

THE AUSTRALIAN



# Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 100 No. 2, 15 February 1997

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A large, stylized, multi-pointed star in a light tan color serves as a background for the central text. The star has approximately 24 points and is centered on the page.

## WHY I AM STILL A CHRISTIAN



# Editorial

## A Good Question

DON SMITH

In this issue we invited four members to comment on their Christian life and why they remain committed Christians. They represent considerable diversity in age, experience and background. The distinguished European theologian Hans Kung in a book entitled *Why I am still A Christian* reflected on his own Christian experience and described his reasons for continuing discipleship. His book title seemed a good question to put to our writers. It is also a question for each of us. \* Our writers are people like ourselves, who grapple with personal and faith issues.



They have shared our achievements, elation, hopes, disappointments and sadness. Our church is built on people such as ourselves. We are part of the many thousands who through the 100 years of this paper have been both the strength and weakness of local churches. It is our corporate faithfulness, joy, perseverance and hope that has carried our churches forward. \* Kung observes that, for all his criticism of the church, he would not want to live apart from the good Christian tradition formed through some twenty centuries. He finds Christianity gives him an orientation on the great questions of Whence and Whither, Why and Wherefore of humanity and the world, and a focus for his individual and social self. \* He draws his values from Jesus of Nazareth, who is an historical figure and not a myth. For him Jesus is authoritative in all things for Christians of all times. Kung describes how Jesus and his Spirit, who is the energy and power of God himself, actually makes possible new awareness, new motivations, new attitudes, new actions and new aims. But then there is the issue of why persevere with the church. Kung lists his grievances with his own Catholic Church. We may have ours too! \* In a moving comment he says we ought not betray the dreams of our youth. Neither can we change a fundamental attitude in life as we might change a coat. And then firmness of character, holding on to convictions and upright behaviour, are fundamental moral obligations and not luxuries. In our perseverance we are never tried beyond our strength. In the end the power of the Gospel of Jesus will prove stronger than human incompetence and more forceful than our foolishness, weakness and cynicism. \*

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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.**

## Anticipating Exploration

To the Editor,  
Like many "AC" readers, I look forward to "our journal" with pleasant anticipation of the topics Janet Thompson writes about.

I thank her for touching our lives with the unusual and practical messages of everyday Christianity. I am a little different from your train friend of so long ago, (who couldn't wait for the ending), so I can guess your endings, but I delight in what you think about and your connecting processes to teach me about the love of and the lessons from our Lord.

May God continue to exercise your love for him and literary ability.

—C.R. Prince  
(Mitcham, Vic)

## Postmodernism

To the Editor,  
The questions asked by Doug Holloway about postmodernism are fair ones to ask, but answers, I believe, may not be straightforward.

Postmodernism is not inherently good or bad, nor a body of knowledge, but is a way of seeing and interpreting the world. It is also an attempt to understand things as honestly as is possible using the human mind. Neat, black and white solutions are not available with postmodernism, and whatever answers are given, the opposite also will have validity.

The Church, till recently, has been able to evangelise in a fairly

one-sided, dogmatic way, proclaiming answers without listening, but this will not achieve the results it has in the past. (Dogmatic proclamation has also been the approach of secular interests and science.) This change is one the Church must come to grips with, for a different type of persuasion is needed, particularly a living persuasion which challenges through engagement, passion and authenticity.

Spirituality is no longer taboo, so the Church can speak without being condemned before uttering a word, but listening, and honestly appreciating the faith journey of others is something we need to learn to do far better.

We need to be skilled in differentiating the essential, sacred core of our faith from the "spiritual highs" we enjoy from our traditions.

Traditions need to be held lightly, so, as Martin Robinson points out in *To Win the West*, we can shift our emphasis from evangelism which seeks to bring people into our Christian sub-culture, to mission, where we are willing to go out, and to adapt as a church in mission to other sub-cultures in Australia, in order to win people where they live to the beauty, power and freedom of the Gospel.

—Brian Holliday  
(Thornlie, WA)


## Wanted: People of Passion

To the Editor,

For me, *The Australian Christian* has faithfully reported the events, happening in Australia and overseas, both within Churches of Christ and snippets from other denominations. However, I'm sure it has been different things to different people, as reflected in articles in the 1 February issue.

Indeed, in Alf White's article, it was good to read the joys and

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# Letters to the Editor

struggles of establishing and maintaining *The Australian Christian*. The emotional flavour, dedication and passion of people determined to make the "AC" succeed was clearly evident.

The struggles, crisis and change, spoke to me particularly. For, similarly, if our churches and ministries are going to expand their witness, and make a far greater impact, at both a state and national level, the 21st Century witness and ministry of all our people, both ordained and lay, will need to be beyond anything we have faithfully accomplished thus far! We need to continually be open to change, evaluation, new ministry opportunities and lifting our game!

What we need are people of passion, called by God, not people, to start a revolution for Christ! We need men and women, not content with simply maintaining their ministry, but who possess enthusiasm, vision, commitment and passion, and who are focused on developing further the witness and ministries of Churches of Christ to a lost and deeply hurting world!

—Colin and Dianne Murdoch  
(Singles For Christ,  
Parramatta, NSW)

## Divine Healing

To the Editor,  
Is there anyone out there who can help me with research on divine

healing of incurable diseases? I would like to contact people who:

1. Have had a definite diagnosis of having a medically incurable disease.
2. God has intervened in some way.
3. Now have a diagnosis (preferably documented) of no longer having the disease.

I would like to hear from as many people as possible, from all denominations, all sorts of diseases (major and minor) and having had a variety of encounters with God. If you or anyone else you know fit the above please write to M.A. Bell, Lot 29 Brokenback Road, Brantxton NSW 2335. You will be sent a questionnaire and may re-

ceive a follow up phone call or visit.

This may be a great encouragement to someone in a similar situation.

—Margaret Bell  
(Brantxton, NSW)

## Update

Dear Readers,

We hope you enjoyed our first issue for 1997. It was an historic moment for the paper and one for which we have already received many positive comments. Some readers may have experienced a slight delay in delivery due to unanticipated technical problems.

As noted in the last issue, we shall be including various articles throughout the year to mark the 100 years of publishing. We shall also shortly be announcing major developmental initiatives to strengthen the paper's future.

We have appreciated the prompt payment of subscriptions by so many readers. Along with these subscriptions readers have generously donated \$1033 towards our work. Thankyou! We would liked to have sent personal ac-

knowledgments but with the volume of mail reaching us each day this has not been possible. Our next issue will focus on the work of our National Aborigines Board. From the planning in hand I'm sure you will find this a stimulating issue.

Readers of "Church News" will note that Neil Noye, the Mayor of the Tasman Peninsula Council in Tasmania and a leader in the Nubeena church, has received an Order of Australia in the Australia Day Honours List. We congratulate Neil and look forward to comment from him a little later, on the response of the community to the tragic events in Port Arthur in 1996.

*Sam Smith*

## Here and There

### 100 Churches Planted in 1996

Despite opposition from the Bulgarian Government, which is basically old Communists dressed up in new clothes, new churches continue to be planted. Some 100 churches commenced last year. Recently seven people graduated from a church planters course and are now in the field, discipling new converts and helping new groups of believers to become vibrant churches. The Chairman of the Bulgaria Lausanne Committee, the Rev Nicolay Nedelchev, says that the newly-elected President in Bulgaria, Peter Stoyanov, may make it easier for the church, since he is known as a democrat. The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation is an international body with partner groups in many countries, including Australia.

### Church Attendance Grows

In recent correspondence with the editor, Barry McMurtrie commented that morning attendance at the Crossroads Christian Church, Corona, California, has grown from 1300 last September to an average now of 3340. The congregation is now the largest church in our movement on the West Coast. New facilities including a large auditorium and a fellowship centre and 22 classrooms have been completed as the first stage. Fifteen acres have been developed with a remaining 23 acres untouched. Barry observes that the progress has been swifter and greater than he expected, but he pretends to be calm!

## Pontius' Puddle





## Cumbers Commended

### Port Arthur ministry commended

Michael Mazengarb, Chairman of the Port Arthur Historic Site, has written to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania commending Glenn Cumbers, former Minister of the Nubeena Church of Christ.

