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THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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Guest Editorial

Past Present Future

Cec Neville



As I get older I have a tendency to think of the past, with the old traditional style of services. We walked two miles to church three times on Sundays because it was deemed a sin to ride on trams. I think of the reverence shown as everyone tiptoed into church, sat quietly and prayed. In those days people felt a responsibility to attend church.

There wasn't any work anywhere on Sunday mornings except for one tram to take people to church. The radio station didn't commence until 11 am, when a church service was broadcast. I wasn't allowed to read anything but Christian books; I wasn't even allowed to play games.

Some churches had youth groups and Bible studies. There were special missions where the evangelist preached Fire-Hell-Brimstone, which scared us as young people. At these missions quite often certain young people were told to go out to the front when the invitation was given; this proved to be a commitment which didn't mean much to the person. Nothing much was said in some churches about the love of God and how the Holy Spirit could take hold of us and change our lives.

During the course of my service for the Lord, I remember picking up drunks out of the gutter and sobering them up and telling them that Jesus loved them. I remember how God protected me one night when a drunk attacked me with a butcher's knife as I was endeavouring to sort out a domestic problem in a slum area. In those days God was revered and his house, where the church met, was revered. I was taught by my mother that God must come first in all things and that I must honour him all of my life as Prov. 3:6 states.

These days we drive to church and no longer do some people feel a responsibility to attend services. The main shops in the city are open on Sundays. It's difficult to find a Christian service on radio or television, particularly in Tasmania. Our church services have changed a great deal, the churches are more alive with thriving youth groups and sharing groups functioning exceptionally well, helping people to develop spiritually and to become more caring. We don't hear a lot of Fire-Hell-Brimstone preaching, we are no longer scared

into or told to make a commitment, but we are taught more of God's love, compassion and forgiveness, offered to all who will accept by faith and believe the Lord Jesus Christ. We hear more about the Trinity and the importance of the Holy Spirit. However, many people today are not prepared to give of their time or are not willing to use the gifts God has en-

trusted to them. It concerns me that many people today will always attend the entertainment provided by the church, but when someone is required for service within the church, it comes back to the few dedicated ones. I find myself asking why? Despite this God uses and blesses those who are willing to serve the Lord with gladness.

The future is, of course, in the hands of God, but, do we have a vision of God's church and what its witness can be and do if we ourselves are faithful to his call? I believe the church of today is very much alive. Many people are being used in ways they never thought possible.

The church has needed and will always need a happy medium. High spiritual standards have been set and proved very successful in building up the church as it is today. We perhaps need to change our methods a little. However, we must never lose sight of the old Christian standards, morals and examples set over the years.

The Lord led the pioneers of our churches. You and I are the pioneers of our churches today. As God's Holy Spirit leads us, we must retain that sense of mission. The message of salvation does not change. So if we are walking with God, we too must accept the command of Jesus Christ, when he told his disciples in Galilee to go, to preach, to teach and to baptise in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19-20)

Cec Neville, a cabinet maker by trade, has worshipped and served with a number of other denominations, before becoming a member of the Hobart Church. Following a leg amputation, he was appointed Hospital Chaplain for the Tasmanian Churches, with a particular ministry to amputees. Cec and Naomi worship at the Hobart City church, they have five children and two grandchildren.

Alpine Trek 93

Hitting the heights

On 9 January, 26 trekkers began an eight day backpacking adventure across the **Bogong High Plains** which took in some of Victoria's highest peaks, namely Mt Feathertop (1922m) and Mt Bogong (1986m).

The trek was made up of people from a wide age range (from teenagers to people in their 60s) and from as far afield as Canberra. The weather throughout the week was excellent and the trek was filled with many memorable experiences. We were fortunate to find one of the few remaining snow patches near Mt Nelse which afforded us several hours of entertainment. We used plastic sheets as toboggans and had the traditional snow fight.

Another highlight was the opportunity to camp on the very summit of Mt Bogong and watch the sunset over the Buffalo Plateau and a spectacular sunrise the next morning. We were also able to get a close up look at thousands of Bogong Moths who make the cairn on the summit their summer home.

The trek provided not only a physical challenge but also the opportunity to develop and grow in Christian living through meaningful devotional times.

The Alpine Trek 93 was just one of the many activities organised by the **Adventure Committee** under the auspices of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development. For more information about activities offered by the Adventure Committee, contact D.M.E.D. on (03) 326 8900.

—Tony Twining

A Vision Becomes Reality

The race is on



• One of the go-carts

Youth ministry is a high priority in the mission of the **Belconnen, ACT, church**. However, funds to enable such ministry were not able to be met through offerings and increased giving beyond the church's requirements to operate. A new venture undertaken by several members is intended to help this vision become a reality.

A number of members have guaranteed a bank loan to purchase a recreational business. The business has been formed as a non-profit organisation **Belconnen Youth Ministries Incorporated**—and is trading as **Mitchell Go Karts**.

The aims of the business are four fold:

- provide employment for youth in a financially viable enterprise

- teach business and other skills to young people
- assist the Belconnen church to fund work amongst youth

- facilitate youth outreach by providing a non-threatening, safe environment for meeting, counselling and recreation.

The manager is a female graduate in Business Management Studies and is a member of the Belconnen church. A number of young people from the church are employed on a part-time basis and already, in this short time, ministry opportunities have arisen.

The Chief Minister for the ACT, Ms Rosemary Follett, will officially open Mitchell Go Karts on 11 March and an open day for church members will also take place during March.

The business is not owned by the church but the rules of the Association ensure that the church is the beneficiary of the profits which are to be used specifically for youth ministry.

It is an exciting venture for those involved, and a vision transformed for those who believe in the real opportunities to minister to the young people with whom we come in contact. It is a real step of faith to enable this to happen.

It is not without risk to those who have accepted the responsibility of being financial guarantors, but everyone who is a part of this vision believes that this is an investment in ministry to the youth of our church, and the community. The church members involved in this venture have a real sense of mission to work in this area and believe that the work already done by those working in this ministry, including many of the young people themselves, will only continue to grow.

The Association is managed by seven people, three young adults who hold the positions of manager, secretary and member and four older adults who are experienced in business management.

For further information contact Manager Kate Hughes on (06) 241 6663 (BH) or Secretary Wayne Leach on (06) 254 3254 (AH).



Leadership Experience

Ministers travelling to USA

A group of young ministers will be sharing in the experience of a lifetime when they travel to Anaheim, California (USA) for an intensive week of training in leadership development. Sponsored by Christian Projects and organised by a group of Australian ministers, the participants will be visiting significant Churches in Los Angeles and San Diego to hear positive Church leaders de-

scribe the impact of their ministries. The group will also be having input from the ministers accompanying them.

The participants are having their fares and accommodation met by Christian Projects and the income from the trading arm of Christian Projects (the "Stan Gilmour fund") is helping fund this great project. Participants were invited to apply for the trip and were chosen by an interview process. The successful applicants included:

Bill Addison (WA), Allan Blyth (Tas), Rod Brown (Vic), Brian Bruce (NSW), David & Debra Buesnel (Vic), Paul Cameron (Vic), Chek Chia

(Vic), Mike Folland (Vic), Milton Oliver (Vic), Paul Potter (ACT), Stephen Templeton (Vic), John Sweetman (Vic), Dale White (Vic), Phil Webber (SA).

The "Stan Gilmour Fund" is so named to acknowledge the vision that Stan Gilmour had for leadership development and the initiatives that he has taken to involve ministers in such a project. Stan Gilmour recently retired from Christian Projects.

A similar training event was held in Singapore in 1989 and this has had a powerful impact on many of our Churches across Australia.

Casualties of War

The Plight of Women in Ex-Yugoslavia

An ecumenical group of women who visited Croatia 14-18 December said they were "absolutely convinced" by extensive conversations there that rape is systematically being used as a "weapon of war" in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

In a 21 December briefing for journalists at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, members of the team urged an immediate and concerted international response to what they described as a "sophisticated strategy" of raping Bosnian women, most of them Muslims, which goes far beyond the incidence of rape which is often a "by-product" of war.

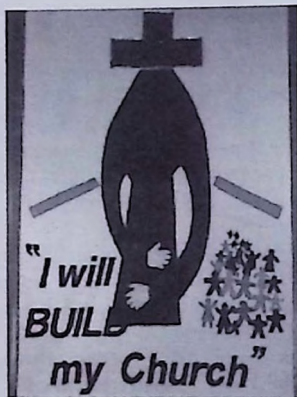
The ecumenical team, which travelled to Zagreb, was one of several women's groups to visit Croatia and Serbia in response to recent reports of the suffering of women in the former Yugoslavia. They met with refugees and representatives of women's, church, human rights and other non-governmental groups.

Rape and other violations of the human rights of non combatants, especially women and children, are taking place on all sides in the present conflict, members of the team said. But they called for urgent international attention to and action on the use of "front-line rape" by Serbian forces to demoralise the opposing soldiers, "third-party rape", which involves public intimidation of the civilian population and thus serves the goals of "ethnic cleansing", and repeated rape with the intent of impregnating women with "Serbian babies". There have been a few cases in which women have been released after multiple rape, they said, but often the women are being detained through the fifth month of pregnancy (after which abortion is illegal), and in some cases women have been killed after being repeatedly raped.

Church Growth

Nunawading's 1993 theme

The ministry team at Nunawading, Vic, launched its theme for 1993 at a recent morning service. The theme is based on the words of Christ to Peter "I Will Build My Church". The team spoke on growth through worship, commitment, belonging and outreach and how growth could occur through any of these areas. Exciting banners for the occasion were prepared by Betty McPhie, a member of the congregation.



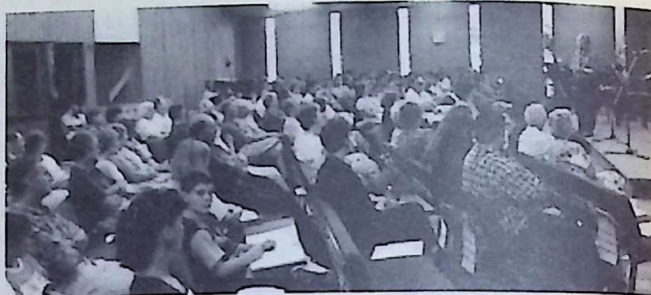
• The main banner

Several organisations are compiling documentation of systematic mass rape for eventual use in war crimes tribunals, the team members said. Accounts of the number of victims vary widely, and some figures have clearly been exaggerated by distressed women, they added. But every aid worker they met confirmed the existence of the policy and of ample documentation that it is being carried out on a mass scale. In a statement late last year (3 December) WCC General Secretary Emilio Castro denounced "these war crimes against women" and called for "freedom under conditions of security" for the women affected and "provision of humanitarian and medical aid to alleviate their suffering".

In suggesting concrete ways

Records Tumble at Marion

Successful January services



• Part of one of the large congregations at Marion

After huge attendances for their special Christmas services, Marion (S.A.) went on to post an all time record attendance figure for the month of January.

On each of the five Sundays in that month, an average combined attendance of 500 was achieved, involving three services per Sunday. Never before in its 14 year history had there been such a high attendance figure for January.

Senior Minister Graham Agnew believes that the result was due, in part, to the way in which the Church promoted January as a special month.

"We went all out to present services that were as exciting and as inspirational as the rest of the year, including a special four-part p.m. preaching series entitled 'Power to be in '93'."

