Teens inspire new book about the Bible

**BONNELLS BAY, NEW SOUTH WALES**

Teenagers at a local Adventist church have inspired the former president of the South Pacific Division to write a new book.

Dr Bryan Ball dedicated *Can We Still Believe the Bible*? to the members of the high school Sabbath school at Lakeside Adventist church. Twenty-six young people received a signed copy of the book during the worship service at the church on April 14. The teenagers led the praise and worship, prayed, collected the offering, read from the Bible and performed a musical item before sitting in the front rows to hear Dr Ball preach. “There has never been a time when truth is of so little consequence,” he said. “The $1 million question is, ‘Who do you believe?’”

The subtitle to *Can we still believe the Bible?* is, *And does it really matter?* “The book answers the second question first because if it doesn’t matter, why bother to read the rest,” explained Dr Ball during the sermon.

Now retired, Dr Ball has authored, edited and contributed to a number of books. He is an honorary senior research fellow at Avondale College and a member of the Avondale College church.

*(Continued on page 5)*
Alcohol is deceptive and any drinking of wine is a risk.

Alcohol: Sweet, bitter enemy

I was in sombre mood as I prepared instruments for yet another autopsy. This would be the sixth in a week—all alcohol-related deaths, all younger than 40—a sad statistic for a comparatively small town of 70,000 people. Through the centuries, alcohol has been regarded as a source of pleasure and aesthetic appreciation. Today, drinking is more popular than ever. It exerts an attraction that appeals to the human psyche like no other, with an influence so intricately entwined within the very fabric of human society.

But is alcohol cool? While it is linked with connotations of pleasure and sociability, alcohol is a highly dangerous, addictive drug that kills approximately 1.8 million people a year, representing 3.2 per cent of all deaths worldwide.1 Adverse effects of alcohol consumption have been observed in nearly every organ of the human body and linked to more than 60 diseases. Road accidents, crime, family violence, health costs, mental disorders and suicides are some examples of numerous social problems impacted by the use of alcohol today. In fact, the estimated financial cost of this problem in Australia alone is a staggering $A7.5 billion per year.2

The suggestion that red wine is good for health often interferes with the message about the health risks associated with alcohol. While the antioxidants in red wine are beneficial for cardiovascular disease, the same benefit can be found from eating fruit or drinking grape juice. While a moderate amount of red wine may reduce heart disease risk in the “older age group,” it increases the threat of premature death from many other causes like cancer and trauma. How could health professionals advocate any amount of a dangerous drug that substitutes one disease for another and even in moderate amounts can cause great harm to many other organs? Meanwhile, research findings on controversial issues such as this must be treated with extreme caution: “The publicity given to the use of moderate amounts of alcohol for heart disease prevention is not the result of rigorous scientific research but is to a large extent inspired by commercial purposes.”3

By contrast, the Seventh-day Adventist lifestyle is a proven, healthy and balanced approach to personal wellbeing and longevity. More than 250 scientifically researched articles published in journals around the world consistently show Adventists usually live longer, have later onset of most cancers, heart disease and diabetes, and a lower incidence of the common lifestyle-related diseases. One notable reason for these amazing results has been our stand as a church on the side of “total abstinence” from intoxicating drinks, cigarettes and illicit drugs. Praise God, these evidences provide tangible, measurable, hard evidence to the world in scientific language that God’s Word is still relevant and beneficial.

Wise man Solomon uses the analogy of a venomous snake to describe wine: “Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper” (Proverbs 23:31, 32*). Alcohol is deceptive and any drinking of wine is a risk, a step toward slavery to alcohol and its consequences. In John 8:44, Jesus Himself exposes Satan’s greatest weapon: “He was a murderer from the beginning... When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” Through deceit, Satan manipulates the human mind to gain control and enslave. As a treacherous slanderer he uses deceit to either destroy people’s faith in God or influence them to accept worldly pleasures and believe these practices are acceptable to God!

If ever we needed a time for clear thinking and spiritual discernment, it’s now. God speaks to our mind through the Holy Spirit and knowing that alcohol is a depressant and decreases judgment, conscience, cognition and moral reasoning, it is prudent that we seriously take heed of His counsel: “The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray” (1 Peter 4:7).

2. Alcohol Education & Rehabilitation Foundation Ltd.
*Bible quotations are taken from the New International Version.

Chester Kuma
Associate Director, Adventist Health Ministries, South Pacific Division
Global Mission funds new outreach in South Pacific

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

ifty-nine new church plants that are entering new areas and people groups in the South Pacific Division (SPD) have been approved and funded by the General Conference this year. These Global Mission projects represent a total financial investment of more than $A1 million, of which the General Conference has contributed $A328,285.

“The planting of new churches in unentered areas and people groups has always been the object of the church’s Global Mission thrust since it was first launched in 1990,” explains Pastor Ray Coombe, director of Adventist Mission for the SPD. “This year there are 48 new projects and 11 others that are now in their second or third year.”

Most Global Mission projects include funding of a small stipend to support volunteer lay missionaries called Global Mission pioneers, plus funding for evangelistic/outreach campaigns and materials, and in the case of island fields, funding for a church building.

The SPD, the unions and the local conferences and missions also contribute to the project funding. “This year the unions’ share of funding totals $A150,268, while the division is contributing $A260,381,” Pastor Coombe reports.

New projects this year include a “friendship fishing” strategy on the island of Nikunau in Kiribati, where a family of Adventists wish to develop closer ties with the island inhabitants through a shared fishing venture and thus gain an opportunity to share the gospel. “Kiribati Mission have three other projects this year, including plans for an evangelistic series on Nauru,” adds Pastor Coombe.

In Papua New Guinea there are six new church plants in the Sepik, five in northeastern Papua, three in Morobe, two on Bougainville, four in Madang Manus Mission, and 10 new areas will be targeted in the Western Highlands.

Two churches are to be built in new work areas of the Solomon Islands on Santa Isabel and the Shortlands, and two new church plants are planned for Tonga. A number of existing projects continue in Vanuatu and Fiji as well as two training programs for new Global Mission pioneers.

In Australia there are four exciting new church plants commencing in Maleny (Queensland), Macarthur College (Sydney, NSW), an indigenous group at Midland and among African and Burmese refugees in Mirrabooka (WA).

A new outreach venture to Wallis and Futuna Islands in the New Zealand Pacific Union, which was funded last year, will get underway in 2007 following the training of Adventist church members who were baptised last year in Noumea, New Caledonia.

“These are the first fruits from this island group who will go back to their home island to establish an Adventist presence in these islands that have been closed to our church in the past,” says Pastor Coombe.

