



Brixton SDA FC



Balham SDA FC

## Adventist Church Football League

by Dennis Bennett

Football generates high levels of passion, skill and competitiveness, fuelled by a desire to win. But teamwork is the key: working together for a common objective.

It was a realisation of the importance of teamwork for church mission that led to the formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Football League. A structured tournament was also set up because: \* many young Adventists were already participating in organised Sunday leagues; \* a football tournament within the Church would promote communication and team work and provide opportunities

for outreach; \* it is a means of attracting young people to church and a means of releasing restless energies.

Those representatives/churches present at the Brixton church when the Adventist Church Football League was formed were Dennis Bennett, Greenwich; Trevor Young, Brixton; Kevin Sterling, Watford Town; Ryan Hastings, Kennington; Colin Anderson, Balham; Christopher DeGale, Battersea/Bethel; Clinton Monfries, Balham; Deane Allen, Willesden; Newton Reid, Luton.

For details email me on [dennis\\_g\\_bennett@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dennis_g_bennett@yahoo.co.uk).

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**Get connected this Christmas**  
 by Alan Hodges, Ldi co-ordinator

**LIFE development.info**

Christmas and New Year are great times to 'Get Connected'. It's a time when we contact old friends, a time when we share seasonal greetings with our neighbours. Why not focus your attention this year on establishing three new friendships in your neighbourhood?

Is your church planning to hold a social event over Christmas and New Year? Why not invite a friend to attend? Ask the Social Committee to plan something special for visitors. It's one of the best times during the year for socialising and an excellent opportunity for making new friends. It can also be a time when the topic of conversation can turn to the true meaning of Christmas.

Are there lonely people who need a visit? Perhaps you know of a work colleague or someone in your street who will be in hospital over Christmas. Why not give them a visit? Show that you genuinely care.

Reflect Jesus in your attitude and actions this Christmas. Look for the needs of people in your community. Show them you care and are sympathetic to their problems, and after the holiday season has passed continue to show an interest so they know you are a genuine friend.

Friendship can make all the difference to your life and others. As you give of yourself this Christmas may others be blessed and led to the Christchild.

## Looking to 2004: What happens when we pray

with Pastor C. R. Perry, president

### Centrality of mission

In creation and re-creation God's plan did not follow a random course of events. Instead, all his purposes are well ordered and prophetically timed. The apostle Paul has shown that our salvation was not an after-thought. It was a deliberate act on the part of a loving God. 'When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law.' (Galatians 4:4, NKJV). Many myths, notions, traditions and various interpretations have grown around the self-revelation of the God-man in our world. Trying to ascertain the actual time of the incarnation with an atomic clock would be an exercise in futility. God's intention for mankind transcends manmade rituals and dating. Its purpose was to usher in the day of salvation.

At the heart of Jesus' ministry is this mission statement: 'To seek and save the lost.' His life on Earth was dedicated to preaching, teaching,

healing and empowering.

### BUC strategic evangelism plans

The times demand of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that wise plans of action be laid to meet the needs of a secular world. We are called upon to 'have an understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do'.

The British Union Conference, in response to the critical need to fulfil the divine mission to the lost, launched a five-year strategy known as LIFEdevelopment.info. It is a bold evangelistic initiative or process to gain the attention of secular post-moderns and those on the fringes of Christianity.

The inclusive nature of our general evangelistic package has a place for all members to be active participants. All can make friends, pray and unite in the search for the lost coin, the lost sheep and make

ready for the return of the lost son. Our churches and homes must become mission stations for Bible studies, prayer groups and Christian fellowship.

### Sowing the seed: literature distribution

The world church has embarked on a programme known as Sowing One Billion – getting our tracts, books and magazines where they can make a difference in the lives of others. We become a part of this process when we produce the well-received LIFE.info magazine. Our aim is to produce 100,000 subscription copies monthly.

### 2004: Year of Evangelism

This call of the world church focuses on the need to give evangelism the emphasis it should get on our individual and corporate agenda.

### 3-10 January: Corporate Week of Prayer

'A revival of primitive godliness and reformation is our greatest need,' said Ellen G. White. The outcome we desire will not come until the majority of our members feel their need of Pentecostal power and seek his presence in their lives.

The setting aside of 3-10 January as a corporate Week of Prayer sets the stage for what could be the beginning of a revival among us. Elijah prayed on Carmel and God

demonstrated his power over false worship. Esther called her people to prayer and fasting and the Jewish nation was saved. Daniel prayed and God revealed to him the rise and fall of nations. One hundred and twenty disciples prayed in the upper room in preparation for the descent of the Holy Spirit.

### Reaping the harvest

Success in the reaping of the harvest is the prerogative of God. Nevertheless, he wants us to be co-labourers with him. Jesus designs that we should use his method in the winning of souls. He befriended them then asked them to follow him.

'Pray,' he said, 'the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.' 'The fields are already white for harvest.' The picture given – maybe the reality – is that the harvest field in Western Europe is not ripe and ready for God's harvest. According to Scripture this is not so – the field in Europe is ready. There are those among the millions who are just waiting for us to give them the invitation.

