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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Taree's New Window

Stained-glass artist Peter
Heldon working on the new
memorial window at Taree
—story page 5

100 Years of "The Austral"

Special supplement

Thanks for the Memory

Eric Hollard remembers
some special people
—page 15

Worship as Theatre

Have our services become
theatrical performances?
—page 24

Focus on Marrickville

—page 18



Photo courtesy of The Manning River Times

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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Christmas '91

A Good News— Bad News Story

Editorials are interesting: sometimes profound, sometimes puzzling and sometimes read. *The Wall Street Journal* for example, that prestigious financial daily of the USA, has run the same Christmas editorial since 1949, ending with the words of Paul, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." A most intriguing thought from a financial paper!

The Past

Most of the 1991 editorials reflected on the events of the past year. "There's a sombre mood in the nation," read Sydneysiders. "How could it be otherwise? Almost everyone in the community has a relative, neighbour or friend suffering the impact of the recession or unemployment." (*Sun Herald*, 22.12.91) While some said it was a time to show deeper compassion ("Goodbye greed: it's a caring, sharing Christmas" ran one headline) another noted that "there is a worrying heartlessness among too many Australians towards homeless young people and the almost one million unemployed." (*SMH*, 24.12.91)

While no one would expect editorial writers to get too excited by the computer program of the King James version of the New Testament able to run on "IBM/compatibles using DOS 3.2 or higher and needs only 150 kb of memory" (*Brisbane Courier Mail*, 24.12.91) or that the *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society* has pinpointed the birthdate of Jesus as "most likely in the spring of the year 5 BC between April 13 and 27" (*Canberra Times*, 24.12.91) there is nevertheless a most disturbing sense of navel gazing in this year's editorials.

An Australian Christmas

There was good news in 1991. Bethlehem, for the first time for many years celebrated Christmas and the Middle East peace talks commenced.

The white apartheid regime of South Africa is talking with the African National Congress, and the year saw the total collapse of "one of history's most repressive and expansionist empires, operated by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from Moscow". Yet hardly a mention—of more interest, was our own backyard: "An Australian Christmas" (*SMH*), "A Christmas for Australia" (*West Australian*), "Time to seek a better earth". (For the *Canberra Times* quite clearly the "better earth" had to do

with Keating, Medicare and someplace called Gungahlin!)

The failure of making Christmas "truly Australian" however, was blamed on migrants! Writers plumbed the worst fears of the community. "As Australian society becomes, increasingly multicultural," according to the *West Australian*, "the nature of the Christmas celebrations becomes less meaningful to a bigger section of the community."

Lest it be thought that only our neighbours in the West have to put up with such rubbish, Melbourne readers were reminded that "Christmas as a religious festival distinct from a shopping spree, is irrelevant to an increasing number of newcomers. This is the price of multicultural migration." (*Herald Sun*, 24.12.91)

With that kind of ill-conceived, ignorant prejudice, it's little wonder that editorial writers usually remain anonymous. Such a preoccupation with ourselves reflects the bad news of isolationism, ignorance, selfishness and racism.

Spiritual

Sydney readers were blessed with, as usual, a profound reflection on Christmas. (Who is this writer of Christmas editorials anyway? Why can't we ever meet her?) Christmas, she notes, "matches the current personal needs of Australians. It speaks to confusions and uncertainties of the present scene. To people discovering the emptiness of secularism and materialism it offers enduring spiritual satisfaction. It gives meaning for living and a goal for existence."

The Brisbane editorialist on the other hand argues, that "if it is a mistake to pretend that modern Christmases have much connection with religious celebration, it is also a mistake to assume that to be spiritual one must also be a Christian." (Now there's a sermon waiting to be preached!)

But let the last word belong to Sydney: "Christmas provides a new way of believing and living...It declares the secret of life is not in getting but in giving. It promises peace...It presents hope...Christmas offers a new way of life for every Australian." (24.12.91)

As I say, it was a good news—bad news time for Christmas editorials.

• Alan Matheson, a member of the Camberwell, Vic, church, is Ethnic Liaison Officer with the ACTU.

Festival at the Eureka Stockade

People discover Christmas gold in Ballarat

About 15 years ago, Marion Feary, then a member of the York Street, Ballarat, Vic, church decided to invite church members to a carol singing evening in her garden after church on the Sunday before Christmas. This continued for a number of years until Marion and her husband moved from Ballarat. The church then adopted the idea and a carol singing service was established at the Eureka Stockade Park, the site of the famous rebellion in 1854.

Since then the concept has grown to the point where, this year, more than 1,500 attended the York Street Christmas Festival with activities lasting over six hours. People from the neighbouring community were invited to share in an outdoor coffee shop, barbecue and



• York Street, Ballarat's Christmas Festival at the site of Eureka

children's activities and listen to several bands, all provided free of charge.

As night fell, the air was filled with carol singing, featuring several local guest artists. The evening was compared by local radio personality, Frank Clark, who is also conductor of the church's 20-piece orchestra, which led the singing. The day's activities culminated with

the presentation, under the stars, of the full-scale musical, "Deck the Mall" featuring a 50-voice choir and performers under the direction of Philip Johnston. The whole festival was co-ordinated by Glen Strange, who said that even though it was a mammoth undertaking, requiring support from all levels of the church, the positive response from the

community was very encouraging. Survey forms have been prepared seeking people's reactions and these will be used as part of the planning for a similar event this year.

It was felt appropriate that the site of Australia's historic battle should, 137 years later, ring to the sounds of "Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward Men".

—Emmalie Clark

Christmas in Song

Telethon reaches target of 1,000 good deeds

"008 Christmas" was last year's theme for the Cheltenham, Vic,

church's Christmas in Song, held on 8 December.

The Pilgrimage and Children's Choir sang a variety of songs that certainly captivated the audience, who also joined in with the Christmas carols throughout the melodrama.

The television studio telethon setting was created to raise and encourage good deeds so that the threatened cancellation of Christmas could be avoided.

As senior minister, Gerald Rose, and Scott Harrison worked hard to keep the telephones ringing, reporter Kylie Crawford and newsreader "Brian" Lindsay Dewberry kept the audience amused as they also encouraged shoppers, Kerry Lang and Shanya Taczynski to help.

The three Scrooges, Brett Hughes, Scott Urquhart and Michael Vine created problems but they were soon "sorted" out along with the postman, Michael Crawford.

Not only did the good deeds target reach 1,000, much to the relief of the many children attending, but the Christmas Bowl appeal raised over \$1,700.



• "008 Christmas" at Cheltenham raises money for the Christmas Bowl

Second Test Broadcast

Will Triple Seven FM pass the test?

She works among Melbourne's prostitutes and pimps, drug addicts and derelicts—the homeless, the hurting. He rides the rails, reaching out to graffiti-addicted teens. One visits Victorian gaols. Others counsel the needy on building sites, in office blocks or in high-rise flats. Some brave the "bear-pit" of political life, from council chambers to the upper house.

In Melbourne, find out why when Triple Seven FM runs its second test broadcast on 91.5 (proposed frequency) from 22 February to 1 March.

Along with interviews with Christians around Melbourne, listeners can expect a light, "listener-friendly" format.

It will be mostly music, with carefully selected adult contemporary commercial releases, blended with contemporary

Christian tracks. Add reliable news, sport and weather updates and you have a style that research shows should appeal to many Melburnians.

Triple Seven aims to be pre-evangelistic—a catalyst, encouraging people to call on-line counsellors, linking inquirers to their local churches for follow-up counselling, evangelism and Christian nurturing or practical care as needed.

Triple Seven has a Christian board directing a group of volunteers from a variety of churches. These include professional specialists in radio broadcasting, from marketing to technicians, announcers, journalists, counsellors and more. Over 15 people will be involved just in the telephone call centre during the test broadcast. General Manager, Bruce Upton, said it is a "total faith venture" in all areas of planning.

The organisation grew out of Melbourne Christian Radio, which was founded in 1977 and was reconstituted in 1990. It is a non-profit organisation, trusting God's people for prayer and financial support.

—Jennie Howell

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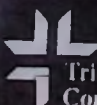
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School Chaplaincy First for Steve Maude

Newlands Primary School makes history

On the surface, a primary school usually looks like a pretty happy place. The sight of children playing games and learning to read and write often makes people nostalgic about their own childhood. But underneath the surface of the school's innocent activities there can be hurt children, with unhappy family lives and fears adults have forgotten with the passage of time. The principal of Newlands Primary School in Preston, Vic, Max Grant, is only too aware of the undercurrents in his pupils' lives that can make their time at school a misery.

He also knows his teachers are concerned about pupils' problems but often do not have the time and sometimes are not the appropriate people to help.

So rather than ignore the issue the school council decided to appoint a school chaplain, the first in a state primary school in Victoria.

Steve Maude started work at the school early in August last year. He is not being paid for the position and there is no hope of immediate funding.

Steve has a background that includes working with teenagers in the Uniting Church in Preston, Fusion in Sydney and St Vincent de Paul.

Steve was a little concerned about working with children. But he has been accepted with open arms.

Steve is a little uncertain as to which direction the work at the school will take. One of the many ideas being considered is a "school club" for children whose parents are not home after or before school.

Although he is the first primary school chaplain in Victoria Steve Maude is reluctant to see himself as a pioneer. "If it works, hopefully other schools will look at picking up the program," he says.

He says it is perhaps an indictment on government support systems that the commu-

nity is increasingly turning to the church for help. One of his first jobs will be to find funding for the position of chaplain to continue full-time at the school.

On 29 February there will be an Australian garage sale at the West Preston, Vic, church (which Steve attends) between 9 am and 1 pm. Proceeds will be split between the church and the chaplaincy fund. The church has also organised a spit roast and bushdance at the Newlands Primary School on 29 February at 6 pm, with the bushdance starting at 7.30 pm. Family tickets will cost \$25, a couple \$20 or single adults \$15 (which includes the spit roast), while the bushdance costs \$10 for adults or \$3 for children. Details and bookings from Steve Maude on (03) 354 2928 (business hours) or John Richmond on (03) 460 7157 (after hours).

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Taree's Memorial Window

Pioneers honoured in stained glass

A memorial to the pioneer members of the Taree, NSW, church was unveiled and dedicated at a Christmas service.

A 3.3 m stained-glass window now has pride of place in the church—a gift to honour the pioneer members who commenced the work in Taree in June 1863. The descendants of George Saxby (one of the pioneer members) donated the window to honour the work of all the pioneer members of the church.

The window has taken stained-glass artist Peter Heldon more than 900 hours to complete, and will be lit at night so that it can be a witness to passers-by in Victoria Street. It was designed by acclaimed artist Cherie Phillips of Sydney, who has also designed some of the spectacular stained-glass windows in the new Parliament House in Canberra.

Features of the window are a centre cross, a fishing boat, a baptism, the tree of life, alpha and omega on an open Bible, a bread and cup, a dove and rainbows.

The window contains 973 individual pieces of glass in 64 different colours from 10 manufacturers in several countries, including France, Germany and the USA. Some are painted and stained and all are leadlighted. It is 2m wide and contains 6 m² of glass in 34 individual panels.

The early pioneers of the Taree church were Thomas and Jane Andrews, Henry Western, George Newby Senior and George Saxby. Still worshipping at Taree church are third-, fourth-, fifth- and sixth-generation descendants of the early pioneers.

At the dedication service held just before Christmas, Ted Saxby, on behalf of the Saxby descendants, gave the window as a gift to the glory of God and as a memorial to God's faithful servants who established the work in Taree. The dedication service was one of the last official duties for Dr Neville Aubrey, who has now completed his term of more than four years with the Taree congregation.

Those who donated the window are Nel Haden (daughter of Percy Saxby), Frank Saxby (son of Edwin J. Saxby), Ted Saxby (son of Roy Saxby), John Saxby (son of George D. Saxby), Janice Wrigley (daughter of George D. Saxby) and Michael Haden (son of Nel Haden).

It is hoped that a coloured brochure can be produced explaining the details of the window.

—Ted Saxby

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Started at Last!

A building update from the Coffs City, NSW, church

Yes, after months of negotiations with the local council we've finally received our building permit! This took us several months longer than we anticipated due to a large number of objections from the council that had to be overcome.

When it appeared that there could be a delay of at least several more weeks we called an "emergency" church prayer meeting. Three hours after the prayer meeting we were advised that we could start building the next day! The slab was poured on 18 December and work is now progressing steadily.

We are still about \$25,000 short of the necessary funds, but we are pushing ahead in the faith that God will supply our needs. The church is excited about moving into the new housing area. It affords us a tremendous opportunity for evangelism. We would like to be in the new building by Easter, but as we are depending heavily on volunteer labour it may not be finished until May or June. —Kevin Simington

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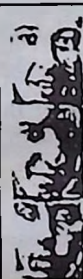
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A.B. Withers Is 90!

Many friends join the birthday chorus

Hestill looks amazingly youthful, his handshake is firm, his eyes still sparkle. He still follows keenly and with growing insight the affairs of God's kingdom.

On 29 January, Arthur Withers celebrated his 90th birthday. Many churches in Victoria and Tasmania, together with Arthur's own family and a host of friends join in this "birthday chorus".

As Arthur is a man of deep reserve as well as possessing genuine humility I'm sure that he would have preferred that this occasion slip by without comment.

His family moved from Lismore, NSW, to Melbourne when he was a boy. They joined with the Moreland church, where Arthur was baptised in 1915 by Will Ewers. He became an apprentice to a manufacturing jeweller but felt the call to ministry. On completing his apprenticeship he entered the College of the Bible in 1923. It proved a busy time; in addition to his studies, he served as a student minister at Red Hill, Blackburn (now Nunawading), Moreland and Ivanhoe. He continued with Ivanhoe in full-time ministry after graduating from the college. All his ministries were long and fruitful. They were at Maryborough, Kaniva, Brighton, West Preston, Northcote and Wangaratta, all in Victoria.



• Arthur Withers

During 1943 he served at Margaret Street, Launceston, Tas, in an important interim capacity. Then his ministry came full circle! Between 1975 and 1978 he was the minister at Ivanhoe, where he had commenced ministry some 50 years earlier.

So deeply did Arthur feel the compulsion of the gospel that after his official "retirement" he helped churches in an interim or part-time capacity. Thus he returned to Kaniva. He then assisted at Footscray, Balwyn, Mount Gambier, Greensborough, Essendon, and Surrey Hills. They all warmed to his special kind of input.

He loved the Brotherhood and was deeply involved in this wider work. He served on the Overseas Mission Department for many years. In 1951 his worth and leadership were recognised in his being elected as President of the Victorian-Tasmanian State Conference. He brought to that office dignity and commitment.

