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# THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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# THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN

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## Comment

# Let the Church be the Church

Max Collyer

**T**he other day, I re-read a book published in the WCC Risk Series (No 43). It was written by Gwen Cashmore (Anglican) and Joan Puls (Roman Catholic of the Franciscan Order), its title *Clearing The Way*.

In my reading, I came upon these words which I had underlined in a previous reading: "We have seen with our own eyes our society being driven in a direction that contradicts the gospel. As we survey our society our inescapable conclusion is that we are being hurt (in Britain, Australia?) today damaged and discounted by public policy. (Declaration on Church Action on Poverty (1989))"

The writers go on to ask "What is the Spirit saying to the church in this historical movement of so-called freedom and self-determination?"

Now in my 80th year, I look back on changes unprecedented in the whole of human history.

Not only technological changes but changes in human nature carefully and continually being manipulated and, of course, changes in the church.

Recently, I was asked the question, "Do you think the time is near when God will pull the plug on the world and say 'Enough is enough'?" My poor answer was to refer to God's pronouncement in Genesis 9-15 that never again would he destroy all flesh. But I must confess that sometimes I wonder.

Throughout history, the church was the centre of a community, it was looked to for guidance, it set the standards. Admittedly, it had its faults, but it was always there. It was visible, it had a voice, its opinion was sought, its pronouncements commented on.

Today, the church still has in its possession those standards, it has truths to tell, it has a task given it by its founder to "teach them to obey all the things that I have taught you".

The church has to realise that the mission of the church is not merely to be centred on the church building and its congregation at Sunday worship. Who is going to tell pious Christians who live out the power of faith in the privacy of their own souls, that faith without visible public action is dead?

The writers of my book liken the churches to a shopping mall where side by

side shopkeepers decorate their windows and in other ways lure customers inside to buy their goods, thus keeping themselves in business. Or the churches are like clubs drawing in members and money for the perpetuation of their own life and interests.

Those shopkeepers and clubs need to please their clientele because it is as easy to switch churches as it is TV channels.

There seems to be little recognition of the world beyond the church's boundaries.

Our failure to face the world and hide in the church has much to do with the declining moral standards, the broken homes, the appalling violence and worse seen on our TV screens.

Once people knew where the church stood, they did not always agree with it, but at least they were made to think. The church was the social conscience. Now there is no social conscience visible. The nearest we have is the environmental movement.

"Respectable" Christians are shocked by any semblance of social or political involvement, despite the enormous mass of Biblical teaching about justice and loving one another.

In my lifetime, our own church Conferences were reported by the daily press. Sure they fastened on any arguments or controversy, but at least it was reported that a church was in conference. No one knows of that today and a suggestion that conference should think of social issues was ignored.

So can the church be the church in this late 20th century, or is its sole voice to an occasional statement by an Archbishop? It is not sufficient to say that as individuals we can set examples by living good lives and giving to the poor and needy.

There is a task for the corporate church which must not only be in the community, it must be seen by its teaching and action to be present in the community, the city, the state. It is supposed to be the servant community of a serving Lord and it is under command to promote the values of the Kingdom of God in the world in which it finds itself.

"Go out of the gates, go out. Prepare a road for my people, build it up, clear away the boulders. Raise a signal to the peoples." (Isa 62:10) ❖

## A Church on the Move

### Development and relocation for Maroochydore

A dedication service for the North Buderim, Qld, Child Care Centre for the Churches of Christ on Sunday 10 April, was the culmination of a move by the Social Services Department and the Maroochydore Church of Christ to jointly develop a strategic block of land in North Buderim on the Sunshine Coast.

In one of the developing areas of the Sunshine Coast and capturing the "village model" of development, the heart of this suburb is shops (presently being built) with the Child Care Centre (now open) and the new

250 seat Church Complex (being built in the new year), all built around a common car park. The local church and the Social Services Department are excited about this joint move of ministering to the community together.

But the church is also on the move literally! From Sunday 10 July at 9:30 am, the Maroochydore Church of Christ will cease to worship at its present address in the school hall and will worship until the new year in the child care centre and take on a new name "Maroochy Church of Christ,



• Bryan Knight (Child Care Director) Malcolm Chandler (Senior Director of Child Care) and Geoff Risson (local Minister) at Child Care Centre dedication

North Buderim". At the inaugural service, Bob Smith, DCDE Director, will be the guest speaker.

If you are moving up here to live on the Sunshine Coast, or

have moved for a short holiday, come and visit. Our new address is Lakeshore Avenue, North Buderim, four minutes west of the centre of Maroochydore.

## The Time has Come

### Global March For Jesus

An unique moment in Church history has arrived. On 25 June millions of Christians will participate in a continuous global march which will start at 2 pm local time at the International Dateline in the Pacific. Fiji will lead off, followed by every capital city on Earth in subsequent time zones. 50,000 Christians will be taking to the streets in South Africa alone, black and white. In Yugoslavia, Serbs and Croats will be marching together and 150 Swedish Christians will join them.

Here, the same spirit of reconciliation is at work among all the various Christian traditions and ethnic groups as Australians prepare for the largest public celebration in the history of the Church. You are invited to connect with the global Christian family on 25 June, a day to change the world!

Marches will be conducted in every capital city and many regional centres. In many cases more than a simple march will be occurring as the opportunity for outreach is grasped. Details of times and locations and contacts are listed below.

#### Capital Cities

Melbourne (03) 563 2412, Hobart (002) 34 9127, Perth (09) 221 5574, Adelaide (08) 326

5651, Brisbane (07) 368 3922, Darwin (089) 277230, Canberra (06) 285 4290, Sydney (02) 716 8247.

#### Regional Centres

NSW: Coffs Harbour Gabriel Babare (066) 51 3954, Cowra Neil Checkley (063) 42 1294, Gosford Ron Clark (043) 25 2813, Kiama Penny Magro (42) 26 1866, (042) 96 4806 (H), Lismore Keith Bale (066) 21 7040, Maitland John White (049) 32 6682, (049) 26 3466 (W), Mullumbimby Ron Cowin (066) 84 3040, Narrabri Keith Bates (067) 92 2398, Narrandera David Polhill (069) 59 2730, Newcastle Ron Thorpe (049) 26 4497, Nowra Peter Robinson (044) 21 8215, Orange Geoff Loman (063) 61 4578, Parkes David Moffit (068) 62 4715, Singleton Diane Tattis (065) 73 1178, Springwood (Blue Mountains) Adele Babbage (047) 51 5078, Tamworth Howard Barnes (067) 65 9773, Wagga Wagga Cec Scott (069) 26 3737, Wollongong David McGruther (042) 68 1595 (042) 67 2267 (H).

Vic: Albury-Wodonga Alison Sutton (060) 40 3484, Mildura Anne Webster (050) 23 5915, Geelong (morning march) Rev Paul Craig (052) 43 1733.

SA: Port Lincoln Pastor

Graeme Prentice (086) 82 3956, Millicent Pastor Paul Hales (087) 34 8352, Bordertown Brenton Wiese (087) 53 4071.

NT: Alice Springs Croote Eylandt and John Tansey (089) 27 7230.

Qld: Port Douglas Mark Setch (070) 98 1153, Mt Isa Bruce Cornish (077) 43 5005, Kingaroy Lynda Lange (071)

62 4843, Townsville Chris Richards (077) 74 5766.

Tas: Launceston (003) 34 3149, Devonport Ron Chapman (004) 24 3441, Georgetown and Scottsdale Cliff Roper (003) 82 2591, King Island Sis Monica Sholverton (004) 62 1164, Sheffield Kerry Holton (004) 91 1870, Ulverstone Rev Rob Tan (004) 25 4446.

## Teenager Training

### Insights for parents

Graham Hyman, a consultant with Youth Specialities Australia, will be coming to Melbourne in June to speak at a seminar especially designed for the parents of teenagers. With breakdown of the traditional

family structure, teenage suicide and discipline problems being highlighted by the media, it is clear that parents in the community need information and support. Youth Specialities has conducted these seminars all around Australia, in various venues such as High schools, Churches and community groups, to the great appreciation of parents. As always, Graham combines humour with very practical insights into family relationships. These insights have become the focus for 1994 as it is the Year of the Family. The seminar entitled "Understanding Your Teenager" will be held at Hartwell Church of Christ on Thursday 16 June, 7-10 pm. For more information please contact Hartwell on (03) 889 3484.



• Graham Hyman

## Sports Focus Awards

### Big name event

Olympians Gary Neiwand, Kirsty Marshall and Cathy Freeman; AFL stars Gary Ablett and Gavin Wanganeen; NBL championship captain Andrew Gaze; Gold Medallist Paralympians Michael Norton and Nicole Provis are finalists for this year's Sports Focus Award

Attracting over 500 business and sporting leaders, the annual dinner will be held at Rembrandt's Receptions, Burwood Highway, Wantirna, Vic, on Monday 27 June at 7.00 pm.

The award is given to athletes or teams who demonstrate the best features of sport: excellence, strength of character, ambassadorial ability and role modelling for fans and future champions.

Graeme Dawson, Bruce McAvaney, Eddie McGuire, Steven Quartermain and Patrick Smithers make up the panel of sporting journalists who select the winner of the award.

Brad Wright, a past professional footballer with the Miami Dolphins and the Dallas Cowboys will be the guest speaker this year. Robert Coleman will provide entertainment and Kevin Sheedy, Essendon AFL coach, will present the award.

Bruce McAvaney, will again provide a selection of sports video clips that range from the dramatic and heroic to the hilarious.

The 1994 dinner is organised by Sports and Leisure Ministries (SLM) who are building and on-going mission into the highest levels of sports, entertainment, tourism and business.

John Northey, Richmond AFL coach, will be the focus of an extra feature this year, receiving the "Friend of SLM" presentation. Paul Burnham's chaplaincy at Melbourne convinced John of its value when

he became a coach at Richmond, making him an eager advocate of chaplaincy in sport.

Readers and their friends are invited to pray for this outreach event which has often resulted in many enquiries about salvation.

Tickets cost \$37.50 each, with bookings of ten or more for \$34.50 each. Contact Graeme or Kaye Kelly, 105 Old Warrandyte Road, Donvale 3111 or phone (03) 841 7873.

## Floods, Mud and Hurricanes

### Camping Reunion

Many of the pioneers of camping in NSW renewed acquaintances at Stanwell Tops recently in a weekend of fun, fellowship and worship. People travelled from Albury, Grafton, Brisbane, Canowindra, Gosford, Warrimoo and Sydney to share experiences.

Memories of floods at Narabeen, mud at Bolton Point and hurricanes at Lake Illawarra were interspersed with humorous and life-changing episodes which happened at camps.

There was a session on what some of these campers had done recently. Rosalie Rofe spoke about New Guinea, Noel Flint about Indonesia and Neil Hodgekiss about Prison Chaplaincy.

John Hunter arranged the reunion and Jim Henderson was the leader.

Out of this came a suggestion that we should investigate

having a camp for people over 50. Would you be interested? If so, contact Jean Flint on (047) 53 6585.

## Aunty Needs You

Breast cancer, faith and family



This is the Year of the Family and one in which we've also become more conscious of the issue of Breast Cancer. Well, Aunty has decided it's time to make a considered program about both: an Encounter.

So I'm looking for women who know about breast cancer first hand. (And maybe a husband or two.) I'd like to hear about what your first feelings and fears were, how you began to deal with them, whether or not they went away, whether your marriage has been strengthened (or wrecked), what happened to your body image, what happened to your self esteem, what happened to your faith in God (better, worse, or no different?), who supported you (if anyone) and how, and whatever you have to say to others who are going through or will go through the same valley.

My telephone number is (03) 640 3269, and if I'm not there Jan Tully on (03) 640 3409 will take messages. If you're phoning

from outside Victoria, do go through the main ABC switchboard in your state—much cheaper!

In every long-distance case, I'll ring you back to finish the call anyway.

You're assured of all the confidentiality you desire and time to express your thoughts. I look forward very much to hearing from you.

