

# Messenger

## ASNA highlights 2003

by Sophia Nicholls, ASNA PR co-ordinator

ASNA has run training and awareness weekends in Daventry, West Green Road (London), Dublin, Winchester, Swindon, Reading and Newbold in the course of 2003, but reports that the highlight of its 'highlights' was in Northamptonshire.

The Adventist Special Needs Association held a respite and training weekend at the Frontier Centre in Irthlingborough, Northants. More than 90 people attended the event, some staying for the weekend and others coming for just a day. Twenty of those attending had disabilities and 21 volunteer respite carers provided much-needed rest for the primary carers. Some carers were heard to say that this was the first time they had been able to leave their child and know that they would be receiving spiritual and social wor-

ship. This meant that parents were free to attend workshops and the support group.

Twelve delegates received certificates for attending the disabilities training workshops which were run by Susan Boniface, Causeway Prospects Missions Co-ordinator. The workshops focused on understanding disabilities, communication, and working with people with learning difficulties in the community.

Pastor Richard Daley led an inspirational and spiritual group discussion on Friday night and Sabbath

morning where he discussed the subjects of getting to know God and each other, acceptance, comfort and hope. Members said how this encouraged them as they were able to discuss their individual experiences in a spiritual context. The afternoon allowed further opportunities for support and encouragement as members focused less on their own difficulties and more on helping and sharing with others. This support group was led by counsellors Trudy Young and Dr Hermione Graham, both members of the Adventist counsellors' team.

The Saturday evening concert provided a platform for members with disabilities to witness in music and poetry. Ellaemae Anderson, a

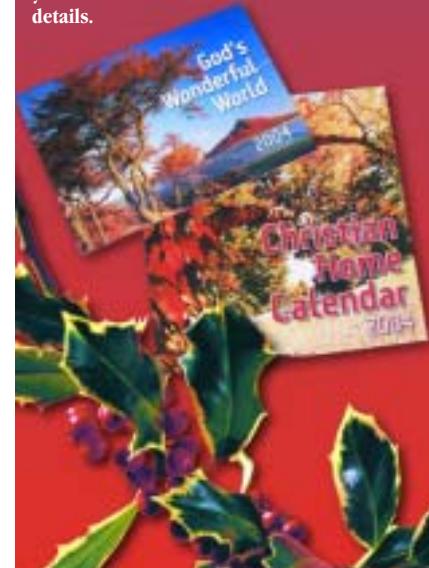
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Mark Finley's *Solid Ground* is the senior devotional, and *Colours of Grace* (by a variety of authors) is the women's devotional for 2004. Ask your PM secretary for details of the Evening, Young Adult, Teens, Junior, Primary and Pre-school devotionals.

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**ASNA highlights 2003**

9-year-old with autism, recited a poem, and her brother Quinland played the piano. Her sister Pearl sang a duet with a friend she met at the weekend who has speech and language difficulties. A presentation by the special class group, who also led the praise and worship on Sabbath morning, was particularly moving. The members of this group, which is based in the Handsworth church, Birmingham, all have learning difficulties. They used Makaton, a modified signing system based on British Sign Language, as well as

instruments to sing praises to God. Guest artistes and musicians included the Tuckley twins, Miriam Wood and Beryl Pussey.

The ASNA Executive Committee for 2003 has included Nigel Nicholls (chair), Olivia Robinson (treasurer), Sophia Nicholls (secretary), Sarah Hurlow, Ethney Anderson, Anne Loftman, Karen Weekes and Jacqui Thorogood.

On Sunday morning Angela Sterling and Angela Woodburn presented 'A Home for Life'. For many years both have been involved in providing a Christian home for people with disabilities.

Those with disabilities enjoyed a

parallel programme during the weekend, catering for both their social and spiritual development. Outdoor activities included abseiling, climbing, search and rescue, and initiative games.

In celebration of the European Year of the Disabled (2003), ASNA hosted a concert and conference.

ASNA is run by volunteers and we would like to hear from anybody who is interested in giving their time or money to help. For more details contact: [asna@special1.fsnets.co.uk](mailto:asna@special1.fsnets.co.uk) or phone 01491 833395.

**Harvest Thanksgiving**  
Bodmin church celebrated its

Harvest Thanksgiving service on Sabbath 20 September with a return visit from a former minister, Pastor Paul Smith, who was the guest speaker for the day to a full church with visitors from far and near.

Produce from farm, garden and hedgerow reminded us of a provider God in colour, design, and increase.

Next day's auction yielded £120 under the hammer of Mr Len Taylor, which included £30 for a flower trolley made by the 'auctioneer'.

The proceeds have been sent to Adventist World Radio.

