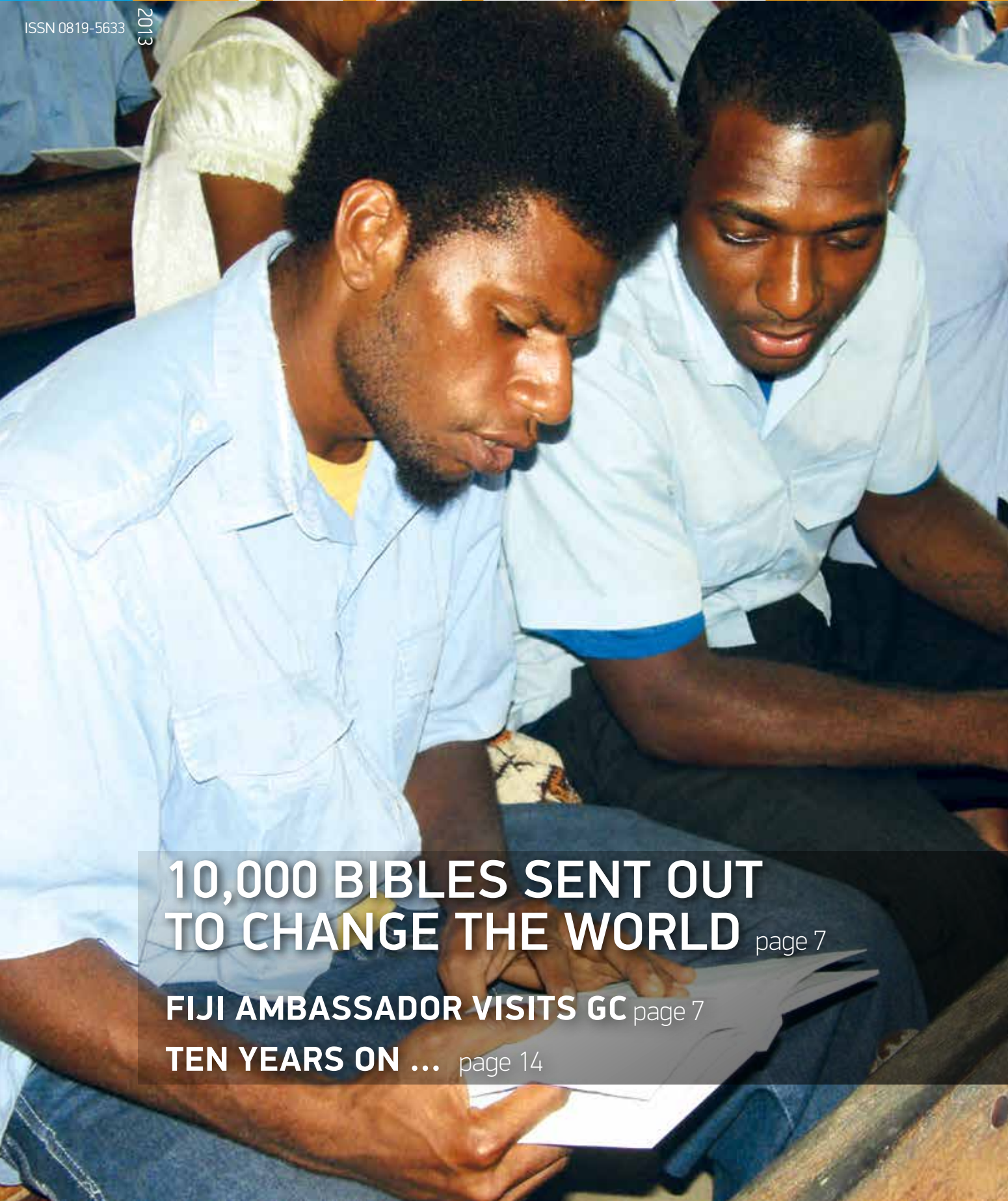


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Record

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**10,000 BIBLES SENT OUT
TO CHANGE THE WORLD** page 7

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TEN YEARS ON ... page 14



TO FIND OUT MORE VISIT

WWW.DESIGNEDFORLIFE.ME

Adventist health program ready for action

Wahroonga, New South Wales

Calls by Adventist world leaders for the Church to boost its health emphasis have been welcomed by advocates of the recently refreshed Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP).

"They're right," said Kevin Jackson, board chairman for the Church-owned Lifestyle Medicine Institute and Health Food Department director of the South Pacific Division. "We have a very real need for resources that will help us connect with our communities in a way that meets people's needs and presents our health ministry in a contemporary and relevant way."

Mr Jackson said CHIP "ticks all the boxes" in the way it covers the various facets of health and wellbeing. "In terms of health results, CHIP has already proven itself thousands of times over."

Since California doctor Hans Diehl launched the program in the 1970s, more than 50,000 people from four continents have participated, with measurable improvements in terms of weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and

insulin dependence. In 2012, ownership of CHIP passed to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the program resources were completely redesigned and updated. The new CHIP has an expanded focus on wholistic wellbeing, not just cardiovascular health.

CHIP participants undertake an intensive educational program, the standard model being 18 sessions running over three months. A group setting provides a supportive environment to help reinforce positive lifestyle behaviours.

Historically, the backbone of CHIP has been local churches using the program to connect with their communities. The refreshed CHIP is also being delivered in hospitals, workplaces and educational institutions.

Students at Andrews University in Michigan are currently participating in the program and medical students at Ohio University will complete CHIP as part of their training. The structure of the program allows family GPs to use it to assist their patients.



Dr Hans Diehl.

"We're running a CHIP program right now with more than 40 people in the group," said Pastor David Price from Gosford, NSW. "The participant group is a mix of non-members, new church members and contacts of our congregations.

"This program is something our Church can offer on a regular basis because the costs are covered by the participant fees. The health outcomes of the group so far are exceptional. We see CHIP as integral to how we engage with our community." —Kent Kingston with Julie Praestiin

Big offering makes big difference

Cooranbong, New South Wales

Two historic buildings at Avondale College of Higher Education have been repaired and upgraded with the help of an offering collected in Seventh-day Adventist churches in 2012.

The biannual offering raised \$A144,000, enabling Avondale's Music and Greer Halls on the Lake Macquarie campus to get a much-needed facelift.

Vice-president (finance) Paul Hattingh said the response reflects the profile the music program gives to Avondale. He is referring to events such as the Avondale Concert Series, which includes the meditative and reflective music program, Evensong, and to last year's Homecoming concert, Music for Royal Occasions, which filled Avondale College church. "It [the offering] has enabled us to do more than just the basics," he said.

These basics have included: repainting exteriors and interiors; replacing broken windows, guttering and rotten timber beams; repointing mortar between bricks; and re-plastering ceilings. The funds have also enabled Avondale to: improve drainage; increase storage; install air conditioning in every classroom, office and rehearsal room; install swipe card access to each rehearsal room; and re-

polish floorboards.

"Two old buildings look good again," said property manager Bruce Cantrill. "I like to fix things up."

Music strand coordinator

Aleta King said the restoration and enhancement is giving students a stronger sense of ownership of and pride in their space. "It says something about the value we place in them, and they respond accordingly," she said.

It also says something about those who have supported the offering. "You chose to give more than you normally would," said president, Professor Ray Roennfeldt. "Your generosity is now improving the Avondale experience for our music students. They thank you, and I thank you."

All work on Music and Greer Halls, including landscaping and re-coating roofs, should be completed by the end of July. —Brenton Stacey



The Avondale Music hall.



Sacrifice

James Standish

My family left Australia when I was two years old to serve our first term of mission service. We were stationed on the beautiful island of Penang, on the west coast of Malaysia. It was an intensely charming place. When it came to mission postings, it was as sweet as it comes.

That said, it presented challenges. Within a short time of our arrival, race riots broke out. A total curfew was declared and a shoot on sight order for curfew breakers was instituted. Unfortunately, it was right at that time I decided to experiment with my dad's razor blades. The experiment ended badly. And my family was faced with a dilemma: let me bleed profusely at home or risk being shot to death if we ventured out to the hospital.

My family chose the latter.

We survived, but one of our family friends, a young Chinese lab technician from the Adventist hospital, was not so fortunate. He was dragged off his motorcycle, beaten to death and then his body was burned. We passed the spot where he died whenever we went to the swimming pool. It was one of the oddest sensations—driving out for a happy swim, but passing by the big black oily mark on the road that memorialised the mindless murder.

It was to be my first of a number of brushes with violence as a missionary kid. When I was 14, a bomb exploded across the street from our home in Bangkok. Six people died from wounds incurred in the explosion and scores were injured. I'll never forget the sight of the carnage and suffering that horrible night. Then there was all the incidental violence: our home was broken into by armed robbers; my dad was briefly held with an AK47 to his head by communist guerillas; one of our Adventist physicians was murdered by a young guy we knew; our ice-cream man was gunned down (apparently he was dealing drugs on the side—a precarious second job); and there were three murders and one police killing in my vicinity over the years.

Nowhere is perfectly safe, I suppose, but no-one is going to make a hip-hop album about growing up on the mean streets of Wairoa where I currently live. In truth, I'm currently doing church service for sissies and I know it. But there are many serving our Church in the South Pacific who are very literally putting their lives on the line for

God. In some nations they face periodic political instability, widespread violent crime, coups and ethnic violence. Added to this, they brave exposure to severe illnesses like malaria. Church service in much of the world isn't for cowards.

And yet, as a community, we can be rather nonchalant about the incredible courage shown by our brothers and sisters. Every year we celebrate the bravery and sacrifice of those who serve in the armed forces. But where is the respect, the deference, the memory and the honour for those who have laid down their lives in Christ's cause? Where is their memorial? When is their remembrance day?

The sad truth is we have no cenotaph, no parade and no day of remembrance.

This is a double tragedy, as not only are we failing to recognise the immense sacrifice of the heroes of our faith and their families, but we are also missing an opportunity to remind ourselves that sacrifice is central to the cause of Christ. Jesus tells us that unless we are willing to give up everything—everything—we aren't worthy of Him. It's time to remember the champions of our faith who haven't just been willing, but actually have, given everything.