“Please pray for the Global Mission pioneers who will open work in all these new places and please continue to support Global Mission through your offerings.”—RECORD staff/Ray Coombe

◆ Adventist World Radio’s (AWR) board of directors has appointed a new director for the Asia-Pacific region. Jonathan Wagiiran ( pictured) is currently the principal of East Java Academy in Jatim, Indonesia. The Asia-Pacific region is the largest territory in terms of population and geography that AWR covers and includes the South Pacific Division. The region office is in Singapore and AWR broadcasts in 32 languages through the region. The position was held for eight years by Akinori Kaibe, who has moved to Japan to serve as chief editor of the Japan Publishing House.—Adventist World Radio

◆ TV advertising for a free viewing of The Search 6 videos will screen in Canberra City on WIN Television, May 12-20.
Almost one year ago, the hype surrounding the best-selling novel *The Da Vinci Code* reached a peak with the release of the movie adaptation of Dan Brown’s story. It is also almost a year since Pastor Grenville Kent and Dr Philip Rodionoff launched their response to the claims Brown’s novel makes about the history and identity of Jesus.

Their book, *The Da Vinci Decode*, published by Signs Publishing, saw 14,000 copies sold and otherwise distributed in Australia, New Zealand, Britain and the USA. But the book has also seen much wider distribution.

“Adventist publishing houses in Croatia, Brazil and the Czech Republic have translated the book,” reports Pastor Kent. “And a secular publisher has translated it into Greek.”

In addition to the hard-copy distribution, *The Da Vinci Decode* has also been available on the website <www.thedavincidecode.net>. “We wanted people to access it for free, especially for students and for people in developing countries where the book could be expensive in local currency,” explains Dr Rodionoff.

“Our designers produced an email campaign to market the website,” adds Pastor Kent. “As people told their friends, it spread like a virus—a good one—to places we never expected.

“A gentleman in Lebanon asked us if he could attach copies of the book to his emailing list of 8000 people in the construction industry. We were delighted—8000 people contacted for free at the click of a mouse.”

The website has received more than 230,000 hits from people on six continents. “It received 112,000 hits in May last year, when the film launched,” says Dr Rodionoff. “By August, that had dropped to 11,000 hits, perhaps because the film didn’t rate like the novel.”

The website also offered a seminar kit to download and, according to Dr Rodionoff, they have received reports from people worldwide saying they have used the material. “The seminar went into about eight languages that we know of,” he says. “We got emails from pastors and church members from Adventist churches around the world, as well as from other churches. They appreciated that Adventist material stayed positive and put forward a credible case for faith in core Christianity.”

Pastor Kent also ran a *Da Vinci Decode* seminar in a cafe venue near his suburban Sydney church. “This project brought 15 non-Adventists to a weekly study group after our local seminar,” he reports.

With their book all but sold out and the hype surrounding *The Da Vinci Code* also waning, Pastor Kent and Dr Rodionoff are reflecting on what has been achieved, learning lessons as to how it might have been done better and looking out for the “next big thing.”

“If we want to be good evangelists today, we need to learn to grab these opportunities quickly and use the free publicity in the media,” reflects Pastor Kent. “We need to link the timeless truths to media focus. So we’re looking for the next good excuse to attract people’s attention to Jesus and the Bible’s prophecies.”

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**Authors reflect on *Da Vinci* outreach**

**SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES**

“A Catholic newspaper, *The Record*, WA, printed a letter to the editor on March 8, praising the Australian Union Conference’s February 17, “prayer for the end of the drought” initiative. John Gilmour said he noticed an advertisement for the day of prayer in his local paper inviting members of the community to come and pray for rain. He says that at around 11 am it started to rain. “Our church leaders are always asking for a deeper faith and a stronger showing of faith to a disinterested secular society,” Mr Gilmour says. “Surely there must be more Catholics out there who like me truly believe that when enough prayer is offered up for rain, then in spite of every predication made by man, the Lord will make it rain.”—*The Record*

**Correction:** The Coronary Heart Improvement Project (CHIP) was not developed by Loma Linda University (LLU) as stated in “CHIP catches media attention,” April 7. It was developed by Dr Hans Diehl, an alumus of the university’s School of Public Health, and director of the Lifestyle Medicine Institute of Loma Linda.

**Worldwide tithe rose 10 per cent** in 2006 from the previous year, General Conference treasurer Robert Lemon announced at the 2007 Spring Meeting, April 11, in Silver Spring, Maryland. Despite there being one less Sabbath in 2006, total tithe increased from S$US1.5 billion to S$US1.6 billion. Mission offerings are on the increase, a turnaround from the declining offering given during the past 50 years, and local offerings also rose. Mr Lemon emphasised the need for a larger portion of the world budget, currently less than 7 per cent, be used for entering regions where there are no Adventists, especially the 10/40 window territories.—*Adventist Review*

**Andrews University** has been awarded a 30-month grant to research factors affecting African-Americans’ access to outpatient substance abuse treatment. The purpose of the project, funded by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Substance Abuse Policy Research Program, is to assess whether state policies help or hinder access to treat-
Teens inspire new book about the Bible

(Continued from page 1)

But his daughter and three teenage grandchildren attend Lakeside, so he eagerly accepted an invitation to speak once a month in the teen Sabbath school. “I’ve always been interested in young adults,” says Dr Ball, “so this was an opportunity to re-establish contact.”

And make new friends—the rapport between Ball and the teenagers was obvious during the dedication service. “You’ve suffered me now for two-and-a-half years,” Dr Ball tells the teenagers. “Good news; it’s coming to an end.”

After the presentation, high school class member Stephen Cooper thanked Dr Ball for his “interesting and creative” Bible studies, presented a card to him on behalf of the other members of the Sabbath school then hugged him. “[You’ve] taken us all of the other members of the Sabbath school.

The journey began in 2005 with studies supporting the validity of the Bible, continued in 2006 with studies about Adventism and ends this year with studies about Bible prophecies, a topic the teenagers chose.

“Young adults are more discerning than we think,” says Dr Ball. “They want solid information. Their interest in the Bible is genuine.

“But as I was writing the book, I realised this was a topic with much wider interest—and the book grew from there.”

Lara Kuivisto, a member of the Sabbath school, speaks highly of her grandfather. “He is passionate about helping young people understand the Bible.” She also enjoys the Sabbath school. “It’s always different and interesting—you learn something each Sabbath.”

The worship service ended with the hymn, “Give me the Bible.” It might have been appropriate to sing, “Give me the book about the Bible.”

Can We Still Believe the Bible?, published by Signs Publishing, was launched formally at Avondale Memorial church on April 21. It is now available at Adventist Book Centres.—Brenton Stacey

More @ www.CanWeStillBelieveTheBible.com

Youth challenged to “stand” in NZ

ROTORUA, NEW ZEALAND

Stand” was the theme of the youth-training event organised by the Waikato churches and held at Tui Ridge from January 23 to 28.

More than 80 young people from across New Zealand gathered for the second annual New Zealand Youth Conference, which featured Pastors Sam Braga and Geoff Youlden as the main presenters.

Ben Martin, associate pastor of Papakura and Mana Park churches, says, “Their topics of ‘Freedom in Christ’ and ‘End-time events’ challenged and uplifted those who attended.”

Workshops were run during the week and covered topics including evangelism, Bible study and prayer. The young people who attended were challenged to put their new knowledge into practice with community-service opportunities throughout the week. These ranged from backyard “blitzes” and massages to doorknocking and putting food parcels together.

