
The Link



No. 2 - July 2011



The Sanctuary

TAWA UNION CHURCH

Christ centred, community facing



Message from our Minister



Rev Clare Lind

It's a huge country, Australia.

Many of you will have observed that as you've flown over it for hour after hour. Don and I have been fortunate enough to have had a week's holiday in the Northern Territory recently. The flight to Darwin took longer than the flight across the Tasman to Sydney (even with an ash cloud to dodge).

The ground below is dry, dull and mostly flat. It looks as though there is absolutely nothing there – a vast emptiness. Only the sight of the odd road crossing the plain in long, straight stretches suggests otherwise.

As we travelled the roads of Kakadu National Park at 130km/hr (the open road limit), scanning the grass gaps between the paper bark trees for not very forth coming wallabies and other wildlife, it would have been easy to jump to the conclusion that there was not much there. It would have been a mistaken conclusion of course.

There is plenty about if you know what you are looking for, the sort of places where it's best to look, the marks it leaves behind, and the best time of the day to observe it. There is plenty about if you're prepared to set aside your timetable, if you're not in a hurry. Once you've accepted that mind shift, what chooses to show itself becomes gift and grace rather than an object to be spotted.

If we let them, these wilderness spaces and the things that are in them can put us firmly in our place. They can draw us out of ourselves, help us to let go of the illusion of control and teach us some humility. If we assume that everything is under our control and we know it all we leave no room to wonder and learn. Someone has said about wild spaces, 'We are saved in the end by the things that ignore us.'

Here's a poem by a Kiwi who lives in Central Otago, one of our own (modestly) large landscapes.

Deserts, for instance

The loveliest places of all
Are those that look as if
There's nothing there
To those who are still learning to
look.

Brian Turner *Just This*

Clare Lind

Message from the Chair



Lois Hill

Carolyn, our daughter, was delighted when I said I would travel to Croydon in London to help her final preparations and be with them for the birth of the twins that she is expecting. She really didn't think I would leave all my commitments here to stay for three months and be a "useful" Gran.

As old as I am, sometimes we have to move ourselves to take opportunities as they arise and certainly this opportunity may never come again for our family.

Hugh is waiting “in the wings” to see what time he will come over but we are secretly hoping I can bring the “entourage” back home with me at the end of October for a short OR a long time. Plans really are in the “Lap of the Gods”.

As I leave you all freezing in Winter I hope I will be in temperatures much warmer. The Croydonites were complaining of 30 degrees just two days ago.

I know you will be in good hands as Gill Knox has agreed to “hold the fort” while I’m away and we have been working closely together all year and with Leanne and Clare anyway.

My first year as Chairperson has passed really quickly. There has not been a dull moment. If I ever finish all that is supposed to be finished in any one month I really feel something has been forgotten!

I am delighted with the way the church is “looking” now, what with our very welcoming

entrance foyer and our recovered chairs, and we are moving into more exciting times thinking about our “outreach” potential and directions. We need input from each one of you to help us with ideas and projects or ways we can assist others in Tawa and beyond. Do talk to us about this!

Thank you all for the magnificent turn out for the MidWinter Dinner on the 18th June. It was a celebration to be remembered and hopefully repeated at some stage.

