

ARUNDEL PRESBYTERIAN is thinking through how they can best serve students studying down the road at Griffith University. In a series of *New Directions* articles, they will be sharing what they have been learning.

Geoff Tacon works with the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) on the Griffith campus and he and his family attend Arundel. Recently Arundel's new student minister, Russell Williams, asked Geoff for ideas for helping students thrive at University.

Russell: Geoff, you have over 7 years' experience with AFES campus groups and now you're working at Griffith. What got you excited about student ministry in the first place?

Geoff: Well I became a Christian while I was at university. I'm really grateful someone spent time meeting with me so I've been keen about student ministry ever since. It was a significant time of growth for me.

R: So you spend your week at uni meeting up with students?

G: That's part of the job. We also have large group meetings each week and at the moment I'm the speaker. That means a significant part of my week is preparing Bible talks. But, yeah, a lot of what we do is meeting with students, both Christian and non-Christian.

Staying Christian at Uni

R: Geoff, at Arundel we're interested in better supporting students studying at Uni. For instance, what are the dangers facing Christian students and how can we best encourage them at this stage of life? Are there particular reasons why Christian kids turn away from Christ at uni?

G: Well, you might say there are particular challenges uni students face. They're often away from home for the first time. Or living at home, but out a lot—studying or socialising. As they're making new friends there's a lot of pressure to fit in and join in

Thriving at University

Russell Williams talks to Geoff Tacon



what others are doing. Plus, uni brings access to a whole range of new experiences—new world views, different religions, a wild nightlife ...

But in another sense, the challenges aren't that unique. Pressure to have a girlfriend or boyfriend (and to sleep with them) starts at school for most students, and any time we go through major changes it's easy to

lose accountability and start lifestyles we live to regret.

R: But there are particular temptations we usually associate with going to Uni. The whole drinking culture, big parties, couples moving in together. Aren't they big dangers for most Christians going to Uni?

G: They are. They're areas where it can be hard to stand apart from the crowd. But other dangers are at least as significant.

Surprisingly, study is a huge danger—especially at uni. Students need to be faithful in their studies, but study can't become their first priority. Some students get so caught up with study—getting good marks and good jobs afterwards—that they think they'll "put off" living for Jesus until uni's finished. One of the first steps in giving up on Jesus is being irregular at church and not seeing Christian friends much. It's heart breaking to watch. While they might say they're still Christian, their heart is somewhere else.

R: So the big danger for Christians is not making their Christian walk a priority while they're at Uni. If that's the case, we're not helping students if we simply tell them to study hard while they're at Uni.

G: There's nothing wrong with studying hard. But I worry when students only focus on their studies and not on growing as Christians at uni. It seems to me if it's important to turn up for lectures, it's at least as important to turn up to meetings with other Christians—both at church and, where you can, at Christian meetings on campus.

Thriving as a Christian at Uni

R: OK, so what are your campus meetings like? What is it that you guys get up to? How do you help Christians mature at uni?

G: I've already mentioned our main meetings. Between them and our Bible study groups we want students to spend serious time reading the Bible together. We want students to learn how to read their Bible. To

read it better—with the same sort of careful thought they put into their studies—as well as to be changed by what they read.

We also run training times so that students can learn skills for serving around church. Things like leading Bible study groups, sharing the gospel with friends and strangers, understanding other religions. We try to provide plenty of experience to go along with the talking.

R: So what are you trying to do through these meetings?

G: Christians are built up by listening to God's Word and putting it into practice. Training especially helps us get practical. And by letting students have a go they can find out what serving other Christians is like. They have to. There aren't elders or older Christians to lead the groups. They need to step up to the plate. Long term, it's the churches that see the difference.

Churches can do the same sort of teaching and training. In fact, they have opportunities we can't offer. Like training in running kids ministries. There aren't any Kids Churches (Sunday Schools) running on campus. But the key is not just dropping students into responsibilities. Training involves preparing people and giving them feedback on how they're going. It involves a fair bit of time. But it's worth it.

Thriving as evangelists at Uni

R: You said you became a Christian while at uni. Is evangelism a big part of what you do?

G: Huge. We've seen several students decide to follow Jesus as their Lord and King. It's been fantastic.

R: Do you expect students to be involved in evangelism, or is it something mainly staff do?

G: Mostly I only get to meet non-Christians when their Christian friends bring them to meetings. So if I start meeting regularly with a non-Christian, I expect Christian students to meet up with me and their non-Christian friend—unless it's simply impossible in their timetable.

