

RECORD

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Attendees of the South Pacific Division's executive committee in meetings in Wahroonga, New South Wales.

SPD to help fund urban churches

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

As a major strategic initiative, the South Pacific Division (SPD) will contribute more than \$A2 million annually toward building new churches in major urban areas across the division. The initiatives, which will benefit urban churches right across the region, were endorsed at the division's year end meetings.

The first focuses on addressing the lack of seating capacity in urban churches in the Pacific islands. SPD leadership engaged building consultant John Morris to develop a plan for simple, low-cost multipurpose church buildings with a seating capacity of between 1000 and 2000. These plans were

presented to the committee.

"We have had large membership growth in urban areas of the Pacific but in many areas we now have inadequate seating capacity to accommodate our new members," explained Rod Brady, chief financial officer for the SPD. "This initiative will greatly assist in the nurture of our members in these centres."

Pastor Thomas Davai, president of the Papua New Guinea Union Mission, was quick to endorse the proposal. "This is something we need to see happen," he commented. "We've held large evangelistic campaigns

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Health association revives



When you push away all the tinsel, baubles and junk, what is there?

Shopping or giving?

T'WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS . . . and the shops have already had Christmas stuff in them for at least three months. If you've not managed to develop Christmas rage with the incessant carols—which somehow always seem to include a Mariah Carey medley—come close to personal injury with a Christmas tree or gotten crushed between the heavily laden trollies of bargain-crazy shoppers, consider yourself lucky.

Add to that the Christmas movies of recent years, which seem to follow the same basic premise—a couple of loudmouth, dysfunctional jerks fighting over toys for the kids or how they'll outdo each other in the decorating stakes, sprinkled with the fairy dust of aggressive consumerism and “me-first” attitudes. Where did the “magic” of Christmas go, anyway?

It's little wonder few people have visions of sugarplum fairies dancing in their heads, when we've got catalogues enough to reconstruct a life-size model of the Tower of Babel to look at. And the business council has harkened to the recent rate rises to bemoan the fact they think it'll decrease the all-important Christmas spending.

The commercialisation of Christmas seems to be mostly complete, as we're continually told to buy, buy, buy. All this useless stuff that makes retailers rejoice and be exceeding glad. Plus, any excuse for a sale—no sooner are they over than the hot cross buns for Easter are lurking on the shelves.

What's the point?

When you push away all the tinsel, baubles and junk, what is there?

Some would say it's just a holiday adopted by the early church to appeal to the local pagan populace. But ultimately, it's still a celebration of the birth of Christ. Over the centuries, Christmas celebrations have taken many forms—but the focus has generally remained on the birth of Jesus and its importance to the world.

This isn't the first, and probably won't be the last, piece written about the meaning of Christmas being obscured by consumerism—for a start, Harriet Beecher Stowe's book, published in 1850, *The First Christmas in New England*, features a character who complains about Christmas' meaning being lost in a shopping spree.

But instead of focusing on getting, we could look at what we contribute over Christmas and other times of the year—as well as what we give in terms of gifts—to those around us. If we use it as a time to remember family, goodwill to all people, compassion and communal celebration, rather than stuffing ourselves silly with festive food or watching the children unwrap their presents (tantrum feature included, although batteries may not be), perhaps there would be less disillusionment and jadedness about the whole affair.

Besides, do you even remember what you got for Christmas last year or the year before? Or do you remember the time you spent with family, friends and loved ones,

the fun had or dramas shared? Spending time with those we love is more important than receiving another pair of novelty socks, featuring reindeer with light-up noses.

We could use Christmas as a time to truly celebrate and give thanks for the good things in our lives, take time to let people know how appreciated they are and do something positive for the world. Perhaps New Year's resolutions could extend to carrying on the “spirit of Christmas,” in much the same way as the character of Scrooge in Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* resolves, “I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.”

For him, it wasn't about one solitary day of celebrations but something that extended beyond, into sharing his good fortune with others, caring for the poor and ensuring he wasn't like his former business partner, Marley, who regretted allowing himself to “walk through crowds of fellow beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode.”

God gave His only Son as the greatest gift to the world. It doesn't matter whether or not this happened on exactly December 25 or how many wise men arrived, bearing gifts. What matters is He loved us so much that He gave the ultimate gift (see John 3:16). He wants to be able to spend all of eternity with us—part of His family—not just Christmas.

Adele Nash



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Our vision is to...
know
experience
 and **share**
 our hope in Jesus Christ!

South Pacific web network project grows

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

The netAdventist software, used to create and manage more than 900 Adventist websites on the South Pacific web network, has been acquired by the General Conference (GC)

The GC made the decision to take full responsibility for the netAdventist software at the annual council in mid-October.

The transition of ownership will begin at the start of 2008 and the church is expected to have acquired full ownership by 2009.

“Our division was the first to implement netAdventist, in May 2007, as the web management system for our churches and it’s great to see the GC get behind this innovative software,” says Jeanelle Isaacs, electronic media officer of the Adventist Media Network.

The annual council also voted to establish an Office of Global Software and Technology, to be based at the church’s headquarters in Washington DC. This new office will be streamlining and coordinating new software and technology initiatives.

“We have also made the decision to use part of the annual media offering to fund the netAdventist websites for another year. This is so any church entity on the netAdventist platform can have a website for free,” says Ms Isaacs.

In May 2008, version 3.0 of the netAdventist software will be released, which includes more functionality and flexibility. All sites on version 2 will be automatically converted to version 3.0 at no cost.

“We are committed to using the web as an effective ministry in our division and will continue to support local webmasters to further develop their sites,” says Ms Isaacs.

There are close to 2000 registered members on the South Pacific web network since its implementation. More than 1600 news items and 1700 church events have been uploaded and shared.

The most accessed page on church websites is the Bible-study lesson, with more than 5000 visits. The lesson podcast has been downloaded more than 3000 times and the church’s online directory has over 2000 visits. These features are just some of the ways the church is reaching out to the 1.24 billion internet users around the world.

Riverlands church in Christchurch, New Zealand, has seen the benefits of taking part in this online community.

“Three weeks ago, a family wanted to find a Sabbath-keeping church to attend. They searched on the net, found our site and visited our church. They attended the



Glen Daniels (left) discussing the Bible with the pastor of Riverlands church in New Zealand, Ben Rea, after a Prophecy Code seminar.

following two Sabbaths and the father, Glen Daniels, has joined a prophecy seminar. We’re thrilled! Having a website is an easy way to tell others about God,” says Stewart Presnall of the Riverlands church.

Other local webmasters have expressed joy and satisfaction with the websites, believing they are bringing the church up to date.

“I am so excited about the website. May God bless the sites mightily for the building of His kingdom,” says Vicki Knight, webmaster of Scottsdale church in Tasmania.

—*Kristina Malarek*

For more information or to join the South Pacific web network visit <<http://web.adventistconnect.org>> or email <webmaster@adventistmedia.org.au>.

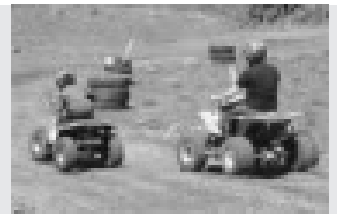


◆ A corporate **blood donation** was organised by **Ponsonby** youth on November 13, in response to an appeal by **NZBLOOD**. Twenty-five young people donated their blood to save lives, many of them first time donors. “I was a bit nervous at first,” says **Clare Strickland**, a financial assistant/teacher aid at Balmoral SDA school, “because

this was my first time and I wasn’t sure what to expect.” According to **NZBLOOD**, a single donation (about 470 mls) can save three lives. Four out of every five New Zealanders will need blood during their lifetime—but only one in 20 currently donates blood. Ponsonby young people could literally be saving the lives of 75 dying patients. “It’s nice to know your blood can save someone else,” says Clare.—*Jeffrey Pau*

◆ **KickStart** is a program developed by the **Tauranga youth, NZ**, to benefit “at-risk” children

in the community. **KickStart** holds monthly motorbike events for a group of children aged between **8 and 12**. The children are selected through the **Homes of Hope** organisation, which provides foster care for abused and neglected children. The team endeavours to develop relationships with the children, openly displaying God’s love and planting seeds for Jesus. The team is made up of about 16 young people, aged between 15 and 33. On October 7, **KickStart** launched its first event at Tui Ridge Park, Rotorua. Eight children attended the event,



taking turns sharing the bikes and other gear. Each child was awarded a certificate in a special ceremony before departing. The team is about to launch a second phase to the project which involves spending time with the children at their safe houses, playing sports and having fun on the third weekend of each month.

