

Lorna Cookson Lorna Cookson's friendly smile and helpful voice (with Kiwi accent!) has greeted us at our Reception desk for the past couple of months. Lorna started full-time

with us in mid-August, and as she answers the phone and operates the front desk, she is very much the face of our organisation. Says Corporate Services Manager, Andrew Tilsley, "Lorna's appointment reinforces SDS's focus on service excellence, as she has demonstrated a great capacity to serve clients and visitors to our premises in a most professional and pleasant manner."

Lorna moved to Australia in April from a very small town in the North Island of New Zealand, where she worked as receptionist and administrator. "I love Australia - it's a very vibrant place," she says with a smile.

Lorna is relishing her job here and enjoying the contact with people in the Diocese, and the general public. "I'm a real people person - I enjoy meeting and greeting people and if I can answer their questions, it really makes my day." Lorna is also enjoying the

Christian environment here. "Everyone is working for the Lord and I feel like God has led me here," she says. Lorna is married with 3 children and 4 grandchildren, and attends the Maori Anglican Fellowship (Te Wairua Tapu) in Redfern.

Stephen Pain



Stephen Pain has been working with us since mid-August, reporting to General Manager, Investment Services, David Cannings. "It's been great to have Stephen join us and the experience he brings from over 20 years in the financial services industry is already proving to be a great benefit to Glebe," says David. Stephen has worked for companies such as Aviva, CGU, and Portfolio Partners, and specialises in financial services, funds management and personal savings and protection. He will be looking after our master custodian arrangement, securing our service level agreement and working on transitional planning as we move through a time of significant change.

Stephen is actually a resident of Melbourne, where he lives with his

wife, Sue and their three children, Jen, Sarah and David. He makes the trek up to Sydney at the beginning of each week and flies home each Friday. He says the environment at SDS has helped to make him feel at home in Sydney. "Everyone has made me feel so welcome - there is a distinct difference here and a strong feeling of fellowship," he says.

Stephen is a direct descendent of William Cowper, the first Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral, and is also the great-great-grandson of Bishop Pain, the first Bishop of Gippsland, so working for SDS has the added benefit of leading him to find out more about his family. "When I first told my father I would be working here, he was quite thrilled - there is an element of excitement about maintaining contact with heritage lines," he says.

Majella David



Majella joined us late in September as Senior Financial Accountant, and in November, she will take over the position as Velysia Mock takes maternity leave.

Majella was in charge of the finance team at Moran Health Care

Group and she has held senior finance positions at companies such as Johnson & Johnson and Coopers & Lybrand (now PWC). She is looking forward to the challenge of the new General Ledger project, especially as she recently implemented a new accounting system in her previous position.

Majella is looking forward to learning more about the unique accounting function of SDS. "From what I have seen so far, the business processes here are quite complex," she says. "I hear there are always new projects happening and this will suit me as I like variety."

As we look to improve our current business processes, Majella is also hoping to draw on what she learnt while studying for her MBA, majoring in business process reengineering (which she completed in Scotland). "I appreciate the highly ethical nature of this organisation - it gives me a goal to aspire to and reminds me that my purpose in life is to serve God, rather than focusing on profit generation," she says.

Majella is originally from Sri Lanka, but came to Australia after spending 24 years in Dubai. She and her husband, Gehan, and children Adrian, Leanne and Kiara have attended St Matthew's, Pennant Hills for 3 years.

Engadine Moves Forward

When Rick Lewers became Rector of St George's, Engadine in October last year, the church property was a construction site and the congregation was meeting in the school across the road. A loan from the Glebe Administration Board had allowed work to start on the building, which was structurally in need of renovation. On Sunday September 17, Rick preached a sermon in the revamped church building for the first time since his appointment.

The building has changed dramatically since it was featured on the front cover of SDS News last year. Then, the building was structurally awkward, the roof was unsound and improved amenities were needed. Now, the building has



The previous interior in the Engadine church building

around 100 extra people and includes 2 'crying rooms'. The exterior of the building is also more attractive, with improved parking and gardens.

As the parish was unable to secure a suitable loan with a bank, the renovation process got off to a difficult start. The Glebe Administration Board was able to accommodate them however, initially with a 12-month loan to fund the construction and then a medium-term loan. "The parish met our credit criteria and we have been pleased to be able to support them and help them in their mission," says General Manager, Property Services, Michael Cambridge.

