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of Churches of
Christ in Australia

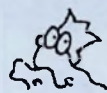
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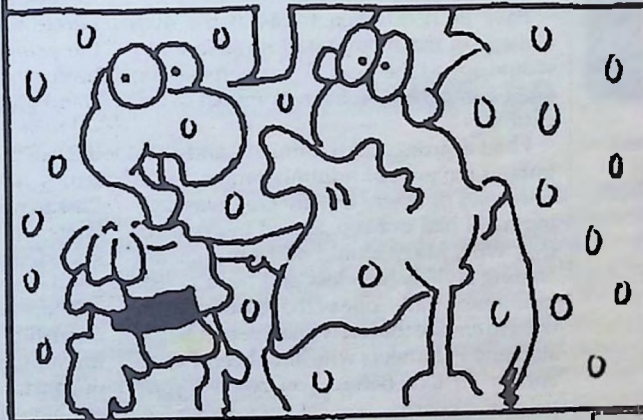
THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

NOW'S OUR CHANCE TO
SATIRIZE THE GREED
AND COMMERCIALIZATION
OF CHRISTMAS. JUST SAY
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND.



Pontius' Puddle

PEACE ON EARTH
AND GOD'S RICHEST
BLESSING TO YOU
AND YOURS.



I HOPE YOU REALIZE
YOU JUST BLEW A
PERFECTLY GOOD
CARTOON STRIP.



THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Vol. 98 No. 22
16 December 1995

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Assistant: Nigel Pegram

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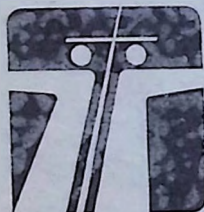
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Ambrosia

Farewell!

Chris Ambrose



This will be the last time I have the privilege of writing to you without an Editor breathing down my neck wanting to check my writing. (I still have to pass my sub-editor's eagle-eye regarding grammar, while also fitting into a definite space).

I wish to express my thanks to the loyal readers of *The Australian Christian*. Over the past 17 years, many of you have passed on appreciative comments and suggestions. Many have included me and members of the editorial team in your prayers. This support and encouragement has been appreciated and has been one of the reasons I have so much enjoyed my 17 years of involvement with the paper.

Back in 1978 when I was at the then College of the Bible, I had no idea that I would spend the next 17 years managing and editing the national newspaper of our churches.

I had a strong call to ministry and with gifts in the area of administration, I was uncertain of where exactly God was calling me. I had not considered journalism. (My wife, Mary would still say that my writing style is hopeless and my English grammar is bad—one of the reasons I have tried to ensure that I have had very reliable staff and volunteers who have been able to correct all that before you receive your printed copies.)

During my time as Sub-Editor/Manager (1978-87) and then as Managing Editor (1988-95), I have striven to provide a forum for people within Churches of Christ to express their faith and their understanding of the church. We have always sought to share the news of what is happening within the church around Australia with you.

We have tried to share not only the times of joy, but also those times when the church is hurting and has failed in its mission to be God's people in the world. The church in the wider world outside of Churches of

Christ has also been featured, so that we should not become too insular.

I have been involved with the production of 374 issues during my time here. Throughout all those issues, I have tried to allow the various groups in our churches to share their views.

I believe that *The Australian Christian* is one of the few forums in our churches that is open for all. There is a need for those on both sides of an issue to listen to each other. Too often both sides just listen to have their prejudices confirmed and not to

hear the truth that they may have missed due to their own blinkered understandings. Sometimes (rarely) I have made mistakes in allowing some people to share intemperate views. However, I believe one of the principles of Churches of Christ has been our tolerance, while still making a stand on the vital issues.

I have enjoyed my time. There has been the frustration of trying to ensure that the issues have arrived on time. (Australia Post is not one of my most favourite organisations, and yet I would have to acknowledge that they mostly have done a good job.)

There have been the constant struggles regarding finances and gaining and keeping subscribers. There have been the times of constant work and tension as computers have failed and as we have tried to master new programs. I well remember when we first went to full computerisation of an issue. We only had two weeks to learn and produce an issue. We did produce the issue on time and it did not have too many mistakes.

I will miss the routine and the fellowship of readers, fellow members of the religious press, contributors and all who have helped in producing *The Australian Christian* over the years.

I wish Don and Nigel God's blessing as they take *The Australian Christian* into a new era.

Editor Farewelled

Appreciation expressed for years of service

Chris Ambrose, sub-editor-manager of *The Australian Christian* since 1979 and editor since 1988, was farewelled at a dinner in his honour held at East Keilor Church of Christ on 17 November. Keith Aird, Chairman of The Australasian Christian Board, chaired the dinner. Board and Management Committee members, co-workers, friends and family members were among the 40 people invited to attend. Greetings were received from interstate representatives.

Lindsay Mott, Treasurer and Board member, expressed thanks to Chris on behalf of the Board and the readership as a whole. He noted the contribution Chris had made to the computerisation of the paper and the subsequent savings and improvements. Chris had showed strengths in financial planning and development of a strong body of support. Keith Aird supported these remarks and acknowledged the dedication and enthusiasm Chris had shown throughout his years of

service. He will be remembered as a worthy successor to a line of outstanding editors who have served the paper.

Through the years he had been quite self-effacing. Even so, his work has been recognised by the Australasian Religious Press Association through a number of awards received in recent years. Viney Longthorp expressed the thanks of the various contributors, commenting on the support Chris had offered to them. Don Milne, Geoff Alves and Shirley Wallis expressed thanks for their partnership with Chris through humorous verse and readings. At the request of the Chairman, Mary Ambrose had prepared a sequel to her recent contribution for the *Historical Society Digest*—"Editors of The Australian Christian 1898-1988". This traced the work of the paper in recent years and brought the history up-to-date by including Chris's contribution.

Keith Aird presented a jarrah clock in the shape of Australia



• Receiving the symbolic Australia clock

to Chris in appreciation of his leadership and a bouquet of Australian flowers to Mary Ambrose in acknowledgment of her support and that of the family over the seventeen years Chris had served with the paper. The "Australian" nature of these served to underline the national scope of their contribution.

In responding to the comments, Chris expressed his thanks for the many positive

remarks offered about his work. He had enjoyed the opportunity to serve Churches of Christ at a national level and his involvement in the wider inter-church scene. The dinner concluded with thanks to the East Keilor catering team and a prayer of thanksgiving for the ministry Chris had offered. Chris Ambrose has accepted a call to ministry with the Goolwa, SA church. He commences there in February, 1996.

ARPA "Tribute" to Chris Ambrose

Thanks from colleagues in the religious press

Chris Ambrose has exemplified the best aspects of the Australasian Religious Press Association—always looking for innovative solutions to the many perils that face religious publishers in Australia.

Some of the qualities that Chris's colleagues in the religious press have valued, included willingness to embrace creatively the best in new technology, a commitment to both excellence and value for money in the production of *The Australian Christian*, and a spirit of ready cooperation that always emphasised the unity we find in Christ.

ARPA is an organisation which draws the bulk of its members from the larger churches—Roman Catholic, Anglican and Uniting.

Chris Ambrose's contribution, coming from the Churches of Christ point of view, often helped to give ARPA members a broader understanding of the issues being considered, helping us look beyond the "big church" perspective.

Chris was always keen to serve ARPA at an executive level as well, making significant contributions as President, Secretary and Treasurer of the association. Chris's election as ARPA President demonstrated the lack of factionalism in the association, as well as showing the high regard of his colleagues for him.

Chris's term as President was marked by the energy he brought to the job and a consultative, inclusive leadership style.

One of the strong bonding forces for ARPA members has been our battle against a common foe—Australia Post. Chris has always been one of the leaders in ARPA's quest for fair and efficient service from Australia Post. ARPA members have much to thank Chris Ambrose (and the other postal campaigners) for.

At ARPA conferences, the determinedly casual appearance of Chris Ambrose has been one of the constants for the eight years that I have been a member.

Always one of the first to arrive, and always the person greeting newcomers to the ARPA scene and encouraging them to contribute, Chris has epitomised ARPA's ecumenical and encouraging spirit.



ARPA wishes Chris well in his new role. He will be missed from the religious press scene (although perhaps not by the senior management of Australia Post!).

Thank you Chris.

Andrew Demack
Senior Vice-President
Australasian Religious
Press Association

Women Lead the Way!

Kenmore College graduation



• Prize winners Carol Hands and Anita Callaway

College graduation at Kenmore Christian College is more than a presentation of awards. It represents the culmination of the year's activities when students, faculty and supporting churches join together in thanksgiving for all that has been accomplished. This has been a difficult year for some. Ill-health has forced some students to reschedule their study program. As a result, the only diplomas awarded were the Associate Diploma in Social Science (Pastoral Assistant) to Simon Knight (Logan City Christian Centre), Kerrie McDonald (Alstonville Baptist Church) and Gavin Morgan (Bundaberg Gospel Chapel). The graduates were presented in an act of dedication, led by the Queensland Conference President, Rod Warwick.

Graduation also provides an opportunity to recognise those who have made a significant contribution to the life of the College. The annual prize giving always brings some pleasant surprises. This year, Carol Hands, a busy housewife with demanding family responsibilities, dominated the academic awards, with the prize for the Best Student in Old Testament (English), Best Student in New Testament (English) and the Queensland Christian Women's Ministry Prize for the Best Academic Achievement by a lady student. Another busy housewife and mother, Anita

Callaway, was awarded the Nell Machin Prize for the best contribution to College life by a lady student. The A.W. Finger Scholarship for the best contribution to College life, academic achievement and human relationships, was awarded to Steve Christian. The Burkhead Prize for an essay on the Restoration Movement was awarded to Bruce Johnson.

This year marked the first year that the A. & B. Wilson

Scholarship was awarded. Professor Allan Wilson recently retired from the chairmanship of the College Board, after serving in that position for some 27 years. In order to pay perpetual tribute to this significant contribution, the College Board has instituted an annual scholarship, awarded for the best leadership from a student in Churches of Christ in Queensland. This year, the prize was awarded to Mark Kirk for his outstanding leadership in a church-planting program at West Moreton (Springfield). In cooperation with the DCDE, the team of students of which Mark is the leader, has established a small but viable congregation in this new housing area.

Musical items were presented by Paul Davies, who writes his own songs and is also a member of the East Moreton team, and Steve Christian. Guest speaker was Orrell Battersby, who urged church leaders to be "Radical, Fanatical and Mathematical".

Ideal Christmas Gift

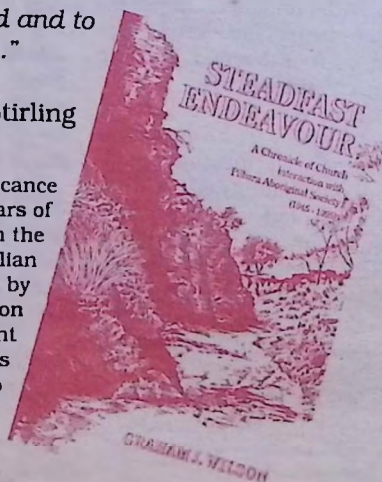
"A balanced account of the impact of Christian missions in the North of Western Australia ... A good book to buy and to read and to lend around."

—Gordon Stirling

The story of the significance of the last 50 years of Aborigines mission in the Western Australian Pilbara and Gascoyne, by Graham Wilson, station employee, government Protector of Natives and Christian who numbers many aboriginal leaders among his friends.

\$16.50

(includes postage)



Calendar

Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church

The Australian Catholic University is presenting a conference on the Christian spiritual heritage "Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church", which will be held in Melbourne 5-8 July 1996. The conference has attracted celebrated scholars and leading speakers, many from overseas. Two major exhibitions will be featured at the conference—"The Art of the Icon writers in Australia" and a trade exhibition by publishers and other companies working in the fields of spirituality, early Christian literature, history and culture. Details and brochures from A.D. Ingamells, Conference Secretariat, Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church, PO Box 786, Frankston Vic 3199. Phone (03) 9904 4240, fax (03) 9781 3066.

Churches Celebrate Happenings in Schools

The South Australian Heads of Christian Churches have set aside 28 January to celebrate what is happening in schools. Churches all over SA will be setting aside time in their services to celebrate the sign of hope offered to young people in state schools by the Christian church. Information, including service outlines, specific prayers, speakers and resources can be obtained from the Schools Ministry Group, 28 Croydon Rd, Keswick SA 5035. Phone (08) 371 0662 or fax (08) 293 8491.

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College News

PBC News

Staff changes, graduation and appointments

Scarborough, WA, church was packed on 25 November for the 67th Perth Bible College graduation service.

In his opening remarks, college Chairman, Dr Alan Mitchell, said that the college was undergoing a time of considerable change. The college is in negotiations with the WA Government about offering a degree program in 1997.

A "This is your life" book was presented to Dennis and Julie Watkins, who are resigning after 24 years of faithful ministry. During the past decade, over 70 had made commitments to Christ as a result of the evangelism course that Dennis had conducted. Two new faculty members had been appointed this year—Rev Alan Gordon and Ray Ball.

During the evening, 10 ATH's from the Central School of Religion were presented, as were 20 internal college awards. Recipients included Glen and Hans Bergsma (Whitfords), David Hill (Whitfords), Ken Doran (Scarborough) and Andrew Duirs (Subiaco).

In presenting the diplomas, the Principal, Dr Alan Meers, noted that almost all of the graduating students already had appointments for 1996. These include Peter Taylor to Dunsborough, Hans Bergsma to Dowerin, David Hill to plant a new church at Merriwa (on behalf of the Whitfords church) and Ken Doran to Scarborough (part-time).

CCTC Graduation and Ordination

Graduates challenged to place their faith in God

Dependence upon God was the pervading theme of the 1995 graduation service of the Churches of Christ Theological College (the national college of Churches of Christ, Mulgrave) held on 17 November. It was the culmination of a highly successful year of ministry to students and churches, and was enthusiastically supported by people who travelled from as far as South Australia and Western Australia.

Inspiring songs of faith and praise were followed by the formal procession of faculty and graduating students, who moved into the auditorium to the beat of an African drummer and the congregational singing of "We're Marching in the Light of God".

Principal Greg Elsdon's report provided a clear indication of the strong sense of purpose and direction of the college. He acknowledged with appreciation the contribution of three Board members, Eira Clapp, Russell Williams and Allan Avery, all of whom resigned during this year, and welcomed Tony Armstrong, Mark Butler and Lynette Leach as new Board members.

The launch of REO, a journal of theology and ministry, was a special feature of the evening. Greg explained that this new initiative arose from the perceived need for a forum for members of Churches of Christ to join with others in expressing their faith, exploring what it means to be Christian with integrity in an ever-changing



• Laying on of hands during ordination service

world. The overwhelming interest in this new journal has vindicated the decision of the College Board to support this ambitious project.

It was a special joy to celebrate the achievements of the graduating class. Jennifer Medley and Dorothy Quantrelle received the Certificate in Christian Studies. Pamela Longmuir and Bryan O'Neill were awarded the Diploma in Theological Studies, and Elizabeth Lloyd, Ruth May, Les Medley, Linda Pilton and Moffat Zimba gained the Diploma in Ministry.

The personal insights provided by the Diploma in Ministry students emphasised how much they valued both the scholarship and pastoral care of the faculty at Mulgrave. The practical ministerial formation they had received through their student church placements and

their ever-growing faith in God has integrated their study with the practicalities of ministry, placing them in good stead as they face the challenges of Christian ministry.

Niki Pidd's dramatic presentation of Jeremiah's call (Jer 1:1-19) was a moving experience and set the scene for Merryl Blair's occasional address. Merryl, Lecturer in Old Testament Studies, asserted that Jeremiah's call and commissioning presents a "model for ministry to a church and society facing a dismantling of its familiar systems of meaning and power".

The National Conference Ordination service that followed was also inspiring. Robert Leane, National Conference President, led the congregation through an order of service that emphasised the significance of ordination. The candidates for ordination were: Vivienne Burns (Wangaratta, Vic); Martin Gillespie (Glen Waverley, Vic); Ruth May (Prospect, SA); Les Medley (Warragul, Vic); Linda Pilton (Richmond, Vic) and Neville Wight (Carnegie, Vic). As representatives of the churches laid hands on the ordinands, Chris Sharp sang "Holy Spirit Come". This was a high point, when the congregation joined in prayer to seek God's blessing upon those being ordained.

Pontius' Puddle

WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR

by PONTIUS

MAY OUR PONDS NOT TURN SCUMMY,
MAY FAT FLIES FILL OUR TUMMIES.

MAY THE ROCKS UPON WHICH WE SIT,
ALWAYS STAY SMOOTH AND SUNLIT.

MAY THOSE WITH WHOM WE LIVE,
LOVE, JOY, AND HAPPINESS GIVE.

SO TO THOSE WHOM WE HOLD DEAR,
A VERY MERRY NEW YEAR.

