

RECORD



While highlighting the continued growth of the church in the South Pacific Division, the midyear executive committee reports also recognised the impact of significant church member losses.

Growth tempered by losses

Wahroonga, NSW

Some 15,417 people joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific through baptism or profession of faith last year, reversing a four-year trend. This is according to a report presented by general secretary Dr Barry Oliver during the South Pacific Division's midyear executive committee meeting.

Almost 23,000 joined the church in 1999, but only 9000 joined in 2002. Forty-two people joined the church each day last year.

Dr Oliver described the increase in accessions as "gratifying," but noted this had not resulted in a corresponding increase in net growth. The number of church members increased by 4914 to 366,672 in 2003. However, membership increased by 3307 when only 9178 people joined the church in 2002. The years 1998 and 1999 are the benchmarks over the past 10 years. Membership increased by 18,500 in each of these years.

Dr Oliver gave an increase in membership losses as the reason for the lower-than-expected rate of net growth. The 10,503 losses in 2003 are up from the 6000 in 2002 and are the second highest over the past decade. Losses through apostasy, defined as when a member leaves the church, or missing total 9120, a rate of almost 60 per cent when compared to accessions.

"We always lament these losses," said Dr Oliver, who added that church members have a responsibility to pray for those who have ceased to be members of the church.

Dr Oliver noted a review of the membership rolls of the church in the Eastern and in the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea—the two largest conferences or missions in the South Pacific—which had contributed to the increase in losses.

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Pirates attack

Adventist

yacht

"Blowing in the wind"

I love the exhilaration of wind on water and that is why I love sailing. Perhaps this instinct comes from my grandfather who was a midshipman on the windjammers that plied their trade on the London–Sydney route—or if I am daring enough to confess it might come from my seventh or eighth grandfather removed who was allegedly a pirate. Whatever the reason, sailing has taught me a lot about myself and the wind.

At any given time, a properly tuned sailboat can sail to all points of the compass save about 30–35 degrees either side of directly into the wind. We call it the “no sail zone.” The only way to move in that zone is to ignore the wind and turn your backup motor on. The 300 degrees of sailing zone are divided into two main points of sail, namely upwind and downwind, which are then subdivided into finer points of sail.

You cannot sail directly into the wind, but the most exciting part of sailing is close to the wind. The boat heels over, the waves splash on the gunwales and sometimes over the prow. You really feel you are going places fast except that you have to tack (change direction) in order to get where you want to go. You can get there, but the course looks much like the way a giant pig would run!

By contrast you can sail at 90 degrees to the wind, which is usually the fastest point of sail. The boat does not heel as much but you make excellent time. Then, of course, there remains the downwind run with the wind at your back. The boat is level, the ride smooth. You really cover the distance, but it can be a bit boring with little to do until the wind suddenly changes or the waves tip the boat. Then the boom may crash over

was master and you were just crew gave you strength to carry on.

If I am honest, there have been moments when I put my motor on and tried to sail against the wind—sometimes knowingly, more often unwittingly—but it never got me far. It was too strong to fight against and it was better to go where the wind pleases.

I guess the answer is found “blowing in the wind”—letting the Spirit of God

***As I think back over my nearly 40 years of church work, I have learned the truth of Jesus’ statement to Nicodemus—
“the wind blows wherever it pleases.”***

and the boat jibe or, even worse, broach.

As I think back over my nearly 40 years of church work, I have learned the truth of Jesus’ statement to Nicodemus—“the wind blows wherever it pleases” (John 3:8*). I can think of moments when everything was plain sailing downwind, and just when I was getting comfortably bored the wind would change, my life would jibe and I would find myself going in another direction.

On many occasions it was hard going, upwind. You made progress slowly with deft little changes of direction to accommodate someone’s sensitivities or to keep a policy requirement you didn’t quite understand or appreciate. But whether downwind or upwind or even side-on, somehow you arrived at a destination where you knew God wanted you to be. There were stormy moments when you had to reef the sail and hang on. Even others when you were tempted to jump ship, but somehow the knowledge that the wind

take you where it will, knowing that your experience will always be diverse and often challenging, but the Spirit will lead you to a safe anchorage and an eternal harbour.

Beware of windless religion that seeks to stereotype religious experience! Our God is Spirit and seeks those who will worship him “in Spirit and truth” (John 4:23), no matter the course He may set before them. When the jagged rocks threaten your vessel, remember Him who is both Helmsman of your life and Lord of the wind and the waves.

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

David Syme
Executive director
Adventist
Development and
Relief Agency
South Pacific Division
He retires on July 9



ADRA transforms lives. You can help with your generous gift to today’s ADRA Disaster and Famine Relief Offering.

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

- Adventist school enrolments up in Australia • Literacy program for Malaita Island
- PAU women begin prison ministry • Aussie children affected by terrorism • and more

—Compiled by Scott Wegener—

● A total of **9041 students** are now attending Seventh-day Adventist schools around Australia, a **4.7 per cent growth** over 2003. An increase of 9.6 per cent in non-Adventist students means that 56 per cent of our students now come from non-Adventist homes. “This represents a fantastic mission field,” says Dr **John Hammond** (pictured), Education System Director for the Australian Union Conference. “Every one of these students takes part in worship, Bible classes and whole weeks devoted to spiritual emphasis.”



The Australian Adventist school system consists of 57 schools nationwide.

● A **literacy program** has been produced by **Joan Cornelius** (pictured) for the people of **Malaita Island** in the Solomon Islands. “The Lord gave me a burning desire to help my people,” she says, “especially in the area of literacy.” Based on the ‘Ants in the Apple’ reading and spelling program, it is built around talking, listening, reading and writing, and is modified to suit people with English as a second language. Thirteen sets of the “Phonics first” series have been sent to all 13 church schools of the Malaita Mission and 16 boxes of books to other



schools on the island. “While we need help to pay for the sets, the Lord has opened up a way to send materials to those schools,”

Waiting for true love at PAU



for true love” at the Friday and Sabbath services on April 30 and May 1. Pastor Kingston also spoke to an audience of 200 people comprising 16- to 30-year-olds at an Adventist youth program. Singles and married couples present were asked to sign a certificate of commitment stating that they will remain pure and faithful to their future partners and children—and if married, their marriages.

she says. “A businessman from Malaita permits me to send books in his container from Sydney **free** of charge.”