"April 28th (1996) witnessed a major tragedy at our Site. The occurrence has been well documented in varying degrees of graphic description, but the reporting was nothing compared to those who witnessed the immediate aftermath, such as Glenn.

His support shown both to the Site Management and Staff and the members of the Tasman community and courage shown on that day was inspirational to many. As you would expect, the after effects of an event such as this do not go away easily and despite



many on-going pressures, he has continued to give freely of his time providing a valuable support function for the community.

... Glenn's contribution ... was far beyond his responsibilities."

Glenn's final Sunday at Nubeena was on 2 February, prior to his leaving to commence ministry at Bathurst, NSW.

## A Lifetime of Work

### Morwell's 56th anniversary



Gwen Fletcher and Sue Lacey pictured here were among the enthusiastic participants at the 56th Anniversary of the Morwell, Vic church.

Their story was written up in the *Morwell Advertiser*.

Gwen, (left) now 81 and Sue, 75 were young women when the church began in December, 1940. Both Gwen and Sue have spent a lifetime of work with the church and have enjoyed it all. They recall early meetings in the Masonic Hall and then the Scout Hall, and support from groups at Warragul and Sale during the early years. The church was later located in Winifred St, Morwell. The work was developed with the help of the Vic-Tas Properties Corporation and the then Home Mission Department.

The anniversary was held in late 1996.

Past ministers attended and sent greetings. Paul Cameron, minister of the Doncaster, Vic, church was the speaker.

One hundred people attended the anniversary service and the luncheon. Andrew Ogden is the present minister.

Photo courtesy *Morwell Advertiser*.



### The Churches of Christ Theological College

invites you and your friends to its annual

## COLLEGE OPEN HOUSE

Saturday 1 March 1997

- 5.00 pm **Garden Party** in College Court Yard—  
a time for fun, food and catching up with friends from other churches. Food and drinks will be available for purchase—or bring your own.
- 6.00 pm **Formal Program**  
a time to launch the College year and introduce new students. A special program will be provided for children during this time.
- 7.00 pm **Back to the Black Stump**  
a time to reminisce—to reflect on the past, to rejoice and have a laugh;
- 8.00 pm **Youth Bash**  
a special event planned by Youth Vision, Victoria.

*A great occasion for all ages!*

**Make it a church outing!**

**40-60 Jacksons Road Mulgrave, Victoria. (Melway 80 K3)**



## Bushfire Deaths

**Coming to terms with the Lindroth family deaths**



*Mike Folland*

Over 900 people attended the Memorial Service at the Church of Christ at Mt Evelyn, Vic, to remember the lives of Graham and Jennifer Lindroth.

As reported in the last edition of *The Australian Christian*, Graham and Jenny were trapped in their house, along with their neighbour Genevieve Erin, at the height of the Dandenong's bushfires on 21 January. It appears that the fire, which was deliberately lit, appeared without warning as they were in the process of leaving.

It was an absolute shock to learn of their deaths, for all who knew them, particularly the close-knit church community at The Patch church.

Graham and Jenny both ran the youth group at The Patch Church for a number of years, proving to be very popular due to their young age and sporting interests. Graham was a successful Rugby Union player, with Jenny picking up the sport and making the first ever Victorian Women's Rugby team.

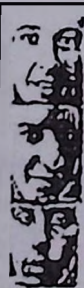
Jenny's great love was children, working in recent years as a family day carer for the local Shire. Our youngest daughter, Ashleigh,

was cared for by Jenny for three days per week most of last year. Tragically, Graham and Jenny were just starting to prepare themselves for their own children when they were killed.

The last few weeks since the fires have been extremely difficult for many people, particularly the families and friends of Graham and Jenny. Feelings of shock and grief were also strained by a significant national media interest. However, the letters and phone calls from so many people around the country have been a tremendous support. The awareness of hundreds of people in prayer for the situation brought a sense of belonging and comfort that was deeply meaningful.

At worship on the Sunday after the fires, and during the Memorial Service, I asked the question, "Where is God?" Rejecting any suggestion that it was God who pre-planned the fires, or that God "took" their lives, we came to recognise God sharing with us in our sadness and loss. We saw God in the lives of all who strove to contain the fires and the massive community response of goodwill and support. We particularly hold on to the belief, that as Graham and Jenny died in each others arms, they also died into the loving embrace of God's love.

—Mike Folland



### ON YOUR OWN, YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Christian Singles Fellowship offers friendship through correspondence with other born-again Christian singles and single-again people. Write enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: CSF, PO Box 3049, North Nowra 2541

## Wet! Wet! Wet!

**Soggy but fun end to year's activities**



*Fun at church playgroup as Fire Brigade put a damper on things*

Many mums and care givers were wet, wet, wet at the Corner Playgroup after a visit from the Glynde Fire Brigade.

A total of 20 children plus mums spent the morning climbing over the big red engine parked in the car park of the Magill, SA, church. Hoses and water were everywhere as the children sprayed the lawn as well as many other items. The playgroup which began with

only two mums has now blossomed and boasts of more than 30 care givers and mothers. Our finale for the year was a visit from Santa and stories of Jesus around a life-size manger.

Magill Church of Christ also hosted carols in the grounds of the University, with a stately Adelaide mansion as the backdrop. Local and guest artists joined the host and minister, Lester Sutton.

## Honours List Award

**Recipient joins three others at Wembley Downs**

The Church at Wembley Downs, WA, is delighted that Elder and Chairman of the Board Professor David Hawks was awarded an Order of Australia in the New Year's Honours List.

The award was for services to community health in the fields of psychology and prevention of alcohol and other drug related problems.

David is very active in the life of the church, despite his duties of

ten taking him interstate or overseas.

His wife Trish is similarly fully involved at Wembley Downs.

David joins Brian Kidd, who recently joined the congregation with his wife Lauris and who was earlier awarded an Order of Australia for services to Architecture. Within the congregation are also two holders of Medals in the Order of Australia. Ray Vincent and Ken Patterson.



## Progressive Move

### Growth leads to space sharing with Adventists

Numurkah's Church of Christ congregation, Vic, enjoyed its first service in its new home, the Seventh Day Adventist Church on 1 September 1996.

Pleased to be welcomed to their new place of worship, Church of Christ members say they believe Sunday was the beginning of a healthy new relationship between the churches, which have entered a space sharing arrangement.

The Seventh Day Adventist congregation meets on Saturday mornings, while the Church of

Christ members attend traditional Sunday morning services.

Church of Christ pastor, Ray Eldridge, said the move to larger and more modern facilities was the result of a fast-growing congregation attending services at the McDonald St site.

The deal between the churches was over six weeks in the making, after Church of Christ elders approached Seventh Day Adventist leaders about sharing facilities at their Tocumwal Rd church.

"They've been good, very good to



*Numurkah congregation at their old place of worship*

us," Mr Eldridge said of the Seventh Day Adventist membership. He said members were generally very supportive and enthusiastic about the change of venue, describing the move as a progressive one for the church.

Numurkah Seventh Day Adventist Church treasurer, Julie Hopkins, said members were more than happy to share facilities with the Church of Christ and have already been impressed by the manner and attitude of their new co-tenants.

"All were of one mind about it," Mrs Hopkins said.

"They think it's great." About 16 church members regularly attend Saturday morning services, while the Church of Christ congregation numbers around 80, almost double that of last year.

Mr Eldridge said many of the new regulars are new to the district, while others have only recently joined the church. He described his own appointment last November merely as a catalyst for the rapid and unexpected expansion of the congregation.

Used with permission of the Numurkah Leader.

## *An exciting paid position now exists for a* **Children's Ministry Director**

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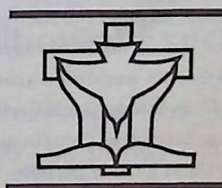
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Trained**

**Up-Front  
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- ◆ To the two aims of evangelism and nurture.
- ◆ Probably teacher trained or theologically trained, preferably both.
- ◆ Impressive ability in front of a large congregation.
- ◆ Utilising the latest trends nationally and globally.



