

*I Wait For The Lord,
My Soul Waits For Him:
And In His Word is My Hope.*

A resource book of the Martyrs of Papua New Guinea and Melanesia

Written by Margaret Bride



Designated places in PNG where the Martyrs were assigned



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Port Moresby

From February 1942 there were frequent night and day air raids on Port Moresby. By August 3rd the Japanese had advanced along the Kokoda Trail over the Owen Stanley Ranges toward Port Moresby and had captured the village of Kokoda. All Australian civilians in the town were being evacuated back to Australia and it was decided that civilians of mixed race would be evacuated to islands in the Gulf, near Daru.

Both Henry Matthews and Leslie Gariardi offered to accompany these civilians on their trip to Daru on the boat *Mumuru*, intending to remain there in order to minister to them.

Henry Matthews

Henry Matthews had been Rector of Port Moresby since 1927. When the administration called for volunteers from the civilian population to join the army to defend New Guinea in 1941–2, he volunteered and became a Garrison Chaplain. However he was over 65 and deemed too old for the Army. In August he was forced to retire, a state which was to formally occur on 8th August 1942. The military administration wanted him to accept safe conduct back to Australia but he refused, preferring to continue to minister to the people whom he had served for the last fifteen years.

As Rector of Port Moresby he *spent much of his time travelling up and down the coast, performing baptisms and marriages and caring for his flock.*¹

In August 1942 he was a widower and his daughters had settled in Australia but his son Adrian, a medical officer, had accompanied the first boatload of mixed race evacuees to Daru and Henry offered to accompany the second boat.

The *Mumuru* was attacked by a Japanese aircraft and repeatedly strafed until it sank. Some survivors tried to keep afloat but they were also shot until in the end only one survivor escaped. The



remainder, including Henry Matthews and Leslie Gariardi, were either shot or drowned.

Leslie Gariardi

Leslie was a young teacher-evangelist who had recently completed his studies at St Aiden’s Training College at Dogura. He was born in Boianai. In 1942 he was posted to Port Moresby as an assistant to Henry Matthews, whom he volunteered to accompany on the boat trip to Daru in early August 1942.

He died from bullet wounds or was drowned when the *Mumuru*, was attacked on August 7th somewhere beyond Yule Island.

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Dorothea Tomkins and Brian Hughes, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1969. Page 63

² Harvard: Tomkins, Dorothea & Hughes, Brian, 1969, *The Road from Gona*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, p63.

Northern Province 1942

Rabaul was successfully invaded by the Japanese in late January 1942. Manus Island was under their control and repeated raids were made at various points along the north coast as well as on Port Moresby. By 8th March, Lae and Salamaua were occupied. The Japanese strategy was to invade and conquer Port Moresby. It was generally believed that this was a stepping stone to an invasion of Australia.

After the attempt capture Port Moresby by sea was thwarted by the battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942, the Japanese began work on an invasion via the northern beaches and the Kokoda Trail. It was the implementation of this second plan which led to the deaths of the martyrs May Hayman and Mavis Parkinson of the Gona Mission and Lucien Tapiedi, Margery Benchley, Vivian Redlich, Lilla Lashman, John Duffill and Henry Holland of Isivita and Sangara.

The Attack on Gona

Between January and June refugees and service-men who had been shot down made a thin but constant stream of arrivals at the Mission stations on the north coast. No one living there could be unaware of the imminent arrival of the Japanese land forces and the consequences for any Europeans who remained when they did arrive. On the 10th March, Bishop Strong's boat, the *Maclaren King*, was attacked by bombs and gunfire off the Buna shore. The crew, Bishop Strong and John Duffill were lucky to escape with their lives.

Late in the afternoon of Tuesday, 21st July, the Gona mission staff witnessed the arrival of the first Japanese forces that were to engage with Australians, Americans and Papuans in the historic campaign of the Kokoda Trail.¹

The staff at Gona, Isivita, Mamba and Sangara had already made the decision to remain with their people. It was only when the Japanese landed in numbers at Gona on 21st July 1942 that the staff at Gona accepted that their presence was in fact a danger to the very people they were there to serve in God's name. It was then that they decided to set up as refugees in the bush. As James Benson himself described it: So we come to the days of the deluge; to the landing of the Japanese at Gona – the first landing of enemy troops on Australian Territory.²

James Benson, May Hayman and Mavis Parkinson experienced great difficulty in penetrating the swamps behind the Gona station. They were unable to use established tracks because there were already heavy Japanese patrols reconnoitring their route for the invasion of Port Moresby via the Kokoda Trail. Eventually, with the help of a number of local people, they established themselves in a hide-out near the village of Siai where they hid for several weeks. It was from here that Mavis Parkinson wrote her amazing account of that time.³ In *Prisoner Base and Home Again* James Benson also gives an account of this period in addition to telling the story of his long imprisonment by the Japanese. The two women were killed at Jegarata, near present day Popondetta, in late August.



The altar erected in 1968 on the spot near Popondetta where two Australian missionaries, May Hayman and Mavis Parkinson, were put to death by Japanese soldiers in August 1942.

The advance was very rapid and the whole area was quickly occupied. On July 22nd Henry Holland at Isivita prepared a bush shelter for his staff and also for John Duffill, Lilla Lashmar and Margery Benchley who left Sangara for Isivita. Vivian Redlich stayed hiding in the bush near Sangara for a time. Once they were in the hide-out Lucien Tapiedi and Andrew Aware made daily trips to the station where Henry Holland remained for a time until he also joined them in order to prevent his presence further endangering others. They were probably joined by Vivian Redlich, and all of them then departed from Isivita.⁴

Lucien Tapiedi was killed on the first day of the journey. The others were captured and beheaded on Buna Beach.

There are some grounds for controversy in any account of the events of this period but the variations in detail should in no way reduce the impact of the witness of these Christians. Romney Gill, the priest in charge of the Anglican Mission at Mamba, was by this time also in hiding in the bush not too far away. He and James Benson wrote to each other during this time. Later Romney was smuggled away and reached Port Moresby.

