

National Journal
of Churches of
Christ in Australia

Vol. 95 • No. 15

5 September 1992

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No. VAR 0761

THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

Bibles at Blackwood



The Blackwood, SA,
church's display of
Bibles to celebrate
National Bible Sunday
—story page 3



Member
publication of the
Australasian
Religious Press
Association



National logo of
Churches of Christ
in Australia

"The Australian Christian" is published
by the Board of Management of the
Australian Christian, a Department of
the National Conference of
Churches of Christ in Australia.

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Printing by New Litho Pty Ltd,
63 Sunbury Cres,
Surrey Hills 3127

Responsibility for electoral material is
accepted by Chris Ambrose,
3 Hamlyn St, Essendon 3040
This publication is indexed in the
Australasian Religion Index
ISSN 0004-8852

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Displayed: \$5 per column
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Classifieds: \$12 for the first 25 words
and 20c for each additional word

Guest Editorial

Running the Race

Greg Foot

The Olympics are over and, for many, fast becoming a fading memory. The marvels of modern communication brought the incredible feats of Kathy Watt, Kieren Perkins and the Oarsome Foursome live to our lounge rooms.

A magnificent spectacle, a media extravaganza with over 10,000 journalists! What has it achieved for the world in 1992?

A correspondent to "The Age" noted during the games that "while we are tuned in by the millions to witness the perfection of the human body at Barcelona, more than a million people in Somalia will tune out for good over the Olympic period". Yes, the Olympic Games do highlight the vast inequalities and contrasts in the world—the ever-widening gap between rich and poor. If we take a look at the medal tally table, there are just three developing nations in the first thirty and the first of these, Kenya (with a total of 8 medals—all from a narrow range of track events), is in 21st place. India, with 17% of the world's people, fails to win a single medal. Australia, with just 0.3 of the world's people, wins 27 medals. The Croatian basketball team, halfway through the first half in the gold medal final, leads the mighty US "dream team".

At the same time, back in their devastated homeland in Eastern Europe, there are atrocities and gross abuses of human rights taking place, which bring grim and chilling reminders of the 1940s.

On the positive side of the ledger, Barcelona was the first boycott-free games since Montreal in 1976. Germans competed together under the one flag. Following the finish of the women's 10,000 m race, the black Ethiopian winner and the white South African silver medallist jogged together around the arena with arms and flags entwined. The Algerian winner of the women's 1500 m struck a blow for her sex in a country where, according to reports, her running is frowned on in some quarters because she has to bare arms and legs. Millions of Australian kids are inspired by the heroic deeds of those who, just a few short years ago, were ordinary kids on the block like them.



Athletic contests were very much a part of life in New Testament times. Paul often drew on the sporting analogy to encourage and inspire. "Run in such a way as to get the prize." (1 Corinthians 9:24) "Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize..." (Philippians 2:13)

"I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7)

There is a sermon in each of these. De Castella and Moneghetti finished the marathon. There is a sermon in that too. God is pleased with excellence. He calls us to sacrifice and commitment to win his prize—eternal life in Jesus.

The writer to the Hebrews tells us (12:1-) to "throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles", so that we may "run with perseverance the race marked out for us, with our eyes fixed on Jesus..."

The increasing brevity and skin-tightness of the gear worn by athletes, swimmers, cyclists and other Olympic competitors is all aimed at going faster, higher and stronger, cutting those precious few hundredths of a second off world records and personal bests. Some-

times we run our race as Christians carrying far too much excess baggage, in the form of all kinds of hang-ups and distractions, both personal and in the life of the church.

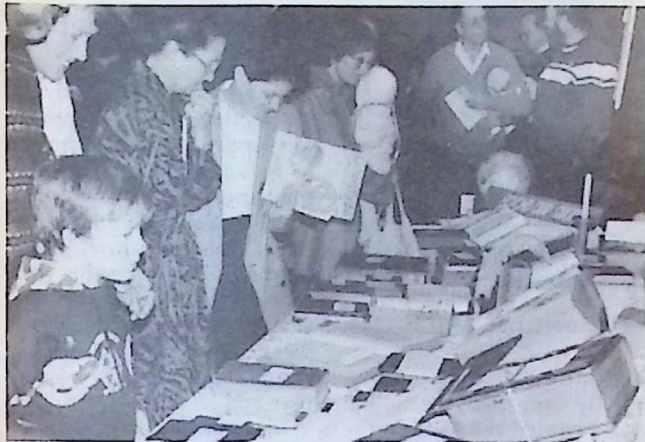
Things we must shake off if we are to do our personal best for God and his church. See you in Atlanta in '96!

• Greg Foot is currently President of Churches of Christ Tasmania. He is married to Anne and their family includes Jane (Mundy) (24), Robyn (22) and Tim (19). Greg has served the Hobart City (formerly Collins St) church as elder, secretary, chairperson, worship leader and small group leader. Formerly a senior mathematics teacher and assistant principal in Hobart high schools, Greg has, since early 1989, served as state manager for World Vision. His interests include music, cycling, bushwalking and running.



Blackwood Bibles

Display of treasures



• Part of the display of Bibles at Blackwood

The Blackwood, SA, church decided to involve the whole congregation in National Bible Sunday, rather than only have the usual static display.

Everyone was invited to bring along Bibles and New Testaments that were valuable, historic or memorable. Scriptures during the morning services were read from the body of the chapel to symbolise the Word being "in the midst", and music and singing were appropriate to the occasion.

Several young people accepted the responsibility of caring for the precious items and setting up the foyer. A string of balloons was used to spell out the text of 1 Timothy 4:13, and under them several tables of books, were set out under three headings: "Beyond Our Shores", "Yesteryear" and "Memories Are Made of These".

Some of the treasures were huge, beautifully bound family Bibles. There was a Douay with Dictionary (1873), a NT that belonged to Alexander Thomas Magarey, eldest son of Thomas, who introduced Churches of Christ to Australia, from NZ, in 1846 and a 1795 Bible, leather bound, with an impression on the front cover, "British and Foreign Bible Society, two shillings and sixpence".

One was accompanied by a

note: "This Bible has been used in hundreds of pulpits in many different countries, in small and large venues. Many came to Christ when they heard the scriptures read and explained."

Attracting much attention, particularly from children, was a 1½" x 1" Bible, complete with magnifying glass.

Many were presentations on the occasion of baptism, one was a prize for record attendance at Junior Christian Endeavour, another a wedding day memento, another a farewell gift to an Englishman migrating to Australia.

Complementing that display were modern, new Bibles from the Bible Society, and reading and study helps from Scripture Union. There was also opportunity to share in the Handwritten Bible Project.

Dandenong Centenary

100 years strong and moving on

During a casserole luncheon after morning worship on 30 August Dandenong, Vic, launched its centenary celebrations.

Events to follow will include a bush dance on Saturday, 12 September, at 8 pm in the Dandenong High School hall, with the band, "Gumnuts". For tickets and details contact

Shirley on (03) 795 4906 or Julia on (03) 791 2854.

The theme of the centenary, "100 Years Strong and Moving On", will be highlighted at the 2.30 pm service on Sunday, 13 September, when the church will reflect on its past and share in a vision for the future. Guest speaker will be Vic-Tas Conference President, George War-

RETHINKING EVOLUTION

Book honoured

Rethinking Evolution received a commended certificate in the recent 1992 Australian Christian Literature Society Australian Christian Book of the Year Awards in Adelaide. *Rethinking Evolution* has been written by Arthur Pigdon, of the Red Hill, Vic, church and is published by the Federal Literature Department.

The judges said of Arthur's book that it "ably presents those aspects of evolution theories which are illogical when considered dispassionately, or which are inadequate as explanations of complex phenomena. Pigdon wisely distinguishes between scientific method and forms of inquiry used in other disciplines, such as philosophy...His work is meticulously logical, the argument is well-developed and his tone is understated and calm. The theological content is deliberately slight and the small volume immensely readable, with engaging anecdotes which appropriately underpin the text."

If you haven't yet obtained a copy (or copies—it would make an excellent gift for a young person asking questions on

evolution and God's creation) of this award-winning book, do so now. Send \$15 plus \$3 for postage and packaging to the Secretary, Federal Literature Department, c/o PO Box 629, Mulgrave North 3170.

The 1992 Australian Book of the Year is *Tall Grow the Tallow Woods* by Geoffrey Bingham. We reviewed this book in the 1 December 1991 issue of *The Australian Christian* and found it a beautifully told story that raises many aspects of faith and belief.

The children's award was for *Tomb Travellers* by Roy Pond, published by Albatross.



• Arthur Pigdon with his book "Rethinking Evolution"

ren. Soloist Barbara Pitts and choir will bring messages in song and minister Graeme Foon will plant a tree.

That morning the 10 am service will be a time for children, "young and old". Guest speakers will be past ministers Alan Page and Alan Avery.

A "Cup Day Family Picnic" will be held at Mornington Park on Tuesday, 3 November, and the celebrations will be brought to a close with a family Christmas dinner in December.

Tribute

Victor George Boettcher, MBE, 1907-1992

On 17 August, a great crowd gathered at the East Ipswich, Qld, chapel, and afterwards at the Fernvale Cemetery, to pay tribute to a man who fervently served his Lord as a minister with Churches of Christ in Queensland through 60 of his 85 years. Fellow ministers, Maurie Pieper and Norm Flett, and the Conference President-elect, Noel Leitch, shared in the services.

Vic was the third of seven children born to Johannes and Johanna Boettcher at Marburg on 23 May 1907. The eldest of the family, Alma, predeceased him, and he is survived by his other sister Olga and four brothers Artie, Edgar, Allen and Mervyn. Vic and his late wife, Evelyn, who died in 1990, were married on 16 April 1932 at the Fernvale church, and had three sons, Ken, Viv and Noel, one daughter, Dorothy, 16 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

Vic was reared on the family farm at Marburg. At the age of 20 he responded to the call of God to full-time ministry and entered the College of the Bible, Glen Iris, Melbourne, where he graduated at the end of 1931.

His 60 years of ministry with Churches of Christ were shared with many churches in Queensland, first at Townsville, fol-

lowed by Gatton/Ma Ma Creek, Kingaroy, Roma, Toowoomba, Boonah and the West Moreton circuit of five churches, and then, from 1961 through to 1985 in what were termed "interim ministries" for extended periods of up to three years, with the churches at Roma, Rockhampton, Warwick, Cairns, Maryborough, Hervey Bay, Sunnybank, Aca-cia Ridge, Ma Ma Creek, Kingswood Park and Mt Isa, where he maintained a great personal interest with intermittent visits and arranging speakers on a regular basis.

Vic served two terms as Conference President—1946-47 and 1978-79. He was secretary/treasurer of the League of 500 for 25 years, served on almost every conference committee or department, and founded the Centenary Development Foundation.

One of Vic's outstanding achievements was in the role of Chairman/Organiser of the Centenary Organising Committee of Churches of Christ in Queensland from 1978 through to the culmination of those celebrations in 1983.

For many years Vic was involved with the Queensland Council of Churches and the Bible Society of which he finally became a life governor. In recognition of his outstanding



• Vic Boettcher, MBE

work in the church and the community over many years, Vic was awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours list in 1981.

During World War II Vic served with the armed forces as chaplain.

In public life Vic was a well-known, highly regarded and prominent figure, involved with the local show society and in other public activities.

Vic and Evelyn travelled extensively throughout the state, as they shared together in the ongoing work of the church.

