

THE AUSTRALIAN

Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

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"How are we going to fill this void and equip a generation of biblically responsible, intellectually astute, culturally sensitive evangelists who will speak to the heart of Australian culture?"

Steve Clark

"The Church can and will survive without theological colleges, but the church will not survive without theological education."

Greg Elsdon

"True leaders cannot be made, they can only be helped along the road."

R.Greenway

Editorial

Success or Failure

DON SMITH

Our theological education has continued to change in response to our needs. Training in the USA attracted some of our earliest ministry candidates. They did not always return. Ministry opportunities, marriage and a new environment were among the reasons. * The commencement of the College of the Bible at Glen Iris in 1907 was our first response to needs for new ministers. The subsequent developments at Woolwich, NSW, in 1942, Kenmore, Qld, in 1965 and later at Wollongong, NSW, came about to meet perceived unfulfilled needs and new opportunities. Sometimes the diversity meant disagreement and difficult relationships. * Convergence between our states has brought about a new-found common purpose. Diversification continues with the growth of new training centres (such as in Perth, WA), colleges and university departments. The assistance of Australian Government "Austudy" has helped open an ever-increasing range of courses, ways of training and new opportunities for theological study. * We cannot shut the door on diversity, it will increase and continue to challenge our past approaches. There can be no closed shop. We need to be recruiting the best and most appropriate leadership available. Lyle Schaller, the distinguished US church consultant writing of churches and their needs, remarks that churches which rank character, commitment and competence above credentials will continue to attract a disproportionately larger number of church goers born after 1945. * We can be thankful for the contribution made by our colleges this century. The numbers of students presenting throughout Australia is an all-time record and augers well for our future. * But before us the situation looks even more complex than the past. Developing a passionate, intelligent and inspired leadership for our churches is the task ahead. On this will depend the future of our movement and national church. Together we stand on the frontiers of theological education for the new millennium. The climate in which we operate is both a disadvantage and an opportunity for the Gospel. Forty years of ministry tells me we are great innovators and adaptors. Our ability to relate to Australian communities, and the theological awareness, passion, and convictions about the Incarnation in emerging leaders, will be the basis of our success or failure. We shall know the answer by 2030. *



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The Australian Christian welcomes letters from its readers. Short letters up to 175 words stand the best chance of publication. All letters may be edited. We reserve the right to omit letters altogether.

Future of Churches of Christ

To the Editor
Whether Churches of Christ should be seen as a movement or a denomination is not the issue. The fact remains we have become increasingly institutionalised.

There has been a gradual shift from mission to maintenance. From passion and prayer, to programs. From focussing outwards on the needs of the unchurched, to pandering to the whims of those in the church. From compassion, to comfort and control. From creativity and intentionality, to banality. From initiators of change to protectors of the status quo. From sacrifice to self-interest. In short, along the way, we've lost the plot.

For this reason I loved Alan Hermann's contribution to the discussion on "Churches of Christ" (Pamphlet Club 393). He touched on key issues that need to be addressed.

Whatever value there may be in a commitment to "restoration principles" or organisational restructuring, or good programs or better ideas, our future and hope do not lie in these.

Our hope and future lie in a spiritual awakening and the renewal of God's Holy Spirit, born of true repentance, a profound change of heart and earnest prayer.

Then we'll be released to get on to God's agenda and the move of his Spirit for today as the leaders of the movement of Churches of

Christ did in their day. Then we'll be empowered to live out a lifestyle of radical discipleship, of sacrificial servanthood and outrageous love.

We will then be fired with a new vision that comes from the leading of God, not the deliberations of people.

—Jeff Deuble
(Castle Hill, NSW)

Homosexuality

To the Editor,
I am sorry for Mark Fletcher, ("AC" 7.9.96) that he has not heard that homosexuality is a product of spiritual death, that state where the body, soul and spirit are separated from the Creator. A love relationship with the resurrected Christ will overcome the matter.

—Tom Fraser
Maitland, NSW

Homosexuality

To the Editor,
I'm afraid it is Mark Fletcher who is wrong in his letter ("AC" 7.9.96). Lifelong monogamous relationships are extremely rare in the homosexual community, whereas promiscuity seems to be the norm, much more so than among heterosexuals (Eg the Sydney Men and Sexual Health Report, 5 volumes, 1995)

Homosexuality is a lifestyle choice, as the more honest homosexuals will admit. As a gay activist and Latrobe University lecturer Dennis Altman put it, "being gay is a choice". Thousands of homosexuals have been set free from the bondage of homosexuality. From a Christian point of view, homosexuality most definitely is a "wrong to be righted", just as lying and stealing are sins to be repented of and turned from.

The real danger is when we tell people who are trapped in the homosexual lifestyle that there is no

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Letters to the Editor

hope, that there is no way to be set free from such bondage. The gospel of Christ is above all the good news of God's liberating power. We don't have to be slaves to sin, but can find newness of life in Christ. The erroneous ideas of Mark Fletcher will only rob people of that much-needed hope. Evidence for the above information is available. A research paper can be obtained from Focus on the Family, Australia (03) 9558 2977.

—Bill Muehlenberg
(Oakleigh South, Vic)

Church Development

To the Editor,
Your edition on church development ("AC" 7.9.96) lacked any mention of the challenge and opportunity we have to work with ethnic and multicultural congregations. At a time when other denominations are increasing their

commitment to cross-cultural mission in Australia, Churches of Christ seem strangely silent. The Uniting Church held a Conference in Cross Cultural Ministry in Collaroy, NSW, at the end of August with 140 representatives from ethnic churches (maybe 100 of them were from non English speaking backgrounds). In our the current Victorian-Tasmanian Handbook, one in eight

new members added to Victorian churches through baptism was welcomed into an ethnic congregation. There is great need for initiative and networks such as the Australian Board of Church Development and Education to provide resources for churches to engage with our multicultural communities. We have so much to learn from their suffering, persecution, deprivation and vital commitment to our Lord. We cannot afford to remain culturally isolated. There is a great deal of

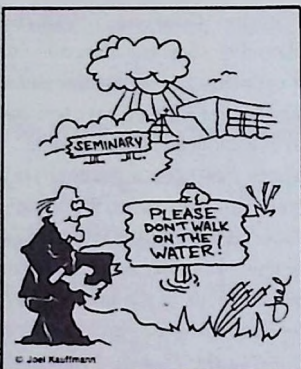
mutual ministry ahead of us if we Anglo-Aussies can build bridges of ministry to our ethnic churches.

—Barry Jenkins
(Carnegie, Vic)

This subject will be dealt with in a subsequent issue as planned. The ABCDE issue 7 September was intended as a broad survey of development issues. The intake into ethnic congregations is one of the numerous encouragements at this time.

—Ed.

Pontius' Puddle



Update

Dear readers,

I hope you enjoy the forward thinking of our Theological College Principals, and then explore some related issues with us. These matters are of fundamental importance for our future life and growth.

Space pressures have meant that several invited smaller features on students have been held over. Media Matters will reappear in the next issue. Space is always a problem these days and we thank contributors of news items and other writers for their patience. Most of the material is already in the computer and waiting for the "starter's" signal. We welcome Church News items, but request reporters stay within the 60 word limit. Guidelines and report's forms are available upon request.

Last weekend Lois and I enjoyed a family visit to Launceston, Tas. It was stimulating to share in the worship, note the large attendance and see so many younger couples and their families. Launceston church is showing all the marks of a congregation concentrating on outreach and experi-

encing a harvest in response. It was also good to meet up with the "AC" news reporter and hear her work affirmed by the ministry team. I was pleased to briefly comment on the paper. We look forward to some new subscribers!

Our NSW Board member, Tom Glynn of Northside church, is doing a great job with promotion. This week his envelope was stuffed full of new subscriber applications. Thanks Tom!

