

New-style Bible reading guide

RECORD

October 14

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TIME FOR A CHANGE

On the day before the official opening of the 1901 General Conference session, Ellen White made it abundantly clear it was time for the church to change its outmoded organisational structures. Speaking to the assembled leaders of the General Conference she declared, "God wants a change . . . right here . . . right now" (Manuscript 43a, 1901).

With Arthur G Daniells, who was to be elected General Conference president at that session, and her son Willie C White, she had just returned

The process will take a huge step forward at our division session in Canberra.

from a period of "missionary service" in the South Pacific. Here they had been largely responsible for pioneering a daring experiment in organisational reform. To better serve the mission of the church, the Australasian Union Conference had been formed.

That experiment was so successful that the union conference model, born in the South Pacific, was adopted at the 1901 General Conference session. Together with some other minor innovations introduced at that General Conference session, the union conference model of organisation has been in place ever since. Unions continue to be the "building blocks" of the General Conference.

One hundred years have passed and we no longer have the benefit of the presence of Ellen White.

However, in the mind of many supportive lay and pastoral leaders, including an increasing number of leaders in the divisions and General Conference, there's a growing conviction that if she were still with us, her counsel may well be very similar to that which she gave in the Battle Creek College library in 1901. That God wants a change . . . right here . . . right now.

Of course, one doesn't have to delve far into the denominational history of the 20th century to realise there has been a reluctance to change our organisational structures. While there may have been continuous adjustments and much fine-tuning, the macro structures are fundamentally those put in place in the early years of last century. Some reasons why there has been reluctance to change include:

1. The perception—and it's the reality—that the organisational structures have served the church well as it has expanded around the world.

2. The conviction of many that the form of organisation we have is divinely inspired and we do not have a mandate to tamper with it.

3. A fear of the unknown. There's security in the status quo. And the success the church has experienced is a powerful argument against change.

4. Failure to recognise diversity.

On the other hand, some give the impression organisational change will be a cure-all for the ills of the church. That's a delusion. The greatest change needed in this church is the change that takes place as we submit ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are revived and renewed by His saving blood and mighty power, and filled

with the Holy Spirit.

That's the change that can and should happen every day for all of us. And if it happens for all of us, it happens for the church. We are the church.

Despite the obvious danger of erring either on the side of ultraconservatism or on the side of ill-considered reactionism, there's a growing consensus within the church that it's time for change. In response to this growing perception, church leadership in the division, the unions, the conferences and the missions have been working through a process that will introduce constructive organisational change for the church.

That process will take a huge step forward at our division session in Canberra, beginning on October 30. An extensive communication process that has utilised the web site and the RECORD has been conducted in order to inform church members of proposed changes.

One hundred years after Ellen White called for necessary changes in organisational structure, the South Pacific Division has the opportunity to make significant changes that will facilitate the fulfilment of the worldwide mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Those who are delegates to the forthcoming division session need the wisdom of God and the prayers of the church as they plan to implement those changes.

Barry Oliver
Secretary
South Pacific Division



Next week

Could this be New Zealand's most isolated church?

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MEMBERS INVITED TO SERVICES AT SESSION

Church members are welcome to attend worship services and hear reports during the South Pacific Division session in Canberra, October 30–November 4.

The union and division institution reports are being presented in the meeting hall of the Rydges Hotel on London Circuit from 7 to 9 pm on October 31,

November 1 and November 2.

A youth worship service is organised in the Canberra Theatre on London Circuit from 7.30 to 9 pm on November 3.

A festival of music, word and praise and reclamation is organised in the theatre from 9 am to 12.15 pm on November 4.

A festival of mission is

organised in the same place from 2.30 to 4.30 pm; a musical extravaganza from 7.30 to 9.30 pm.

A Cradle Roll Sabbath school is organised in the Canberra Museum and Gallery (which is next door to the theatre) from 9.30 to 10.30 am.

Satellite uplink

The following worship

services will be uplinked to satellite:

- Opening, from 7 to 8.30 pm on October 30.

- Youth, from 7.30 to 9 pm on November 3.

- Festival of praise and reclamation featuring General Conference president Dr Jan Paulsen, from 11.00 am to 12.15 pm on November 4.—*Nat Devenish*

30,000 attend friendship evangelism program in Rio

Thirty thousand people attended a friendship evangelism program in the Praça de Apoteose in Rio de Janeiro (the square made famous by the Brazilian carnival) from September 16 to 23. "It's friends who bring friends to meet Jesus," said speaker Pastor Alejandro Bullón. More than 50,000 filled the square for the last program. Some 570 were baptised; 1800 asked for Bible studies.—*Ray Dabrowski/ANN*

Adventist soccer player chooses faith over money

Carlos Roa, a Seventh-day Adventist from Argentina who keeps goal for soccer club Real Mallorca and country, has refused a lucrative contract from Manchester United. According to reports in the British press, Roa did not accept the contract because it would encroach on his Sabbath-keeping. "God is worth more than 10 million dollars," he says.—*Ray Dabrowski/ANN*

President makes his point

The president of the General Conference (GC), Dr Jan Paulsen (pictured),

identified mission and unity as the most formidable challenges facing the Adventist Church. He was speaking at the beginning of the Annual Council

(September 26), a five-day GC executive meeting. "There is no virtue in simply remaining busy," he told executive members. He identified strategic planning as essential in building "a very intentional design which enhances unity, stimulates growth, and makes this church a better spiritual home for all."

For leaders

Dr Paulsen challenged church leaders present to model Adventist leadership, characterised by "spiritual values," "a clearly defined mission" and a truly global perspective that is able to transcend preoccupation with provincial interests and "turf-protection." "With such a mind-set leadership binds together rather than scatters, looks out rather than in, shares rather than hordes," he said.

250 youth participate in Olympic outreach



Larry Laredo



Some 250 Seventh-day Adventist youth, including 50 from outside the South Pacific Division, reached out to those attending the Olympic Games in Sydney.

General Conference youth director Dr Baraka Muganda challenged the youth to introduce people to the gospel during the first phase of Olympic Outreach 2000, a field school of evangelism at the Crosslands Youth and Convention Centre, from September 11 to 14. "People are looking for answers," he said.

The youth, who could choose from 17 ministries, then formed 15 teams and performed in and around Sydney during the games. They also staffed a tent cafe at Parramatta and distributed 70,000 copies of the "More than gold" Olympic Games edition of *Signs of the Times*.