Rick says his parish has a lot of work to do as they strive to reach their area with the gospel. While the power is ultimately in the gospel, he says this new building will help the parish to reach the local community. Already, the parish has held three evangelistic dinners



Happy ending: Lending Manager, Warren Richards, and St George's Engadine Rector, Rick Lewers survey the revamped church building, which is making services and events easier to run.

in the building, hosting at least 100 people at each. "The building serves families better now. It's more inviting and comfortable, it's more childsafe, we can have more control over the environment in the services and the general functioning of the building makes it more convenient for doing ministry."

High achiever



Congratulations are in order for Helen L'Oste-Brown, who has finished a Bachelor of Business, majoring in Accounting, at UTS. Helen completed the course over 7½ years while working full-time, 3 years of which have been at SDS.

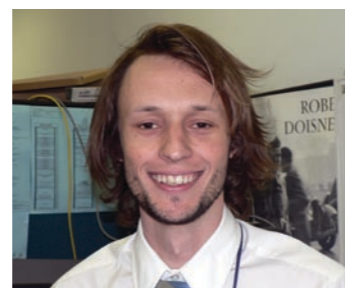
While working full-time and studying made life busy and sometimes pressured, Helen recalls that both complemented each other well. "I could use what I was learning and

apply it to my job," she says. "I found the study not too difficult because I was working in the industry and could understand the concepts."

Helen says it took a few days after she received the results from her final subject for the realisation to sink in that she had achieved something so significant. "It was such a great achievement to do a good job at work and do well in my study." Senior Financial Accountant, Velysia Mock, says she and the rest of the accounting team are thrilled. "Helen has worked persistently and tirelessly in completing her degree. The accounting division congratulates her on a well-earned achievement."

Helen feels her study has set her up well for the future. "What I've learnt in the workplace has been backed up with my study." She is looking forward to a well-earned break, but also hopes to study again in future. "I love to study and keep my brain active," she says.

Passion In Profile: Nathan McQueen



IT Support Analyst

by the knowledge that in heaven, there will be no computers (as I understand from Scripture).

How do you express your faith outside work?

My wife Liz and I have been at church at Christians in the Media in Annandale for going on 4 years now. It's been a very exciting place to be and to watch God work (and we love it!). I spend my time there running the music team, a small bible study and talking about how I need to get on with doing more evangelism.

What does your job involve?

My job is to keep our servers up and running. Every now and again they break and cry out for attention. I tend to them, then the cycle starts all over again ... (you get used to it).

What motivates you at work?

I work with a fantastic team and we get plenty of support for evaluating and developing new technology. I am also motivated

A Platform for the Future



Doing the groundwork: Gerry Taheny with the implementation plan for the GL project.

Over the coming year, the replacement of our General Ledger will be a key project here at SDS. The GL affects the functions of a whole range of departments including Parish Services and Investment Services. Chief Financial Officer, Michael Blaxland says the replacement has not only been a response to the insolvency of our current D360 system's supplier earlier this year, but also a conscious choice, to ensure our accounting is done to the highest possible standard, and to allow for improvements to be made to our business processes in the coming years. "The General Ledger upgrade gives us the opportunity to start with a virtually blank sheet of paper and select a system which will provide some significantly enhanced features," says Michael.

Project Manager Gerry Taheny is doing the groundwork for the replacement, and to date

has interviewed all key users of the General Ledger at SDS. He is currently documenting our needs for the new system. The next step will be to analyse the features of the different systems available in the marketplace, with a final decision on a software provider set for the end of the year.

"The GL sits at the heart of a network of applications and as such its capacity, usability and reliability impacts on virtually every other division of SDS, as well as SDS's clients," says Michael. This new system will allow us to take extra leaps in performance capabilities and improve the standard of our reporting and presentation, as our ability to analyse our data grows. The system is expected to provide enhanced security to further safeguard our data while ensuring users have appropriate levels of access.

"As one of our key IT systems, the strength and capacity of the GL is closely aligned with a measure of the health of this organisation," says Michael. "The fact that we're doing this says a number of things about our organisation, namely that we have a desire for continuous improvement and that we're not satisfied with 'near enough is good enough'. It also shows that we have a more proactive attitude towards managing risks." While the replacement is a huge task, Michael is confident we have the skills and resources to handle it successfully. "Doesn't the administration of God's kingdom deserve the best?"

Building Bridges in London



Chief Financial Officer, Michael Blaxland, was able to draw some wisdom from the Church Commissioners in London on his visit to the UK in August. Michael accompanied CEO, Rodney Dredge in meeting several people in senior roles in the Church of England. It was Michael's first opportunity to make contact with senior executives in the Anglican Church outside Australia. These included the Head of Policy and Planning, the Head of Finance, the Chief Accountant and the Chief Management Accountant. "They were open and friendly to us and we had an interesting discussion about the roles and challenges we both face," he says.

