

THE AUSTRALIAN

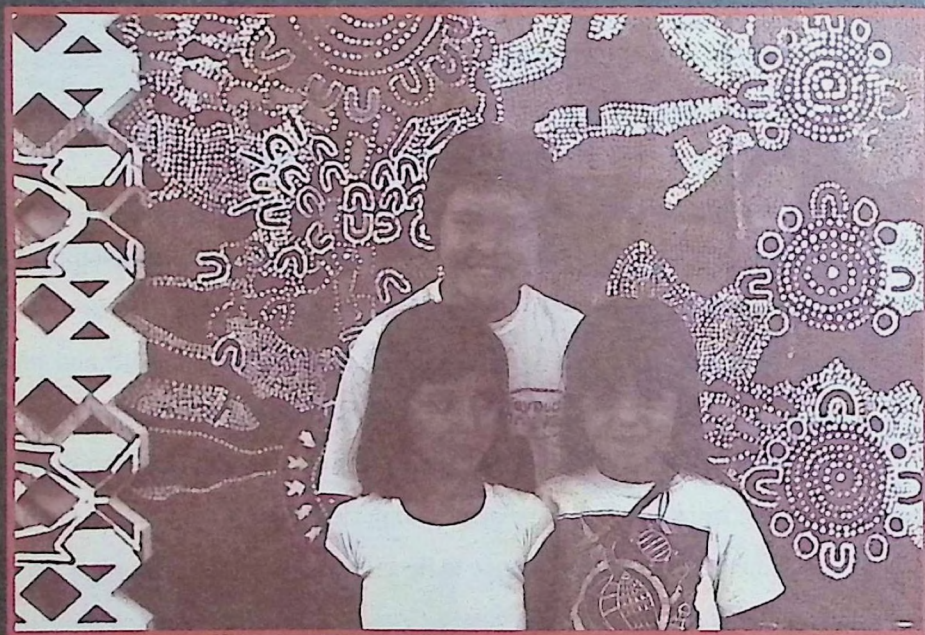


# Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 102 No. 2, 24 February 1999

PRINT POST APPROVED PF349181/00418



Aboriginal Mission  
New Developments



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NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Editor: Don Smith, Production Manager/Sub Editor: Nigel Pegram Issue 10 March Deadline 25 February; Issue 11 March; Issue 7 April Deadline 25 March. Address for all correspondence: PO Box 101, Essendon North Vic 3041. Telephone (03) 9379 1219, Fax (03) 9379 0015, E-mail <editor@ozemail.com.au>. World Wide Web <www.ozemail.com.au/~aceditor>. Member publication of the Australasian Religious Press Association. Published by the Board of Management of The Australian Christian, a Department of Churches of Christ in Australia. Keith Aird, Chairman (SA); Lindsay Mott, Treasurer (Vic); John Batchler (Tas); Tom Glynn (NSW); Bev Grenfell (Qld); Lea Nelson (ACT); Allen Smyth (WA). Printed by New Litho Pty Ltd, Surrey Hills Vic. Responsibility for electoral material is accepted by Don Smith, 2 Larkspur Ave, Doncaster 3108. This publication is indexed in the Australasian Religion Index. ISSN 0004-8652. Advertising Rates: Displayed: \$6.00 per column centimetre, Classifieds: \$15.00 for the first 25 words and 25c for each additional word.

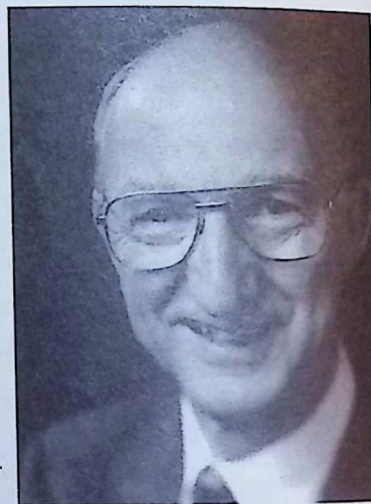


## Editorial

### Something New

DON SMITH

**S**omething new is happening in our midst. The comments by Avon Moyle and Des Croot in this issue are of profound significance for one part of the national ministry of Churches of Christ and for our whole Australian movement. Here are not just the familiar missionary reports but comment and reflection about new developments. \* What is happening in the Pilbara is of fundamental significance in mission theory and practice. The late Donald McGavran, father of the church growth movement and active within our American churches, would have rejoiced at



the developments. McGavran was a distinguished international missiologist committed to understanding why churches grow and how we can work with God to this great end. \* In the Pilbara story we have the marks of "redemption and lift" where we see a people moving on in their journey and lifting themselves to new levels of faith and life. Confronting the issues of alcohol abuse ("AC" 29.4.98) and the successful completion of land rights agreements ("AC" 11.3.98) are indications of a new social conscience and activism. This experience flows from new and old disciples experiencing new depths of understanding about the Gospel message and its relevance to their lives. These developments are so far distant from most of us that it is not always easy to grasp the significance of what is happening. \* All this is quietly occurring while in the wider context of Aboriginal affairs we are familiar with news of political conflict, reconciliation and constitutional preamble issues, "sorry days," land-rights claims, health, education, drug abuse, employment concerns and more. Reports of conflict and bad news abound. Ahead lies the challenge to build a new society for all Australians. \* But now we should stand off and see what God is doing in our movement. Let's link the Pilbara experience with the Stanwell Tops Manifesto and all the good things emerging at this time. If we lift our sights beyond the immediate there is something larger and more significant emerging among us. These developments are of great spiritual significance for our movement. There is a new dynamic in our midst. I believe this is the most significant moment in our history this century. Hear what the Spirit is saying to us. \*

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# Letters to the Editor

**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.**

## International Summit on Mission

To the Editor,  
I write to affirm the importance of the "International Summit on Mission". It was a great idea that became a reality and has far-reaching potential. Planning for this time restricted us to the family line of the Brits, Kiwis and Aussies. That was diverse enough! Some time in the future we would encourage some of the other 158 countries where we witness to try a similar event.

It was revealing for us Aussie participants. Gone are the divisive difficulties of the old Federal Board of Christian Education in the 1960s. Lingering state suspicions, however, still need to be conquered. I applaud the background work of Alan Hirsch and Martin Robinson in giving direction to the Summit's purpose and keeping us all within the fold!

The Manifesto included the words "the five-fold ministry pattern of gifting". As a participant, I draw attention to the fact that that concept was not discussed, but uncritically taken as given!

There was an interesting surge towards what was called "apostolic and prophetic leadership". It makes me ask where we are heading. Who are our Apostles and Prophets? Who appoints or anoints them? What is their territory and jurisdiction? What is their life-span and destiny if they are found to be in error? Is this another aspect of "kingdom think-

ing" that needs deeper consideration from a Restorative position? I have not seen such a major drift in a movement's leadership, embraced so swiftly by so few who may be considered to hold our movement's future in their hands! In the meanwhile, as the Summit stressed, not only must we avoid the death of becoming denominationalised and the elitism of ecclesiology, our movement must be kept to the primary responsibility of its evangelistic mission.

—Bruce Armstrong  
(Carlingford, NSW)

[As noted in "Update", we plan to explore Summit themes in an upcoming issue.]

## Stanwell Tops Manifesto

To the Editor,  
One statement in the Manifesto reiterates our classic self-understanding: We "renew our commitment to the purpose and plea of our movement to seek the unity of all Christians on the basis of the New Testament and in the Mission of our Lord Jesus for the evangelisation of the world."

In Great Britain, this was made explicit by, for example, J.B. Rotherham in the nineteenth century and in North America by the Disciples in their 1909 International Convention (celebrating the centenary of Thomas Campbell's "Declaration and Address").

I think the Manifesto needs to be amplified. For one thing, what do we mean by the unity of all Christians? Who is educating us in answering this question? Is it simply left to every congregation acting on its own? For another, to use my terminology, what do we mean by the restoration of the apostolic faith and order? Is that left just to every local minister thinking things through on her or his own?