Vic was a man of ability, a man of action and a man of affection. We today are able to testify of Vic that he fought a good fight, he finished the course, he kept the faith and there is laid up for him a crown which the righteous judge will give to him and to all who love his appearing.

—Norm Watson

Inducting a Minister

Neil Galbraith goes to Belmont

Churches of Christ typically use the Sunday morning communion service as the opportunity to induct ministers into new ministries.

When Neil Galbraith transferred from Montrose, Vic, to Belmont, Vic, it was his wish that the induction service should stand alone. The reason was to allow people from other churches in the area to participate and have an opportunity to meet him and his family.

A service, drawing on a number of sources, was written for the occasion. It fell fairly naturally into three parts. The first part contained welcomes, from the local community, other churches and the Belmont church.

These welcomes were necessarily short but provided a focus of recognition of the incoming minister.

Commendation was the second part. Trevor Banks (chairman of elders at Belmont) described the process of calling Neil Galbraith and the qualities relevant to this call. The chairman of elders at Montrose (Eunice Reidy) brought greetings and a commendation of Neil Galbraith's ministry at that church.

The induction itself was the third part. It began with a sermon delivered by Ian Allsop (conference secretary). This was followed by the presentation of five symbols of ministry: proclamation, teaching, worship, service and pastoral care. The induction and the charge to the congregation followed, after which the newly inducted minister made his response.

This new style of induction for Belmont church was well received and was felt to be meaningful to those who attended.

By making it a special focus it provided an emphasis on the place of the full-time minister in the life and work of the congregation.

Wes Beavis at Marion

Unique musical ministry

Marion, SA, recently became the latest church to experience the unique musical ministry of Wes Beavis. He was special guest at the church during an intensive week of consultation, which climaxed with a huge concert on the Saturday night.

The support, encouragement and practical guidance that Wes offered to the musicians and singers involved in Marion's extensive musical ministry will be a source of long-term benefit for the church as it seeks to

"lift the bar" a notch or two in its quest for excellence.

Graham Agnew, senior minister at Marion, was delighted in every way with Wes Beavis: "As Churches of Christ, we can be extremely proud of this young man and his exceptional talents. The fact that he is now available to churches on a full-time, hands-on consultative basis is terrific news for churches who are in need of help in developing or refining their approach to music and



• Wes Beavis

worship." Wes can be contacted by writing to Powerborn Ministries, PO Box 192, Figtree 2525. Phone (042) 72 1411.

Cool Yule

Christmas in July

Father Christmas was missing but Christmas trees, candles, holly and gifts set the scene for the "Cool Yule" dinner at the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, Vic, on a cold wintry 25 July.

The dinner was organised by the Vic-Tas Department of the CCTC as a social fundraiser, and the 120 guests enjoyed the delicious traditional Christmas dinner of soup, roast turkey and ham and plum pudding, prepared and served by Eileen Graham the college caterer and her staff of voluntary helpers.

David Brooker was the genial host and introduced Principal-Elect, Greg Elsdon, who shared a little of his background, his hopes and ideals for the college. Cheryl Connor (soloist and keyboard) and Joan Loft (violinist) delighted the diners with their music from the shows, the classics and Christmas carols. Meanwhile the six churches of Geelong

combined at Belmont, Vic, for a similar evening. 112 were present, with Alan and Chris Niven and Don and Heather Mansell representing the college and the board of management. The cooking and serving of the dinner there was shared by the churches, and George Clarke (tenor) and Alf White (teller of tall tales) entertained the guests, with Cliff Warmbrunn conducting carol singing.

Greetings and balloons were exchanged between the two venues and \$1500 (CCTC) and approximately \$1100 (Geelong) were raised for the college.

The Vic-Tas Department's next social fund raiser will be a "Spring Festival" of arts and crafts at the college on Friday, 4 September, 7 pm to 10 pm, and Saturday, 5 September, 9.30 am to 1 pm. The entrance fee is \$3 and includes a Devonshire tea/coffee or pancakes.

—Patricia Hilbig

Rising Sun Bibles

Good News for peace-keeping mission



• Hillas MacLean presents a New Testament to Brigadier Peter Dillon

Australian soldiers serving with the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in the Western Sahara have been given a distinctive edition of the Good News New Testament. Each New Testament has been embossed with the new Australian Army "rising sun" badge.

The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Gary Allen, requested scriptures for the soldiers prior to their departure in mid-May. The unit is the Force Communication Unit supporting the United Nations peace-keeping mission in Western Sahara. Their tour of duty will be approximately six months.

The gift of the 50 New Testaments was presented to Brigadier Peter Dillon, Principal Chaplain of the Australian Army, by Hillas MacLean, a representative of the Bible Society. The Bible Society regularly provides copies of the

scriptures to service personnel, funding the supply through the society's tax-deductible "Scriptures for Servicemen Fund".

Earlier this year hundreds of New Testaments were provided to the Australian and US servicemen and women during the exercise Kangaroo 92 in the Northern Territory.

GGANG

Group with strong bond of commitment

GGANG (guys, girls and naturally God) is a group of 13 young people aged 14-22 at the Warragul, Vic, church that has been meeting twice monthly for about two years. The group has a social night one Saturday each month and a discussion night on the alternate fortnight.

The strong bond of friendship and trust between the leaders, John and Judy Farmer and the young people is the real strength of the group. When the group started, the large age difference was a bit of a problem, but the group has overcome this and now has a very strong bond of commitment to each other.

A recent Sunday night service was conducted entirely by the group and the leaders and was a real treat for the 100 who attended. Everyone in the group took part. The highlight of the night was a dramatisa-

tion of the Prodigal Son. The depth of feeling portrayed by the group during this presentation was extremely moving.

Through the discussion nights, many questions and subjects have been worked through and real spiritual growth has taken place. During the past year, eight of these young people have made commitments and been baptised, many during recent months. One of these, Stephen Earl, asked John (also an elder) to baptise him, as he had worked through so much with him during discussion nights that he felt it important for John to be a part of the big day.

Not all of the group have come from church families, and one of these, Rebecca Wright, was baptised last Sunday in front of the congregation of 181. She came to the group via her school friend.

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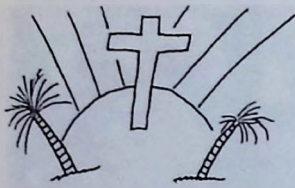
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South Seas Island Fling

Fun in the Son



With the sun slowly setting in the west, we set sail for Magnetic Island, Qld, to begin a weekend of absolute abandonment in the Son at the 1992 Magnetic Island Ladies' Camp.

On Friday evening we discussed what or who is a missionary.

7.10 am on Saturday we found ourselves "on deck" with our activities officer, Millie, lubricating our joints in gentle gym.

Peg Kilgour, study director, showed us how to soak up some of God's "Sonshine" as we lived in the suburbs of heaven!

After Saturday's luau we enjoyed a school fete with the locals and a hike across uncharted mountains in search of the illusive ice-cream!

Sarongs were the order for Saturday evening. Debbi Fulford, entertainment officer, organised concert items.

Camp director Gwynneth Poulton made sure all the guests were evacuated in time to catch the "love boat" for home.

—Kay Eaton and Kay Shepherdson
(The offering from the Sunday morning service was allocated to Banmatmat Bible College Library and Overseas Mission.)

Spring Conference Response

Large numbers going to Wollongong

Early indications of interest in the Spring Conference to be held at Wollongong, NSW, 17-19 October, are most encouraging.

Registrations are significantly ahead compared to the same time last year. More than 100 ministers are likely to attend.

A feature of the response is the number of churches planning to bring groups of leaders. The theme of the conference is "Communicating the Gospel in the Nineties".

The event is being jointly sponsored by the Wollongong church and the Australian Board of Church Development and Education.

Dr T. Garrott Benjamin will be the guest speaker. He comes from the Light of the World Christian Church, Indianapolis, USA, and is widely recognised as a preacher and seminar leader with a deep commitment to evangelism.

Other guests include Dr Gordon Moyes, Dr Dean



T. Garrott Benjamin

Drayton, Dr Keith Farmer and Jay Bacik. Wollongong and board staff members will also contribute.

Accommodation bookings and enquiries should be directed to the Wollongong church office on (042) 26 5022.

A special rate has been secured with Stanwell Tops for \$20 per person per night for bed and breakfast.

Triple Seven Update

Finding room for a radio station



• Volunteers at work replacing the roof

Triple Seven Communications will be holding another radio test broadcast in Melbourne, Vic, 13-23 March 1993. They are also making a major, updated proposal seeking a permanent special licence, which is being submitted to the Federal Department of Transport and Communications during July. On 18 July a dozen volunteers from several denominations defied threatening thunder clouds to replace the roof and refurbish an unused Uniting Church building in the Brighton Parish in which the company hopes to store equipment. Licensed plumbers, electricians, builders and labourers worked feverishly to

wrench off rusted roofing iron, and just managed to replace a multi-coloured spaghetti of wiring, plus new roofing, before the rain set in.

TripleSeven has been offered the use of Thomas Lambeth Lodge, plus building materials, in return for the repairs. They are now considering whether they could also incorporate a studio there for next year's test broadcast.

For further information or if you wish to become involved in the next broadcast contact Bruce Upton, General Manager, Triple Seven Communications, PO Box 117, Glen Waverley 3150. Phone (03) 560 1700

Preston Church of Christ

220 High Street, Preston

We have decided there will be **NO** celebration of our **90th Anniversary**

on 11 October 1992 because we are putting all our effort into our ministry to children. Kids' Club commenced 14 August 1992 and is taking the joint efforts of 25 of our adults each week.

So, you are welcome to attend a special service on 18 October 1992 when we will be Celebrating the Future

with the Kids' Club and their families.

This service commences at 10.30 am and morning tea will be served at its close.

Bringing Home the Gold

Chinchilla couples

They may not be considered eligible for listing as the eighth wonder of the world, nor as contenders for gold medals at the next Olympic Games in Atlanta, but each of these couples has gone for gold and brought it home in another way.

There are a number of striking features that all six couples have in common: they all attend the same church (Chinchilla, Qld), they all share a common background in farming and they have all celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

The couples have an average of almost 54 years of married life (with the same partner!), 32 children (most of whom, like their parents, are also involved in the life of the church where they live), 100 grandchildren

and 31 great-grandchildren.

By any standards, this is quite an achievement, and their lives bear testimony to a fact that is generally overlooked or ignored in our society today, that a stable, faithful marriage relationship is still the only firm basis upon which to build a stable society and a stable nation.

There are many, many problems in our country today. The answers to a number of them can be found right here. We would like to bear tribute to them and say thank you for the example of their lives, and wish them all the very best as they go for Diamond.

(This article, except for one slight alteration, appeared in the *Chinchilla News* on 6 August.)

Caught in the Act?



• Graham Foon, minister of the Dandenong, Vic, caught breaking into a car in broad daylight. Actually, Graham was helping a lady in distress who had locked her keys in her car while attending a wedding. The lady in question was Sandra Gibson, a member of the Vic-Tas Conference Executive. Her face matched the colour of the car (red)! Next time you see Graham ask him where he learnt his skills!



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• Bill and Daphne Davis (married in Chinchilla, 1941), Ron and Eva Holt (married in Eva's home at 16-mile, 1938), Roy and Mavis Clark (married at Mavis's home in Montrose Estate, 1936), Mr and Mrs W.T. Holt (the first to be married in the new chapel at Wambo, 1935), Cliff and Ena Kingston (married at Kingaroy, 1940) and John and Vi Hart (married at Goodhope farm at Brigalow, 1939)

CBMI's New Director

John Jeffries takes over from Reinhold Behr

Christian Blind Mission International has announced the appointment of John Jeffries as the new National Director.