Florida, USA-based Seventh-day Adventist school chaplain Pastor Jeff Wood spoke at youth rallies on the Friday and Saturday evenings.

The Greater Sydney Conference, with support from the division, Trans-Tasman Union Conference and North New South Wales Conference, organised Olympic Outreach 2000.—*Larry Laredo*

\$100,000 RAISED FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Church boards encouraged to apply.

Eleven Seventh-day Adventists with experience in business, ministry, teaching and law have raised \$100,000 to subsidise the employment of women in ministry.

An incorporated association has been established to disburse the funds. Its president is Keith Johnson. Carole Ferch-Johnson, women's ministries director for the South Pacific Division, and Ian Watts are vice-presidents. Pastor Ian Howie, associate minister of the Avondale College church, is secretary.

Women in Ministry "supports the desire of congregations and

administrators" by offering \$20,000 to conferences per year for each of up to five female interns beginning January 1 next year, reports the association's media liaison officer, Dr Arthur Patrick.

Dr Norman Young, a lecturer in theology at Avondale College, in a letter to RECORD on July 15 encouraged church boards to write to the magazine in support of women. He and other men and women will be committee members, reports Dr Patrick. The group is still looking for a treasurer.

Solicitor Stuart Tipple, who has volunteered to be the public officer of the association, is organising the legal details of incorporation.

Dr Patrick encourages church boards considering a female intern next year to apply "immediately"

to their conference president.

"As there will be more applications than interns, the association will select from the conference applications those to which it can donate \$20,000 each."

The association has received commitments for the \$100,000 needed to subsidise five interns in 2001, "but the achievement of its goals requires strong continuity and carefully planned long-term support," says Dr Patrick.

"We're confident this initiative will receive enthusiastic support, since it responds to widely based and frequently expressed concerns in Australian and New Zealand churches and at the General Conference."

The association is developing a web site. Details will be announced later.

ADVENTIST PARALYMPIAN AIMS TO WIN GOLD

Remember Lilo Ljubisic (see Flashpoint, December 11, 1999)? The Seventh-day Adventist from British Columbia, Canada, is competing in next week's Paralympic Games (October 18-29).

She threw a world record 32.98 metres in the discus to win gold in Barcelona in 1992 and is aiming for another gold and a new world record in Sydney.

A gold in shot-put—in which Lilo has also thrown a world record—is also a possibility.

Lilo is blind. She gradually started losing her sight from an



Lilo Ljubisic, a Seventh-day Adventist, is aiming to win gold in the discus at the Paralympic Games in Sydney next week.

early age and has endured five failed corneal transplants. She believes her greatest limitations are other people's perceptions of her limitations.

An example?

It was not until the age of 17 that Lilo met someone who could see beyond her disability. A schoolteacher introduced her to sport, something she now believes she was always going to excel at.

She remembers admiring Olympic athletes before she was even aware of the Paralympics.

The discus and shot-put brought independence. Goalball met her yearning for team sports.

She started to feel a sense of belonging.

At the age of 23, Lilo qualified for the British Columbia team and competed at the national championships, winning her first medal.

A pivotal point.

"I finally found who I was and what I could be," she says.

She describes winning the medal as a "dream beyond dreams."

Her ability and skills continue to improve even as her sight deteriorates. She keeps winning gold in the discus and shot-put despite competing against partially blind athletes.

Lilo's drive is impressive. She speaks with conviction about using God's powerful tool—choice.

"God chose to save us. It is up to us to choose Him."—Peta Morris

THE TALE OF FIVE CHURCHES

Albanian Mission president on the challenges of ministering in a "God-forsaken" country.

Why would you want to go to a God-forsaken place like Albania?" I have heard this many times. Sometimes I ask the same question.

Few Albanians are Seventh-day Adventists, and the shortage of ministers in the mission means many of those who did respond to the gospel during the 1990s have left.

Take the tale of the church in Shkodra, for example. Several attempts have been made to establish a church in this city, but civil unrest and hazardous roads make it a less than desirable location. Interest from the community is high when volunteers minister in Shkodra, but with no continual presence, the interest subsides. The church building has never been finished and is now falling into disrepair.

And members of the house church in Durres have doubled

attendance by bringing their friends. However, they have no minister.

The potential is there, though.

The new house church in Fier has a minister but no members. This will change soon. The minister, Julian Kastrati, a graduate of Newbold College in England, uses local contractors to renovate the apartment chosen for the church. He makes friends with them and then visits them in their homes. He even shops at the same market so the locals will get to know him.

The house church in Elbasan has more non-members than members because the non-members are bringing their family and friends. Fellowship is important in Elbasan because of the high rate of unemployment, reports the minister, Alban Matohiti. Most of the men who have lost their jobs seem to have no purpose, no place to go except the bars, the billiard halls or



the streets where they sit playing backgammon or dominoes.

And, after eight years of worshiping in less than ideal locations, the church I minister at in the capital, Tirana, has a new home: the ground floor of a villa that also serves as the mission office and my apartment. The villa had previously been used to store barley for the owner's brewery business.

Having our own church building means we can create a sense of worship to increase awareness of God's presence. People stopped in the street outside to hear us sing. Children wandered inside to join us. No-one told us to stop worshipping and vacate the building at 12.30 pm. The youth even stayed to fellowship.

Albania is a God-forsaken place, not because God has forsaken it, but because past politics have demanded God be forsaken. We have an opportunity to change this, but the change needs to happen quickly because materialism and secularisation are rapidly replacing the vacuum created by Communism.—Leigh Rice, president, Albania Mission. Pastor Rice is an Australian.

Students take the message

Australian volunteers Andy and Sylvia Krause are challenging the youth at their church in Korca to talk about their faith. And it is working.

Emanuel, a local high school student, encouraged classmates Lindita and Matilda to visit the church earlier this year. The girls live in the village of Malavec, a long way from Korca, and asked whether the church could visit them. Andy promised Emanuel if the girls found a place to meet, he would take the church to the village.

Lindita and Matilda arranged with the village elder to use an old hall. Andy met with the elder and negotiated a contract to use the building free of charge every Sabbath for 10 years and with priority for use at any other time.

Forty-three youth met that first Sabbath. Now, six months later, two, including Lindita, have been baptised.—Leigh Rice

The Mission Project for this quarter is the construction of a church-evangelistic centre in Tirana.