—Kay McLennan  
(ABC Religious Broadcasts)

## Cool Idea

### Launceston's church freezer

The concept of our freezer, providing food for those in need, has really caught on. Many people are being blessed by this ministry, either through having the opportunity to provide the goods or responding practically to needs as they are brought to our attention. Young families struggling to make ends meet temporarily; some faced with illness and not able to prepare meals themselves; some who need the encouragement of knowing others share their burden—these are different areas where help has been channelled.

—B. Baker

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## JUSTIN TIME



## God, Prophets and People

*Introduction to the Old Testament*



• **Merryl Blair—stimulating**

This six-week short course offered by CCTC has been well-attended on Thursday evenings at the Mitcham Church of Christ. The lecturer, Merryl Blair, has stimulated the thinking of 25 people each night as

she explains the truths of these ancient writings.

Studies have included *The Beginning of a Nation*, *Israel Wanting a King like Other Nations*, *Solomon: Losing the Plot*, *Prophets of the 8th century*, and much more. Lectures have been fascinating, thought-provoking and informative. All participants have appreciated the way Merryl has shared her knowledge. Her insight into the lives of the prophets and God's dealings with his beloved people have been the theme of the studies. —Dorothy Quantrelle

## Calendar

### Awakening Needs You

There is an urgent need in the weeks up to 25 June, the date of the Global March for Jesus, for people willing to: package orders, assemble mission packages, enter computer data, sort and file and deliver and pick up goods. Tasks big and small need volunteers willing to work. Ring Steve Hamilton (02) 7463972, (047) 21 1623 (AH) or Marion Walker (02) 716 8277.

### National Bible Sunday

National Bible Sunday is being held in churches around Australia this year on 24 July. The theme is "Good News for Australian Families" especially relating to the International Year of the Family. National Bible Sunday is a joint venture between the Bible Society, Scripture Union and churches across Australia. The day offers a chance to celebrate the Word of God in the life of individual Christians, the church and the nation. Posters, worship leaflets and reading guides are available from state offices of either the Bible Society or Scripture Union.

## Every Year?

*Chelsea's 70th*



• **Ian Whitelock receiving the mayor's presentation**

There was a great day of celebration at Chelsea, Vic, church on 27 March. Palm Sunday was celebrated with an enactment of Jesus' triumphal entry by the children. There was also a wonderful response to the 70th anniversary invitations.

Max Gowty, Conference President, with his wife Pat, worshipped with us for the occasion. Tim Hanna, Berwick Vic, (former student minister) gave a challenging address to the congregation of 142.

During the following smorgasbord luncheon, Max spoke, bringing a greeting from the Conference. The Mayor of Chel-

sea, Councillor Ron Jacobs, brought a greeting and presented a plaque, acknowledging the church's witness over the years. The candles on the birthday cake were blown out by Sarah Dickson, one of the youngest people there, and the cake was cut by Mrs Ivy McCance, who at 92 was the oldest person there.

A time for remembering was enjoyed with a slide and photograph display of past events.

It was a great occasion of reunion and fellowship, and the question was asked, "Why don't we do this every year?"

—Ian Whitelock

## Put Jesus First

### *Bendigo Mothers' Day Luncheon*

On May 5 the Bendigo Christian Women's Afternoon Fellowship hosted their annual Mothers' Day Luncheon, attended and thoroughly enjoyed by about 70 women. (Plus nine men who did a great job at the kitchen sink and other chores.)

CWAF President, Barbara Powell, ably chaired the event and all appreciated the meal of soup, sandwiches and dessert provided by the Fellowship members.

Posies were presented to the oldest mother, Olive Comber, who is also a grandmother and great-grandmother and to the "newest" mother, Simone Hore. Among the guests was Marj Buckingham, who read a

poem she wrote 50 years ago for Mothers' Day 1944, and everyone received a souvenir bookmark featuring the poem. Maree Jackel, Sonia Hinson and Pauline Newnham presented musical items, all enthusiastically received.

The guest speaker was our Youth Director, Andrew Grant, who has been on the job now for five months. Andrew spoke of the positive effect of the Gospel, as young people progress from program to program. He took a look at some Biblical mothers and their attitude to their children. As mums, we need to steer our kids in God's direction—forget housework once in a while, spend time with

Jesus and get to know him so we can introduce our kids to him. Put Jesus first, even before family. If God is first and we are obedient, all else will take its proper place. (Matt 10:37-38).



• **Olive Comber**

## Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Christian Fellowship

### Rags To Riches

The QAICF has the phenomenal ability to turn rags into riches. Yes! Just send us your old rags (those clothes hanging in your cupboard just taking up valuable space) and we can guarantee that they will, with a wave (and a sort, pack and send) of Hazel's hand, turn into riches for Aboriginal Churches.

Only last month Murray Thomson and friends took some boxes to Chillagoe, 145 kilometres west of Mareeba, and came home at the end of the day with \$400. One day a month a similar feat is accomplished on the grounds of the Mareeba and Normanton Churches. Each sale on these sites has the potential to raise \$800-\$1,000 toward projects such as the purchase of Sunday School material, Christian video hire, painting and maintenance, the purchase of sporting equipment and youth group outings.

Simply send those discarded summer rags to Mrs Hazel Morris, 113 Fernvale Road, Tarragindi. 4121 or phone (07) 848 9466.

### Look Out

Is your youth group/Sunday School/Bible study group stagnating? Do they spend too much time looking inwards? Then, look out! There are many worthwhile activities they could be undertaking, not for their own benefit, but for someone else. For example, the Mareeba Aboriginal Church

has a project list. Why not commit yourselves to purchasing something which another youth group/Sunday School/Bible study group desperately needs?

Please contact Murray Thomson on (070) 92 1043 or PO Box 845, Mareeba. 4880

### Logan City

Lindsay reports that Nola and he had an enjoyable holiday with family in NSW. Many thanks to Lyle, Peter Bardsley and young people from Southport who took services in their absence. Edward Law became an ordained minister with the Uniting Church on 14 May. The church attended special meetings for Aborigines in Brisbane organised by John Smith from God's Squad. Dalby Church is planning a work party visit to paint the inside of the manse.

### Torres Strait

Stan has set up a display beside the video stand at the store. He has also written an article for TI News. The Bible Society is undertaking a five week trip to the Cape and Gulf in May/June.

### Mareeba

Vincent Mathieson (elder) reports that they held a successful clothing sale on 21 April. Mareeba are featuring certain goods as special items at each sale. They have a curtain sale coming up and then a linen sale. Please send these along. There is a great age range in the

children attending youth group so they are dividing into two groups. Please uphold the Thomsons in prayer while they conduct RE in the schools. Murray goes to the high school Friday mornings and both Murray and Narelle teach the primary school children on Tuesdays. The people are looking for an Aboriginal name to

describe the church and are talking with Uncle Norm in seeking their own particular identity.

### Normanton

A special Mothers' Day meeting was held with fifty in attendance. Jeff Weston's ministry was much appreciated.

—Ken Tedford

## Tom Stokes

### Talk about a friend on 777 FM

Glen Waverley based Triple Seven FM promised to tackle the tough issues from a perspective you won't hear on other stations, during its test broadcast from 1 April-26 June on 89.9 MHz.

So trust announcer and Upper Beaconsfield minister, Tom Stokes, to take on personalities as well known as Ita Butrose or Rev James Bevell, Peter Reith, Tim Costello, Sid Spindler and Margaret Fletcher.

In between a light hits music format his 9 am-12 noon shift is attracting a growing following.

Where else but Triple Seven could Melburnians catch details of the significant role of dedicated Christians in the South African elections, a factor overlooked by most media? And what about the difference Christian principles make in the successful rehabilitation of drug abusers or suicidal teens? Whether it's the value of Gippsland's Toora wind farms or opposition to the Albert Park Grand Prix, Tom is there, boots and all.

Tom certainly talks from the heart—as a parent, husband and pastor, and as a chaplain on radio for the Anglican Church. Tom has had years of experience ranging from youth worker and parish priest, to talkback and counselling on commercial radiostations such as 3XY and FOX FM.

With his laid-back style, Tom Stokes moves easily between

talkback and the day's hot topics. Yet there's a new angle here. His approach reflects the station's genuine care and concern for the "little battlers" in our community.

Whether you're a single parent, are retrenched or a long-term unemployed struggling with guilt or depression, dealing with a disability, wanting advice on healthy living or managing your money better, help is only a phone call away. Off-air counselling is a valued feature of the station's community services approach.

Station General Manager, Bruce Upton, states they are "seeking to build an audience of integrity. We are trying to offer hope, acceptance and friendship in a hurting world. We mean what we say. Our commitment is valid, to be a friend."

Its mandate is to be a Christian outreach to the non-churched across metropolitan Melbourne. But with the signal being ten times stronger for this fourth test broadcast, it has been picked up from Shepparton to Geelong and Traralgon to Ballarat. Triple Seven depends upon subscriptions from members and offers an attractive sponsorship plan for business and community groups. The station is seeking a community broadcasting licence and the Australian Broadcasting Authority will consider applications in about a year's time.

—Jenni Howell

Sydney



Blue Mountains

8-15 October 1994

Fully Motel Accommodated  
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8 Days for \$665.00

Contact: David Boyd (03) 728 5286, "Christian Fellowship Tours"

## News

### Australia

#### Casting Our Votes

Many Christians have shown concern at the lack of response by politicians, particularly in the Federal Parliament, to their call for Christian values to be upheld. Network for Christian Values has registered Feedback Australia as a business name to operate alongside the NCV Lobbying Service. They have acquired a software program (Feedback Australia) which will enable a survey of Christian opinion on any given piece of legislation coming before Parliament. It will also provide to those surveyed the response of their elected member to any legislation through recording how they voted. Information in the scheme can be obtained from NCV Lobbying Service, PO Box 347, Curtin 2605. Phone (06) 282 1724 or fax (06) 282 1774.

#### League Chaplaincy

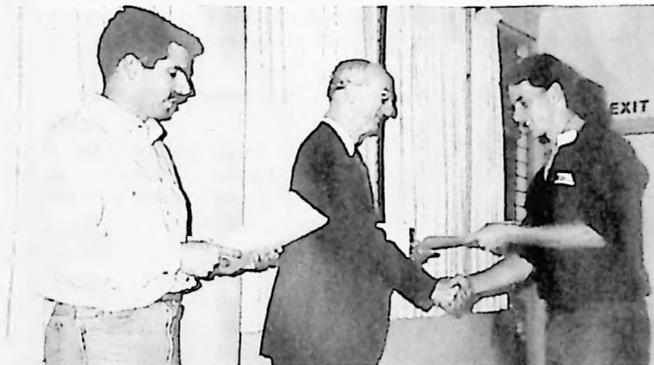
There are now 23 Rugby League clubs either with chaplains or in the process of negotiations. The first Junior Rugby League Club chaplaincy has been negotiated with Wynnum Manly, which has 300 young men from ages 7-17. Rev George Capis, the Cronulla Sharks chaplain, has been requested to be the teams' first grade manager due to his credibility, character and Christian commitment. This is his eighth year as chaplain.

#### Bibles to China

During 1994 the project for the Bible League in Australia is to provide 500,000 Bibles to China. Through a "matching grant" arrangement with Christians in Japan and the US, every dollar donated provides one Bible. Every day, 3,000 Bibles are being delivered into China, whilst the estimated rate of conversions to Christ is 10,000 daily. The Bible League has been supplying Bibles to China since 1978 and they have placed 5 million so far, mostly taken in by courier. The Bible League can be contacted at 137 Victoria St, Werrington 2747 (PO Box 464, Penrith 2751). Phone (02) 673 3055, fax (02) 673 3207.

### Bushwalking Leaders

#### DMED leadership training course



#### • Adventure Committee chairman Steven Smith with Don Smith presenting certificate to David McGregor

On 2 May, forty persons attended a presentation evening at Chadstone Church of Christ, sponsored by the Adventure Committee of the Victorian/Tasmanian Department of Mission, Education and Development. Those attending were young people who had been involved in the Leadership Training Course in Basic

Bushwalking conducted by the Committee, their relatives and friends.

