

SOUTHERN CROSS

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Vietnamese church finds new home

By JEREMY HALCROW

Sydney Diocese's first Vietnamese congregation has finally found a permanent home with the opening of St Luke's Vietnamese Anglican Church at Regents Park on February 25.



The Rev Vinh Pham

After a lifetime on the move the congregation's long-time pastor, the Rev Vinh Pham, is keen to stay at Regents Park. He already feels comfortable in his new residence, painting over the old white walls with his favoured bright blue colours.

"It really makes a difference," he said. "I've been in Australia for 12 years and now I feel like this place is my home."

The 50-strong congregation is made up mainly of 'boat people' who fled from their homeland into refugee camps before coming to Australia.

Mr Pham is relieved that his congregation is finally able to settle down. In the last year they have been moved three times, from Dulwich Hill to Punchbowl and finally to Regents Park.

"It's one of the major problems for Vietnamese congregations," said Mr Pham. "They only have temporary contracts with the churches whose premises they share, so they are always having to move."

But Sydney Diocese is right behind Mr Pham's ministry, granting him his own building. "It's very exciting to see an ethnic Anglican church starting to

outreach to their own people in our region," said the Archdeacon of Liverpool/ Georges River, the Ven Geoff Huard.

Archdeacon Huard said the new Vietnamese church couldn't have happened without the support of the original parish. When the original two congregations in the parish of Regents Park with Birrong decided to move into the one church - St Matthew's, at Birrong - the church building at Regent's Park was left free.

"I am full of appreciation for the former congregation's generosity," Archdeacon Huard said. "They have made their premises available and given financially to start this new ministry off."

Mr Pham agreed. "This is why it has been an advantage for my congregation to belong to the Anglican church," he said. "They have helped find us a place of worship."

Mr Pham said that many Vietnamese Christians in Sydney belonged to the Vietnamese Evangelical Church which was weakened by a chronic shortage of property and the problems of having to share premises with landlord churches. He said that many of the mainstream churches were insensitive to the needs of the ethnic congregations, forcing them to leave when they wanted to use their buildings for new initiatives.

"The problem is that people leave their congregations when they move because the church ends up too far away," he said.

In the case of the Vietnamese Anglicans only one family had decided not to follow them to Regents Park. But Mr Pham hopes quickly to make up the numbers through outreach strategies. "Already since Christmas we've had six conversions," he said.

"Vietnamese people don't know anything about Jesus Christ because they are Buddhists," Mr Pham said. "Buddhists think that you can only get to be with God by doing good deeds. But when Vietnamese hear that you only need faith, they say that's great!"



(From left) Andy Tait, Jim Munro, Rob McAllum, Ron Denning and Nola Munro help renovate the new counselling centre at Narrabeen. It was opened in February by the local parish and the ACC.

New counselling centre meets needs on beaches

The Northern Beaches are crying out for counselling services, according to the Rev Roger Green, assistant minister at St Faith's, Narrabeen. And they are about to receive them. St Faith's, in conjunction with the Anglican Counselling Centre (ACC), opened a new centre at Narrabeen in February.

"There is a big need on the Northern Beaches for counselling services," Mr Green said. The closest facilities are at Manly; they are small and struggle to meet the demand. "There seems to be a large general hun-

ger for counselling," he said. "Even some schools are interested in making use of the centre."

"At first the centre will provide counselling for personal relationships for all age groups. We will even provide marriage counselling and marriage preparation," he said.

St Faith's has turned a self-contained cottage into meeting rooms for use as a counselling centre. "A lot of work has gone into renovating the house," said Mr Green. "We wanted it to be meeting rooms and offices not a drop in centre."

Mr Green said that at first there will be at least three counsellors renting the property with this number increasing over time. "Some of the ACC counsellors will also use the centre," he said "and ACC will use the premises to run one of their courses."

"One of our key goals is to use it as bridge to the community. It will let people see that the church is interested in them and also let us take the gospel to the community."

For more information about the facilities at Narrabeen phone St Faith's on (02) 9971 1048.

The Eve of the Millennium

Australians have elected a government that will take them through to the eve of the third millennium. We have at some level given this government a mandate as to how we hope our country will be run. Within this, we have also made a number of assumptions about what things are really important, the values that we want to undergird our nation, and indirectly, our lives.

Promise-breaking

In our cafés, shopping malls and offices, a guessing game is taking place as to how long it will be before the government breaks its first promise. We strangely expect lies and even deception, while at the same time hoping for truth and integrity in our country's leadership. But there is no

time like the present to rid ourselves of cynicism, and to start hoping and *expecting* truth in word and deed.

One of the recurring themes in the recent election campaign was people's distaste for arrogance. There is perhaps in this some residual intolerance for tall poppies in Australian society, but it relates equally to such things as the presence of pride and the absence of humility.

It is right that these issues concern us, just as it is right that we call on those in authority to account for the way they have handled the responsibilities with which they've been entrusted. It has been suggested that politicians' behaviour in parliament ought to be subject to a code of ethics; perhaps such a code ought

also to apply to their wider conduct. The Anglican Church has always encouraged its people to pray for leaders and those in authority. We must not only pray for their salvation, but also that their influence would come both to reflect and to engender the values of Jesus' kingdom.

It is not too much to expect. If our faith and prayers can move mountains, they can also move the hearts and minds of cabinet ministers and bureaucrats.

The place for hope

Likewise, despair ought to have no place in the heart of God's people. We have a new perspective on life, moving outward from our own transformation, stretching outwards to touch our friends, families, fellow

workers, neighbours and those with whom we share our local communities.

Let us all maintain a deep and lasting hope for our country, for our society in all its diversity, that it will reflect the values of Christ's kingdom, and that through this more and more people will come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord.

Let us all long for and pursue peace and justice, for good government and wisdom for our leaders, for this pleases God and enables the gospel to flourish.

Let us also maintain the call for truth, not just as an abstract concept, but something which is embedded deeply in all *our* lives and all *our* dealings, as well as the lives and dealings of those who govern us.

CROSS words

Surplice fees banned

When I was rector at Helensburgh I found myself in the fortunate position of having to conduct about one wedding a year. My Saturday afternoons were free to rip up to Port Hacking in a catamaran. When I was appointed to Cronulla I sold my catamaran, for Cronulla has a long aisle. The only compensation was a little play-money for a Saturday evening visit to the local Chinese restaurant.

I have never been able to understand why we clerics see it as our divine task to legislate the "tithing of mint and cumin". We stand by while the ritual and order of the Anglican church is shredded, but get ourselves into a lather over whether or not a clergyman should receive surplice fees. Why are we so unwilling to trust each other in the exercise of our ministry? Why do we so often assume that my way of doing ministry is not only the right way, but is the way everyone else must do it? Why do we so easily condemn, so quickly infer the unrighteousness of the ministry of others, so quickly seek to extract the "speck".

On the matter of surplice fees there is no word from the Lord, just personal assumptions couched in the language of faith. "For freedom Christ set us free." We are proclaimers of the free grace of God in Christ, which gospel is "the power of God unto salvation". When children of grace become children of law they are lost.

The Rev Bryan Findlayson Cronulla

What blessing?

One thing about Robert's column: it never leaves me where it found me! I refer to the February edition where he predicts that "something called 'The Alpha Course' will make an evangelistic splash in 1997" and "You heard it here first". Wrong again! I heard it elsewhere and often. I

can only hope that if this prediction is correct that people will not use this course without seriously modifying its content. It has a brilliant format but its content is unhelpful and in some places will lead people astray.

However it was not this which stirred me so much: it was the discovery that another blessing had come and that I had missed out again! When 'tongues' were all the rage I missed out on that. When 'baptism in the Spirit' was the latest fad, alas it passed me by. 'Healing' and 'words of knowledge' the same. When 'prophecy' was going strong not only could I not do it but no one even had one for me. (That none of them came to pass didn't seem to worry anybody.) When the Toronto blessing came my fate was the same. Can you imagine my despair when I discovered that the Sydney blessing had come and I had missed out on that too! Was it not ever thus? Let me describe where I am at in the hope that someone might be able to tell me what blessing I have. I am bolt upright, faculties functioning, and am full of the joy of salvation.

John C Chapman Penshurst

Time for unity

Over the January break I had opportunity to spend time outside the Diocese and observe ministry in an evangelical church ministering in a liberal and hostile context - hostile that is, to evangelicalism.

The issues that dominate for the (few) evangelical clergy in that Diocese, are matters such as non-Christian counsellors (even *anti-Christian*) being employed by the Cathedral; clergy who find their inspiration from Buddhist monasteries (and see no conflict with Jesus' claims in the gospels - because they are considered fabrications of the early church); a bishop who supports the ordi-

nation of practising homosexuals; clergy days on "Anglicanism" which make no mention of gospel, the Bible or anything we would see as Christian ministry.

I returned to Sydney with a question that I could not escape. Why do we spend so much time fighting over issues such as women preaching to mixed congregations, lay presidency, etc? It seems that in the absence of the gospel and the Bible to fight over, we will find something else. A love of the Lord Jesus and the gospel is no longer enough - we introduce new labels and new categories and new tests to see whether people are really 'orthodox' or not! Do we just love controversy, a good argument?

I wondered for a moment what might happen if we focused more on what unifies and less on what divides us; if we actually decided to work together in the cause of the gospel; if all the passion and the energy and the time and other resources now spent in the cause of argument were put behind gospel work? If we have so many episcopal, clerical and lay leaders who love the gospel and the Lord Jesus, why aren't we more effective as a church in witnessing to the gospel? Why are we so small? Given who we are and what we believe, we should be unstoppable! Or am I naive, idealistic?

Another question lay heavily on me: why in Sydney, do we tend to knock our leadership, no matter who they seem to be? We are so fortunate to have bishops who love God and Jesus and believe the Bible! Of course they won't do things exactly the way we would have done them - but surely we can trust that they lead from a firm foundation of love for the gospel and a belief in the truth of the Bible as God's Word. They might not always get it 'right', but do we?

May the Lord give us grace to get as passionate - no, *more* passionate - about the gospel itself than we do over peripherals, and

so to realise the unity we do have in Sydney, in Christ, that we have the humility to work with one another in His cause, instead of against one another in our own.

Mark Calder Roseville

Gospel versus structure?

It is a disappointment to me to hear of the opposition towards those who desire to take the gospel to the Central Coast. Is the maintenance of church structures more important than the expansion of the kingdom of God? Or have we deceived ourselves into thinking these are one and the same thing?

I am glad to hear that the Archbishop is keen to encourage evangelistically enterprising initiatives. This Central Coast venture would appear to be such an initiative, so why the reluctance to support it? Are the praises of men worth more than the treasure we receive as we see those coming into God's family as a result of the power of the gospel preached? I don't think so.

Did Paul tell Timothy to preach the word, but only where most people felt comfortable about it? I understand the encouragement was to preach the word in season and out of season. Perhaps this Central Coast opportunity is an out of season moment, but it is still a moment to preach the word. Thank God for those who have the courage to stand up and proclaim the word of God, this Central Coast venture being the latest but not the last of these opportunities.

Gavin Parsons Earlwood

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Sydney welcomes new church

Singapore and Malaysia have gained independence with the inauguration of the Anglican Province of South East Asia and the installation of the Rt Rev Moses Tay Ling Kwong as its new archbishop. The Cathedral of St Andrew in Singapore was filled to capacity on Friday, February 2, for the installation service.

The Archbishop of Sydney, Harry Goodhew, attended not only to represent Australia as acting primate, but also because of Sydney's numerous connections with the region.

The service was conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, who preached from Isaiah 30. He spoke of giving glory to God, strengthening and furthering the church's fellowship and partnership in the gospel, and proclaiming it in obedience to the great commission.

Archbishop Goodhew said, "The four dioceses of the new province are responsible for reaching between 320 and 360 million people in their area. They are in great heart, they look for revival and for the spirit of God to move powerfully across the land. There were people from Brunei who spoke movingly about the need to be faithful in the face of persecution."

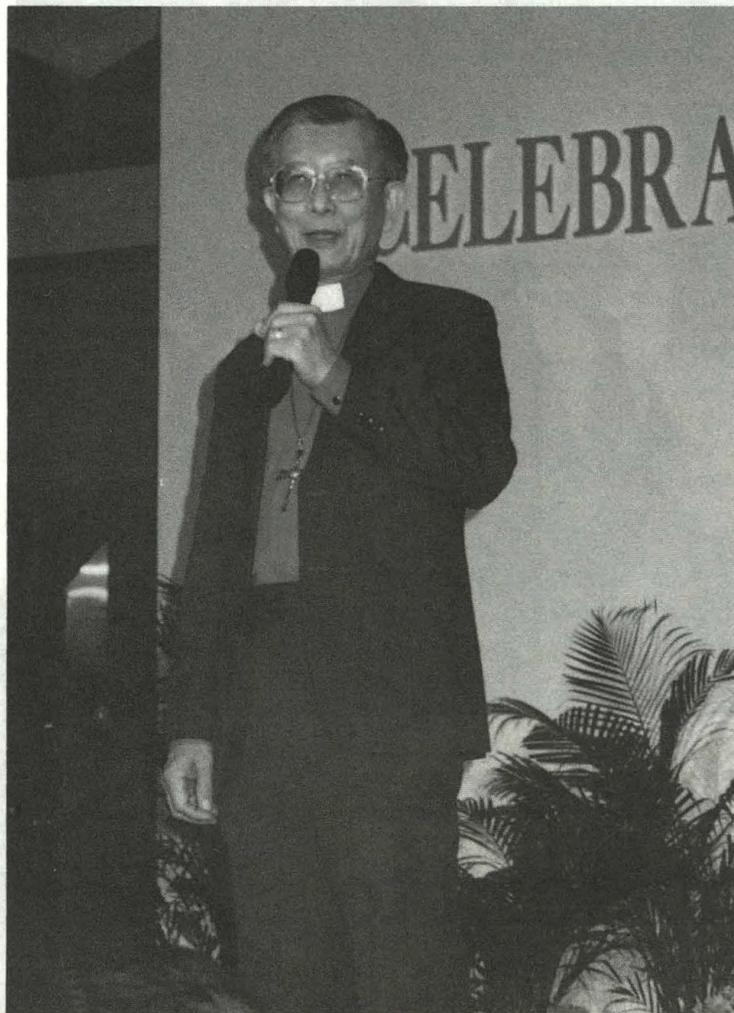
Archbishop Goodhew also attended a retreat conducted by

Archbishop Carey, who spoke on the operation of God's power through weak people, on building up God's people, and on Christian leadership. "They were solid, practical and encouraging times. George Carey is clearly a man who has had a background in parish ministry. He brings an honest heart to his themes and they were very helpful sessions," said Archbishop Goodhew.

God is very much at work in the lives of those in this new province. In Singapore's Cathedral itself, the gospel is proclaimed, the people aspire to mission and to see people alive to God, and there is much energy for mission and outreach.

"I was impressed by the local Christians' genuine piety and their love for Christ. They have great expectations of what God will do through them. I can understand how we in Sydney may appear a little hard and calculating in the eyes of people like this."

Archbishop Goodhew preached at the Church of St John and St Margaret on Sunday, February 4. The service ran for about two hours and was full of life. The charismatic movement has opened Anglican churches in Singapore to the genuine work of God and brought many people to faith in Christ.

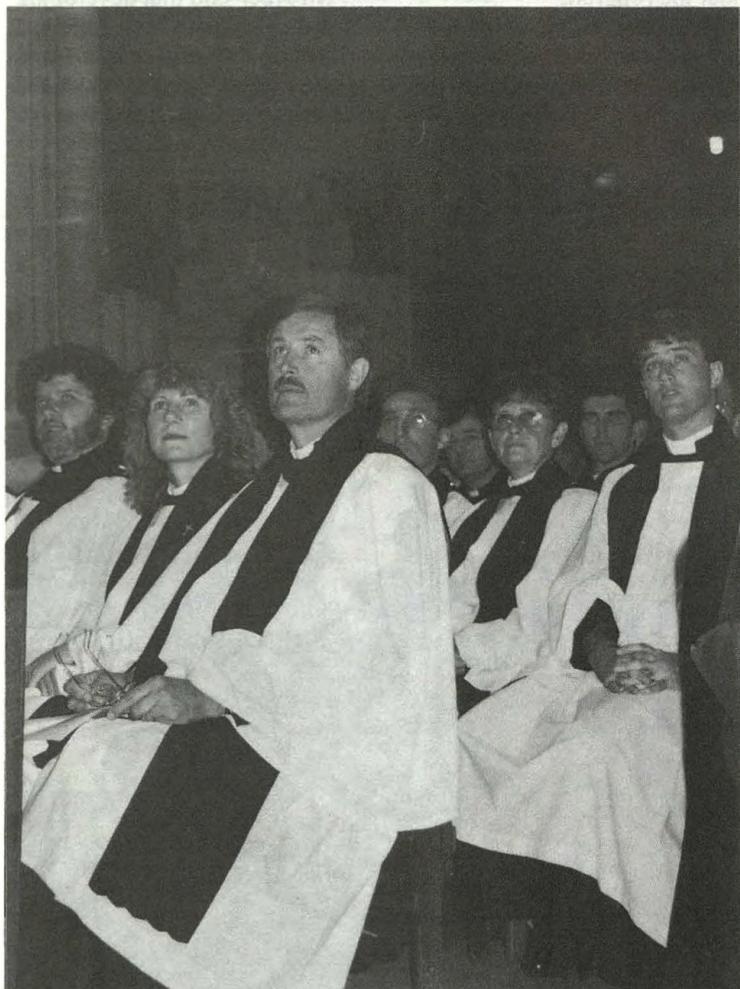


Archbishop of the world's newest province: Moses Tay.