Equally loved and valued is his wife Clara. He met Clara Lovell at Moreland soon after he moved there. They commenced "going together" in 1920 and were married at the Coburg church in 1926, the year after Arthur graduated from college. They recently celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. Clara was (and is) a wonderful minister's wife. Her own record of service is also impressive. Apart from taking an active role in the local churches she gave valued leadership in the girls Good Companions clubs, where she was a camp leader. She was also a leader of Phi Beta Pi girls clubs and taught Sunday school classes for many years. In 1952 she was the President of the Vic-Tas Christian Women's Fellowship.

Arthur and Clara have enjoyed a rich family life together. Their children were all baptised and became members of the church; their son Les and

daughter Jean (Mrs Max Witt) are still very active. Their youngson, John, is now sadly deceased. They are adored by eight lovely grandchildren. The family "line" continues in the eight great-grandchildren, soon to be nine!

Arthur's ministries were based on conscientious preaching and pastoral work. Although he was basically a shy person he was a true listener and a wise confidant; people rightly trusted in his utter goodwill and empathy. His preaching touched all of us who were privileged to share in it. He eschewed all forms of rhetoric or exaggerated mannerisms; he spoke simply from the heart about all those situations where people are hurt, puzzled and in daily conflict; in all of this he brought a wealth of knowledge of the depths of scripture. Here, one felt, was a true word expressed with integrity. And

if "it is by their reading that you know them", Arthur's library was impressive; he was a daily student of the best in biblical scholarship and fine literature.

It is a joy, then, to celebrate with Arthur and Clara—and with all their family—these 90 years. Our thanks go to them as a team for the friendship and inspiration they have given to so many, especially as living examples of Christ's way in the bonds of the community of faith.

—Viney Longthorp

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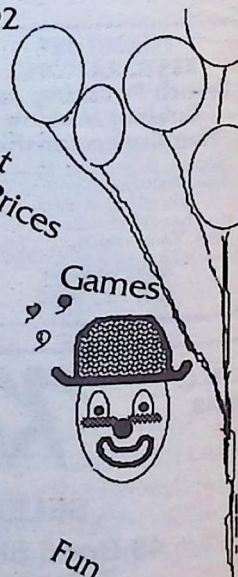
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Launching of the College Year



College Graduation

Ten Banmatmat students complete studies

Leis were put on the necks of guests, graduating students and their visiting families after the opening prayer of the Banmatmat Bible College, Vanuatu, graduation service. Lecturer John Stephen chaired the service and Judith Vusi welcomed everybody. The eight graduating and two exiting students were introduced to the congregation by Jan Christensen, as Cain Sese, Conference Vice-President, presented their diplomas or certificates. Cain also received the students from Principal Samuel Vusi as they were handed over from the oversight of the college to the care of Conference.

Among the graduates was Philemon Gigiri, an Anglican from north Pentecost. The Anglican Church was represented

by an elder, Philemon's father. Cain and Lenster of Erotka, Santo, exited with letters from the college detailing their study. Cain, who can neither read nor write, attended two years of lectures but sat for no formal examinations. His wife, Lenster, successfully completed one year of the college course.

The graduation address was given by former lecturer, Doug Walladge, who spoke about the qualities required of leadership, using material presented to the SA Synod of UCA by Dr Deidre Palmer.

It was just after 6 pm when the graduates lined up outside the chapel for people to shake hands with them. There were many tears and words of farewell, encouragement and thanks shared down the line.



• Banmatmat graduates in the lush garden setting—before Cyclone Betsy

coconuts, mangoes and other fruits and vegetables. In a country where subsistence living is a way of life this is a very serious situation.

The Conference Council of the Churches of Christ in Vanuatu is meeting to determine priorities. Churches of Christ Overseas Aid (COCOA) will assist financially and there may be need for practical assistance. Will you pray for your brothers and sisters in Christ who have lost their homes, their income and their livelihood? I told them you would so I hope I'm right!

—Jeff May

After the cyclone

Brief references by the Australian media to a cyclone that had affected Vanuatu give only a limited view of the damage and the ongoing effects. In January Cyclone Betsy spent almost a week passing through Vanuatu. The high seas and strong winds caused damage throughout the country. When I arrived at Banmatmat Bible College, a week after the cyclone, I was welcomed by Jan Christensen. Pastor August Ben and four young men from Santo Island were also there. They had begun the work of cleaning up. The following week some men from West Ambae travelled to Banmatmat to provide further assistance.

Strewn around the college area were trees, branches, iron and other debris. An orange tree had fallen down along Jan's back verandah. Another tree

had damaged the roof of the single girls' quarters nearby. One-third of the chapel roof had been blown off. The wind had come from at least two directions over a period of several hours and so some iron from the roof had landed to the west of the chapel. The larger section had been blown east and smashed into a classroom, damaging the wall and louver windows.

The day I arrived a helicopter landed. The First Secretary for Home Affairs and two other men were visiting places that were badly affected. Nearby Ranputor village had several homes damaged and the church destroyed.

In other areas even where there is no damage to buildings the loss of food from gardens is a major concern. Large clumps of broken bamboo mean that building supplies are depleted. The increase of mosquitoes after a cyclone is one of the factors that lead to an increase of sickness. People have been told to boil water before drinking it. South of Ranwadi, the road has been washed away by the high seas in two places, cutting off the school from the airstrip. The school driver will now be driving a boat until the road is repaired.

Assistance will come in various ways where it is needed. Funds from COCOA have been used to send immediate help to Banmatmat. A request will be made for further funds to be sent for rebuilding and repair.

—Julie Trinnick

Storm Damage

Cyclone Betsy blows in

Many in Australia don't have much first-hand experience of cyclones. Betsy began somewhere west of Vanuatu, hovered for a while and then at full force swept through the middle of the islands and made a straight line towards the Queensland coast. Many places experienced the strong winds that accompany tropical cyclones but the real intensity of Betsy caused great damage in Vanuatu.

Samuel Vusi and his family were alone at Banmatmat Bible College in the south of Pentecost Island. They were to have left after the students but the threat of Betsy meant there were no boats and all aircraft had been shifted to New Caledonia. Julie Trinnick reports that damage at Banmatmat is extreme. Jan Christensen and a team from Santo returned to Banmatmat to help in the clean-up, but a week later a helicopter landed because from the air things still looked so bad. The chapel roof was removed and it went through a classroom.

Dormitories were wrecked and lots of ancillary buildings were destroyed. At the height of the wind Sam had to tie down the roof of the principal's house. All the staff houses survived but the place where Sam had stored his family's belongings ready to move out was unroofed and the things inside were spoiled.

The village at Ranputor on the east coast of Pentecost was badly hit. Many homes were destroyed. Further up the coast at Ranwadi High School there was widespread damage, with fallen trees and broken windows causing damage to classrooms. Schools in Vanuatu will begin two weeks late, on 17 February.

It is possible to go on listing places and damage done, but the long-term loss will be in the gardens that have been destroyed. When we talk about gardens in Vanuatu it is not rose bushes but food production. It will be months before gardens produce yams, taros, bananas, pawpaws, manioc,

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Curkpatrick

To the Editor,

Just a word of appreciation to Stephen. "The Serendipity of Freewill" ("AC" 1 December) is an article of real insight concerning the phrase "God's plan for my life". One of the key sentences reads: "The grace of God gives us the freedom to live in the serendipity of free will, with its infinite range of possibilities for living a Christ-filled life." Scope for failure is acknowledged, and even then there may be experienced "unique possibilities out of failure".

My letter is prompted by this particular article, but it is really to express appreciation to Stephen Curkpatrick for a number of his writings that are creative. He writes with insight and with that rare capacity to use what Fowler calls "the right word in the right place".

—Ed Roffey
(East Kew, Vic)

Pregnancy Loss

To the Editor,

I read with interest the letter by Jenny Kearney ("AC" 1 December) about her work with people who have suffered pregnancy loss. I would like to affirm her in the work she is doing.

Thirteen years ago, I bore a baby boy at five and a half months gestation who lived for two hours. In September 1991, my family and our pastors, Heather and Paul Potter, held a memorial service in our home for Alastair Stuart. For all of us it was a positive, life-restoring experience.

In 1978 we were encouraged on all sides to forget about our baby and get on with living—by the hospital, the funeral parlour, even our families. We made many mistakes at that time because we were willing to conform to society's dictates rather than listen to our own hearts.

Prior to our service, Paul and I had worked through—long and painfully—much of the hurt, anger, guilt and sorrow

that I, particularly, had carried for so long.

Our service helped me to put those feelings aside, to see that God had been with us in our experience, although we failed to recognise him, and to give our second son his rightful place in our family.

Since then, I have been able to find out some of the missing information from Alastair's story through the help of the funeral company and the cemetery. I contacted the hospital, but their records division were unable to help as they keep records for only seven years. However, the person in charge of the records rang me, an STD call, and spent some time sharing with me his regret that he could not help, and some of his story, which told me of his compassion and his identifying with our situation.

I mentioned earlier our service as a life-restoring experience. As a person I have changed. I feel at peace with myself, and more confident in what I do and the way I relate with others. God is working through my pain and has given me the ability to grow again. If Jenny Kearney and her colleagues are able to help others in a similar way that has helped me, then I pray that God will bless them for their sensitivity, and that they will be able to share God's restoration with many who are in need of this.

—Barbara Kennedy
(Belconnen, ACT)

More on Point Stuart

To the Editor,

I would like to express my appreciation of Helen Oatley's report of the 136th anniversary of the church at Point Stuart ("AC" 1 December). Here evocative writing has captured the very essence of this little pioneer outpost of our movement in Australia.

A plate attached to the wall adjacent to the entrance of the little building states simply, "Founded 1855 Erected 1861". What food for thought those dates provide.

During those years, Alexander Campbell, in his late sixties and early seventies, was still

involved in his editorship of *The Millennial Harbinger*; his itinerant preaching tours which he undertook on horseback; preaching at Bethany and in the college which he founded. Truly a man of enormous energy and commitment to Christ. It was during those years too that the college was destroyed by fire and Campbell in his 70th year set out to raise funds for its rebuilding.

One reflects that in both North America and in this land our movement grew and was nurtured by hardy pioneering folk who had a unique vision of the nature of Christ's church.

They matched their vision with an enthusiasm and will to reach out into new ventures. It is salutary too to recall that both Alexander and his father, Thomas, referred to the movement as "the reformation".

Whilst for some, no doubt, history is "bunk", it can and should be an inspiration for us as heirs to heritage to hold firmly to those things which

made us a peculiar people. May the Spirit who informed the minds and filled the lives of those who laid the foundations of our movement, inspire and move us too.

—Ken Dawson
(Brooklyn Park, SA)

Vision or Hallucination?

To the Editor,

Responding to an apparent decline in financial support for Conference committees and some ambiguous statements by a handful of elders and ministers about the relevance of Conference, the Conference Executive in NSW has set up a "Vision and Strategy Group" to recommend on the future of Conference activities in this state.

This group, whose members were selected largely on the basis of their non-involvement in Conference activity, has recommended the abolition of most Conference committees. If its recommendations are ac-

Letters from Tertius

Just Wondering

To the Editor,

I often find myself just wondering.

I wonder why it is that when things are going well people want the government to keep out of business and commerce and our private lives, but when things are bad we all want the government to rescue us.

I wonder why we always want taxation reduction but at the same time want better roads and community services and get uptight when we have to queue up in post offices and other government facilities.

I wonder why most people don't want God—or his people—"poking their noses" into world affairs, but when world affairs are not going well say, "How can you believe in God when the world is in such a mess?"

I wonder why when things are not going so well in churches that some people blame the minister and some ministers blame the people.

I wonder why church people who are always negative and critical towards their church, especially in front of the children, can't understand why their children leave it.

I wonder why God ever thought of creating "*Homo sapiens*" when so many of us are so touchy and belligerent and negative and hard to get on with so much of the time.

And I wonder why I find it so hard to find answers to these matters that I keep wondering about.

Yours cluelessly,
Tertius

Letters to the Editor

cepted, Conference activities in NSW will be undertaken largely by a handful of full-time and part-time executives. The group sees these changes as being "consistent with Churches of Christ in NSW being a grass roots movement".

The recommendations will be "sold" to the churches on the basis of the perceived merits of "decentralisation", by which is meant the handing back to the churches responsibilities they have never ceded. However, by eliminating direct church representation, Conference will not only lose the benefit of hundreds of hours of voluntary contribution but will be effectively established as a centralised, oligarchic structure.

The committee's report will undoubtedly provide some self-justificatory satisfaction to non-co-operative elements among the churches. However, it is a seriously flawed document which does not confront the real issues facing the churches and will almost certainly expedite the decline it seeks to arrest.

My concern is not with the flawed nature of the report but with its potential to distract and divide, and to delay genuine renewal and reformation. It appears to aim at nothing (its aims are not clear) that cannot be achieved under the existing arrangements, especially as most of the present Conference personnel will almost certainly find their way into the oligarchy.

—H.E. Hayward
(Berowra, NSW)

Living the Christian Life

To the Editor,

Living the Christian life has never been easy. Today is no exception.

Our population is made of atheists—the fool hath said in his heart there is no God—the agnostic, who is perplexed, puzzled and believes it is all right to sit on the fence, and the rationalist, who is not rational and followed by the vast majority who believe life is one vast merry-go-round of alco-

hol, sex, gambling, sport etc. Busy people indeed who have no time for God their creator in whom they live, move and have their being.

Perhaps some have never heard the Gospel. If so are they or we to blame?

I believe the church has the responsibility to try with much more enthusiasm. God won't go away because they don't believe he is there. There is a problem. Perhaps the Christian has such a diversity of secular interests that, to go into all the world to preach the Gospel has to be put to one side.

Our faith is based upon God who has given us his word, the Bible, with its sure word of prophecy, throughout the ages and today men's hearts are failing for those things that are coming upon the earth and we the church are divided. No wonder our task is so difficult, but we can preach one sure event, Christ is coming again. If we believe this it makes all the difference to our preaching.

Always remember that the Jesus of the Gospels is no myth, but the only God of men and women's salvation. A consistent prayer life, positive preaching. No gimmicks brought us to salvation in Christ, a new birth through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Many will look upon Christmas and Easter as a wonderful time of fun and holidays. To us these times are a reminder of God's gift of salvation in Christ to all mankind. We have been given the responsibility of telling our families, friends, neighbours and to all workmates and the people we meet.

God called us to this task.

—Henri Pietzsch.
(Hurstbridge, Vic)

"Appreciation"

To the Editor,

Regarding Ross Bourdon's letter of appreciation ("AC" 14 December), may I say on behalf of all our CWF members, thank you for passing on the gratitude of the Children's Hospital.

Could I further add that these comments are very typical of

the praise I hear all the time as I move around the 53 hospitals and nursing homes which our 71 visitors through CWF so lovingly visit and distribute gifts from all our Victorian churches.

So thank you Ross for your letter of encouragement, and thank you one and all for making this outreach possible.

—June Andrews
(Superintendent, CWF
Hospital Visitation)

Where Have We Gone?