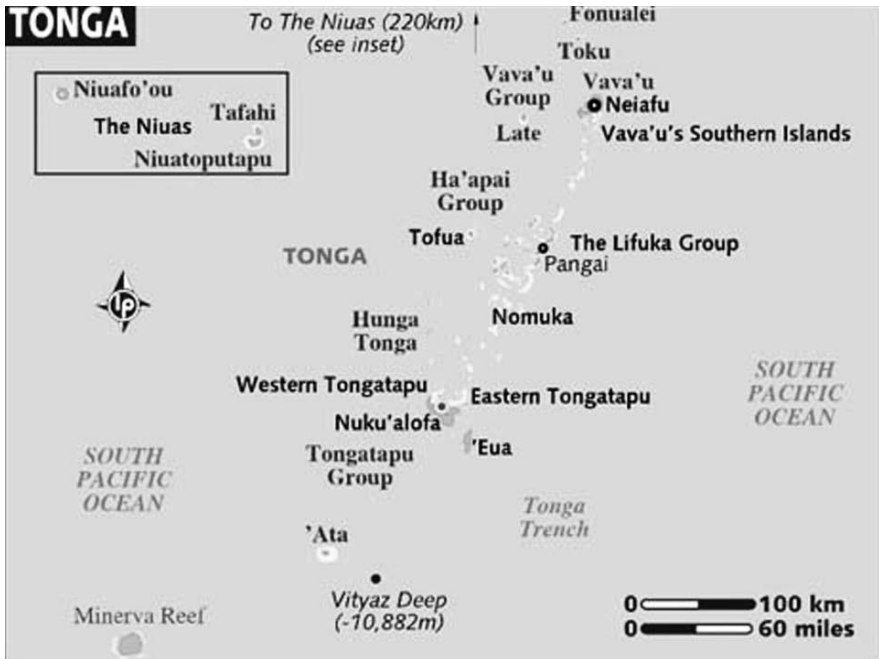
Thank you, too, for your continuing support and work each week with services, with funeral catering, with keeping our properties up to the mark, with caring for our community, with running Messy church and Family time, homework centre and on and on the list goes. Please take this as a personal thanks and appreciation.

Until the end of October, have a great three months.

Lois Hill

Memories of Tonga

Bryan Pannett



Malo e lelei! (Hello)

Some months ago I came across an Air New Zealand advertisement offering seats to Tonga for a very reasonable price. The idea of going there immediately appealed because of the number of Tongans in our congregation and my desire to learn more about their homeland. So the time had come for a crash course about the Island Kingdom.

Yes I had heard Tonga referred to as the *Friendly Islands* as a result of the reception given to Captain Cook. I knew of the respect with which the late Queen Salote was held, both in Tonga and New Zealand, and that the present monarch was King George Tupou V.

But that was hardly enough so it was off to the Library for a copy of the Lonely Planet and onto the Internet to search the website www.tripadvisor.com.au for local information about accommodation.

I found that Tonga is made up of 176 islands scattered over 700,000 sq km of ocean and that they are divided into five groupings: Tongatapu, 'Eua, Vava'u, Ha'apai, and The Niua. I rapidly found out that the capital is Nuku'alofa on the main island of Tongatapu which is at the southern end of the island nation.

Where to go? In the end I decided to divide my time between Tongatapu and 'Eua but acknowledge that each island group has its own attractions and all are worth visiting.

Why choose 'Eua? Well it is only 17.5 km from Tongatapu but has very different physical characteristics as it is the oldest and highest island in the group, is geographically not related and is estimated to be 30 million years older than any of the other islands. 'Eua National Park is Tonga's premier nature destination and the Kingdom's ecotourism capital.



Methodist church in the village of Ha'atafu on the western side of Tongatapu. In front of the building is a monument with various plaques which commemorate the bringing of Christianity to Tonga.

Religion plays a very significant part in the life of most Tongans. Wesleyan missionaries arrived in Tonga during the early 1820s and by 1831 had converted Taufa'ahau, the high chief of the Ha'apai Islands.

Taufa'ahau used missionary support - and guns from other sources - to win a series of wars and become king of Tonga.

When he instituted a constitution in 1862, a clause in that document declared, "The Sabbath Day shall be sacred in Tonga forever and it shall not be lawful to work, artifice, or play games, or trade on the Sabbath."

Although there now is some flexibility that allows hotels to cater to their guests on Sunday, almost everything else comes to a screeching halt. Tongans by the thousands go to church, often more than once, then enjoy family feasts, perhaps cooked in an 'Umu, and a day of doing not very much.

About half of all Tongans belong to the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga. The Free Church of Tonga is an offshoot that is still allied with the Methodist synods in Australia and New Zealand. There are also considerable numbers of Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Seventh-Day Adventists, Mormons and some of the charismatic sects. The red national flag has a cross on a white field in its upper corner to signify the country's strong Christian foundation.