An average of thirty-five people signed in as visitors every week and on present indications, it looks as though around twenty five adults and young people will be linking up with the Church in the coming weeks.

Marion has a goal of increasing its membership by 100 during 1993 and if January is anything to go on, they may well realise this ambitious objective.

for the international ecumenical community to respond to the situation the team called for continued pressure on governments to provide refuge for those fleeing the conflict and to ensure that this refuge keeps families together and conveys

a sense of acceptance. At the same time they emphasised the urgent need for professional counselling and treatment for all victims of the policy of systematic rape, but financial resources and trained personnel are in short supply.

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Double Honour's

Australia Day 1993 brought dual honours for W. Edward Fisher. He received an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in the annual honours list, recognising his service to the community; and the Tatiara Council "Citizen of the Year Award" for his service to the district.

The awards acknowledged his contribution to the Tatiara District through church organisations, Retirement Village board, Show Societies and others, and further afield through Freedom from Hunger. Edward's service began in the late 40s when, following two and a half years ministry with the Cowandilla, SA, church his father's ill health took him back to the family farm in Mundulla.

Soon after his return Edward initiated the formation of an Inter-Church Council and was its secretary for the 25 years of its operation. Through this medium he was instrumental in inaugurating and organising many services to people at home and abroad. These included the local Carols by Candlelight, collecting hay for drought stricken NSW farms, making (from old plough discs) 950 hoe heads for Indonesia (this project arose as a result of his 1962 participation in a goodwill visit to Indonesia with an Australian Council of Churches team), organising seminars, farmers' conferences, and church discussion groups covering such topics as Home and Family, Rape of the Soil, Youth needs and Aboriginal Affairs.

From these activities many areas of need were identified within the district. Edward's initiative and drive became di-

rectly responsible for the establishment of The Tatiara Retirement Village. He served on the board since its inception, as hon. secretary for 23 years; was involved in: the formation of a district Domiciliary Care Service, becoming secretary of the management board for its initial six years and the formation of Junior and Senior Community Youth Groups organised and operated by the combined Mundulla churches.

Presently a member of the Freedom from Hunger state committee, he has organised the doorknock appeals locally



for 30 years, and six years ago introduced the Grain Action concept which has now spread nationwide.

Edward's communication skills have been in evidence through his much sought after commentaries at local shows,

field days and debutante balls. His concern and compassion for people has been manifest via the many people he has comforted and guided through difficult times.

As an elder of the Mundulla church and Chairman of the Circuit Board of Elders, through his many preaching and speak-

ing appointments, and his leadership status in numerous church and community organisations, Edward is noted for his foresight, innovation, encouragement, and ability to engender in others his own appreciation of people regardless of age, colour, religious belief or status in life.

The Mundulla church activities have always been the pivot of Edward's operations, and the support he receives from this source has often meant the difference between success or failure of many a venture.

As was said of him at his local award presentation—W. Edward Fisher is "A community person, he displays high Christian ideals and principles; his kind, friendly and caring nature is widely appreciated. He epitomises all that this award (these awards) should be."

Churches of Christ in New South Wales

Applications are invited for the position of

Conference Secretary

Responsibilities include the day-to-day activities of the Conference Executive and supervision of the transition to the new model of organisation and compatibility with its principles, as accepted at the Special Conference in September 1992.

The position requires a proven ability in administration, organisation and financial management coupled with the desire to serve God and his church through the ministry of Conference.

Remuneration package will be aligned to that of a Senior Minister with appropriate car and house allowances, superannuation and long service leave.

The successful applicant would need to commence duties at the earliest possible date.

Applications should be in writing, together with a current curriculum vitae, marked "Confidential" and submitted by 2 April 1993 to—

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Tertius

Mary Ambrose

Whenver the "AC" is promoted in our churches, the question most commonly asked has been, "Who is Tertius?" I can assure you that Editors' wives have never been told.

The first letter from Tertius was printed on page 11 of the *Australian Christian* dated May 7 1966. The introduction on page 2 of that issue states:

"With this issue we welcome a regular writer who has borrowed an ancient and honourable name from Romans 16:22: 'Tertius, the writer of this letter greet you'".

Thus commenced a most intriguing and loyal contribution to the pages of the "AC" which has continued until this issue. In 1966 the "AC" was printed weekly. Since then, there have been 22 issues per year. Therefore, the number of letters received from Tertius totals 670. What a faithful ministry!

Researching the early letters of Tertius is very time consuming because in the adjoining pages of the "AC" are articles about events and thoughts current in our churches nearly 30 years ago (at which time I had never heard of Churches of Christ). It is fascinating to see the photographs printed then showing the people I now regard as very wise, looking so much younger.

Those early letters from Tertius usually contained a direct personal message or question to the Editor, often relating to the work involved in editing the "AC". His "mate from St. Chad's" frequently sparked off an acute observation of, or query about, our tradition compared with others'. His thoughts about common events are so astute and logical that we wonder why the same had never occurred to us.

A.E. White wrote in an introduction to a collection of letters from Tertius published in 1975:

Since he entered the pages of the "AC" in 1966, his comments on life and the church have won for him a very special place in our hearts. He has entertained us, interested us, stimulated us, annoyed us,

frustrated us, and made us laugh a bit in an unfunny world.

From his writings we get a picture of a man who works with his hands. He has a simple faith which regularly brings him into head-on conflict with both society and the church. This is because he can't escape the conviction that the Bible means what it says and that life can be conquered in Christ.

I am constantly being asked, "Who is Tertius?" and that is a very good question, and an understandable quest. My office staff has even been offered such bribes as cream sponges and chocolate eclairs to persuade them to tell. But so long as the proffered bribes have such a high calorie content they present no real threat to honest office girls.

An interesting theory was presented recently: that there has been more than one Tertius, and, in fact, there is clear evidence from the changed style of the Letters that we are now on our fourth! That is as good a theory as any. Certainly better than suggesting that Tertius is a woman, and maybe an editor's wife!

Within weeks the identity of Tertius will be revealed (or confirmed). Obviously, it is the *not knowing* that makes the subject so intriguing. Several people told me that it would be better to not know and feel that the answer should not be revealed. A great many other people expressed their appreciation for the practical, thought-provoking and witty insights Tertius has written over the years.

Most people surveyed felt that one person could not have been responsible for all the letters.

Some are convinced that the frequent references to St. Chad's indicates a strong link with New Zealand. (There is a St. Chad's located at One Hunga.) This fact, plus examples of brilliant wit, and a deep affinity with a former editor, support the view that the original Tertius was Mr Cyril Flood.

Changes in style and the decrease in the "New Zealand" influence provides evidence for the concept of a "pseudo" (second or third, etc.) Tertius. This idea was obviously circulating a long time ago as it is referred to in Alf White's introduction (above).

For various reasons, the ultimate answer is that at some time the author is thought to have been one or both of the highly regarded, astute, articu-

late and devoted former editors of the "AC"—G.R. Stirling and A.E. White.

Other suggestions for Tertius' identity included Geoff Alves, Trevor Banks, Eric Hollard, W. Stan Lowe, Ed Roffey, W.W. Saunders, Beverly White and Stanton Wilson. Should any of these ideas prove to be the correct answer then I feel that the editor of the "AC" will be obliged to run a feature article on that person when all copies of the "Life of Tertius" have been sold.

In compiling this article I contacted many people around Australia and each indicated their interest in this question, that they have valued the ministry of Tertius through his letters and are grateful for the observations made by this servant of the Lord.

Some letters, to and about Tertius, have been received, along with an acrostic poem (see page 7), and a characteristic letter from Tertius.

A Parting? Comment From Tertius

My most embarrassing moments for many years have been when people have asked me, "Who is Tertius?" or "Do you know who Tertius is?" or "Are you Tertius?" I have tried to be dumb and at the same time put people off the scent without telling even a white lie.

In my letters to the Editor I have tried not to abuse my anonymity by offending people. My aim was simply to encourage "AC" readers to think. If any reader has been upset, I apologise. You see I am a very ordinary person who is so fond of people that I cannot help but observe them to see what makes them tick. But the main reason I have been able to write about their foibles and funny ways is that they are also my foibles and funny ways.

It is because I have spent a life time observing myself and other people that I am so grateful that we have a gracious, understanding and accepting God.

Soon you will be able to read the "Life of Tertius" and discover who I am, and to know who to blame if any of my letters have upset you. Unfortunately, the man who said that Tertius is Latin for third rate is dead. But he probably knows my identity now anyhow. He may still think that the letters are third rate!

The only thing I ask is that when you find out who Tertius is you keep it to yourself until all copies of "The Life of Tertius" are sold. The proceeds are for "The Australian Christian Capital Fund" and we want all the books sold. So tell the world that you know who Tertius is, and get them to buy the book to find out for themselves!

Yours as ever,
Tertius

Letters

To Tertius

Dear Editor I would appreciate it if you would pass on the attached letter to my old friend Tertius.

Dear Tertius,

For many years I have been concerned about you and your health. You see, I have been around the place as long as you have and I have watched the subtle changes and even abrupt about faces in your writing. These have been all too clearly the signs of a split personality. At first, I thought that there were, as your name suggests, just three faces to your disjunctive personality. But as time went on and the symptoms of your disease (aggravated advocati demonitae) have escalated, I have discerned a fourth, fifth and, more recently, a sixth aspect to your complex personality. Some of these phases were but short lived, fully victim, I fear, to the strict censorship of your super-ego, the Editor.

My anxious enquiries concerning your well-being over the years have fallen on the deaf ears of your minders who have struggled with such rigid determination to prevent the real truth of your situation becoming known to your dedicated readers. Now I hear with great sadness that your demise

is near and at long last the truth can no longer be kept from us. I can only wish you well and hope that, even in these last days, something may be done to make you pull yourself together and enjoy, if only briefly, a moment or two of oneness of mind. You'll be missed by all of us. Our sorrow will only be diminished by the relief that we, who have worried over you for so long, will feel with your passing,

Yours sincerely,
Gerald Rose.

PS. Please give my regards to your close associates Alf White and Gordon Stirling, who must have been deeply saddened by the passing of your comrade in journalism, and old mate, Eric Hollard.

Don't Tell Us

To the Editor,

Please don't tell us:

- if Tertius is female, Alf White was fibbing when he described Tertius as "he"
 - if Tertius is a preacher, he was fibbing every time he wrote that he was sitting in the pew
 - if Tertius was unknown to "AC" Editors, they illegally printed a letter without having a name and address
 - if Tertius is an atheist, heaven help us!
- No, keep his/her name a se-

Comment

TERTIUS

Tracing nameless people you need data, of course its Elementary if you have a starter, but

Rather difficult when the person's name for so long has been concealed.

Tension begins to mount, as possible names are taken into account;

Indeed the pressure grows to have the name revealed.

Ultimately and conclusively though, perception will win out,

Scotching all the rumours, ending all the doubt.

So let's see if we can find the solution—only then we'll give them total absolution. Conference Presidents come and go, it could be one of those but I don't know. Perhaps someone very savoury the likes of Alan Avery, or did they possibly charter the gracious Max Carter?

Definitely they have narrative skill, maybe that lady Phyl, Davis that is, generated the curiosity to grow.

Surely; Alf White could shed a ray of light, or is Gordon Stirling's head whirling, I still don't know.

It could be anyone of those, or maybe its Gerald Rose!