The gathering was to recognise the successful participation of these young people in the course. The theory component of the course was held over two nights; dealing with subjects such as aims and purposes, organisation, safety,

equipment, how to lead devotions, personal commitment, map reading and navigation. All the sessions were conducted by members of the Adventure Committee. Field work consisted of a day of map and compass work around the Lysterfield Lake and a weekend assessment walk in the Grampians or Buangor Forest Park.

Belinda Perrin, Leanne Handasyde, Karen Arnett, Lindsay Raisbeck, Ross Freiberg, Geoff Martin, Ken Martin, Shayne Anderson, Andrew Neilsen, David McGregor and Roger Ambrose were presented with certificates to mark their completion of the course. Four other participants are yet to complete their assessment walk. The Committee met most of the costs with each participant only asked to pay \$20 for the whole course.

With such an encouraging result, the Committee looks forward to further developing these leaders and selecting others who show leadership potential.

### Spring Conference

#### Addressing church issues

Planning is now well advanced for the 1994 Spring Conference to be held at Wollongong from Saturday 29 October-Monday 31 October, 1994.

Joe Harding, a distinguished preacher and leader in the United Methodist Church in the United States, will be the overseas guest. Joe has served as the Director of Evangelism and Church Growth Ministries with the General Board of the United Methodist Church. He is in demand for conferences and

consultations and launched Vision 2000, a visionary posture of hope for the UMC. The project has been widely accepted by the churches. Joe Harding is regarded as an outstanding preacher and evangelist. During his visit he will lead special seminars for ministers.

The supporting team of seminar leaders will be drawn from the Wollongong staff and Australian Churches of Christ. Sessions planned include Australian society issues, contemporary music, your church's image, computing as an aid to ministry, worship, leadership issues, overcoming growth obstacles, revitalisation, working with women, youth, spirituality, team ministries, finance, vitality in church life and more. Each evening there will be major preaching events and worship.

Registration forms will be



#### • Joe Harding

available in July. Churches are already inquiring regarding the event which looks set to break the attendance records of 1992. The conference is jointly sponsored by the Wollongong Church and the Australian Board of Church Development and Education.



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

Christian Singles Fellowship offers friendship through correspondence with other born-again Christian singles and single-again people

Write enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

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Anna Bay 2301

# Letters to the Editor

## Letters are limited to 200 words

### Church Government

To the Editor,

Bruce McIntosh asks, "What is the real motive in attempting to legitimise autocratic government?"

Because it is that which was taught in the New Testament and practised in the early Church. I refer Bruce, and all other interested readers, to Encyclopedia Britannica v. 7 p. 216 (Democracy—Origin of Modern Democracy). "From the fall of the Greek city-state to the rise of modern constitutionalism there is a gap of about 2000 years in the theory and practice of democracy." Can any historian name one nation, or tribe, which practiced democracy at the time of the early Church?

Thirty years ago, I commissioned Encyclopedia Britannica to prepare 2 studies; one dealing with the Eldership among the Jews at the time of Christ. Director of Research V.A. Stenberg replied, "The material given in this report represents the best type of data that we have been able to obtain from indexed library sources".

Some quotes: "The most neglected key to the understanding of the Christian ministry is the conception of eldership, which the Apostles must have had as Jews and brought with them into the Christian Church".

"The idea of succession is very strongly marked. Just as

Moses had laid his hands on Joshua and 'put his honour on him' (Num 27:18-21) so in the post-captivity times a man became an elder by the laying on of hands of elders (in our Lord's day three) and this succession passed into the succession of the Rabbis in the period after the taking of Jerusalem." "The elders of the local sanhedrins were made by the members of the Great Sanhedrin."

Ignatius referred to the Presbyters as "the Sanhedrin of God". Clement stated "Christ was sent by God, the Apostles were sent by Christ and the Apostles appointed their first-fruits to be Bishops and Deacons of those who should afterwards believe".

Acts 14:23 clearly states that it was the Apostles who appointed the elders in the churches they had established. Following the Jewish system of government, the elders appointed other elders. They were not elected by popular vote of the membership.

—Owen Wainwright  
(Bass Hill, NSW)

### Feminism and Culture

To the Editor,

I think it is unwise to be dogmatic about the definition of a topic as subjective as feminism. We know that in any philosophical area there will be a wide range of expression, from radical to conservative. The Chris Field's definition ("AC" 7 May) is a radical one.

It appears to me that Christ's view was that women and men are equal in God's sight and it

behoves the church to act as though that is so. The Australian Government is way ahead of the church in recognising the value of women in our society—it should be the other way around.

Chris states that he believes women have been "neglected" yet neglects us himself when he says "God's ways are so distant from man's ways" and "The world's system and all its processes for achievement are the best man can discover". Language such as this adds to the frustration many women feel. As to whether faith can be both biblical and cultural, I would argue that we are expected to express our faith culturally, just as people of biblical times did.

To cite a relatively trivial example, very few women wear hats to church these days, as Paul told the Corinthian church should be done (1 Cor 11).

Culture expresses something of the essence of each cultural

group, a faith that seeks to dissociate itself from culture would be a pale imitation of real faith.

The Christian church must take on board issues such as feminism and achievement, so that we won't "be impotent and irrelevant in the context of our culture".

—Gwenyth Bray  
(Belconnen, ACT)



LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

I AM DEEPLY DISTRESSED BY YOUR MAGAZINE. THERE HASN'T BEEN A PUBLICATION WHOSE THEOLOGICAL TREATISES I'VE BEEN SO OFFENDED BY, WHOSE CANDID ACCOUNTS OF BICKERING AMONG CHURCH GROUPS I'VE BEEN SO EMBARRASSED BY, WHOSE HAGGING REMINDERS OF THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD AND CHURCH I'VE BEEN MADE TO FEEL SO GUILTY BY SINCE -- WELL, SINCE THE NEW TESTAMENT!

## Letters to a Travelling Companion

### Waste of a Good Miracle

Dear Daniel,

I note, with interest, your comments in your latest letter regarding your friend whose life seems full of miraculous happenings. I gather from what you say that you are somewhat suspicious about his claims. Could your suggestion that this friend "could turn the most obvious coincidence into a miracle" simply be reflecting your own cynicism and uncertainty?

I must admit that God doesn't work too many earth-shattering miracles in my life either. That is probably because he is aware of the waste of time and effort it would be. I imagine he figures that he might as well not bother performing miracles for people like you and me who would simply dismiss them with a rational explanation.

Miracles aren't the only string God has to His bow and perhaps he chooses to work in miraculous ways with those who are open to such phenomena whilst not wasting a good miracle on natural sceptics like you and me. What we probably need to do, Daniel, is to paint God a little bigger in our expectations. Our God, although usually very "down to earth" in his approach to us, is capable of things beyond our wildest imagination. Maybe if, like your friend, we widen our expectations of God our experience of him will become broader too.

Write again soon,  
Pastor Salt.

### Health Care In Christ Inc Victorian Branch

Invites you to attend a seminar at 2pm on Saturday, 11 June, at the Christian Life Centre, cnr Evans & Duffy streets, Burwood. The speaker will be Peter Cutforth, a radiographer & leader of HCIC Inc in Tasmania, who before he became Christian was involved in New Age practices. A love offering will be taken

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## This Special Time

*Richard and Shirley Pearce in Cuba*

He is a proud energetic young man of 27. Married with a little son, well-educated and working in a good job in the field of electrical engineering. He has mastered two languages, Spanish and English. Home to this young family is an apartment on the fourth floor of a condominium in the city of 60,000. His pretty young wife has a job and a neighbour minds their son during the day. Doesn't sound much different to thousands of young families in Australia, but there is a difference.

This family is Cuban living in what is referred to as "This Special Time" in their country. What does it mean, "This Special Time"? It means things have not always been the same as this before and the future is uncertain. It means things are not easy for a young family, or anyone else at this time in Cuba.

It means the shelves in the shops are empty and ration books are in use that allow each family member a monthly ration of 5 lb [2.27 kg] of rice, 6 lb [2.72 kg] sugar, 30 oz [850 g] black beans, 1 lb [454 g] cabbage, 1 lb [454 g] tomatoes, 25 eggs per family, 1 small bread roll each day, 1 lb [454 g] salt per family and cheese and meat on the very odd occasion. Everything else has to be grown, if possible, or purchased from friends or neighbours or family in the country areas, or on the black market. It means powdered milk for children only up to the age of seven. It means one or maybe two meals a day with low nutritional value. It means a good wage of 450 pesos a month is equivalent to \$US4.50. It means a new shirt costs almost a month's wage, that is if you can get one. If you are fortunate enough to have access to US dollars you can go to special shops where a wide range of goods are available, but that's not for the average Cuban. It means the family vehicle is a bicycle, unpredictable public transport or a horse-drawn carriage. It means power cuts of up to 12 hours each day

at unpredictable times. It means everything is run-down or in a state of disrepair and there are no materials available to fix them.

This young man and his family, along with thousands of other Cubans, have found an answer to living in "This Special Time".

They have found the answer in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that has brought them hope, love, strength and the ability to live in, and not be overcome by, the circumstances.

Richard and Shirley Pearce recently spent 11 days with this young family and others like them as they visited Cuba at the invitation of a Baptist Church in the Eastern area of the country. Those 11 days leading up to and including Easter were busy, filled with pastoral visits, sharing in homes, special meetings, preaching, sharing the Gospel in song, encouraging "God's forgotten people" in their faith and in turn being encouraged.

The pastor of this Baptist Church has seen his congregation grow from 200 to 500 in the last three years and 11 of his members take up full-time training for the ministry. It's not happened without difficulty, lack of funds and resources, but in God's grace and timing it's happening.

A church office has been opened in the downstairs area of the pastor's house which is regularly staffed. In the first six weeks over 1,000 people came to the office for help, counselling and to enquire about the Christian faith. This church's



• Richard and Shirley Pearce singing in Cuba

weekly ministry touches over 250 children, 120 teenagers and young people, 200 women and many men.

In the last few years, 33 cell groups have been introduced which meet weekly for prayer, Bible study, fellowship and outreach. These cell group members take turns at leading Sunday meetings and presenting special music, drama and Bible readings. They are proving to be at the very heart of the church's effectiveness.

Prayer, Bible readings, hymn singing, faithful teaching, gospel preaching and public responses to accept Jesus are all part of the Sunday worship services, along with well-attended all-age Bible school. Bibles are available from the Bible Society and the Gideons through channels in Mexico.

The Conference of Baptist Churches in Eastern Cuba consist of 151 churches and 72 pastors. They work amongst a population of 5 million and have experienced 951 baptisms and planted 11 new churches in 1993, bringing their combined membership to over 10,000. All of this in a crumbling Socialist country that al-

lows the church to exist but keeps a watchful eye on its activities.

"God's forgotten people?" Yes these gentle, warm Spanish speaking Cubans are God's forgotten people, by the church at large in the world, but they're not forgotten by the God they love and serve. In spite of "This Special Time", God is building his church in Cuba. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ. Let us stand with them in prayer.

*Richard and Shirley Pearce are widely known in Australia for their ministry of music. They are currently ministering at the Annerley, Qld, church. That church has set up a fund to assist the church in Cuba and if you would like more information, or to financially support the church in Cuba, then send enquiry or gifts to Annerley Church of Christ, PO Box 213, Annerley 4103. Please make cheques payable to "Annerley Church of Christ Cuba Fund" and mark your envelope "Cuba Fund". Each gift will be receipted and channelled in total to Eastern Cuba.*

CHURCHES OF CHRIST THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

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## Papers

### The Words Cry Out: New Writing by Burmese in Exile

Edited by Zaw Gyi and Alan Nichols (Australia-Burma Support Group, Prahran)

This booklet contains stories, poetry and other writings by young Burmese who have been exiled from Burma. They write of the military oppression and ethnic cleansing that has occurred in Burma. Yet they all desire to go back and to bring freedom and democracy to Burma. There are some very poignant stories about how they were forced to flee and the suffering that those opposed to the current regime face in Burma.

