

FORUM

AAF Newsletter
Remove if you wish

Newsletter of the Association of Adventist Forums

October 1984

AAF Explores Earth History

by Penelope Kellogg Winkler

Following the 1985 General Conference session, the Association of Adventist Forums is sponsoring "Geology and the Biblical Record," a four-day conference at Yellowstone National Park combined with a 10-day field trip. Those attending the conference will choose between taking the field trip beforehand, July 28 to August 7, or afterwards, August 12 to August 22. Participants, more candidly and carefully than has been possible in the past, will study lines of geologic evidence bearing on the age of life on earth, and the profound changes to be observed in all kinds of fossil animals and plants in the successive levels of strata.

According to Richard Ritland, former director of the Geoscience Research Institute and director of this AAF field trip and conference, the 1985 trip is designed for those who have a serious interest in better understanding many of the unresolved problems in geologic history. Says Ritland, "While the conference's primary concern will be to tackle some of the problems Christians confront, it is equally important to also consider major problems for materialistic (as opposed to spiritual) interpretations of the history of the world and the life upon it."

During the 1985 field trip and conference, a number of Adventists who have had the opportunity to complete advanced technical training in geology and paleontology will be speaking, presenting papers, and assist-

ing with the trips. Several Seventh-day Adventist theologians who have studied the topic of science and religion will also participate. Some of the many scientists and other scholars who will participate are Ross Barnes, who teaches at Walla Walla College; Richard Bottomly, geologist for the Atlantic Richfield Company; Raymond Cottrell, former associate editor of the *Adventist Review* and editor of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*; William Fritz, geologist at Georgia State University; F.E.J. Harder, former associate director of the General Conference Department of Education; P.E. Hare, geochemist for the Carnegie Institution; Bill Hughes, a geologist at Andrews University; Harold James, geolo-

continued on page 8.

Spectrum to Appear Five Times Yearly

by Dana Lauren West

The Association of Adventist Forums' Board of Directors authorized the purchase of a computer system during the 1984 AAF boardmeeting held March 14 and 15 in Loma Linda, Calif.

Recordkeeping, word processing, and composition are a few of the computer's

continued on page 2.

Spectrum, continued from page 1.

capabilities. It is also equipped with a modem, enabling *Spectrum's* editorial staff to type manuscripts into the computer and have the articles automatically transferred to the composition company typesetters. Office and journal efficiency should improve.

Other major board actions include: a move to publish *Spectrum* five times yearly (Dates of publishing and mailing will be sent to regional representatives.); also, regional representatives may now serve a maximum of three terms if unopposed or if they defeat other candidates for office.

Several Forum projects were brought before the board, and it was voted to continue AAF's exploration of them. Ongoing projects included the upgrading of Forum's tape library, to be used at chapter meetings as the members desire, and setting up a Christian education project (at present a committee is studying possibilities for sponsoring scholarships for SDA students involved in higher education). The AAF is also looking into opportunities to raise funds for an annual lectureship. Professional outreach seminars are also being planned in order to expose Adventism to prominent businesspeople.

Constitutional changes were also discussed at the meeting and have now gone to committee for ratification; these modifications will be announced when passed. Other topics discussed: the need to study the possibility of extending IRS exemption status to chapters, developing a new handbook for starting new chapters, sending tapes of AAF meetings to ministers, and the value of regional meetings and retreats.

The board also voted to organize a new region. The Maritime Region will include the Ontario and Quebec areas.

The next boardmeeting takes place during the 1985 General Conference session on July 3, 4, and 5 in New Orleans.

Dana Lauren West is a journalism graduate student of the University of Maryland.

Sydney Chapter Leads Forum Revival

by Dana Lauren West

After returning from a trip to Australia and New Zealand, Roy Branson, editor of *Spectrum*, says he anticipates that relations between AAF and Australasian church-leaders will improve. During his 21-day trek, Branson met with the presidents of the division, the two "home unions," four conferences, and the two division institutions, five of the directors of the departments in the division, a third of the pastors in the North New Zealand and Greater Sydney conferences, and a portion of the faculty of Avondale College.

Ways of bridging the communication chasm between the Adventist Church and the local AAF chapters were some of the primary reasons for Branson's trip, and it is his wish that *Spectrum* and the AAF become a vehicle for healing the breach between the two groups.

While in the Australasian Division, Branson also met with university students in Wellington, New Zealand, and Sydney University in Australia. Presentations and question-and-answer periods were conducted in Hawke's Bay, Auckland (New Zealand), and Sydney, Adelaide, and Melbourne (Australia).

