History was made on Monday 13 June when more than 3,000 people from the North and South England Conferences converged on Prestatyn, Wales, for the 2011 camp meeting under the theme 'Revive'. This was the first joint camp meeting for these two conferences since the re-introduction of the camp meeting in 1982. As proceedings got underway it was clear that the volume of people present at the opening service would present a logistical challenge as the week progressed.

Dressed in red bow ties, Pastors Ian Sweeney and Paul Lockham welcomed the members to camp meeting on behalf of their conferences, while Pastor Don MacFarlane echoed this in his greeting from the British Union. Pastor John Summidge then welcomed the members to the principality of Wales in the Welsh language.

The main adult speaker was Pastor Henry Wright, from the United States. He is no stranger to these shores, having preached at the first camp meeting to be held in the North British Conference, back in 1986.

He preached powerful, relevant, and revivalist messages throughout the week, appealing to both the young and the young at heart. When he preached, seats in the main auditorium were filling up at least an hour before the service began. He challenged the congregation to beware of ‘making the journey of losing your love and ending up with the indifference of Laodicea.’

The music was of the highest quality, and Thursday’s plenary session brought back memories for many as Paul Lee sang ‘Coming Back to You’, a song that he sang some twenty-four years ago when Pastor Henry Wright was preaching at the North British Conference camp meeting, an event that marked a profound turning point in his life.

Dr Ranko Stefanovic, who specialises in the end-time themes in Daniel and Revelation, gave powerful and scholarly presentations, which many found to be among the highlights of the camp meeting. The presentations were simple, practical and profoundly devotional in nature. He pointed out that biblical happiness is not related to the absence of trouble, but is a divine gift that exists in spite of adversity and trial.

The third main speaker for the adult programme was Pastor James Uyeda from Japan, who now ministers in Orange County, California. His energetic presentations were also well received.
How could a man get lost – for a few days – while travelling the 120-odd miles between Gatwick airport and his home in Trowbridge, Wiltshire? It actually happened in December 2010, after Mohammed Bellazrak had dropped off his wife, Latifa, who was going home to Morocco for Christmas.¹

The 72-year-old left the airport at 8am on 23 December, became disoriented because of the snow and ice, and spent the next sixty-six hours travelling in circles through Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire! Once alerted, police were surprised to discover that ANPR cameras had recorded him in Bracknell, Wokingham, Burnham and High Wycombe – all presumably attempts at finding his way from Gatwick to Wiltshire.³ Their last ‘hit’ was in High Wycombe at 6pm on Christmas Eve!²

Christmas in a Peugeot 307

Mohammed spent a ‘white’ Christmas in his ‘black’ Peugeot 307. Certainly not my idea of home comfort!

Fortunately, his car triggered a camera alert on Christmas day, just before 2pm, and the police were able to end his odyssey, and return him safely to his family.

Have you ever been lost?

I have. Quite recently I got horribly lost between Grantham, Lincolnshire, and the Welsh coastal resort of Prestatyn. What should have been a leisurely drive of 150 miles became a nine-hour satnav of more than twice that distance!

It was a saga of wrong turns – some of which were made under the stern direction of a vintage Miss Satnav. But, much as I would like to, I can’t blame everything on her. I must share some of the responsibility too!

The lost experience

The typical lost experience goes something like this: a) something doesn’t feel right about what you are doing, and you experience self-doubt; b) then there is that funny of false assurance, which makes you press on along your dubious route; but c) soon you experience that strongly nagging doubt again; and d) panic sets in; followed by e) a deep sense of dread; and f) a fear that blunts your ability to think straight.

I think that happened to Mohammed Bellazrak – eventually he was mentally paralysed, and incapable of anything other than driving on and on, through the snow and ice.

‘Lostness’ is not limited

This ‘experience of lostness’ is not limited to direction or location. It is equally true for our money management, careers, relationships, or religion and spirituality. There are many of us who live with uncomfortable feelings of doubt, panic, dread and indecision concerning at least one of these areas.

Like rabbits, we feel trapped in the harsh light of fate’s blinding beams – we don’t know which way to jump. Our lives seem to circle endlessly in orbits of fear and dread.

How do we get back on track?

Perhaps these simple rules can help:

Rule one: Calm down, and recognise that panic is the father of stupidity! It is natural to panic in situations over which we feel we have no control – or from which we cannot see an escape route. But panic invariably leads to stupid mistakes.

