

# Secretariat goes to Synod

Administration of the third session of the 46th Synod made October an important month for the secretarial staff. Mark Payne, General Manager, Secretarial, says Synod this year ran smoothly, with good feedback from Synod members.

Mark's role as Lay Secretary is to provide administrative support to the Synod, with the assistance of the secretarial division. "Synod is the major forum by which representatives of the church come together and we have an important role in making sure it functions properly," Mark says. "It's one of our major public faces."

A key feature of this year's Synod has been the increase in technology. Mark says the visual nature of PowerPoint made verbal presentations more effective this year. "Using two senses greatly increases people's ability to understand what is being said, especially when it relates to parish ministry," he says.

During Synod, members of the secretarial team started work as early as 7:30am and finished as late as 11pm, working constantly through the day. Robert Wicks, Manager, Legal Services says the commitment and hard work involved are simply part of the job. "One of the main reasons we exist is

to serve Synod," he says. "It's a primary focus for us all year round."

Robert says that much of his work for Synod was done beforehand, preparing paperwork such as draft ordinances and related explanatory notes. Robert worked with Legal Officer Steve Lucas to maintain the daily amendment sheet and present amended ordinances in their final form. They also ensured that questions raised during Synod were given to those most qualified to answer them.

These answers were delivered to the Archbishop by 10 o'clock the following morning.

Synod was also a busy time for Kim McMahon as she provided administrative support for Mark Payne. Kim prepared the business papers for each day of Synod, and posted them on the Diocesan web site. She also ensured the minutes were checked and signed by the minute-readers and coordinated the Synod summary, which was posted on the web site the Friday after Synod finished.

## Three men and their babies



Anticipating fatherhood; (left to right) Matthew Masila, Hamish Maple and Mark Rowan

First-time fatherhood is on the cards for three SDS staff: Accountant Matthew Masila, Network Administrator Hamish Maple and Support Analyst Mark Rowan. Matthew's baby is due on November 18 and he says his wife Wambui is so excited, all the preparation was finished two months ago! He has high hopes for a happy, healthy baby that will hopefully arrive when his CPA examinations have finished!

Hamish and his wife Jodi are expecting their baby on January 15 and are busy finishing off the nursery. "It's a good feeling - we're looking forward to this new phase in our lives," Hamish says. "I'm also going to enjoy the interaction that will come later on when the baby learns to talk, and then passing on knowledge and wisdom and sharing life experiences."

Mark Rowan and his wife Nicole are looking forward to their first ultrasound on Novem-

ber 15 and to the arrival of the baby in May next year and are excited about the progress of the pregnancy so far. "There's a lot I'm looking forward to," he says, "especially touching the little hands and toes."

Mark and Hamish sit beside one another and often swap notes on how the pregnancies are progressing. "Not having been through it before, it's good to be able to talk to Mark," Hamish explains. "There is camaraderie there and as we're more advanced, we can compare notes." Matthew also says talking about the new arrivals has been therapeutic. "It releases a bit of tension."

All three prospective fathers have a strong Christian faith. "I know this baby is a blessing from God," Mark says. "It has happened in his timing and it's comforting to know we are being looked after." Matthew feels similarly. "We can plan for these things but it's God who fulfils them."



## From the CEO

We can make church life more effective in many ways. We have skills and experience in the Secretariat that are scarce in most parishes. Used properly, our competencies could assist front-line ministers to concentrate more on communicating the gospel and less on administration, accounting or regulatory issues. You saw an example when we showcased the use of Planned Giving at Figtree. It is this thinking that leads to our main story and to the board's consideration of how the Secretariat should support the Diocesan Mission more closely.

We are working on two major proposals: the Diocesan Development Fund and a Products and Services delivery function. Our timetable is to have draft business plans ready in late February and final plans ready for the board in April. So please be patient as we work through the foundations of these projects. In due course, there will be an expansion in the number of departments through which we operate and so SDS personnel will have more opportunities to express their mission calling in their work.

We are seeing very clear evidence that all the hard reshaping work of the last three years is being rewarded in many ways, particularly in investments and in operational efficiency. The proper response for us is to turn our minds to our further contribution to the life of the church. These projects are that response.

Rodney Dredge

# The big picture

When Fiona Wardle handed in her resume to the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat seven years ago, she was unaware the organisation was looking for an employee with her exact qualifications and experience. Fiona took on the role of Personal Assistant firstly to Andrew McDonald, General Manager, Finance and Administration and later to David Cannings, Chief Financial Officer, and found the responsibility and variety in the job made it a good fit for her as well.

Her role involved her in all areas of administration and she dealt with almost everyone in the organisation. This mix of personal and technical tasks allowed her to build relationships with people, sometimes talking and praying with workmates going through tough times. She says the freedom she was given to try new things in a safe

environment helped develop her skills and her confidence. "I think the Secretariat is a great place to work," she says. "I have had a purpose in my work beyond just making more money."