Australia presently has one AAF chapter in Sydney; however, with the contacts with possible Australian AAF leaders made during this trip, and the renewal of relations between AAF and the Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand, other chapters will become active.

A new executive committee of the *Sydney Adventist Forum* has several well-attended meetings which have been held at MacQuarie University. John Pye, president of a fund-raising firm, has been re-elected as

president and Denise Roy elected as secretary. Dr. Trevor Lloyd, active in Adventist educational programs, serves as a non-voting liaison between the denomination and the committee. They report the following Sydney chapter events:

In June, James Cox, Ph.D., president of Avondale College, addressed several current issues from a Christian perspective: human rights, the economy, peace, and ecology. H.E. Clifford, M.D., responded. Clifford is the administrator of the Sydney Adventist Hospital and has lectured in Australia on medical ethics.

In August, three Adventists who have made, or are currently involved in the making of, full-length feature films discussed Christian responses to film and film-making. Gabe Reyaud is a full-time film-maker. Clive Pascoe is a former head of the Sydney Conservatory of Music and a frequent conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Bruce Judd is an architect and artist.

On Oct. 6, Gil Valentine reported on his thesis, written at Andrews University about W.W. Prescott, president of the school which later became Andrews. Prescott was

a contemporary of Ellen White and one of the intellectual leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Valentine explored Prescott's influence on Ellen White.

Millerite Studies Come of Age

by Rennie B. Schoepflin

Surrounded by the bright spring-green of the mountains near Rutland, Vt.—only 25 miles from the site of William Miller's Great Disappointment—23 historians gathered on June 1 and 2, 1984, to participate in a conference on "Millerism and the Millenarian Mind in 19th-century America." This conference, funded by friends of Vern Carner in cooperation with the Association of Adventist Forums, could provide an excel-

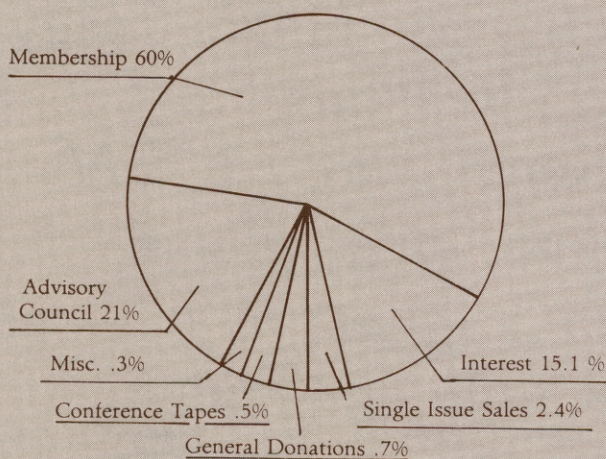
continued on page 4.

1983 AAF Income and Expenses

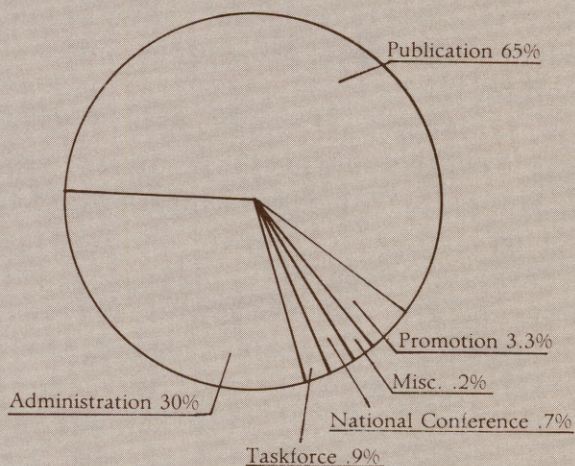
The two pie charts below give an indication of sources of income and categories of expenses for AAF during 1983. Percentage of income from membership dues took a significant jump during the past year.

Categories of increased percentage of expense for 1983 include publication, the national conference, and administration. In 1984, promotion will claim a larger percentage of expenses.

AAF 1983 Income



AAF 1983 Expenses



Millerite, continued from page 3.

lent model for the Association should it decide to increase its involvement in the sponsorship and organization of scholarly conferences.

Organized by Ronald Numbers, professor of the history of science and medicine at University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Wayne Judd, associate professor of church history and religion at Pacific Union College, the conference sought to resurrect Millerite studies from the neglect and distortion of the past and to set them on the sound footing of modern historical scholarship. For too long, Millerite "history" has trickled down to popular culture through secondary works based on popular caricatures like Clara Endicott Sears' *Days of Delusion* (1924) or apologies like Francis D. Nichol's *The Midnight Cry* (1944). The organizers of this conference believed that sensitivity to demographics, historical context, and intellectual content would create a fuller and more accurate picture of early Adventists and enhance our understanding of the religious world of mid-19th-century America.

