

News from the Somervell Community

December 2013

Flame Newsletter

Our Mission

....where faith inspires life. . .

Flame

is produced for the friends and
parishioners of
Somervell Presbyterian Church

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All are Welcome All are Welcome



Somervell Church Camp 2013 was a great success. Read about it on page 6 and there are lots more photos of all the fun that was had too.



Christmas Services at Somervell

Dec 24th

6.00pm Children's Christmas

An interactive service for children and their
parents including lolly scramble and crafts.

9.30pm

Carols by Candlelight

Dec 25th

9:30am Christmas Day Service

Families welcome.

Christmas Day 2014

In one year's time New Zealand will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the first preaching of the Christian Message on New Zealand soil. This came about through a unique partnership between Samuel Marsden, an Anglican Chaplain from Sydney Australia and Ruatara, a Maori from Northland. Together they organized a ship to bring them to New Zealand, and Ruatara helped smooth the path and pave the way for Marsden and his fellow missionaries to land and hold the first service.



The following extract is from the Gospel Bicentenary web site:

"The missionary / Māori party arrived at Oihi Bay and Rangihoua Pa on the 22 December. When they landed horses and cattle Nicholas records how the people were "bewildered with amazement, not knowing what to conclude respecting such extraordinary looking animals". Marsden mounted the horse and "rode up and down the beach, exciting their wonder in a tenfold degree". Ruatara's stories about big dogs that could be ridden no longer seemed preposterous and according to Nicholas: "This was, therefore, a day of triumph to Duaterra [Ruatara]". Later that day, Korokoro and Ruatara staged a large mock battle on the beach for the missionaries' entertainment or education, with the fighting parties concluding by joining in a vigorous haka. We gain glimpses into the exchanges that were taking place on both sides as Maori and Europeans were learning about each other.

On Christmas Eve, 1814, Ruatara, on his own initiative, organised the space where the church service was to be held as an open air church with an improvised reading desk, pulpit, and canoes serving as pews. On Christmas Day, Ruatara and Korokoro, wearing the uniforms given to them by Governor Macquarie, acted as Master of Ceremony indicating to Māori how they should behave – when they should stand or sit. At the end of his sermon, Māori said that they could not understand what Marsden meant. Ruatara replied that "they were not to mind that now, for they would understand by and by; and that he would explain my meaning as far as he could". Significantly Māori heard Marsden's sermon through Ruatara's translation. What they heard and understood we do not know. What is significant is that Māori were hearing Marsden's message from a Māori. Nicholas described how Māori responded to the service:

three or four hundred, surrounding Mr. Marsden and myself, commenced their war dance, yelling and shouting in their usual style, which they did, I suppose, from the idea that this furious demonstration of their joy would be the most grateful return they could make us for the solemn spectacle they had witnessed.

The engagement of Ruatara and Marsden, iwi and tauiwi, Māori and missionaries, inaugurated the missionary starting point at Rangihoua in December 1814. This is a foundational event in New Zealand's history. It ranks alongside the encounters between Māori and Abel Tasman in 1642, Māori and James Cook in 1769, and the signing of the Treaty between Māori and the British Crown at Waitangi in February 1840.

Marsden's sermon and the service on Christmas day marked beginnings that had profound effects on the developing relationship between Māori and

Pākehā. Those beginnings at Oihi in 1814 gave rise to a complex story which historians still seek to unravel."



As we celebrate Christmas this year, let us keep in mind the celebration next year. What are ways that we can make the year special, or next Christmas a true celebration of the preaching of the Gospel? I would like us to organize a pilgrimage to the place in the Bay of Islands where the first sermon was preached, now marked by what is called the Marsden Cross.

Turning to this Christmas, may you and your family have a true celebration of the birth of Jesus into the world, may it be a time of joy and hope.

Blessings

Brett.

Change at the Op Shop

After long and faithful service as the Op Shop coordinator and manager, Margaret Bear is stepping down. She was farewelled from the role at a Church Service in November. Margaret has been the Coordinator and Manager since the Op shop opened its doors in 1991. Indeed her name is synonymous with the shop. The shop's success and energy have a lot to do with her success as a manager. However earlier this year Margaret realized that it was time to move on. She will now move from being the coordinator to being a volunteer.

At the same service that Margaret was farewelled, Andrew Laxon the Session Clerk introduced Janet Rowley the new Op shop manager. Janet is keen to begin her new role, and is thankful to take over from Margaret such a well oiled machine. Janet will start as the new manager after the January shut down. Janet will be paid a small salary as the manager. The Life and Mission Committee is very pleased that a "Somervellian" has stepped in to take on this role and looks forward to working with Janet in the New Year.