While on my Prestatyn ‘safari’ I experienced the results of panic. At one point, I realised suddenly that I was on a southbound motorway – far from North Wales – just 120 miles from London!

I panicked, took the first exit from the surging traffic, and slid to a halt on a deserted section of road, determined to find my way by map alone. But I then realised that I had executed my knee-jerk, panic-stricken stop so quickly that I didn’t know where I was, at what junction I had turned off, or even the name of the nearest town!

If part of your life seems out of control today, read Psalm 46:10: ‘Be still, and know that I am God’³, and take the advice.

Rule two: Accept by faith that God can help you to bring your life under control. Panic will return unless you replace it with a sense of calmness, based firmly on your acceptance that God has the resources to do what he promises. If you regularly read Psalm 46 (and similar passages), you will personalise those promises, and entrust that calmness in your mind. For example:

‘Be still, and know that I am God’²

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If part of your life seems out of control today, read Psalm 46:10: ‘Be still, and know that I am God’³, and take the advice.

Rule three: Actively seek God’s reference points for your life. Once your panic has been replaced with God-inspired calmness (Philippians 4:7), you need to search diligently for those things that God wants you to do in each area of your life – his reference points.

I am guilty of not plotting my course from Grantham to Prestatyn properly. I ended up driving empty, frustrating, wasted miles because I did not know the precise reference points for my journey to camp meeting! Don’t make the same mistake... on the journey of life.

² http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/3318106/Grandpas-three-days-lost-on-M4.html
³ All the Bible references are from the New International Version.
Why was it a good thing that Gideon refused the kingship?

What lesson in tactfulness did Gideon teach them?

Coventry University student, student the bidding at for a single constituency – and sold it in 2004 for £1.20.

Those are bizarre items for raising money of!

In Isaiah 55:1(NKJV), the exiled Israelites were summoned to return and be restored – free from charge: ‘Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.’

In Lamentations 5:4 it appears that, when water was scarce in biblical times, the thirsty had to pay for their refreshment too. But the paradox is that in Isaiah 55:1 is that those who have no money – no means – can come and ‘purchase’ this ‘good news’ among the unusual items listed.

At the other end of the spectrum Bill Bennett, a ‘hard up’ senator from Nebraska, sold the birth of Islam, Christianity appears to have made no real inroads into it. Dialogue with Islam is possible in culture, in politics, in economics, in education. Islam, leading to toleration and religious freedom for Christians in Islamic countries. The possibility of this happening is minimal at the present time.

Are we really thirty? Are we truly online with the Desideratum? We may deny its existence but, as a member of the Church, I believe that we can be both ‘the Church’ and ‘the world’ at the same time. The desire of the Early Church was to be ‘one in mind and heart’.

The question for us today is, ‘Who are you going to be?’ Are we truly online with the Desideratum? We may deny its existence but, as a member of the Church, I believe that we can be both ‘the Church’ and ‘the world’ at the same time. The desire of the Early Church was to be ‘one in mind and heart’.
Early morning prayer
The early morning prayer services were Spirit-filled and well-attended to overflowing – to the point that an extra half-night prayer service was held on Wednesday night from 10pm to 1am! The testimonies that were shared were inspiring.

Workshops
A wide variety of workshops were run, and all aspects of the Church’s work were covered.

Youth
The Young Adult programme was an experience that will never be forgotten. Both speakers brought out different perspectives and lessons from Scripture that truly engaged the youth. The workshops from Pastor Juan lifted and inspired them to remember who they are as God’s children through ‘The Ten Commandments of Courtship’.

The music in the worship services was definitely a highpoint of the week, climaxing in the Communion Service with strong testimonies and praise.

Through the challenges of diversity, the youth and working teams were blessed fully by the programmes, presentations and fellowship over the week. All in all, it was a healthy and positive experience that brought many closer to their Maker.

Communion Service
More than 3,000 people filled the main auditorium, hours before the Communion Service commenced, such was the anticipation and desire within each person’s heart to commune with Jesus and recall his sacrifice for us all.

A rendition from the ‘Music 4 Life Strings’ provided a unique blend to the service; the gentle melody of the orchestra provided a moment of reflection on what had been a challenging and impressive week.

Pastor Henry Wright preached the sermon and stressed that anyone of those present could be in the place that Peter (or even Judas) were in at the communion table: we have all been guilty of seeking to manipulate Christ to do our will. This closing revelation silenced the congregation and immediately brought a sense of humility and repentance over them.