Our last issue carried a cover photo by David Tatnall. I hope you enjoyed its sense of mystery and awe. It was hard to make a choice from the photos David selected for us. More will follow at an appropriate time. David is a distinguished photographer in his area. He has travelled throughout Australia and done some outstanding work overseas. His specialty is nature and the environment.

The millennium will be the theme in our next issue.

Sam Smith



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Refusing to Duck

Innovative outreach to Aborigines



Din Din, with Anne Prime

There is a special duck at Warragul, Vic. Din Din is the Prime family's pet. Anne Prime has an unique ministry among Aboriginal people in the town. They won't come near the church, but will listen to the Christian message they receive though Anne and her husband Gary each week.

When the Federal Aborigines Board deputation team was in Victoria, members spent two days in Warragul. At a specially arranged meeting, team members spoke to nearly 60 young people and their parents at a BBQ/sports night that culminated in Len and Melba Wallam and Richard Yuline sharing their testimonies. Normally boisterous young people sat and gave close attention to what was being said. To hear of changed lives from "some of their own" meant a lot to the children.

The evening was to conclude with the youngsters chasing Din Din, with a prize going to the person who eventually caught him. The duck refused to cooperate. Wanting to be friends with everyone, Din Din sat quite still, refused to be chased, or to give any one the

satisfaction of earning anything at his expense.

Anne and Gary Prime do a marvellous job reaching young people who are homeless, lonely, hurting, afraid, suspicious and sad. The children respond to the friendship and the listening ear extended to them. Many activities take place out of doors, some in the Prime's home.

The Primes give themselves to this work as their ministry among Aborigines. They are innovative, relating to the children with hands of friendship that have no strings attached.

—Avon Moyle

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Work Party to Nazareth

Opportunity to work and learn in Israel



Blackburn Community Church of Christ, Vic, is sponsoring a team of 30 people who will be painting at the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society's hospital in Nazareth, Israel, Christmas–New Year 1996. A few positions are available for new team members. The team is being led by a former surgeon at the hospital, Dr Paul Kitchen, along with his wife Merrill, Dean of the Evangelical Theological Association. As members of the Swanston Street

church they worked as missionaries at the Nazareth Hospital in the 70s, and have visited Nazareth and Israel many times since. The team will paint an emergency staircase in a five-storey new wing of ward accommodation, establish a garden and undertake renovations to the nurses' home. Improvements will also be made to this 134-year-old mission hospital, which serves the minority Arabic speaking people of Galilee. Team members will benefit themselves spiritually and educationally. Merrill will conduct a "World of the New Testament" study course as part of the tour. Learning occurs with lectures at the hospital and at places of biblical importance, which will include sites in Rome and Jordan as well as the Holy Land.

The team leaves on 23 December and will travel for a month. Team members pay their own airfares and contribute \$200 towards a Paint Fund, from which all building materials, will be bought. Donations are tax-deductible. If more information is required contact the church or Dr Paul Kitchen on (03) 9852 0118.



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Survey At Pine Rivers



Pine Rivers, Qld, church attenders were among an estimated 670,000 people involved in completing their National Church Life Survey forms in August. Churches of Christ congregations throughout Australia participated. The survey will analyse many aspects of church life. The Pine Rivers congregation is in Brisbane's outer northern suburbs. The NCLS team reports that twelve tonnes of paper was used for the survey forms and most of it is flowing back to the office right now!

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Tel (03) 9853 3177 Fax (03) 9853 6695

WA Women's Retreat

A weekend filled with many good things

Sixty women from Western Australian churches came together at the Baptist campsite in Serpentine 23-25 August for a retreat weekend. Participants came from various parts of Perth and country areas including Mukinbudin, Northam and Albany. It was great to be able to share the weekend with our Living Link, Melba Wallam from Bunbury, and her daughter Sharon.

The weekend filled us with many good things: fellowship with one another around the meal tables and fellowship with our Lord as we worshipped several times each day and shared communion around his table on Sunday. The studies were led by Cathy O'Dea.

We were reminded that God uses weak, frail, fallen people for his purposes. We were encouraged and challenged to know that we have the power and authority to do all that God requires of us, to be salt and light and to let his glory shine in us.

It was a full weekend which also included time with Fay Christensen from our mission in Papua-

New Guinea, who told us about her work in translating the Bible into some of the 800 languages of the local tribes. Dr Leonie Smith talked with us about various medical issues and a thoroughly enjoyable concert with impromptu acts, songs, skits and poetry kept us entertained.

Our participants left for home on the Sunday afternoon with the theme "Couriers for Christ" and the theme song "Here I am wholly available. As for me, I will serve the Lord" firmly fixed in our hearts and minds.

—Annette Reid

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It Only Takes a Spark

Unity in Gilgandra

"It only takes a spark to get a fire going" was the opening line of the theme song of Gilgandra's Combined Christian Churches Outreach in July. Sir Alan and Lady Walker came to share the message of God's reconciling love and the power of his Spirit. Originally announced at the Ministers' Fraternal by the Uniting Church, it spontaneously burst into a united churches (nine congregations) effort and carried through with great enthusiasm.

It was a weekend of blessing exceeding all expectations with the various Christian leaders saying, "Barriers which may have divided people in the past appeared to have removed." Accepting one another's differences, but united in a desire to show God's love in action, further united efforts are planned.



David Mudford and friend Stan at the worship service in the Shire Hall

The following weekend the Church of Christ hosted a two-day seminar with Ross Wakeley of the NSW Conference of Churches of Christ as leader.

Youth Vision Training Day

Providing training for church youth leaders

Youth Vision Victoria has begun a new phase in youth ministry. For many years it has been unable to provide training for church youth leaders, but this year it held a training day at the Churches of Christ Theological College at Mulgrave with great success. Guest speakers included Michael Frost from the Baptist college in NSW, Graeme Hush, the ministry co-leader at the Belconnen, ACT, church, and other youth ministers from Victoria, as well as the Y-Care ministries team from the ACT.

Over 80 youth leaders and ministers attended the day, which finished with a great evening program featuring "Hungry", a live band from Canberra led by Graeme Hush, and a message from Michael Frost.



Jason Potter, Coordinator of Training, Youth Vision, Victoria

There will be more training days in the future. There will also be opportunities for training programs in local churches, not only by Youth Vision, but also by Y-Care and other groups that provide youth ministry training.

Have you a friend/relative in the Maidstone, Vic, area?
If so, please invite them

To come over and help us.

Maidstone Church of Christ
Cnr Richelieu and Curtin Sts, Maidstone
Service time 10.45 am

Ivanhoe Church of Christ

79th Anniversary

27 October, 10.30 am

**Guest Speaker
Mike Janssen**

Further information from:
Ian Smith (03) 9499 4155
L. McCredon (03) 9481 5359

Death of Carol Wilson

We are sad to announce the death of Carol Wilson, Associate Minister and Director of Ministries of Northside Community Church in

Sydney on 26 September 1996. Carol has had a courageous struggle with a brain tumour for fourteen months.

Sunshine Church of Christ

near cnr Hampshire and Derby Roads

70th Anniversary

Sunday 10 November 1996

10.00 am Worship Service

Speaker: F.B. Alcorn

Luncheon to follow

2.00 pm Afternoon Program

RSVP Friday 1 November 1996 for catering purposes.
Contact Susan Horwood (03) 9311 1557.

Koorringal

A centre for the enrichment of marriage, family and personal life at Williamstown, SA, developed by Kevin and Gwyn Harvey in 1980,

Will be offered for sale in 1997.

It has provided a residential healing environment for groups, families, couples and individuals. Accommodation for up to 20 people in three separate self-contained living areas.

If interested, ring Kevin on (085) 24 6196

A Careful History

50 years for SA Churches of Christ Aged Care

At the SA state conference in 1946 "The Care of The Aged" was chosen as a special project. Following this decision, a home on 1¼ acres of land was purchased at Glen Osmond for \$13,000 (£6500). This opened as an Aged Care facility in 1950 and ten guests were admitted.

