

Newsletter

REACHING INTO *THE FUTURE*

Story from the Archives: The Message in a Bottle

Editor's Note: As we start a new year, it seems fitting to reshare this divinely-ordained story from many years ago. We look forward to continuing to see God's attention to details lived out in 2022.

In June of 1994, the M/V Island Mercy was lying off the island of Atafu in the Tokelau chain of islands. One evening, the ship's Director, David Cowie, threw a bottle over the side of the vessel with a note in it and a brochure on Mercy Ships. For eighteen months the bottle drifted around the Pacific, finally washing up on the island of Yasawa in the Fijian Islands.

An elder in the local church found the bottle while walking along the beach and gave it to his pastor. Upon extracting the contents, the pastor immediately wrote to David asking if the M/V Island Mercy would visit their island to help their village with medical teams.

In May of 1998, David visited the island with a team from the Island Mercy to investigate the needs of the local community. After a 10-hour ride over open seas in a small boat, the team arrived at the village of Yasawrara. There was no running water, no

electricity, no medical facilities, no roads, and no schools (the children walked three hours each morning to attend school in the neighbouring village).

The local pastor fed the team with fish his family and friends caught, and the watermelon he grew in his garden. The team was touched by the simple faith and lifestyle of the people and quickly agreed to bring the ship to help.

On the morning of Monday, the 29th of July 1998, the Island Mercy slid quietly into Yasawa Bay. The dental and optical team began to provide needed services to the village. A 1000 litre water tank was pushed over the side of the boat and floated to shore as part of a new water system donated by Grace Community Church and several of its members in Visalia, California, USA. The people were touched by these acts of kindness and opened their homes and hearts to the men and women of Mercy Ships and to the message of love and hope they brought with them.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you". John 15:12



Marine Reach Base Welcomes Orchard Workers

On a sunny Saturday at the beginning of the summer, Marine Reach welcomed 45 seasonal male and female orchard workers originating from the nations of the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, and the Republic of Kiribati.

Marine Reach staff member, Claire Hodgkins, took the lead on organising the event as her contact and relationships with the orchard workers have grown over the last few months (see the November 2021 newsletter issue for more of the back story).

These orchard workers originally came to New Zealand about 2 years ago to work the summer and autumn season, but when the pandemic caused international borders closures, they were granted extended visas, and they have stayed on.

The event included a volleyball tournament, soccer, and a huge hangi feast, prepared by local Maori. Each nationality was invited to present a dance or performance from their home, as well as wear traditional attire from their nations.

Marine Reach has a long history of trying to recognize and value the cultures of the South Pacific, and build relationships with various island groups. Although the border closure has

prevented the staff of Marine Reach from heading out into the islands for almost the last two years, God divinely allowed people from these same island groups close to our hearts to come to our base.

Claire comments: "It was an honour and a privilege to welcome representatives from these nations onto the land of Marine Reach. It's been a dream of our heart to reciprocate the hospitality and love that we have received for nearly 30 years of ministry in the islands. Our goal was to celebrate the beauty and the uniqueness of each island and person, and be able to empathise with missing overseas family members. Our staff and friends of the ministry did an amazing job making the event happen, and we trust God will continue to open doors to minister to these precious islanders in new and creative ways."

Marine
Reach
For God. For Good.



For more information about Marine Reach's involvement in the Pacific, please visit www.marinereach.com or www.familycarecentre.org



Pandemic DTS #2 Graduates Amidst Delta Hurdles

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When the July school DTS students arrived on base, the bubble between Australia and New Zealand was open, and the DTS staff were anticipating a calm, NZ-focused outreach.

It was delightful to have the life and energy of students back in the building and the rhythm of a DTS running again.

However, things started to get interesting when just a few weeks into the DTS, the Delta variant of Covid landed in NZ and the country (and the Marine Reach base) re-entered a strict lockdown.

