

RECORD

June 18, 2005



Members of the South Pacific Division's executive committee, meeting at the SPD headquarters from May 24 to 26, reflected on the progress of the church in the past five years and recommended significant administrative changes to the division session to be held later this year.

Church gears up for sessions

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

The last meeting of the current executive committee of the South Pacific Division (SPD)—held May 24 to 26—has voted and recommended a number of actions to the SPD session to streamline church administration, continue the process of legal incorporation and reform procedures for the election of church officers. And the SPD session—to be held in Melbourne, Vic, beginning April 30—could be the last such session, if a proposal recommended by the executive committee is adopted at that meeting.

“These have been historic meetings,” commented Pastor Ray Coombe, assistant to the SPD president and long-time committee member, at the conclusion of the three-day meeting. “The decisions and recommendations made here will shape the

administration and mission of the church into the future.”

In a year of sessions—General Conference, SPD and unions—the proposal to discontinue division sessions is perhaps most historic. SPD president Pastor Laurie Evans explained to committee members that division sessions arise from a historical anomaly, with the SPD the only division in the worldwide church to hold such meetings.

“Operating the way we have, has given the division a higher profile than we need to have,” said Pastor Evans. “We are a branch office of the General Conference in this region and this proposal will help us operate as such.”

The proposal would see an expanded SPD delegation to General Conference ses-

sions and the first meeting of the new division executive committee fulfilling the present functions of the division session. While emphasising this proposal is not financially driven, Pastor Evans suggested the plan would save the church as much as \$A800,000 in each five-year period.

As the current five-yearly church cycle draws to a close, church administrators used the midyear meetings to honour a number of long-term church employees who will be retiring in coming months and to thank the members of the division executive committee for their service to the church in this quinquennium.—*Nathan Brown*

For more reports from the South Pacific Division executive committee's midyear meetings, see pages 3 to 6.



Social justice and humanitarian action are not optional extras to our Christianity.

This is an emergency!

OUR CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS are filled with reports, initiatives, strategies and policies: all important things, but sometimes dwarfed when the outside world makes itself felt in our gatherings. And that was what happened at the recent South Pacific Division executive committee (the reports of which you can read in this issue of RECORD).

It seemed innocuous enough—another report from another commission. But then it wasn't. Suddenly we were confronted with tens of thousands of people dying in our region from a disease that is preventable and to which we as a church should be able to provide some positive answers.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is exploding in our part of the world (see page 5). In Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and other places in the Pacific, health workers are beginning to see this new killer stalking nations, villages, families and particularly young people. These are our "neighbours" in every sense of the world and we must stop to help them (see Luke 10:30-37). Perhaps these are those of whom Jesus will say, "I was sick, and you cared for me" (Matthew 25:36, NLT).

Various people working on the issue of HIV/AIDS in Africa and around the world have pointed out that this is not an issue of charity; rather, it is an issue of justice. Disasters always have the greatest impact on the poorest people and nations. It is not a coincidence that 95 per cent of HIV/AIDS cases are found in developing countries. We must act.

In an issue so large and complex, we will make mistakes in our responses. But when we do, let us always err on the side of generosity and the preservation of life. One of the difficult moral and cultural discussions is whether we promote the use of condoms—and distribute them. There is always the risk this will be misrepresented as encouraging increased sexual activity, but we should do this simply because we do not want people to die.

Our response—or not—to this horrifying tragedy may be a defining moment for our church in this region. Our church's transnational, tiered structure provides a unique placement to take a practical lead on this issue, partnering with governments, aid agencies and other non-government organisations, and other denominations and religious groups. But the time is now.

Every missed opportunity and delayed response is an eloquent but heartbreaking sermon on the irrelevance of our church and our message. God said as much through Amos: "I hate all your show and pretense—the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies. . . . Away with your hymns of praise! They are only noise to my ears. . . . Instead, I want to see a mighty flood of justice, a river of righteous living that will never run dry" (Amos 5:21-24, NLT). Otherwise good acts of worship or service are nullified by denying or ignoring the real needs of others.

So what can we do about HIV/AIDS in our region?

Like any well-managed organisation,

our church has significant financial reserves. Sometime soon, perhaps we will realise this is the proverbial "rainy day" for which these have been kept. And the sooner, the better. Work done earlier will be far more effective than work done in catch-up mode.

And imagine if the church corporately raised its voice to call for urgent action. Imagine if every church member in the South Pacific Division wrote to their national and local political leaders, calling for urgent action to address this emergency.

Imagine if—as one of my fellow committee members suggested—we duplicated our Year of Evangelism efforts in running numerous "evangelistic" programs across Papua New Guinea focused on this immediate humanitarian need, using the same resources to provide HIV/AIDS education and implement other prevention and treatment strategies.

Imagine if our church realised that a concern for social justice and humanitarian action are not optional extras to our Christianity, but that reaching out now to HIV/AIDS sufferers and future victims of this pandemic is at the heart of what Jesus and the gospel is about (see Luke 4:18, 19).

As Philip Yancey has put it, "By instinct I do not want to hear about yet another tragedy, but down deep I know I have no option. I must care about that holocaust of human suffering because God cares."

Nathan Brown



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



President: Church's time is now

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

The president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific called on church members to recommit to the gospel commission at the opening of the midyear meetings of the South Pacific Division's executive committee.

Pastor Laurie Evans referred to the tsunami tragedy in South-East Asia and the death of Pope John Paul II as signs of the times, during his report. "If ever the world needed to hear about the hope we have in Jesus Christ, it is now," he said.

He reminded committee members of the goals he set to make effective ministry a priority for 2004-05. While noting the progress, he spoke at length about the following challenges:

1. The lack of leaders

Pastor Evans said the church is now experiencing the predicted decline in the growth of the work force, with the loss of a generation of ministers in the 1980s compounding the "critical nature" of the problem. The church needs more administrators, auditors, financial managers, health professionals and lecturers, particularly in the Pacific islands where governments and

the private sector pay generously to employ graduates from church training institutions. "Believing the Lord will provide is not enough," said Pastor Evans. "He expects us to do our part in addressing such issues."

Pastor Evans noted how some employers "care for employees better than we do."

He suggested the church must: become employers of first choice; review the process of appointing and electing leaders at sessions; increase spending on leadership development in the Pacific islands; and focus more on human resource practices and policies that recognise the value and worth of the individual employee and their family.

2. The pressures on remuneration

Pastor Evans spoke of the impracticalities of offering a common wage scale to church employees across the South Pacific. "As much as we believe in the priesthood of all believers, employment conditions are not the same for all of the priesthood," he said.

He foreshadowed changes to the church's remuneration policies in the Pacific islands and for principals and their deputies, warning that unless the church has an intentional



Pastor Laurie Evans.

strategy, "ministers in the field are likely to be the casualties."