—Ronald Graham  
(Johnston, Iowa, USA)

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# Letters to the Editor

## The Creator

To the Editor,

I'm very sorry that Ronald Graham ("AC" 10.2.99) finds John Rees's statement that "Jesus Christ is our Creator" puzzling. Certainly, Genesis 1 lies behind John 1. But that Gospel passage, together with Col 2:2-10 and Heb 1:1-3, reveals that God did not create alone. I am lifted to the heavenlies when I meditate on this New Testament teaching, that God made the universe through and for the Word, who is the Son, who is Jesus Christ.

—Peter Dixon  
(Marrickville NSW)

## The Creator

To the Editor,

Ron Graham's letter ("AC" 10.2.99) implies that the "deeper" we look into the Prologue of John's Gospel the more clearly we will see a separation between the Divine Logos and the historical Jesus. It is more likely that we will discover the reverse.

John might be borrowing the Logos idea from the Hebrews or the Greeks. He might be adapting Logos poetry or composing rhythmic Logos prose. He might even be presenting aspects of Jesus' identity with more lucidity than the earlier Evangelists. Regardless of these "mights", what seems clear is that one of the purposes of John's Gospel as a whole is to show how the Logos of the Prologue is the historical Jesus. How else are we to take the famous "I am" sayings, which all point to Jesus' divinity? How else are we to read that "the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us"? That John considered the Divine Logos to be our creator (1:3f.) is simply an outworking of his belief that the Man from Nazareth was the incarnation of God.

—John Rees  
(Petersham, NSW)

## Tabymancon

To the Editor,

I was very interested to read Gordon Stirling's comments in his "Snippets from History" ("AC" 23.12.98) concerning Tabymancon.

In 1987 my wife and I visited Pentecost Island, Vanuatu, and on that occasion were guests in the home of Silas, the Principal of the secondary school at Ranwadi.

In conversation, I mentioned Tabymancon to him and he said the grave of Tabymancon was in the bush adjacent to the school and that if we would like to visit it, he would be pleased to take us to do so.

He got two of the older students to clear a track with their long bush knives and we were able to go with him and photograph the grave.

That coloured photograph of Silas standing with his hand on the rough cement cross of the grave is a precious memento of the occasion. At the time of our stay, Silas was not married, so his father, Zacchaeus, acted as cook and housekeeper for us during our stay.

On the Sunday, I had the privilege of preaching in the school hall in the morning service. At the customary line-up of visitors after the service, Zacchaeus, instead of shaking hands with me, put his arms around me and firmly hugged me, a rather lovely re-

membrance of a lovely and loving people.

We came home from our two visits to Vanuatu with the firm impression that the people of that

country live within a truly Christian environment. God bless them all!

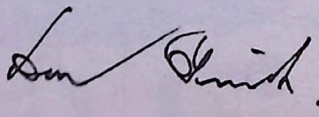
—Ken Dawson  
(Brooklyn Park, SA)

## Update

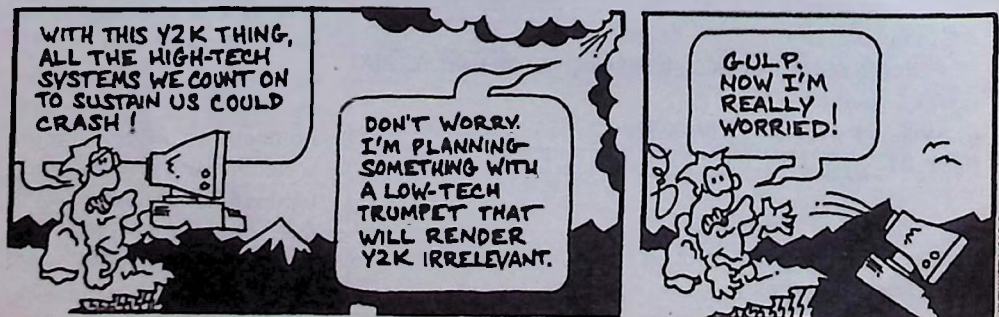
Dear Readers,

This issue has a focus on Aboriginal Mission work. We hope you will find the contributions stimulating. The material has been arranged by Avon Moyle of the Federal Aborigines Board. Also in this issue we make some changes. Viney Longthorp's "Media Matters" will now alternate with a new feature looking at "Matters" of wide interest. A number of writers will contribute throughout the year. Rob Culhane leads off this series with comments on events of significance for the church in the last forty years. Kerrie Handasyde reports on her involvement at the World Council of Churches Conference in Harare. Kerrie was one of the two Australian Churches of Christ representatives. Given the current focus on ecumenical events we shall shortly be including a survey by Dr Bill Tabbernee of ecumenism this century. 1999 is an appropriate

year for this coverage. We have numerous "Letters to the Editor" to hand. There will be some delay in including them all. One of our proof readers, Jackie Kelly, will leave us at Easter to prepare for her fast-approaching wedding. Her voluntary contribution has been greatly appreciated. We invite anyone living in Melbourne who is interested in this role to contact the office to discuss details. The commitment is for a Monday morning, 22 times a year. In recent months there has been a number of enquiries to the National Literature Department for Jeff Deuble's book, *Effective Eldership*. This is now out of print, but recently ten copies were discovered. Call us promptly if you want them. The cost is \$8.50.

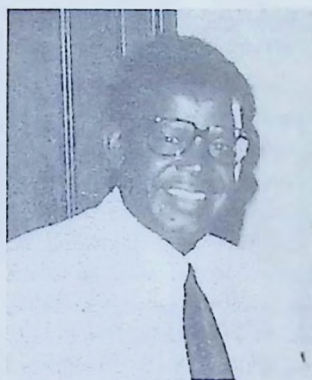


## Pontius' Puddle



# African Leader Dies

**Zimbabwe leader killed in car accident**



*Manikidza Nyoni, secretary of Zimbabwe Churches of Christ, died recently*

It is with sadness that we report the death of the secretary of the

Associated Churches of Christ in Zimbabwe, Manikidza Nyoni, in a car accident on 25 January. M.M., as he was known to many, died when his car collided with an oncoming vehicle that had crossed to the wrong side of the main Bulawayo—Gweru road.

A special memorial service was attended by many thousands of people at his home church in Gweru. Many tributes were made, including that of Zimbabwe Vice-President Muzenda.

It is not possible to list the many achievements of this outstanding man. Manikidza was known to many as a wise counsellor, civic leader and devoted Christian.

In the 1960s he studied at Victoria University, New Zealand, where he received a Master of Arts degree. He was a natural teacher, with excellent communication skills. His professional life took him to the position of Regional Director of Education. He made history being the first African to be appointed as Headmaster at Dadaya High School. He was twice Mayor of Gweru and involved in football administration.

However, his great passion was the Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. He was very committed to the leadership of his home church, being an elder for a

number of years, a trustee with the Dadaya Mission Trust and secretary of the Associated Churches of Christ.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Mrs Dorcas Nyoni and her children. This is their second sudden loss in recent times. Dorcas and Manikidza lost their son suddenly in England late last year. Sir Garfield Todd, in his tribute to Manikidza Nyoni, said; "We who are involved in the work of our churches will miss his wise counselling, but especially his great contribution to the spiritual life of our congregations."

—Jeff Weston  
Overseas Mission Board

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## Indigenous Ministry

### Second World Indigenous Conference

"Did God make a mistake when he created you?" was the question by a speaker at the second World Indigenous Conference, commenting on how the drive for assimilation of indigenous people implied that people should be ashamed of who they were. The 1000 participants from 15 countries at the conference held in South Dakota, USA, September 1998, were encouraged to explore expressions of worship that grew out of their tradition and culture. Lynda Prince, an indigenous Canadian, believes that "indigenous people have been asked to give up too much and commented that it was wrong for denominations to teach us to become like them".

Participants shared their cultur-

ally-unique forms of worship. Some critics warned of the dangers of blending Christianity and other forms of religion. Mark MacDonald, Episcopal Bishop of Alaska, commented that some have difficulty seeing things from a perspective other than their own culture. He cited the example of Indians putting out a plate at a funeral of a relative. MacDonald noted the comment of a white man who with a laugh said, "When are your relatives going to get up and eat that food?" The response was "About the same time your relatives get up and smell the flowers." Sydney, in January 2000, will be the venue for the next scheduled gathering of the Conference.

