

# FIJI DEAF MINISTRY

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*Photos, left to right:*

*Tema serving dinner;*

*Junior girls wait their turn at a sports fixture;*

*John and Marilyn Lindsay.*



But those who wait for the Lord's help, find renewed strength; they rise up as if they had eagles' wings, they run without growing weary, they walk without getting tired. Isaiah 40:31

## Behind the Scenes

### The New Hostel

The above Bible verse is inscribed, in German, over the entrance to the main Francke orphanage in Halle, Germany. In the late 1600s Pastor August Francke started a school, in the town of Halle. He was concerned that many children in the town were poor, a number were orphans, and some were turning to crime. The first school was in a room, the pastor had only a little money, but what Francke began grew and grew. All that was done was based on the belief that each child was precious to God, and needed to be encouraged and challenged to use his or her abilities for good in the world. Radical new things were done. In the orphanages each child had their own bed and a small amount of space to make their own, a place to meet privately with God. This was a new concept at the

time. Along with many other Halle innovations this went on to have international influence.

Like the people of Halle the staff and Trust Board are thinking hard about what is important, and what must drive the design of a new hostel for the Deaf. How do we, for instance, have a hostel:

- \*that has a Fijian flavour?
- \*that helps hostel groupings function as a family?
- \*that honours the preciousness of each person?
- \*that makes it hard for bad things to be done in secret?
- \*that is a comfortable home to all who live there?

Please pray for wisdom for the Building Committee and for those involved in turning ideas into a design.

### Operational Audit

The initial plan changed several times but we are thrilled to

announce that the Operational Audit is underway, and as I write John and Marilyn Lindsay are examining systems, and talking with staff about how things are being run: what is going well and what could be improved. They are checking carefully. Such audits can be a cause for anxiety but the news from Fiji is that the staff are encouraged about what is happening. We look forward to the final report. Everyone wants to do their best for the glory of God and for the blessing of the children.

## In Front of the Scenes

The school and hostels have just finished a busy and exciting time of year, with the end-of-year break-up. Parents put on a lovo (a hangi/earth-oven) for everyone, the children performed mekes (dances), the hostel staff baked etc, and the teachers organised the prize-giving. School finished early on 25 November this year.

2016 has been a full year. It started with Cyclone Winston. Many good things, and other hard things have happened. We hope in 2017 the new hostel building will start. Marau na Kerisimasi (Happy Christmas) to everyone!



*The main orphanage in Halle, Germany (1700), now nominated as a UNESCO world heritage site for the character of the building and the quality of what was done there*



## Introducing Robert & Eileen Wilson

For a few years now we have asked you to pray concerning a New Zealand couple who have been considering going to Suva to help with the Deaf Ministry. It has been a very real journey of faith and challenge for them as they decide whether the Lord is calling them to this work. They have proceeded with much prayer and soul searching but have made a final commitment to go as soon as they can finalise arrangements for their younger (early adult) children and property and obtain work permits/visas. Their home church in

Marton is commending them to the work and they will be going in faith looking to the Lord and his people to meet their needs. Robert and Eileen have visited Fiji a couple of times and spent time with the leadership in Suva and have sought and obtained affirmation from the Deaf Ministry trustees that they are wanted in Suva and can work with the Ministry in caring for the Deaf. Their exact role is still to be established and will be finalised closer to the time that they leave.

Robert grew up with a deaf mother and so he has empathy with the Deaf and they have been preparing by learning NZ sign. Eileen has home schooled all their children. They have also been sponsors for some of the children in the Hostels.

Robert and Eileen have 7 children and their youngest daughter, Keturah (19) may be accompanying them to Suva, while Ezra (17) is waiting for an apprenticeship position and Nathaniel (19) has employment in NZ. Their older children are either married or have their careers firmly established.

Please keep praying for this couple. There are still many arrangements to make and they need a Work Permit to be able to stay in Fiji and they are applying for this as “missionaries to the Deaf”. If your church or organisation would like Robert and Eileen to visit in the meantime and tell you about the Deaf Ministry and their call, then please just send an email or letter to the address on this newsletter.

## FDM Update

- Cooneys are back in Rhode Island, USA
- During the holidays, we are hoping that MMM Fiji will be able to make repairs to our Senior Girls Hostel and alterations to Harland House for an extra toilet and shower plus new laundry space

- We are making contact with people in the Solomon Islands who give vocational training for Deaf youth to see if there are ways that we can help
- A Parents Group has been started to help parents support their children at the School and for the Ministry to help them their deaf youngsters.

If you would like to make a contribution, please make cheques out to **Global Connections in Mission** (n.b. 7.4% to a maximum of \$200 is deducted by GCiM before sending to us). **Please do not send gifts direct to Fiji.** □

Alternatively, you can make an online deposit to bank account **06 – 0729 – 0336879 – 00** with the Reference set to **FIJI DEAF**.

Either way, please **always** send the details below to GCiM at **PO Box 744 Palmerston North New Zealand**, or to **admin@gc3.org.nz** so we know who the gift is from and the intended purpose.

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\$..... is  Enclosed  Paid Online For the **Harland Deaf Ministry Trust of Fiji** to help with:

Greatest need  Hostel activity  School for the Deaf  Building Programme  Teacher Scholarship