

New Capital progress!

The New Capital Project continues to gather momentum in 2005, with the data collection process almost complete. Since the end of January, Warren Stanley has worked with SDS to assist with this process by visiting parishes for whom we have insufficient data, such as service times and attendance numbers.

This has not only enabled SDS to fill in the gaps in its database, but has also been an opportunity to give the project a human face and build relationships with parishes. Warren says these visits have been well received by the parishes so far. "Senior clergymen have given me a warm reception and they have been willing to share information," he says.

In particular, Warren says parishes have expressed the desire for this human contact with the organisation to increase. "It has been an encouragement to clergymen to see someone rather than just talking on the phone," he explains. "So we believe



Warren Stanley's visits to parishes have been well received.

the face-to-face approach has enhanced the whole process."

General Manager Parish Services, Mark Payne, emphasises the importance of this contact as the project moves forward. "The visitation program illustrates that face-to-face contact will be a key to building meaningful relationships of support with our parishes."

Warren has also been encouraged by the high level of support for the main objectives of the NCP. "There

is an understanding that we're trying to be good stewards of the assets we've been entrusted with," he says.

Once Warren has finished this task, he will continue to work on the NCP in a support role as the project moves into the data analysis stage and then on to developing strategies. Warren will be on hand to provide whatever support is required as the pilot program develops and will help to prepare a report for Synod later in the year.



From the CEO

The middle six months of any year are usually the hardest in a management sense. We must make real progress now if the whole year is to be productive.

In that context, the New Capital Project (NCP) is moving smoothly towards a climax at Synod this year. We are quietly confident that NCP will, as planned, make a lasting and profound contribution to the shape of the Diocese. In particular, NCP will vastly improve the capacity of the Diocese's assets to support our mission imperatives.

We need to think a long way ahead and be ready for the implications of a continuing increase in mission activity. More ministers, more congregations and more people attending church, added to more asset movements are the opportunities to which we will need to respond.

Our upgraded PCR service was the first public expression of our plans and the launch has gone really well. It ran parallel to an intense period of data collection in the NCP and so far it seems that our work has been well received.

We need to maintain these high standards and, to help in that, we will shortly be talking to all parishes about our vision for the Secretariat. We will be looking for input as to how we can best serve them in their work, advice on any obstacles and their view on the difficulties facing parishes in some of the thorny regulatory areas.

I stand ready to shape my work based upon the views of those I serve. I know you do also.

Rodney Dredge

Diary Dates

April 25
Anzac Day

May 11
Finance & Loans Board meeting

May 12
Finance Committee meeting

May 18
Secretariat Board meeting

May 20
Church Property Trust meeting

May 30
Stipends and Allowances meeting
Mission Taskforce meeting
Standing Committee meeting
Mission Property Committee meeting

SDS lightens up!



CEO greets staff member using secret SDS hand signals.



Mark Rogers celebrates probation completion despite over one year of service.



Black shirts have mysterious impact on facial expressions.

SDS training for excellence

Feedback has been positive so far as *The Big Three* training initiative continues.

Late last year, we launched *The Big Three*, a training initiative focussing on Communications, Technology and Management Development. The first two are well underway with staff involved in our monthly communication workshops and individualised PC/software skills training with New Horizons.

Two weeks ago, we kicked off our Management Development Program (MDP) with the senior management group as well as the CEO of the Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation (SASC), Laurie Scandrett. The 18-month program is a major investment for us. There will be 30 participants in total, including a couple of folk from SASC and Youthworks.

Module One examines the subject of Trust. Participants completed 360 feedback, and other tools to help explore the critical aspects of this topic. The program is very valuable in helping us understand the complexities of building trust

at personal and organisational levels.

Our communications training has become a normal part of life at the Secretariat as we now work towards the end of the third module of our Communications training course. Feedback on the first two modules of the course, which focussed on Communication in the Workplace and Conflict Resolution, has been positive. We have found that the interactive nature of the sessions has helped us to understand the concepts and we enjoy learning in the relaxed environment that the course allows.

Most staff have valued the opportunity to work with people from different departments, who they normally wouldn't talk to in their daily roles. In general, training groups are starting to gel as we become used to learning together. Applying what we learn requires revision and practice, and hopefully we can help each other as groups to implement what we are learning in our daily job functions.