R: Doesn't that freak some students out?

G: Yeah, when I suggest it, it does. But they quickly discover it's not that bad. Christian students need to learn that evangelism is just a part of loving relationships with non-Christians. I think that's essential for Christian maturity. No point learning how to be a top-notch barrister but never learning how to tell others about Jesus.

R: And so you have students bringing their friends to meetings?

G: It needs to be part of our culture. We try to run meetings that are open to visitors coming along and hearing what Christians are on about. It's not too hard at uni. Lectures involve someone standing up front and speaking for a while. It's just we're friendlier than a lecture! We take time to talk to God and encourage each other through our meetings.

R: Sounds like it's working. It must be great to see students inviting their friends and seeking to live their lives for Christ. We'll be praying that God continues to be at work through Griffith Christian Students. Thanks for your insights.

Next issue we'll hear how Arundel is planning to help students thrive at uni and how they see local churches making a unique contribution.

Pray, Give, Go but what about the children?

by Naomi Reed

IT'S THE question that keeps us awake at three in the morning.

God might be leading us to Mongolia or Iraq, Nepal or Kazakhstan... but what about our children? How will they cope? Will they make any friends? What if they get sick? Will they turn out all right?

And we try and reassure ourselves with the thought that, 'If God calls one, then he calls the whole family'; but as we drift back to sleep a more frightening thought stirs at the back of our mind, 'What if something terrible happens to one of them?' and then, 'Will I ever be able to live with myself?'

Wherever we are, we worry about our children. We worry about their friends and their education, their attitudes and their behaviour.

But there's a certain increase in anxiety when we consider taking them into third world countries, especially to places with civil unrest, physical challenges and unfamiliar customs. We find ourselves losing sleep, developing guilt complexes and then looking to others for some reassurance.

Happily, most of the books on Third Culture Kids (TCKs) tell us that the children of missionaries turn out to be adaptable and empathetic adults with a highly developed world view.

Returned missionaries also tell us that their children loved their years in Mongolia, Iraq, Nepal and Kazakhstan; and in fact, they can't wait to go back.

But the questions still sit there in the dead of night for us. What about

my children? Will they be okay?

Unfortunately, of course, there isn't any answer ... just as there isn't any answer in the event that we stay in Australia.

None of us can ensure our children's faith by sending them to Sunday School and we can't ensure our children's wellbeing by keeping them in Australia.

All we can do is commit ourselves to loving them, praying for them and making the most of the time that God has given to us to spend with them on this earth, in whatever country that might be.

If He leads us to the foreign mission field then that might mean we spend more time ensuring a good water supply and some sturdy contingency plans in the event of ill health or political turmoil.

We might spend more time investigating educational options and gathering resources in case we need them.

We might spend more time teaching our children about the extraordinary world that God has made for us and then enjoying its diversity on the backs of elephants or in dugout canoes.

We might spend more time playing in paddy fields and watching what it means for a local family to grow everything they need to eat ... and then give most of it to us.

We might spend more time feeling thankful for God's goodness and growing in the way we put our trust in Him.

And then one night, in some far distant country, we'll wake up at three in the morning and smile, knowing profoundly that He, who holds the sparrows, has a plan for our children. He, who numbers the hairs on their heads, also knows what tomorrow holds.

And then we'll slowly lean back on our pillow ... and find rest.



Darren and Naomi Reed with their three children



A life of service



JOYCE WADDINGTON made a wonderful contribution to the life and work of the Presbyterian churches of the Valley, Southport, Benowa, Wilston/Newmarket, Norman Park and Ann Street through starting and teaching Sunday School, Pathfinders, Girls' Clubs and PFA.

She was also involved with the Women's Auxiliary for Homes and worked for Hopetoun, knitting and sewing relentlessly for stalls and the annual fete. She sent out birthday cards to every resident of Hopetoun, St Michael's and Roslyn Lodge for sixteen years. During this period she also volunteered at the Cystic Fibrosis Charity Shop and tutored in adult literacy for Yeronga TAFE.

Her husband, Jack Waddington, a volunteer at the Church Office, reported to Joyce that some accounts could use some help. She agreed to go in for two days to get them up-to-date. She stayed on in the Church Supplies for twenty-five years until her failing health forced her to give up a few years ago. Joyce was responsible for the organization and distribution of the Book of Family Worship during those years.

Joyce was a quiet, dignified woman whose life was devoted to God and the service of others. She never looked for recognition or reward but took quiet satisfaction in deeds well done.