Funds were raised by the churches as there were no government funds available at that time. This site has undergone numerous upgrades and now houses 99 residents.

In 1963 the first accommodation was built in the Southern region, at Everard Park, providing nursing home, hostel facilities and independent living units. A village centre was built in 1988, incorporating a shop, hairdressing salon and meeting area. In 1994 the nursing home was rebuilt and the site now accommodates 125 residents.

In 1982 a new site was established at Joslin, providing care for 95 nursing home and hostel residents, which includes a day therapy centre. Two independent living units were built in the mid 80s. Recent alterations have increased the number of single rooms. A palliative care room has also been added.

In 1991 the Reynella Lodge Retirement Village was purchased, incorporating nursing, serviced and independent living units. At the present time, the nursing home is being upgraded to increase its capacity. This work is being carried out in two stages, with stage two due for completion in March 1997. On completion of the Reynella site the operation of the recently purchased Botanic Park nursing home will be transferred

to Reynella and incorporate residents and staff into our organisation.

In 1979 and 1984 two blocks of independent living units were established, at Marion and at Modbury. In 1991 five independent living units were built at Parkrose Court. Two houses adjacent to Parkrose Village have been purchased for further expansion.

In 1994 a self-contained unit program, providing hostel care to residents within our Reynella Village independent living and serviced units, was commenced.

Over the last few years, planning for a forty bed hostel at Aldinga has been proceeding. This work commenced in April, with a completion date of late 1996. This project will provide places for people with dementia (mentally frail), hostel accommodation for married couples and respite places. Our community area will also provide for our Aldinga church and community activities.

In 1990 our offices moved to Melbourne St, North Adelaide, to provide for our administrative services. The whole program has been well supported by residents, their relatives and friends. South Aus-



Construction at the Aldings, SA, Churches of Christ Aged Care site

tralian churches have provided many volunteers who work closely with staff to provide addi-

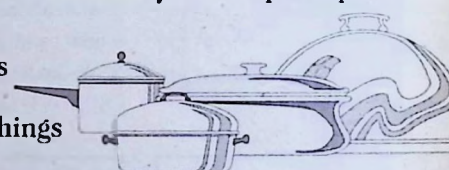
tional services for those for whom we care.

—Kingsley Curtis.

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—Lindsay Mott, Treasurer

A bequest to The Australian Christian can be made through your solicitor or contact us for the appropriate wording.

Numurkah's Building Filled

Benefits from new ministry already apparent



◦ Ray Eldridge, Numurkah's first official minister (right), outside the chapel

Numurkah's chapel, Vic, is almost filled such has been the growth this year. New families have been added and the church is in an expansive mood. Ray Eldridge commenced in March as the congregation's first minister. Over the past thirteen years since the

church commenced, the pulpit has been filled by guest preachers, plus having a student from CCTC, Mulgrave, once a month for 3 years. Ray trained in NSW and has had ministries in both NSW and Vic. He has had a break from ministry for a few years and now returns.

Ray was appointed by the church at a special meeting in January and was inducted into the ministry on 3 March by Robert Hough, the minister of Shepparton Church of Christ, Vic. The church is already experiencing blessings from Ray's ministry and availability. He serves on a part-time basis.

1996 Spring Festival of Arts & Crafts

Churches of Christ
Theological College
40-60 Jacksons Road,
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Friday 11 October 4.00-9.00 pm
Saturday 12 October 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

Minister Part-Time

Bellarine Peninsula Church of Christ, in an area with great potential for future growth, a friendly community-minded church with a representation of all ages is seeking a Pastor who is prepared to accept a part-time appointment.

Ideally this person will be a Bible-based evangelical preacher who will be responsible for pulpit ministry, church leadership and pastoral care. Strong voluntary team support is provided.

Replies to: Mr Ian Walter,
Bellarine Peninsula Church of Christ,
PO Box 314,
Ocean Grove Vic 3226.

Destination—Overseas

Tasmanian members involved in mission

Natalie Smith of Burnie, Tas, left in July for Sierra Leone, West Africa, to work as an occupational therapist for World Vision. She will help rehabilitate amputees who have received artificial limbs. World Vision approached Natalie and offered her the appointment as someone with her experience was required. Natalie feels her biggest challenge will be getting used to the people, their culture and the change of lifestyle. Sierra Leone is the same size as Tasmania, with a population ten times that, some 4.5 million. Only 9% are Christian.

After spending 4 years training at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Natalie acquired her first permanent job in Latrobe, Tas, and attended the Devonport Church of Christ for three years. A farewell dinner was held for Natalie with 24 friends and well-wishers present.

Two other Devonport members David and Natalie Richards have reached their goal of \$8000 for the Bike For Bibles project sponsored by the Bible Society. They will participate in a bicycle ride across Canada as a part of the project. Devonport members contributed a further gift bringing their total to \$8750. They are appreciative of members from Victorian and Tas-

manian churches who have supported the fund-raising project.



David and Natalie Richards (above), having achieved their goal, join Natalie Smith in overseas mission

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Hush of Evening



Hazel Baumann (right) recently launched her new book *The Hush of Evening* at the Churches of Christ Retirement Centre, Glen Osmond, SA. The book contains her reflections on life. Janeen Brian (left) assisted in the final selection. The book is available for \$7, including postage, from Support Services Manager, 263 Melbourne Street, North Adelaide SA 5056.

Polish Churches Celebrate 75th Anniversary

Restoration Movement in Europe

Churches of Christ in Poland celebrated 75 years of witness in August.

Poland is the only European country with a strong indigenous presence of the Restoration Movement.

As part of the celebration the Christian Bible Institute has translated William Robinson's book, *What Churches of Christ Stand for*, into Polish. It will be printed shortly.

The churches have raised half the

amount needed for translation and printing and are appealing to the British Churches of Christ to assist in raising the balance.

British churches have made a grant of £250 towards the £1000 required.

Dennis Lindsay, Principal of Springdale College visited Warsaw for the celebrations.

Gifts for this appeal can be sent Springdale College, 54 Weoley Park Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6RB UK.

"Padre, Can I See You?"

Help in the Gulf



Barrie Yesburg conducting worship on board HMAS Melbourne

"Padre, can I see you about a personal matter?" I am hearing this phrase quite frequently as we are moving towards the half way point of our deployment in the Gulf. The request could mean anything from helping draft a letter, to finding out information on the Navy's personnel services organisation, to a plea for help over guilt relating to a sexual indiscretion while in a port, to a family issue relating to an ex-husband of his wife, to having difficulty emotionally as we transit a mine danger area, to deep spiritual issues.

A day does not go past when I don't hear these words. They can come through a formal approach or through an informal conversation or a person may be referred to me by one of their supervisors or through conversation in a Mess.

When I mention Jesus Christ or the possibility of God getting involved in their situation, it quite often brings a positive response. Spirituality is not far below the

surface in the life of a sailor. They may not go to church or may be negative towards the church but a lot have a great respect for Jesus Christ.

"Padre, can I see you about a personal matter" is a cry for help and it is good to be involved with personnel in their struggles. Opportunities also arise in these times to bring officers and sailors into contact with their Creator and his son Jesus Christ. It is good to be a servant of Jesus Christ and of the church and to be involved in this operational deployment in the Gulf as a chaplain.

—Barrie Yesburg

(Barrie Yesburg is the first person from Churches of Christ to serve as a full-time chaplain with the Navy. His appointment comes through the Churches of Christ Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee.)

[Barrie and the Crew of the Melbourne have since safely arrived back in Australia.]

—Edl

Training

Where Have all the Evangelists Gone?