BUT TO THOSE THAT WE DISLIKE,
MAY THEY —



PEACE ON EARTH TO ALL
GOD'S CREATURES.

MMMPHI



Blame it on "reo"

Or, "Who split that infinitive?"

I was looking forward to *reo*, the new quarterly journal being published by the Churches of Christ Theological College, Vic, for ministers, graduates, the increasing number of lay people doing theological and biblical studies and any others interested in stretching their minds on matters of faith and life.

In due course, my first copy arrived and I set out to read it with an open mind. I had only read as far as the third line of the unsigned editorial when to my shocked surprise I came across a split infinitive ... in such a scholarly journal! Then I realised that in these days most people do not know what an infinitive is, let alone a split one, and modern writers are splitting them like kindling wood, unaware of their grammatical sin. So realising that my reaction was an indication of my geriatric fastidiousness, I read on. In fact I read the 111 pages through twice and am impressed by

"Issue number one".

Having come out in November, it is not surprising that 30 pages are devoted to the Christmas theme. Using a fictional Sherlock Holmes-Watson dialogue, Stephen Curkpatrick looks at the differences between the Christmas stories of Matthew and Luke and their bearing on the great fact of the Incarnation. Nigel Pegram, already commenting on Isaiah in *The Australian Christian*, gives Bible background to the Isaiah readings for the five Sunday mornings of December. Principal Greg Elsdon brings light from the seemingly uninteresting "begats" in Matthew 1. CCTC student Kerrilyn Reader, in "Three Men and a Baby", looks at the significance of the Magi, while Merrill Kitchen of the Evangelical Theological Association paints a graphic picture of Rachel, still weeping for her children.

While four CCTC faculty members contribute to the first

issue, the majority of it comes from a variety of able writers. So *reo* is not an "in-house" publication, and its contributors will not necessarily be following any "CCTC line", but rather will encourage readers to do their own theological thinking.

"The Integrity of Apostolic Ministry" is written by Darrell Guder, Professor of Evangelism at the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in the USA. He is to deliver the Jesse Bader Lectures on Evangelism in Melbourne, 2-10 July, 1996. Colleen O'Reilly, Associate Dean of the Melbourne College of Divinity, writes for theological students as they move into ministry.

One contributor presents a hypothetical of a minister and his wife and the church board and their conflicting expectations of each other. Seven writers react to the hypothetical. These reactions, especially that of a character called J. Ibes, should be required reading for church boards.

It would make a good night if a church board made these 20 pages the sole agenda item for one of their meetings. However, I hope that in fairness the editors of *reo* will present another hypothetical from the point of view of the board and the congregation!

reo presents reviews of books covering both theological and practical church issues. Two "Letters to the Editors" in this issue indicate that reader correspondence will be welcomed. Imagine that the editorial team will be disappointed if various articles do not produce reader response in the generously afforded correspondence pages.

Merryl Blair's address at the CCTC Graduation is included as the lead article. It looked at Jeremiah's call to ministry and its implications for those called to contemporary ministry. Greg Elsdon answers, hopefully for ever, those who ask the question "Should theological education be academic or practical?" And as expected there is a

poetry section for the creative writers among us.

The last pages of *reo* are apparently to be reserved for invited writers under the heading of "Springfield". The name comes from that of a presbytery in the USA that dissolved itself so that its members should be free from denominationalism, creeds and party spirit. Calling themselves simply "Christians" and taking only the Bible as their guide for faith and life, they set out to show the church and the world a way of life and faith in harmony with the mind of Christ. In 1832 these "Christians" under their leader Barton Stone united with Campbell's Disciples.

Churches of Christ in Australia have a joint heritage with them and with our British spiritual ancestors. The "Springfield" writers will write anonymously, sharing with readers their dreams of the church freed from tradition and inhibition and guided only by the mind of Christ for the contemporary church.

I finish with a word to lay people who might think that *reo* is a bit too "high brow" for them. Subscribe and try it out. All you will need is a Bible, a dictionary, some patience, an open mind and a sympathetic minister who will help you when you are stuck. You will enjoy the experience!

—Gordon Stirling

Australia

Drinking Action Applauded

The NSW Council of Churches applauded the NSW Cabinet's stance tightening underage drinking legislation. In the proposed reforms, the penalty for supplying alcohol to minors would be six months or \$5,000. Retraining courses for staff will also become mandatory. Council President, Rev Ross Clifford said, "I am sure all member churches fully support the actions of the government to stamp out underage drinking."

Encounter Prize

Radio National's religious documentary program, *Encounter*, celebrated its 30th anniversary in October by launching an annual prize. The Radio National Encounter Prize is open to anyone under 30 who wishes to explore religion in society through the medium of radio broadcasting. In 500 words or less, entrants are asked to outline an idea for a religious documentary to be produced for *Encounter*. The successful entrant will be paid \$1,200 for the winning idea and for part-time research during the four to six-week production period. Entries will be accepted until 1 February 1996 and should be addressed to The Radio National Encounter Prize, ABC Radio National, GPO Box 9994 in your capital city.

Turkey for Christmas

Friends of Turkey are calling on Christians to use Christmas as a time to share the gospel. They are encouraging all Christians in Australia to mail five gospel letters to Turks in Turkey this Christmas. Each letter begins by greeting the reader with respect and love and explains that the purpose of writing is to be able to serve them through praying for them. The letter goes on to assure them that there are no hidden motives in writing and offers 15 different prayer points. A Turkish Jesus video and New Testament are also offered. The letters cost \$1.20 airmail to post and are available in packs of five. To be involved, write to Friends of Turkey, PO Box 780, Wynnum Qld 4178 (Phone (07) 3348 6533).



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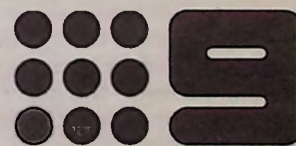
*"For I was hungry
and you gave me
something to eat,
I was thirsty and you
gave me something
to drink..."*

Matt 25:35

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Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

Saying Thank You

To the Editor,

The cover picture and caption of *The Australian Christian* for 4 November, of our friend, Elva Hall, kneeling at the grave of Colin Simper at Labuan War Cemetery would be probably the most moving of your editorship. Your caption "How Do You Say Thank You?" and the picture say it all most eloquently.

How do you say thank you in an adequate way, not only to Colin Simper, but to all that great host of young men, (and heroic nurses) who died in two world wars, but on our knees and with tears?

Wilfred Owen, the English poet who died in the closing hours of World War I, speaks of the "Pity of War" and of the "Abraham" who took the knife to slay his son and was pleaded with to slay instead, the ram of pride, but he would not, but slayed the young men of Europe one by one. It is most fitting that another young man of England, Benjamin Britten, set some of his poems to music and produced *War Requiem*, a fine and deeply moving work. A fitting tribute.

However, when all is said and done, the most satisfying tribute we can bring is probably to hate war as a way of handling conflict with all our heart and commit our ways to the Prince of Peace.

—Ken Dawson
(Brooklyn Park, SA)

Cosmology and the Church

To the Editor,

I wholeheartedly support the article by Gordon Stirling ("AC" 18 November) proposing that "we think through the implications of our cosmology for our theology" and might I add that we include the beginning of our cosmos, also.

But I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for the church to respond. For thinking people throughout the ages, the idea of a flat earth has been debunked for more than 2000

years. Archimedes credited Aristarchus, 280–264 BC, with the hypothesis that the earth revolves around the sun in the circumference of a circle.

In reviewing theology for our times, however, I would suggest that there are other branches of science which need to be taken into account, for example, the principles of evolution which have revolutionised the study of biology.

Many eminent theologians over the last 70 years have attempted a review of theology in the spirit of Gordon's proposal, but their writings have been largely ignored and they have been isolated within the church.

A serious attempt, therefore, by a respected member of our church community, to conduct a review of theology which a 21st century student can accept as compatible with continuing scientific studies, (which after all are merely seeking to find the truth about our natural world) is perhaps one of the greatest services we can offer the church at this time.

—Colin R. Johnson
(Preston, Vic)

Congratulations to a Courageous Congregation

To the Editor,

How encouraging it was to read of the decision by the Caulfield-Malvern church ("AC" 18 November) to allow the closure of their ministry to pave the way for a new ministry through the Indonesian church.

It must have taken great soul-searching, grace and courage to bring to an end their identity as a congregation. But praise God for the wisdom of those who lead the change. So often I hear of small (tiny) congregations hanging on to their identity for grim death, hoping against the evidence that somehow the past will repeat itself, resisting change as if the devil!

I know nothing of the circumstances of this change, but it looks like the handiwork of God from here in NSW. I pray that the minis-

try closes with a blessing on December 10, and that the new ministry builds firmly on the gift that this church has passed on. May it also be an example to others in similar situations.

—Tony Sands
(Campbelltown, NSW)

When Language Fails

To the Editor,

Of course, Gordon Stirling is correct. ("AC" 18 November) Science and technology have long since demolished the old idea of a three-tiered universe; next to fall, the superb language with which we have traditionally clothed our deepest spiritual concepts.

But is all this just a matter of semantics? Is it the failure of our human language adequately to express spiritual verities? As Paul admits (2 Cor 12:4), we mortals have neither the mental capacity nor the scope of language to describe the in-

describable, we must needs resort to symbols.

What matter then, if my generation envisages God's abode in terms of pearly gates and golden streets, while future generations may talk of micro-waves and silicon chips? Will they be any nearer the truth? Just a little more confused, maybe!

Talking recently with an elderly disciple now past coping with modern technology, we discussed our Christian hope in terms of "the Father's house". Said she: "It's something to look forward to, isn't it?" And why not?

—Marj Buckingham
(Oakleigh, Vic)

Roxburgh Park Support

To the Editor,

Many readers will know that the Sunbury, Vic, church has planted a new church—the Roxburgh Park Community Church. In

Letters to a Travelling Companion Coffee, Cake and Pledges

Dear Daniel,

I was interested to hear that you have volunteered to be a home visitor for the upcoming stewardship campaign at your church. Well, I hope you have more success than I did when our church went through the same process some years ago. The number of pledges I was able to collect was in inverse proportion to the amount of coffee and cake I ingested at each visit. Mind you, I really enjoyed doing the visits. The trouble was that I always left with a very full stomach and a very empty hand, so to speak.

Part of the problem for me was that I was very uncomfortable about making such a pledge myself, so I felt rather reluctant to ask others to do something that I was not prepared to do. It seemed to me that the whole process was turning the idea of making an offering as an act of worship into a bland "business" transaction. It also seemed to be focussed on money alone and did not recognise the call for Christians to be good stewards with all their resources (including time, energy, possessions, empathy and so on).

What bothered me the most was that we needed a stewardship program at all.

To be honest, I felt more than a little guilty that I even had to be prompted to give my resources to something as captivating and exciting as the mission of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Surely, if my priorities were really in order, that would be on the top of my list.

Until next time,
Pastor Salt

Letters to the Editor

International

Japanese Christians Repent

Japanese Christians have issued a statement repenting of their country's wartime atrocities and for the failure to compensate ex-prisoners of war and others who suffered brutality at the hands of the Imperial Army. "We Japanese Christians must repent from the bottom of our hearts for these sins," says the historic declaration from church leaders representing around 800,000 of Japan's more than 1 million Christians. The statement, signed by the Japan Roman Catholic Church, the National Council of Churches, evangelical groups and others, expresses indignation at the Japanese Government's refusal to recognise its full responsibility to pay war reparations.

World Refugees

The 1995 world refugee survey has found that there are 23 million refugees in the world with another 25 million people internally displaced. (These are people forced from their homes but who remain in their country.) Half of the world's refugees are in Africa, which has only 10% of the world's population. Over 75% of refugees are women and children. Official Australian assistance to international refugee agencies is about \$1 per head.

NZ Birth Figures

The latest figures from the New Zealand Department of Statistics show an increase in the number of New Zealand children born to unmarried parents and a reduction in the number of live births. More than one in three babies born in New Zealand do not have married parents. The New Zealand fertility rate is currently 2.06 (the replacement level is 2.10 births/women). New Zealand's fertility rate first dropped below the replacement level in 1993.

US Church Sizes

There are about 375,000 churches in the United States with 100,000 of these having an attendance of fewer than 50. Only about 300 churches have an attendance in excess of 2,000.

January Matthew Salvador, who is graduating from Carlingford, will join the Sunbury ministry team. His responsibilities will include developing a ministry infrastructure and outreach into the community so that the new church will become self-sufficient within 12 months.

About seven weeks ago, I mailed out over 100 letters to churches, inviting pledges of financial support for Roxburgh Park for just one year. Our vision is to enable Matthew to work full-time at the church plant so that it can be self-sufficient quickly, but we need help to realise this. So far we have received two replies, one promising support and one declining. With Matthew's arrival imminent, I am issuing an urgent plea to our churches to respond so that we can plan effectively. We really need your support in this new initiative.

We want to honour Matthew and his young family's sacrificial response to the call of God—it is a huge faith decision. Sunbury has invested every last dollar we have in this project, choosing to do without buildings and equipment in order to extend the Kingdom. While writing this letter, I received a phone call from the Sunbury Baptist minister informing me that their congregation voted to pledge us monthly support for Roxburgh for one year! How exciting! Will you join us too? Please call me urgently if you can help in any way.

Thank you for those who are praying for this new work, we need you too!

(Office (03) 9740 8799, home 9740 9145, fax (03) 9740 6799).

—Milton Oliver
(Sunbury, Vic)

Leadership

To the Editor,

I congratulate Kim Thoday on his willingness to take on the "powers that be", in his searching article "Leadership in Churches of Christ". He has done the hard work in struggling with the Scriptures to establish a Christian and Biblical model for leadership and re-

sisted the temptation to grab at contemporary models from the business and political world and to try and justify them with selective texts. He has also given credibility to his article with his lifestyle and ministry among the poor.

As a senior minister (but not one of the senior ministers) I express regret that Kim's article was not allowed to stand on its own merits by the Literature Department.

I hope that in future, the "Kims" of our churches will be free to publish, without someone considering a defence is necessary. —Gerald Rose
(Southern Community, Vic)

D.A. Ewers

To the Editor,

The tone of voice used when making a statement can change the meaning of the words. When written, it is hard to know if statements are serious or said with a chuckle.

In his article on eschatology ("AC" 2 December), Ronald Graham quotes my grandfather, D.A. Ewers, as arguing in 1896 that the "apostles used neither bicycles nor gold fillings in their teeth" and therefore neither should we.

My mother, Mrs Nettie Lewis, was still living at home with her father when he died in 1915 and later told me lovingly many serious or amusing accounts of D.A. Ewers. He was certainly reluctant to use organ music in the communion service, but accepted it years before he died. He was wary of theatres and dancing, but there is no family teaching on fillings and bicycles.

D.A. Ewers was a witty man and liked a joke. For example, when he returned from America in 1910, he wrote an article called "The Faults of American Disciples" in which he listed 13 faults he had found there: Sometimes people arrived at a service after the starting time; congregations had more women than men; the majority of members left the work to the few; some only went to service once on the Lord's day, etc. While outwardly pointing at faults in

American churches, he was really making an amusing comment on life in the Australian churches in 1910 (and perhaps some are still relevant today).

It is amazing how refreshing many of the writings of D.A. Ewers still seem after almost 100 years, although of course there have been many changes of thought.

I felt I had to comment on the "bicycles and gold fillings" statement. It was a statement in jest!

—Laurel Moore
(Elizabeth, SA)

Sexual Urges

To the Editor,

I am greatly encouraged to read the words of wisdom written by "Pastor Salt" ("AC" 2 December).

However, may I add an addendum to Pastor Salt's wise advice. I would like to include just two words after the word "philosophy", and these are "and politicians".

It is most gratifying to note that Pastor Salt has touched on this important issue in the lives of all of us who are parents, as well as the lives of the children we care for.

I am sure that members living in the Brisbane area must surely have read the regular leading articles written by Peter Cavanagh, a journalist of the Brisbane *Courier Mail*. Peter's articles have appeared several times, he has become "the knight in shining armour" condemning the Cleo article, and making the point that it is the God-given right of parents to nurture and raise their children in the way they (the parents) choose—without interference from the elements referred to by Pastor Salt.

I think the churches in general, (this includes Churches of Christ), are not in the forefront on this serious issue—pride of place belongs to the RSL. I am still hopeful that the Christian community as a whole will "gird its loins" and take up the challenges which Major "Digger" James says is "the problems of which are presently tearing our country apart".

—Robert (Jock) Scott
(Curtin, ACT)

Music

Journey Along the Road

by Dave Diprose (Slingshot Music SMD279502) \$27.95.