The time to sow and to reap is now. Let the church be wise before the summer of God's grace ends and the time of the harvest is gone.



# The Xmas Files

As I write this – in mid-November – 35% of the population is claiming to be stressed by the prospect of Christmas. When Christmas comes, in excess of 95% will be celebrating it in one way or another.<sup>1</sup>

So the very *least* you can say for Christmas is that, for a month or so once a year, people pay attention to something with *Christ* in it.

In the 1970s, aware of the (near) universal appeal of Christmas, the staff of Stanborough Junior and Secondary Schools used to put on a Christmas programme. Thus it was that the non-Adventist, as well as the Adventist, parents, families and friends of our students, would throng Stanborough Park church once a year for an outreach event about which we were all enthusiastic.

For a number of years I was scriptwriter, producer and co-ordinator for this programme, and so it was to me that the man came to complain. He was a new teacher; and he was deferential, courteous, puzzled, and outraged, but in a subdued sort of a way. What on Earth were we doing with a humongous Christmas tree in our headquarters church? he wanted to know. And, furthermore, why did we spend so much time and attention commemorating an event that did not occur at that time of year anyway? Didn't a chap with an expensive education like mine know that Christ wasn't really born on 25 December?

He was the first man I ever heard of, apart from Scrooge, who was not a Jehovah's Witness but was hostile to the idea of Christmas. I had lived a sheltered life. I have met loads since. And they have all been Adventists! Some years



ago, my old friend Sam Davis, aware of the opposition to Christmas within our ranks, wrote a piece in this paper demonstrating that Ellen White was all in favour of Christmas.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, that she favoured Christmas trees in our churches. That came as a big surprise to many who had EGW marked down as a Queen Victorian killjoy. She wasn't, of course. Nor was Queen Victoria!

The majority of our churches will do *something* to commemorate – if not to celebrate – Christmas this year. Most will have carol services. Some will have services on Christmas day. A few of our congregations, however, will be spartan about it, and there will be no sign of Christmas trimmings or Christmas cheer in their environs. No one will know it's Christmas thereabouts, apart from a 'Bah! Humbug!' reference in Sabbath school or sermon.

However, one element of my belief system even more fundamental than Christmas is this: freedom of expression. Hence I would want freedom to ignore Christmas to be enshrined in the constitution just as much as freedom to commemorate it. After all, it is not exactly one of the twenty-seven Fundamentals. The only thing I am against, totally, is when people on either side of the argument try to sound as if it is.

Given the fact that 95% of the population gets in on Christmas, what is the case against it? \* That the date is surprisingly near the winter solstice and has its origins in a pagan festival? Well, so do weddings, wreaths at funerals, the Olympics – the names of the days of the week, and much else beside. \* That Christmas is a time for conspicuous consumption, not to mention excessive drinking? Well, those things are not compulsory.

Is there a case *for* Christmas? \* A great family time; and, as the older generation dies, Christmases are the main family times that you'll remember. \* Time out; a time for a rest. There is a certain satisfaction in the relaxing week following Christmas (now that many of us choose stressful summer holidays, the week after Christmas is over may be the only genuine break from stress). \* Outreach; the Gospel commission bids us tell the world about Christ. Those who do not view the church building in the same way that Freemasons view their temples (some do!) will want to take the two opportunities provided by the Christian holidays (Christmas and Easter) to attract people into church for a service and some exposure to the Gospel. Some call it 'Putting Christ back into Christmas'.

Why *do* some Adventists suffer from overheated collars on both sides of the issue given that neither the case pro nor con is strictly biblical?

*Cultural factors.* That's what it boils down to. My old friend on the staff of Stanborough School came from a small island in the Indian Ocean in which Roman Catholics predominated and the commemoration of Christmas was associated with the majority. He felt that he needed to stand aside from Christmas in order to be a good Adventist. Others, since those days, have also argued against Christmas from the point of view of asserting their identity as part of a micro-minority in a hostile population.

Those who read this paper, in the main, reside on a collection of islands off mainland Europe where we are a micro-minority, too. Not, however, in a *hostile*, but an *apathetic* population. A population that, in the main, is totally secular but which – weird anomaly! – once a year chooses to spend about a month commemorating a festival from which the Name and Person of Christ cannot legitimately be removed. (Though some *do* try by using the awful word 'Xmas'.)

Given that anomaly, wouldn't we be foolish not to take advantage of it to put *Christ* back into Christmas? In short, to take advantage of the fact that, for one month of the year, the tide of popular culture flows *towards* us and not in the opposite direction?

Further to that I shall, as ever, be using the time of year to keep in touch with old friends and to say to new friends, 'It's been great having your friendship this year.' I'll be using cards and trying not to get too upset by postal charges. In case the cost of postage stamps becomes all too much, and you don't receive a card from me, permit me to say, here and now:

Hey, it's great to have your friendship. Have a happy holiday! And don't forget the *Christian Reason* for the Season.

References:  
<sup>1</sup>Christian Marketplace, VI:14, page 36. <sup>2</sup>MESSINGER, 4 December 1992. To check what Ellen White says about Christmas, read *The Adventist Home*, pages 478-482, especially page 482.