● When many mothers were getting breakfast in bed, a group of 16 women from **Pacific Adventist University** (PAU), made up of faculty staff and student wives, **visited the Bomana Prison on Mother’s Day**. The 27 female inmates, most of whom were mothers, and their duty warders appeared to be touched by the sharing of spiritual things and food. **Pele Alu**, the registrar, baked a Mother’s Day cake with “Happy Mother’s Day” inscribed on it for the prisoners. As part of PAU’s contribution to the Year of Evangelism, the Personal Ministries department of the church has organised Sabbath-morning branch Sabbath schools and **visits to the prison every Sabbath** to run worship services. **Francis Aia**, elder for personal ministries of the small group in the minimum-security unit at the Bomana

Pastor Andrew Kingston (pictured), associate youth director for the South Pacific Division, went to Pacific Adventist University, PNG, at the request of their counselling department. He spoke to students about “waiting

Prison, says, “As part of the annual rehabilitation program, each group is rostered to lead out in morning and afternoon devotions for the whole unit each day.”—*Laurel Rikis*

● The **Armadale church**, WA, had their teen and youth members present a special **Mother’s Day Sabbath school** with music, hymns, readings and performances. Every woman was presented with a corsage on arrival and a laminated bookmark during the service. That evening **Ron Dalais** and his team organised and presented a “Gospel in song” concert, which attracted a full house

of 130 attendees. Among other performers, **Nicholas Sande** (pictured) was the youngest to perform at four years of age. As a result of a collection and the selling of supper, a total of **\$A1265 was raised** for purchasing a new sound system.—*Kath Allen*



● Two new **TV advertising campaigns** will take place in **Griffith, NSW**, and **rural south Queensland**. Griffith’s campaign will consist of 70 30-second ads between June 5 and 13, for the free viewing of the *Search* video series. The rural south Queensland campaign will offer a free viewing of the *Who is Jesus?* video, shown from June 12 to 20 in 83 30-second ads.

● The first three of 11 children have successfully undergone **corrective heart surgery** at **Penang Adventist Hospital** in Malaysia as part of the international charity program, Children's HeartLink. The first candidate was six-year-old **Michel Lim Yew Peng** from Kuala Lumpur. After volunteer doctors from the United States corrected the problem between Michels

pulmonary artery and aorta, her mother, **Cecelia Lim**, said this was "her best ever Mother's Day gift." Doctors say there is a need for heart specialists in South-East Asia. The operations are sponsored by Adventists Heart Patients Fund, the Rotary Club of Penang, the Rotary Club of New Jersey, the Wong Keng Fei Fund and the Society for Sabah Heart Fund.—ANN

4000 doughnuts help Hearts in Action

More than 4000 Krispy Kreme doughnuts were consumed by Sydney Adventist Hospital staff, their friends and families in March as part of a fundraising drive by Hearts in Action—a team of health and other professionals coordinated by coronary-care staff.

Two of the coronary-care team have recently returned from Myanmar (Newsfront, April 10), where, as part of an Operation Open Heart team, they undertook lifesaving cardiac procedures, as well as teaching local staff new skills.

Renee Trotter (pictured left with her husband, Chris) from coronary care reports that more than \$A2000 was raised



to assist in the education and training of health professionals in Myanmar.

The Hearts in Action team are using various ways to raise money. Coronary care team leader Fiona Hyde (right) says, "To raise money for projects related to the Operation Open Heart Myanmar program, staff from coronary care, cardiac cath lab, cardiac rehab, theatres and Operation Open Heart Myanmar undertook a two-day, 40-km walk in April from Berowra to Hunters Hill."—*Pacemaker*

● **Adventist World Radio** (AWR), the short-wave service of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is now broadcasting in the **Uyghur language** to north-west China. The Uyghur—a Turkic people inhabiting north-western China and Kazakhstan—constitute a majority of the population of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China. The majority of the Uyghur people are followers of Islam, though in the past they have practised Buddhism, Christianity and other religions. Uyghur is one of 60 languages being used by AWR to communicate the gospel message around the world.—ANN

● **Thousands of children** around Australia were invited to write down **their prayers** for their family, their country and themselves. While the drought still hovered as a core issue for rural children, along with personal issues like school, family relationships and pets, this year's topic of prayers are starting to show the influence of **terrorism** seen around the world. Typical prayers this year were: "I pray that there'll be no bombings in Australia"; "I pray that there'll be no terrorist attacks and we'll get stronger"; "Dear God, protect us from armies"; "I pray for Australia that all the terrorists will stop bombing and start doing good things in the world so everyone can feel safe living in Australia." Now in its 15th year, this research is used as a measure of what our children have been feeling deeply about.—ACC

Days and offerings

June 12—Avondale College Offering

July 10—World Mission Budget Offering

July 17—Bible Sabbath (Bible Society)

Day

Off the record

● **Rosa Grolimund** (pictured) turned **100** on **04/04/04**. The ninth child of a family of 11, she is sadly the "last of her tribe." Mrs Grolimund recalls at age eight her mother and sister reading the Bible, **discovering the Sabbath** and



thinking they were the only Christians in the world to have such a belief. Later she joined the North Fitzroy church, Vic, and also trained at the Sydney Adventist Hospital, where

she met Max and together raised their children, Doris, Jeff and Keith.—*Focus*

● The **ADRACare** department of the **Wanganui church**, New Zealand, holds free clothing days each month for three consecutive days. Their hall is set up like a department store and people just make their choice to a set limit. Included are shoes, bags, household items, *Signs* magazines, books and leaflets. During 2003, **6234 articles of clothing** were given away, 310 pairs of shoes and **420 Signs, books and leaflets**. A total of 1282 people were helped and \$NZ641.45 received in donations. Led by Mrs **Vivienne Walker**, four other women help at these events. Their efforts have enabled the donation of \$NZ500 to the Wanganui Mayoral Relief Fund, and received acknowledgment in the local paper after the Wanganui-Manawatu flooding.—*Gloria Greenfield*

● Almost **500 Pathfinders** and their leaders invaded the Gosling property at Macksville, NSW, for a **Camporee** that included real soldiers and helicopters in an **Anzac ceremony**. Pathfinders laid wreaths for those who gave their lives for their country.



President shares his goals for church

Wahroonga, NSW

Opening the midyear meeting of the executive committee of the South Pacific Division (SPD), president Pastor Laurie Evans set out his objectives for the church. The committee met at the SPD offices in Wahroonga from May 18 to 20. Pastor Evans challenged church leaders to detail their goals and be held accountable to them.