We are in the process of building an online memorial to all those from the South Pacific who have died in Christ's service (that is, those killed in accidents, violent acts or by disease related to the location or conditions in which they served). We want the memorial to honour their sacrifice, remember their service and to inspire all of us to live a courageous life for Jesus. If you know of someone who has died in Christ's service—whether they were a lay person or church worker—please send a biography of the length of your choosing or a factual summary, and, if you have them, photos, to: <lindenchuang@adventistmedia.org.au>.

Together we can remember the sacrifice of the very best of our community.

James Standish is editor of RECORD.

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 "A study given by a young person
 with their new World Changers
 Bible."

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Our vision is to be a church that...
knows
 experiences
 and shares
 our hope in Jesus Christ



Every nation

Kent Kingston

I grew up attending churches in three different countries—Australia, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand—and have attended or visited many churches dominated by a particular ethnic group as well as churches where the proverbial cultural melting pot was bubbling away.

But as fun as cultural diversity might be when it comes to combined church lunches, it's also a point of friction. One of the very first conflicts within the early Christian church was along ethnic lines: "In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food" (Acts 6:1).

Nearly 2000 years later, it's sad how some things haven't changed. I've sat in very multicultural churches in Australia and noted that, when it comes to Communion time, suddenly it's only white men presiding over the table. I've known people in ethnic minority congregations to tell someone from another cultural background that they don't belong. I've been present at diverse gatherings in the Pacific and heard the host nation's language dominate—spoken and sung to the exclusion of many in the congregation, including myself. In some ways I was grateful for this experience, because it's not often that a white guy feels marginalised. It was an important lesson to learn.

It's the 21st century and the global village is fast becoming a reality. How are we going to deal with it? Many Australian churches are seeing a rapid influx of migrants. Our denomination in a number of Pacific nations is searching for ways to engage the growing Chinese population.

I'm not going to be prescriptive, because each church has its unique situation. There are good reasons for establishing ethno-specific churches; there are good reasons for keeping them that way (like being a base for intentional evangelism to unreached local people from that cultural group). But sometimes there are good reasons for surrendering to the changing times and making the transition to a multicultural rather than an ethno-specific or blindly "mainstream" church.

In any case, my call is for inclusion rather than exclusion. Open doors and open hearts. Our leadership teams should reflect the diversity of our congregations, not the inequalities of our societies—as Christians we are better than that. We have the technology easily available to provide interpreting services where there are significant numbers of congregants who struggle with the church's main language. And, on that point: is the church's main language a matter of tradition or consideration?

I'd love to sing more songs in different languages, using different melodies, rhythms and instruments that reflect the cultures of those sitting around me. I'd love to invite more people home for Sabbath lunch to share the cuisine of my heritage. And I'd love to praise my God one day together with the "great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9).

**All Bible verses taken from the New International Version.*

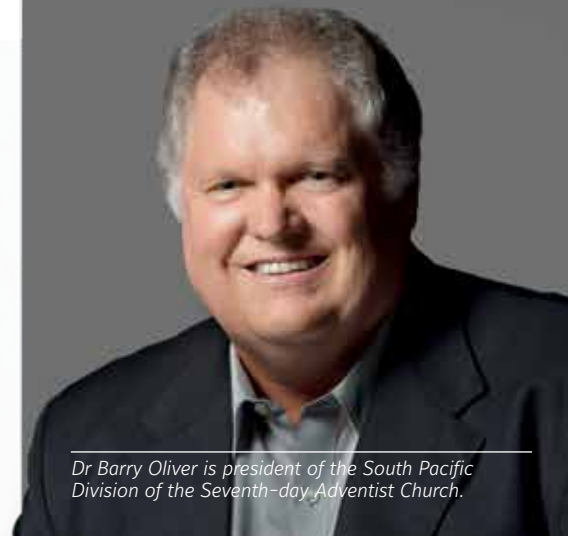
Kent Kingston is assistant editor of RECORD.

Tragedy at Atoifi: 10 years on

I was deeply moved reading Jean Gersbach's reflections on page 14 in this edition of the RECORD. In fact I must confess to a few tears. Jean, your resilience, hope and love is an inspiration to us all. I do not know why Lance had to be taken from us those 10 years ago at Atoifi. But you and your daughters, Louise and Anita, have shown us so much courage and remind us every day just how to trust in God despite circumstances that seem almost impossible to bear.

In memory of Lance, we at the Division would like to initiate the setting up of a scholarship fund for the training of nurses at Atoifi Hospital School of Nursing. The Division will provide a grant to start the trust fund but I would like to invite members from around the Division to contribute. You can do so by sending your donations to our Division Treasurer Rodney Brady at Locked Bag 2014, Wahroonga, NSW, 2076. We will work with Jean through the mechanics of setting up the fund to be managed by the Church.

Please be generous. We want to ensure that the legacy of Lance's contribution to Atoifi and his service for his God continues into the future.



Dr Barry Oliver is president of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



**Adventist
Aged Care
South Queensland**

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



Construction is progressing well at the new Victoria Point facility. Notwithstanding the rainfall, the project remains 2 weeks ahead of schedule.

The latest milestone for stage 1 saw the final sheet of roofing screwed into place last week. The 3 storey structure, complete with decorative turrets has now clearly claimed its position on the site.

The excitement is increasing at the site among the Staff and Residents who look forward to this state of the art facility becoming a reality.



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**R
NEWS**

Tributes flow for esteemed leader

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

One of Papua New Guinea's foremost Christian leaders and ministerial trainers, Dr Aaron Lopa, passed away in the early hours of Sabbath morning, April 20, at Port Moresby General Hospital. He was 67 years old.

The son of an animist "devil priest", Dr Lopa made a significant impact on Adventism in the Pacific during 40 years of active ministry. He spent a number of years serving at both Sonoma Adventist College and Pacific Adventist University (PAU) and was an integral part of the improvement of training for teachers and ministers.

"For many ministers in PNG, Aaron has been both a model and a mentor," said Dr David Thiele, acting deputy vice chancellor of PAU. "His influence in the Pacific will endure because Aaron profoundly influenced a whole generation of ministers, shaping their understanding of ministry, spirituality and the Church's mission."

"Aaron Lopa was truly sent by God to minister to me to enter God's service," said Pastor Thomas Davai, director of Student Services at PAU. "He began the fire burning in my heart and I wanted to be like him preaching [from a] very early age."

Dr Lopa was also a pioneer. He was the first Papua New Guinean to be sponsored by the Church for advanced study in the Philippines. He was also the first Adventist from PNG to receive a Doctor of Ministry, which he completed at Andrews University in 1997.

Dr Lopa received a number of significant awards during his lifetime, including the Order of Logohu, which was bestowed by PNG's Governor General in 2008. After his retirement from PAU in 2009, he was given the title "Professor Emeritus" in recognition of his contribution to university life. Earlier this year Dr Lopa was awarded the General Conference "honourable retired" service medal.

"Dr Lopa was a man of great gifts who could have risen to the highest echelons of politics or business in Papua New Guinea," said Avondale College senior lecturer, Dr Ross Cole, "but instead chose to devote his talents to training young men and women for ministry."

Dr Cole, who worked with Dr Lopa at Sonoma College and studied alongside him at Andrews University, also described Dr Lopa as a natural leader and a gentle, respectful and forthright individual. "He will be sadly missed but his legacy will long outlive him," Dr Cole said.

A funeral service was held at PAU. Dr Lopa was buried on his home island of Wuvulu in the East Sepik Province. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and children Jamie, Jennifer, Nathan, Alice and their families. —Linden Chuang/David Thiele/Andrew Opis



Dr Aaron Lopa speaking at PAU.

**REVIVED
BY HIS
WORD**

June 15—29, 2013

READING THROUGH THE BIBLE TOGETHER
ONE CHAPTER A DAY

15 - Neh. 12	19 - Esth. 3	23 - Esth. 7	27 - Job 1
16 - Neh. 13	20 - Esth. 4	24 - Esth. 8	28 - Job 2
17 - Esth. 1	21 - Esth. 5	25 - Esth. 9	29 - Job 3
18 - Esth. 2	22 - Esth. 6	26 - Esth. 10	

New Caledonia gets local president

Howick, New Zealand

Pastor Felix Wadrobert has been named president of the New Caledonia Mission, making him the first New Caledonian to serve in the role.

The announcement was made following the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference's (NZPUC) mid-year meetings at its headquarters in Howick, New Zealand, in May.

"While I am in this position as a servant, I have a dream to see the Gospel of Jesus Christ continuing to spread over the whole territory of New Caledonia," said Pastor Wadrobert. "The people here must hear His word and prepare for His coming."

Pastor Wadrobert has served the New Caledonia Mission for more than 30 years as a church pastor, youth director and administrator. The NZPUC executive committee voted unanimously for his appointment as president.

"Pastor Felix is a humble, calm and friendly pastor who

is well respected by both church members and the community," said NZPUC secretary treasurer Graeme Drinkall. "We wish God's blessings to Pastor Felix as he takes up this new role."

Pastor Wadrobert will continue to serve as general secretary of the New Caledonia Mission, and pastor of Bethanie church, until the end of the year. The NZPUC executive committee also appointed retired pastor Claude Couty as Pastor Wadrobert's assistant for the remainder of 2013.

Pastor Wadrobert and his wife, Jeannette, have four children, Audrey, Sébastien, Rudy and Aenaelle. —*Linden Chuang/Graeme Drinkall*



Pastor Felix Wadrobert.

10,000 Bibles sent out to change the world

New Britain, Papua New Guinea

Ten thousand "World Changers" Bibles were distributed to young people during the New Guinea Islands Bible launch held at Sonoma Adventist College on April 26-28.

The launch was attended by hundreds of young people and church members from across the province as well as students of Sonoma Adventist College. The size of the crowd meant many people had to follow the proceedings from outside the church.

South Pacific Division Youth director, Dr Nick Kross, and his associate Litiana Turner, were joined by Papua New Guinea Union Mission Youth director, Pastor Timothy Sandau, and New Britain New Ireland Mission Youth director, Pastor Bennis Kotoveke, to launch the Bibles.

