Rabaul Harbour, East New Britain, 1980.

Photo courtesy of Barry Oliver.

# East New Britain Mission, Australasian Division


## BARRY OLIVER

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The East New Britain Mission existed as an administrative entity of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church for eight years between 1964 and 1972. It administered the territory of east New Britain and southern New Ireland in Papua New Guinea, located in the South West Pacific Ocean.[1]

## The Territory and Statistics of the East New Britain Mission

The territory of the East New Britain Mission was "the northeastern portion of New Britain and the southeastern portion of New Ireland.[2] The administrative office of the Mission was located at Kamarere Street, Rabaul, New Britain, Territory of Papua and New Guinea.[3]

In the *1971 Annual Statistical Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,* the East New Britain Mission was listed as having 11 organized churches. Church membership at the end of 1971 was 1, 374. The mission had 30 active employees. Its tithe receipts for 1971 totalled US$13, 368.17. Its tithe per capita was US$10.81.[4]

## The History of the East New Britain Mission Structure

In 1947 the Bismarck Archipelago Mission was formed. It was connected directly to the Australasian Union Conference as were all other organized administrative entities in the Union. Charles Mitchell was the first president. The territory of this mission had been previously included in the Papua-New Guinea Mission. In 1947 New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville, Buka, the St. Matthias Group, the Admiralty Group, and adjacent islands were taken out of the Papua-New Guinea Mission and organized as the Bismarck Archipelago Mission.[5] The remaining territory of the Papua-New Guinea Mission was organized as the Papua North East New Guinea Mission under superintendent Robert R. Frame.

In 1953 with the formation of the Bismark-Solomons Union Mission, the Bismarck Archipelago was divided into four local missions that were organized as Bougainville Mission under Cyril Pascoe, Manus Mission under Karese Manovake, New Britain Mission under Eric Boehm, and New Ireland Mission under John Rongapitu.[6] The New Britain Mission was located on a compound at Palm Beach, Rabaul, and the Kavieng Mission was located on a compound in Mussau Street, Kavieng.

In 1955 The New Ireland Mission and the Manus Mission were combined and named the North Bismarck Mission. The headquarters of the Mission were initially at Boliu, Mussau. Leslie Webster was the president of the combined Mission.[7] In 1956 the headquarters of the mission moved to Kavieng.[8]

In 1957 the administrative office of the New Britain Mission was moved from Palm Beach to Kamarere Street, Rabaul. It was to remain there until the volcanic eruption of 1994.

In 1964 all of the entities in New Britain and New Ireland were renamed and reorganized. The New Britain Mission was reorganized and renamed as the East New Britain Mission.[9] Its territory was designated as the

north eastern portion of New Britain and the southeastern portion of New Ireland.[10] The president was Joseph Mave. It had 624 members meeting in nine organized churches. The headquarters were in Kamarere Street, Rabaul.[11] It was part of the Bismarck Solomons Union Mission.

The East New Britain Mission existed from 1964 until 1972 and was dissolved in that year, its territory becoming a part of the newly organized New Britain New Ireland Mission.[12]

## Presidents of East New Britain Mission (1964-1972)

Joseph Mave (1964–1966); Gapi Ravu (1967–1972).

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NOTES

1. Unless otherwise credited, the information in this article comes from the personal knowledge and experience of the author as a former president of the New Britain New Ireland Mission (1980 –1984), General secretary of the South Pacific Division (1997 --2007), and president of the South Pacific Division (2007–2015). The author acknowledges the assistance of Pastor Lua Bobore, Secretary of the New Britain New Ireland Mission, Pauline Yorio, Administrative Secretary of the Papua New Guinea Union Mission and Sarah Guguna, departmental assistant in the New Britain New Ireland Mission in the collection of information for this article.

2. *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, "East New Britain Mission," page 108, accessed February 14, 2020, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1972.pdf

3. Ibid.

4. *Annual Statistical Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 1971*, accessed February 14, 2020, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Statistics/ASR/ASR1971.pdf

5. *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, "Australasian Union Conference," page 75, accessed February 14, 2020, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1948.pdf

6. *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, "Bismarck Solomons Union Mission," page 83, accessed February 14, 2020, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1954.pdf

7. *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, "Bismarck Solomons Union Mission," page 68, accessed February 14, 2020, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1956.pdf

8. *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, "North Bismarck Mission," page 70, accessed February 14, 2020, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1957.pdf

9. *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, "East New Britain Mission," page 86, accessed February 14, 2020, http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1965.pdf

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

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