

# RECORD

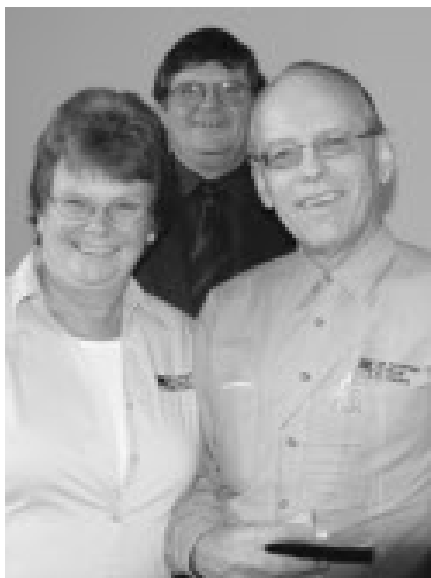
June 16, 2007

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Pioneer pilots Pastors Colin Winch and Len Barnard (left and centre) survey the new Adventist Aviation Services' plane with AAS pilot Pastor Roger Millist (right).

## Pioneers remembered with new plane

GOROKA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The newly commissioned PAC 750XL aircraft has arrived safely in Goroka, Papua New Guinea (PNG), having completed its maiden flight from the manufacturer in New Zealand, with a dedication plaque to be placed in its hangar (see "New AAS aircraft dedicated to service," News, June 9).

The aircraft—registered P2SDB—is "dedicated to the service of God and in memory of mission pilots who died in mission aviation and other mission service." The first plane of its kind to fly in PNG, it will be used by Adventist Aviation Services (AAS) to treat the sick in hard-to-reach

places in the highlands of the country as well as providing other transport services. "The new aircraft will make a huge difference to the many isolated communities in PNG," says Dr Brad Kemp, associate general secretary of the South Pacific Division, who participated in dedicating the plane in part to the church's mission pilots "who put their lives at risk but who do it with purpose and passion."

The memory of former mission pilots Lawrence Shields, Peter Knopper, Graham Barnett and Les Anderson will also live on through the services the aircraft will provide. *(Continued on page 5)*



There is a grace in being outnumbered.

# Outnumbered

**T**HE RAINY SEASON HAS COME TO Cambodia and the oppressive heat is punctuated by regular downpours that flood the fields, roads and marketplaces. Ploughs drawn by cows, water buffaloes or small engines churn the mud in preparation for the rice planting. And the sugar palms stand like tall exclamation marks amid the patchwork of ploughed mud, small lakes and vibrant green.

The roads are more difficult than usual, with the usual clinging dust replaced with brown puddles and sticky mud. But the traffic is no less frenzied, as animals and animal-powered carts share the roadways with large trucks, buses, small motorbikes and cyclists, and school children in the standard pristine white shirts and dark trousers or long skirts.

A wet fug adds to the spectrum of smells that emanate from the many roadside markets. And when the sun next breaks through the clouds, the humidity rises from the rain-soaked ground and thickens the air until it can almost be tasted.

We are waiting for a ferry to cross the Tonle Sap River to the south of the great lake in central Cambodia. The group of young people we are travelling with—senior students from an orphanage school—talk and laugh among themselves, exploring the riverbank while waiting for the cross-river ferry to return from the far bank. We watch a heavy rainstorm strafe the river in the distance, expecting it to move upstream and break over us at any time.

A short distance downstream, the public-address system from a mosque sounds the afternoon call to prayer. The tinny, amplified chant echoes across the empty expanse of the river.

To our left, a passenger ferry—an old wooden boat powered by a single propeller on an extended pole—unloads on the bank. Among the passengers, a Buddhist monk is conspicuous by his bright orange robes. We can see three pagodas on the opposite bank, one still under construction with a spider web of bamboo scaffolding precariously surrounding the half-finished roof.

We understand so little of it. The language washes over us like the scudding rainstorms but we can recognise only occasional words. It is like this for most of our trip. With many of the people we meet, conversations are restricted to “Hello” and an exchange of smiles, mostly sparked by our shared predicament of being unable to communicate further. And the lives, beliefs, culture, tastes and smells are similarly strange—and, often, difficult for us to appreciate.

Fatigue is understandable among those who live and work constantly in environments that are so “foreign” to them. It can be a difficult place to be. We tend to gravitate toward those who are like us, who live, look, think and act like us. This is natural—and more comfortable. In the company of our fellows, we can relax and simply enjoy all that we share in common. And that is good. We need networks of social support and community and these form more easily around

common beliefs, values and culture.

But there is a grace in being outnumbered. Removed from the easy assumptions and taken-for-grantedness of our everyday lives, we are challenged to think about what is most important in our beliefs and culture. We are also invited to learn from all that is around us, to look for what is important and best in their lives, beliefs and culture. In addition, we must reflect on the poverty, disease and tragic history of Cambodia—realities in the lives of many of the people with whom we come into contact and of the country and culture as a whole.

And we also come to realise that we are not as outnumbered or outside as it might first appear. Our first connection with the people we meet and spend time with is that of fellow human beings. Their joys, sorrows, hopes, fears, dreams and aspirations parallel our own. We try to learn from them and how these essential human drives are expressed in their culture and beliefs. And, when opportunities arise, we in turn try to explain something of our lives to them.

It is not an easy road. But being outnumbered from time to time is perhaps a pre-eminent spiritual discipline. It tests and expands our lives, belief and thought—and it is the bridge of humility toward mutual growth and sharing our faith, hope and love.

And we don’t have to trek around Cambodia to find places to be outnumbered.

*Nathan Brown*



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Editor Nathan Brown  
 Associate editor David Edgren  
 Editorial assistant Adele Nash  
 Editorial assistant Jarrod Stackelroth  
 Copyeditor Graeme Brown  
 Editorial secretary Kristel Rae  
 Layout Nathan Chee  
 Senior consulting editor Barry Oliver

[www.record.net.au](http://www.record.net.au)

Mail: Signs Publishing Company  
 3485 Warburton Highway  
 Warburton, Vic 3799, Australia  
 Phone: (03) 5965 6300 Fax: (03) 5966 9019  
 Email Letters: [editor@signspublishing.com.au](mailto:editor@signspublishing.com.au)  
 Email Newsfront: [record@signspublishing.com.au](mailto:record@signspublishing.com.au)  
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Our vision is to...  
**know**  
*experience*  
 and **share**  
 our hope in Jesus Christ!

# ABC sales still growing

WARBURTON, VICTORIA

For the second year in succession, sales of “Adventist” products in Adventist Book Centres (ABC) have increased by more than 20 per cent in the South Pacific Division.

Awards for sales and accreditation were made at recent marketing seminars for the ABC managers in both Australia and New Zealand, held in Warburton, Victoria; and for the Pacific island territories, held at Pacific Adventist University (PAU), Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG).

“Surprisingly—and significantly,” says Signs Publishing Company’s book department manager Liz Dunstan, “the percentage increase for Australasian sales was 20.98 per cent. It’s surprising because it follows a 21.90 per cent increase last year. That equates to sales growth of almost 50 per cent compared with two years ago. After last year’s results, I had expected things to level off this year but that Signs and the ABCs would achieve anywhere near the same outcome is amazing!”

