

THE AUSTRALIAN



Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 101 No. 4, 25 March 1998

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"Drugs now a daily part of school life"

"No quick fixes on drug problem"

Drugs!

"Cannabis use hits record"

"Friends with drugs"

"Nation of dope smokers"

These are just some of the headlines in Australian newspapers each day.



THE AUSTRALIAN

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NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 101 No. 4, 25 March 1998

Editor: Don Smith
 Production Manager/Sub Editor: Nigel Pogram
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Editorial

Drug Abuse

DON SMITH



Drugs are closer than we think. Recently I was speaking with a Melbourne minister by telephone when he exclaimed that someone had just collected drugs outside his office, obviously left by a "pusher". He went on to comment that in his area it was common to see users "shooting up". * The Victorian metropolitan ambulance service reported in February that in one 24-hour period officers attended two deaths, two near misses and 24 drug overdoses requiring emergency treatment. Ambulance officers had attended another young woman in different locations four times in one day. The Chief Commissioner of the Victoria Police was quoted this last week as saying we have lost the drug war. Statements and situations like this are common to all states and situations. * In recent days, a youth leader in one of our churches stressed to me that it would be an illusion to think our youth and young adult groups are untouched by drug abuse issues. Heroin and other illegal drugs cause great danger, but an overemphasis on illegal drugs can divert our attention from legal drug problems. Alcohol and tobacco cause 97% of drug related deaths in Australian communities. * One notes within our churches a gradual social acceptance of alcohol. The situation has certainly shifted from the vigorous temperance advocacy of earlier decades. Our feature writers comment upon the importance of example or role modelling in what is an increasingly tolerant society. The potential for abuse in some instances needs to be kept in mind. Living with alcohol abuse is an unhappy experience for all concerned. * On the larger scene Max Neutze in a November 1997 Zadok paper, "The ACT Heroin Trial" comes down in favour of the trial proposal. He argues as a committed Christian and as someone with professional experience in urban research. Neutze says the issues must be faced. This proposal has now been dropped. It certainly raised a controversy. * There are no quick fixes. Proposals must be faced and examined. Our writers clearly affirm that we have hope and a new sense of purpose to offer. Personal and group advocacy concerning complex and debatable issues must not be shirked. What are appropriate responses in your situation? *



Drugs

A many-sided problem whose tendrils touch us in ways we may not even realise.

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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.

Exciting Days

To the Editor,

Just three years ago I was under the impression that the Churches of Christ in Britain were all but dead. How wonderful it has been to be proved wrong!

I am currently the minister of Bournville Church of Christ in Birmingham, known locally as "Trinity Church". This church is small, but very much alive and growing, as are several other Churches of Christ here in the Midlands. Around 40 of our churches comprise the Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with a total membership of about 1,000.

Their Annual Conference is to be held in Birmingham on 16 May and I would encourage all interested readers of "The Christian" to be praying for that event. We seek God's help in discovering his call for the Fellowship, and our corporate identity, vision and shared mission in line with that call. There is a sense that this is a new beginning for the Fellowship after many difficult years and that we really do have a significant contribution to make to the wider Kingdom of God.

I urge your readers to take an active interest in what God is doing among our churches in the UK. These are exciting days!

—Rick Lewis
(Birmingham, UK)

[Readers wishing to support Rick's ministry or receive further

information should contact Ken Russell, 141 Adderton Road, Carlingford NSW 2118. —Ed]

CCTC Alumni Association

To the Editor,
COB/CCTC, Mulgrave, Alumni could be pardoned for imagining that I had disappeared from the face of the earth or that the proposed Association had not been able to escape the labour ward. The reality is far less interesting. The truth of the matter is that it has taken us longer than anticipated to organise a comprehensive, up-to-date, database. The difficulties inherent in the task have been exacerbated by the fact that we are running on minimum secretarial staff at CCTC and it is this staff that has been responsible for the update. However, we are getting there!

This note is to assure alumni that they are not forgotten. You will shortly receive the Association's first newsletter, which outlines our plans for the future.

In listing e-mail addresses on the database, I noticed that there are numerous names missing from our records. If you do not receive a newsletter in the next two or three weeks, please let me know, forwarding your name and address. We would also appreciate knowing your e-mail address, if you have one. This will help us cut postage costs and will allow us to send you additional material from time to time. I forwarded material late last year to those whose e-mail addresses I had at the time.

—Graeme Chapman
(Mulgrave, Vic)

Unleavened Bread

Letter to the Editor,

Over recent years I have partaken of the Lord's supper with some churches which regularly use whole baker's bread to symbolise

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Letters to the Editor

the Lord's body instead of the "unleavened" bread (free from yeast), which is definitely not what God commanded.

When God ordered Moses to prepare the Jews for the Passover, he told them what to wear, what to eat, how to cook it, and demanded that the bread be free of yeast (leaven), and even the house be cleansed of leaven. In Exodus 12:19 we note that anyone who eats anything with leaven will be cut off from the congregation of the people.

What's wrong with yeast? Paul explains in 1 Cor 5:6-8 that leaven represents sin and a little of it in the dough affects the whole. The

reason that God turned away from Jesus on the Cross was because at that moment Jesus had become sin for the world.

So, that is why Jesus, as a true Jew on the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Matt 26:17-19) took from the remnants of the Passover Feast the unleavened bread, telling his disciples to eat it in memory of him.

Every aspect of the Lord's Supper and the Feast of the Passover was symbolic and remains so to this day, that is why yeast, a symbol of sin, must be no part of the bread.

—Harold Vawser
(Subiaco, WA)

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Here and There

New Date for Easter

The World Council of Churches has proposed a new way to calculate the date for Easter to allow Western and Eastern Christians to celebrate Easter on the same day. The proposal will be sent to world bodies for consideration. The change is suggested for 2001. (Christian Century)



Pontius' Puddle



Update

Dear Readers,

This issue with a focus on drugs has been put together with the assistance of members in four states. We appreciate their help and the range of insights they have been able to offer. It is of interest that whatever the theme, it is possible to locate people with skills and experience to make a good contribution. John Rogerson, a staff member of the Australian Drug Foundation, Melbourne, and Director, Communications has been helpful with his advice. John is an elder at the Doncaster, Vic church.

We are aware that this is a complex theme. It has not been practicable to cover every aspect. In some instances, there will be differing opinions on how problems may be dealt with. Readers' views are welcome.

Listed below are telephone numbers for readers seeking advice, counselling or other assistance: NSW (02) 9361 2111, 1800 422 599 state wide; Vic 13 15 70, Qld (07) 3236 2414 metro, 1800 177 833 outside metro; SA 13 13 40; WA (08) 9442 5000 metro, 1800

198 024 state wide; Tas 1800 811 994; ACT (02) 6205 4545; NT (08) 8981 8030, 1800 629 683 territory wide.

Additional services and resources including training, field work, videos, posters and such like are available from state offices.

Drug-Arm is another body active in this area. It also provides a range of services. Affiliates include Churches, IOR, WCTU, Abstinence Societies and Ansvar Insurance. Offices are located in each capital city.

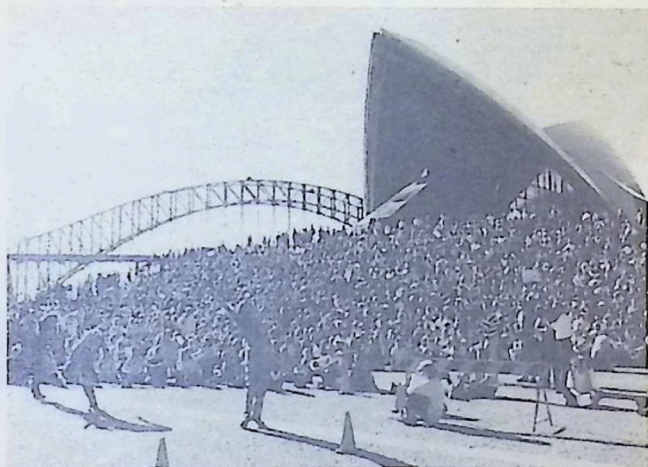
Close of copy for the next issue is 26 March. The cover date is 8 April. This issue will focus on Easter. There will be a three week break before the following issue dated 29 April. Close of copy is 16 April.