The young people were given discipleship training, taught how to give a Bible study and given the opportunity to take one. The sessions were practical and used creative learning techniques. Dr Kross challenged the attendees to use their World Changer Bibles and Bookmark Bible Studies to introduce one young person to Jesus within the next 12 months. —*ToPailiu Benson Diave*



Dr Kross and Ms Turner.

Fiji ambassador visits GC

Silver Springs, Maryland, US

The Fijian ambassador to the United States met with Adventist church officials at the General Conference's (GC) headquarters on May 15 to discuss the South Pacific island nation's draft constitution.

In town for the GC's annual Religious Liberty Dinner, ambassador Winston Thompson accepted an invitation from the Church's Public Affairs and Religious Liberty department to discuss the proposed Fijian constitution and its potential impact on religious freedom. During the meeting, Mr Thompson was presented with a copy of the Fijian Adventist Church's submission to the draft constitution.

"The submission by the Seventh-day Adventist Church provided a succinct, yet in-depth, Christian perspective on a number of areas of concern," said Pastor Wame Sausau, field secretary of the Trans-Pacific Union Mission.

"Of particular interest are the church's views on religious

freedom, rights and discrimination, and the right to life.

"The draft constitution leaves room for serious challenges to religious freedom and human rights later on," he added.

It was the ambassador's first visit to the GC.

"The meeting was very cordial," said Karnik Doukmetzian, legal counsel to the GC. "We took the opportunity to give him a tour and talk about the Church, its presence and work around the world," Mr Doukmetzian said. "He was quite impressed with our breadth and representation."

—*Linden Chuang*



Adventist liaison to the UN, Ganoune Diop, meets Mr Thompson.



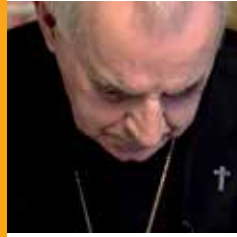
Ultimate penalty
Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Peter O'Neill has introduced the death penalty for convicted murderers and increased jail time for other violent offenders. But the Catholic Church says the death penalty is not biblical and may lead to revenge attacks from families of those executed. —ABC



Thanks!
Organisers estimate 1500 communities across Australia participated in the 10th National Day of Thanksgiving, held last month. Churches coordinated local community events and thousands of individual acts of gratitude were performed. —National Day of Thanksgiving



Relief effort
ADRA is among Christian groups lending a hand after the devastating Oklahoma tornado that killed 24 people, injured more than 200, and left up to 13,000 homes destroyed. A number of churches opened their doors to those left homeless. ADRA is providing food, clothing and clean-up supplies. —Christian Post/ADRA International



Shame
Britain's most senior Catholic has been asked to leave the country after he admitted to improper sexual conduct. Cardinal Keith O'Brien is accused by priests in Scotland of making inappropriate advances towards them over a period of decades. Critics say he should have been sent for therapy and stripped of his title. —The Scotsman



Healing wounds
A unique partnership between Australians and Israelis—Jews, Muslims and Christians—will see hundreds of Palestinian children treated in a Zionist hospital in Jerusalem. Project Rozana raises funds for the Hadassah Hospital and was launched in Melbourne by Hadassah Australia and Anglican Overseas Aid. —Hadassah Australia



Adventist alternative?
America's Boy Scout movement will include gay youngsters but not openly gay leaders. The controversy has led Christian parents and churches, which often sponsor Scout troops, to consider alternatives, including the Adventist Pathfinder program. North American Division Youth director, Pastor James Black, says new Pathfinders are very welcome. —Religion News

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Dream in the desert

The desert emirate of Dubai might seem like an odd location for a meeting of the technology, communications and media leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

It is, after all, not exactly a place overflowing with Adventists. And it's a very long way, both physically and culturally, from the world headquarters of the Church on the outskirts of Washington, DC. But, it turns out, it has its advantages when you are literally trying to bring the world together.

The most obvious advantage is that it's very easy to get to from all over Africa, Europe, the Asia/Pacific region and even the Americas. But there is something else. Here, in one of the hottest, driest climates on earth, a world-class metropolitan centre has grown up in, by city standards, the blink of an eye. The sheer audacity behind the vision of creating modern Dubai—filled with companies and people from across the globe, breathtaking buildings, man-made islands and world leading infrastructure—has a tendency to challenge minds to embrace a larger, more ambitious vision.

And on the table of the Global Adventist Internet Network meetings was just such an ambitious vision. Specifically, perfecting and integrating the way the Adventist Church presents its identity to the world on the web.

Klaus Popa, of the Adventist Media Center in Germany, gave an overview of the way the Adventist Church around the world currently represents itself on the web. He demonstrated that, in stark contrast to many major entities, the Church lacks a coherent global look, feel and functionality on the web. The discussion among the 240 representatives generally supported moving towards a globally coordinated look. However, how to get there remains the question.

A first draft of a global Adventist web style was presented by the General Conference (GC) communications team to a mixed reception.

"We are very supportive of a move towards global excellence, but obviously less so if the design presents global mediocrity," said James Standish, communications director of the South Pacific Division (SPD). "The draft design at this stage is, to be candid, somewhat cold and corporate. So, in principle, we like the idea of a global look and feel. In practice, we have some work to do before we have a global

web product that communicates the warmth and values of the Adventist message."

Fortunately, there is time. The model is not slated for release until later this year and Williams Costa, communications director for the GC, assured delegates their input would be very much appreciated as they work towards finalising the site.

John Becket, also from the GC, noted that whatever form the final product takes, it will permeate through the Adventist world over a period of time as current websites end their life cycle and entities then choose to move to the new model.

"When the SPD presented the current iteration of its website at the conference," said Andrew Hunt of Wahroonga Adventist Television, "the whole room went 'wow'—it is so fresh and engaging. I hope the GC will incorporate some of the SPD look and feel into their global model before it's finalised."

"The new SPD site is designed to show what value we provide to people in the community, not what departments have," said Jared Madden, digital director at the Adventist Media Netow this is why we have developed the Live More, Love More, Learn More theme which presents Adventism in a new relational human way."

The South American Division also presented its impressive new website; representatives credited the SPD site for its inspiration.

Also representing the SPD was Luke Pannekoek, who received an award for "outstanding leadership in Information Technology Ministry in the SPD". Mr Pannekoek, the SPD's IT manager, said, "The conference was humbling for me—it was inspiring to meet so many talented people who are making a difference in our Church. It helped me appreciate the privilege of working for the SPD and being a member of a global church family."

Three Australian expats also made contributions to the conference: Darryl Thompson of the White Estate in Silver Spring, Maryland, Warren Judd from the Adventist Media Center in California, and Daryl Gungadoo, who currently serves at Adventist World Radio, also in Silver Spring.

—RECORD staff

LETTERS

BUILT ON DISAPPOINTMENT

Elissa Schmertz, via website

Regarding "Primal Adventism" (Feature, May 18). All of Christendom was initially built on disappointment.

Jesus died ignominiously on a Roman cross a week after crowds waved palm leaves and declared Him to be their King of Israel. The disciples originally thought that Christ would return in their lifetime, but He didn't because their mission was to first grow the church on earth.

It is faith that dries tears of disappointment. Faith that God the Father is still in His rightful place and Jesus is continuing His ministry to us here on earth until the appointed time for human effort to end.

Being wrong and humble enough to admit being wrong is a great teacher. From humiliating defeat can come new and better understanding if we lay aside preconceptions and listen to Jesus speaking to us through the Holy Spirit.

GIANT OF FAITH

David McClintock, via website

I had the privilege of first meeting Dr Aaron Lopa as a missionary's kid growing up at Kabiufa in the '60s when he was one of the first to go through Grade 10 there.

Then as principal at Mt Diamond in the '80s we occasionally touched base at PNGUM meetings while he was at Sonoma. We were at Andrews together in the '90s and then I had the chance to catch up in 2006-07 when I came over to PAU for PAU Council from the TPUM.

A giant of faith has been

laid to rest. A man of integrity, a man of vision and yet a family man who thought the world of his wife and children. See you in the morning, wantok.

CELEBRATE? NOT YET
Danny Bell, WA

As was pointed out in "So far, some good" (Editorial, May 18), we have a lot to be thankful for but let our celebrations be tempered with the fact that a lot needs to be done.

No, we are not perfect, far from it with 0.46 of a percent of a person kingdom growth per church in Australia for 2011. Simply put: for approximately 500 churches that's not even half a person per church (latest GC statistics).

Let the celebrations begin but let them not obscure the desperate need in our communities and the greater need for the Church to adapt with the times to meet those needs.

We can no longer rely on large, excessively expensive public campaigns with a "come hither" style only attracting certain mindsets. We must now roll up our sleeves, get out there and get really dirty breaking down the prejudice that is building dramatically against organised religion in Australia. People don't care about what you know until they know you care.

FULL OF HIS LOVE

Marge Flett, via website

Thank you Jarrod for "The strength of women" (Editorial, May 4)—such a beautifully written article.

Your sensitivity of thought towards the strength of women who not only bear healthy children, but those strong

women who do not have children because of health issues or their circumstances—thank you for remembering them . . . it was for me like a lovely Mother's Day note or card.

Thank you again . . . I pray that God will bless your marriage in ways that will be overwhelming and full of His love.

CONCERNED PARENT

Leanne Abbott, NSW

Regarding "Sydney schools worship together" (Flashpoint, May 18).

As a mother of children who have attended our Adventist schools, and also as a current employee of one of our Sydney schools, I am deeply concerned at the use of a "Christian" magician in our children's worship services.

First of all, there is no such thing as a Christian magician, and I would like to know why we are using a magician at all—this is Satanic and there is no other word for it.

Magic has no place in our Church, and certainly not in our schools where our precious children are put under its sinister influence.

We should have nothing to do with this kind of entertainment, if you can call it that.

What are we teaching our children, that it's OK to dabble in a bit of magic as long as we are worshipping God at the same time? I don't think so.

Pastors, teachers and parents, be very careful of the influence you are allowing into our children's minds, for God will have the final say about the stumbling blocks that you are laying!

Note: Views in letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Letters should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All letters are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's original meaning will not be changed. Not all letters received are published. See Page 4 for contact details.



Fast family food

Finding time to spend in the kitchen preparing meals is a challenge we face every day. When it comes to the crunch, we often place convenience before nutrition. The good news is that with a little planning we can deliver family meals that are both quick and nourishing.