“More importantly, this really means more Adventist publications are being read by our people. But this isn’t really surprising, I guess, as the titles directly cater to the specific needs of members.”

The award for greatest percentage sales increase in Australasia went to New Millennium Books (Christchurch, New Zealand), with the ABCs in Western Australia and Victoria just a fraction of a percentage point behind.

The church’s 13 ABCs in the South Pacific are Oceania’s only international book chain and account for 70 per cent of Signs Publishing Company’s annual sales.

Signs operates an accreditation plan—assessing retail competency, sales growth, personnel and accounting and procedural systems—for these ABC stores. At the May PAU marketing seminar, three were awarded a five-star rating for the first time, and almost all ABCs went to a higher status level. Those awarded were the ABCs in Madang Manus and New Britain New Ireland Missions (PNG) and Fiji.

Sales of Adventist products across the Pacific increased by 18 per cent despite difficult economic circumstances and political strife. Commenting on the reasons for such growth, Mrs Dunstan attributes it to anecdotal reports that “people are attracted to our stores and the ‘good feeling’ they experience from merely standing in them!”

“I can only assume that what they are feeling is the presence of the Spirit,” she



*Pacific ABC managers recognised for their five-star stores with Glen Reed (centre), manager of Signs Publishing Company.*

says, “as well as the spirit of the staff, who also give spiritual and personal support to their customers. Of course, they also enjoy browsing the church’s literature.”

Pastor Terry Goltz, director of publishing ministries for the South Pacific Division, attended both seminars. “Not only were there high sales yet again,” he says, “but what impressed me was the real sense of mission within both groups of ABC managers.”

Mrs Dunstan reports that the next link in the Pacific ABC chain opens soon in Apia, Samoa. She says that along with Signs Publishing Company, the church’s two United States publishing houses—Pacific Press and Review and Herald—have each donated stock in order to kick-start sales in the fledgling store, which is owned and operated by the Samoas–Tokelau Mission.—**RECORD staff**

◆ A former **St George Rugby League player** addressed students at Avondale High School, Coorabong, NSW, on May 28 about the dangers of taking drugs. **Darren Marton**, the “**Drugs: No way**” campaign manager, spoke to students, staff and parents at an information session designed to tackle the increasingly dangerous issue of drug and alcohol abuse among teens. Mr Marton spoke of his own struggles with drug abuse, which culminated in the destruction of his promising football career. With recent statistics suggesting that up to 20 per cent of teens are using

and abusing alcohol while 13 per cent live with alcohol abusers, it is an issue the community needs to tackle head on. All **480 Avondale students** listened to Mr Marton’s powerful presentation, with a small handful of parents and community members also attending. **Leighton Heise**, Avondale school chaplain, said that although hoping for more community involvement “it highlights even further the drug culture in Australia, and how as families we tend to be apathetic about drug use, particularly alcohol in our communities.”—**Braden Blyde**



◆ **Laura Kent**, a well-known resident at the Charles Harrison Nursing Home, Coorabong, NSW, recently celebrated a very special birthday. Born near MacKay (Queensland), on May 14, 1899, Mrs Kent turned **108**. Surrounded by friends and family, she celebrated by cutting the cake and testifying of her faith and trust in God. Mrs Kent is the **oldest alumni** of Avondale Col-

lege, where she studied as a young woman. It was at Avondale that she met her future husband, **Pastor Thomas Kent**, and they ministered in Sydney, the South NSW, North Queensland, South Australian and North NSW Conferences during more than 60 years together. Her three surviving children were present for her birthday celebration, and she also has 16 grandchildren, 36 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandsons. Messages of congratulation were received from Australian heads of government and also the Queen.—**Deirdre Lindsay**

# Plans to link the South Pacific underway

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

More than 900 websites for Seventh-day Adventist churches, schools, conferences and various ministries of the South Pacific Division (SPD) have been created and are now available for customisation.

The websites are part of the SPD web network project, enabling them to be interconnected through interactive individual websites by the end of the month. The project is an initiative of Adventist Media Network.

“Under this new project, Adventist organisations will be able to share information, such as news and events, automatically across the network,” says Jeanelle Isaacs, electronic media officer of Adventist Media Network. “This means that a church can choose to have their local Adventist school’s events automatically appear on their calendar, or have news from their conference or the SPD update automatically.”

Churches will be provided fully func-



tional websites free for 12 months, including hosting requirements. The websites are designed to be simple to use, update and add information.

“Anybody who is interested in using the internet as an outreach tool for their local church should trial the program,” says Ms Isaacs. “Even churches that already have working websites should do so, as being on the network will enable them to be interconnected with the greater Adventist family.”

According to Ms Isaacs, it is not too late for local churches, schools and ministries to register for a new website.

The official launch date of the SPD web network project is July 21, to coincide with the annual Media Evangelism Offering that will fund it.—*Melody Tan*

More @ <http://web.adventist.org.au>

## “Reading is giving” at MVAC

DOONSIDE, NEW SOUTH WALES

Year 6 students at Mountain View Adventist College are helping others while they help themselves this year, by participating in Scholastic Book Clubs’ *ClassroomsCare*, a philanthropy-based literacy campaign designed to teach children about the joys and importance of reading and giving.

From April through to September, students in Maree Worker’s classroom and all across the country will read 100 books and, in turn, Scholastic Book Clubs, a division of Scholastic Australia, will donate 100 books to disadvantaged children.

The class of 34 students has set itself the goal of reading 300 books by September. More than 100 books have already been read.—*RECORD staff/Maree Walker*



Year 6 students at MVAC are aiming to read 300 books by September.



◆ The Palmerston North 50 Plus Club, NZ, recently celebrated their 10th birthday. Started by three ladies as the Nifty Fifty’s social club, it soon changed to 50 Plus to include more people. Currently, between 40 and 45 people attend the monthly socials, usually held in members’ homes. Their oldest member, Jane Whippy (pictured), had the honour of cutting the cake.

The group have also adopted a small rest home, visiting often and running small programs there.—*Julene Duerksen-Kapao*

◆ Avondale College’s (Coorabong, NSW) senior music lecturer, Dr Robb Dennis, placed first in the Century Challenge Cycle Tour on May 6. Dr Dennis completed the 107-kilometre event in three-and-a-half hours. After a fall, Dr Dennis got back on his bike to repass the two riders in front of him. “I decided to go for it. I was hurting. My legs were burning,” says Dr Dennis. He hopes to compete again next

year.—*Avondale Connections*

◆ “Jesus saves,” was the theme of a recent week-long spiritual program at Pacific Adventist University (PAU), which saw two students baptised and 50 others publicly dedicate their lives to Christ. After struggling with peer pressure and addictive substances, Neil Macdonald (pictured) and David Kundi were both baptised during the program, which called on the students to recommit and consecrate their lives to God. PAU chaplain, Pastor Jeffrey Paul instigated the meetings after several recent incidents



on campus.—*Warren Marape*

◆ The Gympie church, Qld, recently celebrated its 85th anniversary, using the opportunity to reflect on past experiences and catch up with old friends and members. More than 100 members, past and present, attended. On display was a scrap-book album, presented in a PowerPoint presentation and

DAYS AND OFFERINGS: ◆ JUNE 23—PACIFIC ISLANDS ADVANCEMENT OFFERING



## Pioneers remembered with new plane

(Continued from page 1)

Shields and Anderson died in plane crashes near Goroka in 1973 and 2002 respectively, while Knopper was murdered in 1988 in Homu, PNG, and Barnett was accidentally killed in 1998 at Pacific Adventist University.