He also spoke of the need to reverse the ratio of how the church spends the tithe dollar, from 45 per cent for field ministry to at least 60 per cent.

3. The growth of the church

Pastor Evans encouraged church members in Australia and New Zealand to try new methods of evangelism, along with traditional methods. He made specific mention of church planting, friendship, health and small groups, challenging church leaders and members to help offset the difference between the growth of the church in these countries with the growth in the Pacific islands. One of the keys to growth will be the revitalisation of the local church, he said, adding a note of caution about inadvertently fostering a congregational mentality.

Addressing these and other challenges in light of the state of the world could result in the church's "finest hour," concluded Pastor Evans. "Our message is relevant and all power has been promised to proclaim it. The only variable ingredient is our commitment and dedication."—*Brenton Stacey*

New companies enhance church structure

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

Noting a report in the March issue of *Business Review Weekly* listing the Seventh-day Adventist Church among the top five churches and top 40 charitable organisations in Australia by revenue, Rodney Brady, chief financial officer for the South Pacific Division (SPD), led members of the SPD executive committee through the next stage in the ongoing process of legal incorporation and restructure of the church's operations and entities. "The division has a wide area of responsibility and a large asset base and financial turnover," he explained.

The midyear meetings constituted three

new legal entities, adding to the five existing companies operated by the South Pacific Division in Australia.

These changes are the most recent instalment in a 10-year process of restructuring the legal framework in which the church functions. Initiated in response to corporation, taxation and charitable law reforms in several countries, the incorporation process has also seen legal entities created for functions of the church in each of the conferences in Australia and New Zealand.

According to Mr Brady, this incorporation will impact on church governance. "This will change the nature of division executive committee meetings," he explained. "The committee will have a

broader role with oversight of each of the companies of the church and a wider focus on SPD activities and mission.

"A major benefit of this structure is that it will increase the visibility and accountability of division functions to the group appointed by the wider church to oversee those functions.

"The proposed legal structure for the division has been developed with extensive legal counsel and research by the division's legal advisers over a long period of time," Mr Brady reported.

As well as adopting these reforms, the committee expressed its thanks to the church's solicitors for their work.—*Nathan Brown*



Tithes up, offerings down . . . again

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

It is becoming a familiar headline, a mix of good and bad news, and a reminder to Australians and New Zealanders of the important role they play in supporting the mission of the church, especially in the Pacific islands. This is according to figures contained in reports presented by treasurer Rod Brady during the South Pacific Division (SPD) executive committee's midyear meetings.

Tithe

Tithe received by the church continues to increase at a greater rate than inflation, but also increasing is the difference in tithe base between the Australian and New Zealand-based union conferences and the Pacific islands-based union missions. The SPD reports tithes in Australian dollars, which does not always give an accurate measure of tithe in local currencies, but the trend is clear. The average tithe per member per annum in Australia and New Zealand is \$A743, up from \$A649 at the beginning of the quinquennium. It is only \$A39—down from \$A40—in the Pacific islands.

Offerings

The continuing decline in Sabbath school and other offerings as a percentage of tithe receipts is “an ongoing concern,” notes Mr Brady in his report. Church members in the South Pacific gave eight cents in offerings per dollar of tithe last year, down from nine cents in 2000. Camp mission offerings have also declined, and quite sharply, from \$A160,000 in 1998 to only \$A40,000 last year (see “Camp mission offering giving drops 60 per cent,” News, June 11). “These trends raise disturbing questions about our attitude and commitment to the church's worldwide mission work,” says Mr Brady.

Budgets

Selected items from the budgets of the companies, Seventh-day Adventist Church (SPD) Limited, and Seventh-day Adventist Church (Pacific) Limited, are as follows:

- The cost of operating the division office will increase by only 1.17 per cent this financial year, less than the rate of inflation.
- The Adventist Development and Relief



Members of the South Pacific Division executive committee during the midyear meeting.

Agency receives \$A75,000 to implement a new Pacific support program.

- The Australian Union Conference receives \$A25,000 (for six months) to help cover the cost of taking over the administration of trust services from the SPD from January 2006.
- Adventist Media receives an increase in their base appropriation for the new Internet evangelism position at the Discovery Centre.
- Avondale College receives \$A300,000 to help with a new student residential complex.
- The Papua New Guinea Union Mission receives \$A500,000 to help redevelopment of its Lae compound, K250,000 for increasing the number of trained field ministers and K240,000 for operating Adventist Aviation Services.—**Brenton Stacey**

◆ The midyear meeting of the South Pacific Division's (SPD) executive committee did not receive a formal secretary's report. This report will be presented to the SPD session, beginning August 30 in Melbourne. However, Dr Barry Oliver invited SPD statistician **Les Relihan** to give a brief overview of the statistical aspects of the secretary's report (inserted in RECORD, June 11). In 2004, **17,135 were baptised** across the SPD (including those pictured). This figure was offset by the loss of 2,041 members through members' death, apostasy or being listed as missing. This gives a **total SPD mem-**



bership figure—as at the end of 2004—of **366,672** from an SPD-wide **growth rate of 3.2 per cent** in 2004. Committee members reflected on the challenges of obtaining and maintaining accurate figures—and what these figures may tell church administration about the success of the church's mission across the region.

◆ The SPD's executive committee has established a **commission to review the tertiary training** provided by the church in the South Pacific. At present the church operates four tertiary training institutions in the Pacific islands: **Pacific Adventist University** and **Sonoma College** in Papua New Guinea, **Fulton College** in Fiji and **Atoifi College of Nursing** in the Solomon Islands. “This proposal is part of an intentional move to bring our tertiary education to a position of strength,” says Dr **Barry Oliver**, SPD general secretary. “There has already been some cooperation between

these institutions but there may be ways to do this more effectively.” The commission is due to report back to the division executive committee next year.

◆ The SPD executive committee approved the following **appointments**:

—**Allan Butler** as associate secretary of the Australasian Conference Association (ACA) Ltd. Mr Butler has been a financial officer for Adventist Schools—Australia, based at the Australian Union Conference.

—**Steven Andrews** as manager of the church's Risk Management



Adventist Health addresses HIV/AIDS in South Pacific

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

HIV/AIDS in Papua New Guinea is no longer a problem, but a crisis," reported Gad Koito, director of health ministries for the Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM), quoting Papua New Guinea's Minister for Health. "And as a church, we have started very late," he added.

His comments were part of a report from the commission on HIV/AIDS established by the South Pacific Division (SPD), delivered to the SPD executive committee's midyear meeting.

At present, 12,000 HIV/AIDS cases are reported in Papua New Guinea (PNG) but estimates suggest the real figure is between 50,000 and 60,000. As elsewhere in the world, young people are those most affected by this emerging pandemic.