Fiona left the Secretariat in October 2004 to begin work at Ellel Pierrepont, London, the home of the long-term residential training school, NETS. She will support Ellel's executive team in an administrative role and will also be involved in prayer counselling. In this role, Fiona feels she will be able to use her gift of administration and her passion to see the church restored. The decision to take up this opportunity came after she spent six months with NETS earlier in the year, where her training focused on using active prayer ministry with hurting people.

As Fiona moves into this new phase, she has appreciated



David Cannings and Fiona Wardle

the support of her manager David Cannings and Chief Executive Officer Rodney Dredge. "David could see that this was a good opportunity for me and he has a strong focus on the wider church," she says. "For Rodney to commission me as I left - and even that he knows my name - means a lot," she adds. David comments on the importance of the big picture in his role. "One

of the hardest responsibilities of leading a group of people is working through how to develop them individually and as a department," he explains. "I'm excited for Fiona because she's getting into a ministry she's passionate about and she believes it is where God is leading her. The worst thing I could do would be to hold her back."

## Roll with IT

There is always something new happening in our IT department! Here is one of the latest developments.

### Let's go to the phones!



Our IT update last issue mentioned a future upgrade to our phone system. Our current Unity system runs on proprietary hardware that is costly to maintain and not able to be extended, which makes call management more difficult, especially for the Glebe Investor Centre. The new technology will run on Dell hardware, is extendable and has integration with both Lotus Notes and Microsoft Outlook, so that voicemail and email can be managed through one interface. This system will have benefits for our voice, email and messaging processes. It will allow us to manage phone-based communications better, especially for those of us involved in customer service, such as the call centre, GIA and reception. The increased capabilities of the new system will allow us to manage

telephone calls based on business logic and we expect the new system will improve the speed and efficiency of our call management.

In-house training programs will be conducted for all voicemail users in the next month and procedures will be reviewed and the system monitored on a regular basis. The new system will allow all voicemail users to set locations on their phones so that callers can know when they are out of the office, on holidays or similar. Users will also be able to customise call forwarding to reception, to colleagues or to a mobile phone. Reception, the Glebe Investor Centre and Anglican Superfund will have a call-queuing function and a simplified handset configuration.

## Board retreat: The lighter side



CEO Rodney Dredge and Chairman Phil Shirriff show that size really does matter.



Michael Cambridge shows the members how they should greet the Chief Executive.



"That's where we buried the gold."

## DIARY DATES

**November 15**  
Standing Committee meeting

**November 17**  
GAB/SDS Board meeting

**December 8**  
Finance & Loans Board meeting

**December 13**  
Standing Committee meeting

**December 14**  
Asset Liability Committee meeting

**December 20**  
SDS Q4 briefing and Christmas function



## Welcome new staff!

This past month, we have welcomed three new staff members to the Secretariat. Each one has an important part to play in the Secretariat's expanding role in the Diocese.



**Matthew Smith (above)** comes on board from Solution 6, where he held the position of senior business consultant. Matthew will work on an intranet for use by all Secretariat personnel and will help to coordinate project teams in the areas of Accounting Review, Parish Cost Recovery, GIT Cash Flow and Church Property Trust. His appointment

forms part of the Secretariat's focus on Parish Products and Services and will contribute towards an improvement in communications across the organisation and also in the development of technology to service the Secretariat's clients. Matthew is particularly excited about how his work fits into the big picture. "I'd like to see the Secretariat become the first place parishes think of for information and assistance because they know when they call us they'll get the information and assistance they need." Matthew is a churchwarden at Cherrybrook Anglican Church.

**Eric Zhao (right)** began work early in October with the Banking Operations team as Administrator. His past employers include Proctor & Gamble, American Express and Careflight and he now works mainly on the Glebe Investment Trust on Romina Camilleri's team. He has found the staff friendly and supportive. "If I have a problem, there is always someone to help," he says,

and looks forward to helping his colleagues with questions in future. As a committed Christian, Eric finds the Glebe policy of 'reward without compromise' motivating. "We are helping parishes and so we are serving God indirectly," he says. "This encourages me to work hard."



October 27 saw **Joseph Tang (right)** begin work at the Secretariat as a Portfolio Accountant in the Investment Banking Division under Joseph Tam. Joseph did some contract work in the same team last year and has also worked for Schroders Investment Management Company

and JP Morgan. His current position also involves project work. Joseph has noticed the difference in the Secretariat's environment in comparison to his other jobs and appreciates the contact he has with other Christians. "Joseph Tam and Christine Kim are good managers – they understand the staff and have a good relationship with the team and they're very approachable – this was one of the factors that influenced me to come back." Joseph is looking forward to using his skills and past experience to enrich his team.



## HR NEWS

### The Big Three!

As our organisation continues to shift towards supplying a diverse range of parish products and services, skills development in the area of communications, technology and leadership is becoming more paramount.

In November, a training kit will be issued to all SDS staff explaining the various new initiatives planned for 2005-2006. This combination of programs will be called *The Big Three*. The kit will explain the following three programs in detail, as well as information regarding our revised

education policy and other administrative matters.

