

## Jamaican Prime Minister visits Brixton church

by Richard de Lisser and Judith Purkiss



As Prime Minister Golding stood up, he started by saying, 'God is good!' and the congregation responded, 'All the time!' He went on to say that he belongs to an Adventist home, because his wife of thirty-six years, Mrs Lorna Golding, is a Seventh-day Adventist and she governs the home by Adventist principles.

The Prime Minister of Jamaica, the Honourable Bruce Golding MP, felt at home among family and friends at the Brixton Adventist church on Sabbath 24 May. He was accompanied by his wife Mrs Lorna Golding, the Jamaican High Commissioner Mr Burchell Whiteman, and Mrs Whiteman, Dr Ronald Robinson (Junior Foreign Affairs minister), and other dignitaries. The waiting 800-strong congregation stood as the party was ushered into the worship service to the beat of the Pathfinder drum corps, to be welcomed by the resident minister, Pastor Hamilton Williams.

Pastor Sam Davis, president of the South England Conference, gave the main prayer, asking God to grant wisdom to the Jamaican Prime Minister as he leads his country at a most challenging time. Pastor Davis proceeded to give a cordial welcome to the party on behalf of the South England Conference and introduced the Jamaican High Commissioner, Mr Burchell Whiteman, who eloquently set the stage for the Prime Minister's address.

Mr Golding stated that his vision is to build Jamaica through the participation of all Jamaicans, at home and abroad, referring to the Jamaicans abroad as part of the extended family. He brought his speech to a close by introducing his British Adventist family, the de Lissers, who are members of the Brixton church. Mrs Dorothy de Lisser is Mrs Lorna Golding's sister, and one of many reasons why they had chosen to come and worship at Brixton.

Mr Golding then took his seat to listen to the song of meditation 'There is a Name', rendered by his niece Paulette de Lisser-Marceny. The worship service speaker was Pastor Jonas Arrias, Associate Ministerial Secretary from the General Conference.

Prime Minister Golding and his team stayed behind to shake hands with and greet members and visitors. This brought to an end a five-day UK tour which saw the Prime Minister meet with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, as well as fellow Jamaicans and friends of Jamaica in London, Birmingham, Manchester and Nottingham.



with Jonathan Barrett

## It's bound to happen!

Things don't look good for Gordon Brown! The Crewe and Nantwich by-election defeat seemed like a large nail in his coffin. Why are people so much against him and his government at the moment?

Things are beginning to affect people. We have extremely high fuel prices, rising food prices, falling house prices and difficulty in obtaining credit. In May truck drivers started venting their anger as their jobs are under threat.

People are beginning to feel that life is not as good as it was. Some people are being forced to travel less and not have such a high living standard. They have to blame someone, so it must be the government's fault! However, most of the issues we are facing in this country have little to do with our government.

My guess is that over the next few years we are going to see a lot more anger as people's living standards are cut.

As we steadily move towards the return of Christ, things are not going to be pretty. We are well aware that natural disasters will increase. Yes, we are going to see a lot more Chinas and Burmas. Wars will increase. Whether these will be caused by food and water shortages, partially caused by global warming, I don't know, but increase they will. People's behaviour will get worse, and their love will 'grow cold' (Matthew 24:12).

When we see all these things happening, what shall we do? Shall we do what most do – complain about how it is affecting us and blame the government? Or shall we be increasingly aware that these are not just local events but of global – indeed universal – relevance? Shall

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we be conscious of the Scriptures that we know so well, or shall we go along with the complaining, angry crowd? After Jesus had outlined conditions before his return, he admonished us to respond:

Be aware: 'Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.' Matthew 24:42.

Be faithful: 'Well done, good and

faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things.' Matthew 25:23.

Be compassionate: 'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat . . . I was sick and you looked after me.' Matthew 25:36.

When predicted events happen, we can either complain about the government, or follow Jesus' advice!



# Gemma Gee and the Saturday people

David Marshall

When Gemma Gee showed up at church for the first time she was in a bewilderingly unfamiliar city. A secular girl, she was away at university and had selected the Saturday church because, back home, she had a school friend who was a Saturday person and who had suggested Gemma Gee give the Saturday people a try. Because of her friend back home, Gemma knew that Saturday people dressed up for church. So she selected her best dress, jacket and shoes, and dressed up, too.

Gemma says that her motive in showing up at church was a desire to meet people who were like her friend back home and, hopefully, get to know the Friend that everyone spoke so much about. She had deliberately adopted the dress code of the group by 'dressing up'. She had worked up all the nervous energy necessary to enter a large building where the vast majority of the members were matronly women with intimidatingly serious hats. Even before she seated herself – tentatively – in an aisle seat not too far from the door, she knew something was wrong from the stares of the matrons. She had arrived in the lull between services. People were on the move. There were swift, hostile stares back at her. A posse of matrons materialised at her side and asked her, in a manner reminiscent of a policeman making an arrest, to step outside and meet them in the mothers' room.

Once there, the arrest party became judge and jury. It was like a replay of John 8's Woman Taken in Adultery. But the stones were thrown and Jesus was *not* present. Her offence? Had she transgressed all 28 Fundamentals on her first visit to church? As the verbal rocks hit her she gathered that she had transgressed their dress code in one respect: she had worn large, circular earrings of a sort then fashionable among the smart set. The verbal rocks rained down on her until she was convulsed by sobs.

The story has a happy ending, sort of. The matrons had hit Gemma where she was most sensitive: she took care with her appearance. The ferocity of their approach convinced her that strict conformity to the dress code was enforced by the matrons because they could not forgive her for the unpardonable sin of being young. She believed that their views and approach accounted for a total absence of anyone under 30 in that congregation. The

enforcement of the dress code was the means they used to preserve the social purity of their club for the middle-aged and elderly.

Gemma finds what she calls 'happy clappy' worship deeply embarrassing. Nevertheless, she has settled for the Pentecostal Sunday church along the road. There, youth are welcome. No one has a dress code check-board. Gemma looked for a Friend among the Saturday people but could not find him. Her friend back home is mortified, and most unlikely to recommend Saturday congregations again. 'In the bigger scheme of things, what gives earrings such significance?' she asked me. Then, after a pause, she followed it up with, 'In a diverse Church like ours with people from many cultures, what sense does it make to enforce the puritan dress code? It never occurred to me that there was a Sev congregation where earrings were so objectionable. Doesn't God look on the heart?'

Churches in the New Testament found things to squabble about. In Galatia Christians were 'biting and devouring' one another (Galatians 5:15). In Corinth members were suing one another and were divided over human leaders (1 Corinthians 1:10-13; 6:1-8). In Philippi two women were at odds with one another and, as a result, split the church. It was in an effort to give them a sense of perspective that Paul wrote, 'Rejoice in the Lord always. . . . Let your gentleness be evident to all. . . .' (Philippians 4:1-7.) The saints in Ephesus and Colosse had to be reminded of the importance of unity (Ephesians 4:1-3; Colossians 2:1,2).

Adventists seem to ignore the second half of the Book of Romans. Check out chapter 14; how many sermons have you heard on that? It starts with, 'Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgement on disputable matters.' (Romans 14:1.) Rather directly Paul says, ' . . . So don't condemn each other any more. Decide instead to live in such a way that you will not put an obstacle in another Christian's path.' (Romans 14:13, NLT.) Having dealt with essentials in earlier chapters, Paul is telling us what to do with nonessentials.

Paul's message boils down to this. Allow for the fact that different people in the congregation are at different stages of their spiritual development. People who obsess about every little thing are spiritually immature. Christians



The Gemma Gees may find it easier to give an account of their earrings than the matrons their lack of love

should have an intense concentration on God's viewpoint about everything and desire to please God in the jots and the tittles. However, he or she must strive to maintain a sense of proportion, lest spiritual life be eclipsed by gnats.

Paul knew that believers had a tendency to make molehills into mountains. His advice has been summarised as: 'In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity.'

The critics of Gemma Gee showed the mark of the Pharisee. A Pharisee is a person who makes an atom of a world and a world of an atom. They strained out a gnat and they swallowed a camel. For the sake of an external, they abandoned love and grace – the heart of the Gospel.

Paul reminds us (Romans 14:9-12) that we must all give an account of ourselves before God. The Gemma Gees may find it easier to give an account of their earrings than the matrons their lack of love.

Jesus took a firm line on those who took pride in their places of honour in the synagogues but used them to 'shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces'. To them he said, 'You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.' (Matthew 23:2-14.)

When the prodigal returned from the pigsties of the Far Country to the Father's House, his Father did not have him hosed down. He showed him that the prodigal son had a prodigal Father. That the Father is prodigal with his grace. And that prodigal grace exceeds prodigal sin.

When the prodigals find out about the limitless love of the Father, they will rush to return to his house. *When they return, make sure that it is the Father they meet – not the Elder Brother. Or the Elder Sister.*



## Enhancing Health

by Sharon Platt-McDonald RGN, RM, RHV, MSc,  
Health Ministries director, BUC

### Brain Health Series

Part 7d

This issue examines key vitamins and minerals essential for brain and nervous tissue.

The nervous system consists of the brain, spinal cord, and a large network of nerves throughout the body. The brain uses the information it receives from the nerves to coordinate all actions and reactions. A key vitamin crucial to brain health is Vitamin B.

#### B vitamins

- Help the body release energy from food to support vitality and stamina.
- Also help the nervous system carry information to and from the brain.
- Vitamin B12 in particular is essential for cell growth and replication and helps to support nerve and brain health.

- The anti-stress vitamin pantothenic acid (Vitamin B5) is essential for normal physiological functions.