John Jeffries replaces Reinhold Behr, the Director for the past eight years, who is returning to Germany to take up a position in CBMI's International Coordinating Office. After a successful business career, John Jeffries has served with CBMI



in many roles over the past 10 years.

• John Jeffries thanks Reinhold Behr for his eight years of service

Letters to the Editor

Letters are limited to 200 words

An Epistle to Paul

To the Editor,

What was the purpose in printing this "letter" on the back page of the 1 August issue? Questioning whether Jesus was the Messiah, and raising doubts about the virgin birth and the resurrection are everywhere. But why have Timothy questioning Paul in this way? If this is presented as a serious critical question for the reader to address, it should have been done under the name of the person who was raising the issues. Otherwise the letter will result in those people who are concerned with the authority of scripture being labelled as "bigoted fundamentalists" before they even attempt their replies. I reject such a label but I also disassociate myself from the letter by "Timothy".

—Barry Jenkins
(Ringwood East, Vic)

A Letter to Paul

To the Editor,

We read the article "A Letter to Paul" in the 1 August issue with some confusion. If it was meant to be "a tongue in cheek" article, then it was both in very bad taste and poorly done.

If it was meant to spark debate then it was ill-considered and unnecessary. The fundamentals of the gospel are not matters for debate in a Christian magazine. Perhaps in a theological college, but not in the church at large.

If the article was meant to be taken at face value as a serious questioning of basic Christianity then we are appalled that it was published. Christians through the ages have died for the beliefs it so lightly discards. We are told that the writers of the New Testament and the apostles are liars. That Luke got his facts wrong. That Paul was misled. Then the writer dares to brand those who would question his/her misuse of scripture as "bigoted, insecure fundamentalists."

The writer has every right to his/her opinions, however he/she cannot hold those opinions

and still expect to be regarded as a Christian. If the tomb is not empty then Christianity is a cruel hoax. Paul, who strongly defended the bodily resurrection of Jesus, said: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men." (1 Corinthians 15:17-19)

More than that, the writer is an enemy of Christianity and one who risks coming under the condemnation of our Lord by upsetting the faith of others by promulgating such an attack on the Christian faith through a national church magazine.

"It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin." (Luke 17:2)

However the article was intended, *The Australian Christian* has made a major mistake in publishing it.

We would expect to see a statement in a future edition rejecting the points made in the article and reaffirming the magazine's commitment to the Christian faith which must now be under question in the minds of many.

This is not intended as a considered rebuttal of the points raised in the article, but a quick note to express our anger and disquiet that it was printed, and anonymously, at that.

—Alan Hermann
(On behalf of the ministers and elders of the Pine Rivers, Qld, church)

Reflections on "AC"

To the Editor,

When I receive my "AC" I read it from cover to cover—usually from back to front so that "The Last Word" comes first. Then I "skim" read it, like a hen scratching for worms among the rubbish. Then I read it selectively until I am satisfied that I have found both the corn and the chaff.

When I ask someone if they have read an article in the "AC" I get answers like, "No, I didn't

notice that," or, "I haven't seen that yet," or worse still, "I don't get it now. It has too much junk in it." While I admit it is not a paper I would pass on to unbelieving friends and there are some "junk" articles, these are informative as they tell us what kind of food is being fed to some of the flocks, which in turn explains why some of the sheep seek new pastures and some just hang on and die (spiritually).

They explain why Peter Pitts' "Fatal Malady" ("AC" 4 July) is spreading so rapidly through the churches.

Articles like one written over an artificial name and addressed to a long gone contender of the faith which the writer tries to disprove (1 August) and printed under the caption "Growing Spiritually" are offset by one like Ian Richer's "Get Out of the Church" (18 July).

Add to such articles the "Happenings" page, Tertius,

Focus on... and Church News it adds up to quite a worthwhile package of reading. Thanks for the crosswords and Pontius Puddle too. In fact thanks for the "AC". I look forward to its arrival.

—E.A. Barton
(Port Lincoln, SA)

Concern over Article

To the Editor,

I make it near number one to read in *The Australian Christian* "Growing Spiritually", even though it is on the back page.

However I am surprised, puzzled and concerned by this article in the 1 August issue.

It does not in any way effect my own faith and complete belief in the word of God, but I am concerned that someone may take this as a message from Churches of Christ and have their faith, perhaps already wavering, completely destroyed.

If this had been presented as a possible letter to Paul from

Letters from Tertius

Heavenly Bliss

To the Editor,

I sometimes wonder if we get converts by false pretences at our church. When our minister preaches the gospel he often uses words like "peace", "comfort", "sanctuary" and "rest". The hymns echo his words. We sing of "a shelter in the time of storm", "a safe stronghold", "a hiding place" and "sweet rest for the weary".

But when people eventually come into the church in response to his message of rest and peace and comfort, our minister is on to them. In no time they have never worked so hard in their lives, nor has so much been demanded of them in the name of the Lord and in the interests of the church. Most of us like it of course, most of the time, but what about this rest and comfort bit?

On Sunday night our minister calls the weary to rest, but on Sunday morning there is no rest for the weary. He sees to that in his sermons. I'm not sure whether it is better to be a sinner with the delectable prospect of rest being dangled in front of one, or whether it is better to be a saint and know that there is no hope of rest, at least as long as our minister is about! He even refers to the after life as "higher service".

Some people believe that after this life our souls sleep. After two or three years with our minister this could be quite an enticing prospect. My favourite hymn is fast becoming "For all the saints who from their labours rest". I must confess though that eternal rest in "Elysian fields" would have me bored after the first hundred years or so. So maybe our slave driver minister is getting us ready for a creative, active and enjoyable heavenly bliss.

Yours in anticipation,
Tertius

Letters

some unbelieving Pharisee or advocate of the Jewish faith alone, it may be less harmful.

But wherever do we have any reason to think that Timothy would react in this way to Paul's letters of help, encouragement and instruction? Paul addressed him as "his true son in the faith" and as a "man of God" and reminds him that there is one mediator between God and man—Jesus Christ.

Could you please explain to us just what this article was meant to accomplish.

—Eddie Telfer
(Mundulla, SA)

Worship

To the Editor,

Richard Hutchens says, "What is the official doctrine of C of C today and what are we officially supposed to believe?" ("AC" 1 August)

In Dr James Jauncey's book *Simply Churches of Christ* it tells us what we are all about both now and in the past. Dr Jauncey says "Churches of Christ are firmly based on the Bible, which is the sole authoritative basis for faith and practice. On peripheral matters where the Bible is not conclusive there is ample freedom for personal interpretation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty."

If this is the case, and I firmly believe it is, there should not be any arguing about "formal" or "informal", "contemporary" or

"traditional" worship—unity should be the key.

Unlike Mr Hutchens, I have spent many fantastic worship times in "contemporary" services where you can still experience quietness, reverence, inspiration, celebration, formality, strong biblical teaching, hymns and songs. We should remember, though, that we don't come to worship to "get" but to "give", of our love and adoration to God and to our fellow Christians and others. Whether we sing hymns, songs or whatever, as long as it comes from a loving, worshipping heart, God loves it all.

Having taught music and worship at Carlingford College for ten years, I can say for sure that lecturers and the principal certainly do not send students out to churches to tell them how to worship, but rather to learn, encourage and share the things they are learning. We should not be scared of change, as we should always be striving to change and grow more like Jesus, not just in our corporate worship but in our entire way of living, this means loving, understanding, tolerance of others.

—Robyn Moses.
(Southport, Qld)

Adverse Re-action

To the Editor,

It would be remiss of me as one who acknowledged to be offended by the Brian Mee article ("AC" 7 March), if I did not indicate my adverse re-action to the Guest Editorial by Chris Hutton ("AC" 22 August). In the first place it appears Chris does not number himself amongst the "some" who "may have been offended" by the word (used in the Mee article). But secondly whilst I was nothing short of being amazed that the management of *The Australian Christian* decided to publish the Mee article in the form it did, I am equally surprised and disappointed that management saw fit seemingly to justify its publication of the Mee article by following it up with Chris's editorial.

—Andrew Augustine
(Chelsea, Vic)

News

Youth Special

"Island Breeze"

The Victorian State Overseas Mission Committee is holding a youth rally on 19 September. The featured artists on the night will be "Island Breeze", who are an outreach arm of Youth With A Mission. "Island Breeze" is made up of Christians from various Pacific islands who share the

gospel through the cultural dance and songs of their various homes. The rally is being held at the Malvern church (cnr Alma and Dandenong Roads, Malvern) at 7.30 pm.

Further details on the evening are available from Barry Jenkins on (03) 870 7520.



Saturday, 19 September, 7.30 pm
Youth Special...

"Island Breeze"

Malvern Church of Christ
cnr Alma & Dandenong Roads

How the Gospel came to the
Pacific Islands
Islanders tell the story in
Song & Dance

Youth from all over are
invited to join us

Arranged by
Churches of Christ
Overseas Missions Committee
Phone: Barry Jenkins (03) 870 7520

IVANHOE

75th Anniversary
10.30 am 25 October

Speaker—Jim Wright
Soloist—Nina Corlett

12.15 pm Luncheon
2.30 pm PSA

Salvation Army Songsters

Please accept this notice as
your personal invitation

RSVP 5 October
Sec: Roy L'Green
84 Williamsons Road
Doncaster 3108
Phone (03) 848 2969
Manse (03) 499 4155

Books

Health, Healing and Transformation

Biblical Reflections on the Church in Ministries of Healing and Wholeness

by E. Anthony Allen, Kenneth L. Luscombe, Bryant L. Myers and Erie R. Ram (Marc Publications) \$7.95 (US)

The four papers comprising this book have quite distinct approaches to health and wholeness from the Christian perspective. Selected from presentations at the World Vision International Health Consultation in Geneva, 1989, together they make a telling statement about this neglected mission of the church. A broad spectrum is covered: from the recognition of the interdependence of body, mind and spirit to the healing of our broken world through discipleship and the church as a healing community.

Many refreshing concepts are well grounded in biblical bases, with the reality of human suffering and brokenness related powerfully to the message of salvation.

Allen urges Christians to "effectively share the message of health, healing and wholeness as intrinsic to the Good News of God's salvation". He underlines the neglected realities of spirituality in healing and wholeness. "The church cannot afford to differentiate between its natural and supernatural resources...use both as God-given resources in healing."

Luscombe theologically develops the imperative of discipleship in this arena, describing it as "a powerful source of healing in a world characterised by brokenness at all levels of life". The resources are there in the Christian faith.

Myers portrays a model of development based on the pilgrimage of the people of Israel. He identifies six enabling factors leading to their transformation, still applicable to health care.

Ram reiterates "whole person healing" instead of "curing disease". The spiritual gifts of hope, peace and love, grounded in compassion, create a healing environment.

This challenging re-look at the Kingdom mission gives a balanced perspective of healing applying to the established comfortable church as well as to areas of obvious health-care need.

—Jean Milne

A People on the Way

Congregation, Mission & Australian Culture
DENHAM GRIERSON

A People on the Way

by Denham Grierson (David Lovell) \$13.95

A book crafted from ministry in Australia has immediate relevance, especially one from this author. In many ways it is a sequel to his *Transforming a People of God*, which many found full of insights.