When I was in Thailand about three years ago, I met several Burmese refugees. One of them was one of the writers in this booklet. He will now be in Australia as a sponsored refugee. He is hoping to develop his writing skills so that he can highlight just what is happening in Burma.

Most of the writers are not Christian, however the yearning for freedom and democracy speaks out from all the pages.

This booklet is available from the Australia-Burma Support Group (Prahran), 46 James St, Prahran 3181. The cost is unknown.

—CRA

## Books

### Caught in a Trap: Elvis Presley's Tragic Lifelong Search for Love

by Rick Stanley (Word Books) \$13.95.

The author, Rick Stanley, begins by rightly suggesting that many will ask "Why another book on Presley?" The answer is that he is Elvis' step-brother, 20 years younger than Elvis who was converted two months after the death of Elvis. Today, he is an evangelist conducting crusades across Europe and North America. He wrote this book to describe the circumstances of Elvis' life: an over-protective mother, roots in a Pentecostal Church, a gift for music and a manager who was determined to make as much money out of the Elvis legend as was possible.

Stanley tells of the poverty and emotional dramas of the Presley household in Mississippi. He records the meteoric rise of Elvis to stardom and his subsequent wildly extravagant lifestyle; his many relationships and his fairy-tale marriage to Priscilla.

Throughout the story is interwoven the relationship of this family to the local Assembly of God church and questions of faith. Stanley believes that in spite of all the inconsistencies of Elvis' life, that Elvis had an undergirding faith; Stanley believes that Elvis would have wanted him to write this book to warn others not to make the mistakes he had made.

A good book to give to Elvis fans; it would help anyone face up to the reality of our accountability before God.

—Barry Jenkins.

### The Genetic Revolution

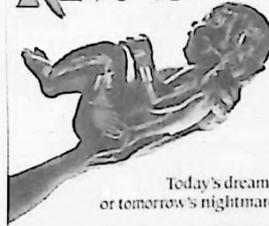
by Dr Patrick Dixon (Kingsway Publications) \$12.95

This is a timely publication. Genetic engineering is a subject which some of us may have vague ideas about but which has not yet affected our lives in a way demanding our attention. Well it's going to! That we should give the subject our earnest attention before it is too late, is the thrust of Patrick Dixon's book.

Dr Patrick Dixon read medical sciences at King's College Cambridge with further training at Charing Cross Hospital. He is the founder and medical director of the international AIDS agency ACET (AIDS Care, Education and Training) and, in the course of his work, has followed closely the advances in gene technology

Dr PATRICK DIXON 

## The GENETIC REVOLUTION



made over the last few years.

The book makes frightening reading. Not many of us will feel comfortable when told that, "over 62,000 animals with new genetic code were born in British laboratories in 1991 alone", and that by the end of the decade "every home will contain substances or living organisms resulting from genetic engineering".

Genetically engineered bacteria can be used to produce hormones to drive the bodies of animals as hard as they can go, for maximum profit. Already, in Britain, housewives have unwittingly bought bread for their families which was made using yeast which had been

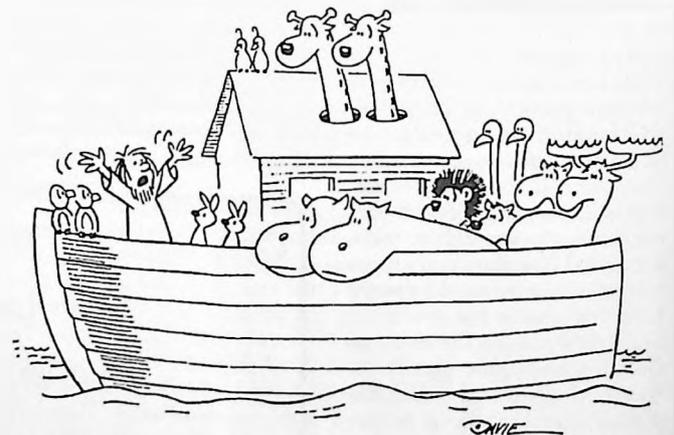
genetically modified to make the bread rise more quickly; milk which has been experimentally produced using gene technology has been sold through dairies. The profits commercial enterprises stand to make from genetic engineering are enormous.

The first part of the book is given over to explaining what scientists can now do, and to what uses, medical and agricultural, the new technology can be put. No moral judgements are made at this point. The facts are set out in short sections with helpful paragraph headings in bold type making it easy to find one's way around the complex information.

In later chapters Patrick Dixon raises the moral and ethical issues which have to be faced. In Chapter 11 he proposes a 10 point Gene Charter which governments could establish to control the technology. The Christian Medical Fellowship's submission to the British Medical Association on genetic engineering is included as an appendix, a comprehensive glossary of medical terms is given, a list of useful addresses, a good index, a bibliography for further reading, and copious notes on the text.

There are benefits to be obtained from the technology but also grave and often unknown dangers. Considering that the author knows his field and states that "the gene revolution is the most powerful scientific revolution in the history of human discovery, with the power to change every aspect of our lives, and even to change irreversibly the nature of human life itself", it is clear that Christians have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with the subject.

—Zillah Williams



"Good heavens, my wife! Has anybody seen my wife?!"

## People

### Mollie Chambers

#### In recognition

Mollie is 94 on 17 November this year, having been born at the turn of the century in Tasmania and coming to Melbourne to live in 1917.

In 1918, she joined the church, following baptism at the Surrey Hills Church of Christ.

She was married in 1921, returning to Tasmania to share that occasion with her family at the Margaret Street Church of Christ, Launceston.

In April 1921 she settled in East Coburg and in 1922 started her family. She was a long way from her own church at Surrey Hills, but, undeterred by distance and lack of transport, she walked the mile or so to the Moreland Church of Christ.

About 1922, she became aware of the Church of Christ tent mission in Bell Street, Coburg (soon to become the Coburg Church of Christ). She attended the Ladies' Guild at Coburg and spread her attendance between Moreland and Coburg.

She had a young husband on shift work and, as time ran on, three very young children born



over a span of three years, Jean, Ted and Betty. Yet with all this demand on her time and energies, she found the time to walk to church Sunday after Sunday wheeling her small children.

Her letter of transfer from Surrey Hills arrived in 1926.

She taught in the Bible School for many years in the 30s and was its treasurer for some of that time.

In those days she attended morning service, the Bible School and Evening Service, her children eventually also attending Christian Endeavour prior to church.

She is very proud and wonderfully supportive of her family which now includes 5 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren, all made in the same

Christian mould; and that in very large part due to her influence and direction.

Not only has she been substantive in attendance, she has been equally substantive in the active support she has given within the church. From time to time, quite unobtrusively, she has made clothes for the needy at the church; she has done craft work and donated the proceeds to the church, something she still does. In her more active days, she supported every special event. She was always there with a helping hand at Sunday School picnics, church socials, etc.

She is a keen student of the Bible, of which she has a very sound knowledge, and still regularly attends a small Bible study group, where she actively contributes and is recognised as an inspiration.

Moreover, she has carried her Christian commitment right through from the church to her whole way of life.

She has done innumerable works for charities and the needy. She was very active on the Women's Hospital Auxiliary for some 50 years, being awarded a life governorship.

She knitted scarves, socks, balaclavas and mittens for distribution through such chari-

ties as the Red Cross during the war.

She was an ARP Warden and studied first aid and home nursing with St John's; training which she has used in nursing and caring for sick relatives and friends at various times. She still actively supports Senior Citizens and such groups.

All of this she sees, and has seen, as her Christian duty—minding sick people and children—helping others.

Her active membership of the Church of Christ spans some 76 years. Her formal membership at the Coburg Church of Christ spans some 68 years. However, her actual association with the Coburg church, harking back to the tent mission, spans something in excess of 70 years. Approaching 94, she is our oldest currently attending member at Coburg.

Altogether this must be something of a record, if not within Churches of Christ overall, then within the Coburg Church of Christ.

At Coburg's 74th Anniversary service, Mollie's son-in-law, Dr Ern Aldred, paid tribute to her on behalf of the family, many of whom were in attendance. Don Milne, minister, made a presentation to Mollie from the church.

### Pat Greig

#### President-Elect for Vic-Tas Conference

Mrs Pat Greig a member at the Ringwood, Vic, church has been elected as the President-Elect for 1994-95.

Previously a teacher and now a psychologist by profession, Pat contributes significantly to a number of conference and local church activities through her work as Deputy Chairperson of the Department of Ministry, and as a part-time sessional lecturer at the Churches of Christ Theological College in Pastoral Care and Counseling. Pat also conducts numerous seminars and workshops with local churches and community groups in the areas of family and personal growth,

conflict resolution and stress management.

Pat has many hobbies and skills, particularly in the area of worship, craft, music and cooking and has been a regular organist and worship leader at Ringwood church, headed catering teams for church and private functions and participated in many and a wide range of group activities.

Pat has been married to Bruce for 28 years and they have a family of Stuart (married to Sharon), Cameron and Narelle. Her family background is solid Churches of Christ (almost "aristocracy"! particularly in South Australia) as her great-great-grandparents were Archibald and Marian (nee Lawrie) Greenshields who were among the very first pioneers



of Churches of Christ in Australia in the 1840s, following their arrival from Scotland.

Those of us who know Pat well are fully confident that she will serve our churches with ability and distinction and we look forward to her time as Conference President in 1995-96.

—Ian Allsop

### Eric T. Hart

#### Passed away

Late Wednesday night, 25 May, in Sydney, Eric passed away. His wife, Madge, predeceased him just 20 weeks earlier. Friends throughout the churches can rejoice that Eric suffers no more and has gone to his reward.

—Beverly Grenfell

[More on Eric will appear in a later issue.]

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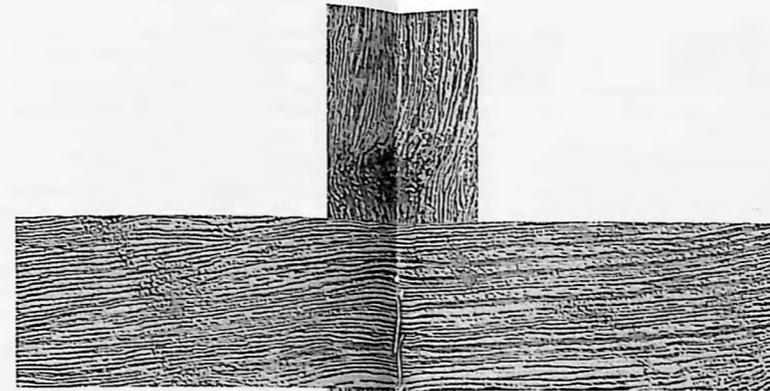
## OUR COMMITMENT

The Churches of Christ Theological college is committed to the task of preparing God's people for ministry and mission in a needy world.

As the college of the National Conference of Churches of Christ, we have a particular concern to provide committed and qualified leaders for our Australian Churches. We have a keen desire to work in close cooperation with local churches and Conference Departments. We also seek to meet the educational and training needs of those in the wider community. This is achieved by a balanced and broadly focussed program of ministerial formation and theological education provided by a highly qualified and dedicated faculty.

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The aim is to nurture our students so that they will become effective leaders within the church and the wider community whilst also being pastors who can provide meaningful and helpful care that meets the needs of the people to whom they minister.



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which authoritatively declares the story of God's revelation and challenges us to follow the way of Christ. We seek not only to interpret the Bible but also to allow the Bible to interpret us!

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to discover how people in other times and places have sought, and are seeking, to be Christian. From their experience, we gain new insights about our own attempts to follow Jesus as we ought.

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The college can only do its part well if it has the wholehearted support of the churches and their members.