#### Vegetarian sources of vitamin B

Vitamin	Source
B1 (thiamine)	Soya beans, brown rice, sunflower seeds
B2 (riboflavin)	Almonds, mushrooms, whole grains
B3 (niacin)	Legumes, whole grains, avocados
B5 (pantothenic acid)	Brewers' yeast, mushrooms, avocados, egg yolk, whole grains
B6 (pyridoxine)	Whole grains, legumes, bananas, seeds, nuts
B12* (cobalamine)	Eggs, fortified soya cheese
Folic acid	Leafy green vegetables, legumes, nuts, eggs, wheat-germ
Biotin	Nuts, brewers' yeast, egg yolk
Choline	Nuts, pulses, citrus fruits, wheat-germ, egg yolks

\* Vegans are recommended to ensure their diet includes foods fortified with vitamin B12. A variety of B12 fortified foods are available. These include yeast extracts, Vecon vegetable stock, veggie-burger mixes, soya products, soya milks, vegetable and sunflower margarines, and breakfast cereals.

#### Vitamin D

New studies on Vitamin D from researchers in California suggest that Vitamin D may help promote brain health. Once vitamin D is converted in the body to its active form, calcitriol, it binds to receptors in the brain. Scientists at the Children's Hospital & Research Center, Oakland, CA, are also questioning whether there is convincing biological or behavioural evidence linking vitamin D deficiency to brain dysfunction.

**Source:** The main source of vitamin D is from sunlight on our skin. Other sources include eggs and dairy products and fortified foods. Vegans require vitamin D from fortified foods such as cereals, soya milk and margarine or supplements, particularly in winter.

#### Minerals

**Magnesium** works with B vitamins to help the body release energy from food and enhance the function of the nervous system and muscles.

**Sources:** Cashews, beetroot, dates, raisins and soya beans.

**Zinc** – the brain's antioxidant. Also protects the blood brain barrier against toxins.

**Sources:** Beans, lentils, peanuts, seeds, whole-grain cereals.

**Good health!**



# What sort of service do your visitors receive?



My wife and I have recently returned from a Caribbean cruise where we literally sat back and allowed others to take care of all our needs. We were impressed with the quality of service shown to all guests throughout the nine days that we were on board. There was always a welcoming smile from the waitresses who greeted us at the entrance of any of the ten onboard restaurants. Nothing appeared to be too much trouble for them. They were there to serve.

On the last day of the cruise we decided that we would go back to the one of the more classy restaurants on board. However, we had already been to this restaurant and had enjoyed the one vegetarian item they had to offer as an entrée. What should we do? We called the Maitre D and explained our dilemma to him. After a couple of phone calls, the head of services for that restaurant was with us, along with the restaurant's menu. She said, 'What would you like? Just tell us and we'll do it.' Surprised at this ready and generous offer, we were not really prepared. We had expected so many excuses. 'Sorry Sir/Madam, but we are at sea and there's not much that we can do,' or something similar. However, Maitre D even suggested that they could bring some of the vegetarian items from the main restaurant, where we ate daily,

down to the restaurant of choice. The service was amazing. It epitomised hospitality at its very best. As we walked around the ship later that day, we were amazed at the level of care that went into keeping things 'ship-shape'. The wooden handrail appeared fine to us but there was a worker varnishing it. Everyone seemed to know his role and did it well. Rowena remarked to me, 'How does this remind you of your Church?' What we had seen onboard ship, the level of hospitality, the care, the attention to detail, the efficiency, the diligence of the crew, did remind me of my Church – but not in the positive sense.

Some years ago I was invited to preach in one of our provincial churches. We arrived after several hours of driving. The pastor was absent, but we enjoyed fellowship with the saints in Sabbath School, and I preached. After the service, with all the formalities out of the way, the doors of the church were locked and members began to head for home. No one invited us for lunch or even asked us how or where we were going to have lunch. It was a cold winter's day and we sat in the car with the children and ate what we had brought with us before heading back home.

It was not so long ago that I was on holiday outside the UK and, as is my custom, I visited one of the local SDA churches. No one noticed me or spoke to me throughout. I was glad though that the pastor was preaching, because here at least was someone who would identify with a fellow pastor and make him feel welcome. As I shook his hand at the door I mentioned that I was a visiting pastor from England, a fact that left the pastor clearly unmoved and unimpressed. I quickly moved out into the courtyard of the church and waited for members to come and greet me. I must have been wearing my invisible jacket that day, because no one noticed the visitor standing in the yard.

My wife had suggested that morning that I should take lunch with me, but I assured her that this would not be necessary as I was sure that

members would accommodate my needs where that was concerned. I could not have been more wrong. After some embarrassing minutes of waiting, I got into

the car and drove away in order not to embarrass myself any further.

As part of our homiletical training at Newbold College we were required to go and listen to one of the outstanding preachers of the day. The chosen speaker was the Revd John Stott of All Souls, Langham Place, London. I will never forget the welcome we received as we arrived at the church.

The greeter welcomed us warmly and invited us downstairs for tea, coffee and biscuits. Before we got to our seats we were welcomed at least three times. I got the impression they were serious and genuinely meant what they said about 'welcome'. The sermon was well worth the visit. As we left the church at the end of the service, we were again invited to join them downstairs for drinks or something to eat. I remember saying to my friend Fred Mapp, 'You know, if I wasn't an Adventist, I would join this church.'

All of us can no doubt tell our horror stories about unfriendly and unwelcoming churches. However, the truth is that one of the most welcoming places on Earth ought to be the church. Because of what we do and what we stand for, it is in our best interests that the person who feels the most welcome is the visitor in the pew.

The welcoming smile, the friendly service, the level of hospitality were clearly evident onboard ship. I would have no problem repeating the experience. Many visitors choose not to return to our churches because these graces are missing.

Our churches may not carry a 4.5-star rating, but the welcome, the hospitality, the level of service should be 5 star every time. Who knows, you may just entertain someone who's looking for Christ and didn't find him in the sermon but saw him clearly through your warmth, your kindness, your hospitality.

Let us endeavour to run a 'tight ship' so that people will choose to come back because the level of service left them with no choice.

Ship-shape ahoy!

by  
Pastor Sam Davis,  
SEC president



## A celebration of Adventist education

### HYLAND HOUSE SDA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL has a visit from OFSTED

by Gina Abbequaye, head teacher and SEC Education director

On Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 April, Hyland House School was inspected by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

As is the practice of this new version of Ofsted, we were given a two-day notice that we would be inspected.

'Relationships between the staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are warm, caring and respectful. Pupils are confident in speaking to staff and will share their problems and ask for help with their work, assured that they will have a positive response. One year 6 commented, "Teachers always give you extra help if you don't understand – they feel for you when you are stuck." There were examples of good and outstanding teaching.' *Ofsted 2008*

Ofsted have four gradings when inspecting schools. They are as follows: INADEQUATE, SATISFACTORY, GOOD, OUTSTANDING.

Following are the areas that were inspected:

- Quality of education
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural

- development of pupils
- Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- Suitability of the proprietor
- Premises and accommodation
- Provision of information to parents and carers and others
- Procedures for handling complaints

*Ofsted's evaluation of Hyland House School is as follows:*

'The quality of education provided at Hyland House School is GOOD. There is an interesting and varied curriculum and GOOD teaching which engages pupils' interests effectively; as a result, pupils make GOOD progress. Pupils' personal development and behaviour are OUTSTANDING. Parents and pupils are very positive about the school, which has a clear Christian ethos and provides a GOOD quality of care.'

Following are the judgements made on the areas inspected:

- Quality of education – GOOD
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development – OUTSTANDING



- Welfare, health and safety – GOOD
- Suitability of proprietor – GOOD
- Premises and accommodation – SATISFACTORY
- Provision of information – GOOD
- Complaints procedure – GOOD

Hyland House School has been judged to be a good school with some outstanding qualities.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our pupils for continuing to love and enjoy their school; for the devotion and support that all parents have for our school; for the dedicated staff who give over 100% willingly to the cause of our school; to the Governors who support us untiringly; and, finally, to God who is the Master of our school.

## Conceive, believe, achieve

by Joan Reid, Brixton Education dept

The power of education to influence the mind, to mould characters and to effect beneficial change has always been recognised as one of the highest priorities in the Seventh-day Adventist church. This was evidenced on 10 and 11 May as the Education department of the Brixton church launched its education weekend under the theme: CONCEIVE, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE.

The main objective was to present to the church and the community at large the concept that true education is executing one's God-given ability through the integration of faith and life-long learning.

The Sabbath morning's programme, led by Dawn Wilks and Leonie Robinson, provided the opportunity for all who were present to re-ignite their classroom experi-

ence retrospectively. Each area of the Sabbath School was changed to represent a different subject area, including using our mathematical skill to decipher the opening hymn.

The Sabbath midday message, presented by Valerie Bernard, currently serving as Head of the Dept of Behavioural Sciences at Newbold College, was entitled 'On Eagle's Wings'. By the end of the sermon we were empowered to aim high, focusing on Christ constantly. We were also challenged and encouraged to die daily and to keep holding on to the eagle's wings, no matter what the circumstances.

Special mention has to be made of the Croydon children's choir who sang for the service. They were conducted by Selina Billett.

The evening's programme, led by

Craige Younge and Christopher Roberts, was called 'Changing Course'. It portrayed a dramatic presentation of a prodigal daughter (a replica of the Bible story of the prodigal son) interspersed with the singing of well-loved hymns and other sacred songs by Janeca (singing group from Brixton church).

On Sunday 11 May, the Brixton hall was transformed into a buzz of activities as educational stalls were erected in readiness for the fair.

They displayed a number of educational effects, including books, academic and professional information, health screening and products, massage therapy, as well as innovative Sabbath School programme activities for children (Croydon church).