## Healthwise

with Richard J. B. Willis, BUC Health Ministries director

### Irish Stew

Minister for Health and Children, Michael Martin, has caused a stew in the Irish Republic by signing into law The Tobacco Smoking (Prohibition) Regulations 2003. It calls for the banning, from mid-January, of smoking in all work-places, including clubs, pubs and restaurants.

The leisure trade is urging that the Republic follow the rest of the world by having smoking restrictions and the provision of designated smoking areas rather than an outright ban. That, said the Minister, defeats the aim of the legislation. Employees would still have to work in such areas and thereby risk their health.

Arguments from the trade that sales will suffer if the new regulations are implemented cut no ice with the Minister. It has been claimed by anti-ban campaigners that there was a loss of income when similar measures were introduced in New York. While this was true initially trade has picked up once more as people dine in their favourite eateries and as these establishments find innovative ways of attracting and keeping customers.

A stew of another kind is also brewing in the Republic – teenage binge drinking – a problem faced in the UK too. The UK Office of National Statistics revealed that young teenagers are drinking twice as much as their counterparts did in 1990. It is not that the numbers drinking have greatly increased, rather it is the amount the drinkers consume that has gone up.

Twenty-four per cent of 11-15-year-olds consume an average of 10.5 units of alcohol a week. The good news is that Hooch, the first alcopop marketed in the UK, has been withdrawn because of falling sales. The bad news is that the former alcopop drinkers have switched to mixed-spirit drinks such as Bacardi Breezer and Smirnoff Ice.

Drinking by young people in Ireland has increased over three hundred per cent in the last decade, resulting in rehabilitation centres admitting 17-year-old alcoholics. Ireland, Denmark and Scotland have the highest binge-drinking rates in the 12-16-year age range. Binge-drinking is defined in these statistics as drinking four to five drinks (or more!) in one sitting,

three or more times within a two-week period. It is periodic episodes of excessive and often uncontrollable drinking with gaps of weeks or even months between drinking bouts and (although it may sound like stating the obvious) the purpose is to get drunk.

There are no easy answers to the problem of young people drinking. They will continue to do so while television soaps and films depict conflicts between people being settled not by calm reason but by drinking. The soap bars do not provide a clean end to conflict, just a quick alcohol wash! We need to show young people that it is possible to enjoy life without the need to smoke or drink to boost confidence.



## Africa Day in Gloucester

Chequers Bridge Community Centre was packed with worshippers on Sabbath 1 November to praise the Lord in music, song and preaching from the African community. Pastor Stefan Burton-Schnüll, in his welcoming address, invited the worshippers to indicate how far they had travelled. It became clear that, not only had people travelled from many parts of Britain to be present, but there were visitors from as far afield as Brazil.

Pastor Maponga was the guest

speaker, and he captured everyone's attention with his sermon. Another highlight was Pastor Maponga's invitation to all the Africans present to come forward and form an impromptu choir. Then he and the choir, without any rehearsal, thrilled the congregation with their singing. Choirs from Gloucester, Birmingham and London all contributed to the success of this special day. After lunch, served by the Gloucester church, the afternoon programme continued with special items by the choirs, including a Brazilian group from the Swindon church.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY



The African Choir

## Luton: queues for health screening



The Lord our God did marvellous things in our sight on 22 and 29 June in Luton Arndale Shopping Centre, where at times people queued to have their health checked. A team of experienced health professionals from Willesden and

Chiswick churches assisted Luton church in providing health checks in Luton's bustling shopping centre. The checks and tests offered were blood pressure, blood cholesterol, blood sugar, BMI and a computer heart risk assessment.

When the project was conceived by the Personal Ministries department we were looking for a location that would be inexpensive and centrally located. Our aim was to be as close to the general public as possible.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

## Chelmsford baptism

Chelmsford is a growing church. This is reflected in its second baptism for 2003 on 18 October and the willingness of members to share their faith.

Progress and Francis committed their lives to the Lord through bap-

tism during the Sabbath morning service. Both have been worshipping and receiving Bible studies during the year from Pastor Malcolm Taylor and Cliff Hilton. Progress, a student from Malawi, was to have been baptised but had to take up studies in England earlier than

## Woodford Green Branch Sabbath School baptism

It was a unique and historical day on Sabbath 30 August when four candidates were baptised at Woodford Green Branch Sabbath school. The branch, derived from the Leytonstone church, was conceived on 11 August 2000 and now worships in the United Reformed Church, Ray Lodge Road, Woodford Green, Essex. Still in its tender years, its members were ecstatic when four candidates decided to take their stand for the Lord.

Mother and son Donna and Dominic Williams took their stand together, while father Winston Williams was given the right hand of fellowship, thus completing the family joy.

Also baptised were Jenny Grant and Lynelle Coker. Both Jenny and Lynelle felt the desire to rededicate their lives to the Lord by renewing their vows. The candidates glowed with happiness as they were submerged in the watery grave of baptism by Pastor Richard DeLisser and arose to walk in the newness of life.