Becoming even nosier I've enquired through Ambrosia,

No subtle hints, I wasn't even assured it isn't Clive Ward or Keith Horne, Brian White or Dr. Trevor Banks.

The dilemma for years has kept us guessing, always revealing in words Gods blessing.

Tertius, for your extraordinary wisdom, we say a heartfelt thanks. —D. Vulge

cret so that no-one knows where his/her lightning may strike next. We need a devil's advocate.

—Jill Gray,
(Upwey, Vic)

Alarming!

To the Editor,

I write in some alarm. Tertius' autobiography? While I admit that it is very satisfying to have mysteries solved and for the praise to be bestowed where

praise is, or has been, due, has anyone realised that this would mean the end of those thought-provoking little boxed articles we all appreciate and look for? I, for one, would prefer to remain curious, and retain the letters. Don't the readers get any choice? Can you do anything to stop this disaster, or don't editors have that much power? —Janet Thompson,
(Numawading, Vic)

Special Introductory Offer

Order "Life of Tertius" before 15 March for the discount price of \$13 per copy, including postage (normal price \$15).

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Life of Tertius



by Tertius
Illustrated by Daniel Changer

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

"Black List"?

To the Editor,

This is an "open letter" seeking some answers to questions which have concerned me for some time. Can any State or Federal department of Conference confirm or deny if there ever has been or still exists a so called "black list" of ministers whose names are not offered to churches for consideration?

Committees have some rights in this matter and some men/women may have been "left out in the cold" and may never have been called by churches. But that is different to a committee deciding that a person should not be referred on to churches desirous of ministry.

If such a list exists it would seem contrary to the very freedoms that belong to us all. Even if no written list exists, but it is generally agreed that a person will not be referred on, then such a practice would appear abhorrent.

The need for confidentiality does not necessarily mean that names should not be given to churches for their consideration.

Is anyone prepared to answer this question?

—Bruce Burn
(Morwell, Vic)

Response

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to Bruce Burns' enquiry regarding a possible "black list" of ministers. Speaking from the Victorian/Tasmanian Department of Ministry, I can assure Bruce that no such list exists. I am confident that other States would not maintain such a list either.

Our department has the responsibility of recommending ministers as suitable to serve our churches. If a doubt exists about the suitability of a minister in Churches of Christ, we will consult with the minister concerned and follow up references that are supplied. Frequently we may refer to other appropriate State Conference departments for advice.

—E.C. Keating

(Chairman, Department of Ministry)

Who is Being Offended?

To the Editor,

Chris Hutton appears to be offended because no-one was offended about his Guest Editorial about what is offending him in the churches ("AC" 6 February). I would not want him to be thus offended.

Over recent years there have been a number of discussions in *The Australian Christian* about the problems of change in the churches. Most of them have been insensitive in their treatment of why people resist change.

Take a hypothetical case. A young minister decides that attendances at Sunday night services could be improved if the gospel service was replaced by a coffee shop for young people. The change involves removing the pews and communion table, replacing the organ with a synthesizer, engaging a gospel pop group and hanging strobe lights in the baptistry. The change is resisted by a handful of older members and they refuse to cooperate.

Regular readers of the "AC" will immediately recognise the villains of this piece. The oldies are clearly not amenable to the leading of the Holy Spirit, are vainly clinging to irrelevant worship modes and are just plain obstructionist.

Situations of change, particularly involving forms of worship, need to be handled with great sensitivity and anyone born post-1945 would have great difficulty in appreciating the concerns and even the spirituality of older generations. Faith is deeply embedded in symbols and rituals and an attack on these is likely to be construed as an attack on the faith itself. The Jewish Christians of the first century experienced this difficulty.

We are constantly told of the need to communicate more effectively with young people, but frankly, we are doing a poor job of communicating with the mature. In a population which is aging, we need to discover,

as business is discovering, what is required to serve an ageless market.

—Harold E. Hayward
(Berowra, NSW)

Overall, The Positives Exceed The Negatives

To the Editor,

What a varied diet is presented to the reader of *The Australian Christian*! The 6 February edition appears to veer wildly from a page of embarrassingly uncritical lauding of a particular State to the usual outstanding commentary by Curkpatrick.

Alan Matheson's examination of the 1992 Christmas editorials may, hopefully, cause us to read any editorial with more perception, whatever the subject matter. In contrast, some of the Letters to the Editor reach a low point, with one in particular bordering on the hysterical, though, of course, the writer has the right to ex-

press his/her point of view.

Ron Graham's letter, with his usual clarity of vision, identifies what was most important at the Canberra Assembly. Keith Farmer's analysis of figures thrown up by two surveys, national and state, is well worth careful study, calling our attention to the necessity to focus more accurately on specific groups and their needs for our ministries to be most effective in reaching "the 80% of Australians who are not actively Christian".

Overall, the greater percentage of the content of *The Australian Christian* continues to improve in quality. Though the evidence in print of some closed and/or parochial minds sometimes drives me to despair, I continue to look forward in anticipation to each new edition of our national mouthpiece—*The Australian Christian*.

—Charles Kimber
(Centenary, Qld)

Letters from Tertius Seven Deadly Sins

To the Editor,

Our minister has just completed a series of sermons on the Seven Deadly Sins, pride, covetousness, lust, envy, gluttony, anger and laziness. I was actually surprised that there were not more of them. But after hearing the sermons I can see that the hundreds of human misdemeanours all fit somewhere into one or other of the Seven Deadly Sins.

They were not comfortable sermons. I for one felt guilty of committing the lot, especially as our minister said that the thought behind the sinful action was equally reprehensible. They were not his most popular sermons. Most of us prefer rousing gospel sermons that roast the sinners out there in the world and make us insiders feel real good by comparison.

The series of sermons has left me in deep thought about one thing. I had always thought that all really bad sin had to do with sexual misadventure or sexual deviance and that the other six sins were more in the nature shortcomings of the "naughty, naughty" variety, that even Christians get away with. Even gluttony is excusable apart from what it does to Christian waistlines.

But the way our minister put it made it appear that while, rightly, Christians want sex enshrined in true love as God intended, the other sins are at the basis of family breakup and of the great social evils of war, discrimination, pollution, poverty and injustice. He accused Christians of bring relatively soft about the Six Deadly Sins, looking on them as rather respectable weaknesses. As I said before, they were not his most popular sermons.

Next Sunday he's preaching about confession and repentance and I don't think he'll have outsiders in mind.

Yours penitently,
—Tertius

Letters to the Editor

Confession

To Tertius,

Your article concerning the act of confession in the service of Communion ("AC" 20 February) is both pertinent and timely.

Having come into Churches of Christ after 45 years in another denomination I have been very surprised at the somewhat glib way in which the elements of communion are trivialised by Presidents who refer to them as "reminders" or symbols of Christ's sacrifice, with no deeper meaning than that of drinking a toast in memory of a dead martyr.

Contrast this shallow approach with a few quotations from an "Order of Service for Holy Communion" as used by the former Methodist and other churches:

"Here we offer and present unto you, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice unto you, humbly beseeching you, that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion, may be filled with your grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto you any sacrifice, yet we beseech you to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then follows the prayer of humble access.

Such an approach as this makes Communion indeed holy. It brings home to us who we are, in God's sight, and emphasises our utter dependence on Jesus as saviour and mediator. To me this is the heart of communion, the Risen Lord saying to us, "Here, take, eat, drink, share my life. And then go out and share that life with those around you." Anything less is not communion.

On the question of our need for forgiveness, we should never forget that the church is a family which is a part of the community, so that we worship, not simply as individuals, but as representatives of the community in which God has placed us.

In our prayers of confession, therefore, we are vicariously seeking forgiveness for the sins of the whole community. The Lord's commission to "Go and share his life with those around us," means that, as Christ "became sin" for us on the cross, so the Christian's task is the same. If the world will not pray for forgiveness, we must pray for it. If the world will not confess its sins, we must be the intercessors on its behalf as well as on our own. So, in view of all the wrongs done in our community, there is no lack of sins to confess.

I could hope that your many readers will think more deeply about the implications contained in your article and maybe, it would make a difference to their understanding of the sublime mystery of communion with God.

—H.P. Head
(Rye, Vic)

More About William Robinson

To the Editor,

Bruce Burns ("AC" 20 February) states that the late William Robinson, one-time Principal of our one-time British theological college, held a high view of the church, so does the NT. Some may not know that Principal Robinson wrote a communion hymn "Thee we praise, high priest and victim". It was first printed in *The Christian Advocate*, the then British Churches of Christ journal, in 1942, and then in *Congregational Praise*, and from there in the interdenominational *Australian Hymn Book* (1976—No. 447), but not in the Churches of Christ Hymn Book. I did request that it be included, but the Committee declined as it felt the hymn was "too high church", although it is based on several scriptural passages. So while Anglican, Catholic, and Uniting Church congregations sing one of our hymns, we don't. (see *Songs of The People Of God* - a companion to the *Australian Hymn Book* for an explanation of the hymn.)

—Bruce McIntosh
(Upper Yarra Fellowship, Vic)

Crime and Punishment

To the Editor,

I am surprised there has been no reaction to Allan Clark's "To Fit the Crime" ("AC" 6 February). Since the abolition of the death penalty the sanctity of human life has considerably diminished (cf. Gen. 9:5f), and one can't help concluding that TV dominated society lacks moral anchorage. However, Allan's distinction between moral principle and retribution seems strange. I always thought the latter was based on the former. I am reminded of an essay by C.S. Lewis where he argued that the humanitarian theory of punishment undermined moral principle, dehumanising criminals into the bargain.

Allan is right in asserting that "capital punishment is the only (adequate) moral response", but regrettably the principle of the death penalty has been subverted not simply by philosophic humanism but by inconsistent and unjust practice. This is inevitably the case when capital punishment becomes a political football.

I regard as frightening Allan's assertion that executions should not be reported in the press. What about Russia, Germany, Argentina and Uganda, where judicial murders were carried out secretly and on a massive scale during this century?

Undesirable though sensationalism associated with executions is, it is far preferable to the silent holocaust that is so frequently its alternative.

Thank God that at least one nefarious execution received extensive publicity some 2,000 years ago. It is horrifying to think what would have happened if it had had no press!

—Ken Stothard
(Essendon, Vic)

PS. What Allan says about prison is cause for concern. It is interesting that imprisonment as a punishment did not figure largely among the Jews. In the Bible prisons usually belong to the Gentiles, i.e. to the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Romans, etc., though note Jeremiah 32:2, chs 37-38, etc.

Kanaka Mission Celebrations

To the Editor,

Your recent feature article covering the Kanaka Mission Centenary celebration at Childers, Qld, on New Year's Day is much appreciated ("AC" 6 February). The vision and efforts of missionary John Thompson amongst the indentured workers from the islands is now being realised within our Australian and Vanuatu churches and together we are seeing a continuation of that missionary endeavour. As this significant historical occasion was organised within a very limited time frame it would be remiss of us if mention was not made of the tremendous efforts on the part of Wally Pohle and his small team from the Twyford St. Church, Bundaberg. Wally's enthusiasm and persistence ensured the day's success with over 200 gathering on an open hilltop on a hot summer afternoon.

It is a certainty that without Wally's efforts this important celebration would not have eventuated and our peoples on both sides of the Pacific would have lost an opportunity to be encouraged and challenged through the remembrance of missionary John Thompson and his small group of Kanaka Christians. —Ken Warne
(Secretary, Queensland OMB)

Aggression

To the Editor,

Isn't there enough aggression in the world at present without using the word "aggressive" as a requirement for a "personal evangelist"?