"I met some delightful people," said Archbishop Goodhew. "Many of them had good minis-

tries around the city both in association with the church and out of their cell groups."

Deacons look ahead



Some of the new deacons listening hard during their ordination service. The 25 deacons ordained by Archbishop Goodhew on February 10, 1996 were: Colin Bale, Sarah Beggs, Andrew Buchanan, Michael Cavanagh, Mark Charleston, Neil Ellis, Sue Emeleus, Martin Foord, Matthew Greenwood, Andrew Heron, Lay Kum Ho, David Hohne, Mark Leach, Geoffrey Leader, Andrew Monk, Roger Morey, Stuart Pearson, Stephen Pivetta, Robert Powell, Kanishka De Silva Raffel, David Smith, Graeme Tutt, Neil Walthew, Sue Willis, and Matthew Yeo.

Tragedy now triumph for Capetown bishop

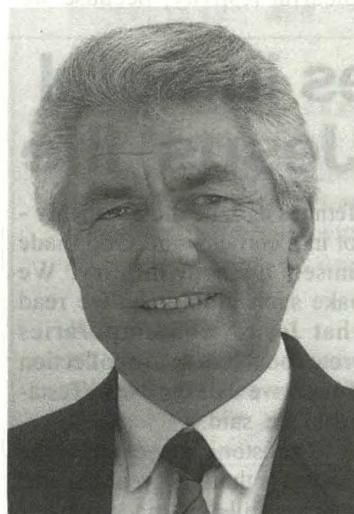
In July 1993 the world was stunned by a terrorist attack on a South African Anglican church. Masked gunmen burst into St James', Kenilworth and sprayed the 1,500-strong congregation with bullets and hand grenades. Eleven died and 50 were injured.

In March and April the minister of St James', Kenilworth, Bishop Frank Retief, will be in Sydney to speak at several missions and conventions.

Frank's book on the attack, *From Tragedy to Triumph*, tells of the long road to healing taken by the congregation, which led them to a fuller understanding of God's will and goodness.

Frank will be speaking at Katoomba Easter Convention from April 5-8 and at a mission run by churches from St Ives and Terrey Hills from March 28-31. He will also be speaking at St Alban's, Lindfield on March 27, St Luke's, Miranda on March 28 and at St Matthias', Centennial Park from 13-14 April.

As a young clergyman, Frank and his wife Beulah began a ministry to children in the suburb of Kenilworth. They began with a kids' club in the lounge room of their small home, and parents began to stay around and join in. A church was started and an old hall was rented nearby. Now the



Bishop Frank Retief: will bring a message of 'hope out of despair' to Sydney this month.

church cares for over 3000 people each week.

Frank's desire to see the gospel reach more people led him to develop a strategy for planting churches around a group of church members from other districts. As home fellowships grew, they would rent a hall and then move to larger premises as their needs required. This has become a model for all churches in the Church of England in South Africa (CESA), and has resulted in ten daughter churches from St James' alone.

Mother's Union makes a century

Mother's Union will celebrate 100 years with a packed year. Kicking off the festivities will be a service in St Andrew's Cathedral followed by a lunch in the Lower Town Hall on March 29. Wollongong will hold its own Festival day on March 22. Other functions planned include the launch of a Centenary History Book on May 31 and a Fun Day at the new Westmead Children's Hospital on June 2 (also see *InTouch* p2).

New head for Christian radio

Major Chris Witts of the Salvation Army was appointed as chief executive officer of Christian radio station 2CBA-FM in mid-January. Major Witts trained as an announcer with 2GB and was converted while working as an announcer on 2XL in Cooma.

Ministry to children

Anglican Children's Ministry are hosting a seminar at St Andrew's House on March 21 at 2.00pm. The Rev Glenn Davies, rector of St Luke's, Miranda, will speak about ministry to children within and outside the covenant relationship. Ph: (02) 283 2635.

Prayer Books go for a song

Nursing homes and parishes with older congregations are advised to contact Anglican Press Australia (APA) to obtain large print editions of *An Australian Prayer Book*. The release of the new *A Prayer Book for Australia* has prompted APA to dispose of selected stock of the older book at a nominal price. Liturgical resources will be also be given away for free. Phone (02) 283 2640 to get your copy.

Baird speaks on scripture

Bruce Baird, the former NSW Liberal politician and organiser of Sydney's Olympic bid, will support scripture teaching at a Breakfast on March 26. The breakfast for *Scripture 21* will be held at the Royal Automobile Club, 89 Macquarie St Sydney at 7:15 am. The cost is \$25 and reservations can be made by contacting Andrea on (02) 283 2637.

Correction

In the February edition of *Southern Cross* it was incorrectly reported in an article about the new women deacons that Sue Emeleus helped with communion while doing her work as a chaplain at Westmead Hospital. Ms Emeleus in fact helps with funerals.

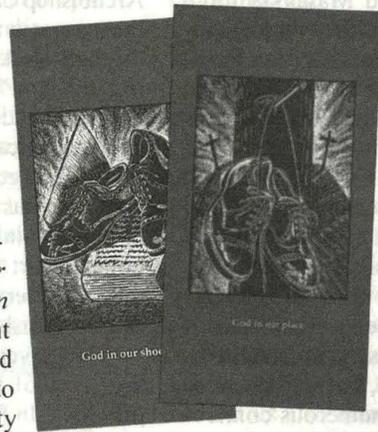


Crystallising Christianity

The basics of Christianity have been 'crystallised' into two new leaflets prepared by young Sydney writer, John Dickson.

The leaflets, entitled *God in our place* and *God in our shoes* are bright and attractive, and use simple terms to present Christianity in a way which is easy to understand.

John Dickson, outreach director at St Clement's, Mosman, is the author of two books, *Hanging in There* and *A Sneaking Suspicion* and was the lead singer of the popular Christian band, *In the*



Silence. The aim of the leaflets according to Mr Dickson is to demystify the images of God and give people the basics with which to understand God and

form a relationship with him.

The leaflets cost 20 cents each and are designed for people from high school age onwards. They are available from Anglican Media, Sydney, on (02) 9958 8003.

St Catherine's reaffirms its commitment to girls

Amidst the recent controversy over gender specific education, sparked by the drop in boy's HSC results, St Catherine's Anglican Girls' School has reaffirmed its commitment to educating girls.

Celebrating the School's 140th anniversary, public relations officer Alicia Watson said the objectives of the school remained as popular as ever. "In these times of change with so much controversy surrounding the education of girls, St Catherine's at Waverley is con-

tinuing a fine tradition."

According to Ms Watson, the school's founder, Mrs Barker, wife of Bishop Barker, decided that the daughters of clergy should be provided with "an education equal to that given to boys."

"This may have been expressed in different ways but the God-given thread remains," she said.

Mrs Karaolis, the present headmistress, agreed. "We are celebrating our 140 years with colourful festivity, because we

are joyful about being part of such a heritage," she said.

"Mrs Barker fought hard to establish her school for girls: it was her clearest goal and ambition.

"If she could see it now, 140 years later, she would rejoice as we rejoice".

Celebrations of the 140th anniversary of St Catherine's will include a service at St Andrew's Cathedral on March 3, an Open Day on July 27 and an Anniversary Ball on August 3.

Discipling Bomaderry

The parish of Bomaderry, which serves its tiny South Coast community, has been showing large Sydney churches a thing or two about ministry. Dave Aber, a member of St Stephen's, Bomaderry has started a program called *Churches Alive*, designed to help parishes improve their ministry strategies. Based on a similar idea operating in America since the 1970s, Bomaderry is attracting people from around the Shoalhaven and as far away as Castle Hill in Sydney to learn about the program.

"Churches Alive helps a local church look at their discipling ministry and find ways of improving them," Mr Aber said. He

explained that it could help a church establish support strategies for new members like welcoming groups.

Last September Mr Aber organised a conference which "helped people improve their leadership skills and continue working at group ministry," he said.

The success of that meeting which attracted more than 70 people has encouraged him to organise a similar conference at Bomaderry in May.

Mr Aber said that developing discipling ministries should be a priority for all churches. "There is no option," he said. "We have a God given command to do it."

Barnett urges judicial inquiry into Jesus' life

Paul Barnett, the Bishop of North Sydney, has urged a 'judicial inquiry' into the life of Jesus. Giving the address at the service to mark the opening of the New South Wales Law Term on January 29, Bishop Barnett said that many people dismiss Christ without inquiry.

"Inquire, get the facts, do the research, apply all reasonable tests and let the truth lead where it will," Bishop Barnett said.

The service, held annually in St James' Church, King Street, Sydney, was attended by nearly 400 people, including judges and members of Sydney's law community as well as the Archbishop of Sydney, Harry Goodhew.

Bishop Barnett, who holds a PhD in New Testament history, told his listeners there was abundant historical evidence about Jesus and to support Christianity. He said that people need look no further than the New Testament writers Paul, John, Luke and Peter.

"When God made himself present among humankind 30

lifetimes ago, he did so openly - not in a corner - and God made himself open to inquiry. We make such inquiry as we read what Jesus' contemporaries wrote about him in the collection of texts we call the New Testament," he said.

"The astonishing claim of the apostles is that the great Creator Spirit we call God made himself visible and accessible in a man; a man who represented God to us and reveals God to us, a man who is the means of reconciliation with God by his death, his resurrection, the gift of his personal Spirit."

"That man is open to inquiry in what the apostles have written. There are no sacred no-go areas regarding inquiry into Christianity. Everything is on the table."

"The resurrection is open to inquiry, judicial, historical or personal and, indeed, everything else to do with Jesus."

"I feel that some people dismiss Christ without inquiry. I say inquire."

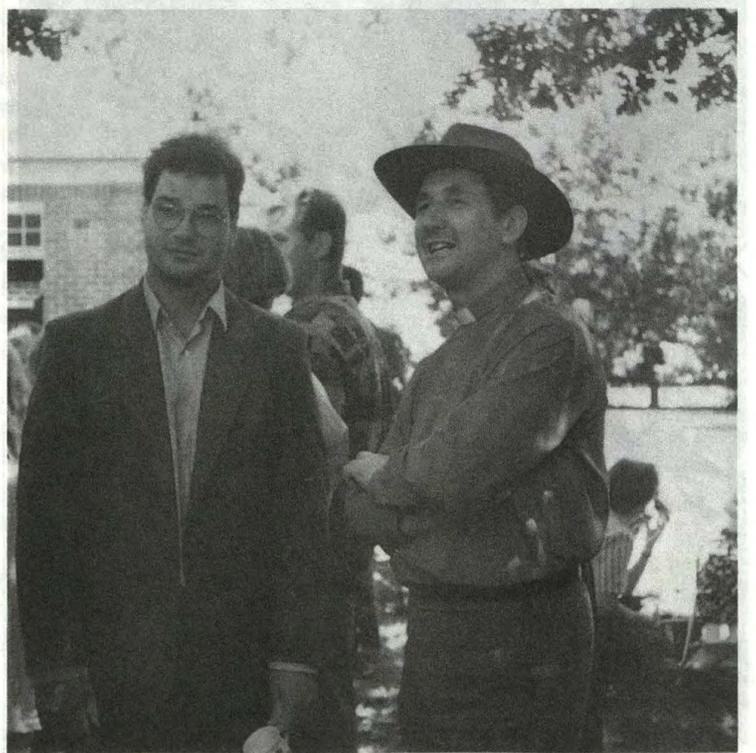
Exeter wins top bill after 100 year wait

It's been a dramatic year for the small Southern Highlands congregation at St Aidan's Exeter. First their church hall played a starring role in the international box office hit *Babe*, (as the sheepdog trial committee room) then their church building was finished after a 100 year wait.

On December 3, 1995, a century after the first stone was laid, the Bishop of Wollongong, Reg Piper, officially dedicated the new church addition. Since 1903 when the second phase of building was completed, the church has stood with a temporary back wall. Over the years corrugated iron has been the only protection from the weather, disguised simply by facing boards and paint.

"With the centenary of the church in 1995, it was now or never," said rector's secretary Helen Staubner. "The entire village became involved and great efforts on the part of the wardens and congregation raised sufficient money to get the project started."

St Aidan's is the only church in Exeter and the locals claim it as their own. Over 300 of them



Bishop Piper and builder Chris Cooper admire the new wall.

attended the dedication service which also saw Bishop Piper confirm two new members of the congregation.

As one older member said, "Now we have this additional

seating space, let's stop looking back; let's move ahead energetically, prayerfully and enthusiastically to fill these pews. Every day counts and every soul is important."

Spirit, Word and World

This is the sub-title of a new book published by Oxford University Press. *Evangelical Christianity in Australia* is the work of Australian church historian Dr Stuart Piggin, Master of Robert Menzies College at Macquarie University.

He argues that "evangelicalism is best understood... as a movement concerned with three major elements - Spirit, Word and world - and that when these three are synthesised the movement is strong, and when they are separated the movement is weak."

Historians and scholars will no doubt debate this idea. I touch on it now, by way of focusing on three areas of vital interest for all who follow Christ.

Spirit

The life of the individual believer, and the life of the church, is of necessity life in the Spirit. The

gospel which proclaims the message of life, which calls for repentance and faith, becomes effective in people through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. New birth is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Christian character, Christian gifts and graces, Christian ministry, and a deepening knowledge of God, are all the work of the Spirit. He makes the dead bones live. He is the gift to us of our ascended Saviour, come from the Father to be our advocate and guide.

It is vital that we as churches and as individuals live in conscious dependence upon that Spirit. We are bound to look to him and seek never to grieve him, and rejoice in the life he communicates to us.

Word

The Word, Holy Scripture, is given to us by the work of God the



HARRY GOODHEW

Spirit. It is God's instrument by which we may know his mind and will to the measure that he has chosen to reveal that to us. It provides all that is needed for salvation and godliness. It concerns me to hear that believers do not study and reflect on

it daily and that churches read less of it now in services than has been our practice in the past.

The living Spirit and the inspired Word are the sources of our life and strength. Dr Piggin is right to remind us of the need to have a proper balance in being nourished by God's provision. Each congregation and each believer needs both; and both in harmony. Focus on the Spirit without submission to the Word creates the possibility of outcomes which have no warrant in Scripture: they mar the life of the people of God. Focus on the Word without reliance on the work of the Spirit will produce sterility, prayerlessness and activity solely driven by human resources.

World

The proper movement of a healthy combination of Spirit and Word is outward. First an outward movement

from the individual and congregations towards God: praise, adoration, love, surrender, faith, prayer and obedience. Then out to others in the church and in the world. Out to brothers and sisters in love of another kind. Out to the lost, communicating God's good news of redemption. Out to all, in generous practical expressions of God's beneficent character to the world that he nourishes even in their rebellion. A fallen world and flawed institutions create the arena in which most men and women of the spirit and the Word are called to live out the faith. Concern for this must join the other two.

A personal challenge

Observing the appropriate combination of Spirit, Word and world is not something reserved for academics. It is a synthesis required in each individual, church and diocese. I pray that it may be well done by us for the glory of God.

SYDNEY news



Farewell! After eight years of faithful service Miss Dorothy Steel (left), assistant to the Archbishop, has retired. She has passed the demanding job on to Miss Ruth Sefton (right), who was personal assistant to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Sydney. Miss Sefton says she is looking forward to working with the Archbishop of Sydney. Miss Steel believes new doors would open for her in retirement. "My years of Christian ministry are not yet finished," she said.

Values 'neglected' in schools

At January's annual meeting of the Australian Christian Forum on Education, held at New College, University of NSW, all six speakers stressed values as an essential, if neglected, ingredient in education. They also criticised the weight given to efficiency and cost cutting.

Professor Fenton Sharpe, a former NSW Director-General, described the 1990s as a time of paradox. The rhetoric of management and leadership stresses the human side of organisations. It is laden with religious and Chris-

tian fervour and sits comfortably with the professional service ethic of many teachers. On the other hand the actions of those who manage large school systems are based on the principles of economic rationalism characteristic of the 1980s. The gap between rhetoric and reality leads to cynicism and low morale.

After the meeting Dr Allan Beavis, Master of New College, and Miss Tracey Newlands of the Institute of Values Research summed up the symposium, endeavouring to ensure that Chris-

tian principles held their place in school programs. These papers, with symposium items, will be published by NEXUS or the Journal of Christian Education.

