Get connected this Christmas
by Alan Hodges, Ldi co-ordinator
Christmas and New Year are great times to ‘Get Connected’. It’s a time when we contact old friends, a time when we share seasonal greetings with our neighbours. Why not focus your attention this year on establishing three new friendships in your neighbourhood?
Is your church planning to hold a social event over Christmas and New Year? Why not invite a friend to attend? Ask the Social Committee to plan something special for visitors. It’s one of the best times during the year for socialising and an excellent opportunity for making new friends. It can also be a time when the topic of conversation can turn to the true meaning of Christmas.
Are there lonely people who need a visit? Perhaps you know of a work colleague or someone in your street who will be in hospital over Christmas. Why not give them a visit? Show that you genuinely care.
Reflect Jesus in your attitude and actions this Christmas. Look for the needs of people in your community. Show them you care and are sympathetic to their problems, and after the holiday season has passed continue to show an interest so they know you are a genuine friend.
Friendship can make all the difference to your life and others. As you give of yourself this Christmas may others be blessed and led to the Christchild.
Looking to 2004: What happens when we pray
with Pastor C. R. Perry, president
Centrality of mission
In creation and re-creation God’s plan did not follow a random course of events. Instead, all his purposes are well ordered and prophetically timed. The apostle Paul has taught us that our walk in the Spirit is an ordered path. It was a deliberate act on the part of a loving God. “When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law.” (Galatians 4:4, NKJV.)

Sowing the seed: literature distribution
This call of the world church focuses on the need to give evangelical emphasis it should get on our individual and corporate agenda.

3-10 January: Corporate Week of Prayer
A revival of primitive godliness and reformation is our greatest need,” said Ellen G. White. The outcome we desire is not to come to the majority of our members feel their need of a secular world. We are

The setting aside of 3-10 January as a corporate Week of Prayer sets the stage for a change; the beginning of the summer’s grace of God, and the time of the harvest is gone.

As I write this - in mid-November - 35% of the population is claiming to be in favour of Christmas. When Christmas comes, in excess of 95% will be celebrating it in one way or another.

So the very least you can say for Christmas is that, for a month or so once a year, people pay attention to something with Christ in it.

In the 1970s, aware of the (near) universal appeal of Christmas, the staff of Stanborough Junior and Secondary Schools used to put on a Christmas programme. Thus it was that the non-Adventist, as well as the Adventist, parents, families and friends of our students, would strong Stanborough Park church once a year for an outreach event about which we were all enthusiastical;

For a number of years I was scriptwriter, producer and co-ordinator for this programme, and so it was to me that the main came to complain. He was a new teacher, and he was deferential, courteous, puzzled, and outraged, but in a subdued sort of a way. What on earth were we doing with a humongous Christmas tree in our head-quarters church? He wanted to know. And, furthermore, why did we expend so much time and attention commemorating an event that did not occur at that time of year anyway? Didn’t a chap with an expensive education like mine know that Christ wasn’t really the case against it?

He was the first man I ever heard of, apart from Scrooge, who was not a Jehovah’s Witness but was hostile to religious ideas such as Christmas. Yet he had lived a sheltered life. I have met loads since. And they have all been Adventists.

Some years ago, my old friend Sam Davis, aware of the opposition to Christmas within our ranks, wrote a piece in this paper demonstrating that Ellen White was in all favour of Christmas. Indeed, that she favoured Christmas trees in our church. That came as a big surprise to many who had Ewas marked down as a Queen Victoria killjoy. She wasn’t a second cousin of Queen Victoria!

The majority of our churches will do something to commemorate - if not to celebrate - Christmas this year. Most will have cards services. Some will have services on Christmas day. A few of our congregations, however, will be about it, and there will be no sign of Christmas trimmings or Christmas cheer in their environment. One will know it is Christmas the other way, apart from a ‘Bah! Humbug!’ reference in a Sabbath school or sermon.

However, one point of my belief system even more fundamental than Christmas is this: the freedom of expression. I use the same expression in a similar context. I have had the opportunity of teaching among a group of first-aid workers in a large London hospital, and the occasion came when I was speaking to a group of people who were anti-christmassy. I was trying to make it clear that just because someone doesn’t want to take part in Christmas doesn’t mean that they don’t believe in Jesus. In fact, if anything, it means that they are more open to the message of Christ. I was trying to make it clear that just because someone doesn’t want to take part in Christmas doesn’t mean that they don’t believe in Jesus. In fact, if anything, it means that they are more open to the message of Christ.
Africa Day in Gloucester