In 2002, she was diagnosed with a terminal bone marrow disorder which she took in her stride and continued life as normal. After her husband Jack's death, independent living at Hopetoun became impossible. She moved to Canossa whose medical and hospital service was able to meet her increasing health needs. She faced death with courage and acceptance, unafraid and in the certain knowledge of her destination. She died peacefully on 27 January 2009.

50 years since ordination

IN THE country town of Lockhart in the Riverina, NSW, on 18 March 1959, Bruce Edmund George Napper was ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments within the Presbyterian Church of Australia by the Presbytery of Wagga Wagga. This ordination followed six years as a student for the ministry and five years conjointly as a Home Missionary at Dorrigo and Kingsgrove.

Since his ordination he has served in the following Charges: Lockhart, Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Ballina-Alstonville, St Andrew's Townsville, West Toowoomba and Annerley. Following his retirement in 1995, he has served as "Supply" at Annerley, Church of St Andrew, Canberra, Launceston, Middle Clarence, Armidale (NSW) and Mudgeeraba, plus preaching at various other churches in NSW and Queensland. It was in these parishes that his most important work was done.

However, during his ministry, he also served on several Assembly Standing Committees in NSW and Queensland, as Convenor of the Queensland Home Missions Committee, as Presbytery Clerk for the Presbyteries of Townsville and North Queensland, as Moderator of the Presbyteries of Northern Rivers, Townsville, Darling Downs and Mowbray, and Moderator of the Queensland Assembly.

Bruce publicly expresses his thanks to Almighty God that in His grace he has been given these opportunities as a Student/Home Missionary and as an Ordained Minister to serve Him and His people and the communities in which he, his wife Joan, and his family have lived.

Kids in the Castle

by Russell Burns

WE AT Wynnnum Presbyterian ran our 11th annual kids holiday program in the January school holidays. The theme "Kids in the Castle" proved to be a great hit with all who came along.

A total of 115 kids enrolled over the three day event, with an average daily attendance of 88.

The kids, along with some of our leaders, enjoyed the medieval theme, especially dress up day, and had fun getting into the spirit of the program.

We even managed to enlist a real live "Knight" in armour with sword and period costume.

The Bible teaching centred around the "armour of God" being the belt of Truth, breast plate of Righteousness, sandals of Peace, shield of Faith, helmet of Salvation and sword of the Spirit.

Thirty-six leaders and helpers took on the task of presenting the upfront program followed by craft, workbook time, morning tea, games and competitions and more.

Our catering team tirelessly managed to feed and water everyone and put on a BBQ lunch on the last day for the kids and their families.

We thank God for this opportunity to present the gospel in this way.

Tom Marshall, Tim Burns and Heather Kolberg entered into the true spirit of our dress-up day



Wynnnum Presbyterian Fun In School Holiday (FISH) Program



The Committees on Home Missions and Outreach and Nurture presented Helen Cunningham with a bouquet of flowers when she concluded her services in Church Office on 24 December. Helen had worked efficiently and enthusiastically for both Committees for twelve months.

VISION RADIO EXTENDS TO TEXAS



TEXAS NOW has a great new FM 88.0 Vision Radio Station. The people in Texas have been without a Christian Radio until this installation.

The move was on to have this facility but nowhere for the antenna could be found until Scots Church gave permission for the dish to be installed on top of the church's roof.

The 10 watt antenna signal extends well outside the town boundary so some isolated folk are very happy to be able to receive Christian Radio.

Vision Radio offers another choice for the Texas Community

to tune in to Christian information programs which include Dr James Dobson's "Focus on the Family" and "Adventures in Odyssey" for children. There are also programs for families, couples, teenagers, young children, grandparents and singles - indeed people in all walks of life.

Pastor Bert Richards, a former technician with Christian Broadcasting Association in Sydney, was pleased to co-ordinate and help the United Christian Broadcasters' team with the installation.



"EATS, SHOOTS AND LEAVES": READING ALL THAT IS WRITTEN



THIS IS the strange title of a book published in the UK some six years ago by Lynne Truss. It became a New York Times best seller. She begins with the story of a panda walking into a café. He orders a sandwich, eats it, then draws a gun and proceeds to fire it at the other patrons.

'Why?' asks the confused, surviving waiter amidst the carnage, as the panda makes towards the exit. The panda produces a wildlife manual and tosses it over his shoulder.