Future activities of the Forum include seminars led by Dr Alan Watson based on his published paper *Encouragement: the Key to Growth and Learning*; and a functioning sub-committee occupied with contributing to the NSW HSC review. Written comment can be addressed to ACFE, Box 139, Lidcombe 2141, or by fax on (02) 746 2710.

Rejoicing after 35 years

Celebrating 35 years since their ordination recently were: (back) Len Abbott, Graham Harrison, Stan Richardson, Daryl Robinson, Tony Lamb, Peter Carman, Ross McDonald, (front) Ron Coleman, Carl Feldman, Bishop Robinson (who gave a devotion), Grahame Defty and Peter Kemp.



Archbishop Writes is reproduced below for our Chinese readers.

聖靈、道（上帝的話語）和世界

這是一本新書「澳洲之福音派基督教」的副題，由牛津大學出版社出版，本書是麥覺理大學文學院（Robert Menzies College）院長碧堅博士（Dr. Stuart Piggin）的研究著作。碧堅博士是一位澳洲教會歷史學者。

在書中他極力主張「對福音派最佳的理解.....是一個有三大要素 聖靈、道和世界」的運動。當這三個要素結合在一起時，福音運動便是強而有力的；當它們分散時，則這個運動便是軟弱的。

毫無疑問歷史學家及學者將會討論這個論點，但我現在就集中這三方面的主要內容向那些跟隨基督的人來說。

聖靈

聖靈是個別信徒的生命和教會的生命所不可缺少的。福音是宣講生命的信息，叫人悔改和相信，在人生裡產生果效也是需要藉著聖靈之更新工作。

基督徒的性格、恩賜、各樣的恩典、事奉及對神有更深的認識，一切都是藉著聖靈的工作。聖靈使枯骨復生，是我們已升了天的救主賜給我們之禮物，祂也是從天父而來成為我們的保惠師和指引師。

作為個別信徒和教會，察覺我們要藉著聖靈而活是重關係重大的。我們一定要仰賴祂，致力永不令祂憂傷，並且要因祂在我們的生命中與我們相交而歡欣快樂。

道

上帝的道、聖經是藉著聖靈的工作賜給我們。它是上帝的工具，使我們知道祂的心思和旨意；祂選用這工具啓示祂自己給我們。上帝的道可以供給我們救恩和成聖一切所要知道的内容。我很關注的是聽到信徒沒有每日讀聖經和默想它的信息，甚至教會現在在崇拜中也比以往讀聖經來得少。

充滿活力的聖靈和上帝默示的話語是我們生命的資源和動力。碧堅博士正確地提醒我們需要在上帝的供給上有正常均衡之餵養。每個會眾和每個信徒都需要上帝的道和聖靈，並且不分彼此，單注重聖靈而不信服上帝的話語，產生可能發生的後果是沒有聖經的根據：這會損害上帝子民的生命。單注重上帝的話語而不倚靠聖靈現今的工作會產生生命貧乏、禱告停止，和單靠人為力量推動的行動。

世界

聖靈和道健全的結合所產生的正常運動是向外的。首先，是個人和會眾對外向上帝的運動：讚美、崇拜、愛慕、降服、信心、禱告和服從。其次是向教會內和世界上的人的運動：對所有弟兄姊妹要彼此相愛，對失喪的人要傳遞上帝救贖的好信息，對所有人的運動：是要慷慨地、實際地表現出上帝仁慈的性格，使世人知道祂甚至會在他們叛逆時餵養他們。墮落世界和不完整的制度變成被聖靈和上帝的道所呼召的人活出他們信心的場所。關心世界的必須與以上所述兩方面一起結合。

個人的挑戰

觀察聖靈、上帝的道和世界如何適當地結合運作，並不只是學術研究的範疇，而是需要聯合每一個人、教會和教區才可以做到的。為了歸榮耀給上帝，我祈求我們把這事做好。

'Son of a preacher man' comes to town

Franklin Graham, older son of preacher Billy Graham, will speak to thousands of Australians at Festival '96, held at Parramatta Park on March 8-10.

Franklin Graham admits he is a reformed 'rebel' whose young adult years were marred by smoking, drinking, fighting and expulsion from a Christian college. By the time he was a young man, Franklin was running from God and the public's expectation of him as Billy Graham's son.

It wasn't until the age of 22, after a conversion experience in

a Middle East, that Franklin accepted God.

Now 43, Franklin is being groomed as the successor to the Billy Graham legend. Late last year, ill health forced Billy Graham to cancel his plans to travel to Australia, and Franklin stepped in to take his place.

The Rev Karl Faase, chairman of the Festival committee, said, "God is doing something unique and we must continue. We feel that this Festival is the beginning of a process of moving Australians together."

AUSTRALIA in brief

Surfers grow up

Leaders of Christian Surfers from around Australia will gather for a convention at Forster during Easter under the theme 'Growing Up.' For more information phone Troy Samways on (049) 50 0391



Armidale's exports

Since the Rev Ken Allen (pictured above with fiancé Danielle Grasse) became rector of St Chad's, Putney, and the Rev Roger Chilton the new rector of St Swithun's, Pymble, yet another leading light from the Diocese of Armidale has made the move to Sydney. The Rev Andrew Dircks, formerly school chaplain and the diocesan media director, is now set to educate Sydneysiders about CMS.

Andrew joined the NSW Branch staff as Mission Education secretary in January. The new job will see him promoting the work of CMS in the North Sydney, Parramatta and South Sydney regions as well as the Newcastle and Bathurst dioceses.

Meanwhile, Armidale's Bishop Peter Chiswell recently ordained five new deacons in his diocese: Rodney Chiswell (his son), Bruce Bennett, Richard Maude, Julie McKay and David Rogers-Smith. Canon John Chapman preached at the service.

Women on the wall

The National Anglican Conference scheduled for Canberra in 1997 will provide an unusual way to look at women's contribution to the church.

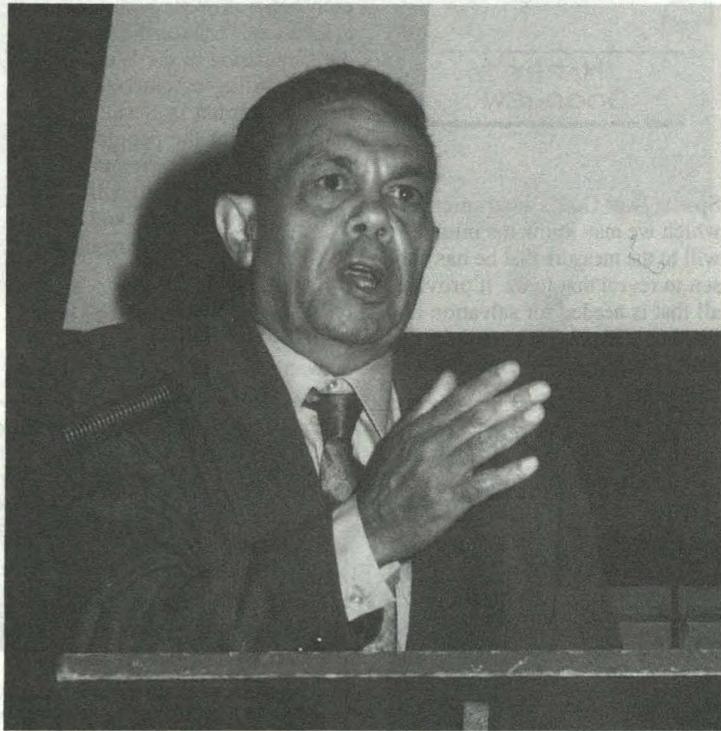
A seven-panelled wall hanging is being prepared by women's groups from each state. Designed by Sydney artist Vicki Conomy it will focus on issues confronting women in the church and the wider community.

Ched for missionary kids

A new organisation has been formed to ease the concerns of missionary parents about the education of their children. The Childrens Education Department (CHED) has been formed by Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia to help missionary children with the curriculum and provide access to resources.

AUSTRALIAN news

Aboriginal pastor stands for reconciliation



Bill Bird: reconciliation needed in church and politics.

Aboriginal pastor for South Sydney, the Rev Bill Bird, has demanded that the government do more to reconcile white and indigenous Australians.

Standing for a Senate seat with the Call to Australia Party at the recent Federal elections, Mr Bird said the elections were

a perfect opportunity to tell people about God's forgiveness. He said people should use such opportunities to come together and "bring God back to this country."

Mr Bird described how he grew up hating white people, but learnt the meaning of forgiveness as he walked with God.

Cathedral bids fond farewell to Governor

They were out in force at St Andrew's Cathedral on Sunday, January 28. White-haired matrons sporting 'No Republic' stickers and brandishing Australian flags, dark-suited professionals, tourists slung with cameras, volunteers and office-bearers from dozens of charities, vagrants from the Sydney Square benches, and the "mums and dads" of Sydney.

In a public show of affection, made all the more fervent by the controversy surrounding the passing on of the vice-regal baton, they joined the regular congregation to give retiring NSW Governor, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair and his wife Shirley a send-off to remember.

Before reading the Second Lesson, Governor Sinclair joked that he was greatly relieved that no "lightning bolt" had followed the choir's rousing three cheers outside or the spontaneous applause when he had entered the Cathedral. He spoke, too, of the personal significance of St Andrew's to his family, some of whom were present, as the church in which he and his wife were married.

"And I can tell you that I have drawn - as has Shirley - great

spiritual strength from attending this Cathedral, especially over the last five and a half years."

Finally in a veiled comment on the foreshadowed changes to the Governor's role, he referred to the "very strong spiritual link" between Government House and the Cathedral, and said he hoped that the "proud tradition" of Governors worshipping there for over 150 years would continue.

Archbishop Harry Goodhew's message, while clearly aimed at encouraging the Sinclairs, avoided direct reference to the controversy.

When the hard knocks come, said Archbishop Goodhew, our only hope is if we can say, like the Psalmist, "For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is for him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress. I shall not be shaken."

More applause, sustained and hearty, followed Archbishop Goodhew's presentation of "his and hers" copies of the new Australian Prayer Book to the vice-regal couple at the end of the service.

The end of an era? Perhaps. But as he took his leave, a grinning Governor Sinclair quipped, "We'll be back!"

Young Anglicans 'break free'

Only two representatives from Sydney attended the recent National Gathering of Young Anglicans despite widespread publicity, according to one of the representatives, Liz Pemberton. Liz, who attended the event on behalf of the Anglican Youth Department, said she tried to raise awareness of the week in Sydney parishes. "I was disappointed that more people from Sydney didn't come," she said, "but that was understandable because so many other things were on at the time."

The event was held from January 12-19 at Mount Tambourine in the Gold Coast hinterland. "It was a beautiful location for the second National Gathering," she said, "and more than 450 people aged under 25 attended."

"They had come from all over Australia and even from Fiji and Canada. They all grew in faith, shared in worship and fellowship, and had a lot of fun!"

The theme of the Gathering was 'Break Free' - breaking free to love others, love God and share his truth. "The teaching was challenging," Liz said. "We went through the Lord's Prayer and were made to re-evaluate what we think when we pray."

Liz said the evenings were dedicated to special topics. "One evening focused on forgiveness and looked at Aboriginal and justice issues. There was a lot of talk encouraging us to be active in



Liz Pemberton (far left) with a few of the 450 young Anglicans gathered at the Gold Coast.

reconciliation with Aboriginal people." Participants also chose workshop topics such as evangelism and personal relationships. One of Liz's electives looked at Kids Club and youth group games. "I found the program on Youth issues really useful," she said. "They showed us how to use games effectively for youth work and I picked up some good ideas

and resources."

According to Liz the organisers of the National Gathering hoped that everyone would go home to become agents of God in the places where they live. "I believe God certainly touched, moved and challenged people from different backgrounds and dioceses," she said. "I would ask everyone to pray that those who

attended would break free into the love and truth of Christ and so help others to do the same."

"The next National Gathering of Young Anglicans will be in Perth in 1998," Liz said. "Start thinking and praying about going, and saving your pennies so you can be part of the next coming together of young people from across the whole country."

Loans change lives in India

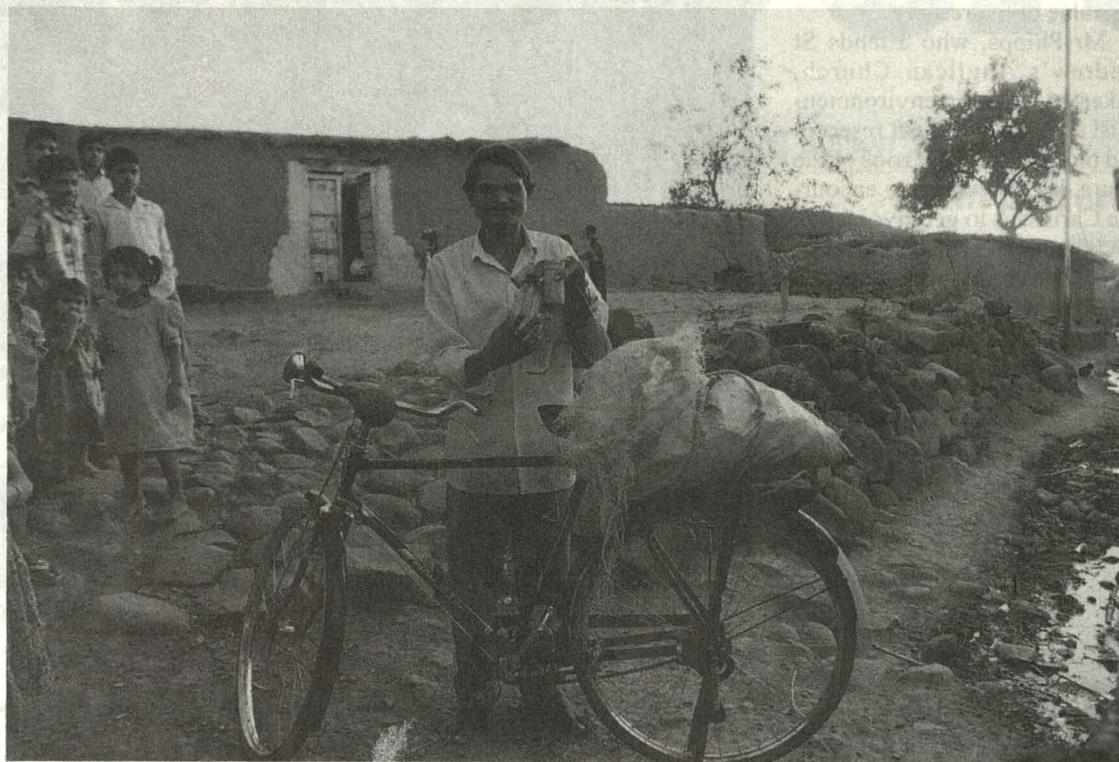
In India, a loan of \$50 can change a life. Mr Vijay Pande used to make a dollar a day going from door to door collecting unwanted plastic, paper and glass bottles, carrying them on his shoulders and selling them to wholesalers. With the assistance of the Archbishop of Sydney's Overseas Relief and Aid Fund (ORAF) Mr Pande borrowed \$47 to buy a bicycle to transport his goods and his income has almost doubled.

Mr Pande was just one of a wide range of beneficiaries that the Assistant Director of the ORAF, Mrs Sandra Burcher, met on a recent monitoring trip to India.

"It's sobering to realise that what seems like a small amount of money to us can be used to dramatically improve someone's quality of life," she said.

The ORAF is working around Amravati in central India with CDS, a Christian organisation which finances small loans on low interest rates to enable people to start or improve their own businesses and break out of the poverty cycle.

"Nothing can prepare you for the terrible poverty that people live in," Mrs Burcher said. "There are simply millions of people who have absolutely nothing. They are too poor even



Mr Vijay Pande used to make a dollar a day before ORAF loaned him money for a new bicycle.

to live in the slums."

Mr Damu Dongre is a member of what is known in India as the poorest of the poor. He and his wife and two children sleep next to their roadside stall which sells tea for four cents a cup. Mr Dongre was a rickshaw puller until his health grew worse. Last year he approached CDS for a

\$157 loan to buy a hand cart, kerosene stove and the basic stock for his tea stall. Mr Dongre has been meticulous about paying back his loan, even cutting back his household expenses of \$1.20 per day in order to make the repayments.

"The monitoring trip was very successful," Mrs Burcher

said. "I was able to see firsthand that the funds that had been donated were being used correctly and that people were really benefiting from the program."

Anyone interested in making a donation can send it to: The Archbishop of Sydney's Overseas Relief and Aid Fund, PO Box Q190, Queen Victoria Building, Sydney 2000.

Gospel beats ban in Argentina

The head of a leading Argentinian University has effectively endorsed aggressive evangelism, opening up the campus for the first time to CMS missionaries.