Denham Grierson uses the biblical images of light, salt and yeast in affirming that one central task for local congregations is transforming the community in which it is set. The church in mission in the Australian culture must be Christ-bearer and servant. His discussion of culture, including "church culture", of choices congregations must make,

of worship and mission (the best presentation I've read), of caring for people both inside and outside the church, of leadership and of discerning gifts, are all creative, perceptive and encouraging. The examples are all Australian.

I hope that Denham writes another sequel. While he refers to the important need to share faith verbally, as part of mission, the

only specific discussion here about evangelism is about the inadequacies of certain types of mass evangelism. This book is mainly about compassion and justice rather than about the full dimension of mission. However, those who heed his insights will find the way opened up for sharing the gospel so that people acknowledge Jesus as Lord.

—Keith Bowes

Raymond Fung

THE ISAIAH VISION

An Ecumenical
Strategy for
Congregational
Evangelism

The Isaiah Vision

An Ecumenical Strategy for Congregational Evangelism

by Raymond Fung (WCC Risk Book Series)

Raymond Fung was secretary for evangelism in the World Council of Churches Commission on World Mission and Evangelism for a number of years. He is now in Hong Kong.

This book describes a three-element strategy for local churches based on the experience of churches around the world and in many different settings. The theme is taken from Isaiah 65:20-23. The God we believe in is one who protects the children, empowers the elderly and works with working men and women. Fung sees the

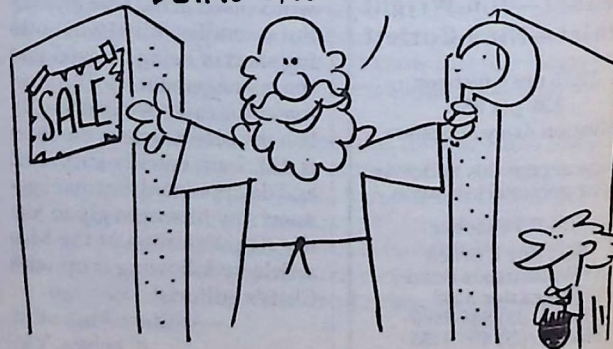
concerns as universal and, although springing from an Old Testament base, argues that they represent a basically Christian charter for the church. He illustrates the themes with stories around the world from Wichita to Hong Kong. This is no Western church manual on the how to of evangelism, but rather an opportunity for a reflective process on the breadth of the task of evangelism for the local church. Fung affirms the importance of the local church by quoting from a WCC affirmation on evangelism: "It is at the heart of Christian mission to foster the multiplication of local congregations in every human community. The planting of the seed of the gospel will bring forward a people gathered around the word and sacraments and called to announce God's revealed purpose."

Available from the Australian Council of Churches, PO Box C199, Clarence Street PO, Sydney 2000, and probably from local state Council of Churches offices.

—Don Smith

The Angelic Verses—Daniel Changer

THE DRUID SALE IS ON
AGAIN... AND EVERYTHING'S
BEING SACRIFICED!



Beautiful for the Lord

The impact of Singapore



• Dr Iris Paul presenting a paper at the Haggai Institute

"Fasten your seat belts, we are about to land on Asia's biggest international Airport—Changi. It is 21.30 Singapore time, the outside temperature is 26° and humidity..." I sat upright and peeped out through the plane window to behold the myriads of lights on land and sea, radiating from dazzling Singapore. Soon I was being welcomed by Haggai Institute personnel and Sue Gohr showed me to my room, and I entered the land of dreams.

The dawn brought me, with the ringing of the bell, to the dining table set in western style. Having lived in a tribal village for the past 20 years, the sight was awesome. As I remained fixed to my seat, the fork, the spoon, and the knife decided to go on a dancing spree, the meat and the fish cutlets jumping out of the plate, to the cut of the knife and the poke of the fork!

The Haggai Institute Leadership Training Course with teaching staff from 10 nations and participants from 27 nations made the sessions very informative. The interaction between bankers, administrators, directors and doctors was very good. There was so much to read and write each day that I eagerly looked forward to 25 June for my visit to Sentosa Island.

That day found me in a cable car gliding gracefully over the world's busiest port. As I glided

along I caught a glimpse of Indonesia and the international cruisers, ferries and tiny boats. The gentle, cool breeze was refreshing to the tired mind. There was excitement in the air as I landed on Sentosa Island.

Oh, there is so much to see on Sentosa Island. The lifelike, wax statues of the pioneers of Singapore and Surrender Chambers took me to the world a hundred years ago and brought a vivid picture of days gone by.

The butterfly park with over 2,500 butterflies, the rare stone museum with its unique collection of over 4,000 stones and rocks left a lasting impression.

I cannot find words to describe the underwater world and the coralium.

My heart skipped a beat as I beheld the beauty of the multi-coloured fishes and corals. I stood awe-struck to see the marvellous creation of God. My thoughts went flashing. Why, why did God create such beauty to be concealed in the deep, deep sea? To be hidden from the world, yet be so beautiful?

As hundreds of beautiful fishes swam elegantly across my view, I heard the voice of God say, "I want you to be beautiful for me among the tribal people whom you serve, though unspotted by the world," and I whispered back, "Yes, Lord, I will be beautiful for you."

Water Flows in the Third World

CBMI helps supply clean water

A staggering proportion of the misery and sufferings in developing countries can be blamed directly or indirectly on a shortage of clean water.

The World Health Organisation estimates that "80% of all disease in the world is attributable to inadequate water or sanitation". This means that 10-25 million die each year from diseases caused or aggravated by unclean or insufficient water, or by inadequate sanitation.

"Given these statistics it is obvious that increasing the quantity of clean water in the developing world, through well-drilling and spring capping, is essential if we hope to improve the quality of health and life in these countries," observes John Jeffries, Na-

tional Director for the Christian Blind Mission International (CBMI).

Research and experience indicates that any organisation involved in well digging needs to have a strategy of design, maintenance and education if they hope to effectively improve the water situation in developing countries.

Thanks to supporters in Australia, CBMI is working with the National Society for the Blind in Niger, Simaid in Ethiopia, and the India Commission on Relief.

CBM International is an interdenominational worldwide fellowship of Christians dedicated to serving the blind and handicapped in the developing world, irrespective of race, nationality, sex or religion.



• A young girl takes a drink at a CBMI-sponsored capped well in Port-au Prince, Haiti

My feelings were echoed by the dancing musical fountain, where colour, water, elegance and music mingle in beautiful unison. I bid goodbye.

Goodbye, Singapore, and thank you Jesus, for making me beautiful for you.

—Iris Paul

Dr Iris Paul has written express-

ing her gratitude for the assistance provided by Australian Churches of Christ, which enabled her to attend the course in Singapore. She has now returned to India and her work in the rural area of Malkangiri, where she is introducing a tuberculosis eradication program for which the Churches of Christ Overseas Aid fund is providing assistance.

Happenings

12 regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) showed increases in participating members during 1991. That number is up from the 9 of 36 regions showing growth last year, and is the largest number in recent years. The total number of participating members, however, continues to decline.

The governing body of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Division of Overseas Ministries endorsed relations with a Korean church body, and approved 14 persons for overseas appointments. The partnership arrangement, already approved by the United Church of Christ, would ecumenically link the UCC and the Disciples with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea.

A provincial governor of Thailand has accepted Christ as saviour and planned to be baptised on 24 July. Southern Baptist missionaries who helped evangelise the governor say he faces tough opposition to his decision, which rejects the state's official Buddhist religion.

China is holding 104 Christian believers in prison, under house arrest or in other types of restriction

because of their faith, charged the Puebla Institute, a Roman Catholic human rights group. The Chinese detainees include 72 Catholic leaders and 32 Protestants. The report also documents instances of mass arrest, torture, brainwashing, detention without trial and harsh sentences imposed on believers, as well as the closing of churches and confiscation of Bibles.

Rugby League's Jack Gibson has been awarded the 1992 Friend of SIM Award, an annual presentation to a professional athlete or coach who has been an enormous support to the SLM (Specialised Life-Oriented Ministries) chaplaincy program. Sports & Leisure Ministry serves 89 Australian professional sports with chaplains.

Representatives of member churches of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) are urging national ecumenical bodies to undertake studies that would lead to a redefinition of the concept of development. Current development strategies were said to be destructive to the environment and to societies.

In 1991, Open Doors delivered a total of 1,113,281

Bibles, New Testaments, Gospels and other Christian literature to the suffering church worldwide. The largest single delivery was 157,959 complete Bibles, including over 100,000 children's Bibles to Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Only 3 months after the first program went to air, Queensland Christian Television Association's "New Horizons" program has gone to number one. Beating all other competitors in its mid-morning timeslot, the weekly program has drawn an average Brisbane audience of more than 61,000 viewers in late July-early August. The program's ratings were swollen by Channel 7's Olympic coverage. "New Horizons" airs every Tuesday morning at 9 am on Channel 7 and the state-wide Sunshine Network. It is a magazine-style program.

An amazing 10-week relief and evangelism program by 4 young Lebanese in conjunction with the Syrian Christian Alliance has seen 400 Iraqi Muslims receive Christ. The 4 workers, from the Karentina Gospel Church in Beirut, with their Syrian counterparts, also

distributed 1,500 New Testaments, 4,000 pieces of Christian literature and 150 books.

According to a report on the BBC, the Hungarian Ministry of Defence is considering introducing the teaching of church and religious history in its military academies.

According to the National Report on Violence (1990) every murder in our community costs the taxpayer \$1 million. According to the SA Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Services (OARS) this is a conservative figure. The cost of keeping in prison for 20 years a person convicted of murder is itself approx. \$1 million.

On 5 June the application by Carlton and United Breweries to dismiss the claims by three Aboriginal claimants in the Orange, NSW, court that they had suffered injury from the consumption of alcohol was refused. Accordingly the claim by those three claimants will now proceed to be heard and evidence will be called to prove the claim that alcohol is in fact poisonous, dangerous and addictive and the cause of injury and damage. The trial date has yet to be fixed.

Personal income tax paid by Australians is \$66,377 million a year. The annual net subsidy paid to the liquor trade is calculated at \$3,700 million. This subsidy represents 5.6% of total taxation income.

Vanuatu Churches of Christ welcomed 4 new churches into the Conference last May. These churches were Lalvaru on Maewo Island, Levelkatpur on Pentecost Island and Lolath on Santo. A second church has also been established in Luganville under the leadership of Pastor Raynold Bori.

A rare copy of the Babylonian Talmud, a compendium of Jewish law and lore, has been discovered in the basement of Sion College, the theological library on the Embankment in London.

The (Anglican) Church of the Province of Southern Africa has resolved to support the ordination of women priests. The church's General Synod made the decision in mid-August. It is not expected that all dioceses will proceed to ordinations in the foreseeable future, although a number will.