Also on board the aircraft when it landed in PNG was Pastor Len Barnard, who also participated in the dedication events. With Pastor Colin Winch, he established AAS more than 40 years ago. Now retired in Cooranbong, Pastor Barnard was the first Seventh-day Adventist medical-missionary pilot in PNG.

"I never thought I would see such a state-of-the-art and beautiful machine used by the church," says Pastor Barnard. "It is my greatest wish that the Lord will bless this machine, the pilots and all the passengers, and that it will be used for the glory of God in PNG."

According to Pastor Roger Millist, chief pilot and chief executive officer of AAS, the new aircraft is a "significant jump up from the other planes that we've had."

"This aeroplane is a clear statement the Adventist Church is serious . . . about being God's hands and feet in PNG," he says.—*Melody Tan/Brenton Stacey*

put together by long-time member **Ruth Ricketts**, showing the progress of the church over the years. The service was attended by **Gympie mayor Mick Venardos** and his wife, **Tina**. "The anniversary was a highlight in the life of the church and its people got a real blessing from the day," says **Pastor Phil Downing**. The church began as a company in 1913-14 and was accepted into the South Queensland Conference in 1922, with 26 members. The current church building was completed in 1970.—*Pat Towner/Lee Gailer*



◆ At the national convention of the **Women's Christian Temperance Union** held in Nelson, NZ, **Vivienne Walker** (pictured), a member of the **Wanganui church**, was presented with a long-service medal for **30 years service** by the national president, **Mollie Aitchison** of Timaru. This service badge was previously worn by Vivienne's

## Kiribati school baptises 107

ABEMAMA, KIRIBATI

**K**auma Adventist High School celebrated the baptism of 107 of its students during the past year.

"This is the most productive year in the history of Kaumu Adventist High School," reports Pastor Tengen Taabuke, president of the Kiribati and Nauru Mission, who paid tribute to school staff members. "These baptisms came as a result of the work of school chaplain George Worrur and all the staff of Kauma."

According to Pastor Taabuke, the number of baptisms is more remarkable considering about 90 per cent of the high school students come from non-Adventist backgrounds. "Unfortunately, many of these young people go through persecution from their parents when they commit themselves to the church," he says.

"Recently, I visited one of our church members on the island of Maiana and there I met one of the students I had baptised at Kauma High School. I asked her why she had missed the Sabbath worship service, and she shared with me the persecution she endures from her parents and relatives."



*Kauma is the Adventist Church's only school in the Kiribati and Nauru Mission.*

Her parents don't support her financially, explains Pastor Taabuke, so she has been unable to complete seventh form at Kauma. "But I believe these students will come to church when they leave home," he says.

Kauma recently added Form 7 University of the South Pacific courses to its curriculum, making it easier for Kauma students to further their studies beyond high-school level.

Pastor Taabuke says that because of the support of the wider church, Kauma Adventist High School "is able to carry on the important task of caring for our young people, not only for this life but most importantly for the life to come."

—*Pacific Waves*

late mother, **Marjorie Ogg**. Mrs Walker is currently a member of the Gonville branch in Wanganui and national superintendent of the promotion methods department. She has previously been in national secretarial roles over 12 years and was national vice-president for three years.—*Gloria Greenfield*

◆ Some **700 marching Pathfinders and young people** from Adventist churches around Southern England brought Central London to a standstill

on May 19. Spectators lined the streets and burst into spontaneous applause at the sight of the London Youth Federation's "**Put it down**" anti-gun crime sign. Adventist youth flowed past Downing Street, Parliament Square and Big Ben en route to Central Hall, Westminster, for the formal celebrations that marked **100 years of youth ministry** in the Adventist Church. Youth leaders say the procession was probably the biggest ever conducted by Adventist young people in the United Kingdom.—*Colin Stewart/BUC News/ANN*

# US leader talks religious freedom and environmental responsibility

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES

On a night dedicated to recognising and upholding religious freedom for all, United States Senator and former presidential candidate John Kerry rallied behind a bill designed to protect the rights of people of faith—including Sabbath-keepers—in the workplace. Senator Kerry spoke to 200 guests at the fifth annual religious liberty dinner on May 17.

“We all uphold the right to practise what we believe as a matter of religious freedom. The ability to be able to do that is a crucial part of our national identity; [it] is what we hold up to other nations and it’s what we take great pride in,” Senator Kerry told the gathering.

“If this bill goes through,” Senator Kerry said, “it will be a major success for religious liberty. I think it’s a hallmark of where we are as a nation—in codifying people’s ability to truly and freely practise their religions.”

Three religious freedom outreaches sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church organised the dinner: *Liberty* magazine, the International Religious Lib-

erty Association and the North American Religious Liberty Association.

Faith leaders from Catholic, Jewish and Protestant groups, foreign diplomats, representatives from various US government departments, Adventist religious liberty activists and Adventist Church leaders from around the world attended the dinner.

Senator Kerry praised the efforts of the coalition of different religions and philosophies represented. He received enthusiastic applause when he said, “That is why I support so passionately the Workplace Religious Freedom Act and have done since I introduced it in 1996. It is time for us to get [it] through the United States Congress.

“This effort is now supported by Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh and other faith organisations, and writing this into law is a bit of a balancing act. That balance can be found and should be found.”

Senator Kerry also took the opportunity to link his concerns about the environment with the evening’s religious-freedom theme. “Every faith shares a commonality, a universality of principle. All share a fundamental respect for the earth itself, of

creation and what it is.” He then quoted 1 Corinthians 10:26 to remind his audience that “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it” [NIV].

“Yes, we have dominion of it,” Senator Kerry added, “but dominion assumes responsibility. Our capacity to think gives us a greater capacity . . . to make choices. God gave us responsibility to make those choices wisely and with love for our fellow human beings.”

He moved on to address humankind’s moral obligation in environmental matters, regardless of party affiliation. “It’s not left or right, liberal or conservative. It’s just plain common sense and it’s certainly in keeping with any responsible interpretation of . . . the Scriptures, the Torah [or] the Koran. [We must] do a better job of meeting our responsibilities to protect creation itself.”