'Well, I'm a panda', he says, at the door. 'Look it up.' The waiter turns to the relevant entry in the manual and, sure enough, finds an explanation. *'Panda: Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China. Eats, shoots and leaves.'*

The author of the book aimed to remind her readers just how important punctuation is and the enormous difference it can make to our understanding of the written word.

Surprisingly she dedicates the work to the memory of the striking Bolshevik printers of St Petersburg who, in 1905, demanded to be

paid the same rate for punctuation marks as for letters, and thereby directly precipitated the first Russian Revolution'.

They clearly believed in the importance of punctuation and stuck to their guns! This precipitated a decade of unrest, strikes and turmoil throughout the Russian empire leading finally to a revolution that was to change the face of a good deal of the globe.

Christians can sometimes read God's Word but not really read what it is saying although the problem is not necessarily one of punctuation.

For instance, if asked what is the message of Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome, many would say that it is all about how we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ.

But that is not what the text actually says. The gospel is to bring about 'the obedience of faith among all the nations', Romans 1:5. Christians are saved to obey — 'for the sake of his name among the nations'.

He drives home the point at the end of this long letter. The message has been revealed 'to all the nations'

with the intention 'to bring about the obedience of faith', Romans 16:26.

As we read through Romans we see that, having laid out clearly the nature of saving 'faith', Paul then indicates the obedience required of Christians — how to live according to the 'will of God', Romans 12–15.

Romans is not the only book we selectively read or remember. Matthew is often seen as concluding with the command of Jesus that we call 'the great commission'.

Jesus commanded that we were 'to go to all the nations' for the purpose of preaching the gospel and baptizing 'in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit'. He gives the great assurance 'and behold I am with you always to the conclusion of the age', Matthew 28:18-20.

Yet, if we read the passage carefully our task is not to gain converts, but 'to make disciples of all the nations', Matthew 28:19.

But that is still not the whole commission. Matthew's gospel ends with the great promise of Christ's unbroken presence with His people but not before He gives the mandate

'to teach them to observe all that I have commanded you', Matthew 28:20.

People from all the nations are saved to become disciples of Jesus and to be taught to obey all that He commanded—these are clearly laid out in the Sermon on the Mount and other teaching segments of Matthew's gospel.

We were saved to obey all that Christ taught and not just 'to follow Jesus'.

But take heart, our generation is not alone in what they selectively read or hear. Even the first Christians needed correction.

Peter wrote to Christians in all the provinces of what we now know as Turkey, to rectify any misunderstanding about the grace of God.

'I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. You must stand firm in it', 1 Peter 5:12.

He begins his letter with the grace of God, that is, the work of the Triune God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit for our salvation, 1 Peter 1:2-12.

But the Christian gospel is not just a ticket for eternity. There are two ways that Christians can live. The first is one that Peter pleads with them not to follow — 'I exhort you to abstain from the passions of the flesh that war against your soul', 1 Peter 2:11.

The alternative is to have a good lifestyle among non-believers, 1 Peter 2:12. The remainder of the letter is taken up with the way to live according to the will of God in all spheres of life by the doing of good and not evil.

Just as a comma can make all the difference in understanding what the panda did, so too, selective reading about the grace of God leads to similar chaos in contemporary Christianity. Reading all that is written can start a revolution.



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From Here to There and Back Again!

Fairholme team visits South India – the Sequel

(An article from Pastor Richard Jessup, Chaplain, Fairholme College, Toowoomba)

OUR MISSION trip to Ootacumund, South India, was successfully negotiated and I would like to share with you some of the highlights of our trip.

The mission team was composed of twelve Year 11 girls and five teachers, who gave up two weeks of their holidays to participate in this "first time" Discovery Tour. We had the privilege of experiencing something of the daily life in India and also shared in some of the tragic experiences of 23 orphans who are cared for in Mizpah home. This is something of our story.

Our flight to Kuala Lumpur was booked to leave Australia on 29 November but you may recall that on 27 November we awoke to the news that the Taj Palace in Mumbai had been bombed. Suddenly our plans were under pressure, but after consultation with our parents and senior management at Fairholme, we decided to proceed with our trip. The

only visible sign of trouble in India was the increased security screening at all airports but at no time while we were in the country, did we ever feel unsafe (apart from a few hairy bus and taxi rides!).

Due to difficult flight schedules, we had a convoluted journey just getting to Coimbatore, even before our bus trip up to Ootacumund. The girls were so pleased to finally arrive so they could unpack and settle into a routine which would last for the next ten days.