In addition to the stalls, there

were various seminar presentations offering stimulating and interesting information on a number of educational issues relating to learning for all ages. Some of the contributors included: Pastor Sam Davis, SEC president, who opened both the event and the church library; Pastor Hamilton Williams, pastor of the church; Mrs Gina Abbequaye, SEC Education director; Mrs Laura Osei, founder, head of Eden School; Dr Richard de Lissar, Stewardship and Communications director; the local police; Mr David Simon, Lambeth community, and Elaine Campbell (member) who spoke on prison ministries.

Special commendation was given to Karen Richards, a member of the team, who was instrumental in planning and contacting most of the contributors of the event. Under God's guidance we are mindful of the fact that, as we prepare people to experience a meaningful life for today, we are also educating them holistically for eternity.



Pastor Robert Hines speaks in the marquee



Packed congregation on Sabbath morning



Jenny Sorensen successfully emerges from the cave



Young rock climber



Best-attended Brecon Camp  
by John Surridge

The Bank Holiday weather was described as 'a washout' – first by weather forecasters, and later by newspaper headline writers, as in some parts of the West Country and Wales nearly a month's rain fell in a couple of days.

There is no question that the Brecon Family Camp, which ran from Friday 23 to Monday 26 May, was wet. It rained as people arrived on Friday evening and it rained as they left on Monday morning, but it was what happened in between that was important.

The Brecon Camps have been popular for over thirty years now and they have a dedicated following. Over the years they have attracted families and young people alike. However, as the camps are self-catering and require a fair amount of equipment, they can be a bit of a struggle for young people who don't have much camping experience. So this year Jeremy Tremeer, the Welsh Mission Youth sponsor and camp director, introduced a few changes to try to make it easier for young people to attend.

Firstly, he arranged for a catering tent to feed any young people who did not have cooking facilities. This was run by volunteers Jane Toft-Bayliss, who lives nearby, and her sister Metti Toft-Zumbuhl, who came to the camp all the way from Switzerland.

Secondly, Jeremy brought in a youth speaker who was known to the young people from the recent 'Three Missions Weekend' in Scotland. Pastor Robert Hines had not been to a Brecon Camp before but went down well with young and old alike. Over the weekend his theme was 'Parables of Life' and in each of the worship services he presented two parables – one for the children and one for the older ones. Many people commented on Pastor Hines' energetic and animated style, as well as his graphic illustrations. Few will forget, for example, the story of how his father gashed his hand with a machete while cutting a length of sugar cane!

A third activity designed to appeal particularly to young people was a trip to a nearby climbing centre. Here, for nearly three hours on a grey and drizzling Sunday afternoon, twenty-four campers, ranging in age from under ten to forty-something, tackled caves, rope bridges and twenty-metre vertical walls – and had a great deal of fun in the process.

Other innovations at the camp included a larger marquee, possibly the largest the camp has ever had, and extra portaloos – a total of eight.

Some observers believe that this year's Brecon Camp was the best-attended ever. During the Sabbath service there were about 170 people in the marquee and even on the final day, when quite a few had already left, there were still about 100 in for worship. Altogether, well over 200 people passed through the camp at some time or other over the weekend.

As the rain-lashed campers left the field on Bank Holiday Monday, they took with them memories of good food, new friendships, excellent worship music, and thought-provoking talks. They also took a renewed appreciation for the everyday things we have been blessed with, but sometimes take for granted.

Approximately 100 pictures from the camp can be seen on the Welsh Mission website: [www.adventistwales.org](http://www.adventistwales.org). See also [www.adventistpictures.org.uk/gallery/2008/Brecon/index.php](http://www.adventistpictures.org.uk/gallery/2008/Brecon/index.php).

Those who enjoyed learning Matt Redman's song 'You Never Let Go' can hear him performing it at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIAdgLR1ZGw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIAdgLR1ZGw).

# £307,000 grant for Burma as Mark returns home

by Victor Hulbert, BUC Communication director

ADRA-UK signed a contract with DFID (the Department for International Development) on Monday 2 June that will enable ADRA to provide shelter for 30,000 displaced persons. The project is called 'Labutta Cyclone Relief Phase I'. Valued at £307,000 from DFID, with an additional £50,000 from ADRA-UK, the £357,000 programme will run from 4 June for two months. ADRA-UK director Bert Smit is very positive about the project. 'This will make a significant difference in helping people to rebuild their lives in Burma.'

Mark Castellino, Programmes director for ADRA-UK, has just returned from a three-week stint in Burma (Myanmar), where he has been part of the International Emergency response team.

'This cyclone has affected so

many people. So many people were displaced. So many people died. Our response as a humanitarian community is still not reaching all of those who have been affected,' Mark stated on his return.

When Mark arrived in Burma on 10 May, the team set about developing a plan for supplying food, shelter, basic household items, water and sanitation. 'We looked at some specific areas of the country where ADRA has been working in the past,' Mark said.

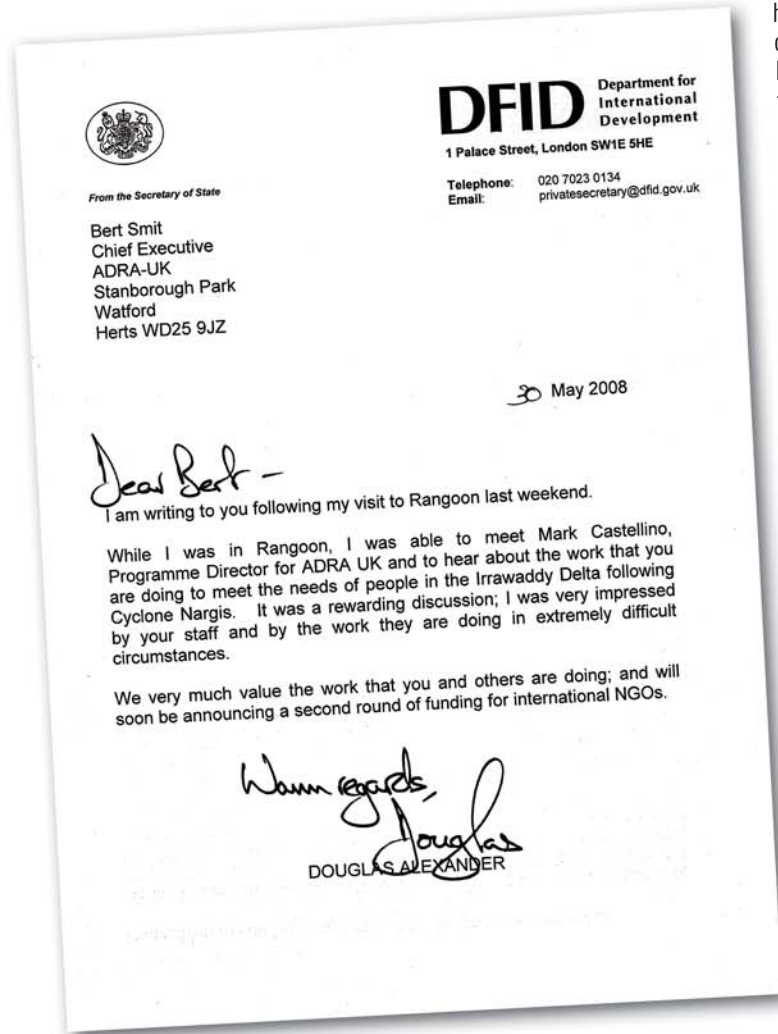
Because ADRA was already working in the Delta area, it was much easier for their teams to be diverted from current projects and to start providing emergency aid. 'A lot of organisations have had real challenges working in Burma, quite simply because they have not been working there before,' Mark reported. However, ADRA has been well sup-

ported. Mark achieved his visa in record time – less than twenty-two hours. While chiefly responsible for planning, he was based in Rangoon, and the 180 local staff employed by ADRA have had free access to the Delta area where they have particularly focused on the area south of Labutta, made up of small islands and waterways only accessible by boat. 'The national staff descended on the Delta area from across Burma and are working long hours,' Mark reported. Together with additional staff that ADRA have taken on, they are providing assistance to thousands who would otherwise be cut off from help.

Mark has been to Burma before, but he was awestruck by the devastation he saw. 'It was so unfamiliar,' he said. 'The city looked significantly different. Rangoon is full of trees, but driving down from the airport I saw tree after tree after tree that had been uprooted. There was a lot of damage; a lot of destruction.' Mark was more perturbed as he found that ADRA staff in the Delta area had also died in the cyclone. 'To think that there are colleagues within this organisation whose lives have been lost was really hard.'

However, there were positive stories, too. As part of the tsunami reconstruction project ADRA had built twenty-two new bridges. 'When the cyclone hit a lot of people sought refuge under the bridges as the only thing that could really protect them.' ADRA Myanmar estimates that these bridges saved around 900 lives.

'The donations we receive from the public really are our lifeblood,' Mark reports. Over £30,000 has been donated by the general public specifically for the Burma appeal in the last three weeks. This adds to significant funding from DFID, the



World Food Programme and many other organisations but, Mark says, while the death and displacement in Burma has been equal to that of the Southeast Asian tsunami, the response to date from the public has not been so great. 'The international community is very much engaged with this process,' Mark reports. His last weekend in Burma saw him at an International Pledging conference where many donors came together. 'We were able to meet with the minister for International Development from the British Government, which is one of the largest donors to the Cyclone Relief Effort. This good engagement helps provide the money to respond to some of these needs.'

'For me, personally, I'm very grateful that I can be part of the response,' Mark emphasises. 'When I left Burma it was really quite difficult to disengage with the work I have been doing there. It was a very intense three weeks.' Mark will be returning to Burma shortly to oversee the project and continue developing lifelines for the people in the hard hit Delta region.