Sabbath services
Sabbath was the highlight of the camp meeting. Patrice Williams-Gordon from Nassau, Bahamas, did the Bible study in a very dramatic and innovative way. This was followed by presentations highlighting personal evangelism and church planting in the various territories.

Throughout the week the adult and youth services were streamed live over the Internet, courtesy of SECmedia. On the final Sabbath more than 2,000 viewers watched the service online, with many churches opting to share the camp meeting experience in their local church. Camp Meeting Radio (directed by Mike Johnson, SEC Radio co-founder) broadcasted in 87.7FM to a 30-mile radius around the camp venue, as well as on the Internet. It provided a forum for news, views and interviews, as well as music.

Worship
The Worship Service captured the heart of this historic camp meeting, reflecting firstly the cultural diversity of the British Isles,
which allowed for the Scripture reading to be recited in both English and Japanese by guest speaker Pastor James Uyeda; secondly the unique ‘coalition’ of the NEC and SEC, witnessed through the blend of voices which formed the worship team and the 126-strong choir, led by Tina Brooks and Dr Diana Sinclair.

The Worship Service was clearly the highlight of the camp for the now 5,000-strong congregation, which had come from far and near to worship in Wales.

Pastor Henry Wright preached a powerful message about Jairus, showing that our perceived self-importance can prevent God from operating in our lives. Our problems in life are not in how we pray, but in the things for which we pray. Instead of praying for the things we can see, we should acknowledge that God is preparing us for the things we cannot see. Our prayers are too short-sighted. We forget that we are praying to a God without limits.

By Sabbath the theme song, ‘Light of my Life, Hope of my Heart’, was being sung with conviction by all.

Ordination Service

In the afternoon, five ministers were ordained in a solemn and dignified service. The ministers from the NEC were Dan Majaducon and Victor Dacosta Marshall. The ministers from the SEC were Anthony Opoku-Mensah, Bernard Akakpo, and Petras Bahadur.

Gala concert

In the evening more than 300 children from ages 5 to 13 made an impressive entrance on the stage and displayed an amazing range of talents while singing and reciting Scripture. Children from the Holiday Bible Club entered with more than 100 starry crowns glistering under the stage lights, and presented a confident song of praise to Jesus. Singer and songwriter Mahali Selepe of Wellingborough Church sang a beautiful song which tied in well with the sermon preached earlier by Henry Wright, recalling: ‘Isn’t it great, when he’s four days late, he’s still on time’.

Croydon Gospel Choir performed next, and dazzled the audience with their songs. When they sang old favourites like ‘Never Part Again’, ‘Troublesome Times Are Here’ and ‘Lo He Comes’, the congregation joined in spontaneously. A single theme held the songs together; the anticipated Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the Gospel message to be preached. What a day that will be when we will weep no more!

New horizons were reached by the young female quartet of the same name when they sang ‘Speak to Me, Lord’. Instrumental pieces flavoured the evening, from ‘He Hideth My Soul’ by Leon Barclay to ‘Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross’ by Carlance Parnell on the flute.

Camp meeting closed with members wondering if the NEC and the SEC would come together again for such a wonderful convocation... Let us see!

Special note:
The camp meeting band was led by Tony Best. There were also numerous local artists from both conferences, as well as Rudi Micelli (Brazil/USA) and Adrienne May, violinist. See more photos and videos on the BUC website: http://www.adventist.org.uk/.
**Scottish Mission also makes history**

by John Wilby

The Scottish Mission held its first camp meeting at Scripture Union’s Lendrick Muir estate in Fife from Friday evening, 27 May to the Sunday afternoon.

Pastor Jacques Venter (originally from South Africa, now based in South England) asked delegates: ‘When we look into the mirror of life, what do we see?’

In his Sabbath sermon he said, ‘Our greatest test of faith as Christians is that Christ is present in our lives, right now’, likening the example of the storm in Matthew 14 to what Christians face today, buffeted by an increasingly secular society – but comforted by a Christ who, even when we feel He isn’t, is always there.

Pastor Venter emphasised that holding onto any bitterness or grudge would eventually lead to spiritual suicide. In the communion service, paired campers were invited to receive the bread and wine from the officiating pastors and to serve their partners in turn.