STEVE CLARKE

Donald McGavran, in his last published work before his death, challenged us with a vital question: "Do theological seminaries have anything to do with effective evangelism?" In response, he noted that, "Most theological training schools do not count evangelism ... an essential part of their curricula." *

This situation demands our attention. Put simply, it is imperative that we seek biblical models of preparing people for

Put simply, it is imperative that we seek biblical models of preparing people for evangelistic ministry

evangelistic ministry, and incorporate these insights into our college and church life. What do we see, particularly in the life and ministry of Jesus, that will help us address these challenges? *

1. Jesus' method of training was to invite people to be with him. They would then observe his life, and he would address issues that arose out of their experiences and understanding. He sent disciples out in ministry and then gathered them for reflection upon their experiences. *

This approach tells us that training involves the whole of life. Jesus dealt with the dynamics of relationships, modelled cultural relevance, and discussed emotions such as anger and lust, just to name a few. In doing so he exploded the secular/sacred dichotomy that we

seem so intent on preserving in evangelicalism. For colleges, which tend to train people to serve the structures and expectations of the church (the "sacred"), rather than preparing them to engage the world in which the church exists (the "secular"), this approach poses a real challenge. *

2. Jesus modelled the importance of the teacher sharing his life with the learner. In Luke 6:40 we are told that the learner, when properly taught, **will be like the teacher**. The previous verse (v.39) demonstrates the need for a teacher. The blind cannot lead the blind. It is not just what the teacher says the learner ought to do that is in focus, it is what the teacher does with the learner that is important. It also tells us that a teacher cannot lead where he or she is not going. *

3. Jesus' model tells us that education begins where the learners are and occurs in a culturally specific context. It then extends into new situations, introduces new experiences and raises new questions. It is significant that he enfolded people into his life in such a way that the very nature of that encounter transformed them, deepened their perception, and prepared them to communicate with their world. He plunged them into the conundrums of life, rather than shielding them from such encounters, and he refused to give them easy answers to difficult questions. Notably, a willingness to follow Jesus seems to be the only vital prerequisite to this process. *

4. Jesus' model tells us that the demonstration of desired outcomes is an integral part of the teaching/learning process, as is the supervision of the



learner in the experience. Jesus demonstrated ministry to his disciples by preaching, serving, healing, and delivering people in their presence, and sent them out to do the same. *

From these biblical principles we can make the following deductions. **First**, all ministry preparation should be done in a group context. This stands in sharp contra-distinction to the model used in most colleges, where individuals compete with one another and reward is based upon results that have little or no relationship to spiritual or ministerial formation. **Second**, it forces the teacher into actual involvement in the reality of life and ministry and assumes an openness on his or her part to the learner. **Third**, it places relationship with Christ and spiritual formation in vital union with the ministry training process. **Fourth**, it ensures that matters like prayer and faith play a central role in the learning experience. *

Steve Clarke is currently a Ph.D. candidate in philosophical theology at the University of Queensland. He is deeply concerned to help Christians understand secularization as a great opportunity for mission and evangelism.

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Training

The Future of Theological Education

GREG ELSDON

The Church can and will survive without theological colleges, but the church will not survive without theological education. I believe theological education is essential for the life of the people of God. It is our ongoing means of discovering what it means to be a community which confesses that God's will for us is to be found primarily in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. So then, what of the future of theological education? * **Theological education must be the task of the whole church.** It must be

The Church can and will survive without theological colleges, but the church will not survive without theological education.

embraced as the responsibility of all Christians, not just the specialised pastime of a few privileged professionals or enthusiasts. I believe that the future of the Christian church depends upon our ability to build and maintain local churches which self-consciously, critically and creatively explore what it means to be faithful to the Gospel. * **Theological education must encompass all of life.** The church of the future will be served best by those who see the relationship between spirituality and politics, worship and mission, pastoral care and evangelism, fellowship and administration. * **Theological education must be grounded in everyday experience.**

It must be marked by integrity which comes only when word and deed align. This applies not only to the people who teach theology, but also to the curriculum, the educational philosophy and practice, the administration and community life, and even funding. Theological education must be pursued not merely as the gaining of information—but also, and most important, as a journey of spiritual formation. *

Theological education must take seriously Jesus' description of God's coming reign. Many of our churches today witness to a Jesus who bears little resemblance to the Jesus who came into Galilee proclaiming the good news of the reign of God in deed and word, and who was crucified by his opponents because of his commitment to that reign. If the Christian Church is to remain "Christian", theological education must be centred in Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God. *

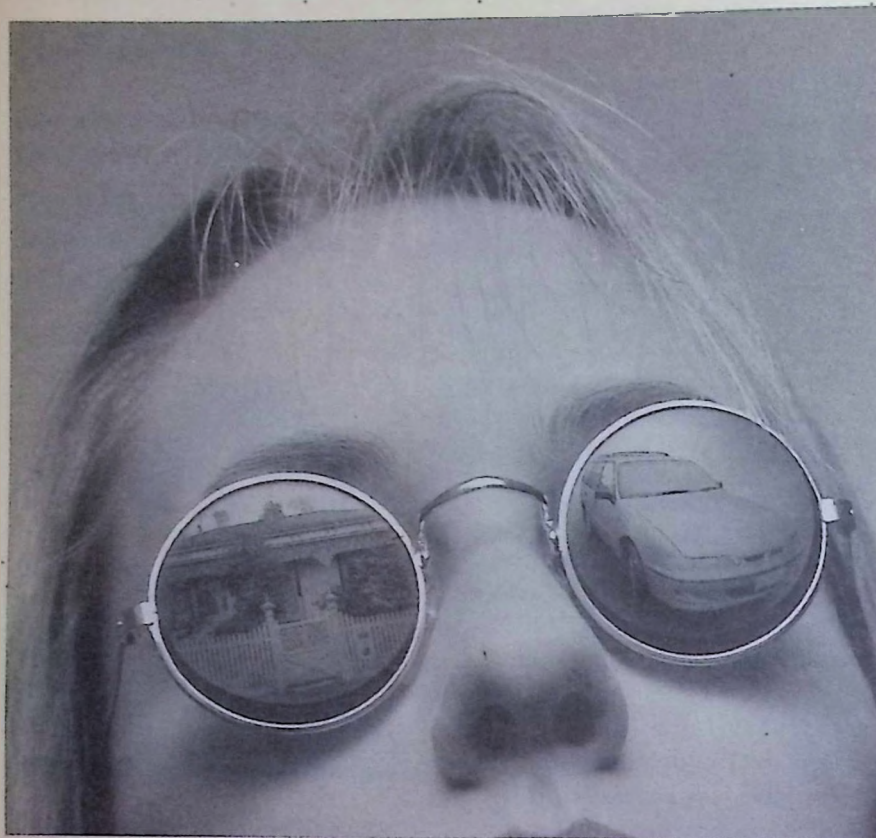
Theological education must take the Biblical text seriously. It must renew and sustain the rigorous, disciplined and creative reading and appropriation of the message of the Bible. Only as we interpret our experience in relation to the stories of Scripture will we discover that the Good News is not merely something to be talked about, but an invitation to life itself! *

Theological education must be prophetic. If theological education gives serious attention to its biblical texts it will discover, among other things, the call for the church to take a prophetic stance. This will undoubtedly generate conflict as those concerned to build permanent structures, institutions and church cultures find themselves con-



fronted by the call of Jesus to leave it all behind and follow him into an unknown future. Indeed, I would venture to suggest that theological education *ought* to have a disruptive and maybe even subversive role in the church. * **Theological education must be ecumenical.** In an increasingly post-denominational world, theological education must affirm the diversity of our common experience of God in Christ such that Christians of all persuasions are both enriched and challenged. * **Theological education must recognise the new challenges posed by an increasingly secular society.** In a world where many of the "givens" of the past no longer have any significance, theological education which is genuinely Christian must be prepared to exhibit a new sense of openness and humility. The success and effectiveness which is thought to flow from our supposed "high ground" will be tolerated less and less as the church in the West rediscovers what it means to live, like the earliest Christian communities, as marginalised minorities. *

Greg Elsdon is Principal of the Churches of Christ Theological College in Mulgrave, Vic.