In November 2011 the Op Shop celebrated its 20th Birthday and Margaret cut a special cake to commemorate.

The success of the shop is of course not down to just one or two individuals, but due to the faithful volunteers who staff the shop, oversee the never ending task of receiving donated goods, pricing, sorting, cleaning, culling and general shifting and moving of boxes that goes with running the shop. They are always keen to add to their number, so if you want to add spice to your life, and mix with a great bunch of people, volunteer for the shop, Janet would be keen to see you.

Uplands Kindergarten: report to Session

Recently the Uplands management committee presented to the Session on the challenges of operating our kindergarten in an increasingly competitive market. After a positive and interactive review with the Session, we would like to share with you some of the highlights.

It's obvious that if you've managed to read this far without reaching for the crayons, then your Kindy days are well behind you, but consider this:

- As a Somervell member you have a stake in one of the best educational services in our neighbourhood
- Every weekday in our church and guided by our expert team of teachers, 3 and 4 year-olds from 60 families are painting, creating, singing, climbing, sharing and otherwise working stuff out that will be the basis for their lifelong learning journeys.
- You can make a difference in supporting the Kindy (more about that later)...

Our Kindy maintains a strong market reputation and great teaching team. We emphasise family and community links within a Christian learning environment, and are particularly recognised for getting children ready to start in our afternoon programme.

These strengths come from the strategic choices that we make: we



like to have a high teacher/child ratio, all of our teachers are 100% fully qualified, we provide separate morning and afternoon sessions and we try to set our fees in the middle of the market.

Competitive pressures have increased over the last two years, thanks to a revised government funding model that encourages larger scale early childhood centres. So the trend favours well capitalised franchise operators who only offer all day sessions and lower teacher ratios, with intensive discounting to attract new enrolments.



After a strategic review earlier in the year, we took several new initiatives:

Operating times: We now offer an optional longer morning session, which has been very well attended.

Marketing: We developed some exciting new branding for the exterior of the building (*pictured*) and posters and brochures, with more planned.

Facilities: Thanks to support from parents, friends and a local body grant we have refreshed and added several outdoor activities which really engage and challenge the children in new ways, and there's more to come.

So with all this positive change what can you do to make a difference? Well, almost all our kindy families come to us through the wider Uplands community – for parents

.....continued on page 8

What's been Happening to our Building?

You may well have been wanting to ask us this question when you saw the white shrouds firstly on the tower a year ago, and then at the west end of the building recently. For well over a year now, we have been undertaking remedial work fixing leaks and subsequent damage which has appeared in the last two or three years.

First it was the tower which needed attention and the work required turned out to be much more extensive than expected. It was full of water. After that we dealt with a window leak which flooded the Kindy rooms when the wind was coming from the southeast. Then it was the roof of our building which was leaking in several places. We finally got on top (!) of that earlier this year with a lot of new patching and replacing some previous patching work. While this was going on, it was disclosed that the west wall was in serious trouble but to an unknown extent, and for that we would need an Auckland Council Building Consent. It was not until our consultant and builder got under that shroud and opened things up that the full extent of the work was disclosed. The whole of the west wall had to be rebuilt. We had to move the heart of our IT system too.

With that work finished, the next project was to complete sealing the atrium between the tower and the portico. This is a difficult area as the tower in a storm moves from side to side and the portico moves up and down and they are joined by glazing. That's a very difficult situation to seal completely. We needed to wait for a

special tradesperson but he's now done some work and we are hopeful the entrance area is now fixed but we'll need to be watchful before being satisfied.

There's still some leaks we are assessing. To date we have spent around \$170,000 on all of this work and it's been fortunate that so far we've had the funds available without calling on the congregation for help.

We have fielded questions around why this deterioration has taken place in a 14 year old building. The answer is complicated, but initially we were able to make savings on the initial cost of the building but perhaps didn't follow up with the recommended maintenance programme using appropriate contractors for the job way back when the first leaks appeared. It is unlikely that we would be successful in taking out proceedings against any party who may have been involved in the saga. Hindsight alone won't fix the damage, but it will make for a better future.

