President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Pastor Jan Paulsen, took time to discuss a variety of topics with young people of the South Pacific Division on September 5.

“Let’s talk” . . . South Pacific was filmed at Adventist Media, Wahroonga, NSW, and broadcast live on Hope Channel.

Totally unscripted, Pastor Paulsen gave on-the-spot answers to issues such as why women are not being ordained, online business and the Sabbath, living “in sin” before baptism and worship styles and the use of drums in church.

Participants also had the opportunity to ask Pastor Paulsen’s wife, Kari, questions before the session was wrapped up with Pastor Paulsen asking participants, “What do you want from your church leaders?”

A second “Let’s talk” recording session also took place earlier in the day, consisting of an Avondale College student audience, and will go to air on Hope Channel on November 21. Pastor Paulsen was pleased with the productions. “These were good sessions,” he says. “It was different to the others. There was more interaction among the participants.”

Both sessions were hosted by Andrew Robertson, community relations officer for Central Coast Adventist School, NSW, and the host of the 2002 live REZ10 broadcasts. “I think it’s great that the conversation has been opened,” says Mr Robertson. “It’s a gutsy move.” — Scott Wegener
Knowing where we came from makes our existence more meaningful.

Past, present, future

We're inundated with quiz shows. They're all over TV, even the ABC, Melbourne, at least, has a nightly 20 questions radio quiz. The winner gets a CD from some obscure artist. For answering the same questions on Channel 9's Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? well, you would be a millionaire. Of them all, I prefer Millionaire, because you know the answer is in there, and you have a one-in-four chance of getting it right.

In fact, I could have won the British million-pound variant—the one where the ex-guardian cheated his way to the prize.

Everyone knows a “google” is $10—die one-million-pound question. (All of those zeros were a big hint.) It brings satisfaction knowing you know ahead of a contestant, which is the appeal of quiz shows.

So here, for your pleasure, and there's no million-dollar prize, is an Adventist history question: Which of the following came to Australia as the first missionary? (a) John Cowles (b) Mendel Israel (c) Henry Scott (d) William Arnold?

History used to be taught as lists of facts to be memorised, but it's really much more than that—it's the why and wherethese, the what could have been, and impact of those facts on society that make it interesting, especially when it's rounded out with anecdotes of real people who made a difference.

As we get older, history becomes more important and interesting to us. I know this from my days as a teacher, trying to teach it, and before that, as a disinterested student. We want to know our roots. Knowing where we came from makes our existence more meaningful. That's one reason why we in the Adventists, with only a derivative culture, perform the obligatory pilgrimage to London once in our lifetimes. And it's my guess that this is why the second and third generations seek their ancestral roots.

One of the good things about my job is that I am literally close to history. Right outside my office door I'm reminded of it daily, as the Signs Publishing Company's heritage display—an old press, the lead type and galley, old cameras and photographs, books and magazines—is housed there. Spending a bit of time browsing gives insight into how the church was published in this country through the eyes of one institution, and helps develop an interest in it.

Because it ores so much to literature work, I've come to appreciate the central place of our publishing house, the books and magazines it produces, and those who distribute them.

But how much about our church's past do you know? (Have you phoned a friend yet?) Are you interested in it? Do you see it as irrelevant to the contemporary scene?

Recently I was required to produce a church historical piece for an event that led me to examine our old publications, dating from when the church was first planted in Australia, which piqued my interest in church history. I reviewed many old copies of RECORD and Bible Echo from different eras, discovering much of interest along the way. My short journey through the annals was fascinating, and my interest was kindled.

But if you're going to live this statement, you have to know what our history is. It's my purpose to encourage members to study the little a more deeply.

*Answer: (a), (b), (c) and (d)—they arrived together in 1885, aboard the same ship.

**http://adventistheritage.org

Lee Dunstan

Editorial

Knowing where we came from makes our existence more meaningful.
Signs and Edge magazines receive ARPA awards

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA

Signs and Edge magazines received awards for artwork and design at the Australian Religious Press Association (ARPA) annual general meeting in Melbourne, on September 10.

Signs of the Times was awarded “Best illustration” for a graphic by Signs designer Shane Winfield, who pipped recognised Melbourne Age cartoonist, Michael Leunig, who had illustrated a feature in The Melbourne Anglican.