To the Editor,

After reading some of the letters and articles in *The Australian Christian* of 14 December, I gained the strong impression that Churches of Christ have lost their way. Questions like "Where are we going?" seemed to occur often. Perhaps it would be more accurate to ask, "Where have we gone?". Under "Happenings" it was noted that the Disciples in America started to decline 26 years ago.

There are several lessons to be learned from the history of our movement. Firstly, when an undenominational brotherhood of churches becomes an organised denomination, it is time to look at making a fresh stand for the simple NT pattern—note Fen Hewett's use of "our denomination" in the same issue. Secondly, when ministers, evangelists and

teachers who do not believe or preach the NT plan of salvation are promoted by the organisation and its national journal, it is time to consider disassociating from those who teach false doctrine. Thirdly, when the organisation becomes known for its departures from NT patterns of worship, ministry and mission, it surely must be time to practise biblical withdrawal.

When this withdrawal occurred in America, the result was a revitalised restoration movement. From small beginnings, churches grew to number over 5,000 congregation. Missionary work developed in over 60 nations and evangelists spread over the world teaching men and women of the necessity to respond to God's grace through faith, repentance and baptism. NT patterns for church and living were re-established. There are already at least eight churches in Australia that have now made such a stand. These churches are not affiliated with any conference but are bound together in faith and love. They are part of the brotherhood of free NT churches. They do not belong to a denomination. For further information contact Doug Willis, Bexhill 2480.

—D.G. Willis

Letters to the Editor are continued on page 11.

DMED Adventure Committee Review

Saturday, 22 February 1992, 8 pm–10 pm, followed by supper At...the Theatre, Churches of Christ Theological College, Jacksons Rd, Mulgrave.

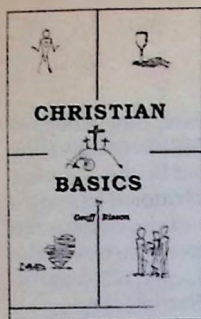
On the program... items, introductions to the clubs (hiking, bicycling, skiing, canoeing, climbing), a famous Les Stewart video of the latest trek.

If you are interested in outdoor activities from a personal point of view or as a church or group leader you wish to know more on how the Adventure Committee can assist you in your ministry...then you must attend this entertaining and informative night. These activities are suitable for all age groups, youth groups, cell groups, churches and individuals.

The cost is \$2 per person (supper provided by the famous college caterer).

Bookings are preferred so numbers can be catered for. Book with Andrew Twining on (03) 470 3462. Only 130 seats are available, so book early.

Enquiries to Andrew Twining (03) 470 3462.



Christian Basics

by Geoff Risson (Department of Church Development and Education in Churches of Christ in Queensland) \$2

Christian Basics is designed to help youth and adults understand the basics of what it means to be a Christian today. There are five introductory studies ("Beginnings", "Baptism and Bread", "Belonging", "Building Relationships" and "Basics of Being a Christian Witness") in this small booklet, which is designed to be a notebook.

The studies are grouped around a small number of texts so that those with little church background are able to find the texts and follow Geoff's argument. These are not long studies and do not need a technical language knowledge.

Geoff Risson is the minister at the Maroochydore, Qld, church and was Queensland Conference President in 1991. The studies grew out of his extensive work in evangelism and follow-up and have thus been very extensively field tested and refined.

Available for \$2 plus postage from the Churches of Christ DCDE, PO Box 441, Kenmore 4069.

Caring Enough to Help

Counseling at a Crisis Pregnancy Centre
by Ellen Curro (Baker Book House)

Following a brief introduction, this book is divided into four parts: "Ordinary Days", "The Pro-life/Abortion Arena", "Mourning: A Baby Dies" and "On a Mission". Within these sections, there are a series of letters addressed "Dear Sis" on topics as varied as prayer, laughter, married couples, adoption and so on. In each case, the writer presents a combination of anecdote and opinion drawn from her experience as an extreme anti-abortion activist as much as from her position as a counsellor in a crisis pregnancy centre. There is no attempt to gather the data together and to analyse it systematically in order to seek any regularities or otherwise, and we are not able to judge whether or not the anecdotes are in any way representative of those whom she sees, or what other bases have informed their inclusion.

I say that the author has an "extreme" position because in her chapter on birth control she comes down not only in opposition to contraception as a solution to adolescent pregnancy but for married couples seeking to limit their family size also. Elsewhere she pursues the same line when she refers to her father's disappointment that God "only" gave them four children. Clearly, a family must be economically secure, even privileged, to contemplate unlimited procreation. Her focus is entirely on the foetus to an extent that seems almost lacking in normal human concern. She is critical of a Catholic priest for endorsing abortion in the case of an ectopic pregnancy and of abortion when young women were inadvertently exposed to x-rays or had been on prescription medication that was likely to produce a malformed child. There is no mention of rape or incest. Curro's position is so fixated on the foetus that she is unable to take account of other human beings, unless they have opposed another's abortion or are suffering guilt because this action has been followed. There is no consideration of women's health and/or other children and their well-being and who will care for them in the event of a mother's death. For all the talk about "caring", there is little real respect for existing life, especially women's lives. In other words, this book takes us nowhere in what is the usual dilemma for Christians: how to choose the lesser of two evils.

I object to the book on other grounds also. The author's style is not persuasive—any writer is entitled to attempt to persuade her reader to accept her argument—it is manipulative. The "dear sis" is not couched in either the terms of Christian or feminist sisterhood, rather it presumes an ongoing relationship, whereby when

she is writing this chapter or that, we have prior knowledge of her health, activities etc. It is ego-centric—readers are treated as a sort of "cheer squad" for her activities. The other ground of objection is related to this: the lack of any attention to the global population problem, the level of resources used by the population of the developed countries, the morality of producing children whose quality of life will be sadly deficient and so on. In other words, to be responsible and genuinely caring and loving people, Christians need to grapple with moral and ethical questions in their social as well as religious context. To reach an informed position, they need to know who seek abortions and why—information and knowledge. Because this book does not take this approach and for the other reasons cited, I cannot recommend it.

—Rosslyn Reed

Behind Our Sunday Smiles

by Jimmy Ray Lee (Baker Book House)

The main goal of the author of this book is to assist the local church to establish a program by which they can help people who experience life-controlling problems. We feel that there would be few Australian churches with the people-skills and resources to take up the challenge.

However, Jimmy Lee has much to offer the reader in recognising his or her own situation and coming to terms with it, be they those who are dependent or those who stand by during such an experience in their children, partners or friends. He deals with a broader spectrum of difficulties than just alcohol or drugs and has much help for those caught up inco-dependency. Co-dependants are those who live with a person with a life-controlling situation, who get caught up in the dilemma and eventually find their own sense of well-being so rooted in their care-giving, that they actually sustain the dependency.

We found the first three chapters, "Introduction to Life-Controlling Problems", "Ways to Help Hurting People" and "Helping Families with Dependencies" to be relevant, insightful and encouraging. Written from a Christian perspective they are well supported with scriptural authority. We also found much valuable material in case studies and personal programs offered in the appendices.

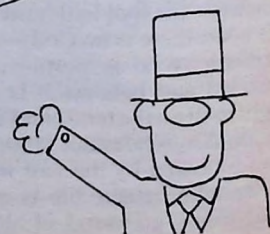
The fourth (final) chapter, "A Local Church Model", would be very challenging to our larger churches but even so, there is much that people with some training, or even people with great sensitivity, could modify and use in helping dependent people.

—Tom and Ruth Edge

The Angelic Verses—Daniel Changer

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Letters to the Editor

Cloud over Our "Polar Star"?

To the Editor,

The CCTC Graduation and the National Executive's Ordination services were inspiring events to share in. I'm sure all were proud of the women and men who had reached the standards required to "Go and Preach the Word", or to serve in a particular field.

Yet no word, printed or spoken, was offered of the Plea of Churches of Christ for Christian Union, our Polar Star. Is it now irrelevant? Is our prayer, "Sorry Jesus we are too busy evangelising our way to do our part of fulfilling your prayer to God that all your followers be one that the world may believe. Amen"? For surely with hundreds of others we persist as a denominational church in blatant denial of the one Lord we claim to witness to.

Perhaps we are more guilty than others, for our starting was to work for the union for which Christ prayed and 2:3.07 of our Constitution reads, "The promotion of the unity of Christians by the restoration of New Testament Christianity".

With many others I pray that in all states we set a cloud-free course to our "Polar Star", in obedience to Christ the Head of the Church.

—David Allison
(Hampton Street, Victoria)

"What's in a Name"

To the Editor,

I am writing about the article "What's in a Name" by Brian Mee ("AC" 14 December).

For about six years a friend and I had a unit for the month of July. We were always there

for four Sundays. As the unit was at Broadbeach, we walked up to the Uniting Church at Surfers Paradise. Had we known of the "Church of the Good Shepherd" we certainly would have attended there, not only us but a good many other people too, as visitors were asked by the minister or whoever was taking the service to stand and say where they came from and I often heard Church of Christ mentioned, from WA, SA, Vic, Tas and NZ. Never once did we hear the Church of the Good Shepherd was Church of Christ. We did get thanked for attending and I even received a Christmas card from the church, having signed the Visitors Book giving my address.

I suggest that they add Gold Coast Church of Christ and make sure it is advertised in *The Australian Christian* before any holidays are coming up, and I am sure their congregation will swell during holiday times.

—M. Williams
(Castlemaine, Vic)

[Up until about 12 months ago the Church of the Good Shepherd was known as the Nerang Church of Christ and still uses that as a subtitle on their letterhead etc. They are situated in the Ashmore area of the Gold Coast. I would also like to thank Mrs Williams for her suggestion about advertising in "The Australian Christian", as we are looking for business—Editor]

Alcohol's Effects

To the Editor,

On 21 October 1991, SWAT (Society Without Alcoholic Trauma) placed a small advertisement

entitled "Has Your Life Been Damaged by Alcohol?" in *The Australian* newspaper. The response has been staggering. Within a few days over 40 newspapers, radio and television stations were pressing us for more information and interviewing our spokesperson, SWAT Vice President, Graeme Rule.

Poignant phone calls and letters continue to come in from all over our nation, from men and women of all ages who believe they have cause to take legal action against the alcohol industry.

Through your journal, we appeal to readers to send us a summary of any claim they believe they or friends may have.

Alcohol causes 6,600 deaths each year and costs \$6 billion in loss, accident, absenteeism and tragedy. The costs exceed revenue collected by the government by around \$4 billion.

Clearly it's time the makers, dealers and pushers pay for the misery they cause.

—Don Strickland
(President SWAT,
880 Toorak Rd,
Hawthorn East 3123)

Address Lost

To the Editor,

Could you please advertise in *The Australian Christian* for the whereabouts of a lady who wrote to us concerning memories for the centenary of the Colac, Vic, church. We wish to send her an invitation, but have mislaid her address.

Her name is Mrs Dotty Gaylard. She attended the 80th celebrations. She is 84 years old now and hopes to come to our

centenary celebrations on Labour Day 1992 (8 March).

—Anne Box
(Secretary, Colac Church of Christ, 10 Batson Cres, Elliminyt 3429)

Addressing Issues

To the Editor,

Could I appeal to "AC" readers to stop using the Letters to the Editor segment as a means of criticising or complaining about the practices of other churches. This benefits nobody, and does not solve the "problem". (If, indeed, one exists.) Last year we read complaints about types of music, styles of worship, names of new congregations, use of worship leaders and/or presidents etc. Most of these issues deal with personal preferences in areas where God gives us freedom to be creative. Instead of wanting everyone to be "like us", it's time we accepted (and were grateful for) the diversity of the church.

Where we have disagreements with certain practices, I suggest we should—

- pray about it—including prayer about the usefulness of any public objection; and
- where it needs to be addressed, do so directly. A public letter is a soft option, and I'd be surprised if a public letter has ever corrected the problem.

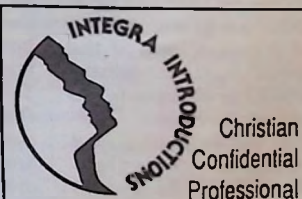
I am praying that 1992 will produce more letters that are positive and encouraging, and that even in the context of genuine debate we can express ourselves graciously and positively.

—Russell Kilgour
(Croydon, Vic)

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Happenings

MARC Europe has released statistics that show that half the ministers ordained in the period 1985-1990 in England were women. The Salvation Army is the most positive group when it comes to appointing women—60% of its officers are female. The fastest growing branch of the church—the House Church or New Church movement, which grew by 60% between 1985 and 1990—does not have women ministers. However, closer examination reveals that in some New Church streams some women are actively involved in leadership roles.

Elonda Efefe, general secretary of the Disciples of Christ community of the Church of Christ in Zaire, died on 31 October, in the capital city of Kinshasa. He had suffered for some time with diabetes and related illnesses. He had long had ties with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US.

For the first time in Australia the Lutheran Church has joined an ecumenical council. Queensland Churches Together (QCT) was inaugurated with the Lutheran Church and the Roman Catholic Church as members. The involvement of the Roman Catholic Church is also a Queensland first.

Some 600 Mongolians made decisions for Christ after performances by the group "No Longer Music", whose dramatic evangelistic show features loud rock and bizarre special effects. The seemingly improbable response was far bigger than had been expected in the country of 2 million, one of the world's least evangelised, which has about only 100 known Christians. A further 700 Russians stayed to pray to become Christians after the gospel message at the end of the 7 concerts in Ulan Bator, the capital, and Dachran. A 5-strong YWAM group based in The Netherlands, NLM, also played 17 concerts in the USSR, at which

they saw a further 400 pray to receive Christ.

Permission has been given for the United Bible Societies to send 5,000 Bibles to Vietnam. This approval comes 18 months after the request was submitted to the government by a Vietnamese church in Hanoi. The last shipment of UBS-financed scriptures to go to Vietnam was in 1981, when 10,000 Bibles were sent from Hong Kong. In 1989, some American veterans of the Vietnam war visited the country and obtained permission to import 5,000 Bibles as part of an aid package.

Church attendance is on the rise in England, with 10% of the population now attending Sunday services. Still, a recent national poll showed that one in three has no idea why Easter is celebrated and 40% do not know what happened on Good Friday.

Protestant churches in America are relatively sensitive to the needs of families, the elderly, children, teenagers and the poor—but are less sensitive to the needs of minorities, non-Christians, young adults, and singles, according to an opinion poll conducted by the Barna Research Group.

At the national conference of the Australian Affiliation of Voluntary Care Associations (now called Aged Care Australia) an awards dinner was held. The National Individual Award, which recognises the recipient's outstanding service in the administration of aged care, at both a state and national level, was made to Don E. Stewart, the Executive Director of the Queensland Churches of Christ Social Services Department. Don has been Queensland State President and a National President of AAVCA. At the dinner the winner of the best newsletter under 500 circulation went to Mylo House and Nubeena Re-

tirement Village, Too-woomba, Qld, for *The Herald*.