Our accommodation in Ooty was at Farley Guest House which is owned by WEC and is such a wonderful retreat in an India of movement and noise. Each day we would spend the morning experiencing something new around Ooty — the markets, the Tea Factory, the Thread Garden, shopping in Commercial Road, time at the Hebron School, negotiating fares with the auto drivers, hanging

out in Modern Stores, the Botanical Gardens and relaxing at Café Coffee.

Each afternoon we would walk down to Mizpah Home where we would spend time with the children, playing with them, and assisting with reading and homework. This was the highlight of every day, when unique bonds were formed between our girls and the children.

Each member of our team carried with them 3-4 kgs of clothing to leave with the children, including a full set of Fairholme tracksuits. In the colder months in Ooty (Dec./Jan.) this warm clothing will be put to very good use.

We have had a number of opportunities to share our experiences with various sections of the Fairholme community since school resumed in January. Perhaps these words of one of our group members, shared at a school assembly, will give you some idea of the effect this trip had on the girls.



Children of Mizpah Home

"I had 23 little faces smiling at me, each with their own devastating story of pain and loss. Some of these little children had been rescued from the streets or saved from leprosy colonies. Others had lost both parents and had been left to fend for themselves. Some had been found surviving on rubbish heaps or living off banana skins discarded on the street. But smiles were all I could see ... Mizpah Home is where we met those 23 smiling faces.

Forgetting the past, the different parts of the world we came from and the ages we were, for over a week we took adventures, laughed, played and bonded like we were eight years old again. We went over to touch the lives of people less fortunate than ourselves, but in doing so, my life was touched more deeply than I ever thought imaginable."

I believe our girls were deeply moved, not only by the Mizpah children, but by the love and compassion shown to each of the children by Mohandas and Jennifer, the founders and motivating force behind the orphanage. These two godly people are such an encouragement to all who meet them. Our girls will tell you honestly that they believed they were visiting Mizpah Home so they could do something special for the children. I'm sure that did happen, but the girls will also tell you they received far more than they gave.

As Eliza said to the students of the Hebron school (an International high

school in Ooty), "We thought we were going to bless the children but in truth, we are the ones who have been blessed more than we ever dreamed".

Right from the outset the girls were keen to take a small monetary gift over to Ooty to help in the running of Mizpah. They set a target of \$1,000 but we were overwhelmed by the generosity of many people in our community and the final amount we were able to leave with Mohandas and Jennifer was \$2,250. The amazing thing is this amount will run Mizpah Home — education, clothing, and food for 23 children — for a little over 3 months!