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on

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Guest Speaker Ken Clinton

- Luncheon

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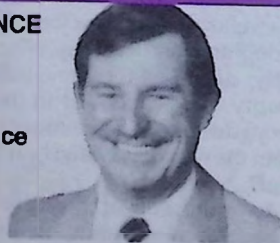
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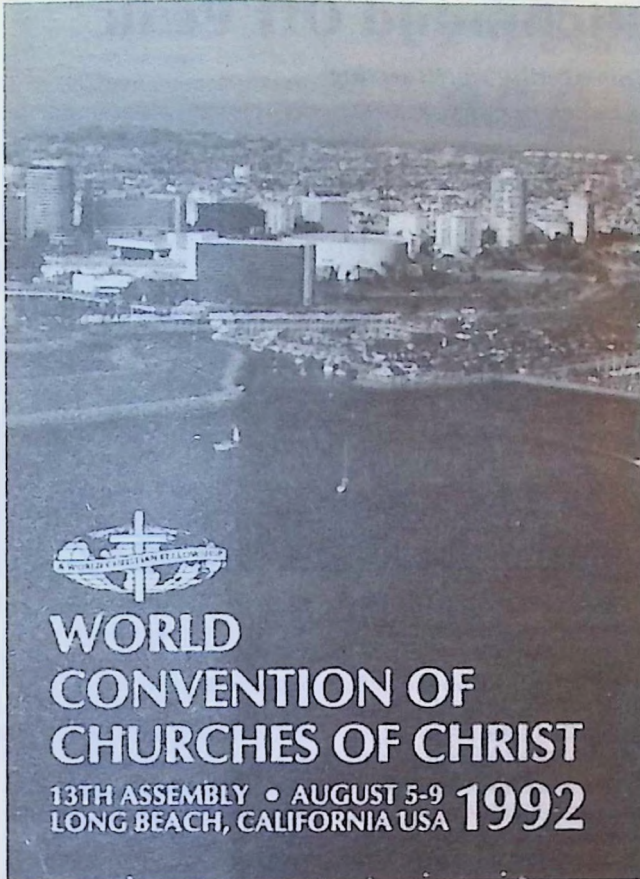
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World Convention



The 13th World Convention of Churches of Christ was held at Long Beach, California, 5-9 August, under the theme "God's Dominion: From Sea to Sea".

Convention is a time when all branches of the Churches of Christ/Restoration Movement/Stone-Campbell (or Campbell-Stone) Movement get together and share in a time of celebration and worship.

Some 1,200-1,500 shared in the convention, with over 140 Australians attending.

This is the only time that members of our movement from around the world come together in any forum. Due to the tensions that exist between the largest groups in the US the convention is not a time for business but a time of sharing fellowship, worshipping God together and being inspired by challenging preaching.

The main speaker at this World Convention was Fred Craddock, who is Professor of Preaching and New Testament

at the Chandler School of Theology in Georgia. Fred is a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and was the Jessie M. Bader Lecturer and preacher. He gave four excellent addresses to the whole convention. Dr Keith Farmer, Principal of the NSW Churches of Christ Theological College, also preached at one of the evening services.

The sessions were inspiring. They were well organised and the singing was appreciated by all. There were a variety of guest artists and several choirs (including bell choirs) who not only shared during the service but also on several occasions performed prior to or after the sessions for those who wished to listen to them. The majority of the singing was of hymns, with very few recent songs of praise being used in the worship. (My mother commented that while she was enjoying the singing she had not sung many of the hymns and choruses for over 30 years!)

Several significant changes occurred at this World Convention. Dr Allan Lee retired from the position of General Secretary of World Convention after 21 years. The new appointment as General Secretary sees several firsts being achieved. Lyndsay and Lorraine Jacobs from New Zealand have been appointed as the new General Secretary and Associate General Secretary. This is the first time that a couple have been appointed to the position, the first time lay people rather than ministers have been appointed and the first time that the position has been held by non-Americans. Lyndsay and Lorraine will be moving to America to set up the new office in the Disciples of Christ Historical Society building in Nashville, Tennessee, later this year. The Disciples of Christ Historical Society has good links with the three main arms of our movement in America—the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Church of Christ/Christian Church (we tend to call them the independents) and the churches of Christ (non-instrumental)—I will write more about the differences and history in later issues.

For those interested the next World Convention will be held in four years time in 1996 in Alberta, Canada. The new World Convention President is Marj Black (again a first in that she is the first woman to fill the post). Good news for Australia is that the 15th World Convention is to be held in Sydney in the year 2000.

Highlights for me included the preaching of Fred Craddock and Keith Farmer. I came away acknowledging that too often we have sold the Christian faith short. We have made the Christian life sound easy and have stressed that in coming to Christ all our problems will be solved. In fact, living a Christian life can be extremely difficult, and Christ in his call to people to follow him often talked of the difficulties they would face. This should make us more reliant on the power of his Spirit working within us because if we try to do it on our own we will fail, and fail miserably.

It was interesting to meet fellow Christians who come from the same church tradition but who live in different cultures. I met with editors, writers and leaders. The two morning Bible studies (written by Leroy Garrett from the non-instrumental stream and printed in the 1 August issue of *The Australian Christian*) were a time when I shared with people I had never met before. I was particularly impressed with the way that we had a common bond in Christ in facing the issues of life.

—Chris Ambrose

[In future issues I will share some of my impressions on the various parts of our movement in the US and some insights gained from visiting the historical areas of the Stone-Campbell movement in the US and listening to various historians share their view of the development of our movement.]

Charlestown Church of Christ Home Coming

29th Anniversary Celebrations

cnr Dudley Rd &
Kalora Cres
Charlestown

Speaker: Fred Miller (USA)
Saturday, 19 September, 6.30 pm

Make this a time to share and reflect on blessing both past and present and the challenge of the future.

Contact: Peter Rama Rau (Minister)
on (049) 43 9007

Adventure and Challenge

Camps for young people

Visitors to the Home Show at the Exhibition Buildings in Melbourne, Vic, were attracted by the display stand promoting an initiative camp for boys.

The camp will be held at Monbulk, Victoria, 27 September–1 October, for boys in years 4, 5 and 6. Campers will have the opportunity to develop initiative and experience physical, spiritual and social challenges.

The program will include varied sports, swimming and hiking. Peter Wing-Tang, minister at Burwood, will lead the study times on "Making the Right Choice". Social games, a film night and concert will be featured. The camp is very well organised and caters for wet or dry weather conditions. A video of last year's camp is available from Jacob Altes, camp director (contact him on (03) 723 3348).

Other camps being offered for young people during the school vacation are at Halls Gap. Phil and Nina McCredden, student minister at Williamstown, will direct "Youth One Returns" for years 7 and 8 students, 20–25 September. James Pearce, minister at Strathmore, will lead discussions on "wearing masks". "Things That Make You Go Mmmmm" is the theme of the Youth 2 Camp for years 9 and 10 students, 27 September–2 October. Alison Nankivell will direct the camp with studies led by Paul Hammat, minister at Cheltenham.

These camps are part of the camping program of the Vic-Tas Department of Mission, Education and Development. Registration forms are available from the Department, 77 Capel Street, West Melbourne 3003. Phone (03) 326 8900.



• On the ropes course at Monbulk

Richmond Off Peak

Opportunity worth seizing



• Richmond minister Rod Beer offers information leaflets at the Off Peak Arts Festival

(Photo by Garry Basinski)

Recently the Richmond, Vic, church was invited, along with other community groups, to participate in the local "Off Peak Arts Festival" street market. The festival was promoted and co-ordinated by the Richmond City Council and many groups participated, expanding the usual Saturday morning street market by several dozen stalls. Members of the Church of Christ conducted a white elephant/craft stall, which attracted considerable attention. A pamphlet describing the activities of the church was placed in a plastic bag with each purchase.

Minister Rod Beer and one or two helpers offered copies of the information pamphlet to passers-by, many of whom accepted them with interest.

The church was pleased to

have been given the opportunity to promote their Sunday school, craft and friendship group, playgroup and worship, along with informing the public about the other congregations who use their facilities.

Money raised by the sale of items in the stall will go towards providing colourful posters for the lounge area in the chapel building.

—Rodney Beer

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I knew I should not have started it. It was a risk, yet I thought I could handle it. Fancy taking a punt on prayer.

Not any sort of prayer, but one of thankfulness to God. I started out in a rare mood of optimism after a good night's sleep and a fresh morning mixed with a good cup of tea. So, why not say, "Thanks to the Creator-Redeemer"?

The Psalms were a great place to start, not too heavy nor too light for a morning's "breakfast with God". Reading along I was arrested by a beautiful piece of spiritual "muesli": "He who sacrifices thank offerings honours me." As I chewed on this for a bit, I nearly choked as I tried to "swallow" it. It stuck in my throat.

Here I was getting all "spiritual" so as to give thanks to God for some great things when my "diet" nearly makes me choke. Was there any similarity with what I was about to say, with what the words of scripture said about the thank offering that would honour God?

Oh yes, I knew that the Jewish concept involved an animal or some grain or something like that, all part of the ritual. But then I realised whatever was offered, actually, physically, emotionally, economically, cost him something. Here I was going to give thanks for a lot of things I enjoyed, things that were simply "freebies", involving no pain or cost to me at all.

I had in mind to say thanks to God that I lived in a land without terrorism, no civil wars or threat of eviction and displacement. I was feeling really blessed that I wasn't unem-

It Was a Risk and It Was Worth It!

Ray Hawkins

ployed or a homeless child or facing a business crisis. As I reflected on my "thank you list" I started to feel like the pharisee in the temple with the tax collector. You know, the gratitude that I am not like that!

So it was as if God was giving me a sharp, smart reminder that being thankful is not dependent upon the luck of the environment but the set of the heart.

As I coughed and spluttered over this I remembered what David said when he purchased the block of dirt on which the temple was later built. I will not sacrifice unto the Lord that which costs me nothing!

Oh boy, was my "thank you list" looking rather cheap. For it wasn't costing me anything but breath.

So I "spat out" what was choking me, and started again. Here are some of the things that have a price tag attached to them in some way or other. They are not listed in order of importance or of thankfulness.

I thanked the Lord (with great effort at being sincere) for the fact that I'm growing old. At least I have found him to be faithful throughout the years.

For the dimming of my eyesight. Makes words hard to see and people hard to recognise,

but I will see him face to face.

The arthritis gave a twinge of pain wanting to test my determination about thankfulness. So I swallowed and said, "Thanks Lord," for my arthritis. I don't like it, but at least I can still make the effort to do things to serve you and help others. Hope my attitude will be helpful to others facing a similar situation.

I saw my bankbook on the table and rubbed my chin. Lord, you know we have financial commitments that are a strain, but I thank you for them. At least they are making me depend upon you for your providence. The call to self-control and self-denial seems to be linked in there with your providence and I'm finding that such an awareness is developing my character. (Just how much character you have in mind is a bit of a concern, but perhaps I will have to be thankful for that later.)

It was a bit of an effort to be fair dinkum with the Lord when being thankful for being disappointed by people, being hurt, ignored. But I did it! I'm realising that even the best intentioned people will let me down as I let them down. The Lord alone is true blue. Time was getting away, but I was

beginning to understand the blessing behind the pain of a costly sacrifice of thankfulness. I opened up my "secret compartment" and showed God my grievances I had against him. For prayers unanswered, for dreams unfulfilled, for important matters unsolved. When I asked for strength to be thankful even for these, wow, did I sense a burden lifted. It sure gave a purging to my motives and power to my perseverance.

Well, it was time I had to say "Amen" and run. But I stole an extra minute simply to thank him for my failures and tears. Not that I wanted to be happy with such things. Rather to recognise before God that in spite of my weakness, vulnerability and stupidity, he still loves me and at least I can truthfully tell people about the forgiving grace of God.

The "In Jesus' Name" was still ringing in my ears as I rushed to face the demands of the day. I would imagine that in the morning (if not before) I will be paying some cost or other to offer up to my Lord and Saviour the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Least this time I'll be ready and while not forgetting the glorious "freebies" I enjoy, I will be trying to be bold enough to be sincere when I say, "Thank you Lord for the following tough, unpleasant, unwanted, unexpected, unjust items. For at least I can declare that in and through all of them God is Sovereign and will again the glory in and through them."

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• Ray Hawkins is the minister at the Maitland, NSW, church.

