

# Pacific Fonomarae 2012



Participants at the Opening Ceremony

Pacific Fonomarae was held at Lakeland Park, Queenstown (NZ) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> January.

A total of forty one participants and leaders from American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands attended, including our International President Ruth Chikasa and her daughter Petra from Zambia.

The theme for the Fonomarae was "Cross over- break camp - move on" based on Deuteronomy 1:6-7. A gathering of representatives from countries in the Pacific Fellowship gives everyone an opportunity to interact, learn and understand each other's culture.

Following are comments received from some of the participants:

## Australia:

"At exactly midnight on 'New Years', we watched the fireworks as we flew out of Perth to embark on our trip to New Zealand, for the 2012 Girls' Brigade Pacific Fonomarae. The week was filled with sightseeing around the beautiful Queenstown and great sessions that would help us with our own leadership in our companies. But by the end of the camp, I left with a whole new appreciation and awareness of how Girls' Brigade is at work around the Pacific Fellowship and within the lives of girls. The camp was also an amazing opportunity to form friendships that would last a life time!" **Meredith**

## Things I enjoyed:

- Meeting all the girls and leaders from other GB countries. Everyone was so friendly and happy. I have made so many strong friendships (including you Alison, and Georgia and Anna!)
- The venue – NZ is stunningly beautiful and I was constantly amazed by the mountains and scenery. Our sightseeing opportunities were well planned and interesting.
- The campsite – the facilities were comfortable, food was really good and we were also given a lot of freedom to move around the campsite grounds, which was lovely.
- The opportunities to learn about the other cultures and especially the different way GB operates. Can't believe

Australia is the only Pacific country that provides a cadet program! The culture night was a lot of fun and I learned a lot.

· I also enjoyed being able to host the kids living with cancer at the end of the camp. It was a great opportunity to share GB and help others in the community. And the little kids were so cute!

· You - Alison! We couldn't have had a better leader – you made everything really cheerful and was so well organised I felt like I didn't have to worry about anything. THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!!!!

· Ruth – she is an amazing person and listening to her talk was so inspiring – I learned so much from her. We were blessed to have her present." **Katy**



Australia teaching a bush dance on the Cultural night.

## Cook Islands:

"Well I would like to firstly congratulate you Jennifer on a job well done in organising this 2012 Fonomarae. It was a lifetime experience of finding friendship, sisterhood, and seeking, serving and following our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Meeting and getting to know the other Girls Brigade members within our Pacific Fellowship was a most treasured honour for me from the Cook Islands. The programme that was set for the weeklong camp was fun and enjoyable, we had shared so many things such as our crafts and our culture with the other Pacific Fellowship members that we met. The event which was held in Queenstown was such a spectacular place with beautiful scenery and lots of attractions and I really enjoyed the activities and the fun days out and it was a very good camping ground for such event. The devotions in the mornings were great and having to eat a lot was even better. (hahaha) I have made many friends, and we shared our Girls Brigade sharing's with each other and learning from others to get the goal of getting more girls involved into Girls Brigade and being involved in community activities and being known as Girls Brigades, and this Fonomarae camp

has educated me more about leadership skills and life skills such as



Naomi, IP Ruth & Mita (Cook Islands)

saving/budgeting and other important things in life than materials things of this world. This year with the confidence I have gained from this camp I am going to be an officer for the seniors in our company and from what I have learned from the Fonomarae, I have the skills and the knowledge and also the support of my fellow friends to do this task. Once again thank you for accepting me and Naomi into camp and making us feel welcome. Im am saving hard and hoping to meet you all at our next gathering in Cape Town, South Africa and also to the next Pacific Fonomarae.”

**Teamita (Mita)**

#### **New Zealand:**

“I really enjoyed the whole Pacific Fonomarae heaps. It was great to meet so many people from different countries and to hear about their culture and what Girls’ Brigade is like in their communities. The workshops and outings were fun and interesting. On the last night we were able to host a meal for Camp Quality a camp for children living with cancer. I helped serve the food for them and after the meal we performed a dance with poi which we had done earlier in the week on the cultural evening. I am glad that I took part in this camp, it was a great experience.”