If you would like to assist ADRA in their emergency relief work in Burma, or find out the latest news from Burma, China and other regions, please visit the ADRA-UK website, [www.adra.org.uk](http://www.adra.org.uk). Donations can be made online or by sending your cheque (gift aided if possible) to ADRA-UK, Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts, WD25 9JZ. Mark's full interview can be viewed online at [www.hopetv.org.uk](http://www.hopetv.org.uk).



Rt Hon. Douglas Alexander is the Secretary of State for International Development and a member of Mr Brown's cabinet.

ADRA was one of only two charities with work on the ground in Burma before the present crisis began. Both Bert Smit and Mark Castellino have worked on committee with Mr Alexander.

# What a day of rejoicing!

The glorious, sunny weather of 10 May seemed to pervade the sanctuary as the friends and family of nine precious souls witnessed their baptism at Leicester Central church.

All the candidates had written heartfelt statements about why they had chosen to be baptised that moved much of the congregation to tears. It was particularly moving to



see so many teenagers take the baptismal vows.

Eighteen-year-old Andrew Henry wrote a particularly touching statement about being dogged by illness all his life, including a hole in the heart, and the trauma he suffered last year as a result of two good friends dying in a road traffic accident. There was also much joy in the Muchenagumbo household, as brother and sister, Nigel and Violet, committed their lives to service for Christ.

Tonderai Chinodyaruswa talked of being initially tricked into coming to church by his friend, Nigel, and then coming to study the Word for himself and never looking back since. Rodrick Chapangara, who completes the trio of friends, made an emotional speech about there being nothing out in the world for young people, and hoped the example he set would be followed by some of the other youngsters looking on.

The other young ladies who were baptised, Pendo Chris Phales, Yvonne

Taylor and Michelle Zviuya, all bore witness to the fact that they had tried the alternative to a committed Christian lifestyle and that nothing compared. There seemed to be an extra glint in the eye of Pastor Paul Liburd as he baptised his firstborn, Abigail.

As each of the candidates rose from the water and had their favourite hymns sung, the Shona lyrics for the candidates that originated from Zimbabwe were joyful and melodious.

There was more harmonious singing from Jane Liburd, the Leicester Central Choir and the girl group, Salvation Six. Pastor Liburd admonished all present that rejoicing was the order of the day for everyone, as we all knew how the story ended: with Jesus conquering sin forever and, should we choose to accept Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, all of us living in peace and harmony together forevermore.

DENISE WILLIAMS

# Middlesbrough helps Myanmar

Thursday morning, tables in a large church hall and those tables loaded with toys, books, DVDs, clean clothes. It was possibly a regular table-top sale, but, in this case, a chance to raise funds for ADRA, a worldwide development and relief charity currently hard at work in Burma, trying to provide aid for the populace of the Irrawaddy delta hard hit by the recent cyclone.

Caring for one of the stalls was Caroline Pace whose friend Mark Castellino is currently preparing plans for future work by the local workers for ADRA-Myanmar. His work on his last visit centred on the bridges that were installed by the charity in the Irrawaddy delta prior to the cyclone. Those bridges sheltered hundreds of people from the storm raging above them that was

destroying crops, houses and livelihoods.

Caroline, pictured with a customer (Ludy Robinson), was trying to offer support to her friend with whom she has been communicating over the Internet.

The Middlesbrough Adventist church has been helping Caroline and the work of ADRA by gifts from church collections and the latest effort, a table-top sale at St Barnabas church on Linthorpe Road, from whom they rent

premises for their regular Saturday services.

Pastor Peter Jeynes, the local pastor of the church, was impressed by the sale. 'We were able to raise over £250 in the morning's sale with a good number of the local community enjoying hearing about the work of ADRA.'

PETER JEYNES



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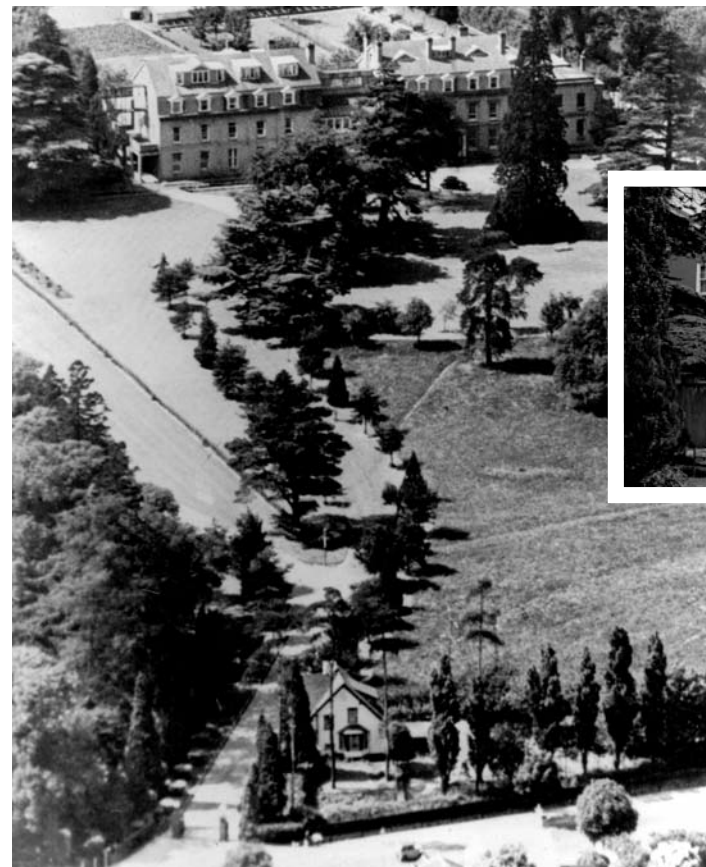
# Commemorating the San

by David Marshall

Forty years ago this year the British Union's flagship health institution closed its doors. The struggle to keep Roundelwood open has been apt to eclipse the contribution made for sixty years by its illustrious predecessor, variously known as 'the San', 'the Hydro' and 'The Stanboroughs Nursing and Maternity Home'.

We are using this anniversary to remember 'The Stanboroughs' and, in particular, the contribution of its post-war champion, Dr Alfred H. Williams.

Dr Williams had a long and distinguished career as a missionary, union president and division officer in Burma and India before he qualified as a doctor at 51. Indeed, Dr Williams was one of a small band of missionaries who buried a wife and child in the lands in which he served.



Here we remember this remarkable man's story – in Burma, India and in Britain – and recall the crisis that precipitated the closure of The Stanboroughs just forty years ago.

Hospital in East London and acquired valuable experience in the treatment rooms of the new Stanboroughs Hydro in Watford.

Adventist records indicate that by 1914 Alfred was back in Burma running an Adventist Technical School, assisting Pastor George Hamilton in establishing a mission station and undertaking (on a self-supporting basis) missionary work among the poorest of the poor in the Salween River Valley. The first three of the seven Williams children, including Hugh, were born in this period. A. H. Williams was ordained as a 'Minister of the Gospel' effective from 1 January 1917.

## Lucknow, Poona and Lahore

By the time of his ordination, Pastor Williams and his family were based in Lucknow in the India Union Mission (renamed Southern Asia Division in 1920). During his years as treasurer, Williams negotiated the purchase of land in Lahore, Poona, and a further 45-50 acres on the southern slopes of Vincent Hill. He also oversaw the building of a two-story Division office block and printing facility. By 1919 he was secretary-treasurer of the Union and in 1920 a delegate at the General Conference session in San

Francisco. On furlough in Watford, Williams recruited C. H. Mackett to assist him with his ambitious building projects (including a large school) in India. On 19 April 1925 Mabel Williams gave birth to their seventh and last child, nicknamed 'Buster' because he weighed in at 12.5lb!

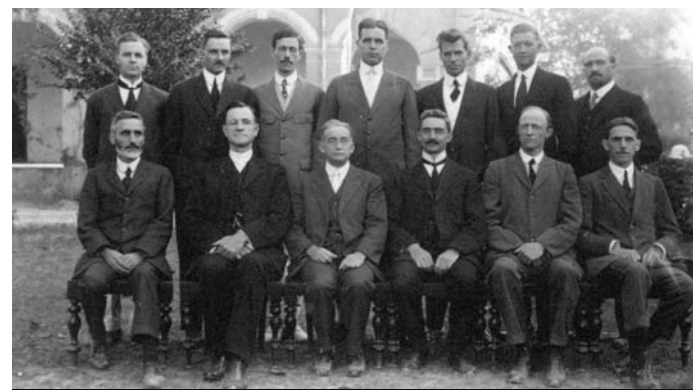
From his base at the Southern Asia Division in Poona, Williams oversaw the building of the Vincent Hill School which, having opened in 1924, was run along the lines of an English grammar school.

## Tragedy in Calcutta

In 1926 Pastor Williams was made president of the Bengal Union, and he and the family moved to Calcutta. Williams advised his children to learn an additional language each year, which was his own practice. Bengali, Hindustani, Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi and Urdu were added to his store of languages.

Pastor Williams was accompanying the Division president, who spoke no language other than English, when tragedy struck the family. He returned home to find 21-month-old Buster dying from diphtheria, a condition which a local doctor had failed to diagnose. Alfred and Mabel Williams, with the six remaining family members, buried Buster in a Calcutta cemetery. The family was devastated by the loss.