The college values the churches that provide student church placements. It also appreciates the encouragement and support of ministers and others who serve as supervisors in the Supervised Field Education Program or who are members of Evaluation and Feedback Groups.

Individual church members and friends can also play a significant role in the development of our future ministers by "adopting" students and taking a personal interest in their development. People can offer their services to the college as volunteers, to assist in the library, in the kitchen, or with the maintenance of grounds and buildings.

Certainly the college is now in a stable financial position, but its future depends on the continued faithful financial support of churches and individuals. Regular gifts to the college ensure its ongoing operation. Bequests make scholarships and new initiatives possible.

*We are proud of the ministry of the college. It is worthy of your support. Please give generously to the Annual Appeal on June 5.*



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# Around the World in 96 Minutes

Viney Longthorp

**W**ell, not quite around all of the world—but to a selection of fascinating places which both delight and amaze. Even so, the newly released film *Baraka* is of such excellence that it gives one the feeling that we have seen all of the world that matters. In ninety-six stunning minutes, it presents a rich kaleidoscope of some of the most remarkable parts of this our home in space.

*Baraka* is an ancient Sufi word which may be variously translated "blessed", "breath" or "essence of life". This film by Ron Fricke and his team has been inspired by these several meanings. He succeeded; some people have described this film as a "riveting spiritual evocation of the oneness of mankind and nature; a visual and aural evocation of the energy and resilience of life's forces". They do not exaggerate; it is a magnificently edited and superbly scored opus—a wild-world tour, no less. The journey which Fricke's cameras give can never be duplicated on the small screen.

There is no commentary—this is not a jumped-up David Attenborough effort (No slight intended). This is storytelling without words, further evidence that as in all true art, it is by means of the unspoken whereby we so often encompass the deeper meanings.

The result is that *Baraka* is a film in a class of its own.

So then, where do we travel and what do we see and experience?

- There is an unforgettable avalanche of freezing mists on the slopes of the Himalayas, headed for Nepal.

- There are awesome and grotesque shapes worn into the ageless rocks in the Messa Verde of Colorado.

- The relentless torrents of the Iguca falls in Argentina almost makes one's eyes ache; millions of tons of water reshaping an entire landscape.

- We peer down a yawning volcanic crater, part of the great rift valley in Africa. Here is part of that nuclear powered massive heat engine which is literally moving mountains.

- Then there is the remote and wild Galapagos Islands. We have eye-to-eye contact with those strange forms of life which made such an impact on the thinking of Charles Darwin. It is easy to understand why.

Then, as Ronny Barker used to say, "There is much else besides." For people make up a large part of this film.

There are scenes which will make us feel good about our kind; others will make us want to weep.

- We witness an extraordinary "litany", by Kenya's Masai Mau people, of a symbolic battle using inchoate vocal sounds which resemble a cataract of pebbles, with a choreography which would test the skills of a Robert Helpmann.

- On the ghats of Varanasi, there is enacted a microcosm of life in India. Next to a partly cremated corpse, an old woman ritually bathes. A priest launches paper boats containing lighted candles on to the broad waters of the sacred Mother Ganga.

- In Calcutta, swarms of women and children compete with bulldozers and sacred cows to reclaim scraps of food in the rubbish tip.

- Piles of skulls and bones in a charnel house in Cambodia remind us of the penalties some political systems exact for not being politically correct.

- And one wonders how thousands of young workers

could maintain free souls in the tedium of making cigarettes by hand in a vast factory in Kediri, Indonesia.

One also appreciates the incurably religious nature of humanity; there are many images which inspire hope.

- The relentless energy of the faith of Islam is experienced in the whirlpool of believers encircling the Kaaba at Mecca.

- The views of the interior of Michelangelo's beautiful dome of St Peter's Rome is quite breathtaking. We also see in fine detail that very icon of the



Counter Reformation, Bernini's Altargroup, The Ecstasy of St Teresa in the Church of the Santa Maria della Vittoria, also in Rome. It is hard to deny its spiritual impact.

One of the most quotable of poets, Alexander

Pope, wrote: "The proper study of mankind is man."

In the secure world in which he lived he did not need to add, "Studied in the context of nature". But we must so study ourselves.

*Baraka* is a stimulus to such thinking. The images, at times quite claustrophobic, remind us that there are simply too many of us and that the natural order of things, water, soil, air and space itself, may no longer be able to cope. These same images also warn us that, in the last resort, nature has the last say. Thus we see the remains of the once mighty civilisations of Assyria and Egypt in their decay. Even more telling are the sights of the jungle reclaiming and slowly pulling to pieces the once mighty temples of Ankar Wat in Cambodia. To

use the words of another poet, T.S. Eliot, it may be a case of, "This is the way the world ends, Not with a bang, But a whimper."

Even so, the total impact of *Baraka* is not of a pessimistic, secular apocalypse. It is full of hope. For those of us in the Household of Faith, the following thoughts of Peter Marsten of the UCA Environmental Taskforce make a positive envoi: "The full implications of loving one's neighbour, as expounded in the New Testament, indicate that our responsibility for caring for the shared environment extends to the sacrifice of some freedoms in regard to exploitation of natural resources and our personal consumption. Since God's creation is for all generations—past, present and future—sustainability is an essential element of caring." ❖

**Baraka**  
Rated M  
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## Classifieds

### BIRTHS

**AVENT (BILLINGHAM)** Marina and Tony give thanks to God for the early but safe arrival of Isabelle Winsome Joy, born Sunday 15 May. A sister for Rowena and Phoebe.

**THURLOW (NEE HEAD)** Michael and Nola announce with happiness the birth of their daughter Emily Grace on 20 May 1994 at Wollongong NSW. God's precious gift.

### ENGAGEMENTS

**LOVE-PARSONS** Yvonne and John Love of Hornsby NSW have much pleasure in announcing the engagement of their eldest daughter Bronwyn to Haydn, youngest son of Heather and Brian Parsons of Ballarat Victoria.

**OLIVER-THIERRY** Joanne, youngest daughter of the late Roy Oliver and Mrs Lesley Oliver of Donvale,

and Andrew, fifth son of Mr and Mrs John Thierry of Geelong, together with their parents are pleased to announce their engagement. May God bless their lives together. Please send all letters/cards c/o 15 Pisces Court, Donvale 3111.

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## Christian Reflection

# Grace

Dennis Ryle

Grace is a funny thing—it sneaks up on you when you least expect it. This is disconcerting for someone who likes to respond to life's experiences from a logical, rational stance. Faith, after all, is primarily rational, is it not? Do we not submit ourselves to baptism only after an orderly study of the responsibilities and privileges of discipleship? Did not discipleship attract us on the basis of the reasonable nature of the claims of the gospel? Did we not learn that one of the marks of responsive discipleship was to "give reason for the hope that is in you?" Yes, coming to Christian faith is surely a rational process! And what better movement to be part of than the Restoration Movement, built on the logic of the Age of Enlightenment and an appeal to Christian practice as based on its primary documents, the texts of the New Testament?

Fortunately, life is not so orderly. It is full of paradox and contradictions. Every day we are confronted with the fact that

we are more than our minds. We are emotive, intuitive beings as well. It's through these faculties that we receive and interpret instances of grace.

Leonardo Boff, in *Liberating Grace*, asserts: "We can never talk about grace in itself because it shows up in this particular thing or that particular thing... Grace is not something isolated in itself that stands apart from other things. Grace is a mode of being that things take on when they come into contact with the love of God and are suffused with [God's] mystery. In that sense the whole world is related to grace."

The other Sunday night, just before the service began, I stood outside our little chapel hidden in the valley behind Aldgate. It was dusk and the night promised to be balmy. The crickets were chirping and the kookaburras were chuckling their way to their rest. The strains of the organ wafted from the chapel. It was a new tune learned that weekend at a convention that some present had

attended and the participants' enthusiasm was contagious. It was a moment of grace that caught me by surprise—inexplicable, indescribable—but the effect was the knowledge that one was in receipt of a prodigal gift from God, a gift that stretched far beyond and transcended the present moment.

Sentimental pietism? This charge would reveal a cold and withered cynic—an Ebenezer Scrooge of the human spirit.

The arresting fact is that there is nothing logical about grace—just as there is nothing rational

about the response of the generous, loving father in Jesus' story of the rude and wasteful son, whose older brother was the only one in the story who made a logical response.

Yet we can only name ourselves Christian by virtue of this illogical grace. Whether we embrace it primarily through reason, emotion, or intuition—or some combination—it is God's good grace that entices us to the passion of the cross, the joy of the resurrection and life in the embrace of the Spirit. ❖

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# Who Then is This?

Greg Elsdon

In Mark's Gospel, the story of Jesus stilling the storm on the Sea of Galilee is found at the end of a collection of parables about the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is coming, says Jesus, not as a cataclysmic interruption to history, but as a plant growing. To many it will appear weak and ineffectual, but to those who have the eyes of faith it will be perceived as a powerful and life-transforming reality. Its beginnings might be as a tiny seed, but its destiny is a plant which offers shelter to the birds of the air.

As readers of Mark's Gospel, we are challenged to view life in a new way and to value things according to new priorities. The Kingdom of God is mysterious and enigmatic—and therefore capable of transforming life. Things are not what they appear to be!

Mark tells us that at the end of a day's teaching, Jesus suggests to his disciples that they get into a boat and travel to the other side of the sea. Leaving the crowd behind, he goes with the disciples and sets out to the other side. Before long, they find themselves in the middle

of a life-threatening storm. Jesus' friends begin to fear for their lives.

What's Jesus doing? He's sound asleep on a cushion up the back of the boat. "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" the disciples ask. In response to their desperate cry Jesus wakes up and silences the raging storm. He then questions their faith while they stand there with their mouths open. "Who, then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:41)

As 20th century readers of this story, we must be reminded of the significance of this sea crossing. Jesus was not simply travelling from one side of a lake to another. He was actually crossing from Jewish territory into Gentile territory. This observation is critical for our understanding of the story. It is in the act of travelling with Jesus into Gentile territory that the disciples experience a life threatening storm.

It would appear that in telling this story, Mark is not merely interested in informing the reader about what happened once upon a time in the life of the historical Jesus. Sure,

he is interested in what Jesus actually said and did, but I suggest the primary reason he is interested in such matters is that he is convinced that this Jesus who once calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee is the same Jesus who now leads his community of faith.

In his reference to the calming of the storm, Mark alludes to the Old Testament tradition which portrays God as the Lord of creation who has ultimate control over all things—even the chaos of the storm and the danger of the unknown deep. (Exodus 14:21-31; Jonah 1:1-16)

The sea in general, and the waves of a storm in particular, are understood as symbols of evil and chaos which only God can control. This identification is seen in many places throughout the Old Testament but nowhere more frequently than in the Psalms. (see Psalms 65:7; 89:9; 104:5-9; 107:24-32)

In calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus is seen to be acting as only God can act. "Jesus' authority over the waters is startling proof that God is once again reigning over his creation. The Kingdom of God is here." (Frank Moloney) The Kingdom which Jesus inaugurates may be like a silently growing seed, but its power is undeniable.

Although Jesus' authority causes the storm to be still, the storm in the lives of the disciples continues to rage. Perceiving this, Jesus rebukes them. "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" (v. 40) The disciples are not destroyed by this experience. Despite their lack of faith they persist with their questioning—"Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (v. 41) From now on, they follow with new eyes.

The full significance of this stormy sea crossing cannot be fully grasped without reference to the story which follows.

(Mark 5:1-20) Upon arriving in Gentile territory, Jesus is encountered by a mad man whose misery and tormented life represent, in the most graphic way imaginable, the power of evil to destroy human life and community. Yet this unrestrained evil immediately recognises Jesus. The mad man in shackles and chains answers the question asked by the disciples after the stilling of the storm.

"Who then is this?", asked the Jewish disciples. "He is Jesus, Son of the Most High God", replied the demon possessed Gentile. This Kingdom which grows silently is full of surprises!