—*Doris Sanderson*

CFO shares good news

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

When we look across the operations of the church, there is a lot of good news, financially speaking," commented Rod Brady, chief financial officer for the South Pacific Division (SPD), in his report to the SPD executive committee.

Mr Brady was pleased to report an 8.73 per cent increase in tithe across the SPD last year. "This has given us resources beyond our cost pressures," he said. "Tithe is growing consistently on a per member basis in Australia and New Zealand but across the Pacific islands, the growth on a per member basis is quite flat."

The total tithe for the SPD in 2006 was \$A78,496,324, which is used to further the mission of the church at all levels of the church, from employing church pastors and funding local evangelistic efforts to smaller percentages that fund operations of conferences, mission, unions, the SPD and the General Conference. To August this year, tithe has increased another 7.1 per cent compared with the previous year.

Mr Brady shared with the committee a comparison of conference tithe adjusted for inflation since 1950. "In real terms in 2006, tithe is higher than it has ever been," he explained. "And our tithe per member

in real terms, while falling since 1950, has been rising since 2000.

"But when we look across the Pacific, the needs always outstrip the resources available and we must constantly find ways to make more resources available to meet these needs.

"It is the faithfulness of our conference membership and the sharing of tithe that enables so many things to be supported beyond an individual conference's geographical borders," he commented. "As a church, we accept the global responsibility of taking the gospel to all the world."

In 2006, the portion of tithe received by the SPD amounted to \$A8,367,910, from which the SPD fund tithe-appropriate expenditure totalling \$A21,366,900, meaning the SPD drew on other sources of income to fund the balance. The costs of operating the SPD office in Wahroonga is not funded from tithe but other sources of income.

Mr Brady also had positive news on offerings given in 2006. "Last year, our offerings increased 12.55 per cent," he said. "Our Sabbath school offerings alone have increased by 8.8 per cent, which is pleasing as this has been static for many years."

Reflecting on the overall financial position of the SPD, Mr Brady thanked members for their continued faithfulness and



Rod Brady, chief financial officer for the SPD, and Laurie Evans, outgoing SPD president.

noted the important contributions made by the church's institutions, especially Sanitarium. "While we always face challenges and problems that the devil puts before us, we can move forward, confident that we have God's blessing," he concluded. "The challenge for us, as stewards, is to use the resources effectively to finish the assignment we have been given in the South Pacific."

The division's use of tithe for the past year was spent on: Division Publishing Department (PUB.10.05), \$A711,900; RECORD (FIN.50.30), \$A652,260; Adventist Media Centre, \$A2,117,514; Avondale College, \$A1,573,844; Union Conference Equalisation Fund (FIN.30.35), \$A220,712; Expatriate Staff, \$A8,446,434; Appropriations to the Mission Field, \$A6,823,253; and General Conference one per cent of tithe, \$A820,983. The total amount was \$A21,366,900.—**Nathan Brown**



◆ Over 1500 children received balloon animals or had their faces painted while their parents entered the giveaway for books at the Home Health Education Service (HHES) stand at the Horsham Show, held recently in Western Victoria. "We were so happy with the success of our stand at the show," said local HHES distributor, **Brendan**

Scale. "Our stand was the busiest stand in the 'children's corner' at the show." Supported by Area Manager, **Russell Alsop**, Mr Scale used the stand to showcase the popular children's character building books *Great Stories for Kids*. The face painting and balloon animals were provided by a **StormCo** team from Ringwood church. People who entered the giveaway for the 5 volume *Great Stories for Kids* set came from as far as Melbourne, yet the winner was a young boy from Goroke, a near-by town. The boy's dad said he

was very pleased about winning the books, valued at over \$A200.

—**Brendan Scale**

◆ When **Kempsey Adventist School**, NSW, got new teacher **Royce McMurtry** six years ago, they had only one teacher and 12 students. It now has 200 students. Almost all the growth is from non-Adventist families. This year, 70 students asked for Bible studies.

—**Evangelism News**

◆ **Farming** is returning to the **Avondale Estate**, Cooranbong, NSW, after two members of the

community signed licence agreements with Avondale College. Property manager and former dairy farmer **Bob Doyle** is grazing a small number of heifers there and **Kelverne Johnson**, formerly of Sanitarium Development and Innovation, is growing vegetables and making hay. He plans to sell the vegetables from a shop on the former dairy site.—**Connections**

◆ The **Carmel College Centenary** brought together many people who had not seen each other for a long time. For one particular family, it was a good opportunity for

Secretary reports growth—and plans for more

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

While the Adventist church in the South Pacific Division (SPD) continues to grow steadily—reaching a membership of 397,189 at the end of 2006—the focus of the general secretary's report to the SPD executive committee was on planning for further and greater growth.

Pastor Barry Oliver, SPD general secretary, presented the division's strategic plan to the executive committee. "We have been working on our strategic plan here at the division for the past two years," he said. "This is an exceedingly complicated process but we have endeavoured to pull together the strategies from all our entities into one document. This is the overarching document for all our activities and planning."

Built from the SPD's vision "to know, experience and share our hope in Jesus Christ," the SPD strategic plan "not only identifies a clear direction for the church but also intentionally brings together departments and entities to share this common focus."

Pastor Oliver introduced eight SPD departmental leaders, who shared highlights

from their respective areas of ministry as they contribute to the strategic focus of the SPD. "Each of our departmental leaders have given just a snapshot or two of their part of this strategic plan but in the overall plan, there are hundreds of strategic initiatives," Pastor Oliver told committee members. "I think a change has come in our organisation, where we are working strategically and with the power of the Holy Spirit to achieve the mission of the church across the South Pacific."

Earlier, Les Relihan, SPD archivist and statistician, had presented the statistical report on church membership in the SPD. Some 17,950 people joined the church in 2006 but this figure was offset by membership losses totalling 11,323, giving a net growth rate for the year of 1.7 per cent. This compares with the worldwide Adventist church's growth rate of 4.62 per cent.

"Our present membership total means that there is now one baptised Seventh-day Adventist for every 84 people across the South Pacific," reported Mr Relihan.

According to Mr Relihan, the longer term trend in the SPD equates to an annual growth rate of 3 per cent over the past 10 years.—*Nathan Brown*

SPD to help fund urban churches

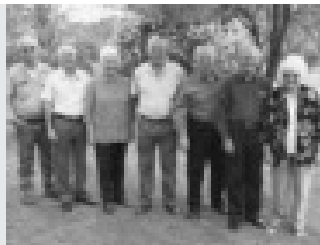
(Continued from page 1)

but then we leave the people standing outside. This project will be a great help to us."

"Church leaders in the Pacific have got behind this and the SPD has allocated initial funding of almost \$A1.2 million, with two projects to begin in the near future," added Mr Brady. The Trans-Pacific Union Mission has selected a site in Honiara that will be the first church in that union to benefit from this initiative.

The ongoing funding of this initiative was made available as a result of the sale of the church's "Woodburn" flats at Manly, which was settled on November 13. The proceeds of the sale will be used to pay out another church loan and the savings on loan repayments will be directed toward the construction of these new multipurpose centre churches. The amount available is expected to be approximately \$A675,000 per year for the next eight years and will provide the major source of funding for one multipurpose centre per year.