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IN MEMORIAM

PARKER Gordon 26 August 1983. For all the years we were so close: all the times I've needed you most: All the loving things we did together; for all those things and one million more, I give my thanks and love: in the thought that when I look above, the brightest star in the sky, is that same sparkle once in your eye. Gwendolyn.

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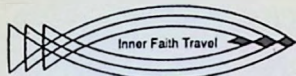
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Curkpatrick

A Sign for Our Time

During the Gulf War speculation about the end of the world became intense among some Christians, and with renewed military confrontation with Iraq a current possibility such speculation will no doubt ferment again. Unfortunately, speculation about the end is always compounded with every civil war and famine in Africa, disaster in the Third World, and skirmish between Arab and Jew as "unmistakable signs of the end". It is also compounded by immense rapid social change in our own society.

Speculation about the end was prevalent in Jesus' day, which like today was a time of massive social change and insecurity. Many of Jesus' contemporaries were engrossed with the cataclysmic end of the age and a passionate hope that the enemies of God (Gentiles) would be destroyed, and the unrighteous (outcasts) would be eliminated. So there were occasions when Jesus was asked for signs to confirm popular expectations that the cataclysmic end and therefore the age of the Kingdom was near. But Jesus responded to their sign-seeking by saying, "The Kingdom is not coming with signs to be observed, so you can say, 'Here it is, or there it is,' for the Kingdom has come in your midst." On another similar occasion he said, "It is an evil and adulterous generation that look for signs." Aggressive words! But why evil and adulterous?

It is a malignant mentality that hopes and rejoices in violent tragic events, and terrible human suffering as a prelude to an ecstatic escape from the world. How many Christians gleefully hoped the Gulf War and the break up of the Soviet

Union would escalate to become an Armageddon? How many now hope the seeds of the end lie in the Balkan crisis? Sign-seeking adulterates the compassionate mission of God's people in the world, because it has a propensity to turn the people of God into a self-righteous enclave, huddled together, nauseated by society, waiting to be rescued and plucked from a world "beyond redemption". The rhetoric may not claim that, but reality often does. This propensity does not produce compassionate, prophetic people of the calibre of Martin Luther King and others who have engaged in working for justice, compassion and community—God's shalom in God's world.

"No sign will be given," said Jesus, "except the sign of Jonah." But what is the sign of Jonah? It is a sign that God has a seemingly incomprehensible compassion for the most "villainous pagan" as God had for the inhabitants of Ninevah, the proverbial "bad people" of the ancient world. Whatever the reputation of Ninevah, the story of Jonah depicts its 120,000 innocent people, ignorant of God,

who don't know their right hand from their left. In a clever parable imbued with irony, the author demonstrates the deep compassion God has for all people, even in the word of judgment on our truncated lifestyles. In a comic caricature of contemporary Jewish attitudes—embodied in the prophet Jonah, the story contrasts the people of God unfavourably with pagans in the narrative, and subverts the popular assumption, that God's compassion is an exclusive possession of anyone. The story is a comic reversal of escalating racial intolerance, which assumed all pagans are callous, without spiritual sensitivities, and shatters the bigotry of a people, who, though "called to mission", had become an enclave of the righteous.

The sign of Jonah is also a sign of death—not the Arabs', Eastern Europeans', or anyone's, but ours for their sake. In what Joseph Campbell has described as a symbolic "journey of death", which can precipitate personal renewal and holistic, compassionate sensibilities, Jonah must die the death of a bigoted prophet in "the

belly of a whale". This appears to be unsuccessful in Jonah's case, unlike the Apostle Paul, who experiences the "death-life journey" in his ministry, in emulation of Jesus' own self-giving for others—"death is at work in us, but life in you".

The "sign of Jonah" is a sign that a self-righteous enclave, nauseated by "this world of Ninevah", waiting, hoping for its destruction will be disappointed, as Jonah was disappointed that Ninevah, the city of Nina, the fish god, was not destroyed. To Jonah's disgust, the compassionate patience of God is a reality.

Whatever peevish feelings the people of God may have about this world of Ninevah, and like Jonah, whatever brooding hopes some Christians may have for its destruction, grace will succeed. The self-giving compassion of God, expressed unequivocally in Jesus Christ, is an enduring reality and sign for our time.

—Stephen Curkpatrick

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SERIOUS STUDY OF THE BIBLE HAS
CONVINCED ME TO BEGIN RIDDING
MY LIFE OF THE INFLUENCES
THAT CONFLICT WITH MY VALUES!



The User-friendly Church

Well I hope I spelt it correctly, but I'm not really up with the goings on and the language of the Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Ask any child though, and he or she will probably be able to tell you what it means (I can't guarantee their spelling either) and fill you in on the life history of this green foursome, including their diet. But you may well ask what has all this got to do with the User-friendly Church? Quite a lot really!

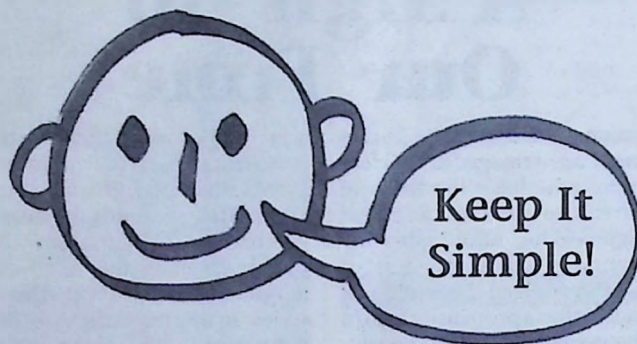
When I first went to university in 1962 my parents gave me a Bible of the RSV translation. Up to that point, I'd only really had dealings with the Authorised Version, though I was aware that J.B. Phillips had produced a version of the NT. Since then we have seen a plethora of translations and paraphrases to the point where we have, the NEB, the TEV, the NIV, the NKJV, a revised NEB and now a revised RSV. I feel sure that a revised TEV or Good News must be just around the corner.

Of course I could go on, but anyone trying to work out which version of the Bible to take with him or her on a visit to another church will know what I mean. All these attempts to produce a Word that can be read rather than left to gather dust. The common denominator is just what we all want, a way in which we can present the Gospel in a written and spoken form that is not going to lose or bamboozle people when they hear it for the first time. Remember that my generation (I'm still three runs short of a half-century) is probably the last one to have a general God consciousness. Not that it did a lot of good, but most of us went to Sunday school, church youth groups or at least had RE at school—that is not the case for the later generation.

Unfortunately the language used by the majority of Christians is just so much jargon to society in general. We expect people to understand words such as "redemption", "atonement", and "revelation", when most people have a 7-8 reading age level, or at least that's

"Cowabunga Dude"

Bryan Mee



how most newspapers pitch their writing.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm not setting myself up as a perfect practitioner in this area. My wife reminds me I fail every Sunday with some of the words I use. It rather reminds me of my first teaching appointment, after leaving university with an honours degree in history. When I was required to teach history to 28 boys in Grade 9 who had little or no interest, I quickly learnt that I had to dispense with all the high aspirations that went with my in-depth knowledge and dig out my own old school notebooks. In other words I learnt to apply the KISS principle, i.e. Keep It Simple Stupid.

For those of us who have been brought up with years of experience in the church and the accompanying ritual and jargon it's not too difficult to make ourselves understood and to understand what is going on. But it must be pure hell for the newcomer off the street. It's probably much the same as a Protestant of the 50s gate crashing a Latin Mass—unintelligible. My plea is therefore for us to consider carefully just what we say or give people to read.

In most churches the most successful sermon preached most mornings is the kids talk. Just look at the ingredients of the good ones that you remember:

- They were short.
- They were very much to the point.
- They often included some form of activity apart from talking.
- They used language that was modified, so that the five-year-olds could grasp something of the message.
- They usually took as their starting point something that was relevant to the kids.

Now I guarantee that as you ran through that list, you did remember some stories you had heard over the last year or two. Now see if you can remember as many good sermons that you

have heard. Then if you're honest, consider that if you are having trouble what about the normal, off-the-street pagan who last came into your church?

If the church is going to be heard it has to consider very carefully not so much what it says—but how it says it. Every time I stand up to preach I promise myself it will be a KISS sermon—I fail, but I'm trying. Someone once said (probably Anon) that it is a good practice to "engage the brain before opening the mouth".

As Christians it is even more important to engage both brain and Spirit before opening our mouths to bear witness to Jesus Christ. We have a great message—don't let's spoil it by inappropriate language.

"Cowabunga Dudes!"

Afterword

This series was not meant to be a criticism of any other's ministry but my own. For me it has been part of the practice of self-assessment, on the basis that we should always be looking at what we are doing, why we are doing it and if we are going to continue the practice, how can we improve.

As one tinned milk brand once advertised, "Our milk comes from contented cows," only to be followed by one of their competitors who wrote, "Our milk does not come from contented cows—they are trying to do better."

As a Christian and as a minister, I hope I am trying to do better!

• Before his death earlier this year, Bryan Mee was minister of the Church of the Good Shepherd on the Gold Coast in Queensland.

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Expectations

Gordon Stirling



When I was a boy growing up in Churches of Christ we all expected that one day we would "make our decision" on a Sunday night by going "down to the front" to confess our faith and to be baptised on the following Sunday night. We would then expect to be "received in" on the following Sunday morning and as bona fide church members would be on our way to heaven or the rapture, whichever came first.

That expectation was re-enforced as we saw the peer groups above us making their decisions. And we knew all about baptism because every one turned up for baptisms. And our parents accepted some responsibility for our eternal destiny and without pressuring us would check in with us every so often to find out when we thought we might "make our confession".

Invitations for decision were given each Sunday night with a variety of word forms pertaining to "sin" and "salvation" and "eternal life" backed by invitation hymns that "tenderly called us home" or asked us "have you any room for Jesus?" But we did not really hear what the hymns and the ministers' invitations said. We heard, "If you want to get to heaven you had better come down to the front and make your confession and be baptised." It was as clear as that and we knew that it was urgent lest we be "lost".

We were asked to accept Jesus Christ as "our own personal saviour". We accepted that formula as part of the deal. But no-one ever suggested that Jesus Christ could save us from our hang-ups with our parents or school mates, or from the fears and uncertainties that dogged us as we stumbled through puberty, or the worries about being accepted by other people. The word "personal" in the formula was always emphasised, but no-one suggested that Jesus Christ could be a friend.

But in those days the path was clear and most young people in Sunday schools and youth groups followed it. Our

elders were worried about young people who never came to church on Sunday nights because unless they did they would be lost, as the only way into the Kingdom was down the front on Sunday nights. To some extent this problem was solved with Sunday school decision days and special missions.

As a young man I used to wonder how they got on in other denominations that did not have gospel services and invitations to accept Christ. Yet their young people stayed in the church and we met a lot of them in Christian Endeavour conventions. I discovered that their young people also had expectations. They expected that when they reached a certain age they would join a confirmation class and eventually be admitted to membership. It was as automatic and inevitable as ours was, although we considered that they had left confession and baptism out of the plan of salvation.

All of this may sound like an assembly line into the church. But large numbers of young people stayed to grow and develop to become the church in succeeding generations. But what about today?

I believe that many young people presently growing up in Churches of Christ, even in good church homes, no longer have the expectation that we had. Many go through Sunday

school and "graduate" to nothing. Thousands of young people have gone through youth clubs and youth fellowships without it ever entering their heads that they might make a commitment of their lives and become part of the church.