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Tomkins & Hughes, Sydney, 1969. Page 38

² *Prisoner's Base and Home Again*, James Benson, Robert Hale Limited, London, 1957. Page 19

³ Australian National War Memorial: www.awm.gov.au: NT0002FIA

⁴ This account follows that given by Hughes and Tomkins *The Road From Gona* pages 60-62. Not all sources are agreed about just what happened between July and September.

Northern Province 1942 (cont)

In a letter to Bishop Strong written soon afterwards, Romney said that most of the people, apart from those under direct mission influence, saw the war only as a terrific fight between foreigners on their land and were quite prepared to accept whichever side came out on top. He allowed that many must be faithful in their hearts, but thought that the dominant thought was self-preservation, which had led some to apostasy. By using the religious word apostasy rather than the secular treachery, Romney showed he was concerned about loyalty to the Church rather than to the Allied cause and so felt that its witness to be of value whatever the outcome of the war.⁵

When the Japanese were finally driven out and Australian forces returned to again take charge of the Northern Province, an investigation was held into the role of the local people in the deaths of the eight mission staff. One PNG man, Embargi, was identified by them as the leader of those who were involved in some way in the deaths. He and *at least thirty-four Papua New Guineans were executed. Ten of the Papuans were hanged for treason. The charge assumed that they had a loyalty to a government and a nation. At the time they probably had neither, and in practical terms the Japanese were their rulers.*⁶

Whether we agree with these views, there can be no question of the cost of this invasion to the Japanese, the Australians and to the people of PNG.

The war in Papua New Guinea was fought at appalling cost. About 150,000 Japanese died. On the mainland alone, from Milne Bay to Aitope, lay the remains of 100,000 men of Adachi's 18th Army. Nearly 12,000 allied soldiers were killed. How many Papua New Guineans died is uncertain, but in areas of intense fighting the population dropped by a quarter. Papua New Guineans would never understand why foreigners had fought a war across their homeland.⁷

May Hayman

May Hayman was also known as Merry, a very apt name for such a *small, sprite-like person with pretty hair and very bright eyes.*¹ May came from Adelaide but had worked as a nurse in hospitals in Adelaide, Melbourne, Dubbo and Canberra. She was immensely happy in her work and in her life at Gona. Shortly before the Japanese invasion she and Vivian Redlich announced their engagement.



While they were in hiding near Siai it became increasingly apparent that they were not safe, particularly when a local sorcerer said he would kill all the Europeans because their presence was a threat to the villagers. Father Benson decided that they should move towards the Managales. Two Australian soldiers heard of their presence and came to ask if they would like to join a group of soldiers who were going to attempt to reach Port Moresby via Oro Bay. Reluctantly, James Benson agreed for them to do so. Four days later they reached the Japanese lines near Popondetta but they were not safe and were captured nearby. May was executed: *Sister Hayman moaned and lifted a towel or cloth to her face, and her escort plunged his bayonet into her throat.*²

After the withdrawal of the Japanese, her body was reburied at Sangara in February 1943.

⁵ Romney Gill: *Missionary, Genius and Craftsman* Christopher Garland, Christians Aware, London, 2000. Page 316

⁶ *Taim Bilong Masta: the Australian Involvement with Papua New Guinea* Hank Nelson, Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1982. Page 199

⁷ *ibid* page 200

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Dorothea Tomkins and Brian Hughes, Angus and Robertson Sydney 1969. Page 34

² *ibid* page 45

Northern Province 1942 (cont)

Mavis Parkinson

Mavis was born in Ipswich, Queensland and attended St Paul's parish church. One of the clergy there said of her *I believe she had a vision which gave her inspiration; there was a power in her life*. She worked in an office, but when she felt called to mission service, she retrained as a teacher.

While she was a student at the Australian Board of Mission training school they were given only a day's notice of an exam. Mavis and a friend went to the city and ate chocolates busily in the hope of being too bilious to face the examination. It did not work!

Mavis Parkinson was a very able teacher and in charge of the school at Gona. *Father Benson had great admiration for Mavis Parkinson as a teacher, saying that the examination results of the yearly inspection by the Queensland District Schools inspector were never higher than when she taught at Gona.*¹

In her letter written while she was in hiding after July 21st, she wrote of the last night they spent at the mission station: *both sister and I had on our pretty long dresses; dinner was a gay meal and our lovely polished table with its pretty mats and beautiful flowers did not fail to call forth the usual compliments.*²

Like May Hayman she was captured when they were travelling with a small group of Allied soldiers who were trying to make their way back to Port Moresby. She too was executed near the present day Popondetta in August 1942.



Henry Holland

Henry Holland began the mission work in the Sangara district as a layman in 1922. His able assistant was Andrew Aware, a Papuan teacher, a life long friend and colleague of Henry Holland. It was the first attempt by the Anglican mission to build a head station any distance from the coast. *Henry Holland was a quiet, slow-spoken man, quite unimpressive to meet, but a giant in his capacity for work and for thoroughness in everything he undertook.*¹

He joined the mission in 1910 and first worked with Copeland King at Ambasi. His work in building 'roads', bridges and mission houses, a dispensary and a school was very highly regarded. The practical skills he had learned on sheep farms in New South Wales stood him in good stead as a missionary in PNG.

Once Sangara was firmly established, he moved further on in 1928 to establish a new station at Isivita. This was a two hour walk from Sangara along a track that twisted its way through dense rainforest on the lower slopes of Mount Lamington. The walker had to cross many deep gullies – down one side, through the water at the bottom, and then up the steep bank.



Isivita Mission House after the Japanese invasion. Scattered on the floor are Henry Holland's Binandere manuscripts and mission station records, which had taken 20 years to assemble.

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Dorothea Tomkins and Brian Hughes, Angus and Robertson Sydney 1969. Page 32

² Australian War Memorial website: reference "May Hayman"

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Dorothea Tomkins and Brian Hughes, Angus and Robertson, Sydney 1969

Northern Province 1942 (cont)

Henry Holland was ordained a priest in 1938. After he moved to Isivita he continued to provide support and ministry to the Sangara staff until 1941 when Vivian Redlich was appointed priest-in-charge at Sangara. About the same time John Duffill joined him to assist in the building and construction work.