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Training

A Look Down the Track

TIM HANNA

When I think of the process and product of theological education, and ministry training in the years to come, I do so with a peculiar mixture of apprehension and excitement. Apprehension, because if we get it wrong we have the potential to influence for the worse the next generation of church leaders; and subsequently impact on the church. Excitement, because if we get it right the impact on the ongoing health and mission of the church into the next millennium could be beyond comprehension. *

My feeling is that we are in grave danger in the church of being "over-managed" and "under-led".

Character

One of the most crucial areas is character development. With the complex nature of ministry and church leadership, there will need to be more time spent on developing the resources needed to cope with the specific demands involved. This will mean a more intentional approach to the "non-academic" input at college, and must include the development of spirituality, retreat programs, mentoring and personal integrity issues. Failure to do so will leave students without adequate resources and reserves in ministry. *

Leadership Development

Just the other day I heard someone say that they thought that the country was "over-governed" and "under-led". My feeling is that we are in grave danger in the church of being "over-managed"

and "under-led". These two are often confused, but ministry training in the future will need to make a much clearer distinction between them. This will mean a much greater exposure to good models of spiritual leadership. On the other side, it will require those currently exercising good and effective leadership to be committed to seeing that part of that responsibility is investing in students. There are already some good examples of this, but the potential is there for it to occur at an even greater level. *

Mission

Training in the future must emphasise a strong focus, both theologically and practically, on the renewing of the mission of the church. I think that this may mean fewer courses on maintenance issues and much greater emphasis on outreach, evangelism and discipleship. Bishop William Temple stated that, "The church is the only organisation in the world that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members". Perhaps he overstates it somewhat, but it is a healthy reminder of the importance, in theological education and ministry training, of our reason for being. We will need to discover and rediscover ways to maintain and rekindle a heart for the lost. We have talked often about the need to stretch people theologically. At least as important is stretching people into new areas of outreach. *

Kingdom Focus

Theological education that will be effective into the future will have much more of a "kingdom" focus. This, in my opinion, will mean less of a distinction between training the clergy, (or training for full-time pastoral ministry), and training and equipping Christians in general for the task of understanding and implementing the mission of the

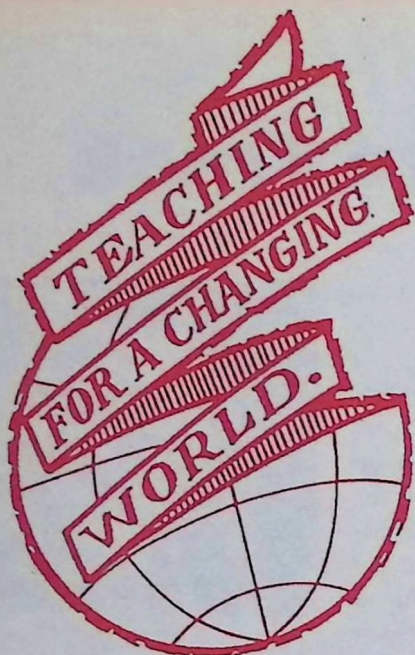


church. In other words, theological colleges will need to see themselves more and more as resources to the local church and less and less as an institution to which people come to learn and train. To be more "kingdom" focussed will also mean getting back to our roots and seeing ourselves as a vital and vibrant movement within the Christian church, and to think less and less denominationally when it comes to education and training. *

This focus will also cause us to explore greater ways to allow theological education to occur in the context of community as opposed to an individualistic approach to the training function. This will mean more and more people realising that the whole process only reaches its greatest potential when it is lived out in a vital community of faith, as opposed to the isolation of pure academic study. *

As a movement, we in Churches of Christ have much to thank God for in our history of theological education and ministry training. My prayer and hope is that we continue to make a key and vital contribution in the years, decades and generations to come. The practical development of these characteristics mentioned above will, I believe, be crucial for that to happen. *

Tim Hanna is a lecturer at our Carlingford, NSW, college.



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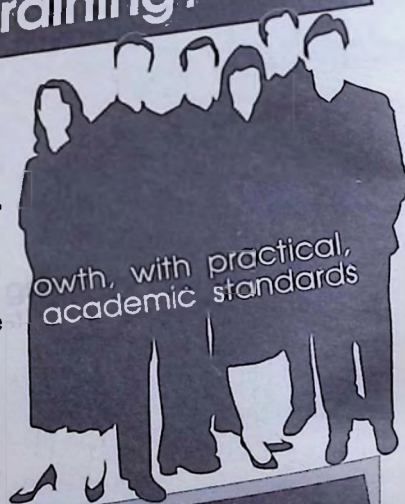
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Training

Teaching in a Changing World

RANDALL EDWARDS

The future of theological education is dependent on three things—the past, the present and the future—and our response to them. What we do in our colleges and in our churches will be a reflection of how we deal with these three. *

The past provides two major factors in theological education with which we must interact. The first is the incarnation—God becoming human. How we handle that event in our interpretation of life will determine whether theological education remains unique in its focus or whether it becomes a mere prod-

The past always presents a daunting pressure to conform to the way we have always done it.

uct of the present and future changes. If we remain committed to the objective reality which took place in history nearly 2000 years ago, theological education will always offer a unique understanding of life and the world which continually challenges the passing fads of philosophy and religion. Neglect it, trivialise it with academic rhetoric or spiritual jargon, and theological education will have little or no future beyond the first decade of the 21st century. *

The second factor from the past is the “how” of theological education. The past always presents a daunting pressure to conform to the way we have always done it. Breaking free from it is extremely difficult—some are controlled by their acceptance of it as the norm, while others are controlled by their rejection of it as ineffective. In the

future there will be great debate about “proven” ways versus “new approaches”. The “how” of the future will be significantly affected by the past, whether accepted, rejected, or adapted. *

The present always casts its net over theological education because we live in the present. Our vision of the future is clouded by present circumstances and situations. In our attempt to be relevant to the present, we will often relegate ourselves to irrelevance in the future. Some might be tempted to think that we could easily move from the past to the future and ignore the present as a moment which is passed before we can identify it, but unfortunately the present (usually a product of the past) has a much greater say in our vision for the future than we like to admit. *

The future is always the goal of theological education. We never train or educate for the present, because our students will always be ministering and working in the future. Therefore, we must be constantly engaged in “crystal ball” gazing (pardon the metaphor from the occult) if we are to provide a relevant education for our present and future students. Because the future is often unpredictable at best, and downright unknowable at worst, there will be great differences of approach in trying to formulate the best theological education for the future. *

The past events of the incarnation will remain focal in the content of relevant theological education. This means that many institutions which have moved or are moving away from this focus will move out of theological education or die. Access to this past will continue to be through the Scriptures. However, the “how” will not be determined exclusively by the past “hows” but will give rise to a multitude of changes both



in institutional forms and methodology. The “technological age” will undoubtedly give rise to another age, but in the process it will transform the how of theological education forever. *

The present move toward “denomination-less” Christianity means that theological education in the future will not be as directly connected to a single tradition as in the past. Moreover, while “professionalism” of ministry increases, there will be a much greater need for “unpaid” ministers in every congregation. Ministers as we know them will become managers of resources. The standard of the resources available will be dependent on the “egalitarian” nature of future theological education and the quality of the education provided. Unless it is available to as many as possible, the future of our churches will be greatly under resourced for the tasks that lie ahead. At the same time, the programs must be practically oriented, with a sound theological base underlying everything we do and teach. *

Randall Edwards is Principal of our Kenmore theological college, Qld.

Training

Elitist Theological Education?