**Olivia**

“The entire Pacific Fonomarae was a lot of fun so it's impossible to choose one favourite part. Some of my favourite activities were going on the Gondolas, the Luge and 'Country Crafts' where each country brought a craft and taught everyone how to make it. The crafts were things like making bracelets, cultural painting, dancing and paper craft. It was great making friends with the other girls and learning about Girl's Brigade and the cultures where they come from. I enjoyed the Fonomarae, it was an amazing week and I loved it.”

**Autumn**



The NZ delegates with IP Ruth, IVP Jennifer, Deputy Chair Renelle, GBNZ National Commissioner Glenda and Fono Team

“This year, I attended Girls’ Brigade Pacific Fonomarae. I had an incredibly awesome time there, meeting new people and making lots of friends. It was great getting to know everyone and their cultures and how different Girls’ Brigade is in countries that aren’t far from our own. One thing that I really enjoyed was when we had Cultural Night. Seeing the Pacific coming together was so fantastic and a great feeling when we all joined in the dances, because I know that everyone who attended had an amazing, amazing time. We

all belonged there, right at that moment. I felt like a true Brigader.

Thanks, Mrs Box for the wonderful job you did and the rest of the people involved. If it wasn't for you and everyone else, we wouldn't have had a great time like we did.

Thank you!! **Christy**

“The week started off with an opening ceremony where everyone wore their Girls’ Brigade uniform, it was great to see all the different variations of the uniform and badges.

Throughout the week we attended workshops on GB programme planning, managing your money and taking devotions. It was interesting to talk to brigaders from different countries and see how they run their GB programme and how it is different to our own. We also did a number of excursions to see some of the attractions in Queenstown these included visiting the kiwi park, going on the gondola and luge, going on the TSS Earnslaw (a steam boat) out to Walter Peak Station (a farm) where we got to feed deer and watch sheep shearing, and visiting the Old Chinese Village in Arrowtown.

Each country had been asked to bring along an activity or craft from their country to share with everyone, this was heaps of fun and everyone got to take home a memento from each country.

On the Friday night we had a cultural night where each country had to perform an item; it was amazing to see all the different costumes and performances from each country. Everyone took part and was enthusiastic making the evening a great success.

Overall the week was lots of fun getting to know Girls’ Brigaders from different countries and from our own countries who we hadn’t met before.”

**Michelle.**

Autumn (NZ) & Katy (Australia) serving dinner on the night we hosted Camp Quality.



#### **Papua New Guinea:**

“On behalf of the Papua New Guinea PF participants I would like to sincerely thank the organizers who have made it possible for us to participate in this worthwhile event. The girls surely enjoy, gained insight and developed skills on camping and basic ideas on organization of activities that could be applied at their local GB setting. This PF leadership training experience will certainly enhance their planning and organization when challenged with the task to help organize similar events in PNG and our local GB Companies. The girls easily adapted to both the cultural diversity and change in the environmental setting and enjoyed the art and craft sessions the most besides the site seeing adventures. This is obviously an indication of a great organization of sessions and excursions as well as provision of a safe, happy and secure environment which created

ease to cope and adapt during this period. Thank you once again to the coordinator and the team for such a breathtaking experience.

The luge and gondola rides were certainly horrifying experiences but once been through I did certainly overcome the fear of fright of height and I believe the others did also."

**Bella Wartovo**



Papua New Guinea delegates



IP Ruth Chikasa taking the opportunity to learn how to kayak on Lake Wakatipu.

### **Solomon Islands:**

#### **Reflections by Laeheng Sasabule, National Commissioner**

"This brief report attempts to highlight what impacted us most during the week-long GB Fonomarae at the Lakeland Park Christian camp site, in Queenstown, NZ. For the six of us from SI this meeting was a first time ever for us and so we had felt small and humble, needless to say rather nervous. However, we are honoured and privileged to be given the opportunity to write this reflection. Below are some highlights that impacted not only us but everyone who had attended and that in due course will ripple as far as our respective home island countries.

The Fonomarae has given a great opportunity for young girls and leaders from different countries to interact. New friends were made or old friendships renewed and strengthened through sharing of experiences, knowledge and skills and challenges and concerns exposed and addressed.