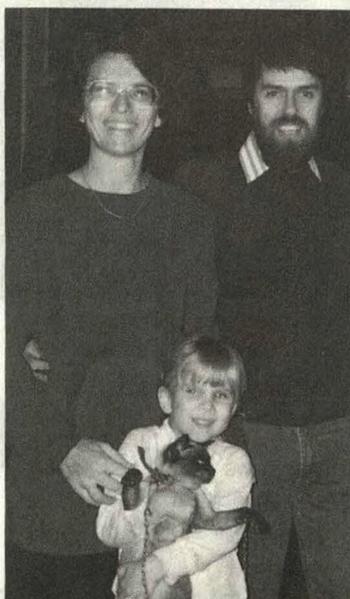
"We have done all that we can for students away from home and it isn't enough. It's time that the churches had access to the university. But they mustn't wait for the students to go to them. An attitude of healthy aggression is needed to make contact with the students," the head of the University of North-Eastern Argentina said.

Officially all religious activity has been banned on that campus since 1917.

However, CMS missionary Peter Blowes, originally from Sydney, and the President of the local Pastors' Fraternal, have convinced the university of their plan to build a chapel.

Mr Blowes said the university recognised that up until now political groups had influenced students, and that the contribution of the churches and religious groups was needed.

This new openness on the part of the University authorities is paralleled by an openness by students and academic staff. "It meant that the Evangelistic Impact which we organised late August was received very posi-



Left to right: Terry, Rosana and Peter Blowes

tively, with mimes, concerts, posters, and tracts providing a background for the personal evangelism done by Christian students," Mr Blowes said.

Peter and Terry Blowes first went to Argentina 10 years ago with CMS, as staff workers with the Argentinean Christian student group, ABUA, which has links with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES).

To support the Blowes' ministry phone CMS on (02) 267 3711.

Evangelical faith a gift 'to be shared with whole church'

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, has said evangelicals should not believe that they alone have the whole truth about God.

Addressing over 2,000 people at Wembley Conference Centre on January 12 to mark the 150th anniversary of the Evangelical Alliance UK, Dr Carey paid tribute to the impact of evangelicals, saying that the Decade of Evangelism and the Renewal movement would have been far less significant without their guidance and energy.

But he challenged evangelicals to avoid past attitudes that equated evangelicalism with the only 'true Church'. Dr Carey said, "Their cry has gone up, 'We alone have the whole truth about God and therefore the whole Church of Jesus Christ should be like us'."

Not surprisingly, said Dr Carey, other Christians had often felt unable to receive a gift offered on such terms.

"Evangelicals do not constitute the whole of Christendom, however strong, significant or large they become. But I remain convinced that evangelical faith and spirituality are gifts to be shared with the whole Church,"

he said.

Despite a strong evangelical tradition of mature thought and reflection, anguished questions of the world had sometimes been met with simplistic answers. "We must repent when those who are looking for faith have been repelled by naive responses to their deep questions," he said.

"I am not for one moment suggesting a drift into 'wishy-washiness', but many people are on spiritual journeys. They are genuine seekers after truth and if too many walls are built they may be prevented from discovering the One who is the goal of all such journeys."

Dr Carey challenged his audience to recommit themselves to prayer in the pursuit of effective evangelism.

"Prayer has been at the heart of missionary churches down the centuries," he said. "When the fire of prayer goes out it is usually replaced by the barrenness of busyness."

"Through prayer, and a fresh vision of Christ, we can ensure that the driving force of all we do will not be the spirit of survival but the spirit of renewal as we see God work in new and wonderful ways."

Evangelicals with heart

The Evangelical Alliance's Tear Fund has launched a program designed to reduce poverty in Britain. Tear Fund's UK Action program will finance community development programs run by congregations to support long-term unemployed people, the lonely elderly and young people thrown out of school. The Evangelical Alliance says the Tear Fund is aimed at helping evangelical churches see the benefits of "confronting poverty issues seriously."

Euthanasia an option says Spong

John Selby Spong, Bishop of Newark in the US, recently said helping someone to commit suicide was morally acceptable. "Assisted suicide is going on all the time," he said. "What we are doing is bringing the issue out into the open." The Diocese of Newark passed a resolution endorsing Spong's views on euthanasia on January 26.

The outspoken Bishop, known for his books rejecting the virgin birth and the resurrection of Christ, also announced his intention to retire as soon as a successor is elected. This is expected to occur within two years.

Bombed, but better than ever

After the 1992 and '93 IRA bombings, St Helen's, Bishopsgate, in London, has now been extensively rebuilt.

It was officially reopened in February. The church now provides seating for 1000, double what it used to hold.

Among the aims of the architect, Quinlan Terry, was that the congregation should be able to read the Bible easily throughout the day. Shattered stained glass has been replaced by clear glass, the walls are white, the floor is cream stone.

Funds for the work came from insurance payments, grants, and gifts from St Helen's congregations.

"We haven't asked the city of London for a penny," said the rector, Prependary Dick Lucas.

Anglican Church in gay rights debate

Leaders of the Anglican Church from around the world have called on their church to debate the issue of gay rights.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, head of the church in Southern Africa, compared the search for gay rights with the struggle against apartheid.

Other leading churchmen who called for the debate included the heads of the church in Canada, America and Scotland.

Backyard bush becomes Noah's ark for frog

By KATHY STONE

When 11-year-old Amber Phipps spotted a Green and Gold Bullfrog in the back yard of her family home there were small but significant changes ahead for the inner-west suburb of Greenacre.

For one thing, the bullfrog is a rare character in these parts. For another, Amber's dad, Graeme, just happens to be the former principal curator at Taronga Park Zoo and knows a thing or two about creatures great and small.

Mr Phipps convinced the local government to establish a small reserve on Cox's Creek where the frogs can be protected. At the moment it's just a strip of scrub bordered by back yard fences but soon the Phipps hope to see it transformed into an important eco-sanctuary in the heart of suburbia.

"The first thing that needs to be done is to take the weeds out

and clean the area up a bit," Mr Phipps said.

"We won't only be concentrating on the frog. We want to establish a seed bank where we can propagate plants and extend the value of the reserve."

Mr Phipps, who attends St Andrew's Anglican Church, Lakemba, is a keen environmentalist and believes local reserves and bio-parks are the zoos of the future. He also wants to encourage Christians to get involved in environmental projects.

"It seems incomprehensible that we should make use of the environment without giving any thought to how we go about it," he said.

"To denigrate the value of wild living things and to minimise their importance seems to run contrary to what we know of God the creator who said creation was good and that people were to be wise stewards."



Graeme Phipps with children Amber and Alexander: transforming a strip of scrub into a reserve.

Bringing our Country Alive



The Bush Church Aid Society began in 1919, with a pioneering spirit. Its vision was to reach outback Australians with prayer and with people offering Christ's life giving message. The spirit of innovative work begun by deaconesses, parish clergy, mobile mission vans, hostels for bush children, Mailbag Sunday School, remote and Flying Medical Services, continues today through men and women prepared to stand by the people who live and work in remote and rural Australia.

Our staff are everyday Australians prepared to give extraordinary service. Working in an area covering more than half of Australia, they provide community leadership, pastoral and practical care, training, medical service and spiritual counsel which brings people good news - "bush people are not forgotten by God", nor by many faithful supporters who help through prayer, regular financial support, bequests and encouragement of our field staff.

Co-operating with more than ten Anglican Dioceses and sending Anglican clergy and workers with the support of home Dioceses, BCA is an Anglican voluntary society seeking to bring the country alive to God.



NSW State Office: Level 7, 37 York Street, Sydney 2000. Telephone: (02) 262 5017

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Wollongong Region Supplement

Number 27, March 1996

inside



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starting up
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Austinmer takes off!

On Sunday, February 18, the new church in Austinmer was officially dedicated. Beth Delbridge, a parishioner, tells the story of its humble beginnings...

The old RSL Club across the road from our church building had not been very attractive for some time; a severe straight up and down block shape rising from the edge of the footpath, various outdated surfaces on the exterior walls, lots of cold glass, some 'stalactites' hanging from leaking overhangs and parts of the roof and that was the outside! Inside there was a strong smell of old smoke and stale beer, dazzling orange tiles around the bar which occupied central place, walls in need of painting, and a generally run-down, dingy atmosphere.

Why, then, would an apparently sensible Anglican congregation forsake a traditional building, one that had been cared for over the year, had quite a lot of money spent on it not so long ago, and in which many of the congregation had been baptised, confirmed, married and had many dear family memories? All to buy a building that was obviously going to require an enormous commitment of money, muscle and sweat to make functional as a building for

a church.

It came down to a realisation that we could stay cosy and comfortable where we were, in our functional but smallish set of buildings, but we would have to ignore that our congregation had been quietly growing, that quite often there were not many spare seats, that the Sunday School teachers were having enormous difficulties with too many children, that in fact we were at that time in a position to take off, and to grow our church in this district. We could grow that is, except that our buildings would limit us. There would simply not be enough room.

During this time, the RSL had gradually been running down and decided to sell. Such opportunities come rarely, and suddenly a committee which had been set up to look at the future building requirements of the Austinmer congregation had something very important to investigate.

Their investigations led to a recommendation, which led to an overwhelmingly positive response from the congregation, and the decision was made.

The project has affected people in many ways.

Matthew Pickering, who came to this parish as rector at the beginning of 1995 says his reaction to it all has been a mixture of bewilderment and wonder, that the learning curve has been a steep one but that his con-

fidence in the church and Jesus' rule of it has been renewed, and his commitment to see the project through has been deepened.

Many have found this to be an exciting time, with a sense of things happening and a new dynamism, but the transition has also presented challenges of many kinds. Some of us have found that the old ways of doing things need to be varied to accommodate the larger congregation and the larger spaces.

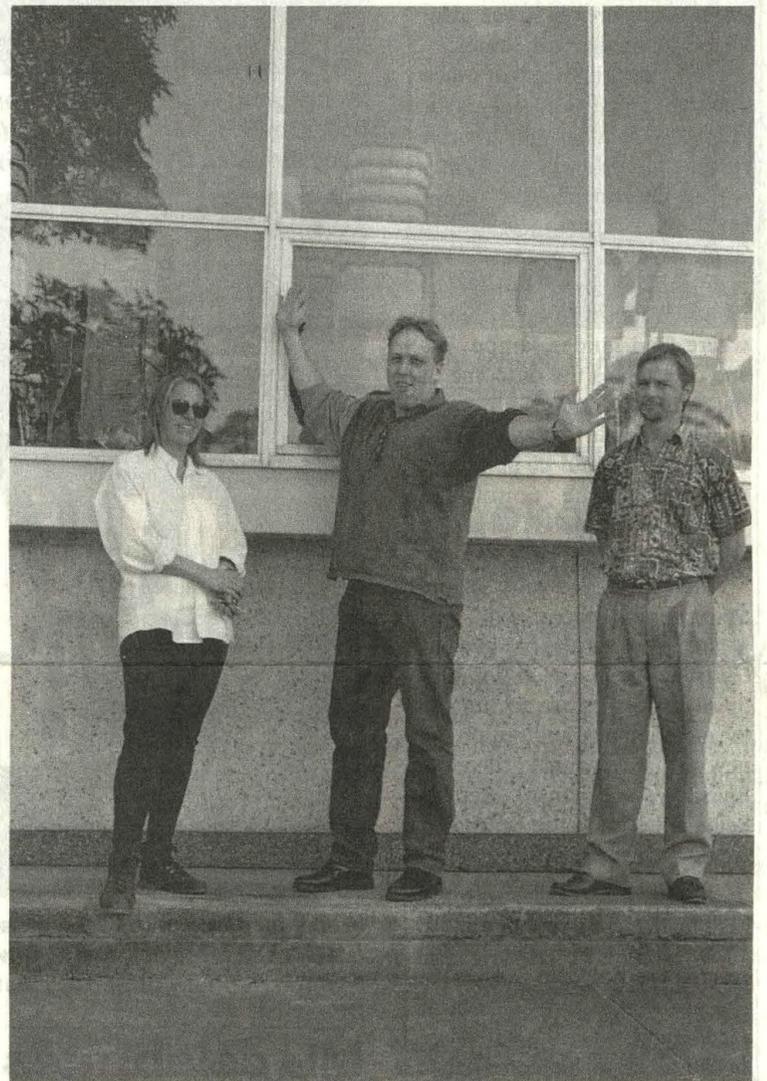
Flexibility and lateral thinking have been required.

One member of our congregation has said she felt the new building is a symbol of what can be achieved by people working together, and this has been demonstrated nowhere more clearly than in the numerous working bees. People have contributed not only with muscle work, but with lunches and morning teas; wherever there has been a need someone has a talent to meet it.

Some feel that the nature of the building establishes us as a church that is looking more seriously at the community, that we are indeed developing a greater outreach mentality.

There is certainly a significant degree of interest, bemusement and curiosity from the community with passers-by often coming in to see what we have done.

We have been reminded over and over again, not only through



The Rev Matthew Pickering celebrates the new church with two of his parishioners, Debbie French and Chris Cox.

the decision to sell our building, but as we have met, initially in a barn like area, building material and rubble nearby, and temporary lights hanging from the beams, how important it is to remember what we so often say,

that the people are the church. It will be a long time before our building is 'finished', but it is already wonderfully functional and able to be used in the bigger vision of growing the church in Austinmer.



Youth head off to WAR

No, its not a weekend of skirmish or a Rambo type discovery weekend. WAR stands for Wollongong Anglican Regional Training and Development weekend.

This is a new initiative to bring people from the whole region together on April 12-14, 1996 at Camp Koloona on the Shoalhaven River for a relaxed weekend of training, development and fellowship.

The weekend is aimed at people 18 to 30ish, and will be a relaxed environment of teaching

from the Bible and seminars covering a number of topics.

Bishop Reg Piper will be present for the whole weekend and will lead the Bible Studies. The seminars will be taken by people with experience and cover topics such as creative Bible studies, multiculturalism and ministry, women and ministry, passion for Christ in the work place and other relevant topics. The program will also include a dinner party on Saturday night and a late breakfast on Sunday morning as well as plenty of free

time.

The weekend will provide time to meet and relax with both the Bishop and people from other areas of the Wollongong Region. It also will encourage participants to see their lives and work in relation to Christ and his vision for the world. The cost will be \$50 for the whole weekend and there are limited places. Advertisement pamphlets will be in churches in mid-February.

For any questions please contact Sean Heslehurst on (042) 948216

The Bishop Speaks X

Your parish will shortly receive our Regional Prayer diary. Requests for prayer and thanksgiving were collected from each of the parishes and regional ministries and then assembled under each day. This provides an ordered way for us to pray for God's Kingdom in our region. I commend it to your use.

On 23 March, people from the Shoalhaven Deanery will pray with me for the region. The Prayer Day will be held 8.00am - 4.00pm. I have written to the rectors and pastoral teams inviting them to the day and through them, their congregations also. I hope that many will come.

Why do we go to so much trouble to organise ourselves for prayer? Why does our church spend so much time not only reading the Bible but also praying, even preparing a Prayer Book? We do it because God promises to hear believing prayer. We want to be a church where God guides, empowers and determines the outcome of our activity.

Our Apostle Paul was insistent that we should be about our prayers. As he concludes Ephesians he pleads urgently with the saints to pray.

He tells us to pray in the Spirit. Every person who has heard the gospel and believed in Christ has been sealed with the Spirit. Believers are to put off the old humanity and put on the new so that we won't grieve the Spirit. We are then to keep on being filled with the Spirit. As we do this, so we are to pray.

We are to pray as men and women strong in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have his resurrection power at work in us. We are seated with Christ at God's right hand. We will share in the glory of his inheritance with all his saints. We know that God loves us in Christ. We know that the love of Christ is so great that we will never be able to understand it in all its dimensions. Let us pray in this Spirit.

He also tells us to pray in the Spirit with great enthusiasm: we are to pray at *all* times; to pray with all prayer and supplication; to pray for all the saints; to pray with all perseverance.