ASHLEY BARKER

When we think of "theological education", what ideas immediately come to mind? The list we come up with is important. For our images of theological education may determine whether we consider it to be accessible to us, our friends or the general population. * If our ideas are based around a "university for ministers" image, then theological education is not for every-one. Ideas of "lectures", "qualifications", "books", "assignments" and "degrees", as important as they are, do not provide accessibility to most of the Austral-

Whatever the leadership need, we should begin with the end in mind.

ian population. Indeed, one million Australian adults are functionally illiterate and only 6% of the Australian population has been able to complete a University degree. *

If we understood theological education in other ways, life could be different. If we could imagine theological education in terms of being "biblical formation for leaders", then it would not have to be an exclusive pursuit by those able to study at university level. The doors could be flung wide. *

If the invitation to participate in theological education is to come to "all who are weary and heavy laden", then we must address three questions:

1. What type of leaders do we need? Given the complexity of our world, the church requires an increasingly diverse range of Christian leaders. Whatever the leadership need, we should begin with the end in mind. If we need bibli-

cal scholars, let's try to recruit and equip the right people. If we need pastors, let's try to find them and train them. If we need small-group leaders or missionaries or Christian truck drivers, let's try to find the right roles for the right people. The type of leadership role must determine the type of training, not vice-versa. The agenda then, would be what does a person need to do and to be to fulfil this role? *

2. What methods are most helpful? How people learn is as important as what they learn. The methods of training often determine who can participate in them. We must seek to use the most helpful methods for developing competence and character, not the easiest methods to transmit our information. * There is a ground swell of discontent among Christian workers around the types of leader being produced through current practices. This was evident in Sydney this year at a gathering of grassroots mission agencies from Australia and overseas. The overwhelming response was the need for practitioners to take up the training agenda and to not simply leave it to Bible Colleges. There needed to be a "learning space" between the "College" and the "Coal Face". *

Daryl Gardiner from New Zealand gave an example. He spoke of Whakapakari, a leadership training college that uses traditional Maori educational methods. We in UNOH have been using action/reflection practices borrowed from Latin America. *

We quickly realised that there was a huge gap. Most middle-class Christians who want to do mission or ministry have at least some training options. The urban poor, the working class, the indigenous peoples, the migrants, the unemployed do not, by and large, have



any Christian training options. What would "localised" training look like? Would we use whatever means we had to see this sin rectified? We prayed, committed ourselves to the task and will meet again in February 1997. *

3. What methods of accreditation are most needed?

In the end we want to know if this person can be and do what is required for this leadership role. Christians have an opportunity to recognise character and competence above academic credit. We could be prophetic in our stand against the idols of formal recognition, or we could buy into the worship of them. Would our Conferences recognise the pastoral gifts of migrant leaders if they were unable to pass a first year Theological College exam, but had the character and competence to be pastors? If "localised" training methods are used, how will our Conferences recognise "localised" accreditation? *

Do we want to invest our resources in the best trained but least effective leaders, or could we open theological training gates that all leaders may enter? *

Ashley is the director of the Urban Neighbourhoods of Hope mission program.

Comment Spring

A.E. WHITE

"In the spring, a young man's fancy turns to ..."

The fancies of spring belong not only to the young. The mature and the old can also dream, and capture the mood of spring. * Spring, rather than the new year, is the time for new beginnings, and new resolutions. Nature is setting such a fine example. Spring is the time to put out new shoots of ambition and bring to flower the half-dead seeds of half-forgotten ideals. C.J. Dennis's Bloke, even in the back lanes and crowded houses of Melbourne, had to burst into a spring song: *

"Ther's little breezes stirinn' in the leaves

An' sparrers chirpin 'igh the 'ole day long;

An' on the air a sad, sweet music breaves

A bonzer song...

"What is the matter wiv me?...I dunno.

I got a sorter yearnin' 'ere inside."

The Bloke didn't reach the upper levels of our language as Milton did, but in his own quaint way he did for spring what John

Keats did for autumn. He showed that the common man or woman can be moved as deeply as anyone by the magic of new life and colour. *

Strangely, the only colour the Bloke mentions is green, and beautiful as green may be, it is only the starting point for the colours of spring. There was a time when our North Essendon church celebrated spring with a flood of flowers. Nothing was to be bought. The flowers had to come from the gardens of the members, or maybe supplied by or "borrowed" from their neighbours. And the church was ablaze with colour. It was a time to celebrate the beauty of God. "For lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, flowers appear on the earth, the time for singing is come, and the voice of the dove is heard in our land." (Song of Songs 2:11-12) *

The spring garden is a riot of colour, mauve, pink, orange, yellow, purple, blue, white, violet, gold and red, as carnations, jonquils, daffodils, irises, peonies, wallflowers, primroses, poppies and foxgloves strive for our attention. Even black has a place, adding a kind of roguishness to black-eyed Susan. * I reject with passion that what

God has joined together some fashion designer bloke in Rome can put asunder. I may not be up to date with those who put some colours out of favour, but I learned that from God. He has no problem with putting colours of every kind together in his gardens. And they never conflict with nature. *

What the colour gurus do with colours, the world tries to do with people, making a list of incompatibles. Blacks and whites. Browns and yellows. Jews and Christians. Hutus and Tutsis. Liberals and Democrats. Haves and have-nots. Saints and sinners. Carlton and Collingwood. Old and young. Classics and rock'n'rollers. West and east. There is no end to people divisions, but they are created by people and not by God. * Spring is the time to bring the colours of God together, and to bring people of God together. To learn again that all the people of the world are part of the family of God. I guess that I would be told that it is a vain hope. It may be. But whatever happens, without hope we are lost. *

This is the season of hope. The farmer plants his crops in hope. The student sits the exams in



*"... the bonzer
smell o' flow'rs
..."*

—The Sentimental
Bloke

hope. The lover looks into her eyes with hope. And many of us hope that somehow, after all of our failures, we can make this world a better place. After all, that is God's hope, and it can be ours. Springtime is as good a time as any, maybe the best of all times, to hope for the highest. *

*"And in some spring the
fuchser 'olds in store,
I'll cop me prize and long in
vain no more."* *

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THANKS

MAY, FRANK DUNLOP We would like to sincerely thank all those who have contacted us with cards, letters and telephone calls when Frank died. The response from so many people, has been very supportive and encouraging for us in this sad time. We miss Frank very much, but we can also rejoice that he is now experiencing a wonderful new relationship with his Heavenly Father. Thanks be to God! From Ruth, Phillip, Kathy, Jenny and their families.

Hospital Chaplaincy When A Baby Dies

GLEN WEGNER

A century ago the death of a baby was not uncommon. Fortunately, these days still births are few in number. However, when the death of a baby occurs, through a miscarriage, still birth, or termination of pregnancy; there is a great sense of loss. In circumstances like this, the chaplain in a hospital may have the opportunity to help parents work through a grief experience they have not encountered before. *



It denied what had happened, suppressed feelings and left grief unresolved.