Jonathan Duffy, director of Adventist Health for the SPD, echoed Mr Koito's concern. "It's a huge issue," he commented. "According to the World Health Organisation, PNG has the fastest growing HIV/AIDS problem outside of Africa.

"And it's not something just outside the church," continued Mr Duffy. "Studies

conducted in some Pacific communities have found Adventist young people are among the most sexually active in the community. As a percentage of population, the spread of AIDS is the same inside the church as outside the church."

PNGUM has established its own commission on HIV/AIDS. "We have also asked each local mission to establish an HIV/AIDS committee," Mr Koito reported. "We are working to develop a strategic plan for the church to address AIDS in PNG.

"This is the top priority as a union health department," he said. "We aim to mobilise church entities and all church departments to address this issue. At the moment, the focus is on training church leaders to be confident in leading HIV/AIDS prevention programs, in working with people living with HIV/AIDS and giving hope to those who are suffering from this epidemic."

The commission has not limited its focus to PNG, recognising the threat hangs over many nations of the Pacific. "In parts of our region, rates of sexual activity are higher than that in Africa, so the epidemic is just starting to emerge here," said Mr Duffy.

He reported that other factors also affect



Participants discuss issues of gender and sexuality at an HIV/AIDS training program held recently in Maprik, East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea.

the rate of transmission. For example, the economic downturn in some countries has led to an increase in the sex trade.

The commission's report calls for action in each of the union conferences and missions across the South Pacific. "This is a sensitive issue, particularly cross-culturally," Mr Duffy admitted. "But we must address this. We are planning to develop a Pacific summit on AIDS next year. The Adventist Church can take a lead role in this issue, raising awareness and developing strategies.

"The time for awareness is gone. By the time we reach a 3 per cent infection rate, it is out of control—and [in PNG] we are very close to that now."—**Nathan Brown**

Service. Mr Andrews is currently the commercial manager at Sydney Adventist Hospital and has served the church in a variety of roles.

—Pastor **John Skrzypaszek** as director of the E G White SDA Research Centre, based at Avondale College, NSW. Pastor Skrzypaszek is Ministerial Association secretary for the North New South Wales Conference.

—Pastor **David Hay** as acting president of the Trans-Pacific Union Mission. Pastor Hay is a former president of the Central Pacific Union Mission, now retired. The committee also recommend

four members to represent the South Pacific Division on the **General Conference executive committee**: Pastor **David Gairo** (from PNG); **Mesake Senibulu** (Fiji); Dr **Carolyn Catton** (Australia); and **Roger Marshall** (NZ).

◆ The SPD executive committee received a report and voted changes to church policy reflecting a shift in the way **teachers in church-operated schools** in Australia are paid. "In the past, the church has worked for exemption from union membership and industrial awards," **Rodney Brady**, SPD chief financial officer

explained. "But courts have now ruled that teachers in our schools can choose to be included under awards." Because of difficulties administering a split system of teacher remuneration, the church will now **pay** all teachers according to **the relevant state award**. "It is not the way we would necessarily like to do it," commented SPD president, Pastor **Laurie Evans**, "but it is the way we need to do it."

◆ Three changes have been voted by the South Pacific Division executive committee affecting Pacific island territories. On the recommendation of the Papua New

Guinea Union Mission, the **Western Highlands Mission** has relinquished the **Sandaun Province to the Sepik Mission**. This change recognises political boundaries and will assist in administering health and education programs. In the Trans-Pacific Union Mission (TPUM), the Tonga and Niue Mission will become the **Tonga Mission** and Niue becomes an attached church of the TPUM. Also in the TPUM, the Samoa Mission will change its name to the **Samoa-Tokelau Mission**, recognising the three nations in this region: American Samoa, Samoa and Tokelau.



Division meeting honours retirees

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

The members of the South Pacific Division's executive committee paid tribute to the dedicated service of five long-time church employees during their midyear meeting, held May 24 to 26. Associate chief financial officer David Potter pointed out that the working lives of these individuals totalled more than 200 years of active service for the church. Each of these retirees were honoured with a citation from the division executive committee and reflected on highlights of their denominational service:

Calvyn Townend

Pastor Calvyn Townend will retire from his position as general manager of the Adventist Media Centre after 46 years of church, beginning at age 13 packing Weet-Bix for Sanitarium. "God is good and that is my major testimony as I look back," he commented.

Owen Mason

After 42 years of continuous church service, Owen Mason will retire from his roles as manager of Risk Management Service and director-secretary of ACAST, the SPD's superannuation fund. "ACAST has been my baby," he said, "and I believe any steps we took there were in the best interest of the church and the employees of the church"

Bruce Roberts

Pastor Bruce Roberts retires in July after 38 years of service. He played a major role in establishing the church's work among Australia's indigenous peoples, working as director of what is now known as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries from 1981 to 1995. He currently serves as president of the Trans-Pacific Union Mission. Pastor Roberts became a member of the division executive com-



President of the South Pacific Division Pastor Laurie Evans (left) thanks Barbara Reynolds for almost 48 years of church work. Mrs Reynolds was one of five retirees honoured at the division executive committee's midyear meetings.

mittee in 1980 and has not missed a meeting since, attending the recent meetings despite a badly broken hip.

Percy Harrold

Dr Percy Harrold has contributed to the church's health and medical ministry during the past 34 years in a variety of roles. He retires in September from his position as associate director of Adventist Health for the SPD.

Barbara Reynolds

Barbara Reynolds will retire from her current roles as associate secretary—property (ACA Ltd) and director of Global Mission for the SPD after almost 48 years of service. She has previously served as a secretary-treasurer for the Western Australian Conference and the Trans-Australian Union Conference. Mrs Reynolds spoke of her commitment to integrity and credibility as her foundation for church employment.—*Nathan Brown*

Session election process reviewed

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

Draft guidelines voted at the midyear meeting of the South Pacific Division's executive committee will contribute to the reform of the process of electing church officers. "The guidelines are initially directed to conferences in Australia and New Zealand," explains Dr Barry Oliver, general secretary of the SPD. "But as these are worked through, the new processes will be adapted for use at other levels of the church."

According to Dr Oliver, the new guidelines are intended to preserve representative governance of the church and the right of church members to elect leaders. "However, we have had legal advice that this can happen only if urgent and comprehensive attention is given to the need for procedural fairness and legal compliance," he says.

Colin Clark, director of human resources for the SPD, echoes these concerns. "There have been occasions when our current system has treated dedicated church employees very harshly," he reflects. "The process has been lacking in Christian care and compassion. Families have been deeply hurt."

According to Mr Clark, the guidelines have been formulated "to provide a system that is fairer to constituents and church employees and complies with employment law."