Pastor Williams accepted the position of president of the Northwest India Union. The family returned to Lucknow. There Mabel founded a school for destitute little girls. During the remainder of his presidency Pastor Williams set up other such schools. With General Conference funding, Pastor Williams



India Union Committee, November 1917, Lucknow  
Back: G. G. Lowery, I. F. Blue, R. D. Brisbin, C. F. Lowery, G. W. Pettit, M. M. Mattison, V. L. Mann. Front: L. J. Burgess, J. E. Fulton, F. H. De Vinney, W. W. Fletcher, H. C. Menkel, A. H. Williams, then only 28 yrs old

also built, equipped and staffed, a hospital, and recruited a Loma Linda graduate in medicine to run it. Mabel Williams, at 42, qualified as a State Certified Midwife in London in order to help.

## Septicaemia

On 22 January 1933 Mabel became seriously ill shortly after her husband had left for the Punjab. He was contacted by telegram and caught the next train home. Mabel was delirious, her tongue horribly swollen. Sulphonamides and antibiotics were unknown, and 10-year-old Leslie Williams knew that Mum was going to die. She died of septicaemia at 6am on 31 January. The bacteria that caused the infection came from a wound on Mabel's ankle received when making her last home visit.

A. H. Williams became one of the small band of Seventh-day Adventist missionaries who buried his wife and a child in the land he served.

For the time Pastor Williams continued with his presidency, having arranged for four of his children to go to Vincent Hill School. At the Winter Council Meetings at Poona in December he gave notice of his resignation. The Division president undertook to try to find a placement for him in the British Union. His approaches to the BUC were unsuccessful. For a time Pastor Williams worked again in Burma before leaving the subcontinent for the last time. The Williams family arrived back at the King George V Docks on 31 August 1934.

## Medical training

Alfred Williams, though 45, had never given up on his dream of completing his medical training. Hence his priority on landing was to confirm his place at Medical School. Within a month he was working on

his first MB. His mother moved in to keep house, and plans were put in hand to build a house. In November 1934 the BUC offered Williams a job as manager of the Hydro. Committed to his medical studies, he declined. In 1936 his second wife Iris, who had both nursing and midwifery qualifications, accepted the matron's post at the San.

A. H. Williams qualified as a doctor in 1940. After a period in general practice, Dr A. H. Williams was appointed Registrar at the Emergency Medical Services Unit at Shrodells Infirmary. At the same time he accepted the invitation of BUC president Pastor Harry Lowe to assist the Church in medical matters (including examining missionaries going to and coming from Africa). During his period at Shrodells and subsequent to setting up his own practice, Dr Williams was an on-call surgeon on a roster made up of local doctors holding an F.R.C.S. When he retired from Medicine in 1961 the Sheepcote Lane practice had grown to four doctors: Dr A. H. Williams, Dr Hugh O. Williams, Dr S. Guest and Dr T. J. Gallivan. His son, Dr Hugh O. Williams, succeeded him as head of the practice.

Since his ministry to the poorest of the poor in Burma and the schools for the destitute in India, Dr Williams continued his ministry to the underprivileged as a Watford GP. Throughout the war years he was confronted by young mothers with sick children, no money and a husband away fighting on some front of World War Two. Dr Williams would say, 'If the children are ill bring the children in and we'll worry about money later.' In many cases either no account was sent or a very reduced bill was submitted.

## The San in 1945

During the War years the San was



Dr H. O. Williams

requisitioned for use as part of the medical school for University College Hospital. When the building was returned to the British Union in July 1945, Dr Williams was asked to get the place 'up and running' again. For a number of years Dr Williams was both medical director and business administrator. The terms of employment were that Dr Williams would not accept remuneration until the institution had been in profit for two years. The agreement was that Dr Williams or his partners would determine what course the medical treatment took. Pre-war medical practices would be re-evaluated and retained or discontinued in light of current medical practice.

Dr and Mrs Williams dismantled, cleaned and sterilised pre-war medical equipment until it shone. An operating theatre was maintained at a standard of readiness. Other surgeons began seeing their private patients at The Stanboroughs, as it became known. Fees paid by patient and practitioner alike went into the coffers. Formal departmental heads were appointed and met with Dr A. H. Williams on a weekly basis. At those meetings Dr Williams (or, following his appointment as business manager, Mr George Annis) went through departmental costs with a fine-tooth comb.

Slowly, as the rooms were repaired, redecorated and refurbished, the Stanboroughs acquired an excellent reputation. Dr Williams visited the Adventist health institutions in Sweden and Denmark and implemented the best of what he found there.

## The west wing

Utilising a grant from the General Conference, the large west wing was added to the existing building. It was built in accordance with modern standards and featured ferro-



Dr A. H. Williams, one time secretary/treasurer of the Southern Asia Division of Seventh-day Adventists, Poona, India. President of the Northwest India Union, Lucknow, India. Fluent in Burmese, Hindi and Urdu. Also one time Medical director of the Stanboroughs Nursing Home, Garston, Watford.

concrete reinforced pillars and floor. It became the maternity department and attracted a large clientele, including the wives of a number of significant figures in public life.

The break-even point was reached in the mid-50s, and profits came in the following years. After two years in profit an annual fee of £2,000 was paid to the Williams practice for the 24/7 services of the four doctors.

Dr A. H. Williams, as first elder of the Stanborough Park church, oversaw a number of major building projects at that church. These included two new side galleries and three additional halls (the first floor hall is called The Williams Hall) to the rear of the building.

Following retirement of Dr A. H. Williams, his son Dr Hugh Williams became Medical director of the British Union and Medical superintendent of The Stanboroughs Nursing and Maternity Home.

## Winds of change

At the British Union Conference session in the De Montfort Hall, Leicester, at Easter 1967, Dr Bernard Seton was elected president, and Chartered Accountant Colin Wilson re-elected secretary-treasurer. Seton's vision was for a professional ministry educated to a high standard and remunerated accordingly. The Home Owners Policy was one of the positive consequences of this new policy. Among the negative consequences was the increased currency in BUC circles of the term 'de-institutionalisation', and, finally, the closure of The Stanboroughs.

## Dr A. H. Williams: Missionary, Administrator, Physician

Alfred Henry Williams was born in Plumstead on 24 July 1889. He won a scholarship to University College School, London, and his first job was with S. Oppenheimer of Rangoon, Burma. During his six years with Oppenheimer's, Williams studied Accountancy and Mercantile Law. He also learned Burmese, but his principal aim was to earn money to complete his university training in Medicine.

## Burma

In 1910 Williams married Mabel Donaldson in Rangoon. The marriage was conducted by Pastor. H. H.

Votaw, the first Adventist missionary to Burma. First Mabel, then Alfred was baptised. Asked years later why he had 'joined such a small American group' as the Seventh-day Adventists, Dr Williams replied, 'It was not the size of the organisation that influenced me in 1910, but the size of the message.'

As a result of the abject poverty they witnessed in Burma, Alfred and Mabel chose to become missionaries when Alfred's contract with Oppenheimer's was completed in 1912. To enable him to work among the villages of Burma, Alfred undertook basic medical training at Livingstone College based at Poplar

While Seton and Wilson behaved like professionals throughout and reserved their comments and arguments for the committee room, others carried the argument out into the community. A respected and senior BUC Committee member called these persons 'The Tobiahs and Sanballats'.

The Stanboroughs bore the brunt of T and S discussion. The maternity unit and the operating theatre were, in particular, singled out for attack. Both sides of the argument, at various times, appealed to the Health 'blueprint'.

For some months it was unclear to what extent the fears being voiced in the community represented reality, though some unfortunate pulpit pronouncements gave credence to them. To Dr Hugh Williams the issue was backbiting by the non-medically trained in matters medical. As a consequence he resigned.

In MESSENGER 19 January 1968, BUC president Dr Seton wrote of 'several disturbing conditions which must be radically changed before true prosperity can come to our beloved Church. The fact is that, for a small self-contained Union like ours [the membership was about 10,000], we have undertaken more than we can humanly manage . . .'. The ensuing document made depressing reading. The future of the new Stanborough Press was compromised by the decline in the number of literature evangelists. 'The coming of socialised medicine [the NHS]' and 'ever mounting costs' were blamed for the struggles of the

San. Granose was operating in 'out-of-date premises' and in 'a grimly competitive world'. The secondary school was already expensive and 'needs several additional tens of thousands of pounds spending on it right now'.

**The Park for sale?**

Between 18-22 April 1968 'a representative commission', including division and union personnel, met to consider the state of the British Union. It had only advisory powers but, after a day of vigorous, informed discussion, its report was accepted by the Union Executive on 30 April after a few amendments had been voted.

Union president Seton, one of the most scholarly men ever to hold that post, communicated the upshot of the discussions in MESSENGER 7 June 1968:

'It has been recognised that for so small a field, we are over-institutionalised: that is, we are endeavouring, in our several institutions, to do more than our present resources will permit, and have therefore been stretching those resources beyond their reasonable limits. Persistence in this present course will only increase our difficulties: it was therefore voted, reluctantly and with deep regret, to acknowledge the impracticability of our operating a hospital-type of sanitarium in a land of socialised medicine, and to avoid continued heavy losses by closing the Stanboroughs Hydro at the earliest date compatible with the fulfilment of our current

**NOT THE WHOLE STORY**

No attempt has been made to tell the whole story. Names of important personages will doubtless have been omitted. The story has not been told of the health institutions at Caterham and in Leicester, founded before the one on Stanborough Park and which, for some years, ran parallel with it. In addition, no mention has been made of the Crieff health institutions and the work of Dr Gertrude Brown. These stories have been told before in these pages. In the case of Dr Brown, it has been the subject of a book.

Our intention here has been to cover, albeit briefly, the story of 'The San' in the post-war period and to provide some account of the circumstances that led to its closure. More importantly, we have tried to tell the story of the man who spent a lifetime as a missionary in Burma and India, and as superintendent of 'The San': Dr A. H. Williams.

To the best of our knowledge, his story has not previously appeared in print.

