

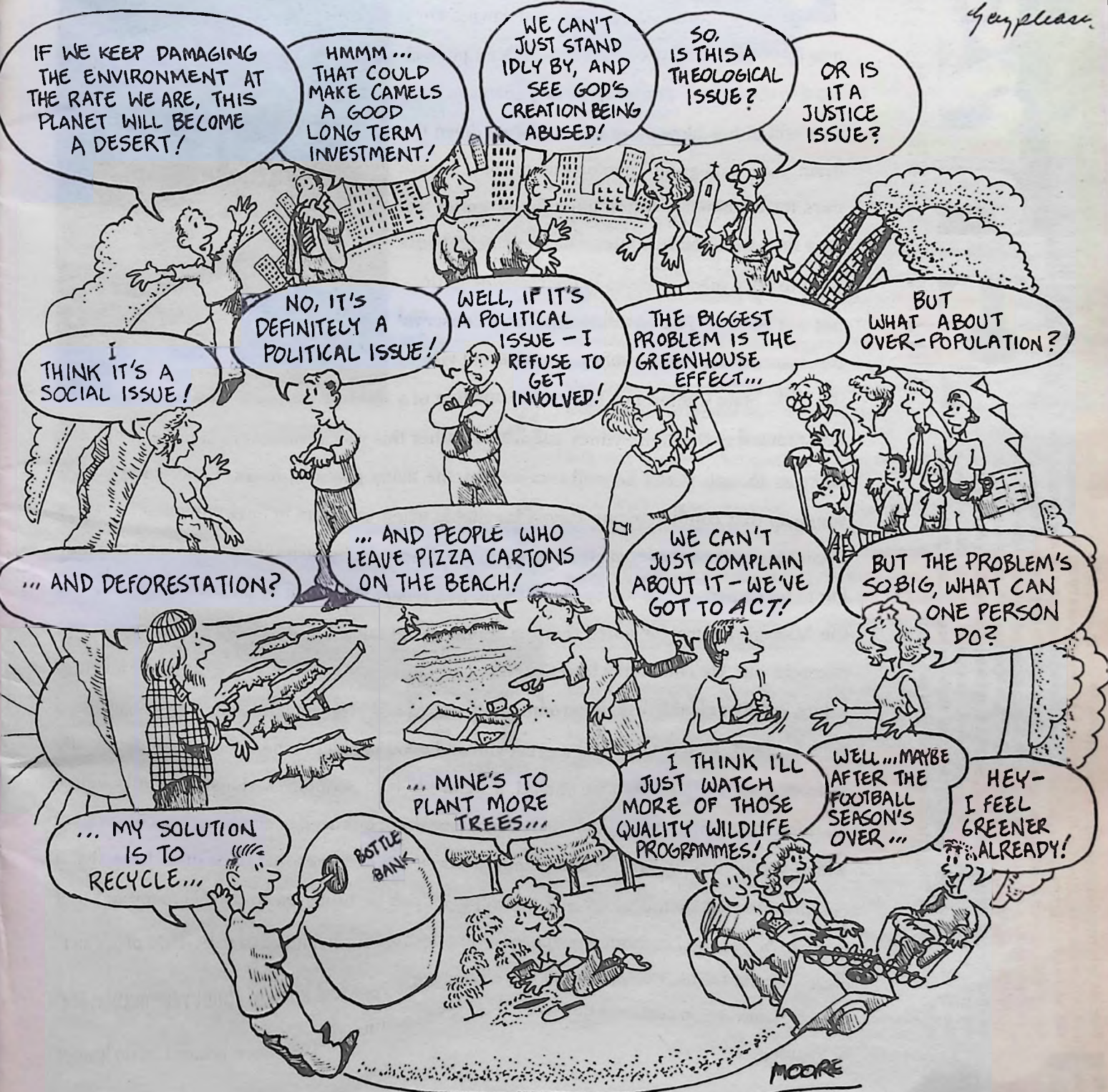
Christianian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 100 No. 9, 7 June 1997

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Billie, Kathy, Gordon & return to Gayle please.



THE AUSTRALIAN

Christian

NATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 100 No. 9, 7 June 1997



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Editorial

Changing Seasons

DON SMITH

Large quantities of autumn leaves still seem to fill our gutters and cover our lawns. On a nearby road the leaves reach out in deep piles almost to the centre. The householder seems to hope they will either blow away or be washed down the drain. As a "mid-green" person I do my best to save ours for compost! Clearing out a house gutter will be a final task before winter. Once our neighbours used to burn piles of leaves in the roadside gutters, but not now! * The environmental and conservation issues before us are many. In my recent visit to the NSW State Conference I noted the opening of a



new motorway through Sydney suburbs. I gather this was a controversial project, but now looks as though it will be well received by the many potential users. Experience to date suggests that conflict seems almost inevitable when we come to environmental issues. * Dean Moore in our cover cartoon sums up the dilemmas. Some issues are so vast it is tempting to let someone else worry about them. In a recent statement by an Australian company the Managing Director noted that his company did not go to developing countries to use cheap labour. He comments how the company's factories in Asia achieve the same levels of safety, quality, cleanliness, environmental control and efficiency as those in Australia and New Zealand. That sounds like a great aim and good practice. Wherever we can personally influence our settings then we should, if we are to take Scripture seriously. * Paul Collins, an Australian writer, in his book *God's Earth* speaks of our need of an ecological conversion, which will be a very difficult and painful process. He observes that most of us hope that a compromise between ecology and development can be brokered by government and that this can be reached without any appreciable effect on our living standards. That process is clearly ahead for us. Conversion in its religious or ecological form is about repentance and change. Conversion comes at times of personal or communal crisis when issues can no longer be avoided. *

Environment

In looking at the ever-relevant issue of the environment, we discuss issues such as overpopulation and our responsibility, and feature a profile of a government Minister, one of our members, who has an important role in this area.

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The Australian Christian welcomes letters from its readers. Short letters up to 175 words stand the best chance of publication. All letters may be edited. We reserve the right to omit letters altogether.

Our Image

To the Editor,
Further to the observations of Greg Foot ("AC" 17.5.97) in relation to the image portrayed of the leadership of Churches of Christ in Australia in the "AC".
A picture is worth a thousand words. As I flipped through the pages I was also struck by one overall very strong impression. Not only are thirteen of the fifteen key contributors male, but they also present as a remarkably homogenous group in other aspects. Of those thirteen, 100% have the following common characteristics: male, middle-aged, presenting as White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant, conservatively, neatly dressed with a collar and tie (and a majority with suit jackets). Have a flip through yourself. Do I even detect a similarity in expression? Sure, I acknowledge that image isn't everything, and may well belie the substance underneath. Nevertheless, I think that it's a fair question to ask about the image we are portraying to our community, about who we are, who we relate to, and who we include.
I offer these views being myself middle-aged, conservative male WASP, and with apologies to each individual portrayed in your publication (yourself included). I trust that you will see the dichotomy of both the humour and the seriousness of the image portrayed.
That's all I have time for now. I have to go out and get myself a

tie and jacket, and see a minister about getting a haircut (him, not me!).

—Craig Webber
(Belconnen, ACT)

Mother's Day Sermons

To the Editor,
I would like to thank Ted Keating for his "Letter to a Minister" on Mother's Day Sermons ("AC" 3.5.97). Mother's Day is difficult (every day is difficult) for those of us who are childless. The grief is only thinly disguised and is often felt most keenly when sitting in a church pew, where family values are (quite properly) most warmly espoused and exhibited. Hence it is inappropriate to expose the sadness that belonging to this minority group entails. Every time I read Ted's letter I cry. The simple acknowledgment that such a grief exists moved me deeply. I know that Jesus loves me and consoles me in my loss, but bless you Ted for having the Christ-centred sensitivity to notice.

(Name and Address supplied)

Pentecost Issue

To the Editor,
Thanks to Don Smith for many things, not least, his editorial "Tongues of Fire" ("AC" 3.5.97). Though Pentecost has about it "mystery and wonder" it is concerned with the here-and-now fullness of God.

I think a lot of us want more of God but have not prepared our hearts, hearts plagued by bitterness, pride and strife. God is not going to fill something that is already full. As we empty ourselves of the unclean and the selfish we disclose our desire to be filled. We need to apprehend the opulence of our Father's measure. Many forget He has a measure which cannot be exhausted. It pleases the Father when genuine Christians ask for more. It is

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Letters to the Editor

much more of God that Pentecost speaks of. It is only the much more of God that brings us to a ministry of Power.

God wants us to have more and more, not simply a measure but a compressed measure, not simply compressed but shaken together and running over. The fullness of the Spirit is an overflowing fullness available to all. Come Holy Spirit.

—Ross Bourdon
(Castlemaine, Vic.)

Aboriginal Policy

To the Editor,

In reply to G. Rehn. ("AC" 3.5.97) Church leaders need to preach reconciliation between Aborigines and other Australians as it is the only way the past can be recognised and apologised for, forgiveness sought and granted.

Not only were Aborigines illegally dispossessed of their land, but many were dispossessed of their culture through government and church policies such as "protection" and "assimilation". During the "protection" era, Aborigines were removed to reserves, frequently away from their own lands and most often against their will. Many of the human rights which we take for granted were removed by "Protection" Acts which were only repealed in the 1960s.

Whilst Garth Rehn complains about the "something-for-nothing" mentality, Aborigines have paid an exorbitant price, firstly with their land and livelihood, and then with their culture, which included the loss of autonomy over their children. While Mr Rehn comments that there is little evidence of Aboriginal occupancy for the 40,000 years prior to 1788, "progress" since has not been without cost. The environmental degradation is clear for all to see, and while we enjoy the benefits of progress, equal access is a myth. Many Aborigines cannot access

these benefits due to factors such as racial discrimination.