Inquiries: Larry Galbraith, Senior Minister, York Street Church of Christ, Ballarat Vic 3350. Phone (03) 5331 1079. Fax (03) 5333 2454.

## **T.E. Rofe Settlement**

Applications for grants to assist with fees and books from the T.E. Rofe Settlement are invited from ministers who are graduates of the Churches of Christ Theological College, Vic, and who are studying at an Australian tertiary institution. Application forms are available from CCTC (PO Box 629, Mulgrave North Vic 3170. Phone (03) 9790 1000) and will close on 7 March 1996.



# World Day of Prayer

**Uniting the world in prayer and worship**

"Like a seed which grows into a tree" is the rather delightful theme chosen for this year's World Day of Prayer to be held on Friday March 7. Not only symbolic of this worldwide movement's flourishing growth since 1887, it is a theme which was specifically chosen to reflect the astonishing growth of the Christian community in Korea, despite many barriers and difficulties along the way.

Each year the World Day of Prayer movement develops and prepares a special theme that becomes a prayer drawn from the faith, hope, joy, struggles, concerns and the suffering of women in a particular country. In this way it is possible to experience the richness of the Christian faith as it grows deeper and broader in an international, ecumenical expression.

In many ways, the Movement is unique in that the theme and service prepared by the selected nation is celebrated at the same time on a worldwide basis. Eunice Kim, liaison officer for Korea, writes about her nation's role in preparing this year's service:

"We feel privileged to write this 1997 order of service believing

that not only Korean people but those around the world will join us in prayer and that we will be empowered to respond to God's call. In Korea, where so many suffer because of the division of the nation, the loss of human rights and social deprivation, we rejoice that despite political pressure, Christians are finding ways to communicate the Gospel."

In this year's Worship Service, for which special versions have also been prepared for students, ethnic groups and the frail aged, the women of Korea ask that we pray for God to bring forth in their lives, and indeed the rest of the world, new seeds for three things: liberation from the pain of injustice, loneliness and alienation; that greed and selfishness may be broken down, and; world peace and unity—reunification in a divided country, where people's suffering under imperialism and oppression has produced hatred. Such goals perhaps best exemplify the overwhelming concerns that unite members of the World Day of Prayer organisation, and symbolise its worldwide growth. In 1967, an International Committee was formed to coordinate activities and for this purpose, rep-

resentatives of National Committees meet every four years in different areas of the world.

National Committees on all continents administer World Day of Prayer in their respective areas and decide on how best to use annual offerings. In February 1995, the International Committee met in Melbourne—the first time in Australia—during which many Churches of Christ women were involved. Officers were elected and themes were set for the following four years. Australian representatives received many compliments for organising the conference.

Every nation appoints a liaison officer and in this regard, the Churches of Christ have been well represented over the last 20 years. Doreen Strack (Vic), Dorothy Armstrong (Qld) and Yvonne Harrison (Tas) have all served in this capacity and should readers have any enquires, Doreen Strack (03 9375 2950) would be very happy to talk to you.

—Philip Davey



*Doreen Strack*

## Here and There

### Church Growth in Turkmenistan

This Central Asian Republic of 4.5 million inhabitants only had a small handful of scattered believers several years ago. Today there are more than 150 baptisms a year. Many of the young believers are persecuted and some have been imprisoned for their faith.

### Disciples Statistics

The Disciple News Service notes a membership of 933,011 in 4070 congregations in the United States and Canada. There is a membership drop of 0.8%, which is one of the smallest in recent years. Eight of the church's 36 regions showed gains. In a ten-year period there has been a 16% overall drop in membership. There are 50 congregations in formation, or new congregations in 21 regions.

### New Group for Women

Heritage Keepers is a new women's version of the men's Promise Keepers movement. Heritage Keepers has recently been proposed among women in the US by Disciple minister Russell Jones of Kansas and his wife Sarah, working in conjunction with Lori and Bob Beckler. Some 3000 women are expected at the first meeting to be held in Wichita, Kansas

## Gardiner Church Songs of Praise

*Come and enjoy singing  
your favourite hymns at*

**3.00 pm  
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*at Gardiner Church of Christ,  
'Malvern' Road,  
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Glen Iris, Vic.*

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## Back to Banmatmat

Jan Christensen returns to lecture in Vanuatu



Jan Christensen was recently a missionary at Banmatmat Bible College, Vanuatu, and now is Ministry Centre Coordinator of

Northern River Ministry Centre for our Carlingford College in NSW. She writes of a recent lecture tour to Banmatmat.

"Banmatmat Bible College in the summer—hot, humid; liberally supplied with mosquitos, rats, cockroaches; ripe pawpaws; crab fresh from the beach into the pot; sun setting vividly in the west reflected in the ocean; excitement as the supply ship arrives; laughter and singing as people work and play; pressure lanterns at night when the generators won't work; warm friendship and times of sharing; hours in the classroom and at study.

I returned to Banmatmat in December to teach a couple of mod-

ules for the "Carlingford Course", a course for those who have been through the regular Banmatmat program and need study at a more advanced level.

When I went, I was thankful to be able to take with me books for the library for my courses to supplement those already at the College. These books were bought with money from the Wilson Bebe Memorial Fund, which is making a significant contribution to the improvement of the library at Banmatmat. In fact, they are gaining so many new books that they will soon outgrow their present library space!

So far, the Fund has raised close to \$8600, and, as a past lecturer

for five years in the regular program of Banmatmat and a present lecturer in the Carlingford program, I've had the privilege of spending \$3339 of this so far on books for the library. When I think back to the days before the Fund, when often, to spend \$100 on library books was a heady experience, this is exciting for me and those at Banmatmat. So thanks to all who have given—you are making a significant contribution to Banmatmat Bible College, and to the education of the leaders of the Churches of Christ in Vanuatu. —Jan Christensen

Gifts to the Pastor Wilson Bebe Memorial Library Fund can be sent to Churches of Christ in NSW Theological College, PO Box 140, Carlingford NSW 2118. Gifts of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible.

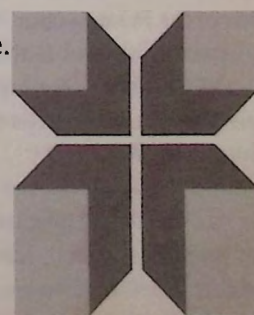
# Executive Officer

**The Properties Corporation of the Churches of Christ invites applications for the position of Executive Officer.**

- Duties:** The corporate management of the Properties Corporation of the Churches of Christ as directed by the policy decisions of the Board of Trustees.
- Qualifications:** Graduate in Accounting, computer literacy essential. A proven knowledge of financial and secretarial management essential.
- Remuneration:** An appropriate remuneration package will be available.

Applications in writing, with curriculum vitae to:

**The Chairman  
The Properties Corporation of the Churches of Christ  
77 Capel St  
West Melbourne Vic 3003  
Telephone (03) 9326 8900**





# To Whom Else Can I Go?

PETER NELSON

**A**s a 13 year old my Sunday School teacher at the Launceston Church of Christ, Tas, presented me with the book *C.T. Studd Cricketer and Missionary*. I was far more interested in his cricketing exploits than anything else, but a phrase from the book burnt into my soul, "If Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him". \*

I am still a Christian because the power of God's love still grips me and challenges me and gives me hope. There is

*I am still a Christian because the power of God's love still grips me and challenges me and gives me hope.*

nothing in philosophy, psychology or political theory that can rival the wonder, glory and wisdom of Christ crucified. Who would ever conceive of a God who takes the rebellious and painful human condition to his heart and becomes a human being to be on our side and die for me and everyone else on a despised cross? The sheer revelation of the crucified God and his sacrificial love for me is overwhelming. \*

I am still a Christian because of the power of the Resurrection. "If Christ be not raised then our faith is in vain." 1 Cor 15.14. The reality, joy and victory of the Resurrection gives me hope for all humanity. \*

All the destructive forces which tear away our humanity and alienate us from God: prejudice, greed, lust for power, hatred and death; have been defeated. Living in the light of the resurrection