Pastor Venter also shared his experience of a church that had previously seen virtually no growth, and how its new approach to outreach was now directed by the community around it. Recognising that children are important and that they need to be empowered to evangelise, the church always prays by Children’s Ministry budget with the Evangelism budget, and funds measures designed to encourage church growth. His animated children’s stories during the camp meeting underline concern that by the age of 13 just 34% of children will have decided to stay in church, dropping to 0% by the age of 18.

In his final session Pastor Venter said that ‘being church’ begins long before you enter that building on Sabbath morning. It’s all about God, and acting on your intention towards him; about craving the Holy Spirit every day and living a life you’ve been forgiven. His closing thought was that we can ‘be church, not to ourselves, but to our community.’

Adventist Discovery Centre director, Pastor Des Rafferty, delivered a Sabbath mission story that revealed that, of the 30,000 UK-registered students studying one or more of the centre’s eighteen courses, 15,000 were active during the past twelve months. On the final evening he felt campers in praying for each other. Aberdonian pastor, Lorance Johnston’s dirionalals blessed early risers, as he said, ‘God is wanting to speak to us every day, all we need to do is open the channel.’ Pastor Clifford Harvey, with Pastor Marcel Ghideaux’s support, led a musical ensemble and the pastors and their wives gave a rendition of ‘Be Still My Soul’, accompanied by Pastor Des Rafferty’s commentary.

Bad weather did not prevent a Sabbath afternoon walk to the nearby Ochil Hills, and allowed archery; rope-climbing, golf, indoor football, table tennis and sneaker.

Special thanks are due to Carole Peacock, SM secretary, and to Scotland’s young pastoral team. SM president, Pastor Berna Hofhof, said afterwards: ‘As this was a first for Scotland I was a little apprehensive. But the camp meeting with its chosen theme – ‘Living an Authentic, Christian Life’ – was a real success. I praise God for our leadership team, and that he has blessed us all including me!’

**news**

‘Whit and Wild’ weekend by Ian Cort

The annual ‘Whit and Wild’ event at the Aberdonar camp site, Llyn Peninsula, North Wales, was a great success. Held over the 27-30 May weekend, it was attended by more than 100 people from all over the UK who could fellowship together.

The event was organised and supported by the Ringway Seventh-day Adventist church, with further support from the North England Conference. Despite a rather damp and windy start to the weekend, the weather improved sufficiently for the campers to enjoy the beautiful countryside, and for many to participate in go-karting, water-sports, and Zapcat rides (google it!).

The padre for the weekend was the NEC president, Pastor Ian Sweeney, who explored some of the interesting stories in the book of Judges, while the musical side of worship was led by Kristina Hammond and Claire Peacock.

A concert at the slipway in Aberdonar village on the Saturday brought together the camp and the local community, with those from the camp having the opportunity to sing of their faith in Jesus and his love to the local people, who wouldn’t normally go near a church.

Chariie Pirc and Richard Gray from the Ringway church, and ‘Difmoth’, a group from the Kidderminster church, were joined by a popular local group, ‘Taylor Maid’, and other members of the community. The mixture of Christian and secular music was an interesting combination, and was appreciated by all attending. Fundraising was done for the local RNLI, which helped to support the event.

**When God spoke**

On Sunday 15 May Holloway Church received 120 guests from the north, south, east and west, for the first All-London ‘Revival’ Day of Prayer.

On arrival, individuals were prayed for by Brenda Edwards and other Planting Prayer Tower members after receiving Bible promises. Praise and worship was followed by a ‘stronghold-breaking’ prayer and the ‘School of Prayer’.

God was able to speak, and congregants heard that if we had an obedience problem, it really reflected a love problem.

Pastor Osei, SEC Prayer Ministries director, reminded congregants that a lukewarm attitude is detestable to God, but Christ leads us to modify.

Prayer was offered for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, for pastors, Conference leaders, SEC elections, youth, evangelism, the political climate and those suffering from global disasters. New Life Choir and Louanne Sampson offered musical encouragement, and was joined in praise to God, including those from recently-baptised Dean Culliane and Che Timbou.

The community outreach activity included a silent prayer walk, prayer with individuals, and distribution of tracts. One young person, Siobhan, was so inspired that she has started a Facebook page and will design a T-shirt saying ‘God loves young people’ to wear when she and others reach out to youths in going areas.

The newly-formed Area 6 Prayer Partnership plan to form a prayer network and meet together to pray for our churches and church leaders, as well as our youth.