Why does the church preach reconciliation? Jesus ministry was to the marginalised peoples of his time, and we are called to do likewise.

—Carol Kingshott
(Hobart, Tas)

Homosexuality

To the Editor,

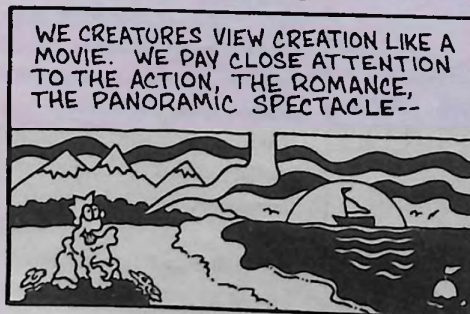
Dr Arnold Jago's comments ("AC" 3.5.97) on the assumptions of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission concerning the nature of homosexuality are correct, but his criticism may easily be extended to other groups.

The surphy that homosexuality is a pathological disorder, or something close to it, is still an unspoken assumption throughout much of society and the church. But homosexuality has nothing to do with disease, and everything to do with identity, emotional needs, and the ways that sexual behaviours are used in relation to those needs. Sound familiar? They're exactly the same issues faced by heterosexuals as they too strive to become mature people and/or Christians.

Let's stop looking at the issue solely in terms of sexual behaviour and place it in a more relevant context: the need of each of us to receive God's grace and love in order to become the people he wants us to be.

—Kim Kemmis
(Marsfield, NSW)

Pontius' Puddle



Update

Dear Reader,

I have recently enjoyed participating in our New South Wales and Victoria-Tasmanian Conferences. At Stanwell Tops, NSW, it was good to meet up with a number of subscribers and hear their strong affirmation of the paper. Naturally, I am much more familiar with the Victorian-Tasmanian Conference. However, in my new role as Editor it was good to meet up with people. It was also good to receive some new subscriptions.

We have a major Australia-wide promotional initiative coming up, with mailings planned to reach every church. As we come closer to the date we shall comment further upon this important step to enlarge our national coverage and subscriber list.

In this issue we welcome a feature article about Trevor Perrett, a member of our Kingaroy church. Trevor is the Minister for Primary Industry in the Queensland Government. We wish him well in this important role, and all the more so because he has recently become a subscriber!

Right now we are literally awash with reports, news items, photos, articles and whatever. In

practical terms this means there can be a waiting time for copy to be used. We hope you will be patient with us. We would encourage you to continue the flow of information. It is always better to have too much material than not enough.

Readers will note some comment on the importance of women contributing to the paper. Given the national spread of our churches and the difficulty of knowing about potential writers, we would welcome your suggestions. A telephone call could be useful. We would especially like to know of women or men with journalism or other writing backgrounds.

Recent comment on aboriginal affairs has attracted considerable interest. The comment from Avon Moyle of our Federal Aborigines Board was invited. Nigel Pegram our Production Manager/Sub-Editor, along with Geoff Alves will represent the paper at the Australasian Religious Press Association Annual Conference in Hobart 6-8 June.

Radio Rhema Moves In!

Expanding the church's mission ministry



Radio Rhema in Canberra begins broadcast from its new location on 4 June.

Rhema staff and volunteers will move their entire studio, office and technical support into a transportable building alongside Belconnen Church of Christ. "Radio Rhema is not taking over the church" Ministry Leader Paul Potter told Belconnen members. "But they are excited about working with us to break down the walls in communicating with the Canberra community."

The partnership with Radio Rhema complements the relationship the church has already developed with other ministries. These include Galilee, which began eight years ago placing homeless young people in Christian homes, and now has a range of counselling, skills training and employment focussed programs for homeless young people; Emmaus Ministries, which now runs four men's accommodation homes in the city; and Christian Media, which places the Christian message before commercial television audiences in the ACT and southern NSW.

The vision of a Christian Mission Centre means every member is inspired, encouraged, equipped and empowered to become a missionary. The development of this philosophy of church began in earnest three years ago with the launch of Y-CARE under the leadership of Graeme Hush.

The centre has developed its own Institute for Christian Revival which now has over a dozen students studying for their Diploma or Associate Diploma in Ministry. A vision for worship ministry led to the recording of a CD, *We're Ready*, and publishing a music book based on worship music composed by members under the "Heart and Soul" label.

Staff of this Christian Mission Centre now number over 20, many of them full-time, yet most of these receive no payment from the church.

"You don't have to be a big church to have effective mission-centred community ministry," says Paul Potter.

With less than three hundred members, the Belconnen Church of Christ is demonstrating the truth of that claim.

New Age Festival

Booming interest presents opportunity for outreach



Philip Johnson seated, explains the Gospel to a seeker. Ross Clifford looks on.

For seven years Sydney's Darling Harbour Exhibition Centre has been the venue for the Mind, Body, Spirit Festival. Since its inception, the festival has steadily grown in popularity in Sydney as well as in Melbourne. According to organisers, it is "the largest and most highly attended event of its kind in the world". This extraordinary fact highlights how a major spiritual ferment is happening in Australia. The May festival in Sydney attracted 44,000 people. This year's festival will span two entire halls at Darling Harbour,

with 468 exhibitors, which is more than double the 1995 festival. It will probably attract 100,000 people. The Melbourne Festival will be in the new Exhibition Centre 6-9 June. Some 30,000 people are expected to attend.

For the second time, the Community of Hope stall will be present there, as local Christians join in the outreach. Prime time has been granted on the public demonstration stage for a Christian group to sing praises to Jesus. Philip Johnson, from the Sydney-based New Age Mission Team, has been invited to present a workshop to New Age seekers. Since 1991, Philip Johnson and Ross Clifford have coordinated the Community of Hope stall at the festival. In 1996 the New Age Mission was established with Tom Glynn (NSW representative on the Board of *The Australian Christian*) to help Christians reach New Agers with the Gospel nationwide. Information is available from New Age Mission, c/o Northside Church of Christ, PO Box 83, Crows Nest NSW 2065.

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Media Madness

Media distortion of PNG news

PNG—Land of violence, tidal waves, fear of spirits and rascals! PNG—Christian country, beautiful land of friendly, loving people. Which is true? Both elements are here, but the Australian media makes news only of the former.

Recently the Australian media have been making big news out of a supposed "coup" by the PNG army. A friend who rang the Australian embassy at the time was told, "There is no coup. The Government is dealing with a problem in an orderly way. We have not even dusted off our contingency plans for protection of Australian citizens in an emergency. The supposed riots are basically the lawless elements of the city taking advantage of the situation, which they learned about through Australian media."

During this time of unrest, what were most of the citizens of PNG doing? Going about their normal daily activities—and many of them were praying.

Praying for the hidden wrongs of the PNG Government to be brought to light. Praying for a

peaceful resolution of the leadership problems. Praying that the "rascals" would not use the situation to cause havoc. Praying that God's people would stand up for right.

Most of the areas where Churches of Christ works were totally unaffected by what happened, except for the fear generated by some "over-the-top" news broadcasts.

Our staff in Madang had the inconvenience and rather nerve-racking experience of seeing some fighting one day, and then of hundreds of police keeping order around the city, and of stores in the town being closed to avoid trouble.

Join the Christians of PNG in praying for this country. Elections will be held in a couple of months and that's a traditionally restless time.

—Fay Christensen

Reef Baptism



A large crowd gathered on 16 April in the Autumn sun at Welshman's Reef to witness the baptism of Ashley Bourdon by his father Ross, minister of the Castlemaine, Vic, church. Many from the Castlemaine church and other churches in the area and the church family from Ascot Vale enjoyed this special time as Nina Corlett-McDonald and Mark Steen sang. A few people then shared on the growth they had seen in Ashley's life. While being baptised, a large eagle hovered overhead reminding us of Isaiah 40:31. As he left the water, the people joined hands in a guard of honour and as Ashley passed they blessed him. We praise God for the wonderful celebration we all witnessed.



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Inquiries or applications to Bill Sutcliffe,
c/o 1185 Geelong Road, Mount Clear Vic 3350.
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Applications close 25 July 1997.

World Figures at CWF Conference



Special guests at the 111th Vic-Tas CWF Conference on 1 May were Ron Brooker, President of the World Convention of Churches of Christ and Marj Dredge, World Christian Women's Fellowship President; seen here with Lynette Leach, Conference Executive Officer and Shirley Wallis, CWF President. Over 400 women attended the meetings. At the evening session four younger women shared insights into their faith and daily life.

We have a Winner!

Members running award-winning business



From roadside strawberry stand to best garden centre in Australia, the Handys' green thumbs deserve a round of applause.

Ian and Neva are members of the Pine Rivers Church of Christ, one of Brisbane's northern suburbs. And Ian, as an active board member for the Department of Church Development and Education, has helped beautify Camp Cal with lovely landscaping around the new swimming pool. Excellence is just a way of doing business for the Handys'.

Ian and Neva own Carseldine Garden World, recently voted best garden centre in all of Australia for the second year in a row. That's good news—but especially

in light of the fact that it's only been in existence since 1994. In its brief three-year history it has established itself as a benchmark for the other garden centres in every state.

Situated in a growing area of the city, the Handys' garden centre has a special flair. Ian, Neva and their staff are constantly looking at ways to improve the centre, its stock range and their relationships with customers.

What makes their centre so special?

They opened a coffee shop at the centre, just for light refreshments. Now they've hired a full-time chef and serve proper meals at lunchtime. They've already expanded the kitchen once, and are under pressure to make it even larger, the demand for their delectables is so great.

But that's not all. "We've established a children's club and we're just developing a program with local schools," Neva explains, "to make kids aware of the environment. We'll be counting on the next generation to take care of it, so now's the time to work with them on responsible use of it." Congratulations, Ian and Neva, on an excellent achievement!