The review of session election procedures involves a range of documentation and procedures. When finalised, the model will include new policies for elected and appointed personnel, a revised Model Conference Constitution and a revised Model Conference Constituency Meeting Procedures. Further consultation will take place with conferences with a view to having these guidelines ready for adoption at the next local conference sessions.

"Legal advice has indicated that this work is imperative, urgent, and that conferences should move together as much as possible," says Dr Oliver.—*Nathan Brown*

Salt, Not Mustard —And other thoughts on being church

REVIEW BY JULENE DUERKSEN-KAPAO

LIFE, AND CHURCH, IS NEVER AS simple as we would want” (page 25). Isn’t that so true? You may have read them before, others could be new to you; whatever the case, *Salt, Not Mustard—And other thoughts on being church* provides juicy morsels to consider, contemplate and put into practice about life, church and where the two meet. Sixty of Bruce Manners editorials from the RECORD over a 17-year period (1988-2004) are compiled in *Salt*, reminding all of us what it means to be church. These are the thoughts, dreams and concerns of Manners for the church he loves.

Readable, relevant, applicable and intellectual, Manners delves into the deeper level of what it really means to be a Seventh-day Adventist in the world today, and on a closer level, in the South Pacific Division. You’ll be reminded of events not so distant in our history, you’ll be encouraged with stories of real people, and you’ll be challenged through looking at personal experiences of church—both good and bad.

We are the salt in the world, of this we need to be reminded far too often. “Do we want to be known as a people with an anti-Catholic, anti-Presbyterian, anti-Uniting, anti-Baptist message? Rather, shouldn’t

we be known by what we stand for and that we have a pro-Christ message? Life enhancers will want to promote the One who is life” (page 48).

Salt takes a look at some of the most relevant issues in the church today—money, relationships, the death penalty, cloning, homosexuality and change to mention a few; issues we often push aside because they are embarrassing, too difficult to find an easy answer to, or just too close to home. Manners takes a thoughtful perspective as he invites the reader to consider these issues with real faces on them—people like you and me. “Real church,” he writes, “is about a relationship with God, and a face-to-face relationship with others” (page 60).

Powerful and memorable, *Salt* gets you thinking—which is good! With Bible stories with a twist like “But . . .” the story of Moses (page 95) or “Peter” (page 97); real-life stories that might make you squirm, “A plumber goes a-plumbing” (page 18) and “If you were a guest to your church . . .” (page 54) and more. Each article and story provides a slightly new or different view on issues in the church.

Witty and funny, Manners is true to form as he paints the reality he sees in the church around him. It is best sometimes, to look at life and church with a sense of

humour so we can be reminded that we are all human, which translates as imperfect. Stop and consider God as a grandad “. . . calling heaven to a halt to point out what one of His children is doing. I see Him pulling out His photo album, or whatever recording means He has (the Book of Records, perhaps), and sharing the pictures there” (page 81). What a great picture? A God who loves you and me so much to halt heaven, or even the universe, to consider how much He loves you!

When it comes to relationships and people, Manners says it well, “The main business of the Adventist Church is not in keeping books balanced, but in helping to establish the kingdom of God. We have a Christ to share, a mission to proclaim, and a fellowship to build” (page 45). Through the stories and journeys of others, *Salt, Not Mustard* thoughtfully encourages the reader to reflect on their own journey. **R**

Salt, Not Mustard—And other thoughts on being church, by Bruce Manners, Signs Publishing Company, 2005, paperback, 138 pages. Available from Adventist Book Centres, price \$A19.95; \$NZ23.95.

Julene Duerksen-Kapao writes from Longburn, New Zealand, and is the regular book reviewer for The Edge.



Show you care

BY RODNEY BRADY

WHEN I WAS A UNION MISSION treasurer, I enjoyed attending functions where the work of the pioneer missionaries was recounted. It was inspiring to honour the sacrifices of those who started a work in hostile and difficult circumstances. In the pioneer days of mission work they had to endure much: long periods of difficult travel; no accommodation and having to build the home they lived in; losing loved ones; suffering tropical diseases with no prospect of returning home for care; no easy forms of communication or social networks. I visited the graves of those who never left their field of service.

In the footsteps of the pioneers, my wife and I felt embarrassed to be described as missionaries. We lived in a comfortable home with television in the lovely city of Suva. It was just a few hours flying time from Australia. With a phone we could call home whenever we chose. For recreation we could enjoy the tropical beaches or stay at nearby resorts. We were paid regularly and the church cared for us well.

But the challenges for treasury staff in mission service have probably never been greater. While the physical challenges may not be as great as the pioneer missionaries, the mental challenge is enormous. The following is a list of just some things the modern missionary treasurer has to cope with:

- **Inadequate resources.** The Pacific mission field is operated at an annual total cost expressed on a per member basis of just \$A85, with more than half of that amount coming from the division. This money is used to finance expatriates, operate almost 5000 churches and companies with more than 300,000 members, run three tertiary institutions and a school system with around 20,000 students. It really is a case of making a little go a long way with the Lord's blessing. There are

huge pressures trying to allocate resources across so many high-priority need areas. With opportunities the pioneers could only dream about, today's mission treasurer has to cope with the frustration and agony of closing schools and reducing workers for the sole reason of finance.

- **Modern Pacific economies.** Modern times have the church operating in an environment of devaluing currencies, inflation rates that can exceed 20 per cent. There are also currency controls, financially stressed governments, broken promises, disputes over land titles, escalating lease costs by today's landowners and unstable economies.
- **An escalating wages bill.** The Pacific now has two economies, that of the growing and fast-changing urban areas and the subsistence rural areas. The majority of our members and growth is in the rural areas. The church work force by necessity is now better educated with most now not living a subsistence lifestyle. The result of the changed lifestyle for church workers is a bigger wages bill.
- **Nationalisation.** Pacific countries restrict the employment of expatriate workers with an expectation that local staff should be used when available. Treasury work is a specialised area and not enough qualified members are willing to work for the church, so the church is dependent on expatriates for senior financial leadership. It is not uncommon to wait more than a year to get a visa for a treasurer. That places pressure on staff waiting for the treasurer to arrive and then on the treasurer as they try to catch up when they do arrive.
- **Technology failure.** Modern finance relies on technology. In the Pacific, a treasurer has to find ways of working despite a phone system that may not

work, unreliable Internet, computers that fail in tropical conditions and then waiting for long periods of time to get them fixed, unreliable infrastructure that sees electricity supply fail intermittently and plane services that can throw into chaos the best time-management plans.

While the physical surroundings may be more comfortable than those of the pioneers, today's treasurers still endure the same sleepless nights experienced by the pioneer missionaries. Spouses share that burden.

Today's mission experience is different. Yet out of the difficulties and frustrations comes an enormous sense of satisfaction in serving the Lord and actively contributing to a work that the devil is desperately trying to frustrate and destroy. Not only is the Pacific the church's priority; it is also the devil's. Today's missionaries are willingly putting themselves in the devil's firing line, wearing the armour of God.