Chequers Bridge Community Centre was packed with worshipers on Sabbath 3 November to praise the Lord in music, song and preaching from the African community. Pastor Stefan Burton Schnüll, in his welcoming address, invited the worshipers to indicate how far they had travelled. It became clear, not only had people travelled from many parts of Britain to be present, but there were visitors from as far afield as Brazil. Pastor Maponga was the guest speaker, and he captured everyone’s attention with his sermon. Another highlight was Pastor Maponga’s invitation to all the Africans present to come forward and form an impromptu choir. Then he and the choir, without any rehearsal, thrilled the congregation with their singing. Choros from Gloucester, Birmingham and London all contributed to the success of this special day. After lunch, served by the Gloucester church, the afternoon programme continued with special items by the choir, including a Brazilian group from the Brixton church.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Woodford Green Branch Sabbath School baptism

It was a unique and historic day on Sabbath 30 August when four candidates were baptised at Woodford Green Branch Sabbath school. The branch, derived from the Lutonstone church, was conceived on 11 August 2000 and now worships in the United Reformed Church, Ray Lodge Road, Woodford Green. Essex. Still in its tender years, its members were ecstatic when four candidates decided to take their stand for the Lord.

Mother and son Donna and Dominic Williams took their stand together, while father Winston Williams was given the right hand of fellowship, thus completing the family job.

Also baptised were Jenny Grant and Lynelle Coker. Both Jenny and Lynelle felt the desire to re dedicate their lives to the Lord by renewing their vows. The candidates glowed with happiness as they were submerged in the watery grave of baptism by Pastor Richard De Liisser and arose to walk in the newness of life.

Pastor De Liisser reminded the candidates that the Christian pathway was not always easy but the important thing was to stay on course. The church was packed with members and visiting friends and the occasion left an indelible memory on the hearts and minds of everyone. Also in attendance was our guest visitor, Dr Kenneth, overseer of the United Reformed Church, who spoke of his joy at being invited to witness such a Christ-centred event.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Totnes Show

A few days of heavy rain, the sun came out just in time to dry up the fields for the Totnes and District Agricultural Show. Thousands of people flocked through the gate to be greeted by an offer of a free carrier bag containing a FOCUS magazine, a LIFE.info magazine and a list of Adventist church addresses in Area 1. It was wonderful to see the logo and words ‘Seventh-day Adventist Church’ written boldly on strong white carrier bags, being carried by about 800 people around the show. Many more came to our 18-ft stall and helped themselves to more magazines and books. Some, such as a lady selling handcrafted cards, and the Red Cross ambulance driver, actually came and asked for their carrier bag of goodies before the show opened, as they had enjoyed reading the magazines in previous years. Others came straight over to collect their bags and commented on how strong they were this year. Of course, we always have a few who say no thank you, but when they realise the magazines are religious, but the majority were happy to receive them.

We take a stall at this show every year, but this year we had the added attraction of free mouse food for anyone who had access to the internet. These little boxes, containing the websites of Adventists, ADRA and AWR, were an immediate success and caused a good deal of laughter and conversation – a brilliant idea from our minister Pastor Bertie Delyschevsky. It is so heartening when people visit our stall to pick up a book because they had one last year, and one lady was delighted to receive a copy of Christ’s Object Lessons in order to understand the parables. We felt that the Holy Spirit was with us as we witnessed for Christ on that sunny day.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Luton: queues for health screening

Chiswick churches assisted Luton church in providing health checks in Luton’s bustling shopping centre. The checks and tests offered were blood pressure, blood cholesterol, blood sugar, BMI and a computer heart risk assessment.

When the project was conceived by the Personal Ministries department we were looking for a location that would be inexpensive and centrally located. Our aim was to be as close to the general public as possible.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Chelmsford baptism

Chelmsford is a growing church. This is reflected in its second baptism for 2003 on 18 October and the willingness of members to share their faith.

Progress and Francis committed their lives to the Lord through baptism during the Sabbath morning service. Both have been worshipping and receiving Bible studies during the year from Pastor Malcolm Taylor and Cliff Hilton. Progress, a student from Malawi, was to have been baptised but had to take up studies in England earlier than expected. On arriving in England he was encouraged by Terence Blackett to remain faithful to the Lord. He attended church regularly, and his request for baptism was granted. Francis worked at the same nursing home as Jennifer Hilton, wife of Cliff Hilton. Francis had experienced many trials in his life and was seeking comfort from God and well-wishers. Jennifer introduced him to the Lord who ‘comforts us in all our troubles’. Francis responded to an invitation to learn about the Lord who cares. His changed outlook on life and the consolation from the Lord, who alone can heal the broken-hearted, is matched by the smile on his face each Sabbath morning. From the waters of baptism both men rose to continue the walk begun with the Lord. They were welcomed into fellowship and encouraged in their new experience by the church family.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Norbury/Hackbridge baptism

October was an exciting month for Hackbridge and Norbury members because six souls were welcomed to our church family. On 11 October, at Norbury church, friends and families celebrated the baptism of Jennifer Blake and the writer.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Norbury Adventist Church succession

The Hackbridge members were particularly overjoyed because Sister Magnus and Sister Wilding are the first-fruits since Hackbridge group was organised into a company last May.