When Henry Holland heard of the sudden Japanese landing at Gona, he had no hesitation in deciding to remain at his post, refusing offers to join a party travelling overland to Port Moresby.

It was he who arranged the shelter in the bush and brought the two women from Sangara to its safety. He accepted responsibility for the party which assembled. During the next week a badly wounded American airman was brought to Isivita. There was nothing that could be done for him and Henry watched over him all night until he died. About the same time two Australian airmen also came to the station, each staying only a short time before heading off toward Port Moresby on foot.

After a week he recognised that they were at too great a risk if they remained in the bush hide-out, and that they were also a danger to the local people. His plan was to travel into the Managalas area and cross the Owen Stanley Ranges from there to Port Moresby on a route it was thought would be easier for the women in the party. They set off to do this but on the way they met up with Captain Austen and his party. Austen persuaded a reluctant Holland to join them in travelling to Oro Bay and escape from there to Tufi or another safe place. It was this plan that led a few days later to their capture by the Japanese and to their execution at Buna Beach.



Lucian Tapiedi is honoured at Westminster Abbey where his statue is one of ten 20th Century Martyrs.

Lucian Tapiedi

In July 1998 ten statues of martyrs of the twentieth century were placed in the niches above the west door of Westminster Abbey in London. Each one was an individual, but also a representative of all those who had died in similar circumstances of oppression and persecution. The martyrs of the Pacific region are represented by a statue of Lucian Tapiedi. The subtitle of the entry about Lucian is "In an age of aggression."



Graves of Mavis Parkinson, May Hayman and Lucian Tapiedi at Sangara Mission Station, 1950 (photo by courtesy of Miss Nancy White).

Tapiedi was born in 1921 or 1922, in the village of Taupota, on the north coast of Papua. His father was a sorcerer who died when his sons were quite young. He was taught at mission schools and then, in 1939, he entered St Aiden's teacher training college. Here Tapiedi became known as a diligent and cheerful presence, fond of physical recreation but also a musician. In 1941 he became part of the staff at Sangara as a teacher and evangelist.¹

Lucian was one of the two Papuans who cared for the small group hiding in the bush near Isivita from July 22nd, making daily trips from the village with food. When it was decided to abandon the hide-out and make for the coast, he made the decision to travel with them as guide. He was determined not to abandon the missionaries with whom he worked.

They had only travelled a short distance when it was found that the carriers had left a package behind, some think on purpose. Lucian offered to return for it and was never seen again by the rest of the party. It is possible that this was the intention, to separate him from them, in order to kill him.

One of the Orokaiva, a man named Hivijapa, killed Tapiedi near a stream by Kurumbo village. ...His killer later converted to Christianity. He took the name Hivijapa Lucian and built a church dedicated to the memory of his victim at Embi.

There is at least one other church dedicated to his memory: St Lucian's in the settlement of Six-Mile near the Port Moresby airport.

¹ *Christian Martyr's of the Twentieth Century*, Andrew Chandler, Dean and Chapter of Westminster, 1998, page 7. All the other quotations in this are also from this source.

Northern Province 1942 (cont)

Lilla Lashmar

Lilla Lashmar was a teacher who had offered for missionary service when she was a parishioner at St Cuthbert's in Prospect, South Australia. She commenced teacher training at St Cuthbert's College while she earned enough money, making and selling baskets. She arrived in Papua in December 1920, working first at Gona, then in Dogura and finally began working at Sangara with the nurse, Margery Brenchley.

Sangara was in the centre of a coffee and rubber growing area and was the first mission station built at any distance from the coast. It was an isolated place for the two women, who communicated with their colleagues on the coast mainly by letter. If either of them wished to make a personal trip they had to walk 27 miles through gullies and streams, perhaps getting a lift near the end of the journey from the lorry-driver who was the only person who lived at the coffee collection depot at the present day Popondetta.

The school was not large enough for the number of pupils and there were not enough teachers to cover all the classes. One of her teachers was Lucian Tapiedi. Materials for the school and dispensary had to be carried as back-born loads from the coast at either Gona or Sanananda.

After the Japanese landing, and as they advanced rapidly inland, Lilla was one of the group led by Henry Holland and assisted by Lucien Tapiedi and Andrew Aware, who left their hide-out in the bush to walk to the coast. They were finally caught, taken by the Japanese in a truck to Buna, and executed there together with Captain Austen, Tony Gors, his wife and small son.



Margery Brenchley

Margery was born in England but migrated to Australia with her brother when she was a teenager. Recognising that nursing was her vocation, she entered Brisbane Hospital for training. While in training she attended the parish of Holy Trinity, Fortitude Valley. They supported her as their missionary from the time she went to New Guinea in 1927 until her death.

*Those who knew her as a mission nurse described her as slightly built, usually dressed in brown, with dark hair and eyes, totally devoted to the care of the native people.*¹ When Henry Holland moved to the new station of Isivita, she shared the responsibility of running the Sangara station with Lilla Lashmar. From this lonely spot she sometimes travelled to Gona alone with a sick patient.

The mission house and all its furniture was made mostly from local bush materials but they also used the packing boxes in which equipment was carried up from the coast. Their isolation was slightly mitigated by the presence, at a short distance, of the manager of the rubber plantation Louis Austen and his wife.

In July 1942 both Lilla Lashmar and Margery Brenchley declined an offer from Australian servicemen to travel to Port Moresby with them, but as their post lay in the direct line of the advancing Japanese, they moved to Isivita, accompanied by Lucian Tapiedi. Early on 22nd July the mission staff began to build a secret camp in the bush for the Europeans.



After a week Henry Holland consulted Andrew Aware and it was agreed that they were not safe in their hide-out, with patrols passing so close all the time and Lucian and Andrew making daily visits. It was then that the decision to travel to the coast was made. A decision which led to their capture and death on Buna beach.