Perhaps one of the hardest things to contend with is the disinterest from their home base. When they return home on leave, few church members—and sometimes even family—are interested enough to find out about the exciting work they are doing.

Then they see this expressed in the financial support they desperately depend on to finance budgets. Camp mission offerings have halved over the past five years. Bequests are increasingly left to the good social work done by ADRA in preference to mission work. World mission giving is less than \$A1 per week per member living in the comfort of Australia and New Zealand. It leaves them with the big question: What value does the church place on its mission field and the sacrifice they are making? **R**

Rodney Brady is chief financial officer for the South Pacific Division, based in Wahroonga, NSW.

Pacific Islands Advancement Offering—June 25

The evidence of success

BY DONNA WEBB

HOW DOES ONE MEASURE THE success of a mission project, the value of the money spent? If the funds help build a school dormitory in a developing country, perhaps the success can be measured in the number of students who come to the school, live in the dormitory and—we hope—are influenced to accept Christ as their Lord. If the funds help build a hospital, success can be measured in the number of patients who are treated, lives saved, people healed. But how does one measure the success of a ministry?

Three years ago the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for North America helped launch a new evangelistic outreach called *The Evidence*. Produced by Faith for Today, the program was designed to appeal to a secular audience, to raise questions in people's minds regarding the existence of God and His claim on their lives.

The Evidence premiered in September 2001, a difficult time in North America's history. Its appearance on select television stations across the country was eclipsed by the terrorist attacks on Washington and New York. By human standards, the program should have floundered. But it has proved to be a godsend to many who, in the weeks and months following that dark period, are asking the very questions the program's producers were raising. And people are responding by mail and email, and to the program's web site.

In April 2004, the program was selected to air on the largest religious broadcasting network, with coverage around the world, and the response was immediate. Emails

and letters poured into the office. Then five months later, the same station asked Dwight Nelson, the program host, to host a live, two-hour special of *The Evidence* in the station's most popular program slot. The station promised to televise the program over its worldwide network at least twice.

Following airing of the program the program's web site received three times the number of hits it normally receives and hundreds requested the book that was offered.

Here's a sample of a couple of emails in response to *The Evidence*:

"I . . . drove home from church one day . . . sad that God was portrayed as being arbitrary, unforgiving, vengeful, exacting and severe. . . I wanted desperately to hear someone [tell] the truth about my heavenly Father! . . . Then I happened to see *The Evidence*. Dwight Nelson pointed to God and God's true character. . . Thanks from the bottom of my heart for speaking the truth about God and His character."

"By 'chance' I turned on [a major religious television network] and watched your program this morning. It was wonderful. I told my friends about it and told them to tune in to the two-hour special. It was . . . refreshing to hear the gospel and the . . . amazing love of God . . . presented in such intellectual and scientific terms. The program is fantastic."

"Recently I happened onto your show. . . Fabulous! What a fresh, interesting and thought-provoking way to tell people's testimonies. I enjoy that the interviews are



from individuals in vastly different venues of life. . . And even the extremely talented artists and how their faith is integrated into their work. Your show has a different vibe to it, and I am now a faithful viewer."

The television network was so thrilled with the response from airing *The Evidence* that they have invited the Faith for Today team back for another two-hour special, this time focusing on health. The program will be aired around the world.

So from the producers of *The Evidence*, from the North American Division and from those who have been blessed by this broadcast, a hearty thank you. **R**

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering to be collected next week, June 25, will contribute to support and expand media evangelism in the North American Division.

Donna Webb works with public relations for Faith for Today.

Our bicycle prayers— God's Rolls Royce answers

BY MICHAEL DABSON

THERE ARE MANY THRILLING EXAMPLES of answered prayer and many disappointments of unanswered prayer. Some pray for a marriage partner and remain single all their lives; some pray for children and remain childless; others pray for a healthy child but their child is born seriously handicapped.

In many church prayers, someone prays after being on a holiday and thanks God for the miraculous deliverance they had from some accident, which should have killed them. But in praying this public prayer, it seems they have forgotten the other church member who five years earlier lost their son and daughter-in-law and two small infants in a tragic car accident.

Examples of miraculous answered prayer in the present can be most inspiring to us as Christians but discouraging for those who see no answers to years of their own unanswered prayers. *Bridge Across My Sorrows* is the story of Christina Noble, a Dublin woman who had no answers to her many begging prayers as a terribly suffering child in a suffering family under an alcoholic father.

She eventually had one prayer clearly answered later in her life. She then said that for the first time in her whole life she “knew definitely” that there is a God, because her prayer had been clearly answered. But this one answered prayer was against a backdrop of hundreds of her unanswered prayers and supplications to God previously.

The huge sufferings of Christina Noble and her mother and siblings were un-

answered prayers. In a real sense, all human suffering is unanswered prayer.

In this world . . .

We pray for God's protection but it is not always there. Jesus said, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33*). In effect, He is saying: “In the world you will have unanswered prayer, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world—where not all your prayers are answered.”

In a real sense, all human suffering is unanswered prayer.

But there seems to be a contradiction: Jesus promised both tribulations and answered prayers. Jesus also said, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7; see also Luke 11:9-13). These verses hold clues to unanswered prayers.

William Barclay presents an interesting perspective on the part where Jesus said regarding the gifts parents give to their children. He draws particular attention to similarities between the true and the substitute gifts. He points out that each of the counterfeits had similarities in appearance to the real gift asked for. All are substitutes—counterfeits—for the true gift.

One of the implications of what Jesus was saying here is that if any sinner asks God for salvation, God will not give us a substitute or counterfeit salvation but true salvation. We will be delivered from sin and have eternal life.

The key words of Jesus are “how much more.” This hints at God's way, of how He answers our prayers beyond our expectations, how He gives us Rolls Royce answers to our bicycle prayers.

Temporal or eternal?

We should expect God to answer our prayers. A thrust of much of Jesus' teaching on prayer is persistence, perseverance and not giving up on expecting an answer. Jesus expects us to trust in our prayers and in a loving God who hears and answers.

But when we stop to think about it, many of our prayers are for temporal deliverance, which in some ways is a substitute or counterfeit for the true and eternal deliverance from sorrow, sin, pain and death God is giving to the world. Jesus, in Matthew 7 and Luke 11, speaks of “good gifts” and giving “the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.” Perhaps this recognises the distinction between temporal and eternal prayer, while also affirming that both temporal and eternal prayers are valid.

It is interesting to consider this question in light of historical circumstances. Imagine we are in a community afflicted with the bubonic plague in the Middle Ages. People are praying for their loved ones, parents and children to live, and yet they are dying like flies: this is an example



of unanswered prayer.