All contributors should note that close of copy date for issue seven has been brought forward from 30 April to 29 April for this one issue.

Sam Smith

Awakening 2000

Enthusiastic response to Easter events preparations



"Awakening" the crowd outside the Opera House

The Awakening 2000 Movement and sponsors of the Easter vigils and marches report an enthusiastic response to the forthcoming Easter Day programs in all states. The initiative began in Sydney in 1990 as an attempt to reclaim Easter from encroaching commercialism. This year, in every capital city and up to 500 cities and

towns, churches are coming together to celebrate this most important event in the Christian calendar.

In Brisbane over 100 actors, singers, dancers, musicians and designers are contributing to "Easter Alive", a two-hour musical stage production staged on the South Bank's Suncorp Piazzare over the Easter weekend. Another major initiative to be held in Canberra is the Global March for Jesus. This march coincides with the 10th anniversary of the National Prayer Gathering in 1988 when 50,000 Christians gathered to pray at the opening of the new Parliament House.

On 30 May, this event will be repeated when an anticipated even larger crowd drawn from all states and territories will circle Parliament House for a service of prayer led by national church and aboriginal leaders.

A 7.00 pm - 7.00 am prayer vigil will follow on the lawns of Parliament House. Details are available from "Awakening" offices in all state capitals.

Stable Tenants

Churches help people looking for accommodation



Stable Association is Doncaster and Balwyn, Vic, congregations working together with community support to provide emergency housing, help and counselling for homeless families. Currently they have three housing units. Stable has twin objectives: to house families in emergency situations for a minimum period of four months, and to add to their living skills. Established in 1989 by North Balwyn Church of Christ, Stable has succeeded in doing this with most families who have passed through their hands. One of the big challenges for Stable is finding good housing units to rent so they can house homeless families. Real Estate Agents have a poor image of homeless families and fear damage to the property. Also, they have to work

harder to convince owners to lease the property. Our experience has proven them to be wrong. In any event, Stable signs the lease and takes full responsibility for the property.

Stable would like to hear from any Melbourne-based owners who have a two-bedroom unit in Boroondara, Whitehorse or Manning municipalities willing to lease their property to Stable. This would provide increased stability in accommodation for needy families, so they can be housed and counselled for 4-12 months before they move on better equipped to meet the challenges of life.

Further details can be obtained from Stan Curtis on (03) 9859 9740 regarding leasing or tax-deductible giving.

Making News

Normanton Floods

Normanton, Qld, has been cut off by floods after seven days of monsoon rains. The river rose 5 metres, supplies were airlifted in, the surrounding area devastated. Heavy cattle losses. Members safe.

—Remy Sese
Pastor

New Face at Girls' Brigade

New office staff member in SA



Di Hubbard

Di Hubbard is the "new kid on the block" at Girls' Brigade State Headquarters in South Australia. She is now the office assistant and takes care of the many inquiries which come through, issues uniforms, types, photocopies, receives monies for camps and conferences, sells stock items and, in general, keeps the office running smoothly.

Di's involvement with Girls' Brigade began as a girl in the Company which met at the Church of Christ, Ascot Park. After completing all of her Brigade work, she stayed on to be a helper, but never took the steps to become a commissioned leader.

Together with her husband Colin, she has worshipped at the Marion Church of Christ for 20 years. She is currently serving on the Pastoral Care Committee and is secretary of the Youth Executive Committee. Until her appointment with Girls' Brigade, Di worked as a volunteer in the church office for 1½ days a week.

In her spare time, she enjoys read-

ing and walking. With her three sons, she is an avid Crows supporter and is involved with basketball.

Much has changed within Girls' Brigade since her first involvement, but Di has fitted in remarkably well, serving Girls' Brigade and her Lord with cheerful efficiency.

Our World Family

"A Cappella" Africa

The collection of statistics of "A Cappella" Churches of Christ in Africa shows there are over 9,000 congregations, with almost 700,000 members in 33 countries. There is an emphasis on evangelism and indigenisation of the work, which is showing rapid growth. A further "Africans Claiming Africa" Conference will be held in South Africa in 2000. (*World Christian*)

"A Cappella" churches in the USA have a baptised membership of 1.25 million, plus a large number of adherents. Overseas baptised membership exceeds 1 million, plus adherents.

—Ed

Belarus Building Dedicated.

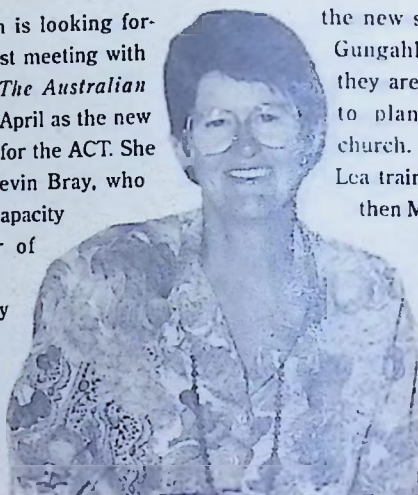
Late last year a new building was dedicated for the Targoszyce Church of Christ in Belarus. The church was founded in 1922. This area was in Poland until the end of World War 2. The early building was burned down in 1961. The congregation has waited 36 years for its replacement. Polish Christian Ministries raised the funds for the building constructed mostly by the people themselves. (*World Christian*)

New Board Member

Introducing Lea Nelson

Dr Lea Nelson is looking forward to her first meeting with the Board of *The Australian Christian* on 4 April as the new representative for the ACT. She replaces Dr Kevin Bray, who served in that capacity for a number of years.

Lea is currently Senior Librarian at the National Library of Australia and is married to Peter Nelson, who ministered with the Ainslie, ACT, church for the past eleven years. This year Lea and Peter moved to



the new suburb of Gungahlin where they are planning to plant a new church.

Lea trained at the then Melbourne

Bible Institute where she developed a keen interest in missions

and languages, which led her to complete a Ph.D. in linguistics at Monash University.

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Colin Orr

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contact with Tasmanian churches, visiting most on an annual basis, while providing active liaison with the Vic-Tas Department. His assessments and advice to the Department were greatly respected.

Colin was a master builder with a special interest in restoration of historic buildings. In 1968 he moved from Launceston to Ulverstone and became branch manager of Besser Tasmania Concrete Masonry. This began a long period of association with the Ulverstone

church, where he continues as treasurer. For eight years Colin served as works supervisor to develop Camp Seaview, Bicheno. During his time he gave some 2,850 hours of voluntary service towards construction of the facilities. Colin was actively involved with the Youth Council of Tasmania for eleven years and served as president during that time. He was a councillor of the Ulverstone Municipality for ten years and treasurer for eight of those years. He also held positions on State Government advisory groups. His services as a builder contributed to major developments at Launceston, Devonport, Caveside and Ulverstone. Through all these years Colin has been warmly supported by his wife Aileen, who has been a loving mother to their seven children, an excellent home maker, and hostess to the many visitors associated with church work. Colin and Aileen are about to commence an extended holiday on the mainland.