—Christianity Today

## Queensland Floods

### Report from our churches and facilities

Floodwaters have certainly swamped the south-east corner of Queensland. The Sunshine Coast, just to the north of Brisbane, bore the brunt of what was a huge, torrential downpour. Floodwaters rose rapidly. Most badly affected was the town of Gympie, where the river rose by an amazing 0.5 metres per hour on 9 February. The church at Gympie is on high ground and all the church folk were unaffected by the disaster. Not so for many of the area's other residents, however. In the main centre of town, it was "all hands on deck" to make sure that as much property as possible was saved from the rising waters. As the waters continued to rise, it became clear that this flood was the worst in 100 years!

Another problem was the number of people left stranded in Gympie because the roads into and out of the town were cut. The church

offered its facilities to help out, but as it happened, all were accommodated elsewhere.

Gympie church minister, Graeme Ellingsen, said, "The sheer volume of the water was amazing. It's something that has to be seen to be believed." He went on to say that he was impressed by the people in the area who all pulled together and kept their sense of humour as the floodwaters rose. Further north in the Wide Bay region, Churches of Christ Care Aged Care staff reported that when the floods peaked on Thursday, 11 February, both aged-care facilities at Maryborough and Hervey Bay were not at risk. The Maryborough church also is built on high ground so did not sustain any damage. At the time of writing, five people had died as a result of the floods, and the damage bill will be many millions of dollars.

## Calendar Photographs Wanted



The National Literature Department invites the submission of colour slides for possible inclusion in the very popular Churches of Christ Calendar for 2000.

Photographs are needed from all states and territories of Australia, and from PNG and Vanuatu.

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

(Please include location of scenes.)

Forward to: National Literature Department  
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## Two Youth Ministers

**Regional Queensland church appoints second youth minister**

Late in 1998 the Hume Street, Toowoomba, Qld, church appointed a second youth worker to the ministry team. Darren Robinson was appointed assistant youth worker (part time) to help meet the discipleship and program needs of a growing youth ministry. Darren, who played Rugby League with the Brisbane Broncos (reserves) for four years is now enrolled part time in theological studies with the Australian College of Ministries. He will help the church reach out to both indigenous and



non-indigenous Australians. On the day of Darren's induction the church joined in a service of reconciliation with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters expressing sorrow at past wrongs, and optimism at working toward true reconciliation in Jesus Christ.

## Leadership Network

**Network to develop skills and encourage growth**



*Garry Berry (Clayton), Martin Gillespie (Mitcham), Rob Culhane (Balwyn), Richard Brohier (Manifold Heights), David Ratten (Blackburn), Buck Rogers (CRMA)*

In November a group of ministers from Victorian churches completed a twelve-month Focusing Leaders Network project. Led by David Ratten (Blackburn) and Buck Rogers (Church Resource Ministries Australia), the group met for one day a month in a learning community designed to further empower the leaders for effective ministry.

The Focusing Leaders Network model has been developed by

Church Resource Ministries Australia. It provides a supportive environment where leaders are able to develop their strategic leadership skills, and foster their personal and spiritual growth. A feature of the network is the coaching component, where participants meet regularly with a coach who helps the leader to integrate what is learnt into their lives and ministry. Another Network is planned for 1999.

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Rob McElroy  
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## WA Graduates

**West Australian Bible College  
graduation service**



*Wayne Johnson, evangelistic outreach development worker from Thornlie Church of Christ, receives his Advanced Diploma of Christian Ministry from Glen Lock*

Thirty students received awards at the annual WA Bible College graduation service held at the Kalamunda Church of Christ, 5 December 1998. Thirteen of the graduates came from the Applecross Indonesian, Kalamunda, Perth City, Rivervale, Roleystone, South Perth and Thornlie Churches of Christ.

A feature of the service was the creative way in which each of the graduating students participated with testimonies, interviews, mu-

sic and drama. Thirteen of the graduating students received a teacher's certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. These awards were issued by the West Australian House of English Studies. This is an alternative registered name of the WA Bible College and will enable some students to use this qualification in overseas countries that would not accept an award from a Christian organisation.

## CHAPLAIN



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## Here and There

**Poetry Submissions Wanted**

The Eremos Institute, an ecumenical association, is preparing a poetry anthology and invites submissions, particularly about personal experience and the spiritual journey. Poems of up to fifty lines are preferred. Contributions with a self-addressed envelope should be sent to the Editors, Eremos Anthology, PO Box 1039, Gawler SA 5118 no later than 30 May 1999.

# Aborigines

## Meeting Under the Tree

AVON MOYLE

**T**he two men, close friends but representing different cultures, stood under the tree for an hour, while the one addressed a gathering of men in "their" language on a fascinating and complex topic—the relationship between Aboriginal culture and Christianity. Not knowing what was being said, the second man could only stand with his friend and pray. The two men were Richard Yuline and Ross Norling. The venue was an Aboriginal community several hours' drive from Port Hedland, WA.

*Fifty men stood before them, requesting prayer that they would not compromise their new faith and yet still be able to operate within their culture.*

At the end of an hour, Richard called the men to pray with him. Ross stood there, head bowed and eyes closed, expecting that trouble could erupt at this point, since their listeners had previously shown hostility towards the Christian message, perceiving it to be a threat to their culture—their very way of life. During the prayer there was rustling and movement, and therefore some anxiety for Ross and Richard. Fifty men stood before them, requesting prayer that they would not compromise their new faith and yet still be able to operate within their culture. That was a great breakthrough! That is the kind of breakthrough that missionaries operating cross-culturally pray for and, with great sensitivity, pursue.

It is not syncretism. Rather, it represents a desire by those men to properly relate their culture to Christ. We know it by the term "the cultural contextualisation of the Gospel". It means being able to properly relate the culture to Christ, leading ultimately to the point of seeing the "culture in Christ".

This is a continuation of similar events of twenty years ago. John Blackett in his book, *Fire in the Outback* documents the revival among Aborigines which began in 1979, and some of the effects of the movement of the Holy Spirit at that time. The people saw God as one who has lived with them through their history and lives with them now. Another result was the emergence of many Christian leaders. Patterns of distinctly Aboriginal worship are appearing—their own style, their own songs, their own language. This has led to the formation of a Christian identity for Aborigines. God speaks their languages, in their thought patterns, in their social framework and culture.

Previously, many were told their culture was evil, that to be Christian meant coming out of that culture altogether. Yet throughout their history, Aboriginal people have had a strongly-developed consciousness of God, in ways similar to other ancient tribal groups.

Many Aborigines increasingly seek Christianity not just as "white fellas' religion", but as something relevant to their culture too. That's why that meeting under the tree with Richard and Ross was so significant. If we can gently seize the opportunity, many more Aboriginal people will yet see that God has revealed himself uniquely to them. It was Lance Fisher, and Bob Williams working out of Carnarvon almost 35 years ago that helped me to see the rel-



evance of the culture properly contextualised within God's Word. The events in WA's Pilbara region today confirm it. What Bob Williams, himself a tribal leader steeped in his culture, discovered at his conversion, many Aboriginal people are proving today.

The Federal Aborigines Board is encouraging people to explore what it means to be a Christian within their own particular setting. Its mission statement recognises that Aboriginal churches should be encouraged to develop other churches that express the truths of the Gospel in culturally-relevant ways. This finds expression in places as far apart as Tamworth and Marble Bar. Paul's words in 1 Cor. 9:23 are a challenge, as he strove to, "become all things to all men in order to save some by whatever means".

For those involved in cross-cultural ministry, these are days of unprecedented opportunity. They are opportunities built on the hard work of those who have faithfully gone before, empowered by a significant movement of the Holy Spirit.

Let's continue to be sensitive to what is happening, prayerful and supportive, so that Aboriginal people will continue to discover the beauty of a culture correctly related to Jesus Christ.

Avon Moyle is Executive Director of the Churches of Christ Federal Aborigines Board.