Accounting team moves forward

Some of the Finance team have embraced new roles as the impact of recent changes is addressed. Velysia Mock becomes Senior Financial Accountant, overseeing the Financial Accountants: Alan Woods (Team Leader), Lisa Shai-Hee, Helen Rogers, Jo Jo Aggabao and Vinod Ram. In this role, she will take primary

responsibility for the production of annual financial accounts for the church client funds and will be involved with projects including new templates for the accounts department and systems work such as the General Ledger upgrade. Velysia is looking forward to this change. "It's very different to what I've done before at SDS," she says.

"I'm looking forward to managing the many changes in the accounting team, and making sure the team has fun and celebrates its achievements."

As well as his usual role in daily

banking, Jo Jo Aggabao takes on the added responsibility of looking after the SDS Accounts, including monthly reconciliations. "The internal promotion of Velysia and Jo Jo is a reflection of their strengths and performance," says Chief Financial Officer Michael Blaxland.

Alan Woods is now officially the Team Leader of Accounting Operations, overseeing the Accounts Payable and Receivable functions. "Alan has accepted the new responsibility with grace, patience and his usual quiet perseverance," says Michael.

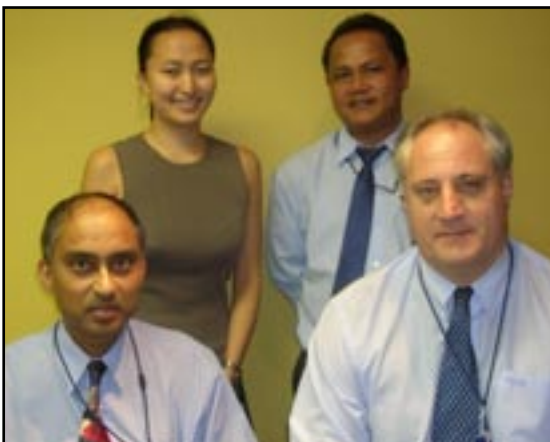
Vinod Ram has recently come on board with SDS in a full-time capacity and will do all the financial accounting for the Glebe group and special projects. "We're delighted that Vinod has accepted this role," Michael says. "He has proven to be an excellent resource at a time of peak workload in the accounting department."

Audit success

The 2004 finance audit for SDS went smoothly as hoped and the reports presented to the audit committee meeting on March 9 showed that SDS's paper documentation standards have dramatically improved over the past year, as has the efficiency of producing financial statements.

This is largely due to the work done by Senior Financial Accountant Velysia Mock and her team in standardising financial statement formats and linking them to the General Ledger, as well as Vinod Ram's assistance with the review and preparation of financial statements.

Chief Financial Officer, Michael Blaxland says these results are encouraging considering the changes in the finance department. "I am delighted with the focus shown by the department while all this 'noise' was happening," Michael says.



From left: Vinod Ram, Velysia Mock, Jo Jo Aggabao and Alan Woods



New faces at SDS



Benita Ong

Benita takes on the position of Assistant Portfolio Manager, Property Securities, reporting to Stephanie Fisher, whom she will replace when Stephanie goes on maternity leave later this year. Benita managed a portfolio with AMP Capital and has also worked with index portfolios and hedge funds. She is looking forward to seeing the fund perform and having a positive impact on the Large-Cap portfolio. "I am very driven by results – I like to see the direct consequences of my decisions," she says. Benita is a committed Christian and attends Cabramatta Anglican church.



Molly Saik

Molly is working with the Finance and Administration team as a Senior Accounts Clerk, responsible for the Accounts Receivable function and providing backup and relief for Accounts Payable.

She is excited about this new role and said she was inspired by Romans 12:1-2 to take it on. "This job is not just about earning a living – it's about serving the saints as well as the public," she says. Molly brings ample skills with her from her previous position at Winten Property Group, where she worked in general accounting and property management. Molly attends Fellowship of Christ at Girraween.



Nathan McQueen

Nathan has recently joined our IT department as Technical Support Analyst and will maintain the Secretariat's phone network, as well as other IT systems and general helpdesk enquiries. Reporting to Paul Semple, Nathan will help keep technology at SDS running smoothly. His previous work for Virtual Offis involved managing and supporting servers, as well as providing technical support. Nathan is looking forward to the added challenge of looking after problems with workstations, which in turn will expand his skills and experience. "I hope to help the Diocese to run the best possible professional enterprise systems," he says. Nathan and his wife attend Annandale Anglican Church.