It is very noticeable that most villages have one or more churches. Gleaming white Mormon temples have popped up in many of them.

Tongans of all religions bury their dead in unique cemeteries

set in groves of frangipani trees. Most villages have their own cemetery. The graves are sandy mounds decorated with flags, banners, artificial flowers, stones, and seashells. I understand the grave is above ground because it is difficult to dig in coral.

Tongatapu, the largest island in the kingdom, has about a third of the country's land area and it is where over 70% of the approx. 104,000 population live. It's a flat, raised atoll about 40 miles across from east to west and 20 miles across from north to south at its longest and widest points. In the centre is a sparkling lagoon, now, unfortunately, void of most sea life.

The international airport is 21 km south-east of the capital at Fua'amotu and transport between island groups is either by air (using the local airline, Chathams Pacific) or by sea. My stomach is not very tolerant of motion so I chose to fly, a wise decision confirmed after talking to other travellers.

So last November saw me headed to Tongatapu and the Heilala Holiday Lodge on the north-west coast where I was to spend two days before heading off to the Hideaway Resort on 'Eua.

Sven and his wife at Heilala certainly went out of their way to make sure I enjoyed my stay.

I was picked up from the airport and then taken to the resort, very quickly learning that the speed limit is 40km in town and the villages and 65km on the open road. But driving is not quite as easy as it might seem since most vehicles have seen better days and cars weave their way on the roads endeavouring to avoid pedestrians (there are few footpaths), animals and potholes. At night street lights are not very common outside of the villages.

My first impression of Tongatapu was that the people were basically happy and friendly, the temperature was

comfortably warm, and the most fertile land was on the south west side. This was reinforced the next morning when for breakfast I was presented with a plate of coconut, mango, papaya and pineapple followed by toast and tea.

A tour of Tongatapu later that day enabled me to see the tethered milking cows, the fertile plots, the blow holes, the Flying Foxes the Royal Palace and the Royal Tombs. Later a leisurely walk took me to the landing place of Abel Tasman.

'Eua Rugged 'Eua lies just off the south-eastern tip of the main island. It is not the place to go if you are fussy about rooms and meals since it is the least developed island in Tonga but it is nature at its best and the people's culture and traditions are still intact. In fact, 'Eua is an ideal destination for those into eco tourism who have a sense of adventure and appreciation for natural beauty.

Taki, at the Hideaway Resort, went out of his way to make his guests comfortable and to point them towards things to do.

The highlight of the stay for me was a 4-W drive exploration of the southern part of the island. This involved:

- Going along forest tracks to the top of the western ridge to a lookout from where one could see along the coast above sheer cliffs and watch the circling sea birds.
- Seeing “Big Ovava”, a large and spectacular Strangling Fig Tree growing out of a giant sink hole.
- Having a picnic lunch at Ha’aluma Beach and watching the blow holes along the coast.
- Going to the southern tip of ‘Eua, standing on the Lakufa’anga cliff and watching a turtle swimming in the sea some 50m below.

But then on Saturday afternoon I was entertained by four musicians and a local girl performing traditional dances.



“Tongan Dancer.”

This girl on the island of ‘Eua was performing traditional dances to the music of guitars.

The Sunday church service was in the village of Ohonua.

And getting to know the other guests who came from Auckland, Poland, Canada and Japan.

Would I go back? Definitely, but earlier when the humpback whales swim past en route to their breeding grounds in Vava’u.

Bryan Pannett



The Sanctuary at Tawa Union Church

This is the second article on the Taonga of the Church by Gill Knox.

Photography by Bryan Pannett

The “Sanctuary” area has shifted around inside the building.

Originally, when the entrance to the church was through the foyer next to the Luke Chapel, it was where the organ is now. The change to its present site came when the congregation explored different seating arrangements.

We are so fortunate to have had many people in the congregation able and willing to share their talents and time to make various items for this area.

The pulpit was originally a much grander affair, it was simplified in the 1980s, and although we don’t use it now it can still be found in the church. The communion table, the pulpit and the pews were made by Alan Turner; the pews have since been replaced by chairs.