“There is a risk in going on record when it comes to matters of this nature,” he commented. “But I believe those whom I have been elected to serve are entitled to know my agenda to improve the health of the church and keep it true to its reason for being.”

Pastor Evans outlined six major objectives and proposals for how they might be achieved, describing them as “goals I have set myself.”

In the context of this year’s Year of Evangelism, there was a strong emphasis on evangelism and communication in his remarks. His first goal noted this

emphasis: “To strengthen the witness and nurture sensitivity of the church.”

This objective includes the many facets of the Year of Evangelism across the division. But with growth come challenges, and Pastor Evans cited projections from the General Conference suggesting that by 2020 only 12.5 per cent of church members will have been Adventists in 2000.

“Essentially a new constituency will emerge. It is critical that our identity and values be articulated clearly,” said Pastor Evans, highlighting the need for an ongoing strategy for nurturing church members.

Pastor Evans identified both education and publishing ministries as areas requiring strengthening in their contribution to the church’s nurture and outreach, particularly in the Pacific islands.

Pastor Evans also challenged the church to explore new methods and technologies for spreading the church’s message. While commending the work of

the media centre, publishing house and communication department, he called for greater cooperation and integration between these communication entities.



Pastor Laurie Evans.

Pastor Evans’s other area of focus was the operation and administration of the church as a corporate body. “Church structure must never be regarded as static, and organisation must always be seen as the servant of mission and not the master of it,” he said.

“It’s important that we regularly review where we are at, our strengths and weaknesses and opportunities for carrying out our Heaven-appointed role more effectively,” said Pastor Evans.

“We are living in exciting yet sobering times and we must never let our vision fade: ‘To know, experience and share the hope we have in Jesus Christ.’”—**Nathan Brown**

Growth tempered by losses

(Continued from page 1)

Dr Oliver’s report also compared the accession rate of the church in the South Pacific with that of the other divisions of the worldwide church. The rates, from 2002, give the number of people joining the church through baptism or profession of faith for each 100 members.

While growth is better than decline, the growth rate of the church in the South Pacific—at only 2.56, the lowest of any Division in the worldwide church—could be much better. By contrast, the rate of growth for the church in Southern Asia is 19.95, and 3.86 for the church in North America

The net growth rate—the change in membership between the beginning of the year and the end of the year expressed as a percentage—of the church in the South Pacific in 2002 is 0.92 per cent, the third lowest of all the divisions.

The church in the South Pacific

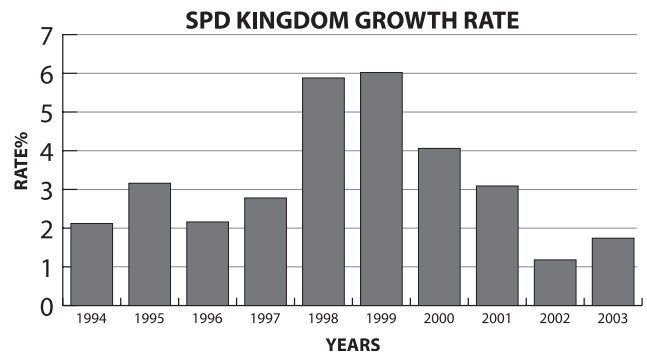
comprises 2.75 per cent of worldwide church membership.

Reporting “embarrassing”

Members of the executive committee have expressed concern about the difficulty in obtaining accurate and timely reports from the various entities of the church in the South Pacific. Dr Oliver raised the issue during the committee’s midyear meeting, noting it had become “increasingly embarrassing because it seems our church entities do not see providing these reports as a priority.”

Dr Oliver is working with the church’s statistician and the

general secretaries of the church’s unions to solve the problems they are experiencing in producing the reports. He moved a motion, approved by the committee, to improve the accountability of all entities responsible for collecting the statistical data.—**Brenton Stacey**



For a full report on the midyear meetings of the executive committee of the South Pacific Division, held May 18 to 20, see RECORD next week, June 12.

Year of Evangelism kid-style

Wahroonga, NSW

Children will have an opportunity to make a commitment to Jesus Christ during the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Year of Evangelism this year.

The church's "Kids: Light up your world" initiative "involves reaching out to children in the community and children using their gifts to witness to others," says Julie Weslake, the new director of Children's Ministries for the South Pacific Division.

"Church founder Ellen White assures us children aged from eight to 10 are not too young to understand God's plan of salvation," she says. "A study by the Barna Research Group backs this up. It found that if a person doesn't accept Jesus before the age of 14, the likelihood of them ever doing so is slim. The church will lose a generation of people unless we put more effort into reaching children with the Word of God."

Mrs Weslake says she hopes "Kids: Light up your world" will encourage members of local Adventist churches to: pray for unchurched children; revitalise children's Bible-study—or Sabbath school—classes; organise evangelistic programs, worship services and other memory events for children; establish play-groups; teach religion in



Julie Weslake.

state schools; and begin a video ministry for children by children.

Many churches have already taken up the "Kids: Light up your world" challenge.

The Adventist church in Papatoetoe, New Zealand, organised a commitment ceremony for 25 eight- to 14-year-olds who wanted to affirm their faith in Jesus.

"Some of the kids were making a first-time decision, while others had been living with Jesus as their best friend for years," says Keryn McCutcheon, the children's and family ministries coordinator at Papatoetoe. "The ceremony was the first time we had publicly acknowledged their decisions."

The church had organised a dinner for



Adventist children are being encouraged to share Jesus with their friends during this Year of Evangelism.

the children and teenagers and their families and "faith friends" the day before the ceremony. "It was interesting listening to the advice the parents gave to their kids and to the reasons the kids gave for making their decisions," says Mrs McCutcheon. "It was a real time of spiritual bonding."

Members of the junior Sabbath school at the Adventist church in Port Macquarie, NSW, plan to present their own evangelistic program this year.

"The kids will do it all—from the praise and worship to the preaching," says Pastor Justin Lawman, the minister of the church. "They've even formed prayer groups in Sabbath school to pray for their friends. We're excited about the potential."

Mrs Weslake, and a team of contributors, has produced a pack to promote "Kids: Light up your world." Included in the pack are: a booklet; a CD containing two songs from the Adventist children's singing group, maxiPraise; and a poster. She is sending two packs—one to the minister and one to the children's ministries leader—to each local Adventist church.