Michael especially valued the conversation surrounding the Church Commissioners' implementation of a new General Ledger. "We were able to talk to them about the software they had selected and in doing that, we identified a package, which we otherwise might not have considered," he says.

Michael and Rodney were able to encourage the Head of Policy and Planning as he deals with issues within their church structure, especially the way that funds are allocated and spent within the church. "I realised how blessed we are in Sydney with the people, systems and structures we have," he says. "Our visit provided an opportunity for us to encourage our colleagues in London and learn from them as well."



A Strategy for Service

A month or so ago we made what could be seen as a relatively minor change to responsibilities across the senior staff team. This means a change in the responsibility for cash management from an operational responsibility to one based on strategy, specifically, investment strategy.

Why is this significant? It represents the one of the last steps in moving the Secretariat towards its final shape as a service provider to the Diocese.

Parish Services as a concept is now well accepted. The "rightness" of focusing our work through a specialised delivery department has been well proven. That cash is now a strategic responsibility cements the fact that GAB will be "served" in a strategic rather than operational sense.

As the benefits of a strategic approach to investment become clear, we will see the same level of acceptance for Investment Services as we do for Parish Services. Likewise,

Technology Services, Corporate Services, Accounting Services and Legal Services are all structures through which the Secretariat will contribute to our very close family and to the wider Diocese.

Three years ago we launched the culture change program "Service Excellence". Our training regimes, our communications processes and our awards schemes are all based on reinforcing our roles as servants to those who minister to the lame and the lost.



From the CEO

Days to go . . .

Take a look at the new sign outside my office. It is a "Days to Go" board and it will count down to Day Zero, 28 September 2007. Day Zero will be my last day in the office as I retire and a new era begins for the Secretariat. Over this next year the demands associated with the major change programs will diminish. For instance, I expect that our investment structure will be fully operational and will be making a major contribution to our business. Parish Services will have another year behind it and will be further advanced in its support of front-line ministers. The new GL will be well on the way. DAWN will have dawned - and so on.

The idea of a "new era" refers to the need for SDS and GAB to pause for a few years and to consolidate the changes made during my term as CEO. It will be an exciting and challenging time. In many ways, building a business incrementally requires considerably more discipline and leadership than does major change. I have to admit to feeling a little sad that I will not be leading you through this next five to ten years. They will be great years.

Three key dates occur between now and "Day Zero". They are at 300, 200 and 100 Days to Go. On those special days we will celebrate the new era, we will brief you on how the search for my successor is going and we will talk more about what the "new era" means.

Rodney Dredge

Open To Change

In our *InFocus* video presentation at our last quarterly briefing, we heard a few ideas and opinions around the office on the subject of our new open plan arrangement. As we prepare for our move to the Ground Floor, there is a combination of thoughts about the change that will go with it - and possibly some mixed feelings about the prospect of our CEO's open office!

Going open plan will be a big adjustment for some, with one of the benefits being a greater sense of community. We will no doubt get to know each other in ways we had never imagined.

It will be an adjustment for everyone, with some people (hehem Rodney) feeling especially the challenge of keeping the volume down. Others (for example, Maria) might feel that concentration takes more energy than before, with a higher level of noise to block out. But these are challenges we face together - and no doubt they will give us a new appreciation of our colleagues and the contribution each of us makes to our mission.

The new world of Ground Floor North awaits us, with its challenges and opportunities. The countdown continues!



"Mmaaarrriiaaaa!": Rodney's voice rises to the challenge of an open plan office.

SDS Lightens Up!

Managers euphoric over new artwork in revamped foyer.



Peter Peters applies for Manager, Tea Trolley Services



No hiding for Chief Helpdesk Operator.

Waiting for the lift need not be an uncomfortable experience.



Reducing Risk in Parishes

Risk management is now a topic that is well and truly reaching parishes, with 19 seminars held around the Diocese in August and September. The seminars were held to launch SDS's Parish Risk Management Program, which will continue to develop as new modules are released over time. "Our aim has been to see every parish represented at one of these meetings," says Clergy Services Manager, Michael Newman.

Each presentation was opened by the Archdeacon of the region, emphasising the importance of risk management in parish life. Michael then introduced the Parish Risk Management Program and gave a summary of the Parish Services offering here at SDS. An introductory DVD explaining the program in more detail was also screened.

Parish Relationship Officer, Warren Stanley led attendees



Peter Peters and Michael Newman handed out Parish Risk Management Program kits at the end of each seminar.

through the Parish Risk Management Program kit and each evening finished with question time, with the local Archdeacon, Michael and Warren on hand to provide answers. CEO, Rodney Dredge and General Manager, Parish Services, Mark Payne also attended several of the meetings.