For two intense days, historians critiqued and discussed 11 precirculated papers that examined a wide array of questions concerning Millerism: Who were the Millerites? How did they fit into the evangelical culture around them? How important was date-setting for Millerites? What was William Miller like? Why did so many people associate Millerism with madness? On the final afternoon of the conference, participants acquired a taste of Millerism as they visited Miller's chapel, sang Millerite hymns, and stood on Ascension Rock.

In addition to seeing its scholarly impact, some participants saw the conference as recognition for Adventist scholars who are often ignored by their church. Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church encourages its members to "follow the truth wherever it leads," it also leaves many scholars out in the cold when their conclusions contradict traditional Adventist self-images. (After Everett N. Dick, a Seventh-day

Adventist historian, completed his University of Wisconsin dissertation, *The Adventist Crisis of 1843-1844* in 1930, Adventist denominational leaders, sensitive to protect their own image of the church, repeatedly blocked the publication of his work, and only now have Millerite studies felt the fresh air of serious public scrutiny.) Participants agreed that more conferences such as this one could provide a successful model for the Association of Adventist Forums as it supports Adventist scholars.

Since conference participants examined Millerism within the context of American religious and cultural history rather than exclusively within the context of Adventist history, they also saw the conference as a sign of the coming of an age for Adventist studies in which Adventist and non-Adventist historians will study Adventist history together and learn from each other's insights. But, the bottom line was that while Adventist historians were happy to be acknowledged and supported by the conference sponsors, they were less interested in the symbolism of the conference than in contributing their expertise to an understanding of Millerism. Future conferences could provide many more SDA scholars the chance to contribute, and to experience the exhilaration that animated this one.

Rennie B. Schoepflin is associate professor of history at Loma Linda University.

Orlando Hears Casey on Reasons For Remaining An SDA

by Barry Casey and Dana Lauren West

Barry Casey, assistant professor of theology at Columbia Union College, presented to approximately 120 *Orlando Chapter* members "Reasons for Remaining an Adventist."

The presentation, given March 10, lasted an hour with an hour of questions and answers following.

There seems to be, according to Casey, at least four general groups within North American Adventism whose reasons for *remaining* Adventists give clues to the changing definitions of Adventism. He believes these four groups are important to look at since contemporary Adventism is a religion "between the times." Traditional Adventism calls us to "maintain the landmarks" which identify us as a unique community within Christianity, while many Adventists, on the other hand, are seeking a redefinition of what it means to be an Adventist in the last years of the 20th century.

Casey thinks that reasons for remaining an Adventist, despite present confusion, arise out of distinct matrices of meaning within which Adventists choose to live. Four groups are outlined as having distinguishable reasons for being Adventist:

- The *Doctrinal/Convictional* group is concerned with doctrinal purity and theological orthodoxy—preserving the belief system as it has been handed down and defending it from corruption within and attacks from without.

- The *Community/Nurture* group cares most about how the individual relates to the corporate body of the church. This group remain Adventists because the church functions as a community and a social support system first, a theological guidance system second.

- The *Prophetic/Ethical* group regards the church as a prophetic voice raised in the world in matters of conscience and problems in human rights. This group continues with the church because it hopes that Adventism will become a prophetic and ethical voice in the world.

- The *Artistic/Liturgical* group's main tie to the church is music, art, the worship services, intellectual discussions, the potential opportunities for creative growth, and dialogue with contemporary culture. This group is willing to experiment with creative

approaches to worship and liturgy. They see the church as needing to speak more to the contemporary culture and to move from the 19th-century world views.

"Adventism is at a crossroads," Casey explained. "It needs to recognize and find ways to deal with the pluralism of cultures, theologies, and world views that already exist within Adventism." The fact that people are asking themselves why they remain Adventists is significant in that this may be the first generation of Adventists who have questioned the mission and purpose of the church. As the shuffling and shifting continues, the fundamental question to ask is, "What is the mission and purpose of the Adventist Church in the world?" "One can hope," Casey concluded, "that we will arrive at a definition or definitions which take in as many forms of Adventism as possible, without losing sight of the Gospel."

Knittel on How SDA Colleges Can Survive

by Cynthia Cross

The *San Jaquin Valley Chapter*, in conjunction with the Dinuba and Fresno Central Seventh-day Adventist Churches, discussed Adventist education during a three-meeting series held on Feb. 3 and 4.