Pastor DeLisser reminded the candidates that the Christian pathway was not always easy but the important thing was to stay on course.

The church was packed to full capacity with members and visiting friends and the occasion left an indelible memory on the hearts and minds of everyone. Also in attendance was our guest visitor, Dr Kennedy, overseer of the United Reformed Church, who spoke of his joy at being invited to witness such a Christ-centred event.

ERMA BELLOT



expected. On arriving in England he was encouraged by Terrence Blackett to remain faithful in the Lord. He attended church regularly, and his request for baptism was granted.

Francis worked at the same nursing home as Jennifer Hilton, wife

of Cliff Hilton. Francis had experienced many trials in his life and was seeking comfort from friends and well-wishers. Jennifer introduced him to the Lord who 'comforts us in all our troubles'. Francis responded to an invitation to learn about



## Totnes Show

After days of heavy rain, the sun came out just in time to dry up the fields for the Totnes and District Agricultural Show. Thousands of people flocked through the gate to be greeted by an offer of a free carrier bag con-

taining a FOCUS magazine, a LIFE.info magazine and a list of Adventist church addresses in Area 1.

It was wonderful to see the logo and words 'Seventh-day Adventist Church' written boldly on strong white carrier bags, being carried by about 800 people around the show. Many more came to our 18-ft stall and helped themselves to more magazines and books. Some, such as a lady sell-

ing handcrafted cards, and the Red Cross ambulance driver, actually came and asked for their carrier bag of goodies before the show opened, as they had enjoyed reading the magazines in previous years. Others came straight over to collect their bags and commented on how strong they were this year. Of course, we always have a few who say no or hand them back when they realise the magazines are religious, but the majority were happy to receive them.

We take a stall at this show every year, but this year we had the added attraction of free mouse food for anyone who had access to the Internet. These little boxes, containing the websites of Adventists, ADRA and AWR, were an immediate success and caused a good deal of laughter and conversation – a brilliant idea from our minister Pastor Bertie DeNysschen. It is so heartening when people visit our stall to pick up a book because they had one last year, and one lady was delighted to receive a copy of *Christ's Object Lessons* in order to understand the parables. We felt that the Holy Spirit was with us as we witnessed for Christ on that sunny day.

JEN READ



the Lord who cares. His changed outlook on life and the consolation from the Lord, who alone can heal the broken-hearted, is matched by the smile on his face each Sabbath morning. From the waters of baptism both men rose to continue the walk begun with their Lord. They were welcomed into fellowship and encouraged in their new experience by the church family.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY

## Norbury/Hackbridge baptism

October was an exciting month for Hackbridge and Norbury members because six souls were welcomed to our church family. On 11 October, at Norbury church, friends and families celebrated the baptism of Jennifer



McIntosh, Sonia Burke, Renola Roach, Odochi Nwokocho, Maria Wilding and Dalsie Magnus – all baptised a week earlier during the joint Norbury/Balham campaign.

The Hackbridge members were particularly overjoyed because Sister Magnus and Sister Wilding are the first-fruits since Hackbridge group was organised into a company last May.

The whole day was one of fellowship, worship and praise, and the presence of the Holy Spirit was felt by everyone throughout the day. The officiating pastors were Pastor S. W. Blake and the writer.

PASTOR SINISA HORVAT

## Hove Investiture

The Pathfinders and Adventurers entered a Hove church filled to capacity on Sabbath 11 October.

A full programme of songs, readings, mimes and drill display was presented to the church by all the members of the club, followed by a short progress report on the club year by the club director.

Pastor Victor Hulbert conducted the investiture service, ending with an inspirational talk.

*Busy Bee:* Jonathan Seetayah; *Voyager:* Bunnett Gumpo; *Master Guide:* Cara Dunn, Ramona Howsen; *Honours:* Nick Husband, Nikkita Husband; *Certificates:* Marvel Chikito, Shelter Chikito, Mercy Chitite, Ruth Chitite, Benedict



Gumpo, Bessie Phiri, Marjorie Phiri; *Flag bearers:* Valarie Chikito, Putendo Chitando.

AGATHA DUNN

bers brought money which was split between the Factor Row Hostel for the Homeless, and Project 58, that feeds the homeless and needy. £90 was raised for each of these charities.

Then they had a special treat as the Shipton Singers from Ipplepen came and took the service, entitled 'Into all the World', with their special blend of beautiful singing and talks about the lives of John Newton, Mary Slessor and Gladys Aylward. The children played their recorders at both services which was a joy to hear and also took part in the Harvest sketches.

JEN READ

## Torquay: Christmas shoeboxes

Autumn is always a busy time for the members of the Adventist church in Torquay, but this year seemed busier than ever. Only a small church, they managed to fill twenty-two Christmas-wrapped shoeboxes with goodies for children in Latvia orphanages, and send them off to Watford to go on the ADRA lorries that were travelling that way, along with other boxes sent from Adventist churches all over Britain.