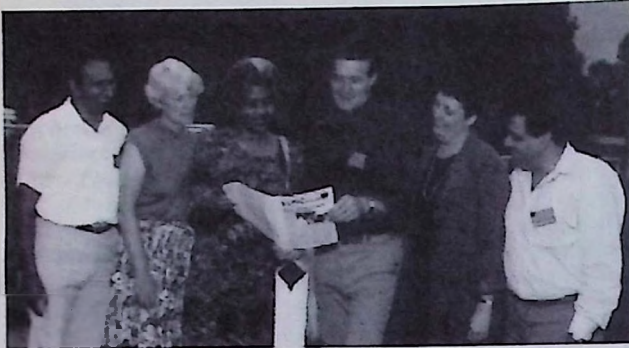
I refer, of course, to the Wollongong church's advertisement in the 6 February issue.

—Max Collyer
(Boronia, Vic)

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The Church Under The "Southern Cross"

Successful ecumenical event



• Guest speakers: Graham Paulson, Gwen Cashmore, Suliana Siwatibau, Peter Newman, Mary Hunt and Charles Amjad-Ali

Regular national ecumenical gatherings, possibly held biennially, are likely following the success of Living Under the Southern Cross (LUSC).

314 people from across Australia participated in the event, the first of its kind, held at the Hawkesbury Agricultural College in Richmond, near Sydney, 19-24 January.

With no formal agenda or decision-making processes, the week was more a gathering than a conference, and covered a wide range of issues.

It followed the pattern of the highly successful visitors' program at the World Council of Churches' Canberra assembly.

Daily creative and dynamic worship, held in a large white marquee, provided a backdrop for the program of input from

major overseas and national speakers, an extensive range of workshops, special events and celebrations, which centred on the theme from Micah 6:8, "What does the Lord require? To act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God."

Five speakers provided the core input.

Many participants cited sessions by Dr Mary Hunt, a Catholic feminist theologian from the US, on the Micah theme, as the most significant. In particular, her plea for a recognition of friendship rather than marriage as the basis of human networks—in order that the many people who cannot or do not marry might be more included in society's basic structures—stimulated intense discussion.

Rev Dr Charles Amjad-Ali, an Anglican specialist on Muslim-Christian relations in Pakistan, gave a Biblical exposition on the Micah theme in the context of global developments and perspectives.

Suliana Siwatibau of Vanuatu, a Methodist theologian and one of the Pacific's leading environmental scientists, led a plenary session on "Do You Hear the Small Call: The Pacific in Quest of Justice", which dealt with social justice questions in Australia and the Pacific.

In his lecture, Rev Graham Paulson, Australia's only ordained Aboriginal Baptist minister and a member of the ACC's Aboriginal and Islander Commission, explained how the clash of European colonial and Aboriginal cultures undermined the possibility of the gospel taking root in the Aboriginal context, even though the Bible had a natural affinity with the values of Aboriginal culture.

In the final plenary, Associate Professor Peter Newman of Murdoch University, WA, an Anglican layman and one of Australia's foremost city planners, used examples of urban renewal and bush land care to emphasise the need for hope as a driving force to action in the

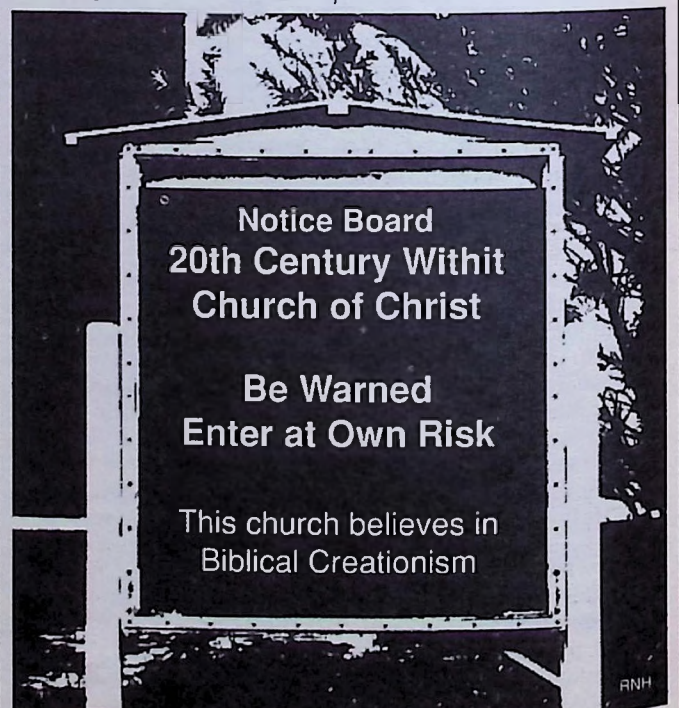
face of a prevailing climate of depression and cynicism.

Coming at the start of the International Year of Indigenous People, LUSC had a major emphasis on these concerns and many people representing the indigenous cultures of Australia and other countries participated in various events.

Significant events included a ceremony to raise the Aboriginal flag for the first time at the Hawkesbury campus, the participation of descendants of the local Darug tribe in the opening service, several workshops concerned with indigenous cultural themes, an indigenous craft market, featuring Aboriginal and Latin American arts, crafts and foods. There was also an outdoor concert with traditional and contemporary song and dance from Aboriginal, Central and South American, and East Timorese performers.

At a special service to mark the mid-point of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity With Women (1988-98), representatives of local heads of churches attended and pledged their commitment to address issues of women's full participation in the life of church and society.

—David Busch





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People

Perth Church—"100 Not Out"!

Dual celebration on Christmas Day



• Anne Anderson with Graham and Robyn Povey

Perth City, WA, church is rejoicing with their unbelievably young centenari-Anne, Anne Anderson, who celebrated her 100th birthday on Christmas Day.

On the previous Sunday, a morning tea was held after the worship service when many friends gathered in her honour.

Speeches were made by the Lord Mayor of the City of Perth, the Rt Hon. Reg Withers, State Conference President, John Fabry, State Director of the Bible Society, Trevor Booth and Graham Povey, Chairman of the Perth Officers' Board, who also made a presentation on behalf of the congregation. Three decorated cakes forming the numerals 100 were made by Audrey Nicholas.

Miss Anderson was only two when her mother brought her from Victoria to join her father,

J.P. Anderson, a builder, who had travelled ahead to build a home for his family in Fremantle. He also built the Fremantle church, where Anne was baptised at the age of 12. In 1918 the family transferred to the Perth church where she and her sister, Jen, still regularly attend services.

Over the years, Miss Anderson has given leadership in Bible School, Christian Endeavour, girls' clubs, and C.W.F. as well as in the wider sphere of the State Youth Committee, Bible Society and Y.W.C.A. As a teacher, on the staff of Princess May Girls' School in Fremantle for 43 years, the last 17 as Headmistress, she had a profound influence on thousands of young lives.

We thank God for the fruitful life of this very special centenari-Anne.

An Invitation

from Brian Kidd, Chairperson,
Department of Community Care

to join with the residents of Fred Combridge House,
their relatives and friends,
staff and the members of the department
in celebrating the official opening
by Mr F. Combridge
of the new extensions and upgrading of
Fred Combridge House,
1A Campbell Grove, Northcote
Sunday, 14 March 1993, at 3 pm

Corrections

In the 6 Feb. issue, in the article "Beyond the Comfort Zone" by Keith Farmer, unfortunately two of the tables were trans-

posed. In the article, read Table 1 as Table 3 and vice versa. In the 20 Feb. issue the address given in the Media Review of *A Place of Rest* was incorrect and should read 15 Glassenbury St.

1994 Calendar Photographs Wanted!

The Federal Literature Department invites readers to forward colour transparencies (slides) for possible inclusion in the very popular Churches of Christ calendar. Photographs are needed from all states and territories of Australia and from PNG and Vanuatu.

Please forward slides to
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Criteria for selection include photographic excellence, variety of subject matter and the church year.

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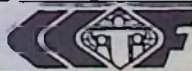
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Happenings

Over the last two years about 100 new churches have begun in Ukraine and 216 new churches in Russia. A Swedish builder, Goran Oscarsson, has concluded an agreement with the new Baptist Union of Russia to build a 1,000 church buildings with seating from 200-1,000 over the next few years at a cost of about \$78 million.

The Chairman of the National Council of Churches in Samoa, Cardinal Popio Taofinu'u, went to the Samoan government in October asking for a ban on new churches and religious communities entering the South Pacific island, because they were dividing the community.

The government in Nicaragua has decided to tax the income of all Protestant organisations and churches while allowing Catholic church funds to remain tax free.

The first Australian Illustrated Haggadah was recently launched. A Haggadah is a Jewish prayer book used for Jewish festivals and celebrations, particularly Passover. The Australian Haggadah is especially for Passover and all the paintings reproduced in the book were by Victor Majzner with additional illustrations by his son Andrew Majzner. This is only the third Haggadah especially produced in Australia. The first was for Jewish members of the armed forces in World War II and the second was written for the special group of Jewish internees (the Dunera boys) during World War II.

Radical Muslims have damaged or destroyed at least 45 Christian churches in recent months in Indonesia. The attackers, wielding such tools as shovels and sledge-hammers, pounded

concrete churches into piles of rubble on several islands. No one has yet been injured in the attacks.

Great Commission Ministries have launched a campaign they call One Million Hours of Prayer—they are calling Christians to pray for Australia from now until the close of polls at the Federal election on 13 March. They have further information and leaflets to help focus prayer on various areas. They state that "what we need, more than anything else, is for God to have a say in the running of our nation". Details from PO Box 330, Boronia 3155. Phone/fax (03) 720 4402.

The new Danish Bible authorised by Queen Margrethe II and published by the Danish Bible Society late last year, has proved to be a runaway best-seller in a country where only 2% of the public are churchgoers.

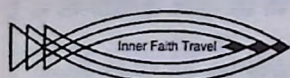
375,000 copies have been printed and they were selling faster than Madonna's *Erotica*. Booksellers estimate that by Christmas every fifth household will own a copy of the new Bible.

Many hundreds of letters are received each week by the Thailand Bible Society and other mission organisations working in Thailand, and the interest is increasing, as is church attendance. Typically, the correspondents have been given an item of Scripture, have seen a film, attended a concert, or seen or heard one of 17 Christian radio or television programs and they are keen to know more about Christ.

The Queensland CWF camp is being held 12-14 March at Camp Caloundra with the theme "The Yo Yo Experience". The guest speaker is Bev Ham, a Uniting Church minister for 28 years who now works in

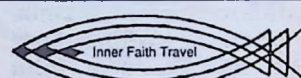
Christian Education in the Uniting Church. Registration forms and details from Alanah Fisher on (07) 378 1988 (work) or 878 3006 (home).

"Luke's Story", the first Bible computer program for the disabled, was launched in England by the British and Foreign Bible Society in December. It has been produced by the BFBS to enable the physically and visually disabled to have independent access to Bible text. The program resulted from the vision of a severely disabled girl, Jayne Chenery, who wanted people, unable to read a conventional book, to be able to read the Bible for themselves. For the severely disabled, Luke's Story can be used with a switching device that is operated by a touch from some part of the body. It can also be linked to a speech synthesiser or Braille.



