



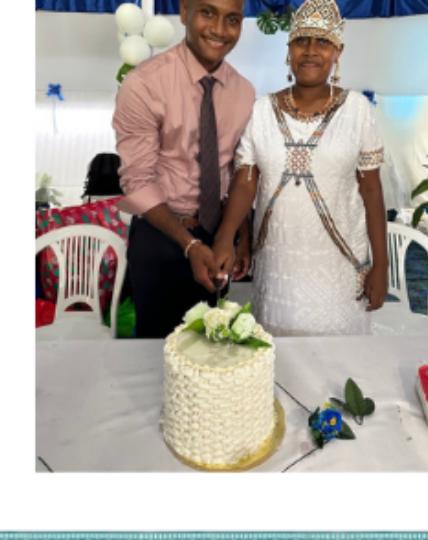
## An Engagement & Wedding

Tim, the young man who lived with us while finishing high school, recently became engaged and married. His bride, Sally is a young woman he met at the Youth With A Mission Discipleship Training Course.

We experienced a crash course in *weddings Solomon-style* as we were heavily involved in the engagement and wedding plans. Sally is from Malaita Island and Tim is from Makira, so navigating the expectations of both cultures was very interesting! We are grateful for our Solomon Islands friends who advised us and helped us in so many ways!

Some of the interesting aspects of the engagement/wedding:

- Friday, the day before the wedding, we and Tim's family (minus Tim) went to Sally's home to receive her from her family. A brief ceremony was held which included Tim's parents presenting gifts to Sally's parents. At the end of the ceremony, Sally came out of the house wearing traditional shell money decorations (see above). Her brother spoke and reminded Sally that she was now a part of Tim's family. Then he presented her with a dowry of shell money.
- Sally's family sang a farewell song and then Tim's aunt and sister led her away, placing traditional mats under her feet as she walked to the waiting truck.
- Meanwhile, the groom waited at our house to receive her.
- Sally, and her female relatives who came along, helped sweep around our house in a demonstration that Sally would be a hard worker in her new family. (We had cleaned out the gutters that morning so they would have something to sweep!)
- Sally spent the night before the wedding at our house.
- We purchased a pig as part of our contribution to the wedding feast.



## Partnerships!

Networking and linking people is something we very much enjoy. Here are some examples of ways we have recently partnered with others.

### Salvation Army Solomon Islands

Last year, the couple leading the Salvation Army here shared with us about a child safety program they were launching. During the conversation, Tim suggested that translating their children's book into Pijin would help the trainers effectively present the information to Solomon Islands children. Around that same time, our Pacific Area office was contacted by the organization that developed the materials about translating some of their resources into Pijin.

In the end, Tim lead the translation of the children's book, which has been very well received. You can read more about the partnership here: [Safe and Unsafe](#)



### Solomon Islands Deaf Association

We are not very knowledgeable about the needs of the Deaf, but we have wanted to help where we can. Martha recently helped a visiting colleague, who works with the Deaf, connect with the Ministry of Education and the Archbishop of the Catholic Church to talk about the goals of the Solomon Islands Deaf Association.

The Deaf Association is working on a 1000 word illustrated dictionary of Solomon Islands Sign Language. They have been trying to produce illustrations using a computer and mouse. Martha introduced them to an iPad as a tool. Thanks to donations, three new iPads were provided to the team and Martha has helped train the team in using them.



### Assisting Educators

We were recently invited to attend a conference for principals from around the Solomon Islands. This event provided an opportunity for us to connect with people like these two young women from Ranongga Island. Over lunch, we were talking about the value of teaching kids in their own language. This week they came to our house so I could teach them how to make a big book in their own language. Now they can teach others how to make books in their Kumbokota language.



### Bible Society of the South Pacific & Literacy Association of Solomon Islands

When the Bible Society began an initiative to fund literacy projects, Tim helped the Literacy Association of the Solomon Islands (LASI) put together a funding proposal which provided funds for beginning reading programs in three language communities where a New Testament is available.

Literacy classes were held in 22 local churches and the new readers were excited to learn to read. As students continued to meet together, they were able to study the Bible together using a *Know Your Bible* study which had been translated into their language. By the end of the first year, 419 people had completed the program. This year, 709 new readers are enrolled!



Priscilla the National Director of LASI

### Financial Freedom

 This woman's daughter sends her money from Australia via Western Union. Before she learned to read, she had to pay the clerk about \$6 USD to fill in the forms everytime she received funds. Now that she can read and write, she can fill out the forms, sign her own name and receive the full amount! That's financial freedom!

### YOU!

We are especially thankful for our partnership with YOU, our supporters and prayer partners! Because of your partnership, we are able to live and serve in the Solomon Islands and to make the most of the opportunities God puts in our path. We are grateful!

At the end of August, we will be returning to the USA to spend five months visiting our families and our partners. We hope to see many of you. After a vacation stop in Alaska, we will land in Dallas. We plan to visit Albuquerque in October (Hello, Balloon Fiesta!) and travel to Michigan and Minnesota as well.

We are hoping to find renters for our house here in the Solomons while we are gone. *Will you please pray we can find suitable renters (who like dogs!) in a timely way?*

Please contact us if you would be interested in having us share about our ministry with your church, Sunday School or other groups.

**Tim & Martha Matzke**

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