A generation ago, a mother whose baby died at birth would probably have been told little, her baby quickly taken away, and she would have been sent home with the encouragement to try again. It was felt it would be unhelpful to talk about the loss; it would be too distressing for the mother. It is now recognised that this type of response was unhelpful. It denied what had happened, suppressed feelings and left grief unresolved. There was silence, people behaving as if nothing had happened. Recently, a mother came to see me regarding a still birth she had 20 years ago, where nothing was said or done following her loss. She needed to work on unresolved grief associated with the loss she had contained within for 20 years. * Today most hospitals provide an opportunity for parents to see, hold, and spend time with their deceased infant. The majority

accept and value this. Mementos of the baby are made available, and may include photographs, footprints, and other details about weight and size. * In these circumstances, pastoral care can provide grief support and offer a service for the deceased child. Most parents choose to have such a service. A service usually lasts for 5-10 minutes and is likely to be held in either the hospital chapel or the patient's room. The content of the service includes the naming of the baby, blessing the baby, committing the baby into God's care, and prayers and encouragement for the parents. While such services are always sad, they facilitate healthy grieving, release feelings, provide support and begin the healing process of recovery. *

As you can imagine, this kind of loss is a new experience for most young couples, and at some stage of the process they are likely to ask, "What do we do next?" Hence the chaplain needs to be able to guide and advise about burial or cremation for the baby. *

It is wise for the person providing pastoral care to leave their phone number for the couple to have after they leave hospital. Several days after leaving hospital some follow-up on the part of the pastoral carer would be desirable. *

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words
BRAND, Ron

Born in Bowden in 1915, and one of a large family, Ron earned the respect of all who knew him. He married Beryl in 1939 and, with Marlene, Janet and Graham, was deeply involved in the Hawthorn, Vic, church. Ron was a man of compassion and integrity. He was Superintendent of the Sunday School (23 years) and served as an elder, deacon and in many local church roles. He was also a man of vision who sup-

ported Conference projects. As a key staff member of the Royal Adelaide Show fraternity he had a high community profile. During the months of illness Ron faced each day the same way as he lived his life, in faith and with courage.

—Keith Horne

HANDASYDE, Alison Emma

(2.9.96) The love and sympathy of the Montrose Church is offered to Glen, Julie, Kimberley and Matthew Handasyde on the sudden death of their 3-year-old daughter and sister, Alison, with a very rare heart condition. A large congregation attended the

service on 6 September. Tributes were offered by a number of her aunts and on behalf of her parents and grandparents. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not forbid them, for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven."

—H. Clark.

HUGGAN, Mary Ann

(13.9.96) Born at Newcastle-on-Tyne and migrating in 1920, Mary lived for 110 years 8 months. Her husband Andrew and all their sons, Bill, John (lost at sea with HMAS Perth, 1942), Andrew and Ernest enlisted in the armed forces in WWII. Her family grew to nine grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren. At 87 she was admitted to Emmaus, and later to Northcote, Vic, as its first resident in 1979. A service of thanksgiving was held at Combridge House, with family members and staff present. The care offered by Commu-

nity Care was much appreciated.

—Bruce Alcorn

McINTOSH, Donald Bruce

(29.8.96) Born in Jeparit 18.9.33, Bruce ministered at Chadstone and Shepparton, Vic, churches for 13 years. He then served in the personnel field with SECV for 21 years, before becoming Human Resources Manager for the Shire of Lillydale/Yarra Ranges. His expertise in personnel management was widely recognised and called on. He served Churches of Christ in numerous roles, including membership of Department of Ministry and College of the Bible Boards, and Vic-Tas Conference Executive, and most recently as an elder of the Upper Yarra church. A devoted husband and father, Bruce was a man of great intellect, strong faith and personal integrity who spent his life caring for others and championing the underdog.

—Sue Hoffman

Capital-Kossie Caper

4-18 January 1997

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BAPTISMS

•Amy Hartfield, Jannah Akehurst, Natalie Caubo, James Yakubi, Emily Chelley, Karen Brookes, Robyn Veeker, **Ringwood, Vic** •Jessica Laird, Nicole White, **Monash City, Vic** •Zoe Alexander, Sarah Thomson, Jenny & Steve Whitehead, Joel Roberts, **Portland, Vic** •Joanne Slater, Ben Dall, **Knoxfield, Vic** •Andrew Bell, **Warragul, Vic** •Melissa Gibson, Steve Fitzallen, **Launceston, Tas**

MARRIAGES

•Sue Milne and George Kinkela, **Boronia, Vic** •Marion Wood and Gavin Barnes, Jenny Wood and Brad Geyer, **Ringwood, Vic** •Sylvia McEwen and Don Rundell, **Portland, Vic** •Ruth Parfett and Travis Vidaic, **Horsham, Vic** •Lorraine Magilton and Peter Reynolds, **Warragul, Vic** •Alanna Jansen and Wayne Wright, **Launceston, Tas**

DEATHS

•Agnes Easton, **Boronia, Vic** •Anne Pegg, **Maidstone, Vic** •Mary Ann Huggan, **Northcote, Vic** •Olwen Nevill, **Knoxfield, Vic** •Bill Walmsley, Ruby Ferguson, **Red Cliffs, Vic** •Ernest Cole, Philip Cole, **Fremantle, WA** •Bernice Millard, **Surrey Hills, Vic** •Tom Bryant, Guy Clayton, **Tootgarook, Vic** •Muriel

G. Storr, Madge Garnett, Lorna Goring, Ron Garrick, **Brooklyn Park, SA** •Don Herbert, **Tuggeranong, ACT**

QLD

DALBY (Tony Ochse) CWM held International Food Night & raised \$280 for carpet fund, good night of fellowship, fun & food ... 2 attended Western Districts Fellowship at Roma ... Dale Miller baptised in river at Longreach, church rejoicing ... Youth group gained 2nd place at combined youth groups of Dalby & District Volleyball Competition, games were followed by BBQ & concert with band "Grunge".

ANN ST, BRISBANE (W.J. Flett) Les Armstrong, Rod Tippet & Ron Sansome visiting speakers during absence of minister & wife on LSL ... Tapau family lost house & contents in fire ... Vaughan Frank baptised ... AGM 15 August. T. Vincent, C. Colston re-elected deacons, N. Watson, R. Smith continuing as elders ... Striking new church sign-board erected ... Several past members attended 113th anniversary ... C. Smith from Bribie Island guest speaker ... "God's Squad" conducted youth meeting.

CAMP HILL (Alan Lohead) Winter video series successful, with "Acts of the Apostles" followed by soup & fellowship ... Boys' Brigade kite flying day at Raby Bay during gale force

winds, Company won 3 of 6 prizes ... Family camp held at Tallebudgera Fitness Camp, Wes Fittel guest speaker, great turnout ... Girls' Brigade hosted father & daughter night mini-Olympics ... Team of workers given church hall a face lift.

VIC

BORONIA (Keith Milne, Darryn Hickling) Keith Milne recovering from illness ... Darryn Hickling undertaking Pastoral Counselling Course ... Joyce & John Masterton attended World Convention ... Members participated in National Survey of Church Life & Mission ... Lynette Leach speaker on Women's Ministry Sunday ... Alannah Guthrie-Jones going to China with Australian-Asian Cultural Centre ... "Whatever happened To...?" series of evening services with Mike Folland, Boska family, Andrew Henley, Harvey Miller, Janet Thompson.

MAIDSTONE (A. McMillan) Church saddened by home call of Anne Pegg ... Much sickness, some hospitalised ... On CRE Sunday Jan Adams chaplain of Footscray Girls' School was visiting speaker ... At church ABM appreciation expressed to Ilma Boettcher

(retiring elder) ... Following Sunday dedication of officers, Melba Colwell, Faye Freiberg (elders), Stan Phillips (treasurer), Marge Cumner & Geoffrey Freiberg (deacons), Tom Hampton (elder emeritus).

NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn) Minister arranged a memorial service for Mary Ann Huggan with Peter Bradley (chaplain in Fred Combridge House), Trevor Giles took part in the service also with some staff ... Ivy Bangsund still seriously ill ... Eileen Larkin still incapacitated after two falls on her knees ... Plans under way for 93rd church anniversary in October.

RINGWOOD (John Sharpe, Judy Rogers) New chapel & meeting rooms begun, worship relocating to Heathmont Senior Secondary from 13 October ... Outreach ministry begun at Ringwood Secondary ... John & Judy involved in chaplaincy to Eastland ... Op-Shop continues to serve community ... Successful: trivia night, line dancing, Do-Something-Good-Day, quilt making for nursing home, parenting evening, new attenders' dinners ... 12-hour prayer vigil conducted with focus on children ... Leadership vigil planned ... John involved in Leadership 2000 ... Church band & Cafe

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125th Anniversary Celebrations

Sunday, 20 October 1996

10.00 am Thanksgiving Service
Special Speaker: Gordon Stirling
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Church News

Nineveh begun ... Approx 27 welcomed into fellowship this year ... Saddened by Ted Moore's stroke ... Divorce Recovery Workshops continue.