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Funeral Assistance Plan

Removing some of the difficulty surrounding funerals

The Funeral Assistance Plan is managed by Churches of Christ in Queensland and available to church members and their families to help them put aside savings to meet the cost of a funeral. The Plan gives its members peace of mind in knowing that the cost of a funeral service will be met when the need arises. It also gives the individual the opportunity to make their wishes known in advance by recording their preferred funeral arrangements so that loved ones can plan with ease. The cost of funeral services is estimated at between \$2500 and \$3000 and already approximately 100 individuals have deposited funds either as a lump sum or by instalments. Interest is paid to the individual twice yearly, and as funds are payable only at death, they are exempt from deeming and income tax. Not only does the fund help financially, but staff members have been able to assist a very emotional elderly lady faced with having her dying husband admitted to a nursing home and not knowing where to look for funeral arrangement advice.



Ron Sansome—a Churches of Christ Chaplain who recently joined the fund

When asked by the family of a terminal cancer patient how they would pay for the funeral, we were able to say it would be OK. All of this adds up to peace of mind—for both the contributor and the family. This is an opportunity for all church members to help their families by making their wishes known and supporting the development of Churches of Christ through income generated from secure investments of the Plan's funds. The Plan has been popular in Queensland for many years and is now available to church members throughout Australia.



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Second Seniors' Convention

Christian convention for seniors in Qld

The Toowoomba Church of Christ on Hume Ridge is sponsoring a second Seniors' Convention following the outstanding success of the 1996 event, which was linked with the Australian Carnival of Flowers.

This year the Toowoomba North Church will join with Toowoomba to co-sponsor the event in the new complex on Hume Ridge.

The program caters for those aged 50 and over.

Dr Robert Shannon from Florida, USA, will be the guest speaker.

The event will be held 17-19 September, with daily programs which include devotional input,

electives, coach tours of Toowoomba gardens and evening programs.

Daryl Thorpe of Toowoomba North and Allan Male, the Director-General of the Queensland Government's Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, will be speakers.

Last year, registrations came from four states and territories, with many more registrations expected this year.

Information is available from PO Box 7564, Toowoomba MC Qld 4352.

Note the advertisement in the 17 May "AC" for other details.

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Passion Builds Churches

Refocussing in Disciples' evangelism strategy

The above theme headed a report in the February issue of *The Disciple*, the monthly magazine of the Disciples of Christ, one of our sister churches in the United States. The article highlighted the prominence now being given to church planting.

Of the churches planted in the 80s just under 63% were Caucasian, 17% Hispanic, 13% African-American and 2.5% Asian. In the 90s there has been a significant shift with only 29% Caucasian. Hispanics now lead with 36%, Asian 21% and African-American 11%.

Regional Minister for the Capital Area, Chris Hobgood says that the Third World has shed much light on the North American effort. He says in places like Kinshasa, Zaire, the Republic of the Congo and Latin America, churches are experiencing phenomenal growth. This growth is fuelled by a passion for sharing God's love with a world in desperate need to hear it.

Hobgood notes that once Hispanic churches have been alive and well for two years they consider it their calling to start another congregation. Deborah Thompson, director of Disciples' New Congregation Establishment who is involved in raising capital funds to assist new church building says, "It's passion that builds churches, passion for the Gospel of Jesus Christ ... Thanks be to God."

The New Church Establishment body of the Disciples has recently adopted a new Vision Statement and is giving a vigorous lead to the churches. Sadly it also notes that some churches show little interest in the plan, while others wonder why newcomers don't come and join them, while failing to recognise that existing Caucasian churches often don't meet the needs of new ethnic communities with distinctive worship and educational needs. A manual *Catch the Vision! Congregations Starting Congregations* is being distributed to churches to assist them in church planting initiatives.

Churches Supporting Each Other

Building relationships during study weekend



People from Stanwell Tops church visiting and encouraging folk at the new church plant at Eden, which Stanwell Tops is supporting.

Over the weekend of the 25-27 of April, six families from Stanwell Tops church drove the six hours south to the fishing town of Eden on the South Coast of NSW.

Since the church plant at Eden a few years ago, the church here has supported them in prayer and finance.

Both churches have wanted to strengthen the relationship which had been enhanced by the respective ministers sharing and praying regularly together.

Eden's Minister, Brian Dixon, saw the need for his congregation to be encouraged and equipped, so a series of talks were put together on the "Purpose of the Old Testament Today" and "Christian Leadership". Under the leadership of Kim Mowbray, the input sessions, including Sunday morning wor-

ship, were conducted by ordinary Christians, with many Stanwell Tops people participating in ways that stretched their faith and trust in God. The team from the Tops were extremely thankful for the work God did in people's lives through their ministry. Some of the families stayed in the homes of Eden folk, which enhanced the sense of unity we share in Christ. Stanwell Tops people mingled informally with the community at Eden during a fair on Saturday afternoon, participating in a beach volleyball competition.

The value of this kind of networking cannot be overestimated. Everyone was empowered in ministry and God received the glory. And best of all, Eden has promised a return trip later this year.

—Ed Holt

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Polish Greeting

News and greetings from our churches in Poland

Readers will have noted our recent contact with Polish Churches of Christ congregations. Michal Weremiejewicz of the Christian Bible Institute in Warsaw has sent greetings on the occasion of our centenary.

"On the occasion of your centenary we wish you God's blessing for long years to come, numerous faithful readers and many devoted workers. May your ministry enrich the lives of both the churches and believers and may you always have a clear Christian message to all Australian people."

Michal goes on to comment on the message from the editor of the *US Christian Standard* in our first

edition this year and his observation on the contribution made by Editors and the printed page in our history.

Michal observes that most of the Polish leaders were neither writers nor publishers. He notes that in the years 1920-39 most were simple farmers. In the years 1945-1990 most were factory workers. Another factor was a communist regime that gave little freedom to write and publish. Then he observes that they kept the faith and spoke boldly proclaiming and explaining their faith.

He notes that the distance which separates us is great, it does not allow for much direct cooperation. "But even maintaining a contact itself and awareness of each other's existence is important, helpful and inspiring".

Readers will be pleased to learn that one of our Melbourne readers has made a generous gift to send regular copies of the paper to Michal and a teacher in Zimbabwe.

A group of Australian members will shortly be visiting Poland in the interest of research into family history. They plan to make contact with the Polish churches and leaders.

Here and There

Black Churches

US African-American worshippers are gathering to form megachurches. In 1983 a church founded in Washington's Georgetown neighbourhood had 17 members. Eleven years later the now 12,000 member church relocated to a new octagonal building constructed in the shape of an African hut. Even as these churches cater for the black middle class, many have a deep commitment to social justice and helping those in poverty. Their ministry includes mentoring programs for young black males. *The Christian Century* notes that the Memphis, Tennessee, Mississippi Boulevard Disciples of Christ congregation has a major commitment to holistic ministry. It now has a membership of 8,000, with a dual emphasis on spiritual development and being socially involved.

Zaire Civil War

Bible workers and churches under threat

The civil war that began in eastern Zaire has been advancing for nearly seven months and has meant a loss of communication with Bible Society depots in these areas. Rebel forces have been taking over the country region by region, severing all communication with the capital, Kinshasa, where the main office of the Bible Society is based.

The United Bible Societies report that contact has been lost with six

depots in the provinces.

Only two of the offices remain open, Kinshasa and Matadi.

Contact is only possible with two of the nine translation projects in Zaire.

We are in contact with our Disciples Churches in Indianapolis, USA, regarding the impact of the war on the large church in Zaire which has its roots in our Movement.

—Ed.

Full-time ministry sought from 1998 Chatswood Church of Christ

Ideally, the position calls for qualifications such as:

- Strong commitment to Biblical Evangelism
- Good communication & teaching skills
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Environment

Sustainable Management

TREVOR PERRETT MLA

A background in farming and grazing, and a belief in the Bible message of wise land husbandry, has set the goal of sustainable management of natural resources for Trevor Perrett, the Queensland Member for Barambah. * Trevor recalled the Old Testament lessons of the rich owners giving herdsmen the task of looking after the domestic animals to preserve them from wild beasts and straying, to ensure the animals survived to provide sustenance both then and for the future. King David's herdsmen were among his chief officers of state, so important was their task in sustaining food supplies. *

Every seventh year their land was left idle, to recover

Farmers who followed Joshua into Canaan were given lessons in sustainable use of the land they were allocated. Every seventh year their land was left idle, to recover from the food production of the previous six years. Right through the Bible, Old and New Testaments, were lessons for Trevor in the need to wisely use the resources which God had provided. *

His own rural background, which still includes interests in the family grazing enterprises, and the knowledge gained in setting the Coalition primary industries policy, led to him becoming spokesman for primary industries when the Coalition parties were in opposition from 1990-1995. *

When the Coalition parties assumed government in February 1996, Trevor accepted the position of Minister for Primary Industries and set about imple-

menting the Coalition policies, into which he had helped incorporate sustainable management. *

An assessment of seafood resources has begun as part of that policy and periodic fishing/harvesting bans or closed seasons will be implemented in areas where commercial and or recreation fishing are found to have severely depleted those resources. *

The wisdom of such a policy was brought home to Trevor as leader of Australia's first specific seafood and aquaculture mission to South East Asia in early 1997. He and other mission members found fishing resources in and around some of the countries they visited had been plundered such that they were almost non-existent. *

The message emphasised over and over to Trevor and the trade mission was of foreign interest, by way of research and production in seafood and freshwater fish in Queensland, because of traditional fishing beds having been exploited. *

It served to confirm the Bible lessons—and the sustainable management policies in which Trevor had been involved over almost a decade in Parliament and a lifetime association with the land. * Queensland has tens of thousands of hectares of plantation pine and natural forests over which both the departments of Primary Industries and Natural Resources have management responsibilities. *

Plantations damaged by bushfires are also replanted and, for the first time in several decades, more land has been bought for additional pine plantings in South East Queensland. *

In another bid to husband timber resources and reduced reliance on imported timber, farmers are being encouraged to plant timber trees as a



long-term or "family superannuation" scheme, with the right for farm timber to be sold at any time by the freehold land owners. *

Many resource management issues need to be dealt with. These include environment protection policies limiting greenhouse gas effects, an integrated planning legislation and integrated development assessment system, ecologically sustainable land management, wiser and perhaps less use of chemicals in food production (perhaps replaced by some genetic engineering to biologically curtail pests and diseases of food and fibre crops), natural resource management legislation and protection of the limited sandalwood resource of North West Queensland. * Trevor believes the challenge to wisely use and manage the natural resources of Queensland is a challenge God has placed on all Christians of the state. * Trevor and his family are members of the Kingaroy Church. This article was written for Trevor Perrett by John Cameron, Senior Ministerial Media Advisor, who is also a member of Kingaroy Church.

