Overlooked highlights of 2003

At least four times as much copy arrives for publication as there is room for in our eight pages. As each year comes to an end heaps of news material are consigned to the file marked 'the past'. We shall commemorate this new year by sharing some of the overlooked highlights of 2003...

- July 19 saw a Children's Day in Preston that involved costumes, props, skits - and a picnic.
- On June 7 Judith Martin reported a threefold increase in the membership of the Glasgow church, caused by the arrival of many new brothers and sisters from Eastern and Southern Africa, the Philippines and the Caribbean.
- On September 25 Newbold's Melody Tan reported on a weekend retreat to Chapel Porth and trips out to St Michael's Mount, Tintagel and Land's End for a hundred students and staff.
- On June 1 Pastor Ken and Mrs Monica Lacey, the successful evangelistic team of the 1950s and the 1960s, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.
- The Chelmsford church reported the departure, for the Dell, of Gladys Brailsford at 95, and of a farewell to Erica White, widow of Ivan, who has returned to live in her native Germany.

Celebrating Small Groups

During the last weekend in October about one hundred small group leaders and members of small groups from the South England Conference gathered at the Stanborough Secondary School, to celebrate and testify to what God has been doing. There was time for inspiration, bonding, learning, and fun. The times of worship where highly innovative and spiritual as various symbols were used to bring us to the presence of our Lord, and where everyone present actively participated.

Speakers included Pastor David Cox and the writer, as well as Pastor Bobby Bovel, who shared his insights about the small groups that are operating as an integral part of the church plant in Beckenham which he is leading. At the end of his talk members of the group surrounded him and his team and prayed for them. The time for testimonies was not long enough as members recounted what God had been doing through their small groups. Particularly inspiring was the account given by Karen Weekes, who is the small group co-ordinator for ASNA (Adventist Special Needs Association). Laverne Byng and Rose Lewis, who had been previously trained and equipped, led out in the worship and workshops, and SEC Youth director Pastor Japhet De Oliveira and S. Gittens from the Youth Federation gave valuable instruction during the youth small groups workshop.

As Pastor Cox said, 'These groups are proving effective in reaching people who would not readily respond to an invitation to attend church. As such they are foundational to the future success of LIFEdevelopment. Training events such as this one are getting better all the time. This was the best so far!'
**`God bless the child`**

Hyland House fundraising success

Much to the surprise of the organisers, over 400 people turned up to support Hyland House School’s fundraising event recently. The concert was put on at the Advent Centre, London, and the theme was ‘God bless the child’. All the performers were children, and those taking part on the night were Victor Acquah and George Acquah, Praise (Luton Children’s Choir), Hyland House Rime Team, G.C., Hyland House Choir, Andrea Clarke (from Liberty Ensemble), song leader Devon Boyd, and MC Pastor Steve McKenziel.

The audience was thrilled to see so many children lifting up the name of the Lord through music and mime. People came from as far away as Leicester and Northampton to support this worthy cause. A competition was arranged to see which pupil could sell the most tickets, and it was won by 4-year-old Nathaniel Awoti who worships at the Tottenham West Green Road church. His proud parents came onto the platform to receive the trophy with him.

There are more fundraising events planned for this year. The idea is for the audience to have a Spirit-filled, enjoyable evening at an event that is not your usual run-of-the-mill format. What is more, the aim is to have family events that all ages can enjoy. With that in mind we can expect to see more events at which we can all do our bit to help support good Christian education.

**Words and pictures from Susanne Kirlew**

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**As happy as a sandboy!**

While the origin of the expression is obscure its sentiment is widely appreciated. It is thought that it might derive from the analogy of boys who used to sell sand a century or so ago. One thing is clear, however, and that is that happy children are usually healthy children and avoid risk-taking hobbies.

Studies using families from twenty Ohio counties and using data from the US Census, listing the availability of artistic and recreational activities in communities, show that children who are happy and have access to these activities are healthier than children who do not.

The studies involved 1,160 people and led the researchers to conclude: “Communities that have more artistic and recreational activities in them may be encouraged to find that this also may extend to children’s health.” Several other studies have arrived at similar conclusions.