Receiving a “Highly commend[ed]” runner-up award was an Edge cover (pictured, left) featuring the issue of pornography, designed by former Edge editor Kellie Hancock.

“Mr Winfield’s illustration (pictured, right) was part of a prophecy special edition in the July 2004 issue. “This isn’t the first award Shane has received for his innovative artistry in Signs, and given the talent and creativity credit to Shane, but to be ahead of Leunig, arguably the country’s best-known artist—that’s a real achievement! As for The Edge, likewise. It’s up there with the best.”

Former editor of the The Edge, Kellie Hancock, says, “It’s great to see The Edge being recognised by industry peers. Creating that cover concept was a team effort. We borrowed a Barbie [doll] for the afternoon and my desk became the studio to take photos. Nathan Brown helped strategically position Barbie in the mouse trap while I took photos. Then Kathy [a Signs designer] added the finishing touches with her great designer style.

“Although the topic may have been confronting for some, my aim was to create a cover that got people’s attention in a slightly cheeky way. The response we had to that issue suggests we were on the right track.”—RECORD staff

Melbourne, 20/9/05 8:53 AM  Page 3

Days and offerings: 30 October—ADRA appeal support offering

With big doubts if we would be finished in time. I’m glad that it’s over.”—Michelle Mead

The teens at Maroochydore

church, Qld, have a post about them on the ABC-TV’s Enough rope web site. When three clergy-men, guests on the show, were asked how many people Jesus raised from the dead, they didn’t know the answer. When asked the same question in their Maroochydore junior-teen Sabbath school, all the children knew the answer—three—and who they were. One child suggested four—because Jesus raised Himself. Moral of the story: “If you give our kids enough rope, they’ll show you they know the Bible better than many clergy.”—Phil Ward

Shane Winfield’s award winning illustration for the Signs, which was part of a prophecy special edition in the magazine.

The Edge magazine a “Highly commend[ed]” award for best cover.
**Melbourne, Victoria**

The Year 9 students of Nunawading Christian College (NCC), Melbourne, have been involved in “No apologies,” a character-based, values-driven program developed by Focus on the Family ministries, as part of their Spiritual and Personal Development classes. The program teaches the consequences of high-risk behaviours, such as indulging in premarital sex, drugs and alcohol, the implications these choices may have on future careers, partner and life; and the myth of “safe sex.”

“We are constantly looking for new ways to engage our students in developing character and in strengthening their resilience,” says NCC principal Jacques Calais. “We want to see our students become all God intends them to be, and leading a pure and healthy lifestyle is a key element.”

With a focus on encouraging the students to look at God’s plan for purity, the program is presented in an activity-based way. Topics explored include healthy relationships, goal setting, character development, consequences of premarital sex, HIV/AIDS and the importance of marriage.

A feature of the program is that it connects with the parents, involving them in partnership by having discussion questions for homework. In the NCC program, parents responded positively to this aspect, commenting on the improved communication they are experiencing with their children, particularly regarding sex education.

The NCC program was as a combined initiative with VicYouth and Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Victoria, with classes run by trained facilitators Rebecca Auriant and Tania Calais.

Mrs Calais, who helped to organise the program, says, “Overall, the program at NCC was a huge success, with all students participating in the complete program signing pledge cards on the final day, committing to abstinence until marriage. Most students stated that along with their parents, family, teachers and friends, God would be their source of strength in seeing through their commitment.”

Some of the student responses included: “This program meant a lot to me—I learned a lot”; “It's made a difference in my life”; and, “I learned that you can stand up against sexual peer pressure.”

“The great thing about this course is that it is designed to be flexible; it can be run as a concentrated 12- to 15-hour seminar-type program or as part of a secondary school’s Bible, personal development and life skills curriculum. It can be run at a school or for a church youth group,” says Mrs Calais. “Plus, it is true to our Adventist lifestyle principles.”

—Record staff

If you wish to have this program run at your school or church, or if you are interested in becoming a trained facilitator, contact Tania Calais on +61 3 9259 2310 or Rebecca Auriant on +61 3 9259 2157.
Adventists work together to help hurricane victims

SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND, USA

as relief in the hurricane and flood-damaged Gulf Coast region of the southern United States continues, Seventh-day Adventists are also surveying churches and schools that have been damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Satellite photos have revealed varying levels of flood and wind damage caused to Adventist churches and schools in and near New Orleans.

