

RECORD

January 26, 2008

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The first baptism of new members of the Maleny church plant in Queensland last year—from left to right, Stephen Groom, Laura Gorman and Pastor Mike Brownhill.

SPD invests in church planting

WAHROONGA, NEW SOUTH WALES

The South Pacific Division (SPD) has provided in excess of half a million dollars (\$A) to support more than 45 new church plants in 2008. These projects represent Global Mission initiatives to enter new areas and people groups in the Pacific islands, Australia and New Zealand, as well as an additional five new church plants in Australia.

On December 11, a new SPD committee, which combines the functions of two previous committees, met for the first time.

This new committee combines the work of the Global Mission committee and the Centre for Church Planting committee.

The secretary for the new committee and director of Adventist Mission, Pastor Ray Coombe, explains, "The reason for this merger is that the work of both committees was very similar and overlapped in a number of areas, because both the Centre for Church Planting and Global Mission focus on planting new churches."

Director of the SPD Centre for Church Planting, Pastor Wayne Krause, has served on both committees, and his activities in fostering church plants and mentoring planters will continue to be funded from a church planting fund, established by the SPD in 2005. *(Continued on page 6)*



It is an expression of intellectual, faith-filled honesty and humility.

“I don’t know”

ONE OF MY MAIN EFFORTS AS A teacher has been to train people to say those (apparently difficult) words ‘we don’t know,’” commented Christian writer and long-time tutor at Oxford University, C S Lewis. Those “apparently difficult” words don’t come easily to any of us—and perhaps they are even more difficult in the mouths of people of faith.

But to admit “I don’t know” is an important spiritual discipline that we need to practise, precisely because it does not come easily. “You think that everyone should agree with your perfect knowledge,” wrote Paul. “While knowledge may make us feel important, it is love that really builds up the church. Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn’t really know very much” (1 Corinthians 8:1, 2*).

To some, this might seem a denial of certainty and hope. But confessing “I don’t know” does not mean we know nothing. Admitting our imperfect knowledge, our fuzzy understanding and our stuttering explanations does not preclude us from also saying with Paul, “I know the one in whom I trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until the day of his return” (2 Timothy 1:12).

However, “I don’t know” means we do not have to force our limited knowledge and understandings to answer questions much larger than those for which they are fitted. It is an expression of intellec-

tual, faith-filled honesty and humility that opens us to fresh possibilities of learning and living.

As Paul suggests, the more we learn, the more we discover we don’t know. But this should not be grounds for either a loss of faith, or discouragement and despair. The awesome vastness and wonder of the Word, world and ways of God are our greatest evidence of who we believe Him to be. A God merely like us, understandable by us, managed by us, is ultimately of little use to us. Instead of roadblocks to faith, the challenges of explaining God are the starting points for contemplation, worship and further exploration.

Drawing on the Jewish tradition of exploring God by intense study of the Scriptures, Rob Bell points out that “the rabbis even say a specific blessing when they don’t understand a portion of the text. When it eludes them, when it makes no sense, they say a word of thanks to God because of the blessing that will be theirs someday. ‘Thank you, God, that at some point in the future, the lights are going to come on for me’” (*Velvet Elvis*). By doing so, they assume that what they do not know or understand is better than they could guess at or imagine and so are content—for the time being—to trust the goodness of the God they seek.

Of course, such an attitude also has practical significance for living our faith.

One of the greatest challenges of reaching out to those who are hurting and sor-

rowing around us is our assumption that we need to be able to answer their inevitable questions. That frightens us—we might be exposed as something less than the confident person of faith we wish we were. But when we are comfortable to say “I don’t know,” we can be simply human together, sharing their pain and grief—becoming agents of hope and healing to them by our presence, openness and prayers.

When we recognise that we are able to live by faith, even amid the questions we might try to suppress within ourselves, we realise that others can also live with, learn from and even appreciate our uncertainties. Freed from our assumptions that we have to have it all “nailed down” and “together” as a complete package of faith products to market to those around us, we can be more healthily comfortable in our faith and our faithful interactions with others.

Sometimes, “I don’t know” is the best, most satisfying and honest answer to many of our questions. Indeed, this might be the secret to sustainable faith in a God we will always struggle to comprehend: “You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him, you trust him; and even now you are happy with a glorious, inexpressible joy” (1 Peter 1:8).

**Bible quotations are from the New Living Translation.*

Nathan Brown



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

TRY-athlon celebrates 10 years

BERKELEY VALE, NEW SOUTH WALES

Tens of thousands of Australian children will come together in 2008 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Sanitarium Weet-Bix Kids TRY-athlon series in Australia. In New Zealand, the TRY-athlon series is in its 16th year.

Supported by the MBF Foundation, the Weet-Bix Kids TRY-athlon is a fun and challenging event, combining variable distances of swimming, cycling and running, designed to encourage kids of all abilities around the country to maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.

Weet-Bix TRY-athlon national ambassador, Jessicah Schipper, a World Championships and Commonwealth Games swimming gold-medal winner, said the goal is for more than 40,000 children in Australia and New Zealand to take part in the 2008 series.

“All around the world, Australians are known for our sporting achievements. Now it’s time for Aussie kids to grab their runners, bikes and swimmers, take part in their local Weet-Bix Kids TRY-athlon and give it their best,” she said.

Ms Schipper, the current women’s 200-metre butterfly world-record holder, said

the events are a great way to inspire kids to get up and move in a friendly and encouraging environment, where the emphasis is on enjoying exercise.

“No placings or times are recorded, and everyone who enters gets a medal. More than 60,000 Aussie kids have participated in the event since it started 10 years ago—it’s a brilliant way to get active with your mates and, best of all, it’s great fun,” she said.

Dr Christine Bennett, MBF Chief Medical Officer and chair of the MBF Foundation Steering Committee, said the Weet-Bix Kids TRY-athlons are an important initiative to help reverse the growing number of overweight or obese children in Australia.

“Numerous studies have shown that the obesity crisis isn’t just a result of poor diet. It’s also from low levels of physical activity due to increasingly sedentary lifestyles. The Weet-Bix Kids TRY-athlons, supported by the MBF Foundation, confirm for children that exercise can be enjoyable, helping set them up for a lifetime of healthy activity,” Dr Bennett said.

To complement the TRY-athlons, Sanitarium Weet-Bix is introducing, for the first time, the TRY Schools Program. Delivered by Kidz Bodz, it is the largest

program of its kind in Australia. Kidz Bodz creator Jackie De Koning said the program, delivered in schools, aims to educate children on healthy eating and exercise practices, helping bring about positive behavioural change and encouraging a healthy start to life.

“With Kidz Bodz, the emphasis is on giving kids healthy-living information in a fun way. It’s thrilling to see them enjoy and pick up on the messages, and know that they are on the road to taking responsibility for their own wellbeing and healthy future,” she said.