As outreach approached, the DTS staff showed tremendous flexibility with making their plans for travelling - Auckland's borders continued to be shut, Northland's borders were an off-again, on-again situation, and then Hamilton got slammed into lockdown as well.

But even if we didn't know what each week - or even each day - of outreach held, God certainly did! And he was up to some incredible work:

Three outreach teams spread over New Zealand for seven weeks. Everywhere they went, they prayed for people, shared the good news of Jesus, and

spoke encouragement. Sometimes on the streets, sometimes in cafes or parks, and sometimes in churches and homes. Time and again, God moved through the team's actions to confirm work he was already doing in the lives of the people they met, or to share hope.

From teenagers to elderly, from all walks of life, the teams followed God's leading to focus on the individuals he highlighted to them, and they were often amazed at how God provided just the right words or put them in just the right place at the right time to really touch someone's heart.

As we celebrated this school's graduation (moved forward several days at the last minute to work around the gathering restrictions of the traffic light system), we celebrated with a special emphasis on God's faithfulness to show up in the lives of his children, even in the midst of unforeseen challenges and circumstances!

For more information about DTS, scholarships and other training opportunities, visit: www.marinereach.com



Our next DTS starts 7 February 2022.

We are offering **discounts up to \$3000 off** our 2022 DTS's.

Visit www.marinereach.com/what-is-dts/ for more information

DONOR PROJECTS

- DTS Scholarship Fund: Donate to support students who are unable to afford the full price of DTS: \$7000 per student.
- Deeply needed dental & medical supplies for Vanuatu; \$5000.

PRAYER PROJECTS

- Please pray that a way will open for the FCC head nurse to return to Vanuatu. She is in the USA, unable to reenter Vanuatu due to Vanuatu's strict border measures.
- Please pray for wisdom in pioneering new initiatives across the ministry.



Many thanks to those who have sown into and given toward the new land purchase



For more information on Marine Reach, contact:

New Zealand: info@marinereach.com
Vanuatu: info@familycarecentre.org
Fiji: info-fj@marinereach.com
USA: maipayne@att.net

M/V Pacific Hope:
volunteer@mvpacifichope.org
M/YNext Wave:
volunteer@mvmynextwave.org

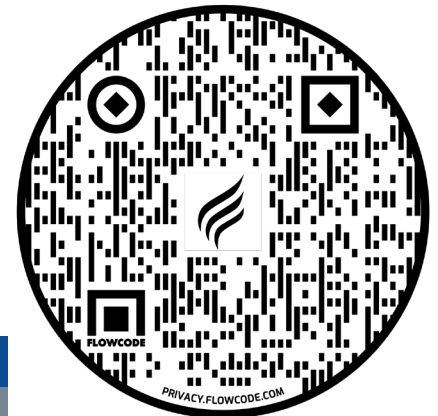
Websites:
www.marinereach.com
www.familycarecentre.org
www.marinereachfiji.com
www.mvpacifichope.org

Cut along the dotted line and include with your donation.

Thank you!

MONTHLY DONATIONS

Your support is crucial to us as we seek to double our efforts and reach out across the Pacific into the lives of those who need us the most. Simply scan the QR code with your smartphone's camera, and click the link that appears on your screen to set up a monthly donation. Even a few dollars can go a long way.



These are some examples of how recent donations have been used



\$63

One box (50 cartridges) of dental anaesthetic



\$120

One week of room & board for a NiVan staff member



\$300

NZ Outreach Team ministry tools (ie: Bibles, kids ministry, teaching material)



\$500

Sponsorship for a NiVan DTS student

If you are posting a donation please indicate how you would like the amount to be used. Complete the table below and include in your envelope or fill out and snap a photo and email to: accounts@marinereach.com or call +64 7 543 3787

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Or Online at:

www.marinereach.com/donate

Bank Address:

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With deep regret our bank is no longer processing checks after 31 May 2021. Please call us at 07 543 3787 and ask for our Accounting department.