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Turkey & Israel April 7th to April 24th

Jan Reid

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Golden Gate. Western Wall. Temple Mount.
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The Virgin Birth of Jesus

Lily Munk

I have been thinking, ever since I read the article by Ronald Graham in *The Australian Christian* (19 December 1992) on this topic, of my own position on the subject. You see, I am well over 70 years of age, happily married, and mother of two children, both born in the natural way, yet I find no difficulty in accepting the account of the Annunciation and the subsequent birth of my Lord and Saviour as the Bible records it.

I can understand that it is difficult for learned people to accept the seemingly impossible, without tangible or at least intelligible proof. I am not particularly gullible myself. When I hear wild stories of the experiences of other people, I remain very sceptical until they can produce some proof of them. However, as a traveller along the way since my earliest memory, I have come to believe in a God who is almighty and "all transcendent", a God whose existence I cannot prove and whose face I have never seen. A God who must be accepted by faith or not at all.

I believe in the great "I am", not created, yet existing in glory and power, unlimited, from everlasting to everlasting. We are his creatures, here to bring glory and honour and praise to him, and completely and entirely in his power.

I know that he does not lightly intervene in the natural order he has established on this planet, but I do not doubt or limit his power to do so if, in his wisdom and unfathomable love for his unworthy creatures, he should choose to do so.

If God, who is the creator of all life as we know it, chose to bring about the birth of his son in this way, yet make Jesus wholly human, it was within his power to do so. After all, he created male and female cells,

genes and chromosomes in the first place, and caused them to interact to bring about the beginning of a new human life in the way we know.

We do know now, the facts of conception, birth and inheritance, but do we really know the mystery of the fourth month of pregnancy when a woman feels for the first time, the movement of the child within her body? I am glad that Ron Graham refers to the whole process of the Virgin Birth as the ultimate mystery for that is what it is, and what it will remain until we see him face to face.

I believe, also, in the resurrection and subsequent appearances of Jesus, and in his Ascension. None of these is in accordance with the laws of nature as we know them, and none can I prove tangibly or visibly although I have personally been aware of his close presence many times.

So, to those who choose, as I do, to believe although they cannot see, I offer, in support of our seeming naivety, the words of the master: "I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it" (Luke 18:17), and "Blessed are they who have not seen yet have believed." (John 20:29).

Lily Munk is a member of one of our ACT churches.

Desires

Neil Marsden

"Love God and do what you want." I had a friend once who took that slightly the wrong way. He figured that because he was already a Christian, and that he believed in his heart, it was all right for him to do whatever took his fancy. So he did just that. He became involved in a lot of things, from drugs to illicit sex and all the rest of it. He never minded, he enjoyed it all and never saw what he was doing to himself and to those around him. He thought it was all right because he was still going to church and doing all his other "duties". Religion, to him, became just a habit. Perhaps it isn't too surprising that, somewhere along the line, he lost his faith. When people make their own rules they often fail. When there is order, with tried and true guidelines, success is sure to follow. Where there is disorder, you're never quite sure where or when you failed.

Adam and Eve thought they'd make their own rules too. They came to the conclusion that it would be better for them to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. So they did. They couldn't even follow one rule. God gave them just one—and they still broke it. If they had centred their thoughts on their love of God, and not on their desire for the fruit of the tree, their love would have conquered their desire. But they forgot about God and thought

only on what they could "gain". We now know there was a huge cost for their desire, and everyone on this planet is paying for it. Everyone in the past, present and future.

Jesus teaches of love and compassion, and although the thought of giving in to these two impulses completely and becoming "one with the living God" sounds laughable to many, that's exactly what Jesus was talking about.

Many young people laugh at the thought of marriage, but later see the rewards of it. Marriage between humans is never perfect because we, as humans, are full of imperfections. But a marriage of hearts and minds between us and God is perfect and will last a blissful eternity. Despite our difficulties with love and God now, God's love will last forever, and, when our battles on Earth are finished, our love will last forever too.

So remember, love God, and do what you want.

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Made of Money

Scriptures For Indonesia



It was a cold winter's day. The Sunday School children gathered around a blank map, money cans making jingling noises around the hall. In spite of the cold, all minds and all thoughts were on Indonesia, because this was the culmination of weeks of fundraising for the Sunday School.

Today the Dalby Church of Christ, Qld, Sunday School children would show how much they cared for the people of Indonesia. The Bible Society project this year (1992) was focussed on that country and its people.

A large blank map of Indonesia was drawn and laid out on the floor of the church hall for the children to gather around. Today's activity was to outline the map in 5¢ pieces and then use donated 1¢ and 2¢ pieces to fill in the land masses of Indonesia. In this activity the children were able to learn two vital lessons: we need to give to others, and missionary work is

vital to the gospel. The children could see the country of Indonesia before them and were able to cover that country with money that they had worked hard to save up for this project. It was a fun activity and a lesson well learned.

Other fund raisers held for the Bible Society project included cooking Indonesian rice, which was then sold for morning tea after church. The children also made fruit salad which was also sold after church. During one term of fundraising for Indonesia, the children in our Sunday School were able to raise about \$250.

I would recommend to organisations such as Sunday Schools to take part in the annual Bible Society projects, not only for the financial benefit to third world countries, but also for the lessons learnt at home. Lessons that are vital to our children, who are the future generations for our churches.

—Elaine Melville

Major Parties Resist Pledge on Postal Concessions

The future of some non-profit community service publications remains uncertain with neither of Australia's two major political parties willing to promise to retain postal concessions if they win government on 13 March.

While the Government has rejected calls for the retention of postal concessions for such publications, the Opposition has declined to go beyond the previous expressions of personal support for the cause by its Shadow Minister for Communications.

Religious, charitable and welfare publications will face high postal increases, many between 30 and 80%, from next year when the long-standing Registered Publications Service lapses.

For two years the Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA) has campaigned for the retention of special rates for such publications, arguing that the commercial rates under the new Print Post system would severely impact on this vulnerable sector of the publications industry.

In January, ARPA joined with five other major agencies—the Australian Consumers Association, the Australian Council of Social Services, the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, Acrod Ltd (the peak disability organisations group) and the Aged Services Association—to press the

cause of non-profit, non-commercial community service publications on economic and social justice grounds.

The day after the election was called ARPA Executive Officer, David Busch, asked the Minister responsible for Australia Post, Bob Brown, and the Shadow Minister for Communications, Warwick Smith, to put in writing their final position on this issue.

In his reply, Mr Brown repeated his stand that it was inequitable for other postal users to subsidise special interest groups in their postage costs.

Mr Brownsaid AustraliaPost statistics showed that 86% of religious publications weighed 50g or less and could gain cheaper postage under Print Post. Only a very small proportion were in the higher weight categories which would incur the greater postal increases.

Warwick Smith did not send a reply. However, in previous correspondence he has indicated his personal support for the retention of postal concessions to certain needy groups including religious and welfare.

Meanwhile, figures about the economic performance of the Registered Publications Service, hitherto not published by Australia Post, will be tabled on the first day of sitting of the new Senate after 13 March.

Wildflowers in Western Australia

19 August–2 September

Now is your opportunity to see the world famous wildflowers of Western Australia and visit three Federal Aborigines Board centres.

The Churches of Christ Federal Aborigines Board is arranging a camping coach tour through Amesz Tours. As well as spending time at the mission

centres at Carnarvon, Marble Bar and Hedland, the itinerary includes such places as Kalbarri, Monkey Mia, Coral Bay and the Hamersley Ranges, travelling north from Perth up the coast and back via the inland road. As well as a tour leader/driver and a hostess/cook, provided by Amesz Tours, an ex-

perienced FAB missionary will accompany the tour. The cost for the 15 day tour is \$830 and includes all meals and costs associated with camping. Bookings are limited to a further 20 people so if you are interested contact Avon or Deslee Moyle at the FAB office, PO Box 1199, Wangara 6065.

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Learning Music in the Bush

Kenneth Briggs, a piano, organ and singing teacher, now resident in Kerang, Vic, has established a personal correspondence way of learning music.

All the student does is post the cassette to him.

A wide range of styles and standards are offered including Christian music which can be used in playing for church or examination.

The system works best for those who can make monthly contact with the teacher. Kerang has a good country transport system. The fees are about the same as for weekly lessons.

Kenneth has played at many Churches of Christ conferences and meetings and is currently a member at Pyramid Hill.

See advert on page 20.

Third Test Broadcast for Triple Seven

Nine days of good clean fun are about to hit the airwaves. Switch to radio 777 FM on 91.5 MHz in Melbourne for Triple Seven Communication's third test broadcast from 13-21 March.

Each day, the station will offer 24 hours of contemporary music, news and views from an underlying Christian perspective, but with professional flare and zest.

Triple Seven's General Manager Bruce Upton says: "We want to reach a broken and hurting generation with a message of hope, and to communicate Christian values through quality of life programs".

Triple Seven is keen to help the increasing number of hurting people in Melbourne, by providing a telephone call-in centre. This will be staffed daily

by teams of trained people. They will link inquirers with local churches for more personalised care-evangelism, nurturing or other needs. Counsellors will also be available.

Bruce Upton heads a dedicated team of Christian professionals including announcers, technicians, journalists, electricians, administrators, computer buffs, publicity, office and maintenance personnel, and more.

There are over 300 hundred volunteers involved across Melbourne and country Victoria. Triple Seven is applying for a permanent "community" broadcasting licence. They had to prepare a major submission for the Australian Broadcasting Authority in Canberra by 12 February.

Since religious broadcast slots are no longer mandatory on radio, a Christian run station in Melbourne is all the more necessary.

Triple Seven is an interdenominational, not-for-profit organisation led by a board of Christian directors dedicated to bring quality-of-life programs to a city in dire need of the kind of light and life only found in Jesus, the Light of the world.

Welsh Choir Concert for CCTC

Last year the Welsh Male Voice Choir had 20 engagements, many with church groups to raise funds. They will be conducting a concert to raise funds for the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, Vic, on 4 April 2.15-4.15 pm at the Glen Waverley church, 46 Monclair Ave. Admission is by ticket, with a donation of \$10 purchasing a ticket. Tickets will be available through churches, CCTC (Phone (03) 790 1000) or Oakleigh church (Phone (03) 568 1825). Guest artist will be Chris Sharpe.

The Welsh Choir began 12 years ago when four Welshmen began singing in a home. It has now developed into a 45 male voice choir. Membership is open to all singers. Patricia Wood is their Musical Director. She has had extensive experience previously being conductor with the BBC in the United Kingdom.

Over the past four years the Choir has sung with Rolf Harris, Harry Secombe, Judith Durham (of "The Seekers" fame) and as guest artists at the Male Choir Association Festival.

—Jack Edwards

British Churches of Christ

I have read, with interest, the recent letters concerning our churches in Britain. As we had the privilege of sharing with five of these congregations in 1990, I would like to offer a few comments.

Some 42 congregations elected to enter the United Reformed (UR) Church. These are now UR churches and some of them, understandably, have merged and no longer exist as individual congregations.

I have friends in one of the churches which joined the URC and I respect their devotion and the contribution they have made within the wider denomination in which they now serve.

Some, however, felt that other alternatives were not fully

considered. As a result some decided to continue as independent congregations whilst another group of 25 churches joined together to form the Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland. This number has now grown. The 1992 Year Book lists 37 churches and four church planting ventures including Sawbridgeworth. The last newsletter I received mentions another new church in Plaistow, whose membership is mainly from the Philippines.