#### 1. Communications

We communicate constantly and as we seek to further the mission, we all need to be communicating at optimum level. Nine, half-day modules of customised skills development by Crouch Consulting will commence in February for all staff and will run through to the end of 2005.

#### 2. Technology/desktop applications

New Horizons offers a wide range of support programs that our staff will be able to access on or off-site. These include Word, Excel, PowerPoint,

Access and other MS skills. Further technical training such as project management, programming and systems will also be offered.

#### 3. Management development

Over the next 12 to 18 months, a staff group will run through the Management Development Program (MDP), run by Integro, which will officially commence February 2005. This course focuses heavily on the management and leadership style of the individual and consists of five, two-day modules conducted off-site.

Course content includes: self-leadership assessment, establishment of trust, coaching and counselling, team development, engagement and commitment

These three initiatives have been put together in direct response to issues raised in last year's organisational assessment and will assist the secretariat not only in providing good career opportunities for staff but also in delivering outstanding service excellence to our customers.



Sydney Diocesan Secretariat  
Level 2, St Andrew's House, Sydney Square, NSW, 2000  
PO Box Q190, QVB Post Office, NSW, 1230

Editor: Natasha Percy  
Telephone: (02) 9265 1627  
Facsimile: (02) 9261 4485  
Email: editor@glebegroup.com.au

# SDS News

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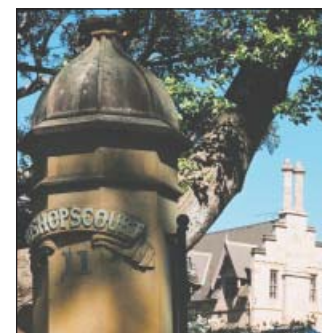
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## Planning for excellence

In late September the members of the GAB and the SDS met at Bishopscourt for their annual review of performance and strategy. Our board members offer their services in a voluntary capacity. They are a mix of clergy and business executives who express their mission calling through their skills in managing organisations such as GAB and SDS. Several of our board members are also members of Synod and Standing Committee and several have close connections with other Diocesan organisations. This means our board is well balanced across the business and church communities.

To open the day's work, Archbishop Peter Jensen led devotions and then outlined his needs from the Secretariat and the Glebe Board as support for the Diocesan Mission. Our



Chairman, Phil Shirriff, said: "Interaction between the board and the Archbishop is essential if we are to align our work and goals with the needs of the Archbishop and the Diocese as a whole".

The board spent valuable time assessing the differences between their responsibilities as members of the Secretariat and as members of the Glebe Board. "We run GAB/SDS as a seamless operation but our board has to be very conscious of the specific responsibilities that attach to SDS and the GAB and to our subsidiaries individually, particularly in risk management, compliance and governance" says Chief Executive Officer Rodney Dredge. The board is conscious that the modern regulatory environment is placing more and more pressure on board members in all types of organisations. That pressure is felt very keenly in a volunteer board working in the not-for-profit sector.

One of the key agenda items was a discussion of how the organisation could more closely support the Diocesan



Members of the GAB/SDS gathered at Bishopscourt in late September to discuss the future shape and direction of the Secretariat.

Mission. Our senior staff made presentations on topics such as investment tactics for 2005, achieving a culture of service excellence, the New Capital Project, the Diocesan Development Fund (DDF), the Church Property Trust and Parish Products and Services (PPS). These topics were debated extensively and the board ultimately concluded that the time was right for the Secretariat to develop a more mission-focused shape and direction.

The two main projects discussed were the DDF and the establishment of a specialist PPS function. Through the DDF, the Secretariat aims to bring together the Diocese's lending and borrowing activities into one organisation, expanding existing services to Diocesan organisations and generating new sources of income for the Synod. Both these projects were approved to go to

draft business plan stage.

The strategy of service excellence underpins the successful development and implementation of initiatives such as PPS, NCP and the DDF. There is a national trend to embracing service excellence. Indeed the focus extends as far as the Federal Government with the appointment of Human Services Minister Joe Hockey to oversee the delivery of government services.

These strategies all have significant implications for the big picture, a picture which is very encouraging in the short-term as well as in the future. "We have an outstanding foundation in the Secretariat on which to build more effective mission support," Mr Dredge says. "That the board has sufficient confidence to support taking these initiatives to the next step is extremely encouraging."

## STOP PRESS: Investment results

Early each month we estimate the previous month's investment result. The estimate for the Glebe Administration Board (GAB) for October is a surplus of \$6 million !!

This would take GAB to around \$30 million for the year

to date – a truly remarkable figure and a credit to everyone in GAB and SDS.

We need to keep a perspective on what is happening because the possibility of a market correction is very high

and we still have a way to go to catch up on the 2002 loss.

It is however a credit to the professionalism of every employee that such results can be produced in what is a

relatively small organisation. Praise the Lord !

Rodney Dredge