A. BLACKBURN

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**Come celebrate with us**  
London Seventh-day Adventist Male Voice Choir will be celebrating 25 years of singing glory and praise to the God of our Fathers. They started under the leadership of Mr Lambert John, Mr George Escoffrey, Mr De Coteau and Dr Keith Davidson in Westminster Central Hall with approximately a hundred-strong men.

Today there are approximately 50 men (some from 25 years ago) as well as new members in the Choir. Since that time the Choir has gone from strength to strength and has recorded various CDs. The Choir toured the West Indies in 1999 which was a big success. There will be a celebratory Festival of Praise at the Holloway church. The London Adventist Male Voice Choir appreciates and thanks everyone for the support given to them each year.

\* Julia Cameron, *God is No Laughing Matter*. Pan paperback.

## Prayer Feature

with Tracy Dixon

### Reaching others

I am writing this feature as a kind of answer to the question I posed a few weeks ago about how we might reach others with our message. The answer came to me through a secular counselling friend of mine, quoting from a book called *God is No Laughing Matter* by Julia Cameron\* and the quote my friend gave me was: 'Let our gardening hands be gentle ones. Let us not root up one another's ideas before they have time to bloom. Let us bear with the process of growth, dormancy, cyclicity, fruiting and reseeding. Let us never be in haste to judge, reckless in our urgency to force unnatural growth.' (Page 206).

This quotation was my answer to prayer this week as it teaches me anew to be patient with others. It shows me that God can save all sorts of people if we are gentle and nurturing in our handling of their enquiries about him, and that he uses all kinds of people to speak to our hearts of spiritual matters; we just really need to search to hear his voice. I also wanted to share with you that for the first time in twenty-three years my mother is going to church tonight as I write this feature. It isn't an Adventist church, but it is a church and I believe it is a start. So thank you to all those of you who are praying for my family. I think this answer to prayer shows that there is always hope.

Send prayer requests to: [TElizabethDixon@aol.com](mailto:TElizabethDixon@aol.com).

**Healthwise**

with Richard J. B. Willis, BUC Health Ministries director

**Sweet enough**

October saw the launch of America's latest 'gift' to the UK - Krispy Kremes - a range of variously coated doughnuts being marketed at Harrods. One man queued for twelve hours to be the first customer. His bonus for his effort is still coming and coming, twenty-four doughnuts each week for a year. Healthwatchers estimate that the man will eat around 400,000 kcalories; 28 kgs of sugar; and 20 kgs of fat (a quarter of which will be saturated fat) while enjoying the doughnuts!

This prize comes at a time when the Food Standards Agency is trying to reduce sugar levels in food. The Food Commission is calling on all supermarkets to remove sweets from the checkout areas especially where these are within easy reach of children who are not only tempted by them but help themselves, to the embarrassment of parents who feel obliged to pay up. It appears that the only supermarket to co-operate at present is Waitrose whose check-outs are snack-free.

Tesco and Sainsbury declared themselves check-out sweet-free in 1993 but, depending on the store, do not

stick to policy. Not that it's only the supermarkets who sell at check-outs. We find the same at filling stations and even pharmacies. An Indian professor who now lives in London said he found it hard to understand when he came to the UK how the government could promote a health policy and yet see the policy undermined in the shops.

If we think that our purchases should be left to personal preference we may need to think again. Companies such as Hershey in the US have published a number of primary school books, *Hershey's Kisses: Counting Board Book*; *The Hershey's Kisses Addition Book*; and *The Hershey's Kisses Subtraction Book* in which all the material is depicted in terms of their own-brand chocolate bars. They have more advanced books on multiplication, weights and measures, and fractions of chocolate!

Nowhere does Hershey point out that a bar of their milk chocolate is approximately half sugar and a third fat (of which half is saturated fat). So children grow up with the idea that learning and chocolate go together!

There is a tendency on the part of sweet manufac-

turers to depict or 'subtly' suggest that their product is healthy or contains ingredients essential to health (through pictures of, say, milk or fruit). Cadbury's and Kinder have used this kind of imagery for years. Healthwatchers have pointed out that purchasing these chocolate products puts the milk content, at 72-75p per 100 mgs, around four times the cost of a glass of whole milk and about three times its calorie content.

Nobody wants to be a killjoy, but it's time we recognised that our children are sweet enough! How can we lament the rise in childhood obesity without doing something about one of its causes? Help the children by encouraging healthy eating and exercise, and encourage shopping outlets to adopt a health-promoting policy. What could be sweeter in the long run?

**Editorial** with Lorna Arthur<sup>†</sup>

# Was this how it went?\*

**W**as this how it went?

'You must be joking! Go to Bethlehem?'