Environment

Who is to Blame?

GOFF EDWARDS

When it comes to probing community sins, it is not so easy to determine who or what is evil and what "following Jesus" actually means. Consider the logging of tropical rainforest in a developing country, with consequent dispossession of the indigenous habitants, silting of coral reefs, and destruction of wildlife. Who is at fault:?

It is easy to blame anonymous greedy capitalists

- The foreign government, desperate for export income so that it can provide health and education for its people?
- The Australian logging company, which takes advantage of a commercial opportunity in order to satisfy its legal duty to its shareholders to maximise profit?
- The State forestry departments which did not establish sufficient plantations 30 years ago because of budget cuts at the time?
- The home renovator who selects some choice meranti or merbau without the slightest knowledge of the devastation which that demand causes at the source of supply? *

A thorough trawl of the Scriptures fails to yield any prescriptive guide to environmental management. We know the command in Genesis 1:26-29 to "have dominion" over the earth, a command which we have certainly fulfilled and cannot regard as an adequate benchmark for a modern response to the environmental crisis. *

Turning to the New Testament, we have Jesus' remarks about the glorious

beauty of the flowers in the field and God's care for sparrows; these suggest an attitude of tenderness and respect towards created life rather than mastery. But we can only guess as to Jesus' reaction had a tanning factory been spewing pollution into Lake Galilee and destroying the livelihood of his fishermen companions. *

An environmental crisis there undeniably is. Looking globally, most of the predictions of the environmentalists are coming true: the ozone hole, climatic change, the appalling dangers and horrendous costs of nuclear power, the poisoning of rivers downstream from mines ... to mention just a few. *

The more one considers the causes of environmental problems, the more complexity is revealed. To make matters particularly complicated, environmental damage might be separated in time or space from the causes: for example, some pollution-triggered cancers may take 40 years to become manifest, and those responsible are no longer around to blame. *

It is easy to blame anonymous greedy capitalists, but to do so would be to ignore the extent to which we all are caught up in a society which is running down its environmental capital. If ecology—the study of the relationships between living things—teaches us anything, it is that everything is connected to everything else: predator and prey, cause and effect, perpetrator and victim. *

Some environmental problems are the result of simple ignorance: for example, Rubber Vine now covers 700,000 hectares of Queensland's bush and pastoral land, but it is difficult to blame those in 1875 who, out of admiration for its



All over the world, in cities, parks and wilderness, frogs are dying out—evidence that the environment is in crisis.

beauty, introduced it as a garden plant. *

Of course, we can always blame "the government" for anything that goes wrong, but in a democracy citizens are participants in government, not simply passive observers. *

It is not possible to contemplate environment-damaging activities for long before confronting questions of politics: who profits and who suffers? Issues of morality and imbalance of power lie at the heart of many environmental problems. And for those issues we do have a guide. Jesus spoke out in unambiguous terms against coveting riches and put forward mercy, fair play and love as better models of human behaviour. *

It is possible to take political action without being divisively partisan. When Christians speak out against actions which glorify economic progress, to the detriment of mercy, fair play and love, they may well find authority in the Scriptures. That doesn't always identify the villains or authorise us to cast blame, but it does authorise us in our capacity as Christians to become involved in finding solutions! *

Geoff Edwards is a scientist and a graduate in public administration. He is a member of the Wynnum, Qld, church

Environment

Human Responsibility

GRAHAM MORTIMER

Leaning on the rail of the dive boat, gazing down into the crystal-clear Barrier Reef waters, my attention was captured by a submerged flurry of solid particles drifting into sight from below the hull of the boat. Several seconds passed as I watched a long, thin fish eagerly devouring the various sized pieces. Several more seconds passed before I realised that what the fish was eating was waste produced by us human occupants of the boat! We were about 100 km out from Townsville, collecting corals to

Human beings have had a massive visible impact

study chemical clues of environmental changes preserved in their skeletons. The eating of human waste by the long, thin fish is a clear example of the many effects we have on our environment, but we were more interested in what longer term, more widespread environmental changes we could decipher. * Human beings have had a massive visible impact on the earth, especially since the industrial revolution. Large cities, factories, and motor vehicles have proliferated. Deforestation, erosion and mining have left deep and wide scars. Ever-increasing coal and oil burning envelops major cities in smog clouds. There are other less visible, but no less significant impacts as well. Pollution of waterways, damage to the ozone layer, extinction of species, and greenhouse global warming threaten to impose upon us dramatic changes in quality of living. Scientists continue to grapple with the unanswered questions as to what extent these global problems

are human-induced and to what extent they may be repairable or reversible. But more personally, each of us needs to decide what degree of responsibility we will take for the quality of our own local environment. *

I choose in the first place to take a relational and an eternal perspective. According to Jesus, the two greatest commandments are "Love God" and "Love your neighbour" (Matt 22:37-40). God's primary focus is our relationships with him and with each other. These are the things that will endure forever. This planet is not his final answer for us. We were created to spend eternity with him in another place. Measured against eternity, our time on earth will be very short. *

Nonetheless, our time spent on earth is of great importance. "The earth is the Lord's and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein." (Psa 24: 1) "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth he has given to the children of men." (Psa 115: 16) God is the creator and proprietor of the earth. He has given us temporary tenancy as stewards, subject to the two greatest commandments, to manage it to satisfy our need for sustenance and to provide for the needs of our neighbours. Our responsibility is to care for what we have, and use our resources best to serve the needs of all the inhabitants of the earth. *

An earth scientist studies our physical environment in an attempt to understand how it works, and looks back in time through the fossil and rock deposits to see what changes have taken place in the past. This helps attempts to predict what may happen in the physical environment in the future. For example, earth scientists understand that the Earth has never been in a



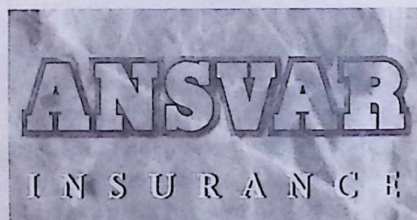
happy state of balance or equilibrium. There have always been major natural changes taking place in the climate, landscape and vegetation. Earth scientists also understand that resources such as fossil fuels are not limitless and cannot be replenished in our lifetime. * An earth scientist with a Christian perspective might also recognise that the earth and its inhabitants are not as God originally created them to be. Human nature has been corrupted by sin and is at heart self-centred, and exploitative. Our responsibility to care for our environment, and use our resources to serve the needs of all is beyond us, except by the grace of God. Natural forces, too, are in bondage to sin and out of balance. Only God can restore human nature, and only God can restore the planet, all the more reason to be devoted first and foremost to loving God and loving our neighbours. *

I had been admiring the long thin fish around the boat the previous day, thinking it would be good to drop a line and haul it in for dinner. I now know that certain fish are not good to eat! *

Graham Mortimer is a member of Tuggeranong church and is part of an ANU earth science research team.



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Environment

"Subduing the Earth" and Responsibility

MERRYL BLAIR

The ecological crisis in which the Earth totters has been blamed, in part, on the Judeo-Christian espousal of the command in Genesis 1:28 to "subdue the earth"; in part, there is probably some justice to the accusation. The common translations of this verse not only reflect a particular attitude to creation that is self-seeking and arrogant, but also fail to take into account the rich meaning behind the Hebrew words. *

Humankind's responsibility is to see that this blessing is carried out in the rest of the created order.