The communion table is covered with tapa cloth given in 1996 by Tongi & Heiuni Nuku at the baptism of their daughter Anaseini Latu Nuku. On top is the glass given by the Peini family to honour the achievement of Sisilia when she gained her Bachelor of Nursing degree.

When St Aidan's, St Luke's and St Stephen's Churches joined together for worship in 1999, the communion vessels were brought down to The Centre, and now we are able to use a variety of chalice and paten.

St Aidan's congregation had the silver paten given in 1957 by Cyril and Phyllis Pert, and the silver chalice was given in 1979 by the Rev Irvine and Isabel Roxburgh, who were members at that time. The wooden chalice and paten had been in the St Stephen's church but the origin is not known. The pewter chalice came from St Luke's and has inscribed on it "Do this in memory of Me - presented by the Redwood Centre Young Adults 1980". The various Communion trays have come from the three centres

There are a number of communion cloths. The cloth with the IHS on the border was especially commissioned by Mollie Sage from Auckland, it was made by the "Sisters" but the rest of its story is unknown. The long cloth from St Luke's came from a 'rag bag' given to the Leprosy Mission when Brian Delaney was the Secretary. The 'throw over' with grapes in the corners was embroidered by Faith Delaney at a Church of Christ conference in Nelson when she was there with Rev Glynthea Finger.

There are three lovely wooden candle holders that were turned by Bob Ekins in 2007 from the cherry tree that stood outside the entrance of the church. This tree was taken down when we remodelled the foyer and had been the climbing tree for many a child while waiting for parents to emerge. The holder for the Pascal Candle was made by Keith Knox.

We sometimes have a wooden bible holder on the table and this was made by Ian Suisted in memory of their son Ian, killed on the railway crossing on McLean St circa 1960s.



The lectern was made by Percy Clark and was in St Aidan's. On the reverse of the drop are verses from Psalms and the explanation

My soul finds rest in God alone

My salvation comes from Him.

He alone is my rock and my
salvation,

He is my fortress.

I will never be shaken.

Psalm 62:1-2

But the Lord is my safe resting
place; my God is the rock where I
am safe.

Psalm 94:22

This banner was given to the church
by Jean and Garry Hollier. Designed
by Wendy Hodgkinson and made by
Barbara Russell 1995.

“The design of this banner is created
from Australian Aboriginal Art. A
collection of circles indicates a
resting place. I have placed my
resting place in the cross in order
to represent the idea that the Lord is my
resting place. The green shapes are
praying hands which are pointing to
the cross. This shapes how we
should look to God for guidance and
trust in His never ending love.”

Beside the communion table there is a very ornate carved wooden chair. This was gifted by the Webb St Methodist Church on the disposal of their property after the closure of that church. This grew out of their long association with the Tawa Flat Primitive Methodist cause. The chair had lain hidden in the roof of St Stephen's church for many years and only came to light when alterations were made to increase the size of the body of the church. The wall on the north side was taken down and the chair was found, restored to its original glory, when Michael Greer was the minister in the 1970s.

We have two baptismal fonts, the brass one is from St Stephen's and the silver one from St Aidan's. Murray Davies made the stand on which the silver font stands.

The two large bibles used have been presented to the church. The larger one by Tom Etuata when he left the parish, and the smaller one by Bruce and Alison Johnston when they left Tawa after 33 years (1963-1996) attendance at St Stephen's.

Offering bags, the four from St Aidan's are made in blue velvet with bronze metal frames. Ian Simmonds had the metal frames made and Win Glassey made the bags and embroidered the symbols. The two bags with wooden frames were made by Chris and Bryan Pannett for use in St Luke's the other two are from St Stephen's.

The final article will cover still more of the Taonga we have in our church.

Gill Knox

All you wanted to know about

THE REDWOOD CLUB

(but were too afraid to ask!)

Many of you will know that the Redwood Club is situated at 83 Redwood Avenue, Tawa, in St Luke's Hall (formerly St Luke's Church), just in front of Redwood Primary School.