Professor Gary Hopkins and Joyce Hop of Loma Linda University have collected the results of these studies and documented them in their book. They state a Church, Children with good self-esteem fare better than others who lack this trait across a wide range of health-related areas of life. Self-esteem is defined as having a realistic attitude about oneself, knowing one’s strengths and weaknesses, and being able to accept oneself, rather than having the unattainable goals or conceit often associated with the word. Self-esteem and the support of family and friends go hand in hand.

Social workers see a commitment to care is the basis of making children and youth able to become caring by being in caring relationships.” US research has shown that children enjoying such relationships are:

- 46% less likely to initiate drug use (70% less if a minority race), and 20% less likely to initiate alcohol use.
- 53% less likely to skip school, and 37% less likely to miss a class.
- 51% less likely to hit other children; more than 30% less likely to hit other children.
- 51% more likely to increase in images that are too small and pixelated.

It is important to consider the flash when you are taking indoor shots. Most of you will have fairly small cameras, which means a fairly small flash. So get in as close as you can to your subjects in order to light them up. Don’t expect good results from the camera; it is important that you have a high resolution camera if you are going to use it at high res. You will want as many shots on your memory card (so buy a bigger card) but your pictures will be better quality. Some cameras at maximum resolution allow you to set ‘normal’ or ‘fine’. Normal will usually suffice. The majority of pictures for MESS is your digital camera as digital files. Most have been taken at a lower resolution, resulting in images that are too small and pixelated.

PRIORITIES

Fact: Four times the amount of copy arrives for MESS than is room for.

Communication secretaries are competing for a limited amount of space.

Fact: Reports on evangelistic/ outreach endeavours and baptisms are prioritised.

All reports should ideally be emailed to me on editor@messenger-ad.com. At the end of your story, please include a word count.

**BEFORE WRITING ANYTHING, ask yourself:**

Is it interesting?

1. Most readers of MESS are church members from other congregations. Do not write about anything that does not have a nationwide appeal.

2. Events that are not special, Christmas visitors’ days, Inaugurating etc. are never going to make news in themselves. Tell them exactly when they are happening if they do not have a nationwide appeal. It is normal to make news in a church, not write about anything that does not have a nationwide appeal.

Sadly, if your subject is in front of bright light, for example the sun. This would cause the camera to under-expose for the subject, so a bit of fill-in flash would help. Of course, this would also apply to most film cameras as well.

Send digital pictures to myerson@stanboroughpress.co.uk. Identify them with all of your church’s, or your name, at the top of the file you have given to the article.

It’s best if we receive your pictures by email, as this saves scanning, but please send them as an attached JPEG, not embedded in the middle of a ‘Microsoft Word’ file.

Digital cameras are great fun to use, so take lots of pictures and enjoy...

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**Towards a better magazine**

What we need to improve MESS is better stories and better photographs. And that, of course, is down to our Communication secretaries.

**Better Stories – and the key word is story.**

For almost twenty-five years now I have been telling the Communication secretaries: ‘Send stories, not reports.’ The sad thing is, of course, that the old-style reports represent the bulk of what we continue to receive for publication in MESS.

**HOW NOT TO DO IT**

Do not give a blow-by-blow account. The general happenings in any church on a particular day will be of interest to no one (not even the writer) if you begin your story with the hymns sung, who announced them, the prayers prayed and by whom, and then you go on to dilute the content of the Sabbath school lesson and sermon. Most church members experience these details each week. This is not news.

You need to adopt a different approach.

**HOW TO DO IT**

When a newspaper reporter leaves the office in the morning he says he’s ‘going after a story’. This is what our Communication secretaries must do.

- It might be a conversion story.
- It might be the story of how someone won a lot of money for Quid.
- It might be the story of how someone (or a group) won souls for Christ.
- It might be someone’s personal testimony of how they came to Christ.

**Photo Tips:**

- Digital Camera quality is improving all the time. The average camera now has at least 3.2 – 5 mega pixels, some even higher. Giving high resolution images at close between A4 and A3.