But what if all these prayers had been answered and all restored to health and not one had died? Where would they be today? All those of that century are now dead, whether as a bubonic plague fatality or not, all the answered temporal prayers would now in a way be undone and therefore unanswered prayers.

If everyone had lived through the plague in direct answer to prayer it would have been a temporary answer—a bicycle—but if they receive eternal life it is a Rolls Royce answer. It lasts forever.

The “your kingdom come” of the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:10) indicates Christ’s longing for that future where there is no more pain and sorrow and death. The whole order of the world must be changed for all prayers for deliverance to be answered.

The big Answer

These answers surely must be in Christ—God’s own Son. Christ is the Rolls Royce answer to all our prayers. No-one has ever dared to ask for God to give

Himself to die for sinners. This was never a prayer from human lips. We all ask for less.

Job did not ask for God’s Son; neither did Moses nor Elijah nor David nor Adam or Noah, nor Methuselah, nor the poor, destitute and starving of this world; not kings or queens or presidents—not anyone.

The Jews asked for the Messiah to come, but they meant to ask for temporal deliverance from the Romans. They expected a king like David, perhaps, or maybe even an angel, but not God’s Son. They could not and did not ask for God Himself in human flesh to come and be a servant to sinners, a shepherd giving His life for His sheep.

Jesus said that the reason God gave His Son to the world was that it was God Himself who “so loved the world” (John 3:16). Christ was God’s own loving prayer for us, and He has answered this greatest prayer for every child born into the human family. John the Baptist proclaimed Him “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

With this Rolls Royce gift comes the final and complete defeat of all sorrows, pains

and death. Not necessarily temporary answers to prayers but—in Christ—eternal results. We pray for bicycles and God gives us His Son. “How will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” (Romans 8:32).

God prays prayers from His heart, better than ours, with much greater outcomes than our temporal prayers. From God’s own heart, the Rolls Royce blessing of His own Son has flowed to the human family. In His Son, all the many prayers of centuries are answered for all humanity for all eternity.

Answers now—and then

So God hears all our temporal prayers and answers some—or many—of them, and He keeps His children safe in His heart even if not safe from the world’s tribulations and sorrows. The day of no more tears or sorrows or crying are not in the present (see Revelation 21:1-5).

The Bible points to tribulations and persecutions for God’s followers, not a smooth path of life but one with difficulties. Paul outlines the real, eternal answer to prayer that impacts on the present: “I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38, 39).

In this life, even our most miraculous answers to prayer become unanswered, annulled (“de-answered”?) by death. God promises us much more. In receiving the Holy Spirit, we are receiving eternal love now.

We live in the middle of a huge battle between good and evil. If all our prayers were answered, the battle would be finished and we would not be in it. But our prayers will be answered and the battle will be over—one day. Then we shall see what God has done to answer all our prayers. Then every single prayer will be more than answered—Rolls Royces instead of bicycles. **R**

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

**Michael Dabson writes from
Mirabooka, New South Wales.**



The surprise

BY PHILLIP LOMMAN

AFTER A STRENUOUS COUPLE OF WEEKS, WE WERE ALMOST there. Shifting just 10 minutes down the road—from a spacious dwelling into a shed with a nine-metre by three-and-a-half-metre lined living area—was tough going. It was easier to throw things into the trailer for the short trip than to carefully pack them into boxes.

Nearing completion, we were exhausted and frazzled. Only the pot plants to go. *Whose idea was it to nurture such a vast quantity of plants, anyway?*

The shade house was yet to be built, so we had nowhere to put the plants. A that stage, we were past caring whether they lived or died. We dumped them under a tree and collapsed into our new “home.”

The next few days were hot. Perhaps it was the greenhouse effect. But—speaking of greenhouses—we didn’t have one yet. There was no pump on the dam and no spare water in the tank; too bad about those plants.

But it’s amazing how one’s energy returns after a few good sleeps—and with returning energy we began to feel sorry for the plants. Our only option was to use treated sewer water to keep them alive.

Six months later—and we’re into a new groove, living in “La Shedde.”

“Have a look over there,” my wife called, one fine winter’s day.

The sewer water can’t be too bad: there among the tangle of weeds and uncontrolled plants was a pink-and-white orchid flower.


After extricating it from its hideaway, we cleaned it up and brought it inside. Not that there was room for it, but we couldn’t waste beauty like that. We had never had blooms like that before. It was magnificent.

In the weeds and sewer of the world around us are beautiful souls, waiting to bloom as God’s children. It can be easy to walk by and miss the joy of seeing a child of God. They’re there now. Lend a hand and help lift them from life’s sewer. **R**

Phillip Lomman writes from Werombi, New South Wales.

Record Roo's

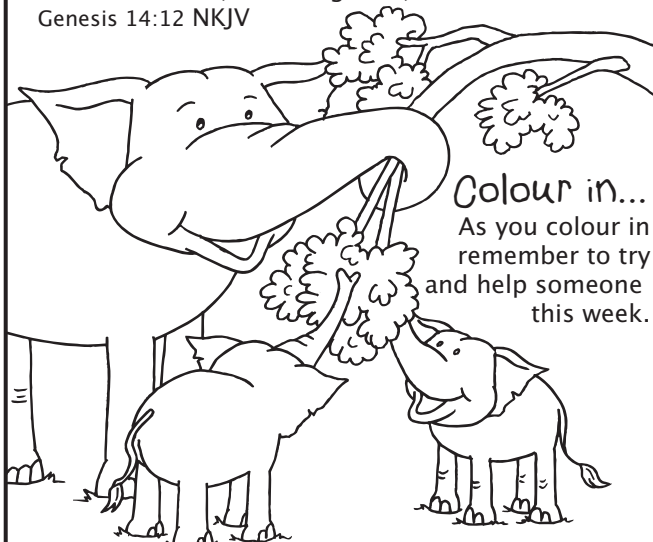
Kids corner



Hi Kids,
Have you ever had to help out a friend or family member? Have a read and find out how Abram helped out Lot when things got bad. The story is found in Genesis Chapter 14...
RR

Fill in the Blanks

They also took Lot, Abram's _____ son who dwelt in _____, and his goods, and _____.
Genesis 14:12 NKJV



Colour in...

As you colour in remember to try and help someone this week.

Unscramble...