'Yes.'

'Be born to an unmarried mother, in a cowshed behind the motel?'

'Yes.'

'Have to flee as a helpless toddler from an angry king? A king who from here I could vaporise in an instant?'

'Yes.'

'Spend my childhood as an exile in a foreign land, being stared at by Egyptian children, feeling out of place, learning hieroglyphics and climbing pyramids?'

'That's the idea.'

'To come of age, at twelve, only to have my mission misunderstood, and be in trouble with my dad and mum?'

'They will come to understand.'

'Go through my formative teenage years in a town with a red-light district and gambling dens - like Nazareth?'

'You can handle it. Just choose your own values and keep talking to me.'

'Become a man, only to make ploughs for farmers, and get splinters under my fingernails?'

'Remember the overworked oxen; make their yokes fit easily.'

'And just when I'm an experienced carpenter with a business of my own, you expect me to leave my job and go bush, out to the desert?'

'Yes.'

'And when I get there I will have no meal service supplied, no company, and I'll have to face the devil single-handed?'

'You will never be single-handed. I will be there, too.'

'Then, when I leave the scene of starvation, I am to take on a group of "helpers" that I am expected to train?'

'Yes, you will have twelve.'

'Only twelve? The pick of the leadership of Israel, I suppose?'

'No, some fishermen, an accountant from the inland revenue, a couple of hotheads, a rebel or two and a money-loving businessman.'

'But here I have thousands of angels at my command. I control all Space. I can order spinning worlds into existence and they appear!'

'Yes, I know.'

'How will I teach these twelve men what they need to know?'

'You just have to be yourself. They'll eventually

'There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. He was despised and rejected - a man of sorrows, acquainted with bitterest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. . . . He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. . . . He was wounded and crushed for our sins. He was beaten that we might have peace. He was whipped, and we were healed!' *Isaiah 53:2-5, NLT.*

'That's right.'

'They will show no recognition, no gratitude?'

'Some will recognise you. A few will come to see you as God, and love you for yourself.'

'And when is all this to happen?'

'At a time you choose.'

'So I do have a choice about whether I go through with this, then?'

'The choice is always yours.'

'There is no other way?'

'If you do not go, all mortals will die without hope. Will you go?'

'I will.'

'Are you sure you want to?'

'Yes, I love them. I will go.'

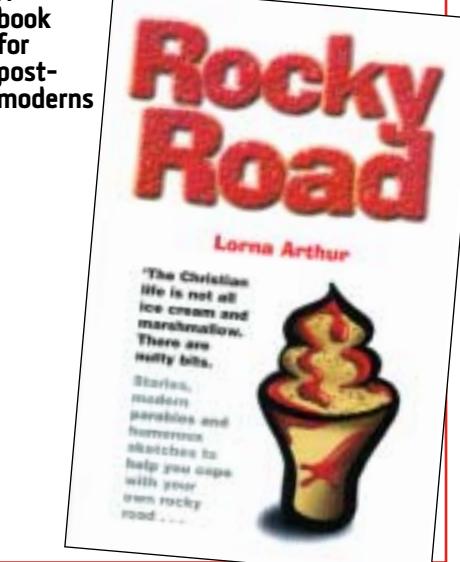
'You won't regret it.'

Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.' *Philippians 2:5-8, RSV.*

\* This feature is republished from Lorna Arthur's book *Rocky Road* (Autumn House), £5.95. Order on the ABC credit card hotline: 01476 539900.

\*A guest editorial. Lorna Arthur is a Seventh-day Adventist teacher, author, and pastor's wife who lives in Canberra, Australia. She is a graduate of Newbold College.

**A book for post-moderns**





## Hallelujah Anyhow!

**S**aturday 31 May 2003 proved to be another high day in the Adventist calendar. Roy Francis Productions in association with *The Voice* newspaper ran a two-day Christian Gospel Exhibition. Not only was our church invited to take part in the exhibition but to lead out in the Sabbath service, all of which took place at the Fairfield Halls in Croydon.

On Friday 30 May the exhibition stand was set up. Manned by members of the London Youth Federation, the exhibition provided the youth with an opportunity to share their faith. With the assistance of key rings, pens, books, leaflets and other promotional material, members of the public were not only able to learn more about Adventism but also take away a reminder.

Despite issuing all the tickets for the event, all things worked together for good – there was still enough space to accommodate those attending the exhibition and to share blessings with them. Many people were drawn into our programme by the band and the lively singing.