This handy checklist will help ensure a healthy balanced meal:

- ▶ Combine vegetables, quality carbohydrates and protein foods in each meal—this will provide a good variety of nutrients needed for good health.
- ▶ Bring on the vegetables—packed with antioxidants, fibre and other nutrients, vegetables add a healthy boost and great taste to a meal.
- ▶ Choose quality plant protein—including a variety of plant protein foods such as kidney beans, baked beans, lentils, chickpeas, tofu, nuts and seeds each day will not only give you all the protein you need, but other beneficial nutrients like fibre, antioxidants and heart-healthy fats.
- ▶ Choose quality carbohydrate foods—examples are wholegrain bread, brown rice, wholemeal pasta, sweet potato (kumara), corn and other grains like oats.
- ▶ Try something new—one of the best ways to make sure we're getting all the nutrients we need is to enjoy a wide variety of foods. Try a new grain, fruit, vegetable or bean.



TIP
If you don't have
ramekins you can make
this recipe in a quiche
dish; adjust cooking
time in step 5 to cook
for approximately
1 hour.



Roast veggie frittata

Preparation time: 20 minutes Cooking time: 40-60 minutes Serves: 6

- 2 cups fresh spinach leaves (optional)
- 350 grams pumpkin
- 1 large sweet potato (kumara)
- 2 large carrots
- 1 teaspoon crushed garlic
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 eggs, whisked
- 2 cups (500 ml) soy milk

1. Preheat oven to 150°C.
2. Prepare four ramekins or pie dishes with oil spray to prevent sticking. Line the sides and bottom of the dishes with spinach leaves.
3. Peel and chop pumpkin, kumara and carrots into bite-size pieces and roast in a well-oiled pan. Season with salt, pepper and crushed garlic. Cook for about 20-30 minutes until tender.
4. Once vegetables are cooked, whisk together eggs and soy milk.
5. Place your cooked roast vegetables into the ramekins, then top with egg mix. Cook for 20-30 minutes until set and starting to turn golden. Serve hot or cold with green salad and crusty bread.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVE: 679kJ (162 cal); Protein 9g; Fat 7g; Carbohydrate 15g; Sodium 270mg; Potassium 708mg; Calcium 230mg; Iron 2.2mg; Fibre 4.2g.

Call and speak to one of our qualified nutritionists at Sanitarium Lifestyle Medicine Services on 1800 673 392 (in Australia) or 0800 100 257 (in New Zealand). Alternatively, email us at nutrition@sanitarium.com.au (Australia) or nutrition@sanitarium.co.nz (New Zealand). Don't forget to order our free cookbook, *Food for Health and Happiness*, by visiting our website www.sanitarium.com.au or www.sanitarium.co.nz

Sanitarium

LIFESTYLE
MEDICINE
SERVICES



Divine miracle

The story of an Adventist family's "miracle" child was featured in the *Sunday Mail* in Queensland earlier this year. While still in the womb, Lyndon and Sharon O'Neill's youngest son, Shaun, required several blood transfusions as a result of an anaemic condition. The newspaper highlighted Shaun's recovery over the 17 months since his birth. The O'Neills are members of Eight Mile Plains Adventist church. —Peter Stojanovic

Tech savvy school

Lilydale Adventist Academy has unveiled a new smart phone app to streamline communication between the school and the home. The app, developed by COXTECH, allows parents and students to receive school newsletters, canteen menus and other notifications on their mobile devices. The app is the first of its kind to be used by an Adventist school in Victoria. —IntraVic

Recipe for fun

Darling Downs Christian School's (Qld) "Mini-Masterchefs" showed off their cooking skills at the school's open day on May 26. Ellie Paxton-Hall—a finalist on the *Masterchef* television show in 2011—served as the celebrity judge of the cooking competition and cake decorating challenge. The school's open day also featured a pet parade, novelty stalls, rides and a fun run. —Adrian Fitzpatrick



Rhiannon makes a splash

Nine-year-old Rhiannon Dein became the first Avondale School student in the past 10 years to compete at the New South Wales Primary Schools Sports Association (NSWPSSA) swimming carnival, held at Sydney Olympic Aquatic Centre in early April. Rhiannon finished fifth in her heat in the nine-year girls 50-metre freestyle (with a time of 38.21 seconds) and 23rd overall. The NSWPSSA swimming carnival is the only event where all NSW schools—public, private and independent—come together to compete in swimming. —Felicity Pittaway

Good things come in threes

The South Australian (SA) Conference's annual big camp ended on a high note with three individuals formally welcomed into the gospel ministry. Cosmin Dan Marica and Laolagi Limu were ordained, and Lily Panozzo commissioned, during the camp's Friday night program in April. Cosmin and his wife, Raluca, recently migrated to Australia from Romania, where Cosmin had been ministering for several years. Samoan natives Laolagi and wife, Helen, have been serving at churches in SA for the past five years. Lily grew up in Adelaide and, after marrying husband Matthew, has been actively involved in chaplaincy and pastoral ministry in SA. —Robyn Dose



Rotary awards

Several Sydney Adventist Hospital (San) staff members were honoured at the Rotary Club of Wahroonga's annual breakfast meeting at the San on May 8. Dr Jeanette Conley, group director of Medical Services, was awarded the Bill Leventhal award. Chief medical officer and Resident Service manager Marilyn Algeo, Occupational Health and Safety manager Jenny Doust, and Education officer and Regional Transport Office administrator Daniel Gallagher were awarded Pride of Workmanship awards. —Leon Clark

Exciting new chapter

Gosnells' Adventist Book Centre (ABC) in Western Australia has undergone a complete makeover. New fixtures and bookshelves were installed over the Easter long weekend, giving the store a more contemporary look. The new displays were purchased from the local Collins bookstore, which was closing down. —Terry Lambert/NewsWest

Stories worth sharing

What great stories are you hiding? Is there a special event happening at your school or church? Have you recently been on a mission trip or know of a church member who has received an award? We want to hear from you! Email your news and photos to <news@record.net.au> and help us share your stories.

Is evolution really impossible?

Dr John Ashton has produced a relatively short volume, provocatively entitled *Evolution Impossible*. But has he really demonstrated the theory relied upon by scientists around the globe is impossible? If so, how? And is the book readable for those of us who've never immersed ourselves in the sciences? RECORD went to Dr Ross Grant to give us a review of the book.

Overall I found the book's style well paced and engaging. In the introduction, Ashton concisely covers the claims and assertions of evolutionary theory. He supports the summary with relevant quotes and referenced publications from reputable evolutionary scientists. He then proceeds to give the reader a "behind the scenes" view of the very real problems that the scientific community is currently addressing regarding the identified holes in evolutionary theory. Almost like a political intrigue the reader is left in anticipation of what is coming next.

Over the next 13 chapters the reader is treated to a logically constructed, credible apologetic for a creationist model of origins delivered at a popular level. The unique feature of this work is Ashton's ability to summarise in one modest volume, material relevant to the evolution debate across a very wide spectrum; from probability theory and the first living cell, to the global flood and fossil record, to radiometric dating and beyond.

While I found the book to be a generally good read, some areas are worthy of specific comment. The summary of Darwin's theory of evolution in Chapter 2 begins well but may jump too quickly into creationist explanations to keep an evolutionist comfortably engaged. Detail on Darwin's theory could have been expanded to outline more clearly Darwin's limited knowledge of genetics and heredity.

Ashton provides a good introduction to complexity theory, leading the reader clearly and logically through the complex probability calculations; wisely pausing to give readers realistic reflective points, enabling them to grasp the meaning of the huge numbers generated. A very readable chapter on the likelihood of evolution producing new genetic information is provided. However, Ashton could have highlighted the important implications of the cell's complex DNA repair mechanisms more clearly, as these stop mutations—precisely the opposite of evolution's requirements.

Ashton makes a solid case for interpreting the fossil record as evidence for mass extinctions by an aquatic/marine catastrophe. However, while his statement ". . . the fossil evidence suggests that all animals were wiped out in one massive world flood" (p 77), is not inconsistent with the data, more direct evidence should be provided.

In the section on missing links, Ashton does well to keep the readers focused by constantly reminding and sum-

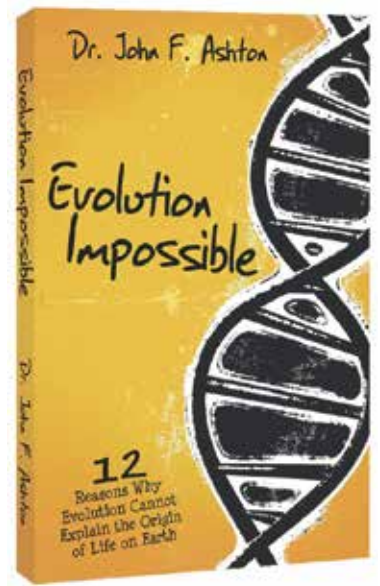
marising what is actually required to transition (at the molecular level) from one structure, through the many new transitional forms (ie. a huge amount of new information). As he points out, such transitions are something the fossil record does not support.

As I have not found a good textual summary of the evidence for a worldwide flood, I was very pleased to see Dr Ashton attempt it. He introduces the topic confidently and provides a good collection of relevant information. This section would have benefited from a summary table covering the various peoples, origins and details of flood legends. I did find his deuterated water explanation for the reduction in post flood ages speculative (though cautiously plausible).

Disappointingly, the section on erosion/sedimentation rates and the age of the earth appeared to be padded out with reiterated evidence for the short existence of life due to genetic decay (already discussed in a previous chapter). While a good attempt at an important area of evidence, this section seemed to lack significant technical detail.

Toward the end of the book Ashton gives a reasonable précis of some of the core problems with the current big bang theory with use of opinion from both older, reputable scientists like Hoyle and Wickramasinghe and more recent comments from Lerner and Lieu.