C. William Nichols, an Illinois pastor, has taken up the full-time position as General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the USA. He was minister of the Central Christian Church of Decatur, Illinois, prior to his appointment, which followed nominee Michael Kinnamon losing by a very narrow margin, gaining a 65% vote at the General Assembly when a two-thirds vote was required.

This year Good Friday falls on 17 April with 19 April being Easter Sunday. The Orthodox celebration of Easter will be 24-26 April.

In the USA clergy and laypeople have similar concerns for the 90s, but they differ in their degree of concern. The top 5 issues, in order of importance, that clergy are most concerned about are: (1) the environment, (2) illegal drug use, (3) health care costs, (4) education and (5) domestic violence. Laypeople rank the issues as: (1) illegal drug use, (2) crime, (3) health care costs, (4) education and (5) the environment.

Of the 15 fastest growing churches in the USA, 9 are black.

Radio Alta Mira, an Adelaide Christian radio station, has been granted a 5-year FM licence by the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal. Radio Alta Mira (which means being on watch from a high place) had its first test broadcast in 1980. It aims to begin broadcasting 18 hours a day from the end of this year and expects to begin 24-hour broadcasting after 3 years on air.

The 1992 World Methodist Peace Award has been given to Zdravko Beslov, a Bulgarian Methodist pastor "for his efforts to bring reconciliation and healing in his country".

World Vision has announced that it is shutting

down its child care and other projects in Pakistan after the government effectively denied the Christian international relief and development agency permission to continue work there. Some 70,000 benefited from 22 World Vision child care and development projects in Pakistan. Staffing the World Vision Pakistan field office and project sites were 85 people, all Pakistanis except for the field director. The Pakistan budget was about \$US 500,000.

The percentage of Americans claiming no religious preference is growing. The Gallup organisation found that 56% identified themselves as Protestant in 1990 (compared to 61% in 1980) and 25% identified themselves as Roman Catholic (28% in 1980). The number of those with no religious preference rose to a high of 11%, the Jewish population remained constant at 2% while only 2.2% claim to be Muslims.

Roy Debapriya, a prince of the Chakma royal family of Bangladesh, has completed the translation of the Chakma New Testament, and has commenced work on the translation of the Old Testament. He began this work after he was paralysed from the waist down following a serious motorcycle accident. When he began his translation work there were very few Christians in the area, but by the time the project was completed 6 years later, there were about 80 Chakma believers.

Many groups are expressing concern about the possibility of a casino in Melbourne and the consequences on society if established. CACAC (Citizens Against Crime And Casinos) is holding a seminar "Organised Crime, Casinos and Good Government" on 29 February in the RMIT Glasshouse Theatre, 360 Swanston St, Melbourne, 9.15 am to 1.15 pm. Registration cost is \$20. The

seminar will address whether there is any real gain by the introduction of a casino and will examine the proposal under three sections: criminality, economics and social impact. Details and registration forms from Peter Olney (03) 802 9694 or Don Saltmarsh (03) 489 9666.

30 evangelical worshippers died tragically from carbon monoxide poisoning during a church service on 30 December in the central Mexican town of El Charquillo, San Potosi State. Authorities believe the poisoning was due to a malfunctioning lamp, aggravated by the large number of people who were packed into a very small room. The tiny El Charquillo mission was visited once a month by leaders of the Mount Zion Pentecostal Church in Monterrey. 17 of those who died were from the mother church.

The Assemblies of God gained more than 5 million new members worldwide during the past 2 years. Church records show 21.5 million adherents in 124 countries served by 1,600 US missionaries and 131,000 national pastors and lay workers. 14 million members live in Brazil. Other countries with a large AOG presence are South Korea (1.1 million), Nigeria (more than 500,000), Argentina (415,000), Mozambique (380,000) and Romania (380,000). AOG churches are also thriving in Myanmar (Burma). There the denomination grew from 20,000 to 90,000 in the 25 years since the door was closed to outside mission workers.

Colin and Elizabeth McPhee, who head up the Christian Ski Fellowship at Smiggins and Perisher in the Snowy Mountains, will be a part of the Winter Olympics Christian outreach team in Albertville, France, from 8 Feb. Colin is representing Australia's Sports and Leisure Ministry.

100 Years of

The Austral Printing & Publishing Company & The Austral Charitable Trust

With the closing of year 1991 has come the realisation that 100 years have passed since The Austral Printing and Publishing Company came into being. To celebrate this century of Christian outreach and witness by Churches of Christ in Australia it has been decided by those persons still responsible for the continuing work of The Austral that a suitable tribute should be paid to all concerned. We would like to honour the founder, the managers and staff of Austral and its many contributors and supporters and recognise the historical significance of all who have been involved through this company in the life of our churches in Australasia.

Accordingly what now follows may help to stimulate memories of the past and hopes for the future for all readers of *The Australian Christian*, to which publication we are indebted for space in this issue. Some of the printed material has been published previously in this journal and elsewhere, but we hope to give a general coverage of some of the main events and personalities associated with the Austral Company and the continuing organisation that now aims to carry out the objectives that were in the minds of its founder and his associates.

Beginnings: A.B. Maston

The now non-existent Austral Printing and Publishing Co. Limited owes its origin to the vision and perseverance of a member and preacher of Churches of Christ in the USA, Aaron Burr Maston, who was born at Coshocton County, Ohio, on 23 March 1853.

His mother was a devout Baptist, and his father, while not professing any faith, was favourable to family participation in religious activities.

Aaron's boyhood education was limited but he later made excellent progress at Northern Indiana Normal School, Valparaiso. He became a member of Churches of Christ at the age of fifteen. He worked his way into Butler University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Aaron supported himself through university by teaching school during non-term periods, but his great ambition was to devote himself wholly to the preaching of the Gospel. Appointments followed in a number of churches.

While attending a missionary convention of the Christian Church, Bloomington, Illinois, in October 1879, A.B. Maston received and accepted an invitation to minister with the Church of Christ, Wellington, NZ. He and Mrs Maston arrived in Auckland, NZ, on 11 January 1880 and, after preaching on occasions and familiarising themselves

with NZ church activities, arrived in Wellington on 15 February.

During the ensuing four years visits were made to Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and Nelson, with encouraging results to the churches there.



A.B. Maston's ministry at Wellington concluded in February 1884, and a new ministry commenced at Hobart, Tasmania. While there he compiled a Manual of Churches of Christ in Australasia after issuing circulars to all the churches in the various colonies, requesting them to sup-

ply statistics and other information. The Manual, published in January 1885, contained much useful information. It entailed much work for one pair of hands, but was successfully issued and enthusiastically received among the churches.

Melbourne had a strong attraction for the Mastons and, with infant son Harry, they left Tasmania in March 1885 and commenced a new ministry at North Melbourne that same month.

Always a strong believer in the printed word, A.B. Maston formed a Tract Society, which afterwards assumed large proportions. Monetary assistance to enable printing and distribution of tracts was generous, hence was established "The Sower Tract Fund". The first annual report of this fund, August 1886, announced that "two million four hundred thousand pages of tracts have been printed, and have gone to all parts of the colonies..." Some reprints of these tracts in both the original or updated formats were still available when the Austral Company ceased operations in 1976.

Interstate preaching and lecture tours began in 1886, then in the year 1887 serious eye trouble developed and A.B. Maston underwent the first of many operations. He later consulted leading specialists overseas but received only temporary relief.

A.B. Maston died in 1907.

The Birth of Austral

AB. Maston was elected President of the Victorian Churches of Christ Conference in 1890. He began to strongly urge the necessity of a printing and publishing house for the purpose of furthering the interests of the churches.

After much private and public talk, he forwarded a letter, dated 17 February 1891, to numerous church members:

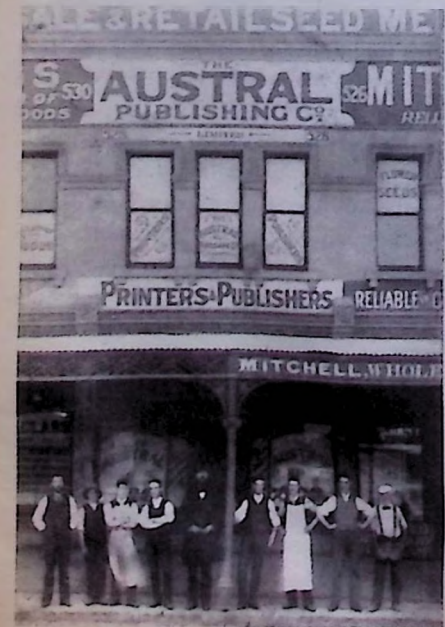
"For a number of years I have been thinking of starting a Printing and Publishing Co. to be run in the interests of the Church of Christ. It seems to me that the time has now arrived to take some definite steps in the matter. "I would be glad of your presence at a meeting to be held in the school room, Lygon Street Christian Chapel, on Friday evening next, February 20, 1891, at 8 o'clock, when I will be glad to lay my plans before you.

"Allow me to say, beforehand, however, that the business if started will be run on strictly business lines, and that your presence at the meeting will in no way commit you to anything which may be done.

Yours truly,
A.B. MASTON"

Forty people attended the meeting and "approved the scheme" but no definite action was taken. A second meeting, held 21 April 1891, agreed "to further the scheme".

528 Elizabeth Street, 1895



A third meeting, on 5 May 1891, resolved—

- to float a company;
- that the said company be called "The Austral Printing and Publishing Co.";
- that seven provisional directors be elected;
- that A.B. Maston act as secretary pro tem.

A prospectus was issued showing £2,000 authorised capital in two thousand shares of £1 each, payable 5/- on application, 5/- on allotment, balance at three or six months.

Provisional directors were Thos. Smith, MLA, W.C. Craigie, F.G. Dunn, B.J. Kemp, Robert Lyall, J. McGregor and W.C. Thurgood.

A meeting held 20 November 1891 authorised "the work of the company be proceeded with on the issue of 1000 shares subscribed or promised".

A further meeting on 2 December 1891 adopted—

- articles of association;
- election of five directors (all to be members of Churches of Christ);
- appointment of A.B. Maston as manager of the company at a salary of £2 weekly plus 10 per cent of net profits.

That meeting resolved to lease premises at 528 Elizabeth St, Melbourne, for £2 weekly rental with option of three-year renewal at £2/5/- weekly rental.

Printing machinery and requisites were immediately purchased, and the first printing order to come off the press was 4,000 four-page Missionary Sunday circulars for the Victorian Conference Committee—cost £2/10/-.

Articles of association of The Austral Printing and Publishing Co Limited were adopted on 1 August 1892. These were amended and/or updated in later years.

- Notable inclusions in the articles were:
- No dividends, fees or expenses payable to directors.
 - No dividends payable to shareholders.
 - Printing undertaken to be religious and/or educational or of such nature to further the company's aims.
 - Profits or losses to be absorbed in the business.



(above) First share certificate, 1892; (right) Staff, 1896; (below) Printing, 1926



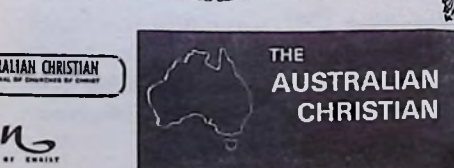
"The Australian Christian"

During the 1890s two independent journals, *The Christian Pioneer* and *The Australian Christian Standard*, were in circulation and operating privately. Both were in financial difficulties and the possibility of liquidation became apparent. Arrangements led to both journals being taken over by the Austral Co. and incorporated into a new publication, *The Australian Christian*.

The journal commenced publication on 6 January 1898. D.A. Ewers was appointed to write the editorial notes for payment of £20 per year and F.G. Dunn

to write the leader and other contributions for £30 a year. A.B. Maston, in a promotional circular, wrote: "I shall be Managing Editor of the paper, and as such will do all in my power to make *The Australian Christian* a great power for the advocacy of right and truth."

The Austral Co., as owner, printed and published the journal until 1963. Editors in that time were A.B. Maston 1898-1907, F.G. Dunn 1907-1914, A.R. Main 1914-1941, A.W. Stephenson 1941-1951, C.G. Taylor 1951-1962 and A.E. White 1962-1963 (continuing as editor for Federal Conference until 1978).

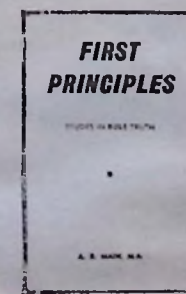


Publications

While the Austral Co. was in existence there were many publications, other than *The Australian Christian*, that found their way into the homes of members of Churches of Christ and other fellowships. The following is a list of some that come readily to mind, but is not at all exhaustive or in any particular order:

- The Pillars of Unity*—E.L. Williams
- The Vision That Made a People*—F.C. Hunting
- The First One Hundred Years*—A.W. Stephenson
- First Principles*—A.R. Main
- The Altar of Love*—W.R. Hibburt
- Declaration and Address*—Alexander Campbell (The thirteen propositions, a reprint from USA)
- The Jubilee History of Churches of Christ in Australasia*—A.B. Maston
- The Significance of the Lord's Supper*—A.W. Connor
- Stepping Stones*—S.R. Baker
- The Bible Speaks*—Series from USA
- Cradle roll certificates
- Psalms and Hymns*—published 1898
- Churches of Christ Hymn Book*
- Current Churches of Christ Hymn Book*—words and music
- Conference handbooks until recent years
- Conference song books
- Pure Words* and later *Skyways*
- Church service plans
- Annual almanacs
- Austral Graded Lessons*, with many revisions over long period
- Tract by G.T. Fitzgerald
- Series of tracts from USA
- A great variety of regular printing and local publications for individual churches and conference departments

(left) "AC" mastheads through the years—1946, 1913, 1967, 1963, 1976, 1978, 1926, 1905
(right) "First Principles" by A.R. Main



Dates

- 1891 The Austral Printing and Publishing Co. Limited registered in the Colony of Victoria.
- 1891 Premises for the company leased at 528 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, from C.W. Mitchell.
- 1893 Freehold premises at 528 Elizabeth Street purchased.
- 1898 First issue of *The Australian Christian* published.
- 1903 Publication of the Jubilee History.
- 1935 Premises enlarged by the purchase of 524 and 530 Elizabeth Street.
- 1955 "Limited" deleted from the company name by special licence.
- 1961 Purchase of new, larger premises at 119-125 Hawke Street, West Melbourne, for £27,500. Sale of Elizabeth Street premises for £39,500.
- 1973 Last publication by the Austral Co. of *The Australian Christian*.
- 1976 Sale of all stock and equipment, transfer of all staff and leasing of the premises at 119-125 Hawke Street to Lenoval Printing as "a going concern".
- 1976 Liquidation of the company and the transfer of all assets to "The Austral Charitable Trust". Incorporation of Maston Pty Ltd as a custodian trustee company to handle the affairs of the new trust.