Mark tells the story of Jesus stilling the storm as a means of calling his community to faith in the risen Jesus who will continue to sustain them in the storms of life. As they follow the risen one into Gentile territory to face the forces of evil, there will be times when they are so overwhelmed they will fear for their very life. At times, it will be so bad they will even begin to wonder if Jesus cares about them at all. But they will discover that, when they cry out to Jesus, the storms which terrify them will be calmed.

In Mark's Gospel, the disciples are presented as very real and fallible people who are seeking to understand who Jesus is and what he wants them to do. They are full of questions and uncertainty. They misunderstand him, deny him and even betray him. Yet Jesus never deserts them.

The Gospel concludes with the account of the young man dressed in white directing three women to tell the disciples to go to Galilee where they will see the risen Jesus for themselves. Their life together as Lord and people will be full of storms. But in the midst of this turmoil they will learn to depend upon the saving presence of the risen one. The story continues ...

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## Reflection

# Reflections on a Ministry

Ted Keating

It has been a fascinating process to think back to where the Nunawading, Vic, church was 20 years ago. As a nervous and excited young man with a young family, about to engage in my first full-time pastoral ministry, I was confronted by what was regarded than as a large congregation. Little did they and I know that the marriage that began on 5 May 1974 would exceed a 20-year period.

How is the church different now to what it was then? There are approximately 150 more worshipping with us each Sunday. The car park is four times larger. The chapel capacity is 30% more and growth has not been due to attracting transfers from other Churches of Christ. (The Church of Christ "types" are now in a minority in the church.)

Instead of a few hours a week typing support, there is a full-time administrator. There is now a specialised and dedicated team of four full-time ministers, and one part-time instead of the one-and-a-half-day per week student. Instead of the "echo chamber" that used to be at the entrance of the chapel, there is now a large carpeted and comfortable foyer. Instead of children feeling that the had entered an alien environment, there are now attractive playgroup, creche and playground facilities. I thank God for the people who have made all of this happen.

The emphasis on adolescents and children as the main form of outreach has been broadened to focus on young families, singles and young adults. The result has been, despite the general ageing trend of the Nunawading area, a church that has lowered the average age of its worshippers during the last few years. Instead of the church attempting to be a community, it now recognises that it is a conglomeration of communities that meet at three different

times on a Sunday. Instead of the worship services being the traditional "churchy" experience, they have evolved into a time where the "person off the street" could walk in and feel comfortable.

Instead of people accusing the church of being unfriendly and cold, they now see a visit to our congregation as a warm, affirming experience.

Above all, in the early 1970s the church at Nunawading felt its best days had been and that decline was inevitable. Now there is a powerful confidence that the best days of the church are yet to be.

As the church has changed, so have I. I have been influenced by my colleagues on the ministry team, by the changing circumstances in society, by my colleagues in other large churches, by the encouragement of other Conference leaders, by the reading program that I have set myself and the life experiences that are involved in pastoral activity. The most important factor in change is the normal maturing process associated with experience.

There are probably many things that I would not do again and I could write a long list of mistakes that I have made. However, let me share some things I wish I had done sooner.

1. I wish I had read Lyle Schaller's writings on how a

large church behaves and how it should be administered. That would have saved a lot of frustrations.

2. I wish I had realised soon that St Paul did not write the hymn book.

3. I wish I had realised sooner that the development of a small group ministry was a positive means of assimilation and outreach.

4. I wish I had realised sooner that a team ministry functions best when each person is given a separate, specific task and that most of these tasks have an outreach aspect.

5. I wish that somebody had told me that disagreement with my ideas was not an issue to be taken personally.

6. You learn that it is good to let go tasks that you think you may excel at without being threatened.

7. I wish that I had encouraged the church board to visit and investigate other models of developing churches sooner than what we did.

8. I wish I had cut back sooner on heavy Brotherhood involvement.

9. I wish I had realised sooner that an amalgamation of two churches works best when both sell up and resite together.

There are some things that I would do again.

1. In 1974, we declared our intention to maintain a focus

on those who do not attend a church.

2. We did not allow the "can't be done", "we've done it before", or the "let's consolidate" attitudes set the pace.

3. I am glad we thought our way around a plateau that affected our church in the mid-80s and did not allow the fact that we are situated in the fourth highest area of population decline in Victoria set the agenda for our church.

4. I am glad I assumed that a congregation would support exciting projects of development and outreach.

5. I am glad I listened to my own family's reaction to worship, music and preaching.

6. I am glad I married the woman who has been so patient with my lifestyle.

Finally, I am glad that the other ministers who were invited to the then Blackburn Church of Christ in the early 1970s refused the invitation, because their refusal gave me the opportunity to serve God in a stimulating and exciting church that has not been easy to leave. ❖

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## Comment

# "It Happens in the Church"

Jenni Ashton

**T**he facial bruising is subsiding now, but the broken, crushed bones will need more surgery before they heal. Even then, Mrs Smith's leg will never be the same, but then again, neither will Mrs Smith.

It was the first time, but no one knows if it will be the last. "Another case of domestic violence", I hear you sigh, as you tell yourself you've heard it all before. She must have nagged him; he must have been drunk; I'm sure he's sorry now.

No, Mrs Smith didn't nag her husband. In fact she worked hard for many years to embody her church's biblical teachings on the need for a woman's sub-

mission and obedience to her husband. All Mrs Smith requested on this particular occasion was that her husband talk to her instead of yell.

No, Mr Smith wasn't drunk either, although obviously incensed with anger.

And yes, Mr Smith says he's sorry now. But he is temporarily unavailable, so as to avoid a restraining order and has already sought legal advice about avoiding possible punishment.

So where has Mr Smith gone? He has gone to his church where he is a well-respected and valued leader. Mr Smith's church are now praying for the well being of his wife who is ill in hospital. What this well-mean-

ing and caring church don't realise is that the real reason they are praying for Mrs Smith is that Mr Smith beat her into an almost unrecognisable state. The church have rallied around to help Mr Smith while his wife is "ill". Serving him meals, accommodating him and generally insuring he is well looked after and supported. Meanwhile, Mrs Smith is not able to have any visitors and is making plans to go into hiding when discharged from hospital.

Mrs Smith is not the first abused church woman I have encountered in my short three years of ministry, and I am deeply concerned that she won't be the last. I am also more

than deeply concerned by the frequency with which I am reminded by many Christian people that the sort of thing doesn't happen in the church.

How many times does it need to happen before we open our eyes and confront this disgraceful reality for what it is. How many times before we acknowledge that it actually happens in the church? ❖

(Names have been changed to protect people's identity.) *Jenni Ashton is the full-time chaplain at Bethesda Hospital, Claremont, WA. Bethesda is an "A" class Christian private hospital which is owned and run by the Churches of Christ in WA.*

## Marsden

# Pentecost Power

Neil Marsden

**O**n the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was given to the Apostles, the church really began to grow. The Holy Spirit appeared as tongues of flame (certainly a dramatic entrance!) and enabled the Apostles to spread the word of God in languages of people from all over the world.

God demonstrated then, since, and even now, that no power on earth can stand in the way of his people when they are energised by him and move forward with desire to do his will.

The Holy Spirit is God's gift for his people. The Holy Spirit lives inside us, he empowers, strengthens and provides for us.

Our deepest secrets are known to him, our darkest fears are held close to him. All our thoughts, dreams, desires, goals, inadequacies, sins and

failures are all known, understood, accepted and cared for. Each aspect of us is dear and special to the Holy Spirit which personally administers to each one—if we join with him in faith and accept his power.

Through the dramatic reshaping of our lives (which can be a long process) we become more and more obedient to God, more Christ-like.

We grow in love and compassion, and our own personal evangelical missions become more and more important as we reach out to others for God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit can help us, mould us, lead us and empower us. If we let him.

He is our confidant, disciplinarian, parent, adviser, helper, beloved, strength, counsellor, power, brother, Lord, God and Master.

All that we were, all that we are and all that we can be are in his hands, as he is on our hearts.

Our faith, trust and love should be strong and sure, for God is not just a native guide—he's the Creator!

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# Knock, Knock! Come In! (Part 1)

Adrian van Leen

**2** John: 10-11 has been used to disallow members of cultic groups from entering one's home. While there may be many good reasons for not inviting cult members inside, such as immaturity and uncertainty of one's faith, this passage has nothing to do with briefly inviting a cult member inside to discuss matters of faith.

The context of 2 John indicates that the house referred to is not a family home, but rather a church fellowship.

To allow heretics who had left the fellowship to come back in could cause real problems and damage. Furthermore, eastern hospitality is far more than a "ten-minute cup of tea" sharing time. Eastern hospitality involved acceptance, identification, protection and more, and could last for a very long time.

In addition, to apply verses 10 and 11 literally to all those who do not abide in the doctrine of Christ would mean that we could not allow any of our non-Christian family, relatives or friends into our home.

Such a view is not consistent with the total teaching of Scripture.

When religious callers come visiting it is usually at the wrong time (in the middle of mowing the lawn, baking a cake, bathing the baby, etc) and you are not ready for them.

There is no fixed formula for witnessing to members of contemporary religious movements, such as cults, the occult and extreme religious fringe groups, or even people from other world's religions, but the following suggested points will be helpful:

You need to:

**1. Have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.** You have no right to try and persuade others that their faith is faulty if you are not really right with God yourself.

You need to have a better alternative to offer the cult member. As someone once stated: "It never pays to advertise, unless you've got the goods!" It is important that your own relationship with the Lord is constantly growing in love and depth.

**2. Have a working understanding of the Bible.** This does not mean that you must memorise a whole lot of Bible verses to fire back at the cult member. A Bible-bullet competition, to see who can shoot the other down with the most Bible verses, is not an effective way to witness. No one wins such a battle.

The cults quote Bible verses out of context. As Christians we should avoid falling into the same trap.

Your Bible is a tool. Use it when appropriate. Use it well. become familiar with it. Highlight, mark, underline relevant passages, make note in the margins. Read large portions in context. It is far better to locate a passage in context because you have a general idea of where to find it, than to feel guilty and frustrated because you can't remember chapter and verse. The Apostle Paul wasn't worried about that. More than once we can read comments from him like, "It says somewhere...", and then Paul starts quoting.

**3. Become adequately informed about the cult.** You must be prepared to do some homework if you want to witness effectively. You cannot approach someone else with the attitude of: "I don't know what you believe, but I know it's wrong, and I'm going to tell you the truth!"

Nor can you tell another person that what he or she believes is incorrect. We cannot get into the minds of others to fully know what they think or believe personally. You can tell them what you believe their church or group believes and

ask if they also believe that, provided that you have done your homework.

You need to be aware that most cultic groups use Christian sounding jargon and terminology that sounds familiar and acceptable to most Christians.

What cultists generally don't tell you is that their group had virtually rewritten the dictionary (and usually the average member is not even aware of this). What they say may sound Christian, but it usually isn't.

Therefore, you need to know about the group's major teachings and the way it will probably misuse and misinterpret the Scriptures. A sound knowledge of a group's teaching and background can ensure that witnessing is done in an informed and intelligent way.

**4. Be motivated by love.** A desire to witness to members of cultic groups should be based on a deep concern for the needs and welfare of others. People have the right to join any religious group and accept any religious teaching. But the discovery that, what was thought to be the truth of God, was nothing less than distorting and deception is a painful and damaging experience. Love wants what is best for others—including wanting others to find spiritual truth.

Wanting to hit back at a cultic group because of frustrations and hurts caused by the group will only lead to greater frustration and probably a poor witness for Christ.

If you have an axe to grind, your actions will only bring hurt, instead of healing and truth.

There is also no place for arrogance in witnessing. Merely wanting to prove how wrong others are, and how correct you are, is not good motivation for witnessing.

❖ **Adrian is Director of Concerned Christian Growth Ministries, WA.**

## International

### Freedom Scarce

Countries with total religious freedom are in the minority, reports Christian Solidarity International. An investigation by this human rights organisation revealed that in 53 out of 153 countries, there was little hindrance to basic religious freedoms, while in 41 countries religious minorities are severely harassed.