- When using your digital camera, it is important that you have a 3.2 mega pixel camera, use at 3.2 for optimum quality. Why have a high resolution camera if you’re not going to use it at high res? You won’t get as many shots on your memory card (so buy a bigger card) but your pictures will be better quality. Some cameras at maximum resolution allow you to set ‘normal’ or ‘fine’. Normal will usually suffice. The majority of pictures for MESS are digital files. Most have been taken at a lower resolution, resulting in images that are too small and pixelated.

- Digital cameras are great fun to use, so take lots of pictures and enjoy...

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**Editorial**

with David Marshall

With Richard J.B. Willis, BUC Health Matters Sector

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**Conversion**

It takes a...
Messenger
Timothy Rennalls, Esther Sulla, Victoria Granger, Blessed Tachiona, Shadreck Gumbo, were packed with young people and children.

On TV
The BBC’s ‘Songs of Praise’ recorded two programmes in Gloucester Cathedral last week. One programme was recorded on Tuesday 19 November; the second was taped on Thursday 21 November. The programmes were transmitted on Sunday 24 November.

- The first Christmas programme was recorded in twelve hundred people gathered in the Maiden Erlegh School, Reading Central church building was packed each night and especially on his mother so proud by taking this step for the Lord.

- His right to join the Adventist church. Blessed Tachiona, a 16-year-old, made having founded several churches there, and had decided the time was join the church. David Mariga had not long arrived from Kenya, his father churches), was thrilled when Peter-Ray Dube, her husband, decided to join the church. Lindiwe Dube, a member of the famous Inspired Redemption year. Esther Sulla, the sister-in-law of Dalington Onditi, the assistant choir among those who came forward at Dr Jeff Brown’s altar call earlier in the last baptism but had waited patiently for this one. Shadreck Gumbo was by Pastor Eddie Hypolite who had known the brothers from when they were toddlers and to whom they made a promise that whenever they were baptised he would baptise them. There was tremendous support for these young men (age range 15-21) from their family and also importantly from their peers.

- Pastor Everett Picart, Reading district minister, baptised the other six candidates. Victoria Granger had wanted to be baptised at the time of the last baptism but had wailed patiently for this one. Shadrack Gumbo was among those who came forward at Dr Jeff Brown’s altar call earlier in the year. Esther Sulla, the in-law of Darlington Odinga, the assistant choir leader of White City church, indicated her intention when Pastor Picart visited the family. Lindie Dube, a member of the famous inspired Redemption singers (comprising members from Reading Central and Reading Whiteley churches), was thrilled when Peter-Ray Dube, her husband, decided to join the church. David Mariga had not long arrived from Kenya, his father having founded several churches there, and had decided the time was right to join the Adventist church. Blessed Tachiona, a 16-year-old, made his mother so proud by taking this step for the Lord.

- The campaign was in the spirit of the power of God. The Reading Central church building was packed each night and especially on the penultimate day (Friday) of the campaign. On the last day of the campaign twelve hundred people attended the Maiden Erleigh School sports field for divine service, including the spectator quarters, which were packed with young people and children.

Reading Revival and Reclamation
From 10-18 October Reading Central conducted a Revival and Reclamation campaign. The theme: ‘Stay Connected – Being faithful to God’. The main speaker was Pastor Joshua Magonge, who combined his evangelistic messages with his musical talents on the harmonica and trumpet. The climax of the campaign was the baptism of nine – seven men and two women – on 11 November.

Pastor George Kumi, a member of the Reading Whiteley church, preached a wonderful sermon on John 3:1-6 that stressed the importance of the new birth experience. It was wonderful to see on that occasion that there were two men rather than women going into the baptismal pool. Especially moving was the baptism of two brothers Jamaal and Fidal Channer and their best friend Timothy Rennalls, who entered the pool together and were baptised he would baptise them. There was tremendous support for their baptism. The family. Lindiwe Dube, a member of the famous Inspired Redemption