At the same time they held their Harvest Thanksgiving service, where instead of a sermon they had a series of sketches under the heading of 'God Provides'. There was a smaller food display than usual, as instead of bringing food, the mem-

## Pat's baptism

October 4 was a high day for the members of Bodmin church. Pat Herbert has been attending the church on and off for the last four years. She began studying with Pastor Cuthbert. When I came to the church as the pastor she asked me if she could be baptised. I continued studies with her. On 4 October the members of Bodmin church celebrated Pat's commitment to the Lord through baptism.

The pool was surrounded by beautiful flowers and greenery and Pat looked radiant as she came down into the water. She had invited several of her friends to come and witness her baptism and there were over thirty non-members present.

RON CLEMON

# LIFEdvelopment and the ministry to the disabled: Meeting the needs in the community

by Sophia Nicholls (ASNA Executive Secretary)



I was privileged to speak to one of our members (M) recently and interested to hear of her concerns regarding a member in her church. The member is an adult with a mental age of a 2-year-old. Let's call this member David. David regularly attends the children's Sabbath school department and M expressed concerns that David was not appropriately placed and felt that he was a disturbance not only for the children in the Sabbath school class but for the rest of the church as 'he is unable to sit quietly during services' and 'jumps around making a lot of noise'.

A mainstream 2-year-old child with this behaviour would go unnoticed and be seen to be 'acting their age', but adults with this behaviour with no expressive communication or indeed apparent receptive communication, are seen to be a disruption, a disturbance and irreverent.

It would be unfair and unrealistic to expect an adult with severe learning difficulties to adhere to everyday social behaviour and interaction typical to the Sabbath church service. So what can be done to address this issue? What suggestions can be made to help encourage the debate around the ministry to the disabled? Isn't David a valued member of his church and, therefore, an apostle for Christ? Maybe the problem is not David but the constraints of the environment or perceptions of those in the majority.

The LIFEdvelopment project encourages the development of small groups to access the community and develop links and programmes that secular people would feel welcome to attend. This also applies to those with a disability.

As we enter a new year let us

revisit our ministry to the community and consider more diverse, caring and Spirit-filled approaches that will reveal our awesome and caring God. 2003 has been the European Year of Disabled People. Before the year closes, please consider some of the suggestions below: You may consider taking these suggestions to a church board for discussion or present them during an afternoon programme.

1. The first step would be to review the current policies of your church with respect to the ministry to the disabled.

2. *Churches For All* is a programme to emphasise the vital need to include disabled people. It provides objective, measurable access standards and guidelines for good practice so that people with disabilities, elderly people and their families may be fully included in the life of the church. Health and Safety officers of the church can obtain this programme from Through the Roof (details below). It consists of a video and manual and is easy to use!

3. How about starting with a feast where these members could be invited in an informal setting? Do you have a day centre nearby or do members in your church have friends they could invite to this event?

4. You may consider starting a small group ministry for the disabled in your church. Members in your congregation like David with learning difficulties can feel free to invite their friends to this programme.

5. Volunteering to take members like David for their own Sabbath school programme which involves music, drama and sensory Bible stories is another option. (ASNA and similar organisations run training workshops on ministering to adults with learning difficulties.)

6. You might want to consider addressing the issues head on with an afternoon programme where the concerns and preconceptions can be aired and addressed before any programme to the disabled is decided and developed.

Let the LIFEdvelopment programme be a template for assisting your ministry along with resources

from organisations listed below. Please contact us if you need any other information about ASNA or the ministry to the disabled.

Other very useful organisations who have been involved in this ministry for a number of years include:

Through the Roof – PO Box 353, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5WS.

Tel: 01372 749955; [www.throughtheroof.org/dms.htm](http://www.throughtheroof.org/dms.htm). Provides resources, training in the ministry to the disabled.

Causeway Prospects – PO Box 351, Reading, RG1 7AL. Tel: 0118 957 2722. Provides resources and training for the ministry to adults with learning disabilities.

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Tel. Kelly Christie-Phillips 0115 989 9081

**Prayer Feature**  
with Tracy Dixon

**God saw her**

It appears at least that with Adam and Eve, Noah and Abraham, God did the talking. He made the connection. It isn't until Genesis 16 that we hear of someone who spoke to God and that the Lord had heard her cry of distress (verse 11). Hagar was apparently the first person to turn to God in her distress. Hagar, a slave woman who had been used to give Abraham a son, had, after becoming pregnant by him, committed the sin of becoming 'proud' and despising Sarai (verse 4), presumably because she felt that she had achieved something that Sarai apparently could not. So, Hagar was a slave woman who had sinned and been treated cruelly by Sarai we are told (verse 6), someone who had been used and who had run away from the source of the pain she faced, and God heard her cry of distress, promised her 'so many descendants that no one will be able to count them' (verse 10) and showed her that God is 'A God who sees' (verse 13). The well where Hagar met the angel who gave her this news became known as 'The Well of the Living One who sees me' (verse 14), illustrating that God had touched Hagar in a very personal way.