### Cult Critic Killed

Tak Myong-hwan (56), an outspoken critic of Korea's many cults, was beaten and stabbed to death outside his apartment in Seoul in February. He had received many death threats and had been injured over 70 times. As director of the International Religious Research Institute, he was active in exposing the bizarre practices of pseudo-Christian sects. There are about 350 pseudo-religious groups in Korea, mostly with Christian affiliations, with some 2 million counted as followers.

### Iraqi New Testaments

5,000 copies of the New Testament in modern Arabic, known as the Good News Version, have been printed in Baghdad, Iraq, to make the Scriptures more available to Iraqi Christians. The publication is the result of several years of contacts between the Bible Societies in the Middle East and the churches and authorities in Iraq, combined with the initiative and support of "Life Agape". A further print run of 5,000 New Testaments will take place shortly.

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## Obituaries

Obituaries are limited to 100 words

### Elliott, Fred H.

(30.4.94) Le Pine's Chapel at East Kew, Vic, was well filled to pay tribute to Fred. April 1923 saw Fred at the tent mission, East Kew, where he enjoyed the songs led by Les Brooker. He became a regular attender and joined the church. He was soon into work as Sunday School secretary and superintendent, leader of youth groups and family camps, on Officers' Board as deacon and elder, positions which he held for many years, finally to be made Elder Emeritus. On 21 September 1929, Fred married Doris. Together they worked in all areas of church fellowship for most of East Kew's 70 years. He was keen on outreach and in 1951 helped start the North Balwyn church. Sympathy is expressed to his wife Doris, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Fred will be missed by many. The service was conducted by Mal Giezen-danner.

—C.J. Pope

### Elston, Mrs Elva

(29.3.94) Mrs Elva Elston passed away after a long period of indiffer-

ent health. As a very young woman, Elva Coleman was a foundation member of the Hamilton Church and an organist of the church in those early years where services were held in Mrs Hider's home of Locherbie, Collins Street. Mrs Elston taught Sunday school during the war years and was a member of the Mission Band, which was later known as the Christian Women's Fellowship. The Church's sympathy has been extended to her husband, Bob; her son, John, and family; her sister, Mrs Hazel Butcher and brother-in-law, Oscar Marchant.

—Tom J. Trimmell

### Kenny, Mrs Verna

(10.4.94) Mrs Verna Kenny passed away after what seemed like a short period of heart problems. The church was shocked at the sudden and tragic loss of a wonderfully committed Christian, whose total support for the church, its members and auxiliaries will be missed for many years to come. Words cannot express what we feel at her passing. Her work on the monthly church stalls was tremendous, the other stall workers will miss her terribly and the customers from the

## Personal

community have, by their enquiries, missed her also. Verna's forthrightness has touched all of us, her humour and laughter were infectious, and her love, caring and prayers directed at us all constantly, will be our greatest loss, while Heaven has gained a wonderful Lady. The sympathy of the church has been extended to her husband, Bill senior; her family, Bill and Faye; Kerry and John and Alister and the grandchildren

—Tom J. Trimmell

and Clive Hill, Red Hill, Vic • Helga Limpert and Mark Jacobs, Goolwa, SA

## Deaths

•Joyce Wardle, Anne Smith, Keith Brooks, Dandenong, Vic •Fred-erick Armitage, Lyons, ACT •Arthur Lewis, Maidstone, Vic •Ed Roffey, Keith Omeara, Keith Williams, Mitcham, Vic •Mrs Kate Hood, Mrs Selby, Warracknabeal/Brim, Vic

## Changes

**ASHWORTH: Maurice and Jan**—Lot 61 Princess Rd, Mt Helena WA 6082. Phone (09) 570 1707.

**PENDLE HILL:** All correspondence now to 101 Pendle Way, Pendle Hill NSW 2145. (Church now longer has Post Office Box). **KEATING: Ted & Marge**—Wolongong Church of Christ, O'Briens Road, Figtree NSW 2525. Phone (042) 26 5022. Fax (042) 28 3828.

**SPRINGVALE: John Carmichael**—32 Armistan Crescent, Chelsea Heights Vic 3196. Phone (03) 776 2070.

## Baptisms

•Sarah Connor, Tammy Collier, Jason Wyatt, Bendigo, Vic •Carole Briggs, Belconnen, ACT •Margaret Johnson, Dean Cartmel, Mornington, Vic •Heidi McFarlin, Mitcham, Vic •Mabel Walters, Twyford St, Bundaberg •Joanne Eamens, Keith Wilson, Tony & Michelle Walters, Launceston, Tas •Dulcie Williams, Ulverstone, Tas

## Marriages

•Lisa Sharwood and Craig Brough, Dandenong, Vic •Marion Edwards

### Churches of Christ in Qld Social Service Department Director of Nursing Golden Age Retirement Village—Gold Coast

Due to the retirement of the present Director of Nursing, applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for the position of Director of Nursing at Golden Age Retirement Village. The nursing home has 44 nursing home beds and is part of a complete residential care complex. Golden Age will give preference to a committed Christian with experience in our kind of facility at a senior management level, preferably as a Director of Nursing. An applicant with Gerontic Nursing Certificate or other relevant post-registration qualifications would also be favourably considered.

The Director of Nursing reports to the Administrator and is responsible for all aspects of management and care at this Nursing Home, including residents' quality of life, nursing standards, staff selection and development. Salary and Conditions are in accordance with the current Nurses Award.

Applications marked **CONFIDENTIAL** should give full details of qualifications and experience, include three (3) referees, and be addressed to:

The Administrator  
Golden Age Retirement Village  
60 Ridgeway Avenue  
Southport Qld 4215

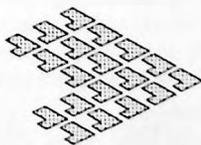
Further information can be obtained from the Administrator on (075) 32 6322  
**Applications close on Friday 24 June, 1994**

## HAMBURG—ICYC

If you are planning to attend the International Christian Youth Congress on Evangelism



in Hamburg from 2-9 August 1994, you could be interested in a KLM/IFAM subsidised package (including conference costs) Melbourne-Hamburg-Melbourne for \$2,650. Organised by the World Methodist Council World Evangelism Committee.



baptism representative  
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Ask for Geoff Glover

# Church News

## Vic

**BENDIGO (John Sweetman)** Bill Sutcliffe (Prison Fellowship) recent speaker ... Palm Sunday, Suds item "Hosanna" at 9.30 service. 10.45 service Short St Singers "Easter Reflections" ... Gold Miners Gang end of term parade ... Combined Good Friday & Easter Sunday Sunrise service well attended ... "Laurie and the Truck Drivers" items at countdown to commitment service ... 3 baptisms ... 8 new members ... Dedication of elders, deacons & deaconesses ... Church participated in "Positive Family Life" week 3-7 May with Baptist, Holy Trinity & Uniting... Excellent attendance at joint Presidents' reception.

**BELLARINE PENINSULA (Glen Stibbe)** Easter Services: Good Friday combined with Uniting Church. Easter Sunday Dawn Service at lookout with all Ocean Grove churches, then 11 am service. All well attended ... Some members ill ... Bill & Nancy overseas for six months ... Bible study & house church at manse going well ... Spirits high, rejoicing that Glen & Betty Stibbe accepted extension of term for another two years ... Church anniversary 19 June ... Men took service & gave ladies morning tea for Mother's Day ... Amity group restarted.

**DANDENONG (D. Akesson, R. May)** 10 February induction service for Ruth May & David Akesson led by elders, BYO lunch followed ... 6 members cooked barbie for CCTC garden party 5 March ... 5 youth services planned for 1994 ... 120 attended breakfast 1 May with 140 at 10 am worship. Puppetry

and King's Kids and Sundayschool items made a great outreach into local community.

**MORNINGTON (Ian Cartmel)** Rejoicing at commitment made by Kerrie Carter, Margaret Johnson & Dean Cartmel. Margaret & Dean baptised. ... Four session Parenting Program conducted by Harvey Miller ... Women held successful fashion parade, many friends present ... 50 young people in Sunday youth classes ... Men's & Women's Choirs enjoying ministry ... Building fund launched ... Local hospital visits to new babies & mums very rewarding.

**MAIDSTONE (A. McMillan)** Well attended VWCC coffee morning. Mrs Carol Richardson interesting speaker ... CWF raised \$269 at mini fete ... Explorers Red Faces evening raised money for Murray Marathon ... 8 members involved in CRE at two state schools ... Praying for several sick people ... Church saddened by home call of Arthur Lewis. Christian sympathy to Joyce & family.

**MITCHAM (Mark Butler)** Fellowship enjoyed at progressive dinner & church family barbecue ... Number of groups cater for wide range of ages ... Kevin Heinze speaker at Retired Men's Group ... \$400 outreach gifts to Christian Blind Mission, Federal Aborigines Board, COCOA & Care Australia ... Cake stall raised \$1,300 ... Inspiring service of celebration & dedication of church extensions ... Church saddened by sudden deaths of Ed Roffey, Keith Omeara & Keith Williams.

**NORTHCOTE (F.B. Alcorn)** Minister attended Australasian Drug Council Conference, Sydney, VBC

student Alan Coker speaker for services ... Week of Prayer Thursday evening service at Northcote ... Represented at ecumenical Pentecost Service at Thornbury Salvation Army ... Special offering for World Vision & SPC plan for Bosnia ... Ivy Bansund returns from long period of ill-health ... Lil Nation held CWF coffee morning \$125 for funds.

**RED HILL (Bruce Butler)** Marion Edwards & Clive Hill married Easter Sunday ... Lynette Leach spoke on Positive Parenting, took Sunday am service & conducted Children's Ministry workshop ... Bible studies recommenced ... Church fellowship dinners in 6 homes ... Shirley Daff, David Holmes & Daniel Laing recuperating ... Box Hill POL visited for weekend ... Conference sessions attended ... Connie Pigdon celebrated 80th birthday & Jack & Valda Henley celebrated 40th wedding anniversary.

**WEST PRESTON (Chris Field)** Members served on platform CWF Sunday, Vivienne Burns speaker ... Recent visit to Fred Combridge Home to celebrate May hart's 95th birthday. Enjoyed harmony from Daniel Field & Kay Twining with

Dulcie Gray & Betty Howitt (Oakover Choir) ... Organisers, Janet Johansen & Murette Hennessy, realised excellent results from their "Ye Olde Country Faire".

**CAULFIELD (John Patriki)** 74th anniversary 15 May, Gordon Stirling guest speaker. Good time of fellowship with past & present members. Followed by lunch ... Buzz Fellowship now Thursday evenings 8 pm. Interesting slide night by Ted Terry.

**SWAN HILL (Lindsay Mayes, Graeme Sonsle)** Dennis Prince (Murray Heart Missions) speaker am 22 May, Noelene, his wife, led worship at 10.30 am ... Combined churches service Pentecost Sunday evening ... Betty Sonsie recovering from surgery ... Boort Baptist youth group visited for evening service 29 May ... Lindsay Mayes concludes 12-year ministry end 1994 ... 9 small groups meeting weekly.

**SHEPPARTON (Robert Hough)** Dedication service held for Keely & Tegan Muntz & Kelly Selby ... Mobile Mission Maintenance led service 17 April ... CWA held church parade 1 May ... 14 members attended N/E Riverina Convention at



## SWANSTON STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

Melbourne  
(cnr Swanston & Little Lonsdale Streets)

### Sunday

9.00 a.m. & 11 a.m.

Worship & Communion Services

7.00 p.m.

Gospel Celebration

### Wednesday

1.15-1.45 p.m.

Lunchtime Service

For further enquiries, please ring (03) 663 3884

## House Parents Required

Exciting new venture in Geelong  
Opening 1 August 1994

A Christ-centred house for  
hurting people

For expressions of interest, please  
write to:

Pastor Rick Wright  
163 Church Street  
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The Rev'd Charles M. Bailey (Director)  
Phone (03) 428 6060

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# Church News

Albury ... Youth Service 15 May ... Ian Allsop spoke at "Service of Reconciliation" for Week of Prayer for Reconciliation & the Aboriginal Council.