Running from February to April in Australia and New Zealand, the Weet-Bix Kids TRY-athlon is open to all children aged seven to 15, with younger children completing a shorter course than the older age groups.

In 2008, the Australian series takes in nine locations across capital cities and major regional areas. Registrations close two weeks before each event. Limited places are available.—*Julie Praestijn*

To view dates and locations, sign-up and get more information about TRY-athlon in your area, go to <www.weetbix.com.au> or <www.weetbix.co.nz>.

For more about Kidz Bodz programs, visit <www.kidzbodz.com.au>.



◆ Children of **Nerang (Qld) Junior Sabbath school** have contributed to the airing of a prime time **radio show** in secular **Nepal**. Leaders **Peter and Fiona Sandy**, and **Sharon Stevenson**, contacted a Nepalese evangelist and minister, **Rajendra Gautram**, whom they had sponsored through **Asian Aid** many years ago. He suggested a cassette ministry that he wanted to establish. The children sent more than **\$A600**, with which Mr Gautram managed to negotiate 6 months of radio time—30 minutes every Saturday evening, in between the local news and the BBC news. This is the first time the church has had significant airtime in Nepal and multiple baptisms have already resulted from the radio program. Mr Gautram has now taken out airtime on TV.—*Sharon Stevenson*

◆ **Robinvale Pathfinder and Adventurer club, Vic**, publicly promoted their clubs through 2007,

seeing some **non-Adventist children join**. The year culminated in the children running the entire Sabbath program on November 24. The church sees the Pathfinders as a great outreach opportunity in the local community and is hoping for more attendance from the community this year. “Indeed, I believe that children are certainly gateways in which the gospel could



reach not only parents but also other members of immediate and extended families,” says church pastor, **Lomani Uilou**.—*RECORD Staff/Lomani Uilou*

◆ **Dr Allan Walshe**, director of family ministries for the South Queensland Conference, is transferring to the **United States**. Dr Walshe will serve as a professor on the faculty of the Christian Ministries Department at **Andrews University**. He will direct the Masters Degree in **youth ministry**, as well as teach postgraduate studies in both the Master’s and Doctoral areas.

Health course for Mamarapha

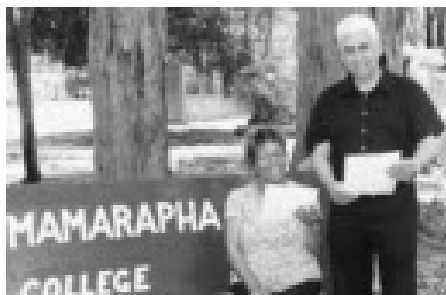
KARRAGULLEN, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Western Australian Accreditation Council recently registered and granted permission for Mamarapha College, a Bible college established by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries, to begin its anticipated Diploma in Health course.

This course is in response to the many Indigenous people surveyed who expressed their desire to see the training of Indigenous people, to take the principles and practices of health and wellbeing back to their communities.

The new Indigenous Lifestyle Health Promotion diploma course begins on February 12 and seeks to provide students with a solid background in understanding principles of biblical health and living, together with learning new skills in health promotion. Students will be equipped and taught to model what they have learnt, bringing back to their family and communities healthy ways of living and preventing ill health and disease.

Michael Steed, health course coordinator for Mamarapha, says, "This course differs from the government health worker courses in a number of ways but does provide students with a community educational focus



Lynelda Tippo and Michael Steed with the registration papers for the health course.

and training as community volunteer health promoters, with opportunities to work in health promotion work."

Mr Steed adds, "It's well known that the health profile of Indigenous Australians stands well below that of any other group. A Canadian study conducted in 2004 on educational attainment, life expectancy and wealth in the context of human development, showed that the quality of life of Indigenous Australians rates as the second worst of the 100 countries studied."

The health course will be a "welcome addition" to the college's other courses, which include Indigenous ministry and pastoral studies, and it is hoped the course will help emphasise the importance of a holistic approach to health care.—**RECORD staff/Michael Steed**

Health course enquiries can be addressed to Mamarapha College admissions, <mchealth@webace.com.au> or +61 8 9397 7233.

10-year initiative approved for Asia

SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND, USA

The Adventist Mission Committee of the General Conference (GC) recently approved a 10-year initiative for the 60 million Indigenous people of central Asia.

The five countries of Central Asia—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan—represent a challenging area for Christian mission.

Although the Adventist Church has had a presence in this area for more than 100 years, more work needs to be done to build bridges with the local people.

"We want to train church members to minister to the physical, social and spiritual needs of the Indigenous people," says Pastor Rubin Ott, president of the Southern Union Conference, based in Kazakhstan. This initiative will also help to establish an Adventist vocational school and health-training program.

"Helping the Indigenous people of Central Asia is a priority for the Adventist Church," says Gary Krause, director of Adventist Mission for the GC. "Thanks to the generosity of those who support Global Mission and mission offerings, we can help meet this need."—**Laurie Fowler**

More @ www.AdventistMission.org.



◆ The "Echoes of Heaven" children's choir recently conducted the entire worship service at Dora Creek church, NSW. The program, entitled "Panoramas of Paradise," comprised choral items, some with solos, group items with string accompaniment, sermonettes and Scripture readings. The 18 choir members, whose ages range

from five to 18 years, have been singing together since July 2005. "We felt such a group would provide an opportunity for children of all ages to be introduced to a choral environment," says director, Robyne Butler. Her co-founders are Jenny Wigglesworth (secretary) and Merilyn Aveling-Rowe (accompanist). Since its inception, the choir has presented various programs in their region and in Sydney.—**George Drinkall**

◆ Aore Laymen's Training School in Vanuatu will benefit

from the Christmas Tree Appeal collected at Lakeside church, NSW. More than \$A1100 was given on December 15. This will provide resources, such as pictorial aids, for volunteers who come for missionary training. Heather Christian and Pastor Don and Orel Hosken organised the successful collection. Beth Kosmeier highlighted the importance of the school by showing slides from the teaching visit that she and Pastor John Kosmeier made to Aore in May 2007.—**Clive Nash**

◆ North West Christian School in Penguin, Tas, submitted two applications to the "Investing in Our School" grants program and received five grants, totaling \$A170,000. The results of four these grants were seen last year, with the local member of parliament, Mark Baker, officially opening the new learning support area, junior playground and refurbished canteen. Heating for three rooms was also provided. Shade areas on all northern aspects of the school are yet to be installed.—**Cheryl Walsh**

DAYS AND OFFERINGS: ◆ FEBRUARY 9—SOUTH PACIFIC RECORD OFFERING

ATSIM regional day in Cairns

CAIRNS, QUEENSLAND

November 10 saw people gather at the Cairns church for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries (ATSIM) regional day.