Colin Orr completed 57 years of association with Churches of Christ Conference activities when he retired as State Treasurer of the Tasmanian Executive in November 1997. Colin was elected to the Tasmanian State Youth Department in 1940 and was appointed treasurer. He was absent from Tasmania for service with the Royal Australian Air Force 1942-1946. In April 1946 he was reappointed to the Youth Department and elected to the State Executive and Home Mission Committee. It was at this point that he commenced his long association with Home Mission work. In 1952 Tasmania linked with the Victorian Conference. Colin forged close ties with Bert Combridge, the secretary of the Home Mission Department for Vic-Tas until 1962, and then with the newly-appointed secretary, Don Smith, which ended when Colin retired as a Tasmanian representative in 1994, marking 48 years of continuous association with Home Mission work. Over these 48 years, Colin gave himself unsparingly to

church, where he continues as treasurer. For eight years Colin served as works supervisor to develop Camp Seaview, Bicheno. During his time he gave some 2,850 hours of voluntary service towards construction of the facilities. Colin was actively involved with the Youth Council of Tasmania for eleven years and served as president during that time. He was a councillor of the Ulverstone Municipality for ten years and treasurer for eight of those years. He also held positions on State Government advisory groups. His services as a builder contributed to major developments at Launceston, Devonport, Caveside and Ulverstone.

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Working with God

New minister commissioned at Ainslie



Picnic in the park—a chance to meet with the new minister and make new friends

On 15 February, Paul Douglas was commissioned as minister of the Ainslie Church of Christ, ACT. The service was led by Elder Karen Green, with assistance from ACT Conference President, Alison McGregor, and Board Chairman, Bevan Parker. Speakers included Don Smallbone from West Pymble Church of Christ, NSW, who used the Apostle Paul's pattern for encouraging the acceptance of Timothy in Acts. Paul Douglas encouraged the church to help him fulfil their mission to the world and to seek

out the places where God was already at work and blessing lives. The elders, board and congregation promised to support Paul and Debbie as they minister to the church and the community. Paul and his wife Debbie come from the West Pymble church, where Paul has been assistant minister during his final year at Carlingford, NSW, college. Together, they bring to the church youthful enthusiasm, combined with a strong appreciation for an aging population. Paul has been an accountant in the retirement industry and Debbie is a physiotherapist specialising in aged care.

The service was followed by a picnic in the local park. People gathered for an informal chat with the new minister and made new friends with the many interstate visitors who attended.

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New South Wales May 27-31

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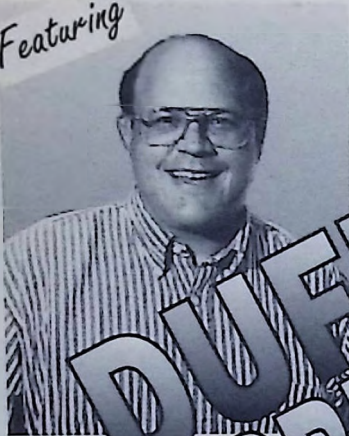
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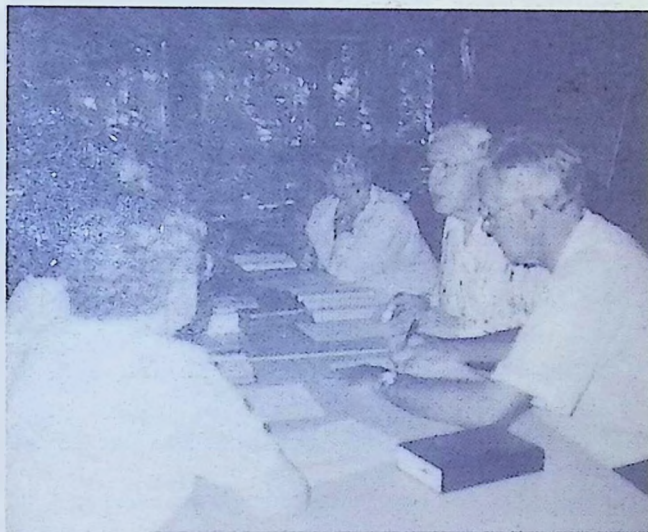
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The Vital Ministry of Seniors

Third Seniors' Getaway



A workshop group at the recent NSW Seniors Getaway at Stanwell Tops

Seniors from seventeen churches in NSW and the ACT gathered at Boronia, Stanwell Tops, NSW, 23-

Here and There

No Compromise

Upset New Zealand Presbyterians are dissociating themselves from the action of the Wellington Presbytery in licensing a lesbian. The 1996 general assembly made a decision in principle to ban practising homosexuals from ministry. This decision is now being discussed by regional presbyteries and parishes. At the 1996 assembly, it was also agreed that an exemption would be made for those already in ministry training. Under these terms, a licence has been given to a lesbian ministry graduate. The Presbyterian Church of NZ has been embroiled in debate over practising homosexuals in leadership for some years.

26 February for the third Seniors' Getaway.

Guest speaker for the four days was Gordon Stirling, whose input on the theme "Towards 2000—The Vital Ministry of Seniors" was much appreciated. In the evening Gordon addressed some of the misconceptions that Christians have, and was also interviewed by one of the Seniors' Ministry Team on his experience of coping with a loved one with dementia. Other activities included a trivia night, a visit to historic Hillcrest House, the former home of Lawrence Hargraves, a shoot and shuffle board demonstration and competition, and, of course, plenty of time for relaxation, swimming or bush walking. Getaway '98 was a time of learning and challenge, fun and fellowship, encouragement and sharing. Many are eagerly waiting for our next time away.

—Pam Clapshaw

Building an Education

International Needs in Sri Lanka



Children from the Harrison School, Sri Lanka

It's a long way from the leafy streets of middle-class Blackburn, in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, to the slum conditions of the canal bank area in steamy hot Colombo, Sri Lanka. But that's where a group of seven young adults and their two leaders chose to go in their summer holidays this year from 22 January – 6 February.

The group, all from Blackburn Community Church of Christ, led by David Ayliffe (Executive Director, International Needs) and Glenda de Jager (Ministry Coordinator) visited Sri Lanka to see first-hand the ministry of International Needs (IN).

"We took a team of seven young adults, but we brought back different people, people whose priorities have been challenged, whose eyes have been opened to the way 2/3 of the world live, and whose hearts have been won by the hundreds of desperately needy children being cared for by International Needs each week." The team, Natalie Roberts, Kylee Comrie, Kylie Mason, Sara Winter, Julia Konig, Gary Butler and Peter Storie were able to spend time with the children in the

Harrison School. These children come from the slum conditions of the canal bank—little shanties with no running water, electricity or sanitation. Some of our family pets in Australia live in better conditions than we have seen whole families living in. And yet, despite their surroundings and their poverty, when the children come to Harrison School they come in their blue school uniforms, shoes on, faces washed and hair combed.

The conditions in the Harrison School are overcrowded. Classes meet in storerooms and even in the bend of the stairs! The lease expires on one of the buildings in June this year, so a new building is desperately and urgently needed. IN Australia has undertaken to help replace this building so these children and others can be educated and have an opportunity their parents have never had.

Each team member has returned to Australia with a commitment to share what they have seen and experienced with others in Australia. For information contact Glenda de Jager at International Needs on (03) 9723 9065.

Drugs

Why Drugs Won't Go Away

GEORGE PATRIKI

People often ask why it is that people use drugs and why we cannot get rid of them. My response varies somewhat but includes statements like, "Why do you take Panadeine forte when you have severe pain?" or "Why do you drink tea or coffee or smoke cigarettes?" We weigh up the risks versus the benefits in much the same way as people do with illicit drugs. People take illicit drugs for similar reasons, they feel they need them and enjoy the benefits, at least for a while. A typical scenario follows:

"I started using drugs because I wanted to, and now I use drugs because I have to."