"Children's evangelism is a process that requires people to build relationships with children and mentor their spiritual growth," says Mrs Weslake. "I hope parents and local church leaders take up the challenge."—**Brenton Stacey**

Experiential week of prayer at Fox Valley

To meet the desire of some young adults to move away from the traditional Week of Prayer format, Fox Valley Community church (FVCC), NSW, recently offered an experience called Mosaic from March 29 to April 4.

"Mosaic was a shift away from a program, music- and speaker-driven week, and a shift toward engaging people in prayer, encouraging creativity and experimentation on their spiritual journey," says George Kovan-Boss, assistant youth pastor for FVCC. "Mosaic was very fluid," he says. "Starting casually with unplugged music in a cafe-type setting, this led into worship through music, and a very brief focal point of thought."

A labyrinth prayer journey was a key component of Mosaic. Labyrinths were a feature of many medieval cathedrals. Unlike a maze, they have only one path with no dead ends. People walk the labyrinth slowly as a spiritual exercise and an aid to contemplative prayer and reflection.



Andrew Robinson

Participants at Mosaic—Fox Valley Community church's experiential week of prayer—had opportunities to interact and reflect with the spiritual subject matter at various stations around the room.

As well as the labyrinth guided prayer walk, Mosaic included individual creative prayer stations, contemplative artwork, a symbolic water and candle exercise, and an isolated Bible space.

"The youth embraced this interactive and engaging mechanism, and resonated deeply with the laid-back, unstructured approach," reports Mr Kovan-Boss. He adds, "Their spirituality was evidently deepened."—**Kellie Hancock**

Pirates attack Adventist ministry yacht

Honiara, Solomon Islands

Pacific Yacht Ministries (PYM) vessel *Lavinia* was raided by pirates while it was moored near Honiara, Solomon Islands, on May 9.

Captain of the yacht Nick Clark was alone onboard, but was unharmed. He had been preparing to depart the Solomons for Vanuatu to meet up with another PYM vessel, *Windago*, and had become sick with malaria. While he was bedridden below deck for two days, the pirates came aboard during the night and stole the inflatable dinghy and motor.

"These are essential for transporting medical and dental teams into the remote villages we work in," says PYM boat-operations manager Steve Woodward. "The boat and motor cost about \$A8000, and as we had to arrange

immediate replacement, this has depleted our emergency fund."

The attack is believed to be a very isolated case. Mr Clark told Mr Woodward via satellite phone the villagers were "deeply shamed and sorry" a PYM vessel had been attacked this way. The chief led a search, recovered the motor, brought the culprits to justice, and pleaded with Mr Clark to still return with the doctor next year.

This year PYM aims to treat up to 12,000 medical and dental patients, and to reach many more with the gospel. "When we serve people's medical

needs, they become open to seeking the God we serve," says Mr Woodward.—**Kellie Hancock**

For more information log on to <www.pacificyachtministries.org>.



Pirates boarded *Lavinia* while her captain, Nick Clark, was bedridden with malaria.

Radio offering returns

Wahroonga, NSW

Approximately 20 per cent of the almost \$A160,000 you gave to the Adventist World Radio (AWR) Offering last year has returned to the South Pacific.

The Fiji Misson has received \$US15,000 to help run its Hope FM radio station. Avondale College, received \$US6000 to help recoup the cost of producing University Roundtable, a 15-minute panel program previewing the Adult Sabbath School Bible-study Guide that airs on AWR each week. The Papua New Guinea Union Mission received \$US4000 for new studio equipment to help produce the Voice of Hope, a 50-minute lifestyle program that airs on the National Broadcasting Corporation's Karai National Radio each week.

The total of the offering given by church members in the South Pacific Division last year is almost \$US30,000 up on the figure for 2002 and more than \$US50,000 up on 2001.—**Brenton Stacey**



Tevita Wagamailau presents the Voice of Hope on the Fiji Mission's Hope FM. The radio station has received \$US15,000 from the Adventist World Radio Offering.

Kids Klub on Lord Howe Island

Twenty children on Lord Howe Island met together to have fun and learn about Jesus during a Kids Klub held April 17-24.

Pastor Wes Tolhurst, director of Youth Ministries for the Greater Sydney Conference, along with his wife, Melissa, organised the program and travelled to Lord Howe Island to spend time with the local Adventist children and youth. "Ministry to children on the island has long been a reason for church growth on Lord Howe," says Pastor Tolhurst. "The Adventist Church is the largest and most vital of the three churches on the island. And it certainly has the most children."

Pastor Ken and Elaine Martin have been volunteer ministers on Lord Howe for the past 18 months. "The kids loved Kids Klub," he reports. "Many of the high-school students, who attend school on mainland Australia, came home for term-break holidays and helped Wes and Melissa run the program."

From a total island population of 330, about 40 people attend the Adventist worship service each Sabbath. The local Adventurer club has six children regularly attending. "Kids Klub certainly



Kids Klub participants relax with Melissa Tolhurst (pictured, right) on the beach after a glass-bottom boat trip sponsored by the Hiscoe family.

made an impact on the island," says Pastor Martin. "Our Adventurer leader, Judy Shick, held a social program shortly after the Kids Klub and 27 children came!"—**Kellie Hancock**

The unique work of ADRA

by Rita Karraz

Since the development of the ADRAcare program by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Australia in 2000, many programs have joined the ADRA network to build what is shaping up to be an innovative and exciting area of outreach and community development for the Adventist Church. The model that is evolving is one where local church groups are able to identify areas of need in their local community by networking with existing organisations, looking at their strengths and resources and then matching the two.

This a unique model of community development, which has resulted in a number of innovative and exciting programs, such as the hot air balloon program in central New South Wales and a networking program on the Gold Coast (Queensland). The network also includes a number of refuges, community centres and many op-shops (providing some of the much-needed financial resources). One can find many opportunities to get involved and become excited by what the church is doing.

At the ADRA national conference held in May the question of the unique nature of these programs was raised. The national ADRAcare network has a number of unique characteristics.

A unique model

The model itself is unique. Many church groups around Australia provide assistance to the needy through a range of programs and services. We are all aware of the work of St Vincent De Paul, the Salvos, Anglicare and so on. Most church organisations have an identified welfare arm that provides assistance to the community.