WARRNAMBOOL (Peter Broadbent) Many participating in Home Fellowship groups, some to commence "Search for Significance" with others from Port Fairy & Portland ... Peter & Margie attended "One Heart for the Nation" conference in Canberra ... 75 enjoyed fun & fellowship at Hall's Gap church family camp, teaching sessions for adults & children led by Harmer & Burns families of York St, Ballarat.

SPRINGVALE (John Carmichael) 1995-96 Faith Promise Missions Target exceeded with \$6,050 being raised ... 7.00 pm celebration services continue on alternate Sundays ... New video series "That the World May Know" to be held on the alternate Sundays commencing 29 September at

7.00 pm ... Minister commencing morning series on "7 Pillars of Wisdom" ... Sally Haire & Cathreine (Samantha) Betteridge welcomed into membership by transfer ... Members holidaying in Queensland returning.

PORTLAND (Blair and Julie Davis) Numbers increasing at morning services, holding evening services once a month ... Several Bible studies, "Search For Significance" series held ... Two work teams went to Casterton to help with renovations to their building ... Craft afternoons held during last school term as an outreach to community ... Ministry of Blair & Julie very much appreciated within congregation & community ... Much sickness among elderly members.

KNOXFIELD (Rod Brown, Jack White, Jason McCheyne) Church pleased to welcome back Rod & Lois Brown after 2 months long service leave, during their absence Jack White & Jason

McCheyne accepted preaching & pastoral responsibilities, ably supported by Ann White, Administrative Secretary ... Recent speakers included Maurie Conry, Paul Creasey, Bronte Stanford from CCTC, & Birgitta & Swante, a musical duo from Sweden. **RED CLIFFS (S Mackie)** Care & Share Ladies held annual fund-raising dinner cruise on *Impulse* ... Annual meeting of CWF held. P. Sprigg (Pres), G. French (Sec), V. Milne (Treas) ... Church attendance fluctuates with some members away sick & on holidays ... Recent speaker was David Jamieson, State Director of Interserve ... Youth group & kids' club well attended ... Church preparing for 73rd anniversary 6 October.

SURREY HILLS (Jonathan Moore, Julie Adam) Numbers of families with young children increasing in this "baby friendly" congregation ... New born babies—Matthew Johnston & Erin Wilson ... Zander Adam's dedication service joyful ... Young mothers & other women enjoyed weekend camp while husbands coped at home with toddlers ... Congratulations Gwen (Elders' Convener) & Bruce May on Golden Wedding ... Bernice Millard died in August, much missed ... Beautiful communion banner thanks to Tricia Moore.

WARRAGUL (Les Medley) Baby dedication during morning worship service ... Youth baptised at evening service ... Family service held with Sunday School children taking part in morning worship ... Church driveway fund commenced ... 2 ladies attended CWF Camp at Monbulk ... Merv & Thelma Symes welcomed into membership ... Lara Waring home from Cornerstone Ministries work to celebrate her 21st.

BELLARINE PENINSULA (Glen Stibbe) Coming up is an "Eat & Meet Dinner" on 12 October, to catch up with those who have been away for the winter & to welcome new friends who have been attending services ... Church annual meeting to be held 10 November following worship & lunch.

TOOTGAROOK (M. Giezendanner) Church saddened by death of Guy Clayton while holidaying in Queensland ... OMB Rep Jack Edwards guest speaker on 15 September, theme "God's Team in Action" stimulated interest in mission ... CWF Birthday celebrated 18 September, special speaker Trevor Byard ... Combined inter-church service held 8 September well attended ... Variety concert arranged by missionary group to raise funds for chaplaincy in schools.

SA

BROOKLYN PARK (P. Webber) John & Valerie Main (now at Bordertown) to commence full time ministry in March 1997 ... Interim ministry being sought Jan-Feb 1997 ... P. Webber & church actively working for John Bond Mission in Western Suburbs.

TAS

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, W. Kerrison, J. Ratcliffe) Church held services for SIDS families & a "Celebration of Carers" of Alzheimers sufferers ... Church assisting Migrant Resource Centre to settle a Bosnian family in Launceston ... World Vision 40 Hour Famine raised \$3,700 ... National Church Life Survey taken ... "Kingdom Cafe" followed evening service on 22 September ... Drama group formed under Emily O'Keefe ... Many of our travellers have returned home.

WA

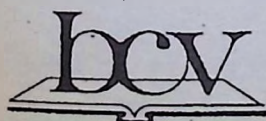
FREMANTLE (J. Caporn, R. Fairman) CWF viewed "God has no rejects" ... Emphasis on Mission continued, John Bolton speaking at one morning service on "Mission Today and our place in it" & at another Fay Christensen telling of the spread of the true light in New Guinea ... On 25 August, 5.30 pm service time concluded with a meal service ... Only 22 days between the deaths of brothers Ernest & Philip Cole, Ern had been church doorkeeper.



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Exploring the Day Straying Sheep

JANET THOMPSON

No one can convince me that sheep are intelligent creatures. I spent many holidays on a wheat and sheep farm in the Riverina, and one memorable year my brother and I, together with the farmer's son and a partly-trained sheep-dog, were given the task of taking a small flock of year-old lambs to a neighbouring property for their first shearing. *

Looking back, I think the farmer probably chuckled as he thought about the fun we were going to have. We were confident, and felt very important. It wasn't far down the road. On a good day (and this was a beautiful day!) it would have been about an hour's walk. *

When I walk from one place to another, I go along one side of the road, and take as straight a path as the road allows. But you can treble the length of a journey by zigzagging across the road; and if you add in a few complete reverses it becomes longer still. *

The sheep did all this, and more. *

If one of them jumped, the whole mob would wheel away and charge madly across the road. *

They seemed to react to a change in the breeze, or the buzz of an insect. We progressed very slowly, getting frustrated, and even angry, which didn't help a bit! When we finally arrived at the shearing shed, the farmer said he had expected us to be about that length of time. It's a good shepherd who knows his sheep—and the abilities of his helpers! *



It sounds a bit strange to describe the average Aussie sheep farmer as a shepherd. In biblical times the flocks were much smaller, and it was possible for the shepherd to know each individual sheep. *

But now, whenever I read, "All we like sheep have gone astray," (Isa 53:6) I know exactly what the verse means. We follow whims and fashions, taking no account of where we are really headed, and we let ourselves be led away from the track by the ideas of other people. *

I am very thankful that it is the Good Shepherd who is looking after me. I hope I'm not as frustrating as those lambs were ... but I'm sure I must be, sometimes! *

Have you done anything "fashionable" lately? *

The Last Word

Dare to face reality and say, "This too will pass away".

—Anthony de Mello

*Sign in the window of a cafe—
Closed for lunch. Open at 2pm.*

*A sign on a department store
dressing room mirror: "Objects
in mirror may appear bigger
than they actually are"*

*Grace. Heaven goes by favour. If
it went by merit, you would stay
out, and your dog would go in.
Mark Twain.*

*In a Budapest Zoo Please do not
feed the animals. If you have any
suitable food, give it to the
keeper on duty.*

*On the door of a Moscow hotel
room If this is your first visit to
the USSR, you are welcome to it.*

*In a Copenhagen airline ticket
office. We take your bags and
send them in all directions.*

*From a Japanese information
booklet about using an hotel air
conditioner. Cools and heats: If
you want just condition of warm
in your room please control
yourself.*

*In a Rhodes Tailor shop. Order
your summer suit. Because is big
rush we will execute customers
in strict rotation.*

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