However, Adventists from across the USA have been working hard to help those in the areas affected by the hurricane. Students from Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee, are actively involved in relief efforts in Mississippi and other areas. A number of other Adventist schools and colleges are also involved in raising funds for victims of the hurricane or sending volunteers to the area to help with the clean-up. Adventist churches throughout the United States are also offering help to as many as possible.

Media reports indicate that it will be at least early to mid-October before water is significantly drained from the city of New Orleans.—ANN STAFF

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Australian youth involved in CQ album

WARBURTON, VICTORIA

A new album consisting of Adventist-originated music and spoken word has been produced by the Kaleidoscope Quarterly (CQ) Bible-study guide. A number of artists and speakers on the album, Kaleidoscope, are Australians, including four musical contributions. CQ editor Gary Swanson says, “I liked the idea right off. It sounded like something the CQ would do.”

Falvo Fowler, who works in the Office of Mission Awareness at the General Conference, came up with the idea for a CQ album to showcase Adventist musicians and said it was “The Edge magazine that got him looking into what youth in the South Pacific Division were doing.”

“Then, and conversations with my Australian boss, had me looking into the Adventist music scene.”

“I was talking with Gary Swanson about ways in which CQ could expand its ministry into other media. Because we share an appreciation for a wide variety of music, we decided on producing a CD sampler featuring Adventist musicians from around the world. It just seemed to be such a perfect extension of the spirit of CQ itself—creativity, participation, and inspiration.”

The album took some six months to compile and produce, and features 16 artists.

The pastor of Mount Colah church in Sydney and chaplain at Sydney Adventist College, Jean-Pierre Martinez, was one of the people who had a “spoken word” segment on the Kaleidoscope CD.

“It was an awesome opportunity to contribute to a worldwide family—a real privilege,” he says. “I’m thrilled with the album’s sound, because it’s much more representative of our world church family and there’s something for everyone.”—Adele Nash

More @ http://cq.adventist.org

To be in the running to win a copy of the CD, visit <www.edgeonweb.org>.

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news

Avondale homecomers challenged to focus on “big picture” faith

COORANBONG, NEW SOUTH WALES

Australia’s leading panoramic photographer captivated Avondale College homecomers during a two-hour concert in the Chan Shun Auditorium on Avondale’s Lake Macquarie campus on August 27.

Ken Duncan, who refers to himself as “an average photographer with a great God,” shared images, stories and sounds from his personal collection. Among the images were stills from his book, America Wide: In God we trust, and the Mel Gibson film, The Passion of the Christ. Mr Duncan was a set photographer for the film.

Mr Duncan, who once suffered from agoraphobia, said many people are afraid of leaving their safe place. “I wouldn’t be able to show you these beautiful images if I were unable to leave my lounge room. God is interested in giving us things beyond our ability, so we can rely on Him more. It is the trust in Him that gives you strength for the troubled times ahead.”

Mr Duncan shared stories of grizzly bears, broken bicycles and a new-found faith in God, and following the concert stayed on to talk and autograph his books.

The Avondale Alumni Association held a “Back to Avondale” festival the following day, sharing the Lake Macquarie campus with the local community. The Cooranbong Community Centre and Sydney Adventist Hospital handled out free merchandise at the festival, and the Avondale Acro-Masters held watchers in awe as they performed gymnastic routines.

Ahool Bazely received the association’s Outstanding Alumni Award for 2005 during the Sabbath worship service in the College church.

Alumni president Pastor Calvyn Townend said the choice of Mr Bazely as the recipient recognized the contribution of those not employed by the church to the “finishing of the work.”

Mr Bazely returned to his family’s dairy farm in Monto, Queensland, after graduating from accountability at Avondale in 1962. His parents hosted worship services in their home until the local Seventh-day Adventist congregation purchased a vacant building for a meeting place. Mr Bazely has held many offices, including interpreter to speak with his wife, Ruth, who is almost totally blind.