For years, the Adventist Church seemed to be doing little in this area in Australia. ADRA's international work is well known and highly regarded, but we have struggled to find our place in Australia. In recent years much of the welfare dollar in community services in Australia has been going to the large church-based charities providing services that are driven from the top. This has not been the case with ADRA. Although ADRA does have and are working toward increasing the opportunities to receive government funding, ADRA's approach will provide services driven by the local community.

ADRA is developing a model that will allow the church to address local needs from a local level. This is exciting, it is innovative and has the capacity to enhance local communities and empower individuals to bring about positive change in their own lives. This work is developmental and moves beyond the hand-out mentality of much of the traditional church-based welfare.

Volunteers

The second unique characteristic is that a volunteer work force does much of the hands-on work provided in ADRA's programs. Volunteers work tirelessly to provide the many services and programs. They are an inspiration, and personify the love of Jesus to the community around them through the services they offer.


What is particularly inspirational about the work of many of these volunteers is that they not only give much of their time, but they are also committed to providing a professional service. Their willingness to undertake training, develop clear policy guidelines and resources is commendable. Some of the ADRAcare

centres have a paid manager to support the work that is done, and this is often a critical aspect of professionalism. However, this is not always possible without the backing of substantial financial resources.

Developing

Finally, we are developing. No-one at ADRA—Australia would say that we are “there” when it comes to our national program. The program is still in its infancy. Yet, with the guidance and leadership of ADRA administration, the commitment of the local conferences and above all the support and dedication of our local churches, ADRA will develop a network of services that the church can be proud of. More importantly, it will glorify God and touch people where they are hurting.

It really is up to church members to take the challenge and consider the needs in their local area. Talk to services in your area, visit your local council and discuss the needs with them, see what you can offer and dream a dream that God can help you to make come true.

A challenge to each church member is to take the time to find out about these programs, support your local programs or start a new program, and be proud of the work that is being done. All church members have the opportunity to get involved and make a difference. Our church has a wealth of human resources, skills and abilities. By working together we can make an impact. We can “let our little light shine.” 

Rita Karraz is a lecturer in welfare studies at TAFE in Sydney and attends the Ashfield church.

ADRA Disaster and Famine Relief Offering—today

Researching your church

by Nathan Brown

In this Year of Evangelism, the Institute of Church Ministry (ICM) will celebrate 18 years of helping local church evangelism. RECORD spoke with Dr Doug Robertson, director of ICM.



Dr Doug Robertson.

Can you give us a brief history of ICM?

From small beginnings in 1986, ICM today plays a significant role in assisting local churches all over Australia and New Zealand, preparing them for effective evangelism in

their communities. During its period of operation, the ICM has operated out of three different locations: five years out of Avondale College, 10 years from the South Pacific Division offices and, for the last three, back again at Avondale.

Who have been the personnel involved with ICM?

I'm the third director to have led the Institute. Dr Alwyn Salom founded ICM, and shouldered the major part in leading church consultancies and researching local church community profiles throughout ICM's existence. And Dr Steve Currow was involved.

What does ICM contribute to the mission of the church?

The ICM fulfils a unique role in the South Pacific Division by providing consultancy services and training opportunities for congregations, which empowers them for more successful evangelism in their local communities. Central to the consultancy process is the development of community profiles researched from National Census data and local community demographic material. This data assists a local congregation to gain a clear and

realistic understanding of the needs that exist among the different people groups that live in its surrounding area. With this information in hand, congregations are able to identify potential areas for effective ministry to which they can direct local ministry resources. To date, the institute has prepared community profiles for more than 400 different local churches in Australia and New Zealand, assisting them in creating new ministries that really meet people's needs.

How else can ICM help a local church?

A further part of the consultancy process provided by ICM is to assist congregations through visioning and strategic planning activities that help churches to focus on fulfilling the evangelistic mission of the church. ICM offers a wide range of training and equipping seminars, in such areas as recruiting, training, motivating and supporting volunteers; sharing one's faith with secular people; creating a user-friendly church; and outreach training for active senior members.

And ICM has also been making an impact beyond our division, I hear.

Yes. For the past six years, ICM has been going offshore with its services. Various conferences, assessment seminars and training activities have been provided to a number of churches in Japan.

You mentioned government census details—where else does ICM get information?

ICM works in close cooperation with the directors of the Australian National Church Life Survey (NCLS). For the past 15 years, the NCLS has conducted nationwide surveys of local church life, involving some 324,000 church attendees in 6900 separate congregations across Australia. The survey, conducted every five years, has involved 20 different Christian

denominations, including Adventists, and provides important information that assists local congregations to understand the current state of their church and its impact on surrounding communities. ICM has produced three

reports based on the Adventist data taken from the NCLS, which have been reported in RECORD and is currently preparing the results of the most recent survey, which will be available later this year.

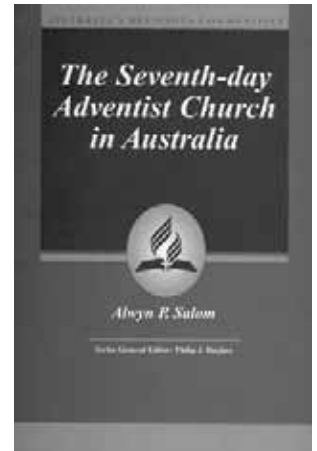
What other resources are available from ICM?

Another major research project recently carried out by ICM has resulted in the publication of a book—*The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia*, which was published in 2002. It's soon to be advertised in RECORD. The research for the book was completed by various personnel from the South Pacific Division and Avondale College, and is edited by Dr Alwyn Salom. The research covers the development of the history, beliefs, practice and demographics of the Adventist Church in Australia.

Where do churches go for more information about ICM?

For more about the institute, people should phone or write to me, Doug Robertson, at Avondale College. They can also email me directly.*

* email doug.robertson@avondale.edu.au
phone +61 2 4980 2228



Nathan Brown is editor of RECORD.

Breakfast?

by A Gran

I was driving past the local cemetery with my six-year-old grandson, when we noticed a row of trees covered with beautiful red flowers. I turned in to make a closer inspection, only to discover this was the first time Pete had ever been inside a cemetery, even though we drove past this one on a regular basis.

Pete has an insatiable interest in everything. So when we saw a digger working on a grave, we sat to watch. Watching machinery at work was not new to either of us. In fact in the past six years I have probably sat watching more machinery than I have in the past 60 years. Of course there were many questions, especially when the digging was completed and workmen laid out artificial grass, erected a sunshade and placed out chairs. Obviously there would be a funeral that day. Later we inspected the hole and he was amazed at the size, especially the depth.