We think of people who do things first, before anyone else, as special. Hagar was anything but, as far as the world could see, yet God saw her in her distress and sent one of his angels to show her that he cared. What a wonderful Lord we serve and how comforting it is to know that he sees our sin and distress and still regards us as important enough to communicate with. If you find yourself discouraged from talking to God this week, think of Hagar and know that our God who 'is love' (1 John 4:8) sees you.

**Send prayer requests to: [TElizabethDixon@aol.com](mailto:TElizabethDixon@aol.com).**

## Derrick Mason (1924-2003)

by Dr Harry Leonard

It is sad to have to report the death of Derrick Mason on 21 October after a courageous fight against the effects of a massive stroke about a year ago. Derrick will be remembered by a generation of Stanborough School pupils as a quiet, efficient and humane teacher and later, from 1975 to 1987 as headteacher, a position he relinquished two years before his retirement to make way for the late Ivor Margerison.

He was born in 1924, the son of school-teacher Richard Mason and his wife Anne, and grew up in Enfield, Middlesex, the family attending the Wood Green church. His parents being some of the pioneer Adventist campers, Derrick soon developed a love of the outdoors, a love he passed on to his own family. And from his father he inherited the genes for practical skills, which he also passed on to his sons. There was little that Derrick has not made, revived or adapted. This ability enabled him to extend a minute cottage into a family home and, in retirement, despite the onset of arthritis, to restore three eighteenth-century barns into a beautiful home just outside Brecon. In it Derrick and Peggy entertained friends from far

and wide as well as the members of the Ystrad Mynach church, of which they were loyal members and where Derrick, following a tradition begun in Stanborough Park, taught a thoughtful and stimulating Sabbath School class.

Teaching was in his blood. On leaving school he trained as a teacher, cycling twenty four miles each day to and from Shoreditch College. When war came he joined the Royal Navy, reaching the rank of lieutenant, based first in Dover, then in the Mediterranean and finally in Canada where he took flying training. The war over, he joined the management team at Fry's, the chocolate manufacturers, in Bristol. It was while there that he dedicated his life to Christ and decided to return to teaching. He went first to Newbold College to gain an insight into Christian education and then took an MA in Education at Pacific Union College, California. After two years' teaching at the Adventist Academy in Bakersfield, California, he returned to England in 1961 to be near his ageing parents. He joined the teaching staff of Stanborough School where he caused an immediate if minor sensation with the number of ties he possessed! However, his lasting legacy will be in the example that he set and the wise advice that he gave. The writer knows of several former pupils who date the beginning of very successful careers to his perceptive counsel.

Psalm 15, the 'Gentleman's Psalm', was Derrick's favourite. He lived it himself and, by example, passed on its precepts to his sons. He was indeed an officer and a gentleman. Something of the Naval officer always remained with him but, above all, he was God's gentleman. That is how he will be remembered.

He will be greatly missed by his wife Peggy, whom he met at Stanborough School and married in 1962, his sons, Ian and Robert, his grandchildren and his sister, Hilary Jackson. He will be missed also by an extended family of friends and colleagues, some of whom were at the Ystrad Mynach church for a service of rejoicing in a life well lived. Pastor Ron Surridge, once the pastor at Stanborough Park where Derrick was an elder, spoke words of comfort and hope to the congregation before making the last journey to Brecon cemetery where Derrick was buried by Pastor Paul Clew 'in sure and certain hope of the resurrection'.



JANET GRIFFITHS (1956-2003) d. 3 August. Peckham church is mourning the loss of their sister Janet Griffiths, who died suddenly. Janet was a member of Peckham for twenty years, an active member who opened her home to feed as many as would come. She was a great mum to four children, Stephanie, Dean, Danae and Rachel; a loving daughter to her mother Edna; a caring sister to Lilly and Sarah, brothers Keith, Neil, Garry and Dwayne; and a wonderful friend to all who knew her. She will be greatly missed by all. Peckham is hurting, but we have this Hope that burns within our hearts.

**CAROL JOSEPH**  
**APOLOGY.** Janet Griffiths' photograph appeared by mistake in MESSENGER No 23, page 4, beside an article about Peckham Church. We sincerely apologise for any hurt this may have caused her family.

**IRIS ANN HOWARD (1920-2003)** d. 13 January. Iris Hapgood, an only child, was born into a Methodist mining family in Kidwelly, South Wales, in 1920. Throughout her youth, church and school activities delighted her. Every year of her young life she was an enthusiastic participant at local and national Eisteddfods and Gymanfa Ganu. Despite her small stature she was the fastest runner in her school, competing for her county during her teens. This sporting prowess may have run in the family, as one of her uncles was Eddie Hapgood, captain of Arsenal and