Dave Diprose is a singer/songwriter/guitarist who has been performing as a solo artist and in bands for over 20 years. He has been involved in bands and in a music ministry that includes performing at the first YFC Hap-

pening and the Kairos events in Canberra and Adelaide. Dave's performances are built on his strong rhythm playing, primarily on acoustic guitar. His music has some variety and features styles, such as early Rock'n'Roll, Bluegrass, Western Swing and old fashioned Country. This CD has a definite country feel and readers with a taste for this style of music would enjoy this CD.

The material is all original and in most of the songs he tells stories of Australians and their struggles and dreams. Many of the songs are about travelling or those who travel. The lyrics are not overtly religious, although careful listening gives insight into Dave's relationship with God.

As a person who grew up in Wynyard, Tas, I have to agree with Dave when his album notes on the last track "In My Father's Time" he comments, "My favourite place in this whole earth is the North West coast of Tasmania".

If not available in Christian bookshops, then contact Slingshot Music, 1/354 Belmore Rd, Balwyn East Vic 3129. Phone (03) 9857 5211 or contact Dave Diprose himself on (03) 9551 5874. —CRA

Sing A New Song: Worship Songs for Australian Churches

Executive Producer and Songwriter Peter Mangold (Sing a New Song Publications). \$24.95.

Melbourne songwriter (and a member of The Patch, Vic, church) Peter Mangold published a song book *Sing A New Song* in 1992. These were based on the lectionary for the year and contained 59 original songs based on the Scripture readings and included material for both congregational singing and individual performances.

On this CD, sixteen of these songs have been performed by artists Salvation Jane, Roma, Helen Wiersman, Kathy Johnston, Rod Davies, Janine Maunder and Kairos. Each of these artists have offered their own interpretation of these worship songs, which range in style from gospel to jazz, blues to ragtime and a cappella.

There are some interesting tracks. I must admit that in most cases I would have preferred the presentation to be a little more up-tempo and with more life. Several tracks could be used at special services, such as communion, baptisms and at Christmas. Interestingly, the majority of the material is based on New Testament readings, with only five being based solely or in part on readings from the Psalms.

The tracks I enjoyed the most were "Open Our Eyes" (Luke 24:13-35), "Baptism Song (Matt 3:13-17) and "Don't You Remember?" (Luke 24:1-12).

Alongside the CD, it is possible to purchase the song book (\$19.95) and overhead transparency masters (\$95.00). There is



also a church pack available which includes all three for \$120.00. (Postage is \$4 extra on all orders). Orders and information should be directed to Sing A New Song, The Bible Society (Victoria), Private Bag 6500, Burwood Vic 3125. (Phone orders can be made on (03) 9888 8422 or by faxing (03) 9888 7227.)

—CRA

Software

Treasures From Heaven CD-ROM

(Shareware) (available from Koorong Christian Bookstores)

This is a most disappointing CD-ROM. There are a few treasures, but it is one of the most right-wing collections I have ever seen. It includes a large number of articles by Americans who believe the King James Version is the only divinely inspired Bible, and who believe that you can correct the Greek, by comparing it with the KJV!

Most of the material is quite old and there seems to be a lot of duplication on the disk.

The Bible helps are available in a better form elsewhere and are only a little more expensive than this. If you want to read some incredibly bitter sermons (one of which says that men are the only ones who have achieved anything in the history of the world and that women are incapable of doing anything but bearing children!), then you should have a great time!

If you want a copy of one of those old poems from your past, such as "If Jesus Came to Your House", or "The Touch of the Master's Hand", there are a few of those old gems. But they are mixed in with programs that don't work, or are very disappointing when you go to the trouble of copying them onto a disk.

It's a great idea, but things seem to have been randomly shovelled onto a disk from any Christian-sounding bulletin board. There was a good collection of light bulb jokes, including one off-colour one (I wonder how that slipped through?) eg How many gorillas does it take to change a light bulb? Only one, but he'll use up a whole box of globes to do it!

Koorong have a lot of good software ... but this is not one of them!

—David McKay



Media Review

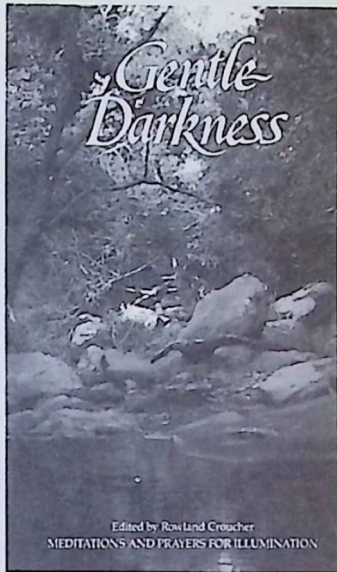
Books

Gentle Darkness

Edited by Rowland Croucher (Albatross Books) \$22.95.

I have rarely been so moved and uplifted by a devotional book as by this one. Every page is a delight. Loosely based around the agonies of Job and the darkness that filled his soul, the 52 studies by 40 different contributors look at the positive aspects of darkness: its mystery, the gentle light in darkness, the gentle recreation beyond darkness and the gentle empowering through darkness. In every devotional, there is a selection of Bible passages, a brief exposition of the topic, a wide selection of relevant readings from modern and traditional Christian writing, a prayer and a benediction. There is a high literary standard throughout and a wide cross-section of sources from poets, novelists, statesmen, opera, biography, theology and life. This is truly food for the searching soul.

—Beverley White.



A Life Worth Living

by Nicky Gumbel (Kingsway Publications) \$9.95.

Searching Issues

by Nicky Gumbel (Kingsway Publications) \$10.95.

These two books provide an excellent resource for Christians and those interested in what Christianity is all about. The author, Nicky Gumbel, read law at Cambridge and theology at Oxford. He practised as a barrister and is now ordained and on the staff of Holy Trinity Brompton in the UK.

Nicky Gumbel's writing style is friendly and his argument easy to follow and interesting, with good use being made of headings within chapters. Humour is injected into the text of both books by the use of engaging line drawings, and all quotations are fully annotated.

He gives examples from life to illustrate the points he makes and quotes widely from other sources, such as the writings of respected authors like C.S. Lewis, John Stott and others and from current newspapers and magazines.

In the preface to *A Life Worth Living* the author states that the book is designed "to introduce, in a simple and practical way, a key letter in the New Testament to those who are starting the Christian life and beginning to read the Bible. It is intended to be read in conjunction with the Bible passages, either by an individual or as a group study, with one person preparing the Bible study using the book as a resource." The letter referred to is Paul's to the Philippians.

The title of the second book, *Searching Issues* gives a clue to its intention. It explores issues which are commonly raised by non-Christians and also need to be understood by Christians. The topics covered are: Suffering, Other Religions, Sex Before Marriage, The New Age, Homosexuality, Science and Christianity and The Trinity.

These books are good value for Christians at all stages of faith, but especially good for new Christians. The writing style and

content makes them very good to use as gifts for young people—mid-teens upwards.

—Zillah Williams

George Herbert: A Portrait

by Nick Page (Monarch) \$16.95.

There must be something special about a poet whose works are still available in many editions 350 years after his death. However, though his poetry is so well known, few know much about the man, George Herbert.

A biography was written of him at the time of his death by Izaak Walton but, although this has been the standard work on Herbert in the years since, Nick Page points out time and again how Walton is careless with his facts and more interested in hagiography than in accurate biography. For example, Walton claims that Herbert met and married Jane Danvers in only three days. There exists documentary evidence that this was not so.

George Herbert died of tuberculosis just short of his 40th birthday. In that short lifetime he had crammed a variety of careers: diplomat, orator of Cambridge University, member of Parliament and royal courtier.

He was frail in body but robust in spirit, as attested by his surviving writings, particularly his poetry in which we can trace his personal search for fulfilling faith. The happiest and most serene years of his life were the last four, beginning with his marriage to Jane and ending with his three years as vicar of Bemerton. In this latter place he wrote *The Country Parson*, a handbook on ministry based heavily on his own experiences. This, and a major collection of his poems under the title, *The Temple*, were published after his death.

For me, this book was not an easy read. It is full of names, places and dates and some of the author's allusions assume a knowledge that at least this reader did not possess. However, Nick Page has clearly researched his subject most thoroughly, making this an important resource for anyone seeking information about the life and times of George Herbert.

—Alan Williams

Thereby Hangs a Tale

By Penelope Wilcock (Kingsway Publications) \$18.95.

Penelope Wilcock is a Methodist circuit preacher, prison visitor and secretary for the church's Division of Social Responsibility in England. She is a very good storyteller. There are eight longer and three shorter stories in this book. The subjects are varied and all of them make fascinating reading.

But the purpose of the book is not the stories themselves. Wilcock's first purpose is to focus on the "people of the darkness". The people who never darken the doors of a church and from whom the church tends to withdraw in distaste or embarrassment.

Another purpose is to introduce various theological themes and issues. For instance, one story focuses on the humanity of Jesus, another on the finding of forgiveness and healing in sacramental relationships.

The book concludes with study notes for each of the longer stories, giving full outlines for studies which would each take a two-hour session to complete. Alternatively, the stories could be used as the basis for talks or sermons.

If you buy this book, you will enjoy the stories, but you probably won't agree with some of the theological positions Wilcock takes. She is a strong advocate, for example, of "nonsexist" language. And she makes comparisons between the church's attitude to homosexuals and the story of the Good Samaritan.

Australian distributors are Christian Marketing Communications.

—Alan Williams

News

Bush Christmas

Blackburn's Christmas musical



• (L to R) James Cutler, Daniel Misson (Joseph) Rebecca de Jager (Mary) and Sarah König

On Christmas Eve at 10:15 am, the children at the Blackburn, Vic, church will perform the musical play "Bush Christmas".

Director Rosemary König says that the play has an Aussie outback setting.

Two children, played by James Cutler and Sarah König, are camping under the stars on Christmas Eve.

They imagine that Jesus was born in Australia instead of Israel.

About 60 children from both the Sunday School and "Kids and Co" Club are participating, dressed as angels, drovers and various Australian animals.

Australian carols will be performed.

Robyn Waters has trained a

Eye for Detail

Volunteers with an eye for detail are needed by *The Australian Christian* as proof readers for each edition. The commitment is to spend from 9.00 am – 2.00 pm on each second Monday for the 22 issues each year. If you have good reading and language skills and can participate on a regular basis, there could be a place for you in the team. Contact the office in Berry St, North Essendon for details. Telephone (03) 9379 1219.

group of young ballerinas to dance as angels.

Admission is free, but an offering will be received.



Prepare for 1996!

Resources from the Wollongong Church of Christ



	Cost	Qty
◆ Tapes from Spring Conference Complete set of addresses by Martin Robinson, Michael Frost, Russell Fragar and Larry Galbraith. (Audio—\$5.00 per tape (9 tapes) + \$3.00 postage. Video \$70.00—set of 9 addresses, includes postage.)	\$8.00/\$70.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
◆ Tape Resource: "How to Improve your Church's Income" (by Ted Keating) This tape will pay for itself in the first 3 minutes of listening.	\$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
◆ Music A CD of original music and arrangements by musicians from the Wollongong Church of Christ. Great music, great variety. This will inspire your musicians.	\$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
◆ Sermon Resources (by Ted Keating) "Mark's Gospel Comes Alive." A series of sermons from Mark's Gospel, with study notes, discussions and questions for small groups. An excellent pre-Easter sermon/study series. "Discover Joy" A series of seven sermons on Phillipians. "God Calling" A sermon series that examines the calls of some of the great leaders in the Bible into ministry.	(all three \$30.00) \$18.00 \$8.00 \$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
◆ Young Adult Ministry Two churches with successful young adult ministries (Blackburn, Vic, and Wollongong, NSW) were compared to see what are the ingredients for a successful young adult ministry. This extensive research paper will challenge and stimulate your own church as it thinks of relating to these age groups.	\$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

Send to: Wollongong Church of Christ, O'Briens Road, Figtree NSW 2525.

Phone (042) 26 5022. Fax (042) 28 3828.

Cheques should be made out to Wollongong Church of Christ (Add \$3.00 for postage & packaging).

Name:

Address:

Cheque/Money order for \$____ enclosed.

Australia

Largest Welfare Organisations

In a recent listing of the 50 largest community social welfare organisations the largest was the Australian Red Cross with the Salvation Army next. Ranked at 15 was Churches of Christ Care in Queensland. They ranked higher than the Sydney City Mission, the Brotherhood of St Lawrence and The Smith Family.

Theological Essay Award

40 entries were received for the first Open Book/Beacon Hill Books Theological Essay Award. The undergraduate section was won by Kathie Chan for an essay entitled "Issues Arising from the Cain and Abel Saga" and the postgraduate section by Christopher Knauf for an essay entitled "Heidegger's Questionable Gift: Doubting the God of Metaphysics". The essays were assessed by a committee of judges, first in particular disciplines such as Biblical Studies and Church History, and then in the two categories of undergraduate and postgraduate awards.

Family Prayers

The family that prays together does not necessarily stay together, a national study by the Seventh Day Adventist Church has found. The study, involving more than 1,000 Seventh Day Adventists, also found that families where a rigid and dogmatic approach to religion is practised are likely to be less happy than those where religion is practised voluntarily. The results suggest that where religion liberates an individual it will continue to be a productive and empowering aspect of family life.

Government Allocation for NCCA

The National Council of Churches in Australia has received an allocation of \$225,000 from the Australian Government to go towards development and peace initiatives in the Middle East. At the Christmas Bowl Appeal launch in Sydney, Australian church leaders made a strong call for the peace initiatives in the Middle East to continue and pledged the continued support of all the churches to work towards peace in that region.

ITIM at Major Crossroads

Role must be re-evaluated says ex-Director

"Industrial chaplains face crucial choice between counselling and mission," said Bishop Richard Randerson, Assistant Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn, in addressing an ITIM (Inter-Church Trade and Industry Mission) staff training event in NSW.

In both Australia and New Zealand, industrial chaplains are under pressure on two fronts—from secularised work forces who want counsellors rather than chaplains and from competing service providers who offer counselling services to workplaces.

Bishop Randerson was the first director of ITIM in Auckland in the 1970s and has kept up his interest in the church's mission to industry, government and commerce.

Faced with such pressures, ITIM might become no different from any secular service provider and in the process lose its distinctive sense of Christian mission in the workplace. That mission does not require some crusading zeal to impose religion on captive audiences, but it does reflect the compassionate and incarnational presence of Jesus Christ. That presence allows for both pastoral

and prophetic consequences.

Pastorally, the chaplain is well-placed to be of assistance to staff in terms of personal counselling and welfare assistance. Doubtless, it is this function which employers seek and pay for and which secular competitors in the field now emulate. But if chaplains allow their role to be reduced to that of counsellor only, they might as well vacate the field to their secular counterparts, said Bishop Randerson.

By their regular presence and independent status, chaplains develop a deep insight into the ethos and dynamics of a workplace. From that position they are often able to reflect with decision-makers on such matters as internal communications, teamwork, or other employee concerns in a way which can lead to constructive improvement.

Drawing on the experience of chaplains across a wide range of workplaces, ITIM can develop a prophetic role through reflection and research, leading to submissions on crucial issues such as redundancy and unemployment, enterprise bargaining, or consultative styles of management.

Chaplains are also well-placed to raise questions about corporate goals and values—how well does this enterprise value its staff? how well does it serve its client base? Is it environmentally friendly in its operation? Is integrity a prime commitment in all its dealings or does a self-serving pragmatism prevail?

ITIM has a key role in enabling Christian laity in the workplace to reflect upon the vocational and ethical dimensions of their employment. All too often the ministry of the laity has been construed by the church in terms of what laity do in church on Sundays. The much more significant task of integrating faith with daily life and work has been largely ignored. ITIM can be at the forefront in rectifying this failure.

Bishop Randerson suggested that ITIM stood at a major crossroads. It could either reaffirm its broad concept of Christian mission in the workplace and develop strategies that gave expression to this multi-faceted approach. Or else it would become merely another player in the narrow counselling field.

—Anglican News
(Canberra and Goulburn)

Dreams Being Realised

Vic/Tas Aborigines News

Department members travelled north in October to visit the Lavington (North Albury) Koori church and also the Wagga Wagga, NSW, fellowship.

After a very early start from Melbourne on Saturday, there was time for a short business meeting before lunch, which was provided by the Lavington ladies.

We were then driven by minibus to the Wagga Wagga property; approximately 20 acres about 13 km from Wagga. Pastor Ivan Williams, son-in-law of Lavington pastor Cecil Grant, is currently planning the

development of a facility for the rehabilitation of young Aboriginal first offenders.

In conjunction with Commonwealth Government departments, there is a proposal to offer residential care under supervision to 6–12 young people, rather than a prison term. While in residence, a learning program will be put into operation to give them various work skills.

Government finance has already been approved and, with the building of two accommodation houses, this vital work will get under way early in 1996.

On Sunday, we attended the

church service at Lavington, which was led by Pastor Cec Grant, and returned home with the knowledge that the vision of Ivan and others is to be realised.