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Dorothea Tomkins and Brian Hughes, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1969. Page 48

Northern Province 1942 (cont)

John Duffill

John Duffill was born in Queensland, one of six children whose mother died when he was only seven years old. As a member of the parish of Wooloongabba in South Brisbane he was a member of the choir and eventually head server. He also became a scoutmaster. Both he and one of his sisters wanted to become missionaries but their father had recently died and they did not want to leave their stepmother alone. After discussing the matter together *the two young people decided that it would be better for John to go.*¹ He arrived in Papua in 1938 as a lay missionary.

He was responsible for the building of the Sefoa mission house and then Bishop Strong gave him the responsibility for the mission boat, the *Maclaren King*, which made six-weekly trips along the coast bringing mail, carrying copra, stores and passengers. He was responsible for loading and unloading and caring for the passengers but not for the management of the boat, which was under the able command of Edward Guise. It was because he had this responsibility that he was on the *Maclaren King* when it was attacked at Gona early in 1942.

When the invasion was imminent in June 1942 he was due for home leave, but he declined to take it saying he wanted to stay to support the other members of the mission team and Bishop Strong. Like the other members of the Isivita and Sangara group, he was captured soon after they left Isivita and executed on the beach at Buna.



Vivien Redlich

Vivien Redlich was born in England and ordained there. He came to Australia and served in the Bush Brotherhood for five years. He was remembered by them as a lively young man: *the brotherhood were sometimes glad of the quiet which followed his hilarious end-of-month stays at the brotherhood house.*¹

After five years in Queensland he offered to serve in Papua New Guinea. In August 1941 he was appointed priest-in-charge of the Sangara district.

*Vivian Redlich was a very thin man, not very strong, and inclined to discipline himself into doing things that seemed to be beyond his strength. His eyesight was weak and he wore very thick glasses.*² It was this physical weakness and tendency to work too hard which led Bishop Strong to insist that he have a short break in Dogura in early 1942. On the way he called at Gona where he and May Hayman became engaged. *Her acceptance filled him with a desire to tell the whole world of his amazing good fortune. At Wanigela he came along the beach with eyes shining and face beaming, almost shouting the good news, 'May and I are engaged'.*³

On the return trip he arrived at Buna and saw the Japanese ships. He could have returned to the safety of Dogura at that point, but instead he chose to go ashore and *slip through the Japanese lines to Sangara.*⁴ He established himself in a bush hide-out and from here wrote a letter to his father which is now in St Paul's Cathedral in London. *I'm trying to stick whatever happens. If I don't come out of it just rest content that I've tried to do my job faithfully.* On the Sunday



morning, as he was preparing for the Eucharist, one of his people told him that a villager had gone to report him to the Japanese but he calmly replied that it was the Lord's day *and he would celebrate Mass for the people as planned.*⁵

After this he apparently joined the other missionaries from Sangara and Isivita. It is not clear whether he did so and met his death on Buna beach with them, as is most commonly reported, or whether he was killed separately as a result of the information given to the Japanese about his presence in Sangara. Exactly how he met his death is not clear, but that he died as a direct result of his faithfulness to his calling to serve God and His church is quite clear.

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Dorothea Tomkins and Brian Hughes, Angus Robertson, Sydney, 1969. Page 51

² *ibid* page 51

³ *ibid* page 52.

⁴ *The Seed of the Church*, Errol Hodge, Australian Board of Missions, Sydney 1992. Page 17

⁵ ditto

New Britain

In October 1941, as the Japanese advanced toward New Britain, the government administration advised all non-natives to take whatever means available and to evacuate to a position of safety.

Rabaul was captured late in 1941 and the Japanese soon occupied all the New Britain coastline, including Gasmata. They set up a base there and visited Kandrian, very near John Barge's station, where they asked the natives if there were any Europeans near by, but the natives did not betray the missionaries.

Because they were hidden from observation by the Japanese, John Barge continued his work for almost two years after the initial occupation. It was not until the later half of 1943, when the Allies were putting pressure on the Japanese, that their patrols became more intense along the southern coast.



The legacy of the Martyrs and many other missionaries down through the years is shown in the faithfulness of the people today, especially through scripture and prayer.

Bernard Moore

Bernard Moore shared with John Barge the work on the southern side of New Britain in the Melanesian Mission districts of Urin and Ilak, with its headquarters at lumielo. He had initially come to work as a layman in teacher training but had then been ordained. In addition to other functions in New Britain he managed the small boat, the Mary Stafford, and carried the supplies and mail from Rabaul to the south coast district.

Bernard Moore and John Barge became great friends: the short intervals of companionship they shared together helped greatly in giving them confidence and courage to face their lonely lives and to make the decision to remain at their posts when a clear and honourable way to safety was available.¹ It is not known exactly what happened to Bernard although it is known that he continued to use the boat to ferry supplies. It is assumed from what could be learned after the war that he died of an illness, possibly severe malaria.

The Melanesian church included him in the list of martyrs very early on but it was not until a meeting of PNG bishops in 1992 that his name was listed with the other PNG martyrs. There can be no doubt that his decision to remain at his mission and with his people after the Japanese occupation led to his death.



*Bernard Moore.
Photo: PNG Church Partnership (UK).
Used with permission.*

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Hughes and Tomkins, page 53

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Dorothea Tomkins and Brian Hughes, Angus Robertson, Sydney, 1969. Page 65

New Britain (cont)

John Barge

John Barge was an Englishman who had fought in the First World War then migrated to Queensland in 1926 where he was an orchardist in the Stanhope area. He studied theology at St Francis College in Brisbane, served in two Toowoomba parishes, then offered himself for mission work. Initially, in 1935, he was appointed to Rabaul.

Later he studied the treatment of tropical diseases at Malaita in the Solomons. He returned to New Britain in 1939, to the Apugi Mission Station to work with two households of Melanesian Brothers and with Henry Moore. *His conviction was that the work of healing should go hand in hand with the preaching of the Gospel*¹. He had a very well equipped dispensary.

The local people were anxious for his safety, particularly Peter, a staunch Christian, teacher and the lulai of his village. At one stage they took him to a small cave which had an entrance so low that it could only be entered on hands and knees. At their offer he retorted 'that he would die on his feet if it came to that, but he would not be caught like a rat in a hole.'

