

Beyond All Reason

G O D A T W O R K I N T H E S O U T H P A C I F I C

Beyond All Reason

GOD AT WORK IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

A BIOGRAPHY

CATHY R. KREIS



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In memory of all those who
have already gone ahead,
leaving a legacy for us to follow.

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable...
for who has known the mind of the LORD?...
For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things,
to whom be glory forever. Amen.
—Rom. 11:29-36

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Preface

Cathy Kreis has assembled a great heritage of one of God's miracle movements in reaching the lost for the Kingdom. This book will have you cheering for the miraculous ways the Lord blesses those who venture to do major efforts for His glory.

—Dr. Dennis E. Hensley,
Taylor University

Acknowledgments

Many people have set out to write accounts about the events that have been fulfilled among us. They used the eyewitness reports circulating among us...Having carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I also have decided to write a careful account for you...so that you can be certain of the truth.

—Luke 1:1-4 NLT

THIS BOOK WOULD never have been possible without the inspiration of my gracious and almighty Father God, who inspired and gifted me to write this documentary. Nor could the task have been finished without Dr. Narayan and Mrs. Savita Nair, who urged me to persevere. Deepest gratitude to the many college administrative staff, especially Sarita Narayan and Narend Nair, who cooperated, with unconditional love, in spite of my endless research questions. Much gratitude goes to Cathy Bibb, Michael Kerns, and Verna Schaffer, three proofreaders who provided immeasurable encouragement through the original manuscript. And humble thanks to Dr. Dennis E Hensley who educated and challenged me when I began to get serious about writing then encouraged me through the process.

Special thanks to my supportive family and friends who waited patiently for the first edition... surprised, no doubt that this second edition has become a reality... your prayers (the “prayers of the saints”), are the greatest encouragement a writer can receive.

This account of God at work in the South Pacific is true. Facts and photos were gathered from college archives and from individuals who actually lived these experiences. If I have missed names or events of importance, your forbearance is requested. No omissions were intended. The distance and time required for research, the challenge of communicating clearly between languages and cultures, and the fading of memories all played a part, as well as the varied degrees of willing participation. Suffice to say that I have done my best. Where I was unable to receive direct quotes, I have at least given credit to most of those whom I found had some affect on or involvement in the work.

This second edition of *Beyond All Reason* was a Godsend that occurred in a miraculous way when newly-founded Redemption Press filled a need and “redeemed” my book. God’s timing was perfect. The College of Theology and Evangelism Fiji plans to celebrate its fortieth year with a grand reunion in November 2014. I’m one grateful author, thanks especially to Athena Dean Holtz and her staff!

Soli Deo Gloria

Cathy R. Kreis, © 2014

Introduction

SPARKLING BLUE-GREEN WATERS and wide sandy beaches; majestic mountains covered with pine forests; the aromas of fragrant frangipani and pungent curry. Fiji is a land of contrasts, a complex union of two major cultures and many small ones, a land of love and brutality seething with desire to make something of itself. Like the tide's ebb and flow, its tensions lie just beneath the surface of endless hope. Independent from Great Britain since 1970, this nation named itself the Republic of Fiji in 1987. Its strategic geographic location makes it the hub of the South Pacific.

Far-sighted Fijian forefathers wisely protected the property rights of indigenous islanders in perpetuity. Short-sighted British colonizers injected a new culture from India, serving selfish interests, and making promises they could never keep. Generations later, this ethnic people group is held captive in a homeland that is often inhospitably dependent upon its skills.

This tension has motivated four military coups in the past twenty-five years, disrupting any momentum for growth, affecting the people and nations that are joined economically and emotionally to it.

¹ Distrust of leadership, specifically between military and governmental departments, has resulted in repeated outbursts of violence. During these periods of high emotion, decisions have been made that appear to have hindered long-term, peaceful resolution.

Indigenous Fijians hope for a land where “progress” will include respect for their ancient village culture, values, and leadership. Keeping a pace of life that includes

chieftain traditions seems archaic to others. Their opportunities for education or hands-on training in skills to improve their lifestyle are slow in coming. With limited resources to communicate or develop understanding outside of their culture, frustration and impatience result.