The graduation classes for each of the Homecoming honour years also honoured a class representative. Receiving citations were Olive White (1935), Jan Walmuth (1945), Ian Wilmoth (1955), Ken Booth (1965), Adrian Craig (1975), Sharon Duncan (1980), Graeme Frauenfelder (1985) and Wayne Krause (1995).—Brenton Stacey/Makushlo Kontaxis

**Franklin Graham**, president and chief executive officer of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, told a gathering at the groundbreaking of the Billy Graham Library how reluctant his father was to have a “monument built to himself.” Franklin Graham assured him that the library will be a “living crusade” meant for evangelism, to illustrate how God can work through anyone. Earlier this year, Billy Graham announced his June crusade in New York would be his last, passing the mantle to his son. An extended standing ovation greeted the 86-year-old as he stepped onto the stage with the aid of a walker. Graham, who has prostate cancer and Parkinson’s disease, spoke in a strong voice but quipped that his hearing had gotten so bad that he needed an interpreter to speak with his wife, Ruth, who is almost totally blind and unable to walk. The 3700-square-metre library, to be free to the public, should be completed in 2007. Franklin Graham says it is a fitting tribute to the humility of his father’s life—the story of a farm boy who rose to world prominence, eventually sharing the gospel with 210 million people in 185 countries and hundreds of millions more through his broadcasts.

In a recent survey of clergy, 34 per cent of pastors feel Billy Graham had the greatest influence on American churches today and an even larger group—48 per cent—see him as the most trusted spokesperson for Christianity.—Jody Brown, AgapePress; Baptist Press

**“Faith chips”**—actual colourful, round poker chips—have been created to carry around as a personal reminder of God and as a minitract to hand out. Five designs with messages, such as: “Don’t gamble with eternity. Accept Jesus before you cash in your chips,” and “Jesus knows how to hold ‘em. No one can take you out of his hand” are on sale. The messages are designed to persuade nonbelievers against gambling with their souls, but might also be used to help a believing gambler kick the habit.—Michael Ireland, Assist News Service

WERE ELLEN WHITE’S MEDICAL WRITINGS REALLY INSPIRED? FIND OUT @ WWW.ACQUIREDORINSPIRED.COM
ADRA helps community house in Wagga Wagga

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has donated $A12,000 to help set up an employment unit of Sunflower House, Wagga Wagga, NSW, which provides assistance and services for people suffering from schizophrenia and other mental-health disorders.

The pastor of the Wagga Wagga Adventist church, Nicu Dumbrava, and one of its members, Adrian Laws, applied to ADRA–Australia for financial assistance for a refurbishment of the building.

The cheque from ADRA–Australia was officially handed over on September 10.

“This has been a partnership between the local church, the local community and the local TAFE” said Adrian Laws, member of the Wagga Wagga Seventh-day Adventist Church and the TAFE teacher coordinating the project.

“The Mental Health Fellowship committee who were behind the project were very pleased with the donation” he added.

A major refurbishment of the 100-year-old building is being completed by Wagga Wagga TAFE pre-apprenticeship carpentry and joinery students.

Additional funding has come from local charities, such as Rotary, and local suppliers have donated much of the building material needed in the renovation.

—Adelle Nash

Kamahl performs for Coronella Retirement Village fundraiser


“This was a very special occasion for the residents who were able to get along to the event,” says Ann Gilmore, fundraising and public relations coordinator for the retirement village.

Tickets sales came from both church and community members. Many retirement villages and seniors clubs in the eastern suburbs were invited to attend. The money raised will go to a new hostel and dementia-specific wing.

Kamahl entertained the audience with his music and personal anecdotes. His personal warmth shone through the songs he had chosen and in the giving out of 30 red carnations to women in the theatre.

—Ann Gilmore

Fiji Mission’s biggest ever local Pathfinder camporee held

More than 2000 Pathfinders gathered at Waiyala Seventh-day Adventist Primary School in the Sigatoka Valley, Fiji, from August 21 to August 28, for a camporee.

The Fiji Minister of Youth and Sport, the Honourable Isireli Leweniqila, was a guest of honour in the opening ceremony, and the Fiji Police Band led a march-past.

The theme of the camporee was “Let Christ lead.” The devotional program was cared for by Pastor Kepereli Lawedrau and Wapole Talematoga.

A local prison officer, Jo Vosanibola, who had been recently baptised with his family as a result of the witness by his son, a member of the Labasa Pathfinder Club, praised the organisers, saying, “I haven’t seen anything like this in my entire life.”

Meetings were held in the open air, as there was not enough room in local buildings to accommodate the Pathfinders.

There is an ongoing need in Fiji for a larger permanent venue to accommodate such events as the camporee and for camp meetings, and a 22-hectare camp site is about to be secured. The Fiji Mission is currently awaiting funding to start the project.