More than 40 homes requested Bible studies or personal visitation as a direct result of their efforts. Pastor Youlden challenged the young people to keep going with their plans to expand the work for Jesus.—RECORD staff/Ben Martin

ment by African-Americans. “Concern about equal access to drug treatment services has become a major issue in our society,” says Duane McBride, the project’s principal investigator and director of Andrews’s Institute of Prevention of Addiction.—Andrews University Media Relations/AR

◆ Nearly 50 youth leaders and pastors from across the Middle East pledged to launch about a dozen new Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs within the next few months during a week-long training seminar in Cairo, Egypt. “This is very good news for all our young people who are looking for outlets that are inspiring, recreational and confidence building,” said Amir Ghali, youth ministries director of the Middle East Union Mission. The Pathfinder and Adventurer curricula and awards were recently translated into Arabic and this was the key to facilitating the launch of the program. Funding for the project came from offerings at the 2004 Oshkosh Camporee in Wisconsin, USA, and the 2006 European Camporee in Stevninghus, Denmark.—TED Communication Department

◆ Five Seventh-day Adventists were among thousands of women who voiced their concerns in deploring violence against women and girls at the United Nations’ 51st session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held from February 26 to March 9. Viola Poey Hughes, associate director of marketing for Hope Channel, led the delegation and found statistics alarming. “About 55 million girls are out of formal school and 82 million girls will marry by the age of 13,” she says. “A frightening 2 to 3 million live in sexual servitude and will never have access to basic human rights, while 218 million are child labourers.” The church’s official statement to the CSW stressed the importance of developing practical programs such as literacy projects, more ministry involvement by women and a four-level leadership training program, developed by the General Conference Women’s Ministries Department.—Adventist Review
SIM president responds to tsunami

HONIARA, SOLOMON ISLANDS

Two more Seventh-day Adventists are reported to have been killed after the Solomon Islands earthquake and tsunami swept across the Western Province of the country on April 2.

“The earthquake and tsunami of April 2 has had devastating effects on many members of our church family who live in the region,” says Pastor Andrew Kingston, president of the Solomon Islands Mission (SIM).

According to Pastor Kingston, who surveyed the affected area on April 4, two church members were killed by landslides on the island of Ranongga to the north of Simbo Island. About 30 houses have also been lost in the Adventist village on the island, which is engulfed by the smell of dying coral.

People on the island of Simbo, south-west of Gizo, have moved away from the area due to landslides and the continuing uncertainty.

In Gizo, the main town in the Western Province, some houses close to the sea were destroyed and others on higher ground shaken and damaged by the earthquake. The Adventist church was undamaged, although the Adventist Book Centre suffered minor flooding.

Adventist villages on Kolombangara have suffered devastation, but there was only minor damage on the building of the regional office at Kukudu.

“Kukuda Adventist College has fared better than reports first indicated,” says Pastor Kingston.

He says a classroom floor has been destroyed, the main generator flooded and overhead electricity wires were broken. The main water supply to the college remains muddy.

The Adventist high school at Puzivai on southern Choiseul has been severely damaged, with a dormitory and staff houses completely destroyed. A generator and a radio, the school’s only means of communication, can no longer be used.

“Fortunately, their water supply is still good,” says Pastor Kingston. “Our greatest need is to get our schools into operation again and to give people in their villages the basic necessities of life.”

About 17,000 Adventists live on Choiseul and in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands.

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia is responding to meet the immediate needs of survivors on the islands of Vella Lavella, Ranongga and southern Choiseul.—Meleody Tan/ADRA Solomon Islands

◆ A group of orthodox Jews in Jerusalem are meeting as the Sanhedrin, an ancient religious court of Israel. They meet every Tuesday to debate matters of Jewish law. They also plan to revive the Passover sacrifice. The Sanhedrin began meeting two years ago in the city of Tiberius, the geographical spot believed to mark their final days a few hundred years after the time of Jesus. In antiquity, the Sanhedrin determined Jewish practice. Now they rule on political and religious issues and ultimately see themselves as an alternative to the secular Supreme Court of Israel. The current Sanhedrin also sees one of its functions as evaluating any potential messianic contender.

“There is no redemption without the Sanhedrin,” says Rabbi Dov Stein, a member of the group. “We are building the opportunity for a king (messiah).”—Religion News Service

◆ It may surprise many, but 75 percent of the Americans who say they are not born-again Christians still believe the biblical account of Jesus literally coming back to life in his physical body, according to recent research by the North American Mission Board’s Center for Missional Research. “It really stunned us to learn that 75 percent of those Americans claiming not to be born-again still believe in the Resurrection,” said Phillip Connor, research manager for the Center for Missional Research. The data was collected from a random sample of 1204 adults across the United States. “It also surprised us that 59 percent of those who rarely darken the church doors, and 39 percent of those who never attend church, nevertheless still believe in the literal resurrection of Christ,” said Connor.—Baptist Press

◆ A new, first-of-its-kind DVD features the work of British skateboarding evangelist Andy Milne and the “Sorted” team, working on housing estates, in schools and reaching out to youth in four parishes across Bradford, England. Using skateboarding as a focus, Pastor Milne works with some 55 young people aged 11-17 every week where they hang out—in their schools, homes, in the park or on the streets.—ASSIST news service

IS YOUR CHURCH DOING SOMETHING EXCITING, INNOVATIVE OR INSPIRING? EMAIL RECORD@SIGNSPUBLISHING.COM.AU
Global Mission grapples with dual allegiance problem

SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND, USA

Seventh-day Adventist missiologists and church leaders met recently to wrestle with the ongoing challenge of church members who retain non-Christian practices and beliefs from their former religions. This discussion was the focus of the Global Mission Issues Committee that met in April, at the General Conference (GC) in Silver Spring, Maryland.

The meeting opened with presenters from Brazil, Africa and the South Pacific giving examples of how this division of loyalty in the hearts of converts, known as dual allegiance, is hindering mission work. In many cases, new Christians feel incredible pressure to adhere to their old ways.

Dual allegiance may manifest itself differently in various cultures, but it is not limited to specific religions. “It is a pervasive, global problem, impacting all Christian organisations involved in cross-cultural mission,” said Michael Ryan, a GC vice-president and committee chair.

Many involved in cross-cultural outreach have not fully understood and dealt with the deeply held belief that rituals and sacrifices are necessary to control evil spiritual forces, said Bruce Bauer, department of World Mission chair at the Theological Seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Marriage problems, crop failure, subterfuge, and protection from spirits are seen as requiring supernatural activity. While eliminating the old ways, Mr Bauer said, “Christianity has often failed to relate biblical answers to these people’s most pressing needs and fears.” The result is often reversion to former practices.

Missiologist Jon Dybdahl sees the root of dual allegiance stemming from people accepting a doctrine, such as the divinity of Christ, without being led to experience the personal implication of that doctrine, such as no longer fearing evil spirits because Christ is Lord even of demons.