The morning programme took the form of a musical. The audience was engaged by performances from Victor Acquaah, Lindani Mangena and Demi Best who outlined the story of Joseph. Joshua Maponga then continued the theme of 'Hallelujah Anyhow'. He highlighted that although we live in a society where some of us may not be accepted because of cultural differences, where some of us are out of work and unsure as to how the bills are going to be paid, where some of us continue to seek relationships – no matter the situation, say: 'Hallelujah anyhow!'

The afternoon concluded with a series of workshops on drama, health and sexual health which were informative and interesting. Open to all of those attending the day, the workshops demonstrated another aspect of Christian life and stressed that we serve a God who is interested in our social, physical and spiritual lives – a God who wishes us to develop socially, spiritually and to be in good health.

PR OFFICER

Tristan plans to go to Avondale College next year to take theology.  
PAUL DE BEER

### Blue Team member baptised

Ilona Samu (31), whose Polish parents, Sabina (Mum) and Ferenc (Dad), was baptised at Stanborough Park church over thirty years ago, responded to the call of God on her life and was baptised by Pastor Larry Lerado (pastor of North Perth Adventist church and Western Australia Communication director) on 19 July.

The Lord called Ilona via a friend. Living in Australia a little over a year ago and prior to leaving, the Lord gave her a message via her mother that if she had any problems she

could go to the Adventist church for help. Sure enough, Ilona experienced problems and she went looking. Unfortunately the church was not there, just a hole where it used to be – because God had moved it to a better place. Ilona did not give up. She was eventually directed to Pastor Lerado's church in North Perth, Australia, where the word of God was spoken and Ilona accepted Christ as her Lord and Saviour.

Ilona had only a short time left in Australia and wanted to be baptised by Pastor Lerado but she also wanted to be baptised in her home church back in England at Stanborough Park. The Lord answered the desires of her heart in his time. Pastor Lerado and Ilona were united in the baptismal pool. Ilona said we should 'Open up our hearts and let Jesus come in.' God is waiting to guide and lead us.

MERVA DALEY

### Pathfinder boost

A physical manifestation of the increase in Pathfinding within the south of England is typically revealed at annual Pathfinder camporees. But on the first weekend of July 2003 Pathfinders from across Area 6A of the SEC blazed a trail in establishing a precedent which demonstrates that the dynamics of the Pathfinder machinery need not only be mobilised for Pathfinder camporees. The weekend's theme was 'A leader or follower? You choose!'



### Enfield baptism

It was a high day for Enfield members and Filomena Francisco Quiari, who was baptised on 12 July. Filomena was born into an Adventist family, but never kept the faith. Her brother Bernardo, who lives in Angola, always encouraged his sister to serve the Lord. Filomena left Angola and arrived in England in October 1999 and has had many trials, through which God has brought her. Her husband Salvadore and her two children attended her baptism, which took place in Edmonton church. Filomena cannot find the words to express her love for God, but she keeps saying, 'I am so happy, I feel like a different person who loves the Lord.'

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

### Oxford baptism

On 20 September Tristan Chadwick from the Isle of Man was baptised by Pastor David Spearing in the Oxford church. Why Oxford? This was Tristan's choice. You see, his grandfather was baptised there, as was



Back, left to right: Pastor D.W. McFarlane (SEC president), Pastor Larry Lerado (North Perth Church, Australia and WAC director), Ferenc Samu (Dad), Youth pastor Japheth De Oliveira (Stanborough Park Church). Front left to right: Sabina Samu (Mum) and Ilona Samu.

Pedestrians stopped, looked and listened. Upon entering the church the flags were presented to Pastor Archer and Pathfinder co-ordinators Rachel Valentine-Montoute and the writer.

SIMON LAMMY

### Manchester influx

Over the last few months Manchester South has been blessed with an influx of foreign nationals mainly from Southern Africa and India, so it seemed only fitting to hold an International Day to celebrate this new and special unity. Before the end of Sabbath school the sanctuary was almost filled to capacity with those who had gathered for this special occasion.

At regular intervals during Sabbath school and divine service the congregation were given small presentations from different nationals, highlighting the main features of the places they came from. As each person spoke the large screen on the platform provided a backdrop showing various scenes along with the national flag. A couple of groups delighted us with musical items in their native language or dialect.

Some of the countries that are represented at Manchester South include Malawi, Zaire, Japan, St Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica, Romania, Barbados, Ukraine, Zimbabwe, India, Trinidad and Tobago, and Botswana. Then there were the British nationals who on days like these tend to get overlooked.

Our speaker for the morning was Pastor Brighton Kavaloh.

JANICE SAVISON

### Music day at Tottenham

New Life Gospel choir, the Platt sisters and Antonio Belgrave were just a few of the artistes who blessed the congregation at the Tottenham West Green Road church.