Although he was well aware of the danger in which he stood, he continued his healing and pastoral ministry for more than a year after the Japanese occupation of New Britain. In October 1943 one of the increasingly vigilant Japanese patrols sighted the mission house at Pomete. *A landing force found John Barge going about his daily work quite openly. The Japanese, who seemed friendly, took him aboard the destroyer, telling the local people they would help him get medical supplies and bring him back. But after the ship had rounded the next point, he was taken ashore. Two local people hiding in the bush saw him executed with shot and sword. The local people buried him on the spot, marking his grave with a border of coral*².

Fr John Matang from the New Guinea Islands at prayer – as determined to share the good news today as John Barge was in 1943.



The Seed of the Church

In 1992 Errol Hodge chose this title for the ABM publication on the martyr's of PNG. Here are three examples of the many ways by which these words have been demonstrated as true.

Our Common Humanity and the Debt we Owe

In September 1946 James Benson wrote:

Particularly enheartening is the changed attitude towards Christian Missions here in Australia. No longer is there so great a need for an apologetic. Men who have had to do with the Papuans, on the Kokoda Trail and in the battles of the beaches, no longer ask silly questions about the cultural possibilities of primitive races. There is a growing sense of the oneness of the human family.

Two soldiers at Lae were telling me of the way the Papuans worked carrying stores and ammunition up to our front lines, and bringing the wounded back gentle as my mother. One of them said, "You don't think of yourself as a superior bloke in those circumstances." These boys telling such stories are the best missionary deputations.¹

That generation of soldiers is fast dying out and it is up to us to heed their message and to remember the huge debt we owe to the people



The PNG church today is a vibrant mix of people using their cultural background to share the Christian journey with others.

¹ *The Road from Gona*, Dorothea Tomkins and Brain Hughes, Angus and Robertson Sydney, 1969. Page 66

² *The Seed of the Church*, Errol Hodge, Australian Board of Missions, Sydney, 1992. Page 24

¹ "A Message from James Benson" in *New Guinea Mission: Occasional Paper* No. 122, September 1946. PNG Church Partnership London

The Seed of the Church (cont)

of PNG today for their devoted service to us in our time of need in 1942-1944. We also need to heed the message of our oneness with them then and now as members of the human race and children of the same heavenly Father.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

No single group of words can convey the sense of openness to the Japanese who were his captors which James Benson conveys throughout his book. He recounts the stories of the good and the cruel men who dealt with him during his captivity. He suffered the loss of friends and colleagues as well as the privations of being a prisoner of war, yet his attitude remained that of Christian compassion and forgiveness.

The Anglican Church in Japan has made its contribution to the commemoration of the martyrs. Firstly in 1950 the Primate of Japan gave several bamboo crosses as an act of contrition and these were erected in the parish churches of each of the martyrs. In 1980 at the annual meeting of the bishops of the Anglican church of Japan, they asked to hear the story of the martyrs, however hard that would be for them. As a result their congregations the following year gave a substantial donation toward the chapel at Newton Theological College near Popondetta.

The post-war director of ABM, Frank Coldrake, gave us a wonderful example by living out forgiveness and reconciliation between Australia and Japan.

Inspiration to pursue our own calling from God

This is one of the most important reasons why we need to hear the stories of those faithful people who have gone before us. One person who heard the story and responded is himself an inspiration to the Anglican Church in PNG and to us. Bishop David Hand, in his book *Modawa*, explains that he had intended to work as a missionary in Africa but when he read this story of the martyrs of Papua New Guinea in 1946 he heard God calling him to go there, in a sense, as a replacement for Father Redlich. No doubt about that being a major mustard seed planting!

A major development in the Anglican Church of PNG, inspired by the death of these women and men is the foundation of the Martyr's Memorial School. At the meeting of white mission staff in July 1947 it was proposed that a secondary school in the Northern Province would be a suitable memorial. The lay leaders of the church in Sangara offered a block of land for the school which was dedicated there in February 1948. The first head teacher was Margaret de Bibra, a remarkable woman who set the pattern of excellence for which the school has been so well known, and who was killed only four years later during the eruption of Mount Lamington. After that the school was re-established on its present site.²

The Melanesian Brothers – the story of the seven Brothers murdered in the Solomon Islands

The Reverend Richard Carter – One time Chaplain to the Brothers. *Day of Commemoration 24 April*

It was on or around St. George's Day 2003 that six Brothers were killed on the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal by the rebel leader, Harold Keke. They had gone in search of their Brother Nathaniel, who had already been killed and similarly tortured.

On August 9th 2003, Richard Carter wrote the following moving account of the seven Brothers. This article is used with kind permission of the author.

Yesterday our worst fears were confirmed. The Melanesian Brotherhood was officially told by the Police Commissioner William Morrell that they had been informed by Keke that all six were dead. It is hard for such news to sink in. These were six young innocent Brothers who went out in faith and in love in search of their Brother. It seems too much to bear that they should have been murdered in cold blood. I would like to tell you a little about each one of them for each one will be so missed:



Brother Robin Lindsay is our Assistant Head Brother and has been in the community for many years. He was four years Assistant Head Brother in Solomon Islands and four years Head Brother in PNG. I call him 'the encourager', because he has time for everyone and helps build on their strengths. He is known and popular wherever he goes in PNG and Solomon Islands and even Norfolk in the UK. With his strong handshake and absolute dedication to his work the community feels in safe and caring hands whenever he is around. He is so greatly loved; how much he will be missed. My last memory of him is on Maundy Thursday when together we washed the feet of the Novices in the community, he washing and I drying.