Following Senator Kerry’s address, five champions of religious liberty received awards, including Sonja Dewitt, an investigator who works at the Cambridge Human Rights Commission, recognising her mediatory work in cases of housing discrimination, public accommodation and employment.—*John Smith/ANN*

◆ Unions have seized on the case of a **Sydney Hillsong Church** worshipper denied a job for refusing to work on Sundays. **Graham Guy**, who attends the **Australian megachurch**, rejected an Australian Workplace Agreement for employment at a call centre requiring him to be available seven days a week. Unions New South Wales spokesman **John Robertson** says the Federal Government’s new workplace “fairness test” should have a right-to-worship clause. “It’s not reasonable to put in place laws that don’t allow people to exercise their religious

beliefs,” he says. “But what we’re seeing is the fact that people who actively participate in religious ceremonies and the like are not being given the opportunity to do that.”—*ABC News Online*

◆ Five years ago, **Compassion Australia CEO Paul O’Rourke** dreamed of 1000 children living in poverty around the world finding sponsors in one day, through partnership with Australian Christian radio stations. By midnight of Compassion Day, May 17, his dream came true as **1239 children** were sponsored through the annual Compassion

Day appeal. A total of 41 Christian radio stations throughout Australia participated in the event, resulting in the highest number of children ever sponsored in one day through Compassion Australia. “We are absolutely rapt,” says Mr O’Rourke. “The outcome went far beyond what I dreamed all those years ago, and amazingly, this outstanding result is almost double the number of children sponsored on Compassion Day last year.” Key to the day’s success was its host, sponsor-child Vaniza Apostol from the Philippines, who shared her story of how sponsorship changed

her life.—*Natalie Moses*

◆ Want to give money to your favourite **charity** just by browsing the internet? **GoodSearch.com** is a new search engine that donates half its revenue to the charity of your choice. Powered by **Yahoo!**, the site works just like any other search engine. If 500 people conduct just four searches a day, charities could raise more than **\$US7300** a year. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency is a listed charity on the site.

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# UN wakes up to religion

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, USA

The United Nations (UN) is waking up to the role that religious organisations can play in meeting its goals—particularly in the area of social, development and peace issues.

“It’s intriguing that the UN has finally discovered religion,” said Dr Jonathan Gallagher, UN representative of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. “In recent meetings, particularly one on Interfaith Cooperation for Peace, speakers have recognised the role faith organisations can play in improving our world.”

“There is no better time than now for interreligious dialogue and peace,” said the Ambassador of the Philippines, Hilario G Davide, speaking at the Report on Interreligious Dialogue held at the UN on April 18.

Emmanuel Kattan, of the Alliance of Civilisations, promoted the importance of cross-cultural understanding and interfaith dialogue. “Religious communities are sustaining concrete roles in education, with youth and in the media. The contribution of religious non-government organisations has to be realised and built on.”

Commenting on how the perceived role of religious organisations is changing, Pastor Rajmund Dabrowski, director of communications and public relations for the General Conference, noted a rising interest in the contribution of religious organisations. “From a communication perspective, many multinational organisations are realising that faith communities play a vital role in their communities and can contribute much to the development of society,” he said.

“It is worth noting that the UN is also recognising that the church can play this role. Of course, unlimited religious influence over the UN would be counter-productive. However, the new-found openness to the role played by organisations of faith should be commended,” Pastor Dabrowski said.—*Adventist News Network staff*

# Church mum named NZ “Mother of the year”

WHANGAREI, NEW ZEALAND

A member of the Tikipunga Adventist Fellowship has been named New Zealand’s “Mother of the year.” Leanne Rouse was announced as winner of the award on Mother’s Day, May 13.

Mrs Rouse mothers her own four children—aged between 12 and 19—as well as two foster-children with special needs and as many as four foreign exchange students at a time. She was nominated for the award by her children but says it came as a surprise.

“I was so shocked that I had been nominated,” she says. “When I read the nomination letters the kids had written, it brought me to tears. To know they feel this way has made me feel very humbled.”

According to her daughter, Jayme-Lee, Mrs Rouse is a “supermum,” who deserves the award. “She’s my role model,” says Miss Rouse, “and I’m so proud of her. I’m so

pleased she has finally had recognition because she deserves it more than anyone.”

Three years ago, Mrs Rouse was asked if she would care for an eight-year-old girl with an intellectual handicap and cerebral palsy. Miss Rouse says her foster-sister arrived in a wheelchair, with her hair shaved and wearing clothes that were far too small for her. “Seeing how she’s now developed into a confident 12-year-old is a real testament to Mum’s commitment and passion for motherhood,” she says.



New Zealand’s “Mother of the year,” Leanne Rouse.

The “Mother of the year” award included a cash prize

and a day’s worth of work around the family home. “I was going to spend the money on the kids,” says Mrs Rouse, “but they insisted I spend it on myself.”

As well as media reports of the award, Mrs Rouse will be featured in an upcoming issue of the *New Zealand Woman’s Weekly*.—*The Northland Advocate/Malcolm Ford*

# SAC students say thanks

STRATHFIELD, NEW SOUTH WALES

Students from Sydney Adventist College (SAC) celebrated the National Day of Thanksgiving on May 25 by thanking others. The day began with students writing thankyou cards to staff members, family and friends during their roll-marking period.

On behalf of the college community, a group of students provided the staff of Burwood police station with morning tea.

“I was happy to see that our small gesture of gratitude to the police officers could make such a difference,” says SAC captain Jennifer Latu.

The students toured the police station



SAC students visited Burwood police station to say thanks.

and officers at Burwood Local Area Command presented the students with a certificate of appreciation in response.

“The annual National Day of Thanksgiving gives a wonderful opportunity to recognise those whom we may take for granted,” commented SAC chaplain Pastor Kevin Robinson.—*Grace Rosales*

# Training and empowering

BY DAVID EDGAR

**S**OUTH PACIFIC DIVISION PRESIDENT Pastor Laurie Evans says the church in Australia is behind the rest of the world when it comes to empowering and releasing members for ministry. RECORD caught up with Pastor Evans at the South Queensland Conference's "Maxi-training" weekend—a biannual "training for ministry" event—held May 5 to 7.

**Why is it important for you to participate in training programs such as this?**

Training and developing our leaders at local church level is a paramount issue. It is vital because the local church is where mission is done. Therefore, the opportunity for me to be a part of that—casting a vision for that—is important as far as I'm concerned.

**You're presenting workshops on personal Bible study this weekend. Does this help keep you connected with the local church?**

I preach nearly every Sabbath in churches or regional meetings. I do it, not so much because I think people are blessed by my preaching, but more because I am blessed by being where the people are.

I like to keep in tune with the pulse of the church at the point where it matters most. Our essential work has to be done, primarily, by local church leaders because there's no way to provide enough ministers to care for all our churches.

This means we need to train our local members, our elders and other local leaders. We need to empower them and we need to affirm them because they are the ones who are going to take the mission of the church into the local community in the future.

**In your presentation, you highlighted Nehemiah's insistence that they rebuild the part of the wall closest to their own house. How is this methodology relevant to us in 2007?**

We can find many lessons from Nehemiah, but the one that strikes me is when he told the people the most productive place

to work was at their own doorsteps, not the wall on the other side of the city. I'm not against helping out overseas, but we are all called to evangelise in our own backyards; we need to make sure the gospel wall is secure where we live. Not only can we offer our neighbours an incredible gift, we are close by to look after them when they join God's church.