—Peni Dakua
Feature

Unity and mission

BY NATHAN BROWN

After serving in the role for almost seven years, Dr Jan Paulsen was re-elected as president of the General Conference at the recent General Conference session. Dr Paulsen—together with his wife, Kari—was a special guest of the recent South Pacific Division session in Melbourne. He took the opportunity to talk with RECORD.

Congratulations on your recent re-election. What does it mean for you personally?

I have been doing church administration for many years now, both in Europe and at the General Conference and I have reached a certain stage in my life that it’s not a professional drive that says, “I have this one more thing to achieve.”

Instead, I’m honoured—truly honoured—that the church should have asked me to give leadership in the role I am doing now and that even at my fairly advanced age in life, that they should feel they could ask me to carry on a bit longer. I think that is an honour.

But there are two sides to it. They can ask and I have to respond. My response is quite simply because I don’t know how I should say to the Lord, “No, I’ve had enough.” So I do this because I think this is what He would like me to do.

At times, it must be a challenging and wearying responsibility. How do you maintain your motivation?

It is a challenging assignment. But it’s not a thing where I wake in the morning and think, What a dreadful thing that I still have to carry on with this. I really do find a lot of fulfillment in what I’m doing. I enjoy my work and I have a lot of well-qualified, excellent colleagues with whom I share responsibility.

You have visited this region a number of times in your role. What is unique about Adventists in the South Pacific?

What I find in so many parts of the world is that you have the developing world with the rapidly growing church, and you have the Western world—very secular, postmodern, whatever term we may use. God has a job on His hands to come across in that kind of environment as having an attractive option to offer people who think they have so much. I see here in the South Pacific Division all of these people groups and values together, and that is a very special challenge for the church.

How can the church meet the very different challenges of rapid growth in some areas and little growth in others and still remain a unified group?

There is no easy answer. The challenges of rapid growth and the challenges of virtually no growth are both very real for the church. They’re very different but very real. We have to remember that the Lord’s command to us is not to convert the world—that’s His job—He has just asked us to be witnesses.

In some places, the fruit of that witness is rapid, enthusiastic and almost takes His breath away, and the church has a job on its hands to know how to cope with this rapid response. In other places, there may be 1 per cent, if you can measure the response as growth, as compared with the rapidly growing.

In one part, the question is how can we get an adequate infrastructure in place? How can we get adequate leadership in place? How can we get adequate ministry trained to take care of the growing responsibility of a church that is in rapid development? How can we do that?

The challenge to the other world of faith is how can we find a new spark, a new element, something that can say to the jaded, Western, secular mind, “Hey, God has got something also for you. Listen to it.”

In meeting the challenge in secular countries, how creative can we be?

I don’t think there is a limit on that. I think creativity has to be explored to whatever the limited may be. As long as you are constantly conscious of the fact that when you walk the path of newness—creativity—you do not lose your identity along the way, that you do not sacrifice values that are sacred to you, and that in fact you find yourself being ever so creative but not the same person or not the same church that you started out as and in fact want to be.

In the faster growing areas of the world, how is the church keeping up with growth?

In most places they are doing very well. Maybe the strongest growth the church has to deal with you find in Latin America—the South American Division and the Inter-American Division. We have a rapidly growing church but we also have a very fine infrastructure.

In Brazil today, we have 1.25 million baptised members and we have a strong higher-education system, a health-care system, the whole infrastructure of publishing, health foods. All that we have historically identified with as a church, as services and ministries to a growing church, it’s there. They are doing it well.

If you have rapid growth, you have a tough job to get the infrastructure in place. This is true in many parts of Africa. They have a big job on their hands. From the General Conference, we are in constant communication with these parts of the world and are asking ourselves and them, “How can we help you?”

There is particular concern that is impor-
I think fear is also in terms of people who look at their own spiritual life and have anxieties created by what they see or by what they may have failed to accomplish, maybe they look to God as the judge who is scrutinising their daily behaviour. There is an element of fear in that. I think we need to remember that God has no hostility toward any of us. God is a salvific God, driven by love and compassion. He’s going to save everyone. He can put His hand on.

So what is your vision for the Adventist Church around the world?

I want the church to be one. The unity of the church is for me a critically important fact. I will work hard to preach the message of unity and address the elements that positively or negatively impact unity.