BUT DO YOU KNOW?

Why it is there? How it came into being? Just what it does? Should it be there?????

The Redwood Club came into being over 22 years ago (we celebrated our 20th birthday in Jun 2009). It was established in response to a need, identified within the Porirua Basin, for a place which could provide specialist day care services for people with dementia who were being cared for at home by a family member. This was to give the carer a break from 24hr care and enable them to keep their loved one at home and in the community for longer.

Under the leadership of the then minister, the Reverend Derek McNicoll, Tawa Union Parish (as it was then), wanted to make use of St Luke's Church, which lay unused during week days.

A survey was undertaken, public meetings were held, and finally, after a lot of hard work, St Luke's Church buildings were brought up to the required standard for this type of facility.

It was established as a Charitable Trust (The Redwood Day Care Charitable Trust), under the care of two trustees, and was underwritten for the first year by Presbyterian Social Services, with St. Luke's Church buildings being provided free of charge by Tawa Union Parish.

The Club, which opened initially for just two days a week, was staffed by an occupational therapist as co-ordinator, assisted by a caregiver.

A valued group of volunteers was largely drawn from Tawa Union Parish. Matt Park, a well known former member of Tawa

Union Parish and a Tawa identity, was secretary/treasurer for 16 years.

The first years for The Redwood club were a little rocky with fluctuating numbers, but gradually we became better known, numbers steadily increased, and eventually we began operating every week day.

Instead of a maximum of eight members for two days a week, we now work with a maximum of twelve members, five days a week.

These are cared for by a registered nurse supervisor, two dementia trained caregivers, and volunteers. Oversight is provided by a registered nurse coordinator assisted by a part time office administrator.

A superb management team of four trustees and four committee members, also made up of volunteers, keep a watchful eye on our sustainability and progress.

The Club is a Health Provider for Day Activity Support Services for the Ministry of Health and Capital Coast District Health Board.

We have contracts with both and they fund our members' attendances at the club. This

provides finances for running costs, staff salaries, and partial purchase for the club's van. At present it is a bright red Ford Transit 12 seater, which is driven by volunteer drivers and some staff.

After a good number of years we are now able to pay a reasonable contribution to Tawa Union Church for the use of St. Luke's Hall, for which we are especially grateful. This helps towards maintenance issues but we are also able to provide support in other ways as well.

As a Charitable Trust we are able to apply for funding from various Trusts. This enables us to purchase items or put funds towards improving the surroundings for members and also improve the value of the church buildings.

Most furnishings in St Luke's are the property of the Redwood Club - tables and chairs, stereo, oven, microwave, dishwasher, fridge, billiard table and more recently a heat pump has been installed. Most of these are available for the community to use when the hall is hired.

The curtains, carpets and linoleum throughout, have also been supplied through funding grants. Outside, the tar-seal around the church porch and

south side, the concrete patio on the east of the foyer and ramp on the north end have been provided partially through funding grants. Labour has been being provided by Tawa Rotary members.

Our members and their families are our main focus and our reason for being. They are very special to us.

A day at the club for our members consists of being picked up in the club's van and transported to our premises, arriving in time for a morning tea with hot scones, muffins or sandwiches and relaxing over a chat.



This is followed by an activities programme which aims to give them mental and physical stimulation to maintain or improve their cognitive functioning. This includes exercises to music, ball handling, frisbee throwing, indoor bowling etc, or crossword

puzzles, quizzes and various word games.

Arts and crafts provide interest and creativity and other activities include a very popular storytelling/discussion time and joke session by our own Gloria Hollier. Professional music therapy and drama therapy, sing-a-longs accompanied by ukulele or piano and pet therapy are other activities.



A home cooked two course meal is provided at midday, followed by a rest period with members either reading or listening to music, before going on an outing in the Club's van. Members particularly look forward to this as we go to plenty of interesting places in and around Wellington.

Then it is back in time for afternoon tea before being transported home again at the end of the day.