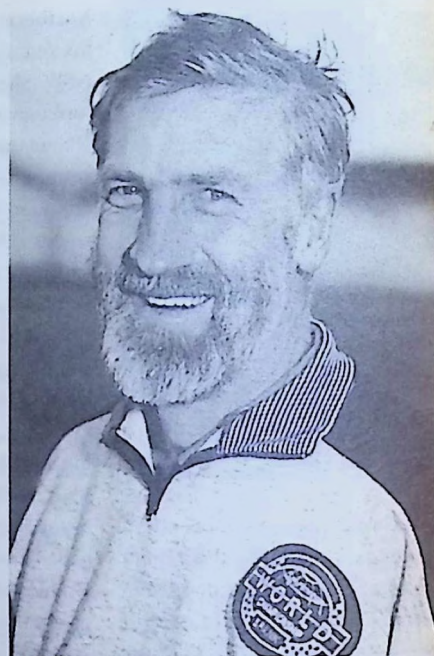
presents me with the challenge of making known the way of Jesus and his victory. I look forward to seeing the living Christ at work in my life, in his church and in our society. The promise of the resurrected Lord to be with his disciples always has never failed me. I've experienced this presence in the face of a hold-up, a near drowning and in the every day care of churches. He has never let me down. \*

Every time I attend a funeral of a believer I experience a peace and a certainty that defies description. I can't explain it logically or express it eloquently, but deep in my heart (a gut feeling if you like) I experience the joy and certain hope of the Resurrection. \*

I am still a Christian because I've glimpsed the future, or should I say, the coming Kingdom. In all the ups and downs of life within a community of Christians there are times when the gospel comes alive in the fellowship of believers and I've seen before my eyes grace, acceptance, unity, love and joy lived out. \*

The shape of the coming Kingdom will be like that, but even greater, and to experience even a taste now gives a great incentive to see the Kingdom in all its fullness. There is so much more track to travel as a disciple and I recognise that my obedience has to catch up with my knowledge. Christ Jesus has so much more to teach me and I want to find the course he has mapped out for me. \*

I am still a Christian because I've caught a glimmer of the glory of God. I am no Moses who has hid in the rock and has seen a fair slice of God's glory, but I've sat at a desk and been shaken with both fear and joy as I've read *Church Dogmatics* Vol. 2 "The Doctrine



of God". Here Karl Barth portrayed the Living God who is his own proof and who is not reliant on the vagaries and limits of human reason. Here is a gracious God who reveals himself as merciful and righteous, holy and loving, all powerful and all knowing. A God who is not small and petty, but a great God, worthy of all the love of my heart, mind, soul and strength. But there too is a God of unlimited grace whose heart reaches out to ordinary people. \*

I am still a Christian because I've seen the beauty, strength and reality of Christ in the lives of so many. In their everyday lives and their selfless service they minister the love of Christ to me. \*

I've heard the voices of protest, I listened to the dreams and nightmares of humanists and I've been made aware of the philosopher's pondering, but Jesus alone has the words of eternal life. To whom else can I (we) go? \*

Peter Nelson is minister of the Ainslie, ACT, church.



# Why am I Still a Christian?

MARG DREDGE

I wish I could answer that for the last 38 years since giving my life to Christ everything has been wonderful or, "Since I became a Christian my life has been so easy!" or even, "Over all those years I've always felt really close to God and I'm utterly convinced there is no other way to live." \* Well, I am convinced that there is no other way to live—not because all my prayers have been answered or dreams fulfilled but, rather, because I've seen a shy, nervous young person grow into a confident, mature woman. \*

*I will never forget my absolute terror at what I had done. (My first thought—"My father will kill me!").*

I did not grow up in a happy home—there were many tears, raised voices and violent episodes. My mother sent me to Sunday School because that was the thing to do. My father would do his best to prevent it—any minor misdemeanour meant no Sunday School! \* Those Sunday encounters which developed into regular church attendance were very important. One day I found myself at the front of a Sunday evening service. I will never forget my absolute terror at what I had done. (My first thought—"My father will kill me!"). I remember trying to work out ways I could "take back" that decision! I believe that was my first call from God—he chose me and there was no denying him. \*

Some years later, I met a young man but he was about to go 1000 miles away to study for ministry! The letters were

written and the relationship developed. The courtship of 3 years' letter writing was not so good for one who needed companionship, but God's hand was in it and so I became a "minister's wife"! \* This was God's second call on my life and again there was no denying it. So I was thrust into the role of minister's wife with all its demands and expectations. Even though still lacking self-confidence, I threw myself into being a support for Colin—teaching Sunday school, leading Girls' Brigade, conducting CWF meetings, hosting visitors and such like. \*

Over those years I have struggled with desert times—times when God has seemed so far away. Times when people have disappointed and disillusioned me. Times when the Church has not been the place of healing and reconciliation but, rather, a place of dissension and power struggles. Times when there seemed to be no light at the end of a tunnel of disappointment. Times of great fear when there has been darkness and evil around me. Even times when, yes, I have doubted whether God really does care! \*

But there have also been times when the joy of living has almost overwhelmed me. When people have brought unexpected pleasure. When the loving hand has been extended and the gentle word spoken. Times when the majesty of God's creation has been seen in all its might and wonder, and times when the days have been golden, filled with love and laughter. There has been the joy of seeing lives transformed or a spring return to the step. Times of being part of reconciled relationships or new adventures of faith. \*

Over those years, I have recognised that to live in this imperfect world is to experience all sorts of setbacks and



disappointments. In spite of all our hopes, our children don't always make the choices we would like them to. We cannot insulate ourselves from human frailties. In this day of modern technology the world is in our living room—we cannot help but be touched by the dangers and difficulties of the world. \* However, I have also understood that no matter how deep my despair, God's arms are deeper still, that no matter how high my joys, God's delight is even higher. I have understood the loving patience of God; I have never broken the thread which links us together. (Sometimes it's been very elastic!) Somehow I have kept my hand in God's and God has been faithful. I have been lifted when I've fallen; I have even been carried, sometimes on eagle's wings. I have been restored and renewed. The mystery of God has filled my life and I have never regretted that decision made all those years ago. \*

That is why I am still a Christian! \* Marg Dredge is currently the World President of CWF and is a past Conference President in SA.



# Why I Still Believe

SIR GEOFFREY FOOT

**I**n my youth I was quite unlike the Timothy of the New Testament, except that I was nurtured in the faith by parents of a similar mould. \* I recall as a young child that while I was confined in a cot for a three-week isolation period following diphtheria (no penicillin then), I began to read through the Bible from Genesis, most of it read aloud to my sister in the adjoining cot. I can't remember if I arrived at Revelation! \*

I practised the Christian Endeavour pledge "... to pray and read the Bible every day," from an early age, and in

*What influence did I then have while the proponents of casinos continued on their course? This was a testing time, but I clung to the support I knew—faith in God—and his faithfulness to me.*

my first year at high school, I made a commitment to Christ and was baptised. \*

The severe economic depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s were hard for raising even two children, but my parents never wavered in their faith and stewardship. Leaving school at 13, my hopes of a calling to a ministry vocation were abandoned. I was apprenticed to an accountant, a fine Christian who became my role model. \*

The local church and study absorbed all my time. I was soon deep into church

administration and financial detail, as well as Sunday School leadership, Christian Endeavour and the choir. Stanton Wilson (our pastor at the time) suggested that I lift my sights to a wider field. Thus began a half-century of association with the Bible Society at all levels, and close contact and fellowship with many whom I regard as saints—Bob Geyer, Bill Howard, Russell Baker, Fred Levett, Bert Arrowsmith, James Payne, and I could go on. They raised, supported and nurtured me in the faith. \*

My faith is simple and uncomplicated. I believe in the one God, whose only Son Jesus Christ lived as a man, died and conquered death, and is my personal saviour. I believe in a life after death—of its form I know nothing except that I will be with my maker God and his son Jesus. \*

So many debates rage that are peripheral to that simple faith—questions like the method and timing of creation, the form and time of our Lord's return, and so on. I don't see these issues as uplifting to me or affecting my basic faith. Although interesting and contentious to some, they mean little to me. I'm too absorbed in enjoying and appreciating God's gifts—the beauty of the earth, human relationships, family, music, poetry ... \*

My faith has had its peaks and troughs, but has stood the tests. I recall during World War II when my duties required me to prepare telegrams to wives and parents informing of the deaths of husbands and sons ... "killed in action" ... "reported missing believed drowned" ... Where was God in all this, I asked? Years later a political career where I had considerable opportunity to influence for right and justice, was unexpectedly cut short by the voters. At 56,



I was jobless with few prospects. Who would want me? What influence did I then have while the proponents of casinos continued on their course? This was a testing time, but I clung to the support I knew—faith in God—and his faithfulness to me. \*

What have been the factors sustaining my faith?