Second, it is important for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be focused on missions. There may be many things with this church that we need to address and to set right. They are best set right in the context and setting of mission. By mission, I mean to reach out, to be what God wants this church to be, not a lodge or a society that lives for itself but a community that is an instrument of God’s salvation acts in history.

So those are my hopes. This is not a battle that I have to work with people, to sort of convince them of this. I find with leadership and I find when I visit churches and when I speak, the “Amen” are loud. I sense in the church a great desire, a positive move to “Yes, let’s hold together.” We are bonded in faith, the Spirit is the unifying one. The Lord’s last prayer to the Father was “Hold them together, for they are Mine.”

So I sense that and I sense also that the church is saying, “Look, we want to finish our task. We want to be done with this.” The church wants to go out and be a witnessing community. So I feel that there is very little headwind and a lot of support.

Nathan Brown is editor of Record.
Ordinary People—Extraordinary God

REVIEW BY JULENE DUERKSEN-KAPAO

Stewardship is choosing to live life as a follower of Jesus, as a member of the kingdom of God today. That has practical implications for all aspects of our lives.” (page v).

Ordinary People—Extraordinary God takes a fresh and diverse look at what stewardship really is, what it means to Christians in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and how it becomes a part of our daily lives.

Throughout Scripture, as a reminder of what He has done, God asks His followers to give back. In Leviticus 27:30 one of these reminders is to give “a tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain or fruit, belongs to the Lord and must be set apart to him as holy.”

Ordinary People—Extraordinary God is a modern testimony that God still needs and uses all we give to Him. South Pacific Division director of stewardship Dr Erika Pua suggests, “Stewardship is about practical Christianity and allowing God to be in control of our lives daily. It is an expression of absolute trust in Him with all that we are: in Christ Jesus, and submitting to His eternal rule” (page x).

So it’s not just about tithing? Is there more we need to do? Don’t be alarmed, but yes, stewardship is about much more than the monetary 10 per cent we give back to God. Ordinary People—Extraordinary God breaks stewardship into eight categories: time, others, creation, talents, finances, life choices and opportunities, trials, and sharing our faith. Fifty-five everyday, ordinary individuals share their perspectives in one of these areas, highlighting stewardship as our “love relationship with God” (page ix).

Colossians 4:5 says that we should “live wisely among those who are not Christians, and make the most of every opportunity.” Paul had it right and what a great way to start Ordinary People—Extraordinary God. The opportunity to meet and pray with someone almost missed because of being tired and not wanting to meet someone new; the love of a newborn child; sharing one’s faith under unique circumstances; and many answered prayers are just a few of the stories. Through the diversity of 55 perspectives, this book provides inspiring and memorable stories that will challenge your perspective of stewardship and what God asks of you.

Sharing one’s faith isn’t always easy. Robert Granger shares an experience where his beliefs were pushed to the edge:

However he was able to answer each question intelligently and biblically and concludes by saying, “I have come to recognise that respecting both the individual and their freedom of choice are keystones in sharing our teachings on stewardship” (page 17).

Opportunities, both to demonstrate and talk about our faith, are times of stewardship. Rebecca Kookk states, “Opportunities are just one of the many ways I believe God knocks on our door” (page 36). Again and again, Ordinary People—Extraordinary God delves into the opportunities taken to share, experience and grow through the stewardship of being the hands and feet of God.

It’s not just about money or the “blessings” we will receive when tithes are faithfully paid. It is, however, about being faithful and allowing God to work through jobs, people, nature, prayer and many other things. From strokes, to ear trouble, changes from unidentified donors, to battered wives, dreams, to Bible in schools, shifting house and selling possessions, to cancer, Ordinary People—Extraordinary God is a fantastic compilation of how awesome God is. Nurses, pastors, administrators, parents and more, these 55 ordinary people provide incredible examples of our extraordinary God.

Compiled and edited by Nathan Brown, Ordinary People—Extraordinary God sheds a generous ray of light on the topic of stewardship putting real faces and stories into what traditionally many have viewed as a “money thing.” Regardless of how you give back to God, in Ecclesiastes 11:1 He promises, “Give generously, for your gifts will return to you later.”

*Note quotations are from the New Living Translation.


Julene Duerksen-Kapao writes from Longburn, New Zealand, and is the regular book reviewer for The Edge.
TO MERE MORTALS, A FLY’N’BUILD TEAM MAY APPEAR AN
ordinary group of “misfits” from everywhere—retirees, a
schoolboy, a mission pilot, a caretaker, a mother, an engi-
neer, an electrician, a pest controller, a nurse—the list is
always colourful.