Justin Puli



Justin is new to the Treasury division of the Secretariat and will help in a quantitative capacity, building models and assessing the fixed income position concurrently and into the future. He will also assist Chris Burrows as Assistant Money Market Dealer, invest SDS's cash assets and converse with the fund managers. Justin's previous roles at ANZ Institutional Banking and HSBC have involved building models and equities work. Justin prefers investments and funds management and he's enjoying the learning curve of this new position. "I see this as a long-term career move and I find the challenge of this new role motivating."

Brenda Sheppard



Brenda Sheppard began with SDS in March as the new Personal Assistant to Chief

Financial Officer, Michael Blaxland and is settling in quickly. "I'm starting to feel I'm one of the team and Michael is easy to work with." Brenda has performed a similar role for organisations such as Marist Youth Care, and is looking forward to seeing her role unfold at SDS. "I believe it's God's will for me to be here, that I'm here for a purpose besides just my job." Brenda is a committed Christian and member of Penrith Christian Life Centre.

Ross Bailey



Ross Bailey started at the Secretariat in mid-February as Facilities Supervisor and has enjoyed working at SDS. "The people have been very friendly and helpful here," he says. Ross has been very busy looking after such matters as air conditioning, building services and fire access and security systems and admits he likes the challenges that a large property like St Andrew's House involves. "I'm enjoying learning from Peter Crowder, Brian Connelly and Colin Davies," he says.



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New era for parish costs

The revamp of the Parish Cost Recoveries (PCR) service has been a major project for the Secretariat this year, involving staff from different departments. Parishes themselves have also had a significant role to play in this project, giving feedback that has shaped the PCR documents, which were sent out to parishes in February.

The change is essentially one of communication, with parishes now receiving a yearly summary and 12 separate PCR statements throughout the year instead of one invoice for the whole year. This has been done with the aim of making the parishes better informed about where the money in their PCR contributions is going.

Project Manager, Matthew Smith says the need for parish involvement in this process became apparent early on, especially as parishes would need to be adequately informed of the changes to the PCR system. Consequently, parishes were sent two documents, explaining the Parish Cost Recoveries system itself and outlining the changes that would be made for 2005, including a draft sample of the new format for statements.

One of the parishes engaged to review the documentation was St Matthew's, West Pennant Hills. At Matthew's request, treasurer John Doherty read through the two documents and they then met to discuss how the material could be made more user-friendly.

"I was more than happy to help," John says. "In past years, the documentation hadn't come from people who were actually having to do the work, so I think it's a good step forward." He feels the new documentation will help parishes fulfil their part of the process as well. "When you're more informed and understand the big picture, it's easier to do the right thing from your end."

Matthew and Deputy General Manager, Secretarial, Martin Thearle have fielded the calls from parishes following the mailout of the documentation. "The process of consultation has paid off and the feedback we got was almost universally positive," Matthew says. He is thrilled with this outcome and says that involving the parishes beforehand meant that questions and problems could be solved before the documents were sent out.

John is also happy with



Treasurer John Doherty of St Matthew's West Pennant Hills with Sydney Diocesan Secretariat Project Manager, Matthew Smith. John says including parish feedback in the Parish Cost Recovery (PCR) process was "a good step forward".

the result. "I knew the money contributed to all sorts of things before but I was never able to see where the money we're paying is actually going," he says. "Now I feel I understand PCR better and it is good to know where our money is used." John says he feels that the changes will help him to carry out his role more effectively. "If

people are more informed, they are better able to contribute and participate properly," he explains.

John has appreciated the opportunity to be a part of this process of change. "It is a breath of fresh air to see SDS communicating with parishes," he says. "That has to make it better for everybody."



passion in profile

Steve Lucas

Position: Legal Officer

What does your position involve?

I provide legal advice to the Bishops and Archdeacons, parish ministry staff, and churchwardens as well as Anglican organisations such as the Glebe group, the Property Trust and Youthworks. I also provide legal and administrative support to the Synod and Standing Committee. The

nature of my job requires me to advise on most areas of law, which is a challenge in an environment where the law is becoming increasingly complex and more solicitors are moving towards specialisation.

What motivates you at work?

I want to support the proclamation of the gospel in

our Diocese and to this end I want to see people at the parish level freed from worrying about legal matters so they can focus on ministry. It is important to make sure our operations stay within the law. The Lord has commanded us to submit to the authorities and in most cases observing the law is an act of love for others.