Wales. Iris, however, was to spend her Saturdays rather differently, for, with her mother, she became an Adventist, and, after a successful school career, went to Newbold College in 1936. She graduated in 1940 in a class which included R. D. Vine, R. W. Dougherty, Gordon Hyde and Vera Lauderdale. At Newbold she met Arthur Wilfred Howard and, after two years as a Bible worker in the Scottish and Welsh Missions, she married him in 1942. For over half a century, until Arthur's death in 1993, Iris supported him in his work, which was mainly as Publishing Department secretary in the Scottish Mission, the North England Conference and the British Union. In April 1949 they went to India, where he became Publishing Department, Sabbath School and Home Missionary secretary for the Northeast India Union. Unfortunately, the climate did not suit Arthur's somewhat frail health and they returned home in September of the following year for Arthur to continue as a PDS in this country. Iris was an intelligent, adaptable, capable and courageous little lady, keeping open house for those who needed her quiet, cheerful encouragement. She loved to garden, travel and read (towards the end of her life she taught herself French and Welsh). She was a good and faithful friend and a patient mother. After Iris suffered a serious stroke in 1988, she and Arthur moved to Parkfields, a residential home in the village of Butleigh, Somerset, not far from the Croscombe church, where they were members. Here they were lovingly cared for by the staff, especially Rachel and Lee Baker, who became 'family' to them. Iris is survived by her daughter Anne, and sons Paul and Gerald, five

grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The funeral took place at St Leonard's church, Butleigh, officiated at by the lady curate. Anne gave the life sketch, and Dennis Porter, a family friend, the address. Iris lies with Arthur in the churchyard awaiting the glorious day of resurrection.

ANNE WILLSEY

**MARGARET ELLA WATTS (1918-2003)** d. 2 September. Ella was born on Merseyside, the eldest of a family of seven, four girls and three boys. She was raised in a Christian home and in the early 1960s a card advertising an evangelistic meeting/VOP course led eventually to the baptism of Ella's mother Mrs Jessie Couch, Ella, sisters Olive and Nancy and brother Tom. Ella spent her working life in large department stores and served in the WAAF during the Second World War. She married in 1964 and her husband died in the early 1980s. Ella was a very kind person and would help anyone who needed it, caring for various family members in different parts of the country. In 1993 she moved for the final time to a small flat in Penistone, Barnsley, to be near her sister Nancy and her family. Ella loved the countryside, so living in Penistone brought her great joy. There Ella met her close friend Geoffrey Smith, much appreciating his friendship during her later years. Following a short illness Ella fell asleep in Christ on 2 September. The funeral service was taken by Mike Rossiter, the husband of Ella's niece Marion. Pam, her sister Olive's daughter, gave a moving eulogy. The cremation took place at Barnsley crematorium. Children were very dear to

Ella's heart and in lieu of flowers, donations were given to the NSPCC, her favourite charity. Ella's family would like to express their thanks to all who have offered condolences. Thanks also go to the staff of the Intensive Care Unit at Barnsley General Hospital for all their care and kindness. As we left the crematorium our sorrow was tempered by the knowledge of the soon return of our Saviour.

HAZEL SCHOLES

**MURIEL WEEKS (1908-2003)** d. 15 July. The funeral of Miss Muriel Weeks was held at picturesque Haycombe crematorium, Whiteway, Bath. Muriel was baptised into Christ, becoming a member of the Bath Adventist church in 1924, where she remained a faithful, active member for the rest of her life. Notably, she served the church for 48 years as treasurer, and also lovingly fulfilled many other church responsibilities. From the age of 18 until she was 70 Muriel worked in a local health food shop. In her youth she was a member of the Bath Cantata Choir and during the war years served in the Civil Defence. Thanks to the kindness of her neighbours and fellow church members, and through her own fortitude, Muriel was able to remain in her own home up to the last few weeks of her long life. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her well. Mrs Enid White, one of her circle of devoted friends, provided much valuable information about her life. Muriel died in the blessed assurance of God's salvation at St Martin's Hospital, Bath. Pastors Ron Edwards and the writer conducted the cremation service.

PASTOR BRIAN MARTIN

## Muslim awareness

Once upon a time over forty years ago a lady left the Caribbean and came to Ipswich. Jean, her husband Percy and her growing family were welcomed into the local Adventist church. As her children grew up Jean's involvement with her church began to extend into the wider community around. Contacts and relationships with other churches and other faiths developed as she contributed to civic committees and interfaith organisations.

One of these was SIFRE (Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource), organised by a Church of England lady named Cynthia Capey. Through Jean, local Adventist pastor David West got to know Cynthia, and when Newbold College advertised a conference celebrating religious diversity David invited Cynthia to attend. She did, and at Newbold in July she met Pastor Oscar Osindo, director of Islamic Studies at Newbold. Cynthia was organising an Islamic Awareness Day in Ipswich and asked Oscar to come. David was at Newbold on a course and invited Oscar to come and preach in Ipswich on 20 September, lead an afternoon discussion, stay the night and then attend Cynthia's programme on the Sunday.

This long and colourful chain of events culminated in an inspiring Sabbath for Ipswich membs, with Oscar giving us fascinating insights into our work with Muslims. Then on the Sunday, he and representatives of various churches and faiths joined the Mayor of Ipswich, Councillor Penny Breakwell, as leaders of the Muslim community shared what their faith means to them and gave us historical insights into the long connection between Britain and Islam. Did you know, for instance, that the eighth-century Anglo-Saxon King Offa

(Offa's Dyke ring any bells?) minted gold coins in England with Islamic inscriptions on them? Altogether, the exhibition, the free material provided (including a CD-rom and a zipped, leather-bound Quran in English), the informative and heartfelt talks, the delicious food, and the responses from the Mayor and various faith representatives (including our own Oscar), created a memorable day of positive growth in understanding. Oscar made valuable contacts for his work and Cynthia spoke publicly in glowing terms of the local Adventist church members and the Newbold Diversity Conference. I am also proud to say that there were more Adventists in attendance than any other group – except Muslims of course!

