for Council. Our theme is “In Christ I can ...” [Phil. 4:13] Remember – Financial report will be prepared, but there will be insufficient time available for auditing.

Please remember to forward tributes immediately to allow for publication in the Council handbook. Handbooks will be posted to delegates late August.

## CONVOCATION

We are aware some of you will also be “Celebrating 100 years” at Convocation. If you require further information about Convocation please contact – Marcia Baker, 11 Merton Place Christchurch 8053, or Rona Collins 2/129 Hills Road, Christchurch 8013.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Warm congratulations to Heather Tate of St David’s, Palmerston North, who has been elected Convenor of the APW National Co-ordinating Group. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our national links with the new Pastoral and Administrative Group. Congratulations also to – Deputy Convenor – Marjorie Empson; Secretary – Jill Little; Treasurer – Diane Croft.



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The Methodist Church of New Zealand  
Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa

## Women’s Fellowship



## President’s Letter – July/August/September 2007

Warmest greetings to everyone ... Malo e Lelei, Talofa Lava, Noa’ia e Mauri, Ni sa bula vinaka, Namaste, Taloha Ni, Kia Orana, Kia Ora

In my last President’s Letter I made an urgent appeal following the Solomon Islands disaster. What a heart-warming response there has been.

Over \$4,000 has been forwarded to the College from around 50 donors. What a privilege and pleasure it has been for me to read messages that have come from individuals, and groups as your hearts have been touched.

The students express their thanks ...

*“With grateful hearts, we appreciate your generosity, and thank God for you!*

*“From mifala, mifala like fo thankem you fala fo support, love and kindness blo u fala. Mifala thankem tumus Papa God fo u fala.”*

*A BIG THANK YOU to all who have given ... and for bringing GOD closer and real, to those in need.*

*God’s blessings continue to be with you always!”*

As a result of your generosity, five Solomon Island students [boys and girls] have benefited through the provision of winter clothing and covering their medical expenses.

*May today there be peace within.*

*May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.*

*May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.*

*May you use those gifts that you have received,*

*And pass on the love that has been given to you.*

*May you be content knowing you are a child of God.*

*Let this presence settle into your bones,*

*And allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.*

*It is there for each and every one of us.*

*Saint Theresa’s prayer*

*[Saint Theresa is known as the Saint of the Little Ways – meaning she believed doing the little things in life well and with great love!]*

May the Lord continue to bless, encourage and enrich my precious sisters and brothers in the Lord.

**Lynne Scott**

## MISSION

How wide is your concept of Mission? How often do you hear it said, "We don't do [or hear] anything about Missions these days?" Yet when we look at Annual Returns from Fellowships and see the wide range of people and projects supported locally, nationally and overseas, it is evident that a lot of "mission" is going on, apart from the support given to each year's Special Projects.

At a District Council meeting, Fellowships could be invited to share about mission taking place in their own area and/or mission work they support. This could be held as a mini Mission Fair, maybe. We are interested to hear how mission work is promoted in your District so that these ideas can be shared.

*Beth Hickman [Missions Co-Convenor]*

## "GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN" June 2007 NEWSLETTER

"We also wish to acknowledge the Methodist and Presbyterian Women's Fellowship for selecting GRG Trust as its National Fundraiser for last year. January saw as many as possible GRG charges off to wonderful summer holiday/school camps and enabled their grandparents to have a well deserved break from all over the country."

## SPECIAL PROJECT 2007/2008

The major focus of the APW/MWF Special Project for 2007/2008 will be CWS partner, House of Passage, in Brazil. House of Passage is a programme giving young people living on the streets of Recife some choices for a different life.

The New Zealand focus will be chaplaincy in state schools, the programme of the Churches Education Commission which aims to help young people make good life choices.

Resources should be available during September and will again be posted directly to groups and fellowships.

## PRAISE, PRAYER, THANKSGIVING

The fragility of life was brought sharply into focus when, two days before the end of the school term, our school community experienced the untimely death of a 53 year old staff member who collapsed shortly after morning staff briefing. In an instant life in the school community changed dramatically!

I share the following reading with you ...

***"Shedding Shared Tears" – A Friend Suffers ...***

*The double bed meant for two is now occupied by one.*

*The young woman who once starred in sports now sits motionless in a wheelchair.*

*The alarm awakens a man from a restless night of sleep – to the realisation that he no longer has a job.*

*The high chair that once was so full of young life stands empty.*

*A man disfigured and despairing, emaciated, broken, bleeding, consumed by pain, all possessions taken away, his children dead ...*

What do you do? What do you say?

*"Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was." [Job 2:13]*

Incredible! The comfort of someone's mere presence! No words. Just ... listening, caring, embracing, holding a hand. Shedding shared tears. Recognising that sometimes there is simply nothing that anyone can say that can help take away the hurt. Beating back the impulse to try to bring a quick word of comfort or insight or advice. Fighting the temptation to set the sufferer straight, to argue for the righteousness of God, to presume that we can understand and explain the ways of God, to magically make everything all better.

*"Lord, would you help us to be there with compassion, with a willingness to enter into the suffering of another even when we know we can't fix things? Please don't let us say too much, Lord – but teach us how to listen, and how to love."*

We give thanks for **Kay Buckner** (Nelson/Marlborough) who died earlier this year. Kay was National Secretary during Judith Parkes' Presidency.

We extend our loving sympathy to Kay's family and friends. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. We thank God for Kay generously gifting her talents and time for the Fellowship.

**Colin McLennan MBE** – It is with great sadness that we record the death of Colin on 28 June 2007. Our association with Colin began with the first APW/MWF joint project in 1982. The \$71,000 raised for Rehabilim Trust gave support for the establishment of a rehabilitation centre in Indonesia for physically disabled children and young people. The objective was to provide medical care, an education and vocational training equipping the young people to become useful members of their communities. The Centre grew from 6 boys to the large centre that it is today. In 1995 Colin established Rehab Craft Cambodia to provide employment by producing and marketing a range of quality handcrafts using hand woven Cambodian silk and napa leather.

A celebration service of Colin's life was held on 7 July. Rita Reid [Vice President] was holidaying on the Kapiti Coast and attended what was likened to a "state funeral". We are saddened by Colin's death but give thanks to God for his distinguished life. Colin was a man of peace and compassion with a strong commitment to the vulnerable, disadvantaged and handicapped.

To quote Colin ... "The purpose of life is not to be happy – but to matter, to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you lived at all."