Brother Francis Tofi from the time he was a Novice was so bright and attentive in all his studies. When you met him you knew straight away that here is someone with a deep spiritual life and gentle wisdom. He asked constant questions and understood intuitively



what it meant to be a Brother. First in Malaita and then on the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal at the time of tension and its aftermath he showed incredible courage. Here was a Brother who was prepared to speak out, to condemn violence and the use of weapons and protect the lives of others even at great personal danger. It was Brother Francis who had organised for the Police Commissioner and a few of the Brothers to go out by canoe and dispose of all the many high powered weapons, explosives and ammunition the Brothers had collected and sink them in the deep sea so they could never be used again. There are stories of how he was able to resolve conflicts and rescue those who were being beaten or in danger from the rebels. Early this year the World Council of Churches offered him a place at the Bossey Institute in Geneva to study and contribute to a course on conflict resolution. I was aware of the possible danger he was in working for disarmament and particularly because he had not been afraid to speak out against Keke. But his courage was very great. He told me he was not frightened of dying in God's service and in his work for peace. I reminded him that God wants LIVING sacrifices and he had his whole life ahead of him. We laughed, for death never really seems a possibility in one so brave and full of life. I told him I wanted to visit him in Geneva. Today we packed his only possessions in a small grubby black rucksack. A few shirts, a couple of pairs of shorts, his uniform and some books to return to his family. I cannot believe he is dead.

² Where the Good Boys Come From, B.W.Roberts, Martyr's School PNG, 1986

Photo of Robin Lindsay taken Norwich Cathedral 1996, taken by Chris Luxton, PNG Church Partnership (UK). Used with permission.

The Melanesian Brothers – the story of the seven Brothers murdered on the Solomon Islands (cont)



Brother Alfred Hilly. He is a young and humble Brother, for two years he has been looking after Chester Rest-house in Honiara. Sometimes the guests find him a bit quiet and vague but he has great kindness: always

giving up his bed and mattress to provide extra room for guests. He takes particular care of the kids who love coming to the house. He makes sure they get fed at lunch time and has been helping young Selwyn, whose parents have deserted him, learn to read. This year he trained in Malaria research and qualified to read blood slides at the local clinic. This has been so helpful to all the religious communities who bring their blood slides to him for the fast diagnosis of malaria. And now dead. How can I write in the past tense about one so young?



Brother Ini Partabatu, free spirited and outspoken, brave and full of energy. He is a brilliant actor and became a key member of my dramas and joined me on the Brothers' mission and tour to New Zealand in

2000. Before joining the community he was a member of a drama group from the Weather Coast, performing dramas about development and health issues. We got on well for he knew I recognised his potential and the fire within him. Ini as a Brother has been brave to speak out against all injustice. He even confronted the SI Police Force when he believed their methods were unjust, brutal or failing to respect the rights of the people.



Brother Patteson Gatu. He is full of joy and so motivated as a new Brother. He was only admitted last October and always smiles from ear to ear whenever you meet him. The last time I saw him just before Easter

he was telling me about when he was fired at while trying to land on the beach as well as enthusing about a sermon I had just preached. I was never quite sure whether he was not teasing! He had such youth and warmth and confidence of faith. Not some narrow religiosity but natural and real and strong. Indeed he made Christ's beatitude a reality: 'Happy are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God (Mat.5.9)



And **Brother Tony Sirihi,** who lost his father when he was young, and found in the Brotherhood a real family and home. He developed from a shy, thin and humble Novice into a stocky and bold Brother. But he never lost his

simplicity. So many memories. I remember so clearly the night before he was admitted as a Brother how we climbed 'Pentecost Mountain' together and celebrated the Eucharist on top with all those about to make their vows. All night Tony had been lighting fires to keep us warm. I remember taking a retreat with him on a desert island in Lord Howe in which we fended off clouds of mosquitoes all night. He was easy company and a natural and unassuming friend to many of the Brothers who loved having him around. He showed his courage throughout the tension and continued to help the disarmament process.



And **Brother Nathaniel Sado,** the lost Brother, for whom they had gone in search. As a Novice he was in charge of the piggery and cared for those pigs as if they were members of his own family! He made a sweet

potato garden for them and cooked for them. They often seemed better fed than the rest of the Novices. The dogs followed him round too and he was one of the few Novices who got on well with our donkey. He loved to welcome guests to the community and made friends with many of the expatriates arranging trips for them to his home volcanic island of Savo where he took them up the mountain to see the hot springs and sulphur smoke and to dig for megapode eggs in the warm sand. He delighted in these expeditions. He had little formal education and had a some-what childlike nature always on the move and as a Brother a bit hard to pin down. During the tension and the disarmament he had made friends with the militant group and was rather proud of the fact that he new Harold Keke and believed Keke to be his friend. The trust was misplaced and he was the first Brother to die. Stories say that he was beaten to death after being accused by Keke of being a spy for the government. They say he sang hymns as he died. There was no darkness in this young man: not wise perhaps, proud of his status as a Brother and the kudos of mixing with the militants but entirely well meaning even if naive in his trust and innocent as a child is innocent when caught up in events out of his depth.

Of one thing I am certain: these seven men will live on in the hearts and minds of our community. Their sacrifice seems too great and hard to believe. The community sat up telling the stories of these Brothers through the night and trying to come to terms with the enormity of their loss. And yet beneath the trauma there is a peace too. The knowledge that each of these young men believed in peace and in goodness. They knew that there was a better way. They were prepared to oppose violence and to risk much. At the end of the day they stand against all acts of brutality which are at present disfiguring our world and bravely, boldly, and with love, lived what most of us proclaim only from the safety of a Church. Oh how much the worldwide Anglican Church at the moment could learn from their witness. And when such real life issues are so much at stake in our world is not this what the Gospel should be?

Richard Carter
9 August 2003

Ideas for Children's Ministry on Martyr's Day

Palm Tree of Prayer

Suitable for a lesson either at the steps of the sanctuary as a children's talk or during the service when children are withdrawn for a time and then return to the main congregation.

Aim

To give some information about the lives of children in PNG today and to involve the children in praying for the people of PNG today

Preparation

1. Green cardboard, either cut out in advance in the shape and size of children's hands
OR
pencils, scissors and cardboard to cut them out as part of the activity
2. Large coloured picture of children in PNG taken from Anglican Board of Mission website <http://www.abmission.org>
3. Felt pens – one for each child at least
4. Broomstick covered with a layer of brown crepe paper to make a palm tree trunk. (Under the paper covering there would need to be a layer of something to make it easy to stick in the pins unless the wood is very soft.)
5. Drawing pins to attach the palms to the trunk.