From my observation, the Fellowship churches are generally very involved ecumenically, at the local level. Overseas mission support has recommenced and a training college is again in operation, giving a lead in church planting.

The churches are, however, small and need our prayers and encouragement. After all, we do owe the British churches a great deal.—Alan Rackemann (Montrose, Vic)

CWFF Women's Department Committee

Invites all women to a

Spiritual Retreat

at "Tay Creggan"
30 Yarra Street,
Hawthorn

9.30 am to 3.30 pm

Saturday March 13

Registration \$5.00

BYO Lunch to share

Enquiries: Lois Smith,
(03) 848 1872

State Overseas Mission Committee invites

Vic-Tas Churches

to be represented at a

**Commissioning Service for
Fred and Patricia Forbes**

as they prepare for their appointment as

Business manager at Madang, PNG

Sunday March 21 at 5 pm

at Church of Christ,

280 Highbury Rd, Burwood

Refreshments to follow.

Enquiries to Dorothy Geyer on (03) 853 8558

A Church ABC

The Mackay church, established 1937, is located on the coast about 10 hours North of Brisbane, and is, therefore, close to the reef and islands that Queensland is so famous for. Its senior minister is Gabriel Babare.

Mackay itself is a small city with a population of around 80,000. Its main industries are mining, cane farming and tourism. It is the last of these that puts the Mackay church in a unique situation.

The church itself is fairly representative of the population of the town, when age is taken into consideration, having a large number of young married couples and young families. Average Sunday attendance is 140, with only 85 of those being adults! Another area where it resembles the town is in its transient population. Each year the congregation experiences a turnover in its membership of about 20%! This is, of course, because of the large number of tourists.

Currently the church is struggling to develop a mission state-

ment to help clarify its aims and identity. This is particularly necessary because of the diverse church backgrounds represented in the congregations. Whilst such denomina-

tional diversity presents a variety and richness of perspective it can also lead to an indefiniteness of direction and vagueness of identity.

One of the significant goals to come out of this is the emphasis the church has on relationships. They see relationships as the way to band the congregation together whilst strengthening its effectiveness in outreach.

They want to be able to develop relationships that go beyond the hackneyed phrasing into real caring and sharing with each other. Such caring relationships could then, obviously, be a great asset when trying to present the claims of Jesus. Some of the methods planned or used include home

groups, preaching on relationships and fellowship events. As with so many of us, they find the desire to have deeper relationships is there, but there are natural fears to be overcome.

seen as the key to integration. The church has had some special events centring around the Craft Group and has seen some of them return to services, and some have stayed. Yet, there is

still a long way to go. Another opportunity presents itself in that many in the church are divers (as would be expected from its

location). Previously the church has organised diver training courses through local dive shops. In the future they aim to have an outreach group aimed specifically at divers.

Two years ago, the church appointed a college graduate, Terry Paris, to concentrate on ministry to the many children, teens and 17-24 year olds. This has been a difficult time for him, but also one of tremendous learning (Even now, he and his wife enter a new stage with new challenges as they have had a child in recent weeks).



Focus on Mackay

A real difficulty the church faces is with the age range of the congregation. So many of the adults have young families that it severely limits the time they are able to give to the church. In addition to that, the young children, of which there are so many, are very people intensive, creating an even greater demand for leaders and helpers.

The church has many contacts, through an IBM Users Group and Craft Group that meet in the church during the week. The great majority of those in these groups are non-Christian and it is both a great opportunity and challenge for the church to incorporate these people into the life of the church. Again, relationships are

Special Baptism

Inspirational service at Mildura

On Sunday 10 January, the Mildura, Vic, church was thrilled to share in the baptism of Valma Landells. Valma's baptism was different and special because she is permanently connected to life supporting oxygen.

Valma is 56 years of age and is suffering from a serious lung disease that makes it very difficult for her to breathe. As a child and young person, she attended the Wallaroo, SA, church, where she was married to her husband Roy in 1957 by M.T. Lawrie.

Since that time Valma has had little contact with the church, until recent months. A resident of Mildura for five years, Valma regularly listened to Mildura minister David Ratten on his weekly radio program. This was followed by a chance visit by associate minister Doug Clark during one of Valma's many trips to hospital.

Valma began attending church and made a commitment of her life to Christ. Remembering baptisms from her

childhood at Wallaroo, Valma was insistent that she be baptised. Following consultations with her doctor, David and Doug together baptised Valma in a very moving and challenging service. Valma's courage and determination to serve her Lord in obedience has been an inspiration to the whole church.



• Valma Landells

Photo courtesy of Kim Norris Photography

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Musical Entertainment
Square Dance Demonstration
Proceeds to work of Teen Challenge

People

Changing Direction At Sixty

Coping with unemployment

After 19 years of ministry, on October 14 1990, I (Allan Avery) tendered my resignation to the

congregation of the Frankston Church of Christ. It was one of the hardest and unhappiest decisions I have ever had to make. One of the major problems facing Lianne (my wife) and myself was that I was sixty years of age and I suddenly had no job. Various comments were made, to me. One was that we had more ministers than churches and I would be

hard put to get a job. Another was that with 30 years' experience leading the second largest congregation in the Vic-Tas Conference at that time—I had too much to offer to be allowed to be lost to our churches and conference. I did have offers from churches in the country and interstate but I was 60, had my own home, my wife had been through a chilling and traumatic church experience and I didn't want to run the risk of taking her out of our own home and into another sad church experience. It was a time of great risk for the Averys.

In desperation I rang Peter Marshall, Executive Director of I.T.I.M. (Interchurch Trade and Industry Mission). I had been a voluntary chaplain to the police for 15 years but had never thought of full-time industrial chaplaincy. Peter's response was very encouraging, but at the time they had nothing to offer in our area. It was a time of waiting, patience and prayer. A few months passed and I was offered 14 hours a week at BHP Steel at Hastings. Four months later I was offered eight hours at Philip Morris Tobacco in Moorabbin. It was hardly survival wages but it was a start. As it happened, the dental clinic where Lianne worked for a day a week offered her full-time work for the first quarter whilst a member of staff was on long

service leave. It gave us some breathing space. By the time the first quarter had passed I.T.I.M. had increased my work load to nearly 30 hours and now it is 33. Thirty-six hours is regarded as full-time.

Sometimes we have to be prepared to make drastic changes at the latter end of our working life. It is frightening—it is a lonely experience—and it's not something I would recommend, but it is a challenge, a test of faith and your resources. Many men and women in our conference and in the community are facing the same challenges. I envy those of my age and younger who have the opportunity of taking large retirement or redundancy packages, but even without these it is possible to survive.

Alan Leane

Retires from full-time church ministry



• Alan Leane

On Sunday 17 January, 200 people were present at the Twyford Street Bundaberg, Qld, church for the final message by Alan Leane. This was followed by a farewell luncheon to mark his retirement after 31 years of full-time ministry with Churches of Christ in Australia.

Alan committed his life to the Lord at 19 during a Youth for Christ Rally. He became a member of the Mile End church, S.A., where he served in a leadership capacity. He also served on the South Australian Youth Department for 5 years.

An electrical fitter by trade, he left a successful sales career to go to Woolwich Bible College, N.S.W., in 1958.

Whilst at Woolwich he had student ministries at Kingsford and Austral. It was at Kingsford he met his wife Win. Their marriage was blessed with 3 children, Stephen, Bruce and Susan. After 2 years student ministry at Austral he contin-

ued on a full-time basis for 3 years, during which time the church grew from 42 to 200. Two new churches commenced and a total of 9 buildings were erected. He went from Austral to Taree, N.S.W., to Naracoorte, S.A., Carlingbah, N.S.W., then to Nambour, Qld, where he ministered for 15 years. The membership at Nambour grew from 62 to over 300, and the church buildings were extended several times before being relocated. He commenced the Sunshine Coast Churches Soccer Association which catered for over 1,000 boys. In 1989 he commenced ministry in Bundaberg and in the past 4 years the active church membership has doubled. He has served on Conference Departments in S.A., N.S.W. and Queensland. During his ministries approx 40 people have gone to theological colleges or into full-time Christian service. Many are ministering in churches throughout Australia today.

Following the luncheon tributes were paid by Donald E. Stewart who represented State and Federal Churches of Christ. Evan Adermann, past president of conference in Queensland and Chairman of the Advisory Board, spoke of his evangelistic thrust and enthusiasm.

Alan's early retirement has been necessitated by health problems. Although Alan has retired from full time church ministry, we know that he, together with his wife Win, will continue to serve the Lord in whatever way He leads them. Alan and Win thank all who have prayed for them since the news of his illness in September 1992.



• Allan Avery

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East Keilor Induction

Message of mutual ministry



• **Tim Hanna with Liz and Jim Tilson**

7 February was a special day in the life of the East Keilor, Vic, church as Jim Tilson was inducted into the ministry by Tim Hannah, minister Berwick, Vic, church.

The service was particularly meaningful as Jim was welcomed and affirmed in his ministry by elder John Cheal. Representatives of the church then presented Jim with symbols of the mutual ministry shared by Jim and the congregation. The symbols were the Bible as the Word of God, water represent-

ing new life symbolised by baptism, the church directory representing pastoral ministry and bread and wine representing the spiritual food and the sign of the body and blood of Christ.

This was followed by the formal induction and prayer. Then elder Lynette Leach welcomed the Tilson family, Jim, Liz and their children Fiona, David and Scott.

The members of the church family and many friends and relatives of the Tilson family then joined in lunch.

Dianella Induction

All dedicated anew to Christ's ministry



• **Tony and Lynette Armstrong**

7 February was a special day for Tony and Lynette Armstrong. It saw the commencement of their first full-time appointment, at Dianella, WA. Tony studied at CCTC and was part-time minister at Preston, Vic. Tony and Lynette's home church is Launceston, Tas.

The service was presided over by Brian Stitt and Tony and Lynette were welcomed into fellowship by elder Grant Stone. Jenni Ashton, associate minister at Dalkeith Road, read the charge to the church in their commitment to the ministry of Christ. Three congregation members prayed for the church and its people to rededicate themselves to Christ's ministry with the new minister. The charge to the minister was conducted by Graham Carslake of the Warwick church.

Laying on of hands on the new minister involved the oldest member, members of the Board, women's work, youth work and a child.

The service was well attended and included representatives from various congregations around Perth, previous ministers and representatives from WA Conference. At morning tea, John Fabry, Conference President, extended a welcome to Lynette and Tony.

A barbecue was held before the evening service which 97 attended, including folk from the Maylands church. The informal service included bright singing by the young people's group and Grant Stone interviewed Lynette and Tony.

Spouse Baptises Spouse

A first at Nunawading

History was made in the Nunawading, Vic, church recently when David Ware was the first to be baptised with his spouse as the celebrant.

David, a Theology/Arts student, and a former Salvation Army Youth Worker, married

Tracey in December in 1992. After completing an essay on Baptism at CCTC, Mulgrave, he decided that he should be baptised himself. Who better to baptise him than his own wife?

• **Tracey baptising David**



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The Present State of Affairs

Ken Stothard

For me, the most striking article to appear in *The Australian Christian* during 1992 was Barry McMurtre's, "Don't Let Theologians Overawe You", (5 September). I took it for granted he was not sniping at the teachers in our colleges. I simply assumed that he had in mind the so-called radical writers who seem to dominate the theological scene and have the ear of the publishers and those who have "time for nothing except talking or hearing about the latest novelty" (Acts 17:21).