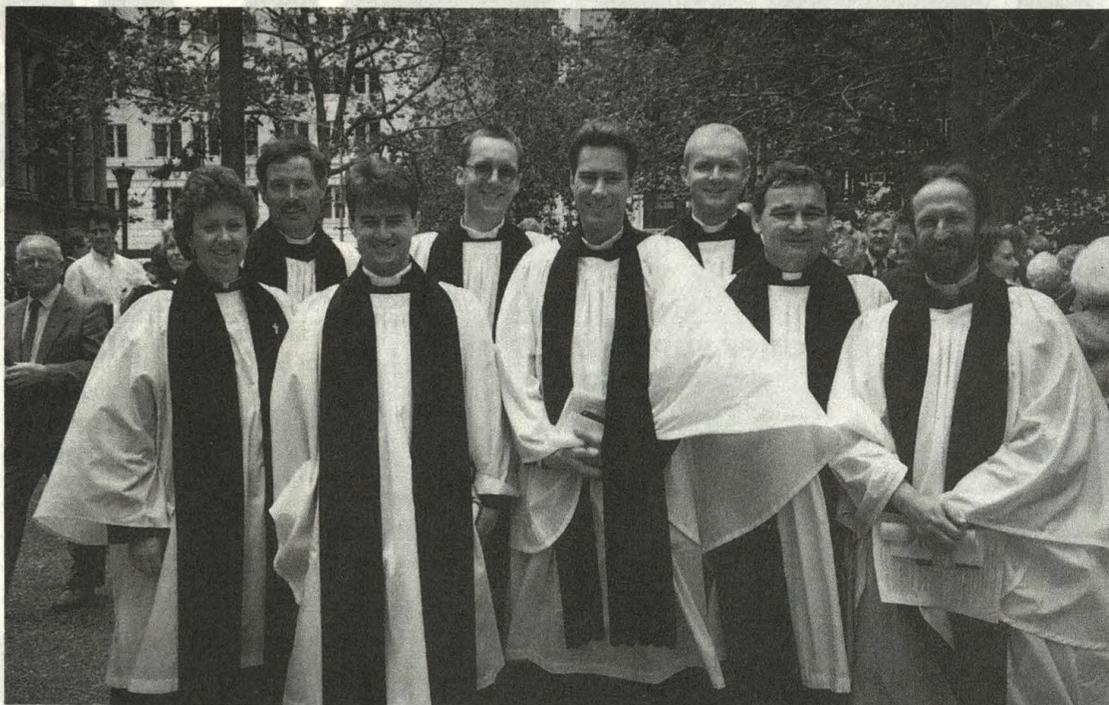
Sometimes I fear for many professing Christians. There is apathy in their prayers. They do not appear to be strongly loyal to Christ. They seem to be at peace with his enemies. They have no loathing of sin. This is not New Testament Christianity!

Charles Haddon Spurgeon once commented, "We should pray when we are in a praying mood, for it would be sinful to neglect so fair an opportunity. We should pray when we are not in a praying mood for it would be dangerous to remain in so unhealthy a condition."

Please pray for God's blessing on our church.

Reg Piper is the Bishop of Wollongong.

New clergy: ready to go



Wollongong region deacons, ordained February 11, 1996: (left to right) Sue Willis (Nowra), Colin Bale (Bowral), Mark Charleston (Engadine), David Hohne (Jannali), Stephen Pivetta (Minto), Matthew Yeo (Miranda), Geoff Leader (Sylvania) and Robert Powell (Berrima with Moss Vale).



Wollongong region priests, ordained December 17, 1995: (left to right) Archdeacon Lindsay Stoddart, Ian Barnett (Figtree), Mark Howard (Shoalhaven Heads), Ian Lawton (West Wollongong), Graham Stanton (Wollongong), Guy Matthews (Camden) and Bishop Reg Piper.

MU celebrates its centenary

By SALLY JACKSON

Sydney Diocese Mothers' Union is celebrating its centenary this year, and members in the Wollongong area are looking forward to taking part in the activities.

Wollongong will hold its own Festival Day on March 22. Later in the year, a special Celebration Day will be held in Wollongong, with displays by branches, a lunch and musical entertainment.

On Monday, June 3, national president Elizabeth Appleby will visit Wollongong to speak to members and present a number of 50-year membership badges.

As a special Centenary gift to the community, Mothers' Union is organising a series of regional seminars on Conflict Resolution. In the Wollongong area, the MU Conference Day at Corrimal on October 15 will be combined with talks on the theme "Mothers and grandmothers, and their relationships with children". The speakers will be Margaret Fuller, of Anglican Counselling, Wollongong and Trevor Batson,

of Careforce, Wollongong. It will be open to everyone.

There are 10 branches in Wollongong - Lake Illawarra deanery. The next deanery days will be held on April 29 and September 2, and are always well attended in the area.

In the Wollongong area members visit Wollongong and Shellharbour Hospital maternity wards to present gifts to new mothers and their babies. This year they will be presenting a special MU Centenary Bible to the babies, a gift from the Bible Society which has donated 10,000 copies to MU. Members also knit endless pairs of booties and sew tiny gowns for premature babies. One of their most endearing ideas was making the gowns in cheerful Christmas prints, bringing a moment of joy on Christmas morning to parents worried about their tiny newborns.

Mothers are also hostesses at three local courts - Family, Wollongong and Port Kembla - to provide 'tea and sympathy', a



Jann McNeill (left) and Betty Nicol from St Michael's Mothers' Union, who operate a refreshment table every Tuesday and Friday morning at the extremely busy Wollongong Court House.

friendly face in an unfamiliar environment for families waiting their turn in court.

And a number of Wollongong members journey regularly to MU head office in St Andrew's House to act as voluntary hostesses to the many visitors who call into the office looking for cards or helpful literature, or just to chat with fellow members.

Working across boundaries

The production of the Anglican Media video, *Buddhism: In search of Paradise*, not only presented an opportunity to reach across ethnic and religious boundaries, but enabled many segments of our church to join together in ministry.

The original idea stemmed from Mark Hadley and Trevor Middleton. Mark is director of Anglican Media Evangelism and is a member of the Oak Flat's Parish, where Trevor is the rector. He had driven passed the temple on many occasions and felt the need to respond to the issue. He contacted Bishop Piper and before too long it was up and running. A meeting was held with the Bishop, Mark Hadley, Trevor Middleton, John Thew (the Director of Cross Cultural Ministries) and Stephen Edwards (University Chaplain). A rough outline was agreed upon and everyone assigned to different tasks.

John's research into the temple and Buddhism proved invaluable for Mark as he wrote the script. Mark and Stephen shot the film one Sunday afternoon. Trevor liaised with the local deaneries of Wollongong, Lake Illawarra, Southern Highlands and parts of Shoalhaven and Sutherland. The project was substantially funded by the local deaneries.

The result: an excellent tool. Trevor Middleton thought it was "well worth the money" and appreciated the strong leadership the Bishop projected through the video and in the organisation. The Bishop spoke highly of the work of Anglican Media and Mark Hadley and he was delighted by the way the joint project came together. Perhaps there are other issues and ministries that we can share!

The video is available at a cost of \$10 from John Thew ((042) 288402) or Anglican Media ((02) 9958 8003).

Members of the Camden Branch of Mothers' Union are regular hospital visitors at Camden Hospital. The branch has 35 members who take part in all MU activities and are planning to attend the Centenary Festival Service and lunch. The branch members are also busy knitting *Bananas in Pyjamas* toys as more than 300 are required for the hospital.

Willis works it out

BY JANE THOMAS

It was 8:30pm on a Monday night when I phoned Sue Willis at her new parish, All Saints, Nowra to chat about ministry, her ordination and life pre-Moore College. I had just switched off the *Vicar of Dibly* and the irony certainly did not escape me! As we chatted I was struck by the warmth, and strength of Sue, certainly reflections of the TV persona of Geraldine, the English vicar.

Regrettably I forgot to ask Sue if, like Geraldine, she was addicted to chocolate, but her generous nature and enthusiasm for life lead me to guess at an equivalent passion for this delicious source of pleasure.

With certainty I can say that Sue is passionate about her faith and communicating it to the world around her. She spoke enthusiastically of time spent with the Department of Evangelism in 1995, and of her prospective involvement at Nowra in a church with proven keenness to share its faith.

Sue was converted by Christians in the ISCF while a student at Nepean High. She spoke with

great affection of the many years of nurture she received at both St Paul's, Emu Plains and St Stephen's, Penrith.

A long and successful management career with Westpac Bank in its International Banking sector proved exciting and stimulating for Sue. However, the frustration of trying to mix career demands and ministry led to the radical decision to resign from Westpac and move into Deaconess House for four years while training at Moore College.

Now finally a full time church worker, Sue describes herself as an encourager and an enabler. She is keen to equip parishioners to minister and to help them find their niche in God's community. Sue is also looking forward to working with and teaching women.

She was reluctant to be more specific about ministry goals for a number of important reasons. Disappointingly, her experiences as a woman attempting to break into ministry in the Sydney Diocese have revealed a distinct lack of opportunities for women and an equal lack of willingness to

change this.

Due to the grace of God and Sue's natural optimism the rejections metered out to her have not caused her to become disillusioned, but I felt deeply for the disappointment she experienced at the response her offer to serve had produced in so many of the Sydney clergy.

Grateful for God's provision and excited about future relationships and possibilities, Sue feels very happy and privileged to have been offered a position in a church like All Saints, Nowra. Rector David Woodbridge is a practitioner of team ministry and Sue is keen to learn and grow in this style of leadership.

The *Vicar of Dibly* portrays an English church in need of an injection of life and community relevance. At 34, Sue is part of an age group under-represented in Australian church involvement. As I spoke with her I felt strongly that the future health and vitality of the Anglican Church relied greatly on people of Sue Willis' calibre, age and gender to engage and be engaged in its ministries.



Sue Willis: excited by the opportunity offered to her.

Radio gives power to the people

BY STEPHEN EDWARDS

POWER FM has blasted out of its studio in Nowra since 1991. The station's manager, Roger Summerill, describes it as mostly rock music for the under 35's - he also notes with pleasure that it has consistently rated No. 1 for this age group.

2ST, POWER's sister station, targets a different audience, it plays easy listening music along with news, information and sport and Roger has been at the helm for the previous 11 years.

When listening to Roger speak, you can understand why those dulcet tones have been a success over the air waves for the previous 25 years.

These days Roger's main role is behind the scenes - maintaining ratings, coordinating and caring for his staff and ensuring the station plays its part in the community.

Roger is a community man, keen to assist it in any way possible. He comments that the "small business community are doing it very tough" and the station's 'buy local' and 'give a kid a job' campaigns are there to assist them.

Roger thinks that his station has a role to play, but he would also like to see the church more plugged into the community. In the business community he acknowledges that there are many closet Christians. But he says that "their position is not being helped by a church that often hides behind closed doors."

As the leaders of our church become involved in community affairs and functions, he believes it will empower people with confidence to live open and consistent Christian lives. He is thrilled to see our Bishop and other clergy attending community functions and being available.

Roger was raised in a Christian

family and the local church has provided the resources for him to develop and grow as a Christian. He warns of the danger of "the Sunday Service becoming so enthusiastic for evangelism that we forget to build up God's people."

Even though Roger's responsibility at work brings with it long hours and pressure, he continues an intimate involvement in ministry at the parish level. He preaches and leads services regularly at the local church and sits on a number of regional committees.

All of Roger's staff know where he stands: he is passionate to live out a consistent and uncompromising Christian life. On the recent death of an employee some of the staff approached him to say prayers with them for their support. He was also asked to speak at the funeral. Yet he acknowledges, living in a 'post-Christian' world can cause tension. At the moment he is holding back a program because of its offensiveness - but others are keen to see it aired. While many radio stations are cutting back on the amount of religious content, Roger continues to encourage the Bishop's radio message and also he is very proud of the Sunday night Christian Rock Show.

Many people, including Christians, complain about the media, blaming it for many of the faults in our society. Roger's advice: if you have a grievance, get involved or get your children involved. "We need Christians at the coal face, deciding what people are going to see and hear. Christian people need to quietly and consistently go about their work and lives and then once again this nation may be called Christian."

The power belongs to the people!

Ministry weekend set for March

The Wollongong Region's Annual Ministry Conference at the Gilbulla Conference Centre is planned for March 19-20. It provides an excellent opportunity for pastoral teams and regional workers to encourage each other in ministry.

A number of topics are on the agenda. Bishop Piper will give his charge and share what he hopes to achieve under God in the coming year.

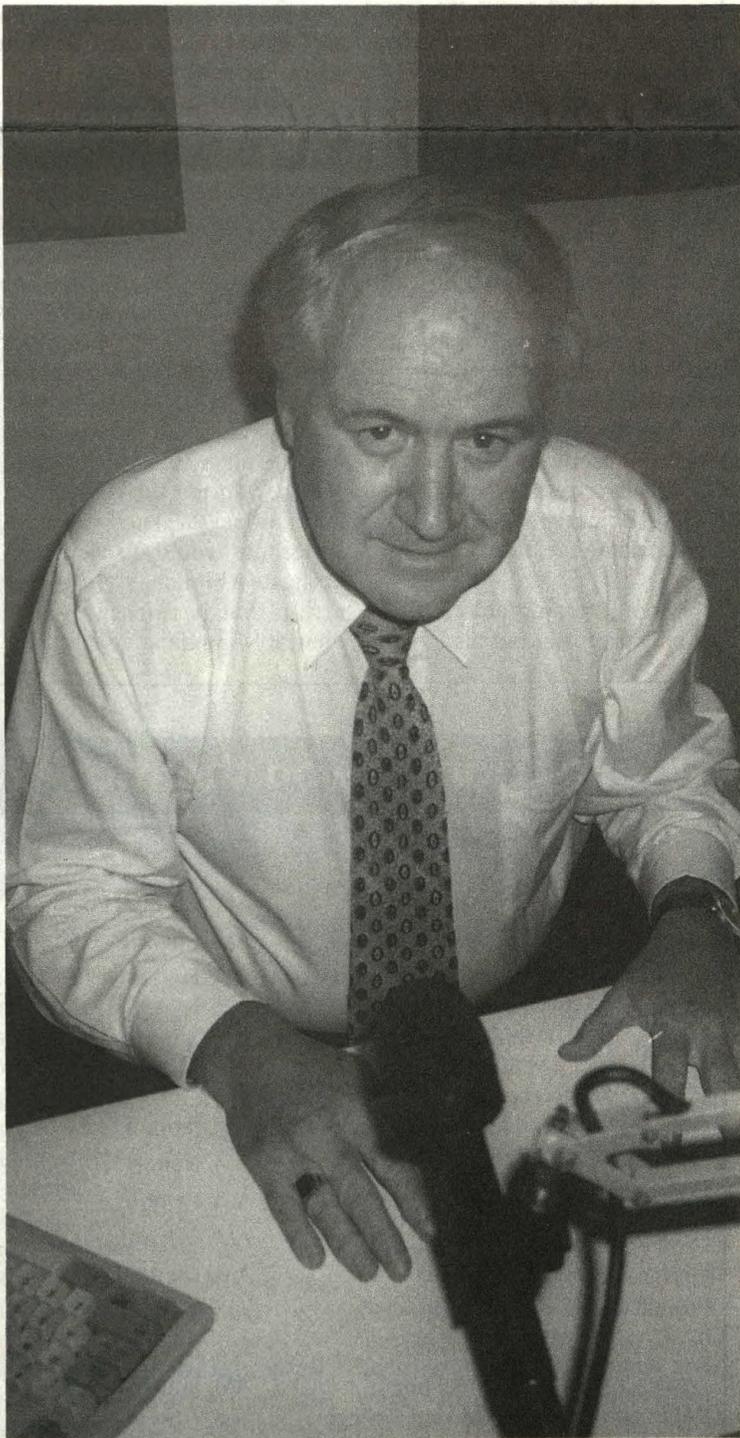
David Watkins, CMS Mission Education Secretary for the region, will inform us of the progress of link missionaries and challenge us to greater involvement in South East Asia. Archdeacon Lindsay Stoddart will speak on church growth, leadership and giving. The Rev Dr Glenn Davies will share with the group form 2 Timothy.

Also to be addressed are the strengths and weaknesses of the new prayer book and Wollongong's participation in the current liturgical movement.

The Conference will also provide opportunity for input. Time will be allotted for people to inform others of events planned in their areas of work, or challenges they have gained from studying God's Word.

The Bishop commented that the Conference, "sets the overall framework for the region, it strengthens the rapport of the regional workers and breaks down any competitiveness and rivalry. It will encourage co-operation and the building up of others ministry".

Please pray that the Conference will accomplish these goals.



Roger Summerill: "We need Christians at the coalface."



The team: (back) Marco Garlato, Matt Yeo, Garry Dawes, Frank Scully, (front) Barbara Walmsley, Glenn Davies and Janelle Baglin.

Team players model ministry

BY STEPHEN EDWARDS

As I was driving to Miranda to talk to Marco Garlato about team ministry, a terrible thought occurred to me. What if he is just about to leave the team because he is sick of playing second fiddle? I was relieved to find out that after a retreat late last year, he and the other staff had just verbally contracted themselves to minister together for the next five years! When this was announced at the services, the congregations clapped and cheered.

But something didn't seem right. Marco is a competent and godly person. He used to run his own real estate business, he left Moore College 8 years ago, but still he hasn't got his own parish! Was there a skeleton in the closet that holds Marco back? Is there a file marked, 'never to be

in charge of a parish'?

Marco just chuckles at these thoughts. His problem - although it is not really a problem - is that he loves working as part of a team, and especially this team at Miranda!

Marco has worked under two rectors at St Luke's Miranda. The Rev Paul Perini was there when Marco first arrived in 1991 - Paul left for 'greener pastures' (he is now an Archdeacon) and was replaced in April 1995 by the Rev Dr Glenn Davies. During the interim of 17 months, the parish was more than happy for Marco to be in charge as the locum. Now if there is ever a recipe for disaster, this has got to be it! How many men would be willing to step aside and give the reigns to another? I know one - Marco Garlato.