This book covers the gamut of empirical topics relating to the evolution debate, providing much good data for both the general and specialist reader to ponder. Ashton brings information from a variety of sources in a way that is engaging and logical and adds to the thinking person's model of origins. However, while this volume provides a good overview of many of the key arguments against evolution in a readable style, the gravity of some of the arguments would be strengthened with a more comprehensive reference list of seminal/original material. I do hope he is planning an expanded volume to address these issues. That said, this is as an excellent overview with many issues dealt with in sufficient detail to provide readers much food for thought. I thoroughly recommend it. R



Dr Ross Grant, a biochemical pharmacologist, is head of the Australasian Research Institute and clinical associate professor at the Sydney Adventist Hospital Clinical School of the University of Sydney.



Ten years on . . .

by Jean Gersbach

May 18 marked the 10th anniversary of the beheading murder of my missionary husband, Lance Gersbach, in Atoifi, Solomon Islands. We mourned the loss of a husband, father, brother and friend.

Great tragedy and grief is gruelling. It crushes your spirit. It suffocates. It overwhelms. At the time it leaves you feeling bereft of hope, purpose and a future. Yet amidst the anguish that pervades every fibre of your being, God is never far away. Seriously? Do you believe, beyond doubt, that God is there? Does the God of the universe really pay close attention to our loss, our despair and our apparently insignificant lives here on planet earth? Perhaps this type of cliché is a good example of "Christian spin". What is the evidence?

As a nurse educator, I often ask my students for evidence to substantiate rationales for their actions/practice. Evidence is vital for without it our words are just that—unsubstantiated words.

Facing the future as a "new widow" with two young daughters to feed, clothe and provide schooling for, I was afraid. In the first few months, grief was crippling. I could not hold down a job. I struggled to cope with my own emotions, let alone those of my daughters. Questions flooded my mind. How could I provide for my family into the future? Yet Scripture promises that God will supply our needs in Christ Jesus. Did that mean spiritual needs only or physical needs too?

A few weeks after Lance's death I journalled a prayer to God: ". . . I want to share our needs only with You God, so You can demonstrate and fulfil Your promise to provide for us." I committed at that time not to discuss our financial needs with anyone. Not family. Not friends. Not strangers. I would talk only to God.

The first credit card statement arrived and I panicked. Turning to God I told Him it was up to Him to do His thing! Over the ensuing weeks we were overwhelmed with the love and generosity of people, known and unknown.

Monetary gifts came in unmarked envelopes from church members and strangers I had never met. Gifts, that to this day bring tears to my eyes, reminding me of God's faithfulness. I have often been reminded of the promise in Isaiah 65:24: "Before they call I will answer." In my experience it is irrefutable that God heard our prayers and honoured His promise to provide for our needs. He has continued to provide for us in so many tangible ways for 10 years.

The first 24 hours after the murder are hard to put into words. I couldn't sleep and every time I closed my eyes I had a vivid picture of Lance's mutilated body. I felt fear, horror and despair. In desperation I cried out to God, "Take this image from me, I can't cope another minute!" Immediately the image was gone, but not only did it go, it was replaced with a favourite memory picture of Lance. To this day I have never again been haunted by those initial images. God has kept me in His perfect peace. I have certainty in knowing within my spirit that God is with us, even in the darkest of life's experiences.

Ten years on I have learnt that being single in a Christian church environment is not always easy. Irrespective of the intent, churches tend to focus on family, the nuclear family of dad, mum and the kids. Sometimes it seemed easier to stay away, to avoid having to face the reality of being alone, being single. Yet time has also shown me that there were those who looked beyond singleness and included me openly into their hearts and homes.

There is enormous value being in a community and we have been blessed by those who reached out and included us into their lives. I will always be incredibly grateful to the men in our church Pathfinder club, who mentored the girls through their teen years. The skills they taught, the exciting challenges, the fun and encouragement that these male

role models provided made a huge impact on our family, providing yet more evidence of God being so very close.

Has it all been easy? Let me assure you that is far from the truth—we have had, and continue to have, challenges and difficulties. However, learning to trust God more completely and seeing evidence of His working in our hearts and lives has brought comfort and hope for the future.

Perhaps the greatest challenge I faced was dealing with the acquittal of the two murder suspects and subsequent closing of the case. It left me reeling, crying out for answers. I believed God placed enormous value on human life and I was certain that He would see to it that justice would be served. However, that was not to be. The accused were acquitted and allowed to go free. I struggled with anger and a sense of betrayal over what had occurred. The injustice and apparent lack of consequences for the perpetrators plagued me. I longed for closure, yet I felt trapped, chained to the crime and unable to break free.

Evil cannot be condoned; we cannot ignore it, pretend it has not happened or that it does not matter. Being Christian does not mean I must overlook the wrong. It does matter and it matters to God. However, there is one significant flaw in the law of revenge. Unforgiveness never settles the score.

Midway through 2006 I reached a point where intellectually I knew there was little hope of finding any human resolution. I had made a choice to forgive the perpetrators and asked God to forgive them, but my heart and emotions lagged behind. I found myself moving through a range of emotions, but always I came back to that inner desire and need for closure.

In August 2006, I made contact with an anthropologist who informed me of an impending visit to Sydney of the chairman of the Kwaio Council of Chiefs. This man was the most powerful man in Bush Kwaio and one who had an inside knowledge of the happenings within the community where we had lived. On September 1, with just two hours' notice, I jumped into my car and travelled to Sydney for a one hour visit. This would be my first opportunity to speak openly with a Kwaio leader about the murder.

I arrived at the appointed meeting place feeling intense emotion—my head full of questions—not knowing what to expect. After brief introductions, the chief spoke of the events of that dreadful day and we shed tears together. I then informed him of my deep desire to find closure to enable me to move forward. I was in no way prepared for his response. After pausing for a few moments, he lifted his gaze and looked me in the eye.

"Jean," he said, "you have two options, but only one offers a way forward. They are not easy options, but very difficult options." I listened breathlessly.

"You must come back to Malaita, meet with the ac-

cused, pray with them and offer your total forgiveness."

To say that I was stunned is an understatement in the extreme. I was speechless. I felt angry and betrayed. After all, I was the victim here. How dare he ask me to offer total forgiveness for such a heinous crime, while the perpetrators go free! His request was unreasonable, even irrational. The visit concluded and I said my goodbyes, still reeling from his outrageous suggestion.

As I drove home, I recounted his words over and over: "Pray with them and offer your total forgiveness." I recalled a quote from a book on forgiveness by RT Kendall: "You must totally forgive them, unless you forgive them you will be in chains, release them and you will be released."

Slowly it started to make sense. He was asking no more of me than what Jesus had already done on my behalf.

When I considered what God had forgiven me, I realised I could do no less. Jesus died the cruellest of deaths so that I could have hope and a future. He accepted and forgave me totally—no conditions other than I accept. I didn't deserve it, I didn't earn it. He gave me Life. The love of God meant Calvary. Nothing less.

The more I thought about it, the better it sounded. I felt a sense of peace begin to wash over me and the tears flowed like a river! As I contemplated the total forgiveness option—both intellectually and emotionally—I sensed a feeling of freedom.

I was not in a position to return to Atoifi, so in January 2007 I wrote a letter, expressing that I wanted to offer my total forgiveness—that my forgiveness was based on what Jesus had done in forgiving me. The letter was sent and received. A huge weight was lifted and God has brought closure for me. The inner peace I experienced was tangible. God alone enabled me to take that step forward. There is no way I would or could ever have done this in my own strength. God gently brought me to this decision and I thank and praise Him for His patience with me. It took time—four years—to come to that point. Yet God never pushed me or made me feel guilty. Gently He carried me through until I was ready to leave it totally to Him.

I don't know the reason God allowed Lance to be murdered, but one day I will. Jesus' death on the cross is proof to me that God always has a purpose in the circumstance, and that His purpose and His plan will prevail and triumph through any circumstance. In the meantime, I know He sees, I know He cares and I know He loves. The evidence is there.

Has God been close these past 10 years? Absolutely. Nothing will dissuade me from knowing that God is with us and continues to be involved in the lives of His children. R

Jean Gersbach writes from Newcastle, NSW, where she is a nurse educator at the University of Newcastle.

How dare he ask me to offer total forgiveness for such a heinous crime. . .



The not-so-secret society of Conspiracy Adventism

by Anthony MacPherson

MOST ADVENTISTS, MYSELF INCLUDED, greeted with joy the news that Angus T Jones, the actor from the hit sitcom *Two and a Half Men*, had recently become an Adventist. It was moving listening to the testimony he shared with *Voice of Prophecy*. The upshot of this initial winsome witness was a focus on meeting Jesus with the potential to attract people to the Gospel.

Then everything got disastrously derailed. Angus T Jones released a media clip in which he agonised over the immorality in the show *Two and a Half Men*. The problem was not his comments about the moral content of the sitcom—after all, the show does indeed glorify sin and immorality. The real problem was that he did so in conjunction with conspiratorial Adventism. Almost instantly everything changed from a story about a young actor discovering Jesus, to a story about a young man sucked in by crazy claims about the Freemasons (apparently Jay-Z is one), the Illuminati, bizarre rants likening President Obama to Hitler, and more. In the eyes of many people, Adventists went from a group with a message about Jesus capable of grabbing the heart of a young Hollywood star, to a weird, paranoid cult indulging in the most ludicrous claims and manipulating a young man. The Church wisely and sensitively distanced itself from the conspiracy connection but the damage was done. A credible witness was greatly diminished.

A WAKE-UP CALL!

The high profile incident provides an ideal time for Adventists to think long and hard about our mission and methodology. Maybe God allowed this to happen to wake us up to the dangers of conspiracy theories and the disastrous effect it has on our witness. Satan would love nothing better than to shift the focus from Christ to baseless conspiracies. Unfortunately, he appears to have many

sincere but unwitting accomplices.

Adventists are to help people embrace the glorious victory of Jesus in the great controversy, not join in paranoid conjectures about an imaginary grand conspiracy. There is a vast world of difference between being a great controversy Adventist and a grand conspiracy Adventist. The way each narrates history, handles Scripture, shapes discipleship, impacts church community, and forms the mind and heart are often very different. One is our inspired calling from God, the other is a twisted product of man. In the introduction to her book *The Great Controversy*, Ellen White explains her methodology and aim. She says: "The great events which have marked the progress of reform in past ages are matters of history, well known and universally acknowledged by the Protestant world; they are facts which none can gainsay." What a contrast to conspiratorial Adventism! This should be our approach. Tragically, conspiracy Adventism turns all of this on its head. Crazy, dubious claims are made the essence of the message.