June 21 was the church's music day and the church was crammed with people eager to hear the talent with which God had blessed the artistes. The day was even more special because the church's newly-formed children's choir – the CFJ (Children For Jesus) choir – made their debut performance. The congregation was also treated to a mime occupied one whole lane.

During the AY service the music and praise continued, with performances by the TWGR Chorale and the church's senior choir.

DIANE APEAH-KUBI

### Newt awareness

A member of the Maidenhead church in Berkshire, John Warren, recently gained an English Nature Great Crested Newt disturbance and handling licence.

Great Crested Newts are an internationally rare species and under EU law it is illegal to handle or disturb them without a licence. Under British law there is a fine of

### Connected in Llandrindod Wells

Llandrindod Wells Victorian Festival presented a fantastic opportunity for the church, small though it is, to 'get connected' with the people of the town. This annual event is a chance for the town to go back to its Victorian heritage. Tourists pour into town in their hundreds. People dress up in Victorian costumes, shop windows are decorated appropriately and there are Victorian sideshows and events in one of the town's parks as well as in hotels throughout the town. From 10am to midnight the town is buzzing.

Weeks of planning and preparation by the Church Festival committee meant that we could host a number of activities during Victorian Week. Our church hosted the opening church service of the festival. The writer, dressed in Victorian costume, gave a short message and Anette Moore and her puppet ministry brought a new angle to the church service. Advertised in the festival souvenir brochure, this service was attended by church members, family and the general public. On the Sunday the puppet ministry took to the street. Setting up in the main thoroughfare, the five performances attracted approximately 500 people. Children were given a balloon with a simple message about God's love tied to the ribbon. Over two hundred balloons were given out on the Sunday alone and again during the following week until 500 balloons with messages had been handed out.

Gordon Lethbridge, a trained gymnastics coach, ran two have-a-go sessions that attracted a huge crowd. Interest was so great that we have been asked to start a club in Llandrindod Wells, which gives us yet another opportunity to 'get connected'.

The church has also sponsored several other events including a craft class and a talk on Zimbabwe and Malawi following in the footsteps of David Livingstone. As a result of all the activities the festival booklet has listed us among the sponsors of the event – the only church to get a mention.

As a result we have been asked to 'bring Christ back into Christmas' by the town's action committee and have been invited to organise an ecumenical prayer meeting.

ROSEMARY LETHBRIDGE



## Eight baptised in Stonebridge Park campaign

Late September saw the conclusion of a five-week evangelistic campaign held at the Bridge Park Complex in Stonebridge Park, London. Meetings were held six days a week with maximum attendance on Sabbath mornings and evenings. The main speaker for the event was 33-year-old lay-evangelist Gary Harrison who is based in London. Altogether eight people were baptised during the campaign and a number are currently having studies in preparation for baptism.

Entitled 'Time is at Hand' and supported by the Willesden, Chiswick, Acton and Kilburn churches, the campaign had a strong health focus. Other speakers during the series included BUC Health Ministries director Pastor Richard Willis, who spoke on subjects such as 'Positively Healthy', 'Cannabis' and 'How To Spot Drug Abuse In The Home', and Sherry Nicholls who presented 'Eight Laws of Health'.

A number of talented musicians supported the work of the speakers, including the Chiswick and Willesden senior choirs, and the Four Harps *a cappella* group. Wednesday evenings were designated as special prayer nights and visitors were encouraged to pray in twos or threes for themselves and for the campaign as a whole. Many first-time visitors responded to the altar calls and during a special prayer meeting elders anointed those who came forward requesting special prayer and healing.

One interesting feature of the campaign was its use of the Internet. Using a specially designed website those not able to attend in person were able to see pictures, download sermon notes, and watch video clips from the event. For more information visit [www.timeisathand.org](http://www.timeisathand.org).

JOHN SURRIDGE

## Nono's baptism

August 16 was a beautiful Sabbath morning at Hemel Hempstead church and saw 15-year-old Nono Chiweshe baptised on her birthday, witnessed by her family, friends and church members.

Nono's brother Khaya and

cousins Keith and Brenda, along with Brenda's daughter Langa, aged 3, led out in a song service.

Pastor David Neal gave the sermon and talked about the 5 Ts and what it means to be born again: Turn; Trust; Take Care; Thank; Tell.

A quartet sang 'I have decided to follow Jesus', a song chosen by Nono. She, her friends, and other young people from the church continued to celebrate with a successful teen camp at Chalfont St Peters which was great fun.

## Nothing but the truth Gospel festival: setting the North ablaze

Once again the Leeds church was blessed with their annual campaign. Pastor Balvin Braham, president of the West Jamaican Conference, accepted the invitation to conduct the campaign.