A similar fund, providing about \$A1.4 million per year, has also been established to assist building churches in the major urban areas of Australia and New Zealand. The initiative also includes a plan to purchase land that may be of future strategic use to the church in establishing urban churches.—*Nathan Brown*



a reunion. The **Strahan siblings** each made a special effort to come. This is the first time all seven have been in one place at one time since 1950. Most were students at Carmel. From left to right (above), William, Douglas, Esther, Malcolm, Stan, Tom and Dorothy.

—*Douglas Strahan*

◆ The **Victorian Conference** has doubled its annual number of baptisms. At this time last year, the conference had baptised 125 people. They've baptised 247 so far this year.—*Evangelism News*

◆ Literature evangelist **Menfred Megao** decided to try selling his books at **Parliament House**, in **Papua New Guinea**. After selling a book to the security guard on duty, Mr Megao organised a meeting with the Clerk of Parliament. After writing to the clerk, he was able to organise a meeting and was given permission to sell his books in the

offices of parliament. On the day of approval he had orders of **K1465**, and is expecting further orders.—*ANZLE Pacific*

◆ Academic achievement levels for students in Seventh-day Adventist schools in **North America** are above **national norms**, according to data from the first year of a **three-year study**. Preliminary results from the study show Adventist elementary and high school students rank in the 60th to 65th percentile, and that the ranking is similar despite location, school size or grade range

in class. The study, **CognitiveGenesis**, is funded by private donations and seeks to answer two questions: what is the achievement level in Adventist schools compared to national norms? And what student, parent, teacher or school factors are associated with achievement? "This is the most important academic survey ever undertaken in the Adventist Church," said **Larry Blackmer**, vice-president of education for the North American Division, which includes the United States, Canada and Bermuda.—*Ansel Oliver/ANN*

SPD thanks retiring leaders

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

The annual meeting of the South Pacific Division (SPD) executive committee paid tribute to two long-serving church leaders. Pastors Brian Craig and Laurie Evans will retire at the end of this year.

Pastor Craig has served as the director of family ministries for the SPD over the past 22 years. He established the department, as well as the church's Institute of Family Relations, and is believed to be the longest serving departmental director in the same continuing role in the history of the SPD.

Pastor Evans acknowledged that Pastor Craig's contribution is well regarded, both in the South Pacific and in the Adventist church worldwide. "He also has great credibility outside church circles," added Pastor Evans.

Pastor Evans presented Pastor Craig with a citation in recognition of his "outstanding, enduring service to the church in the South Pacific Division," which has spanned 40



Pastor Brian Craig.

years, including 16 years as a conference youth director.

Pastor Craig's wife, Maaike, was also acknowledged for her support of this ministry and for her work in the SPD office over the past 13 years.

"As we look back over 40 years of ministry, there have been wonderful experiences and real challenges," Pastor Craig responded. "It has been an exciting journey.

It has been a real privilege to be invited into the personal world of people's lives."

Pastor Evans retires after 10 years as president of the SPD, as part of 46 years of church employment, working in Australia, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. SPD general secretary Pastor Barry Oliver presented Pastor Evans with a citation in recognition of outstanding service and leadership. He noted Pastor Evans's love

for God, the church and the people of the



Pastor Laurie Evans.

Pacific. "We honour you for who you are and for what you have been able to do in the power of the Lord," said Pastor Oliver.

In turn, Pastor Evans acknowledged the leadership and departmental team of the SPD, with whom he has worked. "I've been in [church] administration for about 40 years, which is a long time," he reflected. "So retirement will be a dramatic change. It's been

an enriching experience. I am indebted to the church for its wonderful work. I have been blessed.

"It has been wonderful to see how our church has grown and matured in the Pacific. I leave with a great deal of joy, knowing the church will go on to greater heights."

As previously reported ("New leaders nominated for SPD," News, December 1), the SPD executive committee had elected Pastor Oliver as the new SPD president.

The committee also appointed Pastor Trafford Fisher to replace Pastor Craig as director of family ministries for the SPD.

—Nathan Brown

◆ A Brooklyn, New York, pastor has used his church as a "personal piggy bank," his estranged wife says, arguing that it should be considered a marital asset in their divorce proceedings. New York State Supreme Court Judge Arthur M Diamond agreed to hear arguments on that claim and ordered a financial appraisal of the church, in a decision published earlier this week. The husband's attorney, Eleanor Gery, said she had never seen a court agree to appraise a church in her 16 years prac-

tising law. The couple had been married for 31 years. The couple founded Grace Christian Church together, with \$US50,000 of their money. Her lawyer, Robert Pollack, told *The Associated Press*, "That church is no different than any other business he might have opened."—Daniel Burke/*Religious News Service*

◆ Christian kids are typically sent to Sunday school for lessons in morality and Bible study. For nonbelievers, there's atheist Sunday school. With an

estimated 14 per cent of Americans professing to have no religion, according to the Institute for Humanist Studies, some are choosing to send their children to classes that teach ethics without religious belief. Camp Quest, also dubbed "The Secular Summer Camp," is offered for children of atheists, free-thinkers, humanists and other nonbelievers who hold to a "naturalistic, not supernatural world view," the camp website states. Adult nonbelievers are leaning on such secular Sunday schools to help teach their kids

values and how to respond to the Christian majority in the United States.—Nathan Black/*Christian Post*

◆ Some Christian bookstores are refusing to sell copies of a new Bible-study guide that challenges standard New Testament translations teaching gay sex is sin. Australia's largest Christian retailer, Koorong, said it is unlikely to carry Ann Nyland's *Study New Testament for Gay, Lesbian, Bi, and Transgender* if the version proves controversial.—Ethan Cole/*Christian Post*

IS YOUR CHURCH DOING SOMETHING EXCITING, INNOVATIVE OR INSPIRING? EMAIL RECORD@SIGNSPUBLISHING.COM.AU

Church leader calls for faith as “way of life”

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

In an address to the annual meeting of the executive committee of the South Pacific Division (SPD), General Conference president Dr Jan Paulsen urged that religion “in not necessarily a collection of ideas, it is a way of life.”

Dr Paulsen addressed committee members on November 14 as part of his two-day visit to the annual meetings.

Reflecting on James 1:27, Dr Paulsen commented on a variety of global issues, such as war, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, poverty, hopelessness and loneliness.

He challenged committee members regarding their response to these realities and tragedies.

“How are you, your church and your congregation doing in looking after the widows and the orphans?” he asked. “And I think we need a wider definition of ‘widows and orphans,’ to include all the ‘exposed’ ones.

“How are we touched by these pains? Does it really tear into me? A religion that is pure and faultless is touched by the sufferings of the exposed ones.”

Dr Paulsen urged that it is impossible to read the Gospels and not be impressed by how much Christ cared for the poor.

“I wish there was a way that the local congregation could make it a ministry to identify the ‘exposed ones’ in your community and that there be a defined plan to continuously go out and reach them,” he said. “It has to do with the thinking and mindset of each of us. Every church should be agents of hope to these people.

“This is where we live. This is where everyday life is experienced. This is where Christ has said, ‘I want you to be My witnesses—and, please, don’t just talk to them. I want you to be something to them.’”



Pastor Jan Paulsen, president of the General Conference, addressing attendees of the South Pacific Division's executive committee meetings.

Reflecting on the second descriptor of “pure religion” in James 1:27, Dr Paulsen commented that the world is a strange place and the followers of Christ have always had an uneasy relationship with the world.

“Many of us have been taught that to stay close to God we should not stay too close to the world,” he said. “We have feared contamination by the world. But the world needs to be thought of as people loved by God that He came to save, and He invites us to join Him in that.”

While noting the risk of “pollution” by the world James highlights, including temptations to decadence, selfishness and various forms of idolatry, Dr Paulsen concluded, “It is an imperfect world but that is where we are and that is where we conduct mission. Let God touch the world through you, your time, your talents, and your resources and you will find you have lived a rich life.”

—Nathan Brown

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

Adventist Health Association revived

ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Adventist Health Association (AHA), a network for health professionals and church members interested in health evangelism, is being revived in Australia.

