

FIJI DEAF MINISTRY

CFD Camp

The Christian Fellowship for Deaf held a camp in August. They met at Deuba Camp, north of Suva.

The CFD have recently had internal troubles. The elders at Suva St Chapel have been working with them. Tuliana has now been appointed overall leader of the CFD and there is a new sense of unity and mutual support within the leadership.

Tai attended and reports that it was an encouraging time. Some of the Deaf wished to renew their Christian commitment, and two (Paul and Ketia) were baptised.



Tuli, Paul, Ketia, and Tema.

Fund Raising

In July, Jim Cooney's sister, Agnes Chretien (centre) and her helpers ran the 8th annual



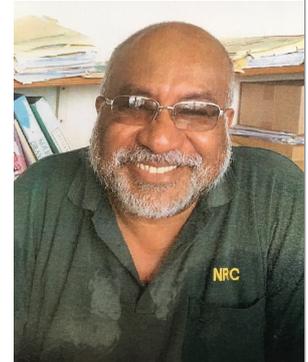
Deaf Hope Golf Tournament. They raised \$7,000US for the ministry. A great achievement!

"Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honouring each other." Romans 12:9

"We went together.."

Earlier this year I asked Tema how she had handled a difficult staffing situation. "I asked Uncle Vivian to come with me," she said, "and we went together to talk with him."

Uncle Vivian, Vivian Nainoca, is a member of the Harland Deaf Trust, he is an elder at Suva St Chapel (the church which most of the Deaf attend), and since 2014 he has managed the Ministry's finances. Uncle Vivian can also be relied on to provide advice and support to hostel and school staff.



In talking with Vivian it is soon clear that his life has been dominated by a search to explore, "What is God's call on my life?" When Ministry Director, Jim Cooney, first begged Vivian for help with the Ministry's finances - the previous financial manager had left a muddle - Vivian had his sights on setting up a Bible College. After many years working as an accountant in Fiji and overseas, Vivian, now a grandfather, sensed a call to something different. Work on the Bible College has been progressing but it has taken a back seat while Vivian has sorted out and put in place new systems for the management of the finances of both the Gospel High School and the Gospel School for Deaf. Now Vivian is working to train successors. In the GHS this has worked well, in the GSD he is starting again, the last accounting assistant went to work in the classroom. "It is not dynamic enough work for many people," Vivian explains. And yet without sound financial management the Ministry will founder. Becoming a "bean counter" was also part of God's call on Vivian's life.

Vivian is a quiet observer. He is often slow to speak, but his observations are astute, and working so closely with the Deaf he has been thinking through what is needed for the future.

"Key issues facing us," he explains, "are these:

- the Deaf are marginalised in Fiji.
- the ministry is totally dependent on charity.
- high school education is problematic, most of the interpreters

themselves left school early and they poorly understand what they are trying to communicate.

- the job prospects for deaf once they leave school are low.

“The Deaf could work together to run a farm.” Vivian’s eyes light up as he describes his ideas. He has thought it through with care. “The Deaf are good with their hands. A large group of them could run a 10-15 acre farm. It would take three years of training to get them started. Then we could give them a few cows and a few chickens. The challenge for the Deaf would be to manage and grow the farm, and to use the profits to feed back into the farm, and into the ministry.”

Vivian cites examples from farming enterprises he is familiar with. Concepts like sustainability, risk management, and developing a micro-enterprise are pivotal to the plan. When to start? Vivian has in mind that work on this project begin a few years after the new hostel has been built. “We need to continue to grow the ministry,” he enthuses, “there are over a 100 children who still need reaching, and they need educating and empowering to make a future for themselves.”

Vivian is preparing a discussion document for the 2018 AGM to help the Trust to consider these ideas.



In April/May Mobile Missionary Maintenance staff and volunteers did some major renovation work at the main deaf hostel. Three deaf young men helped in the project and learnt new skills. MMM have invited deaf young men to work with them again, and they have offered to do more work on the main hostel next year. THANK YOU MMM!

Thank you so much for your prayers and support!

Extra Ministry Update Notes

Hostels: * The architect, Geoff Tune, has produced the second draft of the new hostel plans. It is carefully done. Now everyone has to consider how suitable it is to the conditions: a hot tropical climate and the need to develop a homelike hostel suitable for very young children as well as older teenagers.

Staff: *The search for a new Director continues. *Mrs Mudalier (GSD Principal) has been very unwell, and is slowly recovering.

Other: * The last newsletter told of a former student, now a solo mum, raising her baby daughter in the hostel, with the help of the staff. Ten weeks ago baby Grace was taken from her mother and given to her father’s family. Dad does not want the child but his Muslim family want to raise her. The grief-stricken mother, with the help of Ministry staff, is fighting through the courts.

If you would like to make a contribution, please make cheques out to **GCAid** (n.b. 7.4% to a maximum of \$200 is deducted by GCAid before sending to us). **Please do not send gifts direct to Fiji.** Alternatively, you can make an online deposit to the **NEW** bank account **06-0729-0522196-00** with the Reference set to **FIJI DEAF**.

Either way, please **always** send the details below to GCAid 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.

 \$.....is Enclosed/has been 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