This contrasts sharply with the attitudes still prevalent when I was a lad. Preachers were occasionally interrupted if a member of the congregation thought something questionable had been said. While I admit that that sort of thing can go too far, at least it showed that ordinary people were not prepared to allow cherished beliefs to be trampled on. They regarded theology as being too important to be left to the experts.

However, it would seem that most of us turn to jelly at the thought of debating or contradicting them in print, even though we are convinced that right is on our side. It is too readily assumed that those who have mastered the classical languages and have great historiographical ability make expert theologians. This is far from being the case. I am reminded of the story of a man who was fluent in over a dozen languages and was said to speak nonsense in them all. Safe in their university ivory towers, too many professional theologians endlessly debate increasingly abstract subjects which, far from building up the flock, actually do harm (cf. 1 Tim. 1:4).

Though again acknowledging the enormous contribution that faithful scholars can make, what the church needs these days is depth of thought, prophetic insight and dynamic commitment of the kind pro-

vided by Athanasius, Luther and Campbell who withstood the world of their day. Without these we are both out-thought and out-fought.

At this point, disagreeing with Barry, I believe that Christianity is like science. It involves, under the guidance of the Spirit, an ever developing understanding of the faith (cf. John 13:7; 14:26; 16:13, etc). My assumption, like that of John Robinson, pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers, is that God has yet more light to break forth from his word. Yet the mere fact that many Evangelicals can still hold, say, the Westminster Confession of Faith (published in the 1640s) in such high regard even today is a virtual denial of this. The inference must be either that the Holy Spirit is dead or that he is on extended leave. This being the case, it is scarcely surprising that we are still looking for answers to problems that have bedevilled the church for so long.

We might well pinpoint some of these. Where do the Jews stand in their relation to God? What should our attitude to them be? What is the fate of the heathen? If by our unity we are called to make an impact on the world (John 17:21), how do we

achieve it? Is the ecumenical movement the way forward or is there a better way? What is the truth about the Christian sacraments? Should only believers be baptised? Perhaps most fundamental of all, What is Christianity? We could go on and pose a welter of social questions also, but enough has been said.

If too many, including Evangelicals, are bound by tradition and too many Liberals by worldly philosophies, do we as Churches of Christ have

anything to offer? It is worthwhile to meditate on words expressed by Brian White in his message as President of the Vic/Tas Conference in 1991, "There is no other Christian movement bet-

ter placed than we are to relate our faith ... We are free to adapt our worship and ministry ... We are not hindered by archaic ecclesiastical form and dress ... Our expression of faith in worship is uncluttered, simple, direct, and should relate to our society. We are open to congregational participation rather than clergy domination. We are part of mainstream Christian thought rather than marginal or sectarian. We have the potential to break the wimpish, impotent image of the church by being one against which "the

gates of hell shall not prevail"". Though these words were directed specifically at the Australian scene, they have a wider reference.


Since we are not shackled by an outdated creed, we are free to respond to the word of God as the Holy Spirit casts new light on it. So throwing off our working-class awe of the learned, we ought to consider ploughing our own furrow and seek new light from the Bible ourselves.

As was intimated above, the "giants" of the theological world have failed us in our battle with hedonistic materialism which is rapidly taking on awesome proportions. At the 1992 Vic/Tas Conference Dr Trevor Banks, sporting a newly won BD, challenged us to "do theology". In view of the fact that little of major significance has been done in the Churches of Christ since Campbell's day, we should take him at his word and do precisely that.

They regarded theology as being too important to be left to the experts

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Classifieds

ENGAGEMENTS

GALLIFORD—SHINNICK Dennis and Bev Galliford together with Brian and Cath Shinnick are pleased to announce the engagement of Karen and Andrew on December 21, 1992. Love and best wishes from both families.

TURNER—MARSH It is with pleasure that the engagement is announced of Janine, youngest daughter of Bob and the late Val of Nunawading to Matthew, younger son of Kevin and Wendy of Donvale.

SILVER WEDDINGS

BLIGHT (DOWLING) Gerald and Elwyn give thanks to God for 25 years of marriage. Married by W.W. Saunders at Raleigh St Church of Christ Footscray, 2nd March, 1968.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

SMYTHE (O'GRADY) Vern and Phyllis, married 13 March 1943 in Boulder, WA. Present address 26/5 Randell Street, Esperance 6450. Love and congratulations from Val and Ross (Murray), Kaye, Graeme and Bronya and grandchildren Linda, Gavin, Susan, Natalie and Peter.

DEATHS

PFEIFER Peter Richard. In his sleep on February 20. Loving husband of Jane. Father of Lucy, Max and Amy. Loved son of Nell and the late Allan Pfeifer. Brother and brother-in-law of Harry and Janette, John (deceased), Robert and Wendy, David and Joyce, Geoff and Sue and Bruce. Uncle of Elizabeth, Bill and Shirley; Lindsay, Allison, Danielle and Christine (and Lana); Paul and Sharon; Joanne, Tony, Kellie and Tim. Loved and remembered always.

WIESE Laura. Peacefully on February 1. Aged 96 years. At the Monash Medical Centre. Dearly loved mother and mother-in-law of Shirley and Roy (dec). Much loved Nana of Philip and Dorothy. Dear great-grandmother of Kylie and Glenn. At rest with the Lord after a long journey.

WANTED

INTERIM MINISTER May–December 1993. East Tamworth, NSW, Church of Christ. Contact Secretary, Roy Coad on (067) 67 7055.

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GRAMPIANS Spend a few days in Autumn at Dunkeld and explore the southern end of the Grampians. Accommodation for 24 people but smaller groups most welcome. \$7 per person per night. For brochure or booking phone Harris (03) 561 6863.

SOUTH MELBOURNE Two story Town House FSC. Sleeps 4–6. Two kms from city. Close to public transport, Arts Centre, Botanic Gardens, markets, restaurants, beaches, etc. Very reasonable rates. Free brochure available. Phone (03) 755 1787 (AH), 696 3828 (AH) Fax (03) 820 8510. Write to 29 Seabreeze Ave, Ferny Creek 3786.

HOUSE SITTER WANTED

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PIANO/SINGING LESSONS

Available at Kerang. Also available by tape correspondence. Contact Kenneth Briggs VMTA, ANZT, Registered IMT. Phone (054) 52 1150 or (050) 32 9300.

Obituaries

CHRISTENSEN, Elfreda Stella (10.10.92) Elfreda was born in Harrisville, Qld, to Arthur and Wilhelmine Lobegeiger in 1917. She had one sister, Lil (dec), and three brothers, Len (dec) Mervyn and Wilfred. Elfreda grew up in the Silverdale church and during her teenage years was baptised. In 1941 Elfreda married Robert Christensen at Silverdale. For 27 years Elfreda and Bob lived at Rosedale and they had four children Beverly, Warren, Adrian and Wendy. In 1968 they moved to Boonah. Elfreda enjoyed good health for most of her life. It was only in the last few years that she struggled with her health. After some months in hospital she was moved to the Fassifern Retirement Village where she died five days later. We give thanks for Elfreda's life. —Peter Willis

CHRISTENSEN, Lily Esther (20.10.92) Lily was born in Harrisville, Qld, in 1911 and like her sister Elfreda, who predeceased her by 10 days, she grew up in the Silverdale church. Here she came to know Jesus and consequently was baptised. In October 1931 Lily married Victor Maurice Christensen and they moved to Rosevale. In 1950 Lily and Victor moved to Westwood, Rockhampton and in 1968 they moved to Silverdale where they made a significant contribution to the church. Lily and Victor had four children: Shirley, Dudley, Desley and Geoffrey. Lily is survived by her children, 13 grand-children and one great-grandchild. Victor predeceased her by 21 years. In 1988 Lily moved to Amaroo Retirement Village, Gatton. Even in her last years of life Lily was involved in the life of her church. —Peter Willis

COWARD, Gertrude May (22.1.93) "Aunt May's" home call had the Charters Towers, Qld, church feeling it had come to the end of an era. She spent her early years on the family farm at Yungaburra. She loved farm life and spoke often of pioneering days and hardships but always of love and fun at home. In 1931 she married Bill Coward and came to Charters Towers living in the house next to the church until her death. Here she conducted a great ministry of hospitality. During World War II Bill and May held open house for servicemen. She was a faithful correspondent to many of "her boys". May served the church as organist, Sunday school teacher and pianist, youth group leader, church secretary, assisting Bill as treasurer, gardener, cleaner, Women's Fellowship and just being there to listen. Her sense of humour, hospitality and generous spirit were appre-

ciated by many. We thank God for her life and ministry.

—Eunice Schneider

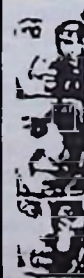
HAMMOND, Eric Herbert (27.11.92) Aged 94. Eric Hammond was truly a saint of the church, who had lived a long and faithful life committed to God, to music, his family and landscape gardening. Eric was a member of the Box Hill, Vic, church for over 60 years, in which time he greatly enhanced the music ministry as choir master and instigator and member of a very successful singing quartet. Eric was characterised by a beautiful smile; he was always at church, and always stood for the hymns. His landscape gardening achievements were considerable, including re-laying the MCG. He worked for years in close association with the late Edna Walling. Eric is greatly missed by all of us.

—Jim Longbottom

URWIN, Dorothy Isobel (6.11.92) The Coburg, Vic, church was saddened by the loss of a lady who endeared herself to everybody. In her younger days, Dot enjoyed working at a mission in Carlton for many years teaching Sunday school. She considered it a privilege, helping disadvantaged children at a Carlton kindergarten and as a volunteer for the Helping Hand Society, receiving the Silver Hands Award. Serving the church and its auxiliaries brought more joy than almost anything. Whether fundraising for the kindergarten or involvement in Good Companions, Women's Fellowship, or latterly the Drop-in Centre, Dot was a beloved friend of Jesus. We thank God for her faithfulness, devotion and witness. —Don Milne

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Personal

Baptisms

•Tim Claridge, Bridgette Bandel, Greg Knight, Alison Knight, Horsham, Vic •Gail Schwarze, Christina & Julius King, Bathurst, NSW •Dawn Mills, Nicki Paton, David Earle, Maryborough, Qld •Valma Landells, Jacquie Burke, Norris Winderlick, Mildura, Vic •Isabel Twyerould, Elisha Greenbank, Peter, Kaye & Danielle Trotter, Vicki Silverman, Sue Dennis, Renee Kindred, Madge Saw, Julie Twyerould, Dawson St, Ballarat, Vic

Marriages

•Shevahn Mills to Frank Telfer, Leanne Halliday to Andrew Becroft, Bathurst, NSW •Susan Munro to

Neale Meredith, Jillian Renfree to Clinton Gardner, Mildura, Vic •Robyn Woodham to John Claxton, Julie Ronalds to Wayne Weshout, Warragul, Vic •Judith Briggs to Patrick Richards

Deaths

•Mrs Florie Young, Tumby Bay, SA •May Allen, North Essendon, Vic •Miss Jessie Dowd, Launceston, Tas

Changes

FOOTSCRAY: Secretary—Shirley Wallis, 14 Hoddle Way, Altona Meadows, Vic 3028. Phone (03) 369 3957.

WARRAGUL: Secretary—Graham Martine, P.O. Box 128, Warragul, Vic 3820. Phone (056) 34 2226.