- The heritage from my parents.
- A wife of great faithfulness in prayer over 56 years.
- Association with others of faith.
- Daily private prayer, Bible reading and meditation.
- Prayer not only in the quiet times, but also in times of urgent need and stress. \*

As an octogenarian, I'd strongly commend Paul's confident assertion in Phil 4.13. I've proved it to be a reality in my life experience—"Christ gives me the strength to face anything." (Contemporary English Version) \*

Sir Geoffrey Foot is a member of the Launceston church. He was President of the Vic-Tas Conference in 1980, and a member of the Legislative Council of the Tasmanian Parliament for ten years. He acted as Leader for the Government during part of this time.



# Why I am Still a Christian

MARJORIE BROUGH

I became a Christian in my early teens and my faith has become increasingly important to me throughout my life. I heard about the Christian faith from my parents and from many fine ministers and devoted Sunday School teachers. Circumstances, experiences and especially the people in my life, have strengthened my faith. \*

I consider myself very fortunate to have been born into a loving Christian family. My mother taught me to pray as a

*I feel I am still growing in faith through family discussions and the sharing of ideas and experiences.*

toddler. (She still keeps me on track.) My father taught me most of the hymns in the hymn book, although almost tone deaf. Dad always said grace before meals. He considered this a natural extension of weekly communion. \* We practice this habit too. It serves as a continuing reminder of the Lord's provision for us in so many ways. \* I feel it is the influence of other people and particularly those close to me that has matured my faith. \* My husband, Ray, has shown me strong faith in action. He was unconcerned when faced with cancer and other serious illness. He is caring, most unselfish, a great encourager, but extremely modest in his own professional and sporting accomplishments. (He will be furious to read this.) \* My sister, Elinor, has enriched my faith. We have interesting discussions on the

phone about moral and spiritual issues. I treasure these chats. \*

I really can't imagine any other framework for a satisfactory life. Not that I'm always the Christian I ought to be, but I do try to live in the way I know the Lord wants me to—loving him and loving my neighbours. I take heart from the car bumper sticker: "Christians aren't perfect—just forgiven". \*

Our children have enriched my faith. I have learnt much from each of them. The youth outreach "Daniel's Den" experience, Rodger's project at the old Wattle Park church, became a family project. It was a significant growing experience for us all. \*

I feel I am still growing in faith through family discussions and the sharing of ideas and experiences. Our children and grandchildren teach us the good new songs. The local church has been a major influence in my faith, and Christian friends have taught me the meaning of fellowship. Our holidays, fun times and even shared sorrows have enriched my life. \*

Study and work experience have developed my faith. As a very-mature adult student I undertook tertiary study at Melbourne University. My interest was psychology and I was especially interested to examine the current (1977) belief that psychology and religion were incompatible. I did not find psychology particularly incompatible, but I did not find it very Christian. Because I enjoyed study, I did a Masters and PhD at Monash and discovered Adlerian psychology. \*

Very briefly this theory is holistic (as opposed to the Freudian concept of id, ego and superego); it is teleological (accepting all behaviour, thought, feeling and action as purposive) and it is phenomenological (behaviour is ac-



cepted as a function of perception). \* A central concept is the German word *Gemeinschaftsgefühl* which is translated as brotherly love. \*

With its emphasis on encouragement, I find it an excellent framework for counselling. I had learnt of the value of encouragement in my work experience as a Nurse Counsellor at the Women's Hospital and also at Wesley Central Mission. It was in these positions that I first became aware of the extent of the problem of loneliness and this subject became the focus of my study. I learnt in my program much about the loneliness of many people. \*

Surely the loneliest state would be to have no knowledge of our God and His love for us. (Gen 2:18) \*

Why am I still a Christian? I have been very blessed and I am grateful to God for the people in my life and for the circumstances and experiences of my life that have nourished my faith. \*

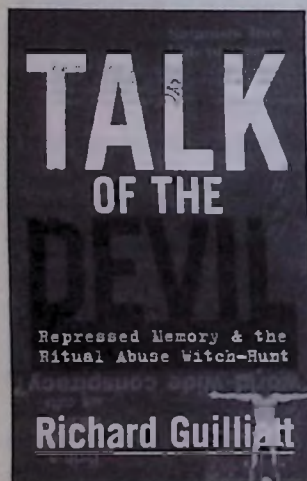
It was St Augustine who said: "Faith is to believe what we do not see. And the reward of faith is to see what we believe." \*

Marjorie Brough is a member of the Surrey Hills, Vic. church.





## Talk of the Devil



by Richard Guilliat (Text Publishing) approx \$16.95. This is not a book for the faint-hearted! Guilliat's report on theories of satanic ritual abuse, repressed memories and multiple personality syndrome is compelling and disturbing reading, but is not without a bias which is likely to disturb some people as much as the issue of child sexual abuse itself. While not disputing the reality of sexual abuse, Guilliat attempts to throw doubt on the validity of

these three theories, and their capacity to explain the suffering of those who believe themselves to have been abused.

He proposes that a network of therapists, support group organisers, conservative Christians and radical feminists, are allied in spreading "satanic cult hysteria" and uncovering what they claim to be a huge, money-making organisation of devil worshippers involved in drug dealing, paedophile rings, child pornography, and rampant ritual abuse, for which Guilliat suggests, the only evidence is unsubstantiated memories.

He accuses over-zealous therapists of perpetuating a crusade, which he compares with the witch hunts of the 15th-17th Centuries, and which continues in spite of the continual collapse of court cases based on "a paradoxical combination of bizarre allegations and flimsy evidence", with "compelling hallucinatory qualities". He also suggests that religious fundamentalists, anti-cult activists, psychotherapists and radical feminists all use the ritual abuse theory to promote their own causes or industries.

Guilliat is not a voice in isolation. Alongside the AAMP&D (Australian Association of Multiple Personality & Disassociation) there is now a growing movement called FMSF (False Memory Syndrome Foundation), so as well as the testing of theories of abuse, he touches on what is becoming a trial of psychotherapy itself.

This ought not be the only book one reads about these issues, but it is certainly worth reading because it will undoubtedly elicit a response one way or another, and perhaps lead to greater research, and considered debate, which is needed for the sake of those who suffer at the hands of abusers; whether those abusers be

satanists, therapists, media, money-makers or one's family. Those who will be outraged at Guilliat's approach may be somewhat appeased by his admission at the end of the book that all witch hunts have a kernel of reality and that all ritualistic abuse is not mythological.

—Carol Preston

## A Marriage That Works

CLIFF POWELL, GRAHAM BARKER & IAN HARVEY  
FOREWORD BY THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

### MARRIAGE THAT WORKS



BUILDING A LOVING, LASTING RELATIONSHIP

by Cliff Powell, Graham Barker and Ian Harvey (Albatross) \$11.95.

Refreshing, down to earth and practical! It is a good book to use for couples; a good book to give as a gift; and a good book to use in groups. It is an excellent combination of common-sense theol-

ogy and psychology. It avoids the cliches.

This book is about understanding the influences of the families of origin and of letting go that which is no longer necessary. Some of the simple communication and conflict resolution skills are outlined and demonstrated.

I love the descriptive "do-ing words" for chapter headings ... leave ... develop ... become ... cultivate ... enjoy ... forgive. In fact there are seventeen pages given to the simple old-fashioned concept of "having fun"!