Stage 1—Experimentation: People out of curiosity seek out drugs, having been exposed to them by peers, or accidentally stumble across drugs, e.g. at a party or school. They try them and enjoy the "high" (psychoactive effect), further, just for a moment they forget whatever pain is inside. Everybody walks around with a measure of pain e.g. school, financial or relationship pressures. Now we all like to feel good every day, not just once in a while, so this experience is sought out again.

Stage 2—Social: We continually look for ways to feel good and avoid pain. In fact, by now we've developed a great routine of "using safely and recreationally". That is, only x number of times per month and only spending x amount of dollars per month. Of course I'm not going to be like that "speed freak" down the street or that "smack (heroin) freak" I've seen in St Kilda.

Stage 3—Harmful Dependency: The more regularly I use my drugs, the more drugs I need to reach that same level of "high". And so now I begin to see more negative consequences of my drug use than those in stage two. These risks and consequences will vary but can include the following:

(1) Financial—Users in this level often sacrifice many important financial responsibilities (such as rent, bills, etc) to obtain drugs.

(2) Legal—Unfortunately, many people find themselves in illegal activities while using drugs regularly, e.g. possession, trafficking and drug-related crimes, such as theft and burglary.

(3) Physical health—Drugs lead to ill-health, as well as the obvious risks of communicable diseases such as Hepatitis B & C and HIV/AIDS.

(4) Psychosocial—Various drugs can effect people's psychological wellbeing. This can be seen in the loss of motivation, concentration and, particularly, short-term memory loss. Many people reaching this state of dependency often share their struggle with guilt and shame as they watch their life fall apart.

(5) Coping mechanism—Although its not always evident to the chemically-dependent person, nevertheless their regular drug use by this stage has become a strong coping mechanism. Just as people with chronic pain take analgesics to cope, so do people with emotional pain take analgesics to help them cope with the mounting pressures.

Stage 4—Full-Blown Addiction: By now people have added many of the above consequences to their original pain and so find themselves using drugs on a daily basis to survive. As some have stated, "I started using drugs because I wanted to, and now I use drugs because I have to." Many



have compared their dependency to the natural desires we have for food and sex. To help people break out of this life-controlling problem, they need holistic care, which addresses their physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual needs. The role of the family, friends and church must not be underestimated. At St Kilda Gatehouse, Melbourne, we often say that it is through unhealthy relationships that we are damaged and it is through healthy relationships that we are healed.

So what's the bottom line? How does the church—the Body of Christ—respond to an increasingly drug-using culture? Do we alienate these people by judging and condemning them, or do we embrace them with the love of Christ? I hate to simplify a very complex issue, but anything we do in terms of outreach, counselling and accommodation services must be done in a spirit of love and grace, extending to people that are chemically dependent, the same mercy and grace that we ourselves have received.

George Patriki is a crisis counsellor at St Kilda Gatehouse, a Churches of Christ initiative in Melbourne.

Drugs

Harm Minimisation

BOB ALDRED

Few escape the impact of drug abuse. Domestic violence, youth suicide, child abuse, teenage deaths and road accidents are a few of the tragedies that are estimated to cost Australia \$18 billion a year. Rarely would I speak at a church, Rotary, Lions, or businessmen's organisations without members telling of their personal trauma because of drug use by a child or other family member.

The notion of stopping supply has failed dismally

The problem has no simple answers. Drug abuse has health, social and economic implications. The link between injecting drug use and diseases such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B and C is a major health concern. Alcohol is a major factor in public safety, road accidents and domestic violence. Most break and enters are linked to illicit drugs. A major health care cost is the treatment of alcohol and tobacco related diseases.

All of us benefit from the tax revenue generated from tobacco and alcohol. The money spent on illicit drugs is estimated at \$7.2 billion a year nationally. Drugs are so much a part of society that eradication of the "drug problem" is not an option now any more than it was in Bible times. The principle of responsible usage is clear from the injunction of Paul to take a little wine for your stomach's sake, when compared to the foolishness of intoxication.

While about 25% of white adults and 37% of urban Aboriginal Australians choose to abstain from alcohol, few can claim to live "drug free" lives.

The wisdom of being "drug free" is also questionable given the benefits of most drugs to our health and wellbeing. Alcohol is used in many medications. Cannabis is beneficial in the treatment of glaucoma and for easing the nausea related to chemotherapy. Paracetamol is the standard pain reliever despite its toxicity and overuse. Caffeine, now the banned drug for athletes, is the social stimulant of the after church cuppa. Probably the only drug without health or social benefit is tobacco.

Harm minimisation was successfully adopted as a strategy to encourage the safe use of drugs by those who chose to do so. The aim is to reduce the harm without condoning the use. Most advocates point out that abstinence is as legitimate a choice as responsible safe usage. Harm minimisation is a non-judgemental, strategy-based model to encourage responsible personal choice. This position is not easily adhered to, especially with illicit drugs. A major harm minimisation program stemming from the threatened epidemic of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis is the provision of disposable clean needles for injecting drug users. To maximise effectiveness, drug users need to be taught how to use needles safely. The philosophy is something of the least worst solution, and does give the opportunity for detox and treatment options to be promoted.

For heroin users, governments encourage addicts to switch to methadone, a synthetic drug without the euphoric effect. This has reduced drug-related crime and has enabled addicts to stabilise their lives. Methadone is not a cure. The life expectancy of a methadone user is estimated to be 18 years less than the average, but far greater than the short life expectancy of the heroin user, where overdose deaths have risen



by 700% since 1979, with most of the increase occurring since 1992.

Recently there has been a policy swing towards a tougher approach to drugs. The new phrases, "Get Tough on Drugs" and "Zero Tolerance", place greater emphasis on intercepting drugs, reducing supply, in contrast to reducing demand through education, health promotion and treatment. Demand reduction strategies focus on changing attitudes and encouraging alternative natural highs through sport, music and other personal conquests. Supply reduction through law enforcement and tougher penalties is estimated to receive about \$10 for \$1 spent on demand reduction programs focussing on early intervention, health promotion, education and treatment. The notion of stopping supply has failed dismally, with most estimates at about a 10% intercept rate, with one recent study estimate as low as 3%.

The drug problem is now so large that the challenge is not a simplistic eradication program, but how to manage the problem to minimise the harm and reduce the underlying social and economic problems.

Bob Aldred has been Chief Executive Officer of the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, Qld, since 1985 and previously ministered with Churches of Christ for over 20 years.

Drugs

Drugs in the Family

ANTHEA ANDREWS

I thought I was strong. I thought I was aware, but what I was doing was continually cutting the lines of communication. Find someone you trust and can talk to. Unless you have support, you can't help those you love when they really need it. My husband felt guilty because he had been taught that as a Christian a strong faith in God would carry you through, but it didn't seem to help. He has told me since that he really wanted God to be available to sit down with him for a chat over a cup of coffee. The problem with trying to help another family member is that you are too close, and hurting as much as each other. Parents ask how they will know if their child is taking drugs. The short answer is that you may not. There are symptoms and reactions to look for, but don't be hasty to jump to conclusions, because if you are wrong the effects could be tragic.

Watch for sudden changes in behaviour. Things such as uncharacteristic changes in mood, bursts of anger, lack of cooperation, a drop in school work, changes in appearance, an unexplained need for extra money and other behaviour that is out of character. Be aware and know your child, as most of the things listed above can also be attributed to puberty and normal development.

Don't panic! Be sensitive and non-judgemental. If you can, encourage your child to talk openly and honestly about all issues. If your child is taking drugs, this may be experimenting only or it may be an attempt to mask the real problem.