After each seminar, a kit containing the first module of the program, along with the introductory DVD and a CD containing resources such as suggested signage formats was handed to a representative from each parish. Michael has been encouraged by how well each seminar has run. "The seminars have been positive and we have been received well," he says. The team have had helpful feedback from parishes so far and they plan to draw on this as they produce further modules.

As the seminars have been run, it has become clear that parishes throughout the Diocese are at different stages. "Some are doing risk management already, some can see what they need to do, and some may go back to their parish and think 'this is going to be a huge job'," explains Michael. After the seminars, Michael adds that the next step for the Parish Services team will be to help



Introducing risk management: Archdeacon Terry Dein opens the seminar at Christ Church, St Ives in September.

parishes to implement the program on a practical level. "The challenge is to keep risk management on the agenda and keep the momentum going, as well as providing training and support where we can."

Archdeacon of North Sydney, The Ven Terry Dein, says he expects the program will help to eliminate potentially dangerous situations for

parishes. "I think the program will raise parish awareness of risks that they probably live with at the moment and of which they take little notice." He adds that this will indirectly help the image and ministry of the parish in the local community. "The program should reassure people that the church is a safe place - it will subconsciously be a plus for ministry."

From Corridor to Shopfront



Michael Cambridge and Sharron Lewis with Croaky, the star of the shopfront window, in Town Hall Arcade.

Some weeks ago, the Kidzlink Sydney office moved down to a shopfront in Town Hall Arcade. The move meant not only a change of location, but also an entire change of scenery for the ministry, which had previously occupied an office on Level 1 of St Andrew's House.

Kidzlink Chairman Sharron Lewis says that, while no move is easy, the new location is suiting the ministry well. "Moving to the Arcade has given us the most wonderful opportunity to promote our work - we have had so many people come in," she says. "We're a bit limited with space but we've been very good at using what we've been given."

SDS IT has been able to supply the ministry with a printer and photocopier, adding Kidzlink to DAWN, and attending to any complications promptly. "We went out of our way to help them because

it's our mission," says Technology Manager, George Lymbers.

The main focus of the Kidzlink Sydney office - which incorporates GFS and Kidsplus - is to provide training, programming and resources for these ministries, as they are run in parishes across the Diocese. This one office oversees 17 GFS groups and 40 Kidsplus groups, catering for around 2000 children.

Sharron has appreciated the help of SDS during the move, namely the assistance she received from Portfolio Manager, Property, Sharyn Miller. "The SDS staff have been wonderful and most obliging," she says. "Everyone has bent over backwards to help us, which has been really great, especially considering they've had to do their normal day jobs as well." Sharyn Miller is quick to echo Sharron's goodwill. "Moving a church tenant to the Arcade was a unique and seamless exercise," she says. "Kidzlink dealt with the move brilliantly - they were enthusiastic and understanding of the reasoning behind the move."

Sharron says it is an exciting time for Kidzlink Sydney, which has just been restructured and renamed. "God's guidance and provision has been amazing as we've stepped out in faith," she says. Look out for new banners and signage, which will be displayed alongside the ministry's mascot, Croaky.

Lessons From Willow Creek



Chicago was the place to be in August for Christians in leadership as the Willow Creek Global Leadership Summit took place. CEO, Rodney Dredge and Chief Financial Officer, Michael Blaxland were there to take some lessons from speakers including Bill Hybels, Ashish Nanda and Jim Collins. "Willow Creek was really valuable as it's one of the few places where you can study leadership in a Christian context in a systematic manner," says Michael.

He adds that the experience of being in a 'megachurch' was encouraging. "Sitting down with about 7000 people in a large auditorium to worship God and study leadership is a real experience," he says. "When you see the resources, professionalism and vitality of the speakers, you realise you're in a special place."

Some of the themes explored

were The Life Cycle of a Leader, Enemies of a Growing Church, The Risky Business of Hiring Stars and Customer Service and Satisfaction - When Business Thinking Fails the Church. "All the sessions had pearls you could pick out and apply," Michael explains.

Some SDS staff in leadership positions will attend the videocast of the Summit in Sydney in October. Opportunities like this are valuable as we seek to foster leadership and initiative at SDS, says Rodney. "A church does not easily breed leaders - there is something about the need for humility and selflessness that in some individuals inhibits leadership qualities from shining through. Balancing those attitudes espoused in the Bible with an understanding of sound management and leadership qualities gleaned from industry is the challenge." He adds, "If we want our church to be great, then we must develop leaders - going to the Willow Creek videocast can help staff to learn what it takes to be a strong leader."