Women of Vision Retreat
Seventeen women from Mussell Hill church spent the weekend of 10-12 October in Devon for our first ever Women’s Ministries retreat. Our icebreaker on Friday evening was entitled, ‘The Colour of You’, and involved each woman bringing a piece of cloth and taking a few minutes to talk about her chosen material, and how it best described her characteristics, hopes and ambitions. This was followed by a guest speaker, Delcina Rodney, wrapping herself in violet cloth and giving us some biblical facts about lydia, ‘the seller of purple.’ The women enjoyed this exercise immensely and even the shy participants at the end and we joined the materials together to show that each piece of cloth, though flimsy on its own, when tied together could produce a strong rope. Our follow-up project is to donate a small piece of cloth each to a child. We woke on Sabbath morning to lovely sunshine and as we looked out from our hotel windows we could see the calm sea and beautiful landscape. This picture evoked many thoughts, such as the chorus ‘wide, wide as the ocean’.

The first programme for the day was conducted by Jean Dodagan and her team. Delcina then, in divine service, encouraged us to listen to Christ as he asks us to ‘put down your handshakes and follow me’. In this stirring talk we learnt of seven types of handshakes that women can use to carry their baggages around in. Sabbath afternoon saw us, young and old, walking partly for recreation, but mostly to shed some pounds after enjoying the wonderful hotel cuisine!

The afternoon session was low key, but nonetheless inspiring as we discussed seven women of the Bible and their often traumatic experiences. Sabbath night was free time and we used that time for ‘pathing’, socialising and for bonding. Sunday morning saw us packed and ready to return to London, but not before having a service of recommitment and reconciliation.

Holloway Pathfinder March on
Up two, three, four Left Right Left.
Under the command of Dr Ilr Major Orn Pitton, 14, and supported by their Orum Corps, the Holloway Adventures and Pathfinders marched in to present ‘Onward Forward Upward’, the theme for Pathfinder Day on September 27.

‘The news was very exciting and we were over the moon that we had been chosen to present such an important theme’, commented Rachel Valentine-Montoute and Simon Lammy.

From Salisbury school to the AY’s the Adventures/Pathfinders presented various aspects of their curriculum and highlights (video clips) of some of their other activities.

Long remembered will be the inspiring sermon presentation as delivered by the trio of Joshua Roberts, 10, Corrine Greenaway, 12, and Karl L. Johnson.
FIC by Candy Layson

The Filipino International Church (FIC) took part in the two-day Filipino festival. The Barrio Fiesta is an annual gathering of Filipinos in the UK which was held in Lampton Park, Hounslow on 20 and 21 July.

They worked hard to reach out to the local community with the club's latest big brother Radio CDs, magazines and tracts. It was also a means of making the Filipino community aware of the existence of the organised Filipino Church in Britain.

Advocacy is seen as one of the aims supported as by the following facts provided by Pastor Todd Fries:

- A total of 1,200 CDs, together with hundreds of LIFE info magazines and other tracts were distributed.
- Thirteen Adventist church members in the Philippines approach our pastor to express their joy upon learning about the recognised FIC in London.
- During the celebrations the Rainbow Singers gave their share of ministrations. The group renditioned a series of songs all pointing to Jesus the new man. It is hoped that many more friends the new man.

Pastor David Ernst

On 22 October Edgar Ernst became a new member. In his home country of Jamaica as a young adult he left the church and went his own way, and he became increasingly disenchanted with the world’s lifestyle. This led him to Europe where he met his wife, and he now serves as an elder in the church where he and his wife were baptised in his youth.

Pastor Roy is returning home soon, and Edgar will be seams to show a genuine concern for each individual member and in return asked nothing for herself. She was an elder and in the church was also an elder in the church. She was the daughter of Wilson and Elmina, the sixth of eight children.

CARMELITA THOMAS (1942-2003) is due to be buried in the coming weeks in the presence of family and friends. The burial will take place in the presence of family and friends.

Baptism in Gloucester

On Sunday 13 October Harold Grant became a new member. Baptised in his home county of Jamaica as a young adult he left the church and went his own way, and he became increasingly disenchanted with the world’s lifestyle. This led him to Europe where he met his wife, and he now serves as an elder in the church where he and his wife were baptised in his youth.

Pastor Ernst is looking forward to showing his old friends the new man. Baptised in his youth, he and his wife were baptised in his youth. It is hoped that many more friends the new man.

