

A Return to Vanuatu.

On the 22nd of April four of us headed to Vanuatu, Peter Maslin and Robin Burness. my brother John and I. It was really great to take along my brother who is a believer but not connected with a church.

We left our hotel (The Ibis) at 4.10am and walked to the Airport. We checked in about 4.30am and after going through security and having some breakfast we left at 6.45am. We flew on Sunday as I had a wonderful



wedding to take the day before. Flying in and out on Saturdays would have allowed us direct flights, however as it was, we flew up through Brisbane, but that wasn't actually too difficult.



We arrived in Vanuatu and were met by Neville Jones, the PCANZ liaison man in Port Vila. Neville did a great job of looking after us and driving us around. The week before we arrived our accommodation fell through but through God's providence we were able to stay at "Grace House", the YWAM base in Port Vila. Mary did a

fabulous job of looking after us for 3 nights.

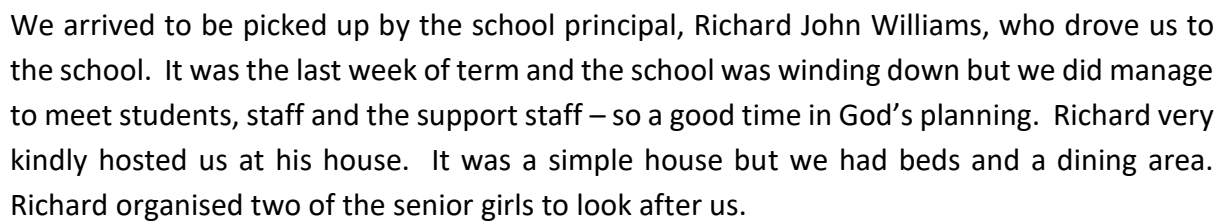
On Monday the 23rd of April we started by driving past 'Twin Cains' where Robin and I had been involved in cyclone repairs last time we visited. Later that morning we were able to go out to the YWAM Family Care Centre and met up with two nurses (Anna and Melanie). Robin went back and helped then with a clinic in the afternoon, this was the ministry Lorna was involved with last year and we will look at sending some more people next time. They would like Nurses, Doctors and Physios.

It began to become clear to me that in the future we might send up a mixed team, some to go to Tongoa and some to go to the FCC, and perhaps some others to help with other projects again.

On the way back into Port Vila we went to a school built with Korean Presbyterian Church money, and staffed by local teachers. Peter was able to give this school a bag of footballs, it was good to see the way that churches were working together.

That afternoon we went to the Assembly Office and met the president of Vanuatu, Rev Obed Moses then the Assembly Clerk, Rev Allen Nafuki and finally Elder Jonathan Tarip, the education secretary with whom we hope to have some future contact.

This map of Vanuatu illustrates the country's topography and major islands. The islands are color-coded by elevation: light green for low-lying areas, medium green for hilly regions, and dark green for mountainous terrain. Key islands shown include the Banks Islands (Torres, Vot Tande, Ureparapara, Mola Lava), the main island of Vanua Lava, and the New Hebrides (Espiritu Santo, Aoba, Maewo, Pentecote, Norsap, Ambryn, Epi, Tongoa, Nguna, Efate, Port-Vila, Malakula, Luganville, Tabwemanasana). The map also shows the Coral Sea to the west, the Pacific Ocean to the east, and the New Hebrides archipelago to the south. A scale bar indicates 100 miles and 100 kilometers. A legend in the bottom left corner identifies the topographic shading for Vanuatu. The source 'worldatlas.com' is noted in the bottom left, and '©GraphicMaps.com' is in the top right.



The students sung to us at the end of the session and it was fantastic. I understand that music and the arts are not highly valued in the education system over there.



The next day, Wednesday we explored the school and had some time meeting with the teachers. We looked around the school. Many of the buildings had been repaired since the cyclone. There were a few buildings still to be repaired including the dining hall which was going to be repaired by the World Bank. The library was repaired but all the books in it were damaged.