Listen and offer choices rather than give orders. Choose your time to bring it up (not when tempers are frayed) and react in the same way as you would to anything else that is different. Don't



Anthea Andrews (right) and her daughter, Rachel (left) have faced the problem of drugs in their family

compromise your values, but at the same time don't be judgmental. My daughter has told me that what she needed was to be understood and feel loved for who she was, with no strings attached. This kind of love is not easy, but we have a fine example in Jesus. She chose to isolate herself from her family because she felt what she was doing was unacceptable, but was unable to reach out to us. It comes back to love and communication again.

Know what you are talking about. If you are feeling unsure, don't hesitate to utilise professional services to help both you and your child. Agencies have lines open 24 hours a day. There is printed material available that gives information regarding use, effects and availability of drugs.

Our journey was a nightmare, but the emergence from darkness has been a cause to celebrate. A life has been re-born. Scars will always be there, but they are fading. Every parent would like to ensure their child would never

use drugs. This is unrealistic. Experimenting is a part of learning from a baby's first step to the end of life. This does not mean that every child will experiment with drugs, so don't be afraid, but rather be aware. Be the best parent that you know how to be and try to stay in touch with God and your family wherever they are.

"I knew something was wrong when what I thought was fun (smoking dope, drinking, taking speed) turned to a need. Without being stoned I did not want to go through the day. When one drug wasn't enough to give me the high

Parents ask how they will know if their child is taking drugs. The short answer is that you may not.

that I was looking for I would turn to another, until I reached the end of the line: heroin. Heroin led me to a world of addiction and misery, to a dim dark place with seemingly no way out. Surrounded by hopelessness and people that looked like the living dead, I felt dead, no emotions or feelings, just numb. Friends around me were dying of overdoses or suiciding. I tried suicide several times."

These are my daughter Rachel's words. She now works with Churches of Christ, SA. Community Care as a youth worker, reaching out to kids. She attributes her first involvement with drugs to curiosity, but hastens to add that not everyone who experiments with drugs will become addicted.

Anthea is a Project Manager with Churches of Christ, SA Community Care.

Drugs

Drugs in Perspective

JOHN ROGERSON

When people talk about drugs they usually mention the illegal ones such as heroin, amphetamines and marijuana. After all they are ones we hear most about in the media. But the legal drugs, tobacco and alcohol, are the two most widely consumed drugs in Australia and they cause the most deaths, injuries and other personal and community harm.

Over 26,000 people die from drug-related deaths in Australia each year. Around 19,000 of these (72%) are associated with the use of tobacco, 6,500 (25%) with the use of alcohol and

The use of drugs by young people tends to reflect the use of drugs by the entire community.

around 800 (3%) with the use of illegal drugs. An additional 1,000 deaths are estimated to result from the use of pharmaceutical drugs, drugs purchased in chemists and supermarkets.

Contrary to media reports, the use of drugs by young people tends to reflect the use of drugs by the entire community. The drugs most commonly used by young people are the legal drugs, alcohol, tobacco and pain killers. Cannabis (marijuana) is the most widely used illegal drug, with approximately one third of 14-19 year olds having tried it. Alcohol is responsible for the death of more young people than any other drug.

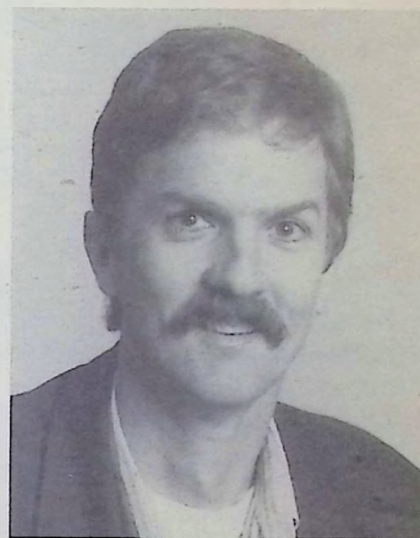
The cost to the Australian community from drug use is staggering. In 1992 drug abuse was estimated to cost the

Australian community over \$18.8 billion each year. These costs include the cost of health care, lost productivity and direct law enforcement costs associated with alcohol-related road accidents and illegal drugs. Alcohol use alone costs the community around \$4.5 billion, tobacco \$12.7 billion and illegal drug use \$1.7 billion.

Then, of course, there are the other effects on society which are really hard to cost. These include: violence and crime, especially assaults, offensive behaviour, domestic violence and child abuse; road crashes; drowning and other accidents; productivity losses; relationship problems; family breakdown; user marginalisation; and financial hardship.

But why are there lots of public education campaigns to reduce the use of tobacco, and in more recent times the use of illegal drugs, and very few well-funded campaigns to reduce the harms associated with the use of alcohol? So are governments really committed to reducing the misuse of alcohol in the community? The alcohol industry in Australia is very powerful. Alcohol is big business, employing thousands, generating significant export income, paying over \$2.1 billion in Commonwealth taxes alone and creating over \$300 million in advertising and sponsorship revenue. Local communities also benefit financially through the sale and promotion of alcohol, whether it is the local hotel and liquor outlet, restaurant, tourist operator or the footy club.

The widespread use of legal drugs also highlights the hypocrisy with which our society approaches drug issues. Young people are told that drugs are bad and dangerous. Yet at the same time they see legal drugs misused all around them.



From a very early age children are exposed to adults using alcohol, tobacco and pain killers, and they learn a great deal about drugs in this way. This "real life" drug education often has more impact than any formal drug education programs that they receive at school. So what does all this mean? Drug use in our community is complex and entrenched and there are no simple solutions to the problems that can arise. As a start, we all need to be good role models with our own drug use.

Young people's drug use will not change unless there is a more consistent, honest and realistic approach to drug issues in the broader community. Young people need to be told the truth: all drugs (and their legal status is irrelevant) can cause serious harm.

Drug users are not "somebody else's children" or the people "down the street". We are a drug using community—we need rational community responses. We must be focussed on doing what is right, not what is popular.

John Rogerson is an elder at Doncaster, Vic, church and Director, Communications Australian Drug Foundation, Melbourne.

Drugs

There is Hope

CHRIS WYDEMAN

For the past seven years my husband, Jervis, and I have managed the Palmer Peace House, which is a house for men and women recovering from substance abuse. This is a joint project of Northside Community Church, NSW, and Churches of Christ Community Care Department, NSW. Our guests came to us from detoxification units, rehabilitation centres and prisons, as well as private and "word of mouth" referrals. We have walked alongside hundreds of men and women as they have struggled for free-

His parents trekked from prison to prison over a period of twenty years, always loving him despite their own pain.

dom from addiction. While "addiction" is a complex subject and I do not underestimate or wish to trivialise the intensity of the struggle back to health and wholeness, I have seen hope begin when men and women connect with God. This comes about through a living, loving relationship, accepting their powerlessness over addiction, recognising their need of divine help and making a deliberate decision to commit themselves to God and his will for their lives. I have seen hope continue to grow and lives continue to change when Jesus is acknowledged. This hope is encouraged and reinforced when recovering substance abusers are accepted, without judgement, into a caring local church community where God is honoured and all people are respected and

treated with dignity, regardless of their history.

Andy's lifestyle was destructive, anti-social and extremely violent. He was addicted to heroin—a fact he had to keep hidden from the group with which he mixed. In the wars with other gangs, heroin addicts were useless fighters. At these times, he used amphetamines. He spent many years in jail for the violent crimes he had committed. He knew of God's love from his parents. There had been times, even when he was at his most uncontrolled, that he been confronted by God and his love for him. He met with prison chaplains who showed him kindness and respect. A priest from his childhood continued to keep in touch. His parents trekked from prison to prison over a period of twenty years, always loving him despite their own pain. Four years ago he committed his life to Jesus. His personal struggle has been intense, but he continues to be drug and crime free. He is deeply spiritual, spending much time in prayer. He is reconciled to all his family and has reconnected with his church.

