

Mind your Matters

Welcome to the launching of Manna Matters! From time to time we want to inform you of recent achievements or setbacks of Manna Publications. We also want you to know Manna's history, key workers, vision. As much as possible we want you to share our excitement over what God is doing around the world through Manna's easy-to-read Christian booklets. We hope the matters of Manna will matter to you.

Manna's meaning: What is this?

The Bible indicates that the name *manna* comes from the question the Israelites asked when they first saw it. They said *man hu* meaning *what is this?* (Ex 16:13-15). Many of our distributors around the world display Manna books in ways that evoke a curious "What is this?" This Manna-question has led many, like these Bulgarian gypsies (to the right), to "taste and see" that the books are good.



Just for fun—a quiz

What's an IOP missionary? Where did Fred and Lorna Morris's Christian literature work begin? What do we hope will be breath-taking about Manna books?

Our Mission

Publishing the truth of God in countries where Christian literature is scarce, literacy is low and error abounds so that people come to faith in Jesus Christ.

Where can you find missionaries like this?

This 'missionary' never gets tired or sick, never leaves for vacation. He is always there whenever the inquirer wants to consult him. This missionary can be honed to be culturally appropriate and speak the language well. The cost of his coming to an individual is phenomenally low—usually less than 75 cents.

We are talking about Christian literature—the ink-on-paper (IOP) missionaries that can go (and stay) where human missionaries could never go or stay. Manna Publication's Bible studies, commentaries, and children's books are priced so low that people who can't afford ordinary books gratefully buy them, read them and share them with others. They enter homes and hearts that will never be visited by a missionary.

Fred and Lorna's love affair with ink-on-paper missionaries

Advancing Christ's kingdom through Christian literature! That has been the passion of Fred and Lorna Morris, beginning in a lonely Christian bookstore

in Japan in the 50's, going on to publishing a faith-building magazine in the Caribbean region, then on to learning from Frank and Bob Laubach's methods how to write in easy-to-read English and now finally to a globe-straddling ministry of printing and distributing easy-to-read Christian literature.

Right: In 1951 Lorna left Australia (home) to begin missionary work in Japan. Fred followed in '52. They married and had three girls in Japan.





Breathless for the right reason

Look at the last sentence on page one (beginning with “That has been...” and ending with “literature”). It’s monstrously long—66 words! Manna Publications would carve it up into crisp, clear, simple sentences of 12 words or less. We want to take our readers’ breath away, but not because of marathon sentences. We want the Truth to leave them breathless—amazed. That is what the writers (mostly Fred) and editors of Manna books aim for. Hold it! Don’t imagine that every page is a thriller, but the over-all message of each book touches the soul, because it brings God’s word to the reader in a way that he or she can understand.

Left: Steve came during ‘furlough.’ Here are the children just prior to the family going to Jamaica.

Manna Publications is much more than easy-English Bible study guides

Manna Publications provides *commentaries* on every book of the Bible. It offers *books on topics important to Christians*. Lately it has been producing very appealing Bible story or character-building *coloring books* snapped up by adults as well as kids. And there is more. Manna *launches Christian literature ministries* in many countries. It finds and trains volunteer publishers in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe. Where translation is required, the volunteer publishers translate or recruit translators. Translation is made easier because the English is simple. These publishers find printers to produce usable but not costly books. They devise ways to distribute the books. Manna Publications pays for the first printing of several different books. Subsequent printings are paid for partly from Manna Publications and partly from sales until, finally, the Manna Representative is paying all of the cost. Thus a self-sustaining, independent Christian literature ministry in Kosovo or India or Uganda is launched. It is not always that easy, but that is the vision. And, thank God, it has been fulfilled by responsible, God-honoring locals in many lands.

Board for Manna Publications (U.S.A.) Inc. formed in April

On April 8, 2008, a band of Manna supporters came together to form a U.S. board to

- give guidance to Manna’s ministry,
- oversee the use of funds sent to Manna Publications,
- form a legal nonprofit organization which can provide tax exemption to donors,
- assure the continuance of Manna Publications beyond the Morris era,
- and to recruit others into prayerful support of Manna’s ministries.

Thank God for these dedicated helpers.



Seated: Lorna and Fred with daughter Jeanette Friedrich **Standing (l to r):** George Wilson, Michael Allen, Roger Green, Doug Weeks, Janeen Weeks, Dr. Chris Carlisle, Linda Carlisle, Gary Edlind, *Not shown is Arvid Vandyke who took this photo. He is shown on page 3.*

On Board—Dr Arvid Vandyke, Factory Chaplain and then some

After a career of teaching future teachers as a James Madison University professor, U.S. Manna Board Member, Arvid Vandyke, now ministers to the spiritual needs of workers in a Harrisonburg, VA factory where he serves as a volunteer chaplain.

