

New era for SDS

The next six months will be a time of change for SDS as the sale of our funds management business, Glebe Asset Management (GAM), goes ahead and the changes that this entails start to be rolled out on a personal and professional scale. As announced on Thursday, October 6, the Glebe Board decided to sell GAM after a detailed review. While the work done on these funds by our staff is 'of the highest order', CEO Rodney Dredge says this decision was inevitable due to the changing nature of the investment environment and "our capacity to benefit from new opportunities presented by the investment industry".

Replacing GAM will be a new service which brings the benefits of externally man-

aged investments together with a sharp focus on the needs of the Diocesan family. This new service will greatly reduce the heavy regulatory burden shouldered previously by GAM. SDS will continue to manage St Andrew's House, cash and mortgages internally.

Rodney says the new structure will serve the church by reducing the risks of litigation and damage to our good reputation flowing from the rising number of regulatory burdens in today's environment. It will also mean we have a wider range of investment options open to us, which will yield a potentially higher investment return.

This step is necessary for SDS as we move forward in an industry environment that is ever-changing, Rodney asserts. Our consultants say this move

is necessary considering market trends and industry dynamics, as well as the requirements placed on funds management companies today and the size of GAM. The Glebe Board has come to the conclusion that these functions are best managed by specialist service providers.

At the moment, these changes are perhaps felt strongest at a staff level, with 10 people to be retrenched. Rodney says that amid this necessary but difficult move, the organisation is trying to make sure these staff members are treated as well as possible. "We are actively working to meet their future employment needs and make sure they are properly cared for financially and pastorally," he says.



From the CEO

In the Secretarial Department two conflicting emotions are in the air. A sense of relief that Synod is over and a sense of quiet elation that the new team's first Synod went so well. Well done Robert, well done to the team. And thank you to everyone in SDS who came to Synod to support us and to listen to those debates, which shape our future.

In the last issue I wrote about "vision" in the context of the direction and alignment of SDS. Following this last Synod, we need to ensure, more than ever, that we are totally focused on our objectives and that we are completely aligned. I have no serious concerns on this, but following major shaping events like a Synod, it is always worth pausing and taking stock. We will be doing just that at the Q3 staff briefing.

Pausing and taking stock allows organisations like SDS to undertake an annual reality check and to retest our planning against the requirements of our Synod. Given the level of change in SDS activities and culture, we emerged from Synod in very good shape. With a relatively small change to parts of our DDF strategy, we can move forward on all fronts into 2006. New Capital will go on for another year, Parish Services and Clergy Services will continue development and Property Services and Technology will make their mark very soon.

Be encouraged, we can look forward to another exciting year in 2006.

Rodney Dredge

Diary Dates

November 8

ALCO meeting
Glebe Australia Ltd meeting

November 9

Finance & Loans Board meeting
Car Board meeting

November 10

Finance Committee meeting

November 14

Mission Taskforce meeting
Mission Property Committee meeting
New Capital Project meeting
Standing Committee meeting

November 16

Secretariat Board meeting

November 18

Church Property Trust meeting

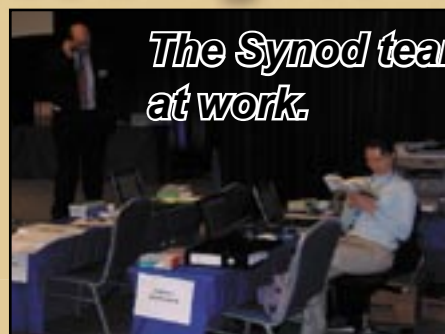
December 8

Finance Committee meeting

December 12

Mission Taskforce meeting
Mission Property Committee meeting
New Capital Project meeting
Standing Committee meeting

SDS lightens up!



The Synod team hard at work.



The Sillars exchange tea trolley tips.



Did somebody say KFC?

All systems go!

The reports produced by our Accounts Payable team have a new look due to the recent decentralisation of the subsidiary ledger system, which is now producing reports that are more usable and orderly. Our accounting officers and treasury are the main beneficiaries, as the new-look reports give them a better indication of the cashflow of our funds and increased ability to monitor them.

The decentralisation process was started by Management Accountant Ian Sharpe in December last year, planning possible procedures with Gerry Taheny from D360. Once larger procedures such as the D360 upgrade were accomplished, preparation for the decentralisation began.

As the system went live on Saturday, September 24, Team Leader, Accounting Operations Alan Woods and Accounts Payable Clerk Jennifer Sarginson were in the office to process work in order to test the system as it moved from a test environment

to a live one. Applications & Development Specialist Lesley Lim was on hand to make sure the technical side of the upgrade ran smoothly. All went to plan until the final processing of payments around 4pm, which failed to work properly due to screen setting errors. "It was when the program finally went from a test to live environment that we realised it had failed to compile correctly," says Alan.

Jennifer, Lesley and the D360 team stayed back until 11pm as the system was reverted to the original form and the processing started again.