Members have different levels and differing types of dementia, the most common being Alzheimer's Disease. There are often other health problems and disabilities, so there is always a variety of issues to deal with which makes it a very interesting and sometimes challenging field to work in.

A diagnosis of dementia often carries with it a social stigma probably due to a lack of understanding and fear by the general public. Members and their families often become socially isolated. This is, however, improving gradually with education and more openness about the disease.

A very important aspect of our work is making sure we provide a safe, secure, happy and nurturing environment for our members – a place that they are happy to come to, to be themselves and find acceptance and understanding.

We are providing the best care and support we can for the family carer as well as our member, easing the stress on both of them.



Drama Therapy

A monthly support group is also available for the carer, to provide education and a confidential forum where he/she can find help and "off load". This is facilitated by the Alzheimer's Wellington field worker with whom we have close connections.

Our members are referred to us by a central body (the Care Co-ordination Centre) in Porirua, and come from all the suburbs in the Porirua Basin – Johnsonville, Newlands, Tawa, Elsdon, Titahi Bay, Plimmerton, Paremata, Papakowhai, Porirua, Whitby etc.

In providing the facilities for this day activity support service, Tawa Union Parish's support has been far reaching within the community. It has played a major part in easing a great burden on the many families who have been affected by Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias.

The vision of community outreach, begun in the 1980s, has been realised in a practical, wonderful way and continues to be on-going!

We are very reliant on our volunteers, of which there are approximately 20. Over the years we have drawn from Tawa Union Church and we still do. Those within Tawa Union Church who work at the Redwood Club at present are –

Committee members: Faith Delaney and Allan Todd.

Volunteer drivers: Chris Gaunt, Geoff Hughes, David Bray, Keith Knox.

Volunteers: Faith Delaney, Margaret Lake, Denise Saunders, Joan Duncan.

Staff members: Pat Matheson, Kristen Gaunt-Ifi.

Others who have provided help at times are Lorna Kears, Elspeth Chiles, Barbara Russell, and Karen Harris.

THANK YOU, TAWA UNION CHURCH.

Pat Matheson

(RN Supervisor
former co-ordinator)



Kevin Buck

By Barbara Adams

Kevin is a new member of the pastoral working group.

Kevin has been involved with parish work since he became a member of St Aidans in 1983. He was on the St Aidans Council, and in more recent times has been on the Finance and Property Committee of Tawa Union Church, which included a spell as church treasurer.

Kevin was born in Lower Hutt and educated in Petone and Wellington, completing a mathematics degree at Victoria University.

He worked for Mobil for many years, mainly in corporate planning, finance and supply, and this included an assignment in Hong Kong.

He then moved into the Public Sector, and in 2003 he joined the newly established Electricity and Gas Complaints Commission as Business Manager, responsible for establishing the corporate support functions.

He feels that he has enjoyed his career and along the way has learnt much about technical matters and leadership as well learning a lot about life in general.

Since becoming semi-retired he has been involved with some contract work.

This has also given him more time to enjoy his hobby of vintage cars. He and Joanna own a 1935 Ford V8 which they drive to the Art Deco weekends in Napier, dressed in their olden days finery.

They also take part in parades, particularly the Tawa Christmas Parade. He is on the committee of the Vintage Car Club.

His plan for the future is to do some travel with Joanna, possibly to the U.K., Europe and USA where he has work colleagues and friends from past years.

Kevin has two adult daughters, both overseas at present, three step-children and a grandson.

With his interesting background he will be an asset to the pastoral working group.

Barbara Adams

Post Script:

Thanks to the contributors to this issue of *The Link*:

Clare Lind

Lois Hill

Barbara Adams

Gill Knox

Pat Matheson

Bryan Pannett

Like you, I would like to see more photos in each issue. Maybe we can fix that next time.

Keeping in touch... With this edition of *The Link* we are again including a space in our address panel (below) for your Pastoral Contact person (your Parish Visitor) to write their name and phone number. This means that you will know who has delivered your newsletter if personal contact was not able to be made at the time. If you would like to contact someone about a pastoral matter, then you will have the phone number to make a call.

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