RETIREES REWRITE BIBLE READING GUIDE

Pastor Ed and Joy Totenhofer, a ministry team for 50 years, are co-authors of the 2001 *Morning Watch*, a day-by-day Bible reading guide.

"It's a privilege to co-author the booklet," says Pastor Totenhofer who, with his wife, Joy, a former assistant editor of RECORD, has ministered at the Yarra Valley (Vic) church for the past nine years. "We put a considerable amount of thought into its preparation, and decided to cover a different theme each month."

Themes include belief, faith, repentance, love and other aspects of Christian growth.*

"Each new year is similar to beginning a journey and the *Morning Watch* booklet is designed to be a pilgrimage of sorts, revisiting the steps in the

Christian's life," says Mrs Totenhofer.

"Each month there's a progression from first awareness through to experiencing the fullness of assurance and profound peace that comes from knowing Jesus as Saviour and Lord—that our sins are forgiven and we have hope for a future heaven. We read every relevant text on the topic, then chose those we felt best fitted."

Starting from scratch

It is the first time the *Morning Watch* has been prepared in this way.

The daily Bible readings in the booklet used to be identical to those appearing in the senior devotional book, which meant they were connected to the stories in the book, explains Alan Holman, print marketing manager at Signs Publishing Company.

"Sometimes the titles of the Bible readings in the *Morning Watch* didn't make sense unless you read the stories in the senior devotional book. So we've started from scratch,

with Ed and Joy preparing a topical and sequential series of Bible readings, with catchlines relevant to the text."

Basic beginning to each day

Pastor Totenhofer believes every Christian needs to spend some time each day in devotional reading and prayer.

"The *Morning Watch* booklet is a basic beginning to each day, and encourages us to start it right by getting in touch with our Best Friend," he says.

"Joy and I both enjoy reading and studying, and we felt to be prodded into such an assignment would be a great incentive to our own further study. We weren't wrong! At its completion, we agreed this time and effort had been worthwhile."—Lee Dunstan



Pastor Ed and Joy Totenhofer are co-authors of the new *Morning Watch* devotional. "We felt to be prodded into such an assignment would be a great incentive to our own further study," says Pastor Totenhofer. "We weren't wrong!"

Bible versions), the *Pathfinder Bible Reading Guide* and a calendar for 2001. They are available from Adventist Book Centres.



children



— CAN YOU SPOT 10 DIFFERENCES?



Norm follows the torch

Norm Hammond (pictured), from Carmel (WA) church followed the Olympic flame for 27,000 kilometres. He drove the shuttle bus in the convoy following the torchbearers.

Mr Hammond joined the convoy at Dalby (Qld) and stayed with it until the torch arrived in Sydney on September 15. During this time he met most of the torchbearers.

As one of the few Christians in the group, he says he had many opportunities to witness.

Adventist runs at Olympics

A Seventh-day Adventist from England competed in the men's 400-metres event during the Olympic Games. Daniel Caines, the under-23 national champion, gained his place after medal favourite Mark Richardson withdrew over a drug controversy. Daniel graduated with a law degree earlier this year. His parents, both former British champions, accompanied him to Sydney.



Missionaries write on

Well-known, retired missionaries Pastor Orm and Win Speck, and Pastor Lester Lock, have published books about their service in Papua New Guinea. The Specks' book is called *Into the Unknown*. Pastor Lock's? *Locks That Opened Doors*. Both are



Multiple baptism helps country church grow



children, with their parents. The other three had not attended a Seventh-day Adventist church until recently.

God performed miracles in the lives of those baptised, says minister Pastor Victor Acuna, including healing one of the sisters. He adds the church is constantly praying and providing worship, nurture, fellowship and evangelistic programs.

Pictured are Pastor and Mrs Anne Acuna (at right) with those baptised (left to right): Zen Rantall, Jy Rantall, Jacqui Delaney, Mrs L Rantall and Jayne Pollock.

Newswatch

Thousands take Scriptures at the Olympic Games

Up to 300 people an hour visited the Quest tent at Olympic Park during the first week of the Olympic Games. They received free copies of *Towards the Goal* (the Gospel of Mark), and bought New Testaments produced in major world languages by the Bible Society in Australia.

"A mission field is visiting this tent every minute of the day," said John Forrest of the Bible Society. He expected a huge rush during the second week as the athletic competitions began.

Mr Forrest said it was "nothing short of a miracle" that the tent was located with major Olympic sponsors Nike and Samsung. "This has resulted in maximum exposure to everyone who uses the Southern Expo Park."

"There's a high level of curiosity in the Scriptures from people from all over the world. There's certainly an air of excitement and enjoyment throughout the park and it is shared at our location."

"In 35 years of theological studies, I've come up with two incontrovertible facts: There is a God. And I'm not Him." —a priest in Rudy

self-published as paperbacks and are available through Adventist Book Centres. Pastor Lock is responsible for translating the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide and World Mission Report into pidgin (for Papua New Guinea) each quarter.

Refugees for the day

Brightwaters (NSW) Pathfinders recently became refugees for 24 hours. The church hall became a refugee centre, and they were allocated clothing, a blanket, refugee rations (two biscuits), and cardboard boxes and tree branches for shelter.



Oops file

■ The sale of the Warburton Hospital ("Warburton Hospital finally sold," September 30) included the Warburton Health Resort. The hospital closed 25 beds after changes to the criteria for patient admission not, as reported, loss of Medicare funding. And, of course, the blueprint followed at the health resort is more than 100 years old.

■ Food Cent\$ is a program developed by the Health Department of WA and presented by Kym Fowler (Flashpoint, September 16), not the other way around. Mrs Fowler presented the Food Cent\$ seminar at the Vegetarian World Congress in Canada recently. She and her mother, Margo Marshall, have a health-promotion business, LiveSmart.



October 28 Adventist History Awareness Day
November 4 Missions Extension Offering
November 5 Adventist Book Centre Open Day

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: HAVE WE BEEN CONNED?

by Jeff Poots

bave current definitions of spiritual gifts, spiritual gift inventories and questionnaires hindered rather than helped in our ministry for God? Have they created boundaries that restrict us to specific ministries rather than freeing us for whatever God would have us do, in whatever situation He places us in? Is God so subtle with His giving of spiritual gifts that we have to complete surveys to discover what He has actually given us?