“Before any evangelism begins, serious analysis of the local culture needs to be done at the deepest levels,” said Pat Gustin, former director of the Institute of World Mission.

Dr Ryan challenged attendees to envision practical steps for implementing change and chose representatives to compile recommendations based on the presentations and discussion. These recommendations will be edited by a select committee; reviewed by theologians, missiologists and various levels of church leadership; and presented at the GC’s spring council in 2008.

“As a church we can’t turn a blind eye to this problem, or hope that it will just go away,” said Gary Krause, director of the Office of Adventist Mission at the GC. “It’s a significant threat to the life and effectiveness of the church. The Issues Committee is recommending tangible steps to help remedy the problem—and they’re not just bandaid solutions. They go to the heart of conducting outreach in a biblical, responsible way, and properly nurturing new believers in their new faith.” —Laurie Falvo/Office of Adventist Mission/ANN

Albany church member awarded

ALBANY, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Recently baptised Albany church member Phyllis Mirco received the award for Albany Citizen of the Year on Australia Day from the town’s mayor, Alison Goode.

Mrs Mirco has been active in a number of voluntary organisations for many years.

In the past three years, three members of the Albany Adventist church have received Australia Day awards for outstanding voluntary work in the local community.

Jill Williamson was the first in 2005; Margaret Martin followed in 2006 (“Adventist cleans up Australia Day award,” News, August 19, 2006); and now Phyllis Mirco.—NewsWest

Mirriwinni celebrates 30 years of education

BELLBROOK, NEW SOUTH WALES

On the weekend of April 6 to 9, Mirriwinni Gardens Aboriginal Academy, one of the oldest Christian education institutions in Australia dedicated solely to the education of indigenous children, celebrated its 30th anniversary.

More than 300 former staff, pupils and supporters came from various parts of Australia to join current staff and students to celebrate and pay tribute to the people who have been dedicated in the work of establishing the school.

On the Sabbath afternoon of the weekend camp program, former staff and students had the opportunity to relate various experiences about the beginning of the school.

“There was nothing flashy about it,” said the founding principal of the school, June Bobongie, who has since retired and now resides in Cairns, northern Queensland.

In her presentation, Mrs Bobongie showed old photographs of the school, staff and students and recounted some of the harshest conditions and times of her young life then—including living in a makeshift shelter in the middle of the bush during winter. The school’s first building was a cowshed partitioned into two classrooms.

She said conditions were hard, but the teachers were highly motivated to provide education to indigenous children, who are often disadvantaged in many ways.

Rex Marshall, one of the founding member of the school and current chairman of the board of directors, expressed similar sentiments and thanked many genuine people who have worked tirelessly over the years to build the school.

The school closed briefly in the 1970s, which disappointed the local indigenous communities. However, the school was able to be opened again, and Mr Marshall highlighted some of the problems faced in doing so during his presentation.

Current principal Fay Oliver paid tribute to the former staff of the school, who have shared the vision in getting Mirriwinni Gardens to where it is today.—Duran Angiki/RECORD staff
Another side to the beer ads

BY JOHN ASHTON

A heritage of drinking, commercial backing of hundreds of millions of dollars and the access to countless media and cultural inputs portrays alcohol as the drink of all “men” and integral to the fabric of our society. But there is another side to the alcohol story—the damage it does to our personal health and the pain and sorrow it causes in our society.

Alcohol absorbed directly into the bloodstream

When we drink alcohol it is absorbed directly through the stomach and intestinal wall into the bloodstream. It induces a greater level of intoxication in women than in men due to men possessing a higher percentage of water in their bodies, resulting in more dilution of the alcohol. For example, for the average male, one hour after drinking three glasses of table wine his blood will contain about 0.05 per cent alcohol. Women will reach this peak level in a shorter time and women midcycle or on the pill in an even shorter time, making them more vulnerable than males to the effects of alcohol.

What happens to the alcohol?

Of the alcohol consumed, 90-98 per cent is oxidised to acetaldehyde—five times more toxic than alcohol—and 90-95 per cent of that has to be detoxified in the liver by converting it to acetate (found in vinegar). It is not surprising that wine drinkers have the highest incidence of liver cirrhosis.

Of the remaining alcohol, 1-5 per cent is excreted in urine and 1-5 per cent is exhaled through the lungs, hence the breathalyzer test for drinking.

Some serious health effects

Alcohol reacts with a number of the functions of our reproductive system. For example, in men it inhibits testosterone production and causes impotence in older men. Alcohol also stimulates conversion of testosterone to oestrogen and for men who drink heavily this can lead to feminisation as they get older—for example, formation of feminine fat deposits in men including breast development. Alcohol damages male sperm and also may damage the female egg.

When a pregnant mother drinks, her baby is also exposed to the alcohol. We now know that maternal alcohol consumption is the leading cause of brain damage in children worldwide.

Maternal alcohol consumption during pregnancy can also lead to diminished muscular and nervous development and changed facial features. Sadly, in some communities maternal alcohol consumption is so common that these changed facial characteristics of the baby are considered normal.

Studies in test animals have shown that maternal alcohol consumption can produce abnormal, feminised sexual behaviour or impaired sexual ability in male offspring. This has potentially serious implications for men whose mothers drank during pregnancy and especially during the first trimester of pregnancy. Yet, despite a number of research studies reporting the feminising effect of alcohol, I have never seen this topic discussed in the media.

Effects on the brain

Alcohol can cause premature ageing of the brain and brain damage is reported to be common in social drinkers. By middle age, even moderate drinkers have been found to have measurably atrophied brains. Alcohol-induced brain damage is reported to develop faster in women, which again emphasises the increased vulnerability of women to harm from alcohol.

Effects of alcohol on the heart

The media promotes the studies that show that drinking wine or beer may help protect against heart disease. However we usually are not warned that habitual heavy drinking damages the heart muscle and leads to increased risk of heart disease. Nor are we made aware of the research showing that the risk of hemorrhagic stroke increases with increased alcohol consumption. After an extensive review of the research literature pertaining to alcohol and heart health, researchers at Heidelberg University recently warned that a regular daily administration of alcohol should not be recommended and that educating the public that alcohol be used as a coronary therapeutic agent would create more damage than benefit. Any recommendation for alcohol to be used as protection against heart attack and ischemic stroke has the potential to cause damaging effects on various other organs.

The alcohol–cancer relationship

A multitude of studies have now confirmed that alcohol is either a carcinogen—a cancer-causing agent—or cancer promoter. In 2006, the International Agency for Research on Cancer estimated that, worldwide, there were about 389,000 cases of cancer attributed to drinking alcohol each year resulting in around 233,000 deaths. Among women, breast cancer comprised 60 per cent of alcohol-attributable cancers. The report authors warn that the burden of alcohol-associated cancer appears to be substantial and needs to be considered when making public health recommendations on alcohol drinking.