Chairmen of Directors

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1891-1935 | W.C. Craigie |
| 1935-1943 | R. Lyall |
| 1943-1959 | A.E. Kemp |
| 1959-1960 | J.McG. Abercrombie |
| 1960-1970 | W.A. Kemp |
| 1970-1976 | L.J. Butler |

Managers

- | | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 1891-1907 | A. B. Maston (founder) |
| 1907-1909 | G.P. Pittman |
| 1909-1914 | F.G. Dunn |
| 1914-1950 | D.E. Pittman |
| 1950-1953 | W.R. Hibburt |
| 1953-1976 | A.R. Haskell |

Times of Change

In 1961 it was realised by the directors that the premises in Elizabeth Street were inadequate and cramped and were too valuable an asset to be used for a printing works. It was therefore decided to seek a new location with improved floor space for more efficient use of the plant and equipment. This was obtained at a vacant two-storey building at 119-125 Hawke Street, West Melbourne, for the sum of £27,500, where part of the upstairs floor was leased to a tenant. After removal of the plant from Elizabeth Street, those premises were sold for £39,500, the surplus funds providing additional capital for carrying on the business.

When the original registration of the company was effected the objects were clearly stated to be "the printing, publishing and selling of Christian literature" and the directors always endeavoured to carry out these requirements. But, by the early 1970s it was evident that the resources of the company were not sufficient to compete for business with commercial printers, who, by then, were doing much of the printing for churches and state and federal departments that had previously been entrusted to Austral. Also the printing, publishing and distributing of *The Australian Christian* was increasing the company's heavy losses and the directors were not prepared to offend against the objects by entering the commercial market. By arrangement with Federal Conference ownership of the journal was transferred to a Federal board and the company donated £2,000 plus the use of office facilities and staff. The company's assets had to be preserved for the ultimate benefit of Churches of Christ so legal advice was

taken as to the best method of preserving the assets under their control. Consequently when in 1976 a satisfactory offer was received for the purchase of the business, the directors and shareholders readily accepted this offer. It was necessary then to arrange for the winding up of the company and the transfer of assets to a charitable trust to be administered for the benefit of Churches of Christ. The purchaser of the business as "a going concern" traded under the name of Lenoval Printing and undertook to re-engage all factory staff without any break in employment. This ensured continuity of long service leave, sick pay and superannuation benefits. Lenoval Printing purchased all stock, machinery and other equipment and occupied the premises under a lease, with an option to later purchase the freehold on suitable escalating terms. This option was exercised a few years later.

In due course the company was wound up and the assets transferred to "The Austral Charitable Trust", which arranged for them to be held by a Custodian Trustee Company, named appropriately "Maston Pty Ltd". The then directors and the manager of Austral became the trustees of the Austral Charitable Trust and the directors of Maston Pty Ltd.

At that time the Vic-Tas Conference recorded the following resolution: "The Victorian Tasmanian Conference congratulates the Austral Company on 85 years of illustrious service to the Brotherhood and, with profound gratitude to God, gives thanks for all who, in various capacities, have helped to win for the company the honoured place which it deservedly holds in the annals of the history of Churches of Christ in Australia."

The Trust

In 1977, upon the voluntary winding up of the Austral Company, the liquidator distributed the total net assets of the company, via The Properties Corporation of Churches of Christ, to the control of the trustees of The Austral Charitable Trust. The total value was approximately \$189,000 and immediate steps were taken by the trustees to collect rental from Lenoval Printing and invest this at interest with other remaining cash assets, which were in the form of bonds, deposits and inscribed stock.

In 1979 Lenoval Printing exercised the option to purchase the freehold of 119-125 Hawke Street and by the end of the 1979 financial year, the Trust Fund was valued at \$259,000. The following year a sufficient surplus had been earned from interest on investments to make an initial distribution of \$14,000. Under the terms of the Trust Deed, which had been approved by Conference, it was obligatory to distribute to Churches of Christ in Vic-Tas at least 85% of the total distribution in any one year. This still allowed small additional amounts to be donated to worthy charitable and religious causes. Since 1980 increasing distributions have been made each year as the trust fund has grown through retention of part of each year's surplus and judicious investment in securities. By 1991 a total of \$325,000 had been distributed, mainly to Conference departments, yet the Trust Fund had grown to well over \$500,000.

The trustees are grateful to God for having been able to serve Churches of Christ in this capacity and will continue to do so to the best of their ability.

Some of the material in this supplement has been taken from The Digest of the Australian Churches of Christ Historical Society, No. 102, published in October 1989 and prepared by A.R. Haskell. Arthur Haskell, who died on 28 December 1991, was a former manager of The Austral Company, a Trustee and the Secretary of The Austral Charitable Trust and a Director and the Secretary of Maston Pty Ltd.

Trustees

(back) N.R. Arnott, R.M. Walker,
R.B. Lee, W.A. Thompson;
(front) A.R. Haskell, L.J. Butler



Tribute

Arthur Richard Haskell

27.11.12-28.12.91



The name of Arthur Richard Haskell has been inscribed in the records of departments and activities of the Churches of Christ in Victoria and throughout Australia over a period of 60 years. It belonged to a man who was honoured, respected, trusted and loved by all who knew him.

Arthur possessed a strong faith in God and a commitment to Jesus Christ and his church. This faith and commitment were expressed in every aspect of his life.

Music

Arthur expressed his faith in God and commitment to Christ through his musical talents. It all began in 1923 when Arthur was a boy of 10. The Churches of Christ were conducting a mission in Wirths Olympia in St Kilda Rd, Melbourne, led by an American evangelist, Dr Jesse Kellams, assisted by his song leader Charles Richards. It was a significant event in the history of our churches, because during the mission hundreds were added to the church. At the suggestion of a man, who was later to become Arthur's brother-in-law, Arthur was invited to audition to sing at a youth service. Charles Richards was impressed with his voice and arranged for him to sing

duets with Horace Lee from the South Yarra church. Arthur and Horace sang on a number of occasions during that mission and in the period that followed.

The Kellams-Richards Mission experience began a connection with the Lee family that has been maintained over the years, a lifelong involvement with and support of the church at South Yarra and an outstanding contribution as singer and song leader that continued over many years.

During what has been described as "the mission era" in the life of our churches, Arthur became a well-recognised and appreciated song leader at many of our churches. He joined with such evangelists as James E. Webb, Dr Lloyd Jones, K.A. McNaughton, J.E. Thomas, Fred Youens and others.

But Arthur's contribution was not limited to Churches of Christ. He felt it was a great honour to be invited to be song leader for a mission conducted in the Collins Street Baptist Church led by an outstanding Baptist evangelist from England, Dr Lionel B. Fletcher.

Arthur was appointed song leader for the Christian Endeavour movement for a number of years. The highlight for Arthur was the opportunity that was his to conduct the choir and lead the singing at a great Christian Endeavour convention held in Melbourne. Arthur's membership of the Christian Endeavour Quartette is remembered with great appreciation.

Business

Arthur expressed his faith through his professional life. Arthur's first position was with rope manufacturers Kinnears. Then followed his appointment as accountant with Australian Glass Manufacturers. It was while he held that appointment that W.R. Hibburt, on behalf of the board of The Austral Printing and Publishing Co. invited him to be his successor as manager. [See the supplement in this issue for the story of Austral—much of the material was

written by Arthur himself—Editor.] Arthur accepted the position as manager in 1953 and worked tirelessly for Australian Churches of Christ, for the good of the Austral Company and for the welfare of all his staff.

In addition to his managerial and financial duties, which included responsibilities in relation to *The Australian Christian*, for many years he contributed the "Uncle Arthur" columns in *Pure Words*. He was also closely involved with W. R. Hibburt and V.C. Stafford and with the Federal Board of Christian Education in the publishing of *The Austral Graded Lessons for Sunday Schools*.

He worked hard to overcome losses suffered by the company in the 1970s when many churches and departments transferred their business to commercial printers. When in 1976 the Austral Company was sold as a "going concern" Arthur orchestrated the transition from a printing business to a charitable trust and since then was a highly efficient and respected trustee of that body as well as its secretary, administering and investing its funds so as to provide Churches of Christ with increasing amounts of money each year.

[When the Austral Company handed over *The Australian Christian* to Federal Conference Arthur did not sever his links with this paper. He offered very valuable advice to me and my predecessors, and up until very recently he served as chairman of *The Australian Christian* Advisory Committee in Melbourne—Editor.]

Servanthood

Arthur expressed his faith through his servanthood role in the church. Few lay persons if any could equal the contribution which Arthur Haskell has made to our churches. He was a vital member of the committee that organised the memorable World Convention of Churches of Christ held in Melbourne in 1952, concluding with a service in the Exhibition Buildings attended by over 10,000. Arthur maintained his

interest in the World Convention and attended the Convention in Honolulu in 1980 and New Zealand in 1988.

For nearly four years from 1976, Arthur was secretary of the Arrangements Committee for the Federal Conference in Melbourne led by Gordon Stirling in January 1979.

For 16 years from 1960 Arthur was Chairman of the Federal Conference Hymn Book Committee. The hymn book we use today was first published in 1974 and was the result of countless hours of detailed research and preparation, meetings and correspondence, all of which was carried out with precision and dedication by Arthur, together with his small committee.

In 1963-64 the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania appointed Arthur as its Conference President, the highest honour that our churches can confer. He served on the Department of Home Missions for seven years from 1962 and on the Advisory Department.

Perhaps the role for which Arthur was best known over the last few decades was his role as a trustee of the Churches of Christ Properties Corporation. Introduced as a trustee by Allan Cleland, Arthur was appointed in May 1959. Five years later he was appointed chairman. He visited church boards, attended church services, inspected plans and understood the detail of each application that came before the corporation.

Finally Arthur expressed his faith as a servant of his master. Arthur as a young man discovered the real secret of Christian service. He used his gifts and his talents in the service of Christ, confident that he was never alone, confident that God would provide the resources that he needed to undertake the task at hand whatever it was. He dedicated and gave all he had in service to Christ and his church.

To Lois, Bev, Ken and Lyn we share with you in the sorrow of the loss which you feel.

—Clive Ward

Memorial to Arthur Haskell

Williamstown remembers a life-long involvement

No tribute to - would be complete without mention of his involvement with the Williamstown, Vic, church. His whole life revolved around the church. He was born within walking distance and was baptised there at about 10 years of age. He was concerned about all facets of church life and at various times served as an elder, church secretary, treasurer and board member. His leadership in worship was particularly relied upon and he often preached in the absence of the minister. Arthur was also active in pastoral visitation. Although he was not officially

appointed to such a role he cared for all involved in the church. No area of church life at Williamstown was untouched by Arthur, and he will be greatly missed by that congregation.

To honour his memory the Williamstown church has launched an organ fund to replace its current organ. Given Arthur's love of music and its use in worship this is a very appropriate memorial. Those wishing to share in this memorial should contact the Williamstown minister, Cheryl Johnson, on (03) 397 5715.

Australia Day Awards

Service to the community and religion recognised

At the time of going to press we were unaware of any Churches of Christ members who had received an award in the Australia Day Honours list.

However, there were several awards made for service to religion.

These included the Roman Catholic Cardinal of Sydney, His Eminence Cardinal Edward Clancy, who received an AC (Companion of the Order of Australia) for service to religion, to learning and to the disadvantaged in the community.

Jean Skuse, who for many years was involved in the Australian Council of Churches and

was heavily involved in organising the WCC Assembly in Canberra last year, was awarded an OA (Officer of the Order of Australia) for service to religion, particularly through the World Council of Churches and to women's affairs.

Valmae Merrin of Warana Beach, Qld, received an OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) for her service to Australian detainees in Thailand. Valmae's husband is a partner of Don Cranston and their architectural firm is involved with projects among our Queensland churches. The Merrins attend their local Baptist church.



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The Last Days

For some Christians, many of the newspaper headlines towards the end of 1991 would have read like a "publicity brochure for the last days". Headlines such as "New world disorder", "Scramble for nuclear power of old empire", "Last days of evil empire promises new evils", "EC will become superpower of the 21st century", "Whose finger is on the button?", "Civil war inevitable in old empire" and other similar headlines peppered our papers. No doubt some Christians gleefully watched the war in the Gulf and, more recently, the volatility of events in the break-up of the old Soviet Union with an exhilarating feeling that "the last days" were at last here, and the countdown to Armageddon had begun. There is, for some Christians, an insatiable fascination with the idea that "things fall apart; the centre cannot hold...anarchy is loosed upon the world..." as Yeats described the world in his poem "Second Coming" in 1920.

Of course, there has always been intense debate, some highly perceptive, some bordering on lunacy, about when the end of the world will occur, and whether we will see it occur in our own lifetime. But the end of which world? The end of "the" world or the end of "our" world? If we are considering the end of "our" world, then it doesn't matter when the end of the material world occurs. The reality is that we will all experience the end of the world in our lifetime. Death is the end of our world, and that can occur, for any of us, at any time. If you are prepared for that, then you are prepared for anything else, no matter how cataclysmic. Perhaps its better to ask, "What does the end of the world mean for us now, theologically?" Theologically, "the end of the world", whenever that will occur, is a reminder that life isn't cyclical, but is working towards a climax. It is a drama moving towards a finale that has already been summed up, proleptically (in anticipation), in the advent of Jesus Christ. History has a purpose, and God is at the centre of that purpose. His purpose in the world involves his people in mission, social justice, compassion and community building—demonstrating the meaning of the cross and resurrection, as life in the midst of death, hope in the midst of despair. To choose to be part of that purpose is to be drawn into history as a drama in which we can be positively involved in the redemption of the world, no matter how dark the events around us may become.

What today's "end of the world" pundits fail to recognise, as they have in every age, is that vivid Jewish apocalyptic language and imagery has been reinterpreted by the New Testament writers, and used to describe the age of the Kingdom in imaginative metaphors for compelling urgency, decision and courage in the face of change, conflict, despair in every age. It is not a blueprint for a 20th century countdown to Armageddon. It is a call to respond to the lifestyle of the Kingdom, and creative compassionate participation in the age of jubilee—all 2,000 years of it. The Kingdom of God will prevail, but not in the arrogant, paternalistic, triumphalist sense of the colonial era. It will prevail in precisely the way it was revealed—good news for the poor, release to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, liberty for the oppressed and the proclamation of the acceptable year of the Lord, the age of extra-ordinary, unequivocal grace. It is the presence of this Kingdom that I believe will sustain the overtures for international peace and nurture for the environment. It will bring hope to the seemingly hopeless struggle of the emerging world, and continue to call out a people who are prepared to be servants bringing wholeness to others. Whatever premonitions today's end of the world pundits may have about the "last days", this is still the acceptable year of the Lord!

