

# Reaching the Islands...

NEWSLETTER 44

DECEMBER 2012/JANUARY 2013



*harvesting bananas!*

*Happy Christmas & New Year 2013! Every year we determine to try to slow down a little & not be so busy all the time, but each year seems to be busier than the previous one.....2012 has been no exception with more work & more charity distributions than ever before!*

*Earlier in the year, we donated boxes of library books in kindergarten, primary & secondary schools in the Rakiraki, Tavua, Ba & Vatukoula town areas --all in the north of Fiji's main island of Viti Levu. We also had a leftover stock of toothpaste that we distributed in children's homes around Suva. Besides these normal activities, a lot of our charity work in the second half of the year was generated by what at first looked like a misfortune: however God turned it around & changed it into something really good. Here's the story:*

*As we recounted in our last newsletter, we participated in Fiji's yearly Hibiscus festival parade, marching through the centre of Suva with our Pacific Outreach banner held up high. At the end of the march, we folded up the banner & walked back towards town; however because the main street was still extremely crowded, we took a short cut through Holiday Inn Hotel, stepping over a few ropes while still holding the folded banner in front of us. When we arrived home though, we saw that my sulu (Fijian male skirt) was covered in engine oil (???). This was a complete mystery to us until we found out a day or 2 later that this came from the rope fence outside Holiday Inn.*



*Above left: donating boxes of educational books at a new kindergarten in Ba; above right: with Dr Jiko, minister for social welfare, and charity friends Peter & Margaret Long.*

*Apparently the management had intended this to be a deterrent, but in fact with the throngs of people & the banner in front of us, we hadn't noticed the oil at all.*

*We decided to complain loudly to the general manager of Holiday Inn & found to our surprise that he was actually a very nice guy. Talking about our complaint & our marching for charity led to a conversation about our aims & objectives in Fiji. He asked us, 'What can Holiday Inn do to help?' We told him that we could really use sheets as we often visit places that lack these items. He assured us that he would go through their inventory & see what they could do. He then asked what other projects he could possibly help with. We told him about our upcoming project to visit Moala island to donate books in all the village schools. To make a long story short, he agreed to sponsor our trip: an enormous help to us as air fares & other transport costs would have been very expensive!*

*And the sheets? Yes—Holiday Inn went through their stock & donated over 80 queen size & king size sheets! We were able to donate these in Father Law Home (for old people), Chevalier Hostel (for poor students from other islands), Vincent House (for mentally handicapped) and Tavua District Hospital. Reporters came from Fiji Sun newspaper to see our distribution at Father Law Home, resulting in a nice article called, 'Charity helps Home residents'.*

*More soon!*

*Yours, Peter & Susan Kingston*

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*Above: kindergarten children performing a welcoming dance before our book donation*



*Above: Fiji Day donation of toothpaste & clothes to a centre for juvenile delinquents.*



*Above: giving sheets to Tavua District Hospital in the north of Viti Levu.*