Members will pray and work closely with the Youth Federation to prepare to reach individuals in the forthcoming Olympics.

**Do maths for ADRA!**

If you are interested in helping your children improve their maths and English, while benefiting ADRA at the same time, please contact V. Rundt for more details about My Own Tutor: www.myowntutor.org.uk; email: v-rydor@iol.com or phone: 02071112836.
**CHIP works**

On Sunday evening, 22 May, twelve graduates of Swansea’s latest CHIP programme were presented with their certificates and badges at a special banquet and awards ceremony. Among the guests were initially bewildered by the variety of foods on offer, but their questions were soon exchanged for expressions of appreciation as they came to realise that healthy food doesn’t have to be boring!

Although the CHIP programme focuses on coronary health, Dr Adesina gave a fascinating presentation on the importance of healthy kidney function and its relation to the health of the heart. Beginning with a general overview of the work of the kidneys, Dr Adesina pointed out that of each of our kidneys contains about one million tiny filters. If these stop working, even partially, we can get into trouble very quickly and ‘kidney failure can lead to heart failure’.

Major risk factors affecting the kidneys included high blood pressure, diabetes and two conditions which the CHIP programme is renowned for reducing. ‘What’s more,’ he said, ‘people on dialysis have a ten-times greater risk of dying from heart disease than the average population.’

The twelve graduates are an outstanding example of what can be achieved through lifestyle change, and Wales CHIP director, Mrs Lil Saunders, was delighted with their success.

Chris was especially commended for losing over 50kg in weight, and Brent was commended for doing walking or cycling over 700 miles before the graduation. Vanessa’s cholesterol fell 20% during the course of the programme. Ken and Marie John were typical of the people who took part. ‘I enjoyed every minute of it,’ said Ken, though his wife admitted that she struggled with the food. ‘It’s a complete change from everything that we’ve ever done,’ she said, ‘but we’ve both lost weight and we’re both happy.’

The Swansea doctors and nurses help to run the CHIP programmes. Their dedication makes Swansea CHIP one of the most successful CHIP ventures in the UK.

Pictures from the event can be seen on the Welsh Mission website at: www.adventistwales.org.

**Health expo in Birmingham**

The Camp Hill Health Ministries department held a health expo in Victoria Square, one of the major pedestrianised areas in the centre of Birmingham, on Sabbath 14 May.

Neil Blest (BUC Health Ministries co-ordinator) had travelled from Peterborough for the day and led the worship, which featured a sermonette highlighting the impact of health ministries in the community, and Grace Walsh (NEC Health Ministries director) also supported the effort, along with Heath Exchange, a group in the city which gives health advice.

A deluge of about 200 attendees wanted to know more about the health message and the positive impact it could have on their well-being, and the Personal Ministries department answered questions and handed out tracts.

Volunteers Adam and Adrian Dawati, Delight and Juliet Mutemwe, Joshua John and Vanessa Bell: a group with an average age of just 15 ... the outcome and there were lots of people interested in our humble efforts, . . . [the expo] seems to be a guaranteed way of reaching out to people and building bridges with the community, just by knocking on someone’s door and saying: ‘We are from the local Adventist church and wondering if you would like some tree cakes!’

The whole church enjoyed the activity, and genuinely blessed the local community.

Most members thought it was a very good idea, and enjoyed the ability to give something free to people and not ask for anything back. Some families had told them that they were thinking of coming to the Chelmsford church in the future!

**Chelmsford community services day**

On 14 May, following the success of the previous year’s community service day, the Community Service department took the main service for the Chelmsford church: during the Friday night youth meeting, the youth had secretly decorated more than 720 cupcakes, which the church would deliver on paper plates to local houses that Sabbath!

This plan was revealed to a previously unaware Chelmsford church during the Sabbath service, after members had prayed in small groups.

A brief explanation from the Community Services leader, each small group was given four plates of cakes, and told to go and bless four families that morning. It was a great way of reaching out to people and building bridges with the church.

The evening began with a short sermon on Psalm 23 was given by the visiting pastor, Dr Richard de Lisser.

Pastor Lorance Johnson immersed each of the candidates. The whole church enjoyed the activity, and genuinely blessed the local community. The evening ended with a video of the baptism, visit the Welsh Mission website at: www.adventistwales.org.