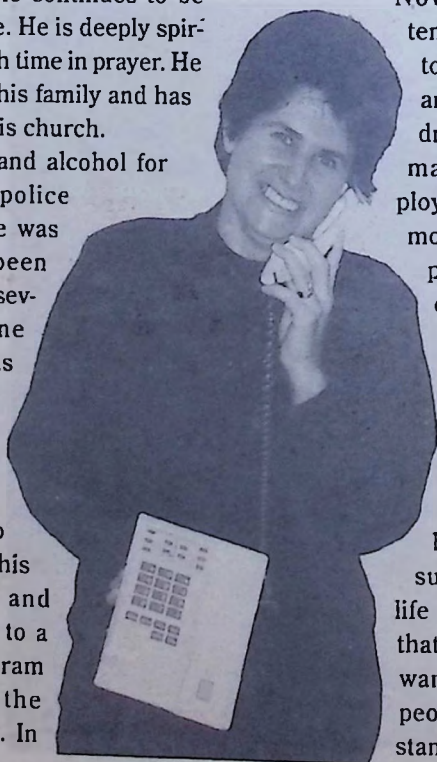
Colin used drugs and alcohol for forty years. The police knew him well. He was proud of having been "head sweeper" in several jails. No-one crossed him. He was too unpredictable. He was due to go before the courts yet again. He had been instructed to get some help for his alcohol problem and thought that going to a rehabilitation program would persuade the judge to be lenient. In

rehabilitation, he met Jesus Christ. He committed his life to him. He went to prison, but remained alcohol and drug free while there. Today, he is a full-time worker for Churches of Christ.

John had committed his life to Christ as a young teenager, but turned to drugs due to peer pressure, a violent home situation and a poor sense of self worth. He craved excitement and acceptance. For six years his life was totally out of control. He came to the notice of the police on many occasions but, fortunately for him, avoided a prison sentence. Although a highly intelligent young man, he spent his time using drugs and sleeping. He was in and out of employment. As he often had nowhere to sleep, there were times when he resorted to climbing into the used clothing bins placed by charities. After living in this way for about six years he recommitted his life to God.

Now married, he attends his local church, together with his wife and two beautiful children. He continues to maintain stable employment, gaining promotions and receiving praise from both his employer and his customers.

These are a few of those whose lives we have seen revolutionised by God's love. The Bible tells us that Jesus came to give us life to the full. I believe that he can do this and wants to do so for all people—including substance abusers.



Does What Happened Matter?

LESSLIE NEWBIGIN

When I was a young missionary I used to spend evenings in the local headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission, sharing with the Hindu scholars there in the study of the Upanishads and the Gospels. I remember that at the end of one session I said to the leader of the mission: "If it could be proved that Jesus never lived I would join you. It seems to me that the Vadanta offers the most persuasive and all-embracing account of the human situation that has ever

The anchorage in secular history is of the substance of the faith.

been conceived—if Jesus never lived". He said: "You must be crazy if you tie up your hope of eternal salvation with a disputable historical record!" I said, "That is the whole point: I do". That little exchange has often come back to me as I have tried

to understand the resistance of "modern" and "postmodern" culture to the Gospel. It brings to view the deep rift that runs through the culture that has developed in Europe in the past 2,000 years. It is vividly exemplified in two often-quoted sayings of Lessing and Pascal. Lessing: "Accidental happenings of history cannot prove eternal truths of reason". Pascal: "NOT the god of the philosophers, but the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob". The former represents that element in European thought which derives from the classical world of Greece and Rome, a world continuous with that of India. For that world, reliable truth, "the eternal truths of reason" is to be known not by attention to events in history, but by the exercise of those mental and spiritual powers which enable us to go beyond the passing events of history to the realm of supratemporal realities accessible to human reason and to our powers of contemplation and reflection.

To accept Lessing's dictum is, of course, to remove the Bible from any place of authority in the arena of public discourse. It can be at best a source of examples and illustrations of truths which are known otherwise. It cannot call into question the findings of the philosophers. In the contemporary climate in which it is assumed that Chris-



tianity is a system of belief and practice to be set alongside other comparable systems, it seems obvious that "dialogue" is the proper model for inter-faith relations. But it is usually understood not in the Socratic sense of a rigorous probing of truth claims, but as a mutual sharing of "experience", with a view to the enrichment of all. In this climate of thought, it is very difficult to convince our partners that we are not talking about "religious experience", but about events which have taken place and which need to be told. A news agency does not function by the method of dialogue. Its business is to communicate the facts.

Of course there is need for discussion and argument about how the effects are to be understood. All "facts" are known in the form of events (*facta*) inter-

preted. But this does not mean that the interpretation can then be detached from the events and held as a free-floating "world-view". It is enormously important that the Roman governor Pontius Pilate is named whenever the Church publicly affirms its faith. The anchorage in secular history is of the substance of the faith.

Pascal was surely right. The god of the philosophers is a product of the human mind in its quest for unity and coherence in a bewilderingly complex and changing world. The Bible, in contrast, tells us the story—the true story—of which our lives are a part and in which alone they have meaning. And the story is the story of God, whom we can come to know only by attending to what he has done and what he has promised. As we do so, we learn a kind of coherence which is not that of a timeless and changeless but impersonal reality. Rather, we find it in the unchanging faithfulness of one who meets our ever-changing sins and follies with both wrath and judgement, with both mercy and grace. As we so learn, our daily living becomes a continuing dialogue with this living God.



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CAROL PRESTON

BIRTHS

BARNARD Roger and Betty Ryall and Heather and Nigel Barnard are thankful to God for the safe birth of Steven David Barnard, 2 March at Kalamunda. Brother to Fiona and Mark. New address for Heather and Nigel, "Anapana Ridge", 38 Gilchrist Road, Lesmurdie WA 6076.

DEATHS

LAUNDER, Arthur Ernest Passed away 25.2.98, aged 93 years. Dear husband of Dorothy. Father of Malcolm (dec), Joy and Graham (dec). Father-in-law of Edwin and Gwenneth. Loving grandpa of 7 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. "You can slow down now dad. Rest awhile in God's arms."

WINDSOR Rodger Loving husband and father of Pat, Bradley, Brett, Jennifer and Julie. Loved son-in-law of Jean and Allan Pyne. Resting in God's love after a courageous battle with mesothelioma. College of the Bible with Pat and Bradley 1971.

IN MEMORIAM

CHALK, Doreen June Called home to be with her Lord 29.3.87. Lovingly remembered by husband Graham and all the family.

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One psychiatrist has called adolescence the "most confusing, challenging, frustrating, and fascinating phase of human development". It was when I felt most inadequate, when I prayed, cried and worried more than any other time in raising my children. Problems of drug taking, teenage crime, homelessness and youth suicide,



These are the people who will take over the running of the world

which are so evident in our society, indicate that the experience is no picnic for teenagers either. Too many young people today feel isolated, hopeless, and powerless. And we need to take notice!

The word adolescence means "period of growth to maturity". It's a 20th century word. Up until this century, at the age of 12 a boy picked up his spear, sword or shovel and became a man. A girl picked up her needlework, saucepan, tied her hair back and became a woman. It's as if we have stretched human development out at this point and put in a horror movie: a human being who is neither child nor adult, and sometimes hardly resembles anything human at all. It's rather frightening to think these are the people who will take over the running of the world in which we live, who will be taking care of us in our old age!

Of course we can all think of young people who are not like this; who are healthy, happy,

well-balanced and developing their potential as mature, contributing adults. People who we can feel confident will take our society in good directions, despite the growing economic and ecological challenges.

What makes the difference? Whatever it is, we need to take hold of it, understand it, apply it and teach as many people as possible to do the same.