**WARRACKNABEAL/BRIM (Kevin Luttrell)** Churches saddened by passing of Mrs Kate Hood & Mrs Selby ... Church camp in April, time of refreshment & blessing ... Brim: continuing studies "People Caring for People"—some great new ideas; looking forward to centenary celebration 11 September ... Warracknabeal continuing video series "Discovering Jesus" ... Stephanie & Aaron Luttrell led service 15 May ... Covenant Players in Growing Together service Brim 22 May.

## SA

**DULWICH/ROSE PARK (C. Harris, J.A. Fulton)** Church congratulated two who won arts degrees at Adelaide Uni—Joan Allan & Chris Bright ... Recent guest preachers were David Brooker (State Minister) & Roger Brown ... Church picnic Adelaide Cup Day at Neil and Betty Bright's home, Port Noarlunga, great success ... Pleasant Sunday Afternoon concert in church by Kensington/Norwood Symphony Orchestra.

**HAPPY VALLEY (Russell Allison)** Catering committee donated \$100 to 50+ group towards bowls mats ... Ecumenical service at local Anglican church ... "Coping With Grief" seminar by Harold Jones well attended ... 12 basketball teams entered in C of C winter competition ... Progressive dinner & golf day organised by social committee.

**PORT LINCOLN** Worship services & fellowship lunches continuing led by Brian Anthony & Trudi Childs & visiting speakers ... Fellowship afternoons monthly, Kid's Club weekly & services at Old Folks' Home fortnightly as outreach ...

Good attendance at Harvest Thanksgiving, Graham Burgan (Whyalla) speaker ... "Thank Offering" displayed and later given to OARS & women's shelter ... Young woman baptised by Max Westphal (Tumby Bay), ... Ted Bain & Thema Nancarrow ill ... Jumble sale planned at end May.

**GOOLWA (Roger Risson)** Rodney Maud, South Africa, spoke of life in home country ... Quiz night as fund raiser for church bus repairs ... Marj Dredge (Conference President) & David Brooker (State Minister) recent speakers ... All Goolwa churches shared fellowship & meal Pentecost Sunday where food donations offered to south coast church community care.

## WA

**EASTERN HILLS (Maurie Ashworth)** Sunday school attended river cruise & rally at Point Walter ... Barbecue night at the church attracted 30+ members & guests ... Guest speakers included Hans Bohm (CBMI), Bruce & Carolyn Axtens (Wycliffe) ... Pastor and family moved into new house ... Welcome to new members Robert & Sarah Nawalowalo, William & Thea Barnsley ... Mother's Day dinner biggest yet, 70+ attended.

**APPLECROSS (Sean Bainbridge)** Marriage renewal and enrichment seminar planned for 17-18 June. Great interest expressed ... Indonesian Family Church now sharing facilities, welcomed to church 1 May ... Recent guest speakers: John Richardson, Chas Osborne, Peter Miller, Ron Gething ... Small group attended hiking camp 13-15 May ... Sean addressed "Inner Wheel" service on "Celebrating the Family" ... Max and Margaret Stevenson welcomed into fellowship.

**ALBANY (John Spencer)** Congratulations to Grant & Nadine

Stone on safe arrival of third child, Rebekah Lee and to Justine Giles on receiving nursing degree ... Prayer chain reorganised & re-established ... Youth group for high school age commenced in May ... John & Heather Spencer spent two weeks holiday at Yallingup.

**MAYLANDS (Robert Drown)** Minister on holidays. Relief preachers Roger Ellem (Compassion), Robert Taylor (Churches of Christ Homes), Ron Jones & Mark Heinrich. George Eaves brought the Mother's Day Address ... Congratulations Debbie and Geoff Bryan on arrival of baby Ian. Special bouquet presented to Debbie—youngest mother ... Ladies from regional churches attended meeting hosted by Women's Ministries—Connie Eaves leader & Margaret Kirby speaker ... Kerry Crockford presented 2-part organ recital at recent evening meeting.

## Qld

**REDCLIFFE (Adrian Risson)** Successful CWF Russian Night raised \$560, enabling 112 Bibles to be sent to Russia ... Mystery coach tour of Brisbane ... Mother's Day evening meal hosted by men, followed by gospel service with presentations by Bible School and Choir ... Gospel services well supported ... Four recent baptisms ... One decision and rededication ... Rissons' term extended by five years ... Church saddened by the recent passing of two long standing members—Win Poole & Ernie Bruce.

**WYNNUM (Charles Cole)** Good attendances at special services at Easter & Mother's Day, QCWA church parade & "Crossroads" ... G. Warne, KCC vice-principal conducted seminars on "reading" & "presiding at the lord's table", 15 May. Good participation from Wynnum & Eagleby ... Church provides services of KCC student to assist at Eagleby pm Sundays ... Wynnum brethren regularly preach and conduct bible study at Eagleby as outreach ... "Open Door" social and craft group attract interest from

community ... Tuesday morning bible study & prayer group well attended.

**TWYFORD ST, BUNDABERG (Paul Scully)** Allan Cossgrove shared in a "motivational" weekend with church & leadership ... Neville Trebbin helping Paul Scully with pastoral ministry to isolated ... Shared in centenary celebrations of South Sea Evangelical Church (Solomon Island & PNG) ... 350 at barbecue catered by Barbara Cook ... Susan Stringer engaged to Daren Bundesen & Adrian Toft engaged to Elisa Trebbin.

**PINE RIVERS (Neale Proellocks, Wayne Kirk, Alan Hermann)** "Rom in May" theme of Labour Day church picnic. Mystery destination Mary Cairns Cross Park. 120 shared enjoyable day, highlight was tug-a-war between home groups ... Missionary weekend 15 May, guest speaker Adrian Risson ... 40 men enjoyed guided tour of international airport under construction.

## Tas

**LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, D. Tobler)** Two evening baptisms 15 May ... State Youth Camping Forum at Ross 21 May ... Alanna Jansen selected for Tas team for Special Olympics ... Colin & Leonie Cripps on 3 month North Qld trip ... Lindsay & Betty Masters on Israel & Greece trip ... Les Filgate in hospital ... Two morning baptisms 22 May. **ULVERSTONE (Tom & Ruth Edge)** Easter services "The Passion Week in Drama" "The Resurrection" well attended ... Family camp April long weekend at Rocky Cape, 18 adults, 28 children—32 church attendance ... Special at 6 speaker Linc Raynor SU ... 6 May Pearl Spicer 90th birthday ... Tom & Ruth Edge attended Bible Society 175th Celebration Dinner, Hobart ... Mother's Night 10 May, fashion parade, 70 attended ... Women's Learn & Share well attended ... Inter-church celebration 22 May, Robert Coleman speaker.

### Lyons Church of Christ, ACT invites expression of interest for the full-time position of minister.

The Lyons congregation worships at a complex close to Woden Town Centre, a large business and shopping centre located near the geographical centre of Canberra. Those who worship at Lyons cover the full spectrum of age groups. We seek someone to work with a committed Eldership and Board who will provide enthusiastic support, encouragement and leadership. For further information, in strictest confidence, please contact:

Ray Swift  
34 Yiman Street  
Waramanga ACT 2611  
Phone (06) 288 2050 (home)  
(06) 285 1344 (business)

### Chaplains—Country Secondary Schools

The Council for Christian Education in Schools invites enquiries from persons interested in serving as School Chaplains in Victorian country areas. Vacancies exist from July 1994 or from January 1995. Theological and/or teaching qualifications and experience in pastoral ministry an advantage. Enquirers by telephone should ask for Adele. Written expressions of interest should be to:

The Chaplaincy Manager, CCES  
3rd Floor, 377 Lt Lonsdale St  
Melbourne 3000  
Telephone (03) 602 1993. Fax (03) 642 0634



# National Ecumenical Restructure

## Preparing for a new National Council

Tens of thousands of Christians across Australia are sharing in the preparation of the inauguration of Australia's new national ecumenical council, the **National Council of Churches in Australia**. The NCCA will be inaugurated at a nationally televised service in St Christopher's Catholic Cathedral in Canberra on Sunday night, 3 July.

The service will bring the curtain down on the **Australian Council of Churches**, 50 years almost to the day since a national federation of churches was first proposed by a meeting of church leaders in Sydney in July 1944. The ACC was formed two years later.

Embracing the Catholic Church (Latin and Eastern rites), Anglican, Uniting and seven Orthodox Churches, the Churches of Christ, Salvation Army and the Religious Society of Friends, the NCCA will represent about 85% of Australia's Christians—87% if the Lutherans come aboard.

Congregations have been invited to focus on each of the member churches during the eight Sundays from the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (15–22 May) to 3 July. Local Christians are covering the lead-up phase with prayer and exploring new local inter-church initiatives.

Lutherans across Australia have begun voting on whether their church should become a founding member

of the new council. A two-thirds majority vote is needed to bring the church in.

For two days following the inauguration, about 100 church leaders and representatives will attend the NCCA's first biennial **National Forum**, establishing priorities and policies to set the new council on its course.

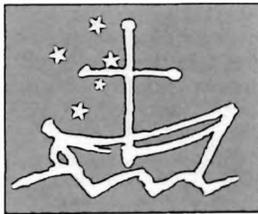
The forum will elect the first Executive, of up to 34 persons, which then will choose the first President. The forum also will appoint a General Secretary.

David Gill (General secretary of the ACC) said the Australian Council of Churches' existing commissions and working groups would lapse and the forum would determine the NCCA's structure.

The NCCA working group was strongly recommending that at least three agencies be established—to cover faith and order, Aboriginal and Islander concerns and world humanitarian relief and development.

"There are other areas which the ACC has worked on—such as mission, youth, women and international affairs—but it is up to the member churches to decide what they want to do together through their new council and what their priorities are for action," David Gill said.

The inaugural service will be broadcast on ABC-TV on 3 July at 10.30 pm, and will be repeated on 10 July at 11.00 am.



NATIONAL  
COUNCIL OF  
CHURCHES IN  
AUSTRALIA

# The Last Word

The best way to revive a church is to build a fire in the pulpit.

—Dwight L. Moody

What do you get if you light a duck's tail? A firequacker.

★★★★★

Customer: "Waiter, I don't see any chocolate cake on this menu?"

Waiter: "No, I've wiped it off."

★★★★★

After the flood, Noah let all the animals go, admonishing them: "Go forth and multiply, and fill the earth." But when he made his final inspection tour, he found two snakes coiled up in the corner. He asked them why they were still there. "We can't go," one of them said. "We are adders."

★★★★★

An atheist challenged the preacher about whether he really believed in the story of Jonah and the big fish. The preacher said: "I don't know, but when I get to Heaven I'll ask him."

"And if he is not in Heaven?" his opponent insisted.

"Then you ask him."

★★★★★

A middle-aged man, bent double with pain, shuffled into the doctor's surgery aided by his wife.

The doctor looked up with sympathy, "Looks like arthritis with complications," he said.

"No," said the wife, "do-it-yourself concrete blocks."

★★★★★

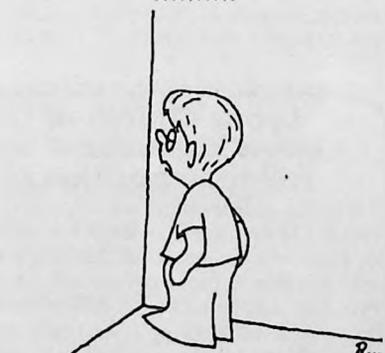
"What position does your son play in the football teams?"

"I'm not quite sure," came the reply, "I think he is one of the drawbacks."

★★★★★

"My son has an identity crisis. He doesn't know who he is and is too lazy to try and find out."

★★★★★



"So much for plea-bargaining."

Source: *The Best Cartoons from The Saturday Evening Post* compiled and edited by Steven Pettinga (Zondervan, 1993).



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