Maybe the first thing that needs to be said regarding this verse is that it is a **blessing**, not a command. In the context of blessing, let us examine the two verbs, *kbs* and *rdh*, usually translated "subdue" and "rule/have dominion over". Both words come from the sphere of royalty. In Ancient Near Eastern literature, the king is said to "have dominion over" his subjects, symbolised by placing his feet on a footstool attached to the throne. The symbolism is that of possession, not destruction. It is interesting to note that the king is often said to be the "image of god". Humanity in general is created for the express purpose of providing slave labour for the gods. *

The Hebrew story uses the language and imagery of the Ancient Near East, but with important differences. Instead

of a king being said to be the "image of god", all humanity is given this honour. Similarly, to all humankind is given the blessing of "ruling over" all other living things. So firstly, the Hebrew story has a democratising interest. *

The words "subdue" and "rule over" come into the language of kingship from the world of agriculture and pasture. The wider connotations of "subdue" are "to lead about, guide"—hence "shepherd". It is no coincidence that the most common metaphor for the king in the Hebrew Bible is "shepherd". The shepherd is one who not only led the flock, but maintained it in health and ensured its continuation. A well-kept flock could stay in the family for generations, providing mutual benefit. Likewise, the king, as God's regent on earth, was expected to care for the peace and harmony of his people. To fail to do so was to forfeit kingship. The Psalms exalt God as the ideal king, and in doing so hold up a blueprint for kingship that can only be ignored at peril. There is no room in this picture for self-serving arrogance in ruling. If the main characteristics of God's rule are peace and justice (see especially Psalms 47, 93, 96-99), these are expected to be the characteristics of any human rule. *

The passing of this responsibility to the whole of humanity in Gen 1: 28 finds many echoes in prophetic literature. Israel gains possession of the promised land in the book of Joshua (Josh 18: 1), and is thenceforth responsible for treating the land as God's gift. When it fails to do so (by failing to pay attention to maintaining peace and harmony with all creation), the prophets threaten expulsion from the land. *



Claus Westermann suggests that the creation story of Genesis 1 sets out the characteristics of God's relationship with his created order, and relationships within that order. Thus it is characteristic of human beings that they are placed within creation for a specific purpose and role: that of shepherding, that is, having a relationship with, all living things. It is characteristic of all living things that they are blessed. Humankind's responsibility is to see that this blessing is carried out in the rest of the created order. *

When we measure ourselves against the picture presented above, deep repentance is necessary. Gen 1: 28 speaks of the blessing conveyed by humankind's viceregal maintenance of order and harmony in the environment: ruling with self-restraint and reverence, justice and peace, recognising the goodness of all things as created by God. What richness of mutual benefit have we lost by our failure to take this blessing seriously? *

Meryll Blair is lecturer in Old Testament at the Churches of Christ Theological College, Mulgrave, Vic.

Environment

The Population Bomb

KEITH SUTER

The globe's population grows at a rate of about 150 people per minute. The global population of 6 billion will be reached at the end of the century and 7 billion by the year 2010. Most of this growth will take place in developing countries: 90% of the babies born today are being born in the Third World. *

The developed world (North America, Europe, Japan, Australia) are close to, or have, "zero population growth". Europe is like an old person's home built alongside the Asian kindergarten. * We are in a time of transition. Since about 1970, we have a high birth rate

Europe is like an old person's home built alongside the Asian kindergarten.

and a low death rate (because of advances in medicine). *

We have "death" control but not "birth" control. Third World population growth rates are slowing down but the impact will not be felt for about a century. *

In the past, there were high global birth and death rates (people did not live long lives and so survival of the human race required high birth rates). The goal is to have low global birth and death rates (fewer people being born and each person living a long life). This goal will be achieved in about a century's time. * In the meantime: are people poor because they have babies or do they have babies because they are poor? Some people have babies because there are no old aged pensions. Life for many people in developing countries is as harsh now as it was two or three decades ago. *

There are few social welfare programs and so the family is the primary unit of support. Thus, large families are important: the greater the number of relatives, the more chance of assistance. A person who knows that their health will fail in their early 40s, that they will be dead a few years later, and who cannot rely on having a government pension, hopes to have enough children to rely on them for assistance in their declining years. Meanwhile, children can start earning their keep at an early age by helping on the rural plot of ground or by begging in the cities. *

In developed countries children bury their parents. But in many developing countries, parents bury their children. There is a lack of basic health facilities to help children through the dangers of their early years. For example, 30,000 children will die today simply because of a lack of clean water and sanitation. Therefore, parents have several children in the hope that some will survive into adulthood. *

If there were better social welfare programs, then people would have less incentive to have children. But this then leads on to the issue of why poor countries remain poor. *

Additionally, there has been little help from developed countries, particularly in giving foreign aid to developing countries. There is an international target of 0.7% of gross national product (GNP). Most developed countries have never reached that target. Australia's aid, which is now 0.27% of GNP, is at the lowest level since records began about three decades ago. *

Additionally, foreign aid is also helping a rich country's export business. Much "foreign aid" does not actually leave the country but is to be spent in that country. Also, some military aid is provided



as foreign aid. This does not apply to non-governmental aid (such as Community Aid Abroad or World Vision). But these organisations raise only a small sum of money (\$140 million) compared to what is supplied as official assistance (\$1.4 billion). *

What all this means is that not enough foreign aid is going into developing countries to help their economic and social development. If there was more economic and social development, then this would then provide an incentive for parents to have fewer children. *

Many churches are already involved in the provision of non-governmental aid. They could also encourage the Australian Government to give more foreign aid. They could also ensure that aid is treated as a matter of humanitarian compassion, and not as a way of boosting Australian businesses overseas or trying to win friends and influence foreign governments. *

Dr Keith Suter, Consultant on Strategic Planning at Wesley Mission, Sydney, is a writer and broadcaster and President of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney.

Athanasius: Champion of Orthodoxy

BILL TABBERNEE

In 312 AD, Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, preached a sermon which one of his presbyters, a man named Arius, considered to have propagated heretical ideas. The issues at stake revolved around Christology and mono-

Athanasius' brilliant oratory won the day.

theism. If we believe that Christ is God and that "the Father" is God, how can we say that there is only one God? *

Arius suggested that to maintain monotheism, we need to remember that fathers precede sons in existence and that, therefore, there "was when the

Son was not". Arius believed this to have been the case so far back that it was even before time itself began, but it still meant that only God ("the Father") was truly eternal. A fierce debate ensued. If God "the Son" is not as eternal as God "the Father", does that mean that the Son is not as fully God as the Father? If so, can we really call Christ God, or should he merely be called "divine"? *

In 325, the emperor Constantine summoned the council of Nicaea to settle the issue. Alexander's secretary at the council was a young archdeacon named Athanasius. Alexander allowed Athanasius to deliver some of the speeches. Athanasius' brilliant oratory won the day. The Nicene Creed declared that the Son is of "one nature with the

Father", "true God from true God", eternal, not created. *

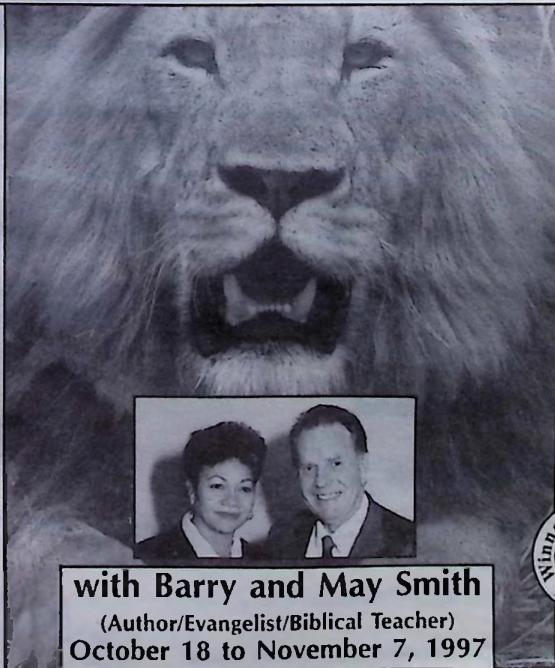
For the rest of his long life, Athanasius continued to champion the cause of orthodoxy. In 328 he succeeded Alexander as bishop of Alexandria, and remained so for an unprecedented 45 years. During this period, he was exiled three times and forced into hiding on other occasions because, at various times, Constantine's successors were won over to Arianism. *

By the time of his death in 373, Athanasius had spent fifteen years in exile. Despite this, he achieved a great deal during the other thirty years which he was able to spend in Alexandria. Not least among his achievements were his numerous writings, including a Festal Letter written in 367 which contains the first



list of the 27 books of the New Testament as we have them today. and his promotion of monasticism through his support of Antony of Egypt. Athanasius, however, will always be remembered primarily as the articulate champion of orthodox Christology. *

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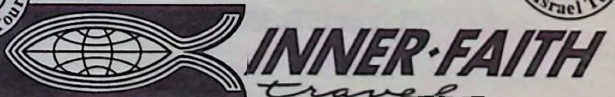


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By What Measure?

AVON MOYLE

How does one measure national progress and achievement? Garth Rehn ("AC", 3 May) would have us believe that such can be measured in terms of steel and concrete. Any society therefore that is unable to point to such indicators of progress presumably has under achieved. * The fact is that prior to colonisation by the British in 1788 indigenous Australians operated a complex social lifestyle that was remarkably free of the kind of "things" Mr Rehn feels are the marks of achievement. Because of their lifestyle, Aborigines had

no use for permanent structures or other material measures by which their success—or failure—could be determined. * As I understand things, Aborigines were not owners of land, they were its caretakers—they will tell you that in a powerful way the land owned them. Therefore, they took great pains to preserve and conserve so that land continually reproduced its bounty. For all our knowledge, we non-indigenous Australians are only now giving credence to the need for conservation—instead we simply took from the land all we could take.

It is fundamentally wrong to say that the concept of *Terra Nullius* applied when the first fleet arrived. Had the settlers endeavoured to discover the true relationship between Aborigines and land, had they given due regard to their highly organised lifestyle, had they a sense of their history or heritage, dealings with the indigenes would have been on an altogether different footing. We cannot dispute that dispossession occurred. It is not simply media hype that recognises prior Aboriginal occupancy and use of the land. Colonisation took away Aboriginal lands and rights without agreement or compensation. *

I cannot see the connection Mr Rehn is trying to make concerning Aborigines and cargo. My friend with years of missionary experience in PNG tells me that the whole basis of the cargo cult is ritualism and contact with ancestral and unseen spirits—that cargo is produced from the spirit world. Many Aborigines despise "sit down money" as demeaning, a poor substitute for a genuine income from meaningful work. Thankfully, written agreements with mining companies and others now include provisions for training and employment for indigenous people. * Aborigines are asking us to recognise their prior possession of the country we all call home, to

recognise that we have overridden and rejected their sense of history. That we might, as modern Australia, acknowledge that we have not always got things right and be prepared to draw alongside Aboriginal people with a genuine gesture of repentance and reconciliation, will be a true test of our national re-

Progress surely is not measured solely by the tangible

solve. Prior to colonisation, Aborigines knew no unemployment, disrespect for law and order, the epidemics of gambling, alcohol and other drug abuse, loss of hope, rape, violence, etc., that characterise modern Australian society. They are part of a heavy price we have all paid for progress. * Progress surely is not measured solely by the tangible, the things we make, the wealth we generate. It is also measured in a fair view of history, a sense of justice that recognises that we Australians value the dignity and worth of all our citizens and in the degree to which we share the land and our resources together. *

Avon Moyle is Executive Director of our Federal Aborigines Board.