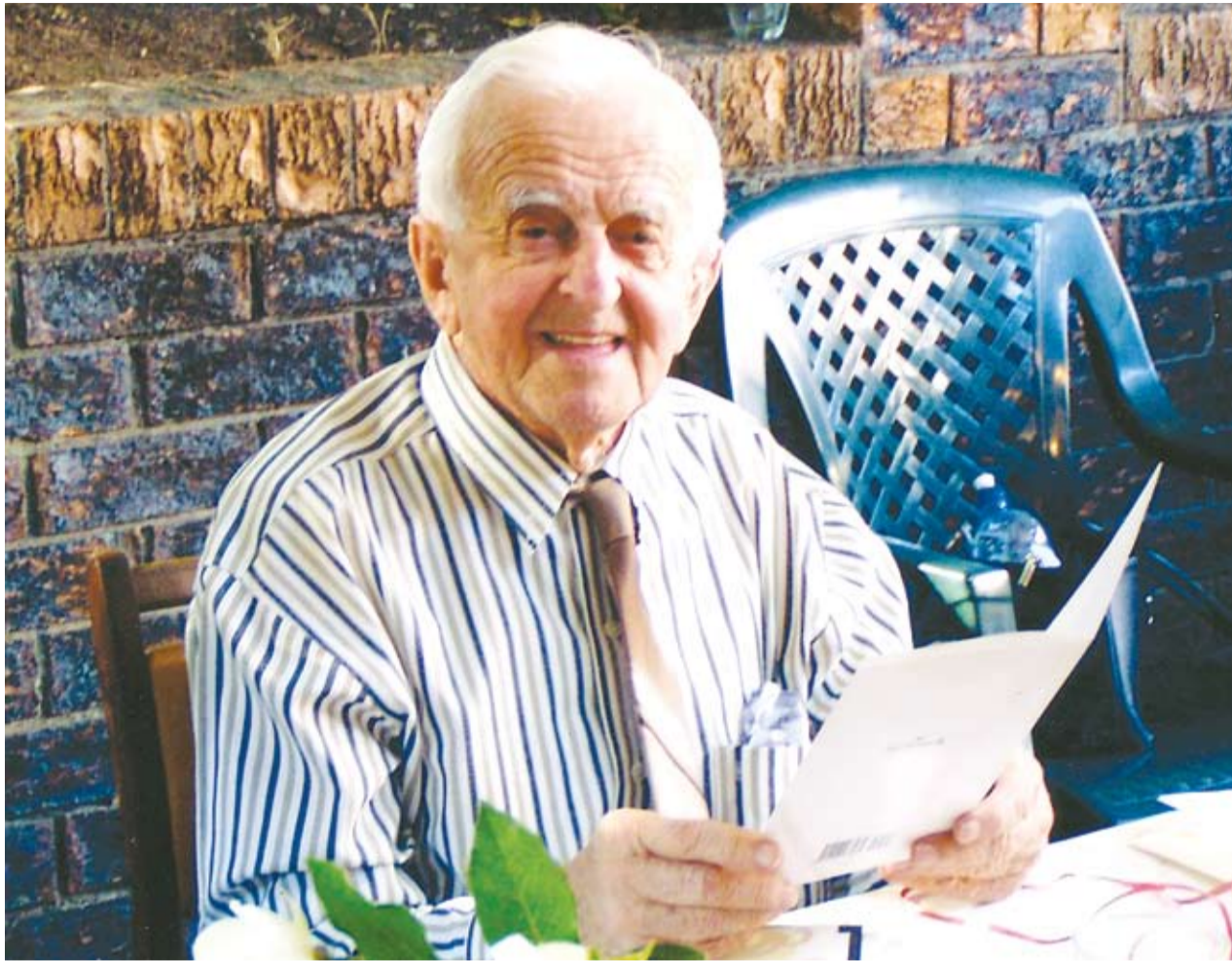
We would like to thank all those dear folk who assisted in any way to help us get to India. We also want to let you know that we intend to make this trip to Mizpah Home in south India an annual mission trip for Fairholme College. The 2009 trip is being planned at this very moment and we would very much appreciate the prayers and support of the wider Church.

If you are interested in hearing more about our mission trip or partnering with us in our future mission trips, please contact me at Fairholme College, (07) 4688 4688.

Points for Prayer:

- Praise for safe travel to, from and within India
- Praise for the way our girls were challenged by their experience
- Pray for Jenny and Mohandas, and the children

Obituary: Stanley Preston Walker 2.11.1915-10.2.2009



PRESTON WAS born in Hamilton, Victoria, on 2 November 1915 (Melbourne Cup Day), the first of five boys. His father, a saddler, wanted to call him Patrobas after the winner of the Melbourne Cup but his mother would not hear of it! He was named after Prestonholme, the Mitchell family farm.

Preston attended the Hamilton Methodist Church along with his family, but it was not till he rode his bicycle 22 miles to Coleraine, Victoria, and boarded with the Fergusons on their farm that he met Dr Wilfred Harvey who led him to the Lord. Preston made his decision to follow Christ in a barn on the farm in 1936.

He then studied at Melbourne Bible Institute (MBI) in 1938-40 under Principal C. H. Nash. There he had a strong camaraderie with other dedicated Christians who later went to the four corners of the globe both in Australia and overseas to serve the Lord in extending God's Kingdom.

Preston joined the United Aborigines Mission (UAM) in Melbourne in 1940 and went with Ern Faulkner to Perth on a new truck powered by charcoal gas. He first served with the UAM in the Great Southern Region, southeast of Perth, at Gnowangerup in 1940. After a brief stint in the 13th Field Ambulance Corp of the Australian Army at Melville Base, He applied to go to Mt Margaret Mission in 1942. He was the head-teacher. May O'Brien BEM (Ex WA Education Department Head of Aboriginal Education), Sadie Canning MBE (Matron of Leonora Hospital for many years), Dora Cotterill (UAM missionary), Pastor Ben Mason OBE and Gladys Tapim were taught by him. He had a choir and taught the violin to aboriginal children who loved him dearly. R. M. Williams, the famous outfitter businessman, worked with Preston there.

In 1940, Preston went to Perth and met his future wife, Miss Kathleen Tuckwell, at Bayswater Baptist where the minister, Rev. Edward Hogg, was on the UAM Board. In 1945, Preston and Kath married at Bayswater Baptist.