—Stephen Curkpatrick

Eric Hollard

CCF/ACTVW0292

Classifieds

BIRTHS

WEBB Allan and Val Webb rejoice and give thanks to God for the safe arrival of two granddaughters, Katelyn Elise Webb, born 19 December 1991, and Jessica Ellen Ward, born 10 January 1992. Daughters to Graeme and Anne and Julie and Roger.

NEW ARRIVALS

AMBROSE Chris and Mary, George, Kate, Roger and Jack welcome the long-awaited arrival of David Christopher Wisan from Thailand. December 1991. Aged 9.

ENGAGEMENTS

HOGG-HONE Ray and Margaret Hone of Tootgarook are delighted to announce the engagement of Gary to Janette, youngest daughter of Margaret and Bill Hogg. May God bless you both.

MARRIAGES

GAMBLE-THOMAS A joyful ceremony at Blackwood, SA, on 4.1.92 celebrated the marriage of Jolie and Mark. Their parents Barbara and Neil, Edda and Thornley, along with family and friends gave their love and blessings.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

DEANE-ALLAN Stan and Elsie give thanks to God for 50 wonderful years of being together. Married at Cheltenham Church of Christ by late J.E. Allan on 21 February 1942. Now living at Greenwood Village, Dingley.

MULLER Ron and Lil give thanks to

God for 50 years of partnership in marriage, and for a loving, caring family. Married at the Camberwell Church on Friday, 13 February 1942. Present address 137 Landscape Drive, East Doncaster 3109.

DEATHS

FEARY Geoffrey. On 26 November 1991 at Port Macquarie, NSW. Formerly of Ballarat. Dearly loved husband of Marion. Loved and respected father and father-in-law of Rosalind and Russell Mitchell (Ballarat), Brendan and Andrea Feary (Canada) and Lynden and John Ogilvie (Ballarat). Dear Grandpa of Emily and Megan Mitchell. Jeremiah 31:3: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

GODDARD (FLEER) Peacefully, at Maroonah Hospital after a short illness, on 27 December 1991, Vera Doris, loved wife of Austin (dec). Loved and loving mother of Doug, mother-in-law of Margaret, grandmother of Jenny, Ross, Martin and Alan. Reunited with Dad. In God's care.

McLEAN Geoffrey Maxwell, on 24 January, aged 30, after a short illness. Dearly loved husband of Loris, loved and loving father of Damien and Amy. Loved son of Max (dec) and Berice, and step-son of Haydn (Anderson). Loving brother of Ken and Janette, and brother-in-law of Janice and Eric (Harvey). Adored uncle of Kate, Timothy and Douglas. Loved son-in-law of Max and Stella (Carter), loved brother-in-law of Anne and Milton (Oliver), Susan

and Vincent (Hutton) and Helen. Adored uncle of Dean, Tristan, Joel, Jeremy and Brett. "At home with his Heavenly Father, and precious in our memory."

NOWITZKE Barry Mack, 4 Etty Street, Dalby 4405. Suddenly, at home, 24 December. Beloved husband of Margaret. Loved father and father-in-law of Bronwyn, Adrian and Brooke. Loved and respected pastor to many Queensland congregations.

ROFE Harold (Harry). Loved son of Jack and Phyllis Rofe, brother of Rosalie and Valerie, brother-in-law of Alex. Loving father of Jessica and Hannah. Aged 46 years following severe illness in Canberra. Missed by us all. In God's keeping.

SWEETMAN Daisy, of Shepparton and Oakleigh. Passed away peacefully 3 January 1992. Loved member of the Shepparton CWA for 26 years. Loved by all. She will be sadly missed.

FOR SALE

ELECTRONIC ORGAN THOMAS MALIBU Double keyboard, bass pedals, Leslie and main speakers. Ten voices. As-new condition, including stool, instruction books and music. \$500. Phone (03) 546 4760. **1989 MAGNA GLX** 5-speed, power steering, air-conditioning, 46,000 km, ex-DMED car now available for sale—an opportunity to buy a well-cared-for car. Contact Steve or Ted (03) 898 9391.

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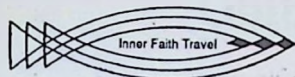
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There is a tendency for people involved in Christian service careers to neglect the development of their spiritual life in Christ. It occurs at every level and in every sphere of Christian ministry. The subtle tendency is to believe that we can function in ministry without a deepening spirituality. Often this slide is unintentional. Those involved at state and national level positions or who are senior pastors are often ones who have experienced more in ministry. The temptation for them is to rest on their laurels. Other times ministers can think that their expertise in church or organisational management automatically carries growth in spirituality.

While I was studying theology at Regent College we were constantly warned about a sterility in our Christian experience that can accompany study of theology, especially dogmatics. Its so easy to start thinking in the third person rather than the second person. Anselm, the great doctor of the Church, began his *Prologue* with a prayer; and not just as a preamble. His dogmatics were prayed dog-

Ministers' Workshop

Guarding Our Hearts

Neil Fong

matics. Hermutt Thielicke said a theological thought can only breathe in the atmosphere of a dialogue with God. It is the same with applied theology as dogmatic or systematic theology. A thought or vision or discussion about the church, its structure or its function can only breathe (come to life and be sustained) in deep, vital spirituality.

Three Things to Guard Our Hearts Against

- A growing dichotomy between belief and behaviour: Os Guinness tells a story of the Queen of Belgium visiting Poland. One day she went to mass accompanied by a government official. Noticing he seemed to know the Catholic liturgy she asked him, "Are you Catholic?" He replied, "Believing madam, not practising I'm afraid." "Oh of course," she answered, "you must be a communist." "Not exactly," he replied. "Practising, not believing."

There is a growing chasm between what we believe and what we do. It is so easy to preach prayer and faith, patience and meditation, and then rely on our political manoeuvring, our sheer persuasive abilities or our new technologies to get things done.

- An addiction to busyness: It was not before I left the hectic pace of full-time work in a medical practice and work in a

local church to study in Vancouver that I realised I had in fact been worshipping at the altar of activism. Narcotised by the need to be constantly busy, we receive much reinforcement through our Christian activities. Our busyness for busyness's sake can leave us dry, shallow and powerless. Eventually our falsely motivated service renders us useless.

The story of Mary and Martha is not a call to follow an extreme of all contemplative-meditative prayer or all-busy active service; rather to a balance, what Walter of Hilton called "the mixed life".

- Look for the signs of en-

trophy: Entropy as an organisational concept is a derivative of the second law of thermodynamics. It means that all organised systems will move towards chaos unless energy is brought intentionally into the system to re-establish order. Neglect our physical bodies and the waistline spreads, ignore building relationships and we become alienated and lonely, miss engaging with God through prayer and scripture and the result is poor holy communion.

Walter Wright, professor of Christian Leadership at Regent College, describes entropy as the antithesis of growth and renewal as the antidote to entropy. God is in the continual process of renewing us or transforming us into who he desires us to be. The issue is: Are we willing to listen and open to being renewed? Our renewing may mean the breaking of old habits, suffering pain, undergoing healing of woundedness carried for many years.

How we need to guard our hearts for it is the wellspring of life.

- Neil Fong is the State Youth Consultant in WA.



An invitation is extended to attend a Service of Commissioning for
Lynette Leach
as a
Field Director
with the Vic-Tas Dept of Mission, Education and Development
— East Kellor Church —
Milleara Road
Sunday, 16 February 1992
at 7.30 pm

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A Church ABC

Marrickville, NSW, is situated 8 km southwest of the central business district of Sydney. Originally a working-class suburb, it is now suffering the plight of many inner suburbs—a flight of population and industries. Last year the municipality lost 1,000 residents. How-

the school loses one-third of its children every year.

The church is situated close to the railway station in a retail area that reflects the ethnic diversity of the area. (There are Thai, Chinese and Lebanese restaurants, and the predominant language groups are Vietnamese, Arabic and Greek, with

in WA. (From the desert to Marrickville!) Barron has been making contact with Aborigines in the area. Next is Chris Newland, just married to Kim, who came from Telopia, where he had been working with street kids. Joel Brunell is also from WA, and via Telopea. Finally there is Ruvena Fung, originally

before entering the ministry. He is married to Karen and they have four children, Jonathan, 10, Elizabeth, 8, Timothy, 6, and Benjamin, 4, and there is a fifth on the way. Karen is involved at the local school in coffee mornings, encouraging mothers, and in a playgroup at the Housing Commission estate



Focus on Marrickville

ever there are still 80,000 left in this small area, 50 per cent of whom speak a language other than English at home. At the local primary school only 3 per cent of the students come from an Anglo-Saxon background. It is interesting area for a Church of Christ to be in.

The Marrickville church was founded in 1893 as an offshoot of Enmore. It had a long history of solid growth until the population changes took effect in the 1970s. Although a number of members continued their membership there even though they lived elsewhere, finally the crunch came, and in 1983 the buildings were handed over to the Department of Church Development. Today the membership is 21, most of whom have joined in the past couple of years. The area has a very transient population; for example

Chinese numbers increasing.) The brick chapel was erected in 1912 but recent renovations have transformed the interior. It is open, carpeted and has flexible seating, with individual chairs. Services are held each Sunday at 10 am, with the Sunday School as part of the service.

For many years Marrickville has had only student ministries. Now things are changing. With a new emphasis at the theological college at Carlingford, the DCDE invited Peter Dixon, a college lecturer, to lead a team of students in ministry at the church. Peter lives in the manse, and spends two days at college and the rest of the time at Marrickville with the team.

The student team includes Barron Bonney, who, with his wife Pauline and sons Neville and Royce, came from Leonora

from Hong Kong and married to Charles. She is developing a ministry to Chinese groups—the Chinese Christian Community Fellowship and the Chinese Restaurant Workers Christian Fellowship. The students spend three days a week in Marrickville. This includes time with group leader Peter Dixon in “spiritual formation” (Bible study, prayer), “ministry refraction” (learning from each other about ministry in the church) and “course reflection”, in which they discuss their lectures and how they relate to the ministry situation.

For Peter this approach has been invaluable as it adds a practical dimension to his position as college lecturer. He loves Marrickville, being literally a child of that very manse. When he was 11, his father Roy came from SA to minister there for four years, before moving to Enmore. Peter practised as a solicitor for a couple of years

with the Anglican organisation Careforce.

The main emphasis of the ministry team is getting out into the community. There were three home groups last year. Working with other churches in the area, an outreach program has begun to primary school children in a new Housing Commission estate on an old factory site. The local Anglican church has a Chinese curate and the Church of Christ shares services and a childrens clubs with that church. A small Korean church meets in the church on Sunday afternoons, and this year a group of Cook Islanders plan to meet on Sunday evenings.

Much of the emphasis at Marrickville is on meeting the needs of members and the incredibly diverse community with care, love and support. Says Peter, “Here I see God bringing people from all over the world to hear the Gospel.”

Closure of the Nursing Home
at the Christian Guest Home

Farewell Barbecue and Luncheon

to thank staff and supporters

1 pm, 21 February 1991
at 139 Atherton Road, Oakleigh

Former supporters and associates of the home
welcome to attend.

RSVP—Val Bush—phone (03) 326 8977 by
Monday, 17 February 1992

Note: The residents will be transferred to the recently upgraded Churches of Christ Nursing Home, Wahgoo Road, Murrumbidgee. The Christian Guest Home, Oakleigh, accommodating 69 residents, will continue to operate and will undergo a substantial renovation over the next few years.



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Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Kleinig, Raymond Arthur (3.11.91) Ray died in his 70th year, being a widower for just over a year, but that time was a very lonely experience for him. He was greatly missed by everyone at the Numurkah, Vic, Church of Christ. He had time to help everyone, by visiting, singing or helping in whatever way was needed. He kept the building and surrounds in top condition, helped with youth groups, grew vegetables and gave them to anyone in need or left them at the church for anyone to use. His love for the Lord was shown by his love to others, by word and deeds.

—A. Farrar

McLean, Geoffrey Maxwell (24.1.92) Husband of Loris, father of Damien and Amy. Son of Charles Maxwell (Max) McLean (deceased) and Bernice Anderson. Step-son of Hayden Anderson. Son-in-law of Max and Stella Carter. Geoff died suddenly in the Austin Hospital after a brief illness. He loved the Lord and served him well during his 30 active years. In his mid-teens he received Christ as his Lord at the Dawson St, Ballarat, church. When the family moved to Melbourne Geoff transferred to the Footscray church where he was a leader with the Explorers, a Sunday School teacher and a member of the board. After his marriage to Loris Carter he moved to Warrandyte to live and attended the Greensborough church. Here Geoff served on a couple of committees and had two terms on the board. At his death he held the position of board chairman. Geoff was a salesman with Sturrock, Field and Williams as well as a keen cricketer. He will be greatly missed by all. We will always remember his quiet enthusiasm, honesty and encouragement.

—GEW

Nowitzke, Barry Mack (24.12.91) Barry Nowitzke was a highly esteemed minister with the Churches of Christ in Queensland. He trained with the Churches of Christ Bible College, Woolwich, NSW, from 1954, graduating in 1957. He ministered in Queensland, beginning at Ipswich, then Sunnybank, Roma, Rockhampton, Bundaberg (11 years) and, most recently, Bongeong. He spent several years working with the Temperance League in the late 1960s. In addition Barry served with distinction as Chairman of the State Youth and Christian Education Department.



• Barry Nowitzke

He was also actively involved and gave meritorious service to the Bible Society. In each of his ministries his recurring theme was the way in which many of the congregation considered Barry to be a very close friend and confidant as well as a respected spiritual advisor. Barry will probably be best remembered for his beautiful singing voice, as well as his outstanding preaching ability. He was the Queensland champion baritone in the early 1950s and also appeared on Australia's Amateur Hour. He was invited to lead the hymn singing on ABC National Radio. While working in Maryborough he met Margaret Turner, to whom he became engaged in 1954. They were married at the completion of his studies in 1957. Their marriage was characterised by an obvious love and friendship. Those who knew them were aware that they were a unique team who touched the lives of all who came in contact with them. They were blessed with two children, Bronwyn and Adrian. Ill health prevented him from attending Adrian's graduation from the Faculty of Medicine in December. Until four weeks prior to his passing, Barry was in reasonable health, actively preaching when needed in Dalby and at other places. Gentle, caring, compassionate and often reserved, yet strong and steadfast was Barry Nowitzke. To his wife, Margaret, daughter Bronwyn, son Adrian and daughter-in-law Brooke, we extend our loving sympathy.

—A.G. Leane

Waters, Bonnie Alice (17.12.91) Passed away peacefully at Batemans Bay Hospital. Baptised by the late Fred Youens in 1930 at Bambra Road, Caulfield, Vic, she married Noel in 1939 and leaves

Church News

SA

ELIZABETH (R.L. Oke) 22 & 24 November saw annual Missionary Weekend. Six speakers represented WEC International, TEAM, MAF, Wycliffe Bible Translators, CofC Overseas Mission Board & young lady who went to Hong Kong & China with MMM. "Contextualisation" common theme, although not planned... Three young ladies, two adult women & eight-year-old boy baptised.. YP successful "car wash" raised \$147 to assist young people considering training 1992.