Questionnaires and surveys are useful tools for discovering self and possible areas of ministry. They can indicate an individual's natural or Spirit-led tendencies. However, they may also hinder our trust in God, because most inventories are subjective reflections of what people are already doing with their lives and what they currently feel, or don't feel, comfortable doing.

Does this limit the church? Some would say no, because current inventories and their definitions of gifts *can* give direction. They can provide an incentive for some to demonstrate their gift. Yet these definitions, even though they are intended as a guide, may also restrict ministry.

The gift of evangelism

The gift of evangelism is often defined as: To be successful in leading people to Christ and establishing them in the body of Christ. But should we wait to find out whether we have this gift before we go out and attempt to evangelise?

If evangelism is a gift, why are so many pastors involved in evangelism courses? This seems to indicate that the use of the gift is more reliant on

training programs than on God as the Giver of gifts. That it is, perhaps, an interest pursued rather than a manifestation of the Spirit of God as, for example, Peter on the day of Pentecost.

Training is good. To use our natural abilities to glorify God is essential. God will bless others through our training and talents. And we should aim to improve in all areas of ministry. The Bible does give descriptions for the use of spiritual gifts. We need to be careful not to emphasise training and gift description more than God's ability to supply the gift.

The gift of hospitality

Romans 12:13 says we should practise hospitality. It's a message to all, not directed at individuals who possess the gift of hospitality. Some people are more hospitable than others. This is sometimes a gift of the Holy Spirit; it is sometimes a natural extension of someone's personality; and sometimes it's ingrained in a person from family background or experience.

Whatever the origin, hospitality is to be used to bring glory to God. We shouldn't limit hospitality as a divinely imparted gift for the few

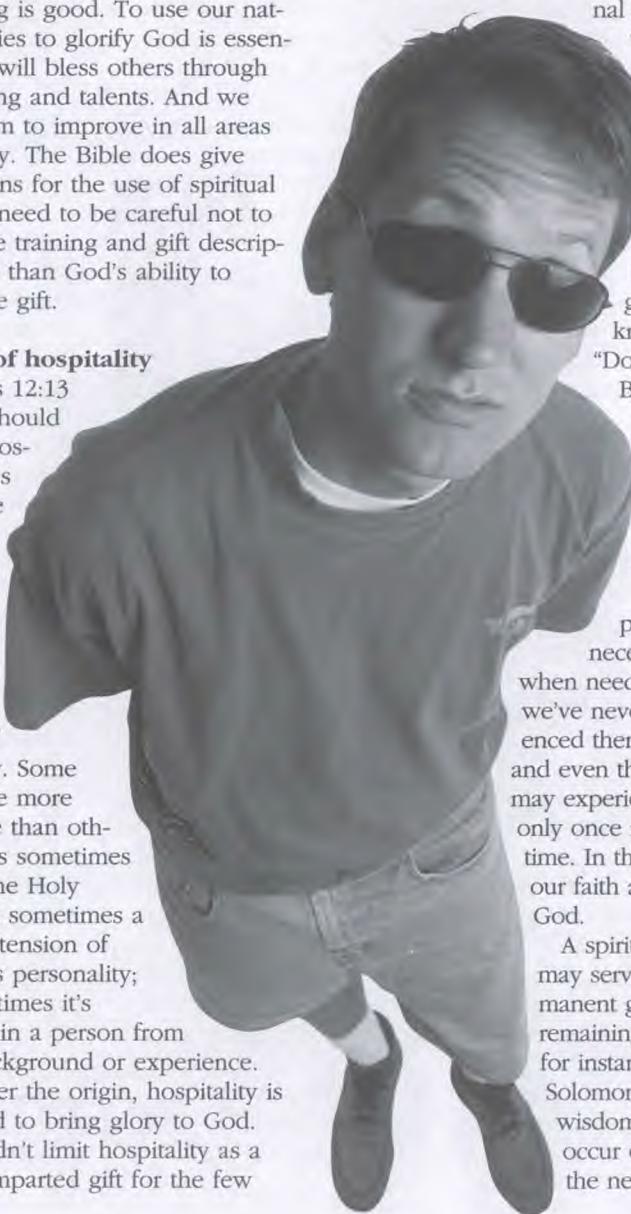
when the Bible states it should be and can be possessed by many.

If someone is hungry, we feed them. If someone asks about Jesus, we tell them. If someone wants to know what the Bible says about eternal life, we read them a text from the Bible.

The questions should be, "Do I have any food to give?" "Do I know Jesus?" "Do I know my Bible?" The question should not be, "Do I possess the necessary gifts?"

God will provide the necessary gifts when needed—even if we've never experienced them before and even though we may experience them only once in our lifetime. In this we place our faith and trust in God.

A spiritual gift may serve as a permanent gift by remaining with us—for instance, Solomon's gift of wisdom. Or it may occur only when the need arises—



the gift of tongues, perhaps.

Formula for ministry

There's a very useful formula used to determine an individual's potential ministry. Spiritual gift + personality + passion = ministry. It's effective. However, a gift may not match a personality or a passion. Take Jeremiah and Gideon, for example. They questioned their usefulness, but God said He would provide the necessary tools. Did Moses need his brother Aaron to speak for him? No (see Exodus 4:11-17).

"Moses said to the Lord, 'O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and of tongue.'

"The Lord said to him, 'Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.'

"But Moses said, 'O Lord, please send someone else to do it.'" (Exodus 4:10-13, NIV).

God gave them both the gift of speech, and He gave Moses the ability to perform miracles.

God isn't stingy in His gift giving. He doesn't have rations that can't be replenished. God has infinite resources. We must be willing to be used by God in His way.

The issue of whether or not we possess a spiritual gift shouldn't become more important than the act of ministry itself. The first question must be, "Should I be involved in this ministry?" not, "Do I have the gift?"

Both questions are important. If the former were the only one asked there may be the tendency to go forward without the Spirit of God. If the latter were the only one asked, we may hesitate and, while waiting for the gift, we may lose sight of the people to whom we are to minister.

We must not go before God; we must go with Him. Importantly, we must go. The Holy Spirit will provide the direction. Those attempting ministry without the Spirit will be self-led, not Spirit-led.

Remember this: God often displays the power of His Spirit as we

go, not before we go. To go requires trust—trust in God that He will provide the gifts He has promised. When God's Spirit works through me, I have nothing to fear. He's the one who has given a spirit of love, power and a sound mind.