The question has to be asked -

why does this team work? Marco is quick to point out that, "it works with an excellent leader". He has both relished and enjoyed working under Paul and Glenn. They are men he respects and to whom he is quite happy to give his loyalty (which he thinks is a major ingredient for team work). Marco comments that "he has never been made to feel as though he is second in charge". He is included in the major decisions and given credit and honour for what he has done and is doing.

Glenn says he is simply modelling his own experience. As a youth leader, his rector drew him into his confidence and treated him as an equal. As a lecturer at Moore Theological College he respected Peter Jensen's valuing of staff input, as well as his will-

ingness to make tough decisions.

The word 'self esteem', keeps recurring when talking to Marco and Glenn. The leader and team members must be people who are content with their work and not jealous of the other's performance. Glenn's desire is to "inspire confidence and to draw out the strengths of the team members. I do not want little clones, but people who can contribute effectively to the team." Was there any Corinthian factions (1 Corinthian 3) among the parish? "It is inevitable that some parishioners will naturally attach themselves to one or the other," Marco responds, "but we feel sufficiently well self-esteemed not to feel threatened by it!"

"Another major factor is that not only the team, but also their

families must get on well together." It is important for Marco that his wife Amanda has a good relationship with Glenn's wife Dianne, and happily that has happened. The staff and their families regularly meet together not only to talk about ministry, but also to socialise.

But what about when the staff have a difference of opinion? They are not frequent, but when they arise, Marco feels comfortable to air his alternate opinion and to discuss the issue. Yet Marco has enough respect for Glenn to trust whatever decision he makes.

One major area often left out when discussing team ministry is the congregation. At Miranda they have been involved in every process and they likewise have included the staff in their decisions! They have made calculated decisions to ease in the change of leadership and the building of a team. For example when Glenn arrived the members of the rector's Bible Study group proposed for Marco and Glenn to share the leading each term to alleviate any concern. The congregation are comfortable with multiple staff because they witness a genuine working relationship between them and they see its effectiveness.

Miranda is one parish where intentional team ministry is proving a success. How can our Diocese encourage more success stories? Some thought needs to be given to our structures.

"Perhaps a permanent Deacon, with authority to celebrate the sacraments would encourage people that being part of a team, and not just a team leader, is a real option," Marco responds. Glenn suggests "that Synod representation for Associate Ministers may be a way of the system affirming the value of being an associate!"

Paul Keating and John Howard made 'leadership' a major issue during the recent election campaign. They and their colleagues would do well to investigate a biblical style of leadership that is refreshingly on view at Miranda.

Regional Diary

Conferences

March 19-20	Ministry Conference	Gilbulla
March 20, 27, 3	Bishop's Bible Studies	Mittagong
April 12-14	Youth Conference	Camp Koloona
April 16	Synod Reps APBA Conference	Wollongong
May 18	Lay Readers Conference	Panania
May 24-26	Church Leadership Conference	Gynea
June 1	Men's Rally	Albion Park
September 7	BCA Concert	Illawarra Grammar School

Regional Prayer Days

March 23	All day at Nowra
June 15	All day at Campbelltown
September 21	All day at Wollongong

Youth Department Seminars

March 23	Holiness	Miranda
May 18	Evangelism	West Wollongong
June 22	Using the Bible	Albion Park
August 10	Leadership	Wollongong
September 28	Ministry	Menai

Wollongong on the move

	From	To
Ackman, Trevor	Milton	Asst Minister, Peakhurst
Bale, Colin	Moore College	AM, Bowral
Charleston, Mark	Moore College	AM, Engadine
Dickens, Mark	Jannali	CIC, Harbord
Edwards, Chris	Engadine	Diocese of Adelaide
Green, Roger	Sutherland	AM, Narrabeen
Hohne, David	Moore College	AM, Jannali
Kazogolo, George	Albion Park	AM, Milton
Lane, Richard	Berrima/Moss Vale	AM, Pymble
Leader, Geoff	Moore College	AM, Sylvania
Pivetta, Stephen	Minto	AM, Minto
Powell, Robert	Moore College	AM, Berrima/Moss Vale
Wale, Murray	Sylvania	AM, Rockdale
Watts, Colin	Peakhurst	AM, Sutton Forest
Willis, Sue	Moore College	AM, Nowra
Yeo, Matthew	Miranda Yth Worker	AM, Miranda

HIV: the virus of a new generation?

By MICHELLE HAINES
IN THAILAND

The countries of Asia - our near neighbours - are facing a major HIV/AIDS crisis. Already an estimated 3.5 million people in the region are living with HIV/AIDS. By the years 2000-2005 this figure is expected to rise to 13 million. Many of those affected will be women and children.

Staggering projections such as these prompted the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), in association with the World Council of Churches and the Church of Christ in Thailand, to run a workshop for Christian communicators on HIV/AIDS, held in Thailand in January.

The churches in Asia have not been in the forefront of the battle against AIDS. Ignorance and fear have too often been the response of the Christian community. This is aggravated by cultural concerns which make sex a taboo topic to most Asian people. The close associations in the minds of the public between AIDS and the seedy side of life, like drug dependency and prostitution, make it a difficult issue for churches to broach.

In most of Asia AIDS is a heterosexual problem (unlike Australia where it is largely a homosexual one). Prevention strategies are seemingly helpless in the face of the thriving sex and drug industries, and further crippled by the refusal of high-risk groups to

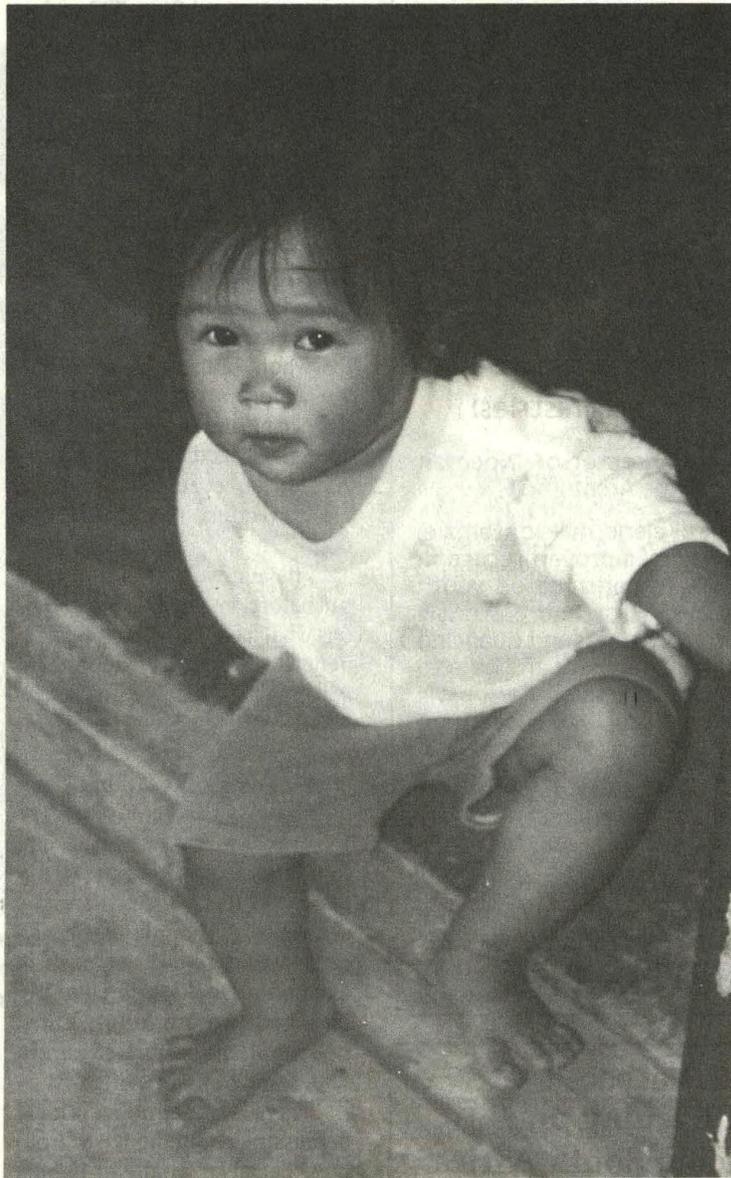
take HIV tests. To know means to be rejected by the community, so most of those with the virus will not find out until they develop symptoms. The damage done in the meantime - which may be as long as a decade - can be devastating, especially to wives and children.

People living with HIV/AIDS bear special burdens which set them apart from those with other fatal illnesses: they are ostracised, blamed for contracting it and judged harshly by their communities.

The CCA workshop heard the voices of those with HIV, of the people who care for them and of those who educate communities about the virus. The conference statement pointed out that these are the people who must be heard in the churches; those who are affected must be allowed to speak for themselves rather than be watered down by mediators.

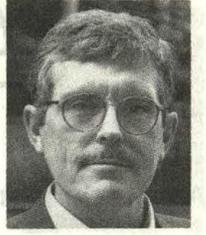
The statement also drew attention to the blame the churches must take for allowing hatred and indifference to grow:

"In order to respond authentically as churches, we must first acknowledge our failure to respond in love and action to the AIDS crisis. By acknowledging and confessing our own brokenness and by facing our own humanity, mortality and sexuality, we can begin to be true bearers of the good news in the midst of the epidemic."



The number of children with HIV in Asia is growing alarmingly.

BAH!
humbug!



ROB FORSYTH

If Christ Church, Gladesville manages to plant a new church in the Diocese of Newcastle against the wishes of the bishop, we will have witnessed another step in the convergency of church life and economic theory.

Economic rationalism has come to the church.

In the last decade we have witnessed a significant change in the economic structure of this country. As Paul Kelly showed in *The End of Certainty* we have moved from the old ideal of high tariff protection for local industries, a fixed exchange rate for the dollar and centralised wage fixing, to a much more decentralised market driven system. Economic rationalism.

Don't ask me if these changes are A Good Thing. (Even though I am indeed a clergyman I don't know.)

Similar shifts are occurring in the church. Pressures are building up against old restrictive and centralised structures in the name of gospel effectiveness.

Parish boundaries, and now diocesan boundaries, are increasingly being taken as nothing more than ecclesiastical restricted trade barriers - protecting inefficient ministry rather than (as the old theory goes) promoting fellowship and focused responsibility.

For ages parish boundaries have been quietly ignored. Now there is a call for their abolition. If Gladesville succeeds then diocesan boundaries may be going the same way.

That is not all. The protection of clergy jobs from the disapproval of their people or bishop or from any performance review (clerical tenure) is being seen less as a defence of gospel freedom than as a way to insulate the clergy from accountability. Centralised liturgical control has broken down. Will a congregation's right to its property no matter what be next under threat?

It is "ecclesiastic rationalism."

Not that a convergence of church and secular life is always a bad thing. Where do we get parishes, dioceses and parson's freehold from in the first place?

In many ways I find myself sympathetic to this new mood of gospel efficiency. But all is not positive. In every revolution there is damage and hurt. Will not increased competition, rapid change, "anything goes" and the inevitable downsizing threaten fellowship, trust, theological integrity, livelihood, and a sense of community?

How can we make sure that gospel efficiency really is gospel efficiency?

Together, 'til death do them part



Lamai Khomtan and Prasert Deachaboon: giving something back to society.

The CCA workshop (see above) was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, where it is customary for males (some as young as 12 or 13) to experience their first sexual encounter with a prostitute, rather than a girlfriend (let alone a wife). In contrast, most women have only one sexual partner - their husband - but the infection is frequently passed on to them and any children they may bear.

That is what happened to Lamai Khomtan. Three years after she had entered an arranged marriage her husband fell ill. After three months he was dead, and Lamai found out that not only she

but her baby daughter were HIV positive too.

She was treated like a leper by her village. Her child was expelled from the nursery. Eventually she decided to move away to the mountains.

It was here that she met Prasert Deachaboon. Prasert discovered he was HIV positive over two years ago, but is unsure how he contracted it. As a soldier in the army he often went drinking with his friends and ended up at brothels, but at about the same time he also received a blood transfusion for a knife wound. However he acquired it,

it soon made him sick enough to leave the military, then resign from his next job due to discrimination. But the illness rekindled the Christian faith his mother taught him, and he is now keen to serve God with what remains of his life.

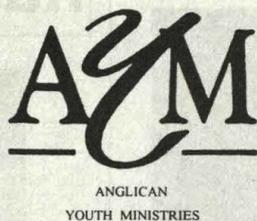
When he met Lamai, the two fell in love and decided to marry. Both wanted to contribute to society, both were committed to the fight against HIV/AIDS, so they started the Clear Sky Project, an organisation which aims to educate others about the virus and provide support for those who are already affected.

What is HIV/AIDS?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It is a virus which, on entering the bloodstream, takes over certain cells in the body's defence system, destroying its capability to fight disease. The virus is spread through the exchange of body fluids (mainly semen, blood and blood products), and can persist in the body for a decade or more without any apparent symptoms.

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It is not in itself a disease. It is a condition of people with HIV who have begun to show symptoms of different kinds of infection. As their immune system fails, a person with AIDS has to do battle with anything from colds to pneumonia to cancer. Without an effective defence system, their body is eventually overwhelmed.

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Division of Diocesan Services



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Remuneration is negotiable, but will be based on the Clergy Stipend Determination.

Enquiries and position description available from Mrs Lyn Whaley, Diocesan Services Directorate, St Paul's Cathedral Buildings, 209 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000. Tel: (03) 9653-4220.

Applications close 22nd March 1996.

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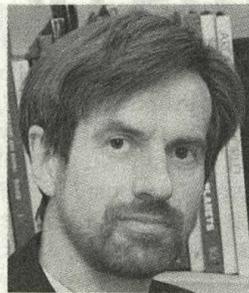
Churches fiddle while Ireland burns

It is Friday night, February 9. Friends have called round to discuss a proposal for a TV script. They think that many programs are encouraging an interest in the occult and want to write 'a Christian version of the X Files' starring a young and dynamic exorcist. My initial scepticism turns to interest as I realize they may have something (though I'm relieved they don't want to feature me in the starring role).

Then shortly after 7.00pm the whole house is shaken and the windows rattle. There is a large bang and rumble as though being squeezed by a giant hand. And the squeeze comes from a clear direction - the City of London.

I have never felt a bomb go off before, but it is quite obvious what has happened. Outside, people are on their doorsteps, asking the same question - "What was that?" - but in our hearts we know the answer already. Frantically tuning from one radio station to another, the full story emerges. At 6.00pm, the Irish Republican Army called off the Northern Ireland cease-fire. An hour later, a bomb in an underground car park in London's Docklands severely damaged two buildings, killed two people and wounded almost 100, some of them critically.

There is something uniquely depressing about the Irish 'troubles' because, whatever people say, it is a war between two nominally Christian communities, and the failure of the



JOHN RICHARDSON

IN ENGLAND

churches to address this is one of the scandals of the last half of the twentieth century.

Australians will know something of this. One wave of migration to Australia was the result of rebellion in Ireland, and divisions between Catholic and Protestant have made their mark. Indeed, one of the few things I found sad about Australia was the willingness to romanticize the present conflict in Northern Ireland in the light of the past.

Personally, I have always found this hard to sympathize with. To me the victims of Oliver Cromwell or the Potato Famine are long dead. Northern Ireland today - and I have been there twice - is a pleasant country with great scenery and warm hearted people. But nationalism - surely the least Christian of all sympathies - holds the population in a time-warp. The result in my lifetime has been twenty-five years of bloodshed which the churches have not done nearly enough to distance themselves from.

I don't remember Cromwell.

But I do remember 'no warning' bombings and deliberate false warnings about bombs which channelled people into the path of the real explosions. And yes, I remember Bloody Sunday - I remember exactly where I was and what I was doing when the news came in. But I also remember Bloody Friday when the IRA ripped the heart out of Belfast with a sequence of bombs in public places and I remember all the other Bloody Days they have initiated since 1969.

Remembering is not the answer. Forgiving must be, though I find in my own heart a hatred which is challenged by every biblical mandate to love one's enemies and pray for their blessing and salvation. So please pray for us. By the time you read this, a solution may have been reached. On the other hand - and I fear this is more likely - more bombings and deaths may have occurred. A bomb isn't constructed and a target selected overnight. Weeks of planning have gone into tonight's events.

But above all, please pray that this stain on the gospel will be removed. Pray that not only will those who kill in the name of Catholic or Protestant see that they are wrong, but that those in the church hierarchy who disapprove yet who will not condemn will be convicted of the wrong they are perpetuating. And please, don't let this be seen as a 'cause'. It is not worth one drop of blood, let alone the lives ruined tonight.

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*should be able to demonstrate discipling skills with young people.

*should have had leadership experience with 8-16 year olds.

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The Rev Neil Flower, (02) 484 1889 or fax (02) 9980 8012.