A new AHA chapter is anticipated to be established in South Australia (SA) next year after its constitution is approved by the South Australian Conference. Twenty-two people have expressed interest in becoming members and AHA SA's coordinator, Drusilla Nowicki, is hoping for more participation by health professionals, students and church members upon its establishment.

AHA works in partnership with the local church conference and its primary function is to nurture health professionals, giving them the opportunity to meet with their Adventist counterparts and receive encouragement and support.

Ms Nowicki says AHA SA was formed initially to support Adventist health professionals in the region, and encourage them and church members to promote “health within the context of the gospel.”

AHA chapters were present in major Australian cities in the 1970s but have dwindled to two in recent times, with one in south-east Queensland and one in Western Australia. “AHA networks teams for health evangelism and seminars,” says Mr Daniel de Bruyn, president of the Queensland chapter. “It is especially beneficial for smaller churches.”

As AHA's members include health professionals, it is able to supply people to help at a local church's health program, give health talks, or do promotions at exhibitions or shows.

The Adventist health director for the South Pacific Division, Jonathan Duffy, says he would “love to see every state have an active AHA working with their local conferences. Health professionals have a tough job and we want to provide them with an environment where they can feel nurtured and will be able to meet with other Adventist health professionals.”—Melody Tan

For more on AHA, contact Jenny Robson via <jrobson@adventist.org.au>.

Natural Christianity

BY STAN SHAW

THINGS HAVE A HABIT OF SNEAKING UP ON US, and we need to stop every now and then to evaluate where we are. That's why we need to take time for each of us to compare how we are doing church today with the New Testament model.

The New Testament church was an out-flowing of people's lives—not something they did. It was a natural part of their existence—even the *reason* they existed. Preaching the good news of salvation through Jesus and making disciples of others is the continuing reason for the existence of churches today.

But we must replace the corporate with the personal. We must regain the balance between the institutional and the relational aspects, which existed in the New Testament Church and the early Adventist Church. At the same time, let me quickly add that I am not anti-organisation. We need organisation to avoid chaos. Indeed, organisation is God-given.

But today the term “church” has become generic. It can mean anything to do with Christianity. But as has been said many times, church is not a building. It is a group of Christians—a relationship between Christian brothers and sisters, the body of Christ—who meet together to worship God and fellowship with each other. In other words, the church is the members. The place where they meet is the church building.

Jesus built His church on the apostles, who were individuals. They were to go out and make others disciples of Jesus, who in turn would bring others to Jesus to become disciples, and thus perpetuate and grow the kingdom of God.

It is time to take our Christianity personally. To do this, we need to pull back and examine ourselves—to evaluate our relationship with Jesus and what we are doing for Him individually. As we draw nearer to Jesus, our witnessing won't be an activity we do—it will occur naturally. We will want to tell people about the good things Jesus is doing in our lives.

If we can't tell people about these good things, we must ask ourselves the question: “Is Jesus really in my life or am I just pretending—going through the motions of my Christianity?”

True Christianity is more infectious than the measles! But it requires a glowing, natural Christian to carry it. It requires a person to have the love of Jesus exuding from them. Someone who is loving, kind, compassionate, tolerant and patient. Someone who freely exhibits the “fruits of the Spirit,” as outlined in Galatians 5:22, 23.

We have to seriously examine how we spend our time. What is consuming it? As we allow time for personal Bible study and prayer, we will naturally draw closer to Jesus. This will cause mundane things, like watching TV or whatever else is distracting us, to cease to be important. The things of God will grow in importance. As our love for Jesus grows, we will naturally want to tell others about Him. We will become “infectious.”

Is our organisation too corporate?

In many places, the church building is used on Sabbath and then locked until the next Sabbath. Gone are the days when church was a way of life—a time when the building was never closed and was available to all, anytime. It was a haven for believers to be alone with their God—to meditate, reflect and pray, away from the outside world.

It was a haven for non-believers who were seeking something better. To escape from their troubled lives for just a few moments. A place where they could find a little peace and quiet, or human contact, if they wanted it. A place to discover the wonderful grace that Jesus offers so freely to all.

The pastor was more available. He was at the church every day. You could sit with him and talk in a casual, relaxed manner, and he had time to relate to you on a personal basis.

We have let our church become an organisation offering services, instead of

an organisation that serves.

We are so caught up in the business of doing church, it seems we sometimes forget the real reason we are there. Most people with a job to do at church on Sabbath morning barely have time to scratch themselves, let alone spend time with God and fellowship with other members.

We are so over-organised we cannot be involved in fellowship times in a natural way. Our main concern on Sabbath morning is getting Sabbath school and the worship service running smoothly.

We are too busy scurrying around, ensuring the special items are in place, and sorting out the sound system, the data projector and the speaker's laptop, we don't receive the benefits of our fellowship with God and each other.

Our church services are so crammed we don't get a chance to connect with God. First-time visitors who come in are ignored and sometimes walk out without being noticed. Our church activities need a more natural flow to them.

Church is not:

1. A business.
2. A consumer product.
3. A place to hang out on Saturday mornings because our friends are there.
4. A place to conduct programs just because we are supposed to.

Church is:

1. A place where believers committed to their God meet with Him and fellowship with each other.
2. The members—and visitors.
3. A place of love, acceptance, nurture and friendship.
4. A place to receive God's grace from all who attend there, whether you are a member or a stranger.
5. A place to connect with God.
6. A place to be edified, exhorted.
7. A place where you feel you belong.

The world around us has become extremely corporate and economically driven,



and has infected our church. Corporately we leave everything for the pastor to do—aren't they paid to do that? Besides, we put in fair offerings every week, that should take care of things.

But what about personal responsibility to God? There is something larger than our local congregation. It's called the kingdom of God. We need to keep both in their proper perspective to maintain a balanced Christian life. Scripture tells us we are a priesthood of believers. In other words, everyone must pull their own weight!

When we rely on the infrastructure to care for our church, we miss the point. We become desensitised to the needs of those around us. Over a period of time, we lose our connection with the Holy Spirit and become lukewarm. We must take responsibility to care for our church individually.

Economics has infiltrated the church structure to such a degree that church board meetings now seem to spend most of their time debating the economics of the local church. According to the church manual, the primary responsibility of any local church board is evangelism—all other issues are secondary. Instead, valuable time is spent debating whether the church should purchase this or that mower, what colour the carpet should be in the foyer or whether we really need new tea towels in the kitchen.

Subcommittees can take care of the smaller matters, freeing the church leaders to deal with important matters, like enlarging God's kingdom.

Church has to be the place we can turn to in times of trouble—somewhere we know we will find help and hope. It should not be the sort of place a drug addict described, when it was suggested she go to a local church to seek help. "Church!" she said, "Why would I ever go there? I was already feeling terrible about myself. They'd just make me feel worse."

Church is not something we do. It is who we are. It has to be a part of our life, not our lifestyle. It has to be who we are. We are Christians. It must be a natural part of our life to tell others how much Jesus loves them and how much we do, too. It doesn't take programs to do that.

It takes a connection with Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

Church has to be a place where people meet freely and often, naturally. They should not be compelled to attend out of a sense of duty to some program but to meet with God, and enjoy fellowship with Him and fellow believers.

Church is a place of praise and worship. A place where strangers off the street can come to find what is missing in their lives—Jesus. A place to find hope, a place to belong, a place to be loved and accepted for

who they are. After all, Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28, 29*).

It is *our* responsibility to be ready to receive God's people, as He calls them out of the world and they walk through the front door of our church. We cannot afford to be so over-organised that when these people turn up, we are too busy doing church to have time for them.

People come before programs!

We need to coin a new phrase—*natural Christianity*—to take us away from our over-organised culture. It has been said, "There is nothing more desirable than a loving and lovable Christian." This can only occur in a natural environment—not an artificial one. (Consider the apostle Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.)

Organisations are initially formed to serve their members. But it's a strange thing with human nature that members usually end up serving the organisation.