The expectations are not there because the former gospel service tradition has gone by default and has not been replaced by anything else. A few big churches that major on youth on Sunday nights still have a working tradition of "down to the front" decisions, but they are a minority. Some churches have tried Sunday morning invitations but these invitations are inevitably general and vague and young people do not often hear them as referring to them. We want them to make an open confession of faith and to be baptised and to become church members, but they do not hear us saying that, especially as no-one seems ready to say it to them outside of a church service, eyeball to eyeball, maybe over a milkshake at the local "hangout" or in the car on the way home from youth club.

I have talked with young people from church homes who have never made a commitment and have ceased attending church services because there were so many more interesting things crowding into their timetables. I found that seldom was the suggestion

made in their homes that they might be thinking of decision or church membership! In fact if the children raised the matter they were often told to wait because they were too young. I found that in many good church homes church was not as high a priority as studies, career, sporting activities, money or social commitments. The young people got the unspoken message.

On talking with parents I found that they expected the Sunday school to give children the necessary knowledge to become Christians and the youth group to encourage them into the church. And if it did not happen they tended to feel that the minister was "letting down the side" somewhere. They did not think that they had very much responsibility for the Christian education of their children apart from taking them to Sunday school and church and the youth activities of their church.

I have also found that in other denominations the automatic expectation of joining a confirmation class has all but disappeared and that the general announcement that one is on brings small results. However when ministers or youth leaders personally visit each young person to explain what it is all about and encourage them to join, the result is very positive.

I want to suggest two things. First, that churches have regular discipleship or membership classes and that young people be personally invited to join them. Those I would have in mind would be late primary school and early high school young people. To leave it later is often too late. Such classes will build the expectation of commitment and church membership. At the end of each session the minister or youth leader would talk privately with each class member to see if they are interested in proceeding to baptism. If any are not the minister or leader would ask if they would be willing to talk about the matter again later. In this case the later date is decided on and noted in the diary.

Don't Let Theologians Overawe You

Barry McMurtrie

Medieval Catholicism kept control of the European populous through Latin. The mysteries of the faith were unfathomable to ordinary Christians because any attempts they sought to make at interpreting scripture were thwarted by the additional barrier of language.

Luther and company swept that domination aside by providing the people with a translation in their own language. Immediately the average Christian began the quest of understanding scripture. Much of Catholicism's mystique evaporated.

In twentieth-century Christianity we have a new breed of "mystics", however they certainly are not into mysticism. They are the scholars who loftily pontificate against any straightforward interpretation of the Bible. Clutching their robes of scholarship around them they expect ordinary Christians to submit to their often unusual interpretations of the Bible and their dismissal of Bible stories and prophecies.

Thomas A. Kempis wrote in *The Imitation of Christ*, "Because many are more eager to acquire much learning than to live well, they often go astray...If only such people were as diligent in the uprooting of vices and the

planting of virtues as they are speculating on problems, there would not be so many evils and scandals among the people...At the day of judgment we shall not be asked what we have read, but what we have done...how holily we have lived. Where are all those Masters and Doctors that you knew so well in their lifetime in the full flower of their learning? Other men sit in their seats and they are hardly ever called to mind." And of course these "other men" replace past theories with their own.

I am not arguing for naive fundamentalism or against the need of excellence in scholarship. I am questioning many of the modern ideas that stand against the ways that Bible-honouring Christians have believed for years.

These ideas claim validity in a similar way to the "scholarly mysticism" of Barbara Thering.

The second thing I want to suggest is that we cease to be satisfied with the practice of calling young people to decision with impersonal invitations at services, especially with the well-worn clichés of invitation and with stereotyped methods of making response. I want to suggest that ministers talk about the most vital thing in a young person's life, person to person. I am not suggesting "cornering" young people so that they feel that they have no "out".

I am suggesting that ministers make personal appointments with each young person simply to check with them about where they are at in relation to Jesus Christ and the church. They may ascertain that a young person has thought

about these things but is not yet ready to make a commitment. This is accepted and the young person invited to agree to talk about it again at a later date. This date is duly recorded in the minister's diary. If ministers feel that they are not close enough to their young people to feel confident about talking to them they could encourage their youth leaders to do so, giving them some guidance.

If we really care for young people and their eternal salvation we will not be satisfied with merely "clubbing" them, entertaining them, "keeping them off the streets", and then letting them go into limbo.

• Gordon Stirling is a retired minister and a former editor of *The Australian Christian*.

The plain fact is the twentieth-century theologians have no more information (save the occasional discovery of papyrus) to base their ideas on than that of recent centuries. Their new enlightened ideas are only theories.

Unlike science, with its developing knowledge, Christianity is based on "revealed" literature and it was just as easily understood then as now.

Certainly the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the like gave information, however the theologians of the New Testament day and the early centuries lived with this knowledge and still held the interpretations evangelical Christians believe to be Biblical. In fact theologians of this age have a much greater barrier to knowledge than those of preceding generations. The world view of most earlier centuries was much closer to that of the Bible. The secularism of today is stamped over much modern theological theory.

The theological proponents of new-fangled theories do not write from a position loftier than Campbell, Wesley, Calvin, Luther, Augustine or the

church fathers. The revealed information is the same and sometimes their academic gowns are just new versions of the king's new clothes.

All serious-minded Christians must wish at times they could set aside some years to work through the weighty tomes of college libraries to discover knowledge of the Word of God. The truth is that most college graduates will admit a modern theological education will not make you a champion of the Bible but only gives you a grounding in theological theory.

The Christian who cannot enter a college for training should realise that there is no greater college than one where—

- the student body is a praying Christian;
- the textbook is the Bible; and
- the teacher is the blessed Holy Spirit.

Our movement, like any other, needs its share of PhDs and DDs and the like. However we should only employ those who, like many theological academics in Australia, have a deep commitment to a traditional view of inspiration.

The others, who espouse the novel theories, are intellectually entertaining but should not be taken too seriously. Our movement's only future lies with a commitment to the faith revealed 2000 years ago.

• Barry McMurtrie is the senior minister at the Wollongong Church of Christ.



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Reflections on the Early Days

In the 4 July issue of "The Australian Christian" we ran a story on the Victorian Committee's plans for celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Federal Aborigines Board. Following that issue we have received a letter in which Betty Roediger (nee Short) reflects on her experiences at Norseman at the time. She was anxious to contact Miss Bentley. They have since made phone contact and had a great time of sharing.

I was living in Norseman, WA, when Miss Eadie and Miss Bentley started the Aborigines Mission. I feel they have not been given due recognition for the way they worked and lived.

It was the end of the Depression and my husband and I and another couple, Mr and Mrs George Harris, left Kalgoorlie to live in Norseman, as work was easier to obtain in the mines. There were two or three other young men, one of whom was Roy Roberts, also from Kalgoorlie, so we formed a small fellowship.

Then these two courageous ladies arrived. They lived in a tent about four miles out of Norseman. They cooked out in the open. They had no means of transport, however the Church of England in Kalgoorlie eventually provided them with a bicycle each.

My husband used to cart their water to them. They did their washing in kerosene tins and ironed at my little shack using my petrol iron.

Our small group used to go out for Sunday morning services at the Native Reserve—four poles and a bush covering. We sat on bush poles attached to forked sticks. In the evening we met in one of our homes. Mrs Harris (nee Pascoe) was a lovely organist and had a beautiful singing voice.

Eventually Miss Eadie and Miss Bentley were able to have a corrugated iron shed built—with no glass where the windows were—and it was bitterly cold but they never com-

plained. The man my husband was teamed with was not a Christian, but was sympathetic to these young women and he brought them a cast-iron pot-belly stove. Many years later his two children became Christians and his son, Barry Waldeck, was a missionary in New Guinea.

The girls were delighted that they could sleep one end and cook on the stove, as well as being fairly warm. The other end was used as a school room.

However Miss Eadie had to return to New Zealand and Miss Bentley went to Mt Margaret Mission (she later suffered a breakdown in her health).

When they left Norseman they asked the Churches of Christ to take over.

We returned to Norseman after the war, by which time a few buildings had been erected—very primitive. Alice and Bill Berthleson were then in charge.

While I stayed with them for a few weeks Bill would bring in these poor wretched children, covered in lice and sores. Alice had two little children of her own and was heavily pregnant but she used to fill a big tub with water and wash and care for these unfortunate nomads. The doctor in the town was very kind and helped all he could.

—Peggy Roediger

P.S. I well remember Albany Bell coming on the train from Roelands Mission. He always had kerosene tins of honey for the mission.

Baptisms

•Phillip Crowley, William Crowley, Belrose, NSW •Rachel Buchanan, Felicia Goodwin, Nathan Woodward, Kirk Earle, Tanya McNeill, Maryborough, Qld •Michelle Crawford, Wembley, WA •Debbie Ellis, Mary Archer, Dandenong, Vic •Jasmine McCarthy, Venita Ellis, Matilda St, Port Lincoln, SA •Lili Liu, Ashley & Sarah Manly, Thornbury, Vic •Kenton Erb, Bundaberg, Qld •Joseph Westley, Happy Valley, SA •Lisa Westrup, Knoxfield, Vic •Thomas Jurkovic, Glen Waverley, Vic

Marriages

Maxine Cunningham to Chris Sorensen, Kathryn Reinertsen to Wayne Davis, Rachel Johnson to Bradley Paton, Maryborough, Qld •Marisa Forbes to David Streeton, Wembley, WA •Sue Denton to Roger Kingdon, Perth City, WA •Sharyn Cook to David Batt, Bundaberg, Qld •Nicky Francis to David Rawlings, Noarlunga Centre, SA •Roma Ellis to George Stebbins, Sue Irvine to John Mason, Glen Waverley, Vic •Jennifer Redden to Robert Wildman, Balaklava, SA

Deaths

•Jack Stewart, Maryborough, Qld •Stella Prosser, Perth City, WA

•Ernest Labinsky, Agnes Meissner, Bundaberg, Qld •Wes Prosser, Noarlunga Centre, SA •Dorothy Daff, Gardiner, Vic

Changes

Port Hedland: Minister—Sonny Graham, PO Box 2161, South Hedland, WA 6722 (Also address for all church correspondence.)

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Obituaries

Daff, Dorothy Moysey (16.8.92) Born at Canterbury 1903, Dorothy Lawson was a granddaughter of pioneer minister G.B. Moysey. Grew up in Surrey Hills, Vic, church, married Charles Daff in 1931, set up home in East Malvern and later Surrey Hills, attended Gardiner church for the rest of her life. They had three sons, Gordon, Russell and Graham, and later eight grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Her husband predeceased her by 25 years. She continued to live in the family home until failing health made it necessary to move into a nursing home in Wantirna. Dorothy was a quiet gracious lady who loved her home, her family, her church and her God. In 60 years associated with Gardiner she was a faithful and regular supporter of all the church activities, a good hostess and a valued friend of many. The service was attended by a large number who joined in the thanksgiving for her memory.

—Harold Steele

Martin, John K. Born Lilydale, Qld, 1902, John was baptised by A.C. Rankine at Ann St, Brisbane in 1919. He entered COB in 1924 and had student ministries at Warragul and Gore St, Fitzroy. In

1927 minister at Wynnum-Hawthorn circuit, Qld. In 1928 married Myrtle Pedersen. Three children—Betty, Kenneth and Vivian. Ministries followed at Geeveston-Dover and Collins St, Hobart, Tas, Swan Hill-Woorinen-Ultima and Red Cliffs-Merbein, Vic. Army chaplain during the war. Following discharge ministered at Ormond. Moved to Bendigo and involved in much work there. Lifetime of dedicated, effective, fruitful and humble service for the Lord.