There are no easy answers, but one thing is for sure. You can't begin to relate in a healthy, constructive way to a child at adolescence. It must start much earlier. For a child to face the challenges of their teenage years, they must have space to explore their identity, to build new relationships in safety, with support and feedback which encourages them and helps them learn. For them to be open to this they must feel secure in something, in someone.

They must know they are loved, that they are each worthwhile human beings. Ultimately any of us can only know that perfectly in relationship with God. But as parents, extended family, church family, we have a very important role to play in investing in the lives of young people in a way which honours and respects their significance. For their sake, for our sake, for the sake of the world and for God's sake, let's look closely at our relationships with children.

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We are a larger regional church located in the outer south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. We have a heart for evangelism and a vision for an active, growing youth ministry.

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Applications and/or inquiries, which will be treated in the strictest confidence, to:

Graeme Cann
Senior Minister
Berwick Regional Church of Christ
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Berwick Vic 3806
Phone (03) 9702 1011
Fax (03) 9702 1217

Media Matters Village Australia

VINEY LONGTHORP

Imagine, if you will, the population of Australia to be a village of just 1000 people. This makes it easier to envisage many of the important facts and see things in better perspective. Last year several magazines and the *Sunday Age* produced such a survey, using in part, some of the results of the 1996 national census. Can you find where you are located in this village?

Language English only is spoken in 758 homes; Italian, in 20 homes; Cantonese in 11; Arabic in 9; Vietnamese in 7.

Work 87 receive unemployment benefits. In government administration and defence, 20. In wholesale trade, 28; in retail trade, 69. In property and business, 47. In agriculture, forestry or fishing, 24; in mining 4. Some 63 worked in manufacturing, while 22 were in transport and storage. There were 33 in edu-

cation services and 43 in health and community services. Finance and insurance, 18. In communication services, 9; and in accommodation, cafes and restaurants, 23.

Age Children up to age 14, two hundred and fifteen; aged 15 to 19, seventy; aged 20 to 24, seventy four; aged 25 to 29, seventy six; aged 30 to 34, seventy eight; aged 35 to 39, seventy nine; aged 40 to 49, one hundred and

*418 people
would be
married; 27
separated and
51 divorced*

forty six; aged 50 to 59, one hundred and one; aged 60 to 69, seventy five; aged 70 to 79, fifty six;

aged 80 to 89, twenty four; aged 90 and over, six.

Marital Status 418 people would be married; 27 separated and 51 divorced.

Literacy Some 640 read newspapers and magazines each day and about 680 read books.

Education Students attending primary school, 104; at secondary school, 72. Attending tertiary institutions, 32.

More About Work Our village identified 76 managers and administrators; 170 professionals; 136 tradespeople; 210 clerical, sales and service workers; 100 labourers.

Wages Each week, 364 would earn \$300 or less; 317 between \$300 and \$700; 88 between \$700 and \$1000, and 52 more than \$1000 (Note: these amounts are now slightly out of date.)

Cars In our village 539 live in a household with one car and 417 where there are two cars. 152 live in a household where there are 3 or more cars.

Sport The main activities are: golf 22; netball 17; outdoor cricket 13; basketball 13; Australian Rules football 9; tennis 17; lawn bowls 11; indoor cricket 6; squash 5; rugby league 4; rugby union 3; hockey 2.

Leisure On most days, 705 would watch TV; 82 listen to the radio; 45 do some type of arts,



crafts and hobbies; 43 would exercise at home; 42 watch videos; 33 play indoor games; 15 play computer games; 11 listen to recorded music.

Pets 592 own a pet. Of these, 375 own a dog; 27 have a cat (one at least); 16 have caged birds; fish, 9; rabbits, 2; chickens, 1; guinea pigs, 1; a horse, 1.

Alcohol 625 drink alcohol. Of these, 514 claim to drink very little; 68 are moderate drinkers and 43 drink to excess to the extent that they constitute a high alcohol risk.

Origins In the village, 893 would be Australian citizens. Born overseas, 219. The most common countries of origin for the latter being Britain (60) New Zealand (16), Lebanon (13), Greece (7), China (6), Germany (6).

Religion 219 Anglicans, 269 Catholics, and 75 members of the Uniting Church. There would be 11 Buddhists, 11 Muslims 4 Jews and 3 Hindus. A recent update claims that the Mormons are the fastest growing religious group, while the Jehovah Witnesses now have more members than the Salvation Army. Returning to our Village in 1996, about 3 citizens belong to Churches of Christ. That's just enough to elect a president and secretary and to vote on which group will we join.

Invitation to past member of the

Merredin Church of Christ, WA

You are invited to attend the 40th Anniversary of the opening of the Merredin Church of Christ buildings.

Evening of reminiscing—Saturday 28 March 1998.

Sunday Services—combining with eastern wheatbelt churches—Sunday 29 March 1998.

RSVP 13 March to PO Box 122, Merredin WA 6415.

Further inquiries (08) 9041 1741—Gloria Banks
(08) 9041 1230—Rhonda Chapman
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—Lindsay Mott, Treasurer

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BAPTISMS

•John Baker, Wodonga, Vic •Lelanina Jones, Sarah Love, Kelli McKnight, Jess Wescombe, Bob Wescombe, Margaret Jones, Glenelg, SA •Carly Collins, Hume St, Toowoomba, Qld •Eric Lovell, Fremantle, WA •Jennifer Naylor, Peter Lin, James Lin, Box Hill, Vic •Mrs Hepworth, Northam, WA

DEATHS

•Evelyn Boyle, Evelyn Amy Bills, Glenelg, SA •Oriell Lloyd, Hume St, Toowoomba, Qld •Dulcie Young, Fremantle, WA

OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

PEARCE, Marney Alice

(24. 1. 98) Well-known and much-loved Adelaide identity, Marney Pearce's funeral was held at the Church of Christ, Nailsworth, SA. Born Marney Alice Kimber on 13 September 1918,

Marney lost her eyesight at 18 years of age. However, her spiritual eyes had already been opened as she had made her commitment to Christ under the guidance of Pastor Roy Raymond. Marney's work with the Blind Welfare Association and the Christian Fellowship for the Blind endeared her to many. Her faith, courage, love for others and fearless Christian testimony will be gratefully remembered for many years.

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WA

FREMANTLE (John Caporn, Bob Fairman) Bible study resumed with BBQ tea & guest speaker Dr David Hawks, subject "Alcohol & Drug Dependency" ... Ruth & Phil Culver, our Living Link, on leave from Madang, PNG. Phil, a builder, constructing Bible College with local help, teaching nationals self-reliance & management skills with good results ... Group attended Franklin Graham final meeting ... Church AGM 15 March.

NORTHAM (Jason Hemsley) 70 people at the Franklin Graham Festival, 33 responses recorded, 15 of those being first-time commitment ... 12 people doing second Alpha course. 25 attending first Youth Alpha. Two decisions, praying for more ... Youth group water skiing at Logue Brook ... After-school program of OASIS successful, with up to 55 attending ... God is really moving here in Northam.

SA

MILE END (Barry Benz) Attendances encouraging January & February ... Video *Faith of Our Fathers* used in segments during January night services ... Open air outreach by Cowandilla, Mile End churches & Community Care to reach crowds, particularly among young people waiting to attend adjoining Thebarton Theatre. Literature, sausage sizzle & Christian Rock Band used in conjunction with personal witness ... 4 referrals to Mile End from Festival SA.