He was given the name 'The Arsonist' because he set on fire and burnt every theological perversion of the enemy including the secret rapture, eternal torment, once-saved-always-saved, the demolition of the Ten Commandments and Sunday-is-the-holy-day-of-worship. These lies and more were brought out in some of the topics: 'When fire has no power', 'Bread by the brook', 'The awful silence of God', 'Ten ways to keep your man happy' and 'Get out of Babylon'.

As a result of such Bible explosions we celebrated mega victories when we witnessed the harvest of twenty-two precious souls who entered the watery grave of baptism.

SUSAN CHISHOLM

## Adventist Football League takes off

Since it first kicked off on Sunday 27 July at the Raynes Park Football grounds in Wimbledon, the Adventist Football League has gone from strength to strength. Over a period of seven weeks, seven churches have competed against each other and have seen the Watford Town church rise to the top of the league. The other churches taking part are Balham, Brixton, Greenwich, Kennington, Luton, and Willesden.

The league has largely been organised by two enthusiasts: Dennis Bennett from Greenwich, and Trevor Young from Brixton. 'Football is one of the most watched sports in

the world today,' says Trevor. 'It is a game that requires and generates high levels of skill, competitiveness, energy, and a desire to win. One of the most vital factors necessary to win in any team sport is teamwork. This is the foundation upon which the game is built and it can only be acquired through hard work, dedication, and co-operation from the entire team.'

Trevor points out that there are many similarities between the teamwork required in football and the work of Christians in the Church. The Adventist Football League has been established to help build relationships between church

members and also to provide an environment where non-Christians can be introduced to Christians in a non-threatening way. High standards of play and conduct are expected both on and off the football field and already a number of visitors are attending Adventist churches as a direct result of the project.

If you would like to get involved in the Adventist Football League, or would just like some more information please contact Dennis Bennett [dennisbennett@swissre.co.uk](mailto:dennisbennett@swissre.co.uk), phone: 07855 797427, or Trevor Young [ttfyoung@hotmail.com](mailto:ttfyoung@hotmail.com).

JOHN SURRIDGE

## Issues

### Sentenced to 120 hours of Community Service

by Pastor Cyril Sweeney, NEC Community Services director

**A**s I waded through the Tuesday 21 October 2003 edition of the *Daily Mail* with many pages devoted to a recent publication regarding suspicions over the death of Princess Diana, there on page 14 was an article that caught my eye.

A Miss Cheryl Tweedy, member of a girls' pop group, was found guilty of what the judge called, 'an unpleasant piece of drunken violence'. Her punishment was, apart from victim compensation and prosecution costs,

120 hours of community service. You can see now, for obvious reasons, why it caught my eye.

This is not the first time that hours of community service have been handed down as punishment for a crime. It is interesting that what should come natural to us all is looked upon as punishment. I would have thought that everyone would be happy to engage in work for the community and not count the number of hours of involvement.

Talking with some of the Community Service leaders of the NEC as they share their frustration over the lack of support from the members and leaders of our congregations, it would appear that, for some, being involved in community service work is tantamount to being punished. Maybe the judiciary should stop handing down community service as punishment and present it in a more positive light.

For many, being involved in the following shows that community service is a very important part of the church's connection with the local community and its needs. Just look at the variety of things happening in the CS department: Luncheon clubs/Day Centres; Seminars/Demonstrations; Mentoring schemes; Food/Clothing distribution; Fellowship groups; Networking with local voluntary agencies; Soup/Kitchen runs; Advice Centres; Advocacy programmes; Home help/Errands; Listening/Counselling services.

The question is, Are you guilty of not involving yourself in at least one of the aforementioned or some other exciting opportunity that you can think of? Then all I can do is sentence you to 'unlimited hours of community service' with pleasure.



## Obituaries

### Death of Dr Seton: A controversial presidency

Dr Bernard Seton was president of the British Union Conference 1967-70

by Dennis Porter

**B**ernard Eldred Sparrow (later Seton) was born in Birmingham on 20 February 1913 and joined the Adventist church with his mother when he was 11. He attended Stanborough College, 1929-31, and moved with the College to Newbold Revel, graduating in 1932. He was not immediately taken into the organised work (budgets were tight in those Depression days) and filled in the next two years by acting as headmaster of a private boys' school founded by Dr Shone of Walthamstow. Seton entered the work in 1934 as a minister in the North England Conference, but was soon transferred to the South England Conference, remaining there until 1938, when he moved back to the North as Missionary Volunteer secretary. He remained in the North England Conference throughout the Second World War, being ordained in 1943. He lost his first wife in death in 1942, and in 1943 married Marjorie Keough, daughter of Pastor G. D. Keough, to which union two children, Gerard and Hilary, were born.