The whole day was one of fellowship, worship and praise, and the presence of the Holy Spirit was felt by everyone throughout the day. The officiating pastors were Pastor S. W. Blake and the writer.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Hove Investiture

The Pathfinders and Adventurers entered a Hove church filled to capacity on Sabbath 11 October. A full programme of songs, readings, minis and drill display was presented to the church by all the members of the club, followed by a short progrress report on the club year by the club director.

Pastor Victor Hubert conducted the investiture service, ending with an inspirational talk.

Busy Bee: Jonathan Seetahali; Voylfray: Burnett Gump; Master Guide: Cara Dunn, Ramona Howson; Honours: Nick Husband, Nikkita Husband; Certificates: Marvel Chiko, Sherril Chiko, Mercy Chiko, Ruth Chiko, Benedict McIntosh, Sonia Burke, Renelia Roach, Odoch Nechacha, Maria Wilding and Dalesie Magnus – all baptised a week earlier during the joint Norbury/ Balmah campaign.

The Hackbridge members were particularly overjoyed because Sister Magnus and Sister Wilding are the first-fruits since Hackbridge group was organised into a company last May.

The whole day was one of fellowship, worship and praise, and the presence of the Holy Spirit was felt by everyone throughout the day. The officiating pastors were Pastor S. W. Blake and the writer.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Torquay: Christmas shoeboxes

Adventist shoeboxes are always a busy time for the members of the Adventist church in Torquay, but this year seemed better than ever. Only a small church, they managed to fill twenty two Christmas-wrapped shoeboxes with goodies for children in Latvia orphanages, and send them off to Worthing to go on the ADRA lorries that were travelling that way, along with other boxes sent from Adventist churches all over Britain.

At the same time they held their Harvest Thanksgiving service, where instead of a sermon they had a series of sketches under the heading of ‘God Provides’. There was a smaller food display than usual, as instead of bringing food, the members brought money which was split between the Factor Row Hostel for the Homeless, and Project 3B, that feeds the homeless and needy.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

Pat’s baptism

October 4 was a high day for the members of Bodmin church. Pat Herbert has been attending the church on and off for the last four years. She began studying with Pastor Cuthbert. When I came to the church as the pastor she asked me if she could be baptised. I continued studies with her. On 4 October the members of Bodmin church celebrated Pat’s commitment to the Lord through baptism.

The pool was surrounded by beautiful flowers and greenery and Pat looked radiant as she came down into the water. She had invited several of her friends to come and witness her baptism and there were over thirty non-members present.
He's Closer Than Before!

The North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists invites you to a full day of Youth Evangelism and Fellowship. Come and find healing for the soul and purpose for the heart with guest evangelist Prof. Henry M. Wright from the USA.

Venue: [Details Below]

For over half a century, until Arthur’s retirement from the Adventist ministry to the disabled. He was indeed an officer and a gentleman. Something of the North England Conference remained with him, above all, he was God’s gentleman. That is how he will be remembered.

In 1989 Eddie Hapgood was married by his wife Peggy, whom he met at Stanborough Park and married in 1962, his sons, Ian and Robert, his daughter-in-law Rachael and his grandchildren. They will be missed also by an extended family of friends and colleagues, some of whom were at the Ystrad Mynach church for a service of rejoicing in a life well lived.

Psalm 15, the ‘Great Psalm of Purity’, was Derricks favourite Psalm and he lived it himself, and by example, passed on its message to his wife and children. He was indeed an officer and a gentleman.

Many of the North England Conference remained with him, and the legacy that he is leaving his churches forever, both here in the UK and beyond, is a legacy of faithfulness and service.

Derrick was a man of integrity, a man of faith, a man of compassion, a man of courage, and a man of love. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him and loved him.

In conclusion, we wish to express our heartfelt thanks to all who have supported us during this difficult time. May God’s peace and comfort be with you all.

We ask that you keep us and our family in your prayers during this time of grief.

Thank you for your support.

Eddie Hapgood

7

Counselor

2. In preparing the programme to emphasise the vital need for the rest of the church to support David, members of the congregation who were aware of his difficulties could be asked to attend a training session on the impact of disability.