DAVID WEST

## How to be a preacher

Nearly sixty enthusiastic 'students' of both sexes and from all ages within the South England Conference gathered at the High Leigh Conference Centre over the weekend of 3-5 October to attend the Lay Preachers' training seminars, organised by the ministerial team of the South England Conference – Dr Brighton Kavaloh and his able secretary Mrs Vivienne Evers.

Pastor Kavaloh, in his introductory remarks, emphasised that this was previously an intensive three-month course with the triple

objective of studying the academic, theoretical and the practical aspect of preaching. This has now been further condensed into a weekend study, presented by a team of carefully selected lecturers from Newbold College, seasoned and experienced preachers and the ministerial team at the SEC. All the students were well provided with a variety of 'tasty and delicious' spiritual cuisine.

We had the late British summer sunshine to keep us both warm and cheerful. By the end of the course on Sunday afternoon most of the students were physically and, to some extent, mentally exhausted. However, all of us had learned much on the art, skills and above all the challenge of preaching God's word.

We are charged by our course director Pastor Kavaloh not only to put what we have learned into practice, but were given a sufficient load of homework over the next three months needed to complete this training course.

Photo and words by JOHNSON WONG

## Stonebridge Park Update

Further to the detailed report on page 6 of the last issue (28 November)



Al Eccles draws our attention to more facts about the campaign at the Bridge Park Complex in Stonebridge Park, London.

The Christ-centred messages in the Time is at Hand campaign were delivered by evangelist G. A. Harrison and his team. Richard Willis and Sherry Nicholls were among those who made up-to-date health presentations. Both the Chiswick and Willesden choirs featured.

The Holy Spirit used the evangelistic team, together with pastors and church members from Stonebridge Park, Willesden, Chiswick, Acton and Kilburn to lead many people to Christ in a series of baptisms conducted between September and November.

The Time is at Hand campaign, in addition to its regular audience in the 1,000 capacity hall, introduced many to Christ through the Internet. The Time is at Hand website has had upwards of 47,000 hits.

[Taken from material supplied by AL ECCLES.]

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Pearl Walker, of St Austell/Redruth area, on achieving her Licentiate with the Central Academy of Music in London, LCAM (TD) with Hons.

**Singles conference planned at Newbold College for Sunday 28 March 2004.** Presenters, keynote speakers, musicians, poets, workshop leaders required. If you want to make a contribution to this singles event contact Val Bernard on 01344 407468 or email [VBernard@newbold.ac.uk](mailto:VBernard@newbold.ac.uk).

## ABC BOOK SALES 2003

Dec

14 John Loughborough 10am-2pm

Wishing you all a blessed Christmas!

## Messenger

Volume 108/26 – 12 December 2003

EDITOR: D. N. MARSHALL

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## Sunset

Sunset times are reproduced with permission from data supplied by the Science Research Council.

	Lond	Card	Nott	Edin	Belf
Dec 12	3.52	4.04	3.48	3.38	3.58
19	3.53	4.05	3.49	3.39	3.58
26	3.56	4.09	3.53	3.43	4.02
Jan 2	4.03	4.15	3.59	3.50	4.09

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENT	WHEN	WHERE	WHO	HOW
<b>Toy Service</b>	13 December 11am	North Wembley SDA Church, 217 East Lane, Wembley	Fund raising event and collection of toys for 'Children In Need'	Tel: Doreen Gayle on 02089 080744
<b>New Year's Eve Gospel Party (over 18 event)</b>	31 December from 9pm-2am	Advent Centre, London	Jefferson & Whitfield, Norman Clarke Band, Kingdom Choir	Tel: Norman Clarke, 020 8880 3141, 07050 039662 email: <a href="mailto:norman@clarktv.com">norman@clarktv.com</a> £12 at door, £10 in advance
<b>Children's &amp; Family Ministries Leadership Training Day</b>	Sunday 1 February 2004	Advent Centre, London. Bring your own lunch or eat nearby	SEC Children's & Family Ministries Department	Tel: SEC 01923 232728 email: <a href="mailto:kholford@secadventist.org.uk">kholford@secadventist.org.uk</a>
<b>Turning Water Into Wine</b> For married and engaged couples	27-29 February 2004	Highgate House, Creaton, Northampton £200 couple (£180 for SEC couples)	Bernie & Karen Holford	Tel: SEC 01923 232728 email: <a href="mailto:kholford@secadventist.org.uk">kholford@secadventist.org.uk</a>

Please submit advertisements in this format. Please make the church connection clear. For a complete list of upcoming events check out the database on the BUC website, [www.adventist.org.uk](http://www.adventist.org.uk).