From there they sailed on the *MV Koolinda* to Sunday Island near Cape Leveque, One Arm Point and Broome to serve among the Bardsis.

They also served in Roelands Mission Farm near Bunbury WA where their son Phillip was born. While on Sunday Island, Rhys and Kathryn were born in Derby.

While in Derby at the Leprosarium, Preston had a chance to ride out as a pillion passenger to Fitzroy Crossing to survey it for a mission. In he went, on loan to the WA Government, as protector of aborigines and set up a mission station there with his wife, Bruce and Pearl Smoker and others. He built a school and dormitory for aboriginal children similar to Mt

Margaret Mission. There was an AIM Hospital, a hotel and the mission all a mile apart. That appointment lasted till 1955 when he, Kath, Rhys, Phillip and Kathryn all sailed on the *MV Koolinda* to Brisbane via Cockatoo Island, Wyndham, Darwin and Thursday Island. Rhys Price, a lifelong friend and a missionary at the Wodjalum Presbyterian Mission, sailed out to meet them at Cockatoo Island en route.

In 1955-57, Preston went to Mackay and worked as a postman. On the Sarina Range he and the whole family nearly drove off the edge of a cliff but balanced on the edge and were hauled back by Main Roads workers. Earlier he briefly worked in Kingaroy while the family was in Caloundra.

In 1957, Preston became a Senior Relieving Officer with the NSW Aborigines Welfare Board and travelled by train with his family for two years across NSW to many aboriginal stations starting with Cabbage Tree Island, his wife giving their children correspondence lessons via Black Friars in Sydney. He and his family stayed one year at Murrin Bridge and Lake Cargelligo.

In 1959, he got a permanent job as District Welfare Officer in Moree where Dwight was born. There he met John Chapman, a famous evangelical Anglican clergyman from Sydney during the Billy Graham Crusade. John valued their hospitality and fellowship highly in the early stages of his career.

In 1963, Preston was appointed North Queensland representative for the British and Foreign Bible Society in Townsville. Here Joanne and Lyndon were born. Canon Arrowsmith and the Right Rev. Ian Shevell opened the Bible House in 5 The Avenue, Hermit Park in November 1964. During that period Preston helped establish the North Queensland Christian Convention at the Copper Refineries Townsville, and later at Atherton. Many from across the region came to Christ or built up their faith through this work. Many famous speakers such as Akbar Haq and Geoff Fletcher came to speak and stayed at Bible House.

Bible House became a centre for outdoor meetings, events and film showings to promote the work of the Bible Society worldwide, and to build up the local churches. The Bible Society float won an award in the annual procession. Preston held a Bible Society stall at many country shows, and during that time He also delivered Bibles to remote places in North Queensland, such as mission stations by flying padre.

In December 1971, on the eve of Cyclone Althea hitting Townsville, Preston resigned and was appointed North Victoria Representative with the Bible Society in Bendigo from 1972-76. In 1977-78, he went

to Geelong as Western Victorian Representative of the Bible Society. In 1976, he visited the Kimberley and NT with Neville Mellor of UAM to distribute aboriginal translations of the Scriptures for the Bible Society to people he knew when he was in the UAM 20 years before.

Preston quit his roving job and moved to Brisbane in 1979, where he worked as a home missionary with the Queensland Presbyterian Church at Cannon Hill, and later Graceville as a chaplain, as well as at Kirwin, Townsville and Gordonvale via Cairns in the 1990s. In 2004 he went back to WA to visit Mt Margaret Mission to speak at a reunion.

He also visited Derby, Fitzroy Crossing and Gnowangerup for Christian conventions to encourage aboriginal churches, elders and leaders of UAM such as Jonathon Bates of Halls Creek. He was vitally interested in aboriginal communities such as Fitzroy Crossing and One Arm Point.

In 1990, he spoke at the 70th anniversary of Melbourne Bible Institute (now Bible College of Victoria) of his Christian work over many years (*New Life* 13 and 20/12/1990).

He was an elder at Camp Hill Presbyterian Church (later Creek Road Presbyterian) since the early 1980s. He also planned Mt Tamborine Christian Convention seniors' events.

In his last years, 2001 onwards, he wrote three books on the Kimberley, Townsville and Mt Margaret and educating aborigines. In 2005, on his 90th birthday, over 100 came to honour him from all parts of Queensland and interstate.