Retention and reclamation of our church members is vital because we are losing too many out the back door. We're not holding those we win and so the General Conference places major emphasis on this. We need to evangelise but we need to spend just as much time ensuring we nurture our members and work with those who have drifted away from the church.

**Are training programs such as this a new trend or has it been around for quite a while?**

In places like the South American and Inter-American Divisions and many places in Africa, training programs empowering church members have been in place for many years now and that's why these places have such tremendous growth. The church members are taking ownership of the mission of the church; they drive the witness of the church. In South America, for instance, their slogan is "Evangelism isn't a program, it's a way of life for all of our people."

**Do you think some pastors have trouble empowering members in this way?**

I think we struggle a bit in that area and with good reason—we're protective of the interests of the church. However, we have to come to the place where we must trust church members to preserve our values and teachings because my experience is that they are ready to go. They are ready to accept the responsibility to finish the work—they just want permission.

**Do you see any obstacles to growing our**



*South Pacific Division president, Pastor Laurie Evans.*

**church in places like Australia?**

The church in Australia is a product of its environment. We're a highly secular country and very materialistic—and that impacts on the witness of the church. So I understand the pressures and difficulties the church, particularly in Australia, has in growing.

But we've got to make sure it doesn't become a mental barrier for us because the power of the gospel can penetrate all kinds of environments. We've got to accept that through God's enabling power we can address the hundreds and thousands of people living in the secular world who are searching for hope. I believe many people are tired of the things this world offers and we have something that can fill this vacuum. We've just got to be brave enough to launch out and perhaps find some different ways to present our message.

One of the keys to presenting our message is ensuring that everybody within the local church is made to feel they are a valuable contributor to some aspect of the church's life and witness. Everyone should be given something to do and feel that what they are doing is making a real contribution. With a united effort and a desire to tap into the power God has promised us, we can make a difference here in Australia. I really believe that. **R**

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*David Edgar is director of communications for the South Queensland Conference, based in Brisbane, Queensland.*



# Grace

BY DUANE A VACHON

**T**HE GREAT CENTRAL THEME OF THE Bible is grace—God’s favour to undeserving people and an undeserving world. God’s love is literally unaccountable. It can’t be put in any ledger of accounts. Yet the mindset of merit—buying, selling and earning—is hard to shake. Until you can give up that way of thinking, you cannot understand the concept of grace—or truly experience it.

We live in an imperfect world yet are called, as a Christian community, to be open to God’s grace; to build the kingdom of God by being instruments of God’s justice, mercy, truth and freedom. Jesus came to bring life, to set us free from sin and death, and to lead us back to the Father. The Holy Spirit guides us and empowers us to be agents of reconciliation.

Jesus did not lower God’s ideal, but He did give us absolute grace. He forgave those who nailed Him to the cross. Peter denied Him but Jesus was to make Him a stand-out leader in His church. He forgave an adulteress and a thief on a cross.

Anything that makes us feel comfortable with God’s moral law, that makes us feel that “at last we have arrived” is a cruel deception. It is the work of Satan. We cannot obey enough laws or ever be good enough to earn heaven—it comes only with grace.

But if we can’t ever achieve all of God’s laws, why did He give them to us? They

were given as God’s ideal standard, toward which we should never stop striving. They also show us the distance between God and us. We all stand on level ground before God: murderers and temper-tantrum throwers, adulterers, lusters, thieves and coveters. As we have all fallen from the law—the ideal God set for us—there is only one answer left for us: *grace*.

## Those who practise legalism will always fail; they can’t be “legal” enough.

Those who practise legalism will always fail; they can’t be “legal” enough. But Jesus’ message of redemption is clear: none of us is the sum total of the acts—good or bad—we have done.

We are created in the image and likeness of God. As a people of faith, we believe that grace transforms even the most hardened and cruel human beings. And, if the Spirit of God has given you a realisation of what you are apart from the grace of God, you know there is no criminal who is half so bad in actuality as you know yourself to be in possibility.

Much of the New Testament is devoted to telling us that our salvation is a free gift from God. Nobody can claim credit. If this

is not the case, grace is not grace. Once we try to organise it and create a “worthiness system” or “merit system” for it, we have destroyed the possibility of grace.

Christianity, in its early years, was much more attuned to the radical nature of God’s mercy. After it became the official religion of the Roman Empire in 313 AD, these concepts changed quickly. Grace and forgiveness became politicised, legalised and organised. We think we have the measuring gauge to find who’s in and who’s out. We begin to find ways to earn grace, jumping through the correct hoops. Yet that distorts the very concept of grace.

The perennial temptation for the church is to become a comfortable club, rather than a centre of grace, healing and salvation. If Jesus Christ and His gospel are not at the centre of church life, it will quickly become irrelevant.

People are called to respond to what God in His grace is doing for them; they are accountable to Him for the life they live in response—and this is where we see a remarkable difference. Christian legalists tend to reflect the quality of their intellect. Christians who live by their faith, basing it on grace, reflect the quality and condition of their soul. **R**

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*Duane Vachon writes from Richlands, Queensland.*



# Three reasons not to have a devotional life

BY MORRIS VENDEN

**A**LAN NEVER INTENDED TO OVER-sleep. He had set his alarm for 6.30 as usual but had been up late the night before. When the alarm went off, he woke just enough to push the “off” button and then went back to sleep. The next time he woke up, it was 7.55, and his first class was a five-minute dash across campus.

Now please don’t misunderstand. Alan really believed in the importance of getting dressed in the morning—and shaving, brushing his teeth and combing his hair. But there simply wasn’t time. The teacher of his 8 am class would not have excused his absence or tardiness and furthermore, he had a test that morning. So, as much as he hated to do it, Alan jumped from his bed, grabbed his books and papers and rushed out the door in his pyjamas. He slid into his seat just as the bell rang.

Have you ever met Alan? I’ve spent much of my life in or around the classroom. I’ve seen thousands of students, and never once has a student come to class in their pyjamas! Somehow, no matter how busy they are, no matter how late they get up in the morning, no matter how important the class, every student I’ve known has been able to adjust his or her schedule in such a way as to show up fully dressed!

And this brings me to the first reason people give for not having a devotional life.

## 1. I don’t have enough time!

I hear it over and over again: people say they can’t have a regular devotional life with God because they don’t have time.

But I’ve noticed we all find time to take a shower, usually several times a week. We find time to dress and groom ourselves every day. We find time to eat our meals three times a day. Yet we fail to find time to put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness and eat the Bread of Life. What is the prob-



lem? Is it lack of time? No. Each of us has 24 hours in a day. We don’t lack time; we lack motivation.

When we say we don’t have time for something, we are really saying we don’t consider it that important. We all have time for what we think is most important. Lack of time is not an excuse for anything. The things you have time for are the things you value most and the things you do not have time for are the things you find less important. It’s just that simple.

Jesus pointed this out to Martha when He was a guest in her home. She didn’t have time to sit at His feet—and she didn’t think Mary had time either! Never mind that Mary was having a personal interview with the Son of God. The important thing on Martha’s mind was to get dinner on the table. So Jesus reminded her of what was necessary and what wasn’t. “Martha, Martha,” He said, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:41, 42\*).