Story

Use the picture to draw out from the children something about the lives of village children in PNG contributing information you have gleaned from Partners and the ABM web-site.

Palm trees are grown extensively in PNG: coconut palms for food, copra and building material; and special palms for the production of oil.

Activity

If the children are old enough, and if time permits they can each write a prayer on one of the palms.

If time is short and/or the children are too young, then distribute the prepared palms with prayers already written on them.

The children pin the prayers on the trunk of the Palm Tree.

Conclusion

The prayers become the basis of the intercessions when that stage of the Eucharist is reached

OR

They can be used at once spoken by one of the children.

Questions and Answers

Who were the Martyrs of Papua New Guinea who are commemorated on September 2nd

The Anglican Church in Australia has set this day aside to remember the twelve Anglicans who died in Papua New Guinea in 1942-3, during the Japanese invasion and occupation of the country we now know as Papua New Guinea.

They were:

- John Barge, priest
- Margery Brenchley, nurse
- John Duffill, builder
- Leslie Gariardi, evangelist and teacher
- May Hayman, nurse
- Henry Holland, priest
- Lilla Lashmar, teacher
- Henry Matthews, priest
- Bernard Moore, priest
- Mavis Parkinson, teacher
- Vivian Redlich, priest
- Lucian Tapiedi, evangelist and teacher

Were any of these people PNG Nationals?

Yes, both Lucien Tapiedi and Leslie Gariardi.

What did they have in common?

Each of them died because, as an individual, they chose to continue to serve the people entrusted to them by God rather than travel to safety when they had the opportunity. It is this act of personal self-denial in the face of imminent personal danger to their life that led inevitable to the death of each of them.

Why is it observed on September 2nd?

This has been chosen as one day to commemorate 12 people who died on various dates in 1942 and 1943. In a number of cases the actual dates of their deaths are unclear.

The first synod of the Diocese of New Guinea after the war ended requested that such a date be set aside. At first they suggested September 1st since by that day in 1942 it was believed that all the martyrs from the Northern Province and Port Moresby were already dead. This was later amended to September 2nd and has been observed since 1947. In 1996 the date was agreed to be used as a commemorative date for all 333 Christian martyrs of the PNG in World War II. ²

Are these the only Christian Martyrs of PNG in 1940s?

Far from it. Members of all the major churches were killed in the hostilities. It is difficult to know exact numbers. At different times the lists have varied but Theo Aerts³ in 1994 gives the following numbers:

- Anglicans 12
 - Roman Catholic 197
 - Evangelical Church of Manus 5
 - Lutheran 16
 - United Church 77
 - Salvation Army 22
 - Seventh Day Adventists 4
- A total of 333

¹ *The Good Shepherd: Bishop Strong and the New Guinea Martyrs*, Bishop Phillip Strong, Melbourne, St Peter's Bookroom, 1983

² *The Martyrs of Papua New Guinea* Paul Richardson, Magazine insert in Church Scene, Vol 5 No39, August 9th 1996

³ Aerts, Theo, *The Martyrs of Papua New Guinea*, Port Moresby, University of Papua New Guinea Press, 1994. Pages 36-7

Questions and Answers (cont)

Does the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea Observe this day?

Yes, indeed. It is one of the big days of celebration in many parishes. There is traditional dancing in the Eucharist and the kundu drums are played.

At the Martyr's Memorial School it is always a very important occasion.

Why does the Australian Church keep this day?

Three good reasons:

1. Papua New Guinea is Australia's nearest neighbour, closer than New Zealand or Indonesia.
2. From 1896 to 1973 the Territory of Papua was an Australian dependant territory. From 1919 to 1973 the Protectorate of New Guinea was an Australian responsibility first under the Charter of the League of Nations and then under the United Nations. Today Australian governments always recognise that there is a special responsibility that we have for the nation of Papua New Guinea. This government responsibility is mirrored in the responsibility that the Anglican Church of Australia has for the Anglican Church of PNG which is taken up by the Anglican Board of Mission – Australia.
3. Many of the martyrs were missionaries of the Anglican Church in Australia on behalf of our Church.

What can we learn today from the lives and deaths of these people in 1942 and 1943?

One answer to this is that they were ordinary Christian people, doing the tasks they believed God had called them to do. It is easy for us to find among them some particular person with whom we can identify and see that we are never too old, too young, too ordinary, too unskilled, to perform a part in the mission of God to bring his love and justice to this broken world.

Martyr's Day Prayers

A Prayer for the Martyrs from PNG

Let Us Pray

Father, we thank you for your martyrs of Papua New Guinea; they obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ to take up the cross and follow him, and so they glorified you by their deaths. May their witness and their prayers make strong your Church in this land: and may we, your servants today, follow their example of faithfulness and courage, work for your kingdom, and be joined with them forever: through the same Jesus Christ Our Lord who lives and rules with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Amen.¹

Collects:

All powerful and everliving God,
Turn our weakness into strength:
As you gave the martyrs of Papua New Guinea the courage to suffer death for Christ, give us the courage to live in faithful witness to you. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

OR

Living God,
You made your Church to grow
Through the zeal, courage and unflinching witness
Of your servants martyred in New Guinea:
Give to us and all your people
Such steadfast faith in your good purposes
That we may serve you faithfully
Wherever you have stationed us:
Through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Amen.²

A Prayer for us and our Brothers and Sisters in PNG

Almighty God, there is no greater love than to give our lives for your friends. Grant us and the people of Papua New Guinea the courage to make our own sacrifice. And may we, in the company of your Martyrs, gaze with joy upon the face of Christ. Amen

¹ Prayers for Martyrs – Diocese of Papua New Guinea Prayer Book 1975.

² Collects from *A Prayer Book For Australia* 1995 63 1ff. Copyright The Anglican Church of Australia Trust Corporation.

Martyr's Day Prayers (cont)

A Liturgy for the Martyrs

Liturgy written by Bishop Denys Ririka, Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Aipo Rongo PNG.