With regard to a matter as contentious as the San closure, even forty years on there are people who are hurting and surviving relations of those who went to their graves hurting. If their story has not been told here, then write it and post it to the Editor, or email [EditorDNM@mac.com](mailto:EditorDNM@mac.com). If your perspective on the issue has not been reflected, then let us hear from you. This need not be the last you hear of the San story.

If you have more to tell, let's hear it!

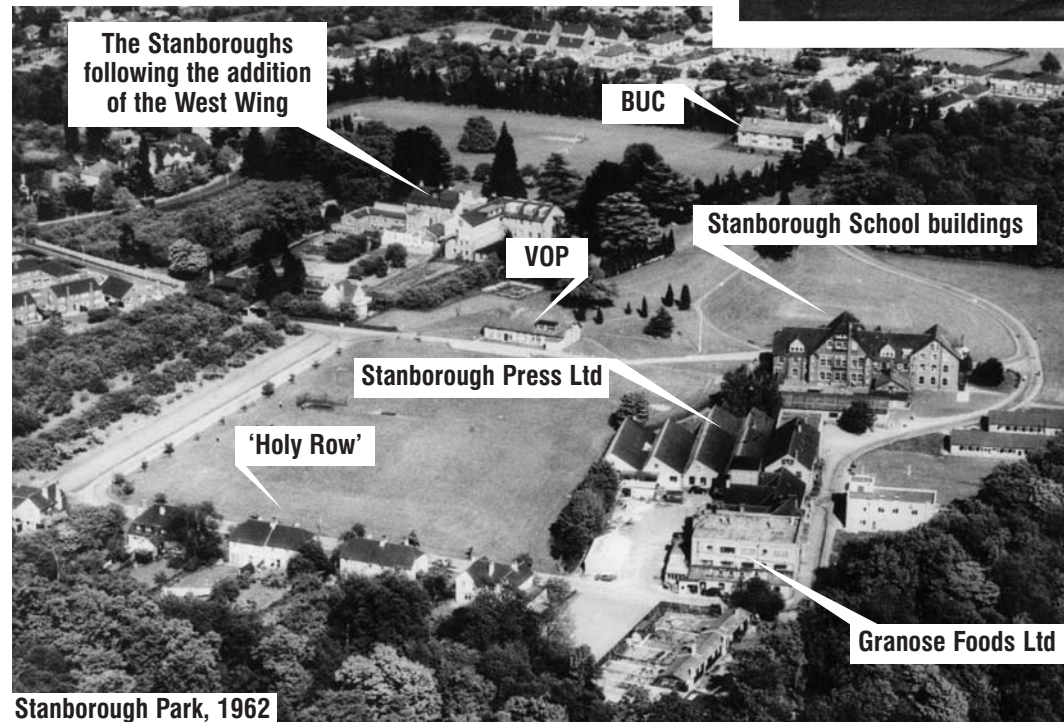
EDITOR

commitments. This, so far as we can now see, means that our sanitarium will close by the end of this year.'

Dr Seton also announced that an investigation had been authorised into the possibility of selling 'the major remaining portion of Stanborough Park', while retaining the church, the BUC offices, the new primary school, 'with the Voice of Prophecy office as a possible extension of the BUC' and a new secondary school 'either on or very near the Park'. Later that year 'green belt'



On 9 May 1912, the mansion on Stanborough Park, after considerable extensions, including two additional floors (which had once housed the college), was opened as the Stanborough Park Hydro. This was how the front of the building looked in 1938 after further significant development had taken place



Stanborough Park, 1962



**Members raised high in GDOP**

On Sunday 11 May fifty people and five clergy from five different denominations were hoisted 150 feet above the ground. They were there for one purpose: to pray! They overlooked Clydebank and the Clyde river, while aircraft ascended and descended at Glasgow's nearby airport — and prayed for its people.

The old Titan Crane, once used for early ship building on the Clyde river, now hosted a party of believers wishing to bless and intercede for fellow people who do not know God.

It formed part of the Global Day of Prayer (GDOP), which started in South Africa in 1994. The local initiative was organised by the parish minister of the Church of Scotland (CoS) in Fairley. Like some of our churches, the Church of Scotland in Fairley added ten days of prayer leading up to 11 May GDOP. Fairley Seventh-day Adventist branch members, tenants of the CoS building, were invited to take part and contribute to the ten-day GDOP programme.

The three-times-a-day prayer events were all held at the Fairley CoS church. On two consecutive Sabbaths Adventists were allowed to host the prayer meeting. On both

**European pastors question world church leader**  
by Victor Hulbert, BUC Communication director

Dr Jan Paulsen, world president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, took part in a live question and comment session with six pastors from Northern Europe on Wednesday 28 May. This programme, *Pastors in Conversation*, was uplinked to the Hope Channel from studios just north of London, and shown around the world.

Introduced by Trans-European Division president Dr Bertil Wiklander, Dr Paulsen answered questions about diversity, emphasising the richness that these groups add to the recipient church. Among the ten major questions he responded to during the one-hour presenta-

occasions, several local CoS members attended. On one Sabbath, some happily accepted an invitation to stay and participate in communion.

Glasgow pastor, Clifford Herman, said, 'All those who participated felt it was a worthwhile exercise — for many reasons. They made new friends, engaged in positive networking and made groundbreaking paths that will lead to understanding the worship and beliefs of all those involved. It opened up exciting opportunities to share and engage with one another in the future.'

JOHN WILBY



tion were reaching the post-modern mind, reclaiming 'lost' members, female pastors, giving young people more responsibility, dealing with small churches, and the role of the church in its community.

Two pastors from England and one from the Republic of Ireland joined with Dutch, Finnish and Norwegian colleagues in what Pastor lan Sweeney from Leeds called a 'very open' and 'very broadminded' conversation. He felt rewarded 'to feel the heart of where Pastor Paulsen is at.' Pastor Ashwin Somasundram represented churches in the London area and was 'encouraged to hear that Pastor Paulsen shares our pastoral concerns and understands our challenges.' Pastor Steve Wilson flew from Galway and, as the youngest participant, asked

some difficult questions relating to pastoral burnout and the reclaiming of lapsed members. His image of the world president has changed and he hopes the sincerity and honesty he sensed in the studio came through in the programme. Galway member, Mary Jo, was among the many who sent a text message to say how much she enjoyed the programme with a 'clear and refreshing message'.

The programme was coordinated by the General Conference Communication department, and facilitated by the British Union Conference Media team. It will be available on the UK Hope TV website: [www.hopetv.org](http://www.hopetv.org) in June. Behind the scenes pictures are available on the BUC picture gallery at [www.adventist.org.uk](http://www.adventist.org.uk).

Those who had lived sacrificially to build that institution were hurt, some of them very deeply.

A last-minute petition from the people of Watford and an appeal to the General Conference by local doctors failed to save the San. When the bulldozers moved in and the demolition work began, the large maternity wing, with all its ferro-concrete, fought them all the way.

**Lest we forget!**

Forty years on, we take the opportunity to pause and remember with reverence the medical, paramedical and other personnel who ran the health institution on Stanborough Park for sixty years. Many who ingathered in Hertfordshire during the San's lifetime and immediately after testify to the fact 'The

Stanboroughs' was the main reason for which the denomination and Stanborough Park were known.

Dr A. H. Williams died at the age of 84 on 22 March 1974. His close friend Pastor J. A. McMillan conducted the funeral service and acknowledged that Dr Williams's service to the British Union and its principal health institution was 'often without any financial emolument'. A moving tribute to Dr Williams by Pastor McMillan appeared on pages 1 and 7 of MESSENGER 3 May 1974.

**Coach to NEC Session, Sabbath 28 June at Scarborough?**

A coach will be leaving from the Midlands for the NEC Session Sabbath. If you would like to book a seat, phone H. Smiley on one of the following: 01384 213803; 07789 206171; 07940 538372.

**A hundred miles for ADRA**

One of our brethren at Norwich church, Washington Mabuto, cycled 100 miles to raise funds for ADRA on the 8 June. Washington, who is one of the elders at the church in Norwich, has been involved in cycling for good causes for the past four years. He has been raising funds for the British Heart Foundation, and this year he will not only be raising funds for the foundation but also for ADRA.

A Zimbabwean-born teacher at Hewitt High School in Norwich, Washington is married to Alice, and the couple have three children (a son and two daughters) whom he hopes will follow in his footsteps in the years to come by cycling to raise funds for good causes.

When asked why he has been doing this, Washington said, 'Not only does this help to keep you fit, but it also helps in reaching out to those in need.'

Affectionately known as *baba* (father), Washington has also been very instrumental in the growth of the Norwich church as a member of the church leadership, which now boasts a membership of 70. He is currently in charge of the baptismal classes at the church.

If anyone would like to sponsor Washington, they can call the pastor, Chris Peake, on 01603 861440 or by sending an email to [church@norwichadventistchurch.org.uk](mailto:church@norwichadventistchurch.org.uk).

MIKE MUDZAMIRI

## Easter Camp

Almost thirty members of the Kettering church, through the leadership of Debbie Sanders, booked up the North England Conference camp site at Aberdaron in North Wales for the Easter weekend from Thursday 20 March to the following Monday.

As the members trickled in on the Thursday evening, we were glad we were not under canvas. A howling northerly wind was bringing with it some very heavy showers, and temperatures were only just above freezing.

Members brought with them their own food for breakfast and lunch but the evening meal was cooked in the main kitchen. Jennie Channer had asked each family to bring specific foods to provide for this meal on the three full days we were there.

The Kettering church is very blessed in that two of its members are the daughters of Pastor Eric Lowe, the BUC Executive secretary, and they were able to twist the arms of their parents to join us for the weekend so that Pastor Lowe could act as our padre.