A MESSAGE: OPEN, PUBLIC AND VER

Ellen White's approach is what healthy Adventism has always used. The foundational bedrock prophecy for Adventism is Daniel 2. Here God nestled prophecy within well attested facts of history. Does anyone doubt the exploits of Alexander the Great? Who isn't fascinated by the amazing archaeological discoveries about ancient Babylon, Greece, Persia and Rome? This is our message. Not fervid conjectures about handshakes and pentagrams. Not spinning a yarn about symbols on the American dollar bill and fantasising that somehow a secret global conspiracy has been established. There is no mistaking the world of difference between the two approaches. One is exciting and the other is embarrassing.

The reality is that history is out of anyone's control, except God's. The rise and fall of empires is something that God oversees (see Daniel 2:20-22). No empire can resist this and no human organisation is secretly controlling it. Not even Satan can control history, let alone a rabble of Freemasons or Illuminati!

HAVE WE FORGOTTEN MURPHY'S LAW?

There is of course the more obvious fact, one known to all people by constant, unyielding and often painful experience: human beings are simply too flawed, fallible, stupid, disorganised, selfish, competitive and gossip prone to secretly control the world. And yet conspiracy theorists credit conspirators with god-like powers. Somehow conspirators can see the future, manage countries and superpowers, keep irreconcilable political enemies submissively on side, and effortlessly orchestrate wars, elections and financial crashes. Are these gods or humans? I would suggest that Murphy's Law helps us see this for what it really is—an embarrassing flight of fancy that keeps crashing up against the stone cold wall of reality.

Conspiracy Adventism approaches history in a way reminiscent of Dan Brown and his book *The Da Vinci Code*. Did you ever wonder how Dan Brown was able to "prove" that Jesus married Mary Magdalene and became the Progenitor of the Merovingian kings of France? Symbolology! This is the very same methodology that conspiracy theorists heavily rely upon. Forget facts, documents and the critical analysis of sources. Symbolology can prove anything. And it's much easier than having to deal with real history.

FROM CHRIST TO CONSPIRACY

I have never yet seen an Adventist conspiracy theory presentation that didn't dramatically move the focus away from Jesus Christ and onto the wildest speculation. Jesus becomes a minor supporting act. Front and centre are always the phantom conspirators and of course the heroic conspiracy theorist himself. Conspiracy theory parasitically lives off its improper attachment to Christianity. And, inevitably, the parasite always ends up killing its host.

FROM CONSPIRACY TO CONTROVERSIES

Paul has strong words for those who turn the church away from the truth to speculative fables: "As I urged you . . . charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith" (1 Timothy 1:3,4; see also 1 Timothy 4:7 and 2 Timothy 4:4). In Titus, after encouraging a devotion to the Gospel and good works, Paul warns: "avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless" (Titus 3:9). As a pastor you soon learn what produces healthy discipleship and what leads to fanaticism, perpetual immaturity and a harsh, argumentative spirit.

Devotion to conspiracy theory is a prime example. Obedience to Paul's words would immediately eliminate it from Adventism.

Conspiracy theories raise questions of ethics and morality. My observation is that conspiracy theories place advocates in a position where truth telling is compromised. Unable to offer clear evidence, the temptation to over-compensate, exaggerate and resort to embellishments is almost irresistible. When does it all descend into simple dishonesty? The ease with which any event or person is implicated into the conspiracy reinforces the impression that things are being made up. A classic yet appalling example of this is the frequent accusation that a particular Adventist scholar, pastor or administrator is really an undercover Jesuit. I guess this is not merely dishonest—it is slander. This is the fruit of a paranoid mindset that disdains public verifiable evidence. The ethical quality of our community can only degenerate. There is a price to pay for giving comfort to conspiracy theory.

CONSPIRACY REAL AND IMAGINED

Of course secret societies exist and are wrong. A Christian should never join one. They advance their own interests and often undermine justice. They bind people together in associations which are counter to Christ. Do small conspiracies happen? Of course! Thousands are happening right now. Governments, businesses, armies, politicians, societies (secret or otherwise), church members and probably your own kids are conspiring to various degrees. The world is a ceaseless realm of competing interest groups. Somewhere in the world some faction of a political party is conspiring to oust their leader in a coup. Australians witness this every election cycle. However, this does not in any way validate grand conspiracy theories, which are a completely different order of claim. Just because humans can now run 100 metres in under 10 seconds doesn't make credible the claim that they will soon be running 100 metres in less than a second. Orders of magnitude mean everything when reasoning from the known to the unknown. Conspiracies do not justify grand conspiracy.

WHAT WILL YOU BE?

Most church members I know who are sympathetic to conspiracy theories nevertheless limit the time and focus they give to them. Thankfully, the centrality of the Gospel in their lives squeezes out any significant impact the theories might have. However, this is not always the case and sometimes conspiracy theory bears its unhelpful fruit. My prayer is that we will become great controversy Adventists not grand conspiracy Adventists. There's a world of difference between the two. What will you encourage? **R**

Anthony MacPherson is pastor of Plenty Valley and Croydon churches, Victoria.



OPENING HIS WORD

Gary Webster

Cloning Christ: 7 Life-Changing Portraits from Patmos

Part 3: Rats, Humans & God Almighty

Imagine becoming a rat for the rest of your life, giving up so much of the good things of life, to save a bunch of dirty, disease-ridden rats. None of us would even entertain the thought! Yet Revelation's second life-changing portrait of Jesus reveals that God went infinitely further than that—Jehovah God Almighty, became a human for eternity. The Son of Man, the male child born of a virgin, became so human that he went even further—he died in the place of every single self-centred, sin-infested human.

Read Revelation 1:13,18; 12:5; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; John 1:1,14; 3:16; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:14,16,17

But what were the reasons God Almighty took on humanity?

Firstly, so He could die and in doing so:

1. Demonstrate God's love for us all and His justice in dealing with the sin problem.
2. Experience death for every person who has ever lived on earth.
3. By the suffering of his death make it possible for the plan of salvation to be totally adequate for us.
4. Defeat the Devil so that we could have salvation; deliverance from Satan's controlling kingdom; and strength and power to overcome evil and sin.

Read Romans 3:25,26; Hebrews 2:9,10,14,15; Revelation 12:10,11

Secondly, to be an adequate High Priestly intercessor who reconciles us to God.

Read Hebrews 2:17

Thirdly, to completely understand humans in order to help us in our personal daily struggles. Read Hebrews 2:18; 4:15,16

Finally, to be our example or model in Christian living.

Read Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 Peter 2:21-24

No question that this portrait of Christ as one of us, when seriously contemplated will cause us to love God. Be changed deep within right now by accepting this God in human flesh and all that he has thus accomplished for you and me.

Pastor Gary Webster is director of the Institute of Public Evangelism for the South Pacific Division.

R MY STORY

Hi, my name is Menega Sisi. I'm from the Highlands of Papua New Guinea where I was brought up by my Adventist mother and stepfather and attended a church school.



When I was 13 years old I had an argument with my family and went to live with my biological father. He was not an Adventist and didn't care what I did with my time. I stopped attending school and got involved with gangs, alcohol and other drugs. I brought a lot of trouble to my community.

But through this time my mother always prayed for me. As I entered adulthood, I agreed to attend a church camp with her. I was touched by the messages I heard there and I accepted the Lord. After I was baptised my church sent me on a six-week course at the Peter Knopper Church Leadership Training School and I started work as a volunteer with Volunteers In Action (VIA).

I was young—maybe too young, only 19. I made some serious mistakes in my work and after a year working with VIA I was removed from my position. Discouraged, I soon returned to my old lifestyle. In fact, it got worse. I did the right thing in going back to complete secondary school, but while I was there I got involved in a cult that worshipped the devil.

However, God had not forgotten me. One day I was walking in the schoolyard and I heard a voice that said, "I have already chosen you and given you a work, but you have not done that work. You need to go to the church". I went to the Adventist student club on campus. It was the first time I'd ever attended. They were having elections for the club officers and somehow I was elected to serve as the president for the next year! I was very surprised but I accepted. Right then I prayed a prayer of commitment to God and felt a fresh cool breeze come from my head to my toes.

From then on I avoided my gang friends and, with God's grace, my habits were gone. My church accepted my confession and welcomed me back. Now I'm in my second year of ministry studies at Sonoma College in East New Britain. God is helping me at every step. I can see how He has worked in my life.—with Kent Kingston

OPINION POLL



Conspiracy theories:

- Give valuable insight
- Are dangerous distractions
- Help interpret prophecy
- Require careful discernment

Visit <record.net.au> to answer this poll.



East Timor: Neighbours in need

by Mark Webster

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS OF CIVIL UNREST characterised by violence and continued poverty tore East Timor apart. The result? Thousands have experienced, and continue to experience, hardships most of us struggle to fathom. And all of this just an hour's flight from Australia's shores.

We're neighbours, but our lives are worlds apart.

Maria, a 67-year-old grandmother, lived through East Timor's darkest times. As a child, instead of going to school, she and her sisters would spend hours each day collecting and carrying heavy jerry cans of water.

As a married woman Maria watched her family suffer continual illness from the dirty water she collected. But with only one source of water there was no other option.

The turmoil of the 1970s as Portugal pulled out of East Timor forced Maria and her family into the jungle. It was the only place some sense of safety was assured. They foraged for food—eating wild cassava, greens and berries. But often there would be days of hunger.

One day, Maria's daughters, Sofia, 3, and Teresa, 2, came across a creek. Thirsty and tired they drank, unaware that a corpse upstream was polluting the water. In a matter of hours their already frail bodies crumbled. They remain buried in the jungle they called home.

Maria's heart-breaking story doesn't end here. After resettling in their hometown post-independence, Maria's husband fell ill. He suffered from vomiting and diarrhoea for a week before passing away. Again, Maria was faced with the grief of losing a loved one because of unsafe water.

Today it's a different story—Maria no longer worries about getting sick or losing another loved one to water-borne disease. She has been a participant in ADRA's water and sanitation project and as a result understands the importance of basic health principles including boiling water before drinking and cooking.