Mrs Valentine Lolting is the French teacher, she didn't speak a lot of English so perhaps we are looking at a French speaker to be an encouragement to her. Mr Willie Lukai was new to the school but had been teaching for a few years. The teachers are appointed centrally and would usually be with a school 3 or more years. John Pakoa, Johnny Donna and Junior Serel were all brand new teachers - new to teaching and new to the school. They were off for a week's training as we left. I got the feeling they were struggling a little in their new roles.

The teachers talked about the need for more books and reference books and the need to repair the library as literacy was a challenge for all students. They also talked about how the science block had been rebuilt but they had only one burner. The teachers appeared keen but seeking support, something that we may be able to do through email.

That afternoon Peter and I walked down to the nearest village. Nowhere is too far away on the Island. We enjoyed dinner and explored the area. We sat outside and talked to a number of the students. We also talked with Elder Jack and the handyman Jimmy.



On Thursday morning we played football with some of the students as the parents arrived to have school reports and interviews with the teachers and principal. That afternoon we talked with Billy the school administrator. He had applied for a job to work with computers I think, but got the job as administrator. Billy had put all the students marks into a spreadsheet at 5am that morning so that parents could see how their students were tracking. Billy seemed really keen to help and was another significant person at the school.

That afternoon Richard took us down to see the local health clinic and for a swim. It seems that the government has decided that as well as handing back schools to the churches it will also hand back some medical clinics. There is a wonderful history in Vanuatu of New Zealand churches helping the PCV to develop schools and medical clinics. Later Richard drove us around the island to visit another village. Richard is doing a fabulous job, he is quiet but has managed to rebuild a significant part of the school. He manages the admin and finances as well as having a full teaching load.



Two things that Richard asked for help with were the library and the generator shed. The library needs books and someone to bring organisation to the library. It would be nice if this could be an ongoing project for a few years. The generator shed needs a new roof and some new other repairs

The next day was flying out day, originally scheduled for 1.20pm we eventually flew out at about 3.30pm. Evidently, if the runway is wet the plane is cancelled so we were all a little nervous about getting off the island.

That night we said farewell to our friends at Grace House and then went to the fire-dancing, spending some of our tourist dollars to help the local economy.

The next morning we flew out on the 7am flight to NZ and met up with our friends from BCC and St Peters who had been building a classroom with 'Breakfree' on a nearby island. We arrived safely back into NZ. 7 days away, 6 nights and many opportunities

So for now:

- 1) Let's pray for the teachers (Now)
- 2) Let's think about helping with the library (maybe this year)
- 3) Let's consider helping with the Generator shed (Maybe next year)
- 4) Next time we send a team they might go in several directions.

Ngapangasale Junior Secondary School Staff



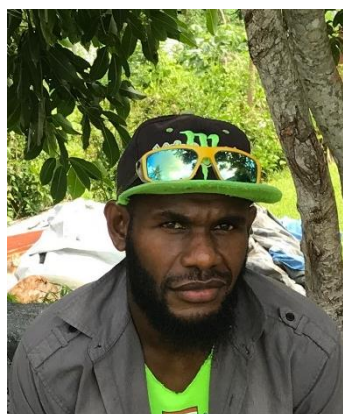
Principal Richard
John Williams.
Lolting



French teacher
Valentine



Teacher
Willie Lukai



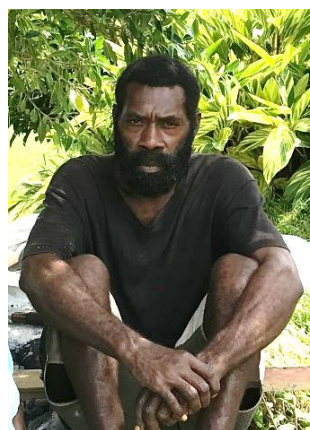
Teacher
John Pakoa



Teachers Junior Serel and Johny Donna



Billy Admin



Jimmy
Maintenance