GROTE ST, ADELAIDE (Ian Adams) Outreach chapel open Wednesday 11 am-2 pm ... City Churches Outreach Lunch 27 December... 4 prayer groups operating ... Group project supporting Max and Naomi Wright at Port Lincoln ... Children's holiday club led by Leeanne Hutchinson ... New administrator Cheryl Canning to assist minister ... 20/80 Strategies steering team presented programs for pastoral lay visitation, leadership resources and corporate dynamic worship.

WHYALLA Wide variety of activities for monthly social outings. All well attended... Barry Goode guest speaker at church anniversary. Counselling given after evening service ... Darren Kittel graduated from CCTC, at Kensington Park, SA, in 1992 ... Gwen & Ron Flavel celebrated golden wedding anniversary ... Looking forward to visit of State Minister Ron Roberts in February ... Koala Club resumes late January.

MATILDAST, PORT LINCOLN (Jim Spiker) Eight ladies attended EP Women's camp ... Church 50th anniversary a great success. Over 100 attending at all meetings ... Prayer partners barbecue held at Tulka with monthly meeting & planning for 1992 ... Pamela Mackie welcomed as member from Marion church ... Christmas morning combined with local churches in school hall ... Jim Spiker preached at Salva-

two children, Janine and Bruce, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Bonnie served as office secretary to the ministry team at Nunawading in the 1970s and also at Southport and finally at Batemans Bay Baptist. A memorial service at Nunawading was conducted by Ted Keating, Jim Wright and Paul Burnham. We thank God for her life and Christian example. Noel, Jan and David, Bruce and Glenys and families.

—Noel Waters

tion Army for Christmas presentation ... Four young boys baptised recently.

BRIGHTON (Neville Moore, Stephen Curkpatrick) Members for Haywood & Bright, Mayors of Brighton & Marion, representatives of Minister's Association all brought greetings to church & good wishes to Stephen Curkpatrick at his induction service on 19 January. State Conference President Rob Leane conducted charge to Stephen & church. 194 attended the service & lunch afterwards ... Neville Moore will share the ministry until his retirement in March.

VICTOR HARBOR (Don Wesley) New family worship service 9.15 am, joined by Sunday School, averaging 70-80. Morning tea afterwards followed by traditional service at 10.45. Combined services 10 am every second month ... "Grandies" enjoyed bus tour & afternoon tea ... Choir presented Judith Butler's cantata "The Promise" ... Sunday School children dressed in international costumes under banner "One in Christ" for town Christmas Eve parade.

COL LIGHT GARDENS (A. Clark) Chinese member read Bible in Mandarin & English at service conducted by Pairs 'n' Spares ... Churches in district were invited to our Christmas Plum Pudding Festival. The hall was packed with people who enjoyed pudding after the service ... Ceciley Harris baptised ... Pew Bibles bought with bequest money from Colin Coombe ... Mabel Pyman & Mary Hall died. Both will be sadly missed.

DULWICH-ROSE PARK UNITED PARISH (Rob Williams, Roger Brown) Church has entered new phase of solo & choral singing under guidance of Keith Stephens, recently appointed organist ... Lindsay Bowes recovered after heart surgery, convalescing at Victor Harbor ... After worshipping with us for a year while working at Queen Victoria Hospital Indian doctors George & Alice Mathew were presented with \$500 for work of Vellore Christian Hospital.

NAILSWORTH (Daryl Telfer) Almost all members plus some Sunday School parents attended Christmas celebration barbecue followed by brief program ... "Carols in the Park" organised with Baptists popular with local people ... Neil Oxenberry, Grant Purdie, Paul Charlton & Stuart Andrews preached while minister on holidays ... Creation Science films shown on three successive Sunday nights ... Day Fellowship started 1992 activities with picnic in Botanic Gardens.

Church News

NSW

CAMPBELLTOWN (K.R. Bond, T. Sands) Ken Bond's ministry to conclude end of year after 15 happy years ... Eight baptisms recently ... Playtime group has successful first year ... Welfare needs continue to be met. Soup kitchen is now operating two nights per week ... Live hook-up with one of our missionaries from Spain during missions month. Church supports five missionaries.

MANNING VALLEY (Barry Rice, Ross Norling) Kolodong Craft raised \$7,000 for welfare work ... Regular youth services being conducted ... Weekend of evangelism with Gavin Williams, Campaigners for Christ ... Wolfgang Hellwig one month itinerant evangelism in PNG ... Two groups studying "Through the Bible in One Year" ... New elders appointed, undergoing training ... Youth band & singers taking part in services ... Youth work for 17-25 year olds commenced.

BOWRAL (Gary Towle) Visit from "Endless Praise" 3 Dec. Delightful example of harmony ... 10 Dec CWF made final "Happy Hour" visit to Harbison Retirement Village for year. Ladies brought gifts for many who attended. Envelope slipped under church door with cheque for amount needed to cover the expense ... Sunday evening 15 Dec special Christmas service with drama, poetry & song ... Combined churches carol service trans-

ferred to church because of wet weather.

FAIRFIELD (Ted Bjorem, Phil Wylie) Rejoicing that Claire Benz & Patricia & Fernandez Rob baptised recently ... Large crowd at Candles by Candlelight in front of chapel with our four church groups—Arabic, Spanish, Vietnamese & English ... Many commitments after mission conducted by Arabic church ... Numbers of babies and children under 5 ... Elsie's playgroup still very popular, with an average of 40 children two days a week.

THORNLEIGH (F. Elliott, S. Wesley) Three young people baptised 22 December by Keith Morgan, associate minister ... Over 250 shared Christmas Day service, led by Stuart Wesley, address by Franklyn Elliott ... Offering "My Christmas Gift to the Lord" to assist Max & Bev Winch establishing medicine bank among the Dani people and "Love in the Name of Christ" outreach in Hornsby district. Now stands at \$2,908.75.

TWEED HEADS (Richard Oakes) Church packed for Christmas Day service. Over \$900 offering for COCOA ... Guy Cooper concluded ministry end of November after three years as youth minister ... Meetings January back in chapel, returning to Civic Centre February ... Local men brought messages in Richard's absence ... 37 received into fellowship 1991 ... Two exchange students to Japan have re-

turned home after one year's absence.

THORNLEIGH (F. Elliott, S. Wesley) During school holidays Phil, Carla & Lisa Neville leaders at Scripture Union Family Mission, Narooma, NSW ... January set aside as special month of prayer with chapel being open during week for prayer. Friday nights, an evening of prayer & meeting for prayer featured in pm services ... Evening services now being held back at chapel at Thornleigh. AM services still at Pennant Hills.

Qld

SOUTHPORT (N. Newton, S. Palmer, G. Barnes, S. Smith) Annual meeting 27 November very positive. New deacons elected, also new elder Lex Bell ... Board members set aside with prayer & laying on of hands 15 December ... Church instrumental in organising combined churches of Albert Shire & Gold Coast Christmas Carols 14 December at Dreamworld Music Bowl. 3,500 attended. Large choir, Youth For Christ Big Band, talented Christian artists backed up carol singing.

DALBY (N.F. Melville, S.L. Colyer) Special events throughout 1991: church auction (February), farewell to Deacons & Millers (February), church family camp (March), special offering to offset church deficit (\$6,000 received—\$2,000 over target) (June), men's dinner (Novem-

ber) ... Special house meetings with Pekene Zarata from PNG, 12 visitors from Normanton & Mareeba & Indian village evangelists.

BUNDABERG (Alan Leane) Hilary Biden, David Bust, Steve & Helen Foley, Craig Thwaitewelcomed into fellowship ... AGM appointments Wally Pohle, sec/treas/elder, Bob Bignill supt/elder, Dennis Trebbin, youth leader/elder. Chairman Rob Johnson. Deacons Nev Trebbin, Ian Foster ... 68th anniversary climaxed 1 decision, 2 rededications .. 200 attended Christmas Day service. \$875.94 collected COCOA ... Bequest \$9,826.95 received estate Violet Cole.

PINE RIVERS (Neale Proellocks, Ian Todd) Bethlehem Markets great success. Money & food donated went to Social Services for needy in our area ... Ipswich choir led Carols by Candlelight ... Three decisions ... Michael Devadason welcomed into fellowship ... One evening service in January taken by adult Bible class God's Masterplan ... The Curries were baptised in morning service on 26 January.

ANNERLEY (Richard Pearce) Special services leading to Christmas on "caring" with the final one where food gifts were brought for distribution to those in need ... February 1992 will see commencement of All Age Christian Education program at 9 am followed by the communion service at 10.30 am on Sundays ... Russell Ritchie presently remaining at the MS Centre.



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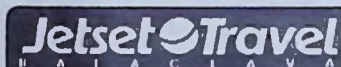
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Personal

Baptisms

•Graeme Ross, Belmont, Vic •Carrie Ann Rouse, Rose Poschl, Chantel Hudson, Lisa Stevenson, Glen Brouwers, Elizabeth, SA •Maurice Haynes, Craig Sharam, Helen Butcher, John Sonsie, Swan Hill, Vic •Nona Whittington, Tanya Jenkins, Vanessa Hope, Devonport, Tas •Julie-Anne Pedler, Shelley Deacon, Rachael Pitt, Kylie Meares, Sue Miller, Tabitha Smith, Dalby, Qld •Correne Sloan, Jason Reed, Carol Brazel, Daryl Pasfield, Rita Steiger, Judy Lambourne, Ted Ryan, Chris Rowsell, Leisa Johnston, Jodie Toft, John Reynolds, Kate Reynolds, Alex Raphael, Manning Valley, NSW •Peter Wright, Warwick, WA •Gina Tsousi, Rodney Bryce, Sonja Andrews, Grote St, Adelaide, SA •Dennis Boyanich, Heather Boyanich, Anne Arnold, Trevor Dowsett, Marian Dowsett, Bruce Rock, WA •Juliette Johnson, Nikki Hart, Nathan Massey, Thornleigh, NSW •Craig Thwaite, Bundaberg, Qld •Craig Sutton-Smith, Scarborough, WA •Robert Sherry, Peter Spiker, Adrian Ellis, Andrew Galvin, Matilda St, Port Lincoln, SA •Michelle Proellocks, Robyn Currie, Neale Currie, Pine Rivers, Qld •Craig Spicer, Damien Gray, Kalamunda, WA •Rhianon O'Shannessy, LaTrobe Terr, Geelong, Vic •Alf Powell, David Kett, Troy Fletcher, Delwyn Leach, Warragul, Vic •Ceciley Harris, Colonel Light Gardens, SA •Mark Wicking, Footscray, Vic •Brendan Routley, Nailsworth, SA

Marriages

•Robyn Witt to Tim Frampton, North Balwyn, Vic •Danielle Caffrey to Brian Anderson, Helen Butcher to John Sonsie, Swan Hill, Vic •Michelle Stibbe to Patrick Sayer, Ormond, Vic •Philippa Gibbsto Lyle Kermond, Kirily Bickerton to Matthew Boulton, Julie Fowles to Graham Gaul, Dalby, Qld •Jenny Silvestro to Steven Harris, Heather Magin to Warwick Dunne, Michelle Robinson to Ron Button, Manning Valley, NSW •Michelle Busbridge to Craig Yeates, Sonja Andrews to John Fleming, Grote St, Adelaide, SA •Judy Tan to Alan Cheeseman, Bruce Rock, WA •Carol Underhill to Stephen Male, Pine Rivers, Qld •Claire Cook to Tim McIntosh, Danielle Powell to Ian Cornthwaite, Kalamunda, WA •Rachel Radhna to Keith Marsden, Leanne Myers to Louis Pouw, Footscray, Vic •Vicki Lloyd to Michael Braithwaite, Thornleigh, NSW •Carol Hale to David Harrold, Maylands, WA •Gail Whan to Darren Spangenberg, Nailsworth, SA •Gayle Fisher to Danny Wilson, The Patch, Vic

Deaths

•Muriel Page, Harry Hood, Ormond, Vic •Elsie McGibbon, Frank Peck, Carnarvon, WA •George Pedler, Graham DuRietz, Barry Nowitzke, Dalby, Qld •Ruby Roy, Rusty Miller, Manning Valley, NSW •Mirian Brearley, Grote St, Adelaide, SA •Hector Bell, Pine Rivers, Qld •Edith Pitt, Warragul, Vic •Mabel Pyman, Mary Hall, Colonel Light Gardens, SA

Changes

Peel St, Ballarat: Minister—Wayne Allen, 209 Main Road, Ballarat, Vic 3350. Phone (053) 33 4396 (office) or 31 7580 (home). Treasurer—Malcolm Gamston, 9 Caroline Court, Nerrina, Vic 3350. Phone (053) 32 6059.
North Balwyn: Minister—Paul Burnham, 287 Canterbury Road, Heathmont, Vic 3135. Phone (03) 870 5638.
Morris: Alan and Joy—1 Castlecrag Drive, Kallaroo, WA 6025.
Murwillumbah: Secretary—All correspondence to the Secretary, Murwillumbah Church of Christ, PO Box 591, Murwillumbah, NSW 2484.
Goolwa: Minister—Roger Risson, 11 Moore Street, Goolwa 5214. Phone (085) 55 2054.
The Austral Charitable Trust: Secretary—Ivan S. Humphreys, 46 Thornhill Drive, Forest Hill, Vic 3131. Phone (03) 878 8530.

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A comprehensive profile of the church and our expectations is available to those who express interest in sharing in this exciting and vital ministry.

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Applications close 28 February 1992

Church News

Tas

DEVONPORT (B. Butler) Old-fashioned Sunday School church picnic arranged by 16+ youth group ... Stephen & Karen Fisher welcomed into church membership ... Final 91 Girls' Brigade church parade, Boys' Brigade, indoor bowls Christmas breakup ... Sunday 15 Dec morning service advanced to 9.30 am to enable all-day biblical workshop to be held ... Three baptised ... Sunday School awards presented in service.

LAUNCESTON (R. Foster, C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) Attendances maintained over holiday period although 12 adults & 12 children have moved interstate in recent weeks ... "Summer at Seven" meeting needs of families ... "Light Factory" holiday program for last of school holidays ... Michael Thurlow to go to Wollongong College ... One decision on 19 January when C. Spaulding speaker ... Kath Edmunds still in hospital after fall ... Opportunity Shop well received in its location.

HOBART CITY (J. Weston, G. Hush) Successful pre-Christmas events including 50 young people attending camp at Coningham ... Crowded youth concert ... Children's Church presentation in morning service ... Recently formed choir presented Christmas cantata. Tapes on sale ... Bushdance held New Year's Eve ... Discipleship Training Institute students all successful in ACT exams. Graeme Hush passed 11 he sat, gaining LTH ... Gordon Barr & Graeme Hush involved National Youth Convention. Two young people attended.