Conclusion

Spiritual gift inventories are useful tools. Definitions of spiritual gifts provide a guide and description of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But these inventories and definitions must not limit us. Training for ministry must be encouraged; it's necessary and it should be ongoing. Surpassing all

this is the presence and power of God in our lives.

God will provide the way and the means for each of us to minister to others for Him. He will give each person the necessary gifts to effectively uplift the name of Jesus. God draws all humankind to Himself, and He most often does it through His people—us (see Ezekiel 36:21-23).

If I'm willing, God can use me where and how He wills. **R**

Jeff Poots is the pastor of the Darwin, Batchelor, Palmerston and Katherine churches in the Northern Territory.

FLYING THE FLAG

by Joan Hunt

Flags. Those colourful pieces of cloth identify a country, an organisation or even a person. More recently we've seen them proudly raised at Olympic ceremonies.

Flags have been with us for a long time. The first known usage was with the Chinese in about 1122 BC.* India also used them early in its history.

In those days, flags were carried ahead of a person of importance. The flag became an announcement of who was coming.

Flags became message bearers. For instance, when a city was captured, the winner's flag was flown from the highest point to send the message out that the city had fallen.

With the advent of knights and suits of armour, the identifying flag became very important. Different flags developed different meanings. The standard was the large flag that marked the home city or base camp. The banner was long and narrow, to be carried around with the forces. The personal identifier was the ensign—the *en sign*, or *signature*.

These different names are used in the King James Version of the Bible. Some modern translations simply use "flags."

During the wilderness wanderings, the Israelites were told to mark their tribes by their tribal standard when they camped around the ark of the covenant (Numbers 2:2, 3, 10). We, as spiritual Israel, should have our camp around God's standard—the Ten Commandments.

For a banner we display God's truth (Psalm 60:4), and His banner over us is love (Song of Solomon 2:4).

The Bible says an ensign will be raised on a hill and all nations will gather there (Isaiah 5:26; 11:10, 12).

What is a flag? Basically it's a piece of cloth attached to a piece of wood to be held up for all to see. The Father allowed the Son to be nailed to a piece of wood as the ensign of the Lord. In this way God autographed the world. **R**

*Information about flags is from Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Joan Hunt writes from Nakara in the Northern Territory.

TO PRAISE LEADERS

by Jim King

Every Sabbath in hundreds of meetings, from church services to youth events and special weekends, you lead the church family in a time of worship and praise.

As I participate in what you provide, I can't help but reflect on the tremendous importance of your role. You lead us in worship and praise, and help us focus on the greatness and goodness of God. You prepare us for the opening of the Word. You help create an environment where the Holy Spirit can soften and subdue our hearts.

Thank you for your commitment and enthusiasm, and for the hundreds of hours you and your musicians spend in preparing for worship.

But, to be honest, over the past few years I've noticed some changes in the way you lead us and I'm a little confused. I've tried to research this and have found that scores of those I've talked with—people of all ages, from teens to boomers—also wonder what's going on.

We come to church wanting to experience worship. We really want to praise God. We want to join in with you, your singers and musicians. We want to be there with you, but somehow it often doesn't happen. We're left flat and leave your time of praise and worship feeling empty—discouraged even.

As I've thought about this and talked to others, I think I've worked out what's going on. And, please, I'm not writing this to be critical. I love God and the church we belong to, and I want to be part of a Bible-based, Spirit-filled, vibrant community as much as you.

One of the problems is so often you choose songs we don't know. We try to join in, but without music or you teaching us, we stand there trying our best and often just give up.



Sometimes the music is so loud we don't feel like singing, even if we know the song. Also, standing for 20 minutes is hard work! Why can't we sit down sometimes?

And, please, don't leap around, jump up and down, and stomp your feet. Even my young friends laugh at you when you do that. It's very distracting.

Would you mind not preaching little sermons before each song, or give a summary of what the pastor said in his sermon when you introduce the last song?

Why do you sing those little frilly bits during some songs? And some of you say, "Yes, Jesus" all the time, so fervently. This can make us feel like spectators, as if we aren't invited to join with you, but merely to watch.

Please don't tell us how we're to worship. Don't force us! Lead us gently into worship, invite us to join with you, choose songs that enable us together to praise God. Create an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit can soften our hearts and the Lord will bless, and we will worship!

I relish what you're attempting to do because I long for worship that is authentic and genuine. I find most of the contemporary worship songs meaningful and helpful, provided the music isn't too loud and we don't sing them at the speed of light. But how about an occa-

sional, well-chosen hymn or gospel song. A little variety is great! A change in the instruments leading us and even singing *a capella* makes us focus on the message of the song.

For the record, many enjoy percussion or (can I say it?) drums, provided they don't drown out the other instruments. Spirit-filled musicians who play sensitively and well are a blessing to any congregation.

Which reminds me to encourage you and your team to continually soak yourselves in Scripture and in prayer. Time spent individually and as a group with God will be a blessing to everyone. When you're Christ-centred in your approach, your team will not be there to show us how good they are. Rather they will be there to minister and usher us into the presence of God.

Our preachers tell us that because of Revelation 14 and the first angel's message—where we are called to worship God as Creator—we Seventh-day Adventists, of all people, should be leading the world in worship. Let's not blindly follow what other churches do, but discover authentic biblical worship for ourselves so our churches will thrive and prosper, and our members will experience the love and power of God in their lives.

Please forgive me if I've said some things strongly, but I feel you need to know what many in the church are feeling. I've been honest because I sincerely want you to succeed in what you're doing for the church.

God bless you in your continuing ministry. **R**

Jim King is a pseudonym. The writer, who is a musician and actively involved in youth ministry, wrote this as an open letter to worship and praise leaders.

THE WOMEN IN MY LIFE

by David Caldwell

t

his is not a confession of a past life of indiscretions, but a tribute to the women who helped to shape my life.

My godly mother was handicapped, born with her left arm terminating just below the elbow. This helped to account for her retiring personality, but her drive and resourcefulness was remarkable.

Those outside our home were astounded at what she accomplished. She sewed for others, gardened and coped with household tasks. Her skills seemed only limited when she wanted to hold me and use the stick at the same time—that's when my sister helped out.

She stood tallest in her prayer life. I believe her prayers brought complete recovery from infantile paralysis when I was five. At that time she renewed the vow she'd made at my birth and dedicated my life in service for God. Later, as I began to view other options, she'd remind God of the pact she'd made with Him.

When a stroke rendered her dependent on others, prayer and reading her Bible became her life.