Here are some names of other people who helped someone out in the Bible. See if you can unscramble them.

thibata _____	lpua _____
Ismaue _____	urht _____
oaran _____	namratsian _____

Find-a-Word

S	E	E	B	S	C	L	D	O	T	S	E	LOT ABRAHAM WAR KINGS SODOM GOMORRAH PLUNDER CAPTIVES SERVANTS HOUSEHOLD RESCUE BLESSED VALLEY MOUNTAINS
M	S	N	G	H	A	R	R	O	M	O	G	
U	E	W	S	M	A	U	R	O	T	G	L	
E	R	R	D	B	L	E	S	S	E	D	M	
M	V	R	E	S	C	U	E	R	V	S	O	
R	A	Y	S	E	V	I	T	P	A	C	U	
E	N	H	O	U	S	E	H	O	L	D	N	
D	T	E	A	U	S	K	E	S	L	U	T	
N	S	H	V	R	I	G	H	O	E	H	A	
U	R	R	E	N	B	C	T	D	Y	N	I	
L	M	T	G	L	A	A	H	O	A	E	N	
P	V	S	O	R	A	W	A	M	E	S	S	

Broad scope

GEORGE SCOTT, NSW

It seems the writer of "Point of law" (Letters, May 28) doesn't see that the law does more than point to sin. He quotes the story of the rich young ruler, but fails to include all the answer. It was not that the law was an understanding of sin but, rather, what was he to do to inherit eternal life? "If you want to enter life, obey the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). Note, even entering life involves law.

In Psalm 119, David says the "blameless . . . walk according to the law" (v 1); that it contains "wonderful things" (v 18); that he thinks about God's name and the law together (v 55); that the law is "my delight" (v 77)—"I love your law!" (v 97); the "law is true" (v 142); and, "great peace" have those who keep it (v 165). Paul says it's "holy, righteous and good" (Romans 7:12). Taken together, the law is certainly more than pointing out sin; it's a whole way of life.

Timing, everything

JIM ZYDERVELD, SA

Thank you for "Prayer for Catholic friends" (Editorial, April 16), and I'm not surprised there was a reaction. Theologically and behaviourally, the Catholic Church has many things for which to apologise, as does probably every group. However, a time of grief probably isn't the best time to point this out. Some things are bigger than

just a coincidence

our conflicts. During World War I both sides stopped fighting to celebrate Christmas and bury their dead.

One of the most complete verses on the Christian life is 1 Peter 3:15. It says there are three things to it: First, live a life committed to the lordship of Jesus; next, be biblically intelligent as to one's beliefs and practices; and, finally, in sharing one's faith, do so with "respect" and "gentleness" toward those we would win.

While there may be many Catholics who don't feel anything about the pope, I know many who will miss what he meant to them, and the editorial respected that.

Some things are bigger than our conflicts.

Semantics lesson

JOH PINK, NSW

Matthew, Mark and Luke speak of Jesus being led by the Spirit into the wilderness. And there seems to be a belief that *wilderness* equates to "desert" (Editorial, May 28).

Just a thought: While a wilderness can be a desert, it can also be an uninhabited place, such as a remote forest. In Mark it says Jesus was with wild beasts (1:12), of which there aren't many in a real desert. Also, Jesus didn't eat for 40 days, but the accounts don't say He didn't drink, so there was probably water.

Perhaps the place where Jesus went, even if now a desert, wasn't so then.

A word in season

DISCOVERY CENTRE, NSW

We recently received the following unsigned letter from someone whom we assume is a Discovery Centre student invited to attend church by an instructor. While the first reaction was to bin it (being unsigned), upon reflection, it might be instructive, as it could refer to many of our churches. Such letters cause distress. But we exist as much for the community as for ourselves. To see ourselves as others see us is gift we're not always willing to accept.

"I attended a Seventh-day Adventist church last Saturday for the first time and was sorely disappointed; I'm also annoyed, aggravated and angry. The sermon was boring, went overtime, and had only reached point three (of six) when my time and patience ran out. Before the sermon, there was a lot of business. I was saddened, for I believe the service ought to be one of enlightenment and loving fellowship. And to my embarrassment, there were *three* collections. The poor, it seems, couldn't afford this church. Perhaps the money does go to good causes, for it didn't appear that any was being spent on God's house, judging by its interior."

Umbrage taken

PHILIP F BOILEAU, NSW

I agree with the letter writer's thoughts ("No abbreviation," Letters, May 28) concerning our church's official name.

Ellen White speaks against such an action, saying, "The name Seventh-day Adventist is a standing rebuke to the Protestant world" regarding the Sabbath (*Testimonies*, Vol 1, page 223).

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.



Appreciation

Avery, Gwen would like to express sincere thanks to all those who supported her in prayer, with cards, phone calls and flowers following the passing of Ernie.

Evans, Greg, Suzanne, George and Loma Evans wish to thank all those who prayed for Greg during his service in Iraq, November 2004 to May 2005. Your prayers were greatly appreciated.

Weddings

Gillett—Gray. Brian Edward Gillett, son of Len and Julie Gillett (Canberra, ACT), and Emily Margaret Gray, daughter of Andrew and Maureen Gray (Perth, WA), were married on 1.5.05 in the Livingston Adventist church.

*Clem Van Ballegooyen
Anthony MacPherson*

Taylor—Major. Tristan James Taylor, son of John and Pauline Taylor (Perth, WA), and Jasmine Joan Major, daughter of Trevor and Deborah Major (Narembeen), were married on 14.11.04 in the Livingston Adventist church.

*Clem Van Ballegooyen
Anthony MacPherson*

Obituaries

Beattie, Andrew (Andy), born 14.3.1913 at Hornsby, NSW; died 20.5.05 in Esther Somerville Nursing Home, Normanhurst. In 1934 he married Pearl Evans, who predeceased him in 1970. In 1974 he married Eveline (Stace) Macfarlane, who predeceased him in 2003. He was also predeceased by his eldest daughter, Elaine Smith, in 1986. He is survived by his daughters and sons-in-law, Jeannie and Bob Morton (Waitara), Rosemary and Norm Morton (Camden Haven), and Margaret and Bob Smith (Castle Hill); his four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. For over 60 years Andy worked as an employee and then a volunteer in the gardens of the Sydney Adventist Hospital. He was an outstanding worker and soul winner in the Waitara church. In 1996 he received the Energy Australia Community Spirit Award and the Australian Sports Medal in 2000. He will be sadly missed but fondly remembered by all who were privileged to know him, including the scores of souls he brought to Christ. He now rests awaiting his rewards when Jesus returns.

*Adrian Craig
Ron Evans, Bruce Price*

Burton, Mavis Jean (nee Brunton), born 1.12.1927 at Waihi, NZ; died 6.5.05 at Orewa, after a short illness. On 14.5.62 she married Alan. She is survived by her husband (Whangaparaoa); her daughter and son-in-law, Gayle and John Watts; her son and daughter-in-law, Ian and Carol; and her daughter and son-in-law, Carol and Lindsay John. Mavis was a faithful member and supporter of the Orawa SDA church after her retirement

in 1988 as secretary of the North New Zealand Conference.