Back into the car, we drove past the lawn section on our way to the flowering trees. I mentioned that two of his great-grandmothers were buried here side by side. “Would you like to see the graves?” I asked.

He was out of the car as soon as we stopped. More questions. I began describing what they both looked like and what they had died from, while thinking how much joy this dynamic great-grandson would have given each of them. Both had struggled to become Adventists, and now three generations later their Christian influence lived on.

We noticed that several graves in the immediate area were of babies, and Pete was quick to comment on this. He is well aware of the story of his birth and first few weeks of life as he struggled with a rare heart condition, was airlifted to a hospital

in our capital city and underwent open-heart surgery with only a 5 per cent chance of survival. This miracle boy, now at school and enjoying life, knew he could have been one of those babies. I did too, and my heart went up in gratitude once more to a loving heavenly Father who answers prayers and works miracles.



We moved from the lawn section to the older section with its assortment of tombstones standing at various angles—and still the questions flowed. We drove past several crypts and discussed why some families chose to be buried this way. Finally we arrived on a small hill overlooking the entire cemetery, where we could see how extensive it really was. We could even see the flowering trees in the distance! Pete was speechless at last.

Being a great believer in Deuteronomy 6:7, which encourages us to seize every opportunity to discuss scripture with children, I began to explain, as briefly as possible, about death. It was like a long, long sleep and those who had died loving Jesus would wake up and come out of their graves to rise up and meet Him when He returned to this earth, I concluded.

But I was totally unprepared for his next question: “But Gran, who is going to get them all breakfast?”

To Pete’s mind it was so simple. He always enjoys breakfast as soon as he wakes, so naturally breakfast would be important to all these people when they awoke from such a long sleep. Now I was speechless. This particular thought had never occurred to me. I began to wonder how many, if any, of the hundreds buried here had died of starvation. Probably none—after all this was Australia—but what of graves around the world? In some countries this would be a real possibility, along with the fact that there would also be hundreds, probably thousands, who would come forth at this resurrection from unmarked graves. I touched briefly on these points and, looking for a positive, said that if Jesus thought it necessary I was sure he would perform a miracle and provide breakfast. We talked about the “loaves and fishes” story.

Reluctantly I started the car. It had been a magic moment with my grandson and one I will never forget. *But how much of what we had discussed would he remember?* I wondered. I silently asked God for another miracle: that Pete would grow up to be a fine Christian man always interested in the needs of others, including those who may not have enough to eat. **R**

A Gran is a pseudonym.

Throwing stones

by Ian Grice

We can learn from the tragic tale of one of history's great rulers, who faced a crisis because of his personal weaknesses. The story is told this way: "When David and his people got close to Bahurim, a city on the road from Jerusalem to Jordan, a man named Shimei from the tribe of Benjamin and a relative of Saul came out cursing. When he got close to David he began throwing stones at him and his officials, even though they were all surrounded by the king's bodyguards." (2 Samuel 16:5, 6*).

Background

David, king of Israel, was fleeing for his life, accompanied by his household and friends. It was something he'd brought on himself. He could taste the bitterness of his humiliation. Overindulgent with his son Absalom, he'd let tiredness and a lowered spirituality impact his rulership. His friends were exasperated with him. Present circumstances contrasted alarmingly with the vibrant, spiritual beginning of his reign. Politically, it seemed David was now consigned to the cemetery for burnt-out leaders.

It would not be surprising if David had opted for a grand finale—the man throwing dust and rocks at him was Saul's relative—and Saul had made David's life uncomfortable for many years. David remembered how hard and lonely those years had been. Saul's daughter, Michal, had been given to him in marriage, later to be torn from his side and given to another. After he regained her by force, Michal had mocked him as he celebrated victory, dancing before the Lord. He had not had good experiences with the house of Saul.

He thought sorrowfully of Mephibosheth, his best friend Jonathan's son. David had given him great honour in the palace for his father's sake. Where was Mephibosheth now that David needed the comfort of friends? Rumour had it

Mephibosheth was glad David had left the capital. (What a disappointment he was!)

Abishai was well aware the king's foolishness had caused discomfort to family and friends. He was loyal, but he was frustrated. David still had enough clout and contacts to rally some troops and make a stand and check Absalom's ambitious plot.

Instead, he was rolling over, voluntarily walking away from the comforts of the palace and choosing the hardship of wilderness living. That lifestyle was tolerable in the days of his youth, but did he realise he was no longer young, and was punishing friends and family into the bargain? And what about his kingdom—how could he turn God's people over to his ungodly son to rule?

These were Abishai's thoughts as the traitor Shimei made his irritating gestures and remarks to the fleeing company. *Didn't anyone in this group have courage anymore?*

Off with his head?

Abishai's mind snapped. "Why don't you let me go over and cut off his head for saying that?" (2 Samuel 16:9), he asked.

It's good to have loyal supporters! You can always count on friends to have an instant solution when you are down and out, looking for a clear course of action.



Some friends have an outstanding capacity to identify your problems and urge a quick response.

Sometimes we find a scapegoat for the problems we suffer, often rightly so, but more often they are convenient diversions to vent our frustrations. When we think we're wrongly treated, the human tendency is to deal with the problem by beheading anyone entering our space. Our nature seeks to destroy troublemakers, in a vain attempt to make problems disappear, and we hit out.

Unfortunately we possess limited human vision and are often wrong in our assessments. We discover we've taken the head off an innocent, the real culprit escaping while we're busy indiscriminately striking. He or she escapes—to prepare for the next round when he can throw more dust and rock.

Shimei was conducting his personal war openly, and David may have understood

his frustration. Shimei had grown up in an environment where the nation deferred to his family, and he had basked in that glory. But nobody in the nation cared for the house of Saul now. David understood the frustration Shimei felt in his changed circumstance, and the despair of his own friends and family as well.

Other perspectives

The story continues: "Turning to Abishai he said, 'You and your brother are the bravest men I have, but we don't think the same. The Lord may have let him come and curse me publicly for a reason'" (2 Samuel 16:10). Sometimes the enemy is less dangerous than a friend. A friend's love and concern affects their capacity to offer an impartial, detached assessment of the situation we face. There may be a need for honesty, and even kindly censure, to prevent our further humiliation.