A natural environment is organised but not to the point where the organisation is all consuming. It is an environment where people are relaxed and have time to connect with God, to love and care for each other, and share each other's burdens. A place where if a stranger walks in the door, there are ample people to receive them, talk with them, and minister to them. A place where we can give them answers to their problems using God's Word, personally. Don't invite them to a program—that's passing the buck, leaving it for the pastor or someone else to do. I love programs. Our church is blessed with gifted evangelists but a program can never replace a personal relationship.

Jesus' instruction to us is, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

We, the Church, are responsible. Don't forget the church is us, individually. And *we* must make time to be about our Father's business. **R**

**Bible quotations are from the King James Version.*

Stan Shaw writes from Deception Bay, Queensland.

Life resonates

BY SUSAN JOHNSTONE

IT'S HOLIDAY TIME AND WE HAVE RENTED a house at the beach. We enjoy lazy mornings on the back patio, eating breakfast in the sun. We walk along the sand and watch seagulls soaring on the wind. We pick up driftwood, shells and bits of pumice stone, and carry them home in a bucket. We wander around the wide streets of the seaside village, investigating little shops and taking detours to the playground.

On one particular day, we decide to drive into the city to do some shopping. We go from one shopping centre to another, looking for things we cannot find. People jostle us and piped music clamours for our attention. We feel frustrated, regretting the impact this has on our relaxation. We call it a day and make a service station our last stop. We start to drive back and get caught in afternoon peak-hour traffic. Our children are becoming hot, tired and hungry.

We take the route out of town and stop for roadworks along the way. I look out the car window and see some horses eating grass in a paddock. The orange glow of late afternoon tints the scene and enhances the hue of the ground, the bark on the trees.

Large, old gum trees remind me of the stunning part of Australia I grew up in. There is something rich and deeply reassuring about God's creation, as seen in the bush. It has a resilience and strength that isn't evident in a delicate flower or lush, green lawn. When superficial aesthetics are put aside, the true nature of God is revealed. Underneath is a powerful resonance—a clue to the power and emotion of God.

These hints of God pulse through me once the traffic is allowed to continue. We are driving slightly under the speed limit and people behind us want to overtake. The road swings around the hills and we see more mountains beyond, lit by the setting sun. The purples and orange-pinks are intense. Vehicles have switched on their lights and we now have a glimmering trail to follow, although it is not yet

night-time.

We reach a crest where traffic has become a slow crawl. My husband has to brake abruptly and we, too, are soon puttering close together in the line of cars. Two tow trucks are a few vehicles ahead of us, their orange lights flashing. There must be an accident.

The traffic is stopped another couple of hundred metres down the road. Bruce turns off the engine to save fuel and we wait. The children look around and doze in the back seat.

In this break, we are released from our hurry and contemplate the dying day. The mountains are still soaking up the last rays of sunlight, their colours blending together in the twilight. The grass on the roadside is long, offering hope of life and growth. Oncoming traffic goes past in a cluster, their headlights sparkling in the dimness.

At last, the cars ahead of us begin to move and we slowly inch forward. As we crest the hill, we see an array of emergency vehicles—three fire trucks, an ambulance or two and many police cars. We see the roof of a bus parked among it all.

A policewoman directs the line of traffic onto a track off the side of the road, to bypass the accident. As we file past, we peer through the long grass to assess the scene.

There is a ute and a car. The car is pointed toward us and its front half is completely smashed. There is no way the driver could have survived. A stretcher is on the ground, covered in a telltale white sheet. Ambulance officers are moving around under temporary spotlights, doing what they have to do.

This is it—the place and time of death. We drive past, have our look and move on. There is nothing we can do. We don't know the people involved. There is nothing we could have done to prevent it. Sadness grips me as I realise the seriousness of it all. Beyond the accident, drivers stand beside



parked vehicles, dazed and powerless to continue their journeys.

All around us, the sun is still setting, the bush is still pulsing with energy, ready to greet the new day tomorrow. At least one life is gone, and we move on to the rest of our holiday. From the cassette deck comes the sound of Chris Rice singing, "Every day is a gift you've been given/ make the most of the time, every moment you're living. . . ."

My heart throbs with resonances of life, and yet the fatality I witnessed is real and significant. The juxtaposition of life and death is mind-blowing. I wonder how God feels about all this.

Does God care? What a stupid question! More importantly, do I care? God is where He always is, holding this planet together—while we do our best to rip it apart. But where am I? What am I doing for all the lives that can be saved? Am I just driving past, having a look, then moving on to my happy pursuits?

I cannot sit by while I have life and hope, and others don't. Thousands of people die each day from hunger, and a small donation to an aid organisation makes a big impact on a community's pain and suffering. Depression wraps paralysing tentacles around young people, while a few sincere conversations can be the difference between hope and despair. There must be thousands of lives I could help in some way.

We continue our journey but the memory lingers. Life is a priceless gift. I want to make the most of every moment. **R**

Susan Johnstone writes from Stanthorpe, Queensland.



Mick's story

BY JESSICA KRAUSE

THERE IS A COUPLE AT MY CHURCH CALLED MICK AND VIV. Viv has been a Seventh-day Adventist for as long as I've known her. As a matter of fact, Viv was the first person my dad baptised—but Mick was different. This is his story.

When I was little, I went to church and Mick would drive Viv to church. Mick would help set-up, because we had church in a school and had to get all our things unpacked for church. Mick had never heard my dad preach but if I asked him to come to Sabbath school, he would always come with Skye and me. (Skye was a non-Adventist girl who Mick and Viv took to church.) And then he would go home. When the church service finished, Mick would help pack up, and take Viv and Skye home. That's what it was like every Sabbath.

When I went to big camp, my dad's parents and Mick and Viv stayed with us. I still remember saying grace that went like this, "Dear Jesus, thank you for the food—Mick, you've got your eyes open." So, I said grace again and Mick had to close his eyes.

At one of the camps I went to, Mick gave his life to Jesus. This is how it happened: Mick was in a campmeeting and the pastor asked something like "Who wants to give their life to Jesus today?"

And Mick said all of a sudden his hand was up in the air—and nobody had put it there. Then my grandad came over and prayed with him and then Viv came over.

My dad had to go back home to my church to preach. When he called my mum to say he had gotten home safely, she said I had something to tell him. I got on the phone and said to him, "Daddy, Mick gave his life to Jesus today."

My dad said, "He did not!"


I said, "He did too!"

So my dad talked to Mick and now Mick is baptised and goes to church. **R**

Jessica Krause is 10 years old and part of the Central Coast Community church in Wyong, New South Wales.

Record Roo's

Kids corner



Hi kids,
Sometimes it's difficult not to be afraid. There are lots of promises in the Bible that tell us not to be afraid. This week we will look at some of the promises God has given us in the Bible that tell us that we needn't be afraid when God is on our side!


RR

Fill in the blanks


The _____ of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and He _____ them.
Psalm 35:7 NIV


Two the Same

Can you find the shadow angel that is exactly the same as the first one?











Read

Read Psalm 91:11. How does that make you feel?
How many other texts in the Bible can you find that talk about angels and God's promises of protection?

5.

Answer: angel 5 has the same outline as angel 1.

Peta Taylor

Aviation annoyance

KEN WESLAKE, NSW

I was surprised and very disappointed at the report in the RECORD of the closure of the Avondale School of Flying (“Aviation at Avondale to end,” News, November 24).

To come at a time when there is an international shortage of pilots, a critical shortage of pilots here in this country, interest-free scholarships from the Federal Government worth up to \$A80,000 to prospective trainee pilots, a growing need for pilots for our Mission aviation program in Papua New Guinea and an increasing number of young Papuan men wishing to become mission pilots, it just doesn’t make any sense at all.

One would hope that other faculties in the college program, which have struggled over the past several years and run at a financial loss, will not be treated in the same way. If they are, we could end up with a college offering very few options in its program in the future.

Not happy, John

MILTON HOOK, NSW

John Cunningham concludes his letter (“Not of this world?” Letters, November 10) with the admirable declaration that changing people’s hearts with the Gospel is the imperative for Christians.

It is his other views that trouble me.

He asserts that Jesus did not form a political party, join protest marches or lobby political leaders, therefore we, as professed Christians, should not engage in these activities.