Praying Parents

Last week a woman who had discovered her husband’s affair and was about to divorce him came to see our Pastor. She had been living with him for twelve years and was pregnant with his child. She had known about his infidelity for a long time but had chosen to ignore it. She had always been a Christian but had never been married.

She said she was the one who had to make the first step. She was very worried and didn’t know what to do. She had spoken to her pastor and had been advised to come and see us. She had been praying for God to change her husband’s heart and for him to come back to her. She had also been praying for herself and her son.

Pastor Ernst was very happy to hear that she had prayed and that God had answered her prayers. She had come to see us because she had heard that we were able to pray for people who were going through difficult times.

She was very grateful for the support she had received and said that she felt a lot better after talking to us. She had decided to continue praying for her husband and for her son and that they would continue to pray for each other.

The couple came to our church and were very happy to be able to share their story with us. They were very grateful for the support they had received and said that they would continue to pray for each other. They were very grateful for the support they had received and said that they would continue to pray for each other.

Prayer Group

The prayer group meets every Monday at 7pm in the prayer room. The group is open to anyone who would like to join and there is no need to register. The group meets to pray for each other and for the church. The group is open to anyone who would like to join and there is no need to register. The group meets to pray for each other and for the church.

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Our high point for 2003:
Scotland’s Project
in Romania

The twenty people awaiting the flight from Glasgow airport included skilled workers, young people – and the president of the Scottish Mission. They were going to Bolintin, Romania, to build two houses, each for a needy family. The average temperature for our two weeks in Romania was 35°C. By the first weekend we had finished the walls of the first house; the foundations of the second – and welcomed six more team members. In addition to building the houses we also brought the church up to scratch and conducted a summer club for the neighbourhood children. Those who were involved in this project experienced a real sense of achievement. It was our high point for 2003.

A big thank you to our financial backers. We raised £20,000 in six months. Thanks, too, for those who donated supplies – Graham, McGill Electrical, Plumb Center, PTS and William Wilson – who together donated 28 safety hats, 32 gloves, 22 boiler suits, 3 high-visibility jackets – and much more.

Golden Years’ Banquet

The Women’s Ministries and Communication departments of the Bristol church were hosts to the first Golden Years’ Banquet to be held at the church. On Sunday 12 October over one hundred men and women of the age of 60 and over (some accompanied by their spouses) were ushered into the beautifully decorated youth hall, where the tables were exquisitely prepared, and the participation and willingness of a number of young people to serve the meal was outstanding. The dinner was expertly prepared by Carol Pusey and her team. The air was buzzing with excitement and exchange of pleasantries as some of the folk said that they had not attended a banquet for many years. They anticipated an enjoyable time and the event did not disappoint.

The function was planned for them primarily to recognise their contributions over the years to church ministry in general, as well as to the social development of the young people in terms of nurture and support. Pastor Hamilton Williams acted as compere for the programme, which featured a variety of items including songs, poems, jokes, interviews by Pastor Williams and an entertaining version of ‘Mr and Mrs’ conducted by Leslie Reid. Both couples who took part, Brother and Sister Shorey and Brother and Sister Blake, have been married for over forty years.

No concrete jungle

Aberdaron doctrinal weekend 3-5 October

‘Our Church experience is like reading a map. We must know where we are, look at where we’ve come from – to know where we are going. This was the theme of the youth weekend, and young people travelled from near and far to learn more about the history of the Adventist church and its doctrines. A presentation on the pioneers gave the young people a taste of that old-time religion!’ Insights into the sanctuary gave a clearer picture of the sanctuary symbols and its relevance to our relationship with God. Dress code was a hot topic.

As well as being given food for thought, we were also kept happy with the physical food provided by the Nottingham kitchen team. The beautiful surroundings of Aberdaron were a welcome change, giving the young people the opportunity to escape the two-up-two-down, high-rise flats, block-paved streets, UPVC windows, the concrete jungles we call cities. There was also time for them to socialise and make new friends.

Overall, the weekend inspired the young people to make an impact in this secular society.

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