—W.W. Saunders

Pinches, Nina Annie Elizabeth (7.8.92) Nina was born 1906 in Ballarat the second-eldest child of Andrew and Annie Somers. In 1922 she married Wm Pinches. They had eight children, 23 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. Nina linked with Preston church by transfer in 1944. She continued in active fellowship until she vacated the family home, and began her final sojourning at Strathalan Baptist Home 17 years ago. Through her involvement in CWF, Goodies and BS, she shared her love and faith. Many greatly valued that love and friendship. Family and friends met at Rosanna Baptist in worship and thanksgiving for Nina's life and witness.

—G.J. Crossman

Church News

Vic

RICHMOND (Rodney & Marjan Beer) Participated in Richmond's "Off Peak Arts Festival", which raised church profile in the community ... Well-represented as a congregation at the Effective Assimilation Seminar conducted at Hartwell church ... 4 July celebrated with a family night—concert and supper evening, an excellent time for all who came ... Three members at World Convention.

DANDENONG (Graeme Foon) CWF celebrated 65 years of service. 100 ladies attended a light luncheon & fashion parade ... Christmas in July was held with the Spanish-speaking Baptist church. Food brought was given to the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army band played ... Church gave thank offering to Overseas Mission Board ... Plans progressing well for 100th anniversary 12, 13 September.

THORBURY (Larry Holt) Service & lunch celebrated baptisms of Lili Liu, Ashley & Sarah Manly on 16 August. Longest-serving member, Olga Rawady, welcomed these & Jackie Kelly & Steve Agyeman into membership. Lunch celebrated engagement of Lili to

David Whimpey, who transferred membership a few weeks ago ... Migrant English classes combined average 25, held Wednesday pm, Thursday am ... 23 August marks Roger Killmier's 50 years membership.

OAKLEIGH (W.J. Edwards) Chadstone shopping charity efforts—CWF \$865, Buckingham Hall \$683 ... Demonstration at CWF by Safeway raised \$80. Donated Bone Marrow Registry ... May Smedley in hospital ... Rear hall rearranged in readiness for occupancy by Fusion ... Guest organists Glenda Jenkins (Dandenong), John Greenwood (Glen Waverley), Doug Mudie (Box Hill) ... Appreciation expressed to Clyde Taylor for transporting residents from Emmaus & CGH to services.

PEEL ST, BALLARAT (Wayne Allen) New revamp services continue to meet the need of all ages ... Cheryl Allen & Jenny Jordan have commenced playgroup for children not school age ... Young adult cell group in action & growing in numbers ... Sunday, 23 August, pm cabaret night held ... Number of young people taking part in singing group. Also telling us of answered prayers and prayer in action.

A C C O U N T A N T

The Properties Corporation of the Churches of Christ invites applications to the position of accountant

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Telephone (03) 326 8900

Church News

NSW

BELROSE (Ian Chapman) Ken & Marj Baker farewelled at recent pot luck dinner ... Pot luck dinners continue to prove successful ... Dobson video series on families is being shown on consecutive Sunday afternoons with some success in outreach ... Belrose church would appreciate prayerful support by other churches in its emphasis on outreach supported by prayer (the mission of our church).

Qld

MARYBOROUGH (David Woodward, Alan Weedon, Allan Cunningham) Centenary weekend speaker Des Nelson. Rich time of reunion, challenge ... Family services, outreach services well attended ... Richard and Shirley Pearce program ... Five baptisms, many reconsecrations ... Girls' Brigade Divisional Sports awards ... Boys' Brigade fashion parade, district camp ... CWF, over 20s, CYF enjoying helpful meetings ... Film "Man Called Norman" ... 24 hours of prayer ... Combined churches services with Jerry Cook (USA).
BUNDABERG (Alan Leane) Kenton Erb welcomed into fellowship ... "Prayer" series of messages ... Friend of Bundaberg, Vic Boettcher, journeyed to eternal home ... Bundaberg represented at funeral at Hervey Bay of Ernie Labinsky, second-last member of pioneering family of Bundaberg, having found his Lord

at Barolin Street church ... Pat Cavanagh, minister at Shepparton, visited mother in Bundaberg ... Superintendent Bob Bignill organised Bible School anniversary.

SA

MATILDAST, PORT LINCOLN (Jim Spiker) Kid's Club formed, ages 6-12. Children enjoy craft, games & tea ... Administration task group appointed to co-ordinate existing groups ... LEG group fundraising purchased microwave & tape deck for church ... Friendship Day averaging 30 from various elderly persons' homes ... Women's EP Half-yearly Conference held with ladies from Tumby Bay, Ungarra & Lincoln churches ... Recent visit by Brian Phelps & Ron Roberts.
COL LIGHT GARDENS (Adrian Clark) Recent monthly church teas included progressive dinner & social, Chinese meal cooked by Shanghai Chinese member ... To celebrate church anniversary in August morning service included short enactment of how church began at CLG. People dressed in old-time clothing, lists of ministers involved, placards showing stages of ministry & confession of faith by Kim Williams. Service was followed by luncheon.
NOARLUNGA CENTRE (Ross Pelling, Graham Mann, Cathy Slade) Church recently agreed to appoint Barry Reid as associate minister from November 1992. Barry has 10 years OAC experience & will lead the church in mission & evangelism ... 40 men enjoyed tour of local Mitsubishi car plant ... CWF led thanksgiving services recently ... Church saddened by death of Wes Prosser ... Assistance to the new Aldinga church given each week by our musicians.
HAPPY VALLEY (Russell Allison) Craft group purchased curtains in office area ... Joseph Westley baptised ... Youth group organised car wash to raise funds for camp. They led morning service at Barmera while away ... 50s plus group celebrated Meg Poynton's 80th birthday ... Kirillie Baggs returned from Barcelona after enjoyable but hectic time ... Marj Dredge guest speaker ... Neil & Leigh Griffin became grandparents.
BALAKLAVA (Graham Lawrie) Christian Education group organising Children's Church on two-month trial ... 80th birthday celebration for Mildred Whiting ... "Gifts for the Handy Person" evening prior to marriage of Peter McPharlin Jr & Kirsty Cunningham ... Painting of chapel interior gives lift ... Outreach night with Richard & Shirley Pearce held Philip Shepherd's shearing shed ... Labethal Harmony Choir presented musical concert raising \$830 Balaklava branch Bible Society.

WA
MERREDIN (David Jolly) Memorial service for Doug Good. 180 people gathered to pay tribute ... S. Robertson, Warwick, Monica Poynton welcomed into membership ... Church opened Sat morning, 16 May, for prayer ... Purchased overhead ... Sunday luncheons held. Proceeds May CCTC, June Aboriginal Mission ... Prayer & Bible studies Tues pm Wed am ... AGM 2 August: M. Freeman, M. Schnaars, T. Baum elected to the board. Thanks expressed to A. West for her dedication.
WEMBLEY (Kim Roberts) Congratulations to Michelle Crawford on recent baptism ... Diamond wedding celebrations (sixty years): congratulations to Lewis & Grace Park.
PERTH CITY (G. Powell) Gordon & Elma Ewers back from holiday in Turkey, UK & Germany, & George & Gladys Powell from USA, where they also attended World Convention ... During George's absence guest speakers were Roger Ryall, John Fabry & John Nicholl ... Natasha Povey is living in Belgium for a year as an American scholarship student ... Money & goods sent to David & Rhoda Sikabbubba in drought-stricken Zambia.
FREMANTLE (W.W. Saunders) Church heartened as interim ministry with Dick Saunders begins ... Present at am service 23 August were Dr Ron & Mrs Gwen Graham (USA). He was preacher ... Annual "Meal Service" held that evening ... \$290 received CWF's mid-year call for talent money, also \$92 proceeds "bring & buy" ... CWF visited Illawong & Joondanna villages ... Mr & Mrs G. Beard (Hamilton, Vic) shared fellowship with us.



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Growing Spiritually

On This Rock I Stand

Graham Butler

In recent days we have seen so many things that surely indicate to us the shakiness of life. I don't want to go into the murky details, enough to know that we are living in explosive days. This earth of ours is shaking, and it's not from the tremors or earthquakes that are about.

As I read God's Word, it seems that God is shaking the things that can be shaken in order that the things that cannot be shaken may be seen as standing.

Often questions are asked: What will survive in times like these? Things of people will fall, but things of God will stand forever. On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.

God Will Not Be Shaken

Our God reigns. It has been said that when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated in Washington, DC, when the news finally hit New York there was utter confusion. The voice of Garfield rang out: "Fellow citizens, there are clouds of darkness all about us, but God still reigns."

God's Word Will Never Be Shaken

Several passages of scripture declare that God's Word shall stand forever, and although the Bible has been denied, destroyed and questioned, and bitter have been the attacks as to its truth, it still stands.

Just as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego rose out of the fiery furnace, the Word of God emerges from its mocking and criticism.

King Jehoiakim tried to destroy the Word by casting it into the flames but God told Jeremiah to write it again as it was.

Many have declared: Once I was blind, but now I can see. It brings peace where there is pain, it brings power and victory where there was sin.

Jesus, God's Son Cannot Be Shaken

His power and his love is unshakeable. Mighty to save, and mighty to keep. He died for us. Love so amazing. There are no boundaries to his love, Jesus is the Name above every name. He came to seek and to save. Without him, this building will fall.

His Church Cannot Be Shaken

I love the church. We are precious to God. Jesus loved his church, he died for it, and he loves us because we are part of his church. I am glad I am part of the family of God.

God's Kingdom Shall Never Be Shaken

Of his Kingdom there shall be no end. The secret for our standing today is by making sure our roots take a firm grip of the eternal things of God. Storms may come, the waves of trouble may hit hard, but we shall stand, because we are linked to God. Let us serve him with reverence. See that we refuse not, he who speaks.

• Graham Butler is the minister at the Northam, WA, church.

The Last Word

Lack of faith in God is the source of most of society's troubles.

—Albert E. Ribourg

Why do some people take a bale of hay to bed with them?

To feed their nightmares.

Did you hear about the people who thought aperitif was a set of dentures?

The assistant had been left in charge of the chemist's shop during the lunch hour, and when the chemist came back she asked if there had been any customers. "Only one," said the assistant. "He had a terrible cough, so I sold him a bottle of castor oil and made sure he drank the lot."

"Castor oil?" said the chemist. "That's no good for a cough!"

"Well, it worked," said the assistant. "That's the chap over there, hanging on to the counter. He hasn't dared to cough for at least 40 minutes!"

A: Why did you leave Mr and Mrs Jones' boarding house after being there for three years?

B: I found out there was no bath or shower.

Used car salesperson: This car is labour saving. Wash it, start it and it will shake itself dry.

First aid instructor: What's the best way to prevent infection caused by biting insects? Student: Don't bite any.

Optimism: An elephant hanging over a cliff with its tail tied to a daisy.

Student: I let six eggs for breakfast this morning.

Teacher: You mean "ate" don't you?

Student: Well, perhaps it was eight I et.

Barber: Haven't I shaved you before, sir?

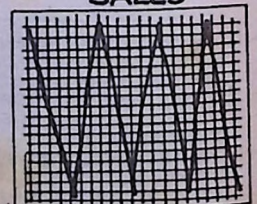
Customer: No, I got this scar in Vietnam.

Mother: The school says we should buy our children an encyclopedia.

Father: Encyclopedia my eye! They can walk to school like I did!

Driver to police officer: But I wouldn't have been going so fast if you hadn't been chasing me!

SALES



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