It is unfortunate when a friend feels it their duty to withhold the truth rather than upset us. Empathy can cause them to refrain from honest counsel when we target a convenient scapegoat, and we are denying our responsibility for the trouble we are in. They seek to protect our egos, when our best good would be served by helping us face reality.

A true friend performs the ultimate act of friendship, when putting matters into correct perspective. They encourage introspection, so we can make changes in our life and avoid similar disturbing occurrences in the future.

The most reliable friend a man or woman can have is Jesus. He is on our side. He knows how to bolster our courage, giving us a timely morale boost when we need it most. But He also knows how to lay it on the line and be scrupulously honest when He sees we need to lift our game. He never encourages us to lay the blame for our own foolishness upon the shoulders of others.

Jesus encourages us to face up to life, to be accountable for our actions and to seek ways we can improve our performance. We may not like the rebukes He has to give us occasionally, but we know from experience we can trust Him and the counsel He gives. He wants us to show courage, to take personal responsibility and learn from the mistakes we make. He knows all about the

discouragements of life on earth, so His sympathies are genuine.

And, perhaps, we can also understand Shimei's actions. He, too, was looking for scapegoats. His family had gone from honour to mediocrity, from power to subservience, from fame to nonentity status. Saul had resisted God, and the kingdom had been wrested from him.

Our actions have an effect on our immediate families, our society and, in extreme cases, our nation. When we're so affected, it's hard to be impartial and see cause and effect at work. The only thing on Shimei's horizon was that David had replaced Saul on the throne. He would not concede God was responsible rather than David. His privileges had evaporated, and his humiliation was equal to what David was now suffering. Frustration and bitterness were his lot too. In David's discomfort, he felt avenged, and emotions prudently bottled those long years prompted Shimei's irresponsible actions.

Forgiveness and trust

David had sown the wind, and was now reaping the whirlwind. In such circumstances, many of us would have lashed out at whoever strayed onto our pathway, be they friend or foe. David was weak in many ways, just like you and me, but David was great in his innermost spirit. Revenge is for the Lord. Punishment and adversity are to be shouldered in a mature way, and should be used as a learning experience and a means of personal growth.


God forgave David's weaknesses because he humbly confessed them, and recognised the part they had played in this seemingly impossible situation. While this did not prompt him to an immediate turnabout in spirit, he was content to leave it to the Lord to work things out.

David believed all things work together for good to those who love the Lord. This is why, when God balanced the assets and liabilities of their mutual relationship, the shortfall could be covered by David's friend, Jesus. David's name was entered into the book of life.

What about you?

Are you experiencing stones of adversity raining down on you today? Are people seeking your humiliation and discomfort? Are your friends giving you good advice as you look for some meaning in the circumstances and events of your life, or are they helping you look for scapegoats?


We can safely accept God's will and direction for us today. He will guide us through our troubled experiences if we trust Him fully. Our ultimate happiness here, and in the world to come, is assured, if we can develop the same mind that David had.

When the stones of adversity fall on us, leave the situation to the Lord. He will work it out to our advantage. 

** All Bible quotations are taken from the Clear Word paraphrase.*

Ian Grice writes from Little Mountain, Queensland.

Just for children



"Give me understanding, and I shall keep your law."

Psalm 119:34

From the horse's mouth

Milton Hook, NSW

I heartily agree with the gist of David Hancock (May 15), but he mentions one point that warrants further comment. Through no fault of his own, he (and a number of other correspondents) suggests that true justification and/or sanctification was taught by E J Waggoner at the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference Session.

This view is largely based on octogenarian and nonagenarian reminiscences—a second-rate research method used by early church historians. It took historian David McMahon to correct this misinformation. He condensed Waggoner's salvation theology from primary sources, using *Signs of the Times* (US) articles he published in the period 1884-90.

McMahon discovered one of Waggoner's main briefs: If people would allow the Holy Spirit to literally dwell inside them—in large doses, as it were—then they would be enabled to keep God's law perfectly (see, for example, *Signs of the Times*, June 3, 1886, page 326). The objective righteousness of Christ was diminished in preference for a fictitious brand of human righteousness, supposedly equal to God's, achieved by and owned by the Christian as an integral part of one's nature and attained only by a lifelong process of struggle.

Waggoner taught human perfectionism of the highest order. His literalisation of figurative expressions ("Christ in us" and

"I will put My Spirit within you," for example), naturally, led him into pantheism in the 1890s.

McMahon's book, *Ellet J Waggoner: The Myth and the Man*, is succinct. It discusses the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, pitching it against the pitfalls of human perfectionism. He trod on the traditional Seventh-day Adventist historical interpretation, but time will vindicate him.

doctrines of the church, but I believe there is also a great need in our church for all to be taught how to be loving and lovable Christians. I guess it's because there is so much personal and family dysfunction in our society that many haven't yet reached "kindergarten" in the subject of interpersonal relationships. There is much we can learn: how to listen to each other, really listen, how to give feedback in a

Waggoner taught human perfectionism of the highest order.

It's self-evident

Jerzy Nurzynski, Qld

I believe the majority of church members will not need a book to tell them that prophets are human. While Graeme Bradford's book *Prophets Are Human* (Laurie Evans, May 1) may be of interest to some who have problems with the ministry of Ellen White, it isn't essential for salvation. It doesn't need any special promotion or advertising.

Broader view of the narrow way

Deirdre Smith, Tas

Graham Sutherland's letter concerning standards and relationships (May 8, 2004) struck a chord with me. It's good that we are well educated in the knowledge of the

gracious way, as the Lord taught us in Matthew 18:15—that is, how to tell the truth in love so healing can take place, how to be patient with the weaknesses of each other as we would like others to be gracious to us.

There is also much to learn about the art of bearing one another's burden. On the other hand we could all benefit by learning how to examine our own hearts: Are we on a power agenda, or are we pretending everything is OK when it isn't, or are we trying to score points with others or in our relationship with Jesus?

What a little bit of heaven it is when we look forward to the Sabbath because we simply love to be together, where we can trust each other, and be trusted with the sorrows, disappointments and the heart-aches each one has in life—all Bible-based stuff, I believe.

Clarification

W J Hebbard, Qld

I was disturbed on reading John Graz's "You are the salt of the earth," (Review, May 8). If one reads *Gospel Workers* page 387, which he quotes, one discovers it is talking about voting in respect to temperance—which is all right—not in respect to politics. You can read what Ellen White has to say about voting for and joining political parties on pages 391-6.

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.