Indo-Fijians hope to assimilate the modern world into Fiji, and they want an aggressive model for change. Business and political acumen have put some at an economical and educational advantage. They are eager to see the nation move forward as quickly as possible. Stifled in progress, persecuted, and unable to become landowners, many have been forced to leave the country. They seek asylum in other nations that welcome their education, expertise, and energy. They are heartbroken to leave the land they have called home for generations.

Christians of all cultures are caught in the crossfire. While political and business leaders toss verbal darts and slurs at one another and the system, prayer warriors across the nation (and around the world!) plead for caution and wisdom to prevail. Struggling to rise above its “developing nation” status, Fiji seems caught in the grasp of the ruler of this world. And in the midst of this troubled arena stand a man and woman, their lives fully committed to follow the will of God.

Prologue

ON THE SLOPE of a low hill overlooking vast fields of sugar cane, with a backdrop of lush, majestic mountains, sits a tiny college that already has, in its first forty years, impacted the world for Jesus Christ in ways we may never fully grasp.

Humble beginnings and a philosophy that models servant leadership, the ministry that emanates from the College of Theology and Evangelism Fiji has grown beyond all reason.

Despite the required changes to its name over the years (established first as Fiji Bible College in 1974) its core values and heart of ministry for the region has been steadfast. With its emphasis on evangelism and discipleship, the college continues to carve a legacy that is unmistakably Christ-centered. It was faith in God that launched this ministry, and that unswerving trust stands tall in the face of often overwhelming odds.

This is the story of the school's remarkable founders and partners and the electrifying events that have shaped this work of God, so far. May you be inspired to enjoy a heart-connection with this ministry, birthed from a simple vision and which, only through the supernatural grace of God, has touched tens of thousands of lives throughout the Pacific islands and around the world.

Let us go now to the South Pacific.

CHAPTER 1

The Vision and Call

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

—2 Tim. 2:2 NKJV

THE VISION

ISLAND PEOPLE “DO church” very well. Years of practice have evolved some church bodies into organizational hierarchies with a sense of self-satisfaction and legalism. Instead of teaching and modeling humility, servant leadership, and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, church leaders have worked on perfecting choirs for song-fests or raising funds for building improvements. In some cases pastors are simply employees. The ministry is considered a profession and a business, and not a calling. Some pulpits are used to center attention on cultural or national issues instead of leading parishioners by example to brokenness before a Holy God. In many cases, the Bible is set aside for the budget, and many people have become spiritually starved.

Recognizing this and carrying a broken heart for their people, Narayan and Savita Nair developed a passion to become instruments God might use to draw people to Him, and to put His Holy Word back into the pulpits of the South Pacific. Their vision in 1970 was of a small college where young people would be trained and inspired to help fulfill the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:18-20). It was a simple but most challenging concept, and the years have proved their vision to be abundantly fruitful.

Missionaries first came to the South Pacific in 1797 from England to Tahiti, and since that time, island people have struggled with the perceived invasion of white man and his religion. Accounts of violent death abound, but the perseverance of these godly missionary men and women and their lifestyle of faith left a positive impression. Eventually the walls of resistance were broken down. They found that it was not “white man’s religion” after all, but an incredible gift made available to everyone who believes; a personal relationship restored with almighty God, through Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, in any land, human ego and pride will flavor most everything, so for more than two centuries denominational structures developed.

In most Pacific island nations the influence of historic evangelism is very tangible in local churches because islanders carry the magnificent old hymns and new praise songs to inspiring heights. There is a certain excitement and ethereal beauty gained by sitting with a congregation of island people as they sing with their multiple harmonies, impressive volume, and great enthusiasm.

As a gifted preacher and teacher, Narayan has served as principal of the College of Theology and Evangelism Fiji for all but two of its years of operation. By God’s grace and the help of many Christians, this Christ-centered institution is without peer in all of the South Pacific. It was during his training in Australia that this east-Indian native of Fiji was called to lead the ministry.

There are three things to keep in mind as you read on. First, Narayan and Savita were *insistent* that this documentary clearly gives God all the credit for every facet of growth, and the far-reaching effects of this ministry. The Lord, at work in and through them and their partners in ministry has, by His mercy and grace, accomplished these things that are often described as “beyond all reason.” Second, this book is but a snapshot of many years of history. AFC Fiji/South Pacific is a living, breathing entity that cannot be fully encompassed in these pages. The last chapter does not contain the end of the story. Third, those of us who were involved in this book project also give complete credit to our gracious heavenly Father who equipped us to do it.