This is curious logic.

It leads me to assume that, in view of the fact Jesus did not establish a single school or hospital, and did not sell scrolls door-to-door, then Christians should not set up educational and medical institutions, or conduct publishing and colporteur enterprises.

The flip side of this logic is the proposition that we should only do what Jesus did. That leads me to the logical conclusion that in view of the fact Jesus trained as a carpenter, was baptised at about thirty years of age and never married, then Christians should do likewise.

In praise of nature

ALAN SMITH, QLD

Thank you, Eric White (“Nature deficit disorder,” Features, November 17) for your powerful plea that we remember our relationship to the natural world, rather than the synthetic one that seems to inexorably invade our space. I trust that it resonates with us by the thousands and kindles greater efforts to keep in touch with the Creator.

In this time in history, when so few of us grow up on farms, there is greater urgency than ever for this effort.

Religious outreach

DIANE STYLES, VIC

I have some concerns with statements by William Johnsson regarding his question “How should Adventists relate to Muslims?” (“Children of Abraham,” Adventist World, November 10). Although, as is agreed, it is partly our commission to love our fellow man as we do ourselves, in no way are we told to merely live side-by-side in some type of peaceful conformity with those who know not our message! Jesus told us we are to be, as we go, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20).

The Lord has given to Adventists the last message of warning to mankind, and our church was especially raised up and established to give that message—to all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples.

We are not to merely preach a “love all” message. If we do, we are merely repeating the message of apostate protestantism!

How should Adventists relate to Muslims, or any other religion or people? By holding out to them the only message of hope left to all mankind in the time we have left—that of the three angels’ messages—and the warning that every man’s God and Judge is soon to return. We all need to seek God’s forgiveness and make preparation for this event without delay. Are we forgetting our divine commission? I pray not.

Noncombatancy?

STEVE SLEIGHT, NSW

I’d like to think those who took the stands of noncombatancy and conscientious objection, in the age of prophetic and heroic vision, did so from their own convictions beyond whatever the stance of their church at the time.

However, uncompromising idealism may throw one into a quagmire of uncom-

Bloodshed is always a reality in our world. As to how much, we do have some choice . . .

fortable realities. Consider these:

1. Even a cursory reading of the Old Testament shows endorsement of militarism and killing for some causes and situations. It simply will not go away.

2. Someone must fight and bear arms. To do less is to allow greater atrocities to occur. Do we simply stand by and let problems escalate in East Timor and the Solomon Islands? The police must bear arms for the same reason. Just to endorse armed intervention is to implicate you to the same degree.

3. If you pay tax, you are likewise implicated in all military interventionist activities the government undertakes—whether you agree or not.

4. If you live in Australia, you are a beneficiary of the past sacrifice and service of Australian military personnel that we honour every Anzac day.

Bloodshed is always a reality in our world. As to how much, we do have some choice.

Noncombatancy and conscientious objection simply do not cut it.

Someone may be a conscientious combatant, and equally worthy of our respect and pride. Perhaps more so, since they may be so easily dismissed as being in it for bloodlust.

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

▲ **Book Department Support Officer**—*Signs Publishing Company (Warburton, Vic)*. The successful applicant for this full-time position will possess strong Microsoft Office skills, together with database experience. They will be a team player in a busy, efficient and happy workplace environment. Customer service is paramount, as is commitment to the church and its values. Flexibility and enthusiasm is essential. For more information or position description, contact Book Department manager Liz Dunstan <elizabeth.dunstan@signspublishing.com.au> or phone (03) 5965 6300. Applications close **January 31, 2008**.

▲ **Caretaker/Manager**—*Ankara Youth Camp (South Australia)* is situated at Walker Flat, on the banks of the Murray River. House and car supplied. Available March 2008. Expressions of interest to Garry McIver <gmciver@adventist.org.au>.

▲ **Management accountant**—*Macquarie College (NNSW)* is seeking to appoint an experienced and qualified management accountant to oversee and administer the financial, business and property operations of the college. Job description: <principal@macquariecollege.nsw.edu.au>. Essential criteria: practising member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; financial management experience; and relevant tertiary and professional qualifications. **Applications in writing** (including detailed resume and references) to The Principal, Macquarie College, PO Box 517, Wallsend NSW 2287. Contact Karyn Asher for closing date, <kasher@macquariecollege.nsw.edu.au>.

▲ **Assistant Management Accountant**—*Sanitarium Health Food Company (Auckland, NZ)* is seeking applicants in the management accounting field, for its Supply Chain Department. Responsibilities include performance monitoring and detailed variance analysis, standard product costing, and budgeting. Also an eye for detail, together with strong analytical and Excel skills are required. Experience with standard costing and/or SAP financial system within a manufacturing environment would be advantageous. **Applications in writing** (including CV) should be forwarded to: Assistant Management Account Vacancy, Private Bag 92127 Auckland, New Zealand; fax (09) 625 4293 or email: <hramu@sanitarium.co.nz>.

▲ **Assistant accountant**—*Avondale College (Cooranbong, NSW)* has an exciting new part-time position for an assistant accountant in Student Finance, commencing January 2008. Preference will be given to applicants who have completed or are completing a Bachelor of Business or similar degree.

▲ **Full-time baker/pastry Chef/Cook**—commencing ASAP in January 2008. The successful applicant will have demonstrated experience in a busy, professional, large volume-cooking environment, with sound knowledge of food hygiene. Applicants will have a trade certificate in commercial cookery and be able to work unassisted and produce products in an efficient and timely manner in accordance with industry standards. The ability to work in a team environment is essential. Any related professional qualification is highly desirable. For more information, contact Nick Hartigan on (02) 4980 2248 or 0404 036 187.

For a job description visit <www.avondale.edu.au>. Applications, including a CV with contact details of at least 3 referees, should be forwarded to the HR Officer <www.employment@avondale.edu.au> or HR, Avondale College, PO Box 19, Cooranbong NSW 2265, (02) 4980 2284. **Applications close** January 4, 2008.

hr.adventistconnect.org



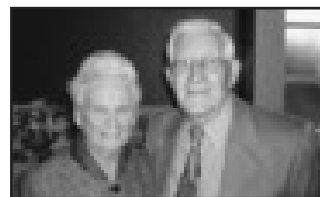
Anniversary

King, Clarrie and Frances (nee Anning) were married on 22nd November 1947 in the Wesley church, Perth WA. They are now members of the Mandurah church.



Kirkman, Wray and June, of the Mullumbimby church have recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Wray and June were married by Pastor Albert Watts in the Albury church on August 19, 1947. Son, Barry (Melbourne), and daughter, Jennifer (Lismore), along with relatives and friends from near and far, gathered together to share this happy occasion. Wray

and June have lived and worked in the Mullumbimby area for over 55 years. Their commitment to the Lord in their lives and



to the church has been much appreciated over the years. We wish Wray and June God's richest blessings for the future.

Appreciation

Clark, Isabel. Our sincere thanks to all of the late Isabel Clark's wonderful friends who visited, phoned, emailed her, prayed for her or sent her food, flowers and cards by the dozens, especially during the last 3 months

Volunteers!

Volunteer Youth Pastor—*Kingscliff, NSW*. Youth pastor needed for 12 months, commencing Feb 2008 at Kingscliff Adventist Community church. Duties include coordination of youth, teen and young adult Sabbath schools, church visitations, bible-study groups with teens and youth, and involvement in community and outreach programs.

Builder and Plumber—*One Mission*. Needed for a trip to the Solomon Islands in January, 2008. For more information, please call Hayley on (02) 9847 3275.

Volunteer Pastor—*Glen Huon, Tas*. To commence ASAP for 12 months. Duties include visitations and evangelism to local community, with a focus on building membership. Please contact Hayley for further information.

Email:

<volunteers@adventist.org.au>
For more positions, check the web on
<www.adventistvolunteers.org>

+61 2 9847 3275



when she knew her time was short. Your love and support brought her great joy.