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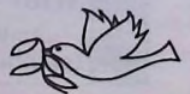
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VINEY LONGTHORP

The modern concern for the environment probably had its beginnings in 1961 with the publication of Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*. In it she presented unpalatable, yet undeniable facts about the adverse effects of the widespread use of pesticides. Many dismissed her claims as "alarmist". *

Many think that the turning point came on that magical day in July, 1969 when the first humans on the Moon sent pictures of the earth as seen from the Moon. There it was, our home

A finite, closed biosphere

in space—incredibly beautiful and so abundantly alive. The world's imagination was aroused to see it so alone and vulnerable—a finite, closed biosphere. The claims of science about the biosphere started to be believable. *

Since that time, facts have risen exponentially in a litany of concern. There are huge mud slides in the Philippines which kill thousands, due to the razing of forests and London has to construct a huge barrage at the

mouth of the Thames to counter a rise in the sea level due to global warming. Our own Federal Government has to allocate millions of dollars to repair environmental damage to the Murray-Darling River system. *

Economists such as E.J. Misham lend their voices, saying that environmental costs must be added to the costs of industrial production to give true prices. Then there are demands that those once sacrosanct concepts such as "progress", "growth" ("growthism", rather) and "development" must be appreciated and understood in terms of their environmental impact. *

Theologians also express their concerns. Jurgen Moltmann even calls it apocalyptic, a life and death struggle. *

Like every other endeavour, our approach to the environment must be based on facts. Tim Flannery's book, *The Future Eaters* (Read Books) is an authoritative account of the nature of the Australian environment. Dr Flannery is a senior research scientist in the Australian Museum, Sydney. His book is a ground-breaking ecological history of Australasia. It is guaranteed to enrich our understanding of that bit of God's world we inhabit. He traces the history, the geography, and the geology

of our continent in its long, thrusting journey over millions of years into tropical latitudes, from its beginnings as part of Antarctica. He presents a fascinating account of the evolution of Australia's flora and fauna and of their interaction. He points out that our environment is not nearly as abundant as was once thought—and he explains why. About 60,000 years ago the first Aborigines discovered a land of forests and giant mammals, but within 10,000 years or so they had wiped out all the large mammals. The Europeans repeated this pattern of expansion, and as a result destroyed the ecological balance, of which they were entirely ignorant. At best, it was always fragile. Flannery concludes that we are facing a continent which cannot bear anything like the burdens and demands we are placing upon it. *

Then there is Paul Collin's book, *God's Earth*. (sub-titled, "Religion as if it really mattered") (Dove Publications) gives an important clue to the argument. Paul Collins is a Catholic priest, a former specialist editor in religious radio with the ABC. On the broadest scale his book is concerned with the relationship between environment, humanity, and God. It was noted at a recent seminar on the environment that, at depth,



questions about conservation are spiritual ones. This is the book which spells out the ramifications of that comment. *

Collin's fear is that if we disfigure the world we will destroy not only ourselves but the most important symbol of God that we have. His arguments can be hard-hitting. He does not seek to win "brownie points" from anyone. He comments that churches have traded mystery for "boring biblical evangelicalism". In the case of Collin's own church, he is dismayed by their triumphalism and their authoritarianism. *

He is to be praised for showing that theology is not an esoteric discipline, but something in which we should all be involved for the sake of the earth and for our salvation. *

This book *God's Earth* is a profound learning experience, albeit an uncomfortable, yet necessary one. *

Latest Update CHURCHES OF CHRIST
MISSION WORK in PNG
 Come, hear and share with . .

OMB TONY WAULIK President
OVERSEAS MISSION BOARD WHITMORE OLOMAN Secretary/Treasurer
 ~ Dynamic PNG Conference Leaders:

ONE NIGHT ONLY Wednesday June 25, 7.45 - 9.30pm
 CHADSTONE CHURCH OF CHRIST
 147 Waverley Road, Chadstone

~Offering taken for mission work in PNG ~Supper served
 JEFF WESTON will also speak on his recent visit to China

For further enquiries, ring Jack Edwards(03) 9794 9419

Mount Gambier Church of Christ

Jubilee Highway, Mount Gambier
 Come and join with us as we celebrate our

40th Anniversary

In worship commencing at 10.00 am on
 Sunday 27 July 1997.
 Morning tea to follow.

80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

FRANK LANGFORD'S FRIENDS are welcome to join us in an informal celebration at 12 Albert St, Surrey Hills on Saturday 21 June from 2.00 – 5.00 pm. RSVP Julie (03) 9888 6458.

DEATHS

BROAD, Elizabeth Mary (Beth) nee Ellery on 18 May 1997. Loved wife of William (dec). Treasured Mum of Arthur, David, Frances (Pitt), Raymond (dec), Barbara (dec), Trevor, Elsie (Smith), Lois (Lea), and Glen. Special mother-in-law of Heather, Lorraine, Keith, Joan, Graham, Barry and Glenys. Caring grandma of 30 grandchildren and great-grandma of thirteen. Aged 81 years. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." (2 Tim 4:7)

BROAD, Elizabeth Mary (Beth) on 18 May 1997. Precious mum of Frances and Keith (Pitt). Much loved grandma of Raeleen and Graeme (Cross), Alison and Rohan (Carr), Adrian and Belinda, Rebecca and Ian (Mason). Loved great-grandma of Matthew and Mitchell. Home at last.

GARTH, Raymond Henry Passed away 20 May 1997 aged 81 years, at Austin Hospital. Dearly loved husband of Nancy, loved father and father in law of Elizabeth and Michael (Canada), Valerie and Keith, John (dec'd), David and Isabel and Ted. Grandpa of seven grandchildren, loved and respected brother and brother-in-law of Linda and Folliott (dec'd) Morgan, Elva and Francis Dowling (both dec'd), Thelma and Aubrey Arnold, Geoffrey and Jean (dec'd), Ralph (Alf dec'd), Stan and Norma, and their families. Also Margaret and Ron (dec'd) Milne and family.

TREZISE, Maisie Elizabeth Passed away (peacefully) at Preston and Northcote Community Hospital on 23 May 1997, aged 90 years. Loved wife of Laurie (dec), Jim (dec), and Walter (dec). Loved mother of Dorothy, mother-in-law of Stan. Beloved step-mother of Neil and Dale, Richard and Jenny, and loved nan and nana of twelve grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Loving Memories.

HOLIDAYS

AYR, NORTH QUEENSLAND Travelling up the Queensland coast? Stop over in the "Bountiful Burdekin" at Ayr Shamrock Motel. Friendly service, reasonable rates. Phone (077) 83 1498. Owned and managed by Dudleigh Oakes.

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HERVEY BAY, POINT VERNON Whale watch or explore magical Fraser Island. Premier holiday position. New 3BR house, lock-up garage. All modern cons, has everything. Fully furnished, carpets, colour TV, washing machine, dryer, microwave. Short stroll to Bay, boat ramps, shops and parks. Bookings phone (02) 790 3710.

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

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

WANTED

COPY OF "GUIDANCE BY GOD", a book written by James Jauncey, published by Zondervan, 1969. Contact Grant Spangenberg, 26 Ralli St, Balaklava SA 5461. Phone (08) 8862 1729.

David Johnson

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CAROL PRESTON



Are you investing time and energy into building friendships? I believe the "one anothering" ministries among Christians have a significant role to play in our growth as individuals, as well as our development as the body of Christ. In friendship we can be confident of support. There is safety to share, trust when we are vulnerable, find acceptance when we are troubled. We need

Our culture promotes independence, our lives are filled with activity

to check regularly to see how we have invested time into relationships that affirm us as people who are valued and cared about, so that in stressful times there are those who are able to come alongside us, who know us, and will understand how to comfort and guide us. *

Our culture promotes independence, our lives are filled with activity, our families are often spread far and wide. When in crisis, the family members we do have around us are often also deeply affected. Many of us are little prepared for the support, encouragement and comfort we will all need at some time. Gordon MacDonald in his excellent book, *Restoring your Spiritual Passion*, talks about the people we all need in our lives. Some will be those who inspire us, resource us and share our passion for Christian service. Some will be those who enjoy our min-

istry and our caring for them. These give meaning to our lives as we give of our gifts to them, but they will also drain our energy and resources. *

What we seem to invest least time and energy into are friendships and support networks for ourselves. *

The times of crisis and stress are not the time to develop trust and deep relationship. That must be there as the groundwork for support, so we can safely open ourselves to being cared for, and accept help when we need it. One of the most potent killers of our times is isolation. It leads to mental and physical illness, self-destruction, and hostility. If we are learning to love our neighbours as we love ourselves, then we will not only be giving to others but also building into our own lives the relationships that will be a significant part of our stress management resources. These will take time, openness, and the willingness to risk being known. *

Who knows what life is like for you and will be there to share their strength in your times of weakness? God calls us to be friends to each other. Make sure you are investing in a friendship. *

Churches' Response to Bougainville Inadequate

EDMUND DOOGUE

Attempts by the churches of the Pacific region to help bring an end to the guerrilla conflict on the island of Bougainville have been "inadequate", according to a staff member of the main ecumenical body in the region, the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC). The guerrilla war on Bougainville, which is part of Papua New Guinea (PNG), broke out in the late 1980s and is the longest-running military dispute in the Pacific since the Second World War.