The Cairns Indigenous Ministry chairperson, Joanne Bowie, with a team of helpers, including Omera London and Junily Bobongie, prepared and presented a special day for all who attended the program, organised by May Franks.

The theme for the day was "Going home," focusing on the journey of the Indigenous people from the time when Satan reigned in their hearts, to the time of their acceptance of Jesus Christ bringing love and unity to the people. Dr Chester Kuma, associate director of Adventist Health for the South Pacific Division, preached a sermon reinforcing the "Going home" message.

Aboriginal elders were also honoured on the day. In the Sabbath-school program, Mrs Franks told the story of her parents, Dick and Jessie Richardson, and the Shepherd brothers and their wives—Willie and Minnie, and Stan and Mabel—who went as missionaries to Papua in the early 1930s.

After lunch, there was a program highlighting the faithfulness of the elders,



Maude Hastie at her baptism by Pastor Roger Ward.

which included many stories and songs. Charlie Bobongie, who travelled from Penguin, Tasmania, to be present, led out in the musical program.

A highlight of the afternoon program was a "This is your life" presentation, honouring June Callaghan for her 40 years of faithful personal ministry in-gathering for the church, collecting thousands of dollars over the years.

The afternoon concluded with Pastor Roger Ward baptising Maude Hastie and Esther Frost. Mrs Frost's grandmother, Mollie, was among the first group of people to be baptised at Mona Mona.

The ATSIM regional day concluded with a musical program, hosted by Mr Bobongie. —*Thelma Silva*

TPUM education directors visit NNZ

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

Education directors from the Trans-Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) visited schools on the north island of New Zealand in late 2007, to discover more about the schools' Adventist focus in teaching.

Together with the associate director of education for the South Pacific Division, Ken Weslake, the group visited seven schools, including the South Auckland Adventist Primary School and Auckland Adventist High School, where an official Maori welcome and Haka were given.

"An interesting observation was noted at the Rotorua Adventist Primary School," says David McClintock, TPUM education director. "The chaplain visits non-Adventist enrolment homes to discuss Adventist beliefs and practices. A copy of *Signs of the Times* is also sent to each home with a monthly newsletter."

According to Mr McClintock, the education directors found the trip to be of "exceptional value," and the insight received from the range of school approaches and insight from principals would be useful when contextualised in local areas of the Pacific. —*Pacific Waves/David McClintock*

◆ The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has been named one of the **Top 100 Highly Rated Charities** in the United States by GiveSpot, an online resource centre that helps donors choose between the hundreds of thousands of charitable and non-profit organisations working around the world. "ADRA is honoured to be recognised as one of GiveSpot's top 100 charities," says **Julio Muñoz**, interim bureau chief for marketing and development at ADRA International. "We take

our responsibility to manage, in a wise and efficient manner, the gifts entrusted to us by our donors seriously, and we thank GiveSpot for acknowledging ADRA's commitment." In order to be ranked in GiveSpot's Top 100, each organisation must solicit donations from the public and run their organisation in an "efficient and transparent way," says the GiveSpot website. More than **90 per cent** of ADRA's funding from private donations goes directly to humanitarian work, one of the highest percentages in

the non-profit world. —*Nadia McGill*

◆ Longtime president of **Loma Linda University, Australian Dr Lyn Behrens**, announced her retirement on December 13. Dr Behrens, who acted as CEO for the institution and presided over the Loma Linda Health Sciences Center, university, and university medical center since 1990, said she is planning a March 2008 retirement. "Dr Behrens' 17-year term as president has been the **longest for any president** in [Loma

Linda's] history," said **Lowell Cooper**, board chair and a vice-president of the General Conference. Cooper described Dr Behrens' leadership as "outstanding," and said her term was marked by an "unswerving" commitment to both the "spiritual dimension of healthcare" and the "denominational identity" of the university. She was also the **first woman** to serve as the university's president. Dr Behrens oversaw a major reworking of the institution's administrative structure. —*Loma Linda/ANN Staff*

SPD invests in church planting

(Continued from page 1)

In the past, these funds were used primarily for training and coaching church planters.

Now these funds, together with Global Mission funds contributed by the General Conference (GC), division, unions and local conferences, will also support church planting initiatives.

At the December meeting of the new committee, it was reported that 40 Global Mission projects that applied for funding in 2008 had been approved, representing a total expense of \$A1.25 million, of which the GC was contributing \$A461,000 and the SPD \$A306,000.

In addition to these Global Mission projects, the new committee approved another \$A234,780 to support five new church-planting projects submitted from the Australian Union Conference, bringing the total SPD contribution to church planting in 2008 to \$A540,000.

"This represents a huge investment of church funds for the core business of planting new churches," says Pastor Coombe. "Some of these projects are ongoing from previous years and, like the Fountain in the City church plant in the Sydney CBD, will conclude this year with the establishment of a viable and self-sustaining congrega-

tion. However, 20 of these projects are just beginning, and will see new church plants in places like Tanna Island in Vanuatu, among the John Frum cargo cult people, or the purchase of land for an Adventist church on Nauru island."

More than 20 of the Global Mission projects this year are located in the Trans-Pacific Union, including projects in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Samoa and Niue. Three projects are located in New Zealand, and 10 projects have been funded for Australia in southern Queensland, northern New South Wales, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Although Papua New Guinea has not received new funding for 2008, they already have 30 projects continuing from last year.

Pastor Coombe says, "All of these Global Mission projects represent a commitment by the local conference or mission to establish an Adventist presence in a new "unentered" area. And it usually involves the deployment of Adventist volunteer laymen and women, known as 'Global Mission pioneers,' who give their time to visiting villages and homes, giving Bible studies and raising up a new group of believers."

Traditional methods of evangelism are often used but in some cases, unique methods of outreach are necessary to reach the

new people groups, such as a fishing club in Kiribati, or providing water tanks in Vanuatu, or children's programs for the Aboriginal community of Tabulum in New South Wales.

The five additional church plant initiatives in Australia represent projects to establish church groups in Perth, Brisbane and Sydney. One of these will target university students on the campus of Curtin University, WA, another will target young families in the Blacktown area of western Sydney and three others will focus on specific ethnic groups.

"All up, the Global Mission and church-plant projects being undertaken in Australia alone in 2008 represent a total expenditure of \$A1.142 million dollars," says Pastor Coombe. "This represents a huge commitment by every level of the church, and we solicit your prayers for the success of these ventures."

The annual sacrifice offering contributes directly to Global Mission funds at the GC but members can contribute regularly to supporting this ministry by including a donation to Global Mission in their tithe envelope. "You can be sure that money given to Global Mission is going to be used directly in the planting of new churches and extending God's kingdom," says Pastor Coombe.