Alcohol and sex

Alcohol is a major contributor to sexual promiscuity. Under the influence of alcohol and peer pressure, some young people choose to participate in sexual activities before making the commitment to marriage. In doing so, they potentially expose themselves to sexually transmitted infections. A
recent report for health professionals published on Medscape warns that currently in the United States, more than 50 per cent of all young adults aged 18 to 25 years have caught at least one of 25 types of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The most commonly reported STI is chlamydia infection, with 3 million new cases diagnosed annually in the USA. When left untreated, chlamydia infection increases a female’s risk for pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), ectopic pregnancy, infertility and HIV infection. Up to 75 per cent of females and 50 per cent of males exhibit no obvious symptoms and 30-40 per cent of all sexually active females are reported as being infected with the disease. If left untreated, 40 per cent of these females will develop PID, 20 per cent of those will then become subfertile and another 9 per cent will develop life-threatening complications during pregnancy.7

Condoms do not appear to efficiently protect against chlamydia and the incidence of infection is also increasing rapidly in Australia. Between 2000 and 2004, known chlamydia infections more than doubled with more than 35,000 notifications. The largest increase in rates of infection has been in women aged from 15 to 29 years.6 These young women are paying a high price for the casual sex promoted in magazines and movies.

**Alcohol and the socialisation of men**

The tradition among many men of drinking alcohol with mates has fostered a culture where male conversations and jokes in the workplace and pub regularly portray women as dumb, worthless—except for sex—and inferior. This type of talk denies women’s feelings, their need for romance and affection, and instead reduces females to sex objects. These alcohol-fuelled conversations can have a powerful influence on the attitudes of men toward women and sadly, as revealed by the following statistics, millions of women suffer as a result.

**Statistics reveal the effects of alcohol in our society**

Alcohol is involved in approximately 55 per cent of rapes and 50 per cent of violence against women. The Australian Institute of Criminology survey of women in 2004 found 29 per cent of those surveyed reported that they had experienced physical or sexual violence before the age of 16 years. The 2005 Australian Bureau of Statistics survey found 1.47 million Australian women—that is 19 per cent of all women aged 15 and older—had experienced sexual violence, and 2.56 million Australian women—33 per cent of women aged 15 older—had experienced physical violence.7 On the basis of calculation, these statistics mean alcohol has been a contributing factor in violence against at least 1.5 million Australian women.

Australian women’s refuge statistics show that one-third of all assaults on women are by partners. That means that in Australia more than 1 million women have been assaulted by a partner. Not surprisingly, each year more than 20,000 women seek refuge in a shelter. That is nearly 400 women a week, plus their children.

In fact, domestic violence is now so widespread that one in five women admitted to casualty wards in Australian hospitals are there because of domestic violence. It is reported that alcohol is a factor in 50 per cent of domestic violence cases and that rates of violence are 15 times higher in households where the male is often drunk. Although less common, female-to-male violence also occurs and again alcohol consumption is often a factor.

Not surprisingly alcohol is a factor in about 25 per cent of divorces. Sadly, however, the risk of violence with a subsequent partner often increases. This is illustrated by the research that found 14 per cent of children living with both parents have witnessed male-to-female violence, whereas 41 per cent of children living with their mum and her “partner” have witnessed the partner being violent toward their mother.

**Alcohol on the road**

Alcohol is also a major factor in road accidents. In Australia each year, around 400 people die and around 8000 are hospitalised as a result of excess alcohol consumption. The financial cost to the Australian community of the hospital care alone for this particular alcohol-caused trauma is estimated to be in excess of $A1.3 billion.8

**Life without alcohol**

When all the alcohol-related health costs are added together the overall cost of the harm of alcohol abuse in the community is enormous.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church takes the position of recommending total abstinence from alcohol. By educating ourselves about the harmful aspects of drinking and sharing this knowledge with others, we can play an important role in helping the wellbeing of the community. 

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**More information**

John F Ashton and Ronald S Laura, Uncorked: The hidden hazards of alcohol and writes from Cooranbong, New South Wales.

See also the May issue of Signs of the Times for further articles on this topic.

Further information is available from a variety of websites, such as:


For general facts about alcohol, Google scholar: <http://scholar.google.com/>. 

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John Ashton is strategic research manager for the Sanitarium Health Food Company. He is co-author of Uncorked: The hidden hazards of alcohol and writes from Cooranbong, New South Wales.
Form and content

BY HARRY NEALE

At what point in the manufacturing process does So Good become So Good, the product?” I asked this question in a talk I gave to a group of workers at the Sanitarium Health Food Company at Berkeley Vale.

“When the packet is placed on the store shelf,” answered a worker.

“The moment it comes off the conveyor belt,” said another.

“When I drink it,” joked one more.

It’s an odd question but here’s the answer I was looking for: It’s the moment soy milk is poured into its container. Before that occurs, So Good is nothing more than a box made of soft, waterproof cardboard, covered with attractive colours and artwork, making its way down the assembly line.

As a consumer, I find So Good packaging attractive. Yet packaging is not why I buy the product. It’s what’s inside the package that makes me buy it. In other words, I buy So Good not because of its form but its content. Form is good, but content is better.

The problem is, all too often people value form over content.

Watch the TV home-improvement programs and the host will tell you it is better to spend money on painting the house and making it look good, than fixing the plumbing and making it work well. Why? Because painting is going to do more to the sale price than plumbing ever will.

A few years back, I watched a series of debates between the two leading presidential candidates in the United States. I noticed each candidate was carefully groomed to look “presidential” on camera—hair parted on the side, red power ties and dark, tailor-made pinstriped suits. Why this attention to appearances? Because each candidate knows that a large portion of the voting population, who do not understand the complexities of government and the issues being discussed in the debate, will ultimately vote for the candidate who looks best on camera. For those people, form is more important than content.

On another occasion, while watching Australian Idol, I heard two of the judges speak candidly to a participant about her appearance. They told her that unless she went on a diet, her chances of survival to the final rounds were doomed. “You might have a good voice, sweetheart, but the voting public needs you to look a certain way,” said one of the judges. The judge was telling her form is equal to, if not superior to content.

As followers of Jesus, putting form over content is a trap we must refuse to be caught in. In the Old Testament, we are reminded that when it comes to things of a personal nature, God’s priorities are different to ours. To Samuel God once said: “The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7).

The difficulty is we too often allow ourselves to be satisfied with good form—a handsome family, a nice car, a pretty house, a good job, a respectable religious affiliation, a dignified manner of worship—but God reminds us that the content of our lives is much more important than surface-level appearances.

This was a problem Jesus had with some of the Establishment in his time, particularly the Pharisees. A certain portion of them were riding on their position, using their authority to their own benefit, maintaining a religious mask behind which lacked content. Jesus once described them as “whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean” (Matthew 23:27).

On another occasion He advised those who were listening to Him, “Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment” (John 7:24). In plain language, Jesus said to those around him, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” Yet that is exactly what many of us do. We easily allow ourselves to be persuaded by a person’s appearance and miss what he or she has to offer in terms of character. Form takes precedence over content.