# Aborigines

## The Spirit in the Pilbara

D.K. CROOT

**T**he movement of the Holy Spirit in the North of WA follows previous revivals in Warburton and southern parts of WA emanating from the Elcho Island revivals last decade. It seems that one man miraculously converted in Hedland ten years ago is one of the keys in this revival, having suffered great persecution for his faith over the years, but leading many to salvation.

Earlier, the ministry of Lance Fisher, Bob Williams and numerous other FAB missionaries through the north is another of the keys. The deep commit-

*God is always doing something new and unexpected—as he has in the Pilbara*

ment and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit shown by Ross and Helen Norling as they returned after a number of years to complete “unfinished business” in the Pilbara is a further key.

What do I see happening in the Pilbara? A revival among a needy people who have been devastated by the detrimental influences of our white society. A revival that has come in God’s time and plan, in spite of inadequate facilities, resources and staff. A revival long prayed for, but a revival that did not come to the people who expected it—that is white society. I’m not surprised, however, that it has come through our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, because God seems to work through those who have suffered injustice and rejection.

I see a people with few material possessions finding their purpose, freedom and value in their experience of Christ

and salvation. Communities stretched across nearly 1000 km of the Pilbara are transformed as they gather to worship God their way and liquor outlets are bankrupted.

In Churches of Christ our plea has been for the “Restoration Movement”, and most of our emphasis has been in the “Restoration” part. I believe this revival helps us see that our emphasis should now be on the “movement” part. God is always doing something new and unexpected—as he has in the Pilbara, with hundreds of baptisms under the ministry of the ABC (Apostolic, Baptist and Churches of Christ) ministries.

Ross Norling ministers to about eight of these communities/churches.

**What are the needs in the Pilbara?**

The need is for prayer, understanding, interest and financial support. This is not the traditional church, but rather a mission church. For the most part, those involved meet in dry creek beds, alongside waterholes, on cattle stations and out-camps where they seek to escape the drink and gambling habits learned from white folk.

Of course it is easier to move around when your meagre belongings are an old vehicle, a few clothes and a couple of blankets. These simple folk, hungry for teaching about God and his plan for them in their somewhat nomadic lifestyle show a depth of faith that is impressive. The folk in Hedland may have regular jobs and houses—but they are the minority.

In Hedland the womens’ singing group under the leadership of Helen Norling is in demand to sing at town events and has ministered to the Perth Women’s Camp in the past two years. When they sing, something happens as the Spirit of God touches hearts and mists the eyes of both believers and unbelievers.



**What about the future?**

These people will not “join” organised churches or be on a membership list. This is much more like the New Testament days when “God added to the church daily”.

We need to appreciate that this is “different” and we will not readily understand this “movement” of the Spirit in the Pilbara—but they are Christ’s church and our brothers and sisters.

We need to recognise God is at work in these people and our part is to continue to provide the workers, disciplers and resources to allow the Holy Spirit to continue to move among them and then through them into the white society. The future is unknown and unpredictable, but if I were to be prophetic, I would say their ministry in the years ahead will probably increasingly reach our organised, self-satisfied white churches in ways we can’t even imagine.

Over the last thirty-five years Des has ministered in our WA churches, the last ten as Director for Church Development. He has made regular trips through the vast northern areas visiting Aboriginal Christians.

# Aborigines

## Making the First Move

DAVID TIMMS

**N**o fair-minded or thinking person could say that the Australian aborigines have been treated justly or humanely. It has been a shameful history of slaughter, genocide, abuse and discrimination, punctuated by just a few shining lights where dignity has been restored and humanity respected.

Since 1992 we have had a series of court judgements and government initiatives which have, if anything, added to the tensions, rather than diminished them. Mabo, the Native Title Act, Wik, Howard's 10-point plan and endless discussion have done little to reconcile

*Reconciliation does not just happen. It has to be willed.*

black and white Australia.

The tensions are not likely to be resolved in a hurry. Strangely, we continue to confuse two very different processes—integration and reconciliation. Some have naively thought the two are the same. They are not.

Integration, whereby white Australians would like to bring aboriginal culture into the 20th century and assimilate it into the wider society, is a political concept. It forces people to change their behaviour, but it does little to address racial tensions. Integration takes lots of money, infrastructure and organisation. Someone has noted, "Legal victories leave a bitter-sweet taste. They may change the quality of life, but don't achieve brotherhood." Integration prompted the "stolen generation".

Reconciliation is very different. It is a spiritual concept. It invites the changing of hearts. Compensation and resto-

ration may be a part of the reconciliation process, but it runs much deeper than that. It enables genuine community rather than mere co-existence. If anyone should know these things it ought to be those who follow Christ!

Paul writes (2 Cor 5:18-19) that the followers of Christ have a unique and special role in the world. We have been given "the ministry of reconciliation" and entrusted with "the word of reconciliation". Perhaps this is because we ourselves have been powerfully reconciled with God. Let's consider some of the basic dimensions of this ministry. If indigenous and non-indigenous Australians are to be reconciled, the following biblical principles will apply.

There will be a cost. It cost God the life of his Son (Rom 5:10; Col 1:20-21). There will be costs for us: time costs, financial costs, emotional costs (related to repentance and forgiveness) and spiritual costs (e.g. denying ourselves). There must be a will. Reconciliation does not just happen. It has to be willed. Time does not heal all wounds. The sending of the Son was willed, planned and orchestrated.

There must be words and actions. Reconciliation is not achieved by talking about each other but talking with each other, and then taking steps of compromise, on both sides. We must be both hearers and doers of the word.

There must be a letting go of the past. There can never be reconciliation without repentance and forgiveness. Letting go is not forgetting or dismissing the past, but it is a decision not to let a hurt govern the future. Therefore, apologies and pardon are essential, because resentment always breeds where the past is unresolved.

There must be confrontation of racism. Racism is the ugly side of fear. It stere-



otypes people and is contrary to the heart of God. It demeans, belittles and divides. It must be condemned both publicly and privately.

There must be an embracing of diversity. Reconciliation does not demand homogeneity (that we all be the same), but delights in diversity and the richness of our differences.

There must be a turning to God. Can there be any lasting or deep reconciliation which does not recognise the spiritual basis of the problem?

These are issues of the heart, not the wallet.

Let's acknowledge that we (on both sides) are often driven by ignorance, apathy, fear, self-interest, peer pressure and stereotypes. Only those who are followers of Christ can understand and advocate genuine reconciliation.

By the way, these principles are as relevant to your marriage, family and workplace as they are to the national issues at hand. Who should make the first move?

David Timms is a member of the Epping, NSW, church and a lecturer at the Australian College of Ministries.

# Aborigines

## A New Era

LYNETTE LEACH

**I**t is a new era for indigenous ministry in Victorian-Tasmanian Churches of Christ. In December 1997, the Conference Board resolved to establish the Indigenous Ministry Unit, replacing the former Aborigines Mission Unit. Reg and Marceil Lawrence were appointed as coordinators. One of the aims was to create space within the

*Without a doubt, pioneering work has happened.*

conference structure for a culturally-relevant expression of indigenous ministry to emerge. The vision is to develop communities that are authentically indigenous and authentically Christian, and to provide opportunities for cross-cultural worship.

### Priorities

The Indigenous Ministry Unit values people, indigenous culture, indigenous discipleship, history, justice and being Christ-centred. Priorities include training, practical relief to people, resourcing and church planting. Future priorities have been identified, including youth and children's ministry, men's and women's ministry; developing leaders, indigenous discipleship and training; speaking out about injustice, indigenous learning, prison ministry, hospital ministry, networking and jilbas (reconciliation journeys).

### Leadership

There is a growing recognition that the health of the church in Australia is directly linked to the health of indigenous Australians in our midst. This is a test of faithfulness in applying the Gospel in our context. The perspectives of indigenous Australians need to influence

the whole church. A key issue is the development of indigenous Australian Christian leadership. This is necessary if indigenous ministry is to be sustained and nurtured. Leaders who can be raised up and trained in their own communities will make an effective contribution. Training is important in changing the way that indigenous ministry is carried out.