THE CALL TO SERVE

For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance shall arise for the Jews from another place...Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

—Esther 4:14 NKJV

Narayan Nair, born in December 1936, was one of nine children—six boys and three girls. His father and mother, both born in Fiji, were the offspring of indentured laborers brought from southern India. In their home, Hinduism was the religion. As an infant, Narayan had been dedicated to their multiple Hindu gods.

His father, Madhwan Nair, died when Narayan was twelve years old. Madhwan was an alcoholic, but was a hard worker, and his death left quite a gap. God stepped in decisively to change the direction of Narayan's young life. His grandfather wielded great influence over the family's future. Narayan's older brother, considered by their grandfather to be a brilliant student, was allowed to continue his Fiji schooling. Then he was sent overseas for higher education. He earned a medical degree at Karala University in India and continued further training in England. He ultimately decided to remain in England as a practicing physician.

Narayan also dreamed of going overseas to become a physician. In his dream, his brother would return to Fiji with his education completed, work as a physician to help Narayan with his school expenses then off Narayan would go to England. But that dream had to die, because his brother chose to stay in England. Narayan was required to leave school and work to help support the family. As the eldest son still living in Fiji, and considered a less brilliant scholar by his grandfather, he had no choice. While working at various sales and service jobs, he began taking correspondence courses. In this way, he finished high school (Form 7) and started an apprenticeship as a pharmacist, which he considered was the next best thing to becoming a doctor.

While working as a shop assistant in 1952, Narayan met Alan Packer, a young missionary from New Zealand, who invited him to a Christian youth camp one weekend. Narayan had become active in Boy Scouts, and he had twelve close friends in that troop who did everything together. They all went to the camp, and that weekend Narayan gave his heart to Jesus. All twelve of his friends became believers in Jesus Christ within a short time.

When Narayan arrived home after camp and shared his good news with the family, his grandfather became angry and made him a family outcast, but stopped short of throwing him out of the house. Narayan explains, "To him it was the lowest I could go. But I didn't mind because I was forgiven of my sins, Christ lived in my heart, and I was going to heaven."

Alan and his wife Margaret helped establish the Brethren Gospel Chapel. That was where the Scout Troop met each week. The young couple began teaching solid biblical truths to the boys. Narayan remembers that each of his twelve friends made a commitment to pursue Christian work in one form or another. They joined the church in 1953. With

a wry smile he reminisces, “Out of all those boys, I am the only one who actually went into full-time ministry. When we started the college, all but one turned away from us and never tried to encourage us in any way.”

With the exception of one friend, no one chose to stand with him, and that one friend later moved to Norway. Narayan recalls him with heartfelt pleasure because in spite of the distance, this childhood friend has called or personally come to encourage him on several occasions. “He helped us with expenses for my daughter Vivienne’s wedding, and actually flew from Norway to be present for the celebration,” Narayan said.

After becoming a member of the Brethren fellowship, Narayan continued his biblical instruction and earned his qualification as a Sunday school teacher. He was then sent out to preach in the villages. When Alan and Margaret Packer had to return to New Zealand, their departure left a big gap in church leadership. The young couple meant a great deal to the boys, and they struggled with the loss of the Packers for a while. Narayan and a few of his young friends determined to keep the church functioning, and so stepped up to fill the gap. The church continued its ministry in the community.

In 1958, another Sunday school teacher with whom he was working reported to Narayan that her parents had a young man they wanted her to marry, but he was not a Christian. She wanted the church to pray this arranged marriage would not happen.

“I called the church leaders together,” said the concerned Narayan, “and while we were praying, the Lord said to me, ‘You had better do something about it.’ So I did. I married that young lady in June, 1960.”

Ganga Bai “Savita” (Subrail) Nair, born in December 1937, was also one of nine children. She had six sisters and two brothers. As followers of Hinduism, they worshipped many gods. When she was fifteen years old, Savita met and chose to follow the Lord Jesus at a Gospel Chapel youth meeting. For making this choice, she could have been thrown out of the house, but Savita says, “My father was wise. He told me that one can be forced to obey, but one cannot be forced to remove what is already in one’s head and heart.”