He has participated in a service project in Kosovo as well as projects to provide housing for needy people in Tennessee and West Virginia. He formerly coordinated Harrisonburg's monthly Downtown Prayer Luncheons. His venture with Christ includes a loving relationship with his two daughters and three grandchildren (in the photo to the right). He enjoys his church family at First Presbyterian Church, Harrisonburg, where he has served on the Session and on the church's Global Missions Committee. His desire to reach people around the world and at home with Christ's love includes befriending many foreign students and aiding Manna's ministry. He hospitably supported Locknath Manaen while he was in Harrisonburg translating Manna commentaries into Nepalese.



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Dirty books for children? What's Manna up to?



Binu, a national missionary in India, tells of children sitting on the floor (sometimes just dirt) coloring the pages of Manna's Read-and-Color books while hearing the story explained. They ended up with pretty 'dirty' books by the end of the class. But the books are well received and they're translated and printed as fast as Binu can keep up.

The story of Timothy recently joined Manna's line of coloring books. It teaches family values and shows that God calls children to serve him.

Check out all our books at www.mannapublications.org.

For pdf files of Manna Publications books go to jimLnorman@tiscali.co.uk.

Couriers needed for hit books that fit

Do you know of teams from your church or area going overseas? *Manna for Children* books can give them an attractive way to present the gospel. The books can be copied on church copiers and used for children's ministries and VBS here as well as overseas. These small 16-page booklets are a hit that fits easily into a gospel traveler's luggage. Manna's commentaries and other books could be taken to introduce to church leaders overseas. Tell mission teams and travelers to call us so that we can recruit them as couriers.

Our work in headline countries

Zimbabwe: Rev. Henry Murray started printing and distributing our books 14 years ago. On a visit to Zimbabwe, Fred Morris watched eager children at a book stall become crestfallen by the high cost of children's books. This triggered the Morris' commitment to create their new line of low-cost children's coloring books. While Lorna taught the children's Bible hour in Zimbabwe she noticed adults crowding in to hear along with the little ones. She remembered Isaiah's

prophecy: “A little child will lead them...” How wonderful, she thought, if a child with a Read-and-Color book would lead his parents to understand the gospel. Let it happen again and again! Because of Zimbabwe’s serious troubles we have not known a great deal about Manna Publications’ fate in Zimbabwe. But recently Myburgh and Mattie, South African missionaries to Zimbabwe, wrote to report that they are still printing our books. How they survive in that chaotic, violent and economically bankrupt land is beyond explanation. We thank God for the vision of books for children that was burned into Fred and Lorna’s hearts while in that land. Our representatives there have just received Read-and-Color books to be reproduced in the place where they were conceived.



Distributing Manna books to the villages of Myanmar.

Myanmar (Burma): In the Chin hills near Myanmar’s border with Bangladesh our translator, Cin, is distributing Manna’s Acts commentary in the Tiddim Chin language of Burma. Cin reports: “I have finished translation work on Mark Gospel.” About 120 local churches are getting these commentaries. Ruth (not her actual name), who visits Myanmar to encourage our work there, hopes many copies of these books can be produced since many speak Tiddim Chin. Ruth reported, even before the devastating cyclone, that many, including Buddhists, are reaching out to God in this time of desperate need. Cin reports that families, churches and schools have responded positively. One couple said they study the book every night and discuss the questions with the family. “It has strengthened our family life,” they said. Burmese Christians face stunning opportunities at the risk of severe persecution. And some are being aided in their work by Manna books. Can we hurry the production of more books for Burma?

Trust God with us for...

Life-transforming impact of all Manna’s ink-on-paper missionaries;

The commentaries to help pastors and Bible teachers bring the Word to life for their people;

Publishers and distributors to be God-inspired in their efforts to get our books to the people who need them;

A growing number of translators who will accurately get the message into more and more languages;

Many children along with their families to learn God’s ways through the Read-and-Color books.

Abounding grace for Fred and Lorna as they deal with the demanding challenges of Fred’s physical ailments;

Raising up a person to continue Fred’s ministry.

The China Connection: Linda Lowe is a Chinese Jamaican that the Morrisses knew in Jamaica. She spent her life in Hongkong with CEF. She’s still writing for children and she helps evaluate Manna’s Read-and-Color books for children. Dare we dream that some day our books will be in Chinese? Think of that as you watch the Olympic games.

Special Notice: At the request of our Board, we are seeking a person or persons to take the leadership of Manna Publications as Executive Director. As this is a faith mission, that person/s needs to have his own support base, be experienced at living by faith and be interested and/or experienced at publishing books in the Reformed tradition written by Alfred (Fred) and Lorna Morris. This person/s would work closely with our UK partners and the many representatives who are currently publishing the books in their own languages and countries. If you know of any person/s who might be interested (and for a job description), please write to us at fredjmorris@juno.com

For more information about Manna Publications, please contact fredjmorris@juno.com or visit our web site: www.mannapublications.org.