Our eternal welfare depends on the use we make of our time during this life.

I would encourage you to make time for God—beginning today!

## 2. It’s just righteousness by works!

Whenever a discussion comes up about the devotional life of the Christian and the importance of spending time day by day with God in His Word and in prayer, someone always asks, “Isn’t it possible for the devotional life to become just another works trip?”

Let’s make one thing clear: righteousness comes by faith in Jesus Christ alone. Nothing we do can earn or merit our salvation.

However, we must accept salvation in order to benefit from it. Jesus’ sacrifice was adequate for the salvation of the entire world. But not all will accept it and we must do so every day. The purpose of coming to Christ on a daily basis is to accept anew His grace, power and salvation for today. So a devotional life is not a matter of merit. It’s a matter of method.

But the question of whether the devotional life is just another system of works has another dimension. The devotional life

is not a matter of works but it can be work and sometimes even a fight! That's an important distinction.

Many things in the Christian life are gifts. But there is one thing that is not a gift. God has never promised to seek Himself for us. He has never promised to accept Himself for us. He has never promised to get acquainted with Himself for us.

All of the Christian life is not spontaneous. At times it may be a joy to seek Jesus for personal fellowship and communion. Other times it may take every ounce of willpower, self-discipline, grit and determination you possess. Paul calls it the "fight of the faith" (1 Timothy 6:12). The Bible does not teach a passive religion. We humans have a part to accomplish in cooperating with God for our recovery and in working out our own salvation.

### 3. It doesn't work!

I hear it over and over again: "I've tried the devotional life and it didn't work for me."

I ask, "What do you mean? Weren't you able to become better acquainted with Jesus by spending time in studying His life? Did you find that spending time with the Word of God and in prayer didn't lead you to communication with God? Did you decide that the effort involved to set aside that thoughtful hour with Him day by day wasn't worth it? What didn't work?"

Almost inevitably the answer is: "I found I still had to struggle with temptation. I still made some of the same mistakes I had made before. I tried a relationship with God and it didn't work."

Jesus said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear" (Mark 4:26–28).

We don't expect to grow a garden, rear children, get an education or learn to play a musical instrument overnight. But many of us expect to become mature, victorious Christians instantly. We must become willing to wait for the development of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

Our relationship with Jesus is not based on our behaviour. So if our behaviour causes us to become discouraged with our relationship, then we know we have been in some way counting on our behaviour for acceptance with God. Anyone who expects to be accepted and saved by his or her own works in any way is a legalist.

Victory over sin and power for obedience will never come from within us. If we ever hope to obey, we must come to Jesus for His righteousness. That's why we must have a devotional life. The one thing you should never do, if you find yourself a defeated Christian, is to quit the devotional life.


So if you've neglected your devotional life, I urge you to re-establish it today. Make the time! Make the effort! And don't let your moral failures stop you because a consistent devotional life is your surest way to maintain the relationship with Jesus that will lead you to victory. **R**

*\*Bible quotations are from the New International Version.*

**Morris Venden is a retired pastor and veteran Adventist speaker and author.**

## Record Roo's

Kids Corner




Hi Kids,  
Wise men from the East went looking for baby Jesus when He was born. They wanted to worship Him. Someone else was looking for baby Jesus too, but not to worship Him and give Him gifts. You can read more in Matthew 2:13-15.

RR

### Colour In

Why is Joseph saddling up his donkey in the middle of the night? Complete the text below to find out then colour in the picture.



### Fill in the Blanks

... an \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord appeared to \_\_\_\_\_ in a \_\_\_\_\_, saying, "Arise, take the young \_\_\_\_\_ and His mother, flee to \_\_\_\_\_, and stay there until I bring you \_\_\_\_\_; for \_\_\_\_\_ will seek the young Child to \_\_\_\_\_ Him."

Matthew 2:13 NKJV

Peta Taylor

## More than ADRA

ELIZABETH YAP, NSW

While we are pleased to support ADRA and are proud of the work they do in Australia and around the world (“When disaster strikes,” Editorial, May 19), certain areas are out of their reach. As a result, it is necessary for church members to step into the breach.

A case in point is the recent tsunami in the Solomon Islands, where some Adventists lost their lives and significant damage was done to church-owned property. ADRA is not in a position to replace or refurbish churches, schools or office buildings, neither can they single out individual Adventists and provide extensively for their needs.

As Christians in an affluent country, we are surely obliged to do our best to help our fellow brothers and sisters in a situation where ADRA is limited in what it can do.

## Heated discussion

EMMA CAMPBELL, NSW

Thank you for “An inconvenient moral truth” (Feature, May 19). “Earth ministry”—as the article so beautifully put it—was humanity’s first mission. Thank you for putting it back on the agenda!

PETER TUNG, VIC

I applaud the call to Christians to be environmentally responsible in “An inconvenient moral truth.” We must accept this moral imperative without reservation. The article’s advocacy of various “green” strategies, however, does not go far enough in representing the Christian’s belief system. We must go beyond the evolutionary beliefs of most environmentalists.

But I can’t shrug off the concerns of those who feel “the earth is doomed anyway.” Though I would add that we will, according to God’s promise, have a whole new earth to live in; therefore, we need to develop habits of being environmentally caring in the present. After all, habits are the building blocks of character, and character is the only thing we can take with us to heaven.

Therefore, let’s use our time now to learn

how to look after the earth, and become Adam’s good helpers when he gets his original job back looking after the restored Garden of Eden. Let’s not kid ourselves we are going to save this earth because we can’t in good conscience believe in that.

ROBYN DONALDSON, NZ

While I agree with much of “An inconvenient moral truth,” it’s a pity the article’s title aligned it with Al Gore’s documentary, much of which was filled with inaccuracies and misinformation.

The scientific community does not agree

## A genuine concern for humanity demands the inquiry, accuracy and scepticism that are intrinsic to science.

that “the earth is becoming hotter due to human activity.” Solar activity is a greater driver of climate change than human-made carbon dioxide, argues Ian Plimer, Professor of Mining Geology at the University of Adelaide. He states: “I think we really are a little bit naive to think we can change astronomical and solar processes.”

Professor Plimer said he has researched the history of the sun, solar and supernovae activity, and had been able to correlate global climates with solar activity. He went on to say, “It is extraordinarily difficult to argue that human-induced carbon dioxide has any effect at all”.

Professor Reiter said, “Alarmists use the language of science to manipulate public perceptions by judgmental warnings.” To me, it seems we have fallen into this trap. A genuine concern for humanity demands the inquiry, accuracy and scepticism that are intrinsic to science. A public that is unaware of this is vulnerable to abuse.

PETER WILLIAMS, QLD

I write in response to “An inconvenient moral truth” as one not converted to the global-warming conspiracy. I can remember the scare tactics used to frighten us into believing in the coming ice age in the 1970s, atomic annihilation in the 1980s and the millennium meltdown of 2000. All these non-events were used to make money for those clever enough to be involved.

In the main, the current theory is being

pushed not by ruling politicians but by those aspiring to be rulers. One could ask why. If one is alarmed by the current thinking, I suggest reading and believing Genesis 8:22 before believing today’s experts.