Much preliminary work has been put into the planning for the March 1996 deputation in Victoria, when FAB director Avon Moyle, along with wife Deslee and three Aboriginal pastors, will be visiting churches all over the state.

The Department is looking for a three-bedroom house in the metropolitan area to be used as a base by the five WA visitors through most of March. If anyone can help in this way, please let the Department know by ringing (03) 9755 2691.

—Betty Bantow

Back On in Sydney

Festival 96 to continue

Following the announcement of the cancellation of all plans for "Festival '96 with Billy Graham" in Sydney ("AC" 2 December), it has now been decided to continue with plans for the Festival because of wider Christian interest.

The original program was cancelled when it was announced that Dr Billy Graham could not travel to New Zealand or Australia early next year on the advice of his doctors and also because of his wife Ruth's medical condition.

Following the cancellation, it was realised that there had been much preparation, inter-church unity, training of coun-

sellors and the need to seek the Lord in the situation.

In Sydney a new executive group are working on changing plans to make the event more of an evangelical outreach.

The new program includes plans for an evangelist, possibly Franklin Graham, Billy Graham's son, to speak at the events, most of which will be held in Parramatta Park.

They are planning an evangelistic meeting in St Andrew's Cathedral on 5 March, with the School of Evangelism on 6 and 7 March, and the weekend of activities at Parramatta Park starting on 8 March.

Fellowship & Challenge

Eyre Peninsula Women's Camp

Redcliffs, surrounded by a golden wheat crop to the south, natural vegetation to the west, rocks and cliffs to the east and sparkling sea to the north, welcomed 20 ladies for the Eyre Peninsula Women's Camp (3-4 November).

Dorothy Jacobs from Goolwa was study leader, her theme being "Find your vision make it happen!"

Although the camp began on Friday evening, the main focus was on the studies throughout Saturday, interspersed with singing, meals and a non-alcoholic drink-tasting. Millie Barton gave a brief talk on the National Gathering, she was the only one from Eyre Peninsula who attended. It was a great time of fellowship and challenge. —Daphne Cartmel

CWF Sing-A-Long

Nostalgic musical afternoon

CWF at Launceston, Tas, held a nostalgic musical afternoon on 8 November, when the church's pipe organ "talked" under the hands of organist Jan Fulton. After a musical prelude that would have made the rafters ring (if we had any), Leonie Cripps led what was an afternoon of memories for the older church members who now mostly form the CWF.

We sang six Alexander hymns including "Out of the Ivory Palaces" and "I Come to the Garden Alone".

Four members of an earlier traditional church choir sang

two of the old anthems.

June Younger sang the old favourite, "What a Friend we have in Jesus" to a newer tune.

The singing was interspersed with readings—some comic, by Leonie—all related to the musical theme and more organ music.

—P. Harrison

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Northern Rivers Training

The Ministry Centre concept of the Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College is expanding to the Northern Rivers district of NSW in 1996 and is being met with a high level of interest from prospective full and part-time students in the area.

Roger Foletta, minister of Ballina District church, is the initial Coordinator, supported by a committee consisting of representatives from Lismore, Tweed Heads, Inverell, Suffolk Park and Murwillumbah churches.

Lecturers from the other ministry centres will initially travel to present modules and some subjects will be offered in semester format. Trainees from all church backgrounds will be able to study without moving away from home and can undertake part-time or full-time study for the Diploma of Ministry and/or the Bachelor of Theology. For the modules, the face-to-face time will be over four days, with pre-module reading, post-module assignments and practical church work.

The Centre is based on the instruction-action-reflection model, which means that practical, down-to-earth, people-centred ministry involvement is a must for anyone taking part in the full-time Diploma/Bachelor of Theology course. Trainees undertake supervised ministry within the life of a church, possibly their home church.

Specialised training will be available in pastoral and youth ministry. People who are studying the Bachelor of Theology full-time may be eligible for Austudy, because the course is accredited with the Sydney College of Divinity.

For further information, enrolment details, handbook and application form, contact Roger Foletta, 60 Antrim St, EAST BALLINA NSW 2478 or phone (066) 86 8988 or (015) 1234 34 (mobile).

International Logo Recognition

In a survey of 7,000 people in six countries, nine well-known logos were presented for unaided identification. The best known of all are the five linked rings of the Olympic movement (92% recognition). The Shell and McDonald's logos were each recognised by 88%. The cross was correctly identified by 54%, while 36% recognised the United Nations symbols. Specialist research firms in Australia, Germany, India, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States carried out the interviews. The Anglican Bishop of Manchester, Christopher Mayfield, commented: "The Olympic movement, Shell and McDonald's have a worldwide vision, so they are to be congratulated on getting their message across the world. Christianity also has a worldwide vision, but we have not been so successful in communicating the faith and we have got to do better."

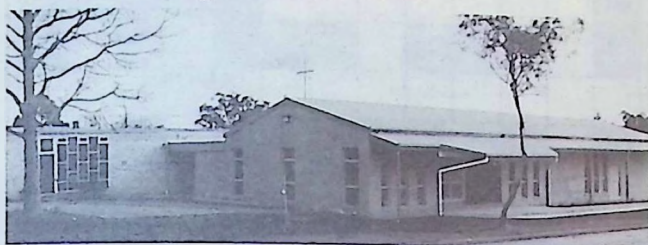
Nepal Growth

Nepal has a population of just over 20 million which is growing at an annual rate of just over 2%. 89% of the people of Nepal are Hindu and less than 1% are Christians, however the church in Nepal is growing at an annual rate of over 13%. There are less than 600 mission workers in Nepal (1 for every 31,000 people) and there are currently 150 Nepali mission workers (1 for every 700 Christians).

Bangladeshi Threats

Fazlul Haque Amini, leader of the Bangladeshi Muslim fundamentalist group "Peer of Charmoni", has threatened to launch a nationwide campaign to deport all foreign Christian missionaries unless the government agrees to eject a group of Korean missionaries. The *Inquilab* daily newspaper has accused Korean missionaries of entering Bangladesh on tourist visas and conducting evangelistic activities throughout the predominantly Muslim country. There are currently some 40 Korean missionaries residing in Bangladesh.

Bayswater's New Worship Centre



• The new worship centre of the Bayswater, Vic, church. It was opened recently free of debt, as a result of the sacrificial work and giving of the church over a period of 12 years. It was deeply regretted that Reg Combridge, who had given leadership and inspiration regarding the building project during those years, was unable to attend the official opening because of illness.

Thanks For The Memories

Remembrance Day program in Tasmania

On 22 November, the members of the Launceston CWF, together with several visitors, shared in a special Remembrance Day program.

The focus was on the Royal Australian Navy, but including the other spheres of the armed forces.

The day served as a tribute to the men of our church who had been engaged in wartime services, some of whom were present.

The singing of the hymn "Eternal Father, Strong to Save", opened the program.

Then Albert Porter and John Piper shared stories of how they came to enter into service with the Royal Australian Navy. The also shared other experiences, highlighted by interesting photographs and proudly displayed memorabilia.

The reading of "The Sailor's Psalm" followed by "A Remembrance Prayer", ended a very meaningful time.

Jim Harrison (ex Army) moved an emotional vote of thanks for the speakers.

—J. Madder

Dual Celebration

Anniversary and opening of new centre



• A view of the "tin shed" in its original state and an inside view of the completed stage one

26 November 1995 was a dual celebration for the Castlemaine church. First, the 125th anniversary was celebrated and, second, the official opening of stage one of the new Blakeley Rd Worship Centre. This latter celebration was certainly the highlight of the church's year.

The Church of Christ in Castlemaine, Vic, was formed when Frank Illingworth from the Bendigo church met with five Castlemaine residents on 1 December 1870. Services were held in the Rechabite Hall. On 10 January 1892, the church met for the first time in its own chapel in Campbell St, under the leadership of Duncan Macallister.

What was originally a roof truss factory cum building supplies outlet has, over the past 12 months, been converted into a worship centre. The end result is certainly a tribute to all who laboured so sacrificially to get the job done.

The service was an inspiration. About 200 attended. Prior to the service commencing, John Wilson, a member of Scottish descent, played a selection of old hymns on the bagpipes.

Special greetings came from John Evans, representing the Commissioners of Mt Alexander Shire, and Allan Emmett, representing Conference. Some of the trades people and hardware store owners who had contributed to the construction also attended. A special presentation was made to Barry Ward who, as Project Overseer, had devoted many months to ensuring the task was completed. Expressions of thanks were made to all who had contributed in some way.

The singing was rousing and the men's choir excelled. Barry Ward had the privilege of leading around the Lord's Table.

At the conclusion of the service, a special anniversary cake was cut by Allan Shehan, a grandson of Duncan Macallister. Following the service, an afternoon tea was enjoyed by all and the opportunity was given to look at the various historical displays.

Landscaping work still needs to be done and stage two still lies before us. However, this is a challenge and, with God's help, we will respond.

—Ian Jones

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

of

the Hawthorn Church of Christ
(formerly Cottonville)
42 Angas Road, Hawthorn

Sunday 28th July 1996

Register your interest by contacting

Graham Knight: 31 Morlane Avenue
PANORAMA SA 5041
Phone: (08) 374 0337

Names and addresses of former members and friends as well as memorabilia appreciated.

Classified

BIRTHS

CLUN Louis and Cathy announce the safe arrival of their new daughter Esther Jennifer on 31 October. A little sister for Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin.

EARL (SOUTH) Stephen and Deborah are pleased to announce the arrival of Tara Jade at West Gippsland Hospital, 3 December. Granddaughter for Lyn and Ray Earl, and Joy South. Great-granddaughter for Joan Peterson.

APPROACHING MARRIAGES

ROBERTS—POPOWSKI Eleanor and Ian with Judy and Ivan (dec) are very happy to announce that Meagan and Marcus will be married on 27 January 1996 at Smithton Christian Fellowship, Tasmania. We wish them every blessing for the future.

DEATHS

BRUCE (FORDHAM) Bertha. Passed away on 19 November 1995, aged 86 years, in the gentle and caring environment of Betheden. Sister of Albert, Lilian, Elsie, Edie, Will, Millie and Stan (all dec). Loving wife of Bill (dec). Mother of Ian and Annette, mother-in-law of Joan and Bob. Nanna of Marcus, Julia, Kylie and Glenn. Our memories are of a generous loving mother and Nanna. God has you now safely in his keeping. Rest peacefully special lady.

IN MEMORIAM

GOLDSWORTHY Loving memories of our parents, Reginald (12.1.41) and Amelia (2.1.54). Till we meet again.

SMITH Jack (14.12.86). In remembrance of my beloved husband. "Till the day dawns and we see our Saviour face to face."

—Dorothy

FOR SALE

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HOLIDAYS

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HOUSEBOAT "White Heron" 8-berth. Moored at Blanchetown, SA. Phone (08) 365 1153 or (085) 40 5250 or write 7 Gameau Rd, Paradise 5075.

RHYLL, PHILLIP ISLAND Holiday house available Christmas holidays. Accommodates 5 people. All modern conveniences. Gas barbecue area. Shady garden setting. Phone (03) 9802 3514.

SUNSHINE COAST Home, tropical garden and pool, 5 min beach & fishing. Avail 27 Dec 2 weeks. Sleep 2 adults & up to 3 children. \$250 dbl pw, \$300 family. Also B&B available Brisbane. Phone (07) 3372 9695 or (018) 159 829.

HOME HELP

DONCASTER/TEMPLESTOWE area. Cleaning, ironing, child-minding, shopping for elderly, meals preparation, etc. (03) 9846 1002.

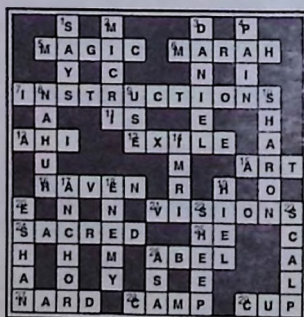
FOR RENT

RESERVOIR Comfortable two-bedroom accommodation available, January to July 1996, for reasonable rental in exchange for care of furnished unit. Close to shops and Reservoir Station. Phone (03) 9460 7157 or 9435 8790.

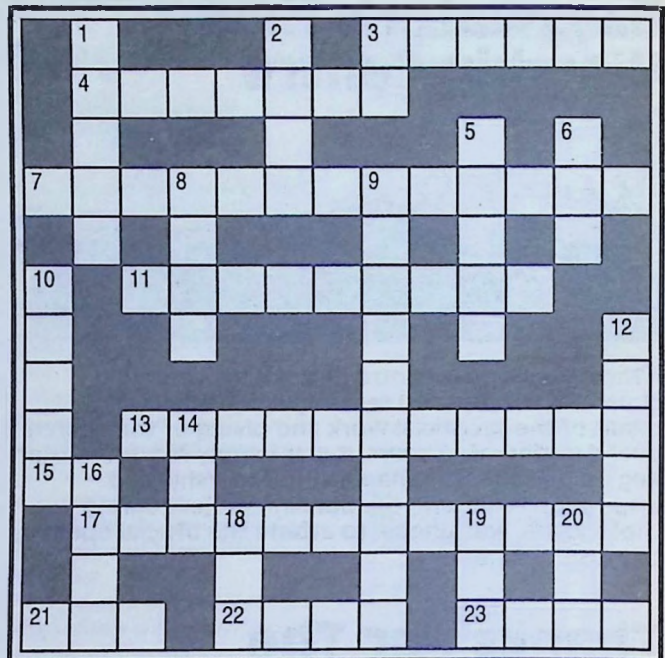
RETIREMENT OPPORTUNITY

COME TO KANIVA! Good cheap housing, ample water and fresh country air, half-way between Melbourne and Adelaide on the Western Highway. Friendly Church of Christ and five other churches. Amenities comprise a hospital, nursing home, aged units, doctor, dentist, physio, optometry and Senior Citizens centre. Centrally located shopping. Sporting facilities include bowls, golf and tennis. Other features are bush walks, country drives and lake fishing. For more information phone Paul Bauer (053) 92 2301, Doug Thomas (053) 92 2373 or Harold Wheaton (053) 92 2628 (Reverse charges if necessary). Or write to Doug Thomas, 34 Commercial St, Kaniva Vic 3419.

November Solution



Crossword



Clues

ACROSS

- 3 Zedekiah _____ towards Arabah (Jer 39)
- 4 Descendant of Canaan (Gen 10)
- 7 Give thanks in all of these (1 Thess 5)
- 11 Some of the disciples were these
- 13 Type of ship Paul sailed in Acts 28
- 15 Particle (used 4,006 times)
- 17 Adjective describing liars (1 Tim 4)
- 21 What sluggard can learn from (Prov 6)
- 22 Gift to the prodigal (Luke 15)
- 23 Three gates on this side (Rev 21)

DOWN

- 1 King
- 2 Galatians told to stand ____ (Gal 5)
- 3 Personal pronoun used 9,660 times
- 5 The Most Holy Place was the ____ room of the Temple
- 6 Colour of one of the horses in Revelation
- 8 Not to be done with the edges of the beard (Lev 19)
- 9 Saul's attendant commented: "See, an evil spirit from God is _____ you" (1 Sam 16)
- 10 Title for Jesus in Revelation
- 12 In a vision Daniel was beside this (Dan 8)
- 14 God will ____ of boughs (Isa 10)
- 16 Fear the Lord and ____ evil (Prov 3)
- 18 Personal pronoun used 1,200x
- 19 An expanse sparkled like this (Ezek 1)
- 20 KJV word for donkey

Have you thought of helping
"The Australian Christian"
in its ministry among
Churches of Christ?

Why not include us in your will?
The following wording could be used in your will:
I give and bequeath \$ (or a percentage of the total estate) to "The Australian Christian", the national journal of Churches of Christ in Australia, absolutely for the use and benefit of the organisation free from all debts, funeral and testamentary expenses.

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People

Alan Hirsch Begins New Role

Commissioning Service



• Alan Hirsch, Executive Director of the DMED (right), with Greg Elsdon, at his commissioning

People

Graham and Graham

Franklin Graham, son of Billy and Ruth Graham, has been chosen to succeed his father as chairman and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Cliff Barrows continues as vice-chairman of the BGEA and as program director for all of Billy Graham's crusades, continuing a 50-year partnership in ministry. Franklin Graham will continue his ministry in Samaritan's Purse and World Medical Mission. He will also conduct 8-10 crusades for BGEA in 1996.

JBCE Director Retires

As from 31 December 1995, Dr David Merritt will retire as Executive Director of the Joint Board of Christian Education (JBCE). He has served the board for 32 years. The JBCE began in 1914 as a cooperative venture of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in Australia. It is now the national Christian education agency of the Uniting Church in Australia and is also a partnership of churches, which publishes resources especially for use in Churches of Christ, the UCA and Anglican churches in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand. Dr Merritt's successor is John Emmett.