**Sit Ing, walking and standing at Brecon**

John Payne took his stand for Jesus by allowing Pastor Jeremy Tremeer to baptise him in the river at Brecon Camp this year, while more than a hundred people watched from the banks. John and his wife Tracey have attended several Brecon camps now and have been particularly helpful in the running of the camp.

Pastor Adam Kedge of the Bella church (also Youth sponsor for the Irish Mission) spoke at the camp from 27 to 31 May, basing his talks on Watchman Nee’s book, Sit, Walk, Stand, which is an exposition of Ephesians. He emphasised that God has raised us up to sit at his right hand, and used numerous colourful illustrations and children’s stories.

For pictures from the camp and a video of the baptism, visit the Welsh Mission website at: www.adventistwales.org.
Adventurer/Pathfinder camp

The Manchester Southern Asia Adventurer and Pathfinder programme was launched on the first day of the formation of the church with their first Adventurer/Pathfinder camp at Aberdeenon, from 27 April to 1 May. The youth spent many hours completing their awards and hand-crafting their own leadership skills and confidence. The theme was ‘Our identity in Christ’.

Sutton-in-Ashfield meets local community

The Sutton-in-Ashfield church constantly seeks ways to reach out to its local community, including a walking group named ‘Sutton Strollers’, which conducts walks suitable for all ages and all capabilities. The aim is to improve health and fitness and increase local knowledge of the church. The picture here was taken on the walk at Trinville Top, close to Codnor Castle, on Tuesday 18 April.

Manchester North children’s health expo

Manchester North’s first children’s health expo – the first in the North-West – came after weeks of preparation on 1 May. The biggest attraction was the ‘specially made café’ for the water-drinking session with Virey and Brenda, where soft music played at the trust table: all NEWSFART principles were displayed to twenty children and some of their parents with games and ice-breakers; not to mention ball games with Rio, and a temperature station displaying the effects of alcohol and other drugs. Children were still singing the closing song two weeks later!

Russian day of celebration

On 7 May the Russian-speaking Seventh-day Adventists in London and Ipswich hosted an annual day of celebration entitled, ‘The Tenth Anniversary and Beyond’, with the theme: ‘Glory be to the Almighty God for the successful past and praising him for the prosperous promised future!’ Opening the morning celebration was Dr Susan Clark, representing the SBC. Pastor Michael Loutso and his wife joined the festive service, presenting the history of Russian-speaking Adventists and finishing with a prayer.

The highlight of the afternoon was the presentation of the Women of Excellence awards – one nominee ‘maintained integrity despite threats to her life’ and whose friends now also attend church. The final nominee was dedicated to achieving her best, a

Joyce Hill (née Balan)

(1924-2011)

4-15 May, from 6 August 1924 in Seahouses, Northumberland, Joyce was the only daughter in a family with three brothers: Edgar, Clarence and Roy. Life was not easy in those pre-war years. A combination of the Great Depression and Gandhi’s chosen path to keep the Sabbath meant that employment as a carpenter – his chosen profession – was difficult. Thus, much of the time he worked as a carpenter – moving from town to town – and the first of many moves for Joyce was to Kenthurst in Perthburn, Scotland. The family then moved to Watford, where Dad worked as a carpenter on the Stambourne Park Estate. This is where Joyce started her schooling – and also developed an early desire to be a teacher. In 1944, Joyce enrolled at the Bible College in London, and in April 1945, she married her life-long partner, Rick. Both were ordained and served at several churches in the UK and Europe. Joyce was a leader in the L_]MIC committee, the AEF and the RHA. She was an devoted mother, teacher and a gifted pianist.

She later served in both schools at Stambourne – but the greatest part of her career took her back to Plymouth and Fletwood School, where she served from 1963 until her retirement in 1975. It was during this period that she also found the love of her life, a draughtsman in the dockyard, Rick Balan – and they married on 15 April 1965. Rick was one of the gifts of the Hill household – with Sabbath lunch for many being a highlight of the work around the large table in their dining room.

Retirement was not an idle time for Joyce. In Ganzhish she monitored the youth with openness and humour. After moving to Watford in 1997 she joined the senior citizens’ club at the Stambourne Park church. She also took up writing, including devotional pieces for Adventist World Radio, poems, and reports for the Stambourne News. She was immensely pleased when, at 85, she had her first book published, Heart-lifting Moments.

Even when, in the last week of her life, she moved into the Watford Peace Hospice, she did not stop making friends and was delighted for the opportunity to be a Christian witness to the delicate and frail there. She kay that caring attitude, her deep personal faith, and, alongside it, her sense of humour, right until the end.