3. Any financial support or resources required to assist a member like David could be considered.

4. An ongoing support programme could be established to provide additional support and encouragement for members like David.

5. Consideration could be given to adapting church services or activities to make them more accessible to members like David.

In conclusion, the meeting encouraged the church to be more proactive in supporting members like David, and to consider additional support measures to help them become more fully included in church life.

As we enter a new year let us

revist our ministry to the community and consider more diverse, caring and Spirit-filled approaches that will be more welcoming and caring. God 2013 is for a number of church members who have been in this ministry for at least 2 years.

The North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists invites you to a full day of Youth Evangelism and Fellowship. Come and find healing for the soul and purpose for the heart with guest evangelist Prof. Henry M. Wright from the USA.

Venue: [Details Below]

For over half a century, until Arthur’s retirement from the Adventist ministry to the disabled. He was indeed an officer and a gentleman. Something of the North England Conference remained with him, above all, he was God’s gentleman. That is how he will be remembered.

In 1989 Eddie Hapgood was married by his wife Peggy, whom he met at Stanborough Park and married in 1962, his sons, Ian and Robert, his daughter-in-law Rachael and his grandchildren. They will be missed also by an extended family of friends and colleagues, some of whom were at the Ystrad Mynach church for a service of rejoicing in a life well lived.

Psalm 15, the ‘Great Psalm of Purity’, was Derricks favourite Psalm and he lived it himself, and by example, passed on its message to his wife and children. He was indeed an officer and a gentleman. Something of the North England Conference remained with him, and the legacy that he is leaving his churches forever, both here in the UK and beyond, is a legacy of faithfulness and service.

Derrick was a man of integrity, a man of faith, a man of compassion, a man of courage, and a man of love. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him and loved him.

In conclusion, we wish to express our heartfelt thanks to all who have supported us during this difficult time. May God’s peace and comfort be with you all.

We ask that you keep us and our family in your prayers during this time of grief.

Thank you for your support.

Eddie Hapgood

7

Counselor

2. In preparing the programme to emphasise the vital need for the rest of the church to support David, members of the congregation who were aware of his difficulties could be asked to attend a training session on the impact of disability.

3. Any financial support or resources required to assist a member like David could be considered.

4. An ongoing support programme could be established to provide additional support and encouragement for members like David.

5. Consideration could be given to adapting church services or activities to make them more accessible to members like David.

In conclusion, the meeting encouraged the church to be more proactive in supporting members like David, and to consider additional support measures to help them become more fully included in church life.

As we enter a new year let us

revist our ministry to the community and consider more diverse, caring and Spirit-filled approaches that will be more welcoming and caring. God 2013 is for a number of church members who have been in this ministry for at least 2 years.

The North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists invites you to a full day of Youth Evangelism and Fellowship. Come and find healing for the soul and purpose for the heart with guest evangelist Prof. Henry M. Wright from the USA.

Venue: [Details Below]

For over half a century, until Arthur’s retirement from the Adventist ministry to the disabled. He was indeed an officer and a gentleman. Something of the North England Conference remained with him, above all, he was God’s gentleman. That is how he will be remembered.

In 1989 Eddie Hapgood was married by his wife Peggy, whom he met at Stanborough Park and married in 1962, his sons, Ian and Robert, his daughter-in-law Rachael and his grandchildren. They will be missed also by an extended family of friends and colleagues, some of whom were at the Ystrad Mynach church for a service of rejoicing in a life well lived.

Psalm 15, the ‘Great Psalm of Purity’, was Derricks favourite Psalm and he lived it himself, and by example, passed on its message to his wife and children. He was indeed an officer and a gentleman. Something of the North England Conference remained with him, and the legacy that he is leaving his churches forever, both here in the UK and beyond, is a legacy of faithfulness and service.

Derrick was a man of integrity, a man of faith, a man of compassion, a man of courage, and a man of love. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him and loved him.

In conclusion, we wish to express our heartfelt thanks to all who have supported us during this difficult time. May God’s peace and comfort be with you all.

We ask that you keep us and our family in your prayers during this time of grief.

Thank you for your support.

Eddie Hapgood

7
Muslim awareness

Once upon a time over forty years ago a lady left the Caribbean and came to Ipswich. Jean, her husband Percy and her growing family were welcomed into the local Adventist church. As her children grew up Jean’s involvement with her church began to extend into the wider community around. Contacts and relationships with other churches and faiths developed as she contributed to civic committees and interfaith organisations.