The Administration Committee of Session commissioned a report from the consultants we have been using on the roof and west wall and they have recommended a six-monthly and annual inspection regime and they have nominated particular contractors we should use in future. They have also told us that within three years we will have to begin a programme of completely redoing the roof membrane at a total estimated cost of \$120,000. At this price it is estimated

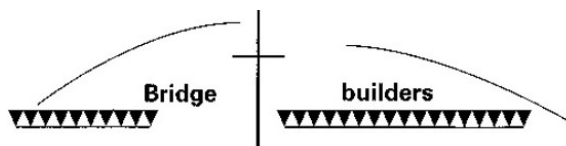
.....continued on page 7

Church Camp 2013

Held at Hunua on the weekend of 18-20 October, this years Somervell Church Camp was a wonderful time of fellowship and friendship. With the theme that 'All are Welcome' the camp committee organised lots of activities which engaged us all . Some folk attended for the whole weekend but it was nice to see some extra faces on Saturday for the day. Some highlights are captured in the photos here including the quilt making (led by Debbie), the house building (with the 'shop' run by Elwyn and Tim) and some of the photos from the photo competition (organized by Iona and Megan). We were well fed by Heather and Kylie and at meal times trivia questions kept us all entertained and we learnt all sorts of secrets about our fellow

Somervellians—thanks Kathryn for that. Thanks again to Fiona and her committee for another great Somervell camp.





**7th Bridgebuilders International Consultation 4-8 April 2014
at St Francis Retreat Centre, 50 Hillsborough Road, Mt Roskill, Auckland
Invitation to Join the Celebration**

The 7th Bridgebuilders International Consultation will be held in Auckland on 4-8 April next year at the St Francis Retreat Centre, 50 Hillsborough Road, Mt Roskill. hosted by the Bridgebuilders Trust. The theme is *Strengthening the Bridge - Building our Capacity – Reaffirming our Faith*. On Monday 7 April the Programme will include a one-day Consultation and Training Workshop on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, known as CEDAW. All Presbyterian and associated women are very warmly invited to attend this live-in event. There is also the option to attend by the day.

Somervell members are especially invited as the Bridgebuilders office was located at Somervell after their network began in March 1996. Many of our events have also been held at Somervell. The St Francis Centre provides comfortable accommodation and excellent meals.

The Bridgebuilders Network began in March 1996 when the Pacific Basin Consultation was held in Auckland, called by the National Executive of the Association of Presbyterian Women. Leaders of Presbyterian and associated church women came together from 16 countries in the Asia and Pacific region. It was the first time Presbyterian women in Aotearoa New Zealand had had an opportunity to meet with counterpart women in neighbouring countries. After 18 years and five further triennial Consultations - in Fiji, South Africa, Vanuatu, Taiwan and Samoa - the Board of Officers is in New Zealand 2011-2014. The aim is to strengthen the Bridgebuilders Network looking to the 20th anniversary and its programme into the future. The sharing of best practices in local and regional mission and the raising of issues critical to the well-being of women serving the church has been empowering for members.

The Registration Form can be found on the Bridgebuilders web site www.bridgebuilders.org.nz or by sending an email message to Bridgebuilders Office Co-ordinator at bridgebuilderstrust@extra.org.nz The Bridgebuilders International Secretary Rose Tauetule will also send the form if you write to her at PO Box 99-464, Newmarket, Auckland 1149.

For more information about the Consultation please be in touch with the International President Jane Prichard on phone 09 528 3727 or email: janeprichard@extra.co.nz

..... from page 5

we should get a roof guaranteed for 20 years with an expected life of 30 to 40 years. The Administration Committee will have to consider whether we need to ask the congregation for funds to undertake this work.

The Committee would like to thank those members of the congregation who have put

in a lot of effort to help us with these issues. Initially it was Ernst Sansom who got things going and subsequently Jack Alison and Syd Jones who took charge. And also our staff and Brett have engaged with this work

We are happy to answer questions.

**John Kernohan, Craig Brown,
Andrew Laxon, John Laing, Brett Johnstone.**

... from page 4

of young children a personal recommendation is the most effective advertisement. So this Christmas, when celebrating with family, grandkids, or relaxing with friends and enjoying those young toddlers tearing up the place, why not ask if they know about Uplands and invite them to contact our head teacher Michele to come and visit one day (pop our number in your phone – 524-5839).

As Christmas approaches we are looking forward to the children's Nativity play in the church with their parents and extended community on Friday 13th Dec and our Christmas concert at Caughey Preston for the residents on the 16th Dec. We're proud of the service that Somervell provides through Uplands: sometimes we forget to celebrate the good work we do and the support that we gratefully receive from many of you in the congregation. Sustaining it and building it for the benefit of the church and the community is also important and it's as easy as spreading the word.



The Committee has been working on marketing ideas for Uplands and the first initiative was installed on our window last month. Our new sign incorporates the colours and logo of the kindergarten – a theme you will see throughout all our signage and brochures from now on. Visitors will now be able to easily identify where Uplands is when they arrive at Somervell.



Somervell Presbyterian

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