I will not even dare to delve into their personal lives: problems,
situations, experiences, families, health, wealth—or lack of it.
Such a variety of factors are reasons enough not to rendezvous
and fly somewhere as a team to build.

I have learned otherwise—from Scripture: “Abraham was old,
Jacob was insecure, Leah was unattractive, Joseph
was abused, Moses stuttered, Gideon was poor,
Samson was independent, Rahab was immoral,
David had an affair and all kinds of family problems,
Elijah was suicidal, Jeremiah was depressed,
Jonah was reluctant, Naomi was a widow,
Peter was impulsive and hot tempered, Martha worried a
lot, the Samaritan woman had several failed marriages,
Zacchaeus was unpopular, Thomas had doubts,
Paul had poor health, and Timothy was timid”*—all misfits as well.

Likewise, a fly’n’build team is a microcosm of God’s people:
saved and spirited, serving out of joy and deep gratitude for their
Saviour; and, healed and blessed, they in turn want to help
and be a blessing to others. The local recipients of fly’n’build gen-
erosity, in receiving, are blessed as well—witnessed to and par-
ticipating with their brothers and sisters from across the sea,
pursuing not self-centredness but meaning and purpose in serving
God as they serve others.

That’s Jesus’ church, my church.

*Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 2002,
page 233.
Baptism blue

HAROLD GOTTING, NT

I wish to comment on the news report “SPD backs alternative baptismal vow” (News, August 27) and ask as to where in the Bible does it state that one must make vows before one is baptised?

A person must be given Bible studies first, accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour, and then be baptised. The person will then follow the Bible and its teachings, as a result of the study undertaken before. When Philip baptised the Ethiopian, he first taught him from Scripture and then baptised him (see Acts 8:38-40). There is no mention of tithes and offerings etc. Let’s get back to the Bible, shall we?

BILL GATES, NSW

The strength of our church lies in the distinctive doctrines and in the urgency of its message of the Second Coming. The first gives a person a reason to become a Seventh-day Adventist, as they realise that they need to come out of spiritual Babylon and see that we’ve been entrusted with taking the special message of the three angels to a doomed world. The second is obviously closely related, as it emphasises the nearness of the return of our Lord.

As I look at my baptismal vows given to me in 1971, I was proud to state my convictions concerning the distinctive doctrines we hold. I was proud to avow my allegiance to the remnant church as the only church to keep all 10 commandments and to possess the gift of prophecy. I was—and still am—proud to take the special message assigned to our church to anyone who will listen. I cannot see a need to produce a baptismal vow that is silent on all of these matters.

We continue to water down our public statements to the point where, if I were to be baptised today, I can avow words that would sit so comfortably as an ecumenical baptismal vow that I could worship anywhere Christianity is espoused. I feel as though our leaders are betraying sacred trusts in order to not offend. Maybe I’ve got it wrong, but I don’t like what I see.

I can avow words that would sit so comfortably as an ecumenical baptismal vow that I could worship anywhere.

Poor turn of phrase

ROB LINDQUIST, SA

I am curious to know why in the editorial of August 20 (“Finding God”), the writer referred to Christ as “a poor Palestinian preacher in the first century,” especially as the term Palestine wasn’t introduced until a later century, by Constantine, I believe. A Jewish preacher, perhaps, or even Galilean or Nazarean might have been appropriate. I feel we move further from the richness of the church’s Jewish heritage by employing such statements.

Testing time

DANIEL BROWN, QLD

As Adventists we have a clearly defined scenario as to how events will unfold in the time of end that includes the persecution of the elect for their faith. In the light of recent events, however, I’ve begun to think that our final test as Christians may actually be more about how we are involved in the persecution of others; that is, do we participate or stand idly by as many suffer, or do we take a stand to defend the defenceless?

A few recent situations that come to mind are attitudes toward Muslims, the continuing plight of Aboriginals and refugees, the AIDS crisis, and developments in Zimbabwe among many others. We are certainly living in a time of trouble.

Take more care

KEN MARSH, NSW

As an occupational health analyst, I noted the cover of the September 10 RECORD included a picture of an individual operating a pedestal drill while ignoring basic safety considerations. For example, the operator is not wearing eye protection.