—RECORD staff/Ray Coombe

◆ Muslim-majority **Indonesia** has unveiled one of Asia's **tallest statues** of Jesus, in the mostly-Christian town of Manado on North Sulawesi island. Indonesian real-estate developer Ciputra built the **30-metre high statue**, hoping to lure tourists and become a religious icon. The white monument, which shows a robed Christ with his arms and palms outstretched above his head, took nearly three years to complete and cost about **\$A611,000**. It consists of 25 tonnes of metal fibre and 35 tonnes of steel. The Indonesian Museum of Records had certified

the statue as Asia's tallest Jesus, overtaking the 27-metre tall Cristo Rei in East Timor's capital, Dili. However, Vietnam's state-run tourism agency, SaigonTourist, says on its website that the southern coastal resort city of Vung Tau is home to a 32-metre tall Jesus Christ statue.—*AFP*

◆ Children at a **Catholic school** were shocked when the head nun reeled off a list of banned swear words. **Sister Kathy Avery**, the principal of St Clare of Montefalco Catholic School, Michigan, US, told students she had a **zero-**

tolerance policy for cursing. Just in case anyone was not sure what she was talking about, she read a list of the words and phrases that she was banning. It got a little "quiet in church" during her talk, she admitted. Some parents were shocked but others applauded, reports the *Detroit Free Press*.

—*Ananova*

◆ An **overwhelming majority of Americans believe in God**, a poll has shown. The survey by Harris Online showed that **82 per cent** of adult Americans believe in God and a slightly smaller percentage

—79 per cent—believe in miracles. More than 70 per cent of the **2455 adults surveyed** said they believed in heaven and angels, while more than 60 per cent said they believed in hell and the devil. Almost equal numbers said they believe in **Darwin's theory of evolution** (42 per cent) and creationism (39 per cent). Seventy per cent of Americans said they were very (21 per cent) or somewhat (49 per cent) religious, while around a third of those polled also said they believe in UFOs, witches and astrology.—*AFP*

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

Church sends volunteers to Cambodia

SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

Kellyville church sent 41 volunteers to Cambodia in December/January, to help construct an orphanage home at the Wat Preah Yesu Children's Home in north-eastern Cambodia. The home cares for orphaned and severely disadvantaged children, who are casualties of the country's HIV/AIDS epidemic or are from the poorer rural class. There are more than 100 children in its care, many having received no education, with no chance to without the home's assistance.

The team of volunteers is largely comprised of members of Kellyville church, as well as a number of non-Adventist volunteers who were keen to help. In addition to building the new orphanage house, the team also ran programs for the children and helped with numerous other smaller jobs around the facility.

A total of \$A50,000 was required to be raised by the team to pay for the materials, in addition to the \$A2200 each for their own travel expenses.

In spite of getting a late start in the year, the team conducted barbecues, sold unused items on eBay, collected Sanitarium labels to win a \$A1000 prize and sought assistance from both church and corporate sponsors.

In early November last year, the team conducted an auction night, attended



At the auction held to raise funds for the trip to Cambodia.

by more than 230 people. In excess of \$A22,000 was raised. More than \$A2000 was raised by two male church members who spontaneously "agreed" to have their legs waxed on the night for the orphanage. With the surplus funds raised, the team has also purchased a generator, as the existing generator could not sustain the power demands of the orphanage.

Assistant pastor Troy Roberts says, "The level of support from within the local church and community has been absolutely amazing. It's even more amazing because Kellyville asks its members to raise \$A30,000 a year to support their own youth volunteer."

Even the Kellyville children got onboard, raising more than \$A900 on their own, to purchase Christmas presents in the local town for the children. A Christmas "Tree of Hope" was established, with gifts ranging from \$A5 upward to enable anyone to contribute and provide toys and essential items, such as mosquito nets and bedding, for the children. This tree raised in excess of \$A1500 and brought much joy to the local children.

The team has enjoyed broadening their horizon for "helping others"—expanding from the local community, from Nyngan, where they run an annual StormCo for more than 100 kids, to Cambodia. They look forward to meeting that challenge and expanding it even further throughout the year.—**Rod Long**



Pledges on the Christmas tree, which raised in excess of \$A1500.

Prayer for rain in Reedy Creek

REEDY CREEK, QUEENSLAND

The Burleigh Gardens Adventist church sponsored a community day of prayer for rain on December 1 last year. It was held in the car park of the Gold Coast Christian College.

Guy Lawson, principal of the college, welcomed the guests, which included people from the community and the church. Dianne Reilly, parliamentarian for Mudgeraba, thanked the church for the invitation to participate.

Church members and guests had the opportunity to pray at the front of the church, and many accepted the invitation.

Pastor Geoff Donovan, minister of the church, prefaced his remarks by referring to the Bible story of Jehoshaphat and the way in which God's people, Judah, were being threatened with invasion from several pagan nations. Jehoshaphat called on God for help. Pastor Donovan commented that our nation is in a similar situation to that of Jehoshaphat, being that "we don't know what to do" to bring rain.

As believers in the power of God, Christians can follow Jehoshaphat's model and "seek the Lord's help," says Pastor Donovan. This was why the church set aside this day to make a special appeal to God, asking Him to intervene in the biggest drought in Australia's history.

"The drought is causing so much hardship and distress to many people, especially the farmers. We believe that only God can fix the problem," says Pastor Donovan.

—**Reg Brown**



Some of the attendees of the day of prayer for rain. From left to right: Guy Lawson, Paul Dawson, Dianne Reilly and Pastor Geoff Donovan.

Hindson Awards 2007

BY NATHAN BROWN

A FEW MONTHS AGO—WHILE WORKING on the book for Carmel College's centenary—I spent a morning searching through the issues of RECORD from the 1930s. One story particularly caught my interest. It was the page-and-a-half obituary of Anna Hindson in the December 11, 1933, issue of RECORD.

Anna Ingels became an Adventist as a young person in California, USA, and served the church as secretary of the California Tract Society, which was instrumental in supporting the first Adventist pioneers in travelling to Australia and beginning the church's work in the South Pacific.

A few years later, Anna was appointed to work in Australia, where she arrived in 1893. She married James Hindson in Melbourne in 1898 and was appointed as an editor of the newly launched *Australasian Record* the following year. She worked with the magazine for 34 years until her death, with just two brief intervals away from the role.

Reflecting on her contribution to the church, Pastor A G Stewart, the writer of the obituary, commented, "The messages sent out, the thousands of printed pages compiled, constitute a wonderful monument to a devoted, unassuming life."

Today, Anna Hindson's contribution is also remembered in honouring some of our contemporary contributors in our annual Hindson Awards. And the Hindson Award winners for 2007 are:

Best devotional article

- Roy Naden, "To three friends I wish I had," April 21.