ADRA has also helped Maria by working together with her community to establish 12 new boreholes and water stations and build 250 toilets, while providing health and sanitation training to more than 2300 people.

Proverbs 14:21 is just one of the hundreds of texts that call us to examine our attitudes and actions towards others. It reads: "Whoever despises his neighbour is a sinner, but blessed is he who is generous to the poor."

Maria's home of East Timor, like the many island nations that surround Australia, is undeniably close—neighbourly even. But based on Proverbs, the question of who my neighbour is remains unanswered.

A lawyer once asked that question of Jesus, who told the parable of the Good Samaritan in reply. The conversation concludes:

"Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?" [Jesus asked]

[The lawyer replied] "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise" (Luke 10:30-37 ESV).

What Jesus highlights is that the question is not really about how we define our neighbours. The question is how we treat them. R

You can help 22,000 neighbours in need this end of financial year. Your gift of just \$A40 will help ADRA raise the \$A800,000 needed before June 30 to improve the health and wellbeing of more than 22,000 people like Maria in Australia, the South Pacific and south-east Asia.

Simply complete and return the form included in the insert, visit <www.adra.org.au/neighboursinneed> or call 1800 242 372.

Mark Webster is CEO of ADRA Australia.

Signs To Life

READING AND RESPONDING
TO JOHN'S GOSPEL



Symposium with Kendra Haloviak Valentine

Friday, August 16-Saturday, August 17, 2013
Ladies Chapel
Avondale College of Higher Education

Features: Three keynote presentations and launch
of Kendra's new book, *Signs To Life: Reading and
Responding to John's Gospel*

Presented by the Faculty of Arts and Theology,
the Institute of Worship and Signs Publishing
Company.

\$75 (Single); \$130 (Double); \$55 (Senior); \$55
(Avondale College of Higher Education staff
members and students)

Delegates receive a copy of *Signs To Life: Reading
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sermons on the Gospel of John, lunch on Saturday
and refreshments on Friday and Saturday.

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Kids' Space

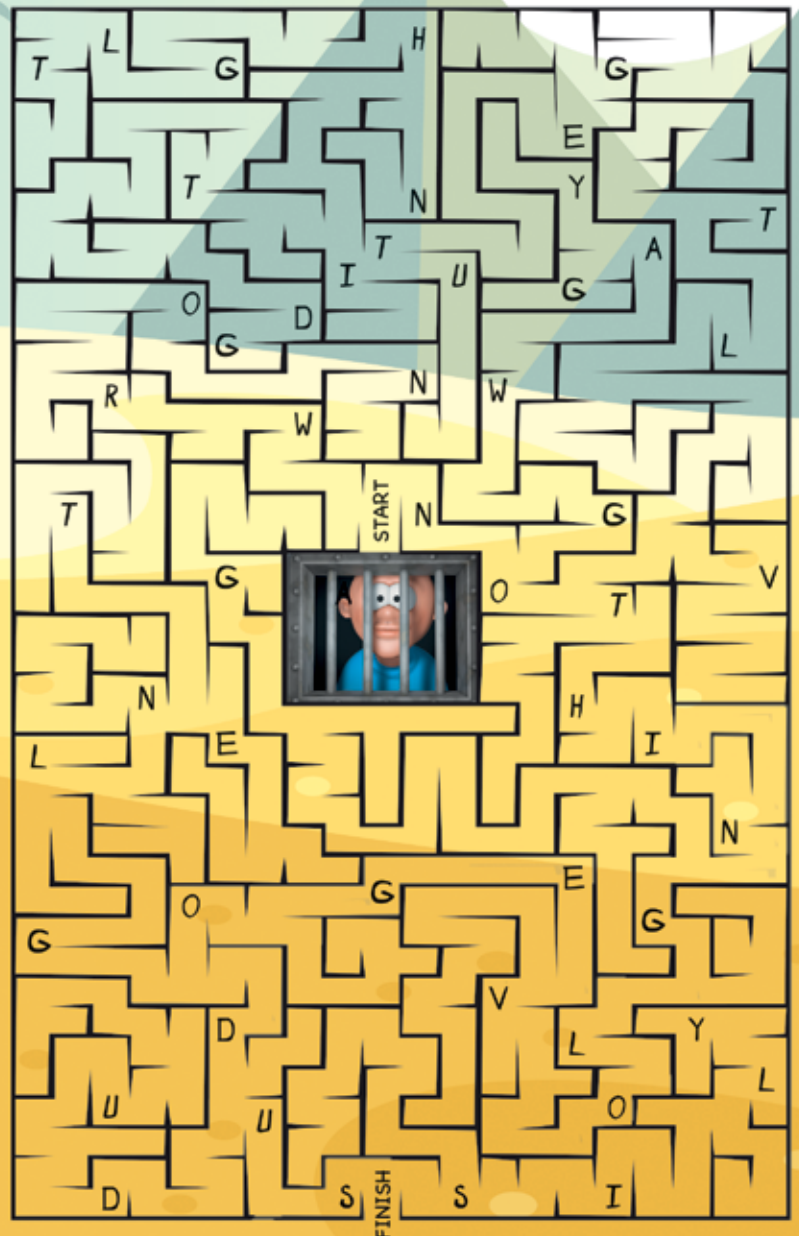


ELLA* KIDS

HELP JOSEPH TO GET OUT OF PRISON

Joseph was sent to jail when he did
nothing wrong! God never left
Joseph and sent him dreams. After
a long time Joseph left prison and
became second in charge to Pharaoh.

REMEMBER: God is with us in
good times and in bad



MEMORY VERSE: " _____ can separate us from the
_____ has for _____." Romans 8:38

WEDDINGS



Critchley-Owen. Troy James Critchley, son of Harry and

Rhonda Critchley (Armadale, WA), and Monique Mikaela Owen, daughter of Michael (High Wycombe) and Jessie Owen (Kalamunda), were married 24.2.13 at Livingston church, Canning Vale.

Lynn Burton



de Rossi-Ludlow. Matthew Glenn de Rossi, son of Glenn and

Adele de Rossi (Raymond Terrace, NSW), and Melissa Kelly Ludlow, daughter of Paul and Ann Ludlow (Bundaberg, Qld), were married 14.4.13 at St Andrews Adventist church, Bundaberg. Matthew and Melissa will be setting up their home in Bundaberg, where they will continue their work and support of the Hinkler church.

Kevin Amos



Gray-Lambert. Jason Gray, son of Peter and Jenny Gray

(Melbourne, Vic), and Amy Lambert, daughter of Mark and Robin Lambert (Launching Place), were married 10.3.13 at North Fitzroy church, Melbourne, by Amy's grandfather, Reverend Ken Bingham. Amy and Jason have set up their home in Northcote, Melbourne.

A H Waldrip



Johnston-Adams. Jonathan Johnston, son of Ronald

(deceased) and Priscilla Johnston (Darwin, NT), and Kelly Adams, daughter of Roy Adams (Stanthorpe, Qld) and Jeanette Adams (Stanthorpe), were married, 4.10.12 at Lonnoc Beach, Espiritu Santo, Vanuatu. Jonathan and Kelly are currently residing in Gladstone, however they plan to move over to Chad, Africa in July to volunteer at Bere Adventist Hospital.

Joel Path



Mitchell-Woolfe. Jason Mitchell, son of Philip and Julie Mitchell

(Adelaide, SA), and Alisha

Woolfe, daughter of Ricki and Yvonne Woolfe (McLaren Vale), were married 24.3.13 at Morphett Vale church, Adelaide.

Nigel Ackland, Allan Croft

OBITUARIES

Ashcroft, Catherine (nee Haynes), born 14.10.1924 in Warburton, Vic; died 11.3.13 in Myrtleford. On 31.12.1956, she married John Alfred Ashcroft, who predeceased her. She is survived by Jonathan (Glenrowan), Catherine, David (both of Wangaratta) and Rosemarie (Narre Warren). Cathy was a beautiful person who loved life, her children and music. She had a beautiful smile and will be missed.

Malcolm Reid



Boyd, Keith Cain, born 18.11.1930 in Subiaco, WA; died 20.4.13 in

Wunkar, SA. He was baptised in 1946 in the River Collie, WA. On 25.3.1952, he married Helen Knot at Berri. They were married for 50 years, until she passed away in 2002. He is survived by his children and their families, Desiree and Warren May, Lurline and Brenton Wilkinson, Christine and Graham Clark, John and Simone Boyd, Michelle and Ron Meyles, Michael and Raelene Boyd, and Jenny Boyd; his grandchildren, Shane, Alison, Sheree, Brenton, James, Natalie, Ashley, Levina, Jarrod, Justin, Katrina, Matthew, Tegan, Gemma, Hayley, Cameron, Dwayne, Ryan, Tammy, Anthony, Keely, Taleetha and Kerolie; his great-grandchildren, Tahlia, Scott, Brooke, Jarrod and Ryder; and siblings, Irma and Denis. Keith was a caring, fun-loving and generous man who trusted fully in his God.

Robert Porter, Lagi Limu

Dawson, Phyllis Evon (nee Pengilly), born 28.3.1926 in Quirindi, NSW; died 8.3.13 in Townsville, Qld. In 1946, she married Aubrey. She is survived by her loving children, Julie and Patrick Daley (Tolga), Jenny (Townsville), Doctor Narelle Dawson Wells and Dean Wells (Gold Coast), Tod and Joy Dawson (Charters Towers), and Paul Dawson (Townsville); 15 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren; and her siblings, Fay Nash (Tamworth, NSW), Beth Harris (Cooranbong), and

Eion and Barb Pengilly (Port Macquarie). Graduating from Avondale, she worked for a short time at Warburton. After raising her children, she returned to university, majoring in special education, and passionately provided quality education to students with high level learning needs. Phyllis loved and supported her church through numerous leadership rolls. In her later years she suffered illness, but as a gentle soul was full of love and laughter.

Bob Borresen, Paul Dawson



Fehlberg, Trevor Keith Owen, born 12.4.1926 in

Collinsvale Tas, died 31.5.12 in Caroon Nursing Home, Goonellabah NSW.