Ellen White's philosophy of education proved to be far ahead of her times, particularly when she urged the growing Adventist church to give Christian education priority over bricks and mortar. Her influence meant I was enrolled in the school in the back room of our little Moonee Ponds (Vic) church.

There, much to the disgust of non-Adventist relatives, I and a dozen or so other children were given into the hands of young women fresh from teacher training at Avondale College. There is no doubting the direction it gave to my development.

One of these young women predicted that God would someday use me in His vineyard. She and the other two teachers played a part in seeing that I did.

Years later, with a wife and young family, I found myself teaching in a church school in Queensland. It was as small as my Moonee Ponds school.

Life had taken many twists to this point. I'd worked as a junior teacher in Victorian state schools. I'd trained for ministry at Avondale, but had gone back to teaching, in a church school in Tasmania. I married enroute to army medical service in Papua New Guinea (PNG). After the war, I worked for the government in PNG, then did mission service before returning to Australia.

This little school was a fertile field for discouragement. Then, unexpect-

"This is not a confession of a past life of indiscretions, but a tribute to the women who helped to shape my life."

edly, came an opportunity for escape—my aunt offered me the job of running a dairy farm for her on a beautiful location overlooking the Gold Coast.

A dear, elderly woman of the church somehow got word of my plight and called me aside. She reminded me that I was indeed where God wanted me to be and urged me to hang on through this valley of discouragement. She'd been a church schoolteacher and I held her in great esteem. Her influence was sufficient for me to decide to remain where I was. This became the turning point in my life. I taught in our schools for the rest of my career.

But I must bear tribute to the woman who is the mainstay of my existence—my wife. Even after 55 years I vividly recall the moment I

first saw her as she came bouncing into work on my first day in the Sanitarium factory at Cooranbong (next to Avondale College). Something in me started a meltdown. Then and there I vowed she would share my life.

Courtship had its problems as students at Avondale, but that only stiffened our resolve. We graduated together, and found our appointments separated us by water—we firmly believed this to be church policy.

Ours was a wartime marriage, and when I began medical work for the government in PNG, she sailed to join me on the first boat to carry civilians after hostilities ceased. For a time she was the only white woman on a remote outstation, but this didn't faze her at all.

Almost yearly relocations led us to experience the semi-controlled highlands, the hot grasslands of central Papua, the swamps of the gulf, and war-ravaged Rabaul. Finally, after burying two babies and finding the life of our eldest child at risk, we returned permanently to Australia.

Twenty years later, we returned to serve out my teaching career in mission schools in the Pacific. Mission life proved to be far less harrowing—our chief complaint was that we missed out on those joyful bonding years with our grandchildren.

Never, through this twisting and turning, sacrifice and sorrow, has she ever really complained. When I ask her if she would like to have taken a different course through life, she says, "No. Never!"

If my service has been acceptable to God, which I pray it has, I testify that it could not have been so without the combined influences of the women in my life. Thank you. **R**

David Caldwell, a retired church-school teacher, writes from Valentine, NSW.

TOO MANY COINCIDENCES

by Ruth Krieg

A painting of the Second Coming leads to a strengthening of spiritual experience.

too often the minor miracles in the lives of us ordinary folk are written off or brushed aside as "luck" or "coincidence." Yet the hand of God is still over His believers, as it always has been. He can and does guide and oversee our lives. God does work His miracles.

Sometimes He's the only One who sees what is happening and why. And you don't have to be a millionaire, a world record holder or young and beautiful for God to use you. I'm none of those things, but I'm humbly aware God still uses me, and still has His hand over me.

Recently some of my paintings were on display in Perth, and they attracted the attention of a girl from Kalgoorlie, some 500 kilometres to the east. She was in Perth to comfort and support her mother, who had just fulfilled her son's last wish before he died—that his ashes should be scattered on the sea.

The mother lives on the estate where the art exhibition was displayed and they had come to forget their grief, if they could, before the daughter returned to Kalgoorlie. I was there to support the opening of the exhibition.

Actually, I almost hadn't attended. Not feeling well, I nearly made my apologies instead. However, I went. I'd had a peep at where my work was hung and then looked for a place to sit before the speeches began. I chose a vacant chair next to the mother and daughter. They both looked withdrawn, and unlike-

ly to talk.

But, after the speeches, they did talk—about the paintings. The daughter was very enthusiastic about one of them, saying it *did* something for her, and was an answer to prayer and so on. It wasn't until she spoke of one of the angels in it, that I realised she was speaking of one of my paintings!

This was a painting of the second coming of Christ, featuring a multitude of people and angels. I had named it "Soon."

I was left sitting with her mother while she went to get money from an automatic teller machine. We chatted about a variety of things and I discovered she knew where I lived. She has a cousin who also lives in the Seventh-day Adventist retirement village in Rossmoyne. Her cousin not only lives there, but lives in the cottage next door to me!

Two days later when Paula, a friend, was back at the estate to pick up my unsold paintings, the mother happened to be passing. Another coincidence? When she saw the pictures Paula was taking, she stopped her to tell her what a comfort the painting "Soon" was to her daughter; that it was now safely on the wall in Kalgoorlie; and that it

had made a lovely hopeful ending to her brother's life and death.

There are so many "coincidences" in this little story, it is quite staggering, but it all confirms, once again, how all knowing and all powerful is our God!

God willing, I shall be having a further contact

with the mother (believe it or not, I'm still unclear as to their name) by joining a book club she belongs to in the new year. I don't drive anymore so she has offered to pick me up each fortnight.

So, from a rather reluctant attendance of a rather small exhibition to check some rather (to me) unsatisfactory paintings, came a new friendship and, God willing, a strengthening of spiritual experience.

Never give up. God is there. R



Ruth Krieg writes from the Rossmoyne Adventist Retirement Village in WA. Although it may be impolite to mention a woman's age, we will reveal that Mrs Krieg is 92 years of age.

“ **As the Bible gives principles on how to live the Christian life, so the Church Manual could be a guide.** ”

Two concerns

LIZ HILL, SA

As an observer of the General Conference session and its outcomes, I have two concerns. The present system of policy making produces winners and losers, with the majority being winners. I question if this will truly reflect the aspirations of the Holy Spirit. Can it be said, for instance, that the majority have been led by the Holy Spirit and that the minority lack this divine component?

A consultative process has many positive results. Although consensus decision making takes longer, it allows the Holy Spirit to lead the whole group to a decision that may be arrived at even with disagreement.