Friday dawned reasonably, and in the afternoon a large group decided to walk down to the village and along the beach to the other end. Very soon they were hit by a short hailstorm and had to take refuge under an overhang of the sea wall. Some decided to turn back as soon as it eased. Other brave souls continued. The first group had just arrived back in the village when another hit and we dived for the comforts of the little café. The owners must have been contemplating a business disaster on such a day until we arrived, followed shortly afterwards by another dozen or so soaked and frozen specimens of the human race! Suddenly, business looked a little brighter for the proprietors!

After the evening meal the tables in the hall were immediately reset for another meal, this time with food representing the typical Passover meal that would have been eaten in the time of Jesus. The participants on this occasion were able to sample it as Pastor Lowe led out and explained the significance of each item, and broadened our appreciation of just what that last supper must have been like.

Sabbath was again cold, wet and windy, but we were warmed physically by the efficient heating in the hall, and spiritually by the warmth and wit of Pastor Lowe as he continued on the theme of that fateful

Passover weekend over 2,000 years ago.

Sunday was a little drier but still very windy. The views from Analog were spectacular but the wind was so strong that it was impossible to stand on the top long enough to take a photograph!

TONY WELCH

## Stafford's Youth Day

On Sabbath 12 April, Stafford Adventist church held a Youth Day with over 120 visitors in attendance. The guest speaker in divine service was Pastor Don McFarlane, BUC president, whose message to the young people was a testimony entitled 'I Choose Christ'. The service was led out with an abundance of musical talent, headed by Stafford's Praise and Worship Team, a visiting choral group from Bourneville, Birmingham, as well as Stafford's own singing group 'E.M.A.S.'.

At lunchtime, members of the church provided the visitors with a delicious and nutritious feast of vegan and vegetarian food.

The AY programme consisted of a gospel concert in which various musical groups donated their time and musical talents. An offering was taken up, the proceeds from which are to be divided between the Youth department and the Church Building Fund. Our thanks go to Brian Quarry, who provided the musical accompaniment throughout the day.

DANA SUDDWORTH

## Scottish millionaire urges return to spiritual values

Scotland is renowned for its castles and ancestral homes, many of which are surrounded by beautiful gardens and picturesque countryside. An outstanding example is the Ochtertyre House on the edge of Crieff.

Members of our church in this small town were thrilled to receive an invitation to visit this stately mansion for a musical extravaganza, organised by the present occupant, Mr Brian Souter and his family. Mr Souter was the co-founder of the Stagecoach Group, which currently employs a staff of more than 27,000 in connection with its international bus and rail network.

The son of a bus driver who experienced a re-birth in his teens, Brian now seeks to promulgate biblical values through a wide range of activities. He keenly follows the national political agenda and organises (sometimes controversially) mass petitions in an attempt to preserve Christian traditions.

Another recent venture was a musical evening in a huge marquee in the grounds of the estate which was attended by 800 guests. The programme included items by the Wototo Children's Group from Uganda and the Crusader Choir from Idaho, USA. Mr Souter also spoke about the urgent need for a switch from material to spiritual interests, and for each individual to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Adventists who were present at this event were encouraged to see one of Scotland's richest inhabitants using his wealth to bring blessing to the community and to highlight some matters of eternal consequence. The church is also grateful for the support it has received over many years from the Stagecoach organisation in the form of humanitarian supplies for ADRA's operations in Albania and Africa. Additionally, Ann Gloag (Brian's sister, who was also a joint founder of the company), is enthusiastically involved with the 'Mercy Ships' charity which brings medical relief to thousands of marginalised citizens in the needy areas of the world.

JOHN ARTHUR

## Welsh Mission Women's Ministries retreat

The Welsh Mission Women's Ministries retreat was held from 9-11 May at St Deiniol's Residential Library, Hawarden, North Wales. Women from several parts of Wales were joined by ladies from the north of England. Two brave men from the Welsh Mission acted as chauffeurs for some of the ladies and joined the group at worship times, adding their voices to ours as we praised God in song. Heather Haworth, BUC Women's Ministries leader, was also able to attend for part of the weekend, and we greatly appreciated her input.

Hawarden is a lovely village situated about ten miles from Chester, and is famous for being the home village of William Gladstone, four times prime minister. It was Gladstone who founded the library and donated 32,000 books and documents. There are comfortable bedrooms, conference rooms and a lovely chapel, as well as the restaurant where good food is served by delightful members of the staff.

The Women's Ministries weekend was blessed with warm sunshine outside and tangible spiritual warmth among the participants. Our discerning and able speaker was Mrs Carlene Rafferty. Her talks were

centred on the theme that women are some of God's most valuable assets. It was good to explore and discuss God's purpose for our lives. We were renewed and refreshed by our awareness of the presence of God, our fellowship together, and by the tranquillity of our peaceful surroundings.

JOYCE PHILLIPS

## Bag packing for ADRA

The preacher was talking about how we communicate on the day that Marie Steward stood up in front of the Darlington church and revealed the visible results of the bag-packing event that the members had taken part in to raise funds for ADRA on 6 April. Marie, who works for Sainsbury's in Darlington, had arranged the bag packing as part of her job within the local store.

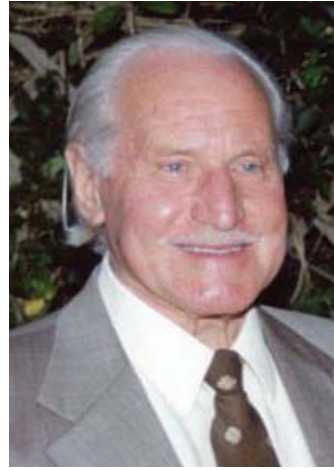
A number of faithful members turned up bright and early on the Sunday morning and, after prayer and a health and safety talk, found themselves packing hundreds of bags throughout the day. The aim, of course, was to raise money and perhaps spread a little happiness in hard-pressed shoppers' lives. However, more resulted. Marie took the opportunity to ask the local press to come along and report on the effort and made sure that the name of the church was clearly stated, along with the activities of ADRA.

The resulting picture, in colour, appeared in the local paper at the same time as our collectors were working their way through the streets of Darlington. It was felt that this publicity helped us as we went from door to door.

There was a good by-product from this. Marie is required as part of her job to make sure that the name of Sainsbury's appears in the local paper. Our bag-pack has helped Marie achieve the goals that have been set for her by her manager – yet another article about Sainsbury's in the *Northern Echo* and the *Darlington and Stockton Times*. Being a faithful Christian doesn't mean that we can't also make a positive impact on the people we work with, as well as a successful contribution to the aims of the companies we work for.

Oh, and the £630 the Darlington members raised helped a lot towards passing the Ingathering goal set by the Darlington church.

PETER JEYNES



Alfred Seymour was born at Bracebridge, Lincoln, in 1914. He was the second son of Edward and Rose Seymour. Edward was a master builder. He was killed on the Somme in 1916 and Rose took in washing to supplement her war widow's pension as she struggled to bring up her two sons.

A bright boy, Alfred passed his scholarship exam in 1926 and went to St Andrews School, Lincoln, where he developed his interest in modern languages. He supplemented the family income by working at Pegg's Print Shop; Pegg was an Adventist. On 7 July 1929 Rose Seymour, Alfred's mother, was drowned in circumstances that disquieted him for the remainder of his life. Alfred went to live with his maternal grandmother who was an Adventist. Alfred became an Adventist, too, but there was always a lot that he missed about high church Anglican worship. Influenced by his grandmother, he went to study at the college on Stanborough Park. To raise his fees he worked at The Stanborough Press. When the college moved to Newbold Revel, so did Alfred. There his job was to rise at 5am and stoke the boiler. In 1933, while canvassing, Alfred met his future wife Nancy; but noted that while, in theory, the Church wanted men and women to marry and raise families, in practice college regulations made courtship extremely difficult! Newbold failed to cultivate Alfred's gift for modern languages. The apocalyptic emphasis at the college was such that Alfred was made to feel that the ministry was the only acceptable calling.

In 1936 Alfred was working at Supermarine in Southampton where the prototype of the Spitfire K5054 was being developed. On 30 March 1937 he joined the Royal Navy as Britain prepared for World War Two. Alfred was in China at the time of the Japanese invasion. When war broke out in 1939 he was serving on board *HMS Norfolk*, moored in Plymouth Sound. In 1941 he witnessed the sinking of both *HMS Hood* and the *Bismarck*. Watching *HMS Rodney* – 'a great, grey fortress in the water' –

## John Alfred Seymour (1914-2008) d. 23 March

steaming back and forth firing its guns into the *Bismarck* Alfred made a decision as to the name of his future son. He married Nancy at Ockbrook church, Derbyshire, on 7 July 1941.

Alfred's subsequent war service saw him involved in escorting convoys to Archangel, serving on the fleet flagship and visiting Bombay, Mombasa, the Maldives and Ceylon. He was photographed speaking to Admiral of the Fleet Lord Louis Mountbatten. In the course of his naval service the warships on which he served survived bombardment from the *Bismarck*, U-boat torpedoes, and aerial bombardment. To the end of his days Alfred had the impressive style of a senior naval officer, and the disarming sense of humour of a perceptive survivor.

Alfred was demobbed in 1945 and, after training in carpentry, found himself employed fitting out schools in the impressive post-war education programme. That gave him a vision for teaching, and he returned to Newbold for training, graduating as a teacher in 1951. Alfred's maturity and calm-in-a-crisis leadership qualities meant that his first teaching post was the headship of the Newbold School.