As one of our editorial team commented after reading this article at the time of its publication, "That article made we want to become a better person." Now retired, Dr Naden reflected on his working years, both professionally and personally. He expressed regrets for some of the opportunities and friendships missed, before committing his remaining years to making the world a better place, and supporting younger people now trying to live their faith in different ways.

Best feature article

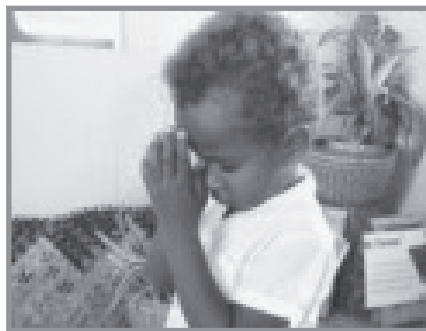
- Brad Watson, "An inconvenient moral truth," May 19.

One of the biggest issues in our community this year has been that of global warming, from the ongoing drought to the Australian federal election. This article engaged with that discussion and offered alternative responses we, as Adventist Christians, could choose. More than just agreeing that Christians should care for our environment, Watson's researched article urges us to be "living our faith" and actually making changes to how we live.

Best practical feature

- Colin Renfrew, "A day in the life of an ordinary pastor," September 29.

So what does a pastor do, anyway? Noting that there is no typical day, Pastor Renfrew shared highlights of one pastor's day—his own—as a glimpse into what pastors do. The article then offered tips for pastors and church members as to how to better understand what pastors do and how members can support their pastors in those many and various activities.



Best news photo

- Joy Butler, "Prayer house opened on Mussau," August 11.

A good news photo draws the reader into the story, teasing them into wanting to find out what the picture is about. With a generous helping of the "cute factor," the image of this young boy's prayerfulness does just that, and is an effective introduction to the renewed focus on prayer among church members on Mussau, Papua New Guinea.



Best news article

- Eddie Erika, "Samoan pastors mark ministry growth," September 29.

Pastor Erika was the man on the spot, reporting on the inaugural meeting of Samoan pastors from around the world held in August. But this article was not just the report of a single event—it also noted the achievements of Samoan pastors in different roles in the Adventist Church worldwide. Supported with good photos, this was an interesting and engaging news story.

Best letter

- Randall Ibbott, "A simple solution," April 14.

Responding to a RECORD editorial, this short letter lamented the polarisation in many of our church arguments and quoted from *Steps to Christ* in offering a simple but profound solution—"fall in love with Jesus."

Best article in *The Edge*

- Melody Tan, "So, how relevant is Ellen White?" *Edge* 61, February 17.

This is a new award, added to recognise the "coming of age" of *The Edge*, published regularly as a youth supplement to RECORD for the past 10 years. Ms Tan's article was part of an issue of *The Edge* focused on the ministry of Ellen White and the continuing relevance of her writing to younger church members today. With touches of humour, Ms Tan addressed a number of the questions currently surrounding Ellen White. She concluded that these books will only be relevant if they are read, issuing a challenge to readers—as well as herself—to spend time with the books for themselves. **R**

Nathan Brown is editor of RECORD.



Enough in common

BY ROY NADEN

TODAY I HAD TO CALL A TAXI FOR A friend and her two little children, newly arrived from Africa. They were coming to share a special holiday meal with us. I called Tony's mobile phone. He's been taking me to and from the airport for more than a decade. He seems to work 365 days a year.

An unrecognisable voice answers. "Is Tony there?" I ask.

An Indian-accented male voice says, "No."

I repeat the number I thought I had dialed and ask, "Do I have the right number?"

"Yes," he confirms, "but Tony isn't here. He's dead."

I stammer out the first words that come to mind: "But he took me to the airport a couple of months ago, just before he left for India on a business trip!"—as if that comment had any relevance. "What happened?" I continue.

"It happened on his trip. Someone gave him the poison. He died."

The conversation also seemed to die at that moment. I had no idea who this man was or what to say to him, or what to comment about the circumstances of Tony's death. What do you say to a total stranger when someone you both know has died?

Pictures of Tony began floating through my memory. He was such a dapper Indian. Impeccably dressed, his taxi immaculately

kept, and like a crown, he proudly wore the turban common to all men of the Sikh religion, which hold their long hair. The practice of allowing one's hair to grow naturally is a symbol of respect for the perfection of God's creation. He seemed to have an endless supply of brightly-coloured cloth with which he wove his head gear, from brilliant yellow to rich purple and, very occasionally, he picked me up wearing a black turban. But the drabness didn't suit him. He was always so talkative and helpful.

We got to know each other's families over the years. He followed my various trips around the world by taking me to my departing flight and being the first one to welcome me home. And when he was about to leave on an annual business trip to India, he would tell me all he hoped to accomplish.

The man on the line gave me the contact information for Tony's family. As I sat looking at the number I had just written down, I didn't know what to do. I had never actually met Tony's wife—didn't even know her name. But I thought I should call her and express my sympathy. That seemed like an awkward conversation. If she had been a Christian, it would have been easy.

I'm a slow thinker. I said to myself, "Tony was a sincere believer and spoke of his faith often. But his beliefs were vastly different from mine. I was accustomed to comforting Christians. What could possibly sustain

a conversation with his wife?"

I called the number anyway. Tony's wife answered. I told her my name and that we had never met, yet I had learned quite a lot about her and her two children from Tony. Before I could continue, she exclaimed, "You must be the man from Australia! Tony spoke about you often."

And from there, the conversation flowed easily. Without hesitation, I told her of my sadness at Tony's passing, and that I would pray that God would comfort her and sustain her in her loss. We talked for a quite a while.

Afterward, as I thought about the call, I realised how much we held in common. Two human beings. We knew about each other, simply because her husband and I had been friends. We both knew the deep sadness of a loss in our families. And we both believed in God.

The differences may have been more numerous than the likenesses but we held in common the basics that really mattered: relationships, feelings and desire to understand the other. It was enough to allow meaningful conversation. It almost always is. **R**

Roy Naden is an emeritus professor of Andrew University. Originally from Australia, he now lives in retirement in Seattle, Washington, USA.



Making the choice

BY BARBARA SHELLEY

IT WAS LATE IN THE AFTERNOON when, returning home, I noticed a small card by my front door. It was from a courier firm, alerting me to the fact that they had tried to deliver a parcel unsuccessfully.

Intrigued, I phoned the company to arrange a mutual time and then forgot about it. Being Friday afternoon, I had to wait all weekend to see what the parcel was. No-one in the house was expecting anything, so I was very curious.

Monday morning came. As arranged, not one but two large parcels arrived at our front door early in the morning. I was excited! Unexpected parcels remind me of when we served overseas and family sent us parcels of food or gifts.