Fehlberg, Joan Margaret (nee Greenway), born 12.2.1929 in Wollongong, NSW, died 13.5.09 in Caroon Nursing Home, Goonellabah.

Trevor and Joan married on 12.12.1949. They are survived by their children and partners, Russell, Nerilie and Terry Humphries, Garry and Trina, Janelle and Arnold Turner; grandchildren, Ian, Kylie, Brooke, Kelly, Nathan, Isaac, Marcus, Richard, Tarli, Jodi, Simon, Keaton and Jaidan; 13 great grandchildren; and their surviving siblings. Trevor studied theology at Avondale, where he met Joan. He later studied accountancy, a career he followed until his retirement. Trevor was blessed with an extraordinary singing voice. Despite being legally

LOCAL CHURCH OPPORTUNITY

Church youth leader-Bishopdale church (Christchurch, New Zealand). As a result of the current youth leader wishing to undertake further study at Avondale College in 2014, Bishopdale church would welcome applications for the above role. The successful applicant would take up the position in late January/early February 2014. Bishopdale church has an average attendance of 180 to 200 people per week and is continuing to grow. The church has a strong commitment to ministering to young people as evidenced in the above role and ongoing support of the church community in general. Christchurch has three tertiary institutions which a number of our youth attend and a Seventh-day Adventist primary and high school. In addition to this role, Bishopdale has a pastor and a full-time Bible worker. The role is full-time and includes a salary and subsidised housing. Applications or initial enquiries can be forwarded to John Edilson <John.edilson@xtra.co.nz>. Applications close **June 30, 2013.**

POSITIONS VACANT

Future senior positions-Adventist Aviation Services (AAS) (Goroka, PNG) is a small, busy, professional aviation organisation based at Goroka in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. It provides aviation transport logistics throughout PNG for the Seventh-day Adventist Church's operations and development work. AAS is currently in a time of transition and is looking at its future personnel in order to deliver its strategic initiatives. As such, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is seeking expressions of interest for the following positions: CEO, flight operations manager, maintenance manager, quality manager and aircraft maintenance engineer. For more information please visit the South Pacific Division's Human Resources website at <www.adventistemployment.org.au>. All expressions of interest, including your CV, three work-related referees and the contact details of your local church pastor, must be forwarded to: Human Resources, Seventh-day Adventist Church (Pacific) Limited, Locked Bag 2014, Wahroonga, NSW 2076 Australia; or email <hr@adventist.org.au>; or fax to (02) 9489 0943. Applications close **July 7, 2013.**

For more vacant positions or to advertise, go to <adventistemployment.org.au>.



blind Joan accompanied Trevor on the organ, memorising the songs he loved to sing. Trevor and Joan opened their home to many people, from foster children to those who just needed somewhere to stay. Sabbath lunch was always special. Trevor was a passionate man with unshakable beliefs. He and Joan loved their Lord and wanted more than anything to see all their family in the kingdom.

Keith Jackson



Franz, Hilario, born 10.9.1925 in Arena, Italy; died 16.3.13 in Southport, Qld. He is survived by his wife; three daughters; 20 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren (all of Argentina). His daughter, Caterina Franze, came for the funeral service on the Gold Coast, Qld. Hilario came to Australia in 1953 and joined the Adventist church at Southport. Although he had problems with his English, he became a deacon in the church, where he served responsibly. He was faithful to the end.

Raymond Trim, Wayne Humphries



Hyland, James Lawrence, born 20.10.1934 in Sorrell, Tas; died 25.1.13 in Hobart. On 4.9.1956, he married Patricia Atkin. He is survived by his wife; their children, Philip (Melbourne, Vic), Michael (Bowral, NSW), Shelley (Melbourne, Vic) and Sharon (Sydney), and their spouses; 10 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Jim was the caretaker of the Orford Youth Camp for over 17 years. His ability to connect with people and make them feel special was evident over the weeks following his death and during the memorial service. He was a great gardener and loved his fishing. We look forward to a reunion soon and a big warm hug.

Darren Slade

Nemaia, Halepatu Elik, born in Niue; died in Auckland, NZ. He is survived by his wife, Luseane; and Jenna, Lau, Winnie, Paita, Afa, Anne, George (all of Auckland), Margaret (Sydney, NSW), Taumani (California, US), Losana (Niue), Hea (Auckland,

NZ), Veia (Hobart, Tas), Anita and Della (both of Auckland, NZ). Hale (Harry) was dedicated to Jesus and the church. He served faithfully in the Auckland Niuean congregation. Greatly loved and missed.

Ben Timothy, Fonovaka Nelisi

Palmer, William Henry, born 15.9.1914 in Worcestershire, England; died 23.2.13 in the Karinya aged care home. On 3.4.1954, he married Doreen. He was predeceased by his wife in 2006, Brian Richard in 2006 and David John in 1971. He is survived by his children, James Palmer (Toodyay, WA), Allison Rodgers (Pingelly) and Jane Palmer (Perth). William was a gentle soul who loved his Father in heaven and his church greatly. He fell asleep on Sabbath morning to be woken on resurrection day at the coming of the Lord.

Steve Belson

Poilly, Noel (Roland), born 25.12.1929 in Mauritius; died 30.3.13 in Springvale, Vic. On 29.6.1975, he married Gisele Poilly. He is survived by his

wife; and Eileen (Springvale), Caline (Gold Coast, Qld), Gilbert (Springvale, Vic) and Elaine (France). Roland was a quiet man who loved reading and had a keen sense of humour. A lover of architecture and family, he will be sorely missed.

Malcolm Reid



Robinson, Hilary Claribel (nee Shields), born 16.8.1939 in Brisbane, Qld; died 3.4.13 in Caloundra Private Hospital. On 26.10.1958, she married Rod Robinson, who predeceased her. She was also predeceased by her daughters, Narelle and Debra, and brothers, Stan and Laurie. She is survived by her son, Pastor Kevin Robinson and wife, Janine (Sydney, NSW), grandchildren, Blake and wife, Michelle, Brielle, Tylee and Kolton; her sister, Ruth Harris and husband Rob; and step-siblings, Robert Clare and Christine Akers. The longest serving member of Landsborough church, Qld, Hilary knew both times of joy and sorrow but she was not one to let the rough

POSITION AVAILABLE
Operations Manager, Adventist Aged Care – Sydney



Adventist Aged Care, Sydney, is seeking to appoint a full time Operations Manager who is focused, motivated and a team player. This new senior position will oversee the day to day administration, management and operations of the residential facilities and independent living units across 3 sites. The successful applicant will implement the strategic plan, manage departments within their budgets and lead an effective administration team. Answerable to the Managing Director, this person will uphold and promote the values and ethos of Adventist Aged Care. Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and management and aged care experience are highly desirable.

For further information and a position profile, contact:
Pr Adrian Raethel at adrianraethel@adventist.org.au
or phone 02 8876 5288

Applications close Friday 19 July 2013

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Register: www.avondale.edu.au/alumni

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spots in life overshadow and rob her of the happiness and enjoyment of living. Her warm, happy and caring spirit endeared her to family, friends and strangers alike. A great cook, she was gifted in hospitality.

Laurie Evans, Percy Harrold



Watts, Audrey Avis (nee Arnall), born in 1925 in London; died 28.2.13. On 11.6.1949,

she married David Watt in Camberwell, London. He predeceased her in 2008. She is survived by her children and their families, Bronwen and David, Julian and Sonja, Christopher and Barbara, and Maria and Chico; her grandchildren, Jade and Siann, Jordan and Melissa, Karl and Karen, Jacqui and Brett, Monica, Nadine and Craig, and Lee and Sari; and great-grandchildren, Raine, Emerson, Ellyah, William, Tyson, Liam, Raya, Jay and Peony. Audrey was a very happy, beautiful Christian, who represented her Lord in word and deed.

Robert Porter

Wright, Emily Jean (nee Ford), born 1.12.1915 in Lismore, NSW; died 30.3.13 in Caroon Kalina Nursing Home, Lismore. In 1946, she married Aubrey Frank Wright, who predeceased her in 1985. She is survived by her daughter, Glenda Roberts (Newcastle); grandchildren, Darrin Roberts and Lynette Lounsbury; and great-grandchildren, Tenzin and Finnian (Sydney). Jean became an Adventist in her late teens. She graduated as a Bible worker

from Avondale, and then worked at the South NSW Conference office as a secretary. Emily did a number of years of volunteer work at Betikama in the Solomon Islands and at Kambubu in PNG, during the late '60s and mid-'70s. She had a strong faith and was a great believer in the power of prayer.

Beth McMurtry

ADVERTISEMENTS

Rossmoyne Adventist Retirement Village and Sherwin Lodge will celebrate 50 years of service on July 7, 2013.

Adventist Residential Care will celebrate with a function at 3pm on site and offer guided tours. Why not attend and celebrate with residents and staff? Memorabilia will be greatly appreciated.

Notice is hereby given that the 90th Triennial Session of the North New Zealand Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held at the Manna Park Seventh-day Adventist Church at 653 Great South Road, Runciman, Auckland. The session will commence at 2.30pm on Sabbath, September 7, 2013. Delegates will be appointed in harmony with the Constitution. The business of the session will be as provided in the Constitution, incorporating the presentation of reports and financial statements for the triennium 2011–2013. A revised Constitution complying with the New Zealand Charities Legislation will be discussed and voted on. The officers of the Conference and a

standing nominating committee will be also elected.

Victorian Conference Constituency meeting. Notice is hereby given that the next regular Constituency Meeting of the Victorian Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held at Seddon Seventh-day Adventist Church Hall, 21 Hotham St, Seddon, September 22, 2013. It will commence Sunday morning at 8am and conclude no later than 5pm. Delegates will be appointed in harmony with the Constitution. The business of the constituency meeting will include presentation of administration and departmental reports, financial statements for the years 2009–2012, all business as required by the Constitution and all matters arising from the constituency meeting of 2009.

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\$4, don't miss out! Nunawading Church, Central Rd. Sun, June 30, 11am–3pm.

Medical practitioners needed for the Logan Adventist Health Centre. Full-time and part-time practitioners needed. Contact 0428 486 455.

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Finally...

"I've always respected those who try to change the world for the better rather than just complain about it."

- Michael Bloomberg

Next RECORD June 29

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