Dr. Frank Knittel, former president of Southern College and current chairperson of the Loma Linda University English Department, spoke on whether an Adventist education is "negotiable," and on the role of Adventist higher education and how it will survive.

Knittel based his Friday evening discussion on Daniel 12:3, and stated that the "only purpose of our schools should be to educate young people to grow up to be those very people who will 'turn many to righteousness' and shine 'as the stars forever.'" Knit-

continued on page 6.

Church Ministry to Manhattan Prostitutes

by Dana Lauren West

The Greater New York Chapter members, known for their wide variety of guest speakers and innovative programming, gathered on Feb. 11 to hear Arlene Carmen deliver "A Ministry to Prostitutes in New York City." Carmen is program associate at the Judson Memorial Baptist Church and works for its prostitute ministry program.

The church decided to focus their ministry on street prostitutes as the street women are the most visible of the prostitutes and, therefore, bear the brunt of jail sentences and fines.

In 1976, Carmen was able to talk with the prostitutes while they walked the streets. During the first year she merely watched and listened, rarely spoke, never asked direct questions, and was primarily concerned with earning the prostitutes' trust.

An event in 1977 bridged the gap between the prostitutes and the church workers. During an illegal sweep of Eighth Avenue, police arrested Arlene Carmen along with 12 prostitutes. The arrests were illegal since the women had not been quoting prices or beckoning to or engaging in conversation with men on the street. Carmen was strip-searched three times during her 24-hour stay at the Eighth Precinct and was denied an audience with her pastor until her release the next day.

The Judson Memorial ministry to prostitutes has grown; the church now operates a mobile unit. During the night, a van makes four scheduled stops between Delancy Street and Eighth Avenue. The renovated van is a place the women can gather, away from pimps, tricks, and police. The church has also begun publishing a journal of poetry and prose by the prostitutes. The magazine links the women in that area together.

These services enable Judson Memorial to draw close to the prostitutes and to make available programs of the church that they might otherwise be denied.

During the question-and-answer session, Carmen related details of her imprisonment and subsequent trials. She recounted stories of her personal encounters with prostitutes, including those who forsook "the life" successfully and those who did not.

Knittel, continued from page 5.

tel also suggested ways, aside from educating young people, that our colleges can provide the general Adventist community with "a broadening of the horizons of truth as revealed by the Scriptures." These included providing resources to local churches and schools throughout the denomination, providing seminars on various social, economic, and health-related topics, and supplying the opportunity for the community to discuss varying perceptions of church doctrine.

Knittel compared public schools with Adventist church schools on Saturday morning. In church schools, Knittel asserted, "God's authority is not questioned," and the "total approach to education" is different. Church schools are not merely public schools with Bible classes added.

At the Saturday afternoon meeting, the chapter explored ways for church-sponsored higher education to survive. Attitudes held by church and lay leaders about education, Knittel emphasized, must be changed if Adventist education is to survive. Innovative ideas for financing Adventist education were also discussed.

Tapes of this weekend series are available for \$12 per set by writing to the San Joaquin Valley Chapter of the AAF, 1702 North Temperance Avenue, Fresno, Calif. 93727.

Cynthia Cross is public relations secretary for the San Joaquin Valley Chapter.

SDA Liberation Theologian Comes to Los Angeles

by Dana Lauren West

Dr. Walter Douglas, AAF director of chapter development and professor of church history and history of religion at Andrews University, conducted a weekend seminar over May 12 at the *Los Angeles Chapter*.

Friday night, Douglas spoke on the relationship between church and state to an audience of 80 people. He introduced two different concepts of the state—one from Paul and one from John (Revelation). Paul saw the “God ordained” authority of the state as important for social order, whereas John was more concerned with the state using its power for evil. Douglas suggested that the state is neither inherently good nor evil, but it is the *function* of the state that is good or evil. The Christian should recognize the authority of the state in its legitimate role, but he or she should decide where the state ceases to “be faithful” to its higher calling, and act accordingly.

Being faithful was a concept particularly stressed by Douglas as one which conforms to the highest morals and ethics. The Christian must be faithful and so, he felt, must institutions. When the church fails to be true to biblical principles, its members must call for proper behavior. Or perhaps the government must step in as an agent of God to force the church back to faithfulness (as in the question of paying its employees without respect to gender).

Douglas' Saturday morning sermon dealt with the nature of biblical faith, while his afternoon discussion covered the mutual irrefutability of science and religion. He spoke to an audience of approximately 130. Douglas contrasted the characteristics of scientific and religious thought and expres-

sion. At this point, he explored those ways the church might reach and relate to the secular mind. Douglas sees the linking of these two—the institutionalized church and the secular person—as the greatest challenge of the Adventist Church, for as the church continues to institutionalize itself, it tends to lose touch with the rest of society and the world.