My second concern is in regard to the *Church Manual*. This book is perceived and used as a “thou-shalt” or “thou-shalt-not” edict. It exists as the rule book, with no room for consultation in decision making that takes into account individual and cultural contexts. As the Bible gives principles on how to live the Christian life, so the *Church Manual* could be a guide and provide principles that challenge individuals to think and decide wisely, yet still be Spirit-led rather than manual-fed.

Amplification

DAVID G GIBBONS, NSW

I've just read “Come on, you guys!” (Letters, September 16) and it begs a response. The writer may not realise that Aussies did make a significant contribution in bringing the General Conference session to the world. Some 65 of the 100 staff in training, helping out and providing the hands and legs to make the event happen, were Australians. But of the other 35-member professional team, 13 were Aussies, the largest staff contingent from any single country.

Heading the session production team was Warren Judd, a quiet Aussie who normally heads the multimillion-dollar Adventist production centre in

California. Other Aussies have joined him there. Some came especially for the session and filled vital roles in key areas of film, studio and audio production; lighting; event management; and satellite uplinking.

Let us quietly applaud them, and praise the Lord for the efforts of these talented Aussies who are on the cutting edge of media technology and are using their skills to take the gospel to the world.

Here's a thought

JAN SHIPTON, EMAIL

“Freeing the board” (Features, September 9) described a traditional way of approaching church “management.” If the method isn't working as well as it should, the order could be reversed, with the business meeting discussing the spiritual direction of the church, overseeing business and referring matters to the appropriate departmental committees. The board would then handle confidential and sensitive issues, meeting only when required.

Such an approach would allow a

greater number of people “ownership” of church decisions and programs, and may result in better involvement.

Worship essential

LLOYD GROLIMUND, NZ

I concur with Nathan Brown's “Get an issue” (Adventist life, September 23). Sometimes we do get tied to issues that are irrelevant and of little earthly—or heavenly—value. However, it's unfortunate he used music as the basis of his argument. Music is central in Adventist worship around the world.

Because it's an issue in the battle between good and evil, surely it's appropriate to study, vigorously debate and pray about the type of music we use in praising our Creator.

As Jesus' coming approaches, worship and its elements will become more important. There are biblical principles of corporate worship and music we do well to heed. How we worship determines whom we worship. In the end (see Daniel 7 and Revelation 13), worship is the issue.

Just a coincidence



Note: Views in Letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Letters should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All letters are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's original meaning will not be changed. Not all letters received are published. See masthead (page 2) for contact details.

Positions vacant

▲ **Chief Executive Officer, Adventist Retirement Villages—Victorian Conference** is seeking to appoint a Chief Executive Officer for the Adventist Retirement Villages. Applications (including résumé and contact particulars) should be forwarded to: Pastor Ian Royce, Secretary, Victorian Conference, PO Box 215, Nunawading Vic 3131; fax (03) 9894 2637; email <iroyce@adventist.org.au> no later than October 23, 2000.

▲ **Cost Accountant—Sanitarium Health Food Company (Coorabong, NSW)** is seeking a professional Cost Accountant who will report to the Site Management Accountant. The successful applicant will be tertiary qualified, preferably with CPA or equivalent professional status. Applications in writing (including a current CV) should be forwarded to The Human Resources Department, Sanitarium Health Food Company, Locked Bag 7, Central Coast Mail Centre NSW 2252; fax (02) 4348 7787 or email <amanda.hawken@sanitarium.com.au> no later than October 25, 2000.

Anniversary

Schofield, Arthur and Val (nee Hick) of Windsor, NSW, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary at a family gathering at Wynella Gardens, Kurrajong Heights. They were married on 25.8.40 by Pastor J W Kent at Avondale and



have given a lifetime of service to the church and the community. Messages of congratulations were received from the Queen, Governor-General and local parliamentarians.

Weddings

Cameron—Hedges. Craig Cameron and Nadine Hedges were married on 16.9.00 at Veale Gardens, Adelaide, SA. Lee Bowditch, David Larson

Dawson—Wallace. Neil Dawson, son of Joseph and Beryl Dawson (Morisset, NSW), and Pauline Wallace, daughter of Rupert and Heather Wallace (Central Coast), were married on 17.9.00 at Martinsville. Roger Nixon

Hunt—Ellis. David Hunt, son of Reg and Pat Hunt (Howick, Manukau City, NZ), and Carolyn Ellis, daughter of Mostyn and Delwyn Ellis (Pukekohe), were married on 3.9.00 in St Luke's Church, Remuera, Auckland. Gareth Ellis

Kaufononga—Daniels. Sinbad Kaufononger, son of Moi and Lisia Kaufononga, and Karen Daniels, daughter of Kari and Gingia Daniels (all of Auckland), were married on 7.9.00 in the Otahuhu Adventist church, NZ. Russell Standish, Karl Sorensen

Lillehagen—Dale. Phillip Edward Lillehagen, son of Nels and Catherine Lillehagen (Stanthorpe, Qld), and Shelia Grace Dale, daughter of Robert and Lyndell Dale (Coorabong, NSW), were married on 17.9.00 at the Avondale College church, Coorabong.

Peter Cousins, Trevor Rowe

Obituaries

Barrack, Herbert ("Uncle Bert"), born 6.11.23 at Savu Savu, Fiji; died 12.9.00 in the North Shore Hospital, Auckland, NZ. Paul Gredig

Clark, Robert Leslie, born 15.4.22 at Georgetown, Newcastle, NSW; died 30.8.00 at Newcastle. On 30.8.44 he married Joyce. He is survived by his wife; his son and daughter-in-law, Lynn and Robyn; one grandson; and one great-grandson.

Alwyn Gersbach, Warren Fedorow

Eaton, Robert Charles ("Pop"), born 1907 at Kalgoorlie, WA; died 13.9.00 in the Freeman Nursing Home, Rossmoyne. He was predeceased by his son, Robert (Blue). He is survived by his wife, Edith (Rossmoyne); his children, Vera (Brentwood), Beryl (Maida Vale), Jean, Jim (James—both of High Wycombe), Stanley (Victoria Park), John (Bickley), Ray (Vanuatu), Norm (Manjimup), Lois (Stirling), Strawb (Trevor-Manjimup), Pauline (Beaumaris) and Elizabeth (Cairns, Qld). Following a memorial service at Sherwin Lodge on 18.9.00, the funeral was held in Manjimup on 21.9.00. "Pop" was a pioneer of our country and a true man of faith. Much loved and much missed.