A privilege and honour to meet the person at the helm of the GB International. Very seldom would a few people who, on one hand, are too distant to have had the opportunity to meet and listen to presentations that were spiritually

enriching and educational. On the other hand, we believe the GB International President had the opportunity to learn from us that we believe also made a rippling effect up the ladder.

Motivating young Girls to gain confidence in Leadership. Our girls are encouraged to have seen other girls just like themselves to have stood the ground in leading and fully participating in country presentations and reporting.

Learn and accept each other's unique cultures through crafts and traditional dances. Accepting and understanding each others' rich diversities strengthens unity.

Realized that planning and preparation is a very important aspect of becoming young Leaders.

#### **Travelling**

Throughout our travel we only encountered one setback and that was when two of our participants had no fares from Auckland to Queenstown. However help was on its way, and so the fares were paid and we all made our way to Queenstown and back to Auckland. Indeed, our God is a loving one and we wish to thank Him.

#### **Hospitality**

The accommodation and food is excellent, we have been allocated to our comfortable dormitories provided with blankets and warm clothing. Food is excellent and in no time my girls were easily adapted to what they have never eaten before. The hospitality was really superb.

#### **Programs and Activities**

The programs and activities were well planned and organized. The sightseeing was splendid especially the places we went to were fantastic. It was our first time to see and explore lots of different things. The sessions were also very good and we have gained a lot in all the sessions. Our trip was really worth it.

#### **Conclusion**

My personal reflection on this Fonomarae is an eye opener and it added new sights to some of us. It was a first ever for Solomon Islands to send full participants since 1985. Even though travelling overseas and attending such gathering is new to my girls, they have learned a lot by interacting with the other girls.

Through session and group's discussions they have gained confidence in open sharing and at the same time learned from others strength and weakness as well.

We have been equipped from this Fonomarae and we will try our best to implement what we have gained to help and improve the work of GB in Solomon Islands.

#### **Word of Thanks**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Otago Area of Girls' Brigade in NZ and the Pacific Chairperson for making this Fonomarae successful and our International President for coming to this event. Lastly thanks to the New Zealand GB

Company who donated money for one of our girls.

You have showed us your love in giving, which reminds me of the song that says; "Little is much when God is in it".



### Hosting Camp Quality:

Each year, members of our local Lions International groups host a camp for children with cancer and this year it was held at the same venue as our Pacific Fonomarae. They came into camp on the Saturday so we decided as a service to the community that we would host them for a BBQ tea. The “cooks” spent a very busy afternoon preparing the food as we catered for 110 people.

Our Fonomarae participants were encouraged to interact with the campers from Camp Quality and it was great to see everyone mixing together. Cook Islands and New Zealand presented their cultural items after tea, and then we joined with Camp Quality in the releasing of balloons to signify the beginning of their camp. There were 18 children there with cancer aged 5 to 15 years; each is allocated a companion who looks after them for the week. These companions are volunteers who complete specialised training. There were also about 25 Lions members at Camp who organise all the activities, food etc.

Hosting Camp Quality was on our final night, following this was a pamper and movie night which everyone enjoyed.



Niue delegates leading evening worship



Petra Chikasa & Veronica Mondo from PNG at the budgeting workshop



Preparing to release the balloons



Lyza Faoa, American Samoa demonstrating a dance on the cultural night

## Thanks

to those who helped make Fonomarae the success it was – the hard working team from Otago Area Girls’ Brigade – Rachael, Emma and Rose, Elizabeth from West Auckland and Renelle from Australia.



**Pamper night –**  
IP Ruth manicuring Emma’s nails, while Rose prepares for her next “customer”



Safety brief before kayaking on Lake Wakatipu



Rachael setting the theme of “Cross over – break camp – Move On” at the Opening Ceremony

*Thanks to everyone who supported this Fonomarae in any way, from fundraising in order to get your girls to Queenstown, to those who provided financial sponsorship. From comments received everyone enjoyed the experience and they are now using the new skills learned to further the work of GB in their countries.*

**Jennifer Box, IVP – Pacific Fellowship  
February, 2012.**