For Jesus, it was always the other way round. And that’s how it should be for anyone who follows Him. This is not to say form is unimportant—it is. But it should never take the place of, nor supersede that of, content. Form is good, but content is always better. R

*Bible quotations are from the New International Version.

Harry Neale is sport and recreation coordinator at Avondale College, Cooranbong, New South Wales.
My name is Earl

BY GRENVILLE KENT

I’m just trying to be a better person.”

Earl Hickey, a small-time criminal and perpetual loser, wins a lottery and seconds later is hit by a car, hospitalised, and loses the lottery ticket—oh, and loses his wife, the trailer-park princess Joy, to his friend Crabman.

In hospital, Earl hears someone on TV mention karma, and has a morphine-fuelled epiphany: his bad life now is because of bad actions in the past, but paying people back and making good choices can improve his future. He tries one good deed—picking up rubbish—and the lottery ticket blows back to him.

Earl the convert preaches his views to his slow but lovable brother Randy, and anyone else who will listen:

“Do good things and good things will happen to you. Do bad things and it will come back and bite you.”

“If you want a better life, you need to be a better person.”

“The secret to life is fixing all the bad things you’ve done.”

He makes a list of every bad deed he can remember, and starts out trying to make them right. He finds the geek he used to beat up in school and helps him find a relationship—and crosses one off his list. He finds the one-legged woman whose car he stole and offers apologies—and crosses off another one.

And then there’s the golfer. Earl noticed this golfer shouted beers when he scored a hole-in-one, so Earl hid in the bushes and threw his ball into the hole after his first shot every round. What Earl didn’t know was that he became so obsessed with golf he quit his accounting job, broke up with his girlfriend and started living in his car hoping to make a fortune from golf. Earl apologises, gets him his job back, speaks to his girlfriend, and even goes to the end of the earth to return their pet dog. Debts paid, Earl goes off happy—with only a few hundred more old sins to atone for.

The top-rating sitcom and has been nominated for Golden Globes aplenty. Its underclass characters regularly punch political correctness in the nose, but its crazy storylines give some fall-over-funny moments—and it has no laugh track. The music track uses superb songs to make witty comments about what’s going on.

It’s so entertaining you don’t notice it’s a religious show—it’s all about karma.

You’d say it almost has moments of redemption: when Joy’s nasty, dishonest family finally speak scary truths at Christmas and realise they can love each other, faults and all; or when Earl realises he has hurt and disappointed his father and missed his attempts to show love, and they finally bond while restoring a classic car. Among all the crass moments, there are some important truths.

“Taking responsibility for faults is impressive. The attempt to make better decisions really does improve relationships and people’s lives. Ask Zaccheus the ex-corrupt tax collector: giving back what you’ve stolen is part of what salvation brings (see Luke 19:1-10). But it’s not what brings salvation.

And that’s what I’d like to tell Earl: you don’t have to pay for your sins. You can’t. But God already paid for them by becoming human and taking your punishment painfully, in fact fatally, by dying on a cross. Jesus crossed off your whole list. He took—if I can put it this way—all your bad karma and offers you his good karma.

Actually karma is a Hindu and Buddhist idea. And while it has some similarities with biblical religion—ideas of reaping what you sow (see Galatians 6:7) and the importance and consequences of choices—it does not teach the key idea of the Christian gospel: grace.

With karma, you are your own saviour, paying for your sins. And you must pay every cent. Karma is a penny-pinching moral accountant, a harsh teacher, a judge showing no mercy but sentencing full retribution. You may need to be reincarnated millions of times before you finally pay off your debt, before you finally learn. Christianity offers free payment of your debt by God, simply by asking.

And karma suggests someone who is sick or poor in this life must have bad karma from mistakes in a past life. So why would you help them and disturb the process? Showing grace would wreck their education. Yet when Jesus healed a blind man, he said the sickness was not a result of sin by the man or his parents, and Jesus showed Himself to be all about healing and encouraging people—freely (see John 9:1-41).

The secret to life is grace. A God of grace crosses off your list—and helps you be a better person.

I’d love to tell Earl my favourite text: “It is by grace you are saved, through faith. It’s not from you—it is a gift from God!” (So no-one can boast.) And believing in Jesus Christ recreates us ready to do good works, the good deeds God has planned for us to do, as we show the results of God’s craftsmanship” (Ephesians 2:8-10, my paraphrase). R

Grenville Kent is a pastor in the Greater Sydney Conference, currently on study leave. He also lectures in Old Testament and cultural apologetics at Wesley Theological College, Sydney, New South Wales.
Prayer keys:

National Day of Thanksgiving

WITH JOY BUTLER

The Australian National Day of Thanksgiving (NDOT) is now a recognised national day in the calendar. This year, May 26 is a day to be thankful, to share our thanks with each other and to thank God for His blessings in our lives and on our nation. We have much to be thankful for in Australia. And let’s also thank each other for friendship and support.

Suggestions for whom to honour and thank this year are:

**Senior citizens**—Acknowledge and honour those who have contributed much to the laying of the foundations on which current Australians continue to build. Write to your local Adventist Retirement Village and thank the seniors there.

**Indigenous people**—We should also honour and thank the first people of Australia. Write and thank Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries for the work they are doing. Contact spiez@adventist.org.au.

**Volunteers**—Thousands of Australians freely give their time and talents in community life. Let’s find, honour and thank those often quiet people on this NDOT day.

**Service organisations**—Many community groups fundraise and undertake projects to help others here and in other lands. It is our turn to thank those who serve in this way.

**Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)**—Write notes of encouragement and thank the ADRA personnel in your area or at head office at 146 Fox Valley Road, Wahroonga, NSW 2076. And May 26 is also ADRA Disaster and Famine Relief Offering day.

Other NDOT resources:

- Cards can be bought individually or in bulk for these purposes from Christian bookstores or make/buy your own cards.
- Thankyou ribbons can be purchased through info@thanksgiving.org.au or order by phoning (02) 9939 2113.
- Church kits are available for immediate delivery by writing to info@thanksgiving.org.au.

NDOT is a great opportunity to put into practice the admonition of Paul: “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not put out the Spirit’s fire” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19, NIV).

To join the Tuesday email prayer meeting, email mkontaxis@adventist.org.au.

To send a prayer request, visit the South Pacific Division website: www.adventist.org.au.

To purchase a prayer pack, email mkontaxis@adventist.org.au.

Joy Butler is coordinator of prayer ministries for the South Pacific Division.
Voluntary freedom

TIMOTHY HUMPHRIES, ACT

I feel extremely disappointed at the letters questioning military service. There can be no room for short-sightedness when it comes to the question of military service and an individual’s right to choose whether they will serve their country and whether it will be in a combatant or non-combatant’s role.

In a free society like Australia’s, the key to our freedoms is an individual decision for a person to freely and openly choose to fight in whatever capacity for the values and ideals that make what we have in Australia great.

I am even more disappointed that we should get so sidetracked by an issue like “Jesus loves Osama” (The Edge, March 31). Whatever the truth of the matter, this is no more than moralising on an issue that we as sinners can have no part in judging.