Groudie, Keith. His wife, Noleen, and family would like to express their appreciation for the many beautiful cards and flowers, as well as the phone calls, prayers and visits, following the sad loss of their beloved Keith.

Weddings

Anderson—*Glasbergen*. Adrian Anderson, son of Robert (deceased) and Gwendaline Anderson (Beachmere, Qld), and Sonya Glasbergen, daughter of Anthony Glasbergen (Melbourne, Vic) and Aldia Glasbergen (Brisbane, Qld), were married on 8.9.07 at 25 Community Way, Lilydale, Vic.

David Erickson

Catton—*Reid*. Joshua Catton, son of Rodney and Julie Catton (Miriwinni, Qld), and Jennifer Reid, daughter of Malcolm and Glenda Reid (Launceston, Tas), were married on 7.10.07 in Glengarry Presbyterian church.

Tony Knight

McLeod—*Cvejic*. Duncan McLeod, son of Douglas and Angela McLeod (New Zealand), and Michelle Cvejic, daughter of Miroslav and Nada Cvejic (Brisbane, Qld), were married on 14.10.07 in the Coolibah Downs Chapel, Nerang.

Zeny Vidacak

Harris—*Rusterholz*. Mitchell John Harris, son of John and Marilyn Harris (Broken Hill, NSW), and Kerrilynn Gayle Rusterholz, daughter of Heinrich and Gayle Rusterholz (Gladstone, Qld), were married on 2.9.07 in the Cedar Gallery chapel, Gladstone.

Heinrich Rusterholz

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Hallworth—*Thornewell*. Matthew Nigel Hallworth, son of Nigel and Leanne Hallworth (Melbourne, Vic), and Joanne Karen Thornewell, daughter of Roger and June Thornewell (Melbourne), were married on 9.9.07 in Colonial Court Receptions, Melbourne.

Richard Araya-Bishop

King—*Hopper*. Michael Andrew King, son of Stephen and Kathy King (Holmesville, NSW) and Natalie Gaya Hopper, daughter of Neville Hopper (Woodcroft) and Beverly Hopper (New Lambton) were married on 18.11.07 in Hamilton Uniting church.

Graeme Loftus

McCrostie—*Wright*. Marcus McCrostie, son of Pastor Peter and Lynette McCrostie (Devonport, Tas) and Lauren Wright, daughter of Graeme and Robin Wright (Brisbane, Qld) were married on 3.11.07 at Wellington Point, Brisbane.

Andrew McCrostie, Andre van Rensburg

Pascoe—*Murray*. Reginald Hartley Pascoe and Valerie Jean Murray were married on 15.9.07 at Zinc Lakes, Broken Hill. They have recently moved from Sunshine Coast to live in Broken Hill.

Jan Denning

Reid—*Plane*. Henry Reuben James Reid, son of Deborah Innes (Armadale, WA), and Suzanne Rosemary Plane, daughter of Joel and Naomi Plane (Armadale), were married on 28.10.07 in Armadale church.

Gervais Cangy

Obituaries

Andrew, Frieda Elizabeth (nee Schupp), born 10.10.1918 at Collinsvale, Tas; died 11.11.07 at Cooranbong, NSW. At age 18, she studied at Avondale College. In June 1945, she married William Andrew, who predeceased her in 1966. They had no children but Elizabeth made up for this by taking on her neices and nephews as if they were her own. She is survived by Peter and Joy Eiszle; Libby and Daryl Thornton; Susanne and Greg Evans, and their children, Natasha and Alexander, and Glenn Eiszle. She was much loved by her family and friends, who will miss her ready smile, her love of nature and beauty, and

an always welcome "Come in, my dearie," when knocking on her door at the Lodge. She was laid to rest in Cooranbong Cemetery on 15.11.07 to await the call of the Lifegiver.
Tom Turner

Croudson, Gladys, born 22.2.1933 at Loxton, SA; died 8.10.07 in the Ipswich Hospital, Qld. On 6.11.1950, she married Nigel and they were married for 57 years. She is survived by her husband; her sons, Garry, Darryl, Kelvin, Bronte, Paul and Clive; her daughters, Robyn Hick and Careena McLauchlan; 16 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. These last four years, Nigel has lovingly cared for Gladys after she was stricken down with illness. Gladys was a caring and generous woman who loved her family, her church and her God. She will be sorely missed by family and friends and now rests, awaiting the call of the Lifegiver, the one whom she served faithfully all her life.
Ervin Ferris, Neville McLauchlan

Dell, Daisy Elva, born 31.5.1923 at Mildura, Vic; died 1.11.07 in Maroondah Hospital, Vic. On 5.7.1948, she married Bill at Yarraville. She is survived by her husband (Warburton); her sons, Rob Hamilton (Croydon) and Maurice Dell; her daughter, Melitah Davis (Adelaide, SA); and her grandchildren. Known for the vigour and good humour with which she lived her life, Daisy worked at the Sanitarium Health Food Company and Signs Publishing Company for much of her working life.
Eric and Joy Kingdon

Foster, Marguerita (Rita), born 22.3.1907 at Lyttelton, NZ; died 8.11.07 in Victoria Point Adventist Retirement Village, Qld. On 16.9.07, she married Keith Foster and they had 65 years together until his death on 11.6.1994. She is survived by her daughter, Shirley Bond; her two grandchildren, Kerry and Phillip; eight great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. Rita's mother died two days after giving birth and, as her father was a sea captain, she was brought up by her father's brother, Joseph Flynn, and his wife, Rosie. She spent her teen years working in SHF cafes in Melbourne and Sydney. Rita said she had a full and happy life, and thoroughly enjoyed her 100th birthday celebration in March this year, with many of her family and friends. Rita's faith and trust in the Lord was an inspiration to those who knew her, and she had no fear of death because, she said, "the next person I see will be Jesus."
Orm Speck

Flinn, Cyril John, born 30.1.1922 at Pontypool, Wales; died 28.10.07 in Narramine Hospital, NSW. In 1944 he married Wilma, who predeceased him. He was also predeceased by his son, Brian in 1969. In 1973 he married Cathy. He is survived by his wife; his children and their spouses, Anne and Keith Bienvenu (Swan Hill, Vic), John and Caroline (Brisbane, Qld), Brian and Zena (Melbourne, Vic), and Jeffrey and Julie (Melbourne, Vic). John, a true gentleman, renowned for his faith and his caring nature, was a family man with a love of the outdoors, vegetable gardening and pets. As his health deteriorated, his faith grew stronger. He was greatly loved by family and will be dearly missed by his grandchildren. Look-

ing forward to meeting again on that great Resurrection morning.

Graham Wynniatt
Haselden, Dorothy, born 13.9.1916; died 25.9.07 peacefully in Maples Life Care, Christchurch, NZ. She is survived by her children and their spouses, Richard, Michael and Virginia, Simon and Adrienne, Julian and Rachel, Victoria and Rolf, and Jeremy and Janine. She was laid to rest on 1.10.07. The memory of this loving Christian woman will live on as she awaits the coming of the Lifegiver.
Allan Hedges

Harman, Lindsay Malcolm, born 27.7.1926 at Auckland, NZ; died 1.11.07 in Canossa Private Hospital, Brisbane, Qld. He is survived by his wife, Margarita; their children, Mark, Sean and Ellen; as well as his children from Tui, Judy and David, from previous marriages. Lin was a faithful member of Springwood church, who loved Jesus Christ. He requested to be buried with his grandparents at Levuka, Fiji, where he will await the coming of our Lord Jesus.
Andre van Rensburg

McCallum, Lorna Elsie, born 13.2.1931 at Brunswick, Vic; died 17.11.07 at Glen Waverley. She is survived by her sister, Doris Cooksley (Chadstone); her brother Laurie (Cairns, Qld); and her sister, Lois Wilson. Lorna was a highly valued member of the Ferntree Gully church. She has served the church not only at local level but at Conference and Union levels, as well as several periods of mission service in PNG, Fiji and Zimbabwe. She was a quiet achiever who has contributed to the church with distinction, as was testified at her funeral at Ferntree Gully church on 21.11.07.
Darrell Croft