### Outreach

Have some of the goals been achieved since the commencement of the Indigenous Ministry Unit? Without a doubt, pioneering work has happened. The Lawrence family has had to cope with the pressures that come with ministry and with the establishing of a different structure within which the Unit can operate. At times, these pressures can be overwhelming. Marceil is a Koori educator in the Gippsland area. Reg is studying at the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave. Through their hospital ministry, recreation programs and food relief, their outreach in communities in Gippsland is extensive. Home gatherings, youth ministry, visits to families and children's ministry are part of their ministry. Recently, the Lionel Rose Centre in Morwell was given for the work of the Koori ministry. Much of this work depends on appropriate leadership if it is to be sustained and nurtured.

### Identity

The Lawrence family led the presentation for the indigenous Australian delegation at the World Christian Gathering of Indigenous People, held at Rapid City, South Dakota, USA. The gathering provided the opportunity for the indigenous peoples of the world to express their faith in Jesus Christ through performing arts, music, instruments, ceremonies and language. This was an



important time that affirmed the identity of indigenous people as unique men and women of God. It is important that they do not have to abandon their culture in expressing their faith.

### Difficulties

The task is not easy. The Aboriginal Church at Mooropna has gone into recess, because of the very small attendance. There is no minister or key leader there to provide leadership. Yet the need for outreach is great, particularly as the death rate among Aboriginal people is high. In the Latrobe Valley area, gambling is very strong, with a high level of addiction and deaths.

### Change

There is a need for conference agencies (national and state) and churches to learn how to respond appropriately to minority and marginalised groups by enabling them to have legitimate access to resources, giving them an open door to carry out different ways of ministry and by making structures accessible. Seeing through the eyes of marginalised groups, giving space for their voices to be heard, is essential. The role of conference leaders is to stand with indigenous Australians, supporting their vision of raising up indigenous Christian leaders, acknowledging that at times the work seems very fragile. As Christians, we are called to walk the road together, shaping a creative mutual partnership between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians and working always towards reconciliation, which is at the heart of the gospel.

Lynette Leach is Executive Officer of the Victorian-Tasmanian Churches of Christ Conference.

# Aborigines

## Reconciliation

AVON W. MOYLE

**T**he "R" word (reconciliation) will not go away. It is very much a part of Australia's life and dominates thinking at political, social, church levels and of individuals everywhere.

Some people respond by denying the need for any form of reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Some people have a fear for what gestures of genuine reconciliation might cost. Others just do not know what they can do to personally further the cause of reconciliation, so they do nothing.

I have just found a most helpful book that provides a model for true reconciliation. Called *Breaking Down Walls*, the authors, Raleigh Washington (an Afro-American) and Glen Kehrein (a white man), set out to be reconciled to each other and later to become agents of reconciliation. The book is set in, and addresses, the American scene, with all its complex racial relations, tensions overt and covert, racism, and the fears that underlie much of modern America. The two men, both devout Christians, had first to learn to operate cross-culturally, to overcome stereotypes and to be genuinely reconciled to each other. They honestly record their personal struggles and then set about implementing a model in line with Christ's teachings that will lead to genuine reconciliation.

The principles they set out for Americans apply equally to us Australians. Be warned—they do not come easy!

The authors suggest that there are things indigenous and non-indigenous Christians need to know, to honestly face, to challenge and to implement. I've tried to briefly interpret their challenge to the church in general and to God's people as individuals.

They suggest that there are six imperatives for we who seek to be reconciled and form friendships across racial lines.

### **Do not deny the reality of racism.**

A careful reading of our history will help us see the truth concerning racism, and the injustice of the past years. We need to be honest about the reality of racism in the present time.

### **Do not look for simple answers to complex problems.**

We are conditioned, these days, to look for instant solutions. There are no simple answers, only a simple word, **time**. It will take time and hard work to build trust. We must choose to identify with the pain of the marginalised and the minority.

### **Become a learner by first admitting you do not know very much about Aboriginal people.**

We live in a society controlled by white people. Aboriginal people have had to deal with a white world and the reverse is not true. Thoughts of superiority have no place in the process.

The solution is to be a learner, asking for their advice, respecting their culture and giving heed to their opinions.

We should learn to value the culture of the minority, to be a true learner, to show respect.

### **Get beyond guilt to action.**

Though we cannot change the past, neither can we deny how its injustice has created the problems of the present. Our guilt occurs when we participate in a lifestyle that perpetuates injustice without question or concern. That should prompt action to build bridges over the gaps.

Repentance leads to change not only in attitude but also in choices—and that is action.

### **How much you accomplish depends on how much you invest.**

Jesus said, "From everyone who has been given much, much shall be required." (Luke 12:48). We Christians have been given so much. That should prompt us to action.

Cross-cultural ministry cannot be done "on the cheap". In business, the return on investment relates directly to the time one invests. To have input on racial reconciliation, you and your church must invest time with people. Resolutions of good intent won't bring about a whole lot of change until the words lead to action.

### **Churches must become part of the solution.**

What corporate action can we, as believers, take to answer the anger, frustration and injustice experienced by racial minorities? We must demonstrate that we are reconcilers. Imagine what would happen in our society if racial reconciliation became an evangelical agenda as important as any other of the present social issues of our time.

It is important to make the distinction between integration and reconciliation. Integration is a political concept, laws can be enacted to implement integration programs, they can change the quality of life, but they do not necessarily achieve reconciliation.

Reconciliation is a spiritual concept. It comes from the heart and the will. It is more than the multiculturalism and the tolerance taught this decade. Tolerance is not enough. Reconciliation is the authentication of all that Jesus taught us about the way we treat one another, we embrace those who are different from us and demonstrate the love He has for all people everywhere.

How do you handle those challenges? If you choose to be part of the solution, you can expect misunderstanding, even conflict. But reconcilers take risks!

# Classifieds

# Coffee Break What's in your Knapsack?

CAROL PRESTON

## BIRTHS

**EVERY (HENDERSON)** Colin and Jill are delighted to announce the birth of Lachlan Colin, born 22.1.99 at Frances Perry House. All well.

**GEORGE (ARMSTRONG)** Roslyn and Andrew thank God for the safe arrival of Michael James on Tuesday 5 January 1999 at St John of God Hospital Ballarat, Vic. Thanks to all those who have been praying and supporting us.

## RUBY WEDDING

**BIRKETT (Butler)** Ian and Marj of 17 Tainton Road, East Burwood, Vic, rejoice and give thanks to God on their 40th wedding anniversary. Married at Church of Christ, Bendigo, 21 February 1959, by R.V. Holmes. Congratulations from all the family.

## GOLDEN WEDDING

**JACOBS-KILLMIER** Sandra, Robina, Warren and Verity are delighted and thankful to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of their parents, Linton and Dorothy of Mt Compass. It was celebrated on 19 February 1949 at the Forestville Church of Christ, SA, by Pastors W.A. Russell and H.P. Manning. Thanks be to God for all his blessings.

## DIAMOND WEDDING

**COLE**, Charles and Beryl (nee Nichols), celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on 1 March. They were married in the Swanston Street, Melbourne, Church of Christ by T.H. Scambler in 1939. They have two daughters, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Charles is currently ministering to the Wynnum congregation.

## DEATHS

**KELLY (SHERRIFF)** Roslyn Dawn on 23 January. Loaned by God to Judy and Ivan as a wonderful daughter for 33 precious years. Loved sister, sister-in-law, aunty and friend of Paul, Rachael and Emillie. Loving wife of Stephen and devoted mother of Telise. Cherished daughter-in-law of Joan and Ron (dec). Safe in the arms of Jesus.  
**KNIGHT (nee Thomas)** Ruth Hilda Verco 3.10.12-18.1.99 Loving daughter of the late J.E and Hilda Thomas (dec). Sister of Alan (dec), Colin (dec) and Don Thomas (dec). Wife of the late

George Knight and John Tilley. Mother and mother-in-law of Jim and Wanda, Bill and Maureen, and Don (dec). Loving Nanna of Tony, Chad, Danny and Matthew, Lana and Penelope, and all her great-grandchildren. Forever with her Lord.

## IN MEMORIAM

**LAUNDER**, Arthur Ernest Called home 25.2.98. Twelve months have passed but loving memories are always here. Your wife Dorothy, and family.