Joyce asked for the hymn ‘Because the Lord is’ to be sung at the funeral service, conducted by Pastors Alan Hodges, Paul Gree and Mary Bartlett on 31 May. That hymn sums up her life and gives hope for those of us long to see her again.

Her brother, Pastor Roy E. Balan, her sister Mary, and the nieces and nephews that she loved well wished that the many friends and church members who so freely expressed their compassion and support during the last weeks of Joyce’s life.


Women Together conference held – appropriately, as NEC President Pastor Ian Sweeney remarked – near Meadowhall Shopping Centre, at the Source Conference Centre in Sheffield.

The ACA-UK & Ireland conducted a successful CHIP leadership training workshop on 19 and 20 March at the Stratford church. The topics included: Team Development; Financial Planning and Ordering; Marketing CHIP to the Church and the Community; Heart Screens; and Liability Issues. All participants were given a booklet telling them how to run a successful CHIP programme. Prayer and worship were central to the forty-six participants from Stratford, Ilford, Plaistow, Eastern Bridge, London Ghana, the Portuguese church, Hackbridge, Aylesbury, Southend-on-sea, Norwich, Holcombe Road, the Filipino church, and Cambridge.

Sheila John

A life well lived

On 27 May, Sheila John, died peacefully at her home in Seahouses. Although she had lived a full life, it would be an injustice to Sheila to say she was fit and well. Sheila was a woman of great gifts and talents, and spent much of her life dedicating her life to the service of others.

Sheila was born on 22 June 1939 in Burghfield, Berkshire, the second of four children. Her parents, John and Dorothy, were both teachers, and Sheila followed in their footsteps. She completed her education at St John’s School, Bath, and then went on to study chemistry at the University of Oxford. After graduating, she worked as a research chemist for several years before deciding to pursue a career in education.

Sheila was a dedicated teacher and spent many years teaching in various schools across the UK. She also held several leadership positions within the church, including serving as the president of the Women’s Ministries. Sheila was a kind and compassionate person, and her students and colleagues will miss her greatly.

Sheila’s passing was a great loss to the church community, and she will be remembered fondly by all who knew her. She left behind a legacy of kindness, generosity, and dedication to others, and her spirit will continue to inspire and guide those who knew her.
Hearts and Hands

Teddy bears, zimmer-frame bags and toiletries’ bags will be given to projects planned for the newly formed Hearts and Hands group at the Crieff church.

Members at Crieff are missionary-minded and dedicated to practical Christianity, and have been carrying out charity work for twenty-one years. With the help of Gift Aid and God’s blessing, they have been able to support projects in Lesotho, South Africa, Pakistan, Egypt, Albania, Kenya, Romania and Ukraine.

But help is required in the local neighbourhood too, and Hearts and Hands was formed to respond to that need. Once a month, the church hall is turned into a workshop and a group of volunteers descend, armed with sewing machines, irons and ironing boards, scissors and pins, needles and wool. They have lots of ideas and until Jesus returns they have plenty to do: ‘We’re not big; we’re not clever; we just believe in practical Christianity.’

CHRISTINE BAUWENS

Stanborough Park’s got talent!

The children’s musical concert at Stanborough Park Church on 7 May packed in more than thirty items of voice (solo and choir), piano, violin, trumpet, flute and clarinet music. The ages of participants ranged from 4 to 17, with an average age of 10.5. Under the direction of Jiae Ahn, and accompanied on the piano by Minnoung Bae, the children raised funds for ADRA through sponsorship and a collection. The church expects to use such concerts as a form of outreach in coming months.

SPC COMMUNICATION

Running to save lives!

Tristan Simmons and Nigel Clark of the Larnington Spa mission raised £390 for ADRA on Sunday 8 May, by running a half-marathon and full marathon respectively! They ran in Stratford-upon-Avon. Tristan, a member of the ADRA-UK board of trustees, managed 13.1 miles in two hours and two minutes, and the more experienced Nigel accomplished 26.2 miles in three hours and thirty-two minutes.

NIGEL CLARK

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Backache and sore knees for God

Volunteers from the Watering Hole recently transformed the Calmore Community Centre flowerbed with donated pants from Paulton’s Plant Centre at Ower. Passers-by and even two people on crutches came to assist this loving example of Christianity in action!