As my knife cut through the tape, I cast a cursory glance at the label. Strange! My address was correct but the name wasn't. I dismissed the thought immediately—a few weeks back, I had entered a competition from the company that had sent the box. My excitement mounted. I must have won the competition!

As I eagerly laid back the top cardboard

covers, I noticed a letter. "Congratulations! You are the winner in our recent competition!" and it continued in the same way. No name on the letter, just "Congratulations," so I assumed someone had made a typo on the label.

Both boxes contained many good things.

Nothing had changed dramatically since opening the parcel—except my attitude.

My daughter—visiting me at the time—helped me sort the contents. There was so much there that I shared some with her. She kept saying, "Mum, you must have had a good entry. I am so impressed."

That felt good. What parent doesn't want to impress their offspring?

Later in the afternoon, after my daughter left, the telephone shrilled in my ear. I answered it. It was the company that had sent

the goods. I immediately thanked them for the prize. To my horror, the response was that they had "made a mistake and sent it to the incorrect address"—my address!

My mood changed instantly. I felt flat, shocked, guilty and annoyed—all that excitement for nothing. I let the caller know what had happened and, to my relief, she explained that it was their mistake and, as I had opened the parcel, I could keep its contents. What a relief.

But as I went about my work that afternoon, I noticed something unusual. Despite being able to keep the parcel and contents, I no longer had the joy of the morning. I still had the goodies. They had cost me nothing but the effort I had put into the competition. So why was I still feeling flat and foolish? Being me, I set about to analyse the situation. As a professional counsellor, my role with others is to assist them in their thinking patterns. Now it was my turn to have my thinking analysed.

I went to my favourite thinking space: God. His response was swift and sure—"Choose you this day whom ye will serve"

(Joshua 24:15, KJV).

I got the message!

Nothing had changed dramatically since opening the parcel—except my attitude. When I thought I had won the competition, I chose to feel positive and happy. When I was told I wasn't the winner—even though I was told I could keep the prizes—I chose to feel miserable!

The shift had occurred within me. It was my thinking that led to my drop in feeling. I had made the same cardinal mistake we all make. I had let my changed circumstances control my feelings.

“For as he [or she] thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7. KJV). Our behaviour can always be tracked back to the same catalyst—attitude. Choice. What we think about any given situation determines our feeling. And our behaviour comes from the feeling.

While I thought I was the winner, I felt happy and acted that way. When I thought I was not a winner, I felt miserable and acted accordingly.

How foolish I felt. And how grateful I was that God had so speedily pointed out the truth to me.

I thought about the behaviour of Peter and the other apostles in prison, who received rejection after rejection, yet chose to ignore their affliction and get on with the business of spreading the gospel: “The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ” (Acts 5:41, 42, NIV).

My self-pity was over! God had gently reminded me of how important my choice is to my wellbeing. As a parent, I had often heard my children say “You made me do it” or “You make me so mad.” But no matter what life dishes out to us, who tries to hurt us or what circumstances we are in, we choose how we respond.

Once again, I reminded myself of the same fact I so often told others—as the old hymn puts it—“Be thy feelings as they will/ Jesus is thy Saviour still.”

Who will you serve today? **R**

Barbara Shelley writes from Ruse, New South Wales.

Home*

BY BRUCE MANNERS

WHAT DO YOU CALL A COUNTRY with snow-capped mountains, sun-scorched deserts and endless beaches?

A country with flat, fertile plains, life-bringing rivers and ever-rolling seas?

A country with large, vibrant cities, small country towns and isolated homesteads?

You call it home.
You call it Australia.

What do you call a place where sport can stop the nation, cricket's in the backyard and football's in the park?

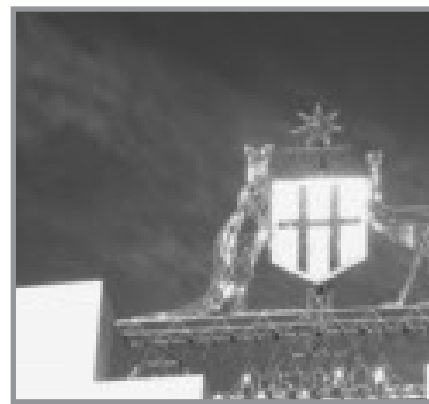
A place where kookaburras laugh, emus run ever forward and kangaroos bound?

A place where barbecues rule, Weet-Bix is for breakfast and pavlova's a treat?

You call it home.
You call it Australia.

What do you call a people who say, “G'day,”
“Good on ya mate”
and, “No worries”?

A people who believe in mateship, helping the battler and a fair go for all?



A people who are Aboriginal, English, African and Asian and more?

You call them us.
You call us Australians.

But wait!

There are times when nature is cruel:
as rivers rage across the land,
forests burst into flames
and droughts destroy.

Times when tragedies hit:
when a plane goes down,
a train leaves its tracks
and a bus rolls over.

Times when a few words say it:
Backpacker Killings,
Port Arthur Massacre
and the Truro Murders.

This too is our home.
This too is Australia.

But wait again!

There's a land that is fairer,
that is fairer than day.
And by faith we can see it,
can see it afar.

So we do wait,
we wait together
here in our home,
the home we call Australia.

And we wait:
proud to be Australian,
but longing for heaven. **R**

**With "apologies" to the rest of the South Pacific—but it is Australia Day, after all.*

Bruce Manners is senior pastor of the Avondale College church in Cooranbong, New South Wales.



It took a bunny

BY CHRISTINE MILES

TODAY I STOPPED—REALLY STOPPED. I HAD FENCED OFF A small section of the garden for our new bunny to exercise in. It was a very temporary fencing job—and now the bunny was exercising.

Being a fence that would simply flatten to the ground if the bunny so much as rubbed her chin against it, I was obliged to stay close by. There were a million other things to be done but I couldn't do any of them at the same time as responsibly watching the bunny.

And so I stopped.

I had thought I stopped quite often. I thought I stopped for my personal devotions. I thought I stopped while at the table, sharing a meal with my family. I thought I stopped while we had family worship. I even thought I stopped when I went to bed at night.

But the truth is there's always something whirling around in my mind. I make lists, I think ahead, I review my day, I plan my family's calendar, I stress about my job. I sleep at night but I wake up with all cylinders firing, fly out of bed and go all day. Even in my devotions, a part of my brain is thinking about all the things that need to be fitted into the day.

But today, the bunny stopped me.

And for 20 wonderful minutes, I thought about nothing except the wonders of God's creation. Making dinner, bringing in the laundry, getting kids to do their piano practice—all had no place while I watched the bunny explore and nibble and, occasionally, leap high in the air with bunny excitement.

I found myself talking to God, exploring again the simple things He offers us and feeling glad I'm part of His plan.

I doubt I'll always feel joyful about watching a bunny exercise but I hope I never forget what it feels like to truly stop and focus on nothing but God's wonders.