Alan Hirsch the new Executive Director of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development was

commissioned for his task at the Glen Waverley, Vic, church on 12 November. Dean Phelan the department Chairman welcomed leaders and church representatives to what he described as a significant appointment.

Alan commences his new task after some seven years of ministry with the South Melbourne congregation. During that time the church grew from under 20 attenders to well over 100. Two new church plants have been initiated and the South Melbourne property has been completely remodelled and a second storey added. In the last three years, Alan has served with the Department as the Director of Urban Ministry on a part-time basis. Alan plans to maintain links with the church with a view to keeping close contact with local

church mission. His wife Debra is deeply involved in local ministry and heads up the Exodus program. (This is a specialised ministry to the homosexual community.)

Dr Martin Robinson of the UK Bible Society preached the commissioning sermon and spoke of the relevance of the challenge of Jesus to Peter—"Do you love me more than these?". Dr Greg Elsdon, Vic-Tas President Elect, led the act of commissioning. The Rev Peter Corney of St. Hilary's Anglican Church, Kew led in a prayer of dedication. Those laying hands on Alan were Ashley Barker, Mike Folland, Debra Hirsch, Pat Kavanagh, Lynette Leach, Terry McCredden, Grant Mackenzie and David White. Ron Elbourne, senior minister at Glen Waverley, concluded the service with prayer.

Farewell Jeff May

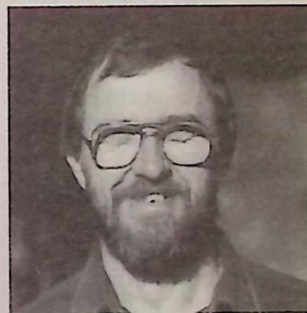
OMB Executive Director leaving

The chapel at the Cowandilla, SA, church was almost full for the SA Overseas Mission Rally on 18 November.

The Overseas Mission Committee had earlier provided a sausage sizzle for church mission representatives to thank them for their work during the year.

This was followed by an open rally.

Jeff May gave a mission update, with some reflections and amusing anecdotes from his 10 years of service as Executive Director of the Overseas Mission Board. As Jeff is concluding his service with the OMB at the end of the year, a number of speakers took the opportunity to thank him and wish him well for the future. Mention was made of the wide range of gifts



• Jeff May

and abilities he brought to the task, as well as his commitment and the obvious fruit of the Spirit he showed in his life and work.

Avon Moyle was present and spoke on behalf of the WA Committee and churches

A group of young people from Blackwood told of their plans to go to Vanuatu in December to do some maintenance work and to share in a youth convention.

—Max Thompson

Boronia Church of Christ Three Great Occasions

4 February 1996, 10.00 am
Speaker: Gordon Stirling

*We invite friends of Gordon and Lesley
to celebrate G.R.'s 60 years of ministry.*
R.S.V.P. by 25.1.96

23 & 24 March 1996
Saturday 7.30 pm. Sunday 10.00 am
75th Anniversary

Speaker: Dr Gordon Moyes

Enquiries: (03) 9762 1277

Don Smith's "Retirement"

Recognising 33 years of leadership

Early in 1962, Don Smith commenced duties with the Vic-Tas Department of Home Missions and Evangelism. At that time his predecessor, B.J. Cambridge, wrote, "There is a sense in which times are always changing. But there are some periods in history when changes are more rapid, more drastic and perhaps more revolutionary. The period just closed witnessed much change but it could be sensed that the one about to open might show even greater change."

The following 33 years have certainly fulfilled those prophetic words. The current record rate of new church development within Victoria and Tasmania bear testimony to the effort, skills, leadership qualities, vision and graciousness of Don Smith.

Leadership is an art and only slightly a science. A leader must know the direction in which he wants to lead; he must have confidence in himself and trust his judgements; there must shine through his character the sharp blade of decision and the steel of leadership. But this is not enough. He must also have the attractive qualities, those which draw others to him and to his cause. All of these emerged in the new department director and he instilled in his board members and field directors the same sense of loyalty and commitment.

Along with church maintenance and counsel and encouragement, planned giving programs and assistance of new churches, the spectrum of the Department widened over the ensuing decades. It became evident that the role of Christian education would benefit by a closer association with the roles of mission and evangelism, and in 1977 the two departments were integrated in the Department of Mission, Education & Development. This amalgamation soon allowed an expanded management, and a program of upgrading camping facilities

which necessitated a large capital outlay. This was possible because of increasing demand for all the sites. Today there is widespread recognition of the high standard of these sites by both secular and religious groups.

One of the most significant decisions of the department was the invitation given to Dr Win Arn to visit Australia in 1975 and 1976. This led to the introduction of significant church growth methodology and this was subsequently endorsed by several other states. A declining church membership and its attendant low morale was arrested, and a more positive scenario ensued. The past decade has seen an upward trend in membership, leading to optimism and its attendant momentum.

Discussions between the DMED and the Federal Board of Christian Education ultimately led to the formation of the Australian Board of Church Development & Education (ABCDE), with Don Smith as its Executive Director. While occupying a relatively small amount of his time, it nevertheless increased his exposure to the Australian churches, with their subsequent acceptance of his leadership and visionary qualities. In the past, different emphasis by individual states had mistakenly led to impairment of cooperation. Today, there is a good cooperative spirit evident and a recognition of the importance of working together. Don Smith emerged as an Australian leader for an Australian church.

With his increased acceptance by the Australian churches and as a result of overseas experience (encouraged and supported by the DMED), a desire arose for the establishment and support of ethnic churches. Here again acceptance of his leadership by leaders of ethnic communities has resulted in Chinese, Cantonese, Korean, Indonesian, Indian, Vietnamese, Spanish and other indig-



• Don and Lois Smith (third and fourth from left) with participants in the dinner program to mark his retirement

enous churches. Throughout all his years of service, his support and encouragement of local churches and their ministers has remained a high priority.

Sir James Darling has written, "The pursuit of excellence is a grand phrase, but we are jealous of it when we find it in someone else. You have to be dead before you are admired and you are not safe even then."

Don Smith is certainly not dead—in fact he is very much alive and, as far as I can detect, very healthy. But he has chosen to retire from full-time ministry and will shortly appear again in these pages in a new role.

As an Australian church, we say thank you to him for his commitment, integrity and his pursuit of excellence.

Barry Rice

Spiritual Formation Supervisor

The Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College is delighted to announce that as from the beginning of 1997 Barry Rice, who is presently the senior minister of the Manning Valley, NSW, church, will be the coordinator of supervision for both the Northern Rivers and Manning Valley Ministry Centres. Barry will work particularly in the areas of spiritual formation of students and the integration of theory and practice.

He brings an outstanding record of leadership in local church pastoral ministry to this role. During the last two years he has been involved in the conducting of spiritual formation groups, integration of theory and practice as well as supervision of a number of students in individual spiritual



• Barry Rice

formation at the Manning Valley Centre.

It is very encouraging to have such an experienced and competent person electing to concentrate on these vital ministry development areas.

Making Disciples

Australian network in formation

A number of ministers and church leaders in Australia are expressing a desire to develop an intentional approach to disciple-making in the local church. Rather than tackling this in isolation, they are wanting to develop an informal network for sharing insights and practices. There is the recognition that the local church needs to be far more effective in its faithfulness to Christ's commission.

In order to help in this development, Bill Hull has been invited to visit Sydney and Melbourne, 20-24 February 1996.

Bill Hull is Executive Director of Mission USA, a department of the Evangelical Free Church of America. His passion to see the local church return to the practice of disciple-making has been expressed through 16 years of ministering in local churches. He has

written a number of books including *Jesus Christ Disciple-maker*, *The Disciple-making Pastor* and *The Disciple-making Church*.

He has developed a process to help transform the local church. This training process, T-Net, involves pastors and key church leaders in training centres over a three-year period. At these centres, leaders are given practical insights into biblical, contemporary and culturally-relevant strategies, which help them lead their congregations through the transformation process. They are coached as they work through the issues and apply the principles in ways which are appropriate in their own particular setting.

Phillip Bradley (Frankston, Vic) has been applying these principles in local church ministries for 14 years. He visited the US in 1994 to assess the work of T-Net in three loca-

tions. He has been involved in developing a network of ministers and leaders who are seeking to apply these principles in an Australian setting. He is coordinating the Disciple-making track of the AD 2000 and Beyond movement in Australia.

The one day Intentional Disciple-making Seminars will be an opportunity for key leaders to understand these principles. These are being held on 22 February in Melbourne, at Doncaster Church of Christ, 10.00 am - 4.00 pm, at a cost of \$45; on 20 February in Sydney, at St Paul's Anglican Church, Castle Hill, 10.00 am - 4.00 pm; and on 21 February in Sydney, at St Luke's Anglican Church, Miranda, 10.00 am - 4.00 pm).

The Breakfast with Bill Hull meetings in Melbourne are designed expressly for lay leaders and congregational members who are unable to attend day meetings. These will be at



the Beau Monde International Hotel (934 Doncaster Rd, Doncaster East) from 7.00-9.00 am on 23 and 24 February, for \$15.

Inquires about Bill Hull's visit and the Australian disciple-making network for church leaders can be made to Phillip Bradley on (03) 9783 3235 or (03) 9775 7535 or by faxing (03) 9783 7721.

World News

COCOA Assists Refugees

Working with Churches of Christ in Thailand

The work of Australian Churches of Christ Overseas Aid (COCOA) in assisting refugees in various parts of the world is well known to many. In recent times, much of COCOA's support of refugees has been channelled through the Burmese Border Consortium in Thailand.

The Churches of Christ in Thailand are the lead agency in this interdenominational consortium which provides food and relief assistance to Burmese refugees on the Thai border.

Recently, Executive Director Jack Dunford wrote the following of refugees in Thailand.

"Thailand has provided asylum to hundreds of thousands of refugees from her neighbouring countries over the last 20

years. Most of these were from the Indo-Chinese countries of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, following communist takeovers in 1975.

More than 700,000 Indo-Chinese refugees lived in Thailand before being moved on to being resettled in third world countries.

In the last few years, around 400,000 others have returned home as normality has begun to return to life in all three countries.

Today, there is a residual case load of only 12,000 Indo-Chinese left in the camps in Thailand.

Half of these are officially recognised as refugees, while it has been ruled that the rest are not genuine refugees. Most of these 12,000 are expected to be

expatriated to their home country in 1996, although emotions are running high, in their repatriation is proving to be problematic for all involved.

In recent years, Burma has become the largest source of new refugees and there are currently over 900,000 living in camps strung along the Thai/Burma border.

Although political changes are taking place inside Burma and there is official optimism that the refugees will soon return home, widespread human right abuses persist inside the country and new refugees continue to arrive.

The Church of Christ in Thailand has been actively involved in refugee service throughout the last 20 years and has provided relief services totalling

around \$US 2.5 million in the Indo-Chinese refugee camps from 1975-1992.

Church of Christ in Thailand has been the lead agency in the Burmese Border Consortium since 1984, which has provided over \$20 million worth of food and relief assistance to the Burmese refugees."

COCOA has had an integral role to play in financially supporting the Burmese Border Consortium.

There is an urgent need for further relief monies to be sent to help feed these homeless people.

Your gift to Churches of Christ Overseas Aid will help to restore hope to many of these people who are the new homeless in Thailand.

—Jeff Weston

Farewell to Dictatorship

Nigerian Primate attacks killings

The execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight of his fellow campaigners could mark "a farewell to dictatorship", said the Archbishop of Nigeria, according to the *Church Times*.

A report in the Nigerian press says that Archbishop Joseph Abiodun Adetiloye made an outspoken attack on the Nigerian government, going so far as to predict a time when 10 November, the date of the execution, would be observed every year as a national holiday in memory of the ac-

tivists.

The archbishop is reported to have said, "The killing of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others may be part of the Almighty's own way of answering the prayer of Nigerians who have been praying night and day for peace and a return to democracy."

The Nigerian archbishop's unequivocal public statement puts paid to fears that church leaders were being forced to tread with extreme caution.

—Church Scene

A Peaceful Saturday Afternoon

Pie in the Sky?

Saturday morning was busy as usual, with the collecting and giving out of mail, stamps and envelopes to sell, sores to dress, the earache, temperatures, developing boil, the bush knife wound that should have been stitched the day before and finally to check on one of our key church workers who had arrived two days earlier after being gored in the leg by a wild pig.

Eventually, the last of the noisy stragglers on their way to soccer at the next village had finally departed. The mission station was blissfully quiet, so I settled to a peaceful afternoon of cooking, gardening and some letter writing—all hopefully.

Halfway through making a special treat for dessert (our first apple pie in over a year), Ian called to me. A seven-year-old had just arrived atop her father's shoulders, timidly holding a suspected broken wrist, after falling almost three metres from a high wind house. After some Panadol, a homemade split and sling, we gathered round and prayed for the little girl, for safe travel and for wisdom for the sister at the

health centre, (there are no doctors anywhere out here in the Ramu Valley). We then loaded her into the wheelbarrow and farewelled them both as her dad pushed her the 15 minutes down to the village and then took the mission motor canoe one hour up river to the Annaberg Health Centre.

"Well Lord, what a peaceful afternoon! At least thank you for Your peace that overruled my initial panic and for your guiding hand while we made up and secured the splint and sling, which were just right. And thank you for the apple pies that were cooking all forgotten but turned out lovely and golden! Thank you for the

Indian Support

Opportunity to support local evangelism



• Bible readers, singers, gospel workers and Sunday School teacher from Indian village

The Women's Fellowship in Warrnambool, Vic, has been supporting a small group of Christians in India for over 10 years. The group is changing the direction of its mission support and they are not be able to support the Indian village work any more.

The main support for this group was to sell two parcels of hand-made crochet lace, doilies, tablecloths, etc. The two parcels would sell for about \$800-1000 and these proceeds are sent back to India.

Naturally, the Indian group are disappointed that the Warrnambool group are unable to continue this support. They

have asked if there is another group in our churches who could undertake regular support for their evangelism work.

The crochet lace has always sold well. They will also make special clothes, etc, if requested, as long as people are prepared to wait 12 months for their arrival.

They are a small band of dedicated Christians who are spreading God's word in an area where Hindus are the major religious group.

Readers interested in following this up should contact Jennifer Black on (055) 62 4051 after 4.00 pm (33 Beamish St, Warrnambool, Vic 3280).

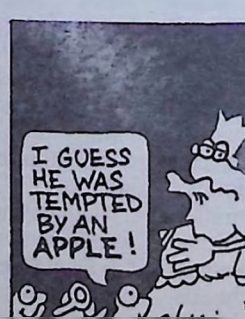
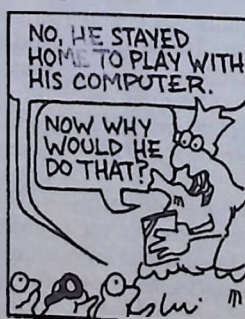
privilege and joy of serving you and your people here in PNG."

—Cynthia Hunt
(Chungribu, PNG)

Note: Without the funds from our Churches of Christ Overseas Aid (COCOA), we

would not have been able to provide the dressings, pain killers, etc, to the usual Saturday morning stream, or the petrol to take the little girl to Annaberg. Thank you to all who give to COCOA!

Pontius' Puddle



The Quest for the Simple Life

Viney Longthorp

The precept, "Live simply that others may simply live", is a splendid statement about Christian stewardship. It carries instant meaning; limit our own consumption and make the savings available to those in less fortunate circumstances than ourselves. This ideal is particularly apt for this time of the year when we focus on the Christmas Bowl Appeal. Generous giving by many people shows that this precept has not gone unheeded.

The simple life. Much has been thought and written about this ideal. Our history is not, as some imagine, a descent from some golden age, where simple living was the style, to the complexities of the present. Rather, each age has had to rediscover the ways of simple living. The Roman poet Ovid, writing long ago, complained that: "Simplicity was rare in this age". And in one of his greatest sonnets, Wordsworth makes a similar cry: "The world is too much with us; late and soon, Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers." Nor is there any consolation to be found in the Middle Ages. In his classic study of a French medieval village, the historian Le Roy Ladurie pointed out in his *Montaillou* that though the physical life-style was simple (with a very monotonous diet) the village politics exemplified the tyranny of tradition, which would have brought tears to the eyes of the Doges of Venice. Decision-making was very complex.

While every student of economics learns to distinguish between needs and wants, rising expectations at every phase of history tends to turn wants into needs. Even in the Age of Faith, long before the European industrial revolution, "the capitalist transvaluation of human values went on steadily; and its supreme success was in making pride and luxury the central virtues". (Lewis Mumford)

Each age, then, has to engage anew in the quest for the simple life, a condition "devoutly to be wished". And in recent weeks the media has reflected this need in several of its offerings.