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Christian Centre
Normanton 4890
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Church News

WA

ROCKINGHAM (Keith Ware) Church filled to capacity for morning services with increased growth & visitors ... Auxiliaries have now commenced for year ... In recent times there has been four commitments to our Lord, nine baptisms & further eight to membership ... Laurie Haynes welcomed on 31 January as High School Chaplain for area ... Church preparing for weekend camp mid March ... Dividing doors a great asset in church.

ALBANY (John Spencer) John Spencer has completed his first year of ministry. A time of healing & new growth under his leadership ... Our 25th anniversary marked by the completion of new foyer, cryroom & kitchen ... Past preacher Bruce Clapp & Ruth attended anniversary service & dinner. Conference President John Fabry guest speaker ... Quiz night raised \$300 for COCOA ... Playgroup providing an outreach to children & mothers.

Tas

DEVONPORT (R. Chapman) Greg Foot (Tas. Conf. Pres.) presided at induction service on 7 February to celebrate commencement of Ron Chapman's ministry. Lyn & children Joanne, Matthew, Michael & Nathan welcomed. Ian Allsop (Vic-Tas Sec.) brought inspiring message ... Ron & Lyn have met with youth leaders & Sunday school teachers in planning sessions ... Board retreat 11 February ... Final meeting of refocussing process 19 February ... Graeme Townsend (missionary in Nepal & past member) spoke 14 February.

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, D. Tobler) On 14 February church crowded for setting apart of Craig Spaulding & Darryl Tobler into full-time service. David Lewis led service & Chairman of Elders, John Powell, introduced guest speaker Don Smith (Director DMED) who also conducted setting apart. He spoke at evening service ... Two morning services have resumed after holidays as have home study groups ... Mural in children's playground completed.

NUBEENA (C.G. Henderson) Sunday School anniversary theme "Let us Shine" great success ... Ladies Christmas program well attended ... Greg Jacobson, home from India, spoke at Sunday morning service ... Four attended Keswick Convention, Camp Clayton ... Two weddings in January ... Church groups recommenced for 1993 ... Elders & wives meet for social evening monthly ... Kelly Brophy made confession of faith ... 11 ladies attended first craft session for year.

ULVERSTONE (Tom & Ruth Edge) Visit to Caveside evening of 6 Dec to present cantata "Song Unending" ... 13 December morning service 76 present for cantata ... Christmas day a family meal for part congregation. Various age groups meeting for meals or entertainment ... All auxiliaries commencing February ... Young music group gave debut 7 February ... Bill Howard, Bible Society representative, guest speaker 21 February.

SA

MURRAY BRIDGE (Morrie Munyard) Auxiliaries enjoyed special Christmas functions ... Hot

Christmas pudding, sauce & icecream served following evening service 21 December ... Action Stations Kids Club concluded 1992 by inviting parents to tea & program including clowns Nip & Tuk (Uniting Church) & speaker Rob George (OAC Ministries) ... Minister compared Inter-church Council community carols on racecourse ... Minister gave short message to council luncheon to elder citizens.

WHYALLA (G & B Burgan) After three years without minister 85 local & visiting members welcomed Graham & Bev Burgan with luncheon followed by induction service led by Brian Phelps from Adelaide ... Koala Club, CWF & Craft Group all active again ... Social activity held monthly ... 16 enjoyed golf croquet on New Year's Eve ... Church camp at Redcliffs, SA, end February ... AGM 7 March.

TUMBY BAY Visitors & holiday-makers swelled congregation during holidays ... Scripture Union Beach Mission great success with over 100 children every day for a week ... All church christian groups participating & working well together ... Church greatly helped & encouraged by visits from minister on first weekend of each month ... Redcliff Camp was crowded over holidays ... Manse also occupied with holiday makers ... Women's Fellowship commenced after holidays.

BORDERTOWN (N. Baxter) Church looking forward to new ministry with Noel & Sandra Baxter & family. Induction service for Noel 18 February with Ron Roberts ... Holiday services at 10 am, with fellowship time afterwards, well received ... CWF rolled into '93 with lawn bowls night. Well attended ... 13 Plus Youth hit off with twilight

golf to commence year ... Bible Club underway with P. Chatfield as Supt.

MUNDULLA (J. Main) Framed photos of past Wampony congregations hung following a short after-church ceremony. Professional photos taken of proceedings ... Church expressed appreciation to Ron & Alice Saunders for their dedicated 12 months part-time ministry preparatory to John & Valerie Main sharing a team ministry with Noel & Sandra Baxter, who, with family, were welcomed recently to the circuit.

Qld

MARYBOROUGH (David Woodward, Alan Weedon, Allan Cunningham) Visiting speakers Jean Claude Bouling & Tammy Copley from Teen Challenge, Wes Beavis message & seminar thought provoking ... Power seminar conducted in preparation for Bill Newman Rally ... Three baptisms, several reconsecrations ... Two officers, seven boys attended Boys' Brigade Pan Australian Camp ... Attended Kanaka Centenary celebrations at Childers ... Carols held at Fairhaven.

NSW

BATHURST (David Gurney) Church activities are now back to normal after the school vacation ... Two weddings during January ... Older youth groups going away for a camping weekend at Abercrombie Caves in March ... Church annual general business meeting to be held in February to discuss important matters relating to the church functions.

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Church News

Vic

MILDURA (David Ratten, Neale Meredith, Doug Clark) 267 attended Christmas Day service ... Annual amphitheatre service washed out by severe thunderstorm ... 19 Year 7-10 students attended Choice youth group camp at Lake Benanee ... State Conference President, George Warren (& Lesley) visited Sunraysia churches 12-15 Feb, 200 attended combined evening service ... Three baptisms in January.

NORTH ESSENDON Book presentations made to Geoff Alves, former secretary, & Graham & Bev Burgan, former ministers ... Ministry situation still being investigated ... Sale of manse underway with maintenance being undertaken prior to market ... Playgroup parents willing to participate in church working bee ... George Rowlings, George Tootell & Hec Follett unwell ... Recent preachers included Barry Jenkins & John Williams ... Pool of members preaching.

HARTWELL (Graeme Rogerson, Merry Blair) Theme for Advent services "faces at the manger" ... All groups held end of year functions ... Friendship Group travelled to Monbulk for Christmas luncheon. A most enjoyable day ... Tuesday night fellowship conducted Christmas program at Gaffney House ... Large congregation shared in Carols by Candlelight on Christmas Eve ... Church leaders attended three sessions for prayer & praise ... Luncheon to mark the new church year.

ASHBURTON (Iris Lawson) Church hosted Confident Living Program for Older Victorians conducted by Vic Safe. This community service appreciated & found helpful by members & people in district ... Advent services featured different customs from countries around world ... Christmas Eve carol service on the lawn outside church attracted large crowd ... Christmas Bowl offering \$1,003 ... CWF enjoyed visit from June Andrews, Superintendent of Hospital Visitation Committee.

WARRAGUL (Debbie & David Buesnel) Sunday school anniversary held ... Youth group held raft race at Blue Rock Dam ... Ministry team accept three year extension ... Guest artists Dominique Gray, Grant Ward & group "Frontier" ... Board organising presentation dinner for future plans ... Chaplain Bruce Waldron moves to Castlemaine schools ... Ladies Craft Group commenced.

BORONIA (Keith Milne, Andrew Henley) Year commenced well, auxiliaries in full swing ... Attendances up at services & new members welcomed ... Christmas Bowl offering \$3,725 ... Board held retreat ... Seminar on worship conducted by Gordon Stirling ... Divorce Recovery seminar with Cheryl Johnson commenced ... Discipleship classes & Bible study groups led by ministers started ... Recent speakers Chris & Mary Ambrose, Russell Wesley (Transplant games participant), Shirley Osborne (christian worker among street kids).

PORT FAIRY (Roy Hope) Christmas carol service on Village Green attracted several passers-by ... Visitors over holiday period greatly appreciated ... Sunday School growing with additions through playgroup & picnic enjoyed by many families ... Worthwhile prayer vigil held 9 Feb ... Grateful for support of garage sale raising \$503 for manse repayments ... Arrangements in hand for our 110th anniversary 3 October.

HADDON (Stephen Templeton) Church commenced second week-end November 92 ... Over past four months attendances have grown to average 50-60 ... Two baptisms have taken place ... \$8,000 donated from Dawson St, Ballarat, towards part-time minister ... Church in high spirits with about 80% of attendances coming from nominal or non-Christian backgrounds ... Haddon is a church planting project from the Dawson St church.

LATROBE TERRACE, GEELONG (Dr C.J. Mackenzie) Auxiliaries resumed activities after Christmas break ... Jenny Elkington spoke of trip to Indonesia with Salvation Army ... Russell Wesley, school chaplain, told of plans to compete in cycling & badminton events at World Transplant Games in Vancouver ... Allan Carr gave message during minister's absence in Sydney ... CWF enjoyed progressive dinner ... Venture Teams International conducted youth service ... Mr Brown & Ian Kirwood hospitalised.

DAWSON ST, BALLARAT (Stephen Templeton, Tracey Wickham) 350 attended Christmas Coffee Cabaret at Ballarat Tennis Centre ... Church full 7.30 & 11 pm Christmas Eve services ... New church planted at Haddon continues to grow. Attendances in 60s ... Farewells to Salvadore family as moved to Sydney. Mathew to train in Bible College ... Kylie Matheson accepted at Swinburne University & Cameron Tudball at RMIT ... Kate Staley joined well known singing group "Corazon".

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Poetry

God's Awesome Creation

Under the boulder, the green moss grows,
Beneath the cool earth, worms wriggle,
In the depths of the blue-green sea, fish swim,
Inside a mother's womb, a baby develops,
Curled in a cocoon, a caterpillar changes,
In the scorching desert, hardy plants survive,
In the freezing snow, seals laze,
High in the sky, birds fly free.
The earth in its entirety is awesome.
The world in its every specific detail is amazing.

—Jodie Ware



Jodie is the 15-year-old daughter of Keith and Julie Ware of the Rockingham, WA, church

The Last Word

My conscience is captive to the Word of God.

—Martin Luther

Because of the overflow on a Sunday morning the minister was forced to hold two identical morning services. One Sunday a member was noticed arrive very late during the 9.30 service. To the minister's surprise, the member was in his seat when the 11 o'clock service began. But when the congregation rose to sing the hymn before the sermon, the member left, explaining to the usher, "This is where I came in."

A minister had been invited to attend a party of the Sunday School nursery department. To surprise them, he got on hands and knees, flapped his coat tails over head like wings, hopped on all fours and cackled like a bird. Imagine his surprise on learning, that due to a switch in locations, he had intruded on the missionary meeting!

Known to be the worst gossip in the community a member came to the church altar at the end of a service and said to the minister, "I'd like to lay my tongue on the altar".

To which the minister replied, "I'd like to help you but the altar is only five metres long."

A patient with sore feet went to visit a Doctor. The Doctor asked: "What have you been up to?" The patient replied, "Well, I went to the supermarket and bought a can of stew. When I got home I read the label which said, 'Stand in hot water before opening the can'."

A customer wanted to buy a chicken and the butcher only had one in stock. He weighed it and said, "A beauty. That will be only \$4.75."

"Oh, that's not quite large enough," said the customer. The butcher put the chicken back in the refrigerator, rolled it around on the ice several times, then put it back on the scales again.

"This one is \$5.50," he said, adding his thumb for good weight.

"Oh, that's fine!" said the customer. "I'll take both of them."



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