"Be still," says God, "and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm 46:9-11, NIV). **R**

Christine Miles writes from Auckland, New Zealand.

Record Roo



Hi kids!
This week we're looking at the amazing story of Creation. You can read all about it in the first book of the Bible, Genesis. What is your favourite part of the story?

Bible Text

In the _____ God created the _____ and the _____. Now the earth was formless and _____, darkness was over the _____ of the deep, and the _____ of _____ was hovering over the _____. Genesis 1:1, 2 NIV

Word Search

Can you find all the words from the list in the puzzle below?

O	E	A	R	T	H	N	R	I	T	A	B	X	I
K	M	J	Z	O	B	Y	G	E	G	O	O	D	L
Q	P	D	M	B	E	G	I	N	N	I	N	G	T
R	E	S	T	O	K	S	B	J	J	F	S	H	I
V	H	W	O	M	A	N	A	T	H	R	X	Y	Q
O	H	E	A	V	E	N	S	W	A	D	S	D	G
U	J	W	C	X	E	F	N	T	U	T	S	E	J
A	H	A	R	G	E	A	S	O	N	L	E	P	S
I	T	T	I	F	M	Z	U	A	T	I	A	U	K
E	Y	E	R	V	V	Q	L	Y	T	J	S	N	Y
D	A	R	C	W	P	P	X	C	R	G	C	E	D
A	N	S	C	R	E	A	T	E	D	F	I	S	H
R	I	S	N	W	R	M	O	R	N	I	N	G	S
K	M	W	U	I	A	M	S	A	B	B	A	T	H
N	A	P	W	N	G	D	O	U	D	G	W	Y	W
E	L	J	Q	L	V	H	K	O	Z	O	M	B	B
S	S	X	D	A	H	S	T	K	N	D	B	I	R
S	O	N	R	L	I	G	H	T	E	Y	L	R	N
D	Q	G	Q	U	C	R	K	K	C	U	S	D	U
H	R	X	U	N	I	Y	U	M	V	G	S	S	N

- | | | | |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| BEGINNING | MORNING | MOON | MAN |
| GOD | NIGHT | STARS | SABBATH |
| CREATED | SKY | FISH | GOOD |
| HEAVENS | WATERS | BIRDS | REST |
| EARTH | LAND | ANIMALS | WOMAN |
| LIGHT | SEAS | PLANTS | |
| DARKNESS | SUN | | |

Thanks for “Cringe”

MURRAY HALLAM, QLD

I read “The cringe” (Feature, December 1) and shouted for joy that such a truth-filled insight on the character of God has been published in RECORD. More please!

I have always been “uncomfortable with the dualistic angry God/loving God” depictions we teach in our Adventist culture. I really cannot understand why most thoughtful Adventist Christians don’t ask more questions about this subject.

Perhaps it is an indication of our carnal, revengeful natures that we want to have a God who gets angry with the wicked and wipes them out in the end. There are many glaring anomalies in our standard teachings on this subject. We have much to learn.

As Ellen White says in *Christ’s Object Lessons*, “The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love” (page 415).

Farce-painting?

BRENDEEN COOKE, QLD

I would like to respond to “A wrong message?” (Letters, November 24). The author seems to have taken an understandable disliking to tattooing and has managed to find a verse in the Bible (see Leviticus 19:28) to support his views. Unfortunately, the text used has been taken out of context. In ancient times, cutting of the flesh and tattooing were carried out as part of pagan rituals and ceremonies to mourn the dead (cutting) or ward off spirits of the dead (tattooing). Thus God reminded His people not to do it, “for I am the Lord.”

Interestingly, Leviticus 19:27 warns against cutting the sides of your hair and clipping off the edges of your beard (the reason orthodox Jews have full beards and ringlets of hair)—a practice most of us understand in its proper context.

So is it OK to tattoo? While I personally find them unattractive, my main moral issue is that, if overdone, tattooing detracts from the being God made you.

The main issue that needs to be addressed in this letter, though, is the propo-

sition that face painting for children leads to tattooing later in life. With all due respect, I find this to be in rather poor form. One only has to look at the differing reasons between face painting and tattooing—on the one hand, you have a child who wants to “dress up” and, on the other hand, you have someone who is pandering to the tastes of fashion and would tattoo as he or she would buy a cer-

tain style of dress or sunglasses. Thus the child wants to be different from everyone else and the adult wants to be—though in an individual way—like everyone else. In both cases, the vast majority would not be doing it to ward off evil spirits.

Blaming adult tattooing on child face painting is like blaming toy cars for the high road toll in young male drivers.

A woman’s church?

DANNY BELL, WA

The article about women’s plight in poverty stricken cultures, comparing that to our churches, needs clarifying (“Why does such a God-fearing husband have such a husband-fearing wife?” Feature, November 24).

A United States study found that in 50 per cent of all domestic violence cases, the woman hit first. Domestic violence should not be tolerated in any form—be it male- or female-initiated—but are we dealing with the tail and not the source?

In Australia, evidence suggests that most men who commit violence against women had a negative experience with their mothers or a feminine figure in their childhood.

Concerning our church, studies have shown that more than 60 per cent of church attendees are women and under 40 per cent are men.

If it is a “man’s world” then it is definitely a “woman’s church.” Many new Christian books are now demonstrating a strong case that Western church cultures, such as that in Australia, cater for women rather than men. From the music to the worship styles,

down to what we allow and disallow in church—most of what we do shows that the potting mix of church is more suited to growing the feminine variety than the masculine.

We don’t just look at the surface when studying the Bible and pride ourselves in digging deep for answers—let’s do the same when it comes to solutions to our gender problems at church or abroad.

Blaming adult tattooing on child face painting is like blaming toy cars for the high road toll.

Keep it flying

ARTHUR PETRIE, NSW

There seems to be a rush to sell church assets. The list grows. Now it’s the Avondale College flying school.

The news story “Aviation at Avondale to end” (November 24) heaped great praise on the track record of the flying school over the past 30 years, and then in the next breath said it is to close.

Are our church leaders just going to sit back and let this happen? We can raise \$A1.3 million for the purchase of an aircraft for Papua New Guinea but don’t seem to be capable to rescue the department that trains the personnel to fly them. What about a program to raise less than half the amount of the PNG plane to keep the aviation school flying?

The administration of the flying school should be taken away from Avondale College and made a department of the South Pacific Division, which I hope would be better able to raise the necessary finance to keep it going.

We are good at raising funds for things we want, how about some leadership from the division? Do something constructive about the flying school, after all the wonderful things it has done over the past 30 years!

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.