The complexity of the modern oppresses many. On SBS television last month, many will have viewed the program about "New World Borders". It was an arresting session with many expert "talking heads" addressing the issue. Among the commentators was the Secretary General of the United Nations, also Frederico Mayor of UNESCO, and Noam Chomsky and Ted Wheelwright of Sydney University. They focussed on the way capital and labour are now free, in most parts of the world, to ignore national borders in the search for profit. Some claimed that this new-found freedom has actually been at the cost of real democracy. The UN Secretary General admitted that the notion of the nation state is becoming untenable.

No wonder so much of the daily news confuses a lot of people as we sense the changes in the world order, but find it hard to discern the new meaning of things. The lack of clarity confuses. Such confusion reduces the sense of meaning and simplicity. The program admitted as much.

Then there was that article in *The Australian* by that most sane of all journalists, Hugh Mackay. He asked, "Can we know too much?" He pointed out that modern society is being overwhelmed by information and, unless we are careful, we could become its victims, just like those who were sacrificed as factory fodder in the mills of the industrial revolution. Some claim that future society will be divided between the information rich and the information poor. And that remarkable French thinker, Jacques Elull, claimed that all

technologies, while removing much human drudgery, has the negative effect of reducing the human scale of life. So, in the light of information technology of the style advocated by Bill Gates and Microsoft Corporation, now ready to open its Pandora's Box, Hugh Mackay offers advice as to ways we may avoid the worst of it. His three points are: 1. Don't confuse data transfer with communication; 2. Don't succumb to the temptation to believe that the more information we have the better off we are; 3. Don't let information keep us out of face to face contact with other people.

The significant thing is that this advice was felt to be necessary, so that we can better practice the art of simple living.

The concern about the simple life must be wider than many imagine. There was a news report in a recent issue of *The Guardian* about some families in the USA who are "victims of luxury", who are now trying to "find relief" and are doing so by becoming "downwardly mobile". I kid you not! So here are many well-heeled families who are forsaking their highly-paid jobs and shedding many expensive possessions (most were not vital anyway) and have formed Voluntary Simplicity groups. This extract will give the general picture: "The objective is not dogmatically to live with less, but is a more demanding intention of living with balance in order to find a life of greater purpose, fulfilment and satisfaction ... Through simple living you're actually dropping in: to community, to family, to relationships."

The mind boggles to think of the social, political, and economic consequences should this trend catch on!

Finally, there was Frank Devine's report from Sydney about the proposed glass spire to complete the building of St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathed-

ral after an interval of 70 years. It will be costly—\$8 – \$10 million. Mr Devine agrees with the development and looks forward to its completion. But, as he admits, it raises a lot of questions.

One can hear many say: "The money would be better spent on the poor." Others criticise the alleged ostentation of the church in general. When it comes to cathedrals, many ask, why we can't get back to the simple ways of the church as seen in the New Testament. In this respect, it is argued that the Society of Friends (Quakers) have the right idea. They worship in simple unadorned rooms in their meeting houses. For many, glass spires and Crystal Cathedrals offend, as symbols of extravagance.

Even our humble brotherhood is not entirely exempt from such comment; pointing to some of our inner-suburban churches some ask: "Where is the stewardship in keeping open valuable real estate to serve a congregation of 20 or so?"

I doubt if there is a single definitive answer to these sorts of questions. Mr Devine doesn't think so either. He says: "Why should the poor be denied cathedrals and soaring glass spires?" He ends his report by quoting John Ruskin, the eminent English art critic: "It is probably much happier to live in a small house and be astonished by Warwick Castle, than to live in Warwick and have nothing to be astonished at." In like manner, St Mary's "will inspire us all to greater heights". After all, living simply doesn't preclude the need to have things and occasions to inspire us.

In the last resort, isn't simplicity a question of life's spiritual priorities? That famous saying by Herbert Butterfield just about says it all: "Hold fast to Christ, and for the rest, be uncommitted." ♦

Getting It Together

Graeme Chapman

Many argue that we don't take sin seriously enough today. I could not agree more.

However, my suspicion is that those who loudly argue this point are wanting people to feel the full force of a supposed divine displeasure over the fact that they are not perfect. They would only be satisfied if the victims of this process are overcome by a sense of their worthlessness.

Such a view, justified by the comment that the law needs to be preached before grace is offered, is the antithesis of the approach of Jesus, who changes people by loving them unconditionally and by helping them accept his acceptance of them.

Those he challenged to face themselves squarely were the people who thought themselves virtuous, the religious people whose religion had forced them to live behind masks ... The sort of people who argue that we should be preaching more about sin!

I am always suspicious of those who propose a vindictive God, for their God is largely a projection of unrecognised hatred of themselves, generated by unresolved issues in their lives; that is, a God who is a product of unconscious guilt.

When we talk about our sinfulness, we often begin with tacit assumptions that are unreal.

We imagine that, in making moral decisions, we are all equal in our capacity to act healthily or destructively and that, when we do wrong, we deliberately choose to do wrong.

The first assumption is untenable. It discounts genetics and environment. The second is equally fallacious. We do not always deliberately choose to act in ways that are destructive to ourselves or others.

We may act wilfully, but our responses are more likely to be

a product of a past that has been formed by others, than of our own prior choices.

Dysfunctional patterns can be traced back through generations and emotional responses can be powerfully influenced by chemical substances ingested by a parent before conception.

This does not mean that we should not be held responsible for our actions, but it does mean that our actions are more likely to result from what has been done to us, rather than from uninfluenced personal choices.

It surprises me that few theologians, in analysing human sinfulness, have taken account of the unconscious.

One reason could be that the psychological approach is experienced as a threat to the traditional doctrine of sin. The former is either dismissed or else we operate concurrently out of two views of the world, depending on whether we are trying to work out why our family is falling apart or whether we are worshipping.

This lack of integration is surprising, given the fact that Jesus argued that destructive behaviours have their origin within. Paul was even more explicit when he described with great accuracy the volatile forces of the unconscious, that controlled him, in spite of, or, one would suspect, because of the fact that he was trying to be so good. (See Romans 7)

That part of us that we now call the unconscious is the repository of aspects of our total person that our culture encourages us to reject.

In the West, this includes our bodies, our feelings and our sexuality.

It is also a dumping ground for memory traces of emotionally-laden experiences that have caused us grief, anger, sadness and for which we have not found healthy expression. What is rejected becomes distorted and powerful. Because

of a balancing mechanism built into the psyche, what has been rejected will manifest, usually powerfully, but sometimes subtly.

For example, anger that turns to rage and slices into others' feelings with words that are chiselled to a knife edge. Communities and nations do the same. Voyeurism and witch hunts, phenomena evident in Puritan societies, often result from repressed sexuality.

We also project onto others, and criticise in them, what we reject and hate in ourselves.

At an international level, this was evident in mutual shadow projection between Russia and America and later, with the collapse of Russia, America discovered a ready recipient for its shadow in Iraq.

Little wonder that we are thwarted when we seek to live fulfilling lives. We are tripped up by factors inside ourselves which are mostly not of our own making.

This description accurately depicts the symbolism underlying the Greek word used in the New Testament which we have translated by the English word "sin".

Jesus' approach to our dilemma was to encourage people to face their total selves, which included their shadow side. He then helped them ac-

cept his acceptance of them, ie of their totality. This acceptance, this unconditional love, helped them change by beginning the integration of the two different aspects of their reality. The Old Testament sacrifices which, incidentally, used the mechanism of projection—the sins of the people being projected onto animals—hadn't worked.

Jesus had no difficulty with those whose lives were not considered to be up to scratch. It was the virtuous who could not face their shadow side. To help them, he kept returning to them what they projected onto others. Their response was to cover him with these returned projections. Not willing to give up on them, Jesus handed them back again. Little wonder that their fury built into a cry for his death. This picture gives fresh meaning to the verse that suggests that, "He bore our sins in his body on the tree".

In this article I have merely touched on a subject of great significance. The treatment has been inadequate and simplification often leads to distortion. Hopefully, however, it has set you thinking.

❖
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A Church ABC

With a population of 10,000, Collie is the sixth largest rural town in WA and is located 250 km south of Perth and 54 km east of Bunbury. Even though it is located in a rural setting, Collie is an industrial town, with the major industries being coal and bauxite mining, three sawmills, the Muja power station and the construction of a new (Kulangatta) power station; it also has the appropriate infrastructure such as a district hospital. It is predominantly blue collar and the unemployment rate tends to be quite high.

The membership of the church is around 35 and reflects the blue collar nature of the community. It has a long history of ministry, totalling 90 years this year, which began when Welsh immigrants planted the church. Like many

country churches, even though the youth work has developed over the past few years, there tends to be a big gap from the age where tertiary study begins. Students move to Perth or larger regional centres since

differences this leads to in worship and ministry. Above all, things have to be practical and down-to-earth. Worship services, for instance, tend to be informal, even while maintaining a definite structure—it lacks

Focus on Collie



Collie itself only has a TAFE college. Few of these return because the nature of town leads to few jobs for them.

The fact that the church is blue collar makes it one of a minority among our churches. The minister, John Bolton, made a few reflections on the

"stiff collars". The church also has a regular ministry to the retirement home, which it shares with the other churches in town, taking the service at its "second church" every fortnight.

The church has a history of being a strong supporter of mission, both overseas and Aboriginal, through prayer and financial commitments and is keen to hear news from the field. Currently, the church support the Wards in Fiji and the Hines in PNG. At the last AGM, hearing of difficulties encountered by the Hines in keeping up with the workload, someone suggested that since their prayer and financial support was not enough, they should go and help themselves. In fact, too many volunteered and six were chosen to go next year to help Gary.

The social structure of the community is also unusual, consisting of fairly tight social groups which are quite distinct from each other. This has its roots in underground coal mining, where each depended on the other in the team for survival. The group that worked together usually played together, bringing the families close together, resulting in tight, self-sufficient clusters and a town where even if you have been there 30 years, you're still a "newbie".

Through a small door-to-door survey, it was found that 80% of people did not attend church, because they had never even considered it. This presents an enormous opportunity and a huge challenge. In

cities, contact and ministry opportunities often arise from celebrations, such as weddings. John is finding that the survival patterns mean that contact is only really made through difficulty, stress and trauma. The church's image is partly to blame, as it presents as rather clean-cut, with little relationship to the dirt and grime of industrial life. However, when ministry is concrete and in the midst of the dirt and grime, contact can be made. Thus contact is made under the bonnet of a car, through the loan of tools and through the help of willing hands—and through being there when life itself is painful and "dirty". Contact to other members of the "clusters" then can occur if a need presents itself. There is, however, an underlying utilitarian view of the church which needs to be overcome, and moving the people from self-interest to curiosity and commitment is the greatest challenge.

The situation is certainly not static, however. With the closing of the underground mine 18 months ago, work structures have changed. The tight groups have been fractured, causing stress and changes in the entire community.

Where the pubs and sport were the sole recreation, now it is difficult to field the same team consecutive weeks. This also means that the support structures are also breaking down with a consequent increase in family problems, greater insecurity and changes in old habits.

The church has a real opportunity to step in and provide support and pastoral care now, where it was unable to before. However, the difficulty is knowing where and how to respond as the dust is still settling.

Searching for direction from God in this will be a major focus of the forthcoming Board prayer retreat.

A further opportunity presents itself with the construction of the new power station and the hundreds of itinerant workers coming into town for that project. ❖

Christmas Thoughts

When Jesus came to bear the shame
The sins of all mankind.
It was his plan that every man
Should full salvation find.

And from above, he came in love
That we might find his peace
That we may see all men agree
and so all wars should cease.

But though his birth brought peace on earth
to every-true believer
Some still are blind because their mind
is marred by the deceiver

So on the date we celebrate
the birth of our blest Saviour
Let us pray for all who may
be lost by their behaviour

And may his love come from above
in this the Christmas season
To win the heart that from the start
Refused to know his reason

Peace on Earth

—Jack Christie
(Cottesloe, WA)

Women, Fundamentalism and the Church

Rosslyn Reed

In recent years, scholars have noted the rise of religious fundamentalism within most of the major world religions. There are debates about its relevance to some religions (eg Judaism), its causes (eg post-colonialism and Islam) and consequences (eg, the Salman Rushdie fatwah). Within most religions, fundamentalists focus a significant level of attention on the role and behaviour of women, but it is only recently that this has been understood as central to North American Christian fundamentalism in particular. In this article, I will review three contributions to the debate on Christian fundamentalism in the USA to show how this phenomenon is most appropriately understood as a reaction against the liberating potential of conservative evangelical Christianity in 19th century USA. This evidence raises questions for Churches of Christ in Australia in the late 20th century as it appears antithetical to our early heritage of progressive attitudes to women.

Religion and America: Spirituality in a Secular Age, edited by Mary Douglas and Steven Tipton (Beacon Press), is a collection of articles from the Winter 1982 issue of the prestigious journal *Daedalus*. As well as contributions on fundamentalism, there are articles on mainstream and cult religions. The 1960s are largely seen as a time of crisis for liberal mainstream churches in the USA. As a result of the counter-culture and the anti-Vietnam War movement, among other major social dislocations, American youth were drawn into Eastern cults and new religious movements. The uncertain climate made fundamentalist religion, with its rules and decisive answers, attractive to equally uncertain youth.

Christian fundamentalism (which is not the same as simple personal interpretations of the Bible) is understood to have first emerged in late 19th century USA as a part of the premillennial evangelical revivalist tradition, especially among Northern Presbyterians and Baptists. Names like Moody and Sunday are cited as leaders.

It has been seen as a reaction against modernist theology, urbanisation, immigration and industrialisation, with their accompanying cultural changes. It reached its peak of influence in the 1920s, following World War I. This stage of fundamentalism was seen as distinct from the holiness Methodist movement and Pentecostalism. In the late 20th century, the line between fundamentalism and pentecostalism becomes blurred; "modernism" becomes translated into "secular humanism" as the evil to be purged; the south of the USA is as involved as the north and the movement is manifested politically in the (religious) New Right.

Clearly, this is sketchy and potentially distorts the arguments of the writers. It is important to note here that some from the earlier fundamentalist movement within evangelicalism, such as Billy Graham, distanced themselves from the late 20th century fundamentalists. Further, it is noted that fundamentalism is itself fractured by different inherited positions on private and personal morality and salvation, on the one hand, and public and national political stances on the other, in varying and often contradictory combinations. What is interesting in this collection is the relative absence of discussions about women and/or gender (understood as the social definitions, roles and

meanings of being a woman or a man).

A decade after *Religion and America*, John Stratton Hawley's edited collection *Fundamentalism and Gender* (Oxford University Press) places gender at the centre of analysis. One contribution by Randall Balmer deals with "the ideal of femininity" in American Christian fundamentalism. Other contributions deal with the other world religions. The conclusion by Karen McCarthy Brown addresses "fundamentalism and the control of women".

Balmer suggests that there are so many statements in Christian fundamentalism about women as the highest form of God's creation and their unique purity that it is easy to ignore them or dismiss them as sentimentality. He contrasts this to earlier references to women in Christian tradition as temptresses and morally weak. Although locating this shift in the evangelical approach to womanhood around the turn of the 18th century, he sees its development in the 19th century domestic revolution and idealisation of the home and of female piety in ways which were unique to the USA. Men participated in the public world of work and business, and distanced themselves from home and family, leaving domesticity, the education of children and religious matters generally to women. Balmer sees these entrenched gender roles and the idealisation of the mother in the Christian education and nurture of children extending into the 20th century among fundamentalists and the preaching of evangelists like Billy Sunday, as attempts to re-masculinise Christianity and the church. He sees fundamentalism as "caught off-guard" by the second-wave feminist

movement of the 1970s. The rigid sex roles carried forward from the 19th century were threatened by women's employment, which has become an economic necessity as much as a form of protest against confinement to, or liberation from, the private domestic sphere. Confusion about the changes in relations between the sexes within the family and beyond becomes focused on to wider public policies which can be defined as "anti-family", that is antithetical to an idealised 19th century concept of family. Hence fundamentalist opposition to the women's movement and abortion law reform, which sits incongruously with a militaristic nationalism, which supports involvement by the USA in wars, international aggression, etc, raising questions about being a "pro-life" stance.

While locating the rise of fundamentalism with a reaction against urbanisation, industrialisation, immigration and the loss of influence enjoyed by conservative evangelicalism in 19th century USA, Balmer sees the emphasis on abortion and the foetus as symbolic of the beleaguered and vulnerable position some Christians find themselves in at the end of the 20th century. At the same time, abortion symbolised the loss of the "cult of true womanhood" and women's purity. Women's movement out of the home becomes the source of all of the problems of the society as a whole. The only way to redeem the culture is to control women as in the 19th century.