In June 1946 he accepted a call to the Southern African Division as Educational and MV secretary in the Angola Union Mission, for which he underwent a crash course in Portuguese. He remained in Angola until 1951 when he became preceptor at Helderberg College and also taught Greek and Hebrew. He obtained a BA from the University of South Africa in 1954 and immediately proceeded for further study to the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, at which he achieved an MA in 1956. He then spent over a year assisting in the editing of *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* before becoming editor of the *Signs of the Times* at the Sentinel Publishing Company of South Africa in 1957. In 1962 he received a PhD from the University of Cape Town for a thesis entitled 'Wesleyan Missions and the Sixth Frontier War, 1834-5'; and in the same year accepted a call to the Southern European Division in

Switzerland as Sabbath School and Medical secretary. In 1966 he transferred to the Northern European Division as Division secretary. This appointment was short-lived because at the British Union session at Leicester in 1967 he was voted as president of the British Union Conference.

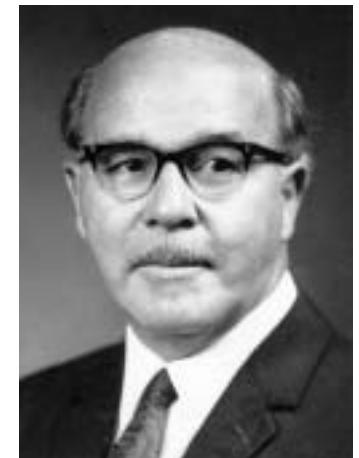
In an article in the *MESSENGER* as he took up office, Seton wrote, 'We shall also need large supplies of courage – courage to move into the unknown, courage to resist unprofitable suggestions, courage to make unwanted changes, courage to take wise but unpopular decisions.' It is a testimony to his courage that, realising that those who grasp nettles get stung, he determined to push ahead with what he – but few others – considered the right course of action to deal with the crisis he had inherited. For a crisis it truly was.

Financial prudence is not a virtue usually practised by apocalyptic movements. The Lord is at hand; why, then, save? The good news must be proclaimed and that costs money, so spend with maybe not too much thought for the morrow. Whether this had been the thinking is unclear; but what was clear was that the British Union and its institutions were in a parlous financial situation. As Seton himself expressed it in a private letter, 'The BUC is in a mess. It has bitten off much more than it can chew, and for many years in the past the problems have all been rolled away at arm's length. They have snowballed until now they threaten to overwhelm us.' Even the president of the General Conference commented on 'problems that have been put off for too many years already'.

Just about every Union institution was in a grave position. The Press (now at Grantham) was 'bankrupt' before the establishment of the Book and Bible Houses; now, because of their debts to it, it was far worse off. It could not meet its debts to suppliers (in the end it was saved by an arrangement with the Review and Herald). Granose was kept afloat only by Union subsidies, and, as a lay member of its board remarked, it had only 'odd pieces of home-made equipment held together by string and chewing gum'. Its new manager, an Australian, was greeted with the bleak words, 'It will be an uphill struggle to bring Granose to where it ought to be.' The Stanborough School was being kept going by the use of revertible funds. No work was to be done on the Dublin clinic because its sale appeared to be an imminent necessity. The Voice of Prophecy's financial situation was difficult. There was talk of giving up the lease on the New Gallery. Worst of all was the state of the Stanborough Hydro. The Division treasurer found its losses in 1967 to be 'appalling'.

The solution, which was actively promoted by the Union treasurer, Colin Wilson, was simple, at hand – and highly explosive. It was the sale of Stanborough Park, or what would be left of it after the repeated partial sales of 1921-58 and the impending sale of the woodland area in 1967. To sell or not to sell, that was the question which would dominate the three years of Seton's administration. More significantly, some members of the Union committee and some departmental men began to feel uneasy and to express themselves. By late 1968 opinion began to harden against the sale of the Park. One conference officer wrote to beg Seton 'not to sell for a mess of pottage the Adventist educational and health work that has been so laboriously and sacrificially built up over the years'.

Seton was a cultured man who could quote classic English poetry in committee meetings, enjoyed painting and was passionately fond of music (he wrote books on hymnology) and, like many cultured people, he was also sensitive. He felt the opposition to his policies deeply, and was not sorry to receive a call to an Associate Secretaryship at the General Conference in 1970, leaving as perhaps his most lasting legacy to the British Union the Home Owners' Policy from which many workers have benefited. He served at the General Conference until his retirement in 1978. He died, aged 90, on 11 September 2003 and was buried next to his wife Marjorie in Hendersonville, North Carolina. His two children and five grandchildren survive.