Preston was a real prayer warrior and did the work of three men, was often outspoken, controversial, adaptable, a debater, a strong leader, irritating, a walker, copious letter writer and catalyst. He had many setbacks but by perseverance, prayer and vision he came through. His favourite sayings were: 'keep on keeping on', and 'never say die till you do'.

Throughout 63 years of married life, Kath ran the office and raised the children so that Preston could travel extensively on God's work. The two were inseparable and dependant on each other to get things done - a team. They had disagreements but kept together through thick and thin.

Preston leaves his wife Kath and six children: Rhys, Phillip, Kathryn, Dwight, Joanne and Lyndon; fifteen grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

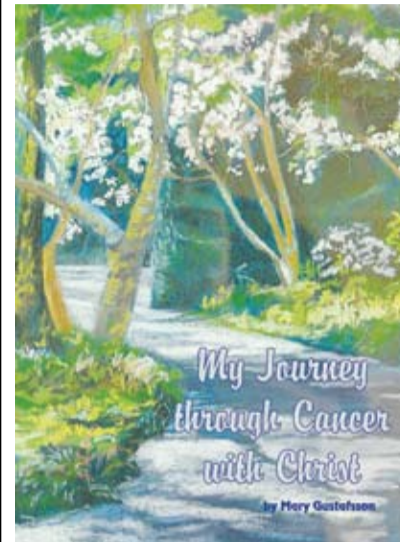
He will be sadly missed for his hyperactive style, deep spirituality and drive and keen mind to solve problems and extend Christ's Kingdom.

He's now with his Lord and no doubt is leading the choir of believers with his violin!

Introducing my booklet, *My Journey through Cancer with Christ*

TWO QUESTIONS come to mind - 1. Why did I write this; and 2. How did it come about?

To answer the first question - I wrote it because I discovered that



there was a gap in the literature available to help cancer sufferers and their families come to terms with the implications of the disease. The Cancer Council provides a wide range of books on all aspects of cancer but none addresses the spiritual need to give hope in Jesus Christ.

To answer the second question - I met a lady when having my third chemo who was desperately seeking hope in Jesus Christ. I shared with her Romans 15:13 and her reaction was 'that is exactly what I want'.

As I progressed through the next four years of my battle, I wrote down all the promises and encouragements the Lord gave me and this gradually evolved into the booklet I have produced with the help of others.

My prayer is that it will encourage other sufferers and their families to find hope and comfort in Jesus Christ, knowing that He assures us that death is not the end but the gateway to eternal life with Him forever.

Copies available from Mary Gustafsson, PO Box 75, North Tamborine Q 4272.

Economic downturn hits church plans for expansion of work



THE RIPPLES of the economic difficulties that have struck so many economies around the world at present are far-reaching, and we have found that churches are not immune.

The church family at Murphy's Creek (just down the range from Toowoomba) had been planning to erect a hall alongside the church building to be used for outreach activities such as Kids' Club and Youth work (see picture), and everything was progressing well with an anticipated start sometime around Easter.

Unfortunately, we received news that the supplier of the building had gone into receivership, and the deposit that we had already paid (some \$25 000) would probably not be recovered.

As you can imagine, this information was a body-blow to the small church

family who have worked so hard to get this far, as well as to our 'mother church', the South Toowoomba Charge.

We ask that you continue to uphold the folks at Murphy's Creek especially, and indeed the entire charge of South Toowoomba, that we might see that God is able to bring about His perfect will in ways that we could not even begin to envisage; and to see that He is building His church, despite any opposition that might be mounted against Him and His people.

We are cast down, but not crushed, for our God is indeed able. Regardless of circumstances that might render us ineffective, we know with an even greater assurance now that our God reigns!!

Rob Farr (Pastor)

PFA REUNION CAMP TINAROO



ANOTHER REUNION of PFA members is happening at Tinaroo on Saturday 27 June 2009. This year marks 50 years since PFA groups decided to actively purchase a camp site for the expansion of an already strong young adult and youth ministry.

Organisers are Bruce Peden and Jim Clark (07 4095 8224).

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of other past members, please pass on the news of this reunion.

The program for the day starts at 10.00 am with morning tea and roll

call. This will be followed by a walk through the camp and BYO BBQ lunch with time for gossip and exchanging memories.

During the afternoon there will be a service, viewing of old photos, records etc and a BYO BBQ Tea.

If you can send us any old photos which can be burnt on to a disc it would be appreciated. They will be returned.

If you are planning to attend or need accommodation, please contact Jim on 07 4095 8224.