In *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism* (Fortress Press), Betty De Berg is far more direct in her assessment of the links between the rise of fundamentalism and changes in sex-roles. While not denying the usual precipitating factors, she

Comment

accounts for the popularity of the first wave of the fundamentalist movement as a reaction against disruptions to the dominant gender ideology and in the social behaviour of others, especially women. Unlike matters of theology and science (eg, evolutionary theory) which were of little concern to most conservative evangelical Christians, questions of human sexual identity and behaviour were obvious and appeared as more personally threatening. It was on this that the fundamentalist leaders focused in their publications and from their pulpits. Through a thorough and systematic analysis of the literature of later 19th and early 20th century fundamentalists, De Berg establishes both the Victorian middle-class gender ideology referred to above as well as concern with the consequences for the church of men's movement outside home, family and church. To some extent, the latter gave a degree of power to women in these arenas and De Berg argues that the church and its welfare agencies were significantly feminised by the late 19th century. In the equation of the public world, aggression, uncontrollable sexuality and dubious morality with men and the private sphere, purity, domesticity and religion with women; the church and hence (male) clergy became relegated to the private sphere while at the same time the church as an institution remained part of the public sphere. Thus the church became the only legitimate public arena for women's partici-

pation and influence. For clergy, however, feminisation threatened both their gender identity and power.

Space does not permit a full elaboration of the historical detail. What is significant is that women entered the public spheres of paid work and institutions of higher education in the late 19th century and succeeded there, threatening the separate spheres structure and ideology. Women began to organise to claim civil rights and remove the divisions between the public and private spheres. White middle-class Christian women, especially through the WCTU, were part of this movement and many were radicalised through their experiences. Many of these women also used the ideology of separate spheres and ideal womanhood to push for reforms. From their origins among evangelical women, clubs and organisations proliferated and grew promoting women's independence. Fundamentalist doctrine, with its twin emphasis on restoring Victorian gender ideology and women's domestic role and reclaiming the church and Christianity for men and masculinity, can be seen as a reaction against first wave civil rights feminism and its results, and an attempt to restore the world-view and social relationships of a largely rural 19th century USA, rather than as a timeless and Biblical imperative.

While many writers like Balmer separate first from second wave fundamentalism, De Berg notes that early funda-

mentalists also focused on abortion (and birth control) as attacks on "motherhood" and notes that they were prepared to subordinate their generalised opposition to Roman Catholicism to join them in these campaigns as in second-wave fundamentalism. Rather than a new preoccupation of second-wave feminism, the role of women, abortion and birth control are central premises of United States' Christian fundamentalism since its emergence and are social rather than theological issues.

Karen McCarthy Brown notes that fundamentalists sense the inadequacy of an entirely rationalised world view. They (like many of the intellectuals who denounce them) nevertheless continue to imitate the Enlightenment drive for clarity and control. As a result, they generate religious forms which resemble the constructions of reason-rigid doctrinal formulations—and lose the potential for "multi-levelled flexible symbol systems" which would promote a Christian spirituality more adequate to the complexity of the contemporary period.

As a result of the long history of patriarchy, women constitute the "other" against which men define themselves. On to them (or else on to "blacks" or "foreigners") is projected all that is perceived as threatening or undesirable. Fundamentalism of the North American Christian type emerges, then, when people are caught up in events and developments too complex to deal with. They are

not marginal movements as was earlier argued by scholars, but attempts to (re)occupy the political and cultural centre. The control of women who come to represent all that must be suppressed or changed to achieve this is central to their existence. But ultimately, the control of women cannot change the complexity of the world in which we are individually or collectively enmeshed. The only realistic solution to this human dilemma at the end of this millennium and beyond is to learn to accept our human limitations. If this were achieved, there would be an end to the scapegoating not only of "women", but all of the other "others" on to whom knowingly or unknowingly we project our fears.

Fundamentalism and its reactionary approach to the position of women in access to education, employment, and any other aspects of the public sphere is antithetical to our movement. It is a flight from, rather than a creative engagement with, the progressive ideas and movements of our times. It is contrary to the position exemplified in the Campbell-Owen debate in the early 19th century. Furthermore, Campbell's encouragement to women in education and the increasingly public arena of social welfare work is a factor contributing to women's liberation and the evangelical women's movement of the late 19th century in the USA. While Campbell and his scholarship and theology was a product of patriarchy and the Enlightenment as much as early Christian history and practice, it cannot be categorised as reactionary or fundamentalist. On the basis of history (the British and Australian aspects of which I have not addressed here) and the consideration of contemporary scholarship, members of Australian Churches of Christ, individually and collectively should tread warily indeed when tempted to embrace the certitudes of late 20th century fundamentalism as it is imported from the USA. ❖

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Stones of Destiny

H. Colin Wheat

Rapha's ancestors had travelled along the coast of Greece in their heavy carts with solid wheels, drawn by hump-backed bullocks. As they moved eastward along the coast of the Mediterranean, a huge ragged band of men armed with bronze swords and round shields, they left a scene of devastation behind them. Towns, cities and empires fell before this engulfing wave that smashed all resistance. Accompanied by women and children, in carts piled high with household furniture, they turned southward along the coast. Eventually, they settled near the country of the Canaanites. Pharaoh and Egypt in the south, breathed more freely as their spies reported that the migrating hoard had eventually found a home in someone else's territory. Their land became known as Palestine, the land of the Philistines.

For several weeks, Rapha and his men had skirted the border in their patrol through the Valley of Elah. Several times they had come across small bands of Hebrews, and sometimes Canaanites, but these had hurriedly withdrawn when they saw the giant. Rapha like others of his family had inherited gross deformities, awesome and repelling. Perhaps the least repulsive of these, but that which brought most fear to his enemies, was giantism the result of an overactive pituitary.

Before the patrol started on their journey home to Ashdod, one of the five cities of the Philistines, they filled their water bags at a small creek that ran through the valley. As Rapha submerged his bag beneath the water, he saw the small stones in the creek bed. Noting their smoothness, he picked up several and put them in his pouch.

It was good to be home. Lilah, Rapha's wife, was an affectionate person and greeted her man by throwing herself into his arms. She was a large woman, but not affected by the strains of giantism. An unpleasant facial muscle spasm, causing her to grimace occasionally, spoilt what would have been a rather

pleasant face. Rapha's frequent absences on warlike expeditions caused Lilah great distress. The fact that her two boys would probably follow in their father's steps preyed upon her mind. She consoled herself that Rapha was big enough to look after himself. But was he?

Lilah's mother Adelia had been a soothsayer and had foretold a number of significant events. From her, Lilah had inherited some of her occult powers, but these only manifested themselves occasionally.

The two boys brought their parents great joy. They were fine lads, but bore in their bodies the hereditary curse of their father's family. The eldest, a lively young Philistine, was already head and shoulders above all his playmates. Baby Beniah spent a lot of time yelling his head off, whether with hunger or excitement nobody knew. Almost too large for his cradle, his arms and feet trailed over the side of the basket; each hand having six fingers and each foot six toes.

Lilah had news for Rapha. Yesterday in a battle, the soldiers had captured the Hebrew god, called "The Ark of the Covenant". The governor had the captured ark placed as a trophy in the Temple of the Great Dagon in the centre of the city. However, this morning Dagon had fallen from his perch and was lying on the ground in front of the Ark. The city was buzzing at the news.

Rapha had to report to his commanding officer early next morning before the officer left for the city of Ekron.

"I know its very early," Rapha said to Lilah, "But the Temple is just across the road from the barracks. How would you like to bring the children and we can have a look at the Temple and the Hebrew god, before I have to go in and see

the chief?"

Lilah was thrilled with the idea. So next morning the family made their way through the deserted streets to the city centre. There were the military barracks with their stone walls and guarded gates and across the road the white fluted columns of the Temple of Dagon, the fish god.

"No," said Lilah, with an anxious look on her face. "We cannot go in there."

"Why, what is the matter Lilah? You said you wanted to see the Great Dagon and the Hebrew god. Come on you foolish woman, you are like your mother always seeing things and feeling things."

Taking her arm, Rapha propelled his wife and family to the Temple entrance. They paused for a moment and then quietly and reverently entered the holy place. In the dim light of the early morning they could see the two chief pillars which supported the roof that surrounded the court of the Temple. Between the pillars stood Dagon, a huge stone figure, half fish, half human, restored again to the stand from which he had fallen. They bowed low before him. Facing him, but some little distance away was the Ark of the Hebrews. This was a rectangular, gold covered box about 1.25 metres long and 0.75 metres in breadth and depth. On the lid, two gold angels with outspread wings faced each other.

"See," said Rapha, "Look how the Hebrew god cringes before the might of Dagon the Great."

Rapha had hardly finished speaking when a loud crack was heard. This was followed by a splintering sound as the figure of Dagon began to crumble and fall from its pedestal. With a mighty crash the stone figure tumbled to the ground

before the Ark of the Covenant. The brute image, head and hands lopped off, lay flat and shamed his worshippers.

A piercing shriek from Lilah's throat echoed around the Temple precincts. Her face twisted in a painful muscle spasm. Rapha moved swiftly to his wife and children and gathered them in his arms. The boys sobbed uncontrollably. His father picked him up. Lilah carried the baby as they hurried away from the humiliation of their god.

Later on at home, away from the crowds that were gathering around the Temple, the family prepared for a meal. Moving Rapha's cloak, tunic and pouch away from the table, Lilah disgorged some of the pouch's contents onto the table.

"What are these smooth stones?" asked Lilah.

"I found them in a creek bed in the Valley of Elah and thought that the children might like to play with them," answered her husband.

"Here lad, have a look at these," said Rapha, handing five of the stones to his son.

Lilah looked at the stones and hurriedly snatched them away from the boy, flinging them out through the open doorway. Her heart beat rapidly and sweat gathered on her forehead as a great feeling of apprehension swept over her. The others looked at her in bewilderment, her face twisting horribly as she stared into space. Like her mother, Lilah was seeing a vision, of the future.

There was her son, a great warrior. He stood upon a battlefield with one other figure, a much smaller man, the enemy. He was holding out his hand and in it were five smooth stones. A stone was flying through the air. It hit her son on the head. He was falling...

Lilah fell to the ground with a groan.

The boy gave a cry and sank to his knees beside his mother.

Slowly Lilah got to her feet, but the boy remained kneeling.

"Come on Goliath," his father said, "You're a big boy, there's nothing for you to worry your head about." ❖

Reconciling our Theology with our Cosmology: God

Gordon Stirling

In "Flat Earth Christianity" (AC 18 November) I suggested that while we accept a cosmology of the earth and the other planets in orbit round the sun in endless space, the thinking of some of us is still coloured by the ancient concept of a flat earth and a three storey universe.

In pre-printing days, the church had to find visual methods of Christian education and painted and sculpted its buildings with graphic representations of its faith. People sat in church and mostly had no Latin and so could not understand the service, so they looked at paintings on walls and ceilings and stained glass windows and sculptures and learned the faith that way. God was depicted as manlike, but larger, on a throne in the top storey, surrounded

by angels and saints, who were just above the earth on the second storey. Under the earth, the damned were vividly portrayed in torment of the agonies of hell.

Then there were the miracle and mystery plays. They were erected on large horse drawn trolleys. People stood on street corners and watched the first act until that trolley moved on to make way for the second act, and so on. The trolleys were intricately constructed with three storeys; heaven above, earth in the middle and hell at the bottom, with smoke pouring out and the smell of brimstone. Strangely, hell was always more spectacular looking than heaven. It is not surprising then that we have inherited the tendency to think of "God up there" and "heavens above" and "mansions in the sky", even though we accept quite a different cosmology.

Of course, with a three storey universe and God just above the blue dome, he was not that far away and could easily influence things on earth according to man's behaviour. But

with our cosmology of endless space and no such thing as "up there" and "down there", to think of "God above" is to have him a long way from us.

But our cosmology frees us from the idea of a limited God on a literal throne in a cramped materialistic heaven "up there". God is of course everywhere, but specially he is here. God is all about us and with us and in us. His creative work is going on within those who are willing for it to happen; those who are "in Christ" (2 Cor 5:17). God is active in the world. He is the stimulator of every mind that is open to truth, compassion and justice, whether or not the owners of those minds are aware of it. He is active in the minds and hands of members of healing teams, whether they know it or not. He is giving insights into the thinking of people in high and low places as often as they have the will to love and to serve and to care. If all of this is not so, what is the point of praying?

The cross of Calvary reveals to us a God who is in every tragic situation in the world, bearing the pain of war, famine, disease and disaster. The God to whom we pray "Our Father" is closer to us than the members of our own family. The God whom we worship in church on Sundays is closer to us than the people in the next

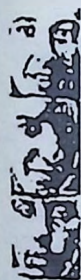
pew. But we do not leave him in church, any more than we banish him above the blue dome. He is in our homes and at our jobs, not to "spy on us" as some sort of invisible policeman, but to encourage and build us up and to give us what it takes to handle any situation in life.

This is the picture of God that Jesus gives us. God was not confined to Mt Gerizim or to Jerusalem or to a materialistic heaven above the bright blue sky. Jesus said that God is spirit and that those who worship him worship him in spirit and in truth.

Paul knew such a God. I can imagine his poor amanuensis writing like fury as Paul dictated the blazing words at the end of Romans 11. And it was about such a God that Paul preached at Athens when he said, "In him we live and move and have our being."

Could I suggest then that next time we pray that we keep in mind that the God to whom we are speaking is right with us and in us. And could I suggest that we de-formalise our praying to a more conversational style as befits the actual circumstances. I think that Paul had this in mind in Phil 4:4-7.

And to any readers who are grieving the loss of dear ones, could I suggest that those who have gone from this life are with God, and God is with us, so they are not very far from us after all. ❖



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OMB

Overseas Mission Board

A duty statement for each position is available from the Executive Director, Australian Churches of Christ Overseas Mission Board, 180a Gray St, Adelaide SA 5000
Phone (08) 212 4446 Fax (08) 212 6388

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Westside Church of Christ is strategically located in the growing western suburbs of Brisbane, with great potential for growth.

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Significant qualities sought in such a person are:

- Sound Biblical teaching
- Initiative
- Ability to work in a team
- Good interpersonal communicator
- Capable administrator

Enquire in writing to: The Ministry Committee
Westside Church of Christ
PO Box 211
Mt Ommaney Qld 4074.

Or phone R. Edwards (07) 3378 7633.

All communications will be kept in the strictest confidence.

COORDINATOR OF EVANGELISM Part-time (two days/week)

The Vic-Tas Department of Mission Education and Development has identified a crucial need for someone to help assist in the areas of evangelism training, development and praxis within the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania. We are looking for someone who will join an energetic and creative team of staff and consultants.

The successful applicant

- Must have a keen awareness of the Biblical imperative of evangelism as a ministry priority.
- Must have a proven track record in personal evangelism
- Will be someone who is keenly aware of the issues relating to evangelism in post-modern culture. For this reason, the person must be well-versed in issues of culture in both its high and popular forms.
- Will be able to train others in personal and corporate evangelism.
- Must have good communication skills.

Please forward applications by 15 January 1996 to:

Alan Hirsch, Executive Director,
Department of Mission Education and Development,
77 Capel Street, WEST MELBOURNE VIC 3003.
Phone (03) 9326 8900. Fax (03) 9329 0902.

CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN SA INC.

Come Join the Team!

Churches of Christ in South Australia are on the verge of an exciting and challenging period of development. Some fresh and innovative mission opportunities are emerging among our churches. Many new ministries will commence in 1996 and beyond. *The team working out of the State Centre in Adelaide has a crucial role to play in the support and resourcing of these mission initiatives.* As a result of restructuring in our office, we are seeking two energetic, creative and adaptable people to join our State Centre team:

Office Services Coordinator

This *full-time position* will be responsible for the smooth and efficient operation of the State Office under the direction of the State Minister, providing positive, enthusiastic and professional service to Executive Staff, Conference Officers and churches. The Office Services Coordinator shall have an office or secretarial qualification from a recognised institution, with appropriate experience and highly-developed skills in word processing (at least 60 wpm), computing, communication (oral and written), switchboard operation and organisational planning. A good working knowledge of book-keeping and negotiation skills will be important. Salary package, commensurate with award levels, is envisaged at \$22,000-\$26,000.

Financial Services Officer

This *part-time (0.6) position* will be responsible for the general financial processes of the State Office under the direction of the State Minister and, in accordance with principles acceptable to the Conference Treasurer, for the practical financial operation of Churches of Christ in SA.

The Financial Services Officer shall work with the Conference Treasurer to establish an efficient and practical financial system for Churches of Christ in SA. The Financial Services Officer shall contribute to the smooth and efficient operation of the State Office and shall offer positive, enthusiastic and professional service to Executive Staff, Conference Officers and churches. The Financial Services Officer shall have an office, secretarial or accounting qualification from a recognised institution, with appropriate experience and highly developed skills in accounting or book-keeping, computing and general financial management. Skills in word processing, communication, switchboard operation and organisational processes will be important. Salary package, commensurate with award levels, is envisaged at \$13,000-\$16,000.