This is a book that says "don't read me unless you are prepared to do something". There are questionnaires, communication exercises for reflection or discussion between couples or in groups. I would love to see this book used in small groups where couples covenanted to read a chapter a month and then met as a group to share insights.

My only disappointment is that this is a "big" book in terms of usefulness, but presented in a very traditional format. The cartoons make a point, but I would love to have seen a greater use of space, colour and format to catch the imagination of those who don't spend a lot of time reading.

—Kevin Harvey.

(Cliff Powell is a registered psychologist and lecturer at CCTC, Carlingford, NSW. —Ed)

## Visiting Canberra? Stay with a Church Family

A number of Canberra church families offer accommodation in their homes at basic bed and breakfast rates to help raise funds for "Home Mission" extensions in the ACT

If you would like to enjoy friendly "one of the family" hospitality in Canberra write for particulars to:

Lyn Swift  
34 Yiman Street,  
Waramanga 2611  
Phone (062) 88 2050

Barbara Kennedy  
6 Sharp Place,  
Melba 2615  
Phone (062) 58 1360

Advance bookings appreciated



# 2046 On My Mind

DON STEWART

I just couldn't get the year 2046 out of my mind: (see "AC" 19.10.96, p. 12) \*

Mind you, I am not afraid of big Churches or big Church organisations. I am not afraid of small congregations either. Both have their temptations and their opportunities for the work of Christ. \*

I have pastored a congregation of 11 persons and I currently have responsibilities in leadership for the largest single enterprise being conducted by Churches of Christ in Aus-

*When I take a glance at the big picture, I see that there have been lots of aberrations, little bumps here and there; but the Church is for eternity.*

tralia—Churches of Christ Care (Qld). People cared for last year: 11,300; staff: 1,100; budget: \$33m. \*

Some years ago I was asked by *On Being* to predict what I saw as difficulties for the Church in the new millennium. While I declined to comment on anything so big as a millennium, I was prepared to at least throw in my two bits for the problems that I see for the early part of the next century. \*

To me, the greatest threat to world peace is religious fundamentalism. In fact fundamentalism is really a misnomer. The "fundamentalism" of which I speak gathers together baser concepts and, using powerful religious rhetoric, drives religious intolerance to violence. Against the monstrosity of religious fundamentalism, the Church will be called upon to be a suffering servant in the cause of Christ's love. \*

More than ever before the Church must reach out to the new generations of disempowered people that fill the cities of the world—the poor, the outcast, the sick, the lame, the powerless. Yet these same people have the power to turn the world into oblivion with the wrong leaders. \*

This is a strange phenomenon. These same people are open to the gospel, they are spiritually alive; but there are few Australian Christians who can talk with

them. These people are the world's majority. \*

In Latin America, Korea, Asia and Africa vast numbers are turning to Christ and turning to the pagan West as a field for mission. I have met some of these missionaries from the Pacific Islands who are working here in Australia. \*

Against that background, I found the offering by Graham Agnew on the year 2046 a very sad comment. \*

No, I'm not disturbed by big churches. I look forward to the time when here in Australia we will have some truly big churches, rather than a number of middle sized ones. Churches of Christ Care have a larger attendance at Church each week than any Church of Christ in Queensland. \*

Two things made me sad. I know that our Churches are not able to communicate with the outcast groups of our Australian society, and if there were some people who could communicate with them then I know these people would not be welcome in our Churches. We are building our Churches out of the middle class and some of our larger churches have a happy knack of being able to press their buttons. \*

How I long for people who will work alongside our professional people in care ministry where we are touching the growing tribe of the disempowered. We need Christians who, as servants, will listen and learn and share their faith and strengthen the lowly, lifting them up to God. We do not want leaders for this kind of work; we want leaders who can set people free to become what God alone can make them for his sake. \*

I am sad because most of our bigger churches are not touch-

ing those with whom Christ Jesus mingled and worked. \*

The second thing that made me sad is the attitude that the Church—the organised Church—has become irrelevant for some middle sized churches. They are no longer seeing it as important to lend their effort to the effort of others to build the kingdom of God together. Lost in a new parochialism that sees their Church as the centre of their world, they press on to grow "big". \*

Already I have noticed that Churches that make our shared structures irrelevant have the effect of making themselves irrelevant as far as the shared structures are concerned. They do not participate, so the need for them to participate is no longer there. The Church in its history has often had its side-shows. No big deal really, but sad. \*

It is easy to give in to the temptation to become impressed with one's success and greatness, until we look at the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame. As Jesus said, "He who would be my disciple must take up his cross and follow me". \*

I am sad because we are not all engaged together to carry the cross, and to care for one another with Christ's love. \*

I am not sad about the Church. I am not even worried about the future of the Church. This is the Church of the Christ. It is his Church and when I take a glance at the big picture, I see that there have been lots of aberrations, little bumps here and there; but the Church is for eternity and it is growing in obedience to his will. \*

Hang in there, we'll get the hang of it sometime. \*

## Quilts Plus Exhibition

Ringwood Church of Christ  
Piecemakers

27, 28 February 10.00 am – 9.00 pm  
1 March 10.00 am – 4.00 pm

Quilts, cross stitch, porcelain dolls, etc.

13 Bedford Road, Ringwood  
Refreshments Available





## DEATHS

**FREIBERG, Glenys** Passed away peacefully on 30 January, aged 45 years. Beloved wife of Neville, mother of Geoffrey and Jason, sister in law of Ross, daughter in law of Fay and Jack (dec.) Freiberg. Loved and remembered always. Shalom.

**THOMSON Roy** (9.12.08-22.1.97) At Fremantle. Dearly loved husband of Hazel (dec.). Much loved dad, grandad, great-grandad of Val and Ross McConkey; Stephen and Lyndal, Denise, Joe, Holly and Wesley Fry; Olwyn and Peter Shannon, Judith, Andrew and Ashlee Bruce, Dianne and Greg. Reunited with mum. "Well done good and faithful servant."

## HOLIDAYS

**FREMANTLE, WA** Bethel Guest House. Short walk to town, beaches, Esplanade. From \$20 pp twin includes light breakfast. Phone (09) 335 4656. Host Bob Fairman.

**HERVEY BAY, POINT VERNON** Whale watch or explore magical Fraser Island.

Premier holiday position. New 3BR house, lock-up garage. All modern cons, has everything. Fully furnished, carpets, colour TV, washing machine, dryer, microwave. Short stroll to Bay, boat ramps, shops and parks. Bookings phone (02) 790 3710.

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

**NOOSA QUEENSLAND** Luxury fully-equipped private 2 bedroom unit available early June to mid August while owner overseas. Attractive rates. Full details Carmilla Wilbraham (07) 5482 7489.

**SA SEASIDE HOLIDAY PLAYGROUND** includes Victor Harbor & Port Elliot. Uniting Church owned self-contained 2 and 3 bedroom units available for hire in both locations. Also units overlooking Adelaide at suburban Belair. Phone UCA (08) 8212 4066.

## CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Dr Greg Elsdon, Conference President, and Mrs. Shirley Wallis, Christian Women's Fellowship President, will host the **Presidents' Receptions** at:

**Manifold Heights Church of Christ**  
Wednesday 12 March 8.00 pm.

**Mulgrave Church of Christ**  
Friday 21 March 8.00 pm.

**Horsham Church of Christ**  
Saturday 12 April 8.00 pm.

**Footscray Church of Christ**  
Wednesday 16 April 8.00 pm.

**Shepparton Church of Christ**  
Saturday 19 April 8.00 pm.

Come and hear what is happening around the churches in your region. Meet the Presidents and Conference personnel. Supper will be served. Further details from the Churches of Christ Centre (03) 9326 8900.