Her father, Govind Sami Subrail, was wise indeed, and his love for his daughter was big enough to allow Savita to pursue her Christian faith. She reports with a smile and a twinkle in her eye that on his deathbed her father, who had always believed in one God, contrary to the multiple gods of Hinduism, accepted Jesus as his personal Savior.

Narayan and Savita became engaged after Narayan asked Mr. Subrail for her hand in marriage. This cultural switch from the tradition of arranged marriages caused some consternation in her family, but the young people persevered and were ultimately married

with full family approval, although their wedding actually took place after Savita's father died. They faced their future with joy, both wholly committed to the Lord. Narayan says, "It would have been impossible for me to carry on my ministry without a wife like Savita. She loves to entertain people and is a good teacher. She believes her main ministry to be that of a helper. Looking back, I know that God knew the type of woman I would need, and I praise Him for providing a partner such as Savita."

Not long after they were married, the young couple agreed that Narayan would begin the education and training program necessary to become a pharmacist. This choice required a move, first to New Zealand then to Australia to complete his training. Savita remained in Lautoka until after their daughter, Vivienne, was born. She and the baby stayed with Narayan's mother, Lachmi Nair, until Narayan found accommodations in Sydney. Then, they joined him.

Settled in Australia (1961) with Narayan doing his studies and working part time, and with baby Vivienne well cared for by one of her sisters, Savita also went to work. She was first employed in a factory that made army badges and other military decorations, but the factory was located in an area where she didn't feel safe traveling alone. Then the Lord connected her with Maria, a young woman from Yugoslavia she often met at the bus stop. Maria understood her concern and suggested Savita apply at the window glazing company where she worked. Savita applied and was offered employment. Shortly after the appropriate notice was given at the badge factory, she made the switch to the window glazing company. Although the work was harder, her income increased along with her sense of security.

Savita was able to manage the house with what Narayan earned at his part time job, so that everything she earned was placed in the bank. When they returned to Fiji, she had accumulated the equivalent of F\$2,000². Narayan's pharmacy profession did not flourish as they had hoped, and they were finding it difficult to make ends meet. Nevertheless, he carried on, and they resumed their active ministry with the Gospel Chapel and let their savings grow. The Lord was not yet ready to reveal His further plans for them. Their second child, Titus, arrived in 1964 and Savita carefully watched their expenses.

In 1966, Bill Cochrane, a preacher with the Australian Institute of Evangelism (AIE) came to Fiji to conduct evangelistic services. Narayan was asked to help organize the crusade. Cochrane was also invited to speak at the church and spent some time getting acquainted with Narayan. Bill asked Narayan if he would like to go to Bible school in Australia to prepare for the ministry of preaching. After praying for the Lord's guidance,

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the young couple knew they should go. The way was opened for Narayan to enroll in AIE's Illawarra Bible College that same year, and that required moving the family back to Australia. Narayan studied there for three years: two at Illawarra, and another year to complete his Masters of Divinity at Melbourne College of Divinity.

The wide network of God's people in the Nair's life included a young British couple, Colin and Brenda Salter. God had called them to attend IBC during the time Narayan was in his second year, although they did not have direct contact with each other at that time.

In 1968, the IBC campus moved from Stanwell Tops to Katoomba, a resort area located west of Sydney. Brenda shares some recollections:

I had read about IBC in a Christian newspaper. I wrote to the principal, Rev. Harold Whitney, and was accepted. I arrived in Katoomba, May, 1968. Things didn't work out as smoothly as I hoped, so I took a job at a local hospital for several months. During that wait, the college moved to Katoomba, so I was able to enroll in IBC February, 1969.

Colin had worked in (UK) coffee bars with a gospel beat group called "The Clearways" and had often come across AFC evangelists as the preachers at these events. His father and mother gently opposed his going to Bible college, but after he got his professional banking qualification (to fall back on!), they gave their blessing. He arrived in Katoomba, January, 1969—and within a couple of days was quickly pulled into a volunteer brigade fighting fierce brush fires. That news made a great first letter back to Mum!