"I was checking that the payments went through correctly, that the screens were suitable and that the system was convenient for our operations," Jennifer explains.

Nathan, who was at his wife Liz's birthday party on the night, was standing by to revert the system to the original and backup the system as the process went along.

Alan then rejoined the D360 team the following morning to



The fruits of their labour: (l to r) Alan Woods, Jo Jo Aggabao, Jennifer Sarginson, Nathan McQueen and Ian Sharpe with the new-look reports.

test the system again and ensure it would be workable for Monday morning. "It's extraordinary that this recovery was doable at all: the team did well," Alan says.

According to Alan, the benefits of the decentralisation are already being felt. "We now have better control and understanding of the payments going out and our Accounts Payable function should be more efficient." Adds Jennifer: "It's

meant we can cut down on some double-handling of invoices and it helps me to be able to post things into the system before they're due to be paid."

While the implementation of the decentralisation was hard work, especially on a Saturday, Jennifer says she wouldn't have done it any other way. "As the user of the system, I wanted to be here and make sure it worked."

Looking back at Synod

At the end of a busy fortnight, Diocesan Secretary Robert Wicks takes a moment to reflect on Synod 2005. "From my perspective, I am generally pleased with how Synod ran and I'm particularly appreciative of the hard work put in by all the staff to make things work as they did."

This year's Synod gave the team some logistical challenges as the Archbishop recast the Diocesan Mission at Town Hall. "It was encouraging to see 1300 people from around the Diocese at the Town Hall to hear the Archbishop deliver his

presidential address and Mission presentation," says Robert.

He certainly feels the Synod this year was productive. "The amount of business we got through was very pleasing," he says. He adds that there is always a tension between making sure the work of Synod gets done and allowing enough time for the members to speak. This challenge was especially strong this year with controversial issues such as affiliated churches on the agenda.

Robert's focus now is follow-up work in preparation for November's Standing Committee meeting, as well as taking care of other work that he was unable to attend to while Synod was on. "I'm currently doing an archeological dig through my in-tray," he says

with a wry smile.



(l to r) Robert Wicks, Nerida Paul and Martin Thearle at Synod.

God loves...

paris!

Paris is, for many, the most beautiful city in the world, a city of lights, romance, history and art. For Communications Officer **Natasha Percy (pictured in red)**, Paris was all these things – but most of all, a mission field.

From 10 to 24 September, Natasha took part in the annual Camp Amitié, run by the French arm of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. For two weeks, the Camp Amitié team went to universities around Paris, having conversations with students and handing out gospel booklets and invitations to evening events also run by the team. Natasha was the only Australian in the group of French, English and American Christians who took part in the program, which was run entirely in French.

For Natasha, it was both a challenging and encouraging experience. "I realised how much I have to learn about the French language and about ef-



fectively engaging with people of different faiths but I also learnt that God can use me, no matter how ill-equipped I feel," she says.

Natasha says she feels blessed by the support she received from her SDS colleagues leading up to and after the mission. "It made such a difference to know my colleagues were interested in what I was doing and were praying for me as I did the mission."

All set to survive the HSC exams

As students across the state sit their HSC exams, five SDS staff members are sharing the journey: not as students, but as fathers. Our 'HSC Dads' – Alan Woods, Peter MacLean, Jim Anderson, Warren Richards and Vinod Ram – have also experienced some of the stress that goes with these all-important exams.

Warren's son Andrew is the fifth child in the family to sit the HSC. "It doesn't get easier," Warren jokes. "I've been trying to support him in a quiet way, being there to help and guide him as much as I can." Warren says the strong support Andrew has had from their church, St George's Engadine, has made the journey easier. "Andrew will find his niche and we know that will be in God's plan," he says.

Peter MacLean says it's natural as a parent to have



Exchanging tips: SDS's HSC Dads, (l to r) Jim Anderson, Vinod Ram, Alan Woods, Warren Richards, Peter MacLean.

concern for the preparation leading up to the exams. His son Jared has a permanent position to go to next year as a 2nd-year apprentice mechanic, which Peter says has lessened the pressure. "I think the main thing I can do is encourage Jared to do his best and pray

that God will give him clarity and concentration as he does his exams."

Jim has also felt the stress of preparing for the HSC as his son James, a strong athlete, completes his exams. "It's hard not to coerce kids because they've got to want to do the

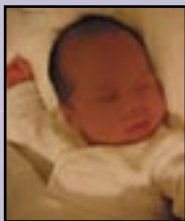
study themselves," he says. The Anderson family are looking forward to a holiday in France in December which will give them a well-earned rest.

Alan Woods is experiencing the HSC for the second time as a parent with his daughter Alice. His main concern has been to help her use downtime constructively. "I've wanted to make sure she has a balance between study, work, social life and church," he says. "Alice is a very relaxed person and she's taken it all in her stride."

Vinod adds that it has been important for him to stay informed so that he can help his daughter Jennifer as she faces HSC deadlines and cut-off dates for university courses. "The load on the students can be enormous," he says. "You have to go through it as a parent to understand the pressures."

baby joy!