Ray Eaton, Dale Arthur

Elliott, Hazel Mary, born 8.8.17 at Ipswich, Qld; died 16.9.00 at Ipswich. On 18.10.41 she married Herbert, who predeceased her in 1994. She is survived by her children, Ronald, Lynette Watson, Barry (all of Brassall) and Grahame (Biggenden). Having lived most of her life on a farm, Hazel was a solitary person, whose greatest witness was to her children, teaching them the importance of fair play and "doing the right thing."

Sandor Gazsik

Evans, Gladys Alma, born 27.7.15 at Albury, NSW; died 31.8.00 at Junee. She was predeceased by her husband, Clarence; also her son, Raymond. She is survived by her children, Clarence (Junee), Merle Protasiewycz, Jack Hughes and Alma Wooden (all of Wagga Wagga). Gladys was a faithful worker in the community, helping the needy in many ways. She was awarded the title of Miss Wagga Charity Queen. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

David Kelsey

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Volunteers needed

Finance Officer—ADRA—Mongolia. Duties include Admin and project accounting. Accounting experience required. Return airfares, insurance, accommodation, stipend provided. Term: 1 year, commencing October 1, 2000.

Assistant Youth Pastor—Papanui church, Christchurch, SNZ. Nurturing youth and early teens, youth services and Pathfinders. Term: 11 months, commencing February 1, 2001.

Volunteer Pastor—Broken Hill church, SNSW. Retired minister or experienced layperson to care for and minister to a church of approximately 40 members. Term: 9 months, commencing early 2001.

For further information contact Pastor Eric White, Coordinator, Volunteer Services, South Pacific Division, Locked Bag 2014, Wahroonga NSW 2076. Phone (02) 9847 3333; fax (02) 9489 0943; email <ewhite@adventist.org.au> website <volunteers.gc.adventist.org>

Fletcher, Ron, born 24.1.17 at Auckland, NZ; died 27.8.00 in Waikato Hospital, Hamilton. On 27.3.48 he married Olga Foote. He was predeceased by his children, Julie, on 13.9.59; also Fiona, on 6.10.66. He is survived by his wife; his children and their spouses, Murray and Kim, Drina, Megan, and Shaun and Erin; and his 11 grandchildren. Ron was a loving and loyal husband, father and friend, who served his family, church and country with distinction.

Jake Ormsby, Jan Harrison

Gulson, Helen May, born 18.6.32 near Mitchell, Qld; died 11.9.00 in Townsville General Hospital. She is survived by her husband, Peter, her sons, Eric and Ray Stanley; and their wives, Joanne and Sue. Helen worked for a number of years at

Avondale College as Laundry Services director. During this time she was a mother away from home to many lonely students. She will be sadly missed.

Ray Stanley, Garth Bainbridge

Mills, Fredrick John, born 16.5.18 at Townsville, Qld; died 30.8.00 at Townsville. He is survived by his wife, Mary; his daughter, Jan; his sons, John and Russell; his brothers, Rob and Ron; his sister, Violet; his eight grandchildren; his nine great-grandchildren; and their families. Fred was Shire chairman for the Burdekin Shire for two terms and built the Ayr Adventist church. He was best remembered as a loyal man with great vision, love for his family, and a deeply committed Christian.

Matthew Sweeny

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Murtagh, Ivy Elvera, born 5.10.20 at Harrisville, Qld; died 4.9.00 at Maryborough. She is survived by her children, Reginald, Terry, Claire, Maurie and Vicki; and their families; her 10 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

John Rabbas

Pearce, Roy Victor, born 14.11.19 at Portsmouth, England; died 17.9.00 at Frankston, Vic. He is survived by his children, Valerie Luff (Hastings), Peter (Boronia) and Leonard (Portsmouth, England).

Neil Marks

Reid, Horace George, born 25.3.26 in Hobart, Tas; died 13.9.00 in Maranatha Nursing Home, Launceston, Tas. He is survived by his wife, Monica (Launceston); his children, Malcolm, Laurelle, Lynette, Richard and Lawson; their spouses; and his grandchildren. George spent some time on the Tasmanian Conference executive committee and assisted in conference church building projects. His professional and spiritual values endeared him to hundreds, who expressed their appreciation at his funeral.

David Currie

Allan Walshe, Kendall Cobbin

Rich, Mervyn (Dick), born 8.3.23 at Orange, NSW; died 6.9.00 in Orange Base Hospital. On 6.4.46 he married Mavis. He was predeceased by his daughter, Noeline, on 16.7.83. He is survived by his wife; his children John, Ken, Michael, Gloria, Barbara, Lorraine, Don (all of Orange), David (Kempsey) and Valerie (Dubbo). Ken Love

Rowe, Allan James, born 2.3.17 at Harden, NSW; died 11.9.00 in the Charles Harrison Nursing Home, Coorabong. On 12.5.41 he married Heather Geelan. He is survived by his wife (Coorabong); his children and their spouses, Trevor and Bronwyn (Wantima South, Vic); and Lyndell and Bob Dale (Coorabong NSW); and his four grandchildren. Allan was an active member of the Arcadia-Galston churches for approximately 50 years. He was always resourceful. Even though he had no formal training, he enjoyed a very full and rewarding life. He is sadly missed by his family and friends.

Claude Judd, Kingsley Andrews
Laurence Gilmore, Les Coombe

Single, Sophie Vallack, born 1920 in Sydney, NSW; died 11.9.00 in Esther Somerville Nursing Home, Normanhurst.

John Silver

Smith, Edgar Lyle, born 12.8.14 at Boorie Creek, NSW; died 3.9.00 at Lismore. He was predeceased by his wife, Val, in 1998. He is survived by his sons, Darrell, Graham, Ian and Barry. Lyle gave a total of 40 years to the Ambulance Service during his working life.

John Skrzypaszek

Turner, Pearl Florence, born 18.7.25 at Mackay, Qld; died 4.9.00 in Redland Bay Hospital. She is survived by her nine children; and her sister, Joy Kettle.

Reg King, Bob Possingham

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F W Borcham books. 50 books of this popular author and 8 booklets + biography by Howard Crago. The lot \$A600.00. Pastor Max Hatton, phone (02) 4977 3194 (51 Kressville Units, Coorabong NSW).

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