Religious fundamentalism is at the core of the Christianity–Islam battle and is not a new thing. Yes, we should be concerned and, yes, we should act in our own best interests and in a way that more befits the great calling that we profess to have. But cowering in the corner, while at the same time professing to be “warriors” for God, seems like an awfully difficult message to get across both within and outside our church.

A broader view

ERIC LIVINGSTON, NSW

I would like to make some suggestions to broaden “Pastors, not priests” (Letters, March 24):

The priesthood of all believers spans Old and New Testaments (see Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 61:6; 1 Peter 2:5, 9); yet there is a distinct, ordained ministry in both eras (see Leviticus 8–9; Acts 14:23; 2 Timothy 1:6; 4:5).

Universal priesthood is personal direct access to God, offering spiritual sacrifices, declaring the works of God, worshiping and interceding, all connected with the church body. The ordained ministry is God’s provision to organise, lead, equip and care for that body (see Ephesians 4:11-16; James 5:14). If the first levelled all distinctions among believers, young/old, male/female, why the second? Why ordain anyone?

I am even more disappointed that we should get so sidetracked by an issue like “Jesus loves Osama.”

So Good benefit

NAME SUPPLIED

I read with interest the article “Experts affirm soy health benefits” (News, April 7) as I had discovered for myself how it helped me. In my late 40s, I began to develop incontinence, which increased as I grew older. One day I discovered I was allergic to cow’s milk and I began to use So Good.

After a time, the incontinence decreased. I had no idea why but was pleased as it grew less and less. After 15 years, it stopped altogether. Praise God, I was at last free.

It was then I realised it was the plant oestrogen in the soy that had helped me. I discovered this is different from what doctors prescribe and there appears to be no side effects with the plant oestrogen. It is now 23 years since I began using So Good and there have been no problems. I wish I had known about its benefits decades before I did.

Revival or attack?

JOHN KOSMEIER, NSW

The present wave of noise “musified” in some churches and “amplified” in too many conference camp-meetings is no indication of either a true musical or “primitive godliness” revival, as seems to be suggested in “The sound of revival?” (Letters, April 14).

On the contrary, it is a clear indication of the present “worship” attack of the devil on our church. History indicates it will take about another five years before this attack loses its intensity and the devil will be forced to switch his attack to some other area of our church structure.

In the meantime, church members everywhere can do their best to resist this anti-Christian “rock” wherever it appears and work actively to promote the incredibly positive aspects of our church that Jesus Christ, our peace-loving Saviour, is building.

AUSTIN FLETCHER, NSW

Jesus gave us some clear and explicit counsel when He said, “When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do” (Matthew 6:7, NKJV). Putting such “vain repetitions” to music does not mean that Jesus’ counsel should be ignored, no matter how imploringly or prayerfully the singer may sing them.

It seems in many contemporary “Christian” songs of this nature the words are not poetic nor the music musical, which are both characteristics of so much of the music of the world. Perhaps a parallel scripture to Matthew 6:7 is 1 John 2:15-17.

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.
Positions vacant

▲ Manager—Wellbeing Centre (Sydney, NSW) is seeking a Manager to establish, create and manage an exciting, innovative and “new” Wellbeing Centre based in inner Sydney. This is the role of a lifetime within a highly regarded professional, church-owned group who support ongoing education and offer enormous career potential. The successful applicant will possess tertiary qualifications in management or health sciences, also have a wide range of skills, including project and operational health-practice management, marketing/promotional skills management, financial management and excellent IT skills. For further information please phone Kate Smeaton on (02) 9812 9840. Applications in writing (including your résumé) should be forwarded to apply@kingscroft.com.au quoting reference number 6000. Applications close May 12, 2007.

▲ Manufacturing Manager—Sanitarium Health Food Company (Auckland, NZ) to manage, monitor and lead the manufacturing-site management team in the achievement of production requirements safely, on time, within standards, quality specifications and cost. We are seeking a self-motivated professional who can lead and motivate, has preferably seven years of manufacturing/production management experience, tertiary qualification in at least one relevant discipline and a sound knowledge of business operations, including OH&S, ISO and HACCP standards. Must be eligible to work in New Zealand. Applications in writing should be sent to Lucie Newport, Human Resources Department, Auckland Manufacturing Unit, Sanitarium Health Food Company, Private Bag 92127, Auckland, NZ; fax (649) 625 4293; email chr supplychamnz@sanitarium.co.nz. Applications close May 18, 2007.

▲ LEAP Coordinator—Sanitarium Head Office (Berkeley Vale, NSW) is seeking a suitably qualified person to join the Group Human Resources Team. LEAP is a Lifestyle Enhancement and Assistance Program and the successful applicant will be expected to consolidate and extend the existing program and promote new ideas and initiatives across Australia and NZ. Experience in employee assistance, competent in Microsoft suite programs, previous interactions with government departments and strong communication and organisational skills. Apply online at <http://www.sanitarium.com.au/company/employment.html>. Applications in writing should be sent to Group Human Resources, Sanitarium Health Food Company, Locked Bag 7, Central Coast Mail Centre, NSW 2252; fax (02) 4349 6099; email chumansources@sanitarium.com.au. Applications close May 16, 2007.

Volunteers!

URGENT! Truck Driver/Team Facilitator—ADRA New Zealand. Duties include program delivery, group facilitation, outdoor recreation instruction (training provided), and general maintenance and upkeep of vehicles. For more information contact Hayley. Email: <volunteers@adventist.org.au> For more positions, check the web on <www.adventistvolunteers.org.nz>

+61 2 9847 3275

Anniversary

Dyason, Lin and Mary (nee Brunner) recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. On 28.12.56 they were married at the Avica Weddings and Resort, Gold Coast, Qld. Lin and Mary lived in Watford, England, for 30 years and have now settled in Tumbulgum, NSW. While living in England, Mary fostered 49 children from babies to teens. Many young lives have been blessed by their love and care. Congratulatory messages were received from the Hon John Howard, MP, Prime Minister of Australia, the Governor-General of Australia and other local government dignitaries.

Retirements

Eric Dasey, Australian Union Conference (45 years). Roy Hollingsworth, Victorian Conference (VC) (38 years). Bruce Shf, SHF Development and Innovation, Coorong (34 years). David Mayer, SHF Cooranbong (43 years). Shirley Steele, Sydney Adventist Hospital, Fox Valley Medical Centre (31 years). Dennis Tame, South Pacific Division (SPD) ex-patrate (37 years). Michael Tarburton, VC Schools (36 years). Wilma Woods, SPD (20 years).

Papua New Guinea Union Mission


Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission

Uyte Denny.

Bougainville Mission

Nuala Harrison. Elizabeth Dimona.

Trans-Pacific Union Mission


Weddings

Ballas—Webber. Layton Kane Bul- las, son of Darryl Ballas (Bonnells Bay, NSW) and Marcia Coulson (Sunshine), and Jessie Elizabeth Webber, daughter of Paul and Winnie Webber (Maryville), were married on 1.4.07 at Burwood Lookout, Merewether.