The international media have distorted the truth when reporting the conflict.

The conflict has become one of the most sensitive issues both for governments of the region and for the churches of the Pacific which are divided as to the best way to bring the dispute to an end.

The PNG Government, whose military is fighting the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) for control of the island, fears that if Bougainville secedes from PNG, other provinces may do the same.

Bougainville is one of several PNG regions with rich mineral deposits, though mining on Bougainville was halted as the conflict escalated.

Mr Peter Salamonsen, the PCC's officer for justice, peace

and development recently told the PCC's seventh assembly, meeting in Arue on the French Polynesian island of Tahiti, that he has experienced frustration in his attempts to promote dialogue on the issue.

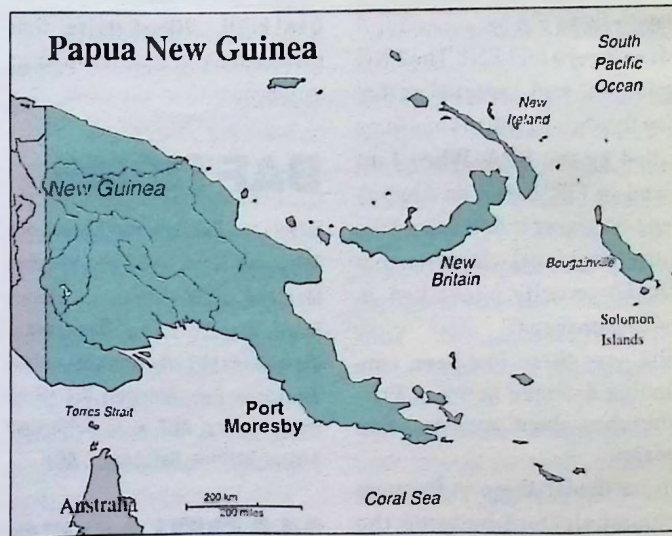
"Where is the prophetic voice of the churches of the Pacific?" asked Mr Salamonsen, who is from Aotearoa/New Zealand. He urged the churches and the PCC, where his term of employment is almost completed, to undertake more committed efforts to promote dialogue.

In his report to the assembly on his work, Mr Salamonsen criticised the PNG Government, saying: "The Government of PNG might still claim legal sovereignty over Bougainville. Has this always been so? Will it always be so? Continuing to claim sovereignty by force of sophisticated weapons and an economic blockade still in place is morally unacceptable."

But some delegates at the general assembly disagreed. Mrs Sophia Gegeyo, an official representing the Papua New Guinea Council of Churches, told the assembly that churches had undertaken many initiatives for peace in Bougainville.

She later told Ecumenical News International (ENI): "In Bougainville the churches are the ones who are keeping people alive. They're not afraid of the barrel of a gun." (In his report, Mr Salamonsen stated that the churches provided substantial humanitarian aid to all sides in the conflict.)

Recent reports that the PNG Government has stepped up its military efforts to bring the conflict to an end by hiring "40 mercenary soldiers" employed by a British-registered company pro-



moted a recent protest from the Government of Australia, where Bougainville is a delicate topic because of Canberra's support for PNG in the conflict.

Mr Salamonsen described the support given to the PNG Government by Australia as "deeply questionable". He urged the PCC to condemn Australia's policy on the issue, and added: "Australia is quite overtly promoting its own interests in such areas as security and mining potential. Australia's position in the entire East Timor tragedy serves as an adequate example of such diplomatic posturing." The conflict on the island, which is located between the Papua New Guinea mainland and the Solomon Islands, began in the 1970s as a clan dispute about the royalties paid by an international mining company for gold and copper mining.

"At that time the conflict was a small sore that could easily have been lanced," Mrs Gegeyo told ENI. Instead it had grown into "a cancer", with deaths and demands that the PNG Government should pay \$US10 billion in compensation to the rebels and allow the island to secede.

Mrs Gegeyo said that in the early stages of the dispute many people in PNG sympathised with those on the island who opposed the Government. But as the rebels resorted to armed struggle, they lost popular support across PNG. Both in a speech to the assembly and in an interview with ENI afterwards, Mrs Gegeyo said that the international media have distorted the truth when reporting the conflict, generally taking the rebels' side and thus causing "a lot of damage". Three-quarters of the population of the island support the Government in the conflict and, after years of fighting, just want peace, she says, adding, "Both sides of the conflict need to be reported." She is at a loss to explain why the media so frequently take a sympathetic view of the rebels. Worthwhile initiatives, both from the Government and the churches, are not reported, but stories sensationalising the conflict are given wide coverage, she said.

"Last December I left Port Moresby [PNG's capital] one

Continued on page 22.

Continued from page 21.

day to fly to Fiji for a meeting," Mrs Gegeyo told ENI. The PNG press, she said, reported on that day that "nine civilians had been killed by the BRA. When I arrived in Fiji, I read an Australian newspaper article [about the same incident] claiming that (PNG) security forces had attacked civilians!" She says there has been continuing dialogue between PNG churches about ways to bring peace.

In particular there is frequent communication between the PNG Council of Churches and the country's Roman Catholic bishops. (More than 80 per cent of the population of Bougainville are Roman Catholics; more than 10 per cent are members of the Uniting Church and there are also Seventh-day Adventist congregations on the island.) Mrs Gegeyo says it is unfortunate there has been no media coverage for a major initiative under which the Government was considering putting churches in charge of "care centres", which helped feed the people of the island and are at present run by the security forces.

Despite factions among the Bougainvillians, more than 700 of the island women, the vast majority of them Christian, held a protest for peace last September, Mrs Gegeyo says. For peace to come to Bougainville, she says, there first has to be some reconciliation among the people of the island.

"They need to put aside their differences and talk to each other, face to face."

From "Challenge Weekly", NZ, used by permission. (ENI—Ecumenical News International)

CHANGES

OAKLEIGH, VIC—Service time changed from 10.30 am to 10.00 am each Sunday.

BAPTISMS

•Mark Lacy, Bendigo, Vic •Aileen Reed, Terry New, John and Linda Weedon, Maitland, NSW •Ann Storey, Jacqui Storey, Damien Young, Dandenong, Vic •Melissa McLarty, North Essendon, Vic •John Pue, Morwell, Vic •Greg Davies, Lyons, ACT, •Lisa Culverwell, Angela Bartone, Belconnen, ACT

MARRIAGES

•Sandra Christianson and Lloyd Fisher, Dandenong, Vic •Jodie Osborne and Peter Weston, North Essendon, Vic

DEATHS

•Dr Arthur "Kerr" Johnston, Maitland, NSW •Jenny Tillie, Dandenong, Vic •James (Jim) Harrison, Launceston, Tas •Elizabeth Holmes, North Essendon, Vic •John Charles Williams, Kaniva, Vic •Norm Murphy, Ivy Bangsund, Ann Graham, Northcote, Vic •Bill Batchelor, Nubeena, Tas

OBITUARIES

Obituaries are limited to 100 words **BROAD, Elizabeth Mary (Beth)** (18.5.97) Beth Broad was born at Farday, Vic, in 1916 to Harold and Frances Ellery, and was from a strong Methodist background. In 1937 she married William Broad of Sutton Grange. Together they established the "Deloraine" Jersey Stud at Pyramid Hill, Vic, where they became vitally involved in the Church of Christ. Beth was known as a strong woman of faith and courage, whose trust in the Lord was shown through some difficult circumstances. As a tribute to this special lady, more than 400 people gathered on 22 May at Pyramid Hill Church of Christ for a victorious Thanksgiving Service.—K. Pitt

CUTHBERT, Maisie Edna

(8.1.97) Born in Croydon, Vic, in 1911 to Mabel and Walter Mitchell. In Box Hill she joined the Sunday school, girls' club and basketball club. Married to Ted Cuthbert by H.A.G. Clark in 1934, they were loyal members of the church for decades. Maisie served in youth work and Sunday school teaching. She gave years of special care to her mother and handicapped daughter. She and Ted gave valued service to the Helping Hand Association and the Alkira Centre. Box Hill and Bayswater churches and four grateful children give thanks for her love, Christian life and service.

—L. Dewberry

JOHNSTON, Dr Kerr

(1917–1997) Born Brisbane and Dux of Sydney Grammar School at 15 years, after family moved to Sydney. Refused University entrance as too young. Graduated with B. Engineering and worked with Howard Auto Cultivators, then Forestry Commission. Awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and became Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Uni-

versity of Newcastle. He had a lifetime interest in alternative fuels. In his 70s he went to Korea to help nationals understand English and western culture. He served as a missionary with SIM one month each year for nine years. All his activities expressed his faith in God. He married Gail 20 years ago. Both were faithful in the Maitland, NSW church.

WILLIAMS, John Charles

(27.4.97) Born 11.10.07. Local preacher at Kaniva, Vic, for 40 years, respected for his judgement and honoured for his integrity, giving generously of his time, John was the friend and confidant of many. Local preacher and usher, he was usually "at the door" each morning service and only periods of hospitalisation and increasing frailty in recent years prevented his attendance. Husband of Ruby, father of John (dec'd), Alison, Jenny and Sue, in his 90th year, "J.C." last attended worship a week before his death. Paul Bauer conducted the funeral service, a large crowd attending, brother-in-law Claude Cunningham gave the eulogy. —J.B.

Pastor

Mount Druitt Community Church (a Church of Christ) is a small congregation that seeks to grow both spiritually and through fulfilling Jesus' great commission. We are seeking an energetic, spiritually-mature person to fulfil the full-time position of Pastor. The person we require will need to fulfil the following criteria:

- Over 40 years of age, married and possessing spiritual wisdom;
- Ability to relate to a diverse range of people and ages;
- Bible college graduate; and
- Teaching and teamwork skills.