Based on material provided by Michael Scofield, regional representative of the Southern Pacific Region.

Haldeman Says Bible Needs Historical Analysis

by Dana Lauren West

The *San Diego Chapter* heard Madelyn Haldeman, associate professor of New Testament studies at Loma Linda University, speak on “The Interpretation of Scripture: Layperson’s Challenge” on Saturday, April 14. Haldeman addressed an audience of 60 people.

“Is a layperson capable of correct biblical interpretation?” was the key question discussed. Haldeman’s answer was “No.” She then described the dangers that laypeople encounter when translating Scripture and Ellen White’s writings, which, in her opinion, require a similar exegetical discipline.

Haldeman gave examples of how laypeople tend to mix and match various translations to obtain unusual interpretations of Scriptural passages. She felt that it is very common for laypeople to bring their personal assumptions and formed opinions into the exegesis.

She also noted how some people will move about between translations searching for a phrase that expresses their own thoughts

continued on page 8.

Haldeman, continued from page 7.

and convictions. Reverting to the original language is, in most situations, essential.

Referring to historical or contextual analysis is also helpful. Haldeman suggested books that would give background to Scriptural life and times, and remarked that the intent of Scriptural authors may not be clear unless such analyses were performed.

When referring to compilations of Ellen White's writings, Haldeman was particularly critical. Certain compilations, she thought, should never have been published, as Ellen White's original intent seemed to have been ignored in the compiling and editing processes.

Based on material provided by Michael Scofield, regional representative of the Southern Pacific Region.

Geology Conference, continued from page 1.

gist for the Gulf Oil Corporation; Jack Provonsha, professor in the Loma Linda Division of Religion; and Loretta Satchell, paleobotanist for Exxon Corporation.

Ritland points out that the common link among participants is a feeling that the area deserves not only serious study but the kind of mutual criticism and peer review that is possible in a cooperative venture. He recognizes that such studies are not without some risk. Some of these problems have long impinged on central articles of Christian faith. Adequate resolution, Ritland thinks,

may be slow in coming and may necessarily involve continued study and re-evaluation of information from both scientific research and divine revelation. "I realize," says Ritland, "that to some people it is unsettling and faith-threatening to live with the intellectual tensions which result from unresolved problems. This is especially true when these problems affect the matrix in which one's personal faith has long existed. Indeed, it may be better for those who find such studies unsettling not to become involved in this area at the level to be explored during this conference."

The conference registration fee, which covers general expenses not subsidized by contributions, is \$125.00 for one person, \$200.00 for a couple (husband and wife), and \$35.00 for graduate students. Food, lodging, and travel expenses (about 1,500 miles will be traveled on each field trip) are extra. More complete details of the conference are available by writing to the Association of Adventist Forums, 7710 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 for an application form and further information.

JOIN THE SPECTRUM ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Council is a group committed to providing financial stability and advice to ensure the continuation of *Spectrum's* discussion of significant issues.

Contact AAF, Box 5330, Takoma Park, Md.

Regional Representatives of the Association of Adventist Forums

Atlantic Region

John Hamer Jr.
c/o Digital Equipment Corp.
75 Reed Road
Hudson, MA 01749
Tel. (617) 568-5244 (o)

Columbia Region

Theodore Agard
Radiology Department
Kettering Medical Center
3535 Southern Boulevard
Kettering, OH 45429
Tel. (513) 434-0045 (h)
(513) 298-4331 (o)

Lake Region

Donald Gillespie
603 Pioneer Road
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Tel. (616) 473-5723 (h)

Southern Region

Grace Emori
2502 Asbury Court
Decatur, GA 3033
Tel. (404) 325-0360 (h)
(404) 329-3518 (o)

Central Region

Darrel Huenergardt
O'Brien, Huennergardt & Cook
Attorneys at Law
109 South Walnut, Box 490
Kimball, NE 69145
Tel. (308) 235-4217 (h)
(308) 235-3617 (o)

Northern Pacific Region

John Brunt
Walla Walla College
College Place, WA 99324
Tel. (509) 529-8113 (h)
(509) 527-2194 (o)

Central Pacific Region

Norman D. Sossong
1670 Sylvaner Avenue
St. Helena, CA 94574
Tel. (707) 963-2764 (h)
(714) 680-2212 (o)

Southern Pacific Region

Mike Scofield
720 S. Webster, #112
Anaheim, CA 92804
Tel. (714) 828-1348