Mike Faber

Camps—Andersen. Glen Kerry Camps, son of Darryl and Roslyn Camps, and Renae Robyn Andersen, daughter of Neivey and Robyn Andersen, were married on 28.3.07 at Brisbane Forest Park, Qld.

Peter Stojanovic

Flores—Raty. Catalin Flores, son of Gheorge and Virginia Floresa (Iasi, Romania), and Anneli Raty, daughter of Tapani and Silja Raty (Brashie, Qld), were married on 18.5.07 at the Logan Reserve Adventist church, Qld.

Gabriel Ontario

Inker—Suchanek. Timothy Inker, son of Timothy Inkster and Judith Gibson, and Esther Suchanek, daughter of Rudolf Suchanek and Irene Kita were married on 8.4.07 at Copperlode Dam, Cairns, Qld.

Roger Ward, Brent Jones

Rogers—Roy. Lachlan James Rogers, son of Lynden and Julie Rogers (Mandongal, NSW), and Claudi Skye Roy, daughter of Trevor (Hong Kong) and Nerelle Roy (Cherrybrook, NSW), were married on 15.4.07 at Avondale College church, Cooranbong.

Ray Roennfeldt

Schmunk—Young. Rudolf (Rudie) Schmunk, son of Gerhard and Elfridie Schmunk (Wolfsburg, Germany), and Rebecca Young, daughter of Cameron Young (Brisbane, Qld) and Renae Stirling (Dubai), were married on 1.4.07 in the Latrobe Chapel, Paddington.

Ritchie Reid, Ken Lawson

Weslake—Szalbot. Benjamin Ralph Weslake, son of Kenneth and Julie Weslake (Bonnells Bay, NSW), and Rebecka Szalbot, daughter of Stanislav Szalbot (Salisbury Heights, SA) and Elizabeth Crawford (nee Shelley, Atlan- ta, USA), were married on 8.4.07 in the Prospect Adventist church. Graeme Lofthus

Obituaries

Brown, Keith, born 9.6.1921 in New Zea- land; died peacefully 4.3.07 in Leamington Nursing Home, Qld. He is survived by his wife, Beverly; his stepdaughter, Steph- ane; and his granddaughter, Tabitha. Keith served the Lord as a literature evangelist, and also served as deacon and elder in his local church in New Zealand. His love for Bible study and reading were with him to the close of his life.

Ken Martin, Casey Wolverton

Grigg, Violet Mavis (nee Steed), born 16.5.1926 at Bendigo, Vic, to Horace and Violet Steed; died 8.4.07 at Somerville, Vic. She was predeceased by her sister, Elva Jenkins; and her brother, Pastor Ernie Steed. She is survived by her husband of 56 years, Alan; her children, Vernon, Lenore and Arlene; their spouses; and seven grandchildren. Of her immediate family only her brother, Fred (Tas), now remains. Mavis was a talented homemaker who had the gift of friendship, which became a witness for good and a ministry to others. In sorrow, and yet in hope, Mavis was laid to rest at the Latrobe Chapel, Paddington.
Limon, Quintin, born 27.4.1924 at Wrong, NSW; died 10.4.07 in Charles Harrison Nursing Home, Cooranbong, NSW. He was predeceased by his wife in 2002. He is survived by his eight nieces; and five nephews. Quintin excelled in growing orchids. His working life included 13 years for Sanitarium, 12 years voluntary work at Cooranbong Community Services Centre; and many years as a faithful deacon. He awaits the coming of Jesus.

Jim Beamsish, Ross Goldstone

McMahon, Shayne Hamilton, born 17.4.1986 in Sydney Adventist Hospital, Wairoonga, NSW; died 7.4.07 in Tweed Heads Hospital. He is survived by his loving parents, Paul and Chalmae McMahon; his grandparents, Val and Betty McMahon (Bonnells Bay), and Ivy Burgoyne (Clothiers Creek); his sister, Renee (Clothiers Creek); his sister-in-law, Dorothy Cottier (all of Cooranbong); his brother-in-law, Ray Cottier (of Cooranbong); his sister-in-law, Elaine Limond (Thornsport); his eight nieces; and five nephews. Quintin’s death is keenly felt by his extended family and many friends in the Tweed community. His young life was motivated by service to others.

Our future… your opportunity

Interested in working for the church?
Have your name entered in Employment Database.

Inquiries: Employment Database.
Phone: (02) 9832 9859
Fax: (02) 9832 9386
Email: recruitment@adventist.org.au

Wanted—your stewardship story.
Signs Publishing is planning a second collection of stories of Ordinary People—Extraordinary God. Share a spiritual lesson in your faith experience with God in stewardship of time, means, talents/opportunities, health, the environment, hope or other aspects of the Christian life. Write your testimony in no more than 750 words. Make sure your testimony is a story. Keep any moral to a minimum. Include a suggestion of a relevant Bible text to be placed at the end of your story. Include your contact details and a short biographical note. Send your story to the editor, Signs Publishing Company (see contact details on the masthead, page 2).

Advent Funerals—an Adventist business serving our church community. Sydney/Wollongong/Central Coast/Newcastle. Pre-paid and payment plans available. Phone 1300 791 182; fax (02) 4648 0166; email <adventfunerals@aol.com>.

Mongolia Volunteers needed to work on the Moron project in northern Mongolia. Goal for 2007 is to build a health education centre and a church. Team members required for June, July, August or September. Builders, concrete workers, brick-layers, cooks, general hands and other positions all required. Evangelistic team for 3 week campaign in September. Contact: Pastor Tony Campbell: (03) 9840 2752 or 0402 482 761; or email <camad1@optusnet.com.au>.

Celebrate 80 years at Ryde. Come celebrate and reminisce on Sabbath, June 30, 2007, at 9.30 am. Bring old photos and food to share. Phone Jan Levett (02) 9638 0137; or email <neilley@pacific.net.au>.

Go Veg making meals easy for you. Enjoy our pies, meals, schnitzels, stufvels and patties. 21 Berry Street, Granville (Sydney). For inquiries phone Jan Levett (02) 9638 0137; or email <neilley@pacific.net.au>.

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Vegie Delights now distributing Go Veg foods in south-east Qld. For inquiries contact Leslie 0433 792 866. For business opportunities in your state please contact Brigitte (02) 9897 0000.

Ordinary People—Extraordinary God. Share a spiritual lesson in your faith experience with God in stewardship of time, means, talents/opportunities, health, the environment, hope or other aspects of the Christian life. Write your testimony in no more than 750 words. Make sure your testimony is a story. Keep any moral to a minimum. Include a suggestion of a relevant Bible text to be placed at the end of your story. Include your contact details and a short biographical note. Send your story to the editor, Signs Publishing Company (see contact details on the masthead, page 2).

Finally
Give God what’s right—not what’s left.
Our ‘right arm’ is BROKEN...

Let’s fix it!

How can we make the right arm stronger?

Can you operate without your right arm?

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... So please give generously

Health Offering

May 12 2007