Retirements

Trans-Pacific Union Mission

●John Dusaru. ●Susanna Faamani.
●Daniel John. ●Stephen Kingi. ●Jama-
makera Naghu. ●Sepeti Titoko.

Papua New Guinea Union Mission

●Hayana Iabei. ●Kingsford Ilagai.
●Mamu Maru. ●Mark Matthew. ●Levi
Namaloi. ●Gauma Ou. ●Stephen
Panc. ●Ila Roani.

New Zealand Pacific Union Conference

●Noelene Edwards. ●Penu Moto
Inoke

Weddings

Hillier—Hammond. Dwight Nathan Hillier, son of Allan and Val Hillier (Sydney, NSW), and Olivia Ann Hammond, daughter of Dr Brian and Dorothy Hammond (Sydney), were married on 18.4.04 in the Wairoonga Adventist church
Eric Greenwell, Wal Taylor

Hodgkinson—Borody. John Keith Hodgkinson (Toowoomba, Qld) and Margarita Alessandra Borody (Cherrybrook, NSW) were married on 2.5.04 in Beecroft Presbyterian church, Sydney.
Jason Borody, Tom Ludowicz

Swanborough—Moore. Lawrence Kevin Swanborough and Darlene Helen Moore were married on 11.4.04 at Laurel Bank Park, Toowoomba, Qld.
Sid Griffith

Obituaries

Cantrill, Frank Brazewell, born 9.7.1902 in Sheffield, England; died 20.4.04 at Cooranbong, NSW. He migrated to Australia more than 80 years ago, never seeing his homeland or family again. He married Margaret Rowe and they raised their family of 10 at Lakes Entrance, Vic, and Eden, NSW. He was predeceased by his wife in 1990; also his son, Lewis, in 1983. He is survived by his children, Elaine, Betty, Frank, Allan, Edna, Brian, Bruce, Beverly and Judy; their spouses; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
Wendy Hergenhan

Hooper, Herbert John, born 28.5.1937 at Wollongong, NSW; died 27.3.04 at Coffs Harbour Health Campus. He is survived by his wife, Sarah (Blacktown); his children and their spouses, Julie and Rick Geering (Sydney), Robert and Tania (Coffs Harbour); and his stepchildren, Nemeuel, Nolan and Niko (all of Sydney). John was a kind and friendly man who will be greatly missed by his family, friends and workmates from the Coffs Harbour City Council.
Eric Greenwell

Goodrick, Ngapoko, born 26.1.1926 in Vaipae, Aitutaki, Cook Islands; died 12.2.04 in Auckland, NZ. On 2.12.42 she married Nolan. She was predeceased by

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her husband in 1985; also her children, Max, Leonie and Clifford. She is survived by her children, Noeline, Keith and Geoffrey; her daughters-in-law, Jeanette and Pinty; her sons-in-law, Cliff and Garry; her 14 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. Gardening was something Ngapoko truly loved. She was actively involved in the local Country Women's Institute and gardening clubs. She also loved her family and her church family.
Kayle De Waal, Peter Howard

Millington, Joyce Gertrude, born 7.5.1925 in Vic; died 30.4.04 in Grace McKeller Centre, Geelong, after a long illness. She was predeceased by her first husband, Harry Millington, on 23.5.54; also her second husband, Mervyn Harvey, on 23.11.02, two weeks after Joyce went into Grace McKeller Centre for ongoing care. Her son, Kevin, also predeceased her on 23.11.70. She is survived by her granddaughter, Janet, and members of the Millington and Harvey families. She will be greatly missed by them and her church family. Although separated by illness and circumstances beyond her control, Joyce maintained her commitment and love for her Lord Jesus.
John O'Malley

Pascoe, Pastor William Lewis, born 11.2.1912 in Auckland, NZ; died 13.4.04 at Wairoonga, NSW. In 1934 he married Mona O'Connor, who predeceased him. He is survived by his daughters, Frances Kench (Wairoonga), Margaret Wylie (Maryland, USA); his son, Bryce (Vancouver, Washington State); their spouses; his brothers, Leslie, Vince, Martin and Lindsay; his five grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. During his church employment of 48 years, he served as division treasurer in his home division and in the

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*Athal Tolhurst
Malcolm Allen, Bert Cozens*

Polglase, John Vernon, born 29.4.1919 at Warrnambool, Vic; died 25.2.04 in the Swan District Hospital, Perth, WA. He is survived by his wife, Florence; his children, John (Sydney, NSW), Kay Hill, Robert and Paul. Vern was not an up-front person, but contributed much behind the scenes.
Lynn Weber

Stanley, Beryl Mary (nee Cooper), born 16.6.1914 at Devon, England; died 14.3.04 in Perth, WA. Beryl sailed to Australia in 1928, settling in SA. She later moved to Carmel College, Perth, WA, where she met and married Colton Stanley, in 1934, who predeceased her in 1989. She is survived by her children, Dennis, Cal, Lynn, Tresna Oakes and Laurie. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord for their works do follow them."
Philip Rhodes

Wilkinson, Charlotte Hope (Lottie), born 30.6.1910 at Leith, Scotland; died 12.3.04 at Sherwin Lodge Nursing Home, Rossmoyne, WA. Lottie and her family came to Australia in 1923 and settled in Adelaide, SA. In 1930 she married Monte Jaspas, who predeceased her in 1964. In 1974 she married Earnest Wilkinson. She is survived by her stepchildren and their spouses, Gwen and Bill Chapman (Perth), Adrienne and George Hunt (Qld), Wendy and Trevor Blucher (SA), Terry and Bev Wilkinson (London, UK); her grandchildren; her great-grandchildren; and her nine great-great-grandchildren.
Philip Rhodes

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School Reunion—Auckland Seventh-day Adventist High School—March 25-27, 2005 (Easter weekend). All ex-students, staff and board members are invited to attend and celebrate 35 years of Adventist education on our current site in Mangere Bridge. Registration forms are available by contacting our school office: phone (09) 275 9640; fax (09) 275 5380; email <reunion@asdah.school.nz>.

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Class reunion—Victoria Park Adventist High School, WA (now Carmel Adventist College), 1974 (Year 10). A reunion is being organised for October 2, 2004. If you attended or know of anyone who did, please contact Richard Swannell on email <richard@swannell.net>.

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Finally

A Sunday school teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and suddenly turned into a pillar of salt. "My mother looked back once while she was driving," contributed little Johnny, "and she turned into a telephone pole."

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