## HOLIDAYS

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**T**he last couple of months have found me spending many hours in my garden. It's hard but rewarding work. However, I have no inclination to go next door and work in the neighbour's garden. That's their responsibility, and theirs to enjoy. I don't even want to tell them how it ought to be looked after or changed. I imagine most people



## What part of NO don't you understand?

ple would feel similarly. However, I often hear of people who move into the lives of their neighbours, friends or family members, and tell them how to look after or change their lives. Some just take over and rearrange things without even notifying the other. If you had a neighbour like that you'd put up an electric fence, or take legal action. However, it seems many feel helpless about it in their personal lives.

This is what I would call boundary crossing. Even when it's done in the name of helping or caring, it is still invasion of another's rights and responsibilities. Some of you have compulsive helpers, rescuers, or controllers in your life, and you feel guilty if you say "No". You may silently resent their "help", but you don't know how to refuse it. You are those who can't make mother hear "No more thanks," when you've had enough to eat at family dinners. Perhaps you even agree with what everyone else says, because it seems not worth the price of having your own opinion, or feelings.

There are also those who can't say no to people who want you to fix all their problems, who will say yes to any job, who will go along with everyone else's plans, no matter how tired, or what other work you need to be doing. You all need to learn to say "No". You need to learn that making life easy for everyone else is not your responsibility. Some need one of those shirts that says "What part of NO don't you understand?"

I love the image in Galatians 6 of burdens and loads. Burdens are huge boulders that one person cannot carry. A load is pictured as a knapsack—a daily load of responsibilities and resources. We are to help each other carry burdens, but each person should carry their own load. We each need to grow up to learn what we are responsible for—and what we are not.

What God has given each of us is a gift that we are responsible to develop, protect and to share, as we decide in our hearts is good and right; not out of guilt, nor under compulsion. This includes our feelings, thoughts, time, resources and talents. They are ours, our right, our responsibility. I hope you will reassess what you're carrying in your knapsack and whose yard you are looking after.

# The Billy Graham Crusade—1959

ROB CULHANE

In 1959 Billy Graham arrived in Australia for a series of evangelistic crusades in the state capital cities. Expectations and controversy both ran high in the Australian church. Within Churches of Christ, some members voiced their concern that he did not preach on baptism (citing Acts 2:38) or require new converts to be instructed about it. But Graham's winsome personality and gracious approach won over both his critics and the media who covered his meetings.

*While people look for better methods, God looks for better people.*

The impact of the crusades on Churches of Christ was considerable. Some congregations were suddenly swamped with new converts. This reconfirmed to many that mass evangelism and open-air missions worked. The Billy Graham Association was innovative in its approach. For the first time, television was used in Australia by an evangelist. Land links to regional cities allowed towns such as Bro-

ken Hill and Taree to hear Billy Graham in Sydney preaching to their hometown crowd. Church members reported a sense of value and recognition from being trained in counselling. The clergy domination in the ministry of the church was ameliorated as a result of the high lay participation in the organisation. And there was a sense of joy and achievement in working with other churches.

At a time when we looked to Britain for our cultural nourishment and religious tradition, Billy Graham represents the increasing involvement in Australia by American preachers. This accounts, in part, for the suspicion which church leaders held toward him. Yet for those within Churches of Christ who knew their history, this American preacher was a continuation of a long line which went back into the mid-1860s. The tent of more recent missions might have been replaced by the showground, but the content was much the same. For other denominations, however, this was a novelty.

In this sense, Billy Graham was a continuation of our heritage that looked to the visiting evangelist to build up or establish a church. So too was his call to "make a decision" and "come

forward". These expressions had become a shibboleth of how one's faith was expressed, as was "a rededication" the expression of one's deepening piety. The ecumenical glow of working together with other churches also fitted in well with our traditional aspirations toward Christian unity.

Certain observations cast light on how much we have changed since then. Most converts would have been from Protestant backgrounds. The residual suspicion between Catholic and Protestant kept many Catholics isolated from the invitation to come to a crusade. Similar missions were run by the Redemptionists and other orders that targeted straying Catholics. Reports about the sermons and their doctrine suggest that Billy Graham did not deliberately appeal to the affections, although people would be emotionally affected. In contrast, most "evangelism" today appeals to the religious affections and feelings, not the head. The biblical literalism and use of Scripture which characterised Graham's preaching gave him the basis for his doctrine and his preaching with conviction. Both these qualities appear absent in today's preaching. His success reinforced the view within Churches of Christ that the solution for a church in decline was a gifted evangelist.

The Billy Graham crusade has come to represent the high water mark of Evangelicalism as a movement in Australian society. His very success became the standard against which other methods of evangelism were judged. This was to the detriment of the next generation, in the sixties and seventies, who had moved into a different social and religious context from



the 1959 crusade. The idealisation of the crusade approach prevented the church's leadership from being able to envision other methods of evangelism that were suitable for their particular social and historical context. It was only after several lackluster visits by Leighton Ford and Billy Graham again in 1979, that local churches began to rethink their dependence on this method of evangelism. The terminology and ethos engendered by the 1959 crusade (and later missions), stifled the development of other expressions of faith experience and piety relevant to later Christians.

In the very expression "crusade" one hears the whisper of confidence and triumphalism that is lacking in today's church. Perhaps for this reason, it jars in today's ears as we come to terms with what it means to live as a minority in a secular society. While people look for better methods, God looks for better people. Billy Graham possessed both qualities and this locates him in a unique place in church history. Today, we need not better methods, but better men and women who will have the imagination to find a method that pleases God and is relevant to this generation.

Rob Culhane ministers at Balwyn Church of Christ, Vic. He has an interest in Australian Church history.

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# World Council Of Churches Assembly

## Community and Commotion

KERRIE HANDASYDE

Imagine this—5,000 Christians from all over the world, from different churches and traditions, meeting in a tent in Zimbabwe. Imagine the sound of 5,000 people standing and praying together the Lord's Prayer in so many different languages. This happened every day at the World Council of Churches Assembly in Zimbabwe where, along with Ian Allsop, I was honoured to represent Australian Churches of Christ—a church founded to promote Christian unity.

*It is a genuine challenge to express the hopes of the church in words that ring in our ears, that stay with us.*

The memory of this experience, of the depth of community felt there, will stay with me for a long time. Yet while there was community, there was no communion celebrated. While each person there will remember how great it was to worship together and share meal times each day, there was no Eucharist experience to remember, there was no "do this in memory

of me". The unity of the church remains fractured and strained, a sometimes distant hope.

The theme of the Assembly was "Turn to God—Rejoice in Hope", and Bible studies and speakers addressed what it means to turn to God and what it means to rejoice in hope. One memorable speaker, Kosuke Koyama, reminded us of God's response to our turning. He likened God's response to that of the father whose prodigal son returns home. God sees us coming and runs out to meet us, arms outstretched, calling out, causing a commotion. The image of "the running God," the God that runs from the centre to embrace us, captured our imagination. We saw exciting possibilities.

We strove in our meetings and in our publications to speak with a clear and prophetic voice, to speak with passion and hope, and to cause "a commotion" (as Koyama called it). However, the prophetic voice was too often smothered. The Word's power was deadened. There were two reasons for this. The first is that with so many differing perspectives, speaking with one clear voice is difficult. Issues over whose views were most prominent and whose excluded were a preoccupation. While we struggled over whose voice is most powerful, the gospel of the powerless sometimes came second.



*Some of the "locals" at the Harare Assembly*

The other reason we did not cause "a commotion" is that in the many speeches and documents produced at the Assembly, the prophetic voice was expressed in cliché and jargon. It is a genuine challenge to express the hopes of the church in words that ring in our ears, that stay with us. Speeches composed of key words, of politically correct phrases that we hear again and again, lose their edge through repetition. Their predicability slows down our reactions. The World Council of Churches and Christians everywhere need to find a freshness of vision, a passion and hope that excites us to act.