The following Liturgwy of Prayers were written by Bishop Denys Ririka and have been generously given to ABM for the use of the Australian Church. It is taken from a service held for Martyr's Day at All Soul's Lae in 2004. It has been translated into English and also includes a prayer for the Melanesian Brothers murdered in the Solomon Islands.

1. Miss Mavis Parkinson

Lord Jesus Christ, we see in your servant, Mavis Parkinson, the loving concern for the children's education; help us in our time to give quality loving care to our children and all other students under our care, so that they may grow in wisdom and truth.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

2. Sister May Hayman

God of love and faithfulness, bless us all with your wisdom, as we remember your servant, May Hayman today, that we may, like her, think, care and serve a little more for others and a little less for ourselves.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

3. Reverend Henry Holland

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your servant, Henry Holland, who saw in Andrew Uware the qualities that were necessary for the mission of the gospel and so shared the task. Mercifully pour upon us your insight that we may discern yours gifts in others, and value them, work together for your glory and the extension of your Kingdom.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

4. Sister Margery Brenchley

God of hope and love, your servant Margery Brenchley gave loving hope of healing and health to the sick. Bless the doctors and nurses in their work; guide and strengthen us to be your instruments of hope to the hopeless, the helpless, the suffering and the poor.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

5. Miss Lilla Lashmar

God, our Father, rekindle and deepen our love for you so that we may with our whole being want to be a good soldier for Jesus Christ, as did your servant Lilla Lashmar.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

6. Reverend Vivian Redlich

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the life of Vivian Redlich, who in obedience to your call, left the comforts and security of his homeland and with others ministered your word and sacraments. Stir up the hearts of all ordained ministers to serve you well in all circumstances to hold high your light of truth and love.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

7. John Duffill

God, our Father, you call people in different ministries to build your Church. We thank you for your servant, John Duffill, whose keen desire to help you well as a carpenter, carrying his share of the cross and laying down his life with others, is an example for us.

Lord, guide and strengthen us in all that you call us to do – to be faithful and devoted to you and to each other.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

8. Lucian Tapiedi

Lord God Almighty, we thank you for your servant, Lucian Tapiedi, who volunteered to go back and collect items left behind – a decision in the face of danger. Pour upon your Church such bravery, that we too may be ready to stand up and defend the rights of the helpless among us.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

9. Reverend Henry Mathews

God, our Father, Creator and Preserver of all, we thank you for your servant Henry Mathews whom you called as priest to minister to your Word and sacraments in Port Moresby. Bless the work of clergy in the urban centres that they may be faithful in their calling.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

10. Leslie Gariadi

Lord God, we thank you for Leslie Gariadi, for example of faithfulness, support and companionship to his priest, together in life and together in death. Holy and gracious God, help us to be true to each other and to you in faith and love.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

11. Reverend John Barge

We thank you, Lord Almighty, for your servant John Barge who met you on a track near a village garden "with a shot and a sword" at Moewe Kandrian.

Clothe us with your peace and enrich us with your grace, that we, like John Barge, may face challenges and dangers with courage and love.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

12. Reverend Bernard Moore

Lord, God of all creations, we thank you for your servant Bernard Moore, priest, teacher, sailor, supplier and transporter of goods and services to the outlying islands on the South West coast of New Britain.

Mercifully give us grace to be the means to present your peace and love to those you have called us to care for and those we meet each day.

V. Lord in your mercy.
R. Hear our prayer.

Continued over

Martyr's Day Prayers (cont)

PRIESTS

God, Creator and Preserver of all, we thank you for your servants, Henry Holland, Henry Mathews, John Barge, Bernard Moore, Vivian Redlich whom you called to serve as Priests and to minister your word and sacrament among your people in PNG. Stir up the hearts of all ordained ministers to serve you well in all circumstances. To hold high your light of truth and love.

V. Lord in your mercy.

R. Hear our prayer.

BROTHERHOOD

We also remember with thanksgiving, the life and witness of the late Melanesian Brothers who gave their lives in your service on the beaches of the Solomon Islands: ROBIN LINDSAY, ALFRED HILLY, TONY SHRIHI, PATERSON GATU, FRANCIS TOFI, NATHANIEL SADO and INI PARATABATU.

O Lord, you equipped these men with different gifts and talents to serve you with courage and conviction. We pray that your Holy Spirit may enable us each day to know the truth from falsehood and like them, stand firm to proclaim what is right.

Where there is hatred let us show love

Where there is injustice, forgiveness

Where there is division, unity

Where there is sorrow, hope

Where there is darkness, light

Where there is sadness, joy

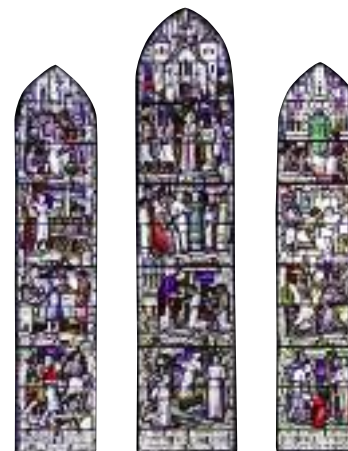
Where there is fear, courage

V. Lord in your mercy.

R. Hear our prayer.

This booklet was compiled and written by Margaret Bride who lives in Port Melbourne and is an active member of the parish of St Martin's Hawksburn. Between 1997 and 2000 she and her husband, Graham, were ABM missionaries in PNG. Since then she has been on the ABM Melbourne Diocesan Committee, much of that time as Secretary. Her interest in the history of PNG was heightened by her association with Bishop David Hand, when she assisted him to prepare his book Modava for publication. Recently she has returned to her original interest in researching and writing history and has published two local history studies. ABM is very grateful to Margaret for all her research and work on the history of the martyrs.

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Pictured on front:

The magnificent stained-glass window in the north transept of St Peter's Anglican Church Eastern Hill, Melbourne – a window commemorating the New Guinea Mission and the martyrs of 1942.



Pictured on back:

The memorial window to the founder of the Melanesian Brothers – Ini Kopuria – in the Brothers Chapel at Tabalia Solomon Islands.