During their course at Illawarra all students were required to write a project on reaching their own country with the gospel. I did mine on UK and Colin did Germany. [Narayan had done Fiji. Narayan's treatise had struck a chord with Mr. Whitney. The year we attended, his evangelism and financial support plans were set before us as the closest to perfect as an outline could be!] The only time we actually met Narayan was when he visited the college and was interviewed about his evangelism plan for Fiji. Years later we met Narayan and Savita at an international AFC conference, but we had followed their news with interest and watched as his treatise became reality during those years.

Colin and I were married a week after graduation (1970), and he was called up for the Australian forces...but failed a medical so didn't have to go to Vietnam. However, he was also not allowed to work at that time, so I went back to work at the hospital to help clear outstanding fees and buy our return tickets to England. We had been asked to join the AFC Great Britain team.

For Narayan it was challenging to study, as well as, work part time, but it was necessary for him to support the family and save for the return fare to Fiji. Savita was too busy with their children to seek outside employment. In 1970, as the newly appointed National Director of AFC Fiji, Narayan and his family returned home, more deeply committed than ever to serve the Lord there. But they had come home to no job or financial support. They were living in one room with only a tiny monthly pension of about F\$10 provided to church laity, and by then, they had added daughter Rachel to the family.

No strangers to adversity, Narayan and Savita had a firm grasp on the Lord and followed His lead, trusting Him with every detail. There was little discussion about Savita's savings. That was earmarked for a special purpose not yet revealed by God. Their day-to-day costs were bathed with prayer, and they saw every need provided, just as He had promised. It stretched their faith and gave them confidence to cling ever closer to their Savior. Then, an unexpected development arose.

The Governor of Fiji (British/pre-independence) maintained a *bure*³ on a large plot of land next to Narayan's mother's home in Simla. It was in a relatively prestigious area located near what is now the Lautoka golf course. His mother, Lachmi Nair, was leasing the land and had lived there for many years. As the British began liquidating their holdings in advance of Fijian independence, that leasehold property was converted to freehold and put on the market. The Governor would be moving on. The price was F\$1,700, but Lachmi didn't have the money. She was well aware that Narayan didn't either. She was facing a frightening change in her life and, at her advanced age, it was a serious concern. That's when



Savita and Narayan Nair, 1978

Savita's savings of F\$2,000 came to light, clearly the "special purpose" for which God had reserved that money! She was able to purchase the choice piece of Simla land, and Lachmi's home life went on uninterrupted.

The Lord had called Narayan to become a preacher; He also burdened the couple's hearts with the desire to establish a Bible college. This vision and the goal of providing solid biblical training for young men who would be called to spread the gospel message⁴ would keep them going forward for the rest of their lives.

An excerpt from a letter written in 1970 by Narayan to AIE/AFC headquarters in Sydney:

Fiji is a land of many religions. The Indians brought their own gods from India. Everywhere in the islands there are Indian [Hindu] temples and Moslem mosques. The Fijian natives have Christianity as their religion, but demon worship is very common....Cults of every description are on the rampage...they find disillusioned Indians and insipid Christians a fruitful hunting ground. Last week my wife had the joy of leading five Indian young women to the Lord...One night after a Bible class, three young men who were given to drink stayed behind [to talk]. They found Christ as their personal Savior.

The Nairs again sought active work at the Gospel Chapel in Lautoka, where they had kept their membership but this time the Nair family was not so eagerly welcomed. They were looked upon with suspicion. It was rumored that they had fallen from grace because they had joined an interdenominational work (AFC). Narayan tried more than once to share his vision with the church leadership. Rather than listen to or encourage him, they proposed another good work in Labasa, on the next largest island of Vanua Levu to the northeast. But the Nairs would not be swayed from their clear vision and calling; they continued prayerfully to seek land for their Bible school.

Their needs were simple; at least one house and enough acreage to add buildings and gardens. Savita preferred the older plantation-type homes that were of sturdier construction. Their search eventually narrowed to three good sites. The first property they selected was snapped up by its tenants, who had been given the option to buy. The second property was out of reach because of its high price. The third property, fitting all categories, ultimately became the campus on which the college now sits.