This person will need to:

- Have pastoral care skills;
- Be compassionate;
- Have experience with people from a low socio-economic background;
- Have a creative approach to problem solving; and
- Be committed to leading the Church and making all decisions based on the Word of God.

Applications close 20 June 1997.

Please send your application to:

The Selection Committee
Mount Druitt Community Church
8 Calala Street
Mount Druitt NSW 2770.

NSW

WOLLONGONG (Ted Keating, Brian Bruce) March Leadership training ... 90 at Men's Breakfast ... Aboriginal group "Wakakirri" at evening service ... Young Adults & Couples played indoor cricket ... April Inauguration of MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) ... Computerised presentations for planned giving. Graham Agnew speaker ... Sole parent families morning tea ... May Seminars "Children of Divorce", "Remarriage", etc ... Youth Mission to Thailand fund raising ... Young family camp ... Meditative music album released.

MAITLAND (R.N. Hawkins) Guest speakers Karen Walter (counsellor), Wendy Parish (C of C Crisis Centre) ... Children's program "Oasis" presented morning program, great ... Mr & Mrs David Mephail, Tahlee Bible College students, doing field training with us ... Dr A. Kerr Johnston died 10 May. Memorial service 14 May ... Premier performance in Hunter Valley of "Grunt" by Wal Spencer ... Jeff Morris guest soloist.

FAIRFIELD (Darren Harwood) Darren received B. Theology degree. His visitation, PR work & religious instruction is creating interest in the community ... Men meet for prayer Sunday mornings ... Good attendance at Friendship Group after photo & report in local "Advance" ... Bible school growing with Elecia Harwood helping Kathleen McNeill ... A Vietnamese & Iraqi family attend regularly & are considering membership ... G. & M. Goninon placed over 8,000 Bibles in 1996-97 through Gideons.

CHATSWOOD (Norris Brook, Rosalie Rofe) Covenant Players visit church with challenging presentation ... Good use being made of Wayside Pulpit ... Pot-plants, umbrellas, seats & luncheon table installed at church front for office & shop workers ... Four mothers speak at Mother's Day service ... Further hospitality Sunday held ...

Members discuss objectives of the church with Mission Statement prepared & adopted.

MAITLAND (R.N. Hawkins) Paul Hawksley of SIMAID guest speaker ... Mr Hawkins represented C of C at induction of Craig Wilmott into ITIM chaplaincy at Christ Church Cathedral ... Mary & Ray Hawkins going with Baptist fellowship to Africa & England on a mission & study tour in July-August.

EPPING (David Moyes) Margaret Farmer appointed as part-time Support Worker for Epping Community Support (new ministry for Epping). Duties include general assessment/referral and support to families experiencing difficulties, train volunteers for outreach, support to lone parents, shut-ins, respite care to single parents, assistance to families in need and facilitating groups for particular needs as determined.

SA

PROSPECT (Ruth May) Invitations sent to the churches inviting all who played sport for Prospect Kilburn church to attend a special service. Nearly 200 attended. "New Connections" supplied entertainment, followed by BBQ ... Friendship Group enjoyed an Autumn Leaves Tour in the hills ... Playgroup held Teddy Bear's Picnic ... The G.R. Stirling Lecture held at Prospect to full house ... Home group well attended. 5-week video study popular.

TAS

LAUNCESTON (C. Spaulding, W. Kerrison) 26 girls & 4 officers attended State Girls' Brigade Camp ... Allan Webb, National Director Overseas Missionary Fellowship, speaker 11 May ... Dedication of Baby Taylor Smithurst ... 22 ladies in camp at Bicheno 17-18 May.

HOBART CITY (Clinton Wardle, Andrew Tonkin) "Kidzone" a new week-day program for primary-aged

children launched ... Monthly luncheons as fund-raiser for CWF operating again over winter months ... New pastoral care team commissioned to assist with congregational visitation ... Another Hmong family farewelled on departure for north Queensland ... Representation at Bill Hybels seminar at Launceston ... Valued member Basil Golder died suddenly, at the age of 92 years.

NUBEENA Geoff Morffew spoke at morning service on 4 May ... A group of 20 came from Devonport & took morning service on 18 May. Geoff Langmaid was speaker ... Stan Ryles conducted Bill Batchelor's funeral ... Gordon Henderson went to Victoria to take a friend's funeral.

VIC

ESSENDON (K. Stothard) Dinner in April realised \$610 profit ... J. Strack presented with Deacon Emeritus certificate for 60 years on Officers' Board ... Craig Wood-Burgess new church Board member ... Sick folk include Alice Buttress, Alf Musgrove, Don Ferguson ... 8 members attended Presidents' Reception at Footscray.

DANDENONG (Brian White, Malcolm Taylor) 160 attended Easter morning service ... 24 men went on tour to Kenworth trucks ... Outreach services still well attended ... Minister attending prayer retreat for 4 days ... Evening services on 3rd Sunday of month continue to grow ... Church saddened at sudden death of Jenny Tillie ... Dale White speaker at 10.00 am 20 April. 10 made commitment.

NORTH ESSENDON (Mike Esbensen, Frank Rosol) Paul Smith spoke on Tourette's Syndrome 13 April ... Dave Ploog celebrated 80th Birthday & Jim Lycett given surprise 70th Birthday party at Essendon church ... Members viewing church growth videos Saturday mornings. Further planning anticipated after series completed ... Young woman baptised 11 May ... Combined

service at Mount Road Uniting Church 25 May followed by lunch ... Lynda Lycett hospitalised ... AGM changed to October.

KANIVA (Paul Bauer) Sympathy to Wheaton family on deaths of brother Roy and his wife Anna, result of road accident; also to Williams family on passing of "J.C." ... Meaningful Pentecost family service held, children playing impressive part. Luncheon followed ... CWF celebrated 70th birthday ... Youth band participated in morning service.

NORTHCOTE (Rod Brown) Within a week, three of our elderly members died ... Flo Prideaux in Panch Hospital following fall. John Prideaux underwent surgery and is expecting further tests. Timothy Ratcliffe been in hospital for operation ... As well as Tongans using our buildings, so are All-African Christian fellowship, their pastor Peter Joe-Andah was the speaker at 3rd Sunday 5.30pm meeting ... L. Leach & A. Hirsch met with area churches to discuss revitalisation issues.

MORWELL (Andrew Ogden) Before his baptism in the service 18 May, John Pue gave a testimony as to his journey & final acceptance of Christ. Samoan families provided lunch for members and John's friends ... Series of special Sunday night meetings being held for younger folk, attracting strong support & meaningful for the community ... Membership led by minister supported recent Newman Crusade resulting in some 200 disciples in various churches.

MOUNT CLEAR (Dale White) Community Awareness Month in May involved Lions Club, Senior Citizens & Brownie-Guides in Sunday services ... Projected 30% increase in offerings followed successful planned giving review with Darren Kittel as guest speaker ... 6 men attended "Promise Keepers" rally in Melbourne ... Church packed to hear guest speaker Michael Frost ... Kids Club launched, with over 30 local children attending on Friday afternoons.

Exploring the Day ... and Counting!

JANET THOMPSON

When I sat for my high-school exams, I was given a number which had to be written on each piece of paper I handed in. I can still remember the number, to my surprise (perhaps because I had to learn it in French as well!). *

The Education Department gave me another number when I began my teacher-training. I had to write this on all official paperwork, so I haven't forgotten it. I can recall the number plates of cars which have belonged to family and friends ... and my high-school English teacher!

But these days there are so many numbers in my life that my poor beleaguered brain is crying for mercy. *

I have numbers for my Tax File, Social Security, the Autobank, my credit card, Outpatients ... an endless list. And if you add phone numbers, it's enough to make anyone dizzy. *

I have given up. Apart from a few phone numbers and my PIN (which I must NEVER reveal to a living soul—or I will lose my good standing in the community), I write them down. It's ridiculous. Surely I am more than just a collection of numbers. I know my name! *

So it was refreshing to unwrap my new T-shirt and find that the pack was sealed with a sticker which read, "Proudly Packed by Susie (47)". Clothes usually have tags reading "Packed by 273" The manufacturer can track down someone to blame, or fire, for a mistake. *



But this label was delightful, not sinister. I found myself picturing "Susie" packing the shirt with care; even wondering who might buy it. I felt as though she and her employer were working together to bring me a quality product. Whoever devised this scheme deserves a bonus! *

One small addition to standard procedures has spread an aura of goodwill around the employee, the firm, the product and the customer. *

We are all people—worthy of care and consideration. I hope the idea spreads! Each of us is unique and God loves and values us as the people we are. We won't be handed a number at the Pearly Gates, and be told to take a seat! *

Introduce Your Friends to an Australian Christian



Greater love has none than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.
John 15:13 NIV

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The Last Word

Everything was created by him, everything in heaven and on earth ... All things were created by God's Son, and everything was made for him.

Col 1:16

Have you seen the latest environmentally sound product in the shops? It's a mouthwash for people who drink tap-water.

The government is finally doing something about energy conservation. They're asking motorists to remember to turn off their windscreen wipers whenever they drive under a bridge.

Whenever he thought about the environment he felt absolutely terrible. So at last he came to a fateful decision. He decided not to think about it.

Air pollution is really bad in London. Yesterday, the West End After Dark tour started at lunchtime.

Water pollution is so bad, there's been a 200% increase in the sales of scuba-diving equipment. What's so bad about that? Most of the customers are fish.



Hugh tries out his new Swiss Army Golf Clubs.

From *The Silence of the Lambs* by John McPherson (Zondervan 1997).