And while I had reason to believe after seeing the page 4 story that this photo was not connected to our schools, I believe that anyone who failed to look past the cover could reasonably assume a connection.

Unsafe acts and conditions lead to injury and incapacity, regardless of what regulations may or may not say.

Many, perhaps most, readers would not have noticed anything wrong, but for anyone who is safety-aware the picture fails to portray a positive image of our Seventh-day Adventist Church. I believe that in all that we do, we should seek to always present a positive view of the church.

Note: Views in letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Letters should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All letters are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author’s original meaning will not be changed. Not all letters received are published. See masthead (page 2) for contact details.
Anniversaries

Bundock, Clifford and Margaret, of Gunnedah, NSW, were married on 11.8.54 at St Stephen’s Presbyterian Church, Gunnedah. They celebrated their 50th anniversary on August 11 with 21 family and friends.

Cooper—David, and Lenore Carter were married on 26.6.05 at Casey Bay, NSW.

Douglas Chestnut

Lewenschor, Michael, of Ballina, NSW, and Eviannia Dye, of Pregnant, were married on 21.8.05 at the First Presbyterian Church, Ballina.

Magnusson—Lawrence, Dr Eric and June Magnusson were married on 30.7.85 at Plantation House, Durban, NSW.

Shaw—Becky, Keith Shaw (Principal, NSW) and Jennifer Shaw (Newcastle) were married on 28.8.05 at the Baptist Church, Newcastle.

Vinkin—Anderson, Glenn Williams and Lin Magnussen were married on 57.9.05 at lovely garden setting on the banks of the Hunter River, Port Macquarie, NSW.

Obituaries

Brown, Vera Mary, born 11.11.1913 in Auckland, NZ, died 7.7.05 in Sydney, NSW. She was predeceased by her husband, Reverend Ronald Patt Boyce (died 1968). She is survived by her daughter, Albertine (Bunny), her grandchildren, Michael and Christine, Mark and Georgina (all of Southland, NZ) and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was loved by many and will be missed by her family and friends. All communications should be addressed to Mrs Patricia Dye, New Zealand Church Office, 74 Albert Rd, Auckland, NZ.

Drodig, Colin Harvey, born 17.2.1918 at Allandale, NZ, and 14.7.05 in Perth. He was predeceased by his siblings, Vivian, Frank and Don. He is survived by his sister, Therese Burgess (Ngaru) also her nieces and nephews. Colin studied at Canford College with the ambition of building schools and that has led to a lifetime of service—an unfulfilled ambition.

Edwards, Arthur Willard, born 27.1.05 at Fort Polk, LA, died 7.9.05 at home in Whiskey Flat after a short illness. He was predeceased by his son, Anthony. He is sur-

Meetings

Hobbs, John, (see McFarlane), born 21.5.1972 at Wellington, NZ, died 27.2.05 in the Friendless Society Private Hospital, Ballantrae, QLD. She was predeceased by her husband, William, on 21.10.04, also her brother, Noel and her sister by her children and their spouses, John and Manon (Ballantrae), and Vida and Markina (Maryborough) and siblings, Sue, (Montan Barry), Vic, (Penrith, NSW), Garry, (Darwin), Mary (Brisbane), lan (Maryborough), her five grandchildren, her great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild.

—Professor, Dallas Adventist Primary School—Northern Australian

zumic, and one great-grandchild.

Principal, Darwin Adventist Primary School—Northern Australian

zumic, and one great-grandchild.

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Colin and Carol Ann Enright (both of Wodonga); and his daughter and son-in-law, Monica and Ully Waasz (Ross). Henry was an outstanding ice-skater and dedicated church worker. His many years as a literature worker were blessed. He will long be remembered for his love for the Church and a demonstration of his faith with his love for his Lord and witnesses to Jesus.

Ethyl J. Phillips
171 Bussel Highway, Busselton

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11.30 am Special service

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GREAT RECORD news story, August 13). Contact Greg or Fay <bhands@flatrate.net.au> for details.

Dedications and notable workers who have sat in our pews. We have many ex-Carmel students on the honour list. Further information: Neil Maxwell (08) 9454 6881; or Yvonne Johnson (nee Garvin) (08) 9291 6508; email yvonnelj@ozzienet.net.au.

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Finally

I expect to pass through the world but once. Any good therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.