Where rainforest has been cleared recently, these soils are being used to feed the starving millions with crops like soya beans, citrus and corn. These crops can be grown cheaper in Brazil, where there is good soil and available water.

Many Adventists are quoting Revelation 11:18 to convince others that Jesus is returning to destroy coalminers, farmers,

land clearers and the like. He is not. It is sin and sinners that are destroying the earth, and all of us are sinners and should be destroyed. The gospel teaches the only way of escape is through applying John 3:16, 17. This is the prophecy my faith is based on, not today’s theorists.

## Where is God?

LEONIE DONALD, NZ

So it goes—month after month, year after year—the arguments about music that should or should not be played in church (“Music at church,” Letters, May 26). My question is: “Where is God in all this?”

The hours and hours on Friday night spent practising songs and rehearsing music for Sabbath worship—is that what God gave us the sacred Sabbath hours for?

So much in our Western society is done for pleasure; and if music is chosen simply for the reason of pleasing the congregation, then the first commandment—“Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3, KJV)—is broken.

**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

**Greive**, James and Lorna (nee Guilliard) were married on 3.4.1947 in the old Wahroonga church by Lorna's father, Pastor E H Guilliard. They recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with their family members. James



and Lorna spent 30 years in Warburton, where James cared for the dental needs of people from near and far. After 10 years at Loma Linda University in California, James and Lorna moved back to the Lake Macquarie area and are now retired in Alton Villas, Cooranbong. They have four children, 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

**Mackay**, Pastor Ferg and Elsie, were married on 5.4.1947 in Kempsey, NSW. The couple recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with family and friends at Cooranbong, where they now live in Alton Villas. During nine years of literature evangelism and 23 years of pastoral ministry, the Mackays worked in north NSW, north Qld, SA, WA and Kiribati, and in retirement in Zimba-



bwe, Vanuatu, and north NSW. They have three daughters, Coralyn Eddy (Newcastle), Marilyn Mackay (Sydney) and Kay Humble (Pacific Adventist University, PNG); three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

## Weddings

**Clarke—Kingston**. Dean Robert Clarke, son of Robert and Lois Clarke (Nambour, Qld), and Rebecca Jane Kingston, daughter of Andrew and Janette Kingston (Honiara, Solomon Islands), were married on 13.5.07 in Greenway chapel, Green Point, NSW. *Graeme Loftus*

**Fourie—Steyn**. Etienne Fourie, son of Chris and Amanda Fourie (Auckland, NZ), and Christine Steyn Grant, daughter of Herman (Wellington) and Elna Steyn (Port Elizabeth, South Africa), were married on 22.5.07 at Kumeu, Auckland, NZ. *Gary Webster*

**Hain—Booker**. James Phillip Booker, son of Leslie Hain and the late Cicely Hain, and Connie Booker (nee Cavallaro), daughter of the late Salvatore Cav-

## Volunteers!

**Casual Staff—Adventist Alpine Village.** Casual staff needed for Adventist Alpine Village, Jindabyne, NSW, during the winter season. For more information please contact David on <info@alpinevillage.com.au>.

Email:  
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For more positions, check the web on  
<www.adventistvolunteers.org>

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allaro and Francesca Cavallaro (Sydney, NSW), were married on 15.4.07 in the Wahroonga Adventist church, Sydney  
*Frank Tassone*

**Kaylor—McNeill**. Christian Kaylor, son of Wolfgang and Bettina Kaylor, and Emily McNeill, daughter of David and Jane McNeill (Macksville, NSW), were married on 9.1.07 at Fairfield on the banks of the Yarra River, Melbourne, Vic.  
*Tim Kington*


## Obituaries

**Cockersole-Jones**, Edith May (nee Martin), born 24.5.1916 at Staffordshire, England; died 25.4.07 at Rossmoyn, WA. On 1.8.36 she married Alf Cockersole, who predeceased her in 1986. On 26.5.07 she married John Jones, who predeceased her in 2004. She is survived by her daughters, Yvonne Whitmore (Port Stephens, NSW), and Valerie Trounson (Merredin, WA). Her life was a wonderful testimony of patience, love and happiness. Now she rests until the Resurrection morning. *Phil Rhodes*

**Denne**, Maud Nelly, born 1.6.1920 in Maritius; died 17.4.07 at Port Macquarie, NSW. On 11.6.54 she married Leslie, who predeceased her in 2003. She is survived by her brother-in-law, Rowland Tarling (Hornsby); and her three nephews, Kenneth Walker (Bingara), Stewart Walker (Kenthurst), and Lowell Tarling (Katoomba).  
*Joseph Maticic*

**Dickens**, Brian Mitchell, born 9.6.1928 at Chatswood, NSW; died 7.4.07 in the John Flynn Hospital, Tugun, Qld. He is survived by his wife, Margaret; his children, Jane, Mitchell, Katrina and Fiona; and their families. Brian was a committed Christian who loved his Lord and the church greatly. He and Margaret supported the work of the church for many years and now Brian rests until the Lord returns to claim his own. Family and friends attended the service in Burleigh Gardens church on 16.4.07 to bid their final farewells. Brian will be sadly missed. *Geoff Donovan, Bruce Price*

**Jackson**, Thomas Richard, born 18.9.1942 at Fairfield, Sydney, NSW; died at home 11.4.07. He is survived by his mother,



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Lily Jackson; brother, Peter; and nephew, Andrew. Tom will be sadly missed by his family and Fairfield church members.  
*Frank Tassone, Walter Flamenco*

**Jensen**, Rex Mayne, born 4.7.1918 in Melbourne, Vic; died 15.5.07 in Box Hill Hospital. In 1942 he married Dorothy Cummings in the Auburn church. He is survived by his wife (Nunawading, Vic); his sons and their families, Philip and Christel (Mansfield), Noel and Rhonda (Blackburn). Rex was dedicated to Christian service. With his wife, Dorothy, he became involved in all areas of the church, especially youth. No-one could beat him in table tennis.  
*Ken Mead*

**McCusker**, Edna Evelyne May (nee Adam), born 10.10.1920 at Christchurch; died 3.5.07 in Christchurch Hospital. In 1946 she married Walter McCusker, who predeceased her in 2002. She was also predeceased by one of her four sons in 1985. She is survived by her sons and their families, Ross and Denise, Bruce and Jenny, Graham and Chrissie; and her sister, Thelma Wooller. Edna will be remembered as a wonderful people-person, who was loved by neighbours and all who knew her. She had a contagious love for the Lord and a wonderful zest for life.  
*Allan Hedges*

**McPaul**, Jodi Joy, born 24.8.1973 in Brisbane, Qld; died 3.5.07 in Frankston Hospital, Vic. She is survived by her son, Tahge (Sydney, NSW); her parents, Wayne and Noleen McPaul (Mel-


bourne, Vic); and her brothers, Greg and Lyndon (Melbourne). Jodi was loved by all who knew her. She was a gentle and kind mother, daughter and sister.  
*Tony Campbell*