NUBEENA (C.G. Henderson) December & New Year very busy ... Sunday School anniversary well attended. Alan Blythe, Howrah, guest speaker ... Home Missions offering \$135 ... Visitors from Young Surfers

throughout Australia attended evening services ... Carols by candlelight held in old church Port Arthur well attended ... Christmas morning service many visitors. Offering shared between Nursing Home, Bible Society & church ... Ladies Christmas evening held, 55-60 attending.

Vic

NORTH BALWYN (Paul Burnham) Visual children's ministry proving popular with toddlers & others ... Rev Ian Hawley, BCV, guest speaker at mission harvest thanksgiving ... Other guests Father Zachariah (Coptic Church), Ray Best (FEBC), D. Geyer ... Greensborough C of C performed Christmas cantata ... Marj Morley held successful art exhibition ... Presentation made to Eric Harvey after two years as student minister ... Boys' Explorers club to recommence in the new year.

BELMONT (Bob Clymer) Church complex refurbished & enlarged. Now more flexibility for use of chapel & foyer. Ian Allsop challenged church at reopening & rededication service ... Graeme Ross baptised & received into membership ... 120 attended combined clubs breakup ... Margaret Allen thanked for four years service to Boys Club following her retirement ... Church's Advent celebration marked beginning of Christian year ... Churches of Belmont & Highton held open-air "Live Christmas" presentation.

YARRAWONGA (W. Keddie) A Good News Festival was held 2-10 November with George & Rita Galieh. The various activities, which included barbecue, dinner, women's rally & social evening were all well attended. There were over 70 decisions of various types during the mission ... Discipleship classes have commenced for young people ... A combined festival with the Presbyterians will be held in 1992. **SWAN HILL (L.J. Mayes)** Minister, elders & their wives & associate minister-elect, Tim Green, spent day in retreat at Koraleigh on 30 November ... Four baptised during December ... Morning services combined for Christmas celebration 22 December. This was followed by lunch in Riverside Park ... Church family encouraged to write their personal testimonies & many were shared with congregations during December.

EAST KEW (Ed Roffey) At last AGM all officers were returned with the addition of Heather Saunders as deacon ... Fred Elliott was honoured for his lifelong work by being

made Elder Emeritus. Fred & Doris are still active in the church. They reside at 10 Kelba St, North Balwyn ... Church saddened by the death of John Youens, who helped by presiding for us for many years.

ORMOND (G.O. Stibbe, M. Adamson) Special prayer service held. Members prayed for future of church, ministry, leaders ... Two Bible study groups meet weekly ... Good Companions, Teen Scene active year ... CWF, EWF & Drop In Centre popular ... Board management meeting weekly prior to Christmas ... Bethany Close officially opened ... Melissa & Michael Adamson finish ministry Ormond 22 December. Will be missed ... Student Shaun Bainbridge commencing January ... Excellent attendance at Day Kindergarten service.

GREENSBOROUGH (G. Warren) Choir presented cantata "Make His Praise Glorious" at morning service & at North Balwyn ... Lunch to farewell relocating families—Geoff & Heather Crossman (Reservoir), Linda & Lindsay Mee (Canberra), Roslyn & Stephen Kelly (Werribee) ... Christmas extravaganza outreach held—bushdancing, spit roast, impromptu nativity, giving tree. Toys donated to Smith Family ... Kevin Pye retires as board chairman ... Plans for Grace Vale community continue.

HAMPTON ST (Peter Pitts) At AGM elders elected Os Cooper, Paul Payne, David Allison & Alan Payne (for the first time), Michele Payne secretary, Alice Allison treasurer ... Alan Payne graduated MBioTech. Duncan Hoggett passed all exams ... "Jesus" film well attended throughout 1991 ... Christmas concert at Elanora Blind Home appreciated ... Eve Gole, Margaret Sampson, Jess Cause in hospital. Jean Kerr & Ruby McDowell recovering at home.

HAMILTON (Ray Eldridge) Minister commences part-time end February, because of finances ... Monthly church stalls raised \$3,700. Proving more popular ... Girls' Brigade held awards afternoon, Monday night break-up ... Much prayer offered for members of church families. Ray Rivett, all ribs broken in fork lift accident; David Hoffman, kidney & pancreas transplant in Sydney in October, was looking forward to coming home probably in late January.

GARDINER (Paul Creasey) Temple Day offering for church repairs ... Church appreciated pastoral care of Harold Steele during minister's absence ... Annual meeting held 17 November ... Christmas carol service at 5 pm 15 December followed

by light supper ... Friendship Club Christmas dinner held at Monbulk camp ... Minister appointed part-time to Department of Mission, Education & Development as youth consultant ... Members using talents to raise funds for church progress.

BELLARINE PENINSULA (Mark Butler) 12 January was a big day. Speakers at morning service were Conference President Max Carter & CWF President Stella Carter. The two presidents were entertained to lunch. At night the chapel was filled for a bowlers' service recognising the bowlers' presidency of church member Alan Marshall ... Gordon & Leslie Stirling were farewelled on 19 January after a year of interim ministry.

RED CLIFFS (G.R. Sharrad) Presentation made to Ivan Cameron at conclusion of 20 years as church secretary ... Kids Club wound up for year in December by travelling round by bus carol singing. Visited hospital & 10 homes ... Holiday Bible Adventure held very successful week 13-17 January again this year in our church. Around 50 children enjoyed Bible stories, songs & craft activities. All churches taking part. Christine Cook co-ordinator. **NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn)** Church members sang carols in Northcote Shopping Plaza the Saturday before Christmas & Sunday night service was held outside church building. Children re-enacted Christmas Pageant with Joshua McKee as baby in the manger ... Christmas Day service combined with Baptists in their building with our minister preaching ... Ian Tippet (DMED) met with church board to plan for 1992 ... Visitors have been present at morning services during holidays.

LA TROBE TERR, GEELONG (Dr C.J. Mackenzie) December busy month with CWF breakup at Young's, Sunday School breakup at O'Shannessy's, carol service at Grace McKellar & well-attended Christmas Day service ... 18 over 80s enjoyed dinner at Drayton's ... Three couples welcomed by transfer ... Young girl baptised ... Andrew McKnight involved in coffee shop outreach ... Charlie Claxton attended Christian camp for the deaf ... David McGregor present at YFC Gold Coast camp.

MAIDSTONE (Wes Rodgers) CWF stall at Sunshine raised \$250. Temple Day & sidewalk sale over \$2,500 ... Bible presented to Len Stratton, former treasurer ... Rita Rodgers acting secretary. Rita collects for BAM. Ilma Boettcher for AMB ... On children's special day, Church of God (Elim) (Spanish speakers from

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Church News

El Salvador) invited to share service & lunch ... Several services over Christmas shared with Tottenham Baptists.

WARRAGUL (David & Debbie Buesnel) Gippsland Gathering at Warragul... Successful church camp at Lancefield ... Neighbourhood Sunday & Hospitality Sunday held ... Pianist Michael Dunn guest at evening service... Church saddened at death of Edith Pitt ... AGM held ... Four married couples transferred into full membership ... Four baptisms, one an 82-year-old ... Christmas cantata & Carols by Candlelight held, with both nights a huge success.

FOOTSCRAY (Dan Lundgren) Good Companions & Explorers continuing—although membership transient many lives being touched ... Sunday School breakfast held & CWF festive luncheon ... Dinner for past Conference presidents hosted by Max Carter ... Church grieves with Max & Stella Carter on death of son-in-law Geoff ... Services in January 10.30 am followed by cuppa & 7 pm in various homes ... Andrew Waters farewelled to Canada New Year's Day.

CROYDON (Martin Burgess) Work party of 13 went to Broken Hill for two weeks. Shared in services at Broken Hill & Mildura ... Isobel Marshall commenced as pastoral care co-ordinator ... Board retreat held at Rosebud ... Ordination service for Martin Burgess 2 February. Harvey Miller guest speaker.

THE PATCH (Mike Folland) Members assisted at Christmas dinner for needy ... Four high school students passed VCE exams ... Gayle Fisher & Danny Wilson were married in chapel at Camp Waterman ... Minister & family on leave all January. Speakers in his absence Jeff Renner, Vic Berry, Phyl Perry & Dean Phelan ... House Church, Kid's Club & Barbecue Church all resuming in February.

WA

CARNARVON (Donald Bone) After 38 years Ron & Criss Jones are retiring to Northam. The church & the CWF held farewells & presented gifts in appreciation of a very loved couple ... More than 100 ex-mission children & their children attended a reunion slide night organised by Edna Lincoln & Criss Jones ... Baby shower party held for Wayne & Mary Bell's new daughter Miriam ... Bert Spratt to go to AEF Bible College this year.

YORK (John Tocknell) Representatives of Christian ship *Doulos* visited church for Bible study ... Tania & Kim Warnock welcomed their second daughter, Natalie Anne, into world on 7 December ... David & Julie Trail have opened a Christian recording studio in town & have performed musical concerts in several churches ... Church welcomed into fellowship Joan Westlake from Mandurah ... Church cricket side crushed Quairading in pre-Christmas match.

WARWICK (G.B. Carslake, B.A. Eagles, R.L. Mason) Excellent Christmas services held. 800 at service in Sports Stadium ... Building extensions progressing well with \$49,000 given in November towards \$250,000 cost ... Boys' & Girls' Brigades continue to grow, with 120 on roll and good team of leaders ... Members involved in National Youth Convention, visit to Korean Deaf Church & local youth camp at Forest Edge ... More baptisms held.

MERREDIN-BRUCE ROCK Full church for farewell & thanksgiving to Don & Jill Sonsee and boys after four years of happy and fruitful ministry ... Also farewelled recently were Dr Chow family and Judy & Jenny Tan ... Congratulations on marriage of Judy Tan & Alan Cheeseman ... New son to Paul & Celia Butler ... Witnessed five baptisms over recent weeks ... John Thornhill study leader at October family camp.

SCARBOROUGH (Nigel Merrick, Mike & Raye Hasleby) Perth Bible College interns, Mike & Raye Hasleby, appointed to ministry ... Testimonies given by crew members of Operation Mobilisation's ship, *Doulos* ... Fred, Sandy Hay & family farewelled to take up appointment at Mt Barker Baptist church ... Brad & Judy Parker prepare to serve in Malang in Indonesia ... Geoff Dunning, Glen Locke, Bob Plump and Brad Parker ministered recently.

FREMANTLE (D. Good) The first

special event of church's centennial year was UC choir's presentation of cantata "My Saviour & My King" 1 December ... Aerial Missions team spoke of its work in outback WA ... Video about life and work Ivory Coast, Africa, screened by WEC missionaries ... CWF office-bearers unchanged for 1992 ... Working visits to "home" from Vic from W.W. Saunders & Carol & Karen Clutterbuck.

KALAMUNDA (Mark Proud, Paul Sanders) Special Christmas services well attended ... Rocksalt welfare program busy distributing Christmas food parcels, toys etc. in district ... 60 ladies enjoyed evening of thanksgiving & praise, "Harvest Jubilee", organised by Grace Ministries ladies ... Christmas luncheon arranged by Friendship Centre for folk from three nursing homes in district. Christian School choir shared in program ... Coffee shop/drop-in centre run for six weeks in Kalamunda Centre by Axiom youth group.

MAYLANDS David jolly concluded ministry at Maylands & will be inducted into Bruce Rock-Merredin ministry February. Presentation made during service 29 December after which church shared with Jolly family at morning tea ... Church in process of confirming interim ministry for 1992 ... In meantime preaching being undertaken by George Eaves, Trevor Streeton, Ron Jones, Rod O'Donnell ... Welcomed into membership David Harrold & Flo Bawden.



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Comment

Worship As Theatre

Brian Phelps

The church has developed a style of worship which, whether we like it or not, is intrinsically theatrical.

Look at the way your church is designed: foyer, auditorium (chapel), stage (platform), wings (vestries)—all to the familiar theatrical model. (And incidentally, to a model which is also common in two other great institutions—the courts and the traditional school! More of these at some other time.)

Because we operate within the theatrical model we have developed a style of worship leadership that is consistently theatrical.

The "actors" up front: presidents, preachers, readers, helpers, musicians: all active, involved and contributing. The "audience" in the auditorium, passive, following instructions and receiving.

I suggest that we have got it wrong. The model is fine, but the roles have been incorrectly allocated.

What we have forgotten is that the audience in worship is not the congregation, but is God himself. Worship is that which we direct towards God. If we realise that, then we will need to re-allocate the roles of the rest of the participants.

We need to see the congregation not as the audience but as the actors. It is the congregation's task to be active, creative, involved, presenting, doing.

If the audience is God and the actors are the congregation, what is the theatrical role of the president, preacher, helpers, musicians etc.?

Clearly it is not to entertain, (although their activity should be entertaining), nor is it to act for the congregation.

Rather it is the role of those people who have traditionally had the up front tasks, to behave as if they were the producers, the director, the stage hands, the prompters—all those people whose task is to help the actors get their presentation right.

This model shifts the emphasis from a leader-dominated, passive congregation to an active congregation supported by good facilitators.

It shifts the congregation from an audience to be entertained, or instructed, or talked at, to a group of participators who are helped to make their worship effective and positive.

It replaces the president as performer with the president whose task is to guide and direct the worship of the congregation.

The helpers become those who help the congregation, rather than those who help the president.

The welcomers, the duty officers, the flower person, the musicians all become the supporters (stage hands if you like) rather than the performers.

The preacher is no longer the star attraction but the chief encourager.

And it makes it easier to see that the purpose of worship is for everyone to bring their best to God.

• Brian Phelps is a member of the Magill, SA, church.

The Last Word

Maturity is the art of living in peace with that which we cannot change.

The minister and his wife, long childless, had adopted a baby and all the parish was talking about it. Two older members were overheard giving their approval. Said one: "I think it's just splendid. It's such a modest way to have a baby."

A Texan in the oil industry went to see the dentist, and when which tooth was the trouble the Texan said, "Oh, just drill anywhere. I feel lucky today."

The members were puzzled by an item in the church's proposed budget for "Unprogrammed Requirements", until the budget committee explained, "The heading used to be 'Miscellaneous', but the committee felt that the new title was more dignified."

As part of a research project, a student needed material from St Augustine's *The City of God*. A search of the library's computerised cataloguing system under "philosophy" failed to turn up the volume. A check under "religion" was also negative. A librarian finally located the work—under "town planning".

Sign on a university notice board: "The geology department shows earthy films."

Too often when you tell a secret to someone it goes in one ear and in another.

Q: If it takes five minutes to wash your hands, and six minutes to wash your face, what would it take to dry them?

A: A towel.

Q: What has no legs yet runs around a paddock?

A: A fence.

Salesperson: Would you like to buy a pocket calculator?

Customer: No thanks. I know how many pockets I've got.



Fred is determined not to be tempted by sin.



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