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Anniversaries

Mann, Alan and Patricia (nee McFarlane), Perth, WA, recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with family and friends. Patricia, who was born in Hobart, Tasmania, met Alan in Perth in 1946, after he had recently returned from serving in the occupying forces in Japan after the war. They were married on 1.12.1947, in the old Perth church in Hay Street. They have



been active members of several Adventist churches around the city over the years. On December 2, a celebration was held at the venue where they spent their wedding night. They were joined by their four children, seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, together with friends and relatives.

Stanton, David and Verna (nee Lehner) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on 2.12.07. On a beautiful sunny morning, they shared breakfast with family and friends at a restaurant in the historic Henry Jones buildings on the Hobart (Tas) waterfront, known as the Wapping. Ironically, many years ago, H Jones and Co processed fruit from both the Lehner and Stanton farms. David and Verna were married in the Adventist Fleet Street church, in Moonah, Hobart, by Pastor Abbott.

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Weddings

Brusek—*Ellis.* Bert Brusek (Albury, NSW) and Karen Ellis (Bowral, NSW) were married on 25.11.07 in Bowral church. *David Syme*

Crews—*Butler.* Jim Crews, son of Peter and Joan Crews (Morisset, NSW), and Soraya Jean Butler, daughter of Grant and Delma Butler (Brightwaters), were married on 2.12.07 in the grounds of the groom's parents' home, Morisset. *Wayne Krause*

Obituaries

Cinzio, Davide, born 10.6.1939 at Milan, Italy; died 18.11.07 in Adelaide, SA. He was predeceased by his wife, Melanie, in 1962. On 15.3.1981, he married Tina. He is survived by his wife; his children, David, Naomi, and Joshua and Emily Cinzio; as well as his grandchildren, Kirsty, Leah, Zachary, Jayden and Lauren. *Steve Cinzio, Jewee To*

Clapham, Gordon Wallace, born 11.7.1918 at Nimbin, NSW; died 27.11.07 at Tingalpa, Qld. He is survived by his wife, Daphne; his son, Harold; and his daughter, Ellen. Gordon was a faithful Wynnum church member and tireless mission in-gathering volunteer, as well as a service man during WWII in Australia and overseas. His special place in our hearts will be empty until the reunion on Resurrection morning. *Gabriel Ontanu*

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Hall, Grace Marjorie (nee Peatey), born 21.3.1921 at Rockhampton, Qld; died 21.11.07 in the Adventist Retirement Village, Victoria Point. On 20.12.1962, she married Peter Hall, who predeceased her on 7.3.1983. She is survived by her sisters, Ina Hodgkinson and Dorothy King; her brother, Neil Peatey; and her much-loved nieces and nephews. Although Grace started her teaching career in the Qld State School system, she transferred to the Adventist Education department. She taught at Albion, Rockhampton, Wahroonga, Adelaide and Melbourne schools, giving a total of 42 years service. For a period, she was called into the South Qld Youth department, specialising in JMV/Pathfinder work. Grace also served in the then Trans-Tasman Conference as assistant to the Education Director. Grace had a strong faith in her Saviour and peacefully awaits His soon return. *Neil Peatey, Ken Lawson, Reg King*

Lis, Franciszka (nee Hupalowski), born 3.12.1913 at Luzany, Austria; died 16.6.07 in the Adventist Nursing Home, Kings Langley, Sydney. In 1932, she married Stanislaw Ostrowski, who predeceased her in 1945. She resettled in Jelenia Gora and married Franciszek Lis, who predeceased her after moving to Australia in 1983. She is survived by her son, Kazimierz Ostrowski; her grandson, Adam, and his wife, Sandra; great-grandchildren, Megan and Jonathan; and her brother, John, in Poland. In 1966, the family moved to Newcastle. After that, she moved to Tumut to live with her son. Franciszka was a quiet and very generous person, always thinking of others before herself. She was

dedicated to the Adventist message and the ministry of the church. *Janusz Jagiello*

McKenzie, Jean Muriel Phyllis (nee Roberts), born 7.10.1919 at Mt Gravatt, Qld; died 25.11.07 at Bethesda Home, Auckland, NZ. In 1944, she married William (Bill), who predeceased her in 1976. She is survived by her two daughters, Raywyn Cooper and Mandy Allen (Auckland); her three grandsons and two great-granddaughters. Jean was a fun-loving woman, who served the Lord in the communities where she lived. Because of her great love for children, she fostered several and devoted her later years to ministering to children in the Maraetai community. She was also a leader in the Dorcas society for many years. She is greatly missed. Rest in peace and in the blessed hope of Jesus' return. *Ben Timothy*

Nolan, Betty Jean, born 16.7.1921 at Inverell, NSW; died 26.11.07 in Coronella Retirement Village, Nunawading, Vic. In January, 1946, she married Harry, who predeceased her in September, 1992. She was baptised in 1936. She is survived by her daughters, Jenny Buckler (Box Hill, Vic) and Beverley Larsen (Bargara, Qld). Betty was a faithful church member at Mont Albert church for over 60 years. She had a deep love for her Lord and great confidence in the blessed hope. *Ian Royce*

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Endless Praise is auditioning for male singers, as well as electric/bass guitar and keyboard players interested in joining the full-time music ministry, commencing in January 2008. Contact Sandra on (02) 8783 7000 or email <ep@praise.com.au> asap.

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Finally

If you board the wrong train, it is no use running along the corridor in the other direction.

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The Methuselah Files: Archaeological discovery of the millennium

The war in Iraq has not all been bad news for the US. One of the most incredible spin-offs in the search for weapons of mass destruction in 2003 was the discovery of what has been hailed by archaeologists as the world's oldest document. These clay tablets, buried in Pre-Cambrian alluvial deposits in the mountains of northern Iraq, have been described as "unbelievably ancient." For security reasons they were smuggled out of Iraq and brought to the Bibliothèque Institute in Washington, DC, for examination.

With the use of sophisticated computer translation software, scientists have been able to unlock the secrets of an ancient civilisation. They appear to be informal snippets of conversations between Mef-Uz-Alla, a highly venerated ancient leader, and his favoured grandson, Noar. Consequently the tablets and their contents have been dubbed the Methuselah Files. They describe an advanced civilisation not unlike ours today and offer insights that remain perennially fresh, relevant and even prophetic.

The files are the musings of a very old man who, at 950 years of age, had outlived his 12 consecutive wives and many of his offspring over 15 generations of descendants. Mef-Uz-Alla has, by virtue of his amazing longevity, become recognised as one of the world's leading authorities on ageing, albeit posthumously.

The translators describe the text as informal, and have therefore

endeavoured to retain a consistency in the conversational style of the ancient author. In an exclusive report the RECORD will be revealing extracts of the Methuselah Files over the next few weeks.

The staff of the Adventist Retirement Villages are a group of professionals dedicated to the compassionate care of the residents and their families regardless of race, culture or creed.



Mef-Uz-Alla discusses his retirement plans

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