## When Communication is Difficult

GLEN WEGNER

One of our readers wrote asking how to pastorally care for someone when communication is difficult. Such circumstances are not unusual in hospitals and nursing homes. A patient may have difficulty in responding for a variety of reasons. This may be due to a stroke, a tracheotomy, or a person may be deaf, semi-conscious, sedated or depressed. And there are patients who speak little English. \*



*In these types of situations there is no easy solution, and I can only suggest patience, presence and perseverance*

It's an awkward and helpless feeling a carer has when wanting to care and communicate, and conversation doesn't flow. It's equally frustrating for a patient when they would like to participate in conversation but are unable to do so. This is especially so for some stroke patients who are unable to transfer their thoughts into words. \* So what can a carer do when communication seems impossible? In some instances writing may aid some exchange of communication, or a speech therapist may help by providing a chart of words, symbols or drawings that a patient may

point to, to achieve a limited measure of communication. If this fails and communication is impossible, then it may be appropriate to sit with a patient and provide a pastoral presence, or hold the patient's arm and communicate through touch. Another alternative is to leave a gift, hoping that the nature of the gift will communicate. \* Often when a patient can't speak, they may still hear. Even people who appear to be unconscious may still hear. In such situations some options are to speak encouragingly, read, or use some taped music. This may help reduce a patient's feeling of isolation. \* A sense of embarrassment is sometimes felt by pastoral carers who when attempting to converse with an older person who is partially deaf find that they are shouting or repeating comments and the other patients in the room can hear, but not the one for whom the conversation is intended. \* In these types of situations there is no easy solution, and I can only suggest patience, presence and perseverance. Not to attempt communication is to leave such patients pastorally isolated or neglected. \*



# Words of Love and War

VINEY LONGTHORP

**R**eaders of the Letter of James will have few doubts about the power of words. Such is the effect of language that the spoken word can inspire, convey deep thoughts and feelings, can bring people close together as well as precipitate conflict. Words must always be taken seriously. \*

The power of the spoken word lies at the centre of each of three films now being screened in most centres \*

In the French film *Ridiculous* we go to the Court of Louis XVI, that hapless monarch, just before *le deluge* will sweep him

*Words are only as valid as the values which are invested in them.*

away, together with many members of his sycophants of the *ancien regime*. Louis had his nobles centred at Versailles where he could keep an eye on them and so render them politically powerless. In that claustrophobic atmosphere where tedium ruled, witty conversations in the salons developed to an art form. Here, the use of the

wrong word or form of words could mean ridicule, and hence, social destruction. It was a clever but merciless game. \*

Into this scene comes Gregoire, an idealistic baron and engineer who needs the king's patronage in order to drain the swamps on his estate which are ruining the health of the peasants. But Gregoire has to run the gauntlet of those at court who like to make verbal mincemeat of newcomers, especially those whom they regard as naive buffoons. \*

However, our Gregoire has a sharp mind and a sharper tongue. In the ensuing war of words we are treated to scintillating repartee and acerbic language. The subtitles convey as much delight as do the sumptuous scenes and the compelling drama. \*

Neil Jordan's latest production, *Michael Collins*, depicts a war of words and war in very fact. It is the story of the rebellion of the Irish against the British early this century. The film starts with the uprising at Easter 1916, when armed rebels fought from the Dublin General Post Office. The British executed all but one of the leaders. Eamon De Valera was spared because he was born in America. The dyspeptic and nerve-ridden De Valera is

superbly played by Alan Rickman. \*

Another of the rebels, Michael Collins (Liam Neeson of *Schindler's List*), who has considerable verbal and personal charisma, rallies his people in a renewed effort for independence. He devises guerilla tactics which resulted in the formation of the Irish Republican Army, which in turn resulted in a bloody campaign of attrition. Much of the tragedy depicted in the film lies in the insoluble contradiction between words about political idealism and the ensuing brutality of action. \*

In 1921 De Valera sent Collins to London to negotiate a treaty. Thus the Irish Free State was born as well as Northern Ireland. But many Irish rejected this partition. Collins was ambushed and killed by a faction of the revolutionaries. Hell, it seems, hath no fury such as that when fellow ideologues fall foul of each other. He was only 31. Many contend that this was the start of that war that has made such heart-rending headlines to the present day, and even changed the ways people in many parts of the world have fought for independence. \*

What a happy contrast we have in *Emma*! Here words are used in the ways of love and friendship, though at times there is much bloodless skirmishing. This is yet another film based on a novel by Jane Austen—she has almost become an industry. *Emma* is arguably her greatest opus and has been worked into a beautiful film—bright, witty, comic, entertaining, and a visual



delight. Our "heroine" (Gwyneth Paltrow) is "heaven bent" on making matches between some of her friends. Her efforts do not always succeed. So obsessed is she with playing cupid's aide that she nearly misses out in identifying her own "Mr Right". \*

But Emma is not all sweetness and light. Jane Austen herself said that she pictured Emma as being not totally likeable. However, when Mr Knightly chastises her for acts of snobbery and unkindness, she repents and resolves to be a kinder, more generous person. This may sound a trifle twee, something out of the many third-rate novels of that era. But where the film gives the language of Jane Austen full measure, we enjoy the felicity of the words embodying the cut and thrust of people in true life situations. \*

Do we seek a moral in all this? James was right about the power of words. Thus in the very last sequence in *Ridiculous* the cynical Madame Blayac is moved to tears when Gregoire declares his intention to return to his estate and save his people from diseases. His words help her to see through the charade of life at Versailles that words are only as valid as the values which are invested in them. \*

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## CHANGES

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## BAPTISMS

•Shireen Emerson, Andrew Lane, Ballarat Family Church •Tony Elias, Daniel Hopewell, Jessica Hopewell, Kevin Adams, Portland, Vic •Ann White, Sarah Anderson, Fairfield, NSW •Ron Folmer, Bennet Humphries, Tweed Heads-Coolangatta, NSW

## MARRIAGES

•Peta Gilmore and Joel Roberts, Portland, Vic •Julie Walshe and Jost Steller, Lyons, ACT

## DEATHS

•Adelaide Peck, Merv Lawrie, Victor Harbor, SA •Gordon Ford, Vi Swales, Mitcham, Vic •Judith Wilson, Lesley Stirling, Boronia, Vic

## OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words  
**CHAPMAN, Marjory Rayment**

(10.12.96) The family and friends of Marjory Chapman were shocked by her sudden death. Born in 1908, her life was devoted to caring. She was a trained teacher, a former cooking editor for the *Sunday Mail* and a person who always found time for others. She worked tirelessly with the Queensland Women's Conference, President (twice), Prayer Superintendent and Homes and Hostels Committee Superintendent, conducting services for Burdeu House residents for 30 years. She was involved in the beginnings of Kenmore College and had a deep passion for her Bible study groups. Marj's two daughters, Marjory-Ann Dredge and Christine McCarthy, their families and her friends pay tribute to an inspirational lady. —CGD

**GOODES, Reginald (Brian)**

(7.11.96) We mourn the loss of Reg Goodes, following a lengthy battle with cancer. Reg leaves his wife Lois, three children and nine grandchildren. Reg had worked as a boilermaker, a policeman, for the Melbourne Port Authority and the Westfield Shopping group. Reg was a Billy Graham convert and had been involved with Cheltenham and Mitcham, Vic, churches. He was very involved with the Explorer boys' movement. After a time away from the Church, Reg again turned to his Lord, which he lamented was because of the cancer and his prognosis. The reality was that the angels in heaven rejoiced, and Reg settled into fellowship at Box Hill.

—Jim Longbottom

**WATSON, Olive**

(20 11 96) Olive lived a full life for her Lord, she was frail, and she was ready to go! In recent years she devoted herself to a ministry to people with mental and depression problems, writing to prisoners and helping people find healing in their life. She was a great follower of Agnes Sanford and constantly bought and gave away copies of Agnes' book *The Healing Light*. Olive operated on a plane that few mortals ever attain, or want to attain. She believed fervently in miracles. She had a prayer ministry, and prayed for me every day. She listened to God and acted on what she heard.

—Jim Longbottom

**WILSON, Judith Margaret**

(19.12.96) Born to Reg and Margaret Hillbrich in 1943, Judy was baptised at Morwell in 1954. A daughter of the manse, Judy lived at Gardiner, Richmond and Carnegie, Vic, and often assisted with music at Sunday School and services. Judy was married in 1964 to Malcolm Scoullar, who died in an accident leaving her with a very young daughter. In 1973 Judy married Adrian Wilson, who had four daughters, and they had a son and daughter. They shared membership at Springvale and Boronia. Bed-bound of later years due to muscular dystrophy, Judy continued to make beautiful gifts. On 19.12.96 Judy departed to be with her Heavenly Father.