Nancy gave birth to daughter, Estelle, in 1953. Shortly after Estelle's birth the Seymours moved to Watford where Alfred had been invited to become woodwork teacher at Stanborough Secondary School. Much later in life Alfred would describe his years teaching woodwork as the happiest of his working life. During the 50s and 60s the Seymour family were well-known occupants of 'Holy Row'. Son Rodney – named after *HMS Rodney* – was born in 1957. Alfred's practical skills meant that he was in demand; 'Here's another little job for you, Brother Seymour'. His teaching married firm discipline with humour and innovation; it was not unknown for the boys to be building canoes and guitars, nor for girls to be found learning woodwork. Alfred's was, at times, an irreverent sense of humour, and Rodney was in trouble at school when he repeated his father's jokes. But Alfred's contribution – including his humour! – was deeply appreciated by Hugh Dunton, the headmaster, and by his fellow teachers.

In 1971 Alfred was appointed to his second headship. On his arrival, the Fletewood School, Plymouth, was failing, but Alfred more than doubled its intake. The Plymouth church and school were part of the same building, so there were soon lots of 'little jobs for you, Brother Seymour'. From time to time Alfred was humorously impatient with the Adventist attention to the detail of prophetic interpretation.

Estelle and Rodney recall that Alfred would say, 'When the thief on the Cross appealed to Jesus, he was not tested on points of doctrine!' Nevertheless, his humorous take on prophecy led him to call the Newbold principal at the time of his graduation 'The Ram' and the preceptor 'The Little Horn'. As with everything else Alfred said, there was not an ounce of malice, and there was a twinkle in his eye.

After his retirement in 1980 the 'little jobs for Brother Seymour' were family centred, and featured a free taxi service for Jackie, Rodney and the grandchildren. The first grandchild was born in 1984 and two more in 1987. In 1991 Nancy and Alfred celebrated their Golden Wedding. By 1992 Nancy was becoming more infirm and the Seymours moved into sheltered accommodation. Nancy's suffering – leading to her death in 1997 – raised many serious questions in Alfred's mind for which he did not find answers. Nevertheless, Alfred held on to his faith, and the hope of resurrection

## Megan Rees (1914-2008) d. 4 April



Megan was born in Gorseinon, South Wales, on 30 November 1914. She was the middle child of three. Her life was marked by her caring attitude to others. Firstly, she looked after her parents instead of studying herself. She and her sister Gwenith married two brothers, and so the relationship between the two couples was very close. Megan had no children of her own, but such was the closeness between the two families that Gwenith and John shared their children with them, so much so, that it was like having two sets of parents! Megan was known as 'Ming' to her family and to many others, too. Her caring attitude continued in the church. Any visitors to the church would be invited back to lunch, including many students, and anybody else who needed a home to go to on Sabbath. These occasions were

and reunion brought him comfort in his last ten years. Those were active years, but Alfred felt that he lived in a world he no longer recognised. He died on Easter Sunday, six weeks after a fall. Pastors Ron Clemow, Eric Lowe and Bob Bell conducted his funeral at the Plymouth church on 31 March. Estelle read Ecclesiastes 12, from which Alfred often quoted in his retirement years.

Alfred loved Estelle and Rodney, and his love was reciprocated. Rarely has a man had so much attention lavished on him in his old age. Lauren, Lydia and Joanne had a most devoted granddad, and Alfred felt privileged to see all three grow up into the fine, successful people they are. He had a warm appreciation for his daughter-in-law, Jackie.

When Rodney visited Alfred in hospital after his fall, Alfred would ask, 'Is there anything I should be doing?' Rodney told him there were no more 'little jobs for Brother Seymour'. After distinguished service to his country, to his church, to generations of children and, more especially, to his family, it was time for Brother Seymour to rest.

ESTELLE AND RODNEY SEYMOUR/DAVID MARSHALL

very happy ones, and the famous soup always stretched to feed everybody. In fact, I'm sure God did many miracles to make sure that there was always enough food! In the 1960s Megan and her husband Gwyn moved from their own house to live with her sister's family for two and a half years, so that she could nurse her sister who had terminal cancer. She was the church treasurer for many years and only stopped when her health started to fail. She was always interested in the lives of others, and this was shown by the many people of all ages who attended her funeral. Megan loved a party and was never known to refuse an outing!

She was very much loved by all her family and church family, too. She will be very much missed by all who knew her.

The family would like to thank all those who faithfully visited her in the nursing home, especially Val Byrd who made time to visit her every week. Also, thanks to all who attended her funeral and to the many who made donations to the Swansea church building fund and the British Heart Foundation, as well as the many sympathy cards and letters. Her faith in her Lord stood her in good stead through her last few years of deteriorating health. We know we shall see her again when Jesus returns.

ERICA CAMERON



## Education fair at Brixton

On the weekend of 10 and 11 May, members of the Brixton church celebrated their Education weekend.

Activities were keenly planned and engineered for this weekend and included an Education fair on Sunday 11 May. Tim Francis, elder, led out in a timely devotional. With a registered attendance of 103 individuals, the day was a blessing and a success.

Under the theme 'Conceive, Believe, Achieve', special features for the day included a number of stalls where various professionals and groups within the church and community had the opportunity to highlight, promote and give information on their respective fields to interested people, along with various departments within the church providing insights regarding their roles and functions.

We were graced with the presence of special guests: Pastor Sam Davis, SEC president; Mrs Gina Abbequaye, SEC Education director; Dr Richard de Lisser, SEC Communications and Stewardship director; Mrs Laura Osei, interim head of John Loughborough School; David

Simon; Charlene Vockins and Andy Chapman of Lambeth Police.

Our church library and computer room were officially opened by the SEC president, Pastor Sam Davis.

Mrs Abbequaye briefed the attentive attendees on her vision as Education director for Adventist education, backed up in the same vein by words from Mrs Osei, who captured the audience with her passion for Christian education, coupled with the importance of having a leadership structure reflecting Adventist leaders in active service. She closed by promoting John Loughborough School.

Dr de Lisser addressed both parents and students on stewardship and careers.

Pastor Hamilton Williams gave an interesting session based on his motivational book *Success within your Grasp*.

PC Charlene Vockins and Andy Chapman of Lambeth Police spoke on community issues and collaborative working relationships by the local police.

David Simon advised parents on children's developmental stages and learning.

Stalls included: Accounting and Finance, Theological Studies, Health and Nutrition, Human Resources, Stewardship, Information Technology, Christian Book Sale, Mentoring and Supporting Self-directed Learning.

Pastor Hamilton Williams, senior pastor of Brixton church, brought the curtains down with the closing prayer.

KAREN RICHARDS



## Web L.I.V.E.

On Sunday 13 April Youth leaders from around the South England Conference (SEC) gathered at London's Advent Centre for the eagerly awaited launch of the Youth department's brand new website. Pastor Colin Stewart, SEC Youth director, welcomed the seventy youth leaders and challenged them to do something great for God, emphasising that we are living in exciting times. Pastor Eddie Hypolite, SEC Associate Youth director, introduced the cutting-edge website to the waiting crowd, stating that the Youth department wanted to reach young people both inside and outside the Church, and that this medium would be a place to which our young people can direct their friends.

The web design team, Neal Ahwan and Alan Murungi of fluid4ght

design, stated: 'This site was a joy to work with as it is a site with a difference. It was a challenge to meet all the stipulated requirements that came from the SEC Youth department, but it all came together in the end.' Some of the features on the website are an online payment system, a pod cast and video area regularly updated and available for download, an online chat room where there will be a chance to interact not only with other young people but to dialogue with the Youth leadership team of the SEC.

One person stated that the website is 'edgy, urban and upbeat, with a feel for the real and a real feeling for evangelism in the twenty-first century.' The web address is [www.secyouth.co.uk](http://www.secyouth.co.uk).

Pastor Eddie Hypolite introduced a new youth initiative entitled L.I.V.E. – Living Intentionally Versus Existing. This theme will be used to promote a

number of youth programmes this summer, including a Youth March from Trafalgar Square to Kennington Park against guns, knives, and violence, planned for 7 June, when it is hoped to attract 5,000 young people, all wearing their SEC-Youth-department-designed L.I.V.E. T-shirts. The day will culminate with a rally at Kennington Park and a free gospel concert at the Emmanuel Centre.

RICHARD DE LISSER, SEC COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR

## Corby church plant

Corby is one of the few places in England where one can still afford to buy a house, and in the last year in particular we have seen people move into the area from London and other parts of the world, notably various African countries and eastern Europe. A new railway station is due to open in December 2008, linking

Corby with St Pancras and other stations on that line.

Following a meeting with our president, Pastor Egerton Francis, who gave us some very helpful advice, the Corby Church Plant had its inaugural meeting on Sabbath 10 May at the West Glebe Sports Pavilion in Corby. Thirty-seven members and friends attended, as well as twenty-two children. In divine service Pastor Adrian Broome encouraged us not to limit what God could do for us – if we did not expect much, then not much would happen. A fellowship lunch followed the service, at which those present were able to meet informally and evaluate the day, which was considered to have been very successful.

Many of those present have previously been worshipping at Kettering, but for those without their own transport this has been quite difficult. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless this venture, and that many souls may come to know and love Jesus as a result of the witness of this new group.

J. M. LEWIS

### ABC BOOK SALES

July

6 Newbold Graduation

PRESS OPEN DAY

Sunday 7 September

ABC Shops

Advent Centre, Sundays 10am-2pm

Watford BUC, 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 10am-2pm

### Messenger

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### Sunset

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

	London	Card	Notf	Edin	Belf
June 20	9.22	9.34	9.34	10.03	10.04
27	9.22	9.34	9.34	10.03	10.04
July 4	9.20	9.32	9.32	9.59	10.01
11	9.15	9.27	9.27	9.53	9.55

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