McLeay, Gwendolyn (nee Jobson), born 13.10.1925 at Taree, NSW; died 7.8.07 in Mareeba Nursing Home, Maclean. Gwen married Wally, who predeceased her in 1987. Her youngest son, John, also predeceased her in 1983. She is survived by her sister, Joyce McElligott (Woombye); her seven children and their spouses, Allan (Lockyer Waters, Qld), Heather Bailey (Maclean, NSW), Keith (Townsville, Qld), Elizabeth Fitzgerald (Goonellabah, NSW), Robert (Maclean), Alice Bushell (Maclean) and Margaret Loman (Longford, Tas); her 23 grandchildren; and her 17 great-grandchildren. Gwen is remembered for her wisdom, love, acceptance and encouragement. She was dearly loved by all her family and church. She had been actively involved in church life for more than 30 years. Despite failing health and pain in the last six months, Gwen never complained and has gone to rest in the assurance of her salvation and Resurrection. She is sadly missed.
Darren Pratt, Paul Richardson

O'Connell, Brian, born 10.8.1945 at South Shields, UK; died 21.9.07 at Hornsby Hospital, Sydney, NSW. He is survived by his wife, Gillian Dove (Sydney); and his children, Richard (Sydney); and Beverley and Jeffrey Foote (Cooranbong). Brian was an electrician who worked in the mines and then installed alarms. He also worked for the Stanborough Press in England. Brian and Gill decided they wanted to work for the church again and emigrated to New

Zealand to work at the Auckland Adventist Hospital. The hospitals closure in 1999 meant they had to move to Australia and they worked for the South Pacific Division, firstly at the Manly Flats, then at the Mission Hostel at Wairoa. Brian was recently diagnosed with cancer but it never stopped his love for God. He was a gentle man, passionate about his beliefs with a quick sense of humour. He strongly believed in the teachings of the church and was fascinated by the Creation Vs Evolution theories.
Gilberto Dias, Allan Foote

Robinson, Alfred, born 15.2.1928 at Kyabram, Vic; died 18.10.07 at Coronella Retirement Village, Melbourne. Prior to his move to Coronella in 2005, Alfred was a long-term member of Lilydale church. He is survived by his sister and brother-in-law, Robyn and Ian Taylor (Warrnambool, Vic); his nephew, Dr David Taylor (Blackburn) and a circle of good friends. One particularly close friend was Bert Gibbs from Lilydale, who assisted at Alfred's memorial service, held in the Nunawading church.
Trevor Roue

Rodd, Theodore Leslie, born 15.5.1914 in Perth, WA; died 3.11.07 in the Royal Perth Hospital. On 9.11.1940, he married Dorothy Thornton, who predeceased him in 1997. He is survived by his son, Trevor Rodd; and his daughter, Margaret (both in Perth). Theo was one of the stalwarts, who laid the foundations for the old Mt Lawley church, Perth. Rest now 'til morning.
Phil Rhodes

Scudamore, Rosemarie Joan (nee Salmon), born 26.10.1944 in Kingston, Jamaica; died 12.10.07 in Logan Hospital, Brisbane, Qld, of cancer. On 30.5.1970, she married Donald. She is survived by her husband; and her sons, Bruce and Sean (all in Brisbane). Rosie was a pillar in her community, devoting countless hours to ADRA, Asian Aid, Red Cross and general community service. She touched the lives of many and made a real difference in her world. She will be greatly missed by her family, her church and her community.
R Posingham, M Collum, L Greenwood

Smith, Gertrude (nee Turnbull), born 26.11.1906 at Mount Perry, Qld; died 4.10.07 in Wyong Hospital, NSW. On 12.9.1928, she married Lionel Harold Smith, who predeceased her in 1985. She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Elaine and Pastor Austin Fletcher; her son, Pastor Lionel and his wife Doreen; her son Raymond and wife Carol; her nine grandchildren (two of whom are pastors); 27 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandson. Gertrude was baptised by Pastor Scott Stewart in Qld in 1930, and was tireless in working for her family and the church. Together with husband Lionel, a builder, she worked on the Wiluna Aboriginal Mission, WA and pioneered the building of the Atoifi Hospital, Solomon Islands. A further 14 of her family line have served in the mission field. She was admired and loved by all who knew her, especially by her family, who rise up and call her blessed. By God's grace, we covenant to greet her on the great Resurrection morning. Maranatha!
*Lionel Smith, Raymond Smith
Austin and James Fletcher*

Slaughter, William James, born 8.9.1941; died 7.10.07 at home of leukaemia. He is survived by his wife, Shirley, and his children, Angela, Penny and Sonny. He lived a simple life and loved prospecting and fishing. He loved his Lord, and remained faithful to God and his church at Caboolture, Qld.
Ross Baines, Lindsay

Townend, Maxwell Gordon, born 3.3.1923 in Wellington, NZ; died 2.10.07 in the Esther Somerville Nursing Home, Sydney, NSW. On 20.9.1944, he married Eunice Rhodes, who predeceased him on 7.1.04. He is also predeceased by his son, Kevin, on 12.11.04. He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Raewyn and Peter Binning (Wahroonga); his grandchildren, Samantha, Chantal, Shaun (all of Sydney) and Carla (Canberra); his great-granddaughters, Paige and Mackenzie (Sydney); his brother, Brian (Cooranbong); and sister, Lorraine (Pansy) Robson (Christchurch). He served in the NZ army before joining his brother, Les, in the Medical Corps in the Coral Seas campaign in the Solomon Islands. He served the church for more than 50 years in many roles. He is especially remembered for his leadership in the Communication Department. Max will be remembered for his service to his country and his commitment to extending the kingdom of God wherever he served.
Brian Townend, Calvyn Townend

Whitbourne, Kenneth William, born 12.4.1921 at Clifton Hill, Vic; died 1.10.07 at Cooranbong, NSW. On 3.8.1940, he married Marg. He is survived by his wife (Cooranbong); his children, Roslyn Hale (Mulgrave, Vic), Alan and Patricia (Bulahdelah, NSW), Robert (Cooranbong), Greg and Patricia (Qld), Catherine Whitbourne (Laurieton, NSW), Andrew and Judy (Manning Park), Keith and Michele (Norah Head); his 23 grandchildren; and his 14 great-grandchildren. Ken trained in the metal and machinery industry as an engineer. He would never avoid a challenge, instead confronting it head-on. This led to Ken setting up his own business when most people are thinking of retirement and he ran it successfully until he was 75. The greatest love of Ken's life was his family. While a resident in Kressville Hostel, Ken enlarged his love for the Lord and was baptised by Pastor Fletcher. Ken rests awaiting his Saviour's call.
Alan Saunders, Austin Fletcher

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of this life are caused
by us standing in
our own sunshine.

Ray and Marilyn Dickson: Life with a passion



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It was not until Ray was living in a flat that belonged to an Adventist lady that he met Jesus. Mrs Skelly gave Ray a Bible and invited him to Sabbath school and church, and in 1957 he became a Seventh-day Adventist. From then on his life took a dramatic turn, with his performances changing from clubs to evangelistic and mission programs around Australia. It was at a particular evangelistic program in Sydney in 1970 when his personal life took a turn, and he met his future wife, Marilyn.

At the time, Marilyn was working at the Sydney Adventist Hospital as a nurse on the maternity ward. Ray and Marilyn shared a passion for Jesus, and it wasn't long before their relationship blossomed and they were married later that year.

Ray was later called to full-time ministry, but he had no training. So they moved to Avondale College, where he became a full-time, mature-age theology student, and Marilyn went on to be a full-time mother of four. However, after one year's study, Ray was wanted in the ministry, and thus began their journey of service.

This journey found them ministering to countless churches across Australia, ranging from Sydney, Lord Howe Island, Port Macquarie and South Australia, where they cared for churches from Mount Gambier to Alice Springs. Ray and Marilyn also helped to build and start churches at Bankstown and Wyee before retiring in 1988.

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