—Adrian Wilson

## VIC

**BALLARAT FAMILY CHURCH (Darren Kittel, Rachael Starbuck)** Annual church fete raised over \$2,300 ... Connexion Youth Group formed prayer partnership with senior members ... "Getting to Know You" activities, followed by luncheon ... December highlights included Sunday School presentation "Plum Pudding Festival", two fully-attended Christmas Eve services (7.30 pm Family, 11.00 pm Traditional). Carols by Candlelight approx. 500 attended ... Farewell to Creelman family to Nepal, Stuart & Michelle Templeton to CCTC, Carlingford, Darren & Andrea Tudball, college in Adelaide.

**MITCHAM (Mark Butler)** Church saddened by deaths of Gordon Ford & Vi Swales ... Search Committee has been established to seek a replacement for Mark Butler who concludes his ministry at the end of 1997 ... Church Life

meeting held in December to consider future directions for church ... Christmas services included outdoor carol service and special music from choir ... Church planning first family camp in many years.

**BORONIA (Keith Milne, Bruce Moore, Simon Risson)** Farewell to Darryn & Anita Hickling as they take up full-time ministry with the Bordertown-Mundulla churches in SA ... Outdoor carol service attended by over 300 people ... Welcome to Bruce & Jenny Moore & Simon & Andrea Risson & families as they join ministry team part-time for 1997 ... Gordon Chandler & Maisie Mierisch celebrated 90th birthday ... Several families evacuated on account of Dandenong's bush fires.

**PORTLAND (Blair & Julie Davis)** SU Family Mission took part in service during holidays ... One young man baptised in river at Narrawong ... Services continue to grow in numbers, building full for children's service ... All study



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# Church News

groups starting up, ladies craft will run again this year ... Ministers holidaying in February, locals to take services ... Well-attended New Year's Eve party held at member's farm.

**IVANHOE (Mavis Uldrich)** Mavis Uldrich inducted into ministry on 2 February, Mavis continues her studies at CCTC & will serve part-time ... Youth group started off the year with a BBQ & games afternoon which was enjoyed. Group members look forward to camp at end Feb ... Some elderly members having difficulty with hot weather ... A lot of positive energy in the church, members anticipating an inspiring year.

## QLD

**WESTSIDE (Geoff Risson)** Grant Spangenberg to a new ministry in SA after overseas travel with Helen ... Geoff Risson began ministry with induction led by special request by Col Smith on 12 January ... Next door property purchased earlier, now refurbished, car park doubled in area ... Second playgroup became necessary, doubling new family contacts ... Several study & prayer groups in operation ... Evidence of positive & optimistic congregational outlook for future outreach & spiritual renewal.

## SA

**VICTOR HARBOR (Graeme Rogerson)** Australia Day was celebrated with a BBQ tea, Barry Gear spoke at the 7.00 pm service ... Church saddened by death of Merv Lawrie ... Scripture Union "Theos" took an evening service in January, sharing with us their experiences at the Port Elliot Caravan park ... CYF leaders had a retreat at the home of Barry & Nancy Pryors.

## TAS

**NUBEENA** Steve Collard spoke at morning service 26 January ... Mayor Neil Noye, a member of our congregation, received the Order of Australia

for all the work he has contributed to the community ... Glenn & Ann Cumbers concluded their ministry after 11 months & have moved to Bathurst, NSW. A farewell & presentation given to them on 2 February.

## NSW

**FAIRFIELD (Darren Harwood)** Darren & Elicia Harwood's ministry appreciated ... Church encouraged by two baptisms

... Leaders & interpreters for Spanish, Vietnamese & Arabic people in our congregation are urgently needed ... Kathleen Suvakov, who is director of a Child Care Centre, leads our Bible school very efficiently ... Geoff Goninon has successfully launched an under-sink water filter which is the only one of its kind in the world.

**TWEED HEADS-COOLANGATTA (Bruce Warwick)** Sunday services going well in Scout Hall ... Excellent

Christmas celebrations ... Renovations almost complete, 23 February thanksgiving & opening planned ... Justin Whitecross, Wollongong College, & Greg Thompson speakers in Bruce's absence on holidays ... Two baptisms in New Year, two others received in ... Mal North commended to the Lord as he leaves for study in China ... Bruce begins series of messages on "New Beginnings" collated with small group studies.

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# Two Back Wheels

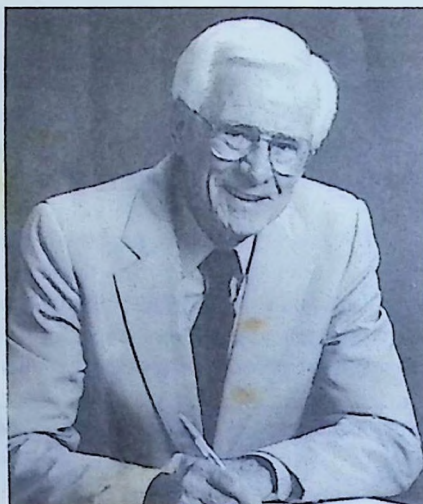
GORDON STIRLING

**T**he two back wheels in question adorn the garden of Ray Lawrie of the Tumby Bay, SA, church. They came from a farm wagon that made a strange journey 105 years ago. \*

The family of Alexander and Agnes Lawrie from the New Mills Church of Christ in Scotland, sailed to South Australia in 1876 and settled on the Alma Plains, where a new Church of Christ had been established. Fifteen years later (1891) three sons of Alexander and Agnes, Alexander (Junior), Nicol and Ninian, travelled, mostly on dirt tracks, the 700 kilometres to Tumby Bay, to settle there. \*

They took with them a team of horses, pulling the above mentioned wagon, which in turn towed a heavy scrub roller. On the wagon was a house in pieces, with their camping gear and provisions. The wagon also provided overnight accommodation, with wheat bags sewn together and draped round it to provide some shelter underneath. \*

The going got tough for the horses as they negotiated the sand hills in the north of Eyre Peninsula, so the house had to be unloaded. They burnt it to save it blocking the narrow track. Encountering a very dry area, there was not enough feed for the horses, so they ripped open their mattresses which were filled with cocky chaff and fed that to the hungry animals. For the rest of the journey the brothers slept on the hard ground. Arriving at Tumby Bay months later they took up land at Point Bolingbroke.



Until they had time to build a cottage they lived in dugouts called "wallaby huts". When they were settled, their brother John joined them, having travelled by ship with the families and more teams of horses. \*

Ninian later took up land at Ungarra and helped to establish the church there. The rest of the Lawries became part of the Tumby Bay church. Many of the Lawrie descendants are still active in these churches. \*

Such pioneers need pioneer-type ministers, which they had. \*

Roy Raymond began his 75-year ministry there. Human dynamo Arthur (A.J.) Fisher was another of the early ministers. They still tell of seeing him returning from days of visiting on foot, leading his weary horse. \*

## The Last Word

**We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.**

*When you hear two eyewitnesses' accounts of the same traffic accident, you begin to worry about history.*

*Student: What are the main effects of the French Revolution?  
Professor: I think it's a little early to say.*

*A group of American tourists were visiting Runnymede and the tour guide was explaining its significance. "This is where the Magna Carta was signed," he told them.*

*"When was that?" came a voice from the crowd.*

*The guide replied, "1215"  
"Darn," said the voice. "We missed it by twenty minutes."*

*How many evolutionists does it take to change a light bulb?  
One, but it takes eight million years.*

*What is the difference between a leopard and a comma?*

*One has claws at the end of his paws, while the other is a pause at the end of a clause.*

*A cowboy riding his horse saw a little dog running down the road. "Hi," said the dog.*

*"Hi," said the cowboy.*

*A few moments later the cowboy said out loud, "That's funny. I didn't know dogs could talk!"*

*The horse looked at the cowboy, and said, "You learn something new every day."*



From "Close to Home" by John McPherson (Zondervan, 1994).

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