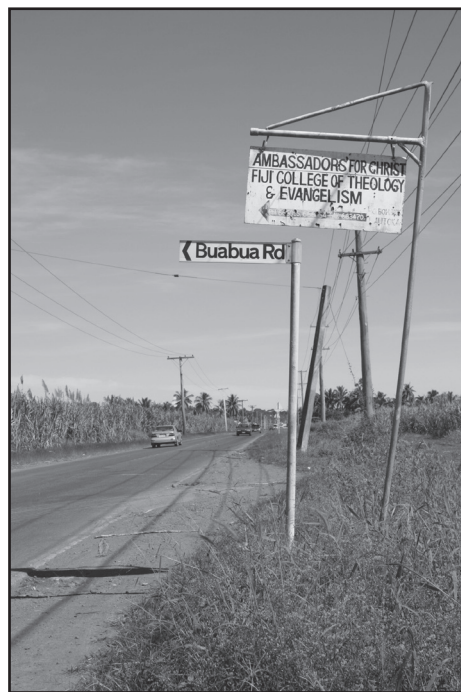
The property was on tribal land and had been leased by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. With Fiji's independence, the British were selling off their leases and leaving the

country. Savita estimates the original house was built in the 1880s, before her grandparents came from India. It was the last good property they viewed, and it met their needs. It had, however, sustained some damage from Hurricane Bibi. So the choice was made; it would do nicely. In 1972 the listed price was F\$11,000 for a sixty-four year lease contract (“mortgage”). The Nair’s had no money, but God’s great network was in place, ready to develop support for their vision in amazing ways.

When the Fijian landowner learned that the land would be used as a Bible college, he dropped his asking price to F\$9,000. Based on good faith, the contract was signed. Narayan and Savita, confidently making plans for the future, placed an “AFC/Fiji College” sign along the highway between Lautoka and Ba, pointing up Buabua Road. The sign is still there; lifting up the banner of Christ and directing people’s attention to God.

On a Sunday, soon after the sign went up, Bruce and Joan Crawford, on holiday from New Zealand, came to worship at Gospel Chapel. Bruce was a high school teacher in Auckland and active in the Baptist church. They met Narayan and Savita at church and began building a relationship with them over the next several days. Their discussions led to Narayan’s vision for a college. Bruce and Joan immediately committed to helping.

Bruce made arrangements for Narayan to come to New Zealand at the end of 1972 and visit several places for deputation⁵. Out of that trip, NZ\$5,000 was raised toward the lease; and it came in an amazing way: at one church where he spoke a woman came forward offering NZ\$1,000 to Narayan on the spot. Narayan was taken aback as he was unprepared to receive the funds. He asked the lady to hold the money for him, and he would let her know when he was ready to receive it. She immediately bought a piece of property with the money as an investment. Later he notified her from Fiji that they were in a position to receive the funds toward the college. She put the property on the market and it sold for NZ\$5,000—her original \$1,000 plus the increase were all sent for their use.



Sign on Queens Road between Lautoka and Ba

The leadership of Gospel Chapel grew more uncomfortable with Narayan's focus on developing the college. Finally, they called a meeting with the Nairs wherein they were publicly denounced and asked to leave the church. The leadership's discomfort was based on "Narayan's new training in evangelism." In spite of his faithfulness to the church and his gifts of preaching and teaching, they are reported to have said, "You are preaching the gospel in a new cart," and cited 2 Samuel 6:2-10 (NASB) which describes when King David erroneously transported the Ark of the Testament on a cart instead of on the shoulders of Levites. They were firm about wanting no part of Narayan's ministry.

Narayan and Savita did not argue, and the church's rejection did not deter them. Their call was clearly of God. They pressed on and established a new congregation, Banares Bible Church (now Lautoka Bible Church), about eighteen miles away. Narayan says of this trial:

Once we left, the Lord began to work. I realized I was not trusting God for my needs but looking for my church to support me..... I had forgotten God's word: "(He) would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power." (2 Thess. 1:11 NKJV)

Another couple from New Zealand, whose names have been lost, was traveling from Nadi to RakiRaki on holiday. They noticed the Bible college sign on the highway and drove up Buabua Road to enquire. Accepting an invitation to stay overnight, they enjoyed Savita's warm hospitality and good fellowship after dinner. Before retiring for the night, they mentioned having sold a property in New Zealand and their plan to tithe ten percent of their profit. In fact, their purpose for coming to Fiji was to rest and to pray about where to place their tithe.