Refugees escape the wall of silence

BY JEREMY HALCROW

A new sculpture unveiled by Premier Bob Carr at St John's, Darlinghurst, on February 19 has been designed to raise awareness of the plight of refugees. Refugees need the publicity. Little is written about them because they are forced into silence. Their position in Australia is precarious and they don't want to offend the Australian government. They also fear provoking the anger of their national governments because it might lead to the persecution of friends and family back home. Unfortunately the media does not care because faceless victims don't make good news.

Yet refugees are real people, with real pain. They are our neighbours. They live in our suburbs, our streets and even go to our churches. They are locked up against their will in prison camps around the world. Locked up even in our country and our city.

An Anglican parishioner who worked for the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs as a Determination of Refugee Status (DORS) officer agreed to talk about the problems faced by refugees in Australia. Although he did not want his name published because it might endanger those refugees he still helps, he was adamant that Australian Christians and the Australian government were not doing enough for refugees.

He explained that refugees fall into two categories: approved refugees and those seeking refugee status. The second category of refugees, like those at the Port Headland and Villawood Detention Centres, had acute needs. He said that many were Christians, and some interested in Christianity, but none had satisfactory fellowship. "People in detention are not free to go to a church service," he said, calling on Christians in Sydney to help them out. "If they are determined to be refugees they are very likely to attend the church of those people who assisted them in detention."

The former DORS officer still has a great interest in serving the Chinese refugees who live in his local area, many of whom are very committed to Christ. "The majority of refugees attending Anglican churches in Sydney would be People's Republic of China nationals - the so-called 'Chinese students'," he said. "I am impressed by their serious commitment to Jesus and to the Bible."

The experience of Chinese refugees is almost always the same. Six years ago when the Chinese army smashed the student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square they were forced into exile in a distant, foreign country. "Australia is very different to China because I always feel lonely here," said one young Chinese woman who is a member of a Anglican parish in Sydney.

"Sometimes I need someone, like my Chinese friends, to share my feelings when I feel really



Anna Cohn sees her sculpture dedicated to refugees unveiled at St John's, Darlinghurst, on February 19. Ms Cohn says she understands the suffering endured by refugees because she escaped Nazi persecution in World War Two and is a survivor of Auschwitz death camp.

down," she said. "Australians are very open, honest and try to help you but they can't really understand how you feel."

"I was distressed to find that some DORS officials, including senior officers, seemed to disbelieve the risks to Chinese Christians despite all the evidence."

Refugees, like herself, feel cut off and isolated from friends and family back home because of restrictions imposed on them by the Chinese Government. Indeed, she did not want to be identified out of fear of repercussions for her family in China. It is well-known among the refugees that the Chinese embassy is monitoring them in Australia and will report back to their government any behaviour it does not like.

The former DORS officer said that many people in the Department of Immigration are 'cynical' about the plight of Christians in China. As a result Christians who sought refugee status received unfair treatment from the Department. "I was distressed to find that some DORS officials, including senior officers, seemed to disbelieve the risks to Chinese Christians despite all the evidence," he said. "I am committed to natural justice and procedural fairness but not all the DORS applicants received this."

The former DORS officer said he was shocked as he read more and more about the level of persecution of Christians in China. "I found that all Christians in China have reason to fear persecution at that hands of the au-

thorities. Local officials are quite arbitrary in enforcing Government regulations against the church, and are liable to go beyond the intentions of the central government in suppressing Christians. Their brutality is not confined to leaders of house-churches," he said.

Despite the difficulties they face in Australia, the refugees believe the move has changed their life for the best. "In China it is impossible to come to know God," one said, "so the most important thing is that I came here so that I could find out about him."

The former DORS officer explained that refugees from mainland China were especially open to Christianity. "Many have been brought up with Marxism as a religion and find that invalid and irrelevant," he said. "They are curious about Christianity and come with open minds unlike many Australians."

It is the refugees' enthusiastic response to Christianity that has convinced the former DORS officer that Chinese ministry is important and effective. "The Anglican church is a late arrival in cross-cultural ministry but it's happening in an increasing number of parishes," he said. He also believes that the Anglican churches could do more for refugees but understands that many people are not aware of refugees because they don't want to attract the attention of government agents from their homeland.

There are many things that parishioners can do for refugees but probably the most important is helping them adjust to life in Australia. One young refugee explained the isolation she felt because she couldn't understand English.

"When I went to my church in the beginning I couldn't understand what anyone was say-

ing, even the minister," she said. "But my church started English classes to help us understand. English classes are very important, because we must be able to communicate with this society," she said.

However the former DORS officer warns well-meaning parishioners against being too nosy. "Be sensitive to the privacy of possible refugees," he said. "Do not be curious. They will move on if asked questions about their migration status or the whereabouts of their spouse."

He advises Christians simply to be friendly and initiate a contact. "Invite the new-comers to a meal," he said. "The loving and caring environment of a Christian home is able to provide the emotional and spiritual support which is often desperately needed by Chinese students."

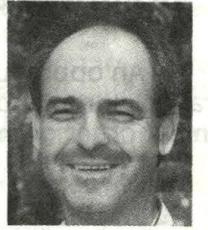
"If I'd lived in China I would never had come to know God. Life is always difficult but now I can place my hope in Christ."

The refugees themselves say that even simple attempts to provide support and Christian encouragement has had profound effects.

"In China there isn't much Bible study so being able to come to an Australian Bible study is very helpful," one said. "The Bible study has even helped me understand Australian culture."

"People can really encourage you and pray for you," another said. "If I'd lived in China I would never had come to know God. Life is always difficult but now I can place my hope in Christ."

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I'm involved regularly with a small but determined group of Christians united by a common purpose.

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Did they wait for these new residents to find them at the parent church in another suburb? Or wait for some other 'body' to identify the need for a church in that area? Or ignore the challenge altogether? After all they all had enough ministry to keep them out of mischief.

Nope! They jumped in at the grass roots while this new area is still in the early stages of developing its identity.

They meet in a school building. They come early to set up and stay late to pack up. In fact they are there an hour before 'church' and still there an hour after. They pray, encourage, fine tune, review, affirm and pray again.

They are a team. They are a church. They care for each other and constantly give attention to their mission.

Every member of the core group (in smaller teams) has responsibility for a 'precinct'. A couple of streets, an avenue and a cul de sac, maybe. For these residents they pray. To these residents they door knock, letter box drop, offer friendship, respond to needs, invite to church, go where the opportunities lead... share the good news of Jesus.

Many good contacts have been made. People have come and 'tried' church. They have felt the warmth of a caring community, heard the gospel preached in clear, simple and careful ways, tasted a meeting that is relaxed, contemporary, short and caters for their kids.

Some have come back. Some have said they will. Growth has been slow, very slow. It is like running up a steep, soft sand hill. Step a metre, slip a yard. It is early days with the hard yards stretching ahead.

But growth has been deep. In the team and in me. Few things excite me more than to be with this church. Socialising, scheming, training, preaching. Being part of their labour for the Lord, convinced with them, that unlike so much else in life, that labour is not in vain.



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THE TORONTO BLESSING - OR IS IT?
Ed. by Stanley Porter and Phillip Richter
Darton, Longman and Todd
ISBN 023-252-1301
\$22

This book is a small anthology by five authors who assess the Toronto Blessing. They answer different questions about the phenomenon, but all their results are intriguing.

A sociological study of the Blessing suggests that the movement's rise to prominence makes sense when it is viewed alongside two major problems affecting charismatic-style churches - the precariousness of their market and the unpredictability of charisma.

Similarities between the Toronto Blessing and other charismatic movements is reinforced by an historical section which looks at earlier revival movements.

Another helpful essay looks at the bib-

lical basis for the Blessing. A comparison is made between various models of worship, and how and if there is any biblical basis in each case.

I found a quote from a person involved in the charismatic movement particularly interesting. "It is a common error to believe that Christians who are filled with the Holy Spirit cannot be deceived," they write. "In fact, those who have been 'baptised' in the Spirit are more likely to be deceived than conservative evangelical or traditional orthodox believers, who have no such experience. The reason is the latter form judgement based on principle, rather than experience or emotional reaction. The more believers are soaked in the Word of God, the more likely they are to be able to make a sound judgement."

Overall this book gives useful insights into the Toronto Blessing phenomenon.

Canon Alan Patrick

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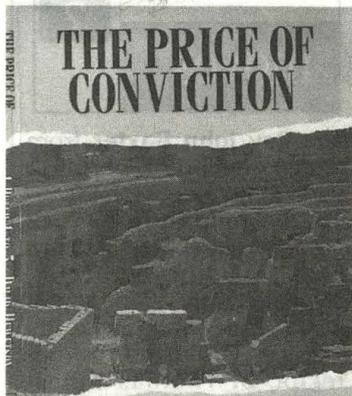
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6pm - Family Festival, featuring James Morrison & Band.
Sunday March 10.
12 Noon - International Music Festival
3pm - Family Festival, featuring Donald Shanks & The Waratah Girls Choir.



THE PRICE OF CONVICTION:
commentary on 1 Peter
by David Hewetson
Albatross, 1995
ISBN 0-86760-148-5



David Hewetson will be known to many as a warm, patient and knowledgeable teacher of God's word, and a writer of many helpful volumes on apologetics. This is his latest publication, and is one of the series of "Pocket Bible Commentaries" published by Albatross Books, featuring local authors.

The book clearly had its beginning in a series of sermons or Bible studies. It assumes its readers will have their Bibles open as they use it, because no text is printed in the commentary. The book has eight chapters. Each covers a section of 1 Peter and finishes with two sets of discussion questions. The first is directly on the text just dealt with, and the second is entitled "Widening our horizons". There are lengthy endnotes and an extensive bibliography.

The author sees 1 Peter as being a "blend of both doctrinal and ethical teaching" - the true grace of God, in which we must stand fast to the end, specially through persecution. David Hewetson carefully works his way through the letter, and almost without you realising it, you find he has left no important stone unturned in faithfully bringing out the message of Pe-

ter. We are getting the fruit of many hours, perhaps years, spent struggling with the text (and the rest of the Bible) and like the good preacher he is, David makes it all seem so simple - which of course it isn't.

The presentation abounds with the pithy expressions characteristic of the author. For example, "What the Father plans, the Spirit executes and the Son receives."

I tried to work out how this book of ready-made studies or sermons might be used. It would make good personal quiet time reading - a few sections of each chapter a day, then thinking about the questions at the close of the week. It would be good to use as a study book in a group, but you'd have to take care people interacted with the Bible's text properly as they discussed answers to the questions. And it would make a good present for your pastor!

Deryck Howell

CLOWNING GLORY
by Roly Bain and Patrick Forbes
National Society/Church House
Publishing, 1995
\$14.95
ISBN 0-7151-4863-X

The blurb on the back describes *Clowning Glory* as an A-Z of clowning for use in ministry.

My heart always sinks when I see anything described as the A-Z. With A-Z books you are forced to read the whole thing to decide whether it's worth reading. So allow me to assist. If you're interested in starting a serious, ongoing clowning troupe, then this book is worth a read. If you want a couple of wacky clowning ideas for one off events then it is not.

Clowning Glory presents the reader with ideas for clowning and little pieces of clown history. Each of these are interesting on their own, but of much greater value is the clown theology which pervades the whole book.

Bain and Forbes alert us to the fact that Jesus' relationship with the authority figures of his day was very much like the relationship of a court jester to the King. He questioned their authority, he lampooned their pretensions, he ate and drank and celebrated life in the face of their joyless religion, he tied them in knots with language and made fun of the absurdities in their world of law. He was without doubt the greatest 'fool' the world has ever seen, and he is



the centre of a faith which is foolishness to the world around it.

Sadly, in an age which has great respect for the vulnerability and humility of the clown, it is the church which is seen as joyless, legalistic and authoritarian.

Clowning Glory is an attempt to put the clown back into the church. The authors describe the clown as a question mark against 'the proud, the pompous, the self-important, the self-righteous'. For Bain and Forbes, clowns are not just a diversion for children, but can challenge people of all ages to rediscover the liberating foolishness of the gospel.

Used thoughtfully *Clowning Glory* could help your church produce an effective clowning troupe. Used as a disconnected set of 'tips', it is more likely to produce clowning which is trivial and an embarrassment to your loved ones. Be warned: good clowning is much more difficult than it looks.

Rod Begbie

A 'ready means' for Anglicans to fulfil the Gospel's call

Paul Keating told us the election was about "leadership". John Howard said we needed "solutions".

Simon Longstaff of the St James Ethics Centre, writing in the Financial Review, reminded us (through the words of political speech-writer Richard Farmer) that: "Politics is rarely about telling the truth. Normally it is about telling people things they want to hear. The skilled politician monitors public opinion, determines what people believe, packages their best lines and sells them back to them." We are to blame, of course, because voters have what the Bible calls "itching ears".

1996 is International Year for the Eradication of Poverty. As the year progresses, the discussion on poverty and how to solve this problem will grow.

Before this Great Debate gathers too much momentum, let's join together to call everyone's attention back to centre stage - to God. Why? Because only God can deliver the sort of benefits our politicians will promise. Benefits such as "the eradication of poverty" are fulfilled through God's enabling. We live in a sin-infected world (an infection each one of us has helped create) and poverty is one of the symptoms. God wants Australians to prosper. He has expressed a desire to prosper us, and not to harm us. He has plans to give us "hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11). A part of this very special plan is that we should cooperate with him. By spreading the Gospel and by relieving suffering.

If leadership really is the issue, then Christians should provide it, through faith and service. If "solutions" are needed, then Christians should provide these too - in particular, making known the all-encompassing solution achieved by Jesus through his suffering, death and resurrection.

This year, the Anglican Home Mission celebrates "140 Years of Help with Hope". Each year, AHMS helps release thousands of people from the grip of poverty.

Isaiah 61:1-2 tells us that it is the Spirit of God, at work within us, which results in effective preaching, the healing of broken hearts, the provision of liberty to those who are captives, and "eye-opening" release for those who are bound.

During 1996, Christians will focus on helping others with new vigour and that special compassion which is a gift from God.

Anglicans have already established their credibility in eradicating poverty, through the work of the Anglican Home Mission Society ("The missionary society working at home"). Each year, AHMS helps more than 300,000 people.

In short, AHMS provides Anglicans with a ready means of "making a difference".



Terence Cunningham
Director of Communications
Anglican Home Mission Society

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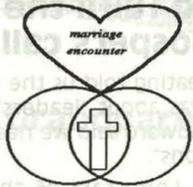
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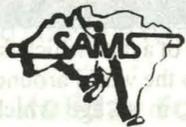
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The Rev John Gray from acting curate-in-charge St John's Park to acting curate-in-charge St John's Park and St Paul's Canley Heights 1.2.96.

The Rev Paul Mostyn from rector, St Thomas Kingsgrove to vicar, Walcha, Armidale Diocese 16.1.96.

The Rev Bill Payne from rector, St Mark's Malabar to general licence 1.5.96.

The Rev Luciano Ricci from rector, St Oswald's Haberfield to assistant minister, Bossley Park Parish 31.1.96.

The Rev David West from acting rector, St Alban's Five Dock to acting rector, St Alban's Five Dock and acting curate-in-charge, St Oswald's Haberfield 1.2.96.

The Rev Bob Duffield from General Secretary, SAMS to become Chaplain, Dampier Seafarers Centre, Diocese of NW Australia.

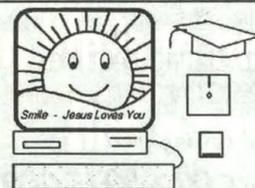
The Rev Kelvin Tutt to Acting General Secretary, SAMS.

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SYDNEY diary



Mon, 11 March, 7.45pm:

Moore College Graduation (Great Hall Sydney University)

29-31 March: Marriage Encounter Weekend at Mt Schoenstatt, Mulgoa. Enquiries: (047) 541-656.

19-20 March: Wollongong Region Ministry Conference at Gilbulla.

Sat, 23 March: Youth Dept Training at St Luke's Miranda.

Sat, 23 March: Wollongong Regional Prayer Day - all day at Nowra.

Mon, 25 March: Standing Committee

Tues, 26 March: Scripture 21 Supporters Breakfast - speaker Bruce Baird.

Fri, 29 March, 10.30am: Mothers' Union - Centenary 1996. Festival Service at St Andrew's Cathedral.

Sun, 31 March, 7pm: Palm Sunday St Andrew's Cathedral - contemporary spoken and sung presentation of the Easter story.

Fri, 5 April, 9.30am: Good Friday St Andrew's Cathedral - Special program music and meditation

Sun, 6 April, 10.45am & 7pm: Easter Sunday St Andrew's Cathedral - Choral services.

Sat 15 April, 10.45am: St Paul's Bankstown. Fashion Parade. \$5 and light luncheon. Enquiries 790-1883.

Fri 19 April, 10.30am: CMS Mission Aid Group Celebration Day at St Thomas' Kingsgrove. Bring lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

Sun 21 April, 10.00am: St Stephen's Willoughby Anzac Service. Speaker Rev Geoff Bingham MM. Willoughby City Band and choir from SCEGS (Shore).

IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR EVENT INCLUDED IN SYDNEY DIARY CALL WENDY BRAMMALL ON (02) 265 1505 OR WRITE TO SYDNEY DIARY, SOUTHERN CROSS NEWSPAPER, PO BOX Q 190, QUEEN VICTORIA BUILDING, SYDNEY, NSW 2000.

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**It's
not
so much
how much
faith you've
got, but
who
you put
your
faith in.**

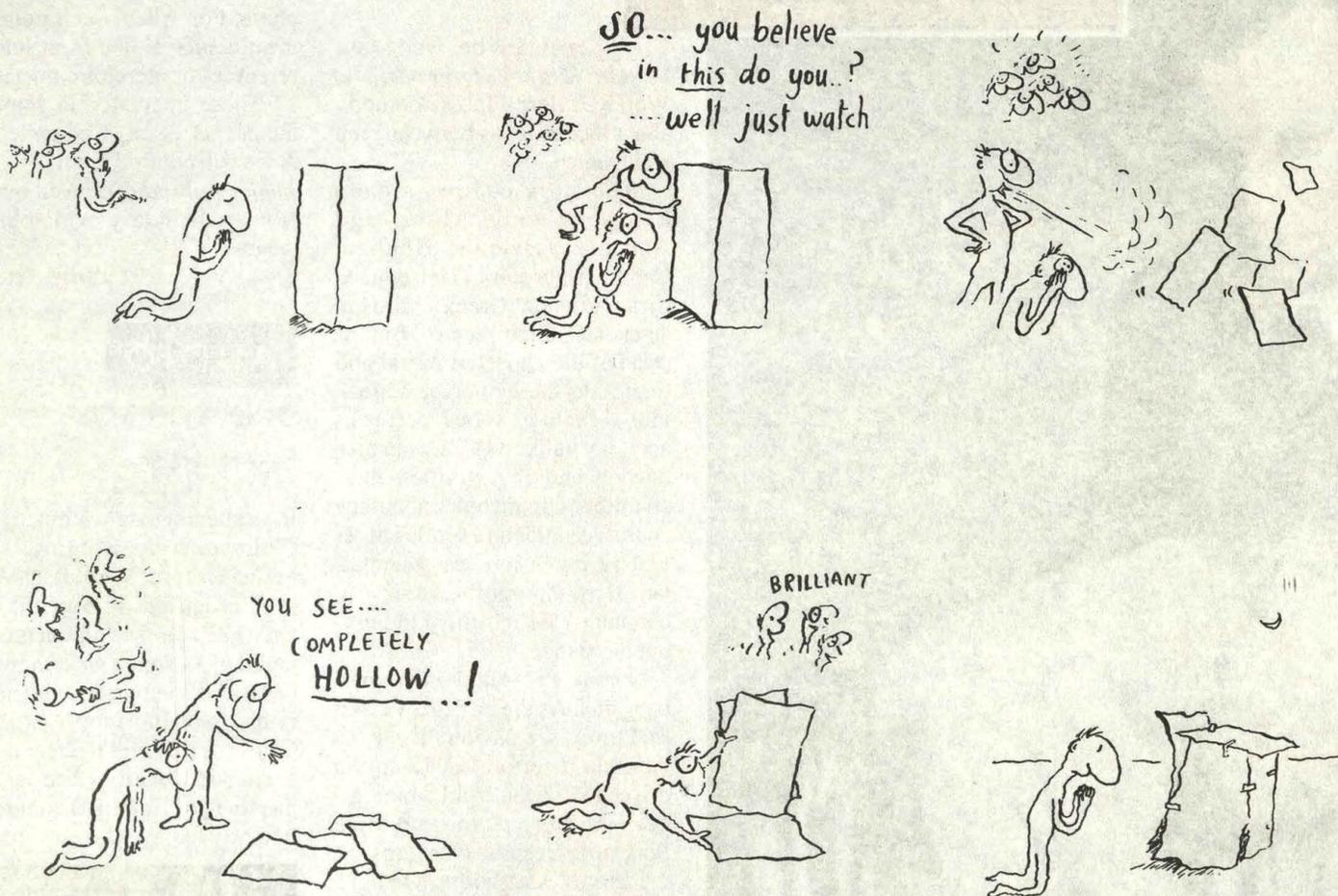


Illustration by Michael Leunig from *A Bag of Roosters*, 1983. Used with the permission of HarperCollins Publishers.



Not long ago, some people believed with all their heart that the earth was flat. No matter how strongly they believed, we know they were quite wrong.

Sometimes very sick people refuse to accept their condition. But no matter how strongly they *disbelieve*, the sickness is still there.

Our belief doesn't make something real.

And our *disbelief* doesn't make it *unreal*. Whether the thing itself is true or untrue has nothing to do with us.

And so it is with the **really big issues** in life. It's not the strength of our faith or belief that counts, it's the trustworthiness and truth of who or what we believe in that matters.

In so much of our lives today, we're encouraged to think that anything can be true as long as we think it is. We take the easy option. Instead of feeling vulnerable, instead of feeling we're drifting alone in the universe, we come to believe in anything. Anything at all.

Our society is full of 'hand-made' gods. Everything from technology to riches, from perpetual youth to popularity. But like everything handmade, they have a use-by date. They all fade, rust, wear out or perish. A quick look at all the advertising around us will give you an idea how much people crave for meaning in their lives, something to fill **the emptiness**.

But Easter time reminds us there is something - *someone* - who is totally dependable, totally true and trustworthy. God himself,

who sent his only Son to earth to live among us 2000 years ago.

The truth about Jesus is **not just wild claims**. Look at his life for yourself. You can read about it in the Bible. It has survived the test of time. Start by reading the Gospel of Mark.

Jesus lived a life of truth, tough truth that was also full of love. A life of great power and integrity, exposing hypocrisy yet full of compassion.

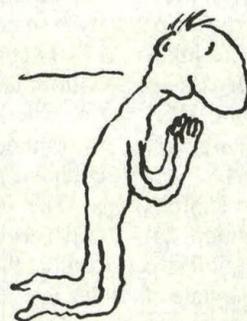
The Bible says we all have fallen short of living the lives God requires. There is nothing we can do about it on our own. But Easter reminds us of God's action in bearing the cost of this himself - sending Jesus to die in our place on that rough wooden cross at Calvary. Through Jesus' death we gain God's forgiveness, and are welcomed into his family. Through Jesus' resurrection, we share in his victory over death, and are promised new life now and for all time.

The Bible says that God is truth. We can see that this is true in the life of his Son. And we can come to know it ourselves this Easter.

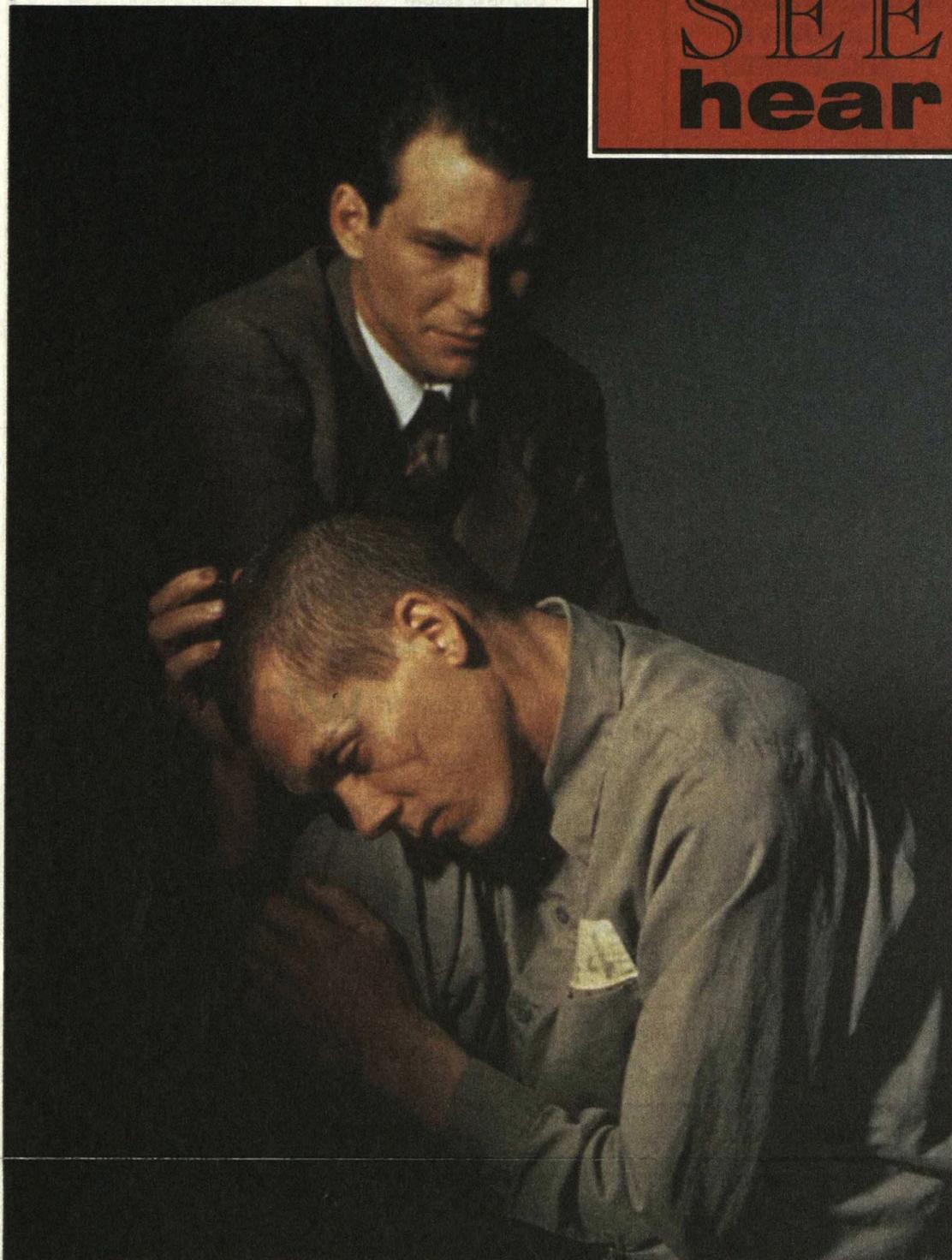
Dear God,

Thank you for loving me so much that you sent Jesus to die in my place. Please forgive me for rejecting you. Help me to follow you from now on. Amen

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11: 28



SEE hear



Kevin Bacon (front) and Christian Slater: a call to mercy.

SCREEN

MURDER IN THE FIRST
Hoyts, Fox Columbia Tristar
Rated M (violence and strong language)

Murder in the First can be captured in one brutal image. In a stinking cell, a naked man, bloodied through constant torture, has a bucket of water thrown over him. He screams. The door slams and he is again immersed in darkness.

Based on a true story, *Murder in the First*, is set in the infamous Alcatraz prison, in 1938. The America of the time is a corrupt society dominated by powerful individuals. This inevitably leads to a cruel and authoritarian prison system. Here we are confronted with a debased Henri Young (Kevin Bacon), a man convicted for stealing five dollars to feed his orphaned sister. Confined to 'the hole', (a cell for solitary confinement), Young emerges filthy and desperate. Following his isolation, Young is forced to eat with other prisoners, where close to insanity, he kills the man he believed responsible for his predicament.

Young is charged with murder, yet through this crime, receives a taste of freedom. He is represented by a slick, self-as-

sured barrister, James Stamphill, played competently, (although the role is somewhat stereotypical), by Christian Slater. Convinced he will lose the case, Young sees this as a chance to make a friend. Rather than discussing evidence with Stamphill, he prefers to play cards, talk about baseball and make jokes. Meanwhile Stamphill, "in the interests of justice", seeks to prove that Alcatraz caused Young's mental instability which prompted him to murder.

Bacon is believable as he portrays a man reduced to his most base level. He shows the crippling fear inflicted by the inhumane treatment of wardens, particularly that of Associate Warden Glenn (played convincingly by Gary Oldman).

Director Marc Rocco exploits the movement of the camera, using shifting, confused angles to correspond with Young's state of mind. He contrasts the grand and beautiful surroundings of the court house with the dark prison cells suggesting a world not only detached from his sufferings, but endorsing Young's torture.

Murder in the First is concerned with deeper issues than the average court drama. While the nature of justice is explored, the film also raises the question of where duty to society should

end and compassion start. The relationship between Young and Stamphill emphasises the importance of human contact and love, in a world which ignores peoples' circumstances and emotions. By showing a corrupt legal system, inflicting punishment without accepting responsibility for its mistakes, the film comments on the hypocrisy of a society not used to forgiveness.

However, the film becomes predictable by pitting two sides against each other. Prison wardens are depicted as evil, without recognising their accountability to society's demands. Stamphill is shown as incorruptible with Young as an 'innocent' victim, who justly becomes the victor (although his triumph is incomplete).

The idea that understanding and forgiveness is needed to combat the evils of humanity, is lost in cliché.

Despite this, *Murder in the First* is a significant attempt at realising the struggle to serve humanity in a self-centred society. It is brutally honest in showing the evil humans are capable of committing against each other. The film's call for compassion and mercy should be contemplated by all of us.

Rebecca Kennedy

MIGHTY APHRODITE
Rated M (strong language, adult themes)
Hoyts Fox Columbia

Set in his beloved Manhattan, *Mighty Aphrodite* is Woody Allen's latest comedy about relationships between men and women.

The story centres around Lenny (Woody Allen) and Amanda (Helena Bonham Carter). Their story is introduced by a traditional Greek chorus in an ancient amphitheatre. But instead of the expected moral and tragic tale, these overseers break into a choreographed performance, not unlike a Broadway production, and give an often abrasive urban commentary about the confused antics and foibles of relationships in modern Manhattan. Here the goofiness sets in, continuing delightfully throughout the film.

Lenny and Amanda adopt a baby boy. As the boy grows, and as Lenny's relationship with Amanda deteriorates, Lenny is driven to find the child's biological mother, Linda (Mira Sorvino). Despite warnings by the chorus' Cassandra, Oedipus and Jocasta, Lenny pursues the mother only to find she is a dipsy blond aspiring to be an actress but working as a prostitute. Determined that his boy should have a more respectable mum, Lenny tries to talk her into becoming a hairdresser, then introduces her to an even more dimwitted onion farmer in the hope of a match. Since the farmer is seeking a woman with simple, traditional values "like his ma", the relationship fails. Their awkward attempts to find happiness in each other is at times painfully comic, but Allen's affectionate treatment is touching.

The ebbs and flows of marriage relationships is a familiar theme for Allen, reminiscent of *Annie Hall* and *Hannah and Her Sisters*. Here he observes that a

relationships can move from the initial giddy excitement to companionship, and that it either dies from lack of nourishment or moves into a newer and stronger phase. For Allen, such nourishment comes either from human resources or mere circumstance.

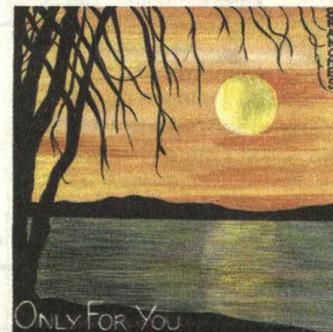
Those interested in some of the deeper issues frequented by Allen will not find them here. But *Mighty Aphrodite* is an enjoyable film, with many well-placed laughs.

Julie Young

AUDIO

ONLY FOR YOU
BRANCHES

In an attempt to reach out to non-Christians, a group of singers and musicians from St Paul's, Menai, have produced an original CD, *Only For You*. The album is composed of 11 songs written by experienced songwriters and musicians, John Balmforth and Reg Clarke. The contributing musicians and vocalists are largely members of St Paul's congregation.



The album has already received an enthusiastic response with over 200 copies sold. Janice Balmforth says the music is designed for people who have not yet made a commitment to the Lord, or are sitting on the fence. It is also intended as inspirational praise and worship music for Christians, with lyrics that touch base with everyday experiences and emotions.

SERPENTS & doves

The January edition of the British *Church Times* was a goldmine. Here's a selection:

☺
Quasimodo he ain't...

The Rev John Walker having been inducted into his new job at St John's, Carrington, England, followed tradition by ringing the church bell six times. On the last ring the bell fell from the belfry and crashed into the church. Corrosion from excess pigeon droppings was blamed for the bell's errant behaviour.

☺
A service to celebrate the centenary of the mass-produced car at Coventry Cathedral, England, came under fire from pressure groups. Organisers were forced to admit the car had been a "mixed-blessing" and a new politically-correct prayer added. The prayer thanked God for the car but

said "We must also acknowledge its harmful effects: environmental pollution, the relentless encroachment of new roads on our countryside and the appalling death and injury due to accidents. For this we ask forgiveness of God."

☺
Also falling foul of political correctness was a church playgroup which was threatened with closure by England's social services officers for not having enough black lego people in its set. The fact that Lego doesn't make black (or white) people seems not to have made a difference. Lego people are bright yellow "precisely because there are so few bright yellow people around," a Lego spokesperson said.

☺
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