One of these was SIFRE (Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource), organised by a Church of England lady named Cynthia Capey. Through Jean, local Adventist pastor David West got to know Cynthia, and when Newbold College advertised a conference celebrating religious diversity David invited Cynthia to attend. She did, and at Newbold in July she met Pastor Oscar Oviedo, director of Islamic Studies at Newbold. Cynthia was organising an Islamic Awareness Day in Ipswich and asked Oscar to come. David was at Newbold on a course and invited Oscar to come and preach in Ipswich on 20 September; read an afternoon discussion, stay the night and then attend Cynthia’s programme on the Sunday. This long and colourful chain of events culminated in an inspiring Sabbath for Ipswich members, with Oscar giving us fascinating insights into our work with Muslims. Then on the Sunday, he and representatives of various churches and faiths joined the Mayor of Ipswich, Councillor Penny Braikaxew, as leaders of the Muslim community share what their faith means to them and gave us historical insights into the long connection between Britain and Islam. Did you know, for instance, that the eighth-century Anglo-Saxon King Offa’s Dyke ring any bells? Mined gold coins in England with Islamic inscriptions on them! Allogether, the exhibit, the free material provided (including a CD-rom and a zipped leather-bound Quran in English), the informative and heartfelt talks, the delicious food, and the responses from the Mayor and various faith representatives (including our own Oscar), created a memorable day of positive growth in understanding.

Oscar made valuable contacts for his work and Cynthia spoke publicly in glowing terms of the local Adventist church members and the Newbold Diversity Conference. I was so proud to say that there were more Adventists in attendance than any other group – except Muslims of course!

DAVID WEST

How to be a preacher

Nearly sixty enthusiastic ‘students’ of both sexes and from all ages within the South England Conference gathered at the High Leigh Conference Centre over the weekend of 3-5 October to attend the Lay Preachers’ training seminars, organised by the ministerial team of the South England Conference – Dr Brighton Kavaloh and his able secretary Mrs Vivienne Eve. Oscar Kavaloh, in his introductory remarks, emphasised that this was previously an intensive three-month course with the triple objective of studying the academic, theoretical and the practical aspect of preaching. This has now been further condensed into a weekend study, presented by a team of carefully selected lecturers from Newbold College, seasoned and experienced preachers and the ministerial team at the SEC. All the students were well provided with a variety of ‘tasty and delicious’ spiritual cuisine.

We had the late British summer sunshine to keep us both warm and cheerful. By the end of the course on Sunday afternoon most of the students were physically and, to some extent, mentally exhausted. However, all of us had learned much on the art, skills and above all the challenge of preaching God’s word.

We are charged by our course director Pastor Kavaloh not only to put what we have learned into practice, but were given a sufficient load of homework over the next three months needed to complete this training course.

Photo and events by ORPHAN WORKS

Stonebridge Park Update

Further to the detailed report on page 6 of the last issue (28 November) Al Eccles draws our attention to more facts about the campaign at the Bridge Park Complex in Stonebridge Park, London. The Christ-centred messages in the Time is at Hand campaign were delivered by evangelist G. A. Harrison and his team. Richard Willis and Sherry Nicholls were among those who made up-to-date health presentations. Both the Chiswick and Willeiden choir featured. The Holy Spirit used the evangelist team, together with pastors and church members from Stonebridge Park, Willeiden, Chiswick, Acton and Kilburn to lead many people to Christ in a series of baptisms conducted between September and November.

The Time is at Hand campaign, in addition to its regular audience in the 1,000 capacity hall, introduced many to Christ through the Internet. The Time is at Hand website has had upwards of 47,000 hits.

[News from material supplied by 8, 12, 15.]

CONGRATULATIONS to Pearl Walker, of St Austell Methodist area, on achieving her Licentiate with the Central Academy of Music in London, LGD (121) with Hons.}

UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>HOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toy Service</td>
<td>13 December 11.15am</td>
<td>North Wymondham, Ebor Nineveh</td>
<td>Run chance event and collection of toys for Children in Need!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Eve Masquerade Party (over 18 event)</td>
<td>31 December from 9pm-2am</td>
<td>Stonebridge Park, Stonebridge Park, London</td>
<td>Tel: 01344 883244</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s &amp; Family Wellbeing Leadership Training</td>
<td>1 January 2004</td>
<td>SEC Stonebridge Park, London</td>
<td>Tel: 01344 883207/883208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning Water into Wine</td>
<td>27-29 November 2004</td>
<td>SEC Stonebridge Park, London</td>
<td>Tel: 01344 883207/883208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonebridge Park Update</td>
<td>Further to the detailed report on page 6 of the last issue</td>
<td>Stonebridge Park, London</td>
<td>Tel: 01344 883207/883208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>