For further information, including full role descriptions:

David Brooker

State Minister, Churches of Christ in SA Inc.
263 Melbourne St, North Adelaide SA 5006
Phone (08) 239 0233 Fax (08) 239 0914

Personal

Changes

LANGFORD: Frank—12 Albert St, Surrey Hills Vic 3127. Phone (03) 9886 6458.

CHADSTONE: Minister—Malcolm and Yvonne Lowe, 2 Lindisfarne Drive, Burwood East Vic 3151.

Baptisms

•Donna Clarke, Mildura, Vic
•Robert Davidson, Doug Morton, Coburg, Vic
•Rosie Maia, Brian Amy, Castlemaine, Vic
•Darryl & Roslyn Parsons, Michelle Templeton, Brett Millito, Emma Harvey, Lincoln Nunn, Jeremy Smith, Jason Wallis, Kath Lonsdale, Dawson St, Ballarat, Vic
•Deborah McCulloch, Larry Pearson, Clare Stevenson, Ken Trutch, Elizabeth, SA
•Kelly & Jody Davis, Ainslie, ACT
•Denise Spink, Warragul, Vic

Marriages

•Tanya Carter and Allan Baldwin, Robyn Wickham and Kevin Elliott, Dawson St, Ballarat, Vic
•Beverley Stephens and Colin Blakeley, Metro North Christian Centre, NSW
•De-anne Leach and Michael Schmidt, Belconnen, ACT
•Kylie Treadwell and Michael Wilmen, Tweed Heads, NSW

Deaths

•Gil Johnson, Percy Brock, Twyford St, Bundaberg, Qld
•Joyce Johnstone, Coburg, Vic
•Lillian Price, Barbara Wise, Beth Thomas, Dawson St, Ballarat, Vic
•Eunice Hanna, Elizabeth, SA
•Rex Thompson, Kaniva, Vic

Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

Bruce, Bertha Florence

(19.11.95) The youngest of Walter and Florence Fordham's eight children, Bertha, the only remaining member of the family, passed away at age 86. Brought up in North Melbourne church, she worshipped later at Lygon Street, Carlton, Maryborough, Vic, and Sunshine, at the latter two with her husband, Bill, who predeceased her 12 years ago, and more recently at Oakleigh when a resident at the Christian Guest Home. Bertha's capacity for hard work, her devotion to her husband and two children, Ian and Annette (Mrs Bob Dwyer of the Greensborough church), and her faithfulness in church life are widely acknowledged. Bertha was a

member of the Sunshine church for 40 years and a deaconess, serving as secretary of the CWF for several years, knitting baby singlets for hospital visitation and clothing for dolls that were placed on the Christmas Tree for Others, attending to the communion table linen and for her singing.

—Bruce Alcorn
Hanna, Eunice Margaret
(15.8.95) Born in Belfast in 1912, her first marriage to Robert Dick saw two children, Jill and Sherwood, with Robert dying during WW2. Some years later Eunice married Robert Hanna, who had two children from a previous marriage, Walker and Kay. Tim was born later and completed the family. The family migrated to Australia in 1962. Eunice was a very special and lovely lady with a unique sense of humour, talented in painting, woodwork, poetry and much more. Her love for God dominated her whole life, with a very valuable contribution made by Eunice at the Elizabeth, SA, church. She continues to be deeply loved and deeply missed. Eunice battled cancer for quite some time, handling it with courage, grace and a confident faith in her Lord Jesus Christ. She is survived by five children, 23 grandchildren, and nine great grandchildren.

—Lindsay Mayes
Ryall, Frederick Russell
(23.11.95) Russell's long earthly life came to a peaceful close after an acute worsening of dogged ill health. He was in his 93rd year. There was an overflow at the service of thanksgiving at the Camberwell, Vic, church; a fitting tribute to a life utterly committed to his Lord. Russell was a pharmaceutical chemist by profession; he brought the attributes of care and conscientiousness needed there to all aspects of his Christian service. He was a member at Camberwell from 1933. Russell was chairman of the Board, treasurer of the Sunday School, and a leading member of Christian Men's Fellowship. He regularly presided at the Lord's Table. When needed, he was the friendliest of greeters. Russell had a genius for friendship and good humour. In 1976 his wife Florence passed away; they had two sons, Keith (dec) and Fred. Russell subsequently married Jean McClure and they had 19 happy years together. He was deeply loved by both families.

—Viney Longthorp

Church News

Vic

MILDURA (Maurice Keatch) Church shocked at resignation of senior minister, followed by rest of ministry team. Dept of Ministry has arranged ministry assistance—Mike Folland, Alan Niven, Neville Moore ... Maurice Keatch conducting interim ministry till end of year ... Sunraysia churches visited by Conf Pres Pat Greig & Conf Sec Ian Allsop ... All church programs continuing.

COBURG (Don Milne) Church rejoiced when two men, Doug Morton & Robert Davidson, baptised 26 November. Guest musicians for service ... Spiritual retreat held with Alan Niven director on 4 November ... Farewell to Don & Tops Milne held 16 December ... Chris Ambrose guest speaker 10 December ... Bible study well attended ... Church saddened by death of Joyce Johnstone, sympathy expressed to Bill.

CASTLEMAINE (Ross Bourdon) Church has moved from Campbell St to new Blakeley Rd worship centre ... Special men's study "Searching for Significance" being held weekly ... Combined church camp with North Fitzroy a great success ... New office bearers elected at AGM—Barry Ward (elder), Graeme Revell, Neil Critchley, Mark Best (deacons) ... Mobile Mission Maintenance recent missionary speakers ... Church celebrated 125th anniversary.

MAIDSTONE (A. McMillan) During Andrew's holidays & while at Wollongong, guest speakers were Lynette Leach (DMED), Graeme Batley (OMB) & Elizabeth Tilson (CWF) ... CWF held successful stall at Sunshine ... Congratulations to Irene Daly—80 years ... Luncheon to farewell Dot Stowe ... Some members on sick list ... Church thanksgiving offering over \$1,000 towards new carpet.

DAWSON ST, BALLARAT (Darren Kittel) Sign erected cnr Ring Rd & Western Highway; plus carstickers, show "A Church on the Move" ... Generous giving dramatically reduced debt on purchased block of land ... 4 November church "fete" raised \$3,000 ... Men's group seeking to meet interests & needs of men through break-fasts, etc ... 28 transfers into membership ... 3 December Christmas Coffee Cabaret held at Webbcon Bowling Club, 250 attended.

CHADSTONE (A. Avery) Church is delighted at the appointment of Yvonne & Malcolm Lowe from NSW as a ministry team to commence Feb 1996. They have purchased new home in East Burwood ... Allen Avery to conclude interim ministry on Christmas Day. Allen & Lianne's contribution most appreciated by all ... Carol service to be held 17 December ... Successful Cup Day picnic at Dromana despite the rain.

BORONIA (Keith Milne, Darryn Hickling) Annual meeting held, new board members Laurel Milne (elder), Graham Billing, Josie Fella, Sheila McAllister (deacons). Details of mission groups presented. Sunday service times discussed ... Explorers & Good Companions led evening service, as did "Koinonia" Seniors group ... CMS annual family dinner held in hall, David Ratten speaker ... Church annual fete raised \$2,656 ... Services December—January commence 10.00 am, Christmas Day 9.00 am.

LATROBE TCE, GEELONG (David Jones) Musical group "Endless Praise" inspired congregation with varied program ... CWF visited Tonga via video & talk by Lyn

Fleet ... Trivia & slave auction night organised by youth groups raised \$160 for funds ... Band provided music for carol night at Grace McKellar Centre ... Sunday School break-up to be held at Fyansford Park ... CWF, youth groups, Bible study groups held final functions for 1995.

RED HILL (Bruce Butler) Visits from Carl & Gaye Brown, Avonsleigh ladies for CWF break-up & Greg Elsdon (CCTC), speaker 26 November ... Sunday School scholars bike-a-thon raised funds to support Suryakant & Archano in India & own Sunday School ... Anniversary 10 December ... Christmas break-up 17 December ... Carol service 22 December & nativity play 24 December ... Congratulations Alec & Evelyn Andrew 60th anniversary & Hal & Betty Holmes 50th.

KANIVA (Paul Bauer) Peter Brook interviewed prior to departure for PNG to work with Wycliffe Bible Translators ... CWF held October meeting at home of Jenny West, former Kaniva member ... Faithful member for many years, Rex Thompson died suddenly. He will be missed ... United Sunday School ended successful year with anniversary in own hall.

WARRAGUL (Les Medley) Debbie & David Buesnel & family farewelled after evening service which was taken by Home Groups ... Junior Church shared in family worship service ... Men's breakfast held ... Successful AGM & Board elections ... Bus load travelled to College graduation to support incoming minister Les Medley ... Julie Trinnick speaker at mission serv-

ice. Luncheon followed ... Church to hold annual carols service.

TOOTGAROOK (M. Glezendanner) 111 attended Open Door Christmas dinner. Entertainment by Police Band quartet much appreciated ... Minister conducted inspirational service on Advent Sunday, when all denominations joined together in worship in our church ... Building being re-roofed by Jack Burgum's willing band of helpers. Mutual Market meeting cost of Colourbond ... CWF Christmas lunch on 10 December with Lowana Singers from Cheltenham church in afternoon.

BAYSWATER (L. Dewberry) Enjoyed dinner evening organised by youth. \$430 raised for mission support & renovation fund ... Les Dewberry accepted part-time interim ministry ... Daniel Hills' message appreciated at Bible School break-up ... Recent missionary speakers Garth Grant (MMM), Barry & Sue Ward (OMB), Shirley Strong (20 years service in Gambia with WEC), Michelle Taylor (departing for Russia) ... Members encouraged by sharing in morning services.

OAKLEIGH (W.J. Edwards) Freda Fraser returned from visit to England & Holland ... Much sickness in congregation. Bert Edgecombe, Nancy Curtis had surgery. Muriel Stockdale receiving rehabilitation after car accident. Clyde Taylor seriously ill in hospital ... CWF ended year with barbecue. More than 300 soft toys given to Hospital Visitation Committee ... John Moore has repaired church doors ... On 16 November minister attended a pastoral carers' information seminar.

L. C. F. Higgins

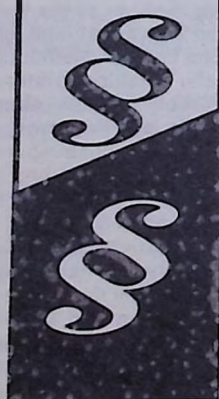
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Church News

NSW

METRO NORTH CHRISTIAN CENTRE (Franklyn Elliott, Lindsay McKeon, Stuart Wesley) In association with Spirit Alive & supported by St Paul's Anglican Church Wahroonga, church in 40-hour prayer weekend 24-26 November. Highlight of weekend was special breakfast on Saturday, with Steve Hall of Eden guest speaker. Prayer times at local churches for their ministries & programs & dinner at North Ryde RSL on Saturday ... Youth group summer camp held at Sandbar Beach near Foster, led by Stuart Wesley.

TWEED HEADS State CWF President, Dawn Fishbur, visited in October ... Men's breakfast featured Promise Keepers ... Family of Alan Cunningham took service when Alan too ill to do so ... Roger Foletta appointed assistant coordinator of Northern Rivers Ministry Centre ... Church Christmas lunch enjoyed by all ... Ken & Rayna Whitecross to serve in ministry support role with Bruce Warwick, who comes to us in February ... Church looks forward to welcoming Warwick family.

Qld

TWYFORD ST, BUNDABERG (Paul Scully) AGM held 15 November ... Church anniversary held 26 November, with Bob Smith guest speaker ... Christmas musical "Three Wise Men & A Baby" will be presented 17 December ... Monster garage sale raised over \$500 for TEAR Fund ... Dinosaur hunt during September holidays well-attended, with 35 children ... Play-time group commenced, offering mothers & young children an opportunity to meet weekly ... Talent night & slave auction raised \$400 towards new sound system.

SA

COWANDILLA (Wayne Shepherd) Church anniversary celebrated with church tea. Then across to carols by the Cross ... Church picnic held ... Youth service went well ... New Bible study group started ... Young Adults went to a traditional Maori feast ... Special prayer time Friday mornings ... Men's/Women's Fellowship & Kids Club going well ... New faces & families attending. Praise God.

ELIZABETH (Lindsay Mayes) Steady influx of new people ... Receptionist, computer & new answering machine improve office efficiency ... Successful men's camp with Gordon Montgomery ... Emphasis on training leaders. Spiritual gifts,

encouragement & network courses done by elders. To be part of discipleship training in 1996 ... House next door bought for future use.

WA

MAYLANDS (Tom Morrison, Trevor Streeton) Church has confirmed proposal for Trevor Streeton to minister on part-time basis commencing February 1996. This will coincide with Trevor's retirement & commencement of studies ... 3 December ministry of George & Connie Evans was recognised as church bid them farewell. In future,

they will fellowship with Warwick church. Minister, Tom Morrison, made presentation on behalf of the fellowship.

TAS

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, D. Tobler, W. Kerrison, J. Ratcliffe) Joel Ratcliffe inducted into ministry team 26 September ... Launceston Male Choir presented concert in aid of Fusion Australia ... Leonie Cripps & C. Peart elected to eldership ... 29 November, CWF held break-up at Prospect Court & brought gifts for City Mission ... 3

December, Children's Church presented joyous occasion ... Girls' Brigade presentation 6 December ... Aged Care seminar held as community service 7 & 8 December.

NUBEENA (C.G. Henderson) Ethel Mundy doing well after lung transplant ... Gwen Henderson celebrated her 60th birthday with family & friends. Some of her family from Victoria & Tasmania joined her for the occasion. 45 attended surprise supper ... Gwen & Gordon moved into new home in Nubeena. Manse to be prepared for new minister ... Darcy Williams attended Glenn Cumbers' graduation.

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Encountering the World

World view for Conference attenders

Spring Conference has become a major training initiative and stimulus for Australian Churches of Christ leaders.

Leaders from churches in each Australian state and the ACT heard a major analysis of the global state of Christianity and of spiritual and intellectual challenges facing the church at the end of the century. This presentation was made by Dr Martin Robinson of the UK Bible Society at Spring Conference, held at Wollongong, NSW,

4-6 November. The Conference was jointly sponsored by the Wollongong church and the Australian Board of Church Development and Education, under the leadership of Ted Keating the church's senior minister and Alan Hirsch of the ABCDE.

Michael Frost, an evangelist, theologian and author from Sydney, gave a presentation on presenting the Gospel within Australian culture. Twelve electives were offered over the three days. These centred on both practical church development and issues of personal faith and experience. Topics included ministry with women and youth, worship, drama, dance and music, getting your church into the news, small group ministry and spirituality for adults and young adults.



• (L to R) Alan Hermann (Qld), David Brooker (SA), Dean Phelan and Alan Hirsch (ABCDE), Ted Keating (Wollongong) and Martin Robinson

Martin Robinson also led an elective on the small church. Other electives focussed on time management, middle-sized churches and work among minority and marginalised people. The new national Youth Vision initiative, under the sponsorship of the ABCDE, was launched at the Saturday evening rally where Larry Galbraith of York St, Ballarat, Vic, was the speaker. Sunday services were celebrations at which Martin Robinson preached.

Five ministers from our New Zealand churches participated and also visited churches in Ballarat, Geelong and Sydney.

The final day concluded with electives, an address by Russell Frager on worship, music and change, and a closing address by Martin Robinson.

The Last Word

Obstacles are those terrifying things we see when we take our eyes off our goals.

A deficit is what you have when you haven't as much as you had when you had nothing.

★★★★★

I haven't recovered from my operation yet. I've still got two more payments to go.

★★★★★

The local library was moving to the other side of town. To save costs, residents were asked to help out by borrowing ten books each and returning them three weeks later.

★★★★★

Teacher: "One of the first laws of physics is this: for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. As an example, can anyone tell me what happens when you get into the bathtub?" Student: "Yes, the phone rings!"

★★★★★

Rome wasn't built in a day. It just looks like it!

★★★★★

By working faithfully eight hours a day, you may eventually get to be a boss and work twelve hours a day.

—Robert Frost

★★★★★

"If the minister preaches for more than 10 minutes, he never finishes; if he preaches short sermons, he's got nothing to say. If he speaks on the mysteries of God, he's over people's heads; if he touches on social problems, he is veering to the left. If he stays in the manse, he never sees anyone; if he goes on pastoral visits, he's never there when you want him. If he cooperates with his deacons, he shows no leadership—if he doesn't, he's too much of a one-man band. If he's always got a smile on his face, he's over-familiar; if he hasn't, he's too distant. If he's young, he hasn't enough experience; if he's old, it's time he retired."

—From *The Baptist Times* (UK)



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