The theme "Turn to God—Rejoice in Hope" was given fresh

perspective in the Zimbabwean context. People live in poverty there with an HIV/AIDS epidemic that makes everyone's lives uncertain. Yet they are exuberant in worship and generous. Their growing churches are full of high-spirited children, full of hope and smiles. The children challenge us to help fulfil their hopes, to act with hope and passion for justice. They challenge us to stir up a commotion in the world, to be a community of hope as one church worldwide. This is the challenge for the World Council of Churches in the coming seven years until the next meeting.

Kerrie Handasyde is a recent graduate of CCTC, and attends the Upper Yarra, Vic, church

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## OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

**ABDULOVIC, Olive Maud Patricia** (18.12.98) Pat was 78 years when she went to be with her Lord. She had a hard life, but was always strong in her faith. Pat was committed to church life and found a niche in Dorcas at Grote St, Adelaide church. She became Dorcas, those who worked with her would say. She was always willing to

help and never turned anyone away. Pat served the Lord in other areas of Christian life, CWF, Focus, and was a good cook and wonderful with crochet. She is greatly missed by son Lokman, family and friends at Grote Street.

—PJA

**MCNALLY, Jean**

(9.1.99) Jean (born 17.11.40) will be remembered for her bravery

and determination to overcome her suffering and physical restrictions. She regularly attended services, until it became physically impossible. Her dependence on and love for her Lord was very evident, and her life challenges us to trust him fully. Her demeanour was quiet and unassuming, yet a busy mother who for some time assisted house-

holds in the Tasman Peninsula when illness in homes caused housework to be a burden. The large number of relatives and friends assembled to celebrate her life bore witness to the respect and love with which she was held. "Absent from the body, present with her Lord."

—Keith Moulton

## "Macedonian Calls" to Ministry in NZ

Right now there are at least 8 congregations in New Zealand that are earnestly desiring Church of Christ ministry, and we are not able to supply that from any available ministers here in NZ. So the Macedonian call is out to you, our partners in Christ in Australia: "Come over and help us!" If you, and those who know you, have a conviction from the Lord that your gifts and effectiveness in Christ's service point strongly to you as one who should "stand in the gap" for any one of these churches, please let us know, and we will be glad to follow this through. The first 6 are regular Churches of Christ; the last 2 are Community Churches with strong links to Churches of Christ and eager for a minister from us.

**CHURCH A**—Conservative country congregation, open-hearted and hospitable, one hour's drive from Auckland, 60 to 70 folk, with a sound eldership and a good general program and a heart for evangelism. They do have good relationships with other churches in their area in a fair-sized town. They would really like an experienced preacher and pastor around 40 years of age with some vision and drive!

**CHURCH B**—Strong, charismatic congregation (around 100) needing a Senior Minister. The NZ Associate has just had training at Mt Evelyn in the Careforce ministry and has launched this successfully. They are working through several possibilities for a suitable senior minister, but have not been successful as yet. Quite a large town about 1 to 2 hours' drive from two other central North Island towns where there are also quite strong Churches of Christ.

**CHURCH C**—A similar sized church in a smaller central North Island town similarly needs an able, charismatic Senior Minister.

**CHURCH D**—This has developed into quite a strong and balanced congregation with effective ministries to both elderly and children especially, in a quite large city in the south of the North Island. They are looking for good growth and are needing a Senior Minister. They recently acquired an able Youth Minister from USA, and they have a Children's Minister.

**CHURCH E**—They are a conservative, smaller congregation actually out in the country near a number of our stronger churches in the north of the South Island, and they are eager for an experienced but somewhat younger minister from Australian Churches of Christ to work with young and old.

**CHURCH F**—A handful of faithful older folk and a few younger folk but all with much hope and vision and faith, and strongly Church of Christ, would love to have a zealous evangelist/church planter to still build up a vital work for the Lord in this city in the far south of NZ! They can pay only half a salary but they have great facilities and are glad to do what they can!

**CHURCH G**—Community Church with quite an evangelical and evangelistic outlook, eager for someone of that calibre. They are very open to Churches of Christ and would prefer one of our ministers now, even though there are hardly any members of our heritage left. About 100 members of Methodist heritage and great facilities. A fair-sized town about 2 hours' drive from Auckland.

**CHURCH H**—This is another Community Church with Methodists and very few Church of Christ folk in a fair sized town between Christchurch and Dunedin, and wanting a part-time Church of Christ Minister who could even be recently retired, to provide basic ministries for them and to encourage them in their own ministries.

### Any Offers?

Contact: John Fulford, Ministry Placement Advisor, 72 Methuen Road, Avondale, AUCKLAND 7, NZ.  
Phone: 0011 64 9 828 7728. E-mail: <jfulford@voyager.co.nz>.

## CHANGES

**DON MILNE** (retired minister)—143 Landscape Drive, Mooroolbark Vic 3138. Phone (03) 9726 6328.

**MINISTER, SUNSHINE, VIC**—James Pearce, 152 Derby Street, Pascoe Vale Vic 3044. Phone (03) 9354 8918.

## BAPTISMS

•Vang Lee Lor, Julie Szczepitko, Jack Szczepitko, Hobart City, Tas •Chad Carson, Bordertown, SA •Phillip Crawford, Heather Ryan, Brad Gates, Hume Street, Toowoomba

## MARRIAGES

•Liz Maughan and Adrian Neville, Elizabeth Bradley and Simon Reynolds, Hobart City, Tas •Roslyn Bagshaw and Peter Schmarewski, Bordertown, SA •Heather Holden and Craig Graham, Bendigo, Vic •Lyndal Green and Reece McCasker, Lucinda Russell and Scott McGuinn, Hume Street, Toowoomba

## DEATHS

•Pat Abdulovic, Grote Street, Adelaide, SA •Keith Harkness, Victor Harbor, SA •Lucy Tilley, Margaret (Dolly) Phillips, Tweed Heads-Coolangatta, NSW •Audrey Bourke, Ainslie, ACT

## TAS

**CAVESIDE** (Ron and Lyn Chapman) Family camp held Camp Seaview, Bicheno, in October. Studies led by Ron. Great time of fellowship ... Australian Rosny Children's Choir visited in November ... Church farewelled Ena Harvey who moved to Bridport having lived in Caveside for nearly 93 years, serving the church for over 80 ... Christmas Eve service held ... Church visited Ena at Bridport in January. **HOBART CITY** (Clinton Wardle, Andrew Tonkin) Newcomers welcomed at New Attenders dinner ...

Naomi Neville re-elected as elder, John Batchler on sabbatical leave from eldership, John Westmore resigned as treasurer, new finance committee formed, Clinton Wardle reappointed a further 5 years ... Prayer & praise night held with good attendance ... Guests-ABC Giving Tree Choir, Covenant Players ... Youth Christmas dinner for senior members great success. Gifts & food donated to Bethany Homes.

## VIC

**TOOTGAROOK** (M. Giezendanner) Interchurch carol service at Blairgowrie highlight at Christmas ... Special speaker New Year Chek Chia. Congregation privileged to meet Chek at luncheon ... During holidays men painted hall & kitchen, CWF paid for paint ... Eunice & Roy Arnold moved to Melbourne to be near family. Doris Burnham, remaining foundation mem-

ber, moving to Bathurst to live with her daughter.

**BENDIGO** (Ross Barnes) Youth group off to a good start this year with new youth leader ... After successful running of "Oasis" material in Sunday school it has been decided to continue with the material this year ... John Bond from South Perth church is spending a week with the church in April. Preparations are well under way.

## QLD

**TOOWOOMBA, HUME STREET** (Dale White, Ross Savill, Darren Robinson) 540 attended Christmas Day service. First carols by Starlight event attracted 600 people under stormy skies ... "Dinner with Jesus" provided food, friendship & care to five needy families prior to Christmas ... 70 attended January youth leaders camp with teaching by Randy Edwards & Garry Hills ... Dale White (minister) & David

Russell (elder) visited America to participate in the Leadership 2000 program.

## SA

**VICTOR HARBOR** (Graeme Rogerson, Suzanne Turner) Parent dedication service held. David & Jodie Marks & daughter ... S/Leader Alf Jonas guest speaker on rescue of British sailors by RAAF. Gave powerful testimony ... 3 couples received into membership ... Induction service for auxiliary leaders followed by luncheon to introduce new folk ... Auxiliaries/home groups in full swing ... Elders/board retreat & 70th anniversary (11 April) celebration plans in hand.