Les Worsley

Davies, Pastor Donald Howard, born 5.12.1917 at Nangambie, Vic; died 12.3.05 at Busselton, WA. Don was the youngest of three sons and a brother to three daughters born to Albert and Alice Davies. In 1946 he married May Taylor, who predeceased him in 1992. He is survived by his daughter, Gaelyn; his son, Donald; and his grandchildren. Don enrolled at Avondale in 1942, where he studied building construction along with theology. He and his wife served in New Zealand, Pitcairn, Victoria, the Cook Islands and Western Australia. As a pastor, Don was very much appreciated for his friendliness, happiness and sincerity. He is sadly missed by many friends in both the church and community. We were encouraged by his faith, inspired by his tenacity and share the certainty of his hope!

Frank Dyson

Drury, Cecil Victor, born 10.3.1918 at Taree, NSW; died 13.5.05. Cecil studied for the ministry but did not engage in that profession. He served his country in the armed forces from 1940 to 1946. In 1963 he married Dorothea (Dot). He is survived by his wife; his five stepchildren; his 10 grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren. Cec knew and loved his God and his Bible and looked forward to the return of his Saviour.

Ray Jerrard, Lyndon Thrift

Hacker, Joan Lynette (nee Shepherd), born 19.6.1957 at Mackay, Qld; died 16.3.05 in Mackay Mater Hospital, following a terminal illness. She is survived by her husband, Murray; her children, Lance and Natasha (all of Mackay); her brothers and sisters, Brian, Muriel, Dianne, Veronica, Francis (all of Mackay), Steven and Christine (both of Brisbane). Joan was an enthusiastic Christian, who loved contributing to church life. She is fondly remembered and sadly missed.

Rick Ferret

Harding, Walter (Wally) George, born 26.12.1921 at Ipswich, Qld; died 3.5.05 in Brisbane, Qld. He is survived by his wife, Joan Rabbas-Harding (Brisbane); his sons, Neville and Troy; his daughters, Pauline, Joanne and Jennifer; their spouses; his grandchildren; his great-grandchildren; also his three stepsons; their spouses and families. He awaits the resurrection morning.

Mark Pearce

Healy, Robyn, date of birth unknown; died 30.4.05 in Cheltenham Grove Rest Home, Auckland, NZ. Robyn never married. She is survived by her cousins, Judy and Neil Malins.

Russell Willcocks

Matic, Tomislav, born 11.1.1933 in the village of Bobota, Croatia; died 20.5.05 in Neringah Hospital, Wahroonga, NSW, after a valiant battle with a terminal illness. In 1966 he married Anica Sparavec. He is survived by his wife; his daughter,

Rahela (both of Sydney); his daughter and son-in-law, Marilene and Eldon Stevenson (Cedar Vale). Tom migrated to Australia, and Melbourne became his new home, where he met and eventually married his wife. His two daughters were born in Melbourne. In 1977 they moved to Sydney, where he took up the painting trade.

Gilberto Dias, Peter Josiet

Sabbo, Cyril Thomas, born 17.5.1934 at Bakers Creek (Mackay, Qld); died 12.3.05 in Mackay Base Hospital. On 5.1.57 he married Isabel Mooney. He is survived by his wife (Mackay); his children, Karen (Sydney, NSW), Sheryl-lee (Mackay, Qld), John (Newman, WA); and his grandchildren, Todd (Sydney, NSW) and Jordan (Newman, WA). Cyril's life was a testament to his love for the Lord and a life dedicated to service.

Rick Ferret, David Lamb

Storer, Erna Merle Elizabeth, born 14.6.1912 at Barcaldine, Qld; died 27.5.05 at Pialba, Hervey Bay. She was predeceased by her husband, Allan, in 1985; also her son, Ian, in 1976. She is survived by her children and their spouses, Gordon and Heather (Childers), Bob and Dot (Devonport, Tas), Charles and Dawn (Mapleson) and Enid (Hervey Bay); her many grandchildren; and great-grandchildren. Merle was a loving mother who inculcated love, care and strong Christian beliefs to her children, and showed warm hospitality to visitors.

Phil Downing

Advertisements

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Notice of AUC Session. Notice is hereby given that the first regular Session of the Australian Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be convened from **September 4 to 6, 2005**, in Melbourne, Vic, at the Carlton Crest Hotel (65 Queens Road). The business of this constituency meeting will be in accordance with the Constitution. Such business will include reports, election of leadership and proposed changes to the Constitution and bylaws. The Session will commence at 3.30 pm on **Sunday, September 4, 2005.**

Housemates wanted for house in Kuraby, Brisbane, Qld, with female. Male or female, student or professional. Close to Pacific, Logan and Gateway motorways. Contact Natalie 0423 776 465 or <n.esau@qut.edu.au>.

Volunteers!

Fly'n'build—Nadi Community Centre. Carpenters, plumber, electrician, handy people. Come and be part of the team to erect the community centre for English-speaking church members. This will be an exciting and challenging project. Term: August 7–22, 2005.

Fly'n'build—Levuqa, Fiji. Carpenters, blocklayers, handy people. Cyclone/landslide damaged steel church. Repairs needed to reconstruct half the steel-framed church. Be on the team to do the impossible! The church members have worked hard to fundraise for these repairs. Term: August 25–September 8, 2005.

ESL Teachers—Kazakhstan. Interested in teaching English? Two teachers are needed in September for 12 months. Teaching experience is preferred, but not essential.

STORM Co—New Zealand. Duties include promoting and developing STORM Co ministry within New Zealand. Board, living allowance and part of airfare provided. Term: 12 months, commencing July 1, 2005. For more information contact Hayley on (02) 9847 3275.

Email:

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80th celebration. All past and present members of Papanui church or Christchurch Adventist School are welcome to join its 80th celebration from October 21 to 24, 2005. Celebrate the past. Register phone +64 3 354 4696; or email <neil@papanui.org>; visit <www.papanui.org>; write to Papanui SDA 80th reunion, 25 Shearer Avenue, Papanui 5, Christchurch, New Zealand.

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Adventist Students Association Convention—"Salted to Taste." You are invited to ASA's National Convention at Crosslands Convention Centre, Sydney, July 11–17. Speaker: Grenville Kent. Register at <www.myasa.org>.

Help needed for Adventist member—Yeppoon, Qld. Due to a house fire that made the home unlivable, repairs are estimated to cost approximately \$A15,000. An appeal is being conducted by the Yeppoon SDA church. Email: Ken Simpson <simpsons@cqnet.com.au>; phone (07) 4939 5446. If you are able to help, please deposit into the designated Appeal Account: BSB 034-231; account number 153990; Westpac Bank, Yeppoon, Qld. Thank you.

Finally

Conformity is one of the most fundamental dishonesties of all. When we reject our specialness, water down our God-given individuality and uniqueness, we begin to lose our freedom. The conformist is in no way a free man. He has to follow the herd.—

Norman Vincent Peale