## Adventist World Church marks 140 years

**G**athered from remnants of the nineteenth-century Millerite movement, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the official name of the world church's governing organisation, celebrated 140 years of operating during its autumn annual business meeting.

'We believe that the Lord's Spirit has led Seventh-day Adventists to a form of organisation that carefully balances the need for local church authority with the need to advance the Gospel effectively throughout the world,' said Pastor Matthew

Bediako, secretary for the world church.

It was in 1863 that James White and other pioneer Adventist leaders, recognising that some form of church organisation was needed to enable a growing, and eventually global work, agreed on a church structure. The Adventist Church was a different organisation in those days, as Bediako noted in his report: 'In 1863 there was a total of 125 churches with a membership of 3,500. There were 22 ordained ministers and eight licensed ministers. The total tithe was \$8,000.'

Today, there are more than 60,000 Adventist congregations, with worldwide-baptised membership at well over 13.3 million. Tithe last year was nearly \$1.8 billion US dollars, an average of more than \$4.8 million a day in contributions.

ANR

### Whatever happened to Vince Goddard?

After serving as a pastor and departmental director in both English conferences, Vince responded to a call to service as director of Development and Public Relations at the Adventist College in Tanzania.

Two years on and Pastor Goddard is college principal.

Tanzania Adventist College (TAC), situated in north-east Tanzania, is only 65km from awesome Mount Kilimanjaro. It has been a dream of the college administration to become a university. Vince is confident that this will occur.

TAC provides vocational training in electronics, engineering and carpentry, as well as offering degrees in Religion, Theology, Education and Counselling, and Business Administration and IT.

At present TAC is a College of Higher Education accredited by the General Conference and the University of East Africa.

Pastor Goddard is hoping to extend the range of degrees on offer to include one in nursing. He also hopes to link up with Newbold College to offer a diploma in Islamic Studies.

The 160 students at TAC come from Kenya, Botswana, Zambia, Burundi and Rwanda, as well as Tanzania.

Vince comes from Preston, where his mother still lives, as do his brother and sister Ronald and Marlene. Vince left school before he was 15. However, Pastor Roy Gee, then the local minister, believed in his potential. Between 1968 and 1970 Vince was at Stanborough

School acquiring the background of GCEs requisite for entry into Newbold College. Subsequently he acquired degrees from Newbold and from Andrews University.

Pastor Vince has a real feeling for Africa and its people. On a number of occasions prior to his call in 2001 he used his summer vacations to conduct evangelistic campaigns in Mombasa. These were, in part, financed by his congregations in England. These campaigns resulted in a total of 1,500 baptisms.

EDITOR



**Q. How could you help this young person?**

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENT	WHEN	WHERE	WHO	HOW
Festival of Praise	6 December at 7.30pm	Holloway Adventist church, 381 Holloway Road, London N7.	LSDAMVC	LMVC Business Promotions - K. Henry 020 8764 6366 K. Ryan 020 8808 2211. £10 Adults; £5 OAPs and children under 15
Gospel Concert Fund-Raising Event	Saturday 6 December	Harper Bell School, Ravenhurst Street, Camp Hill, Birmingham	Hosted by Mark Palmer. Fellowship Choir (Wolverhampton), Providence, Teens Choir (Camp Hill) and much more	Contact Judith on 0121 544 3990 or Lois on 0121 608 6101. Price: Adults £5; Children £2.50; Concessions £3.50

Please submit advertisements in this format. Please make the church connection clear. For a complete list of upcoming events check out the database on the BUC website, [www.adventist.org.uk](http://www.adventist.org.uk).

**Corrigendum** MESSENGER 108/23, 31 October 2003, pages 4-5. Harper Bell feature. The four pupils who took GCSE Maths were aged 10 and 11, not in year 10 and 11 as given. There were, in fact, in year 6.

### ABC BOOK SALES 2003

Nov	30 Peckham	10.30am-2pm
Dec	7 West Midlands 14 John Loughborough	10am-2pm 10am-2pm

**Wishing all our members a blessed Christmas!**

### Messenger

Volume 108/25 – 28 November 2003

EDITOR: D. N. MARSHALL

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### Sunset

Sunset times are reproduced with permission from data supplied by the Science Research Council.

	Lond	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
Nov 28	3.58	4.10	3.55	3.47	4.06
Dec 5	3.53	4.05	3.50	3.41	4.00
12	3.52	4.04	3.48	3.38	3.58
19	3.53	4.05	3.49	3.39	3.58

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