**Modernel**, George William, born 9.1.1952 at Montevideo, Uruguay; died tragically on 15.4.07 at Central Coast, NSW. On 8.3.1980 he married Joana. He is survived by his wife; his children, Andrew, Timothy, Jeremiah and Rebekah; his mother, Olga Alegre; his brother, Harry; and his sister, Judy Alonso.  
*Rein Muhlberg*

**Paul**, Bradley John, born 18.8.1979 at Batemans Bay, NSW; died 30.3.07 at Newcastle as a result of a tragic car accident. Brad is survived by his parents, Ken and Deborah Paul (Batemans Bay); his brothers, Jason and Jamie; his sister, Cassandra; and sister-in-law, Lauren. Loved and missed by all his family, extended family and friends. In God's hands 'til we meet again.  
*John Tompson*

**Peters**, Shirley Maud (nee Plahn), born 22.5.1931 at Rockhampton, Qld; died 27.4.07 in the Rockhampton Base Hospital. She was predeceased by her husband, Vincent, in 1991. She is survived by her five sons and their wives, Lance, Rodney and Anne, Paul and Charlotte, David and Jacqui, and Vincent; her daughter, Maxine; and son-in-law, Kerrod Harris and their families (including nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild); her two sisters, Hazel Marsh and Joyce Jones; and her brother,

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Keith Plahn. Shirley loved her Lord, her church, and her family and will be sadly missed by all. We are the better for having known you. Rest peacefully now until the Resurrection. *Andy Krause*

**Ralph**, Shirley Joan (nee Hyde), born 23.12.1923 at Fern Bay, NSW; died 1.5.07 in Melbourne, Vic. On 26.1.1958 she married Norm, who predeceased her on 17.11.02. She is survived by her children, Paul (Bega, NSW), Debbie (Lilydale, Vic), Glenda (Berkeley Vale, NSW), and their spouses; and seven grandchildren. Shirley's love for her Saviour was truly demonstrated through her love for her family, her hospitality to young and old and her extensive community service. Her working career entailed secretarial duties at the South Pacific Division, the Sanitarium Health Food Company and as a legal secretary. Shirley went peacefully to sleep, awaiting eternity, to spend with her Lord, her family and her friends.  
*Robyn Stanley*

**Sammon**, Sylvia Dawn (nee Brown), born 28.12.1926 in Sydney Adventist Hospital, NSW; died 12.4.07 at Rylstone. She was predeceased by her husband, Harry in 1999. She is survived by her daughters, Sandra Willis (Brisbane, Qld) and Suzanne Faul (Wamberal, NSW); her sisters, Letty Warren (Vic) and Beverly Fleming (NSW); and her brothers, Wilfred and David (Vic). *Ken Bird*

**Sohan**, Olive, born 24.11.1949 at Wainunu, Fiji; died 1.5.07 in the Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick, NSW. She is survived by her children, John,

Danny, Helen and Martin; and her 11 grandchildren. Olive was one of the founding members of the Fountain in the City church in Sydney. She will be sadly missed by her family and church friends and remembered as a gentle and loving friend to all. *Lyle Southwell*

**Sydenham**, Alfred Russell, born 9.12.1928 at Kempsey, NSW; died 1.5.07 in Coffs Harbour Hospital. On 2.5.1951 he married Dorothy McKiernan. He is survived by his wife (Newee Creek, Nambucca Heads, Qld); his sons and their wives, Ian and Julie (Brisbane) and Owen and Glenda (Newee Creek, Nambucca Heads); seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Russ loved life on the farm, was a wonderful father and a friend to all who knew him. He loved his church and was a deacon there for many years. He will be sadly missed by his family and all who knew him.  
*Harold Edmunds,  
Colin Dunn, Lindsay Laws*

**Symons**, Roma Muriel, born 13.6.1920; died 22.4.07 in McKay House, Tamworth, NSW. She is survived by her son, Warren (Sydney); her daughters, Ruth (Gladstone, Qld) and Wendy (Tamworth, NSW); and her grandchildren; and great-grandchildren.  
*Frank Cantrill*

**Toepfer**, Les, born 30.6.1926 at Wyong; died 5.5.07 at Mildura, Vic. On 14.12.1947 he married Alice Jean Taylor. He is survived by his wife (Cooranbong, NSW); his sons, Darryl (Redcliffe, Qld) and Adrian (Mildura, Vic); his sisters, Margaret Searle (Coffs Harbour, NSW)



## THE EDUCATION MEDAL AUSTRALIAN UNION CONFERENCE

Nominations are invited for a recipient of the Education Medal to be awarded by the Australian Union Conference Board of Education.

The Education Medal is intended to give due recognition to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to Adventist education in Australia. It may be given to a professional educator or to any individual whose outstanding interest and involvement in Adventist education is worthy of special acknowledgment.

Nominations of potential recipients to receive the Education Medal will be studied by a subcommittee of the National Board of Education. The subcommittee will then make recommendations to the Australian Union Conference Board of Education. Nominations must be submitted by 27 July 2007. Please refer to our website to view the criteria that shall be taken into account when awarding the Education Medal—<[www.adventist.edu.au](http://www.adventist.edu.au)>.

All correspondence should be directed to Dr John Hammond, Director of Education, Australian Union Conference, PO Box 4368, Ringwood Vic 3134.

and Joy Lloyd (Warburton, Vic); and his brothers, Harry (Kundabung, NSW) and Cecil (Cooranbong). Les will be remembered for the generous use of his mechanical skills to benefit others as well as his practical demonstration of Christian living.  
*Eric Kingdon, Joy Kingdon*

**Walker**, Dorothy Thomasina, born 1.4.1914 at West End, Brisbane, Qld; died 8.2.07 at Ipswich. On 22.9.1942 she married Harry Walker. She is survived by her husband (Ipswich). Dot was baptised at the Red Hill Adventist church and was children's Sabbath school leader at Ipswich church for 30 years. She was a faithful servant of her Lord, who looked forward with eager anticipation to the day of His coming. Ipswich church truly mourns the sad passing of one of its pioneer women.  
*Sandor Gazsik*

**Wanted—your stewardship story.** Signs Publishing is planning to produce a second collection of stories of *Ordinary People—Extraordinary God*. Share a spiritual lesson in your own faith experience with God in stewardship of time, means, talents/opportunities, health, the environment, hope or other aspects of the Christian life. Make sure the relationship to the concept of stewardship is clear. Write your testimony in no more than 750 words—the shorter, the better. Make sure your testimony is a story. Let the narrative speak for itself. 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 masthead, page 2.)

**South NSW Conference Special Constituency meeting.** Notice is hereby given that a special constituency meeting of the South NSW Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held at the Canberra National Church, 3 Macleay Street, Turner, ACT. The Business Session will commence at 10.30 am, Sunday, September 16, 2007. Delegates will be appointed in harmony with the Constitution. Business will include proposed constitutional changes and campground considerations.

**CD ministry—used CDs needed.** Adventist Media Network (AMN) is developing plans for a radio program service to be heard in most countries of the South Pacific region. Christian and classical music CDs are needed to build up the music library. Donations of CDs are gratefully received. Send to AMN,

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