A week later the couple returned from RakiRaki and stopped again at the Nair's home on Buabua Road for the night. In the morning, they told Narayan and Savita they had decided to tithe their profit toward development of the college, and wrote a check for NZ\$4,000 on the spot. Having said nothing about the amount of their mortgage to this couple, they saw God provide what they needed to clear the debt, *plus extra*, due to the currency exchange rate.

The college campus sits within an area populated mainly by sugar cane farmers. Several tribal villages are nearby (Lovu and Vitogo, for example). Most sugar cane growers continue to lease the land, providing the sugar that has been a staple of the Fijian economy

for generations. The mortgage on the lease is clear. The structures that have been built are debt free, but the lease on the property is due to expire in 2036. If the lease were not renewed, the landowner could legitimately take back the land and would certainly claim all the improvements on it.

Nevertheless, work and ministry continues undisturbed at the Buabua site. The amazing growth and development of this 5.5-acre leased parcel began immediately after the New Zealanders provided the funds to get started.

Narayan makes an important observation related to all that has happened since 1972 at the college:

There would be nothing here, no quality of education, no buildings, no students, no spreading of the gospel...if the Lord God had not raised up gifted people who responded to the call to join us in the work, people who were unique and different from one another in their ability or type of giving, but alike in their love of Jesus. It has been this underlying teamwork of caring individuals that has carried the vision onward and upward for the glory of God.

MEETING DR. NAIR

HAROLD MOAR—AUSTRALIA

We drove up a long dirt track. The bottom of the car was constantly scraping as we tried to avoid the worst of the ruts and bumps. We knocked on the door of the house to which we had been directed and a rather elderly looking, diminutive Indian gentleman answered.

We explained that we were from Australia and had just won a tender to build 130 houses for the government. We were looking for some Christian fellowship and the opportunity to assist in the development of young Christian men. Narayan Nair spoke to us for about ten minutes on the doorstep, and then offered me the opportunity to lecture at his Bible college.

It occurred to me that he was brave to the point of recklessness in making that sort of an offer after such a short interchange. Soon I learned that he only ever acted on guidance from above, and evidently he had received guidance on the spot.



Author (left) with Harold and Faye Moar in Lautoka, 1993

I lectured New Testament studies for four years, first to the diploma students doing a two-year course; then to the degree students who studied for four years. I had attended part-time at the New Zealand Baptist College some years earlier, so it was a challenge to keep ahead of the students, and I suspect I learned much more than they ever managed to get from me.

Narayan had started four church fellowships in his “spare time.” One of them was English speaking. I was increasingly given the responsibility of preaching at this service, to the point where he rarely attended, concentrating instead on the other fellowships for which he was responsible.

As someone who has many charismatic relatives, and in particular had been associated with a charismatic and very effective Baptist missionary, I had done a lot of study on the reasons for the seemingly unbridgeable gulf between their teaching and that of the non-charismatic conservative fellowships in which I had grown up. I decided I had resolved the issues in a way that would be understood and accepted by both sides, so did a series of teaching on the Holy Spirit for four Sunday mornings.

Narayan attended, and to my surprise, asked me to repeat the teaching at the Sunday evening youth group. This group was like none other that I have seen: 30-plus young men and about three women all attending from the various church fellowships. They were taught for two hours each Sunday evening before finishing with supper. It was a privilege to teach so many young people who were so keen to learn, rather than to play.

Narayan had a heart condition that required him to take up some form of regular exercise. As an uncle of the world class golfer, Vijay Singh, he decided that golf was a good solution. He got rather keen on the game, playing up and down the hilliest golf course I’ve ever seen each Wednesday afternoon. After several requests that I join him, he finally gave me no option. One day he arrived at my house with a set of clubs and a membership card that he had bought for me! This from the man who houses and trains

about 30 students each year for no fee, underwrites the finances of the affiliated church fellowships, and organizes several pastors' conferences in the surrounding island nations each year, not charging the attendees anything and giving them three or four study books to take home with them.

Narayan was brought up on the principle that if God leads you into a work, He will provide, and so he never asks for money, but somehow manages it all on a ridiculously low budget. He could not afford membership fees and golf clubs but, although his heart was not too strong physically, his heart was (and still is) incredibly capable of giving out abundant Christian love.