GLENELG (Ron Roberts) Church appreciating 5 years of excellent leadership, teaching & ministry ... 6 baptisms recently, also confessions of faith & membership transfers ... Contemporary Sunday evening services continuing very encouragingly ... Electric piano & new sound system installed ... Ecumenical 18+

The Church of Christ, Hurstville, NSW

invites applications for the position of

Senior Minister

Applicants should

- be committed to good preaching and Bible study, evangelism and nurture
- have a vision for ministry opportunities
- have good leadership skills
- have a desire to see the church grow by producing disciples, evoking the use of spiritual gifts and ministering to the wider community; and
- be willing and able to give direction in the consideration of the relocation and development of the church's plant and exercise leadership in undertaking any such relocation and development.

Remuneration and conditions will be consistent with the appointment.

A profile of the church is available on request.

Please submit written applications to

The Secretary
Church of Christ Hurstville
PO Box 19
Hurstville NSW 2220

by 17 April 1998.

Associate Pastor

Tokyo Union Church

Tokyo Union Church is seeking a dynamic Christian leader to serve as Associate Pastor. TUC is an English-speaking, international, inter-denominational congregation located centrally in Tokyo. Primary responsibilities include: leadership of the Christian education program, including young adults ministry, mid-week children's ministry, youth ministry and development of a small group ministry; worship leadership/ preaching approximately once a month; and pastoral care and counselling.

The position is full-time. Salary is negotiable and a housing allowance is provided. This call to service is for two years to begin on or about 1 July 1998. Applicants must be ordained or ordainable ministers.

Those interested in the opportunity should send resumes to the Associate Pastor Search Committee, c/o Susan Banda at e-mail <tukomdo@tgol.com> or by fax (813) 3280 5078 or airmail 3-12-10 Takanawa Minato-ku, Tokyo 108-0074 JAPAN.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 24 April 1998.



Church News

group, also Seniors Happy Days meet fortnightly, weekly craft classes see 100+ participating ... 2 groups doing Lenten studies ... Church buildings regularly used for community activities.

VIC

BOX HILL (John Williamson & Elizabeth Lloyd) Long-serving leaders of Friday night kids' club, Julie Waterhouse & Averil Carr, travelled to Warwick, WA, church to conduct seminar on ministry to children. 60 people attended, 9 sessions conducted ... Vic-Tas Conference Executive Officer, Lynette Leach, spoke to a full house at John Williamson's induction service 1 February ... Liz Lloyd focussing her ministry on children and youth, with excellent results.

WODONGA (David Oldfield) Ewen McGregor, recovering from accident & surgery, has resigned as church secretary in his 85th year ... Ray Baker now secretary ... Surprise church luncheon held to celebrate 80th birthday of Jean Potter ... Seven church members as leaders, cooks and five young people blessed at very successful Cheshunt Camps ... Church attendance on increase ... One baptism in January.

DANDENONG (Brian White, Martin Rees, Jack Edwards) Over 160 attended Christmas outreach service. Children brought their presentations & were presented with their books. Service followed by basket lunch ... Chapel full for carol service on 21 December. Gifts brought to put under Christmas tree & were then presented to Salvation Army for distribution ... Outreach calendars given to TAFE, Dandenong Hospital, Op Shop, Mayfair Nursing Home & outreach groups in church.

ASHBURTON (Fiona Ogilvie) Farewell to Keith Wiggins early December ... Ken Barton took 2 Christmas services. Elders & Wendy Sowler responsible for January services ... Fiona Ogilvie welcomed on 1 February. Alan Niven

conducted commissioning service for Fiona 1 March ... Elsie McCahey hosted luncheon at her home for CWF ... Ashburton hosts for district World day of Prayer service. 60 present. Yvonne Lowe speaker.

MAIDSTONE (A. McMillan) Church shared some services over Christmas with Tottenham Baptists ... Half-yearly business meeting well attended ... Church welcomed Lindsay Dewberry, Conference President ... During min-

ister's holidays speakers were Ron Brooker, George Dajezer, Leprosy Mission, & Graeme Permerzel of Insight for Living ... Property appearing greatly improved by new fencing & concreting.

QLD

TOOWOOMBA (Dale White, Ross Savill) MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) running successfully, with

60 young mums, 80 children & 30 helpers involved each month ... Playgroups running 3 mornings each week ... Professional didgeridoo player & speaker Adrian Ross took recent Stumpey's youth program & Sunday night service ... Approx. 100 young people involved in Bible study groups, in addition to regular Friday night programs ... Once-a-month Coffee Shop format, being piloted in evening services.

COCOA brings HOPE



To the isolated people of Orissa State in INDIA, COCOA brings HOPE via medical treatment.

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Snippets from History

Meet the Editor

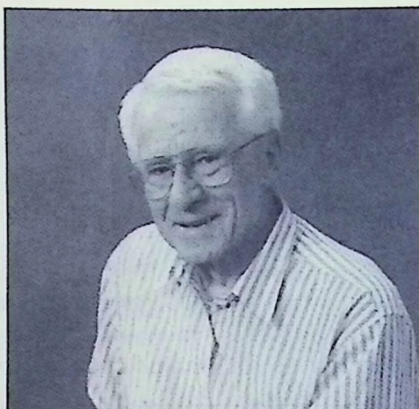
GORDON STIRLING

When I was a lad and turned the pages of the huge *Jubilee History of Churches of Christ* (1903), I was always intrigued by a distinguished looking, kindly, bearded gentleman, usually in the front row of the pictures. The reason for my curiosity was that while every one else was looking straight ahead, he was always pictured side on. He was Aaron Burr Maston, one of the outstanding leaders with Australian and New Zealand Churches of Christ from 1880 to 1907.

I was later to learn that by 1903 cancer had taken his left eye and that subsequent operations had eventually left two great holes in its place. He was able to use dressings to enable his appearance to be tolerable during his very active 25 years of public life, which involved several ministries in New Zealand and Australia, evangelistic missions and active participation in all state conferences. It was in the last 20 of these years that the ravages of the disease were so evident. But for almost 30 years he was never free from often excruciating pain.

This remarkable man came with his wife from the United States soon after their marriage, to serve first in New Zealand and then in Australia. As well as his pastoral ministries and evangelistic missions, he was instrumental in leading the churches in establishing the Austral Printing and Publishing Company. He was the founder and first Editor of *The Australian Christian* a hundred years ago.

A.B. Maston was one of the first to see the



need for the training of preachers in Australia. Up until then a few evangelists had been imported from the United States. Most of the churches used the British churches' "mutual edification" scheme, whereby at sermon time the pulpit was opened to any who felt led to bring a word of exhortation. While the Australian churches were slowly getting preacher training under way, Maston established a temporary fund to help Australians to train in America until a College of the Bible became a reality.

One of his major works was *The Jubilee History*. It contained 424 pages, comprising the history of 280 churches in Australia and New Zealand, with over 700 pictures. The blocks alone cost £500, the price of a handsome mansion in those days. It is a treasured possession still in many Australian Churches of Christ homes. No one since has been game enough to tackle a similar venture.

The Last Word

God cannot be seen. He can be recognised.

—Anthony de Mello

Hysterical Headlines

Miners Refuse to Work after Death.
Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant.
Stolen Painting Found by Tree.
Man Struck By Lightning Faces Battery Charge.
New Study of Obscure Looks for Larger Test Group.
Astronaut Takes Blame for Gas in Spacecraft.
Kids Make Nutritious Snacks.
Chef Throws His Heart into Helping Feed Needy.
Arson Suspect Held in Massachusetts Fire.
Ban On Soliciting Dead in Trotwood.
Local High School Dropouts Cut in Half.
New Vaccine May Contain Rabies.
Hospitals are Sued by 7 Foot Doctors.

A vicar was having trouble with his microphone. The congregation could hardly hear him, but they followed the liturgy and dutifully gave their responses. Finally, he sighed, "There's something wrong with this microphone". "And also with you," came the response.

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Pontius' Puddle