**BORDERTOWN** Church blessed by excellent guest speakers ... 6-week

## Here and There

### Indian Missionary Deaths

Readers will be very much aware of the recent deaths of Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two young sons in Orissa, India. The news and comment has been to the fore in the Australian media. We all share the shock and sadness of this tragedy. John Main, minister of Brooklyn Park, SA and a former Churches of Christ missionary in India commented, when forwarding his feature article for this issue, that they had known Graham Staines during their service in India and had strongly identified with his ministry. John comments that one of the Haines sons featured briefly in a video made for the centenary of the Hebron School, where the Main children studied and where Barry and Maureen Jenkins served. He comments that he viewed the video for the first time after hearing the news of the deaths and found the video very touching.

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# Church News

study "Loving One Another" in 8 home groups ... CWM carol singing to shut ins, Christmas presentations well attended ... Youthworx average 25 ... Bible Club recommenced, 4 new teachers ... Good morning attendances ... Marriage of Roslyn Bagshaw & Peter Schmarewski conducted by Sonny Pillay 30 January ... Andrew Evans (Nailsworth) conducted baptismal service 31 January for Chad Carson

**HAMPSTEAD GARDENS (Graham & Bev Burgan)** Church encouraged by recent baptisms of Erin Brooks, Pat Rennie, Julie Powell, Hannah Killmier & Mandy Gilder ... Great interest shown by neighbourhood in outdoor Christmas carol service ... Church youth participated in play written & produced by Hannah Killmier. Sausage sizzle & strawberries provided ... Alpha Course completed with another to start this year ... 3 home weekly Bible study groups continue & well attended.

## NSW

**TAREE (R. Foletta and S. Kelly)** Roger & Rae Foletta commenced ministry. Induction service led by David Mansell & Max Hall. Rae's great-grandparents among early pioneers of church & district ... Shaun & Catie Kelly continue part-time ministry ... Evening service attendance growing ... Morning tea given to celebrate Thelma Horsburgh's 90th birthday.

**METRO NORTH CHRISTIAN CENTRE (Franklyn Elliott)** Special Mexican dedication service 3 January for 38, of which 16 are from Metro North who are going to Mexico for 2 weeks to build 4 small houses. Following the service a young man baptised & a Mexican fiesta ... At service on 31 January those back from Mexico reported on their experience & how the Lord had blessed them.

**TWEED HEADS-COOLANGATTA (Bruce Warwick)** "Carols on the Run" great success Christmas Sunday-50 taking part. Offering to COCOA \$750 ... Church saddened at passing of

Margaret Phillips in Melbourne. Thanksgiving service here, many participating. Margaret member here from earliest days ... Sunday night "Summer Series of Surprises" created interest ... Nine small groups have begun the year. Theme "We Grow" ... Junior youth group began February.

**TELOPEA (D. Wilson, L. Berthelsen, J. Berthelsen, J. Elsmore, S. Hall)** Morning series provoking people to ask God to release them from old hab-

its & attitudes ... Sunday night series "How to Live as Victorious Christians" ... Thursday Church recommenced February ... Women's Camp 3 March ... 30+ men attending "Men, Love & Leadership" at Katoomba Convention ... Interim administrator appointed following death of Alan Cupit soon after his appointment ... Leadership & worship team training commenced.

**WOLLONGONG (E.C. Keating & B Best)** Members' artwork used for

Christmas message. 40 hampers delivered ... \$13,000 raised for World Vision project, India ... Joanne May returned from YWAM, Africa ... Scott Burford enriched by L2000 study tour ... Youth camp at Burrinjuck Dam ... Singles' dinner & discussion ... 90 at small group evening with John Rees ... Cricket match with Anglican church ... Babies born to Burford, Willingham, Cole, Wilson & Gentle families ... MOPS began year well.

## COCOA brings HOPE



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

*Dr Iris Paul and her assistants travel for many days to reach these people. She brings much-needed medical treatment and supplies. Without our support many of these people would die.*

**Will you become a partner in this vital work?  
Help spread HOPE though a gift to COCOA.**

Name: .....

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Amount: \$ .....

Please charge my: ☐ Bankcard ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Expiry Date: .....

Signature: .....

Post to: Churches of Christ Overseas Aid  
180a Gray St, ADELAIDE SA 5000.

# Snippets from History

## Social Conscience

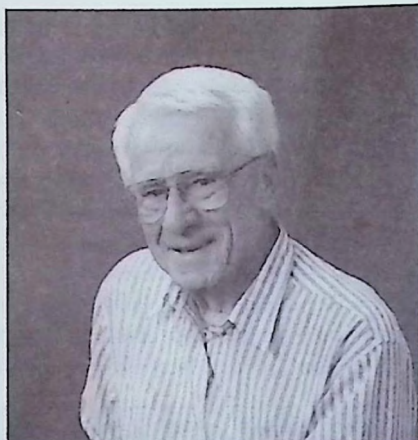
GORDON STIRLING

**F**rom the beginning Australian Churches of Christ were involved in works of compassion, but at a congregational level. Church members looked after one another in sickness, death and misfortune. Dorcas societies saw that struggling families were kept well clothed and most churches had one or more treadle machines.

But there was little conference-directed work. The function of conferences was to unite the churches in evangelism. In the late 1800s Mrs Joseph Pittman founded a Rescue Home that cared for 1,100 women in its sixteen years. Early this century the Burwood Boys Home, Vic, was founded and later one at Pendle Hill, NSW. A comment at the time was, "We are beginning to learn that Jesus is the saviour of the body as well as the soul".

The first evidence of social conscience at conference level was when temperance committees were formed from about 1880. In 1889 the SA conference resolved "that this meeting expresses its earnest sympathy with all legitimate efforts to lessen the evils attendant on the use of intoxicating liquors". Other conference resolutions were usually to do with gambling and "Lord's day observance". The issues of war and peace and social justice were not to appear on our agenda until the 1930s.

The Great Depression hit Australia in the late twenties, and the League of Nations and the disarmament question were hot issues. Conference resolutions began declaring



war to be out of harmony with the will of God and most Christians were pacifists until the Second World War broke out. The Depression showed the world that capitalism could produce well, but was not good at distribution, and many church folk found what came to be called "a Christian social conscience".

Most church families suffered from unemployment during the Depression, but they shared what they had with each other and their needy neighbours. As well, state conferences set up social service committees to coordinate the work of benevolence. The better times from the forties saw organised social service becoming more involved in aged care, arising both from compassion and generous government subsidies. Today across Australia our institutional care of the aged is out of all proportion to our size as a body.

## The Last Word

**O Lord, let us not live to be useless, for Christ's sake. Amen**

—John Wesley (1703–1791)

*I used to play under the worst captain ever. He always used to put me into bat in the middle of a hat-trick.*

*What happens to a cricketer when his eyes start to fail? He applies to be an umpire.*

*I bowl so slow that if after I have delivered the ball and I don't like it, I can run after it and bring it back.*

—J.M. Barrie

*Soup should be seen and not heard.*

*Mathematics is a tentative agreement that two and two make four.*

—Elbert Hubbard

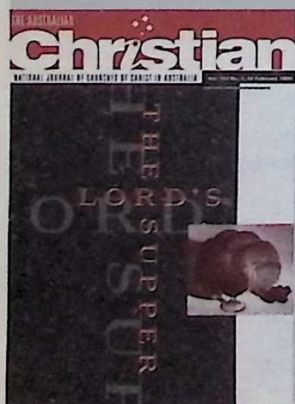
*"But I can't be overdrawn. I've still got fifteen cheques left."*

*"What are you drinking—tea or coffee?"*

*"They didn't say."*

*To err is human, but to really mess things up you need a computer.*

## Introduce Your Friends to an Australian Christian



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## Late News

### Forge Successfully Launched

The Forge church planting training course, under the leadership of Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, was successfully launched in Melbourne in February with thirteen new students of outstanding quality.