On September 6, Equities Portfolio Manager Amanda Lee and her husband Billy welcomed their baby boy, Hezron, into the world. Amanda says they didn't decide on the name, which Billy had seen while reading the Bible, until the end of her pregnancy. Hezron, a descendant of David and ancestor of Jesus, seemed a good name for a child who Amanda and Billy pray will come to know Christ as he grows.



There have been some tough days, but now that he's more settled, Amanda is more able to enjoy the adventure of motherhood. "Every day there are new things to learn," she says.

New faces at SDS

This issue, we introduce two new starters who will play vital roles at SDS. By now, most staff will know Jeni Sillar, who joined us in October for reception and administrative duties at St Andrew's House. Jeni comes to the Secretariat from Servcorp, where she performed a similar role, and has been enjoying the change from a secular to a Christian work environment.

"People here are a lot more relaxed," she said. "Everyone has been accommodating and understanding."

Jeni adds that this new job combines well with her Christian home life and her activities at St Andrew's, Wahroonga, making it easier to focus on Christ all week! Jeni is enjoying working in the same office as her dad, Corporate Secretary Andrew Sillar, although she

Jeni Sillar



says their busy days mean their paths don't cross much. Jeni is studying Events Management at TAFE and may also play a role in SDS's developing Corporate Services area.

As Andrew Sillar leaves the Secretariat to study at Moore College at the end of the year, John Chapman will take over as the new Corporate Secretary. He joined SDS on October 10 and will work alongside Andrew for the next two months.

John Chapman



John's past positions include Senior Vice President – Finance for Burns Philp and Director, Finance & Administration for Caltex. John attends St Swithun's, Pymble and is also Honorary Treasurer of the NSW Branch of the Church Missionary Society. John is settling in quickly. "I'm looking forward to becoming familiar with the affairs of the Diocese," he says.



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Preparing for all scenarios

Imagine this: You arrive at St Andrew's House one morning to find fire engines and barriers surrounding the building and flames leaping from the windows on Level 2. What happens now? How do you know everyone is safe? What about the important jobs you had planned for the day?

Technology Manager George Lymbers has recently employed Consultant Ian Cook to put into place contingency and recovery plans in case that day should ever come. "Disaster recovery planning is like an insurance policy: you pray that you never need it, but you're thankful for it if you ever do as you can't buy it after the event," says Ian.

SDS has already invested heavily in plans to ensure critical business data is well protected and Ian's work builds on this solid foundation. He is conducting a business impact assessment that will identify and assess SDS's business functions, determine our dependence on technology and estimate the potential impact of a disaster on those functions. This information will then be used to determine the order in which systems should be restored so that the most essential functions

at SDS can be carried out with minimal delay or financial loss, maintaining the highest levels of service delivery possible under the circumstances.

This assessment will also help determine the 'best fit' Disaster Recovery (DR) solution to implement. It has already identified the need to upgrade the DR website, make some changes within the St Andrew's House server room and application upgrades to allow them to run at the offsite DR location. "It's better that we do this work in advance in a stable environment than having to do so under pressure in an emergency situation," explains Ian.

Finally, this DR plan (which includes recovery strategies and restoration sequences) will form part of the IT Reference Manual which is being developed concurrently to pull together all the necessary technical details of the business and technology systems employed within SDS.

George advises that Ian's work is intended to provide the infrastructure base for SDS's Business Continuity Planning initiatives. These plans would set out processes to allow SDS to keep operating in the event of building loss or a prolonged technology outage such as the



Server outage is one of the many scenarios being discussed by Technology Manager George Lymbers and Consultant Ian Cook as they work on Disaster Recovery plans for SDS.

one in Auckland that left the whole CBD without power for over 2 weeks.

These plans will also identify the most suitable staff members to support technology restoration, run critical business functions manually and address customer and regulator concerns. Also addressed will be logistical issues such as where employees would work and how they would be provided with communications, office equipment and supplies, as well as access to

the vital information needed to carry out SDS business.

Ian sums up the situation: "Statistics taken in the US after 9/11 reveal that, of those companies that suffer a disaster, 30% are out of business within 12 months due to the loss of business-critical data and a further 30% within 3 years through loss of business and customer confidence. For the sake of the Diocesan Mission, we must make sure this doesn't happen at SDS."

passion in profile

Warren Richards

Position: Lending Manager, Investments



What does your job involve?

I analyse loan applications, prepare loan proposals and see them through to approval. I also oversee the documentation and settlement of loans and their ongoing conduct.

What motivates you?

One great thing about my role is being able to meet my customers' needs. Where the borrower is a parish or church organisation, it is encouraging to play a small part in bringing a project to fruition. I aim to live according to Colossians 3.

How do you express your faith outside work?

I am involved in a number of activities where my faith is displayed, especially in the soccer club where 4 of my children play. I am also on the parish council at my church, St George's Engadine.

